

Volume

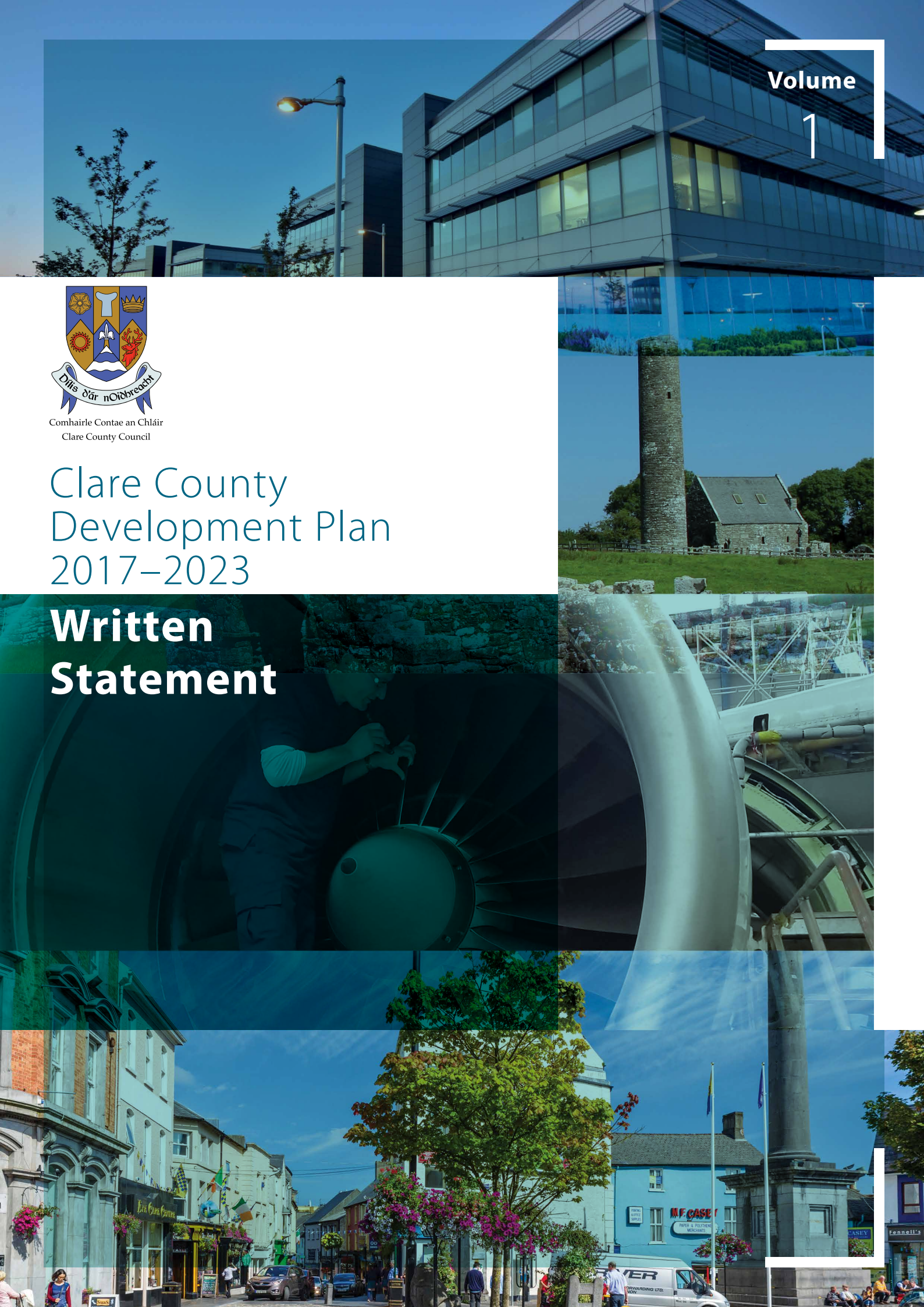
1



Comhairle Contae an Chláir
Clare County Council

Clare County Development Plan 2017–2023

Written Statement





The Clare County Development Plan 2017–2023 consists of:

Published by:

Clare County Council, Áras Contae an Chláir,
New Road, Ennis, County Clare.

Design: Optic Nerve

Printed in Ireland

Copyright © 2017 Clare County Council. All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted, in any form or by any means, or stored in any retrieval system of any nature without prior permission of the authors and publishers

Maps based on Ordnance Survey base maps may not be copied, reproduced or transmitted without the written agreement of the Ordnance Survey Ireland. Maps printed in this Plan are printed under licence agreement 2015/18/CCMA/Clare County Council.

Please check with Clare County Council Planning Section for statutory variations (if any) to this Plan. Variations will be contained on www.clarecoco.ie.

The Clare County Development Plan 2017–2023 may be inspected at the offices of Clare County Council, Area Offices and Branch Libraries.

**The Plan may be purchased from Clare County Council, Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.
Telephone: 065 682 1616**

All documents may be viewed and downloaded online at www.clarecoco.ie

Volume 1 Written Statement

Volume 2 Maps

Volume 3 Municipal District Written Statement & Settlement Plans

- 3a Ennis Municipal District
- 3b Shannon Municipal District
- 3c Killaloe Municipal District
- 3d West Clare Municipal District

Volume 4 Record of Protected Structures

Volume 5 Clare Wind Energy Strategy

Volume 6 Clare Renewable Energy Strategy

Volume 7 Strategic Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP) for the Shannon Estuary

Volume 8 Mid-West Regional Retail Strategy 2010–2016

Volume 9 Joint Housing Strategy for Clare Local Authorities and Limerick City & County Councils 2010–2017

Volume 10 Environmental Appraisal of the Plan

- 10a Natura Impact Report
- 10b(i) Strategic Environmental Assessment—Non-Technical Summary
- 10b(ii) Strategic Environmental Assessment—Environmental Report
- 10b(iii) Strategic Environmental Assessment—Statement
- 10c Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

Foreword

This Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 was adopted on the 19th of December 2016 following a period of extensive, effective and meaningful public consultation and cooperation between the Elected Members and Executive of Clare County Council.

This Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 is the single most important policy document for the County representing an agreed economic, social, cultural and environmental blueprint for the future planning, growth and development of County Clare. Responding to the reorganisation of local government in Ireland, this Development Plan has been prepared for the entirety of County Clare, including for the first time the settlements of Ennis and Kilrush.

This Development Plan is an agreed strategy to achieve the shared vision for the County, with the aim of enhancing the quality of life for all people who live, work and visit County Clare. The Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 establishes a framework to maximise the sustainable development of key national assets in our County, including Shannon town; Shannon International Airport; University of Limerick – Clare Campus; the Shannon Estuary; and our abundant on and off-shore renewable energy resources, whilst also protecting our environmental assets.

This Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 also recognises the important role that our towns and villages play, not only as locations for services and social activities, but also in fostering a sense of place and sustainable communities. This Plan supports and seeks to develop strong and vibrant rural communities in our County which are of fundamental importance to the achievement of balanced and effective development. The Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 has been prepared to ensure that all aspects of its objectives reinforce our commitment to equity, accessibility and social inclusion.

Everyone who works, lives, visits or invests in County Clare is a stakeholder in this County Development Plan and we can all contribute positively to the achievement of the vision of this Plan. Clare County Council shares the pride that the people of Clare have for their county. County Clare is renowned as a county of contrasts, creativity and culture, but it is also a county of industry, education, talent and entrepreneurship. This Development Plan sets out our commitment to work tirelessly to drive economic growth, support business development, enhance our towns and villages and foster sustainable communities. Working together we can ensure that County Clare reaches its full potential.



Pat Dowling
Chief Executive
Clare County Council



Councillor Bill Chambers
Cathaoirleach
Clare County Council

The Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 was adopted by the Elected Members of Clare County Council on the 19th December 2016 and is effective from the 25th January 2017.

Elected Members of Clare County Council:

Mayor of Clare Cllr. Bill Chambers (FF)	Cllr. Pat McMahon (FF)
Cllr. Michael Begley (NP)	Cllr. Tom McNamara (FF)
Cllr. James Breen (NP)	Cllr. Richard Nagle (FF)
Cllr. Pat Burke (FG)	Cllr. Ann Norton (NP)
Cllr. Clare Collieran Molloy (FF)	Cllr. Tony O'Brien (FF)
Cllr. Joe Cooney (FG)	Cllr. Alan O'Callaghan (FF)
Cllr. Cathal Crowe (FF)	Cllr. P.J. Ryan (NP)
Cllr. John Crowe (FG)	Cllr. Bill Slattery (FG)
Cllr. Christy Curtin (NP)	
Cllr. Pat Daly (FF)	
Cllr. Gerard Flynn (NP)	Chief Executive
Cllr. Johnny Flynn (FG)	Mr. Pat Dowling
Cllr. Pat Hayes (FF)	
Cllr. Michael Hillery (FF)	Director of Service
Cllr. Mary Howard (FG)	Mr. Gerard Dollard
Cllr. Gabriel Keating (FF)	
Cllr. P.J. Kelly (FF)	Senior Planner
Cllr. Ian Lynch (NP)	Mr. Brian McCarthy
Cllr. Paul Murphy (FG)	
Cllr. Mike McKee (SF)	

The Executive and Elected Members of Clare County Council wish to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the staff of the Planning Department and other departments of the Council in the preparation of the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023.

Clare County Council would also like to express a special thanks to all of those who made submissions, attended workshops and otherwise participated or assisted in the making of this County Development Plan.

Contents

Chapter 1 Introduction and Vision 9

- 1.0 Introduction..... 10
- 1.1 Legislative Requirements of a
County Development Plan 10
- 1.2 Preparation Process for the
Clare County Development Plan
2017–2023..... 14
- 1.3 Format and Content of the Clare County
Development Plan 2017–2023..... 15
- 1.4 Profile of County Clare..... 17
- 1.5 A Vision for County Clare..... 18
- 1.6 Goals..... 18
- 1.7 The Role of Local Government and
the County Development Plan..... 20
- 1.8 Proper Planning and Sustainable
Development 20
- 1.9 Monitoring and Progress 20

Chapter 2 Core Strategy 21

- 2.0 Introduction..... 22
- 2.1 Core Strategy 22
- 2.2 Strategic Aims..... 23
- 2.3 Relevant Plans, Policies
and Strategies..... 23
- 2.4 Core Strategy for the Clare County
Development Plan 2017–2023..... 27
- 2.5 Conclusion 38

Chapter 3 Urban and Rural Settlement Strategy 41

- 3.0 Introduction..... 42
- 3.1 Strategic Aims..... 42
- 3.2 Settlement Strategy 43
- 3.3 Implementation and Monitoring of
Settlement Policy 54

Chapter 4 Housing 57

- 4.0 Introduction..... 58
- 4.1 Strategic Aims..... 58
- 4.2 Context 58
- 4.3 Housing in County Clare 59

Chapter 5 Community Development and Social Infrastructure 69

- 5.0 Introduction..... 70
- 5.1 Strategic Aims..... 70
- 5.2 Context 70
- 5.3 Sustainable and
Inclusive Communities 71
- 5.4 Social Infrastructure 76

Chapter 6 Economic Development and Enterprise 85

- 6.0 Introduction..... 86
- 6.1 Strategic Aims..... 86
- 6.2 Context 86
- 6.3 Economic Development
and Enterprise 87

Chapter 7 Retail 103

- 7.0 Introduction..... 104
- 7.1 Strategic Aims..... 104
- 7.2 Context 104
- 7.3 Strategy 104
- 7.4 Level and Form of Retail Activity..... 105
- 7.5 Town Centre Retailing..... 109
- 7.6 Other Forms of Retail..... 112

Chapter 8 Physical Infrastructure, Environment and Energy 115

8.0 Introduction.....	116
8.1 Strategic Aims.....	116
8.2 Access and Movement	116
8.3 Water Resources	128
8.4 Water and Wastewater Services.....	130
8.5 Waste Management	134
8.6 Noise, Air and Light Pollution	136
8.7 SEVESO – Major Accidents Directive..	137
8.8 Energy and Communications	138

Chapter 9 Tourism 143

9.0 Introduction.....	144
9.1 Strategic Aims.....	144
9.2 Context	145
9.3 Strategy	145
9.4 Sub-County Tourism Development ..	155

Chapter 10 Rural Development and Natural Resources 161

10.0 Introduction.....	162
10.1 Strategic Aims.....	162
10.2 Context	162
10.3 Strategy	162
10.4 Natural Resources	167

Chapter 11 Shannon Estuary 171

11.0 Introduction.....	172
11.1 Strategic Aims.....	172
11.2 Context	173
11.3 Strategy	173

Chapter 12 Marine and Coastal Zone Management 187

12.0 Introduction.....	188
12.1 Strategic Aims.....	188
12.2 Context.....	188
12.3 Management of the Marine and Coastal Area	189

Chapter 13 Landscape 199

13.0 Introduction.....	200
13.1 Strategic Aims.....	200
13.2 Evolution of Landscape Designations and Protections in County Clare	201
13.3 Clare's Living Landscapes	204
13.4 Seascape Character Areas	210
13.5 Views and Prospects	211
13.6 Applications for Single Houses in the Countryside.....	212

Chapter 14 Biodiversity, Natural Heritage and Green Infrastructure 215

14.0 Introduction.....	216
14.1 Strategic Aims.....	216
14.2 Context.....	216
14.3 Natural Heritage and Biodiversity....	217
14.4 Green Infrastructure	230

Chapter 15 Architectural, Archaeological and Cultural Heritage 233

15.0 Introduction.....	234
15.1 Strategic Aims.....	234
15.2 Context.....	234
15.3 Architectural Heritage	235
15.4 Archaeological Heritage	238
15.5 Cultural Heritage	241

Chapter 16

Towns and Villages 243

- 16.0 Introduction.....244
- 16.1 Strategic Aims.....244
- 16.2 Town and Village Renewal
and Regeneration.....244

Chapter 17

**Design and
Built Environment 253**

- 17.0 Introduction.....254
- 17.1 Strategic Aims.....254
- 17.2 Context.....255
- 17.3 The Design Process255
- 17.4 Strategy257
- 17.5 Regulations and Guidelines263
- 17.6 Collaboration.....264

Chapter 18

**Climate Change Adaptation,
Flood Risk and Low Carbon
Strategy 265**

- 18.0 Introduction.....266
- 18.1 Strategic Aims.....266
- 18.2 Context.....267
- 18.3 Climate Change267
- 18.4 Climate Change Adaptation.....269
- 18.5 Low Carbon Strategy.....270
- 18.6 Flood Risk Management.....273

Chapter 19

Land Use and Zonings 277

- 19.0 Introduction.....278
- 19.1 Strategic Aims.....278
- 19.2 Context.....279
- 19.3 Land-Use Zoning279
- 19.4 Nature of Zonings280
- 19.5 Indicative Land-Use Zoning Matrix ..283

Chapter 20

**Implementation
and Monitoring 285**

- 20.0 Introduction.....286
- 20.1 Implementation and Monitoring of
Settlement Policy286
- 20.2 Housing Implementation
and Monitoring.....286
- 20.3 Community Development and
Social Infrastructure
Implementation and Monitoring.....287
- 20.4 Retail Implementation
and Monitoring.....287
- 20.5 Physical Infrastructure
Implementation and Monitoring.....288
- 20.6 Tourism Implementation
and Monitoring.....288
- 20.7 Marine and Coastal Zone Management
Implementation and Monitoring.....289
- 20.8 Biodiversity, Natural Heritage
and Green Infrastructure
Implementation and Monitoring.....289
- 20.9 Architectural, Archaeological and
Cultural Heritage Implementation
and Monitoring.....290
- 20.10 Design and the Built Environment
Implementation and Monitoring.....291
- 20.11 SEA Monitoring.....291
- 20.12 Collaboration and Engagement.....292

Appendix 1	
Development Management Guidelines	293
A1.0 Introduction.....	294
A1.1 Pre-Planning Consultations	294
A1.2 Design Statements	294
A1.3 Residential Development	294
A1.4 Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes (SUDS)	297
A1.5 Green Infrastructure within Industrial and Enterprise Zones	297
A1.6 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	297
A1.7 Habitat Directive Assessment	297
A1.8 Archaeological Potential	298
A1.9 Transportation	298
A1.10 Signage.....	302
A1.11 Agricultural Developments	304
A1.12 Access and Mobility.....	304
A1.13 Energy Efficiency and Sustainability	304
A1.14 Development Contributions	304
A1.15 Cash Deposits and Bonds	304
Appendix 2	
Indicative Land Use Zoning Matrix	305
Appendix 3	
Natural Heritage Sites in County Clare	309

Appendix 4	
Architectural Conservation Areas	317
Appendix 5	
Scenic Routes	321
Appendix 6	
Public Rights of Way	323
Appendix 7	
Plans, Policies and Guidelines to which the Development Plan must have Regard	327
Glossary of Terms	332
List of Tables	338
List of Figures	338
List of Maps	338
Acknowledgements	339

Chapter 1

Introduction and Vision

This chapter sets out the background of the Clare County Development Plan 2017–2023 with regard to legal requirements, the profile of County Clare, the vision for the County and the goals established to realise that vision.

1.0 Introduction.....	10
1.1 Legislative Requirements of a County Development Plan	10
1.1.1 Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).....	10
1.1.2 Strategic Environmental Assessment	12
1.1.3 Appropriate Assessment.....	12
1.1.4 Flood Risk Assessment	13
1.2 Preparation Process for the Clare County Development Plan 2017–2023.....	14
1.3 Format and Content of the Clare County Development Plan 2017–2023	15
1.4 Profile of County Clare.....	17
1.5 A Vision for County Clare.....	18
1.6 Goals	18
1.7 The Role of Local Government and the County Development Plan.....	20
1.8 Proper Planning and Sustainable Development	20
1.9 Monitoring and Progress	20

1.0 Introduction

This Clare County Development Plan 2017–2023 sets out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the functional area of Clare County Council over a 6 year period. Development Plans comprise a written statement supported by maps indicating the development objectives for the area in question, including a number of mandatory objectives. Clare County Council is required to prepare and adopt a County Development Plan every 6 years. Not later than 4 years after the adoption of the Development Plan, the Council is required to review its existing Development Plan and commence the preparation of a new one.

The Clare County Development Plan 2017–2023 governs the functional area of Clare County Council. It replaces the Clare County Development Plan 2011–2017 (as varied) and it is the seventh Clare County Development Plan since 1964. As a result of the implementation of the Local Government Reform Act 2014, this Development Plan incorporates the areas formerly within the jurisdiction of Ennis Town Council and Kilrush Town Council, both of which previously had their own development plans.

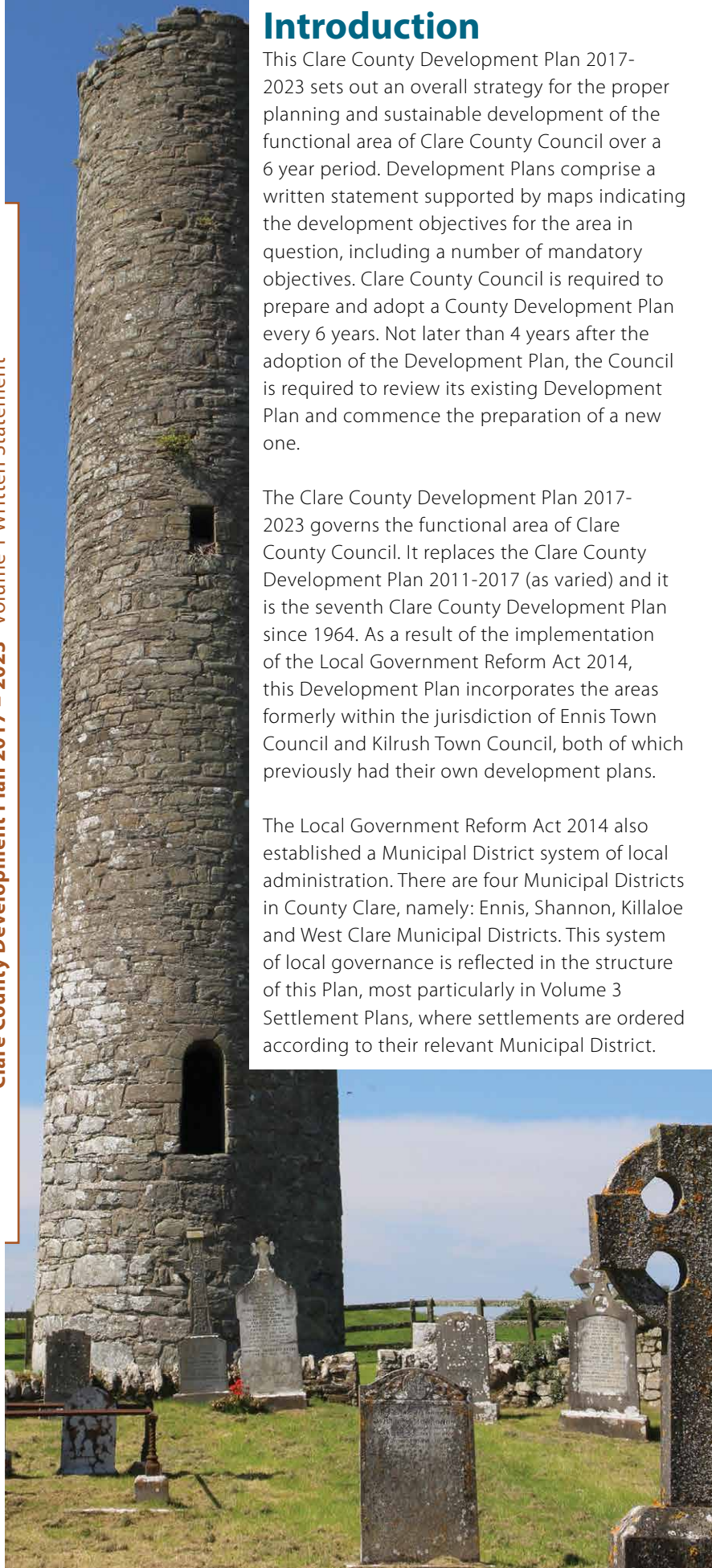
The Local Government Reform Act 2014 also established a Municipal District system of local administration. There are four Municipal Districts in County Clare, namely: Ennis, Shannon, Killaloe and West Clare Municipal Districts. This system of local governance is reflected in the structure of this Plan, most particularly in Volume 3 Settlement Plans, where settlements are ordered according to their relevant Municipal District.

1.1 Legislative Requirements of a County Development Plan

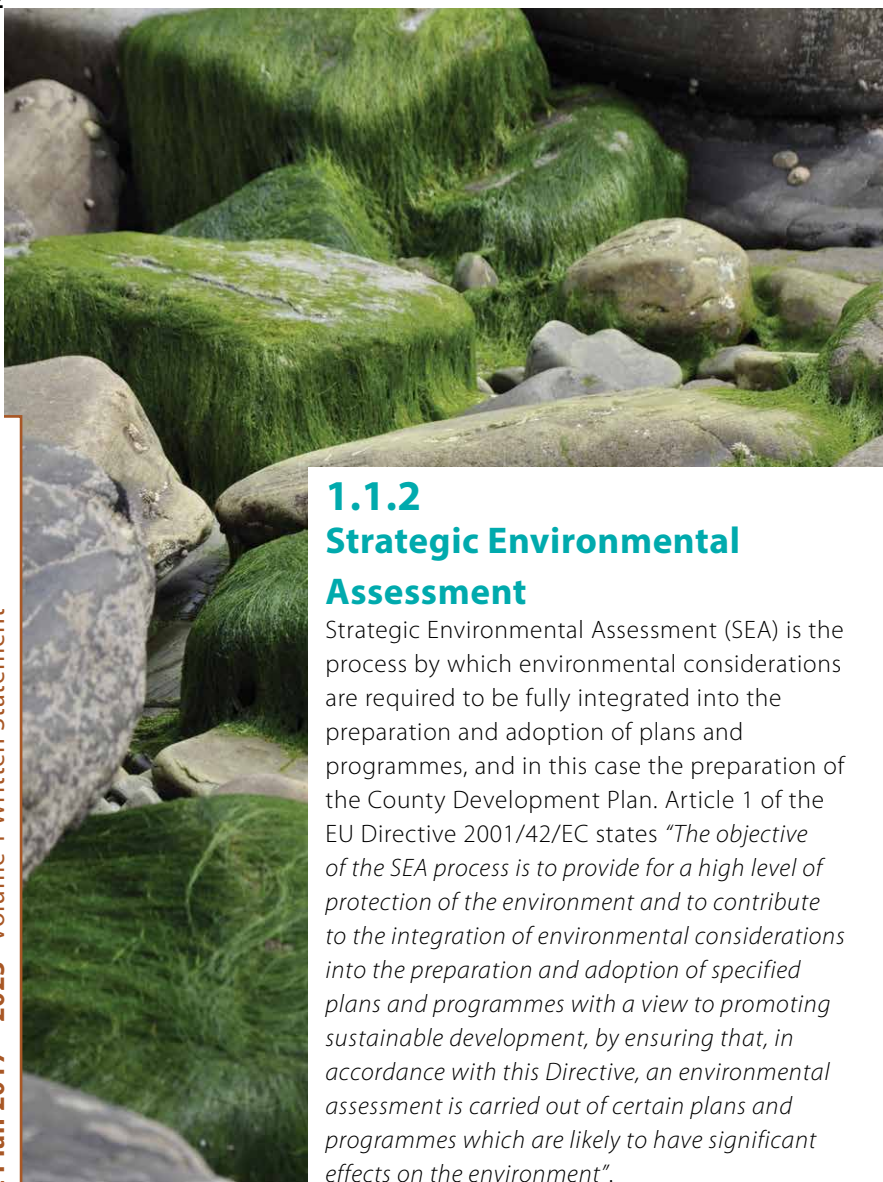
1.1.1 Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended)

The Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) requires a County Development Plan to set out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the County. It also requires the inclusion of a Core Strategy, which shows that the development objectives in the Development Plan are consistent, as far as practicable, with national and regional development objectives set out in the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines. The plan must also include a number of mandatory objectives including those for:

- a The zoning of land for the use solely or primarily of particular areas for particular purposes (whether residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, recreational, as open space or otherwise, or a mixture of those uses), where and to such extent as the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, in the opinion of the planning authority, requires the uses to be indicated;
- b The provision or facilitation of the provision of infrastructure including–
 - i transport, energy and communication facilities,
 - ii water supplies and waste water services (regard having been had to the water services strategic plan for the area made in accordance with the Water Services Act 2007),
 - iii waste recovery and disposal facilities (regard having been had to the waste management plan for the area made in accordance with the Waste Management Act 1996), and
 - iv any ancillary facilities and services;
- c The conservation and protection of the environment including, in particular, the archaeological and natural heritage and the conservation and protection of European sites and any other sites which may be prescribed for the purposes of this paragraph;



- (ca)** The encouragement, pursuant to Article 10 of the Habitats Directive, of the management of features of the landscape, such as traditional field boundaries, important for the ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 network and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species;
- (cb)** The promotion of compliance with environmental standards and objectives established–
- i** for bodies of surface water, by the European Communities (Surface Waters Regulations 2009);
 - ii** for groundwater, by the European Communities (Groundwater) Regulations 2010;
- which standards and objectives are included in river basin management plans (within the meaning of Regulation 13 of the European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations 2003);
- d** The integration of the planning and sustainable development of the area with the social, community and cultural requirements of the area and its population;
 - e** The preservation of the character of the landscape where, and to the extent that, in the opinion of the planning authority, the proper planning and sustainable development of the area requires it, including the preservation of views and prospects and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty or interest;
 - f** The protection of structures, or parts of structures, which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest;
 - g** The preservation of the character of architectural conservation areas;
 - h** The development and renewal of areas, identified having regard to the core strategy, that are in need of regeneration, in order to prevent–
 - i** adverse effects on existing amenities in such areas, in particular as a result of the ruinous or neglected condition of any land,
 - ii** urban blight and decay;
 - iii** anti-social behaviour;
 - iv** a shortage of habitable houses or of land suitable for residential use or a mixture of residential or other uses;
 - i** The provision of accommodation for travellers, and the use of particular areas for the purpose;
 - j** The preservation, improvement and extension of amenities and recreational amenities;
 - k** The control, having regard to the provisions of the Major Accidents Directive and any regulations, under any enactment, giving effect to that Directive, of–
 - i** siting of new establishments;
 - ii** modification of existing establishments;
 - iii** development in the vicinity of such establishments,
 for the purposes of reducing the risk, or limiting the consequences, of a major accident;
 - l** The provision, or facilitation of the provision, of services for the community including, in particular, schools, crèches and other education and childcare facilities;
 - m** The protection of the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Gaeltacht including the promotion of Irish as the community language, where there is a Gaeltacht area in the area of the Development Plan;
 - n** The promotion of sustainable settlement and transportation strategies in urban and rural areas including the promotion of measures to–
 - i** reduce energy demand in response to the likelihood of increases in energy and other costs due to long-term decline in non-renewable resources;
 - ii** reduce anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions;
 - iii** address the necessity of adaptation to climate change;
 in particular, having regard to location, layout and design of new developments
 - o** The preservation of public rights of way which give access to seashore, mountain, lakeshore, riverbank and other places of natural beauty or recreational utility, which public rights of way shall be identified by marking them on at least one of the maps forming part of the Development Plan and by indicating their location on a list appended to the Development Plan;
 - p** landscape, in accordance with relevant policies or objectives for the time being of the Government or any Minister of the Government relating to providing a framework for identification, assessment, protection, management and planning of landscapes and developed having regard to the European Landscape Convention done at Florence on 20 October 2000.
- In addition to compliance with the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the County Development Plan is informed by other legislation, in particular the requirements for Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Directive Assessment.



1.1.2 Strategic Environmental Assessment

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is the process by which environmental considerations are required to be fully integrated into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes, and in this case the preparation of the County Development Plan. Article 1 of the EU Directive 2001/42/EC states *“The objective of the SEA process is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of specified plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development, by ensuring that, in accordance with this Directive, an environmental assessment is carried out of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment”*.

It should be noted that results from the SEA process must be fully considered and integrated into the preparation and making of the County Development Plan by:

- Carrying out consultations with the public and prescribed environmental authorities;
- Preparing an Environmental Report in conjunction with the preparation of the Draft Development Plan;
- Integrating environmental considerations into policy formulation;
- Publishing information on the decision in conjunction with the adoption of the Development Plan (SEA Statement);
- Publishing information on the decision;
- Monitoring the significant environmental effects of the implementation of plans/programmes.

In accordance with the requirements of the SEA Regulations, this County Development Plan includes an SEA Environmental Report contained in Volume 10.

1.1.3 Appropriate Assessment

The Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora) formed a basis for the designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). Similarly, Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are legislated for under the Birds Directive (Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds). SACs and SPAs are also referred to as European site(s).

The EU Directive on Habitats (92/43/EEC), as transposed into Irish law through the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011) and Part XAB of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010, requires the assessment as to whether the implementation of a plan is likely to have significant effects on any sites designated under the European Commission's Natura 2000 network of sites (hereafter “European sites”). These sites are designated on the basis of the presence of certain habitats and species that are deemed to be of international importance. The Irish Government and local planning authorities have a legal obligation to protect these sites.

Under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive, appropriate assessment must be undertaken for any plan or project that is likely to have a significant effect on the conservation objectives of a European site(s). This includes the preparation of the Clare County Development Plan 2017–2023.

Screening for Appropriate Assessment of the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 was carried out by the competent authority to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if the Plan, individually or in combination with other plans or projects was likely to have significant effects on a European site. The screening indicated that appropriate assessment was required and therefore a Natura Impact Report was prepared.

Appropriate assessment is an evaluation of the potential impacts of a plan on the conservation objectives of a European site, and the development, where necessary, of mitigation or avoidance measures to preclude negative effects. Principally the purpose of appropriate assessment is to identify the implications for the conservation objectives of implementing the

Clare County Development Plan 2017–2023 on a European site within the Plan area and whether there will be adverse effects on the integrity of that site.

It is necessary to incorporate or assimilate any mitigation measures or measures proposed to avoid or ameliorate the (potential) adverse effects on European sites into the policy or detail of the Clare County Development Plan 2017–2023. More importantly, notwithstanding the proposed mitigation measures or other proposals to avoid impacts contained in the Natura Impact Report, if a development plan has the potential for a significant adverse impact on the integrity of a European site, it cannot be adopted unless it is established that there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI), including those of a social or economic nature, and/or reasons of human health and public safety.

Article 6(4) allows for proposed plans or projects to be approved in certain conditions.

Article 6(4): *"If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the site and in the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature, Member States shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted. Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, to the beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest."*

The Natura Impact Report is contained in Volume 10 of this Development Plan.

The Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 is prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (as amended 2011) and Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.

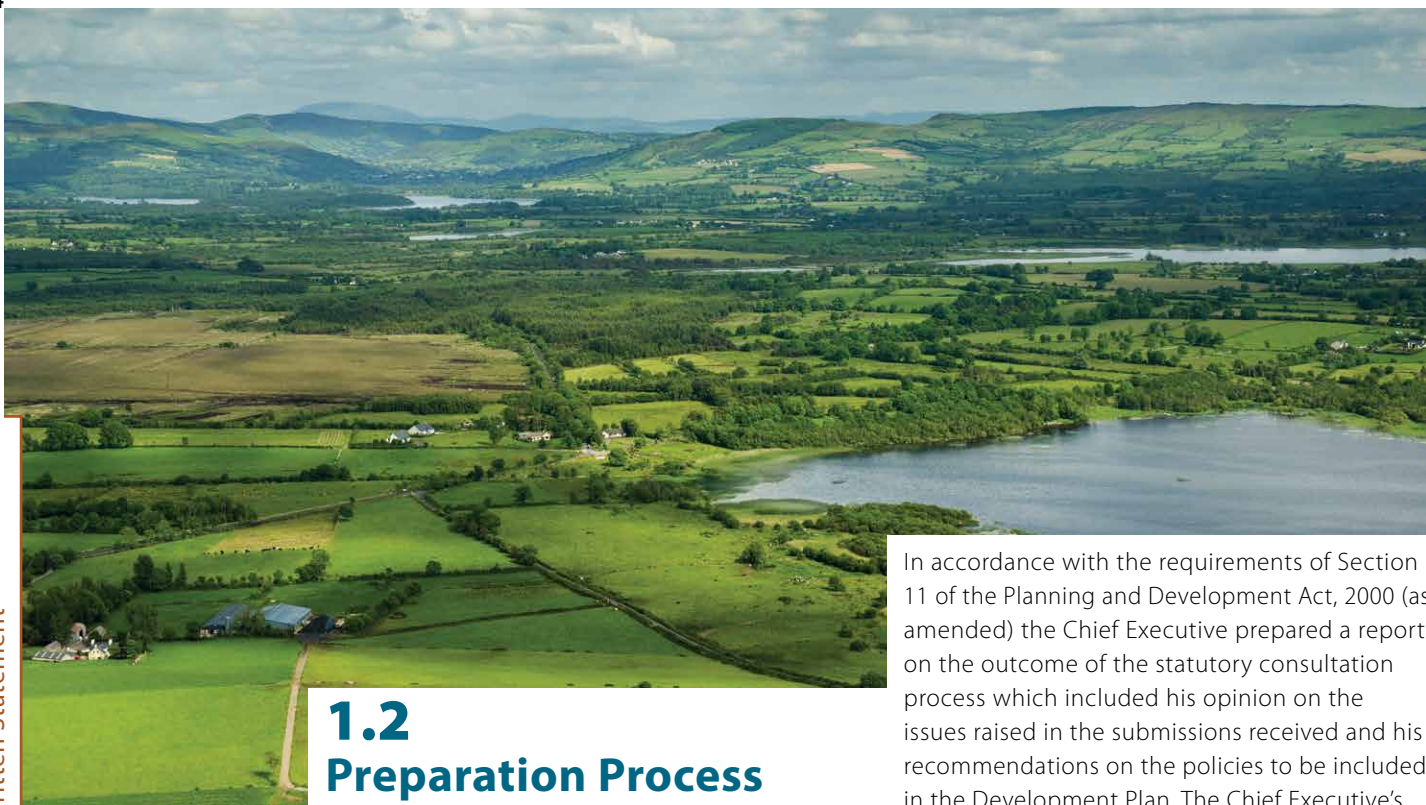
1.1.4 Flood Risk Assessment

The Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) indicates that development plans may include objectives *"for carrying out flood risk assessment for the purpose of regulating, restricting and controlling development in areas at risk of flooding (whether inland or coastal)"*.

'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities' made flood risk assessment an integral and leading element of planning functions and requires development plans to establish the flood risk assessment requirements for their functional areas. Local authorities are required to take all practical steps to ensure the prior identification of any areas at risk of flooding in the Plan area.

In compliance with these requirements, Clare County Council has carried out a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) as part of the process of preparing the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023. The SFRA is contained in Volume 10 of this Development Plan.





1.2 Preparation Process for the Clare County Development Plan 2017–2023

The previous Clare County Development Plan 2011 – 2017 was adopted by the Elected Members of Clare County Council in January 2011 and remained in force until January 2017. On 9th January 2015 and within the 4 year time period as required by the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the Council commenced a review of the existing Clare County Development Plan 2011-2017 and the preparation of a new County Development Plan. The process commenced with notices in the local newspapers and the subsequent commencement of 8 weeks of public consultation.

An Issues Booklet was prepared in consultation with the Elected Members to initiate public debate on the broad planning and development matters that should be included in the new Development Plan. During the pre-draft public consultation period, the Issues Booklet was widely distributed both locally and nationally, including to Elected Members, members of the public, community groups, statutory bodies, state and government agencies. In addition, public consultation events were held in February 2015 where the public were invited to raise issues with planning officials. Written submissions or observations were invited regarding the review of the Clare County Development Plan 2011-2017 and preparation of the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023.

In accordance with the requirements of Section 11 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) the Chief Executive prepared a report on the outcome of the statutory consultation process which included his opinion on the issues raised in the submissions received and his recommendations on the policies to be included in the Development Plan. The Chief Executive's Report was submitted to the Elected Members on 30th April 2015 for their consideration. This report listed the persons or bodies who made submissions or observations and summarised the issues raised in both the submissions and during the consultation process. The Chief Executive's Report also set out his recommendations on the policies to be included in the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023.

After considering the Chief Executive's Report, the Elected Members issued directions to the Chief Executive with regard to the preparation of the Development Plan. This process continued until the 9th July 2015 pursuant to Section 11(4) (e) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).

The Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 was prepared having regard to the directions of the Elected Members. Pursuant to the requirements of Section 12(2) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) the draft Development Plan, together with the Strategic Environmental Assessment – Environmental Report and the Natura Impact Report, was made available for public consultation from 8th December 2015 for a period of 10 weeks. The Chief Executive's Report to the Elected Members on submissions received on the Draft Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 Part I-III was furnished to the Elected Members on 19th May 2016 and was considered by the Elected Members at the Council Meeting on 25th July 2016 in accordance with Section 12(6) of the Act.

The Elected Members resolved to make amendments to the Draft Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023. The proposed amendments would, if made, be a material alteration to the draft concerned and the amendments were placed on public display for a period of 4 weeks from the 13th September 2016 to the 12th October 2016. In accordance with Section 12(7)(aa) the Planning Authority determined that a Strategic Environmental Assessment or an Appropriate Assessment or both such assessments as the case may be was required to be carried out as respect one or more than one of the proposed material alterations of the draft Development Plan. The relevant assessments were undertaken as required and are contained in Volume 10 of this Plan.

In accordance with Section 12(8) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) the Chief Executive prepared a report on the submissions and observation received and submitted that report to the Elected Members on 8th November 2016. The report related to the submissions received on the proposed amendments to the Draft Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023, the associated Strategic Environmental Assessment, the appropriate assessment process and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

Having considered the proposed amendments and the Chief Executive's Report, the Elected Members made the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 by resolution on 19th December 2016.



1.3 Format and Content of the Clare County Development Plan 2017–2023

The Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 takes into account national and regional planning guidelines, strategies and policy documents. It is also informed by particular national and global environmental issues that are accepted as being critical to the formulation and implementation of sustainable development. They include climate change, flooding, renewable and alternative energy. In addition, the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 has been prepared in compliance with the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC) and the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).

The Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 has regard to other relevant local policy documents. The objectives contained in the County Development Plan complement the goals and aims of the Clare Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021 and the Clare County Council Corporate Plan. Moreover, the Development Plan commits to equality, accessibility and gender proofing throughout the preparation of the Plan, policy formation and its implementation.

The format of the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 reflects the challenges and opportunities facing the County over the period of the Plan as well as the specific and unique issues pertaining to land-use and the socio-economic development of the County.

The Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 is the primary policy document for planning policy throughout the functional area of Clare County Council.



The Plan also contains settlement plans for all of the towns and villages in the County, with the exception of Shannon town. Shannon, as the designated Gateway, has its own dedicated local area plan which contains the zonings for the town. This provides the user with a simplified and user-friendly approach to land-use and planning in the County.

The Plan has been written and presented in a user-friendly manner. To assist this, a definition of the technical terms used is provided in the glossary of terms.

The Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 consists of 10 volumes, as follows:

Volume 1 Written Statement

This contains the written text and constitutes the main body of the document outlining the vision, Core Strategy and objectives for the different policy areas addressed by the Development Plan. The Development Plan contains the mandatory objectives as required by the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), as specified in Section 1.1.1 above.

Volume 2 Maps

This volume contains all the large maps, on a County scale, referred to in Volume 1 and which give effect to the designations as contained in the written statement.

Volume 3 Municipal District Written Statement and Maps

This volume contains individual settlement plans and land use zoning details for each of the towns and villages in the municipal districts of the County as follows:

- › **Volume 3(a)** – Ennis Municipal District Written Statement and Maps
- › **Volume 3(b)** – Shannon Municipal District Written Statement and Maps
- › **Volume 3(c)** – Killaloe Municipal District Written Statement and Maps
- › **Volume 3(d)** – West Clare Municipal District Written Statement and Maps

Volume 4 Record of Protected Structures

A Protected Structure is a structure that is considered to be of special interest from an architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social and technical point of view. Details of all Protected Structures in County Clare are entered in this Record of Protected Structures.

Volume 5 Clare Wind Energy Strategy

This volume comprises a detailed County-wide Wind Energy Strategy, supplemented by maps which set out Clare County Council's strategy for informing wind energy development, having regard to economic, environmental and visual issues.

Volume 6 Clare Renewable Energy Strategy 2017–2023

This volume outlines the renewable energy resource that is deliverable within County Clare including issues such as micro-renewable energy and energy storage.

Volume 7 Strategic Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP) for the Shannon Estuary

This volume comprises the SIFP, an inter-jurisdictional land and marine-based framework to guide the future development and management of the Shannon Estuary.

Volume 8 Retail Strategy for the Mid-West Region 2010–2016

This volume comprises the Retail Strategy for the Mid-West region, which is intended to provide a strategic region-wide approach to achieving a balance in retail development.

Volume 9 Joint Housing Strategy for Clare Local Authorities and Limerick City & County Councils 2010–2017

This volume comprises a joint Housing Strategy, prepared in accordance with Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and covering the functional areas of Limerick City and County Council and Clare County Council.

Volume 10 Environmental Appraisal of the Plan

This volume of the Plan comprises a suite of environmental assessments, in full compliance with the requirement of the Habitats Directive, the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive and the Floods Directive as follows:

- › **Volume 10a** Natura Impact Report
- › **Volume 10b(i)** Strategic Environmental Assessment - Non-Technical Summary
- › **Volume 10b(ii)** Strategic Environmental Assessment - Environmental Report
- › **Volume 10b(iii)** Strategic Environmental Assessment - Statement
- › **Volume 10c** Strategic Flood Risk Assessment



1.4 Profile of County Clare

County Clare is situated on the west coast of Ireland in the province of Munster, covering an area of some 318,784 hectares (787,715 acres). It is bounded by the counties of Galway to the north, Tipperary to the east and Limerick to the south. Its natural boundaries comprise Galway Bay to the north, River Shannon and Lough Derg to the east and the Shannon Estuary to the south.

The County has a diverse topography, varying from bare limestone pavement to estuarial mudflats and from high Atlantic cliffs to inland lakes and waterways. The County's coastline is 360km in length. Much of the County has underlying limestone strata which is highly permeable. County Clare is noted for its agriculture, tourism and beautiful landscapes. It is home to the Burren National Park and is renowned for both its physical and cultural heritage.

Ennis is the County Town and the administrative centre of County Clare. It is also designated as a Hub town in the National Spatial Strategy (NSS). Shannon is a large town in the south of the County and is a major industrial and employment centre, not only in the County, but in the region as a whole. In conjunction with Limerick, it is designated a Gateway under the NSS. In the remainder of the County, Kilrush, Ennistymon and Scariff act as service centres for their surrounding hinterlands, supported by a network of other towns and villages.

County Clare's air, road and rail transport facilities are unique in the region. Shannon International Airport caters for almost 2 million passengers per annum providing flights directly to the UK, US and Europe, with worldwide connectivity. In 2009, the US Customs Pre-Clearance facility was opened, providing more efficient transfers to the US for passengers. The County is well served by strategic road access with the Ennis Bypass, the M18 Motorway from Shannon northwards beyond Ennis and the fourth Shannon River crossing at Limerick. Road access to the west and north of the County is provided by National Secondary Routes. Access to east Clare is being enhanced by ongoing improvements to the R352 Regional Road. The Western Rail Corridor already provides for daily commuter rail transport between Ennis/Limerick and Dublin and to Athenry and Galway. Marine access and transport is provided for at Moneypoint, Killimer, Shannon Airport and harbours along the Atlantic coastline. However, significant potential exists for greater accessibility along the deepwaters of the Shannon Estuary.

Commerce and trade are the greatest source of employment in the County. Outside of the industrial/business, retail and administrative employment centres of Shannon, Ennis and Kilrush, tourism and agriculture are two of the primary industries in County Clare. The location of several higher education facilities within and in close proximity to the County provides easy access to higher education and provides significant opportunity to enhance the knowledge economy in the County.

The Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 seeks to develop and improve the social, economic, cultural and environmental assets and quality of life of the County. In order to give effect and a common understanding of the purpose and scope of the County Development Plan, it is critical to identify a common vision for County Clare.

1.5 A Vision for County Clare

A county that has maximised its unique characteristics, strengths, location and connectivity to become Ireland's centre of culture, tourism, heritage and the preferred international destination for sustainable investment and innovation. A county in which citizens, visitors and all stakeholders are empowered and supported by public bodies under the leadership of a professional, responsive and progressive local government system.



1.6 Goals

The following 20 chapters set out the planning policy framework within which the vision set out above will be realised by 2023. Each chapter identifies a key goal supported by strategic aims and objectives. It is through the delivery of these goals that this common vision for County Clare will be realised. The key goals are:

Goal I

A County Clare that drives local and regional sustainable growth by harnessing the potential of its unique location, quality of life, natural resources and other competitive advantages.

Goal II

A County Clare with strong and balanced urban and rural areas providing key services and a good quality of life and where people have the choice to live in the area where they are from.

Goal III

A County Clare with high quality housing at appropriate locations throughout the County, ensuring the development of a range of house types, sizes and tenures to accommodate differing household needs, promote sustainable communities, social integration and inclusion and facilitating a sense of place.

Goal IV

A County Clare where healthy and sustainable communities are developed and integrated with the timely delivery of a wide range of community, educational and cultural facilities and where, through a commitment to equality, participation, accessibility and social inclusion, the County develops as a unique location with an enhanced quality of life for its citizens and visitors.

Goal V

A County Clare in which jobs and people are brought together and where the growth of employment, indigenous enterprise and economic activity is pursued proactively across all economic sectors throughout the County.



Goal VI

A County Clare with viable and vibrant town and village centres, that have shopping areas and markets at appropriate scales and locations and which function to serve their communities and rural hinterlands.

Goal VII

A County Clare that supports strong economic growth and a high quality of life for all residents through the provision of efficient and robust physical infrastructure whilst having regard to environmental responsibilities and complying with European and National legislation.

Goal VIII

A County Clare in which tourism growth continues to play a major role in the future development of the County, adapting to the challenges of competing markets by maximising the development of a high quality, diverse tourist product.

Goal IX

A County Clare with diverse and strong rural communities and economy, where its natural resources are harnessed in a manner that is compatible with the sensitivity of rural areas and the existing quality of life.

Goal X

A County Clare that builds on the strategic location and natural resources of the Shannon Estuary by facilitating and maximising its potential for various forms of development while managing the estuarine and natural environment in full compliance with all relevant EC Directives.

Goal XI

A County Clare that maximises and manages the economic, social and recreational potential of the Atlantic Coastline and Shannon Estuary while protecting the coastal zone and its resources and adapting to and managing the challenges of climate change including flooding and sea-level rise.

Goal XII

A County Clare of 'living landscapes' where people live, work, recreate and visit while respecting, managing and taking pride in the unique landscape of the County.

Goal XIII

A County Clare that protects and enhances the County's unique natural heritage and biodiversity and recognises the potential for sustainable green infrastructure development, while promoting and developing its cultural, educational and eco-tourism potential in a sustainable manner.

Goal XIV

A County Clare that affords protection and conservation to buildings, areas, structures, sites and features of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest and recognises them as a social, cultural and economic asset to the County.

Goal XV

A County Clare with a strong and vibrant network of towns and villages that provide a wide range of services and a high quality of life for residents of the County.

Goal XVI

A County Clare that promotes buildings, urban spaces and public realms of the highest quality and ensures all development adheres to the principles of good design and contributes to the establishment of distinctive buildings and areas with a 'sense of place'.

Goal XVII

A County Clare that is resilient to climate change, manages flood risk, facilitates a low carbon future, supports energy efficiency and conservation and enables the decarbonisation of our lifestyles and economy.

Goal XVIII

A County Clare where the overall strategic objectives of the County Development Plan are translated into settlement plans and local area plans containing detailed land-use zonings and master-planning of neighbourhoods in an evidenced-based, plan-led approach with a focus on ensuring a high quality of life.



1.7 The Role of Local Government and the County Development Plan

The Local Government Act 2001 (as amended) sets out the functions of local authorities. It recognises that one of the roles of a local authority is to provide a forum for the democratic representation of its citizens and to provide civic leadership for that community.

Given the extensive public consultation afforded to the making of a development plan and that its adoption is the function of the Elected Members, it has been described as a 'contract' between the Council and the public. This Plan is therefore an agreed blueprint for the economic, social, cultural and environmental development of County Clare. It provides the platform for Clare County Council to ascertain and communicate to other public authorities the views of its citizens in relation to those functions performed by other authorities which affect the interests of County Clare.

1.8 Proper Planning and Sustainable Development

When making a development plan, the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) requires planning authorities to consider the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. While there is no definition of the term in the Act, for the purposes of this Plan, proper planning and sustainable development is defined as *"achieving the correct balance of economic, social, cultural and environmental considerations in the interests of the common good and securing long term benefits to County Clare."*

1.9 Monitoring and Progress

A development plan must be able to respond to changing circumstances within its lifetime. Regular monitoring of the relationship between the plan and changes within a wider EU and national policy context, development pressures and varying local priorities are important if the policies and objectives are to remain effective and relevant throughout the lifetime of the plan. The impact of policies and specific objectives should wherever possible be quantified.

To provide a quality service focused on the needs of customers/citizens during the lifetime of the Clare County Development Plan 2017 – 2023 and in line with the Corporate Plan, the implementation of the Development Plan and its importance in assisting applicants for planning permission, communities, statutory bodies, investors and voluntary groups will be monitored by Clare County Council.

It is a requirement under the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) for a report to be prepared, two years after the making of the plan, on the progress achieved in securing the objectives of the Development Plan. This progress report is necessary because, under the Act, it is the duty of the Planning Authority to *"take such steps as are in its powers as may be necessary for achieving the objectives of the Development Plan"*.

The SEA process requires that monitoring should be carried out in order to identify at an early stage any unforeseen adverse effects due to the implementation of the plan, with the view to taking remedial action where adverse effects have been identified. An environmental monitoring programme has been developed as part of the SEA of the Clare County Development Plan. It is based on environmental indicators which have been developed to highlight changes attributable to the plan and which have been selected to track progress towards achieving strategic environmental objectives and reaching targets, thereby enabling positive and negative impacts on the environment to be measured.

Chapter 2

Core Strategy

Goal I:

A County Clare that drives local and regional sustainable growth by harnessing the potential of its unique location, quality of life, natural resources and other competitive advantages.

2.0 Introduction.....	22
2.1 Core Strategy	22
2.2 Strategic Aims.....	23
2.3 Relevant Plans, Policies and Strategies.....	23
2.3.1 National Spatial Strategy (NSS) 2002–2020	23
2.3.2 Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022 (MWRPGs)	24
2.3.3 Other Plans and Strategies taken into consideration.....	26
2.3.4 Development Plans – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2007	26
2.3.5 Settlement Plans and Local Area Plans	26
2.3.6 Adjoining Local Authorities’ Development Plans	26
2.4 Core Strategy for the Clare County Development Plan 2017–2023	27
2.4.1 Consistency with the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines	27
2.4.2 Compliance with National and Regional Population Targets	29
2.4.3 Settlement Hierarchy and Strategy.....	35
2.4.4 Retail Planning	36
2.4.5 Housing Strategy	36
2.4.6 Core Strategy and relevant Environmental Assessments	36
2.4.7 Core Strategy Map	37
2.5 Conclusion	38

2.0 Introduction

This chapter is to set out the Core Strategy for the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023. The Core Strategy of this Development Plan illustrates how the vision for the County will be achieved in a manner that is consistent with the guidance, strategies and policies at national and regional level, in particular the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 and the Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022, which set out the national and regional policy framework for housing, settlement, retail and transport strategies with which Clare County Council must comply.

2.1 Core Strategy

The Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) requires the inclusion of an evidence-based 'Core Strategy' in development plans which demonstrates how the Development Plan is consistent with the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) and Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines (MWRPGs). The Core Strategy must take account of any policy of the Minister in relation to national and regional population targets and serves to reinforce the role of the Development Plan as the fundamental link between national, regional, county and local policies. The Core Strategy must also provide the policy framework for other documents within the organisation including the Local Economic and Community Plan, local areas plans and the zoning of land in settlements

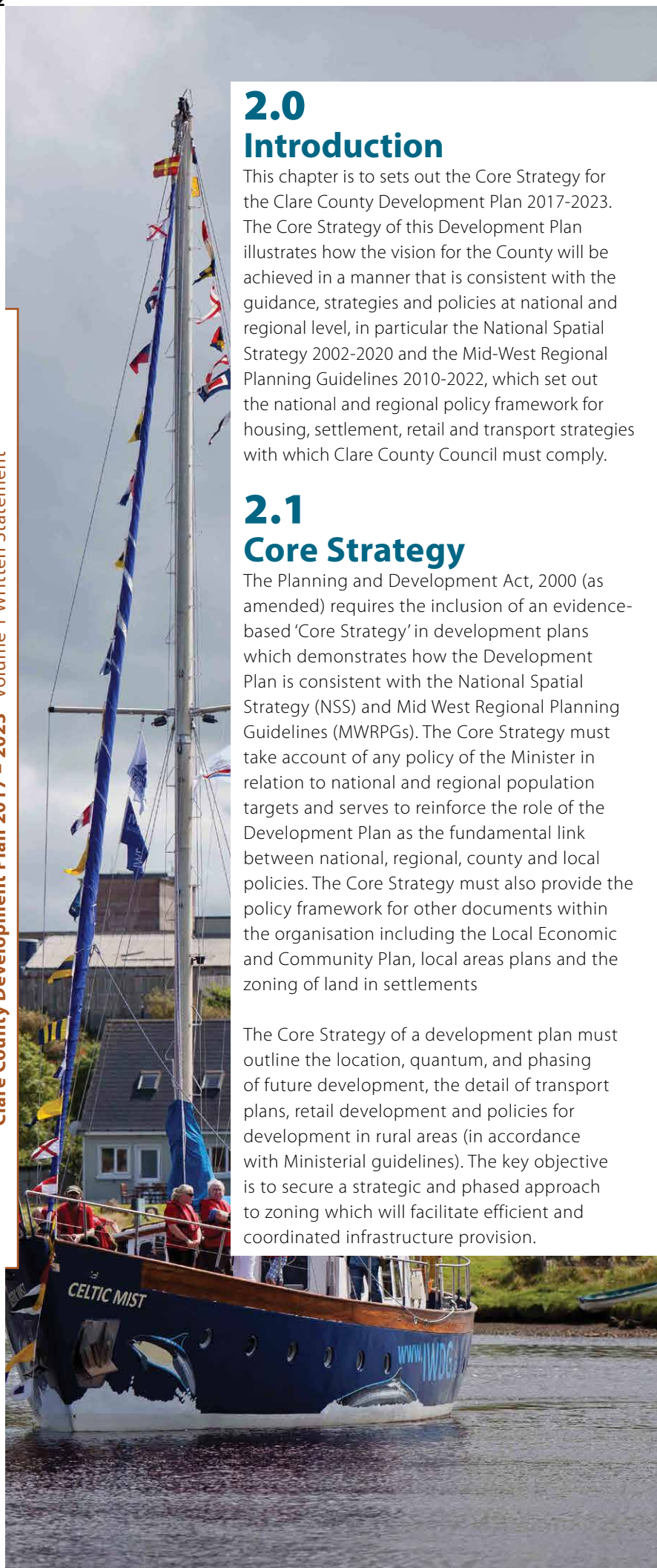
The Core Strategy of a development plan must outline the location, quantum, and phasing of future development, the detail of transport plans, retail development and policies for development in rural areas (in accordance with Ministerial guidelines). The key objective is to secure a strategic and phased approach to zoning which will facilitate efficient and coordinated infrastructure provision.

The Core Strategy of a development plan must:

- Set out the area of land already zoned, or proposed to be zoned, for residential use, or a mix of residential and other uses, and indicate the number of housing units to be provided in that area;
- Where appropriate, indicate if the lands are to be developed on a phased basis;
- Show that the planning authority has had regard to relevant guidelines issued by the Minister under Section 28 of the Act in setting the objectives relating to retail development;
- Set out a settlement hierarchy for the development area which provides details of:
 - › Any towns or cities designated as a gateway or hub for the purposes of the NSS;
 - › Other towns referred to in the hierarchy;
 - › Policies or objectives in relation to national or regional population targets that apply to the towns and cities referred to in the hierarchy;
 - › Policies or objectives in relation to national or regional population targets that apply to areas or classes of areas not included in the hierarchy;
 - › Projected population growth in the settlements in the hierarchy;
 - › The national primary, national secondary, regional and local roads;
 - › Inter-urban and commuter rail routes;
 - › Rural areas to which 'Sustainable Rural Housing – Guidelines for Planning Authorities' apply.

The Core Strategy of the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 contains:

- 1 A **Core Strategy section of the written statement**, outlining the origins and broad aims of the strategy, including in particular the population targets or allocations for the Plan period;
- 2 A diagrammatic type **Core Strategy Map**, depicting how the Planning Authority anticipates its area will develop over the Plan period and in line with the availability of infrastructure, services and amenities;
- 3 A **Core Strategy Table**, summarising the key statistics in the Core Strategy as regards the distribution of future population and housing and its alignment with Regional Planning Guidelines.



2.2 Strategic Aims

The strategic aims of the Core Strategy are:

- To demonstrate how the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 is consistent with national and regional planning strategies, guidelines and policies including national and regional population targets;
- To strengthen the role of the Development Plan as the fundamental link with national, regional, county and local policies;
- To provide the policy framework for settlement plans and local area plans (LAPs), particularly in relation to land-use zoning, and to ensure a strategic approach to zoning that allows an appropriate level of development throughout the Plan area at the right time and in the right place;
- To set the context for the key infrastructure of the County and its role;
- To provide a framework within which the provision of sustainable infrastructure, amenities, economic investment and development can take place to maximise the use of resources in the County, for current and future generations;
- To comply with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).

2.3 Relevant Plans, Policies and Strategies

The following sets out a brief summary of the main provisions of the National Spatial Strategy and the Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022. It also sets out the plans and strategies at national, regional and local level that have been taken into consideration in the preparation of this Development Plan.

2.3.1 National Spatial Strategy (NSS) 2002–2020

The NSS provides a planning framework for delivering a more balanced social, economic and physical development between the regions of Ireland. It proposes a more balanced pattern of spatial development throughout Ireland, with continued growth in Dublin but with significant improvement in the rate of development in nine Gateway locations and nine Hub towns. The strategy emphasises the critical role of gateways and hubs in achieving balanced regional development and designates Shannon as part of a linked Gateway with Limerick, while Ennis is designated as a Hub town.

Figure 2.1(a)
County Clare: National Spatial Context

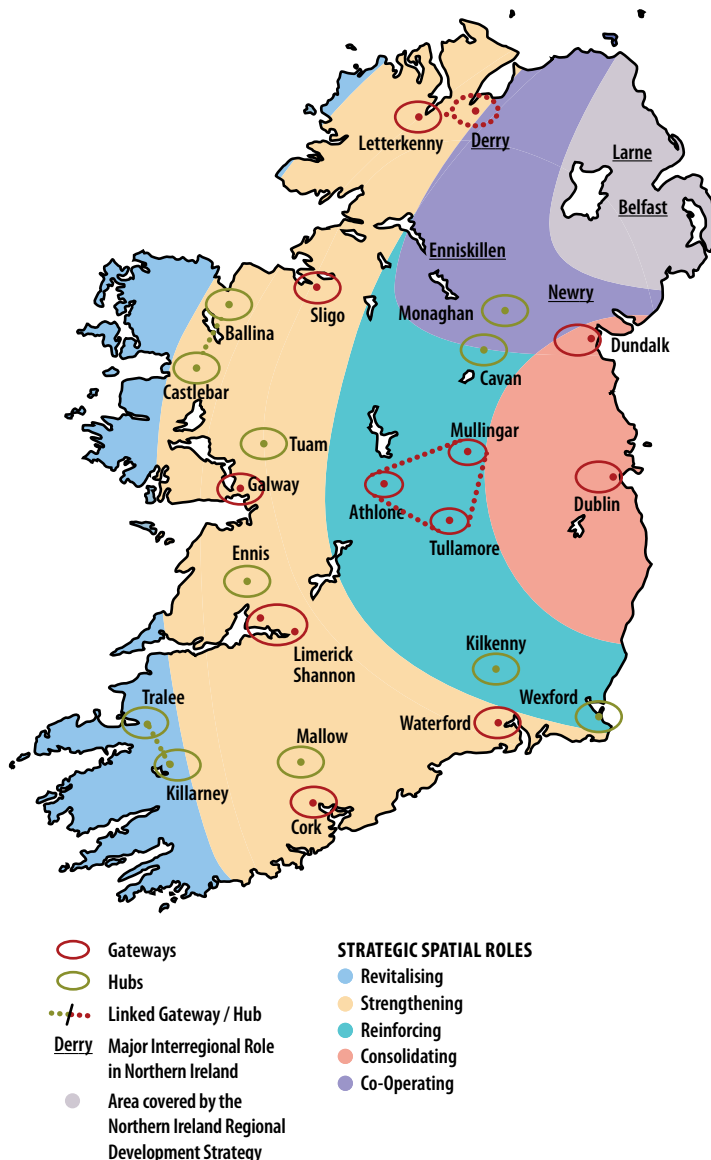
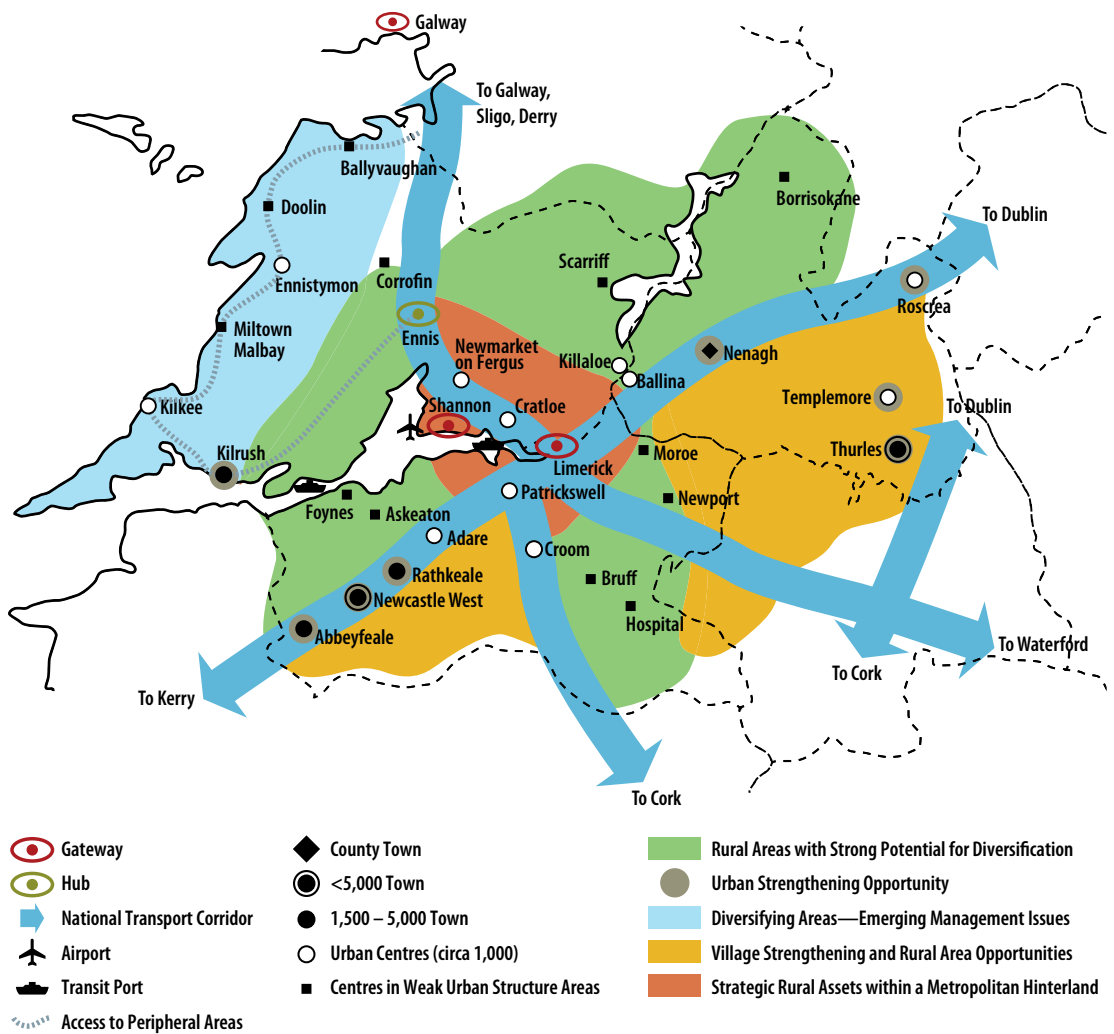


Figure 2.1(b)
County Clare Regional Spatial Context



Source: National Spatial Strategy 2002 - 2020

The Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010 further supported the NSS objectives by ensuring greater oversight, integration and consistency between spatial plans at national, regional and local levels, together with ensuring that environmental and social sustainability are fully integrated into planning policy.

The Gateways and Hubs Development Index 2012 provides a detailed assessment of the socioeconomic performance of the individual Gateways and Hubs designated under the NSS. The outcomes of the report, as they relate to the Plan area, have been taken into consideration and have influenced the policy priorities contained in this Development Plan.

2.3.2 Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022 (MWRPGs)

The Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022 give effect, at a regional level, to the national planning framework put forward in the National Spatial Strategy and National Development Plan. The MWRPGs provide a regional framework for the formulation of the policies and strategy in the County Development Plan and seek to ensure the proper balance between the different settlements in the region with regard to development, population and services.

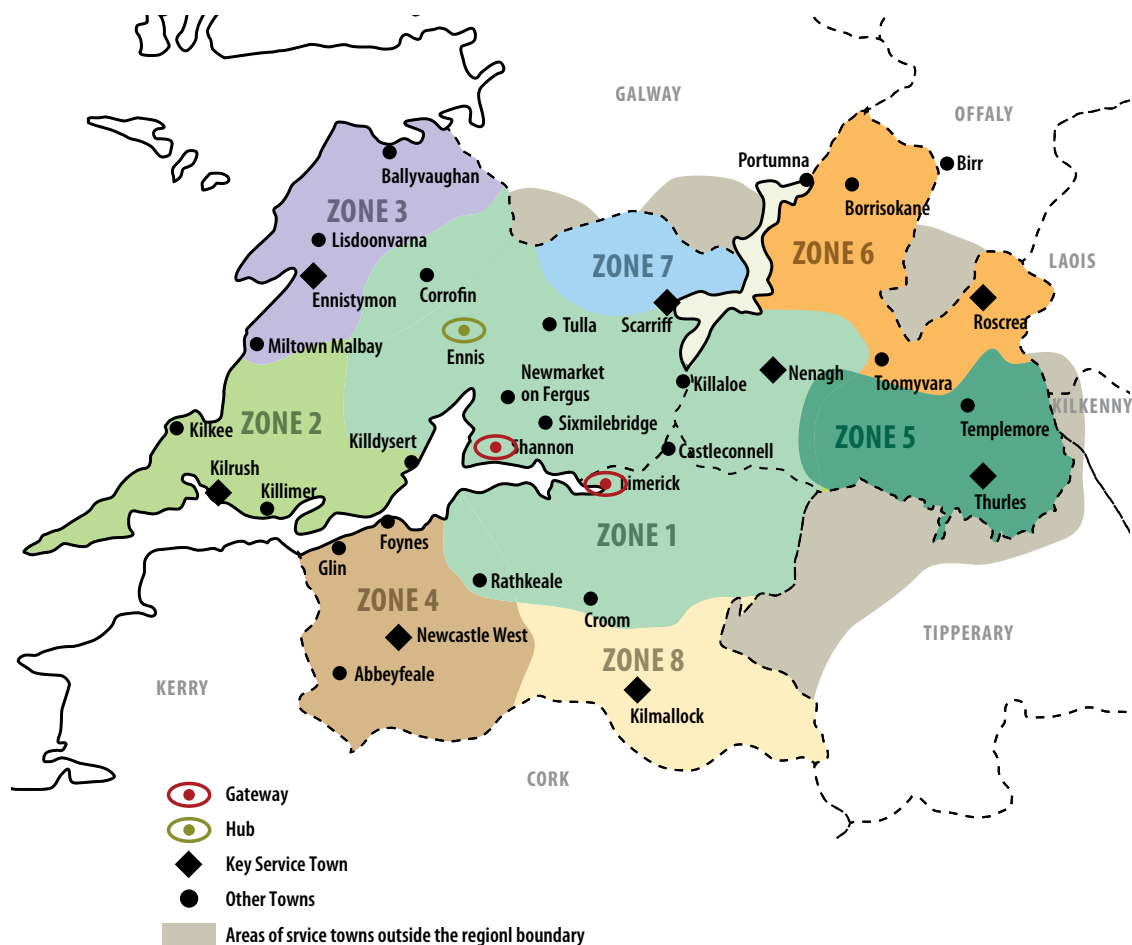


The Guidelines set out an updated regional Settlement Strategy and also set out 'Population Targets' for the region and for each county, including County Clare, which have been formulated having regard to the January 2009 'population targets' issued by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG) and supplementary guidance of August and October 2009. Furthermore, the Guidelines outline a range of criteria for development plans in the context of population and settlement and identify strategic infrastructure investments for the region.

This regional guidance has directly informed the development of the Settlement Strategy for County Clare. The MWRPGs set out a 'zone'-based strategy, outlining the development potential and needs of each zone in turn. The zones relevant to County Clare are 1, 2, 3, and 7, as illustrated in Figure 2.2 below.

During the lifetime of this Development Plan the MWRPGs will be superseded by a Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy that will be prepared by the Southern Regional Assembly. Clare County Council will ensure that, upon its adoption, the key aspects of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy are integrated into the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023.

Figure 2.2
Regional Development Zones



Source: Mid-West Regional Authority (2010)

A brief description of the MWRPG 'Zones' which relate to County Clare are listed below. It should be noted that Zone 1 also includes areas within the region which are outside of County Clare:

Zone 1 Limerick/Ennis/Shannon: This is the core area of the Mid-West Region, which has a high level of population growth, good internal and external accessibility, a large range of social and community facilities, and a strong settlement structure.

Zone 2 West Clare: This zone shows population decline, a poor settlement structure, limited accessibility and a modest level of social and community services. It has, however, significant tourism potential, marine resources and the potential of the Shannon Estuary.

Zone 3 North Clare: This area demonstrates many of the characteristics of Zone 2. It does however have the Burren and high quality land for cattle winterage. While its settlement structure is weak, it must also be considered in the context of Galway and the town of Gort.

Zone 7 North East Clare: This zone contains an area around Scarriff/Tuamgraney. It has some access difficulties as it is a significant distance from other service centres. The area, in time, might be linked to Zone 1, but in the medium term the development of a significant service centre is important. This approach promotes balanced growth throughout the zone to achieve the maximum social, economic, health and cultural benefits for all citizens.

2.3.3 Other Plans and Strategies taken into consideration

In addition to the strategic guidance set out in the National Spatial Strategy and the Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines, a large number of national, regional and local level plans and strategies, including significant documents such as the Mid-West Area Strategic Plan (MWASP) were taken into consideration in the preparation of this Development Plan. Regard has also been had to planning guidance documents issued in accordance with Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended). A full list can be found in Appendix 7.

2.3.4 Development Plans – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2007

Regard has also been had to 'Development Plans – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2007'. These guidelines aim to assist and promote consistent best practice among all planning authorities in the preparation of development plans. They also aim to improve the quality and consistency of plans, strengthen their strategic content, and improve consensus building in their preparation, implementation and review.

2.3.5 Settlement Plans and Local Area Plans

The Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) introduced a tiered and plan-led system, setting out a framework to give more detailed and localised effect to the policies and objectives of the County Development Plan. As indicated in Chapter 1, the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 will govern the overall land-use objectives for County Clare. Volume 3 of this Development Plan contains settlement plans for all of the settlements in the County with the exception of Shannon which, has a dedicated local area plan. Ennis will also have a dedicated local area plan prepared for it within the lifetime of this Plan to support its sustainable development into the future.

2.3.6 Adjoining Local Authorities' Development Plans

Pursuant to the requirements of Section 9(4) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, (as amended), in preparing the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023, regard has been had to the Development Plans of adjoining planning authorities. These include:

- a** Galway County Development Plan 2015–2021;
- b** North Tipperary County Development Plan 2010–2016;
- c** Limerick County Development Plan 2011–2017;
- d** Limerick City Development Plan 2010–2016;
- e** Kerry County Development Plan 2015–2021.

2.4

Core Strategy for the Clare County Development Plan 2017–2023

A key aim of the Core Strategy is to demonstrate how this Clare County Development Plan 2017–2023 is consistent with the policies of the Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government in relation to national and regional population targets, thus strengthening further the role of the Development Plan as the fundamental link between national, regional, and local policy. In this regard, the previous section identified the hierarchy of spatial and land use plans, including the National Spatial Strategy and the Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010–2022 which this County Development Plan must comply with. This Development Plan is consistent with national and regional frameworks which have informed the policies and objectives of the Plan, which in turn provides a basis for day-to-day planning decisions.

2.4.1 Consistency with the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines

This Plan has been prepared to be consistent with the National Spatial Strategy 2002–2020 and the Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010–2022. In summary, the key objectives of the National Spatial Strategy and Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines which influence the policies contained in this County Development Plan and with which the Plan is consistent are as follows:

- To enhance the Shannon Linked-Gateway through the promotion of economic development, innovation and the development of international and national transport connections;
- To designate a hierarchy of urban settlements, from the Hub of Ennis and the Gateway of Shannon, for appropriately scaled development in order to achieve the critical mass to provide a range of facilities and services to act as drivers for sub-regional growth throughout County Clare and the Mid-West Region;
- To designate 'Service Towns' for population growth;

- To provide for population growth in compliance with the population targets for County Clare, the linked Gateway of Shannon/Limerick, the Hub of Ennis and the Service Towns as allocated by the Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010–2022;
- To sustainably distribute the target population having regard to the County Settlement Hierarchy;
- To provide sufficient zoned land to accommodate population targets and associated development in a sustainable manner;
- To promote linkages as a means of moving people, goods, energy and information throughout the region;
- To define sustainable rural housing objectives, in accordance with Ministerial Guidelines on Sustainable Rural Housing;
- To include policies proposing compliance with the recommendations of the Joint Housing Strategy for Clare Local Authorities and Limerick City and County Councils 2010–2017;
- To sustain the success of established tourism areas along the West Coast of Clare and Lough Derg, while enhancing the physical access and developing the potential of tourism in particular along the Shannon Estuary and east Clare uplands;
- To recognise the needs of a co-ordinated development approach to the Shannon Estuary, Lough Derg, the Burren, Atlantic Coast and Slieve Aughty.

The range of locations in County Clare from the County town of Ennis, the service towns of Kilrush, Scarriff/Tuamgraney and Ennistymon/Lahinch, to the smaller towns, rural villages, and countryside are set out in the Settlement Hierarchy which is illustrated in Map 2A and set out in Table 2.1 below. The Hierarchy is based not only on population, but on a variety of strategic long-term planning and land use concerns including: the capacity of individual areas to accommodate growth; availability of road, rail and air transport; availability of water and waste water services; availability of education facilities; and the requirement to revitalise rural areas. In addition, the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process informed the preparation of the Settlement Hierarchy.

Table 2.1
Settlement Hierarchy in County Clare

County Town/Hub Ennis
Linked Gateway Shannon
Service Towns Ennistymon/Lahinch, Kilrush, Scarriff/Tuamgraney.
Small Towns Kilkee, Killaloe, Lisdoonvarna, Miltown Malbay, Newmarket-on-Fergus, Sixmilebridge and Tulla.
Large Villages Ardnacrusha, Athlunkard, Ballycannon North (Meelick), Ballyvaughan, Barefield, Bridgetown, Broadford, Bunratty, Carrigaholt, Clarecastle, Clonlara, Cooraclare, Corofin, Cratloe, Crusheen, Doolin, Doonbeg, Feakle, Inagh, Kiladysert, Kilfenora, Kilkishen, Kilmaley, Kilmihil, Kilmurry, Labasheeda, Lissycasey, Mountshannon, Mullagh, O'Briensbridge, Parteen, Quilty, Quin, Whitegate.
Small Villages Ballinruan, Ballyea, Ballynacally, Bellharbour, Bodyke, Boston, Caher, Cappa (Kilrush), Carron, Clooney, Connolly, Cranny, Creegh, Cross, Doonaha, Fanore, Flagmount, Inch, Kilbaha, Kilbane, Killanena, Killimer, Kilmurry McMahon, Killinaboy, Kilnamona, Kilshanny, Knock, Knockerra, Liscannor, Moy, Moyasta, O'Callaghans Mills, Ogonelloe, Querrin, Ruan, Spanish Point, Toonagh, Tubber.
Clusters Ardkyle, Ballaghboy No.1, Ballaghboy 2, Ballinooskey/Lisconner, Ballintlea South, Ballintlea South 2, Ballycar, Ballycorick, Ballyduff, Ballyea South, Ballyfaudeen, Ballyhannon North, Ballyhannon South No.1, Ballyhannon South No.2, Ballygireen, Ballymacahill, Ballymorris, Ballynagun West, Ballyveskil/ Tiermaclane, Ballyvonnavaun/Deerpark, Ballyvrislaun, Barn tick, Barloughra, Bartra, Bealaha, Bearnafunshin/Ballyogan, Beevrack, Behagh, Buncraggy, Caherea, Caherush, Cappa Sixmilebridge, Carrowmeer, Castlecrine, Castlequarter, Castlequarter Kilkeedy, Cloonadrum, Cloonanaha, Cloonoughter, Coogyulla Cross, Coolisteige, Cratloekeel, Crosses of Annagh, Deerpark/Corlack, Doonass, Drumandoora, Drumdrehid, Drumeen, Drumline 1, Drumline 2, Drummina, Drumquin, Finvarra, Garraun, Garraunboy, Gilloge, Kildorus, Killeenan, Killow/Knockanimana, Kilmore, Kineilty, Knockfin, Knockloskeraun, Leamaneigh More, Lisduff, Lisheen, Luogh South, Manusmore, Maurices Mills, Meelick, Monaskeha, Mooghaun North, Mortyclough, Mountrivers Cluster, Murrooghkilly, Murroughtoohey South, New Quay, Newtown Cloonlara, Noughaval, Portdrine, Poulawillin, Rockforest/Aughrim, Roo East, Sooreeny, South of Rossmanagher Bridge, Spancill Hill, Streamstown, The Wells, Tromra, Urlan More/Bellsfort, Williamstown, Woodpark.
Countryside The countryside are those parts of County Clare outside of recognised settlements.

2.4.2

Compliance with National and Regional Population Targets

This Plan adopts an approach to population growth that is linked to the implementation of the National Spatial Strategy. Future populations are expressed as 'targets' in this Plan to ensure adequate investment in infrastructure, which will help to maintain the County's economic growth and avoid infrastructural deficits. The MWRPGs have given effect to the national population targets by designating pre-defined population targets at sub-regional, County and service town level. The Development Plan must be consistent with the population targets as set out by the Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022.

Table 2.2 sets out the population targets for the years 2016 and 2022 for the individual counties in the Mid-West region, as identified in the Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022.

Table 2.2
Population Targets 2022

	2006	Percent 2006	2016	Percent 2016	2022	Percent 2022
Clare	110,950	31%	131,321	31%	141,600	31%
Limerick	124,265	34%	147,081	34%	157,065	34%
City	59,790	17%	70,768	17%	81,240	18%
North Tipperary	66,023	18%	78,145	18%	82,123	18%
Totals	361,028	100%	427,316	100%	462,028	100%

Source: Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines (2010)

The population targets set out in the MWRPGs cover the period from 2006 to 2022. Clare County Council has directly transposed these target populations into the Development Plan 2017-2023 and extrapolated the figures to establish the target population for County Clare, the Gateway, Hub and service towns and the remaining areas of the County for the year 2023. This is essential to ensure that adequate lands are made available for residential use to accommodate population growth during the lifetime of this Plan.

Table 2.3 specifies the target population for 2023 in the Gateway of Shannon (figures given exclude Limerick area of Gateway), the Hub of Ennis, the Service Towns (Kilrush, Ennistymon and Scarriff) and also indicates the target growth in the remainder of each of the zones in County Clare.

Table 2.3
Population Targets Breakdown 2023

	Population 2011	Service Towns 2023	Gateway ¹ 2023	Hub ² 2023	Remainder of Zone ⁶	Targets 2023
Zone 1	81,514		+2,709	+9,244	+7,874	101,341
SW Clare 2	16,651	+975 ³			+1,928	19,554
NW Clare 3	14,236	+1,125 ⁴			+1,537	16,898
NE Clare 7	4,795	+525 ⁵			+586	5,906
Total	117,196	+2,625	+2,709	+9,244	+11,925	143,699

¹ Shannon

² Ennis

³ Kilrush

⁴ Ennistymon/Lahinch

⁵ Scarriff/Tuamgraney

⁶ Remainder of Zone includes total population for the remainder of settlements and rural area

In compliance with the Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022, and the requirements for a Core Strategy under the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), Tables 2.4 to 2.7 set out the distribution of the target population throughout each of the settlements in County Clare categorised on a zone-by-zone basis as per the MWRPGs. This element of the Core Strategy sets out the policy framework to secure a strategic evidenced-based approach to the location, quantum and phasing of zoned lands throughout the County.

It is not intended that the population targets for individual settlements will be rigidly implemented without any flexibility. Local factors for consideration include:

- i** Availability of services;
- ii** Demand and land availability;
- iii** The need to accommodate those who qualify to build in the countryside but who alternatively may wish to locate in a settlement;
- iv** The need to support the retention of local services e.g. schools.

The Council will also have regard to:

- a** CDP 3.9 Monitoring and Implementation of Settlement Strategy;
- b** CDP 3.10 Planned Growth of Settlements;
- c** DoEHLG Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas;
- d** The overall performance of the relevant level of the Settlement Hierarchy e.g. small villages.

This shall be subject to regular monitoring.

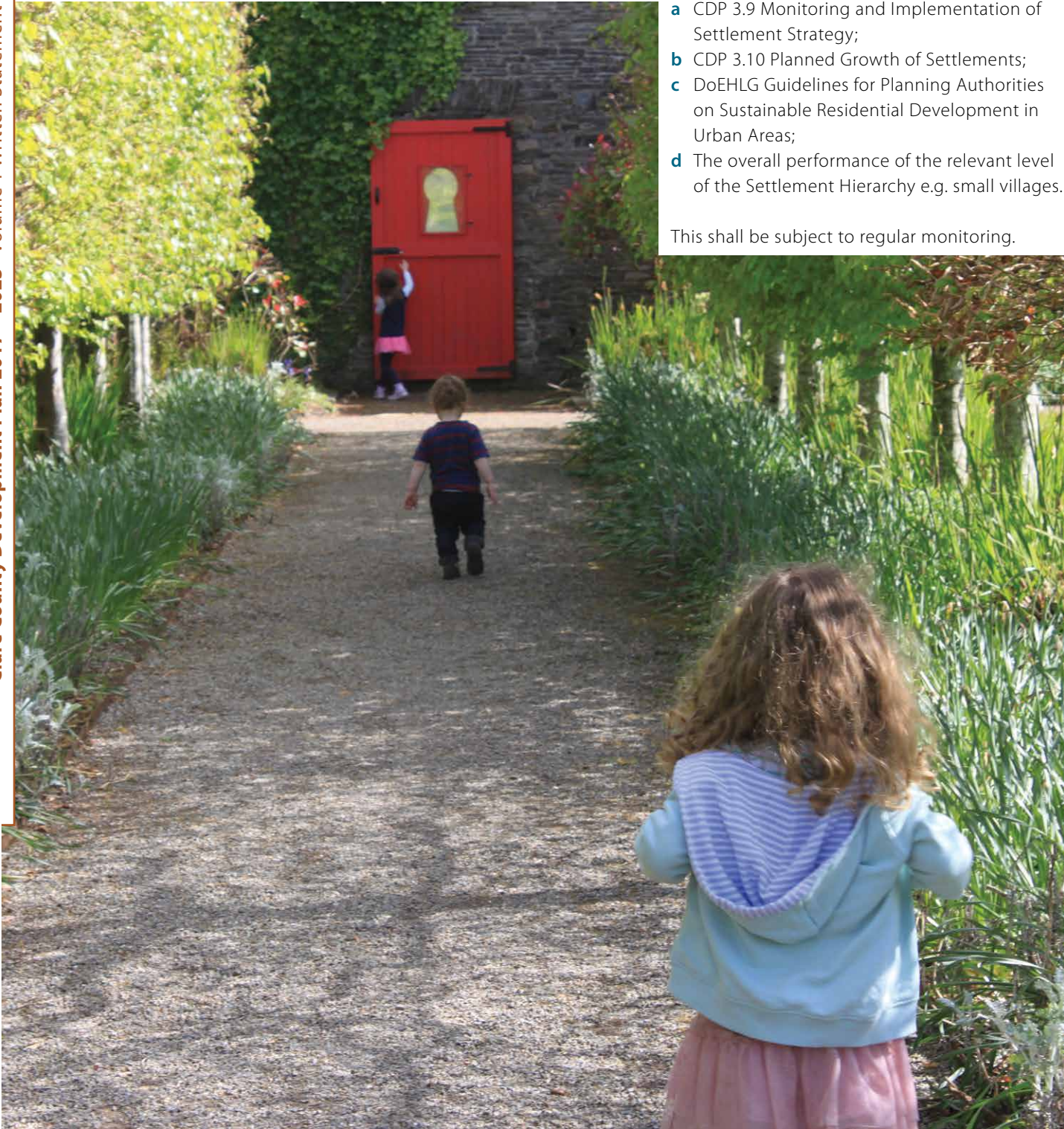


Table 2.4

Core Strategy Population Targets for Zone 1

	Municipal Area	Population 2011	Population Target 2023	Target Increase in Population 2011-2023	Target Increase in No. of Households to 2023	Total Required Area of Residentially Zoned Land (ha) to 2023*1	Total Area Zoned (given as Residential Equivalent in ha.)	Anticipated Services Available 2017-2023	
								Water	Wastewater
Hub									
Ennis	Ennis	25,360	33,497	8,137	3,166	137.2	134.65	Yes	Yes
Gateway									
Shannon*2	Shannon	9,673	12,931	3,258	1,185	59.2	47.11	Yes	Yes
Small Towns									
Killaloe	Killaloe	1,363	1,792	429	156	11.7	13.54	Yes	Yes
Newmarket on Fergus	Shannon	1,922	2,339	417	152	11.4	10.89	Yes	Yes
Sixmilebridge	Shannon	2,612	2,985	373	136	10.2	18.96	Yes	Yes
Tulla	Killaloe	745	1,020	275	100	7.5	9.56	Yes	Yes
Large Villages									
Ardnacrusha	Shannon	1,318	1,440	122	44	6.7	7.95	Yes	No
Athlunkard	Shannon	3,410	3,675	265	96	7.2	5.26	Yes	Yes
Ballycannon North (Meelick)	Shannon	903	1,027	124	45	6.8	7.94	Yes	No
Barefield	Ennis	135	218	83	30	4.5	4.57	Yes	No
Bridgetown	Killaloe	234	318	84	31	4.6	4.23	Yes	No
Broadford	Killaloe	382	504	122	44	6.7	6.48	Yes	No
Bunratty	Shannon	367	466	99	36	5.4	3.42	Yes	Yes
Clonlara	Killaloe	671	830	159	58	8.7	9.3	Yes	Yes
Corofin	West	733	896	163	59	8.9	8.58	Yes	Yes
Cratloe	Shannon	908	1,110	202	73	11.0	5.65	Yes	No
Crusheen	Killaloe	525	688	163	59	8.9	8.39	Yes	Yes
Kilkishen	Killaloe	582	732	150	55	8.2	8.57	Yes	Yes
Kilmaley	Ennis	332	416	84	31	4.6	5.62	Yes	No
Kilmurry	Killaloe	407	534	127	46	6.9	5.23	Yes	No
O'Briensbridge	Killaloe	314	450	136	49	7.4	2.39	Yes	No
Parteen	Shannon	822	1,042	220	80	6.0	3.52	Yes	Yes
Quin	Ennis	958	1,169	211	77	11.5	8.26	Yes	Yes
Small Villages									
Ballinruan	Killaloe	30	65	35	13	3.8	3.29	Yes	No
Ballyea	West	127	179	52	19	5.7	4.05	Yes	No
Ballynacally	West	133	186	53	19	5.8	5.06	Yes	No
Bodyke	Killaloe	52	92	40	15	4.4	3.48	Yes	No
Clooney	Ennis	77	118	41	15	4.5	5.22	Yes	No
Kilbane	Killaloe	83	125	42	15	4.6	4.22	Yes	No
Kilnamona	Ennis	74	113	39	14	4.3	4.73	Yes	No
Inch	West	107	137	30	11	3.3	3.12	Yes	No
O'Callaghans Mills	Killaloe	207	272	65	24	7.1	8.6	Yes	No
Ogonelloe	Killaloe	170	230	60	22	6.5	7.55	Yes	No
Ruan	Killaloe	240	319	79	29	8.6	9.4	Yes	No
Toonagh	Ennis	71	113	42	15	3.02	3.02	Yes	No
Tubber	Killaloe	78	121	43	16	4.7	8.85	Yes	No
Total settlements		56,125	72,149	16,024	6034	428.8	410.86		
Rest of Zone 1 (Rural)		25,389	29,192	3,803	1383				
Total Zone 1		81,514	101,341	19,827	7417				

*1 This calculation has been arrived at based on the following assumptions:

- A density of 30 to the hectare for residentially zoned land and 15 to the hectare for low density residentially zoned land for Ennis and Shannon. A density of 20 to the hectare and 10 to the hectare respectively for service towns and small towns and also Clarecastle, Parteen and Athlunkard. A density of 10 to the hectare for residentially zoned land and 5 to the hectare for low density residentially zoned land for large villages. A density of 5 to the hectare for small villages. These are average figures for calculating supplies of zoned land. Individual planning applications on low density/residentially zoned land will be considered on their own merits;
- A household size of 2.57 persons per household in Ennis and Clarecastle and 2.75 persons per household on all other areas;
- A headroom of an additional 30% in Ennis and Clarecastle and 50% in all other areas to allow for choice and in anticipation of not all lands being made available.

Please note that these figures include both residential and low density residential zoned land and that 1 hectare of residentially zoned land equates to 2 hectares of low density residential except for small villages.

*2 In recognition of its Gateway status the population target for Shannon includes 1,000 extra persons. This has been added to the initial Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines target for Shannon from the population target available to Zone 1 as a whole.



Table 2.5
Core Strategy Population Targets for Zone 2

	Municipal Area	Population 2011	Population Target 2023	Target Increase in Population 2011-2023	Target Increase in No. of Households	Total Required Area of Residentially Zoned Lands (ha)*1	Total Area Zoned (given as Residential Equivalent in ha.)	Anticipated Services Available 2017-2023		
								Water	Wastewater	
Service Town										
Kilrush	West	2,539	3,514	975	355	26.6	21.29	Yes	Yes	
Small Towns										
Kilkee	West	1,176	1,615	439	160	12.0	8.22	Yes	Yes	
Large Villages										
Carrigaholt	West	164	209	45	16	2.5	4.20	Yes	No	
Cooraclare	West	221	271	50	18	2.7	3.05	Yes	No	
Doonbeg	West	341	438	97	35	5.3	5.42	Yes	Yes	
Kiladysert	West	513	646	133	48	7.3	8.62	Yes	No	
Kilmihil	West	513	646	133	48	7.3	8.42	Yes	No	
Labasheeda	West	133	167	34	12	1.9	2.52	Yes	No	
Lissycasey	West	268	334	66	24	3.6	6.59	Yes	No	
Mullagh	West	154	190	36	13	2.0	3.53	Yes	Yes	
Quilty	West	209	271	62	23	3.4	4.45	Yes	Yes	
Small Villages										
Connolly	West	124	154	30	11	3.3	2.90	Yes	No	
Cranny	West	112	146	34	12	3.7	3.25	Yes	No	
Creegh	West	166	209	43	16	4.7	6.25	Yes	No	
Cross	West	75	104	29	11	3.2	3.38	Yes	No	
Doonaha	West	78	104	26	9	2.8	3.56	Yes	No	
Kilbaha	West	84	108	24	9	2.6	3.12	Yes	No	
Killimer	West	151	188	37	13	4.0	4.95	Yes	No	
Kilmurry McMahon	West	97	119	22	8	2.4	2.69	Yes	No	
Knock	West	59	83	24	9	2.6	3.15	Yes	No	
Knockerra	West	53	70	17	6	1.9	2.62	Yes	No	
Moyasta	West	96	125	29	11	3.2	3.29	Yes	No	
Querrin	West	154	188	34	12	3.7	5.16	Yes	No	
Total Settlements		7,480	9,899	2,419	880	112.4	120.63			
Rest of Zone 2 (Rural)		9,171	9,655	484	176					
Total Zone 2		16,651	19,554	2,903	1,056					

*1 This calculation has been arrived at based on the following assumptions:

- A density of 20 to the hectare and 10 to the hectare respectively for both service towns and small towns. A density of 10 to the hectare for residentially zoned land and 5 to the hectare for low density residentially zoned land for large villages. A density of 5 to the hectare for small villages. These are average figures for calculating supplies of zoned land. Individual planning applications on low density/residentially zoned land will be considered on their own merits;
- A household size of 2.75 persons;
- A headroom of an additional 50% to allow for choice and in anticipation of not all lands being made available.

Please note that these figures include both residential and low density residential zoned land and that 1 hectare of residentially zoned land equates to 2 hectares of low density residential except for small villages.

- In Kilrush there is a floating allocation of 5.3 hectares in order to facilitate the development of infill sites, brownfield sites or development on land where residential use is open for consideration

Table 2.6
Core Strategy Population Targets for Zone 3

	Municipal Area	Population 2011	Population Target 2023	Target Increase in Population 2011-2023	Target Increase in No. of Households	Total Required Area of Residential Zoned Land*1	Total Area Zoned (given as Residential Equivalent in ha.)	Anticipated Services Available 2017-2023	
								Water	Wastewater
Service Town									
Ennistymon/Lahinch	West	1,544	2,669	1,125	409	30.7	25.87	Yes	No
Small Towns									
Lisdoonvarna*2	West	788	970	182	66	5.0	7.24	Yes	Yes
Miltown Malbay	West	757	920	163	59	4.4	5.55	Yes	No
Large Villages									
Doolin	West	205	273	68	25	3.7	3.51	Yes	No
Inagh	West	244	318	74	27	4.0	3.80	Yes	Yes
Kilfenora	West	286	363	77	28	4.2	4.23	Yes	No
Ballyvaughan	West	322	410	88	32	4.8	5.83	Yes	Yes
Small Villages									
Boston	Killaloe	34	68	34	12	3.7	3.73	Yes	No
Bellharbour	Killaloe	92	136	44	16	4.8	4.89	Yes	No
Liscannor	West	180	233	53	19	5.8	6.74	Yes	Yes
Carron	Killaloe	28	64	36	13	3.9	4.51	Yes	No
Killinaboy	West	42	80	38	14	4.1	4.36	Yes	No
Fanore	West	66	104	38	14	4.1	4.37	Yes	No
Kilshanny	West	38	76	38	14	4.1	4.04	Yes	No
Spanish Point	West	266	337	71	26	7.7	6.96	Yes	No
Moy	West	21	53	32	12	3.5	3.49	Yes	No
Total Settlements		4,913	7,074	2,161	786	98.7	99.12		
Rest of Zone 3 (Rural)		9,323	9824	501	182				
Total Zone 3		14,236	16,898	2,662	968				

*1 This calculation has been arrived at based on the following assumptions:

- a) A density of 20 to the hectare and 10 to the hectare respectively for both service towns and small towns. A density of 10 to the hectare for residentially zoned land and 5 to the hectare for low density residentially zoned land for large villages. A density of 5 to the hectare for small villages. These are average figures for calculating supplies of zoned land. Individual planning applications on low density/residentially zoned land will be considered on their own merits;
 - b) A household size of 2.75 persons;
 - c) A headroom of an additional 50% to allow for choice and in anticipation of not all lands being made available.
- Please note that these figures include both residential and low density residential zoned land and that 1 hectare of residentially zoned land equates to 2 hectares of low density residential except for small villages.

*2 This figure for Lisdoonvarna includes a substantial landbank owned by Clare County Council that is intended to be only partly developed over the lifetime of the Development Plan.



Table 2.7
Core Strategy Population Targets for Zone 7

	Municipal Area	Population 2011	Population Target 2023	Target Increase in Population 2011-2023	Target Increase in No. of Households	Total Required Area of Residentially Zoned Land*1	Total Area Zoned (given as Residential Equivalent in ha.)	Anticipated Services Available 2017-2023	
							Water	Wastewater	
Service Town									
Scarriff/Tuamgraney	Killaloe	822	1,347	525	191	14.3	14.38	Yes	Yes
Large Villages									
Feakle	Killaloe	252	322	70	25	3.8	3.95	Yes	Yes
Whitegate	Killaloe	212	272	60	22	3.3	3.3	Yes	Yes
Mountshannon	Killaloe	173	224	51	19	2.8	2.47	Yes	Yes
Small Villages									
Flagmount	Killaloe	59	84	25	9	2.7	2.7	Yes	No
Killanena	Killaloe	46	65	19	7	2.1	2.19	No	No
Caher	Killaloe	48	69	21	8	2.3	2.27	No	No
Total Settlements		1,612	2,383	771	280	31.3	31.26		
Rest of Zone 7 (Rural)		3,183	3,523	340	124				
Total Zone 7		4,795	5,906	1,111	404				

*1 This calculation has been arrived at based on the following assumptions:

- a) A density of 20 to the hectare and 10 to the hectare respectively for both service towns and small towns. A density of 10 to the hectare for residentially zoned land and 5 to the hectare for low density residentially zoned land for large villages. A density of 5 to the hectare for small villages. These are average figures for calculating supplies of zoned land. Individual planning applications on low density/residentially zoned land will be considered on their own merits;
- b) A household size of 2.75 persons;
- c) A headroom of an additional 50% to allow for choice and in anticipation of not all lands being made available.

Please note that these figures include both residential and low density residential zoned land and that 1 hectare of residentially zoned land equates to 2 hectares of low density residential except for small villages.



2.4.3 Settlement Hierarchy and Strategy

All the policies and objectives of this Development Plan flow from and are consistent with the higher level national and regional policies and strategies. The Core Strategy population targets, set out in Tables 2.4 to 2.7 above, identify the relevant population figure and housing land requirement for each of the settlements in the Settlement Hierarchy. These population targets and land requirements are reflected in the settlement plans set out in Volume 3 of this Development Plan and should be used as a framework for the provision of water and wastewater services in the County.

Strong settlements are the mainstay of a strong county. Vibrant and viable settlements that provide a range of jobs, services and housing choice not only create the basis of strong economies and communities, but also support a greater range of sustainable modes of transport, both within and between settlements. The development of a range of settlements that work together to the benefit of the County and all its inhabitants, including those in rural areas, can only occur in a planned way. The main tool for achieving this is a Settlement Strategy based on the Core Strategy which will enable the proper planning and sustainable development of towns, villages and rural areas.

The Settlement Strategy for County Clare is outlined in full in Chapter 3 of this Plan. It gives effect to the NSS and MWRPGs and will act as a guide to the location and scale of new development. There is a clear link between the Settlement Hierarchy and the role of the Hub of Ennis and Gateway of Shannon, the population target for the County, the designation of Service Towns as set out in the Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022 and the population targets and housing requirements for each settlement in the County Clare Settlement Hierarchy.

Moreover the Settlement Strategy is consistent with the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines and the Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022 while responding to the specific rural typology of County Clare. The MWRPGs seek to achieve balanced growth in the different parts of County Clare so that viable communities can

be retained and the quality of life of all citizens can be enhanced. The rural Settlement Strategy set out in Chapter 3 of this Development Plan identifies rural areas under strong urban pressure which are primarily located along the Limerick-Shannon-Ennis-Galway M18/N18 road corridor, around the Service Towns and along the coastline and Lough Derg. The remaining areas comprise an intricate mix of structurally weak or strong agricultural areas as defined in the Sustainable Rural House Guidelines.

The Settlement Hierarchy and Strategy for County Clare have been devised according to the following key aspects of the NSS:

- The spatial structure set out in the strategy in relation to the Mid-West region including the designation of the Limerick/Shannon Gateway and Ennis Hub Town;
- The complementary role of other towns and villages;
- The role of linkages in terms of good transport, communications and energy networks;
- Distinction between rural generated housing and urban generated housing;
- Suggested range of policy responses for different rural areas;
- The spatial planning framework to support sustainable rural settlement.

Additionally, in order to achieve balanced County-wide growth, the Settlement Strategy was prepared having regard to availability of services, transport and infrastructure. Regard was also had to the SEA and AA processes. There are two types of rural areas identified in the Plan area – ‘rural areas under strong urban pressure’ and ‘rural areas that are structurally weak or with a strong agricultural economic base’. These areas were classified based on an analysis of a range of socio-economic variables including population profile, labour-force, travel-to-work distances and an analysis of rural housing statistics. The settlement policy for rural housing in both of these areas is set out in Chapter 3 Urban and Rural Settlement Strategy. These settlement policies are consistent with ‘Sustainable Rural Housing – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, (2005).

2.4.4 Retail Planning

The objectives regarding the management of retail development in County Clare are contained in Chapter 7 of this Development Plan and in Volume 8 - Retail Strategy for the Mid-West Region 2010-2016. Clare County Council's designation of settlements in the Settlement Hierarchy and the retail policies of this Development Plan are informed by the defined retail hierarchy and align with estimates of the requirements for future retail floorspace provision as set out in the Retail Strategy for the Mid-West Region. The objectives in Chapter 7 of this Development Plan further translate the retail policies as identified in the Retail Strategy for the Mid-West Region into specific policy objectives for County Clare.

In accordance with the DoECLG Retail Planning Guidelines (2012), this Development Plan:

- a** States the elements of the settlement hierarchy in line with the relevant regional planning guidelines and the core strategy;
- b** Outlines the level and form of retailing activity that is appropriate to the various components of the settlement hierarchy;
- c** Defines, by way of map, the boundaries of the core shopping areas of town centres and the location of any district centres;
- d** Includes a broad assessment of the requirement for additional retail floorspace;
- e** Sets out strategic guidance on the location and scale of retail development to support the settlement hierarchy including, where appropriate, the identification of Opportunity Sites;
- f** Identifies sites which can accommodate the needs of modern retail formats in a way that maintains the essential character of the shopping area;
- g** Includes objectives to improve accessibility in retail areas, create pedestrian and cyclist-friendly town centres and to improve the retailing experience through public realm interventions;
- h** Identifies relevant development management criteria for the assessment of retail developments.

2.4.5 Housing Strategy

Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) requires all planning authorities to include in any development plan a Housing Strategy. Volume 9 of this Plan comprises the Joint Housing Strategy for Clare Local Authorities and Limerick City & County Councils and is given effect in this Clare County Development Plan by objectives contained in Chapter 4 - Housing. The Joint Housing Strategy is consistent with the National Spatial Strategy and takes into account the Regional Planning Guidelines and the County and city level population targets.

2.4.6 Core Strategy and relevant Environmental Assessments

This Core Strategy has also been informed by Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and the Natura Impact Report, which were undertaken as parallel processes in tandem with each stage of the Development Plan preparation. In addition, the implications and requirements of the Floods Directive in relation to flood risk assessment and management and the requirements of the Water Framework Directive as regards protecting and enhancing water quality, particularly with regard to securing the objectives of the relevant River Basin Management Plans, have been incorporated into the Plan thereby ensuring full integration and consideration of environmental issues throughout the Plan-making process. This represents a further iteration of environmental assessments at development plan level, as the Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines, Retail Strategy for the Mid-West and Joint Housing Strategy for Clare Local Authorities and Limerick City and County Councils have been subject to separate Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment processes.

Volume 10 comprises the SEA Environmental Report, the Natura Impact Report and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). Each of the Development Plan objectives and settlement plans is in compliance with the outcomes of the SEA, AA, and SFRA processes. The objective to comply with the Water Framework Directive is stated in CDP8.21, while the objectives contained in Chapter 14 ensure that AA and

SEA requirements are incorporated into the implementation of development plan and settlement plan policy and any subsequent local area plans. In addition, objective CDP14.3 requires, where appropriate, that all plans and projects comply with the requirements of the Habitats Directive. Climate change considerations have been integrated throughout the preparation of the Plan, in particular, into the SFRA and the objectives contained in the Chapter 18 Climate Change Adaptation, Flood Risk and Low Carbon Strategy. The reduction of energy demand and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and the promotion of a low carbon economy is an underlying principle throughout the Development Plan and is also dealt with in detail in the Clare Wind Energy Strategy and the Clare Renewable Energy Strategy (Volumes 5 and 6 of this Plan). In accordance with the provisions of Section 10(1D) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the development objectives in the Development Plan are consistent, as far as practicable, with the conservation and protection of the environment.

CDP2.1

Development Plan Objective: Appropriate Assessment, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To require the preparation and assessment of all planning applications in the Plan area to have regard to the information, data and requirements of the Natura Impact Report, SEA Environmental Report and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Report contained in Volume 10 of this Development Plan;
- B** To require projects to be fully informed by ecological and environmental constraints at the earliest stage of project planning and any necessary assessment to be undertaken, including assessments of disturbance to species, where required;
- C** To require compliance with the objectives and requirements of the Habitats Directive, the Bird Directive, Water Framework Directive, all other relevant EU Directives and all relevant transposing legislation.

2.4.7

Core Strategy Map

Delivery of a plan-led Settlement Strategy in line with the integration of services, transport, infrastructure, economic activity, development of natural resources, while preserving the natural environment and amenities is a critical component of this Development Plan's Core Strategy. The Core Strategy Map (Map 2A) demonstrates how the County works with respect to the main geographical areas, the Settlement Hierarchy and existing transportation, energy, communication and waste infrastructure, together with its relationship to adjoining regions.

All motorway, national, secondary and primary routes along with regional roads are shown and named, including the proposed Shannon Bridge Crossing in Killaloe which will provide a direct link between the East Clare area and the M7 motorway network. The route of the proposed Limerick Northern Distributor Road is also shown. This road, when developed, will give enhanced access to the University of Limerick and help to foster stronger economic connectivity between County Clare, Shannon International Airport and the University of Limerick. The objectives in relation to access to National Routes, prepared in line with the 'Spatial Planning and National Roads – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012' are contained in Chapter 8. The Western Rail Corridor is also highlighted. The Killimer-Tarbert ferry is identified as a critical ferry port and provides a means of waterborne transport in the west of Ireland. Moneypoint and Ardnacrusha and associated power-lines are critical elements of the state electricity generation and supply network. Shannon International Airport provides global connectivity into and out of the County and region. The main geographical areas of the County, including the County's important natural and cultural assets of the Burren, the Atlantic coast, Loop Head, the Shannon Estuary, Slieve Aughty and Lough Derg are highlighted, as is the Wild Atlantic Way. The relationship and linkages of all these key elements are shown in the wider context of the smaller settlements in the County, the Limerick/Shannon Gateway, Hub Town of Ennis and the wider Atlantic Corridor.



2.5 Conclusion

The objectives that will deliver on the Core Strategy are outlined in the chapters that follow.

Firstly, the Urban and Rural Settlement Hierarchy and Strategy for County Clare is outlined and this is followed by a chapter on Housing which sets out how the housing needs of the people of County Clare will be met during the lifetime of this Plan. The concept of healthy and sustainable communities is built on in Chapter 5 which deals with community development and support for the provision and enhancement of social infrastructure. Chapters 6 and 7 address economic development, enterprise and retail development respectively. Chapter 8 outlines the framework for physical infrastructure development in the County including water supply and wastewater services, the management of water resources, transport infrastructure and energy and communications infrastructure. Tourism is an important part of the economy in County Clare and is dealt with in Chapter 9. Rural development in the County and its natural resources form the basis of Chapter 10.

The sustainable future development of the Shannon Estuary is addressed in Chapter 11. Chapter 12 relates to a similar theme and deals with the prominent issues of marine and coastal zone management, including coastal flooding and future development in coastal areas. The management and enhancement of our landscape, biodiversity, natural heritage, green infrastructure and architectural, archaeological and cultural heritage are the focus of chapters 13 to 15 respectively.

The enhancement and future growth of towns and villages throughout the County is addressed in Chapter 16 whilst promoting quality in the public realm and built environment is the focus of Chapter 17.

The key issues of climate change adaptation, flooding and the achievement of a low carbon county are progressed in Chapter 18 and Chapter 19 sets the framework for more detailed settlement plans and land-use zonings in the County. Finally Chapter 20 sets the context for the implementation of the Plan whilst also setting out the mitigation measures necessary to ensure that implementation does not have a negative impact on the environment of County Clare.





Chapter 3

Urban and Rural Settlement Strategy

Goal II:

A County Clare with strong and balanced urban and rural areas providing key services and a good quality of life and where people have the choice to live in the area where they are from.

