



Comhairle Contae Mhaigh Eo  
Mayo County Council



# Westport Local Area Plan 2024-2030

Adopted 27<sup>th</sup> May 2024.

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# Chapter 1 Introduction and Context

## 1.1 Introduction and Context

The Westport Local Area Plan 2024 – 2030 (the ‘Plan’) has been prepared in accordance with the requirements and provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended (the ‘Act’), in particular, Sections 18-20 of the Act. A local area plan is required to be prepared in respect of an area that is designated as a town in the most recent census; has a population in excess of 5,000 and is situated in the functional area of the planning authority which is a county council. The 2016 Census of Population indicated that the settlement of Westport had a total population of 6,198 persons. A local area plan is therefore mandatory for Westport.

The Plan sets out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of Westport in the context of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028; the National Planning Framework (2018), the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Northern and Western Region, and the Mayo County Council Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024. It is also informed by Ministerial Guidelines issued pursuant to Section 28 of the Act together with EU requirements regarding Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA); an Appropriate Assessment/Natura Impact Report (AA/NIR), and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). The Plan has also been informed by a Local Transport Plan.

In relation to the process of preparing the Draft plan the following to be noted:

There was no consultation or engagement with locally elected Councillors as recommended under Section 4.1 of the Local Area Planning Guidelines (June 2013) before the Draft Local Area Plan was issued.

There was no consultation with Children & Young People as recommended under Section 4.2 of the Local Area Planning Guidelines (June 2013) before issuing the Draft Local Area

The Local Area Plan does not take account of the 11% increase in population since 2016 as indicated in the Population Census April 2022 confirming Westport Town population at 6,872 as at 2022.

No consideration has been given in this Local Area Plan to the 1,241 additional people who have settled in the Westport Area post the Population Census April 2022 arising out of the war in Ukraine (reference data - Oct 8<sup>th</sup> 2023, CSO “Arrivals from Ukraine in Ireland” - Series 11)

## 1.2 Climate Action

This Plan is set in a context where climate change is accepted as a global challenge and requires climate action responses in adaptation and mitigation to ensure a healthy, economically thriving, liveable built environment (see Figure 1.1 below). One of the key National Strategic Outcomes of the NPF is to transition to a low carbon and climate resilient society.



**Figure 1.1: Climate Mitigation and Adaptation**

The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 provides for a national climate objective, which commits to pursue and achieve no later than 2050, the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity-rich, environmentally sustainable and climate-neutral economy. The Climate Action Plan 2023 sets out the measures to be taken to reach our targets in each sector of the economy.

Mayo County Council’s Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (Climate Ready Mayo), 2019-2024, forms part of Ireland’s national strategy for climate adaptation, as set out in the National Adaptation Framework 2018 (NAF). The purpose of this Strategy is to ensure that climate adaptation considerations are mainstreamed into all plans and policies and integrated into all operations and functions of the local authority, and it is a policy of the County Development Plan to support its implementation.

The compact growth agenda outlined in the NPF is reinforced through Ireland’s Climate Action Plan 2023, which promotes extensive retrofitting of existing premises and housing stock and the prioritisation of brownfield and compact development. The actions committed to in the Climate Action Plan 2023 strongly align and support the regeneration and revitalisation of Ireland’s towns, including through reducing demand for travel by car, sustaining economic and social activity at street level and increasing access to shops, employment and amenities by sustainable transport modes.

### 1.3 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership (see Figure 1.2 below). The 2030 Agenda encourages countries to set out a holistic approach to achieving a sustainable future for all by developing national responses to the SDGs and incorporate them into planning and policy.





**Figure 1.2: Sustainable Development Goals**

Ireland is committed to achieving the SDGs, as set out in the Department of Environment, Climate and Communication’s ‘National Implementation Plan for Sustainable Development Goals 2022-2024. There is significant alignment between the NPF’s National Strategic Outcomes and the SDGs. A key objective of the National Implementation Plan is to embed the framework provided by the 2030 Agenda into the work of national and local government.

#### 1.4 Spatial Planning Context



**Figure 1.3: Hierarchy of Plans**

##### 1.4.1 National Planning Framework

The National Planning Framework sets out a high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth of Ireland and provides 10 National Strategic Outcomes for realising the vision of the plan. The NPF sits at the highest tier of planning policy in Ireland, and all regional and local planning policy should be consistent with the principles contained within it.



Figure. 1.4: NPF National Strategic Outcomes

#### 1.4.2 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy

The Northern and Western Regional Assembly’s Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) was adopted in January 2020 and comprises of the regional tier of planning policy relevant to County Mayo and Westport. The RSES primarily aims to support the delivery of Project Ireland 2040, the NPF and the National Development Plan 2018-27 (NDP). The RSES seeks to ensure coordination between the County Development Plans (CDP) and Local Enterprise and Community Plans (LECP) of the eight local authorities in the Northern and Western Region, including County Mayo.



Figure 1.5: RSES Key Metrics

The RSES introduces a Growth Framework for the Northern and Western Region, which includes a settlement hierarchy, growth ambitions and supporting policy framework to advance the spatial and economic development of the region. The RSES designates Westport as a settlement with strategic development potential of a regional scale. This designation is based its enterprise economy, the strength of the town’s tourism industry, as well as its potential to further develop marine resources. The RSES also recognises that the full strategic regional development potential of Westport can be best achieved by building on the existing economic, commercial and social links with the nearby Key Town of Castlebar. This link has the potential to develop an urban place of scale located between the Galway Metropolitan Area to the south and the Sligo Regional Growth Centre to the north.

#### 1.4.3 County and Town Development Plans

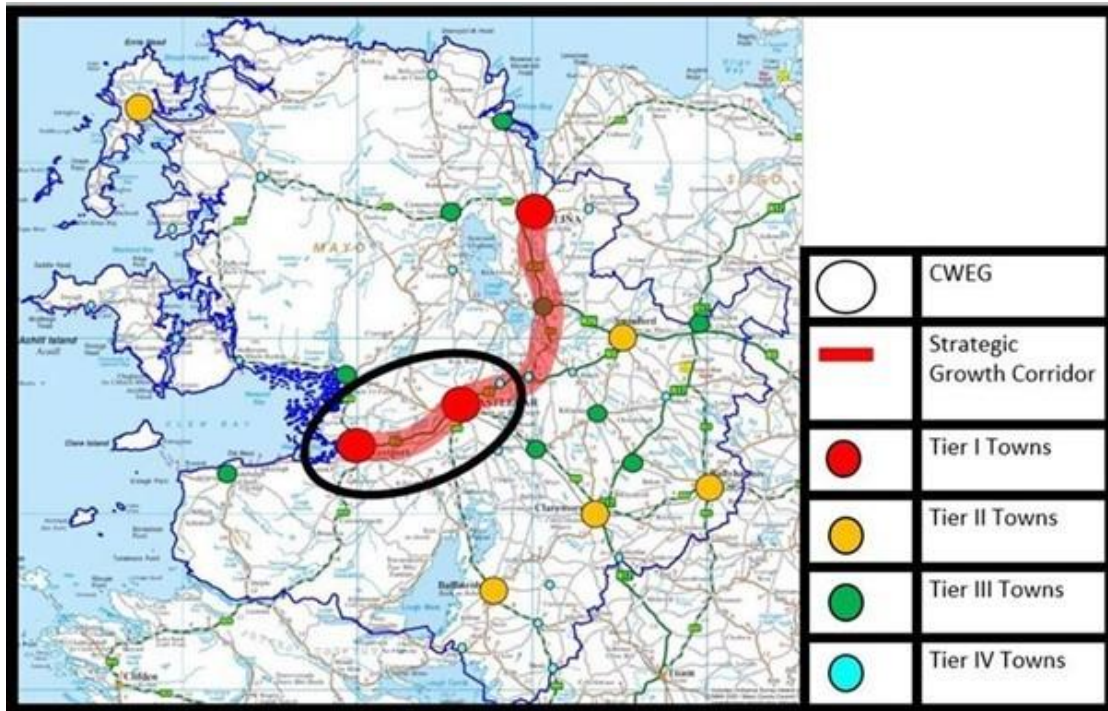
Westport is designated as a Tier 1(b) Strategic Growth Settlement in the 2022-28 County Development Plan and is included in the second tier of the County settlement Strategy. The Westport LAP must be consistent with the provisions of the Mayo County Development Plan (CDP) 2022-2028. The Core Strategy of the Mayo CDP sets out the population and household targets, in addition to the zoning requirements to facilitate new residential for Westport over the plan period. The CDP also contains a suite of policies and objectives to guide development, which should be read in conjunction with this Plan.

The lifetime of the Westport Town and Environs Plan 2010-2016 was extended following the abolition of Town Councils in 2014 to run contiguous to the lifetime of the Mayo County Development Plan 2014-2020. Upon final adoption, the Westport LAP will replace the Westport Town and Environs Plan 2010-2016 (as extended).

Where conflicting policies and objectives arise between the CDP and the LAP, the policies and objectives of the CDP shall take precedence. It should be noted that the general development management guidelines applicable to the plan area are included in the Mayo County Development Plan. This Plan therefore includes policies and objectives that are specific to the future development of the town of Westport.

### 1.5 Strategic Growth Corridor

At a strategic level, the Mayo CDP recognises that the economic development of Mayo will be further enhanced through the development of the economic growth clusters in the county. Westport, along with and the Key Towns of Castlebar and Ballina is located within a central strategic growth corridor in the county (See Map 1.1 below). From a regional perspective, this corridor provides urban places of scale between the Galway Metropolitan Area to the south and the Sligo Regional Growth Centre to the north, thereby contributing to the realisation of the Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC).



**Map 1.1** - Castlebar Westport Economic Growth Cluster in context of County Mayo

A key economic driver of this central corridor is the Castlebar Westport Economic Growth Cluster (CWEG) Cluster (See Map 1.1), which is underpinned by an economic strategy to further strengthen linkages and harness future economic opportunities. Westport is intrinsically linked to the nearby town of Castlebar through their strong economic, commercial and social linkages and interdependencies. The Mayo CDP supports and promotes a future linked regional growth centre of Castlebar and Westport in the next RSES. The upgrading of the N5 route and increased frequency of rail services will reduce the commuting time between Westport and Castlebar. The increased connectivity between both population centres will strengthen the urban structure of the region by creating a critical mass.

## 1.6 Composition of the Plan

The Plan comprises of three volumes. Volume I consists of the written statement accompanying maps and appendices. Volume II comprises the Environmental Reports including the Strategic Environmental Assessment, Appropriate Assessment and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. Volume III contains the Draft Westport Local Transport Plan.

### 1.6.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process is the formal systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme before a decision is made to adopt the plan or programme. It informs the plan-making process of the likely environmental impacts of alternative actions and contributes to the integration of environmental considerations into plan-making.

The findings of the SEA are set out in the Environmental Report, which, while constituting part of the Plan documentation, is presented as a separate document. The Environmental Report provides a clear understanding of the likely environmental consequences of decisions

regarding the location of development in the Plan area. The mitigation measures needed to offset potential adverse effects of the Plan and future monitoring proposals have been transposed from the Environmental Report into the Plan.

### 1.6.2 Appropriate Assessment (AA)

The requirements for Appropriate Assessment of plans or projects, is outlined in Article 6(3) and (4) of the European Communities (1992) Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora ('Habitats Directive'). The assessment examines the implications of proceeding with the plan or project within its zone of influence, in view of the conservation objectives of European Site(s).

The Plan was screened for AA during its preparation at draft stage. This screening found that significant effects on European Sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects, could not be screened out, and therefore, a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment/Natura Impact Assessment (NIR) was required. All AA recommendations have been integrated into the Draft Plan. The emerging conclusion of the AA is that the Plan will not adversely affect the integrity of European Sites, in light of their conservation objectives. The AA NIR is presented as a separate document accompanying the Plan in Appendix II.

### 1.6.3 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) is an assessment of flood risk and includes mapped boundaries for indicative flood risk zones, taking into account factors such as local knowledge, site walkovers and flood risk indicators. The SFRA is required to be prepared in accordance with the requirements of The Planning System and Flood Risk Assessment Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009) and Circular PL02/2014 (August 2014). All SFRA recommendations have been integrated into the Draft Plan. The SFRA is presented as a separate document accompanying the Plan in Appendix II.

### 1.6.4 Westport Local Transport Plan (WLTP)

Mayo County Council (MCC) has developed a Local Transport Plan (WLTP) for the town of Westport and its environs which will guide future transport investment. The WLTP is a short to medium-term plan that sets out the town's transport strategy for the period to 2029, but also looks beyond 2040.

The strategic aim of the WLTP is to provide for the planning and delivery of transport infrastructure and services in Westport Town and its environs over the period of the Westport Local Area Plan (LAP) (2024 to 2030) and beyond, which will: *"co-ordinate transport and land use planning, reduce the demand for travel and the reliance on the private car in favour of public transport, walking and cycling"*.

The WLTP examines all transport modes and how they interact both in the town centre and throughout its environs, specifically including linkages with public transport modes such as rail and bus services.



## CHAPTER 2            Development Strategy

### 2.1 Introduction

The Development Strategy has been informed by the NPF, RSES, Mayo County Development Plan and National Climate Action Plans, which will influence the sustainable growth of Westport over the lifetime of the plan and beyond. This Plan has also been informed by the findings and recommendations of the Strategic Environmental Assessment, Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), accompanying this Plan in Volume II. The development strategy for Westport town and environs is guided by the vision statement, key future priorities and strategic aims set out in this chapter.

### 2.2 Strategic Development Potential

Westport is recognised in the RSES as being a town with strategic development potential of a regional scale, that is also intrinsically linked with the nearby Key Town of Castlebar. This approach will maximise the existing strong economic, commercial and social links and interdependencies between both towns, which in turn will strengthen the urban structure of the region.

### 2.3 Vision Statement

Mayo County Council has a long-term vision for a future linked regional growth centre of Westport and Castlebar. The vision statement below supports this long-term vision.

#### **Vision Statement**

To support and grow the role of Westport as a key economic driver in the county and as a national tourism hub, capitalising on its significant tourism related assets, including its designation as a Heritage Town and its status as a settlement with strategic development potential of a regional scale, in tandem with the Key Town of Castlebar, within the context of Galway Metropolitan City, Sligo Regional Growth Centre and its location in relation the Atlantic Economic Corridor, in order to facilitate long-term economic growth within the context of a high quality environment supporting a wide range of services and amenities, thereby making it attractive as a place to work, live and invest in.

The development of the vision will be progressed through the implementation of the Westport LAP and the Castlebar-Westport Economic Growth Cluster (CWEG). The CWEG Cluster seeks to harness and develop the complementary strengths and synergies between both towns and their functional hinterland. Thereby, creating connected centres of scale, with the necessary critical mass, in terms of population and employment, to enable them to compete and grow to fulfil their potential and drive regional and national development in tandem with regional and national policy.

## 2.4 Strategic Key Future Priorities

This Plan has been prepared in the context of a long-term vision for Westport, which will only be achieved by focussed implementation of targeted measures and key priorities over the short to medium/long term, some of which may extend beyond the life of this Plan. The Plan presents an opportunity to create compact, sustainable communities and liveable places. It also provides the opportunity to address shortfalls in social infrastructure and initiate the necessary transition to a low carbon and sustainable model of development that will improve the quality of life for people living in the town.

The RSES has identified the following key priorities for Westport:

- To support and grow the role of Westport, in tandem with the Key Town of Castlebar, as a driver of economic development for the County and Region, building on the dual capacity, and combined strengths of both towns in terms of population, established commercial, social and cultural links and proximity, thereby strengthening the urban structure of the Region and enabling the realisation the Atlantic Economic Corridor.
- Promotion and continued sustainable development and enhancement of Westport as a major tourism centre in the West of Ireland, building on its reputation as one of Ireland's premier visitor destinations along the Wild Atlantic Way, as a Heritage Town and gateway to areas of outstanding natural and built heritage.
- Develop Westport's key assets e.g., Westport House Demesne, Quay area, extension of Great Western Greenway and additional greenway linkages e.g., connectivity of the Great Western Greenway to Castlebar to and the Wild Atlantic Way and other tourism related infrastructure.
- Develop the potential of Westport's harbour area in terms of marine related tourism, and extensive marine resources in general.
- Build on Westport's existing large industrial/manufacturing economy and associated skills base.
- Provision of additional enterprise space / commercial units.
- Removal of barriers to development through enhanced road and rail connectivity to and from Westport including:
  - (i) Upgrading of the entirety of the N5 to a Ten-T 'High Quality Road'
  - (ii) Construction of southern relief road
  - (i) Enhanced rail services (thereby supporting the transition to a low carbon region) to Dublin and commuter services between Westport, Castlebar, Ballina and Claremorris with connection to Galway and Limerick Metropolitan Cities and major international ports such as Shannon/Foynes, should the Western Rail Corridor be realised.

## 2.5 Strategic Goals

The strategic goals which relate to the advancement of this vision, are set out hereunder for each chapter of the Plan. The Plan aims to consolidate previous successes and to build on Westport's recent designation as a settlement with strategic development potential of a regional scale in the RSES, and to ensure that we meet the needs of our citizens, communities, built and natural environments, infrastructure and economic/employment development to their full potential, while combatting and adapting to climate change.

**Town Centre Regeneration/Consolidation:** To develop a robust and design-led urban regeneration and development strategy; to maximise the strengths of the town; and to promote sustainable movement. To integrate new and regenerated areas within the historic core in a contemporary manner that complements the existing urban structure and heritage of the town. To create an integrated and commercially robust, liveable and sustainable town. To ensure that best practice urban design principles are applied to all new development, based on the principle that well-planned and integrated development enhances the sustainability, attractiveness and liveability of an area.

**Climate Action:** To transition Westport to a carbon resilient, biodiversity rich and climate neutral town and environs by 2050, with an emphasis on reduction in energy demand and greenhouse gas emissions, through a combination of effective mitigation and adaptation responses to climate change; in addition to maximising the opportunities for energy efficiency, renewables and decarbonisation.

**Economic Development and Employment:** To support and enhance the sustainable economic growth of Westport, consistent with its role as settlement with strategic development potential of a regional scale, through the provision of designated areas for high quality employment, through the expansion and protection and enhancement of its tourism product and through the further development and expansion of its role as a thriving retail destination.

**Housing and Communities:** To facilitate and deliver liveable, high-quality, nearly zero-energy, integrated residential development that provides for an appropriate demographic mix in tandem with the delivery of good social and physical infrastructure to support the development of vibrant and diverse communities.

**Movement and Transport:** Promote and develop a sustainable, integrated transport system for Westport that further consolidates and builds on the work carried out under Smarter Travel and that prioritises walking, cycling and public transport, and provides an appropriate level of road infrastructure, road capacity and traffic management to support future development and enhance connectivity to and from regional towns and cities.

**Built Environment:** To recognise and enhance the unique identity, character and built heritage of Westport town and Westport House and Demesne, to improve quality of life through the application of healthy placemaking, underpinned by good urban design with the creation of attractive public spaces that are vibrant, distinctive, safe and accessible and which promote and facilitate positive social interaction.

**Westport House and Demesne:** To promote and support the strategic development and enhancement of Westport House and Demesne as a flagship tourist attraction in the region



and public amenity, while protecting the natural and built environment and cultural heritage of the estate by permitting appropriate development in accordance with Chapter 9 of this plan. Emphasis shall be placed on preserving and re-enforcing the historic core of the estate, planned management of the Demesne woodlands, enhancement of links between the House and the town, and retaining the vistas to and from the House.

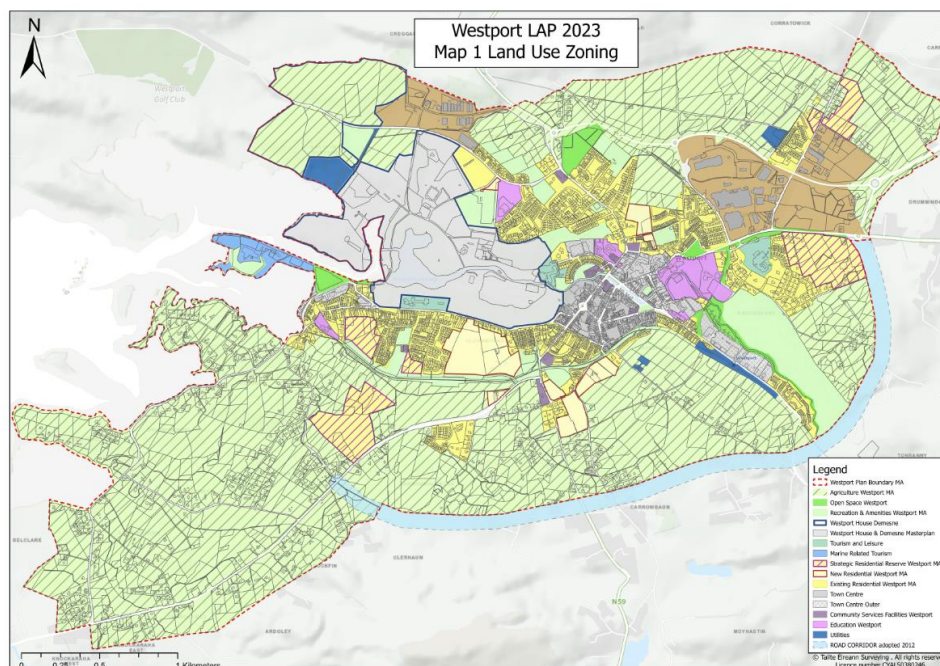
**Natural Environment:** To protect, conserve, enhance and sustain the natural environment of Westport and promote climate adaptation, placemaking and enhance biodiversity through promotion of green infrastructure for future generations.

**Infrastructure and Environmental Services:** To phase future growth in line with the capacity of supporting physical infrastructure and to ensure it occurs in accordance with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.

## 2.6 Preferred Development Strategy

The SEA considered three alternative development scenarios for the Westport Local Area Plan, considered to be realistic, reasonable, implementable and viable. Scenario 3 is the preferred development strategy being pursued in the Westport LAP. This option is considered the most effective in the delivery of an environmentally sustainable, climate resilient, biodiversity-rich and climate neutral future for Westport, consistent with national, regional and local planning policy.

The vision and strategic aims for Westport targets reducing the effects of climate change, through focusing on the delivery of compact growth, town centre regeneration/consolidation, sustainable mobility, creation of sustainable communities, protection of built and natural heritage, utilising services and infrastructure, green and blue infrastructure protection and enhancement, while also promoting and maximising the most efficient and sustainable use of land.



Map 2.1: Strategic Conceptual Map

Key Elements of the Development Strategy include:

- **Compact Growth** – New residential development to be accommodated within the existing built-up footprint of the town on brownfield/vacant/infill sites in the town centre, existing and new residential areas, at appropriate densities, and optimising existing social and physical infrastructure.
- **Sustainable Transport and Mobility** – Effective integration of transport and land use through pursuing compact growth through the application of the 10-minute town approach; and improved accessibility to existing residential areas to encourage and facilitate active mobility, and by implementing a suite of measures from the Westport Local Transport Plan to encourage sustainable transportation within the Plan area.
- **Built Environment** – Enhancing the built environment and protecting the character of Westport’s built heritage through a strong emphasis on promoting opportunities for place making and urban regeneration, particularly in the town centre, creating attractive, liveable, well designed, high quality urban places that provide for a high quality of life and well-being, whilst appropriately protecting the character of historic built heritage.
- **Natural Environment** – To protect and enhance Westport’s environmental resources, including the networks of green and blue Infrastructure throughout the plan area; and support measures to achieve a sustainable, low carbon and climate resilient future for the town, including promoting a sustainable built and natural environment, maximising the most efficient and sustainable use of land, and promoting a security of energy supply through renewable energy sources.
- **Sustainable Communities** – Promoting vibrant communities where people can live, work and enjoy access to a range of community services for all needs and ages and promote social integration through a range of housing developments with an appropriate mixture of house type, tenures and sizes to meet all needs Westport’s needs.

## 2.7 Challenges and Opportunities

While the challenges affecting the current urban structure of Westport are substantial, there are several areas of opportunity, that if acted upon, would greatly assist in the creation of a more integrated urban structure and better-connected town. These opportunities can be summarised as follows:

**Connecting the town centre and the periphery:** There is somewhat of a spatial disconnection between the commercial core and the employment clusters around the periphery. While acknowledging the work carried out under the Smarter Travel Initiative as regards sustainable travel modes (see chapter 7), there are further opportunities for the initiation of new and improved high-quality links between the historic town core and new and existing developments at the periphery through the implementation of the LTP.

**Integrating residential areas into the urban structure:** The tendency to create large, isolated blocks of housing has created disconnected and car dependent residential areas that lead to the fragmentation of the overall urban structure. Mayo County Council have

prepared a Local Transport Plan for Westport (WLTP). The WLTP examines the potential for the incorporation of sustainable transport with integrated, legible, well connected and permeable neighbourhoods, as well as the feasibility of public transport options within the town and environs, thus improving access to social and community infrastructure. The WLTP will inform and assist in the approach for future residential development in Westport and will ensure that the town grows in a coherent, connected and unified manner.

**Using diverse movement networks as connective links:** Movement infrastructure is biased towards facilitating private car access. Connectivity between key locations, destinations and residential communities is poor and has led to fragmentation of the town and the excessive use of a small number of routes. There is somewhat of a disconnect between the existing greenway infrastructure and the urban core of the town and this mitigates against cyclists accessing the commercial core and educational establishments on the immediate periphery of the core. This LAP, in conjunction with the WLTP, presents an opportunity to address this deficiency.

**Unifying the urban structure through a high-quality public realm:** While the existing public realm of Westport has a lot to offer in terms of physical attractiveness, it suffers from high levels of traffic movement and congestion which detract from the overall experience of the town, particularly within the historic core area. A strategic approach to the public realm, combined with the full implementation of the Local Transport Plan, will generate and sustain spatial unity in the urban structure over the longer term.

## 2.8 Core Strategy

The Westport Local Area Plan must be consistent with the provisions of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028, as per Section 19(2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). Local Area Plans take a detailed look at a specific area and provide a land use planning framework and principles for the future development of the area.

The Mayo Co. County Development 2022-2028 designates Westport as a Tier 1 (b) Strategic Growth Town within the settlement hierarchy of the Council. The Core Strategy allocates 8.8% of the overall housing target growth for Mayo over the plan period to Westport to accommodate a projected population growth of 21.2%, as set out below in Table 2.1. It identifies that an increase of 1,315 persons in Westport to the year of 2028 and a dwelling target of 285 additional units over the plan period. to the year 2028 is required.

Town	Population 2016	Population 2028	Population Growth Rate %	Housing Targets	Housing Growth Rate %	Quantum of lands zoned for residential use (Hectares)
Westport	6,198	7,513	21.2%	285	8.8%	23.91

**Table 2.1:** Projected Population Increase and Housing requirements to 2028

Therefore, it is critically importance for the sustainable future growth of Westport that future housing is delivered in a compact growth approach in accordance with sustainable principles and the NPF/RSES objectives, in a manner that meets housing need requirements. The overall allocation of residential units and associated land requirements for Westport is set out in Table 2.2 below.

Westport Allocation of Residential Units/Lands Requirements		
Land Zoning Category	Housing Targets (285)	Area (uph)
Town Centre/Opportunity Sites	18	1.2ha.
Residential Infill Lands	10	0.67ha
New Residential Lands	257	23.91ha

**Table 2.2:** Projected Population Increase and Housing requirements to 2028

### 2.8.1 Achieving Compact Growth

The National Planning Framework (NPF) requires that at least 30% of all new housing units are delivered within the existing urban footprint (CSO Boundary) of the town. The development strategy seeks to concentrate all new homes within the existing built-up footprint of the town. The Plan supports the delivery of new homes through the appropriate redevelopment of town centre regeneration sites for a mixture of uses. In addition, the majority of new homes are directed towards infill greenfield sites zoned 'New Residential' within existing residential neighbourhood areas off the Quay Road/West Road, Monastery View and Horkan's Hill.

