

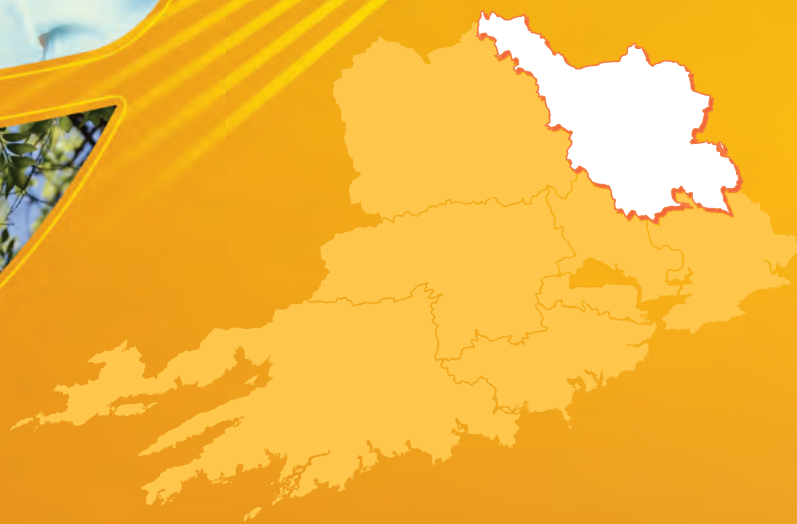


**Cork  
County Council**  
Comhairle Contae Chorcaí

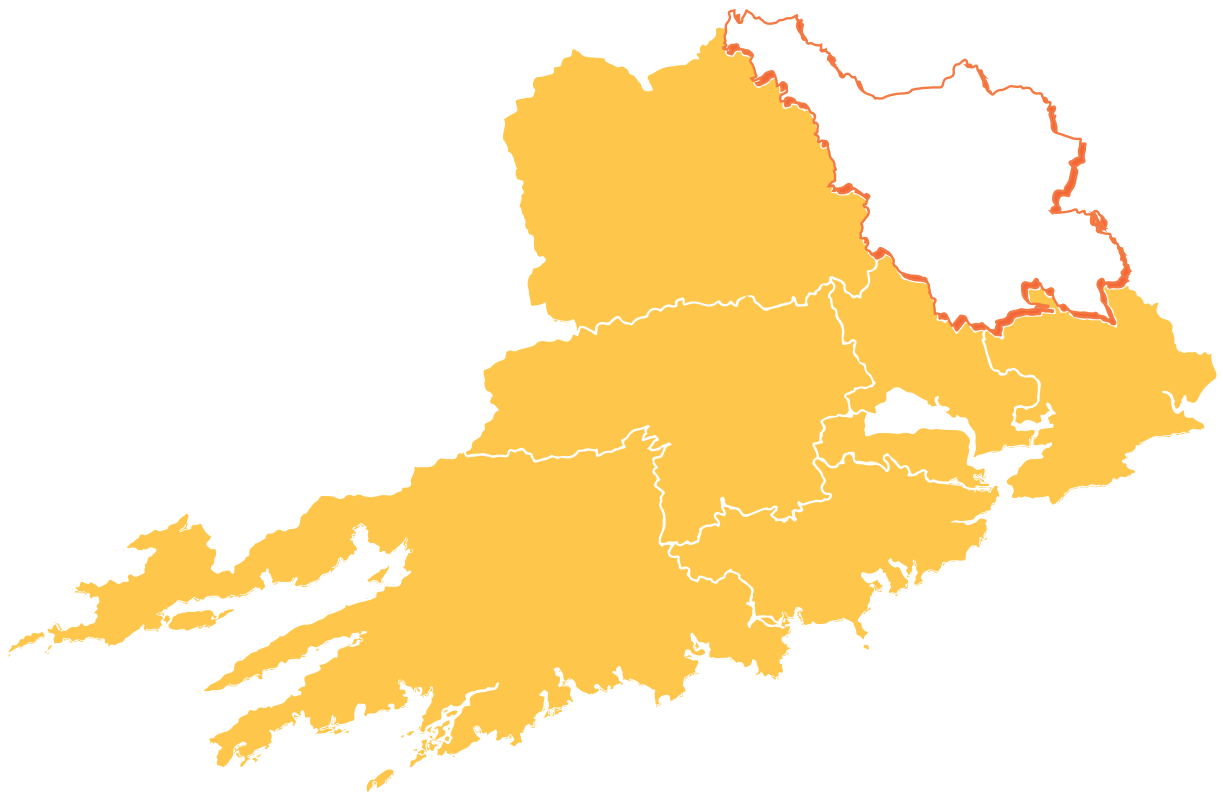


# Fermoy Municipal District

Local Area Plan Review



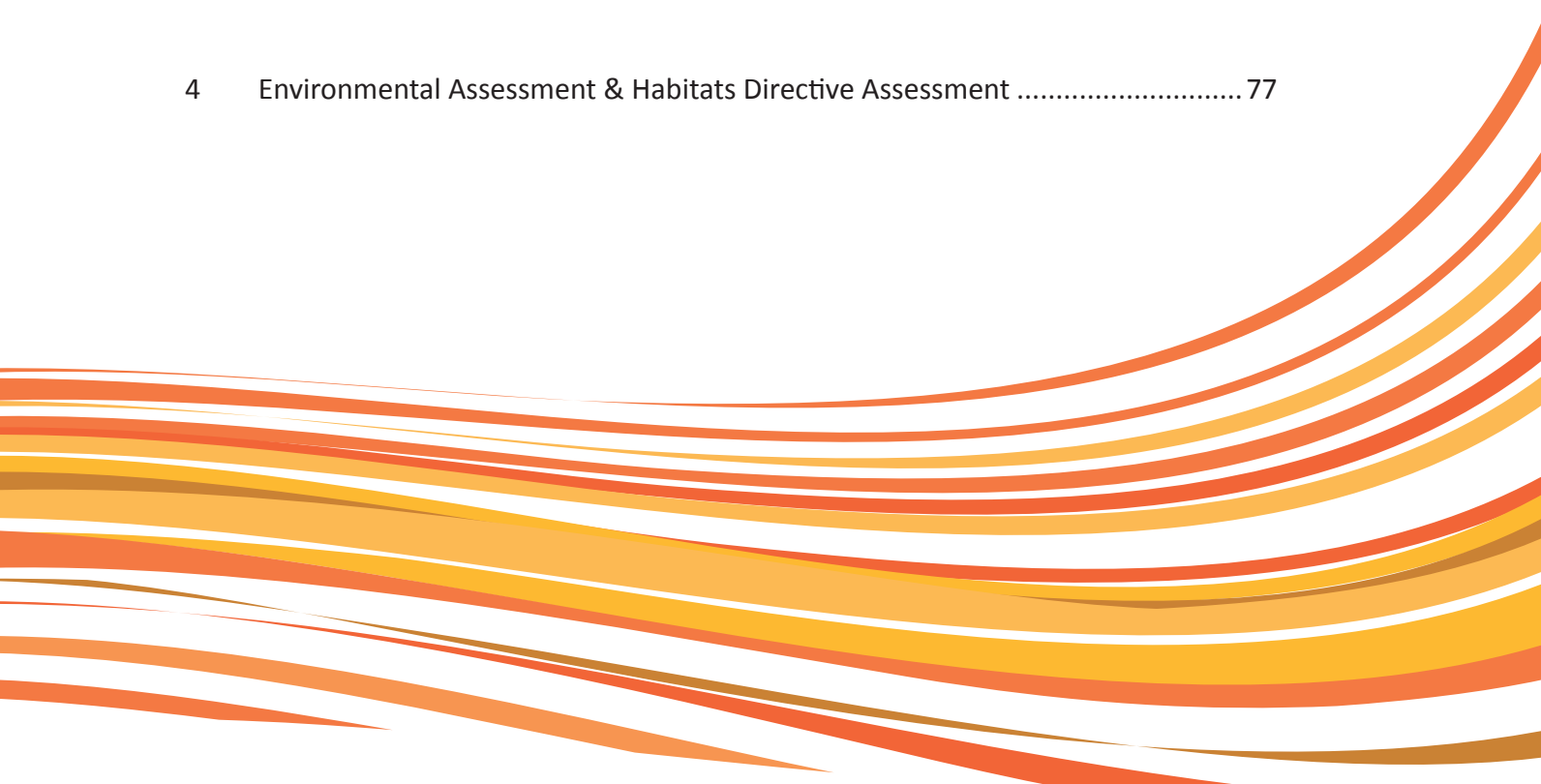
**Public Consultation Document**  
14<sup>th</sup> December 2015



# Fermoy Municipal District

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# Section 1

## Introduction

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## 1.1 The Purpose of this Document

- 1.1.1 Cork County Council sets out its land use planning strategy for the development of the towns and villages of the county in a series of Electoral Area Local Area Plans. The most recent Local Area Plans were adopted in 2011. The Plans have a six year life and the Council is now commencing the process of reviewing the plans so that new plans will be in place by August 2017.
- 1.1.2 Following the re-organisation of local government in 2014 and the abolition of the town Councils, the electoral structure of the County is based on eight Municipal Districts, see Table 1.1 and Figure 1.1. A new Local Area Plan will be prepared for each of the eight Municipal Districts in the County. The plans will set out the detail of the planning strategy and land use zoning as appropriate for each town and village in each Municipal District. **The main purpose of this document is to provide a basis for consultation with the public on those aspects of the current Local Area Plan and Town Development Plan that are considered likely to change in the new draft plan to be prepared in 2016.**
- 1.1.3 Fermoy Town Council was abolished in 2014. Currently the Fermoy Town Development Plan 2009 remains in force pending the making of the next Cork County Development Plan in 2020. Government has indicated that it intends to introduce legislation which would allow the Town Development Plans to be superseded by a Local Area Plan, and on this basis, it is proposed to include the former Town Council administrative area within the Local Area Plan review. **Parties with an interest in lands within the former Town Council's administrative area should consider the need to make a submission to the County Council as part of this consultative process.**

Table 1.1 : Municipal Districts in County Cork

	Municipal District	Population 2011	Main Towns	No of villages
1	Ballincollig Carrigaline	71,946	Ballincollig, Carrigaline, Passage West/ Monkstown/ Glenbrook, Cork City South Environs, Ringaskiddy	5
2	Bandon- Kinsale	42,454	Bandon, Kinsale	34
3	Blarney - Macroom	43,398	Blarney, Macroom	53
4	Cobh	53,544	Carrigtwohill, Cobh, Glanmire, Little Island, Cork City North Environs. (Monard is proposed new town and a designated Strategic Development Zone)	24
5	East Cork	42,399	Midleton, Youghal	30
<b>6</b>	<b>Fermoy</b>	<b>42,226</b>	<b>Charleville, Fermoy, Mitchelstown</b>	<b>29</b>
7	Kanturk - Mallow	47,305	Buttevant, Kanturk, Mallow, Millstreet, Newmarket	46
8	West Cork	56,530	Bantry, Castletownbere, Clonakilty, Dunmanway, Schull, Skibbereen.	67 & 7 Inhabited Islands

- 1.1.4 This document relates to the Fermoy Municipal District Local Area Plan and highlights the main areas of change proposed by the Council in the next Local Area Plan, relative to the Local Area Plan adopted in 2011, and the Fermoy Town Development Plan 2009. The document focuses on identifying the critical planning issues and choices now faced taking account of the amount of growth envisaged in each area, the available land supply, availability of the infrastructure required to facilitate development and the need to protect and conserve the environment.



Figure 1.1 Cork Municipal Districts

1.1.5 The publication of this document marks the commencement of the public consultation process in relation to matters that should be addressed in the preparation of the new plan. This document has been prepared in order to promote and generate interaction and feedback. It is intended that it will act as a tool to stimulate, guide and encourage debate and discussion on the current issues impacting upon the community, to flag important factors, and to encourage and assist the public in making submissions / observations to the Planning Authority in respect of the proposed Local Area Plan. The Council is inviting feedback and suggestions in relation to the issues raised in the document and in relation to any other matters not specifically mentioned, which the public / stakeholders consider relevant to the future planning strategy for the area.

1.1.6 Any formal submissions received by the Council during the consultation process will be considered in the preparation of the formal Draft Local Area Plan. This Plan is expected to be published for public consultation in the autumn of 2016, at which point people will have a further opportunity to comment and make submissions on the specific proposals contained in the Draft Plan. A more detailed timeline of the plan making process is set out in Table 1.2.



## 1.2 Structure of Document

- 1.2.1 This document is set out in four sections. Section One provides an introduction to the process of preparing the new Local Area Plan and sets out the scope of this document.
- 1.2.2 Section Two of this report provides an overview of the Municipal District and outlines the strategy for the future development of the Municipal District, its towns and villages, in line with the Core Strategy set out in the County Development Plan 2014.
- 1.2.3 Section Three deals in detail with the Main Towns of the Municipal District and outlines the main issues which need to be considered in the formulation of the new Local Area Plan. Where the potential need for changes to the zoning of land has been identified by the Planning Authority this is highlighted for each town. **It is important to note that this is not a definitive list of changes and as the review process continues other changes may arise.** It is intended that the new plan will provide more detailed guidance on some issues such as the development of the town centre and proposals in this regard are also discussed in Section 3.
- 1.2.4 Section Four of the report deals with issues in relation to the need for SEA and HDA of the new plan.

## 1.3 Other Issues Affecting the Preparation of the New Local Area Plan


- 1.3.1 **Flood Risk Management:** the Government issued Guidelines to Planning Authorities on the “The Planning System & Flood Risk Management” in 2009 and the subsequent Local Area Plans made by the County Council in 2011 were subjected to Flood Risk Assessment broadly in accordance with the guidelines. The County Council used information from the following sources to carry out that assessment:
- Draft River Lee Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study (Lee CFRAMS) (OPW);
  - Floodmaps.ie (OPW); and
  - Flood Hazard Mapping for fluvial and tidal area commissioned by Cork County Council from Consultants JBA Associates.
- 1.3.2 Since 2011, OPW have commissioned new detailed CFRAMS studies for several locations in the County and, once complete, will be used by the County Council to supersede the JBA Associates Flood Hazard Mapping used by the County Council in the making of the 2011 LAP’s, in the locations where the information is available. Although these new CFRAMS studies are at an advanced stage, their final outputs were not available when this document was prepared. Therefore, in this document, references to flood risk are based on the flood risk data used in the preparation of the 2011 Local Area Plans. It is anticipated that the new CFRAMS studies will be available to inform the preparation of the draft plans themselves in 2016.
- 1.3.3 Because the 2011 Local Area Plans were subjected to a detailed flood risk assessment in line with the Government’s guidelines to planning authorities, the majority of zonings in those plans are not affected by significant flood risks and can therefore be considered for inclusion in the new Draft Local Area Plans in 2016, if appropriate. However, a small number of zonings from the 2011 Local Area Plans and some zonings originating in Town Council Development Plans carry a residual element of flood risk. Where possible, it is intended to draw attention to those zonings in this document so that the justification for their inclusion in the new Draft Local Area Plan in 2016 can be re-assessed.
- 1.3.4 **Habitats Directive Assessment:** Similarly, because the 2011 Local Area Plans were subjected to a detailed Habitats Directive assessment in line with the Government’s guidelines to planning authorities, zonings in those plans are unlikely to be considered as posing risks to the integrity of Natura 2000 sites through their inclusion in the new Draft Local Area Plan in 2016. However, some of zonings originating in Town Council Development Plans were not subjected to Appropriate Assessment when those plans

were made. Where possible, it is intended to draw attention to those zonings in this document so that the justification for their inclusion in the new Draft Local Area Plan in 2016 can be re-assessed.

- 1.3.5 **Approaches to Zoning:** Many existing town development plans use ‘established’ zoning categories to define the appropriate use in existing areas of development e.g. ‘established residential’ to denote existing residential areas. In the Local Area Plans adopted in 2011 the use of ‘established’ zoning categories was discontinued in favour of an ‘existing built up area’ classification. In preparing the new local area plans this approach will be applied to the developed areas within the former town council administrative areas.

## 1.4 Process of Making a Local Area Plan

- 1.4.1 The legal process for making a local area plan is set out in Section 20 of the Local Government Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. The main stages of the process of making a Local Area Plan are summarised in Table 1.2 below.

Stage	Actions	Timeframe
Preliminary Stage  This is the stage we are at now.  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Brief Elected Members at Development Committee.</li> <li>➤ Brief Planning Special Policy Committee.</li> <li>➤ Brief Municipal District Committees.</li> <li>➤ Publish Consultation Documents.</li> <li>➤ Invite submissions and observations from the public and interested bodies.</li> <li>➤ Present Chief Executive’s report on Submissions Received to Municipal District Committees / Development Committee.</li> </ul>	September 2015 to March 2016
Draft Local Area Plan Stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Prepare proposed Draft Plans.</li> <li>➤ Brief Members on Proposed Draft Plans.</li> <li>➤ Commence Formal Public Consultation on Draft Plans.</li> <li>➤ Invite submissions and observations from the public and interested bodies.</li> <li>➤ Issue Chief Executives Report to Members.</li> <li>➤ Members consider Chief Executive’s Report.</li> </ul>	April 2016 to March 2017
Draft Local Area Plan Amendment Stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Consider need to Amend plans.</li> <li>➤ Publication of Amendments as appropriate.</li> <li>➤ Commence Formal Public Consultation on Amendments</li> <li>➤ Invite submissions and observations from the public and interested bodies.</li> <li>➤ Issue Chief Executives Report to Members.</li> <li>➤ Consideration of Issues by members and Adoption of Local Area Plans.</li> </ul>	April 2017 to July 2017          Adopted Monday 24th July 2017

- 1.4.2 Throughout the preparation / review of this electoral area plan, the Acts state that the Elected Members of the Council are restricted to considering only the following matters:

- The proper planning and sustainable development of the area;
- The statutory obligations of any local authority in the area; and
- Any relevant policies or objectives for the time being of the Government or of any Minister of the Government.

## 1.5 How to make a submission

1.5.1 The Fermoy Municipal District Preliminary Consultation Document is available from the Council website at [www.corkcoco.ie](http://www.corkcoco.ie). If required, a hard copy of the document may be inspected between the hours of 9.30 a.m. and 4.00p.m, from Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2015 to 4.00p.m on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January, 2016 at the following locations:

- Planning Department, Floor 1, County Hall, Cork.
- Planning Department, Norton House, Skibbereen, Co. Cork.
- Cork County Council Offices, Mallow
- Public Libraries – Please check libraries regarding opening times and availability.

1.5.2 CD copies of the documents may be requested by phone (Tel: 021-4285900) or collected from the Planning Department, Floor 1, County Hall between the hours of 9.30am and 4.00pm during the above period.

1.5.3 Submissions or observations regarding the Preliminary Consultation document are hereby invited from members of the public, children, or groups or associations representing the interests of children and other interested parties during the period Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2015 to 4.00p.m on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January, 2016.

1.5.4 Submissions may be made in either of the following two ways:

On-line via [www.corkcoco.ie](http://www.corkcoco.ie) following the instructions provided

**OR**

In written form to the Senior Planner, Planning Policy Unit, Cork County Council, Floor 13, County Hall, Cork.

1.5.5 All such submissions lodged within the above period and prior to the close of business at 4.00pm on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January, 2016, will be taken into consideration in the preparation of the Fermoy Municipal District Draft Local Area Plan.

The Council regrets that for technical reasons, submissions by email cannot be accepted.





# Section 2

## Planning Strategy

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## 2.1 Local Area Plan Context

- 2.1.1 It is a requirement of the Planning and Development Acts that local area plans must be consistent with the objectives of the development plan for their County. In County Cork, the County Development Plan 2014 sets out the overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the County including population targets for each of the main towns and the amount of new housing required to meet the needs of the population, and is consistent with national targets issued by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government and the Regional Planning Guidelines for the South West Region. The Plan also sets out county-wide objectives for issues such as housing, social and community facilities, economy and employment, town centres and retail, energy and digital economy, transportation and mobility, water services, heritage, green infrastructure and the environment and zoning and land use.
- 2.1.2 The new local area plans will be informed by the current plans adopted in 2011 and by changes in national planning policy, legislation, government guidelines etc which has taken place in the interim and by changes in local circumstances, needs etc.
- 2.1.3 In considering the future development of this Municipal District, proposals must be consistent with the Core Strategy for the County as set out in Chapter 2 and Appendix B of Volume 1 of the Cork County Development Plan 2014, which details the population growth targets for each Municipal District, the expected growth in households and the corresponding amount of new housing required within the settlement network and rural areas to meet the growth target.

