
Tarbert Local Area Plan

Preamble

This Plan is prepared in accordance with S.20 of the Planning & Development Act 2000. The plan is consistent with the policies, provisions and objectives of the Co. Development Plan, National Guidelines, and Kerry Co. Development Board policies. This plan, in conjunction with the Kerry Co. Development Plan, will provide the framework for future development decisions and will remain in effect for a period not exceeding 6 years from the date of adoption.

Introduction

Town Profile

Tarbert is located on the Shannon estuary on the border between the counties of Kerry and Limerick. Access to the national road network is via the N69 and the N67 (See Map 1). Land directly to the north and east of the town has been designated as both a Natural Heritage Area and a candidate Special Conservation Area. (See insert on Map 2)

Sprawling linear development is evident on the approach roads to Tarbert. This has resulted in the loss of the formerly compact character of the town. The Killimer-Tarbert car ferry saves up to 137 km on the alternative journey north via Limerick, and attracts a significant amount of tourist and commercial through-traffic.

Demographic Trends

Existing population projections point to a slight fall in the population of Tarbert, whilst the number of households is expected to increase slightly, due to the trend of smaller households. Over the last census period employment levels have risen slightly, while unemployment has decreased. It is estimated that approximately 10 houses per annum will be required in Tarbert over the period 2001 – 2021.

Development Strategy

The development strategy for Tarbert is to enhance the town's physical assets and promote economic growth. To attract residents and tourists, development should be of a high visual and architectural standard. The plan also provides for the protection of scenic and wildlife areas.

Location for Small-scale Technology

Small-scale high-tech enterprises are not bound to traditional employment centres, but can choose instead to locate in areas which provide an attractive environment. The Shannon Development E-town project seeks to promote Tarbert as such a location. This plan supports this project by allocating suitable land, and by protecting and improving the quality of the environment.

A Stopping Point for Tourist and Commercial Traffic

For Tarbert to capitalise on its potential as a stopping point, it will be necessary to improve car parking, as well as other appropriate facilities and attractions.

Tourism

Tourism in Tarbert has not yet reached the point where it is a tourist destination in its own right. The town has one museum and is also located on a number of walking routes. A public bird-watching facility has recently opened. An anchorage for touring boats has also been developed.

To capitalise on maritime and wildlife tourism, access to the water-front areas will need to be improved. The plan aims to facilitate such development where it can be shown that the natural environment will be protected.

Industrial Development

The highly accessible location of Tarbert provides locational advantages which could, if capitalised upon, generate demand for industrial activities.

A large bank of industrial land to the west of the town is envisaged for port-related industrial uses. There are no immediate plans for the land-bank, but continued national growth may generate opportunities.

Development Objectives

This Plan is a statement of planning objectives for land within the town as indicated on Map 2.

Development Boundary

The development boundary for Tarbert has been determined by the need to provide for the development of a compact and accessible town in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.

Housing

Housing Objectives

The proposed pattern for future residential development reflects a compact urban form. This will promote accessibility to employment and to commercial, educational, social and other services. Ribbon development is discouraged in the interests of traffic safety and to reduce servicing costs.

Housing Requirement

This plan facilitates more housing development than that indicated by the growth forecasts, to cater for growth estimated to stem from the implementation of this plan, as well as the Kerry Co. Development Plan Settlement Strategy. It also takes account of lands not becoming available for development.

Objective No	Specific Zoning Objective	Approx Area - Ha (acres)
Z-1	This land is reserved for residential development to serve existing and projected demand.	Additional Proposed 21.01 (51.93)

3.6 Affordable Housing

It is an objective of the Kerry County Development Plan 2003-2009 that 20% of all land zoned for residential use be reserved for the provision of social and affordable housing.

Objective No	Social and Affordable Housing
H 1	It is an objective of the Council that 20% of land zoned in this Local Area Plan for residential and other uses, shall be made available for the provision of social and affordable housing.

Housing Mix

It is an objective to ensure that a variety of housing types is provided to promote sustainable community life, and to enhance choice. Higher densities are appropriate closer to the town centre, with densities decreasing further out. Housing densities should be appropriate to the location and take account of adjoining developments. The provision of detached housing, in order to enhance choices of housing types, will be appropriate in lower density developments away from the town centre.

In the town centre high-density development will be considered where proposals will integrate with the streetscape. Development must comply with the standards set out in the Kerry Co. Development Plan and any new design guidelines adopted by Kerry Co. Council.

A number of laneways within the town centre have the capacity to develop as new streets. These areas are identified on Map 2.

Housing Design and Standards

To prevent the negative impacts on quality of life and the natural and/or built landscape associated with poor housing design, design statements justifying design proposals will be required to accompany applications for 2 or more houses. This must address the visual integration of the proposals in terms of design, siting and materials. Pedestrian access ways must also be addressed.

