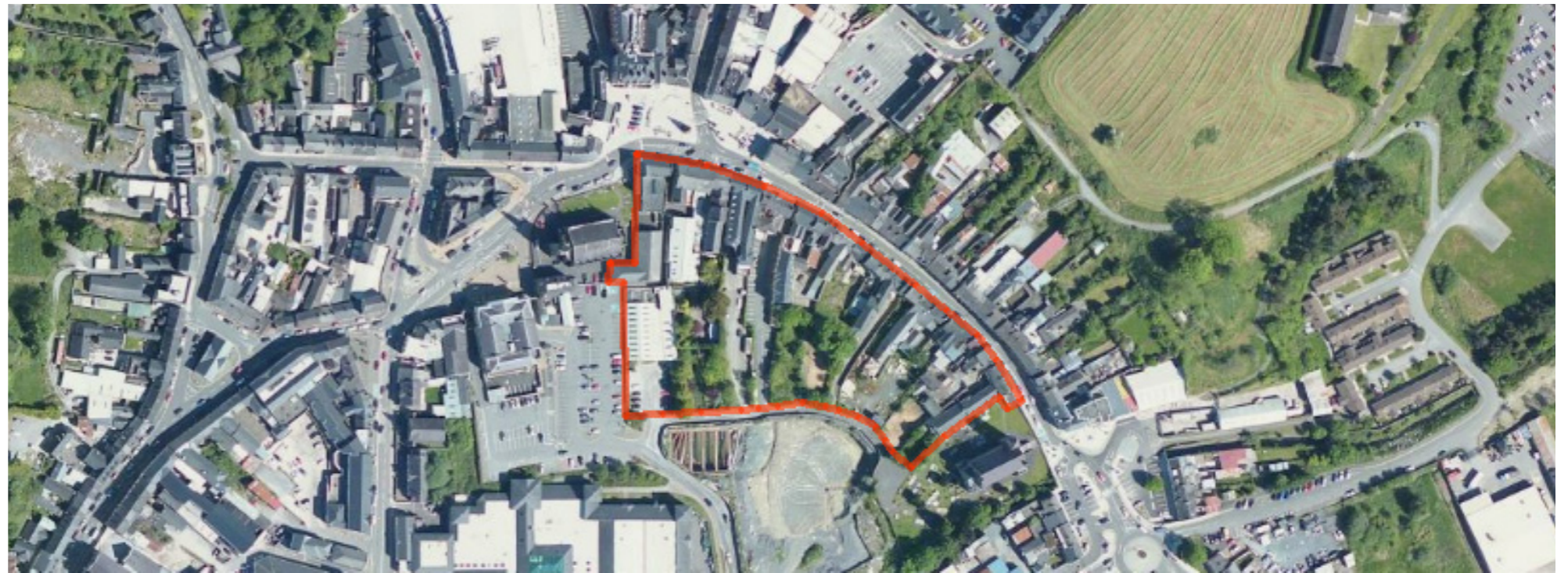
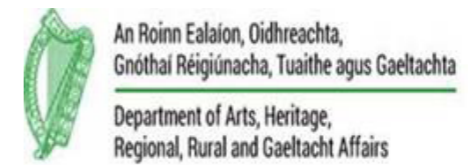


DUBLIN STREET REGENERATION PLAN MONAGHAN



Extract From Bing Maps_Dublin Street Regeneration Plan Area Outlined In Red_Annotated by SW

DRAFT 22.05.17



Comhairle Contae Mhúineacháin
Monaghan County Council

Dublin Street Regeneration Plan Monaghan

Prepared on behalf of Monaghan County Council, by Sheridan Woods Architects & Urban Planners Ltd, and supported by the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs under the Realising our Rural Potential: The Action Plan for Rural Development.

May 2017



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Introduction

The Dublin Street Regeneration Plan has been prepared on behalf of *Monaghan County Council* by *Sheridan Woods Architects & Urban Planners Ltd.*

Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of the plan is to provide guidance on the regeneration options for the future development of the Dublin Street Regeneration Plan study area, and to provide recommendations on how to:

- Realise the potential for growth and to improve the range and quality of offer in retail and non-retail sectors
- Deliver a more attractive shopping and visitor environment
- Develop the town as a service centre given its strategic location
- Increase the number of people visiting Monaghan for shopping and other purposes.

Guidance is to be provided in relation to a framework plan, concept visualisations of building heights and massing, or other appropriate format, addressing land uses, pedestrian and vehicular movement, car parking and amenity are provided.

Consultation

This plan has been prepared in consultation with Monaghan County Council, identified stakeholders including landowners, and the Monaghan Town Team. Individual consultations with identified stakeholders was held on 6 December 2016, and stakeholders were invited to make submission to inform the plan. A meeting with the town team was also held on 01 February 2017. The consultations and submissions were taken into account at the survey, analysis and plan stages.

Planning Policy Context

The plan has been informed by national, regional and county policy objectives and guidance. Of particular relevance is the Monaghan County Development Plan 2007 – 2013 (currently under review), which incorporates the Monaghan Town Development Plan and the retail and housing strategies for the county. The Development Plan recognises the role of the town in its strategic context. It includes a number of policies which are relevant and have a bearing on the proposed area.

The subject lands identified are zoned for town centre use. To provide for the development and improvement of appropriate town centre uses including retail, residential, cultural and social use, with the overall aim of maintaining and strengthening the vitality and viability of Monaghan town centre.

Dublin Street is an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) and includes a number of protected structures. Policies for the ACA and protected structures promote the repair and refurbishment of the existing buildings, and that development in the vicinity of buildings of architectural heritage shall respect the character and integrity of these and the place.

The lands to the north of Dublin Street benefits from a Local Area Action Plan. The LAAP proposes a new street to the rear, with infill and new mixed use development, and a new interim surface car parking area of 0.5ha, with amenity and recreational area. There are also proposed improved pedestrian links, and local access from the new street to The Diamond and Old Cross Square. The implementation of this plan would complement the regeneration of the Dublin Street Regeneration Plan area.

Structure of Report

The report is structured into the following sections

Section 1 Introduction

Section 2 Context and Regeneration Area Appraisal

Section 3 Regeneration Vision

Section 4 Regeneration Strategy

Section 5 Objectives



Fig 1.1 Extract From MyPlan_Site Outlined In Red_Annotated by SW

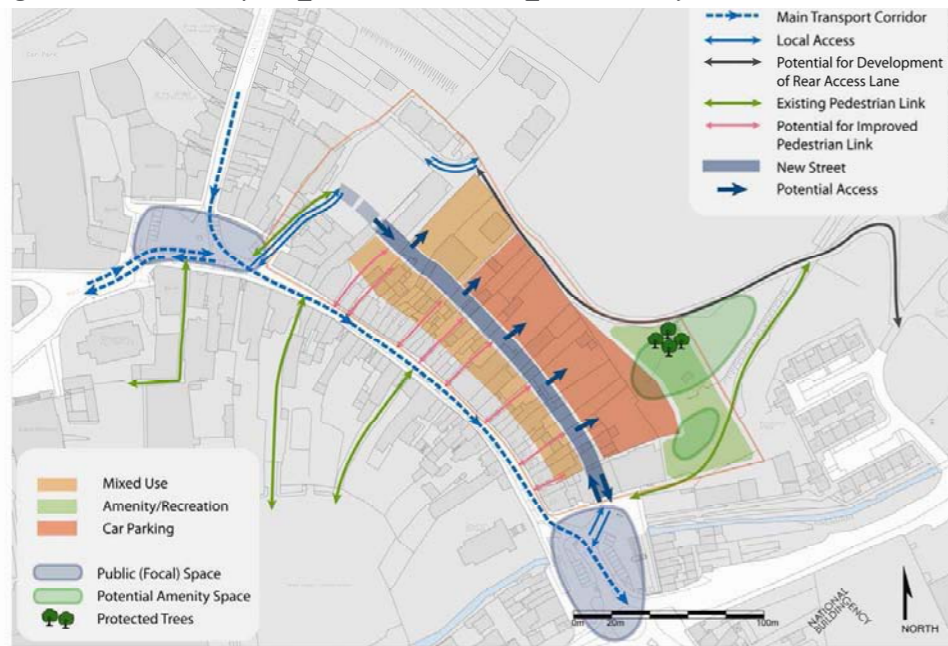


Fig 1.2 Dublin Street Local Area Action Plan_Framework Plan Map

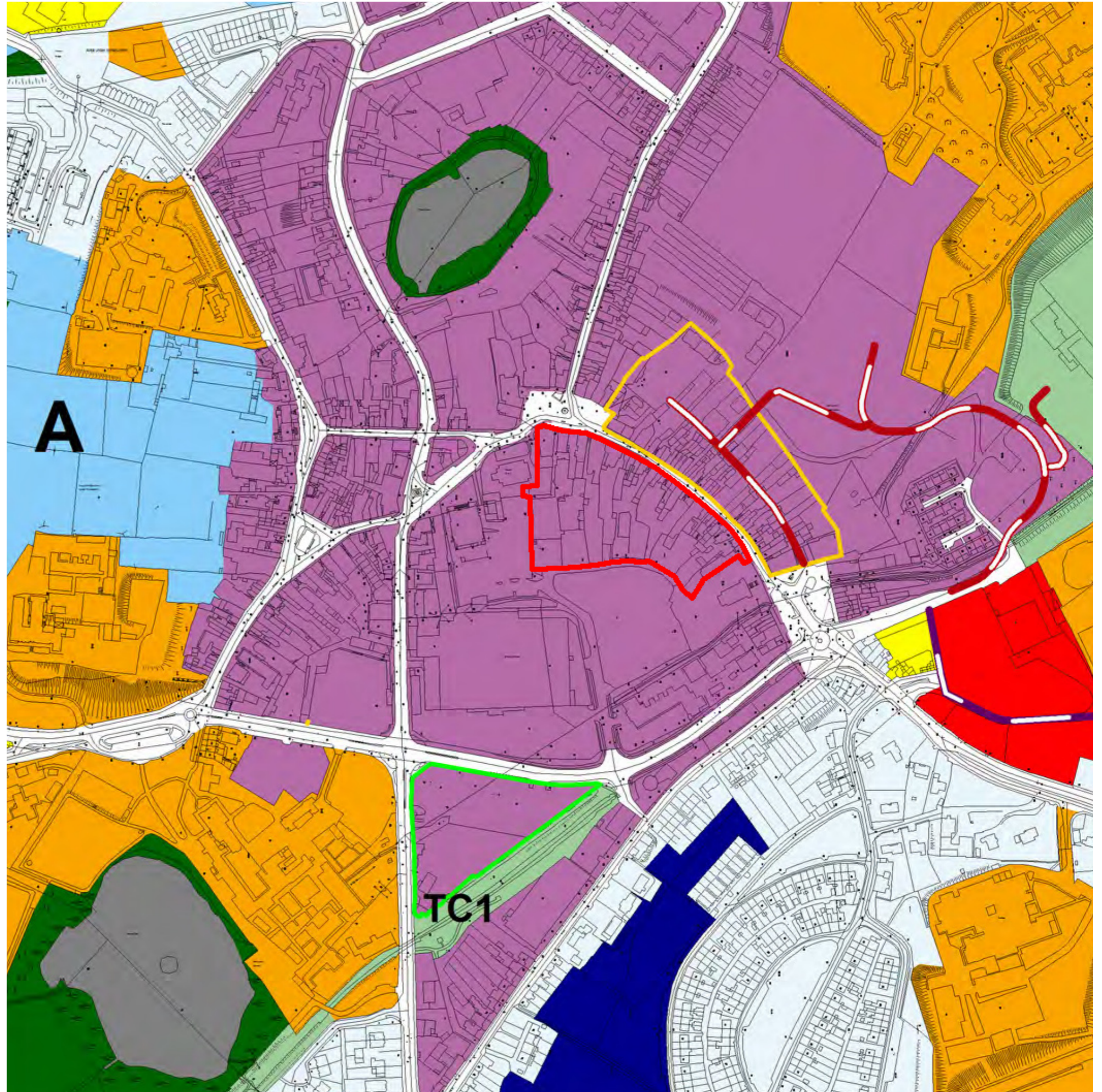


Fig 1.3 Extract From Monaghan Development Plan MDP 2_Site Outlined In Red_Annotated by SW

SECTION 2 - SITE CONTEXT - APPRAISAL

Introduction

Monaghan Town is strategically located at the intersection of the N2 Dublin – Derry/Letterkenny and N54 Belfast - Galway National Routes, linking Dublin to the North-West and Belfast to the Midlands, respectively. The town is also located along the key east-west corridor linking Dundalk and Newry to Sligo. Monaghan was designated as a hub town in the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) 2002-2020. It is located 45km north west of Dundalk, the designated gateway for the North-East Region. As well as serving as a critical hub in terms of transport and linkages with Northern Ireland and the North-West, Monaghan Town performs important employment, retailing and administrative functions servicing the economic needs of a large rural hinterland, which extends into Northern Ireland and adjoining counties.

The town's large rural hinterland and role as county town will continue to strengthen its function as a business and administrative centre. Whilst North County Monaghan is noted for its extensive number of villages and dispersed settlement structure, the increasing urbanisation and population growth will expand residential and commercial development in the town. This will contribute towards the creation of the critical mass which attracts inward investment in employment and enterprise activities.