The Plan also supports the delivery of additional new homes within existing residential areas through consolidation, infilling and densification over the plan period, where development can be assimilated satisfactorily through design and layout and in a manner that does not detract from the character of the area. This will allow for efficient use of existing services, facilities and supports the existing and planned sustainable transport network as set out in the Draft Westport Local Transport Plan.

### 2.8.2 The Quay Area

The location of the original fishing village of Cathair na M prior to the development of the planned town of Westport in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, the Quay Area is located 1.5 km to the west of Westport town centre. Although significantly removed from the town centre in terms of sequential development, the Quay Area, including Roman Island, has developed into a recognisable sub-settlement within the overall context of the town. Today this area is characterised by a vibrant mixture of residential, retail and commercial development, with much of the latter associated with the leisure and tourism industries.

Roman Island too is an amenity and attraction for passive leisure and marine related activity. The further development of Roman Island as a recreation area over the lifetime of the LAP is critical to both tourists and locals alike. The development of which will be advanced over the lifetime of the plan.

### 2.8.3 Compliance with the Core Strategy

To ensure compliance with the Mayo County Development Plan Core Strategy and its housing allocation for Westport, it will be necessary to monitor the number of residential units permitted and developed on an annual basis. This enables a closer alignment between the Core Strategy population projections, development activity and all necessary physical, social and community infrastructure.

#### 2.8.4 Tiered Approach to Zoning

Appendix 3 of the NPF requires all plans to adopt a tiered approach to land use zoning. The NPF sets out a two-tier approach to land zoning as follows:

**Tier 1: Serviced Zoned Land** – Lands that are able to connect to existing development services and generally positioned within the existing built-up footprint of a settlement or contiguous to existing developed lands or spatially sequential within the plan area.

**Tier 2: Serviceable Zoned Land** – Lands that are not currently sufficiently serviced to support new development but have the potential to become fully serviced within the life of the plan. These lands may be positioned within the existing built-up footprint of a settlement, or contiguous to existing developed lands or to Tier 1 zoned lands. The potential for delivery of the required services and/or capacity to support new development on Tier 2 lands must be identified and specific details provided by the planning authority in the form of an Infrastructural Assessment.

The land use zonings within this Plan were assessed in terms of their potential for future development based on their serviceability as per the findings of the Infrastructural Capacity Assessment accompanying this plan, see Appendix I.

#### 2.8.5 Development Densities

The Plan adopts a site-specific approach to development densities. The density of development and number of units permissible will be determined at detailed design stage based on a full assessment of site characteristics, local conditions, design sensitivities, connectivity and overall quality of the scheme and having regard to the various provisions within the development management guidelines, as set out within the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 and the relevant Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines.

### 2.9 Integrating Climate Considerations into the Westport LAP

The Plan places climate action at the heart of its vision and promotes a development strategy to achieve compact growth, town centre urban regeneration, a sustainable transportation system, and best practice in low carbon energy systems, planning and design. The Plan also places a priority and focuses on enhancing and protecting biodiversity, natural heritage and the environment of the town and its environs. The LAP has been guided by the UN Sustainable Development Goals and climate action provisions of the NPF and RSES. The Plan supports the sectoral emission reduction targets of the annual national climate action plans, and the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity rich and climate neutral economy by 2050.

## 2.10 Development Strategy Policy and Objectives

<b>Development Strategy Policies</b>	
<b>It is a Policy of the Council to:</b>	
<b>DSP 1</b>	Support and facilitate the sustainable growth of social, economic and residential in Westport in accordance with the National Planning Framework, the Northern and Western Regional Spatial Economic Strategy 2020-2032, and the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 (and any review thereof).
<b>DSP 2</b>	Support the compact growth of Westport to ensure that new development proceeds in a sustainable manner and at an appropriate scale, density and in line with the Core Strategy.
<b>DSP 3</b>	Promote measures to reduce vacancy and the underuse of existing building stock and support initiatives that promote the reuse, refurbishment and retrofitting of existing buildings within the Plan area.
<b>DSP 4</b>	Ensure that sufficient land is available at appropriate locations to satisfy the Economic Development Strategy and County Core Strategy growth allocation for Westport and to ensure Westport maintains its status as one of Mayo's Key Towns and that key employment sites are provided.
<b>DSP 5</b>	Ensure the vitality and viability of the town centre is maintained and enhanced and to strengthen its function by facilitating the development of residential, retail, community, tourism, professional and other services, subject to compliance with the policies and development management standards of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028.
<b>DSP 6</b>	Ensure that all new development within the plan area accords with the policies, objectives and development standards set out in the Mayo County Development 2022-2028, in respect of wastewater systems.
<b>DSP 7</b>	Support the effective and efficient use of land in Westport, prioritising compact growth through the development of brownfield/infill land in the built-up footprint of the town in preference to greenfield land.
<b>DSP 8</b>	Require the preparation and assessment of all planning applications in the plan area to have regard to the information, data and requirements of Appropriate Assessment, Natura Impact Report, SEA Environment Report and Strategy Flood Risk Assessment Report that accompany this LAP. There shall be a requirement of Ecological Impact Assessment as appropriate in the Plan area.
<b>DSP 9</b>	The Council shall provide affordable Homes and Mixed Tenure Developments in all Local Authority and Approved Housing Body developments.



<b>DSP 10</b>	<p>Given the limited number of land owners of New Residential and Strategic Residential Reserve lands within the LAP and in order to facilitate single houses for people with a genuine housing need, sons and daughters of long term Westport Town residents (LAP boundaries) or any individuals in permanent employments(*) within the LAP Area shall be facilitated in <u>fully serviced, including by public wastewater and water networks</u> non New Residential and Strategic Residential Reserve 2 lands within the LAP )</p> <p>*Letter from employer and affidavit from solicitor confirming employee is in permanent full- time role, has completed at least 1 year service and main place of work is in the LAP area</p>
<b>DSP 11</b>	<p>Ensure that the built environment is protected and development by having appropriately qualified professionals have appropriate design control of all non-residential (excluding agricultural and utilities) projects and all residential projects exceeding six residential units. For all such buildings, the term 'Appropriately Qualified Professional' shall mean a registered architect as described in Section 18 of the Building Control Act 2007.</p>

## Development Strategy Objectives

### It is an Objective of the Council to:

<b>DSO 1</b>	<p>Deliver at least 30% of all new homes in Westport within the existing built-up footprint of the town.</p>
<b>DSO 2</b>	<p>Seek the sustainable intensification and consolidation of the existing built environment in accordance with the objectives for compact growth in higher-level spatial plans through appropriate infill, brownfield development, supported by the necessary physical and community infrastructure.</p>
<b>DSO 3</b>	<p>Monitor the scale, type, tenure and location of constructed and permitted developments in Westport during the lifetime of the Plan and apply appropriate development management standards to ensure compliance with the Core Strategy to achieve the delivery of strategic plan-led and coordinated balanced development within the town.</p>
<b>DSO 4</b>	<p>Promote sustainable economic development, enterprise and employment opportunities and prioritise the town centre as the primary location for retail and services.</p>
<b>DSO 5</b>	<p>Promote and facilitate sustainable modes of transport prioritising walking, cycling and public transport, whilst protecting and improving existing road infrastructure.</p>

<b>DSO 6</b>	Protect, conserve and enhance the built environment, through promoting awareness, utilising relevant heritage legislation and ensuring quality urban design principles are applied to all new developments, respecting historic and architectural heritage.
<b>DSO 7</b>	Protect, enhance and connect areas of natural heritage, green and blue infrastructure and open space for the benefits of quality of life and biodiversity, capitalising on climate change adaptation and flood risk measures.
<b>DSO 8</b>	Ensure the highest quality of public realm and urban design principles are applied to all new developments.
<b>DSO 9</b>	Guide the future development of Westport in accordance the Town Centre First policy approach seeking to bring people and appropriate business/services back into the heart of Westport through place-making, good quality urban design, sustainable mobility and control of development in other locations which might undermine this objective.
<b>DSO 10</b>	Ensure the future development of Westport supports the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity-rich, environmentally sustainable and climate-neutral economy, implementing national policy to reduce gas emissions, improve environmental quality and contribute to meeting national targets for climate action.
<b>DSP 11</b>	That Roman Island/Westport Quay be developed as a key recreational area in line with Failte Irelands Clew Bay Destination & Experience Development Plan.



### 3.1 Strategic Aim

The strategic aim of this chapter is to transition Westport to a carbon resilient, biodiversity rich and climate neutral town and environs by 2050, with an emphasis on reduction in energy demand and greenhouse gas emissions, through a combination of effective mitigation and adaptation responses to climate change; in addition to maximising the opportunities for energy efficiency, renewables and decarbonisation.

### 3.2 Introduction

Climate change has emerged as one of the biggest global environmental challenges facing current and future generations. Climate change can be defined as the alterations to climate directly or indirectly attributed to human activities, which release greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions and building climate resilience can, as well as tackling climate change, also create co-benefits including cleaner air, health benefits and more energy efficient buildings (see Figure 3.1 below). This in turn will have positive benefits for residents, businesses and visitors alike. There are also economic opportunities to be realised in tackling climate change through innovative and technological solutions such as renewable energy.



**Figure 3.1:** Climate Action Mitigation and Adaptation Measures

Appropriate spatial planning, particularly compact urban development helps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The NPF, RSES and the Mayo County Development Plan encourages compact growth and recognises the potential for such compact growth to facilitate the development of renewable and low carbon energy development, such as low carbon district heating.

Renewable and low carbon energy development can be accommodated in appropriate locations within the natural and built environments in Westport, without compromising other important environmental assets or people’s quality of life. These developments assist in delivering a more stable and affordable energy supply for homes and businesses, which help communities realise the social and economic benefits of renewable and low carbon energy.

### 3.3 County Position

The Mayo County Development Plan sets out Mayo’s position on climate change and renewable energy for the plan period. Mayo County Council will develop a climate change screening checklist and guidance document. This will help ensure new developments take account of climate change over the lifetime of a development, especially with regard to its location, site layout, building, ventilation and cooling, drainage, water, outdoor spaces and connectivity. The Council have developed a Climate Adaptation Strategy for Mayo and will also be developing a Climate Action Plan for the County.

#### 3.3.1 Mayo Climate Adaption Strategy

The Council published their first Climate Adaptation Strategy ‘Climate Ready Mayo’ in September 2019. This strategy sets out a vision and establishes both strategic goals and adaption goals with targeted objectives across five operational goals for Mayo to ensure the County will be climate ready, as set out below in Figure 3.2. Mayo County Council will also be preparing a Climate Action Plan over the plan period, which will also provide a pathway to decarbonise Mayo to meet our 2030 National climate action sectoral targets.



**Figure 3.2:** Goals of Mayo’s Climate Adaptation Strategy

### 3.3.2 Local Initiatives

Public and stakeholder engagement is extremely important in addressing climate change and it is recognised that there is a need to foster and build momentum on wider citizen engagement in climate change, across all age groups. A successful established example of community engagement in this regard is the SEAI's Sustainable Energy Communities initiative, which assists groups of people to come together to improve how energy is used for the benefit of their community with the common goals of using less energy, using clean, renewable energy and using smart energy.

### 3.3.3 Westport Energy Plan

The Council will support Energy Master Plan (EMP) developed by Sustainable Energy Communities in Westport. An EMP provides a low carbon roadmap to enable the town to become more energy efficient, use renewable energy, where possible, and use smart energy technology, if appropriate. An EMP includes a "Register of Opportunities" for decarbonising projects by local communities that can be implemented over the plan period. Suitable projects may include energy retrofitting of residential and non-residential buildings; a roadmap for electrification of the heat and transport systems; and the identification of viable renewable energy and energy storage projects. These projects will help contribute toward achieving the 51% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions required nationally by 2030.

## 3.4 Decarbonising Westport and Reducing Greenhouse Emissions

The Plan examines the following main sectors which set Ireland on a pathway to decarbonising the economy:

- Electricity Generation
- Built Environment
- Transport
- Land Use
- Nature Based Solutions

These measures lay the foundations for transitioning Westport to a carbon resilient, biodiversity rich and climate neutral economy by 2050, and are discussed further below.

### 3.4.1 Electricity Generation

Renewable energy is a low carbon, or zero carbon source of energy produced from sources that are constantly replenished through the cycles of nature. Unlike fossil fuels, these sources of energy are not finite. The development of renewable energy resources and the development of low carbon energies is critical to the transition to a carbon neutral economy, and to meet climate targets relating the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The development of renewables, including micro renewables are needed to ensure the security of our energy supply.

The Local Area Plan supports the use of micro generation renewable energy technologies. The development of renewable energy infrastructure and initiatives to provide a viable alternative to the burning of fossil fuels. Sources of renewable energy include solar photovoltaic (PV), solar thermal, geothermal, hydroelectric power, renewable gas, green hydrogen, the use of biofuels and onshore and offshore wind turbines. The Council will support and promote the development of renewable energy technologies most suited to Westport at appropriate locations.

Potential also exists for examining district centre heating opportunities within the town considering the type and variety of industries that exist, which produce excess heat that could be harnessed and recirculated.

### 3.4.2 Electric Vehicles (EVs)

Electric vehicle use is growing in Ireland and will undoubtedly form a large part of the transition to a carbon neutral economy. Range anxiety has been described as a key area of concern for drivers, making it essential that efficient, reliable electric charging infrastructure is available in a range of public locations.

ESB is responsible for the roll out of public electric car charge points in Ireland, whilst private EV charging providers operate publicly accessible chargers on private land. There are currently 5 no. EV Charging locations in Westport. Mayo County Council are committed to facilitating the expansion of the EV charging point network across the county to ensure greater connectivity and reliability for EV drivers.

The introduction of new regulations for the installation of electric vehicles (EV) recharging infrastructure came into effect in 2021 under the publication of the EU Energy Performance Regulations and will help to encourage supporting infrastructure. These regulations require the installation of recharging points for EV for both new buildings and existing buildings undergoing major renovations for more than ten car parking spaces. The installation of EV recharging infrastructure will support the Climate Action Plan targets of nearly one million EV to be on the road by 2030 and will help to facilitate this transition.

### 3.4.3 Built Environment

High quality design is fundamental to making places more attractive, sustainable, safe, healthy and accessible. Good design can help reduce and mitigate the impacts of climate change; promote healthier lifestyles; create safer places and make high quality and attractive places that foster civic pride. In well-designed places, water features also form part of an integrated system of landscape, biodiversity and drainage. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and Nature Based Solutions can be used to enhance the surrounding environment and provide many additional benefits including attenuation, improvements to biodiversity and habitat, character, amenity and open space.

The National Residential Retrofit Plan commits the Government to retrofit 120,000 dwellings to B2 or cost optimal by 2025 and 500,000 by 2030. The Council supports and encourages the retrofitting of existing buildings with appropriate energy efficiency measures within the Westport Plan area. The Plan also supports and encourages energy conservation and the use of renewable energy sources in existing buildings.

Proper planning can help increase resilience to the impacts of climate change through the built design, layout and landscape design of development, such as promoting low carbon design approaches to reduce energy consumption in buildings. The Council is committed to ensuring developments and places are designed to deal with the challenge of adapting to and mitigating to climate change.

Developers should be proactive in responding to climate change and adopt sustainable and low carbon construction principles in terms of design, layout and density. Sunlight and energy efficiency should be considered as part of the layout, through solar design and natural ventilation systems. Buildings and their surrounding landscapes should be designed to make efficient use of natural resources during construction, operation and maintenance.

#### 3.4.4 Transport

Ireland is targeted to reduce transport related emissions by 50% by 2030. Integrating land use planning with transportation is key to addressing climate change, supporting economic prosperity and improving the quality of life for those who live in Westport. Reducing the need to travel, especially long distances, by private car, and increasing the use of sustainable and healthy travel alternatives, can bring multiple benefits to our climate, local environment and communities.

Policy to reduce emissions in the transport sector are focused on both reducing the transport intensity of growth and the carbon intensity of travel. To reduce transport emissions, the LAP seeks to develop Westport in a compact fashion, through appropriate zoning, town centre regeneration, application of sustainable densities, the densification of existing residential areas and through enhanced connectivity for active travel and public transport.

The Westport Local Transport Plan (LTP), which forms an integral part of the LAP, sets out a series of measures over a delivery time framework of short, medium and long term to ensure that essential transport related infrastructure will be delivered at the right locations in the town to facilitate a modal shift towards more sustainable transport options, in particular Active Travel.

#### 3.4.5 Land Use

Settlement patterns, built form, mobility and the mix of land uses in Westport will be key factors in transitioning to a climate resilient and carbon neutral town, as well as providing a range of other environmental, social, and economic benefits. Planning Westport in a fashion where people are enabled to live and work and access facilities by walking and cycling, or through the provision of convenient public transport options will reduce the need to travel by car and the associated carbon emissions. This aligns with the 10-minute town concept whereby people can access most of their daily needs within a 10-minute walk or cycle from where they live or are accessible by public transport services connecting people to larger scaled settlements. It also aligns with the overall approach set out in the government's 'Housing For All' Plan (2021) which emphasises that compact growth contributes to the transition to a carbon neutral and climate resilient society.

Cross-cutting themes engrained throughout the Plan, include Compact Growth and Sustainable Travel. The Core Strategy of the County Development Plan sets out a sustainable housing strategy in which compact growth, including brownfield redevelopment and urban infill, is a priority in line with the NPF and the RSES.

### 3.4.6 Waste

National climate action policy emphasises the need to take action to address climate action across all sectors of society and the economy. In the waste sector, policy on climate action is focused on a shift towards a ‘circular economy’ (see figure 3.3 below) encompassing three core principles:

- (1) designing out waste and pollution;
- (2) keeping products and material in use; and
- (3) regenerating natural systems.

The government’s commitment to these principles is underlined by the publication of the Circular Economy Bill 2021, which will provide a national policy framework for Ireland’s transition to a circular economy. It will also seek to implement many of the actions contained in the recently published Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy, which sets out Ireland’s National Waste Policy for 2020-2025.



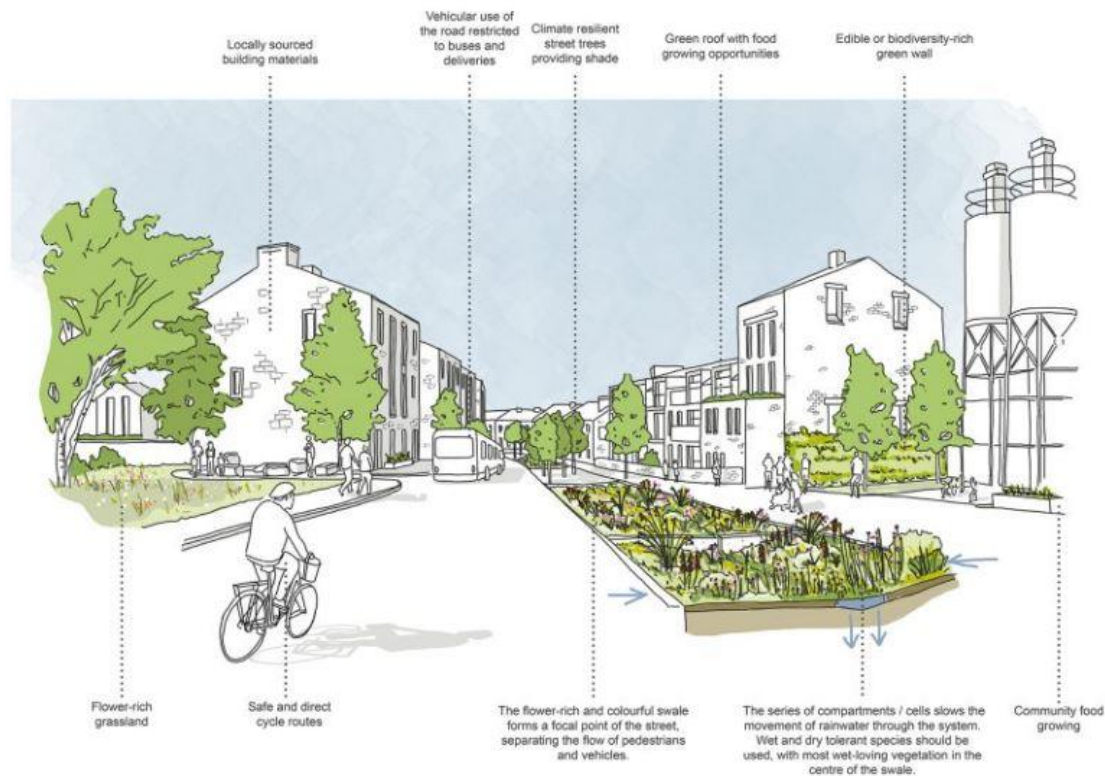
**Figure 3.3:** The Circular Economy

### 3.4.7 Nature Based Solutions

Nature-based solutions to adapt to climate change can be deployed through the active management green and blue Infrastructure. Nature based solutions shall have regard to the “Management of Rainwater and Surface Water Runoff in Urban Areas – Best Practice Interim Guidance Document (2022)” and are defined by the International Union for Conservation of Nature as “actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural or modified ecosystems that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously



providing human wellbeing and biodiversity benefits”. Green and blue infrastructure can provide significant environmental benefits including flood water storage, urban cooling and improved air quality. They also have an important role in tackling the biodiversity crisis, sequestration of carbon, absorbing filtering and attenuating water, preventing erosion and filtering pollutants from the air and water. Figure 3.4 below shows how nature-based solutions and other climate friendly measures can be integrated into the built environment. Forests are probably the most familiar nature-based solution for climate change and can contribute both by reducing emission sources and increasing carbon sinks.



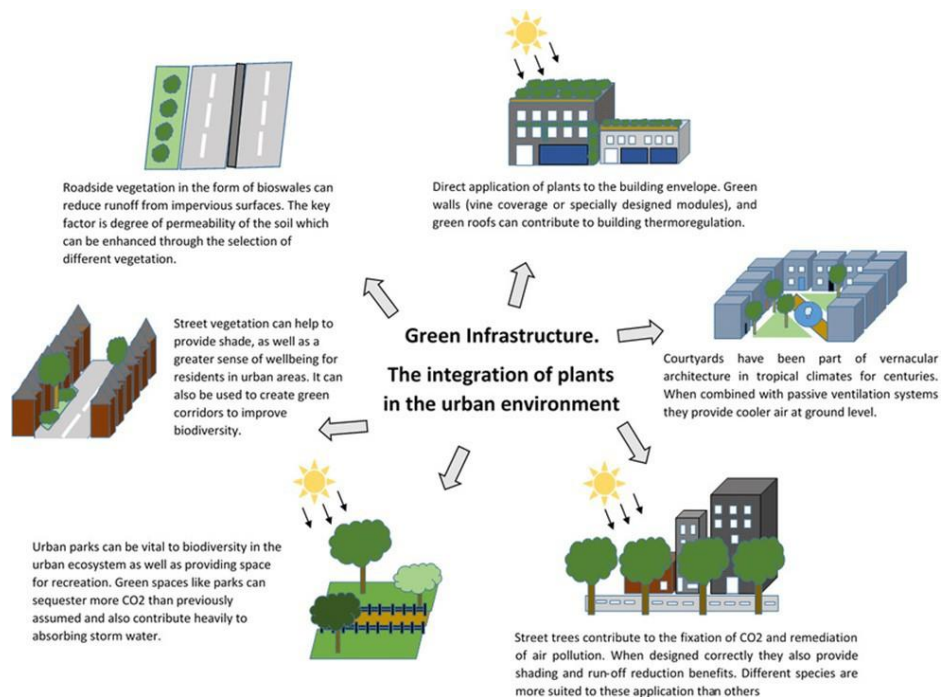
**Figure 3.4:** Nature-based Solutions (Source: [www.landuse.co.uk](http://www.landuse.co.uk))

### 3.4.8 Greening of Westport

Green spaces in urban areas mitigate the effects of pollution and can reduce a phenomenon known as the urban heat island effect, which refers to heat trapped in built up areas. The urban heat island effect appears in towns and cities as a result of human activity. The heat generated by people, transport, shops and industry is trapped/absorbed in the narrow roads, dark building materials, courtyards, concrete structures and surfaces, unable to escape to the atmosphere. This can bring the temperature in urban areas up 3-4°C higher than the surrounding countryside.

Increased temperatures in summer leads to an increased demand for cooling. This expands our energy consumption, which in turn intensifies fossil fuel consumption, increasing pollutants in the air and harmful smog on our streets. Hotter pavements also damage the water cycle. In summer, surface temperatures can be significantly higher than the surrounding air, and that heat is transferred to the rainwater that drains into our sewers,

which in turn raises water temperatures as it is released into streams, rivers and lakes. This can be destructive to aquatic ecosystems, as changes in water temperature can be stressful or even fatal for marine life.



**Figure 3.5:** Examples of urban green infrastructure and their potential contributions to the health and wellbeing of urban dwellers (Source: <https://www.mdpi.com/journal/buildings>).

Figure 3.5 above shows that vegetation, particularly in the presence of high moisture levels, plays a vital role in the regulation of surface temperatures. There are different ways of reducing the effects of the urban heat island effect. However, a common measure to mitigate urban heat island is to increase urban green spaces such as parks, street trees and green roofs.

Increased soil, plants, tree coverage and other greenery in the built environment, including green roof and walls, would both reduce surface temperature, reducing the energy needed to heat and cool the buildings. Green roofs can also help regulate rainwater, trapping it as it falls and filtering out pollutants.

Tree planting within and around urban areas help reflect solar radiation, while also decreasing the urban heat island effect. Trees provide shade, absorb carbon dioxide, release oxygen and fresh air and provide a cooling effect. Deciduous trees are ideal for urban areas because they cool the area in summer and don't block any warmth during the wintertime.

The introduction of SuDS (Sustainable drainage systems) has a number of benefits including heat reduction through evaporation and flood prevention, particularly during periods of high rainfall when surface water runoff increases in urban areas. SuDS mimic natural drainage by storing, infiltrating and slowing the flow of water. The impervious surface in urban



environments has lower infiltration and evaporation than natural environments and greater surface run off.

### 3.5 Climate Action Policies and Objectives

#### Climate Action Policies

##### It is a Policy of the Council to:

###### CAP 1

Mitigate against the effects of climate change, adapt to its impacts, and to ensure resilience, development proposals should take into account and demonstrate how they are:

- a) promoting sustainable patterns of development including development in sustainable locations.
- b) promoting the use of energy efficient, micro-generating and decentralised renewable energy systems, including through incorporating sustainable design features and the use of zero carbon technologies.
- c) promoting the use of zero carbon technologies.
- d) facilitating sustainable travel by encouraging active travel and travel by public transport in preference to the private car.
- e) supporting the adaption of existing homes to reduce energy use, including Protected Structures and those located within Architectural Conservation Areas, providing there is no adverse impact on historic character or appearance.
- f) supporting the delivery of facilities needed to divert waste away from land-fill and promote the prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery of materials (including heat from waste) with disposal to landfill as the final option.
- g) limiting / mitigating the likely greenhouse gas emissions, including through the provision of green infrastructure, and minimising resource and energy requirements through the siting, design and layout of all new development.
- h) working with natural environmental processes through promoting green infrastructure and the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems / Nature Based Solutions.

###### CAP 2

Promote and encourage development which is resilient to climate change by ensuring that development proposals demonstrate sustainable design principles for new buildings/ services/site, including:

- a) measures such as green roofs and green walls to reduce internal overheating and the urban heat island effect.
- b) ensuring the efficient use of natural resources (including water) and making the most of natural systems both within and around buildings.
- c) minimising pollution by reducing surface water runoff through increasing permeable surfaces and use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).

