



Tionól Réigiúnach an Deiscirt
Southern Regional Assembly

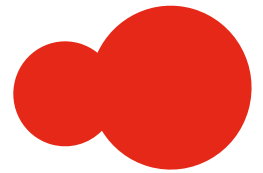
Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan

Extract from the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region



Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040

Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan



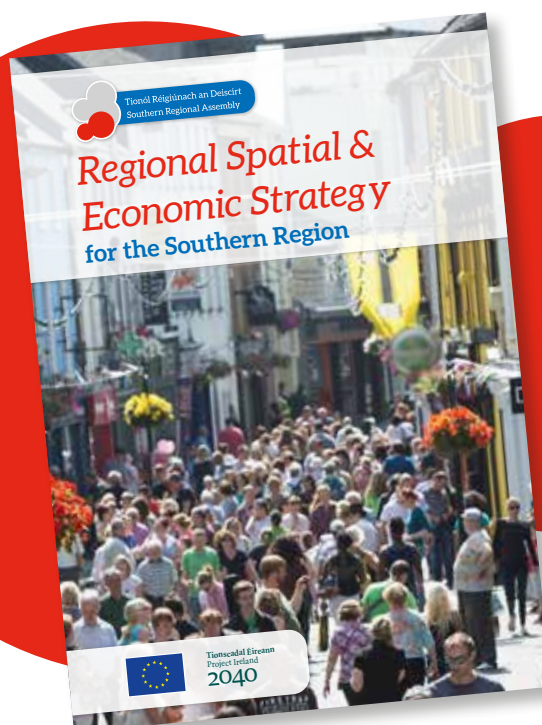
Extract from the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region

The NPF targets significant growth and development in all five of Ireland's cities. To achieve this, Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans (MASPs) have been designated in the NPF and in the Region MASPs have been prepared for:

- The Limerick - Shannon Metropolitan Area;
- The Cork Metropolitan Area;
- The Waterford Metropolitan Area;

The MASPs are an essential component of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (RSES) published January 2020 and provide a framework for accelerated sustainable growth in each Metropolitan Area and a mechanism to ensure co ordination between the local authorities in each MASP area. The following is the Limerick-Shannon MASP as contained in the RSES. It is important to note that the MASP is a subset of the RSES and therefore this extract should be read in that context. The RSES itself contains the overall policy (and relevant environmental assessments) for the Region and MASP and this extract should not be considered in isolation from the RSES.

The strategic role and Regional Policy Objectives for the MASPs are set out in Section 3.4 of the RSES and are attached here as Appendix 1. The RSES also includes strategic goals for the MASPs which are included as Appendix 2.





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 achieve its potential to become a city of scale.

The NPF recognises the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area's growth potential with existing third level institutes and international airport and port facilities. The NPF aims to build on these strengths while improving liveability through key growth enablers including proposals to implement and extend Limerick City Centre in accordance with the Limerick 2030 Economic and Spatial Plan, enhance opportunities for education and employment, and enhance connectivity to Shannon International Airport and Shannon Foynes Port, Cork and Waterford.

The NPF also aims to provide for a citywide public transport network with enhanced accessibility from the centre to the National Technology Park, the university and the airport, the development of a strategic

cycleway network, development, regeneration, and to diversification of the city. Shannon is a significant employment centre with assets such as Shannon International Airport, Shannon Free-Zone (SFZ) and the International Aviation Services Centre (IASC). Though located within different counties and 19km apart, both Limerick City and Shannon are interdependent, with complementary functions contributing to a combined strength - a primary economic driver for the Region.

Significant strategic investment in recent decades has helped unlock their joint potential, including the Limerick Tunnel (N7), improved links to Dublin via the N7 Dublin-Limerick motorway, and Galway via the M18.

This Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan provides a focus on Limerick City and the metropolitan settlement of Shannon. It sets out the framework for Limerick City and County Council and Clare County Council and the various stakeholders to implement the NPF within the context of the RSES.

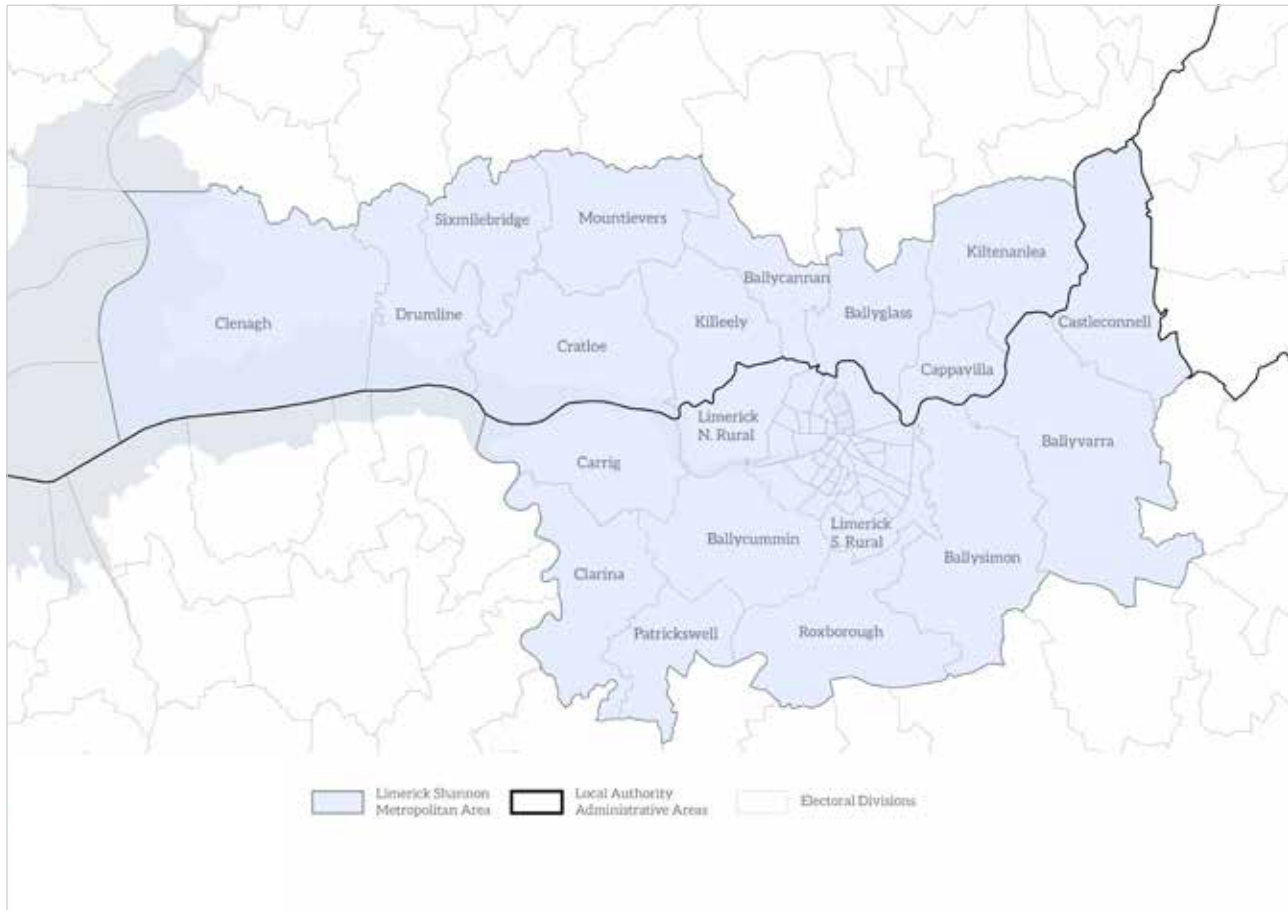
1.2 | Spatial Definition

The Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area includes Limerick City Centre at the core and the continuous built up area of Limerick City and Suburbs (as defined by the CSO). Shannon in Co. Clare is the largest metropolitan town with a population of 9,729.

The Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area also includes Annacotty (2,930), Castleconnell (2,107), Patrickswell (847), Clarina (294), Mungret (277) in Limerick and Sixmilebridge (2,625), Ardnacrusha (1,383), Clonlara (713), Cratloe (692), Ballycannon (638), Bunratty (349) and O'Briensbridge (396) in Clare³². The MASP area is almost evenly split, with 49% located in Co. Clare and 51% in the City and County of Limerick.



³². Population from Census 2016 of each listed settlement is contained in brackets.



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 Volume III).
- d. Any reference to support for all plans, projects, activities and development in the 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 EcIA 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 Region.

2.0 | Key Components and Attributes

2.1 | Limerick City

Limerick City¹ has a population of 94,192 persons and covers an area of 59km³³. An ancient city located on the banks of the River Shannon, its history dates back to its establishment by the Vikings as a walled city on King's Island in 812AD. Limerick's charter in 1197 makes it older than the City of London.

Limerick has already experienced successful economic and cultural rejuvenation. From record levels of high unemployment and emigration a decade ago, Limerick is now an exemplar of recovery and primed to take its place among the most dynamic emerging cities of Europe.

Limerick City has significant competitive advantages including its pivotal location in relation to other cities, its central location on the Atlantic Economic Corridor, national and international connectivity through Shannon International Airport and Shannon Foynes Port, tourism connectivity as a Wild Atlantic Way Gateway City, and a significant third level education and skills role including a world-class university.

It is a key economic driver for our Region and is a focus of employment for the surrounding areas with 44,635 jobs in 2016, an increase of over 4,000 over the previous five years. In 2016, over half the people working in the City were from outside with some 22,700 commuting into the City each day for work.

The Limerick 2030 initiative is key to unlocking the potential of the city and has been accelerated by the establishment of the Limerick 2030 Strategic Development Designated Activity Company, the first entity of its kind created by a local authority to deliver a city and county-wide programme of investment. It includes the biggest single Irish commercial property development programme undertaken outside of Dublin. Over €1 billion is being invested in enterprise and investment infrastructure as part of the Limerick 2030 vision, which aims to transform Limerick through economic, social and physical investment. The MASP supports this initiative, including the development of the Opera site, Gardens International, Cleeves Riverside Quarter and Mungret College lands.

This is complemented by Innovate Limerick, a delivery mechanism for key Limerick 2030 projects. Limerick is also transforming itself into Ireland's first Digital City with the integration of a number of public services, the creation of smart homes, smart buildings, energy districts and smart neighbourhoods.

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.

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

- **City Centre Consolidation and Revitalisation** based on Limerick 2030, comprising social, physical and economic regeneration and formation of a higher density Georgian Living City with all essential services and community facilities;
- **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;
- Potential for alternative uses in **Limerick Docklands**;
- Continued expansion and enhancement of the **retail offer** and experience in the City Centre;
- Continued investment in the City's **regeneration areas**;
- Development of a **new business park** on the north side of Limerick City linked with Limerick IT, Moyross and building on the regeneration process;
- **Industry 4.0**, Digital transformation and Smart City initiatives;
- **Public realm** improvements in the City Centre including the development of a city-wide interconnected set of public parks and urban renewal within the Georgian Quarter;
- Additional **child friendly amenities** within the City Centre including playgrounds that will help drive footfall;
- Improvements to **sustainable transport infrastructure** including the development of public transport, walking and cycling;
- Creation of a **Carbon Neutral City**;
- **Business incentive schemes** to further generate footfall and use of the City both during the daytime and in the evenings;
- The further development and promotion of **cultural, heritage and sporting offerings** (such as EVA International / The Red Mile) to further develop the desirability of the City Centre,

³³ Limerick City is taken to be the Census settlement of Limerick City and Suburbs.

- The growth and development of **health care facilities** as proposed by the University Hospital Limerick in their Strategic Plan,
- Delivery of the **Limerick Northern Distributor Road (LNDR)** – a key strategic infrastructure priority for the Region.
- Progressing the sustainable phased development of areas for **housing** and the development of support public transport and infrastructure, in areas such as Mungret.
- The continued expansion of the City's **third level institutions** and integration with the wider city and Region, including the provision of specific facilities to address educational and social deprivation
- The construction of a **Digital Collaboration Centre** by Innovate Limerick,
- The **World Class Waterfront Project** along the River Shannon to reinvent the City Quays as the main entertainment and leisure destination for the City.
- **Climate resilience** measures including CFRMAs Flood Relief Scheme for the City Centre.

Limerick-Shannon MASP Policy Objective 2

Limerick-Shannon

The Limerick-Shannon MASP recognises that for the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area and the Mid-West to prosper and develop 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 a primary economic driver for the Southern Region.
- Enhance the City Centre as the primary commercial area, supporting a range of retail, tourism, social and cultural activities.
- Strengthen the consolidation and regeneration of Limerick City Centre to drive its role as a vibrant living, retailing and working city, the economic, social and cultural heart of the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area and Region.

- Seek investment to achieve brownfield regeneration of City Centre sites as high quality, mixed use sustainable and transformative projects which set national and international good practice standards in innovation, quality design, exemplary urbanism and placemaking.
- Support collaboration between Limerick City and County Council and the Land Development Agency to masterplan and sustainably develop strategic City Centre and Dockland sites in Limerick City, utilising the appropriate planning mechanisms and subject to required environmental assessments.
- Seek investment to achieve regeneration and consolidation in the city suburbs.



2.2 | 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 International Airport and the industrial park, are critical not only to the Metropolitan Area but to the country.

Shannon is central to delivering the ambition for the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area's economic development and success. 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. Shannon has a daytime population of 18,000 people, with over 8,700 people working within the Shannon Free Zone in over 160 companies. Like Ennis, there is potential to capitalise on the growing linkages and synergies with Galway. The Limerick-Shannon MASP strongly supports Shannon's current and future role as a driver of growth.

