

1.0 | Introduction

1.1 | Overview

Limerick City is the largest urban centre in Ireland's Mid-West and the country's third largest city. The NPF supports ambitious growth targets to enable Limerick City to grow by at least 50% to 2040 and to enhance its significant potential to become a city of scale.

Shannon is a significant employment centre with assets such as Shannon International Airport, Shannon FreeZone and the International Aviation Services Centre (IASC). Though located within different counties, (19km apart), both Limerick City and Shannon are interdependent, with their complementary functions contributing to a combined strength which is a key economic driver for the Southern Region.

The Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area, as defined by the "Implementation Roadmap for the National Planning Framework" is a logical progression of the relationship which exists between these two urban centres. Significant strategic investment in recent decades including the ~~N7~~ Limerick Tunnel [\(N7\)](#), [and](#) improved links to Dublin (the N7 Dublin-Limerick motorway) and Galway (M18) have ~~unlocked~~ [helped unlock](#) their joint potential.

1.2 | Spatial Definition

The boundary of the Limerick Shannon MASP has been defined by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Governments (DHPLG) Circular FPS04/2018 and accompanying document "Implementation Roadmap for the National Planning Framework".

This clarifies the boundary of each metropolitan area based on Electoral Division boundaries to enable key data and patterns to be monitored for the area in tandem with each Census.

The Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area includes the continuous built up area of Limerick City and Suburbs (as defined by the CSO) and Shannon in Co. Clare. It also includes (population 2016 in brackets) Annacotty (2,930), Castleconnell (2,107), Patrickswell (847), Clarina (294), [and](#) Mungret (277) in Limerick and Sixmilebridge (2,625), Ardnacrusha (1,383), Clonlara (713), Cratloe (692), Ballycannon (638), [and](#) Bunratty (349) in Clare. The map below clarifies the boundary, as provided by the DHPLG, of the Limerick Shannon MASP.

Limerick Shannon MASP

Policy Objective 1: Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area

a. It is an objective to strengthen the role of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area as an international location of scale, a complement to Dublin and a primary driver of economic and population growth in the Southern Region.

b. It is an objective to promote the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area as a cohesive metropolitan area with (i) the city centre as the primary location at the heart of the metropolitan area and region (ii) compact growth and regeneration of Limerick city centre and suburbs, (iii) compact growth and regeneration of Shannon (iv) active land management initiatives to deliver housing and employment locations in a sustainable, infrastructure led manner.

c. It is an objective to seek co-ordinated investment and delivery of holistic infrastructure packages across State Departments and infrastructure delivery agencies as they apply to the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and seek further investments to deliver on the Metropolitan Area Goals (see section A 'Overall MASP Goals).

d. Any reference to support for ~~all~~ plans, projects, activities and development in the Draft MASP should be considered to refer to 'sustainable development' that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints), environmental assessment including EclA to support development management and where required, the completion of statutory SEA, EIA and AA processes as appropriate

e. The MASP seeks to protect, manage and through enhanced ecological connectivity, to improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Southern Region.

[Insert Map 1]

1.3 | Limerick City

Limerick City⁶⁸ has significant competitive advantages, including its central location on the Atlantic Economic Corridor, its national and international trade and tourism connectivity through Shannon International Airport and Shannon Foynes Port and a significant education role.

Limerick City is a key economic driver for the region and acts as a major locus of employment for the surrounding areas with 45,000 jobs located in the city in 2016, which was an increase of over 4,000 over the previous five years. In 2016 over half the people working in the City were from outside it with some 22,700 commuting into the City each day for work.

There is evidence of a positive turnaround in terms of both population and employment growth. Over €1 billion is being invested in enterprise and investment infrastructure as part of the Limerick 2030 Vision: An Economic and Spatial Plan for Limerick - a 20- year action plan, which aims to transform Limerick through the economic, social and physical investment. The MASP supports this initiative including the development of [the](#) Opera, Hanging Gardens and Cleeves Sites, and other strategic development sites such as the Limerick Docklands.

The MASP supports Limerick City in becoming a major economic force in the Irish and European economy, a leading centre for commercial investment – both foreign direct investment and indigenous business growth, capitalising on the strengths of its higher education institutions and the skills of its workforce. The City Centre will be at the heart of this economic force – an attractive magnet for retail, leisure, residential, commercial, educational and cultural growth. This growth will benefit all citizens across the City, County, Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and Mid-West SPA.

The MASP supports the following key infrastructure and transformative projects within Limerick City:

- [Densification of development in the city centre, including identification and assembly of brownfield sites for development;](#)

- Development of key strategic sites including Opera site, Cleeves, Arthurs Quay and continuation of the riverside links^{7.4};
- Potential for alternative uses in Limerick Docklands;
- The continued expansion and enhancement of retail development within the City Centre^{7.2};
- Public realm improvements in the City Centre including the development of a City-wide interconnected set of public parks, urban renewal within the Georgian Quarter, [and the introduction of significantly more child friendly amenities within the City Centre including playgrounds that will help drive footfall](#);
- [The introduction of covered urban spaces within the City Centre and its surrounding areas to enhance the experience of and provide shelter to visitors, including covered streets, walkways and cycle paths](#);
- Improvements to sustainable transport infrastructure and the development of walking and cycling facilities through, for example, [the introduction of a Limerick City Walking Map, covered urban spaces and](#) greenways;
- **Business**[The introduction of](#) incentive schemes to further generate footfall and use of the City both during the day and after 5pm^{7.4};
- [The introduction of a dedicated team to collect and analyse data that can help Limerick City address deficiencies and achieve targeted sustainable growth](#).
- The further development and promotion of cultural, heritage and sporting offerings (such as EVA / The Red Mile) to further develop the desirability of the City Centre^{7.2};
- Continued investment in the City's regeneration areas^{7.4};
- The growth and development of health care facilities as proposed by the University Hospital Limerick in their Strategic Plan^{7.4};
- [The introduction of Light Rail Public Transport Corridors to connect the City Centre with each of the key population centres, business parks and third level education centres within the Limerick Metropolitan Area, to promote sustainable transport, remove congestion, improve accessibility and allow Limerick City to expand as envisaged under the NPF](#);
- [Support the concept of the Atlantic Economic Corridor linking Limerick with Cork and Waterford to the south and Ennis, Galway, Sligo, Derry and Belfast to the north](#);
- Delivering of the Limerick Northern Distributor Route (LNDR) – this is one of the main strategic road infrastructure priorities for the Southern Region^{7.4};
- Progressing the sustainable development areas for housing and the development of support public transport and infrastructure, such as at Mungret^{7.4}; [and](#)
- [The continued expansion of the City's third level institutions and their](#) integration with the city.

1.4 | Shannon

Shannon occupies a strategic position as a Gateway to the West of Ireland. It is a centre of international business and has strong synergies with Limerick City.

The infrastructure at Shannon, in terms of the International Airport and the industrial park, are critical not only to the Mid-West region but to the country. Shannon is central to delivering the ambition of how the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area develops in terms of its economy, social diversity and tourism growth. Shannon is identified for significant population growth i.e. greater than 30% population increase by 2040.

The 2016 census shows the population of Shannon as 9,729. Approximately 11,400 people work in the area, the majority of which are in the Shannon Free-Zone and the International Airport. Like Ennis, there is the potential to capitalise on the growing economic linkages and synergies with Galway. The Limerick Shannon MASP recognises Shannon as a significant regional strength and strongly supports its current and future role as a driver of growth, not just at a regional level but also nationally.

The MASP identifies a significant opportunity for Shannon to expand globally as a recognised centre of excellence for current and future software engineering/aviation/logistics talent. The MASP therefore recognises and supports Shannon as a centre for research and development for autonomous vehicles which will complement Shannon's role as a world leader in aviation.

The attributes of Shannon include:

- centre of international business, aviation and aerospace
- major employment location which includes industrial, manufacturing, warehousing, distribution and transport
- International Airport with capacity for 4.5 million passengers
- Shannon Free-Zone is home to 160 companies and employs over 7500 people
- Through the IASC, Shannon contains the largest Aviation/Aerospace Cluster in Ireland with over 65 Aviation Companies and 2,600 jobs
- Strong, well established economic and employment links between Shannon and Limerick City.
- The Limerick Shannon MASP provides a unique opportunity to strengthen this relationship.
- Economic triangle of Limerick - Shannon – Ennis
- Improved synergies between Ennis and Galway with significant potential and capacity for enhancement.

The infrastructural requirements for Shannon include:

- **Public transport** improvements [within and to Shannon International Airport and Shannon Town, in particular from Limerick City, Ennis, Nenagh, Thurles, Tipperary Town, Newcastle West and North Kerry.](#)
- **Rail link** – an infrastructural safeguard has been incorporated into the existing Clare County Development Plan and Local Area Plan for a rail line to be provided to Shannon town and International Airport. [The MASP supports the connection of Shannon town and International Airport to the national rail grid by developing a rail link to Sixmilebridge. This would significantly enhance the attractiveness of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area as a location for foreign direct investment and tourism and provide a direct rail link between Shannon International Airport, Shannon Foynes Port \(once the Limerick-Foynes railway has been reinstated\) and Limerick and Galway cities.](#)
- **Road Access** - Investment is required in improving and upgrading the existing road access from the motorway all the way to Shannon International Airport. This section of the N19 Northern Road connects Shannon International Airport to all parts of the country and plays a significant role in international connectivity which increases prosperity to the region including tourism and exports and ~~it~~ provides connectivity to Shannon Free Zone which is a prime area for industry and international investment.
- **Limerick Northern Distributer Route** – linking Shannon International Airport, ~~the~~[Shannon Free zoneZone](#) and Shannon Town with UL and Limerick City. The provision of this road will benefit regional interconnectivity which will result in social, economic and educational gains to the region.
- **Electricity** infrastructure is required to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to facilitate the expansion of the Shannon area including that of the airport, free-zone, the development of a Combined Heat and Power Plant and other strategic investment in the area.
- **Wastewater treatment** infrastructure requires investment in terms of capacity and extension to facilitate future development and expansion in Shannon Town, the free-zone and airport.
- The RSES supports the continued investment in the delivery of the **Shannon Green Infrastructure Plan** and its projects such as the Shannon Town Park, Shannon Estuary Walk and the development of other amenity facilities.
- Improvements and enhancement to **Shannon Town Centre** to create a sense of place, up-grade public realm and promote re-development

Limerick Shannon MASP

[The Limerick MASP will be updated as local development plans including the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy are developed and finalised.](#)

Policy Objective 2: Limerick City

The Limerick Shannon MASP recognises that for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and the Mid-West SPA to prosper and development in a sustainable manner, a strong Limerick City is

paramount. It is an objective to support the regeneration and continued investment into Limerick City through initiatives such as Limerick 2030 and Limerick Regeneration and to further enhance Limerick City as key economic driver for the Southern Region.

1.5 | Limerick Shannon MASP and the Wider Region

Competitive cities drive competitive regions, by promoting growth and employment and by joining up separate business hubs, infrastructural assets and clusters, to expand existing markets and create new ones.

Functional area analysis by the National Transport Authority (NTA) provides a methodology to define the catchment of Limerick City and Shannon (see Map 2). It is recognised that the sphere of influence of the Limerick Shannon MASP will extend northward towards Galway, southwards towards Cork and Tralee, eastwards towards Tipperary Town and Nenagh and west towards Kerry. There is need for a complementary focus to enable those areas outside of the metropolitan boundary to pursue a greater degree of self-containment of employment, services provision and patterns of commuting. For example, in terms of Newcastle West the Limerick 2030 Plan highlights that the town is a key location, which will complement the growth of the Metropolitan Area.

Development of self-contained economic roles in settlements and rural areas in the Mid-West SPA will reinforce the economic strength of the metropolitan area. The MASP recognises and supports the role of Nenagh, Ennis and Newcastle West as Key Towns well connected to the Limerick-Shannon MASPs. Other settlements and rural areas have potential for complementary roles, interacting economically with the Metropolitan Area and benefitting from the economic spread from larger centres of scale, nurturing local enterprise growth, local jobs and developing strong roles that contribute to the success of the metropolitan area. There are also opportunities for networks of settlements, harnessing specialist roles and driving shared strengths to generate stronger economic interactions with the metropolitan area. Enhanced connectivity (transport and digital) between the metropolitan areas and between other settlements (especially networks of settlements) and the metropolitan areas is an essential enabler to strengthen these opportunities.

Limerick Shannon MASP

Policy Objective 3: Shannon

The Limerick Shannon MASP recognises Shannon [asand](#) its assets as a significant regional strength and employment centre. It is an objective to support and promote Shannon as a centre for research and development for autonomous vehicles which will complement Shannon's role as a world leader in aviation and aerospace.

2.0 | Attributes, Vision and Guiding Principles

2.1 | Demographics

The population of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area in 2016, at over 132,420, is 3% of the State population and 8% of the Southern Region's total population. The Limerick Shannon

Metropolitan Area is 387 sq.km and in population and in area terms is the third largest metropolitan area in the State after Dublin and Cork.

