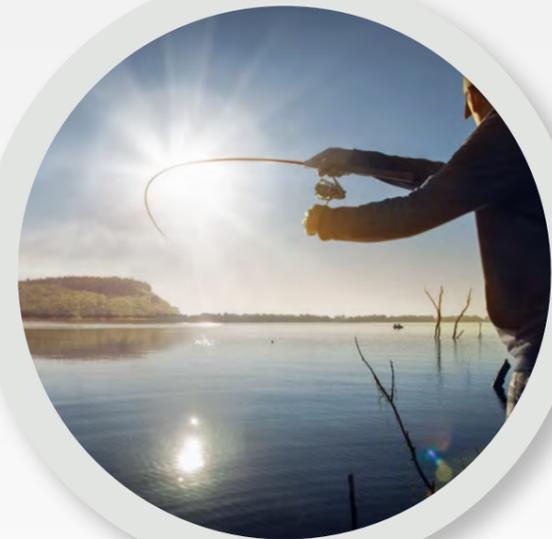


Castleblayney Town Public Realm and Economic Plan, 2019



Project Team:



Department of Rural and
Community Development

An Roinn Forbartha
Tuaithe agus Pobail

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1 Foreword

Castleblayney Town has a population of approximately 3,700 persons as per the 2016 Census and is strategically located on the main national primary route from Dublin to Derry (N2), with links to Dundalk via the N53 national secondary route. The market town and industrial heritage of Castleblayney is still visible today in its function providing for the retail, service and educational needs of its wide hinterland and in the industrial presence to the north and west of the Town.

The distinctiveness, character and attractiveness of Castleblayney is derived from a combination of the man made environment and its natural setting. The Town retains its unique built character that combines buildings associated with both a traditional market town and an estate town including *inter alia* the Market House and Hope Castle. In addition, its natural setting and specifically Lough Muckno, is both a significant and unique asset to have located within a Town, providing a range of recreational and sporting facilities including walking routes, biking trails, fishing, water activities and children's play facilities as well as community resources such as the Íontas Arts and Community Resource Centre.

Overall, as a place to live and to visit, Castleblayney has many positive attributes including:

- Great quality of life
- Access to high quality public amenity and recreational space
- A rich history, as reflected in its architecture
- A unique cultural connection with the Country Music Industry
- A location in a County known for its natural produce
- An Age Friendly Town
- Opportunity to live within the Town Centre

Key to the continued success of the Town will be strengthening these assets and the features that define its local identity. This can be achieved by re-establishing its heritage and natural assets e.g. the Market House, Hope Castle and Lough Muckno, and reconnecting them to the Town through considered improvements in the public realm. In addition, the incorporation of new cultural assets, specifically the Country Music connection, provides a further opportunity to deliver a unique identity and attraction for the Town.

The Purpose of the Plan

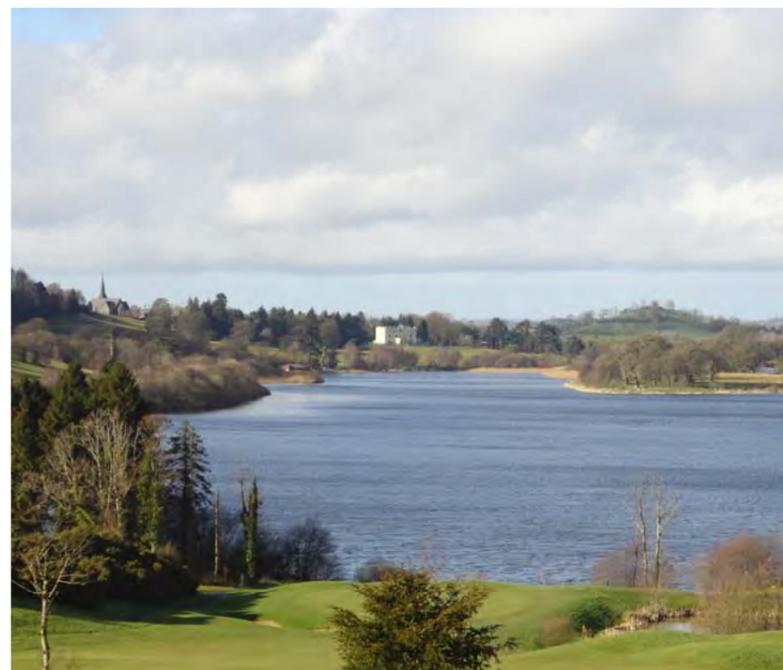
The Castleblayney Town Public Realm and Economic Plan seeks at its core to identify and detail a number of intervention opportunities and associated projects that are fundamental to the future development, management and promotion of the Town.

The purpose of the Public Realm and Economic Plan is to:

Build on and promote Castleblayney's existing economic, architectural, and cultural assets to enhance the attractiveness of the Town as a place to live, work and visit. In doing so, the Plan will also act as catalyst to attract additional investment. To this end, the Plan seeks to establish the most effective presentation, management and development of Castleblayney's public realm and to promote its economic assets and opportunities through the identification of a number of intervention opportunities and associated projects.

The Plan will seek to enhance and improve the way Castleblayney functions on a day-to-day basis, with resulting long-term economic, socio-economic and cultural benefits for residents, businesses and visitors.

Central to this is the formulation of a Shared Vision that focuses on the physical assets of the Town including spaces and buildings, in a way that acknowledges and enhances the Town's unique heritage and cultural assets and that bases the Town's future development around these, with a focus on showcasing the unique character of the Town.



It is proposed to achieve these enhancements and improvements through a range of interventions including:

- The ‘greening’ of the Town Centre to improve its environment and promote the positive health and well-being of residents and visitors.
- The reinvention of the Town Centre as a place for people, where residents, visitors and shoppers enjoy spending time and appreciate the Town’s buildings, spaces and unique attributes.
- The delivery of enhanced linkages, including pedestrian and visual, between the Town and the amenity asset of Lough Muckno.
- The designation of key urban spaces for enhancement and specific urban design proposals.
- The delivery of enhanced pedestrian linkages between the Main Street and the backland areas to encourage integration and the delivery of a compact Town.
- Realisation of the potential of heritage and cultural assets that will not only showcase the Town’s unique history and identity for its residents and visitors, but will also set the foundation from which to grow its tourism offer.

The Plan will deliver:

- An economic review of the Town, identifying deficits and potential opportunities for its economic development.
- An audit of the study area including its physical urban form, heritage and infrastructure.
- A determination of the features the local community value in their Town.
- A Vision for where the Town should be in ten years - a Shared Vision.

Embracing Culture to Define Identity

While the public realm of a place can greatly improve the experience of both residents and visitors, it is the cultural / heritage / environmental assets of a place that attract people there in the first instance. Building an identity for a place means establishing an association between the place and its key assets. As the identity of a place is based on the specific characteristics of that place, the identity is unique.

Castleblayney as a Town has many assets which not only make it an attractive and inviting place to live and visit but which will also define its character. The Town’s location adjacent to the amenity resource of Lough Muckno is one such asset. Another is the Town’s strong and renowned history of, and association with, Country Music. Both of these assets are unique to Castleblayney and provide the basis for the creation of an identity for the Town.

The importance of Lough Muckno and Country Music to Castleblayney is acknowledged and embraced by this Plan which incorporates these as key features to create an identifiable and unique public realm for the Town. Specifically giving physical form to Castleblayney’s Country Music connection through the ‘country singers crosswalks’ along the length of Main Street, not only embraces this cultural heritage as part of the Town’s identity but utilises it as a unique visitor attractor for the Town.

Themes

The People’s Town

Distinct Public Realm

A Future for Our Heritage

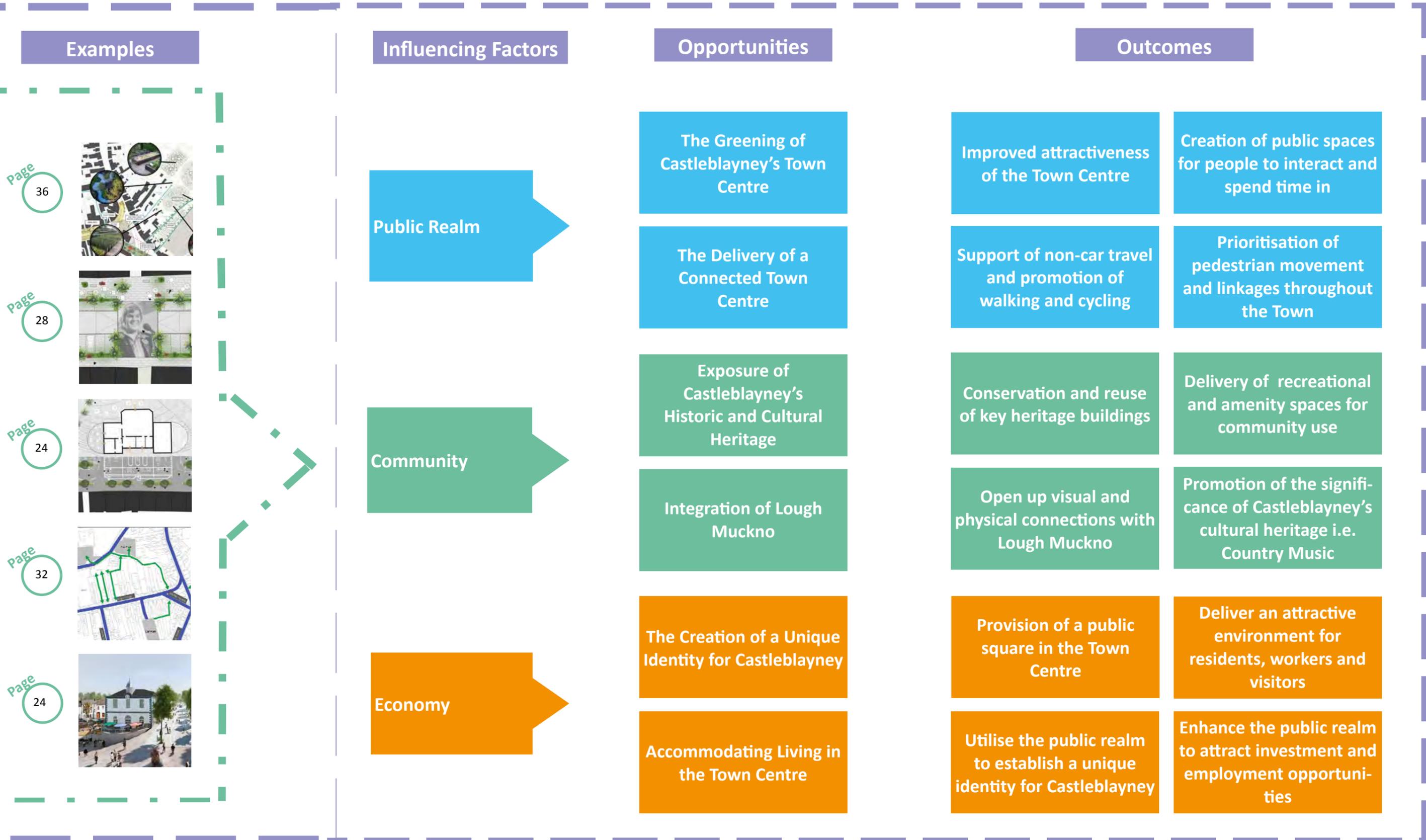
A Permeable Place

A Defined Economy

Interventions



Guiding Principles
Pgs. 16 - 17



2 The Shared Vision

The Shared Vision for Castleblayney Town has been formed through public consultation workshops and meetings with the Local Authority. The finalised Shared Vision, provided below, has therefore been accredited to the valuable input of the public, community organisations and agencies and the Council.

Castleblayney Town Centre will become a place for its residents, workers and visitors where the unique heritage and cultural assets of the Town are protected and showcased, enhancing pride of place, encouraging tourism and supporting local businesses. A place where improvements in the public realm and enhanced connections not only encourage people to live in and spend time in the Town Centre, but aid in its integration with, and benefit from, the adjacent amenity area of Lough Muckno and the establishment of the Town as a major visitor attraction in the Region.

Shared Vision

In order to deliver on this Shared Vision for Castleblayney, a number of key actions will be required to support the following outcomes;

- The Greening of Castleblayney Town Centre
- Showcasing of Castleblayney's Historic and Cultural Heritage
- Enhanced Integration with and Connection to Lough Muckno
- Accommodating Living in the Town Centre
- Delivery of a Connected Town Centre

Outcomes

The Greening of Castleblayney Town Centre

Ambitions

Make the Town Centre a more attractive place in which to live, work and visit, including visual enhancements.

Increased social spaces and facilities to attract people and encourage them to spend time in the Town Centre.

Readdress the balance between the delivery of an inviting and safe pedestrian environment with traffic movement and parking demand in the Town Centre.

Castleblayney Town Centre is focused on Main Street which runs in an east-west direction. As the location where people come to work, shop and visit on a daily basis, economic and social activity is concentrated on Main Street, with the western end of the Street currently accommodating the majority of retail activity. As the Main Street is also the primary thoroughfare through the Town it currently experiences high volumes of vehicular traffic and demand for parking. This has impacted how people perceive the Main Street, its usability for entertainment and recreational purposes and its attractiveness as a place to live, work, visit and spend time.

The Plan proposes a number of improvements and enhancements to Main Street that together will deliver a pedestrian-friendly spine through the centre of Castleblayney that connects with Lough Muckno. This enhanced public realm will contain green infrastructure with new planting on both sides of the Street. Car parking will be rationalised along the eastern end of the street to allow for the provision of new public spaces on the southern side of the street. Side streets that have the potential to act as links to the backland areas will be integrated into the Main Street and form part of this enhanced pedestrian environment through the use of shared surfaces and the provision of pedestrian links.

One of the key aims of the Plan is to create an improved public realm for residents and visitors that is unique to Castleblayney. In this regard the Plan openly embraces the historical and cultural heritage of Castleblayney, physically incorporating these assets into the public realm

and making them legible to all. This approach will not only benefit the Town in terms of visual amenity but will further strengthen Castleblayney's connection to the Country Music Scene, providing an attraction for visitors that is unique to the Town.

Implementing the Plan will result in the following benefits:

- Visual enhancement of the Town Centre, rooted in its historical and cultural heritage.
- Providing the Town with a unique public realm that not only contributes to its attractiveness but that makes the Town an attraction in its own right.
- Increased social spaces and facilities along Main Street.



Showcasing Castleblayney's Historic and Cultural Heritage

Ambitions

Secure the future of Castleblayney's heritage buildings as an integral part of the public realm improvements.

Encourage the re-use of historical buildings within the Town and support their role in the attraction of investment and tourism.

Showcase Castleblayney's cultural heritage, specifically its long standing connections to Country Music.

The importance of Castleblayney's historic and cultural heritage is tangible in the architectural prominence of its buildings, which include:

- The Market House – This 19th century building was once the hub of market trade in the Town and was later used for court services. It remains a key landmark in the Town Centre, but requires maintenance and reuse to secure its future.
- Hope Castle – This impressive building was constructed in the late 18th century by Lord Blayney on the site of an old castle and was formerly used by the family of the estate. It is a key asset of the Town.
- The Stable Building – Located within the grounds of Hope Castle and directly connected to it and its historical function.
- The Gate Lodges – These two small buildings mark the entrance to Lough Muckno directly from the Main Street. One of the lodges has been restored for community use with the second to be restored with the intention to accommodate a library.
- St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church – Located on the Dublin Road leading into the Town from the south side.
- St. Maeldoid's Church of Ireland Church – This church is located near Lough Muckno on Church Road.

Like many other rural Towns, the inherent spatial qualities and the significance of Castleblayney's streetscape have been eroded due to vacancy of important historical buildings, the dominance of traffic and associated on-street parking. Securing the future of historically significant buildings, enhancing their setting and creating spaces and routes that improve their context will help protect and reconnect with the history of the Town.

The cultural heritage embodied in the Town is also a significant resource and Castleblayney is uniquely positioned in this regard due to its long standing and strong ties to Country Music. Linking the Town's built environment with local cultural figures and music icons and presenting and interpreting this artistic heritage will help cultivate a unique identity for Castleblayney. Presenting this cultural and artistic heritage as an integral part of the story of Castleblayney also offers a unique tourist attractor for the Town that appeals to a niche market in itself and offers the opportunity to work in conjunction with other historical and cultural assets in promoting Castleblayney as a unique tourist destination.

Enhanced Integration with and Connection to Lough Muckno

Ambitions

Provide improved physical connections and enhanced visual linkages to the high quality, useable public amenity space at Lough Muckno.

Provide enhanced recreational, social and community activities on lands within Lough Muckno that are accessible to and usable by the whole community.

In conjunction with improvements to pedestrian routes throughout the Town, this Plan seeks to deliver new, usable, high quality and accessible public and community open space and amenity areas within the grounds of Lough Muckno east of Main Street. This community centred area would provide a range of facilities including vegetable patches, a rest and reflection space, picnic area and ateliers, improving the attraction of Lough Muckno to both residents and visitors. The space will also act as a valuable amenity in attracting people to live in the Town Centre.

The amenity area will be highly accessible via both the existing main entrance to Lough Muckno and through new pedestrian routes and linkages from Muckno Street. These routes will not only deliver direct pedestrian and cycle access to this new amenity area but their formalisation will also provide direct visual connections between the Town and Lough Muckno, placing Lough Muckno at the heart of the Town Centre.



Accommodating Living in the Town Centre

Ambitions

Increase the residential population of the Town Centre.

Promote the reoccupation of vacant residential stock within Castleblayney Town Centre, including 'Living Above the Shop'.

Promote the efficient use of accessible backland sites for residential development.

The population of Castleblayney, including the Town and its environs is approximately 3,607 persons according to the 2016 Census. The Electoral District of Castleblayney Urban, which encompasses the Town Centre and runs north along Muckno Street has a population of 883 (2016 Census). The residential population of Castleblayney is thus concentrated in the wider environs of the Town, in the housing estates to the south and east, closer to the N2. Within the Town Centre, there are first and second floor residences that have remained vacant for some years and there are a number of backland sites north of the Main Street which are highly accessible but remain undeveloped.

The number of vacant units and over the shop units are visible within the Town Centre specifically along Muckno Street. A detailed survey of the condition and constraints to the reuse of vacant residential units is required to create a vibrant and viable Town Centre. In many cases these properties may require substantial upgrading and renovation works, in particular to comply with fuel and energy conservation requirements, as well as fire safety requirements. A 'Toolkit for Reoccupation' including advice in relation to Planning, Building Control, Fire Safety, Security and other relevant statutory issues to owners, tenants and potential investors, as well as information regarding any currently available funding (e.g the Town Centre renewal schemes) should be provided by the Local Authority.

The Town Centre also offers the potential to accommodate new residential development to the north of the Main Street, on the backlands that were opened up by McGrath Road. These lands provide the opportunity to deliver a range of housing types within the heart of the Town Centre in close proximity to the amenity open space of Lough Muckno.

Delivery of a Connected Town Centre

Ambitions

Improve the pedestrian experience through an enhanced public realm that gives priority to pedestrian movement and reduces barriers to pedestrian flows on the Main Street and through side streets.

Encourage pedestrian activity through new and clearly identified pedestrian links from Main Street to the backland areas north and south.

Introduce clear and attractive pedestrian routes between the Town Centre and the amenity lands at Lough Muckno immediately to the east.

