

# Town Renewal Master Plan

Monasterevin, County Kildare

Kildare County Council  
Comhairle Contae Chill Dara



the **paul hogarth** company



# Town Renewal Master Plan

Monasterevin, County Kildare

## Contents

1	Introduction	03
2	Analysis	06
3	Consultation	20
4	Vision	26
5	Proposals	30
6	Action Plan	50
	Appendices	52

# Introduction

## Overview

In response to a range of changing needs, growing demands and increasing challenges faced by towns and villages across modern Ireland, a number of responses are being examined and delivered to safeguard the livelihoods, successes, safety and futures of those who live in, work in and visit these special places.

Monasterevin in County Kildare is a unique town with a rich history, a vibrant and diverse community, and an exciting heritage setting. As a town facing these demands and challenges, Monasterevin also presents a strong and unique opportunity to secure a thriving future.

A Master Plan for the future of Monasterevin has been commissioned by Kildare County Council (KCC), and is being led by The Paul Hogarth Company (TPHC) in collaboration with the Strategic Projects and Public Realm Team (SPPR) with input from transport engineering consultants O'Connor Sutton Cronin (OCSC). This report summarises and presents the process of having developed the Master Plan for Monasterevin.

It is the SPPR team that is delegated the authority to carry forward any project or further develop any proposal based on resources and capacity and subject to funding availability.

Central to the success of this process is the collaborative input and knowledge of those who know the town best: the local residents and workforce, as well as those who visit and enjoy Monasterevin. Alongside the professional guidance and input of the design team - and as developed through an iterative review and assessment process with the SPPR team - this process has been helpfully informed and assisted with the input of Masters students of Urban Regeneration and Development at TU Dublin.

This report presents a summary of the team's findings, conversations, processes and conclusions through a

collaborative effort with the SPPR in ensuring the delivery of a viable and exciting Master Plan for Monasterevin.

## Collaboration

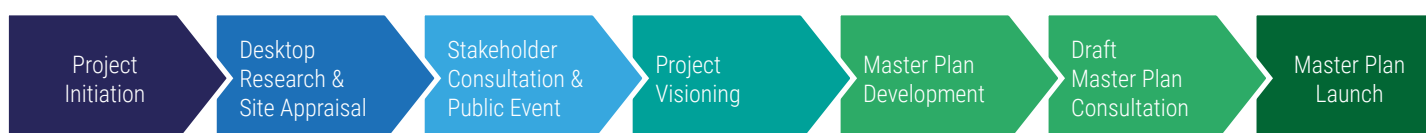
This Master Plan identifies the team's recommended changes and proposed developments to the spatial configuration of the town, highlighting priority projects within the study boundary area - each of which have been informed by significant urban design and spatial analysis. This iterative engagement and design process, its emerging vision - as well as the project proposals themselves - each take into detailed consideration a number of studies, regulatory, legislative and policy documents, and national design guidance.

The purpose of this document, therefore, is to demonstrate a number of considered and viable approaches to further improve and develop upon the successes of Monasterevin Town: a number of key objectives emerge through the process of engagement and detailed study, with much of the report's vision focusing on the safe and active enjoyment of the town and the region, and particularly towards delivering a vision for the town with pedestrian-focused and connected public spaces and liveable streets.

It aims to put the pedestrian and cyclist at the heart of the design solutions for the town and to create fully accessible, inclusive and age-friendly public spaces.

## Process

A number of critical steps and key project milestones have been successfully concluded, as illustrated below, to ensure that the emerging vision and proposals are desired for, while being as robust and comprehensive as possible.



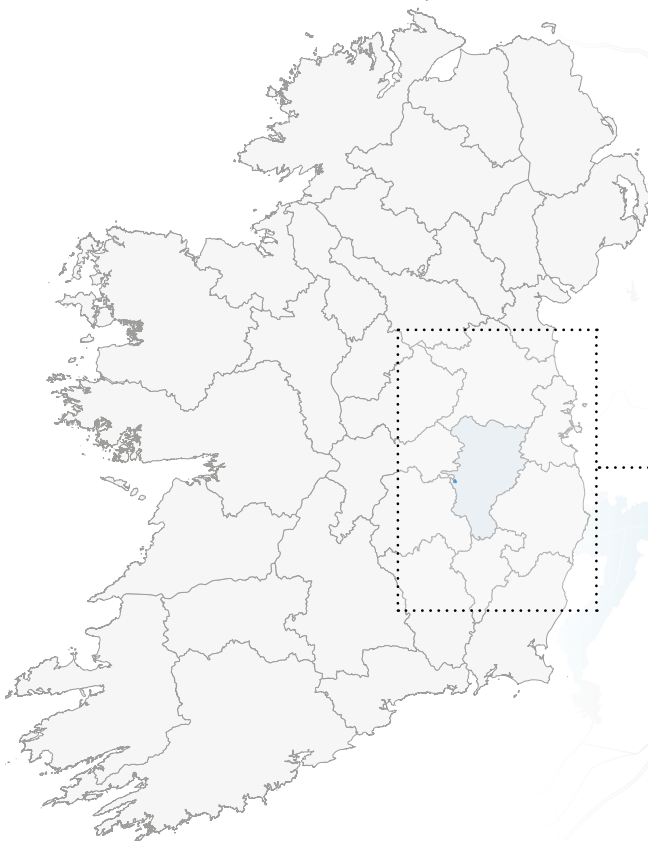
# Introduction

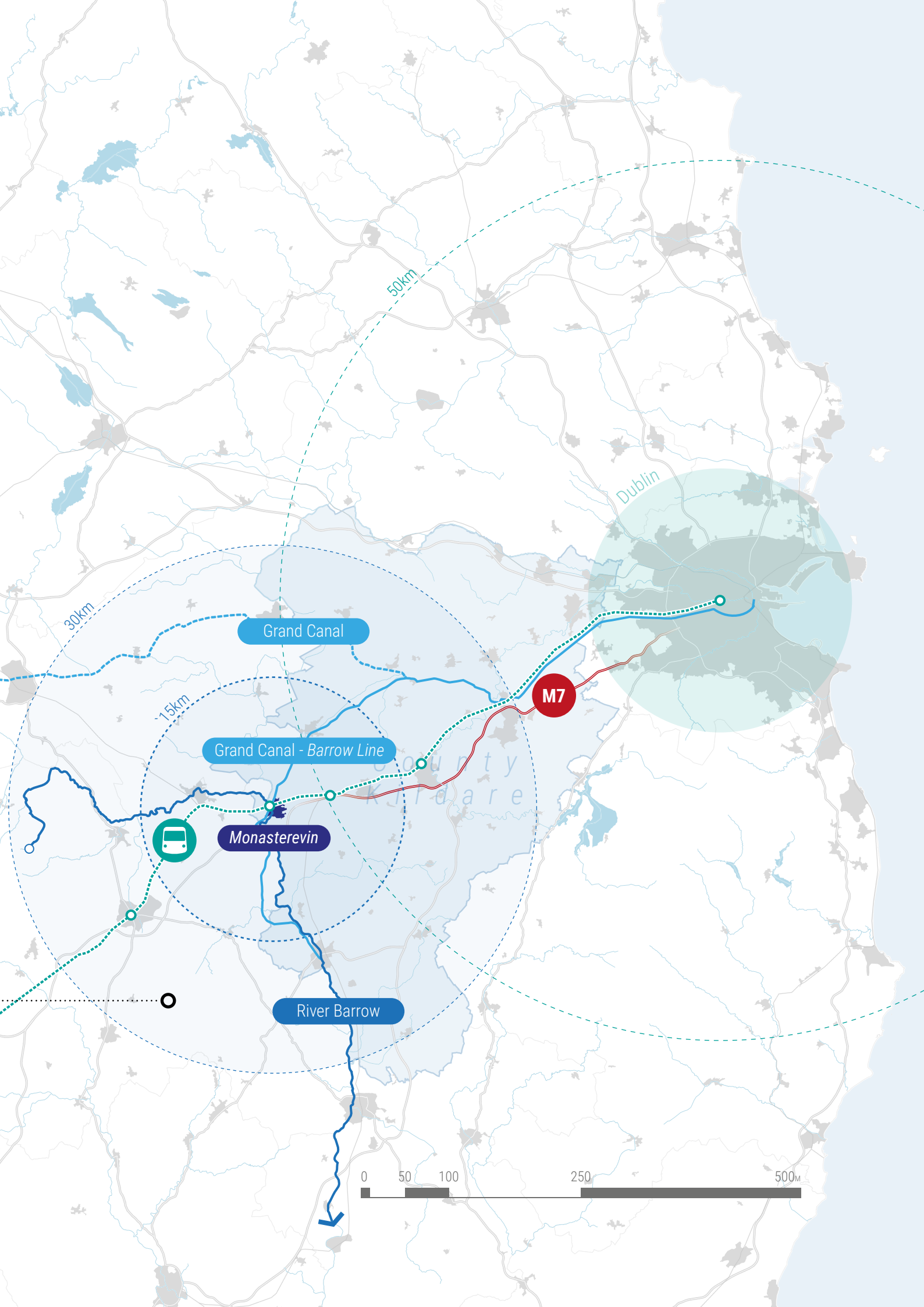
## Context

The town of Monasterevin is positioned at a unique point along the River Barrow in the west of County Kildare, where the Barrow Line of the Grand Canal extends south from Lowtown and traverses Ireland's second-longest river- the Barrow - via a stone aqueduct in the town.

Monasterevin is located just over 50km from Ireland's capital city of Dublin, and is comprehensively connected to other urban centres by various modes of travel including motor vehicle (M7 motorway), rail (Dublin to Cork train service), and the aforementioned waterways of the Grand Canal (to Dublin) and the River Barrow along which is the emerging touristic attraction of the Blueway.

Due to the town's advantageous regional positioning, strong connections through transport infrastructure, and rich social, industrial and cultural heritage, Monasterevin is recognised as presenting a truly unique and exciting opportunity for furthering its development and potential.





Dublin

Grand Canal

Grand Canal - Barrow Line

Monasterevin

River Barrow

M7

30km

15km

50km

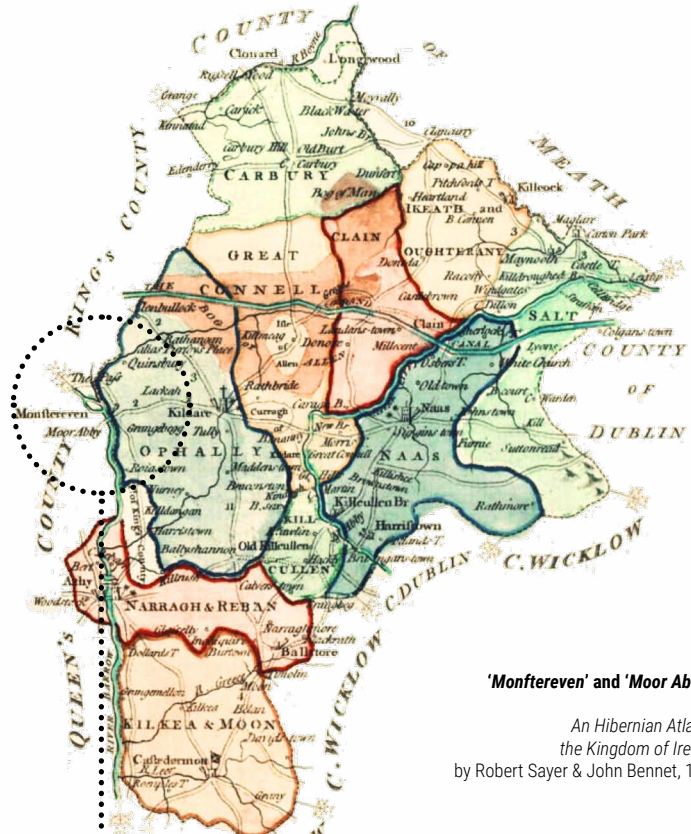
0 50 100 250 500m

# Analysis

## 2.1 History & Development

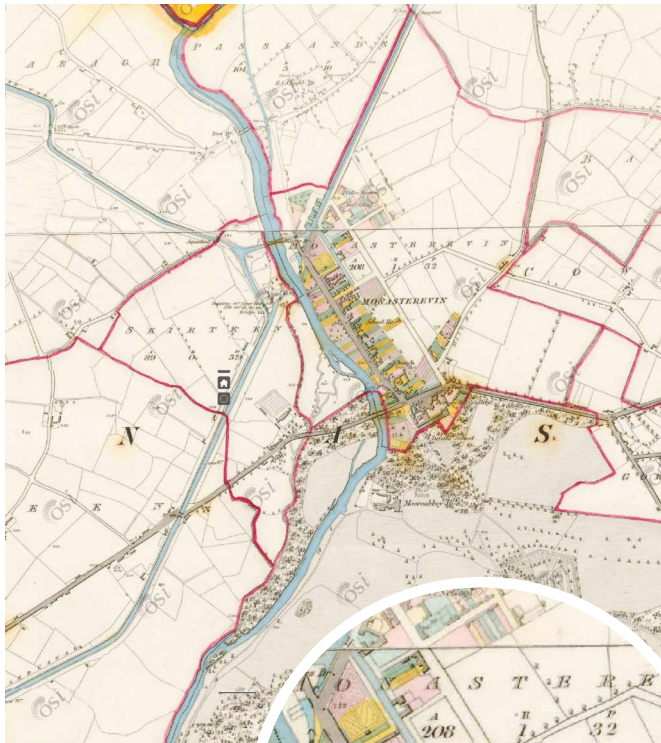
Urban growth of the settlement of Monasterevin can be traced back to the 5th century, after St. Evin established the monastery at Moore Abbey. Though this fell into decay in the 9th century, it was from this original monastic settlement that the name *Mainister-Eimhin* emerged.

After its refounding as a Cistercian monastery through the 12th century, the town positioning as a crossing point on the River Barrow was recognised as advantageous. By 1826, the Grand Canal aqueduct over the Barrow was built, which - along with the Moore family's planning of the town's notably rectangular centre - gave rise to the town being fondly regarded as 'The Venice of Ireland'.



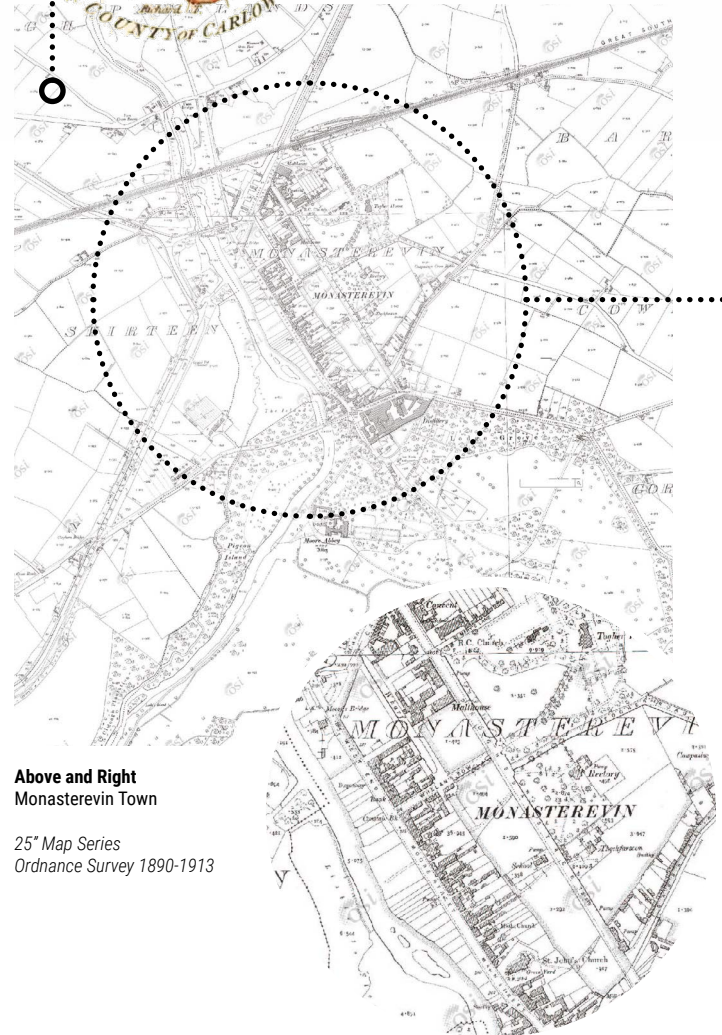
'Monsterevin' and 'Moor Abbey'

An Hibernian Atlas of the Kingdom of Ireland by Robert Sayer & John Bennet, 1776



Above and Right Monasterevin Town

6" Map Series Ordnance Survey 1830s - 1840s



Above and Right Monasterevin Town

25" Map Series Ordnance Survey 1890-1913

word was originally applied, still retain it in their names, and it is generally very little disguised by letter changes.

Saint *Eimhin* or Evin founded a monastery on the brink of the river Barrow, on a spot which before his time had been called *Ros-glas*, green *ros* or wood; but which took from him the name of *Mainister-Eimhin*—so written in all ancient authorities—Evin's monastery, now Monasterevin. He was a native of Munster, and was one of four brothers, all ecclesiastics, sons of Eoghan, who was eighth in descent from Olioll Olum king of Munster in the third century. He lived in the beginning of the sixth century; and he is believed to have been the writer of a Life of St. Patrick in a mixture of Irish and Latin, which is still extant, and which on account of its being divided into three parts, each having a proper introduction of its own, is now well known as the "Tripartite Life."