[Insert table 1]

In 2016, the population of Limerick City was 94,192 people while Shannon recorded a population of **nearly** 9,729. The population of Limerick City⁷⁰ increased by 3% between 2011 and 2016 and Shannon's population grew by 0.6% during the same period. Given the ambitious population projections for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area, this rate of increase must be substantially improved upon.

Limerick City and Shannon have a relatively young population. The percentage of the total population aged between 15 to 24 in both Limerick City (15.5%) and in Shannon (13.5 %) are both higher than the State (12%) and SRA (12%) averages. The percentage of the total population aged between 25 to 44 in both Limerick City (31.5%) and in Shannon (30.5%) are also both higher than the State (29.5%) and SRA (28%) averages. In addition, the Old Age Dependency Rate⁷¹ for Limerick City and Shannon (18% each) are below the State (20.5%) and SRA (22.5%) averages.

This is a very positive trend for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area as it is indicative of future labour supply and population growth, which are vital drivers of economic development.

The percentage of the Non-Irish born population residing in Limerick City (14%) and Shannon (16.5%) is above the State (11.5%) and SRA (10%) averages. This highlights the ability of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area to retain this new population, which is an important factor in expanding the growth potential of the economy.

The changing demographics and spatial distribution of migration are key drivers of demand for housing, employment, transport and services. The Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area will need to deliver more family friendly and age friendly accommodation and services to plan for these changes.

2.2 | Education

The Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area is home to three of Ireland's most prestigious third level academic institutions, which are critical drivers of economic growth. The University of Limerick (UL), Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT) and Mary Immaculate College (MIC), offer a range of undergraduate and postgraduate study programmes.

These produce approximately 6,000 graduates per year in a variety of disciplines including IT, Life Sciences, Business Administration, Engineering and Technology and education. In the academic year 2015/16 there were 23,800 students enrolled in the three Third Level institutions. The Shannon College of Hotel Management, founded in 1951, is Ireland's only dedicated hotel management college, offering degree programmes and has a world-wide reputation for careers in business and hotel management.

According to Census 2016, the percentage population with a Third Level Education residing in Limerick City (32%) is just below the State (33.5%) and SRA (30.5%) averages however there is

greater gap in Shannon (24%). Limerick City's percentage of total population with No Formal/Primary Education of 13% is similar to the State (12.5%) and SRA (12.5%) averages while Shannon (10%) is below. However, in many parts of the city, the proportion of the population who left school with just a primary education is considerably higher than the national average. In 18 EDs, the rate is 20% or higher, with 9 EDs recording an early school leaving rate more than 30%. It is accepted that solutions to these historic issues require a broad spectrum of responses such as Lifelong Learning and upskilling which are advocated strongly in the RSES.

2.3 | Social Inclusion

There are significant issues relating to social deprivation evident in both Limerick and Shannon with the former Limerick City identified as the most disadvantaged area in the Region. There is therefore a requirement for focus and investment in ensuring long term measures to systematically address these issues.

The working population grew in both Limerick City (+16,079) and Shannon (+914) between 2011 and 2016. This is a positive indication of the employment performance and potential of the Limerick Shannon MASP. Both Limerick City and Shannon have a positive job to resident workers ratio of 1:206 and 1:085 respectively. However, there are established issues of long term unemployment in parts of Limerick City which needs to be addressed.

2.4 | Travel patterns

The proportion of the population who travel to Work/Education using Green Modes of Transport in Southern Region (13.5%) is below the State (16.5%) average however, Limerick City (25%) and Shannon (29%) are above both averages.

Nevertheless, private vehicles remain the dominant mode of commuting in the metropolitan area and there is a need to ensure proper integration of landuse and transportation policies to promote more sustainable modes of travel, including public transport. The Mid-West Area Strategic Plan (MWASP) 2012 -2030 identified that local passenger and national freight activity return from the available ~~rails~~rail infrastructure is underutilised. Aside from Ennis – Limerick Junction and Dublin-Cork the condition of the commuter route infrastructure is variable, with several speed restrictions in place, on the Limerick to Ballybrophy route. The condition of the line as far as Nenagh means that this commuter route is low speed. The rail links to Limerick via Nenagh and Ballybrophy are greatly underutilised and need investment. There is a new opportunity to examine the potential for increased line usage, in anticipation of future population growth in the Limerick Shannon MASP and Nenagh as a Key Towns in the RSES.

Public transport frequency to Shannon International Airport and along the corridor, from Limerick to Galway provided by Bus Éireann, ~~is relatively high. Given current patron numbers, the existing public transport offering and upgraded road infrastructure there does not appear to be an immediate need for a rail link to the Airport, but the corridor should be protected into the future and reviewed on a regular basis.~~ is relatively high however the development of a rail connection from Shannon

[International Airport to Limerick City, Galway City, and the wider national rail grid, including the Shannon Foynes Port, should be considered a priority.](#)

2.5 | Vision

The vision and guiding principles of the Limerick Shannon MASP ~~has~~[have](#) been shaped by consultations and submissions throughout the RSES process.

There is a long history of public and private stakeholders working together for the betterment of the area including the development of the Mid-West Strategic Area Plan, the Shannon Integrated Framework Plan and the Mid-West Retail Planning Guidelines. The Shannon consortium, a collaborative alliance between the three higher level institutes of UL, Mary Immaculate College and Limerick Institute of Technology, aims to establish the Shannon region as an area of excellence in teaching, learning and learner support.

Limerick City and Shannon have performed well over recent years. Limerick Regeneration, the amalgamation of Limerick City and County [Councils](#) and the Limerick 2030 initiative have all contributed to enhancing Limerick's growth potential. Shannon has developed into a centre for research and development for autonomous vehicles which complements its role as a world leader in aviation. Improved access via the M18 to Galway offer opportunities for linkages and economic development with Galway and the western corridor which will build on the historical trend and heritage of the economic ~~EnnisShannon~~[Ennis-Shannon](#)-Limerick corridor. Sustainable management and compact growth will offer the platform to address key challenges related to housing, transport, sustainability and liveability to ensure the [Limerick Shannon](#) Metropolitan Area can increase competitiveness and continue to attract talent and investment on a global scale.

There is a need to enable regeneration and employment opportunities for established communities where redevelopment and re-intensification occurs, particularly in areas of deprivation. While the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area is young, diverse and multi-cultural, areas of on-going deprivation will require a long-term planning response to meet existing and future needs.

The MASP needs to be flexible to adapt and respond to external risks such as climate change, technology disruption, demographic and cultural change and economic shocks and to support a future transition to low carbon, ~~for~~ sustainable and electric mobility.

The Vision Statement for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area is:

"To create a sustainable, smart, climate resilient Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area, of a scale which can exert critical-mass leverage at an international level, maximising the economic, social, cultural and environmental opportunities in a manner for all those who live, work and visit the [Limerick Shannon](#) Metropolitan Area, Mid-West Region and for the benefit of the country."

2.6 | Guiding Principles

The future growth and ambition for the Limerick Shannon MASP is based on the principles of a Sustainable Place Framework as identified in the RSES Settlement Strategy (Chapter 3).

To achieve the vision of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area the MASP has identified several Guiding Principles for its sustainable development:

A Living City and Metropolitan Area - Investment must be supported in revitalising and reinvigorating Limerick City for higher density living and high density high value jobs. Limerick City and Shannon should be well-functioning and energising places providing residential, employment, health, business, political, recreation, educational, commercial and transport functions driving the region. The high capacity transport corridors, [including the Light Rail Public Transport Corridor](#), needed to support this scale of growth will be delivered incrementally ~~in line with~~ [ahead of](#) growth and intensification of the city.

It is recognised that there is a need to collaborate rather than compete for the benefit of the Limerick Shannon MASP on the issue of employment creation. The metropolitan area needs a dynamic, diverse and high-profile city centre to function and the city centre needs a fully functioning and progressive metropolitan area to prosper.

Limerick Shannon as a global gateway – A competitive, properly resourced and well-functioning Shannon International Airport and Shannon Foynes Port is essential to facilitate their growth and to ensure excellent international access.

Compact sustainable growth – The development of brownfield and infill lands to achieve a target of at least 50% of all new homes within the existing built up area in Limerick City and 30% in Shannon and other settlements. Integrated transport and landuse – ~~Target~~ [target](#) growth along high quality public transport corridors, [including the Light Rail Public Transport Corridor](#), and nodes linked to the delivery of key public transport projects.

Accelerate housing delivery – Activate strategic residential development areas such as Mungret [and its connection to the Light Rail Public Transport Corridor](#) and support the steady supply of sites to accelerate housing supply, supported by better services and public transport.

Employment density in the right places – Re-intensify employment in Limerick City and Shannon and activate strategic employment locations to complement existing employment hubs in the city centre and near third level institutes. Social regeneration - ~~Realise~~ [realise](#) opportunities for social as well as physical regeneration, particularly in areas with pockets of deprivation.

Future development areas - having regard to the long lead in time for planning and development, identify future growth areas that may be delivered beyond the lifetime of the draft RSES but within the long term 2040 horizon of the NPF. For example, enabling infrastructure such as the [Light Rail Public Transport Corridor will potentially open lands to the north and south of the city for consolidation and expansion while the](#) Limerick Northern Distributor Route (LNDR) will potentially open lands to the north of the city ~~for consolidation and expansion~~.

Metropolitan scale amenities – Provision of regional parks and Strategic Green Infrastructure including greenways/blueways along the Shannon and the reopening of the Errina Canal.

Enabling infrastructure - Identify Infrastructure capacity issues and ensure water services needs are met by national projects. Improve sustainability in terms of energy, waste management and water conservation.

Co-ordination and active land management - Limerick 2030 provides an excellent platform to promote even more active urban development and land management actions that focus on the development of under-utilised, brownfield, vacant and public lands.

Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 4: Investment to Deliver Vision

a. It is an objective to seek the identification of investment packages across State Departments and infrastructure delivery agencies as they apply to the Limerick Shannon MASP and seek further investments into the Limerick Shannon MASP to deliver on the seven Metropolitan Area Goals (see section A 'Overall MASP Goals').

b. It is an objective to ensure quality infrastructure and quality of place is prioritised as an incentive to attract people to live and work in sustainable settlement patterns in the metropolitan area.

3.0 | National Enablers

The NPF and MASP identifies the following key future growth enablers which will be supported in the MASP.

- Implementation of the Limerick 2030 economic strategy to create modern, city centre office accommodation and a series of transformational city centre public realm projects.
- Complementary further development of the Limerick 2030 plan to include measures to encourage significant inner urban residential regeneration and development, to include the City's Georgian Quarter.
- Extending the ambition of the Limerick 2030 plan to include extension of the City Centre towards Limerick Docks.
- Identifying infill and regeneration opportunities to intensify housing and employment development throughout inner suburban areas.
- Enabling enhanced opportunities for existing communities as development and diversification occurs, particularly through employment, learning and education support.
- Progressing the sustainable development of new greenfield areas [such as at Mungret](#) for housing and the development of supporting public transport and infrastructure, such as [at Mungret the Light Rail Public Transport Corridor](#).
- The continued expansion of the City's third level institutions and integration with the wider City and region.
- Provision of a Citywide public transport network, [which prioritises the introduction of a Light Rail Public Transport Corridor and Limerick BusConnects network](#), with enhanced accessibility from the City Centre to the National Technological Park, UL and Shannon International Airport.

[• The promotion of walking as the primary mode of transport within the Limerick City Inner Orbital Route by removing heavy vehicular congestion, developing a Limerick City Walking Map and by providing appropriate infrastructure including covered urban spaces and enhanced public realms.](#)

[• The promotion of cycling as the primary mode of transport within the Limerick Metropolitan Area by implementing and developing the Limerick Metropolitan Cycle Network identified in the Limerick Metropolitan Cycle Network Study.](#)

- Development of a strategic cycleway network with several high capacity flagship routes.
- Enhanced [rail and](#) road connectivity to Shannon-Foynes Port, including local by-passes.
- Enhanced regional connectivity through improved average journey times by road to Cork and Waterford.
- Ensuring that water supply and waste-water needs are met by new national projects to enhance Limerick's water supply and increase waste water treatment capacity.
- Improving sustainability in terms of energy, waste management and resource efficiency and water, to include district heating and water conservation.

The following are some examples of projects identified in National Development Plan (NDP) which pertain to the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area.

Limerick Regeneration Programme Current Status: In progress. Estimated Cost: €170 million. Estimated Completion Date: 2023

The NDP states that there will be continued investment in the Limerick Regeneration Programme which will see the completion of the works identified in the 2013 Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan, with the delivery of some 400 new homes and the upgrading of 900 homes across the areas of Moyross, Southill, Ballinacurra Weston and St Mary's Park. A programme of social and economic initiatives will also be advanced over the coming years. The scheme is scheduled to be completed by 2023.

Health

- National Maternity Strategy developments including the replacement of standalone maternity hospitals by relocating the Limerick University Maternity Hospital at UHL.
- Acute Hospital developments in Limerick ward block.
- New Ambulance bases at Limerick Health.

