



Limerick Regeneration

Framework Implementation Plan

Delivering safe and sustainable communities





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Volume 1

Volume 1 Introduction & Context

Forewords

Executive Summary

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Policy Context

3.0 Baseline Conditions and Analysis

4.0 Physical Overview and Analysis

Foreword by the Minister

As a resident of the city, as a public representative for Limerick and in my capacity as Minister for Planning and Housing, I am particularly pleased to launch the Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan. A flourishing mid-west region needs a strong and vibrant Limerick City.

This plan is an integral part of the overall framework which is currently being advanced to deliver effective economic and spatial strategies for the city and the Limerick region. In June 2013 Limerick City & County Council launched its Economic & Spatial Plan which sets out a clear vision of how our city & its environs will develop in the years up to 2030. Delivering regeneration is a crucial part of the ambitious plan to transform our city and our communities.

Over the past five years, structures have been put in place to facilitate consultation with stakeholder groups on wide-ranging issues relating to the development and implementation of social and physical regeneration strategies. This Framework Implementation Plan is entirely focussed on building and delivering sustainable communities. Delivery is key and this framework implementation plan provides the tool-kit to get the job done.

The Office of Regeneration as an integral part of the new Limerick City and County Council has now put in place a robust, workable and measurable implementation plan. It took a lot of time and resources to achieve this outcome. I am pleased with the level of engagement and co-operation between the Office of Regeneration and the communities in framing this plan. The Limerick Regeneration Agencies, led by Chairman John Fitzgerald over a five year period laid the very solid foundations which can now support and sustain regeneration in the communities and the city as a whole.

Regeneration is a live process and needs to be flexible and adaptable over the implementation phase. It will be monitored, measured and evaluated on an on-going basis. This plan will facilitate these actions at every level across all three strands of regeneration. I am conscious too that successful delivery will require a whole of Government approach with all public bodies, the private sector and community organisations working in close collaboration to deliver this programme. To facilitate this, I intend to re-constitute the Programme Delivery Group to ensure consistent and co-ordinated delivery by the relevant Government departments, public bodies and agencies. This holistic, multi-agency approach will ensure that regeneration is sustainable into the future and enable it to generate long-term social and economic benefit.

The main driver of delivery on the ground will be the Office of Regeneration, reporting directly to Limerick City

and County Council. This revised structure has been in place for more than 12 months and has the experience and capacity to ensure focused delivery of individual regeneration projects through an efficient and accountable structure.

Notwithstanding the challenging fiscal climate, my Department has demonstrated a firm commitment to the regeneration of the four regeneration areas over the past five years. This has contributed to the stabilisation of these areas through a substantial acquisition and re-housing programme, a planned programme of demolitions, the purchase of strategic development sites, energy retrofitting to housing and environmental improvement works. In addition, grant funding is provided for a range of social and community infrastructure and social inclusion interventions which have been delivered by a broad collection of State and community organisations. The value placed on the national regeneration programme is explicitly recognised in the Programme for Government and it is the stated objective of my Department to ensure that this important programme is supported in future years. The Regeneration programme is a key driver for change across the city and, as demonstrated by a capital allocation of over €30 million to Limerick city in 2013, my Department's commitment to that process is not in doubt.

The substantial capital investment in regeneration will complement the measures announced by my colleague the Minister for Finance, Michael Noonan, under the Living City initiative, which are intended to provide a stimulus for the rejuvenation of the magnificent Georgian centre of Limerick.

We can look forward with confidence that regeneration will reinvigorate and revitalise communities that have witnessed considerable neglect and breakdown over decades. I am aware that to enable people to participate fully in the rebuilding of their communities they must be given a real opportunity to enter the jobs market. I am particularly pleased to see that social employment clauses are central to delivering the regeneration programme. This innovation has the capacity to present much-needed employment opportunities to disadvantaged communities and will also ensure that regeneration will benefit from the experience and knowledge of skilled workers and young workers across the City.

The journey we are now on is transforming Limerick. With lessons of the past taken on board, we now have the opportunity to lead the way in regeneration at both a national and a European level. In the coming years our experience will prove invaluable as other cities look to redesign their social, economic and urban environment to the benefit of all their citizens. The decision to locate the National Social Innovation Hub in Limerick City will

Jan O'Sullivan TD
Minister of State, Department of Environment,
Community and Local Government with special
responsibility for Housing and Planning



confirm Limerick's growing reputation as a leader in innovative social action.

Many people have contributed to this plan and I thank each of you for your generosity and commitment. It provides us with the tools to chart our progress. I am confident too that the Limerick City and County Council, my own Department and indeed the other Departments, public bodies and Agencies, are ready to face the challenges in delivering this plan as effectively and efficiently as possible and in a way that most benefits Limerick and its residents.

There are pivotal times in the life of a person or of a place when things will never be the same again. I believe this is happening now for Limerick and the plan we are launching today is a significant marker of that change. There is now a new energy and confidence in Limerick, something I haven't experienced before in my years in public life. This transformative spirit is rooted in our communities. They are the people who have maintained our sense of social solidarity, often against immense challenges. Now is the time when all stakeholders need to come together to deliver this implementation plan so that the people of Limerick, and their children, can build the future they deserve.

Foreword

by the City and County Manager

The result of a considerable body of work by numerous stakeholders including – perhaps most importantly – those who live in the areas involved and know them best, the Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan sets out how the shared vision for stronger communities can and will be delivered.

