



# Tullow Town Centre First Plan



Riadas  
na hÉireann  
Government  
of Ireland

Tionscadal Éireann  
Project Ireland  
2040



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Aerial view of Tullow Town Centre

# **Preface**

“Town Centre First represents a new approach to the development of our towns where local communities and local businesses can be central to reimagining their own towns and planning their own futures. Every town is different. Each town is unique and requires unique solutions to the challenges and opportunities they face.”

**Town Centre First - A Policy Approach for Irish Towns**

## Introduction

**Settlements are important places for people. They provide homes, employment and retail services that support local economies. They also provide places for social, educational and recreational uses which are important for our communities to thrive and grow.**

The settlement of Tullow is situated within the north east area of County Carlow and within the Southern Assembly Region. Tullow is designated as a 'District Town' in the settlement hierarchy as contained within the extant County Development Plan (CDP) 2022 - 2028. The CDP describes District Towns as "Well-developed serviced settlements with a moderate level of jobs supporting services and community facilities with good transport links and capacity for continued commensurate growth to become more self-sustaining."<sup>1</sup>

As recorded by the 2016 Census, Tullow had a population of 4,673 persons, a rise of 701 persons from the previous Census in 2011.

The town is strategically located within the Southern Region and situated less than 50km via the M9 motorway from Kilkenny to the south west, 16km south east of Carlow Town via the R725 route and c.80km south west of Dublin City via the M9 and N1 routes.

As a market town, Tullow has a strong employment and service base serving surrounding areas, including industry and agricultural services such as Tullow Mart as well as important retail services.<sup>2</sup> The extant CDP also states that there is a need to develop supporting services in Tullow and in particular to support sustainable travel and alternatives to car-based commuting.

## Plan Preparation

This Town Centre First Plan for Tullow (hereafter 'TCF Plan') has been prepared by RMLA, Urban Agency and SYSTRA in line with the Town Centre First Policy brought forward by the Dept. of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the Dept. of Rural and Community Development. The Town Centre First Plan provides a rationale for the regeneration and re-imagining of Tullow's Town Centre that can bring forward economic, social and environment benefits over the long term. The structure of the TCF Plan is summarised below.

### Chapter 1 - Strategic Approach

The strategic approach has involved a collaborative process consisting of three principal elements: Map, Design, Implement.

### Chapter 2 - A Vision for Tullow

The Vision is central to the TCF Plan - to create an attractive, prosperous, vibrant and connected Town Centre. Key inputs into the Vision are outlined.

### Chapter 3 - Themes

Four key themes are presented along with their relevance and importance to Tullow. Theme objectives and outcomes are provided and how they align with the Town Centre First Policy.

### Chapter 4 - Project Interventions

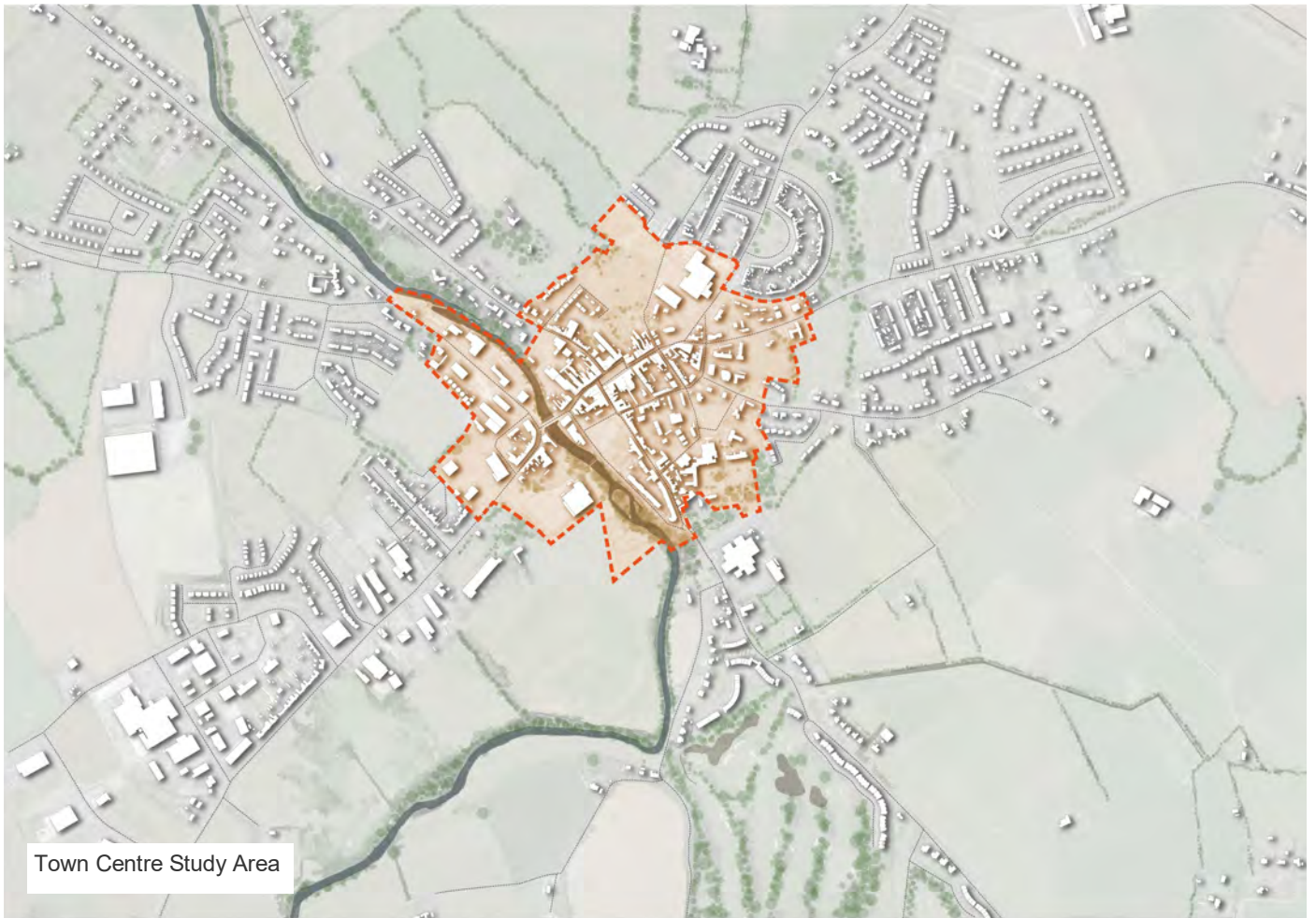
This chapter sets out future project interventions for the Town Centre in order to achieve the Vision. Projects are grouped within individual project areas and are directly related to the four key themes.

### Chapter 5 - Implementation and Delivery Plan

Establishing the approach regarding the implementation, delivery, cost and phasing of projects in Tullow Town Centre.

<sup>1</sup> Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028, pg. 25

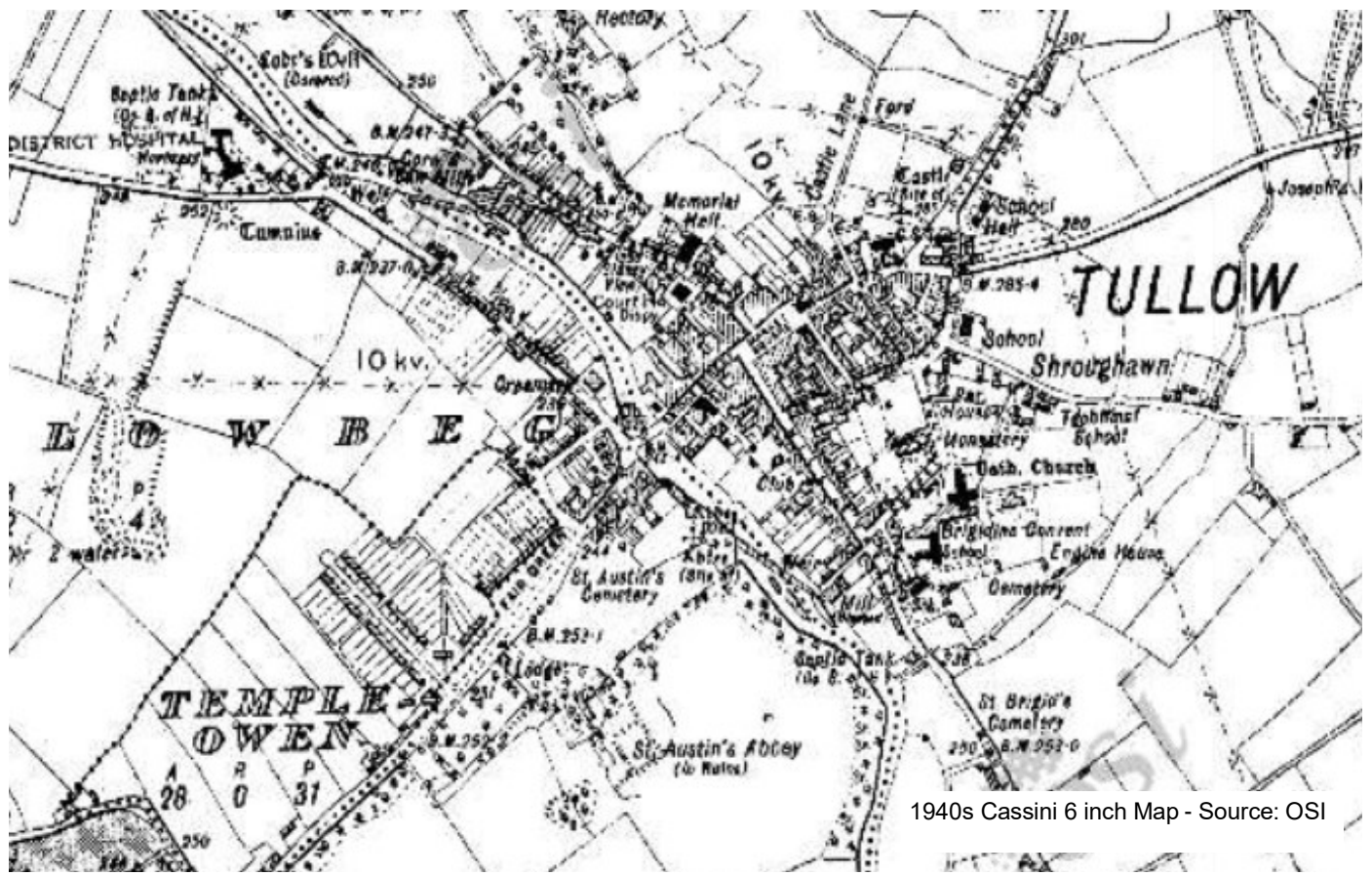
<sup>2</sup> Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028, pg. 27



Tullow - Geographical Context



1830s -1840s Historic 6 inch Map - Source: OSI



1940s Cassini 6 inch Map - Source: OSI



## Settlement History and Evolution

**Tullow's placename ('An Tulach') is derived from Tullach, meaning 'a mound'. Archaeologically, the town is important for a number of reasons. Firstly, it is an example of a pre-Norman monastery which was developed into an Anglo-Norman town. Secondly, as an example of a small Anglo-Norman town, and third, as one of the few Anglo-Norman settlements in Carlow to have survived the Gaelic revival of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.<sup>3</sup>**

## Heritage

The heritage story of the town of Tullow can be read through the street pattern and buildings of the well-built eighteenth-century street town with its prominent market place. But Tullow's heritage is a story through time, exemplified in property boundaries at the northern portion of the town near the former castle and the former Abbey located at the southern portion of the town on the southern bank of the River Slaney.

The murgage grant of 1343/5 (Thomas 1992,240) suggested that Tullow was a medieval walled town. The present day St. Columba's Church (NIAH 10400306) situated on an elevated area of ground, was within close proximity to the site of a Castle. The property boundaries for the buildings along Church Street, taking the form of stone walls themselves may reflect the line of the medieval town or later seventeenth or eighteenth-century boundary. Archaeological excavations along Church Lane led to the discovery of an earth cut limekiln with a stone flue containing sherds of medieval pottery (Leinster Cooking Ware).

The historic graveyard known as the *Abbey Graveyard*, contains a holy well covered by a stone structure that contains the upper portion

of a solid ringed stone cross. Both the Holy Well and the Cross fragment are features associated with early medieval monastic settlements. It is probable the Augustinians founded their Abbey in Tullow in 1314, on the site of the earlier monastic settlement. The River Slaney would have provided food, sanitation, commerce (milling) for the monastery and subsequent town of Tullow.

Tullow's valuable built heritage character is illustrated by the historic buildings and Protected Structures present in the town. This is illustrated by, for example, the Georgian courthouse building (c.1825), Catholic Church of the Most Holy Rosary (c.1835), Tullow Monastery National School (c.1910), St. Austin's Abbey (c.1856) and the unique Water Bailiff's Hut (c.1835) (see below).



<sup>3</sup>Bradley, J. and King, H.A. (1990) Urban archaeological survey - County Carlow. Unpublished report commissioned by the Office of Public Works, Dublin

## Town Centre First Policy

Much like other towns across Ireland, Tullow has faced a number of common challenges in recent times which include, *inter alia*, the quality of the public realm, compact growth, reducing reliance on the private car for journeys, facilitating Town Centre living, the appearance of buildings and streetscapes, vacancy and the overall vibrancy of the Town Centre etc.

The 'Town Centre First - A Policy Approach for Irish Towns' document represents a new approach to the development of our towns where local communities and local businesses can be central to reimagining their own towns and planning their own futures. Every town is different. Each town is unique and requires unique solutions to the challenges and opportunities they face.<sup>4</sup>

This Town Centre First Plan for Tullow affords the unique opportunity to regenerate and rejuvenate the Town Centre so that it becomes the heart of Tullow once again. It provides an opportunity to undertake an analysis of the town in order to gain an informed understanding of what is good about Tullow and also what could be better.

In terms of looking to the future, Chapter 2 of the Town Centre First Policy is important as it relates to the potential opportunities that may exist for Tullow. The baseline work undertaken has identified opportunities such as the presence of the River Slaney, its heritage character, the potential of its public spaces, the Market Square and its community spirit.

At the core of the TCF Plan is the future Vision for Tullow. This TCF Plan envisions an attractive, prosperous, vibrant and connected Town Centre for its residents, those who work in Tullow and those who visit the town. It is essential that this TCF Plan is for 'people'.

## Town Centre First

### A Policy Approach for Irish Towns



## Town Centre First Plan - Core Elements

As illustrated opposite, the TCF Plan structure for Tullow incorporates the core elements as set out within the Town Centre First Policy:

- Collaboration and Communication.
- Understanding the Place (Analysis and Appraisal).
- Defining the Place (Objectives and Actions).
- Enabling the Place.

<sup>4</sup> Town Centre First - A Policy Approach for Irish Towns, pg. 3

## Alignment with Core Elements of the Town Centre First Policy

### Core Element 1:

#### Collaboration & Communication

### Tullow TCF Plan:

The Town Centre First Plan for Tullow has undertaken a collaborative process which has included input from and engagement with, *inter alia*, Town Team, local residents, business owners, Elected Members and Carlow County Council. The collaborative process and engagement with local stakeholders and Tullow's community has been central to the preparation of the TCF Plan. Chapter 2 of the Plan provides further details regarding the overall process of public engagement.

### Core Element 2:

#### Understanding The Place (Analysis & Appraisal)

### Tullow TCF Plan:

The Baseline Report, which is provided at Appendix I of this TCF Plan, provides detailed information regarding the socio-economic, urban, transportation and placemaking analysis of Tullow that has been undertaken by the TCF Plan team. This analytical work has provided the TCF Plan team with a core understanding of the structure and functions of Tullow and also its strengths and challenges. Local knowledge and information provided by the community in Tullow has also been important in understanding the place.

### Core Element 3:

#### Defining The Place (Objectives & Actions)

### Tullow TCF Plan:

Four high level themes have been prepared for Tullow that are founded in the analytical work undertaken and which are considered to have future importance for the Town Centre (Chapter 3). Themes presented are Environment, Economy, Movement and Urban Structure. Objectives and outcomes are presented in relation to each theme and how same have alignment with the Town Centre First Policy.

### Core Element 4:

#### Enabling The Place

### Tullow TCF Plan:

Chapters 4 and 5 of the TCF Plan provide details in respect of the proposed project interventions for Tullow and a pathway for the delivery and implementation of such interventions. Case studies are presented regarding similar projects nationwide which illustrate how interventions can deliver positive outcomes for Town Centres. Chapter 5 provides implementation details regarding project costs, timelines, phasing, actors while also highlighting selected catalyst projects for Tullow.

1

# Strategic Approach

# Strategic Approach

The Town Centre First Plan is an integrated regeneration plan that addresses Tullow's economy, its environment and its society. The TCF Plan for Tullow has adopted a strategic approach in formulating a framework for the sustainable regeneration of the town over the long term that embraces circularity through place-based solutions.

## Circularity

For cities, towns and villages across Ireland, embracing 'circularity' represents an opportunity to rethink and repurpose how settlements are spatially arranged; what their key functions are; how residents move around; and how cities, towns and villages can be great places to live, work and visit.

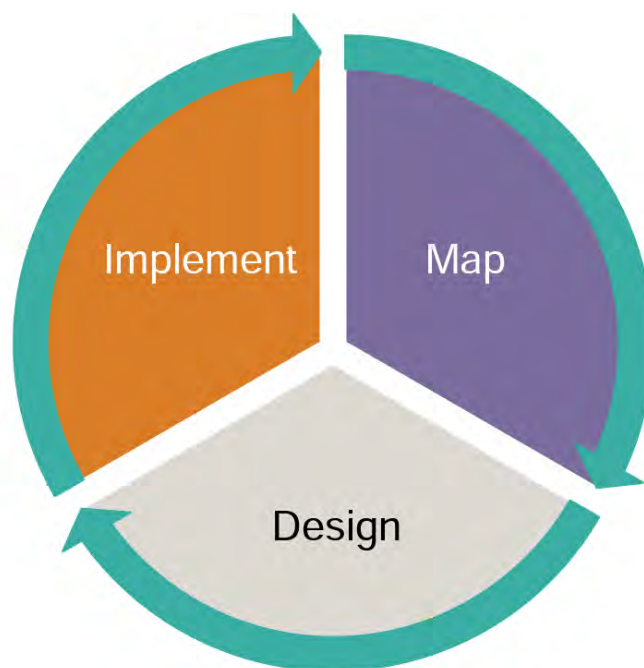
Circularity is a model that can achieve sustainable growth for Tullow over the long term period. It is a model that ensures key functions of the town are inter-related and connected such as the built environment, mobility, and the economy, for instance. This will be important regarding the project interventions that are brought forward.

The strategic approach for Tullow is focused on three key elements to deliver place-based solutions and which comprise:

- 1. Map:** Establishing a critical understanding of Tullow's local context and unique urban characteristics. Identifying the town's strengths and its challenges. Analysing the policy framework that exists and ensuring relevant stakeholders are engaged.
- 2. Design:** Undertaking a process of researching, analysing and evaluating in order to prioritise a framework of key Town Centre

interventions in Tullow that are appropriately informed by the 'Map' stage.

- 3. Implement:** Identifying and sourcing the appropriate funding streams from national, regional and local agencies in order to deliver place-based solutions that will positively enhance the vibrancy, appearance, liveability and resilience of Tullow Town Centre. Establishing a plan for project implementation.



Our cities, towns and villages have an important role to play in making the circular transition happen, as they are at the centre of key decisions determining economic growth, social, well-being and environmental benefits.

At the heart of the concept of circularity is 'sustainability' that will play a fundamental role in the rejuvenation of Tullow Town Centre - for example, facilitating sustainable movement, provision of a sustainable urban structure, and the sustainable use of land and buildings.

## Strengths and Challenges

Gaining an understanding of Tullow's urban structure and functions has allowed its key strengths and challenges to be identified. The engagement carried out with Tullow's local community and stakeholders has provided valuable insight. This is a key step in the TCF Plan process as it creates a foundation from which the themes and project interventions can be constructed.

## Challenges

### Vehicular Movements

Daily movement of large vehicles such as HGVs and tractors has a detrimental impact on the user experience of the Market Square.

### Appearance of Buildings

Buildings in poor condition present a negative image of the Town Centre and do not make any contribute to the vibrancy of Tullow.

### Active Travel Infrastructure

Upgrade of the active travel network in order to encourage more people to walk and cycle and reduce car dependency.

### Diversity of Uses

A greater range of uses in order to create a resilient local economy over the long term.

### Compact Growth

Future development must utilise infill and brownfield land to promote a sustainable and compact urban form.

### Quality of Public Realm

The public realm provides the setting for Tullow, including all the public spaces that people use everyday. Its quality can be enhanced as high quality spaces/places encourage social interaction and vibrancy.

# 4,673

Tullow's population  
(2016 Census)



# c.43%

of Tullow's  
population aged  
29 or under



# c.23%

of journeys made  
by residents used  
sustainable modes  
of transport



# 20 mins

majority of Tullow's  
population live  
within a 20 minute  
walk of the Town  
Centre



# 10 mins

all of Tullow's  
population live  
within a 10 minute  
cycle of the Town  
Centre



## Strengths

### District Town

Tullow is designated as a 'District Town' in County Carlow which are defined as having a strong employment and service base serving surrounding areas. Having a 'District Town' designation provides Tullow with a platform for future growth and development.

### Location

Tullow has a strategic location within the county. The town is situated less than 50km from Kilkenny to the south west and approximately 16km south east of Carlow Town.

### Heritage Value

The town has a valuable built heritage character which is illustrated by the numerous historic buildings and Protected Structures present in Tullow. These buildings make a positive contribution to the townscape.

### The Market Square

Tullow benefits from the presence of The Market Square which is a focal point and meeting place within the town. A statue of Father John Murphy, one of the leaders of the 1798 Rebellion, is located within The Market Square. As set out within this TCF Plan, The Market Square has the potential to become a high quality, people-dominated civic space.

### River Slaney

The river provides Tullow with a key piece of blue infrastructure which offers the potential for significant amenity and recreation improvements for residents and visitors.

### Population Growth

Tullow experienced a high level of population growth between the Census years of 2011 and 2016 at c.18% which is a significant uplift in residents. This uplift in population provides a critical mass of people in the town that can generate economic activity and vibrancy.

### Community Spirit

The public engagement process highlighted the positive community spirit that is evident in Tullow. As mentioned, the TCF Plan for Tullow is one that places people at its core and one that seeks to improve the quality of life for Tullow's local community.



## Plan Framework

The strategic approach comprising the elements of 'Map-Design-Implement', as set out, supports and informs the TCF Plan Framework as illustrated opposite.

The TCF Plan has four primary components:

1. **Vision**
2. **Themes**
3. **Project Interventions**
4. **Implementation & Delivery Plan**

The following chapters of the TCF Plan will address each of the components in further detail.

## Strategic Approach - Planning Policy Context

The strategic approach in formulating the Town Centre First Plan will ensure alignment with the national, regional and local planning policy framework.

The policy references, summarised in Table 1.1 overleaf, are associated with the individual TCF Plan themes which are set out in further detail in Chapter 3. The TCF Plan will also align with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (as illustrated below).

## Sustainable Development

This TCF Plan for Tullow is brought forward in alignment with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals as illustrated below.



UN Sustainable Development Goals



### 1. Vision

The Vision for Tullow is to create an attractive, prosperous, vibrant and connected Town Centre where people will want to be, to live, to work, to socialise and to visit. Through an understanding of Tullow's urban structure and functions, key interventions have been identified that seek to deliver long term economic, social and environmental benefits with the aim of improving the quality of life and opportunity within the town.

MAP

### 2. Themes

From the baseline analysis of Tullow, key TCF Plan themes have emerged which focus on: (i) Environment (ii) Economy (iii) Movement and (iv) Urban Structure.

DESIGN

### 3. Project Interventions

Following on from establishing the TCF Plan themes, project areas have been identified that will support and be aligned to the themes. Project areas comprise the following: (i) Main Street (ii) Backlands and Opportunity Sites (iii) Linkages & Wayfinding (iv) The River and (v) Biodiversity.

IMPLEMENT

### 4. Implementation & Delivery Plan

The final chapter of the TCF Plan will address how the identified projects and interventions can be delivered on the ground in Tullow. Matters such as, *inter alia*, project phasing, costs, and timeframes are examined.

Table 1.1 Summary of National, Regional and Local Planning Context

Theme	National Policy Context	
<b>Environment</b>	<p><b>National Planning Framework</b> National Policy Objectives 4 &amp; 6 of the NPF.</p> <p><b>Town Centre First - A Policy Approach for Irish Towns</b> TCF policy recognises that successful places:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are characterised by an attractive public realm that is designed to invite people to meet, mingle and dwell.</li> <li>• Provide a mix of housing typologies and tenures to cater for diverse communities in terms of age, income and mobility.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for the amenity, health and well-being of residents, workers and visitors.</li> </ul> <p><b>Our Rural Future - Rural Development Policy 2021 - 2025</b> Policy Measures 36, 48 and 57 of Our Rural Future.</p>	
<b>Economy</b>	<p><b>National Planning Framework</b> National Policy Objectives 6 , 15 &amp; 16 of the NPF.</p> <p><b>Town Centre First - A Policy Approach for Irish Towns</b> Action 17 &amp; Experience-led Retail.</p> <p><b>Our Rural Future - Rural Development Policy 2021 - 2025</b> Policy Measures 26, 46 and 68 of Our Rural Future.</p>	
<b>Movement</b>	<p><b>National Planning Framework</b> National Policy Objectives 27 &amp; 64 of the NPF.</p> <p><b>Town Centre First - A Policy Approach for Irish Towns</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful town centres are well connected and accessible to sustainable modes of transport.</li> </ul> <p><b>Our Rural Future - Rural Development Policy 2021 - 2025</b> Policy Measures 36 and 102 of Our Rural Future.</p>	
<b>Urban Structure</b>	<p><b>National Planning Framework</b> National Policy Objectives 4 &amp; 6 of the NPF:</p> <p><b>Town Centre First - A Policy Approach for Irish Towns</b> TCF policy recognises that successful places:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are characterised by an attractive public realm that is designed to invite people to meet, mingle and dwell.</li> </ul> <p><b>Our Rural Future - Rural Development Policy 2021 - 2025</b> Policy Measures 46, 48 and 57 of Our Rural Future.</p>	

Regional Policy Context	Local Policy Context
<p><b>Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region 2031</b></p> <p>Regional Strategic Outcomes 1 &amp; 8 of the RSES.</p>	<p><b>Tullow Local Area Plan 2017-2023</b></p> <p>Housing and Sustainable Neighbourhoods Policy HP24.</p> <p>Land Use and Function LU6, LU8, LU9.</p> <p>Streets and Movement Policies SM4.</p> <p>Public Spaces and Public Realm Policies PR1, PR4.</p> <p>Smarter Travel Policies TP1, TP3.</p> <p>Community Facilities Policies CF1, CF2, CF6.</p> <p>Sports, Recreation and Play Policies SP1.</p> <p>Recreational Potential of the River Slaney Policies RC1, RC2, RC3.</p> <p>Archaeological Heritage Policies HR1, HR4.</p> <p>Cultural Heritage Policy HR6.</p> <p>Green Infrastructure Policy HR14.</p> <p>Tourism Policies TP1, TP4, TP5, TP6.</p>
<p><b>Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region 2031</b></p> <p>Regional Strategic Outcomes 1 &amp; 8 of the RSES.</p>	<p><b>Tullow Local Area Plan 2017-2023</b></p> <p>Economic Policies EC15, EC18, EC20, EC22, EC26, EC27, EC29.</p> <p>Land Use and Function LU6.</p> <p>Streets and Movement Policies SM2.</p> <p>Community Facilities Policies CF1, CF2.</p> <p>Tourism Policies TP1, TP5, TP6.</p>
<p><b>Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region 2031</b></p> <p>Regional Strategic Outcomes 2 &amp; 4 of the RSES.</p>	<p><b>Tullow Local Area Plan 2017-2023</b></p> <p>Town Centre, Landscape and Public Realm Policies CA1</p> <p>Land Use and Function LU2, LU6, LU11.</p> <p>Streets and Movement Policies SM3, SM4, SM5</p> <p>Public Spaces and Public Realm Policies PR4</p> <p>Smarter Travel Policies TP1, TP3,</p> <p>Transport Infrastructure Policy TP6</p> <p>Community Facilities Policies CF2</p> <p>Sports, Recreation and Play Policies SP1</p> <p>Recreational Potential of the River Slaney Policies RC1</p> <p>Tourism Policies TP1, TP5</p>
<p><b>Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region 2031</b></p> <p>Regional Strategic Outcomes 1, 7 &amp; 8 of the RSES.</p>	<p><b>Tullow Local Area Plan 2017-2023</b></p> <p>Economic Policies EC22, EC25, EC27, EC28, EC29.</p> <p>Town Centre, Landscape and Public Realm Policies CA1.</p> <p>Streets and Movement Policies SM1, SM2, SM5.</p> <p>Public Spaces and Public Realm Policies PR1.</p> <p>Community Facilities Policy CF2.</p> <p>Archaeological Heritage Policies HR4.</p> <p>Tourism Policies TP1, TP2, TP6.</p>

# 2

## A Vision for Tullow

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**The Vision for Tullow is to create an attractive, prosperous, vibrant and connected Town Centre where people will want to be, to live, to work, to socialise and to visit. Through an understanding of Tullow's urban structure and functions, key interventions have been identified that seek to deliver long term economic, social and environmental benefits with the aim of improving the quality of life and opportunity within the town.**



The Irish Bar

Sráid na hEaglaise  
CHURCH STREET

The Irish Bar on Church Street

## Informing the Vision

The Vision for Tullow is to create an attractive, prosperous, vibrant and connected Town Centre where people will want to be, to live, to work, to socialise and to visit.

Through an understanding of Tullow's urban structure and functions, key interventions have been identified that seek to deliver long term economic, social and environmental benefits with the aim of improving the quality of life and opportunity within the town.

The Vision has been informed through gaining an understanding of the place and a number of key elements, as illustrated below, that will play an important role in the future regeneration of Tullow as contained within the Town Centre First Plan.



## Collaborative Process to inform the Vision

A fundamental component in the development of a Town Centre First Plan for Tullow has been engagement with local residents, stakeholders, business owners etc, who have provided feedback, comments, local knowledge and insight that has been invaluable to the TCF Plan team.

The participation by the community in Tullow has helped to gain an understanding of the town and positively inform and shape the Town Centre First Plan.

## Public Engagement

Carlow County Council have played an active role in promoting awareness of the Town Centre First Plan for Tullow. The images below and overleaf provide examples of social media posts at different stages of the public consultation process which advised of public workshops and encouraged members of the public to share their thoughts and views on the TCF Plan through online surveys.



## Collaboration & Consultation Timeline



### TCF Plan Commencement

The initial Town Centre First Plan project kick off meeting was held in June 2022 with Carlow County Council, the Town Regeneration Officer (TRO) and the TCF Plan team. At this stage, the Plan team also commenced their baseline analysis work with site visits to Tullow. The baseline work focused on the town centre's urban design and public realm, movement and planning characteristics.



### Public Consultation Workshop 1 October 2022

The first public consultation workshop was held on 26th October 2022. The TCF Plan team met with members of the public, Town Team and TRO and exhibited their baseline analysis information under the following subject areas:

- Urban Design & Public Realm
- Movement & Transport
- Planning & Environment

An online survey was facilitated on the Carlow County Council website to allow members of the local community who were not able to attend the workshop to also share their thoughts and views on the TCF Plan to date.



CCC social media post re: first TCF Plan public survey





**Public Consultation  
Workshop 2  
November 2022**



Following on from the initial Public Consultation Workshop, the TCF Plan team met with members of the Tullow community on 29th November 2022 and presented the next stage of their TCF Plan work that comprised project theme areas for the Town Centre encompassing:

- Environment
- Economy
- Movement
- Urban Structure

Potential project interventions were also presented for each of the theme areas and comments sought regarding same. An online survey was also made available to allow those who were not able to attend to share their views.



CCC social media post re: second TCF Plan public survey



**Public Consultation of  
TCF Plan  
May 2023**

Tullow Town Centre First Plan goes on public display. TCF Plan has been prepared in accordance with the analytical work undertaken for the baseline assessment, and the ideas, comments, and local knowledge received at the public consultation events from members of the local community in Tullow.

Public Consultation Workshop - 26th October 2022



Public Consultation Workshop - 29th November 2022



## A Collaborative Process to inform the Vision - A sample of comments provided by the local community

### Environment

- The Market Square is a nice feature with upgrade potential such as the creation of outdoor dining areas.
- The Market Square feels like a car park.
- Shopfront design / signage could be better.
- Vacant buildings affects visual aspect of the town.
- Buildings should retain traditional appearance.
- Develop natural amenities around the River Slaney.
- Asset being situated on River Slaney.
- Increased planting.
- Better lighting.

**TCF Plan Response:** The Market Square is a central project for the Tullow TCF Plan, in terms of its visual and environmental quality, use and location in the Town Centre. Projects have also been identified around the River Slaney which is an under-utilised natural resource. Amenity areas are also key in improving Tullow's urban environment.

### Economy

- Shops and the Square are a strength.
- Good level of services, businesses and education.
- Vacancy on Main Street.
- Re-use of former Bank of Ireland as a remote working hub / tourism centre, business uses.
- Restore Courthouse - could be a tourist attraction for Tullow.
- Range of services needed (for e.g. too many hairdressers and takeaways).
- High business costs.
- Loyalty scheme to promote the town.
- Re-use vacant buildings in the Square for SMEs.

**TCF Plan Response:** A key objective for Tullow's economy is restoring vibrancy and vitality to the Town Centre - this is critical to regenerating the Town Centre. Tullow's Town Centre should be characterised by a diverse range of uses and functions that will underpin its future economic resilience. The other themes also feed into the local economy.

## Movement

- Reconfigure The Market Square parking.
- Pedestrian linkages within town centre could be enhanced.
- Traffic disruption stemming from the bridge.
- Traffic flow through the town (particularly morning times).
- Second bridge would be very beneficial.
- Parking on footpaths.
- Parking restrictions outside the riverbank.
- Create pedestrian zone in town centre.
- Cycling can be unsafe.

**TCF Plan Response:** Additional cycle and pedestrian connections over the River Slaney have been assessed as providing increased future connectivity with the Town Centre. Theme objectives include creating a legible, accessible and connected Town Centre and enhancing the existing active travel infrastructure in Tullow.

## Urban Structure

- Great buildings in Tullow (e.g. the former Bank of Ireland building).
- Approach roads to Town Centre have good potential / approaches need to be improved.
- Traffic disruption stemming from the bridge.
- Location of primary schools in Tullow causes additional traffic movements.
- Need to provide services when planning development (for e.g. water, transport, education, community uses, medical).
- Need to create spaces for people to meet.
- Heritage and history associated with Tullow is a strength.

**TCF Plan Response:** The re-imagination of The Market Square seeks to bring forward increased public space for residents, workers and visitors, creating areas to meet, socialise etc. Projects also seek to relocate some parking to other more appropriate locations in the Town Centre. Objectives include promoting the regeneration and re-use of vacant buildings.

3

# Themes

# Themes

## Overview

This chapter of the TCF Plan provides details regarding the four identified themes as summarised below. Additional information in respect of each theme in terms of, *inter alia*, their relevance and importance to Tullow, their associated objectives and outcomes, and how they align with the Town Centre First Policy is provided further within the chapter.

Theme objectives are particularly important as they provide an overarching framework for addressing the individual challenges facing the Town Centre and delivering the Vision. They also provide a foundation for the preparation of project interventions that will play a key role in the future Town Centre. Details of the selected project interventions are provided in Chapter 4 of this TCF Plan.



### Environment

The environmental quality of the Town Centre is important in creating a place where people will want to be/ work / visit, in attracting investment and improving the quality of life for Tullow's residents.



### Economy

The economy has a direct impact on where people live, where people work and how people move around. A successful Town Centre is one that is underpinned by a vibrant and resilient local economy.



### Movement

There is a high reliance on the private car in Tullow which is unsustainable over the long term. Promoting the use of sustainable modes of transport is a key issue, including making Tullow Town Centre more accessible by walking and cycling.



### Urban Structure

The urban structure of Tullow is important in understanding how people access local services, move around and visit different parts of the Town Centre – this is critical for the vitality and vibrancy of the future Town Centre.

# Theme 1: Environment

The Town Centre First Plan for Tullow seeks to create a sustainable and high quality urban environment within which a diverse and rich mix of land uses, amenities and facilities can be located.

As part of this, the environmental quality of the Town Centre is key in creating a place where people will want to live, work, and visit, for attracting investment and improving the quality of life for Tullow's residents.

However, there are challenges for Tullow's environment to address such as, but not limited to, the physical condition and appearance of buildings (particularly in prominent/key locations), a lack of soft

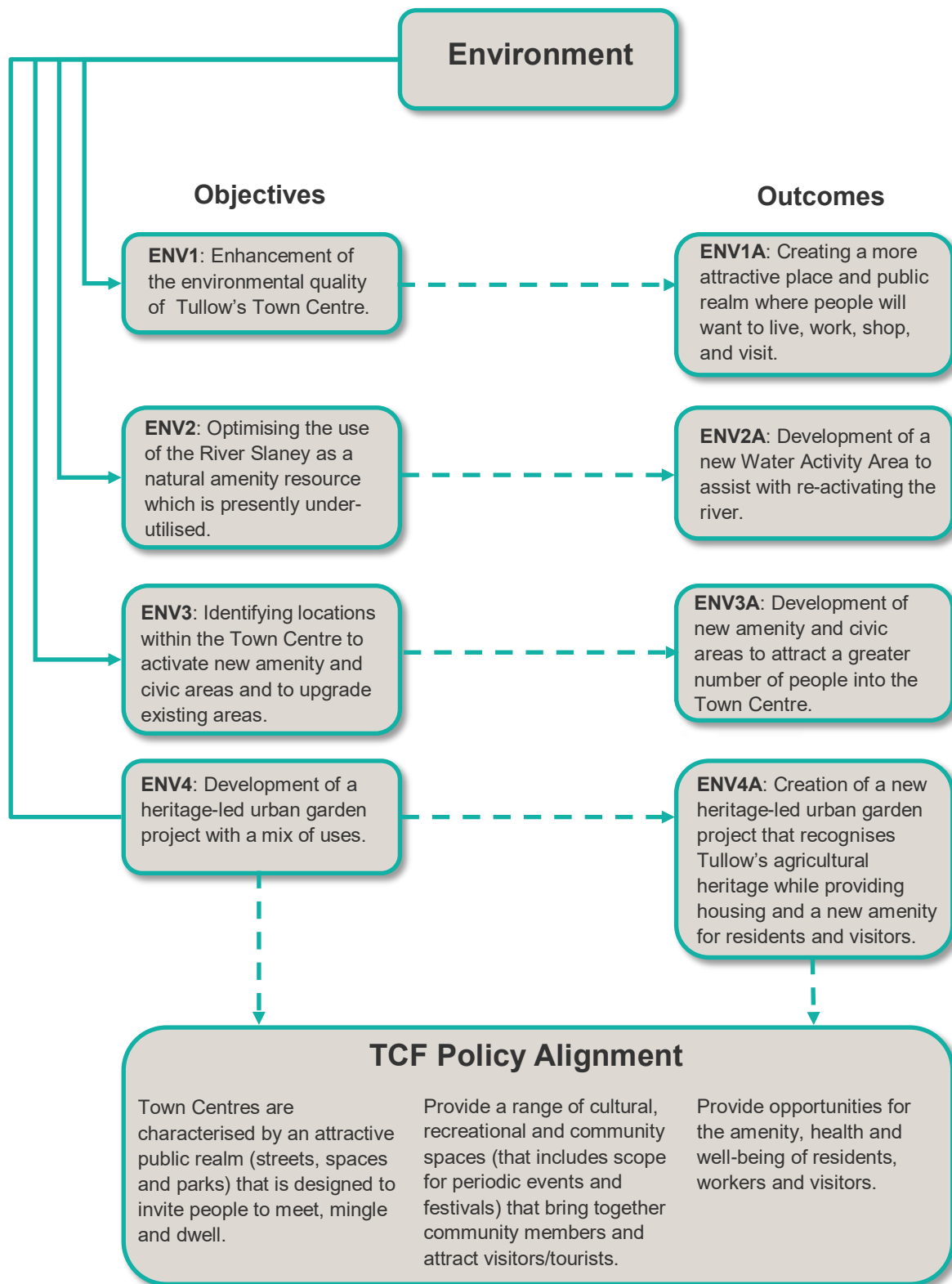
landscaping and planting, open space and civic amenity areas that fail to encourage social interaction, lack of street furniture and limited pedestrian and cycling infrastructure that in turn promotes private car use.

These environmental factors play a role in whether people choose to live in, work or visit the Town Centre. Objectives for this theme include enhancement of Town Centre environmental quality, promotion of the River Slaney, activation of new amenity and civic areas and development of a heritage garden project. Objectives have sought to include both the natural and urban environments, as each have a complementary role to play in the quality of the future Town Centre.



View of jetty area, River Slaney and Tullow Bridge





## Theme 2: Economy

The economy has a direct impact on where people live, where people work and how people move around. A successful Town Centre is one that is underpinned by a vibrant and resilient local economy.

