



# CLONES

Heritage & Economic Plan











**Monaghan Local Action Group**

Ba mhór againn cuidiú a thug na gníomhaireachtaí seo luaite : Grúpa Forbartha Áitiúil Forbairt Chomhtháite Mhuineacháin Theoranta , Comhairle Chontae Mhuineachán , an Roinn Forbartha Tuaithe agus Pobail chomh maith le Ciste Eorpach Talamhaíochta le Forbartha Tacaíochta áitúila don Scéim seo a chuir i bhfeidhm

I would like to acknowledge the assistance of Monaghan Local Action Group (LAG), Monaghan Integrated Development CLG, Monaghan County Council, the Minister and Department of Rural and Community Development and 'The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe investing in rural areas' in funding this project.



Rialtas  
na hÉireann  
Government  
of Ireland

Tionscadal Éireann  
Project Ireland  
**2040**



The European Agricultural Fund  
for Rural Development:  
Europe investing in rural areas

Funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development

**LEADER 2014-2020 Programme**

May 2021



the paul hogarth company



The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe investing in rural areas



# Foreword

Clones Tidy Towns is delighted to see the production of this new Heritage and Economic Plan for Clones.

This project has been a really worthwhile collaboration with the Clones Town Team and the Municipal District. As a local community group we are very much aware of the huge pride our residents take in our hometown.

While the amazing history and built heritage of Clones is something that we all appreciate, it is fair to say that we may sometimes need to be reminded of what unique resources we have here. We will certainly benefit from the guidance given by The Paul Hogarth Company on how we should best present our heritage to both visitors and residents alike.

We look forward to working with the Town Team, the Municipal District, local businesses and other community groups on developing ancillary resources that will allow us to appreciate our natural heritage and community spaces. A vibrant and attractive town will benefit us all.

Ba mhaith linn an deis seo chun buíochas a gabháil leo siud go léir a bhfuil baint acu an Plean seo a dheanamh.

**Billy Flynn**  
**Clones Tidy Towns**

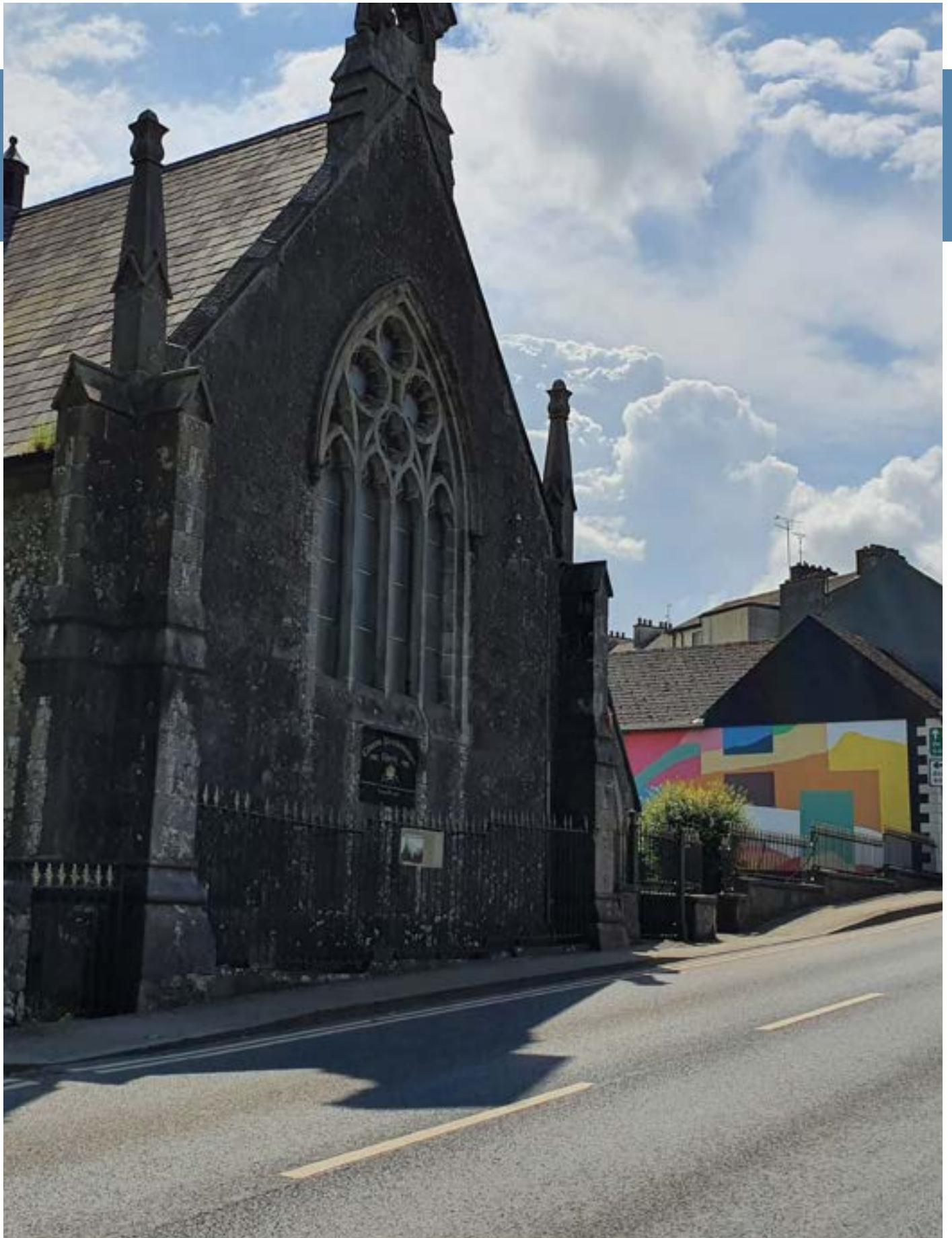
Some might say that the greatest asset our town has to offer is that of its history and the important heritage sites. Others might say, it's our sporting facilities or sporting personalities who have brought many an honour and sense of pride to the town. The development of this Heritage and Economic plan, gave opportunity for us to reflect on the many attributes Clones has to offer, none more so, than its greatest asset of all – its people and that great sense of community spirit and pride

Down through the ages, many, who carried a 'grá' for Clones, inspired influence, aspirations, decisions, and developments that still support and harness the social and economic fabric of our community today. When times got dark for the town, it was the genetic resilience of our community that kept the town alive.

Consultation with our community was pivotal and to the fore of the development of this plan. Only, by listening to our community, could we support the proposed multidisciplinary projects that are illustrated overleaf. The consultation has fostered a partnership approach, which will support a co-design process moving forward, where community voices are the active agents of change.

The Clones Heritage and Economic Plan is a blue print for Clones' future and its recommendations will, no doubt have an exciting and positive impact, in restoring and harnessing the towns historical past. It will also inspire the seeds for future developments, so that our community will continue to inspire future generations to come.

**Maureen Mc Intyre Mc Donald**  
**Clones Town Team**



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CLONES HERITAGE AND ECONOMIC PLAN



# Introduction

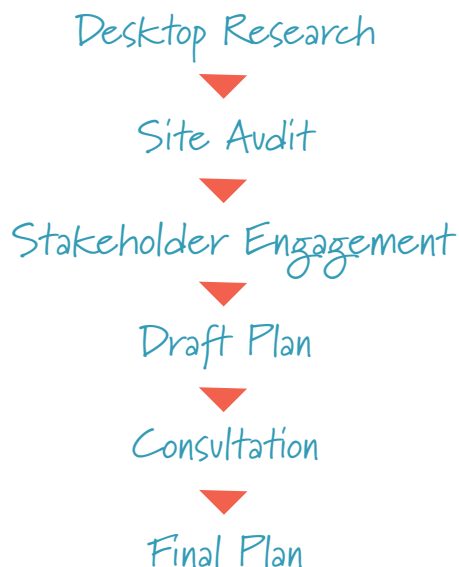
## Project Background

Clones Heritage and Economic Plan was commissioned by Clones Tidy Towns in conjunction with Clones Town Team to develop a plan for the most effective presentation, management and development of Clones' heritage, economic assets and opportunities and for the protection of the historic sites and artefacts of the town.

This plan has been prepared by The Paul Hogarth Company (a multi-disciplinary team of Urban Designers, Landscape Architects and Planners) and has been developed through collaboration and engagement with the Clones Town Team, local community and Council to ensure it reflects the views and aspirations of local people.

The document includes an Action Plan which has been developed to be delivered over a 10-15 year period by a range of local interest groups bringing forward projects as funding opportunities arise.

