

CARRICK-ON-SHANNON

TOWN CENTRE FIRST PLAN

JUNE 2023



Rialtas na
hÉireann
Government
of Ireland

Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040

Ár dTodhchaí
Tuaithe
Our Rural
Future



Lár Bailte ar dTús
Town Centre First



Comhairle Chontae Liatroma
Leitrim County Council





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Allies and Morrison



The background features a stylized, blue-toned map of a city, showing various blocks and streets. On the left side, there is a large, vertical number '1' with a green-to-blue gradient. The word 'INTRODUCTION' is written in white, bold, uppercase letters at the bottom left, partially overlapping the number '1' and the city map.

INTRODUCTION



Introduction

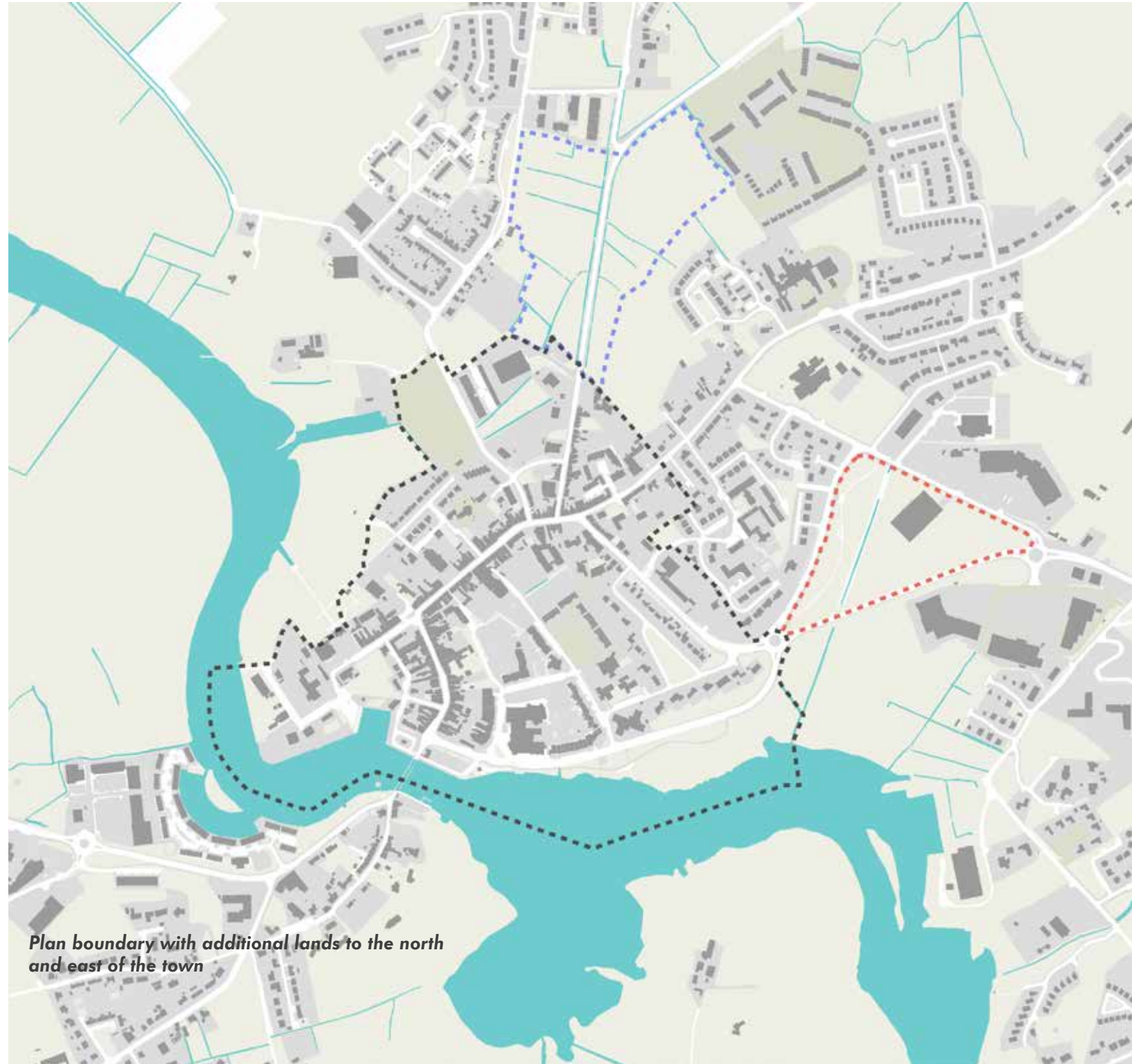
Carrick-on-Shannon is a successful town in County Leitrim with an approximate population of 4,441 per census 2022. It has long been a strategically important crossing point on the River Shannon.

Carrick-on-Shannon has been selected as a key town under the first phase of the national town centre first initiative and awarded funding by the Government to prepare a Town Centre First (TCF) Plan.

The project is being led by Carrick-on-Shannon's Town Team alongside Leitrim County Council and facilitated by a team of consultants led by Allies and Morrison.

Informed by an extensive programme of local community and stakeholder engagement, this plan report follows national TCF guidance by being structured as follows:

- 1. Understanding the place** - an overview of the baseline phase of work;
- 2. Defining the Place** - an overview of opportunities and projects which have emerged from community engagement; and
- 3. Enabling the Place** - an Action Plan to guide delivery of the projects.



Project context

The Government's Town Centre First Policy (February 2022) is a major new policy that aims to tackle vacancy, combat dereliction and breathe new life into town centres. The policy lays the foundation for towns to develop a tailored plan by a Town Team in collaboration with the Local Authority. The policy is underpinned by a multi-billion Euro investment programme spread across Government schemes.

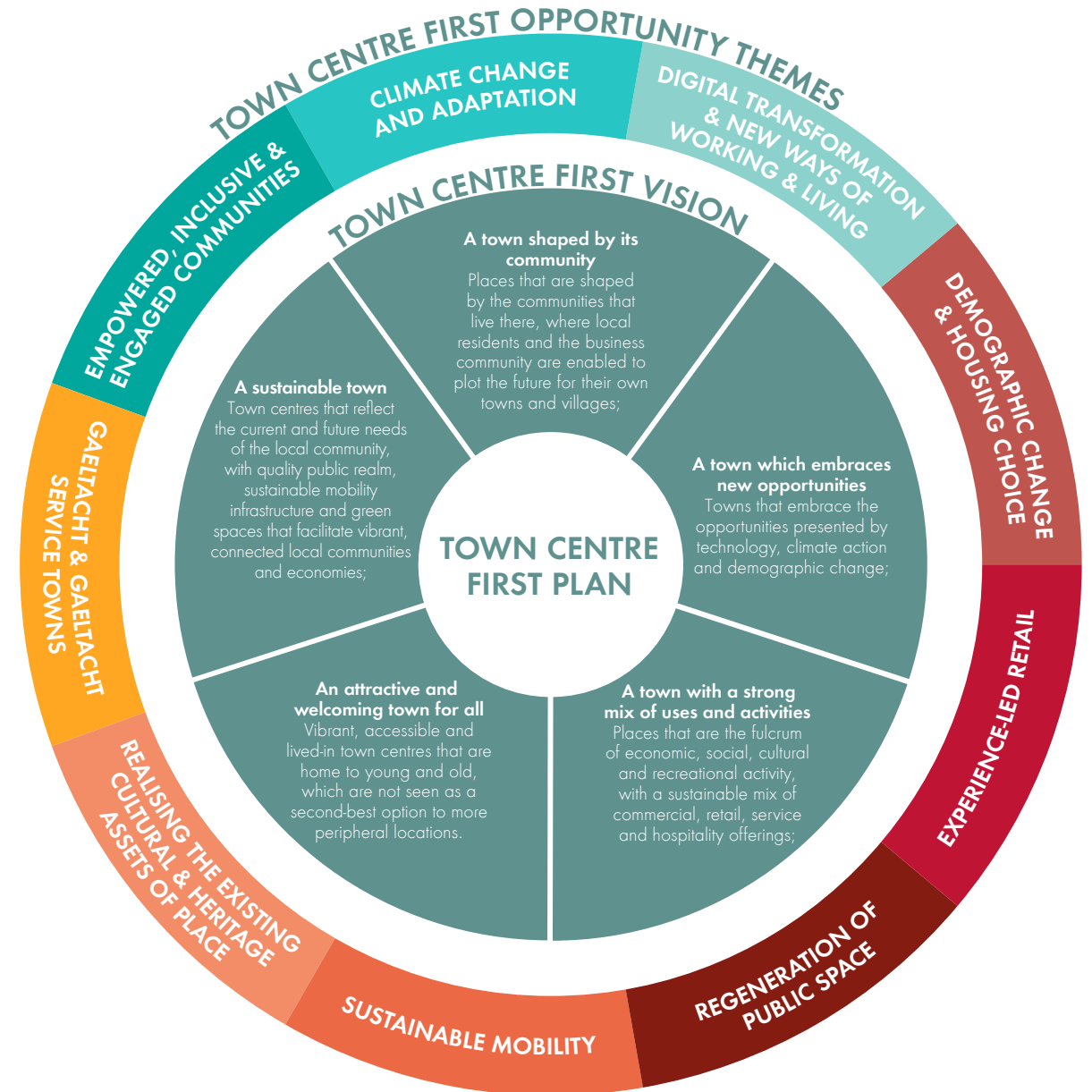
Carrick-on-Shannon is one of the early waves of towns to receive funding for a plan under the National Town Centre First Plan Initiative. Carrick-on-Shannon was selected on the basis of successful community led initiatives to date, the challenges the town currently faces and the opportunities and potential that are unique to the town.

The Carrick-on-Shannon Town Centre First Plan will provide a basis for multiple stakeholders to seek support from funding streams such as the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund, Rural Regeneration and Development Fund, Croí Cónaithe (Towns) Fund, Town and Village Renewal Scheme, Active Travel Fund and the Historic Towns Initiative.



Town Centre First policy

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.



A successful future Carrick-on-Shannon will:

Be **characterised by an attractive public realm** (streets, spaces and parks) that is designed to invite people to meet, mingle and dwell;

Contain a **variety of services/shops** that provide employment opportunities, enable people to shop locally and meet the needs of the local community;

Provide a **range of cultural, recreational and community spaces** (that includes scope for periodic events and festivals) that bring together community members and attract visitors/tourists;

Contain a **well maintained building stock** that creates **visual interest and animates streets and spaces**;

Conserve, adapt and highlight historical buildings and streetscapes that provide the town with a unique identity;

Be an **attractive and vibrant place for enterprises** to grow and develop; and for people to **live and work**.

Be **well connected and accessible to sustainable modes of transport**, enabling a high proportion of journeys to be made by foot and/or bicycle from the immediate hinterland (e.g. the '10 minute town' concept);

Manage traffic within central areas so that streets **prioritise vulnerable users** (pedestrians and cyclists), enabling them to move about safely and in comfort;

Provide **a mix of housing typologies and tenures** to cater for diverse communities in terms of age, income and mobility, and to **encourage town-centre living and working**;

Utilise digital technology to enhance the experience of living and working in towns, enabling greater choices in terms of location and lifestyle;

Provide **opportunities for the amenity, health and well-being** of residents, workers and visitors.

Vision objectives adapted from the Government's Town Centre First policy (p9)





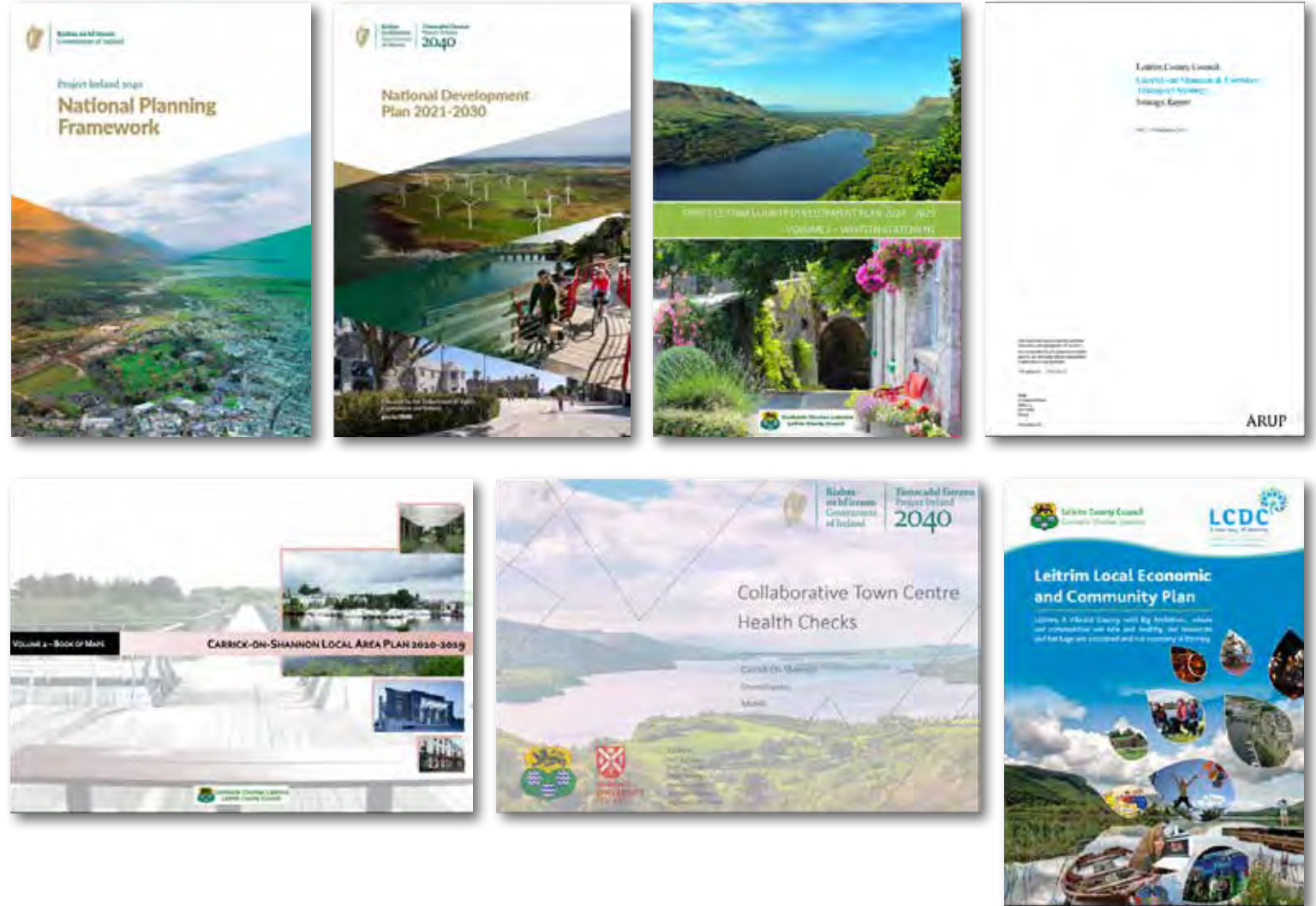
POLICY CONTEXT



Strategic Policy Review

Carrick-on-Shannon Town Centre First Plan will be developed within the context of various national, regional and local level plans and reports. Key plans are as follows:

- Project Ireland 2040 – National Planning Framework and National Development Plan
- Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032
- Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029
- Carrick-on-Shannon & Cortober Transport Strategy 2021
- Carrick-on-Shannon Local Area Plan 2010-2019 and Proposed Joint Local Area Plan for Carrick-on-Shannon/ Cortober (Note: Council are currently in the process of developing a Draft Local Area Plan (2023 - 2029)
- Leitrim Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2015-2021 and Draft LECP 2023 – 2028
- Carrick-on-Shannon Town Centre Health Check



Project Ireland 2040 – National Planning Framework and National Development Plan

The National Planning Framework (NPF) is the government’s strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of the country to 2040. The NPF is partnered with the National Development Plan (NDP), which outlines a programme of investment. Regional and local plans must align with the shared National Strategic Outcomes of these plans.

Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) 2020-2032 developed by the Northern and Western Regional Assembly sets out a framework for implementation of the NPF at a regional level. The RSES Settlement Strategy identifies Carrick-on-Shannon as a Key Town, which should provide regionally strategic employment of significant scale and provide functions and services to the sub-region south of Leitrim/East Roscommon.

Carrick-on-Shannon is targeted to have a 30% population uplift, focused on compact growth and prioritising the development of opportunity sites close to the town centre. The RSES sets out key future priorities for Carrick-on-Shannon:

- Develop and expand the potential of the Carrick Business Campus and explore the opportunity to attract a people intensive use of the modern existing buildings.
- Deliver support to existing businesses in Carrick-on-Shannon to ensure their retention and expansion.
- Promote research and development opportunities, building the capacity of the region.
- Promote the potential of the Metropolitan Area Network fibre optic cable managed by eNET. This provides Next Generation Access Fibre Network that offers speeds of up to 100Mbps.
- Progress the sustainable development of the serviced strategic employment land to the east of the town.
- Development of the tourism offer and the thriving Purple Flag Status of the town that supports a variety of enterprises in the surrounding countryside.
- Deliver on the Blueway development under the Upper Shannon Erne Future Economy project (USEFE). Carrick-on-Shannon is strategically located within this Blueway.

The RSES includes the need to prepare a joint Local Area Plan with Roscommon County Council for Carrick-on-Shannon and Cortober. Priorities for road and rail investment projects include the Carrick-on-Shannon bypass and support for the development of the N4 at Carrick-on-Shannon to a high-quality road.



National Strategic Outcomes (Source: NPF)

Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029

The County Development Plan 2023-2029 sets out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the County for six years whilst also aligning with longer term national and regional objectives.

The Plan contains the following policies and objectives for Carrick-on-Shannon of relevance to the preparation of the Plan:

CARRICK POL 1	To deliver and offer support to existing businesses in Carrick-on-Shannon to ensure their continued existence and expansion.
CARRICK POL 2	To promote research and development opportunities, building the capacity of the region.
ENT EMPL POL 1	To direct significant enterprise and employment growth into the Key Town of Carrick-on-Shannon and also into the Sub Regional Growth Centres of Ballinamore and Manorhamilton.
TOUR INF POL 1	To provide high quality experiences for visitors by supporting expansion in accommodation and facilities in Carrick-on-Shannon as a Destination Town
CARRICK OBJ 1	To develop and expand the potential of the Carrick Business Campus and seek to attract a people intensive use of the modern existing buildings.
CARRICK OBJ 2	To progress the sustainable development of the serviced strategic employment land that is available to the east of the town.
CARRICK OBJ 3	To continue to develop the tourism offer and the Purple Flag Status of the town that supports a variety of support enterprises in the surrounding countryside.
CARRICK OBJ 4	To deliver on the strategic positioning of Carrick-on-Shannon as part of the development of the Blueway proposition under the Upper Shannon Erne Future Economy project (USEFE).
CARRICK OBJ 5	To pursue the development of a town destination centre in Carrick-on-Shannon to strengthen the town centre as a destination of choice and improve the retail attractiveness of our Key Town

CARRICK OBJ 6	To pursue the sustainable development of the new regionally significant opportunity site to the east of Carrick-on-Shannon and contiguous to the existing land use zoning envelope for use as a data centre or alternative regionally scaled employment use following the undertaking of a feasibility study. Access would potentially be from a National Primary Road (outside of reduced speed limit zone) and careful consideration of options is required. This will require inclusion of an exceptional circumstance for a new entrance off the N4 to be agreed with the TII in accordance with the Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines
CARRICK OBJ 7	To enhance the night-time economy by facilitating a mix of bars, restaurants and late-night cafes to make the town attractive to all users
RET OBJ 2	To promote Carrick-on-Shannon as the main retail centre in the county and to ensure that the retail quantity, quality and range is of a standard that reduces leakage of retail expenditure out of the county and contributes to the strengthening and competitiveness of the retail economy within Carrick-on-Shannon, the county and the region as a whole.
TOUR INF OBJ 4	To support the development of the night-time economy by supporting the Purple Flag initiative in Carrick-on-Shannon and collaborating with arts, music venues, festivals and events in centres across the county.
TRAN OBJ 3	To progress and develop, with the support and co-operation of Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), the following schemes: i. N4 Carrick-on-Shannon to Dromod Project from Faulties townland to Drumharlow townland in Co. Roscommon (in conjunction with Roscommon County Council)
TRAN OBJ 13	To co-operate with Roscommon County Council and other relevant stakeholders to prepare a Local Transport Plan for Carrick-on-Shannon/Cortober ensuring that this process is guided by the NTA/TII document 'Area Based Transport Assessment' to the extent required for a combined urban centre of this scale.
CA OBJ 2	To develop a Decarbonisation Zone in Carrick-on-Shannon in accordance with Action 165 of the Climate Action Plan 2019.



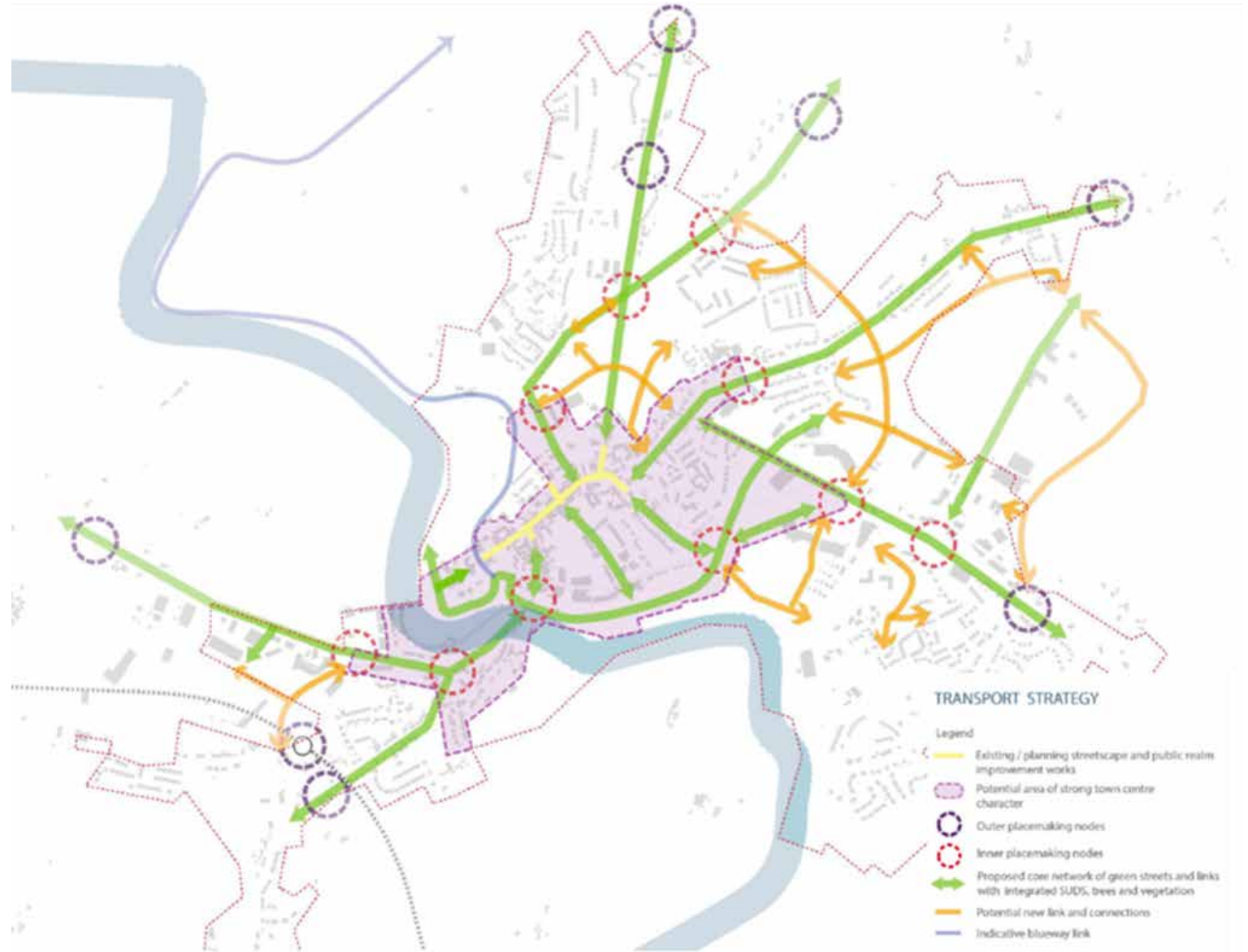
Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029