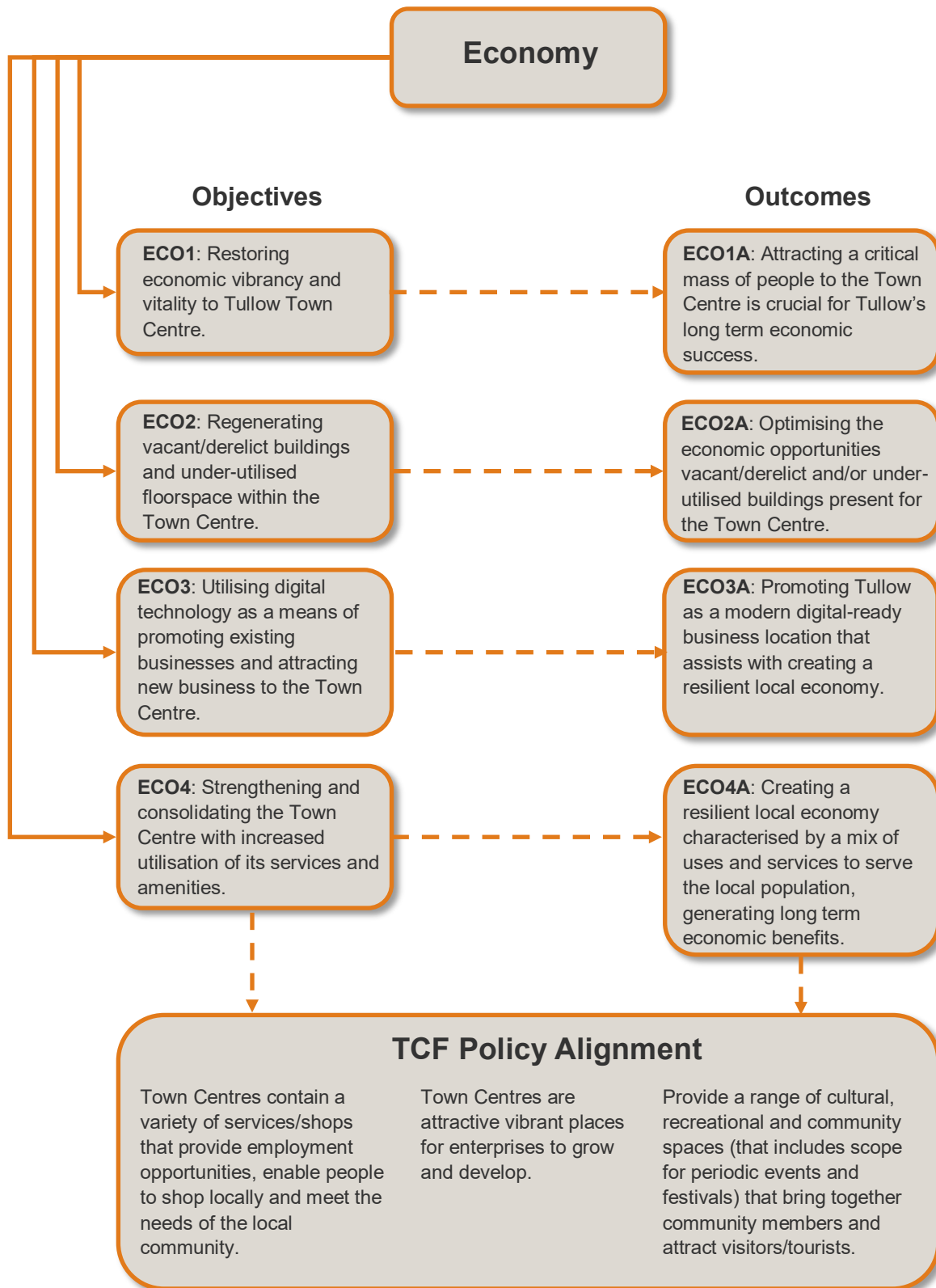
The rejuvenation of Tullow Town Centre, through the interventions outlined in the TCF Plan, will create an economic landscape where local businesses can operate successfully, provide services and create employment opportunities for the local population. Placemaking is also a considered economic factor, as undertaking the right placemaking initiatives will create attractive spaces and places for people to live, work and spend time in.

As such, it is important for Tullow to create the optimal conditions for the local economy to thrive. To this end, the vitality and vibrancy of the Town Centre is pivotal for Tullow over the long term. Therefore, the 'economy' has been identified as representing a key theme as brought forward within the Town Centre First Plan.

Economic objectives for Tullow Town Centre include restoration of economic vibrancy and vitality, regeneration of vacant and derelict buildings, promoting the application of digital technologies for business and strengthening and consolidating the Town Centre.



Retail offer on The Market Square



## Theme 3: Movement

How people move around and the modes they use to do so is important. Promoting sustainable modes of travel has advantages such as reducing congestion, decreasing journey times, contributing to a cleaner environment and assisting with health and well-being. Census 2016 data reveals that c.65% of journeys to work, school or college made by Tullow residents were undertaken by private car (car driver and car passenger).

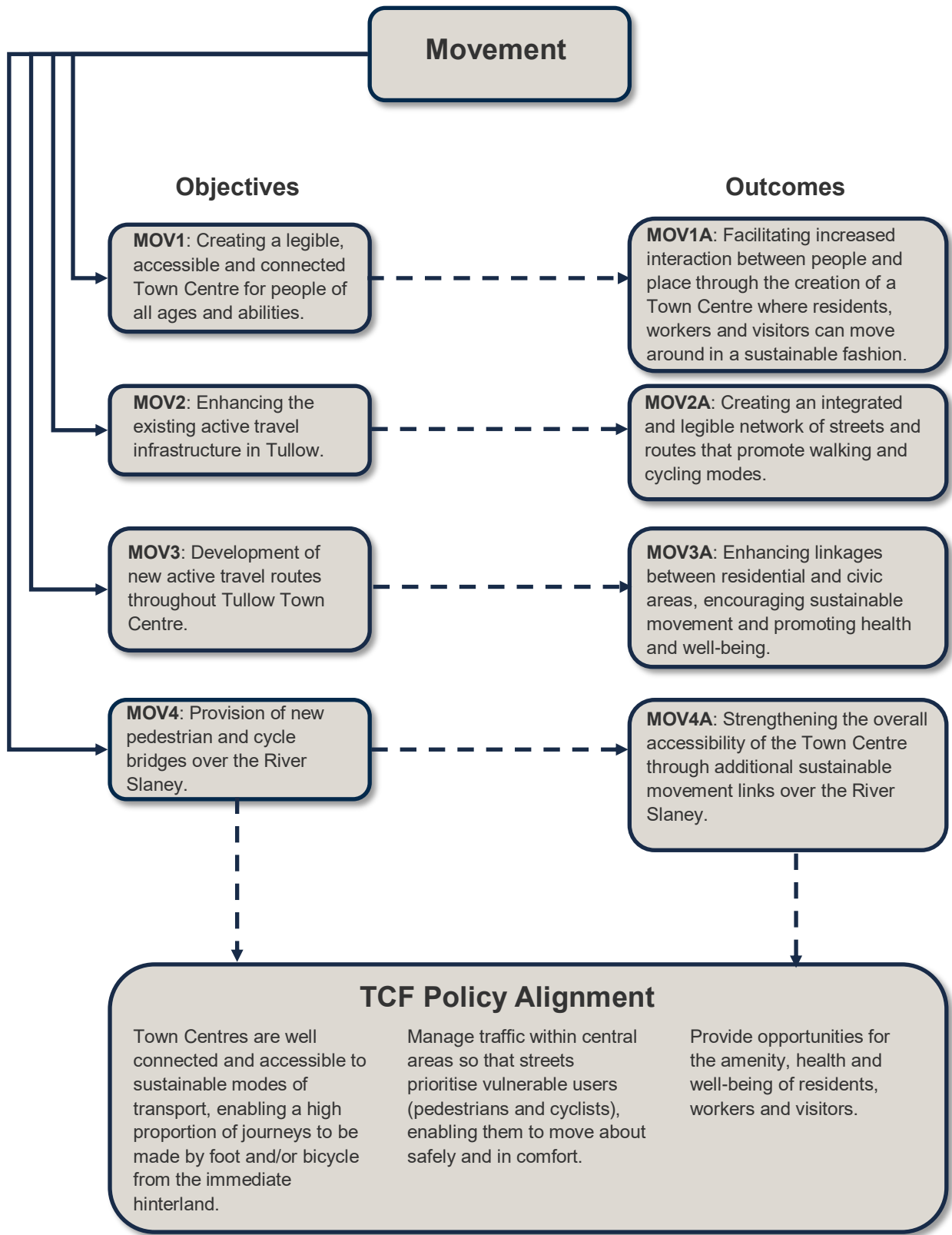
The Census figure demonstrates the reliance on the private car by Tullow residents which is unsustainable long term. The TCF Plan will address movement and transportation related matters including promoting active travel mobility, improving legibility, enhancing the accessibility and connectivity of the Town Centre, and the usability of the street network in Tullow.

A primary consideration regarding such matters will be to ensure that Tullow Town Centre is accessible to all citizens regardless of age or ability.

Reducing the high volume of vehicles that move through the Town Centre daily is a key matter for Tullow. Principally, there is a need to 'create room' for the Town Centre as a welcoming space, and similarly the experience of The Market Square won't be fully realised if the status quo is maintained. This matter is examined in further detail overleaf. Movement objectives for Tullow include the creation of a legible, accessible and connected Town Centre for persons of all ages and abilities, enhancement of active travel infrastructure, development of new active travel routes and provision of new pedestrian and cycle bridges and linkages.



Pedestrian bridge over River Slaney onto Tullow Street



## Creating Room for the Town Centre

The high volume of traffic passing through Tullow Town Centre, particularly HGV and agricultural vehicles, gives rise to a number of associated issues including citizen safety, air and noise pollution, impedence to active modes and economic impacts due to reliability and journey time impacts.

The Tullow Local Area Plan (LAP) 2017-2023 identifies a key objective to investigate the feasibility of providing the Tullow Relief Road. The LAP states that this is necessary to relieve HGV congestion on the main thoroughfare providing for a significantly improved quality environment. The LAP includes an indicative Relief Road alignment on the Land Use Zoning Map, linking Bunclody Road (N81), Rathoe Road, Carlow Road (R725), Castledermot Road (R418), Ballymurphy Road, Dublin Road (N81) and Shillelagh Road.

### New Road

The TCF Plan for Tullow considers that the delivery of a section of the Tullow Relief Road would provide a new vehicle connection from the N81 Bunclody Route to the R418 Castledermot Road along the line indicated on the LAP and would be advantageous in reducing traffic numbers from the bridge area of the Town Centre. A reduction in the number of vehicles passing in the immediate area of the bridge would have a positive placemaking outcome for The Market Square by reducing traffic turning movements in the vicinity of the bridge. A similar proposal has been brought forward in Clonakilty, Co. Cork and details are provided opposite showing the benefits the town has enjoyed.

## Movement Case Study - Clonakilty, Co. Cork

Clonakilty relief road scheme has enabled the town centre to develop a comprehensive Urban Design Masterplan which has provided the town with an enhanced environment that promotes walking and cycling and one that is accessible, safe and inclusive.

Following the implementation of this project, residents have reported a stronger sense of place, property prices have risen and previously vacant buildings are now occupied. This has delivered new urban vibrancy and a sense of community. The design concept is based on the reduction of street clutter and the provision of wider pedestrian zones including mini-squares at strategic locations.

The Main Street in Clonakilty was the winner of the RIAI Best Place in Ireland in 2017. At the core of the scheme success was the public participation-led approach to the urban planning design process.

Project benefits include:

- Realignment and narrowing of vehicular carriageways.
- Increased footpath widths.
- Rationalisation of on-street car parking.
- Pocket spaces in the Town Centre.
- Ashe Square acting as a focal point.
- Improved pedestrian crossing facilities.
- New tree planting and street furniture.



Vehicles moving through Tullow Town Centre

## Theme 4: Urban Structure

Urban structure refers to the spatial arrangement of buildings, streets and spaces in our towns and villages, and takes into consideration the built and natural heritage, public realm, and open space areas for instance. The relationships of these matters are important in understanding how people in Tullow access local services, move around and visit different parts of the Town Centre.

The existing urban structure of Tullow may be restricting its overall success, particularly economically, in terms of why residents, visitors etc are not visiting the Town Centre more often to access local services.

The urban structure of Tullow originates from Anglo-Norman times as one of five settlements in County Carlow from that period. Much of the present layout around The Market Square originates from the 16th and 17th centuries. The first stone bridge across the River Slaney was constructed in 1767.

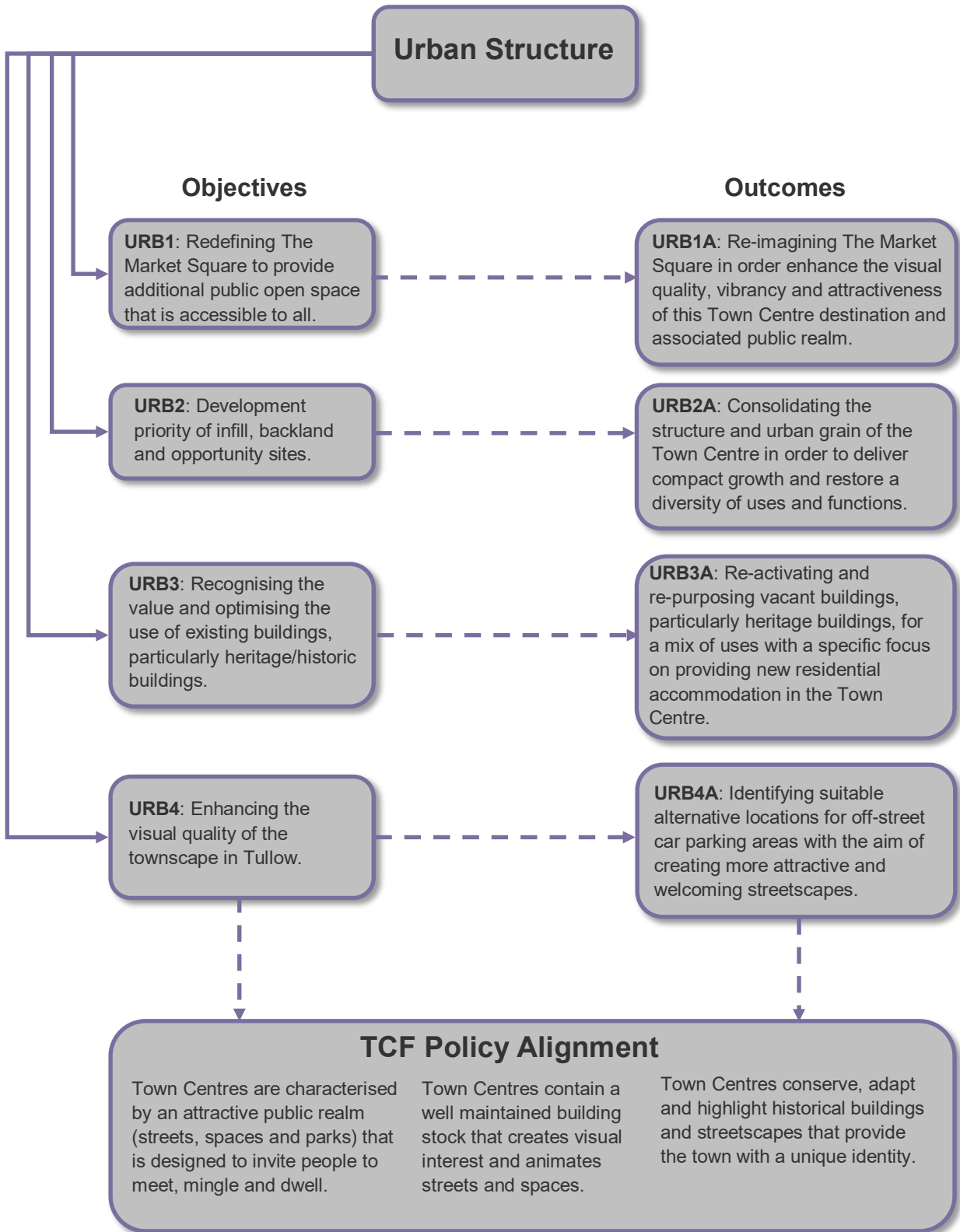
In recent times, riverside development has come forward with industry moving to the edge of town.

The project interventions set out within this TCF Plan seek to appropriately shape and modify the existing urban structure of Tullow over the long term. Urban structure objectives include the re-imagining of The Market Square. The Market Square is the focal point in Tullow and it needs to be rejuvenated as the central destination in the Town Centre. Other theme objectives include upgrading the visual quality of the streetscape, development priority of infill, backland and opportunity sites to encourage compact growth, recognising the value of heritage buildings and promoting their re-activation as a means of enhancing the overall townscape quality of Tullow.




Aerial view of Tullow Town Centre





# Theme Objectives and Vision Inputs Matrix

The matrix table below provides a summary overview of how the various theme objectives are related with the Vision inputs, illustrating how such objectives will feed directly into achieving the desired Vision for the Town Centre in Tullow.

		Vision Input					
		Connectivity	Regeneration	Economic Resilience	Sustainable Movement	Placemaking	Quality of Life
 Vision Input aligns with Theme Objective	Theme						
	Theme Objective						
<b>ENV1:</b> Enhancement of the environmental quality of Tullow's Town Centre.							
<b>ENV2:</b> Optimising the use of the River Slaney as a natural amenity resource which is presently under-utilised.							
<b>ENV3:</b> Identifying locations within the Town Centre to activate new amenity and civic areas and to upgrade existing areas.							
<b>ENV4:</b> Development of a heritage-led urban garden project with a mix of uses.							
<b>ECO1:</b> Restoring economic vibrancy and vitality to Tullow's Town Centre.							
<b>ECO2:</b> Regenerating vacant/derelict buildings and under-utilised floorspace within the Town Centre.							
<b>ECO3:</b> Utilising digital technology as a means of promoting existing businesses and attracting new business to the Town Centre.							
<b>ECO4:</b> Strengthening and consolidating the Town Centre with increased utilisation of its services and amenities.							
<b>MOV1:</b> Creating a legible, accessible and connected Town Centre for people of all ages and abilities.							
<b>MOV2:</b> Enhancing the existing active travel infrastructure in Tullow.							
<b>MOV3:</b> Development of new active travel routes throughout Tullow Town Centre.							
<b>MOV4:</b> Provision of new pedestrian and cycle bridges over the River Slaney.							
<b>URB1:</b> Redefining The Market Square to provide additional public open space that is accessible to all.							
<b>URB2:</b> Development priority of infill, backland and opportunity sites.							
<b>URB3:</b> Recognising the value and optimising the use of existing buildings, particularly heritage/historic buildings.							
<b>URB4:</b> Enhancing the visual quality of the townscape in Tullow.							



Pedestrian pathway leading to Town Park

4

# Project Interventions

# Project Interventions

The identification of projects and interventions for the Town Centre follows a structured approach whereby such projects/interventions are directly related to the TCF Plan themes and wider project areas, as illustrated in the diagram below.

As a result of the urban analysis and research undertaken to gain an understanding of Tullow, a number of key project areas have emerged which comprise the following:

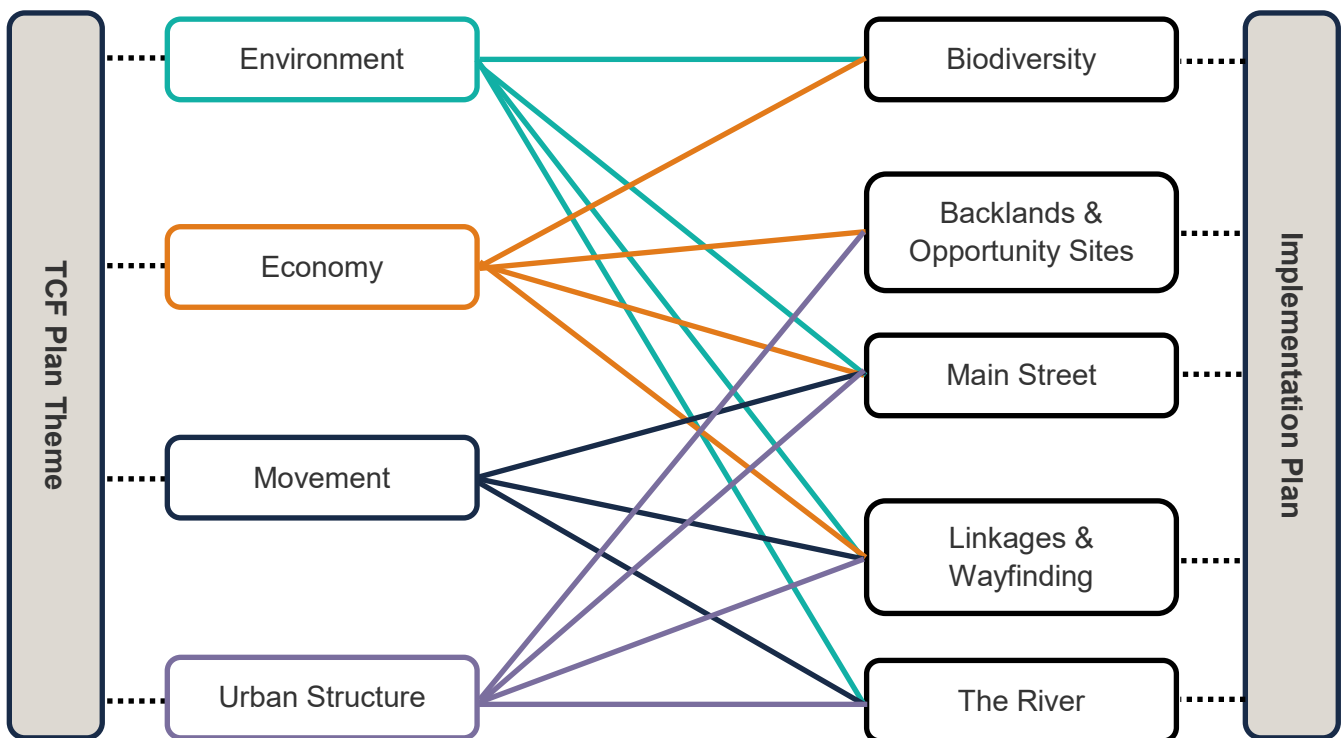
- **Biodiversity**
- **Backlands & Opportunity Sites**
- **Main Street**
- **Linkages & Wayfinding**
- **The River**

Within each defined project area are the various individual projects which are outlined in greater detail within this chapter of the TCF Plan.

Case study examples of relevant projects are also provided in order to demonstrate how such projects can successfully contribute to the process of urban regeneration and Town Centre rejuvenation.

The Tullow TCF Plan is a non-statutory document. For this reason, any future development proposals or projects arising from the TCF Plan will be subject to (a) compliance with all relevant planning and environmental criteria, including Appropriate Assessment, and compliance with the policies, objectives and related provisions of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 and the Tullow Local Area Plan 2017-2023 (and any amended or updated versions of these development plans), and to (b) normal statutory processes consent procedures as required.

Any future statutory development plans which incorporate the TCF Plan will be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).



# Project Intervention Overview



**The Market Square** **1**



**Courthouse Building** **2**



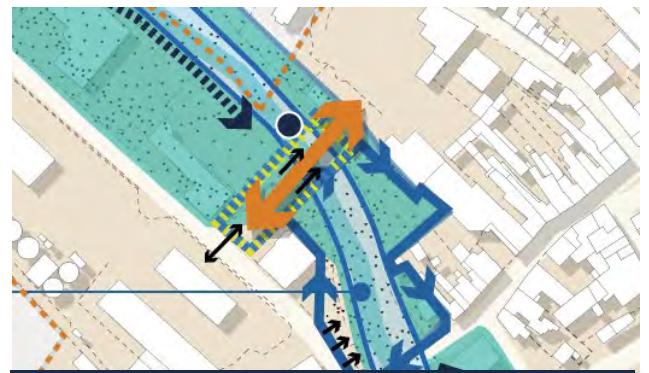
**Heritage Gardens & Exemplar Housing** **3**



**Biodiversity Walking Loops** **4**



**River Walk** **5**



**Riverfront Amenity Areas** **6**



**Water Activity Area** **7**



**Pedestrian & Cycle Bridges** **8**



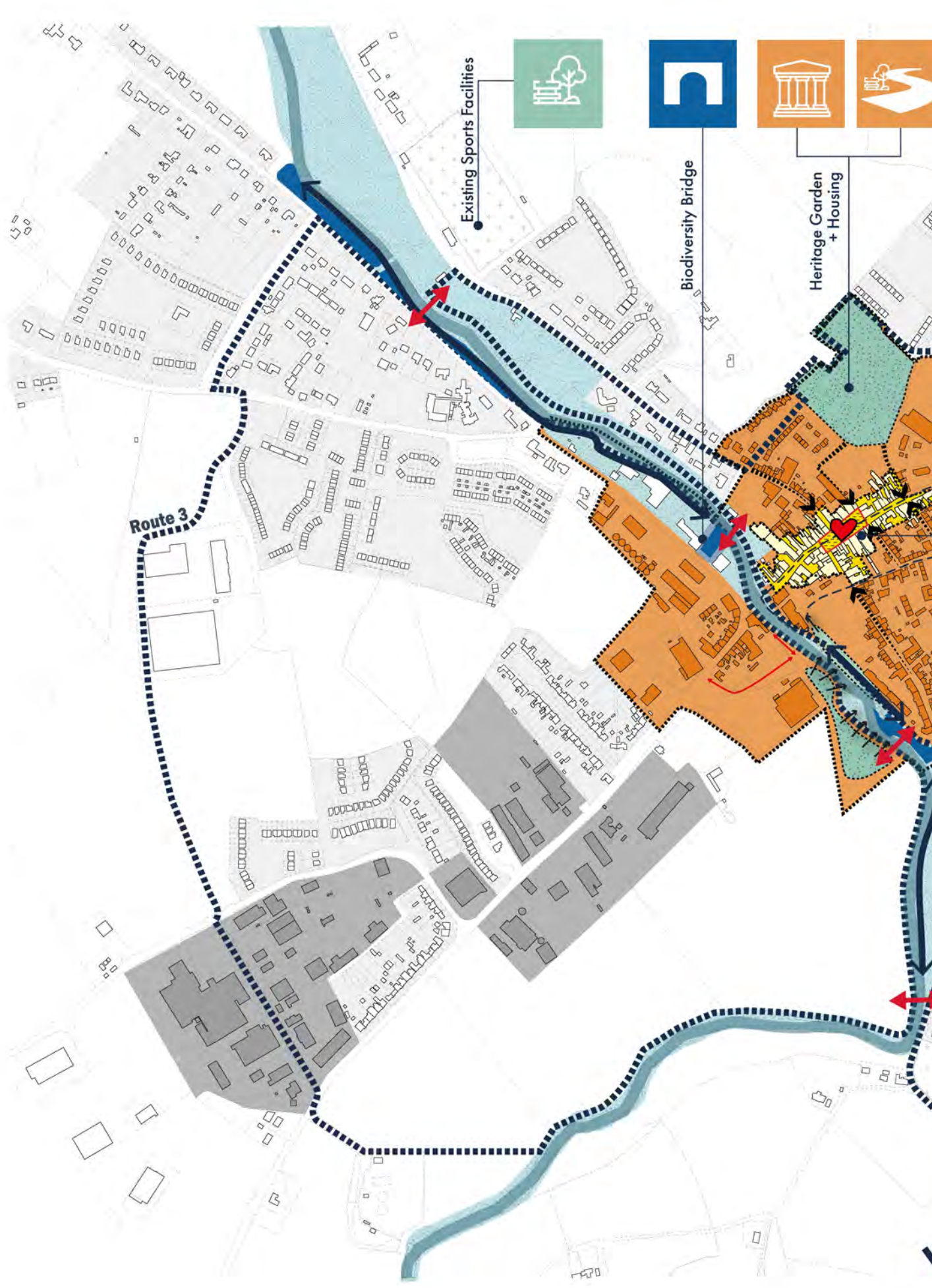
**Laneways & Alleyways** **9**



**Captain Murphy Memorial Hall** **10**

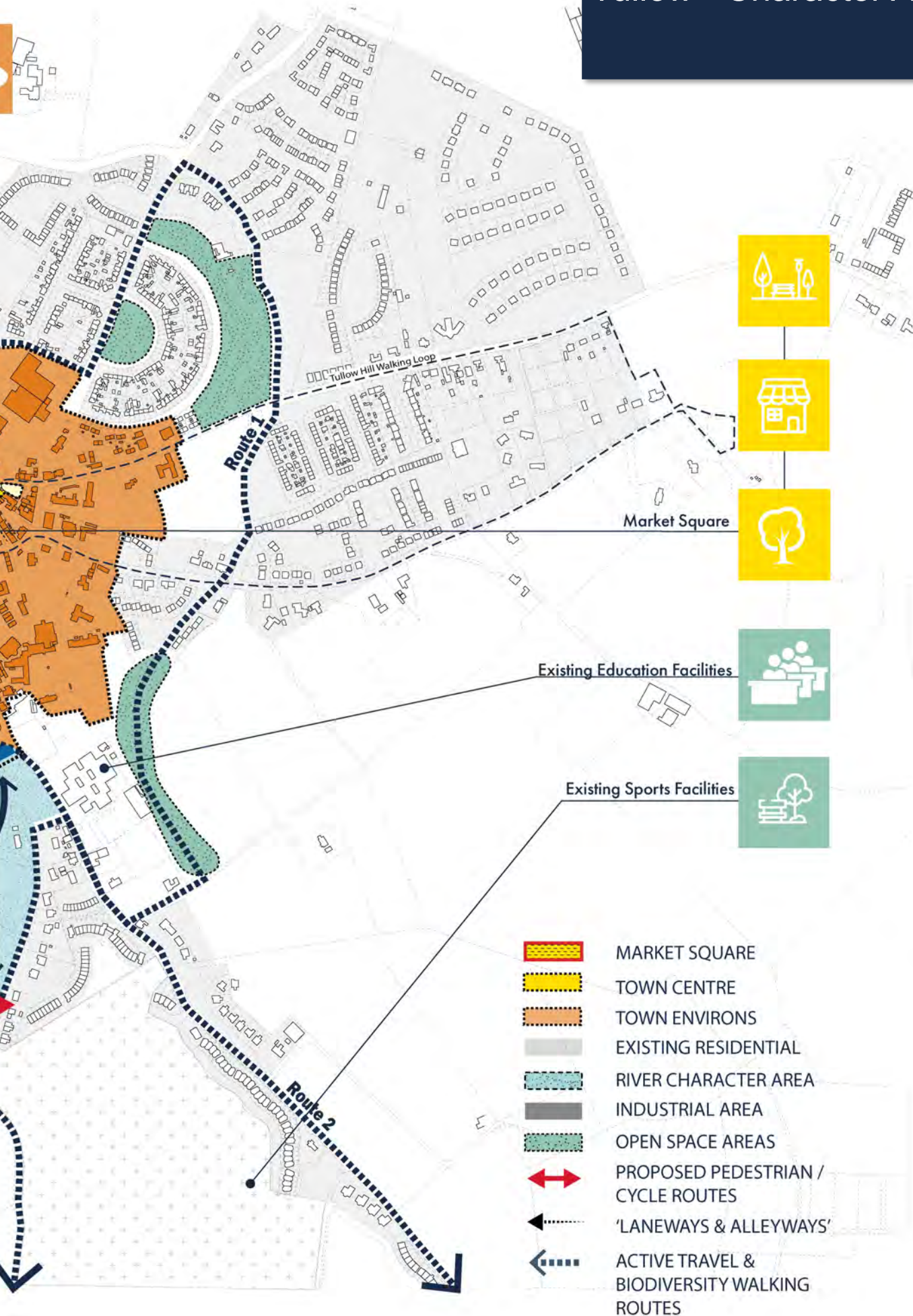


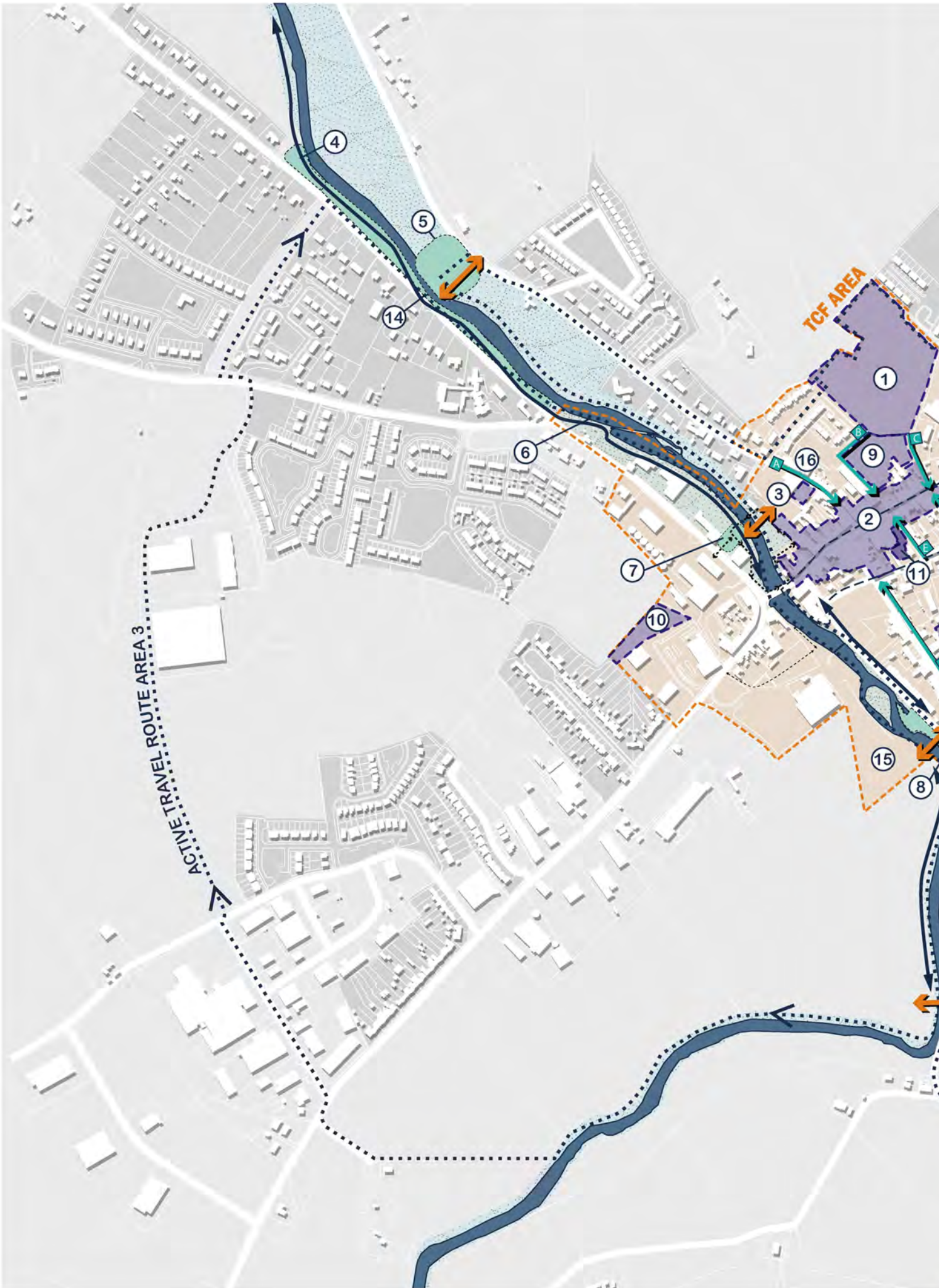
**Town Park** **11**



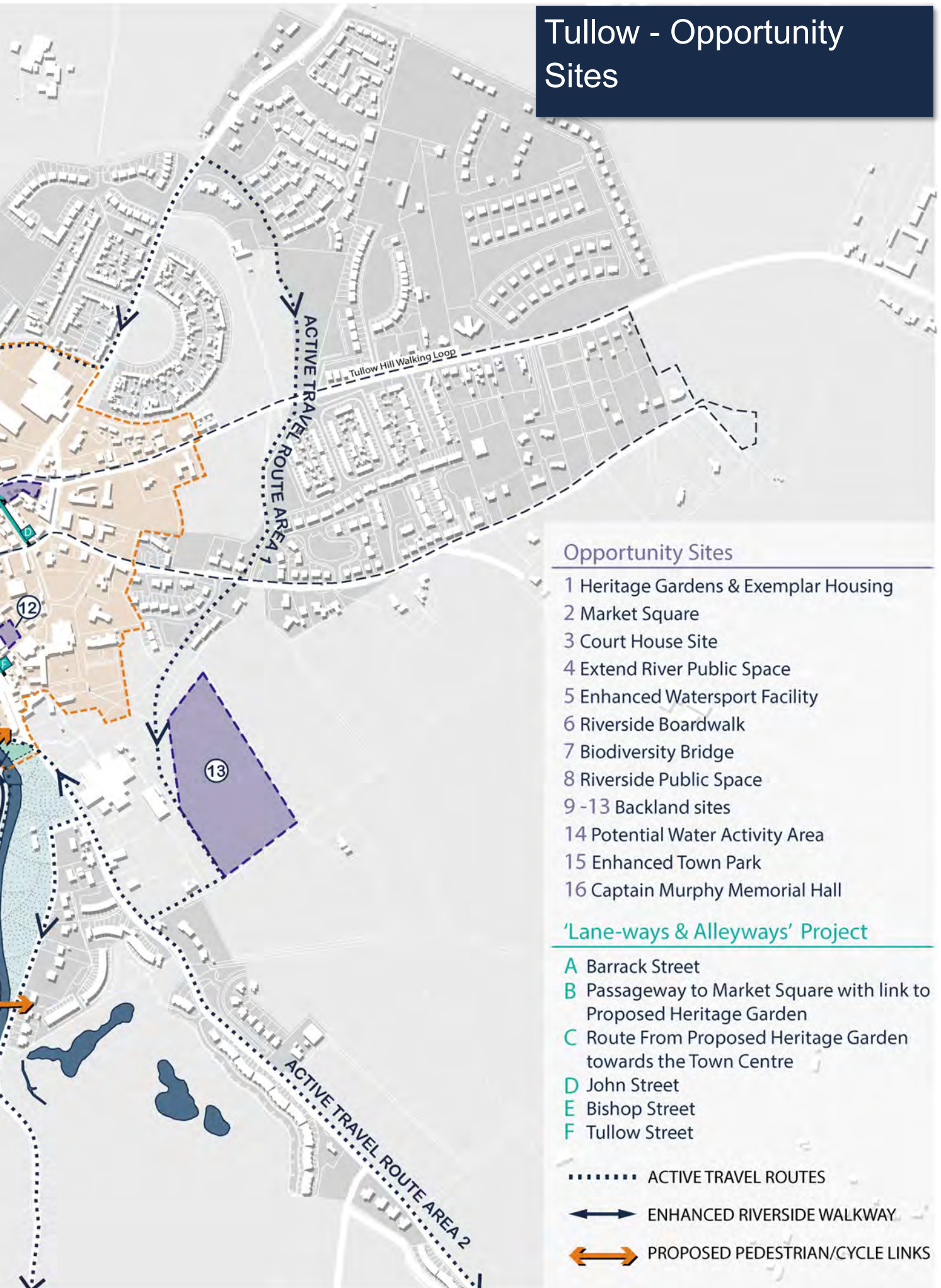


# Tullow - Character Areas





# Tullow - Opportunity Sites



## Opportunity Sites

- 1 Heritage Gardens & Exemplar Housing
- 2 Market Square
- 3 Court House Site
- 4 Extend River Public Space
- 5 Enhanced Watersport Facility
- 6 Riverside Boardwalk
- 7 Biodiversity Bridge
- 8 Riverside Public Space
- 9 -13 Backland sites
- 14 Potential Water Activity Area
- 15 Enhanced Town Park
- 16 Captain Murphy Memorial Hall

## 'Lane-ways & Alleyways' Project

- A Barrack Street
- B Passageway to Market Square with link to Proposed Heritage Garden
- C Route From Proposed Heritage Garden towards the Town Centre
- D John Street
- E Bishop Street
- F Tullow Street

- ..... ACTIVE TRAVEL ROUTES
- ↔ ENHANCED RIVERSIDE WALKWAY
- ↔ PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN/CYCLE LINKS

# Project Area - Main Street

## The Market Square

The Market Square is situated along Church Street which is the central spine of the town. The Market Square is the principal visual element of the Town Centre and extends from Bridge Street to Dublin Road at the top of the town (north). The main focal point of the Square, and its landmark, is the Fr. John Murphy Memorial Statue.

The Market Square's existing provision of on-street parking presents the opportunity to rebalance the relationship between vehicular traffic and pedestrian movements in this central location. Enhancements to The Market Square will deliver a more usable, accessible and attractive public realm that encourages people to visit and spend time in the Town Centre while improving the visual quality of the Town Centre. The Market Square will act as a focal point for the surrounding streets, laneways and spaces of the Town Centre. Prioritising space for economic, social, and cultural and activities will assist local economic growth in Tullow.

### Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project is to redefine The Market Square. The opportunity to re-imagine and re-define The Market Square as a place/space for people to meet, socialise and spend time in is a significant one. The project aims to address the current dominance of vehicular traffic and to create a more pedestrian-friendly, safe and welcoming place through an enhanced public realm for the residents of Tullow. Over the long term, it will be important that this reimagined civic space is maintained and improved appropriately when required. It is considered this project would benefit majorly from the delivery of the Relief Road.

### Project Features

- Creates a larger civic space that can increase vibrancy and vitality in the Town Centre by attracting a critical mass of people on a daily basis.
- Redefines the arrangement and relationship of vehicular and pedestrian space in The Market Square.
- Establishes The Market Square as a space that can be utilised on a year round basis (for e.g. markets, events).
- Relocation of car parking spaces to alternative sites and provision of new cycle parking.
- Promotes greater pedestrian activity in the Town Centre.
- Servicing strategy to be undertaken to identify suitable location(s) of the loading bay(s) and to specify the hours of operation for the loading bay(s).

### Project Physical Changes

- Creation of a pedestrian-friendly and safe environment through a re-purposed use.
- Implementation of hard and soft landscaping as a means of enhancing the visual quality of The Market Square.

### Project Outcomes

- Greater economic activity generated in The Market Square.
- Facilitates increased visual interest and attractiveness.
- Creation of a sense of place and a 'destination' for people.