Castleblayney as a market town is a destination where people travel to work, to shop and for school. Despite this there is a perception that people do not spend time in the Town Centre or amenity areas when they visit. This appears to be attributed in part to the current dominance of vehicular traffic and the quality and legibility of the pedestrian environment in the Town Centre. The commercial focus of the Town Centre has also shifted to the western end of the Main Street and to the car parking areas to the north and to the rear of Main Street. Poor pedestrian connections between these parking areas and the Main Street inhibit people accessing the remainder of the Town.

International practice and national guidance in relation to traffic management in our towns and cities has brought a shift in thinking away from a car-centred to a pedestrian and cyclist-centred approach. The interventions contained in this Plan will facilitate the implementation of a pedestrian-friendly town centre in Castleblayney. 'Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future: A New Transport Policy for Ireland' (2009) seeks to accommodate more sustainable means of travel, in particular walking and cycling. This Plan supports such measures and seeks to promote a shift toward walking and cycling, especially within the Town Centre in line with the Walking and Cycling Strategy prepared for the Town.

Providing a safer and enhanced environment for both pedestrians and cyclists will encourage greater adoption of sustainable means of travel in the future and is key to the creation of a fully connected Town Centre, which is a central aim of this Plan. The opportunity to utilise existing side streets for direct, legible and safe pedestrian links from the Main Street to the backlands north and south will facilitate better integration of existing parking facilities, while also providing for the future development of backland parking areas to serve the requirements of Main Street.

Considered enhancements of the public realm such as the widening of footpaths, provision of shared surfaces and the creation of a public space around the Market House can help alter the perception of the Town Centre. Such enhancements will also deliver a place where people are encouraged to traverse and spend time, ultimately increasing levels of investment in the Town.



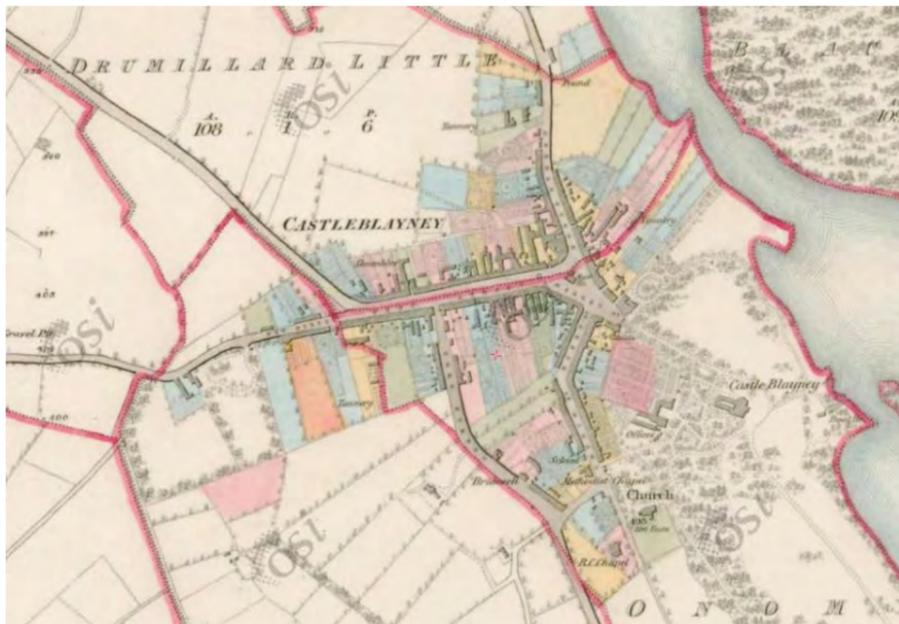
3 Castleblayney's History

Castleblayney has a rich history from its foundation and settlement by British land holders in the 17th and 18th centuries, to the establishment of Blayney Castle and Hope Castle. This history has influenced its layout as it is today and has led to Castleblayney becoming the third largest historic market town in Monaghan.

The Story of Castleblayney

Early Origins

Castleblayney originated in the period following the Nine Years War that took place at the end of the sixteenth century. Lands seized from Gaelic lords were given to Sir Edward Blaney by the crown in 1611 to augment earlier holdings at Muckno Friary on Lake Muckno. The intention was to provide a more secure location on the route to Monaghan. It was laid out in 1612 and a castle was built at Onomy beside the Town. The Town developed around the castle on the west side of the lake. Markets had been granted permission in 1613 and these were important to its economic future. The castle was overrun in the rebellion of 1641 and the Town recovered only slowly in the later part of the century.



Ordnance Survey Map from 1836

Eighteenth Century

The Town struggled economically until the end of the eighteenth century, when the 11th Lord Blayney took control of the estate. The linen trade was promoted and a market house and market place were constructed. Lord Blayney built a fine Neoclassical house in 1799 to the designs of Robert Woodgate, an assistant of John Soane, near the site of the former castle and this commanded views of the landscape and lake.

The Town combines characteristics of a traditional market town with those of an estate town. The free-standing market house, standing at a junction to the east end of the Town, lends a monumental character to the public space. The main street was aligned by two and three storey structures of varying architectural expression. The Market Square east of the market building narrowed to form a short street that led the entrance of the estate. This street was flanked by rows of elegant houses.

The estate came to be owned by the Jackson family from Scotland in the eighteenth century and profited from an influx of Presbyterian settlers. Henry Street and Noble Street were laid out and constructed in 1788.

Nineteenth Century

This was a time of industrial development that included the introduction of a number of tanneries. Fairs and markets continued to contribute to the commercial life of the Town. A market building was erected in the public space to the east of West Street in the late eighteenth century and may have appeared like the later market house in Ballybay (two-storey with an arcaded ground floor). It was largely altered in 1856 to accommodate a courthouse. It is urbane, impressive and well composed in the Classical style.

The Catholic and Protestant churches lie to the south of the Town Centre and play a secondary architectural role in the historic core. The spire of the Church of Ireland church can be seen from the demesne landscape and the Catholic chapel remains without a tower. The first church was built in 1622 and the last, or third church, now still extant was by Joseph Welland and dates from 1860. The Catholic church is uncharacteristically understated, it dates from the beginning of the

century and was extensively remodified by James Hughes in 1851-1856. The nearby Methodist chapel was a smaller structure and part of the street line, it is no longer extant. The Presbyterian church was located north of the Town on the continuation of Muckno Street and was built at the end of the eighteenth century.

The designed landscape had strong natural characteristics suited to the English or Picturesque landscape style. The landscape was embellished in that style by William Sawrey Gilpin in 1832. He arranged a scheme of planting for the islands to give them more visual interest. A fine Temple structure in Neoclassical style and dating from the 1840s was located on Concra Hill in the landscape setting with views to the lake and house.

The Muckno estate was sold by the Blayney family to a Henry Thomas Hope in 1853 and they remained in Castleblayney until 1916. Hope extended and remodelled the house in the Italianate style and it became known as Hope Castle. A u-form arrangement of stables was located to the west of the house and in 1865 an imposing pedimented gateway was added. In the 1870s symmetrical lodges were built to either side of the Town entrance. They terminated the existing terraces of houses and were constructed handsomely, in a sober version of the Italianate style.

The Ordnance Survey map from 1836 shows the layout of the Town with the following features:

- West Street, The main thoroughfare (now Main Street) running in an east-west direction and having roughly the same width throughout. York Street meets it roughly midway on the south side and connects to Ardee and further afield.
- The west end of West Street connects with two routes, one towards the northwest heading to Monaghan, and another heading to Shercock. New Street continues the straight line of West Street for a short run and veers off to take a long direct run westwards. Both of the routes are clearly secondary to the main street space in the Town.
- West Street connects at its eastern end with a triangular market space. This serves to connect with Noble Street (now Muckno Street) which runs to the north and the entrance to Blayney Castle. The south side of the space connects Henry Street, which is a short street that leads into Church Street and the location of three places of worship.



Ordnance Survey Map from 1900

- A school and a bridewell are also located near the churches.
- The Market Square is dominated by a Market House that stands to the west end of the space, where it can be best seen from West Street and leaving the public space free in the direction of the entrance to Blayney Castle.
- Plots are for the most part long and narrow. Those near the castle are shorter due to the proximity of service gardens and offices.
- Tanneries are located off Muckno Street and New Street.

Castleblayney was connected to the railway network in the mid-nineteenth century. It was at the junction of the Great Northern Railway line and the Castleblayney, Keady and Armagh line. A planned connection to Kingscourt was not carried out. A modest railway station was built off New Street in 1849.

The Griffith Valuation map (1848-1864) shows much of the detail of the earlier Ordnance Survey map and includes garden and orchard layouts. Those of note are to be seen in Hope Castle and in the properties facing the lake. The map shows the path of the railway to the west side of the Town and the curious case of Connabury House where the extensive front garden is tunnelled under by the railway line. Further to the west a workhouse was built in 1842 by George Wilkinson.

The Ordnance Survey Map of 1900 depicts much of the additions from the later part of the century in good detail. The layout remains similar to that in the earlier Town Map:

- Thomas Street has been introduced to connect York Street and Henry Street/Church Street. A large set back or 'Commons' is located on the south side of the street.
- A row of fine alms-houses is located to the south of the Town on Upper York Street. These were built of brick by the last Lord Blaney in 1879. They augment other fine estate houses located in nearby Church Street that were built of stone and brick and carried out in a picturesque Gothic style.
- West Street notes the location of important businesses and organisations. There were several hotels such as the Hope Arms Hotel, Commercial Hotel and Railway Hotel. There are also numerous bank buildings including the Belfast Bank, Provincial Bank and Bank of Ireland, variously carried out in eclectic styles to add to the appealing appearance of the streetscape. Other structures accommodated a masonic hall and a post office.

Twentieth Century

Few buildings from the twentieth century have any architectural quality or merit mentioning. The imposing Convent of Mercy and an adjacent National School on New Street were built in the early decades of the century. The new border caused difficulty for the local economy and the railways, the Castleblayney to Keady section closed in 1924 with other sections closing in the region in the following decades.

The twentieth-century saw the demolition of some structures in the historic centre of the Town. Of particular concern, is the loss of function of the former Market House which is currently disused. The plight of the former Blayney Castle and associated outbuildings, which are currently vacant, is also of concern.

The most significant change to Castleblayney has been the addition of areas of suburban housing and one-off houses around the historic centre that has increased the footprint of the Town. The Town Centre has lost much of its historic strong relationship to its immediate rural setting though the unspoiled and tree crested drumlins can still be appreciated.



Main Street looking west from Market House (Source: Lawrence Collection, National Library of Ireland)



View along Main Street looking toward east market House (Source: Oram.H & MacKenna.M, 'Old County Monaghan')



Blayney Castle, south and east elevations (Lawrence Collection, National Library of Ireland)

4 Castleblayney Today

Although traditionally a market town, Castleblayney has, to a large extent, lost its weekly market. The traditional core of the Town remains the focus of its retail and service function and accommodates its key assets including the Market House, Hope Castle, leisure facilities at Lough Muckno and the Town's churches. The loss of the administrative function, Court Services, of the Market House has, however, impacted the Town's attraction to associated professional services and while the Town holds on to its architectural heritage, many of its key historic buildings are in need of repair and conservation work.

Experiencing Castleblayney Today

As part of the urban analysis process the project team convened two Public Consultation Workshops with invitations to attend issued to relevant Government Departments, Public Bodies and State Agencies as well as multiple local groups and organisations including *inter alia*:

- Castleblayney Tidy Towns
- Sporting groups
- Residence Associations
- Education and childcare providers
- The Conservation Society
- Community Groups including Íontas Arts & Community Resource Centre, the Men's Shed, the Drama Festival etc.
- Religious Orders

The Workshops were attended by the public, representatives of some of the key community stakeholders, advisory agencies and businesses. The outcomes of this process can be thematically linked and presented as follows:

- Perceptions
- Community
- Public Realm
- Heritage
- Infrastructure
- Finance

It is under these headings that experiences of the Town as it exists today can be defined and used to understand how it may be improved into the future.

Engagement Through Consultation



Perceptions of the Town

Castleblayney is subject to altering perceptions as the identity of the Town has changed over time. From the traditional market town, residents now view the Town's connection to Country Music as being a key part of its identity. Castleblayney's assets also contribute to its identity as a Heritage Town, with recognition by the public that dereliction and vacancy of important historic buildings has impacted perceptions. Key points raised during the consultation include:

- A heritage Town that needs to protect its historical assets, specifically Market House and Hope Castle which are falling into disrepair.
- Lough Muckno is an important heritage asset for the Town.
- Substantial potential to redevelop Hope Castle and attract people and expenditure to the Town.
- Foreign visitors to the Town, specifically Canadian & French visitors, have been very impressed.
- The Main Street is of good scale.
- Strong tradition of Country Music, Dances, Bands and Music Groups.
- There is dereliction in parts of the Town, specifically along Muckno Street.
- There is a move away from living in the Town Centre.



Community

Castleblayney Town is well served by community infrastructure and demonstrates a strong pride of place that was clear at the stakeholder workshops. The Castleblayney Regeneration Committee, representing business and community sectors, works in partnership with Monaghan County Council to drive future economic and community objectives within Castleblayney. Organisations such as the Castleblayney Tidy Towns as well as the Íontas Arts & Community Resource Centre are central to community life in Castleblayney and demonstrate a positivity and willingness of residents to participate. Key points raised during the Consultation include:

- There is a requirement for housing of the elderly in the Town.
- Issues with anti-social behaviour around Lough Muckno, specifically in the vicinity of Hope Castle.
- Potential to combine heritage resources with community uses.
- Community gardens would contribute to the Town and act as an incentive for people to live there.
- The Town is a safe place to visit and walk around.
- Get more people involved in shows, festivals and 'Get Active' initiatives e.g. Muckno Mania, TransFAUGHmation (Castleblayney Faughs).
- Increase awareness of Calendar of Events taking place within the Town, specifically in relation to Country Music.



Urban Design – Public Realm

The existing public realm of the Town Centre is viewed as being characterised by high levels of vehicular traffic through Main Street, on-street car parking and the shifting of the retail core from its historic location at the eastern end of the Main Street to the western end. Vacancy and some dereliction were noted in the eastern end on foot of this shift which was also attributed to car parking demand currently being highest at the western end of the street.

Changes to reduce the volume and priority given to traffic is central to the delivery of a people-focused, pedestrian friendly Town Centre, instead of one dominated by traffic. Vehicular access and parking for shopping, businesses and visitors must be balanced with traffic dominance and congestion, and the need for attractive and safe pedestrian environments. The contemporary urban design principles referenced in this Plan will attempt to provide an alternative perspective of the Town by combining the principles with issues and ideas formulated through stakeholder engagement. Key points raised in relation to the urban design features that Castleblayney could benefit from include:

- Opportunity to create a space or a square for civic purposes at the Market House.
- Potential to utilise the backland area to the rear of Main Street.
- Improve access and pedestrian safety at Market Square.
- The litter issue along the Main Street needs to be addressed.
- Opportunities to reuse vacant properties within the Town Centre.
- Lack of accommodation in the Town and surrounding area.
- Need for improved landscaping, particularly greenery, in the Town Centre.



Heritage

Castleblayney has a rich and diverse historical and cultural heritage that is a key feature in creating and fostering a unique identity for the Town. This rich heritage which includes Lough Muckno Estate, Hope Castle, the Market House and Country Music remain underutilised and need to be showcased. Castleblayney Historical Group is an important organisation in the preservation and promotion of the historic assets of the Town. Key points raised during the consultation include:

- The Town's heritage needs to be maintained as it is what makes the Town unique.
- Potential for a Country Music Museum in the Town.
- Develop the history of the Town from the more recent troubles to the historic past.
- Current security fencing around Hope Castle is uninviting and excessive.
- The traditional core of the Town was down at the Market House.
- Shop frontages can be refurbished and/or provided in a traditional style.
- The conservation of the Market House needs to be considered in terms of viability, finance, safety, use etc.



Infrastructure

Discussions in relation to infrastructure within Castleblayney focused on through-vehicular traffic in the Town Centre, on-street parking provision and pedestrian permeability particularly on Main Street and from existing backland parking areas to the Main Street. Changes to reduce the dominance of traffic to rationalise car parking within the Town Centre as a whole and to improve pedestrian accessibility and safety are central to the delivery of an enhanced public realm in the Town Centre.

The lack of greenery within the Town Centre, the current dereliction of the Market House which is a landmark feature and the requirement for enhanced connections, including visual connections with Lough Muckno are also considered integral to the delivery of an enhanced and attractive Town Centre. Key points raised during the Consultation include:

- Provide direct and safe pedestrian links between the Main Street and McGrath Road.
- Pedestrian crossings on the Main Street need to be addressed.
- Landscaping on McGrath Road.
- Concerns in relation to parking at the churches and schools.
- Public transport requires improvement.
- Open up the backlands to encourage movement within the Town Centre.
- Potential to create Greenways around the Town.

Engagement Through Consultation



Finance - Defined Economy

The Town has a good employment base, however, the loss of the court service and the location of the Municipal District Offices in Carrickmacross has had a negative impact on the provision of professional services in the Town. The traditional heart of the Town Centre, at the eastern end of Main Street, retains an element of professional service provision and the rejuvenation of this area, including the conservation of the Market House, offers the opportunity to strengthen this. The Town Centre has remained the focus of the retail, service and hospitality sectors with the schools bringing both employment and footfall. There is, however, the need to encourage those visiting the Town Centre to spend more time in it through improvements in the public realm including enhanced pedestrian linkages and public spaces.

Castleblayney's connections to the Country Music and leisure tourism industries should also be targeted for their further employment potential, with significant potential for Hope Castle in this regard. The service and tourism sectors are directly connected to the public realm and increasing the service sector offer alongside the promotion of Castleblayney as a unique tourist destination needs to take place in tandem with public realm improvements. This interconnectedness is directly reflected in the proposed public realm Country Music inspired interventions on Main Street, as this area is considered key in the promotion and tourist attraction of Castleblayney.

This Plan identifies the economic benefits that an enhanced and connected public realm can deliver for Castleblayney and sets out a number of interventions required to deliver such improvements. Each intervention contains a number of specific projects which can be progressed further by the Council and brought forward for funding through the various funding mechanisms and streams available. Key points raised during the Consultation include:

- Conservation grants should be sought to secure the future of heritage buildings within the Town.

- The Historic/Heritage nature of the Town should be used to leverage funding.
- Look at opportunities for cross-border funding e.g. Castleblayney/Crossmaglen.
- The relocation of services, specifically the Urban District Council Offices and court services has negatively impacted the Town and its employment profile.
- There needs to be a focus on promoting events and/or projects in the Town that will attract both residents and visitors to the Town Centre.
- Develop links to tourism opportunities, e.g. Country Music Museum.

What Has Been Achieved

Castleblayney: Active Travel Town – Walking and Cycling Strategy 2012

The Walking and Cycling Strategy, published on 30th of November 2012, was produced by Kieran Boyle Consulting, Transport Planning Engineers. The Strategy begins by providing an overview of the policies relating to promoting walking and cycling facilities in towns and villages across Ireland. These policies informed the Strategy objectives to promote community involvement, to improve walking and cycling access to public transport, to provide safer routes, to tie-in with schools/colleges and workplaces, and to reduce short-distance car journeys.

The public consultation process, as part of this Strategy, demonstrated that the majority of people surveyed revealed that they would be encouraged to walk more if there was a better provision of footpaths in the Town. With regard to cycling, most of the respondents indicated that proper cycle lane facilities were needed in order to encourage more cyclists in the Town. The Modal Split for businesses revealed that the vast majority of people arrive to work by car, with only 6% walking and 6% cycling. A similar Modal Split was indicated in consultation with the schools in the area.