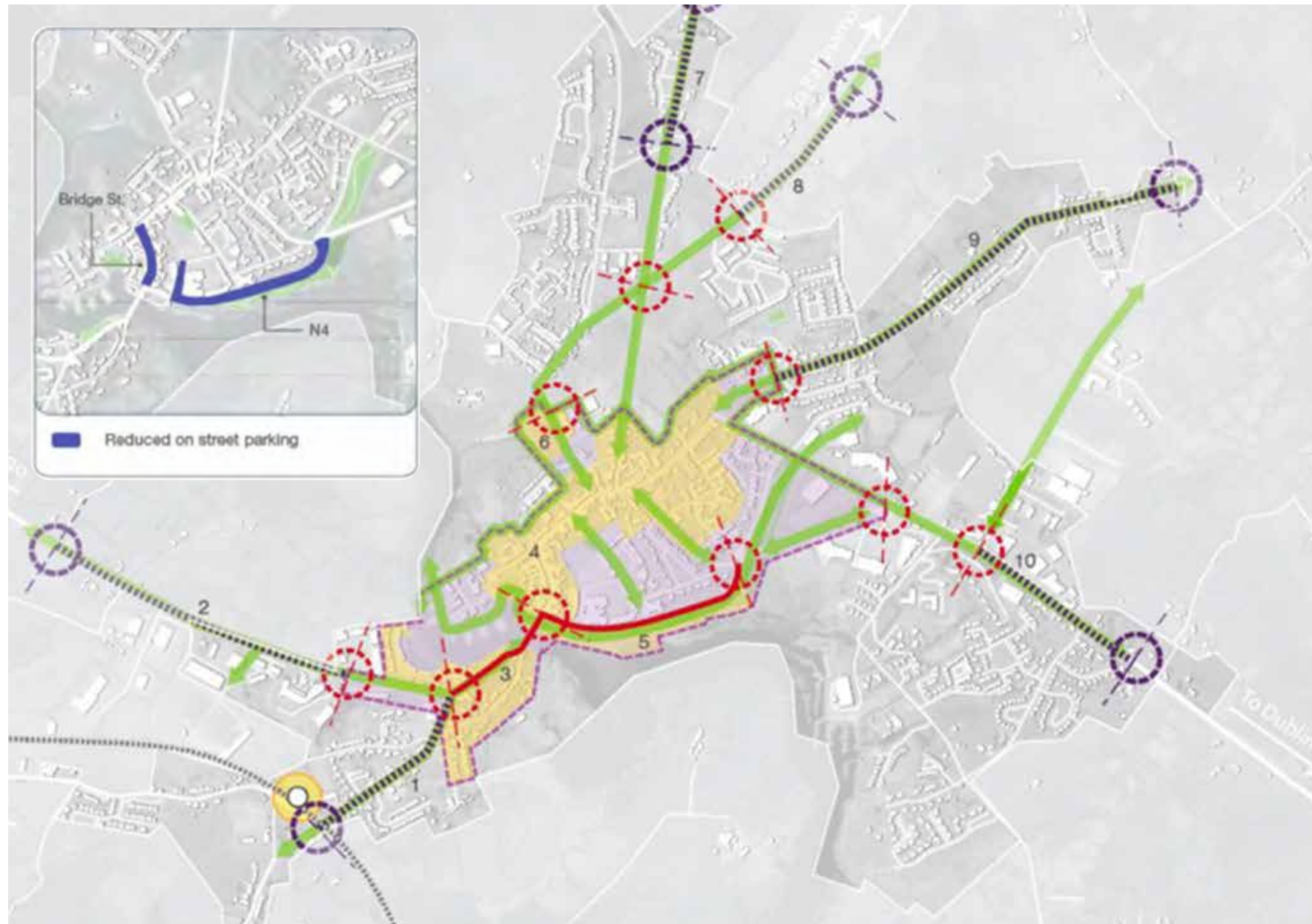
≡ POLICY CONTEXT

Carrick-on-Shannon & Cortober Transport Strategy 2021 presents a comprehensive analysis of the current transport situation and provides a strategic framework for the future development of transport infrastructure over the next 15 years. The Strategy seeks to strengthen the main town and village centre areas with placemaking opportunities while improving connectivity with surrounding neighbourhoods through the provision of a safer and more usable multi-modal transport network. The Strategy is being used to prepare a Local Transport Plan to inform the joint Local Area Plan for Carrick-on-Shannon and Cortober.



**Carrick-on-Shannon & Cortober
Transport Strategy**





STREETSCAPE & PLACEMAKING PLAN

Legend

-  Areas of existing strong town centre character
-  Potential area of strong town centre character
-  Outer gateway
-  Inner gateway
-  Potential rail station hub / public realm project
-  Proposed N4 - 30km/h
-  Proposed Transition zone
-  Proposed core network of green streets and links with integrated SUDS, trees and vegetation
- 1-10** Links to Streetscape & Placemaking interventions table

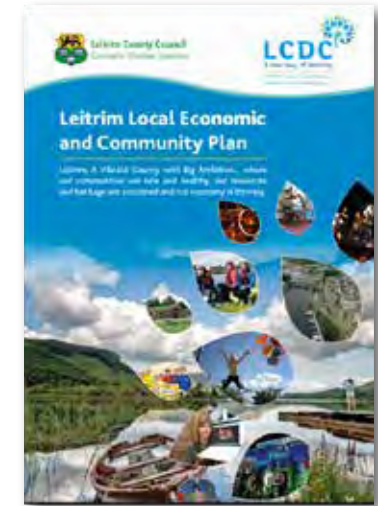
Carrick-on Shannon Local Area Plan 2010-2019 and Proposed Joint Local Area Plan for Carrick-on-Shannon/ Cortober

Carrick-on-Shannon LAP 2010-2019 aims to develop the town as an attractive place in which to live, work and visit. The Plan identifies areas of amenity and the town’s built and archeological heritage. It also identifies areas at risk of flooding, strategic drainage areas, the proposed N4 Carrick-on-Shannon to Dromod preferred route and preliminary road reserve at Hartley Junction. The Plan will be superseded by a joint Local Area plan for Carrick-on-Shannon and the adjoining village of Cortober. The joint Local Area Plan will be consistent with the framework for Carrick-on-Shannon provided for in the County Development Plan 2023-2029. The Joint Local Area Plan will also be consistent with the objectives of the RSES.



Leitrim Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2015-2021

The Leitrim City Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2015-2021 sets out objectives to promote and support economic, local and community development both by Leitrim County Council and in partnership with other economic and community development stakeholders. Key objectives include to improve town and village footfall; address dereliction and vacant premises; respond to declining retailing; create town and village centre variety; improve public realm to stimulate place related activities to support and promote economic development and employment opportunities. A draft LECP (2023 - 2028) is currently being progressed and should be complete in December 2023.



Carrick-on-Shannon Town Centre Health Check

This report sets out the findings of Town Centre Health Checks for Carrick-on-Shannon. It provides an analysis of building uses in the town centre with 9.7% vacancy of ground floor units recorded in 2020 and 30% vacancy for retail units. The report includes proposals for first floor living, a riverside pocket park, pop-up shops, a heritage and creativity centre on the outskirts of the town centre and a Bike Rental scheme.



A Tourism Masterplan for the Shannon (2020–2030)

Waterways Ireland, in association with Fáilte Ireland and Local Authorities within the Shannon region, developed the Shannon Tourism Masterplan to reposition the River Shannon and Shannon-Erne Waterway (collectively referred to as ‘the Shannon’) as a key tourism destination. The masterplan divides the Shannon into three regions and identifies Carrick-on-Shannon as a key hub town at the core of discovery zone 1. It also sets out an action plan for future tourism investment and supports interventions such as enhanced harbours and waterside public realms in towns, improved amenities for boat users and infrastructure for activity providers, remote moorings and tranquillity zones and new recreational infrastructure including a substantial network of walking and cycling trails.

Hidden Heartlands Regional Tourism Development Strategy (2023-2027)

Fáilte Ireland's Hidden Heartlands Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023-2027 provides a strategic framework for the sustainable development of tourism destinations in the region. It is a strategic initiative of the strategy to implement the Shannon Tourism Masterplan in association with Waterways Ireland and Local Authorities along the River Shannon and Shannon-Erne Waterway.



Digital Town Blueprint

The Digital Town Blueprint (DTB) is an entry-level assessment for local authorities, chambers of commerce, and other local community groups interested in understanding the current digital readiness of their town. The DTB has been designed to help towns rapidly and cost-effectively:

- Understand their current digital town readiness and digital competitiveness;
- Compare their town against Irish and international benchmarks;
- Stimulate stakeholder engagement on digitalisation.

Seven dimensions of analyses

The DTB analyses digital readiness across seven dimensions, accomplished through a combination of primary research, desk research, secondary data, key informant interviews and automated data collection techniques.

The seven dimensions are:

I. Infrastructure for Connectivity – the deployment of fixed and mobile broadband infrastructure and the availability of free public Wi-Fi and digital rural hubs.

II. The Digital Economy and Digital Business – the use of digital technology by local businesses and their level of sophistication.

III. Digital Public Services – the use and sophistication of digital technology by both local government and health, and the availability of local open data.

IV. Digital Education – the support for and use and sophistication of digital technology by education providers, and the provision of training and education in digital technologies across all levels.

V. Digital Technologies and Civil Society – the use and sophistication of digital technologies by community and voluntary groups in a town.

VI. Digital Tourism – the use and sophistication of digital technology to attract tourists and deliver a distinctive tourism experience.

VII. Governance of Digital Town Initiatives - the degree of coordination across the town on digitalisation including (a) integration across different elements of policy making, and across policy and other stakeholders, and (b) integration across different levels within the governance or policy sphere.



Findings summary

Based on the analysis undertaken as part of this process, Carrick-on-Shannon has been given an overall Digital Town Score of **56**.

The findings therefore suggest that Carrick-on-Shannon’s “Digital Readiness is Clearly Defined and Documented”, and that: “There is clear evidence of digital readiness. Use and sophistication of digital technologies and capabilities are documented and planned.”

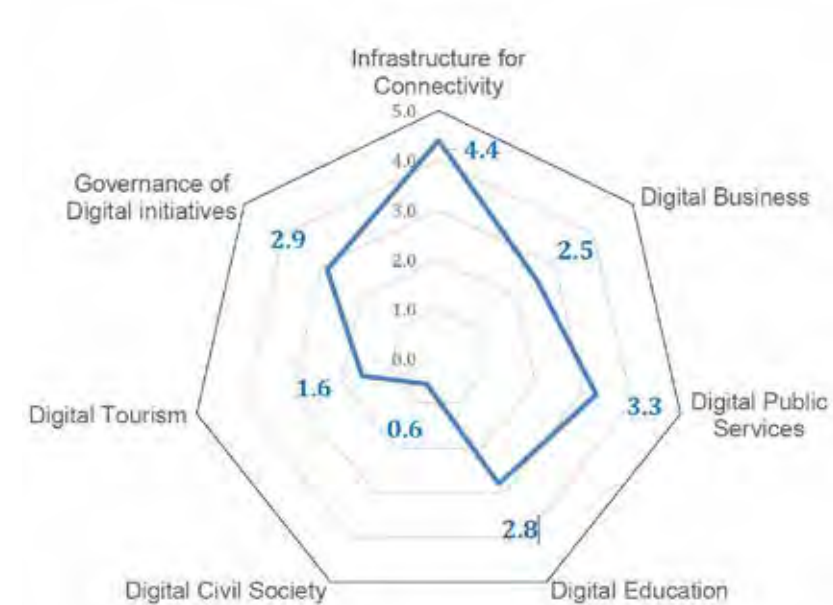
A key objective of the analysis is to provide an insight into key indicators for improvement at a town-level. The numbers individually have very little meaning without comparators however as presented do show gaps between performance today and potential in the future. The findings note that “KPIs are competitive relative to peer towns and regional, national and EU averages.”

The spider diagram shown opposite provides a summary of Carrick-on-Shannon’s digital readiness in each of the dimensions of analyses.

The town scored highest on its ‘Infrastructure for Connectivity’ - demonstrating it has good capability in this regard. However, the town scored poorly on Digital Civil Society - demonstrating that Carrick-on-Shannon’s voluntary bodies or social groups serving the needs of the community, including sports clubs, charities, political organisations, and other community groups, could make better use of Website Technology to improve their services, role and function in the town.

The town scored relatively poorly on Digital Tourism, particularly on the ‘Digital readiness of tourism businesses’ and ‘Smart tourism and digital tourism infrastructure’. However, while the town of Carrick-on-Shannon has its own designated website, it also features on the county website, www.enjoyleitrim.com and performs well in regard to SEO rankings. The Carrick-on-Shannon section of the County website is in the top five pages most visited.

More information is provided overleaf on the town’s connectivity and remote working facilities.



Spider diagram summarising the town’s digital readiness scores in each of the assessed dimensions

Broadband Provision & Remote Working Hubs

Carrick-on-Shannon currently has good broadband provision and connectivity. In 2023, a 100% fibre broadband network will be rolled out in Carrick-on-Shannon.

The roll out will include over 1,800 homes and businesses in Carrick-on-Shannon. The build works commenced in April of 2023, with the rollout of the area expected to complete in Q4 2023.

The rollout will enable more people to live and work locally, reducing the need for commuting and enabling more people to shop and socialise in the town. Fibre broadband is also greener than other forms of broadband networks.

It should be noted that Carrick-on-Shannon is fortunate to have The Hive, Leitrim's technology enterprise centre and remote working hub, located in Carrick-on-Shannon. The Hive provides desk space, offices and a range of services, including 400 mbps fibre broadband, to support entrepreneurs and remote workers.

The Hive is also part of Ireland's National Hub Network, or 'Connected Hubs' initiative, launched under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme in 2021 and operated by the Department of Rural and Community Development. The National Hub Network provides a vehicle for individual hubs to come together under a shared identity to maximise the economic opportunity of remote working.



The Hive, Carrick-on-Shannon Fully serviced office spaces, hot desks, and co-work areas and also large and small meeting rooms, all with fibre broadband connection. The Hive received an award for sustainability at the Irish Architecture Awards in 2014 and also the Green Apple Award in 2015. (Photo credit: the-hive.ie and Allies and Morrison Ltd)

The background features a large, semi-transparent green number '3' on the left side. To the right, there is a stylized map of the United Kingdom in a medium blue color, with a detailed urban grid pattern overlaid on the landmass. The entire background is a solid dark blue color.

UNDERSTANDING THE PLACE



A history of Carrick-on-Shannon

The name of the town is not the same in origin as other towns named "Carrick", which derives from the Irish for "rock". Instead it is from Cora Droma Rúisc, meaning "Weir of the marshy ridge".

Origins

Before the establishment of Carrick-on-Shannon the area was known as a forest called Feda Conmaicne. This name can be dated as far back as 1270.



Map of Carrick-on-Shannon, Taylor and Skinner 1778

1600s

In 1613 Carrick-on-Shannon was given its charter name by James I. During this time the town was titled 'The Provost Free Burgesses and Commonality of the Borough of Carrickdrumruske.



OSI map of Carrick-on-Shannon, 1837-1845

1800s

In 1821, the old courthouse was built by architect William Farrell. Since the building's erection, it played its role as a judicial facility but in 2005 the building was converted into an arts centre known as The Dock.



