

**Administrative Officer,
Planning Department,
South Dublin County Council,
County Hall,
Tallaght,
Dublin 24**

3rd September 2012

Re: Draft Local Area Plan for Newcastle, Co. Dublin.

Dear Sir/Madam,

The National Transport Authority (“the Authority”) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Newcastle Draft Local Area Plan.

Context

In our submission at the Issues Paper stage, it was stated that public transport accessibility should be a key factor in influencing the scale, density and location of future development in the Greater Dublin Area. As such, Newcastle was referred to as not being a preferred location for large-scale residential development due to its remoteness from high-quality rail and bus services and from retail and other services provided in South Dublin’s District and Town centres. The Authority recommended therefore that the extent of lands zoned for residential use in the LAP should reflect this.

Analysis of the 2011 Census has shown that the Newcastle Electoral District is the second most car dependent in the GDA for trips to work, school and college, with a mode split of 69% Car and only 10% Public Transport.

Proposed Growth

The Authority recognises the reduction in the number of housing units proposed in the draft Local Area Plan in comparison to the 2003 Newcastle-Lyons Local Area Plan – from 1,300 dwellings to 855-1,098 dwellings. This still, however, allows for an additional population of between 2,419 and 3,107 persons in the Newcastle settlement, which had a population of 2,659 in 2011. While this may be reasonable in the longer term (up to 2025/2031), such a scale of growth within the current plan period would not be regarded as consistent with the

principle of integrated land use and transport planning, given Newcastle's location remote from existing public transport and other services. As such the Authority recommends that the extent of zoning is revised further downwards to represent a more sustainable and natural growth for Newcastle over the period of this plan.

School Provision

The Authority welcomes the plan-led approach to the phased provision of schools in tandem with population growth. It is considered that, due to the scale of the settlement, it may not be necessary to provide two separate school sites. It may be more advantageous, from a transport point of view, to locate both schools centrally on the main street close to neighbourhood centre retail and service uses, rather than locate one school on a peripheral site. This would be of particular significance if the overall scale of growth is revised downwards for the period of the plan.

Regardless of the outcome in relation to the location of schools, the Authority recommends that policies are inserted into the plan which state that access by walking and cycling is optimised to the site(s) from the residential areas of Newcastle and that drop-off facilities are provided off-site in order to allow pedestrians and cyclists to access the school safely and conveniently.

The Authority therefore recommends that the draft Local Area Plan is amended to take account of the concerns outlined above and the implementation of the subsequent plan would be supported. I trust that the views of the Authority will be taken into consideration in the finalisation of the Newcastle LAP and we would welcome dialogue with South Dublin County Council as the plan progresses to the next stage.



Hugh Creegan

Director of Transport, Planning and Investment