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

Shannon's attributes include:

- Centre of international business, aviation, aerospace and attracting emerging sectors such as CAV and Lifesciences, for example Jaguar Land Rover and Edwards LifeSciences;
- Major employment location which includes industrial, manufacturing, warehousing, distribution and transport;
- Shannon International Airport with a capacity for 4.5 million passengers and, with US Pre clearance for passengers, is the international gateway for the West of Ireland;
- Ranked No. 1 for economic potential, No. 2 for business friendliness and No. 4 for connectivity among Micro European Cities of the Future 2018/19 by FDI Intelligence;
- NUIG Shannon College of Hotel Management is Ireland's only dedicated hotel management college;
- Shannon Free Zone (SFZ) is home to 160 companies and employs over 8,700 people;
- Through the International Aviation Services Centre (IASC), Shannon hosts the largest Aviation/Aerospace Cluster in Ireland with over 65 Aviation Companies and 2,600 jobs;

- Westpark Business Campus is home to over 50 global and national businesses;
- 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 to Shannon International Airport and Shannon Town. Shannon International Airport benefits from regular Bus Éireann services to Galway, however currently only five of these services per day are direct expressway services and do not coincide with flight times, creating a disincentive to use public transport to and from the Airport. Moreover, there are currently no direct public bus services providing connectivity between Cork and Shannon. Enhanced public transport connectivity from cities such as Galway, Cork and Limerick is particularly important to assist the continued growth of the Airport and the sustainable development of Shannon town;
- **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;
- **Road Access** - Investment is required in improving and upgrading the existing road access from the motorway to Shannon International Airport;
- **Limerick Northern Distributer Road** - linking Shannon International Airport, the SFZ 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 our Region;
- **Electricity** infrastructure is required to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to facilitate expansion through the development of a Combined Heat and Power Plant;
- **Wastewater treatment** infrastructure requires investment in terms of increased capacity to facilitate future development and expansion in Shannon Town, the SFZ and airport;
- The MASP 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. This will be a central component in attracting and retaining a skilled workforce.

Limerick-Shannon MASP Policy Objective 3

Shannon

- a. The Limerick-Shannon MASP recognises Shannon 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, aerospace, engineering, manufacturing and distribution.
- b. It is an objective to seek investment to deliver a Connected and Autonomous (CAV) R&D testbed and smart infrastructure in Shannon.
- c. It is an objective to improve and enhance Shannon as an attractive residential location through placemaking and regeneration initiatives.

2.3 | 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.

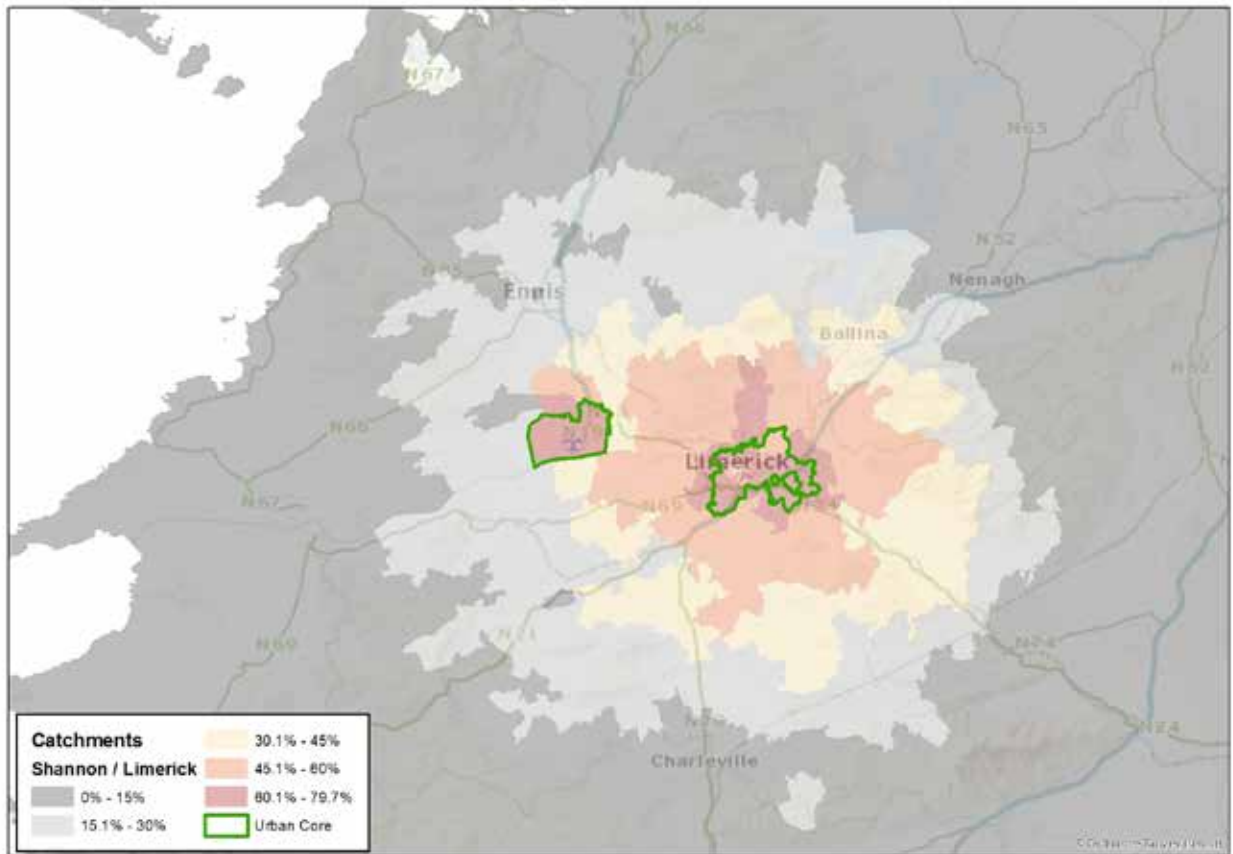
Analysis by the National Transport Authority (NTA) identifies the catchment of Limerick and Shannon MASP (see Map 2) and includes areas previously referred to as the Mid-West Limerick City Region. This sphere of influence of the Limerick-Shannon MASP will extend northward towards Galway, southwards towards Cork and Tralee, eastwards towards Tipperary Town and Nenagh, and west towards Kerry. The catchment has a number of dynamic relations including: international connectivity through the Port and Airport, connections to the Dublin, Galway, Cork and Waterford metropolitan areas, connection to Key Towns in the Mid-West and its relationship to surrounding towns, villages and rural areas. It contains a significant number of commuters to the Metropolitan Area and there are cultural, social, sporting, education, health services and amenity linkages in both directions.

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. Development of self-contained economic roles in settlements and rural areas 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 MASP. Limerick 2030 highlights Newcastle West as a key location to complement the growth of the Metropolitan Area. Other settlements and rural areas have potential for complementary roles, interacting 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 their mutual success. There are 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) within the Metropolitan Areas, between other settlements and between other Metropolitan Areas is an essential enabler to strengthen these opportunities.



Map 2 | Catchment of Limerick City and Shannon Urban Cores



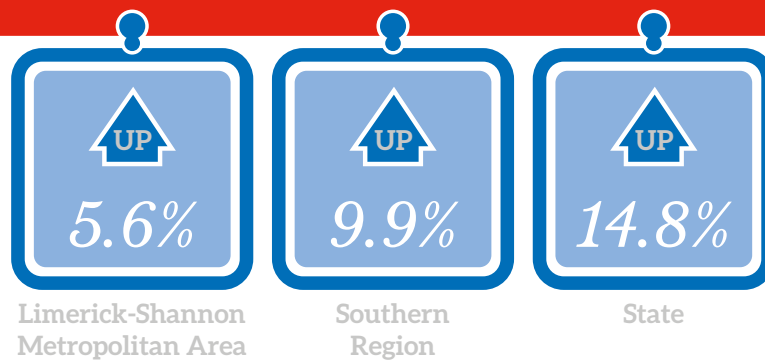
SOURCE | NTA Hinterland analysis



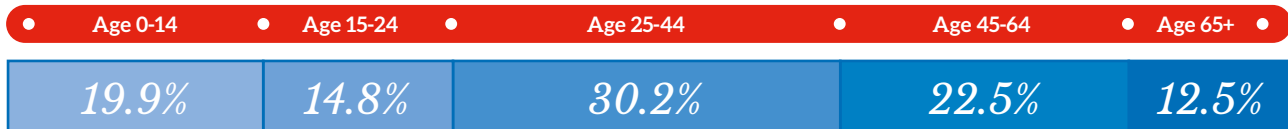
2.4 | Example Trends for the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area

The following infographics provide details of the key components and attributes of the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area.