Monasterboice in the county Louth, near Drogheda, now so celebrated for its abbey ruins,

**Above**

*The Origin and History of Irish Names and Places, Volume II*  
PW Joyce 1910

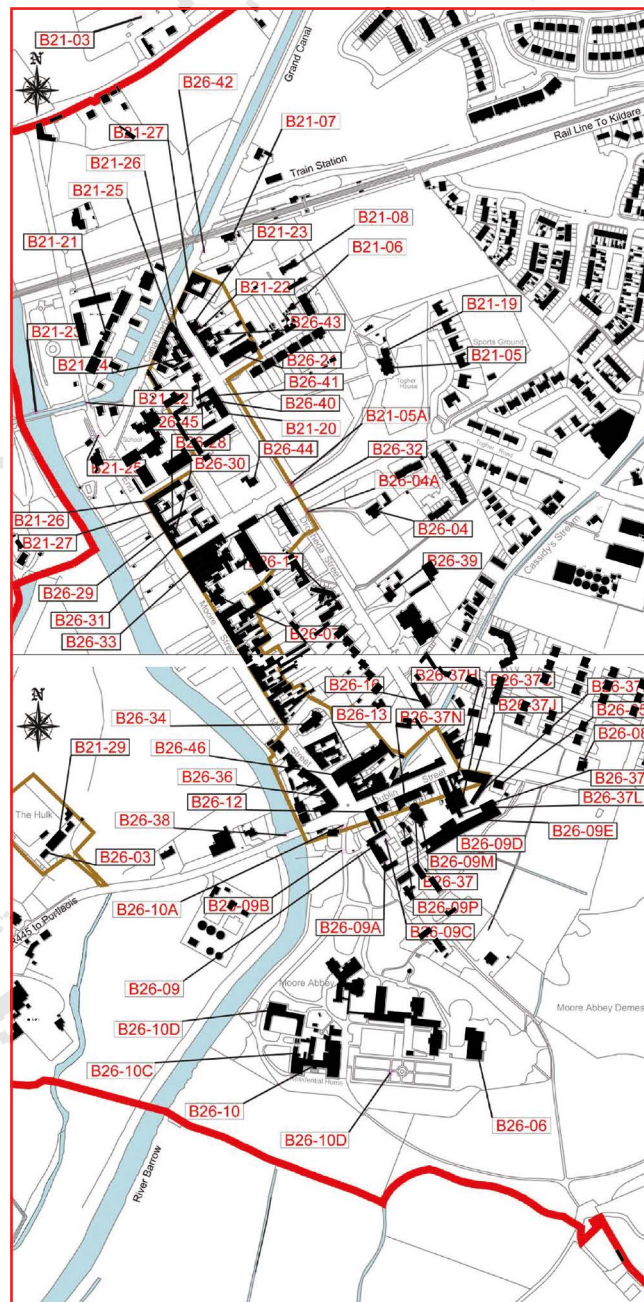
**Below**

Market Square, Monasterevin  
circa 19th Century  
Kildare County Council



**Right**

Areas and items noted on the Record of Protected Structures (RPS), and the Architectural Conservation Area (ACA)



# Analysis

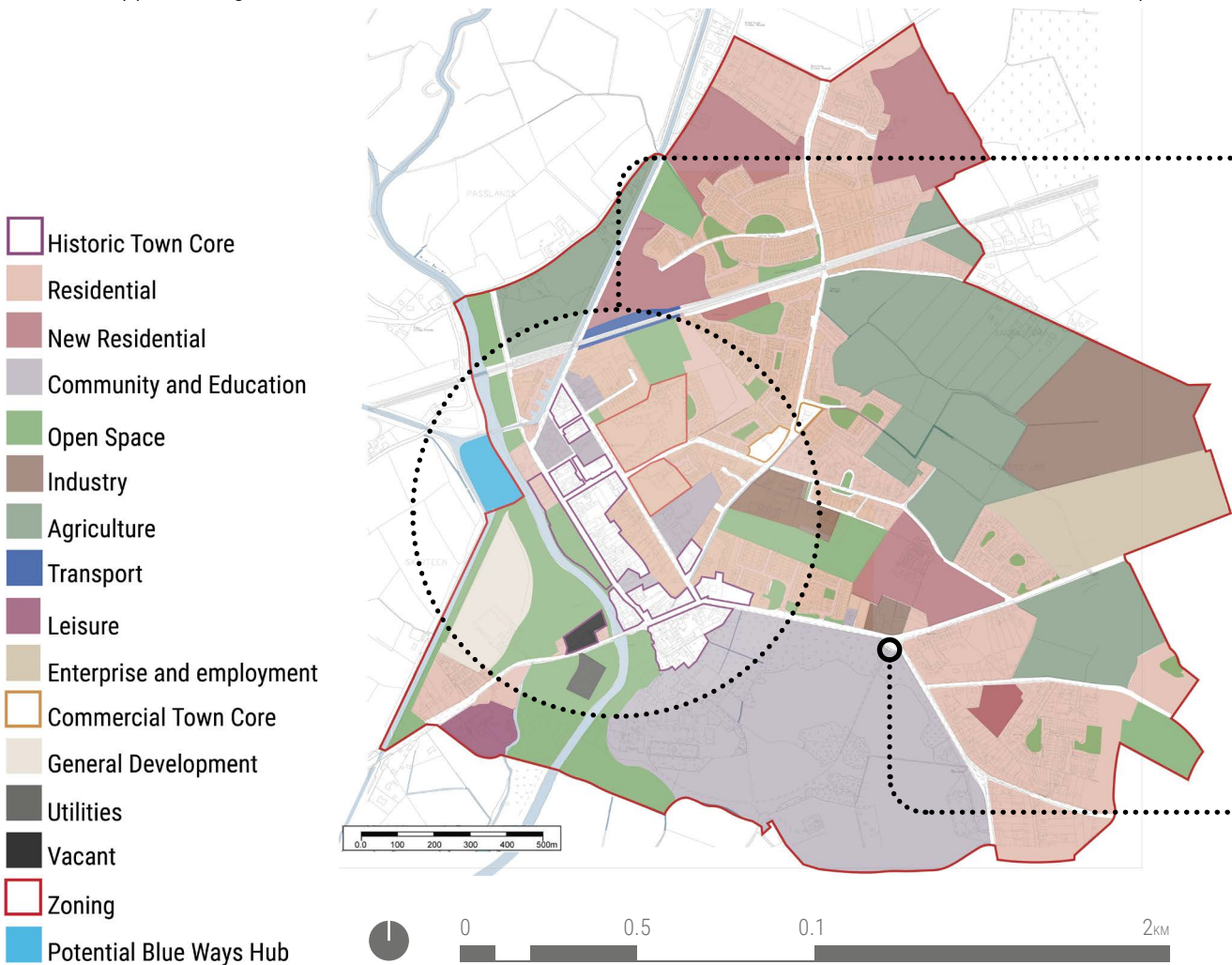
## 2.2 Land Use

A study of proposed land uses within the Monasterevin Local Area Plan (LAP) 2016-2022 boundary demonstrates that there is a diverse mix of uses proposed within the LAP development area, as illustrated below.

Of note is the extensive zoning of Community and Education lands - including the broad expanse of land at Moore Abbey. Expansive Residential areas indicate towards the town's recent development sprawl to the north and east of the historic centre, while generous Open Space areas are zoned along the banks of the River Barrow and Grand Canal. The historic Town Core is examined opposite in greater detail.

Extracted from the LAP (below) is the historic town core (circled), examining existing ground floor uses within the historic area as indicated, and shown opposite.

It is recognised that the mix of land uses across the town's historic core present a mix of invaluable attributes for the town built heritage and land use diversity - a feature to be protected through the process of any further development. A significant amount of vacancy remains noticeable across the historic town centre, however: this is recognised as a significant challenge in working towards Monasterevin's sustainable and healthy social, environmental and economic development.



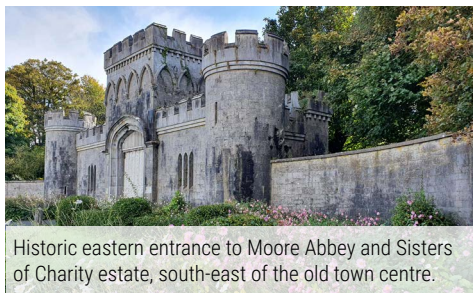


**Right**

Land use designations across Monasterevin's historic town core, or old town centre, demonstrate a variety of mixed-use functions - particularly near Market Square towards the south of the town, though it is noted that a number of vacant plots and buildings remain.



- Historic Town Core
- Residential
- Community and Education
- Retail
- Bank + Financial
- Clinic/ Office/ Surgery
- Pub/ Restaurant/ Takeaway
- Vacant



Historic eastern entrance to Moore Abbey and Sisters of Charity estate, south-east of the old town centre.



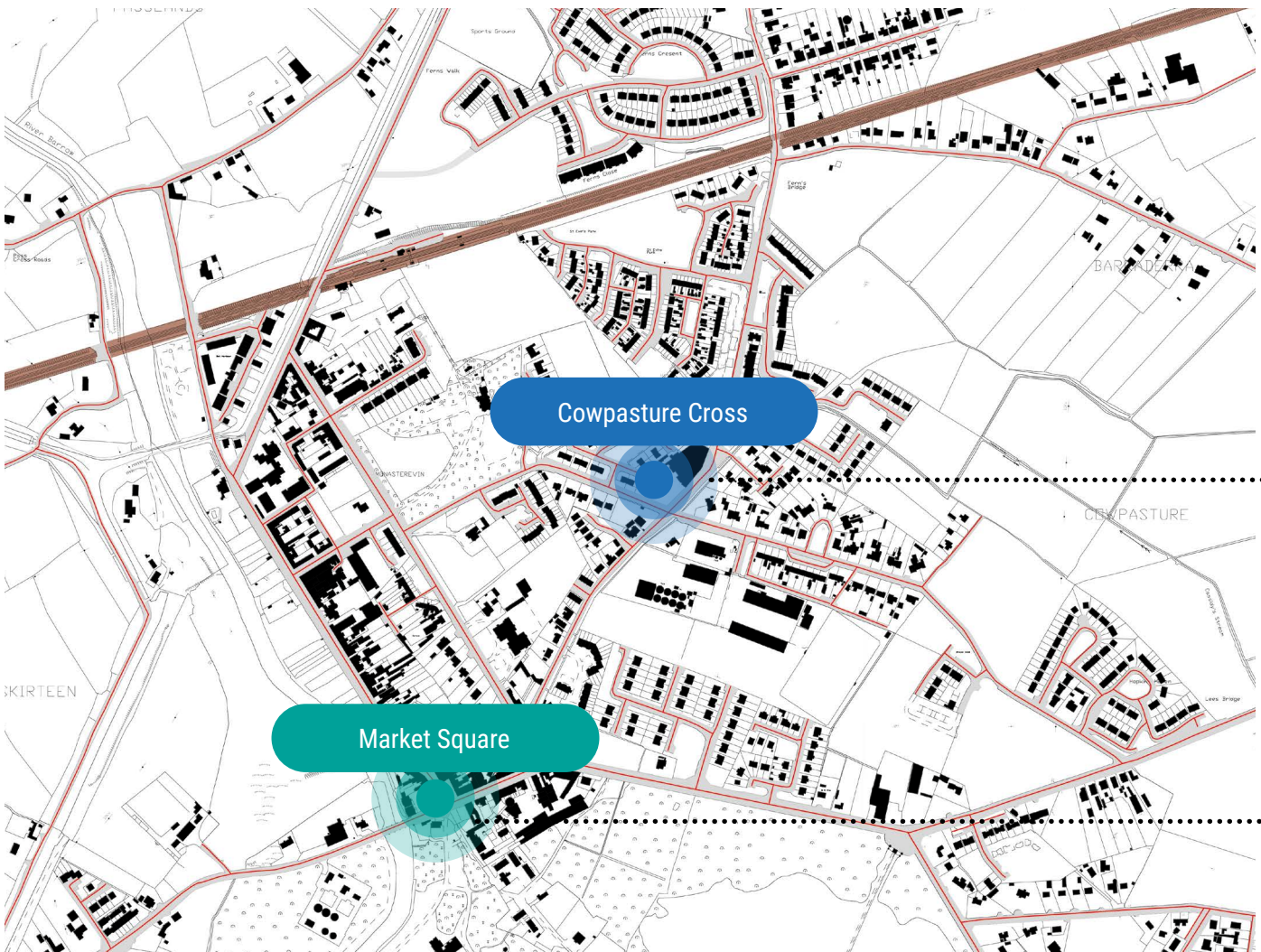
# 2 Analysis

## 2.3 Central Urban Growth

It is recognised through various facets of study - including site visits, public consultation and workshops, stakeholder engagement meetings and discussions with the local people and development authority - that Monasterevin has two core focal points, around which is a concentration of civic activity. Illustrated below, these areas are located at Cowpasture Cross (Supervalu) and the Market Square (historic town centre).

Each of these two areas of urban focus create a notable division of civic functions - including social, commercial, heritage, business operations and retail activities.

It has also generated a pattern of disparate urban growth around different behaviours: the historic centre boasts quality heritage architecture and waterfront adjacency though lacks recent business investment, while the new town centre attracts commercial investment and footfall.



## Modern Centre

When read alongside the Land Use plan, it is evident that this area is largely encouraged by (while also influences the development of) low-density residential neighbourhoods, connected by private car infrastructure.

Retail at the heart of the new town: access to shops such as Supervalu, O'Rourke's Pharmacy and Kelly's Newspagent actively encourage car use.



Repetitive placenaming and signage provides a poor sense of urban place.



Local points of interest and storytelling are informed at junctions.



Limited pedestrian connectivity and raised kerb junction crossings create points without any safe option for those using modes of active travel.



## Historic Centre

While the stock of buildings and proximity to valuable amenities are strong assets for the town's historic centre, under-investment and a lack of appropriate infrastructure has impacted the quality of the area.

Existing infrastructure across the historic town provides unbalanced, unsafe and poorly communicated strategies for movement and car parking.



Layers of visitor information and signage create illegible decision points.



Moment of quality historic fabric remain across the old centre.



Recent incentives to encourage greater use of amenities ask that visitors use private vehicles, while other modal systems remain lacking in development.



# Analysis

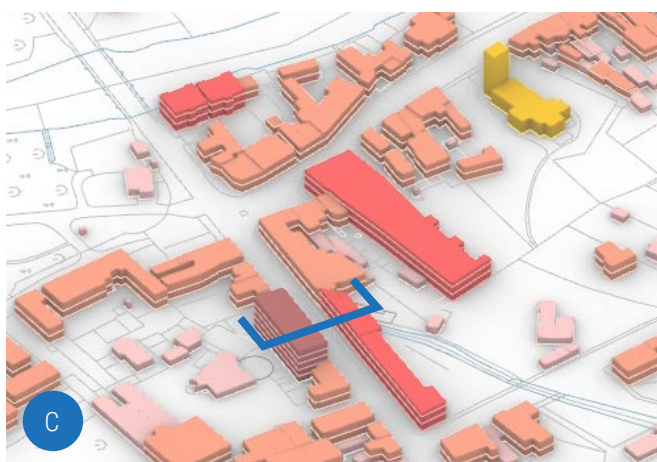
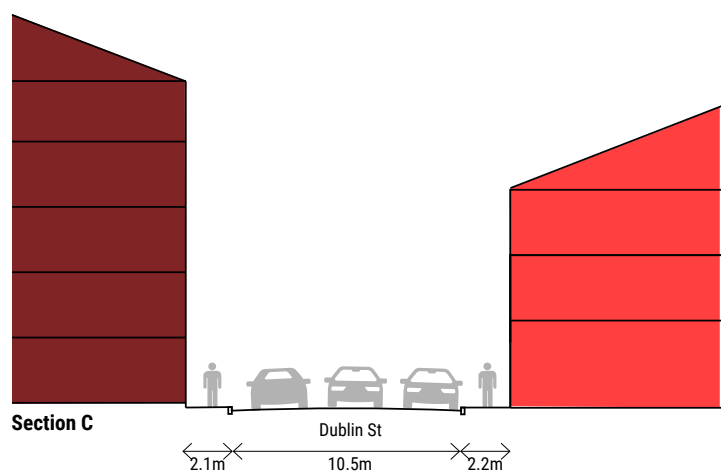
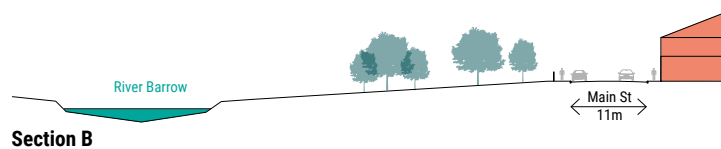
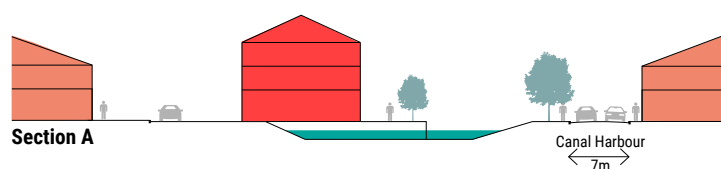
## 2.4 Buildings and Height

A survey of settlement pattern and building height allows for ease of visually understanding the lower-density settlement patterns around the periphery of Monasterevin, which contrasts with higher-density across the town's historic Georgian terraces on Moore Street.

These findings were consolidated into the an interim client presentation of findings; the below plan summarises the building height across the town centres of Monasterevin.



Greater understanding of the density of the built environment is developed through sectional studies at various points in the town, as summarised below:



# Analysis

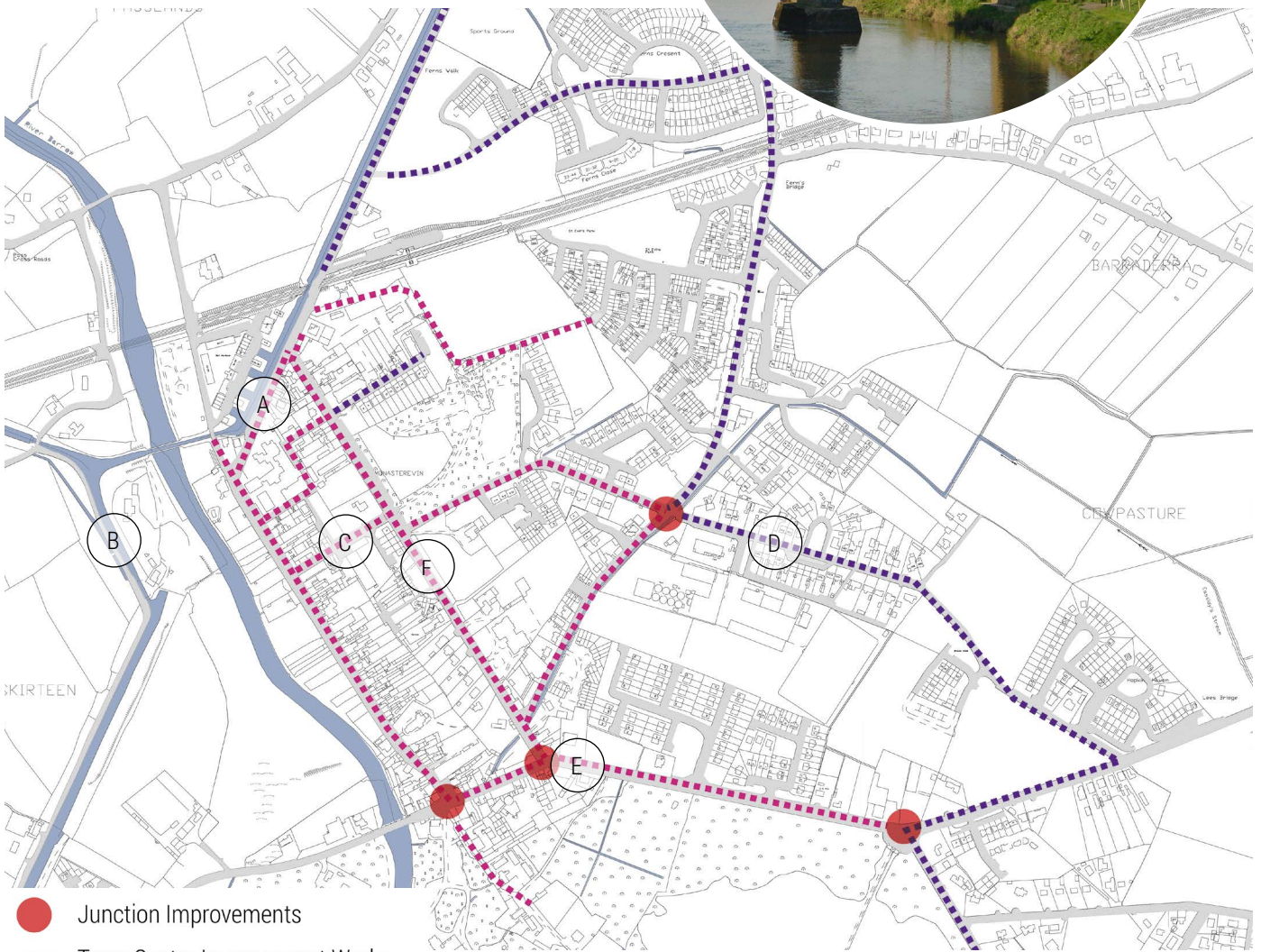
## 2.5 Transport and Movement

Monasterevin boasts a wealth of transport options, both by public and private transport, by active and vehicular travel, and by each of land and water.

While the below plan presents data from the Local Area Plan to demonstrate areas for local carriageway improvements, it is recognised also (see page opposite) that the town offers a variety of transport and movement options, each with positive and negative features.