The targets indicated in the Strategy were to increase the cycle mode share for journeys to work, school and education from 0% to 5% by 2017, to increase the overall mode share for walking and cycling from

22% to 30% by 2017, ensure that all schools within the Town have a school travel plan in place by 2014, and to create a Workplace Travel Network group and to have Workplace Travel Plans in operation at two of the main businesses within the town by 2014. Key to reaching these targets was specific improvements in the public realm as described in the Strategy in the form of footpath and junction improvements throughout the Town, incorporating schools, businesses and residential areas.

Castleblayney Market House—Report on Proposed Repairs

A Report on the Proposed Repairs to the Market House in Castleblayney was undertaken by Liam Mulligan Architects, Chartered Building Surveyors and Historic Building Consultants in February 2018. The Report details the historic significance of the building and its strategic importance, in terms of location and viewpoint as a landmark in Castleblayney's Town Centre. The Report also takes account of the current condition of the building, both inside and out, with photographs showing the poor condition of the building and the need for conservation. The cost of such conservation work is indicated including different approaches such as phased repairs to spread costs.

Free Market and Castleblayney—Ireland at the Venice Biennale 2018

The Venice Architectural Biennale is the foremost global forum for Architectural exhibition and debate. It runs from 26th May 2018 for six months until 25th November of the same year. The 'Free Market' is a proposal from the Irish Pavilion and it aims to study Ireland's Rural Towns. Castleblayney is part of the Study and the Irish Exhibition will be brought on tour to Ireland in 2019.

Projects Delivered to Date

In addition to the above, a number of physical projects have also been delivered in Castleblayney that make a marked contribution to the public realm and enhance the physical assets of the Town. These include the restoration of Gate Lodge 1 at the entrance to Hope Castle for community use and the plan to restore Gate Lodge 2 for use as a library. The securing of Hope Castle in Local Authority ownership provides for its future use and preservation as a key asset of the Town. In addition the Town and Village Renewal Scheme has also delivered a number of enhancement in the public realm including *inter alia* street furniture.

Planning for the Future

Consultation and Research

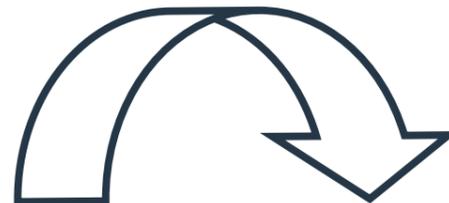
The comprehensive consultation undertaken, including public workshops and meetings with local business owners, community groups and officials (Focus Group) and the Local Authority (Steering Group), formed the basis for this Plan. A clear progression of the Plan can be traced from the initial tender brief, through to the issues raised by the multiple stakeholders and informed by the information attained as part of the research phase. This progression has culminated in the emergence of specific interventions covering substantial areas of the Town and which include multiple projects which can be brought forward on foot of the Plan.



Participation Booklet from First Stakeholder Consultation

Emerging Strategy and Interventions

Comments and observations made by stakeholders as part of the consultations can be traced through the process of the making of the Plan. These comments and observations formed the basis of and directly informed the specific proposals presented to the public at the second stakeholder workshop.



Feedback from Stakeholder Consultation

Iteration and Design

The workflow illustration below is intended to convey the process of consultation, analysis and design development in arriving at a Plan as presented. It follows the trajectory of the Plan from the initial familiarisation through the consultation workshops and meetings with the Focus Group and the Steering Group, to the presentation of initial concepts and finally in the design iteration of particular actions / interventions and the detail of the projects contained therein.



Sketch of Intervention Presented at Second Stakeholder Consultation



5 Guiding Principles

Five distinct Guiding Principles have been used to gather the most important elements of this Public Realm and Economic Plan for Castleblayney Town in relation to key determinants such as the public realm and urban environment, the community, the Town's heritage, the physical infrastructure and economic principles. The Guiding Principles used are as follows:

The People's Town - A vibrant Town Centre and public realm that meets the needs and aspirations of those who live in it and those who visit, wherever they come from and however long they stay.

Distinct Public Realm - A public realm based on urban design principles that are distinctive and authentic.

A Future for Our Heritage - A public realm that not only embraces its unique heritage but promotes this heritage as a tourism asset.

A Permeable Place - A Town Centre and public realm that is accessible and pedestrian friendly.

A Defined Economy - A Plan that has economic initiatives at its core can be used to leverage funding and encourage investment.

The People's Town

The concept of 'the People's Town' is a Town Centre and public realm where people choose to live, work, shop, visit and spend their leisure time. It is a place that residents are proud of and spend time in and that visitors are interested in and drawn to. It is a Town Centre with a high quality public realm, a range of shopping and service facilities, local amenities, quality housing and a vibrancy and distinctiveness that attracts people to it.



Community

Community and participation are key aspects of the identity of Castleblayney and were considered in detail in the making of this Plan. Consequently the Vision Statement has been directly informed by the community theme.

The Plan aims to create a Town for the community with a high quality, accessible public realm that connects to and integrates with the amenity resource of Lough Muckno. The Main Street will be reimagined as a space with different character areas, with an enhanced and legible presentation of the Town's heritage and cultural assets.

An Active and Vibrant Town Centre

The Plan seeks to enhance the quality of life of residents, to utilise the historic and cultural heritage to define a unique identity for Castleblayney and to improve the Town's ability to attract investment. The Town Centre must deliver an attractive, high quality public realm that entices people to visit and provides spaces for those people to enjoy. It should not only connect into the surrounding backland areas through legible and safe pedestrian routes but it must integrate with Lough Muckno as a defining feature of the Town and as a valuable amenity resource for both residents and visitors alike.

The Plan, through upgrades in the public realm, the integration of historic buildings and amenity resources, and with new and improved pedestrian and cycle linkages, provides the opportunity to deliver a diverse Town Centre that offers a range of attractions to both residents and visitors.

Distinct Public Realm

Successful urban design can deliver sustainable communities and a high quality built environment that attracts people to visit, while also enhancing the quality of life of residents and workers of the Town. The concept for Castleblayney is to focus on its unique cultural and heritage assets and showcase these through considered interventions in the public realm in order to deliver a 'Distinct Public Realm'. Specifically, embracing Castleblayney's strong connections with Country Music as part of its public realm was a key piece of feedback from the stakeholder consultations.

- **Activity** - Create an attractive environment that encourages year-round use and day and night activity, encouraging and facilitating people spending time in the Town Centre.
- **Heritage** - The Town's cultural and historical heritage is a central feature in the creation of an identity for and attractor to the Town. It provides the basis on which to develop specific events, e.g. leisure events at Lough Muckno and for Castleblayney to be promoted as a cultural destination (Country Music).
- **Identity** - The heritage and cultural assets of Castleblayney are what define it as a place and present the opportunity to create a distinct identity for the Town. These assets must be integrated into and form a distinct and legible part of the public realm.
- **Access** - Delivering a better balance between vehicular traffic, pedestrians and cyclists and improving ease of access to car parking will make the public realm feel more legible, comfortable, better connected, safe and aesthetically pleasing.
- **Buildings and Space** - Ground floor uses and design that interacts (physically and/or perceptively) with the public realm will determine how buildings engage with surrounding public spaces.
- **Focal Buildings** - These buildings are not about dominance but about engagement with the public realm in a manner that attracts people to a particular location in the Town Centre and encourages them to linger there.



- **Curating the Place** - A Plan should be made with implementation at its core, central to which is a sense of ownership and clear responsibility. Delivery of the interventions will not only enhance the public realm but should in turn lead to an increase in revenue.
- **Flexibility/Adaptability** – Castleblayney Town Centre needs to re-focus the purpose of its public spaces and key buildings primarily to ensure their conservation but also as a means of providing for different events and experiences from an operational perspective.
- **Residential Use** - New residential development in the Town Centre must be carefully considered, well-integrated, and must enhance the public realm and support the Vision Statement's implementation.

A Future for Our Heritage



Heritage

The architectural heritage of Castleblayney is at the centre of the Public Realm and Economic Plan and will be showcased as a principal identifying characteristic of the public realm. This Plan respects the need to protect and conserve the Town's important historical structures, while also ensuring their meaningful integration into the enhanced public realm. The Plan also focuses on the historic development of the Town in terms of market activity and the important role of Lough Muckno.

The key heritage building within the Town Centre is the Market House, which is not only a landmark but is intrinsically tied to the development of Castleblayney as a settlement. It warrants conservation as a physical representation of Castleblayney's history and as a Protected Structure. Active use of this building will further ensure its conservation into the future.

Design

New additions to the Town Centre should respect the existing character and take cues from the historic setting. High quality architectural design can complement the existing setting and add to the overall built heritage of Castleblayney. Within the public realm the historic architecture can be showcased through careful conservation and by eliminating visual

clutter. Landscape features, traffic management interventions and street surfaces should be designed not in isolation from the surrounding built environment, but respectful of it. Such measures will optimise the presentation of the historic architecture of the Town.

Improved design in the public realm will also emphasise the historical form of the Town, unveiling and re-establishing historically significant spaces. Emphasising the historical importance of side streets and lanes will help clarify a hierarchy of historic routes and directly tie into a new pedestrian emphasis for the Town Centre. Focusing a new and enhanced public realm around the Market House will reclaim its role as the principal space and public venue in the Town, while the rationalisation of parking on the eastern end of Main Street will further help return a sense of vibrancy and vitality to this area.

A Permeable Place

Managing Vehicles in the Town Centre



At present the Main Street of Castleblayney is dominated by vehicular traffic and on-street parking to the detriment of safe pedestrian and cyclist movements and the vitality and vibrancy of the Town Centre. Specifically the provision of on-street parking has impacted the quality and type of activities that can be accommodated in the Town Centre, with no public spaces along Main Street and limited opportunity for outdoor eating areas for hospitality providers. Rationalising parking at certain locations would address these issues, creating a better quality environment and making the Town Centre a more attractive place to live, work and visit.

Movement Infrastructure

A connected Town Centre with a high quality public realm, that is accessible, has good pedestrian and cyclist permeability, and has a network of public spaces, is the core infrastructure that can catalyse urban growth and attract inward investment. It is also crucial to the growth of, and will support, the Town Centre's residential, retail and employment base.

This Plan sets out improvements to the public realm that will facilitate safe pedestrian movements throughout the Town Centre. Key to this is the utilisation of the Town's existing infrastructure of lanes, present along the Main Street, Muckno Street and Thomas Street. These form an integral part of the architectural character of Castleblayney and provide direct access to rear yards and the opportunity to create new pedestrianised lanes as part of the delivery of a permeable Town Centre.

A Defined Economy

Develop an Identity



The Plan seeks to build on the existing economic strengths of Castleblayney and to encourage and facilitate, through public realm improvements, the maximisation of the economic benefits of these strengths. Considered key in this regard is the Town's cultural heritage and natural assets, specifically its strong connections with Country Music and the outstanding amenity value of Lough Muckno. Such heritage is key to the development of a unique identity for Castleblayney, an identity that is representative of the Town and which attracts tourists to it. The Plan places these assets to the fore in developing the public realm and incorporates them as an integral part of it.

Central to this Plan is the identification of 'Intervention Areas' which include multiple projects that will deliver the enhancements to the public realm identified through stakeholder consultation and the research undertaken by the project team. These projects do not stand in isolation, with many interconnected and, therefore, must be viewed collectively in their contribution to the public realm of Castleblayney. The 'Intervention Areas' group these projects based on a number of factors, e.g. proximity, land use, historical context, movement and connectivity, ensuring that each can be progressed individually and recommending a phasing plan for the projects. This approach also provides maximum flexibility and adaptability when seeking funding, allowing these projects to be brought forward either individually, in groups, or for the entire Intervention to be brought forward.

6 Economic Input

High quality public realm and a lively business environment go hand in hand. Public realm improvements encourage more people to visit a place, both locals and tourists alike, and to spend more time and money there.

Conversely, strong business communities attract visitors/customers and animate the public space around them, making it more active and engaging. In this way, the two are linked and reinforce each other.

Introduction

Key to the formulation of the Shared Vision and the identification of intervention areas is the economic review of the Town which examines its current economic position, including its deficits and the potential opportunities for its economic development.

In this regard the proposed interventions were considered not only in the context of the deliverable improvements to the public realm but in terms of the activities that would have a positive economic impact on the Town. Specifically the current interdependency between Castleblayney as a service and leisure provider for its hinterland and the opportunity to advance these attractions and engage the wider economy were considered at length.

Project Ireland 2040

The National Planning Framework (NPF) is the long-term strategic planning framework that will guide national, regional and local planning and investment over a 25 year period. In contrast to its predecessor, the National Spatial Strategy 2002 (NSS), the NPF will have a statutory basis and is accompanied by a sister document, the National Development Plan 2018 (NDP). The NDP is a 10 year strategy for the capital investment of almost €116 billion, known as Project Ireland 2040.

Development Funds

As part of the Project Ireland 2040, the Government has announced the creation of the following funds:

- €2 billion Urban Regeneration and Development Fund, intended to secure more compact, sustainable growth in Ireland's five cities and other large urban centres.
- €1 billion Rural Regeneration and Development Fund to support job creation in rural areas, address de-population of rural communities and support improvements in our towns, villages and their hinterlands.
- €500 million Climate Action Fund to support initiatives that contribute to the achievement of Ireland's climate and energy targets.
- €500 million Disruptive Technologies Fund to provide investment in the development and deployment of disruptive innovative technologies and applications, on a commercial basis, targeted at tackling national and global challenges.

The four funds are available to Local Authorities, but are to be allocated competitively to the best projects, which also leverage investment from other sources. The four new funds are intended to ensure balanced regional development and stimulate renewal and investment in rural and urban areas, the environment and innovation.

Three quarters of new growth identified in the NPF will be outside Dublin, with 50% of the projected population growth planned for our towns, villages and rural areas and 50% for our cities.

The above funds could potentially be leveraged to help fund the interventions identified in this document.

Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019

The current County Development Plan includes a separate Development Plan Chapter for Castleblayney which highlights some of the economic aspirations for the Town such as improvements in retailing, housing, employment, infrastructure, recreation and tourism. The details of the Interventions in this Plan have incorporated these objectives.

Draft Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025

The Strategic Objectives of the Draft County Development Plan relate to the sustainable and balanced distribution of development throughout the County. Castleblayney has many natural assets which can be

promoted and improved to benefit the local economy and support the Strategic Objective of the Draft Development Plan to *"protect and nurture the County's rich natural resources, heritage and amenities along with the environmental quality of the natural and built environment in both the urban and rural areas."*

Strategic Objective CBS01 of the Castleblayney Settlement Plan 2019-2025 aims to *"promote Castleblayney as a prosperous and thriving local development and service town where the principles of environmental, economic and social sustainability including protection of the town's heritage, natural and built environment are enshrined."*

Monaghan Local Economic and Community Plan 2015-2021

The Monaghan Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) sets out the economic strategy for the County in the period up to 2021. It includes a range of goals that can be summarised as follows:

- To develop and promote a positive image of the County as a place to live, visit and invest.
- To support the development of a highly skilled workforce.
- To support and strengthen the community and voluntary sector.
- To promote the health and wellbeing of people in Monaghan.
- To protect, enhance and maximise the potential of the County's natural cultural and heritage resources.

The objectives and Proposed Interventions contained in this document are designed to support and further the above goals.

Brexit

At the time of writing, negotiations between the UK and the EU are ongoing and the situation regarding Brexit remains unclear. However, what is clear is that Brexit will have an influence on the border region and that the national economy, and particularly the border economy, may be more turbulent in certain sectors (e.g. retail, agriculture).

It is expected that Brexit may have regionally differentiated effects and a hard Brexit could hit counties such as Monaghan harder due to the importance of the agri-food sector. Furthermore, Castleblayney's immediate adjacency with the Border will make it more susceptible which fur-

ther emphasises the need for a diverse economy that targets sectors such as tourism.

Tourism

Castleblayney has the potential to significantly increase the contribution that tourism makes to the economic life of the Town. The LECP 2015-2021 notes that Monaghan has historically captured a lower proportion of tourism than most other counties in the region and a significantly lower proportion of their spend.

Research provided by InterTradeIreland indicates that since 2008, the number of visitors crossing the border from the North has increased significantly from 636,000 to 1.5m visitors. In addition, since 2012, the percentage of overall revenue attributed to overseas visitors has increased significantly (44.05% to 51.21%). Given the numbers of tourists already coming into Ireland and spending time in the region, there is a significant opportunity for Castleblayney and Monaghan to tap into that resource, as well as the domestic tourism sector.

Many tourists who visit Ireland, or who tour internally, may visit a range of different locations as a part of that itinerary. In order for Castle-

blayney to form a part of that itinerary, it needs to clearly define its identity in a coherent way, which will make it an attractive option to people who may only be spending a few days in Ireland.

Tourists have a range of destinations to choose from, with review guides and websites helping in determining their itinerary. Castleblayney’s identity and key attractions therefore need to be articulated in a straightforward manner. In this way, potential visitors, who perhaps will only spend a few seconds initially reviewing their options before deciding what to investigate further, will understand what Castleblayney has to offer.

The public realm interventions outlined in this document are intended to help to clearly define that identity, and to assist in the ‘branding’ of the Town.

The Local Economy and the Public Realm

The public realm, being the spaces in between buildings, has a variety of uses. Its first use is to facilitate the movement of people from one building to another, whether within the Town or to a place outside the town.

Activities in the public realm consist of two types, ‘necessary’ and ‘optional’. The ‘necessary’ activities are the journeys that people have to make. Schoolchildren passing through the public realm to get from home to school is a ‘necessary’ activity. So too are people travelling to work, or to a shop to purchase groceries.

‘Optional’ activities involve people utilising the public realm for recreational activities, such as simply to go for a walk, perhaps without a specific destination in mind, sitting on a bench talking to a friend, window shopping, sunbathing in a park, or drinking coffee outside a restaurant.