Employment and Economic Activity

Technology Enterprises

It is an objective of Council to facilitate the development of Tarbert as a viable location for small-scale technology enterprises through the provision of land on mixed-use sites. (See Map 2, Objectives Z3, Z4, Z7). A high standard of design in the form and layout of new development will be required to promote the environmental quality sought by this sector.

In relation to Z7 new development must be designed to protect the listed structure on the site. A new weir and the restoration of the pier could provide boat anchorage facilities. Any scheme must contribute to upgrading the streetscape.

Objective No	Specific Zoning Objective	Approx Area Ha (acres)
Z-7	This site adjacent to the town centre on the banks of the estuary is zoned for small scale knowledge-based industries and/or home working residential units	0.47 (1.16)

Light Industrial Uses

It is an objective to facilitate the diversification of the economy through the provision of land for industrial and light industrial uses. Noxious or dangerous industries that are not compatible with urban areas will not be permitted. Housing or community uses not directly related to industrial activities will not be permitted in industrial areas.

Service uses such as car repair workshops will be considered within the light industrial park where they are of a sufficient scale to be inappropriate in a commercial or mixed-use area.

Objective No	Specific Zoning Objective	Approx Area Ha (acres)
Z-2	A range of light industrial and distribution uses will be permitted on this site.	1.53 (3.77)

Town Centre

Mixed-use service industries such as retail outlets, leisure and professional services will be permitted within the town centre. Commercial developments that have specific requirements/impacts will be considered on a site-by-site basis, and only where they will not give rise to nuisance.

Sites within the town centre have been zoned to allow for the expansion of retail and service uses (see Objectives Z-3, Z-4 and Z-7). Retail, office, technology, recreational and housing uses will be permitted here. The residential component should not exceed 60% of any site area.

Objective No	Specific Zoning Objective	Approx Area Ha (acres)
Z –3	<p>This area shall make provision for the expansion of the town centre, retail and service uses. Office uses, small-scale technology, recreational uses and housing will also be permitted.</p> <p>Proposals must include road layouts, details of design and materials. Access points from Bridewell St. and the N69 to be retained. The layout is to include a traditional street layout along the proposed public road running through the site (see Map 3).</p> <p>Layouts to allow for pedestrian movement within and through the site. Development to provide an attractive and high quality environment. Applications are to be accompanied by a design statement.</p>	1.1 (2.7)

Objective No	Specific Zoning Objective	Approx Area Ha (acres)
Z –4	<p>This site is adjacent to the river and encircled by the walls of the old Mill. The walls are listed and must be retained. The site is also adjacent to the river and public open space and the amenity of both must be preserved. Office, retail, service, tourist, recreational uses and housing will be permitted where proposals respect the historic nature of the site and its setting.</p>	0.24 (0.6)

Community, Recreational and Open Space Facilities

Land is zoned for Community and Recreational Facilities adjacent to similar facilities and to the town centre. Sports and recreational facilities etc. will be facilitated. Future proposed development includes the provision of a children's playground in accordance with Kerry Co. Councils' play strategy.

Objective No	Specific Zoning Objective	Approx Area Ha (acres)
Z - 5	Land to be reserved for leisure and amenity use, including a possible playground facility.	4.27 (10.54)

Objective No	Specific Zoning Objective	Approx Area - Ha (acres)
Z - 6	This land is reserved for the expansion of recreational uses. An access point has been retained to improve access to existing sports facilities.	1.01 (2.5)

Open Space

An extensive area of parkland is identified in a central location on the banks of the river.

Objective No	Specific Zoning Objective	Approx Area - Ha (acres)
Z - 9	Provide for the development of a town park, including parking and possible play facilities.	1.11 (2.73)

Transport and Infrastructure

Car Parking

An additional car park is proposed to the rear of Bridewell St. to reduce on-street parking that currently causes congestion.

Objective No	Specific Zoning Objective	Approx Area - Ha (acres)
Z - 8	Develop the site as a town centre car park with the capacity to service adjacent new development.	0.24 (0.6)

Internal Distributor Roads and Access to Back Lands

Indicative access routes are identified for access to back-land areas so that in-depth development is not blocked off.

Bridewell Street

A significant proportion of through-traffic comprises commercial vehicles. An additional road is proposed to remove such traffic from Bridewell St. The road starts at the junction of Bridewell St. and the Ballylongford Road, and exits directly onto the N69 (See Objective T1) The road will function as not only a relief road, but will provide the opportunity for the expansion of the town centre, as well as a network of streets to accommodate a new housing area.