Rail connections through Kildare

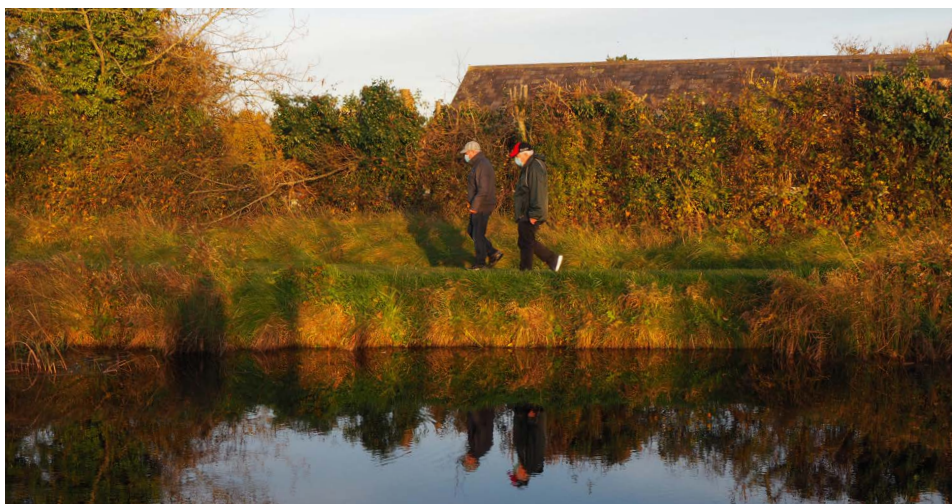


- Junction Improvements
- ⋯ Town Centre Improvement Works
- ⋯ Street Improvement Works





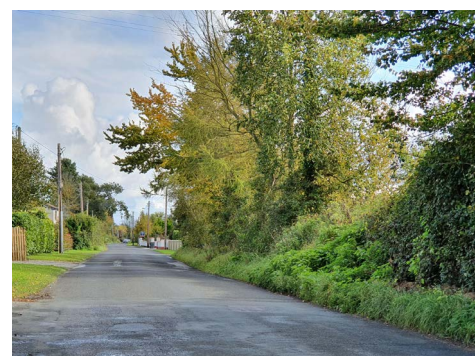
A Public seating next to a busy street, without a footpath



B Popular canal-side pedestrian and cycle routes connect Monasterevin with the wider region along the Barrow Blueway



C Wide carriageways allow for vehicle journeys through the town at speed, while elongating crossings for pedestrians



D No pedestrian infrastructure between neighbourhoods



E Degraded kerb conditions and delineations create ambiguity between different travel modes.



F Limited cycle infrastructure outside of busy school areas

# Analysis

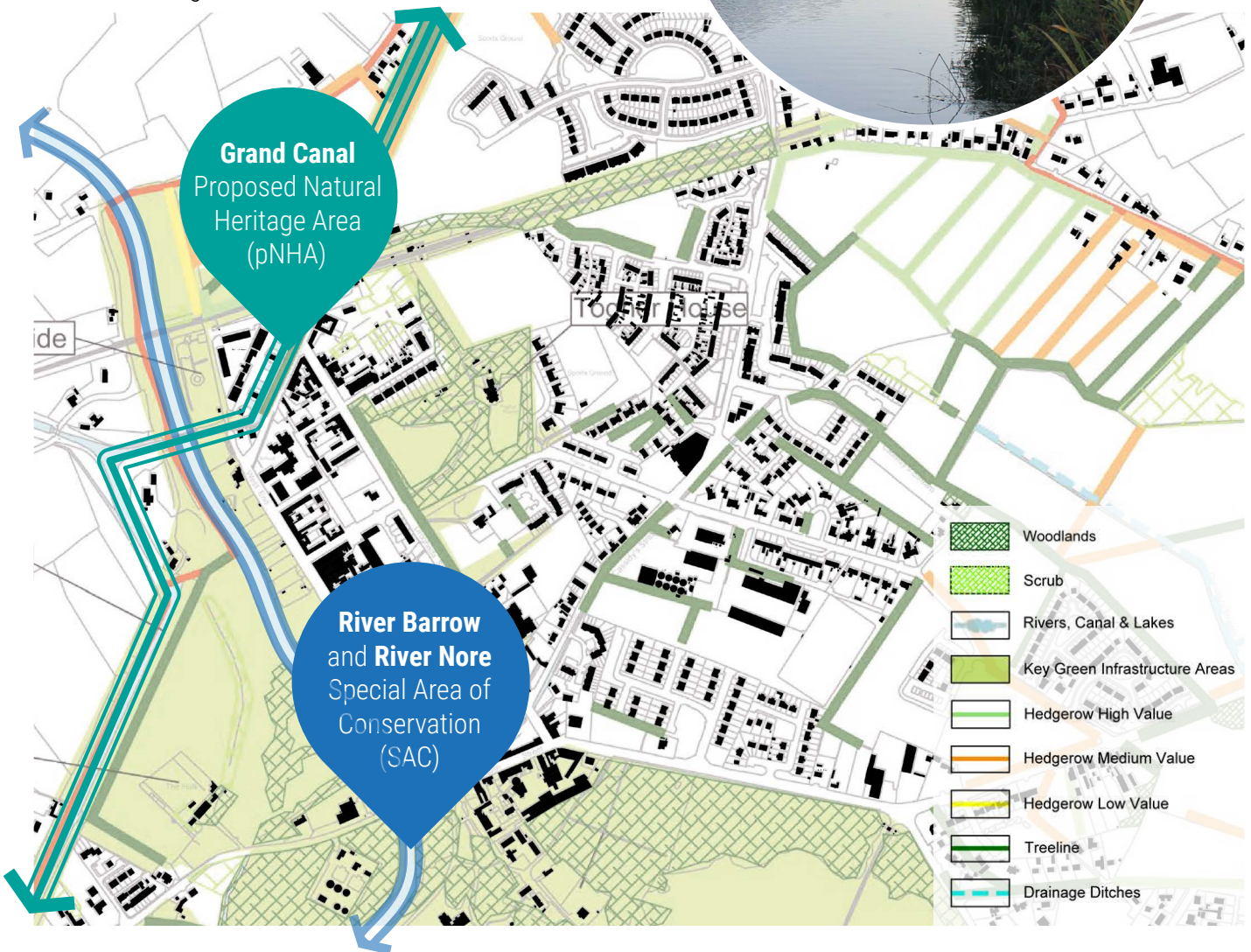
## 2.6 Environment & Green Infrastructure

A study of existing Green Infrastructure (GI) and ecological assets demonstrates that a variety of landscape typologies and invaluable environmental assets are located to the west of the town centre, including various hedgerows, tree lines and areas zoned in the Local Area Plan as Key Green Infrastructure areas.

Notable also are a number of additional linear GI elements and areas throughout the town centre street areas.

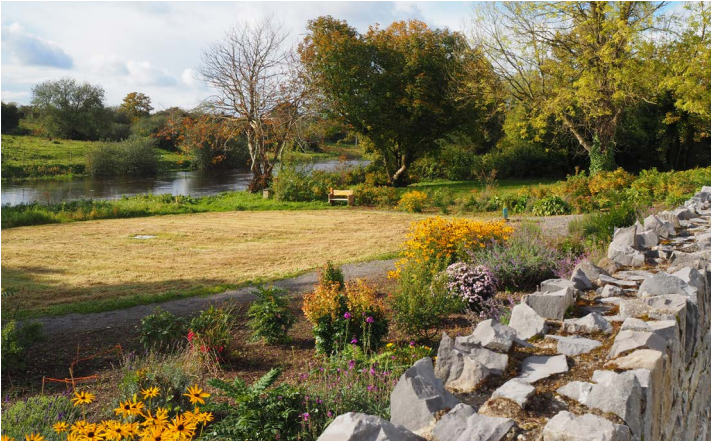


Mature hedgerow adjacent to the Grand Canal



Above Regional Green Infrastructure plan, data extruded from Monasterevin LAP 2016-2022



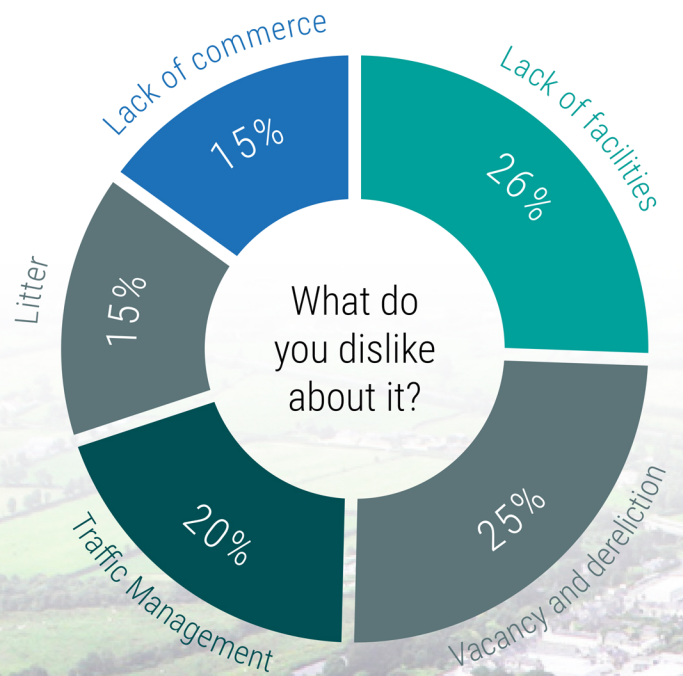
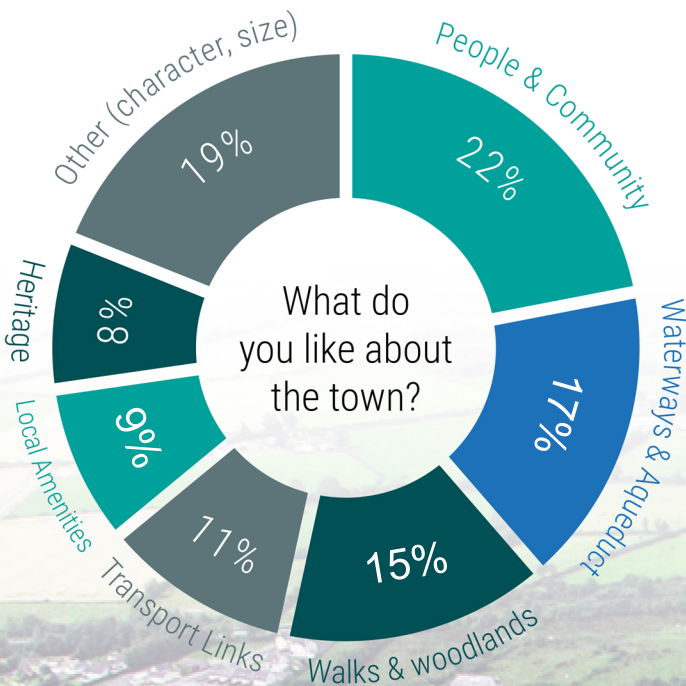


# Analysis

## 2.7 People and Community

Stemming from a successful public consultation process from November to December 2018 alongside the local community - and hosted with Kildare County Council at Monasterevin Community Centre - the design team has successfully consolidated a number of findings that have assisted in informing a broad design direction for the town. These meetings and conversations have provided invaluable insights about the community's needs, unique local knowledge, and future opportunities for the town.

As summarised below and opposite, these findings offer important baseline insights, and were central to the team's emerging thinking in developing draft design proposals that were put out for public consultation.



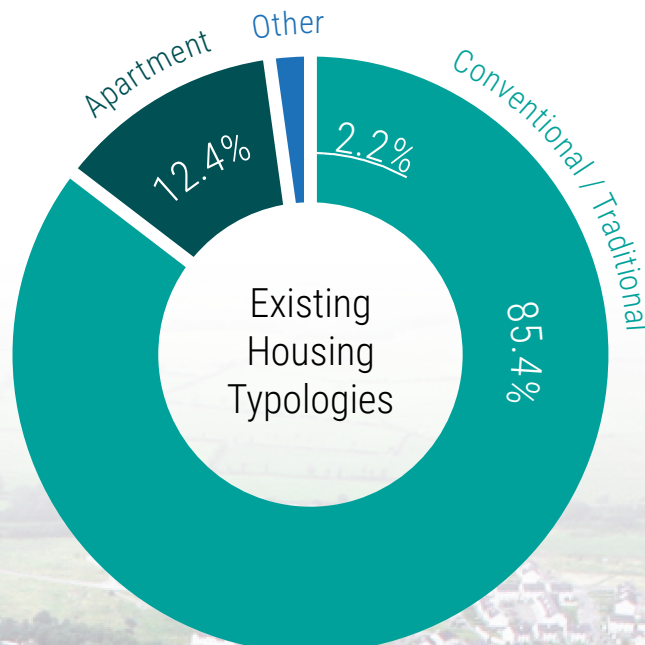
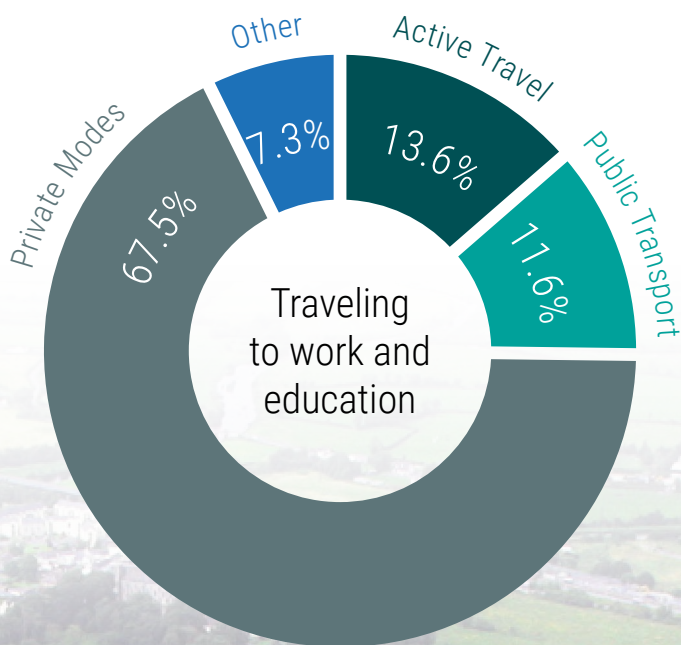
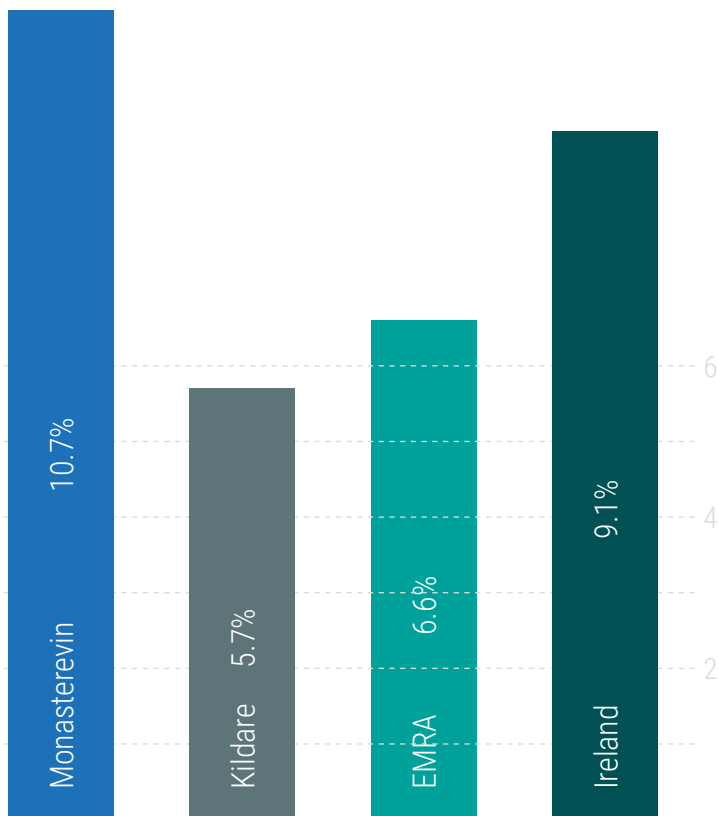
## 2.8 Place and Facility

A socio-demographic analysis was developed to inform the development and design teams in how best to progress with proposals, with input consolidated from the Central Statistics Office (CSO) data alongside that available from the county development plan.

Seen below and opposite, critical information on the existing quantity of housing stock, vacancy and existing transport systems are summarised so as to ensure a more informed and refined decision making process.

### Vacant Housing Stock

*Monasterevin is defined as the settled area within the Local Area Plan (LAP) 2016-2022 boundary.*



# Consultation

## 3.1 Approach

Additional public consultation alongside the Strategic Projects and Public Realm (SPPR) team was successfully hosted through May and June of 2021. While the Covid-19 pandemic limited opportunity for in-person engagement due to physical restrictions, the questions presented and summarised over this section were presented using an online platform for ease of public use and engagement.

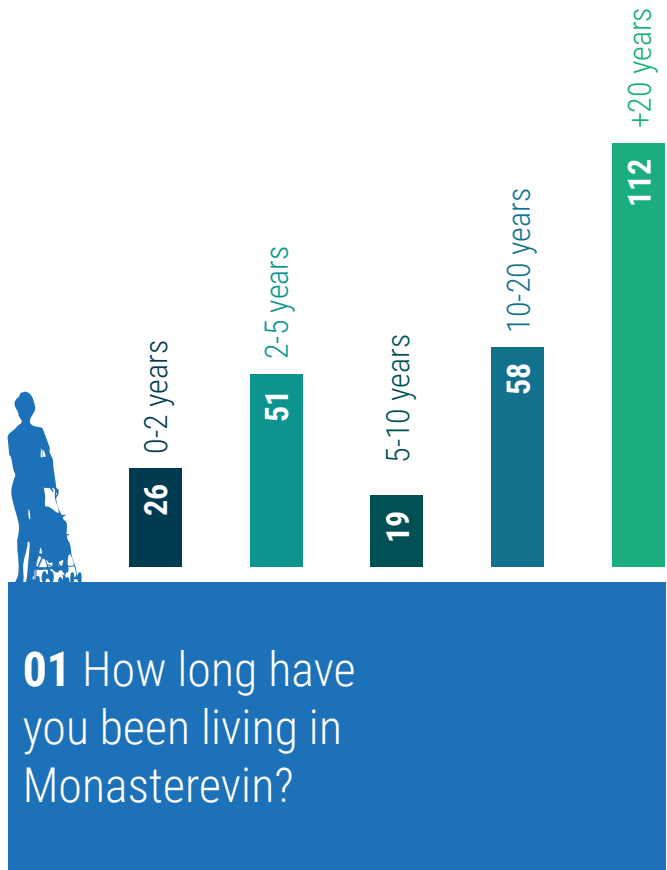
Three core headings were addressed within this single and consolidated questionnaire, a framework that focused on the themes of **Living, Shopping** and **Strategy**.



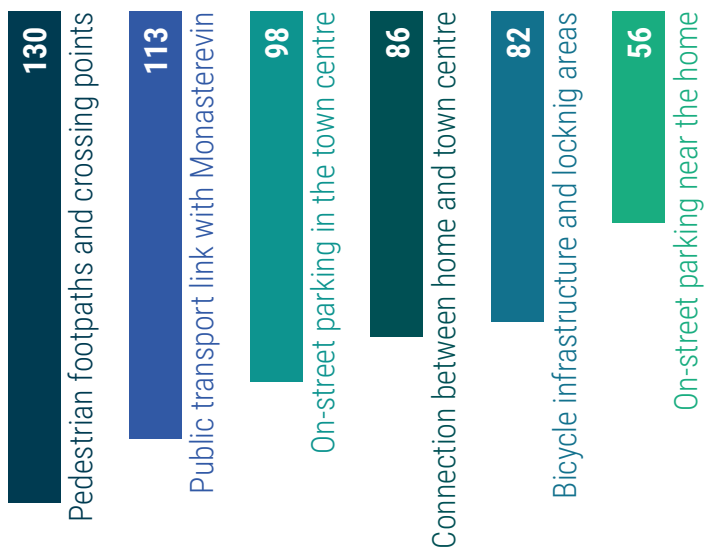
## 3.2 Living

Each of the questions presented (see right) aim to consolidate critical findings from local residents on their **experience of living** in Monasterevin.