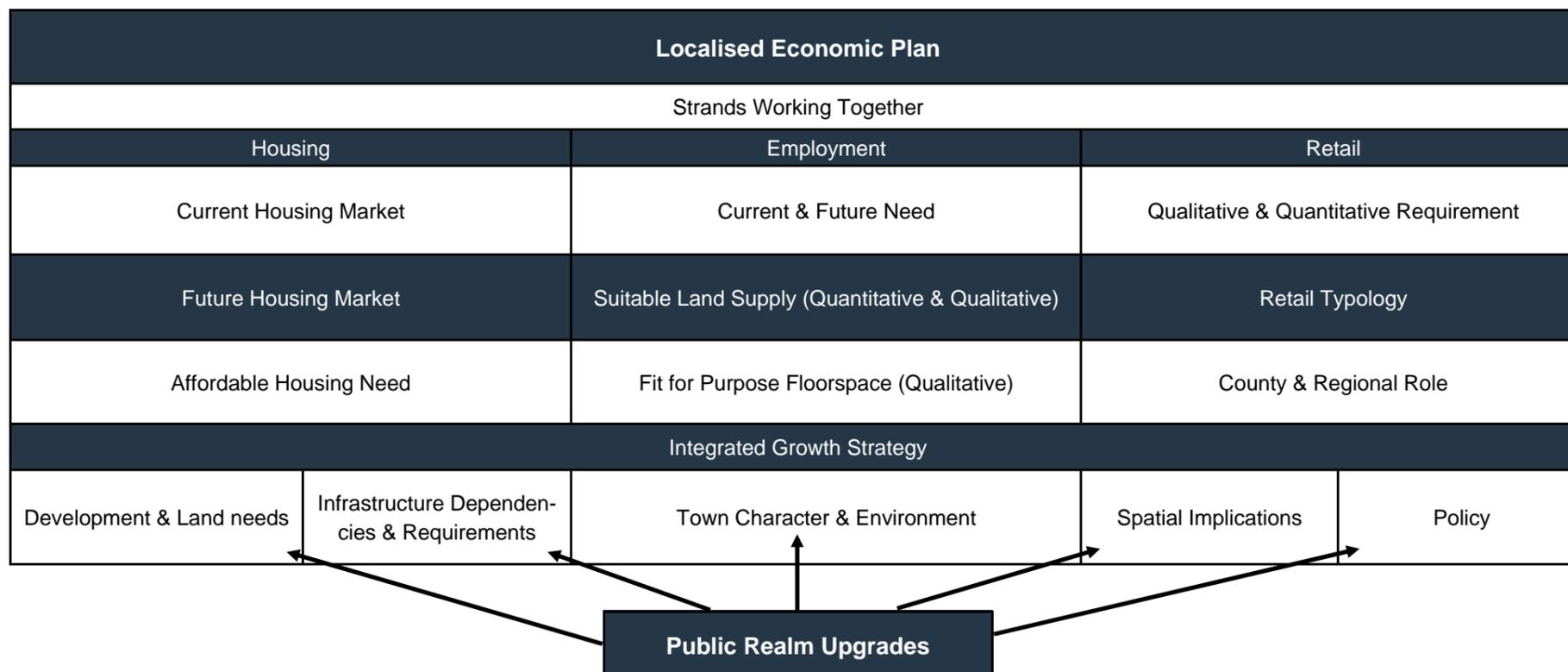
‘Necessary’ activities will always occur regardless of the quality of the public realm, as people will always need to get to the shops, school, or to work. However, ‘optional’ activities will increase commensurate with the quality of the public space. The more ‘optional’ activities that take place on a street, the greater the footfalls and the more opportunities that business owners have to entice potential customers into their premises. The more people who visit an area and the more time that they spend there, the greater the potential that they will engage in ‘casual’ shopping and will increase their spend.

The public realm on and around Castleblayney’s Main Street, while functional for ‘necessary’ activities, should also be viewed as an amenity for people to enjoy in its own right, and should be invested in and promoted as such.

Quality of Life and the Local Economy

A lively, vibrant public realm coupled with a strong business environment helps to improve the attractiveness and quality of life in a place, offering people more amenities and ways to spend their leisure time. Quality of life is becoming increasingly important in attracting entrepreneurs and skilled workers to a given location.

Remote working opportunities have made the geographic location of a variety of workers, including the self-employed, sub-contractors and consultants, less important. Instead, quality of life, coupled with the cost of living and the cost of renting business/commercial floorspace (often with smaller footprints) is creating opportunities for more rural locations to attract investment and a skilled workforce.



Public Realm Improvements and Interventions

The public realm improvements proposed in this document are designed to leverage off Castleblayney’s heritage, culture and existing assets. Taken together, the changes proposed will improve quality of life in the Town and improve its attractiveness to tourists and visitors. Any increase in visitors and associated spending, will have a knock-on effect on jobs, which in turn supports people’s ability to save and to purchase property, etc.

‘Big Tom’ and the Country Music Theme

The incorporation of the Country Music theme into the public realm is designed to help define the identity of the town and to attract visitors by creating a unique selling point, based around the Town’s rich Country music pedigree, something which people won’t find anywhere else.

This intervention supports the following economic objectives for the Town:

- To assist with the marketing of the Town as a centre of Country Music in Ireland.
- To attract more visitors to the Town by offering a unique point of interest and difference.
- To create a place where Country Music fans will wish to gather and congregate.
- To create a unique identity and branding for the Town.
- To encourage Country Music related events and businesses to locate in Castleblayney.
- To connect the Town’s branding to its Country Music heritage.
- To help define the perception of Castleblayney in the minds of potential visitors.

The Greening of the Town Centre

The greening of the Town Centre, which involves interventions to Main Street and the Market Square and Monaghan Road junction, are intended to support businesses in Castleblayney by making the Town Centre a more pleasant place to spend time and to increase footfalls. It promotes

and supports the idea of the Town Centre and Main Street as an amenity to be enjoyed in itself.

This intervention supports the following economic objectives for the Town:

- To increase the number of people visiting Castleblayney and footfalls in the Town Centre.
- To support jobs by encouraging spending in businesses on Main Street and extending into the backland area.
- To increase the amount of time that visitors to the Town Centre spend there.
- To provide businesses with an increased number of potential customers and opportunities for sales.

Connection and Integration with Lough Muckno

Lough Muckno is a key natural asset for the town and has the potential to play a significant role in the economic life of the Town, to improve the quality of life for people living there, and to attract visitors.

This intervention supports the following economic objectives for the Town:

- To expand the range of amenities in the Town, making it a more attractive place to visit.
- To broaden the appeal of Castleblayney beyond those who may be interested in its musical and cultural heritage.
- To provide activities that can be undertaken during the day, in order to complement those that take place in the evenings, such as music sessions.
- To increase the amount of time that visitors spend in the area.

Accommodating Living in the Town Centre

The Census conducted in 2016 indicates that the population of Castleblayney declined slightly, from 3,634 in 2011 to 3,607 in 2016. This change, combined with an ageing population, including nearly a 50% increase in the number of persons in the 80+ category during the intercensal period, has significant implications for the Town’s economy.

An increase in the number of people living in the Town Centre will increase the level of expenditure available in the Town and help to support local businesses and jobs.

In addition to an increase in residential accommodation in the Town Centre, short term lets that facilitate self-catering tourism could also benefit the economic life of the Town, so long as they don’t displace existing residents. The renovation of ‘over the shop’ accommodation to target this market could help to increase the numbers of tourists overnighing in Castleblayney.

This proposal supports the following economic objectives for the Town:

- Increase the number of people living in the Town and the available pool of expenditure for local businesses to tap into.
- Encourage the renovation of vacant or commercial space above existing businesses as short term rental accommodation aimed at the self-catering market.





Relationship between assets of the Town

7 The Integrated Plan

The Integrated Plan presents the public realm improvements and captures all of the Proposed Interventions in the context of the development of the Town Centre.

The following sheets describe the individual interventions that have emerged from the public consultation and the Design Team's proposals, to address the place and its analysis, through the application of the guiding principles to frame economic development and deliver the Shared Vision.

Urban Analysis

As part of the background analysis undertaken by the Design Team the principal components of the existing place have been identified and these form the basis of the interventions that have emerged.

The following issues were observed in relation to Castleblayney Town Centre:

- The need to conserve the Market House and bring it back into active use.
- Limited connections, both physical and visual, between the Town Centre and Lough Muckno.
- Poor pedestrian experience / undefined routes - laneways.
- Limited greenery / planting on the Main Street.
- Car parking / Poor road junctions.
- Limited activity at the eastern end of the Main Street.
- Hidden cultural heritage.

Addressing these issues as part of the individual interventions were, in the first instance, guided by the key themes of the Plan.

Overview of Interventions

The Plan seeks to bring the amenity space at Lough Muckno back into the Town Centre supporting the physical and mental well-being of residents and all of the benefits that can be delivered by green infrastructure. Indeed, Lough Muckno as an amenity is a unique and outstanding natural asset that sets Castleblayney apart from other Towns.

The main elements of the landscape strategy are the delivery of a public space at Market House, delineated by a shared surface, landscaped terraces and tree planting, as well as landscaping the length of the Main Street. These projects will create an interconnected network of high quality urban spaces at the heart of Castleblayney and provide facilities and spaces which can improve the quality of life in the Town. In conjunction with the enhanced facilities at Lough Muckno these areas will accommodate a wide variety of landscaped spaces and play and recreation facilities.

Vitality and viability of the Town Centre, specifically to the east of the Main Street in the traditional Market Square, are key concerns, so public realm enhancements have sought to reinvent this area as a multi-purpose public open space with the Market House at its core.

Detailed planting design should reflect the bringing of the countryside into the Town. To this end, we suggest the use of native trees and hedging in the appropriate context. Use of evergreen groundcover shrubs should be limited as much as possible to ensure that the spaces do not have a suburban or institutional appearance. Hard landscape materials have been varied to reflect the heritage of the Town and to ensure that the spaces are defined and recognisable.

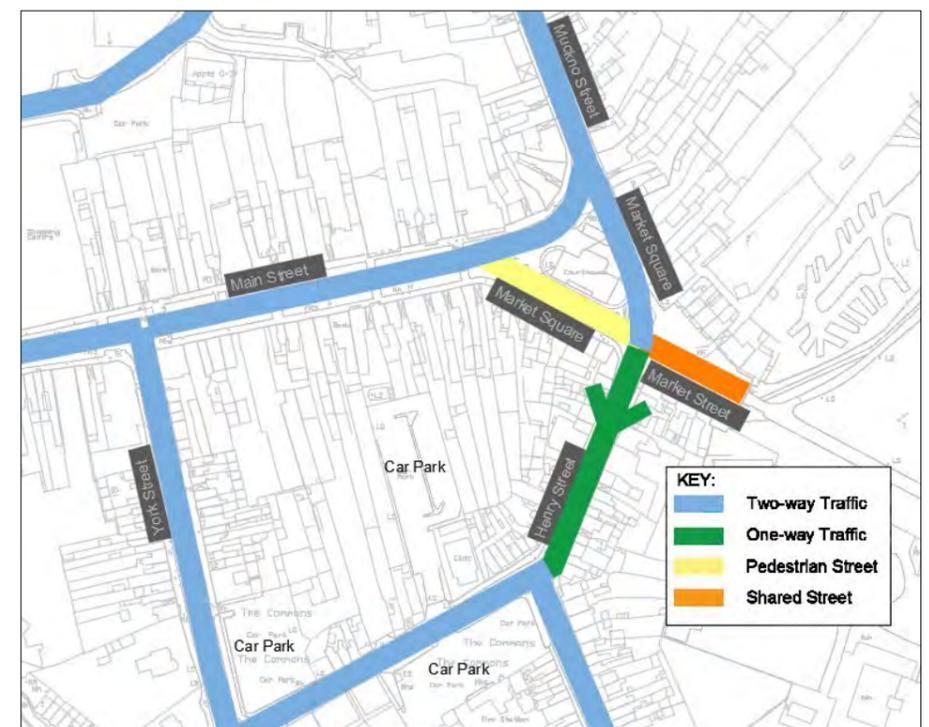
To promote and facilitate the increased role of tourism in the local economy, pick-up and set-down only coach parking will be provided on Market Square. As this is the central civic space within the Town, longer term coach parking here is not promoted, however, 2 - 3 spaces could be provided in the public car parks on Thomas Street to facilitate such parking. The coach pick-up and set-down area on Market Square will be hard landscaped in line with the surrounding area and the Main Street to ensure continuity of the public realm.

A key and unique feature of the Plan is the visual interpretation of the cultural heritage of Castleblayney in the public realm through the 'country singers crosswalks'. These crosswalks will visually represent the connection between the Country Music scene and the Town, and will form the basis of an integrated, high quality public realm for the entire length of the Main Street. The crosswalks will be hard landscaped, specifically using paving to create the variations for the singers to ensure that each is recognisable.

Traffic and Movement

In addition to public realm improvements, the Plan addresses traffic and movement within Castleblayney. Proposals in this regard have informed and / or been integrated into the Plan, as detailed in the Interventions that follow.

In relation to overall traffic and movement within the Town Centre, it is proposed to upgrade the south/south west side of Market Square to a pedestrianised street to promote this area as a public space. Market Street, from Henry Street to the gates of Lough Muckno, will be upgraded to a Shared Surface for pedestrians and motorists. Henry Street will become one-way southbound to improve the pedestrian facilities and to avoid traffic using this residential street as a short cut. The remainder of the streets/roads will maintain the current two-way system. The Proposed Interventions will modify the Town circulation around the Market Square Area, as per the below diagram, and appropriate road signs to indicate motorists of the change of circulation will be required accordingly.



Circulation around the Market Square

Overview

- The Integrated Strategy

Placemaking / Greening / Mobility Interventions

- Market Square
- Main Street
- The Backlands
- Main Street / Monaghan Road Junction
- The Laneways
- Lough Muckno
- Street Improvements

Heritage Interventions

- Market House / Market Square
- Other Heritage Assets Exposed

Environmental Interventions

- Lough Muckno



The Integrated Plan

8 The Interventions

Market Square

The Market House is a landmark building in the centre of Castleblayney. It is located in a visually prominent position at the eastern end of Main Street, at the entrance to Lough Muckno. It served the Town originally as a Market House, but was later adapted for uses in the court services. The building is currently vacant and in need of conservation. It is a Protected Structure and also features on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.

There is now an opportunity to conserve the building for reuse and be the focus for the redevelopment of Market Square. The Plan seeks to enhance this area, making it an attractive and usable space through the introduction of pedestrianisation and shared surface for pedestrians, cars and bicycles. The space will also help link the Main Street to Lough Muckno through a high quality, safe pedestrian environment. The area around the building presents the opportunity to re-establish the building's former market function, once again giving meaning to the area of 'Market Square'.

The Purpose of the Intervention

The purpose of the Market Square Intervention is not only to conserve the historically important Market House building and encourage its reuse, but to enable the creation of a high quality, pedestrian friendly public space bookending Main Street. The intervention will also provide an important visual and physical link to Lough Muckno, as well as a coach pick-up and set-down facility.

Key Features of the Intervention

- Encourage building conservation.
- Reduce car dominance.
- Facilitate pedestrian movement.
- Introduce opportunities for increased activity to the spaces around the Market House.
- Promote vibrancy and vitality at the eastern side of the Main Street.

- Facilitate the creation of a sense of place.
- Incorporate a public sculpture.
- Provide for markets and events.
- Incorporate coach parking facilities.

The Market House

The Market House is the principal focal building in the Town, from which several key routes radiate. This Plan promotes the conservation of this important historical building and its reestablishment as the heart of the Town Centre. The Plan seeks to address the building not only in terms of its conservation but also in relation to its future potential use(s) and the opportunity for such use(s) to interact with and contribute to the surrounding Market Square area.

Market Square

The opportunity exists at Market Square to reinvent the space as a multifunctional, pedestrian friendly area which can accommodate markets, fairs and events. The plan to make Market Square a focal point in the Town is informed by its historical use as a venue for the Town's market and the fact it would have also served as a place for group meetings. The accommodation of a commercial element is important in maintaining a link with its past while the potential to serve as a public space for cultural and entertainment events ties in well with the Town's strong Country Music connections.

By pedestrianising the south of the street, and introducing shared surfaces from the Market House to the entrance with Lough Muckno, a sense of priority for pedestrians is created in this area that will encourage more such movement through and within this space. The paving used to create this pedestrian space will tie this area back into the heritage of the Town, Market Square and the Market House, telling their story visually. The visual connection between the Main Street, the Market House and Lough Muckno will be further strengthened through the creation of a tree lined avenue.

To facilitate tourist visits to Castleblayney, a coach parking space is provided for adjacent to Market Square on the northern side of Main Street. This location provides direct access to Market Square and the entrance to Lough Muckno, without interrupting the view of the Market House from Main Street. This location also enables the shared sur-

face space between the Market House and the entrance to Lough Muckno to remain largely free from vehicular traffic.

Access from the coach parking area to the south side of Main Street and new public spaces on Market Square will be via two designated pedestrian crossings. To ensure continuity in the public realm for the length of the Main Street, the crossings will be hard landscaped as 'country singers crosswalks', as detailed in the Main Street Intervention. To avoid long stay coach parking at this civic space, parking will be designated as pick-up and set-down only, with longer term coach parking (2 - 3 spaces) provided in the public car parks on The Commons.



Coach Parking on Market Square

Key Physical Changes

The following are the key components of the Plan for Market Square:

- Creation of a pedestrian friendly environment including the use of shared surfaces.
- Conservation and reuse of Market House.
- Integrated hard and soft landscaping proposals including outdoor seating.
- Creation of a public space for gatherings and events.
- Utilisation of hard landscaping to 'tell the story' of Castleblayney and Market House.
- Provision of terraces to Market Square utilising existing gradient.



Indication of how Market Square could appear following the enactment of the Intervention (the location of the public sculpture is indicative)

Contribution to the Guiding Principles

- Provides for the conservation and reuse of a key heritage asset, Market House.
- Delivers a strong pedestrian connected place to link Market Square as a key public space with Main Street and Lough Muckno.
- Provides for the creation of a multi-functional public space centred on the Market House.
- Provides for a high quality urban designed environment.
- Provides a key event space for fairs and gatherings.
- Facilitates tourism in the Town.

Outcomes

- Conservation and reuse of Market House.
- Aesthetic improvements.
- Improved pedestrian routes.
- Greater activity promoted.
- Increased visual interest .
- Improved vibrancy and commercial activity at the eastern end of Main Street.
- Better social opportunities .
- Considered setting within which a location for the public sculpture can be considered.
- Provision for coach parking facility (pick up and drop off).
- High quality, durable, and well-maintained materials.

Projects

The Market Square Intervention is multifaceted and addresses the Market House building, the surrounding space, the streetscape, the street surface and hard and soft landscaping. For the purposes of progressing this Intervention it can be approached as a number of individual projects as follows:

- Conservation works to the Market House building to protect the building fabric from further decay and to conserve the structure.

- Works to the Market House building to enable it to be brought back into active use.
- Landscaping of the existing road to the south of the Market House, to provide a continuous pedestrian priority area to Lough Muckno, including pedestrianisation and a shared surface, that ‘tells the story’ of Castleblayney through paving and provides a public square for activities and events.
- Works and hard and soft landscaping to the public realm along the Market House’s arcade to provide a public open space consisting of gradient terraces and an outdoor area for dining, potentially associated with the future use of the Market House.
- General landscaping in the area of Market House, to include a tree planting project to Main Street and a tree planting project to the south of the Market House, to provide a tree lined avenue to the entrance to Lough Muckno.
- The provision for coach parking to the north of Market Square and Main Street to provide pick up and drop off facilities at this civic hub.

Phasing

The Market House is an important heritage asset of Castleblayney and is the focal building of the Town Centre, which will anchor the new civic space. Given this important role, its protected status and its current state of disrepair, the conservation of the Market House would be one of the early phases of works as part of this intervention. Conservation works that make the building safe and ensure its structural stability are required in the first instance. Conservation works as part of the next phase would restore the building and allow for it to be brought back into active use.

Other projects around the Market House can be progressed separately or brought forward together. Once the Market House is made safe, even in advance of further conservation works, other projects could be progressed. The delivery of the shared surface and enhanced landscaping to the south of the Market House would provide an immediate enhancement of the public realm and increase pedestrian accessibility from the Main Street to Lough Muckno. It would also provide a public square for events and act as an attractor for the eastern end of the Main Street.

The gradient terraces built into the slope will form an attractive feature, providing a usable public space to spend time in and enhance the entrance to the Town from Muckno Street. Their contribution to the public realm will, however, be maximised as part of the re-use of the Market House as this space will act as an extension to the building providing a directly accessible and usable outdoor area.

Given the location of the coach parking facility on, but separate to, Market Square and being on the northern side of Main Street, this can be progressed as a standalone project at any point. Its delivery as a stand alone project must consider how it integrates with other aspects of the Intervention and the Main Street Intervention.