Historic Evolution

Monaghan is a historical town of notable architectural and civic character. The town derives its name from the anglicisation of "Muineachain", meaning "hilly place" or "bushy place". Monaghan Town owes part of its development to the plantation period (early 17th century), although the area was occupied for over 100 years prior to that. The earliest references to Monaghan are from the fourteenth century, when the McMahon family established their primary residence on a crannog on Convent Lake.

Monaghan Town developed many of its characteristics during the Ulster plantation. The central Market Square, or Diamond, with the principal centres of administration, religious buildings and commerce were common in Mid-Ulster towns. Monaghan grew commercially through the development of the road and rail network and flourished in the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries as a centre for linen and agricultural production.

The historic street pattern is evidenced today in the four historic squares, connected by the main streets, radiating from the central space, the Diamond, including Dublin Street, Glaslough Street and Market Street. Adjoining the Diamond is Church Square with land mark structures, St. Patricks Church and the Courthouse. To the west is Market Square, and the Market House located within the space. At the opposite end of the town is Old Cross Square under which the Ulster Canal runs which is the location of an ancient market cross.

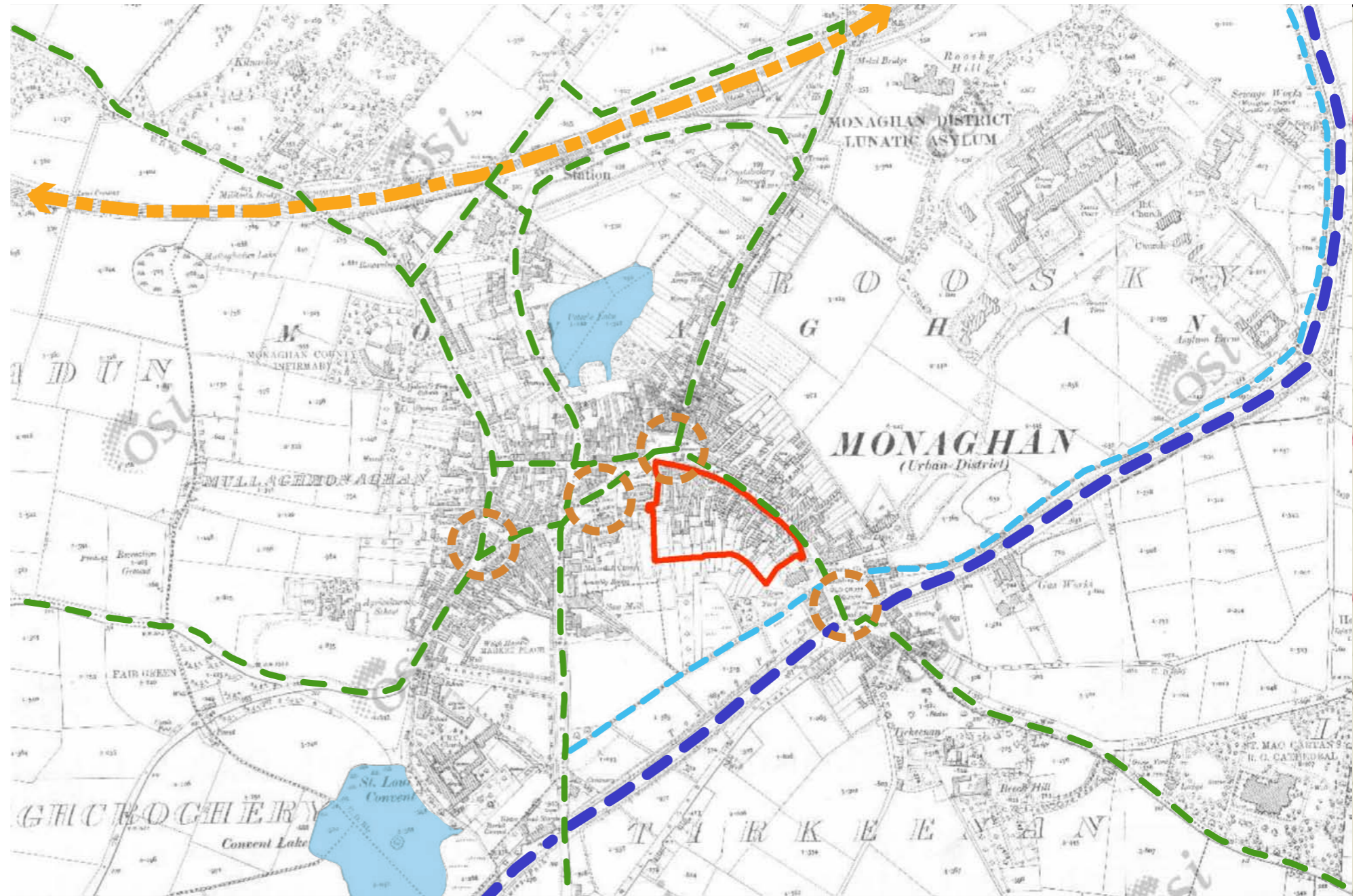


Fig 2.1 Extract From MyPlan_Historic Map_Annotated by SW



Fig 2.2 Extract From MyPlan_Historic Map_Annotated by SW

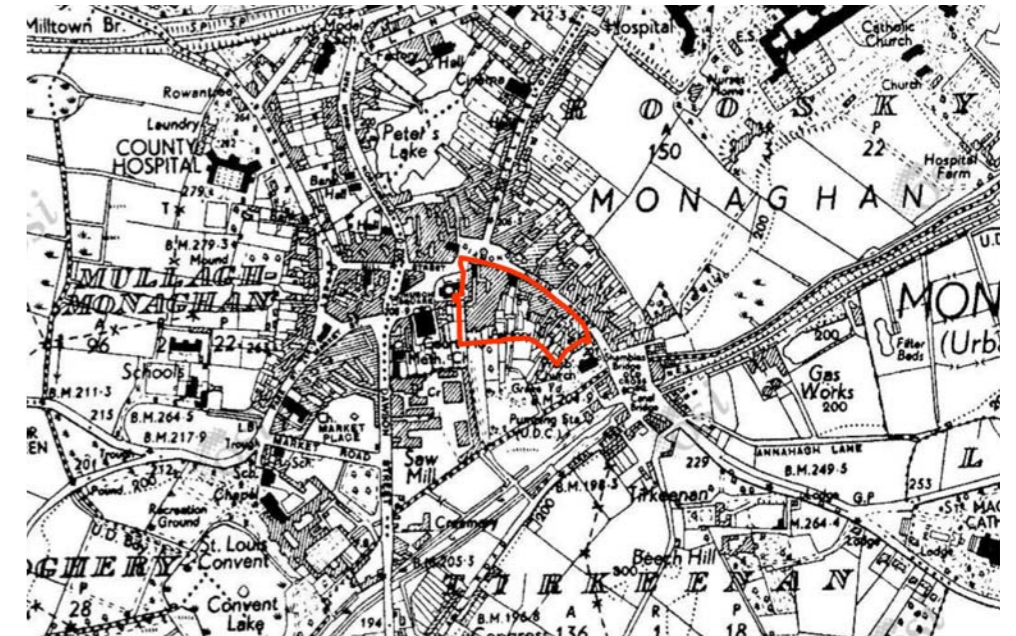


Fig 2.3 Extract From MyPlan_Historic Map_Annotated by SW

Dublin Street Regeneration Plan Study Area

The Dublin Street Regeneration Plan area is located to the southeast of the town core, extending from The Diamond to the northwest, south eastwards along Dublin Street, and is defined to the southeast by the Presbyterian Church to the at at Old Cross Square.

The plan area is defined by the terraces of dwelling to Dublin Street to the north east, and the long rear gardens to the south. Historically the rear gardens extended to the Shambles river. 20th century development resulted in the gardens being reduced to their present-day configuration. The rear gardens now face onto the existing large public surface carparking area to the south.

The terraces facing Dublin Street are interspersed with laneways through archways (4 No) and gaps between terraces (4 No.) to the courtyards, backlands and gardens to the rear. The existing structures facing Dublin Street comprise two and three storey structures, generally of two and three bays in width. Typically, there are long rear annexes extending into the depths of the plots. To the south east the backlands are characterised by small courtyards created by two storey outhouses positioned parallel to the principal structure. The lands slope down from The Diamond to the north, eastwards to Old Cross Square to the south east, and also down from Dublin Street southwards toward the public surface car park to the rear.

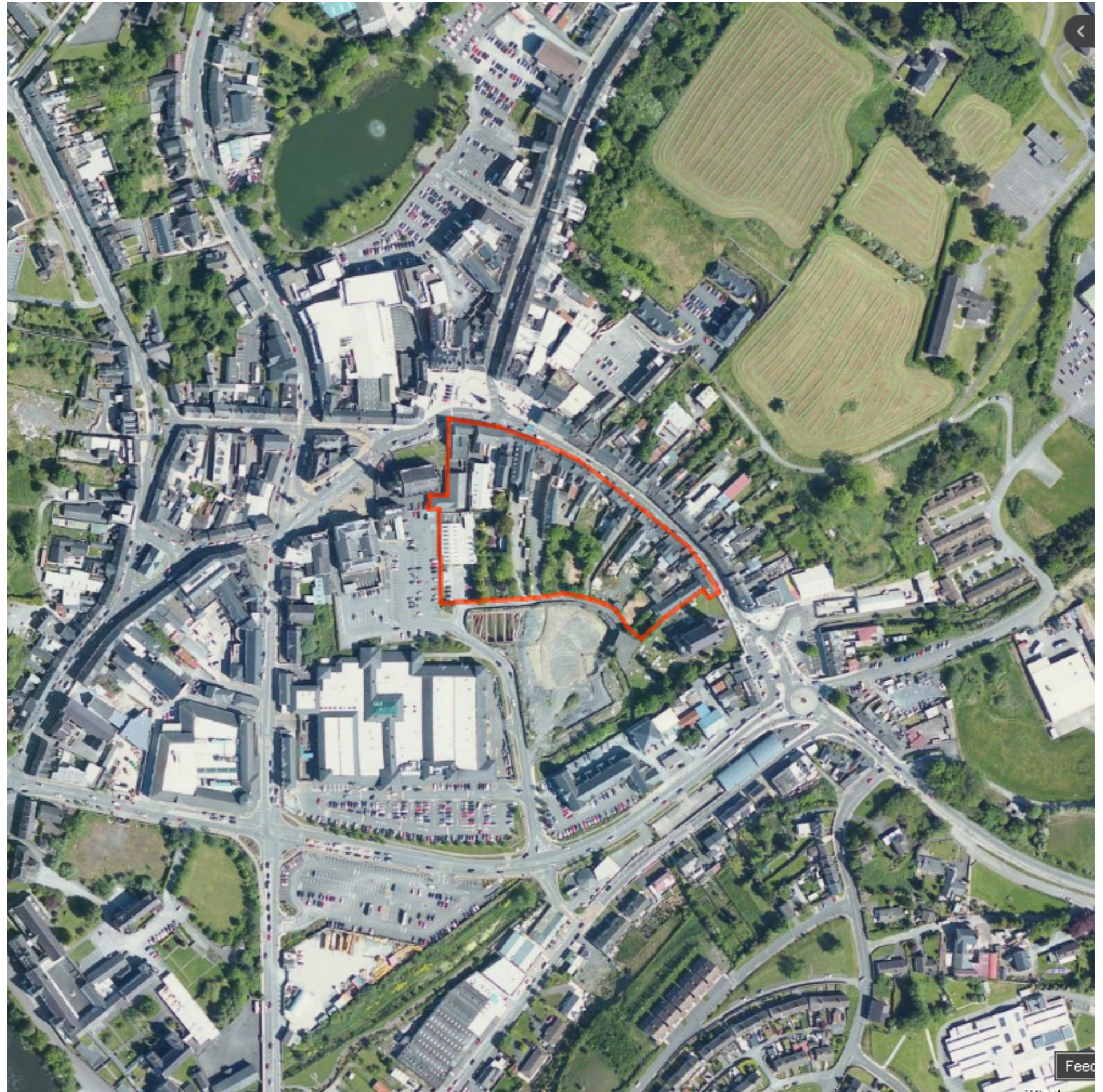


Fig 2.4 Extract From Bing Maps_Dublin Street Regeneration Plan Area Outlined In Red_Annotated by SW