	<p>d) reducing flood risk, damage to property from extreme events, including residential, public and commercial.</p> <p>e) reducing risks from temperature extremes and extreme weather events to critical infrastructure such as roads, communication networks, the water/drainage network, and energy supply.</p> <p>f) promoting and protecting biodiversity and green infrastructure.</p>
<b>CAP 3</b>	<p>Promote low carbon development within the County which will seek to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, and which will meet the highest feasible environmental standards during construction and occupation. New development should generally demonstrate/provide for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Building layout and design which maximises daylight, natural ventilation, active transport and public transport use.</li> <li>b) Sustainable building/services/site design to maximise energy efficiency.</li> <li>c) Sensitive energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings.</li> <li>d) Energy efficiency, energy conservation, and the increased use of renewable energy in existing and new developments.</li> </ul>
<b>CAP 4</b>	<p>Support a successful transition to a circular economy where waste and resources are minimised in accordance with emerging legislation and national strategy including the Circular Economy Programme 2021-2027, as amended or superseded.</p>
<b>CAP 5</b>	<p>Support the designated and any future Decarbonising Zone (DZ) in Westport and associated implementation plan promoting measures to reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and improve general environmental conditions in this area.</p>
<b>CAP 6</b>	<p>Promote and encourage positive community and/or co-operative led climate action initiatives and projects in Westport that seek to reduce carbon emissions, improve energy efficiency, enhance green infrastructure and encourage awareness on climate change issues.</p>
<b>CAP 7</b>	<p>Support and encourage the development of small-scale wind renewable facilities/micro- renewable energy production.</p>
<b>CAP 8</b>	<p>Promote the use of district heating systems in new residential and commercial developments where such development does not have a negative impact on the surrounding environment, landscape, biodiversity or local amenities.</p>
<b>CAP 9</b>	<p>Support the development of sustainable low-carbon climate resilient communities and encourage a climate adaptation and mitigation approach to developments which will enable regeneration.</p>
<b>CAP 10</b>	<p>Encourage innovation and facilitate the development of pilot schemes in Westport that support climate change mitigation and adaptation measures.</p>

## Climate Action Objectives

### It is an Objective of the Council to:

<b>CAO 1</b>	Ensure all development proposals shall have regard to the Mayo County Council Climate Action Plan (2024-29) and the associated SEA and NIS Environmental Reports, any revised or forthcoming adaptation, mitigation or climate action strategies in the formulation of any plans and when assessing planning application for future developments.
<b>CAO 2</b>	Consider a variation of the development plan within a reasonable period of time, or to include such other mechanism, as may be appropriate, to ensure that the development plan will be consistent with the approach to climate action recommended in the revised Local Area Plan Guidelines when adopted or any other relevant guidelines.
<b>CAO 3</b>	Promote the use of smart climate change, energy and carbon off-setting solutions in new developments. In the cases of large industrial, commercial or newly constructed public buildings, the incorporation of renewable technologies, such as solar energy in the design will be encouraged, subject to compliance with all relevant planning criteria. The Council encourages the NZEB standard of building or equivalent for all new development and the use of blue green infrastructure as a mechanism for surface water management and improving public realm.
<b>CAO 4</b>	Support high levels of energy conservation, energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources in existing buildings, including retro-fitting of appropriate energy efficiency measures in the existing building stock, and to actively retrofit Mayo County Council's housing stock to a B2 Building Energy Rating (BER) in line with the Government's Housing for All Plan retrofit targets for 2030.
<b>CAO 5</b>	<p>Have regard to Goal 3 of the Mayo Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024:</p> <p>Increase the Resilience of Natural and Cultural Capital:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Build awareness of Nature Based Adaptation Solutions and Green Infrastructure.</li><li>2. Support bio-diversity for its intrinsic value within the natural environment and its importance in climate change adaptation.</li><li>3. Develop a database of impacts of climate change on Mayo's Natural Environment.</li><li>4. Identify Cultural and Heritage Sites vulnerable to climate change and develop adaptation and management policies.</li></ol>

	5. Encourage adaptation in Agriculture and Local Food Supply.
<b>CAO 6</b>	Develop a carpark in a suitable location on the edge of Westport Town to facilitate "Park & Stride" facilities.
<b>CAO 7</b>	Develop the towns cycling infrastructure to build on Westport European Cycling Federation status as Irelands first "Cycle Friendly Town".

## Chapter 4                      Town Centre and Regeneration

### 4.1 Strategic Aims:

- *To develop a robust and design-led urban regeneration and development approach to maximise the strengths of the town; to promote sustainable movement.*
- *To integrate new and regenerated sites within the historic core in a contemporary manner that complements the existing urban structure and heritage of the town.*
- *To create an integrated and commercially robust, liveable and sustainable town.*
- *To ensure that best practice urban design principles are applied to all new development, based on the principle that well-planned and integrated development enhances the sustainability, attractiveness and liveability of an area.*

### 4.2 Introduction

To realise the strategic vision for Westport and fulfil its regional role as a town with strategic development potential, in tandem with the Key Town of Castlebar, the plan places a strong focus on sustainable compact growth, with particular emphasis on the maintenance and enhancement of the core and built-up areas.

This approach focuses on maximising the use of infill, vacant and underutilised sites and buildings that are suitable and capable of reuse to provide housing, jobs, services and amenities. National funding schemes are available to assist local authorities and communities to address urban decay, dereliction, vacancy, and re-use of buildings to make town centres attractive, vibrant, and desirable places to live, work, visit and invest. National policy documents such as 'Town Centre First' (2022) provide a roadmap to support towns and their communities to design, deliver and implement a plan that can reimagine each town. This chapter identifies Opportunity Sites, the development of which will enhance the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre.

Westport town centre contains the greater proportion of the town's archaeological, cultural and historic heritage, the shopping and commercial core and key community and residential uses. However, unlike, many contemporary urban centres of a similar size, the streets immediately adjoining, the commercial town core, such as the Mall, High Street, Peter Street, and John's Row, and to a lesser degree Mill Street, have significant levels of residential occupancy of older building stock.

However, there are a number of sites and buildings, both within and on the edge of the town centre, that if developed appropriately would further enhance the physical, and social amenity of the town.

### 4.3 The Urban Structure of Westport

The town was planned by John Browne between 1750 and 1760. The town's earliest streets date from the early 1700's. John Browne 1st Earl of Altamont is credited with driving the town's design and expansion under his patronage with work commencing circa 1750, on what was to become the beginnings of the town core of Westport as we know it today. The town expanded under the 2nd and 3rd Earls of Altamont and continued to thrive beyond the Act of Union in 1800, with the completion of the canalisation of the malls around 1820.

### 4.4 Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF)

Mayo County Council was successful in gaining funding under the RRDF for Phase I of the regeneration of the Sisters of Mercy Convent site at the junction of Altamont Street/Mill Road and Distillery Road, for the development of New Town Library, Civic Offices and Community Building. The RRDF part-funds projects aimed at enhancing the urban areas to make them more attractive places to live, work, visit and invest.

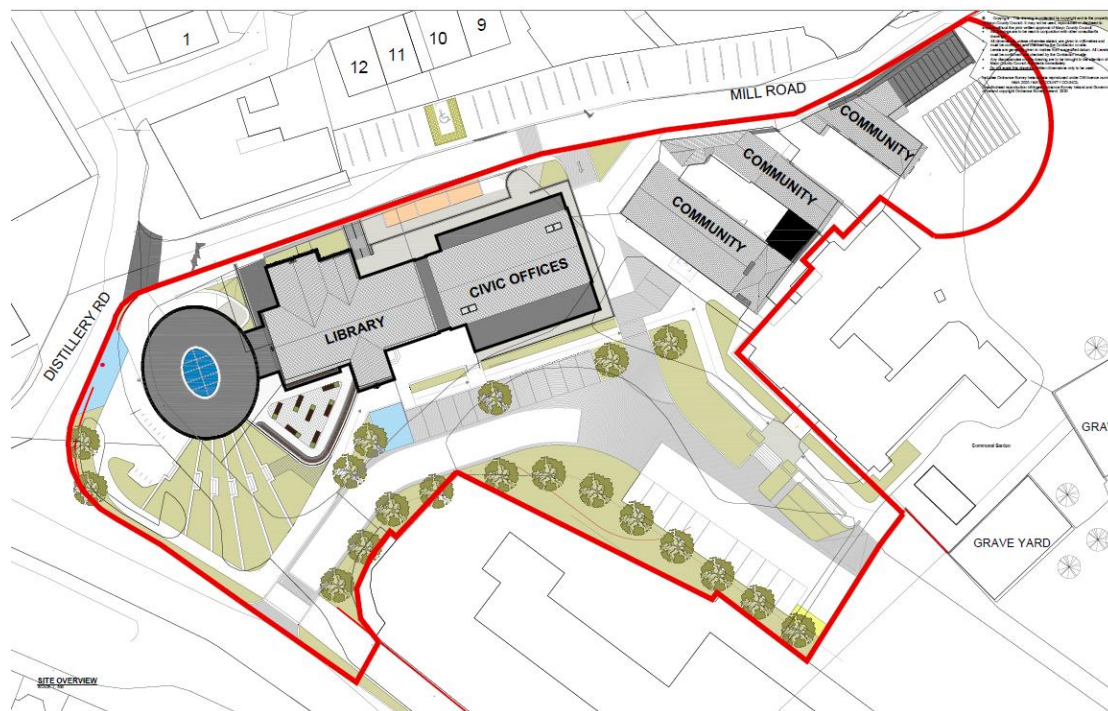


Figure 4.1: RRDF Funded Convent Site

### 4.5 Opportunity Sites

Opportunity sites refer to sites that are in both public and private ownership and that are identified in the plan as having the potential, if appropriately developed, to enhance the town as a place to live, visit and do business.

The plan has identified Key Opportunity Sites within the town centre and on the edge of the town centre that it is considered will contribute in a positive way towards the amenity of the town for both residents and visitors.

## Opportunity Site 1: The Old Court House

	<p>Currently disused, but in Council ownership, this 5-bay, 2-storey dressed limestone building, completed in 1846, represents an important component of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century built heritage of Westport.</p>
	<p>The building sits on a 0.08-hectare site that is strategically located at the junction of Castlebar Road and Distillery Road on the eastern edge of the town centre.</p>
	<p>The scale and character of the structure marks it as appropriate to house some form of heritage use, such as a local heritage centre or museum.</p>



## Opportunity Site 2: The Bank Garden



The 0.56-hectare Bank Garden site comprises of part of the attached stable block and the large rear garden of the former Dower House of the Marquis of Sligo which dates from 1809.

The house and stable block fronts onto the North Mall and the rear wall of the garden abuts Distillery Road. The site can also be accessed from the west via a public car park off Castlebar Road.



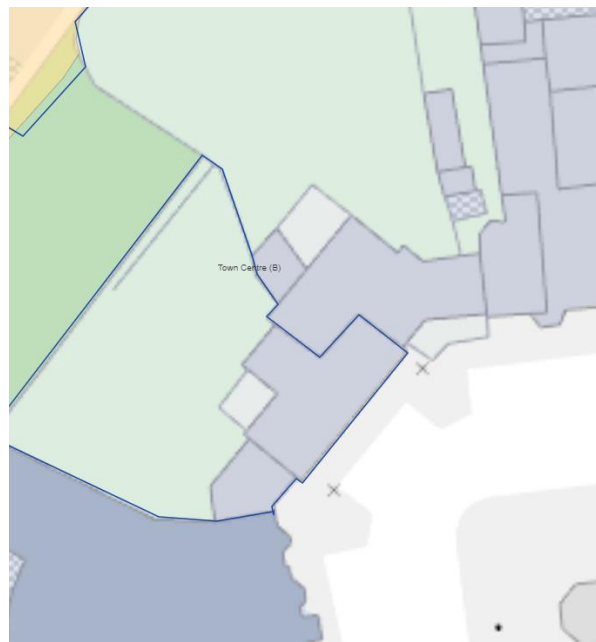
The site provides opportunity for the development of a boutique town park.



There is also potential to develop the adjoining stable block along the North Mall as a potential public gathering/performance area.



### Opportunity Site 3: Market House Site



This impressive early 19<sup>th</sup> Century, terraced, 2-storey Market House, completed in 1815, occupies a prominent location on the Octagon on the western edge of the town centre. Currently disused, the rear of the property adjoins a public park.

A building of this scale at such a prominent location in the town could provide an opportunity to be partially reinvented as a public market space, also housing commercial/enterprise units.

Furthermore, as the rear of the building adjoins a public park, there is also potential for the development of a public performance space.

#### Opportunity Site 4: The Walsh Factory Site



This 1.43-hectare site is located on Altamont Street circa 300 m southeast of the town centre. The western site boundary abuts the Great Western Greenway, and the northern site boundary is directly opposite a street front 3-storey residential complex.

The site is currently partially occupied by some light industrial units but would provide an optimum location for a residential development in keeping with those on adjoining sites, in terms of scale and character, combined with some commercial/enterprise/light industrial units at ground floor levels.

This mix would reflect the existing and emerging residential/office /commercial character of the immediate Altamont Street area, which includes the nearby Leeson Enterprise Centre.

## 4.6 Co-Operation between Landowners/Developers

The Plan acknowledges the multiplicity of landownership across a number of future development and opportunity sites in Westport. In order to develop land in a co-ordinated and sustainable manner, a co-operative approach to regeneration and development activities is necessary. It is an objective of the Plan to encourage and facilitate co-operation between the various landowners within the Opportunity sites, and other areas of the town to ensure the best possible outcomes in the developing proposals for regeneration and development. The Planning Authority may, if deemed appropriate, consider the use of its compulsory purchase powers and along with other powers to facilitate development and secure the strategic objectives of the Plan.

### 4.6.1 Vacant Sites and Derelict Buildings

Vacant development sites represent both a challenge and an opportunity for Westport. While such sites currently detract from the visual aesthetics and vibrancy of the town, they have the potential to provide for additional housing, employment, cultural and other uses.

In relation to derelict buildings the Planning Authority will, where appropriate, continue to use its powers under the Derelict Sites Act 1990 (as amended) to deal with the issue of dereliction in the town.

## 4.7 Town Centre and Regeneration Policies and Objectives

<b>Town Centre Policy</b>	
<b>It is the Policy of the Council to:</b>	
<b>TCP 1</b>	Ensure the vitality and viability of the town centre is maintained and to strengthen its function by facilitating the development of residential, retail, community and tourism services, subject to compliance with the policies and development management standards of the County Development Plan
<b>TCP 2</b>	Seek to develop and improve areas within the town in need of regeneration, renewal and redevelopment. The Council will seek to apply, where appropriate, the provisions of the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act, Derelict Sites Act, and use Compulsory Purchase Orders and other active land management instruments, as appropriate, to facilitate regeneration, housing supply, employment opportunities and community facilities.
<b>TCP 3</b>	Protect the visual character, built and cultural heritage, ambience, and vitality of the traditional heart of the town centre in order to meet the retailing and service needs of the area, in addition to offering a pleasant and attractive environment for shopping, business, tourism, recreation and living.
<b>TCP 4</b>	Actively encourage, support and facilitate environmental and public realm improvements in Westport to address environmental quality, urban design, safety, identity and traffic impact.

<b>TCP 5</b>	Support the development of the further public realm projects in Westport that will enhance the aesthetics of the town's built and natural character and improve the overall ambience and visitor experience of the town.
<b>TCP 6</b>	Embed an age-friendly approach to the design of the public realm.
<b>TCP 7</b>	Support and encourage the principle of healthy place-making in Westport

## Town Centre Objectives

### It is an Objective of the Council to:

<b>TCO 1</b>	Encourage and facilitate the development of Opportunity Sites in Westport for a mixture of uses that will contribute to the regeneration, vibrancy, diversity, vitality, attractiveness, safety, liveability and compact growth of the town centre. In conjunction with this, proposed developments must demonstrate how they will interact within its context and the wider urban area.
<b>TCO 2</b>	Continue to develop and regenerate the town centre in partnership with the Rural Regeneration Development Fund and other funding sources as may be available
<b>TCO 3</b>	<p>(a) Promote high quality place-making and public realm in accordance with the Mayo Development Plan 2022 – 2028, including the Development Management Standards, any replacement thereof and any relevant Section 28 Guidance. All development shall demonstrate climate resilience measures to climate-proof critical infrastructure.</p> <p>(b) Ensure the highest quality of public realm and urban design principles are applied in the town centre, and the opportunity areas identified in this Proposed Plan. The success of the public realm is high quality, easily maintained street furniture, soft landscaping. Drainage solutions shall be designed on the principles of SuDS.</p> <p>(c) Ensure development proposals have given proper consideration to the urban design criteria of site context, connectivity, inclusivity, variety, efficiency, distinctiveness, layout, public realm, adaptability, privacy and amenity, parking and detailed design.</p>
<b>TCO 4</b>	Work with landowners and other stakeholders in the redevelopment of the identified 'opportunity sites' for appropriate town centre uses over the lifetime of the Plan.
<b>TCO 5</b>	Work in partnership with community groups in the development of regeneration initiatives and public realm enhancement projects and to seek funding for projects as opportunities arise.
<b>TCO 6</b>	Support the provision of cycling infrastructure, bicycle parking facilities and electric vehicle charging points in the town centre, in accordance with the recommendations of the Local Transport Plan and subject to traffic and

	pedestrian safety
<b>TCO 8</b>	Developers will be required (where appropriate) to prepare urban design frameworks/masterplan for the Opportunity Sites in Westport Town Centre to inform future development proposals.
<b>TCO 9</b>	Maintain and enhance the vitality and vibrancy of the Town Centre by addressing and controlling leakage of social, economic and service activities to areas outside the Town Centre.
<b>TCO 10</b>	Prepare a plan for the improvement of the public realm in Westport, including proposals for improving the pedestrian environment for residents and visitors, and traffic management in the town.
<b>TCO 11</b>	Prevent the use of film or screening that obscures the glazed areas of a shopfront window where it negatively impacts upon the streetscape.
<b>TCO 12</b>	Plastic, internally illuminated, flashing or neon shall not be permitted on in or over any building within the boundary of the LAP.



## CHAPTER 5

## Economic Development

### 5.1 Strategic Aims

*To support and enhance the sustainable economic growth of Westport, consistent with its role as a Strategic Growth Town through the provision of designated areas for high quality employment, through the expansion and protection of its tourism product and through the enhancement and expansion of its role as a manufacturing hub and as a thriving retail destination.*

### 5.2 Introduction

The NPF sets out the development of a strong economy supported by enterprise, innovation and skills as a National Strategic Outcome, that will depend on creating places that foster enterprise and innovation and attract investment and talent. The NPF states that this can be achieved by building regional economic drivers. The RSES has designated Westport as a Settlement with Strategic Development Potential of a Regional Scale, and therefore is regarded as having the capacity to act as a regional economic growth driver. To fulfil Westport's regional role, it is critically important that job opportunities are created in the town to sustain its economic growth. A healthy economy contributes to the quality of life for those who live and work in the town and its environs. Retaining existing jobs and creating new employment opportunities in Westport are key priorities for the Council.

### 5.3 Westport-Castlebar Economic Growth Cluster

The RSES considers that the economic growth of Westport can be enhanced through the creation of an economic growth cluster with the nearby Key Town of Castlebar. To advance this regional economic growth cluster, Mayo County Council have produced the Castlebar Westport Economic Growth (CWEG) Cluster Study 2040. The CWEG Cluster model is intended as a spatially targeted economic development approach to leverage public and private investment. The agglomeration of the two towns will help to address the current challenge of scale and will lever the inherent quality of life characteristics on offer in this West coast location.

This economic growth cluster seeks to harness and develop the complementary strengths and synergies between Castlebar and Westport and their functional hinterlands. This will help create highly connected centres of scale, with the necessary critical mass, in terms of population and employment. It will enable both towns to compete and grow to fulfil their potential and drive regional and national development in tandem with regional and national policy and when combined, make a compelling case for a regional growth cluster.

The development of the new N5 road, represents a significant investment to link the two towns and underpins and reinforces this connection. The strategic approach recommended within the study sets out a road map to achieve a Castlebar-Westport Economic Growth Cluster (CWEG CLUSTER 2040).



## 5.4 Existing Economic Development Profile

Westport has a significant employment function relative to its local catchment. The manufacturing base of Westport is underpinned by the AbbVie pharmaceutical plant, which is the town's largest single employer. The town has an attractive compact and vibrant core which is characterised by independent traders and a relatively low level of commercial vacancy. The three major supermarkets in the town are also located within or on the edge of the retail core.

However, Westport is most renowned both nationally and internationally as an attractive and vibrant tourist location and attracting and servicing the needs of visitors is a major component in the economic wellbeing of the town.

An established measure of the employment 'health' of a settlement is a measure called 'Jobs to Resident Workers Ratio'. This is the relationship between the number of people in the labour force and the number of jobs in any defined area. According to POWSCAR 2016, the total number of jobs located in Westport was 4,241 and the total number of resident workers was 2,525. Therefore, the jobs to resident workers ratio of 1.647. This is an indicator of a healthy economy function, as there are more jobs than resident workers in Westport, and therefore, people travel to the town to avail of those employment opportunities.

While the ratio was positive in 2016, the introduction of short-term tourist accommodation has significantly impacted on this dynamic. There are now approximately 300 registered short term tourist accommodation lets in the Westport town area.

## 5.5 Economic Development Strategy

A key principle underpinning this Plan is the pursuit of sustainable economic development opportunities to provide for an increase in the number of jobs based in the town. Westport is an important employment centre within the County. The town has a healthy job to resident workers ratio of jobs, attracting workers from a wide catchment area. For Westport to fulfil its role as a regional economic growth driver, the town must aim to increase its jobs creation over the longer term. The overarching guidance in the NPF is that job creation should follow population growth at a ratio of 0.66:1 (NPO1c). Therefore, the Economic Development Strategy targets at least 678 extra jobs by 2028, above 2016 figures, as set out in Table 5.1 below. The jobs ratio aligns with the 0.66 jobs ratio target for the region, as outlined in the NPF.

Westport	2011	2016	2028 (Population Projection)
<b>Population</b>	6,063	6,198	7,225
<b>Labour Force</b>	2,517	2,525	2,943
<b>No. of jobs in Westport</b>	3,726	4,241	4,919

<b>Job Ratio</b>	1.480	1.647	1.671
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**Table 5.1:** RSES population growth match with job creation at 0.66:1= 0.66X (7,225-6,198 = 1,027) = 678 additional jobs needed.

Mayo County Council is therefore particularly focused on ensuring there is a range and quality of employment opportunities to meet the needs and aspirations of the existing and future local population and wider catchment. The Council will work with other local organisations in this regard, such as the County Enterprise Board, Westport Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Ireland, IDA and Enterprise Ireland. In this regard, proposals put to the Council for employment generating uses will be treated in a positive manner, unless there are clear reasons in the interests of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area to adopt a contrary view.

#### 5.5.1 The Economic Development Strategy for Westport will be achieved by:

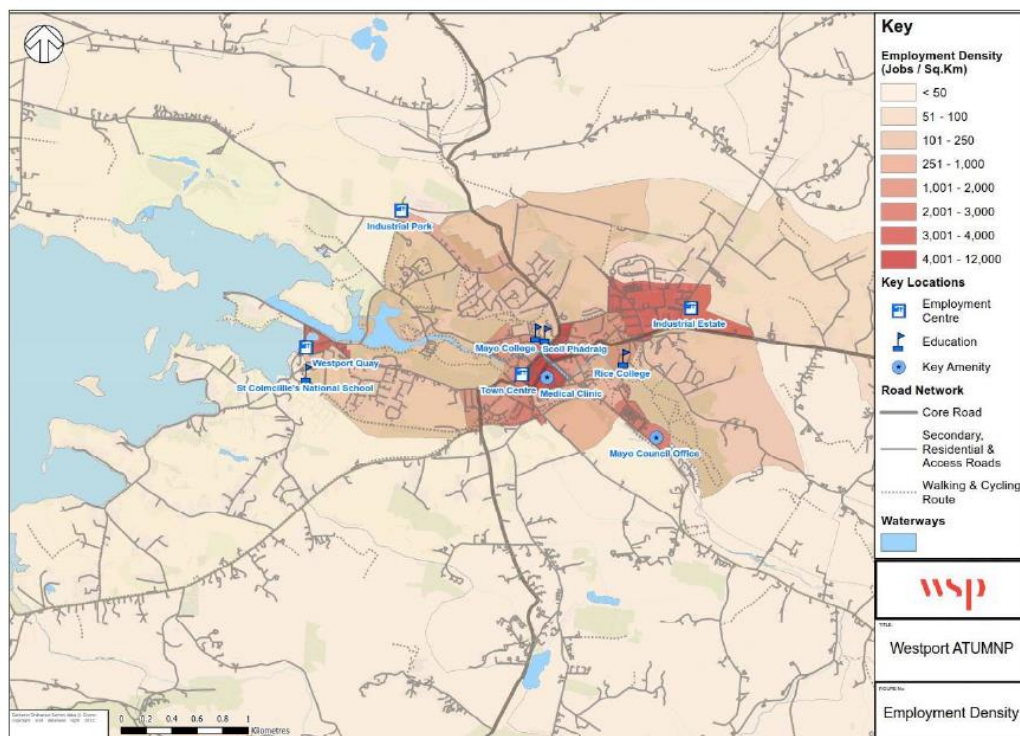
- Supporting the Castlebar-Westport Economic Growth Cluster with a view of achieving Regional Growth Centre status in the future.
- Providing the necessary infrastructure and quantum of zoned lands to attract economic development in recognition of the status of Westport as a settlement with strategic Growth Potential of a Regional Scale.
- Capitalising on the existing infrastructure in place in Westport to enhance the local employment base.
- Consolidation of the town centre and Quay area for the provision of appropriate retail and commercial, hospitality, cultural and amenity functions.
- Working with the (Local Enterprise Office (LEO), IDA, OPW, Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Ireland and other agencies in relation to the development of potential economic opportunities for Westport and its environs.
- Maintaining and enhancing Westport in performing its regional retailing function in accordance with the retail planning guidelines and the retail hierarchy of the Mayo County Development plan, by consolidating the retail and town centre offering and improving on the urban fabric and public realm of the town centre area.
- Ensuring the provision of new commercial or business floorspace will allow for future flexibility, including future subdivision and/or amalgamation to provide for a range of accommodation, particularly for small businesses.
- The development of the tourist profile of Westport and expansion of the tourism offering of Westport by supporting tourism developments, such as the completion of Westport/Castlebar/Roonagh (Wild Atlantic Way) Greenway, and the development for Roman Island, Westport Quay with regard to Failte Irelands Clew Bay Destination & Experience Development Plan.
- Supporting and facilitating, subject to environmental and other relevant planning considerations, all forms of employment generation.

### 5.5.2 Commercial: Office and Enterprise

Westport has an administrative function for a number of bodies, including an office of the Department of Social Protection (INTERO) and the Mayo Co. Council Area office for the West Region. The Leeson Enterprise Centre on Altamont Street, which supports entrepreneurs and start-ups by creating an environment of innovation and business, also plays an important role in supporting enterprise activity in the town.