## Plan Making-Process



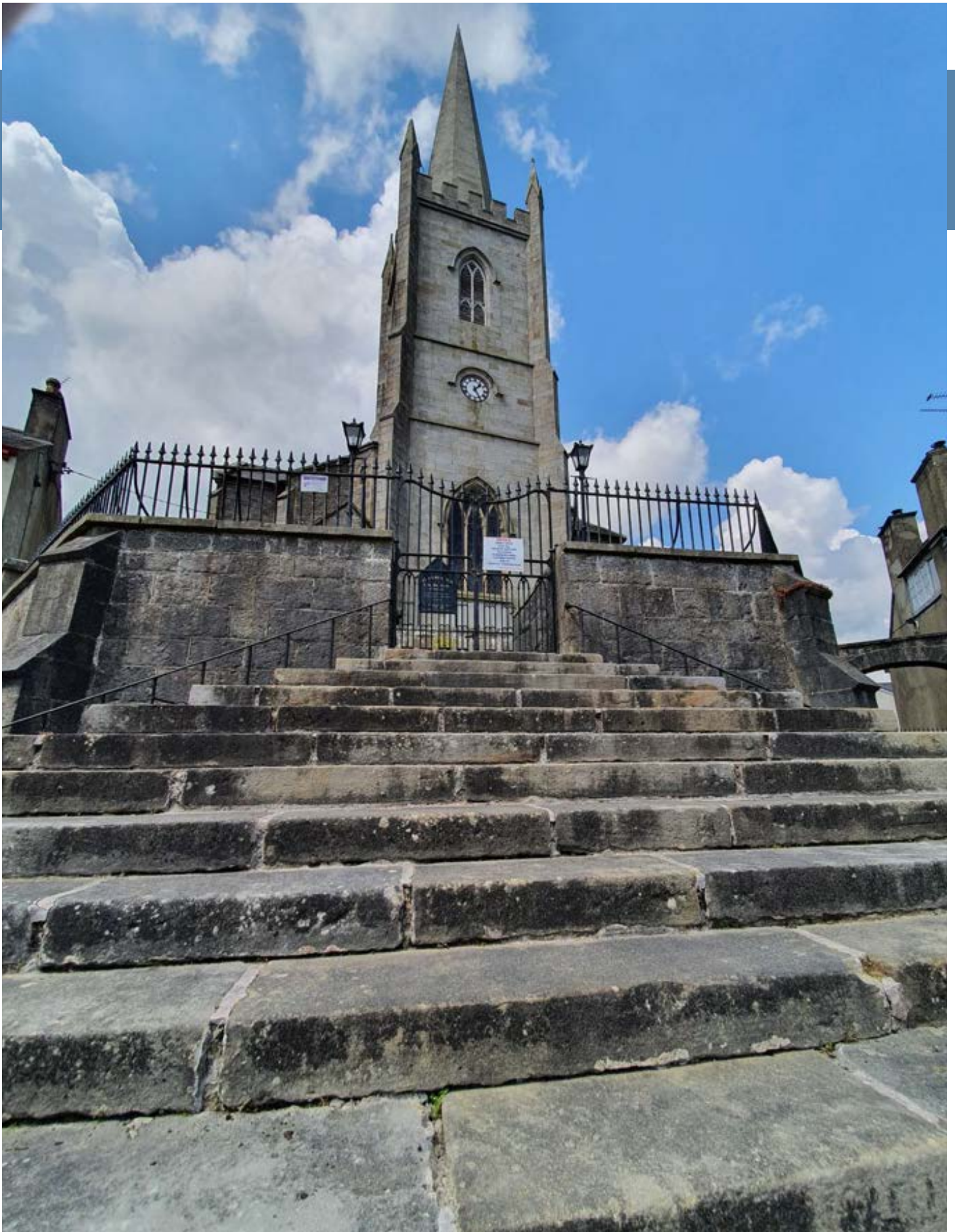
It is well known that Clones, County Monaghan has great potential. The breadth and depth of local history and its associated rich heritage sets Clones in a positive position to capitalise upon these economic opportunities.

It should be noted that this plan builds upon a significant amount of valuable work that has already been completed in the town and seeks to further contribute and complement that which has gone before. This includes items such as the Clones Town Team Activity Plan 2018-2020 and Council investment in business development and economic incentives for enterprise uptake.

Alongside such strategic work, multiple successful projects have been delivered on the ground in recent times by a range of local individuals, community groups and governmental organisations. Such projects include new school developments, social housing units, the Cassandra Hand Centre and Famine Museum, Canal Stores and Clones Lace Museum, Peace Link, library and a series of active travel trails.

This demonstrates that while Clones has a proud past, it's also a town that confidently looks to the future, that is inclusive, collaborative, resilient, dynamic and enthusiastic to deliver for its people.

Yet, like many Irish towns, Clones is facing significant economic challenges and needs to strategically reset its course of direction. This document therefore attempts to help Clones achieve its potential by setting out a visionary plan for the town that will deliver transformative change through a heritage-led approach.





# Your Town, Your Say

## Taking a Collaborative Approach

From the project inception in May 2020, the team conducted extensive research and site appraisal work to inform this plan. Collaboration with local stakeholders was critical to this process, ensuring that the resultant Heritage and Economic Plan accurately reflects the aspirations of local people.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, all consultation had to be conducted virtually and so the team worked hard using online technologies to capture the views and opinions of locals and wider stakeholders.

The first public consultation event comprised an online survey in late May 2020. The findings of which were used to guide development of the draft plan. A second public consultation process was held online in October, this time to test the proposed vision and projects of the draft plan.

Levels of public participation were positive, despite the challenging circumstances of 2020. This in itself demonstrates the enthusiasm in Clones for change.

Working with Clones Town Team, Monaghan County Council and key local stakeholders, a Vision and set of Objectives were formulated for the Heritage and Economic Plan. This in turn established 6 key areas for investment in the town, with a series of bespoke projects in each area and an Action Plan for delivery.



## What you told us

### Consultation 1 -

**159** Online Survey Results

**230+** 'Likes' on Facebook

**180+** 'Interactions' on Twitter

Over **50%** of all respondents said they visited Clones at least once a day. Highlighting a very engaged and locally invested cohort of responders.

Over **74%** of all respondents said they felt the heritage of Clones was very important for the future of the town.

When asked 'What are the top 3 things you like most about Clones?' 29% stated '**People/Home/Community**', followed by 26% who answered '**History/Architecture/Old Buildings/Diamond**'.

When asked 'What are the top 3 things you dislike most about Clones?', 30% said '**Dereliction/Vacant Buildings**', followed by 18% who answered '**Poor Retail Offering/Issues with Shopping Hours**'.

### Consultation 2 -

**104** Online Survey Results

Over **92%** of all respondents said they were broadly supportive of the Draft Plan.





# Understanding Clones

## Geography

Clones, County Monaghan, located on the N54 midway between the towns of Cavan and Monaghan, and 35km from Enniskillen, serves the economic needs of a large rural hinterland.

The town is transected by the former routes of the Ulster Canal and the Belfast to Cavan railway line.

## First impressions of the town



Landmark Trees



Sites of Significance



Topography



Views



History and Character

## Demography

According to the 2016 census, Clones Urban Area had a population of 1,680 which was a 0.93% reduction from 2011 census. Of that, 52% were female, 58.3% fell within the 18-64 age bracket and 51.8% were noted as single.

In relation to nationality, 80.5% described themselves as Irish but when listing country of birth only 70.3% were born in Ireland. The second largest demographic cohort were residents originally born in the UK who made up 12.4%, followed by individuals originally born in Poland and Lithuania at 8.8%.

# Economic Analysis

Clones has long been a centre of economic activity which has certainly been assisted by its enhanced levels of connectivity into the wider region and nation. This connectivity was initially linked to the arrival of the Ulster Canal and the railways in the 19th Century.

A period of economic decline, a falling population and closure of local industries heavily impacted the town in the mid-to-late 20th century. This was largely brought about by 'The Troubles' in Northern Ireland and Clones' close proximity to the Irish border. However this was also influenced by the loss of the Ulster Canal and local railway line and coupled with government policy of regional prioritisation that left Clones vulnerable to a changing economy.

The 2016 Census data ranked Clones Urban area as the most deprived electoral district within County Monaghan and when divided into the 6 'Small Areas' the results showed that one area was even described as "very disadvantaged" and sat significantly below the national average.

Conversely, this lower level of attraction for investors did safeguard the town from poor quality development associated with the 'Celtic Tiger'. Unlike many heritage towns across Ireland which have been left scarred by such development, Clones' historic character remains.

The fortunes and favours of Clones have greatly improved in recent decades as the town has leveraged significant capital spending from public finances.

Key projects delivered have included a new second level school, new primary school, expansion of a gaelscoil, new fire station, new County Library headquarters, state of the art sports complex – the Peace Link.

The culmination of these new assets have resulted in a town with all the right ingredients to offer a good quality of life for all - including families to live and raise their children and for investors to establish their businesses.