Airports and Ports

- Shannon Foynes Port Company will be investing €27 million towards capacity extension works at the Port. The Shannon Foynes Port Company's Infrastructure Development Programme ~~is~~ will consist of a jetty expansion program, the joining of the East and West Jetties and the infill behind,

land purchase and site development at Foynes considering the land bank shortage at Foynes Port and the Foynes Rail Reinstatement.

- The NDP states that in line with the 2015 A National Aviation Policy for Ireland, the roles of Shannon International Airport as key tourism and business gateways for their regions, and particularly about the development of niche markets, will be supported.
- Shannon Group through its subsidiaries Shannon Airport Authority (SAA), Shannon Commercial Enterprises and Shannon Heritage have plans to invest more than €150 million in its capital programme over the period to 2022. This includes €100 million for the development of the property portfolio which is designed to deliver high quality advanced manufacturing, warehousing and office space solutions. Also included is the construction of a wide body paint hangar at Shannon International Airport to encourage the development of the International Aviation Services Centre (IASC) at Shannon as well as plans for the €10 million redevelopment of Bunrat y Castle in partnership with Fáilte Ireland.

Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 5: National Enablers

a. It is an objective to deliver the investment priorities as identified in the NDP for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and to seek progress and co-ordination between the principal stakeholders for the delivery of the priorities as identified in the NPF. Identification of suitable sites for regeneration and development should be supported by a quality site selection process that addresses environmental concerns.

b. It is an objective to implement innovative and collaborative projects through funding mechanisms such as the Urban Regeneration and Development, Rural Regeneration and Development, Climate Action and Disruptive Technologies funds.

4.0 | Integrated Landuse and Transportation

4.1 | Transportation

The principles underpinning the development of the MASP include the effective integration of transport planning with spatial planning policies, from regional down to local level and the alignment of associated transport and infrastructure investment priorities.

To the extent practicable, development within the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area should be carried out sequentially, whereby lands which are, or will be, most accessible by walking, cycling and public transport – including infill and brownfield sites – are prioritised. [Within the Limerick Metropolitan Area and Shannon Town, walking, cycling and public transport \(including rail, bus, light rail, taxi and boat\) will be prioritised as the primary modes of transport and the development of the 10 minute city concept supported to drive the integration of sustainable mobility with land-use planning, zoning and transport infrastructure. Delivering high capacity Light Rail Transit Corridors to the Limerick Metropolitan Area will be a key transformative project and is a key ambition.](#) The transport capacity of the strategic national road network should also be maintained and protected and larger scale, trip intensive developments, such as high employment density offices and retail, should primarily be focused in locations which are well served by existing or proposed public transport corridors. **A Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy** will be

prepared during the lifetime of this MASP. Sustainable transportation is dealt with in more detail in Chapter 6 of the RSES.

In terms of strategic road infrastructure for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area, development of the Limerick Northern Distributor Route (LNDR) is a key priority. The LNDR will improve access from the region to the University of Limerick and the IDA national technology park and will reduce City Centre through traffic. It will provide a direct link between Shannon International Airport, the businesses and industries in the Shannon area and the university campus. Furthermore, the delivery of the LNDR will improve transport links to the regeneration area of Moyross, across east and north County Limerick, south County Clare and onto the national road network and open significant areas of land for development.

Inter-regional transport connectivity between Metropolitan Areas is identified as a priority in this MASP. **The Galway-Ennis-Shannon-Limerick (GESL) Economic Network** is a key element in the development of the Limerick Shannon MASP and can greatly assist in the realisation of the AEC. The [GESL Network](#) is underpinned by the presence of public transport and motorway infrastructure that connects the two cities on the West coast of Ireland. The [GESL Network](#) links the metropolitan areas of Galway and Limerick-Shannon and includes the Key Town of Ennis (population over 25,000). By increasing the GESL ~~Networks~~[Network's](#) critical mass, population and jobs growth will take place in a sustainable growth pattern focused on clusters and smart specialisation, as per the strategy. This will be consistent with and complement the AEC initiative and will assist in enabling balanced regional development to occur.

4.2 | Population Projections

The NPF and Implementation Roadmap set out projections to achieve accelerated urban growth. The NPF and Implementation Roadmap also refer to further qualified allowances which may apply to deliver on accelerated urban growth in Metropolitan Areas.

This may be relevant in the Limerick Shannon context given for example the need for change to a more balanced concentric city through strategic proposals for development at Mungret [which will be connected by the Light Rail Public Transport Corridor](#) and by opening the north eastern quadrant (in both Limerick and Clare) facilitated by the development of the LNDR.

As required under the NPF 50% of all new housing within Limerick City is to occur within the existing city and suburbs footprint, through brownfield, infill and regeneration. Outside of Limerick City, 30% of all new homes that are targeted in settlements is to occur within their existing built-up footprint

Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 6: Sustainable Transportation

[Sustainable Transportation](#)

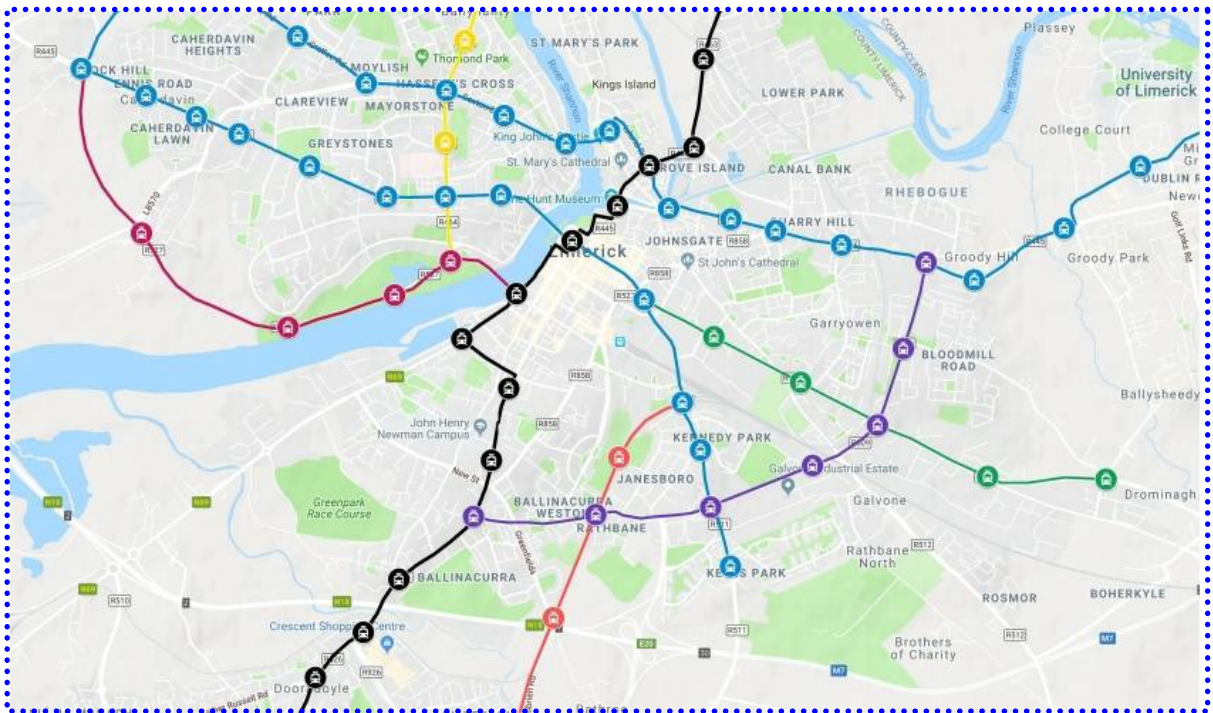
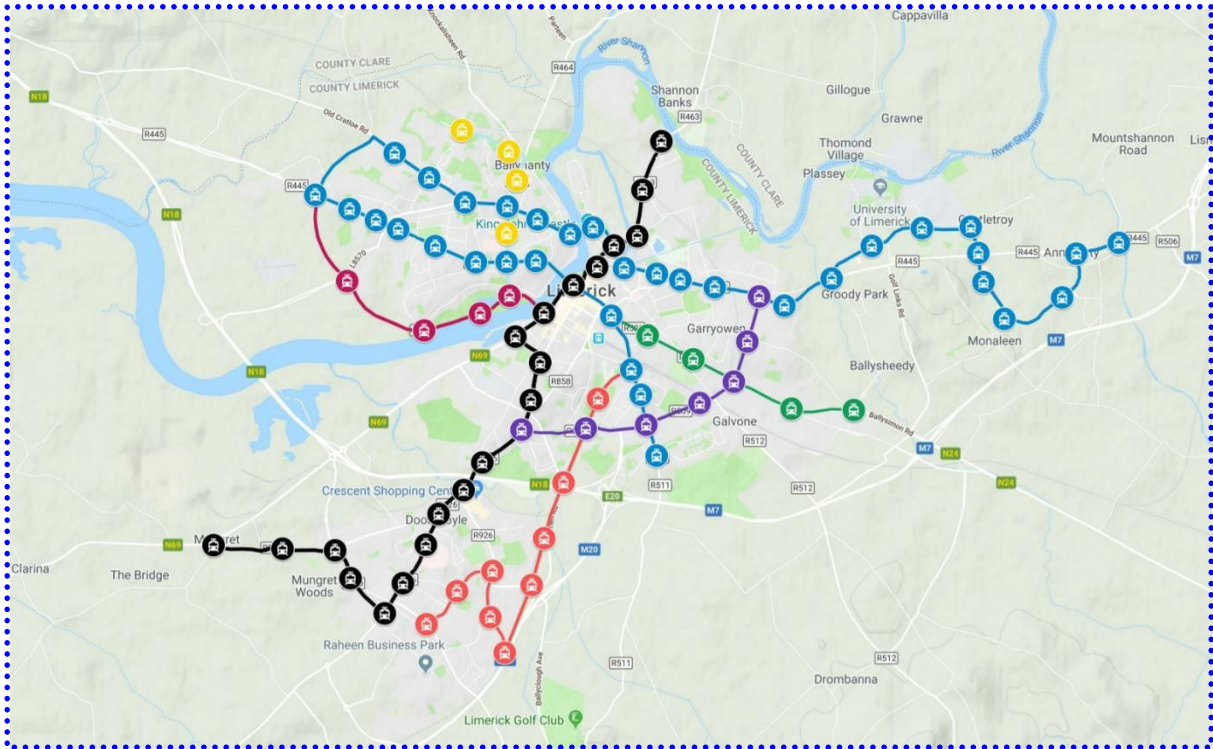
a. It is an objective to prepare a Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy during the lifetime of this MASP ~~and it is an objective to ensure~~. [The SRA will seek investment and implementation of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy and transport initiatives that improve connectivity both within the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and between it and the wider region.](#)

~~b. It is an objective that~~ The Core Strategies of Local Authority Development Plans will identify the public transport corridors and station nodal points on corridors in Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area arising from the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy which have potential for high density development/regeneration. Core Strategies shall identify the appropriate land use zonings for these ~~station~~public transport nodal points and demonstrate the effective alignment between land use and transport infrastructure planning and delivery of the NPF Compact Growth targets as they apply to the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area.

~~c. It is an objective to support the following sustainable transport priorities in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process:-~~

The following principles are supported by the SRA for investment and sustainable delivery in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area subject to feasibility, planning and environmental processes where applicable:

(i) **Light Rail Public Transport Corridors (see draft route maps below):** Strategic public transport corridors connecting high density residential areas within the Limerick Metropolitan Area to the City Centre. The transport corridors will connect six key residential areas and require development consolidation along the corridor at appropriate nodal points for a high capacity service. The six residential areas of (i) Castletroy, (ii) Dooradoyle/Raheen (including Mungret), (iii) Ennis Road/Caherdavin, (iv) Moylish/Woodview (v) Corbally/Westbury, and (vi) Ballysimon/Southhill include key third level academic institutions such as the University of Limerick, Limerick Institute of Technology and Mary Immaculate College, key health facilities including University Hospital Limerick, Saint Camillus Hospital and Barrington's Hospital, and key economic drivers such as the IDA national technology park and Raheen Industrial Park. The development of the Light Rail Public Transport Corridors will provide a fully integrated transport network for the Limerick Metropolitan Area, improve access to educational, health and economic centres, provide access to Limerick's docklands area and allow for increased residential density and the development of brownfield and infill lands for housing as well as reducing dependency on private cars and promoting modal switch to sustainable transport.



(ii) [Walking: Promoting walking as the primary mode of transport within the Limerick City Inner Orbital Route, by removing heavy vehicular congestion, prioritising walking and cycling and significantly improving and enhancing public transport services to the area. The SRA supports the investment in and implementation of the following:](#)

- the objective of making Limerick the most walkable city in Ireland;
- developing and implementing a Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Walking Strategy during the lifetime of this MASP to encourage modal shift to walking;
- the development of diffused walking networks;
- improved and enhanced pedestrian crossings and connectivity between neighbourhoods;
- the re-design of public space on the basis of pedestrians' priorities;
- the conservation, enhancement and expansion of parks, parklets and urban gardens;
- improving accessibility for the elderly and disabled;
- improving lighting at night to improve navigation, visibility and safety;
- providing shelter from adverse weather conditions by covering streets and sidewalks and providing strategic rest and shelter areas;
- the introduction of child friendly facilities including playgrounds within the Limerick City Inner Orbital Route and Shannon Town;
- introduction of additional traffic calming measures within residential areas and town and city centres;
- improve public seating, street art, access to free wi-fi, navigation and rest facilities;
- introduction of car-free days within the Limerick City Inner Orbital Route;
- supporting smart technology and journey planning to assist walking;
- the development of a metro-style walking map for the Limerick Metropolitan Area (see draft map below);
- improved signage with walking times and directions; and
- promoting the economic, social and health benefits associated with walking.