## 2.2 County Development Plan Strategy for the Fermoy Municipal District

- 2.2.1 The Fermoy Municipal District straddles two Strategic Planning Areas for which the CDP 2014 sets out differing objectives. Fermoy, its hinterland and the area to the south of Fermoy are located within the Greater Cork Ring Strategic Planning Area. Mitchelstown, Charleville, and the northern part of the Municipal District are located within the North Cork Strategic Planning Area.
- 2.2.2 Fermoy and its hinterland and the southern part of the municipal district are located within the Greater Cork Ring Strategic Planning Area. The Ring has experienced population growth significantly ahead of target over the last decade. In this context the County Development Plan seeks to:
- a) Establish an appropriate balance in the spatial distribution of future population growth so that Youghal, Bandon, Fermoy and Macroom can accelerate their rate of growth and achieve a critical mass of population to enable them to maximise their potential to attract new investment in employment, services and public transport;
  - b) Facilitate the development of the villages as set out in the local area plans so that the rate of future population growth compliments the strategy to achieve a critical mass of population in the towns and provide protection for those areas recognised as under pressure from urban development;
  - c) Strengthen and protect the rural communities of the area by encouraging sustainable growth in population, protecting agricultural infrastructure and productivity so that agriculture remains the principal rural land use and focusing other employment development in the main towns and key villages;
  - d) Protect and enhance the natural heritage of the Blackwater Catchment; and
  - e) Prioritise the adequate provision of water services and transport infrastructure to meet current needs and future population targets while protecting the areas environment.

- 2.2.3 Mitchelstown, Charleville, and the northern part of the Municipal District are located within the North Cork Strategic Planning Area. In relation to the North Cork area, it is an objective of the County Development Plan 2014 to;
- a) Recognise the importance to the area of the Atlantic Gateways Initiative; to acknowledge the potential of the towns located within the Atlantic Gateway Corridor to act as a focus for new investment in jobs and housing and to recognise the value of such investment to the area as a whole;
  - b) Establish an appropriate balance in the spatial distribution of future population growth so that Kanturk, Millstreet, Mitchelstown, Charleville, Buttevant and Newmarket, can accelerate their rate of growth, in line with this Core Strategy and achieve a critical mass of population to enable them to maximise their potential to attract new investment in employment, services and public transport;
  - c) Facilitate the development of the villages and rural areas so that the rate of future population growth compliments the strategy to achieve a critical mass of population in the towns and provide protection for those areas recognised as under pressure from urban development;
  - d) Strengthen and protect the rural communities of the area by encouraging sustainable growth in population, protecting agricultural infrastructure and productivity and focusing other employment development primarily in the main towns and key villages;
  - e) Recognise the need to encourage the diversification of the rural economy by promoting a stronger tourism and leisure economy through the protection of the area's natural and built heritage, and by encouraging appropriate new forms of employment development;
  - f) Prioritise the adequate provision of water services and transport infrastructure to meet current needs and future population targets while protecting the areas environment; and
  - g) Protect and enhance the natural heritage of the Blackwater catchment.

## 2.3 The Fermoy Municipal District

- 2.3.1 In 2011 the population of the Fermoy Municipal District stood at 42,226. This population is spread across a network of settlements including three towns and 29 villages and the open countryside, as detailed in Table 2.1. Outside the main towns the district is largely rural / agricultural in character. Almost 45% of the population of the Municipal District lives in the open countryside i.e. not within a settlement.
- 2.3.2 Fermoy is the largest town in the Municipal District with a population of 6,489 in 2011 and has the largest employment, service and retail base. Both Charleville and Mitchelstown are smaller in terms of population and employment but offer services that support a significant rural hinterland.
- 2.3.3 Agriculture is a key economic activity throughout the District both in direct farming of land and in food processing with significant dairy processing industries located in Charleville and Mitchelstown. Services and more traditional manufacturing are also significant employers in the area.



**Table 2.1: Distribution of population within the Fermoy Municipal District 2011**

	Settlements	Population 2011	%
Towns	Fermoy (6,849), Charleville (3,646), Mitchelstown (3,677)	13,812	33%
Key villages	Doneraile, Newtownshandrum, Kilworth, Glanworth, Rathcormack, Castlelyons/Bridebridge, Castletownroche, Ballyhooly, Watergrasshill, Conna, Kildorrery	9,428	22%
Villages	Killavullen, Bartlemy, Ballynoe, Clondulane, Ballindangan, Glennahulla, Ballyhea, Shanballymore, Coolagown, Curraglass		
Village nuclei	Aghern, Grange, Ballygiblin, Araglin, Curraghalla, Kildinan (The Pound), Knockanevin Rockmills		
Rural areas		18,987	45%
<b>Total Population</b>		<b>42,226</b>	

\* Village and Rural Area Populations are estimated figures



Figure 2.1 Fermoy Municipal District

## 2.4 River Blackwater Special Area of Conservation

- 2.4.1 One of the key attributes of the Fermoy District is the River Blackwater which is designated as a Special Area of Conservation under the Habitats Directive as it is a significant site containing important rare plants and species. In planning for the future development of the area the Council has a legally binding obligation to protect the favourable conservation status of the River Blackwater Special Area of Conservation. In practical terms the status of the site, and conservation objectives for it, means that significant improvements are required to water quality within the catchment to meet stringent water quality standards.
- 2.4.2 The County Development Plan 2014 proposes significant new development within the Blackwater Catchment, particularly at Mallow, Fermoy, Kanturk, Newmarket and Millstreet. The Habitats Directive Assessment process undertaken as part of the preparation of County Development Plan concluded that it was not possible to rule out adverse impacts on the Special Area of Conservation if the scale of development proposed within the catchment went ahead. The County Development Plan has put development within the catchment *on hold* pending the outcome of further investigations / studies.
- 2.4.3 The Council is liaising with the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, Department of Arts Heritage and Gaeltacht and Irish Water to resolve these issues and is proceeding on the basis that the issues will be resolved prior to the adoption of the new Local Area Plan in 2017.

## 2.5 Growth Strategy

- 2.5.1 Within the Fermoy Municipal District the County Development Plan provides for growth in population of 4,678 persons. The number of households is expected to grow by 4,381 leading to a net requirement for 4,874 new houses within the Municipal District. The County Development Plan indicates that 149ha of land are required to meet this level of housing provision in the main towns, in addition to housing opportunities in the villages and rural areas.
- 2.5.2 Through its County Development Plan 2014, the Council has allocated the majority of this growth to the towns with 2,782 new houses proposed. Housing growth is also planned within the villages (1,630 units).
- 2.5.3 Table 2.2 shows that, arising from the County Development Plan 2014, there is a net requirement within the towns of the Municipal District for 2,782 new dwelling units and capacity, in terms of the current provision of zoned lands within the main towns, to accommodate 4,018, providing headroom of 1,236 units or 44%. Broadly similar levels of new housing area proposed for each of the three towns.
- 2.5.4 In overall terms in this Municipal District there is enough land within the towns to meet the target requirement for housing and at this stage of the LAP process there is no need to add to the overall land supply as it includes a strategic land reserve of 44% in terms of the amount of housing units required.
- 2.5.5 The value of retaining this strategic land reserve is that it provides flexibility in the local housing market and provides capacity within the towns in the event that investment in infrastructure in the villages is delayed.

Table 2.2. Fermoy Municipal District

	Housing Requirement					Housing Supply	
	Census 2011	Population Target	Total New Households	New Units Required	Net Estimated Requirement (ha)	Est. Net Residential area zoned in LAP / TCP (ha)	Estimated Housing Yield (LAPs and TCPs) (Units)
Fermoy	6,489	7,589	831	938	47	94.56	1,601
Charleville	3,646	4,925	741	804	45	72.50	1,124
Mitchelstown	3,677	5,346	905	1,040	58	79.60	1,293
<b>Total Main Towns</b>	<b>13,812</b>	<b>17,860</b>	<b>2,478</b>	<b>2,782</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>246.66</b>	<b>4,018</b>
Villages	9,427	11,529	1,417	1,533			1,003
Rural	18,987	17,514	486	559			
Total Villages and rural	28,414	29,044	1,903	2,092			1,003
<b>Total Municipal District</b>	<b>42,226</b>	<b>46,904</b>	<b>4,381</b>	<b>4,874</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>246.66</b>	<b>5,021</b>

Current Estimated Strategic Land Reserve (LAPs and TCPs) for this Municipal District is 97.3 Ha  
Source: Cork County Development Plan 2014- Appendix B, Table B 11

## 2.6 Water Services infrastructure

- 2.6.1 Water services, of all the infrastructure requirements needed to facilitate new development, is the most critical, as in the absence of it, little development can take place.
- 2.6.2 Since January 2014 Irish Water is responsible for the operation of public water services (drinking water and wastewater) including management and maintenance of existing water services assets. Those intending to carry out development must now obtain consent to connect to Irish Water Infrastructure for new development. Irish Water also has responsibility for planning for future infrastructure needs and for the delivery of new infrastructure and future decisions in relation to investment in new water services infrastructure will be made by Irish Water. Developers must also satisfy themselves that Irish Water will make adequate services available in order to meet the needs of any development they propose.
- 2.6.3 The Cork County Development Plan, 2014 and the new Municipal District Local Area Plans are important documents that Irish Water should take into account in formulating its plans and programmes. As part of the review of the Local Area Plans it is proposed to prepare a companion document outlining the Water Services Infrastructural Investment needs in each Municipal District.

### Approach to Water Services provision

2.6.4 Within this Municipal District, as illustrated by Table 2.4, the water services infrastructure needed to deliver the scale of growth envisaged by the 2011 Local Area Plan is often not in place. In general the Councils approach to this, which is summarised in Table 2.3, is that **where Irish Water already have water services infrastructure in a town or village then Irish Water will need to up upgrade that infrastructure as necessary to meet the demands of current and future customers in the settlement.**

Table 2.3: Strategy for Water Services Provision		
Normally Expected level of Water Services		Policy Approach
<b>Towns</b>	Public Drinking Water and Waste Water Treatment	Adequate water services infrastructure to be prioritised.
<b>Key Villages</b>		
<b>Villages</b>	Public Drinking Water	Adequate drinking water services to be prioritised.
	Public Waste Water Treatment	Adequate waste water treatment facilities to be prioritised for villages which already have some element of public infrastructure.  For smaller villages where services are not available or expected, development will be limited to a small number of individual houses with their own treatment plant.
<b>Village Nuclei</b>	Public Drinking Water	Where already present, adequate drinking water services to be maintained. In the absence of public drinking water, individual dwellings may be permitted on the basis of private wells subject to normal planning and public health criteria.
	Public Waste Water Treatment	In these smaller settlements within no public services, it is proposed to limit development to a small number of individual houses with their own treatment plant.

2.6.5 Therefore, while the current water services infrastructure within the villages cannot immediately deliver the scale of growth envisaged by the 2011 LAP, **the proposal generally is to retain the scale of growth with the expectation that the infrastructure will be delivered over time by Irish Water.** Settlements in this category are denoted by the letter 'R' in the final column of Table 2.4.

2.6.6 In some areas where water services infrastructure is not available, nor likely to be available, it may be necessary to adjust the scale of growth and limit development within such settlements to a small number of individual houses. Settlements in this category re denoted by the letter 'A' in the final column of Table 2.4. Within this Municipal District, Ballyhea is the only settlement that falls into this category. In Ballyhea there is Council plant serving some Council houses but this is not currently under the control of Irish Water.

2.6.7 In some settlements, typically village nuclei, the scale of growth envisaged in 2011 is already quite low in recognition of the lack of water services infrastructure and therefore it may be possible to retain this as it is.

2.6.8 In relation to the Villages, the County Development Plan 2014 indicates that, in the villages of this Municipal District, provision has been made for 1,533 units. An analysis of water services capacity in the villages indicates that without further investment in Water Services, it may only be possible to deliver 572 housing units.



- 2.6.9 Within the village network it is suggested that the new LAP should maintain the scale of growth established for the 2011 Local Areas Plan in order to respect the scale and character of the villages and because there are significant deficits in water services infrastructure. Ample land is available within the development boundaries of the villages to accommodate the expected level of growth and at this stage of the process it is not **intended to alter the development boundaries of any of the villages**. The main factor constraining development in the villages is likely to be inadequate water services infrastructure. As outlined above, there is enough land available within the towns within the municipal district generally to accommodate any development which cannot take place within the villages due to lack of infrastructure.

## 2.7 Summary of the proposed Development Strategy for Villages in Fermoy Municipal Districts

- 2.7.1 In relation to the villages of this Municipal District the suggested approach for the new local area plans is as follows:
- a) Maintain growth at the level already provided for in the current 2011 Local Area Plans. The main factor constraining development in the villages is likely to be inadequate water services infrastructure and for this reason, the scale of growth provided for in some settlements may need to be adjusted downwards to reflect this.
  - b) It is not intended to alter the development boundaries of any of the villages.
  - c) **Key Villages:** In some key villages the current water services infrastructure cannot immediately accommodate the scale of growth envisaged by the 2011 Local Area Plan and further investment will be required by Irish Water. However it is proposed to retain the scale of growth envisaged for Key Villages at the level established by the 2011 Local Area Plan **with the expectation that the infrastructure will be delivered over time by Irish Water.**
  - d) **Villages:** There are ten villages in this District. In five of villages water services infrastructure is in place to cater for the scale of growth envisaged by the 2011 Local Area Plan and it is proposed to retain the scale of growth in the new LAP. In the other five villages, Irish Water waste water treatment infrastructure is not available and is not expected to be provided (see Table 2.4). In these villages consideration should be given to adjusting the scale of growth to a level appropriate to the provision of individual houses with their own treatment plant. In this context the scale of growth envisaged by the 2011 LAP for Ballindangan, Coolagown, Curraglass and Glenahulla is already quite modest. However the scale of growth envisaged for Ballyhea may need to be adjusted.
  - e) **Village Nuclei:** Village Nuclei are the smallest settlements in the network and, the CDP 2014 indicates that they are only intended to cater for individual dwellings (i.e. not housing estates). None of the eight village nuclei in this Municipal District have public (Irish Water) waste water treatment infrastructure, and it is not expected to be provided. The scale of growth envisaged for the village nuclei in the 2011 LAP is already quite modest and is unlikely to require further adjustment.

Table 2.4: Fermoy MD Suggested Strategy for new LAP

Name	Existing no. of Houses 2015	Planning permissions Q1 2015 (no. of houses)	Scale of Growth CDP 2014 & LAP 2011	DW Status	WW Status	Suggested Approach for New LAP
<i>Towns</i>						
Fermoy			938			Target as per CDP 2014
Charleville			804			
Mitchelstown			1,040			
			2,782			
<i>Key Villages</i>						
Castlelyons / Bridebridge	210	43	40			R
Kilworth*	412	87	50			R
Rathcormack	670	0	120			R
Watergrasshill	463	0	108			R
Ballyhooly*	199	0	50			R
Castletownroche*	217	83	54			R
Conna	170	76	30			R
Doneraile*	411	35	180			R
Glanworth*	257	0	50			R
Kildorrery*	173	0	50			R
Newtownshandrum	137	97	125			R
			857			
<i>Villages</i>						
Ballynoe*	70	7	20			R
Bartlemy	34	72	10			R
Clondulane*	180	0	20			R
Killavullen*	131	40	5			R
Shanballymore*	67	0	10			R
Ballindangan*	10	0	5		None	R
Ballyhea*	45	0	30		None	A
Coolagown	19	0	5		None	R
Curraglass	17	0	3	Private GWSS	None	R
Glennahulla*	28	0	5		None	R
			113			
<i>Village Nuclei</i>						
Aghern	5	4	5	Private GWSS	None	R
Araglin*	7	0	3		None	R
Ballygiblin*	2	0	4		None	R
Curraghalla*	6	0	5	Private GWSS	None	R
Grange*	28	0	5		None	R
Kildinan (The Pound)	12	0	5		None	R
Knockanevin*	1	0	3		None	R
Rockmills*	14	0	3		None	R
			33			
<b>Total</b>			<b>3,785</b>			
<b>Water Services Key</b>	Irish Water Services in place with broadly adequate existing water services capacity.					
	Irish Water Services in place with limited or no spare water services capacity.					
	None – no existing Irish Water Services.					
<b>Suggested Approach Key</b>	R= It is intended to broadly retain the overall scale of growth as set out in current 2011 Local Area Plan					
	A = The overall scale of growth as set out in current 2011 Local Area Plan will need to be adjusted to reflect available water services capacity. Development will be limited to a small number of individual houses with their own treatment plant.					

## 2.8 Employment within the Fermoy Municipal District Municipal District

2.8.1 Analysis of Census 2011 data for the Municipal District provides information in relation to the jobs that are located within the Municipal District and on the place of employment for the people who live within the Municipal District. In 2011 there were 11,601 jobs within the District, including 1,674 home workers. Jobs located within the Municipal District fall into the following key categories:

- 27.1% - Wholesale, Retail, Transportation and Storage, Accommodation and Food service activities;
- 20.7% Manufacturing, mining /quarrying, Electricity/Gas /Water Supply / waste management.
- 18.4.1% Education, Human Health and Social Work Activities.
- 13.5% Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
- 10.6% Information / Communication, Financial, professional, administration etc.

2.8.2 Within the District 16,794 persons were at work in 2011. This includes home, mobile and 'uncodeable' workers and corresponds to 38.6% of the population of the District. These jobs were distributed across and outside the county as follows:

- 7,747 or 46.1% work within the Municipal District (including 1,674 home workers).
- 3,974 or 23.6% work within the Greater Cork Ring (this includes part of the MD).
- 1,914 or 11.3% work within Cork City.
- 1804 or 10.7 % work within the County Metropolitan Area (this includes part of the MD).
- 1,331 or 7.9% work outside Cork County.

2.8.3 In terms of travel to work, 66.3% of employees who live within the District travel to work by driving a car, van lorry or other vehicle. Only 0.8% of employees living within the District travel to work by bus or train while 7.2% travel on foot.

2.8.4 Fermoy is the largest centre of employment within the area. The 2011 Census recorded a daytime working population within Fermoy of 2,657 people, a decrease of 576 on the 2006 figure. In Mitchelstown, the figure was 1,662 (decreasing from 1,957 in 2006) and in Charleville the figure was 2426, an increase of over 18% on the 2006 figure. This would indicate that of the 11,601 jobs within the Municipal district 6,745 or 58% are located within the three main towns. Apart from farm based jobs a wide dispersal of employment opportunities outside of the main towns makes it more difficult for people to access employment opportunities and creates challenges for the provision of effective public transport and transport infrastructure generally.

2.8.5 There is a strong supply of employment land within the Municipal District. The new Local Area Plans should seek to ensure that lands identified for employment use can be readily developed for such and address any barriers to development.

<b>Town</b>	<b>Business</b>	<b>Industrial</b>	<b>Enterprise</b>
Fermoy	27	33	0
Mitchelstown	29	68	0
Charleville	63	28	0
<i>Total</i>	<i>119</i>	<i>129</i>	<i>0</i>





# Section 3

## Main Settlements

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## 3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 There are three towns in the Fermoy Municipal District: Fermoy, Mitchelstown and Charleville. This section outlines some of the key issues in relation to the main towns which the new Local Area Plan will address. The section also identifies the main areas where changes are being considered relative to the plan that was adopted in 2011 and the issues which the Council would like to engage with the people/stakeholders on. The main issues are:

- a) Where will people live – issues around the location of lands for new housing development.
- b) Where can people work?
- c) Are there sufficient community facilities and public spaces?
- d) How can the town centre be strengthened? Identifying opportunity sites & providing for a mix of uses which promote vibrancy and the viability of the town centre?
- e) Are the public spaces of the town attractive and accessible? Is the public realm of high quality?
- f) How to deal with congestion and improve movement for all modes within the town?
- g) What are the water services needs of the town and how can these be delivered?