Fig 2.5 The Diamond Dublin Street



Fig 2.6 Vacancy Adjoining Magill's Jewellery Dublin Street

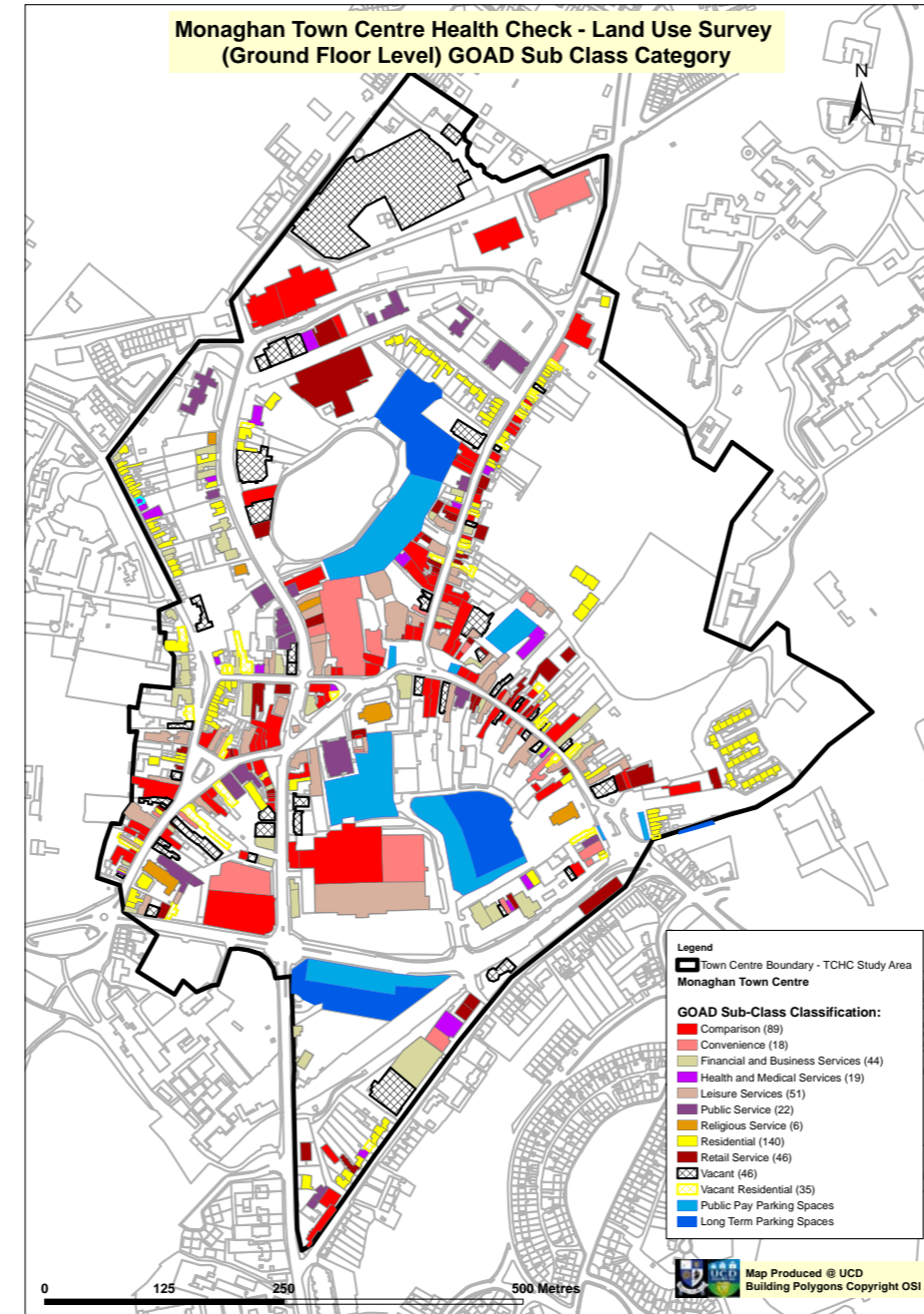


Fig 2.7 Monaghan Town Centre Health Check Land Use Survey Prepared by UCD

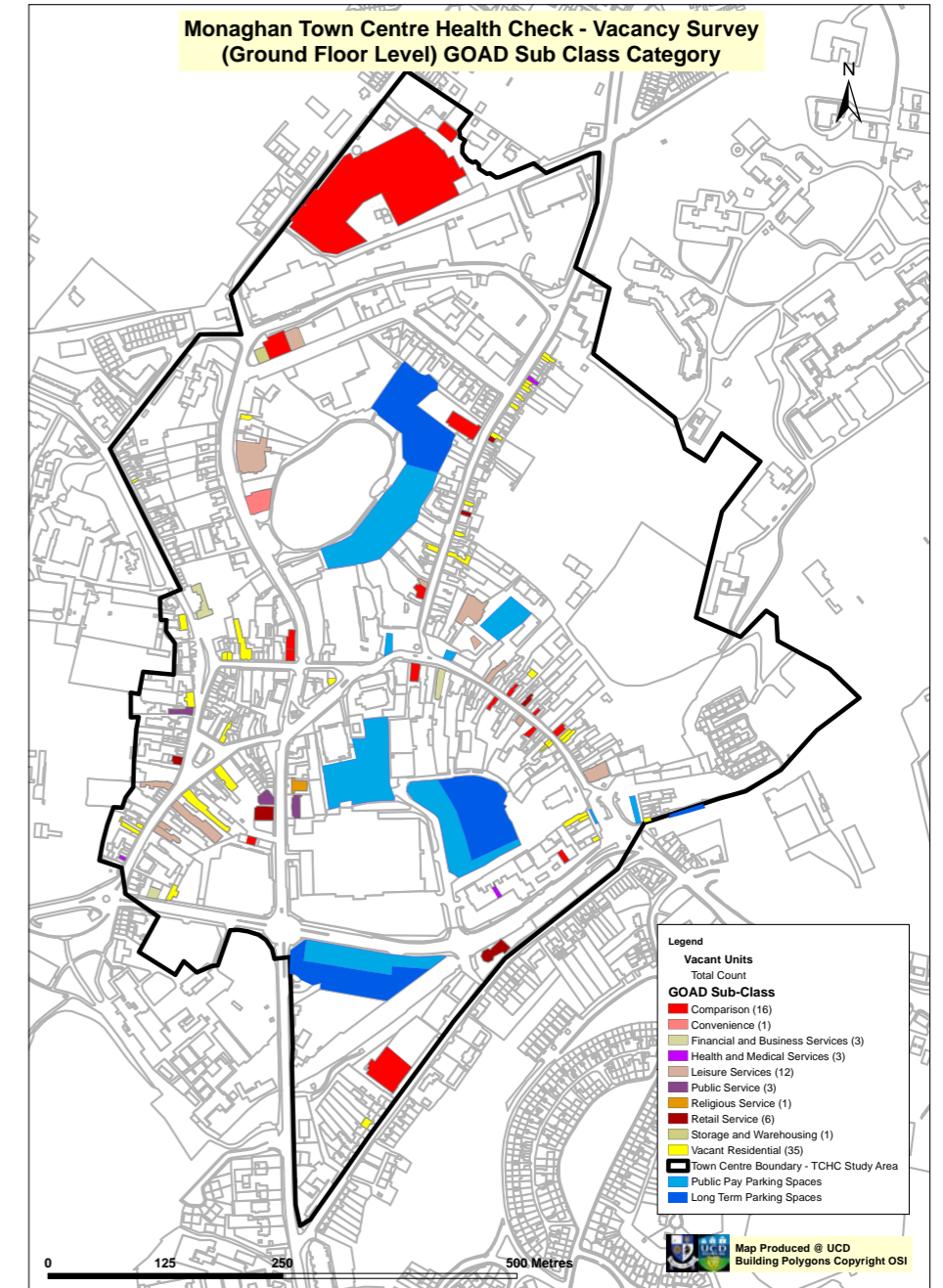


Fig 2.8 Monaghan Town Centre Health Check Vacancy Prepared by UCD

Land Uses – Regeneration Area

Ordnance Survey maps and historical accounts over the years refer to the central role this street has played in the town, in conjunction with the Diamond. In previous times the series of pedestrian linkages were thriving arteries to communities who lived and worked in the back lands of the town. However, as the nature of uses have changed in the town centre, with the development of larger shopping facilities within the town core, including the Monaghan Shopping Centre and Dunnes Stores to the south west of the study area, and Flemings Department store to the north west, pedestrian movement patterns have shifted towards these areas and there is a consequent reduced footfall to Dublin Street. This together with diversification of socio-economic patterns and population shifted towards the outskirts, a period of steady and seemingly irreversible decline manifested itself in Dublin Street and its backland area today.

The existing land uses within the study area comprise civic use, including the Town Hall at the western end of the street, professional services including banking and solicitors offices, political constituency office, commercial uses including retail units; jewellery, clothing, footwear, convenience, including a butcher, a pharmacy, and wellness salon, a number of restaurants and fast food units. Recent uses that have emerged along the street include a casino, with two further casinos to the rear extending along the backlands. The Northern Standard newspaper office and printing works are located to the rear of McNally's shop and townhouse. A number of the shops extended the retail use to the full width of the property which does not allow separate access to the upper levels and which has led to vacancy at upper levels. There are also a number of vacant shops along the street. The backland areas are substantial, but are underutilised, and represent a poor and unsustainable use of serviced land.

Land Uses - Surrounding Area

The surrounding area is characterised by a mix of uses, comprising a small to medium scale retail uses based on traditional narrow plot street pattern. Immediate to the south east is the Monaghan Shopping Centre and Dunnes Stores to the south west, with Flemings department store to the north west. There is a large expanse of car parking immediately to the south, and east of the regeneration area. There is a modest level of residential use in the town core.

Built Heritage

There are a number of fine buildings both civic and vernacular structures along the street. The Town Hall is a distinctive feature within the streetscape, and creates a minor landmark along the street. There are a number of attractive three storey three bay retail / town-houses. These are located at western end of the street at The Diamond, including 'CMcNallys', 'McGills' and 'Lonargans', and to the southern end 'Sherrys'. More modest two bay, three storey structures are interspersed along the street, with additional three and one four storey structure. A number of these properties benefit from original and attractive shop fronts, including 'Paul Boyce Solicitors', and contemporary interpretation of tradition shop fronts, including a vacant property adjoining 'Best 4 you'.

Many of the buildings have lost original features, including original sash windows and original shop fronts. Clutter, including signage, excessive wiring, lighting fixture etc has occurred on the facades that detract from the overall visual appearance and character of the buildings. However, these works are all reversible and the streetscape can be improved with careful decluttering, upgrade, and maintenance.

The backlands to the rear of 'Sherrys' public house benefit from a cluster of out houses, that create very attractive and intimate courtyard spaces. There are remnants of fine stone piers, and chamfered corner details that are a characteristic of the area. The materials include lime washed stone, and render and brick finishes. Traditional external stairs provide access to first floor levels.

The built heritage is recognised and protected by the policies of the development plan which relate to the designation of an Architectural Conservation Area within the area and a number of structures listed on the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) along the street. There are also a number of structures identified in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH). There are 5 no. structures of regional importance within the study boundary, and 5 No. of local importance.

Archaeology

The area's rich archaeological heritage is identified in the Record of Monuments and Places as a Zone of Archaeological Potential, and is protected under the National Monuments Act, (ref. no. MO009-060). 'A former castle is given protection of local importance Ref MO009-060003 'There is a fayre castle buylte at Monahan on the king's charge wherein Sr. Edward Blanye nowe dwells, who for makinge of it more convenient for himselfe for his owne tyme hath layde out good somes of money of his owne' (Carew MSS, quoted from UJA 1975, 81). The castle was under construction in 1611 and last visible remains were taken down around 1853 (McMahon and Walsh 1982, 7). It consisted of a central keep with bawn enclosed by stone wall.' The office of the Northern Standard premises are mentioned as a potential location for a castle.



Fig 2.9 Town Council Offices, Dublin Street

Address	RPS Ref	RPS Rating	NIAH Ref	NIAH Rating
'Sherry's No. 24 Dublin Street	41001056	Regional	41303130	Regional
No. 10 Dublin Street Birthplace of Charles Gavin Duffy	41001071	Regional	41303129	Regional
Town Council Offices	41001080	Regional	41303128	Regional
Former Town Hall ? (19 The Diamond)	41001100	Regional	?	Regional
4 The Diamond 'McNallys'	41001086	Regional	41303126	Regional
No. 3 The Diamond	Local 1	Local		
No. 5 The Diamond	Local 2	Local		
No. 6 The Diamond	Local 3	Local	41303127	Regional
No. 7 The Diamond	Local 4	Local		
No. 9 The Diamond	Local 5	Local		



