

Chapter 1 Introduction

Legal Preamble

The legal basis for the Limerick City Development Plan is contained in the Planning & Development Act, 2000-2008. In making the Plan, Limerick City Council adhered to the requirements of the Act and had special regard to the required widespread consultation, timeframes and consistency with other plans. The new City Development Plan sets out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the City and upon adoption, this Plan will supersede the existing Limerick City Development Plan, 2004.

Period of the Plan

In accordance with the requirements of the Planning & Development Act 2000-2008, the new Plan is valid from its adoption for a period of six years, subject to any review, variation, extension or alternation made in the future. This period will extend from 2010 to 2016.

Purpose of the Development Plan

The purpose of the Plan is to:

- Identify key development issues informed by statutory requirements, issues from the Council's perspective and community and/stakeholder participation;
- Develop policy objectives for the proper planning and sustainable development of the City that are consistent as far as possible with National Plans, Strategies and Policies;
- Provide a detailed and consistent framework for the use of land and the control and regulation of development that will guide planning decisions;
- Provide a basis for co-coordinating public and private development throughout the area;
- Ensure public participation through the statutory process governing its preparation; and
- Inform local communities on how their interests will be affected.

The Review Process

The review process of the Limerick City Development Plan officially commenced on the 5th of December 2008, when notice of intention to prepare a new City Development Plan was published. The review process stretches over a period of two years and must conclude with a fully adopted City Development Plan in late 2010.

Introduction

Limerick is the third largest city in the state and as such has a crucial role in the development of national competitiveness and the general economic performance of the Country as a whole.

The Limerick City Development Plan sets out Limerick City Council's policies for the development of Limerick City to 2016 and beyond. It has been developed following a period of intensive consultation which took the form of public meetings, meetings with stakeholders and service providers, written submissions and workshops for Elected Representatives.

The key issues that arose during the consultation process were:

- The decline of the City Centre.
- The need to integrate the Regeneration Master Plans into the City Development Plan.
- The limited size of the City relative to the suburban area and the impact that this issue is having on the vitality of the City as a whole.
- The need to integrate residential, commercial, social and recreational facilities in a manner that serves all the City's inhabitants.

These key issues have been taken on board and are dealt with in the relevant Chapters of the Plan. The Plan is set within the strategic framework established by the National Spatial Strategy

and Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines. It also takes account of the Limerick City Development Board's Strategy, and a range of other local strategies and plans.

The Plan has been prepared having regard to relevant National plans, policies and guidelines that impact on proper planning and sustainable development. The main ones are:

- *The National Development Plan, 2007-2013*, which aims to achieve balanced regional development and identifies Limerick as a National Gateway;
- *The National Spatial Strategy, 2002-2020*, which provides a spatial planning framework for the country and reinforces Limerick's role as a National Gateway;
- *Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland, 1997*, which provides a framework for the achievement of sustainable development at a local level;
- *The National Climate Change Strategy, 2007-2012*, sets out how Ireland can meet its targets under the Kyoto Protocol;
- *Ministerial Guidelines and Directives* including those on Housing Strategies, Retail Planning, Childcare, Residential Density, Architectural Conservation and Urban Design.

Overall Goals

The vision of the Plan is for Limerick City to continue to grow as the centre of economic, social and cultural development for the Mid-West Region. For this to be realised Limerick City must be ~~an attractive, accessible and unique City, offering an array of services to support living, working, trading and leisure activity~~ a cohesive and sustainable community of people; where natural surroundings and important resources are protected; where cultural and built heritage is safeguarded; where opportunities exist that allow people to live and work in a safe environment with excellent public infrastructure and services together with ample cultural and leisure facilities. This Plan outlines Limerick City Council's policies for improving the social, economic, cultural and environmental health of the City both through direct action and in conjunction with other stakeholders i.e. the State, private and community sectors. It is based on three fundamental and interrelated goals, which underlie all the policies contained in the Plan.

Goal 1

To promote and provide for the sustainable development of Limerick City enabling it to fulfill its role as a National Gateway City.

This goal seeks to promote the social and economic development of Limerick City in a balanced and environmentally sustainable way. This will involve measures to promote a range of commercial, industrial and cultural developments; to increase the quantity and range of housing provision and to reverse the decline in population; to regenerate the City Centre, and other parts of the City in particular those identified in the regeneration programme; and to develop a high quality sustainable transport system. It is the belief of Limerick City Council that this can be best achieved in the context of an enlarged administrative area.

Goal 2

To promote social inclusion and to facilitate equality of access to employment, education, transport, suitable housing, social and cultural activities, whether by direct provision (e.g. social housing) or by facilitating others to provide the service (e.g. education).

Limerick City Council believes that the City Centre should be the centre of commercial and cultural activity in the Region. This belief is supported by a number of other strategies including the *National Spatial Strategy* the *Regional Planning Guidelines* for the Mid-West Region. The City Council is committed to the regeneration process currently underway in the areas of Moyross, Kings Island and Southill. The City Council is also committed to ensuring that the

proposed policies and actions will contribute positively to social inclusion and help meet the requirements of the *National Action Plan for Social Inclusion*.

Goal 3

To provide for a high quality natural and built environment and improved quality of life for those living and working in Limerick City and also for those visiting the City.

The attractiveness of the City is to a large degree dependent upon the quality and character of the environment – the buildings, the public realm, the amenity spaces and the natural heritage. A good quality environment is extremely important to the City for reasons of quality of life and economic prosperity. The City Council will therefore introduce a range of measures in this Plan to ensure a high quality built and natural environment for the City.

Structure of the Plan

The Plan is divided into three volumes made up of seventeen individual chapters, including explanatory maps, figures and tables.

- Volume I Written Statement
- Volume II Appendices
- Volume III Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

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