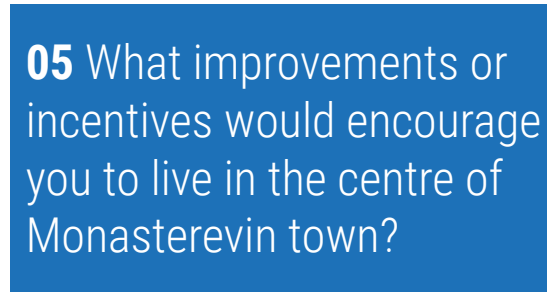
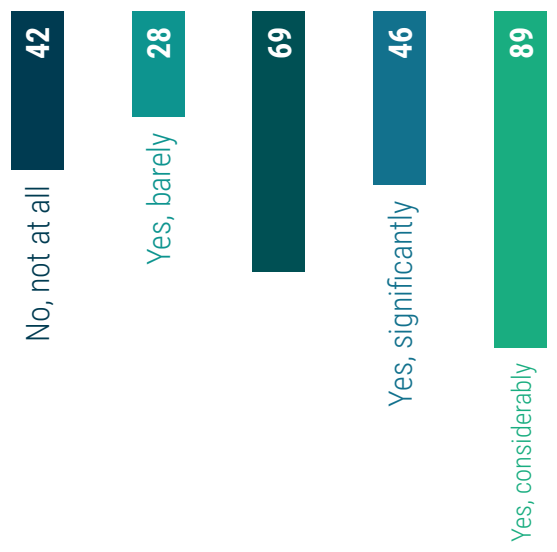
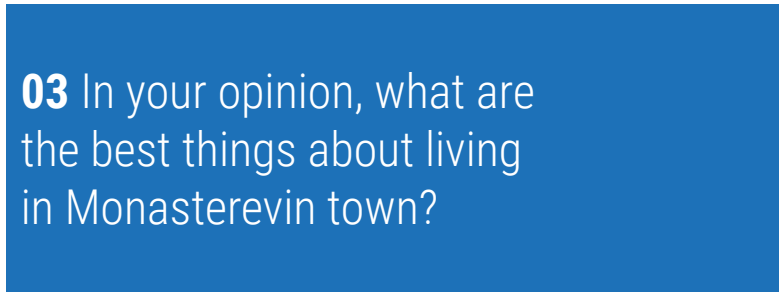
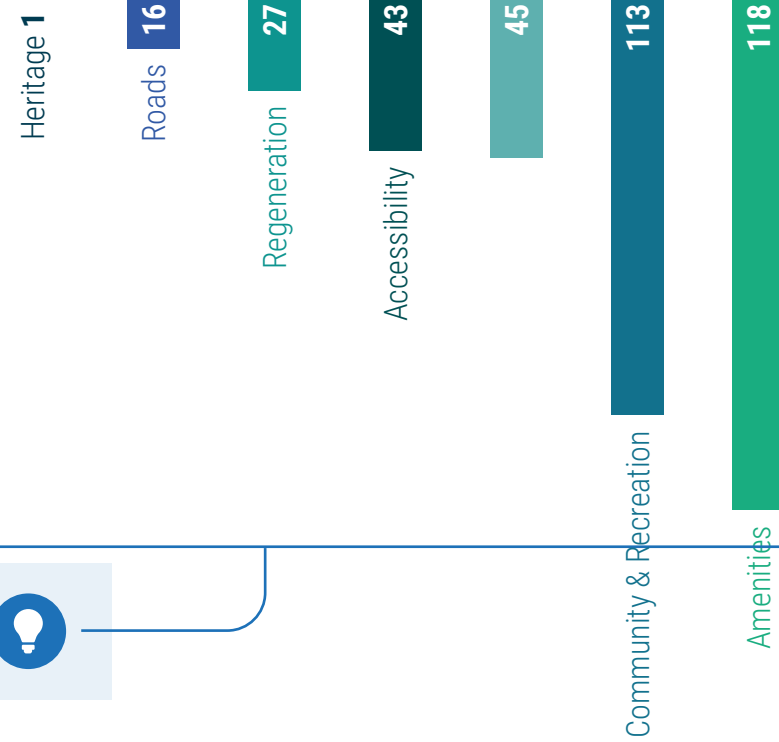
As demonstrated through this public response, it is understood with greater confidence and clarity that the majority of people are long-term residents of Monasterevin, that they take pleasure in existing outdoor space and environmental recreational facilities including the River Barrow and the Grand Canal - though there is also a desire to continue to improve access and conditions to these landscape amenities, alongside a broad interest in also improving the physical condition of the wider town including infrastructure such as footpaths, connecting spaces, car parking facilities and greater recreation space. Each of these findings are extruded from the data summarised to the right:



**02 Rank the below items from 10 (very important) to 1 (not very important) for Monasterevin town:**



**Key take-away from Living Survey** while there is a public appreciation for the town's existing recreational facilities, they are important to those who live in the area, and so there remains a desire to see these improved and expanded.

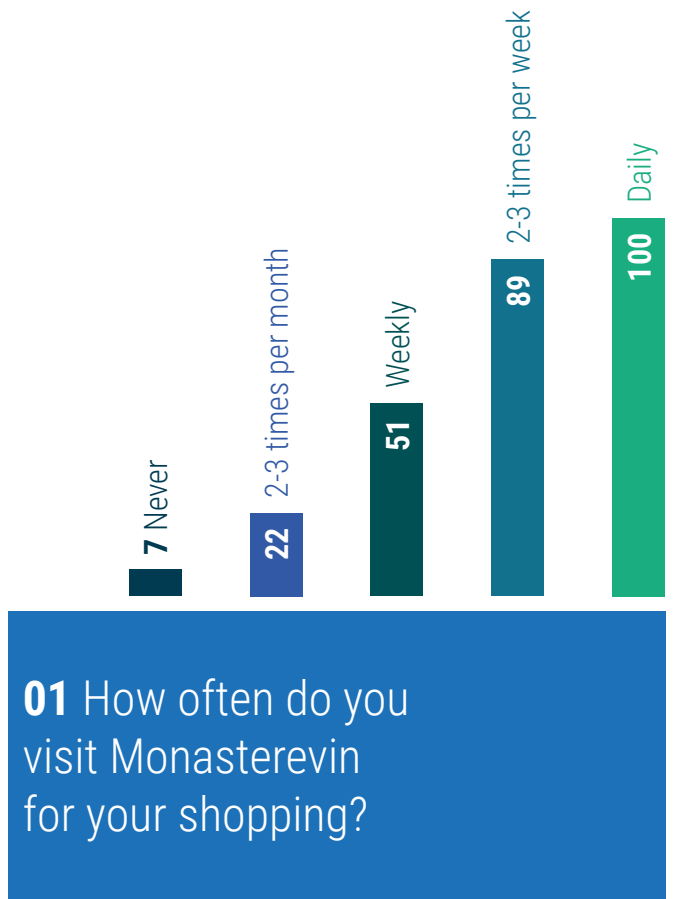


# Consultation

## 3.3 Shopping

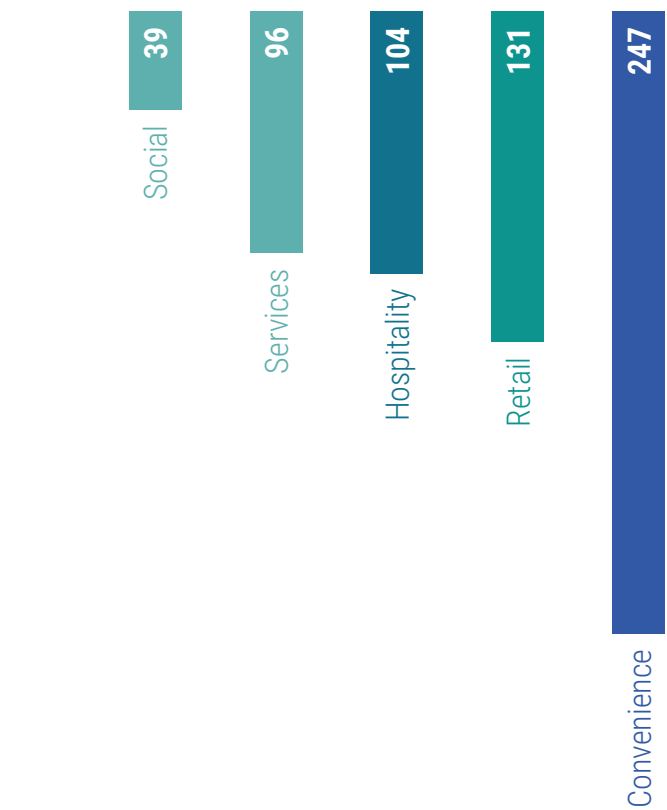
Alongside the two other themes of *Living* and *Strategy*, the theme of **shopping** - including items relating to retail and local commerce - was addressed in the second section of the same survey of May and June 2021.

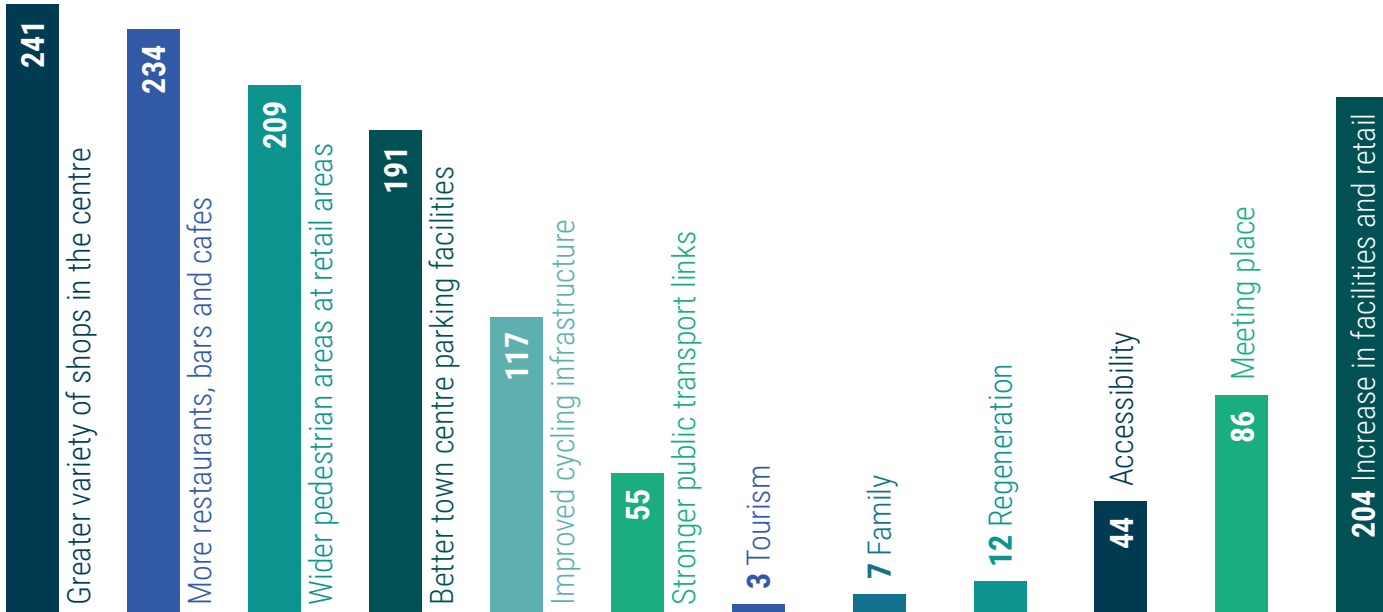
This section of the public consultation questionnaire focused on the users shopping preferences, with an aim to understand what types of retail were commercially successful, where there may be a lack of commercial demand in the town, and where else might shoppers go to do various sorts of shopping and retail.



**01** How often do you visit Monasterevin for your shopping?

**02** ...and what type of shopping do you visit Monasterevin for?

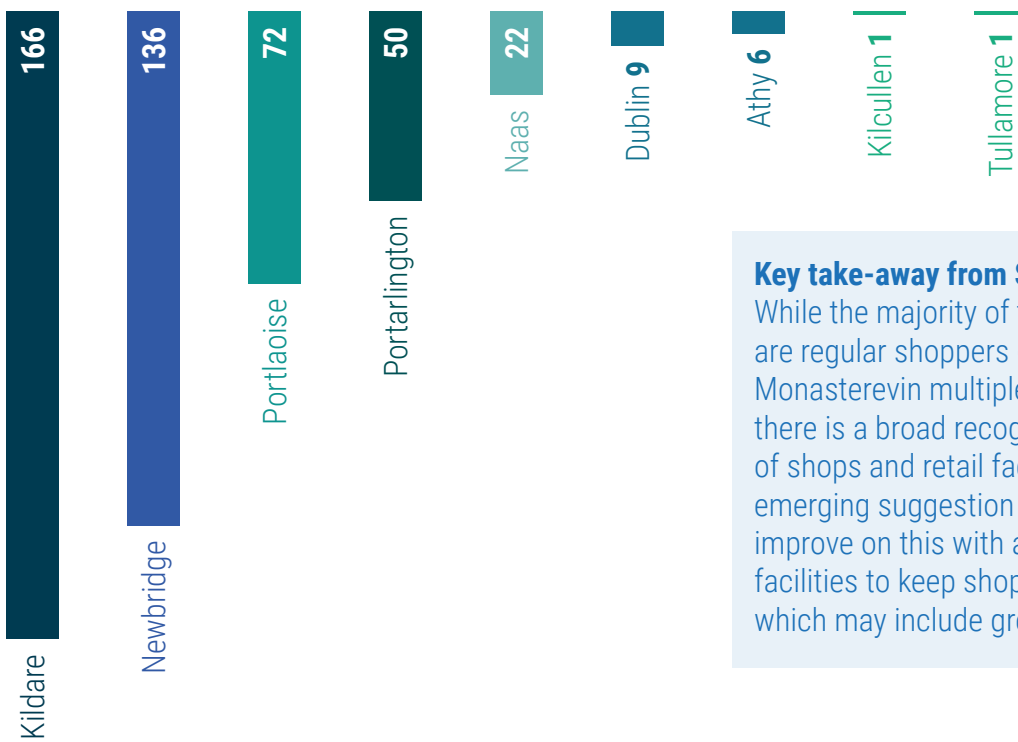




**04** From the list, please indicate the top three items that could be improved for Monasterevin.

**06** What improvements or incentives would encourage more shopping in Monasterevin town?

**05** Where else would you shop, beyond Monasterevin town?



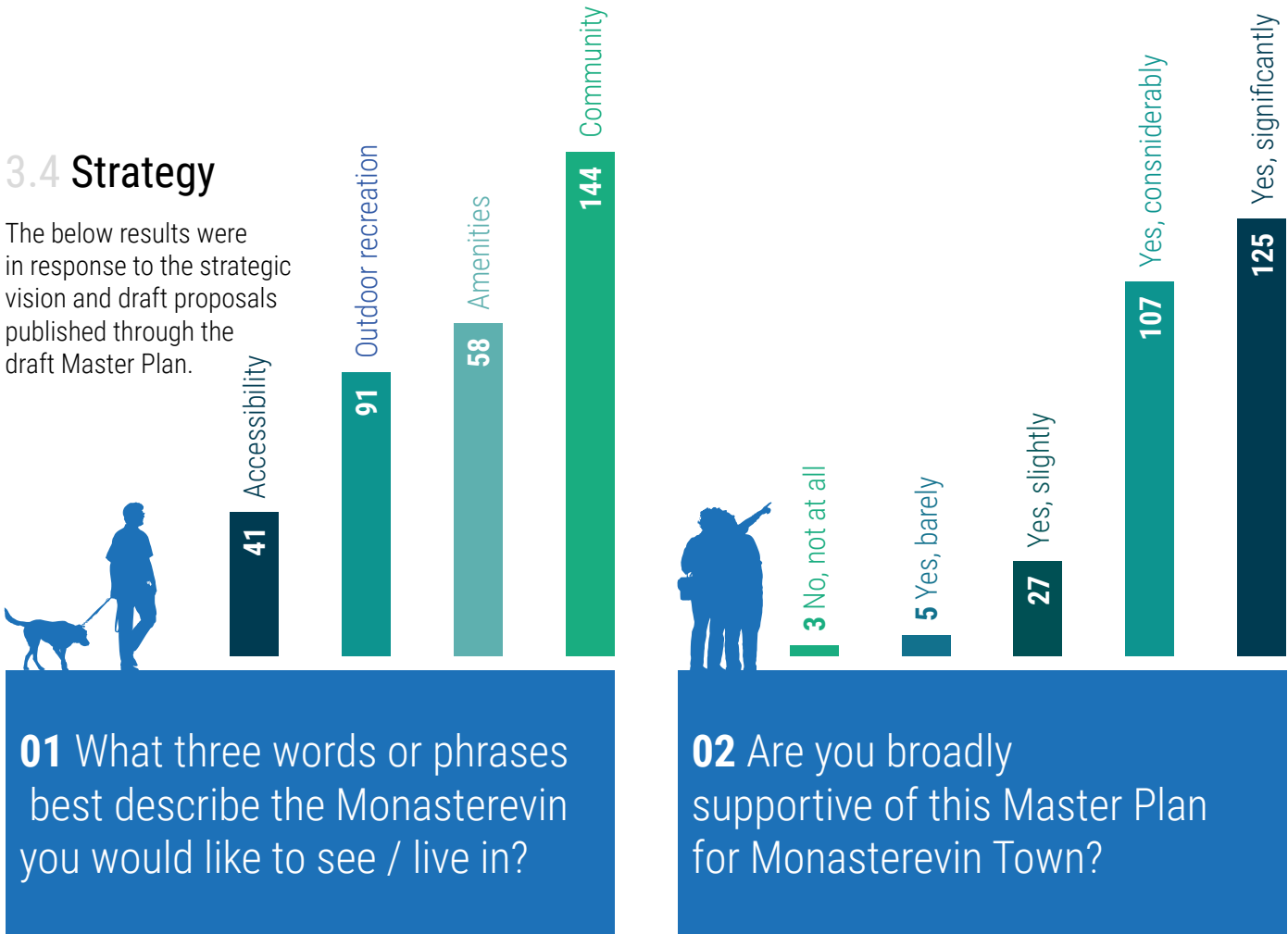
**Key take-away from Shopping Survey**  
 While the majority of those surveyed are regular shoppers (+70% shop in Monasterevin multiple times per week), there is a broad recognition that the variety of shops and retail facilities is lacking, with the emerging suggestion that Monasterevin can improve on this with an investment in retail facilities to keep shoppers enthused and busy - which may include greater dining and play.



# Consultation

## 3.4 Strategy

The below results were in response to the strategic vision and draft proposals published through the draft Master Plan.