# Section 3.1

## Fermoy

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### 3.1.1 The Vision for Fermoy

- 3.1.1.1 Fermoy, a market town which evolved at a historic bridging point over the River Blackwater, is a moderately sized town located in the Greater Cork Ring Strategic Planning Area, 37 Km north of Cork City. Fermoy is a growing town - the 2011 Census recorded a population of 6,489 persons, an increase of 10.5% over the 2006 census population which in turn represented a 22% population increase over the 2002 population. The town has excellent access to the national road network, particularly through its proximity to the M8, which coupled with a good range of schools, community facilities and amenities makes it both a convenient and attractive employment and residential location.
- 3.1.1.2 The central part of the town was administered by Fermoy Town Council until 2014 and a Town Development Plan was prepared in 2009 setting out a strategy for the development of the lands within the Town Council area. The Town Plan identified a number of strategic objectives to guide the future development of the town which included enhancing the economy of the town, rejuvenating the retail function, developing the potential of the town's location on the River Blackwater, protecting the town's heritage and addressing traffic and parking issues. The Town Development Plan 2009 remains in force and will inform the preparation of the new Local Area Plan.
- 3.1.1.3 The environs of the town are currently dealt with by the Local Area Plan adopted in 2011 which, in summary, seeks to boost the town's population, optimise employment opportunities, deliver community and recreation facilities to meet the needs of the population and ensure new development respects the significant historic and visual assets of the town on the banks of the River Blackwater. This strategy remains relevant today. Future development in Fermoy is affected by water quality issues in the wider Blackwater River Catchment (see paragraphs 2.4.1 and 2.4.2 in Chapter 2 of this document).
- 3.1.1.4 Within this context the preparation of the new Local Area Plan offers the opportunity to gauge how Fermoy has performed through the duration of the previous plans, refine the strategy as appropriate and set out the land use strategy needed to allow the town to continue to grow and prosper.

### 3.1.2 Residential Land Supply

- 3.1.2.1 The strategy for Fermoy, as set out in the Cork County Development Plan 2014, provides for the population of the town to grow to 7,589, representing growth of 1,100 people (17%) on Census 2011 figures (6,489). In order to accommodate this level of population growth, an additional 938 housing units will be required. The County Development Plan has identified a net housing land requirement of 47ha to cater for this level of housing provision.
- 3.1.2.2 The current Local Area Plan and the Fermoy Town Development Plan make provision for a residential land supply of 94.56ha with the capacity to provide approximately 1,601 dwelling units. There is therefore a potential surplus of zoned residential land / Strategic land reserve within the town in the order of 663 units / 70%.
- 3.1.2.3 The value of retaining a strategic land reserve in Fermoy is that it provides flexibility in the local housing market and provides capacity within the town in the event that investment in infrastructure in Metropolitan Cork, or in the smaller settlements, is not forthcoming. In addition the amount of land required to cater for future growth in Fermoy depends on a wide range of factors including the type of housing provided and the density to which it is developed. In Fermoy it is intended to provide land for residential development that generally conforms to the Medium A and B density requirements as set out in the County Plan 2014, thus providing for a range of housing densities, including opportunities for people to build their own houses as part of lower density serviced site type developments. On some town centre mixed use schemes, higher densities may be appropriate and achievable, and this will also be encouraged and facilitated.
- 3.1.2.4 The current land supply for Fermoy is detailed in Table 3.1.1. The final column on the table details the suggested zoning approach for the new Local Area Plan and indicates whether it is proposed to broadly retain a zoning or change it. Where it is proposed to retain a zoning this refers to the land use category only – the detailed objective for a site may change.
- 3.1.2.5 With regard to residential zonings, changes to zoning objectives are suggested regarding three sites within the former Town Council administrative area – R-02, R03 and X-01. Sites R-02 and R-03 are small residential sites which are within a flood risk area. The R-03 site is also within the River Blackwater Special Area of Conservation. It is therefore suggested that both the R-02 and R03 sites should be rezoned as open space.
- 3.1.2.6 The X-01 site is zoned for a hotel on the southern portion and low density housing on the northern portion of the site. While this land is now defended by the flood defence system from a 1/100 year flood it remains a flood risk area and there remains a residual risk of breaches of flood defences. Accordingly it is not considered suitable land for vulnerable land uses. The objective for this site will need to be reviewed in light of the provisions of the Guidelines on **The Planning System and in Flood Risk Management**.
- 3.1.2.7 As part of the preparation of the Draft Plan refinements may be considered to three other zonings. Local Area Plan sites R-03 and R-04 contain a former landfill site and there is a need to provide a buffer zone around this. A service way leave to serve I-01 east of M8 may also run through R-03 and needs to be provided for. LAP site R-02 also contains a former quarry. These issues may be addressed in drafting the new objectives for these lands.

#### *Housing land Supply - Issues For Consideration:*

- 3.1.2.8 There is sufficient land zoned in Fermoy to accommodate the requirement for the new housing units as set out in the County Development Plan and to provide a strategic land reserve equivalent to 70% of housing requirements. However, further investment in water services infrastructure is needed before much of the land supply can be developed, notably sites R-02, R-03, R-06, R-08 and R-09 and R-10. The value of retaining a strategic land reserve in Fermoy is that it provides flexibility in the local housing market and provides capacity within the town in the event that investment in infrastructure in Metropolitan Cork, or in the smaller settlements, is delayed.

**Table 3.1.1: Fermoy Residential Land Supply**

Site ref.	Area (HA)	Comment	Proposed Strategy
<b>Infrastructure available to facilitate development within 0-2 year timeframe:</b>			
R-04 (part of) (LAP 2011)	1.68	Valid permission on part of the site for 44 units. Medium Density A	Retain zoning.
R-07 (LAP 2011)	3.1	Previous permissions have expired. School proposed on part of site. Medium Density A	Retain zoning.
R-01 (TDP 2009)	1.24	No planning history.	Retain zoning.
R-04 (TDP 2009)	6.8	The north western corner of the site has existing development. No significant planning permission.	Retain zoning.
<b>Developable within 2-6 years subject to additional infrastructure provision:</b>			
R-04 (Part of LAP 2011)	2.32	Valid permission for 44 units on part of site. Legacy landfill issue on part of site. Medium Density A	Retain zoning.
R-05 (LAP 2011)	2.6	Access Issues. Medium Density B.	Retain zoning.
R-05 (TDP 2009)	0.026	Part of convent grounds. No history.	Retain zoning.
<b>Infrastructure requirements suggest delivery more than six years down the line:</b>			
R-01 (LAP 2011)	3.1	Previous permissions have expired. LAP Medium Density B	Retain zoning.
R-02 (LAP 2011)	1.7	Site of an old quarry. May be difficult to develop. LAP Medium Density A	Retain zoning.
R-03 (LAP 2011)	22.8	No planning history. Legacy landfill issue. Medium Density A.	Retain zoning.
R-06 (LAP 2011)	9	No history. LAP Medium Density A.	Retain zoning.
R-08 (LAP 2011)	9.56	Valid permission for 308 units subject to water services. LAP Medium Density A.	Retain zoning.
R-09 (LAP 2011)	22.8	No planning history. LAP Medium Density B.	Retain zoning.
R-10 (LAP)	6.3	No planning history. LAP Medium Density B.	Retain zoning.
<b>Other sites:</b>			
R-02 (TDP 2009)	0.05	No permissions. Flood risk area. Within flood plain of the River Blackwater SAC. Not suitable for residential development.	Rezone as open space.
R-03 (TDP 2009)	0.27	No permissions. Flood risk area. Within SAC.	Rezone as open space.
X-01 (TDP 2009)	1.65	Hotel /low density housing. Site is at risk of flooding.	Review zoning.
<b>Total:</b>	<b>95</b>		



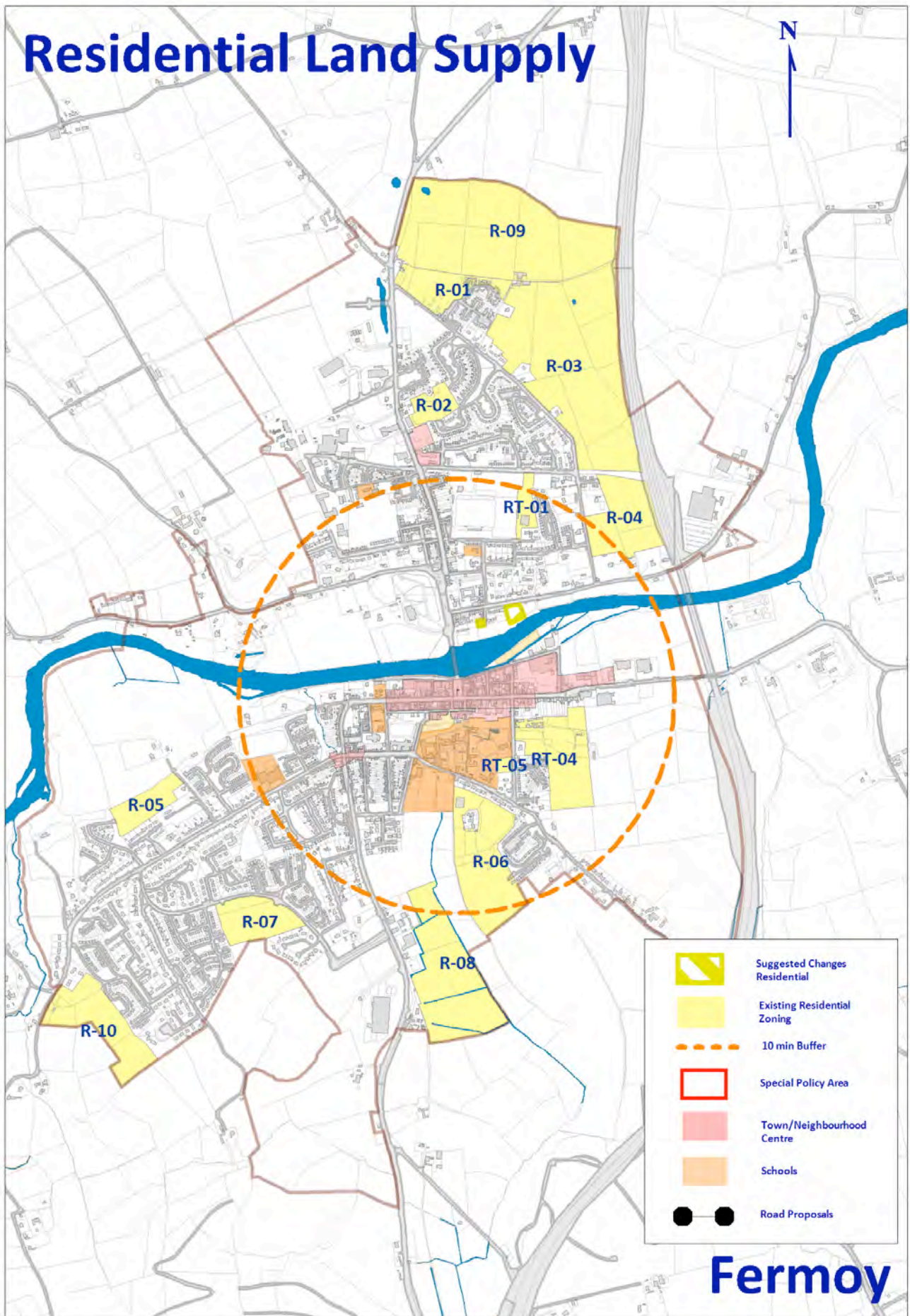


Figure 3.1.1: Fermoy Residential Land Supply

### 3.1.3 Employment Land Supply

- 3.1.3.1 Census 2011 identifies, in its Town Area Profiles, 2,360 residents of Fermoy as being at work, equivalent to 36% of the population and more than half of them commute outside the area for work.
- 3.1.3.2 In 2011 the daytime working population of Fermoy town was 2,324 with commerce and trade being the largest employment sector at 35%, followed by professional services at 24% and manufacturing at 18%. Unemployment levels in 2011 were at 22%, slightly higher than the national average for the time of 19%.
- 3.1.3.3 Retail and service sector employment is largely based in the town centre. Other employment uses are mainly concentrated in the north western quadrant of the town including Silverpail, Micro Bio and the Faber Castell Business Campus, with additional significant employment at SCI, east of the M8. The Teagasc Dairy Products Research Centre is located at Moorepark further to the east of Fermoy.
- 3.1.3.4 Fermoy's location on the M8 corridor means it is well positioned to attract employment investment. The Cork County Development Plan 2014 identifies, in the context of a countywide employment hierarchy, that the employment strategy for Fermoy should focus on local catchment employment and delivering a good supply of serviced employment land to cater for medium to small scale business / industry.
- 3.1.3.5 Together, the Fermoy Town Development Plan and the Local Area Plan provide approximately 61 hectares of land for employment related development. Within the current LAP, lands for business use are zoned to the north of the town with good access to the M8. Lands for industrial use are zoned to the south of the town, also with good access to the M8. Lands are zoned to the east of the M8 to cater for the expansion of an existing operator.
- 3.1.3.6 The Town Plan identifies existing industrial uses to the north west of the town and a site for employment use (I-01). The Town Plan also uses a commercial land use category which is no longer used in the County Development Plan so these sites will be reclassified as part of the preparation of the Draft LAP.
- 3.1.3.7 Similar to the residential lands, further investment in water services infrastructure is needed to facilitate development of some of the employment land, notably site 1-03 to the south of the town.
- 3.1.3.8 Table 3.1.2 below sets out the current situation in relation to the lands identified for new employment uses in Fermoy. No significant changes are proposed to the lands identified for new employment uses. However, in line with the approach in the local area plans, some land identified as existing industrial use in the town development plan may be reclassified as part of the 'existing built up area'.
- 3.1.3.9 It is estimated that there is sufficient land zoned in Fermoy to accommodate a range of business and industrial employment uses and it is not proposed to zone any additional employment land.



**Table 3.1.2: Fermoy Employment Land Availability**

<b>Site Ref.</b>	<b>Current Status</b>	<b>Suggested zoning approach</b>
I-01 (LAP 2011)	Undeveloped site, zoned to facilitate expansion of existing industrial use.	Retain zoning.
I-02 (LAP 2011)	Undeveloped site.	Retain zoning.
I-03 (LAP 2011)	Undeveloped site	Retain zoning.
B-01 (LAP 2011)	Undeveloped IDA site.	Retain zoning
B-02 (LAP 2011)	Undeveloped site.	Retain zoning.
B-03 (LAP 2011)	Undeveloped site	Retain zoning.
B-04 (LAP 2011)	Undeveloped site.	Retain zoning.
I-01 (TDP 2009)	ESB depot.	Retain zoning.

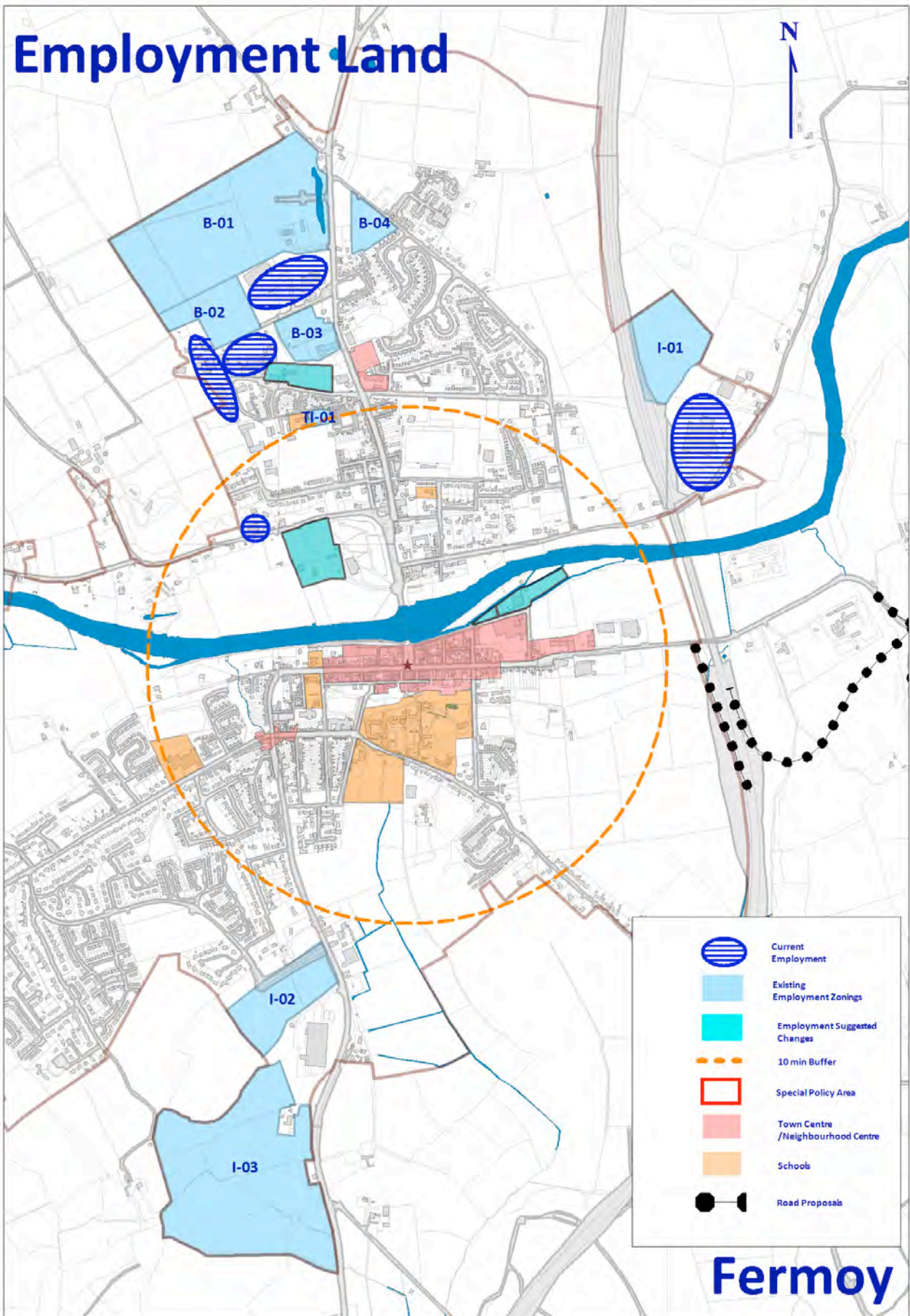


Figure 3.1.2: Fermoy Employment Land Supply

### 3.1.4 Town Centre / Retail

#### *Overview of Fermoy Town Centre*

- 3.1.4.1 Fermoy has a relatively compact town centre, with a rich architectural heritage. It occupies an attractive setting on the banks of the River Blackwater.
- 3.1.4.2 The main focus for town centre retail development is in the area south of the river along Patrick Street and McCurtain Street. An additional small neighbourhood centre is formed by a cluster of commercial units around the Cork Road/Emmet St. Junction to the south west of the town, and there is a more modern, but largely vacant, neighbourhood centre (Blackwater Shopping Centre) to the north of the town centre at Beechfield. In terms of convenience retail the town is served by Supervalu, Lidl and Aldi.
- 3.1.4.3 The dominant uses in the town centre are comparison shops and services. There is a strong predominance of independent stores, some national multiple stores and relatively few international multiples. While there is some vacancy in the town (estimated at 18.5% in a 2012 town centre study) it is dispersed and many of the vacant units are relatively small so the vacancy level does not appear to be causing any significant adverse impacts.