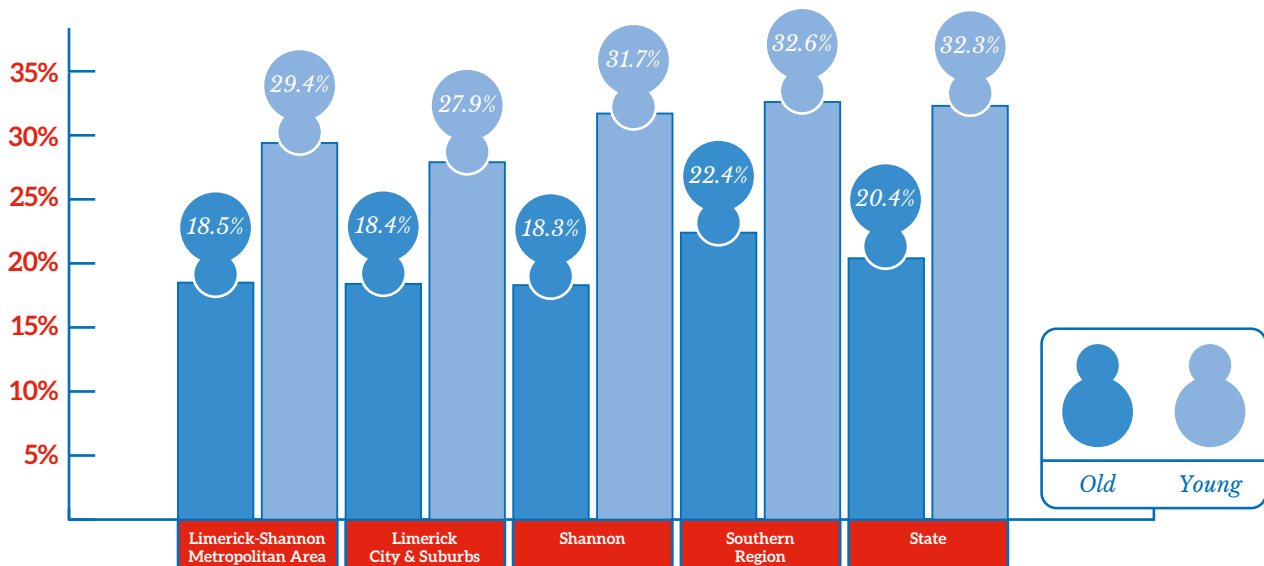
Population Change 2006 - 2016



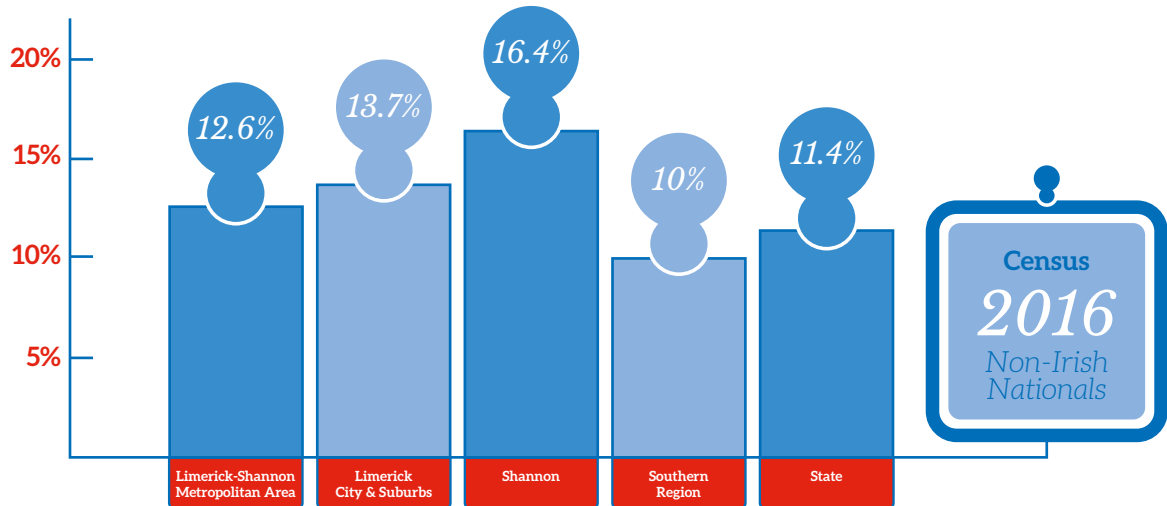
Population by Age



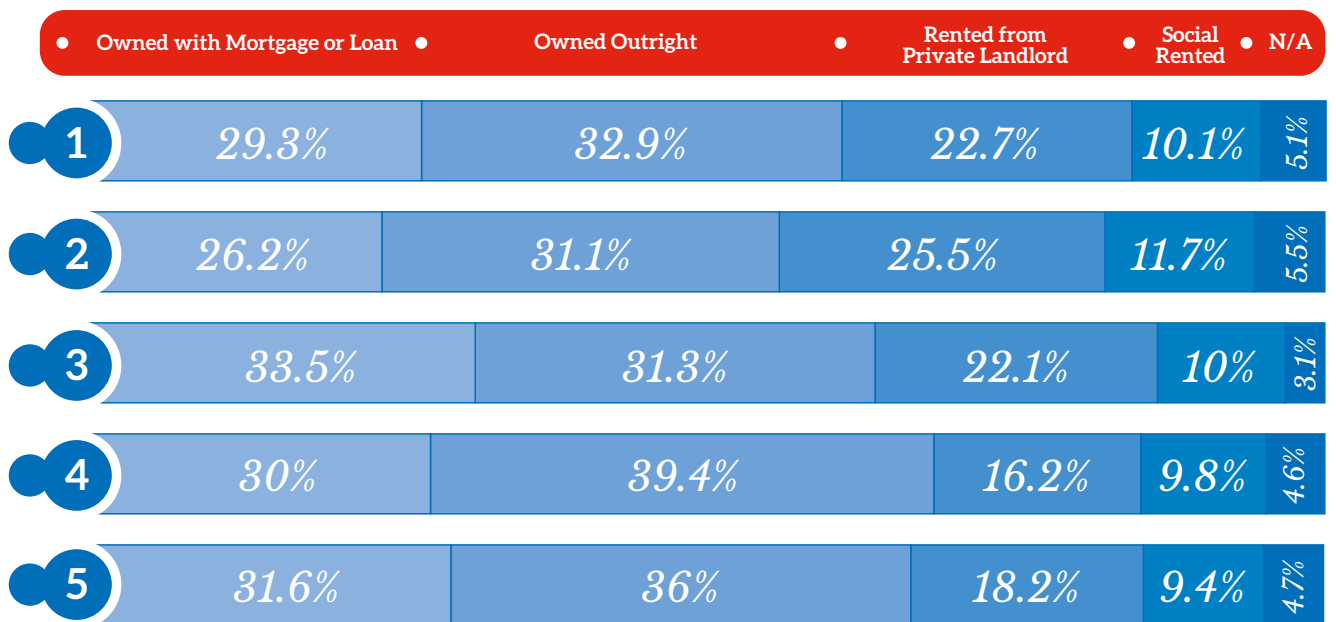
Old & Young Age Dependency Rate



Diversity and our Migrant Communities

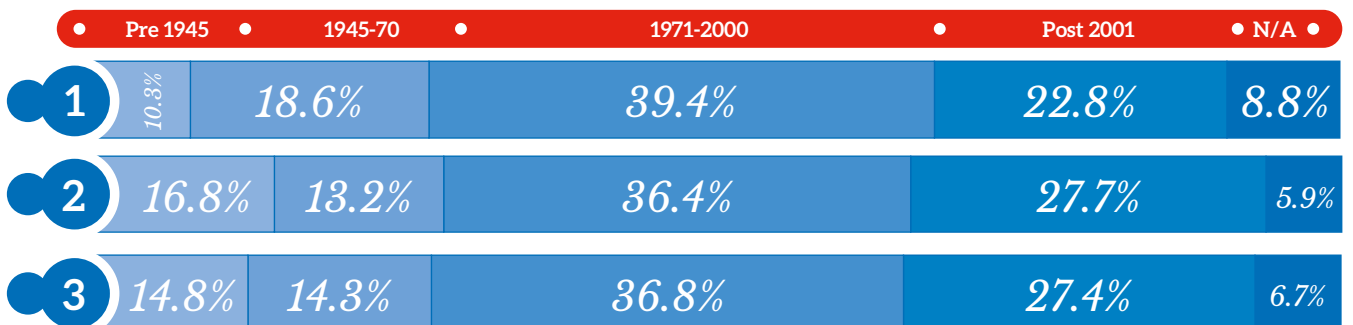


Housing Tenure



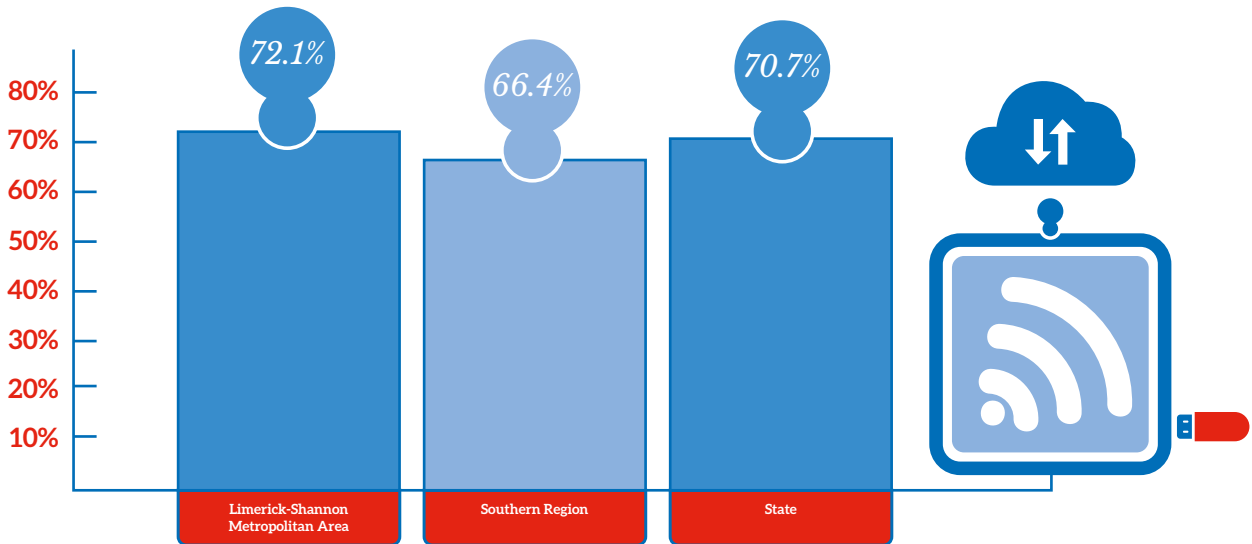
1. Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area 2. Limerick City & Suburbs 3. Shannon 4. Southern Region 5. State

Housing Year Built

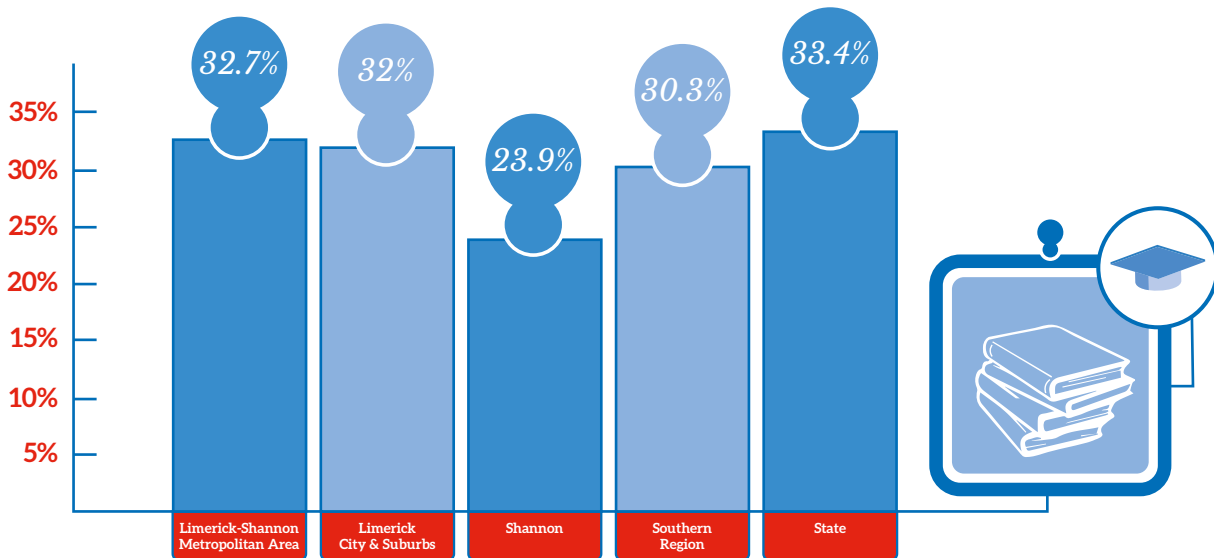


1. Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area 2. Southern Region 3. State

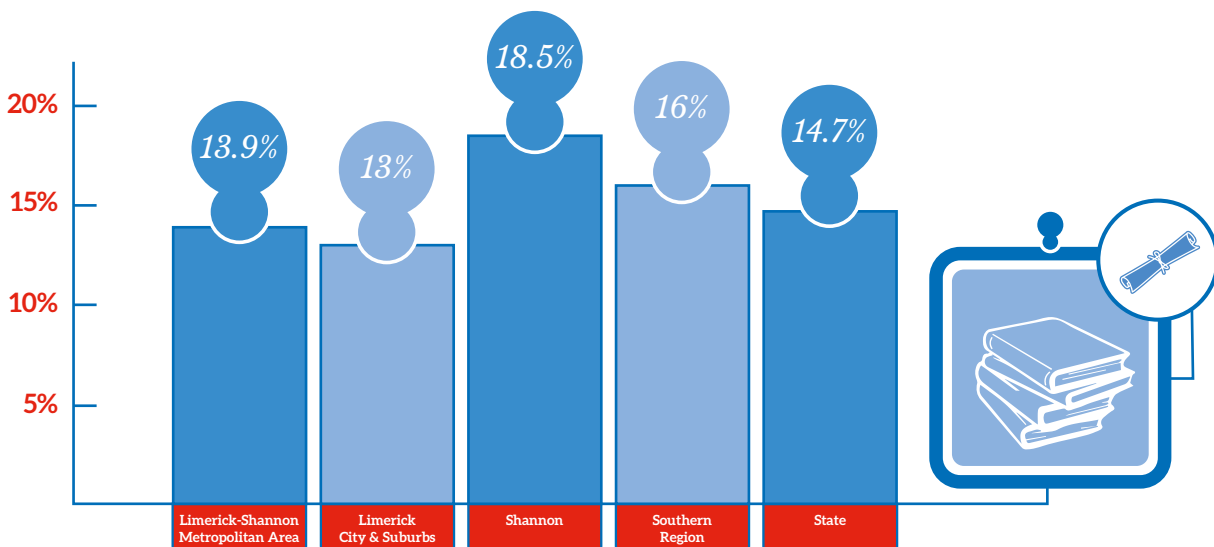
Households with Broadband



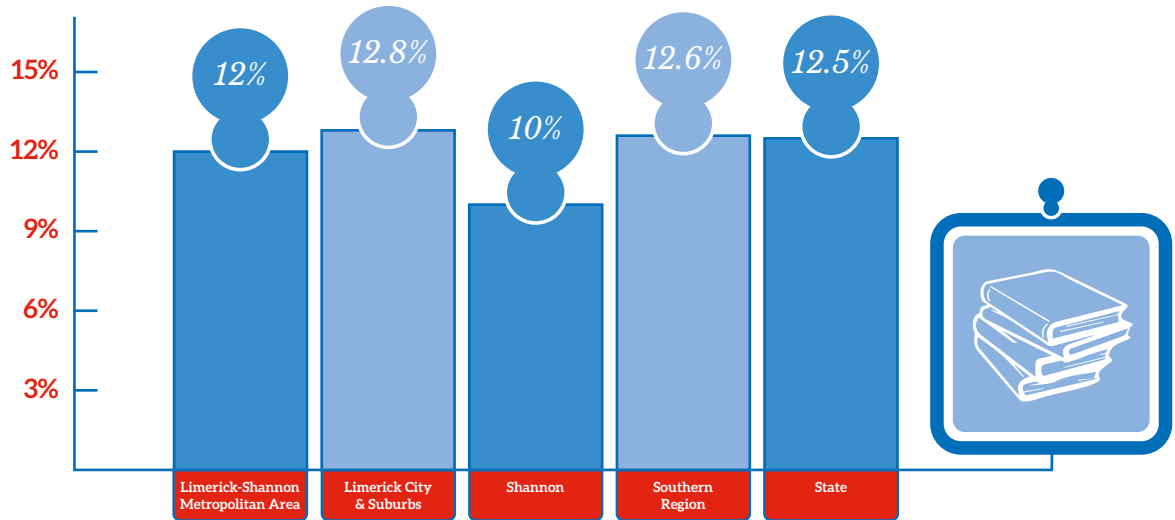
Education Attainment: All Third Level



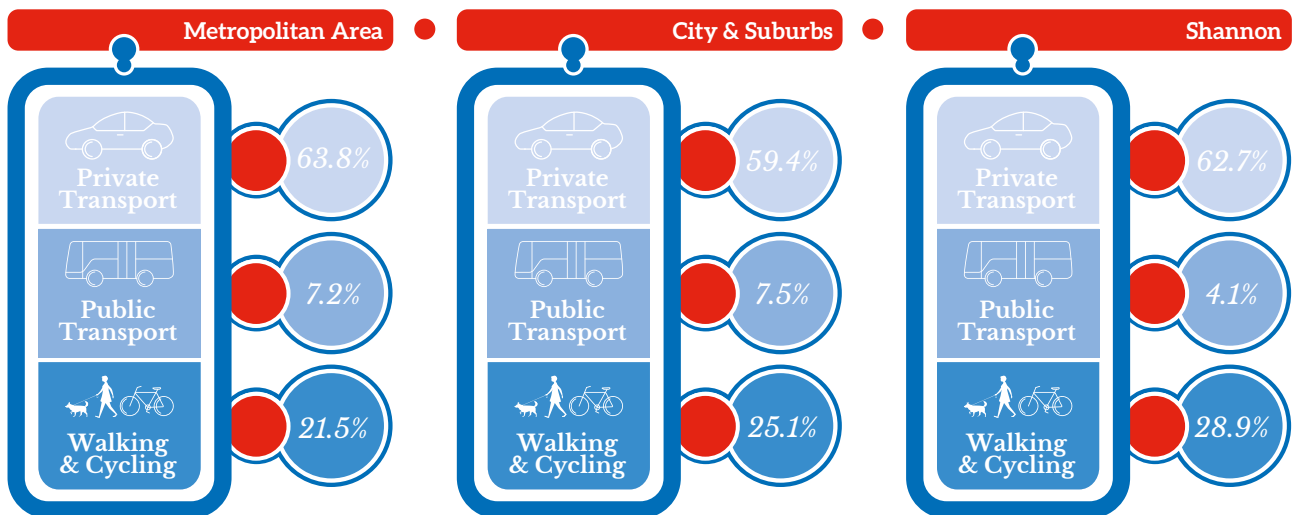
Education Attainment: Tech/Apprentice/Cert



