

Draft Limerick
CYCLE
Network



1. Introduction

AECOM, as part of the NTA Cycle Design Office, have been requested by the NTA to develop comprehensive cycle plans for counties across Ireland, including Limerick County Council. CycleConnects is intended to form a comprehensive cycle network for all cycle user types across each county in Ireland.

This will include existing cycle networks such as urban cycle routes, greenways, and interurban routes. This will be supplemented by proposed cycle routes/links outlined in latest development and transport plans, and other networks required to maximise the connection of the network to communities. It should be noted that this network does not specify any infrastructure types on any route and is focused on highlighting the key links required to form a comprehensive cycle network connecting all major communities and destinations.

This note will briefly summarise the proposed cycle network for Limerick. For details of methodology, national policy and the overall aspirations for the CycleConnects networks, please refer to the main report of which this technical note is an appendix of.

2. Limerick Population and Settlements

County Limerick is in the west of the country in the province of Munster. It is bordered to the north by the Shannon, with Clare located across the river. It is also bordered by the counties of Kerry, Cork, and Tipperary to the west, south, and east respectively.

According to the CSO 2016, the county has a population of 194,899 inhabitants. Table 2.1 below shows the population of towns within Co. Limerick with at least 1000 people. Limerick and Newcastle West are the only settlements with over 5,000 people while all other towns have a population of more than 5,000 people.

Table 2.1: Population of settlements in Limerick

City/Town	Population (2016)
Limerick City	94,192
Newcastle West	6,619
Annacotty	2,930
Castleconnell	2,107
Abbeyfeale	2,023
Kilmallock	1,668
Caherconlish	1,476
Rathkeale	1,441
Moroe	1,377
Croom	1,159
Askeaton	1,137
Adare	1,129

3. Existing Limerick Policies and Plans

Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028

The Limerick County Development Plan (LCDP) was published by Limerick County Council to outline the strategy and objectives for the planning of the County.

The Strategic Vision of the County is as follows:

“Limerick – A Green City Region on the Waterfront. By 2030, Limerick will become a green city region on the Shannon Estuary connected through people and places. This will be achieved through engagement, innovation, resilient urban development and self-sustaining rural communities.”

The Development Plan’s vision is supported by a number of strategic objectives. The objectives outline the potential to strengthen communities, built environment and natural heritage, infrastructure, and tourism.

Throughout the Plan, there are a number of policies that make note of the facilitation and provision of cycle infrastructure and greenways, which have been listed under the following headings:

Chapter 7: Sustainable Mobility and Transport

Chapter 7 of the LCDP outlines transport policies and objectives for Limerick including but not limited to:

- **Policy TR P4 - Promotion of Sustainable Patterns of Transport Use:**
It is a policy of the Council to seek to implement in a positive manner, in cooperation with other relevant authorities and agencies, the policies of the NPF, RSES and the Department of Transport’s Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future 2009 – 2020 (and any subsequent updates), to encourage more sustainable patterns of travel and greater use of sustainable forms of transport, including public transport, cycling and walking.
- **Policy TR P5 - Sustainable Mobility and Regional Accessibility:**
It is a policy of the Council to support sustainable mobility, enhanced regional accessibility and connectivity within Limerick, in accordance with the National Strategic Outcomes of the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region.
- **Objective TR 02 - Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets:**
It is an objective of the Council to support the appropriate road design standards of all roads and streets within the urban areas, including suburbs, towns, and villages within the 60km/h zone as per the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets and TII Publication Standards DN-GEO-03084 The Treatment of Transition Zones to Towns and Villages on National Roads.
- **Objective TR 05 Limerick – Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy:**
It is an objective of the Council to facilitate the implementation and delivery of the proposals that will be contained in the final Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy, in conjunction with the National Transport Authority, Transport Infrastructure Ireland and Clare County Council and other relevant stakeholders. This partnership will achieve successful integration between land use and transport planning and targeted growth along high quality public transport corridors and sustainable higher densities.