### 5.5.3 Industry

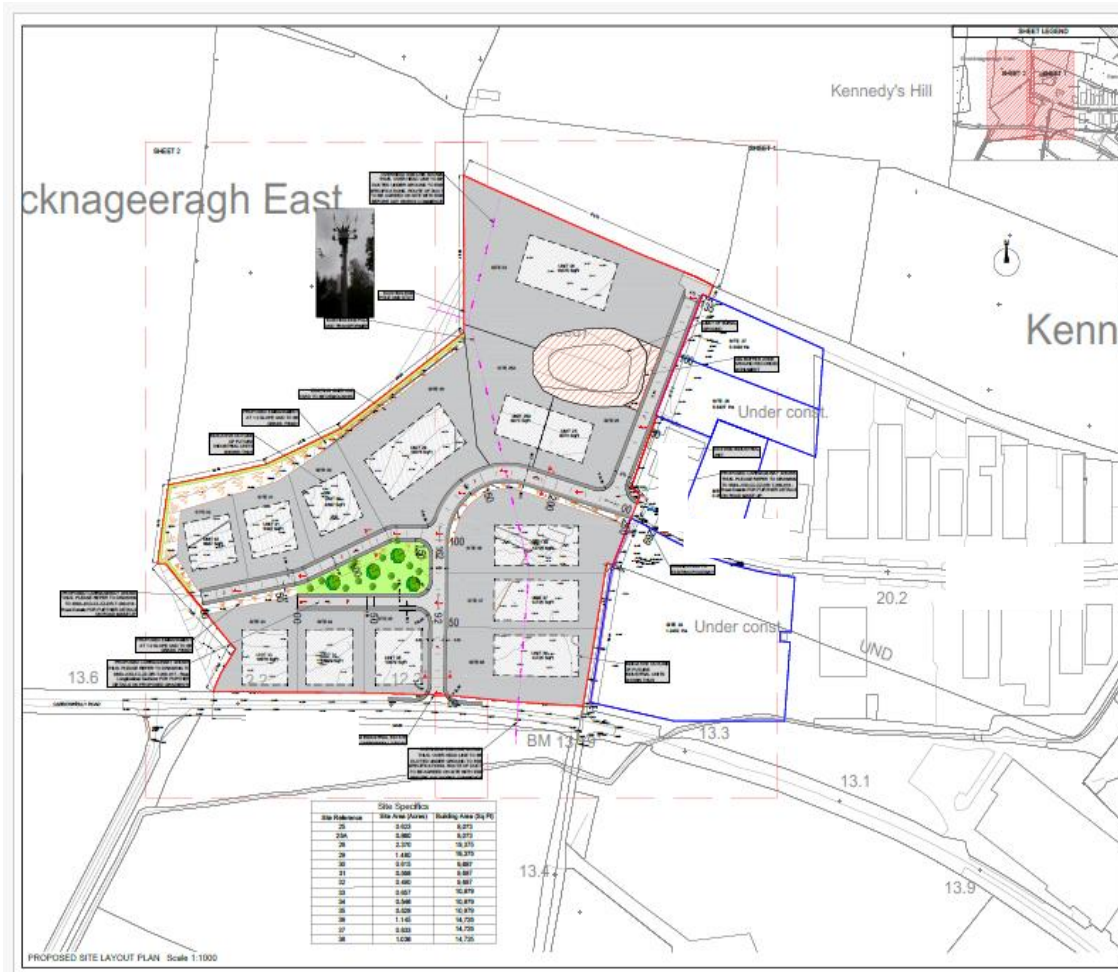
Manufacturing employs 16.9% of the working population in the town, compared with a state average of 9.6%. The largest employer in the town is the pharmaceutical company Abbvie, which employs approximately 850 people. Other prominent employers include Portwest, WestRock and Synergy Health.



Source: Data obtained from the Central Statistics Office 2016 Census Data. Presented at Small Area Population Statistics (SAPS) level.

**Map 5.1:** Map of main Employment Areas in Westport

The main IDA park in the town is located between the Lodge Road and the Carrowbeg Road on the north-eastern outskirts of the town. The IDA Park is reaching capacity and the same is true of the Council owned Westport Industrial Estate off the Newport Road on the northern edge of the town, however, a Stage III extension of the facility is proposed (see figure 5.2). The Westport Industrial Estate complex is characterised by light industrial/manufacturing units, along with some large comparison goods retail outlets.



**Map 5.2:** Outline of Proposed Extension of Westport Industrial Estate

It is therefore important to retain Westport’s existing established industrial base, while also seeking to expand further the industrial activities appropriate to the town. The industry zoning objectives set out in this Plan allows for industrial development and a range of related uses that could be suitably located within industrial estates and enterprise zoned lands within the Plan boundary.

Westport Industry 2016	Total	%
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	29	1.01
Building and construction	107	3.75
Manufacturing industries	491	17.25
Commerce and trade	519	18.23
Transport and communications	100	3.51
Public administration	117	4.11
Professional services	567	19.92
Other	916	32.18
<b>Total</b>	<b>2846</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 5.2:** - Westport’s Industry Breakdown (Census 2016)

## 5.6 Retail

Westport has a vibrant and compact retail/commercial core. The inner retail core is defined by The South Mall to the East, Shop Street and the Octagon to the West, Mill Street to the South and James Street to the North. The inner retail core contains an abundance of independent traders and service providers, many of whom cater predominantly for the tourist market. This scenario has been replicated at a smaller scale in more recent times in the Quay area. In terms of convenience shopping, the town currently contains three of the larger national/international multiple retailers. One of these outlets is located within the retail core at the junction of James Street and the Octagon, while two are located on the edge of the outer retail core on New Road and Altamont Street. Planning permission also currently exists for another anchor tenant retail store on a site on the Castlebar Road on the eastern edge of the outer retail core.

The main area for the purchase of larger comparison goods is on the Lodge Road on the eastern outskirts of the town and to a lesser extent in the Westport Industrial Estate off the Newport Road.

The LAP encourages compact growth in the town centre and core retail area. It is recognised that the retail sector is pivotal to the continued vitality of the town centre the protection and enhancement of the built environment and the delivery of a high-quality public realm and sense of place.

The Mayo County Development Plan recognises a three-tier retail hierarchy in the county and aims to concentrate higher order shopping functions in Castlebar, Ballina and Westport.

The sequential approach to development will be applied to proposals for retail development in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG 2012). The land use maps for Westport, identifies inner (retail core) and outer (retail core) areas to assist in the application of the sequential approach, whilst ensuring edge of-retail core sites are within easy walking distance of the identified primary retail area of the town.

## 5.7 Tourism

The tourism industry is of paramount importance to Westport and the surrounding area. The importance of the tourist and leisure industry in the town is reflected in the fact that 21% of the working population is employed in the Accommodation and Food Services sectors, compared to a county average of 5.7%.

Westport is a designated heritage town, renowned nationally and internationally for the attractiveness and charm of its built environment, which is further enhanced by the immediate juxtaposition of the settlement with the parkland setting of Westport House and Demesne. In more recent years the tourism product has been greatly enhanced and expanded upon by the success of the Great Western Greenway project from Westport to Achill, which has become a template for similar projects nationwide. The completion of the Clew Bay Bike Trail linking Westport to Louisburgh/Roonagh is critical in order to enhance the amenity and tourism potential of the town and county.

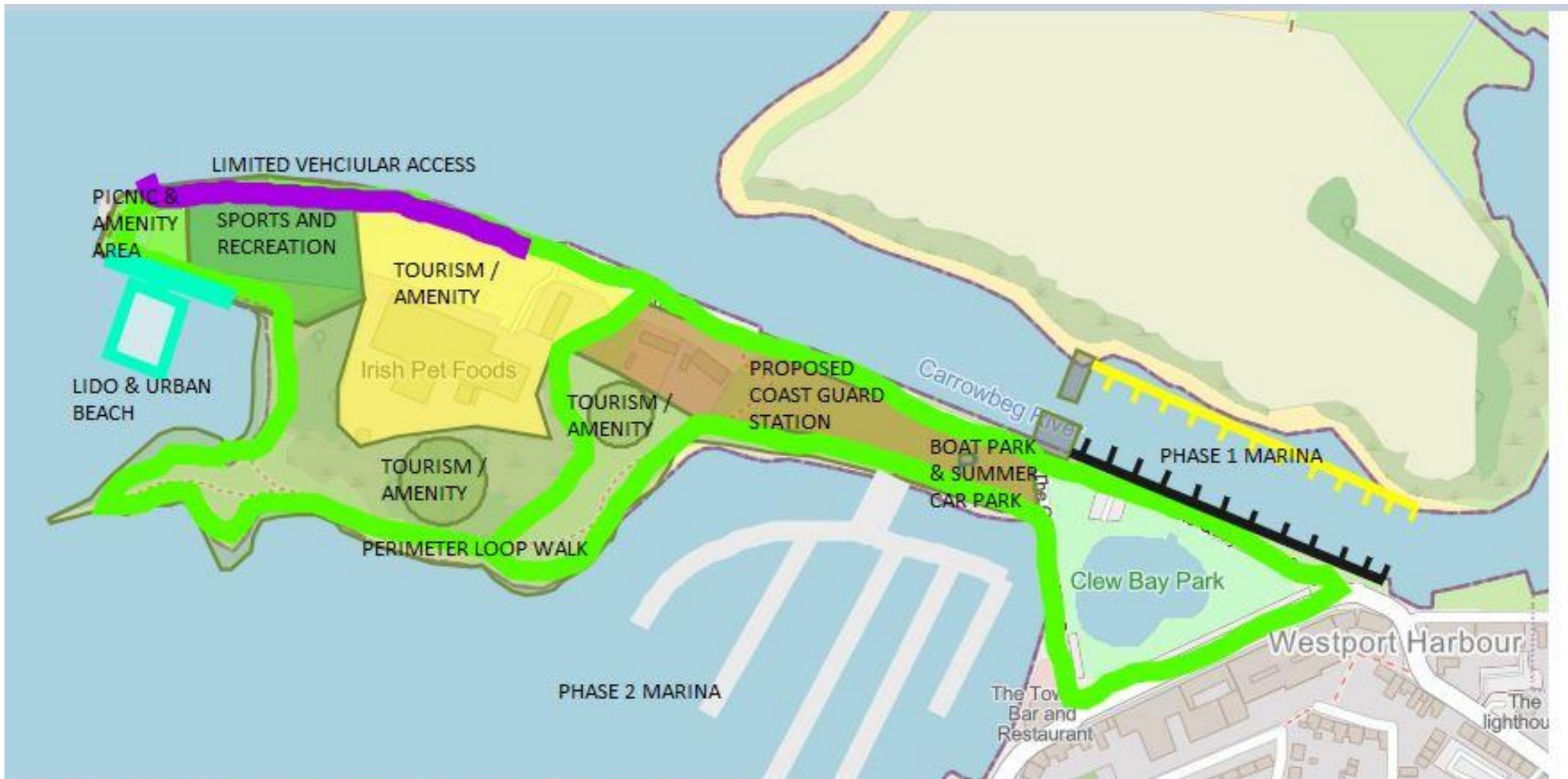


### 5.7.1 Quay Area Masterplan

The potential of Westport's harbour area and Roman Island in terms of marine related tourism, and marine resources in general, are extensive. Map 5.3 overleaf sets out a high level overview of the main aspirations for the Quay Area over the lifetime of the LAP. Failte Irelands Clew Bay Destination & Experience Development Plan also includes Westport Quay Area as a Hero Experience Priority and as a potential Bounteous Bay infrastructure project. The development of Roman Island/Westport Quay is critical in enhancing the amenity and tourism potential of the town and wider area.







**MAP 5.3 POTENTIAL OUTLINE OF PROPOSED ROMAN ISLAND MASTERPLAN**

## 5.8 Remote Working, Co-working and Business Workspaces

Westport was voted the Best Place to Live in Ireland by the Irish Times in 2012 and has won the National Tidy Towns Title on three occasions. The town has therefore strong appeal as a centre for remote working.

The Plan encourages shared workspaces as a use in order to accommodate those who do not wish to commute long distances and who seek to avail of a local formalised shared work environment. Having regard to the demand arising from the changed work patterns and behaviours, this plan supports the provision of appropriately located remote working hub/premises for the purposes of multi-purpose shared working space. The Council recognises that managed co-working hubs provide much more than a physical centre for start-ups and expanding enterprises, allowing important interaction between early-stage entrepreneurs, remote workers, more experienced business owners and Local Enterprise staff. Increased investment in remote working hubs that are in locations that suit commuters and are close to childcare facilities will also potentially attract people to live in towns. Town centre locations are preferred (though not limited to), where the reuse of underutilised or vacant properties will be encouraged and supported.

### 5.8.1 Live – Work Units

Traditionally office-based activities have tended to have a high density of employment and whilst the impacts of the COVID 19 pandemic on the density of employees per office space is not yet clear, it is anticipated that employers will require lower densities and, in some cases, offer a blended solution of office and remote working. The potential increase in working from home/e-working as a result of COVID-19 provides new opportunities for people who would like to live in Westport and also to increase the vibrancy of the town centre through the concept of a live-work unit.

A live-work unit can be defined as a single commercial unit, designed to accommodate a residential element e.g. commercial ground floor with living accommodation over. Live-work units are used for business/enterprise to provide for uses such as office, medical and related consultations, data processing, software development, media associated uses, publishing and film production, artists and crafts studios, home-based economic activity and creative industries.

While this Plan supports the concept of home working, it is important that such activity is not injurious to the amenities of a predominantly residential area and therefore employment use in a dwelling should be restricted to the occupier(s) of the dwelling and such use should be subordinate to the main use of the dwelling as a residence.

## 5.9 Economic Development Policies and Objectives

<b>Economic Development Policy</b>	
<b>It is a Policy of the Council to:</b>	
<b>EDP 1</b>	Encourage the development of employment areas in a comprehensive and sequential manner which uses existing infrastructure effectively and efficiently, ensuring they are designed to the highest architectural and landscaping standards, with natural site features, such as watercourses, trees and hedgerows be retained and enhanced as an

	integral part of the development/scheme.
<b>EDP 2</b>	Support the development and expansion of enterprise and employment within Westport, and to co-operate with all stakeholders, landowners and relevant agencies to attract investment.
<b>EDP 3</b>	Support and promote the development of economic and enterprise development and activity in Westport in a manner which contributes to the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity-rich, environmentally sustainable, and climate-neutral economy.

## Economic Development Objectives

### It is an Objective of the Council to:

<b>EDO 1</b>	Engage with IDA Ireland and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment in seeking to attract Foreign Direct Investment into Westport.
<b>EDO 2</b>	Ensure new enterprise and employment uses provide Workplace Travel Plans /Mobility Management Plans to reduce dependency on private modes of travel consistent with the principles set out in the National Transport Authority guidance: 'Achieving Effective Workplace Travel Plans'.
<b>EDO 3</b>	Extend the Westport Industrial Estate in accordance with the proposals contained in the forthcoming Phase III extension of the facility.
<b>EDO 4</b>	Support, promote and facilitate the provision of shared co-working spaces/hubs in town centre and other appropriate locations in Westport to provide multi-purpose flexible workspace options.

## Retail and Town Centre Policy

### It is a Policy of the Council to:

<b>EDP 4</b>	Support the retail function of Westport as a Regional Tier 2 Category town in the Retail Hierarchy, and to consolidate existing retail development within the town centre.
<b>EDP 5</b>	Support and facilitate the development of retail, retail services and niche retailing in the town centre area, including new/infill development and redevelopment of an appropriate scale.
<b>EDP 6</b>	Support and facilitate the development of retail led tourism associated with the natural and built heritage assets of Westport.

## Retail and Town Centre Objectives

### It is an Objective of the Council to:

<b>EDO 5</b>	The Council, in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines for Local Authorities (DECLG, 2012 or as amended or superseded) will continue to protect and promote the vitality and viability of Westport town centre, including applying a 'town centre first approach' or sequential test for retail developments.
<b>EDO 6</b>	Manage the over proliferation of certain undesirable uses such as fast-food outlets, amusement arcades, off licences, bookmakers, and of other non-retail uses in the interest of protecting the vibrancy, residential amenity and public realm of the town centre of Westport.
<b>EDO 7</b>	Ensure that new shop front and signage design contributes positively to and enhances the streetscape and is in accordance with the guidance set out in The Development Management Standards of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 and as set out in the Mayo Shopfronts Booklet (Mayo County Council).

## Tourism Policy

### It is a Policy of the Council to:

<b>EDP 7</b>	Promote the sustainable development and enhancement of Westport as a major tourism centre in the West of Ireland and to continue to promote the tourism sector in the town, whilst recognising that there is an interdependency between preserving the character of the landscape, heritage and tourism.
<b>EDP 8</b>	Encourage the development of tourism activities such as water-based activities, cultural and food tourism including festivals and food markets in Westport.
<b>EDP 9</b>	Support the development of new tourist facilities or the upgrading / extension of existing tourist facilities.
<b>EDP 10</b>	Promote festivals and sporting events to increase the tourism, cultural and lifestyle profile of the town.
<b>EDP 11</b>	Encourage linkages to other tourism locations such as Castlebar to realise the tourism potential of the Castlebar Westport Economic Growth Cluster (CWEG).

## Tourism Objectives

### It is an Objective of the Council to:

<b>EDO 8</b>	Support and facilitate the development of an integrated network of greenways and heritage trails, including links to the Castlebar Urban Greenway and to the Murrisk, Louisburg, Roonagh greenway, to link into the network of National Greenways
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<p><b>EDO 9</b></p>	<p>Develop Roman Island over the lifetime of the LAP in accordance with Map 5.3, and to further develop Roman Island and The Quay area as an amenity area for the town and to realise its potential with regard to civic amenity, marina and marine related tourism and activities. The following studies shall be completed by June 30<sup>th</sup> 2024 in order to build on Map 5.3 and ensure a comprehensive overall plan is in situ by August 31<sup>st</sup> 2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)</li> <li>• Appropriate Assessment (AA)</li> <li>• Any other reports required</li> </ul> <p>The masterplan should align with recommendations in the Westport Biodiversity Management Plan (2019) relating to grassland management including orchids rich grassland habitat.</p>
<p><b>EDO 10</b></p>	<p>Work with all relevant stakeholders and Failte Ireland to facilitate the provision of standardised signage and interpretation for tourism facilities and tourist attractions throughout the town.</p>

## Chapter 6 Housing and Sustainable Communities

### 6.1 Strategic Aim

*To facilitate and deliver liveable, high-quality, nearly zero-energy, integrated residential development that provides for an appropriate demographic mix in tandem with the delivery of good social and physical infrastructure to support the development of vibrant and diverse communities.*

### 6.2 Introduction

This chapter has been guided by the above strategic aim, sustainable development goals and national strategic objectives to create sustainable communities and sustainable growth of housing provision and to ensure all housing needs are appropriately accommodated in Westport. The chapter has also considered the key legislative and policy documents including the NPF and RSES for the Northern and Western region and the Mayo County Development Plan.

### 6.3 Residential Development Strategy

The Development Strategy for the town is based around a framework to facilitate residential development on lands zoned within the town centre and on a range of other residential sites within walking distance and close to existing services. The Council will also seek to promote compact growth through the re-use and re-development of vacant properties, brownfield and infill sites within the town in a sequential manner. This will be achieved by locating a significant proportion of housing in the existing built-up footprint of Westport at appropriate densities, thereby strengthening the town centre. New housing allocation must be consistent with the Core Strategy and be proportionate to the size, function and capacity of Westport as a Strategic Growth Town in accordance with the County Settlement Hierarchy.

Residential development in Westport will be assessed having regard to the following national guidance and policies (and any review of these guidance documents):

- Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities (DEHLG, 2007)
- Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (DEHLG, 2009) or as updated;
- Design Standards for New Apartments (DHPLG, 2018);
- Urban Development and Building Heights (DHPLG, 2018);
- Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DTTS & DHPLG, 2013 and as updated); and
- Development Management Standards set out at Volume 2 of the CDP.

### 6.4 Housing Profile

Residential growth in Westport over past decades has generally taken place north west of the town centre off the Newport Roads at Deerpark, Horkans Hill, Kings Hill and more recently at Cedar Park. On the western side of the town, to the south of the Quay Road there is also a significant number of residential estates comprising of public and former public housing and private developments.

In more recent times, but prior to the economic downturn in the late 2000's, there were a number of denser mixed-use apartment/townhouse developments on infill sites in the town centre and on the fringes of the town centre such as those at Knockranny, Altamont Street/Ballinrobe Road and Carrowbaun.



#### 6.4.1 Residential Development, Capacity and Delivery

In accordance with the County Development Plan, and in order to facilitate the assessment of development proposals, applications will be required to be accompanied by a detailed design statements incorporating a mix of house types and sizes.

The development of infill sites and provision of living accommodation on upper floors of commercial units within the town centre is supported by the Plan. Proposals for infill development should be sensitively designed to have regard to proximity of neighbouring buildings, the uses of proposed development and neighbouring properties, impacts on light, overshadowing, servicing, noise and general disturbance.



The development of 50 social housing units on a site in the Golf Course Road on the northern edge of the town is nearing completion. In accordance with the policies of the County Development Plan, the Housing Strategy and the requirements of Part V of the Act, social housing will be required to be delivered as part of new private housing which meets the thresholds set out in the Act. The Council will also continue to deliver social housing in Westport through the 'Housing for All' Government programme.

#### 6.4.2 Residential Density, Mix and Design

The plan adopts a fluid and site-specific approach to development densities. The density of development and number of units permissible will be determined at detailed design stage based on a full assessment of site characteristics, local conditions, design sensitivities and overall quality of the scheme and having regard to the various provisions on development management within the Mayo Co. Development Plan and the relevant Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines.

Tenure is an important consideration for the delivery of housing and Section 6.6 of the NPF identifies the need to allow for choice in housing location, type, tenure and accommodation in responding to need. Therefore, in accordance with national policy and to respond to our demographic trends of smaller housing sizes and an ageing population, residential development over the next plan period will need to provide a greater range of choice and options to meet the needs of the community.

#### 6.4.3 Group/Special Needs Housing/Assisted Living

The Mayo Disability Strategy 2016-2020 aims to meet the identified housing needs of people with disabilities locally, whether they are currently living in the community and/or in a congregated setting. It acknowledges the challenges faced by persons with a disability in sourcing appropriate accommodation through private home ownership, the private rental market or through social housing support. The Plan will support the implementation of the Mayo Disability Strategy and the provision of dedicated elderly and special needs services including assisted living, supported living, nursing homes and day care centres where the applicant can demonstrate there is an evidenced based need for these services. The mix and design of new housing for group/special needs housing in Westport will be influenced by a range of factors including:

Consideration of the nature of the existing housing stock and existing social mix in the area.

- Desirability of providing for mixed communities.
- Provision of a range of new housing types and tenures.
- The need to provide a choice of housing types, suitable and adaptable for all age groups and abilities.
- The need to cater for groups with specific needs.

#### 6.4.4 Housing for Older People

Housing is a key social policy area that needs to adapt to meet the changing needs of older people. The NPF supports national policy to assist older people to live with dignity and independence in their own homes and communities, for as long as possible. It highlights the need for well-designed lifetime adaptable infill and brownfield development, close to existing services and facilities, supported by universal design and improved urban amenities. Accommodation for the elderly in Westport will be required to locate in existing residential areas, well served by social infrastructure and amenities, such as footpath networks, public transport and local facilities and services, to allow for better care in the community, independence and access, ensuring that residents are not isolated. New developments will be required to provide accommodation suitable and adaptable for the elderly.

#### 6.4.5 Residential and Climate Change/ Low Energy Buildings

The design construction and operation of new buildings has a significant role to play in reducing energy demand and increasing energy efficiency into the future. The Nearly Zero-Energy Buildings (NZEB) applies to all new buildings occupied after the 31st December 2020. Therefore, all new homes will have a typical Building Energy Rating (BER) of A2 compared within the current rating for new builds of A3.

Retrofitting and refurbishment of the existing housing stock also plays an important role in meeting higher energy efficiency standards in the future. Grants are available through the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) to upgrade the energy efficiency of a person's home.

#### 6.5 Mayo Age-Friendly Programme

The Mayo Age Friendly Programme addresses the challenges faced by our older people. The objective of the MAFP is to work to improve the services and facilities that our older people have identified as being important to them, and the wider community, as they live healthy and active lives. Mayo Age Friendly projects, in conjunction with other organisations, include the following - Outdoor Spaces and Buildings; Transportation; Housing; Respect and Social Inclusion; Social Participation; Communication and Education; Civic Participation and Employment; Health and Wellbeing. The key contributors to this programme are the Age Friendly Alliance and Mayo Older Peoples Council.

The Mayo Age Friendly Strategy sets out a vision where the inclusion of older people is promoted, valued and actively encouraged in all areas of life. The strategy seeks to support older people to live independently with confidence, security and dignity in their homes for as long as possible and to encourage this age group to maintain, improve and manage their health and wellbeing. Public realm projects will have regard to and implement the principles of Universal Design and Age Friendly Ireland's 'Age Friendly Towns' and 'Being Age Friendly in the Public Realm', where feasible. The Plan will also seek to ensure, where possible, that homes in new residential developments are universally designed to the Lifetime Homes standard set out in Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities (DEHLG, 2007).

#### 6.6 Community and Educational Facilities

Westport is well catered for in terms of community and social facilities and has many active community groups, the most notable of which being Westport Tidy Towns Committee, Westport embracing Sustainable Transport, Westport Civic Trust. These groups have been very successful in delivering a number of projects, delivering physical and social infrastructure in tandem with residential development to support the continued development of a healthy, active and liveable town is a core aim of the plan and the Council will seek to support community-led and cultural projects which enhance the well-being of residents of the town and improve the quality of the environment in the town.

Funding has been sourced from the RRDF for the redevelopment of the Old Convent site on Altamont Street for the development of a new town library, civic offices, community group hubs and community greenhouse/allotments.

Health services in Westport include a Primary Care Centre on Tober Hill which was opened in 2018.



The Plan will support the proportionate expansion of healthcare facilities in the town and will zone sufficient land for this purpose.

There are currently 7 pre-school/Montessori schools within the town and environs and the provision of new childcare facilities within the Plan boundary will be supported in accordance with the requirement of the policies set out in the CDP.

Westport is served by five primary schools, one of which is a Gaelscoil and another of which is an Educate Together School which currently operates out of the Sharkey Hill Community Centre. The largest primary school in the town is the recently opened Scoil Padraig on the Newport Road which relocated from its previous location on Altamont Street, a site which remains in the ownership of the Department of Education.

There are two post-primary schools in Westport, namely Rice College for boys and the Sacred Heart School for girls. Post Leaving Cert education and training in the town is provided at Carrowbeg College.

## 6.7 Sport and Recreation

Westport has a lot to offer in terms of sporting facilities, sports clubs and both active and passive recreation. Facilities for all the main national sporting bodies are provided in the town and planning permission was recently granted to Westport GAA for the development of new playing facilities off the Golf course Road, near to the recently developed pitches and facilities for Westport United Soccer Club and the town playground. All these facilities are located on lands that formerly formed part of Westport House Demesne, an area of open parkland, a large area of which allows for public access, thereby providing residents and visitors to Westport with an unparalleled amenity for a town of its size.

Also, of vital importance to the town in terms of active and passive recreational amenity is the Quay area and Roman Island. The Council is currently implementing measures to encourage and facilitate sea swimming off Roman Island and it is an objective of the Council to develop a Masterplan for



Roman Island designed to maximise its potential both as a marine and non-marine related recreational amenity, thereby enhancing its attractiveness for residents and visitors.



Policies for recreational facilities include to support local sporting and community organisations to develop their facilities and provide activities for residents and visitors to Westport. The plan also seeks to ensure that new school provision has adequate sport and leisure facilities that will be open for use to local communities. The plan seeks to improve the overall appearance of the town by developing and enhancing existing amenities and facilities.

### 6.8 Open Space and Amenities

High-quality open spaces and amenity areas are essential for a good quality of life and are key components of sustainable communities. In terms of publicly accessible open space, Westport is somewhat unique in a national sense in being a planned town immediately adjoining the extensive grounds of a privately owned stately home to which informal public access is allowed. Furthermore, the Great Western Greenway in the town is an infrastructural asset which supports and improves environmental conditions in a way that facilitates environmental, economic and societal benefits. The protection of Green Infrastructure as well as the redevelopment of public open spaces and amenity areas, which are accessible to all, as well as providing play spaces for children that are safe will be promoted in the plan.