3.0 Introduction.....	42
3.1 Strategic Aims.....	42
3.2 Settlement Strategy	43
3.2.1 Introduction.....	43
3.2.2 Settlement Hierarchy and Strategy.....	43
3.2.3 Linked Settlements	47
3.2.4 Managing the Growth of Settlements	47
3.2.5 Single Housing in the Countryside.....	48
3.2.6 Site Suitability	53
3.3 Implementation and Monitoring of Settlement Policy	54

3.0 Introduction

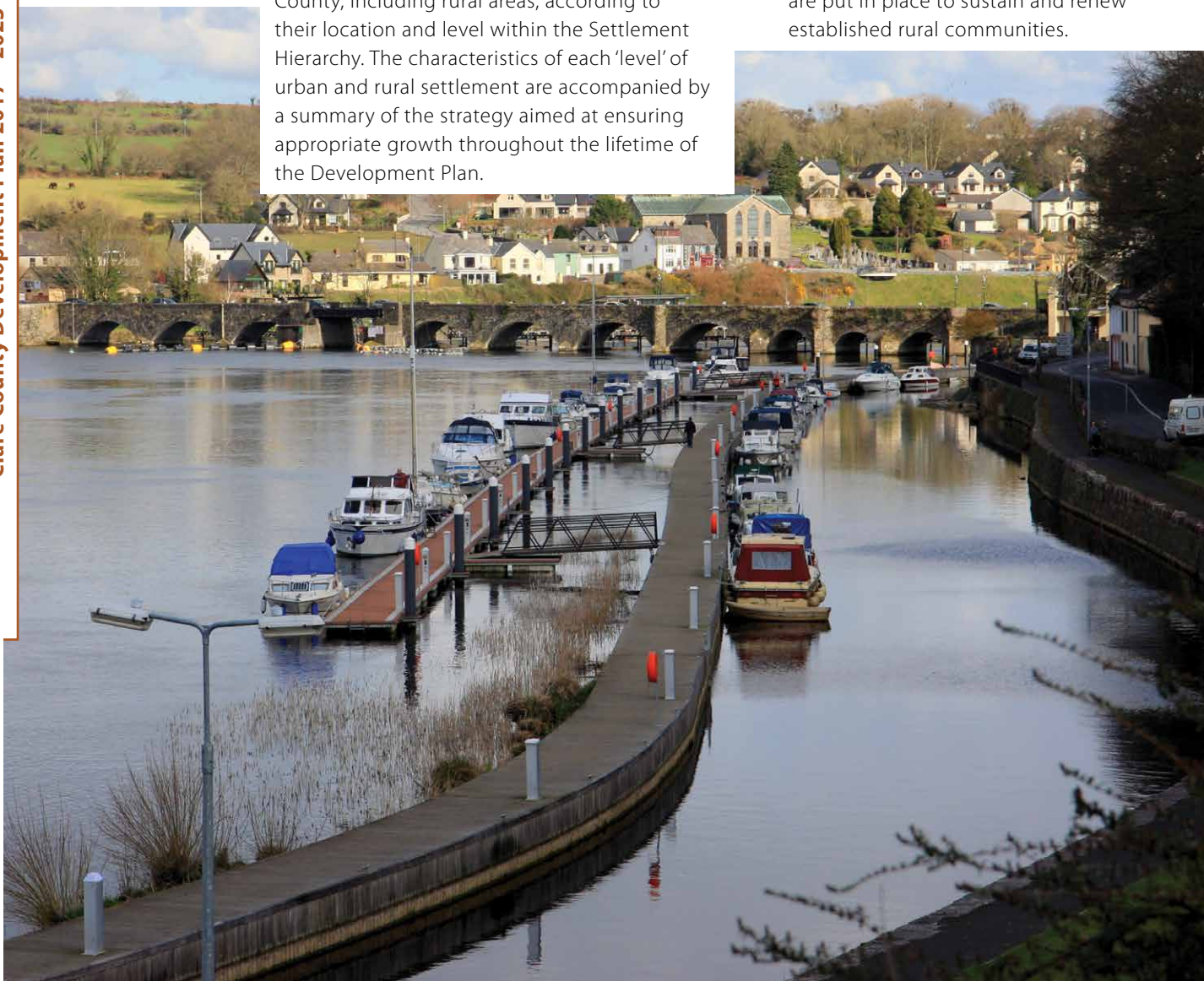
A network of vibrant settlements, supported by strong rural areas, is important in order to sustain the population, provide jobs and services and otherwise ensure a good quality of life for those who live and work in County Clare. The Urban and Rural Settlement Strategy guides where, when, and how new development should take place in a manner, scale and form that is appropriate, having regard to national policy, the settlement hierarchy and target populations (outlined in Chapter 2), the local characteristics and the physical constraints of individual areas within the County. This chapter builds on the objectives set out in the Core Strategy of Chapter 2. It sets out Clare County Council's approach to distributing the target populations in a balanced manner.

This chapter provides a brief synopsis of the planning and development strategies for each of the main types of settlements in the County, including rural areas, according to their location and level within the Settlement Hierarchy. The characteristics of each 'level' of urban and rural settlement are accompanied by a summary of the strategy aimed at ensuring appropriate growth throughout the lifetime of the Development Plan.

3.1 Strategic Aims

This chapter sets out the objectives required to sustain a healthy network of settlements in a range of urban and rural locations throughout the County. In accordance with the overall vision of the Plan, it is based on the following strategic aims:

- To ensure that Ennis 'Hub Town' and Shannon 'Linked Gateway' are drivers of growth and development in both County Clare and the wider region;
- To provide a strategic Settlement Strategy to manage population growth/targets and associated housing needs and to achieve balanced development within the County;
- To promote sustainable growth at a scale appropriate to the existing settlements and their location within the County, thus managing their development in an attractive, incremental, plan-led manner;
- To ensure that the specific needs of rural communities are identified and that policies are put in place to sustain and renew established rural communities.



3.2 Settlement Strategy

3.2.1 Introduction

The aim of the Settlement Strategy is to ensure that future development is directed in a balanced plan-led manner to rural and urban areas throughout the County as appropriate. This will enable future development to be located in areas where services and community facilities can accommodate growth and thus achieve the vision and goals of the Development Plan. It is envisaged that this development will take place in a range of locations across County Clare from the County Town of Ennis and the Service Towns of Kilrush, Scarriff/Tuamgraney and Ennistymon/Lahinch, to the smaller towns, rural villages and countryside.

The Settlement Strategy recognises the role of all towns, villages and, importantly, the countryside as components of a balanced Settlement Strategy in County Clare. Individual settlement plans set out in Volume 3 will give further localised and detailed effect to the Settlement Strategy by zoning the appropriate amount of land and setting out other detailed policies and objectives for the settlements in accordance with their position and role in the Settlement Hierarchy.

The position of a settlement within the Hierarchy provides an indication of the potential scale of population growth permissible over the lifetime of the Plan and therefore plays a key role in the appropriate delivery of the population targets outlined in Chapter 2. The settlement plans in Volume 3 of this Development Plan are reflective of the Settlement Strategy set out in this chapter and work to ensure the delivery of housing and the creation of sustainable communities in each settlement in County Clare.

It should also be noted that the underlying aims of the Settlement Strategy are linked with and support relevant policies and objectives elsewhere in the Plan to ensure that the settlements deliver on their roles as employment and service centres for their existing and target population. The strategy for each level of the Urban and Rural Settlement Hierarchy is outlined in the following section.



3.2.2 Settlement Hierarchy and Strategy

Ennis

Ennis town, with a population of approximately 25,000, is the largest settlement in County Clare. It is designated as a Hub Town in the National Spatial Strategy and, as the County Town, is an important residential, service and commercial centre providing significant levels of employment. It is therefore at the top of the Settlement Hierarchy for the County. A new local area plan to guide and support the future development of Ennis and its environs will be prepared during the lifetime of this Development Plan.

CDP3.1

Development Plan Objective: Ennis

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To ensure that Ennis, as the County Town and as a designated Hub Town in the NSS, is a driver of County and regional prosperity by harnessing its strategic location and access on the Atlantic Corridor; its strong urban structure, existing retail, service and accommodation base and other competitive advantages;
- B** To achieve a vibrant and culturally-rich Ennis area with a revitalised town centre and strong economic growth balanced with enhanced social inclusion, sustainable neighbourhoods and a high level of environmental quality to ensure an excellent quality of life for all;
- C** To prepare a local area plan for the Ennis Town and Environs area during the lifetime of this Development Plan.

Shannon

Shannon town was developed from the 1960s onwards in response to the growth and development of Shannon Airport and the Shannon Free Zone Industrial Estate. Today it has a population of approximately 9,700 and its strategic regional and national importance is recognised in its designation as part of the Limerick/Shannon Gateway in the National Spatial Strategy. The strategy for Shannon is outlined in more detail in the adopted Shannon Town and Environs Local Area Plan 2012-2018.

CDP3.2
Development Plan Objective:
Shannon

- It is an objective of the Development Plan:**
- A** To ensure that Shannon, as a linked Gateway with Limerick in the NSS, is a driver of County and regional prosperity by harnessing its strategic location and access on the Atlantic Corridor, in addition to its employment base, international airport and other competitive advantages;
 - B** To prepare a new local area plan for Shannon Town and its Environs during the lifetime of this Development Plan.

Service Towns

The Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022 identify three Service Towns in County Clare, namely Kilrush, Ennistymon/ Lahinch and Scarriff/Tuamgraney. This Development Plan reflects the designations and has regard to the local characteristics of these settlements. They have been designated as service towns due to their role as important service centres in their respective Municipal Districts and as drivers of growth for their surrounding hinterlands. The strategy for Service Towns is outlined in more detail in their individual settlement plans, contained in Volume 3 of this Development Plan.

CDP3.3
Development Plan Objective:
Service Towns

- It is an objective of the Development Plan:**
- To ensure that the Service Towns in County Clare are drivers of growth and prosperity for their respective catchments, by consolidating their administrative, retail and service bases, protecting and enhancing their distinctive town centre characteristics and natural landscape settings, and maximising their role for sub-regional growth.





Small Towns

There are 7 small towns throughout the County identified in the Settlement Hierarchy. They are of fundamental importance in offering services and facilities to their own populations and surrounding rural areas. They are also important employment and tourist centres. The strategy for these settlements is to ensure that their existing role is maintained and strengthened. This can be achieved through adequate zoning of lands and a facilitatory approach towards appropriately-scaled and designed urban development. The expansion of these towns should be sympathetic to the surrounding area with a focus on developing brownfield sites and developing from the centre out. Every effort should be made to improve the public realm in order to make these towns attractive places to live, work and visit. It is recognised that some of these towns have not been in a position to fulfil this role due to deficiencies in water and wastewater services and every effort must be made to ensure that these deficiencies are addressed over the lifetime of the Plan. The strategy for the individual small towns is outlined in more detail in their respective settlement plans set out in Volume 3 of this Development Plan.

CDP3.4

Development Plan Objective: Small Towns

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To ensure that the small towns throughout the County continue to act as important local service centres that maintain sustainable communities, help to ensure a good quality environment, provide public transport to the main centres, ensuring a high quality of life for those who live in the vicinity.

Large Villages

The next level on the Settlement Hierarchy is the large villages which provide a reasonable range of services and facilities to their surrounding areas. Due to their existing and envisaged size, the strategy for large villages is to provide for small-scale well-designed residential, commercial and community developments which have regard to the character of the settlements. A key priority is to retain community and social facilities within these villages and to encourage indigenous enterprises and service provision.

The nature of large villages in County Clare, with their attractive character and community infrastructure, provides opportunities for 'sites for independent development' to act as a viable alternative to single housing in the countryside. Some of these settlements, however, require significant improvements in physical infrastructure to facilitate residential and commercial development and assist in their long term viability as settlement centres.

The strategy for the individual large villages is outlined in more detail in their respective settlement plans contained in Volume 3 of this Development Plan.

CDP3.5

Development Plan Objective: Large Villages

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To ensure that the large villages throughout the County maintain existing population levels and services and to ensure that future growth is balanced and sustainable and is relative and appropriate to their scale, size and character.

Small Villages

These are smaller settlements that generally have a predominantly rural character with some public/community services such as a church, school, shop, etc. The strategy for these settlements is to encourage small-scale, incremental residential growth that reflects the rural nature of the settlements. Suitably-scaled and appropriate commercial or employment-generating development will also be encouraged. Growth will be carefully monitored and managed. The village boundaries are illustrated on the individual settlement plans which can be found in Volume 3 of this Plan. However, it should be noted that it is not intended to ‘complete’ the delineated development envelope within a short timeframe. Rather, a long-term timeframe for their completion is considered more appropriate.

CDP3.6

Development Plan Objective: Small Villages

It is an objective of the Development Plan: To ensure that the small villages throughout the County maintain existing population levels and services and future growth is incremental and small scale in nature, relative and appropriate to their scale, size and character.

Clusters

These are the smallest type of settlement in the hierarchy and their character reflects traditional building patterns with a loose collection of rural dwellings clustered around one or more focal points. Focal points may include existing rural houses around a crossroad or a community or social facility such as a shop, school, church or post office. The strategy for these settlements is to facilitate a small number of additional dwellings and/or small enterprises to consolidate the existing pattern of development around the focal points and utilise existing services in the area. To meet the needs of those wishing to settle in rural areas, the provisions of Objective CDP 3.11 (i.e. ‘Local Need’ requirement) will not apply to applicants for single houses within the designated cluster boundaries.

CDP3.7

Development Plan Objective: Clusters

It is an objective of the Development Plan: To ensure that clusters throughout the County maintain their existing character providing only for very small scale growth.



The Countryside

At the lowest level of the Settlement Hierarchy are those parts of the County outside of recognised settlements with low population density levels. These areas are referred to as the 'countryside'. The National Spatial Strategy and the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines recognise and support the long tradition of people living in the countryside and objectives relating to this are included in Section 3.2.5. The countryside, apart from being a place to live, is the source of the majority of our natural assets and therefore plays an important role in terms of employment, tourism and leisure. The strategy for the countryside is to ensure that it is appropriately managed and that it continues to play its role in a balanced manner having regard to its carrying capacity and environmental constraints.

CDP3.8

Development Plan Objective: Countryside

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To ensure that the countryside continues to play its role as a place to live, work and visit having careful regard to its carrying capacity and environmental sensitivity.

3.2.3 Linked Settlements

The Council recognises that there are a number of 'linked settlements' in the County namely Ennistymon/Lahinch, Scarriff/Tuamgraney and Miltown Malbay/Spanish Point. In the case of Killaloe/Ballina the linked settlement crosses the County boundary as well as the River Shannon. While retaining their own identities, these settlements, due to their proximity to one another and their complementary roles, will be encouraged to work together to generate the critical mass of population to act as a focus for service provision and economic growth for their surrounding rural areas.

3.2.4 Managing the Growth of Settlements

In order to achieve the objectives as outlined for the Settlement Strategy, appropriate monitoring and management must take place. The following are the objectives of the Council in this respect.

CDP3.9

Development Plan Objective: Monitoring and Implementation of Settlement Strategy

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To achieve the delivery of strategic, plan-led, co-ordinated and balanced development of the settlements throughout the County;
- B** To carefully monitor the scale, rate and location of newly permitted developments and apply appropriate development management measures to ensure compliance with the Settlement Hierarchy and Strategy, including the population targets for the County.

CDP3.10

Development Plan Objectives: Planned Growth of Settlements

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To ensure that the sequential approach is applied to the assessment of proposals for development in towns and villages and to ensure that new developments are of a scale and character that is appropriate to the area in which they are located;
- B** To restrict single and/or multiple large-scale developments that would lead to the rapid completion of any settlement within its development boundary, in excess of its capacity to absorb development in terms of physical infrastructure (water, wastewater, surface water, lighting, footpaths, access etc.) and social infrastructure (schools, community facilities etc.).

3.2.5 Single Housing in the Countryside

This section sets out how the development of single houses will be accommodated in the rural areas outside of the boundaries of the towns, villages and clusters. There is a long tradition in County Clare of people living in the countryside in dispersed settlement patterns. In these areas, the rural townland remains an important unit of identity and this is recognised by Clare County Council. It is the Council's intention to support this tradition in a positive manner and in accordance with the Sustainable Rural Housing - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG). These Guidelines constitute Ministerial Guidelines under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). Therefore, the Council is required to have regard to them in formulating its policies on rural housing.

Rural Area Types

The Guidelines require the Council to identify the different types of rural areas within the County, as set out in the NSS, and to tailor policies that are responsive to:

- The varying characteristics of rural areas;
- The different housing requirements of urban and rural communities.

In this regard, the Council must distinguish between rural-generated housing (i.e. housing in rural areas from persons within the established rural community) and urban-generated housing (i.e. housing in rural locations sought by persons already living and working in urban areas, including second homes).

These distinctions are necessary to ensure that, first and foremost, the housing requirements of persons with roots or links in rural areas are facilitated and that policies respond to local circumstances whether these relate to areas experiencing economic and population decline or to areas under substantial urban-generated pressure for housing.

Urban generated pressure for housing, if not properly managed, can result in ribbon development and piecemeal/haphazard development along the approach roads to larger settlements.

This creates problems as these centres grow in relation to:

- 1 The orderly and efficient development of newly developing areas on the edges of towns;
- 2 Obstructing alignments for future provision of infrastructure;
- 3 Undermining the viability of urban public transport due to low densities;
- 4 Attendant later problems in terms of demands for higher public expenditure.

Such development is therefore more appropriately located in the urban areas or well planned extensions to them. The NSS, the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines, population trends, development pressure, travel-to-work distances and socio-economic data from the 2011 Census, were used to identify two different rural area types as described below.

1. Rural areas under Strong Urban Pressure

These areas display the greatest pressures for development due to:

- Proximity to the immediate environs or close commuting catchment of large towns.
- Rapidly rising population;
- Location in areas of considerable pressure for development of housing due to proximity to urban centres;
- Proximity to major transport corridors with ready access to urban areas.

Areas which are under strong urban pressures are primarily located along the Limerick – Shannon – Ennis – Galway road corridor, around the key towns along the coastline and around Lough Derg. These rural areas under strong urban pressure are shown on Map 3B in this chapter and in more detail in Volume 2 (Maps)

In these areas, the key objectives of the Council are:

- a To facilitate the genuine housing requirements of the local rural community (rural generated housing), subject to satisfactory site suitability and technical considerations;
- b To direct urban-generated development to areas zoned for new housing development in the adjoining urban centres, towns and villages as identified in the County Settlement Strategy and to seek to enhance these settlements. This is articulated in Section 3.2.2 of this chapter.

2. Rural areas that are structurally weak or with a strong agricultural economic base

Whilst some rural areas, particularly those adjacent to the larger urban centres and towns, have seen significant population growth, other areas, particularly the more remote areas, continue to experience population decline or slower rates of growth. A significant portion of the rural areas outside of those under strong urban pressure are structurally weak with only small pockets demonstrating the characteristics of stronger rural areas. Those rural areas that are structurally weak or with a strong agricultural economic base are those areas outside the areas of strong urban pressure shown on Map 3B in this chapter.

In this second rural area type, the key objectives of the Council are:

- a** To accommodate demands for individual **permanent** residential development proposals as they arise subject to satisfactory site suitability and technical considerations;
- b** To maintain and strengthen existing towns and villages. This is articulated in Section 3.2.2 of this chapter.

In addition to the issues outlined above, development pressure on sensitive scenic and coastal areas of the County must be addressed given that there is limited capacity to accommodate individual houses in these areas. These areas include the Burren, Loop Head, the Atlantic Coastline, Slieve Aughty, Lough Derg, and the Shannon Estuary. They are collectively known as Heritage Landscapes and are discussed in more detail in Chapter 13. There is also an important network of scenic routes in the County that must be afforded adequate protection. In these areas the objective of the Council is to facilitate rural-generated housing subject to the normal site suitability and technical requirements.

Objectives and Criteria

In order to respond to the challenges outlined above and deliver on the requirements of the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines, the Plan proposes a different policy response for each of the following:

- a** New single houses in the countryside within the 'Areas of Special Control';
- b** New single houses in the countryside outside the 'Areas of Special Control';

- c** New single houses on infill sites in the countryside;
- d** Replacement of sub-standard habitable houses in the countryside;
- e** Refurbishment of derelict dwellings/structures in the countryside;
- f** New single holiday homes in the countryside.

A. New Single Houses in the Countryside within the 'Areas of Special Control'

The 'Areas of Special Control' are:

- Rural Areas under Strong Urban pressure;
- Heritage Landscapes;
- Sites accessed from Scenic Routes.

These are shown in Map 3B in this chapter and in greater detail in Volume 2 – Maps.

CDP3.11

Development Plan Objective: New Single Houses in the Countryside within the 'Areas of Special Control'

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

A In the parts of the countryside within the 'Areas of Special Control' i.e.:

- Areas under Strong Urban Pressure (See chapter 17);
- Heritage Landscapes (See Chapter 13);
- Sites accessed from Scenic Routes (See Chapter 13 and Appendix 5).

To permit a new single house for the permanent occupation of an applicant who falls within one of the **Categories A or B or C** below and meets the necessary criteria.

B To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation as outlined in Objective CDP2.1 and have regard to the County Clare House Design Guide, in particular with respect to siting and boundary treatment.

Note: *Where the proposed site is accessed from a National route or certain Regional routes, the proposal must **in addition** to compliance with this objective, also be subject to compliance with objectives CDP8.4 and 8.5 as set out in Chapter 8.*





Category A – Local Rural Person

Criteria

The following **3 criteria** arise in assessing applicants under this category:

1. The applicant must come within the definition of a 'Local Rural Person'
- and**
2. The proposed site must be situated within their 'Local Rural Area'
- and**
3. The applicant must have a 'Local Rural Housing Need'

Definitions

A '**Local Rural Person**' (applicant) is a person who was born within the local rural area, or who is living or has lived permanently in the local rural area for a substantial period of their life at any stage(s) prior to making the planning application. It therefore includes returning emigrants seeking a permanent home in their local rural area who meet this definition. It also includes persons who were born or lived in a rural area for substantial periods of their lives but that area is now within a settlement boundary/zoned land.

A '**Local Rural Person**' can also include a person who has links to the rural area by virtue of being an established rural landowner. This is defined as a person and/or their son or daughter, or sibling, who has owned a landholding in a rural area prior to 1999 and who wishes to build on that land. It also provides for beneficiaries under the Succession Act.

The '**Local Rural Area**', for the purpose of this objective, is defined as the rural area generally within a 10km radius of where the applicant was born, living or has lived (for a substantial period of their life as per 'local rural person'). Where the proposed site is of a greater distance but the applicant can demonstrate ties with the area of the proposed site e.g. family, landownership or being within the same parish as the applicant is from, then these cases will each be considered on their individual merits.

Note: The rural area includes the countryside, designated clusters and small villages but excludes those settlements listed within the County Settlement Hierarchy which are urban settlements i.e. Ennis, Shannon, Service Towns, Small Towns and Large Villages.

An applicant who satisfies a '**Local Rural Housing Need**' is defined as a person who does not or has not ever owned a house in the surrounding rural area (except in exceptional circumstances) and has the need for a dwelling for their own permanent occupation.

OR

Category B – Persons Working Full Time or Part-time in Rural Areas

Criteria

Such persons shall be defined as persons who by the nature of their work have a functional need to reside permanently in the rural area close to their place of work. Such circumstances will normally encompass persons involved in full-time farming, horticulture, forestry or marine-related activities as well as others who can demonstrate a genuine need, because of their occupation, to live in the rural area. Similar part-time occupations can also be considered where it can be demonstrated that it is the predominant occupation. In each case the applicant must not already own or have owned a house in the surrounding rural area except in exceptional circumstances.

Or

In order to ensure compatibility with Articles 43 and 56 of the EC Treaty which guarantee respectively the Freedom of Establishment (of business) and the Free Movement of Capital, bone fide applicants who are not considered eligible under the preceding categories may be considered as qualifying to build a permanent home in the rural areas, subject to being able to satisfy the planning authority of their commitment to operate a full time business from their proposed home in a rural area, as part of their planning application, in order for example, to discourage commuting to towns or cities. Applicants must be able to submit evidence that

- Their business will contribute to and enhance the rural community in which they seek to live

and

- That they can satisfy the Planning Authority that the nature of their employment or business is compatible with those specified in the local needs criteria for rural areas i.e. that they are serving a predominantly local rural business need.

OR

Category C – Exceptional Health and/or Family Circumstances

Criteria:

Having regard to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government's *Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines* (2005), special consideration shall be given in limited cases of exceptional health circumstances – supported by relevant documentation from a registered medical practitioner proving that a person requires to live in a particular environment or close to family support, or requires a close family member to live in close proximity to that person.

In cases where an applicant requires to reside near elderly parents (who have been living in the local rural area for a substantial period of their life) so as to provide security, support and care, or where elderly parent(s) need to reside near an immediate family member (who have been living in the local rural area for a substantial period of their life), favourable consideration will also be given.

In addition, where elderly local farmers have no children, consideration may also be given to the housing needs of one favoured relative (in anticipation of taking over the landholding). The applicant will have established affiliations or connections with the landholding and his/her living in the area would be a service and support to the landowner.

B. New Single Houses in the Countryside outside of the 'Areas of Special Control'

The 'Areas of Special Control' are shown in Map 3B. In the areas outside 'Areas of Special Control' the following is the objective of the Development Plan.

CDP3.12

Development Plan Objective: New Single Houses in the Countryside outside the 'Areas of Special Control'

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

Within the parts of the countryside outside of the 'Areas of Special Control' i.e.:

- Outside of the Areas under Strong Urban Pressure;
- Outside of Heritage Landscapes;
- Not accessed from a Scenic Route.

To permit an application for a single house by persons who seek a dwelling as their principal private residence and will, therefore, contribute to the social and economic well being of the area.

*Note: Where the proposed site is accessed from a National route or certain Regional routes the proposal must **in addition** to compliance with this objective, also be subject to objectives CDP8.4 and CDP8.5 as set out in Chapter 8.*

All development proposals must be in compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive.



C. New Single Rural Houses on Infill Sites

CDP3.13

Development Plan Objective: New Single Houses on Infill Sites in the Countryside

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

In the case where there is a grouping of rural houses, the development of a small gap site, sufficient to accommodate only one house, within an otherwise substantial and continuously built-up frontage, will be permitted provided it respects the existing development pattern along the frontage in terms of size, scale, siting, plot size and meets normal site suitability requirements. Dwellings constructed on infill sites of this nature must be for the permanent occupation of the applicant. The siting of new dwellings in the countryside so as to deliberately create a gap site of this nature will not be permitted.

In circumstances where these sites occur in 'Areas of Special Control' the provisions of Objective CDP3.11 (i.e. Local Need requirement) will not apply.

D. Replacement of a Substandard Habitable House in the Countryside

CDP3.14

Development Plan Objective: Replacement of Substandard Habitable Houses in the Countryside

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To permit the proposed demolition of a habitable but substandard dwelling and its replacement with a new single dwelling, subject to normal site suitability considerations;
- B** To permit the replacement of a dwelling damaged by fire, flood or other natural disaster subject to normal site suitability considerations;

In such circumstances where these sites occur in 'Areas of Special Control' the provisions of Objective CDP 3.11 (i.e. 'Local Need' requirement) will not apply;

Notwithstanding the above, it is Council policy to protect the County's vernacular building stock from demolition where restoration and extension is an option (see CDP 15.4).

**E. Refurbishment of a Derelict Dwelling/
Structure in the Countryside**

CDP3.15
**Development Plan Objective:
Refurbishment of a Derelict
Dwelling/Structure in the
Countryside**

It is an objective of the Development Plan:
To permit applications for the refurbishment of derelict dwellings/structures in the countryside subject to the following criteria:

- The external walls are substantially intact and are capable of being refurbished;
- The design of the proposal does not erode the siting and design qualities of the dwelling/structure.
- The size of any extension takes account of the siting and size of the existing dwelling/structure.
- The design, scale and materials used in the refurbishment and/or extension are in keeping and sympathetic with the existing structure.
- Mature landscape features are retained and enhanced, as appropriate.
- That normal planning considerations i.e. road safety, amenities, public health, design, protected species (especially Lesser Horseshoe Bats and other bat species) etc. shall take precedence over the ‘principle’ of encouraging such development, and in particular that for such developments alongside or directly accessed from National Roads, the provisions of Objective CDP 8.4 shall apply (Refer to Chapter 8 Physical Infrastructure).

In such circumstances where these sites occur in ‘Areas of Special Control’ the provisions of Objective CDP 3.11 (i.e. ‘Local Need’ requirement) will not apply except where the total or substantial demolition of the existing structure and a new dwelling is proposed.

**F. New Single Holiday Homes
in the Countryside**

CDP3.16
**Development Plan Objective:
New Single Holiday Homes in the
Countryside**

It is an objective of Clare County Council:
To not permit new single holiday homes in the countryside and to direct this type of development to appropriately-zoned land within certain settlements. Alternatively, this need can be met through the second hand housing stock in the countryside or the refurbishment of derelict dwellings/structures.



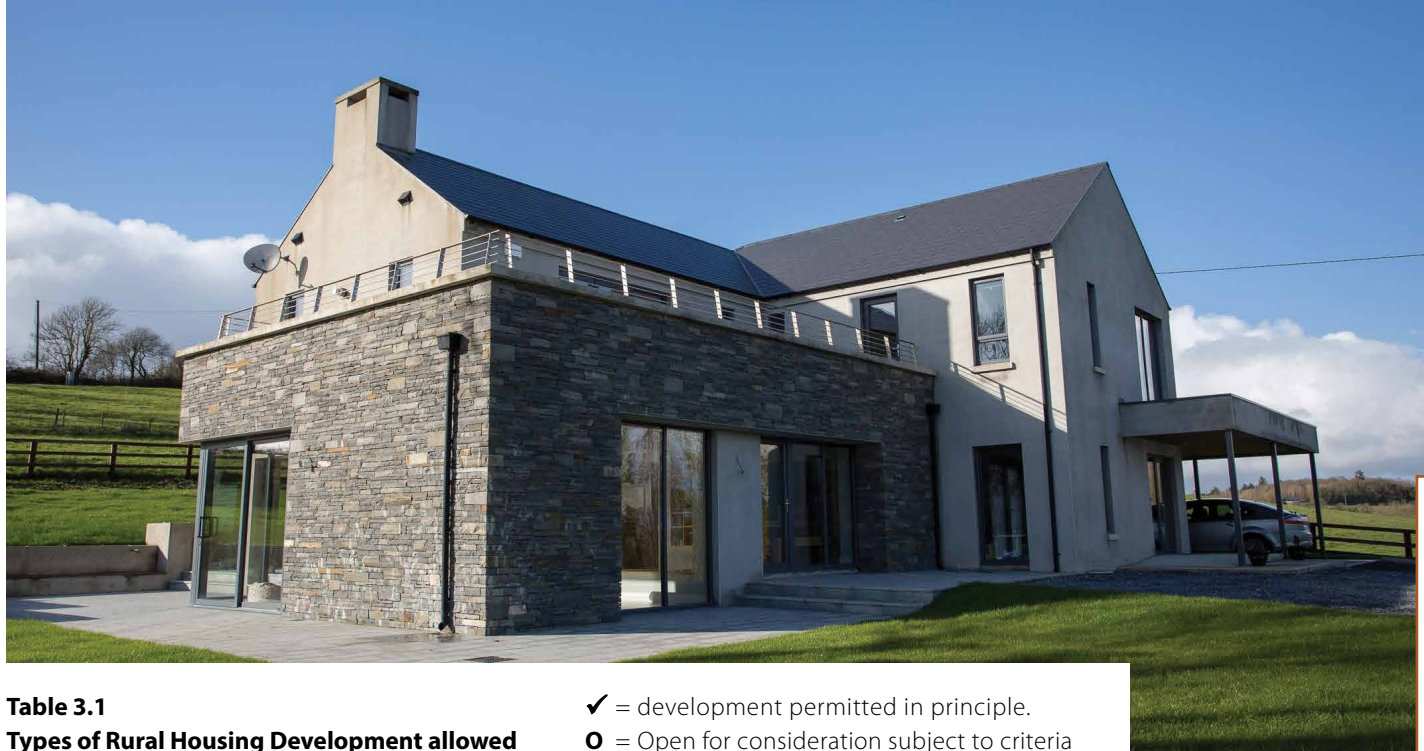


Table 3.1
Types of Rural Housing Development allowed on Suitable Sites

Type of Development	Within areas of special control i.e. urban generated/ heritage/ landscape/ scenic routes	Outside areas of special control
New dwelling (PPR) <i>See objective CDP3.11 and CDP 3.12</i>	O	✓
New dwelling (PPR) on an infill site <i>See objective CDP3.13</i>	✓	✓
Replacement of substandard / damaged dwelling <i>See objective CDP3.14</i>	✓	✓
Refurbishment of a derelict structure <i>See objective CDP3.15</i>	✓	✓
Holiday home <i>See Objective CDP3.16</i>	X	X

- ✓ = development permitted in principle.
 O = Open for consideration subject to criteria in Objective 3.11 "new single houses in the countryside within the areas of special control."
 X = Not permitted.

Note1: PPR= Principal Private Residence.

- i For a new single dwelling within areas of special control, a condition shall be attached requiring the dwelling to be the permanent/principal place of residence of the applicant for a period of 7 years.
- ii For new single dwellings outside areas of special control a condition shall be attached requiring the dwelling to be a permanent/principal private residence but with no restrictions on resale after the first occupancy.

Note2: Where any proposed site is accessed from a national road or certain regional roads the objectives in relation to housing in the countryside must be read in conjunction with objectives CDP 8.4 and CDP 8.5 (Chapter 8).

3.2.6 Site Suitability

It is important to note that the policy considerations outlined in Section 3.2.5 represent only one element in the assessment of an application for dwelling(s) in the countryside. Other considerations relating to siting, design, environment, heritage, amenity and traffic considerations are also of paramount importance in the consideration of any development. It is the intention of the Council to attempt to facilitate, where necessary, the resolution of these issues through supplementary guidance and pre-planning application discussions.

3.3 Implementation and Monitoring of Settlement Policy

The Settlement Hierarchy and Strategy is based on a clear set of principles, which aim for a properly planned and sustainable settlement pattern for County Clare. The settlement plans set out in Volume 3 of this Plan reflect these principles and translate the Settlement Strategy and Core Strategy into clear plans for future growth in the towns and villages of the County. It will be important, through the lifetime of the Plan and beyond, to monitor progress on achieving this properly planned and sustainable settlement pattern for the County. The Council will manage and carefully monitor the nature, scale, rate and location of newly permitted developments in rural and urban areas, in order to assess the degree to which settlement policy objectives are being met across the network of settlements and to take appropriate development management measures as outlined in Section 3.2.4.

Chapter 3 Urban and Rural Settlement Strategy – Cross References

CDP2.1	Appropriate Assessment, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
CDP4.1	Implementation of Joint Housing Strategy for Clare Local Authorities and Limerick City & County Councils 2010-2017
CDP4.2	Facilitating the Housing Needs of the Population
CDP4.3	Living in Our Towns and Villages
CDP4.7	Housing Mix
CDP4.8	Sites for Independent Living
CDP4.13	Holiday Homes
CDP5.1	Sustainable Communities
CDP5.7	Age-Friendly County
CDP8.21	Water Framework Directive
CDP8.22	Protection of Water Resources
CDP8.24	Water Services
CDP8.3	Protection of Surface Waters
CDP8.4	Direct Access onto National Roads
CDP8.5	Development of Strategic Regional Roads
CDP8.22	Protection of Water Resources
CDP8.25	Water Supply
CDP8.26	Ennis and Environs Water Supply
CDP 8.27	Waste Water Treatment and Disposal
CDP12.12	Coast Erosion and Flooding
CDP13.2	Settled Landscapes
CDP13.3	Western Corridor Working Landscape
CDP13.4	Shannon Estuary Working Landscape
CDP13.5	Heritage Landscapes
CDP13.6	Seascape Character Areas
CDP13.7	Scenic Routes
CDP14.2	European Sites
CDP14.3	Requirement for Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive
CDP14.4	Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs)
CDP14.7	Non-designated Sites
CDP14.9	Environmental Impact Assessment
CDP14.10	Contaminated Land
CDP14.12	Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows
CDP14.13	Habitat Fragmentation
CDP14.26	Invasive Species
CDP15.2	Protected Structures
CDP15.5	Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)
CDP15.6	Protected Species and Proposed Works to Buildings
CDP15.8	Sites, Features and Objects of Archaeological Interest
CDP17.2	Universal Design
CDP17.3	Sustainable Development
CDP17.4	Design and Built Environment
CDP18.6	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
CDP18.7	CFRAMS
CDP18.8	Storm Water Management
CDP19.2	Local Area Plans
CDP19.3	Compliance with Zoning





Map 3B: Areas of Special Control



Chapter 4

Housing

Goal III:

A County Clare with high quality housing at appropriate locations throughout the County, ensuring the development of a range of house types, sizes and tenures to accommodate differing household needs, promote sustainable communities, social integration and inclusion and facilitating a sense of place.

4.0 Introduction.....	58
4.1 Strategic Aims.....	58
4.2 Context	58
4.3 Housing in County Clare	59
4.3.1 Housing Strategy	59
4.3.2 Living in our Towns and Villages..	60
4.3.3 Social and Affordable Housing.....	60
4.3.4 Emergency Accommodation	61
4.3.5 Unfinished Developments and Taking in Charge	62
4.3.6 Housing Design, Mix and Tenure ..	62
4.3.7 Sites for Independent Development	63
4.3.8 Traveller Accommodation.....	64
4.3.9 Housing and Accommodation for Older People	64
4.3.10 Housing for People with Disabilities.....	65
4.3.11 Student Accommodation	66
4.3.12 Holiday Homes.....	66
4.3.13 Naming of Developments	66
4.3.14 Green Infrastructure within Residential Developments	67
4.3.15 Radon	67



4.0 Introduction

Clare County Council has multiple roles in relation to housing in the County. Under the provisions of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), it must ensure that sufficient and suitable land is zoned for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, to meet the requirements of the housing strategy and to ensure that scarcity of such land does not occur at any time during the period of the Development Plan. The Council also provides dwellings for persons in need of accommodation who cannot provide such accommodation through their own resources, using the functions and powers available to it as a Housing Authority. Furthermore, through its development management function, Clare County Council regulates and manages private housing development.

Clare County Council recognises that suitable housing is an important factor in the health and wellbeing of the residents of County Clare. Housing that is appropriate to the needs of the occupant, in a location that has convenient access to essential services and which supports engagement in social and recreational activities is a primary element in the creation of sustainable and healthy communities. Achieving such communities is a central theme of this Plan.

4.1 Strategic Aims

This chapter presents the objectives required for the provision of housing and sustainable communities for the existing and future population of County Clare. In accordance with the overall vision of the Plan, it is based on the following strategic aims:

- To provide for the existing and future housing needs of the area covered by the Development Plan and to set out how this will be achieved;
- To ensure our towns and villages sustain their population and are vibrant places to live;

- To ensure that new housing developments contribute to the creation of sustainable and healthy communities;
- To ensure that sufficient land is zoned for various types of housing need over the lifetime of the Plan;
- To require compliance with Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015;
- To actively participate in the housing sector through the provision of public services, infrastructure and services for social, voluntary and private housing;
- To implement the Joint Housing Strategy for Clare Local Authorities and Limerick City & County Councils 2010-2017, and any subsequent strategy.

4.2 Context

In the preparation of this Chapter of the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023, regard has been had to the following:

Joint Housing Strategy for Clare Local Authorities and Limerick City & County Council 2011-2017

Best Practice Urban Design Manual 2009

Social Housing Strategy 2020 – Support, Supply and Reform

Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022

Report of the Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas

Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas – Guidelines for the Planning Authorities 2009

Managing and Resolving Unfinished Housing Developments – Guidance Manual 2011

National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability 2010-2016

Construction 2020 – A Strategy for a Renewed Construction Sector

Building on Recovery: Infrastructure and Capital Investment 2016-2021

4.3 Housing in County Clare

4.3.1 Housing Strategy

The Housing Strategy is the mechanism adopted by the Council to ensure that the housing needs of the existing and future population of the County are provided for. The Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) requires each planning authority to include the provisions of its Housing Strategy in its development plan.

The Joint Housing Strategy for Clare Local Authorities and Limerick City & County Councils 2010-2017 (Volume 9 of this Development Plan) sets out the strategy for addressing existing and future housing needs in Clare and Limerick.

CDP4.1

Development Plan Objective: Implementation of the Adopted Housing Strategy

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To secure the implementation of the Joint Housing Strategy for Clare Local Authorities and Limerick City & County Councils, 2010-2017 and any subsequent adopted housing strategy.

Clare County Council will ensure the provision of housing for the existing and future population in sustainable communities through the implementation of the Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy of this Development Plan. This will ensure that towns, villages and rural areas in County Clare will accommodate growth in accordance with their location within the Settlement Hierarchy. Land use zonings, based on the overarching principles of this Development Plan, set the framework and rationale for the amount and location of zonings for residential development throughout the County.

CDP4.2

Development Plan Objective: Facilitating the Housing Needs of the Population

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To facilitate the housing needs of the existing and future population of County Clare through the management of housing development throughout the County in accordance with the Settlement Strategy;
- B** To monitor the effectiveness of the Housing Strategy in meeting and resolving identified housing needs;
- C** To prioritise the reuse of existing housing stock in the Plan area.



4.3.2
Living in our Towns
and Villages

In order to create vibrant and sustainable towns and villages it is essential to sustain and enhance the residential population in town and village centres. Residential uses in the town centre, when combined with retail, commercial and civic uses, bring about high levels of human interaction and form an essential element in the vitality of a town. Residents in town and village centres enjoy a high quality of life and convenient access to both employment opportunities and a range of amenities. Residential uses in town and village centres also enhance economic growth by contributing to the vibrancy of settlements, making them more attractive locations for new business development and job creation. It is an aim of this Development Plan to encourage greater levels of residential occupancy in town and village centres across the County. In order to achieve this aim it is important to ensure that town and village centres are attractive, family-friendly spaces with a mix of accommodation types and tenures and to encourage the reuse of upper floors above commercial premises in the town centres for residential accommodation.

CDP4.3

Development Plan Objective:
Living in our Towns and Villages

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

A To encourage the reuse of upper floors above commercial premises for residential accommodation;

B To promote the retention of town centre residential units and to discourage their subdivision into smaller units or conversion into non-residential uses;

C To encourage the development of new residential accommodation in or adjoining town centres and to ensure that such developments provide a range of accommodation types and tenures and a high level of residential amenity;

D To support the procurement of vacant town centre residential property by Clare County Council to ensure its continued use for residential purposes into the future.

4.3.3
Social and Affordable Housing

Social Housing is defined as rented housing provided either by the local authority or a voluntary or co-operative housing body. Affordable Housing is defined as owner-occupier or shared ownership housing, provided at a price below market value.

In instances where the local authority is developing social or affordable housing, or purchasing property for such uses, it is essential to ensure that all members of society have access to accommodation that is suitable for their needs. Social and affordable housing also has an important role to play in town renewal and sustainable development. It is important to ensure that such housing has convenient access to essential services such as schools, shops etc. and is not constructed/purchased in areas that are isolated/at a distance from settlement centres. The use/renovation of existing housing stock, within existing settlements around the County, will be supported and encouraged.

The Urban Housing and Regeneration Act 2015 made amendments to Part V the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended). Section 94 of the Planning and Development Act now provides that a specified percentage, not being more than 10% of land zoned for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, shall be reserved for the provision of social and affordable housing.

Compliance with the requirements of Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) will be achieved in accordance with Section 96 of that Act, which was also amended by the Urban Housing and Regeneration Act, 2015

CDP4.4

Development Plan Objective: Social and Affordable Housing

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** In accordance with the requirements of Section 94(4)(c) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), to reserve 10% of land zoned for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, including 'low density residential' for the purpose of meeting social and affordable housing need arising within the County;
- B** To acquire land/properties for social and affordable housing provision in advance of immediate requirements in order to be in a position to respond to housing supply and demand opportunities;
- C** To support and encourage the use of existing housing stock and infill sites, in close proximity to services in towns and villages, for social and affordable housing provision;
- D** To ensure that new social and affordable housing developments are strongly integrated into the structure of existing settlements and are not isolated from services or segregated from the surrounding community;
- E** To ensure that new social and affordable housing developments are designed and constructed on the principles of universal design and life-long adaptability;
- F** To support the work of voluntary and cooperative housing associations in County Clare;
- G** To ensure that there is a balanced supply of private, social and affordable housing such that no settlement in the County experiences an over-concentration of any one type of accommodation.

4.3.4

Emergency Accommodation

Clare County Council has an important role to play in the provision of emergency accommodation. The Council has a dedicated Homeless Unit that provides assistance to all homeless people in accordance with need. For a variety of circumstances, a need for safe emergency accommodation may arise and it is recognised that those who are in need of emergency accommodation may require long-term social housing in the future. Clare County Council will work to meet both the short and long-term housing of all residents of the County.

CDP4.5

Development Plan Objective: Emergency Accommodation

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To support the work of the Homeless Unit and ensure that assistance is provided to those who are homeless in the County;
- B** To work with all relevant stakeholders to implement the Clare Homelessness Action Plan 2014-2018, and any subsequent plan.





**4.3.5
Unfinished Developments and
Taking in Charge**

There are a small number of unfinished developments in County Clare and there are also numerous residential developments that, while completed and occupied, have not yet been taken in charge by Clare County Council. The Council will continue to work with residents, developers and all relevant stakeholders to secure the satisfactory completion of all developments in the County and to ensure that residential developments are taken in charge in accordance with the requirements of Section 180 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).

CDP4.6

**Development Plan Objective:
Unfinished Developments and
Taking in Charge**

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

A To work with all relevant stakeholders to secure the satisfactory completion of unfinished developments in the County in accordance with 'Managing and Resolving Unfinished Housing Developments (DoECLG 2011)';

B To work with all relevant stakeholders to ensure that residential developments are taken in charge in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and the Council's 'Taking in Charge Policy for Private Housing Developments 2009' or any updated version.

**4.3.6
Housing Design,
Mix and Tenure**

The mix of house types proposed in an area must ensure that the needs of all members of society are accommodated. A mix of house types and tenures will create mixed communities and provide a choice of housing suitable to all age groups and persons at different stages of the life cycle.

In terms of house design the Council will require a variety of designs in each new development. The Council will also require development proposals to incorporate a mix of house types such as bungalows, two storey dwellings, duplexes etc. as appropriate to the scale of the settlement in which the development will be located. A variety of plot sizes and shapes will be required within each development, providing future residents with the option of greater/ less private open space associated with their property in accordance with their personal needs.

CDP4.7

**Development Plan Objective:
Housing Mix**

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

A To secure the development of a mix of house types and sizes throughout the County to meet the needs of the likely future population in accordance with the guidance set out in the Housing Strategy and the Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas;

B To require new housing developments to incorporate a variety of plot sizes to meet the current and future needs of residents;

C To require the submission of a Statement of Housing Mix with all applications for multi-unit residential development in order to facilitate the proper evaluation of the proposal relative to this objective.

4.3.7 Sites for Independent Development

The provision of sites for independent development in the towns and villages of the County provides an opportunity for the development of housing in close proximity to amenities and services, whilst also affording the applicant the opportunity to design and develop a home that is tailored to their specific needs. Housing schemes of this nature also have the potential to increase the number of people living in towns and villages across the County. In such developments infrastructure such as roads, lighting, water connectivity etc. will be developed by the primary developer, with house design and development, waste water treatment (in areas without public waste water treatment services), on-site landscaping etc. being carried out by the individual site purchasers. This form of development provides an alternative to single houses in rural areas whilst allowing individuals to design and build their own bespoke home.

It is essential that such developments are fully integrated into existing towns and villages and reflect the character of the surrounding settlement. In rural settlements in particular it is important to ensure that new houses constructed as part of a scheme of this nature are sympathetic in their design and do not result in the creation of a suburban-style environment in a primarily rural area.

Clare County Council will prepare guidance on the progression of housing schemes comprising 'sites for independent development'. This guidance will address issues such as the integration of the development into the existing settlement, the potential order of work and the preparation of an overall masterplan for the site to ensure that the development is fully completed to a satisfactory standard.

CDP4.8

Development Plan Objective: Sites for Independent Development

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To support the development of 'sites for independent development' housing schemes on lands that have been zoned for low density residential development in the settlements of County Clare and on other sites that have been specifically identified for developments of this nature;
- B** To prepare a guidance document on the progression of 'sites for independent development' housing schemes during the lifetime of this Plan.





4.3.8 Traveller Accommodation

Clare County Council recognises the specific requirements of providing accommodation for the Traveller community. It also recognises its role in empowering and facilitating the travelling community so that it can provide for its own accommodation to a greater degree. The Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998 places a statutory obligation on Clare County Council to prepare and adopt a Traveller Accommodation Programme, subject to periodic review, to meet the existing and projected needs of the Traveller community in the County. Clare County Council has provided housing for Traveller communities in a number of towns and villages throughout the County. The Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014-2018 sets out the need, location and types of accommodation for that period.

CDP4.9

Development Plan Objective: Traveller Accommodation

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To provide appropriate housing accommodation for the Traveller community in accordance with the Social Housing Strategy 2020 and the Clare County Council Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014-2018, and any subsequent programme adopted by the Council.

4.3.9 Housing and Accommodation for Older People

Older people have certain housing requirements relating to access, medical care, security and personal safety, amongst other issues. While the majority of older people own their own homes, some may find that their accommodation is not entirely suitable to their needs. The demographic profile of County Clare indicates that the number of older people per head of population is increasing which results in a growing need to provide assisted housing which is suitable for older people.

Day care and nursing home facilities will become increasingly important in the coming years and Clare County Council will facilitate the development of quality services throughout the County. It is important that, wherever possible, these facilities are integrated into the community to allow residents to access goods and services outside the facility and to ensure convenient access for visitors, staff and servicing vehicles.

In addition to the provision of assisted housing, it is highly important to recognise that many older people wish to live in their own homes for as long as possible. For this reason it is important to ensure that new developments provide accessible and adaptable homes so that residents can continue to live independently in their own community, if they so wish, through all stages of their life.

Older members of the community, particularly those currently living in rural areas, can also experience social isolation and difficulties accessing essential services. They can benefit from moving to towns and villages where they are close to services and social opportunities. Housing for older people in such locations also supports the Council's objective to encourage greater residential uses in town and village centres.

Section 5.3.6 Age Friendly County is also of relevance to this issue.

CDP4.10

Development Plan Objective: Housing for Older People

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To ensure that new housing developments provide a range of house types and that accessibility and life-long adaptability are key elements in house design;
- B** To facilitate the provision of accommodation to meet the needs of older people and to encourage the provision of a range of housing options for older people in appropriate, convenient and easily accessible locations;
- C** To support the development of new nursing home and day care facilities in towns and villages in the County;
- D** To support the development of nursing home and day care facilities on brownfield sites outside of settlements, subject to normal site suitability criteria.

4.3.10 Housing for People with Disabilities

The aim for all new housing and, wherever possible, housing conversions and refurbishments should be to construct homes that are universally designed and easily adapted to meet the changing needs of occupants over time. This will provide everyone with greater choice in terms of where they live, and will enable people to continue to live in their own homes as their needs change.

The Council supports the 'National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability 2011-2016' which sets out a framework for the delivery of housing for people with disabilities through mainstream housing policy. Effectively meeting the housing needs of people with disabilities requires a variety of approaches and responses. The Council recognises and supports other key areas including; person-centred and specific design to meet individual's personal needs, circumstances and choice, and a person-centred service with accessible information provision and inter-agency cooperation.

The Council fully supports 'The Universal Design Guidelines for Homes in Ireland (2015)' which offers a flexible framework for designers to enhance the quality of life for everyone in their homes, while also offering guidance for person-centred design.

Clare County Council provides a small number of specially adapted housing schemes for people with disabilities. In addition it also adapts existing houses to the needs of tenants with disabilities subject to resources. The Council also operates a number of grant schemes to assist the owners of private houses to adapt their homes to meet their changing needs during their lifetime such as the Housing Aid for Older People Scheme, Mobility Aids Housing Grant Scheme and the Housing Adaptation Grant for New Houses.

CDP4.11

Development Plan Objective: Accommodation for People with Disabilities

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To facilitate the provision of accommodation to meet the needs of those with disabilities through the provision and/or adaptation of appropriate accommodation and through the promotion of lifetime adaptable homes;
- B** To require all new residential buildings to provide a ground floor low level access shower and toilet to ensure adaptability to future needs.



4.3.11
Student Accommodation

Purpose-built student accommodation has particular requirements in terms of design and location. It should be located so that it has convenient access to the university and colleges, particularly on foot, bicycle and public transport and generally within urban or suburban centres or within college campuses. Such developments are generally relatively high-density projects with a range of facilities appropriate for student living.

CDP4.12
Development Plan Objective:
Student Accommodation

- It is an objective of the Development Plan:**
- A** To facilitate the provision of high quality student accommodation in appropriate locations having regard to relevant guidance in relation to residential development;
 - B** To encourage new student accommodation to locate in areas where smarter travel transport options are available.

4.3.12
Holiday Homes

Holiday homes form an important part of the tourism infrastructure in County Clare and make a valuable contribution to the local economy particularly in the coastal areas of North and West Clare. However, large numbers of holiday homes in an area can also have negative impacts in terms of high numbers of vacant dwellings in the 'low season' and, in some cases, associated issues with poor property maintenance during those times of vacancy. High levels of holiday home development can also have a consequent effect on the provision of services and planning for future population growth. In County Clare, Kilkee, Liscannor, Querrin, Mountshannon and Carrigaholt had the highest vacancy rates in Census 2011, with Kilkee and Liscannor having vacancy rates of 71% and 56% respectively. The provision and distribution of holiday homes in settlements throughout the County, particularly along the Atlantic Coast will be carefully monitored. The development management process will ensure that the overall vision of sustainable communities is achieved.

CDP4.13
Development Plan Objective:
Holiday Homes

- It is an objective of the Development Plan:**
- A** To permit holiday homes in settlements where the developments are of a scale and location which contribute to sustainable communities, ensuring an appropriate balance between the number of permanent homes and holiday homes;
 - B** In settlements where an oversupply of holiday homes has been identified¹, namely Kilkee, Liscannor and Querrin, to permit new residential developments for permanent occupancy only;
 - C** To support and facilitate the conversion of some holiday home units to permanent homes or appropriate alternative uses where:
 - i** It can be demonstrated that both the dwelling and the associated infrastructure (open space provision, car parking, waste water capacity etc.) are of a sufficient standard to support the proposed new use;
 - ii** The Planning Authority is satisfied that the conversion will not have a negative impact on the tourism product in the area.

Note: See also CDP 9.3.4 Visitor Accommodation

4.3.13
Naming of Developments

It is important that place names in new developments such as housing developments, streets, business centres etc. and their associated signage reflect the local topography, history, culture or ecology, such as ancient fields, roads, people and significant events. The Clare Place Names Committee gives advice on selecting place names and monitors new names given to developments.

CDP4.14
Development Plan Objective:
Development Place Names

- It is an objective of Clare County Council:**
- To promote local heritage by encouraging the use of local placenames or geographical, historical or cultural names in the naming of new residential or other developments.

¹ Settlements with >50% vacancy rates, as per Census 2011

4.3.14 Green Infrastructure within Residential Developments

In many cases the 'greening' of residential areas focuses on the requirement to provide a percentage of open space, back gardens/ balconies, privacy strips and street planting. Quantity can often take precedence over ecological quality and function. Levelled areas of grassland provide ease of maintenance but have limited eco-system benefits. Open spaces in residential developments can be enriched by retaining and enhancing existing natural features as well as introducing additional features. New developments will be required to ensure that quality takes precedence through the incorporation of eco-system benefits alongside established features e.g. the retention of existing and/or the provision of new edges rich in biodiversity such as treelines, hedgerows, wetland areas or meadow planting which can be provided in conjunction with recreational amenity facilities. Regard should be had to the adopted Clare Biodiversity Action Plan and County Clare Heritage Plan in the design of green areas in residential developments.

CDP4.15

Development Plan Objective: Green Infrastructure in Residential Developments

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To ensure that green areas associated with new residential developments enrich the quality of life of local residents and provide ecologically-rich areas that enhance biodiversity and contribute to the green infrastructure network in the County.

4.3.15 Radon

Radon levels in the County have been collated from the Radiological Protection Institute of Ireland. The central portion of the County is above reference level and therefore within a high radon area. A High Radon Area is any area where it is predicted that 10% or more of homes will exceed the Reference Level of 200 Bq/m³. Actions are required to reduce the risk to health from high radon levels in particular, within this central location.

CDP4.16

Development Plan Objective: Radon

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To have regard to the specific guidance on radon prevention measures for new homes as contained within the existing Building Regulations (including any updated/superseding regulations that may be published within the lifetime of this Development Plan).



**Chapter 4 Housing –
Cross References**

CDP2.1	Appropriate Assessment, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
CDP5.1	Sustainable Communities
CDP5.4	Social Inclusion
CDP5.5	Inclusivity
CDP5.6	Accessibility
CDP5.7	Age-Friendly County
CDP5.8	Community Facilities
CDP5.10	Arts and Cultural
CDP5.11	Physical Recreation and Active Living
CDP8.10	Smarter Travel
CDP8.11	Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans
CDP8.13	Walking and Cycling
CDP8.16	Bus Services
CDP8.17	Integrated Transport
CDP9.4	Tourist Accommodation
CDP10.5	Rural Tourism
CDP14.1	Biodiversity

CDP14.2	European Sites
CDP14.3	Requirements of Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive
CDP14.4	Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs)
CDP14.7	Non-Designated Sites
CDP14.12	Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows
CDP14.27	Green Infrastructure
CDP15.2	Protected Structures
CDP15.5	Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)
CDP16.8	Land Identified as Areas on which the Vacant Site Levy can Apply
CDP16.11	Community Activity
CDP17.2	Universal Design
CDP17.3	Sustainable Development
CDP19.2	Zoning of Lands
CDP19.3	Compliance with Zoning



Chapter 5

Community Development and Social Infrastructure

Goal IV:

A County Clare where healthy and sustainable communities are developed and integrated with the timely delivery of a wide range of community, educational and cultural facilities and where, through a commitment to equality, participation, accessibility and social inclusion, the County develops as a unique location with an enhanced quality of life for its citizens and visitors.

5.0 Introduction.....	70
5.1 Strategic Aims.....	70
5.2 Context	70
5.3 Sustainable and Inclusive Communities	71
5.3.1 Local Community Development Committee	71
5.3.2 Voluntary and Community Groups	72
5.3.3 Social Inclusion	72
5.3.4 Inclusivity	73
5.3.5 Accessibility of Public Services, Information and Heritage Sites	73
5.3.6 Age-Friendly County	74
5.3.7 Community Facilities	75
5.3.8 Community Gardens and Allotments	75
5.4 Social Infrastructure	76
5.4.1 The Arts and Cultural Development	76
5.4.2 Physical Recreation and Active Living	77
5.4.3 Educational Services	80
5.4.4 Dual Use of Community Facilities ..	83
5.4.5 Healthcare Facilities	83
5.4.6 The Library Service	84
5.4.7 Burial Grounds and Crematoria....	84

5.0 Introduction

Creating vibrant, healthy and inclusive communities, developed on the principles of sustainability and accessibility, is a key component in ensuring a high quality of life for all residents in County Clare, ensuring that the County is an attractive place to visit and in which to do business. Access to social and community infrastructure, not only in larger towns but also in smaller settlements and rural areas is also essential to well-being, social inclusion and the creation of sustainable and attractive communities. This Development Plan aims to ensure that all residents of County Clare have access to essential services, the facilities to remain active and healthy and the amenities to ensure a high quality of life.

5.1 Strategic Aims

This chapter presents the strategic aims and specific objectives required to support community development, enhance social infrastructure, address social exclusion and support physical, social and cultural integration as well as addressing deficits in social, community and physical infrastructure. In accordance with the overall vision of the Plan, the strategic aims of this chapter are:

- To promote, encourage and facilitate physical, social and cultural inclusion throughout the County and across all communities;
- To ensure that the principles of accessible, inclusive and sustainable community development are central in all developments;
- To implement the community elements of the adopted Local Economic and Community Plan;
- To promote the creation of strong, vibrant neighbourhoods in the settlements of County Clare, each with a range of services and amenities which are easily accessible for local residents;

- To promote and support improved social and community infrastructure throughout the County;
- To encourage, promote and facilitate active and inclusive participation in physical and social activities.

5.2 Context

In the preparation of this chapter of the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023, regard has been had to the following:

Clare County Council Local Economic & Community Plan 2016-2021
Clare Local Authorities Social Inclusion and Accessibility Strategy 2011-2014
Profile of Social Inclusion Target Groups in County Clare Working Group Report on Citizen Engagement with Local Governments – DoECLG 2014.
The National Countryside Recreation Strategy 2006
Clare Age Friendly County Programme 2013
Building on Recovery: Infrastructure and Capital Investment 2016-2021
Creating Space – Clare Arts Development Plan 2010
The Local Government Reform Act 2014
Active Living Strategy for County Clare 2012
Limerick Clare Sports and Physical Recreation Strategy 2013
National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016
World Health Organisation – Promoting Physical Activity and Active Living in Urban Areas – The Role of Local Governments
Off-Road Cycling Strategy – Coillte 2012
SmarterTravel – A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020
Opportunities for All – A Strategy for Public Libraries 2013-2017
A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 013-2025





5.3 Sustainable and Inclusive Communities

One of the key aims of the Development Plan is to ensure that County Clare becomes synonymous with a high quality of life based on healthy, accessible and inclusive communities. The Local Authority has a leading role to play in achieving this aim, particularly with regard to ensuring that patterns of future development support the creation of vibrant and sustainable communities. Throughout the lifetime of this Development Plan the Local Authority will work to promote:

- Residential development in close proximity to existing services in order to reduce car dependency;
- The provision of accessible community facilities to enhance social interaction and quality of life;
- The creation of activity-friendly environments e.g. cycle-lanes and well-lit paths
- The creation of compact and 'walkable' urban forms to increase community cohesion;
- The provision of local play and community facilities adjacent to existing services to encourage linked-trips and to ensure that facilities are accessible to all local residents.

The aim is for each settlement in the Plan area (and each neighbourhood in large settlements) to be a high quality place to live, with essential services provided in close proximity to residential areas. In order to achieve this, high quality design, which reflects the prominence of schools, community and commercial buildings in the neighbourhood, will be required as part of future development proposals.

CDP5.1

Development Plan Objective: Sustainable Communities

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To ensure that future development proposals contribute to the creation of sustainable communities throughout County Clare;
- B** To work in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders to facilitate the planning and delivery of accessible community facilities throughout the County.



5.3.1 Local Community Development Committee

The Clare Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), which comprises representatives from local government and from local development and community interests, plays a pivotal oversight role in local and community development programmes and in preparing the community element of the Local Economic and Community Plan. The LCDC ensures that there is a more coherent approach and meaningful citizen and community engagement in the scoping, planning, delivery and evaluation of local and community development programmes. Through the implementation of the community elements of the Clare Local Economic and Community Plan, the Council will work in partnership with local communities to promote quality of life and well-being, address the needs of disadvantaged communities, pursue labour activation schemes, support rural transport initiatives and enhance towns and villages across the County.

CDP5.2

Development Plan Objective: Local Community Development Committee

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To support the work of the Clare Local Community Development Committee;
- B** To work with the Clare Local Community Development Committee and all relevant stakeholders to implement the Clare Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021 and any subsequent plan.

5.3.2 Voluntary and Community Groups

Clare County Council recognises the essential contribution that voluntary groups, community groups and sporting groups make to quality of life in the County. These groups work tirelessly to support and enhance their local communities, from both a physical and social perspective. The Clare Public Participation Network, which comprises over 170 community and voluntary groups from across the County, is one of the main links through which the local authority connects with the community, voluntary and environmental sectors. It provides the opportunity to create greater synergies between local government and local and community development and places local and community development at the heart of local government.

The Clare Public Participation Network will ensure the work of the Council reflects the needs of the community and the Council will actively engage with the Network when implementing the objectives of this Plan.

CDP5.3 Development Plan Objective: Voluntary and Community Groups

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To actively engage with the Clare Public Participation Network in the preparation and implementation of this Plan and other local authority policies and programmes to ensure that it represents and responds to the needs of the residents of County Clare.



5.3.3 Social Inclusion

Social inclusion is about ensuring that everybody can fulfil their potential through access to high quality public services, education, employment opportunities and adequate housing in an attractive and safe environment. It is therefore important that our living, working and leisure environments are designed and maintained in a manner that ensures that people of all backgrounds and circumstances can achieve equality and access to the facilities and services needed to achieve their own potential in life. This Development Plan has an important role in promoting social inclusion in the County and includes a range of strategies to promote access to housing, community facilities, amenities, participation in cultural life etc.

The Clare Local Economic and Community Plan has a strong focus on promoting and supporting the interests of local communities, including enhancing quality of life and wellbeing. The Plan contains measures aimed at tackling poverty, disadvantage and social exclusion and its implementation will make a positive contribution to communities across the County.

The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) aims to tackle poverty, social exclusion and long term unemployment through local engagement and partnership between disadvantaged individuals, community organisations and public sectors agencies. In County Clare SICAP is being overseen by the Clare Local Development Company and Clare County Council will work to support the implementation of the programme in the County.

CDP5.4 Development Plan Objective: Social Inclusion

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To work with all relevant stakeholders to help tackle disadvantage and social exclusion, to secure improvements in quality of life and to promote equality of access to public and social services;
- B** To work with all target groups, including older persons, young people, the disabled, the Traveller community, refugees and migrants, to advance their physical, social and cultural integration.



5.3.4 Inclusivity

Inclusivity is a broad term that refers to how easily all people can access, understand and use places, products or services regardless of age, size, gender, race or physical, sensory, mental health and intellectual abilities or disabilities. In its broadest sense it means that places, products and services can be positively enjoyed by people from all cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.

Section 17.4.6 Universal Design is also of relevance to this issue.

CDP5.5

Development Plan Objective: Inclusivity

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To promote social inclusion by implementing best practice universal accessibility and design.

5.3.5 Accessibility of Public Services, Information and Heritage Sites

The National Disability Authority is the independent state body providing expert advice on disability policy and practice to the government and the public sector, and promoting universal design in Ireland.

The Disability Act 2005 (the Act) provides the statutory basis for making public services accessible. Sections 26, 27, 28 and 29 of the Act place obligations on public bodies to make their services, information and heritage sites accessible to people with disabilities. The 'Code of Practice on Accessibility of Public Services and Information provided by Public Bodies' and the 'Code of Practice on Accessible Heritage Sites' have been prepared at the request of the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform under section 30 of the Act to guide public bodies to meet these obligations.

CDP5.6

Development Plan Objective: Accessibility

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To promote social inclusion by promoting and supporting the principles of universal design to create products, services and environments that meet all people's needs in terms of access, understanding and use, across all sectors, including transport, built and natural environments, heritage and tourism;
- B** To take all required steps to ensure compliance with the Disability Act (2005).

5.3.6
Age-Friendly County

Census 2011 indicated that the number of older persons (defined as 65+ in the Census) in County Clare is increasing. It is therefore becoming more important to assess the needs of an ageing community and the particular needs of people now in the later stage of life. It is equally important to maintain a good quality of life as people grow older by ensuring that available resources are optimised and necessary facilities are provided.

Clare County Council is participating in Ireland’s Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme, an initiative run by the World Health Organisation to encourage an age-friendly society. Clare County Council has prepared the Clare Age-Friendly County Programme which includes both an overall strategy and an action plan. The Programme provides the foundations for a county where older people are supported, connected and valued for their contribution to community and family. The Programme also aims to ensure that the County’s social, cultural, economic and physical environments become more age-friendly and supportive of a healthy and positive experience of ageing.

The age-friendly approach will also benefit those people with impaired mobility, including those with physical disabilities, parents with young children and children themselves. This Development Plan aims to develop life-long communities with adequate housing, transport, local retail and services, and social and outdoor facilities for all age groups.

5.3.6.1 Ageing in Place

The creation and modification of the built environment can affect the lives of all community members in both negative and positive ways. Without proper planning the physical environment can act as a barrier to older people remaining active in their community and this, in turn, can lead to a deterioration in their physical and mental health and social isolation, especially in rural areas.

‘Ageing in Place’ implies that older people can continue living in their communities and homes for as long as possible. They should be able to remain as independent as their health and financial situation allows and should have continued access to educational, cultural and recreational facilities. By incorporating the principles of ‘Universal Design’, architects, designers and planners can have a major impact in terms of creating the environment that enables people to remain in their own homes.

Please also refer to Appendix 1, Section A1.3.2 Life Long Adaptability,

CDP5.7

Development Plan Objective:
Age-Friendly County

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

A To proactively support the implementation of the Clare Age-Friendly County Programme 2013 and any subsequent programme;

B To work with developers, communities and relevant stakeholders to achieve accessible and age-friendly amenities and facilities in communities across the County.





5.3.7

Community Facilities

A large range of amenities and facilities available to residents of County Clare are owned and/or managed by local communities. There are a large number of amenities throughout the County such as community buildings, youth clubs and sporting facilities that are of paramount importance to quality of life, wellbeing and social interaction in their respective areas.

The loss of such facilities can have a major impact on a community, especially in areas where no other dedicated facilities exist. In order to prevent the loss of community facilities, the Council will discourage their change of use to non-community uses.

In some areas facilities of this nature are ring-fenced for specific groups and are closed to other users, meaning that community facilities can often be under-utilised. The Council will work with community groups to address this issue during the lifetime of this Plan.

CDP5.8

Development Plan Objective: Community Facilities

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To promote and encourage optimum usage of the large number of community facilities across the County;
- B** To update the inventory of community, social and cultural facilities throughout the County within the lifetime of this Plan;
- C** To encourage, advise and assist community groups wishing to provide community facilities in their area;
- D** To ensure that sufficient lands are zoned for community use to meet the demands of the projected population during the lifetime of this Plan.



5.3.8

Community Gardens and Allotments

Community gardens and allotments make a valuable contribution to society on a number of levels. They contribute to neighbourhood improvement, sense of community, connection to the environment and the overall green infrastructure network in an area. They can also have an important educational and social role in a local community. While there are numerous benefits to community gardens and allotments, it is also important to ensure that they are developed and managed appropriately.

CDP5.9

Development Plan Objective: Community Gardens and Allotments

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- To facilitate the development of community gardens and allotments in County Clare subject to normal planning and environmental considerations.

5.4 Social Infrastructure

The infrastructure required to meet a community’s social and physical needs is facilitated in locations and amenities such as health centres, day centres, childcare facilities, schools, colleges, museums, libraries, public halls, places of worship, cemeteries, sports fields, etc. Clare County Council facilitates and supports the development of these facilities. Strong and relevant social infrastructure is essential to the creation of healthy, inclusive and sustainable communities. While different elements of social infrastructure are discussed individually below, they should be provided in a coordinated manner in communities across the County, in locations that are accessible to the population that they are intended to serve.

5.4.1 The Arts and Cultural Development

The Arts Act 2003 defines “the arts” and enables local authorities to provide financial or other assistance for the purpose of stimulating public interest in the arts, promoting knowledge, appreciation and practice of the arts and improving standards in the arts. Culture, in this Development Plan, can refer to both the traditional culture and cultural activities of County Clare, and embracing the County as a dynamic and multi-cultural society. A strong arts and cultural sector can enhance quality of life, promote social inclusion and the integration of people from different cultures into their local community. It can also contribute significantly to the economic growth of the County, attracting visitors and creating employment.

CDP5.10

Development Plan Objective: The Arts and Cultural Development

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To develop programmes that support the arts and people’s experience of the arts both as participants and audience members;
- B** To support the development of workspaces for artists and artistic organisations and display facilities for visual arts works throughout the County;
- C** To support cultural and entertainment activities in the County by operating within the forthcoming National Cultural Policy and by co-operating with the Arts Council, community groups and other bodies;
- D** To support events and activities that allow people from different cultures to meet and learn about their different traditions, music, food, religions etc. in order to support the development of an open, inclusive and multi-cultural society in County Clare.



5.4.2 Physical Recreation and Active Living

There is a need to enable individuals to incorporate more physical activity into their daily lives. Active living refers to the integration of physical activity into everyday routines such as cycling to work or walking to the local shop. Clare County Council has a central role to play in ensuring that towns, villages and communities develop in a manner that encourages physical activity and active living.

Physical recreation and active living are inherently interlinked with health and wellbeing. Peoples' health is largely determined by the social and built environments in which they live, work and learn and a lack of recreational spaces and facilities in community settings/ neighbourhoods is closely associated with behavioural and health problems. There is a need to ensure that when such facilities are provided, they are appropriate for different groups in the community. The physical environment in the settlements of County Clare should enable all citizens to be physically active in day-to-day life. The Limerick and Clare Sports and Physical Recreation Strategy 2013 sets the policy context for the provision of a wide variety of amenities for communities across the County.

Local governments have a crucial role to play in creating environments and opportunities for physical activity and active living. Activities such as walking and cycling are not just healthy modes of transport. These activities also promote well-being and physical health, improve quality of life and tackle sedentary lifestyles. Taking part in physical activity also creates opportunities for socialisation, networking and cultural activity. Therefore active living can positively contribute to economic prosperity and social cohesion.

CDP5.11

Development Plan Objective: Physical Recreation and Active Living

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To support the implementation of the Limerick and Clare Sports and Physical Recreation Strategy 2013 and any subsequent strategies;
- B** To promote Active Living as a means of enhancing health, wellbeing and social inclusion;
- C** To work with local community groups to support and expand the Slí na Sláinte network in County Clare, in compliance with all relevant legislation, as outlined in Objective CDP2.1;
- D** To work with local communities and relevant bodies to support local groups that promote/organise walking, cycling and other recreational activities;
- E** To support the coordinated development of new indoor and outdoor recreational facilities in County Clare, based on need;
- F** To work in coordination with all relevant stakeholders to ensure that the necessary facilities and infrastructure are in place to support Active Living and increased levels of physical recreation;
- G** To support the development of cycle-parking facilities at appropriate locations in all urban areas in the County;
- H** To ensure that new recreation facilities/ amenities are based on the principles of sustainable development and incorporate efficient heating systems, lighting etc.;
- I** To ensure that recreational facilities are accessible to all and based on the principles of Universal Design;
- J** To ensure that sufficient lands are zoned for recreational uses to meet the needs of the projected population during the lifetime of this Plan;
- K** To ensure that future development, zoning or recreational facilities are in compliance with all relevant legislation as outlined in Objective CDP2.1.



5.4.2.1 Off Road Walking and Cycling Routes

There are many off-road walking and cycling routes throughout County Clare that provide a significant amenity and recreational opportunity for both local residents and visitors to the County. The walks include the Doolin to Hags Head cliff walk, the way-marked trails and numerous looped walks across the County. A cycleway has been developed to link Ennistymon with Lahinch and significant work has commenced on the development of a greenway along the former route of the West Clare Railway. Clare County Council recognises that sustainably-developed and maintained walking and cycling routes are of considerable benefit to the economies of the areas through which they run as well as playing an invaluable educational, recreational and conservation role. There are a wide range of opportunities across all parts of the County to further expand the network of walking and cycling trails available.

Having regard to Coillte's Off-Road Cycling Strategy 2012, the Cratloe Woods area meets all the necessary criteria for the development of a regional-scale trail centre for off-road cycling. Such a development would constitute a significant addition to the recreational facilities in County Clare. It could attract large numbers of visitors to the County, contribute greatly to the local economy and also provide an excellent recreational amenity for local residents.

CDP5.12

**Development Plan Objective:
Off-Road Walking and Cycling**

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To support the maintenance of existing off-road walking and cycling trails and support the development of new trails in County Clare;
- B** To support and facilitate the development of the West Clare Railway Greenway and necessary supporting infrastructure;
- C** To promote the development of regional-scale, off-road cycling trails and associated facilities in the Cratloe Woods area;
- D** To ensure any proposed development for off-road walking and cycling takes into consideration the safe and adequate provision of access, set-down and parking areas;
- E** To complete heritage audits and improve heritage interpretation along walking and cycling routes in the County;
- F** To encourage and support the development of ancillary businesses and facilities such as bike hire and repair, outdoor clothing sales, drying rooms for walkers, surfers etc. and businesses offering walking and cycling tours subject to normal planning considerations;
- G** To ensure that the development of any off-road walking and cycling routes does not negatively impact on any European or nationally protected sites;
- H** To ensure all cycle routes adhere to the principles contained within the national policy document 'Smarter Travel A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020', and 'The National Cycle Policy Framework' or any updated/ amended guidance document.

5.4.2.2 Countryside Recreation

The varied countryside of County Clare offers extensive opportunity for recreational activity. These activities have the potential to diversify and strengthen the rural economy and include developments such as walking and mountain bike trails, forestry-based recreation, or the reuse of quarries for activities such as climbing, abseiling, off-road sports etc.

In order to encourage active living it is also important to ensure countryside recreational activities can be safely and easily accessed from the towns and villages in the County e.g. through the provision of linkages via footpaths, cycle-ways etc.

CDP5.13

Development Plan Objective: Countryside Recreation

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To support the diversification of the rural economy through the development of the recreational potential of the countryside, in accordance with the National Countryside Recreation Strategy and subject to compliance with Objective CDP2.1.

5.4.2.3 Public Rights of Way

The Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) requires that development plans preserve public rights of way which give access to seashore, mountain, lakeshore, riverbank or other places of natural beauty or recreational utility. The Act requires that such public rights of way shall be identified both by marking them on at least one of the maps forming part of the Development Plan and by indicating their location on a list appended to the Development Plan.

The inclusion of a public right of way in this Plan is based on evidence of such a right of way existing and in particular of its compliance with the specific requirements of Section 10(2) (o) of the Act. It does not affect the existence or validity of any other public right of way which is not included in this Plan.

Public rights of way which meet the criteria of Section 10(2)(o) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) are set out in Appendix 6 of this Plan. Maps of the relevant locations are also contained in this appendix.

CDP5.14

Development Plan Objective: Public Rights of Way

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To encourage the preservation of existing public rights of way within the Plan area;
- B** In accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), including Sections 10 and 14, to preserve public rights of way which give access to seashore, mountain, lakeshore, riverbank or other places of natural beauty or recreational utility, as set out in the maps associated with this Plan (Appendix 6).





5.4.2.4 Play Areas

Play areas for children and teenagers in both urban and suburban areas greatly enhance quality of life and sense of community. Facilities can range in size and scale from tot-lots in town centre areas to encourage family activity in urban settings to larger community playgrounds and play areas.

Clare County Council recognises the importance of these facilities and in recent years, through the implementation of a highly successful ‘community ownership’ approach, significant investment has been made in children’s play and recreational facilities across the County.

CDP5.15

Development Plan Objective: Playgrounds and Play Areas

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To support local communities in the provision of a range of play facilities, including tot-lots, play grounds, skate parks and other play areas in appropriate locations across the County, including town centres.

5.4.3 Educational Services

Educational services, for the purposes of this Plan, encompass pre-school and childcare facilities, primary and secondary educational facilities, higher education and adult learning. Education is a critical driver of economic success and social progress in modern society. Access to quality education services is also essential to the long-term viability of rural areas. Rural depopulation is a significant challenge to the retention of educational services and Clare County Council will work with local communities, education providers and all relevant stakeholders to address this issue during the lifetime of the Plan. This issue is addressed further in Section 16.3.7 Addressing Depopulation.

5.4.3.1 Pre-School/ Childcare Facilities

It is essential that sufficient childcare spaces are available to meet the needs of the population of the County. A lack of such services has the potential to be a barrier to employment and economic growth. Childcare facilities will be encouraged to locate close to residential areas, in the vicinity of employment locations and in town centres or local centres. It is particularly important to ensure that vulnerable or disadvantaged members of the community can access childcare services in order to support social integration and to enable parents to access education or employment opportunities.

While it is recognised that the provision of childcare facilities in residential areas can provide a beneficial service to the surrounding communities, this must be balanced with the protection of residential amenities and the retention of the residential character of the area. For this reason, development proposals for change of use of all or part of a dwelling house in a residential area to a childcare facility will be assessed having regard to the standards set out in Appendix 1, Section A1.3.3 Development Management Guidelines.

CDP5.16

Development Plan Objective: Childcare Facilities

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To encourage the provision of affordable and accessible childcare and preschool facilities throughout County Clare;
- B** To facilitate the development of additional childcare services for vulnerable or disadvantaged groups in the community;
- C** To have regard to ‘Childcare Facilities – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001); or any updated version, in the assessment of applications for childcare facilities.

5.4.3.2 Primary and Secondary School Facilities

Clare County Council recognises that schools are a key part of social and community infrastructure available in an area and that schools act as an anchor to wider social and community facilities in many areas. The Department of Education and Skills is responsible for the delivery of educational facilities and services. In accordance with 'Provisions for Schools and the Planning System – Code of Practice 2008', it is Clare County Council's role to ensure that adequate serviced lands are available in appropriate locations, to facilitate the development of primary and secondary schools. There are a number of locations throughout the County where new schools will be required during the lifetime of this Plan including Ennis, Ennistymon, Killadysert, Sixmilebridge and Tulla.

County Clare is currently well-served in relation to primary and secondary school facilities. However new residential communities can generate a demand for a significant number of new school places, particularly where families are attracted to the area. In such cases, it is vital to the process of supporting sustainable communities that the planning system facilitates the timely provision of new school buildings. There are also areas where new school facilities will be required during the lifetime of this Plan due to natural growth in the population of an area. Where a need for additional facilities has been identified, suitable land will be zoned in the relevant settlement plan or local area plan to accommodate new educational development. In the assessment of applications for development the Planning Authority will have regard to 'The Provision of Schools and the Planning System

– A Code of Practice for Planning Authorities (2008)', 'Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Area – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009)' and the Department of Education and Skills technical guidance documents 'Identification and Suitability of Sites for Post primary Schools' and 'General Design Guidance for Schools'.

A number of rural primary schools, located in close proximity to larger urban centres, have been progressively expanding, chiefly to accommodate children travelling from within the neighbouring urban areas. In the interest of promoting sustainable travel and transport patterns, the expansion of rural schools to accommodate children from neighbouring urban areas will be discouraged.

CDP5.17

Development Plan Objective: Primary and Secondary Education

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To facilitate the provision of schools by zoning suitable lands in settlement plans and local area plans capable of meeting the demands of the projected populations;
- B** To ensure that land developed for educational purposes is located as close as possible to the area experiencing population growth that it is intended to serve;
- C** To assess and ensure the adequacy of school capacity when dealing with planning applications for large residential developments;
- D** To require the provision of cycle lanes, pedestrian footpaths and crossings serving primary and secondary school facilities.



5.4.3.3 Higher Education Institutes

County Clare is uniquely positioned in close proximity to six higher education institutes namely; University of Limerick, Limerick Institute of Technology, NUI Galway, Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology, Shannon College of Hotel Management and the Burren College of Art. As a result the County has a highly-educated workforce and is an attractive location for research and development, business development and investment. The University of Limerick Clare Campus is continuing to evolve and grow, making a significant contribution to higher education, the progression of the knowledge economy and overall economic development in the County. This issue is discussed further in Chapter 6 – Economic Development and Enterprise.

The further development of higher education institutes in County Clare, both through the direct development of campus facilities and through course-delivery methods such as outreach/distance learning, is encouraged and supported by Clare County Council. In particular, the expansion of Limerick Institute of Technology’s presence and course delivery in Ennis will be positively pursued by the Council. Opportunities also exist to develop stronger linkages between County Clare and universities located in the County’s twin cities and regions. Stronger linkages can be developed with the University of Phoenix, particularly in the area of hospitality, travel and tourism, capitalising upon the twinning of Ennis with the City of Phoenix, Arizona. County Clare is also twinned with the Yunnan Province in China and there are significant opportunities to develop greater linkages with the higher education institutes in that region.



Please also refer to Section 6.3.5 University of Limerick – Clare Campus

CDP5.18

**Development Plan Objective:
Higher Education Institutes**

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To support the further development of higher education facilities in County Clare;
- B** To support the expansion of the Shannon College of Hotel Management and the Burren College of Art;
- C** To collaborate with higher education institutes in the provision of a knowledge and innovation-based economy for the County and region, including off-campus research and development.

5.4.3.4 Further Education and Adult Learning

Adult learning includes evening and part-time courses such as those offered by the Limerick Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB), Clare Local Development Company and by numerous secondary schools in the County. Opportunities for further education and adult learning are key elements of educational provision and social development.

CDP5.19

**Development Plan Objective:
Further Education and Adult Learning**

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To encourage the retention and expansion of all tiers of educational services and associated educational and skills training programmes;
- B** To collaborate with other agencies in the delivery of adult education, skills training and post secondary school education.

5.4.4 Dual Use of Community Facilities

Schools and other educational premises represent a valuable resource in terms of land and buildings, which generally are only used on a partial basis. The dual use of educational facilities, where it does not conflict with the delivery of the education service (i.e. outside school hours and during school holidays) can contribute to meeting the wider needs of the community, by helping to satisfy demand for a variety of activities. The DoEHLG Guidelines on Childcare Facilities (2001) recommend the use of school premises to cater for after school care and school authorities are encouraged to examine how they can help address the demand for such activities. Where lands and buildings can be beneficially used by the community, the Council will promote such uses subject to available resources. Where new schools or other community facilities are proposed, opportunities will be sought to ensure that they are designed in such a way as to facilitate dual use.

CDP5.20

Development Plan Objective: Dual Use Facilities

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To encourage and promote the shared use of school facilities with community groups where possible;
- B** To encourage the shared use of all community facilities for use by all groups in the Plan area.

5.4.5 Healthcare Facilities

Healthcare facilities are essential to ensure that the residents of County Clare have access to the care that they need. Healthcare is provided by a range of private, community and charitable service providers. HSE policy reflects a shift away from traditional hospital-based care, towards more community-based care with increased emphasis on meeting people's needs at local level by primary care teams. Clare County Council will seek to facilitate the provision and expansion of built facilities to ensure accessible healthcare services are integrated into communities throughout the County.

CDP5.21

Development Plan Objective: Health Services

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To facilitate public, private and community-based agencies to provide appropriate healthcare facilities, including hospital care and community-based primary care throughout the County, where practical;
- B** To encourage the integration of appropriate healthcare facilities into new and existing communities;
- C** To facilitate and encourage the accommodation of emergency services including fire services, rescue services and acute care, in locations that facilitate ease of access, effectiveness and safety.

Air Ambulance Facilities

Due to the expansive coastal and lakeland areas in County Clare, and also the peripheral nature of some parts of the County, air ambulance services play an important role in the provision of emergency services. It is essential that suitable landing areas are identified and agreed in advance in order to expedite the provision of air ambulance services in emergency situations.

CDP5.22

Development Plan Objective: Air Ambulance Facilities

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To work in coordination with all relevant stakeholders to identify air ambulance landing locations in coastal, estuarine and lakeside locations in County Clare.



5.4.6
The Library Service

The library service plays a strong role in communities in County Clare and there is an extensive network of Branch Libraries strategically placed across the County. This strong physical presence of a network of branches with extensive opening hours, catering for all age groups, allows for the provision of a wide range of services that are a valuable resource in terms of culture, heritage and education.

The County Library, located in Ennis, while offering an excellent service to local residents, is limited in terms of its physical size. Therefore it is recognised that a new County Library will be required during the lifetime of this Plan.

CDP5.23

Development Plan Objective: Libraries

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

A

To support and promote the services provided by the Branch Libraries to local communities across the County;

B

To support the development of a new County library in Ennis during the lifetime of this Plan.

5.4.7
Burial Grounds and Crematoria

The Council co-ordinates approximately 170 burial grounds in County Clare. Maintenance works are carried out on these burial grounds by the Council and through significant voluntary effort. The Council also provides financial assistance to extend existing facilities or provide a new burial ground.

It will be necessary to develop a new burial ground to serve the Ennis and Environs area in the coming years. The Council will work proactively to identify suitable sites for this facility during the lifetime of this Plan.

The use of crematoria has increased significantly in recent years but there is currently no such facility serving County Clare. In recognition of the multi-cultural population of the County and the changing trends in end-of-life service, the Council will support the development of crematoria in the County.

CDP5.24

Development Plan Objective: Burial Grounds/Crematoria

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

A

To provide and facilitate the provision of burial grounds or extensions to existing burial grounds, in cooperation with local communities, at appropriate locations throughout the County;

B

To ensure that burial grounds throughout the County are managed and maintained in a manner which respects their associated culture and heritage, having regard to the relevant byelaws;

C

To support the development of crematoria in County Clare, subject to normal planning considerations;

D

To support the future provision of new funeral homes which are designed to sensitively meet the needs of the service.

Chapter 5 Community Development and Social Infrastructure – Cross References

CDP3.10	Planned Growth of Settlements
CDP4.7	Housing Mix
CDP6.6	Third Level Institutions and the Knowledge Economy
CDP6.7	University of Limerick – Clare Campus
CDP14.27	Green Infrastructure
Section 15.5	Cultural Heritage
CDP16.11	Community Activity
CDP17.2	Universal Design
CDP17.3	Sustainable Developments
CDP17.4	Design and Built Environment
CDP19.2	Zoning of Lands
CDP19.3	Compliance with Zoning

Chapter 6

Economic Development and Enterprise

Goal V:

A County Clare in which jobs and people are brought together and where the growth of employment, indigenous enterprise and economic activity is pursued proactively across all economic sectors throughout the County.

6.0 Introduction.....	86
6.1 Strategic Aims.....	86
6.2 Context	86
6.3 Economic Development and Enterprise	87
6.3.1 Action Plan for Jobs: Mid-West Region.....	87
6.3.2 Economic Development in Shannon	88
6.3.3 Economic Development in Ennis.....	89
6.3.4 Higher Education Institutes, the Knowledge Economy and Access to Talent.....	89
6.3.5 University of Limerick – Clare Campus.....	90
6.3.6 Shannon Estuary.....	92
6.3.7 Moneypoint Power Station	92
6.3.8 Research and Innovation	93
6.3.9 Clare Digital Hub Network.....	93
6.3.10 Sustainable Design and Working Environments.....	94
6.3.11 Availability of Land and Infrastructure	94
6.3.12 Re-use of Brownfield Sites	95
6.3.13 Ancillary Services	95
6.3.14 Energy	95
6.3.15 Green Technology	96
6.3.16 Agricultural Development.....	96
6.3.17 Rural Enterprise	96
6.3.18 The Food Industry	97
6.3.19 Craft/Creative Industries	98
6.3.20 Home-Based Economic Activity..	98
6.3.21 The Film Industry.....	99
6.3.22 Retail Developments	99
6.3.23 Tourism Developments	99

6.0 Introduction

County Clare has long been recognised as an attractive place to live, work and do business. The quality of its workforce and its strategic location makes the County ideal for enterprise development and investment. A primary aim of this County Development Plan 2017-2023 is to positively and proactively encourage economic development and enterprise. In particular, it aims to promote flexible policies and objectives which are responsive to economic change, opportunities for job creation, investment, advances in technology and changing work practices. Clare County Council, and its Local Enterprise Office, will work with relevant stakeholders to sustain the diversity of existing employment in County Clare; to identify, encourage, facilitate and support new opportunities for indigenous employment and inward investment throughout the County. To do so at levels appropriate to the order and scale of the County's Settlement Hierarchy and the resources and services available in any particular area.

6.1 Strategic Aims

This Development Plan sets out an economic strategy to achieve greater prosperity in all areas of the County which is based, in accordance with the overall vision, on the following strategic aims:

- To maximise the economic assets of the County including Shannon and Shannon International Airport, University of Limerick – Clare Campus, the Shannon Estuary, County Clare's rural and tourist attractions and access to talent;
- To ensure Ennis and Shannon continue to develop as drivers of economic growth in County Clare and the Mid-West Region;
- To proactively implement the economic element of the adopted Clare Local Economic and Community Plan;

- To ensure the benefits of economic growth and prosperity are spread to all parts of the County;
- To maintain and promote County Clare's broad economic and employment base;
- To encourage, support and facilitate enterprise development at appropriate locations throughout the County;
- To encourage, support and facilitate research, technology development and innovation as well as start-up business with high potential;
- To maintain, adapt and promote the industrial areas in Shannon as a driver of economic and industrial growth throughout the region;
- To facilitate the diversification of the County's rural economy and encourage cottage industry and micro-enterprise.

6.2 Context

In the preparation of this chapter of the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023, regard has been had to the following:

Clare County Council Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021
Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022
Supporting Economic Recovery and Jobs - Locally
Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary
Action Plan for Jobs: Mid-West Region 2015-2017
Building on Recovery: Infrastructure and Capital Investment 2016-2021
Building Ireland's Smart Economy: A Framework for Sustainable Economic Renewal (2009)
Research and Innovation Strategy for the Mid West Regional of Ireland 2014-2018
Annual Action Plan for Jobs 2013-2015
Mid West Regional Enterprise Strategy
Report of the Commission for Economic Development in Rural Areas





6.3 Economic Development and Enterprise

Planning shapes the environment in which people live and work and it plays a key role in supporting the wider national economic, employment and enterprise objectives. A shared vision and proactive planning will help to coordinate infrastructural investment with economic growth, making the County an attractive location for new business development.

Allied to a positive planning approach to economic development is the promotion of the County in a national, European and global economy and the marketing of the resources and opportunities that County Clare has to offer. Clare County Council will work in collaboration with other agencies and stakeholders to actively promote and encourage economic development and enterprise development in the County.

Indigenous enterprises are also highly important to the County, providing jobs in both urban and rural locations and supporting the local, regional and national economy. Clare County Council and its Local Enterprise Office will work on an on-going basis to foster entrepreneurship and provide support for small and medium businesses.

It is important that enterprise development and economic growth occur in all parts of the County. This will ensure that each settlement in the County achieves its economic potential and that there is balanced and sustainable growth across County Clare. Where appropriate, Clare County Council will promote the integration of employment uses with other land uses, including residential, tourism and retail uses, in order to provide mixed use developments in the interest of sustainable planning.

CDP6.1

Development Plan Objective: Economic Development and Enterprise

It is an objective of Clare County Council and Local Enterprise Office, Clare:

To work in partnership with Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, adjoining local authorities, the Regional Assembly and all other relevant agencies to proactively pursue sustainable enterprise and economic development in line with the policies and objectives as set out in national, regional and local strategies.

6.3.1 Action Plan for Jobs: Mid-West Region

The Mid-West Action Plan for Jobs seeks to build on the National Action Plan for Jobs which looks at how government and industry can collaborate to create an enabling environment for enterprise and job creation. The primary objective of the Action Plan for the Mid-West Region is to have 17,400 more people at work in the region by 2020 compared to today and to ensure that unemployment is within 1% of the national average. Clare County Council, through actions set out in the Action Plan for Jobs for the Mid-West Region, will aim to build on the success of sectors in the County such as manufacturing, tourism, med-tech, aviation and aerospace, food and beverage and sports and design, where there is real potential for job creation.

CDP6.2

Development Plan Objective: Action Plan for Jobs: Mid-West Region

It is an objective of Clare County Council and Local Enterprise Office, Clare:

To collaborate with all relevant stakeholders to proactively progress the delivery of the actions set out in the Action Plan for Jobs: Mid-West Region.

6.3.2
Economic Development
in Shannon

Shannon is an established centre of both foreign direct investment and indigenous enterprise. Industry and enterprise bases such as the Shannon Free Zone, Smithstown and Westpark Business Campus accommodate companies that make a significant contribution to the national economy each year. Additional lands have been zoned in the Shannon Town and Environs Local Area Plan for future employment-generating development, including a substantial landbank in proximity to Shannon International Airport. The Council will protect and promote Shannon as an attractive location for industrial/enterprise development. It will facilitate, where required, the adaptation of industrial areas to other forms of employment-generating development in order to maintain and promote its role and function as a driver of economic and industrial growth throughout the Mid-West Region.

CDP6.3

Development Plan Objective:
Development of Shannon

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A To protect and promote Shannon as a primary location for industry, manufacturing, warehousing, distribution, and transport operating centres, and facilitate, where required, the adaptation of industrial areas to other employment generators;
- B To work in coordination with Shannon Group Plc. and all relevant stakeholders to support the development of an International Aviation Services Centre at Shannon;
- C To support the redevelopment and renewal of enterprise and industrial units in the Shannon area, in particular works to enhance the energy efficiency of the buildings and the physical appearance of the existing business park/industrial zones in the town.

Shannon International Airport provides international connectivity and is a major asset, not only to the promotion of economic development in the Gateway, but also to the economy of the wider region. The planned development of an International Aviation Services Centre in the area will result in a new era of industrial and economic development in Shannon and will be strongly supported by Clare County Council.

The airport is a gateway to Ireland’s premier tourist locations and offers full US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) pre-clearance facilities to airlines travelling to the USA. Clare County Council recognises the opportunities that Shannon Airport provides as an international gateway, together with the large number of global logistics companies located in close proximity and 24 hour unrestricted aircraft landing and take-off operations. Clare County Council will encourage and support the diversification of the airport and provision of increased cargo-services.

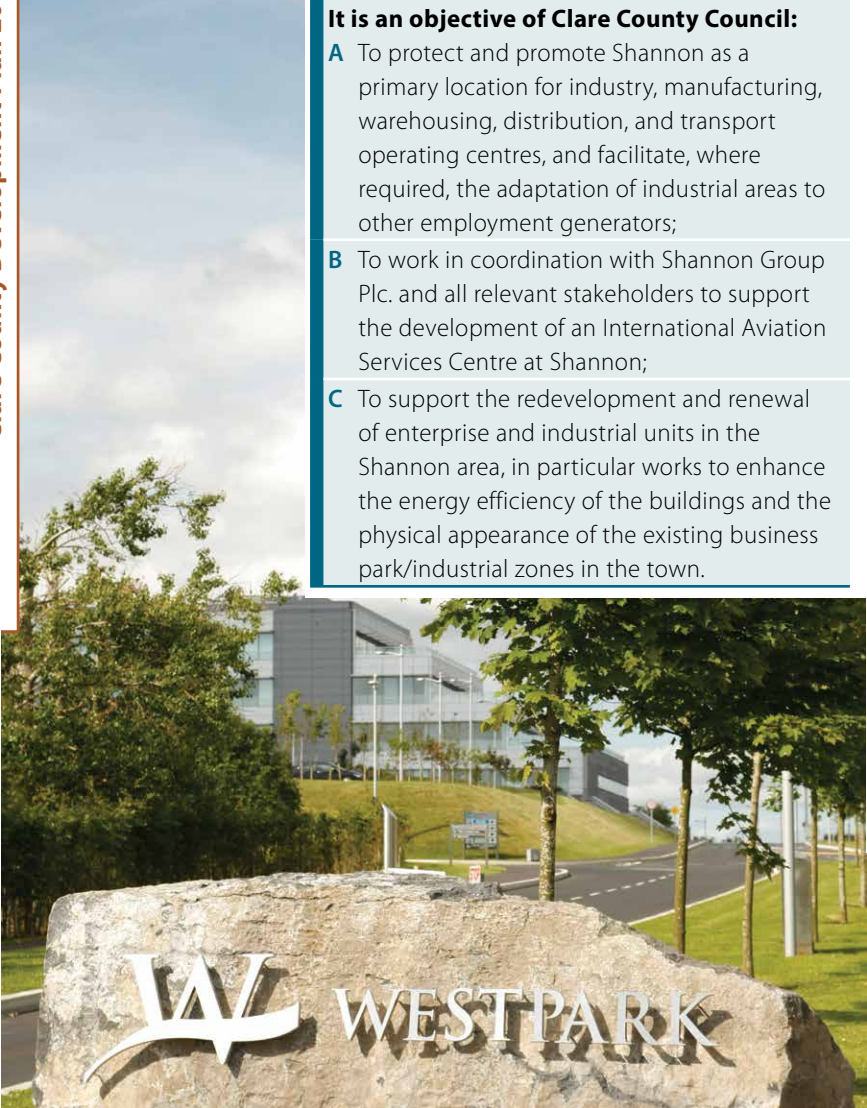
CDP6.4

Development Plan Objective:
Shannon International Airport

See also Section 8.2.5
Shannon International Airport

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A To support the future sustainable development and expansion of Shannon International Airport and its continued role as a key driver of economic growth in the region;
- B To facilitate the development of enhanced freight cargo facilities at Shannon International Airport;
- C To facilitate the improvement/upgrade (as necessary) of key infrastructural resources within the airport, the airport lands and the N19 providing access to the area;
- D To support the development of initiatives that harness the potential of the airport including, but not exclusive to, a residential flight school, unmanned aerospace systems (UAS) and a centre for space collaboration and research cooperation;
- E To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation as outlined in Objective CDP2.1.



6.3.3 Economic Development in Ennis

Ennis is at the heart of the economic and enterprise development of the County. It is home to international industries and indigenous companies and is the administrative capital of County Clare. Potential exists to further expand the employment base in the town, building a resilient and dynamic local economy. A settlement plan for Ennis Town, containing enterprise and industrial zoning is contained in Volume 3 of this Plan. A detailed local area plan setting out further initiatives for economic development in Ennis will be prepared for the town and its environs during the lifetime of this Development Plan.

CDP6.5

Development Plan Objective: Economic Development in Ennis

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To support the creation of a strong and diverse employment base, that capitalises upon the strengths of Ennis and its environs;
- B** To support the future development of Ennis as the principal economic and commercial centre of County Clare.

6.3.4 Higher Education Institutes, the Knowledge Economy and Access to Talent

County Clare has a highly-skilled and well-educated workforce, making it an attractive location for new business development. The importance of the University of Limerick and Limerick Institute of Technology as well as other higher education institutes located in the West and Mid-West regions is acknowledged and recognised as a critical driver of economic success. These institutes also play a key role in retaining highly education and qualified young people in the County and attracting a skilled workforce which is essential in terms of attracting economic investment and retaining the vibrancy of the local population.

The sharing of knowledge and innovation between higher education institutes and the enterprise sector is critical to the promotion of a knowledge and innovation based economy. With the availability of a high quality, international academic base, the economic focus of the County needs to be directed towards research and development, intensive and higher value-added products.

CDP6.6

Development Plan Objective: Higher Education Institutes and the Knowledge Economy

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To foster and develop strategic links with and between industries/businesses and higher education institutes in order to provide an enhanced local-based knowledge economy and in order to improve education, training and skills development in the workforce;
- B** To encourage research, technology development and innovation in collaboration with higher education institutes and development agencies;
- C** To encourage and facilitate start-up businesses with high growth potential.



6.3.5 University of Limerick – Clare Campus

University of Limerick is a significant strategic asset to County Clare and is a critical driver of economic development and the fostering of an innovative, knowledge-based economy for the County and Mid-West and West Regions. The University, catering for approximately 15,000 students, has developed significantly in recent years on the Clare side of the River Shannon, and now boasts three residential villages along with road and pedestrian bridges across the river, the Health Sciences and World Academy of Music and Dance buildings, a medical school and the largest all-weather sports complex in Europe. There is significant potential for the University to expand further northwards into County Clare within the designated University Zone (refer map 6A). The development of the Limerick Northern Distributor Road will provide direct access to the University from County Clare increasing its accessibility for students throughout the County. It will also create a direct link between Shannon International Airport, the businesses and industries in the Shannon area and the university campus. This will significantly enhance the attractiveness of the region from a research, innovation and development perspective.

International experience of the development of universities and, in particular, those universities whose strategic mission focuses on knowledge transfer, indicates that their hinterland adapts quickly to become a focus for development arising from, and complementary to, the existence of the university. The potential of such hinterlands in terms of economic and social development is significant. The pace of hinterland development is determined by the factors of university-industry linkages, excellent relevant graduate output, modern connectivity infrastructure and the development of a “town and gown” environment commensurate with the requirements of a permanent living, working and social population. International university hinterland development models reflect the seamless integration of learning, research, employment, living and on-going economic, social and cultural development in permanent development nodes which become the globalisation nucleus of the administrative area in which they exist.

Over the lifetime of the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023, Clare County

Council will work in partnership with the University of Limerick to further expand the campus into County Clare within the designated University Zone, to create a world class learning, research and development hub and a centre of excellence, that strengthens the role of the Shannon – Limerick Gateway as a driver of continued economic prosperity within the County and region.

The hinterland of the University of Limerick, within the University Zone, has the potential to become an important driver of economic and social activity in the County and become an attractive destination for indigenous and global employment, mirroring the success of such developments in international comparison sites. Clare County Council will promote and assist in the development of the university hinterland within the University Zone as an area incorporating all the aspects of permanent living, working and social space commensurate with international and local models.

A Strategic Master Plan for the University Zone will be prepared providing for significant growth areas of the University and its hinterland within the University Zone around a new access corridor off the future Limerick Northern Distributor Road. The Strategic Master Plan will also provide for the redevelopment and integration of the Errina Canal and its associated water-based developments into the zone by means of canal/riverside water-related uses. Uses appropriate to the development of the university hinterland include:

- 1 Educational facilities;
- 2 Research and development;
- 3 Student residential quarter;
- 4 Residential quarters complementary to the uses contained or proposed to be contained in the University Zone;
- 5 Student support facilities;
- 6 Enterprise / start-up business units/ commercial units linked to the University's research and development role;
- 7 Recreation / sport / social uses;
- 8 Canal / riverside water-related uses;
- 9 Green quarter / high amenity areas.

Through the development management process, the Council will have regard to the Strategic Master Plan and the envisaged uses above in managing all future university development. The sustainable future development of the UL Clare Campus will require an integrated approach to development that complements and strengthens the existing facilities and contributes to the overall objective of strengthening the role of the University in fostering

economic development and continued prosperity within County Clare. In particular the Council will require connectivity with County Clare through the provision of adequate road access to the campus. In addition, development on these lands will be subject to flood risk assessment, ecological impact assessment and appropriate assessment, and the requirement to provide a buffer area along the River Shannon.

CDP6.7

Development Plan Objective: University of Limerick - Clare Campus

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To support and encourage the further expansion of the University of Limerick campus on the north side of the River Shannon;
- B** To work closely with the University of Limerick in realising the vision for the Clare Campus as a world class learning, research and development hub and a leading centre for the localisation of globalised development;
- C** To support, facilitate and promote the overall development of the University Zone, including hinterland development within the Zone;
- D** To facilitate the development of the Limerick Northern Distributor Road to provide direct access from County Clare to the University;
- E** To improve footpath and cycle access to the campus from County Clare;
- F** To support the rebranding of the University to reflect its continued expansion into County Clare;
- G** To support and promote the future reopening of the Errina Canal as a functioning piece of waterway infrastructure and facilitating water-borne access to the Clare Campus, and to support any development proposals the University may have to maximise its strategic position adjacent to the River Shannon, River Blackwater and Errina Canal, including the reinstatement of the riverside walkway;
- H** To support the future attainment of a strategic rail link from the Clare Campus of University of Limerick to the Ennis – Limerick line;
- I** To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation as outlined in Objective CDP2.1;
- J** To provide a 30m wide buffer area along the Shannon River to function as an ecological corridor, contribute to flood management and to the overall Sustainable Urban Drainage framework for the University of Limerick;
- K** To support and facilitate the growth of the Clare Campus as part of the development of the University of Limerick.



Burlington Lands

The former Burlington Plant in Gillogue, which comprise approximately 29,000m² of floorspace, has significant potential for redevelopment and to contribute to economic growth in the South Clare area. The buildings have the potential for a wide variety of uses including light industry and enterprise uses, with possible linkages to adjoining land uses in the University. The site also has potential for indoor recreational uses. The site is currently accessed by the R463 which is a Strategic Regional Route. Access will be greatly enhanced by the construction of the proposed Limerick Northern Distributor Road.

There is a number of settlement ponds to the south of the site associated with the former industrial uses in the area. The Council will work with the relevant stakeholders to ensure the on-going maintenance and eventual decommissioning and remediation of these settlement ponds during the lifetime of this Plan.

CDP6.8

Development Plan Objective: Burlington

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To support the redevelopment and reuse of the former Burlington site and encourage appropriate new development in accordance with the zoning on the site;
- B** To facilitate the development of a pedestrian link from the Burlington site to the University of Limerick;
- C** To ensure that all works on the site are in compliance with Objective CDP2.1 of this Plan.

6.3.6 Shannon Estuary

The Shannon Estuary is a natural asset of international importance and offers significant potential for future economic development in County Clare and the Mid-West region. In recognition of the potential to capitalise on this natural advantage and the need to take a sustainable approach to future development in the area, a Strategic Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP) for the Shannon Estuary has been prepared. The SIFP identifies and zones two sites in County Clare for marine-related industry and also identifies opportunity sites for other key activities such as renewable energy development and aquaculture. It also promotes the potential of the estuary for tourism and recreation activities. The SIFP is contained as Volume 7 of this Plan.

CDP6.9

Development Plan Objective: Shannon Estuary

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To proactively implement the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary including the mitigation measures identified in Volume 2 Appendices of the Plan.

6.3.7 Moneypoint Power Station

Moneypoint is one of Ireland's largest electricity stations, located on the Shannon Estuary near Kilrush. It has a capacity to generate up to 915MW of electricity each year and is capable of meeting approximately 25% of Ireland's demand for electricity. It is primarily fuelled by coal, brought ashore via the ESB's deepwater port on the Shannon Estuary. The plant, when combined with Tarbert on the south shore, forms a significant industry and energy hub on the estuary. Moneypoint is identified as a Strategic Development Location in the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP) for the Shannon Estuary and the lands are zoned for Marine-Related Industry.

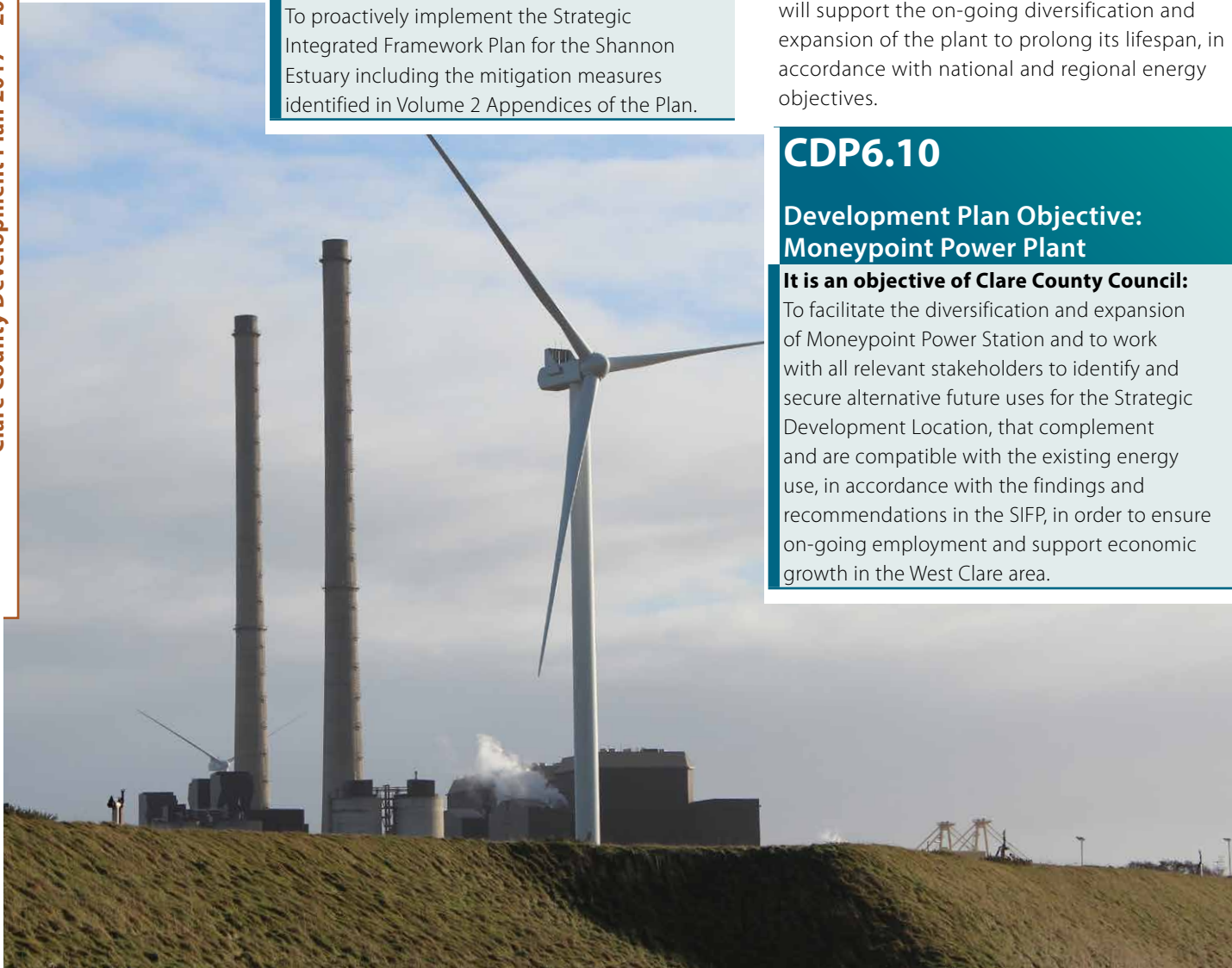
Moneypoint Power Station makes a very significant contribution to the local economy and the facility continues to be strategically important regionally and nationally in terms of capacity, diversity and security of energy supply. In the interest of retaining employment in the West Clare area, Clare County Council will support the on-going diversification and expansion of the plant to prolong its lifespan, in accordance with national and regional energy objectives.

CDP6.10

Development Plan Objective: Moneypoint Power Plant

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To facilitate the diversification and expansion of Moneypoint Power Station and to work with all relevant stakeholders to identify and secure alternative future uses for the Strategic Development Location, that complement and are compatible with the existing energy use, in accordance with the findings and recommendations in the SIFP, in order to ensure on-going employment and support economic growth in the West Clare area.