- **Policy TR P8 - Local Transport Plans:**

It is a policy of the Council to prepare a Local Transport Plan (LTP), Mobility and Public Realm Plan for the Key Town of Newcastle West, in consultation with the National Transport Authority, Transport Infrastructure Ireland and other relevant stakeholders, as part of the Local Area Plan process and for other settlements as deemed necessary.

- **Objective TR 06 - Delivering Modal Split:**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Promote a modal shift away from the private car towards more sustainable modes of transport including walking, cycling, carpool and public transport in conjunction with the relevant transport authorities;

b) Support investment in sustainable transport infrastructure that will make walking, cycling, carpool and public transport more attractive, appealing, and accessible for all.

- **Objective TR 08 - Walking and Cycling Infrastructure:**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Improve and provide clear, safe and direct pedestrian linkages, cycle networks, including the greenways and primary segregated cycle routes, between the employment zones, shopping areas and residential areas throughout Limerick;

b) Maintain and expand the pedestrian route network, infrastructure and where possible, retrofit cycle and pedestrian routes into the existing urban road network, to provide for accessible safe pedestrian routes within Limerick.

- **Objective TR 09 - Limerick Cycle Network:**

It is an objective of the Council to implement in full, the Cycle Network, which will be set out in the final LSMATS, with priority given in the short term to delivering the primary cycle network and cycle routes serving schools.

- **Objective TR 010 - Limerick Regeneration Area Sustainable Travel Infrastructure:**

It is an objective of the Council to support LSMATS in the identification and delivery of improvements to walking/cycling infrastructure and improvements to public transport, based on those measures identified in the Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan.

- **Policy TR P9 - Sustainable Transport in Rural Areas:**

It is a policy of the Council to support the objectives contained in Our Rural Future: Government's Blueprint to Transport Rural Ireland, including investment in public transport and high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure specifically targeted at towns and villages.

Draft Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (LSMATS) 2040

The Draft Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (LSMATS) was developed by the NTA in collaboration with Limerick City and County Council, Clare County Council and TII.

Within the report a comprehensive study of existing cycle networks infrastructure available was provided, and a number of limitations of the cycling infrastructure were identified. These include the lack of cycle provision on the vehicular bridges crossing the Shannon.

In 2016 the Limerick Metropolitan Cycle Network Study was undertaken. This put forward the vision of “a Cycle Network Study for the Limerick Metropolitan Area is to develop a consistent, clear and continuous network of urban and suburban cycle networks throughout the Limerick Metropolitan Area to ensure cycling becomes a realistic choice as a mode of transport”

The key aims of the study were to;

- Identify a cycle network that provides continuous and coherent routes between the main trip generators and attractors;
- Achieve a quality of service level B or greater in each primary corridor;
- Achieve a quality of service level B and no less than level C of service on secondary routes and;
- Provide a quality of service B on feeder routes.

As part of LSMATS a cycle network has been developed for both Limerick City and Shannon. The Limerick City Cycle Network proposed as part of the CycleConnects Network is heavily based on this. This is outlined in Figure 3.1 below.