A possible reduction of the pavement width in Bridewell St. (much of the current pavement is very wide) would allow for increased parking and road width, thereby improving the flow of traffic.

Objective No	Specific Zoning Objective	Approx Area - Ha (acres)
T - 1	Facilitate the development of a new town centre street and a network of minor streets to relieve traffic on Bridewell Street, and provide opportunities for town centre and housing development.	—
T - 2	Reserve access points to facilitate orderly in-depth development.	—
T - 3	Extend footpaths to the development boundary (See Map 3).	—

Public Utility Services

The public water supply in Tarbert does not have sufficient reserves for growth. The upgrading to meet increased demand is proposed to be secured from savings under the NEK Water Conservation Project.

The waste water system has insufficient capacity. A new system is being designed and is estimated to be completed by 2010. The collection network is also proposed to be upgraded where necessary.

Objective No	Specific Zoning Objective	Approx Area - Ha (acres)
S - 1	To provide a site for the development of a new wastewater treatment plant in an appropriate location.	—

Urban Design & Built Heritage

Urban Design

High Quality urban design contributes to the improvement of quality of life, and can create the physical conditions for economic regeneration.

All new development should be shaped by the visual, social, functional and environmental context of the site. Design should contribute to a sense of local identity. In areas of poor architectural quality, proposals should contribute to the upgrading of the character of the streetscape.

Objective No	Specific Zoning Objective	Approx Area - Ha (acres)
UD - 1	All new development to comply with the design objectives of this plan, and with the development control standards laid out in Chapter 12 of the Kerry Co. Development Plan.	—

Land Zoned for Mixed-Use

To promote good urban design, a development brief for mixed-use developments shall be submitted in advance of pre-planning discussions. This brief will address, *inter alia*, form, scale, open space, movement routes, and integration with the town centre area.

Approach Roads

The mature woodland setting fronting the Shannon Estuary is a valuable environmental asset. The land along the estuary is protected by a number of scenic and wildlife designations. Mature trees, hedgerows and dry stone walls are however being lost to development.

On the approach roads to Tarbert all trees and hedgerows should be retained and improved except where it is necessary to create an entrance. Where trees and hedgerows have already been lost, the developer will be required to replace them. The visual and environmental impact of the loss of hedgerows and trees to create entrances will be a consideration in all planning applications

Tree Preservation

The landscape character of Tarbert and its surrounds is characterised by extensive tree coverage and it is an objective of the Planning Authority to ensure that trees are protected from development where feasible.

The densely wooded area shown on Map 2 as Z 10 due to its scale and extent makes an important contribution to amenity and the environment. It is proposed that the Kerry County Council will make a tree preservation order in accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000.

Built Heritage

It is an objective of Kerry County Council to take a balanced approach to the protection and development of the architectural heritage of Tarbert. The Planning Authority will have regard to both the qualities of the given architectural context and the safety, comfort and usage requirements of modern living.

Town Centre Streetscapes

It is an objective of the council that new development within and adjacent to the town centre reinforces the town's local and regional identity by incorporating predominant architectural elements. This will include pavement building lines, rectangular sash windows, plain or decorative plasterwork where appropriate. New developments with pavement building lines will need to make provision for off-street car parking to be provided to the rear of the building.

Objective No	Specific Zoning Objective	Approx Area Ha -(acres)
UD - 2	<p>This land is zoned "Town Centre Streetscape Area". New development must incorporate the traditional architectural values of the existing town centre in terms of massing, scale, form, and street frontage. Features such as rectangular sash windows, plain plaster renders and decorative plaster should be included where appropriate.</p> <p>Proposed development must incorporate pavement building lines and rear parking in its design and layout.</p>	

Proposed New Town Centre Street

This street will function as a new town centre street providing an attractive new town centre extension, thereby contributing to the quality of the environment and the development of Tarbert.

New development along this road must conform to the architectural values of the existing town. Development must include quality public space.

Protected Structures

The following structures are included in the Record of Protected Structures. Council will seek to protect their architectural, social, cultural and historic value in any redevelopment proposals, whilst encouraging the practical re-use of the structures.

No.	Reference	Description / Location
1	21300307	Creamery Ruins
2	21300306	Former Courthouse & Bridewell
3	RPS 003-001	Former Industrial Building Doonard Lower.
4	RPS 003-002	Betting Office, Bridewell Street.
5	20300309	Terraced House, (Pub) Bridewell Street.
6	RPS 003-003	Enright's Restaurant, Bridewell Street.
7	21300304	St Mary's Catholic Church. Chapel Street.
8	21300303	St Mary's Presbytery, Chapel Street.

Architectural Conservation Areas

It is an objective of the Council to designate the area shown on Map 3 as an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) in accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 and the statutory guidelines for designation issued by the Heritage Services