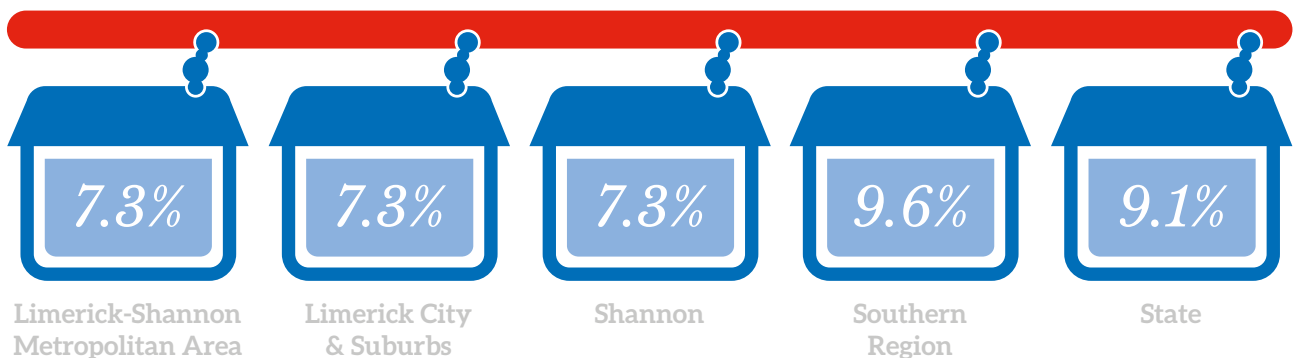
Education Attainment: No Formal/Primary



Mode of Travel to Work/Education



Housing Vacancy*



*Excluding Holiday Homes

2.5 | Signals of Confidence

Recent signals of confidence include:

- Significant progress in the transformation to Ireland's first Digital City with the integration of a number of public services, the creation of smart homes, smart buildings, energy districts and smart neighbourhoods;
- Advancement of the development of a Connected and Autonomous Vehicle (CAV) R&D hub and testbed in Shannon including the decision by Jaguar Land Rover to open a CAV R&D facility in Shannon;
- The people of Limerick voted for the introduction of a directly Elected Mayor that will be the first in the State;
- Government go-ahead to advance procedures to deliver the Foynes to Limerick Road (incl. Adare Bypass) project;
- Launch of Propeller Shannon Incubator Programme;
- Gardens International (officially opened in 2019)
- won the top prize in the New Build Workplace category in the prestigious Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland annual awards;
- Progress on the upgrade of the N19 to the Airport to facilitate the continued expansion and regeneration of Shannon;
- Collaboration between Limerick City and County Council, the Land Development Agency (LDA), CIÉ and other stakeholders to create an urban neighbourhood at Limerick's City Centre train and bus station, Colbert Station where there is a 50 ha landbank;
- Active regeneration initiatives and plans for significant investment in the Shannon Free Zone, Shannon International Airport and key tourist attractions in the MASP area;
- Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan (LRFIP) has resulted in the creation of over 300 jobs.

3.0 | Vision and Guiding Principles

3.1 | Vision

Sustainable management and compact growth will offer a platform to address key challenges related to housing, transport, environmental sustainability and liveability to ensure the 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 re-

development 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.

Implementation of 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.

The Vision Statement for the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area is:

“To create a sustainable, inclusive, smart, climate and economic resilient Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area, which is competitive and 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 Metropolitan Area, Mid-West and for the benefit of the country.”

3.2 | Guiding Principles

The future growth and ambition for the Limerick-Shannon MASP is based on the principles of the Sustainable Place Framework³⁴ 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 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 our Region. The high capacity transport corridors needed to support this scale of growth will be delivered incrementally in line with 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 or contiguous to the existing built up area in Limerick City and 30% in Shannon and other settlements.

Integrated transport and landuse - Target growth along high quality public transport corridors and nodes linked to the delivery of key public transport projects.

Accelerate housing delivery - Activate strategic residential development areas such as Mungret 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 opportunities for social as well as physical regeneration, particularly in areas with pockets of deprivation.

Future development areas - having regard to the long lead time for planning and development, identify future growth areas that may be delivered beyond the lifetime of the MASP but within the long term 2040 horizon of the NPF. For example, enabling infrastructure such as the Limerick Northern Distributor Road (LNDR) will open lands to the north of the city for consolidation and expansion.

Metropolitan scale amenities - Provision of regional parks and blue green infrastructure including greenways/blueways along the River Shannon and the re-opening of the Errina Canal.

Enabling infrastructure - Identify infrastructure capacity issues and ensure water services needs are met. 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 Volume 3).

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.

34. As per Goal 1 of the Metropolitan Area Goals in Volume III

4.0 | National Enablers

The following are identified for the Limerick-Shannon 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 through 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;
- 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 for housing and the development of supporting public transport and infrastructure, such as at Mungret;
- Provision of a Citywide public transport network, with enhanced accessibility from the City Centre to the National Technological Park, UL and Shannon International Airport;
- Development of a strategic cycleway network with several high capacity flagship routes;
- Enhanced 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 wastewater needs are met by new national projects to enhance water supply and increase wastewater treatment capacity;
- Improving sustainability in terms of energy, waste management and resource efficiency, to include district heating and water conservation;
- The fast-track delivery of the Limerick Northern Distributor Road (LNDR) which is a strategic investment priority for the MASP;
- Enhanced connectivity to Shannon Foynes Port, including local by-passes;
- Development of a new business park on the north of the city accessible by public transport, linking with Limerick IT and Moyross to build on the regeneration progress;
- Supporting an application for 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);
- The continued expansion of Limerick City's third level institutions and the NUIG Shannon College of Hotel Management along with integration with the wider Metropolitan Area and Region;
- Creating a sustainable urban design town centre through the development of an Action Area Plan for Shannon Town Centre;
- Enable a digital and innovation economy and make this Ireland's leading smart Metropolitan Area;
- Develop a Connected and Autonomous (CAV) R&D testbed and put the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area at the forefront of a global mobility revolution;
- Delivering a 55% level of non-car based transport in the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area;
- The delivery of measures and infrastructure which will transition cycling and walking as the primary mode of transport within the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area;
- Interconnecting and integrating walking and cycling infrastructure;
- Continue to develop workforce skills and talent and enhance the attractiveness of living and working in the Metropolitan Area;
- Protecting built and natural assets;
- Achieve a step-change in progress toward a low carbon economy;
- Managing flood and climate change risks;



The following are some examples of projects identified in the National Development Plan (NDP) in the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area³⁵.

NDP and Limerick-Shannon MASP

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 to see the completion of 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 for completion by 2023.

Airports and Ports

- **Shannon Foynes Port Company** will invest €27 million towards capacity extension works at the Port. The Shannon Foynes Port Company’s Infrastructure Development Programme will consist of a jetty expansion programme, 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 to 2022. This includes €100 million for the development of the property portfolio, 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 Bunratty 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.

35. Some projects outside of the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area are referenced as it is considered that they have a strong link to the MASP area. For a complete listing of all projects please refer to the National Development Plan (NDP).

5.0 | Population Projections

The NPF and Implementation Roadmap provided by the DHPLG set out the population allocations and targets for our Region and local authorities including projections to achieve accelerated urban growth³⁶. The NPF sets out ambitious targets for Limerick City and Suburbs of a population of least 141,000 by 2040 (as per Table 4.1 of the NPF).

The NPF and Implementation Roadmap also refer to further qualified allowances which may apply to deliver on accelerated urban growth in Metropolitan Areas. National Policy Objective 68 states a Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan may enable up to 20% of the phased population growth targeted in the principle city and suburban area, to be accommodated in the wider Metropolitan Area i.e. outside the city and suburbs or contiguous zoned area, in addition to growth identified for the Metropolitan Area.

This will be subject to:

- Any relocated growth being in the form of compact development, such as infill or sustainable urban extension.
- Any relocated growth being served by high capacity public transport and/or related to significant employment provision; and
- National Policy Objective 9.

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 and by opening the north eastern quadrant (in both Limerick and Clare) facilitated by the development of the LNDR. The application of NPO 68 will be subject to review by the MASP Implementation Group.

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 footprints as per National Policy Objective 3 (c) of the NPF.

Table 1 | Population Projections for the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area³⁷

Area	Population 2016	Projected Population 2026	Projected Population 2031
Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick)	89,671	112,089	123,289
Limerick City and Suburbs (in Clare)	4,521	5,607	6,150
Subtotal	94,192	117,696	129,448
Remainder Metropolitan Area (Limerick)	15,281	19,453	21,611
Remainder Metropolitan Area (Clare)	22,947	25,414	26,463
Subtotal	38,228	44,867	48,074
Total Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area	132,420	162,563	177,552



36. In addition, the Department have clarified that the 25% Headroom identified in the Roadmap can apply to the County Clare area of the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area.

37. The overall population projections for each county, as provided in the NPF Implementation Roadmap (July 2018), do not change in light of these MASP projections figures.

6.0 | Integrated Land Use and Transport

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

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. The transport capacity of the strategic national road network should also be maintained and protected and larger scale, trip intensive developments, should primarily be focused in locations which are well served by existing or proposed public transport corridors.

The Mid-West Area Strategic Plan 2012-30 identified that local passenger and national freight activity return from the available rail infrastructure is underutilised. The rail links to Limerick via Nenagh and Ballybrophy are in need of investment. There is a new opportunity to examine the potential for increased line usage, given future population growth in the Limerick-Shannon MASP and Nenagh as a Key Town in the RSES. There does not appear to be an immediate need for a rail link to Shannon International Airport, but the corridor should be protected into the future and regularly reviewed. Opportunities for improvement to commuter rail services including the provision of new stations could be assessed against the location of future population growth and value for money.

Enhanced public transport connectivity with Dublin, Galway, Cork and Waterford is particularly important to assist the continued growth of Shannon International

Airport. Transport investment requirements in the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area will be identified and prioritised through the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy (LSMATS). Sustainable transportation is addressed in more detail in Chapter 6 of the RSES.

In terms of strategic road infrastructure, the development of the Limerick Northern Distributor Road (LNDR) is a key priority. The LNDR will improve access to the University of Limerick and the IDA National Technology Park and will reduce City Centre 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 will open significant areas of land for potential development.

Interregional transport connectivity between Metropolitan Areas is a priority in this MASP. In addition, collaboration is required to address similar challenges and to harness opportunities. The Galway-Ennis-Shannon-Limerick (GESL) Economic Network is a potential network which promotes greater collaboration between the metropolitan areas of Galway and Limerick-Shannon and the Key Town of Ennis. It offers potential opportunities for partnership to drive economic growth and innovation on a sub-regional basis. This potential network is underpinned by the presence of public transport and motorway infrastructure that connects the two cities on the West coast of Ireland. Increasing collaboration across this potential network can create the conditions for achieving critical mass, population and jobs growth in a sustainable manner.

Limerick-Shannon MASP Policy Objective 6

Integration of Land Use and Transport

- 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 its investment and implementation.
- b. It is an objective that Core Strategies of local authority Development Plans will identify public transport corridors and nodal points on corridors in the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area arising from the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Transport Strategy which have potential to support high density development/regeneration. Core Strategies shall identify the appropriate land use zonings for these 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 achieve the National Strategic Outcomes of the NPF, through the sustainable and infrastructure led:
 - Regeneration, consolidation and growth of the City Centre and Suburbs.
 - Regeneration, consolidation and growth of Shannon Town.
 - Regeneration, consolidation and growth of strategic residential, employment and nodal locations along public transportation corridors
 - Regeneration, consolidation and growth of strategic residential, employment and nodal locations along strategic bus network corridors
- d. It is an objective to seek sustainable higher densities where practicable at public transport nodal points.

Limerick-Shannon MASP Policy Objective 7

Sustainable Transportation

a. It is an objective to support the following sustainable transport priorities in the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area subject to their consistency with the recommendations of LSMATS and the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process:

- Investment in sustainable transport infrastructure and public transport services;
- The implementation of an integrated, multi modal public transport network across the Metropolitan Area servicing strategic residential and employment growth locations.

b. Other transport measures for consideration, across the wider Mid-West area, may include the following:

- Implementation of improved public realm, walking and cycling routes and facilities;
- 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 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;
- The MASP supports the ambition to create a rail link between Limerick City and Shannon International Airport and this should be investigated further;
- Investigate the potential for a higher speed rail link between Dublin and Limerick City;
- Improved sustainable transport links between the City Centre, Shannon International Airport, LIT, UL and the National Technology Park;
- Implementation of improved public realm, walking and cycling routes and facilities including delivery of the Great Streets project;
- The provision of a high-quality cycle network in Limerick City as set out in the Limerick Metropolitan Area Cycle Network Study/ LSMATS;
- The provision of three new pedestrian/ cycle bridges in the City Centre as set out in the World Class Waterfront proposals to improve pedestrian and cycle permeability to key sites.

Limerick-Shannon MASP Policy Objective 8

Strategic Road Infrastructure

It is an objective to maintain and 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 their consistency with the recommendations of LSMATS, the outcome of appropriate appraisal, 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;
- Limerick Northern Distributer Route (LNDR);
- Foynes to Limerick Road Scheme (including Adare Bypass);
- 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;
- Upgrading of the R471;
- Works to upgrade and improve the road alignment of the L3126;
- The upgrade of the Childer's Road/ Ballysimon Road in Limerick City to accommodate bus and cycle facilities.

Limerick-Shannon MASP Policy Objective 9

Potential Collaboration Network-Galway-Ennis-Shannon-Limerick (GESL) Economic Network

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

b. It is an objective to deliver excellent public

transportation connections in the potential GESL Economic Network.

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.

7.0 | Housing and Regeneration

7.1 | Housing and Regeneration in the MASP

Chapter 3 of 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 and Suburbs, supported by Shannon.

Limerick City is one of the most affordable urban areas in Ireland to both rent and buy residential property. Coupled with higher disposable incomes than the national average, this is key competitive advantage for attracting people and investment.

The MASP recognises the progression of sustainable development areas for housing in Mungret and Castletroy. Limerick 2030 Designated Activity Company 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 a 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. The MASP supports the provision of sustainable transport options to and from the City Centre and nearby amenities and employment.