Costing Exemplar

While the costing for the projects contained in the Market Square Intervention will be dependant on the detailed design brought forward for each in terms of materials, fixtures, ground works etc. In order to assist with achieving a high level understanding of such costs, the Thematic Design Manual, provided in Section 9 includes examples of fixtures and finishes and provides a cost range in this regard.

In addition exemplars have been assessed to determine a high level cost for a similar project in a comparable context. In the case of the Market Square Intervention, Market Square in Dundalk was reviewed as an exemplar as it is a relatively recent example of substantial upgrade works to an urban square in a historic setting. While the receiving physical environment and detailed design are unique to that project, it does contain a similar range of works to those required to deliver the Market Square Intervention including paving, traffic and pedestrian management, road surfacing for new road layout, street furniture and soft landscaping.

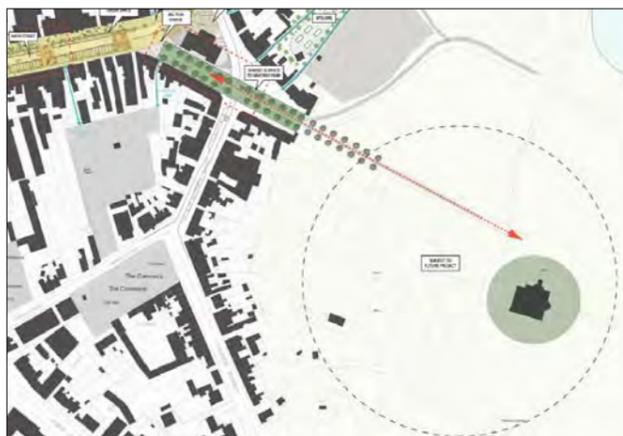
The overall cost of the upgrade works to the Market Square in Dundalk was in the region of €3 million, of which Dundalk Town Council had won c. €1.9m in funding from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).



Market Square Intervention Detail



Paving Reference



Market Square to Hope Castle



Market Square, Main Street towards Market House (Lawrence Collection, NLI)



Seating Reference—Example of Seating Type



Clonkilty Reference

8 The Interventions

Main Street

The Main Street of Castleblayney is the central spine of the Town and acts as the main core for commercial, retail and entertainment activities. Running in an east - west direction for a length of c. 300m, it is consistently wide and accommodates two-way vehicular traffic and on-street parking on both sides.

The width of Main Street and the existing provision of on-street parking presents the opportunity to re-balance the relationship between vehicular traffic and pedestrian and cyclist movements. The proposed improvements will deliver a more usable, accessible and attractive public realm that encourages people to visit and spend time in the Town Centre and deliver a legible and unique identity for the Town.

The Purpose of the Intervention

The purpose of the proposed intervention to Main Street is to address the current dominance of vehicular traffic and to make it not only a more pedestrian friendly place but to deliver an enhanced public realm. This intervention provides a real opportunity to redefine the eastern part of the Main Street as a space for people, where they can come to spend time in the Town and visit and enjoy the range of shops, cafes, restaurants and eateries it has to offer. This intervention also has a fundamental role in defining a unique identity for the Town by making its strong ties to Country Music an integral part of and legible within the public realm of Main Street.

Key Features of the Intervention

- Readdress the dominance of vehicular traffic on Main Street.
- Promote greater pedestrian activity in the Town Centre.
- Introduce new outdoor spaces that promote vibrancy and vitality in the traditional Town core of Castleblayney.
- Promote vibrancy and vitality at the eastern side of Main Street.
- Incorporate the 'identity' of Castleblayney as an integral part of the public realm through the 'country singers crosswalks'.

- Provide an enhanced public realm for the length of the Main Street through hard and soft landscaping.
- Enhanced pedestrian crossing facilities.
- Increased connectivity through laneways.
- Facilitate the creation of a sense of place.

Main Street

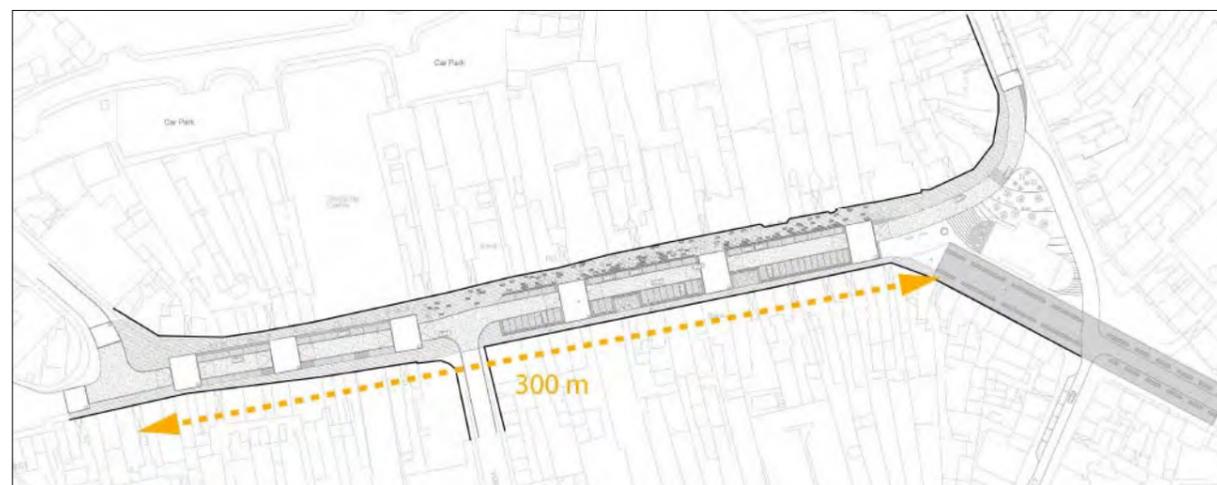
The proposed intervention extends the length of the Main Street from the junction with the Monaghan Road to the west to Muckno Street to the east. It is made up of both landscaping improvements, public realm interventions and parking rationalisation. Pedestrian crossings are facilitated at multiple locations to enhance the new pedestrian links and to improve road safety provision on Main Street, The optimum type of crossing (i.e. zebra, toucan, curtesy, uncontrolled, etc.) best suited for each location should be further developed and assessed individually.

Starting at the junction with the Monaghan Road, and running to the junction with York Street, the north and south side of the Main Street will be landscaped, including planting to soften the public realm. Pedestrian movement will be enhanced through the provision of crosswalks, provided proximate to links to the backland areas and delineated using paving to represent the faces of famous Country Music singers. This will not only provide a visual connection to the heritage of Castleblayney but will be central to creating a unique identity for the Town. Parking will remain in its current form, parallel to street, reflecting

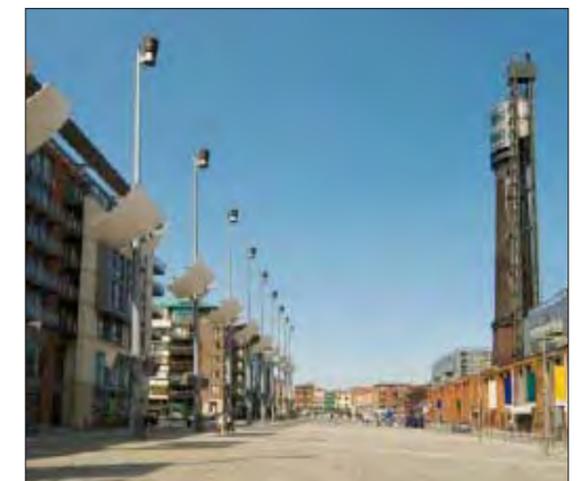
of the fact that the western end of the Main Street is the current focus of daily commercial activity.

The planting and 'country singers crosswalks' will traverse the entirety of the Main Street to its junction with Muckno Street, providing a continuity of quality public realm and bringing both ends of the Street together visually. The public realm function and form will, however, alter at the eastern end of the Main Street in acknowledgement of the ongoing reduction in vitality and commercial activity in this area. The footpaths will be reinvented as sidewalks, protected from on-street activity by vegetation incorporating green strips in the form of trees and grey strip that act as benches. Landscaping will be utilised along the southern side of the street to create terraces that can be used by existing restaurants and eateries and as an asset to attract such commercial activity to this area. Parking will be rationalised to accommodate these public realm upgrades.

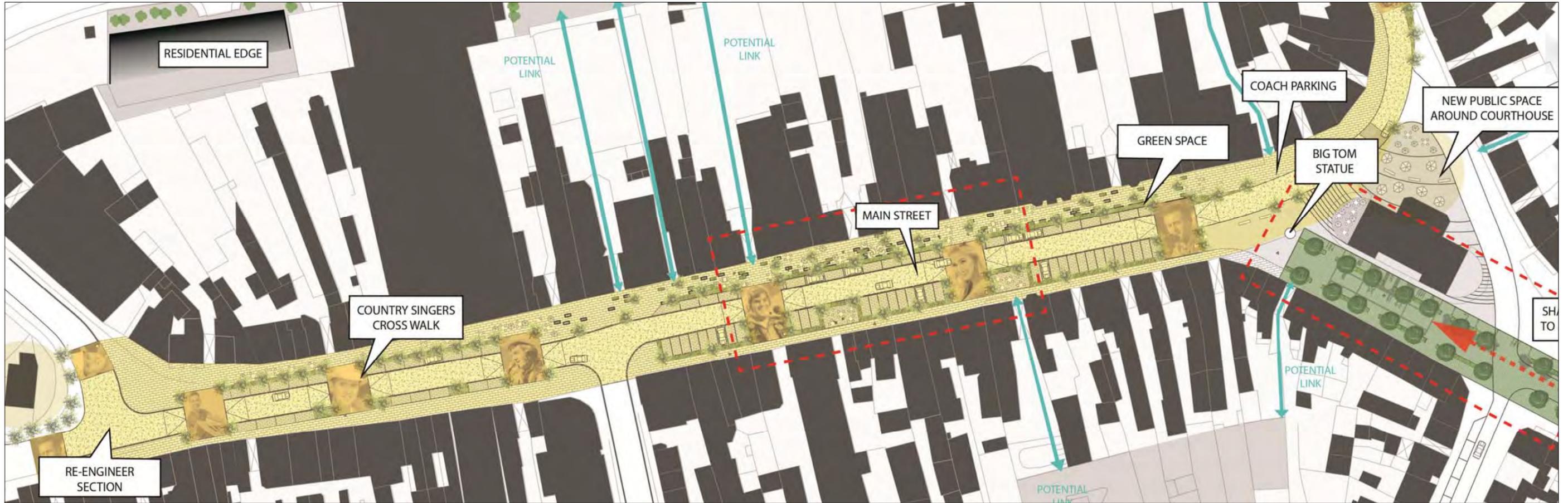
The enhancement of the Main Street in terms of planting, pedestrian movement and the delivery of public spaces will visually and functionally connect with the Market Square Intervention. These two interventions together will transform the existing Main Street to a high quality public realm that promotes pedestrian movement, encourages pedestrians to spend time there and makes the length of the Street attractive for commercial use.



Main Street - c. 300m from Monaghan Road junction to York Street



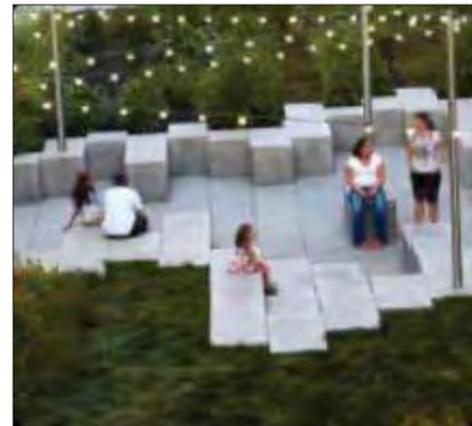
Smithfield Square, Dublin - 300M long



Main Street - Monaghan Road junction to York Street



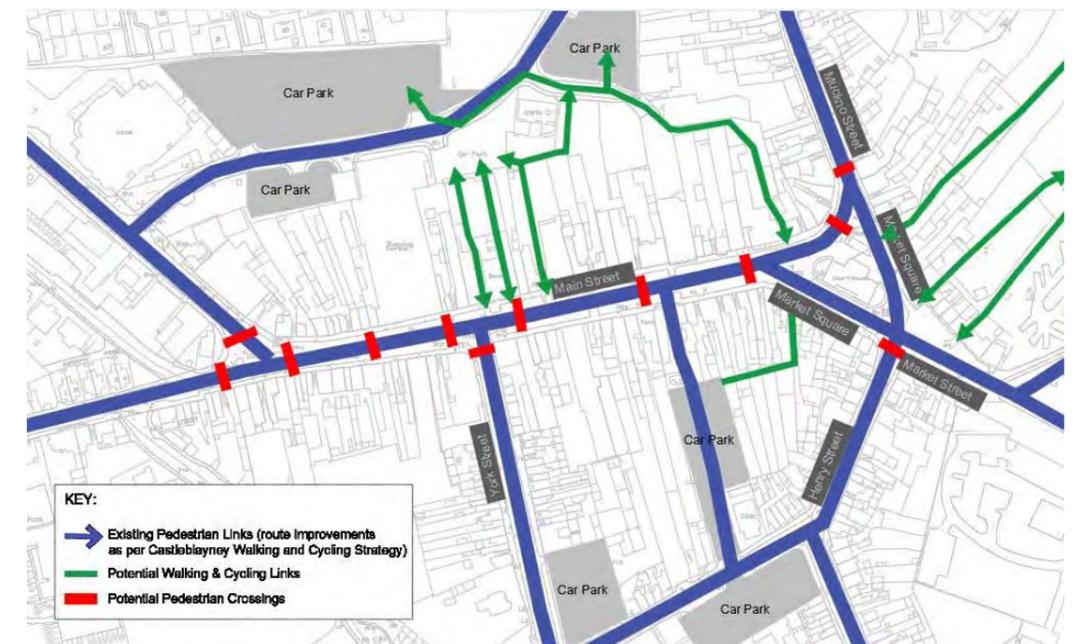
Country Music Reference



Seating Reference



On-Street Terrace Reference



Pedestrian Crossing Locations

Key Physical Changes

The following are the key components of the Plan for the Main Street:

- Creation of a pedestrian friendly environment through the use of hard and soft landscaping proposals including outdoor seating.
- Utilisation of hard and soft landscaping proposals to reduce the visual dominance of vehicular traffic.
- Provision of terrace areas that are usable as public spaces and that act as a resource for and attractor to commercial operators.
- Utilisation of hard landscaping to create the 'country singers crosswalks' that not only provide enhanced pedestrian accessibility but are a unique selling point for the Town and a tourist attraction.

Rationalisation of car parking at the eastern side of Main Street, with parallel parking provided to the north to allow for an enhanced pedestrian environment and removal of spaces to the south to facilitate the on-street terraces.

The preparation of a design guide is essential to the implementation of this intervention which would provide a design basis for the transformation of Main Street, e.g. colour scheme, shopfronts, signage, etc. This should be undertaken as part of a further study.

Contribution to the Guiding Principles

- Provides for a high quality urban designed environment.
- Turns the Main Street into a strong pedestrian connected thoroughfare, that integrates linkages to the backland areas and strengthens physical connections with Lough Muckno.
- Extensive landscape provides for greening of the Town Centre.
- Provides for the creation of public terraces that encourage people to spend time in the Town Centre and that facilitate and promote commercial activity at the eastern end of Main Street.
- Delivers a physical and visual connection to the Town's Country Music heritage that is key to the creation of a unique identity for Castleblayney.

Outcomes

- Increased visual interest.
- Creation of a sense of place unique to Castleblayney.
- Improved pedestrian routes.
- Better social opportunities.
- Aesthetic improvement.
- Greater activity promoted.
- Improved vibrancy and commercial activity at the eastern end of Main Street.
- High quality, durable, and well-maintained materials.

Projects

The Main Street Intervention is multifaceted addressing the streetscape, street surfaces, pedestrian crossings, hard and soft landscaping and connections with the backland areas. The progression of this Intervention can be approached as a number of individual projects as follows:

- Landscaping, in the form of planting to the Main Street.
- Works and hard and soft landscaping to the public realm along the Main Street to provide public spaces consisting of seating areas and terraces for dining.
- Landscaping in the form of paved pedestrian crosswalks that visually represent the Town's Country Music connection.
- Rationalisation of car parking at the eastern end of the Main Street to provide parallel parking to the north and space for on-street terrace areas to the south.

Phasing

In order to deliver a coherent, high quality public realm on Main Street, consideration must be given to how each project integrates with other aspects of the Intervention, if projects are to be brought forward separately. Landscaping in the form of planting to the western side of Main Street is a standalone improvement which could be

quickly delivered. Landscaping to the eastern end, which would visually unify the Main Street, must consider the revised line of the footpath to the north, the on-street terrace areas to the south and the role of planting in traffic screening.

The provision of the 'country singers crosswalks' could also be progressed as a stand alone project. Provision would have to be made in its delivery for integration with the wider public realm improvements including landscaping (hard and soft) and the rationalisation of on-street parking.

Costing Exemplar

The costing for the projects contained in the Main Street Intervention will be dependant on the detailed designs brought forward in terms of materials, fixtures, ground works etc. and will also be influenced by the cost of labour relating to the setting of the paving for the 'country singers crosswalks'. Notwithstanding this, in order to assist with achieving a high level understanding of such costs, the Thematic Design Manual provided in Section 9 includes examples of fixtures and finishes and provides a cost range in this regard, as well as a range of high level costs of general public realm works.

In addition, exemplars have been assessed to determine a high level cost associated with street upgrade works, the aim of which was to deliver an enhanced physical environment, improved the public realm, regenerate the urban fabric and promote walking and cycling. The proposed upgrade works to O'Connell Street in Limerick were reviewed as an exemplar in this regard as it is a live example with a budget based on current market costs for such street improvement works.

The works to O'Connell Street which cover from the junctions of Denmark Street and Barrington Street, a distance of approximately 786 metres in length, have been costed at approximately €9.1 million. For this investment Limerick City & County Council has secured €4.1 million in European Regional Development Funding via the Designated Urban Centre Grants Scheme.

The Main Street Intervention covers a substantially shorter distance of c. 300m and based on the above costing for O'Connell Street could at today's rates cost somewhere in the region of €3.5 - €4 million.



Indicative Sketch of Public Realm on Main Street / Market Square



Country Singers Crosswalks and Enhanced Public Realm on Eastern Side of Main Street

8 The Interventions

The Backlands

The opening up of the backland area presents the opportunity to deliver a connected and integrated Town Centre that promotes pedestrian accessibility and permeability. Areas have been identified that could accommodate residential development to facilitate and encourage living in the Town Centre. In addition, the backland area is a resource for the Town that facilitates multiple development opportunities and provides for the relocation and rationalisation of car parking to serve the retail, commercial and business needs of the Town Centre.

Opening up of these sites and bringing people back to the Town Centre to live, not only has the potential to transform the dynamic of the Town, but also presents an important investment opportunity in the heart of Castleblayney.

The Purpose of the Intervention

The purpose of the proposed Backland Intervention is to efficiently and appropriately utilise this important, accessible, land bank in the centre of Castleblayney. The development of these lands also has a pivotal role to play in addressing the current dominance of vehicular traffic and associated car parking on the Main Street, in promoting and facilitating living in the Town Centre and in providing for improvements to the public realm (see the Main Street Intervention for details).

