

1.1 Introduction

Limerick County Council is currently preparing a new Local Area Plan (LAP) for the town of Newcastle West. The LAP sets out Limerick County Council's strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of Newcastle West to 2020 and beyond. The new Local Area Plan replaces the current 2008 LAP. It must address current challenges and reflect developments since 2008, both in respect of settlement and other planning policies and in respect of changes to the economy and local community.

1.2 What is the purpose of the Newcastle West Local Area plan?

The Local Area Plan is a public statement of planning policies and objectives for the development of your area and includes zoning measures, which set out the various purposes for which land may be used. However it should be borne in mind that the achievement of various objectives will be subject to the availability of resources and the inputs of various statutory and other bodies.

These zoning measures include open space, housing, retail, commercial, enterprise and employment use and community use. It also contains a number of objectives in relation to areas, preserving natural and built amenities, e.g. important buildings, historic sites, etc. In addition, the plan will highlight areas where facilities are lacking. With your help, the plan will contribute to the sustainable future development of Newcastle West.

1.3 How does the Plan affect me?

The Local Area Plan does not influence all aspects of our lives. However it can have an important bearing in a number of ways. For example, all planning applications are measured against the zonings and objectives in the plan and development permitted must be in accordance with the plan.

1.4 Planning Issues you may wish to comment on?

Newcastle West is a town that has expanded a great deal in the last decade. This growth has led to pressure on certain services, such as the schools, infrastructure such as roads, treatment of sewerage, provision of water and social services. The economic downturn brings other challenges. Employment opportunities are contracted. Commercial vacancy is a threat to the future development of the town.

1.4.1 Population and Housing

The population of the Plan area was 6327 in the 2011 census. This was a 24.1% increase in population from the previous census in 2006. The scale and rate of increase in population has had significant consequences for community life, local services, infrastructure as well as the social composition of the population. It is therefore important that future growth is carefully phased and predicated on appropriate benefits to the local environment for all.

1. How can the quality of existing residential areas be improved?
2. Where should future housing be located?
3. How can social integration be achieved to create a balanced and mixed community?



1.4.2. Town Centre Development

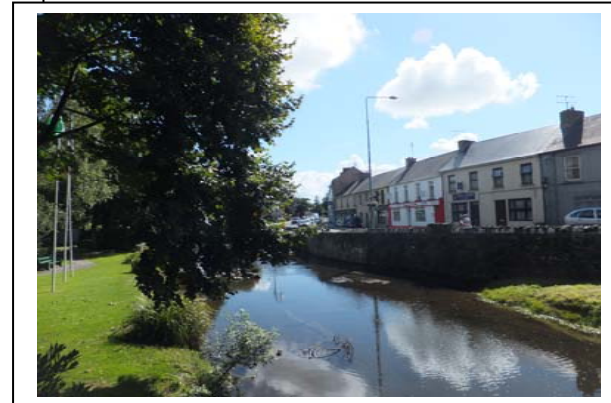
In Newcastle West town centre commercial vacancy is a major problem. Further development should maximise the town's potential to sustain business and be responsive to the local community's needs and the growing population.

1. How can the town centre of Newcastle West be improved in terms of shopping and business activity?
2. Is there an absence of any business activity in the town that we should be addressing?
3. Are there opportunities or constraints to develop the commercial role of the town centre?

1.4.3. Community, Amenity and Recreation

Community infrastructure plays a vital role in contributing to the quality of life for all. The physical environment should be developed in such a way that it facilitates and does not obstruct the healthy functioning of community and cultural life. It is never enough just to build houses and leave such needs as crèches, schools and other community facilities as an afterthought.

1. What community facilities are needed in the town? Where should they be located?



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1.4.4. Built and Natural Heritage

The town has important elements of character, rooted in its history and its natural setting along the banks of the River Arra. The built and natural heritage should be a vital consideration for new developments to create a 'sense of place' contributing to the attractiveness of Newcastle West as a desirable place for people to live, shop and work and for communities to take pride in.

1. What are the features and elements of the town's natural and built heritage that should be conserved and enhanced?
2. Can effective ways be found to conserve and enhance the town's built and natural heritage?
3. How can key features of the town's heritage be made accessible, attractive and legible to the public?

1.4.5. Tourism

Newcastle West has potential for tourism growth with many important resources in close proximity including: its river front. Its location on the N21 Limerick to Tralee road, its local heritage including Desmond medieval hall, the town's traditional streetscape with many fine traditional shop fronts, the walking/cycling path known as the Great Southern Trail. Many of these local resources are underdeveloped.

1. What facilities/services are required in the town to further develop Newcastle West's tourism potential?



1.4.6 Waste, Energy, Telecommunications, Water services and Flood Risk

1. As the town is located on the River Arra what precautions can be taken to avoid or to prevent flooding?
2. What are your observations on water, waste, energy and telecommunications infrastructure in Newcastle West?
3. Are there sufficient recycling facilities in the town?

1.5 What process is involved in making a new Local Area Plan?

This 'First Issues' document is the first step in the preparation of a Local Area Plan for Newcastle West. A public information evening on **Tuesday 15th October from 6.00pm to 8.00pm** in the Council Offices, Newcastle West will take place. The purpose of this

session is to give you an opportunity to highlight any issues/views that you want addressed in the preparation of the Proposed Local Area Plan for the town of Newcastle West.

The proposed LAP will be put on public display for a period of six weeks in the County Council Headquarters, Dooradoyle, Council Offices Newcastle West and local libraries. The proposed LAP will also be displayed on the County Council's website www.lcc.ie. Any person may then make written observations or submissions on this proposed plan and these are then taken into consideration by the elected members. The proposed LAP is expected to be placed on public display in January 2014. Notices will be placed in local newspapers accordingly.

Submissions made may result in changes in the proposed plan. If the changes are significant, the amendments will go on display for a further period of four weeks, during which time further submissions may be made on these changes. The LAP is then formally adopted with or without amendments by the Full Council and becomes the official Local Area Plan for Newcastle West.

YOUR OPINION COUNTS...

Above are just some of the issues that will need to be addressed in the Plan. With your help we will be able to produce a better plan to guide us in the years ahead. The current Newcastle West Local Area Plan, 2008 - 2013 can be viewed on the Council's website www.lcc.ie. If you have any queries or wish to discuss the plan, please contact Bernadette Collins, Forward Planning Section at (061) 496391. We would welcome any comments that you may have. Please forward written submissions to:

Forward Planning Section, Planning & Development Department, Limerick County Council, County Hall, Dooradoyle, Co. Limerick or planning@limerickcoco.ie

THE CLOSING DATE FOR PRE-DRAFT SUBMISSIONS IS MONDAY 11TH NOVEMBER 2013

Attached, for your reference is the Zoning Map from the current Newcastle West Local Area Plan.



ISSUES PAPER

Proposed Newcastle West Local Area Plan 2014-2020

October 2013



Limerick County Council
Comhairle Chontae Luimnigh

Forward Planning
Pleanáil chun tosaigh