The Market Square - Present Day



The Market Square - Future Option

# Tullow - Future Market Square Option

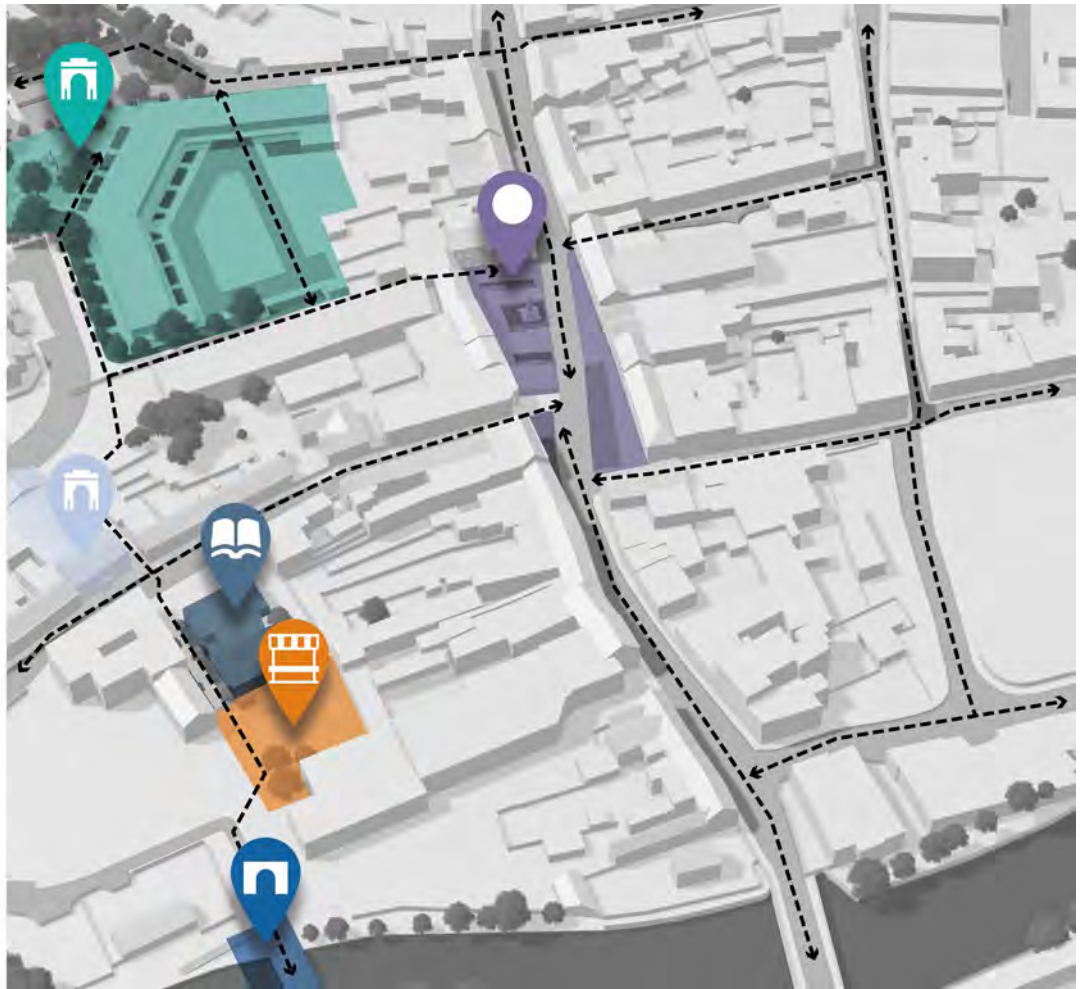




MARKET SQUARE

LINKS TO ACTIVATED SITES

-  Biodiversity Bridge
-  Proposed Library
-  Outdoor Market
-  Market Square
-  Heritage Gardens
-  Captain Murphy Memorial Hall
-  Active Travel Connections



HERITAGE GARDENS + HOUSING

PERMEABILITY AND LANDMARKS

-  Biodiversity Bridge
-  Proposed Library
-  Outdoor Market
-  Market Square
-  Heritage Gardens
-  Captain Murphy Memorial Hall
-  Active Travel Connections





MARKET SQUARE

UPGRADES TO MATERIALITY

- Hard Landscaping
- Soft Landscaping



MARKET SQUARE

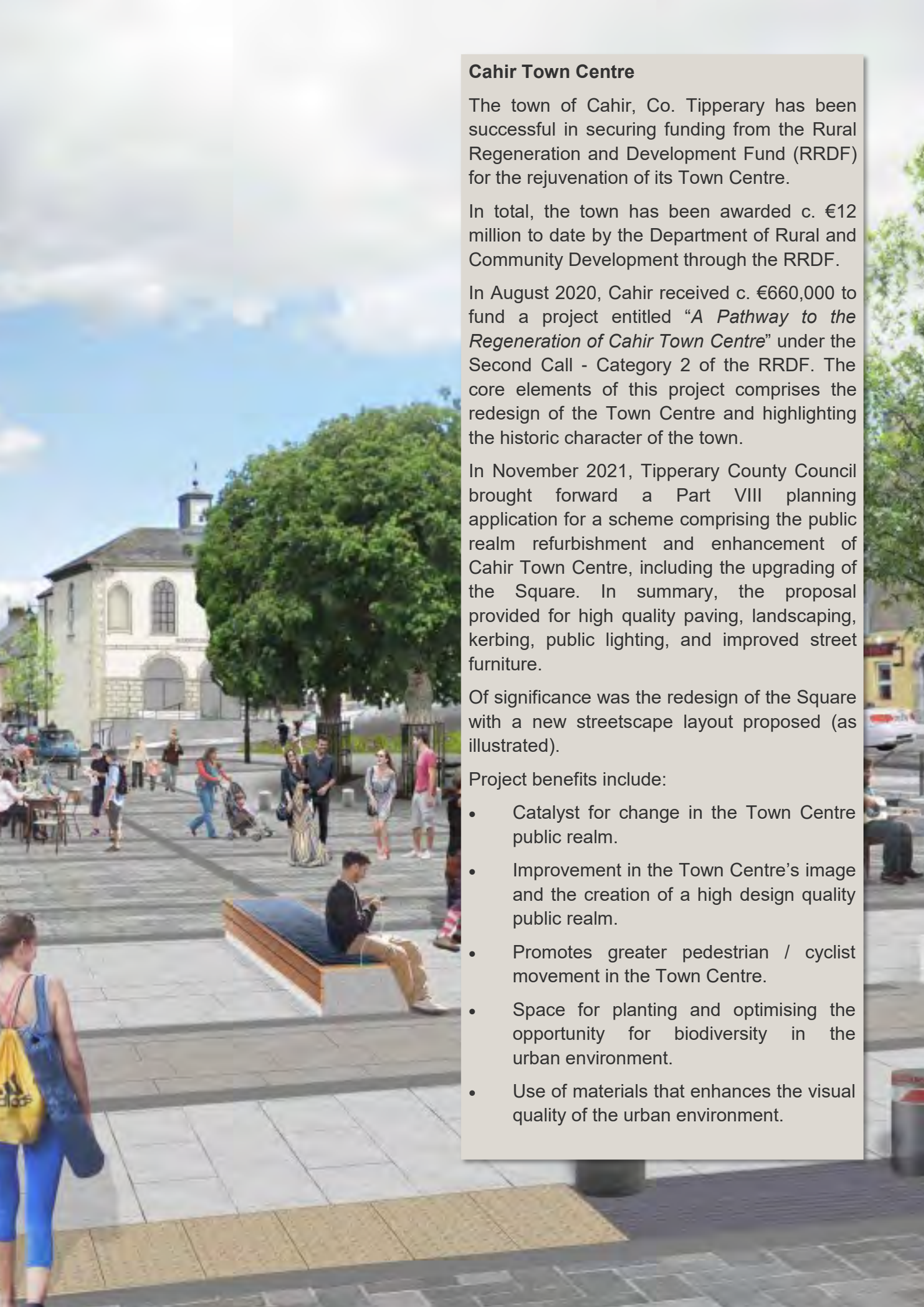
CONSOLIDATION OF THE MAIN STREET

- Access Points



# Case Study - Public Realm Enhancement





## Cahir Town Centre

The town of Cahir, Co. Tipperary has been successful in securing funding from the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) for the rejuvenation of its Town Centre.

In total, the town has been awarded c. €12 million to date by the Department of Rural and Community Development through the RRDF.

In August 2020, Cahir received c. €660,000 to fund a project entitled “*A Pathway to the Regeneration of Cahir Town Centre*” under the Second Call - Category 2 of the RRDF. The core elements of this project comprises the redesign of the Town Centre and highlighting the historic character of the town.

In November 2021, Tipperary County Council brought forward a Part VIII planning application for a scheme comprising the public realm refurbishment and enhancement of Cahir Town Centre, including the upgrading of the Square. In summary, the proposal provided for high quality paving, landscaping, kerbing, public lighting, and improved street furniture.

Of significance was the redesign of the Square with a new streetscape layout proposed (as illustrated).

Project benefits include:

- Catalyst for change in the Town Centre public realm.
- Improvement in the Town Centre’s image and the creation of a high design quality public realm.
- Promotes greater pedestrian / cyclist movement in the Town Centre.
- Space for planting and optimising the opportunity for biodiversity in the urban environment.
- Use of materials that enhances the visual quality of the urban environment.

# Project Area - Backlands & Opportunity Sites

## Courthouse Building

The former Courthouse building is situated on Barrack Street in the Town Centre. This two storey Georgian style building dates from c.1825 and is a Protected Structure. The heritage plate attached to the façade of the building provides some interesting background information regarding its history. The Courthouse ceased to function in 2000 and the site is believed to occupy a former military barracks site. The stone used to build the barracks is thought to have come from the demolished castle and Augustinian Abbey which adds to its to the heritage quality.

The building is a detached structure which is set back from the public road. A small stone plinth wall encloses the front of the site at Barrack Street. The building is an important and valued part of Tullow's heritage and a short 2-3 minute walk north of The Market Square.

### Purpose of the Project

Supporting lifelong learning is one of the core functions of the library service. All Carlow County Council libraries provide a diverse range of resources and services to facilitate lifelong learning and can be considered centres of learning. These include encouraging reading at all levels, improving digital skills and literacy, enabling formal and informal learning, supporting the provision of information and guidance on many topics including health and wellbeing, job seeking and personal development and ensuring that people have a place in the community to meet and come together.

The purpose of this project is to undertake the refurbishment of and extension to a Protected Structure and to bring a key building back into

active use. This project will bring forward a new modern facility while re-activating a valued historic asset. The existing library will be re-purposed as new office space for Carlow County Council. The project will also include a full upgrade of the public realm around the building, enhancing the visual quality of the streetscape within this locale.

### Project Features

- Restoration and extension to the former Courthouse building.
- Upgrade and enhancement of public realm on Barrack Street.
- New civic space.

### Project Physical Changes

- Sympathetic external and internal works to restore an important Protected Structure in the Town Centre.
- New extension to building to provide a modern facility.
- Upgrade works to improve the visual quality and useability of the public realm.

### Project Outcomes

- Facilitates a new Library and Centre of Learning within the Town Centre.
- Enhanced public realm in close proximity to The Market Square.
- New multi-use public space area situated to the rear of the building.
- Improved pedestrian linkages to The Market Square and onward connectivity to the River Slaney.
- Re-use of an architecturally significant and prominent heritage building in the Town Centre.



Former Courthouse building on Barrack Street



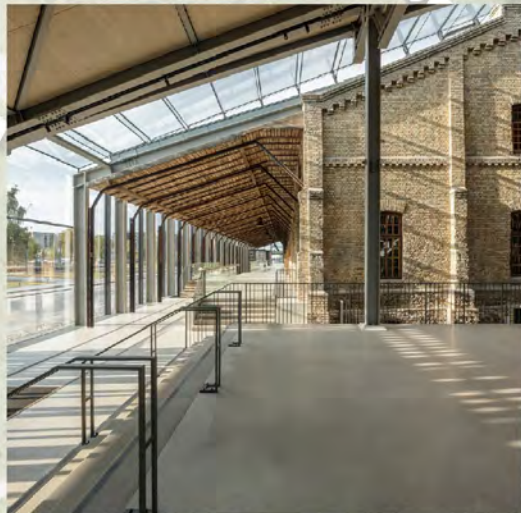
Library Building, Civic Space and Public Realm - Future Option



**PROPOSED LIBRARY & CENTRE OF LEARNING**



Extension & Adaptive Reuse of the former Court House



Reference Image



Present day Court House

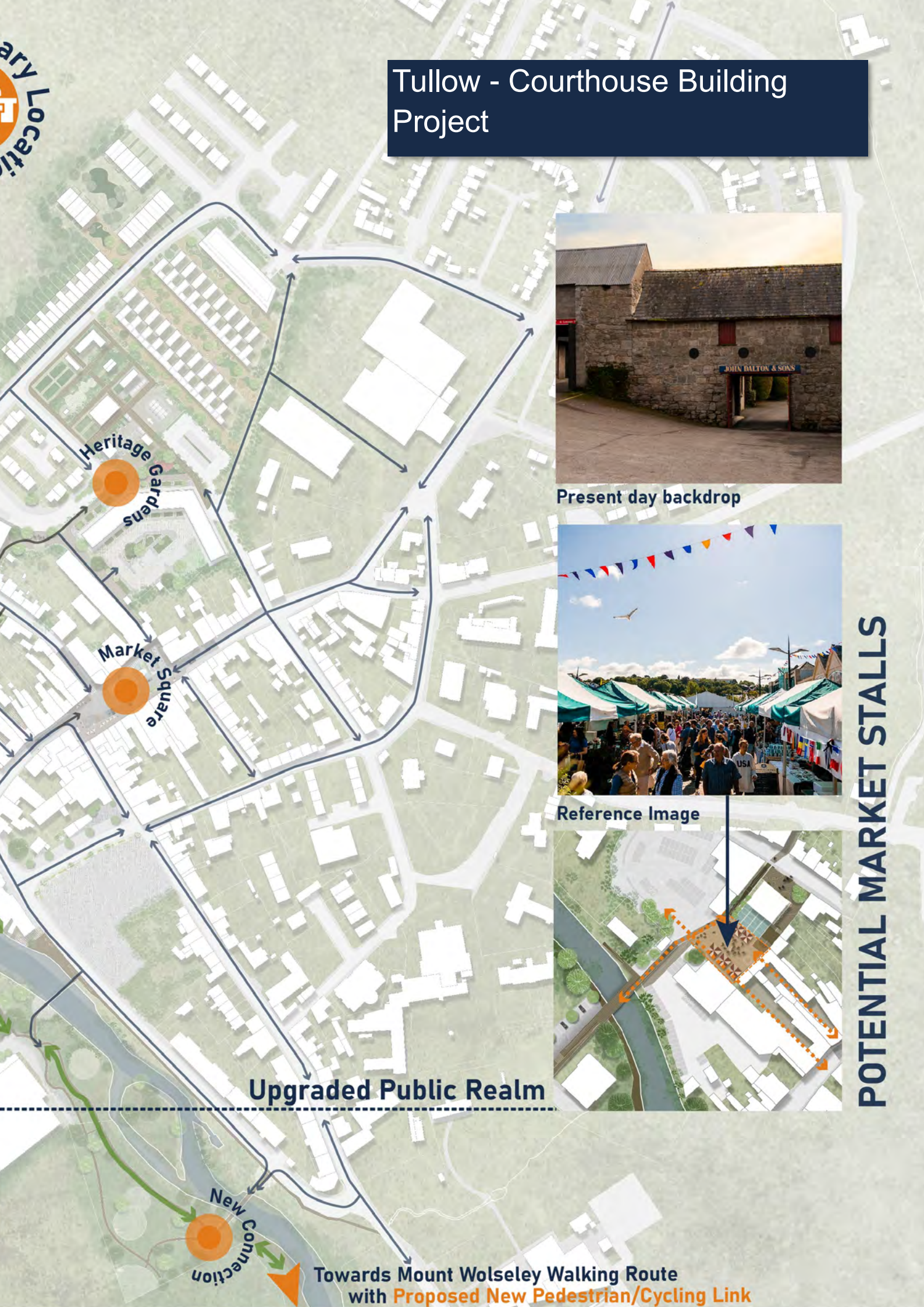
Proposed Library on

EDUCATION

COMMUNITY

Potential Outdoor Markets

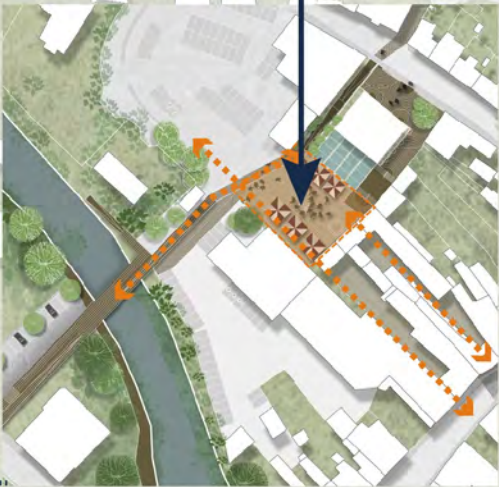
# Tullow - Courthouse Building Project



Present day backdrop



Reference Image



POTENTIAL MARKET STALLS

Upgraded Public Realm

New Connection

Towards Mount Wolseley Walking Route with Proposed New Pedestrian/Cycling Link

FORMER COURT HOUSE

EXTENSION + ADAPTIVE REUSE OF THE FORMER COURT HOUSE

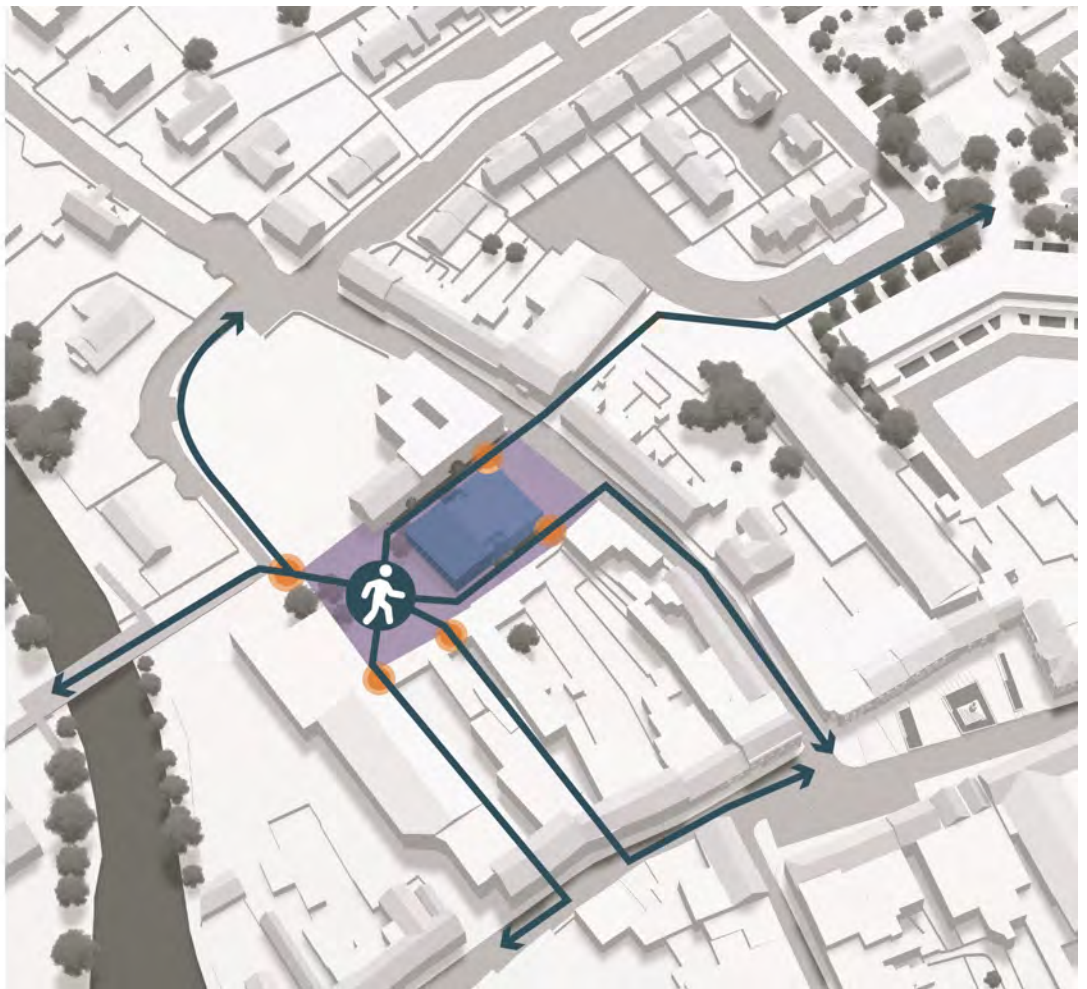
- Existing Court House
- Proposed Extension
- Upgraded Public Realm



FORMER COURT HOUSE

PEDESTRIAN PERMEABILITY

- Proposed Library
- Upgraded Public Realm
- Accessibility Routes
- Access Points





FORMER COURT HOUSE

### PUBLIC REALM UPGRADE

- Hard Landscaping
- Soft Landscaping



FORMER COURT HOUSE

### LINKS WITH EXISTING SCHOOLS

- Proposed Library
- Schools
- Existing Travel Routes
- New Active Travel Routes



# Case Study - Heritage Building Restoration



Source: Fingal County Council

## **Carnegie Library - Skerries, Co. Dublin**

In March 2022, work began on a project to facilitate the enhancement and upgrade of the Carnegie Library in Skerries Town Centre. The library building is a Protected Structure from the early 20th century and is a visually prominent building in the streetscape of Strand Street.

The project will deliver provide a modern library facility within a restored and extended community building. The new library building will provide study space, computers for public use as well as maker and event space. The project also comprises works to upgrade of the public realm to the forecourt of the library and St. Patrick's Church.

Project Benefits include:

- Upgraded and enhanced community facility in the Town Centre.
- Restoration of a visually significant and an architecturally prominent Protected Structure in Skerries.
- Associated public realm works to visually enhance the setting of a key Protected Structure and the wider streetscape in the Town Centre.



# Project Area - Backlands & Opportunity Sites

## Heritage Gardens & Exemplar Housing

This project site is located on under-utilised backlands situated north of The Market Square and south of the An Caislean residential development. This project will bring forward a new destination within the Town Centre for residents and visitors through the delivery of open space, community uses and new exemplar housing. This project will allow the public realm of Tullow to be extended north of The Market Square with the addition of new landscaped spaces. The Heritage Garden will be accessible and connected to the network of streets located to the south through improved laneways and alleyways. This will promote and encourage new walking and cycling movements to and from this under-utilised backland site in the Town Centre.

### Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project is to bring to life Tullow's rich heritage past and agricultural traditions, while generating a new amenity resource for residents and visitors alike. Additional community uses and exemplar housing will also be attached to this project scheme, as illustrated by the image opposite.

The project will create a unique destination within the Town Centre that can bring forward distinct social, economic and environmental benefits through increased social interaction and visitor numbers, for example, and the efficient use of under-utilised lands. In conjunction with this project, linkages will be enhanced to the site through the various projects outlined in this TCF Plan (for e.g. Laneways and Alleyways and Biodiversity Walking Loops), generating footfall between this backland site and The Market Square.

### Project Features

- Provision of a new heritage garden project with complementary residential and community uses.
- Exemplar housing to accommodate a variety of social groups, ages and needs.
- Utilisation of accessible backland areas within the Town Centre for a mix of uses.
- Environmental sustainability promoted through community-focused facilities (for e.g. upcycling centre, bring facility etc.).

### Project Physical Changes

- New exemplar housing, environmental buildings, open spaces, parking, active travel routes delivered.
- A pedestrian/cyclist friendly environment through the use of improved linkages and wayfinding.
- Creates a 'destination' with sustainable mobility links to the Town Centre.
- The provision of a visitor car park with EV charging points.

### Project Outcomes

- New exemplar housing typologies brought forward in the Town Centre.
- Facilities and amenity areas will improve quality of life, generate social interaction and create an attractive place for residents and visitors alike.
- Creation of an amenity that enhances civic knowledge of Tullow's rich heritage and agricultural traditions with improved movement between a strategic backland site and The Market Square to the south.





# Tullow - Heritage Garden Project



# Tullow - Heritage Garden Project

FARM TO FORK



PAPER UPCYCLING



HERITAGE TRAIL







**INDIVIDUALS**



**COUPLES**



**FAMILIES**



**ELDERLY**

**COMMUNITY OPEN SPACE**



**BEE KEEPING**



## Exemplar Housing Case Study

### Cambridge, England

Knight's Park in Cambridge is an award winning exemplar housing scheme of 184 units. The scheme provides a mix of unit typologies comprising houses, apartments and maisonettes that provide a variety of unit sizes including studio flats and 1-4 bed units. Units sizes range from 38 sqm (studio) to 228 sqm (4-bed house).

The Knight's Park scheme is part of a carbon-zero, low rise sustainable neighbourhood. The design has utilised different building types such as terraces and apartment blocks which include courtyard typologies and roof terraces with the overall design ethos placing people first and enhancing the sociality of the scheme. A principal element of the exemplar scheme relates to the unit typologies and sizes that have been brought forward, which promotes demographic diversity.

PERMEABILITY

-  Active Travel Connections




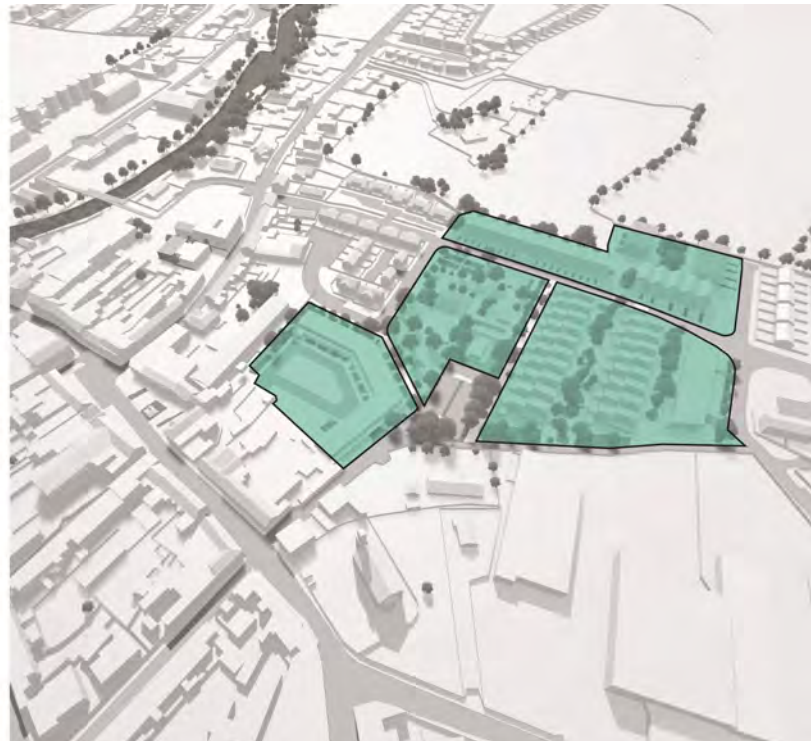
CONSOLIDATION OF THE "MAIN STREET"

-  Access Points



PROPOSED SCHEME STRUCTURE

-  Development Plots



HOUSING TYPOLOGIES

-  Detached house
-  Terrace house
-  Apartments
-  Duplex






PERMEABILITY AND LANDMARKS

-  Biodiversity Bridge
-  Proposed Library
-  Outdoor Market
-  Market Square
-  Heritage Gardens
-  Active Travel Connections



HIERARCHY OF OPEN SPACE

-  Private Open Space
-  Semi-Public Open Space
-  Public Open Space





HERITAGE GARDENS + HOUSING

TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION

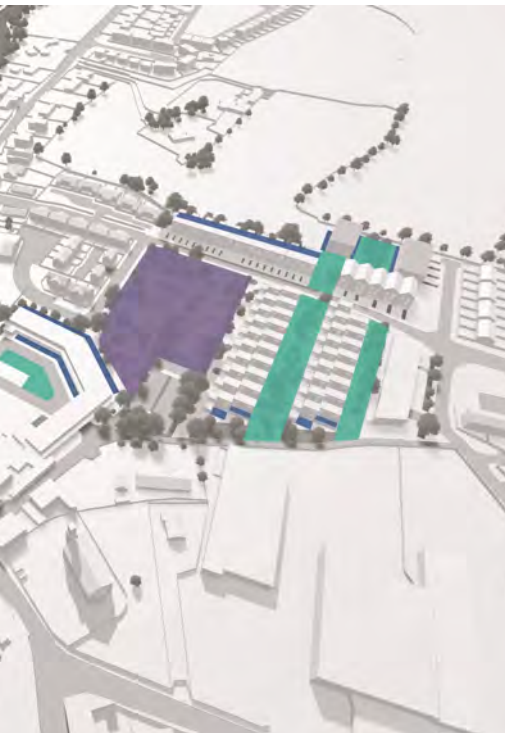
- Primary civic hub
- Secondary civic hub



HERITAGE GARDENS + HOUSING

UNIT TYPES

- PATIO HOUSE - 3 Bed  
116-134 sqm
- 5M HOUSE - 2 Bed  
80 sqm
- 4M HOUSE - 3 Bed / 4 Bed  
110-143 sqm
- DUPLEX - 2 Bed / 3 Bed  
83-105 sqm
- ACCESSIBLE APARTMENTS UNITS - 1 Bed / 2 Bed



HERITAGE GARDENS + HOUSING

DEMOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY

- Individuals
- Students
- Couples
- Families
- Elderly



# Case Study - Community Uses & Amenities



## Airfield Estate, Dundrum, Dublin

Airfield Estate is situated in Dundrum, South Dublin. The estate has a focus on four general themes comprising the farm, the gardens, heritage and food.

The estate provides the city's only urban working farm with over 20 acres of agricultural land dedicated to farm use, food production and land management. The gardens in Airfield Estate measure an area of c.6 acres and provide a wide variety of garden and play areas for visitors to explore. Airfield House provides visitors with an interactive heritage experience. The kitchen at the estate is fully self-sufficient from the produce grown and animals reared on site that visitors can avail of.

Airfield Estate has become an extremely popular destination in Dublin with over 250,000 visitors annually.





### **Rediscovery Centre, Ballymun, Dublin**

The Rediscovery Centre is located in Ballymun, North Dublin and has the important role of being the National Centre for the Circular Economy in Ireland. The Rediscovery Centre is an innovative and creative movement connecting people, ideas and resources to support greener and low carbon living.

The Rediscovery Centre is located in a bespoke demonstration eco-facility and supports four re-use social enterprises:

- Rediscover Furniture
- Rediscover Fashion
- Rediscover Paint
- Rediscover Cycling

These exemplar businesses use unwanted materials for new product development and design demonstrating effective resource efficiency, re-use and low carbon living.

# Project Area - Biodiversity

## Biodiversity Walking Loops

The analysis of the Town Centre identified the potential for new active travel routes to be brought forward with the aim of providing new amenities for residents and visitors. Further consideration of this project investigated the possibility of extending the scope of the potential walking routes beyond the Town Centre boundary to incorporate suburban areas and agricultural lands. As a result, a number of suitable walking routes have been identified which are considered to present interesting routes and which provide walking trails both inside and outside of the urban environment.

The extended geography of the routes has an environmental factor in that it incorporates agricultural lands, as referred to, and the River Slaney which in turn highlights the biodiversity characteristics of the project. The trails proposed consist of the following primary routes:

- Area 1 - The northern portion of the Town Centre incorporating the new Heritage-led Garden project and the northern river bank area. The route will provide new educational and play spaces.
- Area 2 - The southern portion of Tullow that will facilitate a reconnection with the Mount Wolseley resort. A new pedestrian/cycle bridge is proposed to enable sustainable connectivity between areas 2 and 3.
- Area 3 - The western portion of the Tullow that will enhance connectivity between the existing residential areas and heart of the Town Centre at The Market Square.
- A fourth route, known as the 'Tullow Hill Walking Loop', will incorporate a route that travels out in an eastern direction, bringing additional connectivity with The Market Square.

### Purpose of the Project

The biodiversity walking loops will assist with the creation of a much improved pedestrian and cycle network within the town. The project will provide a new amenity resource for the local community and visitors to utilise.

### Project Features

- Creation of new biodiversity walking loops within and outwith the Town Centre.
- Sustainable mobility encouraged.
- Feature areas along the routes such as nature paths, and educational and play areas.

### Project Physical Changes

- Delivery of new pathway routes and associated feature areas.

### Project Outcomes

- Improved active travel network for Tullow.
- Provides a resource whereby residents and visitors can gain access to the natural environment.
- Delivers a new outdoor recreation amenity that can generate positive quality of life, and health and well-being outcomes and promote physical activity.
- Enhances the active linkages between existing residential and civic areas.
- Project can add to Tullow's tourism offer and complements other project interventions such as the Heritage-led Garden.



View of River Slaney and Tullow Civic Offices and Library

# Tullow - Biodiversity Walking Loops Project



PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN /  
CYCLE LINKS



PROPOSED BIODIVERSITY &  
ACTIVE TRAVEL ROUTES



INTERVENTIONS ALONG THE  
PROPOSED BIODIVERSITY &  
ACTIVE TRAVEL ROUTES





# Project Area - The River

## River Walk

The River Slaney is a significant natural blue amenity asset for the town's population. As such, the opportunity exists for the use of the River Slaney to be optimised as a rich resource for fishing, water sports, and nature pursuits, for example. The development of new water-based resources, including a new River Walk, for community and visitor use can bring forward positive outcomes such as new social interaction, quality of life benefits, increased connectivity to The Market Square and surrounding streets, thereby generating vibrancy.

### Purpose of the Project

The purpose of the River Walk project is to maximise the environmental, social and economic benefits this blue infrastructure asset has to offer Tullow. This project will provide a number of new amenity areas/locations for people of all ages and abilities to enjoy. For example, the project will seek to provide accessible platforms/jettys to facilitate those who wish to avail of the river for angling purposes (see photograph opposite).

The optimised use of the river, and making it available as a resource to be enjoyed by all, assists with making the Town Centre a more attractive place to live, to work and to visit. Indirectly, the increased use of the river by citizens can lead to economic benefits such as new food and beverage operators locating on the riverbank areas.

In addition, this project will enhance the operation of the existing kayak facility on the river. Where necessary, flood mitigation works will be carried out in order to facilitate this project.

### Project Features

- Creation of new spaces along the river walk (for e.g. sports facilities, angling, picnic and rest areas).
- Provision of a new riverside boardwalk to the southern side of the River Slaney.
- New pedestrian routes from Church Street and Mount Wolseley to the river walk.
- Promotion of active travel routes.
- Increased accessibility to blue and green infrastructure assets.
- Enhancing the visual quality and experience of the natural environment.
- Enhanced walking route to the Mount Wolseley resort to attract greater visitor numbers into the Town Centre.

### Project Physical Changes

- Strategic connectivity to the Town Centre through new active travel infrastructure.
- Facilitating increased pedestrian and cycle movement.

### Project Outcomes

- Optimising use of the River Slaney.
- Provision of new facilities and amenity areas for local community and visitor use.
- Quality of life benefits for residents, through health and well being and increased social interaction, and helping to make Tullow an attractive place to live, work and visit.



River Slaney at Tullow Street



Accessible jetty platform - Kybe Pond, Skerries, Co. Dublin



EXTENDED RIVERSIDE PUBLIC SPACE



ENHANCED SPORT FACILITY



RIVERSIDE PUBLIC SPACE



WALKING ROUTE TO MOUNT WOLSELEY



extended riverside public space



enhanced sport facility



potential water activity area



river walking loop



enhanced riverside walkway/ public space

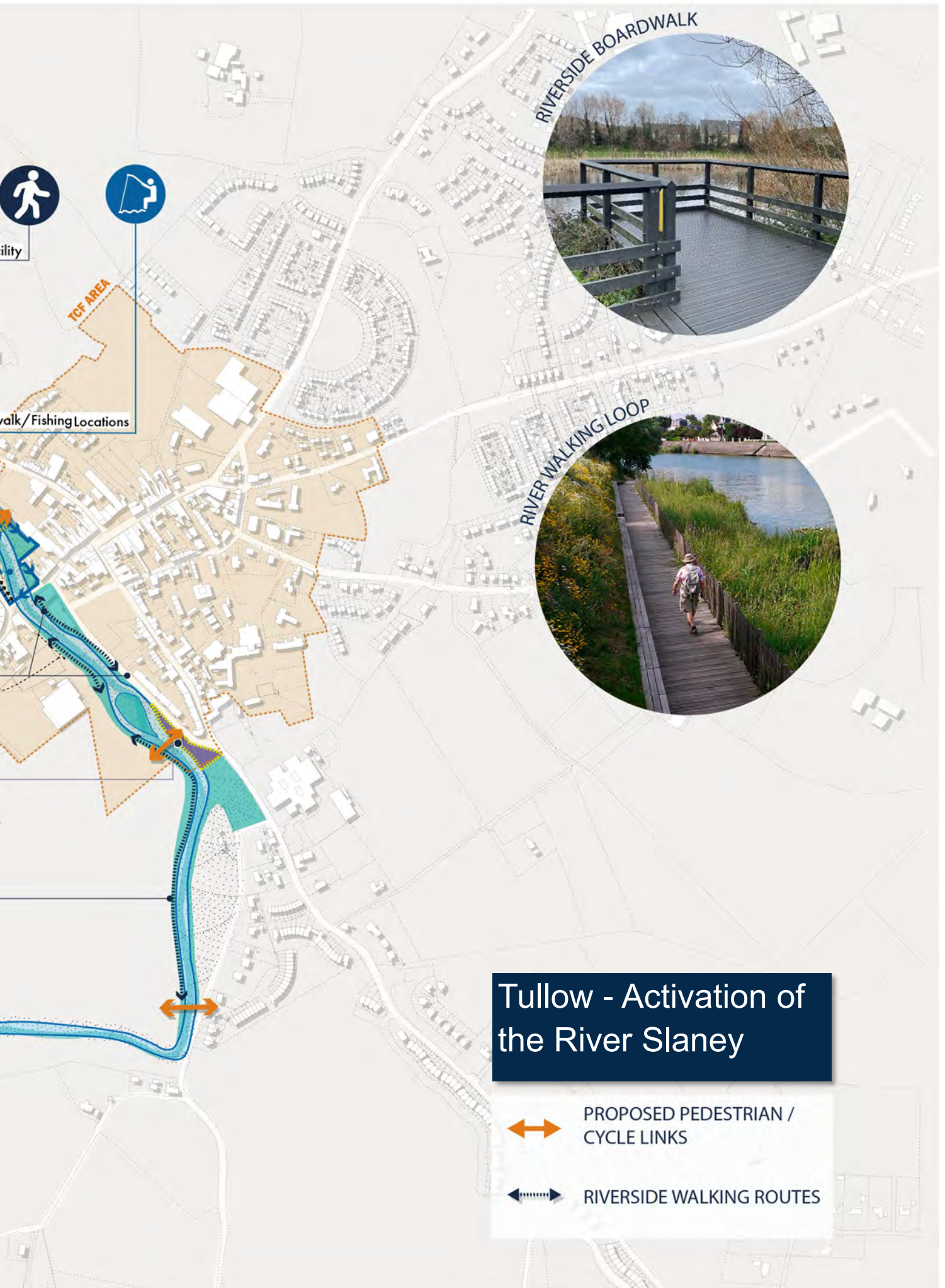


riverside public space





walking route to Mount Wolseley

riverside boardwalk



## Tullow - Activation of the River Slaney

-  PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN / CYCLE LINKS
-  RIVERSIDE WALKING ROUTES

BIODIVERSITY BRIDGE

PERMEABILITY

 Active Travel Routes



BIODIVERSITY BRIDGE

ENHANCED RIVERSIDE AMENITY

-  River Area Walk
-  Potential Angling Locations
-  Existing Primary Links
-  Proposed Primary Links



BIODIVERSITY BRIDGE

VIEWS ALONG THE RIVER

-  Biodiversity Bridge
-  Market Square
-  View Points



TULLOW

TOWN CENTRE CONNECTIONS

-  River Area
-  Market Square
-  Potential Angling Locations
-  Existing Links
-  Proposed Links
-  Routes to Town Centre
-  Proposed River Boardwalk



# Project Area - The River

## Riverfront Amenity Areas

Amenity areas can create attractive places and spaces within the urban environment to complement the built form. Integrating public spaces within the urban context can bring forward significant benefits to the public realm, while also providing active open spaces for all to enjoy.

An opportunity has been identified to improve the public realm at locations comprising Tullow Civic Offices, the public space opposite the Civic Offices (leading to the Town Park) and at Tullow museum. These locations are advantageous for an enhanced public realm given their position on the River Slaney which provides a visually impressive backdrop.

This project includes new lighting for Tullow Bridge that will serve to embellish this structure at evening and night-time.

Management of the upgraded civic areas will be important going forward in order to maintain their quality and use over the long term.

### Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project is to re-activate public open spaces and to upgrade amenity areas. This project will provide for an upgrade to the public realm, delivering more vibrant spaces that will enhance the overall quality of the townscape.

Where necessary, flood mitigation works will be carried out in order to facilitate this project.



River Slaney and Tullow Bridge



## Project Features

- Facilitating an upgrade to the quality of the public realm and promotion of the use of public open space in the Town Centre.
- Enhancing the visual quality and experience of the urban environment.
- Improved and more useable civic space.
- to meet, dwell, spend time.
- Embracing the natural and visual quality of the River Slaney.
- Developing a long term management and maintenance plan for civic areas in order to preserve their quality and use.

## Project Physical Changes

- Upgrade and improvement works to prominent riverfront civic locations.
- Introduction of street furniture, seating, landscaping, planting and lighting solutions.

## Project Outcomes

- Re-activation and upgrade of riverfront public spaces that are under-utilised at present.
- Increased social interaction outcomes by facilitating an attractive place for people



# Project Area - The River

## Water Activity Area

The presence of the River Slaney provides a natural location for the development of a new Water Activity Area in the Town Centre. A proposed site for this recreation opportunity has been identified on lands situated between the river and Castledermot Road (R148) in the western periphery of the Town Centre.

This project is supported by the substantial rise in popularity of, and participation in, outdoor recreation activity as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. A Central Statistics Office (CSO) survey was carried out in 2022 which examined how the pandemic altered citizens' relationship with recreation activities. In summary, the survey found that more than c.46% of people (all ages combined) participated in more than one new activity (including watersports such as canoeing, kayaking and sea swimming).

The proposed location of the new Water Activity Area is optimal given the presence of the popular Tullow Kayak Club on the northern (opposite) side of the river.

### Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project is to promote the use of the primary blue infrastructure asset in Tullow through the development of a new Water Activity Area. The proposed facility can add to the recreation activity offering in Tullow along with the proposed River Walk and Biodiversity Walking Loop projects as promoted in this TCF Plan. The enhanced activity resources, as mentioned, will provide residents and visitors with a greater variety of recreation options.

## Project Features

- Development of a new water-based recreation facility within the western area of the Town Centre.
- Optimal use of the River Slaney as a natural infrastructure asset.
- Assists with generating greater activity and vibrancy in the Town Centre.
- Alignment with proposed River Walk and Biodiversity Walking Loops project.

## Project Physical Changes

- Development of vacant riparian lands accessed via Castledermot Road.
- Increased activity on the river.
- Potential for new infrastructure situated on the river.

## Project Outcomes

- Promotes the re-activation of the River Slaney.
- Creation of potential employment and commercial opportunities.
- Generates positive health and well-being outcomes.
- Development of a new activity location/destination in the Town Centre that can contribute to the overall tourism/visitor offer in Tullow.



River Slaney flowing through the Town Centre



Water Activity Area - Future Option

# Case Study - Outdoor Swimming Pools



**Utilisation of a  
natural  
resource**

**Unique  
recreational  
facility  
for residents  
and visitors**



### **Outdoor Swimming Pool Banagher**

Located on the River Shannon with County Offaly on one side and County Galway on the other. The pool is situated in Banagher Park and is owned by the community and managed by Banagher Shannon Park committee, a group of trustees who are responsible for the overall management of the facility.

### **Clontarf Swimming Pools, Co. Dublin**

Clontarf Baths and Assembly Rooms, as it was known, features a large, tidal, seawater swimming pool jutting out from the promenade wall into Dublin Bay. The Baths offer a sheltered, safe swimming environment and all the benefits of seawater swimming.

### **Arvagh Outdoor Swimming Pool, Co. Cavan**

The outdoor pool is situated alongside Garty Lough and is adjoined by a children's park making it a vibrant amenity area for the local community.

### **Belmullet Tidal Pool, Co. Mayo**

Located on Shore Road in the waters of Blacksod Bay and a short walk from the Town Centre. It has a toddler's section and a deeper section for more experienced swimmers.

**Low  
maintenance  
and operational  
costs**

**Amenity adds  
to the overall  
tourism offer**

**Inclusivity and  
accessibility to  
all members of  
the local  
community**

# Project Area - Linkages & Wayfinding

## Pedestrian & Cycle Bridges

Tullow Bridge provides vehicular and pedestrian/cyclist access over the River Slaney from Abbey Street and Thomas Traynor Street to Church Street (The Market Square) in the Town Centre. The bridge is an important part of the townscape and a key piece of infrastructure for Tullow.

The location of the River Slaney provides both advantages and challenges for the Town Centre. As set out within this TCF Plan, the river is a blue asset for Tullow, however it presents challenges in terms of connectivity to and from the Town Centre for obvious reasons.

### Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project is to provide improved active travel connectivity options across the River Slaney through the provision of four new pedestrian/cyclist bridges. The location of the proposed bridges in this project are situated at locations comprising:

- Castledermot Road
- Thomas Traynor Street
- Town Park onto Tullow Street
- Ouragh Road

The proposed pedestrian / cyclist bridges are strategically positioned with the aim of providing enhanced sustainable mobility within the Town Centre and locations such as St. Patrick's GAA Club, Tullow Kayak Club, the Barrack Street locale, Tullow Town Park and the Mount Wolseley resort to the south east. A 'Biodiversity Bridge' is proposed at Thomas Traynor Street that will facilitate a strategic cross-river link to the proposed new Library and Centre of Learning and onward

sustainable connectivity with the Heritage Gardens and exemplar housing further to the north east.

### Project Features

- Facilitating new pedestrian/cycle bridges across the River Slaney.
- Generating greater pedestrian and cycle activity/movement in the Town Centre.
- Promotes connectivity for the western residential areas with the Town Centre along with added connectivity to the proposed River Walk and Biodiversity Walking Loops.
- Enhancement of connections to local facilities and amenities (for e.g. kayak club, GAA club, Town Park) from residential areas to the south.

### Project Physical Changes

- Construction of new pedestrian/cycle bridges across the River Slaney at selected locations.
- Creation of a legible pedestrian and cycle route network in Tullow.
- Additional linkages that open up the riverfront area.

### Project Outcomes

- New pedestrian and cycle active routes for residents and visitors to avail of.
- Enhanced connectivity between the River Slaney, Town Centre and wider residential areas.
- Promotion of active travel particularly for short trips to and from the Town Centre.



Existing Pedestrian / Cycle access on Tullow Bridge



Towards Mount  
with Proposed I



# Tullow - A Connected Town Centre



# Project Area - Linkages & Wayfinding

## Laneways & Alleyways

The analysis of Tullow's urban structure has identified the Town Centre has issues regarding its overall degree of permeability. This is characterised by limited connections and linkages between the Town Centre, backlands, residential areas and existing car park locations.

### Purpose of the Project

Reviving and re-activating the network of laneways and alleyways that exist in the Town Centre can deliver improvements in relation to connectivity and permeability while promoting pedestrian movement. Upgrades to the laneways network can also assist with contributing to a high quality public realm and generating increased vibrancy around The Market Square.

### Project Features

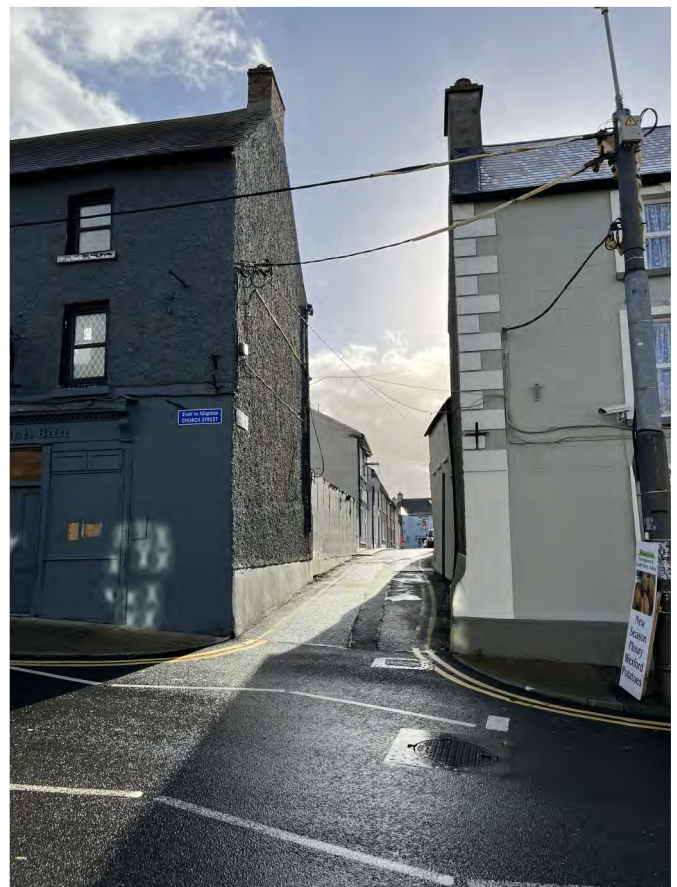
- Enhancement of existing laneways and alleyways as safe and attractive active travel routes to and from The Market Square.
- Cycle parking in close vicinity to the main destinations and at Active Travel links.
- Wayfinding from existing and new car parking locations to The Market Square (for e.g. Heritage Gardens parking area).
- Lighting, landscaping and signage to improve existing pedestrian linkages.
- Increasing permeability and connectivity to The Market Square locale.
- New pedestrian links from Church Street to the existing car park areas in the backland areas situated to the north and south.

### Project Physical Changes

- Physical upgrade of existing laneways and alleyways in the Town Centre.
- Creation of safe and legible pedestrian and cycle routes from Church Street to backland and residential areas.

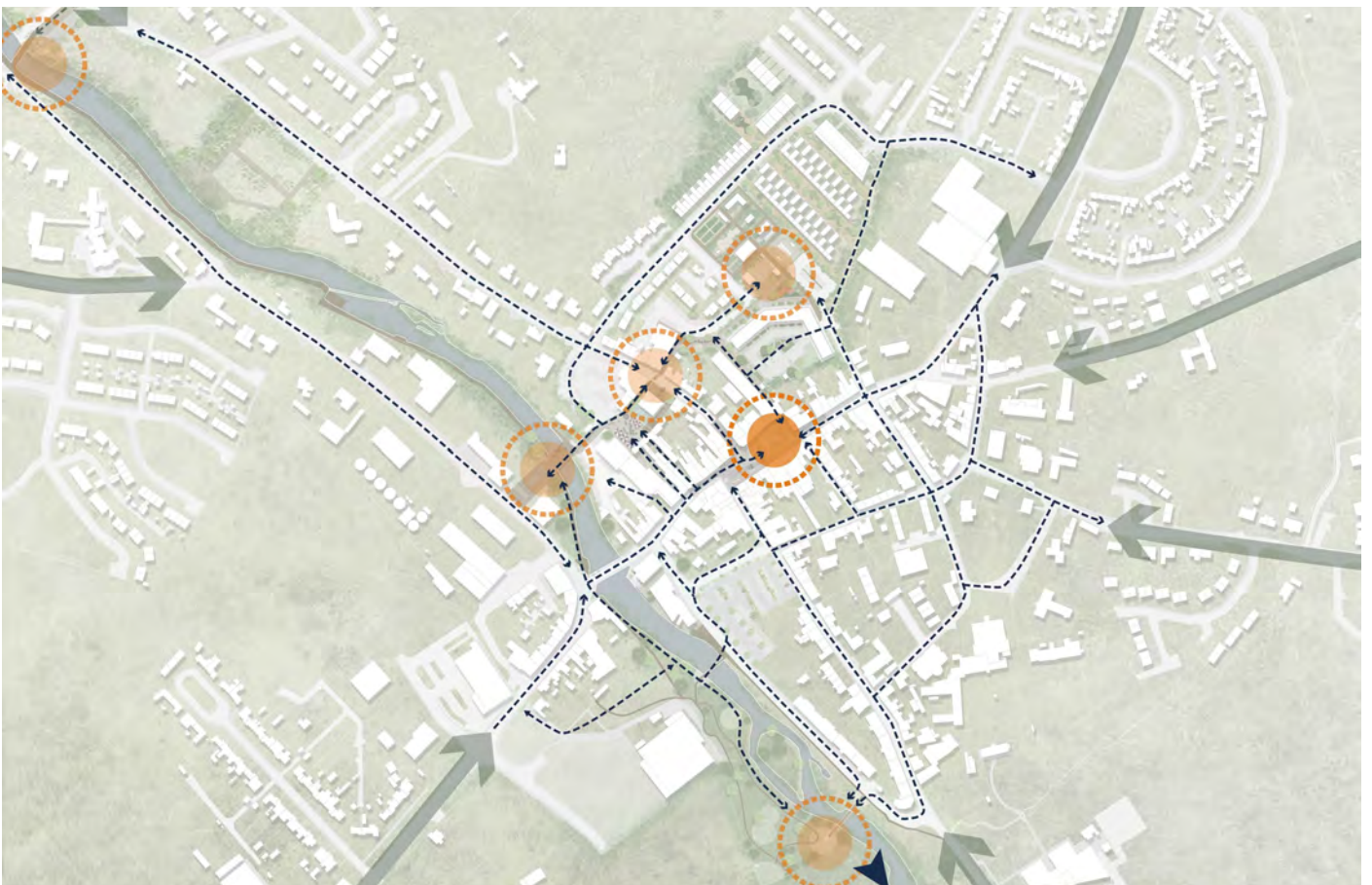
### Project Outcomes

- Improved pedestrian and cycle routes.
- Greater activity promoted within the core retail area and surrounding network of streets.
- Visual enhancement of the streetscape at various Town Centre locations.





Linkages and Alleyways A-F



A Connected Town Centre

# Project Area - Backlands & Opportunity Sites

## Captain Murphy Memorial Hall

Captain Murphy Memorial Hall is situated on Barrack Street in Tullow Town Centre and opposite the former Courthouse building. The Memorial Hall is a two storey structure with an elongated floorplate and an associated parking area located to the rear.

The building sits comfortably within the streetscape in this locale which generally has a two storey scale, particularly on the northern side of Barrack Street. The location of the Memorial Hall is advantageous being within a central location within Tullow and a c.1-2 minute walk north west of The Market Square.

### Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project is to undertake improvements to the Captain Murphy Memorial Hall in order to bring forward a new multi-purpose community facility in the Town Centre. A new and bespoke community facility will generate positive social outcomes through the promotion of interaction amongst members of the local community in Tullow.

The upgrade of the Memorial Hall can offer a range of suitable facilities for the local community such as offices and meeting rooms, sports hall, gymnasium, and general recreation space for example. The Tullow Local Area Plan 2017-2023 makes reference to the lack of indoor and recreational facilities in Tullow for all ages and this project has the potential to deliver a significant contribution to the overall social infrastructure of Tullow.

This project aligns with the Tullow Local Area Plan 2017-2023 which states, “*The town hall in Tullow, Captain Murphy Memorial Hall would benefit hugely if it expanded its use to offer more recreational facilities, such as cinema nights, expanding its range of recreational classes open to both locals and tourists.*”

### Project Features

- Re-activation and refurbishment of an existing community facility in a central location.
- Potential for accommodating a multitude of uses and assisting various local groups.

### Project Physical Changes

- Physical works to improve and modernise the Captain Murphy Memorial Hall building.
- Works undertaken will contribute to enhancing the visual quality of the streetscape in this location of the Town Centre.

### Project Outcomes

- Refurbishment and enhancement of a prominent Town Centre building in Tullow.
- A modern community facility to serve the local population over the long term.
- Increased social engagement, community interaction and vibrancy within the Town Centre.



Captain Murphy Memorial Hall situated on Barrack Street



# Project Area - The River

## Town Park

The Town Park is located within the southern portion of the Town Centre and adjacent to the River Slaney. Tullow has an extensive network of green spaces, in particular recreational space such as playing fields and Mount Wolseley golf course, however the Town Park is the primary general amenity area / park located centrally within Tullow.

Pocket parks and amenity areas can create attractive places and spaces within urban environments that are primarily dominated by buildings, streets and roads. Integrating green spaces within the urban context can bring forward environmental benefits while also providing active open spaces for walking, cycling and nature. The provision of high quality and useable green spaces can aid the attraction of greater numbers of people back to the Town Centre thereby assisting its overall vibrancy.

### Purpose of the Project

This project seeks to further enhance the quality and attractiveness of Town Park for the benefit of the local community and to promote its use by people of all ages.

This project will further enhance the quality of the urban environment in Tullow and contribute to making the Town Centre a more attractive place to live, visit and spend time in. In addition, measures to treat the riverside vegetation will strengthen the relationship between pedestrians and the river which is an important natural resource for Tullow.

### Project Features

- Provision of an enhanced amenity and recreation resource for the local community in Tullow.
- Management of the riverbank areas along the southern section of the River Slaney.
- Opening up of the River Slaney on Tullow Street.
- Enhancing the visual quality and user experience of the urban environment.

### Project Physical Changes

- Environmental works to treat the overgrown riverbank vegetation along the southern section of the River Slaney.
- Upgraded planting, paving, play equipment and seating solutions throughout the Town Park.

### Project Outcomes

- Increased green infrastructure and improved amenity area within the town centre.
- An amenity that will improve the quality of life for those living in the town, generating social interaction and the enhancement of an attractive place for residents, visitors etc.



View of Town Park from pedestrian bridge over the River Slaney at Tullow Street





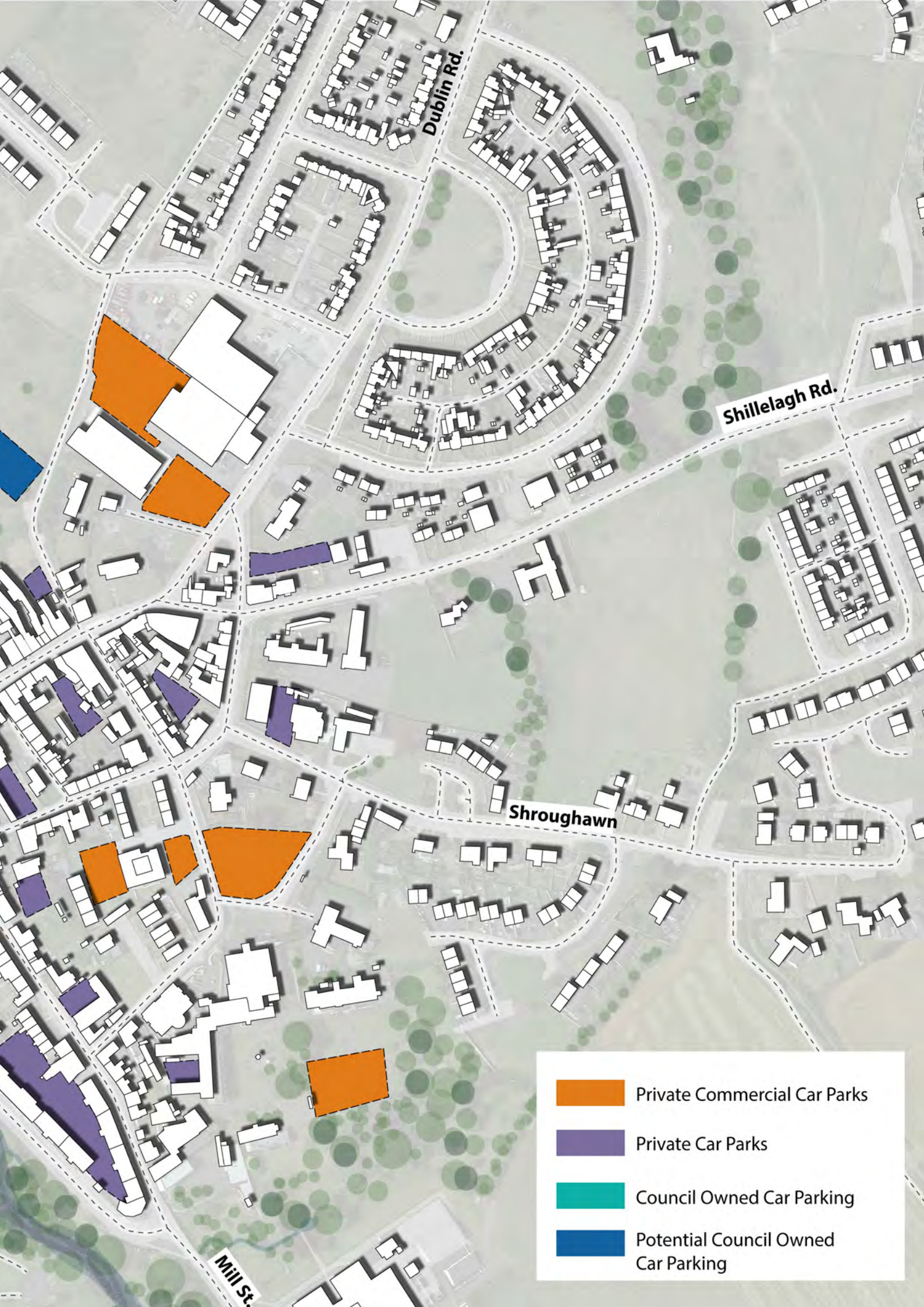
Barrack St.

Castledermot Rd.

Tullow St.

N87





Dublin Rd.

Shillelagh Rd.

Shroughawn

Mill St.

-  Private Commercial Car Parks
-  Private Car Parks
-  Council Owned Car Parking
-  Potential Council Owned Car Parking



Barrack St.

Castledermot Rd.

Market Square

Tullow St.

N81



## Tullow - Existing Town Centre Vacancy

*“Addressing vacancy and maximising the use of existing housing stock is a primary objective of Government. The re-use and regeneration of vacant properties can provide much needed housing, while also being an essential catalyst to transforming areas and the communities living in them.*”

*The challenges associated with vacancy and dereliction are not limited to affecting housing supply, they also impact on the vibrancy and vitality of our towns.”*



# Tullow - Future Town Centre Context



# 5

# Implementation and Delivery Plan

# Implementation and Delivery Plan

## Introduction

This chapter of the Town Centre First Plan sets out how the Vision for Tullow, along with the project interventions as proposed, can be successfully achieved over the long term.

The focus of the proposed interventions is based upon a critical analysis of the Town Centre and its identified opportunities. Interventions are required to deliver enhancements that can bring about significant changes to the urban and natural environment, the local economy, patterns of movement and Tullow's urban structure. The individual projects as outlined are considered to have the potential in regenerating and reinvigorating different elements of the Town Centre, and cumulatively improving the quality of life for Tullow's residents. Key to achieving the Vision for the Town Centre will be matters relating to, *inter alia*, the delivery process, funding and stakeholder engagement.

## Delivery

The preparation of a Town Centre First Plan for Tullow is the first step in the delivery of a rejuvenated Town Centre. The TCF Plan sets out the Vision and the interventions required to reimagine and regenerate Tullow over the long term with the objective of the making the Town Centre more attractive, more prosperous, more vibrant and more connected.

The delivery process undertaken in respect of the proposed project interventions, and ultimately the success of the Town Centre First Plan, will involve a framework of different stakeholders at national, regional and local levels. The degree of success in relation to the delivery of project interventions will be reliant upon the successful interaction and

engagement of stakeholders at all levels. Broadly, the composition of stakeholders will involve the participation of:

- Government departments
- State sponsored agencies
- Regional assembly
- Local authority
- Private landowners / private developers
- Non-governmental organisations
- Local community

The Town Centre First Policy sets out that a national level, a National Oversight and Advisory Group (NOAG) will be established with the purpose of monitoring and guiding the overall delivery process. NOAG will also have the responsibility of providing a shared forum for engagement with Government departments and stakeholders at a national level.

At a local level, the role of Carlow County Council (CCC) in the wider regeneration and development process, and as the Local Authority for Tullow, is crucial. Within its role, CCC has responsibility at a county level for matters concerning housing, enterprise, heritage, public amenities, transportation for example, all of whom are important for the future Town Centre Vision. The Town Centre First Policy establishes the delivery of projects will be done in collaboration with the Local Authority (and others as required) which effectively demonstrates the importance of the role of CCC. Furthermore, the Council provides the Town Regeneration Officer who contributes to the delivery process by assisting Local Authority co-ordination and the engagement with multi-disciplinary teams.

The TRO also plays an additional role at a local level by assisting the Town Team, such as in securing funding and acting as a link between them and the Local Authority. In relation to the role of the Town Teams, they are an important component of the process as they provide local expertise and facilitate implementation on the ground.

Regarding the project interventions, a further aspect to be examined within the overall delivery process concerns how they are prioritised. Additional considerations in relation to project priority potentially include, *inter alia*:

**Project Finance:** targeting funding streams that presently have financial assistance available for certain project types which align with the Town Centre First Plan (for example, tackling vacancy and dereliction).

**Project Value for Money:** certain projects may be prioritised on a 'Value for Money' basis and particularly where a project(s) can create additional indirect benefits (for example, active travel development throughout Ireland has provided new recreation and leisure amenities for residents and visitors, however they are proven to deliver significant indirect economic benefits).

**Project Complexity:** prioritising the less complex projects at the start of the regeneration process to gain momentum.

**Project Land Requirement:** utilising lands within Local Authority ownership as a means of project delivery that doesn't require third party agreement that can lead to project delay.

**Project Need:** it may be the case there is an identified regeneration need within a particular town which is considered to be the main priority over short to medium terms (for example, enhancement of walking and cycling infrastructure).

## Funding

The project interventions as set out within the Town Centre First Plan will require the necessary public and private funding in order to deliver their objectives and to ultimately realise the Vision for Tullow.

Given the variety of stakeholders that will be involved in the regeneration process, as referred to, funding and investment for Tullow Town Centre may be secured from a range of sources including:

- Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) - a €1 billion fund distributed by central government to be invested in rural Ireland over the period 2019 to 2027 for settlements of less than 10,000 persons.
- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) - funding distributed by regional assemblies which supports the sustainable regeneration of towns and urban centres using a Town Centre First Framework.
- Town & Village Renewal Scheme - funded under Project Ireland 2040 as part of Our Rural Future – Ireland's Rural Development Policy 2021-2025. For 2022, the funding focus sought to bring vacant and derelict buildings and sites back into use.
- National Transport Authority's (NTA) Active Travel Investment Programme for sustainable transport projects.
- Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme provides funding for the development of new outdoor recreational infrastructure and for the necessary repair, enhancement or promotion of existing outdoor recreation infrastructure in countryside areas across Ireland.
- Carlow County Council funding programmes as available.



New funding and investment streams, not currently in operation, may become viable options for Tullow in future years and cognisance needs to be given to same.

### **Monitoring and Measuring Success**

As with any plan or framework document, an important task is to monitor its progress and to ascertain levels of progress periodically. For Tullow Town Centre, this will be a key step in the overall regeneration process as it allows for TCF Plan objectives, outcomes, project priorities for example to be evaluated in light of changing circumstances, funding availability or other relevant matters.

At certain intervals in time, the Town Centre First Plan should be measured against a range of performance indicators. Such indicators can be related to the four TCF Plan themes and may include, but are not limited to:

#### **Environment**

- Greater footfall in core retail area particularly The Market Square.
- Increase in non-resident visitors.
- Positive health and well-being outcomes.
- Improvements to the visual quality of the urban environment.

#### **Economy**

- New businesses opening and business expansion.
- Diversity of uses in operation.
- Vacancy rates.
- Increased employment generation.

#### **Movement**

- Walking and cycling trips increased.
- Use of private car visibly reduced.
- Greater connectivity to Town Centre.

### **Urban Structure**

- Infill, backland and opportunity sites and vacant/derelict buildings developed as first priority.
- Increased Town Centre living.
- Sustainable balance of built form and open space within Town Centre.

The monitoring of TCF Plan progress should be undertaken by the Town Regeneration Officer with support and assistance by the Town Team.

## Catalyst Projects

As part of the Implementation and Delivery Plan for Tullow, a number of projects have been identified as catalyst projects whereby they have the potential to deliver the greatest impacts and outcomes for the Town Centre.

A project summary is provided at Table 5.1 which sets out information regarding project timeframes, phasing, estimated project costs and implementation details.

### The Market Square

**Description:** Re-imagine The Market Square as a social space with enhancement to the visual quality of the urban environment.

**Cost:** c. €750,000 - c. €900,000

**Timeframe:** 0 - 5 years

**Actors:** Department of Rural and Community Development, Carlow County Council

### Courthouse Building

**Description:** Restoration and extension of former Courthouse building as a new library and centre of learning with public realm upgrades.

**Cost:** c. €2.8 million - c. €3.2 million

**Timeframe:** 0 - 5 years

**Actors:** Department of Rural and Community Development, Carlow County Council, Heritage Council

### Heritage Gardens & Exemplar Housing

**Description:** Heritage-led project to create new amenity destination for residents and visitors along with new exemplar housing and community uses within walking distance of The Market Square.

**Cost:** c. €15 million - c. €20 million

**Timeframe:** 5 - 15 years

**Actors:** Department of Rural and Community Development, Carlow County Council

### Biodiversity Walking Loops

**Description:** New walking and cycle routes with enhanced connectivity to Mount Wolseley resort to the south east of the Town Centre.

**Cost:** c. €1.5 million - c. €2 million

**Timeframe:** 0 - 5 years

**Actors:** Department of Rural and Community Development, Carlow County Council, National Transport Authority, Private Landowners

### River Walk

**Description:** New active travel routes situated along the River Slaney.

**Cost:** c. €1 million - c. €1.5 million

**Timeframe:** 0 - 5 years

**Actors:** Department of Rural and Community Development, Carlow County Council, National Transport Authority, Private Landowners



Table 5.1 Summary of Project Timeframe, Phasing, Cost and Implementation Details

Project Details	Project Cost (exc. VAT) *	Project Phasing
<b>The Market Square</b>	c. €750,000 - c. €900,000	Single Phase
<b>Courthouse Building</b>	c. €2.8 million - c. €3.2 million	Single Phase
<b>River Walk</b>	c. €1 million - c. €1.5 million	Multiple Phases
<b>Captain Murphy Memorial Hall</b>	c. €100,000 - c. €500,000	Single Phase
<b>Biodiversity Walking Loops</b>	c. €1.75 million - c. €2.75 million	Multiple Phases
<b>Riverfront Amenity Areas</b>	c. €350,000 - c. €500,000	Multiple Phases
<b>Town Park</b>	c. €400,000 - c. €600,000	Single Phase
<b>Water Activity Area</b>	c. €350,000 - c. €500,000	Single Phase
<b>Laneways &amp; Alleyways</b>	c. €400,000 - c. €500,000	Multiple Phases
<b>Pedestrian/Cycle Bridges (including Biodiversity Bridge)</b>	c. €3.8 million - c. €4.9 million	Multiple Phases
<b>Heritage Gardens</b>	c. €15 million - c. €20 million	Multiple Phases

\*All project costs should be subject to review to allow for inflation and for other economic factors to be fully considered.

Project Timeframe	Implementation
0 - 5 years	Project comprises works to upgrade and re-imagine The Market Square as a new civic plaza area that will deliver public realm enhancements while promoting greater social interaction. The subject lands required for this project intervention are under Local Authority ownership. The proposed works can be undertaken in a single phase in order to complete this scheme.
0 - 5 years	The development of the Courthouse will deliver a new Library and Centre of Learning in the Town Centre. The Courthouse building is under Local Authority ownership, however the lands to the rear are under third party ownership. The proposed works to the building and public realm can be completed within a single phase of works.
0 - 5 years	Project incorporates a significant tract of land along the River Slaney which includes various land parcels in third party ownership. Multiple phases are considered necessary to complete this project intervention.
0 - 5 years	The refurbishment of Captain Murphy Memorial Hall will bring forward a new, modern and multi-purpose community hall in Tullow. It is considered that given the nature of the upgrade works proposed this project can be undertaken in a single phase. Building is not presently in the ownership of the Local Authority.
0 - 5 years	Similar to the River Walk scheme, this project has a significant land requirement with land parcels under third party ownership. Multiple phases will be necessary to complete all of the proposed biodiversity walking routes.
0 - 5 years	Subject lands required for upgrade works are under Local Authority ownership. Project has a number of different locations and therefore a multi-phase approach may be required.
0 - 5 years	Project will deliver a much improved and attractive Town Park for the local community which is under Local Authority ownership. Upgrade works can be carried out in a single phase.
0 - 5 years	The costs for this project are indicative at this stage and will be contingent upon the scale and nature of activities that are ultimately brought forward at this location.
5 - 10 years	This connectivity project comprises a number of individual laneways/alleys and as such will require multiple phases for completion. Lands in third party ownership will also required.
5 - 10 years	Parcels of land in private ownership will be needed to complete this active travel scheme. Multiple phases are considered necessary to deliver all bridges over the River Slaney as proposed. Project has alignment with a number of other projects such as the River Walk and Biodiversity Walking Loops.
5 - 15 years	Significant portion of backlands needed to accommodate this project. Identified lands required are within Local Authority ownership. Given the quantum of proposed development, this project will need multiple phases to complete. Indicative project costs are based on the Local Authority delivering the residential element, however final costings will depend on the delivery strategy adopted (for e.g. Local Authority as housing provider, formulation of a Public Private Partnership).



# Tullow - Future Town Centre Context



# Appendix I

# Baseline Report





# Tullow Town Centre First Plan

## Baseline Report

December 2022



Rialtas  
na hÉireann  
Government  
of Ireland

Tionscadal Éireann  
Project Ireland  
2040

URBAN  
AGENCY

RMLA. SYSTRA

# C

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Prepared By: RMLA

Status: Draft

Date: 21st December 2022

# Preface

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**Project Tullow 2040 – Masterplan will provide a cohesive and planned approach to the future development of the Town focused on the Town Centre and emphasising placemaking, town centre living, the social and economic purpose of the Town, enterprise/job creation and a collaborative stakeholder development approach.**

# Introduction

This Baseline Report (hereafter 'Report') has been prepared by RMLA, Urban Agency and SYSTRA as part of the Tullow Town Centre First Plan. The Report will examine and establish the baseline scenario in order to ultimately support and inform the development of the Town Centre Plan for Tullow. This Report will be informed by *inter alia* the following:

- **Planning Context:** establishing the planning context as applicable to Tullow at national, regional and local levels.
- **Assessment of Tullow:** in respect of its buildings, public spaces/streets, modes of transport and arrival points, urban fabric, physical character, setting within the landscape, areas and quarters, planting/green spaces, current pedestrian and cycle provision and urban design opportunities etc.
- **Socio-Demographic Profile:** collation of data in order to formulate a socio-demographic profile of the town in terms of its population, age structure, rates of employment, labour status, educational attainment and housing for example.
- **Urban Form & Transportation:** undertaking an audit of Tullow's existing urban form in terms of compiling a record of the public spaces, built form, streetscapes and transport system/infrastructure.
- **Sustainable Placemaking:** including a review of planned development and availability of sites/premises, physical and environmental constraints to development, derelict and brownfield land, connectivity and accessibility

and the overall quality of the town's built environment.

This Report follows Task 1 of the Project programme and the formulation of an Inception Report for Carlow County Council. The Inception Report set out the details of the project along with the management structure for Tullow while providing information regarding the key contacts who are involved, project deliverables and core principles associated with the overall project.

An initial meeting was held which provided the opportunity to discuss with the Client and Community Representatives the background to the project, the study area, the history and development of Tullow, the opportunities and challenges, initiatives, the role of engagement and consultation, the issues that will need to be addressed and timelines. Public consultation events were held on 26th October 2022 and 29th November 2022.

Related to this, the Inception Report also contained a Communication Strategy outlining how the Project Team will communicate with the Client Team and a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy outlining how the various stakeholders will be involved in the Town Centre First Plan.

# Planning Context

# 1

# National Policy

## Project 2040: National Planning Framework

The National Planning Framework (hereafter ‘NPF’) is the government’s high-level strategic framework for guiding Ireland’s future growth and development to 2040.<sup>1</sup> The NPF’s goal is to help rural and urban Ireland successfully accommodate growth and change by supporting a shift toward Ireland’s regions and cities while simultaneously acknowledging the importance of rural areas. The NPF is made up of ten National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs), which drive Ireland’s economic, environmental, and social growth at national, regional, and local levels.

The NPF’s purpose is to create a shared vision and set of goals for all communities across the country. These objectives are referred to as NSOs and the NPF is responsible for achieving them. The following NSOs are, *inter alia*, relevant to the Tullow Town Centre First Plan:

- **Compact Growth:** Carefully managing the sustainable growth of compact cities, towns and villages which will add value and create more appealing places in which people can live and work.
- **Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities:** Rural areas play a key role in defining our identity, in driving our economy and our high-quality environment and must be a major part of our future development.
- **Enhanced Amenities and Heritage:** This objective will ensure that our cities, towns and villages are desirable and can offer a good quality of life. Investment will be required in

well-designed public realm, which includes public spaces, parks and streets, as well as recreational infrastructure.

- **Sustainable Mobility:** Electrify our mobility systems and moving away from polluting and carbon intensive propulsion systems to new technologies such as electric vehicles, so that by 2040 our cities and towns will enjoy a cleaner, quieter environment free of combustion engine driven transport systems.

Furthermore, the NPF provides a number of policy objectives structured around the National Policy Objectives (NPOs). The following objectives should be noted in relation to this plan:<sup>2</sup>

- **National Policy Objective 4:** Ensure the creation of attractive, liveable, well designed, high quality urban places that are home to diverse and integrated communities that enjoy a high quality of life and well-being.
- **National Policy Objective 5:** Develop cities and towns of sufficient scale and quality to compete internationally and to be drivers of national and regional growth, investment and prosperity.
- **National Policy Objective 6:** Regenerate and rejuvenate cities, towns and villages of all types and scale as environmental assets, that can accommodate changing roles and functions, increased residential population and employment activity and enhanced levels of amenity and design quality, in order to sustainably influence and support their surrounding area.

<sup>1</sup> Project Ireland 2040, National Planning Framework, pg. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Project Ireland 2040, National Planning Framework, pg. 55.

- **National Policy Objective 7:** Apply a tailored approach to urban development, that will be linked to the Rural and Urban Regeneration and Development Fund, with a particular focus on reversing the stagnation or decline of many smaller urban centres, by identifying and establishing new roles and functions and enhancement of local infrastructure and amenities and in more self-contained settlements of all sizes, supporting a continuation of balanced population and employment growth.
- **National Policy Objective 11:** In meeting urban development requirements, there will be a presumption in favour of development that can encourage more people and generate more jobs and activity within existing cities, towns and villages, subject to development meeting appropriate planning standards and achieving targeted growth.
- **National Policy Objective 15:** Support the sustainable development of rural areas by encouraging growth and arresting decline in areas that have experienced low population growth or decline in recent decades and by managing the growth of areas that are under strong urban influence to avoid over-development, while sustaining vibrant rural communities.
- **National Policy Objective 16:** Target the reversal of rural decline in the core of small towns and villages through sustainable targeted measures that address vacant premises and deliver sustainable reuse and regeneration outcomes.
- **National Policy Objective 18a:** Support the proportionate growth of and appropriately designed development in rural towns that will contribute to their regeneration and renewal, including interventions in the public realm, the provision of amenities, the acquisition of sites and the provision of services.
- **National Policy Objective 18b:** Develop a programme for ‘new homes in small towns and villages’ with local authorities, public infrastructure agencies such as Irish Water and local communities to provide serviced sites with appropriate infrastructure to attract people to build their own homes and live in small towns and villages.
- **National Policy Objective 27:** Ensure the integration of safe and convenient alternatives to the car into the design of our communities, by prioritising walking and cycling accessibility to both existing and proposed developments, and integrating physical activity facilities for all ages.
- **National Policy Objective 28:** Plan for a more diverse and socially inclusive society that targets equality of opportunity and a better quality of life for all citizens, through improved integration and greater accessibility in the delivery of sustainable communities and the provision of associated services.

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<sup>3</sup> Project Ireland 2040, National Planning Framework, pg. 32.

<sup>4</sup> Project Ireland 2040, National Planning Framework, pg. 33.

<sup>5</sup> Project Ireland 2040, National Planning Framework, pg. 35.



## National Development Plan 2021-2030

As part of Project Ireland 2040, the National Development Plan (NDP) sets out the Government's investment strategy and budget for the period 2021-2030. It is an ambitious plan that balances the significant demand for public investment across all sectors and regions of Ireland with a major focus on improving the delivery of infrastructure projects to ensure speed of delivery and value for money. The NDP will incorporate a total public investment of €165 billion over the period 2021-2030.<sup>6</sup>

Since the adoption of the NPF in 2018 a range of supporting measures have been implemented, this includes the roll-out and operation of the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF). The URDF has proved to be vital in the promotion of co-ordinated investment in the renewal and redevelopment of cities and towns. Launched as part of the previous NDP, it will be extended to 2030 with an associated level of additional investment targeted in an integrated, dynamic and responsive way to underpin the NPF by supporting the regeneration and rejuvenation of our towns and cities with particular focus on compact growth.<sup>7</sup>

The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of the quality of our urban living spaces and in this context the role of URDF has gained an increased significance as a catalyst for post-Covid-19 economic recovery, social renewal and regeneration of cities and towns.

URDF Funding is to be directed across a number of strands, which will separately address the needs of cities and towns across the Country, reflecting both the experience of the funding calls to date, and the objectives of Housing for All in terms of accelerating new supply and tackling vacancy in towns, which is reflective of the Town Centres First approach.

Towns aligned with the Town Centre First Approach will seek to provide a toolkit for the enablement of specific visions for towns, specific criteria will be included in the URDF to encourage the activation of vacant properties, and to bring stock back into productive use.

The bulk of funding has been assigned through a competitive bid process, however the time is now favourable, particularly with the enabling focus under "Town Centre First" for the Department to work with local authorities to ensure a steady pipeline of projects for consideration for URDF funding rather than a competitive bid process.<sup>8</sup>

## Our Rural Future - Rural Development Policy 2021-2025

Our Rural Future provides a framework for the development of rural Ireland over the next five years. The policy is forward-looking and ambitious and addresses both the challenges facing rural areas and the opportunities which rural communities can benefit from in the coming years.

The Government will deliver innovative solutions to key policy challenges affecting rural areas through this policy including investment, job creation, sustainable population growth, balanced regional development, access to services, broadband connectivity, social cohesion and inclusion, Brexit and climate change adaptation. The implementation of this policy will have a transformative effect on rural areas and assist rural Ireland which is integral to our national recovery and future development.<sup>9</sup>

The strategy promotes a comprehensive, place-based approach to rural development, encouraging and supporting rural communities to establish cohesive and integrated plans to address their area's long-term requirements. This strategy

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<sup>6</sup> National Development Plan 2021-2030, pg. 41.

<sup>7</sup> National Development Plan 2021-2030, pg. 57.

<sup>8</sup> National Development Plan 2021-2030, pg. 58.

<sup>9</sup> Our Rural Future - Rural Development Policy 2021-2025, pg. 8.

recognises that there is no one-size-fits-all solution to satisfy every area's developmental needs and advocates a holistic, place-based approach to rural development which encourages and supports rural communities to develop cohesive and integrated plans to meet the long-term needs of their own local area.

Our Rural Future focuses on the following thematic objectives:

- Supporting improved quality employment and career opportunities in rural areas.
- Assisting the regeneration, repopulation and development of rural towns and villages. Enhancing the participation, leadership and resilience of rural communities.
- Enhancing public services in rural areas
- Supporting a Just Transition to a climate neutral economy.
- Nurturing our culture and heritage.

One of the key deliverables in the plan is **Revitalising Rural Towns and Villages** which is to be delivered through the following measures:<sup>10</sup>

- Put the future development and regeneration of rural towns at the heart of decision-making through the Town Centre First approach.
- Invest significantly in the revitalisation of rural town centres through the €1 billion Rural Regeneration and Development Fund.
- Expand the Town and Village Renewal Scheme as a key enabler to bring vacant and derelict buildings and sites back into use as multi-purpose spaces and for residential occupancy.
- As part of Budget 2022, examine the scope to introduce new financial supports to

encourage increased residential occupancy in rural towns .

- Review and extend the regulations which exempt certain vacant commercial premises, such as “over the shop” type spaces, from requiring planning permission for change of use for residential purposes.
- Provide seed capital to Local Authorities to provide serviced sites at cost in towns and villages to allow individuals to build homes and encourage town living.
- Encourage Local Authorities to use their powers under CPO, where appropriate, to tackle vacant and derelict properties in Town Centres, to bring vacant properties back into use.
- Identify potential State owned properties in rural towns and villages which can be used for community purposes.
- Examine the feasibility of introducing ‘meanwhile use’ legislation so that empty buildings and shopfronts on main streets can be brought back into use on a short-term, temporary basis as pop up shops, street markets, exhibitions spaces and other purposes.
- Provide funding to support the upgrade and enhancement of shopfronts and street facades in towns and villages and for the adaptation of town centres for outdoor socialising.
- Fund Local Authorities to adapt and improve outdoor public spaces for cultural events and activities all-year round.

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<sup>10</sup> Our Rural Future - Rural Development Policy 2021-2025, pg. 11.

- Invest significantly in the development of parks, green spaces and recreational amenities in town centres to make them vibrant hubs for community enjoyment, and to increase footfall for local businesses.
- Provide grants to retail businesses in rural towns and villages to establish an online presence to complement traditional footfall trade.

## Town Centre First - A Policy Approach for Irish Towns

Town Centre First represents a new approach to the development of our towns where local communities and local businesses can be central to reimagining their own towns and planning their own futures. Every town is different. Each town is unique and requires unique solutions to the challenges and opportunities they face.

*“The Town Centre First policy aims to create town centres that function as viable, vibrant and attractive locations for people to live, work and visit, while also functioning as the service, social, cultural and recreational hub for the local community”<sup>11</sup>*

The Town Centre First policy sets out a range of Actions which collectively will create the framework required to support our towns to achieve the desired outcomes and deliver on their own unique vision. These Actions are centred around improving our knowledge and understanding of our towns and what they need. Key priorities in establishing and growing this framework include:<sup>12</sup>

1. **A Network of Town Regeneration Officers** to bring a co-ordinated approach to delivery across the country.
2. **Capacity Building Programmes** for Town Teams to increase the skills and capabilities of Town Teams and enable them to deliver effectively.
3. **A National, Integrated and Scaled-up Health Check Programme** for towns which builds and expands on the success of the Heritage Council’s Collaborative Town Centre Health Check model and results in a national database of towns.
4. **A Town Centre First Toolkit to include a Web Portal** which will provide access to all available TCF resources and funding. The Toolkit will provide a best practice model for developing TCF plans that is informed by existing models and include specific strands targeting key issues.
5. **A Targeted Investment Programme** to support towns in delivering the interventions identified in their bespoke Town Centre First Plans.
6. **Pathfinder Towns** that will be immediately assisted to act as initial demonstrators of the TCF policy approach. A key ongoing focus of the policy will also be to identify early-stage towns where local stakeholders require more support to collaborate as part of a Town Team and to access investment programmes.
7. **Mechanisms to put Town Centres at the heart of decision making** including a methodology to assess the impact of development on town centres for applicability within the statutory planning system.
8. **Better data which enhances our understanding of Ireland’s towns** and builds

<sup>11</sup> Town Centre First Policy, pg. 5.

<sup>12</sup> Town Centre First Policy, pg. 6.

an evidence base for the ongoing evolution of the TCF policy.

9. **A new National Town Centre First Office** established.
10. **Cross-Government focus and alignment** through a National Oversight and Advisory Group.

The Programme for Government recognised the need for, and committed to, the development of a co-ordinated, strategic approach to town centre regeneration that would maximise the impact of the Government's considerable investment in urban regeneration. This Town Centre First policy, informed by the model in Scotland, encourages Government Departments, Local Authorities, businesses and communities to put town centres at the heart of decision-making.