6.3.8

Research and Innovation

Research and innovation are the cornerstones of modern economic growth. County Clare's strong industrial base and close affiliations with the University of Limerick and numerous other higher education institutes make it ideally placed to foster and support research and innovation activities and create beneficial linkages between industry and higher education.

In order to successfully support balanced development across the County it is important to recognise that innovation and development occur on many different scales. While interactions and innovation between large industries and research institutes can bring benefits on a regional and national scale, business development based on small-scale innovation and research can be hugely important to the economic future of small towns and villages across the County.

It is important therefore that Clare County Council supports research and innovation on all scales throughout the County.

CDP6.11

Development Plan Objective: Research and Innovation

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To support and facilitate the development and progression of beneficial interactions between industries located in County Clare and relevant higher education institutes;
- B** To work with relevant stakeholders to support research, innovation and enterprise development in the County including incubation facilities for new business development.

6.3.9

Clare Digital Hub Network

Significant potential exists to grow the digital industry in County Clare. During the lifetime of this Development Plan, Local Enterprise Office Clare will work to establish a network of digital hubs to support the growth of this industry in the County. The digital hubs, when established, will comprise a vibrant cluster of digital content and technology enterprises, providing entrepreneurs in the digital industry with an opportunity to establish and grow businesses within a supportive network in County Clare. The hub will work to counter the loss of human capital from rural towns and villages to large urban centres.

Local Enterprise Office Clare aims to establish a minimum of two digital hubs in each Municipal District. Each hub will have access to high-speed broadband and will provide accommodation for up to ten businesses. The hub will aim to attract individuals/enterprises working in the digital and media industries to locate in County Clare including local start-up businesses, start-ups currently based in higher education institutes and existing small to medium national/international businesses.

CDP6.12

Development Plan Objective: Clare Digital Hub Network

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- To support the development of a network of digital hubs in order to attract new businesses to locate in County Clare and to support the further growth and development of the digital and media industries in the County.

6.3.10
Sustainable Design and
Working Environments

Quality of life and quality of place is of increasing importance in creating the right conditions to attract and retain businesses, jobs and investment. It influences the decision of a business or investor to locate and remain in a particular area. A high quality and well-designed working environment can foster local economic growth. It also encourages other businesses to invest and attracts employees and visitors to an area.

Clare County Council will work to ensure that new developments deliver sustainable, attractive and healthy working environments. This will be achieved for example, through the provision of landscaping and open space, pedestrian access and safe cycle parking, and, where appropriate, through facilities such as health care, child care, shopping and leisure facilities.

CDP6.13

Development Plan Objective:
High Quality Development

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To encourage the development of attractive, accessible and healthy working environments that enhance the character and quality of an area;
- B** To ensure that the design of employment-generating development, regardless of location, is of high quality, inclusive and accessible;
- C** To require new large-scale developments (>75 employees) to prepare and implement a Mobility Management Plan to support the use of sustainable modes of transport;
- D** To encourage new employment-generating developments to support modal shift through the provision of facilities such as lockers, changing rooms and drying rooms for their employees.

6.3.11
Availability of Land
and Infrastructure

Infrastructural investment is critical for future economic development activity. It is essential therefore that infrastructure providers, such as Irish Water, Transport Infrastructure Ireland and electricity and broadband providers, support Clare County Council's vision for economic development through their service provision. The Settlement Strategy contained in Chapter 3 of this Development Plan, sets out envisaged levels of economic development and growth for the towns and villages of County Clare based on their position on the Settlement Hierarchy.

The settlement plans contained in Volume 3 of this Development Plan, ensure that lands are appropriately zoned to meet the needs of different users and to encourage a diversity of employment-generating development throughout the County.

CDP6.14

Development Plan Objective:
Availability of Land and
Infrastructure

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To ensure that an adequate supply of land is zoned in appropriate locations throughout the County to support economic development and employment-generating activities;
- B** To maximise the efficiency of zoned lands by advocating for and facilitating the provision, upgrade or refurbishment of necessary infrastructure;
- C** To protect land zoned for employment-generating uses from inappropriate development that would negate future economic activity;
- D** To ensure that lands are zoned for industry and enterprise development in towns and villages across the County at a scale appropriate to the size and role of the settlement as per the settlement hierarchy.

6.3.12

Re-use of Brownfield Sites

The possibility of re-using old or disused buildings and lands for new employment-generating enterprises will be encouraged. Such developments contribute to regeneration and enhance the visual appearance of an area, make more effective use of land and stimulate economic activity in urban and rural areas.

CDP6.15

Development Plan Objective: Re-use of Brownfield Sites

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To favourably consider the redevelopment of brownfield sites and disused agricultural or commercial buildings in urban and rural areas for industrial, enterprise or cultural developments subject to normal planning considerations, ensuring that all such developments will not adversely affect protected habitats and species.

6.3.13

Ancillary Services

In general, Clare County Council will require services such as childcare providers, financial institutions, food providers etc. to locate in town and village centres or other identified appropriate locations across the County. However, it is recognised that it can be beneficial to provide limited ancillary services in larger employment-generating areas. Services such as gyms, childcare facilities, café/restaurant facilities can enhance the attractiveness of industrial/business parks for potential employers and employees and can also contribute to more sustainable travel patterns for those working in the area.

CDP6.16

Development Plan Objective: Ancillary Services

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To support the development of small-scale ancillary services in large industrial and business parks where they do not detract from the vitality and viability of the town centre in the subject settlement.



6.3.14 Energy

County Clare's ability to continue to attract and retain high levels of foreign direct investment and to provide a supportive environment for industry will depend on its capacity to deliver a competitive and uninterrupted energy supply. County Clare has a secure energy supply and the network in the County has significant potential to accommodate further generating activity. The County also has significant potential to increase the production of electricity from renewable energy sources such as wind and tidal energy. The Clare Wind Energy Strategy (Volume 5) and Clare Renewable Energy Strategy (Volume 6) provide for a strategic plan-led approach to secure renewable energy production in County Clare. The creation and storage of sustainable forms of energy and the associated development of new energy technologies will assist in the creation of a low-carbon county that can be developed and marketed to the benefit of local business and job creation in the County.

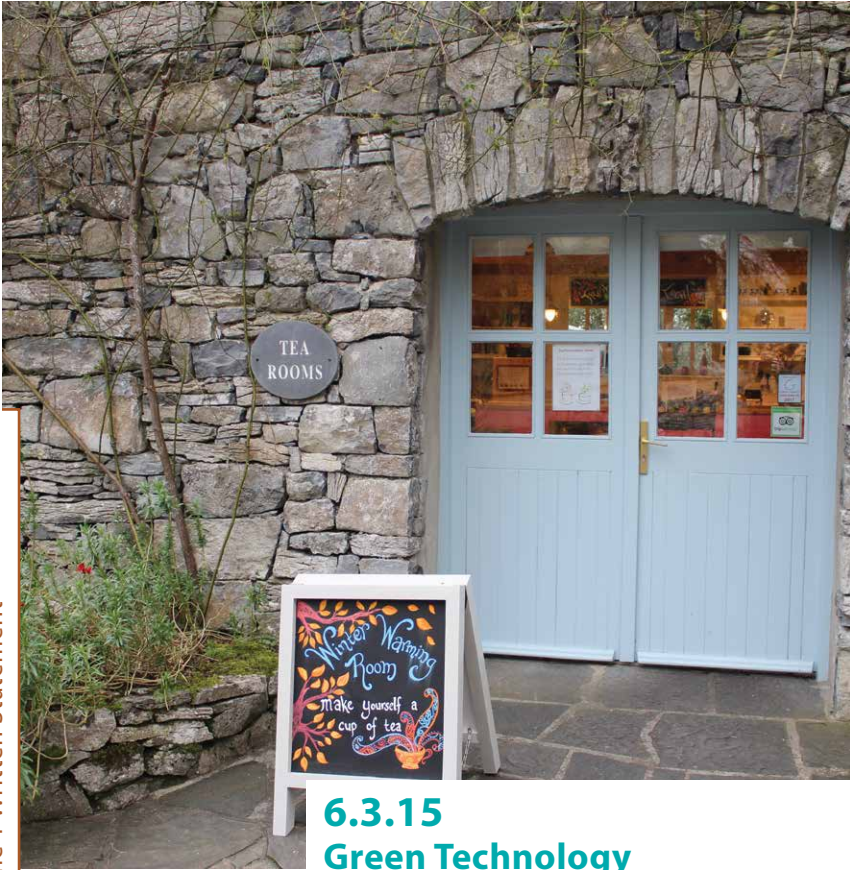
CDP6.17

Development Plan Objective: Energy Supply

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To contribute to the economic development and enhanced employment opportunities in the County by:

- A** Facilitating the development of a self-sustaining, secure, reliable and efficient renewable energy supply and storage for the County;
- B** Enabling the County to become a leader in the production of sustainable and renewable energy for national and international consumption through research, technology development and innovation.



**6.3.15
Green Technology**

Climate change adaptation is one of the key issues facing County Clare during the lifetime of this Plan. While it is essential to ensure the safety and quality of life of all residents, it also offers significant potential from an economic development perspective. There are strong growth opportunities in the emerging low carbon goods and services sector such as renewable energy (wind, wave, tidal and biomass and the services that support them), low carbon technologies including alternative fuels for vehicles, carbon capture and storage, and building technologies. Opportunities also exist in environmental management including environmental consultancy, pollution control, waste management, recovery and recycling.

Considerable opportunities exist for job creation and economic growth in areas such as green tech and new technology developments. Addressing the impacts of climate change and global warming can drive innovation and stimulate economic growth.

CDP6.18

**Development Plan Objective:
Green Technology**

It is an objective of the Development Plan:
To support the development of low carbon and green tech businesses and industries throughout the County.

**6.3.16
Agricultural Development**

Agriculture remains a highly important part of the local economy and the sector will be one of the main drivers of economic growth and employment-creation in the coming years. Employment opportunities can be created through agricultural development/diversification to supplement farm incomes, regenerate the rural economy and sustain rural communities.

CDP6.19

**Development Plan Objective:
Agricultural Developments**

It is an objective of the Development Plan:
A To facilitate and encourage the development of alternative farm enterprises, agri-tourism projects and farm shops on agricultural lands subject to compliance with appropriate planning and services requirements;
B To facilitate and encourage the re-use of redundant farm buildings of vernacular importance for appropriate agri-tourism enterprises subject to compliance with appropriate planning and services requirements.

**6.3.17
Rural Enterprise**

Rural enterprises are vitally important to sustaining rural populations, supporting the rural economy and generally enhancing the fabric of rural society. The Council recognises that businesses in rural areas and their employees benefit from the high quality of life and the opportunities arising from the available capacity in local social, community and educational facilities. Rural areas in proximity to raw materials and resources may have competitive advantages and be best placed to establish niche enterprises ideally located to serve their markets and provide employment in rural areas. There is also a growing trend for the development of small workshops, some of which are located within the confines of existing houses, in rural areas. Clare County Council will seek to accommodate these wherever possible subject to normal planning considerations, including the suitable expansion of existing facilities.

Proposals for other small-scale enterprise in rural areas will be considered on their individual merits, including:

- the nature of the activity;
- where the workforce is likely to be sourced;
- evidence that its scale is appropriate to a rural area;
- evidence that the enterprise would not be viable on industrial or commercially zoned land in towns and villages nearby;
- evidence that a suitable site is available.

Section 10.3.2 Economic Development in Rural Areas and Section 10.3.3 Farm-based Rural Enterprise also refer to this topic.

CDP6.20

Development Plan Objective: Rural Enterprises

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To support rural enterprise and the rural economy by:

- A** Permitting the development of rural resource-based industries in rural areas subject to compliance with appropriate planning and services requirements;
- B** Supporting and facilitating proposals for new small-scale rural enterprises or extensions to existing small-scale, rural-based, indigenous industries subject to compliance with appropriate planning and services requirements;
- C** Encouraging new commercial uses for vacant or derelict buildings, including historic buildings and buildings in rural areas subject to compliance with appropriate planning, wildlife legislation and services requirements.

6.3.18 The Food Industry

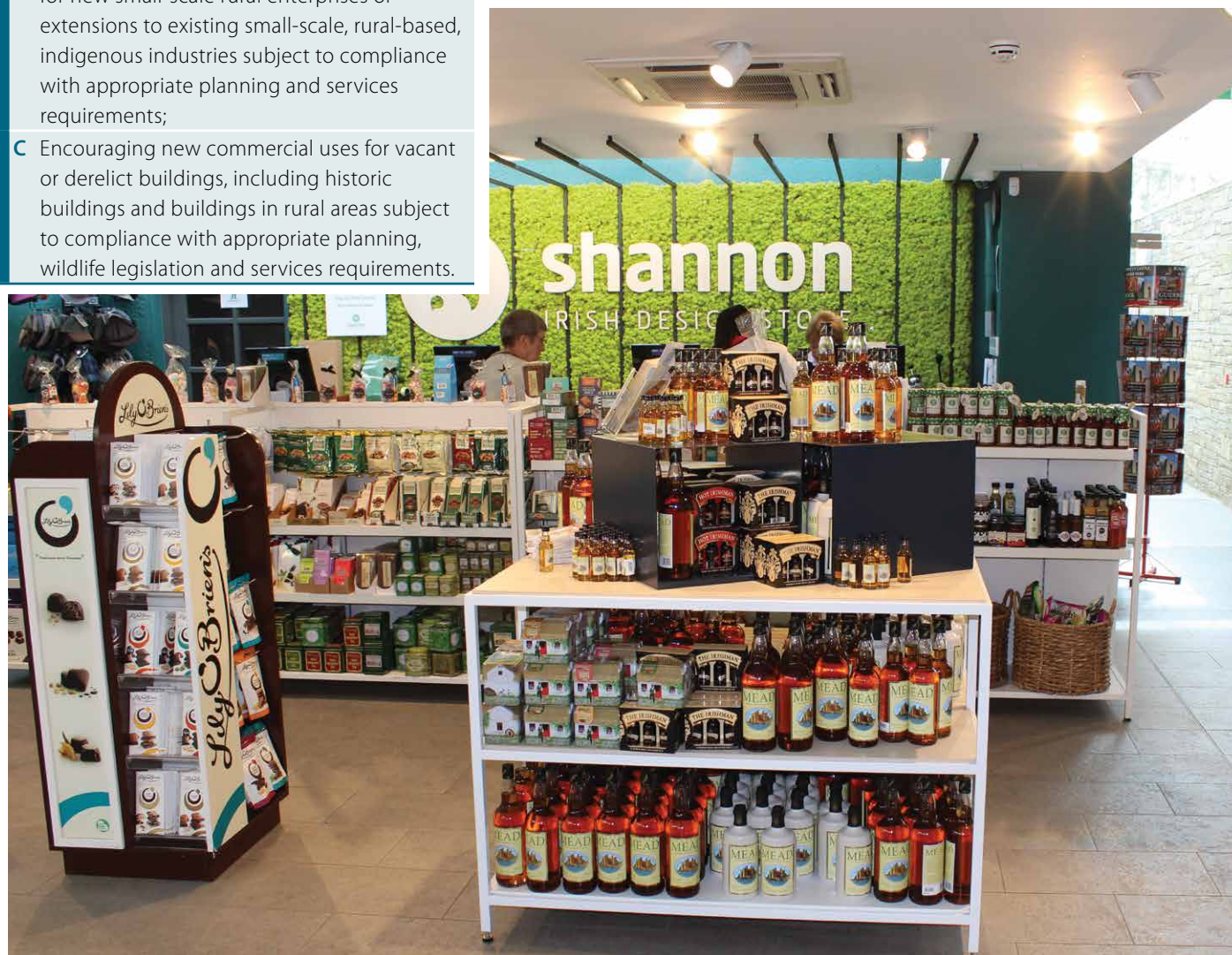
Food production is a growing industry in County Clare, with businesses ranging from large-scale catering operations to an extensive network of artisan food producers. There is significant potential to grow this industry, particularly in terms of the development and production of new products. To support growth in this industry, Local Enterprise Office Clare intends to establish a number of Food Hubs throughout the County which will support entrepreneurs through the provision of individual work units with shared meeting rooms, reception services and facilities for product development. The development of Food Hubs across the County will also facilitate greater collaboration within and between the network of hubs.

CDP6.21

Development Plan Objective: The Food Industry

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To encourage and support the development of a network of Food Hubs throughout the County to support the expansion of the food industry in County Clare.





6.3.19
Craft/Creative Industries

The craft industry is a dynamic and vibrant sector. It is a key employer and makes a significant contribution to the economy in County Clare. Encompassing a range of different skills including textile making and clothing, pottery and ceramics, jewellery, glass and woodworking and furniture making craft industries are characteristically small in scale and are geographically widespread. Enterprises in this sector create employment throughout the County. Clare County Council recognises the importance of these industries, not just in terms of employment creation, but also in terms of the creation of unique products, many of which utilise local resources and contribute to the branding of County Clare as a unique and vibrant county. The Council will also support the provision of a training location for apprenticeships in this area.

CDP6.22
Development Plan Objective:
The Craft Industry

It is an objective of the Development Plan:
To work in coordination with Local Enterprise Office Clare and all relevant stakeholders to support the further development and expansion of craft industries in County Clare and to proactively seek new market opportunities for locally-produced crafts at local, national and international level.

6.3.20
Home-Based
Economic Activity

Home-based economic activity, defined as conversion of part of a house to a home-based (non-retail) business, is increasing significantly as a result of advances in technology and the increased opportunities to work from home. Working from home can reduce the need to commute and provides opportunities for all areas of the County to generate employment, thereby supporting rural and urban areas from both a social and economic perspective.

CDP6.23

Development Plan Objective:
Home Based Economic Activity

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To support the conversion of part of a dwelling to an appropriate home-based economic activity, where the dwelling remains as the main residence of the practitioner;
- B** To co-operate with and facilitate government agencies and other bodies where feasible, in encouraging home-based employment;
- C** To promote and facilitate the development of:
 - e-town, home-based employment;
 - ‘electronic courtyard’ developments in villages and rural areas;
 - improved communication networks throughout the County.

6.3.21

The Film Industry

The film industry is hugely important from both a local and national perspective. It creates direct employment, with over 560 small and medium enterprises focused on this sector nationally. It also generates significant positive spin-offs in terms of the provision of support services, tourism generated from international exposure etc. The future expansion of the film industry in County Clare has the potential to have a significant positive impact on job creation and economic growth in the County.

CDP6.24

Development Plan Objective: The Film Industry

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To work with all relevant stakeholders to promote County Clare as a film location;
- B** To support new and existing businesses involved in the film industry in County Clare and to support their future expansion.

6.3.22

Retail Developments

Retail development plays an important function in the socio-economic development of the County. Its contribution to employment is significant. In addition to generating direct employment it creates demand for local goods and services. This combination of direct and indirect effects can contribute significantly to a town's or village's vitality and viability particularly if the workforce resides in the town centre. A more detailed consideration of retail planning is included in Chapter 7, while Volume 8 comprises the Retail Strategy for the Mid-West Region 2010-2016.

CDP6.25

Development Plan Objective: Retail Development

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To harness the economic potential of retail development at appropriate locations throughout the County.

6.3.23

Tourism Developments

The tourism industry is one of the main contributors to the economy of County Clare and this is reflected in the considerable on-going investment made by the Council in tourism infrastructure throughout the County. Chapter 9 – Tourism expands further on the potential of tourism industry in County Clare.

CDP6.26

Development Plan Objective: Tourism

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To harness the economic potential of tourism throughout the County.



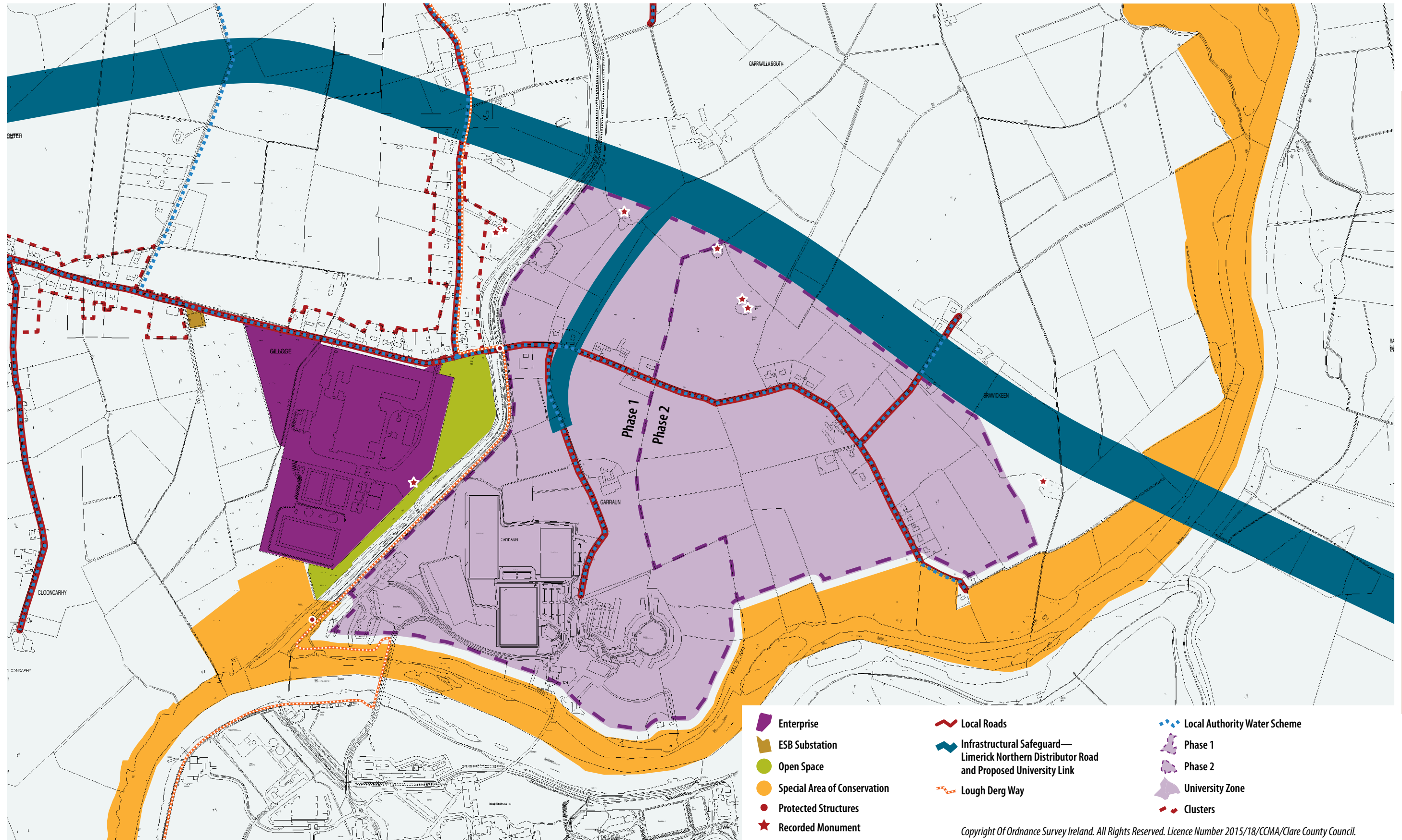
Chapter 6 Economic Development and Enterprise – Cross References

CDP2.1	Appropriate Assessment, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
CDP5.18	Higher Education Institutes
Section 8.2.3	Road Network
CDP8.9	Shannon Airport
CDP8.14	Rail Network
CDP8.21	Water Framework Directive
CDP8.22	Protection of Water Resources
CDP8.28	Waste Management
CDP8.33	Noise Pollution
CDP8.34	Air Pollution
CDP8.35	Light Pollution
CDP8.36	Seveso III Directive
CDP8.40	Renewable Energy
CDP8.43	Broadband Connectivity
CDP8.44	Telecommunication Infrastructure
CDP9.4	Tourism Developments and Tourism Facilities
CDP10.2	Rural Enterprise
CDP10.3	Agri-Food Sector
CDP10.11	Renewable Energy Development
CDP11.2	Strategic Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP) for the Shannon Estuary

CDP11.3	Marine Related Industry/Large-scale Industry on the Shannon Estuary
CDP11.4	Strategic Development Locations
CDP11.5	Strategic Development Location A – Inishmurry/Cahircon
CDP11.6	Strategic Development Location B – Moneypoint
CDP11.8	Harnessing the Energy Resources of the Shannon Estuary
CDP11.11	Estuary Settlements
CDP12.12	Coastal Erosion and Flooding
CDP14.1	Biodiversity
CDP14.2	European Sites
CDP14.3	Requirement for Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive
CDP14.4	Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs)
CDP14.7	Non-Designated Sites
CDP14.12	Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows
CDP16.5	Opportunity Sites
CDP16.8	Lands Identified as Areas on which the Vacant Site Levy can Apply
CDP17.2	Universal Design
CDP17.3	Sustainable Development
CDP17.4	Design and Built Environment
Section 18.5	Low Carbon Strategy
CDP19.2	Zoning of Lands



Map 6A: University of Limerick, Clare Campus



Aerial image of University of Limerick, Clare Campus



Chapter 7

Retail

Goal VI:

A County Clare with viable and vibrant town and village centres, that have shopping areas and markets at appropriate scales and locations and which function to serve their communities and rural hinterlands.

7.0 Introduction.....	104
7.1 Strategic Aims.....	104
7.2 Context	104
7.3 Strategy	104
7.3.1 Retail Hierarchy	104
7.3.2 Regional Retail Strategy	105
7.4 Level and Form of Retail Activity	105
7.4.1 Ennis	105
7.4.2 Shannon	107
7.4.3 Service Towns	107
7.4.4 Small Towns	108
7.4.5 Large Villages	108
7.4.6 Small Villages.....	108
7.4.7 Retail Activity in Rural Areas.....	109
7.5 Town Centre Retailing.....	109
7.5.1 Improvement of Town Centres...	109
7.5.2 Diversity of Uses	109
7.5.3 Improved Accessibility and Mobility.....	110
7.5.4 Retail Health Checks	110
7.5.5 Shop Fronts, Advertising and Signage	111
7.5.6 Evening and Late Night Uses	111
7.5.7 Leisure and Entertainment.....	111
7.6 Other Forms of Retail.....	112
7.6.1 Edge-of-Centre and Out-of-Centre Retailing.....	112
7.6.2 Retail Parks/ Retail Warehousing	113
7.6.3 Tourism-Related Retail Developments.....	113
7.6.4 Ancillary Retailing	114
7.6.5 Petrol Filling Stations.....	114

7.0 Introduction

Nationally, the retail sector forms a key part of the Irish economy both in terms of direct employment and the employment created in the associated manufacturing, supply and distribution sectors. The retail sector makes a substantial contribution to the financial well-being and social formation of communities throughout the country.

In County Clare the retail sector is a significant employer. The achievement of a strong retail sector leads to the creation of vibrant town centres that offer a diverse range of services to local residents and communities in surrounding rural hinterlands.

7.1 Strategic Aims

This chapter presents the objectives relating to existing and future retail development in County Clare. In accordance with the overall vision of the Plan, it is based on the following strategic aims:

- To ensure that the retail needs of the County's residents are met, in so far as possible, within County Clare;
- To promote retail activity in the core areas of towns and villages in the County;
- To ensure that town and village centres are pleasant, safe, accessible and vibrant and attract the public for shopping and social purposes;
- To improve accessibility and ease of movement for all forms of transport in town and village centres;
- To ensure the towns and villages fulfil their retail potential, providing retail services appropriate to the scale and function of the settlement and the surrounding hinterland;
- To fully examine mechanisms that will assist in bringing forward and delivering the development of town centre sites as well as the redevelopment/rejuvenation of underutilised, vacant and derelict sites for appropriate town centre uses.

7.2 Context

In the preparation of this section of the Development Plan, regard has been had to the following:

Retail Planning – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012
Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022
'A Strategy for Rural Retailing' – Retail Excellence Ireland
Retail Design Manual, 2012
Retail Strategy for the Mid-West Region 2010-2016

7.3 Strategy

The potential of retail outlets to generate footfall means that their location is critical. They have a major bearing on the health of town centres and this, in turn, has a major impact on the vitality of the surrounding hinterland. It is essential to ensure that retail development is plan-led, suitable to the scale of the settlement in which it is located and makes a positive contribution to the surrounding townscape and the overall vibrancy of the area.

7.3.1 Retail Hierarchy

The Retail Strategy for the Mid-West Region sets out a retail hierarchy for the region in order to guide the location, nature and scale of retail developments.

The Retail Planning Guidelines 2012 have renewed this approach and require that development plans outline the level and form of retailing activity appropriate to the various components of the Settlement Hierarchy in the Core Strategy. In keeping with the approach required in the Retail Planning Guidelines (2012) and having regard to the Core Strategy, this Plan addresses retail development in the following areas:

- Hub Town/County Town – Ennis;
- Linked Gateway – Shannon;
- Service Towns – Ennistymon/Lahinch, Kilrush and Scarriff/Tuamgraney;
- Small Towns;
- Large Villages;
- Small Villages;
- The Countryside.

7.3.2 Regional Retail Strategy

The Retail Planning Guidelines 2012 established a requirement for Clare County Council, Limerick City and County Council and Tipperary County Council to work in coordination to prepare a Retail Strategy for the Limerick/Shannon area and also, if desired, for the wider region.

CDP7.1

Development Plan Objective: Retail Strategy

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To work with relevant local authorities to prepare a Retail Strategy for the Limerick/Shannon Gateway and for the wider region, if deemed necessary, during the lifetime of this Plan.

7.4 Level and Form of Retail Activity

In line with 'Retail Planning – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012)', the following section outlines retail locations in the County in line with the Core Strategy and the position of a settlement on the Settlement Hierarchy, setting out the key objectives for each area.

CDP7.2

Development Plan Objective: Retail Activity

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To ensure that sufficient lands are appropriately zoned for retail development in the settlements of County Clare to support a level, quantum and form of retail activity that is appropriate to the position of the settlement on the Settlement Hierarchy for the County;
- B** To have regard to the guidance set out in 'Retail Planning – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012' in the assessment of development proposals for retail development.

7.4.1 Ennis

The strategy for retail development in the Ennis area is to concentrate comparison and convenience retail outlets in Ennis town centre, including the identified town centre expansion area. There is additional capacity for convenience retail in the Laureen, Cahircalla More and Clonroadmore neighbourhoods.

In relation to bulky goods, there is a qualitative issue with floorspace availability in the Ennis area rather than a quantitative issue. In response this Plan has made provision for qualitative improvements to existing properties in the Quin Road and Ballymaley areas of the town.

It is not anticipated that there will be any requirement for new edge-of-centre or out-of-centre bulky, convenience or comparison floorspace in the Ennis area during the lifetime of this Plan.

Ennis Town Centre

Ennis is the most significant retail urban centre in the Mid-West Region after Limerick. As the County Town of Clare, it is a traditional large town with shopping streets and public spaces containing a pleasant mix of cafes, bars, restaurants, speciality and fashion boutiques. The focus for Ennis is to reinvigorate the retail sector in the town and facilitate the potential for further retail growth whilst also retaining the historic character of the town centre.

Other aspects of town centre enhancement and economic growth will also be progressed. A multi-faceted approach to land-use planning in Ennis town centre is required to achieve this aim including:

- The identification of sites to allow for town centre expansion and to accommodate the needs of modern retail formats;
- Public realm interventions to enhance the character, vibrancy, accessibility and physical appearance of the town;
- Enhancement of the appearance and usability of public spaces;
- Improved car parking and mobility;
- Actions to make the historic streets of Ennis more pedestrian and cyclist friendly;
- Working in coordination with landowners and relevant stakeholders to optimise the appearance and use of derelict, vacant and under-utilised sites in the town centre.

Whilst the broad objectives for the retail function in Ennis are set out in this Development Plan, the Ennis and Environs Local Area Plan, when prepared, will set out more detailed objectives for the retail sector in the town.

CDP7.3
Development Plan Objective:
Ennis Town Centre Retail Offer

- It is an objective of the Development Plan:**
- A** To prepare a detailed town centre development and improvement strategy for Ennis including town centre public realm enhancements, as part of a detailed local area plan for the town;
 - B** To support the improvement of the suitability of Ennis town centre retail accommodation for modern retailers, whilst preserving the town's attractive historic character;
 - C** To facilitate the need for additional non-bulky comparison goods floorspace within the town centre, ensuring it is integrated into the existing shopping facilities;
 - D** To harness the retail development potential of any appropriate opportunity/brownfield sites within the town centre;
 - E** To maintain and expand the attractive network of independent fashion boutiques and other speciality shops in the town centre, which combined with the character of the town and its public spaces, creates a niche shopping experience for residents and tourists;
 - F** To carefully consider qualitative factors in assessing the appropriate nature, scale and distribution of any future proposals for new retail development in Ennis town.

Additional Retail Floorspace
There is an identified need for additional convenience and comparison floorspace in the Ennis area during the lifetime of this Plan. Details of future quantitative and qualitative requirements and the preferred sites for such developments are set out in the Ennis and Environs Settlement Plan, contained in Volume 3(a) of this Plan. See also Section 7.6.5 Retail Parks/Retail Warehousing below.

Neighbourhood Centres in Ennis
As a town with a population greater than 25,000 persons, there is a requirement for neighbourhood centres at appropriate locations in the Ennis and Environs area. These centres generally serve smaller more localised communities. They promote sustainable communities by meeting the daily convenience shopping needs of local residents, promoting social inclusion and reducing the need to travel by car into the town centre for daily essentials. They can also act as a focal point for the community and attract other small businesses such as hairdressers, newsagents etc. to locate nearby.

In Ennis there are existing neighbourhood centres serving the Roslevan and Lifford communities. However there is a need for similar services in other neighbourhoods in the town and its environs, namely the Claureen, Cahircalla More and Clonroadmore areas. Suitable sites for the development of neighbourhood centres in these communities are identified in the Ennis Settlement Plan contained in Volume 3(a) of this Plan.

CDP7.4
Development Plan Objective:
Neighbourhood Centres in Ennis

- It is an objective of the Development Plan:**
- To support the development of neighbourhood centres in the areas identified in Section 7.4.1 of this Plan, to provide a mix of uses and services suited to the scale of the local neighbourhood.



7.4.2 Shannon

Shannon, located approximately midway between Limerick and Ennis, is situated between the catchment areas of the two largest shopping areas in the region. However, Shannon has many strengths as a retail destination in itself. It is part of a Linked Gateway, has a sizeable workforce and resident population and has an international airport and brand name. The Council will encourage and facilitate the enhancement of both the town centre retail provision and the character of its environment in Shannon in order to improve the service to its local catchment. The town will be supported as a developing settlement and it is recognised that Shannon has very little representation of 'bulky comparison goods' outlets. The provision of a distinct shopping area linked to tourism is an opportunity which should be examined.

A masterplan was prepared for the redevelopment and expansion of Shannon Town Centre. The key elements of this masterplan have been incorporated into the adopted Shannon Town and Environs Local Area Plan 2012-2018.

CDP7.5

Development Plan Objective: Shannon Town Centre

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To support the continuing development of retail facilities in Shannon Town Centre through the delivery of the adopted local area plan;
- B** To encourage the growth of retail floorspace so that the town centre can improve its quality of service to its local catchment area;
- C** To examine the possibility of creating a distinct shopping character for the town centre, reflecting its Linked Gateway status and increasing its attractiveness to tourists, particularly those using the airport.

Additional Retail Floorspace in Shannon

There is an identified requirement for additional convenience and comparison retail floorspace to serve Shannon town and the surrounding hinterland. The Shannon Town and Environs Local Area Plan 2012-2018 identifies preferred sites for future retail development and also indicates the nature and extent of retail floorspace that can be accommodated in future development areas.



7.4.3 Service Towns

The primary function of Service Towns is the provision of convenience goods and everyday services. Some Service Towns such as Lahinch and Kilrush also benefit from their tourist and visitor attraction which allows them to support a wider range of comparison goods than would be justified by their local catchment population. The primary objective for these centres is to enhance the quality of their convenience goods provision, enabling the construction of modern food store outlets.

Sustainability benefits in terms of reducing vehicle miles travelled can be achieved through providing improved facilities in Service Towns. Additionally, where towns have an established tourist and visitor function, the provision of tourist-orientated retailing will be supported to encourage the tourist industry (See Section 7.6.3 below)

CDP7.6

Development Plan Objective: Service Towns

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To support Service Towns as important centres for the provision of convenience goods and retail services;
- B** To encourage the provision of good quality convenience outlets capable of supporting a main food shopping trip.

7.4.4
Small Towns

The primary objective for small towns is to maintain and enhance the quality of their convenience goods provision, where necessary, by the construction of modern food store outlets which in turn will reduce the propensity for local shoppers to travel to larger supermarkets for weekly/monthly shopping trips. Consequently, there are likely to be sustainability benefits in terms of reducing the distance travelled to access retail services through providing improved facilities in these towns. Clare County Council will encourage the enhancement of retail services in established town centres, expanding the range of goods and services available for locals and tourists.

CDP7.7

Development Plan Objective:
Small Towns

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

A

To support small towns as important centres for the provision of convenience goods and retail services for the catchment population;

B

To encourage the provision (where not already provided) of good quality convenience outlets capable of supporting a main food shopping trip in or on the edge of the town centre;

C

To encourage the provision of tourist and visitor-orientated retail provision to capitalise on the central role that these towns play in the tourism industry in the County.

7.4.5
Large Villages

The retail function of large village centres is to meet ‘top-up’ convenience shopping needs (i.e. those products which need to be replaced between main food shopping trips) and to provide local services. From a social and economic perspective they are also important as they constitute a sustainable provision of retailing whilst also binding communities and social networks in rural areas.

While it is unlikely that these centres will attract sufficient expenditure to support the large scale provision of retail or comparison goods, they remain an important focus of the community, and consequently their continued vitality and viability is strongly supported. The focus will be to ensure that existing retailers remain and, if required, new floor space is provided, either through the construction of additional units or the qualitative improvement of existing floor space, to enhance the level of services provided to local communities.

CDP7.8

Development Plan Objective:
Large Villages

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To encourage the retention of existing retail services and facilitate retail development within designated village centres, where it is appropriate to its location and catchment.

7.4.6
Small Villages

Retail services in small villages generally consist of rural shops, petrol filling stations, creameries, post offices etc. These services are focal points in the local community and are essential to maintaining a high quality of life in rural areas. For these reasons it is essential that they are enhanced and maintained during the lifetime of this Plan. Due to the low population densities in small villages and their surrounding rural hinterland, these settlements generally cannot support extensive or large-scale retail facilities, nor would they be appropriate to the scale of the settlements.





.However, an increase in the range of services available in small villages will be supported to reduce the need to travel to large urban centres for daily essentials and to ensure on-going quality of life for rural residents.

CDP7.9

Development Plan Objective: Small Villages

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To facilitate retail development in small villages where the nature and scale of the proposed development is appropriate to the location and catchment.

7.4.7

Retail Activity in Rural Areas

Retail services in rural areas are most commonly provided in the villages and towns that service the rural hinterland. However certain retail activities can be dispersed throughout the rural area such as farm shops and tourism/craft-based home enterprises. Such retail services, particularly farm-based shops can serve a vital function in rural areas by helping to meet the demand for fresh produce and providing new sources of employment and services, thereby contributing to the diversity of economic activity in rural areas.

CDP7.10

Development Plan Objective: Retail Uses in Rural Areas

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To consider proposals for the introduction of a retail use on a farm where it can be demonstrated that the scale and scope of retailing proposed is ancillary to the continued agricultural use of the farm and will not harm the vitality and viability of retail facilities in any nearby town or village.

7.5 Town Centre Retailing

7.5.1

Improvement of Town Centres

Vibrant and attractive town centres are essential to sustain and attract further retail services in towns and villages across the County. In order to ensure that town centres are attractive spaces, public realm interventions may be required. The retail experience can be greatly enhanced through the provision of high quality civic spaces. The local authority has a key role to play in this area, both by directly carrying out works in town centres and also by coordinating the work of relevant stakeholders. For further information on this issue please refer to Chapter 16 – Towns and Villages.

7.5.2

Diversity of Uses

Maintaining the health of town or village centres requires diversity in the services on offer to the catchment population. A wide variety of different functions in town and village centres is a key element in ensuring the on-going vitality of an area. This vitality is threatened by an over-concentration of one particular type of outlet.

CDP7.11

Development Plan Objective: Over-Concentration of Uses

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To ensure that, in the interest of vitality and viability, development proposals result in a balance of services and outlets thus avoiding an over-concentration of a particular type of retail activity in a given area.



7.5.3 Improved Accessibility and Mobility

It is essential to ensure that town centres across the County are accessible and accommodate all forms of transport, especially sustainable transport options. Accessibility is a measure of how people of all ages and abilities can use an area. Car park locations, surface quality, pavement and building design can all contribute to the level of accessibility in a given area. Enhancing accessibility, to ensure that everyone can enjoy the amenities and services of town centre areas, is therefore essential.

To reverse the trend of car dependency in town centres, and increase enjoyment of town centre areas, it is critical to enhance mobility. Efforts are needed to make town centres across the County more pedestrian and cyclist-friendly to ensure that sustainable modes of travel are encouraged and supported.

CDP7.12

Development Plan Objective: Town Centre Accessibility and Mobility

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To ensure that all new town centre developments, including developments relating to the enhancement of civic spaces and streetscapes, are based on the principles of universal access;
- B** To work to ensure that town and village centres are pedestrian-friendly, cyclist-friendly and generally promote the safe use of sustainable modes of transport.

7.5.4 Retail Health Checks

The ‘Retail Planning Guidelines 2012’ highlight how the concepts of vitality and viability are central in maintaining and enhancing town centres. The realisation of these essential qualities depends on a balance of many factors, including the range and degree of activities in a centre, its mix of uses, its accessibility to people living and working in the area along with its general amenity, appearance and safety. As the attainment/maintenance of town centre vitality and viability are crucial in attracting both retail businesses and consumers, an examination of the ‘health’ of the County’s principal settlements is essential to inform proposals for improvement in the future. The process by which these qualities are assessed for a specific centre is known as a ‘health check’.

CDP7.13

Development Plan Objective: Retail Health Checks

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To carry out retail health checks, as required, in accordance with Annex 2 of the ‘Retail Planning Guidelines 2012’.

7.5.5 Shop Fronts, Advertising and Signage

High quality shop fronts greatly enhance the attractiveness of an area. The towns and villages of County Clare have a variety of traditional and contemporary shop fronts which reflect and complement the character of the settlements. These shop fronts make an important contribution to the character of the towns and villages across the County.

Commercial businesses must have specific regard to the importance of quality design in terms of shop fronts, signage and advertisements. Further detail of the standards required in relation to signage and advertising is set out in Appendix 1 Development Management Guidelines. The Council will build on previous initiatives such as the Kilrush Shop Front Scheme, during the lifetime of this Plan

CDP7.14

Development Plan Objective: Shop Fronts

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To encourage the use of traditional shop front designs, materials and signs and to seek the repair and retention of shop fronts of architectural interest, where appropriate;
- B** To ensure that new shop fronts and the fronts of other commercial buildings:
 - Display a unity with the building of which they are part, including the use of appropriate materials;
 - Reflect the scale and proportion of the adjoining buildings and the street scene as a whole;
 - Are of a format and design, using appropriate colouring and lettering, which complements the visual amenities of the surrounding buildings and locality.

7.5.6 Evening and Late Night Uses

A healthy night time economy contributes greatly to the vitality and viability of a town centre. There is a need to ensure that adequate provision is made for evening and late night activities such as restaurants, public houses, taxi offices, hot food takeaways and other similar uses. A vibrant night time economy brings many benefits such as increasing visitor numbers, providing passive surveillance, and increasing the appeal of a town as a destination for artistic and cultural events.

CDP7.15

Development Plan Objective: Evening and Late Night Uses

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To support proposals for development involving evening and late night commercial, retail or entertainment uses within, or immediately adjacent to, the town centres or neighbourhood centres, where it can be demonstrated that the development will enhance the character and function of the area;
- B** To encourage the provision of limited on-site-eating floor-space as part of hot food takeaway developments in order to assist in reducing disturbance and litter in public streets and places.

7.5.7 Leisure and Entertainment

Leisure and entertainment facilities form an essential component of the mix of use required to ensure town centre vibrancy and vitality. They make a particularly important contribution to retaining vibrancy outside of regular business hours.

CDP7.16

Development Plan Objective: Leisure and Entertainment Facilities

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To consider proposals for the establishment of leisure or entertainment facilities within, or immediately adjacent to, town centres or other centres, where it can be clearly demonstrated that the development will enhance the character and function of the areas.

7.6 Other Forms of Retail

7.6.1 Edge-of-Centre and Out-of-Centre Retailing

Edge-of-centre sites are located within easy walking distance (generally no more than 300-400m) of the primary retail areas in the town whereas out-of-centre retail development is clearly separated from the town centre but within the urban areas identified in the Development Plan. Whilst it is not the purpose of the planning system to prevent competition or trade diversion, having regard to the plan-led approach to town centre expansion in Ennis and Kilrush, it is not envisaged that new edge-of-centre or out-of-centre convenience or non-bulky comparison retail developments will be required or permitted in Ennis or Kilrush during the lifetime of this Plan. Retail developments of this nature will be directed to either town centre locations or, in the case of Ennis, the identified Neighbourhood Centres, where it can be demonstrated that there will not be a negative impact on the vitality and viability of the town centre and subject to the floorspace areas set out in Volume 3(a).

In other settlements in the Plan area, convenience and non-bulky comparison retail development will be directed, in the first instance, to town centre locations. Following the sequential test, edge-of-centre locations may be suitable for retail developments of this nature depending on a number of criteria including ease of movement between the subject site and the town centre, strength of

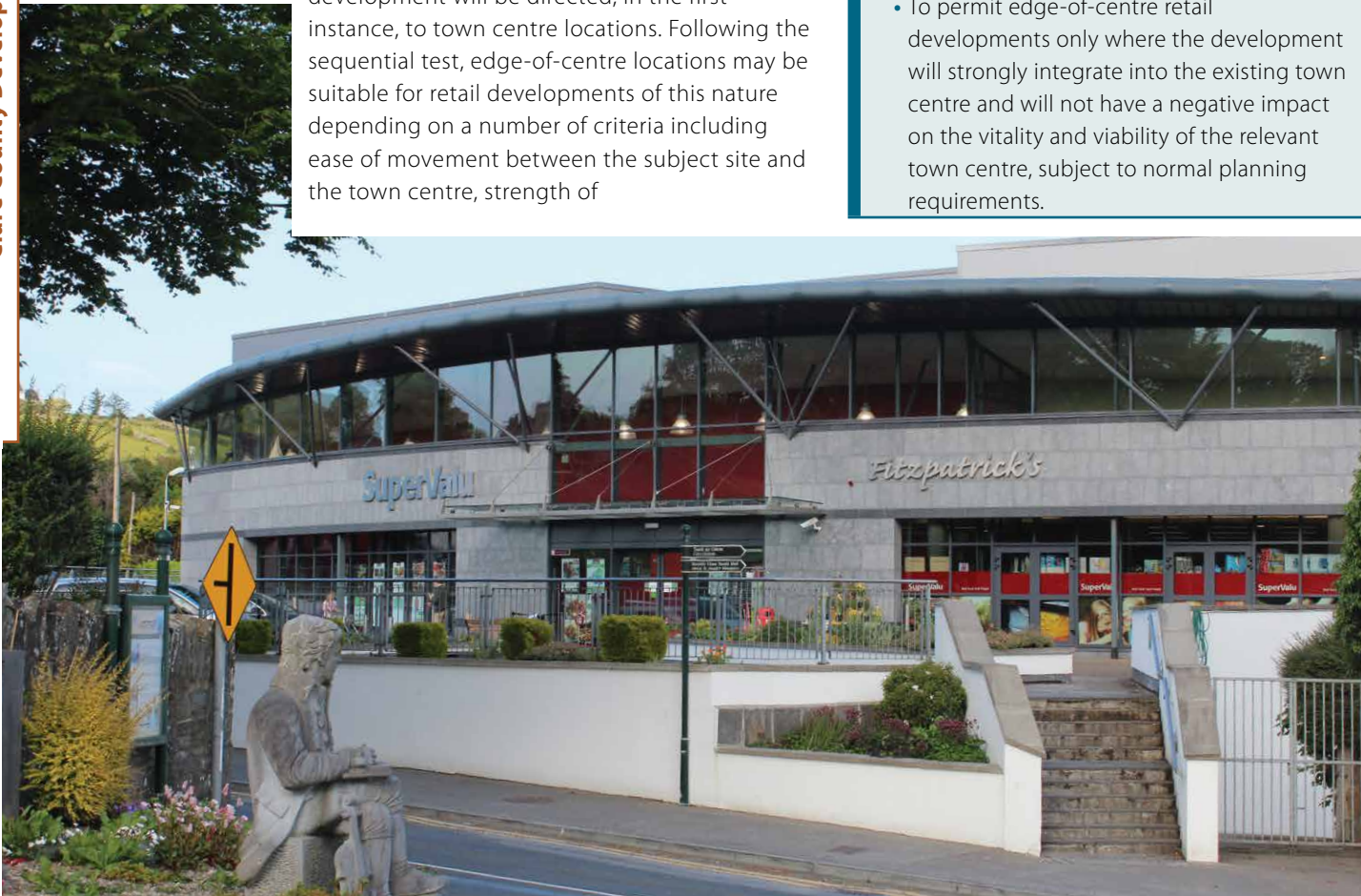
attraction and size of the relevant town centre, transport links, visual integration with the town centre etc. Proposals for edge-of centre retail developments will be assessed having regard to the considerations set out in 'Retail Planning – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012'. In the interest of protecting and enhancing the vitality and viability of town and village centres, it is not envisaged that out-of-centre retail developments will be permitted during the lifetime of this Plan.

CDP7.17

Development Plan Objective: Edge-of-Centre Retail Development

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To permit convenience and non-bulky comparison retail developments in town centre locations in the Ennis and Kilrush areas and in identified neighbourhood centres in the Ennis area, subject to normal planning requirements;
- B** In settlements other than Ennis and Kilrush:
 - To apply the sequential test to development proposals for edge-of-centre retail developments;
 - To assess applications for edge-of-centre retail developments having regard to the criteria and considerations set out in 'Retail Planning – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012';
 - To permit edge-of-centre retail developments only where the development will strongly integrate into the existing town centre and will not have a negative impact on the vitality and viability of the relevant town centre, subject to normal planning requirements.





7.6.2 Retail Parks/ Retail Warehousing

A retail park comprises an agglomeration of retail warehouses grouped around a common carpark selling mainly bulky goods. In keeping with the Retail Planning Guidelines (2012) there will be a presumption against further development of out-of-town retail parks in the Plan area. However, there is an identified need for retail warehouse development of varying scales in the Ennis and Shannon Areas.

In the Ennis area there is a quantitative over-provision of bulky-goods comparison floor area but there is a need to improve the quality, range and accessibility of such floorspace. There is a requirement to consolidate the existing disparate floorspaces of bulky-goods retail warehousing in the Ennis and Environs area in order to counteract the leakage to larger multinational stores in Limerick.

In the Shannon Town area there is little representation of bulky comparison goods outlets and there would be sustainable advantages to establishing some provision to meet local needs so as to reduce the need for residents to travel to either Limerick or Ennis. The Shannon Town and Environs Local Area Plan 2012-2018 identifies preferred sites for future retail warehouse development and also indicates the quantum of floorspace required.

In relation to both existing and proposed retail warehouses, the minimum unit size in out-of-town locations shall be 700m² and the subdivision of warehouses into units of a smaller size shall not be permitted.

CDP7.18

Development Plan Objective: Retail Parks/Retail Warehousing

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To encourage and facilitate an improved bulky comparison retail offer in specified locations in Ennis where it can be achieved through a qualitative improvement of existing retail floorspace;
- B** To permit new retail warehouse development in the Shannon Town and Environs area subject to the application of the sequential test and the preparation of a Retail Impact Assessment to ensure that there will be no negative impacts on the vitality and viability of the town centre area and subject to normal planning requirements.

7.6.3 Tourism-Related Retail Developments

It is an objective of the Council to support niche tourism and innovative tourist enterprises to enhance the diversity and quality of local visitor experiences and to stimulate increased visitor numbers. Clare County Council will give favourable consideration to tourist-related retail developments in settlements and in established tourist attractions throughout the County.

Tourism retail shall be encouraged at appropriate and established tourist locations where it can be shown that the tourism attraction concerned is well-established and has a suitable existing flow of visitors sufficient to make a retail facility viable. The retail facility must not detract from the main tourist attraction on the site.

CDP7.19

Development Plan Objective: Tourism-Related Retail

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- To encourage and facilitate the delivery of sustainable tourism-related retail developments and initiatives, of appropriate scales, located in the vicinity of tourism attractions.

7.6.4 Ancillary Retailing

It is recognised that some industrial and commercial businesses also operate small-scale retail facilities, subsidiary to their main operations, to provide direct sales to the public. Such operations will be considered having regard to the location of the business, the extent of retail activity that will be generated and the potential impact on both surrounding businesses and town centre retail activity.

CDP7.20

**Development Plan Objective:
Ancillary Retailing**

It is an objective of the Development Plan:
To facilitate industrial and commercial businesses located in premises outside the town centres to trade to customers where such retailing operations are ancillary to the business as a whole and where they do not have a negative impact on neighbouring businesses and/or town centre retailing.

7.6.5 Petrol Filling Stations

Small shops associated with petrol filling stations can be a cost effective way of providing the equivalent services of a local shop. It is considered appropriate for petrol filling stations to provide limited retail facilities on-site but such facilities should be of a small scale and ancillary to the main purpose of the filling station. The Council will consider proposals on an application-by-application basis and may limit the range of retail goods available for purchase at petrol filling stations in order to protect the viability and vitality of existing retail centres. Facilities will generally not be acceptable in rural areas where the maximum speed limit applies.

See also Section 8.2.3.2 Motorway Service and Rest Areas

CDP7.21

**Development Plan Objective:
Petrol Filling Stations**

It is an objective of the Development Plan:
To consider development proposals for petrol filling stations, and associated shops with a floor space no greater than 100m² (net), on their individual merits, subject to traffic impact considerations and the location, health and scale of existing retail services in the area.



Chapter 7 Retail – Cross References

Volume 8	Retail Strategy for the Mid-West Region 2010-2016
Section 3.2.2	Settlement Hierarchy and Strategy
CDP6.25	Retail Development
CDP6.15	Re-use of Brownfield Sites
Section 8.2.3	Road Network
CDP8.3	Service and Rest Areas
CDP8.24	Water Services
CDP16.1	Town Centre Vibrancy
CDP17.2	Universal Design
CDP17.3	Sustainable Developments
CDP18.8	Storm Water Management
Section 19.4	Nature of Zoning



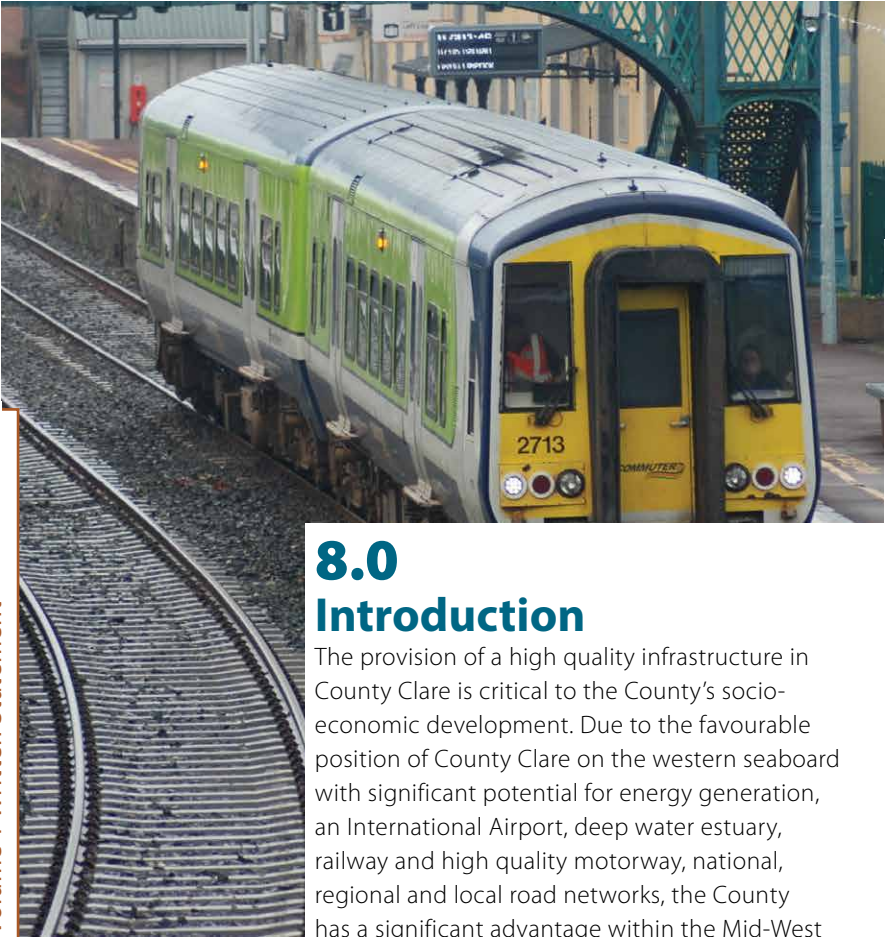
Chapter 8

Physical Infrastructure, Environment and Energy

Goal VII:

A County Clare that supports strong economic growth and a high quality of life for all residents through the provision of efficient and robust physical infrastructure whilst having regard to environmental responsibilities and complying with European and National legislation.

8.0 Introduction.....	116
8.1 Strategic Aims.....	116
8.2 Access and Movement	116
8.2.1 Access and Movement Context..	116
8.2.2 Integrated Land-Use and Transportation Planning	117
8.2.3 Road Network.....	117
8.2.4 Urban Roads and Streets	122
8.2.5 Shannon International Airport...	122
8.2.6 SmarterTravel.....	123
8.2.7 Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans	124
8.2.8 Active Travel Towns Programme..	124
8.2.9 Cycling and Walking.....	124
8.2.10 Public Transport.....	125
8.2.11 Integrated Transport Services..	126
8.2.12 Public Rights of Way	127
8.2.13 Coastal and Estuarine Transportation.....	127
8.2.14 Ports, Jetties, Harbours, Quays and Piers	127
8.2.15 Directional Signage	127
8.3 Water Resources	128
8.3.1 Water Resources Context	128
8.3.2 River Basin Management Plans..	128
8.3.3 Water Resources.....	128
8.3.4 Water Extraction from Lough Derg	129
8.4 Water and Wastewater Services.....	130
8.4.1 Water Supply	130
8.4.2 Water Supply in the Ennis and Environs Area.....	132
8.4.3 Wastewater Management.....	132
8.4.4 Storm Water Management	133
8.5 Waste Management	134
8.5.1 Southern Region Waste Management Plan	134
8.5.2 Waste Transfer and Recovery	134
8.5.3 Litter Management	135
8.5.4 Construction and Demolition Waste	135
8.5.5 Agriculture Waste	135
8.6 Noise, Air and Light Pollution	136
8.6.1 Noise Pollution	136
8.6.2 Air Pollution	136
8.6.3 Light Pollution.....	136
8.7 SEVESO – Major Accidents Directive ..	137
8.8 Energy and Communications	138
8.8.1 Energy and Communications Context.....	138
8.8.2 Energy Strategy	138
8.8.3 Energy Security	138
8.8.4 Electricity Network.....	139
8.8.5 Gas Network.....	139
8.8.6 Renewable Energy Sources	140
8.8.7 Energy Storage.....	141
8.8.8 Energy Efficiency and Conservation.....	141
8.8.9 Broadband Connectivity	141
8.8.10 Telecommunications Infrastructure.....	142



8.0 Introduction

The provision of a high quality infrastructure in County Clare is critical to the County's socio-economic development. Due to the favourable position of County Clare on the western seaboard with significant potential for energy generation, an International Airport, deep water estuary, railway and high quality motorway, national, regional and local road networks, the County has a significant advantage within the Mid-West Region. These advantages must be progressed in tandem with the sustainable management and development of other essential infrastructure such as water services, waste management facilities and telecommunications infrastructure. By facilitating, coordinating and encouraging the development of the range and quality of physical infrastructure, Clare County Council plays a central role in sustainable development and the improvement in quality of life and economic competitiveness of the County and region.

8.1 Strategic Aims

This chapter presents the objectives for the provision of physical infrastructure for the existing and future population of County Clare. In accordance with the overall vision of the Plan, objectives are based on the following strategic aims:

- To provide a safe, integrated and efficient network of transport to serve the needs of people, goods and services travelling to and within County Clare;
- To promote and encourage the use of alternative sustainable modes of transport;
- To safeguard the strategic transport function of the motorway and national road network and associated junctions in order to cater for the safe and efficient movement of inter-urban and inter-regional traffic;

- To protect, improve and conserve the County's water resources to meet the requirements of the Shannon International River Basin Management Plan and Western River Basin Management Plan;
- To encourage and promote the benefits of re-use and recycling of waste and to enable the provision of such waste management facilities throughout the County;
- To ensure security of energy supply throughout the County;
- To reduce County Clare's dependence on imported fuels and to provide alternative energy sources by harnessing the County's potential for renewable energy sources;
- To promote and facilitate the provision and continued development of broadband and ICT infrastructure to further enhance social and economic development, particularly in the more peripheral areas of County Clare.

8.2 Access and Movement

8.2.1 Access and Movement Context

In the preparation of this section of the Development Plan regard has been had to the following:

Building on Recovery: Infrastructure and Capital Investment 2016-2021
National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020
Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022
National Roads Need Study for Secondary Roads, NRA 2011
Design Manual for Urban Streets and Roads (DMURS)
NRA Service Area Policy, 2014
The National Cycle Network Scoping Study 2010
The Irish Trails Strategy 2007
National Cycle Policy Framework 2009
European Charter of Pedestrian Rights 1988
Spatial Planning and National Roads – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012
NRA Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines 2014
Mid-West Area Strategic Plan (MWASP)
Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020

8.2.2 Integrated Land-Use and Transportation Planning

The integration of planning, land-use and transportation is an essential component of identifying the optimum location of future development, encouraging the use of sustainable transport options and moving towards the development of a low carbon society. The *Mid-West Area Strategic Plan (MWASP)* is a 30-year infrastructure development plan for the Mid-West Region which provides a framework for the integration of land use and transport provision into the future.

CDP8.1

Development Plan Objective: Mid-West Area Strategic Plan

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To seek to implement the recommendations of the Mid-West Area Strategic Plan (MWASP) throughout the lifetime of this Development Plan.

8.2.3 Road Network

The road network in the County is made up of a motorway, national primary roads, national secondary roads, regional and local roads. County Clare has a large rural area with a dispersed population with the result that the car is the predominant mode of transport. The maintenance and upgrade of the existing road network and, where necessary, the provision of new road networks or realignments are essential to achieve modern high standards.

8.2.3.1 Motorway, National Primary and National Secondary Roads

These roads play a strategic role in inter-urban and inter-regional transport requirements and underpin economic success and competitiveness by providing faster, more efficient and safer access to and from ports, airports, cities and major towns. The motorway, national primary and national secondary roads also play a pivotal role in providing ready access to all parts of County Clare.

CDP8.2

Development Plan Objective: Motorways and National Roads

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To safeguard the motorway and national roads, and associated motorway and national road junctions, in line with national policy;
- B** To support the upgrade and improvement of motorways, national roads and their associated junctions, subject to compliance with requirements of the Habitats Directive;
- C** To advocate for the upgrade of National Secondary Routes in the County in order to improve connectivity between the North and West Clare areas, the Hub town of Ennis and the wider Mid-West Region;
- D** To advocate for the expeditious completion of the M18 motorway from Gort to Tuam.

8.2.3.2 Motorway Service and Rest Areas

Motorway service and rest areas are essential for driver safety and to ensure the availability of services and amenities for drivers. Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) has identified a need for an on-line Motorway Service Area on the M18 at a location between Junctions 7 (Sixmilebridge/Hurler's Cross) and Junction 12 (Ennis). They have identified a need for a Type 1 Service Area (full service area) at this location.

See also Section 7.6.5 Petrol Filling Stations.

CDP8.3

Development Plan Objective: Service and Rest Areas

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To collaborate with Transport Infrastructure Ireland to secure the development of an on-line Type 1 Service Area on the M18 between Junction 7 and Junction 12 during the lifetime of this Development Plan, having regard to the 'NRA Service Area Policy - 2014' and 'Spatial Planning and National Roads – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012'.

8.2.3.3 Access onto National Roads

In retaining the safety, efficiency and carrying capacity of national primary and secondary roads within the County, development proposals involving access onto national roads will be assessed by the Council having regard to 'Spatial Planning and National Roads – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012)'.

Lands adjoining National Roads to which Speed Limits of Greater than 60km/h apply

The policy of the Planning Authority will be to avoid the creation of any additional access points from new developments or the generation of increased traffic from existing accesses to national roads to which speed limits of greater than 60km/h apply in accordance with 'Spatial Planning and National Roads – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012)', subject to the exceptional circumstances as set out below. This provision applies to all categories of development, including individual houses in rural areas, regardless of the housing circumstances of the applicant.

Transitional Zones

On sections of national road on the approaches to or exits from urban centres that are subject to a speed limit of 60km/h before a lower 50km/h limit is encountered – otherwise known as transitional zones – a limited level of direct access will be permitted to facilitate orderly urban development. Any such proposal must be subject to a road safety audit in accordance with TII requirements and a proliferation of such entrances, which would lead to a diminution in the role of such zones, must be avoided.

Lands adjoining National Roads within 50km/h Speed Limits

In these areas the Planning Authority will consider access onto national roads in accordance with normal road safety, traffic management and urban design criteria for built up areas.

Exceptional Circumstances:

Developments of National and Regional Strategic Importance

A less restrictive approach may be adopted in the case of developments of national and regional strategic importance which, by their nature, are most appropriately located outside urban areas and where the locations concerned have specific characteristics that make them particularly suitable for the development proposed.

In considering whether such exceptional circumstances arise, the Planning Authority will take the following matters into account:

- The relevance and appropriateness of the proposed development in supporting the aims and objectives of the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines;
- The requirements of other planning guidelines issued under Section 28 of the Act;
- The nature of the proposed development and the volume of traffic that will be generated by it;
- Any implications for the safety, capacity and efficient operation of national roads;
- Any plans for future upgrades of national roads and other transport infrastructure/ services;
- The suitability of the location compared to alternative locations;
- The pattern of existing development in the area;
- Satisfactory details of the proposed demand management measures;
- Acceptable funding and delivery proposals for any road improvements required;
- The precedent that would be created for cumulative development in the area and the potential implications for the national road network.

Clare County Council has identified four locations where exceptional circumstances to the general policy may be considered for developments of strategic importance, as follows:

- Moneypoint Power Station – provision of alternative sources of energy supply;
- Former Whelan's Quarry site at Fountain Cross, Ennis – use as quarry; rehabilitation of site for outdoor activity/adventure park;
- Hotel and Golf Links, Doonbeg – intensification of existing uses;



- Central Waste Management Facility, Ballyduffbeg, Inagh – renewable energy project, waste transfer and recovery facility, eco-park.

The following provisions are also required whereby the applicant/developer is responsible for all costs associated with any road upgrades and/or junction improvements required to facilitate the development proposals. All upgrade proposals are to conform to road safety and design standards as set out in the relevant TII publications. Demand management measures shall accompany relevant planning applications to include mobility management/travel planning to address future trip management/travel planning and, where appropriate, visitor trips to the site.

Temporary access requirements for renewable energy developments are required to adhere to the road safety and design standards set out in TII publications and to include appropriate traffic management measures.

Lightly-trafficked Sections of National Secondary Routes

A less restrictive approach will be applied to lightly-trafficked sections of national secondary roads where a balance needs to be struck between the important transport function of such roads and the social and economic development of these areas. In consultation with TII and based on the criteria set out in Section 2.6 of 'Spatial Planning and National Roads – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012)', the following sections of National Secondary Road have been identified as areas where this less restrictive approach will apply:

- N67 Ballyvaughan to Lisdoonvarna;
- N67 short section between the junction with R483 and the junction with R484;
- N67 Doonbeg to Kilkee;
- N67 Kilrush to Killimer.

The areas listed above are also identified in Volume 2 Maps of this Plan. In these areas the Council will give consideration to developments requiring direct access onto national secondary roads for farmers and their sons and daughters who are actively engaged in farming the land, wishing to build a dwelling house for their own permanent residence on family land. It must be clearly demonstrated that:

- There is a genuine need for the dwelling proposed;
- There are no other alternative sites available with access off a regional or local road;
- The development fully complies with the objectives set out in Chapter 3 of this Plan – Urban and Rural Settlement Strategy;
- All safety issues and considerations are adequately addressed in accordance with the NRA's Design Manual for Roads and Bridges.

Existing Accesses onto National Secondary Roads

A less restrictive approach will be applied to existing accesses onto national secondary roads where a balance needs to be struck between the important transport function of such roads and the social and economic development of these areas. The Council will give consideration to developments utilising existing accesses onto national secondary roads for farmers and their sons and daughters who are actively engaged in farming the land, wishing to build a dwelling house for their own permanent residence on family land. It must be clearly demonstrated that there is a genuine need for the dwelling proposed and that there are no other alternative sites available with access off a regional or local road. The development shall fully comply with the objectives set out in Chapter 3 of this Plan- Urban and Rural Settlement Strategy and must also demonstrate that use of an existing entrance to serve the proposed development will not result in the creation of a traffic hazard.

CDP8.4

Development Plan Objective: Direct Access onto National Roads

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To safeguard the safety, efficiency and carrying capacity of national primary and secondary roads within the County in line with national policy;
- B** To assess development proposals requiring direct access onto the national road network having regard to the criteria set out in Section 8.2.3.3 above.

8.2.3.4 Strategic Regional Roads

Regional roads provide an important function in linking smaller towns and villages with the larger urban centres and with national primary and secondary routes. The Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines MWRPGs (2010) highlight that developments requiring access onto key regional routes must be restricted in order to protect the capacity and safety of such routes. There are several regional roads which have been selected by the Council as strategic routes that act as feeder routes based on the volumes of traffic that they carry on a daily basis.

The Council will protect the identified strategic regional roads from a proliferation of access points and will ensure that their key function is retained.

CDP8.5

Development Plan Objective:
Development of Strategic Regional Roads

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A To upgrade and improve, where necessary, the Regional Roads in the County as outlined in Table 8.1 and Table 8.2. The Council will have regard to national and regional transport plans and the Council’s programme of works. The undertaking of any works will be subject to the availability of finance and resources;
- B To preserve the carrying capacity of Strategic Regional Roads and safeguard the investment in such infrastructure. Development requiring direct access onto the Strategic Regional roads identified in Table 8.1 will be restricted to the following criteria:
 - Developments of strategic importance which by their nature are most appropriately located in a rural area;
 - Established rural landowners* and their sons and daughters wishing to build a dwelling for their own occupation on family land. It must be clearly demonstrated that there is no reasonable alternative site with access off a minor road available, and that the development complies with the objectives as set out in Chapter 3 Urban and Rural Settlement Strategy;
 - Developments located within the settlement boundaries, residential clusters and where the 50km/h speed limit applies.

* An established rural landowner is defined as a person and/or their son or daughter, or sibling, who has owned a landholding in a rural area prior to 1999 and who wishes to build on that land. It also provides for beneficiaries under the Succession Act.

Table 8.1
Strategic Regional Roads

Strategic Regional Corridors	Location
R352	Ennis – Tuamgraney
R476	Fountain Cross – Kilfenora
R463	Limerick – Killaloe – Tuamgraney
R471	Cloverhill – Sixmilebridge
R465	Barry’s Cross to Broadford settlement boundary
R462	Sixmilebridge to Setright’s Cross
R469	Ennis to Quin
R478	Lahinch to Lisdoonvarna

8.2.3.5 Relief/Distributor Roads

The Council will seek to provide relief roads where necessary in towns and villages throughout the County as resources permit. Such roads will divert heavy volumes of traffic away from the core areas of towns and villages and will have regard to the need for access and road safety. The provision of such roads can also facilitate the organised expansion of towns and villages and have the capacity to cater for pedestrians and cyclists.

No new residential access points shall be permitted on the Limerick Northern Distributor Road and the Killaloe Bypass when constructed.

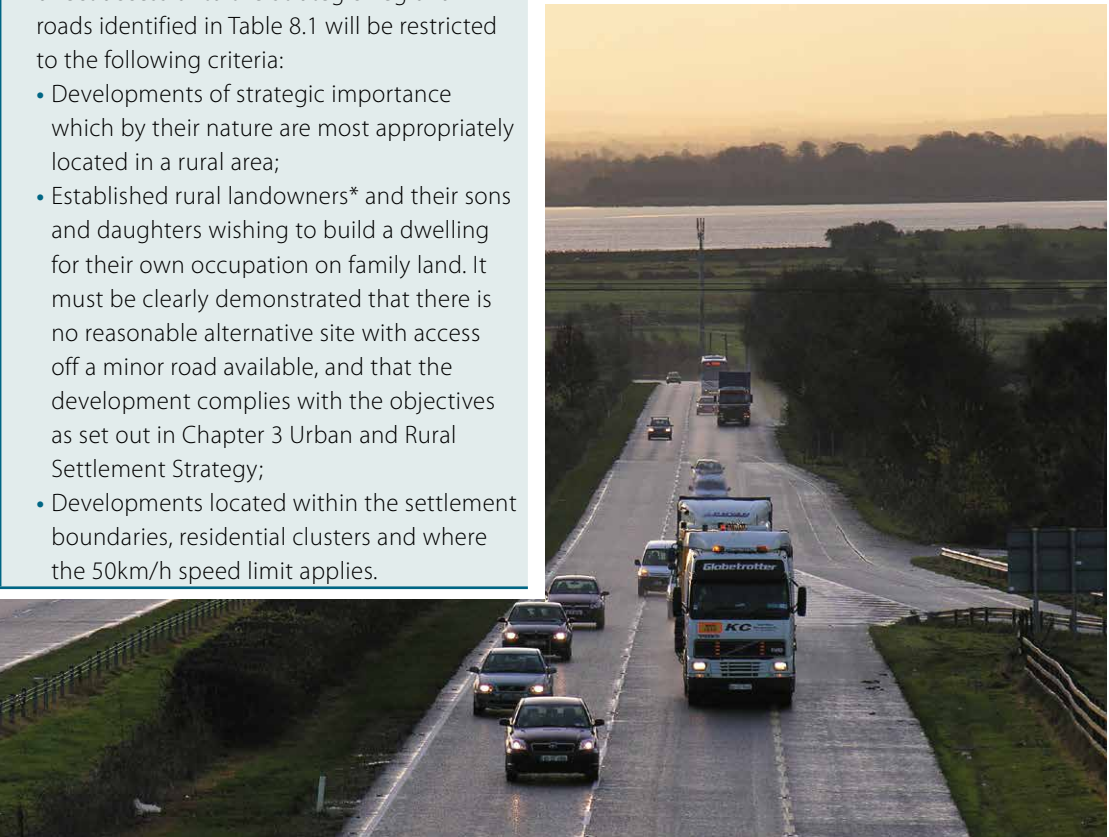


Table 8.2
Proposed Projects identified for
Future Development

- Limerick Northern Distributor Road (LNDR) – Knockalisheen to Shannon River Crossing – and university link road to the University of Limerick Clare Campus
- Western By-Pass of Killaloe and River Shannon Bridge crossing south of Killaloe
- N67, N85 Road Improvement Scheme, Ennistymon
- Upgrade/extension of N19 to Shannon Airport
- Realignment of sections of N85 Ennis–Ennistymon road
- Kilkee lower ring road linking the N67 at Kilkee Bay Hotel, running west to the Carrigaholt road, linking with the coast road.
- Sixmilebridge Inner Relief Road
- Shannon crossing south of O'Briensbridge
- Relief Road from N68 Ennis Road at Kilrush to the N67 Killimer Road at Kilrush
- Relief Road from R473 Ennis Road in Corofin to north of the village
- Relief Road from N67 northeast of Lahinch to the N67 south of Lahinch
- Road realignment on the N68 at Caherea
- Bypass south of Ennistymon linking the N85 to the N67
- Relief Road from N67 south of Miltown Malbay to the N67 northwest of the town
- New routes southeast of Shannon linking Bóther na Luchra with Slí an tSionnaigh and Bóthar na Lóiste
- N67 Ballyvaughan to Lisdoonvarna Rd – works to facilitate the development of a footpath and cycleway.

Ennis and Environs Area:

- Northern Inner Relief Road - linking the Gort Road (R458) to the Tulla Road (R351)
- Link from Lahinch Road (N85) to Drumcliff Road (L4182)
- Link from Drumcliff Road (L4182) to Gort Road (R458)
- Link from Clon Road (R871) to Quin Road (R469)
- Arterial Road from Skehanagh Roundabout (N85) to Quin Road (R469)

CDP8.6

Development Plan Objective: Proposed Projects identified for Future Development

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To provide and/or facilitate the projects identified in Table 8.2 where necessary, and to ensure that such road infrastructure is designed and constructed to fulfil its intended purpose;
- B** To ensure that the relevant mitigation measures contained in Appendix C2 (a)–(d) of Volume 10(a) associated with the projects identified in Table 8.2 are strictly adhered to;

In relation to the Limerick Northern Distributor Road:

- C** To ensure that the design of the proposed Limerick Northern Distributor Road, as it intersects the R464 in Parteen, provides for safe and adequate means of pedestrian and vehicular access and connectivity east and westwards within Parteen and across the route at this point;
- D** To ensure that results from a detailed hydrological, hydrogeological and engineering assessment inform the design of the Limerick Northern Distributor Road and University Link Road to avoid any adverse negative effect on the existing hydrological and hydrogeological regime within the Knockalisheen Marsh area. The design of the River Shannon Bridge shall be informed by the overriding requirement to avoid adverse impacts on the qualifying interests of alluvial woodland, otter and lamprey species when assessed under the Habitats Directive;
- E** To ensure that the bridge abutments are set back a sufficient distance to allow for the retention of any existing riparian habitats or areas with the potential to develop into alluvial woodland. This will ensure maintenance of ecological connectivity on both banks for the River Shannon. The bridge deck shall be constructed at a sufficient height to allow for the continued development of any alluvial woodland present on both banks of the River Shannon and there will be no net loss of habitat;
- F** To ensure that the Tailrace Canal, Errina Canal and River Blackwater are all crossed on clear span structures, with the abutments sufficiently set back from the watercourse banks to ensure maintenance of ecological connectivity. The necessary ecological assessment of the design of these bridges will be informed and supported by a detailed review and assessment of similar development in comparable sensitive environments;
- G** To ensure that all watercourse crossings, both culverts and bridges are designed so as to not impede the flood conveyance through the structure and not cause any significant change in flood levels, flow depths and velocities that would result in any noticeable increase in flood risk or erosion/accretion locally in the vicinity of the crossing or more remotely both in the upstream or downstream reaches;

- H** To ensure that the proposed road is set at a minimum level that provides sufficient freeboard above the 100 year with climate change flood event (200 year combined tide event in respect of the Knocklisheen area) so as to have a low flood risk over its design life and sufficiently elevated for its storm drainage system to function appropriately during flood events;
- I** To ensure that the construction of the bridges is monitored by a suitably qualified ecologist. Appropriate mitigation will be employed to avoid risks of pollution during both the constructional and operational phases;
- J** To ensure that all mitigation measures set out in the NIR and SEA contained in Volumes 10(a) and 10(b) of this Plan are complied with.

CDP8.7

Development Plan Objective: Environmental Considerations in Road Construction Projects

It is an objective of Clare County Council:
To ensure that, for all major road construction projects, the route selection process will be informed by a constraints study, a significant criteria for which will be environmental considerations in compliance with Objective CDP2.1, in addition to compliance with best practice guidelines from the Fisheries Board, Transport Infrastructure Ireland and relevant Government Departments.

8.2.4 Urban Roads and Streets

The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) applies to streets and roads with a speed limit of 60 km/h or less and sets out a series of requirements, recommendations and actions to ensure that streets and roads are safe, attractive and comfortable for all users. It requires professionals of different disciplines to work together to achieve better street design ensuring that the design must (a) be influenced by the type of place in which the street is located and (b) balance the needs of all users.

CDP8.8

Development Plan Objective: Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS)

It is an objective of the Development Plan:
To implement the requirements and recommendations contained in DMURS in the assessment of development proposals, the preparation of design schemes and their implementation in the development of streets, roads and public realm improvement schemes in the County.

8.2.5 Shannon International Airport

Connectivity to/from Shannon International Airport is essential to ensure that it can continue to grow and make a significant contribution to the local, regional and national economy in the future. Road connectivity to the airport is currently provided via the N19, which provides a link to the national motorway network. The Council will support the upgrade of the N19 during the lifetime of this Plan (see Objective CDP6.4(c)).

Public transport links to the airport are also important to ensure the on-going growth in passenger numbers using the airport. The Council will support the further integration of airport services with both public and private bus services in the future.

See also Section 6.3.2 Development of Shannon.



Public Safety Zones

Red Zones and Public Safety Zones (PSZs) are designated for Shannon International Airport and are located at the ends and approach to the runway to provide for the safety of aircraft and people on the ground. In the assessment of planning applications, in the vicinity of Shannon International Airport, Clare County Council will have regard to the Red Zones and PSZs identified by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government and the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport.

CDP8.9

Development Plan Objective: Shannon International Airport

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To support and facilitate transport linkages to and from the airport by both public and private service providers;
- B** To safeguard current and future operational, safety, technical and development requirements of Shannon International Airport;
- C** To have regard to, and implement the national land use policies and guidance in relation to the Red Zones and Public Safety Zones for Shannon International Airport;
- D** To have regard to the advice of the Irish Aviation Authority with regard to the effects of any development proposals in the vicinity of Shannon International Airport on the safety of aircraft or the safe and efficient navigation thereof, in particular within the Red Safety Zones and Public Safety Zones identified within the Shannon Town and Environs Local Area Plan 2012-2018 and the maps contained in Volume 2 of this Plan;
- E** To have regard to the Irish Aviation Authority Policy 'Landuse Planning and Offshore Development (2014)' in the assessment of relevant development proposals;
- F** To ensure that all proposals are in compliance with Objective CDP2.1.



8.2.6 SmarterTravel

SmarterTravel is the transport policy for Ireland that sets out how the vision of a sustainable travel and transport system can be achieved. The programme works to support a move toward more sustainable travel and transport options. It promotes the development of walking, cycling, public transport and other sustainable forms of transport such as car-sharing and car-pooling, as an alternative to the private car. Objectives in this Development Plan to support walking and cycling, green infrastructure development, active living and sustainable residential development all contribute to the achievement of the goals of the SmarterTravel programme.

CDP8.10

Development Plan Objective: SmarterTravel

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To support sustainable travel in County Clare and to implement the key goals, targets and actions as contained in 'SmarterTravel – A Sustainable Transport Future – A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009-2020'.

8.2.7 Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans

A Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) is a strategic plan designed to address the mobility needs of people and business in towns and their surroundings in order to enhance quality of life. It builds on existing planning practices and takes due consideration of integration, participation and evaluation principles.

Clare County Council is committed to proactive involvement in the EU Endurance Project which aims to create a beneficial network of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans across Europe. To this end the Council will work to develop and implement a SUMP in the Ennis and Environs area during the lifetime of this Plan and will work in close cooperation with Limerick Institute of Technology who are the national facilitators for the Endurance project.

CDP8.11 Development Plan Objective: Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To prepare and implement a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan for the Ennis and Environs area during the lifetime of this Development Plan;
- B** To work in close cooperation with Limerick Institute of Technology and the EU Endurance network.

8.2.8 Active Travel Towns Programme

The Active Travel Towns programme aims to support sustainable and active travel by:

- Creating safer walking and cycling routes through the provision of high quality infrastructure;
- Reducing the need for short distance car journeys;
- Providing sustainable links to schools, colleges, places of employment, amenity and leisure facilities.

Ennis has been designated as an Active Travel Town and has been awarded funding to implement a number of schemes to support sustainable travel in the County Town.

CDP8.12 Development Plan Objective: Active Travel Towns

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To implement an Active Travel Towns programme in the Ennis area during the lifetime of this Plan;
- B** To pursue opportunities for additional funding for both Ennis and other towns in the County that may arise.

8.2.9 Cycling and Walking

Cycling and walking present real opportunities to reduce the use of the private car and reduce green house gases whilst also providing a healthier option to the car. The implementation of the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans and Active Travel Towns programmes work to support walking and cycling and the Council will endeavour to encourage these activities through good urban planning, the provision of bicycle lanes, the creation of pedestrian-friendly zones, pedestrian crossings, dished footpaths and public lighting. Similarly, and where possible, the Council will seek to incorporate such features into road improvement works and where appropriate, on new roads.



Long distance cycling, such as the West Clare Railway Greenway, both for recreation and as a means of transport is supported by the National Cycle Framework and Clare County Council will work to support the development of the routes identified in the National Cycle Network Scoping Study 2012. These issues are also discussed in Section 5.4.2 Physical Recreation and Active Living and in Chapter 14 Biodiversity, Natural Heritage and Green Infrastructure.

CDP8.13

Development Plan Objective: Walking and Cycling

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To support the development and enhancement of long-distance cycling routes in County Clare, in accordance with the National Cycle Network Scoping Study 2010;
- B** To safeguard, where feasible, the route of the old West Clare Railway which has not been affected by existing development and to encourage its use for recreational purposes and/or as part of an operational railway tourist attraction. Exceptions to this shall include short sections within the curtilage of residential or commercial property;
- C** To support the development of cycle-lanes in urban areas, linking residential areas to town centres, employment centres and school locations;
- D** To support the development of new walking routes and trails throughout the County;
- E** To ensure the development, enhancement and safeguarding of all walking and cycling routes are in compliance with the requirements of Objective CDP2.1;
- F** To support the enhancement of footpaths and the provision of safe crossing points in the towns and villages of the County.

8.2.10

Public Transport Rail Network

The development of the Western Rail Corridor is important in terms of enhancing the economic and social development of the region thus achieving balanced regional development. The Council will therefore support land use policy, future development proposals and transportation strategies that ensure the viability of a rail service between centres of population.

CDP8.14

Development Plan Objective: Rail Network

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To support and facilitate the improvement and expansion of rail infrastructure and services and the opening/reinstating of railway stations on the Western Railway Corridor within County Clare and in particular Crusheen;
- B** To protect lands adjacent to rail stations against encroachment by inappropriate uses that could compromise the long-term development of the rail facility;
- C** To identify and safeguard land required for the development of rail infrastructure including bridges, stations and goods terminals and areas necessary for the development of the rail infrastructure in the County;
- D** To work with Iarnród Éireann and other interested parties to find a resolution to the issue of periodic flooding of the Limerick to Ennis railway line.

All proposed developments shall be in accordance with the requirements of Objective CDP2.1.

Shannon Rail Link

A proposed route for the Shannon rail link has been identified (see Volume 2 – Maps) by a Shannon Rail Link Feasibility Study. The proposed rail link is in line with the Government's objective of achieving balanced regional development and is an objective of the Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022. It is considered necessary to safeguard the selected route from development or other activities that would compromise its future development.

CDP8.15

Development Plan Objective: Shannon Rail Link

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- To safeguard the route of the proposed Shannon Rail Link and permit development where it is demonstrated it will not inhibit the future development of the selected route as a rail link.

Bus Transportation

Bus transport forms a fundamental element of the overall public transport infrastructure linking the key towns of Ennis, Shannon and Limerick by means of a frequent high quality service. Bus services in the County have been improved significantly with the provision of an hourly, private bus service between Ennis and Dublin via Limerick to complement the existing Bus Éireann regional and local services. The development of a dedicated coach park in close proximity to Ennis town centre has added to transport facilities in the town and contributed to ease of travel.

Services in County Clare would be greatly enhanced by the provision of frequent bus services between Ennis, Shannon and key towns such as Ennistymon, Kilrush and Scarriff. This would ensure a strong regional public transport network.

County Clare also benefits from an excellent local bus service. Clare Bus provides an extensive service which is available to everyone and plays a particularly important role in sustaining rural communities by providing links between large urban areas and smaller settlements and rural areas. The Council fully supports this service and will seek to facilitate expanded services throughout the lifetime of this Plan. Services that provide connections to regional and national public transport services will be particularly encouraged.

In 2013 Clare County Council carried out a feasibility study of a bus service from Clarecastle to the Gort Road Business Park in Ennis, serving Clare Road, Clon Road, New Road, Steele’s Terrace and the Gort Road. The feasibility study showed that there is sufficient demand to make a bus service within the Ennis area feasible. Having regard to this study, it is the Council’s policy to encourage the provision of such a bus service.

CDP8.16

Development Plan Objective:
Bus Services

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A To support the provision of more regular and efficient bus services throughout the County and to encourage private/public partnership in the provision of more widespread rural bus services;
- B To facilitate the creation of bus corridors, integrated bus transportation stations, and bus parking facilities within settlements and at tourist attractions, throughout the County;
- C To work with all relevant stakeholders to provide new bus pick up/drop off locations and bus shelters in towns and villages across the County;
- D To work with relevant stakeholders to encourage and promote a sustainable, community-based public transport scheme that will enable access to service centres for all members of the community in the County.

8.2.11
Integrated Transport Services

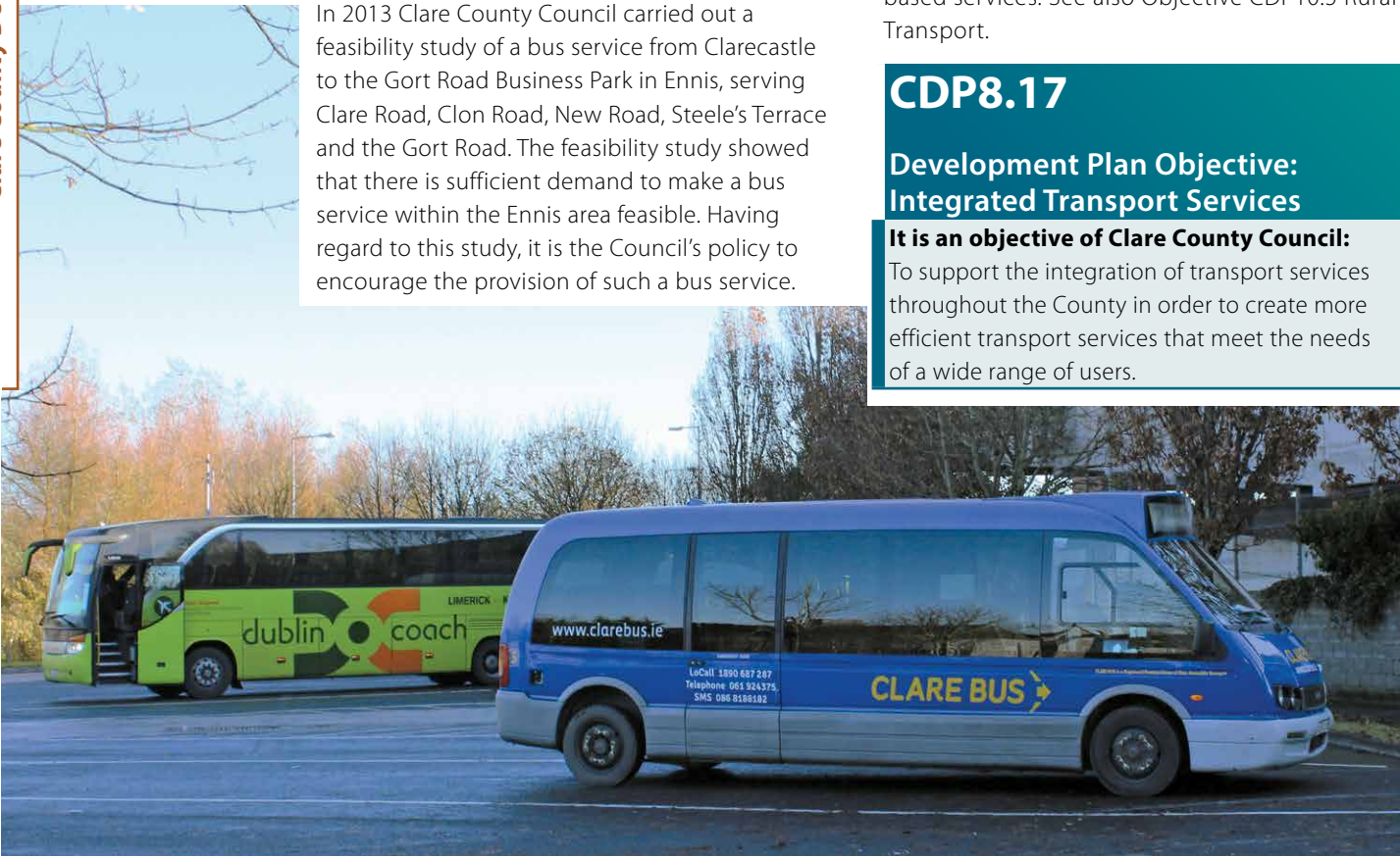
In order to increase usage of public transport and to make it a viable alternative to the private car for a greater number of users, it is vital that there is greater integration of public transport services. This integration should include both national transport providers and community-based services. See also Objective CDP10.5 Rural Transport.

CDP8.17

Development Plan Objective:
Integrated Transport Services

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To support the integration of transport services throughout the County in order to create more efficient transport services that meet the needs of a wide range of users.



8.2.12

Public Rights of Way

Public rights of way constitute an important amenity and an economic and social asset. They enable enjoyment of the County's high quality landscape and are important for tourism development, recreation and the enjoyment of the County's cultural heritage. In accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), Appendix 6 of this Plan contains a list and maps of the public rights of way in County Clare that give access to seashore, mountain, lakeshore, riverbank or other place of natural beauty or recreational activity.

CDP8.18

Development Plan Objective: Public Rights of Way

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To encourage the preservation of the existing public rights of way within the County, as set out in Appendix 6.

8.2.13

Coastal and Estuarine

Transportation

The transport of goods and passengers is well established between County Clare and the Aran Islands and between County Clare and County Kerry. The operation of the Killimer-Tarbert ferry service is an important resource for West Clare, providing an important economic and tourist link from County Kerry to the tourist routes along west coast of County Clare. It is now a key link in the route of the Wild Atlantic Way.

The ferry service operating from Doolin to the Aran Islands is also a key transport service which has been greatly enhanced by the development of a new pier in Doolin. Additional seasonal services are also provided between Ballyvaughan and Galway by the Galway Bay Hop service.

The Shannon Estuary is a major international shipping hub. The activities that take place in the Shannon Estuary, both current and future, are addressed in detail in Chapter 11 Shannon Estuary and also in Volume 7 of this Development Plan (Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary).

CDP8.19

Development Plan Objective: Water-Bourne Transport

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To safeguard and support the continued operation of the ferry services between County Clare and County Kerry, the Aran Islands and Galway City. Land use proposals that would prejudice the sustainable operation of these services will not be permitted;
- B** To support the provision of services and amenities for passengers in the vicinity of ferry departure/arrival points in the County.

8.2.14

Ports, Jetties, Harbours, Quays and Piers

The Council acknowledges the importance of ports, jetties, harbours, quays and piers to the local economy as well as their role as recreational and amenity facilities. The importance of establishing new marine infrastructure is also recognised. These issues are addressed in Chapter 12 Marine and Coastal Zone Management.

8.2.15

Directional Signage

Directional signage is an essential component of transport infrastructure, ensuring that both visitors and residents of County Clare can conveniently and efficiently access settlements and services across the County.

Signage issues are addressed further in Section 9.3.19 Tourism Signage and Appendix 1, Section A1.10.

CDP8.20

Development Plan Objective: Directional Signage

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To ensure that adequate directional signage is provided throughout the County to facilitate convenient movement and access between settlements and services.

8.3 Water Resources

8.3.1 Water Resources Context

Clare County Council, in the preparation of this Development Plan, must comply with the provision of the Water Framework Directive and all other EU and national legislation and regulations in relation to water quality, waste management and the protection of habitats and species.

In the preparation of this section of the Development Plan regard has also been had to the following:

National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020
Irish Water Proposed Capital Investment Plan 2014-2016
Western River Basin Management Plan
Irish Water Draft Water Services Strategic Plan
Shannon International River Basin Management Plan
Our Sustainable Future – A Framework for Sustainable Development in Ireland
Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022

8.3.2 River Basin Management Plans

The provisions of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) are implemented through River Basin Management Plans. On the basis of River Basin Districts, 95% of the County is located within the Shannon International River Basin (SIRB) and the remainder is in the Western River Basin (WRB). The Water Framework Directive National River Basin District Management Plan, when finalised, will supersede the existing River Basin Management Plans.

The principal objectives of River Basin Management Plans include:

- To prevent further deterioration in water quality;
- To protect/enhance all waters including surface, ground and coastal waters;
- To manage water bodies based on river basins or catchments.

The River Basin Plans propose a program of measures to achieve the objective of high or good water quality status.

CDP8.21

Development Plan Objective: Water Framework Directive

It is an objective of Clare County Council:	
A	To facilitate the implementation of the Shannon River Basin Management Plan and the Western River Basin Management Plan (together with any subsequent National River Basin Management Plan) for groundwaters and surface waters in the Plan area as part of the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive;
B	To protect groundwater resources in accordance with the statutory requirements and specific measures as set out in the relevant River Basin Management Plan;
C	To consider proposals for development where it can be clearly demonstrated that the development will meet the requirements of the relevant River Basin Management Plan.

8.3.3 Water Resources

Water resources are a key component of the natural environment. Water resources encompass a wide range of areas including drinking water, ground water, surface water, bathing water, shellfish waters, and freshwater pearl mussel waters, the management and protection of which are required under various relevant EU Directives. Unpolluted water resources are essential to human health, reliable water supply and the protection of habitats and species of importance in the County.

County Clare’s drinking water supply is derived from natural resources. It is crucial that water sources are protected so that dependable, good quality water supplies can be provided. Groundwater is a naturally occurring resource and it supplies approximately 20-25% of drinking water in Ireland. It supplies water to industry and agriculture and sustains wetlands and river flows during dry spells. Groundwater is increasingly at risk from pollution, particularly so from human activity.

The County Clare Groundwater Protection Scheme classifies the majority of Clare's groundwaters as 'extreme vulnerability'. The Scheme seeks to preserve the quality of groundwater in the County for drinking purposes and other beneficial uses, for the benefit of present and future generations. The Groundwater Protection Scheme has been incorporated into the relevant River Basin Management Plans.

CDP8.22

Development Plan Objective: Protection of Water Resources

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To protect the water resources of County Clare having regard to the requirements of the relevant EU Directives;
- B** To ensure that developments that would have an unacceptable impact on water resources, including surface water and groundwater quality and quantity, designated sources protection areas, coastal and transitional waters, river corridors and associated wetlands are not permitted;
- C** In areas of potable groundwater resources or over vulnerable aquifer areas, development proposals will only be considered if the applicant can clearly demonstrate that the proposed development will not pose a risk to the quality of the underlying groundwater;
- D** To protect groundwater resources, in accordance with statutory requirements and specific measures as set out in the Shannon and Western River Basin Management Plans;
- E** To ensure that proposals for development which infringe on a river boundary, or an associated habitat, including their connection by groundwater, will only be considered where it can be clearly demonstrated that:
 - The character of the area will be conserved;
 - An acceptable physical riparian zone will be maintained with all natural vegetation preserved;
 - There will be no impact on the ecological, aquatic or fishing potential of the waters or associated waters;
 - All proposals are in compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive, where appropriate.

8.3.4 Water Extraction from Lough Derg

Project planning is currently being undertaken by Irish Water for the delivery of water services to the Eastern and Midlands Region. On the 1st of January 2014, Irish Water assumed responsibility for managing Ireland's water and wastewater investment and maintenance programmes. Simultaneously, Irish Water also took over the management of a New Water Supply Project for the Eastern and Midlands Region (WSP) from Dublin City Council/Department of Environment, Community and Local Government. This is currently at the fourth consultation phase on the Preferred Scheme and will represent the first major comprehensive upgrade of 'new source' infrastructure in over 60 years. The construction of such infrastructure is required to meet the domestic and commercial needs of over 40% of Ireland's population into the medium to long term.

A carefully balanced approach needs to be achieved between meeting national priorities for water supply and addressing local concerns about the potential impacts of the proposed project. Clare County Council adopts the 'precautionary principle'² from both a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment³ (AA) perspective. The 'precautionary principle' in essence is about determining risk and taking preventative action in order to protect the environment. It is fundamental to SEA and AA and must be considered if potentially adverse environmental effects are identified through an evaluation of available scientific data or if there is sufficient scientific uncertainty.

CDP8.23

Development Plan Objective: Water Abstraction from Lough Derg

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To carefully scrutinise any proposals for the abstraction of water from Lough Derg, either for storage or direct supply outside the County which, due to geographical proximity, may have a significant impact on County Clare.

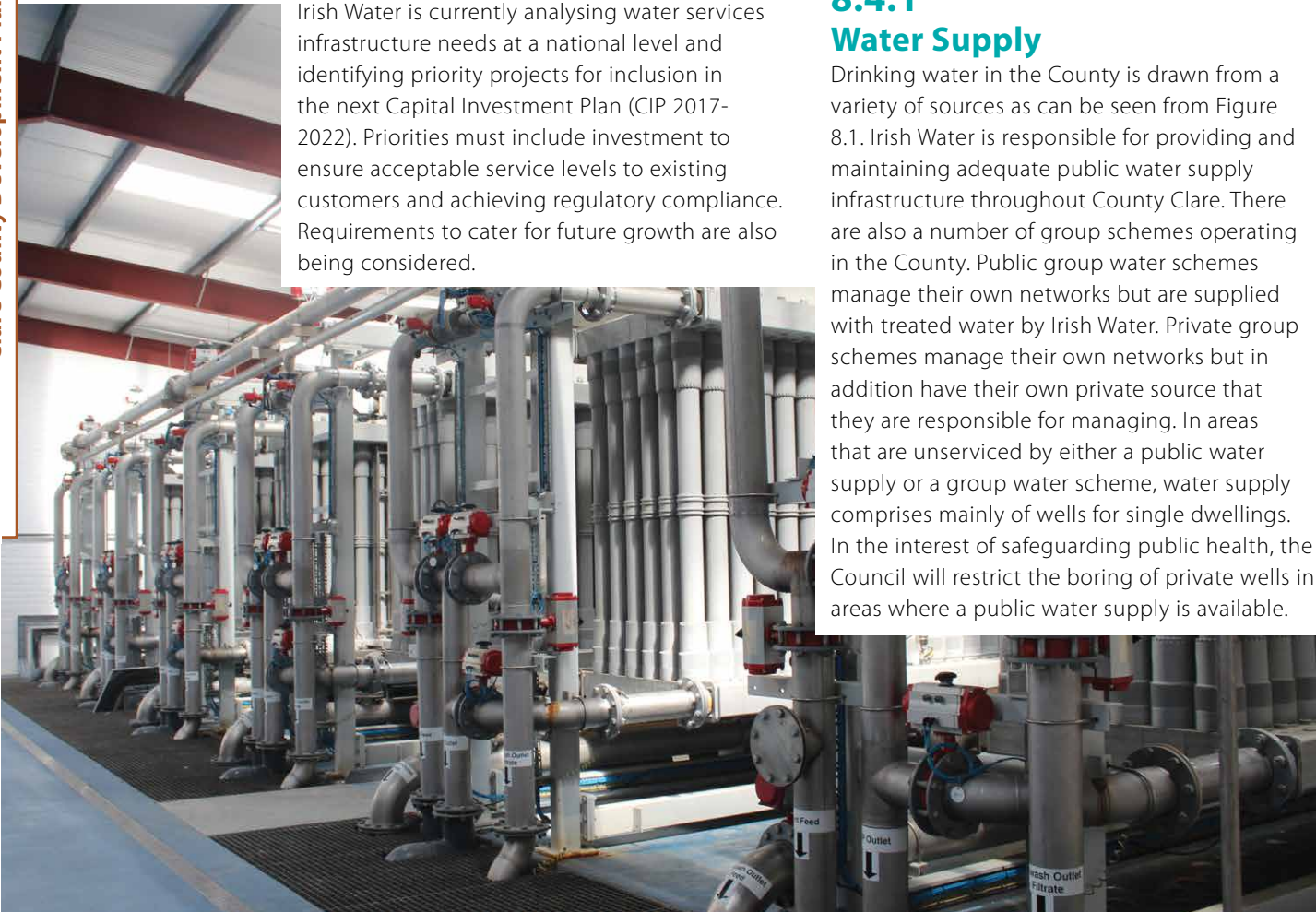
² http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/consumers/consumer_safety/l32042_en.htm. Accessed on 07/06/2013.
³ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/art6/natura_2000_assess_en.pdf

8.4 Water and Wastewater Services

The provision of good quality water supply and effective wastewater disposal infrastructure are critical requirements for the future economic development, quality of life and sustainable growth of the County. The provision of adequate infrastructural capacity in areas of population growth, as identified in the Settlement Strategy, will allow for the plan-led future development of County Clare. The Council recognises that, in order to ensure land use policy is sustainable and for the Development Plan strategy to be realised, a coordinated and integrated approach to planning the provision of public utility services is crucial.

Irish Water has responsibility for the provision and management of water supply and wastewater services. Clare County Council, through a Service Level Agreement with Irish Water, manages the daily operation of infrastructure and the progression of capital projects. However Irish Water has responsibility for project prioritisation and financial investment.

Irish Water is currently analysing water services infrastructure needs at a national level and identifying priority projects for inclusion in the next Capital Investment Plan (CIP 2017-2022). Priorities must include investment to ensure acceptable service levels to existing customers and achieving regulatory compliance. Requirements to cater for future growth are also being considered.



CDP8.24

Development Plan Objective: Water Services

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

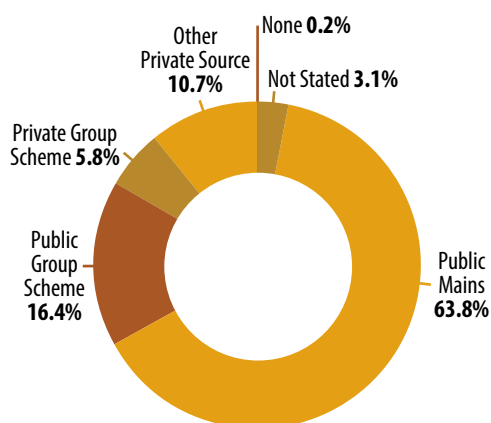
- A** To work closely with Irish Water to identify and facilitate the timely delivery of the water services required to realise the development objectives of this Plan;
- B** To facilitate the provision of integrated and sustainable water services through effective consultation with Irish Water on the layout and design of water services in relation to the selection and planning of development areas and the preparation of master plans;
- C** To ensure that adequate water services will be available to service development prior to the granting of planning permission and to require developers to consult Irish Water regarding available capacity prior to applying for planning permission;
- D** To ensure that development proposals comply with the standards and requirements of Irish Water in relation to water and waste water infrastructure to facilitate the proposed development.

8.4.1 Water Supply

Drinking water in the County is drawn from a variety of sources as can be seen from Figure 8.1. Irish Water is responsible for providing and maintaining adequate public water supply infrastructure throughout County Clare. There are also a number of group schemes operating in the County. Public group water schemes manage their own networks but are supplied with treated water by Irish Water. Private group schemes manage their own networks but in addition have their own private source that they are responsible for managing. In areas that are unserved by either a public water supply or a group water scheme, water supply comprises mainly of wells for single dwellings. In the interest of safeguarding public health, the Council will restrict the boring of private wells in areas where a public water supply is available.

Water sludge is a by-product of water treatment and sludge management is an important issue. Clare County Council will work with Irish Water to find a sustainable and long-term solution for the production, minimisation and beneficial reuse of water sludge, in order to minimise risk to human health and the environment.

Figure 8.1
Water Supply in County Clare 2011



Source: CSO (2011)

Irish Water is currently carrying out a strategic review of water supply in the Mid-West Region. Initial indications are that the Clareville Water Treatment Plant in Limerick, which currently serves Limerick City and its environs, has the capability to supply a large regional area in the Mid-West. This could include augmentation of the Shannon/Sixmilebridge and Ennis Water Supply Schemes, utilising the existing pipe network installed on the N18 and N85.

In general, there is sufficient water supply treatment capacity in the County to meet the needs of the target population identified in the core strategy. Many of the water treatment plants supply water to a number of settlements in a "Water Supply Zone" (WSZ) and WSZs may be linked together to form a water resource zone.



It is Irish Water's objective to interlink WSZs, where appropriate, to increase the resilience (reliability) of the water supply system. Network reinforcement is likely to be required to ensure that water supply can be moved around the network to where it is needed. In addition, many of the water treatment plants in the County need to be upgraded in order to ensure that water is produced to the required standards as set out in the relevant Drinking Water Regulations.

It is estimated that 48% of the water supplied in County Clare is lost as a result of leakage as well as illegal use of water. Clean potable water is an important resource and therefore water conservation is essential to ensure security of supply in the future.

CDP8.25

Development Plan Objective: Water Supply

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To advocate the provision, by Irish Water, of adequate water supply to accommodate the target population and employment potential of the County in accordance with the statutory obligations set out in EU and national policy and in line with the Core Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy set out in this Plan;
- B** To advocate for the on-going upgrade of water supply infrastructure in the County;
- C** To maximise the use of existing capacity in water service in the planning of new development;
- D** To protect existing wayleaves and protection areas around public water services infrastructure through appropriate zoning and to facilitate the provision of appropriate sites for required water services infrastructure as required;
- E** To work with all stakeholders to promote water conservation and sustainable water usage;
- F** To promote and support the use of rainwater harvesting (in new buildings and as a retrofit) where viable;
- G** To prohibit the use of bored wells for water supply in areas where public supply is available.

8.4.2 Water Supply in the Ennis and Environs Area

In the Ennis and Environs area water is derived from a natural groundwater source at Drumcliff Springs, located to the north of the town. The Drumcliff water treatment plant currently supplies the Ennis Water Supply Zone (Ennis, Clarecastle, Barefield, Crusheen and Doora) with approximately 14,300 cubic metres of water each day, but new leaks in the network, wastage and unusual weather conditions could raise the demand significantly over a short period. Geological Survey Ireland has identified this water source as being ‘highly vulnerable’ and due regard will be had to this designation in the assessment of development proposals in the area. An exclusion zone, 200m in radius, has been established around the springs.

In order to meet the envisaged demand for water from the target population it is imperative that water storage is enhanced, water is conserved and pipe network repairs are implemented. Pouladower Spring is located approximately 3km to the north of Ennis, rising at the northwest corner of Ballyallia Lough. This source will be investigated over the lifetime of the Plan as a potential back-up supply/future supply to reduce dependency on Drumcliff Springs.

CDP8.26

**Development Plan Objective:
Ennis and Environs Water Supply**

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

A

To improve efficiency in the operation and demand management of the water supply infrastructure, promote water conservation and reduce the overall loss in public water supply in the Ennis and Environs area;

B

To safeguard Pouladower Spring and investigate its use as a potential supply of water for the Ennis area. Any such proposals shall demonstrate that they will not have a negative impact on European Sites;

C

To advocate the provision, by Irish Water, of adequate water supply to accommodate the target population and the employment potential of the Ennis and Environs area in accordance with statutory obligations as set out by EU and National policy;

D

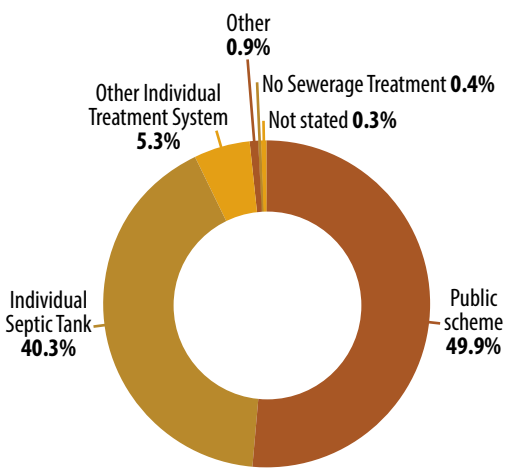
To protect Drumcliff Springs water resource. No development will be permitted on either the Springs, or the within established 200m exclusion zone.

8.4.3 Wastewater Management

Irish Water has responsibility for the provision and management of wastewater facilities serving sewered towns and villages, including the management of storm water. The maintenance, upgrading and provision of the County’s wastewater drainage system is essential to accommodate future development requirements and to ensure the sustainable development and environmental protection of the County. At present there are significant service and compliance issues in many existing wastewater systems in County Clare.