Fig 2.12 'Sherry's' Public House



Fig 2.10 Courtyard and Out Buildings To Rear of 'Sherry's' Public House



Fig 2.13 Rear view of 'Sherry's' Public House

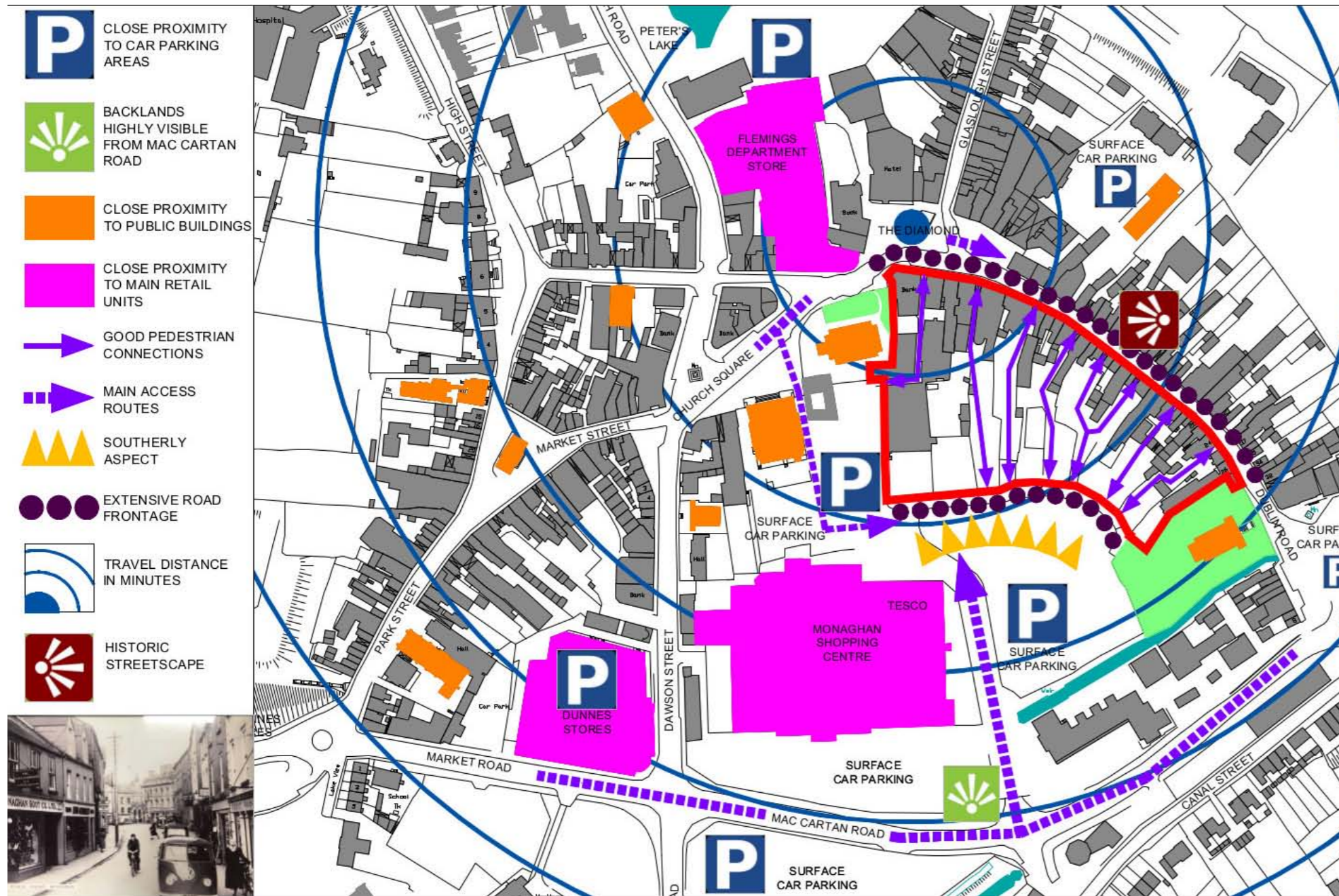


Fig 2.14 Dublin Street Regeneration Plan Area and Environs_Strengths

Urban Structure & Public Realm

The urban structure in the town is well defined, and the structure of the town is clearly legible. The figure of eight street pattern and the interconnection of the streets to the historic four urban spaces creates particular character areas which gives a good sense of orientation within the town. The historic urban spaces have been repaved in Church Square, the Diamond and Old Cross Square, provide a high quality public realm, in particular at Church Square, and the Diamond and distinctive and attractive character areas.

Dublin Street connects The Diamond and Old Cross Square, and benefits from its own distinctive characteristics. The building line is well defined, and with a gentle rising topography, and slightly curving building line creates an attractive and intimate closing effect. The gaps and archways allow glimpses southwards with potential good visual connection to the south west and backland areas.

New linear blocks have developed into the backland areas to the rear of a number of the existing structures. While this form follows the traditional approach in principle, the configuration of the blocks do not readily achieve dual orientation, which lessens the quality of the accommodation. Furthermore, this form of development limits east west permeability, and potential for coordinated development between plots and does not maximise the southerly orientation of the lands.

In general the pedestrian and vehicular access to the backlands are not well supervised, which limits a sense of security. The fall in topography from Dublin Street to the lower car parking area also discourages pedestrian movement between both areas, which further reduces the sense of security. This detracts from the quality of the public realm.



Fig 2.15 Dublin Street Regeneration Plan Area and Environs_Weaknesses

The public surface car park to the rear of Dublin Street also extends to the rear of The Diamond, and Church Square provides ample car parking and ensures ease of access to the more recent shopping areas, including the Monaghan Shopping Centre, Dunnes Stores and Fleming's department store. However, these car parking areas are generally open, exposed, poorly defined, poorly light, and are windswept and unattractive places and represent a poor quality public realm.

Dublin Street is a narrow street with limited car parking, there is no opportunity to comfortably walk and pause on the street. This environment creates a poor public realm and has also contributed to the deterioration and decline of Dublin Street as a shopping destination, a place to do business and a place to live.

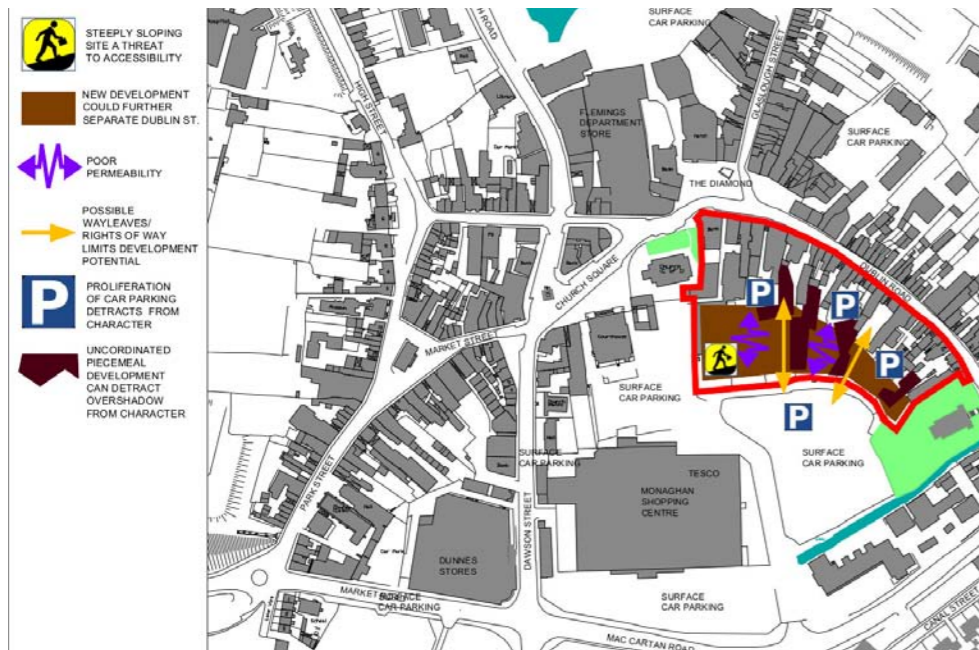


Fig 2.16 Dublin Street Regeneration Plan Area and Environs_Threats Movement and Access

Vehicular movement along Dublin Street to the north east of the study area, operating on a one – way system leading from the Diamond south east to Old Cross Square. As a consequence of this, Dublin Street has become an exit from the town, reversing its former role as a principle entrance to the town core.

The configuration of the road without traffic calming measures, and as a one way system encourages speed. Relative limited parking opportunities along the street results in vehicles less inclined to use the street to short term park and visit local shops. Furthermore, footpaths for pedestrian areas are very narrow. This together with speeding vehicular movement creates a poor physical environment for pedestrians.

-  GOOD PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS
-  INDICATIVE MAIN ACCESS ROUTES
-  POTENTIAL PUBLIC SPACE GATEWAY TO BACKLANDS
-  INDICATIVE OF LARGER DEVELOPMENT SITE
-  INDICATIVE OF MID SIZE DEVELOPMENT SITES
-  HISTORIC STREETScape & BACKLAND SPACES GIVE STRONG IDENTITY
-  POTENTIAL TO USE SLOPED SITE FOR SEMI- BASEMENT CARPARKING



Fig 2.17 Dublin Street Regeneration Plan Area and Environs_Opportunities

There is vehicular access from Dublin Street to the backlands, however these are generally narrow, and quite restricted. There is ample vehicular access from the existing road adjoining the car park to the south of the site. There are good pedestrian links from Dublin Street to the backlands. These creates a permeable pedestrian network.

Socio – Economic Context

Monaghan Municipal District had a population of 20,500 and a town population of 7,452 in 2011 (8,620 in 2016 preliminary figure) (CSO). Preliminary results from Census 2016 indicate a modest population increase. The town’s large rural hinterland and role as county town will continue to strengthen its function as a business and administrative centre which has the potential to contribute to the regeneration of Dublin Street.

Notwithstanding the population growth, an analysis of residential densities within the town core illustrates a reduction in the number of residents in the town core, and an increase in the resident population on the edges of the town. This characteristic also contributes to the decline in the vitality of the inner core. In the context of sustainable urban development it is appropriate that an increase in the resident population in the town core should be encouraged, and should form part of the regeneration plan.

The County Monaghan Retail Strategy 2016 – 2022 identifies future retail floor space requirements for the overall County and encourages innovation and diversification of the county retail offer, including tourism, agri-tourism and craft related centres where appropriate (Objective 4), and promotes complementary non retail uses in town centres particularly where this can encourage cross - visitation (Objective 9). A review of retail density carried out in 2016 by CBRE Research has found there is an average retail density of 643sqm of shopping centre and retail park accommodation per 1,000 head of population in Ireland. There is however, a divergence of retail density on a national basis. In this regard, Monaghan has a low retail density, comprising 111sqm per 1000 population, which is in contrast to Westmeath, which has an average retail density of 1,176sqm. This would suggest that there is capacity for further retail development in Monaghan county and town. Dublin Street is well placed to provide a range of retail uses to complement existing retail provision in the town core.

A comparison of retail provision in Athlone and Kilkenny is useful as similar county size, and centres where retail use has been concentrated in town core. Athlone benefits from two Shopping Centres in the town core, the recent Athlone Shopping Centre, and the Golden Island Shopping centre. Athlone Shopping Centre provides 1,950sqm of retail floor space, and incorporates Marks & Spencer, who trade alongside TK Maxx, H&M, Zara, River Island, Next, Topshop and Tommy Hilfiger. The shopping centre complements the Golden Island shopping centre, that includes Pennys, Argos, Lifestyle and Tesco. Alongside the centre is a mix of one, two and three bedroom apartments and a four star landmark hotel. The McDonough Junction shopping centre in Kilkenny provides 1,950sqm of retail floor space (45 shops), and includes its anchor Dunnes Stores, as well as TK Maxx, H&M, Jack and Jones, and Next. This complements the Market Cross shopping centre in the town core, which includes Supervalu, Heaton's, and Penneys.

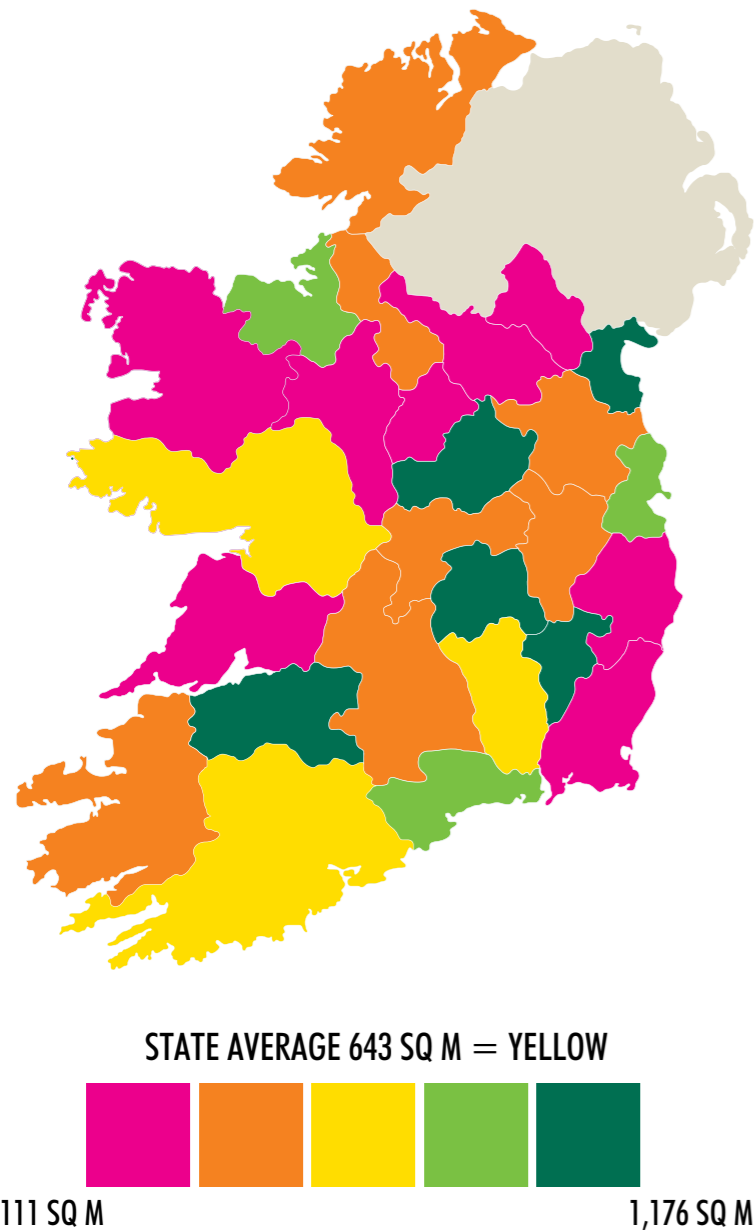
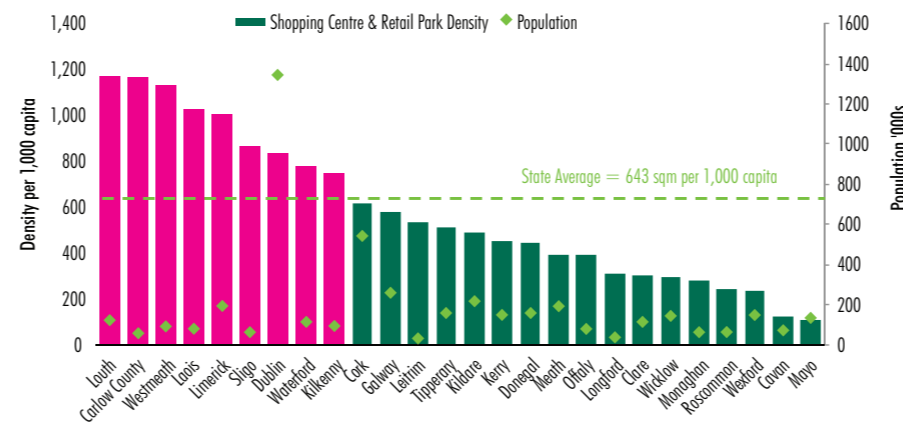


Fig 2.18 Extract From CBRE Ireland Retail Market View Q3 2016 pg 4 (SQM of Retail Density per 1,000 capita)



Source: CBRE, Q3 2016

Fig 2.19 Extract From CBRE Ireland Retail Market View Q3 2016 pg 3 (Retail Density by County)

Monaghan benefits from a good range of shopping, in both the Monaghan Shopping Centre, Flemmings, and the Monaghan Retail Park, there is a gap in retail provision however, and consideration could be given to stores such as Pennys and TK Maxx stores or similar comparison goods stores. These uses could be readily accommodated on the sites.