## **Housing for All - A New Housing Plan for Ireland**

Housing for All is the Government's housing plan to 2030 which seeks to improve Ireland's housing system and deliver more homes of all types for people with different housing needs. In order to address vacancy (Housing Policy Objective 19), a new *Croí Conaithe (Towns)* fund has been included within Housing for All that seeks to bring forward serviced sites for housing to attract people to build their own homes and to support the refurbishment of vacant properties and enabling people to live in small towns and villages in a sustainable way.

New housing that is brought forward under the *Croí Conaithe (Towns)* fund is expected to be walkable from town and village centres and be guided by responsive design principles so that they are integrated into the town/village with a close visual relationship to the prevailing vernacular.

## **Climate Action Plan 2021**

The Climate Action Plan sets out Ireland's strategic objective in transitioning to a climate-resilient, biodiversity-rich, environmentally sustainable and climate-neutral economy by 2050. Key climate targets for the country include:

- A reduction in emissions from electricity generation and large industry sectors by 43% by 2030.
- A reduction in emissions from all other sectors by 30% by 2030.
- An economy-wide 2030 reduction in emissions by at least 55%.

In order to reach the above targets, sustained efforts will be required in terms of matters such as electricity generation through the rapid build-out of renewable generation capacity, accelerating the electrification of road transport and a modal shift to public and active transport, retro-fitting of buildings and acceleration of zero-emissions heating in commercial buildings for example.

## **Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024**

The Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (CCAS) 2019-2024 vision states that, "Carlow County Council will fulfil a leadership role in learning about and responding to the impacts of climate change, be fully engaged with the risks and opportunities of a changing climate and build a resilient future for and together with, the communities of Carlow".<sup>13</sup>

A series of thematic areas, with associated goals, are contained within the CCAS and are summarised as follows:

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<sup>13</sup> Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, pg. 42.

- Theme 1 - Local Adaptation Governance and Business Operations.
- Theme 2 - Infrastructure and Built Environment.
- Theme 3 - Land Use and Development.
- Theme 4 - Drainage and Flood Management.
- Theme 5 - Natural Resources and Cultural Infrastructure.
- Theme 6 - Community Health and Well-being.
- Theme 7 - Mobility.
- Theme 8 - Economic Development.
- Theme 9 - Resource Management.<sup>14</sup>

The themes and goals are underpinned by four principle aims (guiding principles) which are mainstream adaptation, informed decision-making, building resilience and capitalising on opportunities.

### **National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland**

The National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (NIFTI) sets out clear principles for the consideration of future transport investment and is closely aligned with key Government policy priorities and commitments, such as the Climate Action Plan and the National Development Plan.

The NIFTI sets out four key priorities for transport investment:

1. Decarbonisation.
2. Protection and Renewal.
3. Mobility of People and Goods in Urban Areas.
4. Enhanced Regional and Rural Connectivity.

### **Heritage Ireland 2030**

Heritage Ireland 2030 is a framework for the protection, conservation, promotion, and management of Ireland’s heritage for the next decade and beyond. Heritage Ireland 2030 recognises the importance of heritage for its intrinsic value, for economic development, tourism and innovation and the role it plays in individual and societal well-being.

The objectives of Heritage Ireland 2030 are set out under three themes:

1. **Communities and Heritage:** local communities have a vital role to play in protecting heritage. As enshrined in the Faro Convention, communities are at the frontline in caring for, enjoying and sharing those things that are special about their places, their history and local traditions.
2. **Leadership and Heritage:** the need for a highly effective heritage policy and regulatory infrastructure is recognised.
3. **Heritage Partnerships:** build stronger heritage partnerships, enabling stakeholders to better work together to ensure the protection and value of Ireland’s heritage.

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<sup>14</sup> Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019 - 2024 pg. 43-43.

## **The Digital Connectivity Strategy for Ireland Draft Paper 2022**

The Draft Paper sets out that the availability of high speed, reliable digital connectivity will support the delivery of Ireland’s economic and social ambitions in the digital era. This digital connectivity will support more balanced regional development, as well as supporting the green transition, including by enabling remote working, and the implementation of the Government’s Remote Working Strategy, and facilitating greater access to regional talent and skills. It will contribute to the reinvigoration of town and villages and help to address the digital divide for rural areas, including the delivery of connectivity to even the most remote rural locations, facilitating the joining up of national networks.

Digital targets include:

- All Irish households and businesses will be covered by a Gigabit network no later than 2028.
- All populated areas covered by 5G by no later than 2030.
- Complete the delivery of digital connectivity to all Connected Hubs and all Schools by 2023.

## **National Implementation Plan for the Sustainable Development Goals 2022-2024**

The new (second) Implementation Plan aims to build on the structures and mechanisms from the first Plan and to develop and integrate additional approaches in areas identified through review and consultation as requiring further action. It sets out Ireland’s Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) implementation strategy for 2022-2024 and forms part of a series of consecutive Implementation Plans, each building on the previous iteration, to work towards achieving the SDGs.

Strategic Objectives set out within the Implementation Plan include:

1. To embed the SDG framework into the work of Government Departments to achieve greater Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development.
2. To integrate the SDGs into Local Authority work to better support the localisation of the SDGs.
3. Greater partnerships for the Goals.
4. To further incorporate the principle of Leave No One Behind into Ireland’s Agenda 2030 implementation and reporting mechanisms.
5. Strong reporting mechanisms.

# Regional Policy

## Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region

The RSES provides the basis for the integration of land use and transport planning in the Southern Region, informing the preparation and implementation of plans, programmes and projects at all levels. The Vision for the Southern Region set out in the RSES is led by the need for transformative change.

By 2040, the population of the Region will most likely grow by 380,000 people to reach almost two million and this growth will require new homes and new jobs. The RSES seeks to build on the Southern Region's strengths and potential to become a more prosperous, sustainable, climate resilient and attractive region for the benefit of its entire population. The RSES has 11 no. Strategy Statements which seek to build a strong, resilient and sustainable region.

The vision for the RSES is:

*“The RSES vision for the Southern Region is led by the need for transformative change. By 2040, the population of the Region will most likely grow by 380,000 people to reach almost two million. This growth will require new homes and new jobs. It also raises questions as to where our future population will live and work, what kind of quality of life will we enjoy and how we can adapt to the challenges we face such as climate change, regional disparity and global uncertainty. An unchecked “business as usual” scenario will diminish our quality of life, our environment, erode our competitiveness and compound*

*regional disparity. There is a need for a different approach to planning for the future.”<sup>15</sup>*

The Regional Policy Objectives, which are linked to National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs) of the NPF, that have particular relevance to Tullow include:

**Compact Growth** - Strengthening and growing the cities and metropolitan areas; harnessing the combined strength of the 3 cities as a counterbalance to the Greater Dublin Area, through quality development, regeneration and compact growth; building on the strong network of towns and supporting villages and rural areas.

**Enhanced Regional Accessibility** - Enhancing regional accessibility through upgraded transport infrastructure and digital connectivity allied to a transformed settlement hierarchy.

**Sustainable Mobility** - Transforming the transport systems towards well functioning, sustainable, integrated public transport, walking and cycling and electric vehicles.

**Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities** - Strengthening the role of and improving quality of life in the Region's diverse rural areas and communities.

**Diversity, Language, Culture and Heritage Enhancement** - Strengthening and protecting the Region's diversity, language and culture, recreational assets, and natural and built heritage.

**Low Carbon, Climate Resilient and Sustainable Society** - Safeguarding and enhancing the environment through sustainable development, prioritising action on climate change across the Region and driving the transition to a low carbon and climate resilient society.

<sup>15</sup> RSES for the Southern Region, pg. 18

- **Sustainable, Planned and Infrastructure-led Development** - Providing infrastructure and services in a sustainable, planned and infrastructure-led manner to ensure the sustainable management of water, waste and other environmental resources.

The settlement of Tullow is referenced with in RSES in terms of promoting and facilitating economic integration between urban centres in the county.

## **South East Regional Enterprise Plan to 2024**

The South East Regional Enterprise Plan (SEREP) was brought forward by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment in March 2022 and sets out projects and initiatives across the South East region.

The SEREP has five strategic objectives:

- **Start and Grow** - Encouraging entrepreneurship and enhancing the region's start up ecosystem .
- **Green Growth** - Ensuring that the green economy becomes an engine for future job creation and economic growth in the region.
- **Smart Specialisation and Clustering** - The principles of smart specialisation and clustering are critical for the region to create a resilient, inclusive, sustainable and competitive economy.
- **Innovate** - Building on our existing RD&I capacity to place innovation at the heart of the South-East economy.
- **Place** - Developing a region that is attractive to both domestic and international visitors and communicating the benefits of living and working in the South-East.



# Local Policy

## Carlow County Development Plan 2022 – 2028

The County Development Plan (CDP) for Carlow was adopted on 23rd May 2022 and came into effect on 4th July 2022. The CDP sets out the policies and objectives that will guide the proper planning and sustainable development within the County over the six year Plan period to 2028. The strategic vision as contained within the CDP seeks:

*“The Vision for County Carlow is to champion quality of life through local employment provision, high quality development, healthy placemaking and transformational regeneration, to grow and attract a diverse innovative economy, to support the transition from a linear to a circular economy, and to a low carbon climate resilient environment, to embrace inclusiveness and enhance our natural and built environment for future generations.”<sup>16</sup>*

In summary, the strategic objectives outlined in the CDP include, inter alia:

- S.O1 - Direct new development in accordance with the Core and Settlement Strategies which will provide for the sustainable development of the County for the period 2022-2028 in accordance with the principles of compact growth, consolidation and regeneration.
- S.O4 - Promote consolidation and growth in the District Towns of Tullow and Muine Bheag along with targeted investment to improve local employment, services and sustainable transport options, building on existing assets.
- S.O5 - Maintain and promote a broad economic and employment base in the County which seeks to maximise the economic assets of the County, including third level institutes, the strategic location of Carlow proximate to Dublin and Waterford Cities along the M9 and the Midlands along the N80.
- S.O6 - Support the role of rural areas with an increased emphasis on the renewal of smaller towns and villages and to seek to sustain the livelihood of rural communities by promoting the development of the wider rural economy while recognising the need to sustainably manage land and resources.
- S.O7 - Protect and enhance the unique character and identity of Carlow’s towns and villages and improve quality of life and well-being through regeneration, healthy placemaking, good quality design with the creation of attractive public spaces that are vibrant, distinctive, safe and accessible and which promote and facilitate positive social interaction.
- S.O8 - Transition to a low carbon and climate resilient County by developing renewable indigenous energy resources, by supporting energy efficiency, reducing energy demand, and by implementing mitigation and adaptation responses to climate change.

<sup>16</sup> Carlow CDP 2022 - 2027, Volume 1, pg. 1.

- S.O9 - Afford suitable protection to the environment, built, cultural and natural heritage assets of Carlow, to ensure their survival for future generations and to ensure they contribute to the future sustainable development of the County.
- S.O10 - Conserve protect and enhance the County's Green Infrastructure (including ecosystems and habitats) and associated biodiversity and so provide communities with a wide range of environmental, social and economic benefits (ecosystem services).
- S.O12 - Ensure the proper integration of transportation and land use planning through the increased use of sustainable transport modes and the minimisation of travel demand to achieve a sustainable, integrated and low carbon transport system.
- S.O13 - Promote, develop and maintain sustainable communities in the County, through the provision of a range of facilities and services to meet the diverse and expanding needs of all residents including the needs of younger persons, thereby supporting community participation and social inclusion, and improving the quality of life for everyone.
- S.O14 - Support and promote tourism in the county as a key economic driver in a sustainable manner that is compatible with the sensitivity of rural areas, the existing quality of life, and the protection and enhancement of the county's natural environment.<sup>17</sup>

capacity for continued commensurate growth to become more self-sustaining.<sup>18</sup>

The CDP provides information regarding the settlement of Tullow and states that it is the second largest town in the County and as a market town has a strong employment and service base that serves surrounding areas. Tullow has capacity for growth however there is a need to develop supporting services and in particular to support sustainable travel and alternatives to car-based travelling.

Policy CS P9 of the CDP seeks to support the continued growth and sustainable development of Tullow (and Muine Bheag) with appropriate levels of growth... And as part of the review of the Local Area Plan sustainable compact growth of town centre zoned sites will be prioritised together with a renewed focus on the town centre first principles and the appropriate development of regeneration / opportunity sites.<sup>19</sup>

Policy CS O1 of the CDP will undertake an area based transport assessment as part of the LAP review that will inform the implementation of transport, demand management and land use measures to ensure the sustainable integration of land use and transport planning with an emphasis on enabling sustainable transport and mobility objectives for the Plan area.<sup>20</sup>

A review of the Tullow LAP is scheduled to commence in 2022/2023.

The CDP's Settlement Strategy, Tullow is designated as a Tier 2 'District Town' that are described as being well-developed serviced settlements with a moderate level of jobs supporting services and community facilities with good transport links and

<sup>17</sup> Carlow CDP 2022 - 2027, Volume 1, pg. 15-16

<sup>18</sup> Carlow CDP 2022 - 2027, Volume 1, pg. 9.

<sup>19</sup> Carlow CDP 2022 - 2027, Volume 1, pg. 27.

<sup>20</sup> Carlow CDP 2022 - 2027, Volume 1, pg. 28.

## Tullow Local Area Plan 2017 - 2023

The Tullow LAP sets out a strategic vision for the town which is:

*“To provide a focused approach to planning for the future growth of Tullow in a coherent manner and spatial fashion which seeks to deliver high levels of employment and balances future sustainable development with the conservation and enhancement of the town’s natural and built environment.”<sup>21</sup>*

The strategic aims for Tullow as set out within the LAP include<sup>22</sup>:

- SO 1: To create vibrant integrated communities in a more consolidated urban form.
- SO 2: To create a thriving town which contributes to the natural and built heritage amenities of the town and provides a vibrant and vital mixed-use environment.
- SO 3: To facilitate the creation of a sustainable vibrant economy which maximises the unique attributes of the town.

Policies and objectives within the Tullow LAP are categorised under a number of subject headings including Economic Development; Housing and Sustainable Neighbourhoods; Town Centre, Landscape and Public Realm; Transportation and Movement; Community, Social and Recreational Development; Utilities Infrastructure, Climate Change and Environmental Management; Built and Natural Heritage; and Tourism.

Opportunity sites are identified within the LAP and these are comprised of:

**Site 1 Mill Street Car Park** - The site comprises an existing surface car park located to the east of Bridge Street and to the south of Mill Street and across from the Tullow Civic Offices. The site has frontage to Mill Street and the Inner Relief Road and is considered to be a key town centre opportunity site. It is strategically located to form an extension to the town centre core and has the potential to deliver additional retail development that would complement and improve existing services in the town. Also, the redevelopment of this site has the potential to directly link with the town centre core at Mill Street, leading to The Market Square and Bridge Street and its redevelopment may act as a catalyst for additional development and the attraction of additional uses at these locations.<sup>23</sup>

**Site 2 The Thomas Traynor Road** - Thomas Traynor Road, near its junction with the N81, to the south of the River Slaney. The site currently consists of a number of warehouse/light industrial units alongside the river, and Wynne’s grain store facility is along the southern side of this approach road towards the N81. The site is considered to be a key opportunity site and should be prioritised for development. The site is strategically located along a main approach to the town centre and the areas redevelopment would allow for replacement of some of the existing buildings with a high quality development which would improve the character and appearance of the area.<sup>24</sup>

Character areas for Tullow comprise the Town Centre, the Riverfront and Industrial Areas which are situated within the south west area of Tullow.

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<sup>21</sup>Tullow LAP, 2017-2023, pg. 3.

<sup>22</sup>Tullow LAP, 2017-2023, pg. 2.

<sup>23</sup>Tullow LAP, 2017-2023, pg. 28.

<sup>24</sup>Tullow LAP, 2017-2023, pg. 28.

## County Carlow Local Economic and Community Plan 2016 - 2021

The purpose of the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) is to set out, for a six-year period, the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of County Carlow.

The LECP's guiding principles are as follows:

- The creation of a framework for an economic and community strategy for County Carlow.
- Promotion and main-streaming of equality.
- Sustainability – promoting a more resource efficient, green and more inclusive economy.
- Maximising returns – avoiding unnecessary overlap and duplication and achieving synergies through co-operation.
- Participative planning – meaningful participation and consultation in the planning process.
- Community consultation and engagement – participation, empowerment and collective decision making to achieve change at local level.
- Community Development principles - equality, participation, empowerment, collective decision making.
- Accessibility and ownership - the plan is written in a style that is open, straightforward and as accessible as possible.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> County Carlow LECP 2016-2021, pg. 13.

# Local Projects

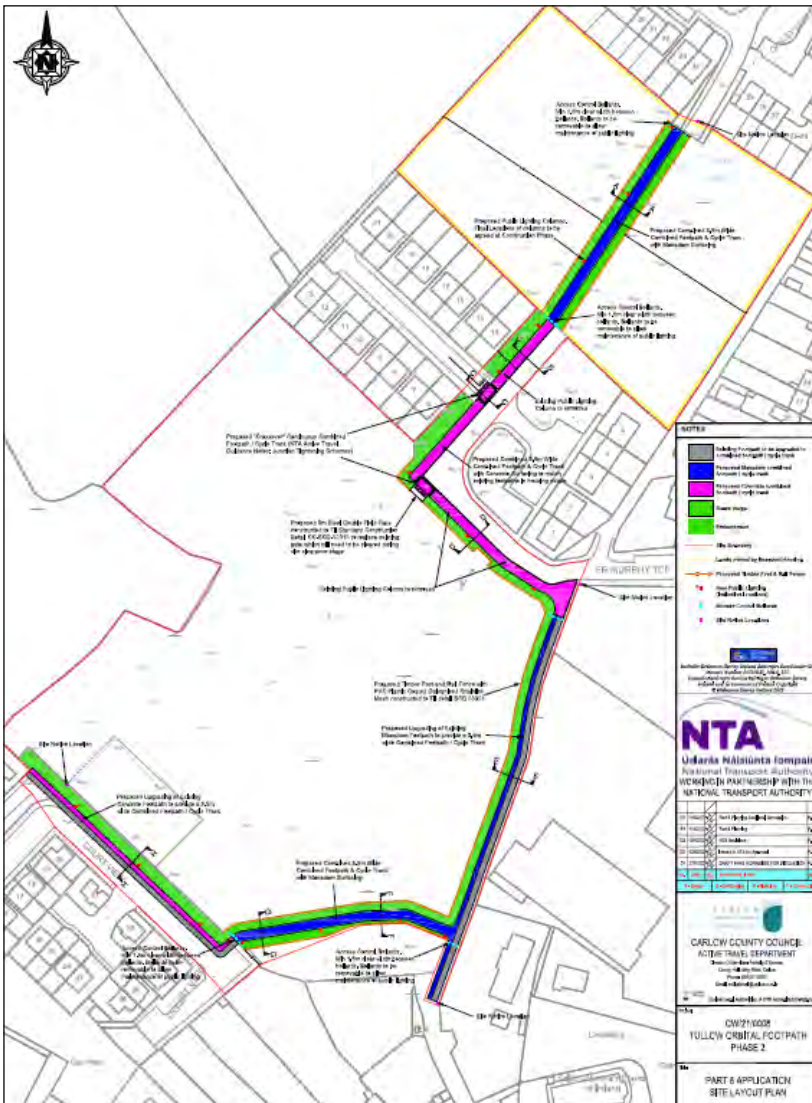
## Proposed Tullow Orbital Pedestrian and Cycle Scheme, Phase 2, Tullowphelim, Tullow

Part 8 Scheme for a development comprising:

- Provision of a combined 3.5m wide footpath/cycle track with macadam surfacing from Oakley Wood to An Caislean Development.
- Provision of a combined 3.5m wide footpath/cycle track with concrete surfacing from An Caislean to Castle Lane.
- Upgrading of existing macadam footpath to

provide a 3.5m wide combined footpath/cycle track along Castle Lane.

- Provision of a combined 3.5m wide footpath/cycle track with macadam surfacing from Castle Lane to Court View.
- Upgrading of existing concrete footpath at Court View to provide a 3.5m wide combined footpath/cycle track.
- Provision of timber post and rail fence.
- Installation of LED public lighting and associated ducting.
- Topsoiling & grass seeding.
- Installation of associated signage and road markings as necessary.



# Socio- Economic Analysis

# 2

# Socio-Economic Analysis

This section of the Report presents an analysis of socio-economic information for Tullow which has been primarily informed by data obtained from the Central Statistics Office (CSO). The analysis undertaken provides the baseline social, demographic and economic structures of Tullow along with other citizen-related information such as educational attainment and modes of transport utilised.

## Social and Demographic Structure

### Population

The settlement of Tullow had a population of 4,673 persons as recorded by the Census undertaken in 2016. While the preliminary results from the recent 2022 Census have not yet released Tullow's 2022 settlement population, the preliminary results do provide an updated population figure for the Tullow Urban and Rural Electoral Divisions which recorded a cumulative population figure of 5,387 persons. This represents a rise of 563 persons over the intercensal six year period. The preliminary 2022 Census results reveal that the population of County Carlow has risen to 61,931 which is a c.9% percentage increase since 2016.

### Age Structure

In terms of age structure, c.43% of Tullow's population was aged between 0 and 29 years with c.43% also aged between 30-59 years. Those persons aged 65 years and older accounted for c.11% of the town's population as identified in the 2016 census results (see Figure 2.1). Overall, Tullow is considered to have a young population with c.62% of its population aged 39 years or younger.

### Marital Status

Single persons accounted for the majority (c.57%) of all persons living in Tullow as recorded by the 2016 Census. Those who were identified as being 'Married' represented c.31% of the population. Persons who were recorded as being either 'Separated' and 'Widowed' cumulatively formed c.8% of Tullow's residents.

### Household Size

A 'One Person' household size accounted for c.24% of all households in Tullow with a slight increase to c.26% for 'Two Person' households. Cumulatively, half of all households in Tullow had no more than two persons (see Figure 2.2).

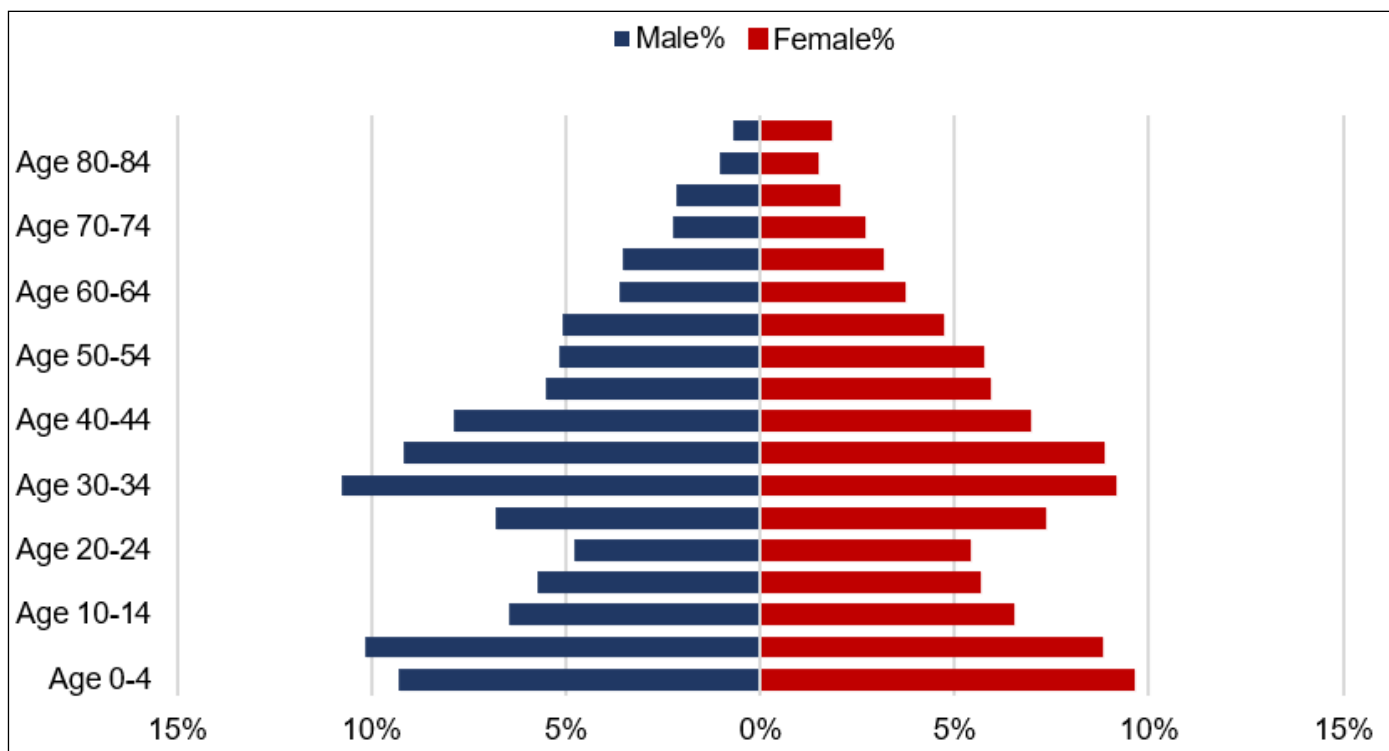
### Household Type

The most common household type recorded for Tullow was 'Married Couple with Children' with one quarter of all households (c.25%) within this category. Those in the 'Cohabiting with Children' category represented only c.10%, while 'One Parent Family (Mother) with Children' accounted for c.12% of all households in the town. As above, single person household types accounted for c.24%.

### Nationality / English Speaking Residents

The majority of Tullow residents had Irish nationality, unsurprisingly, at c.79%. Those persons holding Polish nationality comprised c.10% with other EU nationals at c.7% of residents. In terms of the ability to speak English, c.69% of foreign residents stated they could speak English either "Well" or "Very Well" with non-English speaking residents accounting for just c.4%.

**Figure 2.1 Age Structure - Tullow (2016 Census)**



### **Housing Tenure**

In terms of housing tenure, c.27% of private households in Tullow were ‘Owned with a Mortgage or Loan’. Houses that were ‘Owned Outright’ accounted for c.25%. Having regard to rented accommodation, c.20% of households were rented from a ‘Private Landlord’ with c.19% of Tullow’s households being ‘Rented from a Local Authority’. In total, c.52% of Tullow’s households had ownership of their property.

### **Occupancy Status**

As recorded by the 2016 Census data, c.88% of dwellings in Tullow were occupied with c.2% falling into the ‘Temporarily Absent’ category. ‘Other Vacant Dwellings’ accounted for c.8% of the total housing stock in the town.

### **Housing Stock**

In relation to Tullow’s housing stock, c.44% of the town’s households lived in properties that were

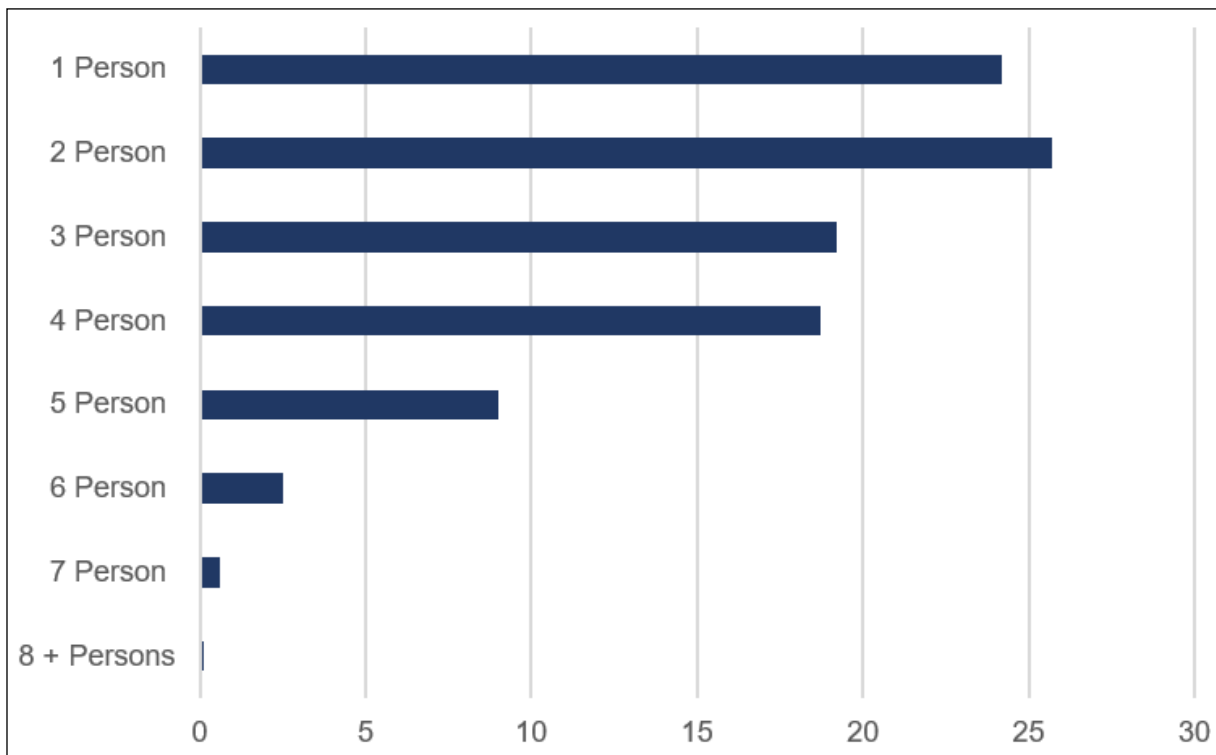
constructed from the year 2001 onwards. There was a decrease in households living in properties (at c.2%) built from the year 2011 and onwards. New housing stock is classified as being constructed from the year 1991 onwards, and in that regard c.55% of households in Tullow were living in a property that was considered ‘new’ stock. Older housing stock built prior to the year 1960 (inclusive of 1960) represented c.15% of households.

### **Educational Attainment**

For persons aged 15 years and above, a total of c.21% of Tullow residents had attained an ‘Upper Secondary’ level of education with c.14% achieving a ‘Technical or Vocational’ qualification. In relation to Third Level education, c.11% of residents had achieved an ‘Ordinary/Bachelor’s Degree’ with a further c.3% in total having obtained a postgraduate qualification.



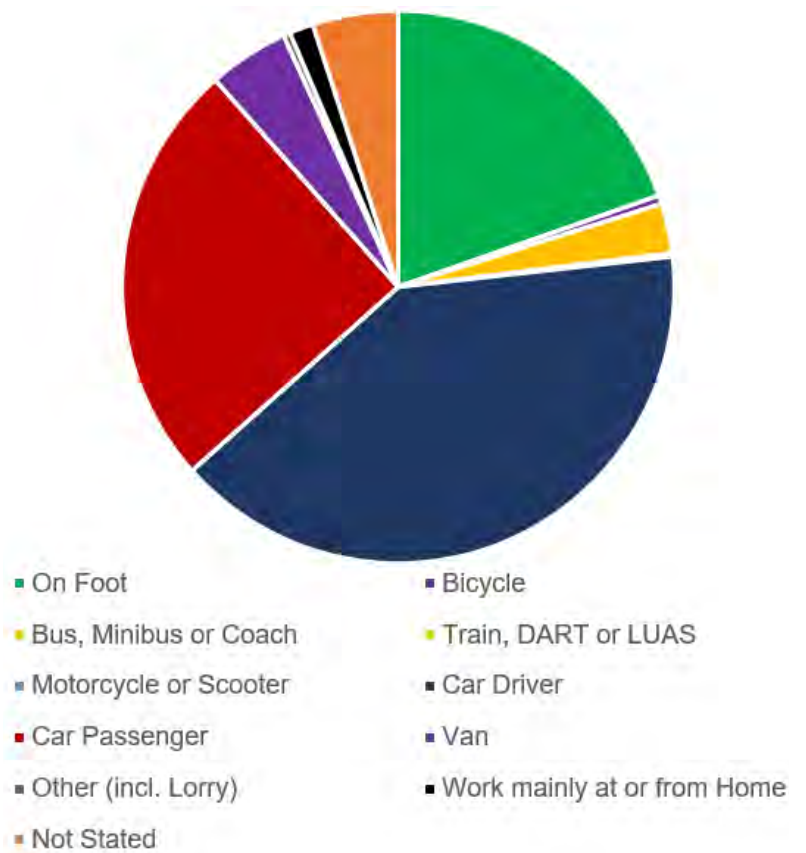
**Figure 2.2 Household Size - Tullow (2016 Census)**



**Commuting & Journey Duration**

In terms of transport modes used for commuting trips (to work, school and/or college), the dominant mode in Tullow was the 'Private Car' (accounting for both car driver and car passenger), which represented a figure of c.65% of journeys (see Figure 2.3). The second most popular means of travel was 'On Foot' with c.20% of journeys undertaken by this mode. Sustainable modes i.e. cycling, bus, train etc. accounted for c.23% of all journeys made. For commuting journeys undertaken to work, school/college, less than half (c.43%) of journeys were 15 minutes, while c.28% of trips had a duration of between 15 to 30 minutes. A small percentage (c.8%) had a journey of one hour and more. In terms of car ownership, over three quarters (78%) of all households in Tullow had ownership of up to 2 cars with 16% of households having no access to a car.

**Figure 2.3 Commuting Characteristics - Tullow (Census 2016)**



## Economic Structure

### Principal Economic Status

For persons aged 15 years and above, c.51% of Tullow's workforce population were recorded as being 'At Work' with c.12% being 'Unemployed'. 'Students' accounted for c.8%. Those persons who have retired amounted to c.12%. A total of c.7% of the town's workforce were unable to work due to permanent sickness or disability (see Table 2.2).

**Table 2.2 Principal Economic Status - Tullow Residents (2016 Census)**

Economic Status	Total Persons	Total %
At Work	1,770	50.8%
Looking for First Regular Job	33	0.9%
Unemployed having lost or given up Previous Job	431	12.4%
Student	285	8.2%
Looking after Family/Home	300	8.6%
Retired	419	12%
Unable to Work (Permanent Sickness/Disability)	234	6.7%
Other	12	0.3%

### Industry Group

The highest percentage of Tullow's residents were recorded as being in employment in the 'Commerce and Trade' group at c.24%, followed by 'Manufacturing Industries' at c.17%. The 'Professional Services' industry group accounted for c.16% of Tullow's population. Industry group figures for Tullow are provided at Figure 2.4.

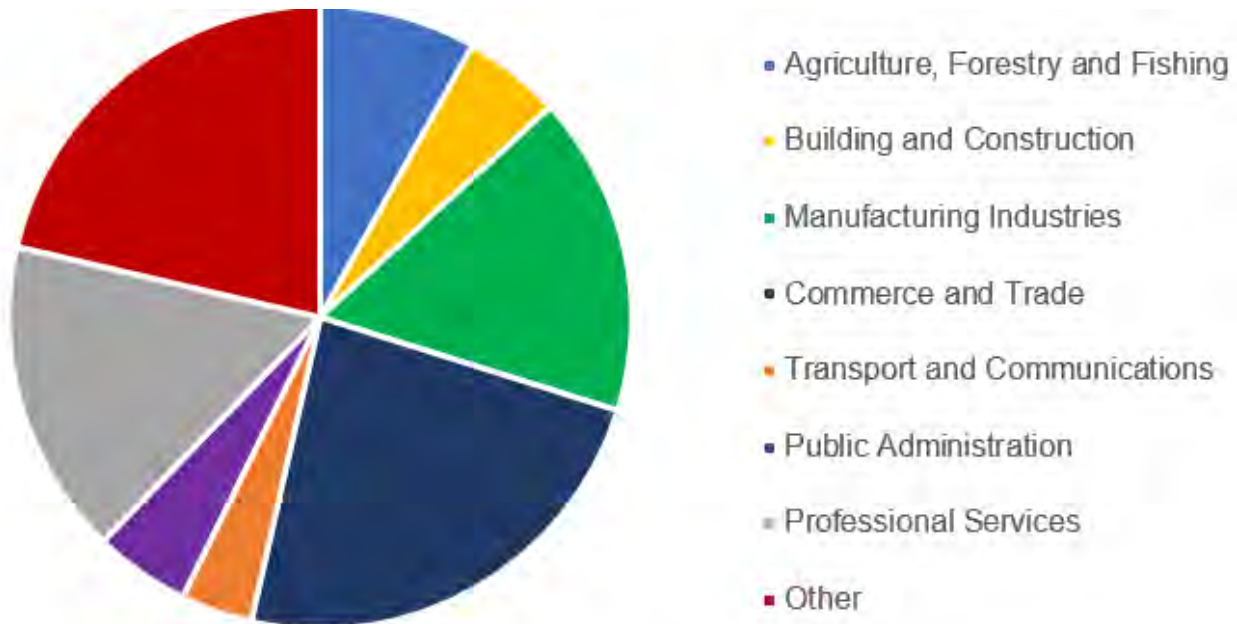
## Occupation Status

Residents of Tullow held a wide range of occupations. Discounting the 'Other' category, the highest number of employees in Tullow held a role within 'Elementary Occupations' at c.15%. 'Skilled Trade Occupations' was next at c.14% of all residents. Cumulatively, c.17% of residents in Tullow held a position within a senior/managerial occupation which included positions such as Directors, Managers, Senior Officials, Professional and Technical roles etc.

### Salary Values

Residents of Tullow generated a significant salary value to the County that was c.€63 million per annum (as at 2016). Residents in the 'Professional Services' industry group generated the highest individual group salary amount at c. €13.3 million followed by 'Commercial and Trade' at €12.5 million. The lowest salary generator per industry group was 'Transport and Communications' which amounted to c.€2.7 million annually. The average annual salary for County Carlow in 2016 was €35,234.00

**Figure 2.4 Industry Group - Tullow Residents (2016 Census)**



### Infrastructure

The settlement of Tullow has evolved in a linear form with development primarily situated on the key routes into the town: (i) to the north east and south west on the N81 route; (ii) to the south east on Mill Street and; (iii) to the north west on the R418 and R725. The M9 motorway provides a key transport link and is situated a relatively short distance away, being c.13km to the west by road. The N81 is a second key route for Tullow which provides connectivity to Dublin and the M50 to the north east.

In terms of proximity to other larger settlements, Tullow is situated c.16km from Carlow to the north west via the R725 route and c.50km from Kilkenny to the south west primarily via the M9 motorway.

In terms of digital connectivity, a total of 60% of all households had broadband internet with just over half of all Tullow households having their own personal computer.

### Economic Assets

The retail core of Tullow is centred around The Market Square, Church Street and Bridge Street where the majority of local shops and services are located. Tullow Business Park (including Tullow Industrial Estate) is situated to the south west of the town centre and is sandwiched between the N81 route to the south and Rathoe Road to the north. The business park provides accommodation for a range of businesses including DPD, Tel Lab, Aquamonitrix, Co-operative Animal Healthcare, Burnside Autocyl and Kelly Precision. Further industrial areas are situated to the north west of the town centre off the R725 route. Within Tullow is the site of Charles R. Wynne Ltd on Thomas Traynor Street who operate as farm feed merchants. Tullow Mart is located to the south west of the town centre on the N81 route. Tullow is well served by large retail convenience operators which comprise Tesco, Lidl, Aldi and SuperValu. A short distance to the south of Tullow is the Mount Wolseley Hotel, Spa and Golf Resort.

## Value of the Economy

A metric that can be utilised to appraise levels of economic value/activity is 'Gross Value Added' (GVA). CSO data for the South East region placed a GVA value per person of €31,276 (basic prices) for the Census year 2016<sup>27</sup>. If this value is applied to Tullow's population (which is taken as 4,673 persons), a GVA value for the town is calculated as being c.€146 million.

Taking a regional perspective, the population of the South East region in 2016 was 422,062 persons and, similarly, if the GVA value is applied to the regional population, a regional GVA figure of €13.2 billion is generated. Through a comparative assessment of the GVA figures as set out above, it is estimated that the settlement of Tullow contributes c.1% of the South East region's overall GVA figure.

## Socio-Economic Analysis - Key Findings

- c.43% of Tullow's population is aged between 0- 29 years with c.62% aged 39 or younger.
- More than half of all residents (c.57%) were of 'Single' status with c.31% being 'Married'.
- Regarding household size, half of all households in Tullow had no more than two persons.
- Just over half of the labour force (c.51%) in Tullow were considered to be 'At Work'.
- The foremost industry group that residents belonged to was 'Commerce and Trade' at c.24%.
- Annual salary generation by Tullow residents was estimated at just over c.€63 million.
- c.11% of Tullow's population have obtained a Third Level degree qualification with an additional c.3% achieving a Postgraduate qualification.
- For commuting journeys to their place of work/school or college, c.65% of Tullow residents used a private car (Car Driver) with c.23% using sustainable modes of transport.
- c.17% of residents in Tullow held a senior occupation such as a Director, Manager or Senior Official.
- Tullow has proximity to the key motorway route of the M9.
- Tullow has a high level of car ownership with 52% of all households having one car while c.78% of households had up to two cars.

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<sup>26</sup> <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/cirgdp/countyincomesandregionalgdp2019/>



# Urban Analysis

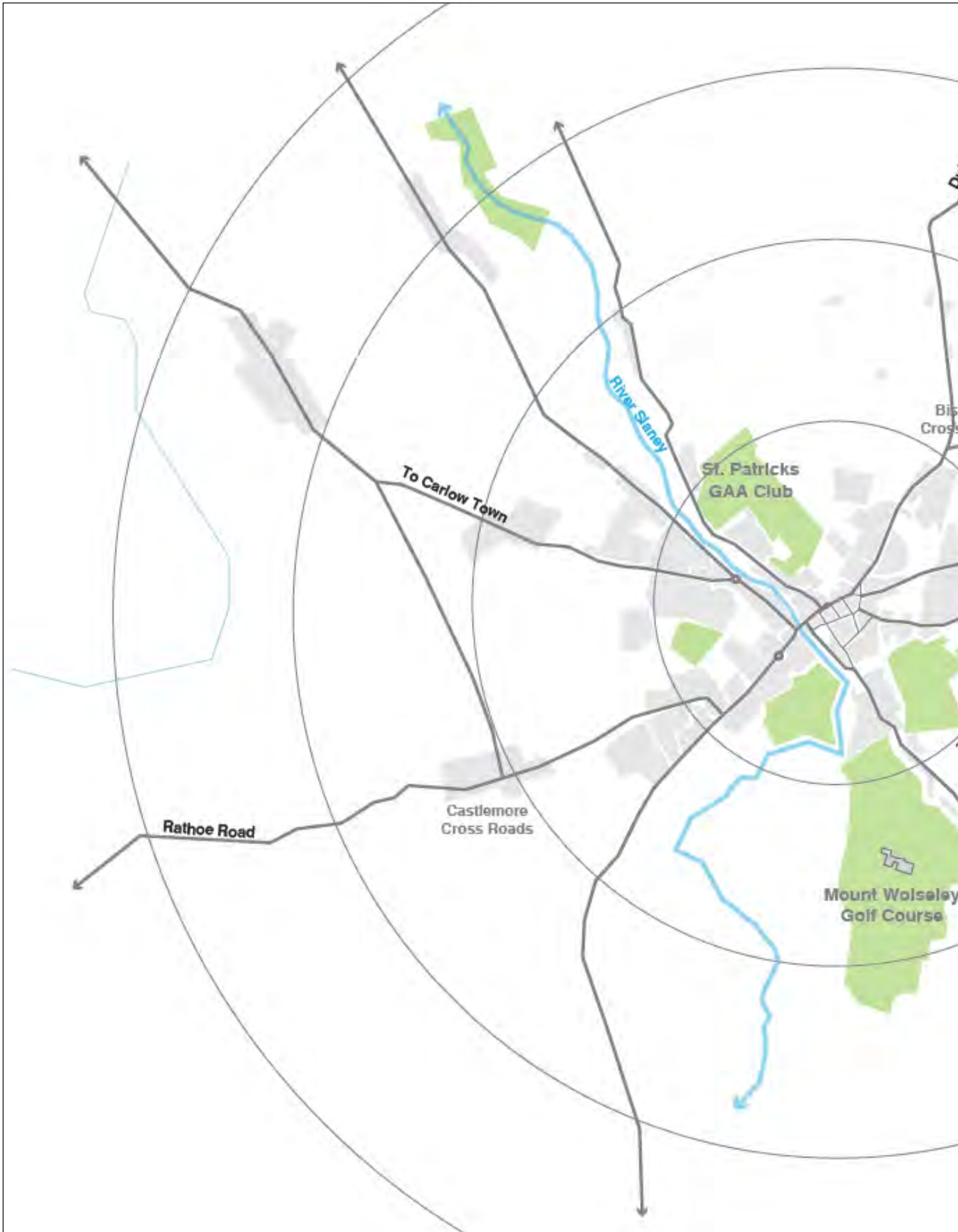
# 3

# Urban Analysis

This section of the Report presents an urban audit of the settlement of Tullow in terms of, *inter alia*, its streetscapes, public spaces, built form, core areas, character areas, landmark and heritage buildings and overall settlement pattern.