This intervention, along with the Main Street Intervention, provides an opportunity to redefine how the Main Street functions, how car parking is accommodated in the Town Centre, as well as providing enhanced pedestrian access to and from Main Street. In delivering new housing stock in the Town Centre, which is easily accessible to services and amenities, the Intervention also supports and enhances Castleblayney as an Age Friendly Town.

Key Features of the Intervention

- Bring currently underutilised, accessible, backland areas, within the Town Centre into active use.
- Provide accessible, safe and legible pedestrian laneways from the Main Street to the backland areas north and south.
- Readdress the dominance of vehicular traffic and associated car parking on Main Street.
- Provide new residential developments that encourage and facilitate living in the Town Centre.
- Promote greater pedestrian activity from the Town Centre to the backland areas and vice versa.
- Promote vibrancy and vitality in association with the Main Street Intervention.
- Increase connectivity in the Town Centre.

Northern Backlands

The northern backlands are directly accessible from McGrath Road and are already utilised in part for surface parking. While this area acts as an important pool of parking for the Town, specifically serving retail units at the western end of Main Street, pedestrian accessibility directly with the Main Street is poor. Existing lanes adjacent to, and part of, commercial premises already provide access to rear yards for several units, with some accessible from McGrath Road. Formally defining such laneways as pedestrian routes from Main Street to the backland area and connecting these through where required, will ensure that these lands are utilised to the benefit of the entire Town Centre. In addition, landscaping, both hard and soft, will define and enhance the pedestrian environment and visually soften the existing car parking areas. This area also provides the opportunity to deliver residential development fronting McGrath Road. Such development would not only provide for and encourage people to live in the Town Centre but would also create a residential edge to the Road and improve safety through passive surveillance.

Southern Backlands

As with the northern backlands, the southern backlands already provide a pool of parking for the Town Centre which is accessible from Thomas Street. The existing car park north of Thomas Street is directly accessible via a lane from Main Street and is located adjacent to a large undeveloped backland area which provides the opportunity to expand this facility. Such an expansion of the car park into the lands to the east would also provide the opportunity to deliver a new pedestrian access directly with Market Square, thereby encouraging and facilitating pedestrian movement in this location in line with the Market Square Intervention.

The southern backlands also contain a second car park to the south of Thomas Street. As well as acting as a resource for the Town in terms of facilitating rationalisation of on-street parking, these lands also present the opportunity to provide street frontage, including residential development, that visually encloses Thomas Street. Landscaping will further enhance the public realm at this location.

Car Parking

As noted in the Main Street Intervention, the public realm works maintain the majority of the existing parallel and perpendicular on-street car parking spaces. In conjunction with this, it is recommended to install road signs to redirect visitors and locals to the existing free car parks located near the Main Street including Lower Commons Car Park, Upper Commons Car Park and the Town Centre Car Park.

To complement this arrangement, it is recommended that existing pedestrian linkages between the car parks to the Main Street and Lough Muckno are enhanced. This can be achieved through the following:

- Wayfinding from the car parks to the Main Street and principal amenities.
- Appropriate lighting.
- New pedestrian links from the Main Street to the car parks in the backland areas north and south of Main Street.



Northern Backlands



Laneway to Southern Backlands

Southern Backlands



Laneway to Northern Backlands



Key Physical Changes

The following are the key components of the Plan for the Backlands:

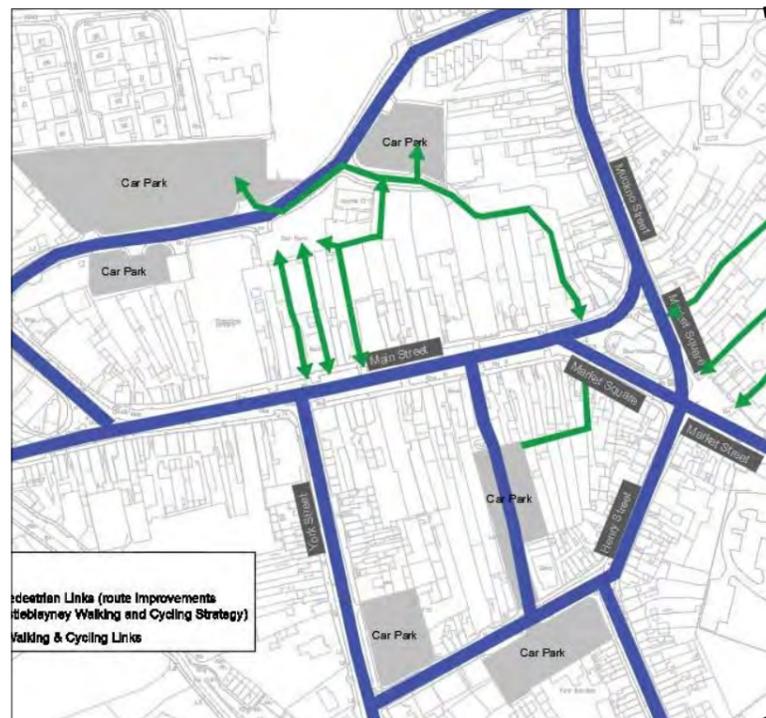
- Physically connect existing lanes to the backlands.
- Creation of clear pedestrian routes from the Main Street to the backland areas through the use of hard and soft landscaping and lighting proposals.
- Remove all unnecessary signs and visual clutter.
- Utilisation of hard and soft landscaping proposals to reduce the visual dominance of the backland car parking areas.
- Provision of signage to direct vehicular traffic to the backland car parks.

Contribution to the Guiding Principles

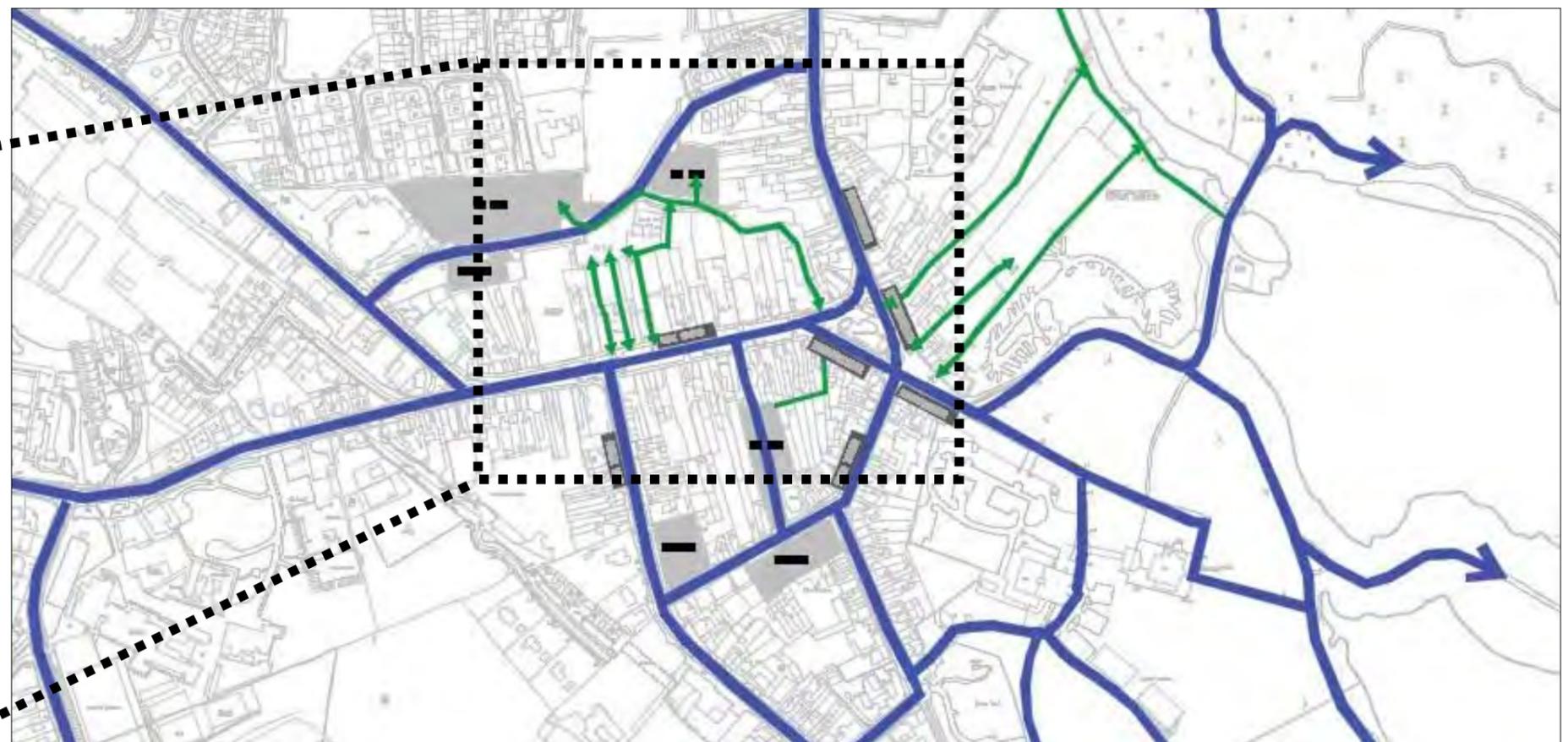
- Provides a pool of car parking that is adjacent to and is highly accessible from the Main Street, facilitating the rationalisation of on-street parking.
- Delivers desirable, safe pedestrian linkages between the existing backland car parks and the Main Street.
- Identifies opportunities for the delivery of new residential developments within the Town Centre to encourage and facilitate living in the Town.
- Landscaping provides for greening, screening and softening of car parking areas.
- Provides the opportunity to visually enclose Thomas Street and frame views of historic structures.

Outcomes

- Improved pedestrian routes
- Increased accessibility to car parking facilities.
- Increased visual interest.
- Greater activity promoted.
- Improved vibrancy and commercial activity on Main Street and specifically at the eastern end of the Street.
- High quality, durable, and well-maintained materials.



Town Centre Car Parks and Potential Pedestrian Links



Wider Existing Pedestrian Network and Proposed Pedestrian Links

Projects

The Backland Intervention is multifaceted addressing the physical provision of pedestrian linkages, streetscape, street surfaces, hard and soft landscaping and lighting. The progression of this Intervention can be approached as a number of individual projects as follows:

- Landscaping, in the form of planting to existing car parks.
- Works, including landscaping, lighting and signage to improve and enhance existing pedestrian linkages from the Main Street to the backlands.
- The provision of new pedestrian connections from the backlands to the Main Street.
- Extension of the existing car parking facilities to the south of Main Street, including the provision of a new pedestrian access to Market Square.
- Provision of directional signage directing vehicular traffic to the backland car parking areas.

Phasing

Landscaping of existing car parks to provide visual improvements and help their integration is an easy deliverable. Also, as there are existing areas of backland car parking already in place, the enhancement of existing linkages to the Main Street, including improvements in hard landscaping, lighting and signage, is a logical early phase in delivering this Intervention.

The following phases of delivering the Intervention should include the provision of new linkages between the northern backlands and the Main Street. Linkages in this area are currently limited and while the backland car parks are well utilised there is little benefit to the Main Street in terms of footfall and pedestrian access.

The latter phase of delivery of this Intervention could include the extension of the backland car park to the south of the Main Street as these lands are currently in multiple ownership. Once assembled this would also allow for the provision of a new pedestrian access point from this area to Market Square.

The provision of a built frontage to the car park on the southern side of Thomas Street is also considered a stand alone phase of development. The delivery of this phase is dependant on, and interconnected with, the relocation of the fire station from this area. In addition, the provision of residential units in the areas identified are also considered separate and stand alone projects, as these lands are in multiple private ownerships and their development would be based on market demand.

Costing Exemplar

The costing for the projects contained in the Backlands Intervention will be dependant on what aspects of the Intervention are brought forward and the detailed design(s) of these in terms of materials, fixtures, ground works, drainage and types of residential units etc.

In order to assist with achieving a high level understanding of such costs, the Thematic Design Manual provided in Section 9 includes examples of fixtures and finishes. In addition, it provides a cost range for public realm works of between €280 - €620 per sq.m. This includes both the physical street furniture and area lighting as well as a range of ground works such as the undergrounding of cables, SuDS etc. Given that the work to the lanes would primarily relate to groundworks with some limited lighting, such projects could be expected to come within the lower end of the above range.



Backland Residential Area Reference



Backland Residential Area Reference



Backland Residential Area Reference

8 The Interventions

Lough Muckno

Lough Muckno is a significant amenity asset and is singularly the most important asset in Castleblayney. In addition to providing recreational and leisure facilities for the residents of the Town and the wider area, Lough Muckno is also a tourist attraction for fishing, mountain biking, water sports and nature pursuits. In conjunction with Country Music, Lough Muckno is a defining and distinguishing feature of the Town.

Given its scale, further opportunities exist to improve Lough Muckno as an amenity asset. While the redevelopment and reuse of Hope Castle is a significant future commercial opportunity for the Town, the options for which are subject to a separate study by the Council, Lough Muckno and its surrounding lands also present opportunities in terms of enhanced leisure and recreational facilities. The provision of spaces for the community to use and develop would be an important asset for existing residents of the Town and aid in attracting new residents back to the Town Centre.

The Purpose of the Intervention

The purpose of the Proposed Intervention at Lough Muckno is to maximise the community, social and economic benefits this significant asset has to offer Castleblayney. It will provide new community centred amenity spaces that will enhance the quality of life in the Town, making it a more attractive and liveable place.

The intervention will also deliver practical benefits, providing a number of pedestrian access points from Market Square to the proposed ateliers, picnic area, rest area, vegetable patch and fitness trail. Identification and formalisation of these access points will also deliver improved visual connections between the Town Centre and Lough Muckno, bringing the Lough as an extensive amenity back into the heart of the Town.

Key Features of the Intervention

The key feature is Lough Muckno itself. By enhancing connections with the Town Centre, both physical and visual, the unique nature and ambience of Lough Muckno becomes part of the Town and its identity.

Whilst Lough Muckno already accommodates a range of leisure and recreational facilities, there is an opportunity to complement these uses through community based amenity areas and spaces such as vegetable patches, ateliers, a picnic area, a rest area and fitness trail. The new community facilities will be designed optimally for both environmental and amenity benefits. Spaces will be landscaped according to use and civil engineering concerns, such as SuDS, should also be considered integrally with the design of these spaces.

These new spaces will make Lough Muckno more attractive to, and practical for, the community on a daily basis and will provide a valuable amenity for those currently resident in the Town Centre. In addition, such facilities will contribute to the attraction of the Town Centre for new residents, including Muckno Street due to its proximity and enhanced accessibility to Lough Muckno.

Key to the utilisation of these enhanced facilities and amenity areas is accessibility. Lough Muckno is currently accessible from a singular, main access from Market Square, with the rest of the Town and specifically Muckno Street, turning its back on it. The new pedestrian access points proposed will make Lough Muckno and the enhanced facilities accessible from new locations, providing direct connections with the Town Centre. These connections will not only be physical but visual, bringing Lough Muckno back into the Town Centre and establishing it visually as a key part of the identity of Castleblayney.

Key Physical Changes

The key components of the Plan include the following:

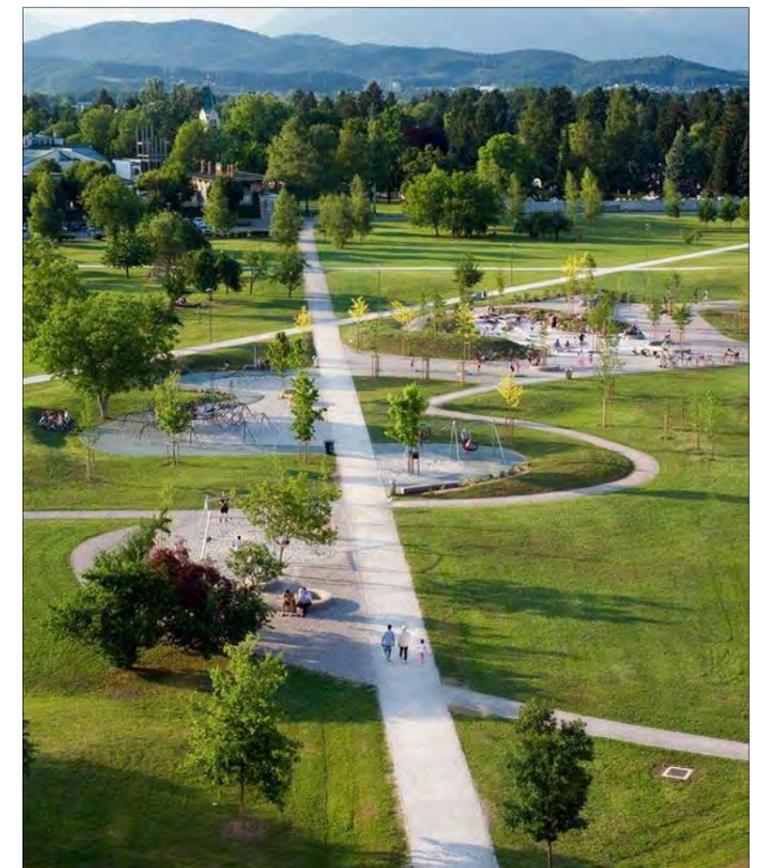
- Creation of new spaces within Lough Muckno designed and landscaped for a specific end use i.e. a vegetable patch, a fitness trail, a picnic area, a rest area and ateliers.
- Open up and physically connect existing lanes from Market Square to Lough Muckno.

- Creation of clear pedestrian routes from the Main Street and Market Square to Lough Muckno through the use of hard and soft landscaping and lighting proposals.

Contribution to the Guiding Principles

The Lough Muckno Intervention contributes to many of the Guiding Principles and in particular the following;

- The People's Town through the delivery of community based amenity spaces.
- The Connected Place by delivering a strong pedestrian connected place to link Main Street and Market Square with Lough Muckno.
- Visually links Lough Muckno back into the Town Centre, contributing to the creation of a strong and unique identity for Castleblayney.



Park Reference

Outcomes

The principal outcomes will be as follows:

- Increased entrance points and connections to Lough Muckno from the Town Centre to allow for greater animation and more options for entry and exit.
- The Intervention will open up new areas within, and adjacent to, Lough Muckno for active use.
- New access points will visually connect the Town Centre and Lough Muckno.
- Provision of facilities and amenity areas specifically for the community will improve the quality of life of those living in the Town, provide social opportunities and make it an attractive place for new residents.
- Provision of new, easily accessible facilities within Lough Muckno will act as a further attractor for people to the eastern end of the Town Centre, thereby, improving vibrancy and commercial activity.

Projects

The Lough Muckno Intervention can be divided into two separate project groups as follows:

Group 1 - Accessibility

- Provision of new linkages between Market Square/Main Street and Lough Muckno to include surface treatment and hard and soft landscaping.
- Integration of new areas into the wider Lough Muckno pedestrian/cyclist network.

Group 2 - Amenity

- Provision of multiple, distinct, amenity areas and facilities to include picnic area, vegetable patch and shed, rest area and ateliers.
- Each individual amenity area will have its own works and landscaping requirements based on the end use.

Phasing

These groups are considered individually, as group one relates to attaining access to the subject lands in the first instance. This can be delivered either through minimal works to connect to the existing pathways within Lough Muckno or as a more substantial project that delivers new, dedicated access points from Market Square/Main Street.

The second group relates to the range of amenity facilities. While these can be progressed as one project, their nature also provides for individual delivery. Some can be delivered in the very short term, requiring limited works or investment, such as the vegetable patch, while others will require both, such as the picnic area and ateliers.