Shannon attracts a daytime working population of approximately 18,000 people per day however its population growth rate remains stagnant. The interdependence between Shannon as a residential area and its employment assets – Shannon Free-Zone and Shannon International Airport - have weakened to the detriment of Shannon. The 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 should be pursued through placemaking, including improving the quality and sense of place in the town centre. The development of an Action Area Plan for Shannon Town Centre to create a sustainable urban centre and a sense of focus would be a positive initiative. Consideration should be given to initiatives to encourage regeneration of existing residential areas.

Local authorities, through 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.

Table 2 | Mungret

Mungret	
Start Date	Procurement of Masterplan / Development Appraisal services commenced Q1 2018
Estimated yield	Potential of 2,000 housing units on all of the residential zoned lands
Stakeholders	Limerick City and County Council / Limerick 2030 /LIHAF
Current Project Status	Progressing Masterplan



7.2 | City Centre Consolidation and Regeneration

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. The Limerick-Shannon MASP supports the densification of Limerick City and Suburbs, the assembly of brownfield sites for development and City Centre rejuvenation and consolidation. The MASP strongly promotes and supports a Living City as per the “Guiding Principles” of this MASP.

The development of additional housing within Limerick City Centre will achieve a redeveloped and vibrant, walkable core. This should be connected to the wider Metropolitan Area by an extensive, reliable and state of the art public transport network. The development of additional housing stock within Limerick City Centre will be achieved by (i) developing high-density housing at strategic locations, (ii) upgrading, modernising and densifying areas containing social housing stock and (iii) the development of underutilised landbanks.

The regeneration process is a key driver of change across Limerick City. Its contribution to the overall economic rejuvenation of the City is critical to sustained socio-economic vibrancy. The Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan (LRFIP) centres on three key pillars – Economic, Physical and Social renewal.

New housing construction with mixed unit sizes and types and retrofitting of existing housing stock are key elements of the LRFIP. This will lead to the delivery of nearly 600 new homes and the upgrading of over 1,500 homes across the areas of Moyross, Southill, Ballinacurra Weston and St Mary’s Park. This will raise standards of living, opportunity, health and wellbeing for all residents of the regeneration areas and involves a high level of cooperation between all the various public sector organizations and agencies. The significant work in the four regeneration areas across Limerick City is having a very positive impact on the communities across the three pillars. It has resulted in the creation of over 300 jobs, increased participation in support services and in school attendance, facilitated a reduction in youth crime and has created safer communities. Over 50% of new build homes have been completed and 80% of 1,493 homes earmarked for thermal upgrading are in progress.³⁸

Actions will be identified at the local authority level to improve housing stock and quality and to bring buildings back into use. These actions will include improvements to public realm and amenities to create more attractive streetscapes and desirable neighbourhoods. The MASP supports collaboration between local authorities and the Land Development Agency to masterplan and develop strategic City Centre and Dockland sites in Limerick City, utilising the appropriate planning mechanisms. Considering that regeneration issues in Limerick City are similar to Shannon, there are opportunities for both local authorities to work together to overcome challenges.

Limerick-Shannon MASP Policy Objective 10

Housing and Regeneration

- a. It is an objective to support the environmentally sustainable densification of Limerick City Centre, the assembly of brownfield sites for development and the regeneration and redevelopment of Limerick City and Suburbs to accommodate residential use. The MASP recognises that initiatives such as the Living City and Living Georgian City initiatives and other interventions by agencies such as the Land Development Agency (and any environmental mitigation arising from the environmental assessment of such strategies) are essential to facilitate compact growth and increased residential density in the City Centre.
- b. It is an objective to enhance Shannon Town as an attractive residential centre through regeneration, active land management initiatives and the redevelopment of Shannon Town Centre. An Action Area Plan for Shannon Town Centre and required environmental assessments including SEA and AA will be prepared within 3 years of the publication of this RSES and MASP.
- c. It is an objective to ensure investment and delivery of holistic physical, social and environmental infrastructure packages to meet growth targets that prioritises the delivery of compact growth and sustainable mobility in accordance with NPF and RSES objectives.

38. As of January 2019

8.0 | Employment and Enterprise

8.1 | Introduction

Investment in the creation of 'place', 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. Together with improvements in existing sectors such as retail and tourism will play an important role in creating a stronger economy.

Limerick City and Shannon are Ireland's most connected fulcrum; the Metropolitan Area is the only location in Ireland with access to all other regional urban centres within 2 hours and within 90 minutes of Dublin. The continued growth of Shannon International Airport, Shannon Foynes Port and third level education facilities is essential for future growth based on leveraging national and international connectivity, higher education capacity and quality of life to secure strategic investment.

8.2 | Economic Resilience and Clusters

The diversification of industry and the development of clusters will increase economic resilience and reduce overall risk. By developing industrial clusters, benefits such as lower production costs, increased innovation among related businesses and increased co-location of similar and supporting businesses can be realised.

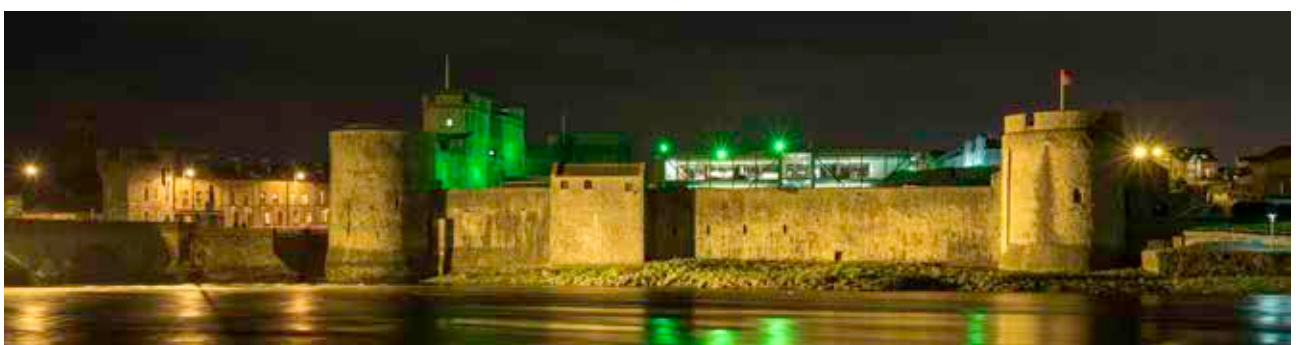
There are positive examples of clusters in the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area. The IASC recently became the first Irish member of the European Aerospace Cluster Partnership (EACP). Firms within the cluster can co-operate on a European level to identify new projects, funding sources and development opportunities. The National Sports Business Cluster will leverage 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.

Working together, companies can be more innovative, create more jobs and register more international trademarks and patents than they would alone. The EU Cluster Portal³⁹ provides tools and information on key European initiatives, actions and events for clusters with the aim of creating more world-class clusters across the EU.

Limerick-Shannon MASP Policy Objective 11

Economic Resilience and Clusters

It is an objective to develop, deepen and enhance the economic resilience of the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area through creating a vibrant and diversified enterprise base, with strong, healthy, connected Clusters drawing on Eolas Comhroinnte Obair le cheile / Shared Knowledge Working Together (ECOLC / SKWT) to assist in bringing disruptive technologies and innovations to national and global markets.



39. https://ec.europa.eu/growth/industry/policy/cluster_en

8.3 | A Smart Metropolitan Area and Strengths in Attracting FDI

The Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area is an important information and communications technology (ICT) hub for FDI. Acting as a cornerstone for the burgeoning IDA Artificial Intelligence (AI) Island strategy, companies such as Analog Devices, Jaguar Landrover, Dell/EMC, General Motors (GM) and J&J 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.

The HEIs that serve the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area are 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 an innovation company, Innovate Limerick, which acts as the delivery mechanism for key Limerick 2030 projects. Innovate Limerick has 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. This innovative process encourages a positive business ecosystem which is essential to achieve the vision of the MASP.

Ireland's First Digital City

Limerick's Digital Strategy will enable the development of a smart, sustainable, city and Metropolitan Area where digital technologies improve quality of life, empower communities and enable economic growth.

The Strategy supports development of Smart Homes and Smart Buildings and sets the foundation for Smart Limerick, where data, automation and artificial intelligence will fuel the knowledge and digital economies and lead to better services and improved quality of life for all.

The Limerick Digital District comprises connected infrastructure that traverses the city, equipping key actors with the capabilities to regenerate and accelerate Limerick's transition to becoming Ireland's first digital city.

The Digital District is the backbone on which the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area can implement and develop novel technologies, build a sustainable knowledge base and engage citizens in digital transformation, while minimising the risk of digital inequalities. The foundation constituents of the Digital District will include the Digital R&D Hub at Park Point, and the Digital Quarter in Georgian Limerick. The Digital District will support compact sustainable growth in Limerick, transforming a vacant development into an 8,625m² landmark R&D/educational/business incubation space with future plans to develop and transform Limerick City's Georgian Neighbourhood.



Limerick has recently become a “Lighthouse Smart City” as part of the EU Research and Innovation funding programme, Horizon 2020. Lighthouse cities develop, and tests integrated innovative solutions at district scale and act as exemplars across Europe. The +CityxChange (positive city exchange) is a smart city project. 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”, the use of smart meters, innovation in new energy sources (including hydrokinetic energy) and storage, to create a ‘Positive Energy District’ in Limerick City Centre. 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 Land Rover will locate their new research and development centre in Shannon, leading to the creation of 150 new jobs. The Shannon facility will play an important role in realising the company’s vision for electric and automated driving vehicles. New technologies will be developed at the test facility to support electrification and self-driving features including the next generation of electrical architecture as well as advanced driver assistance systems. 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. The MASP supports transformative projects which provide strategic opportunities for the Metropolitan Area such as the development of a Connected and Autonomous Vehicle (CAV) testbed in Shannon.

Limerick-Shannon MASP Policy Objective 12

A Smart Metropolitan Area and Strengths in Attracting FDI

- a. It is an objective to seek investment and improve quality in high speed, high capacity digital infrastructure and to seek 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.

- d. It is an objective to seek investment in the sustainable development of initiatives of IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland in strengthening enterprise assets, fostering competitive locations and conditions for enterprise growth in the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area.
- e. It is an objective to implement and develop novel technologies, build a sustainable knowledge base and engage citizens in digital transformation, while minimising the risk of digital inequalities in the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area. In this regard it is an objective to support the Limerick Digital District and to accelerate Limerick’s transition to becoming Ireland’s first digital city

8.4 | Employment Distribution

The delivery of business and enterprise potential is dependent on understanding and identifying the main economic drivers and removing obstacles. The Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area meets these key elements as a business location of choice.

The Limerick-Shannon MASP identifies strategic employment locations within the Metropolitan Area. However, achieving NPF growth targets will require consideration of new locations and initiatives by each

local authority. Additional locations may become available and this MASP recognises the need for flexibility to accommodate future growth opportunities that may emerge during the lifetime of the MASP. In particular, it is recognised that a new Northside Business Campus could be identified and developed. Future growth proposals should be consistent and integrate with the Limerick-Shannon MASPs aim of revitalising and reinvigorating Limerick City for higher-density living and high-density, high-value jobs.

Future growth in employment will place additional resource demands on the local economy. As an open

market economy at the innovation edge, where new technologies and business models continuously evolve at a rapid pace, it is difficult to specify jobs targets for every type of economic activity and location in the Limerick-Shannon MASP. However, as a functional economic area, certain assumptions can be made. The NPF, used a ratio of 1.6 between population growth targets and employment growth. Applying a similar ratio to the population growth targets for the Metropolitan Area can provide an indication of additional jobs in the Limerick-Shannon MASP. Therefore, with a projected increase in the population of 30,134 (2026) and 45,132 (2031), additional jobs to 2026 would be in the order of at least 19,000 and additional jobs to 2031 at least 28,200.

The recent economic revival in the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area has been generally concentrated on financial service companies, such as Northern Trust, and high-end manufacturing and research, such as Regeneron and Jaguar’s new autonomous vehicle research centre. These sectors place different infrastructural requirements on the local economy.

Table 3 lists some of the main employment centres. Modern service companies require high quality office space in areas that offer a good quality of life and reliable public transport. The completed Gardens International Centre, the Opera Centre and the planned Cleeves development have the capacity to add 7,000 additional jobs. There is also existing capacity in Ballysimon (c. 54.6 hectares), Clondrinagh (c. 27.7 hectares) and Annacotty (c. 37.5 hectares). The MASP supports further plans for development of central sites for continued employment growth, which should also add to the core regeneration of Limerick City. The proposed development of the Dock Road provides significant potential. Concentrations of employment outside the City Centre area are predominantly at locations in Shannon, Castletroy and Raheen. The MASP area has capacity for expansion of scale at these primary locations. These strategic locations offer the capacity to cater for companies that complements access to an international airport and third level graduates.

Table 3 | Strategic Employment Locations

Name/Type	Employment Numbers/ Status	Description	Capacity
Higher Education Institutes	3,000+	25,000+ students with 6,300 graduates per annum. Strong synergies with extended region and local businesses. UL is recognised for the employability of its students. CONFIRM, based at UL, is a new research centre that develops future smart manufacturing technologies. LIT has strong industry connections and is internationally recognised for its industry focused “Active Learning” courses.	Large capacity for growth at UL including the proposed South Clare Economic Strategic Development Zone (SDZ) and a City Centre Campus. Recent expansion of LIT campus to Coonagh with potential for further growth.
Shannon Free Zone (SFZ)	8,500+ 160+ companies	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 Land Rover recently planning for a research centre in autonomous driving. Supportive start-up environment with Propeller and Gateway Hub Innovation Centre.	195 hectares

Name/Type	Employment Numbers/ Status	Description	Capacity
Public Hospitals	3500+	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.	New Accident and Emergency department recently opened, with plans approved for a new 60 bed unit. Plans for expansion including relocation of Maternity Hospital.
National Technological Park	3000+ 80+ companies	Large graduate pool from UL. Opportunity for industry collaborations. Supportive environment for start-up companies including the Nexus Innovation Centre.	71 hectares
Raheen	3000+ 50+ companies	Located 3 miles from City Centre, offering brownfield and greenfield sites.	57.5 hectares
Garden's International Centre	Complete (2019)	The newly completed Garden's International Centre offers state of the art office space, with the first tenants in place in Q2 2019. It is the first completed part of the Limerick 2030 plan.	750+ (estimated)
Opera Centre	Funding Secured	High quality City Centre office space. Easy access to graduate pool, international connectivity and a vibrant City Centre location.	3,000 (estimated)
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.	1,500 (estimated) 4 hectares
Dock Road	In development	The Limerick Docklands Framework Strategy aims to grow existing commercial activity at SFPC's 23 hectare Ted Russell Docks, and also provide for the major development of non-core activities along a further 49 acre site.	113.2 hectares
Northside Business Campus	In development	A new business park on the north of the city accessible by public transport, will be developed on the basis of strong links between, and synergies with, LIT and various employment agencies, and will build on the regeneration progress in Moyross.	