This has been the case with ABP (a company who employ over 300 people, export globally and are part of one of Europe's largest beef processing companies), BM Transport (a major regional transport company delivering all over the EU), Alpha tanks (a specialised engineering tank manufacturing company and global exporter) and Feldhues GmbH (a German business based in Clones for over 30 years).

Whilst the recent level of public sector investment has not been equally matched by that of the private sector, examples of individual businesses investing in their premises and developing their local offering gives confidence to the local market.

In terms of growing a residential population to embed local resilience to economic change, with changing employment patterns and an increase of remote working that has been intensified as a result of Covid-19, Clones is well positioned to attract new business into the town capitalising upon its new community-focused assets, affordable housing for workers and ample available land supply for development opportunities.





The Peace Link plays an important role providing quality sporting facilities for both locals and visitors.



High levels of through traffic and an overall vehicular dominance has a negative impact upon the town.

## STRENGTHS

- Heritage assets
- Community spirit and resilience
- Proximity to Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor
- Sporting and leisure facilities
- Good educational provision
- Affordable housing
- Compact and walkable
- Fascinating history
- Successful at drawing down funding

## WEAKNESSES

- Impact of through traffic
- High levels of economic inactivity
- Low business rate uptake
- High rating of deprivation
- Loss of key services
- Declining population

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Strategic cross-border projects
- Improved digital connectivity
- Tourism diversification opportunities
- Multiple government funding streams available
- Economic development from business hub
- Improved regional connections
- Affordable land supply for redevelopment

## THREATS

- Brexit
- Key Sites in Private Ownership
- Climate change
- Loss of heritage assets

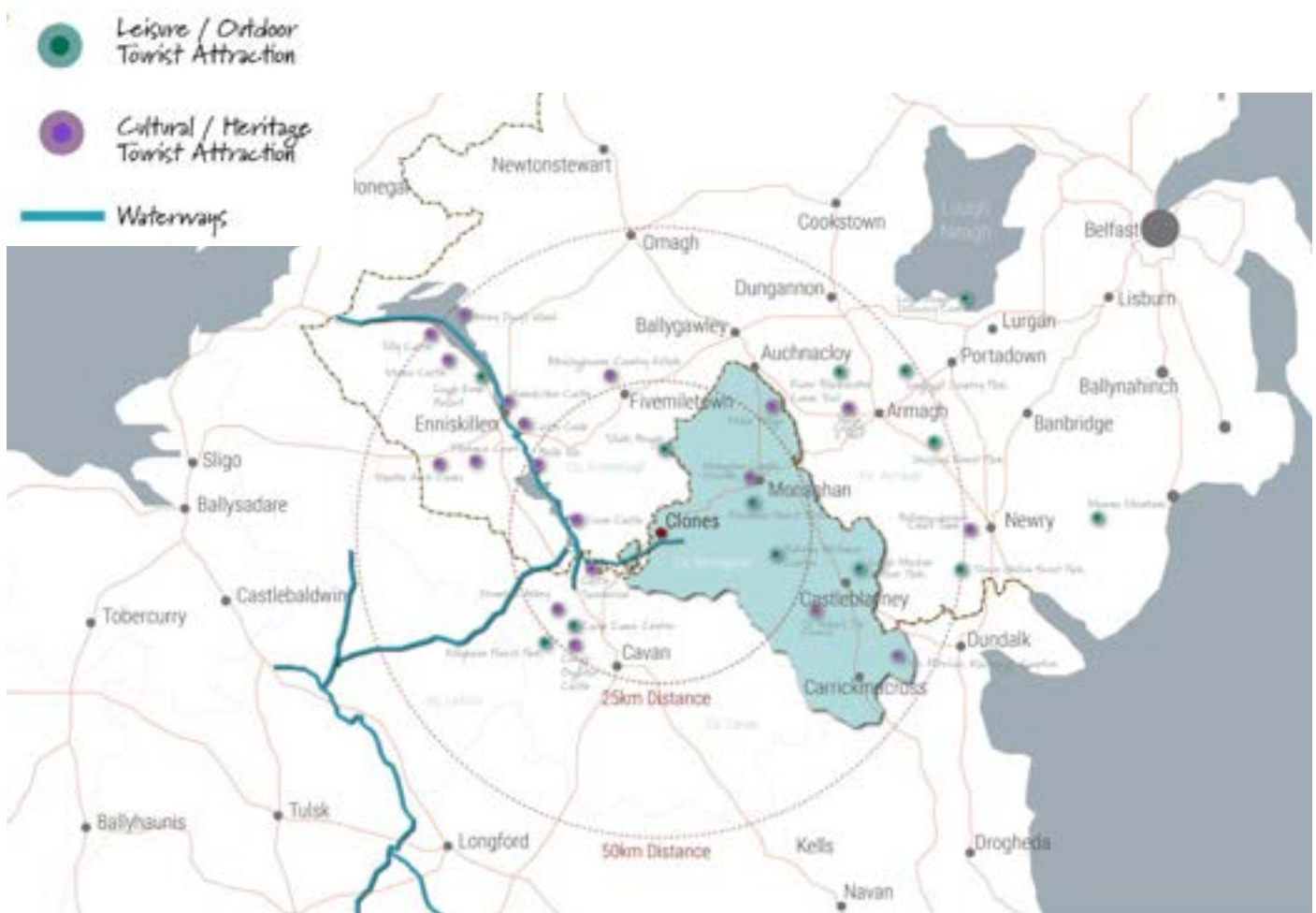


An enhanced tourism offering should be sought after that diversifies the market and adds greater resilience.



Opportunities to harness key sites for regeneration are being halted due to issues of accessibility and ownership.

# Spatial Analysis



## REGIONAL LOCATION

Strategically located close to the border with Northern Ireland and with good connections to both Dublin and Belfast, Clones performs an important regional role.

The town benefits from close proximity to many visitor and tourism attractions within the wider region as can be seen on the Plan above.

Being situated on the Ulster Canal also brings with it great potential for the future of Clones. A cross-border government commitment to restore and reopen the route as a navigable waterway helps place Clones on the national map and makes it a prime destination for investment.

More widely, within a 30km radius of Clones three further dedication colleges exist (Monaghan Institute, Cavan Institute and South West College Enniskillen) who all offer a wide range of practical and academic programmes





## HISTORIC MOVEMENT

Located between the rail line and the Ulster Canal, the town of Clones was once very well catered for in terms of transport connectivity, with easy movement for goods and people.



## CONTEMPORARY MOVEMENT

With the rail line closed and the Ulster Canal no longer operational, the movement needs of the town today are serviced purely by the local road network with the busy N54 dissecting the Diamond.



## MOVEMENT & WALKABILITY

Whilst the majority of the town is within a short 5-10 minute walk, the presence of the N54 and secondary roads have an impact on the perceived walkability of the town. Whilst radial roads spur out of the town cater to commuters and car users, interconnectivity of pedestrian routes and street level permeability is poor.