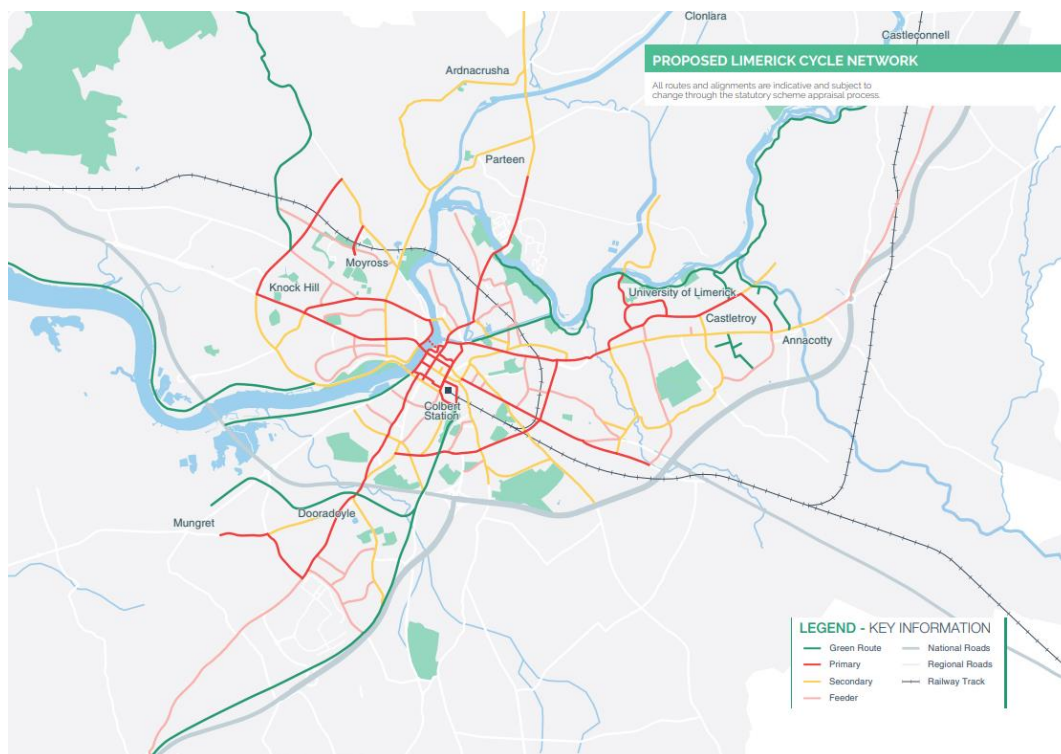


Figure 3.1: Proposed Limerick Cycle Network (LSMATS 2022)

Newcastle West Local Area Plan 2014-2020

The Newcastle-West Local Area Plan (LAP) was originally planned to run from 2014 to 2020 but was extended in 2019 until 2024. It aims to establish a framework for the planned, coordinated, and sustainable development of town of Newcastle West. This includes the core policy of ensuring the sustainable development of Newcastle West and to ensure that all proposals shall comply with the policies, objectives, and development management standards of the LCDP.

Chapter 6 of the LAP outlines key policies and objectives in relation to transport in Newcastle West. These include:

- **Policy T1:** It is the policy of the Council to improve accessibility; reduce dependence on private car transport and encourage the use of energy efficient forms of transport and alternatives to the private car in accordance with national transport
- **Policy T2:** It is the policy of the Council to ensure that all proposals shall comply with the policies, objectives, and development management standards of the Limerick County Development Plan, 2010 – 2016, the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Street (DoECGLG and DTTS, March 2013), and the Spatial Planning and National Road Guidelines (DoECLG and DTTS, 2013) in relation to transport and infrastructure and the objectives outlined below.
- **Objective T1:** It is an objective of the Council to encourage walking and cycling as more convenient, popular and safe methods of movement in Newcastle West through supporting the recommendations of the Walking and Cycling Strategy for Newcastle West(2013).

Future Local Transport Plans

Limerick City & County Council are required to develop Local Transport Plans as part of their Development Plan process. While the cycle network outlined in this plan has been created to reflect current transport arrangements, it may be subject to change based on the more detailed analysis and recommendations developed as part of the LTP process.

4. Proposed Limerick Cycle Network

Introduction

Following a review of existing data, policies and conducting workshops with Limerick County Council to review the draft cycle network, the following summarises the methodology and proposed cycle network development for Limerick. The full details of how all the CycleConnects networks were developed are available in the NTA Consultation website.