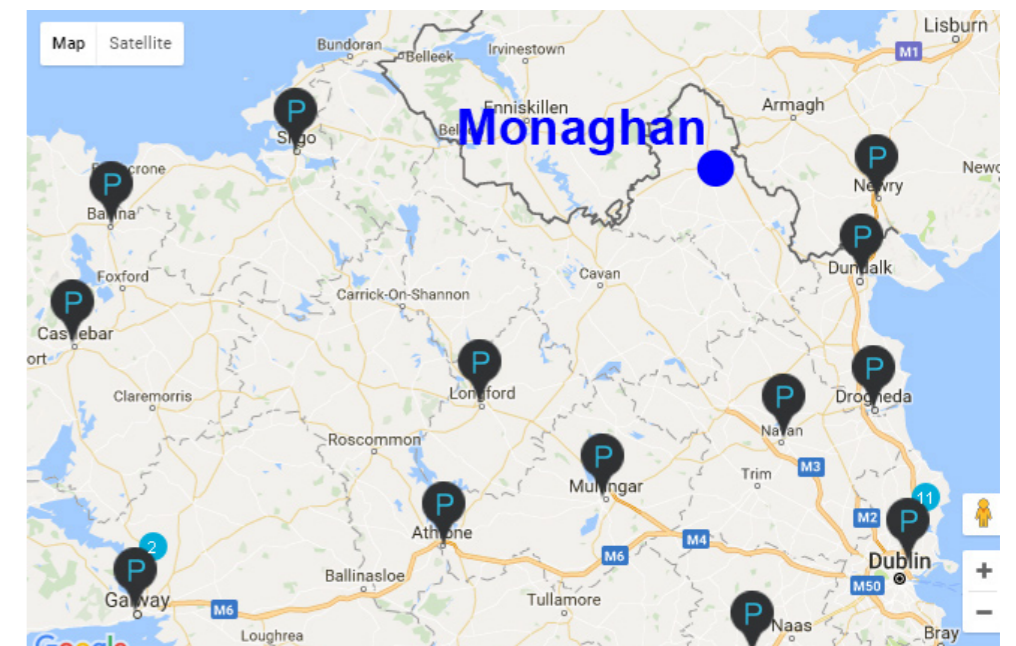


Fig 2.20 Extract From Google Maps_Locaiton Of Pennys Stores

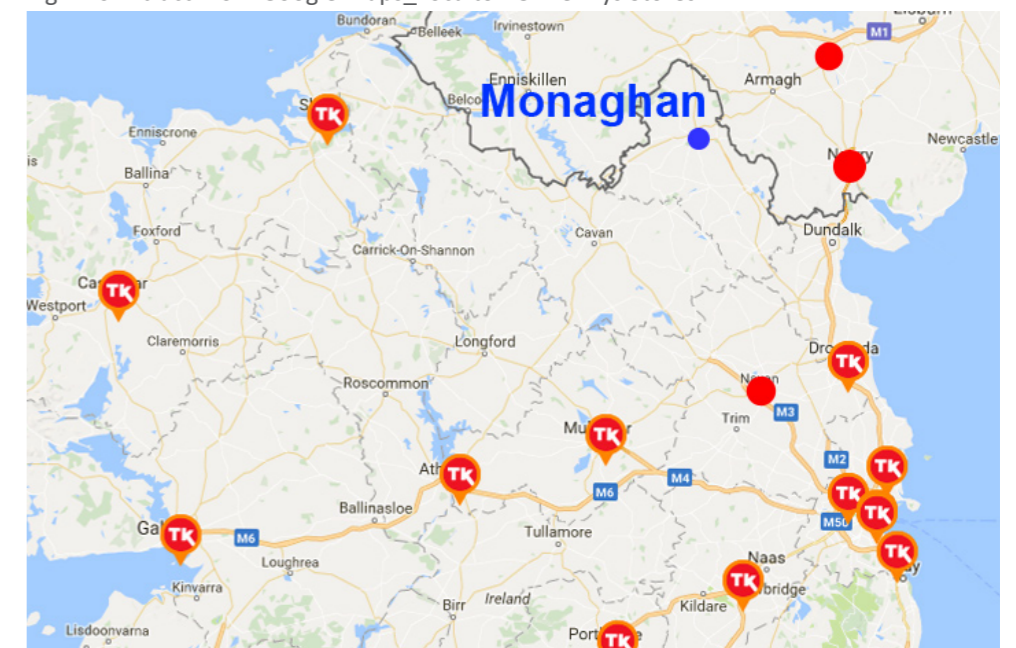


Fig 2.21 Extract From Google Maps_Locaiton Of TKMaxx Stores

An assessment of Regional Tourism performance carried out by Failte Ireland in 2016 notes the regions visited overseas holidaymakers, as well as the domestic visitors. Monaghan is poorly represented in both areas.

A review of the *Accommodation Capacity by County 2015* Carried out by Failte Ireland, which outlines a summary of approved tourist accommodation in Ireland in 2015, provides information on accommodation capacity broken down by type and by county. This indicates low provision of bedspaces, which perhaps accounts for the low level of visitors. The total number of bedspaces in Monaghan County is 782, as compared to Cavan which provides 1,595 bedspaces, and Westmeath which provides 2,299 bedspaces. This would also suggest that there is capacity for an increase in the provision of bedspaces in the town and County. Consideration could also be given to tourist accommodation within the regeneration area.

A more detailed review of the types of accommodation provided highlights the low level of 4 star hotel premises. The study identifies 3 no. 4 star premises, while Westmeath provides 14 no. 4 star premises. Consideration could be given to the development of a 4 star hotel premises within the town.

The absence of rail infrastructure in the county and the poor level of bus service has resulted in a high level of car dependency in the county which reflects the dispersed rural population and network of small towns and villages. This increases the demand for car parking within the town. It is noted that any development will need to accommodate the associated car parking demand generated by the use. However, it is also noted that consideration should be given to the potential for multi trip uses. The objective in the plan will be to balance the provision of car parking, with the achievement of a high quality public realm and built environment.

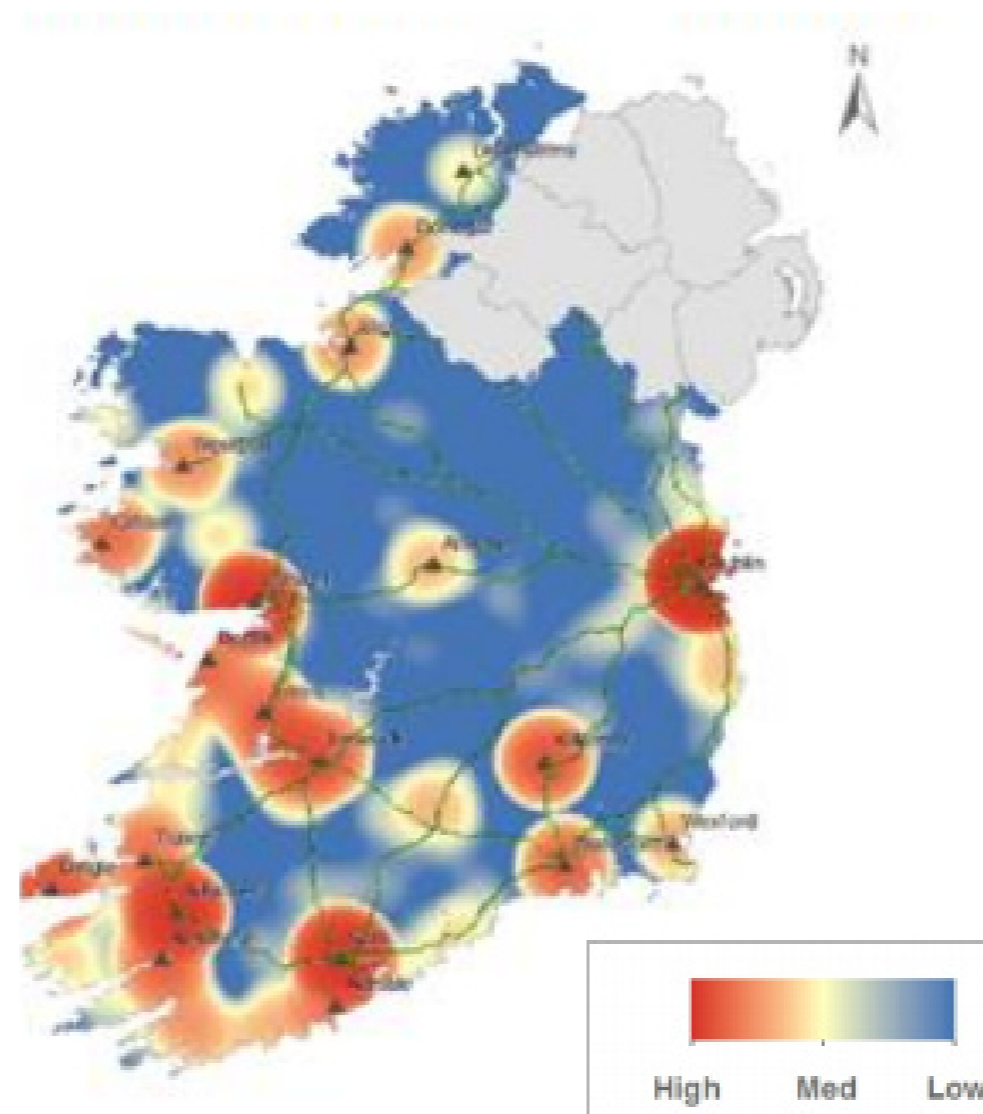


Fig 2.22 Extract From CFilte Ireland - Regional Tourism Performance 3014 - Overseas Visitor Hot Spots

Key Issues - Constraints and Opportunities

- The Dublin Street Regeneration Pan Area benefits from a strong identity, with fine built heritage.
- There is sufficient scale of land to facilitate quantum of development within each land ownership parcel, and as assembled sites.
- Individual land parcel development however, is compromised by the linear nature of the plots, and piece meal development of the land in its current configuration would compromise the development potential of the overall lands.
- The quality of the public realm of Dublin Street is compromised by poor pedestrian provision and dominance of vehicular movement.
- The quality of public realm to the rear is poor, it is dominated by an expanse of car parking that presents a very poor sense of place. Both of these environments detract from the attractiveness of the area as a place to shop, do business and live.
- There is a deficit of a number of land uses within the town core, including a mix of retail use, visitor accommodation, and residential development. The town core, has capacity to accommodate additional service accommodation / office space.
- The Dublin Street Regeneration Plan Area is ideally positioned to meet this demand in terms of location and scale.
- The development of the Dublin Street Regeneration Plan area has the potential to contribute to the enhancement of the quality of the built environment to both Dublin Street and the backlands area.
- It has the potential to create its own identity and to become a destination itself within the context of Monaghan town core.
- Any development however, would need to complement and integrate with the existing context, and the immediate surrounding areas would need to be enhanced to also support the regeneration area. Accordingly, an integrated approach that takes account of the Regeneration Plan Area, and its immediate surrounds is recommended.

Guiding Principles

Government guidance documents informing the proposed regeneration strategy include the following:

- Retail Design Manual, A Companion document to the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities, April 2012
- Shaping the future - case studies in adaptation and reuse in historic urban environments

Case studies that are most relevant to the proposed strategy inform principles in relation to New Urban Spaces / New Streets, Mix of Use, COmplimentary Contemporary Expression and High Quality Development and Adaptation and Reuse of Existing Structure.

New Urban Spaces / New Streets

New urban spaces can act as a catalyst for existing business to alter their structure in response to the new urban space, and to complement the new urban space, this is evidenced in Navan, Co. Meath where a new civic, successfully completed by the Local Authority in 2009 following an architectural competition. The new civic plaza was designed to be used for open-air markets and civic events, plus a modicum of surface car parking to facilitate existing traders. Construction of the civic space prompted Dunnes Stores to redevelop its adjoining site as an in-town supermarket, capitalising on the possibility of fronting the new civic space, while also retaining its traditional frontage onto Trimgate Street.