## Tullow - Locational Context

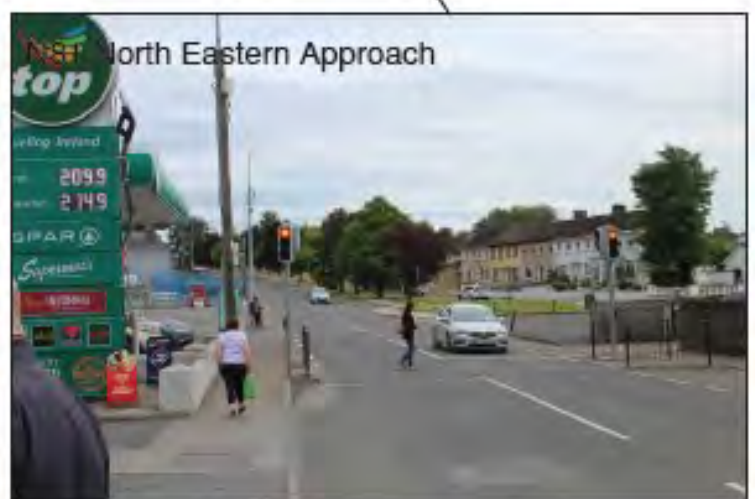




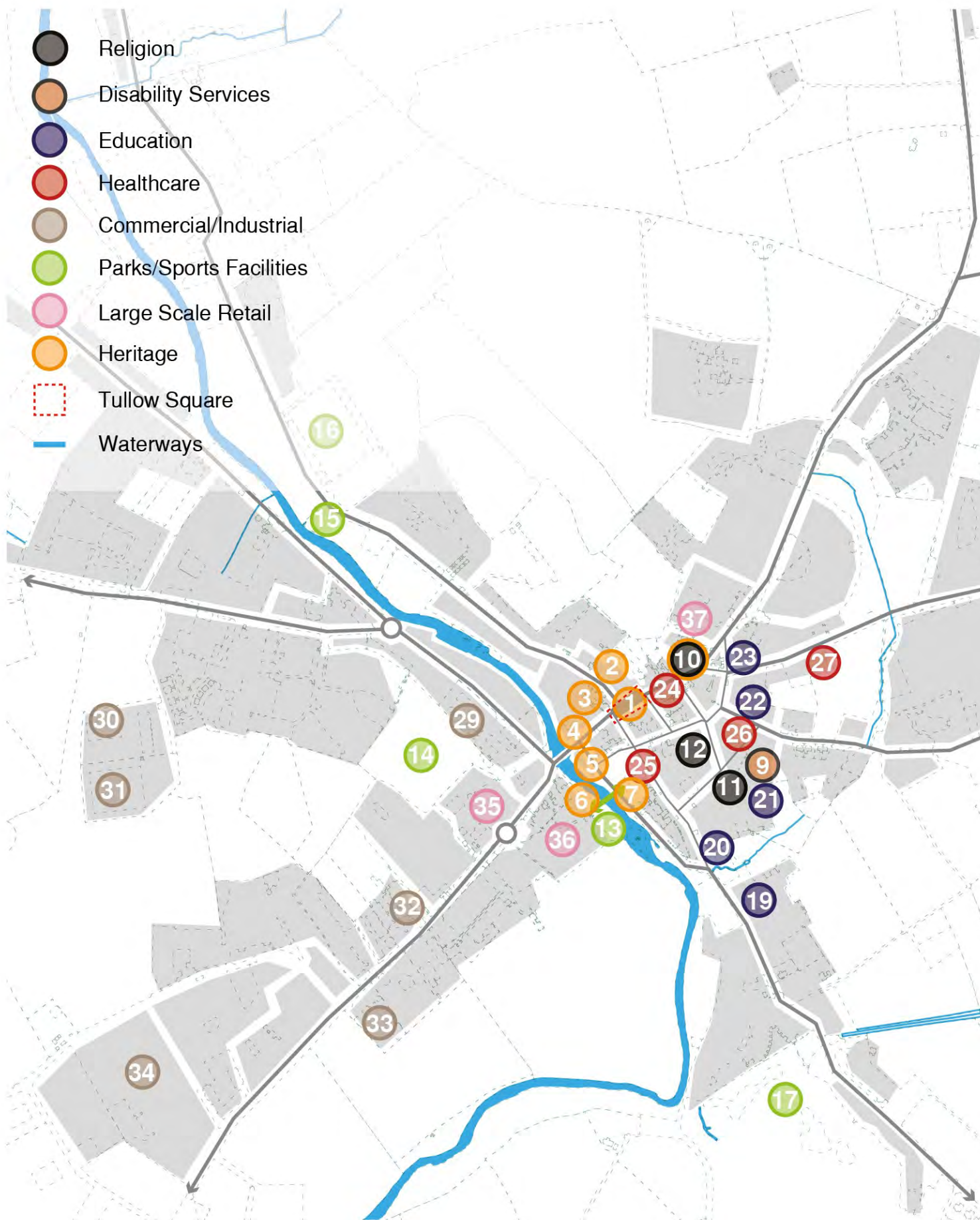


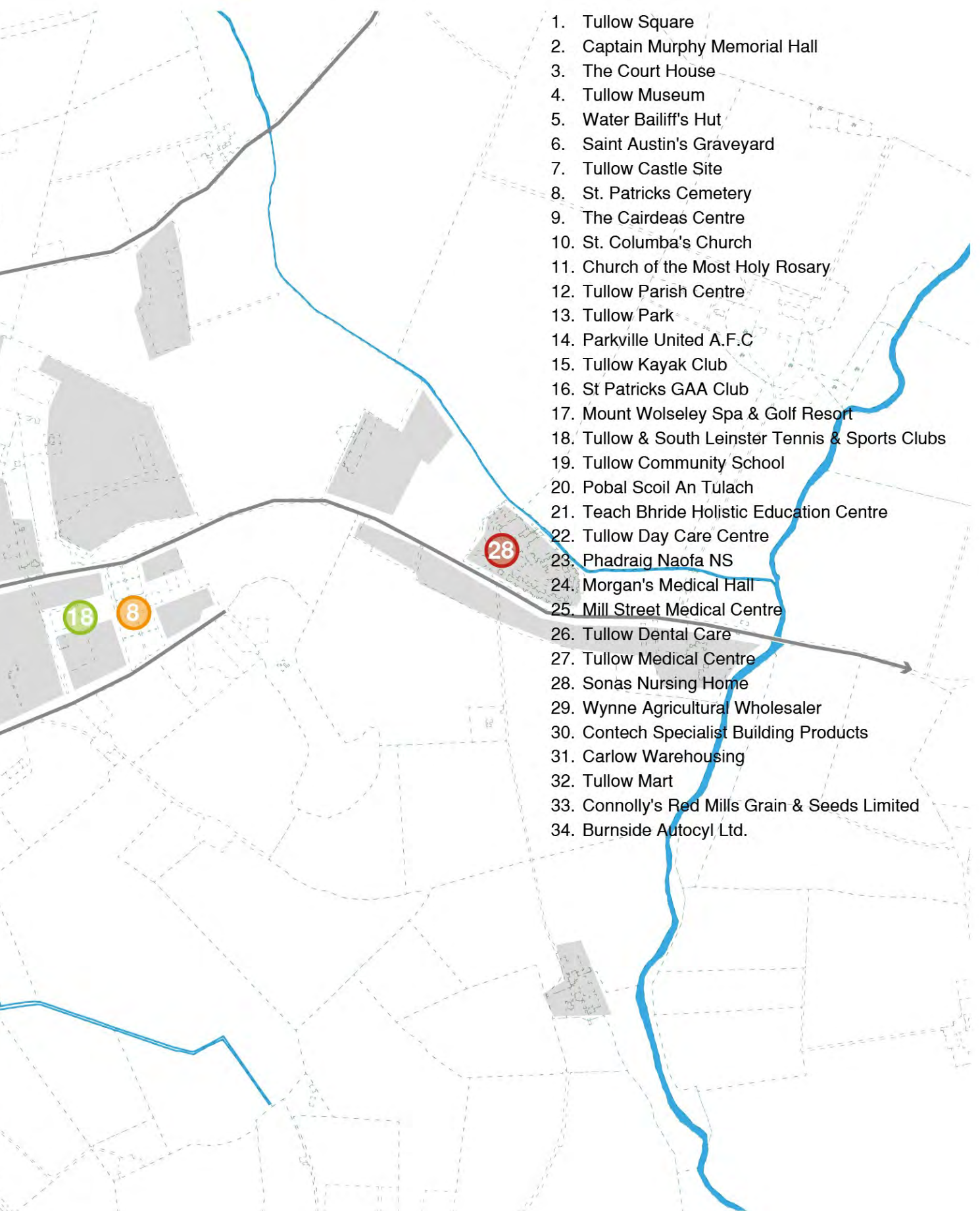
# Tullow - Approach to Town Centre





## Tullow - Land Use Analysis

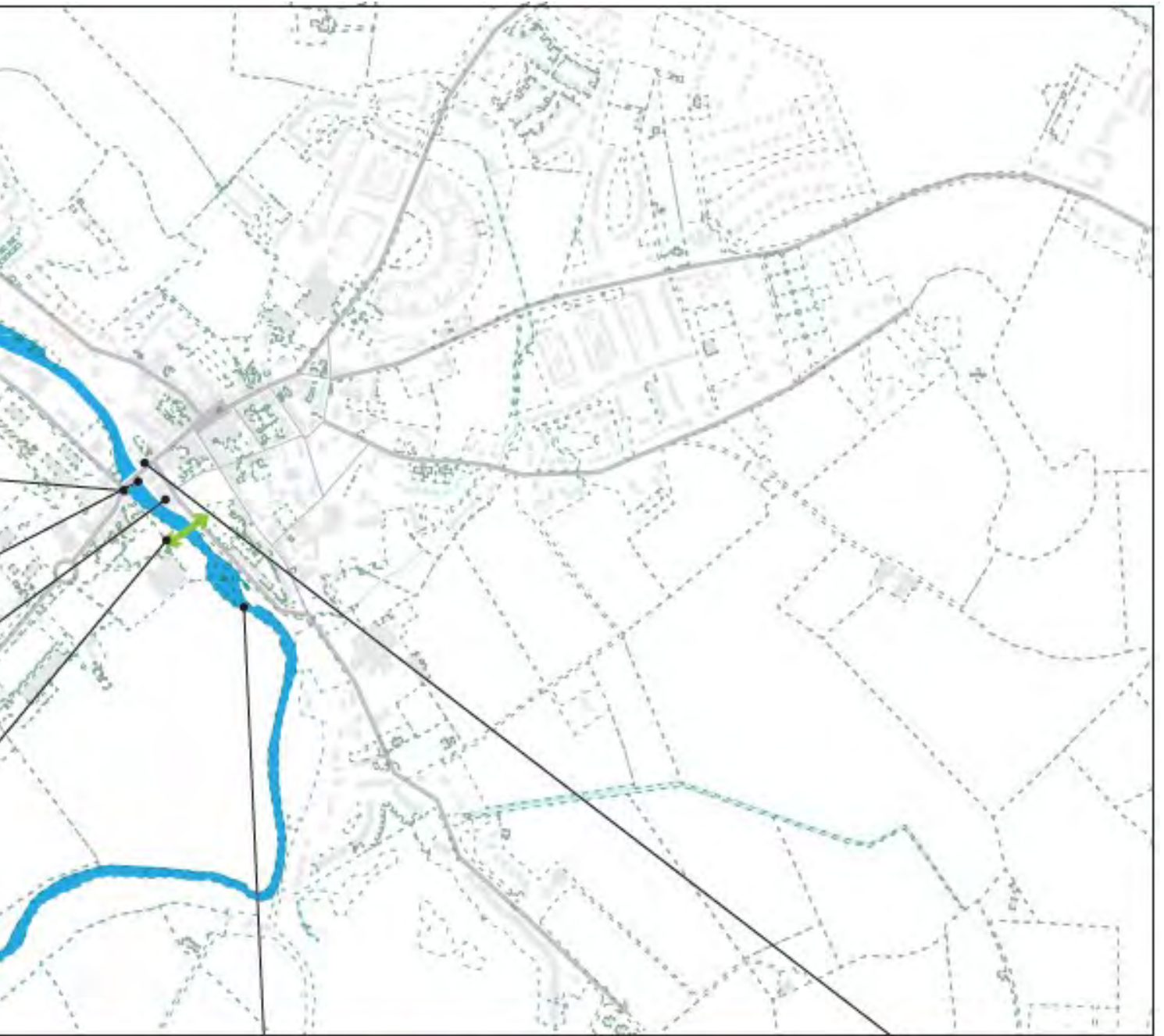




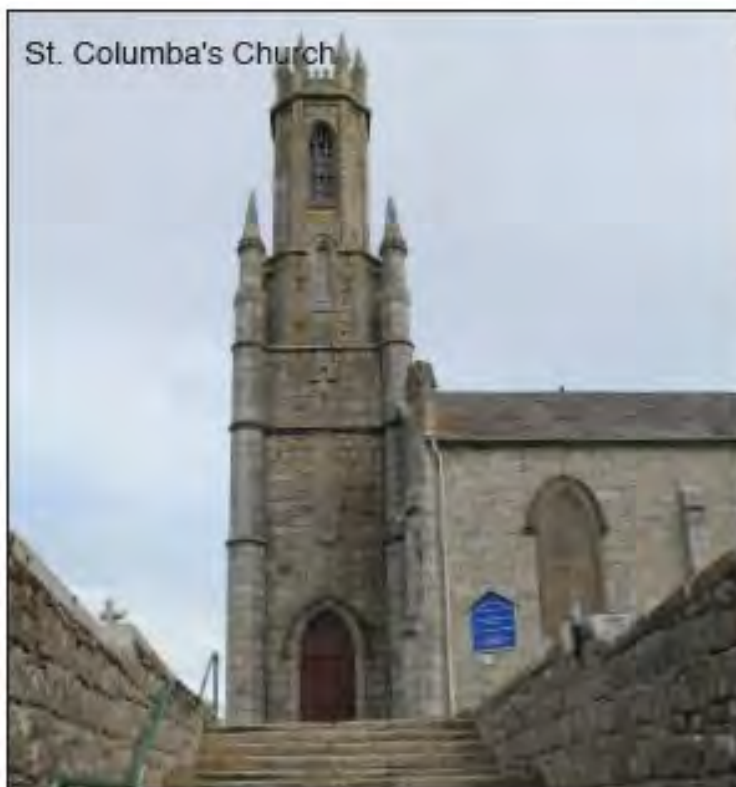
1. Tullow Square
2. Captain Murphy Memorial Hall
3. The Court House
4. Tullow Museum
5. Water Bailiff's Hut
6. Saint Austin's Graveyard
7. Tullow Castle Site
8. St. Patricks Cemetery
9. The Cairdeas Centre
10. St. Columba's Church
11. Church of the Most Holy Rosary
12. Tullow Parish Centre
13. Tullow Park
14. Parkville United A.F.C
15. Tullow Kayak Club
16. St Patricks GAA Club
17. Mount Wolseley Spa & Golf Resort
18. Tullow & South Leinster Tennis & Sports Clubs
19. Tullow Community School
20. Pobal Scoil An Tulach
21. Teach Bhríde Holistic Education Centre
22. Tullow Day Care Centre
23. Phadraig Naofa NS
24. Morgan's Medical Hall
25. Mill Street Medical Centre
26. Tullow Dental Care
27. Tullow Medical Centre
28. Sonas Nursing Home
29. Wynne Agricultural Wholesaler
30. Contech Specialist Building Products
31. Carlow Warehousing
32. Tullow Mart
33. Connolly's Red Mills Grain & Seeds Limited
34. Burnside Autocyl Ltd.

# Tullow - Riverside

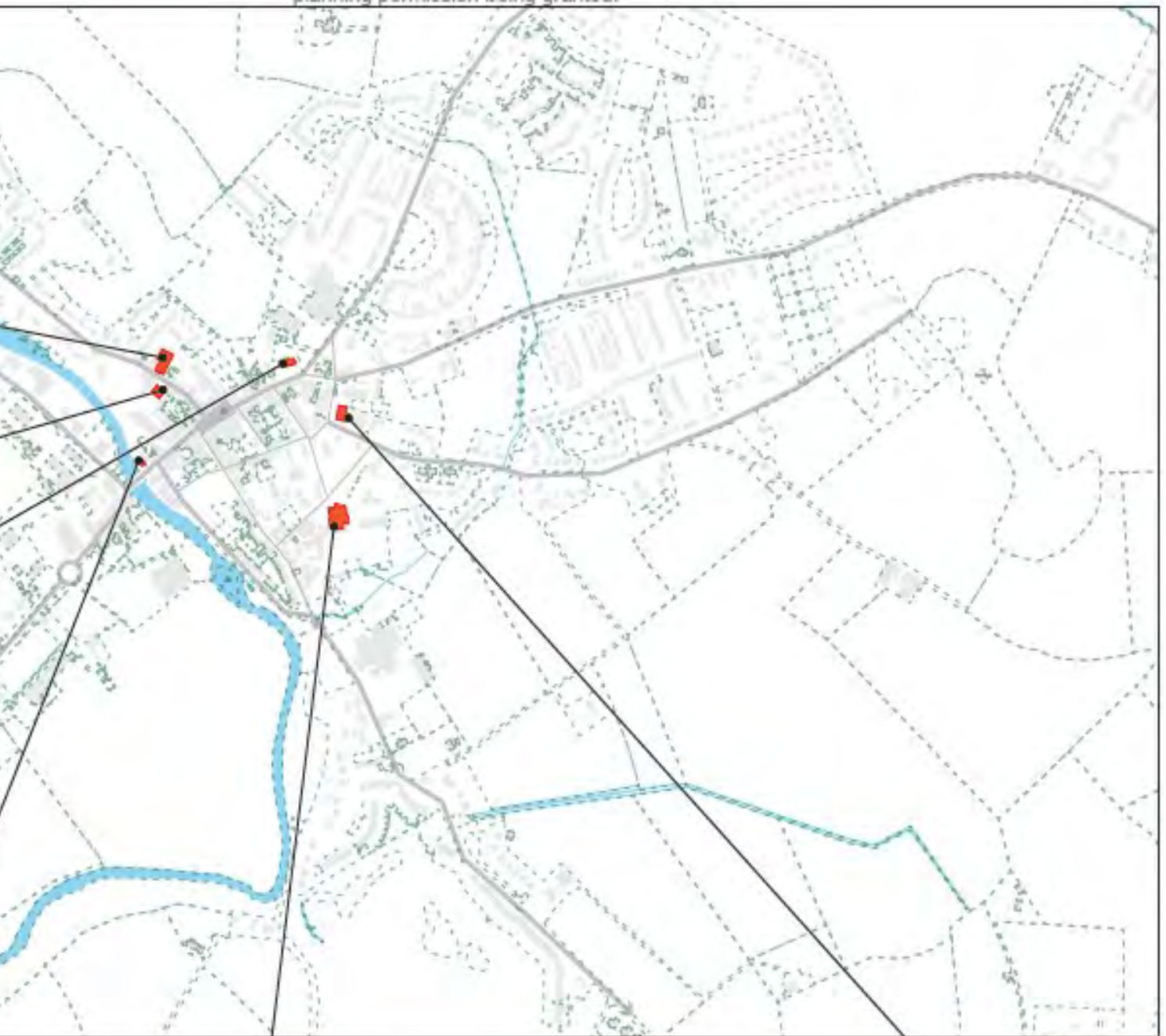




## Tullow - Heritage Assets



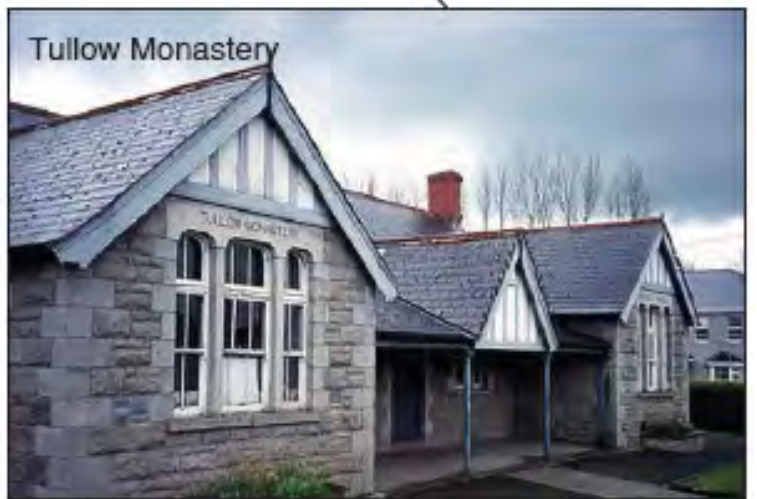




Church of the Most Holy Rosary

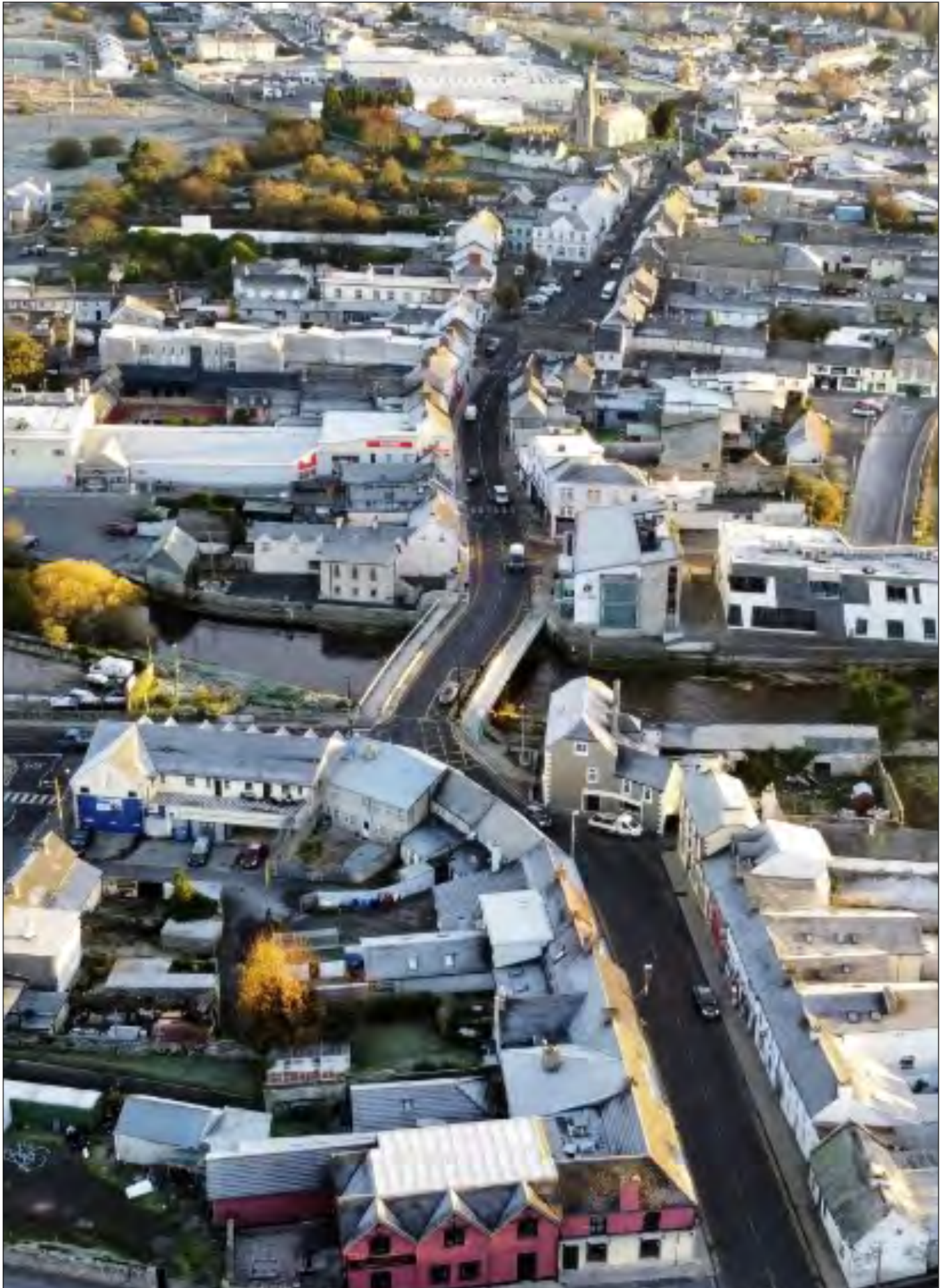


Tullow Monastery



## Urban Analysis - Key Findings

- **Context:** Nearby amenities such as Mount Wolseley Golf Course and the River Slaney help define the approach into Tullow.
- **River Slaney:** Despite acting as a severance because of its lack of crossings, the river is an important amenity which has the potential to be a catalyst for Tullow in terms of providing improved public realm, sport/recreation amenities as well as improved connections between the town centre and the periphery of Tullow.
- **Main Square:** The Main Square of Tullow has the potential to be the principal public realm focal point within the town. Due to the topography, the Square offers views west over Tullow. The vista is unobstructed by clutter i.e. no telephone or electricity wires crossing the space. The incline of the Square offers potential to create an interesting terraced space.
- **Backlands:** Many sites within the town centre and its periphery have been identified as being under-utilised. These sites occupy key locations within the town and have the potential to form better links within the town centre.
- **Residential:** The majority of residential developments in Tullow follow the many radial routes out of the town centre. The backland opportunity sites that have been identified have the potential to bring residential developments into the town centre and help counteract the bleeding of the town into the periphery.
- **Heritage:** Multiple heritage sites which could become anchors for Tullow Town Centre in terms of cultural/tourism or community assets have been identified—for example, Tullow Court House, Father John Murphy Hall, St. Columba's Church, Tullow Museum, Tullow Monastery.
- **Links:** One of the key urban challenges facing Tullow is the poor connectivity within the town centre. Connectivity across the River Slaney is particularly poor with 1 no. two pedestrian and 1 no. vehicular crossing point identified. Also, orbital pedestrian connections around the town are poor and a circumferential pedestrian route could help provide better connectivity within the town centre.



# Transportation Analysis

# 4

# Transportation Analysis

The first section of this chapter sets out a review of the existing evidence and documentation base in the context of transport and movement in Tullow, with the second section providing a review of the existing transport infrastructure in the town including walking and cycling provision, public transport, general traffic conditions and car parking.

## Existing Evidence, Research and Documentation Base

The existing evidence and documentation base in the context of transport and movement in Tullow has focused on the following:

- Tullow Local Area Plan 2017 - 2023
- Tullow Orbital Pedestrian and Cycle Scheme Phase 2
- Tullow Market Square Public Realm Design.
- Tullow Active Travel 2021
- Develop Tullow Association - Issues Statement, October 2022

## Tullow Local Area Plan (LAP) 2017 – 2023

The LAP sets out a list of policies and objectives to facilitate sustainable accessibility and legibility within the town core area in favour of the needs of pedestrians, the mobility impaired and cyclists. The Plan has identified the following transport policies:

- TP 1: Continue to promote a modal shift from private car use towards increased use of more sustainable modes of transport such as cycling, walking and public transport and to implement the initiatives contained in

Government's "*Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020*".

- TP 2: To improve the pedestrian environment and promote the development of a network of pedestrian routes which link residential areas with recreational, educational, employment and tourist destinations to create a pedestrian environment that is safe and accessible by all.
- TP 7: To co-operate with public transport service providers to ensure that adequate public transport services are provided to the town.
- TP 8: To support the provision of public transport services by reserving land in suitable locations for public transport infrastructure and ancillary facilities such as park-and ride.
- TP 9: To monitor traffic movements in the town and to provide passive traffic calming measures at appropriate locations as the need arises.

Smarter Travel, Transport Infrastructure and Public Transport objectives include:

- TO 1: To provide appropriate facilities for pedestrians and for people with special mobility needs in line with the aims of the European Charter of Pedestrian Rights and the principles of Universal Design as defined in the Disability Act 2005.
- TO 2: To promote and facilitate the provision of secure parking areas for bicycles in Tullow

town centre and at key tourist attractions in the town.

- TO 3: To investigate the feasibility of providing the Tullow Relief Road to facilitate by passable traffic using the N81 or the R725, R726 or R418.
- TO 4: To continue to upgrade the condition of road and footpath surfaces in conjunction with the Council’s annual roads programme.
- TO 5: To monitor and upgrade, where necessary, the standard of public lighting throughout the town.
- TO 6: To investigate and seek the improvement of pedestrian facilities throughout the town.
- TO 7: To improve deficiencies in pavement surface, quality and general alignment and to protect future road lines where required.

### **Tullow Orbital Pedestrian and Cycle Scheme Phase 2 (May 2022)**

Carlow County Council’s Active Travel Department, in conjunction with the National Transportation Authority (NTA), proposes to provide 550m of new combined footpath /cycle track, that will link the Oakley Heights, An Caislean and Court View housing developments with Castle Lane. The works will also include the provision of new and upgraded public lighting along the route and access control bollards.

This high quality combined footpath and cycle track will link a number of residential areas and provide alternative access to retail premises, recreational amenities and town centre services in Tullow.

### **Tullow Market Square Public Realm Design**

“Tullow Market Square Public Realm Design” developed by Carlow County Council, comprises a site analysis identifying the constraints and opportunities of The Market Square, Barrack Street (The Market Square to Court View), Mill Street (The Market Square to Old Chapel Lane), and Mill Street (Old Chapel Lane to Inner Relief Road). It also includes a number of options to improve the streetscape space on The Market Square, Barrack Street and Mill Street.

The proposals identified are summarised below:

- Reduce width of N81 corridor;
- Reduce/remove vehicle parking from Main Square;
- Continuous high quality surfacing to unify space;
- Upgrade existing controlled pedestrian crossings and formalise existing uncontrolled pedestrian crossings.
- Utilise SW aspect on north side for outdoor seating, “spill out” activities from businesses and shops, events etc.
- De-clutter space and enhance monument setting.
- New tree planting along carriageway to define space and “filter” vehicle traffic.
- Utilise space on south side for “spill out” activities from businesses and shops, temporary stalls etc.
- Incorporate cycle parking where possible.
- Extend surface treatment along Mill Street to create “shared street” as extension of Main Square space.

## **Tullow Active Travel 2021**

Carlow County Council Active Travel team has identified a series of new walking and cycling links that could be implemented to improve permeability between residential areas and provide an alternative route for walking and cycling to the busy town centre roads.

In addition, a number of proposed measures to improve the existing facilities, some key junctions and the provision of pedestrian crossings along desire lines have been identified.

## **Develop Tullow Association - Issues Statement, October 2022**

Develop Tullow Association CLG (DTA) is a registered charity founded in 1979. It is community-based development organisation, which has expressed their interest in engaging with the Tullow Town Team to work together in the delivery of the town centre first plan objectives.

The DTA produced an “Issues Statement” in October 2022 covering sixty areas of concern across several categories to assist in the development of the Town Centre First Application.

The first section of the document corresponds to the “Transport and Movement Issues”, where it highlights the following main issues:

- Tullow Outer Relief Road - Desire to develop the Outer Relief Road commencing with phase 1, linking Bunclody Road to the Thomas Traynor Road (Castledermot Road / R418). To relief traffic congestion on the town centre which will create a safe space for pedestrians, cyclists and public realm.
- Active Travel Measures - Supports the completion of the Part VIII planning

application and construction of the footpath to connect Phelim Wood on the Dublin Road to Court View on Barrack Street via Oakley Wood estate.

- Footpath Repairs - Supports the completion of CCC’s footpaths repairs programme and the creation of a further programme of repairs for footpaths in residential estates in 2024.
- Public Transport - Highlights the need for more regular routes to Carlow which connect into timetables for other services.
- Public Lighting - Identifies the need for developing a LED replacement programme and expansion of lighting programme to cover areas with no existing public lighting.
- Electric Vehicles Charging Points - Highlights the status of the EV charging points at the rear of the Capt. Murphy Memorial Hall needs to be regularised, the Inner Relief Road EV charging stations need to be re-located and several additional fast charging points need to be installed.
- Permanent Town Centre Car Park - Identifies the issue of the unknown future of the car park currently rented by Carlow County Council and expresses the need to develop a permanent new town centre car park to provide car parking for at least 80 cars.

## Tullow Transportation Analysis

Tullow is well serviced by the national road network due to its close proximity to the M9 Dublin to Waterford Motorway which is approximately 10 minutes drive time from Tullow. The N81 National Secondary road passes directly through Tullow, linking the town to Baltinglass and Dublin to the north and Bunclody and Enniscorthy to the south via the N80.

The town is also well connected to the county's regional road network with the R725 traversing the town in an east-west direction linking Tullow to Carlow to the west and Shillelagh to the east. The R418 connects Tullow to Castledermot and Athy to the north.

Whilst the town benefits from good road connectivity, a considerable amount of traffic passes through the town centre daily, where the N81 acts as a main transport corridor through Tullow. This creates traffic congestion along Bridge Street, the Square and Church Street throughout the day, but particularly during peak commuter periods.

A key objective of the Tullow Local Area Plan 2017-2023 is to investigate the feasibility of providing the Tullow Relief Road to substantially reduce through traffic volumes in the town and provide a calmed environment more conducive to walking and cycling.

**Figure 4.1 Existing Road Network - Tullow**





## Existing Travel Patterns

The modalshare for commuting and education trips for Tullow Town compared to Carlow County is summarised in Table 4.1.

A considerable percentage of people (c.20%) walk as a means of transport in Tullow Town, which is higher than the rest of the county. This reflects the substantial level of local trips made within the town and its environs.

Only 0.5% of trips are made by bicycle, which is comparable to the County Carlow average but substantially below the national target of 10% commuting by bike.

High volumes of traffic and the absence of cycle provision in the town centre means cycling within the town is not currently an attractive option.

There are low levels of bus and train usage within Tullow, very similar to Carlow County. A high number of people in Tullow town rely on private vehicles usage (c.65%) for commuting which is very similar to the rest of the County.

**Table 4.1 Summary of Modes of Transport - Tullow**

Mode	Tullow	Co. Carlow
On Foot	19.9%	13.7%
Bicycle	0.5%	1%
Public Transport	3.1%	6.5%
Car Driver/Car Passenger	64.9%	63.9%
Van/Lorry/Motorcycle	5.2%	6%
Working from Home/Not Stated	6.4%	839%

## Existing Walking Infrastructure

A review of walking and cycling facilities along key streets and links within the study area was undertaken by the engineering team. For walking facilities, the assessment focused on footpath provision and pedestrian crossings. The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) sets out that a minimum footpath width of 1.8m is considered adequate for areas of low pedestrian activity, whilst the desirable width is 2.5m.

Within the core of the town, there are a number of points where footpath widths are very narrow or non-existent. There is also a lack of pedestrian priority and crossing points on several key pedestrian desire lines. The discontinuity in footpath provision results in safety issues for vulnerable road users and creates a sense that the town centre streets are dominated by vehicular traffic.

Some examples of barriers to pedestrian movement are outlined below and shown at Figures 4.2 to 4.7.

- Footpaths along N81 – Bridge Street and Church Street present narrow footpaths, less than 1 metre at existing steps in front of Georgian Houses.
- Footpaths blocked by cars parked on the path and or bins located at paths.
- Lack of pedestrian facilities crossings along desire lines.
- Wide junctions presenting long radius which encourages high speeds.

The conditions of walking infrastructure around the schools situated in the town centre is particularly poor, which contributes to parents/guardians opting for driving their children to school.

Footpaths in the vicinity of Phadraig Naofa NS are discontinuous and crossing facilities are very narrow along Station Road, where there is limited visibility

**Figure 4.2 Narrow footpaths on Church Street**



at the junction. Scoil Naisiunta Muire Lourdes and Tullow Community School are located on Mill Street, the paths along the side of the schools are very narrow, with widths ranging from 1-1.5m. Lastly Saint Columba's National School located on the N81, suffers from narrow footpaths and wide vehicular junctions approaching the school.

**Figure 4.3 Narrow footpath on Bridge Street**



Figure 4.4 R725/Dublin Road/Church Street - Wide junction with no pedestrian crossing and poor visibility



Figure 4.5 Old Chapel Lane - footpath blocked by bins on the path



**Figure 4.6 Church Street / R725 corner - Wide turn in junction and narrow footpath**



**Figure 4.7 Scoil Phádraig Naofa – Narrow and discontinuous paths along Station Road and poor visibility at junctions**



The conditions of walking infrastructure around the schools situated in the town centre is particularly poor which contributes to parents/guardians opting for driving their children to school. Footpaths in the vicinity of Scoil Phádraig Naofa are discontinuous and crossing facilities are very narrow along Station Road where there is limited visibility at the junction.

Scoil Naisiunta Muire Lourdes and Tullow Community School are located on Mill Street, where the footpaths along the side of the schools are very narrow, with widths ranging from 1m to 1.5m. Saint Columba's National School located on the N81 suffers from narrow footpaths and wide vehicular junctions approaching the school.

Outside of the town centre, a number of radial routes have junctions with wide entrances and poor crossing facilities.

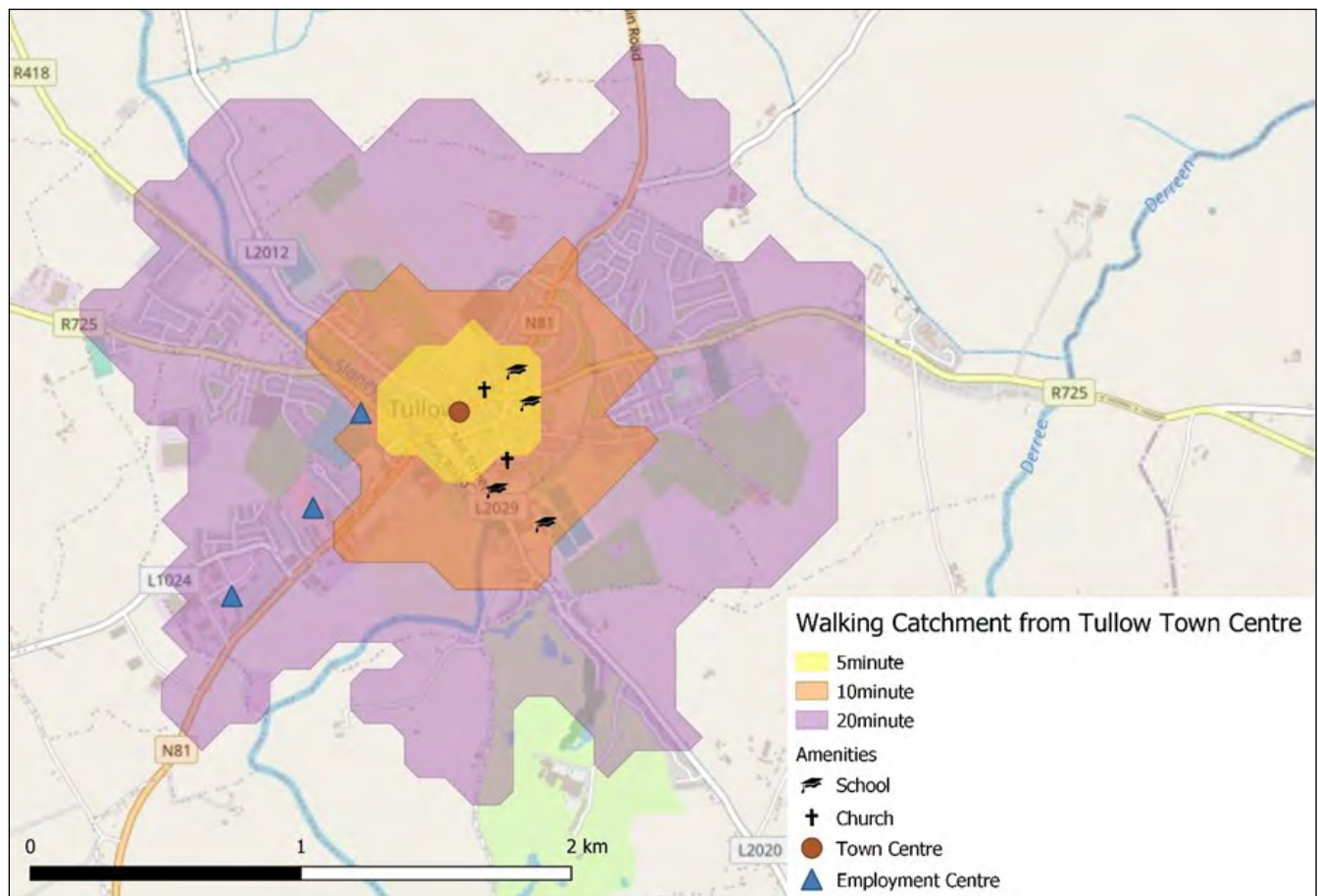
This, in combination with a lack of traffic calming, results in an environment that is non-conducive to walking or cycling.

In February 2022, Carlow County Council embarked on a programme of footpath repairs for Tullow for 2022 and 2023.

### Walking Catchments

Analysis was undertaken of the areas within a 10, 15 and 20 minute walk of Tullow town centre and the results are illustrated in the isochrone at Figure 4.8. The results indicate that the majority of population living in Tullow are within a 20 minute walk of the town centre. This suggests that there is an opportunity to encourage increased levels of active travel through improvements to the walk and cycle network.