St. George's Church was established in 1827 as a place of worship for the Church of Ireland. The building has been fully restored and the St. George Heritage and Visitor Centre was built in 2005. The Heritage and Visitor Centre has become the home of three historically important landmarks in Carrick-on-Shannon: St. Georges Church, the Famine workhouse and the Costello Chapel.

1830s

Carrick-on-Shannon Rowing Club was established in 1836 and is the oldest rowing club in the country. The club has been very successful over the years, producing athletes such as Frances Cryan who represented Ireland in the 1980 Moscow Olympics.



1840s

Until the early 19th century, the head of the Shannon Navigation was Drumsna. In the 1840s the improvement of the navigation entailed extensive dredging of the river, and the building of a new bridge and quays at Carrick-on-Shannon. The new bridge, built in 1846, took the place of a nine arch stone bridge, which in turn replaced a wooden structure.



In 1862 the Carrick-on-Shannon train station opened for the first time.



HERITAGE & TOWNSCAPE



1870s

St. Mary's Church, built in 1879, is situated in the centre of Carrick-on-Shannon. It was designed by Mr. W.M. Hague, a well known and high distinguished Dublin Artist. The church stands upon the site of an earlier small chapel erected in 1807.



St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church, Main Street, Carrick-on-Shannon



Surgeon Major Thomas Heazle Parke was the first Irishman to cross Africa. He returned home from the 3 year journey to great acclaim and was bestowed honours and fellowships. Parke was brought up in Carrick-on-Shannon and is commemorated in the town centre.



1990s

The McCann Memorial Monument was erected in 1905 in memory of Owen McCann. This monument was placed near the Old Courthouse which was the scene of many historic happenings.



Carrick-on-Shannon Town Clock, Main Street, St. George's Terrace. Photo by Allies and Morrison



Carrick-on-Shannon memorial plaque in the Great Famine Garden of Remembrance. Image by the Wild Geese



Geraghty's Music Shop, located on the High Street of Carrick-on-Shannon established in 1955 in a building that has lasted since the 1800s. Photo by Allies and Morrison



2000s

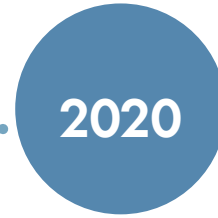
The Carrick-on-Shannon Water Music Festival began in 2004. The Festival showcases a vibrant mix of music and culture, including established Irish musicians and artists and up-and-coming local talent.



The Hot House Flowers performing at the Carrick-on-Shannon Water Music Festival in 2018. Image from the Leitrim Live.



Main street Carrick-on-Shannon, 2007 image from Trip Advisor



2020

In 2016 VistaMed created 200 new jobs in Carrick-on-Shannon bringing the total amount of employment by the company to 525. Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Mary Mitchell O'Connor said this partnership provides evidence that a rural county such as Leitrim can be home to successful international companies and provide them with the community, infrastructure and resources that they need.

In 2020 the Carrick-on-Shannon Literary Mural was unveiled as a celebration of the town's literary heritage. The mural features Susan L. Mitchell, John McGahern, MJ McManus, Canon William Slater and Nora Murray, five individuals who represent some of Leitrim's well-known literary figures who play an important role in the town's cultural heritage.



Once a derelict site, Peoples Park was developed in 2012. Adjacent to the Shannon with seating for a few quiet moments away from the hustle and bustle of Carrick-on-Shannon town centre.

Image of Peoples Park Carrick-on-Shannon by Allies and Morrison

Historic development



Situated on the East bank of the River Shannon at a point where it narrows considerably, Carrick-on-Shannon was an ancient stronghold of the O'Rourke's of Breffni and their oft-times rivals, the O'Raghnaills (Reynolds) of North Roscommon. Carrick-on-Shannon was granted a Royal Charter and named a borough with its own seal in 1607. Originally called 'Carrick Drumusk', the town was incorporated by charter in 1613, although a fort had already been built in 1611. Maurice Griffith became constable in 1620, but the fort's importance declined with the foundation of Jamestown further along the river in 1622 (Kerrigan 1980, 140). A second fort was built on the Roscommon side by 1627.

However, the town itself might never have been fortified and it is represented as without walls on the Down Survey (1656-8) barony map. The town was captured by Roger Maguire for Owen O'Neill in 1648, but it was surrendered to the Cromwellians in 1652. It had a population of 47 in 1659 (Pender 1939, 559) and a wooden bridge had been built by 1683, but only fourteen families were then living in the town. Part of the fort survives, the site of the parish church can be identified, and the Costello memorial chapel which was built in the 19th century, is extant. Archaeological testing up to 2000 had failed to recover features associated with the early occupation of the town but deep deposits (D c. 2-3m) of mixed organic material with stone and red brick dating to the nineteenth century testify to attempts to raise the ground level.

According to the Urban Archaeological Survey the street pattern of the initial town was linear and was based on the curving line of Bridge Street. Main Street represents an extension which was probably established towards the close of the seventeenth century, if one is to judge from the positioning of St George's Church of Ireland church. The expansion in the width of the street at the foot of Bridge Street immediately outside the castle suggests that this was the location of the original market place.

The construction of the market square at the north end of Bridge Street was a later development. Archaeological monitoring of a water mains identified the original quay-face and encountered a re-deposited oak beam with a likely felling date in the late seventeenth century and may have come from a bridge erected in 1683 or from its replacement in 1718.

Urban morphology

- Main Street & Bridge Street are the town's clear backbone
- River frontage also an important defining feature
- Key spaces / nodes found at junctions
- Town's structure is less defined on the lands behind these main streets

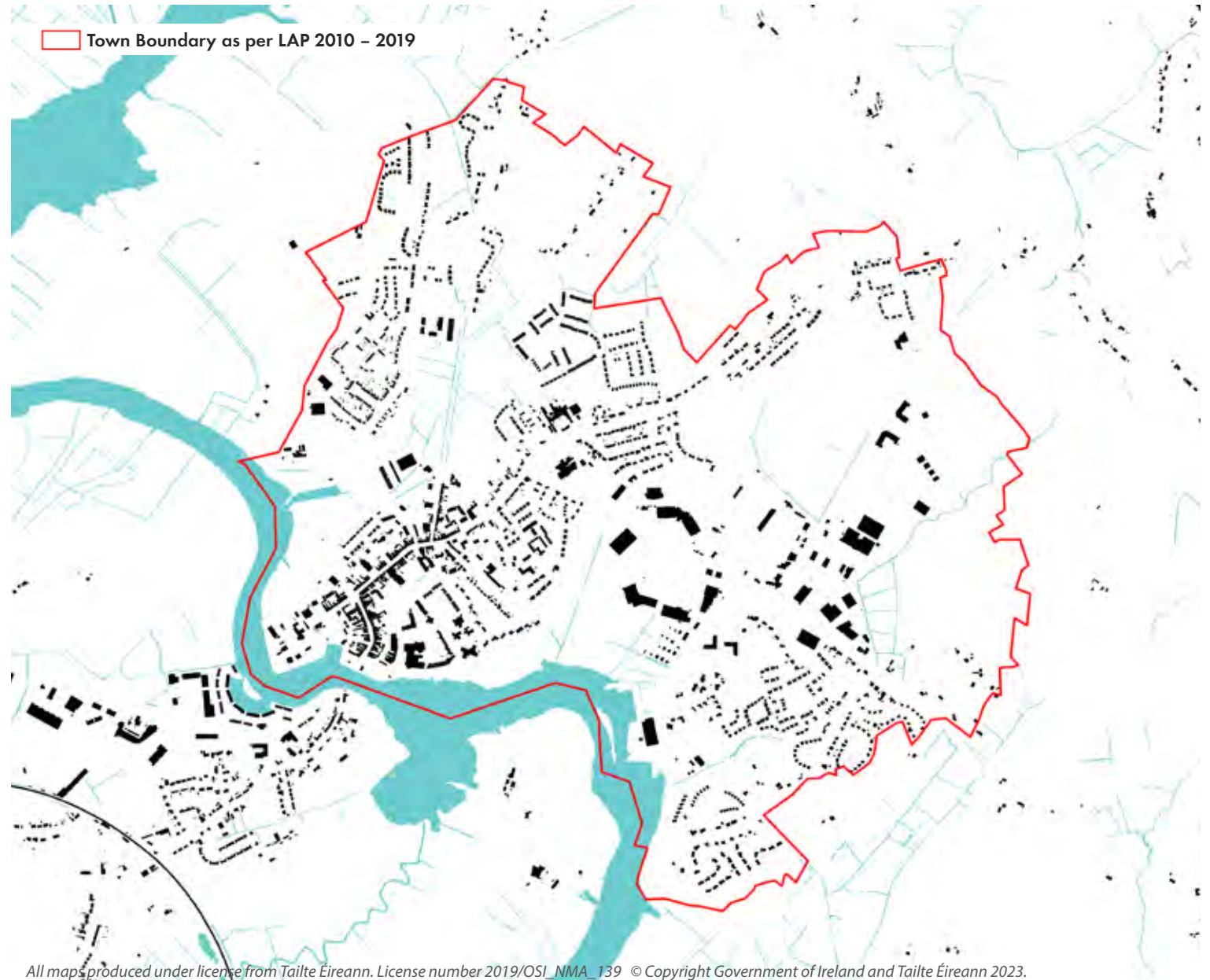


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Urban morphology

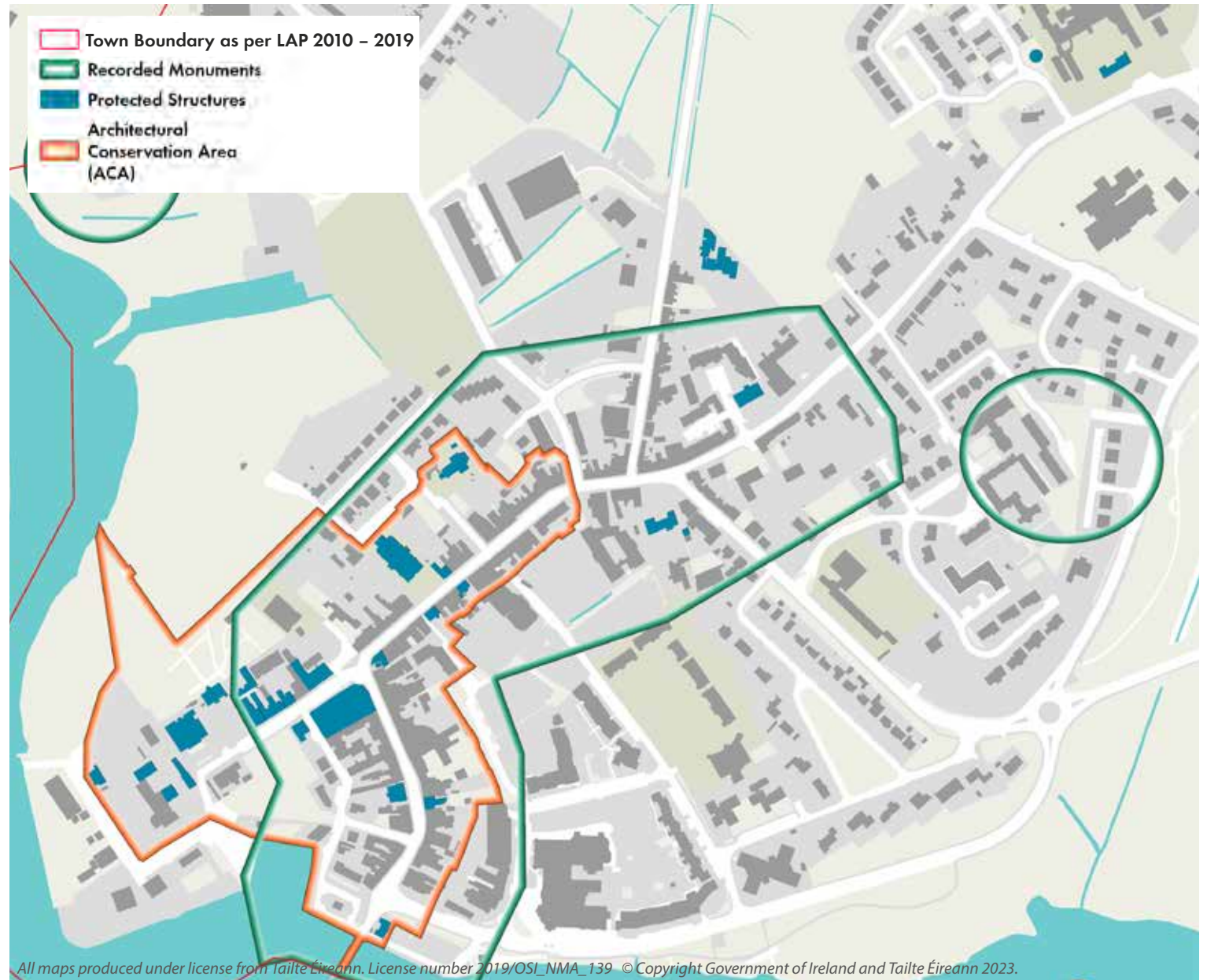
- Further afield, the larger floor-plate out of centre formats clearly evident
- These development formats contrast starkly with more organic town centre morphology
- Might there be opportunities to make the town more compact... more dense?