### 6.9 Community and Climate Change

The greening of built environments can contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation, by cooling the surrounding area and providing homes for wildlife, as well as ecosystem services. It also boosts property values and adds to the quality of life by filtering the air, reducing noise and creating

attractive places where people can live or spend time. Westport has a number of vibrant community groups active in promoting climate action and enhancing biodiversity, many of whom were consulted in the drafting of the 2018 Westport Biodiversity Management Plan.

## 6.10 Sustainable Communities Policies and Objectives

<b>Residential Development Policy</b>	
<b>It is a Policy of the Council to:</b>	
<b>HSCP 1</b>	Encourage the compact growth of Westport and undertake a town centre first approach to ensure that development proceeds sustainably and at an appropriate scale, density and sequence and in line with the County Core Strategy Table.
<b>HSCP 2</b>	Promote healthy place-making, increase the liveability factor of Westport, encourage the most efficient use of land, and ensure a mixture of residential unit types that are designed and constructed on the principles of universal design, life-long adaptability and energy efficiency.
<b>HSCP 3</b>	Encourage the reuse of upper floors above commercial premises in Westport for residential accommodation.
<b>HSCP 4</b>	Support new residential development and infill development that occurs in tandem with the delivery of supporting physical and social infrastructure.
<b>HSCP 5</b>	Support approved housing bodies and other sectoral agencies in the provision of a greater diversity of housing type and tenure, including social housing and exploring new models at low-cost rental and affordable homeownership. Any development by an approved housing body or sectoral agency larger than 6 units shall be mixed tenure only; any exception to this must be approved by the Westport-Belmullet Municipal District Elected Members.

<b>Residential Development Objectives</b>	
<b>It is an Objective of the Council to:</b>	
<b>HSCO 1</b>	Support, promote and facilitate the appropriate consolidation, densification and/or redevelopment of brownfield and infill sites for residential uses within the footprint of the existing built-up area, where appropriate, including living above the shop opportunities.
<b>HSCO 2</b>	Safeguard the amenity and integrity of completed residential estates and provide for smarter travel options, it is the objective of the Council to ensure that new access proposals to any adjoining lands through an existing completed residential estate is provided for pedestrian or bicycle movements/connectivity only.
<b>HSCO 3</b>	Seek to provide Traveller Specific Accommodation at appropriate locations close to key services, including education, community, health, recreation and public transport facilities in accordance with the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024 (or any updated).



## Residential Density, Design and Mix Policy

### It is a Policy of the Council to:

<b>HSCP 6</b>	Require that an appropriate sustainable mix of housing type, tenure, density and size is provided in all new residential areas, and in appropriate brownfield/infill areas to meet the needs of the population of Westport, including the provision of special needs housing, which includes housing for older people, people with disabilities, social housing, affordable housing and accommodation for the travelling community.
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## Residential Density, Design and Mix Objectives

### It is an Objective of the Council to:

<b>HSCO 4</b>	Require that a good mix of housing types and sizes is provided in all new residential areas and in appropriate brownfield/infill areas within the town centre and existing residential areas, to meet the needs of the population of Westport, including the provision of appropriate supported housing and longer-term residential care solutions designed for older people and/or people with disabilities. This will include accommodation provided under Part V requirements
<b>HSCO 5</b>	Support and promote high levels of energy conservation, energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources in existing buildings, including retro fitting of energy efficiency in traditional buildings. All new buildings will be required to achieve the Nearly Zero Energy Buildings (NZEB) standard in line with the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD).
<b>HSCO 6</b>	Comply with the Special Policy Planning Requirements (SPPRs) for apartment standards and building heights issued under Section 28(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).
<b>HSCO 7</b>	No Affordable Housing have been built or provided for by the Council in Westport in over 10 years. House prices in Westport are significantly higher than every other part of Mayo making it a huge challenge for local people to purchase a home. The provision of a substantial number of Affordable Homes and Affordable Sites is the single highest housing priority of the Council.

## Age Friendly Policies

### It is a Policy of the Council to:

<b>HSCP 7</b>	Promote an age-friendly town, which seeks universal accessibility and age-friendly homes in accordance with the Age-Friendly Ireland - Ten Universal Design Features, 2021, and the best-practice guidance outlined in the Building for Everyone – A Universal Design Approach, by the Centre of Excellence in Universal Design.
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## Age Friendly Objectives

**It is an Objective of the Council to:**

<b>HSCO 8</b>	Support the objectives set out in the Mayo Age Friendly County Strategy 2022–2026 and any subsequent strategy, regarding the implementation of Age Friendly principles in the planning, design and delivery of physical infrastructure, public realm works, business and commercial premises.
<b>HSCO 9</b>	Encourage the delivery of facilities and services for older people, at appropriate locations in Westport.

**Community, Arts and Educational Policy**

**It is a Policy of the Council to:**

<b>HSCP 8</b>	Facilitate and support a broad range of community, cultural and recreational facilities to serve the future needs of the residents of the Plan area and its wider catchment.
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**Community, Arts and Educational Objectives**

**It is an Objective of the Council to:**

<b>HSCO 10</b>	Actively engage with the Department of Education and Skills in the identification and delivery of school sites to address the emerging demands.
<b>HSCO 11</b>	Support, promote and facilitate the development of cultural, arts and performance spaces in Westport.
<b>HSCO 12</b>	Encourage the development of new facilities and improvements to and expansion of existing facilities for educational, early learning, childcare and healthcare facilities, at appropriate locations in Westport.

**Sports and Recreation Objectives**

**It is an Objective of the Council to:**

<b>HSCO 13</b>	Support, promote and facilitate the development of cultural, arts and performance spaces in Westport.
<b>HSCO 14</b>	Support the endeavours of sports and community groups in their acquisition and/or use of lands for sports and recreation purposes.
<b>HSCO 15</b>	Facilitate and promote the development of a network of playgrounds, amenity spaces and recreational areas for children of all ages which are universally designed throughout the town and its environs.
<b>HSCO 16</b>	Develop sea swimming facilities at the Quay, with the provision of a lido pool and disabled access beside the existing entrance steps.

**HSCO 17**

Seek the development of additional municipal facilities that are available for all users within the town of Westport and its surrounding areas.

### 7.1 Strategic Aim:

*Promote and develop a sustainable, integrated transport system for Westport that prioritises walking, cycling and public transport, and provides an appropriate level of road infrastructure, road capacity and traffic management to support future development and enhance connectivity to and from regional towns and cities.*

### 7.2 Introduction

The integration of land use and transportation is a fundamental principle of the national policy document *Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future, 2009 - 2020*. By shaping the pattern of development and influencing the location, scale, density, design and mix of land-uses, the integration of land-use and transportation can help reduce the need to travel and facilitate sustainable urban development. National Planning Objective (NPO 27) seeks to ensure the integration of safe and convenient alternatives to the car into the design of our local communities. Census 2016 recorded that while the daytime population of workers and students in Westport almost doubles from 4210 to 8347, only 23% of workers/students in the town travel to their place of work/study by sustainable modes (walking, cycling, public transport), with walking, at 13.8% and bus at 7.8% being the most popular sustainable modes, while 69.8% travel by car.

### 7.3 Westport Smarter Travel Area

*Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future* was the transport policy for Ireland for the period 2009-2020 and in 2012 Westport was one of 3 locations designated as a Smarter Travel Area. As a result of this designation, Westport availed of over 5 million euro in funding to develop and enhance more sustainable modes of transport in the town. The WST infrastructure investment was focused on the expansion of the town greenway network. Overall, 7km of new greenway infrastructure was delivered, providing a traffic free route for walking and cycling with direct connections to two primary schools, one secondary school and the town's main employer, AbbVie. To complement the town greenway, investment was also made in on-road cycle lanes, with approximately 1.6 km provided on the Castlebar Road and Altamount Street. WST also invested in public realm improvements and traffic calming, mainly within the town centre and at The Quay.



An assessment of the impact of the works carried out as part of WST in terms of modal shift between 2012 and 2016, over the three study areas was published in 2018 (AECOM, EX-Poste Evaluation of Smarter Travel Areas 2018). The assessment saw an increase of 5% in walking and 1% in cycling in over the period, as opposed to a corresponding increase nationally of 0.2% and 0.1% respectively.

Another factor which should significantly impact in a positive manner on transport and movement in Westport the over the lifetime of the LAP is the completion of the N5/N59 northern by-pass of the town which was recently opened. It is also an aim of the LAP to pursue the completion of N5-N59 southern by-pass of the town.

#### 7.4 Integration of Land Use, Transport and Sustainable Mobility

Settlement patterns play a fundamental role in influencing how people travel, both the distances undertaken and the modal choice. The proximity of populations to education, retail and leisure assists in generating an environment which promotes a shift towards active modes, such as walking and cycling. Therefore, there is a need to ensure that alternatives to the car are integrated in the design of streets and public spaces, prioritising cycling and walking as active transport modes. The effective management of space within the town centre should deliver a high level of priority and permeability for walking and cycling to create accessible, attractive, vibrant and safe places to work, live, shop and engage in community life.

## 7.5 Walking and Cycling

Westport is a relatively compact town, with all the existing residential and residentially zoned lands within the current town boundary, located no more than 2.9 km from the town centre, schools or the main employment locations. However, the use of the private car is still the predominant form of transport for trips and therefore supporting and facilitating a modal shift to sustainable transport options must be a priority over the lifetime of the LAP. This modal shift will be supported through the appropriate zoning of land close to the town centre and existing services and employment opportunities. The LAP will seek to build on the work carried out to-date under the WST and, in accordance with national guidelines, will also require that at design stage, residential and mixed developments consider pedestrian movement and the provision of cycleway and associated facilities that connect to the existing network in the town.

## 7.6 Public Transport

### 7.6.1 Rail

Westport is served by mainline rail, with the train station located on Altamont Street, within easy walking distance of the town centre. Iarnród Éireann in their strategic policy document “Rail Vision 2030: The Future of Rail Transport in Ireland” notes the importance of the Dublin-Westport/Ballina service and it confirms the important role of rail in servicing the interconnectivity between the key towns of Mayo. Mayo County Council, through objective MTO 18 of the County Development Plan, supports an increase in the frequency of commuter services on mainline rail network between Westport, Castlebar and Dublin. The low frequency of current rail services in Mayo, renders rail travel an unviable transport option for daily commuters to Westport. Increased frequency of rail services and a greater integration of bus and rail services would provide for enhanced services and would facilitate the transfer from private car to bus and rail.

### 7.6.2 Bus

There is no internal bus service in or around Westport, however the town is served by both public and private bus operators. Under the Rural Transport Initiative, the rural areas in the county are served by Local Link Mayo, which is based on demand. The Local Link currently operates six weekly *Demand Responsive Routes* terminating in Westport, including one seasonal bus service operate to/from the Great Western Greenway from Westport. The further development of Local Link Mayo and other similar public transport services to Westport is essential to provide a modal shift to public transport Westport and its rural hinterland.

## 7.7 Roads

### 7.7.1 National Roads

Westport is recognised in the RSES as being “intrinsically linked” to the Key Town of Castlebar and the Strategy also recognises that this link has recently been further enhanced by the recent completion of the N5 upgrade which has reduced the commuting time between both settlements to less than 10 minutes. The N5 upgrade includes the N5/N59 northern by-pass of Westport, which has removed traffic heading to Newport and Achill from the town centre. The LAP will also seek to progress the southern N5/N59 by-pass of the town over the lifetime of the LAP. Both infrastructural



projects will in time, greatly reduce traffic congestion in the town centre. The rebalancing of the town centre road space and provide for improvements to the public realm and enable greater enhancement of the town centre environment in terms of placemaking and free up road space for more sustainable forms of transport.



However, the LAP, in line with the Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DECLG, 2012) will protect from inappropriate development, undeveloped lands adjoining national roads and junctions.

## 7.8 Parking

Public parking within the town is currently provided for by 4 public car parks which supply 459 off-street car parking spaces. A total of 883 on-street parking spaces are also provided in two separate inner and outer pay zones. Off-street car parks provide direct pedestrian access links to the main shopping streets in the town. In addition, 'seasonal' car parks have, in recent years, been provided in the town to accommodate additional car parking spaces during peak tourist seasons.

Whilst there is a focus on active travel mode and shift away from car-based trips, the development of alternative parking solutions and measures as the need to cater for private car parking in the town centre will continue. These measures include provision of 'Park and Stride' locations and facilities at the edge of the town centre to cater for the long-distance trips into Westport. Such faci-

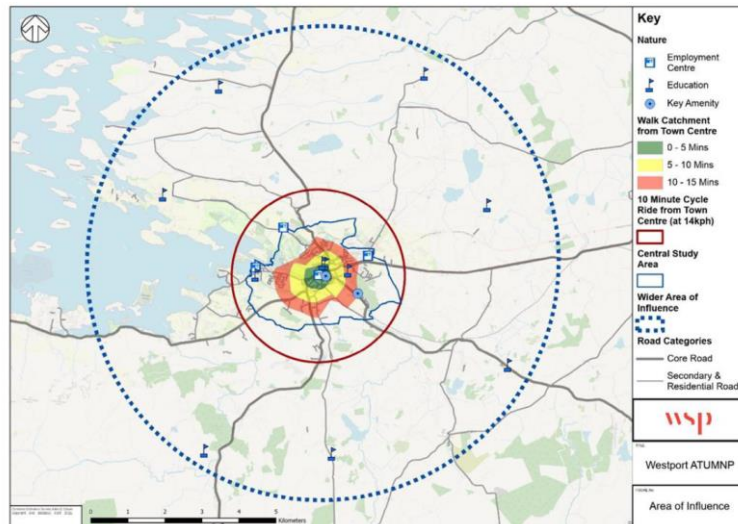
ties encourage car commuters to switch to alternative modes of transport (i.e. walking & cycling), which is particularly effective for those who commute to school or employment centres.

### 7.9 Westport Local Transport Plan (WLTP)

In compliance with objective MTO 1 of the CDP and regional policy objective RPO 6.17 of the RSES, a Local Transport Plan (LTP) has been prepared for Westport (WLTP), and forms part of the LAP.



The WLTP is aimed at providing a functional and active travel network from the town centre outwards. It has been prepared in collaboration with the NTA and runs concurrent with this Plan. The Local Transport presents an evidence-based assessment of the town, which takes into consideration the location, land-use and transport infrastructure and provides a suite of recommendations for various modes of travel to serve forecasted travel demand based on population and employment growth targets for Westport. The realisation of the measures proposed in the LTP will be underpinned by the National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (2021), the National Sustainable Mobility Policy (2023) and, where appropriate, the infrastructure shall be designed having regard to the National Cycle Manual (2023).

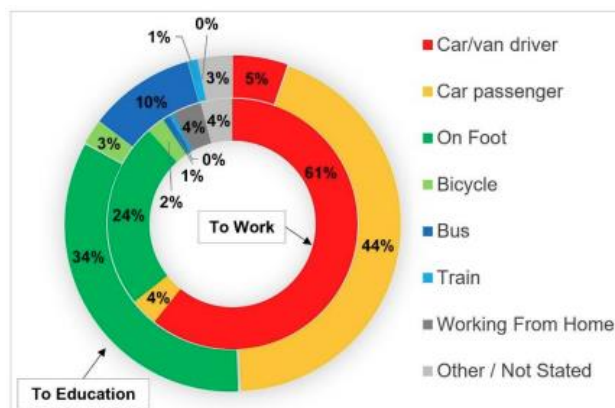


**Map 7.1:** Area of Influence of WLTP

A key aim of the WLTP is to improve the integration between Land Use and Transport Planning. It provides an appraisal of the current transport environment bringing sustainable transport considerations to the forefront. In particular, the WLTP provides alternatives to car-base travel, including the promotion of active travel and alternative technologies, as well as a strategy for the delivery of sustainable transport. It provides a suite of necessary supporting infrastructure/measures and services, in line with land uses, through a range of design solutions and specific measures aimed at enhancing the physical public realm and transport network.

### 7.9.1 Main Considerations/Elements

As part of Part 2 of the Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) process, a suite of objectives was developed to enable significant modal shift to walking, cycling and public transport in order to reduce emissions and align with national policies.



**Figure 7.1:** 2016 Census Mode Share for Westport

The 5 objectives are:

1. More effective integration of land use and transport planning to reduce number of car trips.
2. Reduce traffic movements through and within the town to reduce vehicle emissions and create opportunities to enhance placemaking by road space reallocation.



3. Encourage mode shift to active travel and sustainable modes and improve accessibility for all users and all journey types.
4. Accommodate the needs of businesses and local resident, by suitable provision and appropriate allocation and management of parking.

Enhance road safety with focus on vulnerable users.

In accordance with part 3 of the ABTA Process, potential interventions were organised into three separate potential scenarios; “Do Minimum”, “Do Medium” and “Do Maximum”. High level assumptions were used to predict the capital investment and timescale required to implement the upgrades.

Category	Definitions
<b>Do Nothing</b>	Interventions already planned / designed by MCC are assumed to go ahead with no other upgrades to existing infrastructure.
<b>Do Minimum</b>	Low cost (<€500k). This will comprise of low profile, quick wins by upgrading some existing infrastructure to improve accessibility for existing connections. Soft measures such as Town wide policy and guidance notes will provide a basis for future investment strategies.
<b>Do Medium</b>	Medium cost (<€10M). This scenario will aim to provide new infrastructure and connectivity throughout Westport with minimal impact on road space and parking.
<b>Do Maximum</b>	High Cost (>€10M). This scenario provides infrastructure that creates most opportunity for modal shift towards active travel. This will have the greatest impact on existing road space and parking.

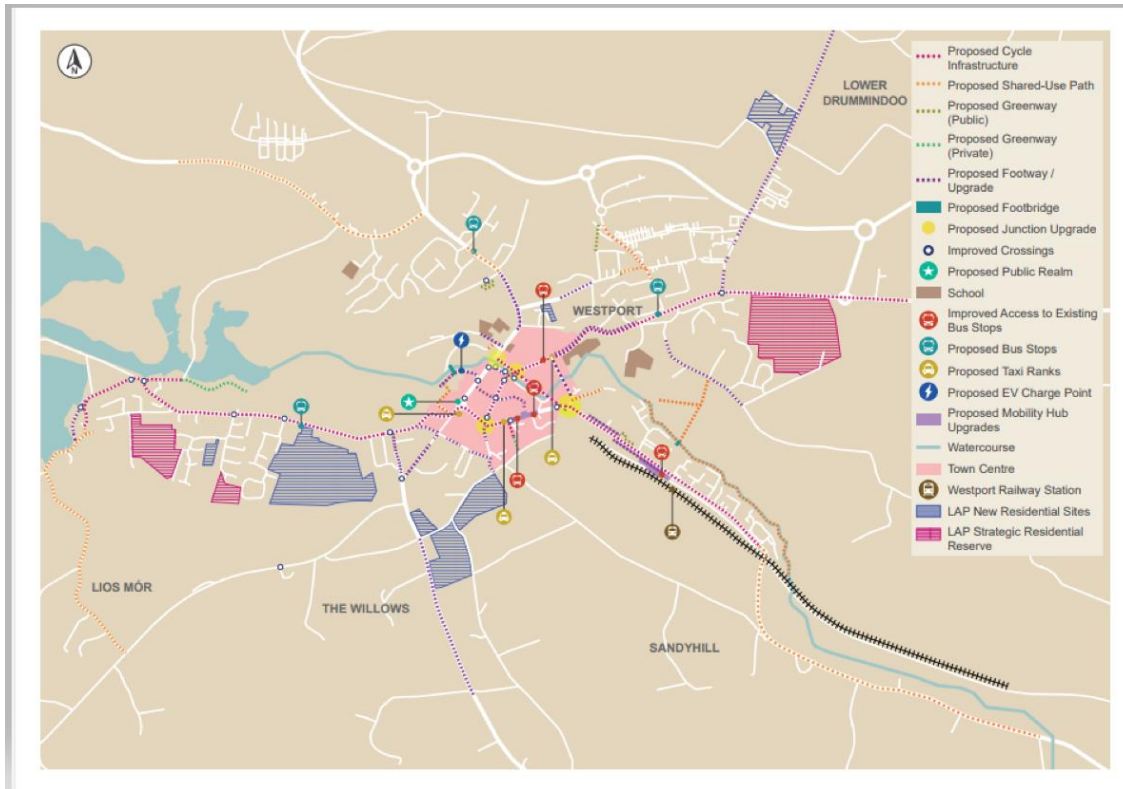
**Table 7.1:** WLTP Scenario Definitions

The “Do Maximum” scenario was chosen as the preferred scenario identified from the results of a Multi Criteria Assessment Framework (MCAF) and it builds upon and incorporates the “Do Minimum” and “Do Medium” scenarios and proposes delivery on all interventions.

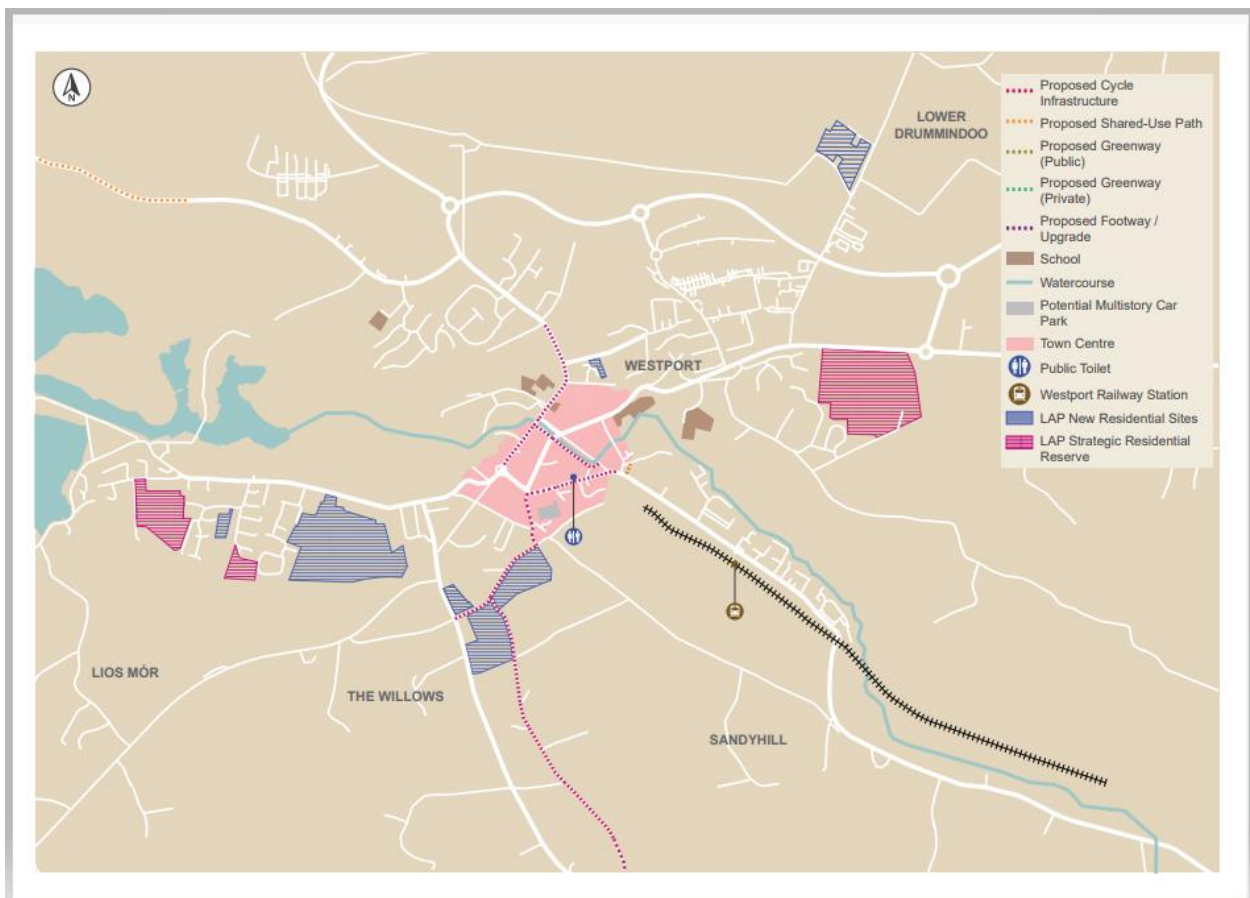
The measures have been categorised based on the delivery time framework as follows:

- Short-term: within 5 years
- Medium-term: 6-10 years
- Long-term: More than 10 years

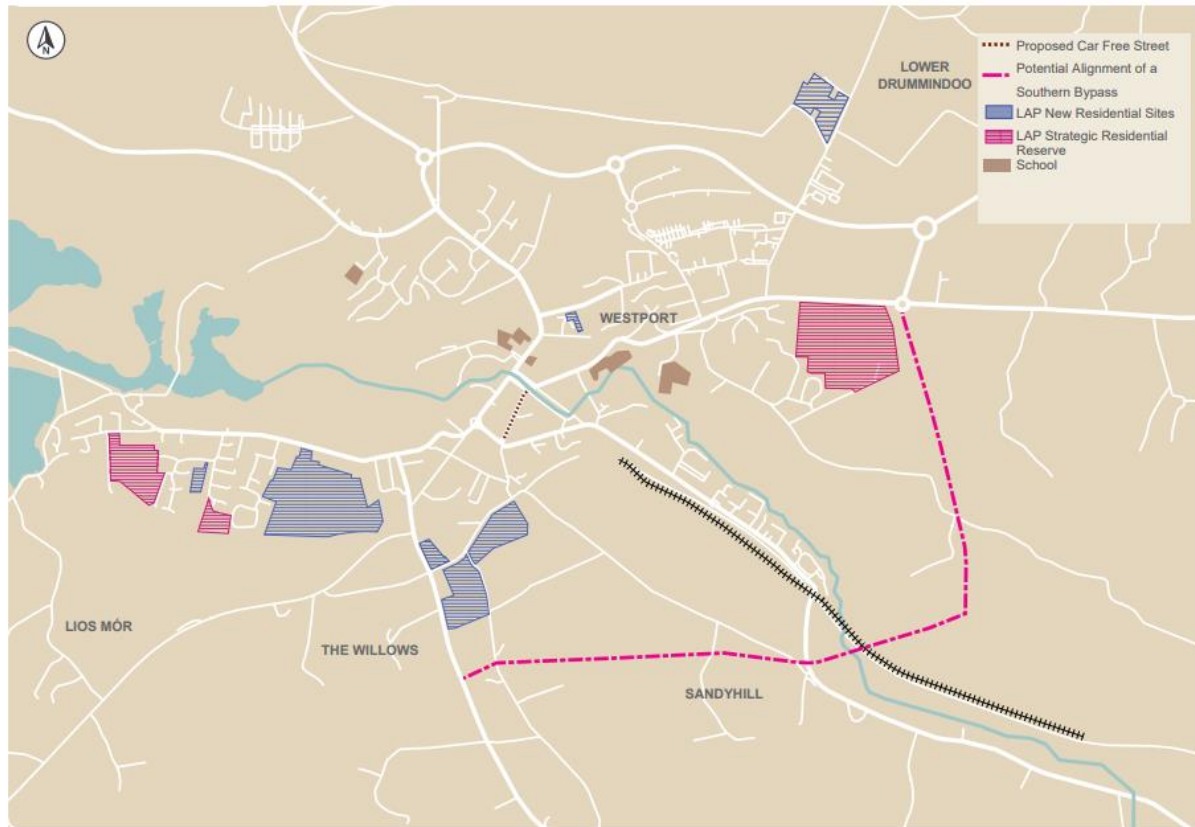
The proposed interventions are listed in the LTP (see Appendix), and a visual depiction of the proposed short-term, medium-term and long-term measures is proposed is illustrated in Maps 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4 below:



**Map 7.2** Short-Term WLTP Measures



**Map 7.3:** Medium-Term WLTP Measures



**Map 7.4:** Long-Term WLTP Measures

## 7.10 Movement and Transport Policies and Objectives

<b>Sustainable Mobility Policies</b>	
<b>It is a Policy of the Council to:</b>	
<b>MTP 1</b>	Improve accessibility and movement within Westport, reduce dependency on private car transport, increase permeability in the town, and encourage the use of energy efficient forms of transport through the promotion of walking, cycling and public transport.
<b>MTP 2</b>	Engage and co-operate with the Department of Transport, National Transport Authority (NTA), Transport Infrastructure Ireland, Irish Rail, Local Link and other stakeholders to improve the provision of public transport and public transport facilities in Westport.
<b>MTP 3</b>	Ensure that new developments are designed to comply with Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2019) including making provision for pedestrian and cycle infrastructure and enhancing connectivity and accessibility to the town.
<b>MTP 4</b>	Improve accessibility and movement within Westport, reduce dependency on private car transport, increase permeability in the town, and encourage the use of energy efficient forms of transport through the promotion of walking, cycling and public transport.