#### *Review of Existing Zonings*

- 3.1.4.4 The updated Retail Planning Guidelines published in 2012 place increased emphasis in protecting the vitality and viability of town centres and the need to take a sequential approach to new retail development. In this context the preparation of a new plan for Fermoy offers the opportunity to review existing town centre policy and zonings in light of the provisions of the guidelines.
- 3.1.4.5 Parts of Fermoy town centre are at risk of flooding but are defended by the flood defence system from a 1/100 year flood event. As part of the preparation of the Draft Plan a detailed flood risk assessment will need to be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Guidelines on **The Planning System and Flood Risk Management** and proposed zoning objectives tested against the provisions of the guidelines. Proposals outlined in Table 3.1.3 may be subject to change as a result of more detailed flood risk assessment.
- 3.1.4.6 In this context there are a number of town centre issues in Fermoy that merit review / consideration:
- 3.1.4.7 *Define the Retail Core:* It is proposed to define the 'Retail Core' of the town in the new Local Area Plan. The retail core is the primary shopping area.
- 3.1.4.8 *Former Mart Site TC-01:* The former Mart site, which comprises land located east and west of Mill Road (c 3.4ha in total) is currently zoned for town centre uses in the Town Development Plan (TC-01). The site is within a defended flood risk area. The lands comprise two sections. On the western side of Mill road the site comprises the old Mart sheds, concrete yards and surfaced car parking areas. The lands on the western side of Mill Road comprise open lands with no buildings.
- 3.1.4.9 Planning permission was sought in 2008 to develop the entire holding for retail (3 anchor stores and 30 smaller retail units), offices, 6 apartments and parking. The application was refused by the former Fermoy Town Council and subsequently by An Bord Pleanála for a number of refusal reasons including the excessive amount of retail space proposed which would have almost doubled the existing provision in the town. Other reasons for refusal included poor layout and design (including poor linkages) and inappropriate scale.
- 3.1.4.10 As part of the preparation of the Draft Plan consideration needs to be given to the best use of these lands going forward, the amount of land needed to facilitate town centre expansion and what uses are appropriate within the defended flood risk area.

- 3.1.4.11 *TC-02.* : This site comprises 1ha and has frontage onto Courthouse road / N72 opposite the Town Hall and comprises the old premises of J Barry and Sons Timber Merchants (sheds and open yard area) and some offices/ residential premises. The current zoning is for ' mixed use that would be in keeping with the vibrant role of the town core as a retail, commercial, service, tourist and family friendly residential area'. An application made on this site in 2008 for a retail, office and apartment development was refused by the former Fermoy Town Council and An Bord Pleanála (reasons included poor design, poor pedestrian permeability and excessive scale). This site is also within the defended flood risk area but is largely brownfield in nature. It is proposed to retain a town centre zoning on this site.
- 3.1.4.12 *Site TC-03:* It is intended to promote the area south of the river as the main area for new retail / town centre development. Accordingly it is proposed to reclassify the area currently zoned TC-03 to the 'existing built up area'.
- 3.1.4.13 *Site TC-04:* It is proposed to reclassify the area currently zoned TC-04 as the 'existing built up area'. This site is currently occupied by a house and garden.
- 3.1.4.14 *Commercial Site C-01:* The Town Development Plan includes a number of commercial zonings which will also be reclassified in the Draft Plan. Commercial site C-01 contains protected structures (a former railway goods shed and a former railway station currently in use as a funeral home) and is within an Architectural Conservation Area. The most appropriate use/s on this site needs to be explored further in preparing the draft Plan.
- 3.1.4.15 *Commercial site C-02* is largely developed and it is suggested that its current zoning should change to reflect this. The eastern portion of this site (Aldi and Blackwater Shopping Centre) would be more appropriately identified as an existing neighbourhood centre and it is proposed that the portion west of Dublin Road become part of the existing built up area.
- 3.1.4.16 *Commercial site C-03* includes the Atkins site and the site of the former Quinn Insurance office building and car park which is currently vacant. The site is at risk of flooding but is partially defended. The easternmost portion of this site is undefended and could be rezoned as open space. The balance of the site could be reclassified as 'existing built up area'.
- 3.1.4.17 *X-01 Site* There is one hotel in the town and it is considered that there is a need for another hotel. There is a site currently zoned (X-01) in the Town Development Plan 2009 for a hotel and low density residential development. This site, while now defended by the flood defence system from a 1/100 year flood, remains a flood risk area with a residual risk of breaches of flood defences. The objective for this site needs to be reviewed in light of the provisions of the guidelines on flood risk management.
- 3.1.4.18 If an alternative hotel site is required, the Local Area Plan will identify a suitable site. There are a number of options which may be considered. It is possible that an area of land within existing residential zonings to the north or existing industrial zonings to the south may be suitable. Alternatively, part of the land that is currently zoned B-03, along with the adjoining land to its north east, may be considered. Other areas may also be considered.
- 3.1.4.19 Table 3.1.3 outlines the current town centre / commercial zonings in Fermoy. The final column on the table details the suggested approach for the new Local Area Plan and indicates whether it is proposed to broadly retain a zoning or change it. Where it is proposed to retain a zoning this refers to the land use category only – the detailed objective for a site may change.
- 3.1.4.20 The new Local Area Plan will continue to promote the consolidation and strengthening of the existing town centre and facilitate sensitive regeneration and expansion where appropriate, while protecting the architectural heritage of the area. The principal retail area in Fermoy is south of the river and it is envisaged that future retail development would consolidate this. Residential uses remain within the centre of Fermoy and the new plan should support the retention of such uses and identify other areas where infill residential development may be appropriate and help support the vitality of the town centre.



**Table 3.1.3: Fermoy Town Centre / Commercial Land Availability**

Site Ref.	Comment	Suggested zoning approach
TC-01	Former Mart site. At risk of flooding but defended. Some buildings on western portion of site but also large open areas, especially on portion of site located east of Mill Road. Previous application on TC-01 site (in 2008) for retail development refused by Fermoy Town Council and An Bord Pleanála due to excessive quantum of retail development proposed, design issues, scale of development etc.	Review objective for this site having regard to the provisions of the guidelines on Flood Risk Management and Retail Planning.
TC-02	Brownfield site including buildings and open areas. Previous application on this site (in 2008) refused by Fermoy Town Council and An Bord Pleanála due to scale, design and permeability issues.	Subject to further Flood Risk Assessment, consider retaining for town centre expansion including a mix of uses.
TC -03	Brian Boru Square	It is intended to promote the area south of the river as the main area for new retail development. It is proposed to reclassify TC-03 as part of the built up area.
TC - 04	Existing house & garden	It is proposed to reclassify TC-04 as part of the built up area.
C-01 (TDP 2009)	Commercial uses	CDP 2014 does not include a commercial land use category. These sites will be reclassified in the Draft Plan. See discussion above.
C-02 (TDP 2009)	Commercial uses	
C-03 (TDP 2009)	Commercial uses	
X-01 (TDP 2009)	Current zoning provides for a Hotel on the southern portion of the site and housing to the north. Site is at risk of flooding but is defended.	Review objective for this site in light of provisions of guidelines on Flood Risk Management.

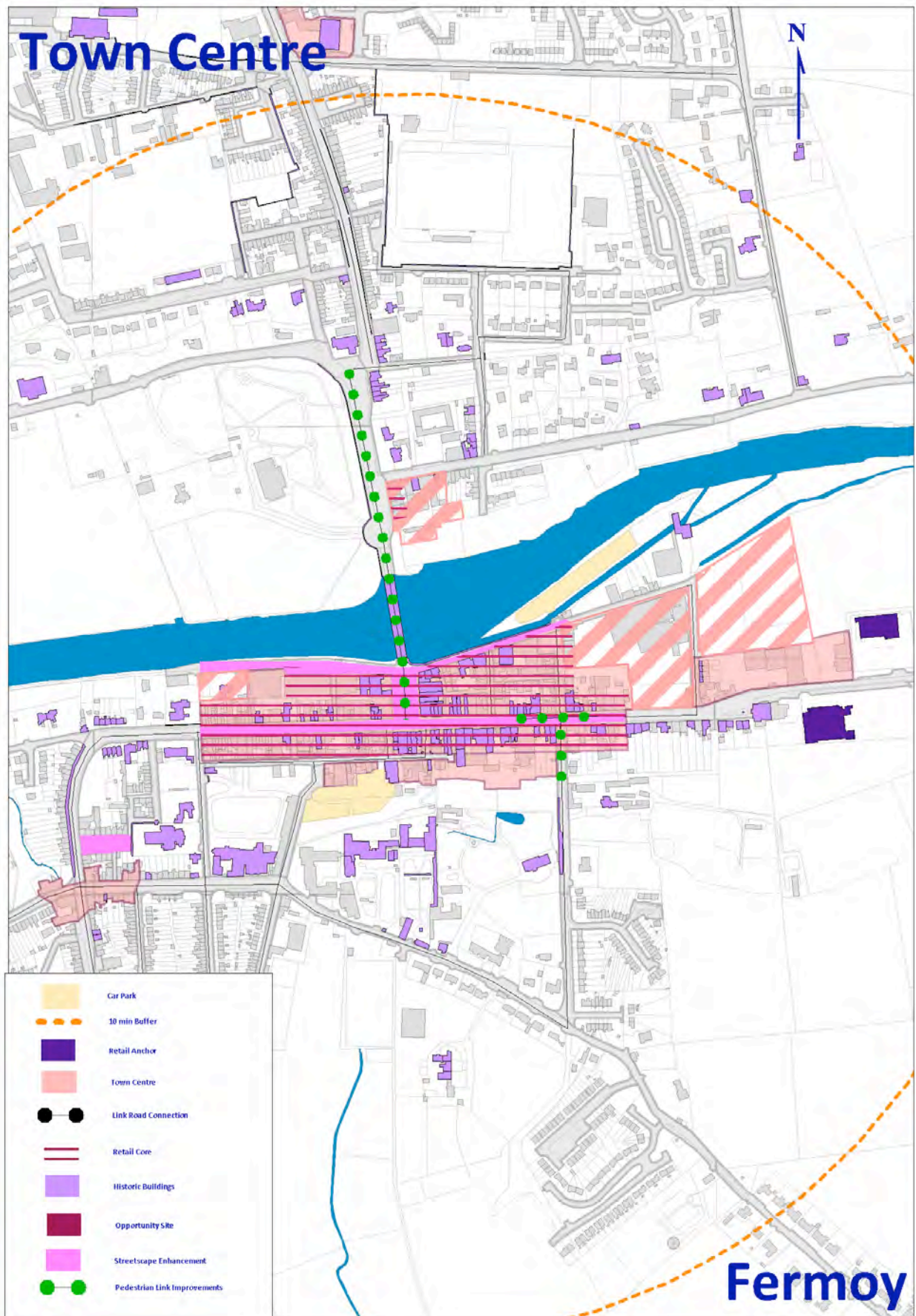


Figure 3.1.3: Fermoy Town Centre



### 3.1.5 Community facilities / Green Infrastructure

#### Community Facilities

- 3.1.5.1 Government population targets for Fermoy require us to plan for population growth of almost 17%. This scale of growth will place new demands on Fermoy’s social and community infrastructure (schools, recreational facilities, health care etc.) While Fermoy has a good range of community facilities and amenities to serve its current population it is important that new community infrastructure is delivered in tandem with planned population growth.
- 3.1.5.2 There are five primary schools and three secondary schools in the town. An application, as yet undecided, was recently submitted for the development of a new, 24 class, primary school on the eastern portion of land currently zoned R-07.
- 3.1.5.3 The town has a good supply of private sports and recreational facilities including Rugby, Soccer and GAA facilities a golf club and a sports hall. The town park contains a municipal swimming pool and a network of well defined pathways including a riverside walk. A riverside seating area has recently been provided on the southern bank of the river as part of the flood defence structure at Ashe Quay. A public library, a town hall and a private nursing home are located in the town. There is also a community hospital located near the town.
- 3.1.5.4 The preparation of the new local area plan provides the opportunity to reassess what community facilities may be required to meet the needs of the growing population.

#### Green Infrastructure

- 3.1.5.5 The future development of the town presents opportunities to develop an integrated green infrastructure strategy which can perform a number of functions including passive and active amenity areas, wildlife corridors and carbon filters to offset impacts of increased development and traffic within the town.
- 3.1.5.6 The River Blackwater, a protected area of biodiversity, runs West / East through the town and adjoins the town centre. It is the most important element of green infrastructure in the town. The current Local Area Plan includes objectives to provide amenity walks alongside the river at a number of locations. The town also contains a Town Park and an opportunity to extend the park will be examined. Development of new residential sites in the town also offers opportunities for the development of additional green spaces and green routes.

<b>Element</b>	<b>Function</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Blackwater Corridor	East-west Amenity corridor & protected area of biodiversity	Area subject to flooding & within SAC so any works will need to respect designations. Explore opportunities to facilitate new riverside walks.
Town parks	Active/passive open space	Explore possibility of reserving land adjoining park for future extension of the park.

### 3.1.6 Transport and Mobility

- 3.1.6.1 In general Fermoy has good road infrastructure and enjoys excellent access to the National Road network. The M8 to the east and the Duntahane Relief Road to the south west has eased traffic congestion somewhat in recent years although there is still a notable level of HGV traffic in the town centre.
- 3.1.6.2 The town also has an adequate internal road network albeit with steep gradients on some roads, particularly to the south of the town.
- 3.1.6.3 A traffic study undertaken in 2008 by consultants made a series of recommendations to improve vehicular, pedestrian and cycle circulation of the town. Objective U-01 of the current Local Area Plan reflects its identification of a need for a link from the motorway to the town centre. Other recommendations include traffic calming measures, junction improvements, revision to parking supply and management regime, enhanced facilities for pedestrians and cyclists. A Walking and Cycling Strategy prepared for Cork Active Travel Towns produced in 2013 also includes a number of recommendations to enhance pedestrian and cycle movement within the town. Its key recommendations are included on the map below and include junction improvements, provision of cycle lanes, footpath provision/upgrade and pedestrian crossing. This will inform the new local area plan.
- 3.1.6.4 There are a number of issues which the draft plan could consider including:
- Encouraging uptake of sustainable modes of travel.
  - Enhancing pedestrian and cycle movement within the town.
  - Ensuring new development enhances the permeability of the town for pedestrians and cyclists.
  - Consideration of measures to discourage HGVs from unnecessarily traversing the town centre.

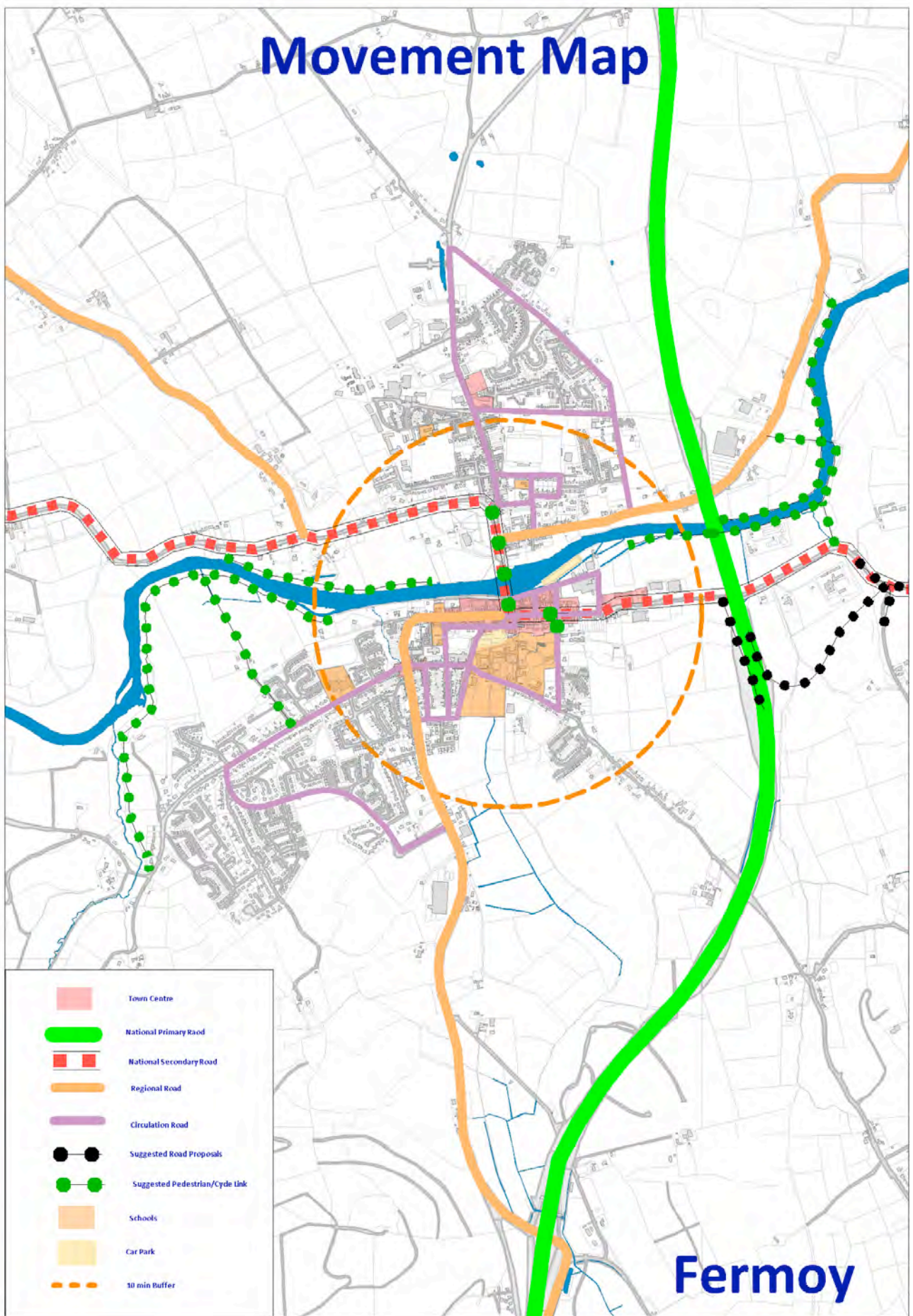


Figure 3.1.4: Fermoy Movement

### 3.1.7 Water Services

- 3.1.7.1 The public drinking water source and wastewater treatment plant infrastructure in Fermoy is broadly suitable to meet the target levels of growth in the town. However further investment in the water main and sewer network infrastructure will be required to serve some areas. At present these works are not included in Irish Water Capital Investment Programme 2014-2016. Note that future development in Fermoy is affected by water quality issues in the wider Blackwater River Catchment (see paragraphs 2.4.1 and 2.4.2 in Chapter 2 of this document).

### 3.1.8 Surface Water

- 3.1.8.1 All new development will be required to address surface water disposal via sustainable urban drainage systems in line with surface water management policy set out in section 11.5 of the County Development Plan 2014. This is an important issue in Fermoy due to water quality issues in the Blackwater River catchment.

### 3.1.9 Flood Risk

- 3.1.9.1 Fermoy town centre is at of risk flooding from the River Blackwater. However the Fermoy Flood Relief Scheme defends the town from a 1 in 100 year flood event through a combination of permanent walls, earth embankments and demountable structures. A number of zoned sites, all zoned in the Town Development Plan, are impacted by the area of flood risk. As part of the preparation of the new draft plan all zonings in areas at risk of flooding will be subject to the Justification Test. This may result in some changes in zonings. With the exception of a portion of C-03, all of these sites are now defended from a 1 in 100 year flood risk. Zoned sites in this category include TC-01 and TC-02, TC-03, TC-04 and C-03, R-02 and R-03 and X-01. The eastern portion of C-03 is undefended. Flood risk is referenced along with other issues in the context of proposals for each of these sites under the relevant land use section.