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Heritage assets

- Many of the town's most important buildings are heritage assets
- These tend to be concentrated along the principal streets of Main Street, St George's Terrace and Bridge Street
- The setting of these assets is a key consideration regarding the impact of potential new development



Significant structures

1. Carrick-on-Shannon Bridge

Carrick-on-Shannon was one of the ancient crossing points of the River Shannon. The existing five-arch limestone road bridge was erected in 1846, replacing an earlier structure. The associated pedestrian underpass and mooring posts create an interesting group of structures.

2. Hatley Manor, Saint George's Terrace

Set within its own landscaped grounds, the Manor occupies a pleasant site enhanced by quality cast-iron railings. Formerly the residence of the St George family, this house and its related mausoleum form an architecturally-significant group of structures in Carrick-on-Shannon.

3. Prison/Jail

This former jail guard building is significant for its historical context within the town. It is a striking yet modest structure, which terminates the vista of St. George's Terrace. It forms a significant complex with the other remaining prison structures and late-twentieth century structures located to the west.

4. Prison Governor's House

This former governor's house and associated jail buildings form a complex, which also encompasses the former gaol guard room and court house. Though much has been replaced within the complex, the structures retain their original character.

5. Carrick-on-Shannon Technical School

This well-proportioned school displays a style of utilitarian architecture employed for schools throughout Ireland in the 1930s and 40s. Though many such structures have been modified, this example retains much of its original fabric.

6. Carrick-on-Shannon Court House

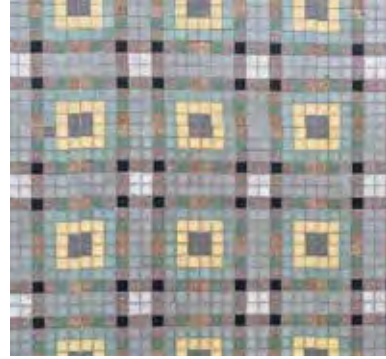
This former court house, elevated from street level, is an imposing structure within the town. This finely-built structure typifies court houses built in the early-nineteenth century throughout Ireland and much original fabric remains. The well-executed masonry enhances the building's façade. The building was successfully and sensitively converted in 2005 and is now "The Dock" Arts Centre, with a theatre and galleries.



Details and features

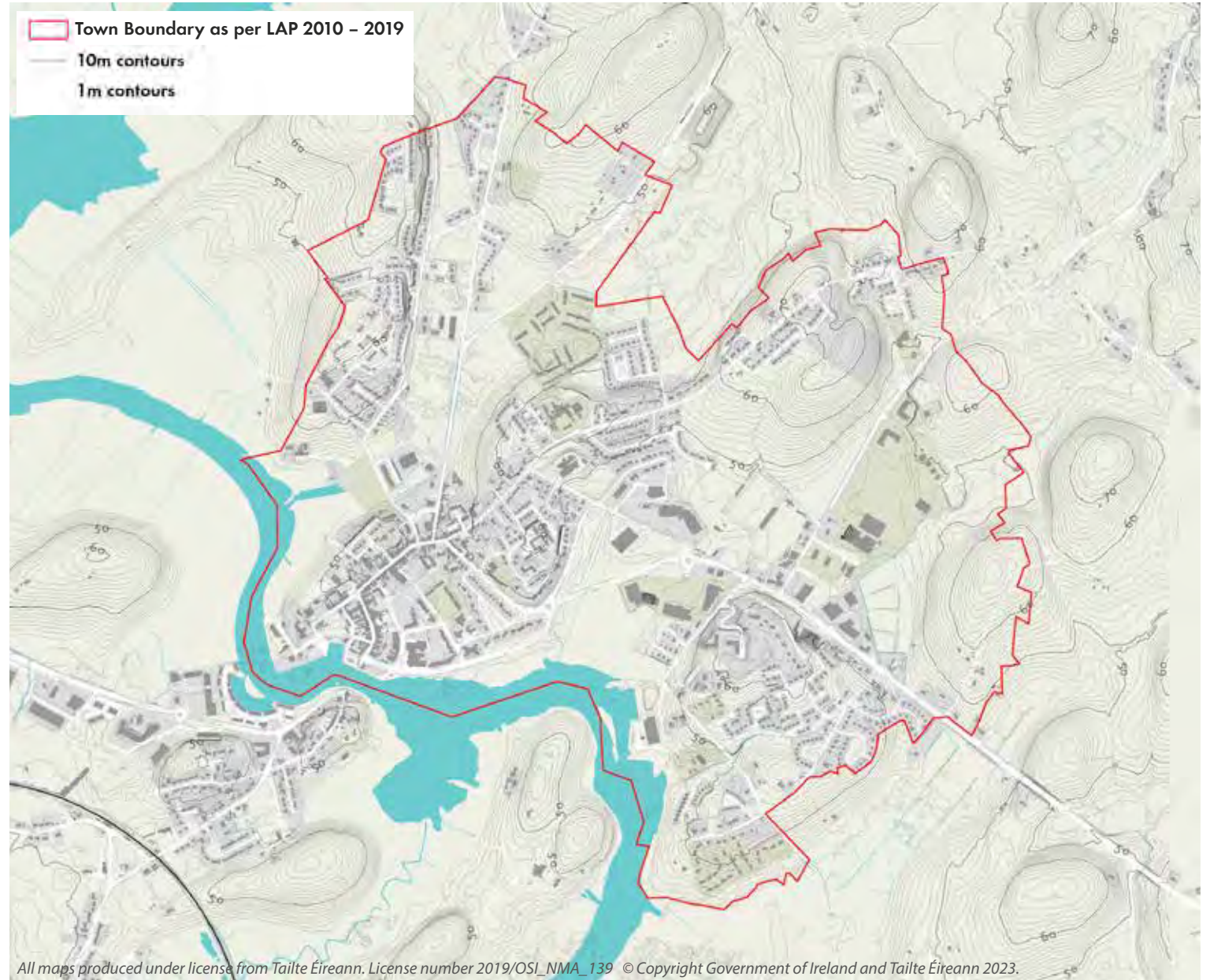


Creativity and culture in Carrick-on-Shannon



Topographic context

Carrick-on-Shannon nestles on the most scenic stretch of the Shannon and is also surrounded by some of the most beautiful and unspoilt scenery in Ireland. It is the gateway to the Shannon-Erne Waterway, Lough Key, Acres Lake and Lough Allen via the picturesque villages of Cootehall, Knockvicar, Leitrim Village, Drumshanbo and Keshcarrigan and is only a short distance away from the spectacular Glens of North Leitrim.



Topography

The town steadily rises away from the Shannon, this means that some of the lower areas are prone to river flooding during extreme weather incidents.

The highest area of the town centre is where the former Marist Convent is situated, now apartments, this area benefits from views over the town and river.

The town also rises up to the north of Main Street, benefiting the properties here and creating an attractive landmark in the St. George's Heritage & Visitor Centre's spire, St Mary's Catholic Church.

Further advantage could be taken of this elevation, particularly in the area north of St George's Terrace.



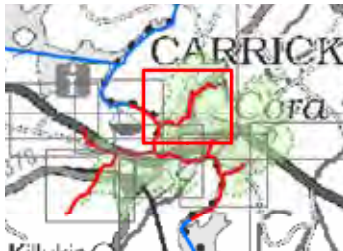
Landscape and waterways



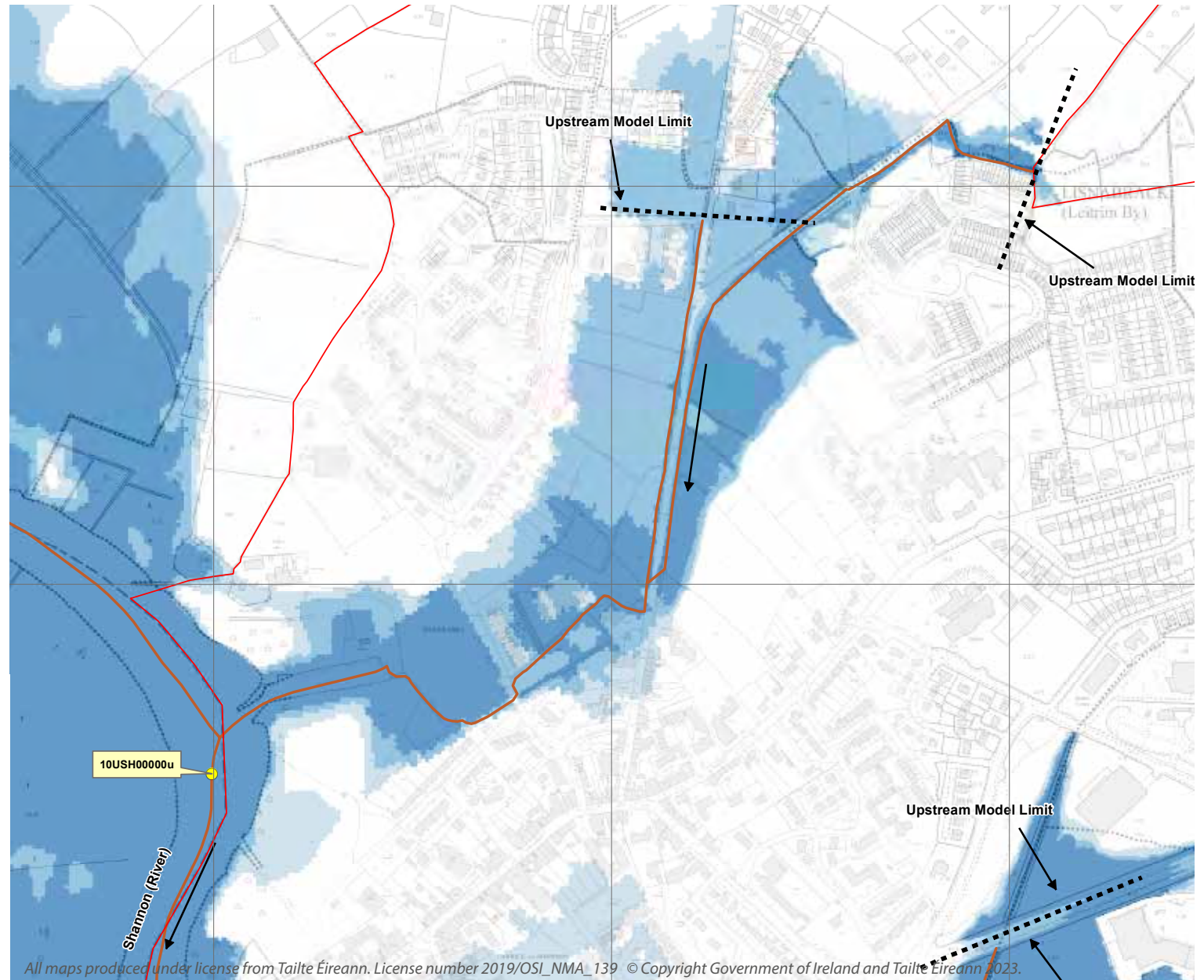
Flooding and flood risk

Flooding is a major issue for the town. Much of the town centre is impacted by this flood risk. In particular, the low lying backlands to the rear of high street plots are shown to be at risk. The area to the north of the town, on the Leitrim Road corridor is also at significant risk of flooding. The plan on this page and the next page show how the central area of the town centre is at risk, most particularly the area around the Town Centre car park.

This pattern of flood risk is a key consideration when considering development proposals and the allocation of appropriate land uses in the review of the Development Plan and preparation of the Local Area Plan.