**04** Do you have any further comments or suggestions for the future of Monasterevin?

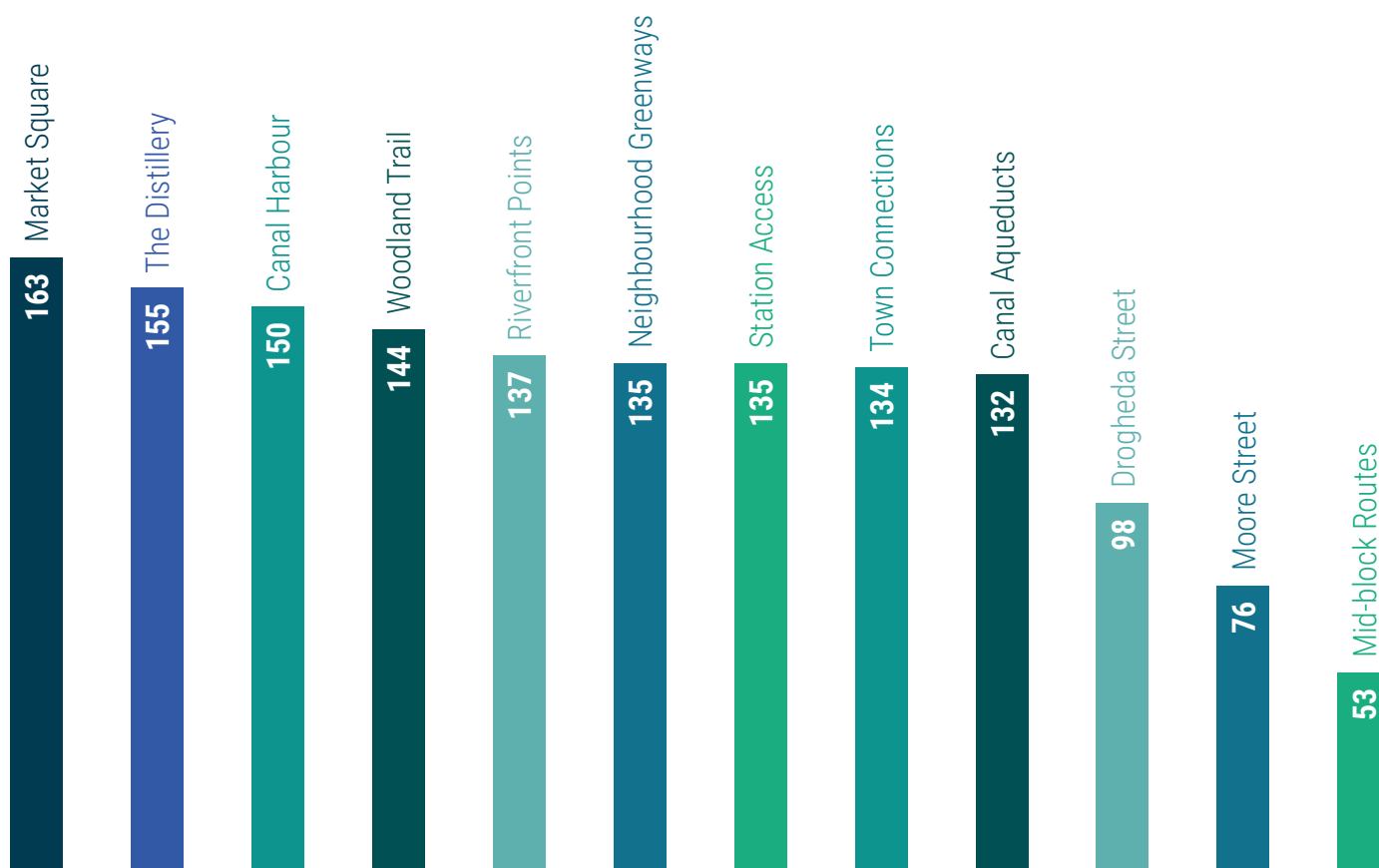
Please make a **walkway** from Monasterevin to Kildare Town. It's **very dangerous** along the Dublin Road with no pathway all the way.

**Parking** is a main factor for me and my business, there is no parking due to a bad bend on the road that people tend to **come around at speed**.

Yes, there is a lot of people that have moved to this town but not a lot of **structure** was put into place to accommodate the numbers to support same. Regarding paths: **cycle tracks**, nice paths for **canal walks**, more transport links, etc.

Please make use of the **beautiful river**: encourage and facilitate locals using the river as they do in many other towns along the River Barrow.





**03** Please assign the importance of each project proposal, from 10 to 1

Let's make it **happen!**

Lovely **potential** for the town but so many **derelict buildings** ruin the look and feel of the town, and **little choice of shops** and social interactions like cafes and restaurants.

I would prefer stay in the town I live in to meet friends for walks or do my weekly shopping, but instead go elsewhere due to lack of facilities or only do minimal amount in Monasterevin when I **would do it all locally** if the options were there.

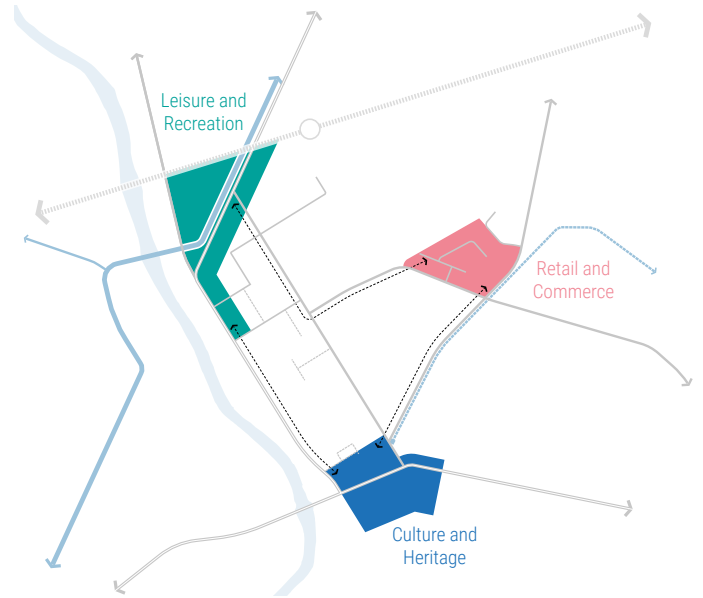
I have a young family and would love to see the town thrive with **more commerce** and **social interaction** over the coming years so there is more in the town to meet the needs of a booming population in Monasterevin.

# Vision

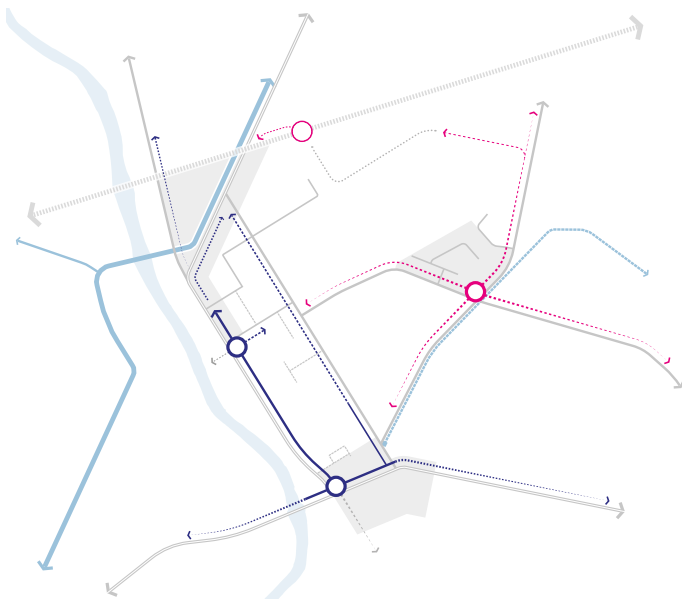
## 4.1 Summary of Findings



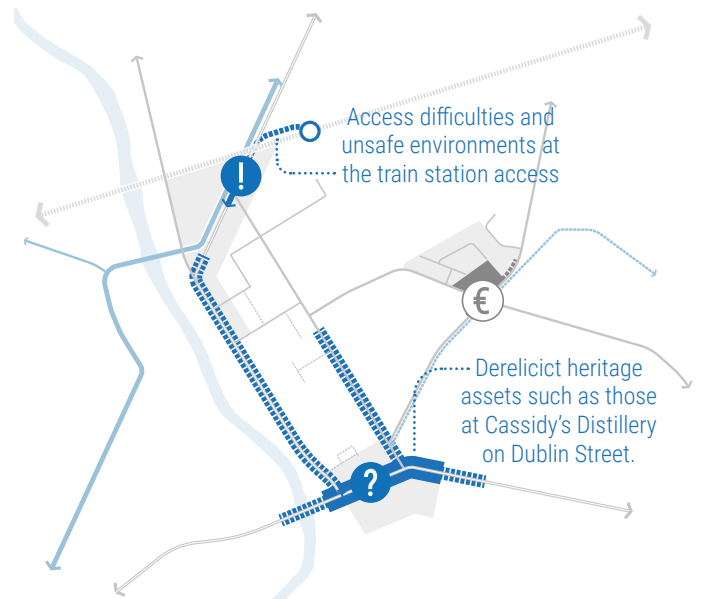
**1** Unique regional character along waterways is special, and remains largely untapped.



**2** Sprawl has established separated town centres and distant neighbourhoods



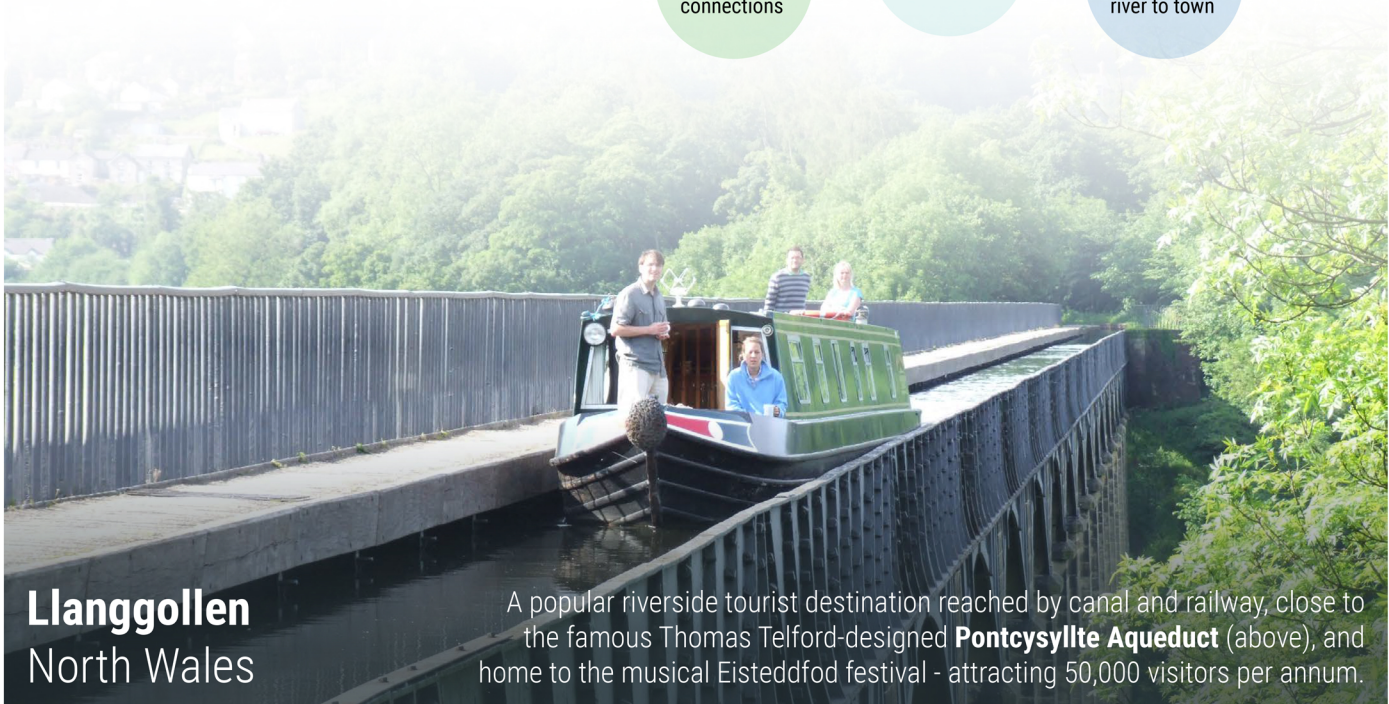
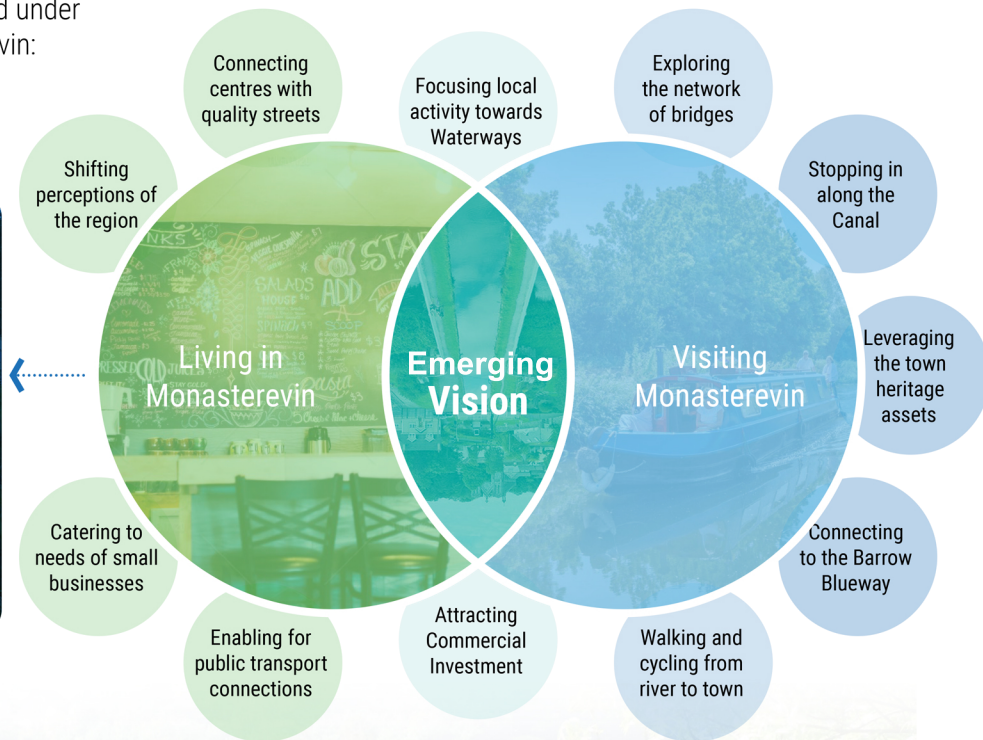
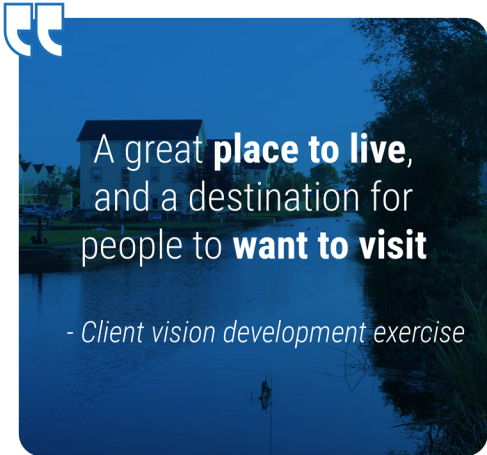
**3** Movement between centres, attractions, neighbourhoods, and waterways is difficult.



**4** Dereliction of historic assets and unsafe space create a local **perceived negativity**.

## 4.2 Vision Development

Consolidating the spatial findings with the aspirations of the public begins to inform the development of a vision for Monasterevin town and region. This wide variety of ideas, hopes and proposals is categorised under each of **Living in** and **Visiting** Monasterevin:



**Llangollen**  
North Wales

A popular riverside tourist destination reached by canal and railway, close to the famous Thomas Telford-designed **Pontcysyllte Aqueduct** (above), and home to the musical Eisteddfod festival - attracting 50,000 visitors per annum.

# Vision

## 4.3 Vision Statement

Through a comprehensive Vision Development exercise that ensures consideration of each of the findings from public consultation and extensive site analysis, the Vision Statement for this Master Plan is finalised as below:



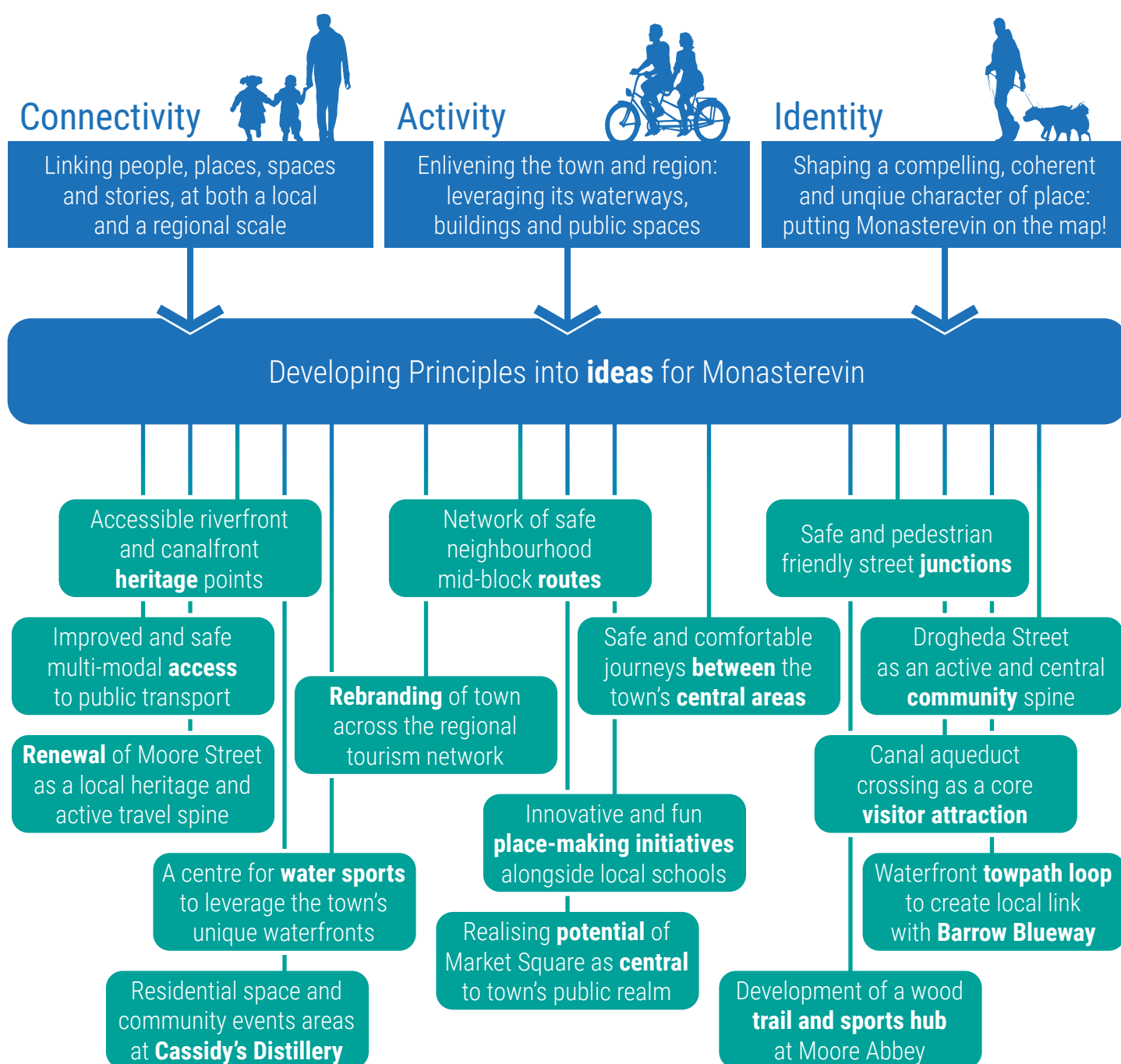
“ The Master Plan will guide the sustainable growth of Monasterevin and enable it to be a safe and enjoyable place to live, work, and prosper, while leveraging the town’s unique assets as an exciting place to **visit, explore** and **remember**.