Integrating New Development with existing historic urban fabric

The Athlone Town Centre site comprised an assembly of infill and backland plots, 'brownfield' uses and semi derelict structures covering approximately 3ha. The lands were amalgamated by the local authority. The scheme is both 'stitching and mending' existing streetscapes, and making new connections and spaces.

The site benefited from natural gradients, which allowed all car parking to be concealed, and servicing and delivery facilities on two subterranean levels. This eliminates the need for expanses of car parking, and allowing the range of new buildings to extend towards, and integrate with, existing development on all edges.

A new structure is overlaid on the site, imposing a pattern of streets and lanes, squares and courtyards on backlands that were previously excluded from the fabric of the town. The project accommodates an appropriately diverse mix of uses incorporating retail units, residential units in blocks of apartments and townhouses set around squares, courtyards and playgrounds, restaurants and cafés, a crèche and primary health-care facility, and a 4-star hotel rising to an 11-storey signature tower at its core, heralding the commercial centre of town.

Mix Of Use

The Athlone Town Centre has provided significant opportunities for large multiples to enter Athlone, through provision of four major retail store anchor units, Next, TK Maxx, Sara and M& S, and has acted as a catalyst for further investment in the town. The Golden Island shopping centre accommodates Penny and Tesco, which complements the Athlone Town Centre. The CBRE Market view Q3 2016 also notes that Athlone recorded the biggest decrease in ground floor vacancy rates, and in all locations surveys, a notable improvement has returned to the high street, and footfall levels appear stronger particularly on street that have seen new entrants opening stores.



Fig 2.23 Athlone Town Centre_Photo From DoEHLG Retail Design Manual



Fig 2.24 Athlone Town Centre_Photo From DoEHLG Retail Design Manual

Complimentary Contemporary Expression - High Quality Development

The Athlone town centre development gave appropriate contemporary expression to its core function within the town centre. This compliments and acts as an appropriate backdrop to the existing historic structures.

Also the quality of development, from building design, proportioning, use of materials, and treatment of the public realm is essential to achieve a high quality environment.

This sense of quality of building and public space is already evidenced in Monaghan and should be continued in the regeneration plan area.

Adaptation and Reuse of Existing Structures

A key challenge is finding a sustainable use for the existing historic structures facing Dublin Street. Some of the structures continue their original use as ground floor retail with residential to the rear and upper floor associated with the use of the retail unit. However, a number of the commercial properties have assumed the entire ground floor area, and there is limited first floor access. Many of the upper floor are used for storage. This has a particularly negative impact on the street in terms of loss of passive surveillance, and has resulted in poor maintenance of the structure and visual deterioration.

Living over the shop schemes have had limited success. However, with careful planning the upper floor levels have the potential to create attractive accommodation that would activate the street, and provide passive surveillance. In this regard uses such as office, and smaller apartment dwellings may be appropriate. Consideration could be given to adaptation and reuse together with modest extensions in order to achieve appropriate floor plates to provide good quality accommodation.

Coppinger Court Cork provides family homes within the context of the historic urban fabric. It uses the topography of the site to provide own door dwellings from the quay front, and from extensions of exist-

ing paths and laneways that integrate with the existing urban fabric. It avoids the 'lift corridor' and provides a series of a series of public, semi-public and private external spaces. Each dwelling is bespoke respond to the orientation, and configuration on the site. This approach may be appropriate to the rear of the existing dwellings on Dublin Street.



Fig 2.25 ACoppinger Court_Photo From DoEHLG Shaping The Future



Fig 2.26 ACoppinger Court_Photo From DoEHLG Shaping The Future

SECTION 3 - REGENERATION VISION

Introduction

The Regeneration Plan sets out a vision for consolidating the urban structure of the plan area; creating new streets and new public spaces which integrate seamlessly with the existing historic town centre and introduce a new backland quarter. The objective is to enhance the permeability of the area, and to provide an attractive place where people wish to live, work and visit. A clearly defined urban structure is fundamental to the creation of a well-designed urban neighbourhood, and a legible network of connections and spaces for pedestrian and traffic movement.

The vision for the area in the short term is to plan for the upgrading of existing public spaces, streets, spaces and footpaths – and to create new connections with new streets and spaces which enhance the urban structure, and quality of the public realm of the Dublin Street quarter as development sites come on-stream. This new high quality public realm (footpaths, street furniture, wayfinding, signage, landscaping etc) will set the standard for new developments and where existing structures are reused and adapted.

The vision in the long term is to allow the existing urban fabric to regenerate through adaptation, conversion and infill developments, and through the development of new urban blocks. A flexible approach is proposed that whereby the plan will facilitate the development of both large scale and / or incremental development. It is envisaged that the new developments of the backland area would present a new façade that will give identity to the new regenerated Dublin Street Quarter.

It is recommended that the emphasis should be given to the physical and spatial quality of both the streets and spaces, ensuring that the demands of vehicles for movement, access, deliveries and emergencies do not compromise the creation of an urban quarter which encourages people to walk and cycle.

The urban strategy addresses barriers to connectivity and accessibility, it is an objective that the development will open up the area to public permeability and to integrate Dublin Street to the new backland quarter, and visa-versa. The guiding principle is to identify ways to reuse, adapt and where appropriate extend the existing historic fabric, where new development will integrate with the historic streetscape, and where new development will compliment the existing built heritage.

Vision: Dublin Street together with its backlands offers a unique opportunity to create a new and viable town centre quarter, with the potential to accommodate additional shopping, office, cultural, residential and new employment zone. It offers the opportunity to address the weaknesses of the area and to maximise its strengths; to enhance pedestrian and vehicular movement, to enhance the existing built heritage; to integrate with the historic streetscape in a manner that is both contemporary and forward looking while complimenting the built heritage; to create an integrated and commercially robust, viable proposal, and a vibrant and sustainable new urban quarter in Monaghan.

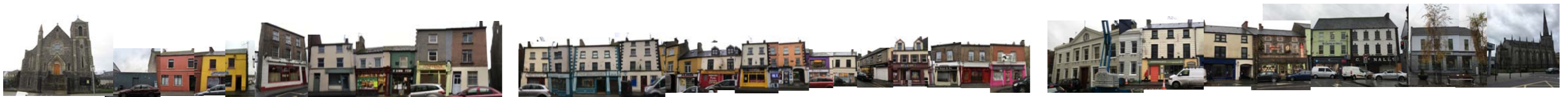


Fig 3.1 Dublin Street Elevation

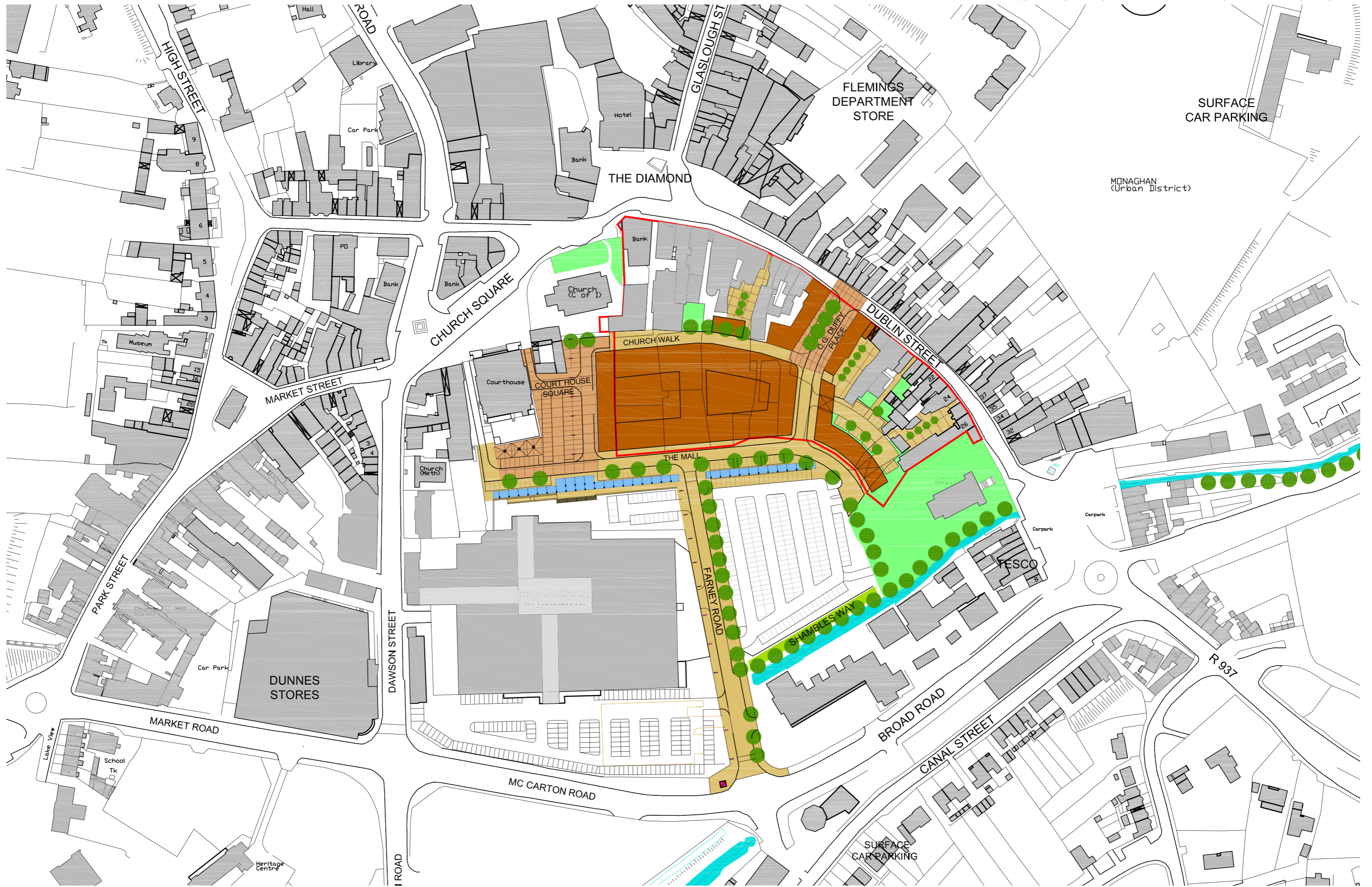


Fig 3.2 Dublin Street Regeneration Plan_Overall Plan

SECTION - REGENERATION STRATEGY

New Streets and Spaces

A hierarchy of streets and spaces are proposed within the plan area, and minor modifications to the street layout of the adjoining area are proposed in order to complete the overall vision for the Regeneration Plan Area and its immediate environs. Three new streets and spaces proposed:

- A new street and public space is proposed to connect Dublin Street to the backland area (Charles Gavin Duffy Place). The new street is formed by the demolition of existing structures to form a new opening in the street that is sufficiently wide to create a space that accommodates two way vehicular traffic and a pedestrian space. The edges of the street are to be created by infill development and the gables of existing structures. The space will be defined to the north east by the existing structures on Dublin Street. It is proposed that this space will be dedicated to Charles Gavan Duffy and will be called Charles Gavan Duffy Place, with the potential to provide an appropriate location to accommodate a statue or plaque and information stand to commemorate him. The space will benefit from a southerly orientation, and will increase light onto Dublin Street, as well as improving vehicular and pedestrian connections to the backlands.
- A mews lane subdividing the long rear plots is proposed. It will form a new large development site to the south, and mews sites to the rear of Dublin Street. It is proposed that this street is named Church Walk in recognition of the views towards the spires of the Church of St. Patrick. The long term objective here is to facilitate a connection from the proposed Charles Gavan Duffy Place to the rear of the Courthouse (Courthouse Square) and provide ease of access and services to the south of the existing plots of Dublin Street.
- A formal street is proposed to the rear, generally in line with the existing road to the rear, adjoining the existing surface car park. The roadway is realigned to create a promenade along the rear of the site. It is proposed that this street will be called The Mall and it will extend to the entrance area of the Shopping Centre. This is to enhance pedestrian access between the existing shopping centre and Dublin Street. A glass covered walkway is suggested along the southern side of The Mall. This will help to define the street and allow sheltered access to the existing car park.
- A realigned road is proposed from The Broad Road to The Mall. It is proposed that public realm improvements are carried out. A major urban landmark sign and a series of light and signage standards with planning is proposed to define the edges of the road, and can be utilised to advertise special events. This will further enhance the views of the town as viewed from The Broad Road. It is proposed to call the road Farney Road to reflect the GAA history of the town and the historic Farney Barony in the County.

