

Market Square, Letterkenny-A Space for People

An Architectural Design Competition to re-imagine our Public Space

'A good city is like a good party-people stay longer than really necessary because they are enjoying themselves.'

Jan Gehl.

Letterkenny Chamber of Commerce in partnership with Donegal County Council presents a competition for the reimagining of the public space at Market Square, Letterkenny. The competition is seeking concept design proposals that embrace architecture and design in creating great places that people want to experience and spend time in. Concept design proposals are to imagine how Market Square can be a central public space that conveys and communicates the DNA of Letterkenny and its people. Design proposals are to be innovative, visionary and creative in architecture and urban design to present an exciting multi-functional civic space that will actively encourage public use, responding in particular to our needs in a post Covid-19, 'new normal' environment and be capable of activating further regeneration and vibrancy in our historic town centre.

The deadline for submissions is 4pm on 4th September 2020.



The Brief

Market Square- A Space for People is an open call for concept proposals created by architectural expertise to explore and present how Market Square could be re-imagined and re-designed to be a space that would more actively encourage people to use it as a safe place to gather, to meet, to animate, to rest, to celebrate, to trade, to market and to promote. The need for a successful and effective outdoor space for people at Market Square is an essential component of the adaptation and recovery of our town centre in a post-Covid world. Concept proposals should therefore take account of the need to respond to a 'new normal' and guide the transformation of Market Square as a useable, innovative and accessible public space where public life can thrive and interactions can occur.

Concept proposals should also be of a high quality level in creativity, vision and innovation that will potentially set the quality standard for further regeneration projects in Letterkenny town centre and, if implemented, act as a centrally located catalyst for renewal and regeneration.

Design proposals should be visionary.

Concept design proposals will take account of the community feedback outlined on page 5 of this brief.

The competition is open to professionals and students in architecture or other related fields. An adjudication panel will evaluate the submissions and shortlist design proposals. Shortlisted design proposals will be displayed in order to further engage the community in the process and the community will be invited to indicate their preferred design proposal. This community participation will inform the final decision of the evaluation panel.

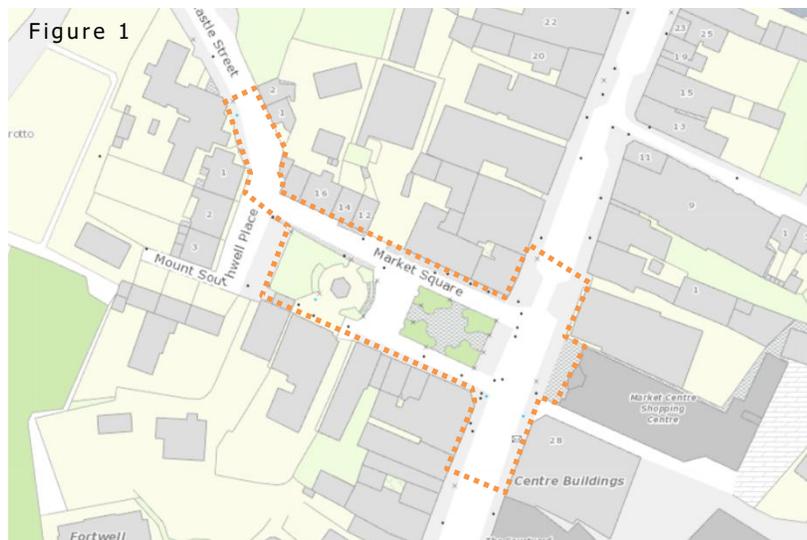
The prize in relation to the winning design is €8,000.

All expenses incurred in developing submissions are the responsibility of the designer. Copyright of the winning design concept including all documents/ maps/ illustrations (in relevant digital format) will be assigned to Letterkenny Chamber of Commerce and Donegal County Council. The winning design concept may be advanced to Part VIII in due course in full or in adapted form and it may form the basis of a funding application for capital delivery. Notwithstanding, a winning design concept shall not be taken as a commission or leading to delivery.

A topographical survey of the area is available by emailing regeneration@donegalcoco.ie

Location

The design competition relates to the entirety of the original Market Square including areas that are public roads. Whilst the design concept will specifically relate to the area shown in figure 1, submissions should reference within the textual supporting design statement, how the design or materiality of Market Square can relate and be linked to further public realm and streetscape enhancement along Main Street and across Castle Street to the Cathedral Quarter (including Church Lane) so that it will form a centerpiece of a much wider regeneration strategy.



Context

In its original form Market Square was an open area where people gathered and trade occurred. A plaque located at the existing Market Square today describes it as the 'social assembly point and economic centre of the town.' It is overlooked by the iconic St Eunan's Cathedral and the historic Mountsouthwell Terrace on the Western end.

In the early 1990's, Market Square was redesigned to be made up of 2 distinct areas; the upper bandstand and the lower level where the Hiring Fair monument is located. Access is via steps and the space is bounded by walls and planting. Observational studies show that the number of people entering the space and spending time in it is low. More commonly people are walking around the external edges of the space using the traditional footpaths to get from one destination to another.

As well as a public space, Market Square is used for multiple and oftentimes competing purposes;

- It is home to a number of people who live on the Square
- Business users (food, financial, office, service)
- Pedestrians
- Taxis
- Car parking for persons with restricted ability
- Loading bays
- Car parking spaces
- Road users (car, van, bus)

Submissions should consider alternative solutions for existing users where they are impacted by the design proposed.



It is noted that by making a submission to the competition, entrants will be expected to be familiar with the Square, it's issues and constraints, preferably though a site visit.

Timeline

The indicative timeline for the competition is as follows:

Competition open	27 th July 2020
Competition closes	4 th September 2020
Shortlist of design concepts	September 2020
2 week public consultation on finalists	1 st October to 15 th October 2020
Final evaluation panel	19 th October to 30 th October 2020
Announcement of winning design concept	2 nd November 2020