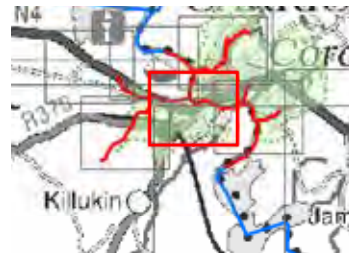
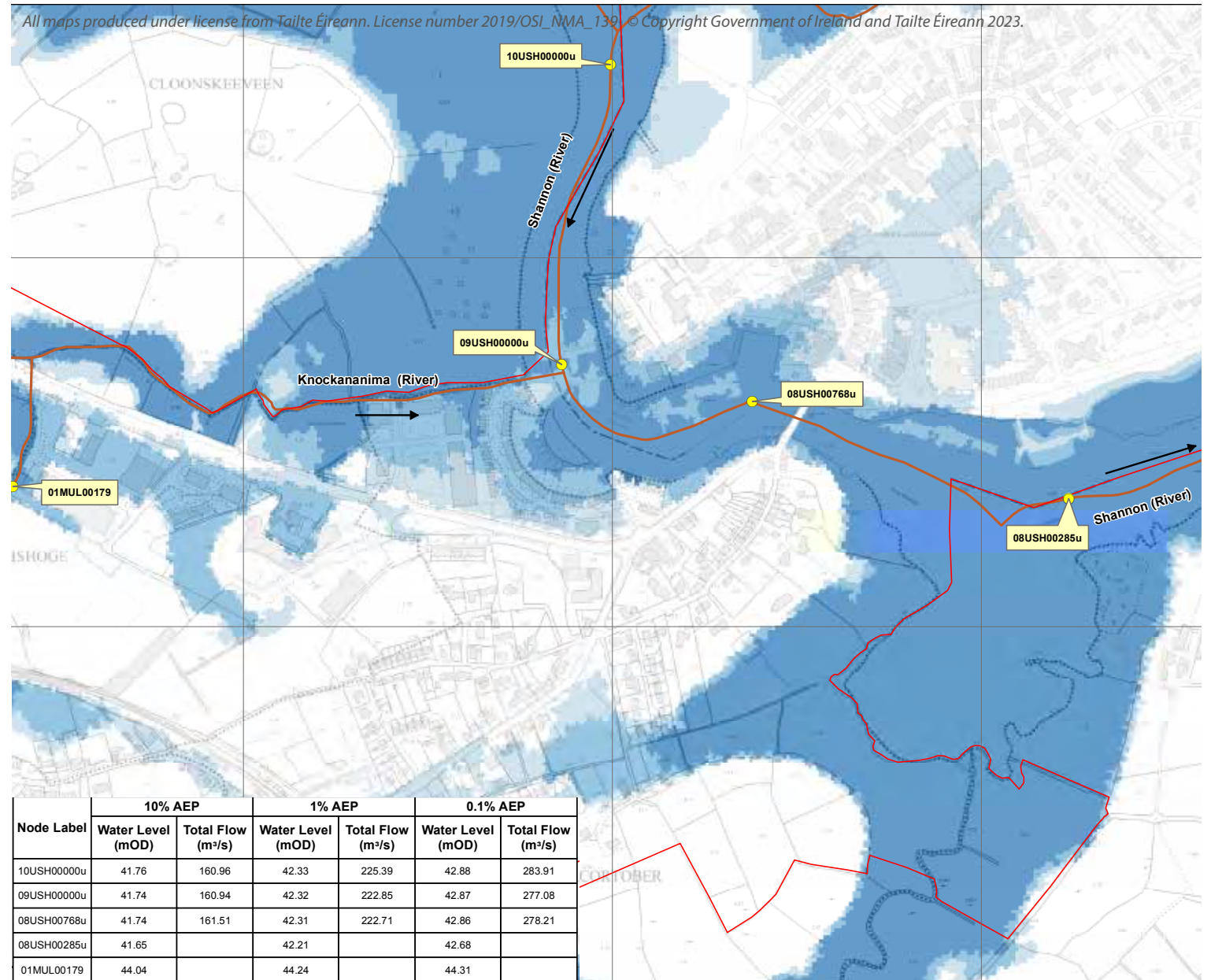


- Legend:**
- Nodes
 - Model Reach
 - AFA Boundary
 - Flood Defence: Wall
 - Flood Defence: Embankment
 - Defended Area
 - 10% AEP Fluvial Flood Extent
(1 in 10 chance in any given year)
 - 1% AEP Fluvial Flood Extent
(1 in 100 chance in any given year)
 - 0.1% AEP Fluvial Flood Extent
(1 in 1000 chance in any given year)



LANDSCAPE & ENVIRONMENT

Leitrim County Council, in agreement with the Office of Public Works (OPW) and Roscommon County Council, are progressing the Carrick-on-Shannon Flood Relief Scheme. This scheme also includes the Cortober area in Co. Roscommon. Ryan Hanley Consulting Engineers have been appointed as design consultant for the project. Works completed to date include topographical surveys, ground investigation surveys, CCTV surveys, hydrology assessment, hydraulic assessment and environmental surveys. Leitrim County Council are currently considering the viable options available to protect properties in Carrick-on-Shannon/ Cortober from flood waters. Leitrim County Council expect go to a public consultation in July 2023 to get feedback from the public on the possible options. Following this the preferred option will be decided upon and Leitrim County Council expect to apply to an Bord Pleanála for planning approval for the project in 2024.



LAP Land zoning

Working jointly with County Roscommon, Leitrim County Council is currently working on a replacement Local Area Plan for Carrick which will also cover the Cortober area across the River Shannon.

The adjacent land use zoning plan is from the Carrick-on-Shannon Local Area Plan 2010-2019 which will soon be replaced. In particular it should be noted that the zones shown do not take account of the more recent flood risk assessment outlined on the preceding page.

Notwithstanding that, it is relevant to the plan that the majority of the historic town centre area is covered by a mixed use zoning, with select pockets of primary residential located on the town centre's outer edges.



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Tourism

Originally the site of an early ford across the River Shannon, the relationship between town and river has always been an important one for Carrick-on-Shannon. For much of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Carrick-on-Shannon was a major depot for river trade. However, with trading patterns modernised, the river is now the town's principal environmental and leisure asset and supports a thriving boat cruise industry. Hundreds of cruise boats are moored along the town's prominent river frontage, either side of the 1864 five-arch limestone Shannon bridge.

Carrick-on-Shannon is a hugely popular visitor destination with a vibrant tourism offer. The town recently secured Purple Flag status for the eighth consecutive year. This accolade is awarded to town centres that meet or surpass the standards of excellence in managing the evening and night-time economy. Stag and hen business forms an important element of this, bringing strong economic benefit to the town and supporting other tourism initiatives.

The town's programme of markets, the annual June Carrick Carnival, the July Regatta, as well as the great variety of shops, cafes, restaurants and bars across the centre support this most important economic sector for the town.



Local creative industry & produce

Leitrim is regarded as culturally vibrant, rich in heritage and relative to its modest size, a hotspot for the creative arts and industries. The Leitrim Cultural Strategy outlines a range of principles and values through which Creative Communities - a partnership which brings together national and local government agencies and departments - will:

1. Broaden access to culture and creative activities.
2. Use culture and creativity as a catalyst for well-being.
3. Better harness the contribution culture and creativity can make in place-making and renewal.

The Market Yard in the heart of the town centre supports a vibrant covered weekly farmer's market. Local growers and producers come together to deliver the highest quality locally sourced produce to the people of Carrick-on-Shannon.



Regional and local connectivity

Air

Carrick-on-Shannon's closest airport is Ireland West Airport which is 60km west of the town in County Mayo and is accessible from Carrick-on-Shannon via the N4/R295/R294/N17 route or N4/R361/N5/N17 route. Knock Airport is approx. 60km by road through the R370 and N5 and takes approx 1 hour. Shannon Airport is approx. 180km by road and takes 2 - 2.5 hours. Dublin Airport is approx. 160km by road through M4/N4 and a 2 hour journey via Sligo-Dublin train service. Belfast International Airport is approx. 190km by road and takes 2.5 - 3.5 hours.

Rail

Carrick-on-Shannon train station is located in Cortober village at the edge of county Roscommon, approx. 1km from the town centre. The Sligo-Dublin rail services operate along the corridor and all services stop at the station. There are eight services per day stopping in both directions on weekdays, reducing down to seven on Saturdays and six on Sundays.

The railway track becomes single line at Carrick-On-Shannon station and hence shared by westbound and eastbound services, thereby adding travel delay and limiting the number of services per day.

	Westbound	Eastbound
Weekday services	8	8
Saturday	7	7
Sunday	6	6
Journey time to final stop	1 hour	2 hours 25 minutes
First train (Arrival)	9:20 am	6:24 am
Last train (Departure)	9:44 pm	7:55 pm

Passenger Rail services from Carrick-on-Shannon station

Regional and local connectivity

The National Transport Authority’s (NTA) National Rail Census Report 2022 (Heavy Rail) indicated that approx. 139 people boarded and 263 people alighted at Carrick-on-Shannon train station on a typical weekday as shown in this table. Approx. 75% of the passengers that boarded a train at this station were found to be travelling eastbound towards Dublin and 25% travelling westbound to Sligo. Similarly, 76% of the passengers that alighted from train at this station were found to be coming from Dublin and 24% coming from Sligo.

The modal share of train services in Carrick-on-Shannon is very low for work and education purposes, implying that it is not a very popular mode for commuting. The low frequency timetable comprising of only eight services per day suggests that the station use for commuting purposes is relatively limited, especially in the westbound direction towards Sligo. The census 2016 PoWSCAR results show that less than 1% of residents commuted by train for education trips. Most trips were therefore non-commuter and for recreational purposes such as shopping, leisure, sightseeing and attending medical appointments.

	Westbound (to Sligo)	Eastbound (to Dublin)	Total
Passengers Boarded	35	104	139
Passengers Alighted	199	64	263

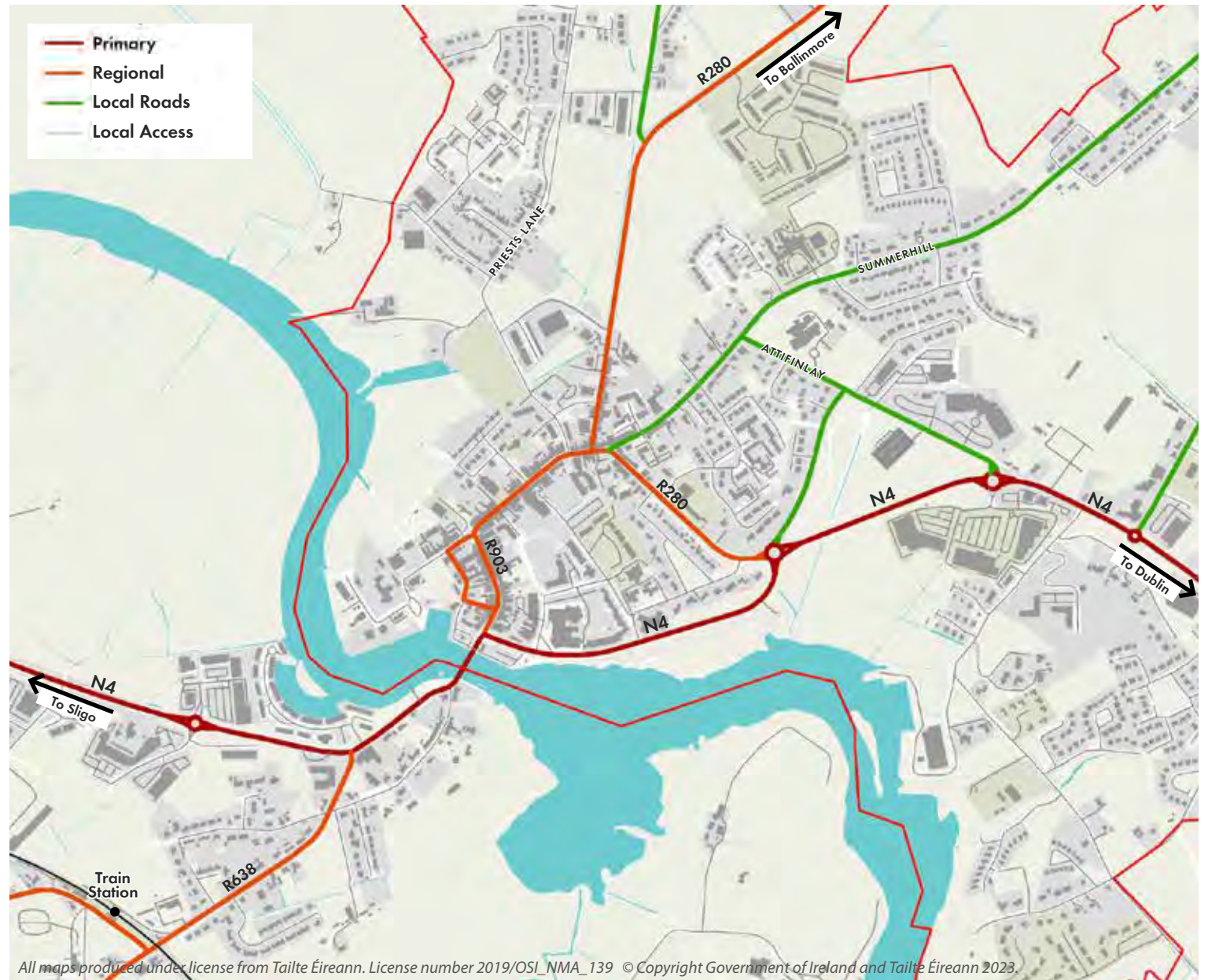
Carrick-on-Shannon train station Boarding and Alighting 2022

Road connectivity

Carrick-on-Shannon is well placed in the northwest of Ireland and well connected by national and regional roads such as the N4, R280, R368 and R370, which are primary routes converging on the town. The N4 connects Carrick-on-Shannon to Dublin through M4 in the east and directly to Sligo in the northwest. The R280 connects the town to Bundoran and Donegal in northwest, R370 connects it to west of Ireland through N5, and R368 connects it to Roscommon through N61 in south.

The N4 is a primary traffic carrier and forms the southern boundary of Carrick-on-Shannon, further leading on to the village of Cortober in southwest through the only bridge on the River Shannon. It is the main national road route connecting Dublin in the east to Sligo in the northwest and therefore carries the highest traffic volumes within the study area. Regional roads within the study area include the R370 and R368, which provide a connection to the N61 and R280 which connect Carrick-on-Shannon and Leitrim Village. It also forms a key route from the N4 towards Main Street, Leitrim Road and Priests Lane. There are several important local roads in the area, including Summerhill, Castlecara Road and Attifinlay which connects Summerhill with the N4.

The R903 forms the core road network loop in the town centre and is predominantly a one-way system including Summerhill road which is one-way eastbound, Leitrim Road which is one-way southbound, and Priests Lane which is one-way northbound.