Crucially, this plan has the ongoing commitment of Government with this underlined by an allocation of €28m in the current year. While the steps to be taken go well beyond physical works, this is one of the largest capital investment projects underway in the country at this time. This will generate significant positive spin-offs in terms of economic activity and construction employment.

Carefully aligned with Limerick 2030 – An Economic & Spatial Plan for Limerick, this is very much an action-oriented and evidence-based plan. It is deeply rooted in the specific communities concerned rather than being an ‘off the shelf’ document that could as easily be applied to any other urban setting in Ireland or abroad.

Built around very valuable insights from Dr Eileen Humphreys of the Institute for the Study of Knowledge in Society at the University of Limerick, this is a Limerick plan for Limerick communities and it is Limerick that will win from its successful implementation.

In considering regeneration in Limerick, one is very conscious of building on some great work by John Fitzgerald, Brendan Kenny and the numerous people they worked with over the last seven years. Indeed, while it obviously reflected very different times economically, the Limerick Regeneration Masterplan published in 2008 laid down an important marker and brought an intense focus on addressing the issues that needed to be tackled most urgently.

In this regard, I also want to acknowledge the work done by An Garda Síochána from a policing perspective to help ensure that a small minority could not continue to sully the good name of communities where the vast majority of people are decent and law-abiding. It is important that this work continues to be properly resourced so that the progress made is in no way jeopardised.

In many respects, 2006-2013 could be regarded as the stabilisation period that was needed to stop the situation getting worse in Moyross, Southill, Ballinacurra Weston and St Mary’s Park. Now, the challenge is to start things

getting better and to bridge the gaps that still exist between the built environment and the social and economic life of these areas and other parts of Limerick.

No single agency could possibly hope to deliver on the broad range of interventions that are needed in this context and – as might be expected in such a great sporting city and county - we are fortunate in Limerick to have team players willing to roll up their sleeves and work together with our partners at a national and EU level.

This also extends to community leaders in these neighbourhoods who show a great willingness to work with all of the stakeholders to move their areas forward. In many respects, these are the real ‘experts’ on what’s needed locally and their inputs will continue to be vital as the plan is implemented.

This joined up approach and the fact that this plan has been framed in full awareness of the current and forecast economic conditions gives me great confidence that the range of measures – from the relatively minor to the more ambitious – included in this plan will be delivered. The weighty evidence that underpins the plan then indicates we will see results as communities that have lagged behind for too long will be empowered and become far more attractive places to live. Following public consultation on this draft, I look forward to seeing it finalised and fully incorporated into the City and County Development Plans.

Conn Murray,

▼ City & County Manager/CEO, Limerick Local Authorities



Foreword

by the Mayor and Cathaoirleach

Delivering for Limerick

On behalf of Limerick Local Authorities and as elected representatives of the people of Limerick, we are pleased to introduce the Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan.

Built on a people-focused and community-based approach, this blueprint will deliver further positive change for those living in the regeneration areas but also benefit the city and county more widely. Indeed, one of the true tests of a plan like this is that it will leave a lasting legacy of benefits.

Delivering on the ambition in this plan will require a collaborative approach between agencies and the communities involved who have shown great energy and resilience through challenging times.

A long-term plan of this type will also require a shared understanding that what is being done is part of a wider vision with lasting and positive consequences which will have welcome spill-over effects for our gateway city and beyond. For success in delivering improved conditions and quality of life to particular areas will without question bring extended benefits, not just to Limerick itself, but to the wider Mid-West region.

It is particularly encouraging that this plan dovetails closely with other relevant policies and strategies at a Limerick, regional and national level. For instance, it will be implemented in parallel with 'Limerick 2030 – An Economic and Spatial Plan for Limerick' which sets out a wider vision for Limerick.

Evidence from across Europe and beyond underlines the importance of strong and vibrant cities to the regions they are located in. For the Mid-West, it is crucial that Limerick is able to reach its full potential as a social and economic powerhouse for the region. In short, the region will not succeed without Limerick thriving and this plan is part of ensuring that.

In introducing and commending this plan, we pay tribute to the hard work and commitment of all those who have contributed to it and – perhaps more importantly – who will now work to implement it.

As well as the people of Limerick who have increasingly found their voices and engaged with the process of delivering the change they want to see, excellent work continues to be done by the Office of Regeneration at City Hall, the housing departments at Limerick Local Authorities, An Garda Síochána; Probation Service; Health Service Executive (HSE), Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, Paul Partnership Limerick, the Department

Cllr Kathleen Leddin,
▼ Mayor of Limerick



John Sheahan
▼ Cathaoirleach, Limerick County Council



of the Environment, Community & Local Government and other Government departments, Limerick's higher education institutions and the community and voluntary sector.

The ongoing investment of time and resources from the public, private, community and voluntary sectors will – over time – help build on what has been achieved in recent years. The strides that have been made in Limerick over the last 5 to 10 years should give us greater confidence as we look to take the next steps.

This plan provides an achievable route to delivering what – put simply - will be better and safer places to live and work. Healthy communities aren't created by improved housing or smarter design alone. It is the people that bring those homes and streets to life and Limerick is very fortunate in this regard. It is this combination of careful planning and ambition with great individuals and families taking pride in their place that provides every reason to be confident that this plan will deliver for Limerick.