• ~~The~~ (v) **Public Transport Integration:** implementation of an integrated, multi modal public transport network across the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area servicing strategic residential and employment growth locations -, [provision for interchange opportunities together with information provision and revised fare structures.](#)

• ~~Implementation of improved public realm, walking and cycling routes and facilities.~~

(vi) **Rail Network:** The SRA supports the investment and implementation of the following:

- Development and promotion of existing intercity rail and commuter links from Limerick to Dublin, Cork, Galway, ~~together with~~ Ennis, Nenagh, Thurles and Clonmel.
- Upgrade and enhancement of the rail line between Limerick and Nenagh and onward line to Ballybrophy.
- Upgrade and enhancement of the Western Rail Corridor between Limerick and Ennis and onward line to Athenry.
- Reinstatement of the Limerick to Foynes rail line, linking Ireland's deepest port to the national rail network and connecting key towns Askeaton, Patrickswell and Adare to Limerick City Centre.
- The ~~MASP supports the ambition to create~~ creation of a rail link between Limerick City and Shannon International Airport ~~and this should be investigated further.~~ , via Sixmilebridge, Co. Clare. This would significantly enhance the attractiveness of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area as a location for foreign direct investment and tourism and provide a direct rail link to transport networks within the Limerick Metropolitan Area including Light Rail Public Transport Corridors connecting to the Limerick Institute of Technology, Raheen Industrial Park, the University of Limerick and the IDA national technology park.
- The MASP supports the exploration of a new rail station at Moyross to link it to the city centre and to provide a rail connection to the Limerick Northern Distributer Route.
- Investigate the potential for a higher speed rail link between Limerick City, Dublin, Cork and ~~Limerick City~~ Galway.

(vii) **Blueways and boat travel:** The MASP supports the exploration and development of blueways and methods of utilising the river network as a mode of transportation, tourism, and economic development.

Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 7: Strategic Road Infrastructure

It is an objective to deliver the sustainable development of strategic road infrastructure for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and improve transport connectivity to the wider region. This will include the delivery of the following subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process:

- Improved inter regional connectivity to the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area including M20 Limerick to Cork and the upgrading of the N24 to Waterford [to a motorway](#).
- Limerick Northern Distributer Route (LNDR) [.](#)
- N69 Foynes to Limerick road upgrade [.](#)
- Improved accessibility to Limerick Southside including the possible provision of a motorway interchange connection from the M20/M7 to Limerick Southside [.](#)
- Upgrade of the N19 road access to Shannon International Airport.
- Upgrade of arterial roads from the motorway network to increase capacity including the provision of public transport infrastructure and Park and Ride, including, for example, R527 Dock Road, R445 Dublin Road, including Junction 28 and R527 Tipperary Road.
- [Introduction of Park and Ride services at primary gateways into the Limerick Metropolitan Area including Coonagh Roundabout, Newport Roundabout, Ardnacrusha, Mungret, Garyglass Roundabout, and future access roads to the LNDR where appropriate, in order to reduce traffic congestion in the city centre and encourage modal switch to public transport.](#)
- [Develop stronger transport links \(road and rail\) to Rosslare Europortand.](#)

Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 8: Galway-Ennis-Shannon-Limerick (GESL) Economic Network

a. ~~a.~~ It is an objective to deliver the effective planning and development of the Metropolitan Area and Key Towns along the Galway-Ennis-~~ShannonLimerick~~[Shannon-Limerick](#) (GESL) Economic Network.

b. ~~b.~~ It is an objective to deliver excellent public transportation connections in the GESL Economic Network.

c. ~~c.~~ It is an objective, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process, to deliver excellent inter-regional transport connections between the GESL, North Kerry/West Limerick/Shannon Estuary Network and the Kerry Knowledge Triangle along the AEC.

5.0 | Housing and Regeneration

According to Census 2016, Social Rented (Local Authority and Voluntary Sector) households in Limerick City accounts for 12% of its total households while in Shannon this figure is 10%. Both are above the State (9.5%) and SRA (10%) averages. The percentage of households in Private Rental in Limerick City (25.5%) and Shannon (22%) are well above the State (18%) and SRA (16%) averages. Housing Vacancy (~~ex~~[excluding](#) Hoilday Homes⁷³) in Limerick City and Shannon (7.5% each) are lower than the State (9%) and SRA (9.5%) averages. Overall, housing remains significantly more affordable in ~~the~~ Limerick City than in other Irish cities⁷⁴. The cost of living is a strong point, with

Limerick identified as the most affordable urban area in Ireland in which to both rent and buy residential property. When coupled with the fact that disposable incomes are higher than the national average, this is key competitive advantage for attracting people and investment.

The MASP will prioritise the development of additional housing stock within Limerick City Centre in order to achieve a redeveloped and vibrant walkable core, connected to the wider metropolitan area by an extensive, reliable and state of the art public transport network including the Limerick BusConnects network and Light Rail Public Transport Corridors.

The development of additional housing stock within Limerick City Centre will be achieved by (i) developing high-density housing at strategic locations within Limerick City Centre, (ii) upgrading and enhancing existing housing stock in the Georgian Newtown Pery area, (iii) upgrading, modernising and densifying areas containing social housing stock within Limerick City, and (iv) the development of underutilised landbanks within Limerick City Centre.

In parallel to the development of the housing stock within Limerick City Centre the MASP will prioritise the development of additional housing stock along the Light Rail Public Transport Corridors which will be extended to new housing developments in advance of the housing construction.

The RSES sets out the framework to increase residential density in our cities and larger towns through a range of measures including reductions in vacancy, re-use of existing buildings, infill and site-based regeneration. The MASP supports a sequential approach to development with a primary focus on the consolidation of sites within or contiguous to the existing built up and zoned area of Limerick City, supported by Shannon. Local Authorities in their land use plans will identify metropolitan settlements that have the capacity to achieve higher residential densities in tandem with the provision of public transport, infrastructure and services. This should be consistent with the RSES and the guiding principles, objectives and goals of the MASP.

5.1 City Centre Consolidation

The NDP sets outs that the strategic investment priority is Housing and Sustainable Development and National Policy Objective 3b of the NPF requires that at least half (50%) of all new homes should be constructed within existing built-up footprints.

Limerick 2030 plans to add substantial office accommodation in Limerick City Centre are well-advanced and the Limerick Shannon MASP supports the densification of Limerick City Centre, the assembly of brownfield sites for development and the regeneration and redevelopment of Georgian Limerick for residential use.

In order to ensure that a holistic approach is taken to the redevelopment of Limerick City Centre the MASP will prioritise a number of ongoing initiatives to provide capacity to accommodate in excess of 60,000 people within the existing built-up area which will achieve the objective of 50% of all new housing being within that area:

- (a) **Georgian Newtown Pery:** The MASP will prioritise supportive actions to be coordinated by a dedicated team at Limerick City and County Council to support homeowners seeking to upgrade properties within Newtown Pery with priority given to projects designed to provide

modern sustainable living ahead of office accommodation. Public funding will be prioritised for public realm and cultural projects which both increase amenities available to inhabitants of the district and creating more attractive streetscapes and desirable neighbourhoods. These will be carried out in parallel with mobility strategies designed to remove unnecessary traffic from the streets of Newtown Pery and strategies to improve retail offerings and other amenities for occupants of the district. It is an objective of the MASP to also upgrade the laneways within the Georgian blocks of Limerick City Centre in line with a new masterplan to be developed by Limerick City and County Council.

- (b) **Docklands and Greenpark Racecourse:** The MASP will seek to develop underutilised land banks beside Limerick port and Mary Immaculate College, including Greenpark Racecourse which has potential for a new large-scale city centre park similar to the Phoenix Park in Dublin with capacity for medium and high-density housing on its perimeter. The Docklands and Greenpark Racecourse areas will be connected to the Light Rail Public Transport Corridor and Limerick BusConnects network. The MASP will provide for the master-planning of this area in conjunction with the Land Development Agency as a new city centre high density urban neighbourhood housing 30,000 people and a basis for rapid transport services to this area and future development in the nearby areas of Mungret, Raheen and Ballykeefe.
- (c) **Regeneration:** As set out below, regeneration areas within walking distance of Limerick's central inter-city train station (Con Colbert) could provide accommodation fully in line with Ireland 2040 objectives for in excess of 30,000 people, transforming these inner-city areas.
- (d) **Mobility Strategy:** As set out in more detail in 4.1, a new Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy will be prepared and will prioritise the facilitation of car free living in built-up areas in and around Limerick City Centre making inner city areas more affordable and attractive choices and reversing previous preferences to live in suburban areas around Limerick City Centre.
- (e) **Public Facilities and Services:** Further investment will be made to continue to fill gaps in the retail and entertainment facilities available to residents of inner-city districts to make Limerick City Centre one of the most desirable places to live in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and encourage compact development. Recognising the importance of public parks and cultural, heritage, sports and Lifelong Learning facilities to the quality of life of residents of higher density areas, continued investment in such facilities will be prioritised including a world-class Riverside Project. Given Limerick's role as a centrally located city in the broader Southern and Northern and Western Region and the significant expected growth in its own population, a number of new flagship cultural facilities of scale, including a new Library project in the Opera Centre will be established within the Limerick City Centre area.
- (f) **Education:** Recognising the importance of good quality educational facilities to residents of an area, the MASP will prioritise the upgrading of facilities and buildings for primary and secondary schools which are housed in older buildings and constrained sites in the inner-city areas. Particular focus will be paid during the term of the MASP to the establishment of

[additional international schools to cater for the growing international population of the city. The MASP will also identify suitable inner-city sites for development to accommodate facilities for UL operations moving into Limerick City Centre. Given Limerick's centrally located position as a bridge between the Southern and Western and Northern Regions, plans will be advanced for the procurement of sites for the establishment of additional third level institutions to accommodate substantial numbers of the third level and apprentice training places required nationally.](#)

[The Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan](#)

The Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan centres on three key pillars – Economic, Physical and Social - that will revitalise the communities of Moyross and St Mary's Park on the city's northside and Southill and Ballinacurra Weston on the southside by raising standards of living, opportunity and health and wellbeing for all residents of the regeneration areas. New housing construction with mixed unit sizes and types to promote diverse occupancy and renewal and retrofitting of existing housing stock are key elements of the Limerick Regeneration Framework which will lead to the delivery of some 400 new homes and the upgrading of 900 homes across the areas of Moyross, Southill, Ballinacurra Weston and St Mary's Park.

[As Limerick's populations targets have become more ambitious than at the time of the original regeneration plans, the MASP will now assess the potential for one or more of these areas to serve as a national pilot for re-densification of inner city areas of scale and will produce a masterplan and implementation plan for such a redevelopment while at the same time identifying broader range of regional public services and job opportunities to be housed in the same neighbourhood to reverse the singular use of such areas when they were built in the 1950s.](#)

[5.3 Further Growth](#)

[Given the potential for Limerick to easily continue to grow sustainably and exceed the Ireland 2040 targets shortly after the completion of that plan, it is important to plan for growth beyond that identified for city centre areas above.](#)

Progressing the sustainable development areas for housing in Mungret and Castletroy is recognised in the MASP. Limerick Twenty Thirty Designated Activity Company (DAC) are preparing a Masterplan of a 42-hectare residential site at Mungret Park. The site comprises 26 hectares of lands owned by Limerick City and County Council in Mungret, including the former Mungret College and associated buildings. Mungret is zoned urban extension of Limerick City under the Southern Environs Local Area Plan. The site has obtained funding through the Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF) for a distributor road, which will unlock substantial lands within public and private ownership and trigger the development of additional residential sites, supporting community and employment uses. In addition to Mungret, the Limerick Shannon MASP supports the densification of the city centre and assembly of brownfield sites for development and the regeneration and redevelopment of Georgian Limerick for residential use. The MASP also supports the continued investment in the City's regeneration areas. [The MASP will prioritise the provision of non-car and public transport](#)

[options including the Light Rail Public Transport Corridors to and from the city centre and nearby amenities and employment.](#)

[Shannon](#)

Shannon attracts a working population of 9,000 people per day however its population growth rate remains stagnant. The inter-dependence between Shannon as a living area and its employment assets – Shannon Free-Zone and Shannon International Airport linkages have weakened due to changing circumstances, to the detriment of Shannon. The ~~challenges~~[challenge](#) for Shannon is to transform into a dynamic, vibrant place to live. Opportunities exist to create a new image that is fresh and welcoming and capitalises on the existing strengths and assets of Shannon. This could be pursued through an emphasis on placemaking including improving the quality and sense of place in the town centre.