### 3.1.10 Main Proposals for the Draft Local Area Plan

3.1.10.1 The key issues to be considered as part of the preparation of the new Local Area Plan for Fermoy town are as follows:

Table 3.1.5: Main Proposals for the Draft Local Area Plan for Fermoy	
Topic	Proposed Approach
Water Services Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resolution of water quality issues affecting the Blackwater Catchment.</li> <li>Engage with Irish Water regarding need for further investment in water services infrastructure.</li> </ul>
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The current Local Area Plan provides approximately 34ha of land for industry and 27ha for business uses. No changes are proposed to these zonings.</li> </ul>
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In order to address flood risk issues it is suggested that three Town Plan zonings (R-02, R-03 and X-01) need to be reviewed. All other residential zonings are being retained.</li> <li>R-02 (Town Plan 2009) is within a flood risk area and within the Blackwater River SAC. Consideration will be given to rezoning the site as open space.</li> <li>R-03 (Town Development Plan 2009) is within the flood plain of the Blackwater River SAC. Consideration will be given to rezoning the site as open space.</li> <li>X-01 (Town Development Plan 2009) (see below also) zoned for hotel and low density housing is within flood risk area. The objective for this site needs to be reviewed.</li> </ul>
Town Centre/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TC-01 (Town Development Plan 2009) is zoned for Town Centre uses, primarily retail and commercial development including an element of residential, social and cultural facilities. The objective for this site needs to be reviewed.</li> <li>No changes are proposed to TC-02.</li> <li>Consideration will be given to reclassifying TC-03 (Town Plan 2009) at Brian Boru Square as part of the existing built up area in line with the intention to promote the area south of the river as the main area for new retail development.</li> <li>Consideration will be given to reclassifying TC-04 (Town Plan 2009) as part of the existing built up area (existing house and garden).</li> <li>C-01 (Town 2009) is zoned for commercial uses. CDP 2014 does not include a commercial land use category. Consideration will be given to reclassifying this site in the Draft Plan. The most appropriate use for this site needs to be identified.</li> <li>C-02 (Town Plan 2009) is zoned for commercial uses. CDP 2014 does not include a commercial land use category. This site will be reclassified in the Draft Plan. It is proposed to identify the eastern portion (Aldi and the Blackwater Shopping Centre) as a neighbourhood centre. The western section may be reclassified as part of the existing built up area.</li> <li>C-03 (Town Plan 2009) is zoned for commercial uses. CDP 2014 does not include a commercial land use category. Consideration will be given to reclassifying this</li> </ul>

**Table 3.1.5: Main Proposals for the Draft Local Area Plan for Fermoy**

Topic	Proposed Approach
	<p>site in the Draft Plan. Consideration will be given to reclassifying the eastern part of the site, undefended by flood defences, as open space. The remainder may be classified as existing built up area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• X-01 (Town Plan 2009) zoned for hotel and low density housing is within flood risk area. The objective for this site needs to be reviewed.</li> <li>• The draft plan will explore opportunities to enhance the public realm.</li> </ul>
Approaches to Zoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The existing town development plan uses 'established' zoning categories to define the appropriate use in existing areas of development e.g. 'established residential' to denote existing residential areas. In the Local Area Plans adopted in 2011 the use of 'established' zoning categories was discontinued in favour of an 'existing built up area' classification. In preparing the new local area plans this approach will be applied to the developed areas within the former town council administrative area.</li> </ul>





# Section 3.1

## Fermoy

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### 3.1.1 The Vision for Fermoy

- 3.1.1.1 Fermoy, a market town which evolved at a historic bridging point over the River Blackwater, is a moderately sized town located in the Greater Cork Ring Strategic Planning Area, 37 Km north of Cork City. Fermoy is a growing town - the 2011 Census recorded a population of 6,489 persons, an increase of 10.5% over the 2006 census population which in turn represented a 22% population increase over the 2002 population. The town has excellent access to the national road network, particularly through its proximity to the M8, which coupled with a good range of schools, community facilities and amenities makes it both a convenient and attractive employment and residential location.
- 3.1.1.2 The central part of the town was administered by Fermoy Town Council until 2014 and a Town Development Plan was prepared in 2009 setting out a strategy for the development of the lands within the Town Council area. The Town Plan identified a number of strategic objectives to guide the future development of the town which included enhancing the economy of the town, rejuvenating the retail function, developing the potential of the town's location on the River Blackwater, protecting the town's heritage and addressing traffic and parking issues. The Town Development Plan 2009 remains in force and will inform the preparation of the new Local Area Plan.
- 3.1.1.3 The environs of the town are currently dealt with by the Local Area Plan adopted in 2011 which, in summary, seeks to boost the town's population, optimise employment opportunities, deliver community and recreation facilities to meet the needs of the population and ensure new development respects the significant historic and visual assets of the town on the banks of the River Blackwater. This strategy remains relevant today. Future development in Fermoy is affected by water quality issues in the wider Blackwater River Catchment (see paragraphs 2.4.1 and 2.4.2 in Chapter 2 of this document).
- 3.1.1.4 Within this context the preparation of the new Local Area Plan offers the opportunity to gauge how Fermoy has performed through the duration of the previous plans, refine the strategy as appropriate and set out the land use strategy needed to allow the town to continue to grow and prosper.

### 3.1.2 Residential Land Supply

- 3.1.2.1 The strategy for Fermoy, as set out in the Cork County Development Plan 2014, provides for the population of the town to grow to 7,589, representing growth of 1,100 people (17%) on Census 2011 figures (6,489). In order to accommodate this level of population growth, an additional 938 housing units will be required. The County Development Plan has identified a net housing land requirement of 47ha to cater for this level of housing provision.
- 3.1.2.2 The current Local Area Plan and the Fermoy Town Development Plan make provision for a residential land supply of 94.56ha with the capacity to provide approximately 1,601 dwelling units. There is therefore a potential surplus of zoned residential land / Strategic land reserve within the town in the order of 663 units / 70%.
- 3.1.2.3 The value of retaining a strategic land reserve in Fermoy is that it provides flexibility in the local housing market and provides capacity within the town in the event that investment in infrastructure in Metropolitan Cork, or in the smaller settlements, is not forthcoming. In addition the amount of land required to cater for future growth in Fermoy depends on a wide range of factors including the type of housing provided and the density to which it is developed. In Fermoy it is intended to provide land for residential development that generally conforms to the Medium A and B density requirements as set out in the County Plan 2014, thus providing for a range of housing densities, including opportunities for people to build their own houses as part of lower density serviced site type developments. On some town centre mixed use schemes, higher densities may be appropriate and achievable, and this will also be encouraged and facilitated.
- 3.1.2.4 The current land supply for Fermoy is detailed in Table 3.1.1. The final column on the table details the suggested zoning approach for the new Local Area Plan and indicates whether it is proposed to broadly retain a zoning or change it. Where it is proposed to retain a zoning this refers to the land use category only – the detailed objective for a site may change.
- 3.1.2.5 With regard to residential zonings, changes to zoning objectives are suggested regarding three sites within the former Town Council administrative area – R-02, R03 and X-01. Sites R-02 and R-03 are small residential sites which are within a flood risk area. The R-03 site is also within the River Blackwater Special Area of Conservation. It is therefore suggested that both the R-02 and R03 sites should be rezoned as open space.
- 3.1.2.6 The X-01 site is zoned for a hotel on the southern portion and low density housing on the northern portion of the site. While this land is now defended by the flood defence system from a 1/100 year flood it remains a flood risk area and there remains a residual risk of breaches of flood defences. Accordingly it is not considered suitable land for vulnerable land uses. The objective for this site will need to be reviewed in light of the provisions of the Guidelines on **The Planning System and in Flood Risk Management**.
- 3.1.2.7 As part of the preparation of the Draft Plan refinements may be considered to three other zonings. Local Area Plan sites R-03 and R-04 contain a former landfill site and there is a need to provide a buffer zone around this. A service way leave to serve I-01 east of M8 may also run through R-03 and needs to be provided for. LAP site R-02 also contains a former quarry. These issues may be addressed in drafting the new objectives for these lands.

#### *Housing land Supply - Issues For Consideration:*

- 3.1.2.8 There is sufficient land zoned in Fermoy to accommodate the requirement for the new housing units as set out in the County Development Plan and to provide a strategic land reserve equivalent to 70% of housing requirements. However, further investment in water services infrastructure is needed before much of the land supply can be developed, notably sites R-02, R-03, R-06, R-08 and R-09 and R-10. The value of retaining a strategic land reserve in Fermoy is that it provides flexibility in the local housing market and provides capacity within the town in the event that investment in infrastructure in Metropolitan Cork, or in the smaller settlements, is delayed.

Table 3.1.1: Fermoy Residential Land Supply

Site ref.	Area (HA)	Comment	Proposed Strategy
<b>Infrastructure available to facilitate development within 0-2 year timeframe:</b>			
R-04 (part of) (LAP 2011)	1.68	Valid permission on part of the site for 44 units. Medium Density A	Retain zoning.
R-07 (LAP 2011)	3.1	Previous permissions have expired. School proposed on part of site. Medium Density A	Retain zoning.
R-01 (TDP 2009)	1.24	No planning history.	Retain zoning.
R-04 (TDP 2009)	6.8	The north western corner of the site has existing development. No significant planning permission.	Retain zoning.
<b>Developable within 2-6 years subject to additional infrastructure provision:</b>			
R-04 (Part of LAP 2011)	2.32	Valid permission for 44 units on part of site. Legacy landfill issue on part of site. Medium Density A	Retain zoning.
R-05 (LAP 2011)	2.6	Access Issues. Medium Density B.	Retain zoning.
R-05 (TDP 2009)	0.026	Part of convent grounds. No history.	Retain zoning.
<b>Infrastructure requirements suggest delivery more than six years down the line:</b>			
R-01 (LAP 2011)	3.1	Previous permissions have expired. LAP Medium Density B	Retain zoning.
R-02 (LAP 2011)	1.7	Site of an old quarry. May be difficult to develop. LAP Medium Density A	Retain zoning.
R-03 (LAP 2011)	22.8	No planning history. Legacy landfill issue. Medium Density A.	Retain zoning.
R-06 (LAP 2011)	9	No history. LAP Medium Density A.	Retain zoning.
R-08 (LAP 2011)	9.56	Valid permission for 308 units subject to water services. LAP Medium Density A.	Retain zoning.
R-09 (LAP 2011)	22.8	No planning history. LAP Medium Density B.	Retain zoning.
R-10 (LAP)	6.3	No planning history. LAP Medium Density B.	Retain zoning.
<b>Other sites:</b>			
R-02 (TDP 2009)	0.05	No permissions. Flood risk area. Within flood plain of the River Blackwater SAC. Not suitable for residential development.	Rezone as open space.
R-03 (TDP 2009)	0.27	No permissions. Flood risk area. Within SAC.	Rezone as open space.
X-01 (TDP 2009)	1.65	Hotel /low density housing. Site is at risk of flooding.	Review zoning.
<b>Total:</b>	<b>95</b>		



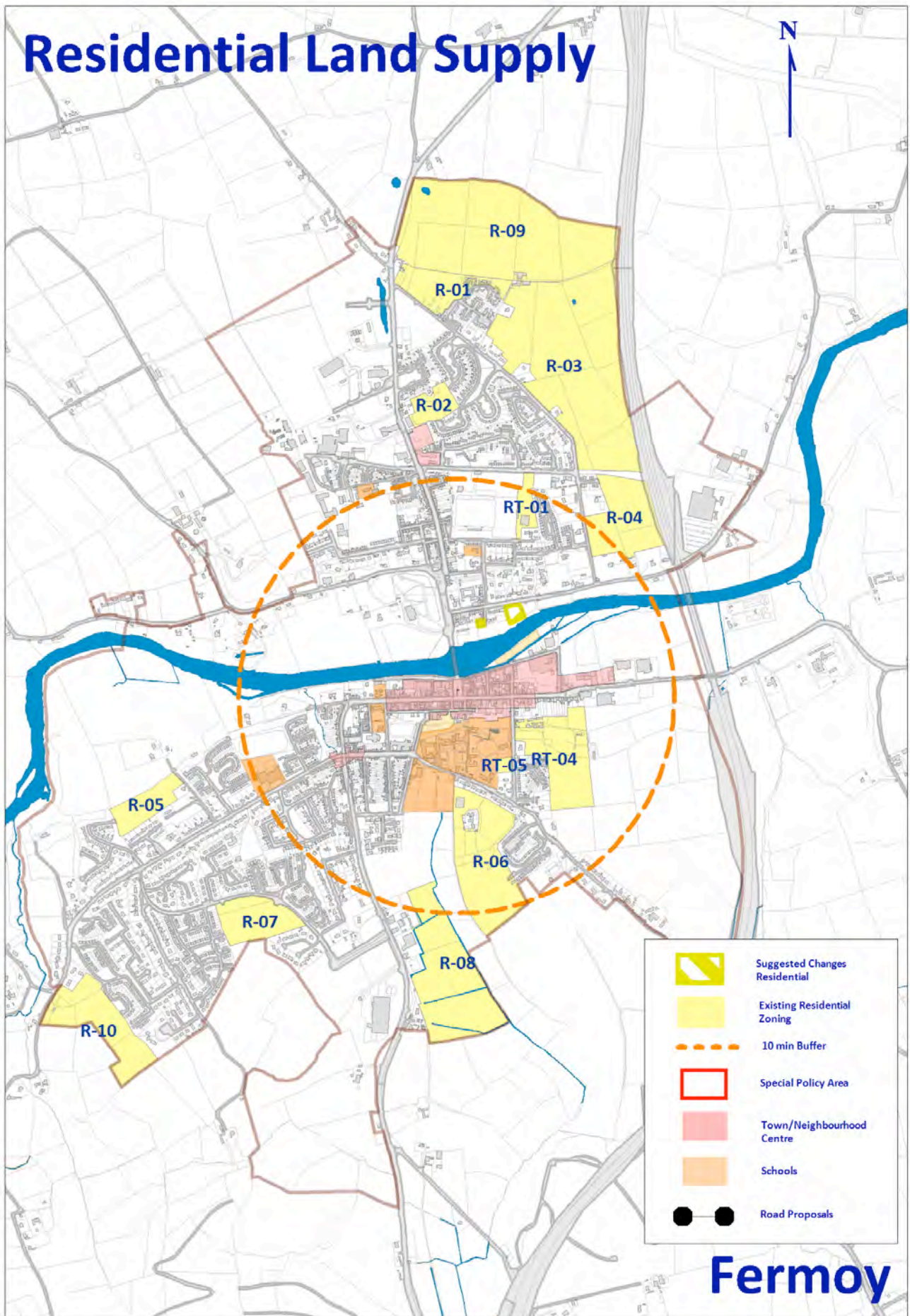


Figure 3.1.1: Fermoy Residential Land Supply

### 3.1.3 Employment Land Supply

- 3.1.3.1 Census 2011 identifies, in its Town Area Profiles, 2,360 residents of Fermoy as being at work, equivalent to 36% of the population and more than half of them commute outside the area for work.
- 3.1.3.2 In 2011 the daytime working population of Fermoy town was 2,324 with commerce and trade being the largest employment sector at 35%, followed by professional services at 24% and manufacturing at 18%. Unemployment levels in 2011 were at 22%, slightly higher than the national average for the time of 19%.
- 3.1.3.3 Retail and service sector employment is largely based in the town centre. Other employment uses are mainly concentrated in the north western quadrant of the town including Silverpail, Micro Bio and the Faber Castell Business Campus, with additional significant employment at SCI, east of the M8. The Teagasc Dairy Products Research Centre is located at Moorepark further to the east of Fermoy.
- 3.1.3.4 Fermoy's location on the M8 corridor means it is well positioned to attract employment investment. The Cork County Development Plan 2014 identifies, in the context of a countywide employment hierarchy, that the employment strategy for Fermoy should focus on local catchment employment and delivering a good supply of serviced employment land to cater for medium to small scale business / industry.
- 3.1.3.5 Together, the Fermoy Town Development Plan and the Local Area Plan provide approximately 61 hectares of land for employment related development. Within the current LAP, lands for business use are zoned to the north of the town with good access to the M8. Lands for industrial use are zoned to the south of the town, also with good access to the M8. Lands are zoned to the east of the M8 to cater for the expansion of an existing operator.
- 3.1.3.6 The Town Plan identifies existing industrial uses to the north west of the town and a site for employment use (I-01). The Town Plan also uses a commercial land use category which is no longer used in the County Development Plan so these sites will be reclassified as part of the preparation of the Draft LAP.
- 3.1.3.7 Similar to the residential lands, further investment in water services infrastructure is needed to facilitate development of some of the employment land, notably site 1-03 to the south of the town.
- 3.1.3.8 Table 3.1.2 below sets out the current situation in relation to the lands identified for new employment uses in Fermoy. No significant changes are proposed to the lands identified for new employment uses. However, in line with the approach in the local area plans, some land identified as existing industrial use in the town development plan may be reclassified as part of the 'existing built up area'.
- 3.1.3.9 It is estimated that there is sufficient land zoned in Fermoy to accommodate a range of business and industrial employment uses and it is not proposed to zone any additional employment land.

**Table 3.1.2: Fermoy Employment Land Availability**

<b>Site Ref.</b>	<b>Current Status</b>	<b>Suggested zoning approach</b>
I-01 (LAP 2011)	Undeveloped site, zoned to facilitate expansion of existing industrial use.	Retain zoning.
I-02 (LAP 2011)	Undeveloped site.	Retain zoning.
I-03 (LAP 2011)	Undeveloped site	Retain zoning.
B-01 (LAP 2011)	Undeveloped IDA site.	Retain zoning
B-02 (LAP 2011)	Undeveloped site.	Retain zoning.
B-03 (LAP 2011)	Undeveloped site	Retain zoning.
B-04 (LAP 2011)	Undeveloped site.	Retain zoning.
I-01 (TDP 2009)	ESB depot.	Retain zoning.



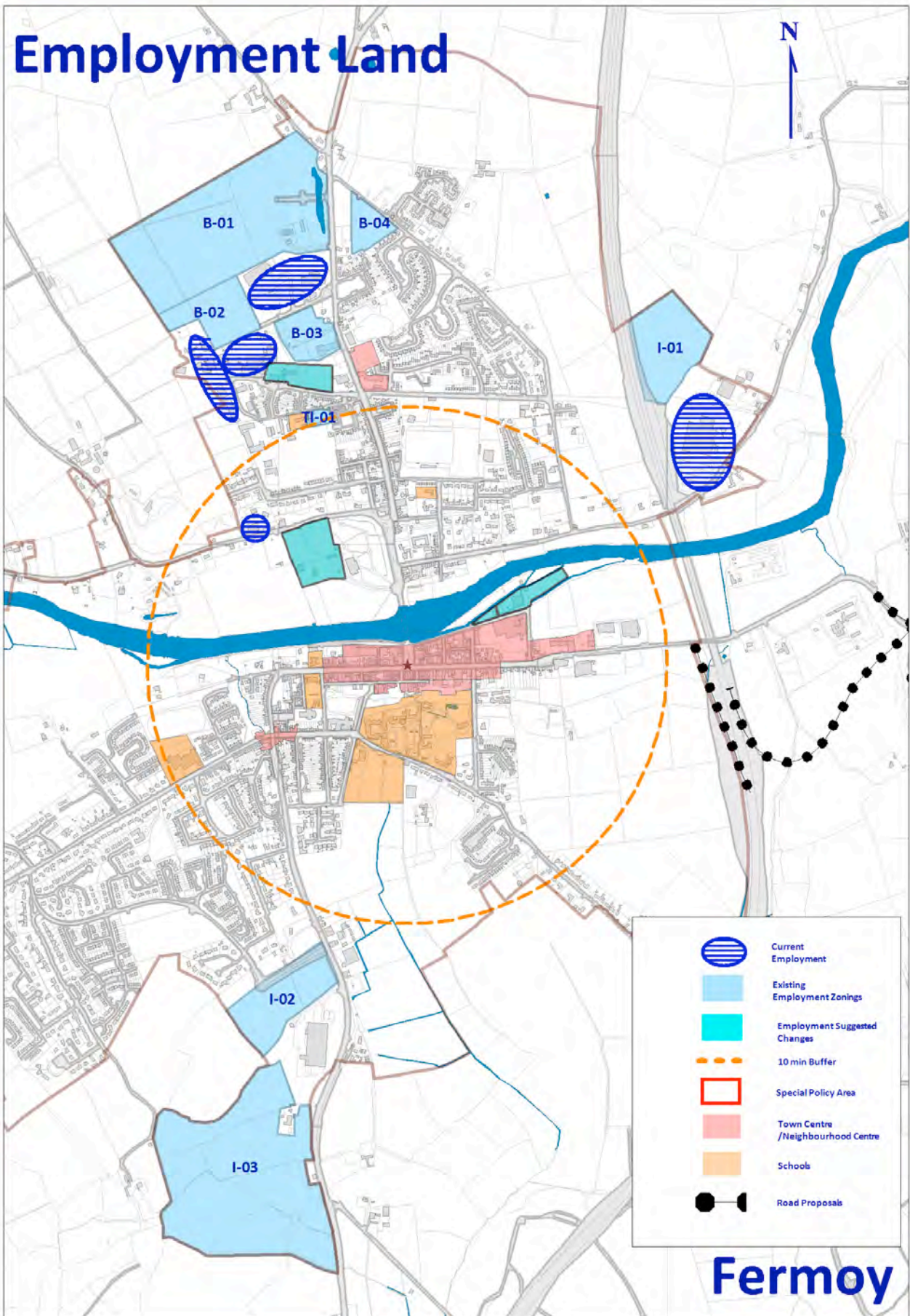


Figure 3.1.2: Fermoy Employment Land Supply

### 3.1.4 Town Centre / Retail

#### *Overview of Fermoy Town Centre*

- 3.1.4.1 Fermoy has a relatively compact town centre, with a rich architectural heritage. It occupies an attractive setting on the banks of the River Blackwater.
- 3.1.4.2 The main focus for town centre retail development is in the area south of the river along Patrick Street and McCurtain Street. An additional small neighbourhood centre is formed by a cluster of commercial units around the Cork Road/Emmet St. Junction to the south west of the town, and there is a more modern, but largely vacant, neighbourhood centre (Blackwater Shopping Centre) to the north of the town centre at Beechfield. In terms of convenience retail the town is served by Supervalu, Lidl and Aldi.
- 3.1.4.3 The dominant uses in the town centre are comparison shops and services. There is a strong predominance of independent stores, some national multiple stores and relatively few international multiples. While there is some vacancy in the town (estimated at 18.5% in a 2012 town centre study) it is dispersed and many of the vacant units are relatively small so the vacancy level does not appear to be causing any significant adverse impacts.