Sludge is a by-product of waste water treatment operations. Clare County Council will work with Irish Water to find a sustainable and long-term solution for the production, minimisation and beneficial reuse of waste water sludge, in order to minimise risk to human health and the environment.

Figure 8.2
Types of Wastewater Systems County Clare 2011



Source CSO 2011

Outside of the larger towns and villages most developments in County Clare are treated by individual proprietary wastewater treatment plants and septic tanks. Developments in these unserved areas must demonstrate that the on-site wastewater treatment system can safely and adequately dispose of effluent in accordance with the relevant EPA *Code of Practice*.

CDP8.27

Development Plan Objective: Waste Water Treatment and Disposal

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

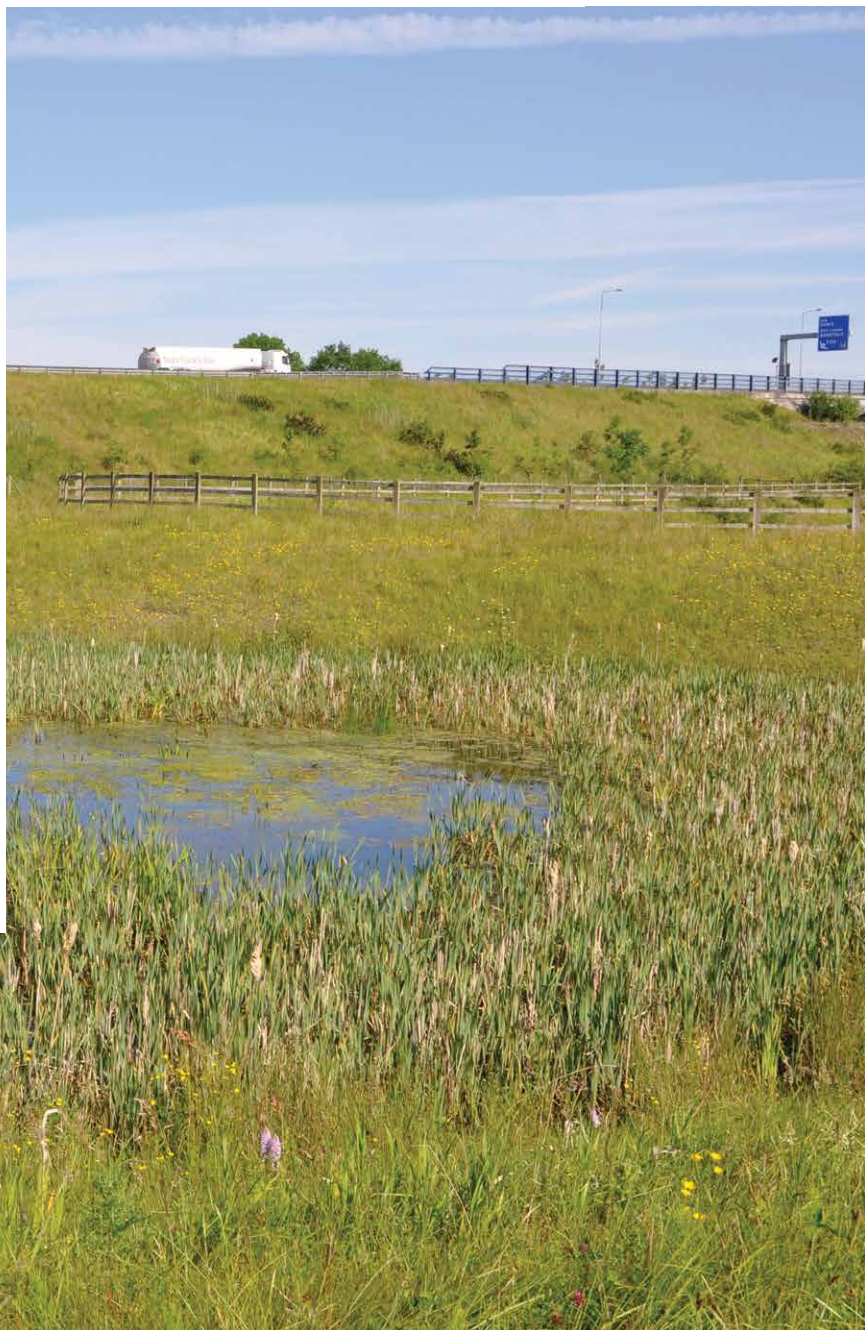
- A** To advocate the provision, by Irish Water, of adequate waste water services and capacity to accommodate the target population and employment potential of County Clare in accordance with the statutory obligations set out in EU and national policy;
- B** To support Irish Water in the promotion of effective management of trade discharges to sewers in order to maximise the capacity of the existing sewer networks and minimise detrimental impacts on sewage treatment works;
- C** To permit the development of single dwelling houses only where it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that the proposed wastewater treatment system is in accordance with the 'Code of Practice Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses EPA (2009)';
- D** To permit the development of treatment systems for small businesses/community facilities in unserved areas where they are in single ownership and where it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that the proposed wastewater treatment system is in accordance with 'Code of Practice Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses EPA (2009) and Wastewater Treatment Manuals-Treatment Systems for Small Communities, Business, Leisure Centres and Hotels, EPA (1999)';
- E** To encourage and support a changeover from septic tanks/private waste water treatment plants to public collection networks wherever feasible, subject to connection agreements with Irish Water and to ensure that any future development connects to the public wastewater infrastructure where it is available.

8.4.4

Storm Water Management

Storm water can be described as rainwater that falls onto a property or accumulates on the ground and runs off to a storm drain. Storm water increases significantly as a result of developments where permeable surfaces (vegetation and soil) are replaced by impermeable surfaces (car parks, roads, driveways and roofs). In serviced towns and villages the management of storm water falls within the remit of Irish Water.

The management of storm water is inherently linked with the wider issues of climate change adaptation and flood risk management. This issue is therefore addressed in greater detail in Chapter 18 Climate Change Adaptation, Flood Risk and Low Carbon Strategy



8.5 Waste Management

The environment is a valuable but vulnerable resource. When it is managed and protected, the quality and integrity of the environment is retained. In conjunction with other State agencies, Clare County Council has the responsibility for a wide range of activities associated with the environment. In particular, the Council seeks to regulate and monitor pollution control and waste management.

8.5.1 Southern Region Waste Management Plan

Clare County Council, in conjunction with the other local authorities in the Southern Region, has a role in the implementation of the Southern Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021. The strategic vision of the Southern Region Waste Management Plan is to rethink our approach to managing waste, by viewing our waste streams as valuable material resources.

The Waste Management Plan provides a framework for the prevention and management of waste in a safe and sustainable manner. The Plan targets are:

- 1% reduction in the quantity of household waste generated per capita over the period of the Plan;
- Achieve a recycling rate of 50% of managed municipal waste by 2020;
- Reduce to 0% the direct disposal of unprocessed residual municipal waste to landfill (from 2016 onwards) in favour of higher value pre-treatment processes and indigenous recovery practices.

Clare County Council is committed to implementing the provisions of the framework set out in the Plan.

CDP8.28

Development Plan Objective: Waste Management

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To implement the provisions of the Southern Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021;
- B** To promote waste prevention and minimalisation initiatives to target all aspects of waste in the County;
- C** To encourage and facilitate the development of new alternatives and technological advances in relation to waste management;
- D** To promote environmental awareness measures and action programmes to ensure good environmental awareness and practices, the recycling of waste, water management and energy conservation.

8.5.2 Waste Transfer and Recovery

Waste transfer facilities/material recovery facilities are essential infrastructure to support the recycling of waste. In the assessment of applications for waste transfer facilities/material recovery facilities, the following site characteristics are preferable:

- Within or as near as possible (within 2km) to the defined Gateway, Hub or Service Town as defined in the Settlement Hierarchy;
- Where practical, on the national or regional road network and where traffic considerations are acceptable;
- In a central location within their general catchment in order to minimise road hauls;
- If possible, in an area close/proximate to existing business operations;
- Where impacts on local amenities can be minimised;
- Where the natural features (for example, geology, hydrology) minimise pollution risks.



CDP8.29

Development Plan Objective: Waste Transfer and Recovery Facilities

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

A To support the development of waste transfer and recovery facilities at appropriate locations in County Clare as a means of facilitating a reduction in the quantity of waste that goes to landfill disposal sites;

B To support the development of higher-value waste pre-treatment processes and indigenous recovery practices.

Such developments must not adversely affect species or habitats designated by the Habitats Directive and shall comply with the requirements of the relevant River Basin Management Plan.

8.5.3

Litter Management

Clare County Council has prepared a Litter Management Plan for the period 2015-2018 which sets out objectives for the prevention and minimisation of litter throughout the County.

CDP8.30

Development Plan Objective: Litter Management

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To implement the provisions of the Clare County Litter Management Plan 2015-2018 and any updated version of the Plan.

8.5.4

Construction and Demolition Waste

Construction and demolition waste (C&D waste) is generally associated with waste materials arising from construction, demolition and renovation activities. Landfill has traditionally been the main receiving point for the disposal of waste associated with construction and demolition building materials but reuse and recycling of C&D waste is now recognised as a more sustainable alternative.

CDP8.31

Development Plan Objective: Construction and Demolition Waste

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

A To require a C&D Waste Management Plan to be prepared by the developer having regard to the DoEHLG's publication 'Best Practice Guidelines on the Preparation of Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects' for new construction or demolition projects and to require that the maximum amount of waste material generated on site is reused and recycled;

B To promote the production and reuse of aggregates from C&D waste and their use in construction projects in the region;

C To encourage the development of C&D waste recycling facilities at suitable sites, including quarries, subject to normal planning and environmental considerations.

8.5.5

Agriculture Waste

The Nitrates Directive, as implemented by the EC (Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters) Regulations 2009 (as amended 2010 & 2014) is the main statutory provision which places an onus on Ireland to prevent pollution of groundwater and surface water from nitrates associated with agricultural sources. Ireland's third Nitrates Action Programme is currently being implemented. The Programme is designed to prevent pollution of surface waters and ground water from agricultural sources and to protect and improve water quality. Waste arising from agricultural practices on farms should be dealt with in a safe and sustainable manner having regard to the protection of the environment and public safety implications associated with inappropriately disposed waste.

CDP8.32

Development Plan Objective: Agricultural Waste

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To ensure that the disposal of agricultural waste is carried out in a safe, efficient and sustainable manner having regard to the environment and health and safety of individuals, and in compliance with the European Communities (Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters) Regulations, 2009 (as amended), S.I. No.101 of 2009, the Litter Pollution Act 1997 and the European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations 2014 (SI No. 350 of 2014).



8.6 Noise, Air and Light Pollution

8.6.1 Noise Pollution

Noise pollution can occur in various locations: building sites, heavily trafficked roads, industrial sites, etc, all of which can have significant impacts on an environment and on the quality of life of individuals, residential areas and communities in the vicinity.

Clare County Council has set out measures to deal with noise pollution associated with major noise sources, such as transportation infrastructure, in the ‘Clare Noise Action Plan (2013)’. This is a five year strategic document published under the Environmental Noise Directive 2002/49/EC, as implemented in Ireland by the Environmental Noise Regulations 2006.

CDP8.33

Development Plan Objective: Noise Pollution

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To ensure that all proposals for development related to transportation infrastructure comply with the provisions of the ‘Clare Noise Action Plan (2013)’ and any subsequent plans.

8.6.2 Air Pollution

Air pollution can potentially affect the health and well-being of sensitive population groups and eco-systems. The EU introduced a legislative framework to oversee the monitoring, assessment and management of air quality, namely Directive 2008/50/EC on Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe. This directive was implemented in Ireland under the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2011.

CDP8.34

Development Plan Objective: Air Pollution

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To implement the provisions of national policy and air pollution legislation, in conjunction with other agencies as appropriate.

8.6.3 Light Pollution

It is recognised that adequate lighting is necessary to ensure a safe and secure environment. However, light spillage from inadequately designed lighting is increasingly recognised as a potential nuisance to nearby properties and a threat to wildlife and their habitats particularly in relation to European sites. It can also be a waste of energy and can reduce the visibility of the night sky. Both urban and rural settings are affected by light pollution.

CDP8.35

Development Plan Objective: Light Pollution

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To require proposals for development that include the provision of external lighting, to clearly demonstrate that the lighting scheme is the minimum needed for security and working purposes;
- B** To ensure that external lighting and lighting schemes are designed so that the incidence of light spillage is minimised ensuring that the amenities of adjoining properties, wildlife and the surrounding environment are protected.

It is not intended that objectives set out will unreasonably constrain the operations of Shannon International Airport nor of other regionally important industrial activity in the County.

8.7 SEVESO – Major Accidents Directive

The SEVESO III Directive (2012/18/EU) is the main EU legislation dealing with the control of on-shore major accident hazards involving dangerous substances. The Directive is implemented in Ireland through the Chemicals Act (Control of Major Accident Hazards involving Dangerous Substances) Regulations 2015.

A Major Accident Hazard Site (SEVESO Site) is a site where the occupier has notified the Health and Safety Authority that they meet a specified threshold for quantities of hazardous substance as outlined in the above mentioned Regulations.

There are a number of companies in County Clare which are within the remit of the SEVESO III Directive. The aim is to prevent major accidents and/or limit their consequences ensuring high levels of protection throughout the community in a consistent and effective manner. There are two tiers of industries, depending on the quantity of substances used, handled or stored on site. The existing SEVESO sites within the Plan area include:

Upper Tier:

- ESB Generating Station, Moneypoint;
- Shannon Aviation Fuels, Shannon International Airport.

Lower Tier:

- Enva Ireland Ltd, Shannon;
- Roche Ireland Ltd. Clarecastle;
- UCB Manufacturing Ireland Ltd, Shannon.

Clare County Council is required to seek technical advice from the Health and Safety Authority, who act as the Central Competent Authority, in relation to any planning application directly pertaining to a SEVESO site or within “consultation distance” of these establishments.

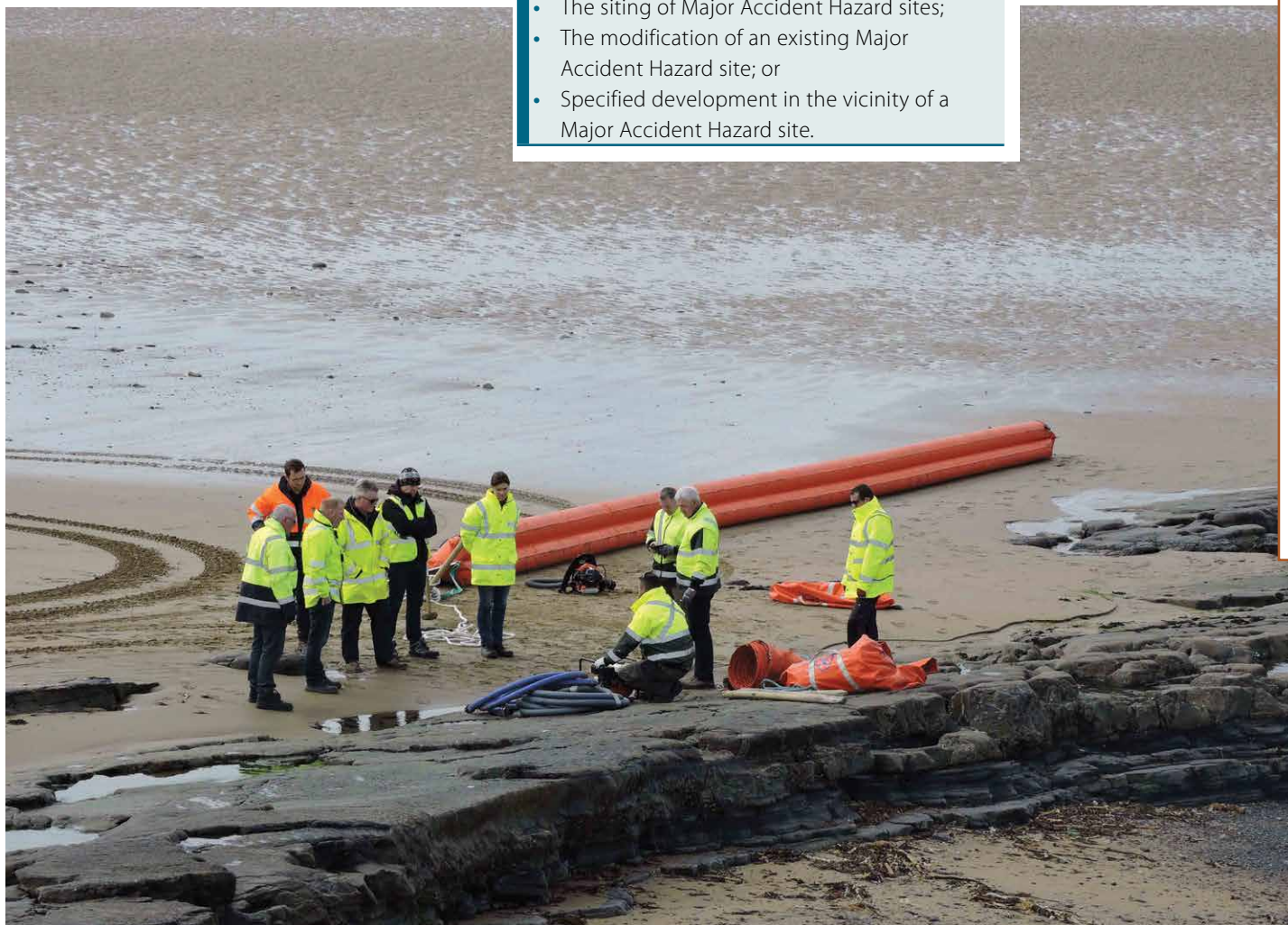
CDP8.36

Development Plan Objective: SEVESO III Directive

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To control the following, for the purposes of reducing the risk or limiting the consequences of a major accident (regard will be had to the provisions of the SEVESO III Directive and any regulations, under any enactment, giving effect to that Directive)

- The siting of Major Accident Hazard sites;
- The modification of an existing Major Accident Hazard site; or
- Specified development in the vicinity of a Major Accident Hazard site.



8.8 Energy and Communications

The provision of high quality and reliable energy and communications infrastructure is essential for County Clare in terms of attracting and retaining high-tech economic investment, maintaining a high quality of life and reducing our dependence on fossil fuels so that climate change targets are met.

8.8.1 Energy and Communications Context

In the preparation of objectives relating to Energy and Communications, Clare County Council has had regard to the following strategies, policies and guidance documents:

National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020
National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012
Ireland's Second Energy Efficiency Action Plan to 2020
Government Policy Statement on the Strategic Importance of Transmission and Other Energy Infrastructure
Offshore Renewable Energy Action Plan (OREPD)
Wind Farm Development Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2006)
Limerick Clare Energy and Emission Balance 2010
Clare County Renewable Energy Strategy 2017-2023
Building on Recovery: Infrastructure and Capital Investment 2016-2021
Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022
National Renewable Energy Action Plan 2009-2020
Delivering a Sustainable Energy Future for Ireland – The Energy Policy Framework 2007-2020
Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future 2015-2030
Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth
Strategic Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP) for the Shannon Estuary
Limerick Clare Energy Plan 2010
Circular PL20-13 Review of Wind Energy and Renewable Energy Policies in Development Plans.

8.8.2 Energy Strategy

An efficient and secure energy supply is essential to the future growth and sustainable development of County Clare. Reliable and low-cost energy is essential for a high quality of life for the residents of County Clare and also to ensure that the County is an attractive place in which to do business. However it is essential to ensure that energy demands are met without compromising environmental quality. Energy efficiency, renewable energy development and progression towards a low carbon economy are therefore central themes of this Plan.

8.8.3 Energy Security

The ability to deliver a secure and uninterrupted sustainable energy supply at a competitive cost is critical to the ability of County Clare to continue to attract and retain high levels of foreign direct investment and to provide a supportive environment for industry. Clare County Council will promote the implementation of the Clare County Renewable Energy Strategy and will facilitate the development of a range of sustainable forms of energy creation within the County in order to ensure a secure and effective supply of energy.

The Shannon Estuary is identified as a key asset in contributing to the diversity and security of energy supply in the region. Significant potential exists to harness the sustainable development of renewable energy sources to assist in meeting renewable energy targets, as set out in the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP) for the Shannon Estuary. The SIFP identifies four sites within the Shannon Estuary that are of strategic significance in national and regional terms relative to their contribution to the security and diversity of energy supply and further economic potential. The four sites of strategic significance are:

- Moneypoint;
- Tarbert;
- Tarbert-Ballylongford land bank;
- Aughinish Alumina.

The Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary is included as Volume 7 of this Plan.

CDP8.37

Development Plan Objective: Energy Security

It is an objective of Development Plan:

To promote and facilitate the achievement of secure and efficient energy supply, storage and distribution for County Clare.

8.8.4 Electricity Network

The provision of a secure and adequate electricity infrastructure is essential to meet the growth in demand and to ensure that an efficient and reliable electricity supply is available to households, business and industry. A strong transmission grid is essential to attract and retain high-tech industrial investment; to ensure competitive energy supplies; to achieve balanced development; to reduce dependency on fossil fuels; and to achieve climate change targets.

Moreover, to attract renewable energy development it is important for County Clare that the existing grid infrastructure is reinforced where necessary and expanded to areas not adequately serviced. Clare County Council will continue to work closely with EirGrid to facilitate the on-going development of the grid infrastructure in line with national, regional and local requirements.

Eirgrid is currently progressing a number of projects to accommodate various energy generators and reinforce the National Grid. In County Clare the project will involve works at Moneypoint in order to allow increased use of the capability of the existing 400kV overhead lines and the proposed construction of a new submarine 400kV cable to connect Moneypoint to North Kerry on the southern side of the Shannon Estuary.

CDP8.38

Development Plan Objective: Electricity Networks

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To facilitate improvements in energy infrastructure and encourage the expansion of the infrastructure within the County;
- B** To facilitate future alternative renewable energy developments and associated utility infrastructure throughout the County;
- C** To collaborate with Eirgrid to facilitate the delivery of quality connection, transmission and market services to electricity generators, suppliers and customers utilising the high voltage electricity system in County Clare;
- D** To collaborate with Eirgrid over the lifetime of the Plan to ensure that the County's minimum target of 966MW renewable energy generation is achieved and can be accommodated on the electricity network in County Clare;
- E** To have regard to environmental and visual considerations in the assessment of developments of this nature.

8.8.5 Gas Network

Gas Network Ireland owns and operates the gas transmission pipeline running from north to south through County Clare and the adjoining wayleaves. Gas Networks Ireland also applies a 400 metre 'Zone of Interest' corridor to the gas pipeline whereby the nature and scale of all developments outside the wayleaves are monitored to ensure compliance with the current codes of practice.

CDP8.39

Development Plan Objective: Gas Networks

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

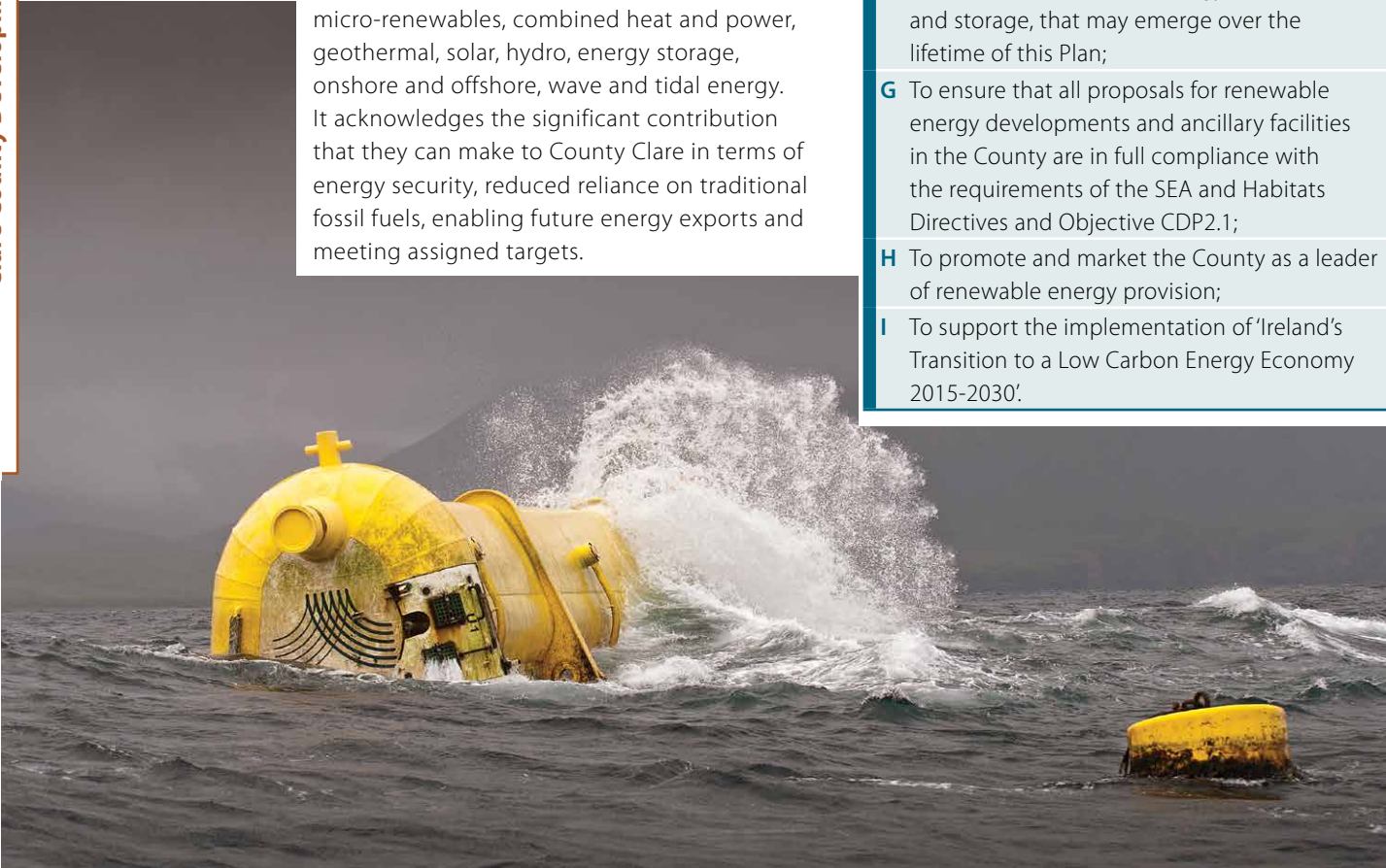
To facilitate the delivery and expansion of the Natural Gas infrastructure throughout the County for both domestic and business/industry use and to have regard to the location of existing gas infrastructure pipeline in the assessment of planning applications.

8.8.6
Renewable Energy Sources

The term ‘renewable energy’ refers to those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment including the sun, wind, oceans and the fall of water. Geothermal energy, plant material and combustible or digestible agricultural, domestic or industrial waste may also be regarded as renewable sources of energy. The Council recognises the importance of developing renewable energy sources in the interest of achieving a low carbon economy and security of energy supply. This importance is also reflected in the Government’s White Paper – *Ireland’s Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Economy 2015-2030*.

A Wind Energy Strategy and a Renewable Energy Strategy have been prepared for County Clare and comprise Volumes 5 and 6 of this Plan respectively. The Wind Energy Strategy identifies the optimum locations for wind energy developments in the County having regard to environmental and geographical constraints and the protection of the amenities of local residents. An updated Wind Energy Strategy will be prepared for County Clare during the lifetime of this Plan.

The Renewable Energy Strategy outlines the potential for a range of renewable resources, including bioenergy and anaerobic digestions, micro-renewables, combined heat and power, geothermal, solar, hydro, energy storage, onshore and offshore, wave and tidal energy. It acknowledges the significant contribution that they can make to County Clare in terms of energy security, reduced reliance on traditional fossil fuels, enabling future energy exports and meeting assigned targets.



CDP8.40

Development Plan Objective:
Renewable Energy

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To encourage and to favourably consider proposals for renewable energy developments and ancillary facilities in order to meet national, regional and County renewable energy targets, and to facilitate a reduction in CO₂ emissions and the promotion of a low carbon economy;
- B** To assess future renewable energy-related development proposals having regard to the Clare Renewable Energy Strategy 2017-2023;
- C** To assess proposals for wind energy development and associated infrastructure having regard to the Clare Wind Energy Strategy and the associated SEA and AA, or any subsequent updated adopted strategy;
- D** To prepare an updated Wind Energy Strategy for County Clare during the lifetime of this Development Plan;
- E** To strike an appropriate balance between facilitating renewable and wind energy-related development and protecting the residential amenities of neighbouring properties;
- F** To support and facilitate the development of new alternatives and technological advances in relation to renewable energy production and storage, that may emerge over the lifetime of this Plan;
- G** To ensure that all proposals for renewable energy developments and ancillary facilities in the County are in full compliance with the requirements of the SEA and Habitats Directives and Objective CDP2.1;
- H** To promote and market the County as a leader of renewable energy provision;
- I** To support the implementation of ‘Ireland’s Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Economy 2015-2030’.

8.8.7

Energy Storage

Renewable energy resources are typically available on an intermittent basis. An ability to store energy generated from renewable resources increases the quantity of low carbon energy harnessed and efficiency of the electricity system. Clare County Council recognises the importance of renewable energy storage, particularly pumped freshwater hydro energy storage (PHES), in meeting its targets in respect of renewable electricity generation. Energy storage is addressed in greater detail in the Renewable Energy Strategy (Volume 6 of this Development Plan).

CDP8.41

Development Plan Objective: Energy Storage

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To support and facilitate the development of secure, appropriately-scaled energy storage facilities at suitable locations throughout the County, in compliance with the requirements of Objective CDP2.1.

8.8.8

Energy Efficiency and Conservation

The introduction of renewable energy and innovative technologies alone cannot reduce our dependence upon imported fossil fuels. It is important to shift our economy and society to a low carbon society, capable of meeting the majority of its needs from indigenous, low-carbon sources. In order to do this we must dramatically increase our energy efficiency and conserve the non-renewable resources available to us for as long as possible. This issue is addressed further in Chapter 18 Climate Change Adaptation, Flood Risk and Low Carbon Strategy.

CDP8.42

Development Plan Objective: Energy Conservation and Efficiency

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To support and promote energy efficiency savings in all sectors in support of the National Energy Efficiency Action Plans and County-level strategies.



8.8.9

Broadband Connectivity

IT connectivity, and in particular the provision of high-speed, reliable and affordable broadband, is essential to the economic growth of both County Clare and the wider region in terms of attracting inward investment and increasing competitiveness. It is also essential to ensure a high quality of life for residents of County Clare, particularly those in more peripheral areas.

There has been a significant increase in the level and quality of IT connectivity across the County, which is indicative of the high levels of investment in this area in recent years. However, much of this improvement has been focused on urban areas, and many rural areas continue to experience poor quality of service. This issue must be addressed in order to support rural enterprise and sustain rural populations.

The Department of Communications, Climate Change and Natural Resources aims to address this issue through the Rural Broadband Scheme. Through this Scheme, the government will intervene to provide services in areas that will not be covered by commercial operators. This issue is addressed further in Section 10.3.8 Rural Broadband.

CDP8.43

Development Plan Objective: Broadband Connectivity

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To work with the Department of Communications, Climate Change and Natural Resources to ensure the prompt implementation of the Rural Broadband Scheme in County Clare;
- B** To facilitate the delivery of high capacity ICT infrastructure throughout the County.

8.8.10
Telecommunications
Infrastructure

Fast reliable and cost effective telecommunications can encourage economic development in an area and can enrich the quality of life at home by offering new choices in education, entertainment and communications. Clare County Council will respond positively to developments of telecommunications infrastructure whilst taking into account other planning policies.

The Council will have regard to planning guidelines provided by the DoEHLG ‘Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures, Guidelines for Planning Authorities’ in assessing proposals for telecommunications infrastructure and support structures. The Planning Authority will work with the telecommunications providers to facilitate the development of infrastructure that respects the recognised values of the natural and built heritage and will seek to encourage the co-location of masts and antennae on existing structures within the County.

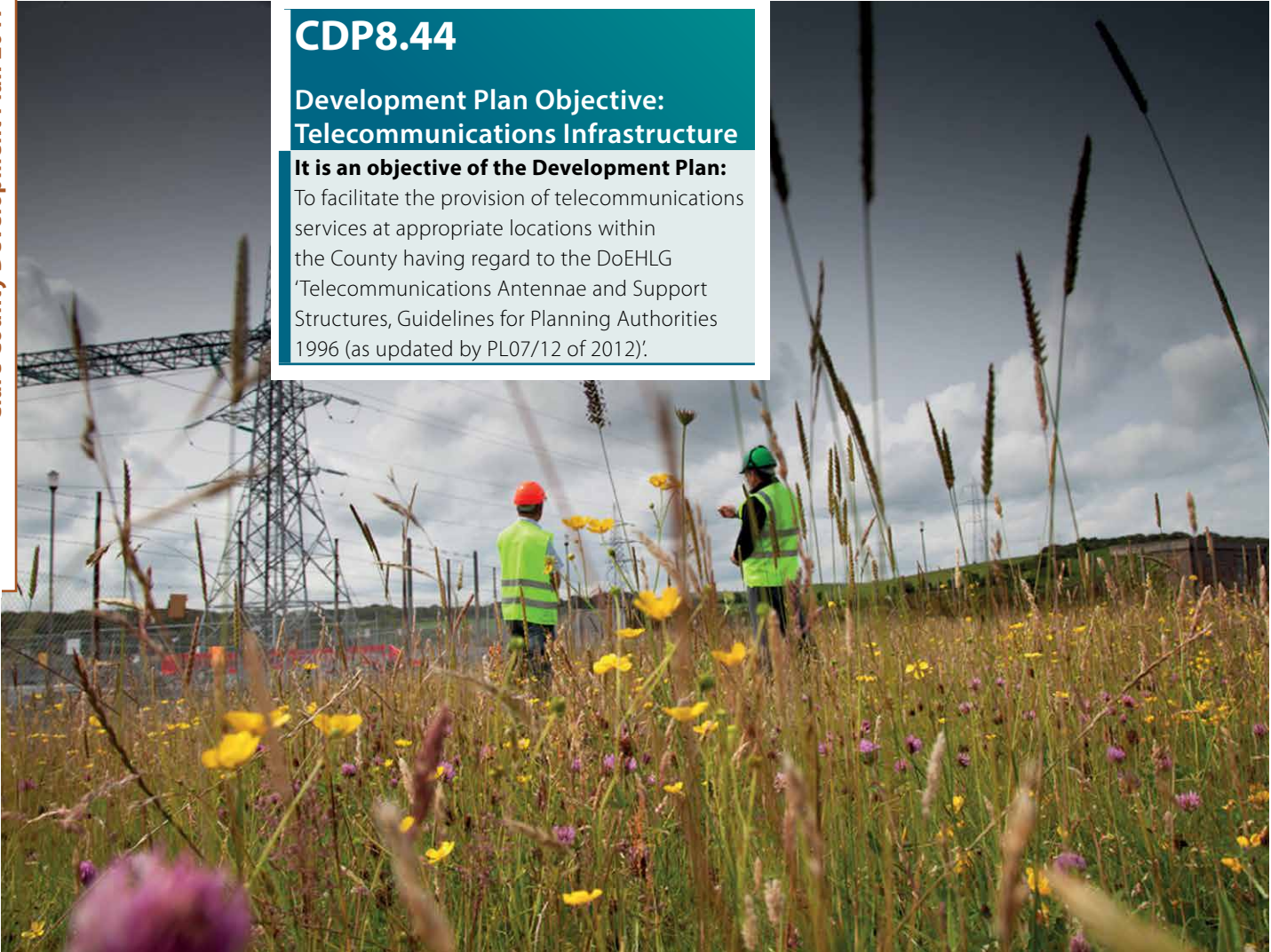
Chapter 8 Physical Infrastructure, Environment and Energy – Cross References

Section 3.2.2	Settlement Hierarchy and Strategy
CDP3.10	Planned Growth of Settlements
CDP5.12	Off-Road Walking and Cycling
CDP6.4	Shannon International Airport
CDP6.14	Availability of Land and Infrastructure
CDP7.21	Petrol Filling Stations
CDP8.21	Water Framework
CDP8.22	Protection of Water Resources
CDP 9.20	Signage Management
CDP10.6	Broadband
CDP11.8	Harnessing the Energy Resources of the Shannon Estuary
CDP14.3	Requirements for Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive
CDP18.3	Development of a Low Carbon Strategy

CDP8.44

Development Plan Objective:
Telecommunications Infrastructure

It is an objective of the Development Plan:
To facilitate the provision of telecommunications services at appropriate locations within the County having regard to the DoEHLG ‘Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures, Guidelines for Planning Authorities 1996 (as updated by PL07/12 of 2012)’.



Chapter 9

Tourism

Goal VIII:

A County Clare in which tourism growth continues to play a major role in the future development of the County, adapting to the challenges of competing markets by maximising the development of a high quality diverse tourism product.

9.0 Introduction.....	144
9.1 Strategic Aims.....	144
9.2 Context	145
9.3 Strategy	145
9.3.1 Tourism Promotion.....	145
9.3.2 Integrated Tourism Product	146
9.3.3 Tourism Developments and Tourist Facilities	146
9.3.4 Visitor Accommodation.....	147
9.3.5 Wild Atlantic Way	148
9.3.6 Business Tourism.....	149
9.3.7 Activity and Adventure Tourism..	149
9.3.8 Educational Tourism.....	150
9.3.9 Rural Tourism and Forestry Tourism	150
9.3.10 Arts, Crafts and Food Tourism ..	150
9.3.11 Coastal Tourism.....	151
9.3.12 Lakeland and Waterway Tourism	151
9.3.13 Urban Tourism.....	152
9.3.14 Festivals and Events.....	152
9.3.15 Heritage and Cultural Tourism .	153
9.3.16 Sustainable and Responsible Tourism	153
9.3.17 Niche Tourism.....	154
9.3.18 Accessible Tourism	154
9.3.19 Tourism Signage	154
9.4 Sub-County Tourism Development ..	155
9.4.1 Tourism in Ennis.....	155
9.4.2 Tourism in South Clare	156
9.4.3 Tourism in East Clare.....	156
9.4.4 Tourism in North Clare.....	157
9.4.5 Tourism in West Clare.....	158
9.4.6 Tourism and the Islands	159



9.0 Introduction

The sustainable and successful development of the tourism industry is critical to the economy of County Clare and also to the wider Mid-West Region. County Clare is one of the leading tourist counties in Ireland and attracts significant domestic and foreign investment annually. Fáilte Ireland estimates that there will be considerable growth in the performance of County Clare as a tourism centre during the lifetime of this Development Plan, making tourism a key economic pillar for the County in the coming years.

County Clare has an abundance of tourism resources, including natural and cultural attractions, vibrant towns and villages and contrasting landscapes, all of which are easily accessible to both national and international visitors. The tourism industry makes a significant contribution to the vitality and sustainability of a wide variety of local enterprises, particularly in rural areas. Tourism promotes an enhanced awareness and positive appreciation of local traditions and ways of life. While County Clare is one of the leading tourist counties in Ireland, a stronger year-round product must be developed. There is also a need to ensure that tourism growth is spread beyond established resorts and larger towns to rural areas.

The first section of the chapter provides a broad approach to tourism, while the second comprises specific objectives focused on local areas within the County.

9.1 Strategic Aims

This chapter sets out the objectives required to promote a sustainable and well-managed year-round, high-quality tourism industry that generates economic benefits to all areas of the County. In accordance with the overall vision of the Development Plan, these objectives are based on the following strategic aims:

- To maximise the potential of tourism as a 'pillar of economic growth' thereby contributing to the balanced economic development of the County and the tourism industry of the region;
- To work in partnership with Fáilte Ireland, Clare Tourism Forum and other agencies to define the tourist experience and to develop a clear tourism identity for County Clare;
- To develop and enhance new and existing tourism products, attractions and tourism infrastructure;
- To capitalise on the distinct tourist attractions that County Clare has to offer including natural, built and cultural heritage, scenic landscapes and natural amenities;
- To work to improve the visitor experience to ensure that all visitors to the County enjoy the unique experience of County Clare and all that it has to offer;
- To develop strong, year-round, high-quality integrated tourism products;
- To increase the length of tourist stay and 'yield per visitor' in the County;
- To capitalise on the County's identified nodes along the Wild Atlantic Way;
- To protect the environmental quality of the County on which much of the tourism quality is based;
- To enhance physical access and maximise the potential of underdeveloped areas for tourism.

9.2 Context

In the preparation of the tourism element of this Development Plan, Clare County Council has had regard to the following policy documents:

The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020

Lough Derg – Life at the Lake: A Roadmap for Experience Development and Destination Marketing 2014-2017

The Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022

Clare Heritage Plan 2011-2017

People, Place and Policy – Growing Tourism to 2025

Towards a Better Kilkee – A Town Improvement and Economic Development Strategy 2014-2024

People, Places and Policy – Growing Tourism to 2015

9.3 Strategy

Several of Ireland's most popular visitor attractions are located in County Clare, including areas of exceptional natural interest. The strategy will be to develop and implement an integrated and sustainable high-quality, year-round tourism product based on the County's outstanding natural heritage, culture, music, traditions and an extensive array of features and attractions such as the Wild Atlantic Way, the Burren, Holy Island and Loop Head.

CDP9.1

Development Plan Objective: Strategic Plan for Tourism

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To support the preparation, adoption and implementation of a strategic regional plan for tourism, covering County Clare and the wider Shannon Region, which will provide a framework for the sustainable and efficient provision and management of the tourism resource in the area in compliance with Objective CDP2.1.

9.3.1 Tourism Promotion

The promotion and branding of County Clare as a tourist destination, both nationally and internationally, is a key element of the future success of the industry. Visitors to County Clare fall into three main categories:

- **Culturally Curious** – tourists in this category are independent 'active sightseers' looking to visit new places, and expand their experience by exploring landscapes, history and culture;
- **Social Energisers** – tourists in this category tend to be young and looking for new experiences and excitement. There is an opportunity to attract these visitors to the urban and coastal areas of the County such as Ennis, Kilkee and Lahinch;
- **Great Escapers** – tourists in this category focus on 'getting away from it all', renewing family bonds and spending time together in a beautiful place.

In County Clare there is particular potential to attract greater numbers of visitors from the latter two categories in the future. Clare has a wide tourism offering including activity tourism, specialised tourism, traditional music and cultural heritage. It is important to ensure that the wide array of activities and amenities available to visitors are promoted locally, nationally and internationally to ensure the future growth and sustainable development of the tourism industry in the County.

CDP9.2

Development Plan Objective: Promotion of Tourism in County Clare

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- To support Clare Tourism in their work to promote and market County Clare as a tourist destination;
- To work in partnership with local, national and international agencies/bodies to promote County Clare as a tourist destination;
- To support and encourage cohesion and linkages between the relevant agencies/bodies to implement the key tourism objectives in this Plan;
- To access, and to assist community groups and tourism providers to access, funding for appropriate and beneficial tourism developments.

9.3.2 Integrated Tourism Product

In order to encourage longer stays in the County and to facilitate the achievement of a greater yield per visitor, it is important to maximise the integration of tourism products. This is essential to ensure that visitors can easily access services, attractions and amenities in the County from their accommodation base. In this regard it is important to provide high quality information for visitors, for example through local tourist offices, local and national websites, accommodation providers and at attractions themselves.

It is also important to create greater cohesion and linkages between tourism-based activities and businesses in different parts of the County in order to encourage tourists to visit a wider array of attractions/activities throughout the County.

CDP9.3

Development Plan Objective:
Integrated Tourism Products

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

A

To work with all relevant stakeholders to achieve an integrated and co-ordinated tourism product. Particular emphasis will be placed on the integration of tourism attractions with accommodation and tourist services in the wider community;

B

To support and encourage the creation of linkages between tourism activities and businesses in key areas;

C

To ensure a well-signed and interpreted heritage and landscape;

D

To improve physical and intellectual connectivity to those areas that are difficult to access;

E

To promote strategic links with Shannon International Airport and the major tourist and visitor attractions within County Clare and the region as a whole in order to support the local tourism economy;

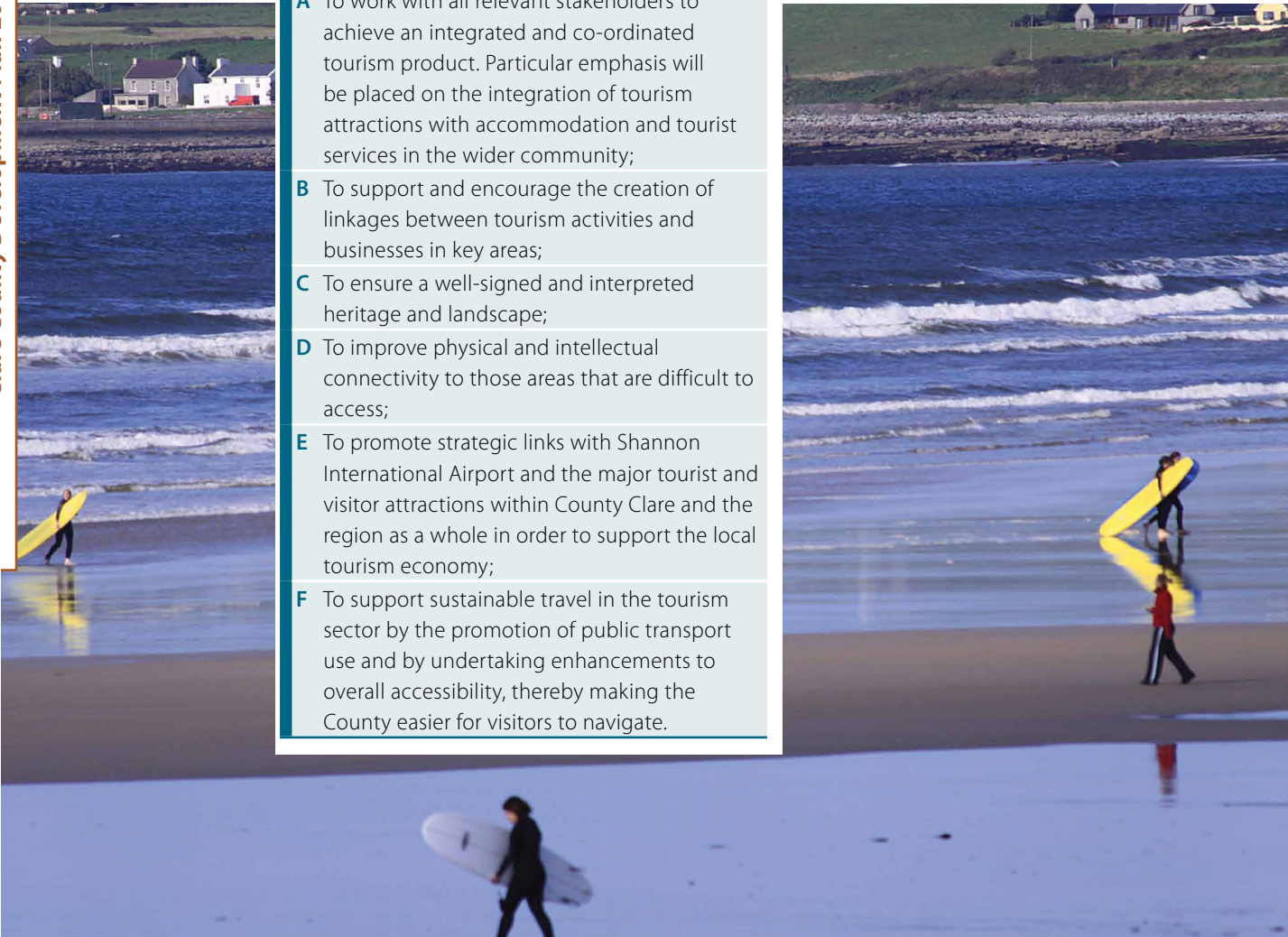
F

To support sustainable travel in the tourism sector by the promotion of public transport use and by undertaking enhancements to overall accessibility, thereby making the County easier for visitors to navigate.

9.3.3 Tourism Developments and Tourist Facilities

Clare County Council is committed to making the County a high quality place in which to live, work and visit. In particular, it is recognised that infrastructure development must meet the needs of both resident and visitor populations. Long-term projects such as the Wild Atlantic Way are also recognised as being essential to the future of tourism and economic growth in the County.

Clare County Council aims to promote the development of tourism in a manner that is compatible with the conservation and enhancement of the environment. A wide range of facilities are required to support the tourism industry and to attract visitors to the County. Many of these facilities can also be used by local residents. Examples include visitor attractions/interpretive centres; wellness and self-development amenities and facilities; equestrian facilities; facilities for water-sports and outdoor adventure activities; facilities for boat rental and inland cruising, family amenities such as playgrounds and woodland walks.





CDP9.4

Development Plan Objective: Tourism Developments and Tourist Facilities

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To permit tourism-related developments and facilities inside existing settlements where the scale and size of the proposed development is appropriate and in keeping with the character of the settlement, subject to normal site suitability considerations;
- B** To permit tourism-related developments outside of settlements where there is a clear need for the specific location and the benefits to the local community are balanced with the potential environmental impact of the development. The requirements of Objective CDP2.1 will have to be considered in such cases;
- C** Development proposals must be in compliance with Objective CDP2.1. The proposal should clearly identify the spatial extent of any tourism activities and should address the implications of increased recreational disturbance (both in isolation and in combination with other tourism activities) on any European sites as a result of increased tourism and recreation in the area/County, taking into account any current pressures on these sites.

9.3.4 Visitor Accommodation

See also Section 3.2.5 Single Housing in the Countryside and Section 4.3.13 Holiday Homes

Tourism can generate great benefits to the local economy and it is therefore considered appropriate to maintain, improve and increase the provision of good quality accommodation for visitors and encourage longer term stays in the County. It is important that a wide range of accommodation options are available to ensure that County Clare is an attractive and convenient tourism location for a wide range of tourists. Objective CDP9.5 below addresses all forms of holiday accommodation with the exception of Holiday Homes, which are addressed in Chapter 4 Housing.

While it is an objective for new tourist accommodation to locate in towns and villages in close proximity to services and amenities, it is recognised that some forms of tourism developments, due to their scale or nature, may require a location outside of settlement boundaries. Such developments include international-scale, integrated tourism developments e.g. golf courses. Such developments, and their requirement to locate outside of an established settlement, will be assessed on a case-by-case basis having regard to their nature, scale, site suitability and normal planning considerations.

CDP9.5

Development Plan Objective: Tourist Accommodation

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To promote, encourage and facilitate the provision of new visitor accommodation and the expansion/upgrade of existing hotels, guesthouses, B&Bs and other tourist accommodation at appropriate locations throughout the County;
- B** To support the redevelopment of brownfield sites, both in settlements and in rural areas, for the provision of tourist accommodation;
- C** To support the development of new camping and glamping facilities and facilities for campervans/motor homes/touring caravans both within settlements and in rural locations across the County;
- D** To ensure all proposals are in compliance with the requirements of Objective CDP2.1.

9.3.5 Wild Atlantic Way

The Wild Atlantic Way is the longest defined coastal touring route in the world, stretching 2,500km from the Inishowen Peninsula in Donegal to Kinsale in West Cork. Once there, visitors are encouraged to further explore and engage with tourism experiences and communities in the wider geographic area. The overall objective of the Wild Atlantic Way project is to grow the economic contribution of tourism to the nine coastal counties of the west of Ireland by increasing international bed nights and revenue and by sustaining and creating employment.

The development of the Wild Atlantic Way presents an opportunity for County Clare to become part of a west of Ireland brand that will evolve and mature over time. The route of the Wild Atlantic Way, as it passes through County Clare, is shown on Map 2A Core Strategy and the relevant maps in Volume 2 of this Plan.

Within County Clare there are two ‘Signature Points’ i.e. Loop Head and the Cliffs of Moher and seventeen ‘Discovery Points’ on The Wild Atlantic Way. It is important to ensure that these key points are developed and managed to ensure increased and sustained numbers of visitors and benefits to the wider rural community. It is also important that visitors to County Clare and the wider region can access the Wild Atlantic Way with ease and that entry/exit points to the route can be conveniently accessed from the surrounding area.

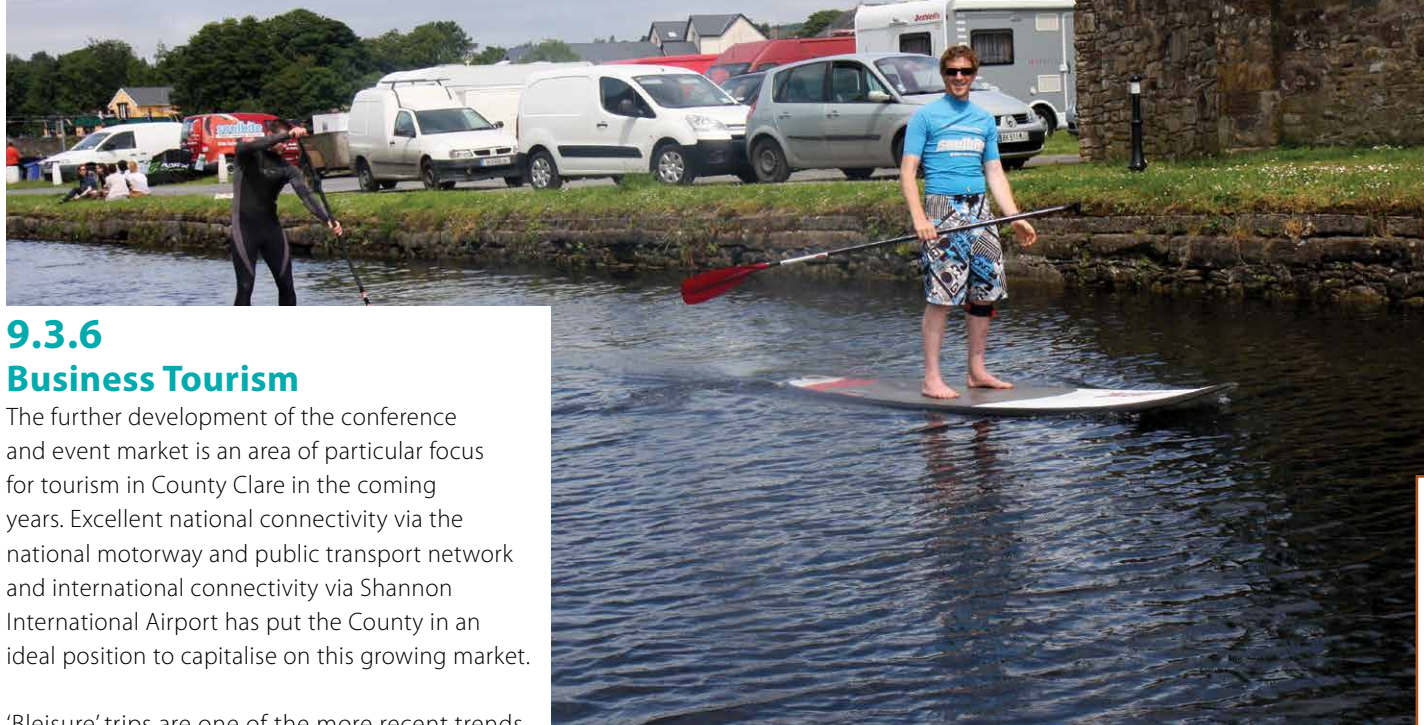
There are numerous towns and villages located in close proximity to the Wild Atlantic Way which are not directly located on the route. It is highly important that visitors are aware of these “Secrets of the Wild Atlantic Way” and that clear signage is provided at optimum locations to raise awareness of the amenities and services available in these areas and to increase visitor numbers in the settlements in close proximity to the driving route.

Please also refer to Section 17.4.4 Place Making and Amenity on the Wild Atlantic Way.

CDP9.6 Development Plan Objective: Wild Atlantic Way

- It is an objective of Clare County Council:**
- A** To ensure the improvement and expansion of tourist services and amenities at the identified Wild Atlantic Way Signature Points and Discovery Points in County Clare;
 - B** To provide improved visitor management and interpretative information at each of the Wild Atlantic Way discovery points;
 - C** To develop the potential of Loop Head as a key destination on the Wild Atlantic Way;
 - D** To provide information on surrounding services, amenities and activities at key points on the Wild Atlantic Way to enhance the overall visitor experience and to ensure that rural businesses in the wider area benefit from the increased visitor numbers;
 - E** To work with all relevant stakeholders to promote the Wild Atlantic Way as a key tourist attraction in County Clare;
 - F** To work with Fáilte Ireland on any further development and implementation of the Wild Atlantic Way branding strategy;
 - G** To support the provision of coordinated signage, navigational aids and visual features to provide ease of access to the entry/exit points to the Wild Atlantic Way and to raise awareness of services and amenities available in close proximity to the Wild Atlantic Way, subject to the required consents;
 - H** To promote the development of linkages between the Wild Atlantic Way and Ennis, which acts as a tourism hub for the County;
 - I** To implement the mitigation measures and recommendations as they apply to the County, in particular the Cliffs of Moher and Loop Head, arising from the Wild Atlantic Way Operational and Monitoring Programmes. In addition, all current and future proposals must be in compliance with requirements CDP2.1.





9.3.6 Business Tourism

The further development of the conference and event market is an area of particular focus for tourism in County Clare in the coming years. Excellent national connectivity via the national motorway and public transport network and international connectivity via Shannon International Airport has put the County in an ideal position to capitalise on this growing market.

‘Bleisure’ trips are one of the more recent trends as professionals are increasingly adding extra days onto the end of a business trip. This has the potential to bring significant additional revenue to the local area.

Clare County Council will continue to work with hotels in the County that offer conference facilities to ensure that opportunities to partake in this growing market are maximised. In particular the development, in Ennis, of an internationally-branded hotel chain with large meeting and convention facilities, is supported and promoted. It is also important to ensure that conference and business tourism facilities are integrated with other areas of the tourist economy e.g. through promotion of local activities and attractions on hotel websites.

9.3.7 Activity and Adventure Tourism

Participation in adventure activities is becoming increasingly popular amongst both national and international visitors. This includes activities such as walking and cycling and other activities such as angling, golf, equestrian pursuits, kayaking, canoeing etc. County Clare is ideally placed to capitalise on this growing demand for experiential holidays. The varied landscape offers opportunities for an expansive range of activities such as water sports, hill walking and orienteering, dolphin watching etc. Significant potential exists to further develop these forms of tourism in a sustainable manner in the future.

CDP9.7

Development Plan Objective: Business Tourism

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To promote, encourage and facilitate the provision of new conference facilities and the expansion/upgrade of existing conference facilities throughout the County at appropriate locations and in full compliance with the requirements of Objective CDP2.1;
- B** To support the work of the Shannon Region Conference and Sports Bureau;
- C** To encourage the development of a new internationally-branded hotel and convention facility in Ennis to enhance the tourism product;
- D** To support and encourage the marketing of County Clare as a conference location at national and international level.

CDP9.8

Development Plan Objective: Activity and Adventure Tourism

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To work with local communities and relevant agencies to achieve the sustainable development of County Clare as a world-class destination for sports and recreation-related tourism development;
- B** To support the appropriate development of low-impact experiential tourism in order to diversify the range of tourist activities available in the County and expand the tourist season;
- C** To support the sustainable development of watersports, surfing, sailing and water-related events at appropriate locations in the County, subject to analysis of their potential environmental impact.

9.3.8
Educational Tourism

County Clare is a highly attractive location for educational tourism. Each year large numbers visit County Clare to study the geology, natural heritage, coastal environments, cultural and built heritage of the County. This is a growing sector that offers opportunity for further expansion. The Burren and Cliffs of Moher Geopark attracts a large number of visitors for educational purposes each year. In addition, potential exists to expand tourism based on geological education in the Kilkee/Loop Head areas and tourism based on maritime/marine renewable energy education in the Doonbeg area.

CDP9.9

Development Plan Objective:
Educational Tourism

It is an objective of Clare County Council:
To support the promotion and expansion of the educational tourism sector in County Clare.

9.3.9
Rural Tourism and
Forestry Tourism

Tourism can play a significant role in the diversification of the rural economy. It supplements, or provides an alternative to, farm-based incomes and helps to sustain the rural population. Many visitors and members of the local community use rural areas and forests for recreation such as walking, running, bird-watching and mountain-biking and many trails and amenities for such activities have already been developed. There is now increasing demand for forest-based accommodation and emerging camping models such as Scandanavian-style cabins/chalets, tree top houses and ‘glamping’ pods alongside adventure centres/hubs.

Additionally there is an extensive range of public forest areas in County Clare such as Active Ennis Lee’s Road Sports and Amenity Park and Vandeleur Walking Trail which make an important contribution to the tourism offering in the County.

CDP9.10

Development Plan Objective:
Rural Tourism and Forestry Tourism

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

A To promote and facilitate the development of rural tourism such as open farms, on-farm craft centres and visitor centres where the development will not have a negative impact on the character, scenic value or rural amenity of the surrounding area, subject to normal planning and environmental criteria;

B To promote the provision of on-farm tourism enterprises such as the renovation of buildings for tourism purposes, angling, pony-trekking etc, subject to compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria;

C To work in collaboration with Coillte, private forestry owners, community organisations and other interested parties to develop new forest accommodation, access, signage and trails for walking, cycling, mountain-biking and horse-riding (bridle paths).

9.3.10
Arts, Crafts and Food Tourism

County Clare is a renowned centre for arts, crafts and artisan food production and is ideally placed to promote these enterprises as part of the County’s tourism offer. This has also been supplemented in recent years with the establishment of a number of craft breweries and local distilleries which attract visitors each year.

CDP9.11

Development Plan Objective:
Arts, Crafts and Food Tourism

It is an objective of Clare County Council:
To support the development of the arts, crafts and food sectors and work in coordination with relevant stakeholders to facilitate growth in this sector.

9.3.11 Coastal Tourism

The attractive sandy beaches of County Clare are a major tourist attraction. The County currently boasts nine Blue Flag Beaches and these beaches have become important centres for water sports such as surfing, kite-surfing, swimming, paddle boarding, kayaking etc. and also for activities such as walking, jogging and general enjoyment of the coastal area. The protection of the coastline is imperative to ensure long-term benefits from tourism activities that are based on this enviable natural asset.

CDP9.12

Development Plan Objective: Coastal Tourism

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To encourage the development of coastal tourism in areas such as water-sports and water-related activities and events subject to normal planning and environmental criteria;
- B** To support proposals for tourism development in coastal areas where it can be demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the amenities of the area, the integrity of the natural environment or the economic value of the County's coastline and beaches;
- C** To continue to work with An Taisce, the local community and other relevant stakeholders to retain and increase the number of Blue Flag awards in the County.

9.3.12 Lakeland and Waterway Tourism

The lakelands and waterways of County Clare are rich natural resources that attract many visitors to the County each year. In addition to their scenic beauty they offer opportunities for a wide range of activities such as fishing, sailing, bird-watching and pleasure boating. Ensuring access to the lakes and waterways and the sustainable management of activities taking place on the water, on the lakeshore and in the riparian zone of waterways is essential to ensure a balance between tourism development and conservation of natural heritage in these areas.

CDP9.13

Development Plan Objective: Lakeland and Waterway Tourism

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To support the development of tourism activities in lakeland areas and waterways subject to normal planning and environmental criteria. All proposed developments shall be in accordance with the Birds and Habitats Directive, Water Framework Directive and all other relevant EU Directives.



9.3.13 Urban Tourism

Towns and villages across the County provide a range of visitor attractions, facilities and services. They have the potential to deliver high quality accommodation and secondary facilities such as restaurants, cafes, pubs, craft outlets and other leisure facilities which support the tourism industry and drive revenue-generation in the County. Many towns and villages in County Clare are tourist destinations in their own right with Ennis in particular also acting as a tourism hub for the wider County and region (This matter is addressed further in Section 9.4.1 Tourism in Ennis). Tourism also has a strong positive impact on the vibrancy of rural towns and villages. The development of vibrant, welcoming town and village centres is therefore highly important as this broadens their appeal and encourages repeat and extended stays.

CDP9.14

Development Plan Objective:
Urban Tourism

It is an objective of the Development Plan:
To improve the visual appearance of towns and villages, protect their character and maximise their tourism potential by the continuation of environmental and public realm programmes, design management and improvement of identified derelict sites.



9.3.14 Festivals and Events

Festivals can be a key driver of local economies and a means of revitalising and maintaining local culture. Festivals are particularly important in terms of attracting visitors to the County during the off-peak season. Over 150 festivals and events take place in County Clare throughout the year, such as Scoil Samhraidh Willie Clancy, Fleadh Nua and Ennis Street Festival, attracting both national and international visitors to the County. The branding of the County as *Clare –County of Culture* will work to increase awareness of the extensive array of events that take place in the County each year.

The hosting of Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann in Ennis in 2016 and 2017 will be a significant boost to the tourism industry in County Clare and opportunities exist to build on the legacy of the event in the years that follow.

CDP9.15

Development Plan Objective:
Festivals and Events

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To support and promote the existing festivals and cultural events which take place in the County and to facilitate the establishment of new events where viable;
- B** To promote County Clare as *a County of Culture*;
- C** To support community groups and festival committees to identify and access new sources of funding for festivals and events in the County;
- D** To promote the development of a variety of new festivals and sporting events to appeal to a wide range of visitors and to increase the profile of the County as a key tourism destination.



9.3.15 Heritage and Cultural Tourism

Tourism based on the heritage assets of a destination can provide an additional opportunity to increase the length of time visitors stay in the County, as well as reinforcing cultural identity by creating revenue to conserve built heritage and support cultural heritage. County Clare has an extremely rich and varied culture and heritage which forms the basis of much of the County's tourism industry. The dramatic, contrasting landscapes, unparalleled built and archaeological heritage and rich culture of the County make it the destination of choice for many visitors to the west of Ireland. Genealogy and genealogical resources also play an important role in heritage and cultural tourism. Services such as the Local Studies Centre in Ennis play a leading role in supporting genealogical research in the County.

CDP9.16

Development Plan Objective: Heritage and Cultural Tourism

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To work with stakeholders including the OPW, the Heritage Council, the Arts Council, local communities and businesses to support the development of heritage and cultural tourism in County Clare.

9.3.16 Sustainable and Responsible Tourism

Sustainable tourism makes optimum use of environmental resources, respects the socio-cultural authenticity of the host community and ensures viable, long-term economic operations. Responsible tourism is about creating more meaningful experiences for visitors - connecting them to the distinctive local culture and natural beauty of host communities. County Clare is well positioned to progress sustainable and responsible tourism initiatives with both private tourism operators and groups such as the Burren Eco-Tourism Network already doing significant work to progress these aspects of tourism development.

CDP9.17

Development Plan Objective: Sustainable Tourism

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To support sustainable and responsible tourism initiatives across County Clare in order to ensure that on-going growth in the tourism industry is balanced with the long term protection of the natural environment and cultural identity of the County.

9.3.17 Niche Tourism

Successful tourist towns are often based on special interest or niche products aimed at the well-informed and experienced consumer. Clare County Council, in collaboration with the tourist sectors and the wider community will identify and target niche tourism products e.g. age-friendly tourism that can provide added value to the evolving tourist market. Particular focus will be directed to promoting the mid-week concept (golden years breaks/culture/heritage/food) in County Clare which has the potential to expand the tourist season and attract additional visitors to the County.

CDP9.18

**Development Plan Objective:
Niche Tourism**

It is an objective of the Development Plan:
To encourage growth of the niche tourism industry in County Clare in order to expand the range of tourism products on offer.

9.3.18 Accessible Tourism

It is essential to ensure that visitor facilities and attractions are accessible to the widest range of society as possible, regardless of abilities, age or physical limitations. This will ensure that all members of society can enjoy the amenities and services available in County Clare equally.

CDP9.19

**Development Plan Objective:
Accessible Tourism**

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To facilitate and support the provision of improved accessibility at visitor accommodation, venues and activities, including access to water-based activities, and to ensure that the principles of universal design are integrated into development proposals for future tourism developments in the County;
- B** To collaborate and work with relevant agencies and the hospitality sector to ensure that Ennis and County Clare are age-friendly tourist destinations.



**9.3.19
Tourism Signage**

It is essential that visitors to the County can navigate between accommodation, visitor attractions and points of interest with ease. It is also important for local businesses to ensure that they are visible to visitors to the area. However this can often lead to a plethora of signage on roadsides and at key junctions which has a negative visual impact and also competes with the directional signage provided to towns and villages across the County. In order to balance the needs of service providers and road users while at the same time protecting and enhancing the visual amenities of the County, it is important to prepare and implement signage plans for key areas of County Clare. Signage plans have been prepared for the Lough Derg and Burren areas and it is intended to prepare similar plans for the Ennis and Loop Head areas during the lifetime of this Development Plan.

Signage issues are also addressed in Section 8.2.15 Directional Signage and Appendix 1, Section A1.10.

CDP9.20

**Development Plan Objective:
Signage Management**

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To implement the signage plans that have been prepared for the Lough Derg and Burren areas;
- B** To prepare and implement signage plans for the Ennis and Loop Head areas during the lifetime of this Plan;
- C** To support the provision of accurate and easy-to-use roadside information including:
 - i** Integrated signage plans throughout the County to improve navigation and visual impact;
 - ii** The development of a digital platform to disseminate information to visitors.

9.4 Sub-County Tourism Development

In order for County Clare to maximise its tourism potential, this Development Plan sets out a number of objectives for tourism development in sub-County areas. This will ensure that appropriate objectives are targeted to each area.

9.4.1 Tourism in Ennis

Ennis, as the County Town, is a tourism destination in its own right and also acts as a tourist hub for the abundant activities available in the wider County and region. Its close proximity to Shannon International Airport, national road, rail and bus links, variety of accommodation options, amenities and activities make Ennis an attractive tourist destination. In order to support the achievement of a successful, diverse and year-round tourism industry in the Ennis area, it is necessary to promote the town as both an independent destination and as an integral part of the wider tourist product in County Clare.

It is also necessary to facilitate the expansion of tourism infrastructure, facilities, entertainment and accommodation and to pursue new areas such as the development of the town as a hub for cycleways, greenways and eco-tourism. These issues, and others of relevance to the progression of the tourism industry in the Ennis area, are addressed further in the Ennis and Environs Settlement Plan (Volume 3(a) of this Plan) and will be explored in greater detail in the Ennis and Environs Local Area Plan, when prepared.

CDP9.21

Development Plan Objective: Tourism in Ennis and its Environs

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To promote Ennis as both a tourist destination and as a tourism hub for the wider tourism product in County Clare;
- B** To facilitate the expansion of tourism infrastructure, facilities and entertainment in the Ennis and Environs area;
- C** To expand the nature and extent of tourist accommodation in the Ennis and Environs area, including camping, glamping and motor home facilities;
- D** To support the development of Ennis and its environs as a hub for cycleways, greenways and eco-tourism;
- E** To support the *Promote Ennis* initiative and Purple Flag accreditation, and any subsequent initiative for the promotion/development of Ennis as a tourist destination.



9.4.2 Tourism in South Clare

The objective for this area is to maximise the area’s potential by exploiting its location close to Shannon International Airport and the high quality national motorway network and rail terminals. The potential development of a national-scale tourism attraction/amenity, conference centre and associated hotels and golf-courses along with associated retail opportunities, will be provided for and facilitated.

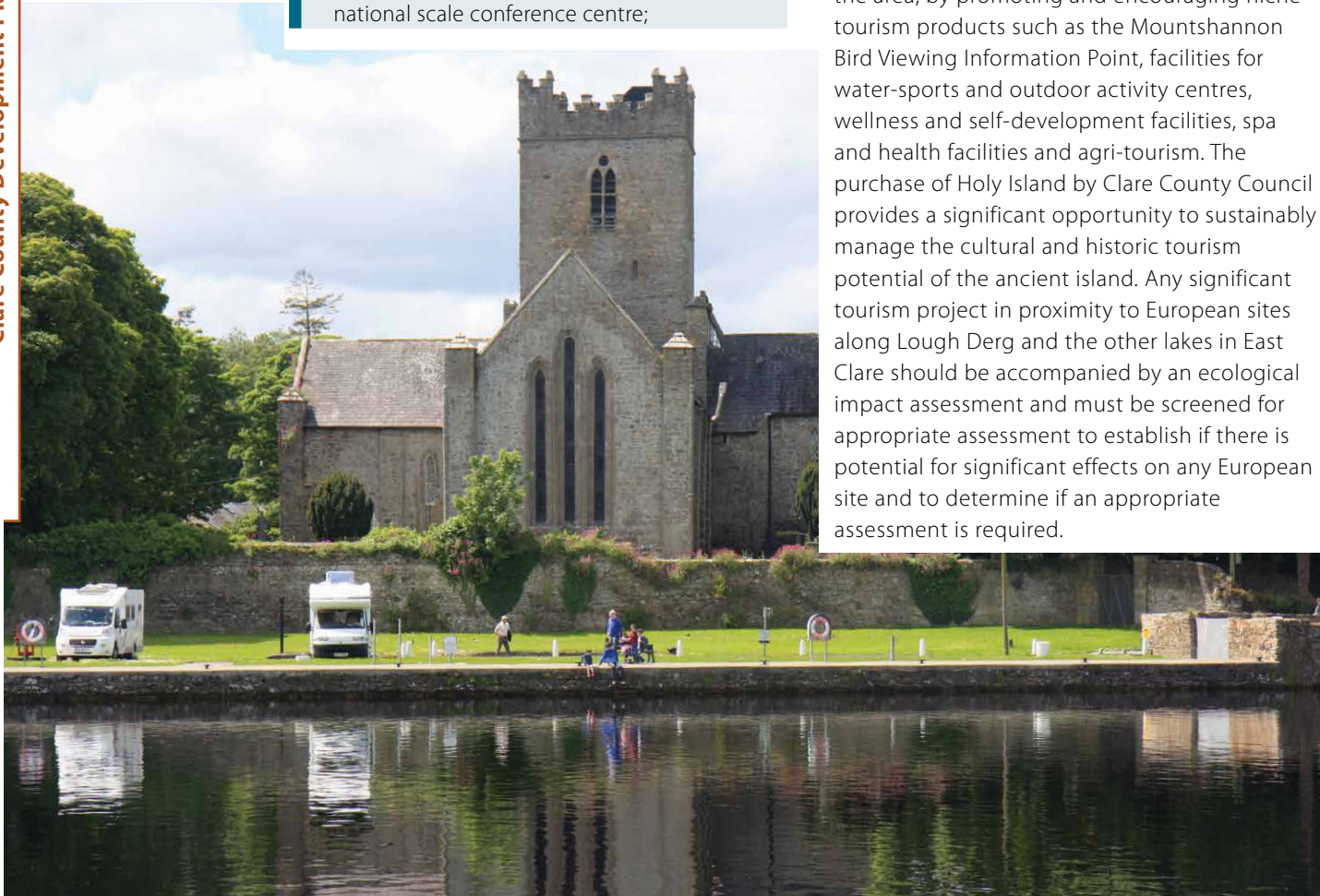
CDP9.22 Development Plan Objective: Tourism in South Clare

- It is an objective of Clare County Council:**
- A** To support the role of Shannon International Airport as the primary tourist gateway to County Clare and the west of Ireland;
 - B** To facilitate the enhancement of Bunratty Castle and Folk Park as a visitor experience;
 - C** To support the development of a flagship, international-scale tourism project in Bunratty;
 - D** To facilitate the development and expansion of the hospitality sector, particularly as it relates to business tourism, in Bunratty and Shannon Town;
 - E** To facilitate the provision of an international/national scale conference centre;

- F** To support the development of Shannon as a visitor destination including enhanced evening entertainment, promotion of looped walking trails, provision of an airport museum and enhanced aircraft viewing areas;
- G** To work with relevant stakeholders to promote the monastic sites in the area as key tourist attractions;
- H** To promote equestrian, boating, outdoor activities and the natural amenities and traditions of the area;
- I** To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation as outlined in Objective CDP2.1.

9.4.3 Tourism in East Clare

East Clare is well-located in terms of tourism. It has a diverse range of tourism resources, especially along the shores of Lough Derg. However, tourism remains relatively under-developed in this area and, throughout the lifetime of this Plan, Clare County Council will seek to ensure that East Clare realises its full potential. Clare County Council has undertaken significant work, in cooperation with Galway and Tipperary County Councils, to enhance the marketing and interpretation of the Lough Derg area and this work will continue into the future. Opportunities exist to further develop the area, by promoting and encouraging niche tourism products such as the Mountshannon Bird Viewing Information Point, facilities for water-sports and outdoor activity centres, wellness and self-development facilities, spa and health facilities and agri-tourism. The purchase of Holy Island by Clare County Council provides a significant opportunity to sustainably manage the cultural and historic tourism potential of the ancient island. Any significant tourism project in proximity to European sites along Lough Derg and the other lakes in East Clare should be accompanied by an ecological impact assessment and must be screened for appropriate assessment to establish if there is potential for significant effects on any European site and to determine if an appropriate assessment is required.



CDP9.23

Development Plan Objective: Tourism in East Clare

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To work with relevant stakeholders to prepare and implement a Visitor Management and Sustainable Tourism Development Plan for Holy Island and to investigate the provision of ancillary services in local villages in the area;
- B** To promote the *Lough Derg (on the Shannon) Heritage and Nature Trail*, the work of the Lough Derg Marketing Strategy Group and to collaborate with Fáilte Ireland and relevant stakeholders on other future initiatives that enhance established attractions and work to promote Lough Derg and the surrounding area as a tourism destination;
- C** To facilitate sustainable marina developments and associated amenities at appropriate locations inside and outside of settlements along Lough Derg and lake areas;
- D** To develop and enhance tourism products in particular sustainable and eco-tourism;
- E** To facilitate and encourage the development of new and expanded outdoor activities in East Clare such as canoeing, water sports, bird watching, mountain-biking and walking trails and to develop links to complementary facilities;
- F** To promote Lough Derg and the Slieve Aughty region as a tourism location and to develop a series of viewing points in the area;
- G** To promote wellness and self-development facilities; spa and health complexes and agri-tourism enterprises;
- H** To support the upgrade of the amenity facilities in the Ballycuggeran area;
- I** To facilitate the investigation of historical sites in East Clare containing the remains of a complex of blast furnaces and iron foundries;
- J** To support the development of a footpath/walking route around Lough Derg, linking Killaloe to Tuamgraney and Mountshannon;
- K** To support the sustainable development of Tinarana Estate as a tourism product;
- L** To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation as outlined in Objective CDP2.1.

9.4.4

Tourism in North Clare

North Clare is well-located in terms of tourism and has a diverse range of tourism resources, especially the Burren and Cliffs of Moher Geopark and the Atlantic coastline. Tourism is well established in the area. However, the potential exists to encourage a larger proportion of tourism traffic to stop in the North Clare area for longer periods of time to avail of the numerous rural and town-based visitor attractions. Any significant tourism project in North Clare should be accompanied by an ecological impact assessment and must be screened for appropriate assessment to establish if there is potential for significant effects on any European site and to determine if an appropriate assessment is required.

CDP9.24

Development Plan Objective: Tourism in North Clare and The Burren

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To maintain the Cliffs of Moher as one of the country's premier tourist attractions and harness its potential as a driver of tourism in North Clare facilitating improvements, if necessary, to the tourist offer and experience;
- B** To enhance and promote established attractions in the towns and villages of North Clare and the surrounding hinterland;
- C** To consolidate and improve the Burren as a vibrant, sustainable, world-class destination in order to retain its Geopark status and support its World Heritage Site status;
- D** To promote the development of ecotourism and agri-tourism and support the work of the Burren Ecotourism Network;
- E** To develop a year-round sustainable tourism product by ensuring linkages to other tourist products in the area;
- F** To support and promote, with the co-operation of private landowners, public access and interpretive signage at heritage sites and features where appropriate;
- G** To maximise the opportunities and benefits from natural amenities such as the Atlantic Ocean and the Burren and to enhance and manage outdoor activity and specialised tourist products such as surfing, rock climbing and water-sport activities;
- H** To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation as outlined in Objective CDP2.1.

9.4.5 Tourism in West Clare

West Clare has a diverse range of tourism resources such as the Loop Head Peninsula, the Shannon Estuary islands, hotels, golf courses, numerous amenities and a unique culture and landscape. However, tourism remains relatively underdeveloped in the area, mainly due to its peripheral location. Significant potential exists to further promote key settlements such as Kilrush, Kilkee and Doonbeg from a tourism perspective, building on the existing amenities and events in these areas.

In recent years tourism has been growing in West Clare and the area has been awarded numerous accolades. Loop Head has recently been voted *‘The Best Place to Holiday in Ireland’* and the Loop Head Peninsula Heritage Trail was awarded *‘Best Cultural Heritage Attraction’* in the World Responsible Tourism Awards 2015. Kilrush town is also a gold medal winner in the International Entente Florale competition. The geography of the area and its coastal location are ideal to underpin further tourism development, particularly for tourism products such as marine, environmental, geological, educational, ornithological activities; short leisure breaks focused on outdoor pursuits linked with evening hospitality.



CDP9.25

Development Plan Objective: Tourism in West Clare

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To work with all relevant stakeholders to further develop and enhance the opportunity for tourism products in particular coastal and cliff walks in Kilkee and Loop Head areas, cycling and niche tourism;
- B** To promote and market the area, building on the cultural amenities and entertainment facilities of Kilrush, Kilkee, and Doonbeg;
- C** To progress the branding of Kilrush town as ‘Kilrush on the Shannon’;
- D** To support the promotion of the Loop Head Peninsula as a tourist destination;
- E** To encourage the development of sustainable tourism at the Bridges of Ross;
- F** To further promote Vandeleur Gardens as a key tourist attraction in the Kilrush area;
- G** To support the enhancement of the tourist accommodation offer in Kilrush town;
- H** To maximise the opportunities of the area’s coastal location and availability of fresh local produce to develop, facilitate and expand the local food and hospitality tourist product;
- I** To develop and enhance the piers, harbours and slipways along the Shannon Estuary, in accordance with the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the area, to maximise their potential for watersports activities;
- J** To establish a driving route along the Shannon and Fergus Estuaries connecting Ennis to Killimer and the Wild Atlantic Way;
- K** To ensure full compliance with the legislation as outlined in Objective CDP2.1.

CDP9.26

Development Plan Objective: West Clare Railway

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To facilitate the reopening of the West Clare Railway as an operational tourist attraction by permitting new sections of railway as alternatives to parts of the line which have been built on or are inaccessible since its closure, in compliance with all relevant legislation as outlined in Objective CDP2.1.



9.4.6 Tourism and the Islands

Being a coastal, estuarine and lakeside County, there are numerous islands in County Clare with significant potential for further tourism development.

Scattery Island, located in close proximity to the Heritage Town of Kilrush and a Discovery Point on the Wild Atlantic Way, has the potential for increased levels of tourism and educational field trips, subject to careful management of the heritage of the island. Issues such as signage and access to the island need to be addressed and the on-going management of the historic resources on the island such as the fishing village, monastic settlement and the battery on the island must be a priority in the future.

The islands in the Shannon Estuary are currently under-utilised from a tourism perspective, an issue which has been addressed in the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP) for the Shannon Estuary. The SIFP identifies the potential of the islands for the development of eco-tourism and heritage based-tourism and recommends a further evaluation of their potential.

Clare County Council's acquisition of Holy Island on Lough Derg also offers a major opportunity to grow the tourism industry and encourage visitors to East Clare. The island is highly important from both an environmental and historic perspective and careful and sustainable management is required to ensure its on-going conservation.

CDP9.27

Development Plan Objective: Tourism and the Islands

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To identify the tourism function of the islands and address the functional, planning and environmental impacts of additional visitors in order to facilitate increased access to the islands in a sensitive and appropriate manner;
- B** To work with relevant agencies to support the development of improved infrastructure and transportation required to enhance Scattery Island's tourism resource and to support the provision of signage associated with these services;
- C** To ensure the on-going sustainable management of the historic and natural resources of Scattery Island and support tourism product development on the island;
- D** To facilitate the further exploration of the tourism/leisure potential of the Shannon Estuary Islands having regard to the landscape/heritage sensitivities in the area and the European and local designations in the estuary.

Chapter 9 Tourism – Cross References

Section 3.2.5	Single Housing in the Countryside
CDP4.13	Holiday Homes
CDP5.12	Off-Road Walking and Cycling
CDP5.13	Countryside Recreation
CDP7.19	Tourism Related Retail
CDP8.20	Directional Signage
CDP8.22	Protection of Water Resources
CDP8.27	Wastewater Treatment and Disposal
CDP9.19	Accessible Tourism
CDP10.8	Non-Commercial Fishing
Section 11.3.6.2	The Islands
CDP11.9	Promoting Tourism, Recreation and Leisure around the Shannon Estuary
CDP11.11	Estuary Settlements
CDP11.14	Building on the Shannon Estuary as an Environmental Asset
CDP11.15	Marina Developments
CDP12.1	Environmental Designations in Coastal Areas
CDP12.4	Integrated Coastal Zone Management
CDP12.11	Marina Developments in Coastal Areas
CDP12.14	Protection of Beaches and Sand Dunes
CDP12.15	EU Bathing Water Directive
CDP12.16	Island Development
CDP13.2	Settled Landscapes
CDP13.3	Western Corridor Working Landscape
CDP13.4	Shannon Estuary Working Landscape
CDP13.5	Heritage Landscapes
CDP13.6	Seascape Character Areas

CDP13.7	Scenic Routes
CDP 14.1	Biodiversity
CDP14.2	European Sites
CDP14.3	Requirement for Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive
CDP14.4	Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs)
CDP14.6	Burren National Park, Wildlife Sanctuaries and Nature Reserves
CDP14.7	Non-Designated Sites
CDP14.9	Environmental Impact Assessment
CDP 14.11	Habitat Protection
CDP14.13	Habitat Fragmentation
CDP14.14	Inland Waterways and River Corridors
CDT14.17	Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows
CDP15.1	Architectural Heritage
CDP15.5	Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)
CDP15.15	Museums and Heritage Centres
CDP15.16	Genealogy
CDP16.8	Lands Identified as Areas where the Vacant Site Levy can Apply
CDP16.9	Derelict Sites
CDP17.2	Universal Design
Section 17.4.4	Place Making and Amenity on the Wild Atlantic Way
CDP18.6	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
CDP18.7	CFRAMS
CDP18.8	Storm Water Management
CDP19.3	Compliance with Zoning



Chapter 10

Rural Development and Natural Resources

Goal IX:

A County Clare with diverse and strong rural communities and economy, where its natural resources are harnessed in a manner that is compatible with the sensitivity of rural areas and the existing quality of life.

10.0 Introduction.....	162
10.1 Strategic Aims.....	162
10.2 Context	162
10.3 Strategy	162
10.3.1 Rural Settlement Strategy	162
10.3.2 Economic Development in Rural Areas.....	163
10.3.3 Farm-based Rural Enterprise	163
10.3.4 Agri-Food Sector.....	164
10.3.5 Agri-Tourism Development.....	164
10.3.6 Local Services and Shops in Rural Areas.....	164
10.3.7 Rural Transport.....	165
10.3.8 Rural Broadband.....	166
10.4 Natural Resources	167
10.4.1 Fishing and Aquaculture	167
10.4.2 Forestry.....	167
10.4.3 Bioenergy	168
10.4.4 Renewable Energy.....	168
10.4.5 Unconventional Gas Exploration and Extraction.....	169
10.4.6 Extractive Industry	169

10.0 Introduction

This chapter sets out the strategic aims and objectives required to promote the sustainable development of rural communities whilst maintaining their intrinsic qualities and vibrancy. It also outlines the strategic aims and objectives required for the management and development of the County’s natural resources.

10.1 Strategic Aims

In accordance with the overall vision of the Plan, objectives are based on the following strategic aims:

- To reinforce the vitality and future of rural villages and settlements and to recognise the roles that they play in the wider social and economic context;
- To encourage and support the social and economic development of rural parts of the County;
- To support local rural economies and facilitate the diversification of local rural enterprises;
- To ensure that key assets of rural areas such as the natural and built environment are protected and enhanced, and rural areas with resources such as wind energy, water sources, and aggregates are sustainably developed;
- To harness a pride of place among rural communities and to assist rural communities to promote their cultural and natural resources.



10.2 Context

In the preparation of this chapter of the County Development Plan, regard has been had to the follow policy documents:

Mid West Area Strategic Plan 2012-2030
Ensuring the Future – A Strategy for Rural Development in Ireland
Sustainable Rural Housing – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2008
Food Harvest 2020
Code of Best Forest Practice - Ireland
Strategy for Renewable Energy 2012-2020
National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020
Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022
Energising Ireland’s Rural Economy – Report for the Commission of the Economic Development of Rural Areas (CEDRA)
Food Wise 2025
Forestry Recreation in Ireland: A Guide for Forest Owners and Managers 2006
Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth – an Integrated Marine Plan for Ireland

10.3 Strategy

Strong and vibrant rural areas are essential to balanced regional development. It is imperative to recognise that the economy of rural areas is diverse and that agriculture, whilst extremely important, is not exclusively responsible for the vitality and viability of rural areas. Changes in the nature and scale of agricultural production and increased levels of diversification in the rural economy have the potential to enhance rural economic growth. However there is an on-going need to support rural communities from both a social and economic perspective.

10.3.1 Rural Settlement Strategy

Chapter 3 sets out the Settlement Strategy for the Countryside and is based on the positive principle that local rural people will be facilitated to live in their own local rural areas. Sustainable rural housing can reinforce the traditional rural communities and contribute to local services such as schools and local shops. The concept of rural sustainability therefore encompasses not only environmental but also social and economic aspects of development.



10.3.2 Economic Development in Rural Areas

The report of the Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas (CEDRA), entitled 'Energising Ireland's Rural Economy', recognises the abundance of natural, physical, human and capital resources and the wide variety of high quality assets, including dormant assets, in many rural communities that could be leveraged to support national economic growth and the development of these communities. The Commission recommends the development of a Rural Town Stimulus Programme that focuses on rural towns/villages and their hinterlands. The programme will be set within the context of identified Rural Economic Development Zones (REDZ) and will facilitate a collective approach to identifying, valuing and building a town's resources and distinctiveness. It is envisaged that the programmes will be led by local stakeholders in partnership with local authorities and state bodies to develop an integrated socio-economic action plan for their area.

CDP10.1

Development Plan Objective: Rural Economic Development

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To work with all relevant stakeholders to implement the recommendations of the CEDRA Report on 'Energising Ireland's Rural Economy';
- B** To promote and support the development and implementation of a Rural Town Stimulus Programme to support the regeneration and economic growth of rural areas of County Clare.

10.3.3 Farm-based Rural Enterprise

Many farmers and landowners, through innovation and the utilisation of local/natural resources, now subsidise their farming by diversifying into new enterprises. The rural economy has the potential to offer many viable and sustainable employment opportunities and the Council will encourage and facilitate the development of small-scale rural enterprises where possible.

In order to further support rural enterprise the Council will also promote the establishment of a number of small scale incubator units in rural areas, and will favourably consider the development of home-based enterprises. Chapter 6 Economic Development and Enterprise gives further details of the Council's objectives in relation to rural enterprise.

CDP10.2

Development Plan Objective: Rural Enterprise

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To encourage and support the development of new rural and farm-related enterprises, existing initiatives, innovative indigenous enterprise (both high-tech and traditional) and on and off farm employment activities as a means of promoting rural diversity and strengthening the local economic base;
- B** To support and encourage farm-based renewable energy technologies such as bio-energy and anaerobic digestion, in compliance with relevant environmental legislation.

10.3.4
Agri-Food Sector

The agri-food sector is one of Ireland’s most important indigenous industries and is vitally important to the economy of County Clare. Food production, on all scales, is continuously growing and is particularly important in rural areas where a strong speciality/artisan food sector has emerged. National level strategies such as Harvest 2020 and Food Wise 2025 emphasise the importance of this sector and its potential for enhanced growth. The removal of milk quotas also presents a potential opportunity for growth in the dairy industry and value-added dairy products/processing both in County Clare and the wider region.

The agri-food industry, and in particular local food production, has an important role to play in ensuring sustainability and resilience. Local food production can provide both local employment and a better product for the consumer.

Artisan food and beverage production is also playing an increasingly important role in the economy of County Clare, particularly in rural areas. The resultant high-quality, locally-produced goods make a significant contribution to both the food industry in the County and the branding of County Clare at a local, national and international level. In addition, numerous highly-successful food and beverage-based festivals now take place in County Clare each year and food trails around the County are also increasing in popularity. These food-based activities increase the tourist offer and simultaneously enhance the rural economy. Section 6.3.18 also relates to The Food Industry.

CDP10.3

Development Plan Objective:
Agri-Food Sector

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

A To facilitate proposals for agricultural and horticultural development;

B To encourage the linking of agricultural production with added value enterprise and the diversification of rural enterprises;

C To support the development of rural/farmers markets and the development of food-based tourism activities;

D To support the on-going growth and development of the artisan food sector in the County.

10.3.5
Agri-Tourism Development

County Clare has a wealth of natural and built amenities and provides a quality of life in the countryside that underpins year-round tourism products and services. Potential exists to develop agri-tourism as another means of diversifying the rural economy, and can include equestrian centres, pitch and putt courses, outdoor pursuit centres, farmhouse guest accommodation and other similar activities including small-scale craft centres. Where proposals for agri-tourism development can be accommodated, the Council will encourage and facilitate their development subject to normal development management criteria. For further details on the Council’s objectives in relation to agri-tourism, see Section 9.3.9 Rural Tourism and Forestry Tourism.

10.3.6
Local Services and Shops
in Rural Areas

The Council acknowledges the challenges facing rural services in some communities and recognises the importance of retaining local services and shops to sustaining rural communities. In line with the Settlement Strategy, the Council will be proactive in enabling the future growth and development of services in rural areas, thus maintaining their critical mass. The Council’s objectives in relation to retail development in rural areas are addressed in more detail in Chapter 7.

CDP10.4

Development Plan Objective:
Rural Services

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

A To encourage the development and facilitate the retention, where possible, of local services and shops in rural areas;

B To facilitate the redevelopment of existing services to other enterprises within the countryside where necessary.

10.3.7 Rural Transport

Public transport is vital to sustain local rural communities and to enhance the quality of life of people who live in the rural area. Regional bus services are provided within the County by Bus Éireann. In rural areas the cost of providing conventional bus services can be prohibitively expensive due to low population densities and limited patronage. But the social inclusion and accessibility benefit is substantial. Rural communities are more reliant on private transport with high levels of car ownership. However, for elderly or mobility impaired people and those on low incomes, access to private transport remains difficult and therefore rural bus services play a significant role in society.

At the local level, Clare Bus operates community-based bus services throughout the County which provide connectivity between rural areas and local service centres. Clare County Council recognises the importance of community-based accessible transport for all and will encourage and facilitate the development of such initiatives to serve the rural areas of County Clare. In particular the Council will encourage the development of linkages between community-based services such as Clare Bus and services provided by Irish Rail and Bus Éireann e.g. linking Clare Bus and Bus Éireann services with the Galway-Ennis-Limerick rail line.

In the terms of rural transport provision, the Mid-West Area Strategic Plan 2012-2023 (MWASP) identifies the need to:

- Widen the base of custom to become more sustainable;
- Become more integrated into the public transport system through service/scheduling integration, ticketing information, smart card technology and pricing;
- Review routing in order to facilitate interchange;
- Upgrade localised facilities to accommodate these interchanges.

MWASP highlights that the core social inclusion and accessibility elements of rural transport service provision must not be lost when these changes are implemented.

Public transport in rural areas is difficult to provide and inevitably costly given the dispersed population. One option is to explore the role of taxi-bus services linked with the main inter-urban bus corridors and the reshaping of the hinterland bus service in a more formulated “hub and spoke” service plan connecting into the main public transport nodes.

Chapter 8 further elaborates on Clare County Council’s transportation objectives.

CDP10.5

Development Plan Objective: Rural Transport

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To support the retention and enhancement of existing rural transport services in County Clare;
- B** To support the provision of new rural transportation initiatives which provide greater accessibility between towns and villages and all rural areas;
- C** To encourage the development of ‘hub and spoke’ rural transport services at key locations in order to support the integration of local and regional transport services;
- D** To support the provision of regular express bus services throughout the County and to encourage private-public partnership in the provision of more widespread rural bus services.



10.3.8
Rural Broadband

Rural broadband is a highly important issue, both in terms of quality of life for rural residents and in order to support rural enterprises, which are essential to sustain rural populations and ensure balanced regional development. Rural broadband can facilitate distance learning in rural communities, provide opportunities to work from home and can also help to alleviate isolation in rural areas e.g. using social media to connect with family and link to medical/caring services.

The government’s Rural Broadband Scheme map of County Clare (Figure 10.1 below) indicates that 49% of premises in the County will be covered by commercial operators by the end of 2016. Government intervention will be required to ensure that services are provided to the remaining 51% of premises, many of which are in peripheral locations. Advocating for prompt intervention to ensure the provision of services in these areas is a key priority for this Plan.

The provision of high-speed broadband in these areas is essential to support modern agricultural practices, the development of rural enterprises, the growth of the tourism industry and also to support more sustainable travel patterns through opportunities to ‘work-from-home’ in areas that are distant from urban centres.

Given the rural nature of the majority of County Clare, the implementation of the Rural Broadband Scheme is essential to the future economic growth of the County. Section 8.8.9 of this Plan also relates to the issue of broadband connectivity.

CDP10.6

Development Plan Objective: Broadband

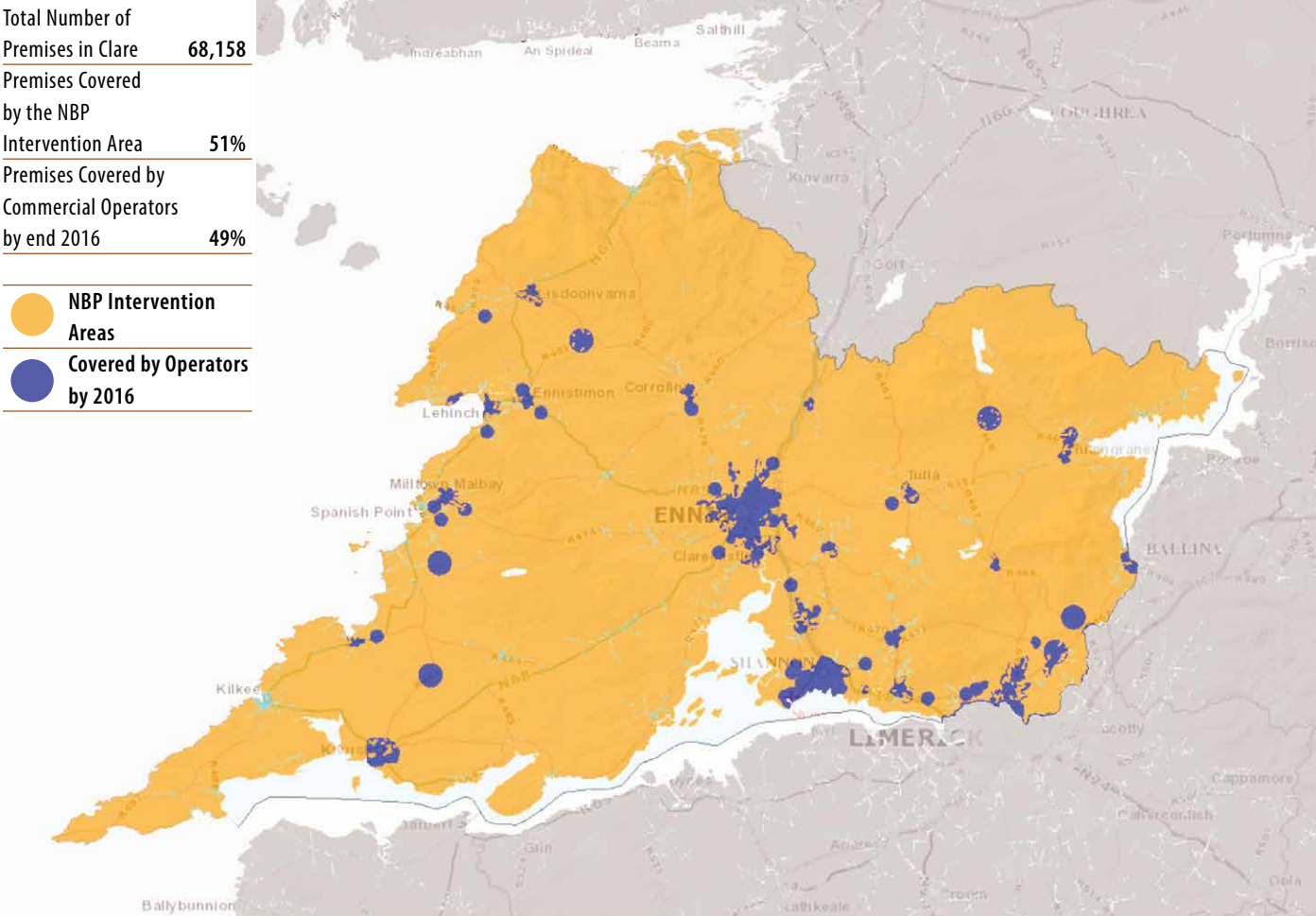
It is an objective of the Development Plan: To advocate for, and facilitate the extension of, broadband infrastructure throughout the County and encourage e-commerce and IT telecommunications in support of rural enterprise.

Figure 10.1
County Clare High Speed Broadband Map 2016

Total Number of Premises in Clare	68,158
Premises Covered by the NBP Intervention Area	51%
Premises Covered by Commercial Operators by end 2016	49%

NBP Intervention Areas

Covered by Operators by 2016



10.4 Natural Resources

Clare is a county rich in natural resources, the sustainable exploitation of which has the potential to contribute significantly to both the local and national economy.

CDP10.7

Development Plan Objective: Natural Resources

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To facilitate, encourage and appropriately manage the development of natural resources of the County and to ensure that this is done in a sensitive way, eliminating any significant adverse effects on the natural environment and in compliance with all relevant legislation, as set out in Objective CDP2.1.

10.4.1 Fishing and Aquaculture

The Council recognises the role that the fishing and aquaculture industries have in diversifying the economy of rural areas and providing employment in production, packaging and ancillary job opportunities. County Clare has an extensive coastline (192km Atlantic seaboard and 168km of estuarial freshwater coastline) and significant potential exists to grow coastal economies through the development of the commercial fishing and aquaculture industries.

Issues relating to commercial fishing and aquaculture are addressed in Chapter 12 Marine and Coastal Zone Management.

Fishing and aquaculture also contribute significantly to the rural economy through marine tourism activities. Charter deep-sea fishing trips operate from Carrigaholt, Kilrush and Kilbaha and potential exists to further expand these industries through the integration of marine leisure/tourism activities with complementary on-shore hospitality in relevant coastal settlements.

CDP10.8

Development Plan Objective: Non- Commercial Fishing

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To support the expansion of non-commercial fishing activities in coastal communities and the development of complementary on-shore hospitality facilities/services.

10.4.2 Forestry

The National Climate Change Strategy identifies the forestry sector as being the largest and most readily available biomass resource with significant scope for wood fuel to replace consumer dependence on fossil fuels. Forestry has the potential to provide economic, environmental and social gains. Clare County Council is a consultative body in relation to applications to the Forestry Service for initial forestation and submits observations to the Forestry Service on such applications, as appropriate.

The spin-off industries associated with the growth sector include the harvesting, transportation and processing of the raw material. The Council will actively encourage and facilitate, where appropriate, the sustainable development of the forestry sector in a scale and manner which maximises its contribution to both the local rural and urban economy.

Forestry also has a strong role to play in recreation and tourism in rural areas. In this regard please refer to Section 9.3.9 and Section 5.4.2.

CDP10.9

Development Plan Objective: Forestry

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To promote and encourage state and private afforestation and reforestation throughout the countryside in appropriate locations, in compliance with Objective CDP2.1, and on suitable soil types as a means of promoting rural diversity and strengthening both the rural and urban economy;
- B** To support the development of enterprises ancillary to the forestry industry, in particular value-improvement enterprises relating to timber extracted from County Clare forests;
- C** To encourage the sustainable development of native woodlands to enhance biodiversity, the landscape and recreational amenity, to provide climate change mitigation and an education resource and to strengthen the rural economy.

10.4.3 Bioenergy

Biomass is a term used to describe all organic materials such as plant materials. The bioenergy industry offers economic benefits for rural areas and for people involved in agriculture. Those involved in agriculture and forestry can supplement their income by becoming involved in the bioenergy industry through the production of biomass, anaerobic digestion, liquid biofuels and use of forestry thinnings. The future development of the biomass and bioenergy industry in County Clare is discussed in detail in the Clare Renewable Energy Strategy 2017-2023 (Volume 6 of this Plan).

CDP 10.10

Development Plan Objective: Bioenergy

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To encourage the development of bioenergy opportunities, facilities and associated rural enterprises in the countryside in appropriate locations where such developments do not have a significant negative impact on the environment.

10.4.4 Renewable Energy

There is significant potential for the development of renewable energy in County Clare. The County has one of the best wind resources in the world – almost the entire County has either an excellent or very good wind energy resource. However, the development and siting of wind energy projects must be balanced with the potential impacts on the landscape, ecology and the amenities of local communities. Areas that are considered suitable for commercial wind energy developments are set out in Volume 5 of this Plan. There is also potential for other forms of renewable energy generation, such as anaerobic digestion and solar energy that can be integrated into both domestic and agricultural settings. These issues are set out further in Volume 6 of this Plan.

CDP 10.11

Development Plan Objective: Renewable Energy Development

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To facilitate the development of renewable energy developments in rural areas in accordance with the adopted Clare Wind Energy Strategy and Renewable Energy Strategy and the associated SEA and NIR (and any subsequent strategies).





10.4.5 Unconventional Gas Exploration and Extraction

In line with European policy, the Council applies the precautionary principle in respect of development where significant environmental implications are involved. In particular, Clare County Council is conscious of its responsibility to protect and maintain the quality of the air and water in the County, so as to ensure a safe and healthy living environment for the present and future generations.

Having regard to the foregoing, the Council has set out the following objective with regard to hydrocarbon exploration and extraction.

CDP 10.12

Development Plan Objective: Unconventional Gas Exploration and Extraction

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To require the application of the precautionary principle to Unconventional Oil/Gas Exploration and Extraction (UGEE) projects/operations proposed within the County.

10.4.6 Extractive Industry

County Clare contains reserves of materials including stone, sand, gravel and peat, which are worked at many locations across the County. There is also potential for the extraction of precious and base minerals in the County. Quarrying and other extractive industries are recognised as important to rural economic development in terms of generating employment and providing raw material to the construction industry and other industrial processes. The exploitation of these materials and minerals, together with the decommissioning and restoration of all sites, must be carefully managed in order to minimise the potential impact on the environment. The Council will facilitate the harnessing of the area's natural resources whilst ensuring that the environment and rural and residential amenities are appropriately protected.

CDP 10.13

Development Plan Objective: Minerals, Mining and Quarrying

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To promote the extraction of minerals and aggregates and associated processing where such activities do not have a significant negative impact on the environment, landscape, public health, archaeology or residential amenities of neighbouring settlements and where such operations are in compliance with all national regulations and guidelines applicable to quarrying and mining activities.



Chapter 10 Rural Development and Natural Resources – Cross References

CDP4.13	Holiday Homes
CDP6.19	Agricultural Developments
CDP6.20	Rural Enterprise
CDP6.21	The Food Industry
CDP6.22	The Craft Industry
CDP6.23	Home Based Economic Activity
CDP6.26	Tourism
CDP7.10	Retail Uses in Rural Areas
CDP8.22	Protection of Water Resources
CDP8.43	Broadband Connectivity
CDP8.44	Telecommunication Infrastructure
CDP9.4	Tourism Developments and Tourist Facilities
CDP9.5	Tourist Accommodation
CDP9.10	Rural Tourism and Forestry Tourism
CDP12.7	The Fishing Industry
CDP12.8	Aquaculture
CDP13.4	Shannon Estuary Working Landscape

CDP13.5	Heritage Landscapes
CDP13.6	Seascape Character Areas
CDP13.7	Scenic Routes
CDP14.1	Biodiversity
CDP14.2	European Sites
CDP14.3	Requirement for Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive
CDP14.4	Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (NPAs)
CDP14.6	Burren National Park, Wildlife Sanctuaries and Nature Reserves
CDP14.7	Non-Designated Sites
CDP14.9	Environmental Impact Assessment
CDP14.11	Habitat Protection
CDP14.16	Peatlands
CDP14.17	Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows
CDP14.19	Wetlands
CDP14.26	Alien Invasive Species



Chapter 11

Shannon Estuary

Goal X:

A County Clare that builds on the strategic location and natural resources of the Shannon Estuary by facilitating and maximising its potential for various forms of development while managing the estuarine and natural environment in full compliance with all relevant EU Directives.

11.0 Introduction.....	172
11.1 Strategic Aims.....	172
11.2 Context.....	173
11.3 Strategy.....	173
11.3.1 Co-operation Objective	173
11.3.2 Strategic Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP) for the Shannon Estuary	174
11.3.3 Strategic Development Locations	175
11.3.4 Shipping and Navigation	179
11.3.5 Harnessing the Energy Resource of the Shannon Estuary....	179
11.3.6 Tourism on the Shannon Estuary	180
11.3.7 Aviation.....	182
11.3.8 Commercial Fishing / Aquaculture on the Estuary	182
11.3.9 Environment	183
11.3.10 Water-Borne Transport.....	184
11.3.11 Marina Developments.....	184

11.0 Introduction

The Shannon Estuary is the largest estuary in Ireland. It is a water body of some 31,500 hectares and covers a distance of 100km from Limerick City to Loop Head. The Shannon Estuary comprises the tidal reaches of the lower River Shannon between Limerick City and the Atlantic and incorporates the Fergus Estuary south of Clarecastle. The Estuary is macro-tidal, having the largest tidal range on the Irish coast (5.44 metres at Limerick Docks). Water depths vary from approximately 37 metres at the estuary mouth and along parts of the County Clare shoreline to less than 5 metres near Limerick City. The estuary's deep water, generous hinterland, skilled resident population and location at the entrance to the Gateway of Limerick City make it an attractive base for various industries.

The estuary area is a multi-functional zone, with the waters and adjoining lands supporting a range of functions, uses and activities and environmental resources and assets which bring character, prosperity and vibrancy to the area. These include: port functions, aquaculture / fishing, marine tourism, recreation/leisure activities, industry/business, energy generation, fuel storage, aviation, agriculture, valuable habitats/landscape and architectural heritage. It is clear that there is significant potential for growth in many of the above sectors. The Strategic Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP) for the Shannon Estuary, as contained in Volume 7 of this Plan, encourages, facilitates and promotes a balanced approach to the estuary's growth potential, while simultaneously encouraging careful protection, management and enhancement of the natural environmental resources of the area. Delivering on this potential will require co-operation between authorities and sectors sharing an interest in the estuary.

However, the entire estuary is also designated as part of a candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC), namely the Lower River Shannon SAC, a wildlife conservation area considered to be of national and European importance. Most of the estuary, including the Fergus Estuary, is also designated as part of the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries Special Protection Area (SPA). As such it forms part of a network of sites across Europe protected under the Habitats and Birds Directives. These designations place the area under strict requirements to ensure, prior to adoption or consent, that plans and projects will not give rise to adverse effects on the ecology of such sites.

11.1 Strategic Aims

This chapter presents the objectives required to maximise the potential of the Shannon Estuary while protecting its designated ecological resources. In accordance with the overall vision of the Plan, it is based on the following strategic aims:

- To diversify the economy through the promotion, along the Shannon Estuary, of industry/business and employment opportunities, environmentally-friendly aquaculture, maritime activities, water-related recreation and tourism industries, in a sustainable manner;
- To properly protect, manage and enhance the natural coastal environment, cultural and built heritage of the estuary area;
- To support and expand the existing economic base, including port and harbour facilities and related activities;
- To implement the SIFP to provide clarity of purpose and direction for the future development of, and investment in, the Shannon Estuary and its environs;
- To ensure that all proposed development is in accordance with the SEA Directive, Birds and Habitats Directives, Water Framework Directive, Marine Strategy Framework Directive, Shellfish Waters Directive, Floods Directive and EIA Directive.