Prior to developing the Limerick County Network, a GIS model was established for the county. This model mapped all existing information made available for the county, supplied by various bodies including the NTA, CSO, Department for Transport, Transport Infrastructure Ireland, Department for Education and Limerick County Council. The data collected includes

- Locations of major employment and job density
- Existing cycle infrastructure and routes
- Existing bus stops, rail lines and other public transport
- Location of schools and education centres
- Shopping centres, hospitals and other destinations that may attract cyclists

The collation of this data has aided the selection of cycle routes in Limerick that are available to as many people as possible. It has also allowed for the servicing of key destinations within County Limerick.

Methodology

Following the collation of existing data, the cycle network plan for Limerick was developed. This is based on a three-tier system outlined in Figure below.

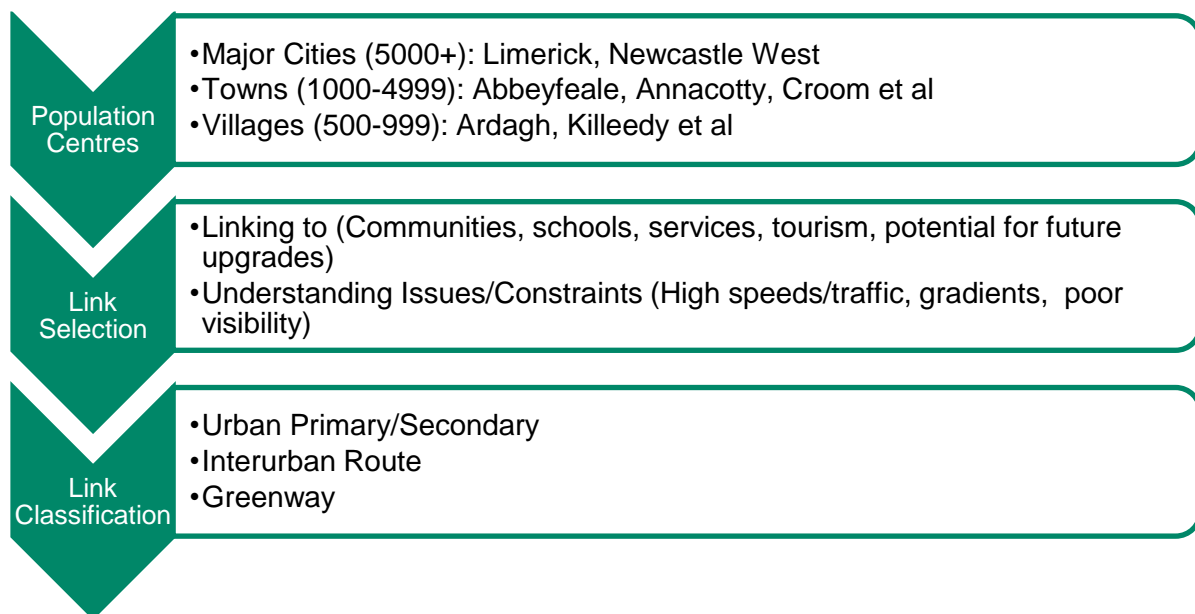


Figure 4.1: Cycle Network Development Methodology

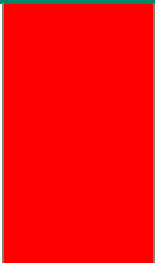
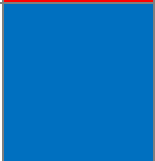
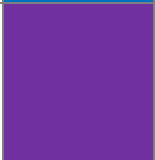
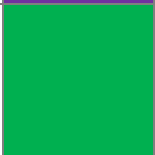
Population Centres: The Limerick CycleConnects Network will look to link towns and villages together as part of a fully connected network. Thus, all towns were mapped with the larger

towns such as Limerick and Newcastle West noted. By mapping all towns and villages, a profile emerged of where most people in Limerick were situated and where potential cycle routes should be provided.