<b>MTP 5</b>	Support the provision of cycling infrastructure, bicycle parking facilities and electric vehicle charging points in the town centre, in accordance with the recommendations of the Westport Local Transport Plan (as adopted) and subject to traffic and pedestrian safety.
<b>MTP 6</b>	Make provisions for the use of electric vehicles through a significant increase in the provision of clearly and exclusively designated electric car charging points on public and private land in partnership with ESB and other relevant stakeholders and landowners.

## Sustainable Mobility Objectives

### It is an Objective of the Council to:

<b>MTO 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Encourage and facilitate the maintenance and further development of the public footpath network, walking and cycling routes and associated infrastructure within the town and where possible the retrofitting of cycle and pedestrian routes into the existing urban road network.</li> <li>b) Promote and facilitate the enhancement of the public realm in order to create attractive, cohesive and well-connected places in order to encourage walking and cycling as more viable forms of transport within the town.</li> </ul>
<b>MTO 2</b>	Seek the provision of workplace mobility plans for proposals for large scale employment and the development of Smarter Travel Initiatives as set in Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020 (or any replacement thereof).
<b>MTO 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Ensure that all proposals within the plan area for residential and mixed-use developments at design stage will consider/incorporate pedestrian and cycling provisions and associated facilities that will integrate into the existing and proposed active travel network in the town.</li> <li>b) Promote sustainable, compact development by ensuring that all proposals for residential and mixed-use developments, including infill and brownfield incorporate provisions for pedestrian and cyclist activity and associated facilities that will integrate into the existing road/street network and existing/proposed active travel network in the town.</li> </ul>
<b>MTO 4</b>	Identify appropriate locations on public lands in partnership with ESB for the provision of battery charging infrastructure for electric vehicles in Westport.
<b>MTO 5</b>	To monitor and review the progress of the Westport Local Transport Plan in line with the Monitoring and Review Strategy set out in this Plan, and in accordance with its stated goals and objectives.

## Road Objectives-National Roads

### It is an Objective of the Council to:

<b>MTO 6</b>	<p>Support the provision of new roads infrastructure by ensuring that the lands along the indicative routes* (as listed below) are protected by keeping them free from development that would undermine the delivery of these projects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) N5-N59 Southern By-Pass</li> </ul> <p>*these routes are indicative only and are/ will be subject to change</p>
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## Road Objectives-Local Roads

### It is an Objective of the Council to:

<b>MTO 7</b>	Carry out improvements at the junction of the Lodge Road (L-805-0) and Local Road L-5847-0.
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## Westport Local Transport Plan Objectives

### It is an Objective of the Council to:

<b>MTO 8</b>	<p>Support the implementation of all measures and actions set out in the Westport Local Transport Plan, where appropriate, in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development to facilitate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• More effective integration of land use and transport planning to reduce number of car trips.</li><li>• Reduction of traffic movements through and within the town to reduce vehicle emissions and create opportunities to enhance placemaking by road space reallocation.</li><li>• Encouragement of mode shift to active travel and sustainable modes and improvement of accessibility for all users and all journey types</li><li>• Accommodation of the needs of businesses and local resident, by suitable provision and appropriate allocation and management of parking</li><li>• Enhancement of road safety with focus on vulnerable users</li></ul>
<b>MTO 9</b>	<p>Support the implementation of the following proposed LTP measures (but not limited to):</p> <p><b>Walking</b></p> <p><b>New footpaths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Leenaun Road (N59) from Pound Road to Daybreak at Carrowbaun;</li><li>• High Street – provide accessible pedestrian link from greenway to John’s Row on the west side of street;</li><li>• Lodge Road from its junction with the N5 (Castlebar Rd) to Slogger / Carrownaclea / Fahy crossroads;</li><li>• Greenway to Mill Street via High Street car park;</li><li>• Mill Street to Laneway connecting to Bridge Street, via Mill Street car park;</li><li>• James St to Bridge St via James St Car Park and Distillery Ct;</li><li>• Knockranny Road footpath extension from Knockranny Lodge B&amp;B to Drummindoo Stud farm junction; and</li><li>• Horkan’s Hill to Carrowbeg Estate.</li></ul> <p><b>Cycling:</b></p> <p><b>Greenway / off road paths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop a Carrowbeg Riverside path from Ashwood to Tesco (Phase 1) with potential northern connection through Knockranny Woods / Colonel’s Wood</li></ul>

	<p>(Phase 2);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a Greenway through Westport House from Church Street to Cloonmonad; and</li> <li>• Improved connection through Pairc Na Coille connecting Greenway Golf Course Road</li> </ul> <p><b>Greenway improvements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pinewoods accessibility improvements to greenway;</li> <li>• Provide a new crossing on R335 at Slí Na Miséan housing development to access greenway;</li> <li>• Provide a new crossing on Leenaun Road near the junction with Tober Hill Street to access greenway;</li> <li>• Increase the width of the offroad path between Church Street and Leisure Centre car park to make it accessible to cycling;</li> <li>• Provide resting places and benches at longer walking routes / key approaches into town;</li> <li>• Provide accessible connection from the Greenway to Altamont Street; and</li> <li>• High Street car park accessible access to Greenway (switchback ramp).</li> </ul> <p><b>Provide new shared use paths on:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Golf Course Road to new GAA pitches;</li> <li>• Newport Road from Pinewoods to King’s Hill;</li> <li>• Carrowbeg Estate and</li> <li>• R330 (Ballinrobe Road) from Ashwood residential area to L5863.</li> <li>• R309 linking existing greenway at Knockranny to Sheeaune (junction with L5848) in line with motion adopted previously by Westport-Belmullet Municipal Elected Members.</li> </ul> <p><b>Provide a Primary Cycle Network consisting of segregated cycleways on:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Mall from Mill Street to Newport Road (including junction upgrades);</li> <li>• Altamont Street / R330 from Distillery Road junction to Asshwood residential area at local road L5864, via the railway station;</li> <li>• Bridge Street from Castlebar Road to Circle K / Spar;</li> <li>• Castlebar Road from North Mall to Corrib Oil service station;</li> <li>• Shop Street from The Octagon to Mill Street;</li> <li>• Mill Street from Bridge Street to High Street Car Park; and</li> <li>• Quay Road from The Octagon to The Quay.</li> </ul>
<b>MTO 10</b>	Aim to meet and monitor the modal share targets as set out in Section 8.3.2 and Table 8.1 of the LTP.
<b>MTO 11</b>	Deliver the short-term active travel interventions in the manner and sequence outlined Section and Figure 5.1 of the Westport LTP

## Car Parking Objectives

### It is an Objective of the Council to:

<b>MTO 11</b>	Provide a 'park and stride' facility at an appropriate location in the town in accordance with the recommendation of the Westport LTP.
<b>MTO 12</b>	Facilitate the provision of: a) Public car parks in its own role and/or in partnership with third parties, in its control of on-street parking and off-street parking to provide for short term shopping and business parking requirements and for the needs of local residents, rather than long term commuter parking. b) Develop a designated coach parking area within the Local Plan Area.
<b>MTO 13</b>	Develop a Parking Management Plan (PMP) in line with that proposed in Table 3.2 (Proposed Interventions of the LTP).

## Chapter 8

## Built Environment

### 8.1 Strategic Aim

*The strategic aim of this chapter is to recognise and enhance the unique identity, character and built heritage of Westport, to improve quality of life through the application of healthy placemaking, underpinned by good urban design with the creation of attractive public spaces that are vibrant, distinctive, safe and accessible and which promote and facilitate positive social interaction.*

### 8.2 Introduction

The built environment is an intrinsic part of a town's heritage and provides an opportunity to learn about the past, reinforce the sense of place and act as guardians for future generations. This is especially the case for Westport, which has a planned street grid as opposed to the more organic street layout found in other settlements in the county. The town was planned by John Browne between 1750 and 1760. The town's earliest streets date from the early 1700's. John Browne 1st Earl of Altamount is credited with driving the town's design and expansion under his patronage with work commencing circa 1750, on what was to become the beginnings of the town core of Westport as we know it today. The town expanded under the 2nd and 3rd Earls of Altamount and continued to thrive beyond the Act of Union in 1800, with the completion of the canalisation of the malls around 1820.

### 8.3 Westport House and Demesne

Westport House and Demesne is located west of Westport town and is part of the overall fabric of the town, having been planned by the descendants of the estate. It is one of the remaining fine houses and landed estates in the Country and it recognised as a site of national significance in the domestic built heritage of Co. Mayo. The demesne currently consists of approximately 170 hectares.



It is an objective of the Council to protect the natural and built environment and cultural heritage of Westport House and Demesne, permitting appropriate development in accordance with Chapter 9

of this plan to ensure the preservation, conservation and future viability of the estate. Emphasis shall be placed on preserving and re-enforcing the historic core of the estate, planned management of the Demesne woodlands, enhancement of links between the House and the town, and retaining the vistas to and from the House. Any plan/project in the areas will require screening to determine the need to undertake Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

#### 8.4 Built Heritage Conservation

The significance of the built heritage in Westport is reflected in its designation as a Heritage Town, one of fifteen in the entire country. Westport was also one of three towns nationally to take part in the Heritage Council's Historic Towns Initiative Pilot Program in 2012. For the HTI pilot, Westport undertook a number of projects throughout the town, at Westport Quay and Westport House Demesne including the planting of a linear orchard; conservation and repair projects at a variety of buildings including Westport House, Bridge House on The Mall; the Clew Bay Heritage Museum and others.

#### 8.5 Architectural Heritage and Record of Protected Structures

Architectural Heritage is protected through the Record of Protected Structures which forms part of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028. The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), places an obligation on local authorities to include objectives for the protection of structures, or parts of structures, which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest. Archaeological structures may, in some situations, be considered as architectural heritage and, therefore, may appear on both the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP), Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) and the Record of Protected Structures (RPS).

Map 3 illustrates the location of these protected structures in Westport. These structures merit protection and enhancement and in many cases have been identified by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH), which provides a detailed description of the survey of the structure.

#### 8.6 Architectural Conservation Area

An Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) is a place, area, group of structures or townscape, taking account of building lines and heights, that is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or that contributes to the appreciation of a protected structure, and whose character it is an objective of a development plan to preserve.

The ACA associated with this LAP is in essence the 18th century planned urban core of Westport. Most of the buildings within the ACA are vernacular two and three story, two-bay, slated structures, predominantly in the Georgian style. Their facades present a traditional vertical fenestration pattern to the streetscape, often complimented by sliding sash painted timber windows, and associated limestone cills. The extent of the ACA is illustrated on Map 3.

Owners and occupiers of protected and non-protected structures located within the ACA should note that carrying out of works to the exterior of a structure located in an ACA constitutes exempted development only if those works would not materially affect the character of the area. For example, alteration works to streetscape features such as roofs, walls, windows, doors and rainwater goods



may not be exempted development. Porches and other development which may normally be considered exempt are not exempt within the ACA.

Development within or adjoining the ACA is required to be sympathetic to the character of the area and be appropriately designed.

### 8.7 Shopfronts

Shopfronts in Westport town centre, both traditional and otherwise, along with their associated signage, are recognised as major contributors to the physical attractiveness and appeal of the town to both visitors and residents. In this regard, continuous effective monitoring and enforcement to preserve, enhance and reinstate is imperative and will continue over the period of this LAP.

### 8.8 Archaeological Sites

Map 3 also identifies the sites within this Plan area that are included on the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR). The Archaeological Survey of Ireland database at [www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie) contains an interactive map/search facility that provides access to all records of the Archaeological Survey of Ireland (ASI) and should be consulted prior to the development of land within the plan area.

### 8.9 Placemaking

The built environment not only includes buildings but the spaces between buildings, such as town squares, parks, community gardens and the physical infrastructure that support human activity, such as transportation and utility networks. The LAP aims to improve the quality of the built fabric of Westport by applying the principles of placemaking. Placemaking is multidimensional and represents the connection between people and place. Westport is fortunate in already having a high-quality public realm, with distinctive features and structures such as the canal and the Octagon and the LAP will aim to protect and further enhance the distinctive character of Westport and provide a safe, accessible and attractive built environment in the town.

### 8.10 Built Environment Policies and Objectives

<b>Built Heritage Conservation Policies</b>	
<b>It is a policy of the Council to:</b>	
<b>BEP 1</b>	Maintain, conserve and protect the architectural quality, character and scale of Westport.
<b>BEP 2</b>	Encourage high quality and well-designed buildings, structures, public spaces and streets and support and promote healthy place-making and quality of life.
<b>BEP 3</b>	Encourage residential uses on the upper floors of town centre commercial properties, where appropriate, and to encourage the retention of residential use except where an alternative use has been established, to maintain and enhance the overall vitality of the town centre area and provide passive surveillance.

<b>BEP 4</b>	Protect the town centre by ensuring all new development is compatible with the existing character and visual amenity of Westport.
<b>BEP 5</b>	Have regard to Mayo Shopfronts Design Guide for shopfronts and signs and to encourage the use of traditional shopfront designs and materials and signs.

## Built Heritage Conservation Objective

### It is an objective of the Council to:

<b>BEO 1</b>	To ensure the preservation of the special character of the ACA in this LAP, as indicated on Map 3, with particular regard to building scale, proportions, historical plot sizes, building lines, height, general land use, fenestration, signage, and other appendages such as electrical wiring, building materials, historic street furniture, paving and shopfronts.
<b>BEO 2</b>	Prohibit the use of plastic and neon lit shop signs within the town core and at other locations where the planning authority deem them unsuitable.

## Architectural Heritage and Record of Protected Structures Policies

### It is a policy of the Council to:

<b>BEP 6</b>	Encourage the rehabilitation, renovation, climate-proofing and re-use of existing protected structures and vernacular buildings within the plan area, where appropriate, over the demolition of same and new-build on-site.
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## Architectural Heritage and Record of Protected Structures Objectives

### It is an objective of the Council to:

<b>BEO 3</b>	Preserve the protected structures and their settings in Westport that are included on the Record of Protected Structures for County Mayo and seek to prevent the demolition or inappropriate alteration of Protected Structures, which would adversely impact on the character and special interest of the structure where appropriate.
<b>BEO 4</b>	Preserve the form and character of the protected structures by ensuring that any proposed subdivision of protected structures for multiple residential units does not impair the character of the protected structure.
<b>BEO 5</b>	Ensure that any alterations or interventions to protected structures shall be executed to a high conservation standard in order to protect their significance or value. Any applications for development of protected structures shall be accompanied by an assessment carried out in accordance with the Councils requirements by an accredited conservation architect, in accordance with the Councils requirements.

## Archaeological Heritage Policy

### It is a policy of the Council to:

**BEP 7**

Support and promote the protection, appropriate management and sympathetic enhancement of the archaeological heritage within the Plan area, in particular by implementing the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the National Monuments Act 1930 (as amended).

## Archaeological Heritage Objectives

**It is an objective of the Council to:**

**BEO 6**

Protect and preserve in situ (or upon agreement preservation by record) items of archaeological interest provided for on the Sites and Monuments Record ([www.archeology.ie](http://www.archeology.ie)) from inappropriate development that would adversely affect and/or detract from interpretation and setting of these sites.

## Placemaking Policies

**It is a policy of the Council to:**

**BEP 8**

Encourage and facilitate improvements to the physical fabric and environment of the town, including streetscape, street furniture, landscaping (hard and soft), signage and wirescape, while recognising that both private and public developments can contribute to effective public realm.

### 9.1 Strategic Aim

*To promote and support the strategic development and enhancement of Westport House and Demesne as a flagship tourist attraction in the region, while protecting the natural and built environment and cultural heritage of the estate by permitting appropriate development in accordance with Chapter 9 of this plan. Emphasis shall be placed on preserving and re-enforcing the historic core of the estate, planned management of the Demesne woodlands, enhancement of links between the House and the town, and retaining the vistas to and from the house.*

### 9.2 Introduction

The decision to exclude Westport House and Demesne from the Land Use Zoning Map as determined by the preparers of the Draft LAP with no consultation of the Elected Members.

Westport House and Demesne is located west of Westport town and is part of the overall fabric of the town, having been planned by the descendants of the estate. It is one of the remaining fine houses and landed estates in the Country and it recognised as a site of national significance in the domestic built heritage of Co. Mayo. The demesne currently consists of approximately 170 hectares.

The house is a protected structure, along with 17 other structures and features within the demesne.

The demesne is located on the shore of Clew Bay, which is designated as a Natura 2000 site (SAC Clew Bay Complex), and which is also designated as a proposed Natural Heritage Area. There are a number of Important Trees/Groups of Trees located within the demesne and the only Tree Preservation Order in the town is located within the demesne (See Map 3). A substantial part of the demesne is designated as a Local Biodiversity Area and Linear Corridor.

The view from Westport House to Clew Bay is a protected view (see Map 3).

It is recognised that in order to ensure the viability and longevity of Westport House and Demesne appropriate development will be required. Therefore, development will generally be permitted that is in compliance with Map 2 and the following development objectives:

### 9.3 Historic Core

***The objective of the Historic Core land use is to protect the natural and built environment and cultural heritage of the historic core of Westport House as identified on Map 2.***

The Historic Core current consists of Westport House, its immediate parkland incorporating the remaining half of its original front lawn. Within the Historic Core there is also an associated stable block, the nursery house (currently occupied as a residence), a walled garden, a church (in ruins), a family graveyard, extensive parkland and an artificial boating lake. The majority of this area is designated as a Local Biodiversity Area. The Carrowbeg River traverses through the Historic Core, flowing from Westport town into Westport House Lough and is designated as a linear corridor which links biodiversity areas in the town. There are a number of pedestrian walks through the Historic Core two of which lead to Westport town. One of these walkways links the demesne to the town at Hotel Westport, whilst the other leads to a currently unused gateway on Church Lane.

The vision for this area is to protect the historic core of the demesne whilst allowing restoration, conservation and enhancement of the existing features and structures in the historic core.

Appropriate development will be permitted which ensures the preservation, conservation and enhancement of all existing buildings within the historic core having particular regard to the scale, design and setting of the existing buildings and structures. Any new standalone buildings in this area shall be of appropriate scale and high design standard that does not detract from Westport House and its setting. The views from all four main elevations of Westport House shall be retained.

#### 9.4 Commercial Core Area 1

***The objective of the Commercial Core Area 1 land use is to permit appropriate development to ensure the viability of the house and demesne whilst ensuring the preservation, conservation and enhancement of the existing structures and farmyard buildings.***

The Commercial Core Area 1 is currently used for tourist facilities associated with the current use of the demesne, such as a shop, reception office, caravan park and facilities, pub, restaurant and play facilities. The farmyard building, which is a protected structure, houses many of these uses.

The vision for this area is to continue to create a vibrant commercial core associated with the tourist product Westport House and Demesne offer and to permit some development to assist in the running of, and viability of, the demesne.

Permitted uses in the Commercial Core Area 1 zone adjacent to the farmyard buildings include, but are not limited to:

services ancillary to the upkeep of the demesne, small convenience shop, small retail units, craft workshops, tourist accommodation, camp sites, car parks, restaurants, public houses, entertainment hall, cinema (indoor/outdoor), museums, galleries, interpretative centres, information boards, leisure facilities, sporting and adventure facilities, playgrounds and utilities, subject to the requirements below.

Appropriate renovation and extension of the existing farmyard buildings will be permitted having regard to its designation as a protected structure.

#### 9.5 Parkland/Woodland

***The objective of the Parkland/Woodland land use is to retain the setting of the demesne and to protect and enhance the parkland and woodland area around the demesne.***

Westport House and Demesne has extensive parkland and woodlands throughout the demesne which provide a setting for the house and its features. The only Tree Preservation Order in the town is located within this zone. The woodlands are currently undergoing woodland management. Some of the area has been identified as a Local Biodiversity Area. Five protected structures and two recorded monuments along with part of two additional recorded monuments are located in this area.

Permitted uses in this zone include:

- In woodlands areas: walking and biking trails, information boards, woodland management activities and recreational activities which will not have significant adverse impacts on the natural environment;
- No development shall be permitted on Garvillaun except for sympathetic landscape interventions to allow for public access.

## 9.6 Vehicular and Pedestrian Movement

***It is an objective of the Council to encourage and facilitate, where possible, the integration of Westport House & Demesne within town through pedestrian links and planned traffic management generally in accordance with Map 2.***

All current traffic movements to and from the estate are through the entrances at Westport Quay and the more recently constructed entrance on Golf Course Road to service the caravan park and ancillary facilities on the northern part of the estate. The house and demesne is served by driveway which is flanked for the most part by the woodlands in the estate. The drive facilitates pedestrian movements also.

The Golf Course Road entrance does not connect directly to the estate driveway thereby preventing any direct vehicular link from the Golf Course Road to the Quay.

It is conditioned that this new road does not provide a link to the estate drive which would then provide a link from The Golf Course Road to the Quay.

There are a number of pedestrian routes throughout the estate which facilitate walking routes throughout the estate and links to the existing recreational amenities on the estate. Such links to the town are considered crucial to link the town with the estate and form a vital element of cycleway and greenway links in the WLTP.

Vehicular traffic not directly related to patrons of Hotel Westport and events/functions therein, is not permitted to access Hotel Westport from the entrance on the Golf Course Road

It is acknowledged that improved traffic management is required in the demesne in order to facilitate any new development. However, it is important to ensure that any improved or new roadways are designed to ensure that they do not detract or divide the estate. Therefore, any roadways shall be designed as a tree lined boulevard, with one-way systems and/or appropriately designed pull-ins, giving preference to pedestrian / bicycle movements over vehicular movements.

The re-opening of the gateway and construction of a tree lined driveway in the general vicinity of Church Lane/Westport Leisure Centre to Westport House will be encouraged to facilitate controlled pedestrian movement to the estate from Westport town. The re-opened entrance may be used for vehicular movement on exceptional occasions following consent obtained from Mayo Co. Council.

## 9.7 Westport House and Demesne Objectives

### **Westport House and Demesne Objectives**

(All objectives are to be read in conjunction with Map 2)

**It is an objective of the Council to**



<b>WHDO 1</b>	To protect the natural and built environment and cultural heritage of the historic core of Westport House and Demesne, as identified on Map 2.
<b>WHDO 2</b>	To protect and enhance the parkland and woodland area around the demesne, whilst also considering innovative landscape proposals/interventions that do not detract from the overall parkland setting.
<b>WHDO 3</b>	To encourage and facilitate, where possible, the integration of Westport House & Demesne with the town through pedestrian links and planned traffic management generally in accordance with Map 2. Keeping the pedestrian entrance at Church Street open to public is critical to the integration of Westport House & Demesne with the town.

## Chapter 10

## Natural Environment

### 10.1 Strategic Aim

*To protect, conserve, enhance and sustain the natural environment of Westport and promote climate adaptation, placemaking and enhance biodiversity through promotion of green infrastructure for future generations.*

### 10.2 Introduction

The natural environment includes those spaces outside of the built environment such as open spaces, lakes, rivers and agricultural land. Westport town and its environs are located on the edge of Clew Bay, close to the foot of Croagh Patrick. The town abuts the grounds of Westport House and Demesne and nestles within a series of steep, flat-topped drumlins. Colonel's Wood on the north-eastern edge of the town is a significant amenity facility for the town.

These natural features are supplemented by a range of public open spaces and parks, institutional lands and playing pitches. They provide habitats for a variety of plant and animal species and combine to form an attractive physical environment that distinguish Westport from most other urban centres of its size.

The natural environment also provides direct and indirect benefits to the population of Westport and its surrounds. They are places where people can engage in recreational activities such as walking, swimming, water related activities and playing formal and informal field sports. These areas also provide a visual amenity that enhances the attractiveness of the town as a place in which to live and work.

All of these factors contribute to the unique attractiveness and character of the town. Fifteen locations within the town have been identified where there are views or prospects considered as worthy of preservation. (See Map 3)

### 10.3 Natural Heritage

Our natural heritage includes the variety of life we see around us every day, often referred to as biodiversity. Biodiversity includes everything from trees to weeds, from mammals to birds, from coast to countryside. A wide range of economic and social benefits result from the protection of environmental quality and biodiversity. For example, biodiversity forms the basis of our landscapes, provides for food and clean water supplies, nutrient recycling and coastal protection. It also contributes climate stability and human well-being.

Westport supports a surprisingly wide range of wildlife habitats and species of local, or even national, conservation interest. Birds nest in trees, shrubs, or under the eaves of buildings. Hedgerows support mammals, insects and wild flowering plants. Bats roost in buildings, trees and underneath old bridges. Fungi, lichens and mosses grow on both wood and stone, while waterways support otters, frogs, newts, insects, waterfowl and fish. The wildlife in a built-up area may well be hidden or may inhabit areas at the edge of the town.



Most noticeably, the Carrowbeg River, which flows through the centre of the town provides a direct pathway to the Clew Bay SAC. Other significant Local Biodiversity Areas in and around Westport (Attireesh and Gortaroe, Carrownalurgan Meadows, Colonel's Wood, North Wood, Rampart Wood, Roman Island, and Westport House).

#### 10.4 Designated Sites

The plan area includes a range of important habitats and species. There are three Special Areas of Conservation within a 15km radius of the Plan Area, namely Clew Bay Complex SAC (1.85km), Brackloon Woods SAC (4.56km), and Mweelrea/Sheeffry/Erriff Complex SAC (11.6km). The Carrowbeg River is also a key ecological asset in the town that provides connectivity to Clew Bay SAC and is an ecological corridor for a number Annex IV species.

The Council recognises the importance of protecting designated areas of natural and heritage value. These designations include: -

- Special Protection Areas (SPA)
- Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Natural Heritage Area (NHA)
- Flora Protection Order



**Map 10.1:** European Sites within 15k of Westport

### 10.5 Protected Species

Certain plant, animal and bird species are protected by law. This includes plant species listed in the Flora Protection Order, 1999 (or other such Orders) and animals and birds listed in the Wildlife Act, 1976 and subsequent statutory instruments, those listed in Annex IV of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), and those listed in Annex I of the Birds Directive. Proposals for developments, where appropriate, will require an assessment of the presence of bats and/or other protected species and ensure that suitable avoidance and/or mitigation measures are put in place accordingly.