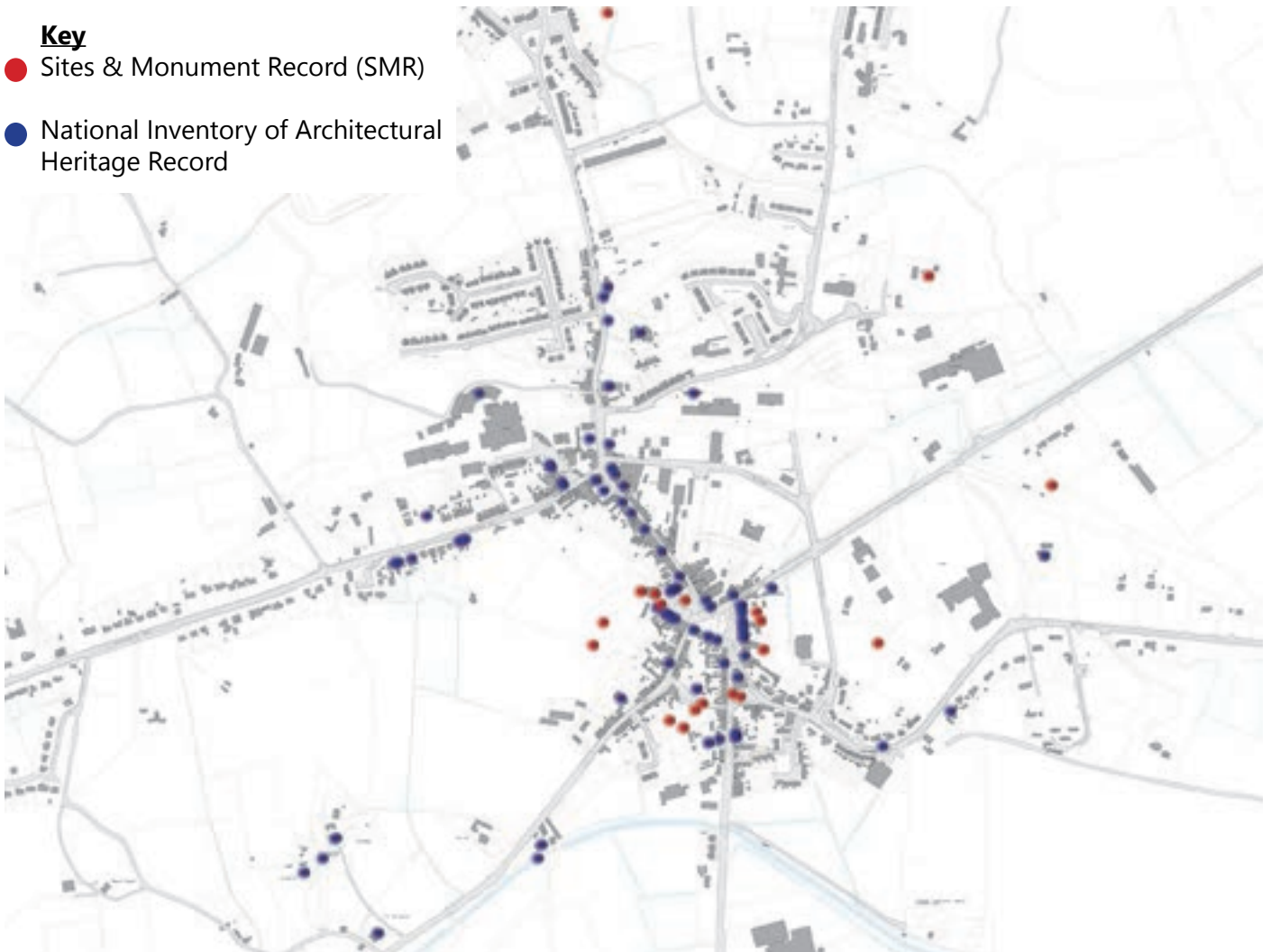
## CLONES CORE

It is clear from the analysis of the built environment and overlaid building features that the town is highly concentrated within the central area. Unlike many Irish towns which have suffered from severe urban sprawl, Clones is still physically well defined which presents positive opportunities for the future.

# Spatial Analysis

## Key

- Sites & Monument Record (SMR)
- National Inventory of Architectural Heritage Record



## BUILT HERITAGE DISTRIBUTION

Following the established footprint of the historic map on the following page, the majority of built heritage features (Protected Structures and Scheduled Monuments) within Clones are clustered around the Diamond and along Fermanagh Street to the north-west.

This concentration of built heritage helps to define the character of the town and highlights that the Diamond has long been the heart and centre of Clones.





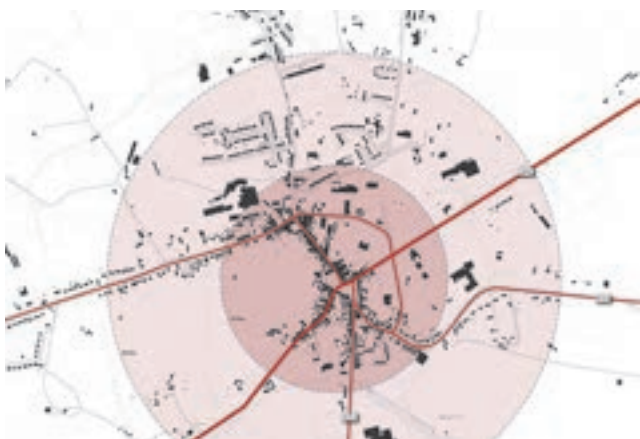
### **ESTABLISHED FOOTPRINT**

Historic mapping from 1837-1842 shows a compact and established urban footprint of Clones with the core of the town centred around the Diamond. This early development still very much defines the contemporary character of the town.



### **CONTEMPORARY FOOTPRINT**

By overlaying the contemporary built form on the historic mapping from 1837-1842 it is evident that Clones has maintained the central compact cluster of development around the Diamond.



### **BUILT HERITAGE WALKABILITY**

Using the PedShed analysis technique we can see that Clones is potentially a very walkable destination with the majority of the town, including its built heritage, located within a short 5-10 minute walk.

It can also be seen that examples of peripheral development have occurred within the town. Some of these examples exhibit a larger footprint linked to local industries and institutions. The majority of the remaining contemporary development is residential in nature. This has occurred in a linear pattern focused along the Newtownbutler Road and also a residential cluster has developed northwards from the town, nestled amongst the sporting and leisure facilities.



THE DIAMOND IS A UNIQUE URBAN SPACE COMPRISING TWO INTERLOCKING CIVIC SPACES.



IT IS A LARGE SPACE WITH POTENTIAL TO ACCOMMODATE LARGE GATHERING AND EVENTS.





THE DESIGN OF THE DIAMOND SHOULD ENSURE FLEXIBILITY OF USE, FOR QUIET AND SPECIAL DAYS ALIKE.



IMAGINATIVE USES IN THE DIAMOND WILL HELP TO INCREASE FOOTFALL OF VALUE TO LOCAL BUSINESSES.

# Areas to Celebrate

## HERITAGE ASSETS

For many, the name 'Clones' is immediately associated with a rich tapestry of built heritage features. These historic assets span the times and tales of the nations' past, creating a multi-layered history that has resulted in the town affectionately being referred to by some locals as 'the time capsule of Ireland'.

From the iconic Diamond with its impressive building frontage, to the Round Tower, Wee Abbey, Cassandra Hand Centre, Celtic Cross, Sarcophagus and much more, Clones is not short of reasons to appeal to visitors and locals to discover and celebrate the town's fascinating past.



## CULTURAL HERITAGE & COMMUNITY SPIRIT

Alongside the vast array of built heritage features in the town, Clones also shares a proud history in relation to its cultural heritage through local storytelling of its famous people and products.

The many literary, sporting, musical and artistic connections to the town undoubtedly make Clones stand out on the national stage.

Importantly, Clones is not purely defined by its historical legacies but more contemporary cultural and community events such as the GAA Ulster Final and Clones Film Festival. Such events prove that the town can be as much of a success today as it has been in the past.

It is when hosting such public events the streets of Clones are packed with visitors and locals, enjoying the warm welcome that Clones is known for.





## WELL PRESENTED

The on-going good work of the local community, voluntary groups and Council has resulted in a very well presented town.

Significant investment has been made within the town in recent years to improve the quality of the local street network. Public realm enhancement schemes, such as that on Fermanagh Street, have positively contributed to the town and will ultimately assist in creating a more legible and attractive town to increase active travel and reduce car dependency.

Areas of wild-flowering at the roadside and numerous planters located throughout the town also help to soften the feel of the town, give a positive first impression and add an important biodiversity boost.



## BIG PLANS

An impressive number of projects have been delivered in Clones in recent years and has resulted in projects of scale and with significant positive impact being constructed in the town.

Such key projects include new educational developments, social housing units, Fermanagh Street Business Hub, Cassandra Hand Centre and Famine Museum, Canal Stores, Clones Lace Museum, public library, Market House and the renovated Post office which has become the new Clones Arts Studios.

Building on these successes, Clones has big plans related to the reopening the Ulster Canal. A recent €12 million fund to restore the Clones to Clonfad stretch of the Ulster Canal and a cross-border government commitment to see the remainder of this strategic project realised gives confidence to the future of the town and would have a truly transformative effect.



# Areas to Improve

## DERELICTION & VACANCY

Like many Irish towns, Clones suffers from issues of dereliction and vacancy. As the local economy has shifted away from more traditional forms of employment, some remnants of past industries remain.

Quite often these cases of dereliction and vacancy are located at prominent sites within the town and so their visual impact is significant. This creates a negative first impression of the town for visitors, detracts from the quality of the local built and natural heritage and impacts upon community pride.



## HIDDEN HERITAGE

Whilst it has been noted that Clones has fantastic heritage on offer, much of it is currently hidden from view, underutilised and under-appreciated.

A lack of inclusive public accessibility, poor signage and interpretation and issues surrounding ownership further add to the problem of hidden heritage.

Nonetheless, the old Plantation castle discovered in the town in recent years shows that Clones is very much still a place of great discovery with so many stories yet to be told.





## LOW LEVEL OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

As a result of a more traditional local employment market running alongside a divergent national economy that is largely focused on digital and service sectors, Clones has suffered a low level of economic activity.

A reduction in economic fortunes of the town has been twin-tracked with a declining population. Consequently, certain services in the town have been cut including Post Office and banking facilities.

The town has been successful in recent years at creating large scale events that occur throughout the calendar and attract high footfall. However, to date these events have not transpired into enough of an increased visitor dwell time that would encourage a more consistent form of economic activity growth and development.

## LOW ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

In certain areas of the town, issues around maintenance and management of buildings, poor finish of the public realm, including inconsistent street furniture materials, and issues of dog fouling seriously impact upon local environmental quality.