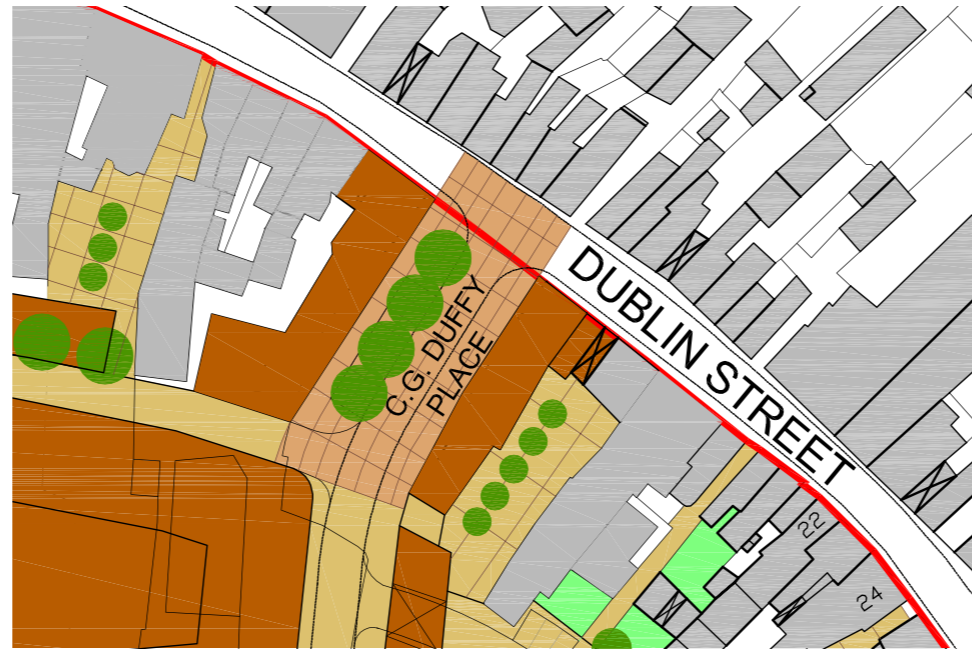


Fig 3.3 Dublin Street Regeneration Plan_New Square_Charles Gavan Duffy Place



Fig 3.4 Dublin Street Regeneration Plan_New Square_Courthouse Square

- It is proposed to redefine the space to the rear and side of the courthouse as a new major public space, and to provide high quality landscaping, with potential covered areas that will accommodate car parking, a farmer's market and possible event space. It is suggested that the space will be flexible to act as a potential outdoor gathering space for special events only, while allowing for day to day parking.
- It is proposed that the Courthouse Square will be defined by the rear / side façade of the courthouse, the boundary to the church, and a new linear building to the east. The proposed walkway along The Mall will define the southern boundary to the Monaghan Shopping Centre.



Fig 3.5 Dublin Street Regeneration Plan_New Square_Charles Gavan Duffy Place

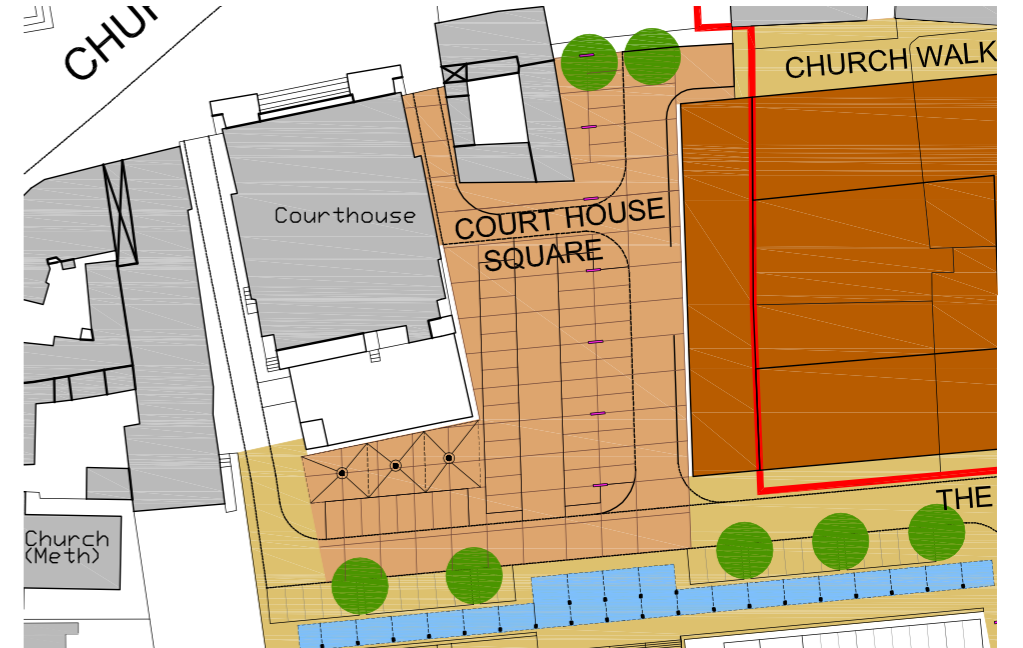


Fig 3.6 Dublin Street Regeneration Plan_New Square_Courthouse Square

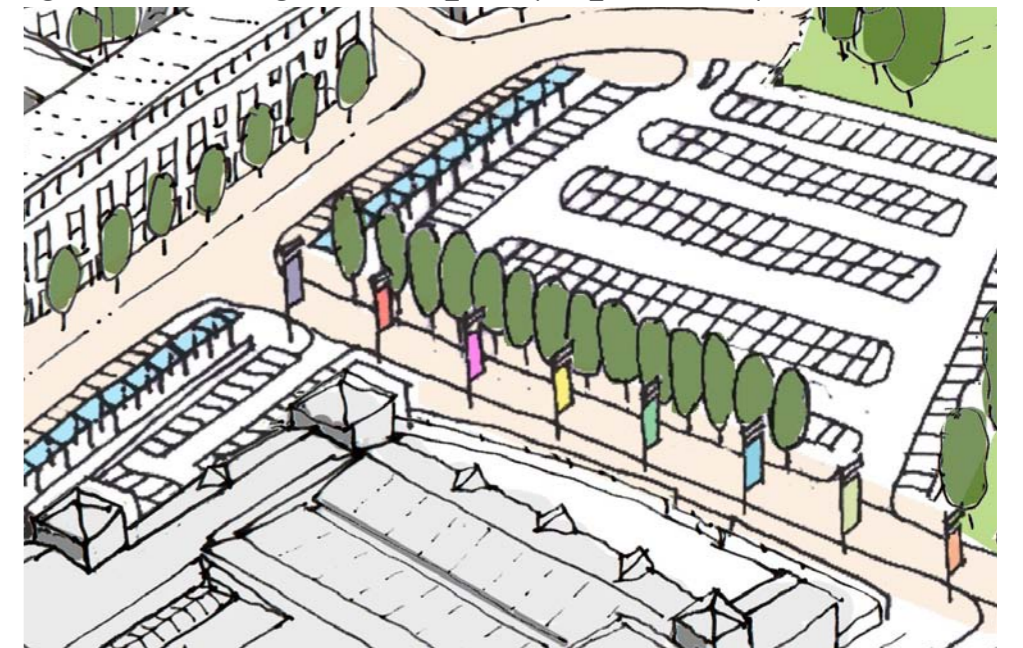


Fig 3.7 Dublin Street Regeneration Plan_Public Realm Fearnly Road



Fig 3.8 Dublin Street Regeneration Plan_Regeneration Area



Charles Gavan Duffy Place

Fig 3.9 Dublin Street Regeneration Plan_new Square_Charles Gavan Duffy Place



Courthouse Square

Fig 3.10 Dublin Street Regeneration Plan_new Square_Courthouse Square

SECTION 4 - REGENERATION STRATEGY

Reuse Adaptation and Infill

Two development blocks will comprise of reuse, adaptation and Infill opportunities.

- The block to the east extends from The Diamond to the proposed Charles Gavan Duffy Place, and is defined by Dublin Street to the north and the proposed Church Walk mews lane to the rear. It is proposed that careful planning of the overall site, taking into account the existing slope on the site, can achieve appropriate floor areas to accommodate either residential or commercial uses at upper floor levels of the existing structures. The rear of the site may be appropriate for new mews dwellings / live / work development at the rear.
- Through routes may be maintained for public use where appropriate, however, consideration may be given to semi private courtyard spaces, that can provide controlled access and open space amenity for potential residents. Also consideration could also be given to potential outdoor spaces associated with cafes / restaurant / shops.
- The block to the south west extends from the proposed Gavan Duffy Place to the grounds of the Presbyterian Church at Old Cross Square, and is defined by Dublin Street to the north east, and the proposed realigned road to the south west; The Mall. This block benefits from a number of extended annexes, such as to the rear of the Shamrock Bar, and courtyards created with an existing dwelling, a very attractive vernacular two storey out buildings positioned perpendicular to the Dublin Street. The former bakery extends along the boundary to the Presbyterian graveyard, it is proposed that this area could develop to include adaptation of the existing structures, and to amalgamate the courtyard spaces to shared spaces where appropriate. There is potential for wider well landscaped courtyard spaces which could contain hostel accommodation and / or short stay rental accommodation. Similarly, the lane and linear space to the side of the Shamrock Bar could be amalgamated to allow the Shamrock Bar external space and an enlarged frontage to help activate the courtyard space.
- The area to the rear facing The Mall could develop independently as a linear building. Access is suggested in the form of a shared surface road extending to the rear of the new block. This could provide access and parking to the existing structures to the front facing Dublin Street, and parking area for the new structure facing The Mall.
- A range of uses are possible. The courtyard space could develop as commercial at ground floor with outdoor courtyard space for cafe / bars, to private garden areas, and to a shared courtyard. The buildings may develop as commercial at upper floors, or apartments, the baker could be adapted as a hostel or sheltered accommodation. The new block facing The Mall be develop with commercial use at ground floor and upper floor apartment / own door town houses, with upper floor private open space.



Fig 3.11 Dublin Street Regeneration Plan Area_Existing Backlands To Dublin Street

- A new street and public space is proposed to connect Dublin Street to the backland area (Charles GavAn Duffy Place). The new street is formed by the demolition of existing structures to form a new opening in the street that is sufficiently wide to create a space that accommodates two way vehicular traffic and a pedestrian space. The edges of the street are to be created by infill development and the gables of existing structures. The space will be defined to the north east by the existing structures on Dublin Street. It is proposed that this space will be dedicated to Charles Gavan Duffy and will be called Charles Gavan Duffy Place, with the potential to provide an appropriate location to accommodate a statue or plaque and information stand to commemorate him. The space will benefit from a southerly orientation, and will increase light onto Dublin Street, as well as improving vehicular and pedestrian connections to the backlands.
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Fig 2.33 Dublin Street Regeneration Plan_new Square_Charles Gavan Duffy Place

Fig 3.23 Dublin Street Regeneration Plan Area_Proposed Backlands Regeneration To Dublin Street

SECTION 4 - REGENERATION STRATEGY

New Development Areas

There is potential for a new site proposed to be created immediately to the west of the Northern Standard. This could develop as a retail ground floor with commercial uses at upper floor levels. This would present an attractive definition of the Courthouse Square and act as a retail link between the shopping centre and Dublin Street and The Diamond.

A new urban block is also created defined by the proposed mews lane, Church Walk, to the north east, and The Mall to the south, with an extension of Charles Gavan Duffy place / street to the east, and The Courthouse Square to the west. There are two development options for this block;

Incremental Development

This block could potentially develop in piecemeal development forms reflecting the plot ownership lines. The scale of the site are such that frontage could occur facing Church Walk to the north and The Mall to the south. Car parking can be incorporated within the topography of the site, and by way of contribution to the development of the new street at Gavan Duffy Place, and public realm, signage works to the realignment of Farney Road, which will improve the arrangement of car parking in the area. Appropriate uses would include retail at ground, and residential or office use at upper floor levels.

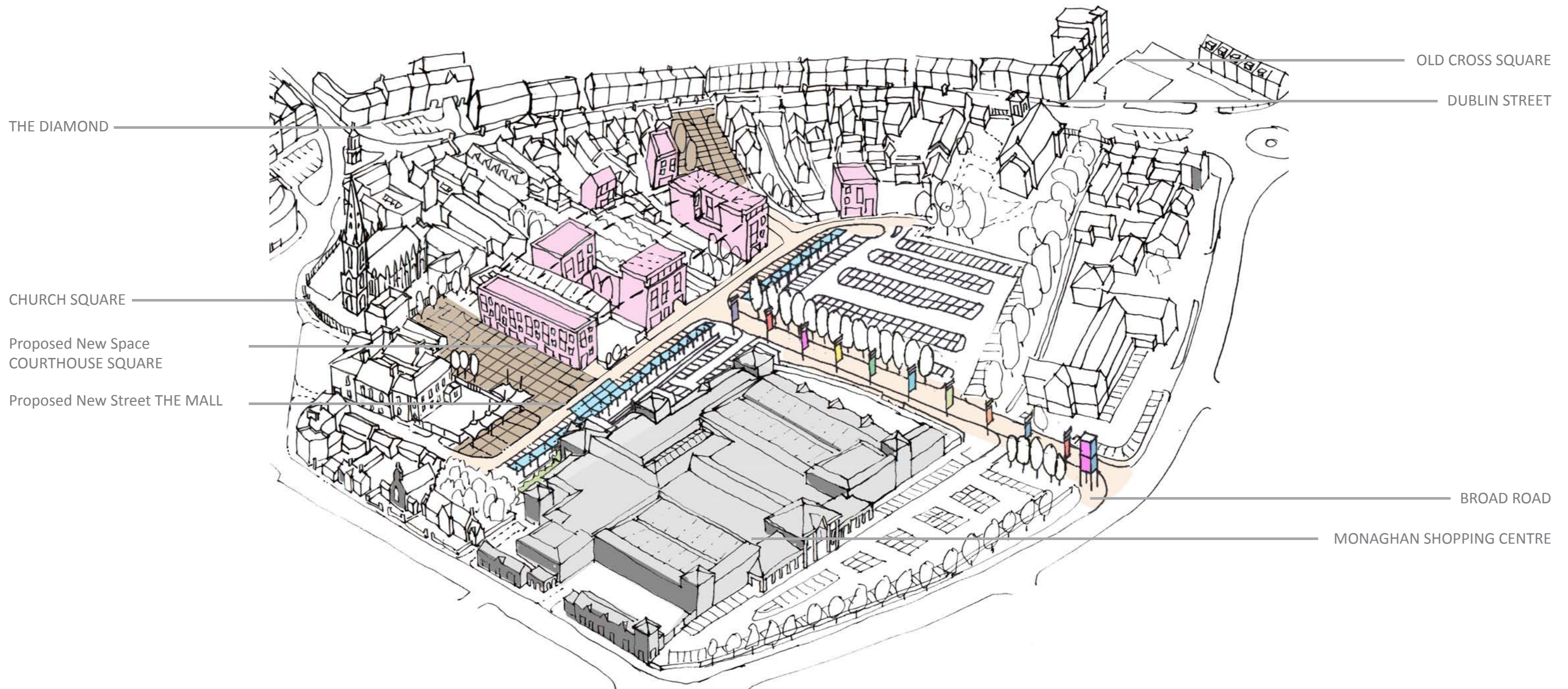


Fig 3.24 Dublin Street Regeneration Plan_Incremental Development

Full Urban Block Development

This block could also develop as a single development site, which has the potential to accommodate a major retail chain and / or office / hotel or mixed use commercial / residential use. The site would have capacity to provide car parking within the site, through the use of the topography of the site, or through the provision of semi basement car parking levels if appropriate.