Route Selection: Once the population areas were established, potential routes were then considered along strategic corridors. This allowed multiple communities to be linked along individual interurban routes both within the county and into adjacent counties. Where possible, these routes were also located within TII National Cycle Network Corridors. This avoided too many parallel cycle routes being developed and for an integrated cycle network to be developed within the county.

Cycle Route Classification: The route classification for each route has been summarised below in Table 4.1. It should be noted that this link classification does not reflect the existing condition of roads for cycling but seeks to highlight their potential for various route classifications. For example, while there are many interurban routes that currently have no cycle infrastructure, the aspiration will be to target these over the next decade for appropriate upgrades.

Table 4.1: CycleConnects Route Classification

City/Town	Colour	Description
Urban Primary		High quality cycle route that can accommodate a high volume of cyclists typical in most urban areas. These will look to feature on major desire lines in town centres and form distinctive radial and orbital cycle routes in the major towns and cities. These primary routes should also form a cohesive and connected network within the urban area that will be simple for cyclists to navigate.
Urban Secondary		Second tier cycle route in major urban areas to link with urban primary network to add greater route density and options on the network. These will typically be passing through residential areas, school and employment areas.
Interurban		On-road cycle route to link all key settlements and destinations outside urban areas. These may have potential to provide off-road/segregated routes parallel to the existing road in later years.
Greenway		Off-road cycle route with no adjacent traffic for the majority of its route. These are typically located on old rail trails and blueways (routes along rivers, lakes and canals) with cyclists sharing the route with pedestrians.

Proposed Limerick County Network

Following the methodology outlined above, the Limerick CycleConnects Network has been outlined in a series of maps shown in below. These are also available to view as an individual PDF when selecting county Limerick in the NTA consultation page.

Table 4.2: Limerick CycleConnects Network – List of Maps

Cycle Map List
Limerick County Cycle Network
Limerick City Network
Newcastle West Urban Cycle Network

The Limerick CycleConnects Network primarily extends the network beyond the key settlement areas of Limerick City and Newcastle West. In summary, it will consist of an urban cycle network for Limerick City and Newcastle West with interurban connectors between towns such as Annacotty, Castleconnell, Abbeyfeale, and Kilmallock. These then extend into adjoining counties forming a comprehensive and connecting cycle network nationally.

Interurban Link Development

The primary towns with a population of over 1,000 were connected via interurban links. Where possible, towns with a lower population that were located along the route were included in the routes. Connections were also made to larger cross border towns such as Shannon in Co. Clare and Thurles in Co. Tipperary. The selection of interurban routes was also influenced by the location of schools/sports grounds on various parallel routes.

As part of the development of the interurban network, the Google travel planning tool was utilised to assist in selecting the most appropriate route between the various settlements. This included avoiding routes/routes with excessive gradients. In some cases, selecting a sufficiently flat route was not available. Thus, the most available flattest route was selected. However, some routes were modified slightly to connect with adjacent towns/villages or key destinations such as schools, sports pitches or tourist attractions.

The TII National Cycle Network Corridors have also been used to overlap corridors. These include corridors and routes into counties Kerry, Cork, Clare, Tipperary.

Greenway Route Integration

There are a number of proposed and constructed greenway projects in Limerick.

Limerick Greenway

This Limerick greenway was built along the former Limerick-Tralee railway line. It is a 40km long route that links the towns of Rathkeale, Newcastle West, and Abbeyfeale. It also connects to Listowel in County Kerry.

There is potential for this greenway to connect into the North Kerry Greenway at Listowel. The greenway is split into 6 sections, all of which are waymarked.

Castletroy Urban Greenway

The Castletroy Urban Greenway has been proposed to provide connectivity to Castletroy College and Castletroy Gaelscoil from the R445 Dublin Road at the Gaelscoil. It will also provide an east- west link from Castletroy Town Centre to the residential area of Walker's Road.