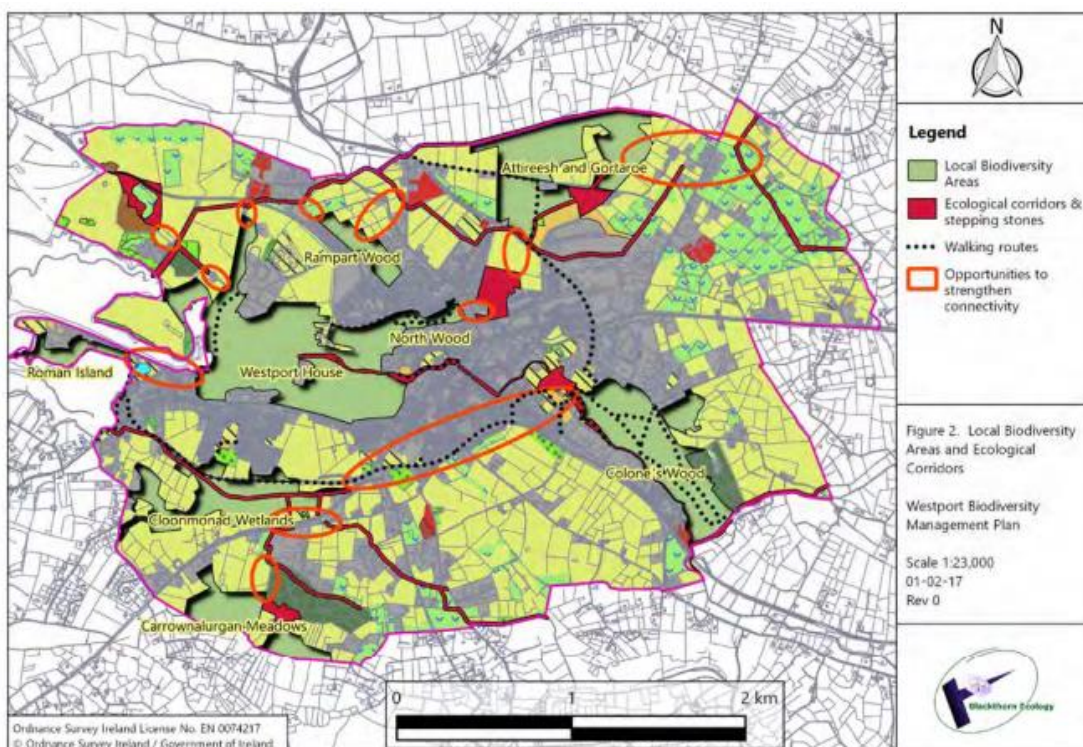
### 10.6 Westport Biodiversity Plan 2018

The Westport Biodiversity Plan (2018) identifies opportunities for appropriate biodiversity enhancement and conservation and recommends practical measures aimed at preserving and enhancing the natural heritage of Westport.

The Plan identified eight Local Biodiversity Areas in and around Westport (Attireesh and Gortaroe, Carrownalurgan Meadows, Colonel’s Wood, North Wood, Rampart Wood, Roman Island, and Westport House).

The Carrowbeg River and other watercourses and riparian zones are acknowledged as important ecological corridors and steppingstones. In acknowledgement of this, the plan will reference Inland Fisheries Ireland recent publication “Planning for Watercourses in the Urban Environment (2020) as a useful planning tool in the integration of green infrastructure and Nature Based Surface Water Management solutions for all types of development.





**Map 10.2** Biodiversity Areas and Ecological Corridors in Westport (Westport Biodiversity Plan 2018)

## 10.7 Invasive Species

Invasive non-native plant and animal species are a major threat to biodiversity ([www.invasivespeciesireland.com](http://www.invasivespeciesireland.com)) and prohibitions are in place in relation to the introduction or dispersal of certain invasive species as set out in the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Habitats Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477/2011)) and as set out in EU Regulations 1143/2014 on the Prevention and Management of the Introduction and Spread of Invasive Alien Species.

Invasive alien species can negatively impact on native species, transform habitats and threaten whole ecosystems causing serious problems to the environment and the economy. They may in certain cases pose a threat to human safety. There is potential for the spread of invasive species during excavation and construction works and for such species to be introduced into the environment via spreading from private gardens, boat users, horticulture etc. e.g. Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam.

## 10.8 Landscape

The town is set within a landscape characterised by a series of steep, flat-topped drumlins running east west. The town core is located between a series of drumlins and is characterised by a series of planned linear streets and urban set-pieces including The Mall, Bridge Street, Shop Street, The Octagon, James Street, Mill Street, Peter Street, Johns Row and 'The Clock' square.

The town core is centred on the Mall lying at the lowest point in the landscape and visually well contained and enclosed by the steep approaching streets and the ridgelines and horizon lines created by the surrounding drumlins. The dramatic and visually dominant form of Croagh Patrick and Clew Bay acts as points of reference in the distance.



## 10.9 Ecological Infrastructure

Ecological Infrastructure includes both Green and Blue Infrastructure. Green Infrastructure is the network of green spaces, habitats and ecosystems within a defined geographic area, which can range in size from an entire country to a neighbourhood. The Green Infrastructure network supports native plant and animal species and provides corridors for their movement. It maintains natural ecological processes and biodiversity, sustains air and water quality and provides vital amenity and recreational spaces for communities, thereby contributing to the health and quality of life of residents and visitors to Westport. Blue Infrastructure refers to water elements like rivers, canals, ponds, wetlands, floodplains, water treatment facilities, etc.

Central to the concept of a Green Infrastructure network is its multi functionality, performing several layered functions in a single shared space. Not only does it provide for a habitat for the maintenance and protection of wildlife, it delivers environmental services such as sustainable water drainage and flood protection whilst also enabling the provision of amenity and recreational activities for people. The most notable ecological corridor is the Great Western Greenway which loops around the town and large sections of this greenway, most especially the section that runs along the old railway line to the south of the town is flanked by semi-natural vegetation.

Mayo County Council's approach to green and blue infrastructure is one that seeks to conserve and enhance the biodiversity and geological heritage and to promote the sustainable management of the landscape and waterways.

## 10.10 Trees and Hedgerows

Trees, whether individually or in groups, make a valuable contribution to the biodiversity and visual amenity of towns. Trees perform a number of roles including absorption of pollutants, filtering noise, producing oxygen, providing a habitat for wildlife and enhancing the environment. There is one Tree Preservation Order in the town along with a number of additional important trees, groups of trees and woodlands located around the town which have been protected by way of objectives in this LAP. In addition, approximately 250 semi-mature trees have been planted around the town in recent years.

These mature trees and other individual and smaller tree stands form a valuable part of the urban environment by contributing to the distinctiveness of individual parts of the town.

Tree Preservation Orders will be served where they would effectively safeguard public amenity and preserve the character of the area. Inappropriate arboricultural work to protected trees will be resisted. Mature trees situated elsewhere in the town, whether in groups or individually, should be preserved, where possible.

## 10.11 Natural Environment Policies and Objectives

### Designated Sites Policies

#### It is the policy of the Council to

NEP 1	In seeking to protect and enhance the natural environment, Mayo County Council will seek to:
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect, conserve and enhance the natural heritage of Westport, including the protection of the integrity of European sites, that form part of the Natura 2000 Network.</li> <li>• Protect and conserve non-designated habitats and species; and</li> <li>• Protect and incorporate existing biodiversity features into the design and construction of new development and public realm and enhancing the biodiversity value of existing open spaces.</li> </ul> <p>Where appropriate proposals are made along a riparian corridor, ensure that a vegetated strip along the river in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, is maintained.</p>
NEP 2	Seek to ensure that new plans or projects would not result in significant climatic impacts on European sites because of their scale, resource or transportation requirements, operation or emissions, either cumulatively or in combination with other development.

## Designated Sites Objective

### It is an objective of the Council

NEO 1	Ensure that any proposal for development within or adjacent to the Clew Bay SAC is located and designed to minimise its impact on the biodiversity, geological, water and landscape value of the SAC/NHA and, where possible, to integrate these important attributes into all such development schemes.
NEO 2	Promote and protect native riparian vegetation along all watercourses and ensure that a minimum 10m vegetated riparian buffer from the top of the riverbank is maintained/reinstated along all watercourses within any development site.

## Ecological Corridor Policy

### It is the policy of the Council to:

NEP 3	Protect, reinforce and strengthen the Green Infrastructure network in Westport and to strengthen links to the wider regional network. This should be informed by appropriate ecological surveys and assessment.
NEP 4	Support the implementation of the Westport Biodiversity Management Plan (2019) for Westport and any subsequent Biodiversity Plan for the Plan area over the lifetime of the Plan, including habitat surveys, ecological connectivity and the 8 identified Local Biodiversity Areas.

## Ecological Corridor objectives

### It is an objective of the Council to:

NEO 3	Support and work with the local community in the development of blue and green infrastructure in the town and in the enhancement of the biodiversity and conservation value of the river and
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lakes corridors.

## Trees, Hedgerows and other areas of Biodiversity Policies

### It is the policy of the Council:

NEP 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There shall be a presumption against the felling, topping, lopping or wilful destruction of mature trees as part of development proposals. Where a development proposal involves the felling, topping, lopping or threatens the destruction of a mature tree or trees, a tree survey will need to be included in the submission, carried out by a qualified Tree Specialist to justify the exceptional circumstances for their interference.</li><li>• The applicant must demonstrate the justification and rationale for removal of mature trees in terms of effect on ecology and landscape and demonstrate how replacement planting will compensate for loss of trees and woodland features. An assessment of potential tree roost features by a qualified and experienced ecologist may also be requested as part of such proposals.</li></ul>
NEP 6	Protect and incorporate existing biodiversity features such as hedgerows and surface water features into the design and construction of new development and public realm. Where the loss of the existing features is unavoidable new biodiversity features should incorporate native species, and species of local provenance to replace the existing hedgerow.

## Landscape and Natural Environment Policies

### It is the policy of the Council:

NEP 7	Protect sensitive landscapes, including elevated lands, from development (as indicated on Map 3).
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## Landscape and Natural Environment Objectives

### It is an objective of the Council:

NEO 4	Preserve the Views and Prospects listed in Map 3 and to ensure they are protected from development which would interfere with such Views and Prospects.
NEO 5	Require that significant development proposals shall be accompanied by a visual impact assessment demonstrating that landscape impacts have been anticipated and avoided to a level consistent with the sensitivity of the landscape.

## CHAPTER 11 Infrastructure and Environmental Services

### 11.1 Strategic Aim

To phase future growth in line with the capacity of supporting physical infrastructure and to ensure it occurs in accordance with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.

### 11.2 Introduction/Context

The capacity of Westport to accommodate future development and remain a competitive location is dependent on the capacity and delivery of infrastructural support. The availability of high-quality physical infrastructure networks and environmental services is critical to securing investment, creating sustainable and attractive places, ensuring health and well-being while also safeguarding the environment. The Council will work with national, regional and local utility providers to safeguard the protection of existing infrastructure assets in the town and seek up-grades and enhancement, where necessary, to facilitate the sustainable growth of the town.

### 11.3 Surface Water Drainage Infrastructure

The Council is responsible for the management and disposal of surface water runoff within the public realm. All new development within Westport must account for how surface water runoff will be appropriately managed. Mayo County Council advocates surface water management through Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) and Nature Based Solutions in accordance with national guidance document 'Nature-Based Solutions to the Management of Rainwater and Surface Water Runoff in Urban Areas Best Practice Interim Guidance Document'.

SuDS is widely recognised as a green infrastructure-based approach to drainage and storm water management. It aims to mimic the natural drainage of a site, to minimise the effect of a development on flooding and pollution of waterways, through various engineering solutions, including using porous surface treatments, ponds, swales, filter drains or other installations.

### 11.4 Flood Risk management

In accordance with the Planning System and Flood Risk Management: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DEHLG & OPW, 2009) a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) was carried out for the local area plan. The SFRA has been informed by the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Programme which, under the responsibility of the OPW, deals with fluvial flood risk. The SFRA has been prepared as part of a suite of environment reports and may be found in in the Appendix of the LAP. The SFRA provides a detailed evidence-based review of the town, including site survey work and outlines provision to ensure flood risk is mitigated.

Consideration of flood risk in the SFRA acknowledges the role of climate change and includes provisions to adapt to, and mitigate, climate change. The Development Framework of the Plan informed by the SFRA ensures a precautionary approach to flood risk management and Greenfield lands at risk of flooding is zoned only for agricultural or amenity purposes. The Council will require all developments within areas identified to be at flood risk to comply with the requirements of the Planning System and Flood Risk Assessment Guidelines (DEHLG, 2009) and Circular PL2/2014.

Proposals for development where there is an identified or potential flood risk will be required

to carry out a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment, and Justification Test in accordance with these guidelines and the standards of the County Development Plan. New development within these flood risk zones shall also provide details of:

- floor levels relative to expected flood levels in ordnance survey datum;
- internal layouts; flood-resistant and flood-resilient construction methods proposed;
- emergency response planning details;
- and access and egress measures during flood events.

Extensions of existing uses or minor development within flood risk areas will be supported, provided they do not: obstruct important flow paths; introduce a number of people into flood risk areas; entail the storage of hazardous substances; have adverse impacts or impede access to a watercourse, floodplain or flood protection and management facilities; or increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.

## 11.5 Drinking Water and Wastewater

Uisce Éireann (formerly Irish Water) replaced Local Authorities as the single provider of water and wastewater services in 2014. Uisce Éireann is responsible for the operation of public water and wastewater services nationally, including strategic planning, policy development, service provision, customer service and capital investment planning and delivery.

### 11.5.1 Drinking Water

In co-operation with Uisce Éireann, the Council will contribute towards compliance with the European Union (Drinking Water) Regulations Drinking Water Regulations 2014 (as amended) and seek to undertake any remedial action as required.

A connection to the Lough Mask Regional Water Supply Scheme to the reservoir at Sandyhill was recently constructed, which supplies up to half of the current demand in Westport. The remaining demand is supplied by the Westport Public Water Supply. The reservoir is deemed to be in good condition and the source is highly reliable. The current supply is capable of catering for the projected population growth.

Mayo Co. Council is also in the process of commissioning a project which will provide a water supply to the village of Murrisk to the south west of the town and this will also provide drinking water to a large area of residentially zoned lands at Cloonmonad on the Quay Road and which is also accessible off the new bridge on the Western Road.

### 11.5.2 Wastewater Treatment

Westport benefits from a public wastewater treatment system located at Creggaunnahorna, which is designed to cater for a population equivalent (p.e) of 15,042. Based on current loading it is estimated there is approx. 5,269 p.e. capacity remaining in the plant which means there is sufficient treatment capacity to accommodate the projected increase in population for Westport and to facilitate enterprise. Future connections to this network from development on zoned and infill lands will be assessed through Uisce Éireann's Connection and Developer Services process. In un-serviced areas within the plan area, the main method of sewage disposal is by means of individual septic tanks and proprietary wastewater treatment systems. Mayo County Council is the competent

authority for the assessment and approval of individual domestic on-site wastewater treatment systems in the county.

Capacity -Today	Load – in 2019 (PE)	Headroom (PE)
15,042	9,773	<del>5,269</del> 4,700

Table 11.1 Capacity of Westport WWTP

## 11.6 Energy Networks Infrastructure

A secure and resilient supply of energy is critical to the functioning of Westport. With increases in population and economic growth, the demand for energy intensifies. The main energy networks serving Westport are electricity and gas. The Council is also cognisant of national policy, which seeks to promote renewable energy use and generation at appropriate locations within the built and natural environment, to meet national objectives towards achieving a low carbon economy by 2050.

### 11.6.1 Electricity

Westport is supplied by a 110kV overhead line from Castlebar which terminates at a 110/38kV station near the IDA industrial estate on the Lodge Road. This line was completed in 2011/12 and meets the current and anticipated electrical needs of the town over the lifetime of the Plan.

Mayo County Council recognises that essential future upgrades are required to the electricity grid in the west, as outlined in Eirgrid’s ‘Tomorrow’s Energy Scenarios 2019 System Needs Assessment’ and will support Eirgrid in future programmes identifying grid solutions, in both infrastructural and technological terms, in order to facilitate the electricity targets, set out in the Government’s Climate Action Plan 2019 and the National Energy and Climate Plan 2021-2030.

### 11.6.2 Natural Gas

Westport is served by the national gas network which is fed by the Corrib Gas Field pipeline which runs from the terminal in Bellanaboy to Galway with feed connections to six Mayo settlements including Westport. Maintaining security of supply of gas is a government priority. However, the government is also responsible for reducing Ireland’s greenhouse gas emissions under the Climate Action Plan. The use of renewable sources of gas will have a key role to play in decarbonising the natural gas grid.

## 11.7 Waste Management

Mayo is located within the Connacht-Ulster Waste Management Region, governed by the Waste Management Plan 2015 – 2021. Mayo County Council is the regional lead authority, acting on behalf of the other authorities with responsibility for the successful implementation of the plan. The plan incorporates policies and objectives for waste management within the region. Within Westport, refuse collection is currently carried out by a number of private contractors and Mayo County Council operate recycling facilities for glass and cans at several locations throughout the town. The Council will continue to encourage and facilitate recycling at appropriate locations while also seeking to minimise waste through its environmental education programme and the Green-Schools programme. The nearest civic amenity centres (Recycling Centres) is located at Derrinumbera, which



is located between Newport and Castlebar and provides recycling facilities for a comprehensive range of waste materials.

The management and control of pollution and environmental services is essential for a good quality of life, human health, wildlife and the economy. The Council will continue to protect and enhance the environment within the Plan area through waste management and the control of air, light and noise pollution. The Council recognises the importance of maintaining Westport as a litter free town and protecting it from indiscriminate dumping and advertising. Along with its legal obligations, the Council will work with the Tidy Towns Committee, schools and local residents’ associations to increase awareness of waste recycling and litter control.

### 11.8 Information Communications Technology (ICT) and Broadband

The increasing use of digital technologies is impacting on every aspect of our lives; from education and leisure to health services. The Covid-19 pandemic highlighted that now more than ever better-connected services are vital to our continued growth, supporting businesses and enhancing our communities. Broadband is readily available in Westport. Several telecoms providers have network infrastructure serving the area and provide various types of connectivity from fixed line, wireless, mobile broadband and fibre optic. Westport is also part of the Wifi4EU scheme, which is an initiative of the European Commission which provides funding to Local Authorities to provides free WI-FI hotspots in public areas. The Council will be guided by national policy in relation to importance of high-quality telecommunication services and the facilitation of improved internet and broadband infrastructure.

### 11.9 Infrastructure and Environmental Services Policies and Objectives

#### Surface Water Drainage Policies

It is the policy of the Council to:

<b>IESP 1</b>	Maintain and enhance the existing surface water drainage systems in Westport and to protect surface and ground water quality in accordance with the Water Framework Directive.
<b>IESP 2</b>	<p>a) Maintain, improve and enhance the environmental and ecological quality of surface waters and groundwater, including reducing the discharges of pollutants or contaminants to waters in accordance with the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2022-2027 (DHPLG) and associated Programme of Measures.</p> <p>b) Require all planning applications to include surface water design calculations to establish the suitability of drainage between the site and the outfall point; where appropriate and feasible.</p> <p>c) Encourage the use of SuDS in public and private developments and within the public realm to minimise and limit the extent of hard surfacing and paving, in order to reduce the potential impact of existing and predicted flooding risks, nature based solutions shall have regard to the “Management of Rainwater and Surface Water Runoff in Urban Area – Best Practice Interim Guidance Document (2022).</p>
<b>IESP 3</b>	Maintain, improve and enhance the environmental and ecological quality of surface waters and groundwater in Westport in conjunction with the Environmental Protection Agency and in accordance with the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2022-2027 and future cycles of

this Plan.

## Surface Water Drainage Objectives

### It is an objective of the Council to:

IESO 1	Encourage the use of SuDS within public and private developments and within the public realm to minimise and limit the extent of hard surfacing and paving, in order to reduce the potential impact of existing and predicted flooding risks.
IESO 2	Work with Uisce Eireann to separate the discharge of additional surface water to combined (foul and surface water) sewers within the plan area, in order to maximise the capacity of existing collection systems, where possible.

## Flood Risk Management Policies

### It is a policy of the Council to:

IESP 4	Extensions of existing uses or minor development within flood risk areas will be supported, provided they do not: obstruct important flow paths; introduce a number of people into flood risk areas; entail the storage of hazardous substances; have adverse impacts or impede access to a watercourse, floodplain or flood protection and management facilities; or increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. Proposals of this nature shall be accompanied by a commensurate assessment of the risks of flooding in accordance with the Planning Systems Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009.
IESP 5	Manage flood risk in Westport in conjunction with the OPW and in accordance with the requirements of the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009) and circular PL02/2014 (August 2014).

## Flood Risk Management Objectives

### It is an objective of the Council to:

IESO 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>Manage flood risk in accordance with the requirements of “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities”, DECLG and OPW (2009) and any revisions thereof and consider the potential impacts of climate change in the application of these guidelines.</li><li>Require applications in areas at risk of flooding to be supported by a comprehensive flood risk assessment. All flood risk assessments should have regard to ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management’ (DEHLG and OPW, Nov.2009) as revised by Circular PL 2/2014, national flood hazard mapping, predicted changes in flood events resulting from climate change and the Erriff-Blacksod-Broadhaven River Basin Management Plan.</li><li>Minimise flood risk arising from pluvial (surface water) flooding in Westport by promoting the use of natural flood risk management measures including sustainable drainage systems</li></ol>
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	<p>(SuDS), minimising extent of hard surface/paving, and smart solutions such as innovative green infrastructure.</p> <p>d) Demonstrate that future development will not result in increased risk of flooding elsewhere, restrict flow paths, where compensatory storage / storm water retention measures shall be provided on site.</p> <p>e) Have regard to the most up to date Flood Mapping as presented on the Office of Public Works (OPW) maps.</p> <p>f) Apply the avoidance approach for new development vulnerable to flooding within a 30m margin from any unmapped watercourse within the plan area, or where an avoidance is not possible, require a detailed flood risk assessment to minimise the potential of future flood risk in accordance with the requirements of “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities”, DECLG and OPW (2009) and any revisions thereof and consider the potential impacts of climate change in the application of these guidelines.”</p> <p>g) Only minor additions to existing developments and new water compatible developments are permissible within Flood Zone A and less vulnerable water compatible development are permissible in Flood Zone B in accordance with the provisions of the Flood Risk Management Guidelines (DoEHLG/OPW 200) and Circular P12/2014 (or any updated/superseding document). SFRA will be reviewed and updated accordingly.</p>
<b>IESO 4</b>	The LAP supports the on-going design, planning and implementation of the Part 8 Flood Relief Scheme Westport for Cois Abhainn and Ashwood.

## Drinking Water and Wastewater Policies

### It is the policy of the Council to:

<b>IESP 6</b>	<p>a) Support the implementation of the Uisce Eireann Investment Plans.</p> <p>b) Liaise with Uisce Eireann, to maximise the potential of existing capacity and to facilitate the timely delivery of new water services infrastructure, to facilitate existing and future growth.</p>
<b>IESP 7</b>	Support the implementation of the relevant recommendations and measures as outlined in the relevant River Basin Management Plan 2022-2028, and associated Programme of Measures, or any such plan that may supersede same during the lifetime of this plan.

## Drinking water and Wastewater Objectives

### It is an objective of the Council to:

<b>IESO 5</b>	Discourage the over-concentration/proliferation of individual septic tanks and treatment plants by requiring developments to connect to the public sewer and public water mains where at all possible, subject to a connection agreement with Uisce Eireann, in order to protect all waters in the plan area, and also to consolidate the urban structure and to control ribbon development along approach roads into Westport.
<b>IESO 6</b>	Support and facilitate the delivery of free outdoor drinking water refilling stations throughout the

	plan area.
IESO 7	Ensure that private wastewater treatment plants, where permitted, are operated in compliance with EPA's Code of Practice Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses (PE. ≤10) (EPA 2021), as may be amended.

## Energy network Policies

### It is the policy of the Council to:

IESP 8	Support and promote the sustainable improvement and expansion of the electricity transmission and gas distribution network that supply the Plan area, while taking into consideration landscape, residential, amenity and environmental considerations.
IESP 9	Promote and encourage the use of renewable energy technologies, at appropriate locations, for developments of existing and proposed building stock, such as district heating, micro generation (photovoltaic, micro-wind, micro hydro and micro combined heat and power) and other renewable energy technologies, which do not adversely affect residential amenity or environmental quality.
IESP 10	Support and liaise with statutory and other energy providers in relation to power generation, in order to ensure adequate power capacity for the existing and future needs of Westport.

## Waste Management Policies

### It is the policy of the Council to:

IESP 11	Protect environmental quality in Westport through the implementation of European, national and regional policy and legislation relating to air quality, greenhouse gases, climate change, light pollution, noise pollution and waste management.
IESP 12	Support waste reduction and sustainable waste management through prevention, reduction and recycling and by facilitating the provision of adequate waste infrastructure, such as bring banks, at locations that will not adversely affect residential amenity or environmental quality.

## Waste Management Objectives

### It is an objective of the Council to:

IESO 8	<p>Require all commercial and residential developments to be provided with adequate internal and external space for the correct storage of waste and recyclable materials. This is particularly important in relation to shared bin spaces such as apartment developments. In such cases the following must be provided for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Adequate space must be given for waste to be segregated and stored in an appropriate manner;</li> <li>b) A multi-occupancy development will require a designated, ventilated waste storage area of sufficient size which allows for the segregation of waste; and</li> </ul>
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	c) New and re-designed commercial buildings and apartment complexes should have waste facilities designed in a manner that waste can be collected directly from them and where possible waste and recyclables should not have to be collected on the street or at the front of the premises.
<b>IESO 9</b>	Promote the prevention, reduction and recycling of waste in new developments, new development proposals shall be required to submit proposals demonstrating how this is to be achieved and shall seek to ensure on-site provision for waste storage and segregation (bio-waste/dry recyclables/residual waste) pending collection at all new domestic and non-domestic premises.
<b>IESO 10</b>	Adequately maintain recycling facilities and secure the provision of additional facilities, as required, including in conjunction with new developments.
<b>IESO 11</b>	Facilitate the installation, if required, of bring bank(s) at suitable locations within the plan area, which do not adversely affect residential amenity or environmental quality.

## Information Communications Technology and Broadband Policies

### It is the policy of the Council to:

<b>IESP 13</b>	Seek the undergrounding of all electricity, telephone and television cables in the town including the town centre and in residential and amenity areas.
<b>IESP 14</b>	Co-operate with the relevant agencies to facilitate the undergrounding of all electricity, telephone and television cables in urban areas wherever possible, in the interests of visual amenity. Where undergrounding of cables is being pursued, proposals should demonstrate that environmental impacts including the following are minimised: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Habitat loss as a result of removal of field boundaries and hedgerows (right of way preparation) followed by topsoil stripping (to ensure machinery does not destroy soil structure and drainage properties);</li> <li>• Short to medium term impacts on the landscape where, for example, hedgerows are encountered;</li> <li>• Impacts on underground archaeology;</li> <li>• Impacts on soil structure and drainage; and</li> <li>• Impacts on surface waters as a result of sedimentation</li> </ul>
<b>IESP 15</b>	Discourage a proliferation of above ground utility boxes in the town and to seek screening measures and discreet locations in conjunction with the provision of such structures.

## Information, Communication Technology and Broadband Objectives

### It is an objective of the Council to:

<b>IESO 12</b>	Ensure that all new development proposals, incorporate s communications service infrastructure broadband, including ducting on an open access basis.
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**IESO 13**

Facilitate the provision of adequate telecommunication infrastructure within the plan area, including telephone and broadband services, to the requirements of the relevant service providers and in accordance with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.