As each amenity area has a stand alone use, their progression individually will still deliver important enhancements to the overall recrea-



Community Amenity Reference

tional provision and community infrastructure in Castleblayney. The addition of each further amenity area will integrate seamlessly and further improve the range and nature of community facilities.

Costing Exemplar

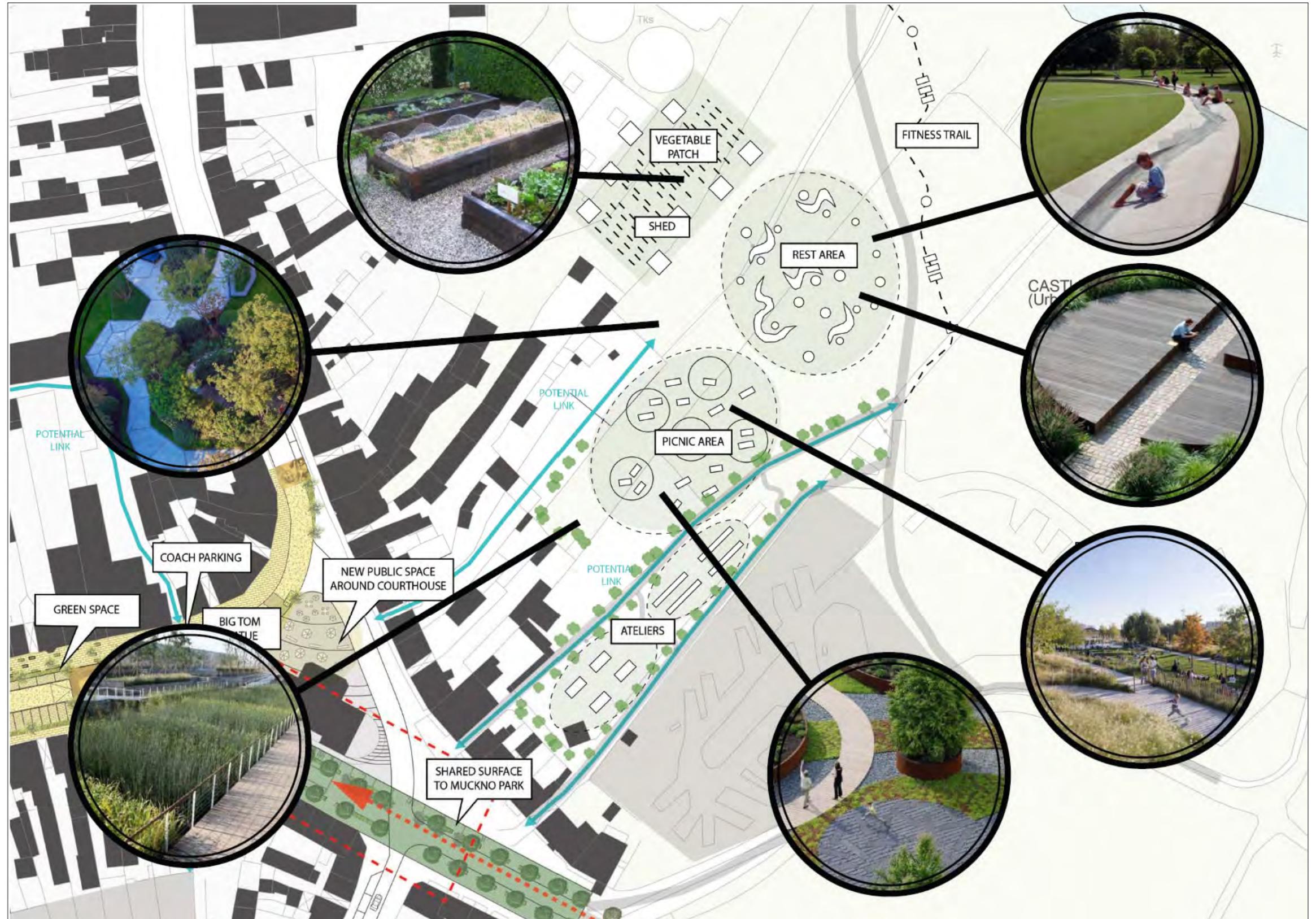
The costing for the projects contained in the Main Street Intervention will be dependant on the detailed designs brought forward in terms of materials, fixtures, ground works etc., and will also be influenced by the physical features of the area, specifically issues relating to SuDS and drainage given the proximity to Lough Muckno.

The site topography and characteristics as well as the fact that the Intervention relates to the provision of new facilities within an existing park setting make even the high level costing for this project or the identification of an exemplar difficult. In addition, the nature of the enhancements proposed i.e. vegetable patch, picnic area etc., can be progressed in a multitude of ways, all of which have associated varying costs.

An exemplar which has been assessed to determine a high level cost associated with the provision of new facilities for the benefit of the community is Weaver Park on Cork Street in Dublin City. Previously a vacant site, the Park which cost over €1 million, provides a range of facilities including exercise facilities (skate bowl), smooth paths, a series of low walls around the park, a space for younger children and landscaping, that allows for a leisurely space to enjoy the sunshine and relax.



Park Reference



Lough Muckno Intervention

8 The Interventions

Junction Upgrades

The Monaghan Road Junction terminates the Main Street (R181) to the west and is a heavily trafficked junction taking vehicular traffic to and from the areas to the west and north of the Town. Current traffic management of the junction takes the form of a 3-arm mini roundabout with a single lane approach. There are two staggered zebra crossings on the Main Street arms, while the Monaghan Road crossing is an uncontrolled crossing, making it difficult to cross, particularly for people with mobility impairments. The junction is a relatively inhospitable pedestrian environment at present.

The Main Street and York Street Junction forms a T-junction located roughly mid-way along the length of the Main Street. The junction is a traffic signal junction at present, with left and right turn lanes provided on York Street onto Main Street. Two lanes are also provided heading east along Main Street at its junction with York Street. Despite the provision of pedestrian crossings, the multiple lanes at this junction, as well as the narrow footpaths on York Street, restrict pedestrian movement and create an unwelcoming environment.

Re-engineering these junctions provides the opportunity to address existing pedestrian safety issues, as well as providing for the more efficient movement of traffic through the Town Centre. Upgrades to the Main Street / York Street junction to allow for improved pedestrian movement will help connect the east and west ends of Main Street. The Monaghan Road junction, as a main entrance point to the Town and counterweight to Lough Muckno at the eastern end, is also the appropriate location to encourage the provision of a landmark building.

The Purpose of the Intervention

The purpose of the proposed intervention to the Main Street / Monaghan Road / York Street junctions is to improve traffic movements at the main approaches to the Town and provide enhanced, safe pedestrian accessibility in accordance with the overall aim to create a more pedestrian friendly public realm. The intervention also promotes the provision of a landmark building at the Monaghan Road / Main Street Junction to define the entrance to the Town.

As part of the Main Street realignment, the following junction's layout have been developed to "Outline Design" stage in order to provide the required pedestrian facilities while still maintaining the required level of service for cars, HGVs and public transport. In geometric terms, the designs have been reviewed to ensure expected vehicles (e.g. HGV's, buses etc.) can safely manoeuvre through the network. As the scheme progresses to the next stage of design, capacity assessments will be performed to enable the refinement of the design (for example turning lane requirements, signal phasing / timings etc.), however, the principles of the outline design, which are aligned with the plan vision, will be maintained i.e. improved public realm spaces, safe controlled pedestrian crossings etc.

Key Features of the Intervention

- Re-engineer the existing junctions to provide improved traffic movements.
- Provide for safer pedestrian movements and an enhanced pedestrian environment in line with overall public realm improvements to the length of the Main Street.
- Provide a sense of arriving at the Town through the use of landscaping and the provision of a landmark structure at the Monaghan Road Junction.
- Promote vibrancy and vitality along the length of the Main Street.
- Promote greater pedestrian activity in the Town Centre.
- Facilitate the creation of a sense of place.

- Incorporate the 'identity' of Castleblayney as an integral part of the public realm through the 'country singers crosswalks'.

Main Street / Monaghan Road Junction

The Main Street / Monaghan Road Junction forms an integral part of the overall Main Street Intervention, which is made up of landscaping improvements, public realm interventions, parking rationalisation and enhanced pedestrian crossing facilities. The Main Street / Monaghan Road Junction is key to the delivery of the overall plans for the public realm of Castleblayney as it is the main entrance to the Town from the east and north, and it forms a visitors first impression and establishes the standard, quality and priorities of the public realm.

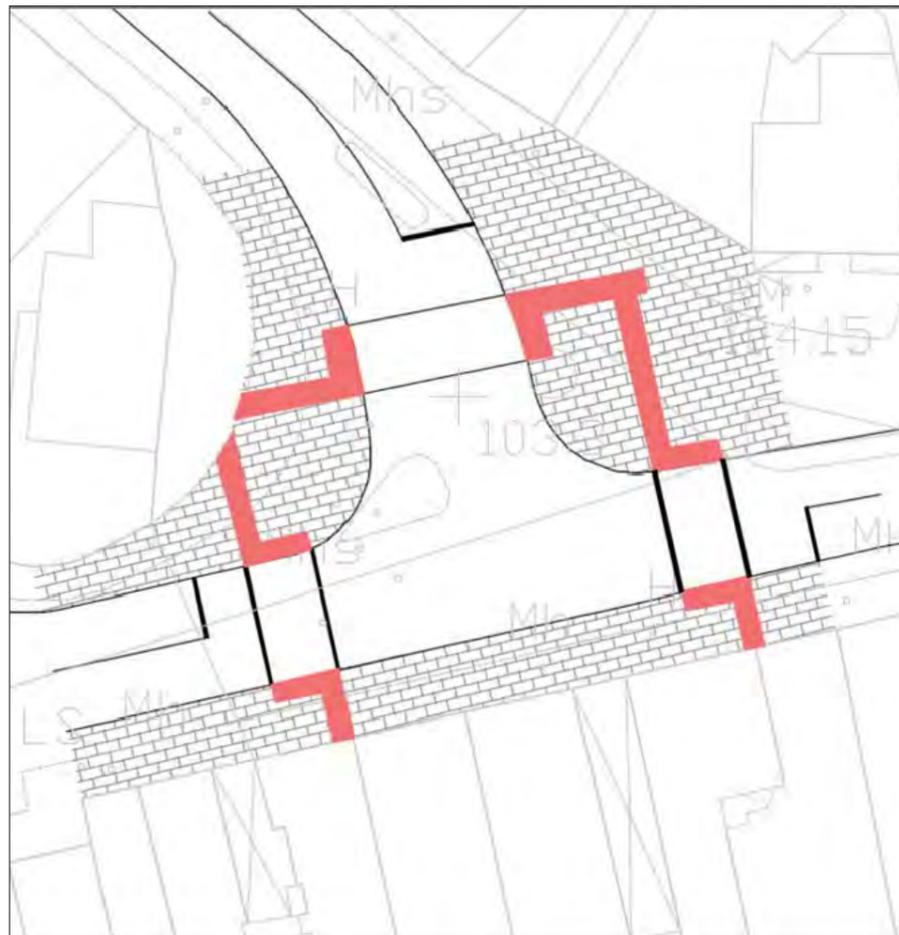
The junction can be upgraded to a Traffic Signals Junction. Pedestrian movement will be enhanced through the provision of one full phase for pedestrian crossings and toucan crossings on all arms, with each crossing 4m wide. Dropped kerbs and tactile paving are to be provided as per best practice. The outline layout includes all these features and provides for a 52-seater coach, as this junction is on the bus routes from York Street to Monaghan Road.



Existing Layout - Main Street / Monaghan Road Junction

In keeping with the Main Street Intervention, the crosswalks at this junction will be delineated using paving to represent the faces of famous Country Music singers. This will not only distinguish the pedestrian crossings but will visually connect the junction with the rest of the Main Street, providing continuity from the western to the eastern end of the Main Street.

Planting on the western side will also help integrate this junction into the wider Main Street, as well as visually soften this entrance to the Town. The existing underutilised site, immediately west of and fronting onto the junction presents the opportunity to deliver a landmark building should the site be redeveloped in the future. Such a building, in combination with the planting proposals, would act to define this Junction as a main entrance to the Town and would instil a sense of place and unique identify upon entering Castleblayney.



Outline Layout - Main Street / Monaghan Road Junction

Main Street / York Street Junction

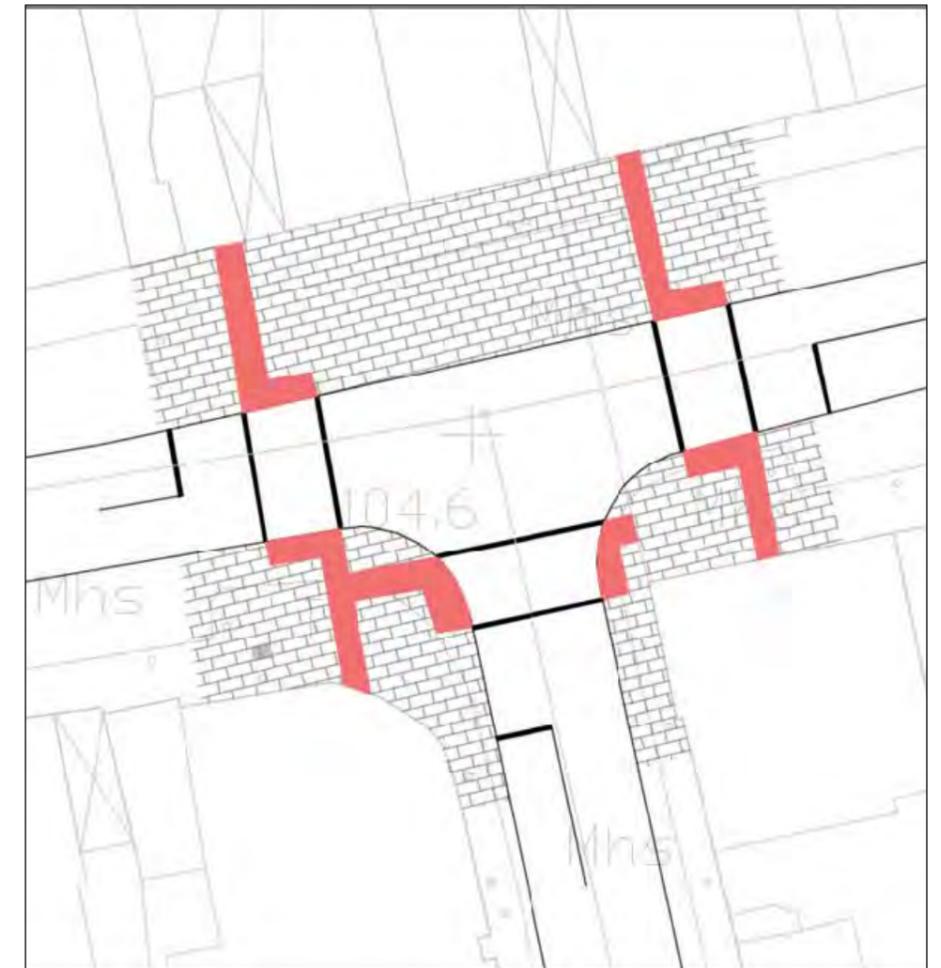
The Main Street / York Street Junction is also an integral part of the overall Main Street Intervention. York Street is the main entrance to the Town when approaching from the south and as it is a T-junction, provides a framed vista of the Main Street and announces entry to the Town Core for visitors.



Existing Layout - Main Street / York Street Junction

The junction can be upgraded by reducing the approach lanes to one single lane. This would allow for enhanced pedestrian facilities, specifically widened footpaths along York Street, with pedestrian crossings located on the desire lines. The outline layout includes these features, with the stop lines located to accommodate the required bus turnings.

The enhanced footpaths at this location will be hard landscaping in line with the rest of the Main Street, and will help to seamlessly integrate the reengineered junction.



Outline Layout - Main Street / York Street Junction

Key Physical Changes

The following are the key components of the Plan for the Main Street:

- Re-engineer the Main Street / Monaghan Road Junction to provide a traffic signalled junction.
- Re-engineer the Main Street / York Street Junction to single lane approaches.
- Utilisation of hard landscaping to create 'country singers crosswalks' on all three junction arms, to provide enhanced pedestrian accessibility and integrate this area with the wider Main Street.
- Creation of a pedestrian friendly environment through the use of hard and soft landscaping proposals.
- Utilisation of soft landscaping as a short terms means of visually improving these entrances to the Town.
- Encourage the provision of landmark building to define the Main Street / Monaghan Road Junction in the longer term.

Contribution to the Guiding Principles

- Re-engineering of the Junctions provides for more efficient traffic movement on Main Street and improves pedestrian safety and accessibility.
- Turn the length of the Main Street into a strong pedestrian-connected thoroughfare.
- Landscaping improves the visual appearance of the western and southern entrances to the Town.
- Delivers a physical and visual connection to the Town's Country Music heritage, that is key to the creation of a unique identity for Castleblayney.
- Provides a high quality urban designed environment.

Outcomes

- Delivery of a safer pedestrian environment.
- Improvement in traffic movement at the Main Street / Monaghan Road and the Main Street / York Street Junctions.
- Increased pedestrian movements and activity for the length of the Main Street.
- Creation of a sense of place unique to Castleblayney.
- Increased visual interest.
- Aesthetic improvement.
- High quality, durable, and well-maintained materials.

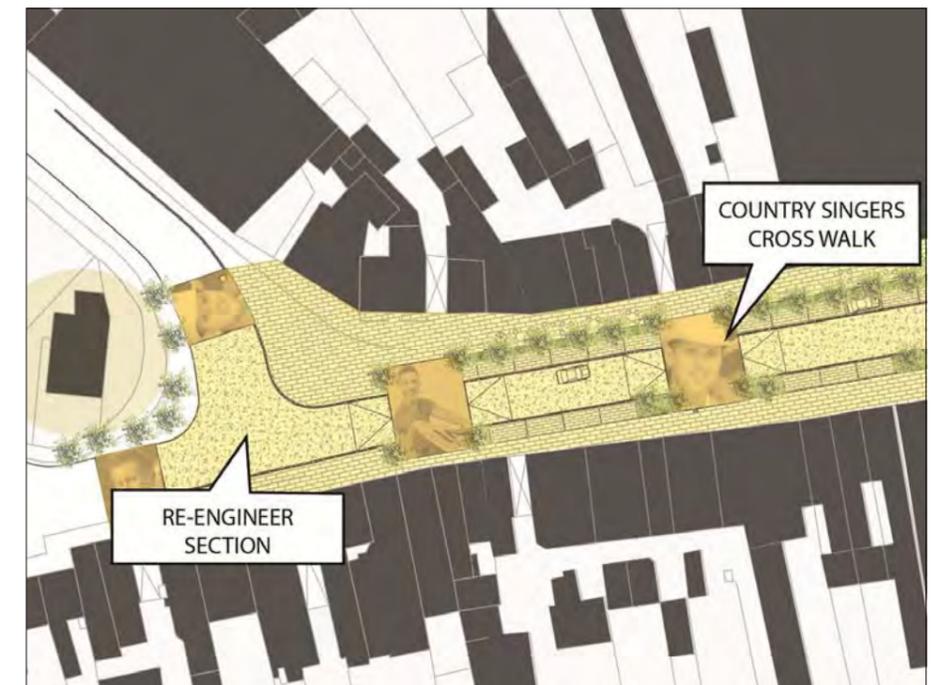
Projects

This Intervention addresses the re-engineering of the Junctions, pedestrian crossings, streetscape, street surfaces and hard and soft landscaping. There are four key components to the Junction Upgrades Intervention, the re-engineering of the roads at Main Street / Monaghan Road and at Main Street / York Street and the improvement to the public realm through landscaping at both locations.