#### *Review of Existing Zonings*

- 3.1.4.4 The updated Retail Planning Guidelines published in 2012 place increased emphasis in protecting the vitality and viability of town centres and the need to take a sequential approach to new retail development. In this context the preparation of a new plan for Fermoy offers the opportunity to review existing town centre policy and zonings in light of the provisions of the guidelines.
- 3.1.4.5 Parts of Fermoy town centre are at risk of flooding but are defended by the flood defence system from a 1/100 year flood event. As part of the preparation of the Draft Plan a detailed flood risk assessment will need to be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Guidelines on **The Planning System and Flood Risk Management** and proposed zoning objectives tested against the provisions of the guidelines. Proposals outlined in Table 3.1.3 may be subject to change as a result of more detailed flood risk assessment.
- 3.1.4.6 In this context there are a number of town centre issues in Fermoy that merit review / consideration:
- 3.1.4.7 *Define the Retail Core:* It is proposed to define the 'Retail Core' of the town in the new Local Area Plan. The retail core is the primary shopping area.
- 3.1.4.8 *Former Mart Site TC-01:* The former Mart site, which comprises land located east and west of Mill Road (c 3.4ha in total) is currently zoned for town centre uses in the Town Development Plan (TC-01). The site is within a defended flood risk area. The lands comprise two sections. On the western side of Mill road the site comprises the old Mart sheds, concrete yards and surfaced car parking areas. The lands on the western side of Mill Road comprise open lands with no buildings.
- 3.1.4.9 Planning permission was sought in 2008 to develop the entire holding for retail (3 anchor stores and 30 smaller retail units), offices, 6 apartments and parking. The application was refused by the former Fermoy Town Council and subsequently by An Bord Pleanála for a number of refusal reasons including the excessive amount of retail space proposed which would have almost doubled the existing provision in the town. Other reasons for refusal included poor layout and design (including poor linkages) and inappropriate scale.
- 3.1.4.10 As part of the preparation of the Draft Plan consideration needs to be given to the best use of these lands going forward, the amount of land needed to facilitate town centre expansion and what uses are appropriate within the defended flood risk area.

- 3.1.4.11 *TC-02.* : This site comprises 1ha and has frontage onto Courthouse road / N72 opposite the Town Hall and comprises the old premises of J Barry and Sons Timber Merchants (sheds and open yard area) and some offices/ residential premises. The current zoning is for ' mixed use that would be in keeping with the vibrant role of the town core as a retail, commercial, service, tourist and family friendly residential area'. An application made on this site in 2008 for a retail, office and apartment development was refused by the former Fermoy Town Council and An Bord Pleanála (reasons included poor design, poor pedestrian permeability and excessive scale). This site is also within the defended flood risk area but is largely brownfield in nature. It is proposed to retain a town centre zoning on this site.
- 3.1.4.12 *Site TC-03:* It is intended to promote the area south of the river as the main area for new retail / town centre development. Accordingly it is proposed to reclassify the area currently zoned TC-03 to the 'existing built up area'.
- 3.1.4.13 *Site TC-04:* It is proposed to reclassify the area currently zoned TC-04 as the 'existing built up area'. This site is currently occupied by a house and garden.
- 3.1.4.14 *Commercial Site C-01:* The Town Development Plan includes a number of commercial zonings which will also be reclassified in the Draft Plan. Commercial site C-01 contains protected structures (a former railway goods shed and a former railway station currently in use as a funeral home) and is within an Architectural Conservation Area. The most appropriate use/s on this site needs to be explored further in preparing the draft Plan.
- 3.1.4.15 *Commercial site C-02* is largely developed and it is suggested that its current zoning should change to reflect this. The eastern portion of this site (Aldi and Blackwater Shopping Centre) would be more appropriately identified as an existing neighbourhood centre and it is proposed that the portion west of Dublin Road become part of the existing built up area.
- 3.1.4.16 *Commercial site C-03* includes the Atkins site and the site of the former Quinn Insurance office building and car park which is currently vacant. The site is at risk of flooding but is partially defended. The easternmost portion of this site is undefended and could be rezoned as open space. The balance of the site could be reclassified as 'existing built up area'.
- 3.1.4.17 *X-01 Site* There is one hotel in the town and it is considered that there is a need for another hotel. There is a site currently zoned (X-01) in the Town Development Plan 2009 for a hotel and low density residential development. This site, while now defended by the flood defence system from a 1/100 year flood, remains a flood risk area with a residual risk of breaches of flood defences. The objective for this site needs to be reviewed in light of the provisions of the guidelines on flood risk management.
- 3.1.4.18 If an alternative hotel site is required, the Local Area Plan will identify a suitable site. There are a number of options which may be considered. It is possible that an area of land within existing residential zonings to the north or existing industrial zonings to the south may be suitable. Alternatively, part of the land that is currently zoned B-03, along with the adjoining land to its north east, may be considered. Other areas may also be considered.
- 3.1.4.19 Table 3.1.3 outlines the current town centre / commercial zonings in Fermoy. The final column on the table details the suggested approach for the new Local Area Plan and indicates whether it is proposed to broadly retain a zoning or change it. Where it is proposed to retain a zoning this refers to the land use category only – the detailed objective for a site may change.
- 3.1.4.20 The new Local Area Plan will continue to promote the consolidation and strengthening of the existing town centre and facilitate sensitive regeneration and expansion where appropriate, while protecting the architectural heritage of the area. The principal retail area in Fermoy is south of the river and it is envisaged that future retail development would consolidate this. Residential uses remain within the centre of Fermoy and the new plan should support the retention of such uses and identify other areas where infill residential development may be appropriate and help support the vitality of the town centre.



**Table 3.1.3: Fermoy Town Centre / Commercial Land Availability**

Site Ref.	Comment	Suggested zoning approach
TC-01	Former Mart site. At risk of flooding but defended. Some buildings on western portion of site but also large open areas, especially on portion of site located east of Mill Road. Previous application on TC-01 site (in 2008) for retail development refused by Fermoy Town Council and An Bord Pleanála due to excessive quantum of retail development proposed, design issues, scale of development etc.	Review objective for this site having regard to the provisions of the guidelines on Flood Risk Management and Retail Planning.
TC-02	Brownfield site including buildings and open areas. Previous application on this site (in 2008) refused by Fermoy Town Council and An Bord Pleanála due to scale, design and permeability issues.	Subject to further Flood Risk Assessment, consider retaining for town centre expansion including a mix of uses.
TC -03	Brian Boru Square	It is intended to promote the area south of the river as the main area for new retail development. It is proposed to reclassify TC-03 as part of the built up area.
TC - 04	Existing house & garden	It is proposed to reclassify TC-04 as part of the built up area.
C-01 (TDP 2009)	Commercial uses	CDP 2014 does not include a commercial land use category. These sites will be reclassified in the Draft Plan. See discussion above.
C-02 (TDP 2009)	Commercial uses	
C-03 (TDP 2009)	Commercial uses	
X-01 (TDP 2009)	Current zoning provides for a Hotel on the southern portion of the site and housing to the north. Site is at risk of flooding but is defended.	Review objective for this site in light of provisions of guidelines on Flood Risk Management.

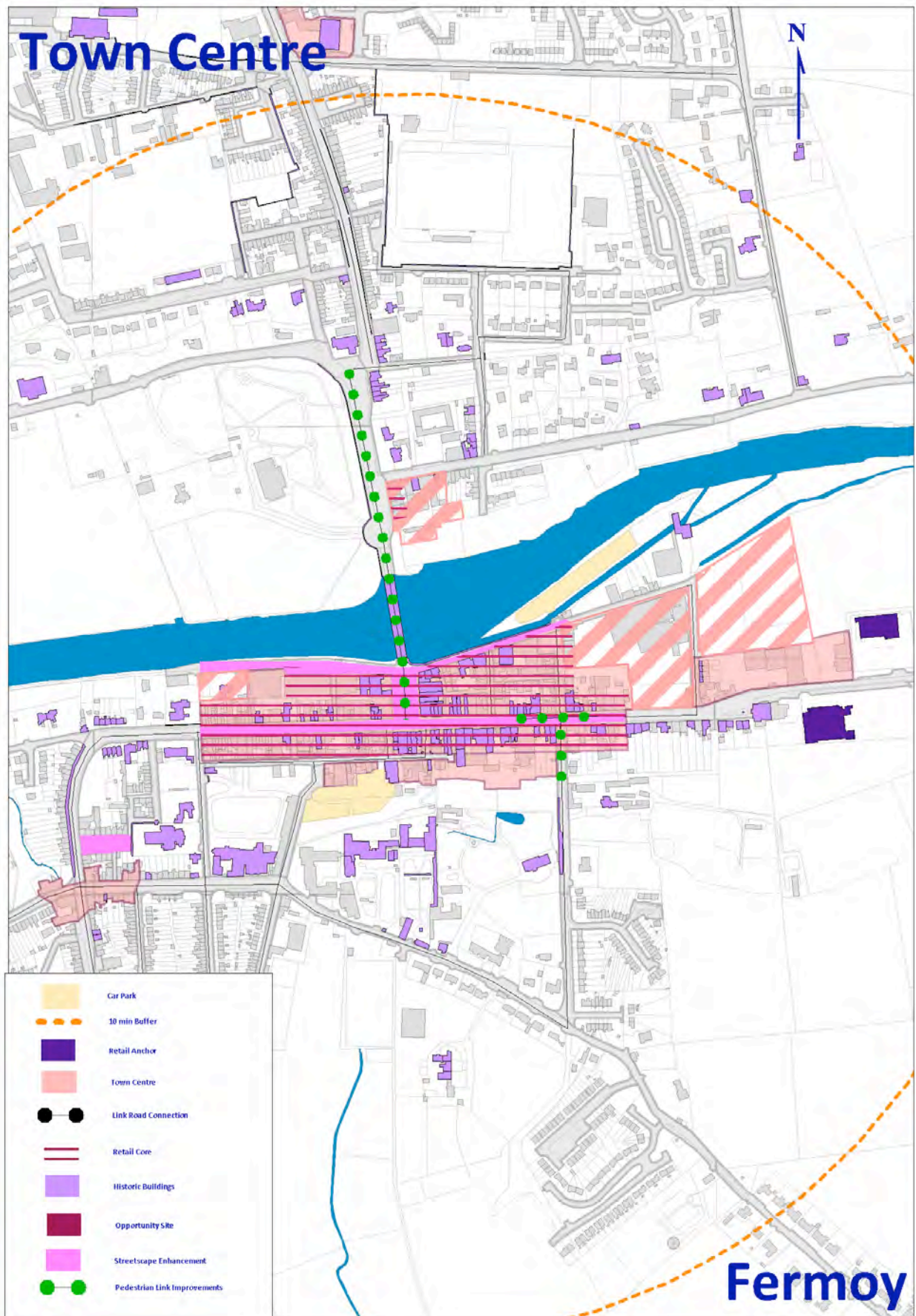


Figure 3.1.3: Fermoy Town Centre

### 3.1.5 Community facilities / Green Infrastructure

#### *Community Facilities*

- 3.1.5.1 Government population targets for Fermoy require us to plan for population growth of almost 17%. This scale of growth will place new demands on Fermoy’s social and community infrastructure (schools, recreational facilities, health care etc.) While Fermoy has a good range of community facilities and amenities to serve its current population it is important that new community infrastructure is delivered in tandem with planned population growth.
- 3.1.5.2 There are five primary schools and three secondary schools in the town. An application, as yet undecided, was recently submitted for the development of a new, 24 class, primary school on the eastern portion of land currently zoned R-07.
- 3.1.5.3 The town has a good supply of private sports and recreational facilities including Rugby, Soccer and GAA facilities a golf club and a sports hall. The town park contains a municipal swimming pool and a network of well defined pathways including a riverside walk. A riverside seating area has recently been provided on the southern bank of the river as part of the flood defence structure at Ashe Quay. A public library, a town hall and a private nursing home are located in the town. There is also a community hospital located near the town.
- 3.1.5.4 The preparation of the new local area plan provides the opportunity to reassess what community facilities may be required to meet the needs of the growing population.

#### *Green Infrastructure*

- 3.1.5.5 The future development of the town presents opportunities to develop an integrated green infrastructure strategy which can perform a number of functions including passive and active amenity areas, wildlife corridors and carbon filters to offset impacts of increased development and traffic within the town.
- 3.1.5.6 The River Blackwater, a protected area of biodiversity, runs West / East through the town and adjoins the town centre. It is the most important element of green infrastructure in the town. The current Local Area Plan includes objectives to provide amenity walks alongside the river at a number of locations. The town also contains a Town Park and an opportunity to extend the park will be examined. Development of new residential sites in the town also offers opportunities for the development of additional green spaces and green routes.

Table 3.1.4: Green Infrastructure Strategy		
Element	Function	Comment
Blackwater Corridor	East-west Amenity corridor & protected area of biodiversity	Area subject to flooding & within SAC so any works will need to respect designations. Explore opportunities to facilitate new riverside walks.
Town parks	Active/passive open space	Explore possibility of reserving land adjoining park for future extension of the park.

### 3.1.6 Transport and Mobility

- 3.1.6.1 In general Fermoy has good road infrastructure and enjoys excellent access to the National Road network. The M8 to the east and the Duntahane Relief Road to the south west has eased traffic congestion somewhat in recent years although there is still a notable level of HGV traffic in the town centre.
- 3.1.6.2 The town also has an adequate internal road network albeit with steep gradients on some roads, particularly to the south of the town.
- 3.1.6.3 A traffic study undertaken in 2008 by consultants made a series of recommendations to improve vehicular, pedestrian and cycle circulation of the town. Objective U-01 of the current Local Area Plan reflects its identification of a need for a link from the motorway to the town centre. Other recommendations include traffic calming measures, junction improvements, revision to parking supply and management regime, enhanced facilities for pedestrians and cyclists. A Walking and Cycling Strategy prepared for Cork Active Travel Towns produced in 2013 also includes a number of recommendations to enhance pedestrian and cycle movement within the town. Its key recommendations are included on the map below and include junction improvements, provision of cycle lanes, footpath provision/upgrade and pedestrian crossing. This will inform the new local area plan.
- 3.1.6.4 There are a number of issues which the draft plan could consider including:
- Encouraging uptake of sustainable modes of travel.
  - Enhancing pedestrian and cycle movement within the town.
  - Ensuring new development enhances the permeability of the town for pedestrians and cyclists.
  - Consideration of measures to discourage HGVs from unnecessarily traversing the town centre.



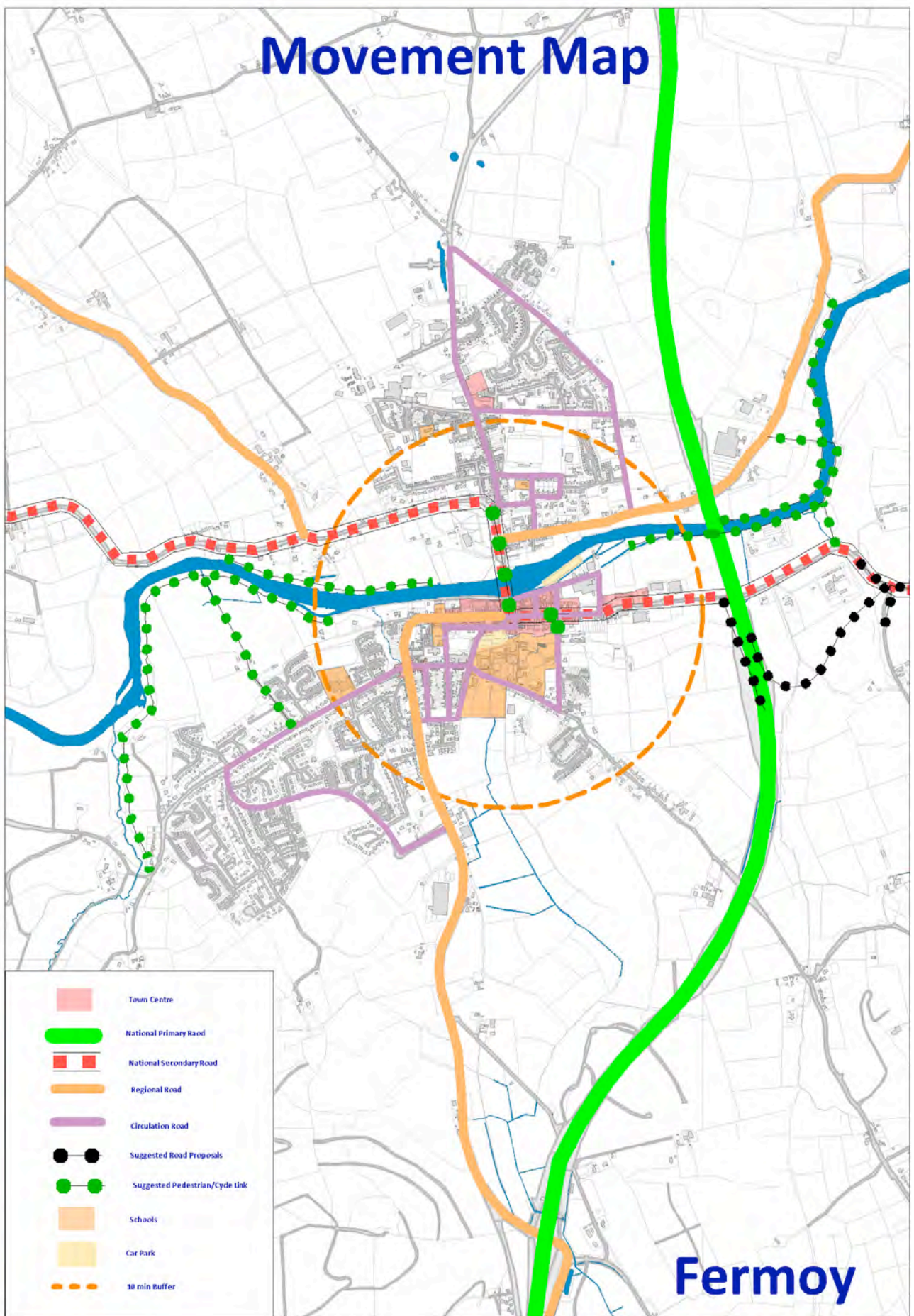


Figure 3.1.4: Fermoy Movement

### 3.1.7 Water Services

- 3.1.7.1 The public drinking water source and wastewater treatment plant infrastructure in Fermoy is broadly suitable to meet the target levels of growth in the town. However further investment in the water main and sewer network infrastructure will be required to serve some areas. At present these works are not included in Irish Water Capital Investment Programme 2014-2016. Note that future development in Fermoy is affected by water quality issues in the wider Blackwater River Catchment (see paragraphs 2.4.1 and 2.4.2 in Chapter 2 of this document).