# Street Furniture Audit

At the beginning of the analysis process, an audit of existing street furniture was conducted which analysed the location, quantity and quality of elements such as litter bins, planters, lighting, signage and seating.

The results highlighted a broad variation in terms of design and condition quality and at times, a cluttered, inconsistent and uncoordinated distribution throughout the town.

It was concluded that although largely functional, the existing street furniture does not reflect the heritage canvas of the town and could be improved and harmonised to meet the needs and reflect the aspirations of the town. The resultant proposals to improve the quality and consistency of the local street furniture can be read in the later chapters of the document.

To view the proposals for Street Furniture, please see Page 40.

LITTER BINS



LIGHTING





SIGNAGE



SEATING



PLANTERS



# Policy Context

Having analysed the town, its spatial connections, physical attributes and social characteristics, it is important to assess the planning policy context in which the Clones Heritage and Economic Plan is situated.

By ensuring that the position of the plan is aligned with national, regional and local policy, this will set a clear direction of travel and assist when applying for future funding opportunities to deliver projects.

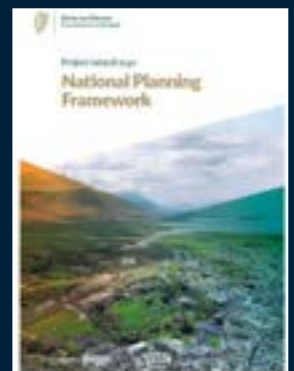
Alongside the key policy documents discussed overleaf, the following important documents have also been taken into consideration when developing this Heritage and Economic Plan:

- Monaghan Biodiversity & Heritage Strategic Plan 2020-2025
- County Monaghan Tourism Strategy 2015-2020
- Waterways Ireland Heritage Plan 2016-2020
- Clones Heritage Trail and accompanying Map
- Ulster Canal Greenways Strategy





HIERARCHY	POLICY DOCUMENT	POLICY DETAIL
<b>International</b>	United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's)	Adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030.
<b>National</b>	National Planning Framework: Project Ireland 2040 (NPF)	Published 16th February 2018, the National Planning Framework (NPF) is the Government's high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of the country to the year 2040.
<b>Regional</b>	Northern and Western Regional Assembly, Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy 2020-2032 (RSES)	Adopted 24th January 2020, the RSES provides a high-level development framework for the Northern and Western Region that supports the implementation of the NPF and the relevant economic policies and objectives of Government.
<b>County</b>	Monaghan County Development Plan, 2019-2025 (CDP)	Effective from 1st of April 2019, The Monaghan CDP provides an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of County Monaghan over the timescale of the Plan. Spatial planning through the development plan policies endeavours to achieve balance between the common good and the interests of individuals.
<b>Local</b>	Monaghan Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP)	In January 2016, Monaghan County Council working alongside Monaghan Local Community Development Committee published the first LECP for County Monaghan. This was produced following extensive research and consultation to identify the key challenges, opportunities and priorities from both a community and economic perspective.





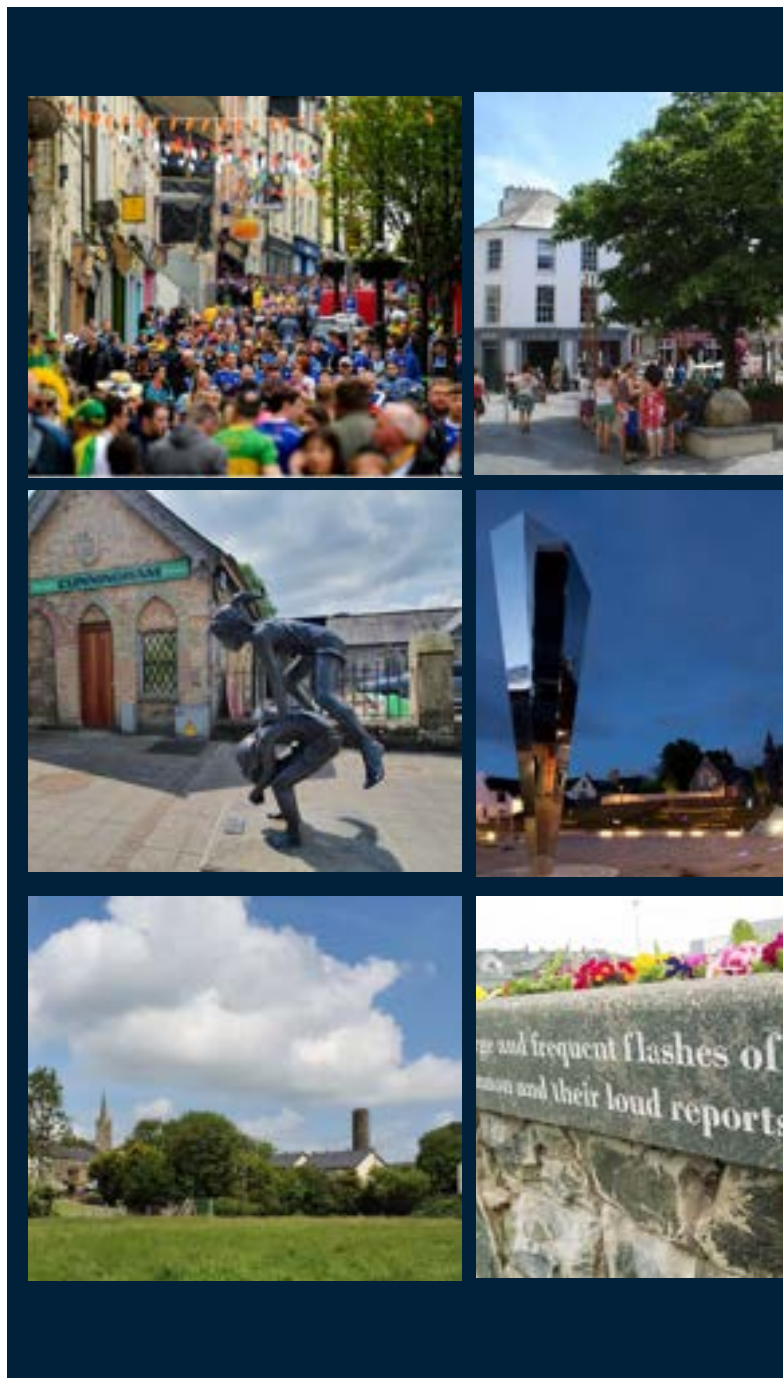
# Vision

Looking confidently to the future whilst celebrating its past, the town of Clones has a clear and ambitious vision for what it will become.

Although heritage will continue to play a key role in the identity and success of the town, it must also work alongside complementary new uses, improvements and strategic interventions so that Clones becomes a much more attractive place to live, work and invest in as well as visit.

The Plan seeks to invest in infrastructure, public realm and heritage, to stimulate private sector investment that will explore the delivery of complementary uses and activities such as accommodation and business uptake.

A town that is dynamic, vibrant and bustling will give visitors more reason to visit Clones than heritage alone, and as a result people will say you must **'experience'** all that Clones has to offer, not merely 'see' it or 'visit' it.





# *Experience Clones*

**A place where energy constantly flows**  
- catalysing on existing regionally existing assets

**A place where history comes to life**  
- interpreting the heritage in a dynamic way

**A place that strikes the perfect work life balance**  
- ensuring facilities and infrastructure are of a good quality

**A place of great resilience**  
- finding sustainable uses for the town centre

**A place you have to experience**  
- honing the identity of Clones of as a place to live, work and invest







# Projects



## TIMESCALES

The Clones Heritage and Economic Plan consists of a series of key locations for targeted investment with projects to be implemented over the short, medium and long term by a range of stakeholders.

Over the next 10-15 year period, this plan will be used to secure project funding opportunities for the town. Each project will then undergo further engagement with stakeholders, the local community and landowners to progress these projects through to delivery.

### PROJECT KEY



SHORT TERM PROJECTS



LONG TERM PROJECTS

# A. ULSTER CANAL



## A1: GREENWAY CONNECTIONS

Whilst the restoration of the canal is likely to be a phased process, developing greenway connections along the route can begin much quicker.

A high quality network of safe, attractive and inclusive active travel routes that are well-connected to the town centre, Monaghan, Lough Erne and Cavan beyond.

These greenway connections will bring multifaceted benefits to the town by seeking to reduce traffic congestion, adding more sustainable options to the local movement network and importantly, further enhancing the visitor activities on offer.



## A2: REOPEN ULSTER CANAL

The restoration of the Ulster Canal has the potential to completely transform Clones.

In the longer-term, reopening the canal as a navigable waterway will involve substantial capital funds to deliver this project and it's enabling infrastructure such as a purpose-built canal basin and associated visitor facilities.