11.2 Context

The Shannon Estuary is a place of many component parts, communities, functions and cultural and physical dimensions, which are dealt with in dedicated chapters elsewhere in this Plan. However, the key points are summarised here in this chapter in the interest of ensuring an integrated development and management approach to the potential of the County Clare shoreline of the Shannon Estuary. The following publications have formed the policy context for the preparation of the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary:

The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020

Delivering a Sustainable Energy Future for Ireland – the Energy Policy Framework 2007-2020 White Paper

National Ports Policy 2013

Offshore Renewable Energy Action Plan

Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022

Shannon Foynes Port Company Vision 2041

Clare Renewable Energy Strategy 2017-2023

EU Birds Directive

Government and EPA guidance documents in relation to Environmental Impact Assessment, Appropriate Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment.

EU Floods Directive and associated CFRAMS studies

Marine Strategy Framework Directive

Government Policy Statement on Strategic Importance of Transmission and Other Energy Infrastructure

National Climate Change Strategy (NCCS) 2007-2012

National Renewable Energy Action Plan

Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth – An Integrated Marine Plan for Ireland 2012

Mid-West Area Strategic Plan 2010-2030

Clare Wind Energy Strategy

Framework and Principles for the Protection of Archaeological Heritage

EU Habitats Directive

Water Framework Directive and associated River Basin Management Plans

National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015-2025

Marine Spatial Planning Directive

11.3 Strategy

11.3.1 Co-operation Objective

The Shannon Estuary lies within the functional areas of a number of local authorities and other statutory agencies and its successful development requires a co-operative approach between the bodies concerned. It is an objective of the Council to work with other agencies to facilitate development in respect of the entire estuary and, in particular along the northern shoreline which lies within County Clare. Clare County Council shall undertake the role of enabling the implementation and delivery of the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP) for the Shannon Estuary within the administrative area of the County, in a co-ordinated and integrated manner, in co-operation with the statutory authorities and agencies involved in the area, within their statutory remit. The SIFP is contained in Volume 7 this County Development Plan.

CDP11.1

Development Plan Objective: Integrated Development of the Shannon Estuary

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To co-operate with the relevant agencies to facilitate, encourage and promote development, economic growth and employment in environmentally-suitable areas along the Shannon Estuary, by implementing the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary.



11.3.2 Strategic Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP) for the Shannon Estuary

The Shannon Estuary is one of Ireland's most important maritime resources and already contains a number of long-established, large commercial ports, as well as nationally significant industries and economic centres. However, since the enactment of the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations S.I. 94/19974, it has become increasingly apparent that the future development and extension of such activities will need to be closely co-ordinated with the conservation objectives for the European sites concerned.

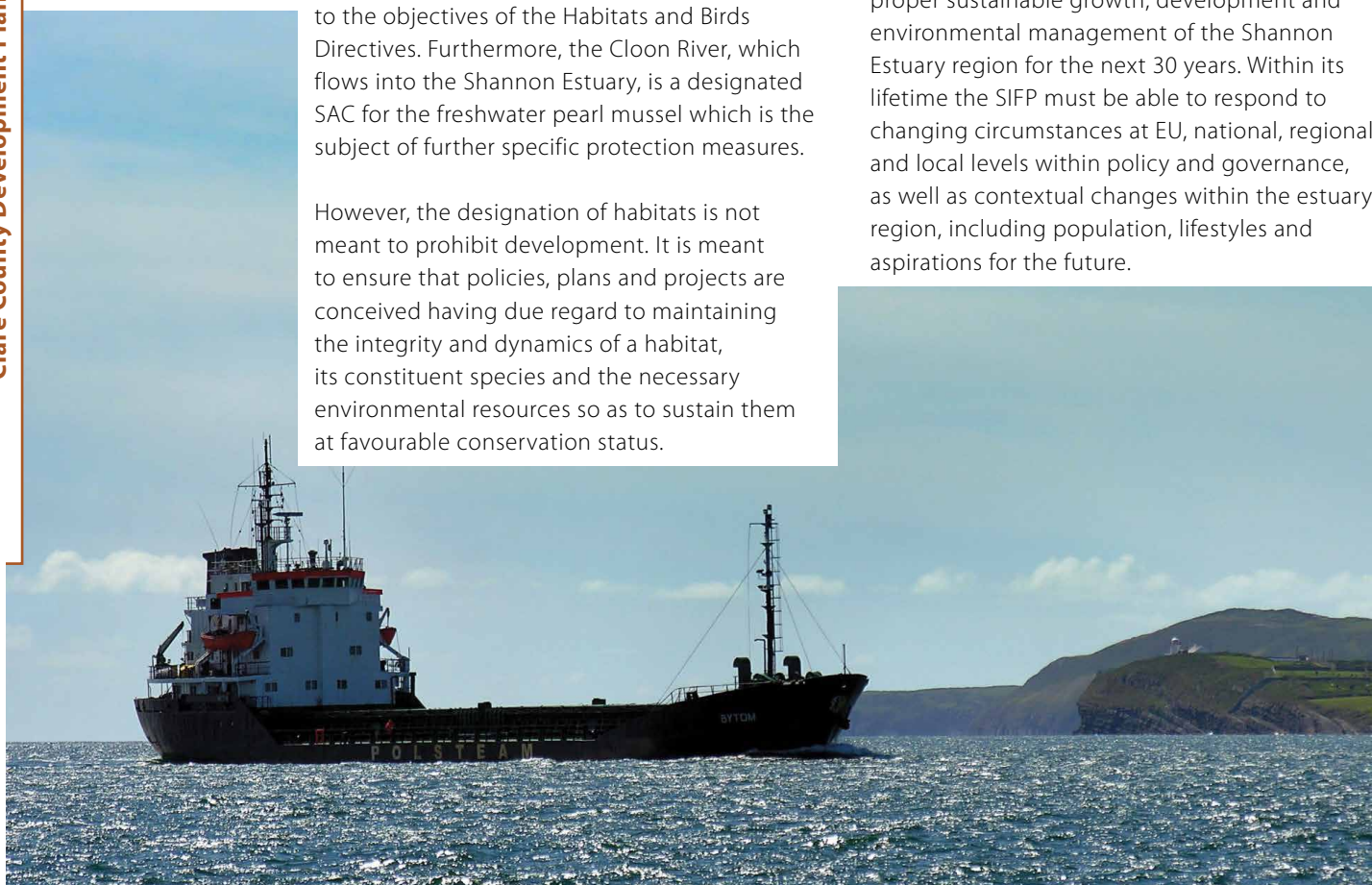
As the entire estuary is designated as a cSAC - and large parts also as an SPA - no developments can be planned for, or permitted, unless the prior assessment regime laid out in Article 6 of the Habitats Directive has been complied with. In addition, public authorities are obliged to avoid pollution and deterioration of natural habitats and the habitats of species, as well as disturbance of the species, for which areas have been designated in so far as such disturbance could be significant in relation to the objectives of the Habitats and Birds Directives. Furthermore, the Cloon River, which flows into the Shannon Estuary, is a designated SAC for the freshwater pearl mussel which is the subject of further specific protection measures.

However, the designation of habitats is not meant to prohibit development. It is meant to ensure that policies, plans and projects are conceived having due regard to maintaining the integrity and dynamics of a habitat, its constituent species and the necessary environmental resources so as to sustain them at favourable conservation status.

The existence of such designations requires a systematic approach to the development of plans, policies and objectives. This is necessary to demonstrate that environmental considerations have been taken into account from the beginning – particularly in the initial consideration of alternatives – so that it can be demonstrated that only the least damaging reasonable alternative is progressed should an assessment under Article 6(4) be required. The design of such alternatives then needs to be developed and assessed in detail to ensure that the assessment regime laid out in Article 6 of the Habitats Directive has been complied with. This, in turn, calls for an evidence-led approach whereby decisions take account of all relevant environmental considerations –including resources such as air and water quality, disturbance, pollution and connectivity.

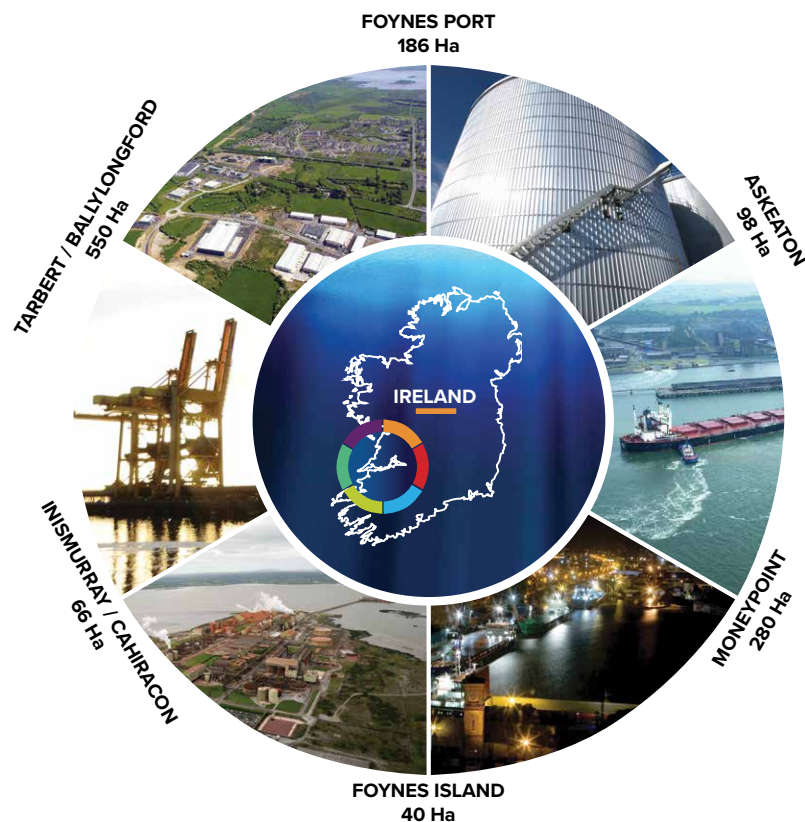
Accordingly, to facilitate the implementation of Development Plan Objective CDP 11.1 Integrated Development of Shannon Estuary - the inter-jurisdictional Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary has been prepared and is contained in Volume 7 of this Plan.

The SIFP sets out an overall strategy for the proper sustainable growth, development and environmental management of the Shannon Estuary region for the next 30 years. Within its lifetime the SIFP must be able to respond to changing circumstances at EU, national, regional and local levels within policy and governance, as well as contextual changes within the estuary region, including population, lifestyles and aspirations for the future.



The Strategy aims to:

- Support the multi-functional nature of the Shannon Estuary and identify opportunities to expand the existing economic base, including port-related industry and other associated activities;
- Facilitate the diversification of the economy through the promotion of appropriate commercial / industrial employment, environmentally friendly aquaculture, maritime energy, transport, recreation and tourism industries in a sustainable manner;
- Promote, manage and enhance the natural coastal environment along the estuary, including its cultural, natural and built heritage;
- Safeguard the estuary's sensitive environmental resources and natural heritage of national, European and international significance.



CDP11.2

Development Plan Objective: Strategic Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP) for the Shannon Estuary

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To support and implement the inter-jurisdictional Strategic Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP) for the Shannon Estuary in conjunction with the other relevant local authorities and agencies. All proposed developments shall be in accordance with the Birds and Habitats Directive, Water Framework Directive and all other relevant EU Directives. All proposed developments shall incorporate the Mitigation Measures as contained in the SIFP – Volume 7 of this Plan - for ensuring the integrity of the Natura 2000 Network;
- B** To proactively market the Strategic Development Locations in County Clare at Inishmurry/Cahiracon and Moneypoint as potential locations for future economic development.

benefits from key attributes that influenced the development of large scale industry and the marine industrial base. These existing industries have the potential to attract further significant investment to the area. There are two definable clusters of industry on the Shannon Estuary, one concentrated broadly around Moneypoint/Tarbert/Ballylongford, and another focussed around Foynes/Aughinish/Cahiracon.

CDP11.3

Development Plan Objective: Marine-Related Industry/Large- Scale Industry on the Estuary

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To capitalise on the natural deep water potential and existing port and maritime infrastructure, by facilitating and proactively encouraging the environmentally-sustainable development of maritime industries at appropriate locations within the Shannon Estuary, while seeking to improve and promote the road and rail connectivity of the deepwater ports in the County. All proposed developments shall be in accordance with the Birds and Habitats Directive, Water Framework Directive and all other relevant EU Directives.

All development associated with marine-related industry shall incorporate the sector and site specific Mitigation Measures as contained in the SIFP – Volume 7 of this Plan - for ensuring the integrity of the Natura 2000 Network.

11.3.3 Strategic Development Locations

The Shannon Estuary is one of Ireland's premier maritime resources with a number of long-established and successful marine enterprises including major ports and nationally significant industries and economic centres. The estuary

Strategic Development Locations are areas identified in the SIFP that are likely to generate the greatest potential opportunities in terms of social and economic aspirations, while safeguarding the essential integrity of the natural environment. Two Strategic Development Locations (SDLs) have been identified on the Shannon Estuary in County Clare:

- Strategic Development Location A: Inishmurry / Cahiracon (Map 11A);
- Strategic Development Location B: Moneypoint (Map 11B).

Lands at both of these locations have been zoned for Marine-Related Industry and have the potential to facilitate a concentration of marine-related industrial development. The SDLs are critical to the future development potential for marine-related development on the estuary. Clare County Council recognises the importance of safeguarding their current role and function as well as allowing flexibility to encourage diversification into compatible marine-related industrial activities that are attracted by the existing facilities and other potential synergies at these locations.

CDP11.4

**Development Plan Objective:
Strategic Development Locations**

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

A To safeguard the role and function of the Strategic Development Locations, which are identified on Map 11A and Map 11B;

B To support economic development by encouraging the sustainable growth, development and appropriate diversification of Strategic Development Locations.

All proposed developments shall be in accordance with the Birds and Habitats Directive, Water Framework Directive and all other relevant EU Directives.

11.3.3.1 Inishmurry / Cahiracon

The Inishmurry / Cahiracon SDL comprises 65.94 hectares of land and is located outside the settlement of Kiladysert, off the R473, on the north shore of the Shannon Estuary. It is accessed via a minor road – the L-2132. Currently the lands are predominately used for agriculture and quarrying. Planning permission was previously granted on the site for a major industrial project. There is an existing pier and a large pocket of deep water located on the edge of the SDL, providing potential for maritime industry.

The SDL is located within the South West Zone in the Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines, indicating potential for growth in commercial/ regional facilities for Foreign Direct Investment and indigenous industry, enterprise and culture. The Guidelines indicate that the potential of the estuary must be harnessed, even at locations outside existing settlements.

The SDL is located adjacent to the River Shannon and River Fergus SPA and Lower River Shannon SAC. Cahiracon House, which is on the Record of Protected Structures as contained in Volume 4 of this Plan, is located approximately one kilometre to the southwest of the SDL. There are protected archaeological monuments located within the SDL area. These monuments are listed on the Record of Monuments and Places for County Clare, 1996, and are protected under the National Monuments Act, 1930 - 2004. In addition, records have shown underwater heritage potential within the inter-tidal and tidal areas, including the presence of fish weirs.

A portion of the lands within the SDL is subject to risk from coastal and pluvial flooding.



Clare County Council considers that the SDL has potential for development of marine-related industry due to:

- A well-sheltered location with an existing pier offering direct access to a large pocket of well-sheltered deep water and the main navigation channel;
- A considerable area of hinterland available in close proximity to the R473;
- The MWRPG identification of the land in the South West Zone as having realistic potential for marine-related industry;
- A strategic location opposite the SDL at the Port of Foynes;
- A previously permitted major industrial development on the site;
- An opportunity to redevelop and re-use existing marine infrastructure at the existing pier;
- The presence of flood embankments.

Buffer zones must be incorporated into proposals for development in order to preserve potentially valuable habitats within the SDL, for example, areas of lagoon, salt marsh and woodland habitat at this site. In this regard, detailed botanical, faunal and ornithological surveys will be undertaken in relation to any proposed development in order to fully consider the potential effects of the development and inform the avoidance of significant ecological effects by influencing the design of any development proposals.

CDP11.5

Development Plan Objective: Strategic Development Location A – Inishmurry/Cahiracon

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To facilitate and promote the sustainable development of the lands at Strategic Development Location A – Inishmurry / Cahiracon (as per Map 11A) for marine-related industry. All proposed developments shall be in accordance with the Birds and Habitats Directive, Water Framework Directive and all other relevant EU Directives;

All proposed development at SDL A shall incorporate the Mitigation Measures as contained in the SIFP – Volume 7 of this Plan - for ensuring the integrity of the Natura 2000 Network.

11.3.3.2 Moneypoint

Moneypoint SDL comprises approximately 280 hectares, 227 hectares of which is occupied by the Moneypoint Power Generating Station, leaving 53 hectares of land to develop. It is located on the Shannon Estuary, five kilometres east of Kilrush. This landbank includes one of Ireland's largest electricity generation stations. There are a number of pockets of deep water in this area, and a tidal energy resource opportunity has been identified which is available for full exploration.

The SDL is close to the mouth of the estuary with excellent transport linkages including direct access to sea traffic for fuel deliveries that ensures efficient replenishment of stand-by fuel general reserves. The lands are also well connected by the existing road network.

Having regard to the location of this SDL on the N67 National Secondary road, any development which requires a new direct access onto that route shall have regard to, and be in compliance with, 'Spatial Planning and National Roads – Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (DoECLG 2012), and in particular Section 2.6 of these Guidelines, which requires the identification of 'exceptional circumstances' where a less restrictive approach to the control of access to national roads may apply. This is in addition to any other relevant objectives that may apply and are contained within this Development Plan.

Moneypoint Power Generating Station, which is owned and operated by the ESB, has an overall operational site of 227 hectares and an installed capacity of 915MW. The site is a major hub for electricity transmission with a 440kv transmission station, connecting into the National Grid system. It is also a bulk supply point for the region, and an essential component for the ESB meshed transmission system. The SDL also includes land and coastline adjacent to Moneypoint, which is outside the ownership of the ESB.

Moneypoint is an existing, strategically important energy hub in terms of capacity and security of supply through providing diversity in fuel supplies and providing critical energy storage in the global energy market. It has a network of 400, 220 and 110kV power lines radiating from it, which are core elements of the national and regional grid network. Clare

County Council is committed to safeguarding its contribution, in terms of capacity, to ensuring efficient production of electricity and security / diversity of supply in the future.

As per the Wind Energy Strategy contained in Volume 5 of this Plan, the SDL is identified as being acceptable in principle for Wind Energy.

The SDL is adjacent to the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries pSPA and the Lower River Shannon cSAC. In addition the ESB Moneypoint facility is a SEVESO Upper Tier Site due to the presence of hazardous substances.

There are protected archaeological monuments located within the SDL area. These monuments are listed on the Record of Monuments and Places for County Clare, 1996, and are protected under the National Monuments Act 1930 - 2004.

Buffer zones must be incorporated into proposals for development to preserve important habitats, for example, areas of woodland at this site. Detailed botanical, faunal and ornithological surveys will be undertaken in relation to proposed developments to fully consider the potential effects of the development and inform the avoidance of significant ecological effects by influencing the design of any proposed developments.

CDP11.6

Development Plan Objective: Strategic Development Location B–Moneypoint

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

A To safeguard the role and function of Strategic Development Location B –Moneypoint (as per Map 11B) as a key strategic driver of economic growth in the country, facilitating its sustainable growth, operational expansion and diversification, in accordance with national and regional energy objectives – ensuring in particular that all such developments shall not adversely affect species and habitats designated by the Habitats Directive;

B To support and facilitate the development of marine-related industry on lands adjacent to Moneypoint which is compatible with the primary use of the SDL as a Strategic Energy Location.

All proposed developments shall be in accordance with the Birds and Habitats Directive, Water Framework Directive and all other relevant EU Directives.

All proposed development at SDL B shall incorporate the Mitigation Measures as contained in the SIFP – Volume 7 of this Plan - for ensuring the integrity of the Natura 2000 Network.



11.3.4

Shipping and Navigation

The ability to accommodate larger ships is critical to safeguarding and developing trade potential and competitiveness in the global market. Clare County Council shall seek to provide the policy framework that safeguards the critical deepwater channels, and facilitates the sustainable growth of deep draught berths, quayside infrastructure and cargo handling facilities to ensure that shipping on the Shannon Estuary continues to make a significant contribution to the national and regional economy.

CDP11.7

Development Plan Objective: Shipping and Navigation

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

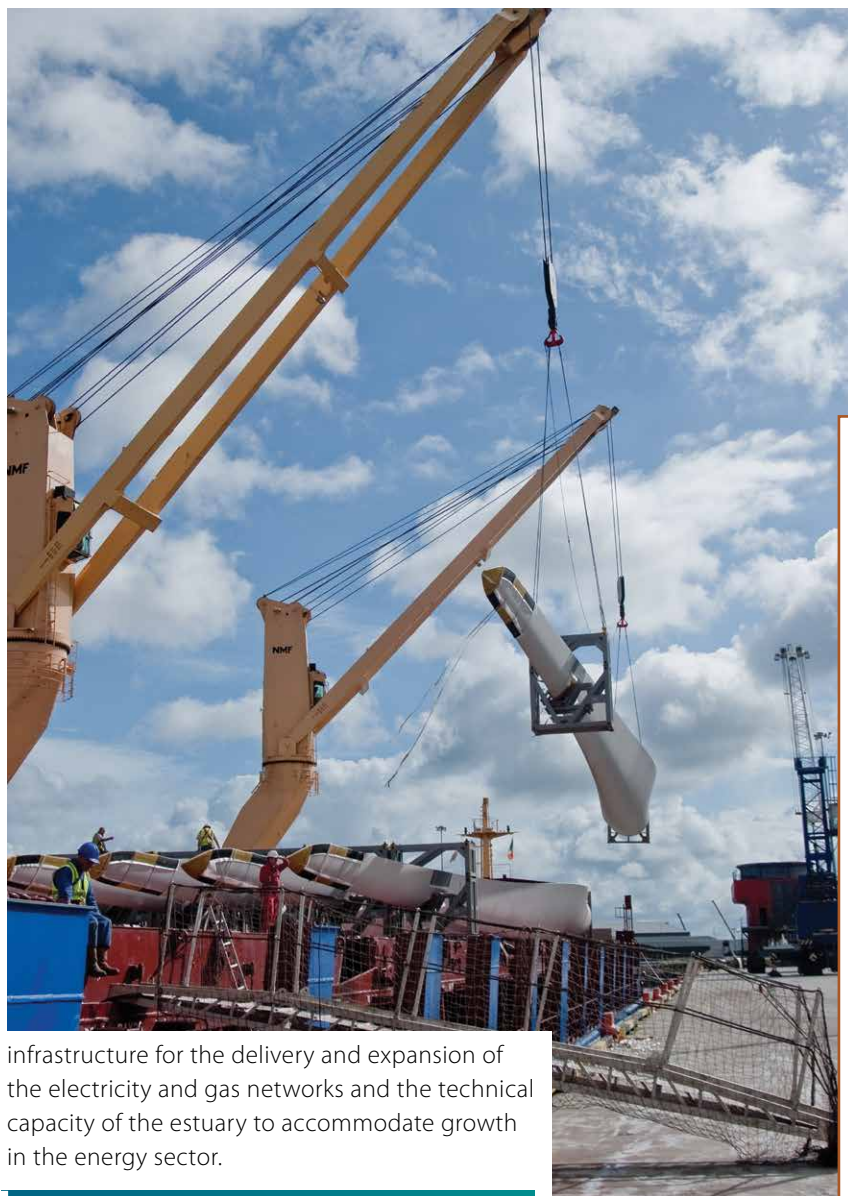
- A** To facilitate and promote the economic growth of shipping trade and investment within the Shannon Estuary, in a sustainable, safe and environmentally sensitive manner. All proposed developments shall be in accordance with the Birds and Habitats Directive, Water Framework Directive and all other relevant EU Directives;
- B** To support the potential for cooperation across all relevant sectors in the preparation of a Strategic Dredging Management Plan.

All development associated with shipping and navigation shall incorporate the sector and site specific Mitigation Measures as contained in the SIFP – Volume 7 of this Plan - for ensuring the integrity of the Natura 2000 Network.

11.3.5

Harnessing the Energy Resource of the Shannon Estuary

Clare County Council recognises that the Shannon Estuary is long established as a major contributor to the national energy supply market. Energy development within the Shannon Estuary must be considered in the context of the multi-functional nature of the estuary area and the competing requirement to safeguard the nature conservation interests of international standing. The context is also provided by national energy policy in respect of security of supply, the target for meeting 40% of the national energy supply from renewable resources, the existing energy infrastructure in the region, the need to upgrade



infrastructure for the delivery and expansion of the electricity and gas networks and the technical capacity of the estuary to accommodate growth in the energy sector.

CDP11.8

Development Plan Objective: Harnessing the Energy Resources of the Shannon Estuary

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To ensure that the Shannon Estuary fulfils its optimum role in contributing to the diversity and security of energy supply;
- B** To harness the potential of the estuary for the sustainable development of renewable energy sources to assist in meeting renewable energy targets.

All proposed developments shall be in accordance with the Birds and Habitats Directive, Water Framework Directive and all other relevant EU Directives.

All development associated with the energy sector shall incorporate the sector and site specific Mitigation Measures as contained in the SIFP – Volume 7 of this Plan - for ensuring the integrity of the Natura 2000 Network.

11.3.5.1 Renewable Energy

Significant potential exists for the development of the tidal energy resource in the Shannon Estuary. There is an opportunity to utilise the considerable capacity and commitment within the region for research and development in this field and to sensitively explore this renewable energy potential. Clare County Council recognises that the growth of the offshore renewable energy sector presents an opportunity for the Shannon Estuary in respect of new infrastructure and supply chain opportunities. The Shannon Estuary is well placed to capture a significant share of that market.

Technical analysis of the estuary and its port infrastructure in the Irish Ports Offshore Renewable Energy Services (IPORES) Report 2012 concludes that the Shannon Estuary has the potential to become a European Ocean Energy Hub. In County Clare, the SIFP identifies an area adjacent to Moneypoint as having significant potential for development of the tidal energy resource in the Shannon Estuary. This site is also identified as an area of significant potential in the SEAI Report 'Tidal & Current Energy Resources in Ireland'. The Clare Renewable Energy Strategy 2017-2023 identifies the potential for the generation of 41MW of energy from tidal sources.

Renewable energy development in the Shannon Estuary must demonstrate compatibility with the critical environmental considerations and the strategic shipping/navigation interests that exist on the estuary.

11.3.6 Tourism on the Shannon Estuary

Clare County Council recognises that the Shannon Estuary is a marketable tourist asset with a considerable range of attractions in terms of the scale and variety of the offer. Shannon International Airport is a key gateway to the region and to the west of Ireland. There are a wide range of major tourist attractions in and around the Shannon Estuary from Bunratty Castle in the east, Loop Head in the west, marina facilities and associated attractions at Kilrush, the Blue Flag beaches at Kilkee and Cappa, the network of cycling, trekking and walking trails, a myriad of water-based tourist facilities and scenic routes including part of the 1,400 kilometre Wild Atlantic Way. Recent studies have also examined the feasibility of sustainable exploitation of the eco/heritage tourism potential of the islands of the estuary.

The environment of the Shannon Estuary is internationally recognised for its nature conservation interest which is a tourist asset in its own right. The coastal habitat is an important ecological environment sheltered from the Atlantic and it carries legal protection that reflects its environmental value. The quality of the natural environment and architectural heritage offer attractions as a leisure destination for eco/heritage tourism, bird/dolphin watching and activity breaks.

Clare County Council will seek to build on these considerable assets and will generally direct tourist development projects to the settlements around the estuary, pitching development at a level commensurate with the status of the settlement in the hierarchy. The Council will encourage and facilitate expansion and re-development of existing facilities, while minimising the potential for harm to the prized environment by ensuring compliance with the Habitats Directive.



CDP11.9

Development Plan Objective: Promoting Tourism, Recreation and Leisure around the Shannon Estuary

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To facilitate and promote the sensitive and sustainable use of the Shannon Estuary's assets in an integrated manner to develop a dynamic and sustainable tourism, recreation and leisure sector that delivers maximum social and economic benefit to the communities of the estuary while safeguarding valued landscape, heritage and environmental interests. All proposed developments shall be in accordance with the Birds and Habitats Directive, Water Framework Directive and all other relevant EU Directives

CDP11.10

Development Plan Objective: Cruise Ship Industry

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To support and facilitate the sustainable use of the estuary by the cruise ship industry by maintaining and safeguarding critical navigational channels, anchorage and berthing facilities. All proposed developments shall be in accordance with the Birds and Habitats Directive, Water Framework Directive, Invasive Alien Species Regulations and all other relevant EU Directives.

11.3.6.1 Estuary Settlements

There are a number of important settlements adjacent to the Shannon Estuary, including Shannon and Kilrush, the second and third largest towns in County Clare. They are part of the Settlement Hierarchy set out in Chapter 2 of this Plan. Small villages along the northern shoreline are Ballynacally, Knock, Killimer, Querrin, Doonaha and Kilbaha. Large villages are Kiladysert, Labasheeda and Carrigaholt. Objectives for the Settlement Hierarchy are contained in Chapter 3 of this Development Plan.

CDP11.11

Development Plan Objective: Estuary Settlements

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To ensure that the settlements along the northern shoreline of the estuary benefit from potential economic, tourism and recreational developments, in accordance with the role of the settlement as per the Settlement Hierarchy. All proposed developments shall be in accordance with the Birds and Habitats Directive, Water Framework Directive and all other relevant EU Directives.

11.3.6.2 The Islands

Clare County Council recognises that the islands of the estuary offer potential for the sustainable development of eco-tourism and heritage-based tourism. Although uninhabited since the 1970s, the islands are still farmed despite the challenging nature of the landscape. Each island has its own story to tell in the social history of the Shannon Estuary, with each hosting a wealth of cultural heritage.

The Shannon Estuary is also one of the most important sites in Ireland for wintering and migrating waterbirds, thus reflecting the designation of the majority of the estuary as a Special Protection Area. The estuary around the islands has considerable potential for bird watching and other nature conservation based pursuits. In combination with the rich cultural heritage and a remarkable landscape setting, this represents a significant tourism opportunity. However, nature conservation is a very high priority and any development must ensure that the conservation objectives for the European sites are maintained at favourable status.



11.3.7
Aviation

Shannon International Airport and the Linked Gateway of Shannon are located on the estuary. Currently the regular delivery of aviation fuel to Shannon Airport by bulk oil-tankers at Shannon Port is the only direct connection between the estuary waters and Shannon town. Given the scale, potential and multi-modal international and national transport linkages from Shannon, potential may exist to improve connectivity and linkages between marine-based transport and the Gateway, creating a multi-modal logistics hub in the region. The Council recognises the importance of Shannon International Airport and the industrial base in Shannon town to the region as a whole. A further investigation of the potential for additional linkages and access to the water from Shannon town and complementary uses of the existing jetty facilities will be encouraged and supported.

It is critical to safeguard the airport lands for future airport expansion and rationalisation, and as a result Clare County Council will give priority to aviation and other compatible uses including aircraft servicing and maintenance, freight cargo handling, complementary business park uses, flight schools, international logistics and research that support the long term sustainability of the airport.

It is noted that any such developments may require works in/adjacent to areas designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC)/Special Protection Area (SPA) and, in this regard, projects must comply with the requirement of the Habitats and Birds Directives.

CDP11.12

Development Plan Objective:
Aviation and the Shannon Estuary

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To realise the long term potential of Shannon International Airport and its environs within the Mid-West Region of the country, and encourage the sustainable development of the Airport as a strategic economic driver in the Shannon Estuary and the wider region. All proposed developments shall be in accordance with the Birds and Habitats Directive, Water Framework Directive and all other relevant EU Directives.

11.3.8
Commercial Fishing /
Aquaculture on the Estuary

The Atlantic waters off Ireland’s south-west coast are renowned for being rich fishing grounds and the Shannon Estuary offers excellent fishing all year round. The relatively sheltered waters of the estuary contain a series of harbours and piers of various scales and specifications. Clare County Council in collaboration with other agencies will facilitate, where appropriate, the development of commercial fishing and associated improvements to piers and infrastructure facilities in the Shannon Estuary, while having regard to the requirement to manage and conserve the natural resources, and in particular to comply with the requirements of the Habitats Directive. The principal commercial fishing activity in the estuary concerns shellfish. In addition, some limited salmon fishing, potting and seasonal trawling also takes place. All fish/shellfish production by aquaculture is subject to licence from the Minister of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. The Shellfish Waters Directive (2006/113/EC) protects existing shellfish waters in Carrigaholt, Rinevella Bay and Poulfnasherry Bay. In undertaking its functions, Clare County Council will have regard to the requirement to protect the shellfish waters.

CDP11.13

Development Plan Objective:
Commercial Fishing/Aquaculture

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To contribute to the diversification of the local economy, growth in employment and social well-being of coastal communities of County Clare through the facilitation and promotion of environmentally-sustainable commercial fishing and aquaculture, within the Areas of Opportunity for commercial fishing/aquaculture identified in the SIFP, which are at Poulfnasherry Bay, Carraigaholt Bay, Rinevella Bay, Killimer and Clonderalaw Bay. All proposed developments shall be in accordance the Birds and Habitats Directive, Water Framework Directive and all other relevant EU Directives.



11.3.9

Environment

The Shannon Estuary is a unique ecosystem in Ireland and of international significance, being one of the few large estuaries on the Atlantic seaboard of Europe. The importance of the estuary for birds, plants and animals is acknowledged through the designation of the Estuary as a candidate Special Area of Conservation (EU Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC) and a proposed Special Protection Area for birds (EU Birds Directive 2009/147/EC).

The Shannon Estuary and its surrounding hinterland is long established as a major communications and transport corridor and as an area for settlement and other human activity. The area is therefore rich in cultural heritage, with many castles and fortifications, crannógs, enclosures, industrial archaeology and religious sites within the vicinity of the shoreline and on the numerous islands throughout the estuary.

This natural and cultural heritage allied to the attractive rural landscape and small towns and villages in coastal settings result in an environment that is a real asset to the communities living there and to the wider region. The quality environment of the Shannon Estuary provides communities with valued opportunities for accommodation, work, recreation and socialising. Clare County Council will facilitate an integrated and sustainable approach to accommodate development that will not seriously compromise the environment which is the core asset of the region thus ensuring compliance with the Habitats Directive.

CDP11.14

Development Plan Objective: Building on the Shannon Estuary as an Environmental Asset

It is an objective of Development Plan:

- A** To facilitate appropriate development which is compatible with the areas of the estuary which are designated under the Habitats and Birds Directives, whilst ensuring that the environment is protected, conserved and maintained and, where possible, restored, ensuring the dual goals of economic development and environmental conservation can be achieved;
- B** To ensure that all proposed developments are in accordance the Birds and Habitats Directive, Water Framework Directive and all other relevant EU Directives;
- C** To ensure that all proposed developments do not compromise the achievement of the objectives of the River Basin Management Plans, prepared in accordance with the Water Framework Directive and the Flood Risk Management Plans prepared in accordance with the Floods Directive;
- D** To work in partnership with all relevant statutory and other bodies to support and facilitate the preparation of an Integrated Environmental Management Plan for the Shannon Estuary.

11.3.10
Water-Borne Transport

The Council recognises the importance of the ferry service between Killimer and Tarbert. The Council will work with others to identify opportunities for the establishment of additional viable water-borne routes within the estuary area, if necessary. This issue is discussed in further detail in Section 8.2.12 Coastal and Estuarine Transportation and Section 12.3.11 Pier and Harbours.

11.3.11
Marina Developments

Marina developments have grown in importance and are necessary to cater for the requirements of pleasure crafts such as yachts and cruisers. They not only provide services for tourists and local residents involved in water-based activities, but are also an important mechanism through which visitors can access local towns and villages and their associated services and amenities.

CDP11.15

Development Plan Objective:
Marina Developments

It is an objective of Development Plan:
To facilitate the sustainable development of marinas and associated amenities at appropriate locations along the Shannon Estuary, and the enhancement of facilities at the existing Kilrush Creek Marina, ensuring that all such developments shall not adversely affect species and habitats designated by the Birds and Habitats Directives and are in compliance with all relevant environmental objectives.

Chapter 11 Shannon Estuary – Cross
References

Volume 6	Clare Renewable Energy Strategy
CDP6.3	Development of the Shannon Gateway
CDP6.9	Shannon Estuary
CDP6.10	Moneypoint Power Station
CDP6.15	Re-Use of Brownfield Sites
CDP6.17	Energy Supply
CDP8.9	Shannon International Airport
CDP8.19	Water-Bourne Transport
CDP8.37	Energy Security
CDP8.38	Electricity Networks
CDP8.40	Renewable Energy
CDP9.2	Promotion of Tourism in County Clare
CDP9.4	Tourism Developments and Tourist Facilities
CDP9.17	Sustainable Tourism
CDP9.25	Tourism in West Clare
CDP9.27	Tourism and the Islands
CDP11.13	Commercial Fishing/Aquaculture
CDP12.8	Aquaculture
CDP12.10	Ports, Jetties, Harbours, Quays and Piers
CDP13.4	Shannon Estuary Working Landscape
CDP13.5	Heritage Landscapes
CDP13.6	Seascape Character Areas
CDP13.7	Scenic Routes
CDP14.1	Biodiversity
CDP14.2	European Sites
CDP14.3	Requirement for Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive
CDP14.4	Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (NPAs)
CDP14.7	Non-Designated Sites
CDP14.9	Environmental Impact Assessment
CDP14.11	Habitat Protection
CDP14.15	Freshwater Pearl Mussels
CDP14.26	Alien Invasive Species
CDP15.13	Underwater Archaeology
CDP18.6	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
CDP19.2	Zoning of Lands
CDP19.3	Compliance with Zoning



Map 11A: Strategic Development Location A Inishmurry / Cahiracon



11B Strategic Development Location B

Moneypoint

Clare County Development Plan 2017 – 2023 Volume 1 Written Statement



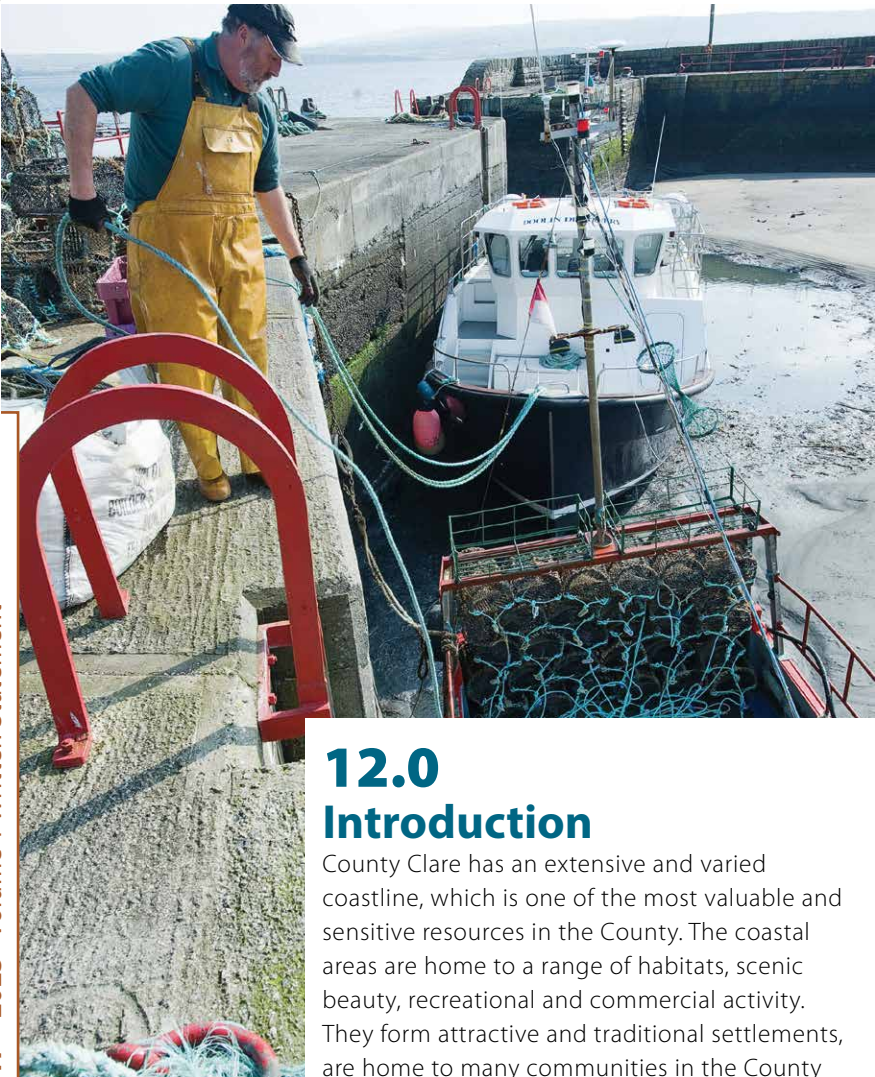
Chapter 12

Marine and Coastal Zone Management

Goal XI:

A County Clare that maximises and manages the economic, social and recreational potential of the Atlantic Coastline and Shannon Estuary while protecting the coastal zone and its resources and adapting to and managing the challenges of climate change including flooding and sea-level rise

12.0 Introduction.....	188
12.1 Strategic Aims.....	188
12.2 Context.....	188
12.3 Management of the Marine and Coastal Area	189
12.3.1 Environmental Designations in Coastal Areas.....	189
12.3.2 Management of the Coastal Zone	189
12.3.3 Maritime Spatial Planning	190
12.3.4 Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM)	190
12.3.5 Coastal and Estuarine Transportation.....	191
12.3.6 Off-Shore Gas and Petroleum Resources	191
12.3.7 Renewable Energy.....	191
12.3.8 The Fishing Industry	192
12.3.9 Aquaculture	192
12.3.10 Shellfish Designations	193
12.3.11 Piers and Harbours	193
12.3.12 Marina Developments.....	194
12.3.13 Coastal Erosion and Flood Defence	194
12.3.14 Coastal Squeeze	196
12.3.15 Beaches and Sand Dunes	196
12.3.16 EU Bathing Water Directive	197
12.3.17 Island Development	198



12.0 Introduction

County Clare has an extensive and varied coastline, which is one of the most valuable and sensitive resources in the County. The coastal areas are home to a range of habitats, scenic beauty, recreational and commercial activity. They form attractive and traditional settlements, are home to many communities in the County and also play a key part in the tourism industry in County Clare. Coastal ecosystems are highly productive containing high biological diversity, rich fishery resources and significant seabed minerals. Coastal areas also support a diverse array of related industries such as fisheries and aquaculture, tourism, shipping, oil and gas industries, which generate enormous economic productivity. There is also significant potential to harness the marine resources along the County Clare coastline for transport, renewable energy and industry. There is significant potential to grow the ‘blue economy’ not only in County Clare but also at a regional and national level. Economic growth in the marine sector has the potential to create employment and increase prosperity in all parts of the County, most particularly in coastal communities.

The resources of coastal areas are complex and dynamic. For sustainable growth and development to take place, an integrated and adaptable management approach is required. This chapter describes how Clare County Council will deal with issues such as development in areas affected by coastal erosion or flooding and protection of habitats and species of importance.

12.1 Strategic Aims

This chapter presents the objectives required to develop and manage marine and coastal resources and the islands so as to achieve maximum benefits for the people of the County whilst having minimum impact on the environment. In accordance with the overall vision of the Plan, it is based on the following strategic aims:

- To adopt an integrated and collaborative approach to the management of coastal areas in County Clare;
- To balance the protection of sensitive environmental areas with the utilisation of the natural resources in the area;
- To encourage improved access to the marine resources for both visitors and residents of the County;
- To promote the further development of the fishing and aquaculture industries;
- To protect the beaches and sand dunes of the County from degradation and damage;
- To proactively manage erosion and flooding issues in the coastal areas of County Clare.

12.2 Context

In the preparation of this section of the Development Plan regard has been had to the following:

The National Development Plan 2007-2013
National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020
Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022
EU Floods Directive
OPW Irish Coastal Protection Strategy Study
Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth: An integrated marine plan for Ireland
Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan
EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive
EU Marine Spatial Planning Directive
Strategic Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP) for the Shannon Estuary

12.3 Management of the Marine and Coastal Area

A diverse and complex arrange of issues affect coastal areas and coastal communities in County Clare and proactive management is required in order to create sustainable communities, support economic growth, protect the natural environment and achieve balance in the interactions between the multiple users of the coastal area.

12.3.1 Environmental Designations in Coastal Areas

The County Clare coastline is densely inhabited by a variety of flora and fauna. Many of these species are of national and/or international importance and therefore many areas have been designated for environmental protection or conservation under the EU Habitats Directive and/or the EU Birds Directive. Full descriptions of these designations, the impact that the designation may have on a proposed development and the policies and objectives that relate to development in these areas can be found in Chapter 14 Biodiversity, Natural Heritage and Green Infrastructure.

CDP12.1

Development Plan Objective: Environmental Designations in Coastal Areas

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To require proposals for development which may impact on a European site to submit a Natura Impact Statement in accordance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive as part of any planning application.

Objective CDP2.1 also refers.

12.3.2 Management of the Coastal Zone

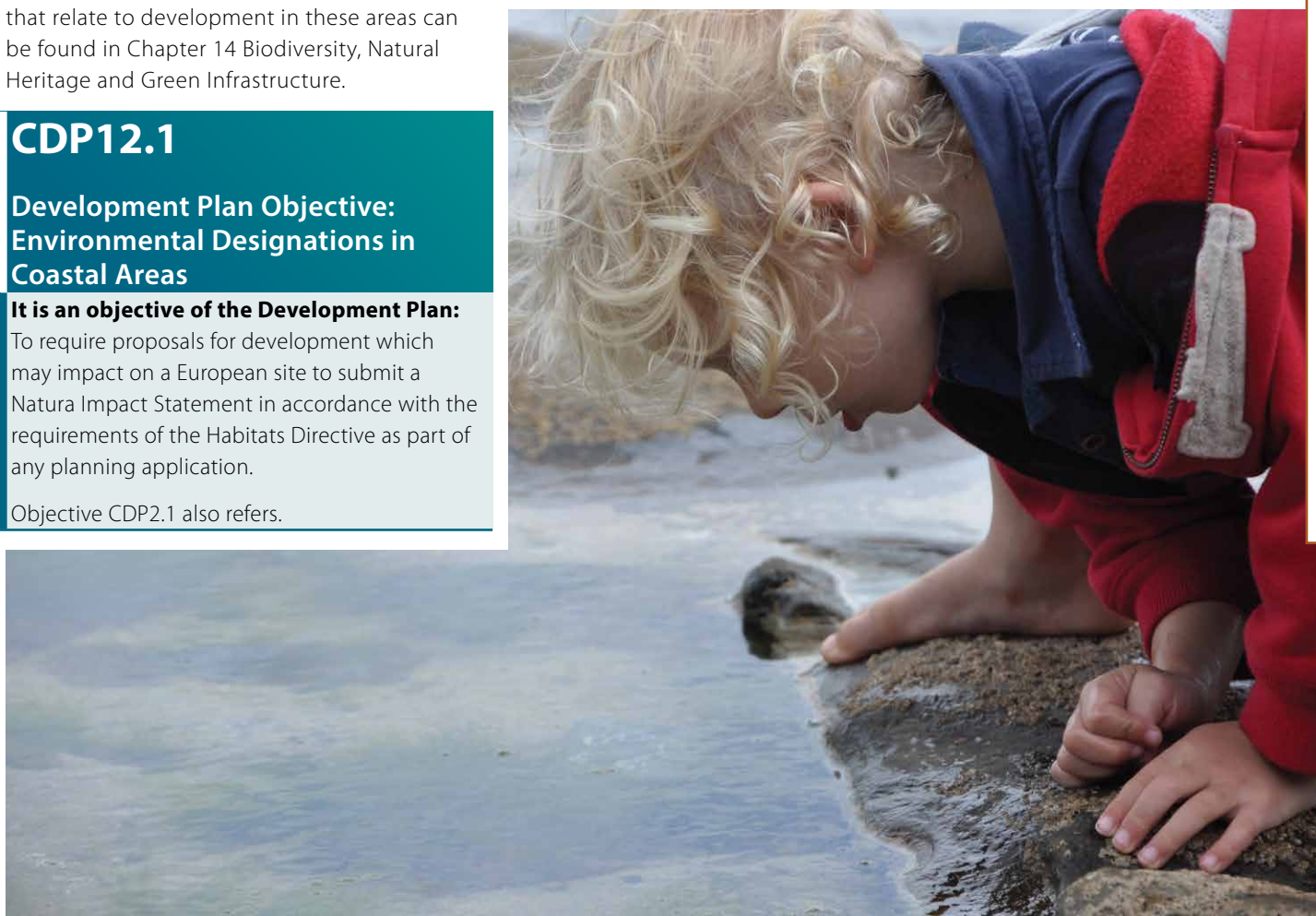
At present management of the coastal zone is the responsibility of various different authorities including the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government, the Department of Communications, Climate Action and the Environment and the local authority. Reforms to the management of the foreshore and offshore areas and the consenting process associated with developments in these areas are currently underway. It is envisaged that these reforms will simplify the management structure and expedite the consenting process. Local authorities, including Clare County Council, will also play a stronger role in the management of their coastal areas.

CDP12.2

Development Plan Objective: Management Structures

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To support and implement the Maritime Area and Foreshore (Amendment) Act, when finalised and enacted.





12.3.3 Maritime Spatial Planning

There is high and rapidly increasing demand for maritime space for different purposes, such as installations for the production of energy from renewable sources, oil and gas exploration and exploitation, maritime shipping and fishing activities, ecosystem and biodiversity conservation, the extraction of raw materials, tourism, aquaculture installations and underwater cultural heritage. To address these multiple pressures on coastal resources an integrated planning and management approach is required. EU Directive 2014/89/EU responded to this challenge and established a framework for maritime spatial planning in EU Member States. The main purpose of maritime spatial planning is to promote sustainable development and to identify maritime space for different sea uses as well as to manage spatial uses and conflicts in marine areas.

Under the Directive each Member State will establish and implement maritime spatial planning and, in doing so, they must also take into account land-sea interactions. Clare County Council will engage fully in the process of preparing and implementing a maritime spatial plan in order to optimise the sustainable development of coastal areas, encourage and support economic growth in coastal areas and capitalise upon new opportunities that arise in the marine/maritime sector in the County.

CDP12.3

Development Plan Objective: Maritime Spatial Planning

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To fully engage in the process of preparing and implementing a Maritime Spatial Plan for the coastal/marine areas of the County.

12.3.4 Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM)

Human impacts, resulting from coastal development, tourism, recreation, coastal industry, fishing, aquaculture etc, coupled with global climate change, place continuous pressure on coastal environments. ICZM aims to ensure the sustainable management of the coastal zone. It brings together all stakeholders in the development, management and use of the coast with a view to reducing or eliminating such pressures on coastal areas, resulting in environmental and economic benefits. Economic benefits accrue from an integrated approach to management, which are greater than those arising from the management of individual sectors.

Chapter 11 sets out the objectives relating to development along the Shannon Estuary, while Chapter 13 identifies areas of Heritage Landscape and Working Landscapes along the coastline, having regard to the Strategic Environmental Assessment, Appropriate Assessment and Strategic Flood Risk Management processes, as set out in Volume 10 of this Plan. Clare County Council, in collaboration with local communities and relevant stakeholders, will encourage the development of this integrated approach to Coastal Zone Management during the lifetime of this Plan. The Council will facilitate an Integrated Coastal Zone Management approach to the coastal zone areas of the County to ensure sustainable development and the protection and enhancement of the man-made and natural resources of these areas.

CDP12.4

Development Plan Objective: Integrated Coastal Zone Management

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To work in collaboration with local communities and relevant stakeholders in the preparation and implementation of an Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan for the coastal and estuarine areas of the County.

12.3.5 Coastal and Estuarine Transportation

There are a number of coastal and estuarine transportation services currently in operation providing important links to both neighbouring counties and to islands off the coast of County Clare. Matters relating to coastal and estuarine transportation are discussed in Section 8.2.13 of this Plan.

12.3.6 Off-Shore Gas and Petroleum Resources

Petroleum exploration and production is currently within the remit of the Department of Communications, Climate Action and the Environment. The role of the Department in this regard is to maximise the benefits to the State from exploration for, and production of, indigenous oil and gas resources, while ensuring that activities are conducted safely and with due regard to their impact on the environment and other land/sea users.

Development proposals, including research developments and facilities for the construction of land-based developments associated with petroleum and gas extraction and/or related infrastructure will be facilitated by Clare County Council, subject to environmental considerations.

CDP12.5

Development Plan Objective: Off-Shore Gas and Petroleum Resources

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To support the development of petroleum and gas resources for the economic benefit of the County, the region and the country as a whole, subject to environmental considerations.

12.3.7 Renewable Energy

There is significant potential for renewable energy development along the Atlantic coast of Ireland. The Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan (2014) and the Clare Renewable Energy Strategy 2017-2023 identify extensive wave and offshore wind energy potential along the Atlantic coast of County Clare and both the OREDP and the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary identify the potential for tidal energy generation in the Shannon Estuary.

Clare County Council, in general, supports the principle of ocean/wave and tidal energy and recognises the significant benefits that the development of such technology off the County Clare coast could bring to the County.

CDP12.6

Development Plan Objective: Offshore Renewable Energy Development

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To support offshore and tidal renewable energy developments subject to environmental considerations and the protection of the amenities of the surrounding areas in accordance with the OREDP SEA Environmental Report and the Natura Impact Report.



12.3.8 The Fishing Industry

The fishing industry is important to County Clare and there is great potential and scope for its promotion and further development along the coastline. There are commercial fishing operations based at numerous piers and harbours along the coast including Carrigaholt, Quilty and New Quay. In County Clare the fishing industry relates not only to commercial fishing but also to tourism and recreational activities such as deep sea fishing off the west coast and in the Shannon Estuary. In relation to recreational fishing activities, there are numerous local companies running charter deep-sea fishing trips from the piers and harbours along the Shannon Estuary and the west coast. Clare County Council recognises the importance of these companies in providing local employment in coastal areas and also in attracting visitors to the area.

CDP12.7 Development Plan Objective: The Fishing Industry

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To conserve marine and freshwater resources that are key to the establishment and sustainable growth of the fishing and aquaculture industry;
- B** To support the development of new and existing port facilities for the fishing industry and associated food and service industries where they comply with the general objectives and development management standards of this Plan;
- C** To facilitate, where possible, car parking areas and access points to coastal areas to allow members of the public and tourists to access these areas for fishing and angling purposes.

12.3.9 Aquaculture

Aquaculture is carried out in the Shannon Estuary and Galway Bay areas and is mainly focused on the commercial farming of pacific oysters. Carrigaholt specialises in the cultivation of shellfish such as abalone, sea urchin and pacific oyster. Pacific oyster is also farmed in Kilrush and Poulfnasherry. While the aquaculture industry is well established in both the Shannon Estuary and Galway Bay significant potential exists for further development.

Aquaculture on the Clare coast is a diverse activity and in recent years there has been an increase in the production of seaweed-based cosmetics and food production based on the harvesting of sea vegetables. Clare County Council will support such developments as a means of diversifying the economy and creating employment in coastal areas.

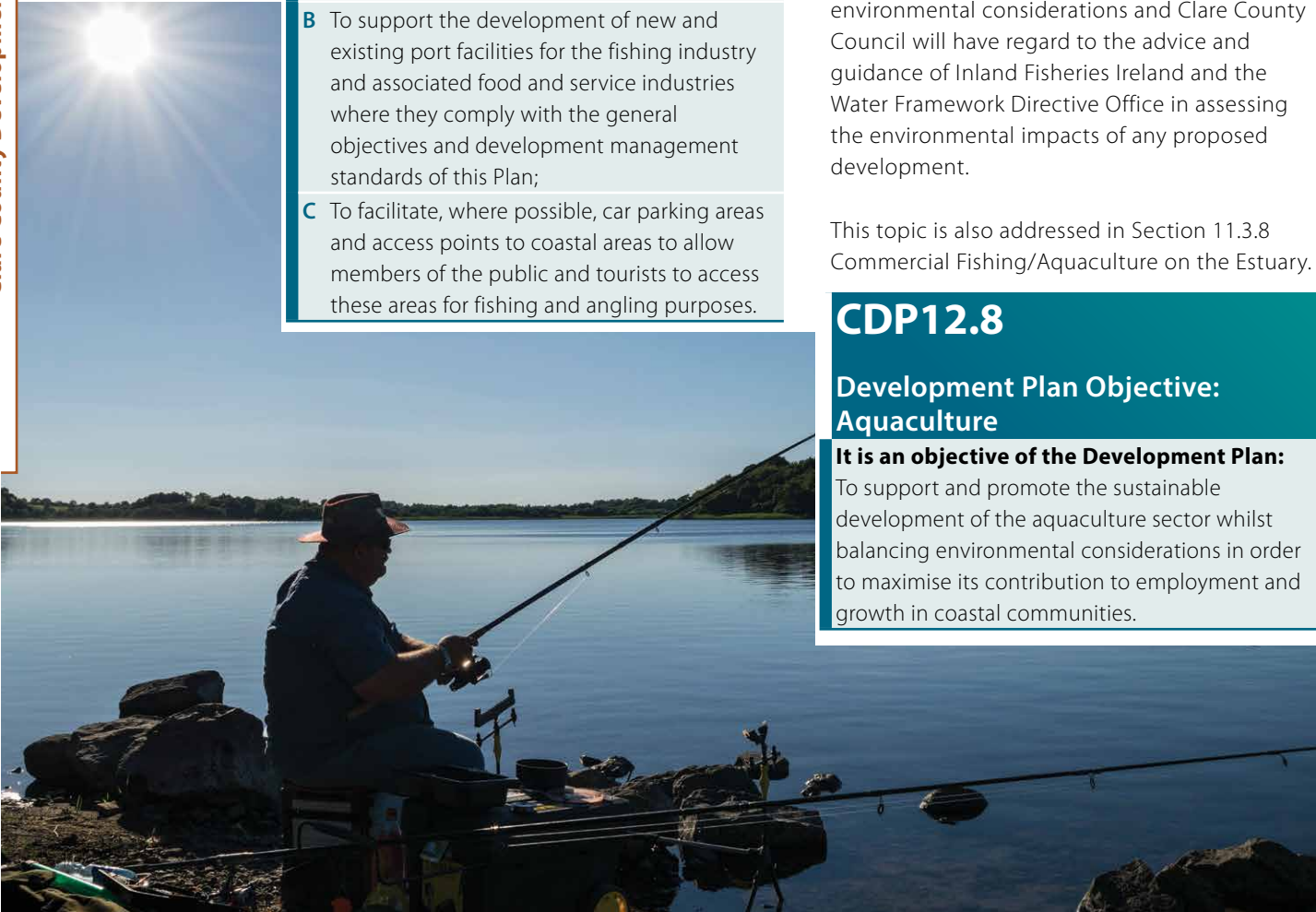
Aquaculture can be highly beneficial to rural and coastal communities, bringing economic growth to areas that can otherwise be isolated from the primary employment centres. County Clare aims to take advantage of the increasing demand for aquaculture products in order to promote the economic wellbeing of the County. It is important to ensure that the benefits of the industry are balanced with environmental considerations and Clare County Council will have regard to the advice and guidance of Inland Fisheries Ireland and the Water Framework Directive Office in assessing the environmental impacts of any proposed development.

This topic is also addressed in Section 11.3.8 Commercial Fishing/Aquaculture on the Estuary.

CDP12.8 Development Plan Objective: Aquaculture

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- To support and promote the sustainable development of the aquaculture sector whilst balancing environmental considerations in order to maximise its contribution to employment and growth in coastal communities.





12.3.10 Shellfish Designations

The European Union introduced the Shellfish Waters Directive (2006/113/EC) to protect or improve shellfish waters in order to support shellfish life and growth. It is designed to protect the aquatic habitat of bivalve and gastropod molluscs, which include oysters, mussels, cockles, scallops and clams. There are five locations along the County Clare coastline that are identified as Designated Shellfish Waters:

- Galway Bay area:
 - › Ballyvaughan/Poulnaclough
 - › Aughinish Bay
- Shannon Estuary area:
 - › West Shannon Poulmasherry Bay
 - › West Shannon Carrigaholt
 - › West Shannon Rinevalla

A Pollution Reduction Programme is in place for each of these areas. Generally, development is required to have regard to the requirements of the Shannon and Western River Basin Management Plans as these plans make full reference to the protected shellfish waters. Developments adjoining, or in the vicinity of, Designated Shellfish Waters must have regard to the designation and ensure that development does not have a negative impact on the quality of the water and European sites in the area.

CDP12.9

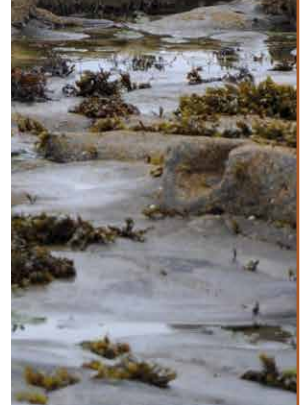
Development Plan Objective: Shellfish Waters Directive

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To work with local communities, relevant stakeholders and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine to ensure the proper and successful implementation of the Shellfish Waters Directive as it applies to the County Clare coastline.

12.3.11 Piers and Harbours

Clare County Council recognises that the maintenance, improvement and in some cases, construction of new piers and harbours is essential in coastal and estuarine areas. These structures are needed to facilitate the activities of the fishing, tourism and commercial industries on which many coastal communities rely. Clare County Council will encourage the development of new harbour facilities along the Shannon Estuary in order to take advantage of the deepwater conditions in the area. The upgrade of other piers on the estuary to facilitate additional marine transport will also be supported.



CDP12.10

Development Plan Objective: Ports, Jetties, Harbours, Quays and Piers

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To maintain and improve the network of piers and harbours for which it has responsibility;
- B** To facilitate the maintenance and improvement of the existing port, jetty, harbour, quay and pier infrastructure within the County and to safeguard lands within their vicinity from inappropriate uses that may compromise their long-term economic and recreational potential and environmental setting;
- C** To ensure safe and convenient access to the water from marinas, piers, harbours and slipways for the purposes of public transport, industry, commerce, sea rescue, tourism, aquaculture or recreation;
- D** To encourage and facilitate the use and development of existing port/pier/harbour facilities for commercial fishing in compliance with the requirements of the EU Habitats Directive.

12.3.12

Marina Developments

Marina developments have grown in importance and are necessary to cater for the requirements of pleasure crafts such as yachts and cruisers. They not only provide services for tourists and local residents involved in water-based activities, but are also an important mechanism through which visitors can access local towns and villages and their associated services and amenities.

CDP12.11

Development Plan Objective: Marina Developments in Coastal Areas

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To facilitate the sustainable development of marinas and associated amenities at appropriate locations along the Atlantic coastlines, ensuring that such developments shall not adversely affect species and habitats designated by the Birds and Habitats Directives and are in compliance with all relevant legislation as outlined in Objective CDP2.1.

12.3.13

Coastal Erosion and Flood Defence

The rising sea levels and increased storm frequency and wave energy associated with climate change can increase the rate of erosion, wave damage, coastal flooding etc. County Clare is particularly susceptible to the impacts of these coastal changes and predicted rises in sea levels will compound these issues in the future. It is increasingly important therefore to actively manage the coastal environment and the risks associated with these anticipated changes.

Clare County Council has prepared a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, contained in Volume 10 of this Plan, which identifies areas at risk from flooding and also indicates the level of risk associated with each area.

12.3.13.1 Shannon CFRAMS

Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Studies (CFRAMS) and their product – Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs) – are at the core of the national policy for flood risk management and the strategy for its implementation. Each CFRAM Study includes the collection of survey data, and the assembly and analysis of meteorological, hydrological and tidal data, which will be used to develop a suite of hydraulic computer models. Flood maps are one of the main outputs of the study and are the way in which the model results are communicated to each of the end users. The studies will then assess a range of potential options to manage the flood risk, and determine, if there are viable options, which option is preferred for each area and will be recommended for implementation within the Flood Risk Management Plans.

In the coastal areas of County Clare, the Shannon, Kilrush and Kilkee areas have been identified as Areas for Further Assessment and these areas will now be the subject of CFRAM studies.

12.3.13.2 Coastal Protection in County Clare

The Office of Public Works (OPW), as part of their Coastal Protection Strategy Study, has carried out an assessment of erosion hazard and potential risk in coastal areas around Ireland. A series of erosion maps were produced which facilitate a strategic assessment of erosion hazard and provide valuable information for the economic value of assets at potential risk from erosion. The erosion mapping also facilitates consideration by planners of the hazard and potential risks to future proposed development near the coastline (both strategic and non-strategic) at the planning stage. The erosion maps were produced primarily as a tool to identify any assets likely to be affected by coastal erosion by 2030 and 2050. It should be noted that the assessment did not include a consideration of future climate change scenarios and the likely impact on erosion hazard and potential risk. The outcome of the assessment was taken into consideration in the preparation of this Plan.



As part of the Coastal Protection Strategy Study a strategic assessment of coastal flooding extents was also undertaken. This strategic assessment predicted mid-range and high-end future scenarios for flooding in coastal and estuarine areas up to 2030 and 2050. In addition to this study, and as a consequence of increased storm frequency and severity on the County Clare coast, Clare County Council has identified a number of areas of coastline that are at high risk of coastal flooding, namely:

- Cloughaninchy
- Kilbaha
- Liscannor Bay, incorporating:
 - › Lahinch
 - › Liscannor
 - › Clahane
- Mal Bay, incorporating:
 - › Quilty village to Seafield
 - › Spanish Point
 - › White Strand, Miltown Malbay
- Doolin
- Flaggy Shore/Aughinish Island
- Ross Bay

For each of these areas the Council intends to prepare a coastal erosion and flood risk management study, comprising detailed localised flood risk predictions and an assessment of options for the management of coastal erosion and flood risk. The Council will proactively seek funding from the Office of Public Works (OPW) for the progression of the recommendations set out in completed studies. The study of Cloughaninchy is completed and was submitted to the Office of Public Works in November 2015.

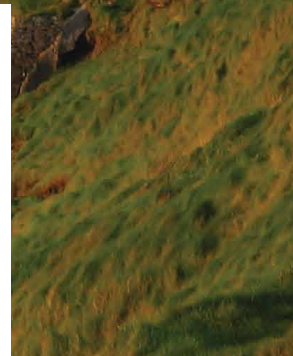
Clare County Council will also continue to repair and/or replace coastal protection infrastructure which was damaged by 2014 storms. Two major projects have been complete in Kilkee and Doonbeg and another major project is planned for Lahinch.

CDP12.12

Development Plan Objective: Coastal Erosion and Flooding

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

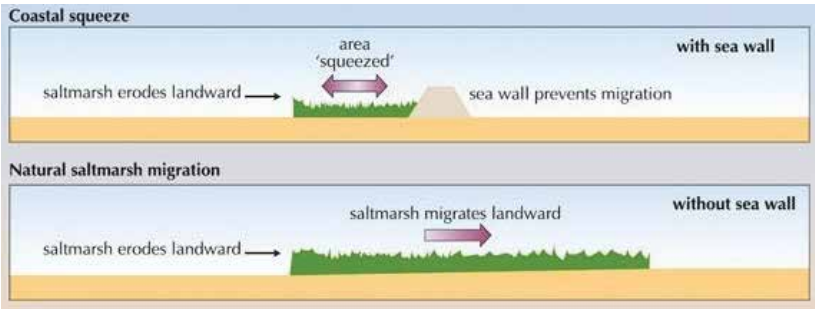
- A** To engage with the OPW to develop appropriate strategies for the management of identified coastal flood and erosion hazards and associated risks;
- B** To have regard to the Clare County Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, CFRAM Flood Risk Management Plans (when available), the OPW Coast Protection Strategy Study, and any updated version/more detailed local studies, in the assessment of development applications in coastal areas;
- C** To permit developments only where the Council is satisfied that they will not be at risk from coastal erosion or inundation in the future;
- D** To permit developments only where the Council is satisfied that it will not result in an increase in coastal erosion or increase the risk of inundation, either at the subject site or at another location in the vicinity;
- E** To prohibit developments outside the boundaries of existing settlements where such development could not be adequately defended over the lifetime of the development without the need to construct additional or new coastal defences;
- F** To seek funding for coastal defence works based on the outcome of detailed Coastal Erosion and Flood Risk Management Studies undertaken in areas identified as being at risk from coastal flooding;
- G** To ensure full compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive with regard to developments in the coastal area;
- H** To have regard to any future adopted Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan for the coastal and estuarine areas of the County, undertaken in accordance with the Habitats and SEA Directive.



12.3.14 Coastal Squeeze

Coastal squeeze is defined as the squeeze of coastal ecosystem such as beaches, salt marshes, mud and sand flats, between rising sea levels and naturally or artificially fixed shorelines, including hard engineering defences. A significant threat to coastal organisms is loss of habitat. This often occurs when structures are built to protect lands and/or infrastructure from erosion or flooding. These structures effectively ‘fix’ the coastline. Many habitats and ecosystems would normally move landward in response to coastal change such as sea level rise and erosion but are prevented from doing so by the built structure. The habitat/ecosystem then effectively becomes ‘squeezed’ between the rising sea levels and the physical barrier. This is exacerbated by global warming, which not only leads to higher sea levels, but also an increase of the storm frequency. See Figure 12.1 below.

**Figure 12.1
Coastal Squeeze**



12.3.15 Beaches and Sand Dunes

The beaches and sand dunes of County Clare are an invaluable natural resource. The County’s beaches not only attract visitors to the area but also provide a base for a wide range of recreational activities that are enjoyed by both visitors from around the world and local residents alike. Beaches also provide an important habitat for a wide range of flora and fauna.

Sand dunes, whilst also forming a rich and varied habitat, in particular form an effective natural coastal defence. Interference with the dunes can have a serious impact on the coastal area. Sand dunes can be vulnerable to damage e.g. from weather events or from human activities such as quad biking or the creation of multiple tracks/walking routes through the dunes. Such events/activities can cause instability and result in increased erosion of a dune system. In some cases dune stabilisation or regeneration may be required e.g. through dune profiling, fencing, planting or, in some areas, the provision of boardwalks to allow beach access without further damage to dune systems. The Council will review the status of important dune systems in the County during the lifetime of this Plan as part of a wider programme of coastal management. It is important, not only to the economy of coastal areas, but also in the interest of protecting natural amenities, that the beaches and sand dunes of the County are protected and proactively managed.

CDP 12.13

Development Plan Objective: Coastal Squeeze

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To ensure that coastal squeeze is taken into consideration in formulating and assessing coastal development proposals.





CDP12.14

Development Plan Objective: Protection of Beaches and Sand Dunes

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To prohibit maritime development on sites either on/or adjacent to any popular beach area, where such developments would significantly interfere with the recreational use of the area or would cause damage or degradation of the beaches or sand dune system;
- B** To engage with all relevant stakeholders to proactively monitor and manage the dune systems in the County during the lifetime of this Plan, in full compliance with the EU Habitats Directive;
- C** To protect the structure and function of sand dunes of the County, (which include Annex I habitats and Annex II species), and prohibit any development that would damage the integrity (ecological and visual) of these areas or prevent full compliance with the requirements of the Habitats and Birds Directives.

12.3.16

EU Bathing Water Directive

The EU Bathing Water Directive aims to improve water quality, enables the improvement of water monitoring and management and ensures that information is made available to the public.

Beaches that comply with 'excellent' standard in accordance with the EU Bathing Water Directive can be awarded the Blue Flag. Beaches and marinas that achieve this accolade must comply with a specific set of criteria relating to water quality, information provision, environmental education, safety and beach management.

The Green Coast Award is for beaches which have excellent water quality, but which are also prized for their natural, unspoilt environment and therefore are often located in more rural/remote areas.

CDP12.15

Development Plan Objective: EU Bathing Water Directive

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To support coastal initiatives such as the Green Coast Award and Blue Flag scheme and seek to ensure that coastal areas and bathing waters are maintained to the highest levels;
- B** To work to retain Blue Flag and Green Coast status on beaches currently awarded this status whilst seeking to increase the present number of beaches with this award.



12.3.17
Island Development

There are approximately 98 islands located in the Shannon and Fergus Estuaries and along the Atlantic coast of County Clare. None of the islands are permanently inhabited. However some of the larger islands, particularly in the Shannon and Fergus Estuaries, are used for agricultural purposes. Many of the islands, both along the coast and inland, are of significant historical importance. The islands are also highly valuable from an environmental perspective, offering habitats to many species of flora and fauna. For these reasons, the islands are particularly susceptible to damage from inappropriate development.

CDP12.16
Development Plan Objective:
Island Development

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A To support development proposals that will contribute to the long-term social, heritage, ecological and cultural development of the islands;
- B To have regard to any environmental and/or heritage-related designation in the assessment of all applications for development on the islands;
- C To preserve appropriate and sustainable access to all islands, including uninhabited islands;
- D To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation as outlined in Objective CDP2.1.

Chapter 12 Marine and Coastal Zone
Management – Cross References

CDP8.19	Water-Bourne Transport
CDP9.26	Tourism and the Islands
CDP11.8	Harnessing the Energy Resources of the Shannon Estuary
CDP11.9	Promoting Tourism, Recreation and Leisure around the Shannon Estuary
CDP11.13	Commercial Fishing/Aquaculture
CDP11.15	Marina Developments
CDP13.4	Shannon Estuary Working Landscape
CDP13.5	Heritage Landscapes
CDP13.6	Coastal Character Areas
CDP13.7	Scenic Routes
CDP14.1	Biodiversity
CDP14.2	European Sites
CDP14.3	Requirement for Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive
CDP14.4	Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (NPAs)
CDP14.7	Non-Designated Sites
CDP14.9	Environmental Impact Assessment
CDP14.11	Habitat Protection
CDP14.15	Freshwater Pearl Mussels
CDP14.19	Wetlands
CDP15.8	Sites, Features and Objects of Archaeological Interest
CDP15.13	Underwater Archaeology

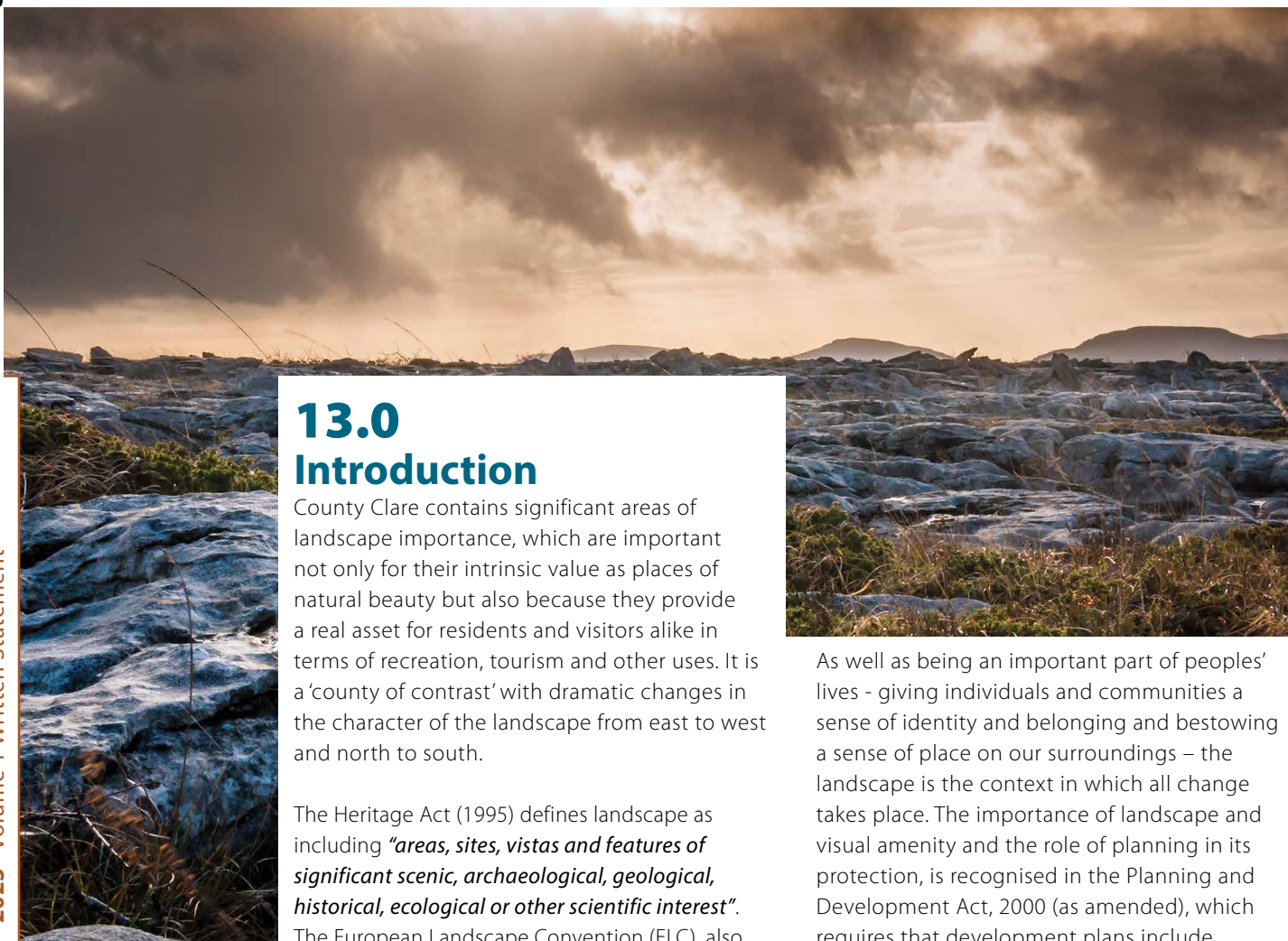
Chapter 13

Landscape

Goal XII:

A County Clare of 'living landscapes' where people live, work, recreate and visit while respecting, managing and taking pride in the unique landscape of the County

13.0 Introduction.....	200
13.1 Strategic Aims.....	200
13.2 Evolution of Landscape Designations and Protections in County Clare.....	201
13.2.1 Landscape Character Assessment of County Clare	201
13.3 Clare's Living Landscapes	204
13.3.1 Background.....	204
13.3.2 Living Landscape Types	205
13.4 Seascape Character Areas	210
13.5 Views and Prospects	211
13.6 Applications for Single Houses in the Countryside	212



13.0 Introduction

County Clare contains significant areas of landscape importance, which are important not only for their intrinsic value as places of natural beauty but also because they provide a real asset for residents and visitors alike in terms of recreation, tourism and other uses. It is a 'county of contrast' with dramatic changes in the character of the landscape from east to west and north to south.

The Heritage Act (1995) defines landscape as including *“areas, sites, vistas and features of significant scenic, archaeological, geological, historical, ecological or other scientific interest”*. The European Landscape Convention (ELC), also known as the Florence Convention, was signed and ratified by Ireland in March 2002. The ELC provides the following definition of 'landscape': 'landscape' means *“an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors”*. The ELC came into force in Ireland in March 2004 and this Development Plan supports the key tenets of the European Landscape Convention 2000.

***“The landscape** has an important public interest role in the cultural, ecological, environmental and social fields, and constitutes a resource favourable to economic activity and whose protection, management and planning can contribute to job creation; contributes to the formation of local cultures and is a basic component of the European natural and cultural heritage, contributing to human well-being and consolidation of the European identity; is an important part of the quality of life for people everywhere: in urban areas and in the countryside, in degraded areas as well as in areas of high quality, in areas recognised as being of outstanding beauty as well as everyday areas; is a key element of individual and social well-being and its protection, management and planning entail rights and responsibilities for everyone”* (European Landscape Convention, 2000).



As well as being an important part of peoples' lives - giving individuals and communities a sense of identity and belonging and bestowing a sense of place on our surroundings – the landscape is the context in which all change takes place. The importance of landscape and visual amenity and the role of planning in its protection, is recognised in the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), which requires that development plans include objectives for the preservation of the landscape, views and prospects, and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty.

13.1 Strategic Aims

This chapter sets out the objectives required to sustainably manage the diverse landscapes of County Clare. In accordance with the overall vision of the Plan, it is based on the following strategic aims:

- To ensure the implementation of the National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015-2025 in County Clare;
- To implement the 'Clare's Living Landscapes' approach to landscape management and enhancement throughout the County;
- To encourage the utilisation of the Clare County Landscape Character Assessment in both the preparation and assessment of planning applications;
- To utilise the 'Clare Living Landscapes' approach to ensure that development in the County takes place in the location / landscape deemed most appropriate;
- To sustain the natural and cultural heritage of the County.

13.2 Evolution of Landscape Designations and Protections in County Clare

There have been a number of previous studies which have characterised the diverse landscapes of County Clare. These range from the CAAS Report *Criteria for the Evaluation of Landscape Quality of 1997* which identified the visually sensitive features of the landscapes of the County and informed the Clare County Development Plan 1999, as well as the Heritage Council Landscape Character Study 2003 which provided a very detailed characterisation of the different parts of the County, in line with the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government's *Landscape and Landscape Assessment – Guidelines for Planning Authorities of 2000*. Both of these were combined to provide a very detailed set of landscape designations that appeared in the Clare County Development Plan 2005. The National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015-2025 progresses this approach and sets out specific measures to promote the protection, management and planning of the landscape.

This is the seventh Clare County Development Plan and the consistency shown in policy approaches since 1967 demonstrates the importance that has always been attributed to areas such as the Burren, the Atlantic Coast, Lough Derg, the Shannon Estuary and upland areas such as the Sliabh Aughty Mountains and to views and prospects of importance in the County. It reveals an underlying acceptance of the values of these areas by policy makers for the County for over 40 years.

This Plan seeks, through the *Clare's Living Landscapes* approach, to continue this work to meet the statutory objectives of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) while at the same time reassuring communities that they are integral to the future of these areas. This approach builds on the *Landscape Character Assessment of County Clare* outlined in 13.2.1 below.

13.2.1 Landscape Character Assessment of County Clare

13.2.1.1 Introduction

The National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015-2025 promotes the sustainable protection, management and planning of the landscape. By increasing understanding of landscape and its dynamic interactive characteristics, the Strategy aims to deal with competing objectives while improving the decision-making process.

The implementation of the National Landscape Strategy will see Landscape Character Assessments being prepared at local and intra-local authority level, using the Landscape Character Assessment Guidelines. These regional and local landscape character assessments will inform and guide landscape policy, action plans and local authority development plans.

In County Clare, Environmental Resources Management (ERM), in association with ERA-Maptec Ltd, was commissioned by the Heritage Council in August 2002 to undertake a *Landscape Character Assessment of County Clare*.

Landscape character is defined as 'a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse'. Put simply, landscape character is that which makes an area unique.

The *Landscape Character Assessment of County Clare* provides an analysis of the character, value, and sensitivity of landscapes identified within County Clare. By understanding how different landscapes have developed and evolved from both a natural and social perspective, informed decisions relating to the management and planning of the landscape can be made. Moreover, due to the fact that landscape character assessments seek the views of communities living within particular areas, the process encourages debate and assists in gaining consensus on what is distinctive about each landscape. In turn, this facilitates a stronger understanding and engenders a greater appreciation of the considerable landscape resource of communities throughout the County.

The *Landscape Character Assessment of County Clare* represents an excellent resource for the Council and the communities that live and work within these areas.

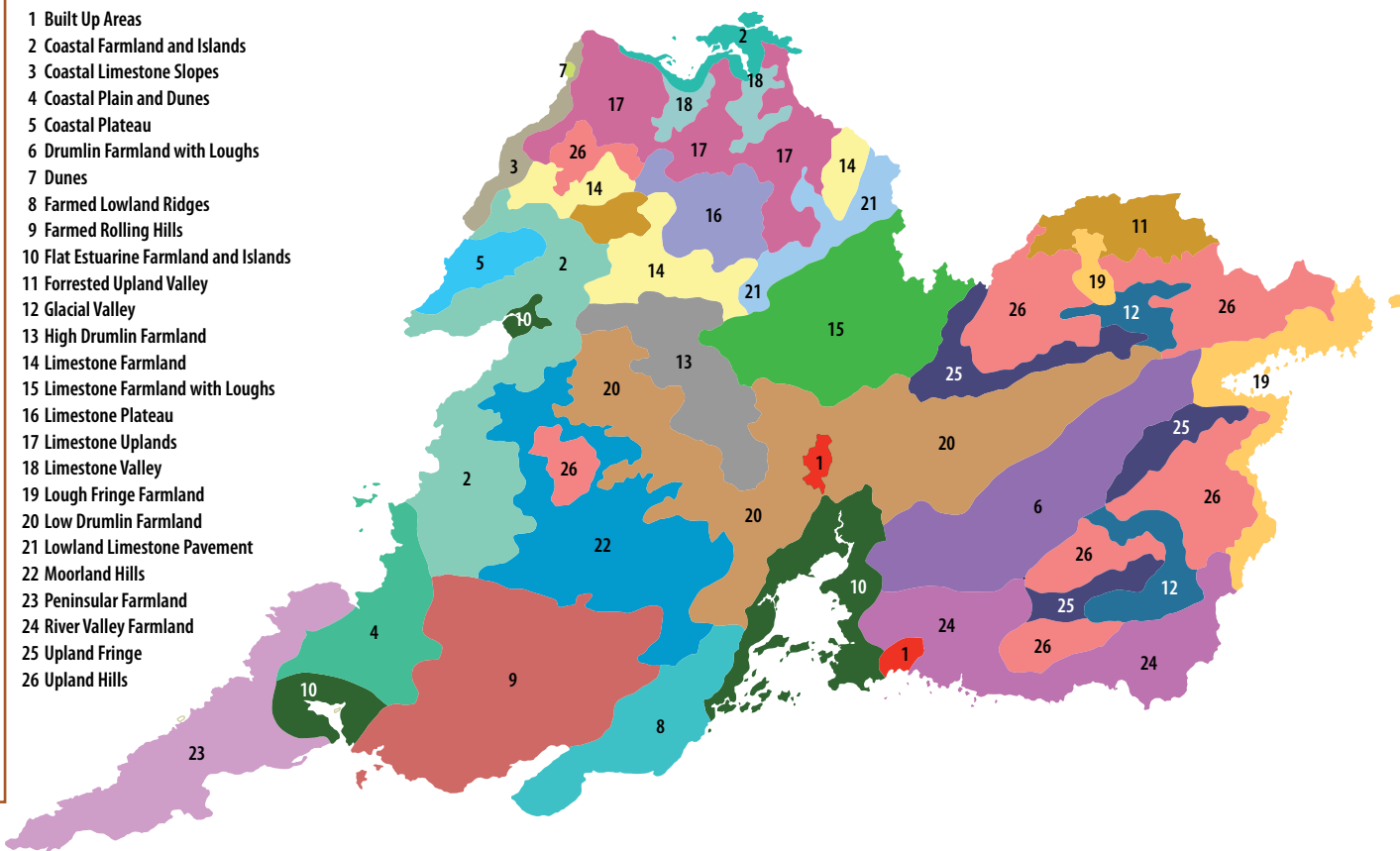
The assessment is an extremely useful tool and should be used by agents/applicants when preparing planning applications. It gives guidance and advice on the key characteristics of the area, the land cover, ecology and also the current condition of the landscape and how sensitive it is to change. Potential applicants should not be daunted by the size of the document as only a small section is devoted to each Landscape Character Area. For applications for houses in the countryside it should be read in conjunction with the *County Clare Rural House Design Guide*.

13.2.1.2 Landscape Character Types

Landscape character types are distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogenous in character. They are generic in nature in that they may occur in different localities throughout the County. Nonetheless, where they do occur, they commonly share similar combinations of geology, topography, land cover and historical land use. For example, limestone river valleys or blanket bog uplands are distinct landscape character types and are recognisable as such whether they occur in County Clare or other counties.

The Landscape Character Assessment of County Clare firstly identifies 26 Landscape Character Types which are grouped into Upland Types, Lowland Types and Coastal Types. These are shown mapped below.

Figure 13.1
Map of Landscape Character Types



Source: Environmental Resources Management (2003)

The assessment also identifies Habitat Types and Historic Landscape Types.

A Habitat Type is described as the area in which an organism or group of organisms lives, and is defined by the living (biotic) and non-living (abiotic) components of the environment. The latter includes physical, chemical and geographical factors, in addition to human impact or management.

An archaeological or historical landscape has been defined as a discrete landscape based on the 'scale and integrity of the archaeological features [that] reflect significantly on the human history and land use of that area'. These landscapes types were also identified in the Landscape Character Assessment.

One of the aims of the Landscape Character Assessment was to integrate these components so that Landscape Character Areas for the County could be defined.

13.2.1.3 Landscape Character Areas

A Landscape Character Area (LCA) is defined as: *"Units of the landscape that are geographically specific and have their own character and sense of place. Each LCA has its own distinctive character, based upon patterns of geology, landform, landuse, cultural, historical and ecological features."*

The *Landscape Character Assessment of County Clare* identifies 21 Landscape Character Areas and these are illustrated in the map below.

CDP13.1

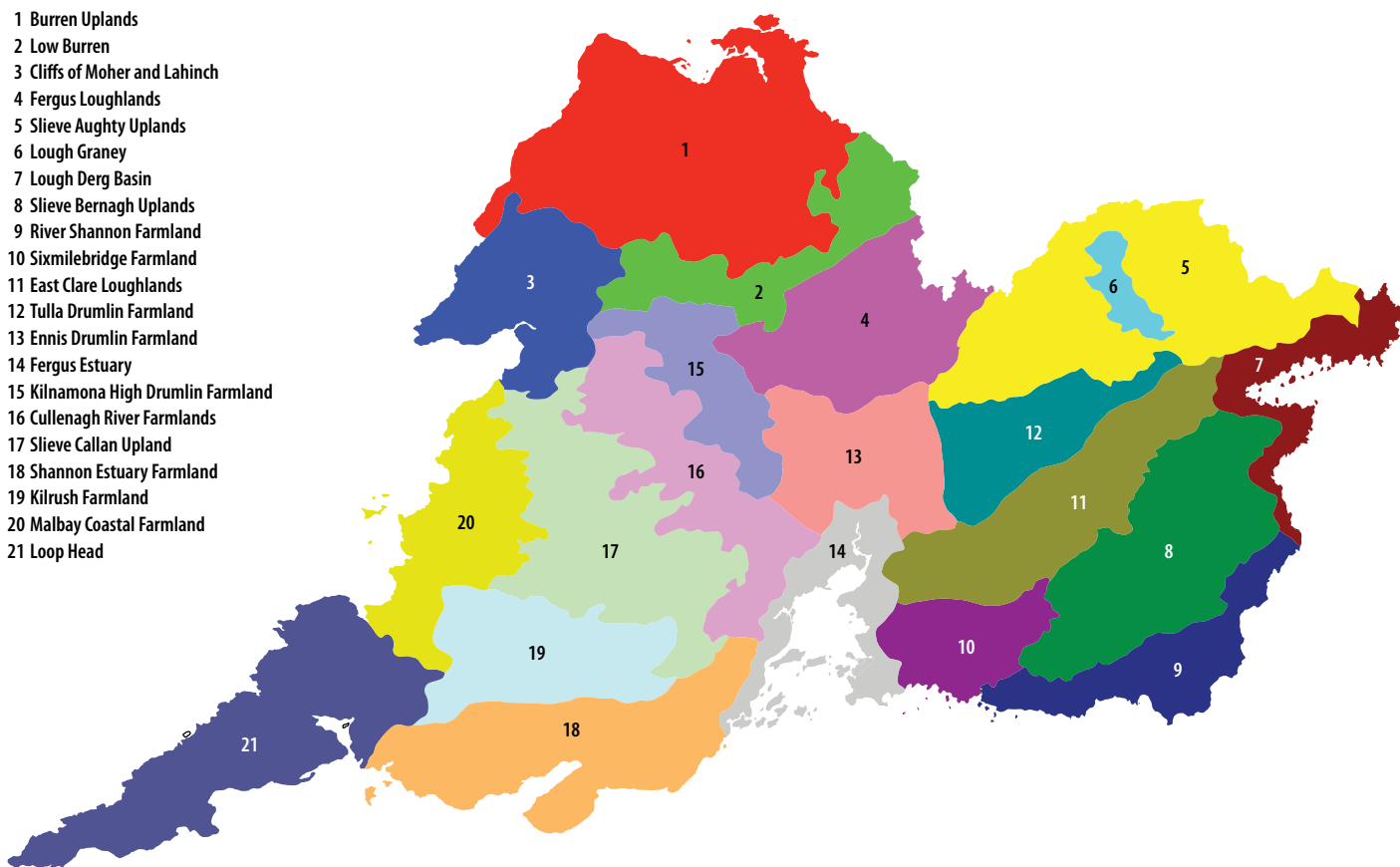
Development Plan Objective: Landscape Character Assessment

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To encourage the utilisation of the *Landscape Character Assessment of County Clare* and other relevant landscape policy and guidelines and to have regard to them in the management, enhancement and promotion of the landscapes of County Clare.

Figure 13.2
Map of Landscape Character Areas

- 1 Burren Uplands
- 2 Low Burren
- 3 Cliffs of Moher and Lahinch
- 4 Fergus Loughlands
- 5 Slieve Aughty Uplands
- 6 Lough Graney
- 7 Lough Derg Basin
- 8 Slieve Bernagh Uplands
- 9 River Shannon Farmland
- 10 Sixmilebridge Farmland
- 11 East Clare Loughlands
- 12 Tulla Drumlin Farmland
- 13 Ennis Drumlin Farmland
- 14 Fergus Estuary
- 15 Kilnamona High Drumlin Farmland
- 16 Cullenagh River Farmlands
- 17 Slieve Callan Upland
- 18 Shannon Estuary Farmland
- 19 Kilrush Farmland
- 20 Malbay Coastal Farmland
- 21 Loop Head



Source: Environmental Resources Management (2003)

13.3 Clare's Living Landscapes

13.3.1 Background

It is common for the word 'Landscape' to be regarded as a restrictive term that only relates to appearance with little regard to the needs of the communities and landowners that shape it. More positive and proactive policies have been sought that will provide support for the vitality of rural communities and help to make things happen – rather than be perceived as an obstacle to development.

In response, the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 sets out a series of 'Living Landscapes' – where different parts of the County are regarded as having different potential in terms of how communities can pursue their ambitions and aspirations. This approach is based on areas maximising their strengths. For example, some areas have strong potential for tourism based on their heritage and scenery, while others have different potential due to proximity to major roads or power lines. As a result, different approaches emerge that are the most suitable for each area.

This vision regards the landscape as something living – that changes and evolves in line with the changing needs of the community. It envisions the landscape as being a place where people have always lived and worked and where they will continue to do so. It recognises that in some places this pattern of work is changing as the viability of older systems of farming change and new ways of making a living emerge. It recognises that areas that once supplied food are now needed to supply clean water, and as areas for recreation, tourism and education for increasingly urbanised communities in County Clare and elsewhere, while other areas are going to be used to provide employment and economic activity from agribusiness, forestry, wind energy and infrastructure.

Legislation requires that the County Development Plan takes account of increasingly large and complex zones of environmental sensitivity. These include ecology, biodiversity, scenery, heritage and water sensitivity – some of these are areas that are very sensitive, even unique.

Others are places where the people of County Clare co-exist daily with special environments – as they have done for over six thousand years.

These many designations create uncertainty, delays and sometimes conflict – especially for those who own, live in and live off the countryside. In order to simplify the planning process it has been decided to identify generalised areas – *Landscapes* - within the County. These are areas that share similar characteristics – so that clear, easily understood policies can be developed that will help to sustain the identity of each of these different areas.

The objective is, quite simply, to help people to continue to use the countryside of County Clare and, in so doing, to continue the ancient patterns of occupation, use and development that have created today's landscapes – both special and ordinary.

Some parts of these areas are dynamic and rapidly changing – due to vigorous demographic and economic conditions. Development in these areas will be facilitated so these areas will continue to change rapidly, subject to conformance with objectives for environmental protection, orderly development and the common good.

Other areas are more sensitive and development in these areas will continue to need to be carefully planned and executed – so that the County's rich natural and cultural heritage can continue to sustain the quality of life and tourism which are vital components of the local economy. Higher development standards are also needed in such areas in order to protect important resources such as drinking water, bathing water and to ensure protection from flooding and erosion.

If it can be accepted that different parts of County Clare's landscapes can accommodate new development in different ways – some quickly and easily, others more slowly and carefully – then the concept of 'Living Landscapes' will have started to work – as the community begin to learn, accept and anticipate what is likely to be accepted and what is not. This would be a successful outcome of this policy approach.

13.3.2 Living Landscape Types

County Clare comprises a number of areas that have similar characteristics for which similar planning policies are applicable. A description of each area is provided below along with the criteria used to define the boundaries of each area. The descriptions outline the vision and future role of the particular landscape together with policies/objectives that will guide development of that landscape.

The policies/objectives are rooted in the fact that landscapes are not constant but are alive and continually changing. It is envisaged that landscapes will be maintained and kept alive by policies that aim to ensure that areas are developed in an appropriate and sustainable manner. Policies must strike a balance between the requirement to respond to present needs while at the same time maintaining connectivity with the past and ensuring the needs of future generations are not compromised.

Undoubtedly, policies that reflect the common good will sometimes result in the refusal of a planning permission or the imposition of certain restrictions on a permission. The objective, however, is to ensure that such planning decisions will have wider support from the whole community because they will be seen to be sensible, fair, consistent and based on reasons that are clear and agreed by all to be for the good of all. These planning policies will only be judged to be successful if they:

- Increase consensus that planning decisions are being made for the good of all but especially for the good of the community who sustain the landscape;
- Increase confidence about the type, location and design of development that will be acceptable in each area;
- Increase the consistency of decisions between one application and the next in the same area or in similar circumstances;
- Reduce the level of planning applications being made that do not conform with policies.

This Development Plan therefore proposes that future planning policies for rural areas in County Clare be integrated by considering the County to comprise three types of landscapes, as follows:

- Settled landscapes** – areas where people live and work;
- Working Landscapes** – intensively settled and developed areas within Settled Landscapes or areas with a unique natural resource;
- Heritage Landscapes** – areas where natural and cultural heritage are given priority and where development is not precluded but happens more slowly and carefully.

Each area is described below and outlined in Map 13A.

13.3.2.1 Settled Landscapes

Settled Landscapes comprise the network of farmland, villages and towns that make up the majority of the County. These landscapes are where the majority of the population live and work. They provide opportunities for enterprise, leisure and personal fulfilment. They contain the resources of land, soil, minerals and water that are used to sustain the economy. They accommodate the roads, power-lines, quarries and piped services that service settlements and industry. Settled Landscapes also contain areas of concentrated development – called ‘Working Landscapes’ which are considered in more detail below. Uses envisaged within Settled Landscapes include agriculture, energy, forestry, extraction, transportation, industry and commerce, tourism, recreation and leisure, education, healthcare and social infrastructure.



Criteria for definition of a Settled Landscape boundary

- All lands not classified as Heritage or Working Landscapes

CDP13.2

**Development Plan Objective:
Settled Landscapes**

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To permit development in areas designated as ‘settled landscapes’ that sustain and enhance quality of life and residential amenity and promote economic activity subject to:

- Conformity with all other relevant provisions of the Plan and the availability and protection of resources;
- Selection of appropriate sites in the first instance within this landscape, together with consideration of the details of siting and design which are directed towards minimising visual impacts;
- Regard being given to avoiding intrusions on scenic routes and on ridges or shorelines.

Developments in these areas will be required to demonstrate:

- That the site has been selected to avoid visually prominent locations;
- That the site layouts avail of existing topography and vegetation to reduce visibility from scenic routes, walking trails, water bodies, public amenities and roads;
- That design for buildings and structures reduce visual impact through careful choice of forms, finishes and colours, and that any site works seek to reduce visual impact.

Many areas within the Settled Landscapes of County Clare contain ground and surface waters that are sensitive to the risk of pollution and coincide with areas identified for nature conservation. Applicants for planning permission are advised that the highest standards will be applied at all stages of the evaluation of site suitability, site design and the design and management of all installations for the interception, storage and treatment of all effluents.

13.3.2.2 Working Landscapes

Working Landscapes are those areas within Settled Landscapes that contain pockets of concentrated development or a unique natural resource. The Plan identifies two such landscapes in the County

- i **The Western Corridor** – Ennis to Limerick Working Landscape
- ii **The Shannon Estuary Working Landscape**

Western Corridor Working Landscape

This part of the County contains the highest concentrations of population and employment and the strongest transport links and connectivity. It includes the Linked Gateway of Shannon and the County Town/Hub Town of Ennis. It is the economic driver of County Clare and an important area of the Mid-West Region.

Criteria for definition of Western Corridor Working Landscape

- All lands within 10km on either side of the N18/M18 – except as excluded by Heritage Landscapes.

CDP13.3

**Development Plan Objective:
Western Corridor Working Landscape**

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A To permit development in these areas that will sustain economic activity, and enhance social well-being and quality of life - subject to conformity with all other relevant provisions of the Plan and the availability and protection of resources;
- B That selection of appropriate sites in the first instance within this landscape, together with consideration of the details of siting and design, are directed towards minimising visual impact;
- C That particular regard should be given to avoiding intrusions on scenic routes and on ridges or shorelines. Developments in these areas will be required to demonstrate:
 - i That the site has been selected to avoid visually prominent locations;
 - ii That site layouts avail of existing topography and vegetation to reduce visibility from scenic routes, walking trails, public amenities and roads;
 - iii That design for buildings and structures reduce visual impact through careful choice of form, finishes and colours and that any site works seek to reduce visual impact of the development.

Many areas within the *Western Corridor Working Landscape* contain ground and surface waters that are sensitive to the risk of pollution and coincide with areas identified for nature conservation. Applicants for planning permission are advised that the highest standards will be applied at all stages of the evaluation of site suitability, site design and the design and management of all installations for the interception, storage and treatment of all effluents.

The Shannon Estuary Working Landscape

The Lower Shannon Estuary contains a nationally significant concentration of economic and natural resources. Extensive areas of sheltered deep water combined with one of the largest concentrations of high voltage transmission and generation capacity in the country, as well as adjacency to a large-scale international airport, provide opportunities for the development of large-scale shipping, transshipment, logistics, manufacturing and associated economic and service activities.

Criteria for definition of Shannon Estuary Working Landscape

- All shores and waters between Moneypoint to Ballynacragga Point excluding Clonderalaw Bay.



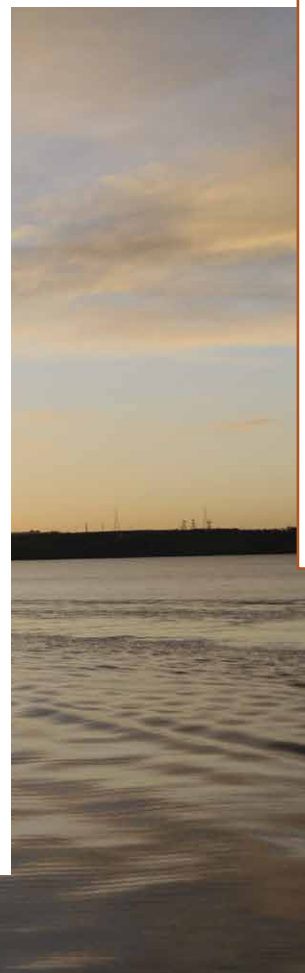
CDP13.4

Development Plan Objective: Shannon Estuary Working Landscape

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To permit development in these areas that will sustain economic activity of regional and national significance – especially through the protection of resources to sustain large-scale energy projects, logistics, large-scale manufacturing and associated infrastructure. All such developments shall be required to conform to relevant management and conservation objectives for designated and protected habitats and species within the estuary;
- B** That selection of appropriate sites in the first instance within this landscape, together with consideration of the details of siting and design, are directed towards reducing visual impact and that residual visual impacts are minimised;
- C** That particular regard should be given to avoiding intrusions on scenic routes and on ridges or shorelines. Developments in these areas will be required to demonstrate:
 - i** That sites have been selected to avoid visually prominent locations wherever feasible;
 - ii** That site layouts avail of existing topography and vegetation to reduce visibility from scenic routes, walking trails, public amenities and roads;
 - iii** That design for buildings and structures reduce visual impact through careful choice of form, finish and colours and that any site works seek to reduce visual impact of the development.

The majority of the areas within the *Shannon Estuary Working Landscape* contain sites, species, habitats and natural resources that are protected under the provisions of the Habitats Directive and/or the Birds Directive. Many areas within the Shannon Estuary Working Landscape also contain ground and surface waters that are sensitive to the risk of pollution. Applicants for planning permission in these areas will be expected to familiarise themselves with the requirements in relation to the protection of water resources and should be aware of the likely need to prepare and submit a Natura Impact Statement should the Council determine that an appropriate assessment is required in accordance with the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive in tandem with the preparation of designs.



13.3.2.3 Heritage Landscapes

Heritage Landscapes are those areas within the County where sensitive environmental resources – scenic, ecological and historic, are located.

Heritage Landscapes are envisioned as the most valued parts of the County – that are important to the people of County Clare as well as the wider community – both nationally and internationally. The principal role of these landscapes is to sustain natural and cultural heritage. The word ‘sustain’ is used to convey the idea of keeping something alive – as opposed to ‘conserve’ or ‘preserve’ – which might imply something dead or beyond use.

These landscapes must evolve to accommodate both the renewal of existing houses, farms, roads, power-lines etc as well as the development of new facilities needed to support the community – particularly in areas where agriculture can no longer provide sufficient income. Uses within these landscapes are expected to include refurbishment of dwellings, new dwellings for members of the existing rural community and developments for agriculture, small-scale employment, tourism, forestry, education, cultural and social services.

Plans, policies and development decisions in these areas will always need to simultaneously take account of scenic, ecological and historical considerations. Landowners and residents, on the other hand, are likely to experience significantly more scrutiny about where and how they carry out developments in these areas. It is hoped that additional resources can be focused on proposed developments in these areas to provide both the assistance to residents and assurance to the wider community – to ensure that communities continue to be renewed while also ensuring that heritage is sustained.

Heritage Landscapes and their hinterlands may contain vernacular structures which are valuable examples of the form and patterns of building which have evolved to suit their landscape both in their design and in their siting. Such forms and patterns should be recorded for historic purposes but also because they may provide a useful template to guide the siting of new structures thus reducing their visual impact.

Criteria for definition of Heritage Landscape boundary

Heritage Landscape 1: Lough Derg and the Eastern Uplands

This has been defined by having regard to the Heritage Council’s LCA Study Unit 5 Slieve Aughty Uplands, Unit 6 Lough Graney and Unit 7 Lough Derg Basin

Heritage Landscape 2: The Burren

This has been defined by having regard to the Heritage Council’s LCA Study Unit 1 Burren Uplands, Unit 2 Low Burren and Unit 4 Fergus Loughlands.

Heritage Landscape 3: The Fergus/ Shannon Estuary

This has been defined by having regard to the Heritage Council’s LCA Seascape Areas 9-12, as shown on Figure 13.3.

Heritage Landscape 4: The Coast

This has been defined by having regard to the Heritage Council’s LCA Seascape Areas 1-8, as shown on Figure 13.3.

CDP13.5

Development Plan Objective: Heritage Landscapes

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To require that all proposed developments in Heritage Landscapes demonstrate that every effort has been made to reduce visual impact. This must be demonstrated for all aspects of the proposal – from site selection through to details of siting and design. All other relevant provisions of the Development Plan must be complied with.

All proposed developments in these areas will be required to demonstrate:

- That sites have been selected to avoid visually prominent locations;
- That site layouts avail of existing topography and vegetation to minimise visibility from scenic routes, walking trails, public amenities and roads;
- That design for buildings and structures minimise height and visual contrast through careful choice of forms, finishes and colour and that any site works seek to reduce the visual impact of the development.

Planning applications in *Heritage Landscapes* will generally be required to include landscape and visual impact assessments to demonstrate that these objectives are being achieved.

The majority of the areas within *Heritage Landscapes* contain sites, species, habitats and natural resources that are protected under the provisions of the Habitats Directive and/or the Birds Directive. Applicants will be expected to familiarise themselves with the requirements of the Directives and should be aware of the likely need to prepare and submit a Natura Impact Statement should the Council determine that an appropriate assessment is required in accordance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive in tandem with the preparation of designs.

The majority of the areas within *Heritage Landscapes* contain ground and surface waters that are sensitive to the risk of pollution. Applicants for planning permission are advised that the highest standards will be applied at all stages of the evaluation of site suitability, site design and the design and management of all installations for the interception, storage and treatment of all effluents.

Many areas within *Heritage Landscapes* contain significant concentrations of National Monuments. Applicants are advised that developments will be evaluated to ensure that both monuments and their settings are protected to the standards required by the relevant statutory authorities.

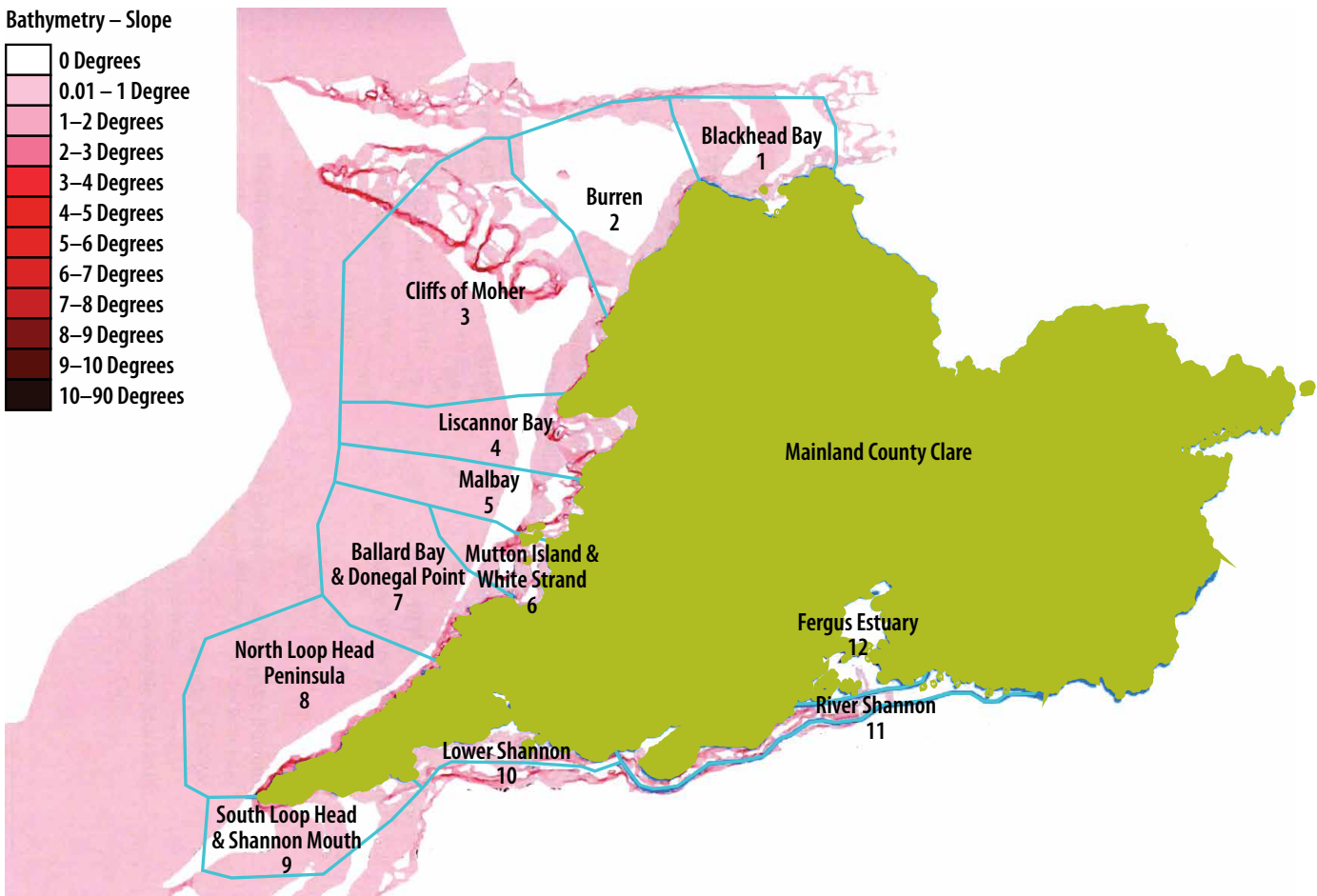
It is recognised that within *Heritage Landscapes* these requirements will place yet another burden on applicants who will also need to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive and the Water Framework Directive. For this reason, it will be Council policy to investigate the feasibility of offering pre-application technical assistance to applicants on appropriate sites within these areas to minimise any disadvantages that might otherwise occur.