### 3.1.8 Surface Water

- 3.1.8.1 All new development will be required to address surface water disposal via sustainable urban drainage systems in line with surface water management policy set out in section 11.5 of the County Development Plan 2014. This is an important issue in Fermoy due to water quality issues in the Blackwater River catchment.

### 3.1.9 Flood Risk

- 3.1.9.1 Fermoy town centre is at of risk flooding from the River Blackwater. However the Fermoy Flood Relief Scheme defends the town from a 1 in 100 year flood event through a combination of permanent walls, earth embankments and demountable structures. A number of zoned sites, all zoned in the Town Development Plan, are impacted by the area of flood risk. As part of the preparation of the new draft plan all zonings in areas at risk of flooding will be subject to the Justification Test. This may result in some changes in zonings. With the exception of a portion of C-03, all of these sites are now defended from a 1 in 100 year flood risk. Zoned sites in this category include TC-01 and TC-02, TC-03, TC-04 and C-03, R-02 and R-03 and X-01. The eastern portion of C-03 is undefended. Flood risk is referenced along with other issues in the context of proposals for each of these sites under the relevant land use section.



### 3.1.10 Main Proposals for the Draft Local Area Plan

3.1.10.1 The key issues to be considered as part of the preparation of the new Local Area Plan for Fermoy town are as follows:

Table 3.1.5: Main Proposals for the Draft Local Area Plan for Fermoy	
Topic	Proposed Approach
Water Services Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resolution of water quality issues affecting the Blackwater Catchment.</li> <li>Engage with Irish Water regarding need for further investment in water services infrastructure.</li> </ul>
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The current Local Area Plan provides approximately 34ha of land for industry and 27ha for business uses. No changes are proposed to these zonings.</li> </ul>
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In order to address flood risk issues it is suggested that three Town Plan zonings (R-02, R-03 and X-01) need to be reviewed. All other residential zonings are being retained.</li> <li>R-02 (Town Plan 2009) is within a flood risk area and within the Blackwater River SAC. Consideration will be given to rezoning the site as open space.</li> <li>R-03 (Town Development Plan 2009) is within the flood plain of the Blackwater River SAC. Consideration will be given to rezoning the site as open space.</li> <li>X-01 (Town Development Plan 2009) (see below also) zoned for hotel and low density housing is within flood risk area. The objective for this site needs to be reviewed.</li> </ul>
Town Centre/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TC-01 (Town Development Plan 2009) is zoned for Town Centre uses, primarily retail and commercial development including an element of residential, social and cultural facilities. The objective for this site needs to be reviewed.</li> <li>No changes are proposed to TC-02.</li> <li>Consideration will be given to reclassifying TC-03 (Town Plan 2009) at Brian Boru Square as part of the existing built up area in line with the intention to promote the area south of the river as the main area for new retail development.</li> <li>Consideration will be given to reclassifying TC-04 (Town Plan 2009) as part of the existing built up area (existing house and garden).</li> <li>C-01 (Town 2009) is zoned for commercial uses. CDP 2014 does not include a commercial land use category. Consideration will be given to reclassifying this site in the Draft Plan. The most appropriate use for this site needs to be identified.</li> <li>C-02 (Town Plan 2009) is zoned for commercial uses. CDP 2014 does not include a commercial land use category. This site will be reclassified in the Draft Plan. It is proposed to identify the eastern portion (Aldi and the Blackwater Shopping Centre) as a neighbourhood centre. The western section may be reclassified as part of the existing built up area.</li> <li>C-03 (Town Plan 2009) is zoned for commercial uses. CDP 2014 does not include a commercial land use category. Consideration will be given to reclassifying this</li> </ul>

**Table 3.1.5: Main Proposals for the Draft Local Area Plan for Fermoy**

Topic	Proposed Approach
	<p>site in the Draft Plan. Consideration will be given to reclassifying the eastern part of the site, undefended by flood defences, as open space. The remainder may be classified as existing built up area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• X-01 (Town Plan 2009) zoned for hotel and low density housing is within flood risk area. The objective for this site needs to be reviewed.</li> <li>• The draft plan will explore opportunities to enhance the public realm.</li> </ul>
Approaches to Zoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The existing town development plan uses 'established' zoning categories to define the appropriate use in existing areas of development e.g. 'established residential' to denote existing residential areas. In the Local Area Plans adopted in 2011 the use of 'established' zoning categories was discontinued in favour of an 'existing built up area' classification. In preparing the new local area plans this approach will be applied to the developed areas within the former town council administrative area.</li> </ul>



# Section 3.3

## Charleville

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### 3.3.1 The Vision for Charleville

- 3.3.1.1 Charleville is located c60km north of Cork City centre close to the northern boundary of the County on the Cork – Limerick Atlantic Corridor. The town has excellent access to the national road network. Charleville has experienced continuous growth over the last two decades and grew by 22% between 2006 and 2011.
- 3.3.1.2 Its busy town centre has a historic core linking primarily residential areas to the north, south and west of the town to the east of the town where employment, educational and community uses are concentrated. The town is an important local and regional employment centre with the food processing industry having a long standing employment significance in the town. The town is relatively well provided for in terms of schools, community facilities and amenities.
- 3.3.1.3 The current Local Area Plan (2011) for Charleville seeks to promote its potential as an important node on the Atlantic Corridor between the ‘gateway’ cities of Cork and Limerick whilst providing employment, commercial and industrial services for its surrounding hinterland. In setting out a vision for the town to expand and diversify its employment and service base the LAP highlighted the importance of the delivery of the M20 motorway bypass to relieve the town of through traffic and facilitate public realm improvements along Main Street.
- 3.3.1.4 Within this context the preparation of the new Local Area Plan offers the opportunity to gauge how Charleville has performed over the life of the current LAP, refine the vision for the town as appropriate and set out the land use strategy needed to allow the town to continue to grow and prosper.

### 3.3.2 Residential Land Supply

- 3.3.2.1 The strategy for Charleville, as set out in the Cork County Development Plan 2014, provides for the population of the town to grow to 4,925, representing growth of 1,279 people (or 26%) on the 2011 levels (3,646). In order to accommodate this level of population growth, an additional 804 new housing units will be required. The County Development Plan has identified a net housing land requirement of 45ha to cater for this level of housing provision.
- 3.3.2.2 The current Local Area Plan for Charleville makes provision for a residential land supply of 72.5ha with the capacity to provide approximately 1,124 units. This provides headroom of 320 units / approximately 40%. Further investment in water services infrastructure is required in Charleville before significant housing development can take place. In particular the waste water treatment infrastructure needs upgrading and constraints affecting the supply of drinking water need to be addressed.
- 3.3.2.3 The value of retaining headroom in the housing land supply in Charleville is that it provides flexibility in the local housing market and provides capacity within the town in the event that investment in infrastructure in the smaller settlements is delayed. In addition the amount of land required to cater for future growth in Charleville depends on a wide range of factors including the type of housing provided and the density to which it is developed. In Charleville it is intended to provide land for residential development that generally conforms to the Medium B density requirements as set out in the County Plan 2014, thus providing for a range of housing densities, including opportunities for people to build their own houses as part of lower density serviced site type developments. On some town centre mixed use schemes, higher densities may be appropriate and achievable, and this will also be encouraged and facilitated.

## 3.3.2.4 Table 3.3.1 details the residential zonings currently in operation in Charleville.

<b>Table 3.3.1: Current Residential Zonings / Land Supply in Charleville</b>			
<b>Site Ref.</b>	<b>Area (ha)</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Suggested Zoning Approach</b>
<b>Infrastructure available to facilitate development within 0-2 year timeframe</b>			
R-01 (part of)	4.29	Expired permissions. Medium B Density.	Retain zoning.
R-04	10.0	Expired permissions on site. Medium B Density. Small portion of site at risk of flooding.	Retain zoning subject to FRA.
R-10	1.7	Permission for nursing home and ancillary housing.	Retain zoning.
<b>Developable within 2-6 years subject to additional infrastructure provision</b>			
R-03	9.8	Expired permission. Medium B Density.	Retain zoning.
R-06	1.3	No planning history. Medium B Density individual sites.	Retain zoning.
R-07	16.1	No Planning history. Medium B Density comprising serviced sites.	Retain zoning.
R-08	1.5	No Planning history. Medium B Density.	Retain zoning.
<b>Infrastructure requirements suggest delivery more than six years down the line :</b>			
R-01 (part of)	11.11	Recently expired permissions on portion of site. Medium B Density.	Retain zoning.
R-02	4.2	No permissions. Medium B Density.	Retain zoning.
R-05	8.0	Expired permission. Medium B Density.	Retain zoning.
R-09	4.6	No planning history. Medium B Density including serviced sites.	Retain zoning.
<b>Total</b>	<b>72.6</b>		

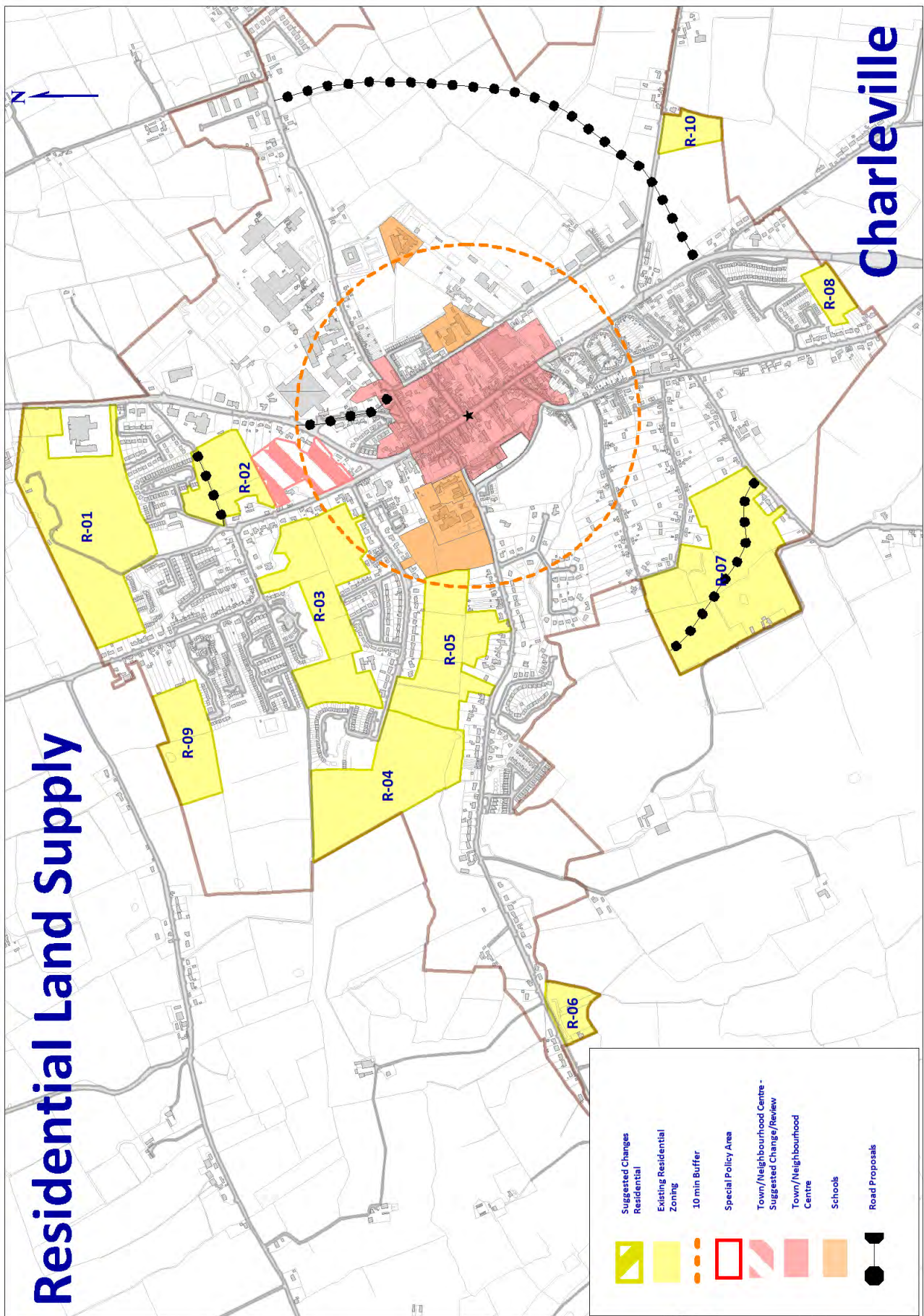


Figure 3.3.1: Charleville Residential Land Supply

### 3.3.3 Employment Land Supply

- 3.3.3.1 Census 2011, in its Town Area Profiles, identifies 1,379 residents of Charleville as being at work, equivalent to 37% of the population and 43% of them commute outside the area for work.
- 3.3.3.2 In 2011 the daytime working population of Charleville town was 2,152 with commerce and trade being the largest employment sector at 30%, followed by professional services at 27% and manufacturing at 25%. Unemployment levels in 2011 were at 21.6%, slightly higher than the national average for the time of 19%.
- 3.3.3.3 The town has a strong services sector serving a large hinterland. The food processing industry is a very significant presence in the town.
- 3.3.3.4 The main employment uses in Charleville are located to the east of the town, substantially concentrated along the Limerick, Kilmallock and Station Roads. Retail and service sector employment is largely based in the town centre. The town occupies a strategic position on the Cork – Limerick corridor. The Cork – Dublin rail route runs east of the town with Charleville station located 2km from the town centre.

#### *Review of Existing Zonings*

- 3.3.3.5 The Cork County Development Plan 2014 identifies, in the context of a countywide employment hierarchy, that the employment strategy for Charleville should focus on local catchment employment and delivering a good supply of serviced employment land to cater for medium to small scale business / industry.
- 3.3.3.6 The current local area plan made provision for a strong supply of industrial / business land in Charleville and all of this remains available for development providing a number of opportunity sites available to accommodate a range of business and industrial uses.
- 3.3.3.7 The bulk of the zoned business land is between the town and the rail station (B-02, B-03 and B-04). Presently there are no significant permissions on these sites apart from current development on a portion of B-04.
- 3.3.3.8 This area of the town also includes a site, B-05, currently zoned for business uses excluding industrial uses, warehousing and distribution. The LAP indicates that the site is also considered suitable for retail warehousing. The Local Area Plan 2011 also identified an opportunity for a single 'discount food store' and a primary healthcare centre on this site (a medical centre is currently near completion on this site). With the presence of both Lidl and Aldi in the town it is no longer considered appropriate to retain the 'discount food store' aspect of this zoning outside of the town centre area. There is sufficient land zoned to the north of the town to facilitate town centre expansion.
- 3.3.3.9 Lands for industrial use comprising 28ha are zoned to the east of the town, south of Kilmallock Rd. and remain undeveloped. It is considered appropriate to retain the objective on this site for industrial estate development.
- 3.3.3.10 The delivery of the M20 Cork – Limerick motorway, which is currently on hold, will potentially make the town attractive to a range of employment uses, including distribution based employment. It is important that new road access is provided linking the Kilmallock road to Station road and onwards to the proposed M20 junction to the south of the town. The current LAP makes provision for this route through lands zoned I-01, B-04 and B-05.
- 3.3.3.11 The supply of employment land in Charleville is very generous. As part of the preparation of the Draft Plan consideration may be given to how best to manage the development of this land supply in terms



of ensuring the sequential development of the town and securing the delivery of the new access route required by objective U-04 to provide access to the proposed M20 junction.

- 3.3.3.12 Table 3.3.2 sets out the current situation in relation to the lands identified for employment uses in Charleville.

<b>Table 3.3.2: Charleville Employment Land Availability</b>		
<b>Site Ref</b>	<b>Current Status</b>	<b>Comment</b>
B-01	Undeveloped site.	Retain zoning
B-02	Existing Ballysally Business Park and adjoining land. No current planning permission.	Retain zoning
B-03	Site undeveloped. No current planning permission.	Retain zoning.
B-04	Site undeveloped. Valid permission on part of site for two warehousing units.	Retain zoning.
B-05	A medical centre is close to completion on part of this site. Remainder of site undeveloped. Zoning currently makes provision for discount retailer.	There is no longer considered to be a need to make provision for a discount food store on the site. Consider amending zoning to exclude reference to discount food store and medical centre.
B-06	Undeveloped site.	Retain zoning.