This is a framework for growth: ensuring a viable, sustainable and exciting direction for Monasterevin.



## 4.4 Design Principles

Three core pillars or Design Principles emerge from the Vision Statement, which further enable the design team to develop emerging ideas and proposals for the town:



# Proposals

## 5.1 Framework

As demonstrated from the emerging Vision Statement and Design Principles, a broad range of ideas and possible projects are envisaged for the town, each informed by the team’s analysis, and combined with the public’s input through rounds of successful consultation.

Each idea was examined and discussed in terms of its feasibility and deliverability alongside Kildare County Council, with the below plan illustrating urban position:

*Given that the River Barrow and River Nore SAC flows through the town, any projects arising from proposals identified in this Master Plan will be subject to Appropriate Assessment Screening to determine the potential for likely significant effects on the SAC.*

*It should be noted that what is included in the plan regarding Delivery Projects represent indicative drawings, scale and location of specific projects. When the final location and design of the projects are prepared and further detail is available, it will then be possible to assess the impact of each project and if mitigation is necessary then a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment will be required.*



## 5.2 Schedule

Each of the aforementioned projects is scheduled out under three flexible categories. While each proposal is recognised as playing a unique and important role for

the town, it is recognised also that the interactions and dynamic exchanges of adjacent projects will only stand to further strengthen the successes of proposals.

History & Heritage	Visiting & Learning	Living & Thriving
<p><b>A</b> Market Square</p> <p>Continued <b>place-making</b> investment and improvements to the historic centre of Monasterevin can return this <b>unique asset</b> to the centre of the town's wider public realm network.</p>	<p><b>E</b> Canal Harbour</p> <p>Accessibility, connectivity and public realm <b>upgrades</b> will allow for this <b>historic wharf</b> to be re-established as a thriving space of civic activity, cafe dining, and waterfront vitality.</p>	<p><b>I</b> Town Connections</p> <p>Linking public transport options (J), recreation trails, (D &amp; F), amenity routes (F), local networks (C) and spaces (A) are a number of important <b>on-street active travel routes</b>.</p>
<p><b>B</b> Drogheda Street</p> <p>Expanding on the successes of recent <b>improvements</b>: re-surfacing, public lighting, seating, planting and safe crossing upgrades ( detailed in <i>Safer Routes to School</i> document).</p>	<p><b>F</b> Waterfront Access &amp; Activity</p> <p>An exciting opportunity to grow on the touristic successes of the Barrow Blueway, a <b>Watersports Hub</b> can bring a diverse and exciting experience for locals and visitors.</p>	<p><b>J</b> Train Station Access</p> <p>Provision of <b>accessible</b> and <b>safe links</b> is critical for the town's appeal: improved local rail connections including <b>Park &amp; Ride / Stride</b> will be key to ensuring these successes.</p>
<p><b>C</b> Mid-block Route Network</p> <p>An opportunity to extend regional and <b>active connections</b> such as the Barrow Blueway, the Moore Abbey Trail and the Watersports Hub directly into the historic town centre.</p>	<p><b>G</b> Canal Aqueduct Crossing</p> <p>Perhaps the most unique feature of the area's <b>rich waterways heritage</b>, this historic aqueduct can benefit from improvements to accessibility, signage, and increased interpretation.</p>	<p><b>K</b> Neighbourhood Greenways</p> <p>Enabling for the safe, comfortable and sustainable <b>active travel options</b> between neighbourhood areas, recreation nodes and hubs, attractions and commercial centres.</p>
<p><b>D</b> Active Trail, Moore Abbey</p> <p>A <b>local trail network</b> that connects towards regional heritage landscape areas such as those at <b>Moore Abbey</b> can offer an opportunity to develop larger facilities such as a <b>Sports Hub</b>.</p>	<p><b>H</b> Moore Street</p> <p>Re-imagining this Georgian axis as a space not just to move through, but a place for <b>stopping along</b> and <b>exploring from</b>: local <b>shops</b>, riverside connections, and local interpretation.</p>	<p><b>L</b> The Distillery</p> <p>Re-imagining this historic landmark as a <b>mixed-use residential space</b> offering new opportunities to exhibit, perform, work and meet: a creative centre for residents and visitors alike.</p>

# Proposals

## A. Market Square

A unique and historic centre of Monasterevin Town, Market Square - located at the junction of Dublin Street and Moore Street - presents an ideal opportunity to provide a truly flexible and multi-functional civic space in the centre of Monasterevin.

Central and easily accessible by footpath, by bicycle (the Barrow Blueway and Moore Street), by public transport links (see *Project J - Train Station Access*), and by vehicle, the square is re-imagined as a **thriving urban enclave** surrounded by a unique mix of heritage, touristic and commercial offerings, alongside the potential for new dining space alongside expanded public spaces - all finished with quality paving, simplified signage, seating and lighting.

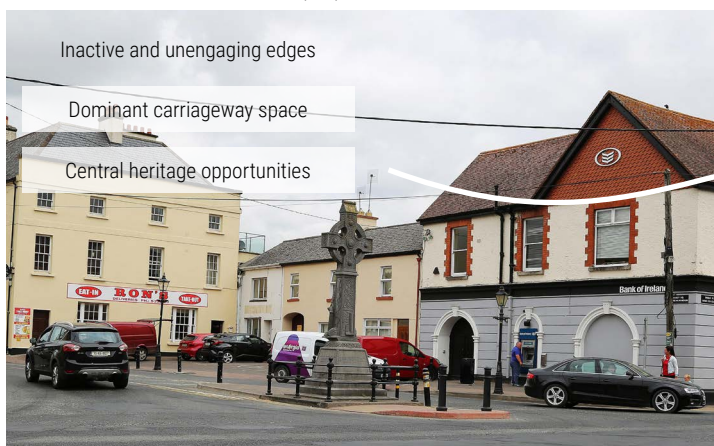


A Vision for  
**Market Square Monasterevin**



**Below Market Square, Monasterevin, County Kildare**

This historic town centre is home to many unique assets, heritage buildings and local business opportunities: today's Market Square has developed an noticeable imbalance between people-focused activities and vehicular movement.



**Below Wokingham Market Town, Berkshire, UK**

This vision for Monasterevin offers a greater balance between vehicle movement and people's activities, with generous space for pedestrians, flexible outdoor dining, increased tree cover, and reduced vehicular carriageway space.



**Left Asna Square, Clonakilty, County Cork**

An adaptable, people-focused square in the heart of historic Clonakilty Town.

**Below (Main) A vision for Market Square, Monasterevin**

Ease of access, the comfort to linger, and a celebration of the town's history and community - Market Square offers great potential to encourage local business growth, entice visitors to stay, and create a comfortable outdoor environment.

“ A revitalised and flexible civic space within the town's historic centre, offering exciting day-time uses and mixed evening vibrancy.



**Below A vision for Market Square, Monasterevin**

Developed by the students of Urban Regeneration at TU Dublin, and informed by detailed studies on development opportunities across Monasterevin, this re-configuration of space at Market Square demonstrates the possibilities for flexible uses through the daytime and evening: greater space is provided for pedestrian movement and activities, while carriageway space is reduced for lower traffic speeds.



**Credit (above)** Masters students of Urban Regeneration, TU Dublin (2021)

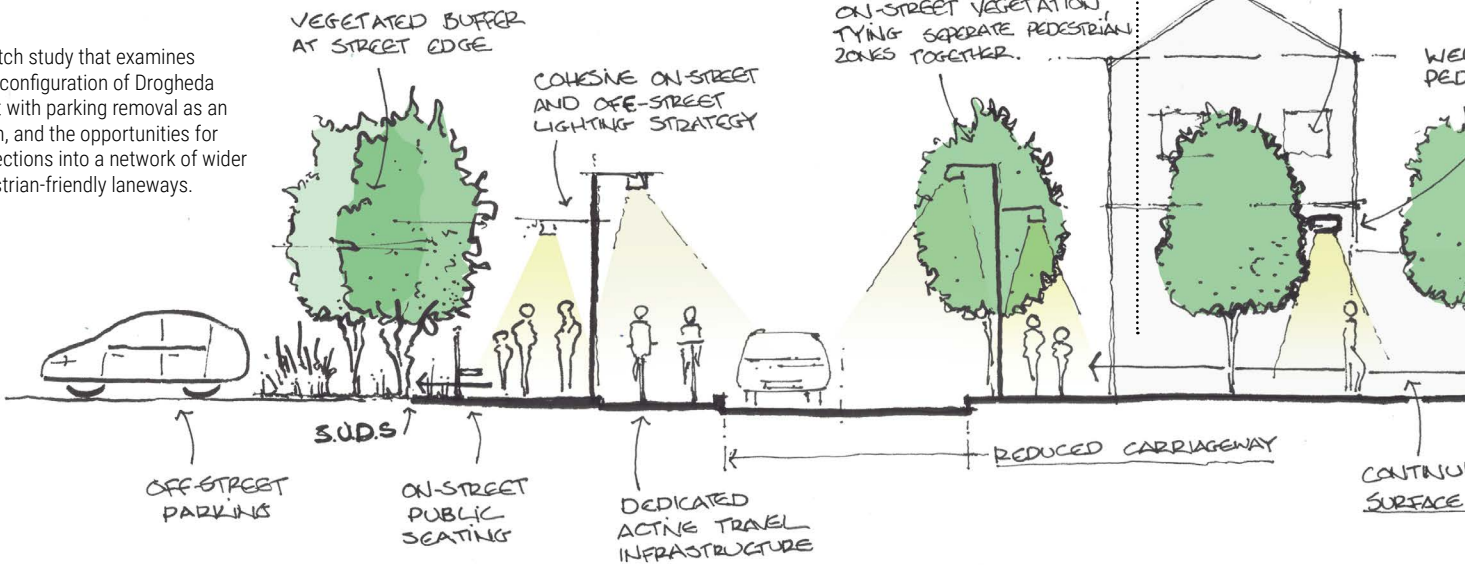
# Proposals

## B. Drogheda Street

Allowing safer space for active travel modes along this critical transport spine will provide easier movement and access for those walking and cycling to school, while the resurfacing and paving works will ensure visual cohesion (see *Safer Routes to Schools* document in appendices).

Safe spaces for movement, as well as additional public lighting, on-street vegetation, improved signage and upgrades to the street's surface materials could return Drogheda Street into a vibrant community corridor.

**Right**  
A sketch study that examines the reconfiguration of Drogheda Street with parking removal as an option, and the opportunities for connections into a network of wider pedestrian-friendly laneways.



- An accessible and safe public realm
- Accessible signage and information
- Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

**Above Westport Town Centre, County Mayo, Ireland**  
Stemming from an integrated action plan for the town, a number of public realm, place-making and successful streetscape improvements have emerged.



- Dedicated off-street infrastructure
- Affordable and durable materiality
- Demarcated from pedestrian routes

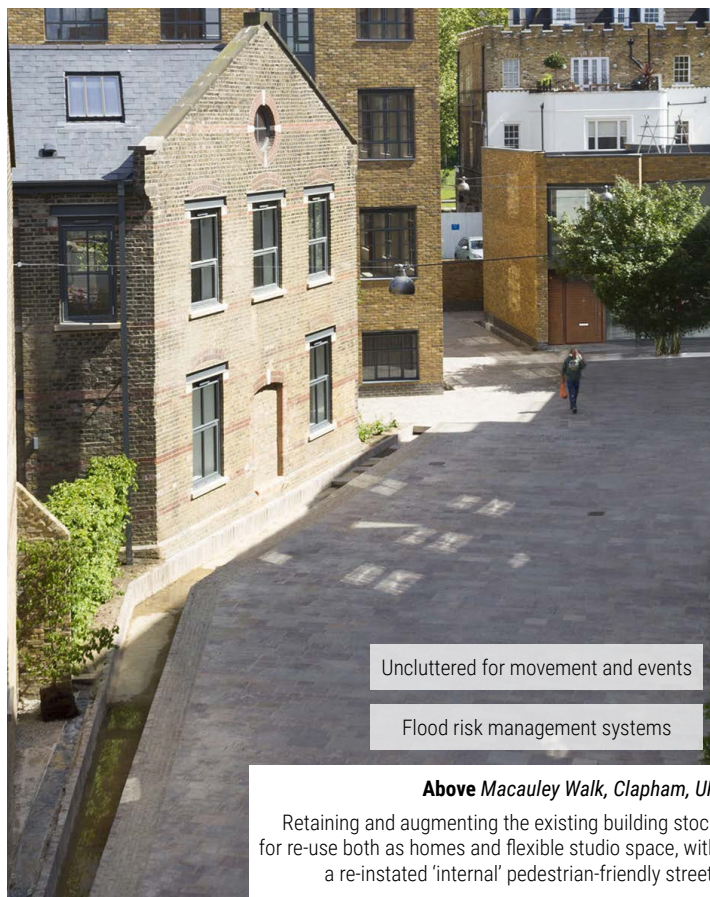
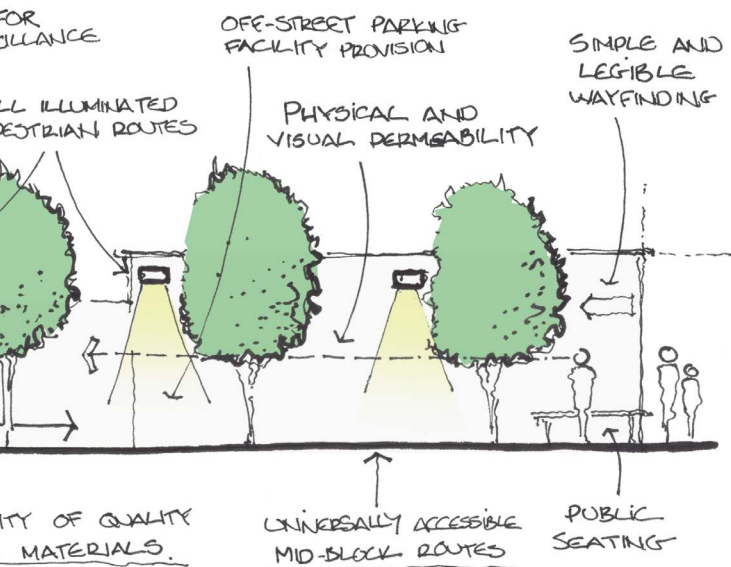
**Above Royal College Street, Camden, UK**  
Dedicated cycle infrastructure with clear segregation from the motor carriageway eases local traffic pressure and offers safer journeys to all road users.

## C. Mid-block Route Network

Many of Monasterevin's larger urban blocks throughout the historic centre present an opportunity to improve neighbourhood connections, school journeys and access to shops through improved pedestrian permeability.

### Below Mid-block connections

Key elements to consider include lighting, safety and visual permeability, comfort and accessibility.

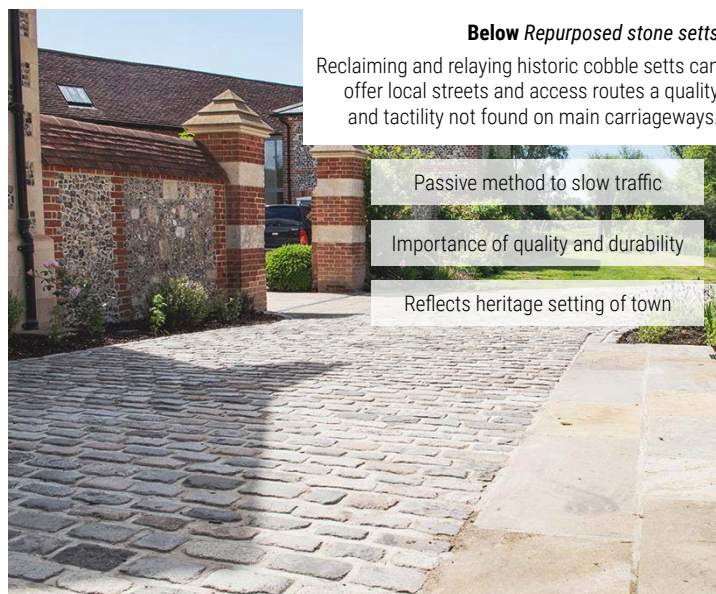


Uncluttered for movement and events

Flood risk management systems

### Above Macauley Walk, Clapham, UK

Retaining and augmenting the existing building stock for re-use both as homes and flexible studio space, with a re-instated 'internal' pedestrian-friendly street.



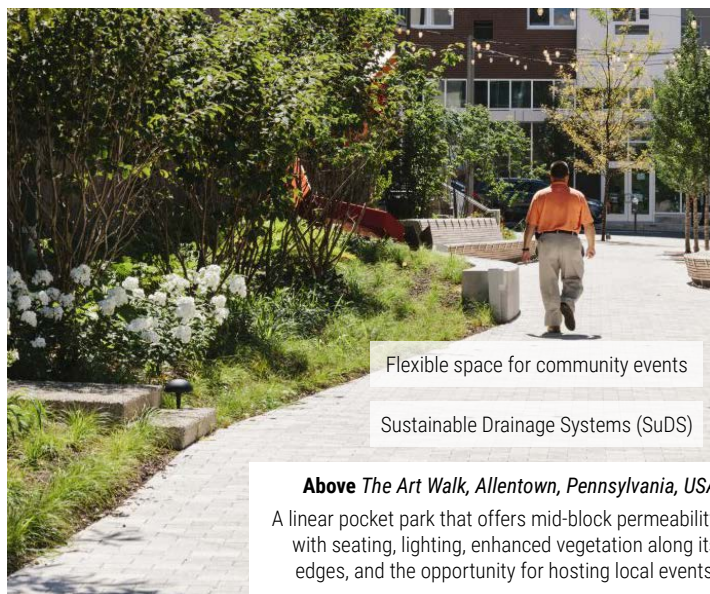
### Below Repurposed stone sets

Reclaiming and relaying historic cobble sets can offer local streets and access routes a quality and tactility not found on main carriageways.

Passive method to slow traffic

Importance of quality and durability

Reflects heritage setting of town



Flexible space for community events

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

### Above The Art Walk, Allentown, Pennsylvania, USA

A linear pocket park that offers mid-block permeability with seating, lighting, enhanced vegetation along its edges, and the opportunity for hosting local events.

# Proposals

## D. Active Trail, Moore Abbey

An opportunity to celebrate the origins of *Mainister-Eimhin* in the grounds of Moore Abbey, where a woodland trail offers an off-road experience for explorers, connecting back to the Barrow Blueway at the town's Market Square.