13.4 Seascape Character Areas

The length of the County Clare coastline totals some 344km of which approximately 317 km is on the mainland of the County with the remaining 27km of coastline on the islands within the County. A Seascape Character Assessment of County Clare was carried out as part of the aforementioned Landscape Character Assessment. The Seascape Character Assessment identified 12 individual Character Areas in County Clare (Figure 13.3). Each of these areas has unique scenic, geology, history and sensitivities.

Figure 13.3
Map of Seascape Character Areas



Source: Environmental Resources Management (2003)

CDP13.6

Development Plan Objective: Seascape Character Areas

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To require all proposed developments within Seascape Character Areas to demonstrate that every effort has been made to reduce the visual impact of the development. This must be demonstrated by assessing the proposal in relation to:
 - Views from land to sea;
 - Views from sea to land;
 - Views along the coastline.
- B** To ensure that appropriate standards of location, siting, design, finishing and landscaping are achieved.



13.5 Views and Prospects

County Clare contains a number of valuable views and prospects which offer a very attractive cross-sectional view and overall impression of differing landscapes as one traverses the County. These views and prospects, many of which are located along identified scenic routes, are interwoven with the settled, working and heritage landscapes outlined above. The Council recognises that in some areas the land adjoining these scenic routes has relatively limited capacity (both environmentally and in terms of scenic amenity) to accommodate individual houses in significant numbers. In such areas, the Council will aim to protect sensitive areas from injurious development, while providing for development and change that will benefit the rural community.

There is a need to protect and conserve views adjoining public roads throughout the County where these views are of high amenity value. In conserving views, it is not proposed that this should give rise to the prohibition of development along these routes but development, where permitted, should not seriously hinder or obstruct these views and should be designed and located to minimise their impact.

Designated Scenic Routes throughout the County are identified in more detail on the maps contained in Volume 2 of this Plan. They are also indicated on Map 13A in this chapter and listed in Appendix 5.

The Wild Atlantic Way follows the west coast of County Clare, from Killimer on the Shannon Estuary to New Quay in North Clare. A series of Discovery Points and Signature Discovery Points have been identified encompassing the most scenic and high-amenity areas along the route. In order to maximise the potential of the Wild Atlantic Way, important views and prospects from the route will be preserved. The Council will work with Fáilte Ireland to ensure the sustainable development of viewing points along the route. For more on the Wild Atlantic Way, see Sections 9.3.5 and 17.4.4.



CDP13.7

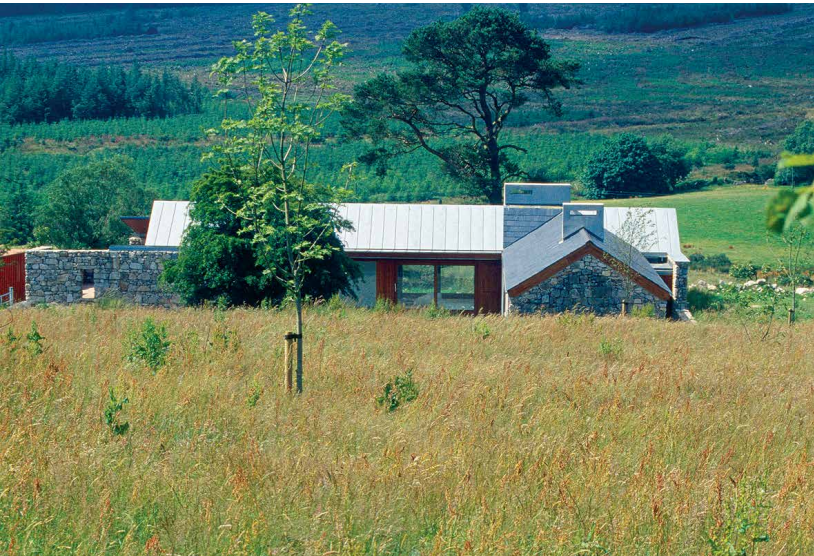
Development Plan Objective: Scenic Routes

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To protect sensitive areas from inappropriate development while providing for development and change that will benefit the rural community;
- B** To ensure that proposed developments take into consideration their effects on views from the public road towards scenic features or areas and are designed and located to minimise their impact;
- C** To ensure that appropriate standards of location, siting, design, finishing and landscaping are achieved.

13.6 Applications for Single Houses in the Countryside

Planning applications for single houses in the countryside in areas that are designated as Heritage Landscapes or are accessed off Scenic Routes must also comply with objective CDP3.11 of this Plan.



Chapter 13 Landscape – Cross References

CDP3.11	New Single Houses in the Countryside within 'Areas of Special Control'
CDP3.14	Replacement of Substandard Habitable Houses in the Countryside
CDP3.15	Refurbishment of a Derelict Dwelling/Structure in the Countryside
CDP4.13	Holiday Homes
CDP6.9	Shannon Estuary
CDP6.10	Moneypoint Power Station
CDP6.19	Agricultural Developments
CDP6.20	Rural Enterprises
CDP8.22	Protection of Water Resources
CDP8.23	Water Extraction from Lough Derg
CDP8.35	Light Pollution
CDP8.40	Renewable Energy
CDP8.41	Energy Storage
CDP8.44	Telecommunications Infrastructure
CDP9.4	Tourism Developments and Tourist Facilities
CDP9.5	Tourist Accommodation
CDP9.6	Wild Atlantic Way
CDP9.17	Sustainable Tourism
CDP10.2	Rural Enterprise
CDP10.7	Natural Resources
CDP10.9	Forestry
CDP10.10	Bioenergy
CDP10.11	Renewable Energy Development
CDP10.12	Unconventional Gas Exploration and Extraction
CDP10.13	Minerals, Mining and Quarrying
CDP11.3	Marine-Related Industry/Large-Scale Industry on the Shannon Estuary
CDP11.8	Harnessing the Energy Resources of the Shannon Estuary
CDP11.15	Marina Developments
CDP12.5	Off-Shore Gas and Petroleum Resources
CDP12.6	Offshore Renewable Energy Development
CDP12.11	Marina Development in Coastal Areas
CDP12.16	Island Development
CDP14.1	Biodiversity
CDP14.2	European Sites
CDP14.4	Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs)
CDP14.6	Burren National Park, Wildlife Sanctuaries and Nature Reserves
CDP14.7	Non-Designated Sites
CDP14.17	Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows
CDP14.25	Dark Sky Reserve Designation
CDP14.27	Green Infrastructure
CDP17.2	Universal Design
CDP17.4	Design and Built Environment

Map 13A: Landscape Designations





Chapter 14

Biodiversity, Natural Heritage and Green Infrastructure

Goal XIII:

A County Clare that protects and enhances the County's unique natural heritage and biodiversity and recognises the potential for sustainable green infrastructure development, while promoting and developing its cultural, educational and eco-tourism potential in a sustainable manner.

14.0 Introduction.....	216
14.1 Strategic Aims.....	216
14.2 Context	216
14.3 Natural Heritage and Biodiversity.....	217
14.3.1 Biodiversity	217
14.3.2 European Sites	218
14.3.3 Appropriate Assessment	219
14.3.4 Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs).....	220
14.3.5 County Geological Sites.....	220
14.3.6 Other Sites for Environmental and Ecological Protection.....	220
14.3.7 Non-designated Sites (Habitats and Species)	221
14.3.8 Environmental Impact Assessment	221
14.3.9 Contaminated Lands	222
14.3.10 Promoting and Protecting Biodiversity and Wildlife Corridors ..	222
14.3.11 Urban Ecology.....	222
14.3.12 Habitat Fragmentation	223
14.3.13 Inland Waters, River Corridors and Riparian Zones	223
14.3.14 Freshwater Pearl Mussels	224
14.3.15 Peatlands.....	225
14.3.16 Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows	225
14.3.17 Grasslands.....	226
14.3.18 Wetlands.....	226
14.3.19 The Burren.....	227
14.3.20 UNESCO World Heritage Site ..	229
14.3.21 Dark Sky Reserve	229
14.3.22 Alien and Invasive Species.....	230
14.4 Green Infrastructure	230



14.0 Introduction

County Clare has a wealth of natural heritage and biodiversity of local, national and international importance. When sustainably managed, our natural heritage and biodiversity can improve quality of life, increase peoples’ enjoyment and pride in County Clare and create jobs. Clare County Council plays an important role in the protection of the County’s natural heritage and the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment. A wide range of economic and social benefits and services result from the protection of environmental quality and biodiversity. Biodiversity forms the basis of our landscapes and amenity areas, provides for food and clean water supplies, opportunities for waste disposal, nutrient recycling, coastal protection, flood storage and attenuation.

Green Infrastructure refers to the integration of walking, cycling and recreation with biodiversity, creating interconnected networks of land and water that sustain environmental quality and enrich our quality of life.

This chapter sets out how the Council will meet its statutory obligations with regard to the conservation and protection of the environment, including natural heritage, as well as providing for the conservation and protection of sites and species under EU Directives and national legislation. It also sets out how the diverse natural heritage of County Clare can be sustainably utilised to create opportunities for active living, recreation, education and enhanced wellbeing through the creation of an extensive green infrastructure network.

14.1 Strategic Aims

This chapter presents the objectives required to promote County Clare as an environmentally-sustainable county and to support the natural heritage of the County through the conservation, protection and enhancement of its natural resources. In accordance with the overall vision of the Plan, it is based on the following strategic aims:

- To conserve and protect sites which have been designated for their ecological or environmental sensitivity;

- To ensure the sustainable management and conservation of areas of natural and geological heritage within the County;
- To increase education and awareness of our natural heritage and biodiversity;
- To promote sustainable development, in harmony with local biodiversity and, if possible, take steps to enhance the natural environment;
- To ensure compliance with the requirements of the EU Habitats Directive and Birds Directive;
- To promote the creation of an integrated and coherent green infrastructure network throughout County Clare in order to enhance connectivity, social inclusion, sense of place and the creation of wildlife corridors.

14.2 Context

County Clare has a vast and diverse range of natural heritage and as such there are many legal obligations, plans and guidance documents at European, national, regional and local level, which aim to guide development in order to ensure the sustainable management, conservation and protection of areas of natural and geological heritage within the County. In the preparation of this chapter of the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 regard has been had to the following:

EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)
EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)
Creating a Green Infrastructure for Ireland – Enhancing Natural Capital for Human Wellbeing (2010)
The National Heritage Plan 2002
County Clare Heritage Plan 2011-2017
The Living Farmland – A Guide to Farming with Nature in Clare
Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2009
EU Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)
Wildlife Acts 1976-2000
Actions for Biodiversity 2011-2016 – The National Biodiversity Plan
Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022
Clare Biodiversity Action Plan 2014-2017
Buds of the Banner –A Guide to Growing Native Trees and Shrubs in Clare
Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (DoECLG 2013)

14.3 Natural Heritage and Biodiversity

County Clare hosts a diversity of wildlife reflecting its geographical location along the Atlantic seaboard and at the mouth of the River Shannon. It is important that in collaboration with all stakeholders, this natural heritage is effectively managed in order to balance the need for development with the desire and obligations to protect our natural environment.

14.3.1 Biodiversity

Biodiversity refers to species, habitats and genetic diversity. It includes all plants and animals (including humans), fungi, algae and all other microscopic life forms, as well as their habitats and their interaction with other species within that habitat. Biodiversity provides us with food, clean water, fuel and medicines, as well as underpinning our agricultural sector and providing a unique landscape which drives our tourism sector.

A habitat is the environment in which plant or animal species, or groups of plant and animal species, normally live or occur. Examples of broad habitat types include woodland, freshwater or coastal habitats. A wide range of economic and social benefits and services result from the protection of environmental quality and biodiversity. For example biodiversity forms the basis of our landscapes, provides for food and clean water supplies, opportunities for waste disposal, nutrient recycling, coastal protection, flood storage and regulation, among others. Inappropriate planning can lead to the need for costly engineering solutions to environmental problems.

Developments which are inappropriately located or designed have the potential to have a negative impact on our biodiversity, for example, a road development that divides a habitat or the clearance of hedgerows within commuting areas for bats. Negative impacts can be minimised when local biodiversity is taken into consideration both at plan level and project design. It is important to recognise that biodiversity has the potential to enhance a development setting rather than posing an obstacle to development.

In some cases it may be necessary to identify a buffer zone between sites of biodiversity or natural heritage importance and new or existing development. The provision of buffer zones are important in terms of their contribution to issues such as flood alleviation, nutrient and silt loading and for the protection of biodiversity. The following criteria should be taken into consideration in the identification of buffer zones for the protection of biodiversity in the Plan area:

- Conservation value of the feature to be protected;
- Intensity of adjacent land use;
- Tolerance of the species and habitat to disturbance;
- Local wildlife corridors and species connectivity;
- Buffer characteristics (e.g. slope, soil type);
- Specific buffer function;
- Proximity to existing development and lands zoned for development;
- Areas that are practicable and appropriate to manage.

CDP14.1

Development Plan Objective: Biodiversity

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To implement the County Clare Heritage Plan 2011-2017 and the Clare Biodiversity Action Plan 2014-2017, or any subsequent plans, in partnership with all relevant stakeholders;
- B** To review the Clare County Heritage Plan 2011-2017 and to prepare a new Plan, which will be set within the context of the National Heritage Plan, upon the expiry of the existing adopted Plan;
- C** To support National Biodiversity Week and events such as Bioblitz in order to increase awareness of biodiversity and its benefits to the community;
- D** To ensure that features of importance to local biodiversity are retained as part of developments and projects being undertaken in the County;
- E** To identify ecological buffer spaces/zones, where appropriate, in the Plan area.

14.3.2 European Sites

The EU Habitats Directive, together with the EU Birds Directive, provide for the conservation, protection and, in some cases, restoration of habitats and species (plants and animals) that are of European importance which may be rare, threatened or in danger of disappearance in the EU, as listed in various annexes of the Directives. The Directives also seek to establish Natura 2000 sites, a network of protected areas throughout Europe. These protected areas include:

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) - These sites are for the conservation and protection of plants, animals (other than birds) and wildlife habitats that are of importance to the EU. The sites are designated for habitats and species listed in Annex I and Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive (1992) respectively.

Special Protection Area (SPAs) – These sites are for the conservation and protection of birds and their habitats designated under the EU Birds Directive 2009 (first adopted by Member States in 1979), which was implemented in Ireland through the Conservation of Wild Birds Regulations (Statutory Instrument 291 of 1985). These sites are for the protection and conservation of rare and threatened bird species and their habitats.

In accordance with the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), Clare County Council, as a competent authority, in the performance of its functions, shall take appropriate steps to avoid, in a European site, the deterioration of natural habitats and the habitats of species as well as the disturbance of the species for which the site has been designated, insofar as such disturbance could be significant in relation to the objectives of the Habitats Directive. In addition, the Council has duties as a public authority under Regulation 27 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 relating to nature conservation.

Any persons proposing a plan, project or works that may have a significant impact on a European site should refer to Section 14.3.3 below.

CDP14.2 Development Plan Objective: European Sites

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To afford the highest level of protection to all designated European sites in accordance with the relevant Directives and legislation on such matters;
- B** To require all planning applications for development that may have (or cannot rule out) likely significant effects on European sites in view of the site's Conservation Objectives, either in isolation or in combination with other plans or projects, to submit a Natura Impact Statement in accordance with the requirements of the EU Habitats Directive and the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended);
- C** To recognise and afford appropriate protection to any new or modified SPAs or SACs that are identified during the lifetime of this Plan, having regard to the fact that proposals for development outside of a European site may also have an indirect effect.





14.3.3 Appropriate Assessment

There is a requirement to ensure that future developments do not have or perpetuate adverse effects on the conservation objectives and integrity of a European Site.

In accordance with the Birds and Habitats Regulations 2011, any plan or project which is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site, must be screened for appropriate assessment (by the Council) to establish if there is potential for significant effects on a European site and to determine if an appropriate assessment (by the Council) is required.

Having considered the conclusions of the Natura Impact Report (for plans) or Natura Impact Statement (for projects), the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project if they are satisfied that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned. It should be noted that the conservation objectives for some protected sites not only require the maintenance of favourable conservation condition but also the restoration of favourable conservation condition of the qualifying interests.

If the Natura Impact Report/Statement indicates that there is an adverse effect on the integrity of a site (and in the absence of alternative solutions), the plan or project can only proceed if there are *imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI)*, including those of a social or economic nature in line with Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive. In such cases, the Member State shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 network is protected. It shall inform the European Commission of the compensatory measures adopted and await the opinion of the Commission regarding the proposed plan or project. Any such project or plan which is identified as having adverse effects on the integrity of a European site and has made the case for IROPI should be guided by the European Commission's guidance on the application of Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive⁵.

CDP14.3

Development Plan Objective: Requirement for Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To implement Article 6(3) and where necessary Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive and to ensure that Appropriate Assessment is carried out in relation to works, plans and projects likely to impact on European sites (SACs and SPAs), whether directly or indirectly or in combination with any other plan(s) or project(s). All assessments must be in compliance with the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011;
- B** To have regard to 'Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2009' or any updated version.

⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/art6/guidance_art6_4_en.pdf

14.3.4

Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs)

Natural Heritage Areas are designated sites of national importance for habitats and species in Ireland. NHAs are established under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000, but are conserved and protected under the Wildlife Acts, 1976-2000. A list of Natural Heritage Areas in County Clare is contained in Appendix 3 of this Plan.

CDP14.4

Development Plan Objective: Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs)

- It is an objective of the Development Plan:**
- A** To actively promote the conservation and protection of areas designated as an NHA (including proposed sites) and to only consider proposals for development within or affecting an NHA where it can be clearly demonstrated that the proposed development will not have a significant adverse effect on the NHA or pNHA;
 - B** To identify and afford appropriate protection to any new, proposed or modified NHAs identified during the lifetime of this Plan.

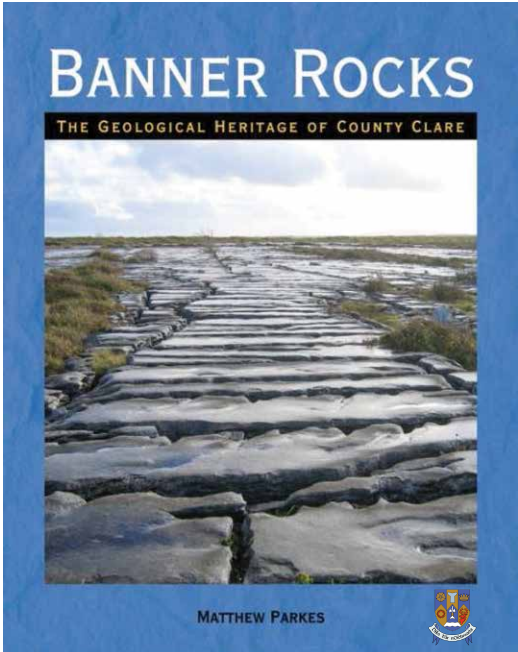
14.3.5

County Geological Sites

In County Clare there are many areas of geological importance that are considered to be of national importance in terms of being best representative examples of particular geological formations or features. The diversity of geological features in the County is highlighted

in *Banner Rocks – The Geological Heritage of County Clare*.

The Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) has identified some of the most important County Geological Sites as part of their Irish Geological Heritage Programme. A list of the County Geological Sites is included in Appendix 3.



CDP14.5

Development Plan Objective: County Geological Sites

- It is an objective of Clare County Council:**
- A** To recognise the importance of County Geological Sites and to protect the character and integrity of these sites;
 - B** To work with the GSI and relevant stakeholders to undertake a review of County Geological Sites during the lifetime of this Plan;
 - C** To promote and facilitate the development of geo-tourism in County Clare in compliance with CDP objectives 14.1 – 14.9, 14.11 and 14.13.

14.3.6

Other Sites for Environmental and Ecological Protection

There are a number of other sites, such as national parks, nature reserves and wildfowl sanctuaries across the County that have been designated for environmental and/or ecological protection. These sites are listed in Appendix 3. It is imperative that these sites are protected and conserved for the protection of flora and fauna, for their significant amenity value and for their ongoing educational resource value.

CDP14.6

Development Plan Objective: Burren National Park, Wildlife Sanctuaries and Nature Reserves

- It is an objective of the Development Plan:**
- A** To protect the Burren National Park, all wildlife sanctuaries, nature reserves and all species (including Annex I habitats and birds and Annex II species) designated under the Wildlife Acts 1976-2000 and EC (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011;
 - B** To work with local communities, landowners, the National Parks & Wildlife Service and other relevant parties to protect, manage where appropriate, enhance and promote sites of ecological importance across the County;
 - C** To ensure that the amenity of the Burren National Park, wildlife sanctuaries and nature reserves are protected and that their educational values are enhanced and promoted.

14.3.7 Non-designated Sites (Habitats and Species)

There are many sites throughout the County that host important plant and animal species or their habitats (including Annex I habitats, Annex I birds and Annex II and IV species) which are not designated as an SPA, an SAC or an (p)NHA but their ecological value is of high importance. Clare County Council has carried out detailed field-by-field habitat mapping for almost half of the County, creating an important record of local biodiversity. During the lifetime of this Plan the Council will aim to complete the mapping in the remaining areas, namely:

- North Clare (excluding The Burren area);
- West Clare;
- The Slieve Aughty area.

CDP14.7

Development Plan Objective: Non-Designated Sites

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To ensure the protection and conservation of areas, sites, species and ecological networks/corridors of biodiversity value outside of designated sites throughout the County and to require an ecological assessment to accompany development proposals likely to impact on such areas or species;
- B** To ensure that available habitat mapping is taken into consideration in any ecological assessment undertaken;
- C** To complete the Habitat Mapping of the County (in accordance with *A Guide to Habitats in Ireland* – The Heritage Council 2000) in order to identify and record the natural habitats of the County at a detailed level and afford appropriate protection to areas of importance, as required.

CDP14.8

Development Plan Objective: Natural Heritage and Infrastructure Schemes

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To ensure the protection of natural heritage when considering proposed services, infrastructure and roadworks (both realignments and new roads) located in close proximity to, or nearby, protected ecological sites or sites of importance in terms of biodiversity.

14.3.8 Environmental Impact Assessment

The requirement for Environmental Impact Assessments is set out in Part X of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended). Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a critical tool in managing and clarifying the complex inter-relationships between development and the environment. It is a process that provides for an examination of the environmental consequences of development actions in a systematic, holistic and multidisciplinary way.

Environmental Impact Assessment provides a means of evaluating the full environmental impact of development. All environmental assessments consider alternative development proposals, assess the impacts of these alternatives, propose measures to avoid, mitigate against or compensate for adverse impacts and in each case lead to the production of an environmental impact statement. This statement is submitted as supporting information with a planning application or, if deemed necessary, may be requested after an application has been submitted.

CDP14.9

Development Plan Objective: Environmental Impact Assessment

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To implement the EIA Directive, ensuring that all elements/stages or components of the project are included in one overall assessment and all reasonable alternatives are taken into consideration in choosing the option with the least environmental impact;
- B** To have regard to 'Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessments (2013)' when considering proposals for which an EIA is required;
- C** To ensure full compliance with the requirements of the EU Habitats Directive, SEA Directive and associated legislation/regulations, including the associated European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477 of 2011), European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) regulations 2004-2011, and the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1989-2011 (or any updated/superseding legislation).

14.3.9
Contaminated Lands

There is no statutory definition of “Contaminated Land” within Ireland, and the term is generally used to refer to all land affected by land contamination. The issue of contamination is covered in a number of existing legislative acts, which are focused primarily on ensuring prevention of pollution from ongoing activities rather than driving clean-up from historical use. To date, remedial action with respect to contaminated soils has been driven by the Development Management process and more recently by the requirement for local authorities to identify and assess unregulated waste disposal sites.

CDP14.10

Development Plan Objective:
Contaminated Land

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

A To ensure that, prior to the redevelopment of a site previously known to include an operation with the potential for high environmental impact such as petrol stations, gasworks or coal yards, due diligence is carried out on the site to address:

- The initial site assessment;
- The ecological aspects of soil and groundwater contamination;
- The preparation of a remedial action plan;
- The preparation of a site aftercare plan;

B To ensure that contaminated soil is disposed of in accordance with the Waste Management Regulations (S.I.821 of 2007).

14.3.10
Promoting and Protecting
Biodiversity and Wildlife
Corridors

Wildlife heritage and biodiversity is not confined to statutorily designated sites but is found throughout the countryside and within our towns and villages. The promotion of biodiversity has become increasingly important over recent years. Of particular importance is the protection of wildlife corridors and stepping stones, including those covered by Article 10 of the Habitats Directive, which provide for the easy movement of wildlife which is essential to allow them to commute from one area to

another for breeding, hibernation, in search of food etc. They are also essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species.

There are a large number of Lesser Horseshoe Bat (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*) and other bat sites throughout County Clare. All bat species and their breeding and resting places (roosts) are legally protected in Ireland under the Wildlife Acts 1976-2000. It is particularly critical that wildlife corridors, tree lines and hedgerows within the area of Lesser Horseshoe Bat roosts are retained to allow for the free movement of these bats and other species within and through the surrounding area.

CDP14.11

Development Plan Objective:
Habitat Protection

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

A To protect and promote the sustainable management of the natural heritage, flora and fauna of the County through the promotion of biodiversity, the conservation of natural habitats and the enhancement of new and existing habitats;

B To promote the conservation of biodiversity through the protection of sites of biodiversity importance and wildlife corridors, both within and between the designated sites and the wider Plan area;

C To ensure that there is no net loss of potential Lesser Horseshoe Bat feeding habitats, treelines and hedgerows within 3km of known roosts.

14.3.11
Urban Ecology

Urban settlements are often located near biodiversity hotspots, such as rivers, wetlands, flood plains and the coast. In urban areas, artificial habitats such as parks and water features also support wildlife, and this can be enhanced through improved wildlife-friendly management.



Private gardens also encourage wildlife and buildings can be designed to incorporate biodiversity with features such as green roofs and living walls and they can play an important role in supporting biodiversity in urban areas. They provide important habitats and wildlife corridors and enhance both the public realm and quality of life in urban areas.

CDP14.12

Development Plan Objective: Urban Ecology

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To encourage and, where appropriate, enhance the provision of biodiversity features in urban areas through the preparation of local area plans/settlement plans, green infrastructure strategies and through the development management process.

14.3.12 Habitat Fragmentation

The County has a wealth of biodiversity but modern day development and infrastructure requirements have led to fragmentation of habitats and commuting corridors which have a negative impact on biodiversity. Road networks, large industrial, retail and residential development have contributed to fragmentation of habitats, loss of species and a weakening of the green infrastructure network. It is important to ensure that existing habitats are maintained by incorporating natural features like hedgerows into development proposals. Where the loss of such features is unavoidable, compensatory provision must be made. Where fragmentation has already taken place, works to remediate and enhance the connectivity and integrity of the disturbed habitats must be implemented.

CDP14.13

Development Plan Objective: Habitat Fragmentation

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To ensure that development proposals support and enhance the connectivity and integrity of habitats in the Plan area by incorporating natural features into the design of development proposals.

14.3.13 Inland Waters, River Corridors and Riparian Zones

There is a multiplicity of surface water systems located around the County, many of which have been designated as protected sites for their unique flora and fauna, and are of national and international reputation. Management of river corridors and riparian zones is vitally important, not just from an ecological perspective, but also from a practical and amenity standpoint.

The County's streams and water bodies are abundant with biodiversity and act as important conduits for the movement of both flora and fauna. Intervention by culverting, removing vegetation to make way for paths and measures to make the banks easier to maintain, can sometimes result in a damaging effect on the established eco-systems and a loss of natural habitat and species, as well as greatly diminishing the quality of the environment for human beings.

Riparian zones can be particularly vulnerable to damage from inappropriate development and it is important to ensure that riparian buffers are put in place. A riparian buffer is a vegetated area near a water body which helps to shade and partially protect the water body from the impact of adjacent land uses. It plays a key role in protecting/improving water quality in associated water bodies (streams, rivers, estuaries and lakes) and they are important linear features in the landscape, essential for connectivity.

The Shannon Regional Fisheries Board has issued a guidance document relating to managing development in the riparian zone. The document entitled *Development and Management of the Riparian Zone* outlines an integrated watercourse protection strategy. A key requirement of this integrated watercourse protection strategy is the set-aside of sufficient land space along the river margin or corridor. The recommended width for larger river channels (>10m) is 35m to 60m and for smaller channels (<10m) is 20m or greater. The determined width should be tailored to site specific, river reach or lakeshore characteristics and their associated habitats. It is important that the buffer zone is large enough to protect the ecological integrity of the river (including emergent vegetation), the riparian zone (bank-side vegetation including trees) and takes into account the human history of the area.

CDP14.14

Development Plan Objective: Inland Waterways and River Corridors

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To work with all relevant stakeholders to protect and manage inland waters, river corridors and their floodplains, turloughs, lakes, fens and other water bodies from degradation and damage, and to recognise and promote them as natural assets and key elements in the green infrastructure network in the County;
- B** To protect riparian zones / areas, where appropriate, in the Plan area;
- C** To ensure that, where development occurs within a riparian zone, it does not have a negative impact on associated habitats and species;
- D** To work with all relevant stakeholders to protect and improve appropriate access to waterways and river corridors whilst ensuring their conservation and the protection of the resource and water quality;
- E** To have regard to the 'Clare County Wetlands Survey 2008' and other relevant documentation, including the 'Convention on Wetlands of International Importance' (Ramsar Convention), 1971 (ratified, 1984) and the 'EU Communication – Wise Use and Conservation of Wetlands 1995', in the assessment of developments;
- F** To encourage development proposals to :
 - Maintain an appropriate width for the riparian zone to be protected;
 - Improve appropriate access and compatible leisure activities;
 - Maintain and enhance the fishing potential for both local interests and tourism by protecting the natural spawning beds of trout and salmon;
- G** To protect the County's valuable inland fishery resource and support its sustainable development through the protection of water quality and facilitation of ancillary infrastructure at appropriate locations.

14.3.14

Freshwater Pearl Mussels

The freshwater pearl mussel is an extremely sensitive species. It is included on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources Red List of Threatened Species and is rated as 'critically endangered' throughout the island of Ireland. Populations of the freshwater pearl mussel can be damaged in a number of ways including the removal of river boulders and gravels, or through works such as building bridges, weirs or bank reinforcements together with works requiring the removal of peat within the vicinity of pearl mussel catchments.

Within County Clare there is one freshwater pearl mussel SAC population for which the river catchment is protected. This is the Cloon River system which is located on the north shore of the Shannon Estuary feeding into the Estuary at its downstream end.

In addition, County Clare contains three other catchments which are identified as Freshwater Pearl Mussel Sensitive Areas by the National Parks & Wildlife Service:

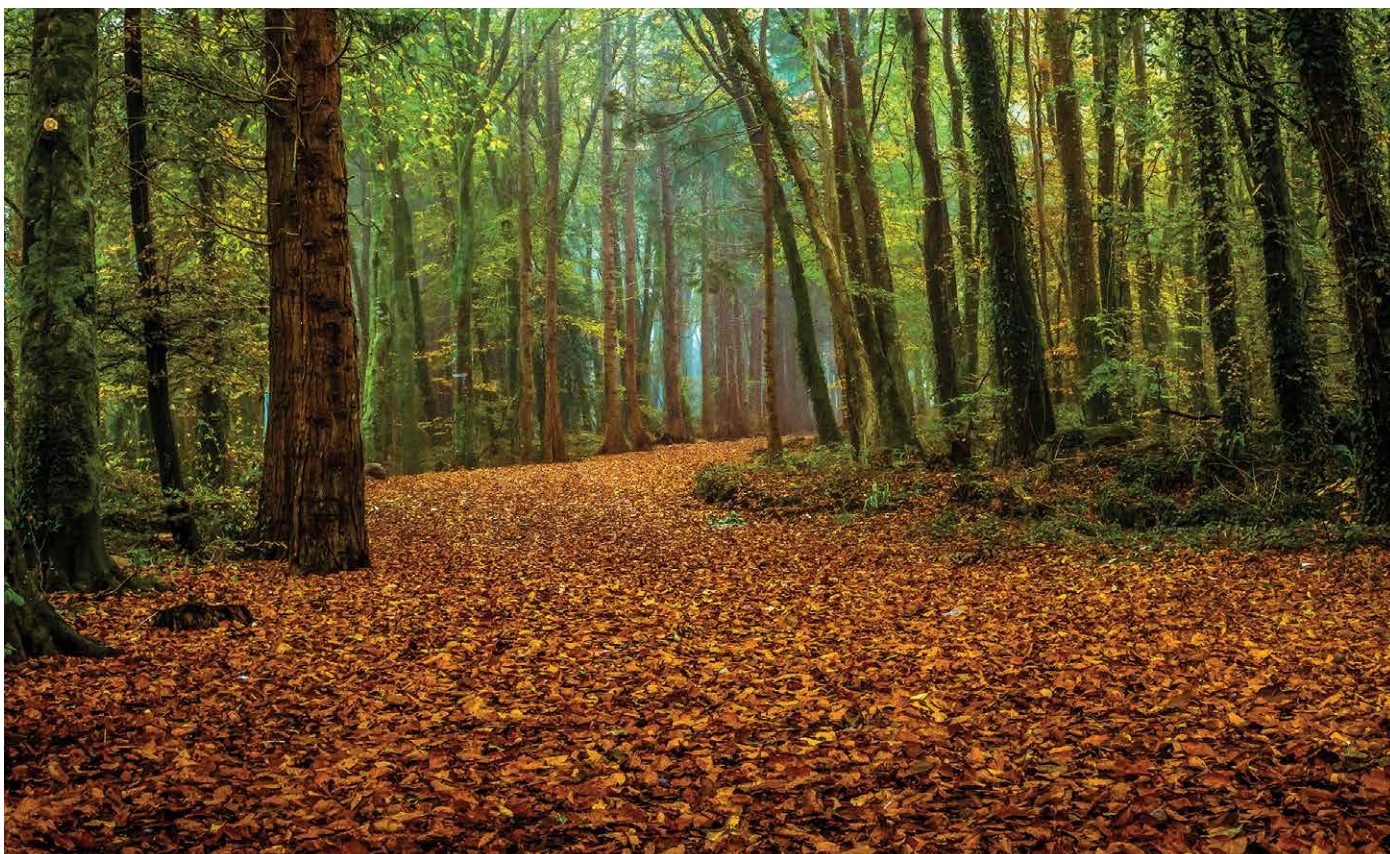
- Doonbeg;
- Shannon – Graney/Scariff;
- Shannon - Woodford.

CDP14.15

Development Plan Objective: Freshwater Pearl Mussels

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To have regard to the potential impacts of developments within or in close proximity to the Cloon River freshwater pearl mussel catchment including impacts arising from downstream within the Shannon Estuary and Clonderlaw Bay;
- B** To have regard to the Cloon Freshwater Pearl Mussel Sub-Basin Management Plan in the assessment of planning applications;
- C** To ensure careful consideration is given to all proposed developments within the Doonbeg, Shannon–Graney/Scariff and the Shannon–Woodford Freshwater Pearl Mussel sensitive areas;
- D** To ensure full compliance with Objective CDP2.1 in relation to any future developments with close proximity to a freshwater pearl mussel catchment or sensitive area.



14.3.15 Peatlands

There are a number of raised and blanket bog areas throughout the County, many of which are protected through international and national designations (Special Area of Conservation, Special Protection Area and/or Natural Heritage Area). Clare County Council recognises the importance of peatlands as a major natural, archaeological and non-renewable resource. Peatlands also play a critical role in addressing carbon emissions by acting as a valuable natural carbon sink. The potential appropriate utilisation of protected peatland areas for amenity, educational, research and tourism purposes is also recognised.

CDP14.16

Development Plan Objective: Peatlands

It is an objective of Clare County Council :

To protect and enhance the valuable peatland resource in County Clare whilst protecting the heritage and environmental value of these peatland areas.

14.3.16 Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows

Woodland habitats in County Clare include oak, ash and hazel woodland, wet woodland, scrub and hedgerow. Small pockets of ancient woodland still remain in the County for example, under Mullaghmore in the Burren and in other small pockets of the Burren area. Many of the woodlands of County Clare are protected areas for their habitat and amenity value, and these are listed in Appendix 3. The high amenity value of woodlands is recognised, as is their contribution to landscape diversity, habitat and carbon sink value.

Townscapes and landscapes generally benefit from the presence of trees as they soften the line of buildings, contribute to a sense of place, act as wildlife habitats and corridors and provide scale to buildings and streets. They also filter out noise, dust and pollutants. Plant and soil cover act as important carbon sink, retain moisture and prevent flooding.

Hedgerows have been an important feature of the landscape in County Clare for centuries. They provide a habitat for many species and also act as wildlife corridors for animals to move along for breeding, feeding etc. Where breaches to hedgerows occur Clare County Council will facilitate and encourage their replacement.

CDP14.17

Development Plan Objective: Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To preserve and conserve individual or groups of trees identified in Volume 2 of this Plan as 'Trees for Preservation' which will enhance the character and appearance of an area;
- B** To carry out tree survey work during the lifetime of this Plan to identify future trees of importance in the County and facilitate their future protection;
- C** To protect individual or groups of trees within the Plan area which are important for environmental, recreational, historical, biodiversity and/or aesthetic reasons or by reason of contribution to sense of place, including groups of trees which correspond with protected habitats, or which support protected species, under the Habitats Directive;
- D** To work with landowners, local communities and other relevant groups to promote the retention and conservation of existing trees and hedgerows and encourage development proposals that enhance the landscape through positive management and additional planting/sensitive replanting of native tree species;
- E** To protect woodlands and hedgerows from damage and/or degradation and to prevent disruption of the connectivity of woodlands and hedgerows of the County;
- F** To ensure, where required, applications for development include proposals for planting / leave a suitable ecological buffer zone, between the development works and areas/features of ecological importance;
- G** Where hedgerows are required to be removed in the interests of traffic safety or where breaches to hedgerows occur due to river drainage/maintenance works and flood repair, to require the applicant/developer to replace the hedgerows with suitable native species to the satisfaction of the Council;
- H** To require each large green space in new residential developments to have at least one native oak tree, or other naturalised tree species of similar stature and lifespan, integrated into the agreed planting/landscaping scheme;
- I** To require, where possible, that all trees felled as a result of development proposals be replaced at a minimum ratio of 10 new native species per 1 tree felled.

14.3.17 Grasslands

County Clare is home to many important grasslands including wet grasslands and dry calcareous grasslands. Grasslands cover much of County Clare albeit of varying ecological quality. Orchid rich dry calcareous grasslands are an internationally important habitat, supporting a high diversity of plants and animals including insects. Wet grasslands support many plant and animal species and are also very important for many bird species.

CDP14.18

Development Plan Objective: Grasslands

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To complete the habitat mapping of the County (in accordance with 'A Guide to Habitats in Ireland', Fossett, 2000) in order to identify and record the different grasslands of the County at a detailed level and to use the collected data to ensure that the necessary protection is afforded to areas of importance.

14.3.18 Wetlands

Wetlands range from ponds to rivers, reed beds to bogs and fens to turloughs and are home to a large diversity of plants and animals. However, they are not just important for biodiversity. They provide open space and recreational opportunities, slow the impact of climate change by acting as carbon storage, improve water quality by removing and sequestering pollutants, provide natural floodwater storage and provide an important habitat for a wide range of wildlife and fish species.

County Clare has an extensive network of wetlands. The County Clare Wetlands Survey (2008) identified 34 different wetland types in the County, covering an area of over 23,000 hectares. These wetlands are a significant resource for the County and Clare County Council will work to manage, enhance and protect these wetlands throughout the lifetime of this Plan.

CDP14.19

Development Plan Objective: Wetlands

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

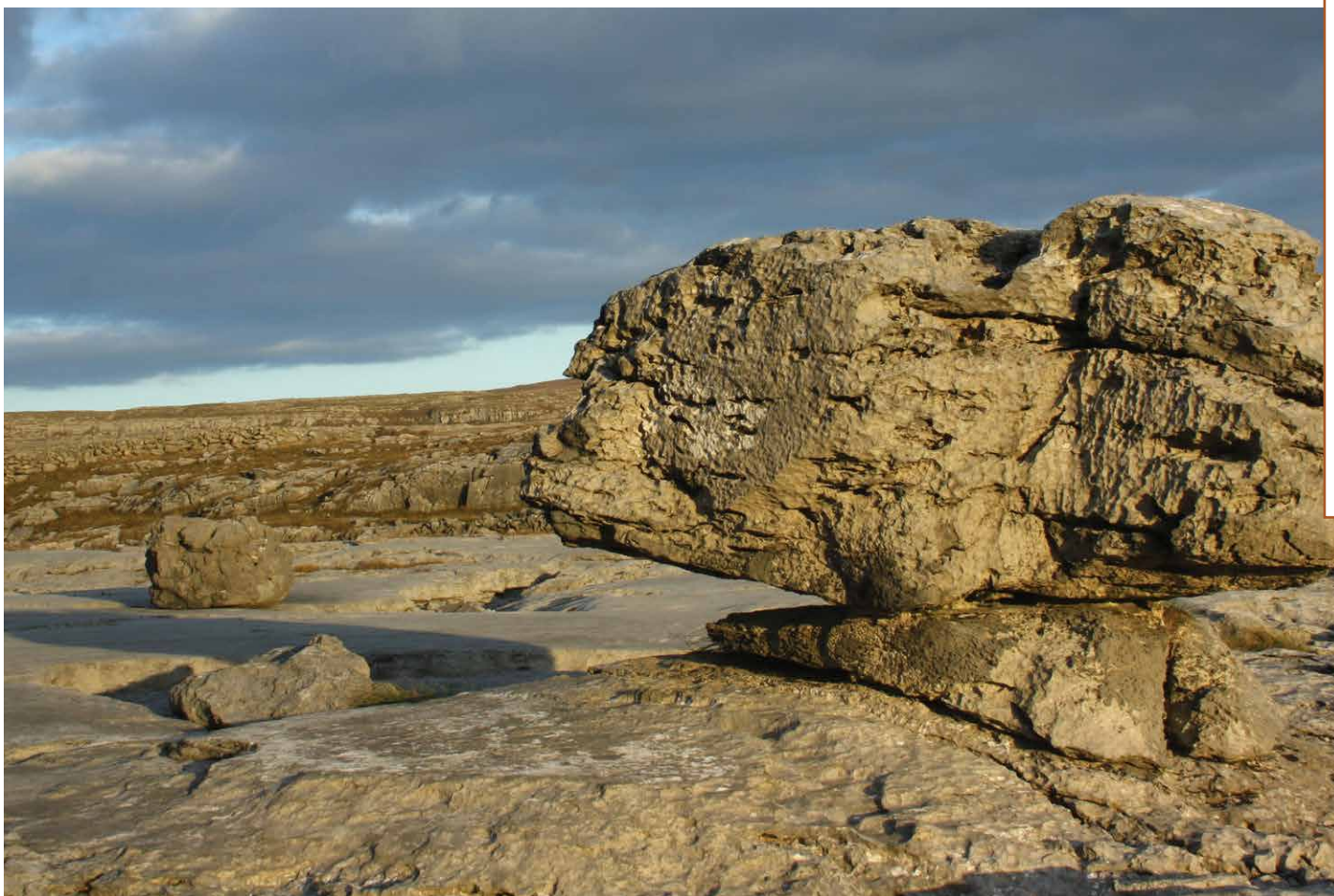
To manage, enhance and protect the wetlands in County Clare having regard to the 'County Clare Wetlands Survey (2008)', the 'Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)' and 'Drainage and Reclamation of Wetlands – Draft Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2011' and any subsequent guidance documents.

14.3.19 The Burren

The Burren is renowned for its unusual and diverse flora and for its rich archaeological and historical heritage. It is also one of the most distinctive landscape regions in Ireland. It features bare rock pavements; cliffed and terraced hills; a dense network of caves; turloughs; disappearing streams; and a varied coast that passes south to the Cliffs of Moher, which is one of the most dramatic coastlines in Ireland. It is also considered to be one of the best preserved agricultural landscapes in Europe.

The Burren has been aptly described as 'one vast memorial to bygone cultures', containing the remnants of over 6,000 years of human habitation. Today, it is home to 5,000 people, living in villages, farmsteads and single rural houses. Its culture is a vibrant mix of recent and ancient.

The Burren has been described as 'an archaeological landscape fossilised in time'. The region contains architectural remnants and settlement patterns from all of the significant archaeological periods in Western Europe and presents a tangible record of continuity between each period.



14.3.19.1 The Burren National Park

The Burren National Park was established in 1991. It is located in the south eastern corner of the Burren and is approximately 1500 hectares in size. The Park is a Category II Protected Area as defined by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature – the IUCN. As such, the Burren National Park shares the same international status as other natural heritage sites of world renown such as Yellowstone National Park, Yosemite National Park and the Great Barrier Reef.

CDP14.20

Development Plan Objective:
The Burren National Park

It is an objective of Clare County Council:
To advocate the preparation, by the National Parks & Wildlife Service, of a Conservation Management Plan for the Burren National Park, incorporating traffic management and parking solutions.

14.3.19.2 Limestone Habitats

The limestone landscape of the Burren, and its associated orchid-rich grasslands, is internationally important and, in Ireland, is exclusive to County Clare and parts of South Galway. Clare County Council works on an on-going basis to conserve the rare limestone habitats in the County. Limestone caves provide an important habitat for bat species and some plant species. There are almost 100km of accessible cave passages in County Clare, almost all of which are in the Burren. Potential threats to the limestone pavement and associated plant and animal species include scrub encroachment, land reclamation for agriculture, development and the abandonment of land. Water pollution and the alteration of hydrology in limestone areas can affect plant and animal species and their associated wetlands, turloughs, fens and lakes.

CDP14.21

Development Plan Objective:
Limestone Habitats

It is an objective of Clare County Council:
To encourage, support and promote farming for conservation in the Burren area in order to support the conservation of the limestone habitats in the area and to seek, on an on-going basis, new funding mechanisms for this work.

14.3.19.3 Burren and Cliffs of Moher Geopark

The Burren and Cliffs of Moher Geopark is a designated UNESCO Global Geopark and, as such, forms part of the UNESCO Global Geoparks Network. It also forms part of the European Geoparks Network. A Geopark is a unified area with geological heritage of international significance, which is used to promote awareness of key issues facing society in the context of the dynamic planet we all live on. The Burren and Cliffs of Moher Geopark supports greater interpretation of the geological landscape, climate change awareness and the achievement of sustainable tourism and land-use. It works towards scientifically-sound and sustainable visitor management and monitoring practices at key natural sites and cultural monuments in the Burren. The Burren Ecotourism Network comprises businesses that adhere to the Geopark Code of Practice. Heritage trails are also being developed in collaboration with local communities and landowners in the area.

CDP14.22

Development Plan Objective:
Burren and Cliffs of Moher Geopark

It is an objective of Clare County Council:
A To continue to work in partnership with all relevant stakeholders to support the on-going work of the Burren and Cliffs of Moher Geopark and to secure the retention of the 'Geopark' status into the future;
B To seek, on an on-going basis, new funding mechanisms for the work of the Geopark e.g. from national and EU sources.



14.3.20

UNESCO World Heritage Site

The protection of the world's cultural and natural heritage is of high importance for present and future generations and, to this end, the State is committed to the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission of its World Heritage Sites (tentative list) to future generations in accordance with Article 4 of the World Heritage Convention.

A Tentative List is an inventory of those properties which a country intends to consider for nomination to the World Heritage List. A Tentative List was approved by the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and submitted to UNESCO in March 2010. Three sites in County Clare have been included on the Tentative List, two of which are part of larger assemblies of sites:

- The Burren Co. Clare and Co. Galway
- Western Stone Forts comprising - the Aran Islands in County Galway (group of 7 forts), Cahercommaun in the Burren, County Clare, Caherconree and Benagh on the Dingle Peninsula and Staigue on the Iveragh Peninsula, County Kerry.
- Early Medieval Monastic Sites comprising Clonmacnoise, Durrow, Glendalough, Inis Cealtra, Kells and Monasterboice.

CDP14.23

Development Plan Objective: World Heritage Site Status

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To collaborate with landowners, local communities and other relevant stakeholders to achieve World Heritage Site status for the sites identified in County Clare;
- B** To protect the Outstanding Universal Value of the tentative World Heritage Sites in County Clare that are included in the UNESCO Tentative List, Ireland 2010 and engage with other national and international initiatives which promote the special built, natural and cultural heritage of places in the County.

Clare and Galway County Councils have prepared a Technical Evaluation that will be used to assess the Outstanding Universal Value of The Burren and its potential to be designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

In the event that The Burren, or any other site in County Clare, is found to have Outstanding Universal Value, the following objective will apply when assessing proposals for development within the World Heritage areas/landscapes.

CDP14.24

Development Plan Objective: Development Proposals in Designated World Heritage Sites

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To ensure that proposals for development in designated World Heritage Sites will be assessed having regard to the contribution of the development to the preservation and enhancement of the special qualities of these areas and the potential impact of the Outstanding Universal Value of the designated site.

14.3.21

Dark Sky Reserve

International Dark Sky Reserves are designated by the International Dark Sky Association. They are areas recognised as possessing an exceptional or distinguished quality of starry nights and nocturnal environment specifically protected for scientific, natural, educational, cultural, heritage or public enjoyment. There are numerous areas within County Clare that lend themselves to such a designation and the Council will explore the possibility of achieving the designation in locations in the County during the lifetime of this Plan.

CDP14.25

Development Plan Objective: Dark Sky Reserve Designation

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To identify areas within the County that possess exceptional quality of starry nights and nocturnal environment and to explore the potential of establishing a Dark Sky Reserve in the County during the lifetime of this Plan;
- B** Subject to resources, to replace public lighting systems throughout the County with more energy efficient, money saving, dark-sky compliant lighting.

14.3.22
Alien and Invasive Species

There is potential for the spread of non-native invasive species during excavation and construction works and for such species to be introduced into the environment via spreading from private gardens, boat users, aquaculture, horticulture etc. The risk of accidental transfer of the non-native invasive species requires adherence to current best practice protocol for avoiding the spread or transfer of all invasive animals and plants for example Zebra Mussel, Japanese Knotweed, Himalayan Balsam and the Asian Clam.

CDP14.26

Development Plan Objective:
Alien and Invasive Species

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

A

To raise awareness of the threat of alien invasive species and take all necessary steps to prevent the spread of non-native invasive species and noxious weeds in the Plan area, including requiring landowners, developers and boat operators to adhere to best practice guidance in relation to their control;

B

To require all development proposals to address the presence or absence of invasive alien species on the proposed development site and to require the preparation of an Invasive Species Management Plan where such species are present;

C

To implement the requirements of EU Regulations 1143/2014 on the Prevention and Management of the Introduction and Spread of Invasive Alien Species.



14.4
Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure is the interconnecting network of land and water all around us that sustains environmental quality and enriches quality of life. It includes features such as parks, gardens, rivers, wetlands, woodlands and farmlands which surround and are threaded through our villages, towns and urban areas. Green infrastructure provides economic, educational, ecological and social benefits through natural solutions and helps us to understand the advantages that nature can offer to society.

While traditional ‘grey infrastructure’ typically only fulfils a single function such as drainage or transport, green infrastructure often provides multiple solutions that are cheaper, more robust and more sustainable from both an economic and social perspective e.g. natural floodplains that provide water storage in times of flood, can provide walkways and recreation areas when flood storage is not required and also provide important habitats for local wildlife. This is not to say that grey infrastructure is dispensable. There will always be a need for traditional infrastructure but in many cases it can be reinforced with solutions provided by nature.

The environmental benefits of identifying green infrastructure cannot be underestimated as the protection of natural features such as floodplains, wetlands, woodlands and hedgerows provide far-reaching benefits, for example, in climate change adaptation. Green infrastructure contributes to the increase of ecosystem resilience and can halt and reverse biodiversity loss, habitat fragmentation and the degradation of ecosystems. It works to provide green spaces in urban environments and builds a strong and connected ecological network.



Table 14.1
Benefits of Green Infrastructure

Environmental Benefits	Social Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of clean water • Removal of pollutants from air and water • Pollination provision • Protection against soil erosion • Rainwater retention • Increased pest control • Improvement of land quality • Mitigation of land take and soil sealing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better health and human well-being • Creation of jobs and education opportunities • Promotion of social inclusion • Diversification of local economy • More attractive, greener cities • Higher property values and local distinctiveness • More integrated transport and energy solutions • Enhanced tourism and recreation opportunities
Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Benefits	Biodiversity Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood alleviation • Strengthening ecosystem resilience • Carbon storage and sequestration • Mitigation of urban heat island effects • Disaster prevention (storms, landslides) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved habitats for wildlife • Provision of ecological corridors • Landscape permeability • Reducing habitat fragmentation • Providing a buffer against climate change for habitats and species

Green infrastructure can include:

- Parks and gardens – urban parks, pocket parks, formal country demesnes;
- Amenity green spaces – children's play areas, playing fields, communal green space within housing estates;
- Natural and semi-natural green spaces – woodland, scrub, nature reserves, grassland, heath, bogs, water bodies, floodplains, bare-rock habitats;
- Green corridors – cycle and walking routes, river banks and field hedgerows, rights of way, green roadside verges and lake shores;
- Other green spaces – allotments, community gardens, heritage sites, graveyards;
- Domestic gardens, street trees and civil spaces in urban areas.

All these natural assets, which can be either naturally occurring or specifically constructed to achieve a desired 'green' benefit, together form an interconnecting and multi-functional green network. This network can be used for a wide range of outdoor recreation, including walking and cycling, and also acts as a wildlife and biodiversity corridor.

A strong green infrastructure network is also highly beneficial from an economic perspective. It supports health and wellbeing, enhances sustainability and productivity and can significantly reduce the long-term costs associated with addressing issues such as climate change adaptation and flood management. In urban areas green infrastructure enhances the public realm and increases the attractiveness of towns and villages as places to live, work and visit. Within County Clare opportunities exist to expand and strengthen the green infrastructure network and to further explore the integration of green infrastructure into both public and private developments in the future.

The importance of green infrastructure is reflected in this Plan and is addressed in the context of issues such as climate change adaptation, integration into various forms of development, contribution to tourism development and the enhancement of the public realm in towns and villages, the quality of life of all residents and the natural heritage of the County. Green infrastructure is therefore interwoven throughout the chapters of this Development Plan.

Green infrastructure projects have a high proportion of capital costs which are incurred at the outset, with benefits that are delivered in the future. The creation, restoration and maintenance of green infrastructure projects can often require substantial investment. For this reason it is important to take account of the future flow of benefits when appraising green infrastructure projects.

CDP14.27

Development Plan Objective: Green Infrastructure

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To create an integrated and coherent green infrastructure network to enhance biodiversity and quality of life, provide sustainable water management and a green setting for urban areas;
- B** To facilitate the on-going development and improvement of green infrastructure in the Plan area, including green networks, green amenities and linked green corridors which ensure the provision of recreational amenities, natural areas for the growth of wildlife and biodiversity, and a network of infrastructure which results in a better quality of life for visitors and inhabitants alike;
- C** To implement the adopted green infrastructure plan for Shannon town and its environs;
- D** To prepare green infrastructure plans for Ennis and Kilrush during the lifetime of this Plan;
- E** To work with community groups to access funding for appropriate and beneficial green infrastructure projects including parks, woodlands, sports facilities, green areas, playground/play facilities, river corridors, walkways, cemeteries, churchyards, paths, seating and amenities;
- F** To require the preparation and assessment of all planning applications associated with amenity and/or recreational uses under the heading of green infrastructure to have regard to the information, data and requirements of the Natura Impact Report, SEA Environmental Report and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Report contained in Volume 10 of this Development Plan;
- G** To require projects to be fully informed by ecological and environmental constraints at the earliest stage of project planning and any necessary assessment to be undertaken, including assessments of disturbance to species, where required;
- H** To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation as outlined in Objective CDP2.1.

Chapter 14 Biodiversity, Natural Heritage and Green Infrastructure – Cross References

CDP3.11	New Single Houses in the Countryside within the 'Areas of Special Control'
CDP3.12	New Single Houses in the Countryside outside the 'Areas of Special Control'
CDP3.13	New Single Houses on Infill Sites in the Countryside
CDP3.14	Replacement of Substandard Habitable Houses in the Countryside
CDP3.15	Refurbishment of a Derelict Dwelling/Structure in the Countryside
CDP5.12	Off-Road Walking and Cycling
CDP5.13	Countryside Recreation
CDP5.18	Higher Education Institutes
CDP6.9	Shannon Estuary
CDP6.15	Re-Use of Brownfield Sites
CDP6.20	Rural Enterprise
CDP8.7	Environmental Considerations in Road Construction Projects
CDP8.22	Protection of Water Resources
CDP8.27	Waste Water Treatment and Disposal
CDP8.33	Noise Pollution
CDP8.34	Air Pollution
CDP8.35	Light Pollution
CDP8.40	Renewable Energy
CDP8.41	Energy Storage
CDP8.44	Telecommunications Infrastructure
CDP9.4	Tourism Developments and Tourism Facilities
CDP9.5	Tourist Accommodation
CDP9.6	Wild Atlantic Way
CDP9.17	Sustainable Tourism
CDP9.27	Tourism and the Islands
CDP10.2	Rural Enterprise
CDP10.7	Natural Resources
CDP10.9	Forestry
CDP10.11	Renewable Energy Development
CDP10.12	Unconventional Gas Exploration and Extraction
CDP10.13	Minerals, Mining and Quarrying
CDP11.3	Marine-Related Industry/Large-Scale Industry on the Shannon Estuary
CDP11.8	Harnessing the Energy Resources of the Shannon Estuary
CDP11.14	Building on the Shannon Estuary as a Natural Asset
CDP11.15	Marina Developments
CDP12.1	Environmental Designations in Coastal Areas
CDP12.5	Off-Shore Gas and Petroleum Resources
CDP12.6	Offshore Renewable Energy Development
CDP12.11	Marina Development in Coastal Areas
CDP12.12	Coastal Erosion and Flooding
CDP12.14	Protection of Beaches and Sand Dunes
CDP12.16	Island Development
CDP15.6	Protected Species and Proposed Works to Buildings
CDP17.2	Sustainable Developments
CDP18.7	CFRAMS
CDP18.8	Storm Water Management
CDP18.9	Green Infrastructure and Flood Management
CDP18.10	Maintenance of Rivers

Chapter 15

Architectural, Archaeological and Cultural Heritage

Goal XIV:

A County Clare that affords protection and conservation to buildings, areas, structures, sites and features of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest and recognises them as a social, cultural and economic asset to the County.

15.0 Introduction.....	234
15.1 Strategic Aims.....	234
15.2 Context.....	234
15.3 Architectural Heritage	235
15.3.1 Record of Protected Structures (RPS).....	235
15.3.2 Industrial Heritage	236
15.3.3 Vernacular Heritage	236
15.3.4 Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs).....	237
15.3.5 Protected Species.....	237
15.3.6 Supporting the Improvement of Architectural Heritage	238
15.4 Archaeological Heritage	238
15.4.1 Underwater Archaeology	240
15.5 Cultural Heritage	241
15.5.1 Museums and Heritage Centres.....	241
15.5.2 Genealogy	241
15.5.3 Oidhreacht Theanga: Linguistic Heritage	241
15.5.4 Folklore and Oral Cultural Heritage	242



15.0 Introduction

Architectural heritage represents the built environment of past centuries as well as recent times. It informs us about the lives of past generations and contributes to the form of present landscapes, both urban and rural. In urban and rural areas architectural heritage has a key role in making successful 'places for people', thus providing visual enrichment and recognisable landmarks which help to create pride of place.

For the purpose of protecting structures, or parts of structures, which form part of the architectural heritage and which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest, every development plan must include a record of protected structures, and must include in that record every structure which is, in the opinion of the planning authority, of such interest within its functional area. Volume 4 of this Development Plan comprises the Record of Protected Structures.

County Clare is renowned both nationally and internationally as a centre of cultural heritage. This Plan aims to support and enhance appreciation of this cultural heritage to ensure that it can be enjoyed by both local residents and visitors to the County and safeguarded for future generations.

15.1 Strategic Aims

This chapter presents the objectives required to protect the architectural, archaeological and cultural heritage of the County. In accordance with the overall vision of the Plan, it is based on the following strategic aims:

- To protect and enhance the character of the built environment by means of the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas;
- To enhance present and future environments by protecting the architectural heritage of the County and successfully integrating new development;
- To protect the archaeology resource in the County for both its intrinsic and tourism value;
- To promote and support cultural activities, facilities and services in County Clare.

15.2 Context

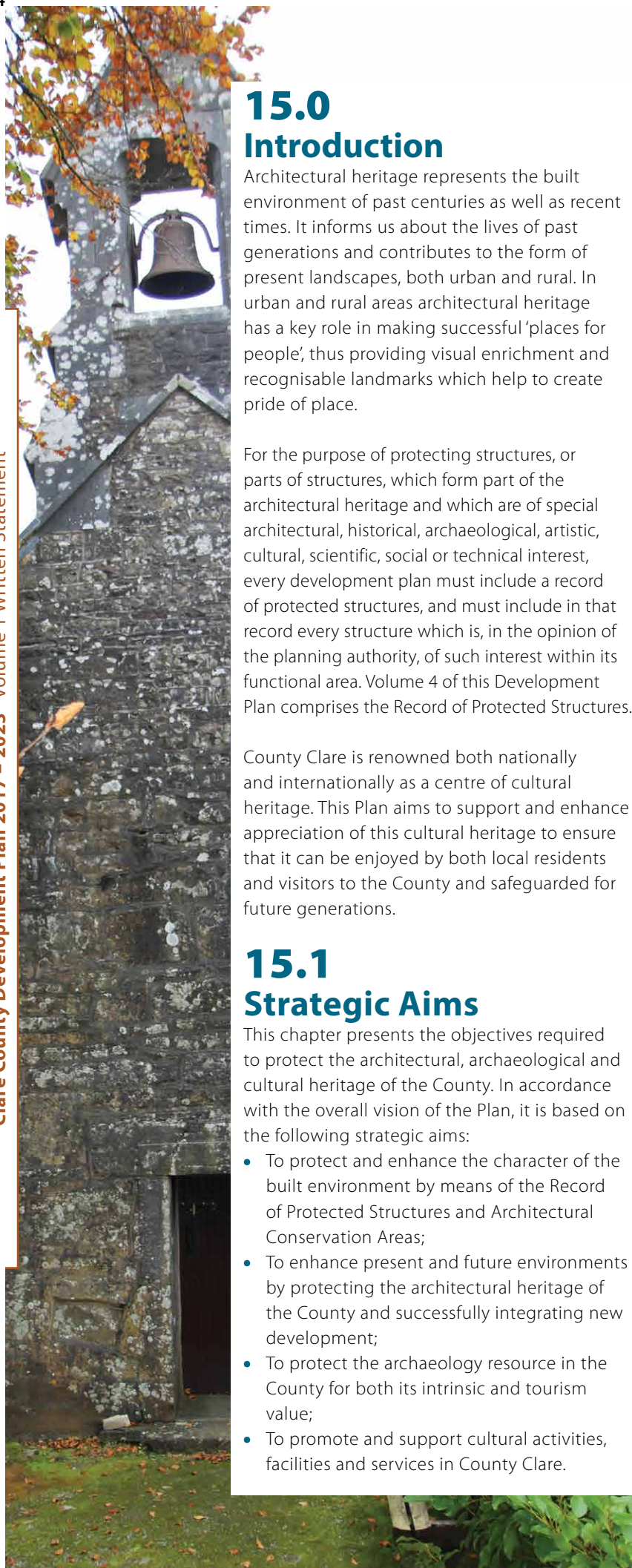
County Clare possesses a wealth of architectural and archaeological heritage including some of the best examples of early settlement areas in Europe. Legal protections are provided by several statutory instruments. In addition to the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), legal protection for archaeology is provided by the National Monuments Act 1930 – 2004, under which the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) is compiled.

This Development Plan protects architectural heritage by drawing up a Record of Protected Structures (RPS), identifying Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) and setting objectives in relation to these and other elements of architectural heritage, having regard to the guidance set out in 'Architectural Heritage Protection – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2013)'. Archaeology is protected as an element of architectural heritage under the Planning Acts and also, in its own right, under the National Monuments Acts.

The built environment is a dynamic entity which may need to adjust to meet the needs of the current generation. In the case of architectural heritage, ways can be found to manage this change in a sensitive manner.

In the preparation of this chapter of the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 regard has been had to the following policy documents:

National Monuments Acts 1930-2004
The Granada Convention (Council of Europe 1985)
Architectural Heritage Protection – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2013
The Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) Act 1999
National Heritage Plan 2002
The Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended)



15.3 Architectural Heritage

The present environment, both natural, built and cultural, is the point of departure in formulating new policies and objectives. Protection of the architectural heritage of the County and the preservation of the character of particular areas goes beyond being an end in itself. The built heritage of the County, comprising its architectural heritage and its archaeological heritage, has a practical role in shaping a positive future for County Clare. Combined with our cultural heritage, it should be viewed as one of the many assets that make the County an attractive place in which to live, work and visit.

CDP15.1

Development Plan Objective: Architectural Heritage

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To ensure the protection of the architectural heritage of County Clare through the identification of Protected Structures, the designation of Architectural Conservation Areas, the safeguarding of historic gardens, and the recognition of structures and elements that contribute positively to the vernacular and industrial heritage of the County;
- B** To ensure that the architectural heritage of the County is not damaged either through direct destruction or by unsympathetic developments nearby.

15.3.1 Record of Protected Structures (RPS)

Section 51 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) requires the development plan to include a record of structures which form part of the architectural heritage of the County and are to be protected. The Council has drawn up this list, referred to as the Record of Protected Structures (RPS), which makes up Volume 4 of this Plan.

An alteration to a protected structure may alter an entire streetscape or rural scene. Therefore, protected structures should not be viewed in isolation, but should be considered as part of a larger architectural picture.

The Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) removes exempted development rights where works to a protected structure or a proposed protected structure will materially affect the character of the structure or any element of the structure which contributes to its special interest. Planning permission will be required where such works are proposed. For each structure on the RPS information is provided on 'category of special interest' for which it is listed. Development proposals will need to have regard to these issues. The definition of a protected structure or part of a structure can include vernacular architecture, historic parklands and gardens and industrial artefacts or structures. Aside from buildings, other elements of interest include items such as pumps, fountains, lime kilns, post boxes, stone walls, gate piers, street furniture and paving, traditional shop-fronts, carriage-ways and jostle stones etc. Such items make a valuable contribution to the character and identity of places.

CDP15.2

Development Plan Objective: Protected Structures

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To protect, as set out in the Record of Protected Structures, all structures and their settings, which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social, or technical interest;
- B** To review the Record of Protected Structures periodically and add structures of special interest as appropriate, including significant elements of industrial, maritime or vernacular heritage and any twentieth century structures of merit.



15.3.2 Industrial Heritage

Various industrial buildings throughout the County form part of its architectural heritage. Structures such as mills, bridges, quays, railways, canals and warehouses from different times represent the evolution of industrialisation and industrial processes in the County. This evolution has continued, for example, from the motive power of early watermills through hydro-electric generation to newer wind energy developments. Industrial heritage can also extend further into the past to archaeological sites and objects that provide evidence of early tool production, metal work and mining. The wide range of structures of industrial provenance provides a visible timeline from early industry to modern times within County Clare and many are of special interest.

CDP15.3 Development Plan Objective: Industrial Heritage

It is an objective of the Development Plan:
To protect and preserve buildings and features of industrial heritage such as mills, bridges, lighthouses, harbours, etc. Proposals for refurbishment works to, or redevelopment/ conversion of, these sites will be subject to a full architectural and archaeological assessment.

15.3.3 Vernacular Heritage

Scattered throughout the countryside and within the towns and villages of County Clare is an extensive stock of historic buildings and structures dating mainly from the 18th, 19th and early 20th century. These cottages, houses, shops, farm complexes, outbuildings, mills, factories and forges were the homes and workplaces of the ordinary people built by local people using local materials. In architectural terms they are deemed to be Vernacular Heritage – ‘used to describe the local or regional traditional building forms and types using indigenous materials, and without grand architectural pretensions’ (from James Steven Curl’s Encyclopaedia of Architectural Terms). This is in contrast to formal architecture, such as the houses of the gentry, churches and public buildings, which were usually designed by architects or engineers.

While many of these vernacular buildings may not merit specific designation as Protected Structures, their form, scale, materials and orientation contribute positively to the rural landscape as well as to the historic villages and towns of County Clare. They often establish the distinctive character of a particular area through their use of natural, indigenous materials such as limestone and sandstone masonry, Moher or Killaloe slate roofs etc. Significant numbers of vernacular structures have been lost through demolition, replacement or dereliction and so what was once commonplace is becoming increasingly rare, especially in rural areas. The Council will encourage the appropriate re-use of vernacular buildings rather than their replacement or dereliction. The Council understands that surviving historic buildings are people’s homes and places of work, which need to evolve to facilitate ongoing occupancy and therefore survival. Such changes need to be sympathetic to the special features and character of the building.

Other types of vernacular built heritage under increasing pressure for demolition and alteration are historic shopfronts and pub fronts found in urban centres. Historic street patterns, plot sizes and street furniture also subtly contribute greatly to the character of a place and should be recognised and kept. Numerous historic cores of the towns and villages in the County have been identified as Architectural Conservation Areas and it is hoped that this designation will assist to encourage the retention and re-use of vernacular structures in urban settings and historic elements in the public realm.

Damage to the vernacular building stock does not only relate to the loss of whole structures but can also be a result of the gradual attrition of architectural details such as the replacement of roof coverings and windows with modern materials, removal of external render, inappropriate repointing and the addition of unsuitable extensions. Alterations to individual buildings can have a significant and cumulative effect on streetscapes and landscapes.

CDP15.4

Development Plan Objective: Vernacular Heritage

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To seek the retention, appreciation and appropriate revitalisation of the vernacular heritage of County Clare, in both towns and rural areas, by deterring the replacement of good quality vernacular buildings with modern structures and by protecting (through the use of ACAs and the RPS and in the normal course of Development Management) vernacular buildings where they contribute to the character of an area or town and/or where they are rare examples of a structure type;
- B** To support proposals to refurbish vernacular structures that are in a run-down or derelict condition, provided that:
- Appropriate traditional building materials and methods are used to carry out repairs to the historic fabric;
 - Proposals for extensions to vernacular structures are reflective and proportionate to the existing building and do not erode the setting and design qualities of the original structure which make it attractive;

While direction for the design should be taken from the historic building stock of the area, it can be expressed in contemporary architectural language.

15.3.4 Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)

Architectural Conservation Areas are places, areas, groups of structures or a townscape which are of special interest or contribute to the appreciation of a protected structure. The ACA provision is complementary to the Record of Protected Structures. The spatial character of ACAs can be the basis for their designation and development proposals must enhance and support the definition of that space. The designation of an area as an ACA is not intended to bring excessive restrictions on development in that area, but rather to be a positive influence, to ensure that new developments make a positive contribution to an area that has been identified as being of significant importance. The aim is to retain the overall special architectural or historical character of an area or place.

Currently there are 35 ACAs in County Clare which are listed in Appendix 4 and mapped in the relevant settlement plans and local area plans. It should be noted that the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) removes exempted development rights where works to the exterior of a structure located in an ACA will materially affect the character of the area. Planning permission will be required where such works are proposed.

CDP15.5

Development Plan Objective: Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To ensure that new developments within or adjacent to an ACA respect the context of the area and contribute positively to the ACA in terms of design, scale, setting and material finishes;
- B** To protect existing buildings, structures, groups of structures, sites, landscapes and features such as street furniture and paving, which are considered to be intrinsic elements of the special character of the ACA, from demolition or removal and non-sympathetic alterations;
- C** To ensure that all new signage, lighting, advertising and utilities to buildings within an ACA are designed, constructed and located in a manner that is complementary to the character of the ACA;
- D** To ensure that external colour schemes in ACAs enhance the character and amenities of the area and reflect traditional colour schemes.

15.3.5 Protected Species

Many buildings and structures of architectural heritage also create important habitats for protected species. While the continued use and on-going maintenance of these buildings and structures is strongly supported, it is important to ensure that this is balanced with the protection of the natural heritage of the County.

CDP15.6

Development Plan Objective: Protected Species and Proposed Works to Buildings

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To protect habitats and species when considering proposed works to buildings which are likely to impact on protected ecological sites and protected species.

15.3.6
Supporting the Improvement
of Architectural Heritage

The on-going maintenance and conservation of the architectural heritage of the County is of great importance. However Clare County Council is also cognisant of costs involved in this maintenance. The Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs operate a number of grant schemes such as the Structures at Risk Scheme and the Architectural Conservation Grant Scheme to provide financial assistance for such works.

Local communities play an important role in maintaining and protecting features of local architectural heritage such as historic churches, graveyards and ruined structures. Clare County Council will encourage communities, owners and occupiers to maintain these buildings and structures in a good state of repair, carefully trimming ivy and carrying out essential conservation works. Guidance will be provided by the Clare County Architectural Conservation Officer and funding may be provided through various conservation grant schemes. All works must be carried out in accordance with the guidance set out in the Advice Series booklets published by the Architectural Heritage Advisory Unit of the Department of the Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

CDP15.7

Development Plan Objective:
Maintenance and Improvement of
Architectural Heritage

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

A

To advocate for greater financial assistance for the maintenance and improvement of architectural heritage in County Clare;

B

To provide advice and guidance to community groups, owners and occupiers with regard to the maintenance and repair of buildings and structures of architectural heritage importance.

15.4
Archaeological
Heritage

Archaeology is the surviving remains of human presence from early times and it consists of known and as yet unidentified sites, monuments and objects. A monument can be defined as a man-made structure or group of structures or a natural structure that has been altered by man. It may consist of sites where there are no visible features but where below-surface, archaeological remains are known or expected to exist.

In Ireland, archaeological sites are legally protected from unauthorised damage or interference through powers and functions under the National Monuments Acts 1930-2004, International Conventions ratified by Ireland, the National Cultural Institutions Act 1997 and the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended). The National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994 made provision for the compilation of all known monuments in the County - The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP). The RMP consists of a set of constraint maps and accompanying manual, on which all the archaeological sites in County Clare known to the Minister in 1994 were marked. All the sites marked on the RMP constraint maps are protected under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994. The RMP is available for consultation in the Planning Department and in each branch library⁶.

A number of monuments are further protected by being in the ownership or guardianship of the State or are the subject of temporary preservation orders (National Monuments) and registration orders, as informed by the Department of the Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. Direct impacts on those monuments that are National Monuments in State ownership or guardianship, monuments in local authority care or monuments subject to Preservation Orders will require the consent of the Minister for the Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs under Section 14 of the National Monuments Act 1930 as amended by Section 5 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 2004.

⁶ Can also be viewed on archaeology.ie/nationalmonuments/flexviewer

It is the policy of the Council that where, after consultation with the National Monuments Service, it is determined that a building of special historic interest or a site of archaeological interest is incapable of continued protection whether by reason of dangerous condition or where road or other developments encroach on such sites, that the Council shall ensure that:

- The site or structure is surveyed, excavated and recorded by the appropriate authorities in an acceptable manner (photogrammetric surveys, inventories and databases);
- A study is carried out to determine the best method of conserving and displaying any fragments of buildings such as ornamental door cases, street names, commemorative signs etc. and of identifying the site for public information purposes.

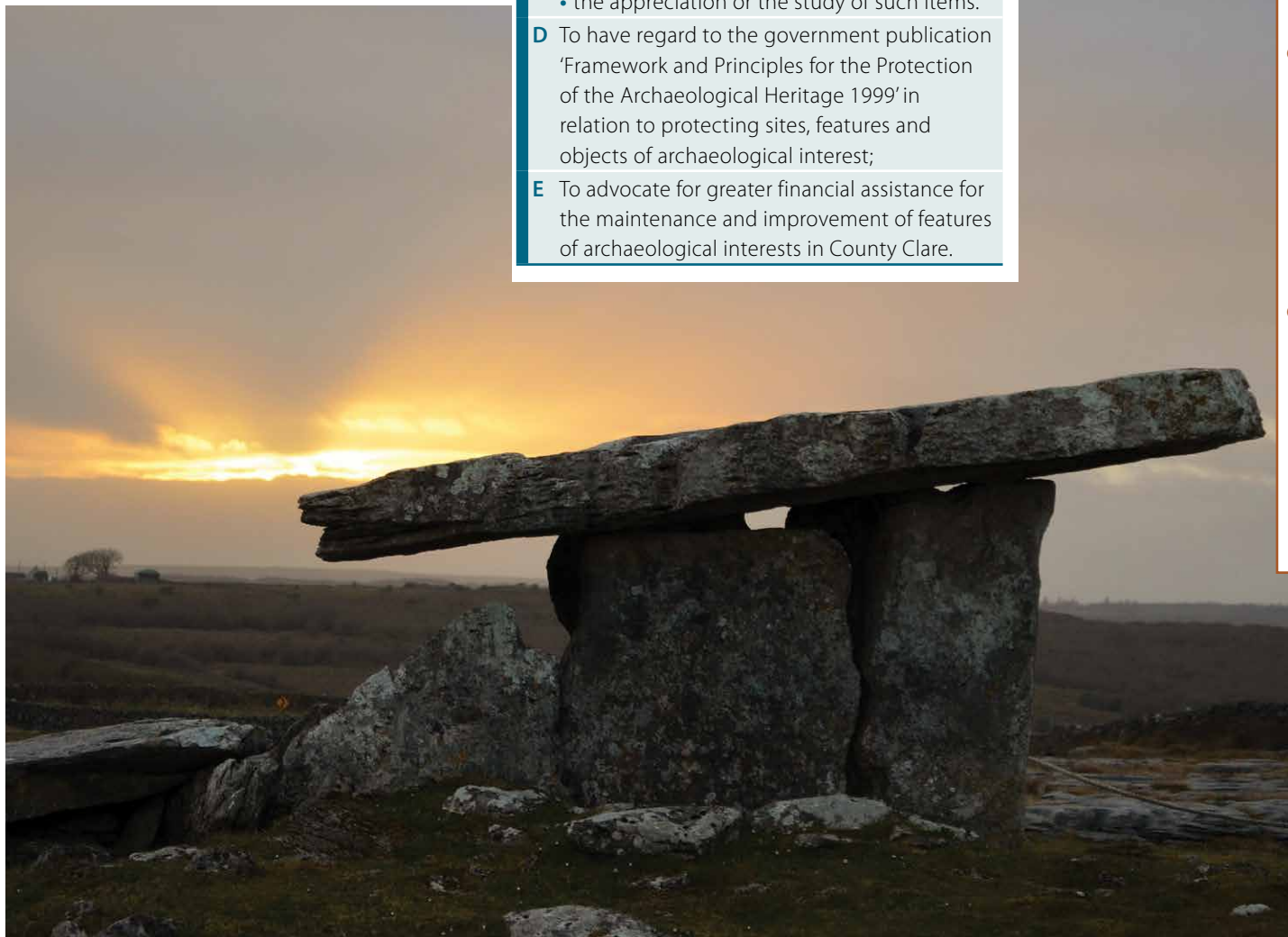
The qualities of archaeological or architectural interest are not mutually exclusive and certain structures can have both qualities. Some of the items listed in the Record of Monuments and Places are also Protected Structures (and are set out in Volume 4 of this Plan), and are within the ambit of protection under the provisions of the National Monuments Acts 1930-2004.

CDP15.8

Development Plan Objective: Sites, Features and Objects of Archaeological Interest

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To safeguard sites, features and objects of archaeological interest generally;
- B** To secure the preservation (i.e. preservation in situ or in exceptional cases preservation by record) of all archaeological monuments included in the Record of Monuments and Places as established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994, and of sites, features and objects of archaeological and historical interest generally (in securing such preservation, the Council will have regard to the advice and recommendations of the Department of the Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs);
- C** To permit development only where the Planning Authority is satisfied that the proposals will not interfere with:
 - items of archaeological or historical importance;
 - the areas in the vicinity of archaeological sites;
 - the appreciation or the study of such items.
- D** To have regard to the government publication 'Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage 1999' in relation to protecting sites, features and objects of archaeological interest;
- E** To advocate for greater financial assistance for the maintenance and improvement of features of archaeological interests in County Clare.



CDP15.9

Development Plan Objective: Newly Discovered Archaeological Sites

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To protect and preserve archaeological sites discovered since the publication of the Record of Monuments and Places.

CDP15.10

Development Plan Objective: Zones of Archaeological Potential

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To protect the Zones of Archaeological Potential located within both urban and rural areas as identified in the Record of Monuments and Places.

CDP15.11

Development Plan Objective: Archaeology and Infrastructure Schemes

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To have regard to archaeological concerns when considering proposed service schemes (including electricity, sewerage, telecommunications and water supply) and proposed roadworks (both realignments and new roads) located in close proximity to Recorded Monuments and Places and Zones of Archaeological Potential.

CDP15.12

Development Plan Objective: Raising Archaeological Awareness

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To raise awareness of and improve practice in relation to archaeology in County Clare. Guidance material will be produced setting out the requirements for archaeological protection in the County;
- B** To promote the care and conservation of historic graveyards throughout the County.

15.4.1

Underwater Archaeology

County Clare has a rich and diverse underwater archaeology. From the Bronze Age fish weir at Islandmagrath (Fergus Estuary), medieval fish weirs and 18th and 19th century kelp walls in the Shannon Estuary to the possible location of Spanish Armada ships off the west coast of Quilty, great potential exists to further explore this archaeological potential.

CDP15.13

Development Plan Objective: Underwater Archaeology

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To protect and preserve the archaeological value of underwater archaeological sites in rivers, lakes, intertidal and sub-tidal environments;
- B** To support the further exploration of the underwater archaeology of County Clare, including the San Marcos project, and any subsequent projects that may arise during the lifetime of this Plan.



15.5 Cultural Heritage

Cultural heritage includes tangible culture such as buildings, monuments, books, works of art and artefacts and intangible culture such as folklore, traditions, language, and knowledge. It also includes natural heritage such as culturally-significant landscapes and biodiversity (which are addressed further in Chapters 13 and 14 of this Plan). County Clare has a rich cultural heritage, renowned as a centre of traditional music and dance, historic landscapes and diverse cultural experiences.

CDP15.14

Development Plan Objective: Cultural Development

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To conserve cultural identity and enhance access to both culturally-distinct areas and facilities for cultural experiences.

15.5.1 Museums and Heritage Centres

The Clare County Museum, a Clare County Council initiative, is located in Ennis and works to collect, preserve, record, communicate and display the material evidence and associated information of the heritage of County Clare. It is one of many such centres across the County, run either by the local authority, privately or by community groups that work to preserve and display local aspects of County Clare's unique history, heritage and culture.

CDP15.15

Development Plan Objective: Museums and Heritage Centres

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To facilitate further development of and extensions to museums, heritage centres and archives across the County;
- B** To ensure that the County Museum's collections and associated information are accessible to the public;
- C** To promote a wider appreciation and understanding of the unique natural, cultural and archaeological heritage of the County;
- D** To recognise and support the role of private and community facilities in making heritage artefacts and information available to the public.

15.5.2 Genealogy

Genealogy refers to the study or investigation of ancestry or family history. County Clare has an extensive array of genealogical resources. The resources of Clare County Library and Local Studies Centre are particularly important with resources such as emigration records and the Graveyards Inscription Collection providing useful research information.

CDP15.16

Development Plan Objective: Genealogy

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To support the on-going collection of information of genealogical interest in the County and to make such data available in multiple formats to facilitate genealogical research.

15.5.3 Oidhreacht Theanga: Linguistic Heritage

Aithníonn Comhairle Contae an Chláir an tábhacht a bhaineann lenár n-oidhreacht theanga do mhuintir an Chontae, agus d'oidhreacht chultúrtha an Chontae. Oibreoidh Comhairle Contae an Chláir i gcomhpháirt le grúpaí, mar shampla Conradh na Gaeilge, Clár as Gaeilge, Coiste Forbartha Gaeltachta an Chláir agus baill d'Fhóram Gaeilge an Chláir a oibríonn ar son chur chun cinn na Gaeilge sa Chontae.

Clare County Council recognises the importance of our linguistic heritage to the people of the County and to the cultural heritage of County Clare. Clare County Council will work in partnership with groups such as Conradh na Gaeilge, Clár as Gaeilge, Coiste Forbartha Gaeltachta an Chláir and members of Fóram Gaeilge an Chláir who work for the promotion of the Irish language.



CDP15.17

Development Plan Objective: Oidhreacht Theanga/ Linguistic Heritage

Tá sé mar sprioc ag Comhairle

Contae an Chláir:

- A** Chun foráil a dhéanamh i dtaobh oidhreacht theanga agus oidhreacht chultúrtha an Chontae trí thacaíocht a thabhairt do na heagraíochtaí atá bainteach le cur chun cinn agus le caomhnú leanúnach na Gaeilge agus an chultúir;
- B** Chun obair a dhéanamh i slí dhearfach agus spreagúil chun timpeallacht dátheangach a chruthú agus a chothú sa Chontae, agus chun deiseanna chun Gaeilge labhartha agus scríofa sa Chontae a chur ar fáil.

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To provide for the linguistic and cultural heritage of the County through support for organisations involved in the continued promotion and preservation of the Irish language and culture;
- B** To work in a positive and encouraging way to create and maintain a bilingual environment in the County, and to ensure the availability of opportunities for the use of spoken and written Irish.

15.5.4 Folklore and Oral Cultural Heritage

Clare County Council recognises the importance of our folkloric and oral cultural heritage to the people of Clare and to future generations. The people of County Clare and those who live in the County ensure that local traditions are kept alive. The Council will endeavour to work closely with groups such as Cuimhneamh an Chláir to realise their objectives in regard to the gathering, recording, preservation and promotion of folklore and oral cultural heritage in the County.

CDP15.18

Development Plan Objective: Folklore and Oral Cultural Heritage

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To support and facilitate the gathering, recording, preservation and promotion of folklore and oral cultural heritage in the County and to work closely with groups such as Cuimhneamh an Chláir to realise their objectives.

Chapter 15 Architecture, Archaeological and Cultural Heritage – Cross References

CDP3.14	Replacement of Substandard Habitable Houses in the Countryside
CDP3.15	Refurbishment of a Derelict Dwelling/Structure in the Countryside
CDP4.14	Development Place Names
CDP8.6	Proposed Projects Identified for Future Development
CDP8.40	Renewable Energy
CDP8.41	Energy Storage
CDP9.16	Heritage and Cultural Tourism
CDP9.26	West Clare Railway
CDP9.27	Tourism and the Islands
CDP12.10	Ports, Jetties, Harbours, Quays and Piers
CDP12.16	Island Development
CDP16.5	Opportunity Sites
CDP16.8	Lands Identified as Areas where the Vacant Site Levy can Apply
CDP16.9	Derelict Sites
CDP16.10	Town Centre Infill Sites



Chapter 16

Towns and Villages

Goal XV:

A County Clare with a strong and vibrant network of towns and villages that provide a wide range of services and a high quality of life for residents of the County.

16.0 Introduction.....	244
16.1 Strategic Aims.....	244
16.2 Town and Village Renewal and Regeneration.....	244
16.2.1 Town Centre Vibrancy.....	245
16.2.2 Town Improvement Strategies.....	245
16.2.3 Town Teams.....	246
16.2.4 Economic Development Fund.....	246
16.2.5 Opportunity Sites.....	247
16.2.6 Addressing Vacancy.....	248
16.2.7 Addressing Depopulation	248
16.2.8 Lands Identified as Areas on which the Vacant Site Levy can Apply	249
16.2.9 Derelict Sites.....	250
16.2.10 Town Centre Infill Sites	251
16.2.11 Tidy Towns and Community Groups.....	251

16.0 Introduction

Towns and villages are the heart of County Clare. They provide services, social opportunities, employment and infrastructure. Most importantly they are home to a network of communities, each of which has its own unique identity, with each one contributing to the overall identity of County Clare.

Each town and village performs a different function, with large towns such as Ennis and Shannon driving economic growth in the County, while smaller settlements are important service providers for their resident populations and focal points for the surrounding rural communities.

The economic decline of recent years has had an effect on all of the towns and villages in the County and, in some cases, has resulted in a reduction in the number of services available, limited employment opportunities and a decline in the quality of the public realm. The country is now returning to a period of economic growth and many of the settlements in County Clare are showing strong signs of recovery. However renewal and regeneration is not yet evident in some parts of the County and it is important that a range of measures are introduced to support their future growth during the lifetime of this Plan. While this chapter sets out the high-level aims and objectives in relation to towns and villages throughout the County, more targeted analysis and proposals in relation to individual settlements are contained in Volume 3 of this Development Plan.

16.1 Strategic Aims

This chapter presents the objectives required to support the renewal and growth of the towns and villages of County Clare throughout the lifetime of this Plan. In accordance with the overall vision for the Plan, it is based on the following strategic aims:

- To support the renewal of towns and villages in need of economic, social and/or physical regeneration;
- To achieve the beneficial reuse of vacant, derelict or under-utilised sites, particularly identified Opportunity Sites;
- To identify and actively engage in initiatives that will support economic growth and social and physical regeneration in the towns and villages of County Clare;
- To support local communities across the County in their work to enhance their towns and villages;
- To identify physical changes that could enhance the 'sense of place' in the County's towns and villages.

16.2 Town and Village Renewal and Regeneration

Town and village renewal and regeneration have both an economic and a physical aspect and both are inherently interlinked. An attractive physical environment with a high level of amenity is essential to quality of life for local residents and also to ensure that settlements are attractive locations for new development. Employment-generating developments in settlements can take many forms from large industries to retail developments to home-based employment, all of which make a significant contribution to the vibrancy and economic wellbeing of a settlement. In order to support areas in need of renewal and regeneration, action may be needed to improve the physical environment, to support new business development or, in some instances, actions may be needed in both areas.





16.2.1 Town Centre Vibrancy

A vibrant town centre that provides a variety of services and functions is essential in any settlement. A strong retail sector coupled with a mix of business, social and residential uses contributes to the health of town centre areas. Due to economic circumstances some of these sectors have suffered a decline in recent years and this has had a negative impact on town centres. The result has been higher than average vacancy rates and a reduction in the number and quality of retail and service outlets.

The return to economic growth now offers the opportunity to enhance the vibrancy and vitality of town and village centres across County Clare. The needs of each individual settlement are different and therefore detailed work and analysis such as retail health checks and vacant site surveys will be required to ensure that the actions undertaken are tailored to the specific needs of each settlement.

Further details on the objectives to support the retail sector in towns and villages of County Clare are set out on Chapter 7 of this Development Plan.

CDP16.1

Development Plan Objective: Town Centre Vibrancy

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To carry out retail health checks, vacant site and derelict site surveys and other essential research and analysis to inform the actions required to support town centre renewal and development in the towns and larger villages of County Clare.

16.2.2 Town Improvement Strategies

Following on from the collation of essential information the Council will, resource permitting, work with local communities and relevant stakeholders, using an inter-departmental and multi-disciplinary approach, to prepare improvement strategies for towns and villages across the County. These strategies will be prepared to achieve the physical enhancement of the public realm in areas that have been identified as being in need of improvement. They will vary in scale from plans for individual sites/areas to larger-scale plans for town centre areas dependent on the needs of the individual settlements.

Clare County Council has already worked closely with stakeholders in Kilkee to prepare 'Towards a Better Kilkee – A Town Improvement and Economic Development Strategy 2014-2024' and will proactively support the implementation of the actions and recommendations set out in the Strategy during the lifetime of this Plan.

CDP16.2

Development Plan Objective: Town Improvement Strategies

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To work with all relevant stakeholders to prepare improvement strategies for areas identified as being in need of enhancement during the lifetime of this Plan;
- B** To support the preparation and implementation of Tidy Towns Environmental Improvement Strategies for towns and villages in County Clare.

16.2.3 Town Teams

The establishment of a town team can support regeneration and enhance the economic development of town centre areas. Town teams generally comprise key stakeholders who are representative of the business and civic interests of the town centre. The role of the town team is to prepare and implement a plan to achieve a healthy town centre in its respective area. The Plan must clearly express the vision for the town, the actions required and who is responsible for each element of implementation. The Plan must take account of ‘internal factors’ affecting the town and external factors such as the state of the economy. It must also contain performance indicators or a means of assessing if the Plan is working or to determine if modification is required. The town team concept has the potential to have beneficial impacts in a number of towns in County Clare, particularly in the town centre of Ennis.

CDP16.3

**Development Plan Objective:
Town Teams**

It is an objective of Clare County Council:
To explore the possibility and potential benefits of establishing a ‘town team’ in Ennis town centre and, if necessary during the lifetime of this Plan, other towns across the County.

16.2.4 Economic Development Fund

The establishment of a revolving economic development fund with the specific purpose of securing property improvement and ensuring that town centre properties are available for economic/employment-generating development has the potential to greatly enhance the viability of town centres across the County. Through the allocation of a percentage of the annual commercial rate income, and the reinvestment of funds generated through successful projects, significant potential exists to fund projects and opportunities for innovation, business development, regeneration and town centre enhancement. Clare County Council will seek to establish a fund of this nature during the lifetime of this Plan.

CDP16.4

**Development Plan Objective:
Economic Development Fund**

It is an objective of Clare County Council:
To seek to establish a revolving economic development fund to support economic growth, town centre vitality and employment-generation during the lifetime of this Plan.





16.2.5 Opportunity Sites

A series of Opportunity Sites have been identified in the towns and villages across the County, the redevelopment of which would make a significant positive contribution to the settlement in which they are located. This contribution can be from either a physical or economic perspective. They have been identified for one or more of the following reasons:

- The redevelopment of the site is central to the achievement of the overall vision of the settlement;
- The redevelopment of the site has the potential to create a significant number of jobs;
- The redevelopment of the site would provide a space for business/activities not currently available in the town;
- The subject site represents a gap in the fabric of the townscape in the given settlement and its redevelopment would make a significant contribution to the overall appearance and amenity of the area.

Details in relation to each Opportunity Site and the potential future uses for which they have been identified are set out in the relevant settlement plans contained in Volume 3 of this Plan. Opportunity Sites can be in either public or private ownership. Sites in public ownership are generally under-utilised public spaces or civic buildings that offer the potential for enhanced local amenities and improvements to the public realm. Sites in private ownership are most commonly premises or sites in key locations with significant future development potential. The process of identifying Opportunity Sites and work to progress their redevelopment is dynamic and on-going. Those sites that have been identified in this Development Plan may be redeveloped to their full potential during the lifetime of this Plan and other sites, through changing circumstance, may be identified.

CDP16.5

Development Plan Objective: Opportunity Sites

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To work with all relevant stakeholders on an on-going basis to secure the successful redevelopment of identified Opportunity Sites;
- B** Subject to resources, to provide technical assistance/guidance to support the redevelopment of Opportunity Sites.



16.2.6 Addressing Vacancy

Town and village centres are dynamic entities and temporary/short term vacancy can often form part of the natural cycle of development and growth. However longer-term vacancy, which can be caused by various socio-economic factors or physical constraints, can become problematic, particularly if the properties are not maintained to a high standard whilst vacant. The causes of vacancy can be complex but it is important to secure a beneficial use for vacant properties in the Plan area in order to ensure that they do not fall into disrepair and begin to have a negative impact on the appearance of the town or village in which they are located. It is also important to ensure that there is a strong mix of uses in town centres, including residential uses.

In order to stimulate economic and social activity in towns and villages the Council will identify areas where long-term vacancy is an issue, assist in examining the reasons for vacancy and work in cooperation with landlords and occupiers to secure regeneration. The Council will investigate, through Development Contribution schemes or other financial initiatives, a proactive and coherent approach to tackling vacancy in our towns and villages.

CDP16.6

**Development Plan Objective:
Town Centre Vacancy**

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

A To facilitate a co-ordinated and proactive approach to address vacancy in the Plan area, including liaising with owners, identifying barriers to use and examining design solutions proposed by owners to resolving identified difficulties;

B To generally permit the alternative beneficial use of vacant property provided that the proposal will not negatively impact on the amenity of adjoining properties, the environment or movement/transport in the area.

Vacant residential properties in the town centre can also provide an opportunity to improve the vibrancy of towns and villages. Residential uses in town centres ensure that areas remain vibrant outside of traditional business hours and also ensure more sustainable living patterns, reducing the need for motorised transportation. Residential uses in town and village centre areas are discussed in greater detail in Section 4.3.2 of this Plan.

16.2.7 Addressing Depopulation

Depopulation is recognised as an issue in numerous towns and villages throughout the County, particularly in more peripheral areas. During the lifetime of this Plan, Clare County Council will work in coordination with local communities in certain towns and villages to identify and remove barriers to revitalisation and growth in these areas. The studies will take a multidisciplinary approach and will include, though will not be limited to, an assessment of type and tenure of accommodation in the settlement, land ownership, social and economic issues and infrastructure provision.

CDP16.7

**Development Plan Objective:
Addressing Depopulation**

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To work in coordination with local communities to undertake a multidisciplinary study of towns and villages that are experiencing depopulation in order to identify and remove barriers to revitalisation and achieve positive growth.

16.2.8 Lands Identified as Areas on which the Vacant Site Levy can Apply

The Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 introduced a vacant site levy in order to incentivise the development of vacant sites in urban areas for housing and regeneration purposes. The application of the levy is intended to bring underutilised and vacant sites and buildings in urban areas into beneficial use.

The Vacant Site Levy may be applied to all identified 'Regeneration' land and 'Residential' land in the existing land-use zonings of the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023. 'Residential' land is identified as applying to the following zonings:

- Existing Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Residential

Regeneration of land and buildings in need of development and renewal throughout the County is a central objective of this Plan, as set out in Objective CDP16.8. In addition, 'Regeneration Land', as defined under the Urban Generation and Housing Act 2015, is identified as applying to the following zonings:

- Mixed Use
- Neighbourhood Centres
- Tourism
- University Zone

The specifics of each land-use zoning objective are included in Chapter 19 of this Plan and should be read in association with this section.



The sites identified as 'Areas on which the Vacant Site Levy can Apply' in accordance with the requirements of the abovementioned Act are:

Ennis

- OP1, Former Boys National School and adjoining Site
- OP9, Riverside Site, Harmony Row and Bank Place
- OP10, Waterpark House and Áras Uí Chocláin, Drumbiggle
- OP16, Former Western Garages and adjoining old Cornstore
- MU1, New Road
- MU2, Clon Road
- MU3, Kelly's Corner
- MU4, Clarecastle
- Mixed Use lands east of The Causeway Link
- R6, Tulla Road
- R7, east of Elm Wood, Roslevan
- R8, opposite Fahy Hall, Millbank
- Residential lands at Fernhill, Gort Road
- LDR10, west of Drehidnagower Bridge
- LDR17, north of Cappagh Lawn, Roslevan
- LDR20, opposite Cuirt na Fhile, Millbank
- LDR64, Tulla Road
- Dwelling and associated lands, north of McInerneys, Mill Road/Circular Road
- Casey's Corner, Garraunakilla
- Centrepont, Orchard Lane
- Heather Hill, Limerick Road

Sixmilebridge

- Site MU1
- Site MU2
- OP1, mixed use site
- OP2, mixed use site
- Residential lands to the south of MU2

Scariff

- OP1, former Clare Lakelands Hotel and adjoining lands
- OP2, former Astor Cinema



Killaloe

- OP2, site at Bridge Junction

Tulla

- OP2, site opposite Tulla Pipe Band Hall

Kilrush

- OP2, former convent building
- OP9, Inis Cathaigh
- OP12, former cinema on Frances Street

Ennistymon

- OP3, mixed use site on Parliament Street

Kilkee

- OP1, former Ocean Cove Hotel

These sites are mapped in the individual settlement plans contained in Volume 3 of this Plan.

CDP16.8

Development Plan Objective:
Land identified as Areas on which the Vacant Site Levy can Apply

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To identify areas for development and renewal that are in need of regeneration, in order to prevent:
- Adverse effects on existing amenities in such areas, in particular as a result of the ruinous or neglected condition of any land;
 - Urban blight and decay;
 - Anti-social behaviour;
 - A shortage of habitable houses or of land suitable for residential use or a mixture of residential and other uses;
- B** To implement, where appropriate, the provisions of the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015.



**16.2.9
Derelict Sites**

A Derelict Site is any land which detracts, or is likely to detract, to a material degree from the amenity, character or appearance of land in the neighbourhood of the lands in question. Derelict sites throughout the County are listed in the Derelict Sites Register. The Council recognises that they are damaging to the environmental and visual quality and amenity value of the areas in which they are located and that their improvement/upgrade is desirable.

The Planning Authority will encourage the reuse of existing derelict sites where this will result in positive environmental, visual and amenity benefits for the town/village and will seek, where possible, to provide the framework within which improvement can take place.

CDP16.9

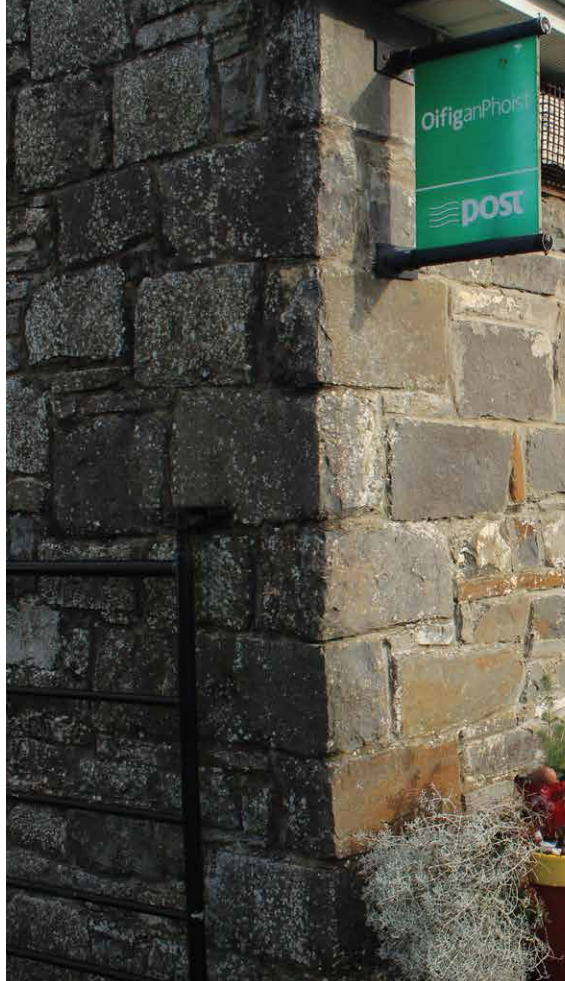
Development Plan Objective:
Derelict Sites

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To make use of the Derelict Sites Act 1990 where appropriate to require owners of derelict property to carry out suitable improvements, and to implement the provisions of the Act to prevent or remove injury to amenity arising from derelict sites;
- B** To prepare improvement plans and design briefs for larger derelict areas, incorporating an alien invasive species management plan as necessary;
- C** To seek to acquire properties which are appropriate to the Council's Capital Programme in order to carry out improvements to derelict sites and revitalise the surrounding areas.

Any proposed development of derelict sites will not adversely affect habitats or species protected by the Habitats Directive or other sites or habitats of national, regional or local importance.





16.2.11 Tidy Towns and Community Groups

The majority of the improvement and enhancement works that take place in the towns and villages is undertaken by communities across the County who carry out work throughout the year to enhance the appearance of their local areas. The strong spirit of volunteerism and community pride is evident for all to see and has helped to make County Clare an attractive visitor destination and place to live. There is a broad range of groups and organisations involved in promoting and enhancing the appearance of towns and villages in the County and their on-going work is reflected in the number of successes achieved in competitions such as Pride-of-Place, Entente Florale and Tidy Towns.

Clare County Council acknowledges the extent of the work and pride taken in the enhancement of villages and towns across the County and will endeavour, over the lifetime of the Plan, resources permitting, to provide guidance/ advice to community groups involved in improving the appearance of their town/village. The Council will also work through the Local Economic and Community Plan and the Public Participation Network to support community groups working to improve their area.

16.2.10 Town Centre Infill Sites

Town centre infill sites offer excellent development opportunities in key locations and can be suitable for either commercial or residential development or a mixture of uses. However, their redevelopment can often be challenging in terms of site area, the need to retain existing structures on site such as protected structures or the need to ensure that new developments reflect the character of the surrounding area e.g. in Architectural Conservation Areas. The redevelopment of infill sites in town and village centres has the potential to significantly contribute to the overall appearance of the surrounding area whilst also ensuring vitality and the beneficial reuse of town centre lands.

CDP16.10

Development Plan Objective: Town Centre Infill Development

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To encourage and support the redevelopment of infill sites in town and village centres for residential, commercial or a mixture of uses;
- B** To provide guidance to potential developers to support the reuse of key town and village centre infill sites.

CDP16.11

Development Plan Objective: Community Activity

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To encourage and support the work of community groups in the maintenance, enhancement and renewal of towns and villages across the County.



Chapter 16 Towns and Villages –
Cross References

CDP3.10	Planned Growth of Settlements
CDP4.3	Living in Our Towns and Villages
CDP4.6	Unfinished Developments and Taking in Charge
CDP4.15	Green Infrastructure in Residential Developments
CDP5.1	Sustainable Communities
CDP5.5	Inclusivity
CDP5.9	Community Gardens and Allotments
CDP6.15	Re-Use of Brownfield Sites
CDP7.12	Town Centre Accessibility and Mobility
CDP8.8	Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS)
CDP8.11	Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans
CDP8.12	Active Travel Towns
CDP8.13	Walking and Cycling
CDP8.16	Bus Services
CDP8.17	Integrated Transport
CDP830	Litter Management
CDP9.14	Urban Tourism
CDP9.21	Tourism in Ennis and its Environs
CDP14.12	Urban Ecology
CDP14.27	Green Infrastructure
CDP15.1	Architectural Heritage
CDP15.2	Protected Structures
CDP15.5	Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)
CDP17.1	Achieving Quality in the Public Realm
CDP17.2	Universal Design
CDP17.3	Sustainable Developments
CDP17.4	Design and Built Environment
CDP19.2	Compliance with Zoning



Chapter 17

Design and Built Environment

Goal XVI:

A County Clare that promotes buildings, urban spaces and public realm of the highest quality and ensures all development adheres to the principles of good design and contributes to the establishment of distinctive buildings and areas with a 'sense of place'.

17.0 Introduction.....	254
17.1 Strategic Aims.....	254
17.2 Context	255
17.3 The Design Process	255
17.4 Strategy	257
17.4.1 The Importance of Place and the Public Realm	257
17.4.2 Urban Design.....	259
17.4.3 Placemaking and Amenity in Settlements	259
17.4.4 Place making and Amenity on the Wild Atlantic Way.....	261
17.4.5 Rural Design	261
17.4.6 Universal Design.....	262
17.4.7 Design Statements.....	262
17.5 Regulations and Guidelines	263
17.5.1 Energy Efficiency and Sustainability.....	263
17.6 Collaboration	264

17.0 Introduction

'The built environment influences every aspect of our lives- the houses we live in, the schools we learn in, the offices or factories we work in, the public buildings we enter, the places where we spend our leisure time and even the streets in which we move about. While few people think consciously about architecture, everyone experiences it. Good design contributes to our sense of well-being, both as individuals and as a community and has a positive role to play in mitigating social exclusion. Poor standards of design and construction represent a waste of effort, energy, materials and opportunity.'

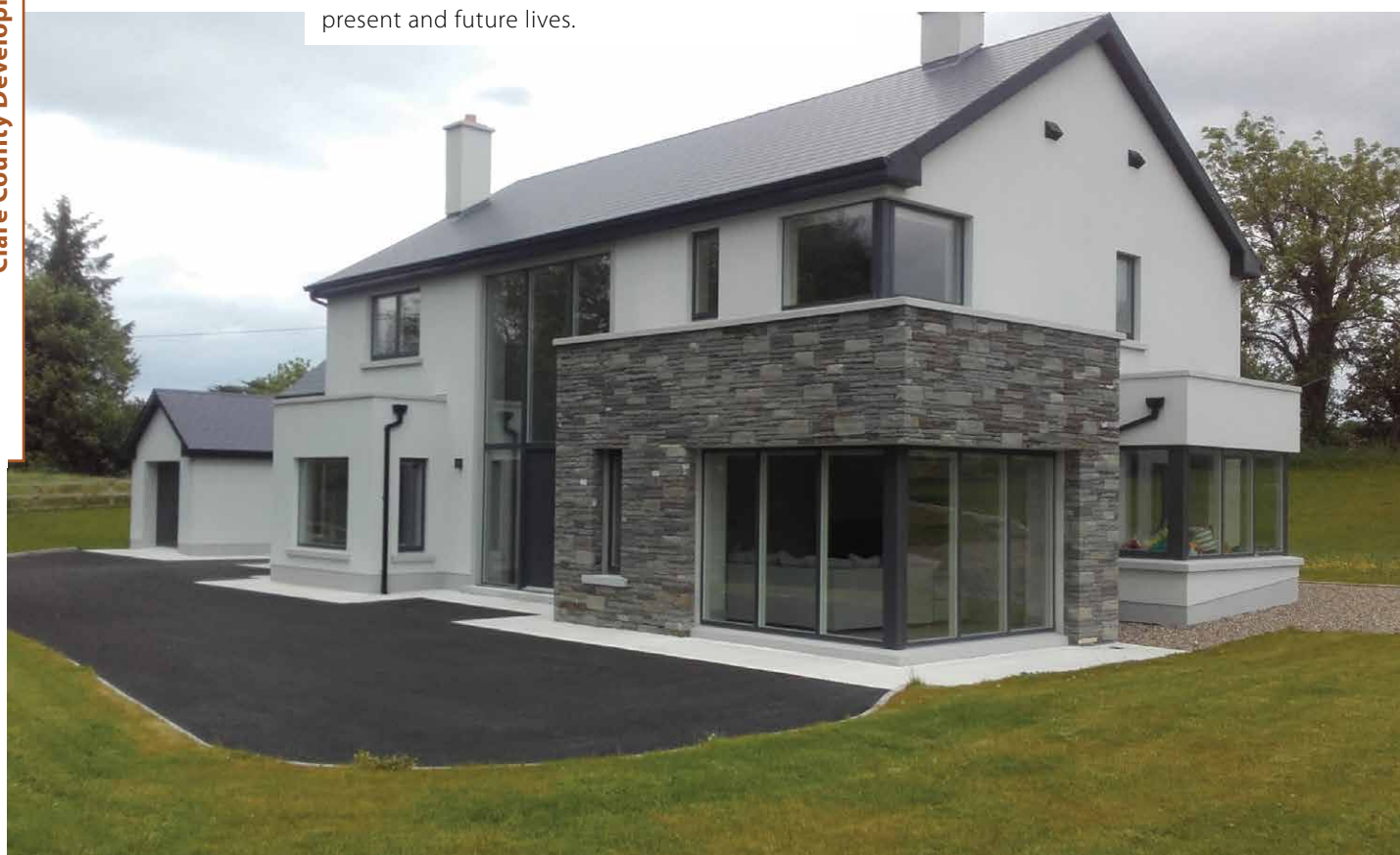
This quotation from Government Policy: Action on Architecture 2004, summarises the importance of design in the built environment. Achieving a good quality built environment is essential to ensure that County Clare is an attractive place to live, work and visit.

The built environment of County Clare ranges from the historic towns of Ennis, Killaloe and Ennistymon, and the new town of Shannon to a variety of attractive smaller towns and villages. The built form is also evident in the countryside with an array of building types; farms, houses, churches, schools and historic ruins. New places and buildings of all kinds will be constructed within this context and the resulting built environment will form the setting for people's present and future lives.

17.1 Strategic Aims

In accordance with the overall vision for the Plan, this chapter is based on the following strategic aims:

- To ensure that each structure or group of structures, whether in an urban or rural setting, will enhance the environment;
- To ensure that structures or groups of structures in urban areas are designed to create spaces between buildings which are attractive places for people to occupy;
- To ensure that structures or groups of structures in rural areas are designed to protect and enhance the quality of the landscape particularly in the case of extensions to, or reuse of, vernacular buildings;
- To ensure that each structure or group of structures is designed and sited to maximise conservation of energy, water and resources and to facilitate flexible and sustainable use.



17.2 Context

In the preparation of this chapter of the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023, regard has been had to the following:

The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020
The Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022
Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets 2012
Retail Planning – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012
County Clare Rural House Design Guide 2005
Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Area – DoEHLG 2009 (including the companion document Urban Design Manual: a best practice guide)
Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities 2007
Sustainable Rural Housing – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2005
Government Policy on Architecture 2009
SmarterTravel – A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020
EU Energy Performance of Buildings Directive
The Building Control Acts, 1990 and 2007

17.3 The Design Process

In urban areas, it is mainly buildings which shape the environment, while in the countryside, buildings form part of a rural landscape. Whether a building or development is set in an urban or rural context, it has the opportunity to enhance that environment. A key tool in achieving the desired enhancement of the environment is the proper use of the design process.