**Figure 4.8 Walking Catchment from Tullow Town Centre**



## Existing Cycling Infrastructure

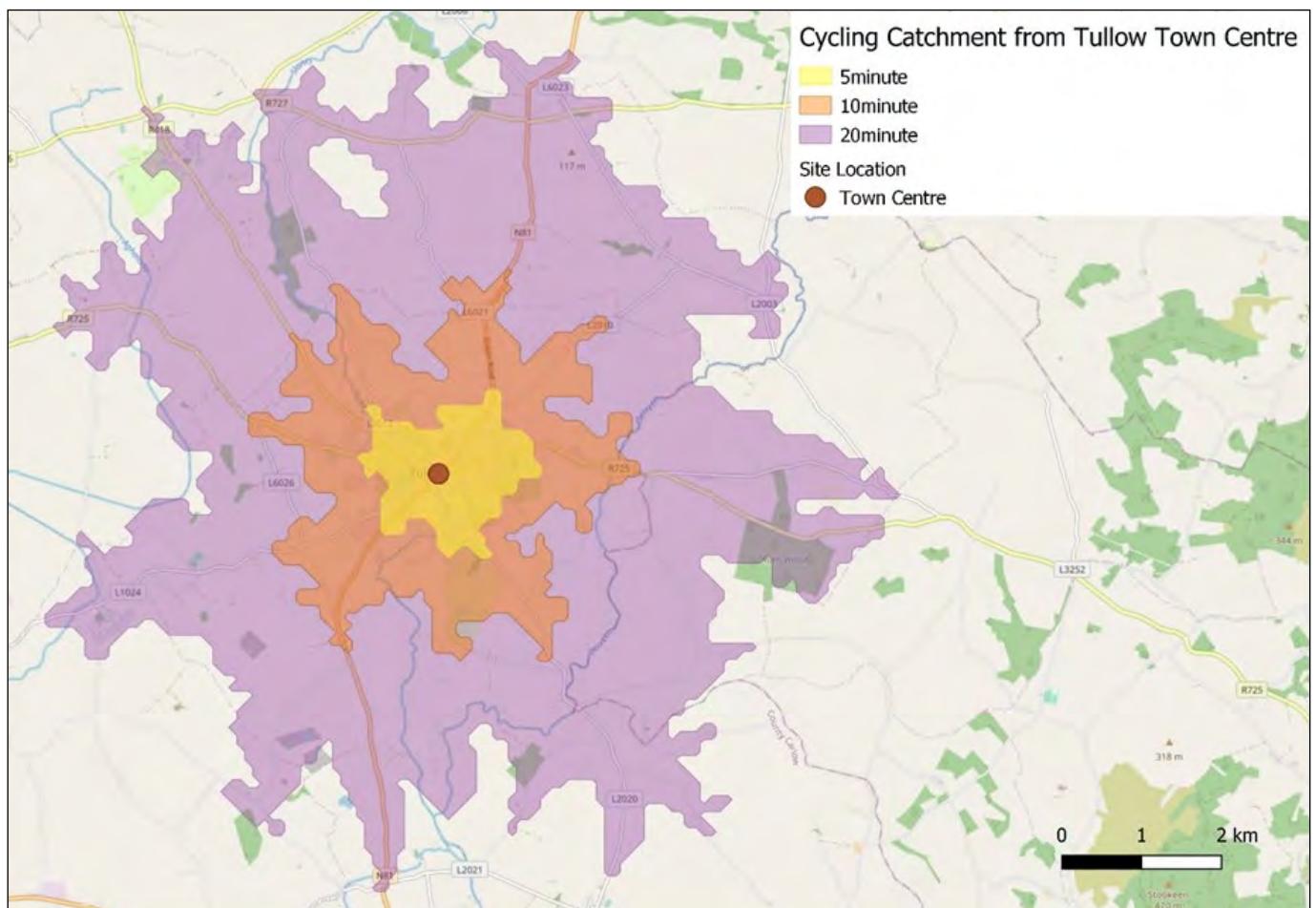
There are currently no dedicated cycle lanes within the town. There is scope for improvements to cycle facilities, cycle parking and cycle priority at junctions along the existing roads leading to the town centre to connect residential areas, the schools and wider recreational areas. The prevalence of a high volume of HGVs within the town also creates safety issues for cyclists.

The Active Travel Map 2021 identifies the location and extent of potential 3.5m wide shared walk/cycling facilities along several off-street links.

These could act as recreational routes but also as important linkages / orbital routes to connect main destinations with residential areas, providing an alternative route to the Church Street / Bridge Street for pedestrians and cyclists.

The Cycling Catchment map at Figure 4.9 shows that the full population of Tullow resides within 10 minute cycling distance of the town centre.

**Figure 4.9 Cycling Catchment from Tullow Town Centre**



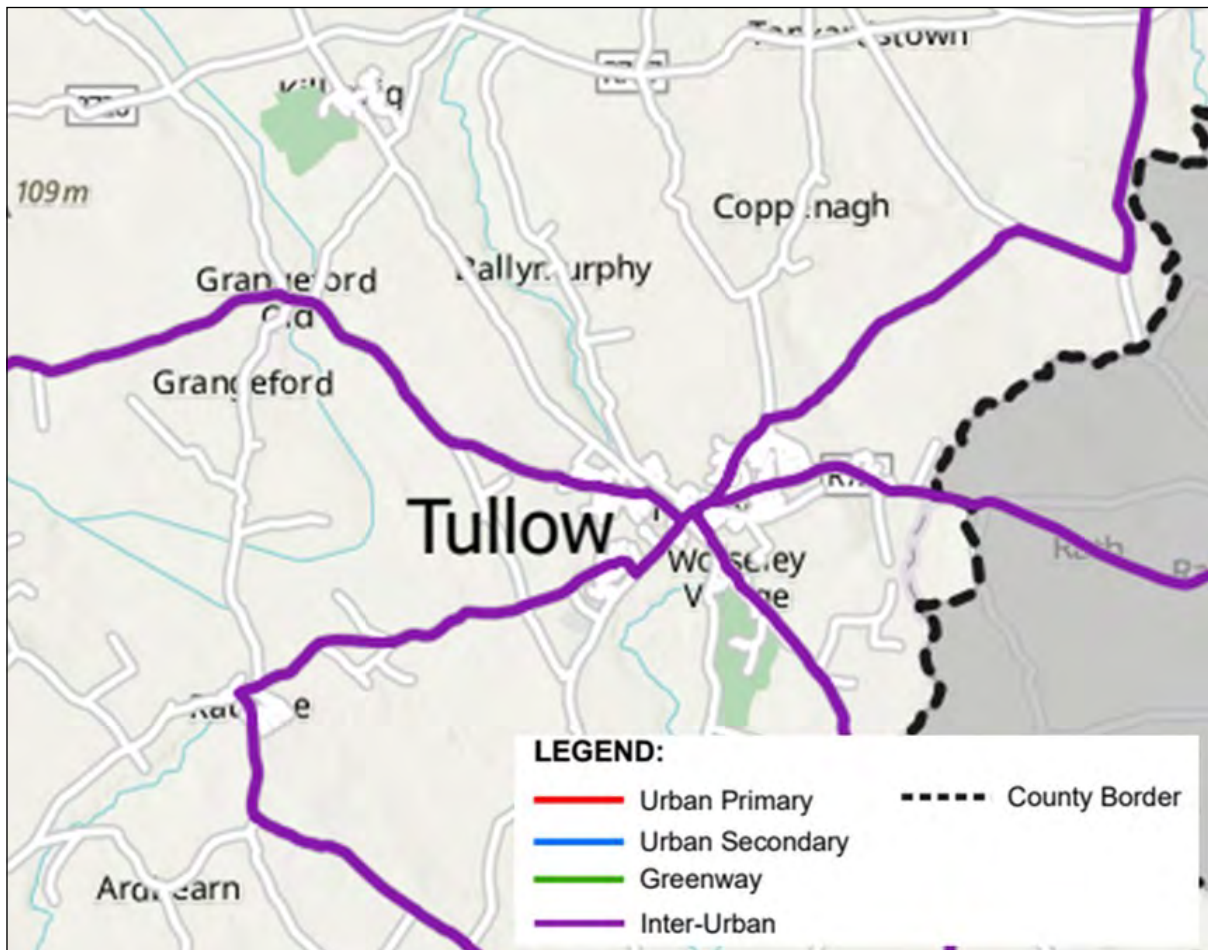
## Future Cycling Infrastructure

In addition to the active travel proposals being progressed by Carlow County Council, the National Transport Authority (NTA) have launched a public consultation for 'CycleConnects'; a nationwide initiative to improve sustainable travel by providing the potential for more trips on a safe, accessible and convenient cycling network, connecting more people to more places.

The plan includes a comprehensive network of proposed cycle links (on-road and off-road), connecting towns, villages and settlements across the country by safe and attractive cycle routes.

The draft plan for Tullow and its environs is illustrated in Figure 4.10 which illustrates the provision of 'inter-urban' cycle facilities along the N81 route and regional roads connecting into Tullow. The exact form of the cycle facilities will be determined as the individual schemes are progressed through the planning process.

**Figure 4.10 CycleConnects Proposals - Tullow**



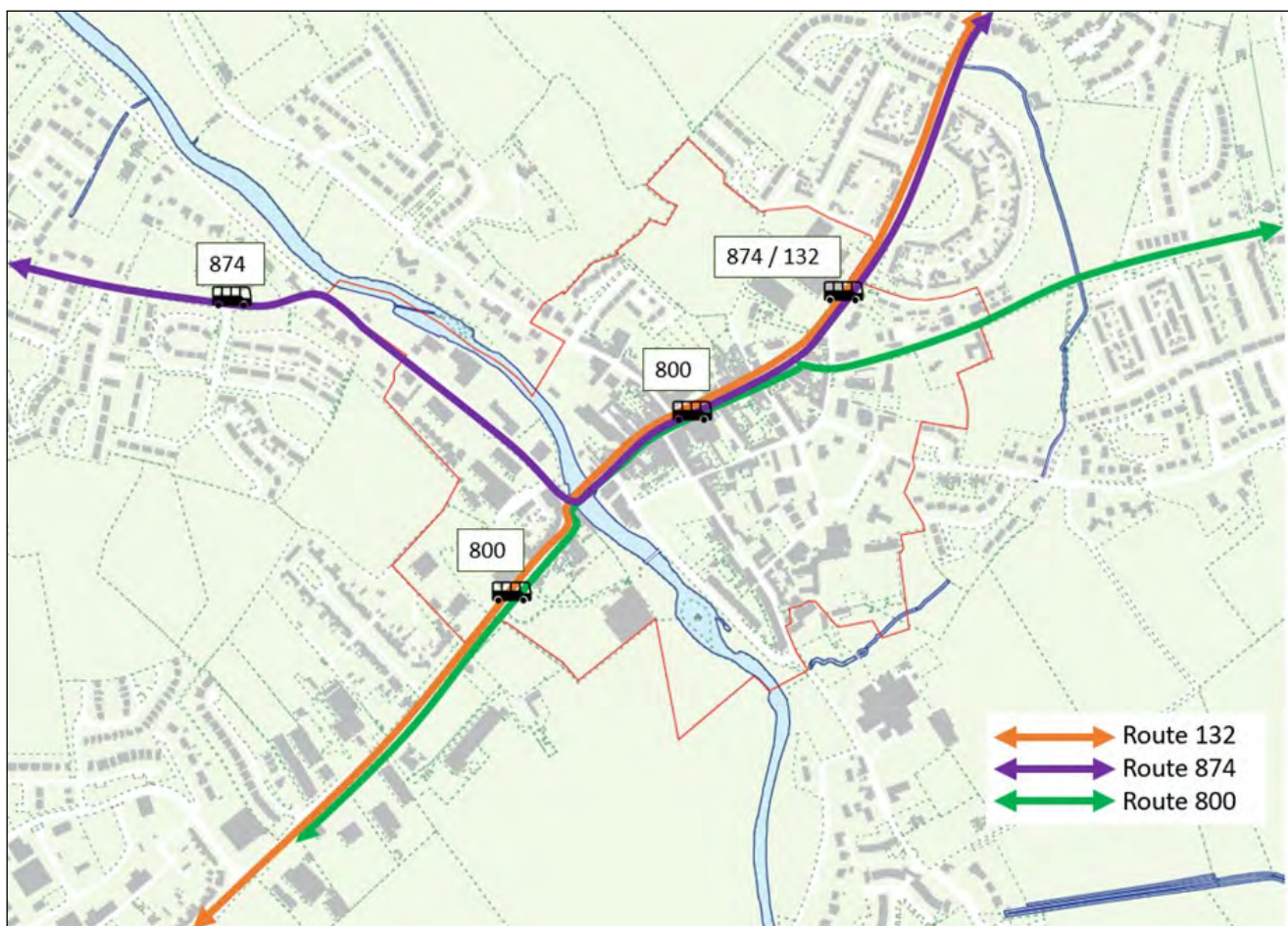
## Existing Public Transport Services

Tullow Town is currently served by the following public transport services:

- Bus Eireann: Route 132 operates from Tullow to Dublin, with four services during weekdays, leaving Tullow at 6:23am, 8:21am, 11:40am and 14:40pm. The bus stop is on the N81 outside of Flynn's Garage. The waiting area is adequate but it doesn't present a shelter at the moment.
- JJ Kavanagh & Sons: a private provider, operates the 874 route from Carlow to Hacketstown on weekdays (Monday to Friday) with 2 services per day, stopping on Dublin Road and St. Patrick's Park.
- TFI Local Bus Link: 800 Arklow to Carlow operates all week with four services Monday to Saturday and three services on Sunday, stopping at The Square and outside Tesco on Bunclody Road.

Longer distance public transport journeys can be made from Tullow to Carlow train station using the 800 local bus link from The Square, Tullow which takes 40 minutes to Carlow Coach Park and a walking distance of 10 minute of Carlow Train Station.

Figure 4.11 Bus Stop provision in Tullow



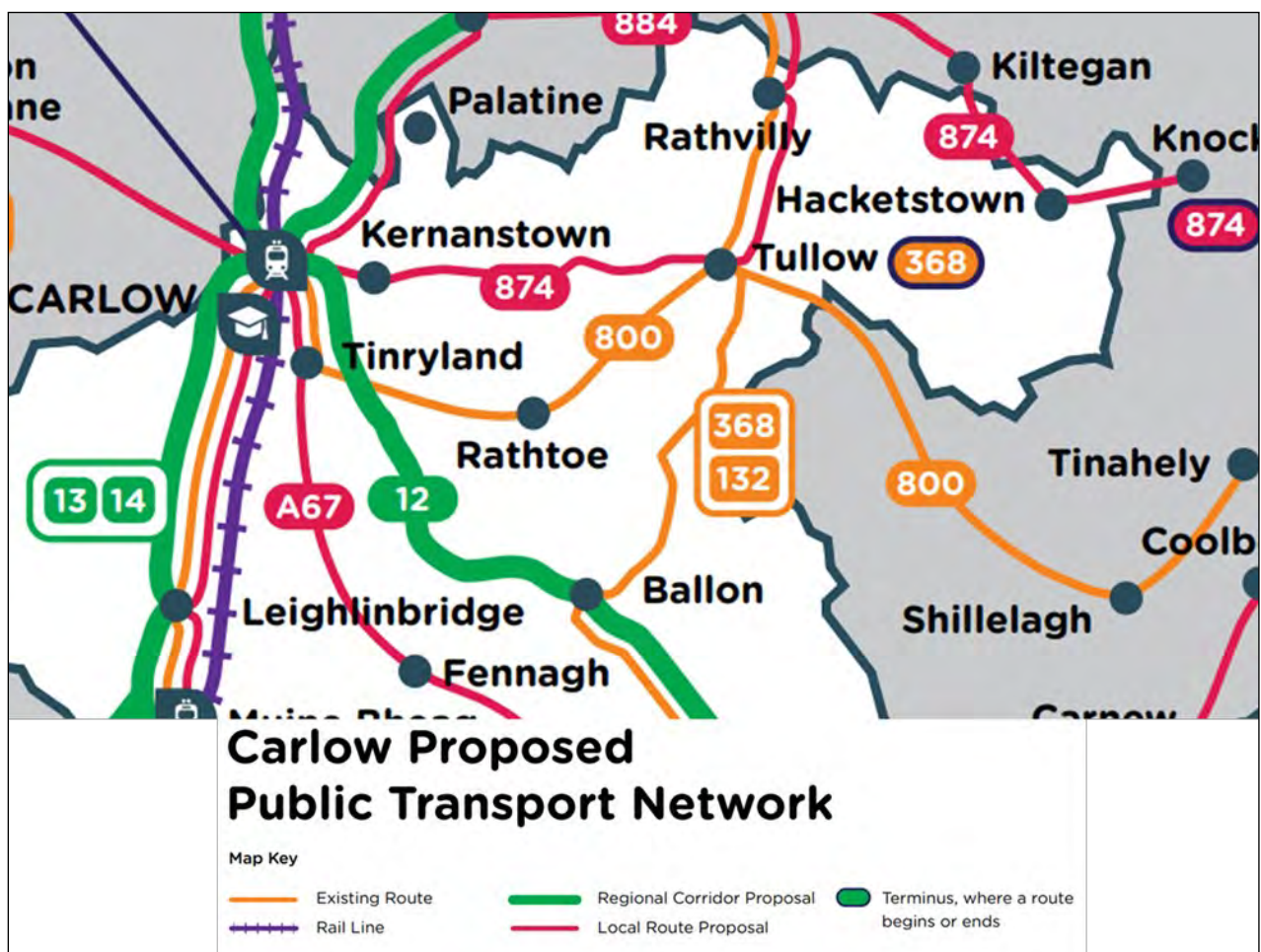


## Future Public Transport Services

The Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan is a major national public transport initiative developed by the National Transport Authority (NTA), with the aim of increasing connectivity, particularly for people living outside our major cities and towns.

The draft plan for County Carlow, with a focus on Tullow and its environs, is illustrated at Figure 4.12. Whilst still at draft stage, the plan includes a proposal to extend route 874 from Hacketstown to Knockananna – serving Tullow, with an increase in frequency.

Figure 4.12 Carlow Proposed Public Transport Network



## Car Parking

Tullow town centre has considerable number of car parking spaces, both on-street and off-street car parks. In certain locations, this impedes pedestrian movements and impact on the quality of the public realm.

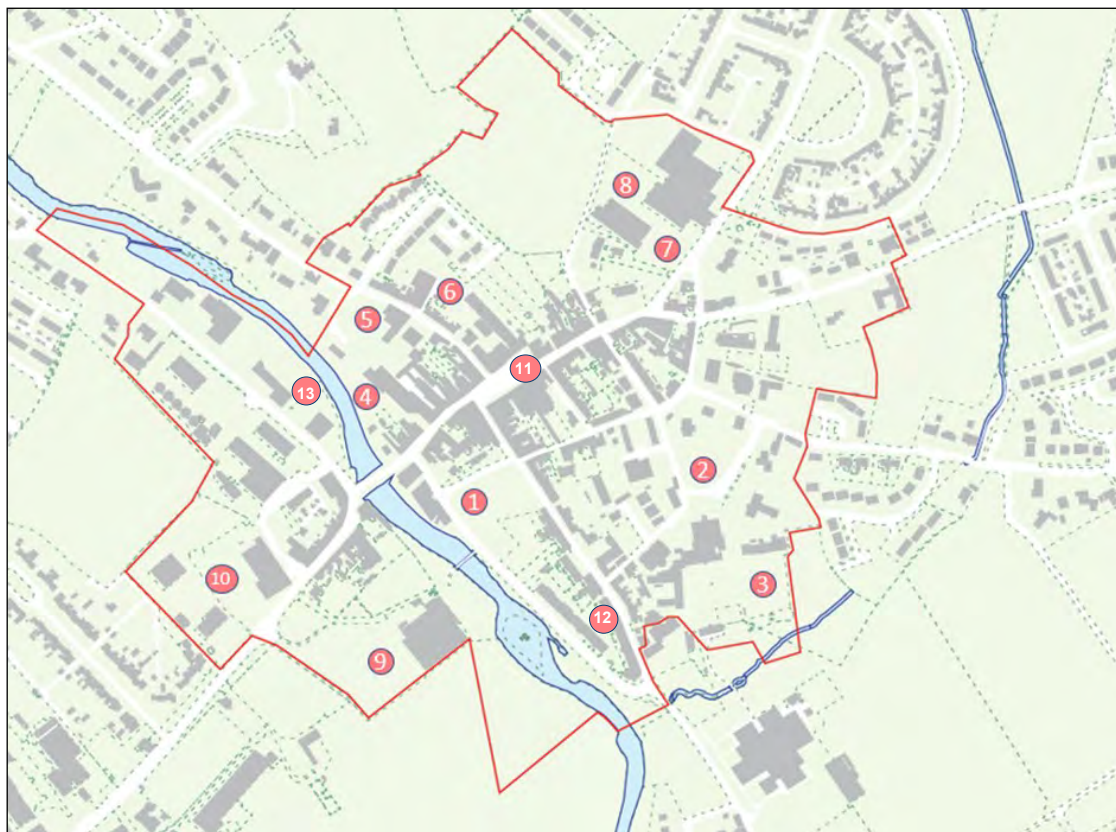
Off-street parking in Tullow town are either public or private parking, free of charge and with the majority located at a walking distance of 5-10 minute away from the Square. It was observed that off-street parking occupancy was below the existing capacity in all the car parks.

On-street parking is free in the town, with a restriction at the Square for a 1-hour maximum stay and some narrow roads presenting double yellow line to avoid parking. Near the Square on Mill Street, outside the Council offices, there are two spaces for Electric Vehicle parking.

Off-street parking locations are listed and shown at Figure 4.13.

1. Leased Car Park (and areas on opposite side of Old Chapel Lane)
2. Church Car Park (and areas to the east at the Parish Centre)
3. Teach Bhríde Holistic Education Centre Car Park
4. SuperValu & Barrack Street Car Park
5. SuperValu & Barrack Street Car Park continued
6. Court View Car Park
7. Aldi Car Park
8. Spar / Supermac Car Park
9. Tesco Car Park
10. Lidl Car Park
11. The Market Square
12. Tullow Street Apartments
13. Thomas Traynor Street

**Figure 4.13 Off-Street Car Park Locations in Tullow**



## Transportation Analysis - Key Findings

- Tullow's proximity to the M9 Dublin – Waterford motorway and the regional road network approaching the town are important transport infrastructural assets which can contribute to the future sustainable development of the area.
  - Census 2016 data reveals that c.65% of journeys to work, school or college made by Tullow residents were undertaken by private car.
  - Tullow Local Area Plan 2017-2023 and the Develop Tullow Association "Issues Statement" document identify the need to develop the Outer Relief Road to release traffic congestion on the town centre which will create a safe space for pedestrians, cyclists and public realm.
  - Within the core of the town, there are a number of points where footpath widths are very narrow or non-existent. There is also a lack of pedestrian priority and crossing points on several key pedestrian desire lines. The discontinuity in footpath provision results in safety issues for vulnerable road users and creates a sense that the town centre streets are dominated by vehicular traffic.
  - In addition to the active travel proposals being progressed by Carlow County Council, the NTA in their draft 'CycleConnects' initiative shows the provision of 'inter-urban' cycle facilities along the N81 and regional roads connecting into Tullow.
  - The Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan developed by the National Transport Authority (NTA), whilst still at draft stage, the plan includes a proposal to extend route 874 from Hacketstown to Knockananna – serving Tullow, with an increase in frequency.
  - Tullow town centre has considerable number of car parking spaces, both on-street and off-street car parks. In certain locations, this impedes pedestrian movements and impact on the quality of the public realm.
  - The plan also set up the objectives to improve accessibility to and within the town centre, improve connectivity and permeability and promote more sustainable modes of transport.
-

# Sustainable Placemaking

# 5

# Sustainable Placemaking



## Introduction

Tullow is situated within the north east area of County Carlow and is designated as a 'District Town' in the county's settlement hierarchy as set out with the extant County Development Plan 2022—2028.

The town is located approximately 16 km south east of Carlow Town and c.80km south west of Dublin City. At a county level, Tullow has relative proximity to Carlow which is designated as a 'Key Town' within the Eastern and Midland Region RSES.

The settlement of Tullow is situated on the River Slaney (An tSláine) which rises on Lugnaquilla Mountain in the Wicklow mountains before flowing through the counties of Wicklow, Carlow and Wexford.

## Geography & History

Having regard to its geography, Tullow's placename ('An Tulach') is derived from Tullach, meaning "a mound". Archaeologically, the town is important for a number of reasons. Firstly it is an example of a pre-Norman monastery which was developed into an Anglo-Norman town. Secondly, as an example of a small Anglo-Norman town, and thirdly, as one of the few Anglo-Norman settlements in Carlow to have survived the Gaelic revival of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.<sup>27</sup>

Tullow is known as the ancestral home of the Wolseley family, with the present day Mount Wolseley Hotel and Golf resort formerly home to the family. A statue of Father John Murphy, a leader of the 1798 Rebellion, is located in The Market Square.

<sup>27</sup> Bradley, J. and King, H.A. (1990) Urban archaeological survey - County Carlow. Unpublished report commissioned by the Office of Public Works, Dublin



### **Built Heritage**

Tullow has a valuable built heritage character which is illustrated by the number of historic buildings and protected structures present in the town. This is illustrated by, for example, the Georgian courthouse building (c.1825) (see photograph above), Catholic Church of the Most Holy Rosary (c.1835), Tullow Monastery National School (c.1910), St. Austin's Abbey (c.1856) and the unique and unusual Water Bailiff's Hut (c.1835) (see opposite).

Tullow's heritage can deliver potential placemaking and economic benefits through the renovation, re-purposing and re-use of its older buildings. This sector can play an important role in the rejuvenation of the Town Centre.



## Natural Infrastructure

The River Slaney is a prominent natural feature within Tullow. The river flows through the central area of the town in a north west to south east direction. The river and its adjoining riparian lands are a valuable natural resource that offers potential placemaking, health and well-being and economic opportunities—for example, through the development of recreational/water sports facilities, riverside public spaces, walking and cycling routes while enhancing connections with central areas such as Bridge Street, Barrack Street, The Market Square for instance and onward to Mount Wolseley.



## Urban Environment

The environmental quality of the town centre is vitally important in attracting increased footfall to support local services and businesses. Presently, there are key challenges within the town that need to be addressed such as the physical condition and appearance of buildings which are crucial in presenting a positive image for the town centre (see photograph opposite of Church Street illustrating vacancy and inactive ground floor units that contributes to a reduction in the overall quality of the streetscape). The dominance of car parking in The Market Square is also a challenge/opportunity for Tullow's urban environment. Having visually attractive places and spaces can attract more people into the town centre that can provide an economic boost. Therefore the quality of Tullow's urban environment can play an important role in the regeneration of the town centre. The following sections set out additional placemaking information regarding opportunity sites/links, challenges, physical/transportation constraints.

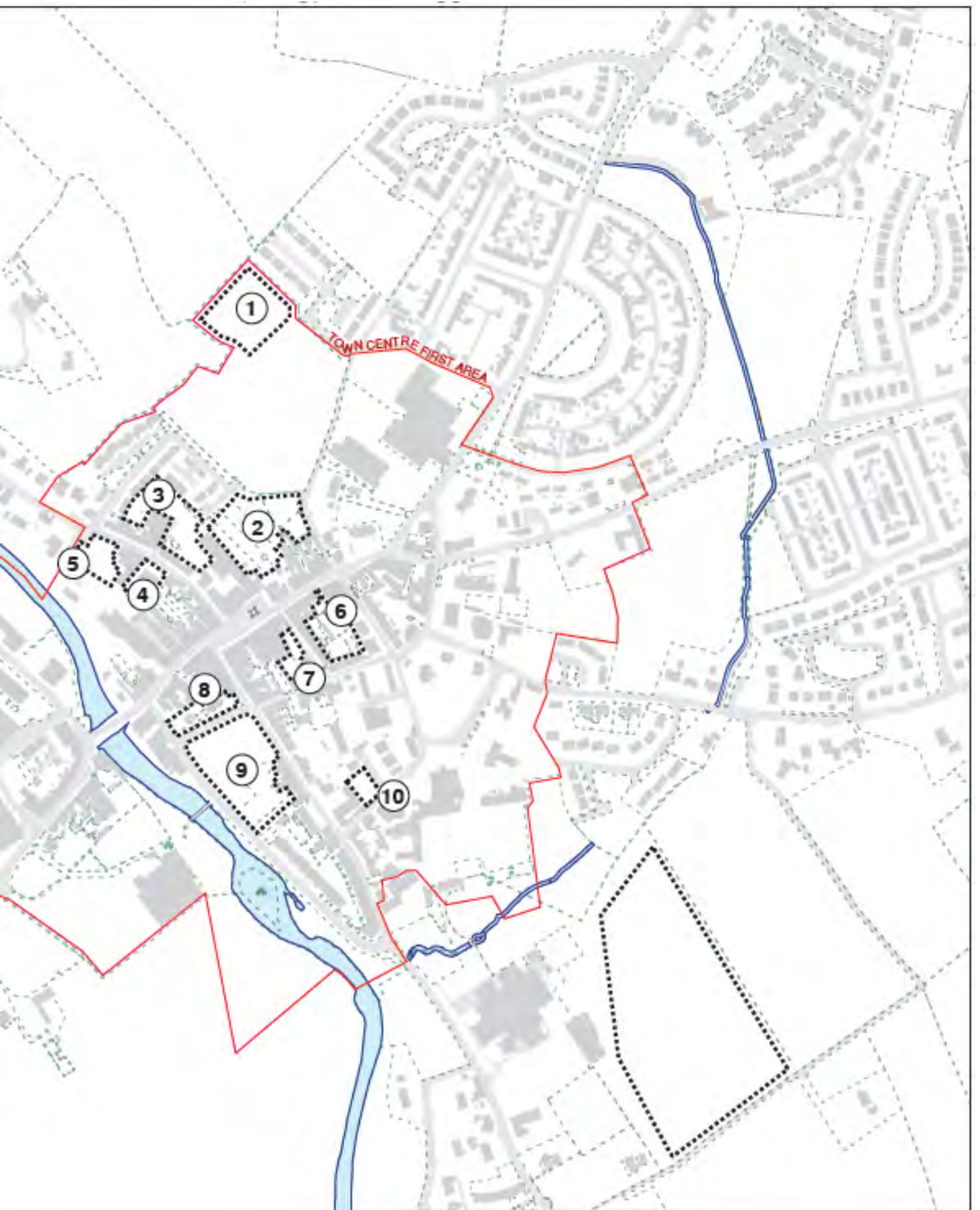


## Tullow - Opportunity Sites




1. Northern Opportunity Site
2. Town Centre Opportunity Site
3. Barrack Street Opportunity Site
4. Barrack Street Opportunity Site 2
5. Barrack Street Car Park Site
6. Bishop Street Opportunity Site
7. Old Chapel Lane Opportunity Site
8. Tullow Street Opportunity Site
9. Mill Street Opportunity Site
10. Chapel Lane Opportunity Site
11. Hawkins Lane Opportunity Site



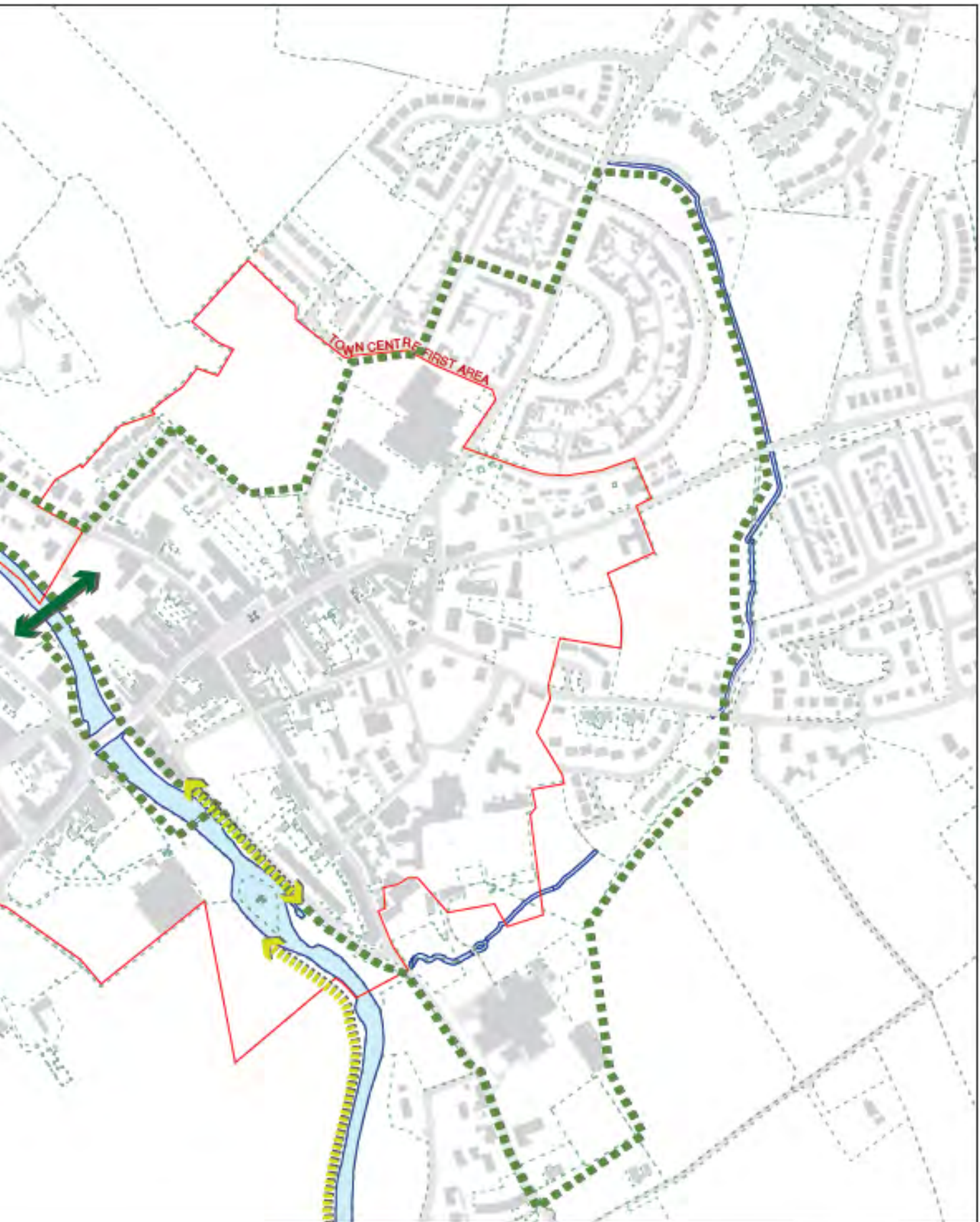







## Tullow - Opportunity Links

-  New River Crossings
-  Biodiversity Loop
-  Riverside Enhancement

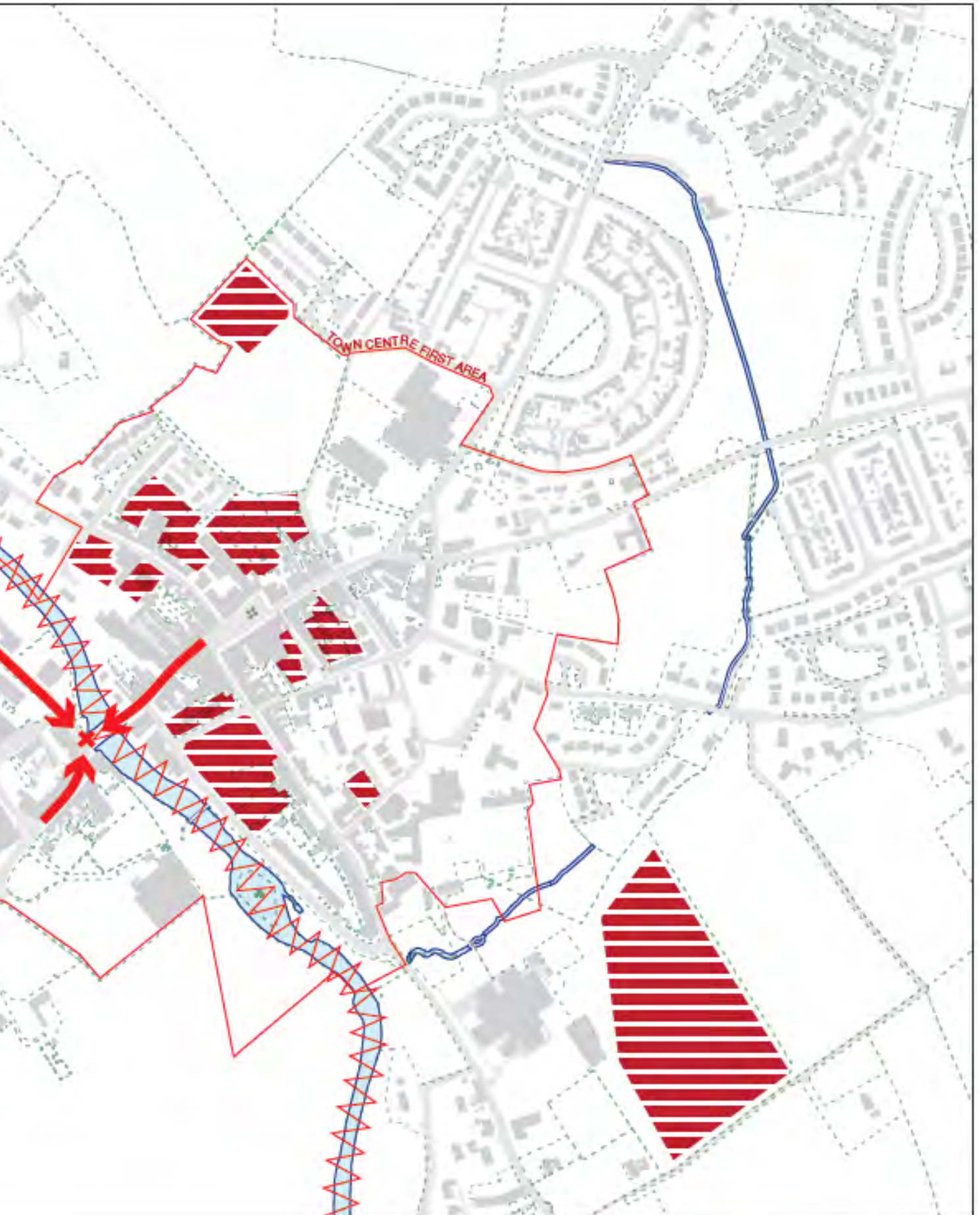




## Tullow - Challenges

-  River Slaney Severance
-  Convergence of major roads
-  Under Utilized Backlands Sites





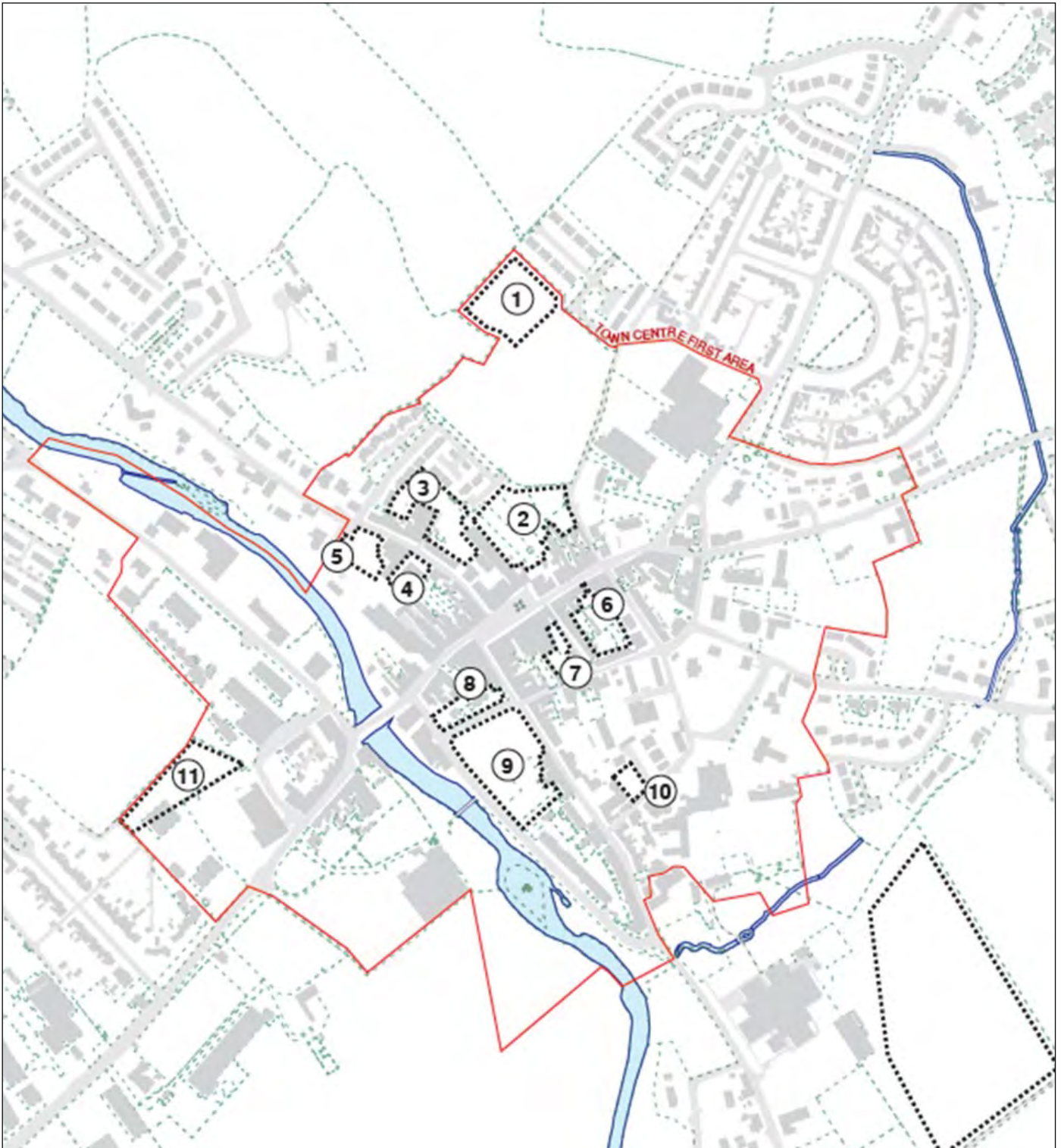
## Tullow - Transport/Physical Constraints





Tullow Town Centre Physical/Transport Constraints	
1	Town Centre Traffic congestion – high volume of HGVs
2	Public Transport: regional services low frequency and lack of bus stops facilities
3	Lack of pedestrian crossings along desire lines
4	Narrow footpaths in the town centre and along the arterial roads
5	Schools accesses: not safe for pedestrian or cyclists
6	Need for a northern river crossing

## Tullow - Transport/Physical Infrastructure Issues and Opportunities





Site No.	Location	Issue	Opportunity
1	Northern Opportunity Site	Appropriate access road to be identified.	Within 10-min walking distance from town centre and 5-min cycling distance, it could benefit from investment in Walking and Cycling infrastructure.
2	Town Centre Opportunity Site	High volumes of HGVs through the town, narrow access junction.	The site is in the Town Centre with access to pedestrian and vehicular facilities which could be improved. It will be connected with the proposed Orbital Pedestrian and Cyclist Scheme at the back.
3	Barrack Street Opportunity Site 1	No issues identified as the sites are in the Town Centre with access to pedestrian and vehicular facilities from Barrack Street.	These sites could benefit from investment in Walking and Cycling infrastructure, enhancement of the existing facilities.
4	Barrack Street Opportunity Site 2	As above.	These sites could benefit from investment in Walking and Cycling infrastructure, enhancement of the existing facilities.
5	Barrack Street Car Park Site	As above.	These sites could benefit from investment in Walking and Cycling infrastructure, enhancement of the existing facilities.
6	Bishop Street Opportunity Site	Bishop Street is a very narrow lane with substandard pedestrian facilities.	This site could benefit from investment in walking infrastructure, enhancement of the existing facilities and traffic management.
7	Old Chapel Lane Opportunity Site	Old Chapel Lane is a narrow road with narrow footpaths.	This site could benefit from investment in walking infrastructure, enhancement of the existing facilities and traffic management.
8	Tullow Street Opportunity Site	No issues identified as the sites are in the Town Centre with access to pedestrian and vehicular facilities.	These sites are very close to recreational amenities (River).
9	Mill Street Opportunity Site	As above.	These sites are very close to recreational amenities (River).
10	Chapel Lane Opportunity Site	Chapel Lane is a narrow road with narrow footpaths.	This site could benefit from investment in walking infrastructure, enhancement of the existing facilities and traffic management.
11	Hawkins Lane Opportunity Site	Access footpaths to this site are narrow.	This site could benefit from investment in walking infrastructure, enhancement of the existing facilities and traffic management.