[Insert table 2]

~~6.0~~ **6. Employment and Enterprise**

6.1 + Introduction

Investment in the creation of ‘place’ ~~is key to realising the potential of the MASP area.~~ ~~Access,~~ [access](#) to talent and the presence of an innovative and smart economy are key factors ~~to realising the potential of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area.~~ The enhancements of these factors and improvements in existing sectors such as retail and tourism will play an important role in creating a stronger economy. The continued growth of Shannon International Airport, Shannon Foynes Port and Third Level Education facilities is essential as future growth will be based on leveraging national and international connectivity, higher education capacity and quality of life to secure strategic investment.

~~6.2 + Employment Generation~~ **[Employment Generation](#)**

~~The delivery of the elements which attract business and enterprise is dependent on understanding and identifying the main economic drivers and removing obstacles to realising their full potential.~~

~~The Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area meets these key elements for business location choice. The Limerick Shannon MASP identifies strategic employment locations within the metropolitan area. However, achieving NPF growth targets will require consideration for new locations and initiatives by each Local Authority. It is thus accepted that additional locations may become available and this MASP recognises the need to be flexible to accommodate opportunities and that future growth areas may emerge during the lifetime of the MASP. Future growth areas proposals should be consistent and integrate with the Limerick Shannon MASP’s aim of revitalising and reinvigorating Limerick City for higher density living and high density high value jobs.~~

{Insert table 3}

{Insert table 4}

[A key factor in local and regional economic resilience is the diversification of industry and the development of industrial clusters in and around a city’s economic base. This approach reduces](#)

overall risk as success is not dependent on any single industry. As a result, diversified local economies have more stable growth in the long-run and can create robust knowledge spillover networks that boost local capital investment and improve firm survival rates.

Table 3: Limerick Employment and Enterprise Profile

	<u>2008</u>		<u>2012</u>		<u>2016</u>	
	<u>Employees (%)</u>	<u>Active Enterprises</u>	<u>Employees (%)</u>	<u>Active Enterprises</u>	<u>Employees (%)</u>	<u>Active Enterprises</u>
<u>Manufacturing</u>	<u>29.8</u>	<u>581</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>604</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>644</u>
<u>Wholesale and Retail</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>1837</u>	<u>16.6</u>	<u>1855</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>1839</u>
<u>ICT</u>	<u>13.8</u>	<u>348</u>	<u>4.7</u>	<u>383</u>	<u>9.2</u>	<u>424</u>
<u>Construction</u>	<u>12.3</u>	<u>2122</u>	<u>5.7</u>	<u>1794</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>1761</u>
<u>Accommodation and Services</u>	<u>12.5</u>	<u>765</u>	<u>10.7</u>	<u>804</u>	<u>12.9</u>	<u>809</u>

Source: CSO

Limerick's economic revival is partly characterised by a movement away from an overreliance on manufacturing towards wholesale, retail, accommodation and services. Wholesale and Retail trade now equals manufacturing, with no single industry representing more than 20% of employment. Limericks reduced dependency on one industry is also evident in the range of firms that have based their operations in the city, including Johnson & Johnson, General Motors, Northern Trust, Uber and WP Engine.

By developing industrial clusters, benefits such as lower production costs, increased innovation among related businesses and increased colocation of similar and supporting businesses can be realised. These large-scale clusters can be complimented by a network of smaller regional-based initiatives that play on local strengths.

One such initiative is the *National Sports Business Cluster* which is to be established in Limerick, where 500 people are already employed in sports. This cluster will leverage off a base of elite sporting facilities established at UL's sports campus and LIT's Sportslab (Europe's leading strength and conditioning centre) in Thurles in addition to thirty sport-related companies currently operating in Limerick and its catchment. The Troy Studios Film Hub in Castletroy is a new sector that has emerged in recent years and there is potential to emulate the likes of the National Sports Business Cluster in spurring clusters in the film/television and related sectors.

Shannon International Airport and the Shannon Free Zone are home to the International Aviation Services Centre, the largest aerospace cluster in Ireland. The IASC is home to over 60 companies and employs over 2,600 people in Shannon. The worldwide aircraft fleet is expected to double in the next 20 years, and there is a unique opportunity for Ireland to become a global leader in aerospace.

and aviation services sector, with Shannon at the heart of this endeavour. Shannon Group has secured planning permission to build a wide body aircraft paint hangar at Shannon International Airport. This is in accordance with the National Aviation Policy to “encourage the development of the International Aviation Services Centre (IASC) at Shannon”. This will be the first new widebody hangar constructed at an Irish airport in over 20 years and is the kind of expansion that was envisaged for IASC to grow a globally recognised and internationally competitive aviation industry cluster in and around the airport campus. The Limerick Shannon MASP recognises and supports the role of IASC as a significant opportunity to become a truly global player in the aerospace industry. The MASP supports the development of the IASC cluster at Shannon as recognised in National Aviation Policy and aims to ensure that cross-agency cooperation will continue to develop IASC at Shannon to meet industry demand. Multi-agency collaboration is required to improve and develop the infrastructure to support the development of the IASC cluster. Further development of maintenance repair and overhaul (MRO) related infrastructure would be important to support the future development of the IASC cluster and the spin off industries in the MASP and wider region.

The IASC recently became the first Irish member of the European Aerospace Cluster Partnership (EACP). Firms within the cluster can co-operate on a European level to identify new projects, funding sources and development opportunities.

The Limerick Shannon MASP recognises and supports the role of IASC as a significant opportunity to become a truly global player in the aerospace industry.

Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective: Employment Generation

- a. Support the development of identified and future clusters in Limerick by ensuring funding is made available beyond Stream 4 of the Regional Enterprise Development Fund.
- b. Support the development of the IASC cluster at Shannon as recognised in National Aviation Policy and aim to ensure that cross-agency cooperation will continue to develop IASC at Shannon to meet industry demand.
- c. Support the development of aviation support services in Shannon and Limerick City including tax, legal, administrative and company secretarial services.

Shannon Free-Zone (SFZ)

Shannon Free-Zone (SFZ) is 243 hectares in area with more than 7,000 employees in over 100 companies and is home to the largest agglomeration of American companies in Ireland outside of Dublin. The site is part owned by Shannon Commercial Properties and part privately owned and consists of both Greenfield and Brownfield lands. There is considerable potential for development within this existing zoned landbank for the long-term growth of the Limerick Shannon MASP and surrounding region. It is particularly important to ensure that a range of property solutions are available for different business life stages and that adequate investment in the utilities infrastructure is provided to enable Shannon Commercial Properties (SCP) to continue to enable jobs growth. It is also critical that the SFZ is connected to Limerick City Centre by a reliable public transport, including a rail connection via Sixmilebridge to Con Colbert station in Limerick.

The MASP supports the development of the Shannon Free-Zone as it plays a key role in the economic development of the MASP and Mid-West. Adequate investment in the utilities infrastructure is necessary to ensure the continued regeneration of the SFZ. Upgrades to the electricity network, [digital network](#), the water and wastewater network is necessary to ensure that the economic potential of the Shannon Free-Zone can be achieved.

The following are key priorities for SFZ:

- Shannon Group is transforming the Shannon Free Zone to create the environment for a high-tech ecosystem in the Mid-West. Given the success of Phase 1 of the redevelopment, it is now necessary to fast track the continued regeneration of SFZ which will assist the Mid-West in continuing to attract investment and support balanced regional development.
- The SFZ Masterplan currently being developed will provide a detailed development framework strategy for the undeveloped landbank at Shannon Free Zone East and the brownfield regeneration of Shannon Free Zone West. The Masterplan will ensure that the land use potential of the lands is maximised and that future development takes place in a co-ordinated manner.
- Shannon can be at the forefront of a global mobility revolution. It has an established an industrial base in the technology & automotive sectors, including global market-leading firms with ambitious investment plans, a plethora of expert SMEs and depth of research expertise. The future development of the automotive and mobility sector in Shannon is supported by the RSES.
- Adequate investment in the utilities infrastructure is necessary to ensure the continued regeneration of the SFZ. Much of the utilities date back to the birth of the free zone in the 1950's and needs upgrade. Upgrades to the electricity network, [digital network](#), the water and wastewater network is necessary to ensure that the economic potential of the Shannon can be achieved.
- Westpark has 2,500-3,000 jobs on a modern campus and has plans for expansion.

~~Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 9: Strategic Employment Locations~~

~~It is an objective to support the sustainable development of identified and future Strategic Employment Locations and to ensure the delivery of associated infrastructural requirements subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.~~

6.3 Strengths in Attracting FDI

The Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area is a massively important information and communications technology (ICT) hub for FDI. Acting as a cornerstone for the burgeoning IDA AI Island strategy, companies such as Analog Devices, Jaguar Landrover, Dell/EMC, General Motors (GM) and J&J are just some of the multi-national companies (MNC) that are drawing on the talented pool of graduates and researchers being developed by UL, LIT, SFI research centres, incubators, enterprise

Ireland/IDA Technology Centres and community enterprise centres serving the region. The higher education institutes that serve the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area are particularly responsive to the upskilling needs of industry. This collaboration has led to the development of an innovative portfolio of Skillnet funded higher diplomas in software engineering, data analytics, Middleware, Embedded systems and Security. UL is home to the world's first industry driven national postgraduate MSc in Artificial Intelligence.

Limerick City and County Council was the first local authority to establish a dedicated innovation arm, Innovate Limerick, which acts as the delivery mechanism for strategic Limerick 2030 projects. Innovate Limerick attracted Troy International Film Studios to Limerick City and developed the Innovation Hub and ENGINE, which provide office solutions for start-up and accelerating businesses. Limerick City and County Council has been garnered notable success in attracting FDI. Noteworthy innovations that have facilitated this success include, the co-location of FDI company employees, including WP Engine and Stats, with Limerick City and County Council staff to ensure that companies hit the ground running.

Limerick has recently been nominated as a Lighthouse Smart City, an award that ensures a substantial grant from the biggest EU Research and Innovation Funding programme Horizon 2020, will be available for community projects totalling €6.5m worth of investment in Limerick City's digital infrastructure. Lighthouse cities develop and test integrated innovative solutions at district scale and act as beacons for what can be achieved through technological innovation. The +CityxChange (positive city exchange) is a smart city project that was submitted by a consortium of 32 partners from 11 countries including Limerick City and County Council. For the next five years, Limerick City along with its partner cities will work together to pioneer the necessary citizen engagement that will lead to a series of demonstration projects that will enable Limerick to become a smart 'better than ambient' positive energy city. This MASP supports the establishment of Limerick as a Smart Lighthouse City.

The focus in Limerick will be on the development of a new "community grid" that will be enabled by the innovative support of key MNC partners such as Dell/EMC and Analog Devices. This innovation will see the use of smart meters, new energy sources (including hydrokinetic energy), significant grid scale storage projects, digital tools and citizen participation paradigm shifts to create what is being dubbed a 'better than ambient' or 'Positive Energy District' in Limerick's city centre. Building out from the Gardens International building and ENGINE workspace provided by Innovate Limerick, the new District will contribute more energy to the grid than it consumes over time. A novel aspect of Limerick's demonstration project will see Europe's most westerly Georgian city become a testbed for the upgrade of housing stock, much of it listed, in a manner that is at the cutting edge of technological development while also being sensitive to the unique history of this historic district within the city centre (Georgian/Newtown Pery areas).

The University of Limerick (UL), Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT) and Mary Immaculate College (MIC), offer a range of undergraduate and postgraduate study programmes to support the business growth and economic development taking place in the Limerick Metropolitan Area and the wider region. Moreover, the Shannon College of Hotel Management is Ireland's only dedicated hotel management college.

Access to airports is particularly important for the high tech FDI and knowledge intensive firms which are key drivers for economic development. The importance of Shannon International Airport in this regard is also evident in the fact that over 40% of US FDI companies are located within the airport's catchment area.

Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objectives: Strengths in Attracting Investment

- a. Seek investment in the sustainable development of IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland initiatives in strengthening enterprise assets, fostering competitive locations and conditions for enterprise growth in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area.
- b. Seek investment in the development of a sustainable, interconnected and environmentally friendly transport network which connects Shannon Airport, Limerick City Centre, educational and economic centres within the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area including the connection of Shannon Airport to the national rail grid, the development of Light Rail Public Transport Corridors and the introduction of a Limerick BusConnects Network.
- c. Deliver and improve quality in high speed, high capacity digital infrastructure and access for all to digital infrastructure in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area.
- d. Support the initiatives of Local Authority Digital Strategies and seek investment to deliver a greener, more innovative and smarter city and metropolitan area.
- e. Support existing and future educational facilities in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area which includes University of Limerick, Mary Immaculate, Limerick Institute of Technology and the Shannon College of Hotel Management as critical drivers of economic development and the fostering of an innovative, knowledge-based economy for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area.
- f. The MASP recognises that the Mid-West Action Plan for Jobs (APJ) and the Mid-West Regional Skills Forum works collaboratively with all agencies focused on the actions and opportunities that the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area can offer in terms of employment generation and the fostering of the knowledge based economy, in particular relating to clustering of expertise e.g. aviation, technology, finance, med-tech, agri-food, sport, etc. It is an objective that the Mid-West APJ and the Mid-West Regional Skills Forum continue their work to deliver significant benefits to the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and Mid-West.