Any development is essentially about translating an idea into reality. In order to ensure that the reality matches the idea, a project needs to be adequately prepared. Development, even of relatively simple projects, can be complex given the range of inputs necessary. The diagram below suggests a typical number of factors that must be considered in the design process. These various elements must be reconciled and balanced if the project is to be successful in terms of enhancing the environment.

The design process is a disciplined and methodical technique for finding solutions to complex inter-related issues as illustrated in Figure 17.1. The objective of the design process is to produce a building or development which is 'fit for purpose', that meets many requirements, including those of the end-user. While the purpose of the development may vary i.e. a family home, a hotel, a medical centre or a mixed use development containing shops, offices and apartments, the basic design process can be summarised as a three stage process, although for complex projects there would be additional sub stages.

Figure 17.1, Inputs to Development to be managed through the Design Process

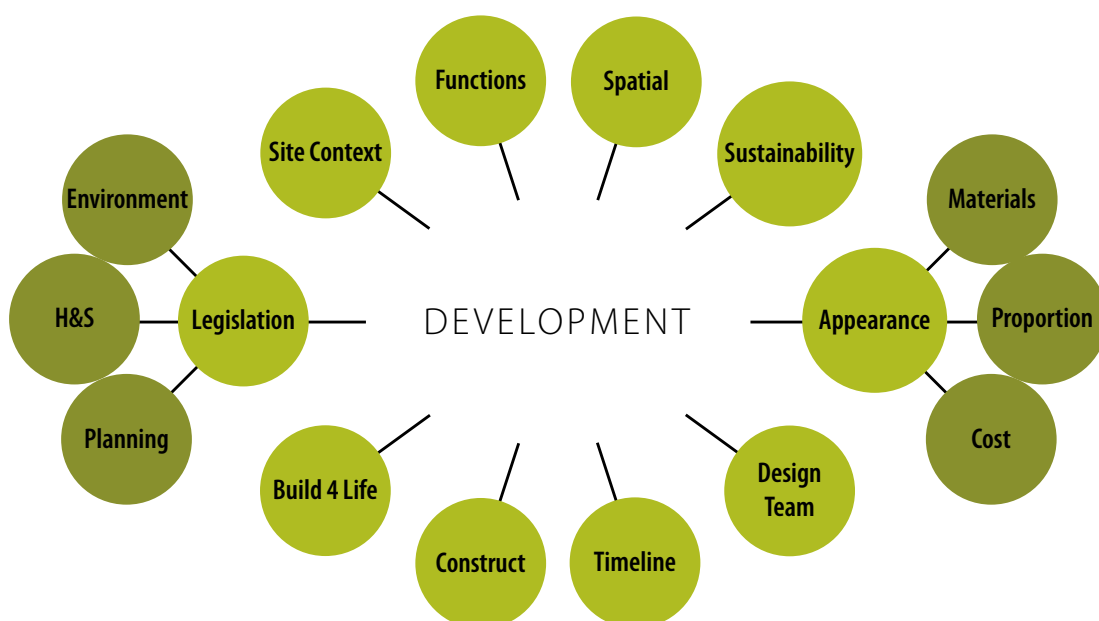


Figure 17.2
Basic Stages of Design Process: Survey, Analysis, Solution



The following are typical but non-exhaustive lists for the stages:

STAGE 1 SURVEY: needs to include ALL relevant issues: functions (both private and public), site, spatial requirements, number of users, adaptability, accessibility, budget, timeframe, psychological/emotional requirements, civic aspect, carbon footprint, resources, governing legislation. This stage of information is often referred to as *‘The Brief’*.

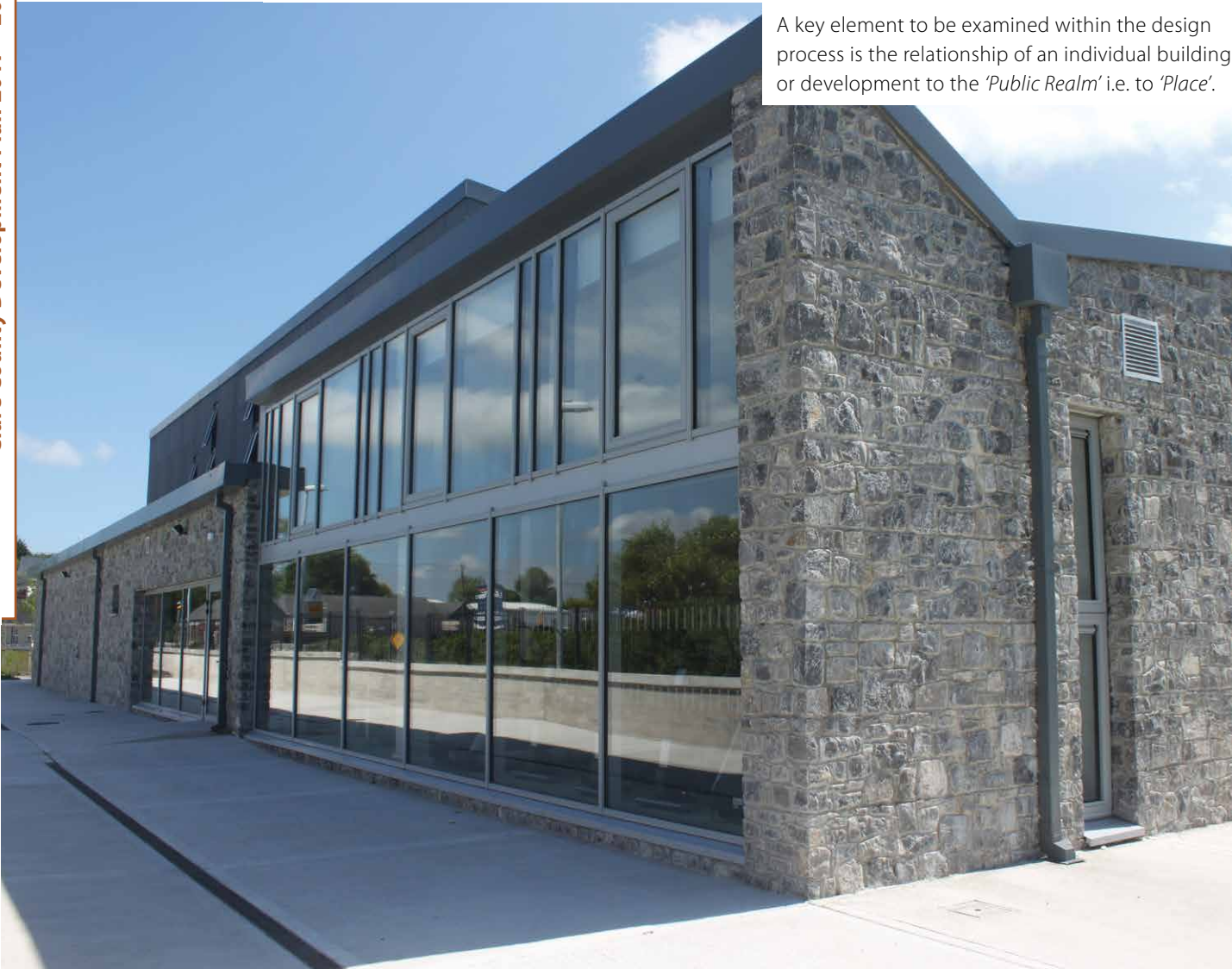
STAGE 2 ANALYSIS: Process the information, examine spatial relationships between issues, circulation patterns, options for siting, implications for character of area, options for construction, planning considerations, cost, aesthetic priorities.

STAGE 3 SOLUTION: Progress options identified in stage 2 to arrive at the ‘best fit’ with stage 1. Develop further and reconcile contradictory elements. Test against requirements of stage 1. Evaluate and refine massing, proportion and other visual elements. Finalise construction and materials details and re-assess. If building enhances its environment, proceed to refine design as appropriate and apply for planning permission.

In summary, fact gathering and analysis are essential initial steps in the design process which should logically precede moving to the final design. Unless this is understood, ‘design’ can be seen as just the outward appearance of the building based only on subjective opinion.

The preparation of a design statement at the culmination of the survey-analysis-solution process is highly important. The design statement can clearly convey the designer’s meaningful engagement with the three stages of the process and help the planner to understand the design rationale in an objective way.

A key element to be examined within the design process is the relationship of an individual building or development to the *‘Public Realm’* i.e. to *‘Place’*.



17.4 Strategy

17.4.1 The Importance of Place and the Public Realm

'Place' is that part of the external environment which people recognise and which has significance for them. People visit places for functional reasons i.e. home to be with family; church for service; hotels for lunch. The quality of public space outside the visited buildings can enhance the visitor's experience. The objective of urban design is to enhance the experience of spaces outside buildings and to develop them into 'places' of character in their own right. 'Place' can also be a unique selling point of an area i.e. the special features and qualities that make it different from other 'places'.

Although natural features often play a significant role, the physical and visual form of 'place' in urban areas is created principally from the enclosure of space by buildings. Spaces which are clearly defined tend to be memorable as places. For example, a street in a historic town such as Ennistymon, lined by buildings, forms a 'wall' of façades on either side. A person in such a street, enclosed on both sides and unable to see beyond these façades due to their height and the width of the street, feels a strong sense of place. However, in lower density developments such as suburban housing estates, creating a 'sense of place' can be more challenging. Due to the distance of the viewer from the buildings there is weak 'enclosure' of their line of sight and here spatial definition needs to be achieved by a variety of other means.

Spatial definition is the first necessary step in creating a sense of place. However, the character of 'place' and the quality of the public realm is influenced by many other elements. In relation to towns and villages, public realm improvements will be focused on six key areas:

- 1 Quality of the Public Realm
- 2 Sense of Place
- 3 Placemaking
- 4 Legibility and Wayfinding
- 5 Permeability and Connectivity
- 6 Inclusivity

This Plan aims to use these six defining qualities of successful urban places. These headings are derived from the 12 criteria set out in '*Urban Design Manual – a best practice guide*' (DoEHLG 2009). The six headings have been tailored here to apply to sustainable urban design in general. '*The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets*' also refers and contains mandatory guidance in relation to these issues.

A Quality Public Realm is characterised by safe, secure and enjoyable public areas with well-defined and distinctive places and recognisable landmarks. A quality public realm will also have an appropriate selection of facilities; a good balance between pedestrians and vehicles defined with quality materials and street furniture and will incorporate trees and other natural elements. Clear definition between private, semi-private and public space is required using well designed boundaries and materials.

Sense of Place refers to the personal perception of an area by individuals. The human experience of 'place' comes through the sense of sight and people react quickly to visual signals; they can decide in seconds if the place they are in, or approaching, is attractive or off-putting. Subconscious reactions nevertheless influence choices and behaviour which can have real impacts, positive or negative, on the place in question. A positive reaction is more likely to result in people choosing to return to that place whether to shop, attend community and cultural events or to do business and therefore can play a key role in the sustainability of a settlement.

Placemaking is implementing a vision to improve both 'Quality Public Realm' and 'Sense of Place' by attention to the containment of urban spaces, highlighting unique features, appropriate use of colour, use of good quality materials and street furniture, suitable tree planting and landscaping, dealing with visual clutter and appropriate traffic management. Successful placemaking is the result of multi-agency and multidisciplinary involvement and commitment. This approach is mandatory under the provisions of the '*Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets*'.

Legibility and Wayfinding refers to the ease with which visitors can navigate a street network using visual cues such as buildings, landscape elements, materials and finishes. Distinctive landmarks at key locations, street furniture and variation to surfaces can greatly enhance the legibility of a town. The connections between the main facilities in a town or village should be clear. Junctions and roundabouts at the outer areas of towns can be lacking in visual features to offer a welcome and to help orientate the visitor by distinguishing one roundabout from another.

A carefully chosen palette of materials can also give places a sense of identity i.e. where one area ends and another begins. It can also help to convey a hierarchy of place.

Permeability and Connectivity refers to the degree to which an area has a variety of pleasant, convenient and safe routes through it. Urban areas are enriched when people use walking to move around. Walking is efficient, healthy and facilitates good social contact. Smaller ‘block’ sizes facilitate better permeability which is good for ‘walkability’. Research has shown that a lack of connectivity is one of the key factors that discourages people from walking. In less central areas where block sizes are larger, which adds significantly to walking times, pleasant and safe short cuts need to be provided to create good walkability.

Inclusivity refers to how easily all people can access, understand and use the public realm regardless of age, size, gender, race, mental health or physical, sensory and intellectual ability or disability. In its broadest sense it means places can be positively enjoyed by people from all cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. The public realm should be accessible to all by removing clutter, avoiding unnecessary barriers and changes in level. It should also be easy and logical to understand and navigate. The term ‘universal design’ also refers.

CDP17.1

Development Plan Objective:
Achieving Quality in the Public Realm

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

A

To require both public and private developments to make a positive contribution to the public realm;

B

To require all proposals for developments in excess of 3 residential units or 300m2 to be accompanied by a design statement demonstrating how the 12 urban design principles set out in the Urban Design Manual (2009) have been addressed. A design statement may be required for smaller developments in instances where the proposed development is situated in a key location in the town or village.

See also Appendix 1 of this Plan.

New developments can only succeed in creating ‘place’ if the principles required are incorporated into their planning and design. These concepts are explained fully in government publications ‘*Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009)*’ and ‘*Urban Design Manual- A best Practice Guide, Part 1 and Part 2, 2009*’ and the ‘*Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets 2012*’.

‘Place’ in rural areas is formed, physically and visually, by features of natural landscape, overlain with patterns of historic development. Traditional buildings of various types sit comfortably in the rural context providing landmarks. Public thoroughfares can themselves be ‘places’ of character, defined by boundaries of hedgerow, stone walls or low banks and trees. In visual terms, the character of the landscape is formed by a variety of shapes in informal patterns.

Figure 17.3, Buildings which sit comfortably in the Landscape



Example of buildings which sit comfortably in the landscape, enhancing the rural character and defining the road edge in a sympathetic manner

17.4.2 Urban Design

Good urban design should create places for people that are safe, comfortable, varied and attractive. New development should enrich the quality of existing spaces and a mixture of different building forms, uses, tenures and densities should provide vitality. The design of streets, for example, needs to strike the right balance between the different functions of the street, including a 'sense of place'.

In terms of residential development in urban areas, housing developers, their design teams, the Planning Authority, and the community, share a common goal to create high quality places that:

- Prioritise walking, cycling and public transport and deliver a high quality of life;
- Incorporate the 'Balance of Needs' principle as set out in the National Disability Authority guidelines on Universal Design;
- Provide a good range of community and support facilities;
- Present an attractive well-maintained appearance with a distinct sense of place and a quality public realm which are easy to access, use and navigate;
- Promote the efficient use of land and energy;
- Provide a mix of land uses to minimise transport demand;
- Promote social integration;
- Enhance and protect the built and natural heritage.

'*Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets*' (2012) provides a statutory framework and guidance for key factors on best practice in the formation of public spaces. Design Guidelines are outlined in the government publications '*Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas*' (2009) and its accompanying document '*Urban Design Manual- A best practice guide*' (2009). Also of relevance is the Department's guidance document '*Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities*' (2007). Furthermore the '*National Cycle Framework 2009-2020*' indicates that buildings for human occupancy should, in their design and layout, enable the creation of safe, efficient and attractive networks of cycle routes, especially in urban areas.

17.4.3 Placemaking and Amenity in Settlements

In the towns and villages across County Clare the main public spaces, in most cases, occur in the historic core of the settlement. Many of these spaces contain specific structures which have a protected status e.g. as Protected Structures or as part of an Architectural Conservation Area. These structures form part of the public spaces and places which themselves need to be valued. All work in these 'spaces between buildings' needs interdepartmental and stakeholder engagement.

Sites identified as Opportunity Sites (see Chapter 16) can, if properly developed, make an important contribution to the 'sense of place' of the town or village. While site specific enhancement objectives are detailed in the individual settlement plans contained in Volume 3 of this Plan, there are a number of overarching priorities that apply to all settlements. Masterplanning and/technical assistance from the local authority will be necessary to achieve many of the following priorities.



Priorities for the **main public spaces** in the towns and villages in County Clare are:

- To protect distinctive spaces by retaining, replacing and enhancing the defining elements* and edges particularly those between private and public space;
- To select lighting, bollards, seats, surface finishes and other street furniture in consultation with relevant designers;
- To examine the selective planting of appropriate trees to enhance and define spaces;
- To use materials of appropriate quality and limit visual clutter;
- To implement best practice in traffic management for all modes of transport;
- To ensure adequate signage and linkages to parking;
- To identify public/community transport stopping points;
- To examine causes of vacancy/dereliction;
- To promote infill street development of accessible 'step down' type homes, private or public;
- To improve access to buildings; enhance pedestrian mobility, crossing areas and comfort;
- To ensure the undergrounding of wires, particularly in historic areas, and upgrading ground surfaces;
- To consider use of co-ordinated painting schemes;
- To erect street names in consultation with the Council;
- To implement the principles established in the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS).

** Defining elements are buildings, walls, trees, hedges or other street furniture which form the visible edges of the space.*

Priorities for the public realm in **new housing areas** are:

- Well-designed layouts forming attractive spaces appropriate to local character and scale;
- Refer to publications identified in 17.4.2 as appropriate;
- To avoid undefined set-backs where new housing abuts regional or local roads. Design these edges to enhance the public realm in character with the settlement;
- To ensure that suitable boundaries between public and private spaces, where defining elements give sufficient enclosure, are specified at planning application stage;
- To plant at least one oak tree in a suitable location on public open space within a scheme.

Priorities for the public realm in the **overall settlement** are:

- To highlight unique heritage or other features;
- To enhance the sense of place at gateways and key junctions;
- To form transition areas on approach roads, both to calm traffic and enhance the arrival to the settlement.

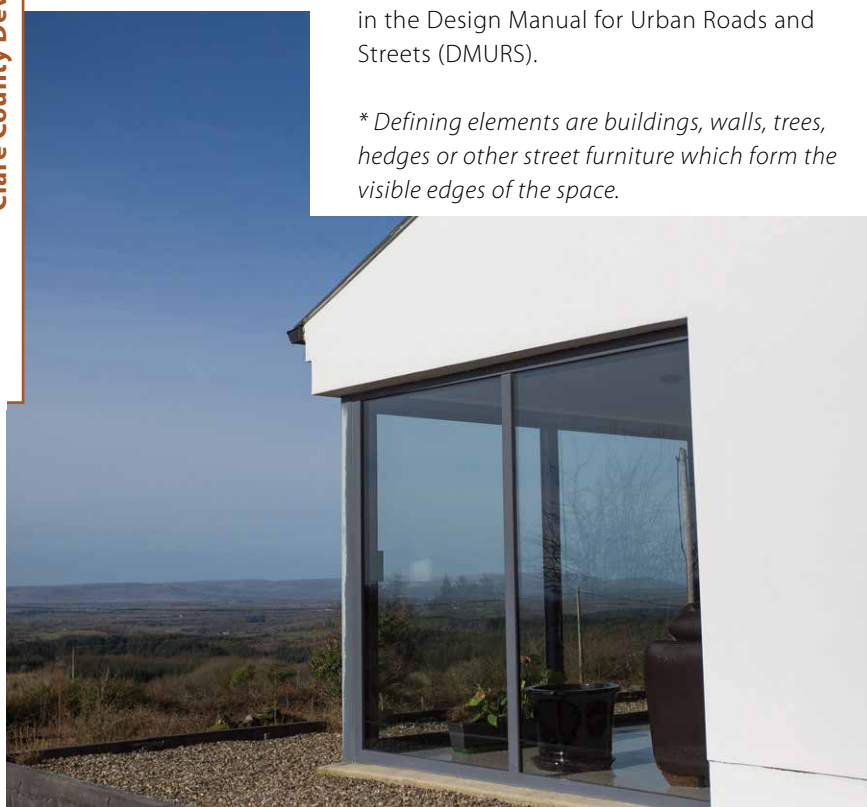
Gateways:

Gateways are used to demarcate a point of arrival from one place to another. They are important placemaking tools as they form the first impression of a place. Gateways are also an important traffic-calming tool as they can be used to inform drivers of a change in driving conditions ahead.

Transition Zones:

A Transition Zone refers to an area that may be needed for slowing vehicles when entering an urban area from a faster moving road, such as from a rural road into a city, town or village or from a motorway into an integrated street network. Transitions Zones can be emphasised by:

- Introducing measures that provide enclosure, such as large trees;
- Applying transitional geometric measures, such as the narrowing of carriageways;
- Applying changes to carriageway surfacing materials.





17.4.4 Place making and Amenity on the Wild Atlantic Way

The Wild Atlantic Way (WAW) is essentially a route with potential stopping-off points at the towns, villages and viewing points along the way. The road is the 'place' in this instance from which the coast and surrounding countryside is viewed. It follows that the roads along the WAW need well-defined edges i.e. boundaries which are in character with the area, where setbacks are carefully tailored to the minimum required and are surfaced with locally occurring grasses.

The towns and villages on the WAW need good gateways to calm traffic and to follow the guidelines above on edges and setbacks. Setbacks which become parking bays in front of large one-off sites in settlements have a negative visual impact on sense of place, facilitate vehicular speed, uncontrolled traffic movements and can impact on sight lines at entrances. Ideally the road or street, its width determined by DMURS movement function, should have its edge defined either by footpath or grass verge as appropriate to the settlement. This will help to manage speed and achieve self-regulating streets i.e. using 'place' to manage movement.

17.4.5 Rural Design

The challenge for new built form in the countryside is to fit comfortably into that 'place'. In terms of new houses in the countryside, the County Clare Rural House Design Guide is a useful reference. Boundaries are important and a site design which places the house at an angle to the road can sometimes respond better to the rural setting. In particular, Clare County Council welcomes the sensitive refurbishment of existing buildings. While vernacular cottages are smaller than the average single rural house, the combined area of the cottage and out-buildings is usually close to that size, making it feasible to refurbish a group of buildings as one residence (Figure 17.4). Where an existing vernacular house is to be extended, a well designed contemporary extension may be a good option. The Government Policy on Architecture notes: *'Contemporary architecture and design also have an important role to play in the design of rural buildings that make the best use of their location while still blending into and enhancing the natural landscape.'*

Figure 17.4
Farm Building Renovation



Farm buildings before renovation



Farm Buildings after Renovation



17.4.6 Universal Design

Universal design is the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people, regardless of their age, size or disability. This includes public spaces in the built environment such as buildings, street or spaces that the public have access to, products and services provided in those places and systems that are available including information and communications technology (ICT).

(Source: Disability Act 2005)

Universal design is one of the key elements of the proper planning and sustainable development of any area. Clare County Council is committed to the principle of universal design; enabling all people to participate in a county that takes account of human differences and to interact with their environment to the best of their ability. Universal design is not a special requirement, for the benefit of only a minority of the population. It is a fundamental condition of good design. If an environment is accessible, usable, convenient and a pleasure to use; everyone benefits. In this way, sustainable design and universal design are inextricably linked.

By considering the diverse needs and abilities of all throughout the design process, universal design creates products, services and environments that meet people's needs. This reflects the life-cycle approach, which should allow people to stay living longer in the community, ideally throughout their lifetime.

CDP17.2

Development Plan Objective: Universal Design

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To require all new buildings, facilities and works to the public realm to meaningfully engage with the principles of universal design so that all environments and buildings can be accessed, understood and used by all persons to the greatest extent possible, having regard to all existing relevant legislation, publications and guidelines in their design.

17.4.7 Design Statements

Following on from the design process, the preparation of a design statement is an important end product to demonstrate how a particular design solution has been chosen. It can provide a rationale for a particularly innovative design or demonstrate how the context of a particular setting has been taken on board or respected. See Appendix 1 Development Management Guidelines for further details.

17.5 Regulations and Guidelines

Regulations and guidelines covering a wide range of topics must now be considered in the preparation of any development proposal. These regulations are intended to improve conditions for owners, users and society at large by ensuring minimum acceptable standards. They have undoubtedly resulted in improvements in the areas of environment, health, safety, accessibility and energy performance. However, the use of regulations and guidelines in themselves does not result in a quality built environment and it is important to achieve a balance between all of these issues. To quote the Government Policy on Architecture 2004:

"Building Regulations set standards for structural safety, drainage, ventilation, stairways and similar matters. However, a building can comply with every regulation and still be ugly, inefficient and depressing. It may make poor use of space which has cost so much to build or it may degrade the landscape or townscape in which it sits."

17.5.1 Energy Efficiency and Sustainability

Energy efficiency is about achieving the same result with less energy. Recognising the importance of energy efficiency, the Government has established ambitious targets. The central commitment is to a national energy-savings target of 20% across the whole economy by 2020. This target will require contributions from all sectors of the economy and will bring significant economic and environmental

benefits. Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) estimate that in the order of 40% of current national energy demand is used by buildings and it is this area that has been identified as having the greatest potential for energy savings.

In accordance with the Low Carbon Strategy that is set out in Chapter 18 of this Plan, proposed development of structures or groups of structures in urban and rural areas should achieve high energy efficiency both at construction stage and during the lifetime of the development, e.g. by climate sensitive design which takes account of the orientation, topography and surrounding features so as to control wind effects, while optimising the benefits of daylight and solar gain and also the installation of renewable energy technologies such as solar panels, geo-thermal heating etc.

Structures should be designed so that they are comfortable, adaptable to changing needs, cost effective to build and economic to manage and maintain. In terms of protected structures and architectural conservation areas, it will be the policy of the Council to incorporate these new technologies where it can be demonstrated that they can be satisfactorily integrated.

CDP17.3

Development Plan Objective: Sustainable Developments

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To require all new developments to maximise energy efficiency and conservation and to ensure that they embrace the concept of sustainable design, achieve excellence in siting and design and promote the use of low carbon materials.



17.6 Collaboration

The *Government Policy on Architecture 2009* recognises that good quality design is not easily achieved. It confirms the importance of effective collaboration between planners, architects, applicants and others in the team who may be involved in producing good design for the built environment.

Within the overall process of place-making, the boundaries of various disciplines overlap. Supporting sustainable place-making will take account of the economic, planning, architectural, engineering, environmental, landscape and community development challenges. Successful place-making depends on the effective management of the overlaps between disciplines. The ‘Design Manual for Urban Streets and Roads’ recognises this and makes collaborative management and inter-disciplinary cooperation a statutory requirement.

The Council has recognised this process in the past through the Clare Design Awards Scheme which acknowledged the collaborative work of the client, architect and builder in bringing successful schemes to fruition.



CDP17.4

Development Plan Objective: Design and Built Environment

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To encourage and facilitate excellence in the siting and design of new buildings in the County and particularly through contemporary and innovative architectural solutions;
- B** To encourage and facilitate high standards of energy efficiency;
- C** To facilitate and promote the use of appropriate low carbon materials in all future development and embrace the principles of sustainable design;
- D** To run a Design Awards Scheme to encourage excellence in the built environment.

Chapter 17 Design and Built Environment – Cross References

Section 3.2.5	Single Housing in the Countryside
CDP5.5	Inclusivity
CDP5.6	Accessibility
CDP5.7	Age- Friendly County
CDP6.13	High Quality Development
CDP7.12	Town Centre Accessibility and Mobility
CDP8.8	Design Manual for Urban Road and Streets (DMURS)
CDP13.2	Settled Landscapes
CDP13.3	Western Corridor Working Landscape
CDP13.4	Shannon Estuary Working Landscape
CDP13.5	Heritage Landscape
CDP13.6	Seascape Character Areas
CDP13.7	Scenic Routes
CDP14.13	Habitat Fragmentation
CDP14.17	Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows
CDP14.27	Green Infrastructure
CDP15.5	Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)

Chapter 18

Climate Change Adaptation, Flood Risk and Low Carbon Strategy

Goal XVII:

A County Clare that is resilient to climate change, manages flood risk, facilitates a low carbon future, supports energy efficiency and conservation and enables the decarbonisation of our lifestyles and economy.

18.0 Introduction.....	266
18.1 Strategic Aims.....	266
18.2 Context	267
18.3 Climate Change	267
18.4 Climate Change Adaptation.....	269
18.5 Low Carbon Strategy.....	270
18.5.1 Energy Efficiency	271
18.5.2 Heat Energy Distribution.....	272
18.6 Flood Risk Management	273
18.6.1 Shannon and Western River Basin Districts	274
18.6.2 Storm Water Management	274
18.6.3 Green Infrastructure and Flood Management.....	275
18.6.4 Maintenance of Rivers and Waterways	275

18.0 Introduction

Climate change includes major changes in temperature, precipitation or wind patterns that occur over several decades or longer. Climate change and the effects associated with it, present a significant challenge to everyone. It is acknowledged that global warming is contributing to climate change and that global warming is associated with human activity. This Development Plan sets out policies and objectives that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the Plan area and will contribute to reducing the impacts of climate change. However for the foreseeable future it will be necessary to manage and mitigate the impacts of climate change on the residents and businesses located in the Plan area.

Climate change adaptability refers to any adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli. Resilience to climate change was one of the central considerations in the preparation of this Plan. This is complemented by an overarching objective to reduce the carbon output from developments and activities taking place in the Plan area.

Flooding is one of the major impacts of climate change in the Plan area. This can relate to coastal, fluvial (from rivers and watercourses) and pluvial (from rainfall) flood events, all of which have increased in frequency in recent years which is attributed to climate change. The management of flood risk is essential to ensure the safety and quality of life of all residents in the Plan area and to ensure that new developments are directed to the most appropriate location, minimising the risk of flooding and risk to human health and safety in the future.



18.1 Strategic Aims

This chapter presents the objectives required in order to achieve a significant reduction in the carbon output of the County, to manage the risk associated with flooding and to ensure that climate change adaptation is a priority during the lifetime of this Plan. It is based on the following strategic aims:

- To work in coordination with relevant stakeholders to secure the development of low carbon residential and business properties in the Plan area;
- To ensure that future development is considered and managed having regard to the risk of flooding;
- To minimise the level of flood risk to people, businesses, infrastructure and the environment;
- To ensure that the potential effects of climate change are a key consideration in the location and design of new developments;
- To ensure that the potential risk of flooding are fully assessed and taken into consideration in the identification of future development lands in the Plan area.

18.2 Context

In the preparation of the climate change adaptation, flooding and low carbon strategy element of this Development Plan, Clare County Council has had regard to the following policy documents:

The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020
EU Floods Directive
EU Energy Efficiency Directive 2012
The Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022
National Energy Efficiency Action Plan 2009-2020
National Climate Change Adaptation Framework 2012
Western River Basin Management Plan
Shannon International River Basin Management Plan
Building on Recovery: Infrastructure and Capital Investment 2016-2021
EU Energy Performance of Buildings Directive
EU Water Framework Directive
Limerick Clare Climate Change Strategy
EU Climate Change and Energy Package 2008
Ireland's Second Energy Efficiency Action Plan to 2020
The Planning System and Flood Risk Management (and Technical Appendices) – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2009
National Renewable Energy Action Plan
Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Studies
The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act, 2015

18.3 Climate Change

Climate Change and the effects associated with it, presents a significant challenge to everyone as it can have significant impacts, including loss of human life through extreme weather events including heatwaves, flooding, storms etc. and on the natural environment including loss of biodiversity. In Ireland, the expected impacts of climate change in the coming years include:

- Increasing average temperatures;
- More extreme weather conditions including storms and rainfall events;
- An increased likelihood of river and coastal flooding;
- Water shortages, particularly in the east of the country;
- Changes in the type and distribution of species;
- The possible extinction of vulnerable species.

It is essential that all possible steps are taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to ensure that, in the interim, the impacts of climate change are managed and minimised.

The Limerick Clare Climate Change Strategy seeks to address the local delivery of national policy in relation to climate change management. The Council recognises that substantial changes are necessary to reduce CO₂ emissions and that alternatives need to be provided in order for Ireland to become a low-carbon generating economy and society. Having regard to the County's significant available renewable resources, Clare County Council will seek to take a lead role in respect of renewable energy technology to assist in meeting national, regional and County targets in energy consumption and CO₂ reduction.

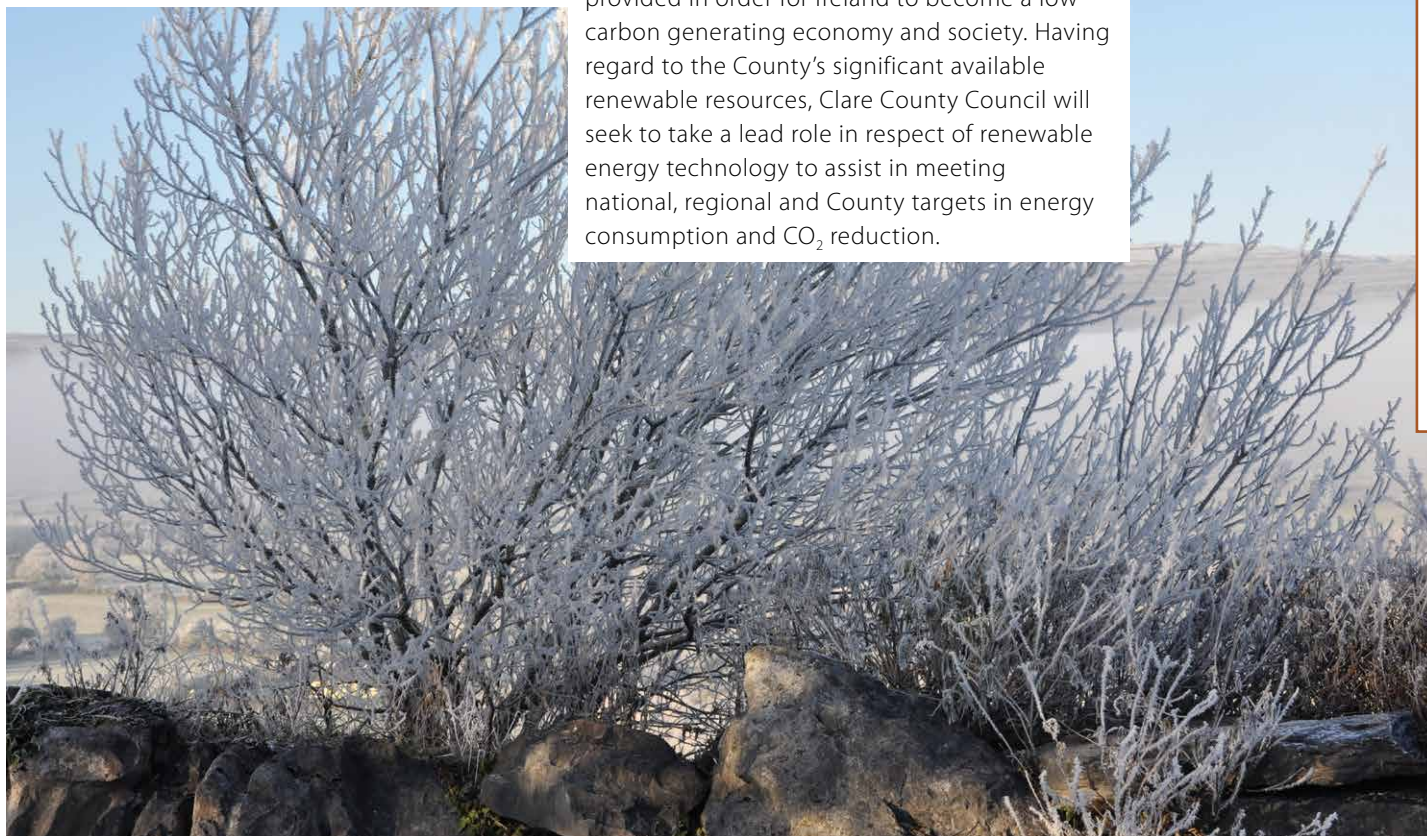


Table 18.1
Renewable Energy Resource Targets for
County Clare for 2020

	Renewable Energy Resource	County Clare	
Chapter	Accessible - Planned	GWh/y	MW
Thermal			
6	Forest wood fuel & Wood Process by-product	128.3	29.3
6	Energy Crop (SRC-Miscanthus)	175.0	39.9
7	Geothermal	34.0	15.0
6,7	Micro-Thermal	175.7	92.8
Sub Total		513.0	177.0
AD-CHP*thermal			
12	AD - Grass Silage	20.1	2.5
12	AD - Animal wastes	15.8	2.0
12	Municipal Organic MSW	25.1	3.2
6	Micro CHP	2.0	0.5
6,13	Biomass CHP	460.0	58.3
Sub Total		523.0	66.6
Electric			
9	Onshore wind	1,590.0	550.0
10	Offshore wind	27.3	10.0
11	Hydro	468.0	89.0
10	Wave	59.1	20.4
10	Tidal	66.1	20.0
5	Micro Gen - elec	7.2	2.1
5,6,13	CHP electric	261.5	29.2
Sub Total		2,479.2	720.8
15	Transport	14.0	2.0
Overall Total Renewable Target		3,529.2	966.4

In addition to the development of renewable energy technology and the generation of electricity from renewable sources, the Council will also support a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in other areas e.g. transport, residential development and commercial development. This is discussed further in Section 18.5.1 below.

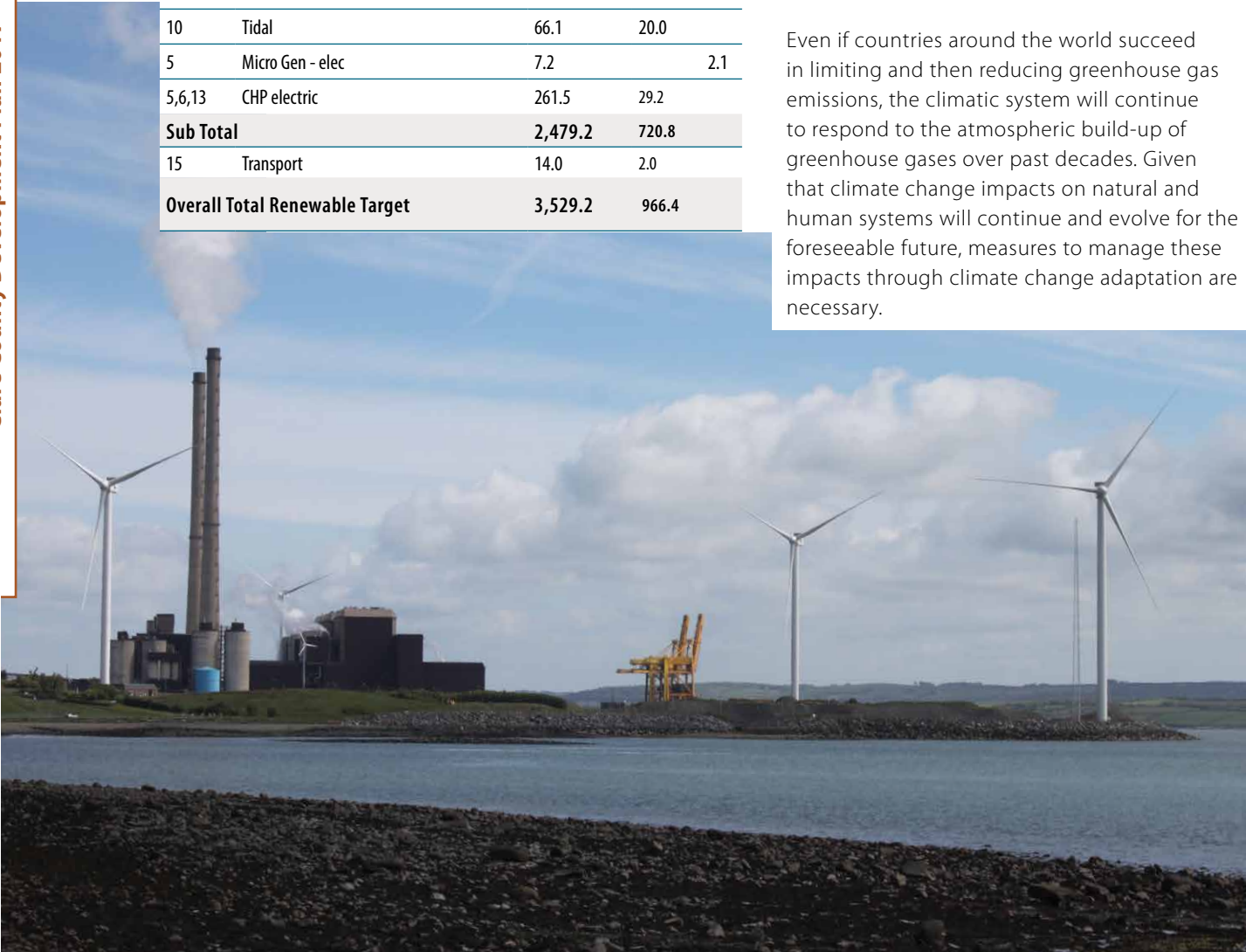
CDP18.1

Development Plan Objective: Climate Change

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To support the implementation of the Limerick Clare Climate Change Strategy 2006, and any subsequent versions of the Strategy;
- B** To facilitate measures which seek to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases;
- C** To adopt sustainable planning strategies through integrating land use and transportation and by facilitating mixed use developments as a means of reducing greenhouse emissions;
- D** To raise awareness and understanding of the impacts of climate change on both the local economy and communities in the County.

Even if countries around the world succeed in limiting and then reducing greenhouse gas emissions, the climatic system will continue to respond to the atmospheric build-up of greenhouse gases over past decades. Given that climate change impacts on natural and human systems will continue and evolve for the foreseeable future, measures to manage these impacts through climate change adaptation are necessary.





18.4 Climate Change Adaptation

Climate change adaptation seeks to reduce vulnerability to the negative impacts of climate change. Adaptation refers to the adjustment or preparation of natural or human systems to a new or changing environment. The aim is to moderate harm and to exploit any potential beneficial opportunities. Climate change adaptation comprises all spontaneous responses and planned action taken to cope with the impacts of changing climate conditions. Climate change adaptation works to anticipate possible future changes and to provide a cost-effective means of reducing risk and damage associated with current climate variability.

Many adaptation measures that have taken place to date have been reactive, taken directly in response to extreme weather events that have occurred. While considerable uncertainties remain in relation to future climate conditions and the rate of climate change, the underlying trends are evident and projected to continue. By planning and anticipating climatic impacts, it is possible to reduce costs and maximise the effectiveness of adaptation actions. It is therefore necessary to put in place the policy framework for adaptation planning to respond to these challenges.

The National Climate Change Adaptation Framework provides the policy context for a strategic national adaptation response to climate change in Ireland. Under the National Framework local adaptation action plans will form part of the comprehensive national response to the impacts of climate change. The local adaptation strategy must develop and express a vision for a well-adapted local community that is resilient to the impacts of climate change, through:

- Determining an area's vulnerability to climate risks;
- Identifying, prioritising and costing adaptation actions;
- Developing and implementing a comprehensive action plan;
- Ensuring that climate change impacts and risks are embedded into all decision-making.

CDP18.2

Development Plan Objective: Climate Change Adaptation

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To endeavour to implement elements of Sectoral Adaptation Plans, prepared in accordance with the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, as they relate to the work of Clare County Council;
- B** To liaise with all relevant stakeholders to prepare a Climate Change Adaptation Strategy for County Clare during the lifetime of this Development Plan;
- C** To raise general awareness of issues associated with climate change and climate change adaptation during the lifetime of this Plan.

18.5 Low Carbon Strategy

The National Mitigation Strategy, when completed, will be a national plan setting out Ireland's first statutory low carbon development strategy for the period up to 2050. The National Mitigation Plan will specify the manner in which it is proposed to achieve the national transition objective and will outline the sectoral mitigation measures that are committed to within the Plan. Clare County Council will endeavour to contribute to the achievement of the objectives set out in the National Mitigation Plan.

The National Climate Change Adaptation Framework also requires local authorities to integrate climate change mitigation into development plans. Mitigation refers to actions to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases that are driving climate change; it includes strategies to reduce activities that give rise to greenhouse gases and enhance sinks for greenhouse gas in forests and other parts of the biosphere.

Global economies are increasingly seeking to achieve low/no carbon outputs. There are two key elements in achieving this target. Firstly an economy must have access to substantial quantities of renewable resources. County Clare is well positioned to become self-sufficient in renewable energy, as set out in the Renewable Energy Strategy. Secondly, there must be a dramatic increase in energy efficiency and conservation.

The creation of a low carbon economy is essential to ensure that County Clare remains an attractive place in which to live and do business. Low carbon centres for commerce will enable the County to attract high value businesses that are actively seeking a location where sustainable low carbon energy security can be guaranteed.

The National Spatial Strategy Update and Outlook Report (2010) highlighted the need to support the emergence of much more economically, socially and environmentally sustainable patterns of development by tackling the drivers of urban sprawl, maximising the opportunities to reduce CO₂ emissions and fossil fuel energy use, while adapting to the emerging effects of climate change and protecting the qualities of our groundwater, rivers, habitats and heritage.

Clare County Council recognises the importance of a local level response to climate change and the theme of creating a low carbon society has been integrated into all elements of this Development Plan. Key elements of the low carbon strategy are set out below.

The Clare Renewable Energy Strategy and the Clare Wind Energy Strategy have been prepared to promote and support the development of non-renewable energy resources in the County, including micro-renewables and energy storage. These strategies form Volumes 5 and 6 of this Development Plan respectively and their implementation forms part of County Clare's contribution to the implementation of the National Renewable Energy Action Plan (NREAP) as required by EU Directive 2009/28/EC.

Information Age Park Ennis has been identified for development as a centre for businesses engaging in green technology/renewable technology and the settlement plan for Ennis and its environs also proposes the development of a low carbon residential community in the Claureen area.

The Shannon Town and Environs Local Area Plan 2012-2018 sets out a strategy to develop the town as a low carbon residential and business/commerce centre. The local area plan also incorporates the Shannon Town Green Infrastructure Plan which aims to enhance the physical and natural environment in the town and support the use of sustainable modes of transport.

This Development Plan contains an objective to prepare a green infrastructure plan for the Ennis and Environs area. This will be complemented by the preparation of a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) for the Ennis area to support greater use of sustainable modes of transportation in the town. It is also intended to prepare a SUMP for the Kilrush town area during the lifetime of this Plan.

In relation to residential development, this Development Plan requires high standards of energy efficiency from all new homes developed in the County and supports the retro-fitting of existing housing stock to enhance their energy efficiency. Living in town centres is also strongly supported and encouraged, thereby helping to reduce car dependency and the need to travel to avail of essential services.

The Development Plan strongly supports sustainable travel in all parts of the County with active living prioritised and the inclusion of objectives to progress the development of the necessary supporting infrastructure. The progression of projects to support Active Travel is also supported in this Plan.

CDP18.3

Development Plan Objective: Development of a Low Carbon Economy

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To promote County Clare as a Low Carbon County as a means of attracting inward investment to the County and the Mid-West region;
- B** To facilitate measures to establish a low carbon economy and society by 2020;
- C** To facilitate the development of energy sources which will achieve low carbon outputs;
- D** To support sustainable modes of transport such as walking and cycling through promotional strategies and the provision of infrastructure where required;
- E** To work to implement the provisions of *Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future 2015-2030* as they relate to County Clare.



18.5.1 Energy Efficiency

In order to achieve the vision of Clare as a low carbon county, energy efficiency must be dramatically increased and the available non-renewable energy resources must be conserved for as long as possible. Nationally this has been addressed in the *National Energy Efficiency Action Plan 2009-2020* in response to EU Directive 2006/32/EC. This Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 promotes and facilitates energy efficiency and alternative energy as a means of reducing the County's dependence on fossil fuels with a view to developing a low carbon economy.

Energy Efficiency in Buildings

Taking account of EU Directive 2010/31/EU on Energy Performance of Buildings, Clare County Council will promote the use of energy-efficient building methods in the design of new developments. The Council will require the design process of proposals for new developments to adopt the principles of sustainable development by integrating high quality design, access to sustainable modes of transport, links to existing social and community infrastructure and ensuring the efficient use of energy and natural resources. The Council will also require that, by the end of 2020, all new buildings are nearly zero-energy buildings.

Energy Efficiency in Transport

Clare County Council recognises that transport is the largest energy consuming sector in the County. The Council will promote energy efficiency in transport in line with the national policy set out in the Government's publication *SmarterTravel: A Sustainable Transport Future – A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009-2020*.

Energy Efficiency in Business

Clare County Council recognises the importance of resource efficiency and waste minimisation. In order for County Clare to establish a low carbon society and economy it is important that all businesses are supported in establishing energy efficient systems, technologies and practices.



Energy Citizens

All citizens are energy citizens, interacting with the energy system as consumers, employees, transport users, householders and landowners. Every person has a role to play in the energy transition. Consumer choices in the home, in the community, at work and when travelling are an important aspect of an energy citizen's role and responsibility. Energy citizens can play an active role in the transition to a low carbon energy future.

18.5.2 Heat Energy Distribution

Heat distribution infrastructure such as district heating has potential in the County, particularly in the Shannon Free Zone. The creation of efficient district heating systems would facilitate the development of the indigenous biomass industry, maximise and encourage agricultural diversification and reduce the CO₂ emissions associated with heating buildings.

CDP18.4

Development Plan Objective: Energy Efficiency

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To assist in reducing the County's dependence on imported fossil fuels and to develop a low carbon economy by:

- A** Promoting innovative new building design that demonstrates a high level of energy conservation, energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy resources, in accordance with national regulations and policy requirements;
- B** Promoting the development and use of alternative energy vehicles in line with the concept of Smarter Travel and to encourage and facilitate the development of ancillary infrastructure;
- C** Promoting energy conservation, energy efficiency and use of renewable energy sources in the production of all goods and services in accordance with national, regional and county regulations and policy requirements;
- D** Facilitating the provision of installations for powering electric vehicles at convenient locations across the County.

CDP18.5

Development Plan Objective: Distributed Heat

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To support and encourage the development of Distributed (District) Heating, in compliance with the objectives set out in Chapter 14, as a means of facilitating:

- A** the increased use of heat generated from indigenous, low carbon, renewable resources (bioenergy, solar, geothermal etc.);
- B** the utilisation and distribution of useful waste heat from large thermal processes;
- C** the utilisation and distribution of useful heat from a combined heat and power (CHP) plant, where such a plant's primary energy is met by indigenous, low carbon, renewable resources (bio energy, solar, geothermal etc.).

18.6 Flood Risk Management

In County Clare one of the most prevalent impacts of climate change in recent years has been the increase in flood events. Management of flood-related issues is therefore of critical importance to the future sustainable development of the County.

The Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) introduced flood risk assessment into the planning process. This was subsequently augmented by 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management (and Technical Appendices) – Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (DoEHLG & OPW Nov 2009) and by Circular PL2/2014 (August 2014). The aim of the guidelines is to enable the future sustainable development of areas by ensuring that development proposals are considered and assessed against the risk of flooding. This will avoid development in areas identified as being at risk of flooding, with the consequent potential damage to property and the economy. The Planning Authority will have regard to these guidelines when preparing plans and assessing proposals for future development, including redevelopment, or the extension or intensification of existing uses.

The Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 contains settlement plans and zonings for Ennis, Kilrush and each town and village in the County (excluding Shannon, which has its own local area plan), with a consequent requirement to prepare a Flood Risk Assessment appropriate to each settlement and zoning. In order to fulfil all requirements of 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management - Guidelines for Planning Authorities', the zonings and objectives in this Development Plan were informed by a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment which comprised:

- Flood Mapping for the Development Plan area;
- A Stage 2 - Flood Risk Assessment for the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 in particular in relation to the location and type of zoning and land-use proposals;
- A Flood Risk Management Plan in compliance with OPW/DoEHLG – 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2009';

The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment is contained as Volume 10(c) of this Development Plan.

Clare County Council has sought to proactively manage flood risk in the County in accordance with DoEHLG Planning Guidelines, by strategically mapping the location of flood hazard in County Clare based on a fluvial (river) flood mapping and tidal (coastal) flood mapping process and by defining flood hazard in the County by zonal classification. Flood risk is generally accepted to be a combination of the likelihood of flooding and the potential consequences arising. These classifications indicate a high (A), moderate (B) or low (C) risk of flooding.

The flood designations shown on Volume 2 Maps I1-I12 are used to indicate the likelihood of a flood occurring. The zones indicate a high, moderate or low risk of flooding from fluvial or tidal sources. They are based on an undefended scenario and are also based on the best currently available technology and information and may be subject to future amendment. The zonal classifications – Flood Risk Zones A, B and C – have been calculated on the basis of uninterrupted flows and do not take account of man-made structures such as drains, barrages and bridges. It is intended that these maps would be used as a screening tool to alert the Council to future development proposals that may be located in areas with a potential flood risk.

For issues relating to Coastal Flooding, please see Chapter 12 Marine and Coastal Zone Management.

CDP18.6

Development Plan Objective: Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To ensure that proposals for development in areas where there is a risk of flooding, (based on the Flood Risk Maps contained in Volume 2 of the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023, or any updated version), shall have regard to 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management (and Technical Appendices) – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2009' and any future OPW flood assessment information. Such proposals must also demonstrate that appropriate mitigation measures can be put in place.

18.6.1 Shannon and Western River Basin Districts

Shannon and Western Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Studies (CFRAMS) are being undertaken by the OPW and aim to:

- Produce detailed flood mapping that identifies and maps out the existing and potential future flood risk within the Shannon River Basin District;
- Build up the information base needed to make informed and effective decisions in relation to managing flood risk;
- Identify measures and options for managing flood risks, both in local high-risk areas and across the whole study area;
- Prepare a Flood Risk Management Plan for each Unit of Management that sets out how OPW, local authorities and stakeholders should work together to create sustainable and cost-effective ways of dealing with flood risk now and into the future.

In County Clare the following areas have been identified as Areas for Further Assessment:

Bunratty	Ennis	Kilkee
Killaloe	Kilrush	O'Briensbridge and Montpelier
Quin	Shannon	Shannon Airport
Sixmilebridge	Springfield	

These areas will now be the subject of CFRAM studies. The outcomes of the studies will be taken into consideration in the assessment of development proposals in County Clare to minimise the risk of flooding in relation to both new and existing developments.

CDP18.7

Development Plan Objective: CFRAMS

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

- A** To comply with the EU Floods Directive 2007/60/EC;
- B** To have regard to the requirements and outcomes of the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Studies (CFRAMS) prepared for the Areas for Further Assessment in County Clare (once finalised) in the assessment of development proposals.

18.6.2 Storm Water Management

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) are effective technologies which aim to reduce flood risk, improve water quality and enhance biodiversity and amenity. They mimic the natural drainage of a site to ensure that the development does not increase the risk flooding or pollution of rivers/watercourses. No additional surface water shall be allowed to discharge to foul sewers or combined sewers. Surface water drainage systems for new developments will be designed in accordance with the principles of attenuation and controlled discharges, SuDS and with any storm water policy documents which may be produced by the Council. The full suite of SuDS measures should be considered, as appropriate, in any drainage scheme.

CDP18.8

Development Plan Objective: Storm Water Management

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

- A** To ensure that adequate storm water infrastructure is in place to accommodate the planned level of growth in the Plan area;
- B** To require all new developments to provide a separate foul and surface water drainage system;
- C** To ensure the implementation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) and in particular, to ensure that all storm water generated in a new development is disposed of on-site or is attenuated and treated prior to discharge to an approved storm water system;
- D** To request the submission of details regarding Surface Water Attenuation Systems for multi-unit development applications in the Plan area. Development will only be permitted in areas where sufficient surface water capacity exists.

18.6.3 Green Infrastructure and Flood Management

There are increasing moves towards working with more natural processes and use of green infrastructure rather than using traditional 'grey infrastructure' such as embankments and dykes to manage flood events. Green infrastructure uses nature's own capacity to absorb excess waters and can play a major role in sustainable flood risk management. By reducing stormwater runoff and protecting floodplains, green infrastructure can help manage both localised and riverine floods. In areas impacted by localised flooding, green infrastructure practices absorb rainfall, preventing water from overwhelming pipe networks and pooling in streets or basements. Green infrastructure practices that enhance infiltration include rain gardens, bioswales, and permeable pavements. In areas impacted by riverine flooding, green infrastructure, open space preservation, and floodplain management can all complement grey infrastructure approaches. These practices reduce the volume of stormwater that flows into streams and rivers, protecting the natural function of floodplains, and reducing the damage to infrastructure and property

CDP18.9

Development Plan Objective: Green Infrastructure and Flood Management

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To facilitate and implement green infrastructure developments as a means of managing flood risk and enhancing the natural environment in the Plan area in compliance with Objective CDP2.1.

18.6.4 Maintenance of Rivers and Waterways

Blockage of rivers and waterways, particularly in urban areas, has the potential to obstruct the natural drainage regime in an area. Addressing these issues is a key element of flood risk management in the towns and villages of County Clare.

CDP18.10

Development Plan Objective: Maintenance of Rivers

It is an objective of the Development Plan:

To encourage and facilitate the maintenance of rivers and waterways by statutory authorities and the cleaning of drains in urban areas where appropriate, subject to the requirements of Objective CDP2.1 and OPW Best Practice Guidelines.



**Chapter 18 Climate Change Adaptation,
Flood Risk and Low Carbon Strategy –
Cross References**

CDP6.17	Energy Supply
CDP6.18	Green Technology
CDP7.12	Town Centre Accessibility and Mobility
CDP8.10	SmarterTravel
CDP8.11	Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMP)
CDP8.12	Active Travel Towns
CDP8.13	Walking and Cycling
CDP8.17	Integrated Transport Services
CDP8.40	Renewable Energy
CDP8.42	Energy Conservation and Efficiency
CDP10.10	Bioenergy
CDP10.11	Renewable Energy Development
CDP11.8	Harnessing the Energy Resources of the Shannon Estuary
CDP12.6	Off-Shore Renewable Energy Development
CDP12.12	Coastal Erosion and Flooding
CDP14.27	Green Infrastructure
CDP17.2	Universal Design
CDP17.2	Sustainable Developments
CDP17.4	Design and Built Environment



Chapter 19

Land Use and Zonings

Goal XVIII:

A County Clare where the overall strategic objectives of the County Development Plan are translated into settlement plans and local area plans containing detailed land-use zonings and master-planning of neighbourhoods in an evidenced-based, plan-led approach with a focus on ensuring a high quality of life.

19.0 Introduction.....	278
19.1 Strategic Aims.....	278
19.2 Context	279
19.3 Land-Use Zoning	279
19.4 Nature of Zonings	280
19.5 Indicative Land-Use Zoning Matrix ..	283
19.5.1 'Permitted in Principle':.....	283
19.5.2 'Open for Consideration'	283
19.5.3 'Not Normally Permitted'	283
19.5.4 Uses not listed in the Indicative Zoning Matrix.....	283
19.5.5 Non-conforming Uses	283

19.0 Introduction

The Clare County Development Plan 2017–2023 governs the overall land-use objectives for County Clare and establishes a policy framework within which the more detailed settlement plans contained in Volume 3 of this Plan and local area plans for the Gateway and Hub towns can be prepared. The Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) requires that a local area plan shall be consistent with the objectives of the development plan. The Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 is, therefore, the main policy document for land-use considerations within the functional area of Clare County Council.

Local area plans for the Hub town of Ennis and the Gateway of Shannon will be prepared during the lifetime of this Development Plan.

19.1 Strategic Aims

In accordance with the overall vision, goals and Core Strategy of the Development Plan, the following outlines the strategic aims within which the settlement plans and local area plans will be prepared:

- To ensure that adequate land is zoned to meet the needs of the population of the County, in compliance with the Core Strategy and populations targets;
- To ensure that sufficient land is zoned and serviced to provide for sustainable development and settlement growth throughout the County, in order to achieve the specified population targets of the Plan;
- To ensure that the land-use considerations in the settlement plans and local area plans are set within the policy framework of the County Development Plan;
- To ensure that social and physical infrastructure is developed in line with the growth of settlements in the County;
- To ensure that proposed developments are, where appropriate, directed to suitably zoned lands within designated settlement areas as provided for in the Plan.



19.2 Context

The Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) requires that development plans comprise objectives for the zoning of lands for particular purposes, in the interest of proper planning and sustainable development. This is reflected in the settlement plans that have been prepared and are contained in Volume 3 of this Development Plan.

In terms of local area plans, the Act requires that a local area plan shall be consistent with the objectives of the development plan. A local area plan shall consist of a written statement and a plan (or plans) which may include:

- a** Objectives for the zoning of land for the use solely or primarily of particular areas for particular purposes, or
- b** Such other objectives in such detail as may be determined by the planning authority for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area to which it applies, including detail on community facilities and amenities and on standards for the design of developments and structures.

Section 19 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) states that a local area plan shall be made in respect of a town with a population that exceeds 1,500 persons except where, inter alia, a local area plan has already been made in respect of the area of the town or objectives for that area have already been indicated in the Development Plan.

It is a requirement under Section 19(2B) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) that no later than one year following the making of this Development Plan, the local area plans shall be amended so that their objectives are consistent with the objectives of this Clare County Development Plan 2017–2023. Where any provision of any local area plan conflicts with the provisions of this Development Plan, the provision of the local area plan shall cease to have effect.

CDP19.1

Development Plan Objective: Local Area Plans

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To ensure that a local area plan is prepared and in place for the areas of Ennis & Environs and Shannon Town & Environs during the lifetime of this Plan.

19.3 Land-Use Zoning

Within the functional area of County Clare, lands are zoned for particular purposes within the settlement plans contained in this Development Plan and in the local areas plans.

In accordance with the overall strategy of this Plan, the County's zoning strategy is based on three important principles:

- i** Sufficient lands should be provided at appropriate locations throughout the County, in accordance with the population targets as set out in the Core Strategy, to facilitate the envisaged land-use requirements during the lifetime of this Plan;
- ii** Sustainable development and the use/ redevelopment of brown field sites within established settlements should be encouraged;
- iii** Land-use zoning objectives should assist individuals in accessing the most appropriate location for new development. Not all needs can be anticipated and therefore some flexibility is required, having regard to all other principles, policies and objectives.

CDP19.2

Development Plan Objective: Zoning of Lands

It is an objective of Clare County Council:

To ensure that sufficient lands are zoned at appropriate locations in the settlement plans and local area plans of the County, in accordance with the Core Strategy population targets, in order to meet the envisaged land use requirements of the area during the lifetime of this Development Plan.

19.4

Nature of Zonings

At the outset, it should be noted that a development proposal that complies, in principle, with the relevant land-use zoning, will not automatically be guaranteed or granted planning permission. Clare County Council shall consider each proposal for development on its individual merits having regard to Section 34 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).

The following describes the individual zonings proposed in each of the settlement plans/local area plans:

Agriculture

This zone is for the use of land for agricultural purposes and farming-related activities. Individual dwellings for permanent occupancy of established landowners and their immediate family members will be open for consideration subject to the objectives set out in Chapter 3 of this Plan and normal site suitability considerations.

Airport

Land zoned for airport development shall be used for airport-related uses, buildings, infrastructure and services and compatible aviation-related businesses and industries.

Buffer Space

Buffer spaces are intended to provide a buffer of undeveloped land for the conservation of biodiversity, visual amenity or green space. Buffer spaces may include natural features such as floodplains, riparian zones, turloughs, valuable biodiversity areas including designated sites, amenity areas, woodlands, hedgerows, green spaces and archaeological features.

Commercial

The use of land zoned for 'commercial' purposes shall be taken to include the use of the lands for commercial and business uses including offices, service industry, warehousing and the facilitation of enterprise/retail park/office type uses as appropriate. Retailing is open for consideration on this zoning, provided that a sequential test is carried out and the lands are demonstrably the optimum location for the nature and quantum of retail development proposed.

Neighbourhood Centre

It is intended that land zoned for 'neighbourhood centre' will be developed to provide an appropriate range of local services including commercial, retail and community uses, to support the population of the surrounding area.

Community

The development of lands for community uses shall be taken to include the use of lands for community, civic, health services, public or educational uses including the provision of schools, community halls, healthcare facilities and any other facility that is intended to provide some form of community service. Public or private delivery is not a factor in this case.

Enterprise

Lands zoned for 'enterprise' shall be taken to include the use and development of land for high-end research and development, business, science and technology-based industry, financial services, call centres/telemarketing, software development, enterprise and incubator units, small/medium manufacturing or corporate offices in high quality campus/park type development.

It is intended that such developments will have high quality architectural design and landscaping. This zoning allows for 'walk to' support facilities such as canteen, restaurant or crèche services which are integrated into employment units and are of a nature and scale to serve the needs of employees on the campus.

This zoning also allows for associated transportation infrastructure such as car and bicycle parking and bus stop shelters. This zoning excludes general retail, retail park outlets, motor sales/servicing activities and heavy industrial undertakings.

Lands zoned for 'enterprise' in large villages and small villages shall be taken to include the use and development of land for small-scale business and enterprise development such as incubator units, craft centres/workshops, small-scale manufacturing, local digital/technology businesses etc. Retail uses on these sites shall only be considered where it is ancillary to the main activity taking place.

Enterprise developments in large villages and small villages must have a high standard of architecture and landscaping and must be relative and appropriate to their scale, size and character.

Existing Residential

The objective for land zoned 'existing residential' is to conserve and enhance the quality and character of the areas, to protect residential amenities and to allow for small scale infill development which is appropriate to the character and pattern of development in the immediate area and uses that enhance existing residential communities. Existing residential zoned land may also provide for small-scale home-based employment uses where the primary residential use will be maintained.

Industry

The use of land for industry uses shall be taken to include the use for industrial processing or manufacturing of a scale and nature where there is significant goods, manufacturing and related issues. Uses of this nature may result in the generation of emissions.

This type of industrial activity may also be subject to the SEVESO Directives, the main EU legislation dealing with the control of on-shore major accident hazards involving dangerous substances.

A mix of uses such as office-based or retail development is not considered appropriate in areas zoned for industrial development.

Light Industry

The use of land for light industry shall be taken to include uses where the primary activity is the manufacture of a physical product. The use for industry/manufacturing, incubator units, distribution, open storage, transport operating centres and the treatment/recovery of waste material is acceptable.

Processes carried out, or the machinery/plant installed on land zoned for Light Industry must be such that they could be carried out or installed without detriment to the amenity of that area by reason of noise, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, soot, ash, dust or grit.

Uses such as retail development or small/medium office-based developments are not considered appropriate in areas zoned for light

industry, save where it is ancillary to the main use of the development. Large-scale office type development (>1000m²) such as call centres are open to consideration subject to compatibility with surrounding land uses.

Low Density Residential

This zoning refers to the use of lands to accommodate a low density pattern of residential development, primarily detached family dwellings. The underlying priority shall be to ensure that the character of the settlement/area is maintained and further reinforced by a high standard of design. Proposed developments must also be appropriate in scale and nature to the areas in which they are located.

Marine-Related Industry

Land zoned for marine-related industry shall provide for marine-related industry and large-scale uses that create a synergy with the marine use. Marine-related industry shall be taken to include the use of land for industry that, by its nature, requires a location adjacent to estuarine/deep water including a dependency on marine transport, transshipment, bulk cargo or where the industrial processes benefit from a location adjacent to the marine area.

Maritime/Harbour

The use of land for maritime/harbour related activity shall be taken to include the use of land, including harbours and piers, that will facilitate small-scale, water-based commercial or tourism activity and associated facilities including car parking facilities.



Mixed Use

The use of land for ‘mixed use’ developments shall include the use of land for a range of uses, making provision, where appropriate, for primary and secondary uses e.g. commercial/ retail development as the primary use with residential development as a secondary use. Secondary uses will be considered by the local authority having regard to the particular character of the given area.

On lands that have been zoned ‘mixed-use’ in or near town or village centres, a diverse range of day and evening uses is encouraged and an over-concentration of any one use will not normally be permitted.

Open Space

It is intended that lands zoned ‘open space’ will be retained as undeveloped open space, mainly for passive open space related activities. The open space/park areas could contain active play facilities such as children’s play areas but these would only be a small component of the overall areas involved.

Recreation

This category of zoning provides for the use of land for the provision of sports grounds/ playing pitches, golf courses, tennis courts and other active indoor and outdoor recreational facilities that contribute to meeting the leisure, recreation and amenity needs of the immediate community and/or the wider area.

Residential

Residential use shall be taken to primarily include the use of land for domestic dwellings. It may also provide for a range of other uses particularly those that have the potential to foster the development of new residential communities e.g. schools, crèches, open spaces etc.

Tourism

Land zoned for tourism development shall be used for a range of structures and activities which are primarily designed to facilitate tourism development and where uses are mainly directed at servicing tourists/holiday makers and visiting members of the public.

Transport Utilities

It is intended that land zoned ‘transport utilities’ will be reserved for the provision of infrastructure required to move people and goods by rail, bus, car or bicycle including existing and proposed train stations, bus stations and coach parks.

University Zone

It is intended that lands identified as ‘University Zone’ will be reserved to accommodate development and uses associated with higher education including research and development, student/campus accommodation, residential uses complementary to the uses contained within the University Zone, student support services, enterprise/start-up business units, commercial units linked to the research and development role, recreation, sport and social facilities and open spaces.

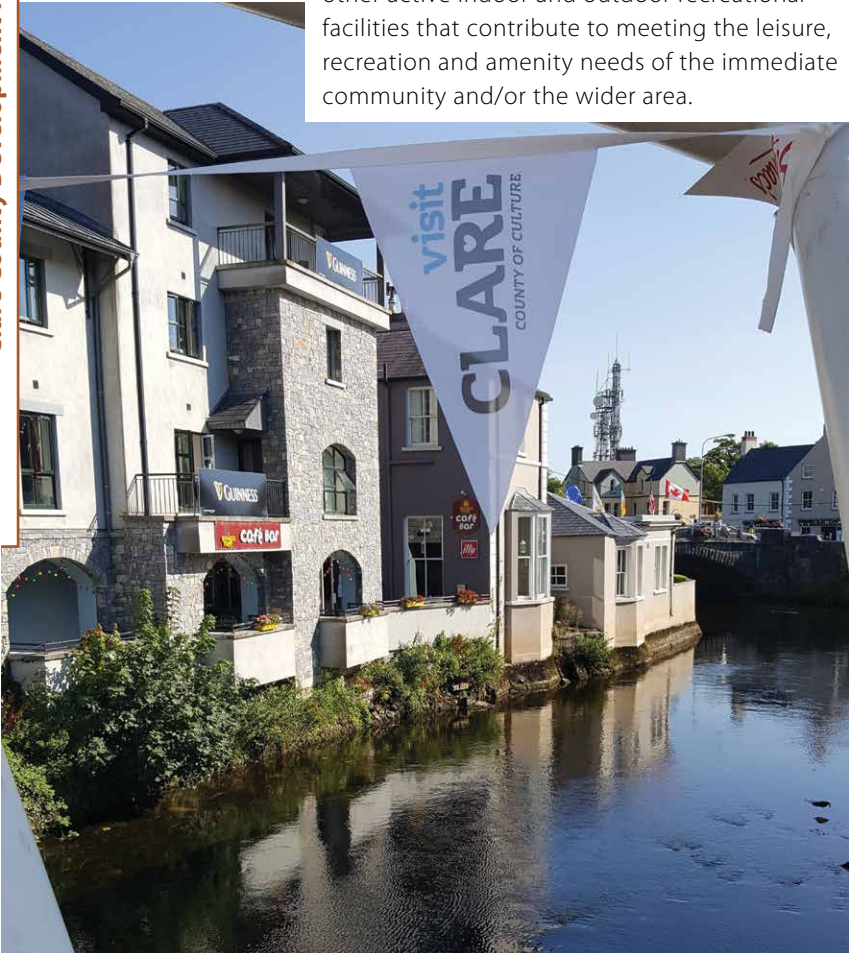
Utilities/Infrastructure Safeguard

It is intended that land zoned ‘utilities’ and ‘infrastructure safeguard’ will be reserved for the existing and future provision of key infrastructural services and the upgrading of existing services and infrastructure relating to road, rail, air, electricity, telecommunications, gas, water and waste water treatment services.

CDP19.3

Development Plan Objective:
Compliance with Zoning

It is an objective of Clare County Council:
To require development proposals to comply with the zoning of the subject site in the settlement plans and local area plans.





19.5 Indicative Land-Use Zoning Matrix

Appendix 2 outlines the Indicative Land Use Zoning Matrix for the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023. This matrix provides an indication as to how different types of development may be considered on the different land-use zonings by listing the most common forms of development and classifying whether the proposed use is acceptable in principle, or otherwise, on lands that are zoned for a particular use.

19.5.1 'Permitted in Principle':

'Permitted in Principle' means that the proposed use is generally acceptable subject to the normal planning process and compliance with the relevant policies, objectives, standards and requirements as set out in the County Development Plan, and by other government bodies/sections, in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. If a proposal is indicated to be 'Permitted in Principle' in the zoning matrix, this does not imply that planning permission will automatically be granted as other factors must be considered and each proposal for development is considered on its individual merits.

19.5.2 'Open for Consideration'

The proposed use may be permitted where the local authority is satisfied that it is in compliance with the zoning objectives, standards and requirements as set out in the County Development Plan and by other government bodies/sections, and will not conflict with the permitted, existing or adjoining land-uses in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

19.5.3 'Not Normally Permitted'

The proposed use will not normally be favourably considered by the local authority, except in exceptional circumstances, and in such instances, the development may represent a material contravention of the Plan. This may be due to envisaged negative impacts on existing and permitted uses, incompatibility with policies and objectives contained in the County Development Plan or it may be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

19.5.4 Uses not listed in the Indicative Zoning Matrix

Proposed land-uses which are not listed in the indicative land-use zoning matrix will be considered on a case-by-case basis having regard to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and compliance with the relevant policies and objectives, standards and requirements as set out in this Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023, guidelines issued in accordance with Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and guidance issued by other government bodies/sections.

19.5.5 Non-conforming Uses

'Non-conforming uses' are established uses that do not conform to the zoning objectives of the Plan. Generally, the Council will consider reasonable extensions and improvements to premises that accommodate non-conforming uses, provided that it would not be injurious to the amenities of the area and is consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Chapter 19 Land-Use Zonings –
Cross References

CDP3.9	Monitoring and Implementation of Settlement Strategy
CDP3.10	Planned Growth of Settlements
CDP3.16	New Single Holiday Homes in the Countryside
CDP4.4	Social and Affordable Housing
CDP4.8	Sites for Independent Development
CDP4.9	Traveller Accommodation
CDP4.10	Housing for Older People
CDP4.13	Holiday Homes
CDP5.1	Sustainable Communities
CDP6.14	Availability of Land and Infrastructure
CDP7.2	Retail Activity
Section 8.2.3	Road Network
CDP8.2	Water Services
CDP18.6	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment



Chapter 20

Implementation and Monitoring

20.0 Introduction.....	286
20.1 Implementation and Monitoring of Settlement Policy	286
20.2 Housing Implementation and Monitoring.....	286
20.3 Community Development and Social Infrastructure Implementation and Monitoring	287
20.4 Retail Implementation and Monitoring.....	287
20.5 Physical Infrastructure Implementation and Monitoring	288
20.6 Tourism Implementation and Monitoring.....	288
20.7 Marine and Coastal Zone Management Implementation and Monitoring.....	289
20.8 Biodiversity, Natural Heritage and Green Infrastructure Implementation and Monitoring	289
20.9 Architectural, Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Implementation and Monitoring.....	290
20.10 Design and the Built Environment Implementation and Monitoring	291
20.11 SEA Monitoring.....	291
20.12 Collaboration and Engagement.....	292



20.0 Introduction

Under the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), Clare County Council has a statutory obligation to secure the implementation of the objectives of the Clare County Development Plan. Clare County Council is fully committed to implementing this Development Plan. The Council will take a leadership role to progress and secure the Development Plan policies and objectives.

In providing this leadership role, the Council will foster a collaborative approach with citizens, stakeholders, Elected Members, sectoral interest groups and adjoining authorities. The Council will seek to co-operate with the relevant agencies to facilitate, encourage and promote development, economic growth and employment in an environmentally suitable and practical manner across the County.

One of the most important aspects of this County Development Plan is to secure the timely delivery of critical physical infrastructure, primarily in the water services sector. The provision of good quality water supply and effective wastewater disposal infrastructure are critical requirements for the future economic development, quality of life and sustainable growth of the County. The provision of adequate infrastructural capacity in areas of population growth, as identified in the Settlement Strategy, will allow for the plan-led future development of County Clare. The Council recognises that, in order to ensure land-use policy is sustainable and for the Development Plan strategy to be realised, a coordinated and integrated approach to planning the provision of public utility services is crucial.

A full report on the implementation of the objectives of the Plan will be prepared two years after the Plan comes into effect. This report will highlight any difficulties that may arise in the achievement of the objectives and give an opportunity to rectify any problems that may arise.

20.1 Implementation and Monitoring of Settlement Policy

The Settlement Hierarchy and Settlement Strategy is based on a clear set of principles, which aim to achieve a properly planned and sustainable settlement pattern in County Clare. The settlement plans set out in Volume 3 of this Plan reflect these principles and translate the Settlement Strategy and Core Strategy into clear plans for future growth in the towns and villages of the County. It will be important, through the lifetime of the Plan and beyond, to monitor progress on achieving this properly planned and sustainable settlement pattern for the County. The Council will manage and carefully monitor the nature, scale, rate and location of newly permitted developments in rural and urban areas, in order to assess the degree to which settlement policy objectives are being met across the network of settlements and to take appropriate development management measures as outlined in Section 3.2.4.

20.2 Housing Implementation and Monitoring

The Council will identify and adopt a continuous monitoring and management process, which will ensure that housing provision and analysis of housing need is both current and accurate throughout the period of the Plan. It is important to undertake continuous monitoring of the implementation of the Joint Housing Strategy for Clare Local Authorities and Limerick City and County Councils 2010-2017, and any subsequent strategy, to ensure that identified needs are met and to ensure that needs not currently identified can be assessed and resolved swiftly and effectively.

20.3 Community Development and Social Infrastructure Implementation and Monitoring

The successful implementation of the Council's Community Development and Social Infrastructure objectives requires a collaborative approach by Clare County Council. The Council will ensure that sufficient lands are zoned throughout the County for community, social and cultural uses. Objectives have also been included in the County Development Plan for the delivery of the required facilities/spaces.

Generally, conditions are attached to planning permissions requiring the payment of a development contribution in line with an adopted Development Contribution Scheme. Contribution towards Recreation and Amenities and Community Facilities are payable and these monies will be used to fund projects that will bring community, social and cultural benefits to the people of County Clare.

20.4 Retail Implementation and Monitoring

Proposals for Continued Monitoring

The retail sector is a dynamic one, dependent not only upon the national economic climate but also upon the retail offer in a given town relative to neighbouring settlements. The objective of a planned approach is to ensure provision of retail services in accordance with the principles of sustainable development. It is therefore essential to monitor how the Retail Strategy for the Mid-West Region is performing in terms of actual provision and also whether the baseline assumptions are evidenced in the future economic climate. Accordingly, it is recommended that the following factors are monitored on a regular, if not annual, basis: population growth, expenditure growth, existing retail floor space, changes in retail floorspace, commercial indicators of vitality and viability and shopping patterns.

Development Management

The development management process is fundamental to delivering a successful retail strategy. For the Retail Strategy for the Mid-West Region to have a real impact, it is important that each local authority, in exercising its powers and deciding on planning applications, takes into consideration both the impact of the development itself, and the development in conjunction with other recently approved or proposed developments, on the retail sector, both within their own administrative area and on centres within the administrative area of adjoining local authorities.



20.5 Physical Infrastructure Implementation and Monitoring

The Council will identify and adopt a continuous monitoring and management process for the maintenance of public roads and will require, through the Development Contribution Scheme, the payment of contributions towards the cost of upgrading and maintenance of public roads. The Planning Authority will monitor the application of national policy in relation to development onto national routes to ensure that it is being implemented.

Clare County Council in partnership with other agencies such as Transport Infrastructure Ireland (T.I.I.) will aim to deliver on the objectives set for transportation infrastructure within the lifetime of the Plan in order to enhance the efficiency of the public transport system and ensure access for all.

The mechanisms for the delivery of infrastructure have changed significantly in recent years, particularly as Government has re-organised infrastructure responsibilities since the economic downturn in the last decade. The objectives relating to physical infrastructure in this Plan reflect these changes and recognise that the successful implementation of this Plan will be a combined effort, shared by a number of key stakeholders. In particular the changes which have occurred relating to physical infrastructure reflect this the most.

For some time, T.I.I. has been responsible for investment in the national roads network. T.I.I. is responsible for public transport promotion and licensing and for the funding of certain sustainable transport investment programmes in County Clare.

Since the 1st of January 2014, Irish Water (I.W.) has taken over responsibility for all public water and wastewater services under one national service provider under the Water Services Act 2013. I.W. is now responsible for the operation of public water and wastewater services with Clare County Council entering into a service level agreement for 12 years, again demonstrating the high level of partnership and collaboration required to secure the objectives and policies of the County Development Plan.

Implementation of the objectives set out in this Plan above for the provision of energy and communication infrastructure will be achieved through the development management process.

20.6 Tourism Implementation and Monitoring

The Council will identify and adopt a continuous monitoring and management programme to ensure that the objectives in relation to tourism are met. Indicators such as:

- Number of tourists visiting the County (both overseas and domestic);
- Revenue per visitor to the County (both overseas and domestic);
- Success in the Fáilte Ireland Tourism Towns Awards.

can be used to measure the impact of the implementation of the objectives in this chapter.



20.7 Marine and Coastal Zone Management Implementation and Monitoring

The objectives in relation to Marine and Coastal Zone Management will be implemented in tandem with objectives outlined in the Plan in relation to the Shannon Estuary, tourism and recreation. Clare County Council will work to secure funding for the development of marine resources and the construction of essential coastal defences. During the lifetime of the Development Plan, Clare County Council will encourage the development of Integrated Coastal Zone Management and an examination of the feasibility of off-shore renewable energy development. The objectives in relation to Marine and Coastal Zone Management will also be implemented through the Development Management process.

In addition, specific objectives relating to the Shannon Estuary will be facilitated through the implementation of the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary (SIFP). The SIFP sets out the policies and proposals to guide development within the Shannon Estuary over the next 30 years. Through participation on the SIFP Steering Group and its two associated sub-groups (Marketing and Promotion and Environmental Working Group) Clare County Council will ensure the vision and priorities for the future of the Shannon Estuary are realised.

20.8 Biodiversity, Natural Heritage and Green Infrastructure Implementation and Monitoring

Implementation of the natural heritage objectives will be achieved through pre-development consultation with appropriate bodies, through the development management process and by compliance with relevant legislation, the County Heritage Plan and other relevant guidance documents. In the preparation of this Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023, the mitigation measures recommended in the Natura Impact Report and Environmental Report have been provided for.

Continued co-operation with local communities and voluntary groups, especially through the Public Participation Network, will also be essential. Clare County Council will work closely with community groups to achieve regeneration and renewal and the environmental and heritage objectives set out in the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023.

In accordance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive, under Article 11 of the Directive, each member state is obliged to undertake surveillance of the conservation status of the natural habitats and species in the Annexes and under Article 17, to report to the European Commission every six years on their status and on the implementation of the measures taken under the Directive. Clare County Council can use this report to monitor the effects of implementation of their biodiversity and natural heritage objectives. The most recent report undertaken for Ireland and submitted to the commission was in 2013.

Clare County Council actively promotes positive environmental action and behaviour in County Clare with particular focus on the promotion of good environmental management in homes, schools, communities and businesses.



20.9 Architectural, Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Implementation and Monitoring

Implementation of the objectives for Architectural and Archaeological Heritage will be achieved through the Development Management process. A report outlining the implementation of the objectives will be prepared two years after the making of the County Development Plan. This report will monitor the success of the implementation of the objectives of the Plan and will afford an opportunity to make adjustments where required.

Culture can be described as the sum total of our experience, encompassing history, archaeology, environment, an Gaeilge, folklore, genealogy, customs, sports and recreation, contemporary life, religion, citizenship, tourism, education and government.

Cultural identity and a vibrant arts sector fosters creativity and expression and can enhance both the appreciation of a locality and underpin and strengthen its community.

20.10 Design and the Built Environment Implementation and Monitoring

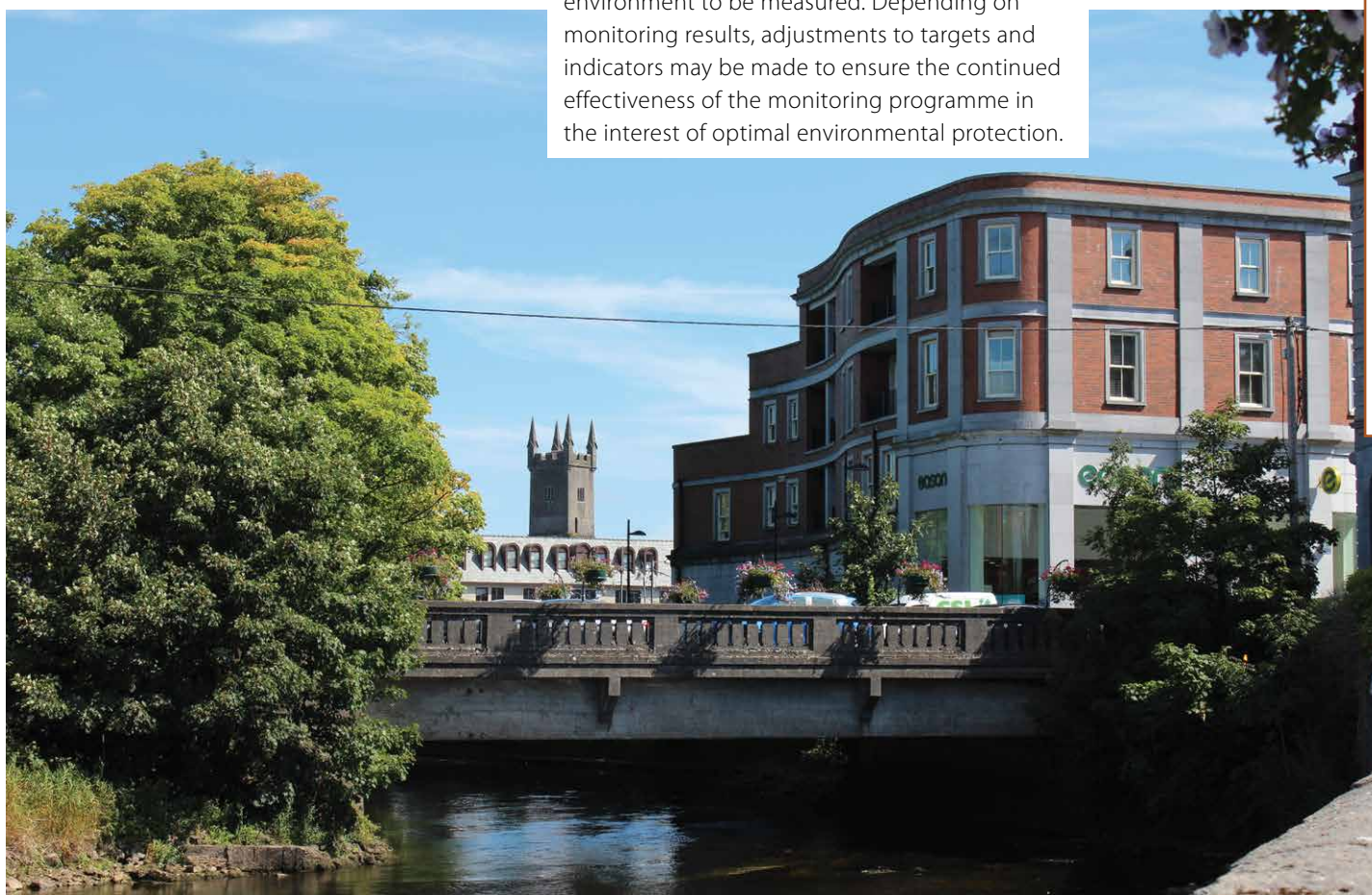
Implementation of the objectives for the built environment and design will primarily be achieved through the Development Management process. The Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines for Planning Authorities proposes that a 'look back' be undertaken on constructed housing schemes to evaluate them against the urban design check-list. Subject to resources, it will be an objective to carry out this work, to report on the findings and to make recommendations as to future changes. The design awards competition is also an opportunity to monitor progress in this respect.

20.11 SEA Monitoring

Monitoring is an important part of the planning process, in order to see how far the Plan aims and objectives are being met, and to gauge their effectiveness as they are implemented. Continual monitoring of the County Development Plan is required to ensure that the development objectives and policies are working, and to ensure that vision and overall strategy remain appropriate.

A Strategic Environmental Assessment has been prepared in tandem with the County Development Plan to assess the likely significant effects of the policies and objectives, and their implementation over the Plan period. The SEA Directive requires that monitoring should be carried out in order to identify at an early stage any unforeseen adverse effects due to the implementation of the Plan, with the view to taking remedial action where adverse effects are identified through monitoring.

An environmental monitoring programme has been developed as part of the SEA. It is based on environmental indicators which have been developed to show changes attributable to the Plan and which have been selected to track progress towards achieving strategic environmental objectives and reaching targets, enabling positive and negative impacts on the environment to be measured. Depending on monitoring results, adjustments to targets and indicators may be made to ensure the continued effectiveness of the monitoring programme in the interest of optimal environmental protection.



20.12 Collaboration and Engagement

The implementation of this Plan requires the cooperation and participation of all stakeholders and Clare County Council will undertake a key leadership role to progress and secure the implementation of the Plan. In providing a leadership role, the Council will aim to foster a collaborative approach with citizens, communities, stakeholders, sectoral interests, partners, governmental and non-governmental agencies and adjoining authorities to achieve collective support and successful implementation of the Plan.

Table 20.1 outlines the key performance indicators relating to the Strategic Aims of the Clare County Development Plan.

Table 20.1
Key Performance Indicators

Strategic Aims	Performance Indicators
To demonstrate how the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 is consistent with national and regional planning strategies, guidelines and policies including national and regional population targets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Population growth in the County is translated into the appropriate growth settlements in accordance with the Plan;• The overall population targets provided for in the Regional Planning Guidelines are not exceeded.
To strengthen the role of the Clare County Development Plan as the fundamental link with national, regional, county and local policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compliance with national and regional policies;• Implementation of Volumes 7, 8 and 9 of the CDP 2017-2023.
To provide the policy framework for settlement plans and local area plans, particularly in relation to land-use zoning, and to ensure a strategic approach to zoning that allows an appropriate level of development throughout the Plan area at the right time and in the right place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The zoning limits set out in the Core Strategy are carried through to relevant Municipal District Plans which contain all relevant settlements;• Take up of new employment land.
To set the context for the key infrastructure of the County and its role.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delivery of key infrastructural requirements as identified in the Plan
To provide a framework within which the provision of sustainable infrastructure, amenities, economic investment and development can take place to maximise the use of resources in the County, for current and future generations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduction in commuting distance time to work and school;• Increase in the provision and use of public transport services;• Overall delivery of “Smarter Travel” initiatives.
To comply with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintenance of extent and quality of protected habitats;• Number of protected structures lost or damaged;• Number of protected structures rescued and revitalised;• Expansion of renewable energy generating sector;• Incorporation of SuDS in future proofing and incorporating climate change resilience to developments.



Appendix 1

Development Management Guidelines

A1.0 Introduction.....	294
A1.1 Pre-Planning Consultations	294
A1.2 Design Statements	294
A1.3 Residential Development	294
A1.3.1 Rural Residential Development	294
A1.3.2 Urban Residential Development	295
A1.3.3 Childcare Facilities in Residential Areas	296
A1.4 Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes (SUDS)	297
A1.5 Green Infrastructure within Industrial and Enterprise Zones	297
A1.6 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	297
A1.7 Habitat Directive Assessment	297
A1.8 Archaeological Potential	298
A1.9 Transportation	298
A1.9.1 Roads, Cycle Routes and Footpaths	298
A1.9.2 Sight Distances	299
A1.9.3 Car Parking and Bicycle Parking Standards	299
A1.9.4 Traffic Impact Assessments (TIA), Road Safety Audits and Road Safety Impact Assessments.....	301
A1.10 Signage	302
A1.10.1 Signage – General	302
A1.10.2 Advertising Signage.....	302
A1.10.3 Directional Signage.....	302
A1.10.4 Tourism Signage.....	303
A1.10.5 Advertising Hoardings (including billboards)	303
A1.10.6 Temporary Construction Hoarding/Safety Netting	303
A1.10.7 Signage at Petrol Stations	303
A1.11 Agricultural Developments	304
A1.12 Access and Mobility.....	304
A1.13 Energy Efficiency and Sustainability	304
A1.14 Development Contributions	304
A1.15 Cash Deposits and Bonds	304

A1.0 Introduction

In making a decision on any individual planning application, the Planning Authority is restricted to considering the proper planning and sustainable development of an area, having regard to the matters provided for in Section 34 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended). Section 34 sets out in detail the issues that must be considered by the Planning Authority when making a decision on a planning application, including the provisions of the Development Plan, guidelines issued by the Minister for the Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government, other relevant Ministerial or Government policies and any submissions or observations made in accordance with the Planning Regulations.

This section sets out some guidelines which applicants should have regard to when making a planning application. This chapter must be read in conjunction with the other relevant chapters of this Development Plan and regard should also be had for the wide array of guidelines issued by the Minister under Section 28 of the Act. The development management guidance set out hereunder is not exhaustive and is not intended to replicate advice and guidelines available elsewhere. It is envisaged that these guidelines will be applied in a flexible manner and it should not be assumed that adherence with the standards and criteria set out hereafter will automatically entitle an applicant to planning permission.

A1.1 Pre-Planning Consultations

The Council, in accordance with Section 247 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), provides an opportunity for applicants to engage in discussions with the Planning Authority prior to making a planning application. Applicants are encouraged to avail of this service to ensure that all key issues are addressed at the formative stage of the design process. It should, however, be noted that such discussions will not prejudice any subsequent decision made by Clare County Council.

A1.2 Design Statements

For larger developments (in excess of 3 dwelling houses or >300m²) and for sites in key locations applicants will be required to submit a design statement with their planning application referencing the main design considerations. The design statement will help the Planning Authority to assess the quality of the submitted application.

A design statement is a short document which enables the applicant to explain why a particular design solution is considered the most suitable for a particular site, especially for larger or more complex forms of development. The statement will usually consist of both text and graphics but is not intended to duplicate planning application documents. The design statement should address all relevant development plan or local area plan design policies and should include, but not be limited to, the following considerations:

- Universal design
- The 12 criteria set out in the Best Practice Urban Design Manual (DoECLG 2009)
- Residential density (if applicable)
- Statement of housing mix (where applicable)
- Overshadowing
- Refuse bin locations/waste management

A1.3 Residential Development

A1.3.1 Rural Residential Development

Siting and Design: The Planning Authority wishes to achieve a high standard of house design and siting in the countryside. Clare County Council has prepared a *County Clare Rural House Design Guide* to assist those making an application for a new dwelling or an extension to an existing dwelling in the rural area of the County. These guidelines are not intended to be prescriptive. Given that each rural site is unique, any guidelines need to be applied appropriately. However the principles are likely to be relevant in most contexts and applicants and agents are encouraged to use it as a reference document.

Road Frontage: Where a site has a public road frontage, a minimum frontage of 30m is normally required, although this may be relaxed where it is desirable to maintain existing boundary features or landscape features, or for backland sites on private roads, on a case by case basis where it can be demonstrated that there are no negative residential or visual amenity/landscape impacts.

Plot Size: The minimum site area of 0.2ha (0.5acres) is required to accommodate a rural dwelling.

Waste Water Treatment Systems: The Planning Authority, in assessing proposals with on-site waste water treatment systems, must be satisfied that site conditions are suitable for the treatment and disposal of domestic effluent.

The EPA has published a Code of Practice: Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses (p.e < 10). The code of practice establishes an overall framework of best

practice in relation to the development of wastewater treatment and disposal systems, in unsewered rural areas, for protection of our environment and specifically water quality. The code replaces previous guidance issued by the EPA on wastewater treatment systems for single houses (EPA, 2000) and incorporates the requirements of new European guidelines, recent research findings and submissions and comments received during the consultation process.

This EPA code of practice sets out the following which will be used by Clare County Council when assessing on-site effluent treatment systems:

- An assessment methodology for the determination of site suitability for an on-site wastewater treatment system and identification of the minimum environmental protection requirements. All proposals shall be accompanied by a site suitability assessment in accordance with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) code.
- A methodology for the selection of a suitable wastewater treatment system for sites in unsewered rural areas. All proposals shall be accompanied by the site specific details from the manufacturer of the system.
- Information on the design and installation of conventional septic tank systems, filter systems and mechanical aeration systems.
- Information on tertiary treatment systems.
- Maintenance requirements for the above systems together with written proof of an agreed maintenance contract with the manufacturer of the system to ensure on-going maintenance.
- All effluent treatment systems shall be designed and maintained in accordance with the EPA publication, The Code of Practice: Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses 2009 or any updated version.

A1.3.2 Urban Residential Development

General: In considering any application for a housing scheme, regard will be had to the publication *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas 2009* and the accompanying document *Urban Design Manual, A Best Practice Guide 2009* issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended). To achieve good urban design, the 12 urban design principles set out in the Urban Design Manual 2009 should be taken into account when designed any scheme:

- 1 Context
- 2 Connections
- 3 Inclusivity
- 4 Variety
- 5 Efficiency
- 6 Distinctiveness
- 7 Layout
- 8 Public realm
- 9 Adaptability
- 10 Privacy and amenity
- 11 Parking
- 12 Detailed Design

These criteria will be used at pre-application meetings and in the assessment of the planning applications. In relation to criterion No. 3 above, the National Disability Authority's guidance on universal design of the built and external environment should be consulted.

Life Long Adaptability: The design of new housing developments must be based on the principles of universal design and lifetime adaptability. All new residential buildings must provide a ground floor low level access shower and toilet to ensure adaptability to future needs. Both internal and external layout and design must be adaptable to the varying and changing needs of occupiers during their lifetime.

Sites for Independent Development:

These sites allow applicants to design and build their own homes within the settlements of the County. The Council will require development proposals for 'sites for independent development' housing schemes to be accompanied by a detailed design brief setting out the parameters for architectural form, plot ratios, external finishes and boundary treatment.

Apartments: The Planning Authority, in assessing proposals for apartment developments, will have regard to the *Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments: Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2015* and *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas 2009*.

Part V: Part V as set out in Section 96 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) applies to lands zoned for residential use or a mixture of residential and other uses. The Planning Authority, in implementing Part V, will have regard to the Housing Strategy in place for the county at the time of implementation, the zoning objectives for the sites concerned and will ensure compliance with relevant legislation, including the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

Taking in Charge: Clare County Council, in dealing with matters relating to the taking in charge of residential developments, will comply with Section 180 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), relevant government guidance (*Managing and Resolving Unfinished Housing Developments, DoECLG 2011*) and Clare County Council's *Taking in Charge Policy for Housing Developments 2009*.

Management Companies: Certain private housing developments (e.g. apartment complexes, holiday home schemes) will have a condition attached to their planning permission which requires that a properly constituted management company be established for the purposes of maintaining the development and its shared services in accordance with the Multi-Unit Development Act 2011.

Place names: The Planning Authority considers it important that new place names for estates reflect the local topography, history, culture or ecology of an area. The developer must submit proposed names to the local authority for the consideration of the Placenames Committee of the County Council as part of the agreement of planning conditions. See also Section 4.3.13 of the Written Statement.

Street Lighting: Lighting shall be provided in accordance with guidelines contained in *Recommendations for Site Development Works in Housing Areas* published by DoEHLG.

Space around Buildings: Generally, a minimum distance of 2.4m for single storey and 3.7m for two-storey buildings will be required between the side walls of adjacent buildings or building blocks, each having a minimum of 1m per side. This standard may be relaxed where the building incorporates a single storey structure to the side.

Rear Garden Length: Normally, a rear garden depth of 11m will be required. This is a minimum depth and larger distances may be required dependent on the nature and scale of the subject development. In the case of high density, infill developments or for housing for the older people, shorter garden lengths may be permitted if there are no overlooking issues.

Plot Size: A variety of plot sizes and shapes must be incorporated into the design and layout of residential developments to allow for the different needs of potential future residents.

Boundary Treatment: Generally boundary walls shall be 2m high and shall be provided along the rear garden boundary of each dwelling and along both side boundaries extending from the rear boundary to the front building line. The finish of the walls shall be consistent with the external finishes of the dwelling house or of a sympathetic material. Proposals for alternative boundary treatment such as planting combined with appropriate fencing will also be considered favourably if it can be demonstrated that it will enhance the development.

Open Space in Residential Areas: See also Section 4.3.14 of the written statement. Each green space in residential developments shall have at least one native oak tree, or other naturalised tree species of similar stature and lifespan, integrated into the agreed planting/landscaping scheme.

Mobility and Sustainable Travel: Development proposals for housing developments comprising 10 units or more shall be accompanied by a Transport and Mobility Statement outlining how convenient pedestrian and cyclist connectivity to the surrounding community has been integrated into the design and layout of the proposed development. Issues such as the provision for bus access e.g. safe school bus pick up/drop off area should also be addressed in the statement.

A1.3.3 Childcare Facilities in Residential Areas

In established residential areas detached houses/sites or substantial semi-detached properties with space for off-street car parking and/or suitable drop-off and collection points for customers and also space for an outdoor play area are likely to be more acceptable for the provision of child care facilities. This is especially the case if this involves use of only part of the house and the residential use remains.

The use of terraced properties or semi-detached properties on small plots is less likely to be acceptable for full day care facilities and will be assessed on their merits with regard to the objectives and development management guidelines outlined in this Plan. Sessional or after-school care which is ancillary to the main residential use, may be more appropriate in this regard. In new housing areas developers will be expected to plan for and include provision for childcare facilities. The level of provision will depend on the particular circumstances but as a guide one childcare facility for a minimum of 20 childcare places per approximately 75 dwellings may be appropriate.

A1.4 Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes (SUDS)

The Planning Authority will promote the use of SUDS in the design of new developments in the county. SUDS are concerned with the quality of surface water run-off in both urban and rural areas and seek to ensure that the risk to receiving water from pollution is minimised and to control the release of water run-off in a carefully managed way.

The Planning Authority will require development proposals to minimise 'soil sealing' (the covering of ground by impermeable material) and to adopt alternative surfacing options that decrease the risk of flooding and the loss of biodiversity.

A1.5 Green Infrastructure within Industrial and Enterprise Zones

Lands that have been zoned for industrial or enterprise use need not be devoid of biodiversity or amenity opportunities. The retention and enhancement, where possible, of existing natural features such as hedgerows and associated ditches and streams in such zoned lands offers the potential to incorporate sustainable drainage measures and retain wildlife corridors through developments. The addition of surface water attenuation ponds, green roofs and living walls in these developments would transform an environment which would normally be perceived to be devoid of biodiversity into one which offers significant opportunities for wildlife while providing a high quality environment for its workers.

A1.6 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

The requirement to carry out an Environmental Impact Assessment derives from EU Directives 85/337/EEC (as amended by Directive 97/11/EC). An Environment Impact Statement is required with a planning application where the defined thresholds outlined in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) are exceeded for certain types of development. If the proposed development is sub-threshold, and the Planning Authority considers that the proposal is likely to have significant effects on the environment, then an EIS must be submitted to the Planning Authority. The Planning Authority will have regard to Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended) in deciding whether a proposed development is likely to have significant effects on the environment, and also the supporting Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-Threshold Development (DEHLG, 2003). This would occur where it is considered that the effects of the proposed development may have a significant impact on the receiving environment.

A1.7 Habitat Directive Assessment

In accordance with the EU Habitats Directive any plan or project with the potential to impact on the integrity of a European site must be screened for appropriate assessment to determine if an appropriate assessment of the site is required. In the event that the screening indicates that the plan or project will, either directly or indirectly, on its own or in combination with other plans and projects, have a significant effect on a European site(s), a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) or Natura Impact Report (NIR) must be prepared.

Having considered the conclusions of the NIS or NIR, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project if they are satisfied that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned. It should be noted that the conservation objectives for some protected sites not only require the maintenance of favourable conservation condition but also the restoration of favourable conservation condition of the qualifying interests.

If the NIS or NIR indicates that the subject site hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species, and the proposed development will have a significant negative impact on that habitat or species, the plan or project can only proceed if there are Imperative for Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI), including those of a social or economic nature in line with Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive. In such cases, the Member State shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 network is protected. It shall inform the European Commission of the compensatory measures adopted and await the opinion of the Commission regarding the proposed plan or project. Any such project or plan which is identified as having adverse effects on the integrity of a European site and has made the case for IROPI should be guided by the European Commission's guidance on the application of Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive¹.

If a development site is located on or near a European site, or the proposed development may have an impact on a European site, it is advisable to consult with the Council at the earliest possible opportunity. The National Parks and Wildlife Service of the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs may also be consulted, including via <http://www.npws.ie/planning>.

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/art6/guidance_art6_4_en.pdf

A1.8 Archaeological Potential

In considering proposals for development, applicants are advised to consult the archaeological maps (available for viewing in the Planning Department) in order to ascertain whether their development is located in an area of archaeological potential. Developers are advised of the requirements set under the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994 with regard to procedures if their site is located within an area of archaeological potential. Developers are strongly advised to have pre-application discussions if their site is located in such an area.

A1.9 Transportation

A1.9.1 Roads, Cycle Routes and Footpaths

Road categories, speed management and traffic calming will generally be required to comply with the current edition of Traffic Management Guidelines i.e. Primary Distributor Road, District Distributor Road, Local Collector Road, Access Road. NRA 41/95 from NRA *Design Manual for Urban Streets and Roads* is the reference for design of accesses to developments. Road construction and other services will generally be required to comply with the current edition of the *Recommendations for Site Development Works in Housing Areas* published by DoEHLG. Road design and layout is of critical importance to the formation of successful urban design.

Road category definitions for the purpose of this Plan:

Primary Distributor Road: It is considered that the predominant role of this road category is to serve long distance traffic. Relief road proposals in urban areas may come into this category.

District Distributor Road: This category runs between districts and through major residential areas, and is designed to slow traffic. There is no direct access for residences or commercial units except in exceptional circumstances. The road shall be a minimum of 6.5m wide with two footpaths, each 2m wide separated by a grass margin from the road. The width of footpaths and grass margins may be reduced where cycle facilities are provided. The Planning Authority may require that the distributor road, which is often constructed in a number of phases, to be designed and constructed to a standard that is be capable of accommodating construction traffic.

Local Collector Road: For developments of more than 80 dwellings, or for developments which form part of larger land parcels which will contain more than 80 dwellings, the Planning Authority will normally require a Local Collector Road, a road with no direct dwelling access. No road with direct dwelling access should serve more than 80 dwellings. The road shall be minimum 5.5m maximum 6.0m not including cycle lanes. Two footpaths required each of 2m width. Grass margins may be required.

Access Road: This category serves housing developments or roads within a development serving less than 80 units. An access road of 5.5m is required with 1.5m wide footpaths. This may be relaxed to 5m where a small number of dwellings are being served or the aim is to create a street. A cycle path may also be required in developments where a cycle network is being developed in the area. A 1m grass verge may also be appropriate and present an opportunity to provide a landscape scheme to create a setting for the development.

Road designs need to take account of necessary permeability in new housing areas, both for vehicles and pedestrians. Such layouts should effectively restrict speed, providing traffic calming where required and accommodate service vehicles. Layouts, which give priority to pedestrians and cyclists shall be encouraged. Dedicated routes should be adequately lit and designed to ensure personal safety and to prevent motorised vehicle access.

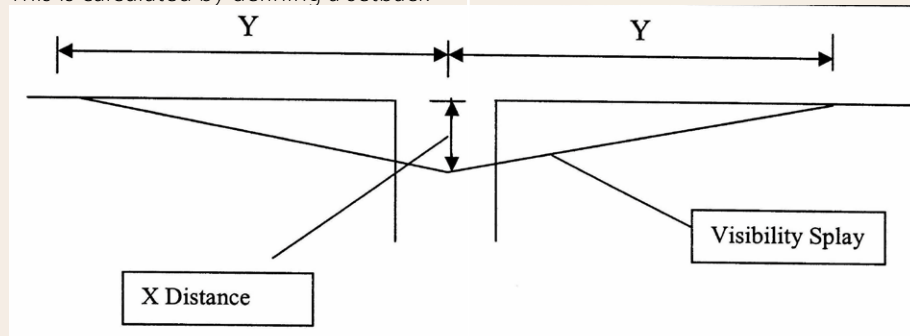
Cul-de-Sacs: Generally not more than 35 dwellings shall be permitted. The road width shall be 5.5m, wide with two 1.5m wide footpaths. A single footway may suffice where the cul-de-sac serves less than 20 dwellings. In smaller cul-de-sacs, serving less than 10 dwellings, footpaths may not be required if it is clear that pedestrian priority is paramount.

A1.9.2 Sight Distances

Entrance Sight Distances

In order to ensure that adequate visibility exists for drivers entering and leaving a dwelling site, it is necessary to create an envelope of visibility on either side of the centre line of the access.

This is calculated by defining a setback



The Y distance is measured from a point on the near edge of the hard surfaced roadway to its intersection with the centre line of the access. A line can then be drawn between the outer point of the Y distance to the setback on the X distance, thus producing a triangular envelope of visibility on either side of the access. The Y distance is determined as follows:

Design Speed of major Road (kph)	120	100	85	70	60	50
"Y" distance (metres)	295	215	160	120	90	70

It may be necessary to obtain the consent of adjoining landowners in order to achieve sight distances. Further information can be obtained from the National Roads *Authority Design Standards for Roads and Bridges*.

A1.9.3 Car Parking and Bicycle Parking Standards

Car parking should be located to the rear of building lines where possible. Large areas of car parking should be accompanied by a landscaping plan to mitigate the visual impact of same.

In town centre locations, in mixed use development proposals, consideration will be given to dual parking usage, where peak times do not coincide.

Design dimensions:

- Each car space shall be 4.8m x 2.5m wide, with 6.1m circulation aisles.
- Disabled spaces shall be 4.8m x 3.6m wide
- Parent and child spaces shall be 4.8m x 3.6m wide
- Loading bays shall be generally 9m x 5m (but at least 6m x 3m).

Where the construction of a new school or child care facility or an extension to an existing school/childcare facility is proposed, the Planning Authority will require the provision of a lay-by or drop off-site parking in relation to buses and for parents dropping off and picking up schoolchildren. Provision shall be made within the site for staff parking.