# Appendix A

## Planning History

# Planning History

Reg. Ref.	Development Location	Development Description	Applicant	Status
CCC Reg. Ref. 22334	Shillelagh Road, Tullow	(a) Completion of construction of facilities adjacent to 3 no. external all-weather Tennis Courts (mainly fencing) (b) Completion of construction of 2 no. "hard court" Tennis/multi-purpose Courts and associated facilities, (c) Extension to the existing single storey Clubhouse currently constructed and associated works (d) Completion/ construction of new car parking facilities, lighting and associated works (e) Completion of upgrading of existing pedestrian access from Shillelagh Road, redevelopment of vehicular entrance access at existing site entrance (on Tullow Hill road) . (f) Construction/completion of a 20m high wind turbine for micro generation (on site use), (g) Construction of timber bin enclosure, (h) Completion of site fencing, boundary fencing, landscaping and associated works and ground works.	Tullow & South Leinster Tennis & Sports Club	Permission Granted 05/05/2023
CCC Reg. Ref. 22235	Mill Street, Tullow	Infrastructure works for a site extending from Mill Street to the Tullow wastewater treatment works. A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) has been prepared in respect of the proposed development.	Irish Water	Further Information received by CCC 12/06/2023
CCC Reg. Ref. 22216	Glendale Estate, Shillelagh Road, Tullow	The development will consist of: (a) Site works to facilitate the proposed development to include general site clearance works. (b) Creation of a new access point to the lands from Shillelagh Road with provision of a new internal access road to facilitate vehicular and pedestrian access. (c) Provision of a residential development comprising completion works to existing buildings as constructed on site pursuant to permissions 03/572 and 08/438 along with the erection of 8no. semi-detached dwellings to provide for a total of 70no. residential dwellings in total.	Nimbus Property Company Ltd	Permission Refused 03/07/2023

Reg. Ref.	Development Location	Development Description	Applicant	Status
CCC Reg. Ref. 22140	Car park of Tesco, Abbey Street, Tullow	The development will consist of: (i) permission for "Click and Collect" signage in the existing Tesco car park; (ii) for the construction of a sheltered canopy (c. 50 sq. m) in the existing car park for the purpose of providing 2 no. dedicated "Click and Collect" spaces for the existing Tesco store; and (iii) a pedestrian crossing and all associated site development works.	Tesco Ireland Ltd	Permission Granted 19/07/2022
CCC Reg. Ref. 19263	4 & 5 Thomas Traynor Road, Tullowbeg, Tullow	The demolition of the existing two storey pitched roof dwelling and ancillary out-buildings; (i) the construction of 18 No. townhouses each with private amenity space/private rear gardens in 7 no. two-storey semi-detached/terraced blocks, with rooflights; (ii) new vehicular and pedestrian entrance on the front (North East) site boundary off Thomas Traynor Road; (iii) provision of internal access road and pedestrian footpath to serve each of the 18 No. proposed townhouses; (iv) provision of 36 no. in-curtilage parking spaces; (v) communal open space, associated boundary treatment, landscaping, drainage and all associated works to facilitate the development. A Natura Impact Statement is submitted with the application.	PJ Coleman	Permission Granted 28/09/2020
CCC Reg. Ref. 19137	Parochial House, Crosskeys, Tullow	Erection of a permanent portacabin for the provision of after school services and all associated site works.	Forward Steps Resource Centre	Permission Granted 03/09/2019
CCC Reg. Ref. 18204	Church Street, Tullow	Construction of a 2 storey office building with independent ground floor access, use of existing entrance and car park to the rear of existing two storey pharmacy and beauty salon and all associated site works.	Morrissey's Pharmacy Tullow Ltd	Permission Granted 24/05/2019
CCC Reg. Ref. 1895	Tullowbeg, Tullow	Development includes the construction of a industrial warehouse unit with a ground floor area of 32,954m <sup>2</sup> and a 135m <sup>2</sup> single storey plantroom annex. The development will be accessed through the existing entrance and estate roadway extending from the public roadway R725 and also via a proposed new emergency exit onto the L1024 public roadway to Rathoe.	Carlow Warehousing Ltd	Permission Granted 15/10/2020

Reg. Ref.	Development Location	Development Description	Applicant	Status
CCC Reg. Ref. 17212	Wolseley Park, Mount Wolseley Golf and Country Club, Tullow	Development to include four new two storey houses, entrances, site boundary treatments, connections to services and associated works	Ernest James	Permission Granted 02/04/2018
CCC Reg. Ref. 16359	Industrial Estate, Tullow	Retention Planning Permission consists of the following;- (A) Retention of existing office space 117 sqm (B) Retention of existing industrial extension No.01 of 98 sqm (C) Retention of existing industrial extension No. 02 of 58 sqm, and all ancillary site works, and Planning permission for; (D) Demolition of 2 no. industrial units of 428 sqm and 40 sqm (E) Proposed industrial extension No.01of 1839 sqm (F) Proposed industrial extension No.02 of 733 sqm (G) proposed industrial extension No. 03 of 400 sqm (H) Proposed two storey canteen and toilet facilities of 162 sqm new connection to mains foul water sewer line, minor internal and external alterations and all ancillary site works.	Burnside Autocyl (Tullow) Ltd	Retention/ Permission Granted 26/05/2017
CCC Reg. Ref. 16318	Industrial Estate, Tullow	Retention Planning Permission and Planning Permission for the following (1). Retention planning permission for existing 1055m <sup>2</sup> industrial extension to ground floor, retention planning permission for 54m <sup>2</sup> office area to north east elevation of building, retention planning permission for 30m <sup>2</sup> office area at first floor level, retention planning permission for existing signage on south east elevation of building, and retention planning permission for relocation of existing entrance from originally granted position. (2). Planning Permission for the construction of a single storey 530m <sup>2</sup> extension to the south west elevation of the existing industrial unit, an LV substation, minor external and internal alterations and all ancillary site works.	Kelly Precision Ltd	Retention/ Permission Granted 30/01/2017

# Appendix B

## Public Consultation Observations

# Public Consultation Observations

Summary of observations and comments provided at the Public Consultation events and as provided electronically to Carlow County Council.

Category	Comments
<b>Urban Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Market Square is a nice feature with upgrade potential such as the creation of outdoor dining areas</li> <li>• The Market Square feels like a car park</li> <li>• Shopfront design / signage could be better</li> <li>• Great buildings (e.g. the former Bank of Ireland building)</li> <li>• Vacant buildings affects visual aspect of the town</li> <li>• Buildings should retain traditional appearance</li> <li>• Steps in front of buildings should not be removed</li> </ul>
<b>Movement &amp; Transportation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reconfigure The Market Square parking</li> <li>• Approach roads to town centre have good potential / approaches need to be improved</li> <li>• Pedestrian linkages within town centre could be enhanced</li> <li>• Accessible via motorway</li> <li>• Free parking</li> <li>• Ease of walking along Main Street</li> <li>• Traffic disruption stemming from the bridge</li> <li>• Traffic flow through the town (particularly morning times)</li> <li>• Ring road/bypass needed</li> <li>• Location of primary schools causes additional traffic movements</li> <li>• Access to playground in park (one way in/out) is congested</li> <li>• Parking on footpaths</li> <li>• Parking restrictions outside the riverbank</li> <li>• Too many pedestrian crossings and their locations</li> <li>• Town car park could be re-lined to allow more parking close to town centre</li> </ul>

Category	Comments
<b>Movement &amp; Transportation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extended river walk from Applegreen to Castledermot Road</li> <li>• Create pedestrian zone in town centre</li> <li>• Population of town is increasing so traffic will increase</li> <li>• Second bridge would be very beneficial</li> <li>• Illegal parking in the Square</li> </ul>
<b>Planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shops and the Square are a strength</li> <li>• Good level of services, businesses and education</li> <li>• Heritage associated with Tullow is a strength</li> <li>• Access to playground in park</li> <li>• Vacancy on Main Street</li> <li>• Need to provide services when planning development (for e.g. water, transport, education, community uses, medical)</li> <li>• Amalgamate primary schools with better linkages</li> <li>• Re-use of former bank of Ireland as a remote working hub / tourism centre, business uses</li> <li>• Re-use vacant buildings in the Square for SMEs</li> <li>• Proximity to heritage sites and surround countryside</li> <li>• No requirement for large retail stores</li> <li>• Lack of affordable housing</li> <li>• Range of services needed (for e.g. too many hairdressers and takeaways)</li> <li>• More play areas for children</li> <li>• Need to create spaces for people to meet</li> </ul>
<b>Environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asset being situated on River Slaney</li> <li>• Many natural amenities near to town</li> <li>• Town has good appearance</li> <li>• Park is prone to flooding</li> <li>• Better lighting around the town to deter anti-social behaviour</li> <li>• Increased planting</li> <li>• Develop natural amenities around the River Slaney</li> <li>• Hydro-electric power potential of River Slaney</li> </ul>



Category	Comments
<b>Other</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fr. Murphy statue a focal point in town centre</li> <li>• Mount Wolseley hotel is an asset</li> <li>• Good sports provision/facilities</li> <li>• Good community spirit</li> <li>• Playground in park aids anti-social behaviour</li> <li>• More live music to attract more people into the town centre</li> <li>• High business costs</li> <li>• Loyalty scheme to promote the town</li> <li>• Lack of builders/developers on Committee</li> </ul>

Appendix II  
Carlow County Council  
Town and Village  
Health Checks

Carlow County Council

# TOWN AND VILLAGE HEALTH CHECKS

2017



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**1.0**

# Introduction

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Carlow County Council is committed to improving the social and economic conditions of communities throughout the county and recognises that each of the county's towns and villages must provide high quality living, working, education, recreation and culture opportunities in an attractive environment.

Seven County Carlow towns and villages have received investment of €380,000 from the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs as a result of an application from Carlow County Council to support the development of rural communities. The investment will be allocated towards a series of community projects in each of the settlements, and part of this investment has been allocated to the completion of town and village health checks.

Future Analytics Consulting was appointed by Carlow County Council to undertake a Town and Village Health Check, SWOT Analysis and Paint Scheme recommendations for seven towns and villages in County Carlow. Consultation with organisations and community members was also conducted as part of the process. The data obtained from the research and stakeholder consultation process provided the foundations for the formulation of a series of recommendations for each settlement.

This report provides up-to-date information on the performance of each settlement, incorporating an assessment of strengths, challenges and opportunities which Carlow County Council will use in preparing for future development and enhancement of each settlement. Moreover, the data will support future community and socio-economic planning and development of each of the towns and villages assessed, with a view to enhancing the prosperity and vitality of each settlement and improving the quality of life for the local community and those working and visiting.

# 1.1

## Town and Village Health Check Approach

*Town and Village Health Checks* collate information on settlements based on a range of indicators and the overall performance of the centres is assessed against pre-determined indicators in order to create reliable baseline information. As outlined in the Retail Planning Guidelines, viability and vitality are core elements to the enhancement of town and village centres: "Vitality is a measure of how active and buoyant a centre is, whilst viability refers to the commercial well-being of a town", thereby, a measure of its capacity to continually attract investment.

The study comprised baseline research, site visits and public consultation and was undertaken by independent qualified town planners from Future Analytics Consulting, with considerable experience in the area of urban and rural planning and community projects.

### Research and Site Visits

The project team undertook extensive background research into each town and village, comprising a socio-economic assessment of the study area's demographics, a review of Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSI) maps and aerial photographs, tourism and heritage plans and strategies, and retail and environmental attributes. A site visit of each settlement was conducted, the purpose of which was to gain an understanding of each of the town and village characteristics, in terms of visual appearance and presentation, functions, retail offering, vacancy rates, parking, tourism offerings, cultural, built and natural heritage, facilities and amenities.

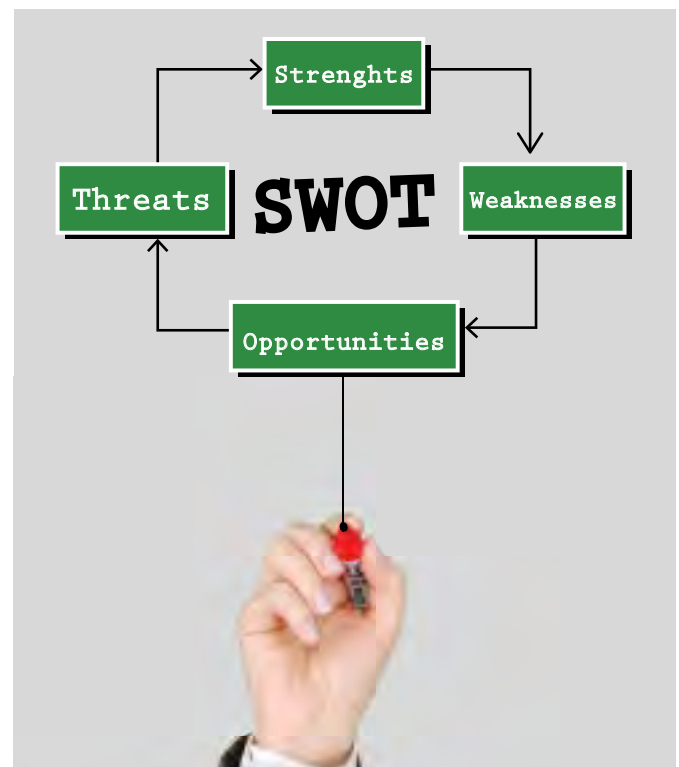
### Consultation and Workshop

Consultation with key stakeholders was held by means of individual meetings with stakeholders representing community, social, cultural and environmental views, and a participatory public workshop, which was held on 24th January 2017 in the Talbot Hotel, Carlow Town. The purpose of the workshop was to give those attending an opportunity to actively contribute to the process and discuss and share ideas on the challenges and future opportunities for their

respective towns and villages. The project team used aids such as photographic aerial images of each settlement and a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis approach to facilitate the workshop. Key elements assessed included: Diversity of retail; Vacancy levels; Environment (shop fronts, signage, dereliction, parking, general appearance); Attractions; Community Amenities, Recreation, Arts, Culture and Sports, problem areas and potential opportunity areas.

## SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Analysis

A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis was undertaken for each settlement which set out the strengths, weaknesses/constraints, opportunities and threats associated with each of the seven settlements. The desk top reviews, combined with site visits and stakeholder consultation assisted in the preparation of each SWOT analysis and builds a picture of what is valued and appreciated in each settlement, what is unsatisfactory and needs changing, where there are threats and opportunities. The SWOT provides a basis for a vision for the future that stakeholders believe to be both desirable and achievable.





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## Recommendations

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The findings of the study, in the form of the Town and Village Centre Health Check, SWOT analysis, and the consultative community workshop have been invaluable in identifying measures for further action. These further actions are set out through a series of recommendations. The recommendations, which are evidence based, will contribute to the enhanced vitality and viability of each of the settlements. The recommendations are presented in the form of short-term (typically 0-6 months), medium-term (typically 7-24 months) and long-term (typically 2-5 years). The recommendations are accompanied by a series of SMART (Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound) actions.

## 1.2

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### Settlements Studied

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This study comprises health checks for seven (7) towns and villages throughout County Carlow. The settlements assessed are:

- 1 Tullow**
- 2 Muine Bheag/Royal Oak**
- 3 Borris**
- 4 Leighlinbridge**
- 5 Rathvilly**
- 6 Hacketstown**
- 7 Myshall**

The settlement boundary of each centre was based on Small Area / Electoral Divisions and extended out according to development, in agreement with Carlow County Council.

The profile of each settlement was identified by collating and mapping the latest data from a range of quantitative datasets, including data from the CSO Census, GeoDirectory, Environmental Protection Agency, National Parks and Wildlife Services, and National Monuments, which together allowed the exploration of themes such as economic activity and performance, employment and settlement connectivity.



2.0

Tullow



## 2.1

### Introduction

Tullow is one of the county's principal towns and is an important urban centre for the surrounding rural hinterland, providing a range of community, commercial and employment functions. The River Slaney traverses through the town centre, with town development to the east and west of the river.

Since 2000, Tullow has increased considerably in size and developed largely as a commuter belt town to Dublin, due to the fact that the N81 traverses directly through Tullow town centre, with direct access to south and west Dublin. The employment profile of the town is distinctive as regards the large presence of agri-industry employment. Tullow is categorised as a District Town under the South Eastern Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022, and is therefore targeted for growth over the coming years.

## 2.2

### Study Area

The study area of the town health check comprises the area as defined in the Tullow Local Area Plan 2016-2022.

## 2.3

### Accessibility and Connectivity

Tullow is well connected by road, with the N81 traversing directly through the town centre. The N81 provides direct access to Dublin (Tallaght) and the M50 (80km), while Carlow town is situated 15km west. Tullow also has direct access to the N80 leading to Rosslare Port (80km) and Portlaoise (59km). The M9 motorway is located 11km from Tullow making it accessible to the major urban centres of Kilkenny City (49km), Waterford City (91km), and Naas (52km).

## 2.4

### Demographic and Socio-economic Characteristics

According to Census 2011, Tullow has a population of 3,972. Census data shows that the population increased by 64% between 2002-2011, which was significantly above the national and county average. Tullow has a culturally diverse population, with approximately 22% of the town's population comprising non-Irish nationals, of which nearly half (9%) are from Poland.

There were 1,478 households recorded in the 2011 Census, with an average household size of 2.7 persons, below both the county (2.8) and national average (2.72). One and two person households make up 53% of all households, which is similar to the national average. Under the Tullow Local Area Plan 2016-2022, a target of 131 new housing units has been set over the period 2016-2022.

Similarly, the age profile is generally consistent with the national average, with 35% of the population under the age of 24 years, compared to 34% nationally, while 11% of the population is over the age of 65 years, marginally below the national average rate of 12%. The proportion of population aged 25-44 years is 35%, which is above the national average of 31%.

CSO data informs that there were 1,940 persons in the labour force (aged 15 years and over who are able to work; excluding students, retired, unable to work due to illness or disability). Of those in the labour force, 72% were in employment (1,405 persons). Tullow had an unemployment rate of 28% (2011 data), significantly above the national rate of 19%. Of persons not in the labour force, 32% were retired, 22% were students (aged 15 years and over) and 18% are unable to work due to illness or disability. A further 27% were categorised as looking after home/family.

'Skilled manual' is the largest socio-economic group with 19% of the population in this social group, while 17% are categorised as 'semi-skilled'. The HP Index (Pobal Haase Pratschke Deprivation Index) identifies Tullow as 'marginally below' the national average with a HP Index score of -8.18.

## 2.5

### Settlement Environment

#### Entrance

- ▶ There are five main entrance routes to Tullow, with the N81 the most heavily trafficked. From the north (N81), the entrance is made up predominantly of residential housing, while access from the south (N81) is significantly more industrial in character.

#### General Character

- ▶ Tullow is a busy market town and serves as an important economic and retail centre for the wider rural hinterland and surrounding towns and villages.
- ▶ The buildings on the Main Street comprise of two and three storey buildings with traditional shop fronts. Many of the buildings in the main retail centre have retained traditional shop fronts and features such as sash windows and other original features which create an attractive traditional character for the town.
- ▶ Some of the buildings along the Main Street are in need of painting, cleaning, and repair work.
- ▶ There is a small square in the centre of the Main Street with an early 20th century monument in the centre dedicated to Fr. Murphy, whose part in the 1798 rebellion led to his execution. This acts as a main focal point for the town centre. The paving in the square is relatively recent, comprising large cobble type paving which is attractive.
- ▶ There is also planting on the square (tree and flower boxes).
- ▶ There are two relatively narrow streets leading off both the north and south ends of the Market Square (Bishop Street, Barrack Street and The Square which leads onto Mill Street).
- ▶ The Tullow Museum is located in a very picturesque granite building by the River Slaney.
- ▶ The River Slaney is a very attractive feature of the town. Significant works have been completed along the southern sections to create walk ways, pedestrian bridge and to the rear of Tesco, a new public park with a new public art works, a children's playground and skate park. However, the river bank to the northern side of the main bridge crossing is less attractive with many industrial and commercial premises backing on to it.
- ▶ The Thomas Traynor Road is very commercial / industrial in nature, with the grain store impacting significantly on the street character (see figures 2.3, 2.4 and 2.7).

- ▶ The industrial site at the junction of Thomas Traynor Road and Hawkins Street is unattractive with the metal railings and concreted parking area with grass and weeds long the verges adjoining the main road (R725).
- ▶ The post and wire type fencing along the boundary (ca. 190m) with the grain plant is very unattractive (concrete piles with chain link wire fencing) (see Figure 2.7).
- ▶ The commercial and industrial units along the river front are unattractive and in need of rejuvenation (see Figure 2.5 and Figure 2.6).
- ▶ In general, the streetscapes are pleasant, evoking a tradition town, however, the dominance of vehicles within the town is very much apparent (see Figure 2.8, Figure 2.9 and Figure 2.10).



Figure 2.1 View southwest from the bridge



Figure 2.2 View northeast across the River Slaney from Thomas Traynor Road (R725)



Figure 2.3 View southwest on Thomas Traynor Road (R725) of grain store



Figure 2.4 View southwest on Thomas Traynor Road (R725) of grain store



Figure 2.5 View of commercial units along the Thomas Traynor Road (R725)



Figure 2.6 View of commercial units along the Thomas Traynor Road (R725)

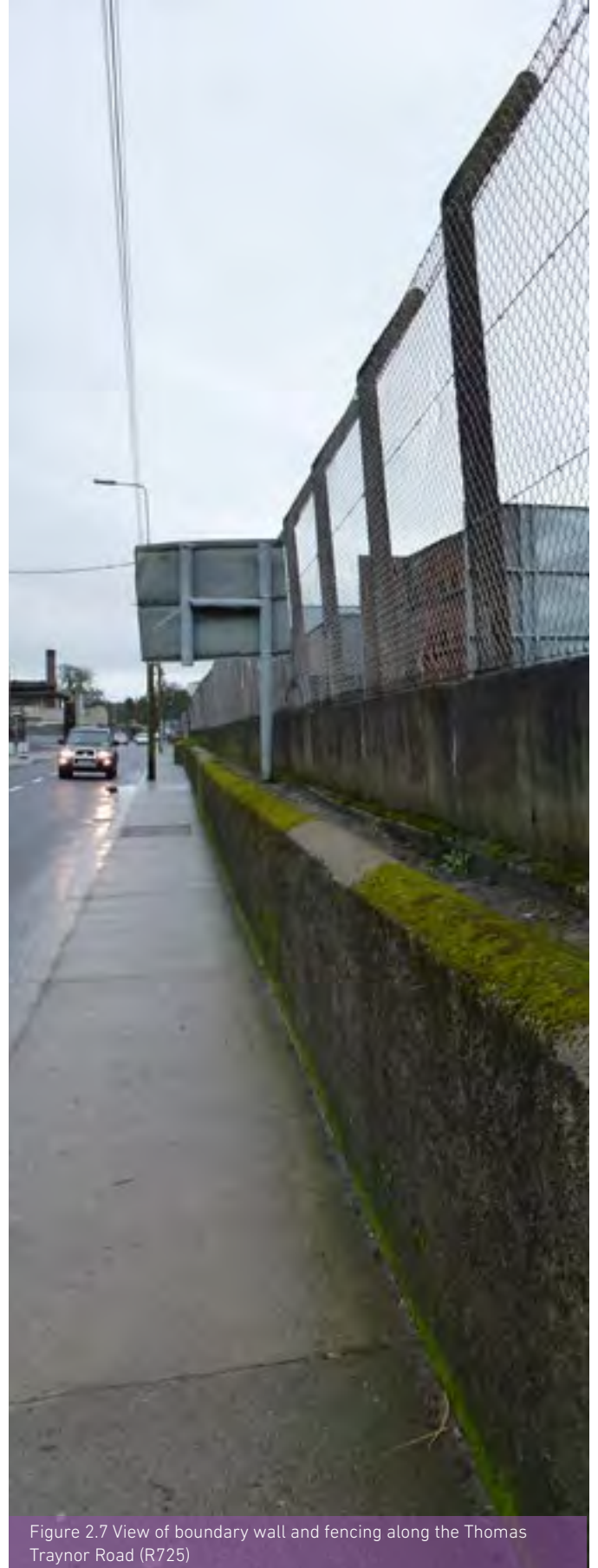


Figure 2.7 View of boundary wall and fencing along the Thomas Traynor Road (R725)

## Traffic and Parking

- ▶ Due to the fact that the N81 traverses directly through the town centre, traffic volumes and congestion can be heavy, along Church Street, Market Square and Bridge Street, particularly during peak times. The volume of traffic going through the town centre has negative implications in terms of vehicular and pedestrian circulation within the town, particularly with regards to congestion.
- ▶ Merging of traffic from the Thomas Traynor Road (R725) at the Bridge on the N81 also contributes to congestion. On-street parking is widely available in secondary streets, while there are a number of dedicated car parks close to the town centre including one to the rear of SuperValu (off Barrack Street) and a more recent unsurfaced car park to the south of Mill Street and adjacent to the Tullow Civic Offices. There are also a number of smaller parking areas to the rear of some premises while Tesco, Lidl and Aldi all have own customer car parks.
- ▶ One-hour parking is permitted on both sides of the Main Square. This parking is imposing.
- ▶ The main bus stop is also located on the square though there is no specially designated layby area for the bus. With parked cars, this means the bus is obstructing traffic when serving this stop (see Figure 2.10). The parked cars on the monument side detract from the public realm appeal (see Figure 2.9).
- ▶ There was good signage noted towards car parking facilities.

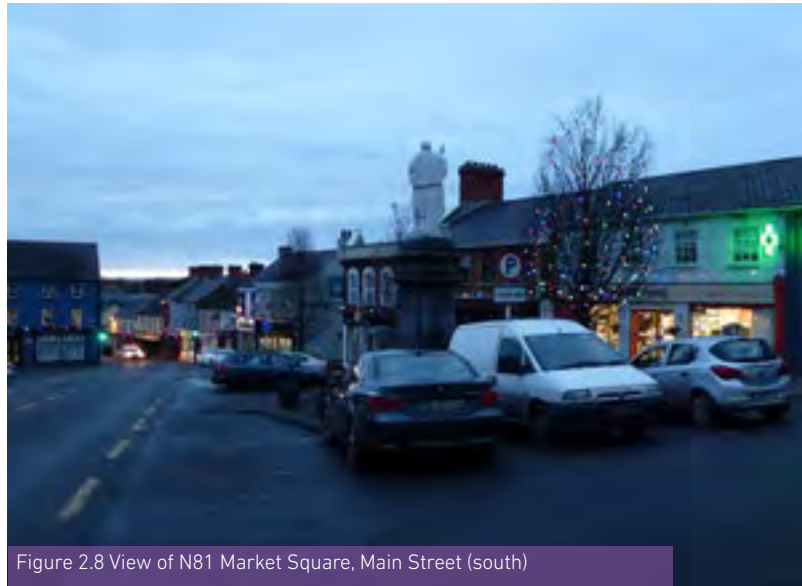


Figure 2.8 View of N81 Market Square, Main Street (south)



Figure 2.9 View of N81 Market Square, Main Street (north)

## Pedestrian and Cycling

- ▶ There are a number of pedestrian crossings at each end of the town however there are no pedestrian crossings directly on the Main Square. There is however, a crossing at the south end of the square.
- ▶ The pedestrian footpath narrows on Bridge Street and pedestrian access is difficult during peak times.
- ▶ There is no designated cycle path through the town.

## Signage

- ▶ Signage was good leading into Tullow town centre. Signage within the town centre was good with clear signage to parking areas and to local amenities, accommodation and attractions outside of the town (Rathwood, Altamont Gardens, Mount Wolseley, Chocolate Factory).



Figure 2.10 View of N81 Market Square, Main Street (south) showing bus stop area



- ▶ Signage providing information to town centre attractions was less evident e.g. museum, river side walk, town park, library.
- ▶ In areas, signage was crowded which could have the counter impact of creating confusion (see Figure 2.11 and Figure 2.12).

### Vacant / Derelict Units and Sites

- ▶ There are a number of vacant buildings located in prominent areas of the town. These include former retail units, hotel and public houses. Notably, there is a cluster of vacant premises on the N81/Abbey Street junction (e.g. former Slaney House, former Finlan's Bar (see Figure 2.13).
- ▶ The vista southwest from the bridge is not attractive, looking over towards the rear of industrial units and yards which appear in need of upkeep (see Figure 2.1).
- ▶ In general, much of the Thomas Traynor Road comprises of unmaintained industrial and commercial units and yards, some of which are vacant (e.g. petrol and service station) (see Figure 2.14).
- ▶ It represents an unattractive entrance to the town.



Figure 2.11 Signage at the R725 Carlow Road/Thomas Traynor Road junction



Figure 2.12 Signage at the R725 Carlow Road/Thomas Traynor Road junction



Figure 2.13 View of the former Finlan's Bar, Main Street (N81) (south) which is now vacant



Figure 2.14 View of the former Fraser Oil service station, Thomas Traynor Road (R725) which is now vacant

## 2.6

### Economic Commentary

There is a good diversity of retail provided in Tullow. It comprises a host of main supermarkets including (SuperValu, Tesco, Lidl and Aldi). SuperValu is located in the town centre (Bridge Street) and also has a large customer parking area. The remaining supermarkets (Tesco, Aldi, Lidl) are located at each end of the town and within very close walking distance. All have large car parking areas.

There are a host of key retail mixes including grocery/butchers, pharmacy, post office, bank, credit union, florists, hairdressers, barbers, in addition to a number of public houses along the Main Street. Restaurants and cafes are less evident (not located in a public house). There are also a large number of professional services located on the primary and secondary retail areas, including solicitors and estate agents. Other key services provided include health centre /GP/dental facilities, childcare facilities, schools, and offices.

There is one hotel serving the town (Mount Wolseley) which is located ca. 1.7km south east of the town centre, along Mill Street. It appears that while previously, there were other accommodation providers in the town, that these have since closed. These buildings remain vacant (e.g. Slaney House)

## 2.7

### Services and Facilities

Tullow has a good range of social and community services. These include Tullow Health Centre, family resource centre, fire station, library, civic offices, Tullow Youth Project, Tullow Men's Shed, the Cairdeas Centre, Teach Bhríde, a community hall, a number of nursing homes, Tullow Credit Union, and churches.

Tullow also hosts a range of sporting clubs including GAA, rugby, soccer, tennis, martial arts (Karate and taekwondo), golf, boxing, kayaking, and dance schools, in addition to many other groups and organisations such as the scouts. There is no public swimming pool.

## 2.8

### Natural Environment and Built Heritage

The River Slaney runs through the town centre and is a key component of the town's character. The river supports a range of wildlife and was an important salmon river. The river provides a natural focal point for the town, acting as the green lungs of the town and contributing very positively to the biodiversity of the town. It also provides an important public



amenity and economic potential in terms of developing water based activities that will contribute to economic expansion opportunities and employment. It is paramount that any such development incorporating the river environment is conducted in a sustainable manner so as to protect the natural environment and ecological diversity. There are a number of positive initiatives to enhance biodiversity along the river including the erection of bird and bat boxes and nesting habitat structures constructed from hollow piping for bees (see Figure 2.15 and Figure 2.16).

Tullow has a number of buildings of architectural and heritage value including Tullow Museum, St. Columba's Church of Ireland, and the former courthouse (now a scout den).

## 2.9

### Tourism and Recreation

There are a number of buildings of architectural and heritage interest including Tullow Museum and St Columba's Church of Ireland. Tullow also hosts the Bishop Daniel Delany Museum.

Altamont Gardens, and Rathwood Home and Garden, incorporating Rathwood Forest Walks and the Chocolate Garden are all located within close proximity of the town

centre and attract large numbers of visitors annually to the area.

The Mount Wolseley Hotel and Golf Club is located less than 2km from the town centre and possesses a host of facilities including its 18-hole championship course, designed by Christy O'Connor Jnr, restaurant, bar, spa, gym and swimming pool.

## 2.10

### SWOT Analysis

A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis was undertaken for Tullow which set out the strengths, weaknesses/constraints, opportunities and threats associated with the town. The desk top reviews, combined with site visits, and stakeholder consultation assisted in the preparation of the SWOT analysis and builds a picture of what is valued and appreciated in Tullow, what is unsatisfactory and needs changing, where there are threats and opportunities. The SWOT provides a basis for a vision for the future that stakeholders believe to be both desirable and achievable.



Figure 2.15 Wildlife biodiversity initiatives to encourage biodiversity along the river bank



Figure 2.6 Wildlife biodiversity initiatives to encourage biodiversity along the river bank

## STRENGTHS

- Location and accessibility
- Strong community organisations
- Broad range of sporting amenities
- Community resource facilities (health centre, library, parish, special needs, elderly, crèche, day care)
- Natural heritage and biodiversity, notably the River Slaney
- Good quality schools (primary and post-primary)
- Strong indigenous industry for employment
- Shops and services
- High quality hotel accommodation
- Recreation amenities (river, park, St Patrick's GAA walking track)
- History and cultural assets and heritage
- Attractions (Museum, Altamont Gardens, Hardymount Gardens, Rathwood Home and Gardens)
- Develop Tullow Association (DTA) Tullow Tidy Towns

## WEAKNESSES / CONSTRAINTS

- Vacant units (commercial, industrial and residential)
- Retail closures in town centre
- Traffic congestion / traffic management
- Underutilised natural amenities
- Sense of public realms
- Undervalued built heritage
- Access to employment and training for youth
- Sense of security/crime
- Buildings in need of refurbishment / unfit for use (e.g. old)
- Litter and dumping off main areas
- Vacant or neglected sites reducing attractiveness of areas
- Mobility in areas of town centre for pedestrians
- Bus stop siting
- Cyclist facilities
- Lack of community spirit in some areas

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Tourism potential
- Connecting out of town attractions with town centre amenities
- Cross generational cooperation (encouraging volunteering)
- Enhanced aged amenities
- Enhanced natural environment
- Promote and support green infrastructure
- Increased employment
- Improved build environment
- Reduced traffic volume and congestion
- Vacant units – development opportunities
- Recreation development, notably water-based activities
- Health and well-being through primary care unit
- Public realm enhancement
- Security and sense of security
- New retailers (niche / boutique)

## THREATS

- Vacant units (commercial, industrial and residential)
- Vacant sites impacting negatively on investment
- Vacant sites facilitating anti-social behaviour
- Reduced economic activity
- Loss of sense of security / increased crime
- Retail leakage
- Increase in retail closures
- Traffic congestion
- Road safety (pedestrian, cyclists)
- Buildings in need of refurbishment
- Excessive commercial rates
- Flooding

## 2.11

### Recommendations

The findings of the study, in the form of the Town and Village Centre Health Checks, SWOT analysis, and the consultative community workshop, have been invaluable in identifying measures for further action.

This section provides recommendations that can be implemented and achieved within the short (typically 0-6 months), medium (typically 7-24 months) and long term (typically 2-5 years). The recommendations integrate physical, economic, social and environmental renewal measures in order to attain maximum benefit for the communities within each settlement. The recommendations are developed from the comprehensive health check, site visits and consultation process which were conducted as part of this study. These are therefore evidence based recommendations which will contribute significantly to enhanced vitality and viability of Tullow. The recommendations are considered to be SMART in that they are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time Related.

The recommendations have been framed around seven core themes:

- 1. Public Realm Improvements**
- 2. Traffic Management Enhancements**
- 3. Promotion of Local Skills, Produce and Enterprise**
- 4. Recreation and Amenities Enhancement**
- 5. Community Development and Engagement**
- 6. Tourism, Culture and Heritage Development**
- 7. Branding and Marketing**



## Tullow

## Town Renewal Recommendations

## Theme: Public Realm Improvements

Recommendation	Coordinator	TimeFrame
Develop a phased building improvement scheme to promote a widespread enhancement of buildings throughout the town	Carlow County Council, in conjunction with local retailers and owners	Short-term
Initiate a window display initiative with retailers to encourage that active window displays are maintained at ground floor in order to enhance street vibrancy. Where a premise is vacant, liaise with owners of vacant retail premises to have a window display	Develop Tullow Association, local retailers	Short-term
Initiate a shop front design and paint scheme to enhance retail streets as they are important element in a streets character and perception of a street.	Carlow County Council	Short-term
Enhance laneway entrances, removing graffiti, rubbish bins that are located along laneways paths	Carlow County Council, Develop Tullow Association	Short-term
Removal of plastic signs from shop fronts	Carlow County Council	Medium-term
To control the installation of security shutters on commercial properties which can visually detract from the environment of a town or village. The replacement of existing authorised roller shutters or new roller shutters where deemed appropriate shall comply with the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must be of an open grille type.</li> <li>• Painted to match the shopfront colour scheme.</li> <li>• Where possible located, together with their associated housing, behind the window display.</li> </ul>	Carlow County Council, in collaboration with Chamber of Commerce, local retailers	Medium-term
Repair of cracked and uneven pedestrian pathways	Carlow County Council	Medium-term
Prepare a street furniture pavement design strategy	Carlow County Council, in collaboration with local retailers, and wider community including representatives of the aged and persons with disabilities.	Medium-term
Remove parking from market square and expand the market square area to enhance the focus of pedestrian movement in the square, reduce the dominance of vehicles and improve the public realm appearance, with street furniture, planting and tourism, history and heritage information display.	Carlow County Council	Medium-term
Replacement of existing street lighting with more attractive low energy street lighting	Carlow County Council	Long-term
Encourage over the shop uses as residential dwelling spaces to improve vibrancy of town centre and to help stimulate the existing retail uses.	Carlow County Council	Long-term

**Theme: Traffic Management Enhancements**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Coordinator</b>	<b>TimeFrame</b>
Create a designated bus lay-by area for pick-ups / drop offs	Carlow County Council, in collaboration with Bus Éireann	<b>Short-term</b>
Commission a traffic survey to understand the level of vehicular traffic through Tullow town centre	Carlow County Council	<b>Short-term</b>
Increase number of age-friendly parking bays in the town	Carlow County Council	<b>Short-term</b>
Improve facilities for pedestrians and cyclists through provision of dedicated cycle paths and secure bicycle parking areas	Carlow County Council	<b>Medium-term</b>

**Theme: Promotion of Local Skills, Produce and Enterprise**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Coordinator</b>	<b>TimeFrame</b>
Business support scheme to promote and support business marketing and training initiatives	Carlow County Council, LEO Carlow	<b>Medium-term</b>
Develop an evening trade / entertainment plan for Tullow with the aim of achieving Purple Flag status. This will require collaboration between retailers, hospitality providers, Chamber of Commerce and Carlow County Council	Carlow County Council, in collaboration with Chamber of Commerce, local retailers and hospitality providers	<b>Medium-term</b>

**Theme: Recreation and Amenities Enhancement**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Coordinator</b>	<b>TimeFrame</b>
Enhance amenities and infrastructure for walkers and cyclists, including tracks, bike parking areas, lighting	Carlow County Council	<b>Short-term</b>
Support development to facilitate increased communication and cooperation between retailers / commercial premises / hospitality providers and leisure providers	Carlow County Council	<b>Short-term</b>
Create connectivity between town centre and out of town attractions and amenities e.g. Altamont and Hardymount Gardens, Rathwood Gardens	Carlow Tourism	<b>Medium-term</b>
Develop a looped walk and link in with visitor places of interest to maximise potential e.g. Slí na Sláinte walking route	Carlow County Council	<b>Medium-term</b>
Promote the expansion of green infrastructure (GI) through targeted measures e.g. GI Audit	Carlow County Council	<b>Medium-term</b>
Recognise the river as an asset. Liaise with water activity providers to support and promote the development of water based activities while protecting the natural environment and biodiversity of the river	Carlow County Council, in collaboration with Inland Waterways, NPWS, sporting clubs and providers, and hospitality providers	<b>Medium-term</b>

**Theme: Community Development and Engagement**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Coordinator</b>	<b>TimeFrame</b>
Increase community cooperation in town centre development	Develop Tullow Association	<b>Short-term</b>
Liaise with water based sporting organisations to acquire input into the development of river based activities	Carlow Tourism	<b>Short-term</b>
Undertake a shopper survey to assess shoppers needs and retail habits	Carlow County Council	<b>Medium-term</b>

**Theme: Tourism, Culture and Heritage Development**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Coordinator</b>	<b>TimeFrame</b>
Create signage in market square with visitor information on history and attractions in centre	Carlow County Council	<b>Short-term</b>
Increase the opening hours of the Tullow Museum and incorporate additional tourist facilities e.g. information centre	Carlow Tourism	<b>Short-term</b>
Erection of new public toilets at Tullow Museum	Tollowphelim Historical Society	<b>Medium-term</b>
Review the existing marketing initiatives and incorporate a new digital marketing plan for Tullow incorporating all groups (e.g. tourism, business, historic and cultural heritage, diaspora links)	Carlow County Council, Carlow Tourism	<b>Medium-term</b>

**Theme: Branding and Marketing**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Coordinator</b>	<b>TimeFrame</b>
Develop and market an event programme which will set out upcoming events, while developing and marketing Tullow's full tourism potential.	Carlow Tourism	<b>Short-term</b>
Website development with link to retailers, hospitality providers, amenities and attractions	Chamber of Commerce in conjunction with Carlow Tourism	<b>Short-term</b>



# Appendix III

## Tullock Land Use Survey Map



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The logo for RMLA, featuring the letters 'RMLA' in a bold, black, sans-serif font. A small red square is positioned at the end of the 'A'. The logo is centered within a white rectangular box.

**RMLA LIMITED**

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RMLA Limited, trading as RMLA is registered in the Republic of Ireland number 720031.  
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Directors of the Company: Robert McLoughlin