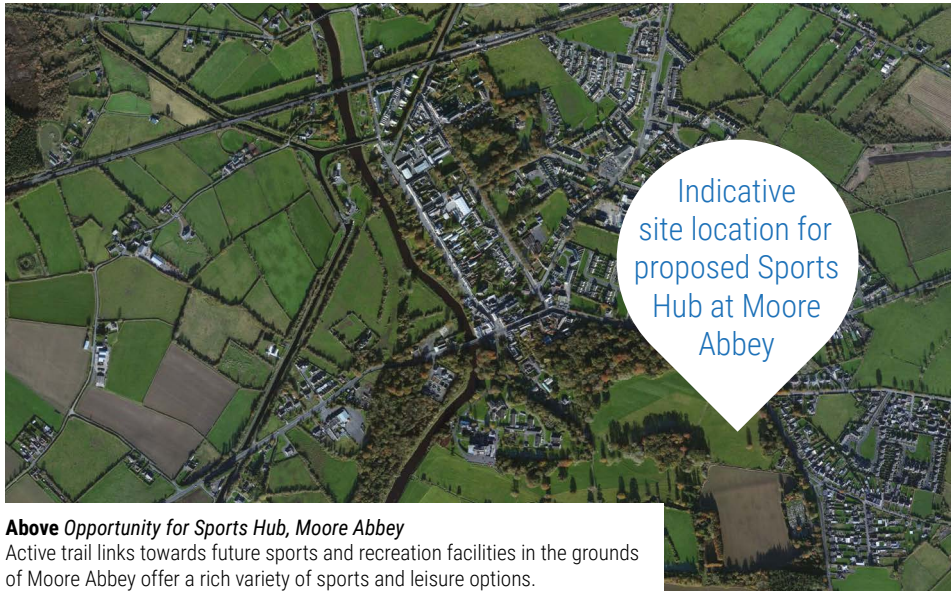
### Below Memorial 22/03, Brussels, Belgium

A space of reflection and memory in a clearing of the Sonian Forest near Brussels - offering tranquility, solace and removal from the urban centre.



### Below Ilawa Forest, Poland

A forest restoration project designed with simplicity and accessibility for its visitors and explorers; designed by Landscape Architecture Lab.



### Above Opportunity for Sports Hub, Moore Abbey

Active trail links towards future sports and recreation facilities in the grounds of Moore Abbey offer a rich variety of sports and leisure options.

### Below Ostpark, Frankfurt, Germany

Serving the recreational needs of locals and visitors, offering vital connections between the urban and the natural.



### Below, left Indicative location of Sports Hub, Moore Abbey woodland

Through discussion with local residents and stakeholders, it is understood that the proposed amenity route through Moore Abbey may connect the towncentre to a future sports hub.

This space offers a generous opportunity to further the progress of the area's existing sports clubs, while offering new field sports facilities including all-weather ball areas and tennis courts.





# Proposals

## E. Canal Harbour Area

Once a thriving harbour front along the Grand Canal, the street of Canal Harbour to the north of the historic town centre is re-imagined as a unique heritage trail that announces visitors' arrival along the Barrow Blueway and connecting the town to the Church of Oak Distillery in the former Ballykelly Mills.

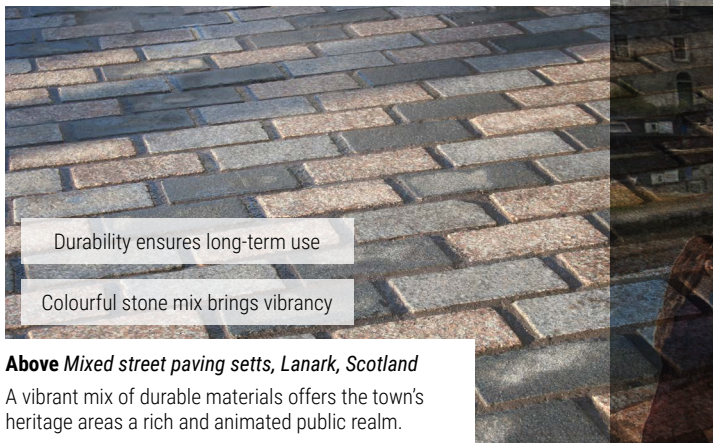
With traffic-calming measures introduced, the street is transformed into a thriving pedestrian-friendly place with accessible points along the waterfront, increased vegetation as buffers, architectural upgrades to heritage shop frontages (see right), local play points next to the historic Wharf (as below), and a safe pedestrian connection underneath the rail bridge, towards the regional train station (see *Project J*).



Shopfront and signage upgrades

### Below Talgarth Mill and Cafe, Brecon Beacons, UK

A restored mill that balances historic architectural quality with contemporary detailing, and produces award-winning food in a warm and friendly setting.



Durability ensures long-term use

Colourful stone mix brings vibrancy

### Above Mixed street paving setts, Lanark, Scotland

A vibrant mix of durable materials offers the town's heritage areas a rich and animated public realm.





**Far Left** Signage strategies, wayfinding systems and local business branding

**Left** Derry City Centre, Northern Ireland

Local laneways are re-imagined as local pedestrian routes with accessible retail frontage adjacent, each connecting the town centre to the historic urban riverfront.

A celebration of the town's unique waterfront heritage.



A Vision for  
**Canal Harbour Monasterevin**

# Proposals

## F. Waterfront Access and Activity

Leveraging Monasterevin's unique positioning where the Grand Canal traverses the River Barrow - and where the Barrow Blueway weaves through the town centre - a exciting opportunity is considered for a **Watersports Hub**.

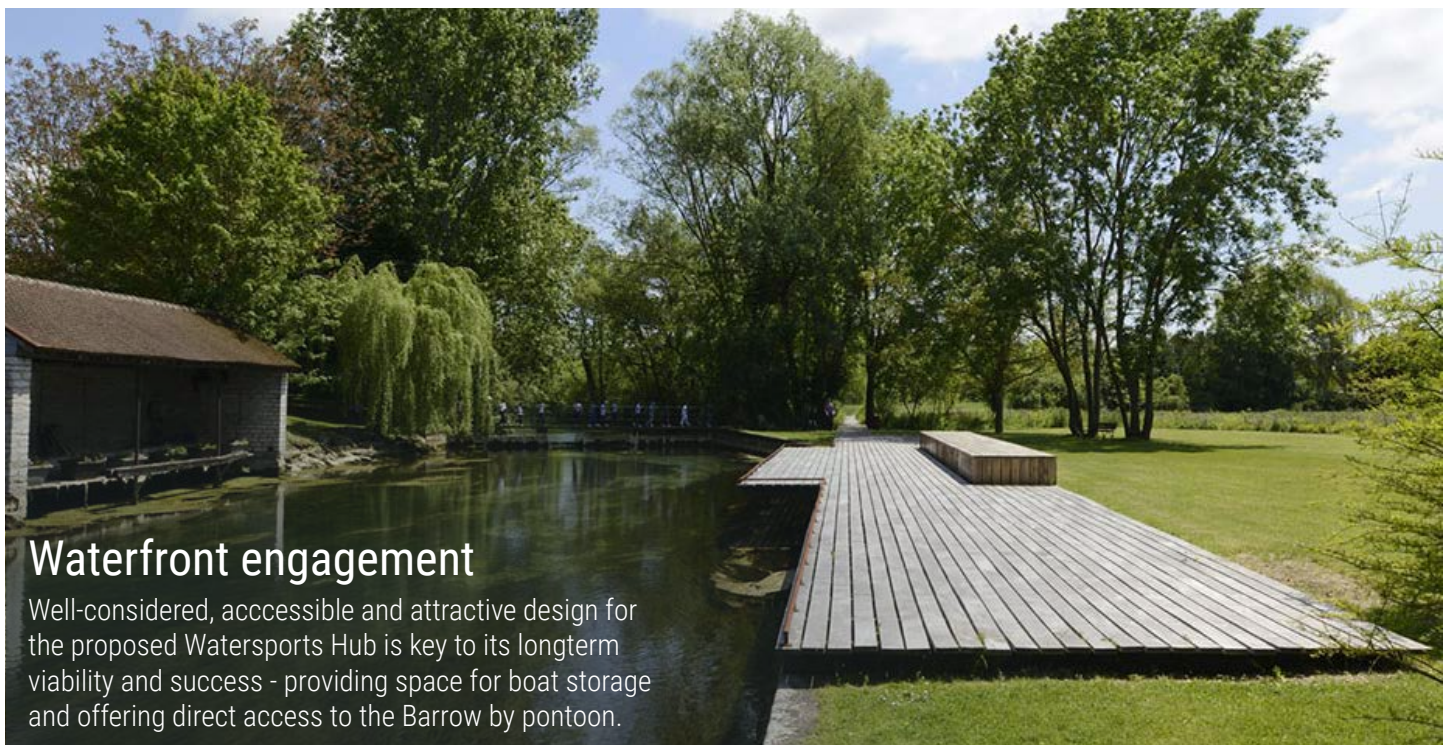
Working alongside the local community - and in direct collaboration with other local centres of education and sport (to include schools, clubs and societies) - the proposed hub will offer outdoor activities combined with heritage engagement opportunities. It is envisaged that project delivery will require Appropriate Assessment (AA).



*What is included in the plan is indicative drawings and scale of specific projects. When the final location and design of the projects are prepared and further detail is available, it will then be possible to assess the impact of the project and it will be the subject of Appropriate Assessment.*

Indicative location for Watersports Hub

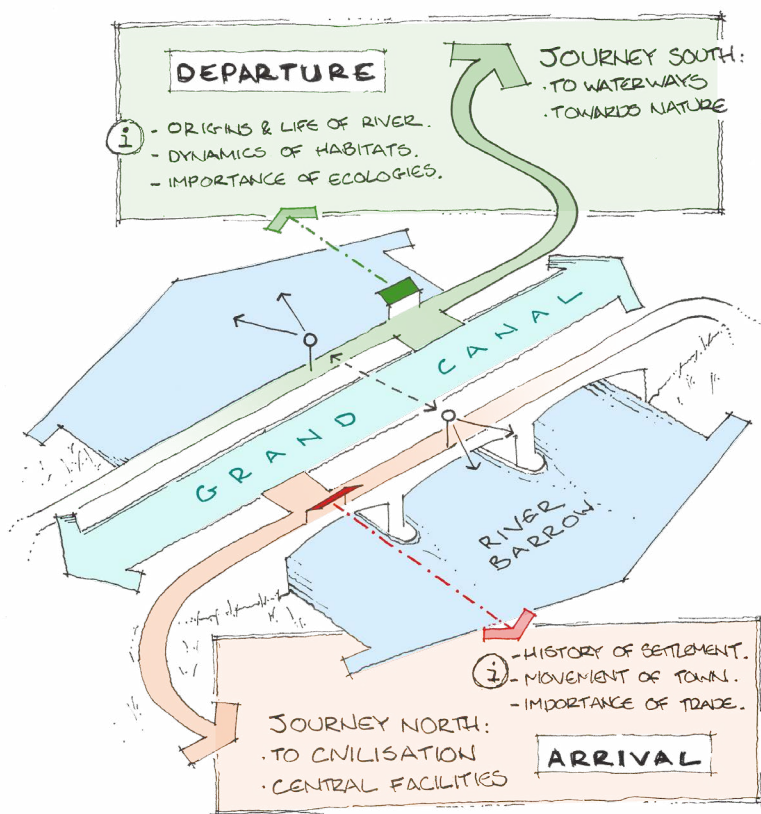
**Left Indicative Hub location**  
A location near active travel routes (Blueway) and Monasterevin centre.



### Waterfront engagement

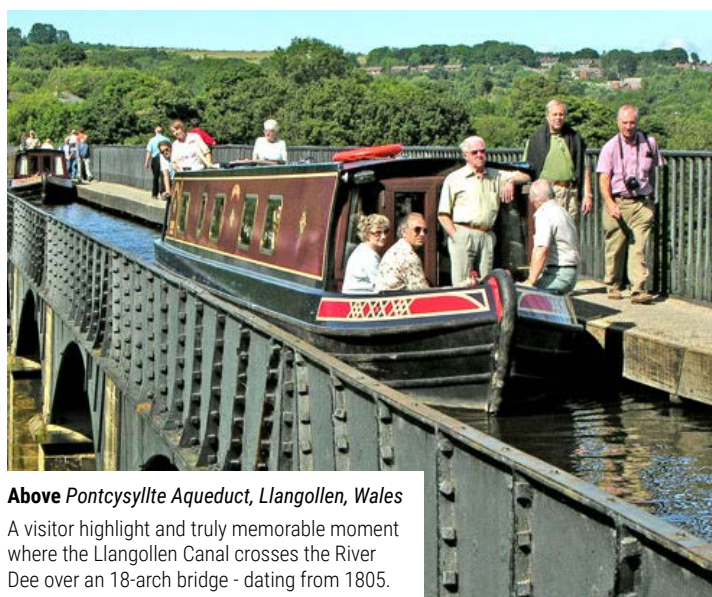
Well-considered, accessible and attractive design for the proposed Watersports Hub is key to its longterm viability and success - providing space for boat storage and offering direct access to the Barrow by pontoon.



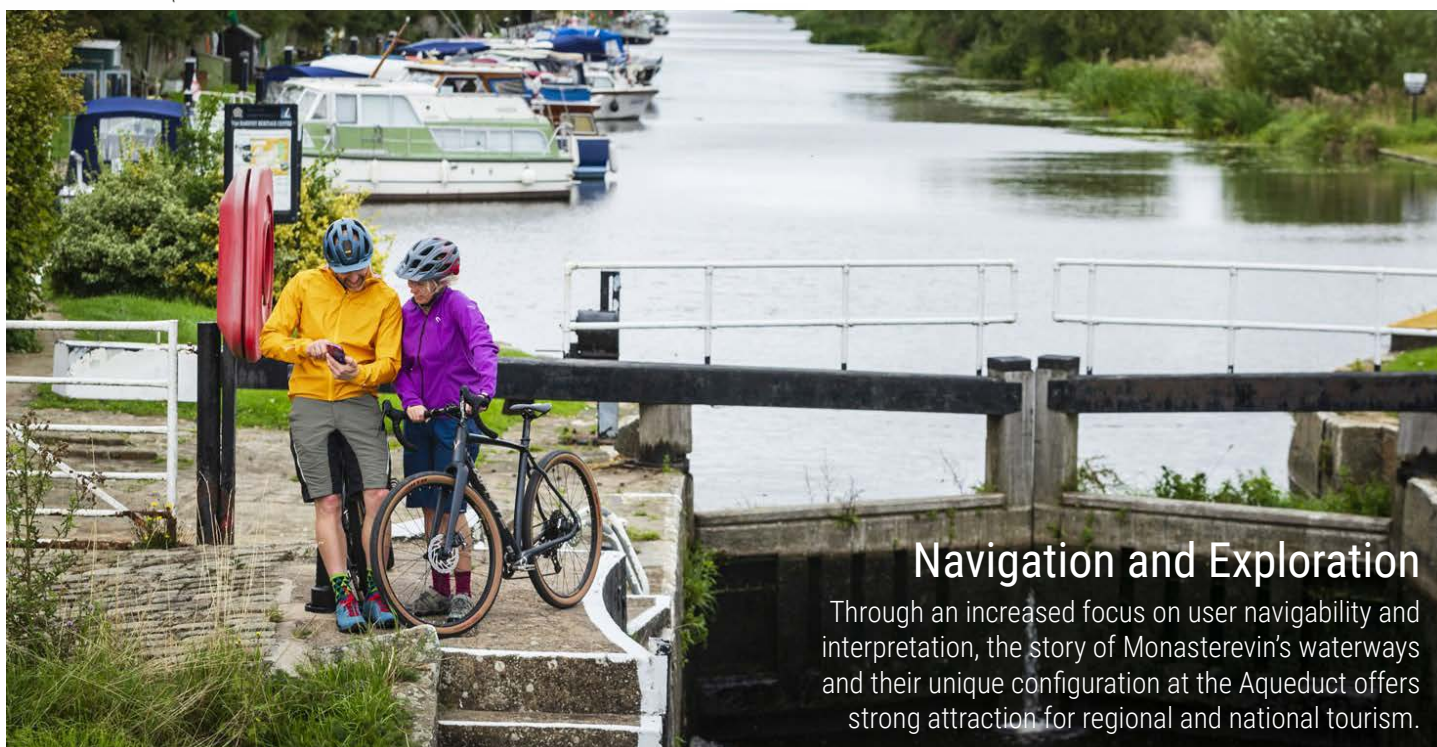


## G. Canal Aqueduct Crossing

A rare journey point along each of the Barrow Blueway and historic Grand Canal, this waterway crossing offers a dual-aspect of views and interpretation opportunities - relating to each of the built and natural environments.



**Above Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, Llangollen, Wales**  
A visitor highlight and truly memorable moment where the Llangollen Canal crosses the River Dee over an 18-arch bridge - dating from 1805.



## Navigation and Exploration

Through an increased focus on user navigability and interpretation, the story of Monasterevin's waterways and their unique configuration at the Aqueduct offers strong attraction for regional and national tourism.

# Proposals

## H. Moore Street

The historic *Main Street* of Monasterevin is Moore Street, and presents an exciting opportunity to tie the town's Georgian architectural heritage assets to the proposed Market Square plaza at its south, and to the wider Barrow Blueway that is planned to weave into Monasterevin along this historic and generously-proportioned thoroughfare.

As visualised (below, right), the street is envisaged as a boulevard of street trees, simplified wayfinding and signage, opportunities for public seating, widened footpaths at active edges, and raised traffic tables at junctions - offering greater safety for all street visitors, alongside bicycle lanes that tie into the Barrow Blueway.

**Right** Programmatic sectional studies of the West End area

Moore Street presents a threshold in the town where ecological and environmental edges blend with the built and urban environment.



**Below** Wilmslow Road, Manchester, UK

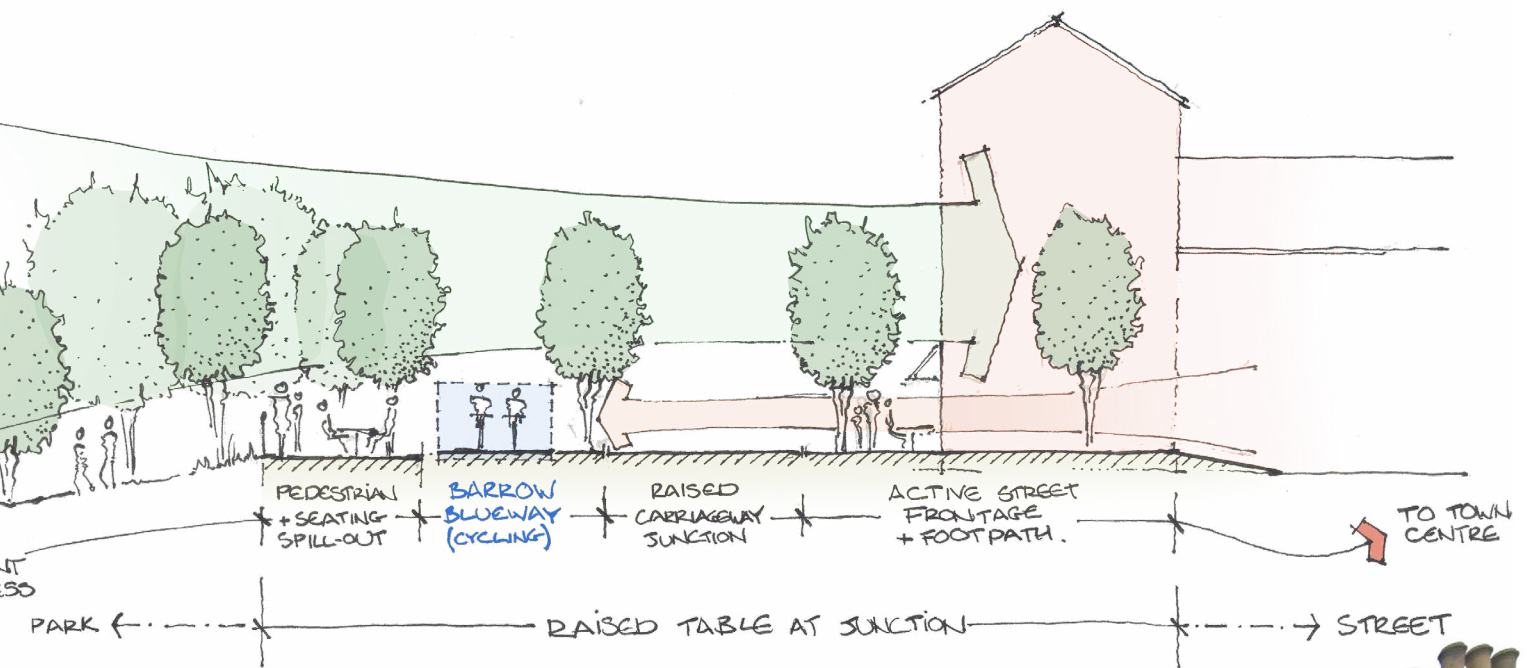
Reconfigured street widths create safe and dedicated space that allow for active travel options such as bicycle lanes, and wider pedestrian footpaths.