6.4 Employment Distribution

Future growth in employment will place additional resource demands on the local economy. With an increase in the general population of about 50,000 forecast by 2040, employment numbers could increase by 30,000. The recent economic revival in Limerick City has been concentrated in two types of business. Financial service companies, such as Northern Trust, and high-end manufacturing and research such as Regeneron and Jaguar's new autonomous vehicle research centre. It follows a broad sectoral trend at a national level. These types of sectors place different infrastructural requirements on the local economy.

Table 4: Strategic Employment Locations

<u>Name/Type</u>	<u>Employment Numbers</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Capacity</u>
<u>Higher Education Institutes</u>	<u>3000+</u>	<p><u>25,000+ students with 6,300 graduates per annum. Strong synergies with extended region and local businesses.</u></p> <p><u>UL is recognised for the employability of its students. CONFIRM, based at UL, is a new research centre that develops future smart manufacturing technologies.</u></p> <p><u>LIT has strong industry connections and is internationally recognised for its industry focused “Active Learning” courses.</u></p>	<p><u>Large capacity for growth at UL.</u></p> <p><u>Recent expansion of LIT campus to Coonagh with potential for further growth.</u></p>
<u>Shannon Free Zone</u>	<p><u>7000+</u></p> <p><u>100+ companies</u></p>	<p><u>Largest agglomeration of American companies outside Dublin. Plans to develop SFZ as part of a Mid-West high-tech ecosystem. An established industrial base in the technology and automotive sectors, with Jaguar recently planning for a research centre in autonomous driving.</u></p>	<u>195 Hectares Zoned</u>
<u>Public Hospitals</u>	<u>3500+</u>	<p><u>Hospitals within the MASP group include UHL, the Maternity Hospital and St. Johns. It caters to a regional population of up to half a million people.</u></p>	<p><u>New Accident and Emergency department recently opened, with plans approved for a new 60 bed unit.</u></p>
<u>National Technological Park</u>	<p><u>3000+</u></p> <p><u>80+ companies</u></p>	<p><u>Large graduate pool from UL. Opportunity for industry collaborations. Supportive environment for start-up</u></p>	<u>71Ha</u>

		companies	
Raheen	3000+ 50+ companies	Located 3 miles from City Centre, offering brownfield and greenfield sites.	57.5 Ha
Garden's International Centre	900+	The newly completed Garden's International Centre offers state of the art office space, with the first tenants in place in March 2019. It is the first completed part of the Limerick 2030 plan.	
Opera Centre	Funding Secured	High quality city centre office space. Easy access to graduate pool, international connectivity and a vibrant city centre location.	3,500 staff
Cleeves Site	In development	Cleeve's is an iconic 10 acre site, located on the northern bank of the Shannon River, just off the city centre. The site is suitable for a mix of uses including education, tourism and commercial space.	3,000 staff 4 Ha
Dock Road	In development	The Limerick Docklands Framework Strategy aims to grow existing commercial activity at SFPC's 35 acre Ted Russell Docks, and also provide for the major development of non-core activities along a further 75 acre site.	120+ acres

[Table 4 lists the main employment centres of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area. Modern service companies want high quality office space in areas that offer a good quality of life and reliable public transport. The completed Gardens Centre, the soon to commence Opera Centre and the planned Cleeves development have the capacity to add 7,000 additional jobs. The MASP supports further plans for development of central sites for continued employment growth, catering to the information and services industries. This type of development should also add to the core regeneration of Limerick City. The proposed development of the Dock Road would be a suitable](#)

location. Concentrations of employment outside the central city area are predominantly in Shannon, Castletroy and Raheen. The MASP area has capacity for expansion of scale at these primary locations and the IDA must prioritise them for investment. These strategic locations offer the capacity to cater to companies that require greenfield or brownfield sites, access to an international airport and third level graduates. Local transport planning must be flexible and accommodative to growth in these areas with a clear objective in the MASP transport strategy.

Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective ~~9~~: ~~Strategic Employment Locations~~: Infrastructure for Strategic Employment Locations

- a. It is an objective to support the sustainable development of identified and future Strategic Employment Locations and to ensure the delivery of associated infrastructural requirements included connections to the Light Rail Public Transport Corridor and the Limerick BusConnects network.

6.5 Shannon International Airport

Shannon International Airport serves a catchment area which extends beyond the Mid-West SPA and is a strategic national asset. Research undertaken by the ESRI shows that access to airports is valued above access to motorway junctions, which in turn is valued above access to train stations for foreign firms.

Enhancing connectivity from Shannon International Airport to drive economic development along the entire west coast of Ireland, the Southern Region and the Midlands is a priority for the Limerick Shannon MASP. Taking account of the critical role of Shannon International Airport in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area, it is imperative that the various connections from Shannon are improved and maintained, including increased “red-eye” services to other financial hubs within Europe. Year-round connectivity to transatlantic and European hubs will be vital to support both business and tourism. While passenger numbers in 2018 were 1.87 million, existing infrastructure at Shannon has the capacity to deal with 4.5 million passengers without additional investment. Market developments over the past number of years point to some worrying trends for our regional cities and wider regions with growth in the air passenger market largely confined to Dublin. As of Q3 2018, Dublin Airport’s market share stood at 84.7 per cent (CSO 2018) and this is only likely to increase once construction of the new runway is complete. A continuation of this trend is likely to have serious negative implications for the NPF’s goal of balanced regional development. With 95% of Irish air traffic growth in the last five years going into Dublin Airport, this is putting greater pressure on the capital’s airport. In this regard, it is important to note that Shannon International Airport can immediately relieve the congestion in Dublin Airport. Long term, high speed rail connecting Limerick and Dublin would position Shannon Airport as an alternative connection for those doing business in the capital.

The above trends indicate the need for a more targeted action at growing access to the airports outside of Dublin. Funding to assist developing new flight routes from airports outside of Dublin with a particular focus on strategic routes for inbound tourism and FDI will be a key enabler of balanced regional development. The European Commission rules on state support to airports has specified that airports under 3 million passengers are deemed eligible for CapEx support. Despite

carrying only 1.87 million passengers in 2018 current Government policy precludes Shannon from availing from support programmes which provides CapEx to private airports at Ireland West, Kerry, Waterford and Donegal. The current programme of exchequer supports is an important driver of competitiveness for regional airports and the exclusion of Shannon is resulting in an uneven playing field.

Public transport frequency to Shannon Airport and along the corridor, from Limerick to Galway, is relatively poor. Shannon Free Zone employs around 7,000 individuals (of which only 4% use buses)¹. The fact that private car is the preferred method of transport is surprising given that Shannon Town has a population of around 8,000. The employment base and local population lends itself to be a prime market for public transport.

Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective: Shannon International Airport

- The Limerick Shannon MASP recognises Shannon International Airport as a national and infrastructural driver of economic, social and tourism growth. It is an objective to develop and enhance the strategic role of Shannon International Airport and to advocate for Shannon to be allowed to apply for financial CapEx support on an equitable basis with other airports.
- It is an objective, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process, to support the utilisation of the existing investment in Shannon International Airport and its surrounding land bank to act as a catalyst for economic growth in the region.
- Advocate for Tourism Ireland to prioritise the promotion of air access to airports outside of Dublin. An economic impact assessment should be conducted to identify the benefits of promoting regional airports over the capacity constrained Dublin airport.
- Review public transport service provision for Shannon Airport and its surrounding catchment with the connection of Shannon Airport to the national rail grid to be treated as a priority.
- Review the demand and viability of river taxis from Shannon Airport and Town to Shannon Foynes Port and Limerick City.

6.6 Shannon Foynes Port Company

As Ireland's second largest port in terms of total throughput/trade handled and its access to deep-water resources, Shannon Foynes Port is designated as a Tier 1 Port of National Significance. This means that the port must continue to play a key role, both regionally and nationally, in meeting the external trading requirements of the Irish economy, and that the continued successful commercial development of the port represents a key policy objective in this regard. The MASP supports the continued expansion of Shannon Foynes Port and recognises the significant opportunities for the Southern Region and Ireland that its deep waters provide.

¹ Mid-West Area Strategic Plan 2012 - 2030

The MASP supports and promotes the inclusion of Shannon Foynes Port onto the EU core network corridor as it would bring significant investment opportunities to the region in the form of FDI potential and support enhanced external connectivity with Ireland's European partners.

Foynes Island has been identified as an optimal location to accommodate larger vessels, serve wider markets and cater for future expansion of existing facilities. A key component of this is the development of a deep-water berth for which land has already been zoned under the CDP. There is further potential for development under the Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth (HOOW) national plan which recognises the potential and sets objectives for the development of the blue economy including its immense potential for renewable energy resources. The HOOW identified substantial marine territory off Ireland's west coast up to 10x the size of our land mass. This can only be accessed by the seaports and as such SFPC has the potential to play a key role in facilitating renewable energy activity off the West Coast.

The N69 does not meet the standards of reliability and connectivity required to serve a port, to support foreign and indigenous investment, or to maximise the tourism potential of West Limerick and the wider region. In this regard the delivery of the Foynes to Limerick Road Improvement Scheme has been identified as a key infrastructural project as it would act as a catalyst in supporting the realisation of important wider economic development benefits. Connectivity to the motorway network will be critical to increasing the ports economic impact in the future. Linking Ireland's deepest port to the national rail network by reinstating the Limerick to Foynes rail line is a key priority for Shannon Foynes Port. The MASP supports this ambition as it will enhance Shannon Foynes Port as key future growth enabler.

Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective: Shannon Foynes Port Company

- a. It is an objective to support the continued expansion of Shannon Foynes Port and to recognise the significant opportunities for the Southern Region and Ireland by virtue of its deep waters.
- b. It is an objective to support and promote the inclusion of Shannon Foynes Port onto the EU core network corridor as it would bring significant investment opportunities to the region in the form of FDI potential as well as supporting enhanced external connectivity with Ireland's European partners, particularly in light of the United Kingdom's departure from the EU.
- c. Support the infrastructural requirements of SFPC in facilitating deep water berth access to offshore resources.
- ~~It is an objective to support the sustainable development of identified and future Strategic Employment Locations and to ensure the delivery of associated infrastructural requirements subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.~~ Support the reinstatement of the Limerick to Foynes rail line and the delivery of the Foynes to Limerick Road Improvement Scheme.

In common with other higher education institutes, the University of Limerick is a key economic driver in the Mid-West Region. An opportunity for the development of a South Clare Economic Strategic Development Zone (SDZ) has emerged at the University of Limerick (UL) on a large scale strategic site zoned as a University Zone.

The proposal which is being developed by the University in conjunction with Clare County Council, prior to consideration by the Government (designation of an SDZ is a function of Government), reflects the strategic economic role of the University of Limerick which is located in both Clare and Limerick. The establishment of a SDZ at this strategic location will be a catalyst for the further economic and social development of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and the wider region. It will establish a zone of substantial scale and strategic importance, advancing the region by creating a prime global site for ~~International~~[international](#) investment with the potential to generate 3,500 jobs. Investment by industry will partner with the University in a new model of learning delivered by industry-partnered academies directed at attracting the best multinational employers with a guaranteed recruitment feed. The zone will create the potential for world class learning, research and development.

Based on the existing zoning in the Clare County Development Plan, the proposed South Clare Economic SDZ is planned to become Europe's first 21st Century University town and gown environment, merging education, enterprise and employment, modelled on the very best of modern on-campus living. It will be a model of sustainable urban living, education and enterprise, building on the standards of the existing campus. The development of the proposed SDZ will also allow for the redevelopment and integration of the Errina Canal which will link the nearby villages of Clonlara, O'Briensbridge and Castleconnell and provide a direct inland waterway connection between Limerick City and Belfast thereby reopening the historic all-island inland waterways system. The envisaged re-opening of the canal will significantly boost economic activity in these villages as has been the experience in each settlement on the route of the Ballinamore-Ballyconnell canal project. In addition, the proximity to Ireland's first hydroelectric power station at Ardnacrusha will provide a direct feed of green energy to the zone.

The impact of the zone on the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area would also be significant as the site's industrial population focus would be on international partnerships with Europe, the United States and the East. Local settlements in the [Limerick Shannon](#) Metropolitan Area would also benefit from the appropriate place-making infrastructure of the zone that will enhance its attractiveness to residents from overseas. The site will be accessed through a new link from the planned LNDR linking the zone directly to Shannon International Airport and onto the cities of Dublin, Cork and Galway on the motorway [network as well as the Light Rail Public Transport Corridor and Limerick BusConnects](#) network.

From a European perspective this is a potential project of scale. From a national perspective this is an exemplar project enabling an early win to the balanced regional development strategy set out in the National Planning Framework. At local level, the economic resurgence effect of this development will be highly significant for Limerick City and will complement the Limerick 2030 plan.

Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 10: South Clare Economic / University of Limerick proposed Strategic Development Zone (SDZ)

It is an objective of the RSES to support the designation and subsequent development of the lands zoned as University in the Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 as an Economic Strategic Development Zone (SDZ), ~~subject to the provisions of the Planning Act and all environmental considerations~~ while at the same time prioritising the integration of UL into Limerick City, the movement of certain UL facilities into Limerick City Centre and subject to the SDZ and UL having a direct light rail connection to Limerick City Centre.

6.4 | Shannon International Airport

~~Shannon International Airport serves a catchment area which extends beyond the MidWest SPA and is a strategic national asset.~~

~~Research undertaken by the ESRI shows that access to airports is valued above access to motorway junctions, which in turn is valued above access to train stations for foreign firms. The research indicates that access to airports was particularly important for high tech FDI and knowledge intensive firms which are key drivers for economic development. The importance of Shannon International Airport is also evident in the fact that over 40% of US FDI companies are within the airport's catchment area. The International Aviation Services Centre (IASC) is a significant part of the aviation industry and the Limerick Shannon MASP recognises and supports the role of IASC as a significant opportunity to become a truly global player in the aerospace industry.~~

~~International Aviation Services Centre (IASC)~~

~~Shannon International Airport and the Shannon Free Zone are home to the International Aviation Services Centre, the largest aerospace cluster in Ireland. IASC is home to over 60 companies and employs over 2,600 people in Shannon. The worldwide aircraft fleet is expected to double in the next 20 years, and there is a unique opportunity for Ireland to become a global leader in aerospace and aviation services sector, with Shannon at the heart of this endeavour. Shannon Group has secured planning permission to build a wide body aircraft paint hangar at Shannon International Airport. This is in accordance with the National Aviation Policy to "encourage the development of the International Aviation Services Centre (IASC) at Shannon". This will be the first new widebody hangar constructed at an Irish airport in over 20 years and is the kind of expansion that was envisaged for IASC to grow a globally recognised and internationally competitive aviation industry cluster in and around the airport campus. The Limerick Shannon MASP recognises and supports the role of IASC as a significant opportunity to become a truly global player in the aerospace industry. The MASP supports the development of the IASC cluster at Shannon as recognised in National Aviation Policy and aims to ensure that cross-agency cooperation will continue to develop IASC at Shannon to meet industry demand. Multi-agency collaboration is required to improve and develop the infrastructure to support the development of the IASC cluster. Further development of~~

~~maintenance repair and overhaul (MRO) related infrastructure would be important to support the future development of the IASC cluster and the spin-off industries in the MASP and wider region.~~

~~Enhancing connectivity from Shannon International Airport to drive economic development along the entire west coast of Ireland, the Southern Region and the Midlands is a priority for the Limerick-Shannon MASP. Taking account of the critical role of Shannon International Airport in the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area, it is imperative that the various connections from Shannon are improved and maintained. Year-round connectivity to transatlantic and European hubs will be vital to support both business and tourism.~~

~~While passenger numbers in 2017 was 1.75 million, existing infrastructure at Shannon has the capacity to deal with 4.5 million passengers without additional investment. With 95% of Irish air traffic growth in the last five years going into Dublin Airport, this is putting greater pressure on the capital's airport. In this regard, it is important to note that Shannon International Airport can immediately relieve the congestion in Dublin Airport.~~

~~Limerick-Shannon MASP Policy Objective 11: Shannon International Airport~~

~~a. The Limerick-Shannon MASP recognises Shannon International Airport as a national and infrastructural driver of economic, social and tourism growth. It is an objective to develop and enhance the strategic role of Shannon International Airport and to advocate for a policy environment that supports a regional distribution of air traffic and for a greater regional focus by national agencies.~~

~~b. It is an objective, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process, to support the utilisation of the existing investment in Shannon International Airport and its surrounding land bank to act as a catalyst for economic growth in the region.~~

~~c. The Limerick-Shannon MASP recognises and supports the role of IASC as a significant opportunity for the Mid-West Region to become a global player in the aerospace industry. It is an objective to develop the IASC cluster at Shannon as recognised in National Aviation Policy and to work to ensure~~

~~6.5 | Shannon-Foynes Port75~~

~~As Ireland's second largest port in terms of total throughput/trade handled and its access to deep-water resources, Shannon-Foynes Port is designated as a Tier 1 Port of National Significance.~~

~~This means that the port must continue to play a key role, both regionally and nationally, in meeting the external trading requirements of the Irish economy, and that the continued successful commercial development of the port represents a key policy objective in this regard.~~

~~The MASP supports the continued expansion of Shannon-Foynes Port and recognises and the significant opportunities for the Southern Region and Ireland by its deep waters. The MASP supports~~

and promotes the inclusion of Shannon Foynes Port onto the EU core network corridor as it would bring significant investment opportunities to the region in the form of FDI potential and ~~as well as supporting~~ enhanced external connectivity with Ireland's European partners.

The N69 does not meet the standards of reliability and connectivity required to serve a port; to support foreign and indigenous investment; ~~nor~~ to maximise the tourism potential of ~~the West Limerick and wider region~~. In this regard the delivery of the Foynes to Limerick Road Improvement Scheme has been identified as a key infrastructural project as it would act as a catalyst in supporting the realisation of important ~~potential~~ wider economic development benefits. Connectivity to the motorway network will be critical to increasing the ports economic ~~impacts in the future~~.

~~Reinstatement of the Limerick to Foynes rail line, linking Ireland's deepest port to the national rail network is a key priority for Shannon Foynes Port. The MASP supports this ambition as it will enhance Shannon Foynes Port as key future growth enabler.~~

Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 12: Shannon Foynes Port

~~a. It is an objective, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process, to support the continued expansion of Shannon Foynes Port and to recognise the significant opportunities for the Southern Region and Ireland by virtue of its deep waters.~~

~~b. It is an objective to support and promote the inclusion of Shannon Foynes Port onto the EU core network corridor as it would bring significant investment opportunities to the region in the form of FDI potential and as well as supporting enhanced external connectivity with Ireland's European partners.~~

~~c. It is an objective support the reinstatement of the Limerick to Foynes rail line and the delivery of the Foynes to Limerick Road Improvement Scheme.~~

6.6 | **6.7 Retail**

Shopping habits and retail are both in continuous change and development. Furthermore, a lack of population density and the growth of suburban shopping centres is contributing to consistently low levels of footfall within town and city centres across Ireland. With the loss of retail activity, cities are also losing attractiveness, vitality and liveability. The Retail Strategy for the Mid-West Region, 2010 to 2016, highlighted that Limerick City Centre fell behind other cities in the State and no longer performed to its Tier 1 Status in the shopping hierarchy⁷⁶.

~~The Strategy found that too much trade was lost to suburban locations. The Strategy sought to reestablish Limerick City Centre at the top of the regional hierarchy as the preferred location for new retail development. The Retail Planning Guidelines published in 2012 states that 'Joint or Multi-Authority Retail Strategies must be prepared by Limerick City and County Council, Clare and Tipperary County Councils.~~

6.7 | Strong Education Assets and Availability of Talent

University of Limerick (UL), Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT) and Mary Immaculate College (MIC), offer a range of undergraduate and postgraduate study programmes to support the business growth and economic development taking place in the Limerick Metropolitan Area and the wider region. ~~The Shannon College of Hotel Management is Ireland's only dedicated hotel management college.~~

According to research undertaken in the UK the more satisfied people are with their city centre, the less they spend through online retail. "Retail sector studies indicate that offering the right retail mix, a strong leisure offer and good customer experience helps keeping the city centre alive. Retail, as the core business activity of high streets, can in turn contribute to this vitality".² The multifunctional nature of today's city centres is a key factor for the area performance and this needs to be considered when planning for retail revitalisation.

In order to re-establish Limerick city as the central town centre for the region retail must be reshaped and adapted to the local consumer. This will require a multi-stakeholder strategy led by a designated Town Centre Commercial Manager. Therefore, further commitment is needed to address the following: adequate traffic arrangement for the city centre; public transport infrastructure that promotes easy access; the re-development of Arthurs Quay to create a new city square and the further development of adjoining retail areas (Cruises Street and Milk Market); and, the development of a world class waterfront that enhances the city's retail and leisure offerings.

The retailing business model is evolving in a digital direction. Therefore, retail should be at the epicentre of any digital strategy plans developed by the local councils. A digital city centre should attract consumers by offering a unique retail experience and this experience should evolve in line with data collected around shopping preferences and behaviour. Funding mechanisms need to be identified in supporting traditional retailers in the transition to technology led, experiential retail models.

Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective ~~13~~: Retail

- a. ~~a. A~~ Joint Retail Strategy shall be prepared in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines. These guidelines clearly place Limerick City at the top of the planning hierarchy, this should be reflected in the Joint Retail Strategy.

~~b. It is an objective to support Limerick City Centre in maintaining its dominant retail function in the Mid West hierarchy. The RSES supports and promotes the continued expansion and enhancement of retail development within the City Centre~~

~~c.~~

- b. In order to re-establish Limerick as a Tier 1 Retail Centre, emphasis must be placed on offering quality residential opportunities in the City Centre that attract a high-spend demographic.

- c. It is an objective to investigate the potential ~~to develop a distinct shopping character to increase Shannon's attraction and to complement the retail function of Limerick city centre.~~

² URBACT, Adapting and Reshaping Retail in the City.
https://urbact.eu/sites/default/files/media/2-5_adapt_reshape_retail_final.pdf

Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 14: Retail

~~a. It is an objective to support the existing educational facilities in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area which includes University of Limerick/ Mary Immaculate/ Limerick Institute of Technology and the Shannon College of Hotel Management as critical drivers of economic development and the fostering of an innovative, knowledge based economy for the Metropolitan Area.~~

~~b. The MASP recognises that the Mid West Action Plan for Jobs (APJ) and the Mid West Regional Skills Forum works collaboratively with all the agencies focusing on key actions and opportunities that the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area can offer in terms of employment generation and the fostering of the knowledge based economy, in particular relating to clustering of expertise e.g. aviation, med-tech, agri-food etc. It is an objective that the Mid West APJ and the Mid West Regional Skills Forum continue their work to deliver significant benefits to the Metropolitan Area and Mid West.~~ in developing Limerick City Centre as a unique shopping experience. Experiential models should be assessed as complements and replacement for transactional type retail businesses.

d. It is an objective to investigate the potential in developing Limerick City Centre as a “super-block” which would prioritise pedestrian movement ahead of vehicular traffic and increase footfall within the heart of the city. In parallel the MASP supports the use of covered urban spaces, including covered streets and sidewalks, as well the provision of improved public realms and a significant increase in child friendly facilities such as playgrounds within Limerick City Centre.

e. It is suggested that a Business Improvement District Scheme (BIDS) should be implemented with the intention of funding a Town Centre Commercial Manager.

6.8+ Tourism

The MASP aims to ensure collaboration between Local Authorities and tourism agencies to develop attractions such as the Wild Atlantic Way, ~~Ireland's~~ Ireland's Ancient East, ~~and~~ and Ireland's Hidden ~~Heartland's~~ Heartlands. The Southern Regional Assembly recognises Shannon International Airport as a national and infrastructural driver of tourism growth and as an international gateway to the tourism assets of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area, Mid-West and wider region.

Despite certain geographical advantages and having an international airport within the MASP area Limerick underperforms in comparison to its regional peers. Hotel occupancy is far below other Irish cities and tourism destinations. Average nightly room rates for Limerick, as of June 2017, are €67.58, compared to €94.06 in Cork and €98.55 in Galway. With value for money a high priority for both domestic and international tourists, Limerick has a strong competitive advantage in this area. Two primary opportunities exist: to develop the MASP area tourist attractions and to act as a gateway to the regional tourist assets.

Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 15: Tourism

~~a. a. It is an objective to support investment in infrastructure, increased capacity of Shannon International Airport, road and rail accessibility, to maximise the potential of tourism- subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.~~

~~b. b. It is an objective to support the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area as a tourism destination. This will require the promotion of the tourism assets of the Mid West SPA which include, inter alia, Ireland's Lakelands, the Shannon Estuary and its islands, greenways, blueways, Munster Vales the Burren, Cliffs of Moher, West Clare NST tourism route, Loop Head, Bunratty, Holy Island, Lough Derg, St. Johns Castle. It is an objective to support and develop the tourism destinations within the MASP area. These include The Walls of Limerick, The Milk Market, King John's Castle and Limerick's Medieval Town, Thomand Park, the Shannon River, Adare village, Limerick's trails and hiking routes, Bunratty Castle, the International Rugby Museum, Pery Square and the Limerick Gallery of Arts.~~

~~c. It is an objective to ensure collaboration between Local Authorities and tourism agencies to develop attractions such as the Wild Atlantic Way, Irelands Ancient East, Ireland's Hidden Heartland's.~~

6.9 | Innovation and a Smart Metropolitan Area

~~Limerick City and County Council was the first local authority to establish an innovation company, Innovate Limerick, which acts as the delivery mechanism for key Limerick 2030 projects.~~

~~Innovate Limerick attracted Troy International Film Studios to Limerick City and developed the Innovation Hub and ENGINE, which provides office solutions for start-up and accelerating businesses. Limerick City and County Council has been very innovative in terms of attracting FDI, including co-locating FDI employees of companies, including WP Engine and Stats, with Council staff to ensure that companies have an immediate landing space.~~

~~Limerick has recently become a Lighthouse Smart City after been awarded a substantial grant in the biggest EU Research and Innovation Funding programme, Horizon 2020, for a smart cities and communities project worth €6.5m to the city. Lighthouse cities develop, and tests integrated innovative solutions at district scale and act as exemplars for their region and other cities and regions across Europe. The +CityxChange (positive city exchange) is a smart city project submitted by a consortium of 32 partners including Limerick City and County Council from 11 countries. For the next five years, Limerick City along with partner cities will work together to develop through citizen engagement a series of demonstration projects on how to become smart positive energy cities. This MASP supports the establishment of Limerick as a Smart Lighthouse City as proposed under the CityxChange project.~~

~~The focus in Limerick will be on the development of a new "community grid" and the use of smart meters, innovation in new energy sources (including hydrokinetic energy) and storage, digital tools and citizen participation to create what is called a 'Positive Energy District' in Limerick city centre, starting with the Gardens International building and ENGINE training and workspace provided by Innovate Limerick. A Positive Energy District contributes more energy than it consumes. Limerick's demonstration project will be centred in the Georgian Innovation district in the city centre (Georgian/Newtown Pery areas).~~

~~Jaguar / Landover will locate their new research and development centre in Shannon. The centre mainly concentrates on software development and will create 150 new jobs. The Shannon facility will play an important role in realising the company's vision for electric and automated driving vehicles. Within the facility, new technologies will be developed to support electrification and self-driving features including the next generation of electrical architecture as well as exploring advanced driver assistance systems for future Jaguar and Land Rover vehicles. This is an ideal opportunity to make Shannon a globally recognised centre of excellence for current and future software engineering talent and recognising Shannon as a centre for R&D for autonomous vehicles, complementing Shannon's role as a world leader in aviation.~~

Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 16: Digital Connectivity & Innovation

~~a. It is an objective to seek investment and improve quality in high speed, high capacity digital infrastructure and access for all to digital infrastructure in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.~~

~~b. It is an objective to seek investment in the initiatives of Local Authority Digital Strategies and investment in initiatives to deliver a greener, more innovative and smarter city and metropolitan area.~~

~~c. It is an objective to deliver high capacity ICT infrastructure and high speed broadband so peripheral locations can interact more successfully with larger urban centres and the metropolitan area.~~

c. [Engage with Failte Ireland to review council run tourism infrastructure with a view to optimising tourism potential.](#)

d. [Improve the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area's cost competitiveness as a holiday destination and actively and aggressively promote it both nationally and internationally.](#)

e. [Encourage local businesses to register with Failte Ireland to realise the potential value that registering with the national tourism body can make to their businesses.](#)

7.0 | Environment

The Limerick Shannon MASP seeks to integrate sustainable economic and social development with the protection and enhancement of the natural environment whilst ensuring our transition to a climate resilient society. Placemaking initiatives such as investment in public realm will create a more attractive area to live, visit and invest. Chapter 5 (Environment) covers these topic in greater detail.

Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 17: Public Realm and Placemaking

It is an objective to deliver improvements in the public realm in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area to create more active and vibrant urban centres which are attractive as locations of choice to

live, work and visit. Examples of projects which can strengthen placemaking and public realm in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area include but are not confined to:

- A 'World Class' Waterfront – a renaissance of Limerick's entire Waterfront;
- The 'Limerick Cultural Centre' – an iconic destination building on the Waterfront;
- 'Great streets' – a transformation of the City's three main streets – O'Connell Street, Catherine Street and Henry Street;
- A new City Square/Plaza – to define the focal point or 'heart' of the City Centre;
- Colbert Station renewal – a new public transport interchange and enhanced station environment;
- Renewal of the Georgian Quarter – a concentrated programme to restore the Georgian part of the City to its former glory; [and](#)
- Improvements and enhancement to Shannon Town Centre to create a sense of place, to upgrade public realm and promote redevelopment.

Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 18: Metropolitan Open Space, Recreation & Greenbelt Strategy

a. It is an objective to achieve a healthy, green and connected metropolitan area through the preparation of a Metropolitan Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy. This will require co-ordination between relevant stakeholders to deliver the sustainable development of parks, recreation and high quality public open space in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area. This Strategy may include, inter alia:

- The sustainable development of green infrastructure as an interconnected series of green spaces including (inter alia) Parks, Greenway, Blueways, natural green spaces and ecosystems.
- The identification of key requirements for recreation, sports and community facilities.
- Identification of a location for Regional Scale Park within the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area as well as the development of neighbourhood parks and open spaces. [Considering if Greenpark Racecourse could be developed into a "Phoenix Park-type" urban park that could support an ecosystem including deer.](#)
- Identification of measures which improve and strengthen the metropolitan area's natural environment and habitats for flora and fauna.
- The development of a Metropolitan Greenbelt Strategy in co-ordination between Limerick City and County Council and Clare County Council and relevant stakeholders.
- [Investigate environmental initiatives aimed at removing single use plastic from daily lives and encouraging reuse and recycling by introducing incentives.](#)

b. It is an objective to support and encourage sustainable recreation and tourism opportunities represented by the Shannon Estuary, the potential to create new walkways by linking existing areas of open space and woodland and the opportunity to develop Greenways for cycling and walking [and blueways for boating activities](#). In order to support decision-making in increasing recreation and tourism opportunities along the coastline, which is in close proximity to European Sites, the carrying capacity of SACs/SPAs will need to be established to understand what limits should be set for the extent of development.

8.0 | Social Infrastructure

The Limerick Shannon MASP supports ongoing collaboration with regional stakeholders to ensure that social infrastructure such as education, health and communities' facilities are provided and to ensure that opportunities for social as well as physical regeneration are realised. See also Chapter 7 (Quality of Life) for further details.

Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 19: Social Inclusion

a. It is an objective to seek investment in delivering ~~actions and~~ [the](#) stakeholder initiatives of the Local Economic Community Plans (LECPs) of Limerick City and County Council and Clare County Council to strengthen community infrastructure and promote social inclusion for all citizens across all our communities.

b. It is an objective to seek investment in initiatives that achieve the physical, economic, social and environmental regeneration of disadvantaged areas in the [Limerick Shannon](#) Metropolitan Area, in particular supporting the ongoing regeneration of the Limerick City RAPID areas.

c. It is an objective to support the development of an inter-agency Social Enterprise Strategy to support the retention and expansion of existing social enterprises and the development of new social enterprises.

[Efforts should be focused on the ongoing creation of social and sustainable communities of opportunity where people of all ages enjoy a good quality of life, a decent home and a sense of pride about their place. Well serviced and attractive neighbourhoods will be physically connected and fully integrated with the social, economic and cultural life of the region. Social infrastructure should be easily accessible by walking, cycling, and public transport. Shared use and co-location of facilities should be encouraged in order to align services and facilitate opportunities for further inclusion and community participation. These include facilities in relation to health, education, libraries, childcare, community centres, play, youth, recreation, sports, cultural facilities, policing and emergency facilities. Social infrastructure plays an important role in developing strong and inclusive communities.](#)

[8.1 University Hospital Limerick](#)

[As the only Model 4 hospital \(providing 24hr A/E care\) in the region with a current catchment population of 473,000, UHL is a major centre of health. Its current Strategic Plan 2018-2022 highlights a growing and aging demographic with the proportion of those over 65 predicted to](#)

double by 2031. Project Ireland 2040 plans include the relocation of the maternity hospital to the UHL site. The consolidation and expansion of UHL infrastructure and services should be prioritised within the strategic plans, in anticipation of servicing a larger and older population.

In the context of spatial planning and the recent increase in motorway access to Limerick city, it is reasonable to view UHL as the most accessible hospital outside of Dublin. As such, future planning of resources should identify this strategic location for development as the major centre of health outside of the Dublin area and develop future transport strategies that provide access to UHL both from within the Limerick Metropolitan Area by way of light rail, bus, cycling and walking, and from the wider region by inter-city train (including the reinstated Foynes-Limerick rail line which will connect Shannon, Sixmilebridge and Ennis to the north and Askeaton, Patrickswell and Adare to the south), bus and private car.

Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objectives: University Hospital Limerick

- a. Recognise the regional importance of UHL in future planning and the need to expand services to cater for the larger population, working with the strategic team at the hospital.
- b. Ensure local and regional transport plans consider the significant population and geographical catchment area of UHL by connecting the hospital with local walking and cycling networks, the Light Rail Public Transport Corridors proposed for the Limerick Metropolitan Area, as well as Limerick BusConnects and Bus Eireann services, inter-city rail and motorway networks.
- c. Anticipate changing demographics in the planning of housing, transport and health care facilities both within the MASP area and as part of its greater regional role.

8.2 | Integrating Education Assets within the Fabric of the City

HSE statistics show that Limerick City has the highest share of population classed as very disadvantaged or disadvantaged at 36.7%. The Opera site is a major first step in integrating more of the education assets of the MASP into the city centre.

- The social and educational development of the local population must be prioritised alongside the strategic plans of our local educational institutions.
- With a large population of single parents childcare facilities must be provided as an enabler of both work and educational opportunities.
- It is necessary to identify and utilise, capacity within existing institutions to provide access opportunities at all levels.
- The strategic plans should support initiatives such as the Community Engagement Gateway proposed at LIT. This facility can help address disadvantaged in their immediate communities, being in close proximity to the Moyross area.

Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objectives: Lifelong Learning and Skills

- a. It is the policy of the RSES to support initiatives such as the Community Engagement Gateway at LIT and to seek investment to facilitate their implementation.
- b. Review the ancillary services to the Opera Centre, such as transport and childcare, to ensure access to local communities
- c. Identify funding opportunities for future lifelong learning and skills programmes.

8.3 | Childcare as a Social Enabler

High quality, affordable and accessible child care facilities can act as a stimulant of economic and social activity. With a growing population, a large proportion of which are single parents, extra resources are needed to keep up.

Childcare costs can act as a significant impediment to access of opportunity in education and employment. Recent OECD reports estimate a weekly cost of €155 for Irish parents. Greater social participation can be realised by actively seeking to reduce this cost. A comprehensive review of MASP infrastructure should be undertaken to measure the existing stock of facilities and to anticipate future capital needs.

Although part of a greater national discussion on private childcare costs, local efforts can be focused on planning for high quality childcare infrastructure. The Affordable Childcare Act provides for subvention of up to €145 per week. As the MASP area is targeted to grow by 50,000, large scale developments must be complemented by quality facilities. Mapping the existing facilities, against demographic information, can allow for more targeted policy action.

The Limerick Childcare Committee is a local group which acts as a central point of contact for childcare related matters. It aims to promote the development of a co-ordinated, integrated, inclusive, strategic approach to the delivery of accessible, affordable, culturally appropriate, high quality childcare services that meet the overall developmental needs of children whilst supporting parents/guardians.

Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective: Childcare as a Social Enabler

- a. Identify the network of childcare facilities with the MASP area, working with the Limerick Childcare Committee.
- b. Anticipate the future areas of residential and employment growth to strategically place opportunities for childcare facility development.
- c. Review international best practice in childcare provision with the intention of creating a world class offering.

Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 20: Lifelong Learning and Skills

a. It is an objective to support investment in Higher Education Institutes, the Education and Training Board, apprenticeships and skills development in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area as an

enabler for jobs growth. This includes, inter alia, investment in LIT, UL, associated research institutes and facilities, the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board and initiatives applied to the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area under the Mid-West Regional Skills Forum and Mid-West Action Plan for Jobs.

b. It is an objective to support Limerick as a Learning City, and Limerick's role in the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities. It is also an objective to seek investment in initiatives under the Learning City initiative and to support the spread of such initiatives in the metropolitan area and region wide.

Limerick Shannon MASP Policy Objective 21: Healthy Cities and Health Infrastructure

a. It is an objective to seek investment in health service infrastructure within the Limerick Shannon MASP to meet existing and future regional population growth including supporting University Hospital Limerick to develop a consolidated integrated health district incorporating acute care, primary care, health education, innovation and research. It is an objective to grow and develop health care facilities as proposed by the University Hospital Limerick in their Strategic Plan.

b. It is an objective to support the role of Limerick as a WHO Healthy City and seek investment in the delivery of recreation, environmental improvements, active travel and health services infrastructure that retains and improves on this status.

Document comparison by Workshare Compare on 08 March 2019 16:31:53

Input:	
Document 1 ID	file://N:\Depts\Legal\Ryan\Original Draft RSES.docx
Description	Original Draft RSES
Document 2 ID	file://N:\Depts\Legal\Ryan\Revised Draft RSES (clean copy) (8 March 2019).docx
Description	Revised Draft RSES (clean copy) (8 March 2019)
Rendering set	Standard

Legend:	
Insertion	
Deletion	
Moved from	
Moved to	
Style change	
Format change	
Moved deletion	
Inserted cell	
Deleted cell	
Moved cell	
Split/Merged cell	
Padding cell	

Statistics:	
	Count
Insertions	486
Deletions	147
Moved from	67
Moved to	67
Style change	0
Format changed	0
Total changes	767