Preliminary work has already been carried out on the process of examining the potential of reopening the canal with previous feasibility studies and tourism strategies undertaken. Whilst there are still many challenges to overcome, a €12 million fund to restore the Clones to Clonfad stretch of the canal has been announced and a national commitment from governments on both sides of the border gives confidence to this project.

On delivery, this project will bring significant economic and social benefit to Clones and drive the regeneration of the town as a visitor destination linked to the wider region.



ACCESSIBLE, INCLUSIVE AND ATTRACTIVE GREENWAY



POTENTIAL FOR WATER ACTIVITIES AND FESTIVALS



### **A3: ENERGISING THE CANAL**

By developing and promoting the waterway as a cultural and tourism facility, Clones can experience an uplift of visitor numbers as well as being a recreational amenity for local people.

Key to this success, an events strategy should be produced that local stakeholders and community groups can help drive and actively participate in.

Regular events and unique experiences, such as water based activities and canal heritage festivals will energise the waterway and make Clones a must-visit destination all year around. Overnight accommodation (both on and off the water) including camper van provision will enable an increased visitor dwell-time and tourism spend.

Temporarily establishing a business hub within the Canal Stores whilst a more permanent space is developed on Fermanagh Street would provide much needed enterprise space within the town.



### **A4: INTERPRETATION**

In the short to medium term, highlighting town's past by revealing the natural and built heritage of the canal is very important.

It is well known that Clones has many fascinating stories to tell and so this project seeks to explore and celebrate the narrative around the cross-border canal and it's people. This should not simply consist of signage, but involve creative use of heritage artefacts, public art and lighting.

Careful restoration of heritage and industrial features should occur alongside an investigation into their associated histories.

Importantly, local residents and community groups should be engaged with this process and may take part in activities such as a community archaeological dig or an oral history project. A 'hands on' approach will help local people better understand and become excited about the history of their own area.,



**NARROW BOAT FLOATING CAFE AND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY, LONDON**



**QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC REALM**



## B. SPORTING HUB



### **B1: ST TIARNACH'S PLAZA & STADIUM UPLIFT**

Clones is the capital of Ulster GAA. By investing in the stadium, its surrounds and overall visitor experience, the role of the town will be further cemented.

In the short term, initiatives to improve the visual impact and create a more positive first impression should be delivered. This should include the removal of aggressive railings and boundary treatments to help soften and enhance the overall appearance of the site.

In the medium to long term, investment is needed to improve the quality of the stadium, its visual presentation, visitor offering and road safety.

This will include the creation of a plaza in front of the stadium on Millbrook Road. The plaza will be multi-purpose, improving the safety of the space on match days and enabling events and activities to take place when the road is temporarily closed to vehicles.

At the time of writing Clones GAA has developed a masterplan for its property. To maximise the collective impact of investment, it will be important that it is delivered in coordination with the proposal set out in this plan.



ARTISTS IMPRESSION OF REDESIGNED ROADWAY, STADIUM WALL AND ASSEMBLY AREA AT ST. TIARNACH'S PARK. SOURCE: MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL.



## **B2:** **INTERPRETATION**

Interpretation features and information panels will convey the importance of this location, add to its sense of place and can act as a physical guide to and from the town centre.

In the longer term, as part of the investment in St Tiarnach's Park and Plaza, the possibility of a more significant tourism facility should be explored.

This dedicated visitor attraction should tell the history of Clones association with Ulster GAA and celebrate Ulster football heroes and successes.



## **B3:** **INVESTING IN PEACE LINK & SURROUNDINGS**

The Peace Link, a state of the art sporting facility, is an already existing fantastic asset for the town. However, to capitalise upon its success, investing in it's gym and complementary facilities would further enhance its offering and increase its regional attraction.

In the short term, improving the setting of the Peace Link and introducing safe pedestrian and cycle linkages to increase connectivity with the wider town and Ulster Canal should be delivered. This should also include the backlands of John Delaney Park.

This will encourage a more sustainable form of movement across the town and ensure the facilities are accessible to all.



INTERPRETATION OF SPORTING HEROES AND SUCCESS



POTENTIAL DEDICATED GAA MUSEUM



GUIDED TOURS OF ST TIARNACH'S STADIUM



ACCESSIBLE AND SAFE CONNECTIONS

A QUICK WIN - **PROJECT B1:**

ST TIARNACH'S PARK AFTER SHORT-TERM INITIATIVES TO IMPROVE THE SETTING AND FACADE OF THE STADIUM.



BEFORE



Removal of aggressive boundary railings on facade wall

Repaint boundary wall to improve first appearance of the site

Underground utilities to reduce visual clutter

Improve surface treatment of public footpath

AFTER







# C. RAILWAY TOWN



## C1: MASTERPLAN

This project is based around the development of a spatial plan for the old railway lands and surrounding greenfields.

A dedicated masterplan for the old railway lands needs to be created to spatially coordinate the future sustainable development of this key space within the town, it's layout, it's connections and it's economic viability.

This should include the surrounding and underutilised greenfield sites which at the moment although they offer a somewhat positive visual impact, they do not actively contribute to the local economy nor provide high quality usable space.

The masterplan may explore potential employment types for the old railway lands which may be well suited for SME businesses, workshop space and other emerging industries which would compliment the town centre and balance the economic offering of the Diamond. The masterplan will enable remaining aspects of the area's railway heritage to be identified and conserved as part of proposals.

Ensuring buy-in of local stakeholders such as landowners, business and community groups will ensure the masterplan is delivered in the medium-to-longer term as funding opportunities arise.

Once complete the masterplan should also be used to attract private sector investment into Clones.



IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION DURING MASTERPLAN DEVELOPMENT



RAILWAY HERITAGE TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES



INTERPRETATION OF INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE



## C2: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

In the short to medium term, environmental improvements should be delivered at the Roslea Road Car Park adjacent to the Cattlemart and at the bus stop on 98 Avenue.

This should include railway interpretation, quality and appropriately styled street furniture as well as public realm enhancement involving surfacing, boundary treatments and lighting.

Historic interpretation would be an important addition for locals and residents to learn of the historical importance the railway had for Clones as well as further bolstering the visitor offering and tapping into the heritage tourism market.



## C3: RAILWAY INTERPRETATION

The railway, its connections and associated infrastructure played a crucial part in the history of Clones and therefore it is important this story is told.

To help achieve this, art features, the restoration of rail buildings and opportunities for related visitor attractions should be explored.

A subtle nod to the past, embedded into the public realm, can often create an intriguing first point of interest and encourage individuals to further explore, increasing visitor dwell time and add to the sense of place.



POLLINATOR FRIENDLY GREEN BUS STOP



DEDICATED SME WORKSHOP SPACE



INTERPRETATION OF RAIL FEATURES



IMPROVED STREET FURNITURE



CAFE BUSINESS IN OLD RAIL CARRIAGE



SPACE FOR EMERGING INDUSTRIES



A QUICK WIN - **PROJECT C2:**  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS AT THE BUS STOP ON 96 AVENUE



BEFORE



AFTER



**HALLA PROTASTÚNAC  
PROTESTANT HALL**

*(Irish text describing the building's history, including the year 1922 and the name of the architect, W. R. Port.)*

The Protestant Hall, which was built in 1926, was designed by a local architect W. R. Port. It is interesting to note the date when the hall was first planned as the date of the establishment of the Irish Free State. Initially, while the hall was predominantly used by the Protestant community as a recreation centre, its facilities were open to all. Various organisations would have held regular meetings and social events there. The dangers of a particular religious community inherent in the 1920s decade may have been a contributing factor in establishing a Protestant Hall. Once a particular Protestant group is formed that organises events, it is clear that access to the hall was controlled. In recent years the hall has been opened up to all sections of the community.



# D. FERMANAGH STREET & CHURCH HILL



## D1: STREET ACTIVATION

Becoming a destination in its own right as well as an important thoroughfare, Fermanagh Street and Church Hill must be a creative and energetic space that drives footfall and encourages an increase in localised dwell time.

Activating and promoting the street on a regular basis can be delivered in the short term and will greatly benefit local businesses along the route.

Working with local business, key stakeholders and local community groups, forms of 'tactical urbanism' along the route should be firmly embraced.

Alongside pop-up events and seasonal festivals, encouraging business spill-out activity throughout the year should be encouraged.

For example, outdoor seating, dressing the street, live music performances, creative events, seasonal festivals. Interventions can be relatively small in budget but still

cost effective in terms of end results. Changing how Fermanagh Street is perceived and turning it into a street that people want to walk down to 'see' what Clones has to offer should be the objective of this project.

Temporary closures of the street to vehicle traffic should be explored, enabling the route to act as venue for events.

Where possible, data should be captured during temporary events to analyse the impact of these interventions, providing an evidence base to help inform future policy and potentially assist in securing funding for projects.