**Above** Market Space in Woodruff Park, Atlanta, USA

Flexible public areas that span valuable space between park and street present opportunities for local seating, dining and temporary markets.





A Vision for  
**Moore Street** Monasterevin

“It’s no big mystery.  
The **best streets**  
are **comfortable**  
to walk along with  
leisure and safety.

- **Allan Jacobs**

Professor Emeritus at UC Berkeley,  
Urban Design consultant,  
author of *'Great Streets'* (1995)

They are streets for both  
pedestrians and drivers.  
They have **definition**, a  
sense of **enclosure** with  
their buildings; distinct  
ends and beginnings,  
usually with **trees.**”

**Above Lady Lane, Waterford**

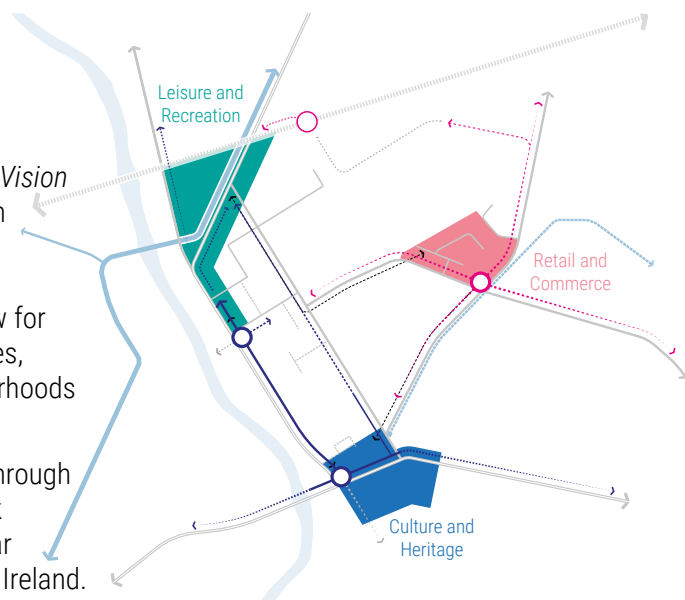
A unique cluster of restored distillery and storage buildings that date from establishment in 1757.

## I. Town Connections

As outlined through the aforementioned *Findings and Vision Development* of this report, an important configuration of urban centres exists across Monasterevin. Critical to ensuring a socially vibrant, economically active and environmentally resilient future for the town is to allow for safe, accessible and active links between these centres, with comprehensive links to attractions and neighbourhoods across the wider region.

Town-wide investment in active travel infrastructure through 2021 has seen a rise in those opting to cycle and walk to school or work - the reality of which has reduced car dependency across many villages, towns and cities in Ireland. This phenomenon of *traffic evaporation* is encouraged by balanced traffic management schemes, increased investment in active travel infrastructure, and incentives to opt for travel modes that are less spatially-dominant and more environmentally-friendly than the private motor car.

Given the advantageous space offered between the town's urban centres along each of the Togher Road, Drogheda Row, Drogheda Street, the Dublin Road, Moore Street (Main Street) and Canal Harbour, a variety of travel incentives can be developed through improved infrastructure - safely linking into the wider regional transport links of the train line (see Project J) and the Barrow Blueway (see Projects E, F and G).



**Below Drogheda Row junction**

Vision for safer crossings, increased vegetation and outdoor seating by Masters students of Urban Regeneration, TU Dublin (2021)



**Above Charenton-le-Pont, France**

Safe, visible, and of a durable finish - **quality** active travel infrastructure is shown to induce greater demand once completed.



**Above Dun Laoghaire Centre**

Seating and planting offer safe and attractive points of respite

# Proposals

## J. Train Station Access

Public realm improvements to the existing access routes *towards* and *into* Monasterevin station (south-west area, as conceptually drafted and issued by Waterways Ireland - see right) as well as opportunities to develop more direct and safe access directly from neighbourhoods to the east (St. Evin's, see precedent scheme at bottom of page) are considered, so as to ensure *universally safe* access to and from the town's residential areas, employment centres, regional attractions and touristic destinations.

These upgrades are to include legible signage, guidance and station information, surface widening and upgrades, and improved street lighting and at station approaches.



**Above Westport, County Mayo**

Raised tables with a change in paving material offer a more visible pedestrian crossing for all road users, while also offering the benefit of slowing motor traffic.



**Above Memory Park, New South Wales, Australia**

Located in the town of Hazelbrook, this linear park offers a vibrant and ecologically sensitive solution allowing for access to the adjacent footbridge.

## K. Neighbourhood Greenways

An inter-neighbourhood network of active travel pathways can offer residents and visitors a wide variety of direct connections with reduced carriageway crossings, less traffic and more ecological engagement.

These routes will function as viable and exciting alternatives to pedestrians and cyclists, offering quieter and safer routes with the provision of wayfinding, lighting, seating and bins dedicated to the network. Accommodating active SuDS measures along these routes will contribute to wider flood risk mitigation measures, while also offering local opportunities for environmental engagement, education and physical interaction.



**Above Craft Urban Ramp Creil / Espace Libre, France**  
A parkland path network with visibility and lighting central to its daytime and evening accessibility and use.



**Above Hammersmith and Fulham, UK**  
On-street drainage solutions are presented as part of a wider Sustainable Drainage Scheme (SuDS) network.



Well-lit with passive surveillance

Safe sight lines through parkland

Accessible seating and furniture

**Above Cessinger Park, Luxembourg**  
Key off-road pedestrian roads connect busy town centre areas and local residential neighbourhoods.

# Proposals

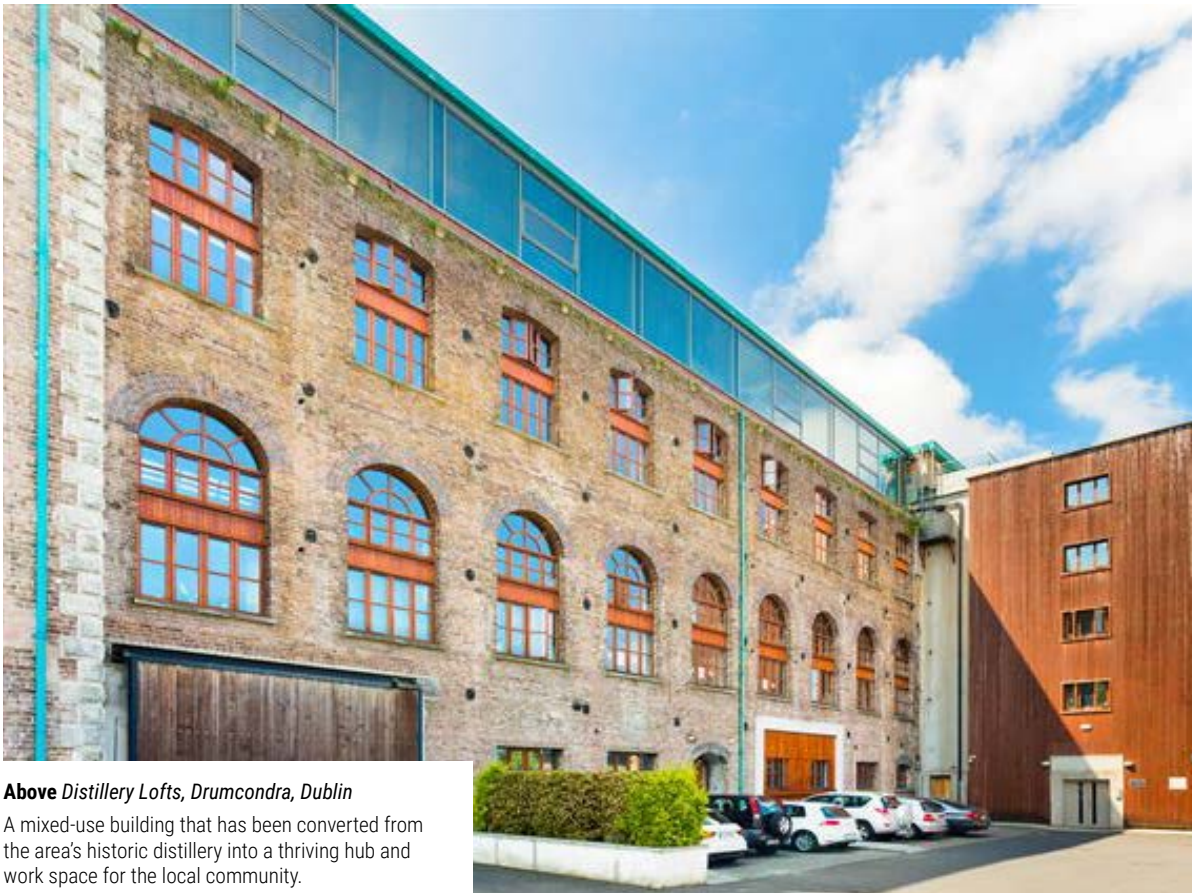
## L. The Distillery

Dating from the late 19th century, Cassidy's Distillery on Dublin Street is ideally located in the centre of Monasterevin, and presents a great opportunity for a range of flexible new uses including residential space and office areas. While currently vacant, this historic cluster and the adjacent lands have capacity to become a mixed-use centre for living in, working at, and visiting. It is seen as a community hub, with ties to other local community and educational facilities - a platform for local performance, exhibition and public events.

It is recommended by An Taisce (The National Trust for Ireland) that - though this impressive building currently requires extensive works to address conservation problems - it presents also a unique opportunity for the wider town, and has recommended uses including **residential, community, commercial, and educational.**



**Above Whisky Bond, Glasgow, Scotland**  
Flexible business space in a historic warehouse, with production facilities in wood, metal, plaster and ceramics.



**Above Distillery Lofts, Drumcondra, Dublin**  
A mixed-use building that has been converted from the area's historic distillery into a thriving hub and work space for the local community.



“The greenest building is the one that is **already built.**”

- **Carl Elefante**  
FAIA, 2018 AIA President



*Above The Digital Hub Campus, Dublin*

A unique cluster of restored distillery and storage buildings that date from establishment in 1757.

# Action Plan

## 6.1 Next Steps

Once prioritised project items and appropriate funding are committed, each project will undergo a detailed process of design development and consultation, as necessary. Larger projects will also be required to obtain necessary approvals including (for example) planning consent.

Smaller projects and short term placemaking initiatives are also encouraged to complement these actions and further advance the vision and objectives set out in this Master Plan document.

## 6.2 Town Centre First Policy

The TCF Policy will assist in the co-ordinated alignment of various new and existing funding streams to support the implementation of the TCF Plans on the ground. This includes funds such as the:

- Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF)
- Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF)
- Housing for All Crói Cónaithe (Towns) fund
- Investment supports from the forthcoming ERDF programme for Towns via the Regional Assemblies
- Active Travel Fund
- Town & Village Renewal Scheme
- Climate adaptation/retrofitting
- Built Heritage supports such as the Historic Town Initiative (HTI).

A core aim will be to ensure specific TCF funding streams within each programme which targets delivery of the TCF Policy and implementation of TCF plans locally.

## 6.3 Funding

A range of funding streams may be available, in relation to the progress of community projects, infrastructure upgrades and design recommendations, as outlined. These are noted as relevant at the time of report writing.

### Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF)

The purpose of the RRDF is to support job creation in rural areas, **address de-population of rural communities** and support **improvements in our towns and villages** with a population of less than 10,000, and outlying areas.

The Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) is a commitment of €1 billion by government to be invested in **rural Ireland** over the period 2019 to 2027.

### Local Improvement Scheme (LIS)

The LIS provides funding to help local authorities carry out improvement works on private and non-publicly maintained roads.

### Town and Village Renewal Scheme (TVRS)

One of a series of national and local support measures designed to rejuvenate small rural towns and villages throughout Ireland, the TVRS will place particular emphasis on projects **supporting remote working** and **enhancing town centre living** as outlined in *Our Rural Future - Rural Development Policy (2021-2025)*.

Notably, Since the launch of the TVRS in 2016, over €93 million of funding has been approved for more than 1,340 projects across Ireland.

### Creative Ireland Programme Creative Communities initiative

In 2021 this initiative enabled local authorities to deliver nearly 1,500 community-led creative projects.

This funding has proved to be an important flexible resource that has enabled local authorities to sustain and develop vibrant creative communities. It will offer thousands of opportunities across Ireland for people of all ages to engage with creative projects in their local area.

### LEADER (*Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale*), European Union (EU)

LEADER is part of Ireland's Rural Development

Programme that is co-funded by the EU, which operates a locally-led, bottom-up, approach to meeting the needs of local communities and businesses.

The funding announced will see the development and enhancement of locally and rurally-led projects in areas such as **enterprise development, climate change** and the green, bio and circular economy.

### Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS)

Funding to further enhance our unique natural amenities and support Rural Ireland as a destination for adventure tourism. This is designed to support the enhancement of dozens of **recreational amenities** such as our mountain trails, **forest walks, beaches, rivers, lakes, blueways and greenways**.

### Community Enhancement Programme (CEP)

The CEP provides **capital funding to community groups**, which allows these groups to **enhance facilities** in disadvantaged areas. The CEP is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development, and has provided €38.5 million in funding since 2018.

### Historic Towns Initiative (HTI)

A Heritage Council initiative to promote heritage-led regeneration and to improve the quality of our historic towns and villages for residents and tourists.

### Community Monuments Fund (CMF)

The Community Monuments Fund was first established in 2020 to provide investment in Ireland's archaeological heritage.

Part of this funding is prioritised for local authorities, private owners and custodians and community groups for the care, conservation, maintenance, protection and promotion of archaeological monuments.

### Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS)

The aim of the Built Heritage Investment Scheme is to

leverage private capital for investment in a significant number of small-scale, labour-intensive conservation projects throughout the country and to support the employment of conservation professionals, craftspeople and tradespersons in the repair of the historic built environment.

### Historic Structures Fund (HSF)

The primary focus of the Historic Structures Fund will be on conservation and enhancement of historic structures and buildings for the broader benefit of communities and the public.

While the primary responsibility to care for and maintain a protected structure rests with the owner, the Historic Structures Fund will invest essential capital in our valuable built heritage and help the owners and custodians of historic structures to safeguard them into the future for the benefit of communities and the public.

### Tourism Business Continuity Programme (2022)

The TBCP is designed to support **strategic tourism businesses** survive through the pandemic and be there to help drive the recovery of tourism.

### Allocations to Local Authorities for National Roads, Active Travel and Greenways (2022)

The NDP considers the 10-year period of the NDP in two periods of five years, namely, 2021-2025 and 2026-2030. As stated in the NDP, the final funding for 2026-2030 will be determined in a new NDP for the period 2026-2035, following a review of the NDP by Government in 2025

### The Historic Towns Initiative (HTI, 2022)

In support of the Town Centres First policy set out in the Programme for Government: Our Shared Future (2020), the Historic Towns Initiative (HTI) is a joint undertaking by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the Heritage Council which aims to promote the heritage-led regeneration of Ireland's historic towns.

# Appendices

## i. Safe Routes to Schools

The following extract (see right) from the Monasterevin *Safer Routes to Schools* document demonstrates the design principles and intent at Drogheda Street, supporting Project B and Project I.

Front of School Environment/  
School Zone Design Elements

FRONT OF SCHOOL  
3.2



**Design Elements could include:**

- 1 Carriageway narrowing where possible (build-outs using inexpensive materials could be used for Quick-Build Schemes).
- 2 Vertical/horizontal deflection at start of zone.
- 3 Surface colour/texture change.
- 4 Visible pedestrian crossing with good lighting.
- 5 Distinctive signage (minimise use of warning signs).
- 6 Planting and trees (use planters for Quick-Build Schemes).
- 7 Seating.
- 8 Potential art elements.
- 9 Protected cycle lanes connecting to wider cycle network.



## ii. Sports Hub, Moore Abbey

Below is an extract from Kildare County Council's emerging plan for the proposed Sports Hub at Moore Abbey. This proposal includes a variety of sports facilities and active travel connections to the wider lands and town.



### iii. Environmental Assessments

Environmental screening has been carried out for this Town Renewal Master Plan and assessment(s) are located in these Appendices. There is one Special Area of Conservation (SAC), the River Barrow (002162), that flows through Monasterevin and is designated for nature conservation purposes under the Habitats Directive.

An SAC is a significant level of designation and protection requiring that all works and proposals in the vicinity are subject to Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening.

Although this Master Plan has been screened for AA, all Priority Projects for Monasterevin that are brought forward to design and development stage will be subject to further AA Screening as development proposals may have potential impacts on the conservation objectives of the River Barrow. Only when further design detail is available, will it then be possible to assess the impacts of the project through Appropriate Assessment. In designing the individual projects, standard site management procedures in dealing with activities close to water, will be considered.

#### Strategic Environmental Assessment

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is the process by which environmental considerations are required to be fully integrated into the preparation of plans and programmes prior to their final adoption. The requirement for SEA derives from Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment and the consultation with the prescribed Environmental Authorities has concluded that SEA is not required (see Appendix).

Proposals for future development (a project) within Barrow SAC will require screening for the requirement for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) under Directive 2014/52/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, which amends Directive 2011/92/EU (on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment), and implementing national legislation.

An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) shall be prepared for projects where the requirement for EIA is mandatory, where the project meets or exceeds stated

thresholds, or where it is determined that the project is likely to have significant effects on the environment.


#### Appropriate Assessment

Natura 2000 sites are defined under the Habitats Directive (Article 3) as a European ecological network of special areas of conservation composed of sites which host the natural habitat types listed in Annex I and habitats of the protected species listed in Annex II. The aim of the network is to aid the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats. In Ireland these sites are designated as European Sites – defined under the Planning Acts and/or Birds and Habitats Regulations as (a) a candidate site of Community importance, (b) a site of Community importance, (c) a candidate special area of conservation, (d) a special area of conservation, (e) a candidate special protection area, or (f) a special protection area. They are commonly referred to in Ireland as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

The County Kildare Development Plan 2023-2026 indicates the Natura 2000 sites located within the boundaries of Kildare. The River Barrow and River Nore SAC flows through the town and is a designated Natura 2000 site, specifically a Special Area of Conservation (i.e. cSAC).

For the reasons set out in detail in the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (see Appendix X), an Appropriate Assessment of the Monasterevin Masterplan is not required as it can be concluded, on the basis of objective information, that the Plan, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not have a significant effect on any European sites. The screening report is available as an independent document relating to the strategy.

The AA screening outlines how project level Appropriate Assessment Screening is integral to the nature and purpose of the plan, and that should any Appropriate Assessment Screening indicate that a project, individually or cumulatively, be likely to have a direct or indirect significant effect on a Natura 2000 site then a full Appropriate Assessment will be undertaken.



---

“ This Master Plan will guide the **sustainable growth** of Monasterevin - enabling it to be a safe and enjoyable place to live, work, and prosper, while leveraging the town’s **unique assets** as an exciting place to **visit, explore** and **remember**.”

---