Limerick-Shannon MASP Policy Objective 13

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 subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process;
- b. It is an objective to seek investment to deliver a Connected and Autonomous (CAV) R&D testbed and smart infrastructure in Shannon and a smart city demonstrator in Limerick;
- c. It is an objective to support the development of the Limerick Docklands Strategy within the context of both commercial and potential future residential development.



8.4.1 | Shannon Free Zone

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 cluster of American companies in Ireland outside of Dublin.

The site is part owned by Shannon Commercial Properties and part privately owned. It consists of greenfield and brownfield lands. There is considerable potential for development within this existing zoned landbank. It is 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.

The following are key priorities for SFZ:

- Shannon Group is transforming the SFZ to create the environment for a high-tech eco-system 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;
- The SFZ Masterplan, currently under development, will provide a detailed development framework strategy for the undeveloped landbank at SFZ East

and the brownfield regeneration of SFZ West. The Masterplan will ensure that the land use potential of the lands is maximised and future development takes place in a co-ordinated manner;

- Shannon can be at the forefront of a global mobility revolution. It has an established industrial base in the technology and automotive sectors, including global market-leading firms with ambitious investment plans, a plethora of expert SMEs and depth of research expertise. The MASP supports the future development of the automotive and mobility sector in Shannon;
- Investment in the sustainable development of the CAV sector in Shannon including the development of a testbed for this transformative technology which can be a key enabler for decarbonising our transport sector;
- Cross-agency cooperation in the promotion and development of the IASC cluster;
- Investment in the utilities infrastructure is necessary to ensure the continued regeneration of the SFZ. Much of the utilities date back to the 1950's and requires upgrading. Upgrades to the electricity network, the water and wastewater network is necessary to ensure that the economic potential of the SFZ can be achieved;
- Westpark which has 2,500-3,000 jobs on a modern campus and has plans for expansion.

8.4.2 | South Clare Economic Strategic Development Zone

In common with other higher education institutes, UL is a key economic driver in the Metropolitan Area and wider region. An opportunity for the development of a South Clare Economic Strategic Development Zone (SDZ) has emerged at 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, reflects the strategic economic role of UL 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 Metropolitan Area by creating a prime global site for international investment with the potential to generate 3,500 jobs. Investment by industry will involve collaboration 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 to link the nearby villages of Clonlara, O'Briensbridge and Castleconnell, and provide a direct inland waterway connection between Limerick City and Belfast to reopen 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. 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 enterprise population focus would be on an international scale with partnerships with Europe, the United States and Asia. Local settlements in the Metropolitan Area would also benefit from the appropriate placemaking infrastructure of the zone that will enhance its attractiveness to residents from overseas. The site will be accessible 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 via motorway.

This is a potential project of scale from a European perspective. 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 14

South Clare Economic / UL proposed Strategic Development Zone (SDZ)

It is an objective of the MASP to support an application for 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.



8.5 | Shannon International Airport

The second largest airport in Ireland with a capacity of 4.5 million passengers annually, Shannon International Airport is a strategic national asset. It serves a catchment area beyond the Mid-West and is experiencing significant growth. The Airport has the longest runway in the country allowing it to cater for fully-laden flights to Asia and South America and is the only airport in the country operating with no flight time restrictions.

Research by the ESRI shows that foreign firm's value airport access above access to motorways. Access to airports is particularly important for high tech FDI and knowledge intensive firms, key drivers for economic development. The importance of Shannon International Airport is also evident in the fact that over 40% of US FDI companies in Ireland are within the airport's catchment area. The 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 be a truly global player in the aerospace industry. The MASP supports the continued sustainable development and investment in the airports surrounding land bank, zoned in the Shannon Town LAP to act as a catalyst for economic growth in the Region.

International Aviation Services Centre (IASC)

Shannon International Airport and the Shannon Free Zone are home to the IASC, 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 IASC at Shannon". This will be the first new widebody hangar constructed at an Irish airport in over 20 years and will assist the growth of 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 Metropolitan Area and wider region.



Enhancing connectivity from Shannon International Airport to drive economic development along the entire west coast of Ireland, the Region and beyond is a priority for the Limerick-Shannon MASP. It is imperative that the connections from Shannon are maintained and improved. Year-round connectivity to transatlantic and European hubs will be vital to support both business and tourism.

While passenger numbers reached nearly 1.9 million in 2018, it has capacity to deal with 4.5 million passengers. Nearly 95% of Irish air traffic growth in the last five years goes through Dublin Airport, putting greater pressure on the capital's airport. It is important to note that Shannon International Airport can immediately relieve the congestion in Dublin Airport.

Limerick-Shannon MASP Policy Objective 15

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

- c. investment in Shannon International Airport and its surrounding land bank to act as a catalyst for economic growth in our Region.
- c. The Limerick-Shannon MASP recognises and supports the role of IASC as a significant opportunity for the Metropolitan Area 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 that cross-agency cooperation will continue to develop the IASC to meet industry demand.



8.6 | Shannon Foynes Port

As Ireland's second largest port in terms of total throughput/trade handled and 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. While it is located outside the MASP area, the Port is of strategic importance to the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area.

The MASP supports the continued development of Shannon Foynes Port and recognises the significant opportunities for the Region and Ireland due to its deep waters. The MASP supports and promotes the inclusion

of Shannon Foynes Port onto the EU core network corridor as it brings significant investment opportunities in the form of FDI potential and as well as supporting enhanced connectivity with Ireland's European partners.

The N69 route to Foynes does not meet the standards of reliability and connectivity required to serve a port to support foreign and indigenous investment, nor to maximise tourism potential. The delivery of the Foynes to Limerick Road improvement scheme is a key infrastructural project. 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.

Shannon Foynes Port

- a. It is an objective, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process, including SEA and AA as appropriate, 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 to support the reinstatement of the Limerick to Foynes rail line and the delivery of the Foynes to Limerick Road Improvement Scheme.
- d. It is an objective to safeguard and maintain Foynes Island as a vital port asset and to support the provision of natural deep water berthage on the island.

8.7 | Retail

Shopping habits and retail are subject to continuous change. Furthermore, a lack of population density, the growth of suburban shopping centres and the significant growth in online shopping are contributing to low levels of footfall within city centres. With the loss of retail activity, urban centres lose attractiveness, vitality and liveability.

Retail plays a central role in placemaking and creating attractive liveable environments, enabling strong mixed-use urban cores and facilitating regeneration. Retail and the City Centre experience must be reshaped and adapted to this changed circumstance. This will require improvements to access, enhanced sustainable transport connectivity and a significantly improved customer experience of visiting Limerick City Centre and Shannon Town Centre.

The Retail Strategy for the Mid-West Region 2010-16 highlighted that Limerick City Centre fell behind other Irish cities and no longer performed to its Tier 1 Status in the shopping hierarchy⁴⁰ and that too much trade was lost to suburban locations. The Strategy sought to re-establish Limerick City Centre at the top of the regional hierarchy as the preferred location for new retail development. The need to regenerate Shannon Town Centre and improvements in the retail offer to create a sense of focus on arrival at the town centre is also a priority.



40. Colliers CRE, Retail Strategy for the Mid-West Region 2010 – 2016

The heart of retail activity in Limerick City focuses on the core area of Cruises Street, O'Connell Street, Roches Street, William Street and Henry Street. Arthur's Quay is the only purpose-built shopping centre in the City Centre. The transition to Irish Town and the Milk Market area offers a concentration of restaurants, bars and night clubs which represent the core of the night time economy.

It is an objective to reposition Limerick City Centre at the top of the retail hierarchy by improving the range and quality of shopping on offer, enhanced customer experience of visiting the City Centre. A contemporary shopping offer with leisure – food, drink and entertainment at the heart of the experience. This can be achieved by radically improving the City Centre experience in the prime shopping area.

The retailing business model is evolving in a digital direction. Therefore, retail should be at the centre of any digital strategies developed by local authorities. A city or town centre should attract consumers by offering a unique retail experience and to evolve in line with data about shopping preferences and behaviour. The MASP supports funding mechanisms to support traditional retailers in the transition to technology led, experiential retail models.



Limerick-Shannon MASP Policy Objective 17

Retail

- a. Within one year of the adoption of the RSES/MASP a Joint Retail Strategy shall be commenced for the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines. The Joint Retail Strategy shall include – inter alia – the defined area of the Core City Shopping Area, the location of Suburban or District Shopping Centres, a map to indicate sustainable travel routes to/from each shopping area.
- 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. It is an objective to protect and enhance customer experience of visiting Limerick City Centre through facilitating a mixed expansion of services including high order comparison retailing in conjunction with service, cultural and entertainment facilities through appropriate and sensitive redevelopment and infill development.
- d. It is an objective to develop a distinct shopping character to increase Shannon's attraction and to complement the retail function of Limerick City Centre.



8.8 | Strong Education Assets and availability of Talent

Building economic resilience will require innovation, productivity and competitiveness across all sectors. A resilient economy will support job creation and higher education institutes have a key role to play in supporting this growth. There is an increasing demand for employees to engage in upskilling, re-skilling and lifelong learning to respond to changing employment patterns and demands by developing skills resilience.

The Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area is home to four of Ireland's most prestigious third level academic institutions. UL, LIT, Mary Immaculate College and Shannon College of Hotel Management (NUIG), which offer a range of undergraduate and postgraduate study programmes. These produce over 7,500 graduates per year in a variety of disciplines including IT, life sciences, business administration, hotel management, engineering and technology and education. The Shannon College of Hotel Management is Ireland's only dedicated hotel management college, offering degree programmes and has a worldwide reputation for careers in business and hotel management. The Metropolitan Area offers further education and training through the Limerick Clare Education Training Board.

8.9 | HEIs addressing Social Disadvantage

In many parts of Limerick city, the proportion of the population leaving school with just a primary education is considerably higher than the national average. In 18 EDs, the rate is 20% or higher, with nine EDs recording an early school leaving rate more than 30%. Solutions to these historic issues require a broad spectrum of responses such as lifelong learning and upskilling, which are advocated strongly in Chapters 4 and 6 of the RSES.

Higher education institutes play an important role in addressing social disadvantage. They can provide accelerated and supported pathways by establishing dedicated facilities to help address disadvantage in their immediate communities. The proposed development by LIT to create a large multi-use Community Engagement

Gateway (CEG) facility at its northern boundary with the Moyross Regeneration Area, is a progressive initiative.

The primary focus of the CEG will be a modern, vibrant and flexible facility, which will deliver new community, education and sports facilities. The CEG aims to address the low educational attainment issues prevalent in the area, by breaking down physical and psychological barriers between northside RAPID areas and the provision of a higher education facility in the community.

UL plans to open a City Centre campus which will support the enhancement of the City Centre. This will bring up to 2000 students and over 100 staff into the heart of the City. This will support the objective of the MASP to strengthen the consolidation and regeneration of Limerick City Centre. The MASP supports the ambition of UL to develop an international identity, to expand and integrate with the City Centre and to develop the proposed South Clare Economic SDZ.

8.10 | Linking Enterprise and Higher Education

The enhancement of linkages between enterprise and higher education and research is critical. This can be achieved by the provision of enterprise development programmes, accessing research opportunities and the provision of dedicated centres focusing on particular aspects of the enterprise/third-level interface such as the planned Mid-West Regional Design Centre. The MASP supports initiatives such as these and seeks investment to facilitate their implementation.

Academies of Learning will distinguish the next phase of UL's Co-op principle. Academies will be developed between UL and individual institutions in enterprise to build programmes of learning. Enterprise will collaborate with UL through programmes of learning devised with

the University to meet the specific needs of industry. The MASP supports the ambition of the University to develop enterprise-led academies of learning demonstrating cohesion with enterprise supported by fit for purpose infrastructure.

There is a need to future proof the Metropolitan Areas long-term talent stream. There are several collaborative education-industry initiatives already underway, which focus on increasing the quality and quantity of the talent stream for the Mid-West. These include the Shannon Consortium, Limerick for Engineering, Limerick for IT, a dedicated Hospitality Education & Training Centre, Regional Skills Forum, UL and Hospital Group (Clinical Research Unit). As per Chapter 7 of the RSES, this MASP acknowledges the work in Limerick as a UNESCO Learning City. This positions the real opportunity to communicate the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Areas selling point as a hub of internationally recognised learning excellence.





Examples of Collaboration

Limerick for Engineering is an industry led initiative pioneering collaboration between industry and education and training providers. The primary goal of Limerick for Engineering is to increase the quality and quantity of engineering talent (apprentice, technicians and engineers) available. The group is a consortium of over 50 engineering companies located across the Mid-West and reaching into Galway, who work in partnership with the education institutions including LCETB, MIC, LIT and UL to 'increase the quality and quantity of talent'.

Similarly, the consortium of companies in **Limerick for IT** work with the education institutes to develop and deliver specific and targeted up-skilling courses (particularly using Springboard). The model is supplying a talent pipeline for businesses while allowing existing multinationals secure further operational mandates and activities, creating a

virtuous circle of emerging skills and jobs. These interventions have supported the creation of over 1,000 additional jobs in the past five years.