The main spine of this greenway is 820m in length linking Castletroy College Road with the access road to the Gaelscoil. Secondary spines will link to proposed future residential development to the east and Castletroy Shopping Centre (Town Centre) to the west. This will be 170m and 260 m in length respectively.

Proposed East Limerick to Cahir Greenway

This proposed greenway is at early planning and feasibility stage so the route indicated may be subject to change once an emerging preferred route is identified.

Urban Network Development: Limerick City

With a population of over 5,000 inhabitants, an urban cycle network was developed for Limerick City. The urban network design is based primarily on the latest LSMATS cycle network (see Figure 3.1). Some additional changes were applied to reflect recent schemes and developments in Limerick City. Some greenways are also shown as indicative as no clear route is known for these greenways at this stage.

The Limerick cycle network includes primary links in the city centre along streets such as Harvey's Quay, O'Connell Street, Mungret Street, and William Street. This is supplemented by primary radial links to link other parts of Limerick City with the city centre. This includes primary routes along streets such as Corbally Road, Dublin Road, R527 Mulgrave Street, Childers Road, South Circular Road, Ennis Road, and Cratloe Road.

Locations that are served by these primary routes include but are not limited to:

- Limerick City Centre
- Limerick Train Station
- University of Limerick
- St Patrick's Boys National School
- St John's Hospital
- St. Joseph's Hospital
- St Michael's National School
- Le Chéile National School
- TUS Moylish Campus
- University of Limerick
- TUS Gaelic Grounds
- Shannon Rugby Football Club
- Thomond Park
- University Maternity Hospital Limerick
- UL Bohemians Rugby Football Club
- Crossegalla Business Park
- Kilmallock Road Enterprise Park
- Coonagh Shopping Centre
- JetLand Shopping Centre

A number of other secondary routes and feeder routes are also proposed along streets such as Shannon Bridge, Roxboro Road, Greenhill Road and Greenfields Road. These are

intended to act as interlinks to the orbital and radial routes in addition to serving locations that have not located on orbital or radial routes previously mentioned.

Urban Network Development: Newcastle West

With a population of over 5000 inhabitants an urban cycle network has been developed for Newcastle West. The urban network design comprises of an inner primary orbital route and a larger amalgamation of both primary and secondary routes that traverse and encompasses the town. This also includes a link to the Rathkeale to Abbeyfeale greenway in the north-west of the town.

The inner orbital route is located within the town centre and includes streets such as Bishops's Street, Hazel Grove, N21 Sheehans Road, St. Ita's Road, Bridge Street and The Square. This is supplemented by additional primary radial linking other parts of Newcastle West with the town centre. This includes primary routes along street such as R522 Cork Road, Bóthar Buí, Churchtown Road, and Station Road.

Locations that are served by these primary routes will include but are not limited to:

- Newcastle West Town Centre
- Newcastle West Rugby Football Club
- Courtenay National School
- Newcastle West Library
- St Ita's' Community Hospital
- St. Desmond College
- Scoil Mhuire agus Ide
- Newcastle West GAA Club.

A number of secondary routes are also proposed along streets such as Maiden Street, Sheehan's Road, Assumpta Park, Woodfield Grove, and Knockane. These are intended to act as interlinks to the orbital and radial routes in addition to serving locations that have not located on orbital or radial routes previously mentioned.

5. Next Steps

AECOM, as part of the NTA Cycle Design Office, have been requested by the NTA to develop comprehensive cycle routes for County Limerick and Limerick City and Newcastle West.

The network design for Limerick has now been made available for public consultation. This will allow for members of the public to submit their feedback. Individual maps are available to view on the National Transport Authority website and are available in the links below:

Table 5.1: Limerick CycleConnects Network – List of Maps

Cycle Map List
Limerick County Cycle Network
Limerick City Urban Cycle Network
Newcastle West Urban Cycle Network

Following the public consultation, submissions will be reviewed, and the network maps updated as required.