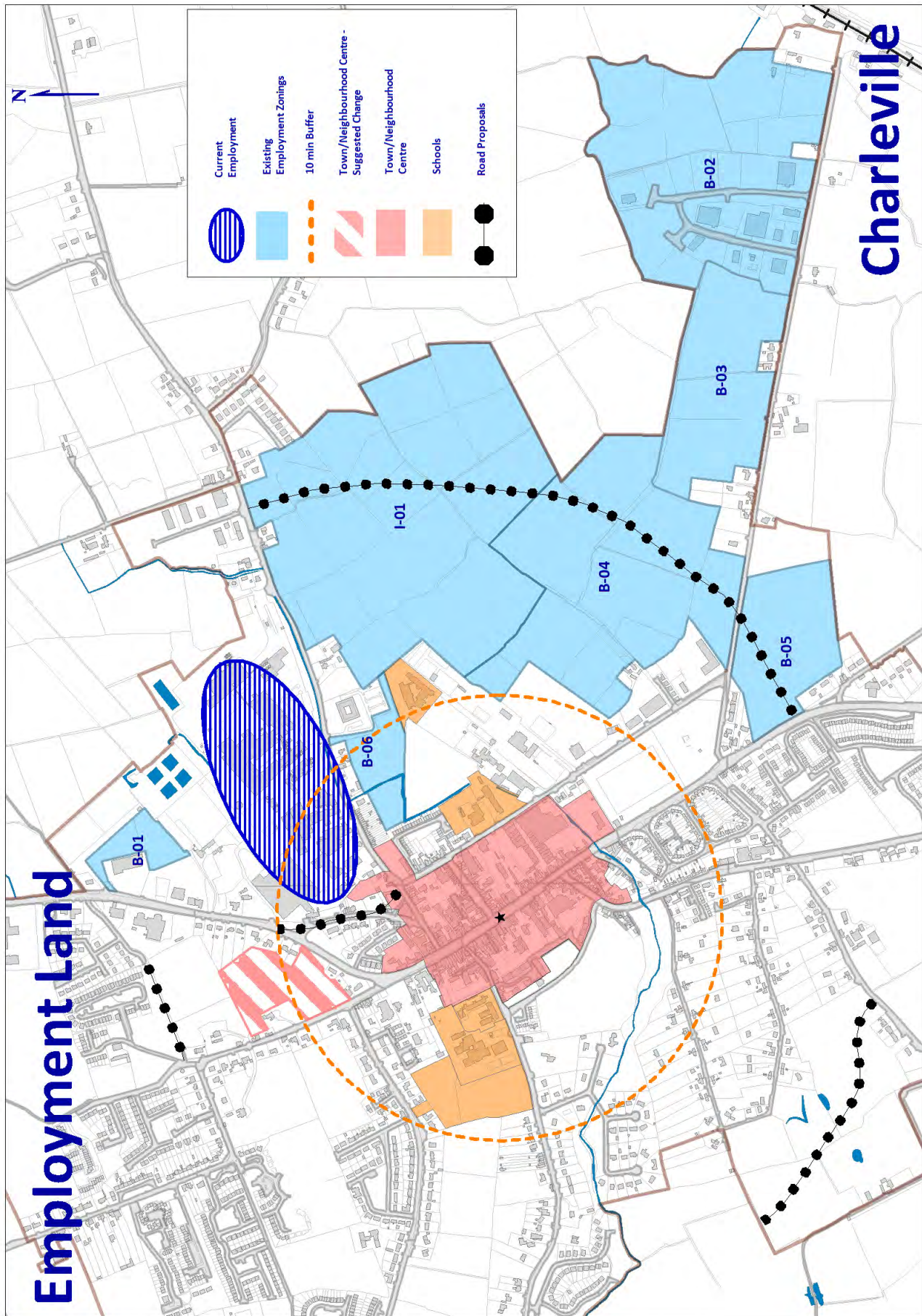


Figure 3.3.2: Charleville Employment Land Supply



### 3.3.4 Town Centre / Retail

#### *Charleville Town Centre*

- 3.3.4.1 Charleville has a busy town centre, providing services to meet local demand and the wider hinterland. The main Cork – Limerick national primary route N20 runs through the town forming its main street and the high traffic levels on this route mean that the town is always busy. In terms of convenience retail the town is served by Dunnes Stores, Supervalu, Aldi and Lidl and has a good range of comparison shops, mostly from the independent sector.
- 3.3.4.2 The Main Street is generally comprised of attractive well preserved buildings. There are a number of vacant premises providing opportunities for new retail uses or for redevelopment. Within this central area there is a modern shopping centre, anchored by Dunnes Stores, which has helped to consolidate the principal shopping area of the town as the main street. In addition to Dunnes the development contains 19 smaller units, only 2 of which are currently occupied.
- 3.3.4.3 The current LAP defines the extent of the town centre. This is the area that will accommodate any future retail development. It is proposed to extend the town centre zoning slightly to include the newly developed Aldi site. Opportunities are available within the area zoned town centre for new retail development or other town centre uses through utilising existing vacant units or through the sympathetic refurbishment or redevelopment / amalgamation of existing premises. There are also backland areas available for redevelopment. The new Plan will identify these opportunities. In line with the requirements of the Retail Planning Guidelines it is proposed to define the ‘Retail Core’ of the town in the new Local Area Plan. The retail core is the primary shopping area.
- 3.3.4.4 The current LAP also identifies a site north of the town centre for town centre expansion (T-02) primarily for large stand alone convenience retail development subject to high quality design and layout, particularly with regard to addressing the streetscape and the provision of parking, and satisfactory proposals to deal with traffic and access. The site area exceeds that likely to be required for the provision of a convenience store and the preparation of a new draft plan offers the opportunity to consider what other non retail uses may be appropriate on this large site.
- 3.3.4.5 The main Cork – Limerick national primary route runs through the town forming its main street and resulting in congestion and reduced public realm/environmental quality. Provision of the M20 will provide an opportunity in the long term for enhanced public realm. The town’s built fabric and generous footpath width provide significant potential for the development of an attractive public realm. In the short term, and prior to the preparation of a public realm strategy, smaller measures can be taken to improve public realm such as general surface improvements, rationalisation of parking, tree planting, and removal of clutter (inappropriate signage and street furniture) from the streetscape.
- 3.3.4.6 A town park adjoins the town Centre with reasonable access from the town centre. There is scope to improve this access and provide continuous pedestrian links to the park.
- 3.3.4.7 To support the vitality of the town centre the new local area plan should support the retention of residential uses in the town centre and identify other areas where infill residential development may be appropriate and help support the vitality of the town centre.

### *Changes Under Consideration*

- 3.3.4.8 There are a limited number of town centre / retail related changes to the current Local Area Plan under consideration:
- In line with the requirements of the Retail Planning Guidelines it is proposed to define the 'Retail Core' of the town in the new Local Area Plan. The retail core is the primary shopping area.
  - It is proposed to omit reference to the provision of a discount food store from the B-05.
  - Site T-02 comprises 3.1ha and not all of that will be required to cater for the provision of a convenience store. Consideration can be given to what other non retail uses may be appropriate on this site.

### **3.3.5 Community Facilities / Green Infrastructure**

#### *Community Facilities*

- 3.3.5.1 It is considered that generally, Charleville has an adequate range of community facilities and amenities to serve its current population levels.
- 3.3.5.2 There are four primary schools and three secondary schools in the town. In addition, a site (C-01) has been reserved for the expansion of educational facilities to meet expected population growth. A nursing home is located to the west of the town.
- 3.3.5.3 The town has a good supply of recreational facilities and accommodates a GAA ground, rugby and soccer pitches, a basketball court, tennis court, golf course and pitch and putt club. Agricultural events are accommodated at Charleville show grounds.
- 3.3.5.4 The town benefits from a town park which includes a playground. An additional playground would benefit the town and will be required with an expansion in population.
- 3.3.5.5 The current Local Area Plan for Charleville identifies a number of sports pitches, the town park and a pitch and putt course that are to be protected for continued recreational use. Other open space zonings are for agricultural use. It is not proposed to identify any additional land for recreational use. The town currently offers many other opportunities for the development of new recreational and cultural amenities for the town which would enhance the overall quality of life for residents. The new plan will seek to place greater emphasis on the development of such amenities, particularly new walks, cycles ways and recreational / play and open space facilities in order to optimise the benefits of the towns natural amenities for the people of Charleville.

#### *Green Infrastructure*

- 3.3.5.6 The future development of the town presents opportunities to develop an integrated green infrastructure strategy which can perform a number of functions including passive and active amenity areas, wildlife corridors and carbon filters to offset impacts of increased development and traffic within the town.
- 3.3.5.7 The development of new residential sites to the west of the town and new employment land to the east offer opportunities for the development of additional greens spaces and green routes. These issues will be looked at during the preparation of the draft plan.

### 3.3.6 Transport and Mobility

- 3.3.6.1 The national primary route, N20 Cork – Limerick, goes through Charleville’s Main Street so high traffic volumes and congestion are significant issues in Charleville despite the town having reasonable road infrastructure and permeability and has good access to the national road network.
- 3.3.6.2 The town has reasonably good pedestrian linkages and permeability although a number of roads within the town centre have gaps in footpath provision along their length which should be addressed. It is important that any new development seeks to enhance pedestrian permeability further.
- 3.3.6.3 The Local Area Plan should seek to identify measures to encourage sustainable transport uptake in Charleville. Such measures could include installation of cycle parking stands at the rail station, bus shelters in town centre, establishing feasibility of bus service serving train station etc.
- 3.3.6.4 Key transport issues for the Local Area Plan to consider include:
- Delivery of the M20 ; Delivery of the planned M20 Motorway is essential in removing heavy traffic from the town centre thus improving accessibility throughout the town and enhancing the overall amenity of the settlement. However the M20 is unlikely to be delivered over the lifetime of the next Local Area plan.
  - Optimising capacity of existing routes ; In order to allow development to take place in the short term, the Plan will need to optimise the capacity for circulation within the existing routes (including pedestrian and cycle movement) , and prioritise development in areas which offer easy access to the town centre and existing facilities.

### 3.3.7 Water Services

- 3.3.7.1 Charleville receives its drinking water from the Charleville Water Supply. There are significant watermain network leakage issues within the Charleville Water Supply and further investment and water conservation is required in order to provide an adequate drinking water supply to service zoned lands in Charleville. Water conservation measures are presently being pursued.
- 3.3.7.2 Wastewater in Charleville is conveyed via a largely combined sewer network to the Charleville Waste Water Treatment Plant. Upgrading of the Charleville WWTP and the sewer network is required to accommodate the proposed development in Charleville. There are assimilative capacity issues in relation to the waters receiving the treated effluent from Charleville WWTP.

### 3.3.8 Surface Water

- 3.3.8.1 All new development will be required to address surface water disposal via sustainable urban drainage systems in line with surface water management policy set out in section 11.5 of the County Development Plan 2014.

### 3.3.9 Flooding

- 3.3.9.1 There is a small area of Flood Risk associated with the River Glen which runs in an west-east direction to the west of the main street and then, to the east of the town, turns and flows northwards. While areas of zoned land were identified as being at risk of flooding in the 2011 LAP, more recent draft flood risk mapping (Draft Shannon CFRAMS, March 2014) indicates only very minimal flood risk in association with zoned lands in the town.

### 3.3.10 Key Proposals for LAP Review for Charleville

- 3.3.10.1 The key issues to be considered as part of the preparation of the new Local Area Plan for Charleville town are:

Table 3.3.3 Main Proposals for the Draft Local Area Plan for Charleville	
Topic	Proposed Approach
Water Services Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with Irish Water regarding need for further investment in Water Services infrastructure.</li> </ul>
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to highlight requirement for delivery of M20 to remove through traffic from the town.</li> <li>Retain current LAP objective U-04 to provide for a local access / relief road connecting Kilmallock road to Station Road and on to the M20. It may be appropriate to prioritise the development of employment land which would support the achievement of this objective.</li> <li>Identify measures to increase use of rail service.</li> </ul>
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The current Local Area Plan provides 27.9 ha of land for industry and 62.9 ha of land for business uses. No changes are proposed to these zonings.</li> <li>It is proposed to omit reference to the provision of a discount food store and a medical centre from the Business Zoning B-05.</li> </ul>
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All residential zonings are being retained.</li> </ul>
Town Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is proposed to omit reference to the provision of a discount food store and a medical centre from the B-05.</li> <li>Site T-02 comprises 3.1ha, not all of which would be required to cater for the provision of a convenience store. Consideration can be given to what other non retail town centre uses may be appropriate on this site.</li> <li>Consideration will be given to extending the town centre zoning to include the existing Aldi Store.</li> <li>Identify measures the plan could take to increase the attractiveness of the town centre and encourage uptake of vacant retail units in the town.</li> <li>Identify what measures the plan could take to achieve public realm enhancements in the town centre.</li> </ul>



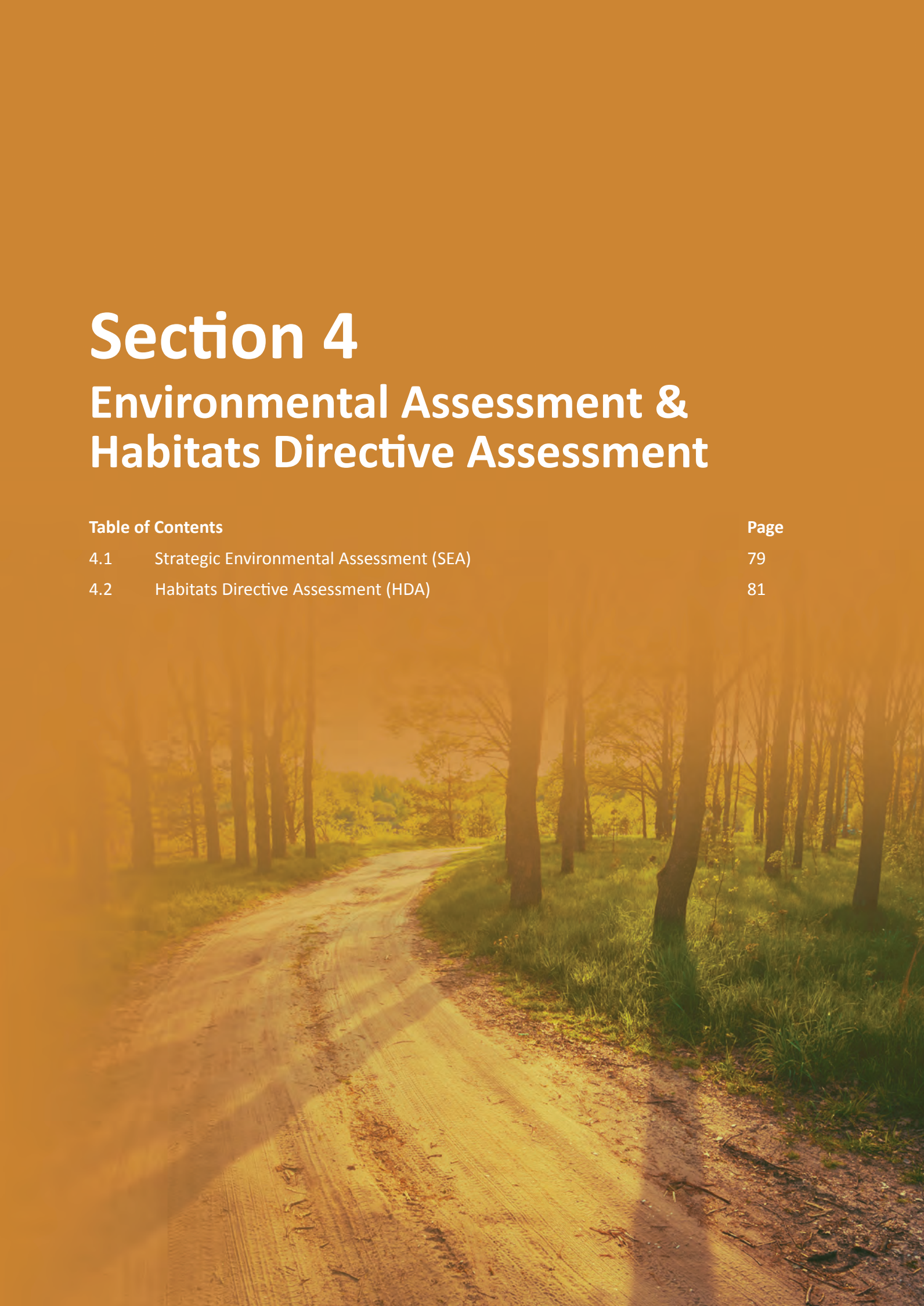




# Section 4

## Environmental Assessment & Habitats Directive Assessment

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## 4.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

- 4.1.1 Environmental assessment is a procedure that ensures that the environmental implications of decisions are taken into account before the decisions are made. Strategic Environmental Assessment, or SEA, is the term which has been given to the environmental assessment of plans, and other strategic actions. SEA is a systematic process of predicting and evaluating the likely environmental effects of implementing a proposed plan, or other strategic action, in order to insure that these effects are appropriately addressed at the earliest appropriate stage of decision-making on a par with economic and social considerations.
- 4.1.2 Under Article 14 B of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2011, a full Strategic Environmental Assessment is mandatory for the preparation of Local Area Plans for an area with a population in excess of 5,000 persons.
- 4.1.3 In addition, as part of the review of the current local area plans and in order to meet the needs of the Strategic Environmental Assessment process, and the requirements of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government / Office of Public Works Guidelines, "The Planning System and Flood Risk Management" (2009), Cork County Council will carry out a county wide Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) to inform the preparation of the next draft local area plans.

### *The SEA Process*

- 4.1.4 The current Local Area Plans adopted in 2011 were subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment. This Preliminary Consultation stage of the LAP review process is concerned with identifying those areas of the existing plans where changes may need to be considered. Those changes will then be fully considered and assessed, including Strategic Environmental Assessment, as part of the next stage of the process, which relates to the preparation of the Draft Local Area Plan. The SEA process will be carried out alongside the preparation of the Local Area Plan so that the findings of the SEA will be integrated into the Plan thus minimising the potential for significant negative environmental effects arising from implementation of the plan.
- 4.1.5 As highlighted in this Preliminary Consultation Document, it is envisaged that the majority of the zonings and policies contained in the current 2011 Local Area Plans, which have already been subject to the SEA process, will continue into the new Draft Plans. It is envisaged that the scale of growth for the villages, as provided for in the current plans, and the development boundaries of the villages, will be carried forward, other than where the scale of growth needs to be adjusted to take account of the lack of water services infrastructure. It is envisaged that this approach will generally have a positive or neutral environmental impact as it will not result in an increase in zoned land or development potential.
- 4.1.6 Where the need for changes to a zoning has been identified in Section 3, it is generally related to the reduction or omission of a zoning or a rezoning to a less intensive land use category such as open space, in response to an environmental/ heritage/ flooding constraint. Such changes will have a positive environmental impact.
- 4.1.7 Within the Metropolitan Cork Strategic Planning Area the need to identify additional development land to form part of a Strategic Land Reserve has been identified. These additional lands have yet to be identified. When they are identified their suitability for development will be assessed in the normal way as part of the SEA process for the Draft Plan.
- 4.1.8 An outline of the SEA process is given in Table 4.1.

## SEA Methodology

4.1.9 The methodology for the SEA is outlined in the table below.

<b>Table 4.1: SEA Methodology</b>	
<b>Stage</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>Screening</b>	The purpose of screening is to determine if SEA is necessary. This stage is not required as a full SEA is mandatory for the preparation of a Local Area Plan for an area with a population in excess of 5,000.
<b>Scoping</b>	The purpose of scoping is to determine what environmental issues need to be considered. In advance of the preparation of the Draft Plan and the SEA Environmental report, a scoping report will be prepared outlining the environmental issues that will need to be considered during the preparation of the Environmental report. The Scoping Report will form a basis for consultation with the statutory environmental authorities.
<b>Consultation with Environmental Authorities</b>	The scoping report will be sent to the environmental authorities for their comment.
<b>Prepare Environmental Report</b>	An Environmental report will be prepared examining the effects on the environment of implementing the objectives and policies contained within the Draft Local Area Plan. The Environmental Report is submitted to the Elected Members at the same time as the Draft Plan. The preparation of the Environmental Report is a parallel but separate process to that of producing the Local Area Plan.
<b>SEA of Proposed Amendments</b>	An environmental assessment will be undertaken of proposed amendments to determine their likely environmental impact.
<b>SEA Statement</b>	At the end of the process, a statement will be issued by the Council summarising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan,</li> <li>• how the environmental report and the submissions, and observations made to the planning authority on the Proposed Plan and Environmental Report have been taken into account during the preparation of the plan.</li> <li>• the reasons for choosing the plan, as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with, and</li> <li>• the measures decided upon to monitor the significant environmental effects of implementation of the plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Monitoring of Local Area Plan</b>	Monitoring significant environmental effects over the lifetime of the Local Area Plan.

## 4.2 Habitats Directive Assessment (HDA)

- 4.2.1 Habitats Directive Assessment is an iterative process which is intended to run parallel to and inform the plan making process. It involves analysis and review of the plan as it develops during each stage of plan making, to ensure that its implementation will not impact on sites designated for nature conservation, nor on the habitats or species for which they are designated. Within this process, regard is had to the potential for the plan to contribute to impacts which on their own may be acceptable, but which could be significant when considered in combination with the impacts arising from the implementation of other plans or policies.
- 4.2.2 The process may result in the development of new policy areas and/or the modification or removal of certain elements of the plan. The results of this analysis and review are presented in reports which are produced for each stage of the plan making process.
- 4.2.3 The current Local Area Plans adopted in 2011 were subject to Habitats Directive Assessment. This Preliminary Consultation stage of the LAP review process is concerned with identifying those areas of the existing plans where changes may need to be considered. Those changes will then be fully considered and assessed, including Habitats Directive Assessment, as part of the next stage of the process, which relates to the preparation of the Draft Local Area Plan. The HDA process will be carried out alongside the preparation of the Local Area Plan and the SEA Environmental Report so that the findings of the HDA will influence the preparation of the Draft Plan, thus minimising the potential for significant adverse effects arising from implementation of the plan.
- 4.2.4 As the 2011 Local Area Plans were subjected to a detailed Habitats Directive assessment in line with the Government's guidelines to planning authorities, zonings in those plans are unlikely to be considered as posing risks to the integrity of Natura 2000 sites through their inclusion in the new Draft Local Area Plan in 2016. However, some of zonings originating in Town Council Development Plans were not subjected to Appropriate Assessment when those plans were made. Where possible, these zonings have been flagged in Section 3 of this document and will be further considered as part of the preparation of the new Draft Plan. Such changes will have a positive environmental impact as it will ensure that zonings with the potential for significant adverse impacts on designated sites are reconsidered and revised as appropriate.