Land Use	Town Centres	Other Areas	Cycle Parking
Residential Developments – dwelling houses and apartments	1 space for 1 & 2 bed units 2 spaces for ≥3 bed units	1 space for 1 & 2 bed units 2 spaces for ≥3 bed units	With garage: none Without garage: 1 space per unit
Visitor Parking	1 space per 3 residential units	1 space per 3 residential units	
Hotel/Guesthouse/ B&B/Hostel	1 space per room + 1 space per 3 staff on duty + public space such as bars & restaurants as per the standards in this table	1 space per room + 1 space per 3 staff on duty + public space such as bars & restaurants as per the standards in this table	1 space per 10 bedrooms in hotel/ guesthouse/B&B 1 space per 5 bed spaces in hostels
Caravan/Camping Site	1 space per pitch + 1 space per 3 staff on duty	1 space per pitch + 1 space per 3 staff on duty	1 space per pitch
Industrial or Manufacturing Uses	2 spaces per 100m ²	2 spaces per 100m ²	1 space per 100m ²
Warehousing	1 space per 100m ²	2 spaces per 100 m ²	1 space per 1000m ²
Offices	2 spaces per 100m ² + 10% of staff parking for visitors	3 spaces per 100m ² + 10% of staff parking for visitors	1 space per 8 employees 1 space per 100m ²
Bank/ Financial/Insurance	2 spaces per 100m ² + 10% of staff parking for visitors	3 spaces per 100m ² + 10% of staff parking for visitors	1 space per 8 employees 1 space per consulting room
Local Shop	2 spaces per 100m ²	3 spaces per 100m ²	1 space per 8 employees 24 spaces per 100m ²
Convenience Retail	5-7 spaces per 100m ² (dependent on site characteristics)	8 spaces per 100m ²	1 space per 8 employees 20 spaces per 1000m ²
Shopping Centre or Large Retail Store (>1000m ² gross floorspace)	5-7 spaces per 100m ² (dependent on site characteristics) + 1 lorry space per 750m ²	8 spaces per 100m ² + 1 lorry space per 750m ²	1 space per 8 employees 24 spaces per 1000m ²
Retail Warehousing	4 spaces per 100m ²	5 spaces per 100m ²	1 space per 8 employees 20 spaces per 1000m ²
Petrol Filling Station	1 space per 100m ² + 1 space per 3 staff on duty	1 space per 100m ² + 1 space per 2 staff on duty	1 space per 8 employees
Cash & Carry	3 spaces per 100m ²	4 spaces per 100m ²	1 space per 8 employees 20 spaces per 1000m ²
Restaurant/Cafe/ Take-away	10 spaces per 100m ² (net)	12.5 spaces per 100m ² (net)	1 space per 8 employees 5 spaces per 100m ²
Crèche/Playschool/ Nursery	1 per employee and 0.25 spaces per child	1 per employee and 0.25 per child	1 space per 8 employees
Licensed Premises (including hotel bars)	10 spaces per 100m ² (net)	12.5 spaces per 100m ² (net)	1 space per 8 employees
Hospital	1 space per patient bed + 1 per doctor/consultant + 1 per 3 nursing and ancillary staff	1 space per patient bed + 1 per doctor/consultant + 1 per 3 nursing and ancillary staff	1 space per 8 employees 5 spaces per 100 beds
Nursing Home	0.5 spaces per patient bed + 1 per doctor/consultant + 1 per 3 nursing and ancillary staff	1 space per patient bed + 1 per doctor/consultant + 1 per 3 nursing and ancillary staff	1 space per 8 employees 5 spaces per 100 beds
Medical/Dental Clinic	2 spaces per consulting room + 1 per doctors/consultant + 1 per 3 nursing and ancillary staff	2 spaces per consulting room + 1 per doctors/consultant + 1 per 3 nursing and ancillary staff	1 space per 8 employees + 1 space per consulting room
Primary & Secondary Schools	1 space per teaching staff + 1 space per 2 ancillary staff + additional 30% of staff parking for visitors	1 space per teaching staff + 1 space per 2 ancillary staff + additional 30% of staff parking for visitors	1 space per 8 employees 1 space per 10 students
Universities and other Higher Education Institutes	1 space per classroom + 1 per 5 students	1 space per classroom + 1 per 5 students	1 space per 8 employees 1 space per 10 students
Church, Theatres, Cinemas & Auditoriums	1 space per 4 seats	1 space per 4 seats	1 space per 20 fixed seats
Cultural, Community & recreational buildings	2 spaces per 100m ²	4 spaces per 100m ²	1 space per 8 employees 4 spaces per 100m ²
Commercial Leisure (amusement centres, play centres etc)	2 spaces per 100m ²	2 spaces per 100m ²	1 space per 100m ²
Ballroom/Dance Club/Function Room	10 spaces per 100m ² (net)	12.5 spaces per 100m ² (net)	2 spaces per 100m ²

Land Use	Town Centres	Other Areas	Cycle Parking
Golf Clubs/Pitch & Putt	2 spaces per hole + public space such as bars & restaurants as per the standards in this table	4 spaces per hole + public space such as bars & restaurants as per the standards in this table	
Golf Driving Range	0.25 spaces per 0.5m base line	0.5 spaces per 0.5m base line	
Athletics/Playing Fields	5 per track + 10 space per playing field/pitch	10 per track + 10 spaces per playing field/pitch	2 spaces per track/field
Tennis Courts	1 space per court	2 spaces per court	2 spaces per court
Bowling Alley	2 spaces per lane + 1 per 3 staff on duty	3 spaces per lane + 1 per 3 staff on duty	1 space per 8 employees 0.5 space per lane
Swimming Pool	5 spaces per 100m ²	10 spaces per 100m ²	1 space per 8 employees 5 spaces per 100m ²

- 1 Where reference is made to floor area, this refers to gross floor area unless otherwise stated.
- 2 In the case of any development type not listed above, the planning authority will determine the parking requirement having regard to the traffic and movement generation associated with the development and other objectives contained in the Plan.
- 3 All bicycle parking spaces must be secure. Where multiple bicycle parking spaces are required e.g. in schools, larger workplaces etc. the bicycle parking area must be both secure and covered.
- 4 The parking requirement for residential developments is a minimum standard and can be exceeded at the discretion of the developer, based on house type, design and layout of the estate.
- 5 In non-residential developments, 5% of car parking spaces provided should be set aside for disabled car parking. Where the nature of a particular development is likely to generate a demand for higher levels of disabled car parking, the Planning Authority may require a higher proportion of parking for this purpose. Disabled car parking spaces should be located as close as possible to the building entrance points and allocated and suitably signposted for convenient access.

- 6 In non-residential developments, 10% of car parking spaces should be set aside for parent and child car parking. Parent and child parking spaces should be provided as close as reasonably possible to the building entrance points and should be allocated and suitably signposted for convenient access.
- 7 All car parks, including those serving residential developments, should be constructed to be capable of accommodating electric vehicle charge points as required (coded/ metered slow charging 220-240V, 13A single phase).
- 8 In rural areas, shared car parking provision for hotel and associated leisure facilities may be considered where these services are shared, as to reduce a potential overprovision of car parking.

A1.9.4 Traffic Impact Assessments (TIA), Road Safety Audits and Road Safety Impact Assessments

A Traffic Impact Assessment is a comprehensive review of all the potential transport impacts of a proposed development or re-development, with an agreed plan to mitigate any adverse consequences. The TIA should be prepared in accordance with the *Traffic Management Guidelines Manual 2003* issued by the Department of Transport and the *Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines* 2014 published by the NRA. These guidelines provide guidance including thresholds and sub-thresholds above which TIA is required.

It is important that scoping of the TIA is undertaken at pre-planning stage between developers and the Planning Authority.

Road Safety Impact Assessment is described in the EU Directive on Road Infrastructure Safety Management (EU RISM) 2008/96/EC as a strategic comparative analysis of the impact of a new road, or of substantial modifications to an existing road, on the safety performance of the road network.

A road safety audit must be submitted as part of any planning application where the proposed development incorporates a new access to a National Road or where it may give rise to an increase in traffic to a National Road. Road Safety Audits shall be carried out independently by assessors approved by the Transport Infrastructure Ireland. Further information is contained in National Roads Authority/Transport Infrastructure Ireland publications HD19 and HA42/01.

A1.10 Signage

Clare County Council recognises the role of well-located and sympathetically-designed signage, whether attached to a buildings or free standing, in contributing to the character and vitality of commercial areas. However, whether by design, scale, location, proliferation or ancillary issues such as manner of lighting, advertising has the capacity to seriously injure the visual qualities of an area and, on occasion, to pose a hazard to motorists by creating a distraction. Clare County Council will seek the removal of such advertisements.

Clare County Council will permit advertisements which are designed sensitively and sympathetically and which enhance the appearance and vitality of an area. Under the Roads Act 1993 the consent of the Roads Authority is required for any sign or structure erected on a public road.

Planning permission is required where the sign is on private property unless deemed exempt under the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended). Under the Litter Pollution Act 1997, the Local Authority has powers to remove any sign that is not exempted development or does not have permission under the Planning Acts.

There are certain planning exemptions for signage under Part 2, Article 6 of the Planning and Development Regulations. In general the sign should be an integral part of the elevational design. The following criteria shall be used in assessing applications for signage:

A1.10.1 Signage – General

All proposals for signage shall:

- Not compromise road safety
- Not be internally illuminated
- Be of high visual quality in terms of design, colour and material
- Be of a scale/character suitable to the building and the host environment
- Not interfere with windows or other façade features or project above the skyline
- Not detract from built or natural heritage
- Comply with the shop front policies contained in this Plan
- Comply with the NRA Road Signage Guidelines
- Be attached to a wall, pole or other solid structure – free standing signs will generally not be permitted
- Where advertising is already a feature, prevent an impression of clutter in any location
- Ensure that the use of electronic variable messaging signs (VMS signs) is reserved strictly for use in roadwork activities, hazard information and/or as part of an approved event traffic management plan.

A1.10.2 Advertising Signage

All proposals for advertising signage shall meet the following criteria:

- Signs will only be permitted where an advertising 'need' can be demonstrated. In this context the term 'need' relates to the requirement of the travelling public and not the desire of the applicant to advertise as widely as possible.
- In general advertisement structures will not be permitted at roundabouts, at traffic signalised junctions, at locations where they obstruct sight lines, compete with traffic signs, give rise to confusion for road users or endanger traffic safety.

- Applications for road signage along national routes and along approach roads to towns and villages will generally not be permitted, in accordance with the provisions of the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines (2012).
- Large scale commercial advertisements are not acceptable on or near buildings of architectural or historic importance, in parks or in Architectural Conservation Areas.
- General advertising signage will be permitted on the subject business/development in accordance with Section A1.8.1 above.
- In industrial estates, business parks, enterprise centres etc. the use of grouped advertising signs will be encouraged.

A1.10.3 Directional Signage

Directional signs for local premises distant from the main traffic routes may be permitted under an annual licence provided:

- They are finger post signs only.
- The maximum area of the sign shall be 0.7m².
- The information contained on the sign shall be directional in nature only
- The premises shall not be located greater than 2kms from the sign
- The maximum number of signs shall generally not exceed two.
- The sign shall not give rise to a traffic hazard

A1.10.4 Tourism Signage

All proposed tourism-related signage shall meet the following criteria:

- Signage for key tourism attractions, tourism routes, community facilities or other public or infrastructure facilities will only be permitted on the subject development, at the entry points to the host town or village or in the immediate vicinity of key junctions leading to the subject development. At such locations, signage for multiple facilities/ attractions shall be grouped on a single sign.
- Applications for signage shall comply with the requirements of the 'Policy on the Provision of Tourist and Leisure Signage on National Roads (NRA 2011) or any other relevant standards and legislation that may be enacted.
- All lettering, logos and symbols are subject to the approval of Clare County Council.

A1.10.5 Advertising Hoardings (including billboards)

Advertising hoardings, including tri-vision and three-dimension signs, inappropriately located, can constitute one of the most obtrusive elements of all forms of outdoor advertisement. They rely on size, scale and location to make an impact and therefore are often detrimental to the character of the area in which they are located and, in some cases, contribute to a traffic hazard. Generally they are used to advertise a single product. The space is usually leased from the advertising company for a period of time which can be as short as two weeks.

The practice of parking trailers or other mobile objects bearing advertisements in fields adjoining roads has become a feature on Irish roads in recent years. Such advertisements can be harmful to the visual amenities of the areas, represent a traffic hazard by virtue of distracting motorists and can have impacts on local biodiversity.

In relation to large advertising hoardings the Council will:

- Prohibit such advertisings in the open countryside, in Architectural Conservation Areas and where they would detract from the visual quality of the setting of a protected structure.
- In all other cases, have regard to the visual impacts of a proposed advertising hoarding and potential of traffic hazard arising from same.
- Consider advertising hoardings, of artistic merit, on a temporary basis, where they would screen a derelict building or other unattractive vacant site or where construction works are on-going.
- Consider hoardings in industrial areas where their presence, by reason of scale and design, is not out of character with the existing environment.

A1.10.6 Temporary Construction Hoarding/Safety Netting

Where construction hoardings/safety nets are required along the main streets of towns and villages in the County, for periods in excess of 4 weeks, they shall be designed and maintained so as to screen the construction site and to contribute in a positive manner to the overall streetscape pending completion of the development works.

The design of these hoardings may reflect some aspect of the area's rich heritage (using local scenes) and/or inform pedestrians about the proposed development in a visually pleasing manner. The creative use of art, colour, images and graphics is encouraged and an element of advertising may also be incorporated, subject to the agreement of the Planning Authority.

All graphics, designs etc. shall be submitted to the Planning Authority and written agreement shall be obtained prior to the erection of any such construction hoardings. It should be noted that a licence may be required for scaffolding/hoarding in certain instances e.g. on footpaths. The applicants should enquire with the Council to see if a licence is required in each case.

A1.10.7 Signage at Petrol Stations

Minimal advertising will be permitted at petrol stations and generally shall be restricted to a single main pillar/totem pole sign structure which shall not exceed 4.5 metres in height.

Canopies should be appropriate to their setting in terms of height and design. They should not be internally illuminated. A maximum of two signs shall be permitted on the canopy which shall be externally or halo lit.

The forecourt and adjacent footpath shall not be used for advertising whether for permanent or temporary structures.

A1.11 Agricultural Developments

The rural countryside is a natural resource with agricultural activity being particularly important. In considering proposals for agricultural development (walls, fences, yards, stables, sheds, slurry pits etc.) the Planning Authority will have regard to the Department of Agriculture document ***Guidelines and Recommendations on the Control of Pollution from Farmyard Wastes*** together with the following:

- Siting and design that is keeping with the surrounding area
- The use of muted coloured materials
- Grouping of buildings will be encouraged
- Adequate effluent storage facilities
- The Planning Authority will require adequate provision for the collection, storage and disposal of effluent produced from agricultural developments. The European Communities (Good Agricultural Practice for the Protection of Waters) Regulations, 2014 set out the requirements for storage of farm effluents and the minimum holding periods for storage of farm wastes. In Clare the holding period required for the purposes of calculating waste storage facilities is 18 weeks. It is permitted to spread soiled water all year round, thus the minimum holding period is 10 days. For silage the short term storage period is 3 days. All agricultural developments must be designed and constructed in accordance with the Minimum Specifications as set out by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

The Living Farmland, a guide to farming with nature in Clare (2008), is a useful reference to issues for consideration when planning farm developments.

A1.12 Access and Mobility

The Planning Authority will encourage development that facilitates access for persons who may otherwise be excluded. Part M of the Building Regulations sets out the requirements which have to be applied in the design of new and existing structures in order to facilitate public access.

The Planning Authority, in considering proposals for developments requiring public access, shall have regard to the National Disability Authority Guidelines A Universal Design Approach.

A1.13 Energy Efficiency and Sustainability

The options for minimising the use of energy through design, insulation, and specification and for producing energy from renewable sources should be examined together with passive measures, for example, site orientation and plan layout. The principle national advisory body in this area is Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) www.sei.ie. Their website gives access to general and specific information on renewable energy from solar, wind, hydropower, geothermal and biomass. They produce a range of publications which can provide guidance on renewable energy for building developers and owners. The Limerick Clare Energy Agency www.lcea.ie is a useful source of advice locally.

A1.14 Development Contributions

The Planning Authority, taking into consideration the capital expenditure necessary for the provision of infrastructure required to facilitate development, will require financial contributions for permitted developments. The Council has prepared a schedule of development contributions in accordance with its obligations under Sections 48 and 49 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and having regard to 'Development Contribution Scheme – Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (DoEHLG 2013), which is reviewed annually. Details of the rates applied are available from the Planning Department and are payable prior to commencement of development. In exceptional circumstances a Special Development Contribution may be required in addition to the standard rates in order to provide a specific piece of infrastructure, the provision of which will facilitate the development as proposed.

A1.15 Cash Deposits and Bonds

Planning conditions may be attached to a grant of permission requiring the lodgment of cash deposits or bond from an agreed financial institution for the satisfactory completion of residential and other developments and their ancillary services.

Appendix 2

Indicative Land Use Zoning Matrix

The purpose of the land-use zoning matrix is to provide an indication only of the type of developments that may or may not be normally considered or open for consideration on zoned lands. Each proposal submitted to the Council for consideration will be assessed based on its own individual merits.

Key

Note: all development proposals will be assessed thoroughly through the Development Management process in accordance with Section 34 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).

✓ = Will normally be acceptable in principle.

A proposed use that will be classified as acceptable in principle in the relevant zone subject to compliance with policies and objective as set out in this plan and in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

○ = Open to consideration.

A proposed use that will be open to consideration, but subject to particular considerations for example, compatibility with adjoining uses, scale or whether or not the proposal is prejudicial to the amenities of an area or the residential amenities of an adjoining property.

✗ = Will not normally be acceptable.

A proposed use that is classified “will not normally be acceptable” in a specific zoning will not be accepted by the Planning Authority.

Land Use	Mixed Use	Existing residential	Residential	Low Density Residential	Commercial	Community	Recreation	Open Space	Buffer Space	Enterprise	Tourism	Industry	Light Industry	Maritime / Harbour	Agriculture	Marine Related Industry
Advertisement Structures	✓	X	X	X	✓	X	○	X	X	○	○	○	○	○	X	X
Agri. Business	○	X	X	X	○	X	X	X	X	✓	○	○	✓	X	○	X
Agri. Tourism	○	X	X	X	○	○	X	X	X	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	X
Amusement Arcade	○	X	X	X	○	X	X	X	X	X	○	X	X	X	X	X
B & B / Guesthouse	✓	○	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	X	✓	X	X	X	○	X
Bank / Financial Institution	✓	X	○	X	✓	X	X	X	X	○	X	X	X	X	X	X
Betting Office	○	X	X	X	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Boarding Kennels	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	✓	X	X	○	X	○	X
Car Park	✓	X	○	X	✓	○	○	X	X	✓	○	✓	✓	○	X	X
Caravan Park/Camp Site/ Motor Home Park (Tourist uses)Glamping	○	○	○	✓	X	○	○	X	X	X	✓	X	X	X	○	X
Cash & Carry/ Wholesale Outlet	○	X	X	X	✓	X	X	X	X	○	X	X	○	X	X	X
Cemetery	X	X	X	X	○	○	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	○	X
Chemist / Pharmacy	✓	○	○	X	○	○	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cinema / Theatre	✓	X	X	X	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Civic & Amenity Recycling Facility/Bring Bank	✓	○	○	○	○	○	X	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓	○	○	○
Civic / cultural / heritage building	○	X	X	X	X	✓	○	X	X	○	○	X	X	○	X	X
Community Facility	○	○	○	○	○	✓	○	X	X	✓	○	X	X	X	X	X
Composting Facility	X	X	X	X	X	○	X	X	X	○	X	X	○	X	○	X

Land Use	Mixed Use	Existing residential	Residential	Low Density Residential	Commercial	Community	Recreation	Open Space	Buffer Space	Enterprise	Tourism	Industry	Light Industry	Maritime / Harbour	Agriculture	Marine Related Industry
Construction & Demolition (C&D) Waste Recycling Centre	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	✓	O	O	O
Crèche / Childcare Facility	✓	✓	✓	O	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	X	O	O	X	X	X
Disco / Night club	O	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Doctor/Dentist	✓	✓	✓	O	✓	O	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X
Dog Grooming	✓	O	O	O	O	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X
Education/Enterprise Centre	O	O	O	O	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	X	X	O	X	X	X
Function Room	O	X	O	O	O	O	O	X	X	X	✓	X	X	O	X	X
Funeral Home	O	X	X	X	✓	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X
Fuel Depot	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	O	O	X	X	O
Garden Centre	O	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	O	O	O	✓	X	O	X
Golf Course / Pitch & Putt	O	X	X	X	X	O	✓	✓	X	O	✓	X	X	X	O	X
Go-kart track	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	O	X	X	O	X	O	X
Hair Dressing Salon	✓	O	O	O	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Health Centre / clinic	✓	O	O	O	✓	✓	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X
Heavy Vehicle Park	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	O	X	✓	✓	O	O	O
Helicopter Pad	O	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	O	O	O	O	X	O	O
Home Based Economic Activities	✓	O	O	O	✓	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	O	O
Hospital	O	X	O	O	O	O	X	X	X	O	X	X	O	X	X	X
Hostel	O	O	O	O	O	X	X	X	X	X	✓	X	X	X	X	X
Hotel	O	X	O	O	O	X	X	X	X	X	✓	X	X	X	X	X
Industry	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	✓	O	X	X	O
Industry - Light	O	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	✓	X	O	✓	X	X	O
Laundrette/Dry Cleaner	✓	O	O	O	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Leisure / gym / rec. sports club	✓	O	O	O	✓	O	✓	O	X	O	✓	X	O	O	X	X
Library	✓	O	O	O	✓	✓	O	X	X	O	O	X	X	X	X	X
Licensed Premises	✓	O	O	X	✓	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X
Lorry Depot	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	O	X	O	O	X	O	O
Mart / Co-op	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	O	O	X	O	X
Motor Sales / Repairs / Service	O	X	X	X	✓	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	O	X	X	X
Multiple Residential Units	O	O	✓	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X
Nursing Home/Retirement Village	O	O	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X

Land Use	Mixed Use	Existing residential	Residential	Low Density Residential	Commercial	Community	Recreation	Open Space	Buffer Space	Enterprise	Tourism	Industry	Light Industry	Maritime / Harbour	Agriculture	Marine Related Industry
Office <100m ²	✓	0	X	0	✓	X	X	X	X	✓	X	X	X	0	X	X
Office 100m ² -1000m ²	0	X	X	X	✓	X	X	X	X	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X
Office > 1000m ²	0	X	X	X	✓	X	X	X	X	✓	X	X	0	X	X	X
Open Space	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	0	✓	X
Petrol Station	0	X	X	X	0	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	0	X	X	X
Plant / tool hire	0	X	X	X	0	X	X	X	X	X	X	0	0	X	0	X
Playground	✓	✓	✓	✓	0	✓	✓	0	X	0	0	X	0	0	0	X
Playing pitches	0	✓	0	0	0	✓	✓	0	X	X	X	X	0	X	✓	X
Primary Care Facility	✓	0	0	0	0	0	X	X	X	0	X	X	X	X	X	X
Refuse Landfill	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	0	X	X	X	X
Religious Places of Worship	0	0	0	X	X	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	0	X
Research and development	0	X	X	X	0	X	X	X	X	✓	X	0	0	X	X	0
Residential – single dwelling (Permanent Occupation)	✓	0	✓	✓	X	0	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	0	0	X
Residential – single dwelling (short-term tourist accommodation)	0	0	0	0	X	X	X	X	X	X	0	X	X	0	X	X
Residential Institution	0	0	0	0	0	0	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Restaurant/Café	0	X	X	X	✓	X	0	X	X	0	✓	0	0	0	X	X
Retail Warehousing	0	X	X	X	0	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
School / College	0	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X
Science & Technology Based Enterprise	✓	X	X	X	0	X	X	X	X	✓	X	0	0	X	X	X
Scrap Yard	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	0	0	X	X	X
Shop	✓	0	0	0	✓	0	X	X	X	0	0	X	0	0	X	X
Take-Away	✓	X	0	X	0	X	X	X	X	X	0	X	X	X	X	X
Tourism Complex	0	X	X	X	✓	X	0	X	X	✓	✓	X	X	0	0	X
Training Centre	0	X	X	X	✓	0	X	X	X	✓	X	0	✓	X	X	X
Traveller Accommodation	0	0	0	0	X	0	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	0	X
Veterinary Surgery	0	0	0	0	✓	0	X	X	X	0	X	X	X	X	0	X
Warehousing	X	X	X	X	0	X	X	X	X	0	X	0	0	X	X	0
Water-based recreational activities	0	X	X	X	0	0	✓	0	X	0	✓	X	X	0	0	X
CHP/Waste to energy facilities	0	X	0	0	0	0	X	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓	X	0	0

Appendix 3

Natural Heritage Sites in County Clare

Table A3.1
Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)
in County Clare and their associated
Site Code

Site Code	Site Name
000014	Ballyalla Lake
000016	Ballycullinan Lake
002246	Ballycullinan, Old Domestic Building
000019	Ballyogan Lough
000994	Ballyteige (Clare)
000996	Ballyvaughan Turlough
000020	Black Head-Poulsallagh Complex
002250	Carrowmore Dunes
001021	Carrowmore Point To Spanish Point And Islands
000030	Danes Hole, Poulnalecka
000032	Dromore Woods And Loughs
001926	East Burren Complex
000268	Galway Bay Complex
001912	Glendree Bog
001013	Glenomra Wood
000036	Inagh River Estuary
002264	Kilkee Reefs
002319	Kilkishen House
002318	Knockanira House
000051	Lough Gash Turlough
000308	Loughatorick South Bog
002165	Lower River Shannon
000054	Moneen Mountain
000057	Moyree River System
002157	Newgrove House
002091	Newhall And Edenvale Complex
002010	Old Domestic Building (Keevagh)
002314	Old Domestic Buildings, Rylane
002245	Old Farm Buildings, Ballymacrogan
002126	Pollagoona Bog
000037	Pouladatig Cave
000064	Poulnagordon Cave (Quin)
002316	Ratty River Cave
002312	Slieve Bernagh Bog
001321	Termon Lough
002247	Toonagh Estate
002343	Tullaheer Lough And Bog

Table A3.2
Special Protection Areas (SPAs)
in County Clare and their Associated
Site Code

Site Code	Site Name
004041	Ballyallia Lough SPA
004005	Cliffs of Moher SPA
004220	Corofin Wetlands SPA
004114	Illeunonearaun SPA
004031	Inner Galway Bay SPA
004119	Loop Head SPA
004058	Lough Derg (Shannon) SPA
004182	Mid-Clare Coast SPA
004077	River Shannon And River Fergus Estuaries SPA
004168	Slieve Aughty Mountains SPA

Table A3.3
Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) in
County Clare and their Associated
Site Code

SITE CODE	SITE NAME	TYPE
337	Doon Lough NHA	Raised Bog NHA
993	Ayle Lower Bog NHA	Raised Bog NHA
1014	Illeunonearaun	NHA
1020	Loughanilloon Bog NHA	Raised Bog NHA
2307	Cloonloun More Bog NHA	Raised Bog NHA
2367	Lough Naminna Bog NHA	Blanket Bog NHA
2377	Lough Atorick District Bogs NHA	Blanket Bog NHA
2397	Slievecallan Mountain Bog NHA	Blanket Bog NHA
2400	Cragnashingaun Bogs NHA	Blanket Bog NHA
2401	Gortacullin Bog NHA	Blanket Bog NHA
2402	Woodcock Hill Bog NHA	Blanket Bog NHA
2421	Lough Acrow Bogs NHA	Blanket Bog NHA
2439	Oysterman's Marsh NHA	Blanket Bog NHA
2442	Maghera Mountain Bogs	Blanket Bog NHA

National Park

- Burren National Park

Statutory Nature Reserves in County Clare

- Ballyteigue Nature Reserve
- Caher (Murphy) Nature Reserve
- Dromore Nature Reserve
- Keelhillia (Slieve Carron) Nature Reserve

Wildfowl Sanctuaries in County Clare

- Mutton Island
- Islandavanna
- Tullagher Lough
- Ballyallia Lough and
- Inagh River (part of)

Changes to designations during the life of the Development Plan may not be reflected in this document. Applicants/Landowners are advised to consult with the Natural Parks and Wildlife Service to obtain the most up to date information.

County Geological Sites

Site Name	Sheet No. 1:50,000	Grid Ref.	Principal characteristics/ critical feature(s)/key words	Townland(s)/district	Summary description
Aillwee Hill	51	M 257 048	Plateau karst with a wide variety of landforms. Area of dolines, uvalas, dry valleys, gorges, limestone pavement, springs, sinks, fossil caves.	Ballycahill, Lisgoogan, Aillwee, Ballyalaban, Gleninsheen, Glensleade, Berneens, Garracloon, Poulgorm.	The densest concentration and best example in Ireland of classic karst features. These features include springs, sinks, fossil cave systems, dry valleys and various enclosed depressions or dolines. A large complex doline or uvala (smaller depressions within a larger enclosing contour) is situated at the summit of Aillwee Hill. This is the largest and most spectacular such diagnostic karst feature in Ireland.
Ballycar South	58	R 5645 6410	Silurian (Wenlock) diverse shallow marine shelly fauna within conglomeratic Ballycar Member of the Cratloes Formation.	Ballycar South	Ballycar South is an important site as the rocks here, which are presently not exposed at the surface, have yielded a very diverse assemblage of brachiopods (more than 200 different species have been identified), corals, gastropods, trilobites and bryozoans of Silurian age. The shelly fauna at this site are critical in the interpretation of the palaeogeography of the region during the Silurian.
Ballycroum Hill	58	R 541 886	Devonian sandstones and conglomerates overlying Silurian siltstones.	Ballycroum Td., Feakle	An excellent unconformity where flat lying conglomerate beds are seen overlying the truncated ends of nearly vertical beds of Silurian slaty rocks. The time gap represented is approximately 30 million years.
Ballykinnacorra North	57	R 2865 8848	Mushroom rocks - isolated wave worn stones in grazing fields	Ballykinnacorra North	Thought to have formed when lakes existed for periods long enough for water to dissolve the limestone below the lake level. Emergent limestone above the lake level was not dissolved. This site is one of only about 63 mushroom stones known in the country as a whole.
Ballymalone Quarry (AKA Raheen Bridge)	58	R 649 814	Late Ordovician graptolitic shales and cherts	Ballymalone	The Ballymalone Formation has been dated by graptolite fossils to be of Caradoc age. The site provides the only representative section of these rocks in the north-eastern part of the Slieve Bernagh inlier, and complements the Ballyvorgal South site.
Ballyvorgal South	58	R 51325 68600	Late Ordovician fossiliferous mudstone of the Ballymalone Formation.	Ballyvorgal South, Ballyvorgal Beg and Cloghoolia	The Ballyvorgal site is an unusual Irish occurrence of an assemblage of deep-water fossils now found all over the world in rocks of Upper Ordovician age. The fauna has been well described and contains a characteristic mix of very small trilobites and tiny brachiopod shells.
Black Head (AKA Ceann Boirne)	51	M 154 122	Coastal cliffs and roadside pavement exposure. Carboniferous (Viséan) corals	Murrooghtoochy North	Limestone pavement with well-developed karst feature s. A good place to see the transition in Carboniferous corals from Siphonodendron to cerioid Lithostrotion through semi-cerioid forms. The Finavarra Member with dolomite bands, of the Tubber Formation is overlain by the Black Head Member, the basal unit of the Burren Formation. The first cerioid colonial rugose corals occur above the dolomite south of the road.
Bridges of Ross	63	Q 733 506	Upper Carboniferous (Namurian) sandstone, siltstone and shale. Rock arches and blowholes.	Ross	The Ross sandstone Formation consists of turbiditic sheet sandstone, siltstone and thinly bedded black shales. Slumping is common at many horizons throughout the formation, the most spectacular of which, the Ross Slide occurs at the Bridges of Ross. The Ross Slide consists of several metres of siltstone and overlying sandstone displaying a range of deformational features including recumbent folds (folds with horizontal hinge lines). Sand volcanoes are present on the upper surface of the overlying sandstone unit. Also of interest at this site are fold structures which formed during the Variscan Orogeny and a sea bridge which has developed as a result of erosion by the sea.
Caher Hill	52	R 5475 9065	Ordovician volcanics, graptolitic shales and cherts	Caher	Caher Hill is the type locality for the Caher Hill Formation. Yellow, cream and pink-coloured amygdaloidal trachytes occur here. The yellow trachytes host enclaves up to 10cm in diameter of basic composition. The pink trachytes contain abundant orthoclase phenocrysts. The trachytes overlie a succession of black shales and cherts, basic lapilli tuffs and a sequence of basic tuffs, lavas and breccias. These rocks provide a record of sedimentation and volcanic eruptions within the contracting Iapetus Ocean. Graptolites found within the black shales have yielded a late Ordovician, Caradoc age for the rocks. The Caher Hill Formation is also exposed south and west of Lough Graney and near Lough Ea. Spillitic lavas occur at the latter locality.

Site Name	Sheet No. 1:50,000	Grid Ref.	Principal characteristics/ critical feature(s)/key words	Townland(s)/district	Summary description
Carran Enclosed Depression	51	R 28 98	Ireland's largest enclosed depression	Castletown, Ballyconry	Ireland's largest enclosed depression. Large internally-draining basin with inlet springs and outlet via a swallow hole (or sink) developed within Carboniferous limestone. It is approximately 4.5km ² in area and 40m deep, implying a considerable length of time for development. The depression is divided into sub-enclosed basins and is ringed by moderate to steep slopes. The structure and hydrology of this depression resembles both an uvala (large and complex dolines) and a polje (closed depression in a karst area).
Coad	51	R 2727 9141	Mushroom stones – isolated wave worn stones in grazing fields	Coad	The at least eight stones in question are an example of a phenomenon classed as mushroom stones. These are thought to have formed when lakes existed for periods long enough for water to dissolve the limestone below the lake level. Emergent limestone above the lake level was not dissolved. The stones at Coad comprise a large share of only about 63 mushroom stones known in the country as a whole.
Coolagh River Cave	51	M 12400 01400	Dendritic Cave System with several stream sinks / swallow holes, Blind Valley, Active Uvala	Ballynahown, Knockauns Mountain, Blakes Mountain, Cloghaun, Poulmagun	The Coolagh River Cave is a mature cave system with many subterranean and subaerial karst features. It is a dendritic cave system with several stream sinks/swallow holes. The Coolagh River sink is at a karst window, at the end of a blind valley. The Coolagh River Valley, which continues southwards as a normally dry valley within the site, is also one of the major surface features of the Burren.
County Council Quarry	51	R 150 995	Viséan Limestones and Namurian Shales.	Ballyinsheen More	Upper Viséan, Carboniferous limestones are exposed at this quarry. These well-bedded, dark grey limestones are rich in fossils. Fossils found at this site include crinoids, bryozoans and corals. These corals, in particular, the coral <i>Orionastraea rete</i> , correlate with specimens found outside Ireland and indicate a Brigantian age (uppermost stage of the Viséan) for these limestones. Basal Namurian Clare Shales overlay these Viséan limestones.
Crossard	51	R 2688 9075	Mushroom rocks – isolated wave worn stone in grazing fields	Crosard	Mushroom stones are thought to have formed when lakes existed for periods long enough for water to dissolve the limestone below the lake level. Emergent limestone above the lake level was not dissolved. In some stones such as at Crossard, this has created a marked bulbous mushroom shape develops with a cap on a pedestal.
Doolin Cave	51	R 07485 96840	Dendritic cave system within Carboniferous Limestone	Doolin	Doolin Cave, a dendritic network of stream passages, is an active cave system, which has preserved various stages of cave development.
Doolin Green Holes AKA: Hell Complex or Mermaid's Hole	51	R 05600 97600	Karst caves in Carboniferous Limestone, inundated by post-glacial sea level rise	Doolin	The Doolin Green Holes are the best-documented karst caves in Ireland and consist of a series of cave passages that formed at a lower sea level than today when the water was trapped in huge ice sheets. Since their formation the caves have been inundated by post-glacial sea-level rises and have preserved much evidence of this. Also of interest here are the photokarren and phytokarst. These erosional features, which are absent in the darkest parts of the cave, are the first of their kind to be recorded outside of the tropics.
Doolin to Hags Head (Cliffs of Moher)	51, 57	From R106500 196000 to R101300 189200	Upper Carboniferous sedimentary rocks.	Doonagore, Luogh North, Luogh South, Lislorkan North, Slievenageeragh, Shingaunagh North etc	A coastal section with a remarkable development of sand volcanoes in Carboniferous beds over-lying slumped shales and sandstones. The 'Fisherstreet Slide' is a distinctive sheet, 30 metres thick, extending over some kilometres of the section. The entire sheet moved as a sedimentary slide, and now contains a wealth of soft sediment deformation features. It is part of the Gull Island Formation from Doolin southwards until the Central Clare Group and comprises the bulk of the cliffs from O'Brien's Tower southward. The cliffs also illustrate cyclothem I and II (Tullig Cyclothem and Kilkee Cyclothem) of the five in the Central Clare Group. These cyclothem are repeated sequences of mudstone, siltstone and sandstone, formed by normal processes in the deltaic environment that created these rocks. They are normally separated by thin marine bands with distinctive goniatite fossils, allowing correlation of rocks and events across a wide area. They comprise a basin fill sequence with the greater depth and development of the basin in south west and central Clare. Accessible ledges of the sandstones also contain a wealth of trace fossils, apart from the very well known Liscannor Flags, which has the burrow <i>Olivellites</i> in abundance. The vertical sea cliffs in Upper Carboniferous shales and flagstones are of iconic status as a tourist attraction - this area is of considerable amenity value.

Site Name	Sheet No. 1:50,000	Grid Ref.	Principal characteristics/ critical feature(s)/key words	Townland(s)/district	Summary description
Doonaha	63	Q889 531	Coastal exposures along approx. 3km of coastline. Namurian sandstones, siltstones and shales of the Gull Island Formation.	Loop Head	<p>The succession comprises micaceous sandstones, siltstones and shales. Of importance at this site are the trace fossils preserved in the Upper Carboniferous, Namurian rocks. These starfish traces represent the only Namurian starfish traces in Ireland.</p> <p>The rocks are part of the Gull Island Formation, which includes the Fisherstreet Slide at its base. The presence of sand volcanoes at Doonaha indicates similar evidence of sedimentary instability. However, there are many other sedimentary and structural features of interest easily visible in the exposures.</p>
Elmvale	51	Elmvale 1: R 2590 9170 Elmvale 2: R2587 9160	Mushroom rocks – isolated wave worn stones in grazing fields	Elmvale	Mushroom stones are thought to have formed when lakes existed for periods long enough for water to dissolve the limestone below the lake level. Emergent limestone above the lake level was not dissolved.
Fergus River Cave	51	R 252 923	Ancient cave with Carboniferous Limestone.	Roughan	The Fergus River Cave is one of the oldest known in Ireland, with calcite deposits dated at greater than 350,000 years old. It contains more than 3km of largely abandoned streamway which floods in very wet conditions. The water is derived in part from the sink in the Carran enclosed depression. The cave is an abandoned rising for the Fergus River, although it can flood in very wet conditions. It is notable also for mud stalagmites and for glacially derived sediments.
Foohagh Point	63	Q 853 590	Growth fault within the Upper Carboniferous (Namurian) sandstone, siltstone and mudstone of the Central Clare Group	Foohagh (to west side of Moore Bay, Kilkee)	A spectacular growth fault can be seen in the cliff face at Foohagh Point. The growth fault at Foohagh Point displaces sandstones, siltstones and mudstones within the fourth cyclothem sequence of the Upper Carboniferous (Namurian) Central Clare Group. The pale coloured sandstones of this formation display clear thickening towards the fault.
Glencurran Cave	51	R 2738 9633	An ancient cave system in the side of a wooded dry valley	Poulaphuca	Glencurran Cave is a truncated and largely sediment filled cave, making it potentially an older system than the postglacial origins of many Burren stream caves. It is a significant cave with a diversity of interest. It is largely earth-filled wide phreatic passage, with short sections of active stream cave. It has considerable geological and spelological potential as the most likely intersection to an undiscovered master cave between Castletown River Sinks in the Carran Enclosed Depression and the risings at Fergus River Cave.
Gortlecka	51	R 3202 9499	Mushroom rocks – isolated wave worn stones in grazing fields	Gortlecka	The two stones in question are an example of a phenomenon classed as mushroom stones. These are thought to have formed when lakes existed for periods long enough for water to dissolve the limestone below the lake level. Emergent limestone above the lake level was not dissolved. In some stones such as at Gortlecka, this has created a marked smooth surface below a lip, whilst in more extreme cases a mushroom shape develops with a cap on a pedestal.
Gull Island, Tullig Point and Truskleeve section	63	Q 770 515 to Q 800 550	Upper Carboniferous Namurian sandstones and siltstones	Quilty, Oughterard, Tullig, Truskleeve	The coastal section around Gull Island and Tullig Point displays some of the best sections in Clare of the Shannon Group and Central Clare Group sedimentary rocks which infilled the Clare Basin in the Namurian, and which now are the foundation of most of south west and central County Clare. It is the type section for the Gull Island Formation of the Shannon Group. The top of this Group is marked by the R1 marine band with goniatite fossil markers. There are an extensive range of sedimentary structures, and also tectonic structures, many of which were formed at the time of deposition, and record the sediment instability on the basin slopes. There are slides, growth faults and slumps present. Key sections are at Gull Island to Tullig Point and at Illaunglass and Pouladav.
Kilbreckan	58	R 399 761	Lead and silver-bearing mineral deposits in cherty Carboniferous limestone and dolomite	Kilbreckan Td.	Kilbreckan Mine was worked intermittently for silver and lead from 1834 until 1856. The mineralized bodies contain silver-bearing galena, pyrite, chalcocopyrite, sphalerite and calamine in a calcite gangue. Other minerals include Bindheimite (a silver-bearing antimonite of lead), Bournonite (a sulphide mineral of copper, antimony and lead), Hemimorphite (a minor ore mineral of zinc), Quartz, Smithsonite (another zinc ore). In addition Kilbreckan is the type locality for the mineral 'Kilbrickenite' – now confirmed as the mineral Geocronite (a white sulphosalt mineral of lead). The main orebody, trending north-south, has a pipe-like shape and is up to 1m in width. A second, northwest trending mineralized body of similar thickness occurs also.

Site Name	Sheet No. 1:50,000	Grid Ref.	Principal characteristics/ critical feature(s)/key words	Townland(s)/district	Summary description
Killinaboy	51	R 2711 9149	Mushroom rocks – isolated wave worn stones in grazing fields	Killinaboy	Mushroom stones are thought to have formed when lakes existed for periods long enough for water to dissolve the limestone below the lake level. Emergent limestone above the lake level was not dissolved. In some stones such as at Killinaboy, this has created a marked smooth surface below a lip.
Loop Head	63	Q693 474	Upper Carboniferous (Namurian) sandstones and shales of the Ross Sandstone Formation.	Kilbaha North, Kilbaha South	The rocks between Loop Head and Ross village represent the type section of the Upper Carboniferous Ross Sandstone Formation. This formation consists of alternating, parallel-bedded sandstones and dark shales. Sedimentary structures such as scouring and channelling can be seen as well as flute, groove and rill casts. Some sand-filled channels are up to 10m deep and 100m wide. These rocks were probably deposited in a deep-marine trough or sub-marine fan where occasional turbidites deposited sandstones. At Loop Head and along the coast many fold structures can be seen in the cliffs. These rocks were folded towards the end of the Carboniferous by a period of mountain building called the Variscan Orogeny. There are numerous features of coastal erosion, such as arches, stacks, storm beaches, blowholes and cliff patterns totally influenced by the geological structures.
Maghera Quarry	52, 58	R 520 901	Ordovician Caher Hill Formation, pyroxene tuffs – a volcanic rock	Maghera (Feakle)	Olivine-pyroxene tuffs are exposed in a small quarry along a private road. They are within the Caradoc rocks of the Caher Hill Formation which include a suite of volcanic rocks such as spilite, pyroxene-olivine basalt, basic tuffs and volcanic breccias, amygdaloidal trachytes, graptolitic black shales and cherts.
Magowna	57	R 283 822	Carboniferous limestones and Clare Shales.	Magowna Castle	The junction between the Carboniferous Limestone and the Clare Shales can be seen in the waterfall, almost half a kilometre northwest of Magowna Castle. This is an interesting site and demonstrates well the contrast between the two different rock types. Interesting microfossils have been found at this site.
Mullaghmore/ Slieve Roe/ Knockanes	52	R 33000 95750	Terrace and pavement development on flat and inclined bedded Carboniferous limestone, diverse karren features, limestone erratics, shallow marl-floored lake, abandoned cave and a structurally controlled gorge.	Glenquin, Coolorta, Creehaun, Gortleacka, Knockans Lower, Leitra, Aglsih, Ballyeighter, Rockforest	The isolated mountains of the Mullaghmore – Slieve Roe – Knockanes site hosts many interesting features including spectacular limestone terraces and pavements, which have developed on the flat and inclined limestone beds. A diverse range of sub-aerial karren features such as rundkarren (rounded solution grooves), kamenitza (shallow pools in the limestone) and rillenkarren (narrow, sharp-edged solution grooves formed on steep limestone faces) are found at this locality. Densely scattered limestone erratics are another feature and are particularly abundant in the Rock Forest townland. The erratics here are the best such examples in the Burren region. Other features of note include the ancient, structurally controlled Glenquin gorge, the marl-floored Lough Gealáin and the abandoned phreatic cave at Gortleacka. The Mullaghmore – Slieve Roe – Knockanes site is a very important karst site, but extremely little scientific work has been done here. It has great potential for academic study.
Pol an Ionain	51	R 09800 99750	Ancient chambered cave with important sediments and a large stalactite situated within Carboniferous limestone	Craggycorrardan	The cave is an ancient chambered cave, containing varved sediments and a renowned stalactite, 6.541m long, which is reputed to be the largest free hanging stalactite in the world. The sediments are potentially of great importance as a record of environmental and climatic changes over the time the cave has existed.
Poulsallagh	51	M 0861 0180	Well-developed range of karren forms in the inter-tidal zone of the limestone coast.	Ballyryan	At Poulsallagh Bay and the coastal section immediately to the north of it, a compact area of foreshore exhibits a sequence of biochemically induced karren landforms that is the equal of any site in the world. On the south side of Poulsallagh Bay, where part of this protective layer has been eroded away, smooth, karren-free limestones are exposed and still preserve glacial striae. The northern part of the site includes remnants of cave passages, some with quartz rich sediments derived from across Galway Bay. These exotic clasts are evidence of an earlier glacial till removed from the Burren area by later ice movement. The area also provides an ideal teaching environment and fuses biological, geological and geomorphological processes.
Rineanna Point	64	R 346 598	The base of Waulsortian limestone strata	Rineanna North	Base of Waulsortian exposed along strike on shore section into an old quarry, comparable to Deel River section on the opposite shore of the Shannon. The limestone is heavily karstified, with karren and kamenitza (solution pits).

Site Name	Sheet No. 1:50,000	Grid Ref.	Principal characteristics/ critical feature(s)/key words	Townland(s)/district	Summary description
Rinnamona	51	R 2969 9404	Mushroom rocks – isolated wave worn stones in grazing fields	Rinnamona	The four stones in question are an example of a phenomenon classed as mushroom stones. These are thought to have formed when lakes existed for periods long enough for water to dissolve the limestone below the lake level. Emergent limestone above the lake level was not dissolved. In some stones such as at Rinnamona, this has created a marked smooth surface below a lip.
Roadford AKA Doolin Phosphate Mine	51	Q083 971	Phosphate mines in the basal Namurian strata, overlying the Carboniferous limestone.	Toomullin, Doolin	In the river about 500m above Roadford, an outcrop of rock phosphate occurs at the base of the Namurian Clare Shales overlying the Carboniferous limestone. Phosphate mining took place here from 1924 to 1947. Some phosphatic nodules may be found in the shale exposures in the area.
Sheshymore	51	R 24150 95900	Extensive area of undisturbed limestone pavement, developed on a single bed of upper Brigantian limestone.	Sheshymore	An extensive area of undisturbed limestone pavement with well-developed karren forms. Tabular blocks of limestone or clints in this area are defined by east-west and north-south orientated joints. The central and eastern areas of pavement are smooth and predominantly karren-free suggesting previous burial beneath a protective layer of calcareous glacial till. Grikes are deepest in this area (1.5-2.5m). Several of the larger north-south trending joints have been enlarged to form vegetated trenches. Karren forms in this area include solution pans (or kamenitza), rundkarren (rounded grooves) and meanderkarren. Physical and chemical weathering has resulted in the decay of the peripheral limestone pavement to clutter and vegetated rocky grassland.
Spanish Point	57	R 023 785	Upper Carboniferous (Namurian) sandstone, siltstone and mudstone of the Central Clare Group.	Breaffy South, Leagard South	The coastal section at Spanish Point consists of well-bedded sandstones, siltstones and mudstones of the Upper Carboniferous (Namurian) Central Clare Group. Sedimentary structures are well preserved here and include cross-bedding, cross-laminations and symmetrical wave ripples. Some of the thicker sandstone units have undergone segmentation, or boudinage, as a result of the extensional forces exerted on the limbs of folds during the Variscan Orogeny. A marine band is present on the north side of the Spanish Point bay, with a prominent palaeosol horizon 2.5m below it stratigraphically, with rootlets, dessication cracks etc. This represents a higher ground area between deltaic channels, exposed above water when the sediments were accumulating.
Sraheen AKA: The Banshee Stone	58	R 4286 7964	Mushroom rock – isolated wave worn stone in grazing field.	Sraheen	Mushroom stones are thought to have formed when lakes existed for periods long enough for water to dissolve the limestone below the lake level. Emergent limestone above the lake level was not dissolved. In some stones such as at Sraheen, this has created an etched lower surface with a major overhang.
St. Brendan's/ Poulnagollum	51	St. Brendan's Well: R 14600 98400 Poulnagollum: M15300 05200	Cave system developed within Carboniferous Limestone.	Ballydonohoe, Ballyteige, Ballycastell, Ballyconnoe North, Ballyconnoe South, Ballysheen Beg, Ballyinsheen More, Ballyneillan, Caherbarnagh, Caherbullog, Cahercloggaun, Cahermaan, Cahermakerrila, Cooleabeg, Cooleamore, Coolmeen, Cragreagh, Cullaun, Derreen South, Gowlaun, Killeany, Kilmoon East, Kilmoon West, Larheenbeg, Lisdoonvara, Lisheenagh, Lislarheenmore, Lismorahaun,	St. Brendan's/Poulnagollum includes St. Brendan's Well near Lisdoonvara, the main rising for a significant area of karstic drainage focused on the Poulnagollum – Poulelva cave system on the eastern side of Slieve Elva, the intermediate Killeany rising and the proven drainage from the Cullaun caves (Cullaun 0-3) on the western side of Poulacapple. The Poulnagollum –Poulelva cave system is Ireland's longest cave system. With approximately 14km total passage, much of which is active streamway, this cave system exhibits many features of interest revealing a complex history of development. The St. Brendan's - Poulnagollum site also includes a number of less developed, simple canyon type and supposedly postglacial streamways in the caves of Cullaun on the east of the site. This site has a complex history relating to at least one previous glacial advance and retreat. There is major scope for research, both underground and on the surface, of the various phases of development of the karst history of the valley.

Site Name	Sheet No. 1:50,000	Grid Ref.	Principal characteristics/ critical feature(s)/key words	Townland(s)/district	Summary description
St. Brendan's Well	51	R 13 98	Lower Clare Shales, Namurian in age.	Knockaunvickteera	<p>St. Brendan's Well is located about 1 mile east of Lisdoonvarna along Gowlaun Stream. The lower Clare Shales are exposed in this stream overlying the Carboniferous Limestone of Hodson (1954). According to Hodson (1954) one of the more notable features of exposures of the Clare Shales in the Lisdoonvarna area is the reduction of the Phosphate Group to a few inches and the occurrence of faunal band rich in goniatites. The site also shows a diverse cephalopod fauna within concretions or nodules at the exposure together with a rich conodont fauna.</p> <p>The area indicates the attenuated nature of the northern Clare Shales, and the junction between the Upper and Lower Carboniferous. It is one of the few places in Ireland in which this horizon is exposed.</p>
Tomeens	58	R 465 810	Unroofed and partially roofed river cave developed within Waulsortian limestone	Milltown, Kiltanon	<p>The Tomeens consists of a linear river cave with unroofed, partially roofed and fully roofed sections, the unroofed sections resulting from roof collapse. It has a number of stream oxbows and dry oxbows. The process is still in progress, and will ultimately result in the cave becoming an open canyon with the river down-cutting the limestone bed.</p>
Toonagh Quarry,	57	R 303 838	Active limestone quarry with Burren Formation, Carboniferous, Viséan Limestone	Ballybrody, Drummina, Toonagh Commons	<p>This quarry, 3.5km north of Ennis off the main Ennistymon road on the Corofin road, is the best representative section in the county, other than karstic exposures in the Burren, for the typical Clare Burren Formation. The broad dip of the beds, and features of the overall sequence can be seen in an always changing quarry.</p>
Tuamgraney	58	R637 831	Carboniferous limestone with karstic features		<p>Rock outcrop in the Garden of Remembrance in the village displaying some fine beds of Carboniferous limestone, with a moderate dip of about 30 degrees to the north west. They are characterized by solution runnels called karren, down the surfaces, more usually seen in the Burren.</p>
Turkenagh	51	R 3387 9246	Mushroom rocks – isolated wave worn stones in limestone pavement area, adjacent to turlough.	Turkenagh	<p>Mushroom stones are thought to have formed when lakes existed for periods long enough for water to dissolve the limestone below the lake level. Emergent limestone above the lake level was not dissolved.</p> <p>At Turkenagh it appears that the lake is actively still forming mushroom stones at high water levels by dissolution of limestone pavement. They may in fact represent what many other sites were like at an early stage in their development, with residual mushrooms being an advanced state.</p>
Vigo Cave	51	R 26051 90518	Ancient, abandoned vadose cave exposure site.	Noonan	<p>Vigo is a significant cave unrelated to present day topography and containing entrance and deep cave sediments. The cave is unusual as it runs almost in a straight, SSW direction beneath the Namurian Shale cover. It has one of the best undisturbed cave entrance facies in Ireland with considerable potential for fruitful excavation. The complementary interior cave sediments together with the distinctive morphology of the ancient cave make it a valuable karst heritage landform.</p> <p>Recent calcite dating indicated a minimum age of at least 6,000 years for the cave.</p>

Appendix 4

Architectural Conservation Areas

Location	Description
Ballynacally	<p>Ballynacally is a very attractive, small, estuary village with pleasant stone buildings and well maintained public spaces. The approach road from Ennis is particularly pleasing with its perfect 18th century estate walls, gate lodges and the spectacular ruin of the old McMahon castle of Dangan (Daingean Máigh Builc) with the upper portion still supported by a narrow staircase as it was in 1837.</p> <p>Little appears to have changed since the 1830s. The Post Office is still in the same building. The old National School dated 1843 is now a parish hall and “The Range” estate cottages, on the Fair Green are restored and inhabited.</p> <p>The village contains many items of architectural heritage interest including the double arch bridge over the river, shown on the 1787 Grand jury Map, which may be of a late mediaeval date with original stone parapet walls. The old fair green is a public park with seating, surrounded by early 19th century buildings. Most buildings date from 18th and 19th centuries.</p>
Ballyvaughan Village Centre	Village centre consisting of 18th and 19th century two storey houses accommodating a hotel, pubs, shops and restaurants and also recent developments such as thatched cottage-type holiday homes.
Ballyvaughan Auxiliary Workhouse	The auxiliary workhouse is the only surviving workhouse in County Clare. The complex comprises a quadrangle surrounded by terraced single-storey stone, gabled houses which has retained most of its mid 19th century character and has potential for development as a unique residential complex.
Cappa (Kilrush)	<p>The village of Cappa comprises a fine stone quay and storm protected pier which is one of the few havens for boats and shipping on this part of the Atlantic coast. The pilot station is still housed in the original coast guard station which was built between 1760 and 1836. Many of the terraced houses to the North East of the pier are shown on the 1st Edition Ordnance Map 1839 and may date from the previous century. Also shown on this map is Cappa Lodge (Protected Structure) and the Square (Former Fort and Military Barracks – Protected Structure).</p> <p>This is a most attractive coastal village with high quality buildings, masonry structures and walls. The original terrace of two storey houses is well maintained</p>
Carrigaholt	<p>Carrigaholt is a very attractive late 18th and early 19th century fishing settlement on the Loop Head peninsula, which has virtually remained unchanged since the 1830s. The village comprises three streets, the longest of which is West Street, running west from the harbour and bisected by Main Street towards the bridge and Chapel Street towards the early 19th century Roman Catholic Church.</p> <p>The village fabric consists of terraces of single storey, gabled, stone, three and four bay houses, which were originally thatched, with some two storey houses and shops between. Many of these display exceptionally high quality external plaster-work, including shop and pub fronts, moulded window surrounds, ornamental string courses, etc.</p>
Clarecastle	<p>Clarecastle village retains much of its 18th and 19th century fabric and character. The Castle which dominates the entrance to the village from the Newmarket-on-Fergus direction was built on an island in the Fergus in the 13th century. Much of its original structure, including gate tower, curtain wall and machicolated, mediaeval, postern gate, remains, while later additions, in the form of the mid 18th century barrack buildings, survive and have been repaired. This historic complex has, for the most part, retained its character and integrity, in that no new development has occurred on the island since the late 18th century.</p> <p>Other structures of architectural merit in the village include 19th century terraces and warehouses on Quay Road, 18th and 19th century terraces on Main St. and the mid 19th century harbour, consisting of an extensive, stone quay with stone bollards. The extent of the old village has remained greatly unchanged since the publication of the Co. Clare Grand Jury Map in 1787.</p> <p>Also contributing to the amenity and character of Clarecastle village are St Peter and Paul’s Catholic Church, built 1839, The National School, built in the late 19th century and recently extended and a very attractive local authority housing estate – St. Michael’s Terrace, comprising twelve semi-detached houses with high gables, large chimney-stacks and cantilevered concrete shelters over entrance doors, facing a tree-lined green.</p>
Corofin	Area identified for its traditional shopfronts and their contribution to a traditional street façade. The overall quality of the area is of sufficient importance to require special care.
Ennis – Former Our Lady’s Hospital Complex	<p>This extensive complex of ashlar-limestone buildings, originally known as The County Lunatic Asylum, was completed in 1868. Although many additions have since been made to the original buildings it still retains all of its original structures. These were invariably built using high quality materials, techniques and design, which with the large open areas of lawn and vegetation create an illusion of tranquillity and space.</p> <p>The complex contains eight protected structures including the former hospital, gate-lodge, gate-piers, boundary wall, mid 20th century chapel, stone water tower, former FÁS offices and former gasometer building.</p>
Ennis Terraces: 6no. ACAs	<p>St. Claire’s Terrace, Clonroad (c.1935)</p> <p>Terrace of single-storey houses, New Road (c.1870)</p> <p>Terrace of single-storey houses, beside the Old Barracks, Kilrush Road (c.1870)</p> <p>Terrace of single-storey houses, Station Road / Clonroad (1928)</p> <p>St. Flannan’s Terrace, Clare Road, 1904 and Clonroad More (1912)</p> <p>St. Patrick’s Terrace, Limerick Road (c.1890)</p> <p>The above, six ACAs consist of terraces of single and two storey houses constructed between 1870 and 1935. Although less formal than many other buildings in Ennis their simple and well proportioned design and their use of natural and local building materials give them a high visual amenity value which makes a considerable contribution to the character of the various approaches to the town.</p>

Location	Description
Ennis – Town Centre	<p>Ennis is a town which has steadily developed since the mid thirteenth century. Although many changes have occurred in the town since the mediaeval period, it still retains its ancient character to a great extent. This is indicated by its narrow streets, stone buildings, laneways, bow-ways etc. Due to the fact that much of the centre of Ennis existed before the year 1700 it is designated as an Archaeological Zone (No. CL033-082-, Historic Town) in The Record of Monuments and Places, published the National Monuments Services of the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.</p> <p>The older part of Ennis, which for the most part consists of narrow, winding streets and lanes, following the pattern of the River Fergus, predominantly dates from the 13th to the 18th centuries. This is confined to the area around Abbey, O'Connell and Parnell Streets while the later impressive public and private buildings of the 19th century are found toward the outer boundaries of this ACA. These include the fine Georgian buildings of Bindon St, the mills and corn-stores of Cornmarket Street and the classical Courthouse and the nearby attractive simple formality of Steele's Terrace to the north.</p>
Ennistymon	<p>The present town of Ennistymon for the most part dates from the late 18th and early 19th centuries and comprises three main streets (Main St, Parliament St. and Bridge St.). The town is renowned for the survival of many of its traditional wooden shopfronts and stone slate roofs quarried from Liscannor and Doolin. The town contains 42 protected structures, many of which are being conserved and repaired.</p>
Kilfenora	<p>The village contains many 18th and 19th century two storey shops and town houses and has retained its unique market village character. Beside the market square stands the 12th century cathedral which has recently been restored. Kilfenora was once known as the "City of the Crosses" from its numerous illuminated carved limestone crosses. The former importance of the village is evident from the numerous forts, castles and 18th century houses which surround it. A large central area of Kilfenora has been designated as an ACA, recognising the historical and architectural importance of the townscape and layout of the core area.</p>
Kilkee	<p>Kilkee has retained its unique character as a 19th century bathing place. The town contained several protected structures and many fine buildings. A large area of the town centre is designated as an ACA, recognising the historical and architectural importance of the townscape and layout of the core area.</p>
Kilkishen	<p>The village core is designated as an ACA, recognising the historical importance of the town and the architectural importance of the townscape and layout of the core, most of which remains intact. There are, however, a number of derelict sites within this area which detract from the overall character of the streetscape.</p>
Killadysert	<p>The town centre has retained much of its character as an agricultural and estuary market town and has grown very little since first surveyed in 1839. There are four protected structures within the ACA and it has an attractive streetscape. The town centre has been designated as an ACA, recognising the historical and architectural importance of the townscape and the layout of the core area.</p>
Killaloe	<p>The town core has been designated as an ACA. The street pattern in Killaloe today is very similar to that shown on the Grand Jury Map of 1787 and it is likely that many of the existing houses and shops date from before that period. By 1837 the town had 300 houses and the town of Killaloe today has not changed greatly from that time. The town still retains its urban character and many of its ancient and later public buildings still remain. Killaloe comprises, for the most part, two storey buildings constructed of rendered, local sandstone rubble with Killaloe-Portroe slate roofs. These are invariably gabled with roof pitch of about 40 degrees. Large wide chimneys of stone or brick sit on the ridge of roofs and windows are mostly of wooden sliding sash type. Some examples of sash windows with small panes and light glazing bars are still to be found, particularly on the rear of buildings or in back lanes. Many fine 18th and 19th century formal, detached houses are also found near the town.</p>
Kilmihil	<p>Kilmihil village grew as a small market town in the late 18th and early 19th centuries and the townscape retains much of its existing character. St. Michael's church is a protected structure and the village core has been designated as an ACA, recognising the historical and architectural importance of the townscape and layout of the core area.</p>
Kilrush	<p>Kilrush is a very attractive and prosperous market town with a vibrant marina for fishing and leisure craft. The streets and squares are well laid out and most of its built fabric consists of two and three storey houses and shops over 150 years old. Many of the old shopfronts remain and are of a high standard in design and materials.</p> <p>The town and its environs contain thirty seven protected structures, including such fine public buildings as The Market House (1808), St. Senan's former Church of Ireland (1813), St. Senan's Catholic Church (1835), The Courthouse (1830), The Mercy Convent (1860) and the Vandeleur Walled Gardens (1808). Kilrush is one of only two towns in Clare designated "Heritage Town" status by the Tourist Board. It has retained its special character as a west of Ireland, maritime and market town.</p>
Labasheeda	<p>The village of Labasheeda comprises one long street of single and two storey houses and shops, most of which date from the 18th and early 19th centuries. The village does not appear to have expanded significantly since the 1830s when the 1st Edition OS map was surveyed, although some old buildings have been demolished and replaced by modern structures.</p> <p>The village extends in an easterly direction, parallel to the shore, from the old Catholic Church to the former 18th century Cloonkerry House. The street commands an elevated position with pleasant views of the Shannon Estuary. Labasheeda has a small early 19th century quay, a short distance south of the main street. This was a busy harbour in the late 19th century, with a regular ferry and cargo service to Foynes. Most of the larger two storey buildings are concentrated at the eastern side of the village, near the quay, with many retaining high quality wooden and render shopfronts.</p>
Lisdoonvarna	<p>The present town of Lisdoonvarna is the product of a tourism boom during the late 19th century. The town comprises, for the most part, well-designed and render-decorated Victorian buildings and an attractive and well laid out central market square. The Spa Wells complex to the south of the town has an attractive pump house and bathhouse built in the early 20th century.</p>
Miltown Malbay	<p>Most of the present buildings in Miltown Malbay date from the early 19th century. There is one long commercial street which includes some very fine plaster shop-fronts which replicate classical wooden traditional examples and date from the early decades of the 20th century. The town has an attractive rural and urban quality and care must be taken to preserve its character and protect its historic fabric.</p>
Mountshannon	<p>The village core has been designated as an ACA. It consists of a single wide street, linked to the harbour, with solid, stone-gabled two storey houses on each side. Many of these date from the late 18th century and still retain their traditional character. The buildings of the 18th and 19th centuries in Mountshannon are constructed of local sandstone, giving the village a cosy, welcoming appearance. The predominant roofing slate is a local grey-green quartzite slate, quarried during the 18th century, and commonly known as "Killaloe slates".</p>

Location	Description
Newmarket-on-Fergus	The town core has been designated as an ACA. Newmarket-on-Fergus is a long-established settlement and its layout and townscape retain much of its 18th and 19th century character.
O'Briensbridge	The village core has been designated as an ACA in acknowledgement of its unique 18th century character and relatively uniform streetscape.
Quin	In acknowledgement of Quin's outstanding architectural heritage, the village core has been designated as an ACA. This designation is designed to positively assist the conservation management of the central area which is a considerable economic asset to the village in terms of its tourist profile.
Scarriff	The town existed by 1780 when the Grand Jury Map of Clare was being surveyed. The present town comprises one main street rising from the bridge over the River Graney to a triangular town "square". The houses are predominantly two storey gabled structures, built of local rubble sandstone with a lime render finish and sash windows. Many are still roofed with local Killaloe/Portroe slate and most still contain their one-over-one late 19th century wooden sliding sash windows.
Scattery Island	<p>Scattery Island (Inis Cathaigh) has been inhabited since prehistory and is almost unique in that it contains substantial vestiges of buildings from many periods spanning almost two millennia. The island has a unique character in that, although practically all of its buildings are derelict or in ruins, it contains important structures from many periods in Irish history from Early Christian to the Napoleonic era. Scattery could be described as a microcosm of Irish history and archaeology and its buildings are excellent examples of Irish vernacular, ecclesiastical, military and coastal-defence architecture through the ages.</p> <p>The island is traditionally associated with St. Senan, a sixth century hermit who is credited with bringing Christianity to West Clare. The island contains the remains of many churches dating from this period, a holy well, a round tower and two mediaeval cemeteries. It was the scene of battles between the Vikings and the army of Brian Ború, High King of Ireland during the 10th and early 11th centuries. Some of the ecclesiastical remains may date to the mediaeval period or later. The remains of a 16th century tower house of the O'Catháin family can be seen near the pier.</p> <p>The village, on the east of the island is mostly in ruins. During the 18th and 19th centuries it was inhabited, principally, by herders, farmers, fishermen and estuary pilots. During the Napoleonic Wars, a coastal artillery battery was constructed at the southern end of the island by the War Department. It is still an impressive fortification with a central, rectangular "bomb proof" blockhouse surrounded by gun emplacements, a dry moat and drawbridge. Beside the battery is a 19th century lighthouse (c.1867) and lightkeepers' house.</p> <p>The whole island of Scattery is designated as an archaeological complex, No. CL067-024- in the Record of Monuments and Places. This designation includes fifteen sub-monuments including eight Early Christian and Mediaeval Churches, a walled enclosure, a Round Tower, a Holy Well, a Castle, a Graveyard, a Battery and a potential archaeological site. Its designation as an Architectural Conservation Area gives the unique built environment of the island additional protection.</p>
Sixmilebridge	The town core of Sixmilebridge has been designated as an ACA. This designation recognises the historical importance of the town as an early industrial settlement on the O'Garney river and the architectural importance of the townscape and layout of the core area which reflects the past.
Tuamgraney	The village is a pleasant hamlet consisting of two storey, three bay, gabled houses and commercial premises with wooden sash windows and Killaloe slate roofs. The buildings and boundary walls are constructed of local sandstone blocks, giving the structures a soft, warm texture not found in the west or south of the County. The village centre appears to have been unaffected by modern development and materials and still retains its 18th century market village character.
Tulla	<p>The village addresses the ruin of an ancient church and graveyard which commands the highest point in the village. This was likely a fortified site in prehistoric times and was once the site of a late mediaeval castle or tower house. Now it is dominated by the ruins of the early 18th century Church of Ireland and some sparse remains of an earlier one, reputedly built by St. Mochulla in the 7th century.</p> <p>The element which contributes most to the character of Tulla is its unusual elevated position, high above the surrounding landscape, which is reminiscent of fortified hill villages of the Iberian and Italian peninsulas. The streets, which slope down from the centre sit easily on this hillside location by the use of incremental variations in floor and roof levels, giving a "deck of cards effect" to the terraces of two storey shops and houses.</p> <p>The buildings of Tulla are predominantly two storey, gabled, two and three bay houses dating from the 18th and 19th centuries. Many contain early wooden or plaster shopfronts with ornate moulding and detailing.</p>

Appendix 5

Scenic Routes

Number	Location
1	Coast Road from county boundary (along the Kinvarra Road) to Quilty including the R479 spur to Doolin
2	N67 from Ballyvauhan to Corkscrew Hill
3	R480 from Ballyvaughan to Leamaneh Castle
4	R476 from Leamaneh Castle to Corofin
5	R476 from Leamaneh Castle to Corofin
6	Series of roads from junction of R476 through Porkabinna to Castletown and south west to Seshymore, northwards from Carran through Rannagh townland
7	Road from Caherconnell to Carran
8	Series of roads from Carran through Fahee South, north to Glencolmille south, northwards to Keelhilla (cross), westwards through Pullagh, Coolnatullagh and Coskeam to Fahee South
9	Road from townland of Turlough to Aghawinnaun
10	From church in New Quay, Behagh to end of public road
11	From junction at Fanore and R477 south eastwards to Lislaheenbeg
12	From road junction Formoyle east, southwards to Lismorahaun
13	Series of roads southwards from junction at Fannoremore to junction at Blake's mountain and westwards to junction with R477 at Corofin
14	Series of roads from junction at Ballynalacken Castle through townlands of Ballynalacken, Carrownacleary, Ballynahown, Poulmagun and Cloughan
15	R474 from Connolly to Milltown Malbay
16	R487 from Kilfearagh to T-junction before Breaghva
17	R487 from outside Carrigaholt to Loop Head
18	Along coast road from Carrigaholt to Doonaha
19	Coast road south east of Cappagh to Carrowdotia South
20	R473 from outside Labasheeda to T-junction before Kiladysert
21	Road through Ballysallagh east, southwards to Ballycally
22	From Brickhill Bridge north east to road junction at Reaskcamoge
23	Road from Cratloe north east through Gallows Hill to Glennagross
24	Views in and out of Lough Cullauntheeda
25	Views in and out of Doon Lough
26	R466 between Broadford and O'Briensbridge
27	R463 from O'Briensbridge through Killaloe to outside Ogonnelloe
28	R463 from Tuamgraney to Mountshannon
29	Roads surrounding Lough Graney
30	R487 from junction at Carrunaveehaun along the coast road to Kilkee
31	Wood Road, Corofin
32	Road from Church at Ballylaghan crossroads as far as the crossroads at Caherhurl (part of the East Clare Way)
33	Road running west from Bealaha Bridge as far as its junction with the N67
34	R487 from the junction with the R488 south to T-junction at Killeenagh
35	Road from Feeard past the Bridges of Ross to the R487

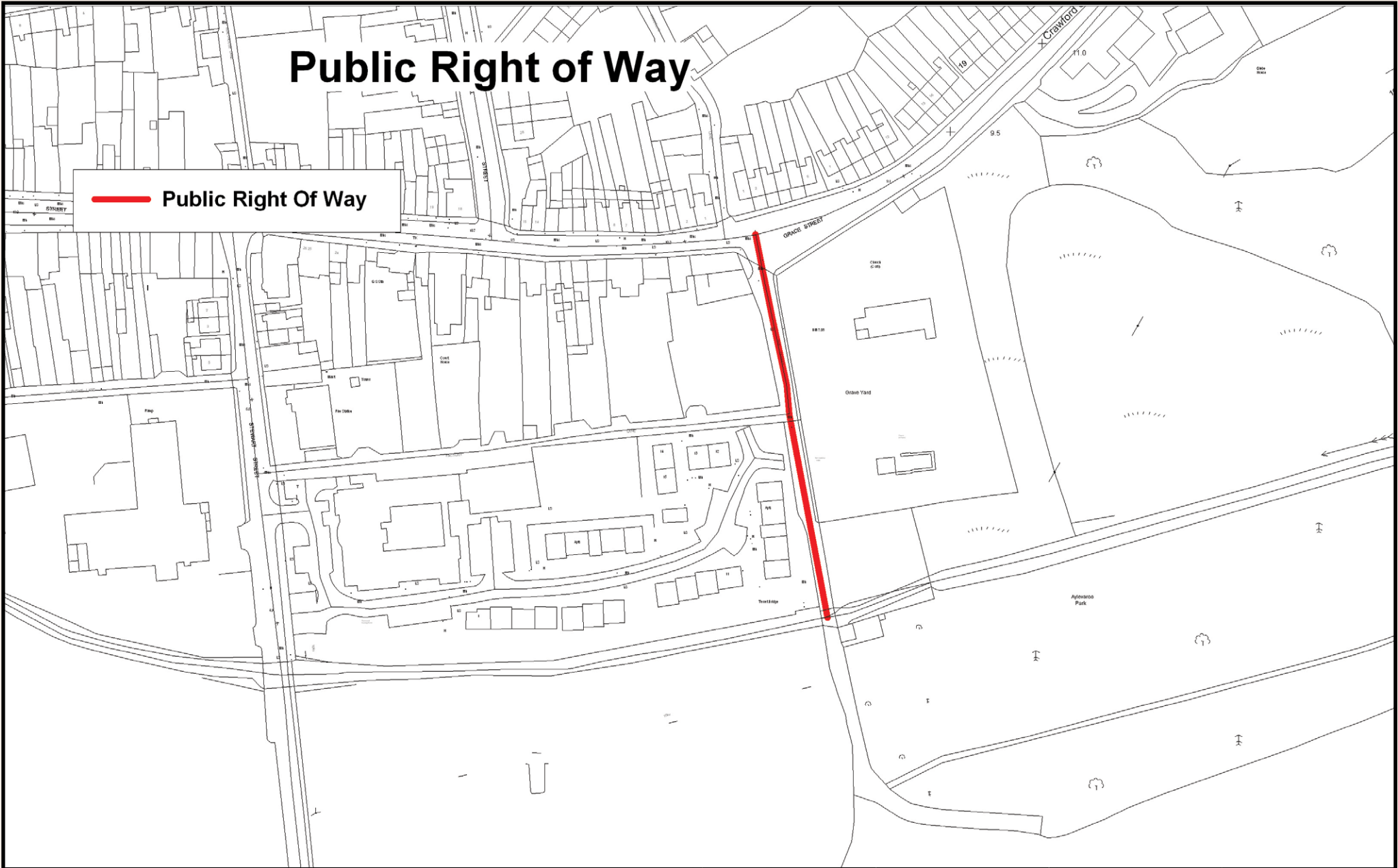
Appendix 6

Public Rights of Way

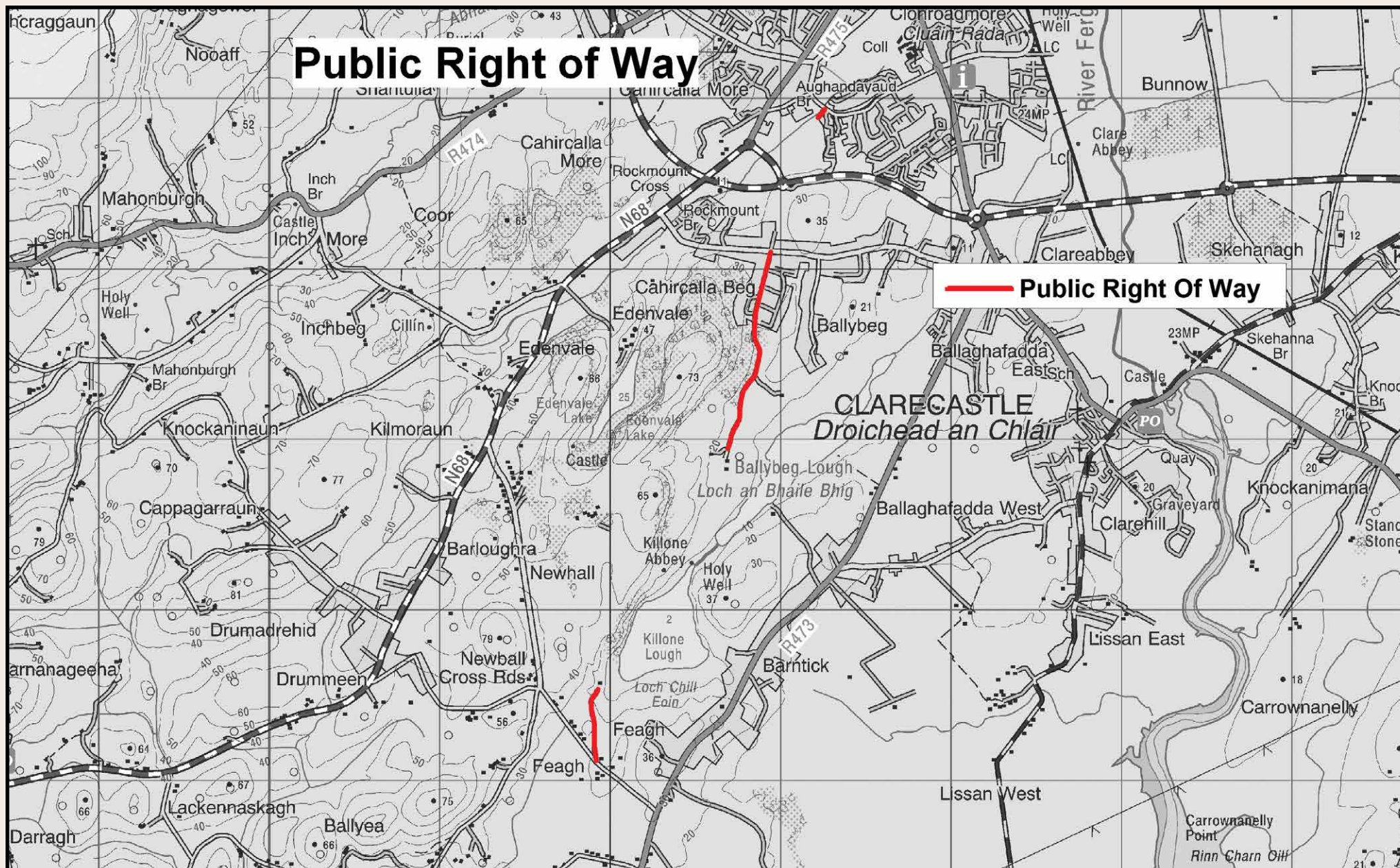
Public rights of way which give access to seashore, mountain, lakeshore, riverbank or other places of natural beauty or recreational utility:

- Turret Lane, Kilrush – connecting Grace Street and Vandeleur Demesne
- The Rocky Road, Ennis (part of)

The inclusion of a public right of way in this Plan is based on evidence of such a right of way existing and in particular of its compliance with the specific requirements of Section 10(2)(o) of the Act. It does not affect the existence of validity of any other public right of way which are not included in this Plan.



Clare County Council: Clare County Development Plan 2017–2023		Title: Turret Lane		
Copyright Of Ordnance Survey Ireland. All Rights Reserved. Licence Number: 2015/18/CCMA/Clare County Council		Drawn By: Padraig McManus	Checked By: Helen Quinn	Scale: Not to Scale
				Date: January 2017



Clare County Council:
Clare County Development Plan 2017–2023

Copyright Of Ordnance Survey Ireland. All Rights Reserved.
Licence Number: 2015/18/CCMA/Clare County Council

Title:
Rocky Road

Drawn By:
Padraig McManus

Checked By:
Helen Quinn

Scale:
Not to Scale

Date:
January 2017

Appendix 7

Plans, Policies and
Guidelines to which the
Development Plan must
have Regard

Under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) the Planning Authority is required to append a statement to the development plan including information which demonstrates how the Planning Authority has implemented the policies and objectives of the Minister contained in the Guidelines when considering their application to the area or part of the area of the development plan.

Alternatively, if the Council has formed the opinion that it is not possible, because of the nature of characteristics of the area of the development plan, to implement certain policies or objectives of the Minister contained in the Guidelines, the statement shall give reasons for the forming of the opinion and why the policies and objectives of the Minister has not been so implemented.

The required statement in relation to the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 is set out below. The Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 is referred to hereunder as ‘the plan’.

Implementation of Regional Planning Guidelines – Best Practice Guidance, December 2010

The Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) were adopted in September 2010 and came into effect on the 7th February 2011. The Plan making process took into account the content of the RPGs 2010-2022, supporting the population targets, economic and social priorities contained therein. The RPG’s have given effect to the national population targets and the targets outlined in the Core Strategy of this Plan are consistent with the same.

Spatial Planning and National Roads – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012

The Plan, in Section 8.2.3 addresses issues in relation to national roads. In objective CDP8.2 the Plan recognises the need to safeguard and further develop the motorway, national primary and secondary road network and associated junctions in line with national policy.

Section 8.2.3.3 and Objective CDP8.4 set out the policy on direct access onto National Routes. The objective is generally consistent with the above guidance document. Objective CDP8.4 allows for direct access onto national routes in certain exceptional circumstances, which are largely in keeping with the Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines. Exceptions will be considered for developments of national and regional strategic importance and for new accesses onto a number of identified, lightly-trafficed section of the national roads network.

The Planning System and Flood Risk Management, Nov 2009 (DoEHLG/OPW)

This document is referenced in section 18.6 of the plan. The development plan is the appropriate mechanism through which national policy and the Council’s strategic planning objectives and approach to flood risk will be implemented at the local level. The plan has taken account of the above document by the inclusion of a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment of the county, presented as part of Volume 10. This Assessment is supported by Flood Risk Maps of the county, presented in Volume 2, Volume 3 and Volume 10 of the plan.

The plan, in Volume 1, also includes Section 18.6 – Flood Risk Management, including objective CDP18.6, which seeks to ensure that proposals in areas where there is a risk of flooding have regard to the above Guidelines and demonstrate that appropriate mitigation measures can be put in place and residual risks managed to an acceptable level.

Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG, 2009)

This guidance document has informed the preparation of the Natura Impact Report, which is included in the Plan as part of Volume 10.

Section 1.1.3, Volume 1 of the plan provides details on the appropriate assessment (AA) process and how it is incorporated into the plan process. At the end of Section 1.1, it is stated that the Plan was prepared in accordance with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. All recommendations and mitigation measures from the AA process have been incorporated into the plan.

Furthermore, objective CDP14.2 in Volume 1 sets out the objective to afford the highest level of protection to all designated European sites in the county and to require all planning applications for development within, adjacent to, or with the potential to affect a European site to submit an Natura Impact Statement in accordance with the Habitats Directive.

In addition objective CDP14.3 sets out the requirement to implement Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive and ensure that appropriate assessment is carried out in relation to all relevant works, plans and projects, having regard to the above OPW/DoEHLG Guidance.

Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessments (2013)

These guidelines are referenced in Chapter 14 Biodiversity, Natural Heritage and Green Infrastructure. Section 14.3.8 of that chapter refers to Environmental Impact Assessment and regard to the above-mentioned guidelines is integrated into Objective CDP14.9.

Design Manual for Urban Roads and Street

The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets is referenced extensively in the both Chapter 17 Design and the Built Environment and also in Appendix 1 Development Management Guidelines

Government Policy on Architecture 2009-2015, DoEHLG

This document is referenced in the Plan under the Design and Built Environment Chapter. Chapter 17 includes aims to ensure that all structures would be environment enhancing, attractive, protecting landscape quality and maximising energy efficiency and conservation. The objectives in Chapter 17 require all new buildings to embrace the concept of universal design, sustainable design, achieve excellence in siting and design, and to promote the use of low carbon materials.

Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (Dec 08)

Best Practice Urban Design Manual (May 09) – Part 1

Best Practice Urban Design Manual (May 09) – Part 2

These documents are referenced in Sections 17.4.1 and 17.4.2 of the Plan under the Design and Built Environment Chapter. Appendix 1, Volume 1 – Development Management Standards – section A1.2 sets out that, in considering any application for a housing scheme, regard will be had to the publication *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas December 2008* and accompanying document *Urban Design Manual – A best practice guide*.

In addition, objectives CDP4.7 relating to housing mix, specifically reference the need to adhere to the above guidelines in the assessment of relevant proposals.

Provision for Schools and the Planning System – Code of Practice, July 2008

Section 5.4.3 of Volume 1 addresses the issue of the provision of educational services in the county during the lifetime of this Plan. Through the settlement plans contained in Volume 3 the local authority has ensured that sufficient land has been zoned to accommodate the provision of schools and educational services into the future. Objective CDP5.17 also ensures the adequacy of school capacity will be taken into consideration in assessment of planning applications for large residential developments.

Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments, Dec. 2015

Appendix 1, Volume 1 – Development Management Guidelines – Section A1.3.2, sets out that, in assessing proposals for apartment developments, regard will be had to the publication *Sustainable Urban Housing – Design Standards for New Apartments*.

Development Plan: Guidelines for Planning Authorities, June 2007

This document is referenced in Section 2.3 of the plan – Relevant Plans, Policies and Strategies. The preparation process of the Plan has been in accordance with Sections 11 and 12 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and has taken account of the information set out within the Development Plan guidelines, including key factors such as: role of the Development Plan, Development Plan process, format, layout, presentation and evaluation/monitoring.

Development Management Guidelines, June 2007

As the Plan will be the sole policy document for the County, the objectives contained within the Plan will be used to assess and determine applications for various developments across the County.

Appendix 1, Volume 1 of the Plan sets out Development Management Guidelines. However, in section A1.0, it is acknowledged that these Guidelines are not exhaustive, do not replicate advice elsewhere, and must be read in conjunction with all the other relevant chapters of the Plan and in particular the Ministerial Guidelines, which includes the above document.

Wind Energy Development Guidelines, June 2006 (amended)

The Wind Energy Strategy for County Clare (WES) is included as Volume 5 of the plan. Table 1c of the WES sets out the relevant policy and legislative framework, which includes reference to the Wind Energy Development Guidelines for Planning Authorities. It is stated in the WES that it has been developed in line with said guidelines.

Wind Energy Development, Circular Letter PD/3/08

This Circular deals with extensions to planning permissions, substantial works, sequencing of grid connections and new applications for wind energy developments. Whilst it is an objective of the Plan to promote and facilitate wind energy production in support of county and national renewable energy targets (as evidenced by the Clare Wind Energy Strategy), the issues dealt with in this circular relate primarily to development management and not to the development plan preparation process.

Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines, April 2005

Section 3.2.5 of the plan states that the policies on rural housing are based on the National Spatial Strategy and the above Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines.

The plan has identified different rural area types, as required by the Guidelines and takes account of the varying characteristics of rural areas within the county and the differing housing requirements of urban and rural communities. The plan also sets out development objectives in relation to natural resources, landscape and natural features, transport, siting and design.

Rural Housing Policies and Local Need Criteria in Development Plans – Circular Letter SP/5/08

The Settlement Strategy outlined in chapter 3 of the plan is considered to be consistent with the above circular. Specifically, the criteria set out in Section 3.2.5 of the plan for determining local rural person status includes bona fide applicants wishing to build a permanent home and/or who have demonstrated a commitment to operate a full time business from their proposed home in the rural area, where such business will contribute to and enhance the rural community and the nature of the business serves a predominantly local rural business need.

The above circular also reiterates the requirement in the 2005 Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines in respect of the promotion and preservation of the Irish language. The Plan includes an objective to provide for the linguistic and cultural heritage of the county through support for organisations involved in the continued promotion and preservation of the Irish language and culture

Retail Planning – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012)

These guidelines are referenced in Section 7.3 of this plan. In accordance with the requirements of the guidelines, the Plan aligns future retail development with the settlement hierarchy, as set out in the Core Strategy, identifies future floorspace requirements in the larger settlements of the County, commits to the preparation of a retail strategy for the Limerick/Shannon gateway and references the criteria that will be taken into consideration in the assessment of planning applications for retail developments.

Additionally, both Chapter 7 – Retail and Chapter 16 – Towns and Villages address issues relating to the vitality and viability of town centres in the plan area.

The adopted Retail Strategy for the Mid-West Region is contained as Volume 8 of this plan.

Architectural Heritage Protection – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2011

These Guidelines are referenced in Chapter 15, Section 15.2 of this plan. They have informed the selection process for the Record of Protected Structures, included as Volume 4 of the plan and have also been taken into account in respect of the content of Chapter 15 as it refers to Protected Structures, Architectural Conservation Areas and the protection of architectural heritage throughout the county.

Quarries and Ancillary Activities, April 2004

Quarry activities are dealt with in the Plan under Sections 10.4.6 (Extractive Industry). The plan has taken account of the above Guidelines in that it acknowledges the economic value of the significant aggregate resources present in the county. In addition, objective CDP10.13 is consistent with the Guidelines in that it seeks to promote the extraction of minerals and aggregates, where such activities will not result in a negative impact on the environment or residential amenities and where such operations are in compliance with all national regulations and guidelines applicable to quarrying and mining activities.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Guidelines, Nov 2004

This guidance document has informed the preparation of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report, which is included in the Plan as part of Volume 10.

Section 1.1.2, Volume 1 of the plan details how the SEA process has been implemented into the plan-making process. At the end of section 1.1, it is stated that the plan was prepared in accordance with the SEA Regulations 2004. All recommendations and mitigation measures from the SEA process have been incorporated into the plan.

Funfair Guidance, 2003

These Guidelines relate to the licensing and requirements for a specific type of land use – funfairs. They are not relevant to the preparation process of the plan.

Childcare Facilities Guidelines, June 2001

The Plan supports the development of additional childcare facilities in the county, having regard to the above guidance. Section 5.4.3 and Objective CDP5.16 refer.

Landscape and Landscape Assessment, June 2000

Objective CDP13.1 of the plan encourages the utilisation of the Landscape Character Assessment of County Clare and other relevant landscape policy and guidance and to have regard to them in the management, enhancement and promotion of the landscapes of County Clare. The Landscape and Landscape Assessment Guidelines, 2000 are one of the said guidelines to which regard will be had. It is noted that the National Landscape Strategy 2015 also promotes the 'Landscape Character Assessment' approach to landscape management. Regard has also been had to that Strategy in the preparation of this plan.

Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures, July 1996 (as updated by PL07/12 of 2012)

The plan has taken account of the above Guidelines by the inclusion of objective CDP8.44, which aims to facilitate the provision of telecommunications services at appropriate locations within the County having regard to the DoEHLG '*Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures, Guidelines for Planning Authorities*' (as updated by PL07/12 of 2012).

Development Contribution Scheme - Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2013

Section A1.14, Appendix 1 of the plan refers to Development Contributions. The Planning Authority, taking into consideration the capital expenditure necessary for the provision of infrastructure required to facilitate development, will require financial contributions for permitted developments. The Council has prepared a schedule of development contributions in accordance with the above guidance and with its obligations under Sections 48 and 49 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).

Glossary of Terms

A

Affordable Housing

Dwellings or land made available for purchase on the open market at a price below that normally obtainable for the dwelling or land.

Aggregates

A granular product obtained by processing natural materials. It may be sand or gravel produced by natural disintegration of rock, or it may be manufactured by passing rock through a series of crushers.

Alternatives

Description of alternative locations, alternative designs and alternative processes.

Alternative Energy Requirement (AER)

In line with the general European Union energy policy, in 1993, the Irish Government decided to establish a specific framework for implementing its commitment to renewable and alternative energy sources. Under the framework, the Irish Government requires the State-owned electricity distribution company, Electricity Supply Board (ESB), to purchase under long-term 15 year contracts, the electricity generated by a number of independent green electricity producers, at a guaranteed price. In order to set this guaranteed price, the Irish Government organises tenders prior to assigning the relevant contracts. Participants to the tenders each state a guaranteed price and the winner is the producer asking for the smallest guaranteed price. These tenders are known as Alternative Energy Requirements. The underlying principle of the AER Programme is that

prospective generators are invited to make a formal application to build, own and operate newly installed renewable energy based electricity generating plants, and to supply electricity from these to the Electricity Supply Board (ESB) under a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) of up to 15 years duration.

Ambient Noise

The average noise level over a given period of time usually composed of sound from many sources, near and far.

An Bord Pleanála (The Bord)

An Bord Pleanála is an independent statutory administrative tribunal that decides on appeals of planning decisions made by local authorities in Ireland. As of 2007, the Bord directly decides major strategic infrastructural projects under the provisions of the Planning and Development (Strategic Infrastructure) Act 2006.

Anemometer

Equipment fixed on a mast to measure wind speed over a particular site. Anemometry masts are usually slender structures fixed to the ground with guy wires.

Appropriate Assessment

The process through which an assessment of the effects of a plan or project on European sites is undertaken. European sites make up the Natura 2000 network which comprise Special Protection Areas under the Birds Directive, Special Areas of Conservation under the Habitats Directive and Ramsar sites designated under the Ramsar Convention (collectively referred to as European sites)

Architectural Conservation Area (ACA)

Architectural Conservation Areas are areas designated to preserve the character of places and townscapes which are of special architectural, historic, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or that contribute to the appreciation of protected structures.

B

Background Noise Level

A measurement of the noise level already present within the environment in the absence of wind energy development operation.

Baseline Survey

Description of the existing environment against which future changes can be measured.

Berm

An extended mound of soils, overburden or structure erected as a barrier to sight, sound or water.

Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna

Biodiversity is the variability among living organisms from all sources including inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are a part. (United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity 1992).

Flora is defined as all of the plants found in a given area.

Fauna is defined as all of the animals found in a given area.

Biomass

Bioenergy is the utilisation of solar energy that has been bound up in biomass during the process of photosynthesis. The process of photosynthesis uses solar energy to combine carbon dioxide from the atmosphere with water and various nutrients from the soil to produce plant matter – biomass.

Biotic Index Values (Q Values)

The Biotic Index Values, or Q values, are assigned to rivers in accordance with biological monitoring of surface waters. Low Q ratings, as low as Q1, are indicative of low biodiversity and polluted waters, and high Q ratings, as high as Q5, are indicative of high biodiversity and unpolluted waters.

Blade Swish

The modulation of broadband noise at blade passing frequency.

Borrow Pit

An area of excavation of rock and/or soil material that is used elsewhere within the site development boundaries.

Built Environment

Refers to both architectural heritage and archaeological heritage.

Bulky Goods Retailing

Goods generally sold from retail warehouses where DIY goods or goods such as flatpack furniture are of such a size that they would normally be taken away by car as they would not be manageable to transport by foot, cycle or bus and/or large floor areas are required to display goods e.g. furniture in room sets; or where collective purchase of goods would be bulky e.g. wallpaper or paint.

C

Commissioning

Making a project fully operational.

Comparison Retailing

Those goods that are required on an infrequent basis by individuals and households such as:

- clothing, footwear and furniture;
- furnishing and household equipment (excluding non-durable goods);
- medical and pharmaceutical products, therapeutic appliances and equipment;
- educational and recreation equipment and accessories, books, newspapers and magazines;
- goods for personal care; and
- goods not (elsewhere) classified.

Convenience Retailing

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

Cumulative Effects

Effects on the environment that result from incremental changes caused by the strategic action together with other past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions. These effects can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over time or space.

Cut-in Wind Speed

The wind speed at which a turbine produces a net power output. This is usually at hub height wind speeds of 4-5 metres per second.

D

Density

The number of dwelling units provided on a given area of land, usually expressed in dwelling units per hectare.

Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government

The Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government is a department of the Government of Ireland with the responsibility to pursue sustainable development. It is led by the Minister for Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government who is assisted by two Ministers of State.

Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport

This department of the Government is responsible for transport policy and overseeing transport services and infrastructure.

Development Boundary

The development boundary of a settlement defines the extent of the urban area as defined in the relevant land-use plan.

Development Contributions

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

E

Ecology

The study of relationships between living organisms and between organisms and their environment (especially animal and plant communities), their energy flows and their interactions with their surroundings.

Emissions

Carbon dioxide, greenhouse gases or other noxious emissions which contribute to global warming.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

Environmental Impact Assessment is a process which involves an assessment of the possible impact, either positive or negative, that a proposed project may have on the environment in terms of natural, social and economic impacts. The purpose of the assessment

is to ensure that decision makers consider the possible environmental impacts before deciding whether to proceed with the project. After an EIA, the precautionary and polluter pays principle may be applied to prevent, limit or require insurance coverage to a project based on its likely adverse impact.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

An Environmental Impact Statement is a document produced as a result of the EIA process. Where effects are identified that are unacceptable, these can then be avoided or reduced during the design process. It is a statement of result from an ordered exercise which focuses on anticipating all environmental impacts of significance of a proposed development prior to implementation or construction and which specifies those measures which should be taken to eliminate or mitigate such impacts to an acceptable level.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

The EPA is responsible for the protection of the environment and has responsibilities for a wide range of licensing, enforcement, monitoring and assessment activities associated with environmental protection.

European Sites

Designated European Sites are also known as the Natura 2000 network. They include Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) under the Habitats Directive (1992), Special Protection Areas (SPA) under the Bird Directive (1985) and RAMSAR sites designated under the RAMSAR Convention. These site are collectively referred to as European Sites.

F Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

Foreign Direct Investment is investment from abroad in the manufacturing and international services sector or a physical investment in the building of a factory in another country to acquire lasting interest in enterprise outside of the economy of the investor.

G Geographical Information Systems (GIS)

Geogrphical Information Systems is a computer database which captures, stores, analyses, manages and presents data that is linked to location. This geographic information systems includes mapping software and its application with remote sensing, land surveying, aerial photography, mathematics, photogrammetry, geography and tools that can be implemented with GIS software.

Geology

Science of the earth, including the composition, structure and origin of its rocks.

Greenfield Site

A piece of open land that has not been built on.

Groundwater Protection

Protection of an underground source of water (groundwater aquifer). Developments may be subject to special controls within defined areas above vulnerable aquifers or close to springs that provide public water supply.

H Habitat

Area in which an organism or group of organisms live.

Heat Energy Distribution

This infrastructure comprises the heat resources themselves, harvesting services, transport, storage, and boilers.

Housing Stock

Houses that already exist.

Housing Strategy

A strategy document legally required to be produced and adopted by each County Council under Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended). The Housing Strategy makes an assessment of housing demand and supply and examines issues of social and affordable housing in the county context. The Strategy makes recommendations for changes to land use-planning policy, which must be incorporated into the Development Plan.

Hydrology

Science concerned with the occurrence and circulation of water in all its phases and modes.

Industrial Development Authority Ireland (IDA Ireland)

Ireland’s inward investment promotion agency, IDA Ireland (Industrial Development Authority) is responsible for the attraction and development of foreign investment in Ireland. It is concerned with securing investment from new and existing clients in the areas of High End Manufacturing, Global Services (including Financial Services) and Research, Development and Innovation.

Infill Development

Refers to development taking place on a vacant or undeveloped infill site between other existing developments.

Infrastructure

Drainage, water supplies, sewage treatment plants, sewerage networks, lighting, telephone lines, electricity supply, railways, roads, buildings, schools, community facilities and recreational facilities.

Integrated Pollution Control Licence

An Integrated Pollution Control Licence is granted by the EPA. It licences and regulates large/complex industrial and other processes with significant polluting potential on the basis of Integrated Pollution Control (IPC). The Integrated Pollution Control approach to licensing dictates that only one licence will be issued to a facility to control all aspects of air, water, waste and noise pollution.

Irish Aviation Authority (IAA)

The Irish Aviation Authority (IAA) is a commercial state-sponsored company which was established on 1 January 1994 to provide air navigation services in Irish-controlled airspace, and to regulate safety standards within the Irish civil aviation industry.

Landscape Character Area (LCA)

Landscape Character Areas are units of the landscape that are geographically specific and have their own character and sense of place. Each LCA has its own distinctive character, based upon patterns of geology, landform, land use, cultural, historical and ecological features. Commonly, a landscape character area may be composed of a number of Landscape Character Types. For example, the Lough Graney LCA is composed of three LCTs – Forested upland valleys, loughside farmland and glacial valley. However, the settlement patterns, historical and cultural associations of this area contribute to the distinctive character of this LCA.

Landscape Character Types (LCT)

Landscape Character Types (LCT) are distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogenous in character. They are generic in nature in that they may occur in different localities throughout the country. Nonetheless, where they do occur, they commonly share similar combinations of geology, topography, land cover, and historical land use.

For example, limestone river valleys or blanket bog uplands are distinct landscape character types and are recognisable as such whether they occur in County Clare or in other counties.

Local Area Plan (LAP)

A Local Area Plan sets out a strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of a specific area within a local authority and for a timescale as specified by the authority. The plan must consist of a written statement and map(s), which set out the local authorities' objectives for the plan area.

Metropolitan Area Network (MAN)

MAN(s) are large computer networks usually spanning a city, town or campus. They typically use wireless infrastructure or optical fibre connections to link their sites.

Mitigate

To mitigate is to make or become less severe or harsh.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures are measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and, as fully as possible, offset any significant adverse impacts on the environment of implementing a human action, be it a plan, programme or project. Mitigation measures can be roughly divided into those that: avoid effects; reduce the magnitude or extent, probability and/or severity of effects; repair effects after they have occurred; and compensate for effects, balancing out negative impacts with other positive ones.

Monitoring

Repetitive and continued observation, measurement and evaluation of environmental data to follow changes over a period of time, to assess the efficiency of control measures.

National Monuments Service (NMS)

The National Monuments Service is part of the Department of the Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and plays a key role in the protection of our archaeological heritage.

National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS)

The National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) is part of the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and is charged with the conservation of a range of habitats and species in Ireland.

National Spatial Strategy (NSS) 2002-2020

The National Spatial Strategy is a twenty-year planning framework for Ireland designed to achieve a better balance of social, economic, physical development and population growth between regions. Its focus is on people, places and building communities.

Natura 2000 Network

The network of designated European Sites, comprising Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas, which are protected sites for habitats and species across the EU.

Natural Heritage

Refers to habitats and species of flora and fauna.

Natural Heritage Area (NHA)

Natural Heritage Area means an area which is worthy of conservation for one or more species, communities, habitats, landforms or geological or geomorphological features, or for its diversity of natural attributes.

O

Office of Public Works (OPW)

The core services offered by the OPW are property management, architectural and engineering services, heritage services, project management and procurement services.

P

Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended)

The basic starting point for the modern planning code is the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and it forms the basis for the Irish planning code, setting out the detail of regional planning guidelines, development plans and local area plans as well as the basic framework of the development management and consent system. Among other things, it provides the statutory basis for protecting our natural and architectural heritage, the carrying out of Environmental Impact Statements and the provision of social and affordable housing.

Proper Planning and Sustainable Development

While there is no definition of the term in the Acts, for the purposes of this plan, proper planning and sustainable development is defined as achieving the correct balance of economic, social, cultural and environmental considerations in the interests of the common good and securing long term benefits for County Clare.

Public Safety Zones (PSZs)

Public Safety Zones are put in place around lands in close proximity to the runways of an airport. Their function is to protect the public on the ground by controlling land uses within these zones. Their function is to restrict the area and extent of development in the vicinity of runways in order to reduce the risk and impact of aircraft accidents on residents/occupiers of development in proximity to the runways.

Q

Qualifying Interest

Qualifying Interests are the constituent habitats of a European Site that are the reason for the site's designation. These habitats are scheduled for protection by the Habitats Directive.

R

Record of Protected Structures (RPS)

The principal mechanism for protection of buildings and structures of architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical importance in the County is through their inclusion on the Record of Protected Structures. This provides a positive recognition of the structures' importance, protection from adverse impacts and potential access to grant aid for conservation works.

Ribbon Development

The Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines (2005) define ribbon development as development in rural areas of almost continuous road frontage type development, for example 5 or more houses existing on any one side of a given 250m of road frontage.

Riparian Zone

The area bordering the banks of a river or stream.

River Basin District (RBD)

All Member States of the EU are moving towards River Basin Management in accordance with the Water Framework Directive. The Directive aims to provide a new strengthened system for the protection and improvement of water resources and water-dependent ecosystems. The Directive requires Member States to identify river basins (or catchments) within its territory and to assign these to River Basin Districts which will serve as the 'administrative area' for coordinated water management.

S

Scoping

Scoping is the process of determining what issues are to be addressed, either in an EIA or SEA, and setting out a methodology in which to address them in a structured manner appropriate to the plan or programme. Scoping is carried out in consultation with the appropriate bodies.

Second Home

A privately owned property which is not the owners principal place of residence, due to the fact that they also own another property.

Sensitivity

Potential for significant change to any element in the environment that is subject to impacts.

SEVESO

A Major Accident Hazard Site (SEVESO Site) is a site where the occupier has notified the Health and Safety Authority that they meet a specified threshold for quantities of hazardous substance as outlined by the Chemicals Act (Control of Major Accident Hazards involving Dangerous Substances) Regulations 2015.

Social Housing

Dwellings that are available for rent at a subsidised price from a Housing Authority or through the voluntary sector. Tenants are usually drawn from an established and prioritised waiting list.

Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

Special Areas of Conservation are identified in the European Commission Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). They protect the 220 habitats and approximately 1000 species listed in Annex I and II of the Directive which are considered to be of European interest following criteria outlined in the Directive.

Special Protection Area (SPA)

An Special Protection Area is a designation under the European Union directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds. Member states of the EU have a duty to safeguard the habitats of migratory birds and certain particularly threatened birds.

Strategic Actions

Strategic actions include: actions which may be considered as inspirational and guidance for action and which set the framework for plans and programmes; Plans, sets of co-ordinated and timed objectives for the implementation of the policy; and Programmes, sets of projects in a particular area.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is the formal, systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme before a decision is made to adopt it.

Strategic Environmental Objective (SEO)

Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) are methodological objectives which are developed from international, national and regional policies which generally govern environmental protection objectives and against which the environmental effects of the development plan can be tested. The SEOs are used as standards against which the objectives of the County Development Plan can be evaluated in order to help identify areas in which significant adverse impacts are likely to occur, if not mitigated.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

Sustainable drainage is a concept that includes long term environmental and social factors in decisions about drainage. It takes account of the quantity and quality of runoff, and the amenity value of surface water in the environment. Many existing urban drainage systems can cause problems of flooding, pollution or damage to the environment and are not proving to be sustainable.

Drainage systems can be developed in line with the ideals of sustainable development, by balancing the different issues that should be influencing the design. Surface water drainage methods that take account of quantity, quality and amenity issues are collectively referred to as Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). These systems are more sustainable than conventional drainage methods because they:

- Manage run off flow rates, reducing the impact of urbanisation on flooding;
 - Protect or enhance water quality;
 - Are sympathetic to the environmental setting and the needs of the local community;
 - Provide a habitat for wildlife in urban watercourses;
 - Encourage natural groundwater recharge (where appropriate).
- <http://ciria.org/suds/index.html>.

Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII)

Transport Infrastructure Ireland is a state body responsible for the national road network in Ireland. It is responsible for the maintenance and construction of national primary and national secondary routes as well as establishing safety measures. It also plays an environmental and archaeological role as part of the road building programme.

U

Urban Fringe

The edge of a built up area where urban and rural environments interface.

V

Visual Impacts

Visual Impacts can be defined as the effects on people of the changes in available views through intrusion or obstruction and whether important opportunities to enjoy views may be improved or reduced.

W

Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP)

WWTP can mean one of the following:

- Sewage treatment – treatment and disposal of human waste.
- Industrial wastewater treatment – the treatment of wet wastes from manufacturing industry and commerce including mining, quarrying and heavy industries.
- Agriculture wastewater treatment – treatment and disposal of liquid animal waste, pesticide residues etc. from agriculture.

Wetlands

Habitats that include limestone lakes, turloughs, rich fen and bog, estuarine areas and wet grassland.

List of Tables

Table 2.1	Settlement Hierarchy in County Clare...28
Table 2.2	Population Targets 202229
Table 2.3	Population Targets Breakdown 2023...29
Table 2.4	Core Strategy Population Targets for Zone 1.....31
Table 2.5	Core Strategy Population Targets for Zone 2.....32
Table 2.6	Core Strategy Population Targets for Zone 3.....33
Table 2.7	Core Strategy Population Targets for Zone 7.....34
Table 3.1	Types of Rural Housing Development allowed on Suitable Sites.....53
Table 8.1	Strategic Regional Roads 120
Table 8.2	Proposed Projects identified for Future Development..... 121
Table 14.1	Benefits of Green Infrastructure..... 231
Table 18.1	Renewable Energy Resource Targets for County Clare for 2020..... 268
Table 20.1	Key Performance Indicators 292
Table A3.1	Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) in County Clare and their associated Site Code 310
Table A3.2	Special Protection Areas (SPAs) in County Clare and their Associated Site Code .. 310
Table A3.3	Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) in County Clare and their Associated Site Code .. 310

List of Figures

Figure 2.1(a)	County Clare: National Spatial Context23
Figure 2.1(b)	County Clare Regional Spatial Context24
Figure 2.2	Regional Development Zones25
Figure 8.1	Water Supply in County Clare 2011. 131
Figure 8.2	Types of Wastewater Systems County Clare 2011 132
Figure 10.1	County Clare High Speed Broadband Map 2016 166
Figure 12.1	Coastal Squeeze 196
Figure 13.1	Map of Landscape Character Types.. 202
Figure 13.2	Map of Landscape Character Areas .. 203
Figure 13.3	Map of Seascape Character Areas..... 210
Figure 17.1	Inputs to Development to be managed through the Design Process 255
Figure 17.2	Basic Stages of Design Process: Survey, Analysis, Solution..... 256
Figure 17.3	Buildings which sit comfortably in the Landscape..... 258
Figure 17.4	Farm Building Renovation 261
Figure A1.1	Definition of "X" and "Y" Distances... 299

List of Maps

Map 2A	Core Strategy Map.....39
Map 3A	Settlement Hierarchy55
Map 3B	Areas of Special Control56
Map 6A	University of Limerick..... 101
Map 11A	Strategic Development Location A . 185
Map 11B	Strategic Development Location B.. 186
Map 13A	Landscape Designations..... 213
	Turret Lane 325
	Rocky Road..... 326

Acknowledgements

Photography

Aidan Conway
pages 54, 235.

Aidan Ryan
page 290.

Áine Dillon
page 40d.

Andrew Young
page 183.

Angela O'Sullivan
pages 49, 51, 52, 97, 112, 114, 109, 252, 286.

Ann Colleran
pages 9, 21, 32, 41, 57, 75, 79, 81, 82, 108, 110, 113, 115, 123, 146, 148, 172, 230, 242, 243, 244, 247, 248, 251, 266, 268, 278, 282, 285, 287, 291.

Bert Geoghegan
pages 22, 40c, 136, 158, 169, 198, 200, 209a, 218, 225, 269.

Brian O'Briain
page 95.

Candace Ingram
pages 12, 46, 71, 74, 133, 151, 152, 184, 187, 189, 193, 205, 249, 267, 272.

Caroline Balfe
pages 76, 96, 118, 147, 154, 155, 288.

Clare County Council
Front Cover (a)(d), pages 13, 20, 25, 33, 43, 44, 58, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 68, 80, 85, 88, 89, 99, 116, 120, 126, 130, 131, 134, 137, 140, 141, 142, 160, 163, 165, 168, 170, 175, 195, 212, 220, 228, 230, 245, 246, 250, 262, 271, 275, 284, back cover (d).

Clare Local Enterprise Office
pages 86, 87.

Clarisford Park
pages 40b, 70, 73, back cover (c).

Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience
page 144.

Colin Bunce
page 227.

Cyril O'Reilly Architect
page 254.

Eamon Ward Photography
pages 124, 180, 214a, 241.

Elaine Rogers
pages 30, 59, 67, 162, 231, 292, back cover(b).

Evan Talty
pages 15, 93, 106.

Gary Collins Photography
page 107.

Gordon Daly
Front Cover (b), pages 10, 40a, 42, 83, 100, 149, 156, 190, 194, 197, 209b, 233, 234.

John Kelly Photography
pages 17, 18, 34, 38, 188.

John Moroney
pages 91, 102.

John O'Sullivan
page 191.

John Power
pages 14 Winner Adult Photo Competition, 192.

Kostas Wootis Architect
pages 261, 264.

Lourdes O'Donoghue Architect
pages 50, 53, 260, 263.

Lufthansa Technik Shannon Ltd
Front cover (c)

Maria O'Brien
page 159.

Mary B. McMahon
page 239.

Niall Cosgrove
page 240.

Nicola Wood
pages 222, 283.

Olivia Cosgrove
page 196 Winner u18 Photo Competition

Patrick Ambrose
page 72, 276.

Sean Torpey
page 98.

Shannon Foynes Port Company
pages 171, 173, 174, 178, 179, 181, 207, back cover (a).

Shannon Group
pages 122, 152, 153, 281.

Sheila Downes
pages 45, 78, 216, 219.

Siobhan Mulcahy Architect
pages 51, 259.

Simon Berrow
page 176.

Page where images of more than one photographer appear are credited clockwise from top left as 'a', 'b' etc.





Comhairle Contae an Chláir
Clare County Council

Clare County Council,
Áras Contae an Chláir,
New Road,
Ennis, Co. Clare

Tel: +353 (65) 682 1616
planoff@clarecoco.ie
www.clarecoco.ie

1

Clare County Development Plan 2017–2023
Written Statement