New development, may be up to three storeys in height, and four storey / roof level / fifth floor to the south facing The Mall site to create a sense of place and definition of the face of the Regeneration Plan area.

A key objective of the Regeneration Plan is that new development responds to context and local distinctiveness. Therefore, the use of quality indigenous materials, and finishes which can contribute positively to the attractiveness, character and appearance of the area, will be encouraged. New development will be expected to be of the highest architectural standard with attention to detail in design, particularly in terms of the articulation of ground floor uses, entrances, facade articulation, roofscape and landmark elements.

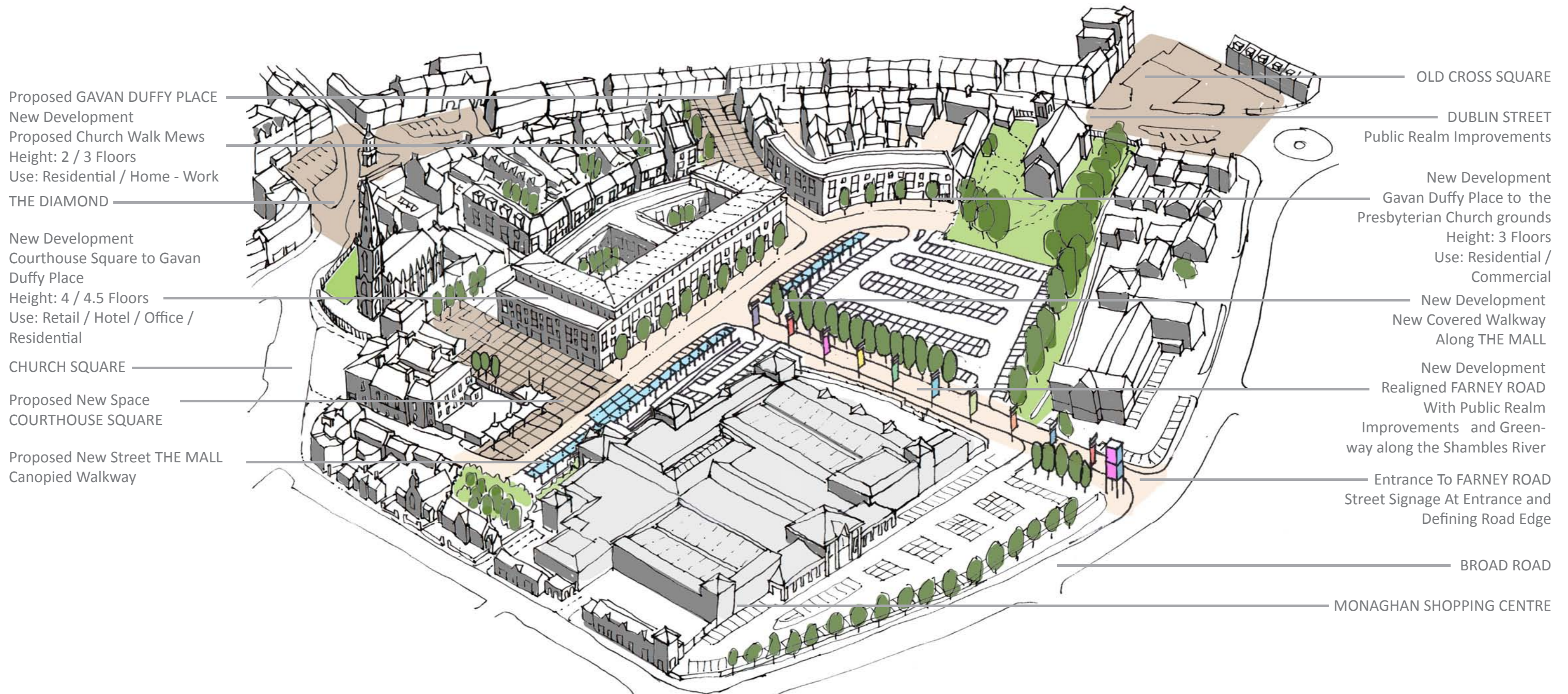


Fig 3.25 Dublin Street Regeneration Plan_Overall Development

Potential Development Capacity

There are two potential large development site areas; the block between Courthouse Square and Charles Gavan Duffy Place, and the block between Charles Gavan Duffy Place and the First Presbyterian Church to the east. There is also potential for a new development to define the proposed Courthouse Square.

The large block between Courthouse Square and Charles Gavan Duffy Place has the capacity to provide a gross floor area of c13,300sqm (Subject to design and configuration). This floor area assumes a subdivision over four floors, comprising two large single floor plates of 3,500sqm each suitable for retail use, and two upper floors of 3,150sqm, which is suitable for office / commercial uses. This block would also be suitable for a hotel use.

The smaller block between Charles Gavan Duffy Place and the First Presbyterian Church to the east has the capacity to accommodate 700sqm per floor, or a total of 2100sqm.

The block to the east of Courthouse Square has the capacity to accommodate 200sqm per floor, or 600sqm in total over three floors.

With regard to use and capacity, as noted previously, for comparative purposes Athlone Shopping Centre provides 1,950sqm of retail floor space, and incorporates Marks & Spencer, who trade alongside TK Maxx, H&M, Zara, River Island, Next, Topshop and Tommy Hilfiger. The shopping centre complements the Golden Island shopping centre, that includes Pennys, Argos, Lifestyle and Tesco. Alongside the centre is a mix of one, two and three bedroom apartments and a four star landmark hotel. The McDonough Junction shopping centre in Kilkenny provides 1,950sqm of retail floor space (45 shops), and includes its anchor Dunnes Stores, as well as TK Maxx, H&M, Jack and Jones, and Next. This complements the Market Cross shopping centre in the town core, which includes Supervalu, Heatons, and Penneys.

Monaghan benefits from a good range of shopping, in both the Monaghan Shopping Centre, Flemmings, and the Monaghan Retail Park, there is a gap in retail provision however, and consideration could be given to stores such as Pennys and TK Maxx stores or similar comparison goods stores. These uses could be readily accommodated on the sites.

A variety of block configurations could be considered, with uses subdivided horizontally or vertically, such as retail at ground and first floor levels, with upper floor offices, or a retail block alongside an office block for example.

Also the site has the capacity to accommodate a hotel use. As noted there are only 4 no. 4 star hotel premises identified in the Failte Ireland study. By comparison Westmeath benefits from 14 No. 4 star hotel premises. Consideration could be given to the development of a 4 star hotel premises at this location. The site can readily accommodate such a use. For comparative purposes, a recently permitted Hotel in an urban context comprises 137 Bedroom, of 6084sqm including 1035sqm basement car parking. As noted the site has the capacity to accommodate a development of 13,300sqm, which could readily accommodate a hotel use of this scale, along side retail / office or residential provision.

The site has the capacity to accommodate its own car parking which will reduce the net development area, however, semi – basement car parking could be considered, and consideration may also be give to alternative car parking provision proximate to the site, to serve both the needs of the development itself and / or the needs of the town, in the form of a multi storey car park.

SECTION 5 - DEVELOPMENT Objectives

Key Urban Design Objectives

- Reinforce identity and sense of place by promoting the development of character areas related to uses, focal points and heritage buildings within the urban structure.
- Promote the creation of the traditional street as the primary circulation network, with provision for traffic calming on street parking, slow traffic speeds and pedestrian priority measures within the Regeneration Area.
- Encourage diversity and variety through a mix of compatible development and uses that work together to create places responsive to local and county needs.
- Provide for a fine urban grain, to optimise permeability and access for pedestrian and vehicular circulation.
- Develop innovative building typologies which have a greater engagement with the street and, in particular, requiring the predominant use of finer grained buildings and spaces and which promote permeability.
- Integrate new development into the existing surrounding network of streets, public spaces, facilities and services.
- Create an urban structure which facilitates convenient pedestrian access to facilities and services.

Key Urban Structure Objectives

- Promote the development of a legible urban structure with a well defined network of routes and spaces for pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular movement.
- Create new routes, for pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular movement, which contribute to ease of movement and connect existing and new spaces; Gavan Duffy Place, Church Walk, The Mall, and Courthouse Square.
- Integrate new development into the existing surrounding network of streets and open space; connection to Dublin Street, The Diamond, Church Square and Broad Road.
- Promote the creation of a traditional street / public spaces as the primary circulation routes, with active ground floor uses, fronting onto Gavan Duffy Place, The Mall and Courthouse Square, and as appropriate facing Church Walk.
- Reinforce identity and sense of place by promoting the development of character areas related to uses, focal points and heritage buildings; courthouse square has the potential to act as a multi functional spaces, including car parking, a temporary event space, farmers market etc; Gavan Duffy Place can provide a space for outdoor seating, benefiting from a southerly orientation; Farney Road, and The Mall can integrate with pedestrian and cycleway through the town centre. The new public spaces should add to the sense of place and cultural identity of the Town.

Public Realm Objectives

- Provide a range of civic spaces to support and animate the area, Gavan Duffy Place, Courthouse Square, The Mall and Farney Road.
- Enhance the existing public realm on Dublin Street, with design for improved pedestrian use, and appropriate accommodation for vehicular access, services and parking.
- Prioritise the design and implementation of a scheme to upgrade the public realm of the backlands area, to include realignment of the routes; proposed Fearyn Road, and The Mall, and walkway along the Shambles river to connect through the existing graveyard to Old Cross Square.
- Ensure that the public realm is characterised by high quality materials such as paving, street furniture, lighting and planting. Opportunities for public art should be created particularly in public squares; Courthouse Square and Gavan Duffy Place.
- Provide positive interaction between spaces and the built form, e.g building frontages, windows and entrances should face onto and overlook the street and public spaces.

Key Urban Form Building Height Objectives

- The urban form should contribute to the consolidation of the fine grain urban structures and the pattern of street blocks and buildings in the area.
- In general up to four floor area suggested facing The Mall; building heights of new developments immediately to the rear of Dublin Street, and facing Church Walk should have regard to the historic structure, and may development from two / three floors as appropriate.
- Where incremental development occurs along The Mall, each development plot should have regard to adjoining developments and a coordinate approach should be adopted in relation to building heights, and massing. Planning applications should be accompanied with an overall built form, and demonstrate how their project sits within that overall block in the short term and long term.
- New developments should promote legibility in terms of the articulation of street level and roof top, the distinction of public and private areas, and primary circulation and entrances.
- Ensure that the height and massing of proposed new development does not impact negatively on the sustainable conservation of protected structures and the social and historic heritage of the town.

Key Architectural Design Objectives

- Promote a design led approach to the redevelopment of infill and new development sites.
- Ensure the new developments make a significant contribution to improving the quality of life and physical regeneration within the plan area.
- Ensure that development delivers quality, attractive urban environments and a high level of amenity for commercial and residential developments.
- Ensure that new development positively address exiting historic structures, and protects established levels of amenity.
- Ensure that development provides for the sustainable conservation of the architectural, social and historic heritage of the area, and promotes the adaptation and re-use of protected structures.
- Provide a detailed design statement for all new building proposes i.e. for sites in excess of 500sqm.
- Promote building design that are sympathetic to and enhance the established built heritage and street patterns.
- Provide a new interpretation of the development of Monaghan town centre, while reinforcing its unique qualities and providing it with a ne distinct identity.
- Provide for the use of high quality materials which are durable and require a low level of maintenance, use of local or indigenous materials.
- Promote new design which is clearly modern and embrace recent construction methods.
- Promote buildings design for adaptability and change of use, plan depth and floor to ceiling heights can allow for future conversion to other uses.
- Promote buildings designed for universal access, parents with push-chairs, people with disabilities and the elderly will have complete access and freedom of buildings, open space, streets and amenity.

Key Security Objectives

- Buildings should be positioned so that they front onto and overlook the public domain. Buildings / boundaries should also form a perimeter around areas of communal or private open space.
- Routes and access points should be clearly defined.
- All areas of public and communal open space should be overlooked by development. Visually impermeable barriers such as high walls must be avoided.
- Any shutters or gates used to secure shop fronts car parking and other entrances should be at least 50% see through