The progression of this Intervention can be approached as a number of individual projects as follows:

- Re-engineering works to the Main Street / Monaghan Road junction.
- The provision of enhanced pedestrian crossing facilities in the form of paved pedestrian crosswalks that visually represent the Town's Country Music connection at the Main Street / Monaghan Road junction.
- Works and hard and soft landscaping to the public realm, including planting, to visually improve the entrance to the Town from the west and integrate the Main Street / Monaghan Road junction with the rest of Main Street.

- Re-engineering works to the Main Street / York Street junction.
- The provision of enhanced pedestrian facilities at the Main Street / York Street junction.
- Works and hard and soft landscaping to the public realm, including planting, to visually improve the entrance to the Town from the south and integrate the Main Street / York Street junction with the rest of Main Street.



Main Street / Monaghan Road Junction

Phasing

This Intervention must be viewed in the context of delivering a coherent, high quality public realm for the length of the Main Street. Each project in this Intervention must be considered in terms of integration with, and contribution to, the projects contained in the Main Street Intervention.

The re-engineered junctions are the core of the Intervention and any amendments to the public realm on foot of this will impact the other projects within the Intervention. The first logical phase of implementing all, or part, of this Intervention is to prepare an Options Assessment in

order to identify the preferred option for each junction and to develop these options to “Preliminary Design” stage. Following which the preferred options for the two junctions can be progressed either together or as two separate road upgrade projects. The options progressed will determine the extent of the hard landscaping at each junction. Such landscaping will be consistent with that utilised in the rest of the public realm on the Main Street.

Landscaping in the form of planting at the junctions is a standalone intervention which would provide an immediate visual improvement and which could be quickly delivered. Such landscaping must consider and provide for the re-engineered junction layouts.

The provision of the ‘country singers crosswalks’ could also be progressed as a stand alone project. Provision would have to be made in its delivery for the re-engineered junction layouts and integration with the wider public realm improvements including hard and soft landscaping.

The provision of a landmark building on lands immediately west of the Main Street / Monaghan Road Junction will be encouraged as a potential long term project.

Costing Exemplar

As part of the “Preliminary Design” stage for the junction upgrades the details of the works required would be brought forward to a point to enable initial costing to be calculated. Given the works required are specific to each junction, it is not possible to provide a cost exemplar for the ‘Outline Designs’ contained in this document.



Main Street / York Street Junction

9 Thematic Design Manual

Market Square Material Palette

The selection and use of suitable, serviceable, robust and appropriate materials is essential to the delivery of high quality public realm works. The need to apply compatible materials needs to be balanced with the geometry of the design to facilitate variety within the palette that is feasible to accommodate different applications. The importance of high quality and robust materials and finishes is essential in those areas where concentrated pedestrian footfall, shared surfaces and vehicular access is encouraged, i.e. the new public square adjacent to the Courthouse and Main Street

The selected materials will need to address the unique architectural heritage and historical context and respond sympathetically to the surrounding buildings. Examples of fixtures and fittings in keeping with this theme are provided in this Thematic Design Manual, the detail of which will be advanced when each project is brought forward for delivery.

Public Realm Works

The works required to deliver public realm enhancements extend beyond the physical items such as paving, seating and light standards etc. to ground works including inter alia drainage and undergrounding of cables etc. Such groundworks are determined by the specific site and servicing context of an area and the cost associated with same vary widely from project to project.

Public realm works will generally include the following:

- Granite and Limestone surface paving, bollards and steps with balustrading and edge protection in brushed stainless steel;
- Area lighting standards of a high quality design and finish as well as accent lighting below steps, planters and seats and frosted glazed low energy strip light luminaires in some paved areas;
- Seats purpose built with terrazzo on concrete and/or reconstituted stone with hardwood inlaid seats;

- Lined and drained granite edged planters filled with growing medium on a draining bed;
- All selected soft landscaping block planting and semi-mature native broadleaf trees;
- Undergrounding of all services and utilities with draw-through service conduits to accessible covered chambers for future data/communications cable provision;
- SUDS measures and rainwater drainage outlets and pipework as required;
- Hydraulically operated stainless steel bollards to provide for controlled vehicular access and deliveries to pedestrian areas;

Detailed surveys will be required both above and below ground for each area, as well as detailed designs of all elements and spaces in order to ascertain the extent of works required to existing services, utilities and infrastructure. Such works will be necessary to accommodate the finished design and the detailed works and to provide for safe traffic management under DMURS.

An indicative cost for such public realm works in 2019 is in the range of €280 – €620 per sq.m.

Gradient Terraces

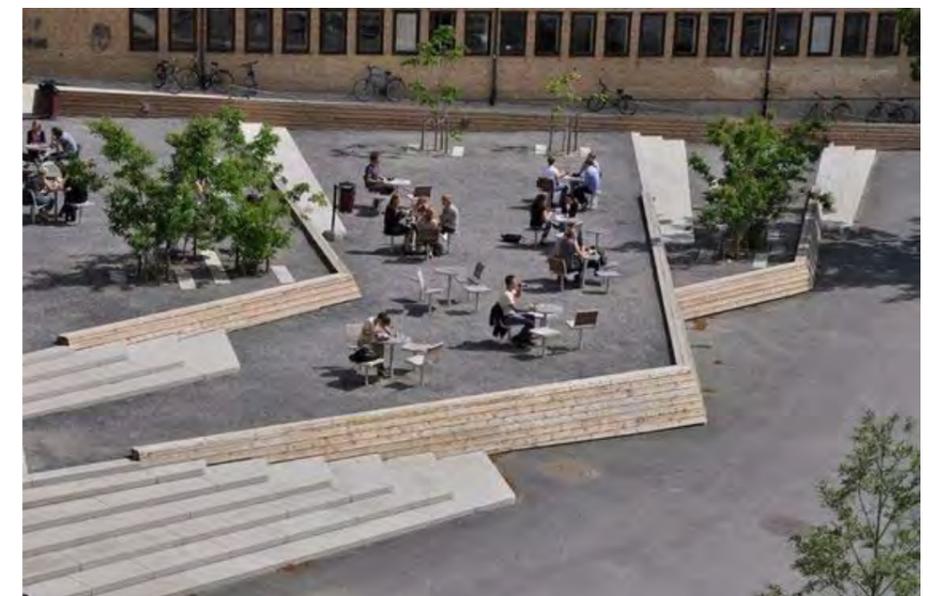
Care will need to be taken in the selection of surface materials in relation to changes in level, edge protection and slip resistance, particularly on ramped surfaces.



Steps formed in granite slabs/risers



Granite steps/risers with contrasting grey slabs to level areas



Granite steps/risers with contrasting grey slabs to level areas

Ground Materials

Ground materials should be selected from a natural stone, or reconstituted stone material, that is anti-slip and frost resistant and robust in particular where there is a shared surface between cars and pedestrians. The images opposite represent a palette of such materials and based on this a budget price is proposed.

While the detailed design for the projects will specify the exact material to be utilised, budget prices for natural stone are as follows;

- Granite slabs—c. €45 per sq.m
- Granite setts—c. €40 per sq.m



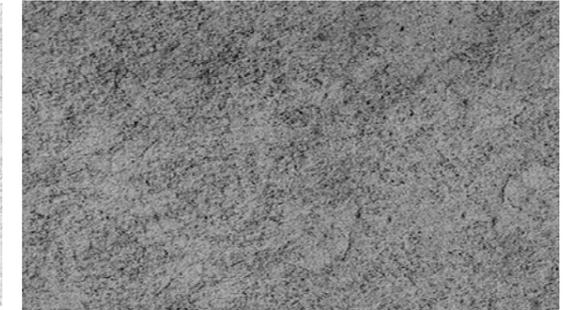
Granite slabs



Granite setts - silver and grey



Granite slabs - flamed or hammered finish



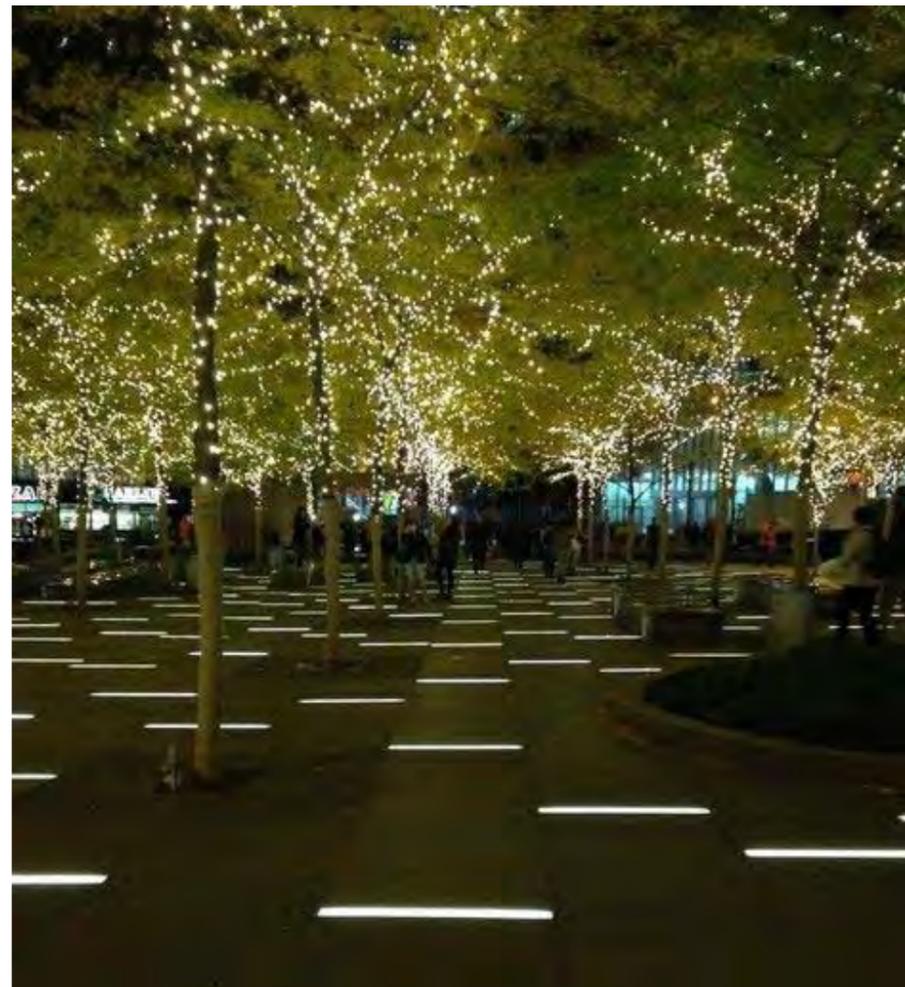
Granite setts



Lighting

Lighting should be discrete in design so as not to be obtrusive in the daytime. Accent lighting can be recessed low energy fittings which are easily accessible for maintenance.

Given the multitude of lighting types, design, manufacturers and suppliers there is a substantial variation in price. The lighting designer will be required to determine the number, location and required lux and lumen output levels based on particular selected lamp/luminaire types.



Recessed toughened glazed low energy ground uplighters



Recessed low energy downlighters beneath seats



Standard mounted low energy area downlights



Recessed low energy downlighters beneath steps

Street Furniture

Street furniture should be simple, modern and contemporary and be constructed from natural materials where possible. Serviceability and durability should be key to material selection and design. A common palette and design should be applied generally, with stone bollards where fixed and stainless steel where access may be required later for servicing and maintenance of areas.

The images opposite represent a palette of street furniture and a budget costings for each street furniture item;

- Stainless steel hydraulic bollards—c. €4,000 unit
- Solid silver granite bollards—c. €500 unit
- Purpose designed polished terrazzo seat on concrete base c. €1,000
- Purpose designed reconstituted stone seats and planters—c. €1,000/€400 ea. respectively.



10 Implementation

The implementation of this Public Realm and Economic Strategy will occur progressively, but ideally will not exceed a 5-10 year period in order to maximise the benefits of the interventions contained herein to Castleblayney. Each step of the process will require careful on-going management and engagement with stakeholders. The coordination of the proposals across a range of stakeholders and funding partners will be necessary to achieve the full implementation of the vision articulated in this document.

The tables in this section set out the main elements of the proposed interventions. Works are proposed to be staged to prioritise upgrades to Main Street, as this is likely to have the most immediate impact. Other works that could represent 'quick wins' are also prioritised.

Funding is primarily the responsibility of Monaghan County Council. However, as stated in Section 6 *Economic Strategy*, four new funds have been established by the Government, to which Monaghan County Council could apply, particularly where partner organisations have been identified.

No.	Market Square	Project	Delivery Partners	Council Roles and Delivery Requirements	Priority
1	Renovation	Conservation works to the Market House building	Monaghan County Council The Heritage Council	Planning, Conservation, Heritage, Design, Funding	Medium Term (subject to further studies)
2	Public Realm	Landscaping works to improve the ground features on Market Square - hard and soft landscaping	Monaghan County Council Castleblayney Regeneration Committee Local businesses	Planning, Urban Design, Funding	Short to Medium Term
3	Transport	Introduction of Coach Parking spaces on Market Square	Monaghan County Council Castleblayney Regeneration Committee Local businesses	Planning, Transport, Roads, Engineering	Short Term

No.	Main Street	Project	Delivery Partners	Council Roles and Delivery Requirements	Priority
1	Public Realm	Tree planting along the length of Main Street	Monaghan County Council	Planning, Environment, Heritage, Conservation, Funding	Short to Medium Term
2	Public Realm	Works to the Main Street consisting of hard and soft landscaping (renovation of footpaths, addition of seating, resurfacing of roadway)	Monaghan County Council Castleblayney Regeneration Committee Castleblayney Tidy Towns	Planning, Roads, Urban Design, Funding	Short Term
3	Public Realm	Addition of crosswalks to represent Country Music Heritage	Monaghan County Council Castleblayney Regeneration Committee Fáilte Ireland	Planning, Design, Roads, Funding	Short to Medium Term
4	Parking	Redesign of parking provision on Main Street to coincide with public realm developments	Monaghan County Council Transport Infrastructure Ireland	Planning, Roads, Design, Funding	Short Term

No.	Backlands	Project	Delivery Partners	Council Roles and Delivery Requirements	Priority
1	Public Realm	Green landscaping scheme in existing car parks - addition of tree and flower planting	Monaghan County Council Castleblayney Regeneration Committee Tidy Towns	Planning, Environment, Design, Funding	Short Term
2	Public Realm	Works to improve pedestrian linkages with the Main Street - addition of signage and lighting	Monaghan County Council Castleblayney Regeneration Committee Castleblayney Tidy Towns	Planning, Roads, Heritage, Design, Funding	Short Term
3	Public Realm	Provision of new pedestrian linkages from Backlands to Main Street	Monaghan County Council Landowners	Planning, Land Acquisition, Design, Funding	Short to Medium Term
4	Parking	Extension of existing car parking to south of Main Street	Monaghan County Council Landowners Local businesses	Planning, Land Assembly, Design	Medium Term
5	Traffic	Provision of directional signage for vehicular traffic	Monaghan County Council	Planning, Roads, Heritage, Design	Short Term

No.	Lough Muckno	Project	Delivery Partners	Council Roles and Delivery Requirements	Priority
1	Public Realm	Provision of new linkages from Market Square and Main Street to Lough Muckno	Monaghan County Council Landowners	Planning, Design, Funding, Land Assembly	Short Term
2	Public Realm	Hard and soft landscaping works to facilitate the development of new linkages	Monaghan County Council	Planning, Design, Funding	Short Term
3	Public Realm	Integrate new areas into Lough Muckno cycle and footpath network	Monaghan County Council	Planning, Environment, Parks, Roads, Transport, Design	Medium Term
4	Amenity Developments	Development of a series of individual amenity areas within the area of Lough Muckno	Monaghan County Council Fáilte Ireland	Planning, Environment, Heritage, Parks, Design	Medium Term

No.	Junction Upgrades	Project	Delivery Partners	Council Roles and Delivery Requirements	Priority
1	Transport	Re-engineering works to Main Street / Monaghan Road junction	Monaghan County Council	Planning, Transport, Roads, Engineering, Design, Funding	Short-Medium Term
2	Transport	Re-engineering works to Main Street / York Street junction	Monaghan County Council	Planning, Transport, Roads, Engineering, Design, Funding	Short-Medium Term
4	Public Realm	Works, hard and soft landscaping and planting to both junctions	Monaghan County Council	Planning, Design, Funding	Medium Term

Project Costs Guide

Below is a table which demonstrates a range of costings for the proposed Interventions described within this Plan. These costings are based on the outline materials costs within the Thematic Design Manual of this Plan which have been calculated against an approximate site area to give a lower, middle and upper range for overall costs. The approximate areas for the below projects have been based on the drawings contained within this Plan.

Project Name	Approximate Area (subject to variation)	Lower Range			Middle Range			Upper Range		
		Cost per sqm	Material and Labour Cost	Adjusted + 35% VAT, Fees, Etc.	Cost per sqm	Material and Labour Cost	Adjusted + 35% VAT, Fees, Etc.	Cost per sqm	Material and Labour Cost	Adjusted + 35% VAT, Fees, Etc.
Main Street	8,424 sqm	€280.00	€2,358,720	€3,184,272	€450.00	€3,790,800	€5,117,580	€620.00	€5,222,880	€7,050,888
Market Square	2,716 sqm	€280.00	€760,480	€1,026,648	€450.00	€1,222,200	€1,649,970	€620.00	€1,683,920	€2,273,292

Outline of Project Costings

These costings have been developed to give an understanding of the overall scale of the proposed Interventions and the cost implications that may follow. To progress these projects further, detailed design briefs must be drawn up including detailed Part 8 drawings and other supporting material. A more specific cost range can then be compiled by a designated professional based on the nature and scale of the proposed project.

It is also important to note that the figures shown in the Cost Table are based on figures which generally reflect current market rates.

Delivery

It may be favourable to deliver these projects on a phased basis as construction works may cause disruption in the day-to-day running of the Town. Should these projects be delivered separately, there may be a cost implication tied to this in terms of preliminaries in relation to the setting up and taking down of all construction material to allow for the normal function of the Town to take place. In this case, the cost of a project may be looking towards the upper range of cost estimate provided here.

Risk

A number of risks may also be associated to each project which would affect the overall cost. Some examples of these risks have been set out below;

- Underground Services/Structures
- Above Ground Conditions
- Stakeholder Agreement
- Timing
- Phasing
- Scale of Project

Before commencing any project, it is important to ascertain key information regarding the potential risks set out here.

Appropriate surveys and studies should be carried out on a potential site area to determine the quality of the ground conditions and, if required, to determine what underground services may be located on site. In this case, it may be advisable to consult service providers to make the appropriate allowance.

Engaging in a stakeholder consultation process prior to the commencement of any development is vital to ensure that the end users and facilitators of the project are suitably consulted to attain a general agreement to the scope of works at hand.

The timing in respect to the commencement of development should be carefully thought out from a cost perspective to ensure that the project timeline is not halted at any stage due to unforeseen or overlooked circumstances regarding the use of the site area, e.g. Christmas public holiday period.

The potential need for the phasing of developments has been discussed in the 'Delivery' section of this chapter.

In terms of the scale of a project, the value for money factor will be affected. Essentially, a larger project will be able to spread costs over a larger area and may gain a lower cost per sqm as a result.