The **Shannon Consortium** is an education partnership between UL, LIT, Mary Immaculate College and the Institute of Technology, Tralee. The Shannon Consortium is a dynamic group of institutions actively working together as equal partners to coordinate and develop specific innovations.

The MASP supports these and other collaborative initiatives as innovative and collaborative efforts which will be the cornerstone to ensuring the sustainable growth and development of the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area.

Limerick-Shannon MASP Policy Objective 18

Education and Access to Talent

- a. It is an objective to support the existing educational facilities in the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area which includes UL, Mary Immaculate, LIT 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 Regional Enterprise Plan (REP) 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 Regional Enterprise Plan and the Mid-West Regional Skills Forum continue their work to deliver significant benefits to the Metropolitan Area and Mid-West.
- c. It is an objective to support investment in Higher Education Institutes, Education and Training Board, apprenticeships and skills development in the 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 Regional Enterprise Plan (REP).
- d. 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 wider region.
- e. It is an objective to support the delivery of a Regional Design Centre to provide the focus for linkages between third level institutes, private design companies and enterprise.

8.11 | Tourism

The MASP aims to ensure collaboration between local authorities and tourism agencies to develop attractions such as the Wild Atlantic Way, Irelands Ancient East, and Ireland's Hidden Heartlands. The MASP 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.

Opportunities to develop tourism in the MASP area are primarily based on developing its tourism attractions and by acting as a gateway to the regional tourism assets. Limerick City offers a strong competitive advantage regarding value for money for accommodation⁴¹. The MASP supports the facilitation of visitor experience development including capital investment in flagship tourism products that can create an attraction of scale.

Limerick-Shannon MASP Policy Objective 19

Tourism

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

- 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, and Ireland's Hidden Heartland's.



9.0 | 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 invest⁴². Placing significant effort and focus on the environmental pillar is central to delivering the goals of placemaking.

High-quality green and blue spaces are important not just for nature but for health and wellbeing, particularly in the context of an increasingly urban society and increasing settlement densities⁴³. A greater effort

is needed to plan for blue and green infrastructure and nature-based solutions in the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area, particularly considering climate action strategies and plans.

Green and blue infrastructure brings considerable value to the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area. This value needs to be recognised and used to help attract sustainable funding to ensure the benefits continue to be felt.

Green and blue infrastructure should be strategically planned to enhance ecosystem services that benefit all and to create a climate resilient and adoptable society.

The better integration of biodiversity into economic and development decisions will ensure better projects and will mitigate against unforeseen negative climate change consequences.

Limerick-Shannon MASP Policy Objective 20

Metropolitan Open Space, Recreation and 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 a Regional Scale Park within the Limerick-Shannon

Metropolitan Area as well as the development of neighbourhood parks and open spaces.

- 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.
- 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. 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.

⁴². Place-making is instrumental to attracting a high skilled workforce and thus ensuring the Region captures sufficient human capital and talent

⁴³. Ireland's Environment - An Assessment, EPA (2016)

Limerick-Shannon MASP Policy Objective 21

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;
- Improvements and enhancement to Shannon Town Centre to create a sense of place, to upgrade public realm and promote redevelopment;
- The enhancement of Shannon the Living Town

The challenges of climate change and the transition to a low carbon society are a key component of the RSES and relevant objectives are set out in Volume 1, particularly in Chapters 2 and 5. Responding to these challenges will be particularly relevant to the MASP and appropriate climate adaptation and mitigation measures are supported.

10.0 | Social Inclusion and Infrastructure

There are significant issues relating to social deprivation in both Limerick and Shannon with parts of Limerick City identified as the most disadvantaged area in the Region. Eight of Ireland's top ten unemployment black spots are located in the MASP area. To achieve an inclusive Metropolitan Area offering equal opportunities for all citizens and to increase the number of persons active in the labour market, a specific focus is required on access to education and training.

The working population has grown significantly in recent years. Nonetheless established issues of long-term unemployment in parts of the Metropolitan Area remain. There is a requirement for focus and investment in ensuring long-term measures to systematically tackle these issues.

The Limerick-Shannon MASP supports ongoing collaboration with regional stakeholders to ensure that social infrastructure such as education, health and

community facilities are provided and to ensure that opportunities for social as well as physical regeneration are realised. The Community Engagement Gateway planned for the LIT Campus in Moylish is an example

Limerick City is a recognised World Health Organisation (WHO) Healthy City affiliated with the National Healthy Cities and Counties Network. Healthy Limerick aims to improve health, wellbeing and quality of life by ensuring all sectors are aware of and collaborate to achieve a healthy society.

Limerick is a centre for regional health care services with Limerick University Hospital, a Model 4 hospital providing major surgery, cancer treatment and care, emergency department services as well as other medical, diagnostic and therapy services. University Maternity Hospital, Limerick is the second largest maternity hospital outside of Dublin. The Bon Secours Hospital at Barrington's is an important private health care provider in the City. The capacity for hospital expansion through intensification and redevelopment of their existing sites and/or buildings needs to be supported.

Limerick-Shannon MASP Policy Objective 22

Social Inclusion

- a. It is an objective to seek investment in delivering actions and 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 continued investment in delivering initiatives to achieve the physical, economic, social and environmental regeneration of disadvantaged areas in the 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.

Limerick-Shannon MASP Policy Objective 23

Healthy Cities and Health Infrastructure

- a. It is an objective to seek investment in health service infrastructure within the Limerick-Shannon MASP area 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.
- b. It is an objective to grow and develop health care facilities as proposed by the University Hospital Limerick in their Strategic Plan.
- c. 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.



Appendix 1

Section 3.4 of the RSES –
Strategic Role and Regional Policy
Objectives for the MASPs'

3.4 | Cities – Metropolitan Areas

The strategy for the development of the Region is built on the pillars of our three cities, each incorporating more than one local authority within their metropolitan areas. The RSES includes Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans to ensure coordination between local authority plans.

A key component of the RSES is about building partnerships and a collaborative approach between the cities and metropolitan areas to realise combined strengths and potential, and to support their development as a viable alternative to Dublin.

Our cities need sustainable planning to ensure that they can absorb a significant scale of development, retain their essential character and ensure quality of life. Compact urban settlements, efficient public transport networks and the provision of essential physical and social infrastructure is required in tandem with achieving projected growth. Responding to the radical change and growth required by the NPF and the RSES will be a major challenge for our cities and metropolitan areas.

Each city has unique strengths and opportunities. Each one is a major centre of employment, has a third-level education presence, healthcare structures, accessible public transport, and interregional road networks and is linked with international gateways of airports and ports. Cork through the Cork Area Strategic Plan (CASP) has an established (non statutory) metropolitan and cityregion planning framework. The newly emerging metropolitan frameworks in Limerick-Shannon and Waterford provide a significant combined proposition for effective regional growth and, at national level, an effective counterbalance to the Greater Dublin Area.

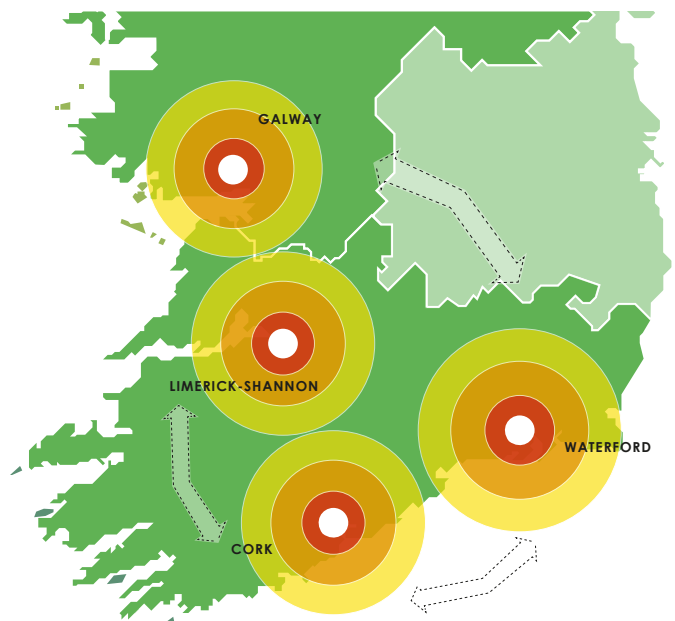
The three cities have extensive areas of influence, as demonstrated by the catchment zone map. The MASPs address these areas for each city and metropolitan area, included in Volume 2. A summary of each MASP is set out in the following pages.

RPO 6

Collaboration between Metropolitan Areas

It is an objective to establish a collaborative intra-regional partnership approach between the Region's metropolitan areas of Cork, Limerick-Shannon, Waterford and a similar inter-regional approach with the Galway Metropolitan Area in the Northern and Western Region, that they are prioritised in line with the NPF's strategic objectives and population targets, for focused and long-term investment as economic engines to ensure regional parity. The three metropolitan areas will lead together in partnership to harness their combined potential as viable alternatives to the unbalanced growth of Dublin.

Map 3.2 | Collaboration Between Metropolitan Areas



The following objectives will apply for each MASP:

RPO 7

Delivery and Funding

It is an objective to:

- a. Support sustainable delivery of the Strategic Investment Priorities identified by the NDP for the Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford metropolitan areas and progress co-ordination between the principal stakeholders for delivery to achieve the vision and objectives identified in each MASP.
- b. Promote the sustainable implementation of innovative, collaborative projects through the Urban Regeneration & Development, Rural Regeneration & Development, Climate Action, and Disruptive Technologies funds within the Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford Metropolitan Areas.

RPO 8

Investment to Deliver on the Vision for Metropolitan Areas

It is an objective to:

- a. Identify investment packages at national level as they apply to the Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford MASP areas, and seek further investments for each to deliver on the seven Metropolitan Area Goals;
- b. Prioritise the delivery of compact growth and sustainable mobility in accordance with NPF objectives;
- c. Ensure the investment in and delivery of the Sustainable Place Framework within each MASP area, delivering quality of place attributes as an incentive to attract people to live, work and visit.

RPO 9

Holistic Approach to Delivering Infrastructure

It is an objective to ensure investment and delivery of comprehensive infrastructure packages to meet growth targets that prioritise the delivery of compact growth and sustainable mobility as per the NPF objectives including:

Water services, digital, green infrastructure, transport and sustainable travel, community and social, renewable energy, recreation, open space amenity, climate change adaptation and future proofing infrastructure including flood risk management measures, environmental improvement, arts, culture and public realm.



Compact Growth in Metropolitan Areas

To achieve compact growth, the RSES seeks to:

- a. Prioritise housing and employment development in locations within and contiguous to existing city footprints where it can be served by public transport, walking and cycling.
- b. Identify strategic initiatives in Local Authority Core Strategies for the MASP areas, which will achieve the compact growth targets on brownfield and infill sites at a minimum and achieve the growth targets identified in each MASP. Such strategic initiatives shall comply with MASP Goals to evolve innovative approaches for all MASPs. Initiatives may include:
 - Support the creation and role of Active Land Management Units with a remit to focus on the metropolitan areas and compact growth targets;
 - Tier 1 (Serviced Zoned Land) and Tier 2 (Serviceable Zoned Land) to be identified as part of the review of the City and County Development Plans in the Region;
 - Partnerships with the Land Development Agency to progress housing and employment delivery in city and town centres, focusing on co-ordinating and developing large, strategically located, publicly-owned land banks, reducing vacancy and increasing regeneration of key sites;
 - Support the role of the local authority as a development agency to kick start regeneration processes;
 - Initiatives that facilitate the regeneration of derelict buildings and vacant sites for the provision of high-quality, environmentally friendly Nearly Zero Energy Building (NZEB) affordable housing;
 - Strategic land reserve initiatives;
 - Deliver design briefs for strategic sites;
 - Seek design competitions for key strategic sites that deliver greater density, mixed uses where appropriate, sustainable design, smart technology, green infrastructure and public gain through good design;
 - Active land management within designated site specific regeneration areas under the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015, and other locations in need of renewal, including the use of site briefs and masterplans for a design led approach to renewal;
 - The identification of public realm and site regeneration initiatives which combine, on an area wide basis, opportunities for regeneration of private owned underutilised sites, public owned underutilised sites, private and public buildings and upgrade of parks, streetscapes and public realm areas;
 - Creation of continually updated databases identifying brownfield, infill sites, regeneration areas and infrastructure packages to enable progress towards achieving compact growth targets. Through active land management initiatives, identify strategic locations for residential growth responding to the growth targets and achievement of compact growth and employment growth.



Limerick-Shannon

MASP

Introduction

Limerick City is the largest urban centre in the 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 achieve its potential to become a city of scale. Shannon is a significant employment centre with assets such as Shannon International Airport, Shannon Free Zone and the International Aviation Services Centre (IASC). Limerick City and Shannon are interdependent, with their complementary functions contributing to a combined strength that is a key economic driver for the Region and Ireland.

Limerick Regeneration, the amalgamation of Limerick City and County 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 that complements Shannon's role as a world leader in aviation. Working together with, inter alia, Higher Education Institutions, Regional Enterprise Plan and Regional Skill Forum initiatives, Shannon International Airport and bodies such as Shannon Development and the Shannon-Foynes Port Company, there is capacity to build on recent successes and add to the ambitious vision for this Metropolitan Area.

Integrated Land-use and Transportation

The principles underpinning the MASP include the effective integration of transport planning with spatial planning policies and the alignment of infrastructure investment. The Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy will be instrumental in the regeneration and transformation of Limerick City and the wider Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area. It will deliver a high-quality, accessible, integrated and more sustainable transport network. A key priority of the MASP is the development of strategic residential areas and the provision of the Limerick Northern Distributor Route (LNDR).

Housing and Regeneration

Regeneration and placemaking are identified as drivers of change and are critical to sustained socio-economic vibrancy. The MASP highlights the need to increase residential density in Limerick City and Shannon through a range of measures including, reductions in vacancy, re-use of existing buildings, infill and site-based regeneration. The MASP supports the densification of Limerick City Centre, the assembly of brownfield sites for development and City Centre rejuvenation and consolidation. Collaborative efforts between local authorities and the Land Development Agency are supported.