## Chapter 12 Land Use Zoning Objectives

### 12.1 Strategic Aim:

*To manage and deliver new development to ensure that it occurs in an orderly and efficient manner in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development.*

### 12.2 Introduction

The quality of the built environment in Westport is dependent not only on building design and street layout, but also on smaller elements that can make an important contribution. For example, standards for landscaping, residential density, building heights, site coverage, street furniture and car parking standards can all play an important role in ensuring successful and sustainable new developments. Development proposals will be assessed in terms of the achievement of both qualitative and quantitative standards. Qualitative standards include design, layout, mix of new buildings and landscaping, whilst quantitative standards include density, plot ratio, site coverage, access, and roads standards. The general development management guidelines applicable to the plan area are set out Volume II of the Mayo County Development Plan, 2022-2028. Where conflict exists between this Plan and the County Development Plan, the CDP will take precedence.

The Planning Authority may exercise its discretion in relation to quantitative standards in certain circumstances on a case-by-case basis such as and not limited to:

- Where appropriate to the context and necessary to secure the urban design or other objectives of this plan.
- Performance based criteria, dependent on location and individual site characteristics, in accordance with the provisions of National Policy Objective 13.
- To facilitate comprehensive redevelopment in areas in need of urban renewal/redevelopment – or the delivery of appropriate uses on urban brownfield and infill sites.
- To maintain existing streetscape profiles, while allowing for high quality developments at suitable locations where additional height may be accommodated.
- Where a site already has the benefit of a higher density, plot ratio and/or site coverage.
- Proximity to public transport termini and corridors, where an appropriate mix of residential and commercial uses is proposed.
- To comply with Specific Planning Policy Requirement (SPPR) set out in Section 28 Guidelines, particularly in town centre locations.
- To take account of the character, context and merits of each respective site and development proposal; to assist the delivery of appropriate uses on urban brownfield and infill sites; and to facilitate higher and increased building heights for appropriate uses at suitable locations.

### 12.3 Urban Design Principles

In order to underpin the development of Westport with sound urban design principles, the Plan places emphasis on encouraging a responsive design approach, particularly in areas of the town in

need of regeneration. In tandem with the concept of 'placemaking', the Plan seeks to deliver sustainable urban growth through the creation of a distinctive, connected and enduring environment. To ensure that a 'sense of place' is at the heart of future development, this plan sets out the following urban design principles to inform and act as a guide for all development proposals within Westport town:

- i) **Coherence of the Urban Form:** Creation of new built form that is in keeping with the surrounding urban context. Such developments should seek to achieve continuity and enclosure through the construction of strong urban edges and legible built form.
- j) **Permeability and Accessibility:** The development of a hierarchy of connected streets and spaces which are easy to get to, move through and prioritise people before traffic. Improve overall movement and connectivity within the town, with a particular focus on design awareness for pedestrians and cyclists.
- k) **Quality of Open Space:** The provision of high-quality open spaces within developments that are valued by people who use them daily or pass through them. Open spaces should provide character and be a focal point for all developments and should not be overly dominated by hard landscaping and car parking.
- l) **Place and Character:** Built form which creates an identity and reinforces locally distinctive patterns of townscape and landscape while securing compact growth based on regeneration and consolidation of the town through the use and adaptive re-use of structures, infill development and legible new urban development.
- m) **Adaptability and Variety:** The development of built form that is robust enough to respond to changing social, technological and economic conditions. Ensure that built form typologies are varied within development schemes to maintain a level of interest in the urban environment.
- n) **Vibrancy:** Increase the number of people living and working in the town centre. Promote and increase the number of people visiting Westport for shopping, socialising, cultural and recreation activities.
- o) **Attractiveness:** Ensure that attractiveness in new and regenerated buildings is achieved through high-quality design, layout, and material finishes.
- p) **Diversity of Function and Use:** Promoting choice through a mix of compatible developments and uses to create a place that responds to the long-term needs of a growing community.
- q) **Environmental Sustainability:** The promotion of local biodiversity; allowing the development of the town's green infrastructure network, where new wildlife habitats become established and existing ones are protected and enhanced.

## 12.4 Land Use Zoning Objectives

## Land Use Zoning - General

### It is an Objective of the Council to:

<b>LUZO 1</b>	Ensure that development progresses in accordance with the land use zoning objectives as set out in Table 12.1 and the Land Use Matrix contained in Table 11.2.
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**Table 12.1: Land Use Zoning Objectives**

<b>It is an objective of the Council to implement the following land use zoning objectives for lands in Westport.</b>	
<b>LUZ 1 - Town Centre Inner (TCI) &amp; Outer (TCO)</b>	To maintain and enhance the vitality, viability and environment of the town centre and provide for appropriate town centre uses.
<b>LUZ 2 - Enterprise &amp; Employment</b>	To provide land for industrial, enterprise and employment uses. In assessing proposed new developments under this zoning, cognisance will be taking of existing uses to ensure compatibility in terms of nature and character.
<b>LUZ 3 - Educational</b>	To provide for the protection of lands for schools and educational uses.
<b>LUZ 4 - Existing Residential</b>	To protect the amenity and character of existing residential areas.
<b>LUZ 5 - New Residential</b>	To provide for high quality new residential development and other services incidental to residential development.
<b>LUZ 6 - Strategic Residential Reserve</b>	<p>To protect and safeguard suitable, undeveloped lands for future multiple residential developments. These lands are generally not developable during the lifetime of this plan for multiple residential developments. This position will be reviewed by the Planning Authority periodically over the lifetime of the plan to ensure housing growth targets are achieved (Core Strategy Table).</p> <p>Where it is apparent that 'New Residential' lands cannot or will not be developed within the plan period, residential development maybe considered within Strategic Residential Reserve.</p> <p>Single houses shall only be considered on a limited basis, where it has been established that the lands in question do not adversely impact on the intended future use of these lands; form part of the overall family landholding and no other appropriately zoned lands are available within of the plan boundary; and a demonstrable economic or social need has been established (Objective RHO 1 of the Mayo County Development Plan).</p>
<b>LUZ 7 - Community Services / Facilities</b>	To provide land for social, health, public administration and educational services and facilities.
<b>LUZ 8 - Recreation &amp; Amenity</b>	To protect and improve the provision, attractiveness, accessibility and amenity value of public open space, amenity and recreation.
<b>LUZ 9 – Agriculture</b>	To reserve land for agricultural and rural uses and to preserve the amenity of the town setting. Developments for single houses within areas zoned Agriculture

	will be considered on their merits having regard to the Rural Housing policies and objectives of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 and issues such as access, services and siting.
<b>LUZ 10 – Open Space</b>	To preserve, provide for and improve active and passive recreational public and private open space.
<b>LUZ 11 – Tourism and Related</b>	<i>To provide, maintain and enhance tourist related facilities</i>
<b>LUZ 12 - Infrastructure &amp; Utilities</b>	To provide land for public infrastructure and public utilities.
<b>LUZ 13 - Marine Related Tourism</b>	<p>The objective of the Marine related Tourism land use is to provide for marine related tourism development whilst having regard to the existing natural and built environment.</p> <p>Land uses generally permitted in this zone include tourist accommodation, open space, small scale retail units for the sale of marine related goods, sailing club ,restaurants, public houses, marina, pontoons, moorings, boat yards, bathing facilities, public utilities, parking, information boards and sporting and leisure facilities.</p>
<b>LUZ – 14 Westport House and Demesne</b>	<p>The objective of the Westport House &amp; Demesne land use is to facilitate appropriate development in accordance with Chapter 9 of this plan, in order to ensure the viability and conservation of the estate.</p> <p>Permitted uses in this zone are set out in Chapter 9 and Map 2</p>
<b>LUZ 15 - Ancillary Uses</b>	To ensure that developments ancillary to the parent use of a site are considered on their merits irrespective of what category the ancillary development is listed under in the zoning matrix of this County Development Plan.
<b>LUZ 16 - Established Use/Non-Conforming Uses</b>	To generally support reasonable extensions and improvements to premises that accommodate established/non-conforming uses, where it is considered by the Planning Authority that the proposed development would not be injurious to the amenities of the area and would be consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

## 12.5 Land Use Zoning Matrix

The land use zoning matrix (Table 12.2) details the most common forms of development land uses in accordance with the county’s zoning objectives and classifies under the three below categories as to whether a proposed use is generally ‘permitted in principle’, ‘open for consideration’ or ‘not normally permitted’.

- 1. ‘Permitted in Principle’** – The subject use is generally acceptable subject to the normal planning process, compliance with the relevant policies and objectives, standards and requirements as set out in the Local Area Plan and County Development Plan, and in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. (Note: A proposal which is indicated as being ‘Permitted in Principle’ within the zoning matrix does not imply ‘automatic approval’ as each proposal for development is considered on its individual merits).

2. **‘Open for Consideration’** – The subject use may be permitted where the Local Authority is satisfied it complies with the zoning objective and other relevant policies and objectives, standards and requirements as set out in the County Development Plan, and will not conflict with the permitted, existing or adjoining land uses, in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
3. **‘Not Normally Permitted’** – The subject use is generally incompatible with the written zoning objective and will not be favourably considered by the Local Authority, except in exceptional circumstances and in such instances, the development may represent a material contravention to the plan.

Whilst the matrix does not provide an exhaustive list of potential uses, the uses listed in the matrix should be considered by applicants to provide a clear indication of the overall acceptability of a particular land use within a specific zoning category. Where a use is proposed that is not listed in the matrix, development proposals will be assessed on their individual merits in accordance with the general guidance provided by the matrix, and having regard to the nature of existing and proposed uses, to the general policies and zoning objective(s) for the area in the Local Area Plan and to the principles of proper planning and sustainable development. Where there is no perceived conflict between existing and proposed uses, favourable consideration will be given to the proposed development, subject to all other normal requirements and to the principles of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Land Use Zoning Matrix Table 12.2	Town Centre Inner	Town Centre Outer	New Residential	Existing Residential	Strategic Residential Reserve	Educational	Enterprise & Employment	Community Services	Tourism and Related	Marine Related Tourism	Recreation & Amenity	Agriculture	Open Space	Infrastructure & Utilities	Westport House and Demesne
	Abattoir	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X
Advertisement Billboards	O	O	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	O	O	X
Agricultural Structures	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	P	X	X	X
Amusement Arcade	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Apartments	P	P	P	P	P	X	X	X	x	X	X	X	X	X	X
B&B/ Guesthouse	O	O	P	P	O	X	X	X	O	O	X	O	X	X	X
Bank/ Financial Institution	P	P	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Batching Plant (asphalt/ concrete)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Betting Office	O	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Boarding Kennels	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Caravan Park / Campervan Park / Camp Site/ Glamping (Tourism)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	P	P	X	O	X	X	O
Car Parking	O	O	O	O	X	X	O	O	X	O	X	X	O	O	X
Cash & Carry Wholesale Outlet	X	X	X	X	X	X	P	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cemetery	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Chemist/ Pharmacy	P	P	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Childcare Facilities – Crèche, Nursery and Playschool	P	P	P	P	P	P	O	P	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cinema/ Theatre	P	P	X	X	X	X	O	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X
Community Facility (hall, centre or recreational use)	P	P	O	O	O	X	X	P	O	X	X	O	X	X	X
Conference Centre	P	P	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X
Dance Hall/ Disco/ Night Club	O	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X
Data Centre	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Dentist/ Doctor Surgery	P	P	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Drive Through Restaurant	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Education – excluding a night-time use	O	O	O	O	X	P	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Education – night-time education use	O	O	X	X	X	P	O	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Education – third level education use	O	O	X	X	X	P	O	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X



Land Use Zoning Matrix Table 11.2	Town Centre Inner	Town Centre Outer	New Residential	Existing Residential	Strategic Residential Reserve	Educational	Enterprise & Employment	Community Services	Tourism and Related	Marine Related Tourism	Recreation & Amenity	Agriculture	Open Space	Infrastructure & Utilities	Westport House and Demesne
	Education – training centre	O	O	X	X	X	O	O	P	X	X	X	X	X	X
Enterprise Unit/Workshop	P	P	X	X	X	X	P	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Extractive Industry	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Funeral Home	O	O	X	X	X	X	O	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Fuel Depot	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	O	X	O	X
Garden Centre	O	O	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Go-Kart Track	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Hospital	O	O	X	X	X	X	X	P	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Hostel	P	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	O	X	X	X	X	X
Hotel	P	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	O	X	X	X	X	O
Industry – Heavy	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Industry – Light	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Leisure Centre/ Gym	P	O	X	X	X	X	O	O	O	X	O	X	X	X	O
Library	P	P	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Licensed Premises (Public House)	P	P	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	O
Logistic, Storage & Distribution Units	X	X	X	X	X	X	P	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mart/ Co-operative	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Motor Sales/ Service	O	O	X	X	X	X	P	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Nursing Home/Retirement Village/Residential Care Office	P	P	P	P	P	X	X	O	O	X	X	X	X	X	X
Office	P	P	X	X	X	X	O <sup>1</sup>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O
Open Space (Public)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	X	P	P	P	P	X	X
Park & Stride Facility	X	O	X	O	X	X	O	X	X	O	X	X	O	X	O
Place of Worship	P	P	O	O	X	X	X	P	O	X	X	X	X	X	X
Plant/ Tool Hire	O	O	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Playground	P	P	P	P	P	P	O	P	O	P	P	X	O	X	P
Playing Pitches/ Sports Club	O	O	P	P	P	P	X	P	O	P	P	P	O	X	O
Primary Care Centre, Health Centre and Clinics	P	P	X	X	X	X	X	P	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

<sup>1</sup> Large offices which do not cater for visiting members of the public.

Land Use Zoning Matrix Table 11.2	Town Centre Inner	Town Centre Outer	New Residential	Existing Residential	Strategic Residential Reserve	Educational	Enterprise & Employment	Community Services	Tourism and Related	Marine Related Tourism	Recreation & Amenity	Agriculture	Open Space	Infrastructure & Utilities	Westport House and Demesne
Professional Services	P	P	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Residential – Multiple (two or more units)	P	P	P	P	P	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Residential – Single	P	P	P	P	P	X	X	X	X	X	X	O <sup>2</sup>	X	X	X
Restaurant/ Café	P	P	X	X	X	X	O	O	P	P	X	X	X	X	P
Retail Warehousing	O	O	X	X	X	X	P	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
School / Third Level Education	P	P	O	O	X	P	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Service Station	O	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Shop/Retail (Comparison)	P	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	O	X	X	X	X	O
Shop/Retail (Convenience)	P	O	O	O	X	X	X	X	O	O	X	X	X	X	O
Shopping Centre / Supermarket	P	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Take Away	P	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X
Traveller Accommodation	O	O	O	O	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Utility Structures	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	P	O
Veterinary Surgery	O	O	X	X	X	X	P	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Warehousing	X	O	X	X	X	X	P	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

<sup>2</sup> Subject to the Rural Housing Policy as outlined in the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 (or subsequent plans) and objective DSP 10.

## Chapter 13 Implementation and Monitoring

### 13.1 Implementation Strategy

This Plan sets out a clear vision for Westport into the future. This vision is in accordance with the role identified for the settlement at a local, county and regional context and seeks to make Westport Town and Environs a more attractive place to live, work and visit. In order to achieve the stated vision, it is important that the individual measures put forward in this plan are delivered. The Council has a statutory obligation to implement the provisions of the Plan and is committed to securing its objectives.

The Council will progress the policies and objectives of the Plan:

- To advance Westport as a settlement with strategic development potential of a regional scale, that is also intrinsically linked with the nearby Key Town of Castlebar.
- To enhance economic activity, promote the transition to a low carbon town.
- To promote the Westport's unique cultural, built and natural heritage.
- To develop sustainable communities ensuring sustainable use of natural resources.

The development of the Local Area Plan has been based on the following sustainable principles:

- Promotion of compact development and the application of the 'sequential approach' advocated by national planning guidance, whereby zoning extends outwards from the town centre.
- Delivery of a sustainable transport system for Westport through the implementation of the Westport Local Transport Plan.
- Promotion of lands close to existing community and social infrastructure such as schools, the library, walkways/cycleways and open space and proximity to the bus stop.
- Cognisance has been taken of the need to provide upmost protection to the environment, built, natural and archaeological heritage of the historic town.

The responsibility for the implementation of policies and objectives of this Plan are dependent on a number of sources, including EU programmes and grants, the National Government, the County Council and the private sector. Particularly relevant is funding available under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) operated under the Department of Rural and Community Development which is applicable to settlements with a population of less than 10,000 persons.

Mayo County Council will also require developers to incorporate the objectives and development management standards set out in the County Development Plan into proposals. Other objectives, particularly key infrastructural elements, will require government funding and support. Where appropriate, the Council will seek financing from specified sources, both the public and private sector, as well as from EU programmes and grants. The implementation of a plan may be constrained by a number of elements, namely, the economic climate, political support, allocated local authority funding, and the availability of funding from other sources. Therefore, no funding of

projects is guaranteed in advance nor is the implementation of all objectives contained within the plan.

It is intended that the various agencies, including voluntary groups, professional institutions, public and private bodies including Mayo County Council, and other organisations in Westport will be encouraged to participate whenever possible, in the implementation of the policies and objectives of this plan to move the settlement forward. The Plan will also be regularly reviewed in light of new legislation or guidelines, to assess progress, and to determine where amendments are required, a variation of the Plan will be necessary.

## 13.2 Development Contributions

Development contributions for the provision of services such as roads, footpaths and amenity / open space provision, etc will be applied where appropriate to development applications. The details and basis for the determination of the contributions are set out in a Development Contribution Scheme 2023-2029 or any subsequent schemes adopted thereafter in accordance with the provision of section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

### 13.2.1 Cash Deposit/Bonds

Depending on the nature of the development, the Council may require, as a condition of planning permission, the lodgement of financial security to ensure that the permitted development is satisfactorily completed. The amount of the security will be determined by the Council and will be reviewed during the plan period. The security will be held by the Council until all works are satisfactorily completed to the exacting standards of the Council, or until the development is taken in charge by the Council.

### 13.2.2 Rural Regeneration Development Fund (RRDF)

One of the key objectives of the NPF relates to the need for compact growth, with development being focused within and close to existing built-up areas. A core element of this approach is the regeneration of infill and brownfield sites. This is in line with the NPF targets of achieving at least 30% of all new homes within or contiguous to the built-up area of Westport. In this regard, it is an objective of Mayo County Council to promote measures to reduce vacancy and the underuse of existing building stock and support initiatives that promote the reuse, refurbishment and retrofitting of existing buildings within urban centres.

The importance of the role of regeneration in the delivery of Project Ireland 2040 is acknowledged by the provision of the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF). The €2 Billion ten-year Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) was launched in 2018 to support compact sustainable development, through the regeneration of Ireland's smaller towns (Population of less than 10'000), in line with the objectives of Project Ireland 2040 – The National Planning Framework (NPF) and the National Development Plan (NDP) 2018 -2027. The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) provides the investment framework for Northern and Western Region. The types of proposals eligible for funding include strategic development areas, active land management, measures to address building vacancy and refurbishment, public realm improvements, enabling infrastructure, sustainable mobility and transition to low carbon and climate resilience.

The achievement of compact growth targets and regeneration will be supported through the implementation of active land management measures which promote the development of infill and brownfield lands, and strategically located greenfield sites that support the principles of consolidated growth. The Residential Zoned Land Tax is a key active land management tool to the delivery of houses on serviced sites in our towns and villages throughout Mayo.

In addition, there are significant portions of well-located lands, some of which are in public ownership. Building on the higher policy objectives set out by the 'Housing for All' Plan relating to the delivery of a new approach to active land management and to increase Social Housing Delivery and broader housing delivery, the Council will work together with the Housing Agency and Land Development Agency to facilitate the assembly/acquisition, financing, and appropriate redevelopment of these sites.

Mayo County Council will consider interventions such as site assembly using CPO, demolition and clearance or decontamination and the provision of facilitating infrastructure. When sites are acquired, the Council will decide on the most appropriate mechanism to ensure appropriate rejuvenation which may include redevelopment for civic or amenity uses, public and private housing or the release of the land back to the market for redevelopment.

Mayo County Council will actively source and leverage funds including the Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF), RRDF, Climate Activation Fund and Disruptive Technologies Fund to achieve compact growth and regeneration of Westport. In this regard priority will be given to projects which result in social and economic rejuvenation and regeneration and the provision of amenities and services where these are deficient.

### 13.2.3 Phasing of Development

The timely provision of supporting infrastructure and community facilities in tandem with the development of areas is important in ensuring high quality, sustainable development takes place. All large-scale development proposals shall be phased having regard to the delivery of both physical and social infrastructure and orderly development.

## 13.3 Monitoring and Implementation

The Planning Department of the Council is the lead section responsible for monitoring and implementing the Plan, mainly through its development management function. However, it is important to note that this Plan co-ordinates the work and objectives of not only of the Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development directorates but also the Corporate and Emergency Services, Operations, Housing, as well as the Finance and Water Service directorates.

In some instances, the implementation of certain objectives may be the responsibility of external bodies such as OPW, Uisce Éireann, National Parks & Wildlife Service, Fisheries Ireland, National Roads Authority, Transport Infrastructure Ireland, and the Environmental Protection Agency etc. The Planning Authority will work in collaboration with the relevant external body to assist in ensuring the implementation of the relevant policy objective.

The Plan objectives are specific, measurable, achievable and realistic. However, a number are set within a longer timeframe, thus they may not be fully implemented over the lifetime of this Draft Plan.

### 13.4 Implementation and Monitoring of the Core Strategy

The NPF states that new statutory guidelines, supported by wider methodologies and data sources, will be put in place under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act to improve the evidence base, effectiveness and consistency of the planning process for housing provision at regional, metropolitan and local authority levels.

This will be supported by the provision of standardised requirements by regulation for the recording of planning and housing data by the local authorities in order to provide a consistent and robust evidence base for housing policy formulation. As such, Mayo County Council, will monitor ongoing developments in this respect and review the operation and implementation of this Plan. This includes adjustments as needed to ensure the effectiveness of its alignment with National and Regional policy and objectives.

### 13.5 Strategic Environmental Assessment

The SEA Directive requires that the significant environmental effects of the implementation of plans and programmes are monitored. Monitoring can both demonstrate the positive effects facilitated by the Plan and can enable, at an early stage, the identification of unforeseen adverse effects and the undertaking of appropriate remedial action.

The occurrence of significant adverse environmental effects not predicted and mitigated by this assessment, which are directly attributable to the implementation of the Plan, would necessitate consideration of these effects in the context of the Plan and potential remediation action(s) and/or review of part(s) of the Plan.

#### 13.5.1 Indicators and Targets

Monitoring is based around indicators which allow quantitative measures of trends and progress over time relating to the Strategic Environmental Objectives identified in Section 5 of the SEA Environmental Report and used in the evaluation. Each indicator to be monitored is accompanied by the target(s) which were identified with regard to the relevant strategic actions. Given the position of the Development Plan in the land use planning hierarchy beneath the Northern and Western Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES), the measures identified in that RSES SEA have been used – as they are or having been slightly modified – in most instances. This consistency across the hierarchy of land use plans will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of future monitoring programmes.

Table 9.1 of the SEA Environmental Report shows the indicators and targets which have been selected for monitoring the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the Plan, if unmitigated. Monitoring is an ongoing process and the programme allows for flexibility and the further refinement of indicators and targets. The Monitoring Programme may be updated to deal with specific environmental issues – including unforeseen effects – as they arise.

### 13.6 Local Transport Plan

The Westport Local Transport Plan (LTP) will guide future transport investment in the area. The LTP is a short, medium to long-term plan that will be used to guide the towns transport strategy over the plan period and beyond. The strategic aim of the Westport LTP is to provide for the planning and



delivery of transport infrastructure and services in Westport that will allow for the generation of a sustainable transport network that can cater for demand. The National Transport Agency are responsible for the issuing of funds for Local Transport Plan projects. The implementation of the LTP will lead to Westport being well positioned to be a leading town for sustainable transport.

### 13.7 Sources

The Plan will form part of the wider land use planning framework comprising a hierarchy of policies, plans, programmes, etc. This wider framework, including the National Planning Framework and the Northern & Western RSES, is subject to its own SEA (and associated monitoring) requirements. At lower tiers of the hierarchy, Local Area Plans and individual projects will be subject to their own monitoring requirements as relevant.

In implementing the Monitoring Programme, the Council will take into account this hierarchy of planning and environmental monitoring. Sources for indicators may include existing monitoring databases (including those maintained by planning authorities and national/regional government departments and agencies) and the output of lower tier environmental assessment and decision making (including a review of project approvals granted and associated documents and the output of any EIA monitoring programmes).

Internal monitoring of the environmental effects of grants of permission in the Council would provide monitoring of certain indicators on a grant of permission basis. Where significant adverse as the result of a development to be permitted are identified, such effects could be identified, recorded and used to inform monitoring evaluation.

### 13.8 Implementation Objective

#### Implementation and Monitoring

##### It is an Objective of the Council to:

<b>IMO 1</b>	Monitor development for compliance with the objectives of the Core Strategy and adjust, where necessary, the approach taken to the consideration of development proposals in order to ensure effective alignment with the National, Regional and County policies and objectives.
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# APPENDICES

## Appendix 1 Settlement Capacity and Map

New Residential					Services				
Site No.	Location	Area - Hectare	Zoning	Tier	Lighting	Footpath	Water	Foul/Storm Sewer	Road
RS 1	West Road	0.72	New Residential	2	✓	✓	X*	X*	✓
RS 2	Cloonmonad	12.2	New Residential	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RS 3	Leenane Road	0.99	New Residential	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RS 4	Monastery View/Leenane Rd	3.62	New Residential	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RS 5	Monastery View	3.0	New Residential	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RS 6	Horkans Hill South	0.45	New Residential	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RS 7	Horkans Hill North	2.3	New Residential	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RS 8	Golf Course Road	0.45	New Residential	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

\* Uisce Éireann has stated this site would require network extension of over 100-180 metres to facilitate connections to both water supply and foul sewer.

Strategic Residential Reserve					Services				
Site No.	Location	Area - Hectare	Zoning	Tier	Lighting	Footpath	Water	Foul/Storm Sewer	Road
SRR 1	Upper Quay Rd/Lane	4.07	Strategic Residential Reserve	2	√	x	√	√	√
SRR 2	Cloonmonad	1.14	Strategic Residential Reserve	2	√	√	√	√	x
SRR 3	Castlebar Road/ Knockranney	12.56	Strategic Residential Reserve	1	√	√	√	√	√
SRR 4	Ardmore/Car rownalurgan	13.45	Strategic Residential Reserve	2	x	x	√	x	√
SRR 5	Monamore West	0.89	Strategic Residential Reserve	1	x	√	√	√	√
SRR 6	Monamore East	4.79	Strategic Residential Reserve	1	√	√	√	√	√



## Settlement Capacity Assessment – Enterprise and Employment Lands

<u>Enterprise &amp; Employment Undeveloped</u>					Services				
Site No.	Location	Area - Hectare	Zoning	Tier	Lighting	Footpath	Water	Foul/Storm Sewer	Road
EEU 1	Upper Quay Rd/Lane	4.07	Strategic Residential Reserve	1	√	√	√	√	√
EEU 2	Cloonmonad	1.14	Strategic Residential Reserve	1	√	√	√	√	√

<u>Enterprise &amp; Employment Developed</u>					Services				
Site No.	Location	Area - Hectare	Zoning	Tier	Lighting	Footpath	Water	Foul/Storm Sewer	Road
EED 1	Westport Industrial Park	9.87	Enterprise & Employment	1	√	√	√	√	√
EED 2	Cloonmonad	1.14	Strategic Residential Reserve	1	√	√	√	√	√
EED 3	Lodge Road	3.32	Enterprise & Employment	1	√	√	√	√	√
EED 4	Lodge Road	0.43	Enterprise & Employment	1	√	√	√	√	√



<b>EED 5</b>	Lodge Road	0.69	Enterprise & Employment	1	√	√	√	√	√
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