Where appropriate, the installation of urban multi-use green areas should also be delivered. These spaces may cater for a range of uses such as teen hangout destinations or biodiversity use such as a sensory garden.



FERMANAGH STREET AS A VENUE OF CULTURAL EVENTS



ROAD CLOSURES FOR TEMPORARY EVENTS





## D2: PUBLIC REALM ENHANCEMENT

In the medium to long term, a high quality public realm enhancement project should build upon the already successful interventions on Fermanagh Street and Church Hill.

It is the objective of this project to create a visually cohesive, appropriately styled and attractive streetscape.

This project should involve the de-cluttering of superfluous streetscape elements and introducing a palette of street furniture that highlights and showcases the surrounding built heritage.

New lighting, public seating, quality paving, appropriately styled litter bins and a shopfront enhancement scheme should all be included in this project. While pedestrianisation is not proposed, consideration may be given to a shared surface design that can create a better environment for those of foot and bicycle.

It is important that Fermanagh Street is a social, inclusive and vibrant space that naturally links the Diamond with the 'Railway Town' and northwards to the 'Sporting Hub'.

The newly developed 'Farmyard' should also be viewed as an attractive outdoor community space that would lend itself to a range of uses including a potential farmers market and annual Christmas market.

The success of Fermanagh Street and Church Hill will play a key role in improving the overall attractiveness of active travel within the town.



SHOPFRONT IMPROVEMENT SCHEME



ACCESSIBLE STREET FURNITURE



TELLING LOCAL STORIES

A QUICK WIN - **PROJECT D1:**  
A MORE VIBRANT, ENERGISED AND BUSINESS-FRIENDLY FERMANAGH STREET BASED UPON TEMPORARY INTERVENTIONS



1. BEFORE



2. AFTER SHORT TERM INTERVENTIONS

**PROJECT D1:** HIGH QUALITY PUBLIC REALM INVESTMENT.  
TRANSFORMING FERMANAGH STREET FROM A VEHICLE DOMINATED THOROUGHFARE INTO A BUZZING PEDESTRIAN DESTINATION

- High footfall uses with ground floor active frontage
- Shopfront improvement scheme
- Road closed to through traffic to enable temporary events
- Accessible, attractive and adaptive environment.
- High quality stone sett paving
- Dedicated business spill-out areas and 'streeteries'



3. AFTER LONG TERM INTERVENTIONS



# E. HERITAGE ZONE & GREEN RING



## E1: MOTTE & BAILEY

An important heritage asset, the Motte and Bailey site is currently under-utilised and under-appreciated due to being largely hidden from public view by overgrown vegetation and an inaccessible and unappealing access route to the viewing point.

Improved pedestrian access and greater connectivity to the town beyond should be sought in the short term, integrating this important heritage asset as part of a highly connected network of local sites.

In the medium to long term, bringing this asset into public ownership alongside delivering an improved visitor experience should be aimed for. This should be achieved via a range of interpretation measures and a quality walkway experience that loops around the site and leads to a viewing platform at the peak.



## E2: TEMPORARY PARKING FIELDS

The fields that surround the eastern access road to the town often perform the role of temporary car parking in order to facilitate large scale events, such as the Ulster GAA Final. However, on a day to day basis, these fields are having a negative visual impact upon the town.

In response, a landscape project is proposed to ensure the space is usable all year, implementing quick wins to improve the appeal of the site whilst continuing its valuable role as overflow parking.

Over night parking for camper vans would also be amenable in this location to meet growing visitor demands as would Roslea Road car park.



WALKWAY EXPERIENCE AROUND MOTTE & BAILEY LEADING TO VISITOR VIEWING PLATFORM AT PEAK



SUSTAINABLE URBAN DRAINAGE SYSTEM INCORPORATED INTO OVERSPILL CAR PARKING



INTERPRETATION EMBEDDED INTO PUBLIC REALM



### **E3: THE FORMER LENNARD ARMS HOTEL**

The Lennard Arms Hotel is currently in a state of neglect due to its prolonged vacancy. The site plays an important role in its prominent location at a key traffic junction in the town and moving from the Diamond towards an important cluster of built heritage items within the southern aspect of the town.

A project is proposed to remove derelict elements of the Lennard Arms Hotel site and redevelop into an ecclesiastical monastic heritage centre and gallery exhibition space to house early Christian monuments within Clones town.

This proposal will involve the sensitive refurbishment and adaption of the former hotel site which will help improve the setting of the Wee Abbey.



### **E4: WALKING TRAIL, INTERPRETATION & LIGHTING**

This project should include upgrades of interpretation and lighting within the area, showcasing of the wealth of heritage features on offer.

This should include sites such as the Lennard Arms Hotel, Round Tower, Wee Abbey, Cassandra Hand Centre, St Tiernach's Well, Celtic Cross, Sarcophagus and ancient headstones to name a few.

Longer term, there should be an ambition to establish an accessible walking loop, highly connected, easily accessible and legible that can successfully add to the visitor offering and increase visitor dwell time.

This may involve working with local stakeholders to further develop an emerging proposal for a 5th Pilgrim Pathway connecting the Newtownbutler Road to the Cassandra Hand Centre via Cara Street.



LOCAL HISTORY AND HEROES CELEBRATED VIA ARTISTIC INTERPRETATION.



IMMERSIVE INTERPRETATION OF RUIN FEATURES



INTERPRETATION INTEGRATED INTO VISITOR WAYFINDING



FEATURE LIGHTING OF MONUMENTS AND BUILDINGS



## E5: STREET FURNITURE

A contextually appropriate and high quality suite of street furniture should be implemented across the town over the short to long term, with care to avoid cluttering of the streetscape. Tourism and traffic signs should be kept separate where possible.

The style of furniture, to include public benches and seating, lighting and bins, should be consistent, high-quality and complement the heritage canvas of the town. Often sleek contemporary styles will be more appropriate than pastiche 'heritage' products. Metalwork should be black or grey in colour (as opposed to eye catching stainless steel) and the use of timber in Clones is to be encouraged.

A transition to LED lighting will help to control energy efficiency and light pollution. Where possible, wall mounted fittings should be used on narrow streets, so reduced street clutter.

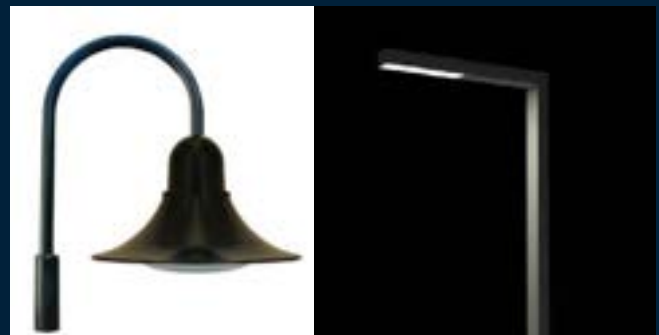
Where appropriate, bespoke items of street furniture and public art will help to reinforce the unique identity of Clones.



UNCLUTTERED, CONTEMPORARY USE OF FURNITURE



BESPOKE TIMBER BENCHES AND SCULPTURAL PLANTERS



LED LIGHTING IN HERITAGE & MODERN STYLES



MINIMAL MODERN BOLLARDS IN BLACK OR GREY







# F. THE DIAMOND



## F1: HOSTING TEMPORARY EVENTS & ACTIVATION OF THE SPACE

In the short term, hosting temporary events on the Diamond and creating a vibrancy to the space through regular activation is essential. Such interventions will help this important space 'work harder', attracting people to visit the town and to spend more time and money there.

Events and activities should range across all seasons, appealing to a wide demographic audience of both locals and visitors and may include the likes of farmers markets, outdoor film nights, live sporting events, pop-up play parks, literary festivals, outdoor seating for cafés and seasonal events such as Christmas Market, Peace and Reconciliation festival and artistic exhibitions to name a few.



## F2: DECLUTTERING OF STREET FURNITURE

In the short term, the de-cluttering of street furniture should be carried out to increase the visual appeal and capacity of the space, enabling more events to successfully take place and allow people to appreciate the surrounding heritage canvas backdrop.

Subsequent increase in public realm investment and the introduction of enabling infrastructure will enhance the space further still, with key elements such as lighting and electricity sources facilitating larger scale events and broadening the scope of what is potential with the space.



FACILITATING ALREADY SUCCESSFUL EVENTS SUCH AS THE CLONES FILM FESTIVAL BUT IN A SETTING OF REGIONAL-DRAW AND REGIONAL-SCALE



DEDICATED FAN ZONE FOR SPORTING EVENTS



SEASONAL EVENTS E.G. CHRISTMAS MARKETS



### F3: CREATING A HIGH QUALITY EVENTS & PUBLIC SPACE

Longer term, it should be the ambition of the town to redesign the Diamond to become a nationally renowned high quality public space with significant event capacity.