Employment & Enterprise

The Higher Education Institutions, ETB and Skills Forum that serve the Metropolitan Area are responsive to the upskilling needs of industry and building economic resilience. Positive examples of industrial clusters and inter-agency collaborations are key strengths in creating a vibrant business ecosystem. Key employment locations include Shannon Free Zone, National Technology Park, IDA Raheen Business Park, Limerick's Dock Road, Annacotty Business Park, Ballysimon and Clondrinagh Industrial Estates with development in progress such in Limerick City Centre (Gardens, Opera, Cleeves) and the opportunity for a South Clare Economic Strategic Development Zone at UL. Investment in the creation of 'place', as well as Shannon International Airport and Shannon-Foynes Port, are key to realising the potential to attract and maintain economic activity and talent.

There is an increasing demand for employees to engage in upskilling, reskilling and lifelong learning to respond to changing employment patterns and demands by developing skills resilience. The enhancement of linkages between enterprise and higher education and research is critical.

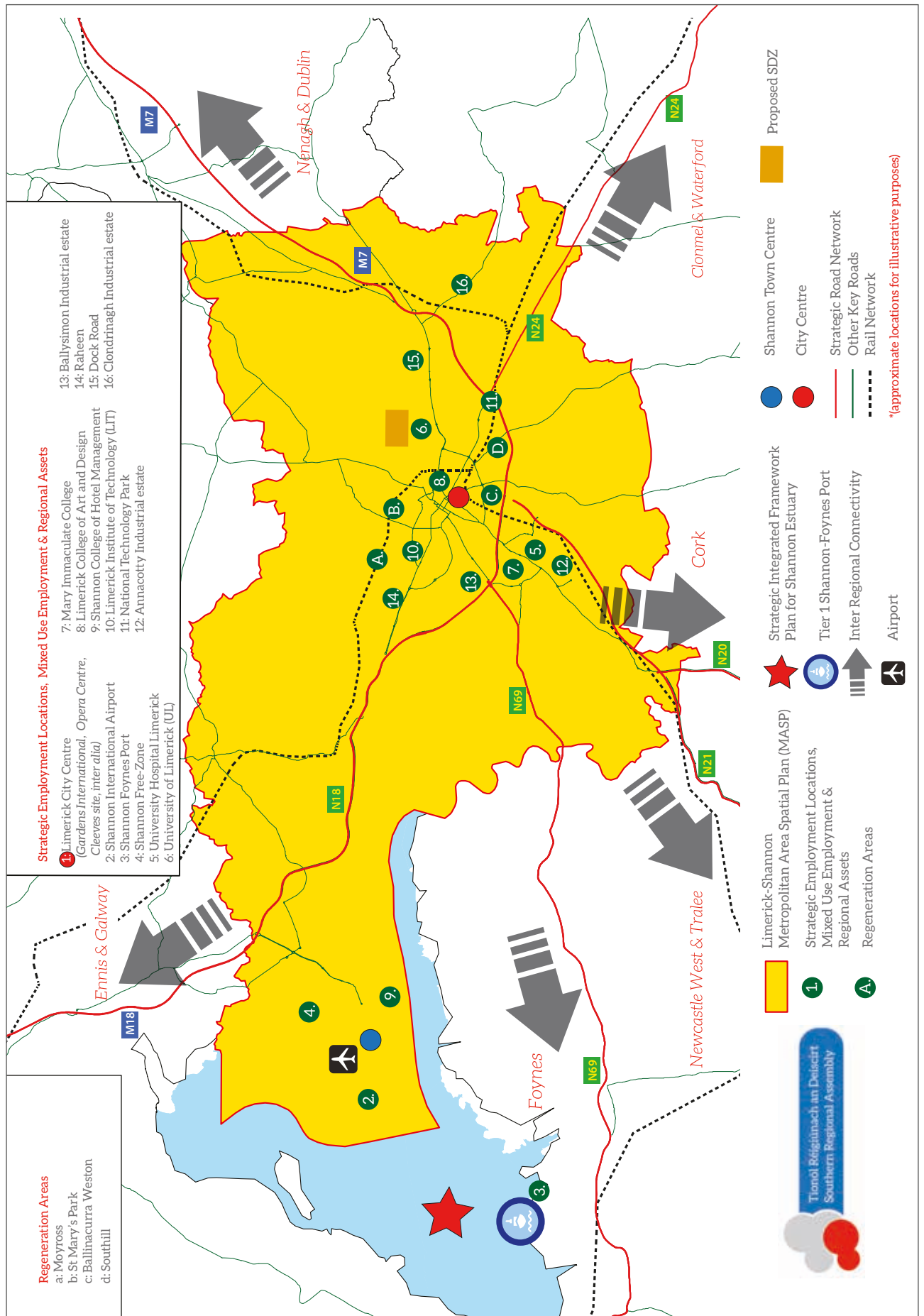
Environment

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. The better integration of biodiversity into economic and development decisions will ensure better projects and will mitigate against unforeseen negative climate change consequences. Placemaking initiatives will create a more attractive area to live, visit and invest.

Social Infrastructure

To achieve an inclusive Metropolitan Area offering equal opportunities for all citizens and to increase the number of persons active in the labour market, a specific focus is required on access to education and training. Solutions to social disadvantage requires a broad spectrum of responses such as lifelong learning and upskilling. The MASP supports ongoing collaboration with regional stakeholders to ensure that social infrastructure such as education, health and community facilities are provided and, in particular, to ensure opportunities for social as well as physical regeneration.





Appendix 2

*MASP Related Strategic Goals
Contained in the RSES
(this is Appendix 3 of the RSES)*

The following goals are set out and apply to each of the Region's metropolitan areas.

Goal 1 | Sustainable Place Framework

The future growth and ambition for each MASP will be based on the principles of a **Sustainable Place Framework**. This framework reinforces the positive relationship between the city centre, metropolitan area and wider region as complementary locations, each fulfilling strong roles. It positions quality place making at the core.

This goal seeks:

- Vibrant living and working city centre at the heart of a thriving metropolitan area and region;
 - Social, physical and economic renewal of inner city neighbourhoods;
 - Compact urban development, achieving brownfield and infill targets through innovative design approaches to appropriate density and height;
 - Provision for diverse residential accommodation types to accommodate the needs of different groups in society including older age cohorts;
 - Network of compact metropolitan settlements and employment areas offering quality residential and working choices, interconnected with sustainable public transport, pedestrian and cycling networks;
 - A metropolitan area complemented by a network of connected regional settlements, fulfilling strong population and employment roles for their rural hinterlands;
 - Enhancing the quality of our existing places through retrofitting a high standard of infrastructure, services and amenities that improve the liveability and quality of place in existing settlements and communities, especially locations that experienced significant new population growth in the past (such as metropolitan towns) and existing areas experiencing positive growth (such as city centre neighbourhoods);
 - Achieve mixed use “five-minute” or “ten-minute” sustainable city and town models where short travel time and ease of access via sustainable travel modes is achieved between where we live, work, access services, access recreation and amenity inter alia;
 - Seek infrastructure led development where housing and job provision is integrated with high standards in sustainable transport, social and community infrastructure, quality public realm, recreation and amenities;
 - Targeted urban regeneration measures to address dereliction and underutilised lands, particularly in inner city and disadvantaged areas to provide improved environmental quality including street tree planting;
 - Rejuvenation of our existing built assets and public realm;
 - Protection and enhancement of the built and natural heritage and biodiversity;
 - Working with/enhancing the amenities of the natural environment;
 - Resilience to climate change and flooding.
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Goal 2 | Excellent Connectivity and Sustainable Mobility

Our metropolitan areas shall be well connected through actions which will seek to deliver connectivity:

- Internationally through port and airport assets, Sustainable Freight and TEN-T Corridors;
 - For high quality, high speed digital infrastructure and optimisation of smart technology through Digital Strategies;
 - Inter-regionally through efficient rail, road, bus networks and services;
 - Intra-regionally, through multi modal transport options and services to access the metropolitan area and city centre efficiently;
 - To encourage the development of sustainable modes of transport to serve the smaller towns, villages and rural areas;
 - Within the metropolitan area, through an integrated network of high capacity public transport corridors and services, pedestrian routes and cycling corridors;
 - Within our urban neighbourhoods and employment locations to achieve high quality standards of public realm, public transport facilities, public transport interchange facilities, appropriate management of private transport and car parking, pedestrian and cycling infrastructure and to promote a significant transition from private car usage to healthier and sustainable modes of travel where people and jobs are concentrated;
 - To achieve successful integration between land use and transport planning, achieving sustainable higher densities and appropriate uses at nodes serviced by public transport networks;
 - To achieve efficient mobility, with close alignment between home and work locations, ease of travel on sustainable transport modes, efficient and sustainable movement of freight and logistics, guaranteed journey times for inter-city and inter-regional travel.
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Goal 3 | Economic Engines Driving Regional Enterprise Growth

Our metropolitan areas will have a competitive international edge through actions which support:

- Smart specialisation, strengthening and evolving existing economic sectors and clusters, supporting partnerships across academia and research centres, public bodies, business sector and local communities;
 - Embracing technology change, transitioning with resilience and innovation towards a smart technology future in how we live and work sustainably;
 - Offer excellent standards of infrastructure services and property assets for all scales of enterprise, from start-ups to FDI;
 - Quality of life offer, with attractive options for housing in the right locations, community infrastructure and recreation options easily accessible from locations of work.
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Goal 4 | High Quality Environment and Quality of Life

A high-quality environment and quality of life in the metropolitan areas will be supported by actions which seek:

- Healthy city and healthy metropolitan area status with equity of access to health services, high ratios of access to quality open space and recreational amenities per population and attractive options to uptake active travel between home, work, education and access to services;
 - Setting high quality performance standards for the metropolitan area to transition towards a zero-carbon future, achieve improved water and air quality, improved sustainable travel and other environmental and health performance standards as indicators for the healthy status of our metropolitan areas;
 - Fostering a creative metropolitan area with vibrant cultural, arts and heritage scenes;
 - Fostering a vibrant tourism scene with facilities and attractions that showcase the unique heritage, natural environments and culture of our Region, enriching the experiences of both visitors and citizens;
 - Placing a greater emphasis on performance-based design criteria in developing our metropolitan area, incentivising and awarding innovation in design, energy efficiency, green infrastructure and smart technology integration.
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Goal 5 | A Learning, Welcoming and Socially Inclusive Metropolitan Area

A socially inclusive, multi-cultural metropolitan area with equal opportunities for learning, supported by actions promoting:

- UNESCO Learning City status and drivers for a Learning Region;
 - The role of HEI's and centres of innovation, regional skills, training and apprenticeships;
 - Targeted initiatives that address social exclusion and prioritise regeneration of disadvantaged areas, especially RAPID areas including education and training;
 - Valuing the participation of communities and Public Participation Networks;
 - Community Services and engagement for ethnic minorities and travellers;
 - Initiatives that protect and develop the potential of our younger and aging cohorts;
 - Facilities that provide inclusive social, community and recreational facilities for mixed neighbourhoods.
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Goal 6 | Pioneering Locations Networked Internationally and Regionally

Our metropolitan areas will be platforms for good practice implementation, pilot initiatives and innovation with actions seeking:

- Innovative approaches and multi-agency collaborations to identify, succeed and implement key enabler projects within the metropolitan areas under competitive bid funding through the NPF/NDP for Urban and Rural Regeneration, Climate Action and Disruptive Technologies;
 - Regional and international project partnerships and shared learning initiatives exploring new policy and good practice in addressing challenges and opportunities facing metropolitan areas, especially innovation to achieve successful compact growth outcomes;
 - Development of tools in collaboration between the Local Authorities, research and learning institutes and others to assist implementation and monitoring of progress within our metropolitan area on achieving objectives, especially brownfield and infill renewal targets, improved environmental quality, integration of and use of smart technologies and overall quality of life improvement;
 - Implementation of the MASP's.
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Goal 7 | Evolve Innovative Approaches and Strategic Priorities

Each MASP identifies the strategic locations for population and jobs growth, which will act as a baseline indication of current priority projects. Achieving the NPF growth targets in compact forms will require in depth consideration for new locations and initiatives by each local authority. The existing priority locations alone will not fulfil targets, but they are a snapshot of current strategic priorities which the MASPs support investment in.

Opportunities for strategic regeneration of vacant and underused land and property, refurbishment, land use and transport planning integration, active land management initiatives and development agency type approaches are examples of the many different approaches that will need to emerge. Aligned with Goal 6 for pioneering approaches, the identification of new strategic priorities need to be informed by innovative solutions and demonstrate incorporation of good international and regional practices.

The MASPs allow flexibility therefore for new strategic priorities, further to those listed in each MASP, to emerge over the MASP/RSES timeframe and to be identified in City and County Development Plan Core Strategies, based on the following criteria which demonstrates that the priority initiative/location:

- Aligns with national and regional planning policies and objectives;
- Helps to achieve compact growth targets, provides infrastructure led development with identified packages of interrelated infrastructures, physical and social, and phasing proposals for delivery identified;
- Promotes effective alignment between land use and transportation planning, especially alignment with public transport networks, encouragement of sustainable travel and consolidation of suitable nodal points on public transport corridors;
- Where new infill locations are proposed, demonstrate how reinforcement and consolidation of the existing settlement pattern is achieved;
- Is identified in collaboration with all required landowners and stakeholder agencies with a role for delivery of enabling infrastructure;
- Is in accordance with national guidelines;
- Is assessed under flood risk and environmental assessments;
- Is informed by innovative solutions and good practice to achieve the overarching MASP goals;
- Is a demonstrator of good practice within the Region for integration of sustainable design, renewable energy, transition of the MASP to a zero-carbon future, green infrastructure and smart technology;
- Where applicable, demonstrates how the priority initiative/location can help the delivery of strategic regional projects funded through the NPF/NDP for Urban and Rural Regeneration, Climate Action and Disruptive Technologies or from other funding streams;
- Where applicable, demonstrates how the priority initiative/location assists delivery of actions through the National Regeneration and Development Agency.