The outcome of this investment would place Clones firmly on the visitor map, whilst driving business activity in the area through an increase in the local value of place and improving the quality of life of local residents. The Diamond should become an iconic destination in its own right, of European standards and attraction.

To achieve this, significant investment would be required, not only in the space itself but also in the wider transport network to remove unnecessary through traffic and create a space that was pedestrian focused and much more environmentally, economically and socially resilient.

A QUICK WIN - **PROJECT F2:**  
THE DIAMOND DE-CLUTTERED WITH THE REMOVAL OF INCONGRUOUS BOLLARDS AND STREET FURNITURE FOR A MORE SIMPLIFIED PUBLIC REALM



TEMPORARY ART INSTALLATIONS



OUTDOOR SPACE TO SOCIALISE



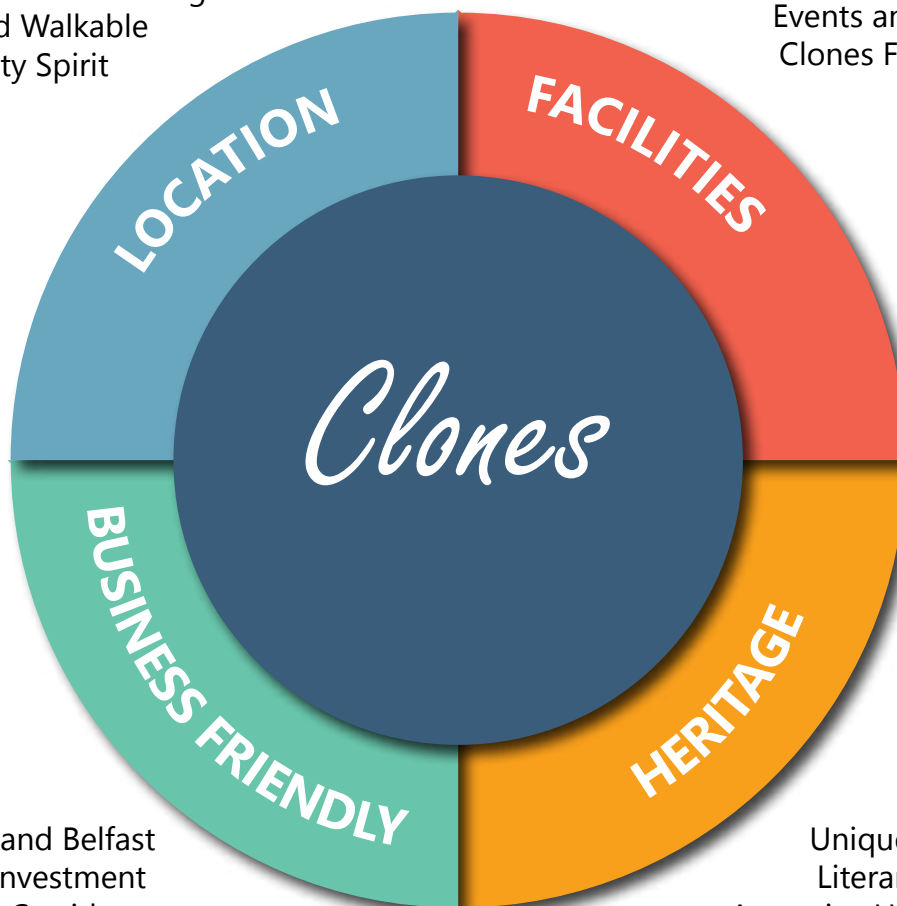




# 25 REASONS TO LIVE, WORK AND INVEST IN CLONES

Inclusivity  
Warm and Friendly Welcome  
Ulster Canal Connections  
Clean and Tidy  
Green Spaces and Rural Setting  
Compact and Walkable  
Community Spirit

The Peace Link  
Good Educational Provision  
The Home of Ulster GAA  
Active Community Organisations  
Courthouse Theatre  
Events and Activities  
Clones Film Festival



Proximity to Dublin and Belfast  
Land Available for Investment  
On N54 Transport Corridor  
Affordable Housing  
Cross Border Linkages  
Regional Attractions

Unique Civic Space  
Literary Successes  
Attractive Heritage Townscape  
Rich and Varied History  
Sporting Reputation



# Plan Implementation

The following section outlines each of the Heritage and Economic Plan's 20 individual projects with considerations given to their future deliverability.

The Action Plan which follows has been developed to be delivered by a range of stakeholders, over a period of 10-15 years, encouraging local ownership for sustainable long-term management and success.

## CLONES HERITAGE AND ECONOMIC PLAN PROJECT LIST

A1: Greenway Connections	D1: Street Activation
A2: Reopen Ulster Canal	D2: Public Realm Enhancement Project
A3: Energising the Canal	E1: Motte & Bailey
A4: Interpretation	E2: Temporary Car Parking Fields
B1: St Tiarnach's Plaza & Stadium Uplift	E3: Former Lennard Arms Hotel
B2: Interpretation	E4: Walking, Interpretation & Lighting
B3: Investing in Peace Link & Surrounds	E5: Street Furniture
C1: Masterplan	F1: Temporary Events & Activation
C2: Environmental Improvements	F2: Decluttering of Street Furniture
C3: Railway Interpretation	F3: High Quality Events & Public Space

# Action Plan

The plan sets out an ambitious set of projects to being about real change of Clones.

The action plan should be a 'live document' used continually to prioritise actions and monitor progress. Consequently, it should reviewed at regular intervals.

Once prioritised, each project will undergo further development and may need statutory approvals, such as planning consent.

Critically, the people of Clones should be kept actively involved in this process of transformation. This must go beyond traditional 'tick-box' consultation, to finding real opportunity for participation.

In addition to a clear plan for delivery, a proactive attitude is required to identify opportunities as they arise. This may be new funding opportunities, potential investors or developments taking place in the town that would be complemented by a specific project.

There are mutiple funding streams currently available for projects at the time of writing, these include LEADER, LECP, PEACE and RECP funding as well as large infrastructural investment opportunities.

## KEY

## PARTNERS

CTT	- Clones Town Team
MCC	- Monaghan County Council
FI	- Fáilte Ireland
TII	- Transport Infrastructure Ireland
WI	- Waterways Ireland
GAA	- Ulster GAA
LO	- Landowners

## DELIVERY TIMESCALES

Short term	- 1-3 years
Medium term	- 3-5 years
Longer term	- 5+ years

## COST PARAMETERS

€	- €0 - €50,000
€ €	- €50,000 - €500,000
€ € €	- €500,000 - €1m
€ € € €	- Over €1m



## Project Deliverables

Project	Project Title	Delivery Partners	Delivery Timescale	Delivery Cost
<b>A1</b>	Greenway Connections	MCC CTT WI	Short term // Medium term connection upgrades	€ € € €
<b>A2</b>	Reopen Ulster Canal	WI MCC FI CTT	Long term	€ € € €
<b>A3</b>	Energising the Canal	WI MCC FI CTT	Short term community initiatives // Medium term establish an events strategy	€ €
<b>A4</b>	Interpretation	WI MCC FI CTT	Medium term	€ €
<b>B1</b>	St Tiarnach's Plaza and Stadium Uplift	GAA CTT TI MCC	Short term aesthetic improvements // Long term comprehensive upgrade	€ € € €
<b>B2</b>	Interpretation	MCC CTT	Medium term	€ €
<b>B3</b>	Investing in Peace Link and Surrounds	MCC CTT	Medium term	€ € €
<b>C1</b>	Masterplan	MCC	Medium term	€
<b>C2</b>	Environmental Improvements	CTT TII MCC	Short term community initiatives // Long term comprehensive upgrade	€ € €
<b>C3</b>	Railway Interpretation	MCC CTT	Medium term	€ €

Project	Project Title	Delivery Partners	Delivery Timescale	Delivery Cost
D1	Street Activation	MCC CTT	Short term	€
D2	Public Realm Enhancement Project	MCC TI	Medium term	€ € € €
E1	Motte and Bailey	LO MCC CTT FI	Medium term improving access// Long term upgrade visitor experience	€ € €
E2	Temporary Car Parking Fields	MCC	Short term	€ € €
E3	Former Lennard Arms Hotel	MCC LO	Medium term	€ € € €
E4	Walking, Interpretation and Lighting	MCC CTT	Short term community initiatives // Medium term comprehensive upgrade	€ € € €
E5	Street Furniture	MCC CTT	Medium term	€ € €
F1	Temporary Events and Activation	CTT MCC	Short term // Medium term establish events strategy	€ € €
F2	Decluttering of Street Furniture	MCC CTT	Medium term	€
F3	High Quality Events and Public Space	MCC FI CTT TII	Long term	€ € € €



the **paul hogarth** company



The European Agricultural Fund  
for Rural Development:  
Europe investing in rural areas