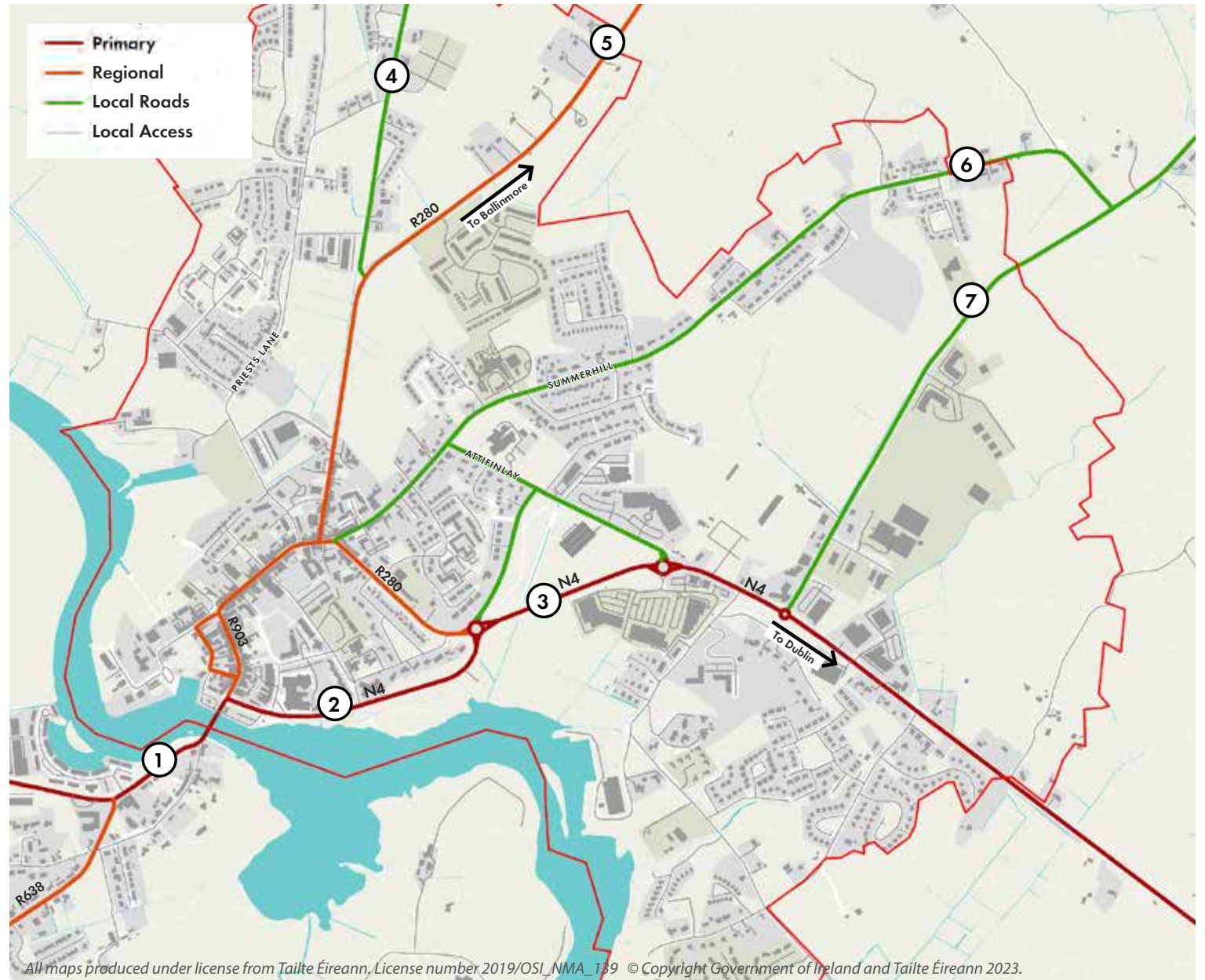
Traffic

The traffic volume on N4 is particularly high due to combined effect of local traffic catchment and through traffic running from east of Ireland to west of Ireland and vice versa. The highest average AM peak traffic volume (five weekdays average) was observed at Shannon bridge and highest average PM peak traffic volume (five weekdays average) was observed at N4 (near The Boardwalk). The traffic on regional and local roads such as R280, L3408, and Shannon Grove is observed to be relatively much lower with highest AM/PM peak traffic volume on R280 just north of Clenahoo House. The Figure below presents AM and PM peak traffic volumes (vehicles) and corresponding peak hours at seven locations.

The highest of the seven day average speed, is observed to be on R280 (72.4 kph) which has a speed limit of 60 kph. On the other hand, lowest of the seven day average speed is observed to be on N4 (Sligo Road, 37.3 kph) which has a speed limit of 50 kph.

SITE	7 day average speed (kph)	7-Day 85th percentile Speed (kph)	Weekday average Total Traffic (vehicles)	7-Day Average Traffic (vehicles)	Weekly Traffic Total (vehicles)
1	37.3	46.0	17,476	17,060	119,422
2	38.2	47.6	17,380	16,857	117,996
3	53.7	62.8	15,927	15,522	108,654
4	57.7	70.1	941	882	6,176
5	72.4	83.5	5,681	5,548	38,836
6	41.6	50.4	538	498	3,489
7	58.5	68.4	2,974	2,817	19,718

Speed profile and traffic volumes at seven survey locations (7th November 2022)



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Traffic

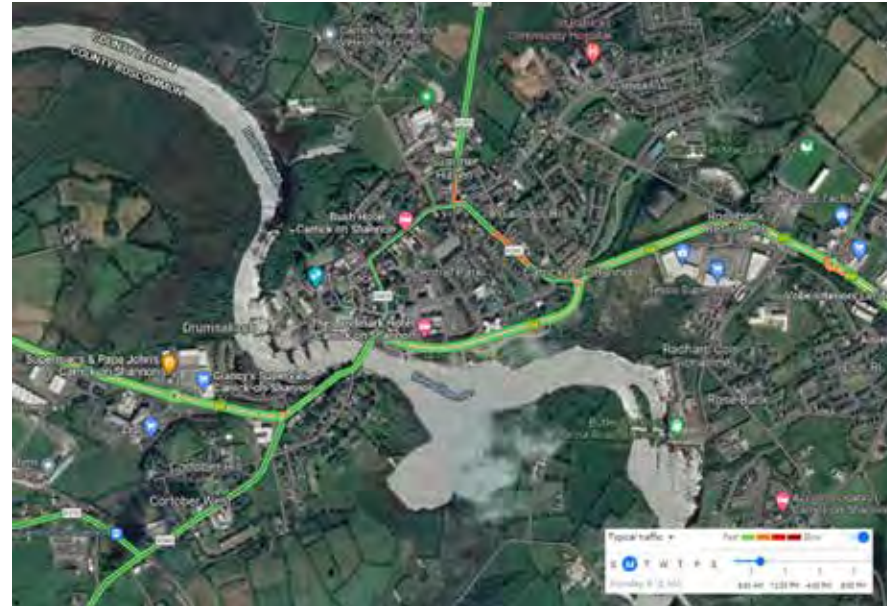
The traffic composition at seven survey locations around Carrick-on-Shannon suggest very strong dominance by Car followed by Light Goods Vehicles (LGV). The bus services and pedal cycling have very low modal share and uptake due to lack of public transport services and cycling facilities.

SITE	Pedal Cycle	Motor Cycle	Car	Light Goods Vehicle	Other Goods Vehicle 1	Other Goods Vehicle 2	Public Service Vehicle
1	0.1%	0.1%	87.6%	8.8%	2.1%	1.2%	0.2%
2	0.2%	0.1%	87.7%	8.6%	2.0%	1.4%	0.1%
3	0.1%	0.1%	85.4%	10.4%	2.4%	1.5%	0.2%
4	0.4%	0.2%	81.3%	14.6%	3.1%	0.3%	0.0%
5	0.1%	0.1%	82.9%	12.6%	3.2%	1.0%	0.1%
6	0.4%	0.0%	88.2%	8.1%	2.8%	0.4%	0.1%
7	0.0%	0.1%	88.5%	8.0%	2.3%	1.0%	0.1%

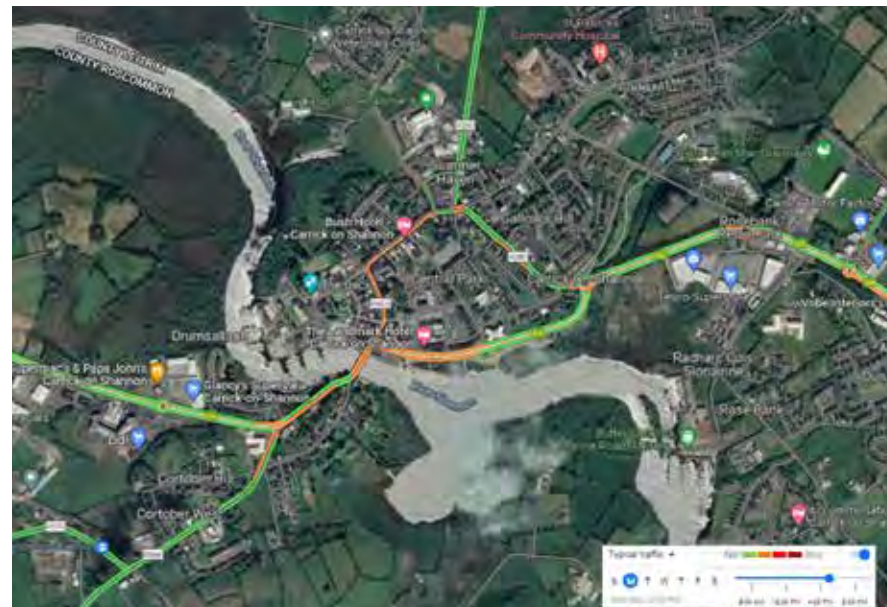
Traffic composition at seven survey locations (7th November 2022)

Congestion levels and delays are particularly high near the core town centre areas including the Shannon bridge, and particularly around the roundabout between N4 and R903. On a typical weekday PM peak, core town centre and areas around Shannon bridge are relatively slower due to higher concentration of traffic.

A corridor has been identified for a bypass to help address these congestion issues.



Typical Weekday AM peak traffic in Carrick-on-Shannon



Typical Weekday PM peak traffic in Carrick-on-Shannon

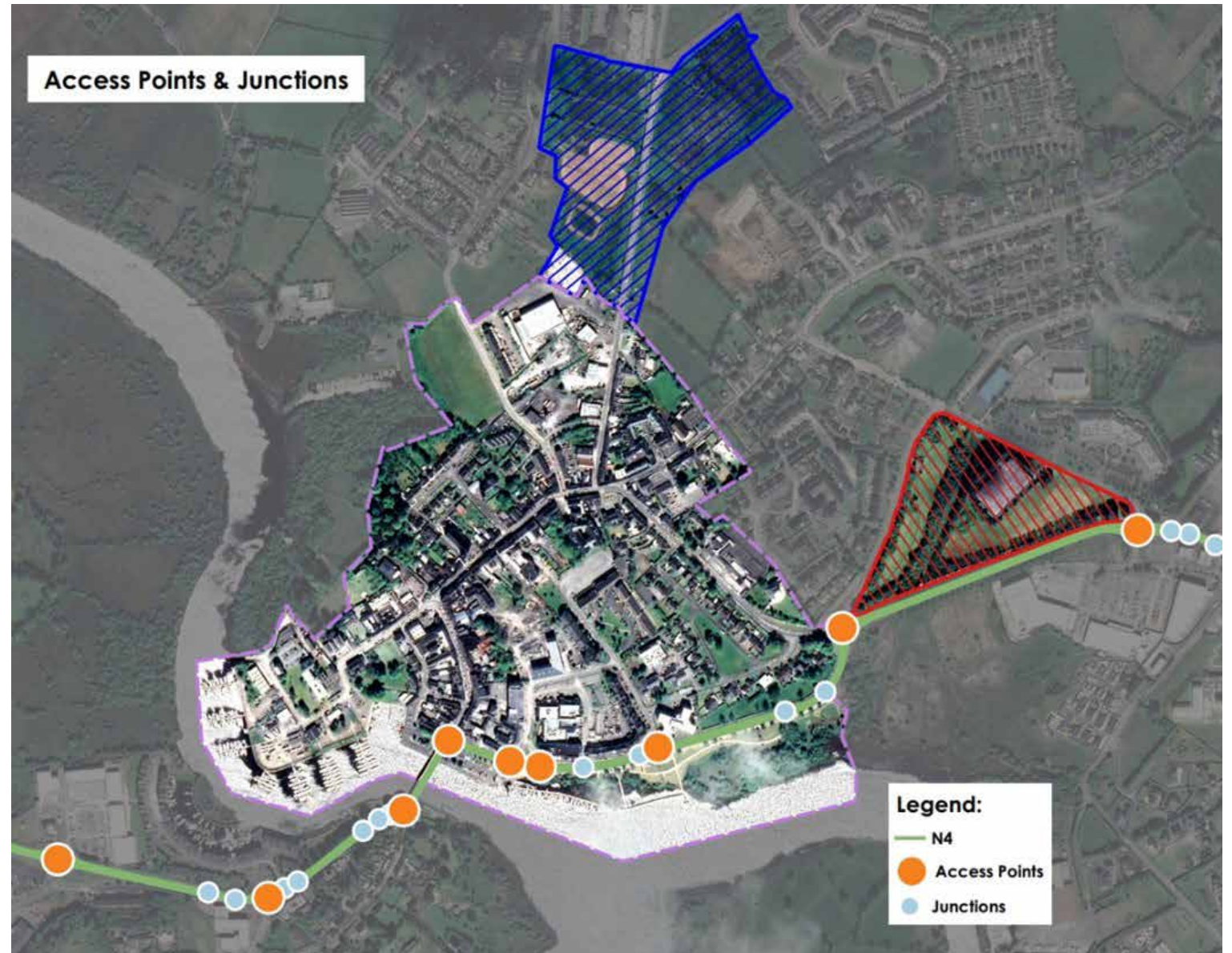


Access points and junctions

The N4 passes through the core urban part of Carrick-on-Shannon and the number of accesses and junctions increase significantly closer to the town centre. Major junctions located along the N4 within the study area include:

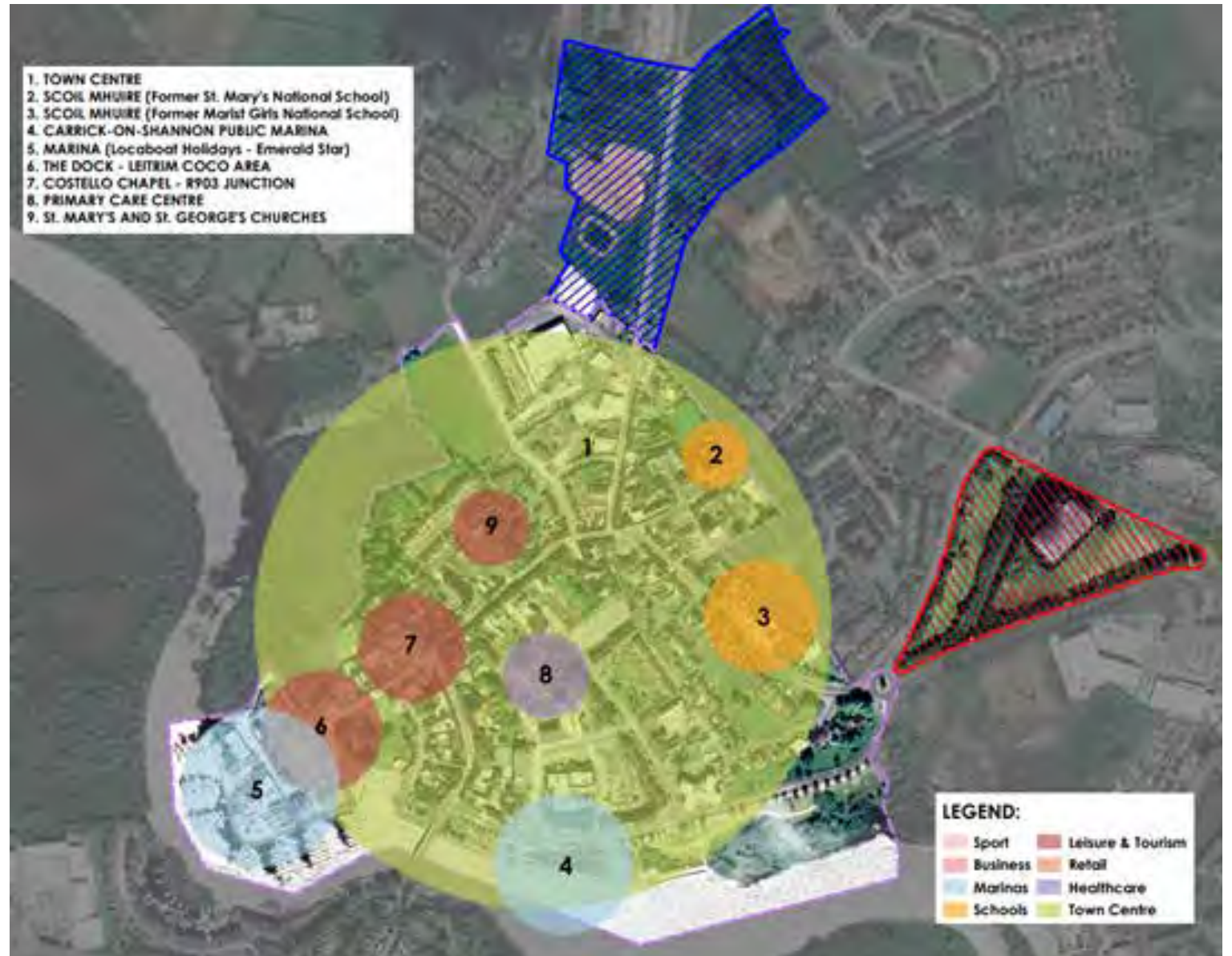
- N4/ Castlecara Rd (Attirory roundabout)
- N4/ Attifinlay/Retail Park (Attifinlay roundabout)
- N4/R280 (Shannon roundabout);
- N4/Shannon Court (priority)
- N4/Cryans Hotel access road (priority)
- N4/Bridge Street (roundabout);
- N4/R368 Cortober (roundabout); and
- N4/Carrick Retail and Business Park (Drishoge roundabout, Cortober).

The N4 sections within the study area have wide traffic lanes, central medians, right turn lanes and hard shoulders. The function of N4 changes within the study area from a strategic national primary route to a more local traffic catchment & distributor road.



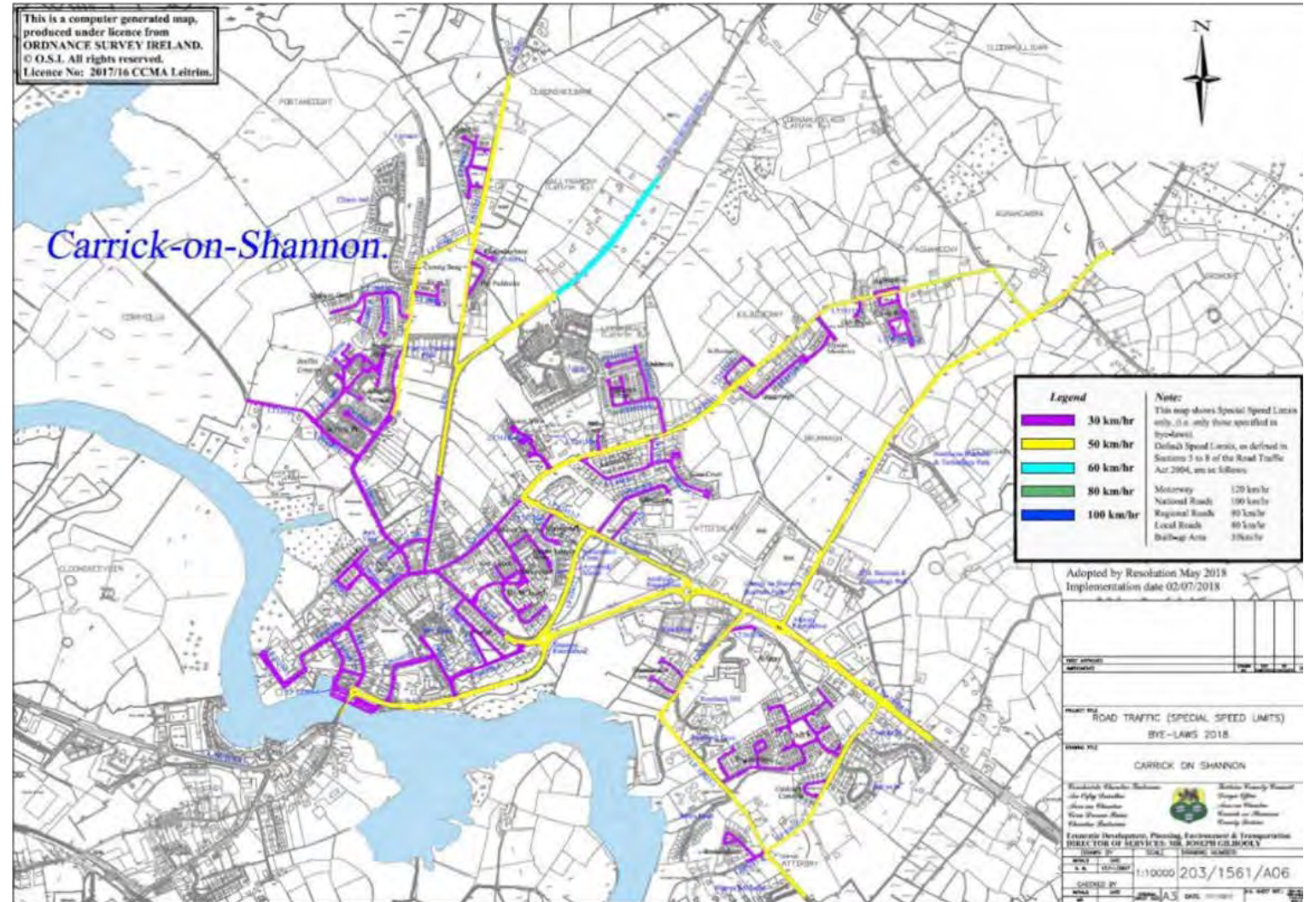
Major trip attractors

Major trip attractors in the Carrick-on-Shannon town centre are national schools, the marina & dock areas, the primary care centre, and St. Mary's & St. George's churches. The marina and dock areas constitute the largest trip attractors by area in the southwest, whereas the two national schools in the northeast are the second biggest trip attractors.



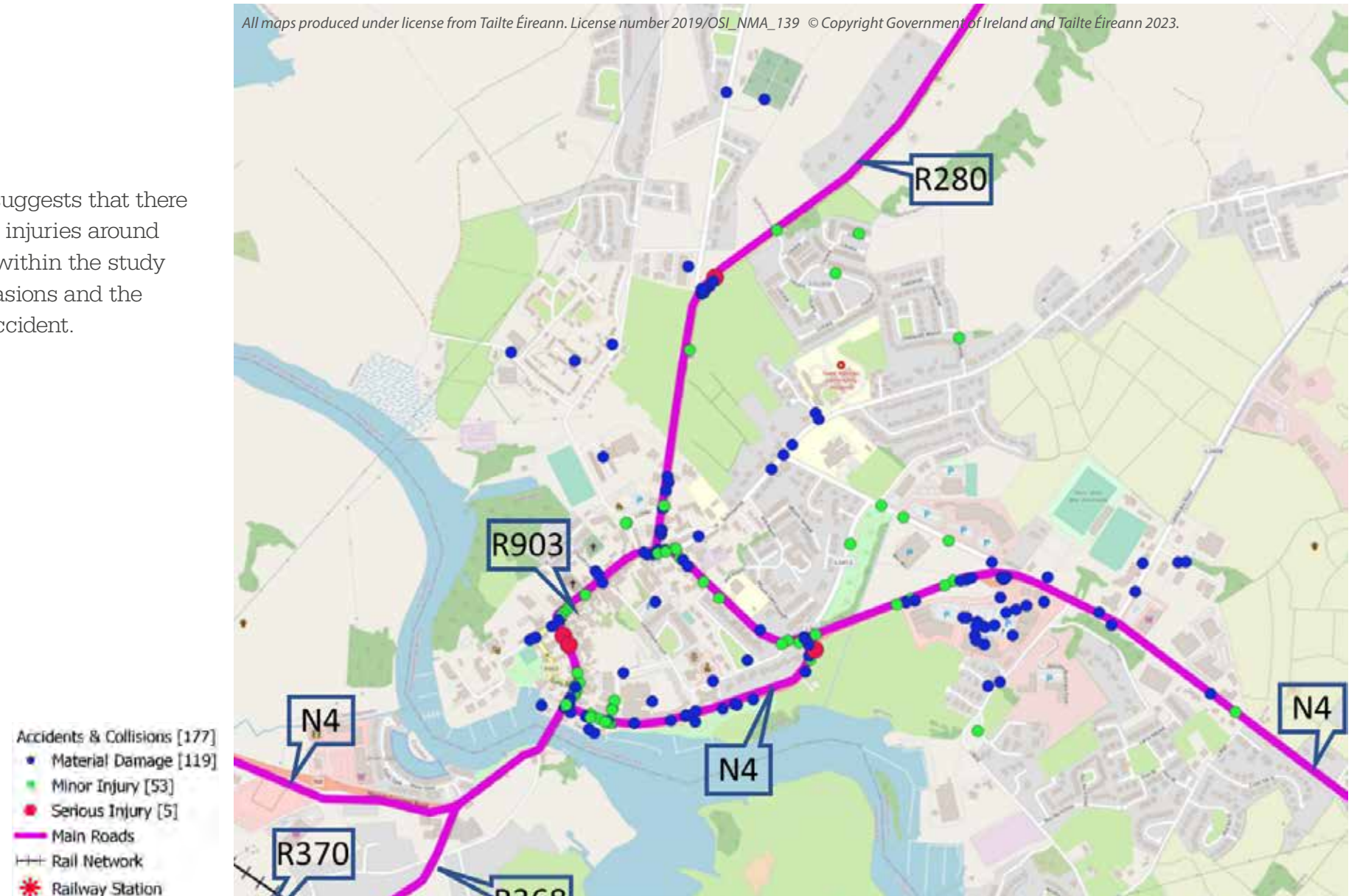
Speed limits

The speed limit on the N4 is 50kph and typically 30kph within the built-up areas. Other roads which have 50kph speed limit include Castlecara Road, Attifinlay and Summerhill (north of junction with Attifinlay). A section on R280 near Clenahoo House however, has a speed limit of 60 kph.



Accidents

The accident data between 2010 and 2019 suggests that there has been at least five incidents with serious injuries around Carrick-On-Shannon and as many as three within the study area. Pedestrians were involved on four occasions and the other incidents were with a single vehicle accident.



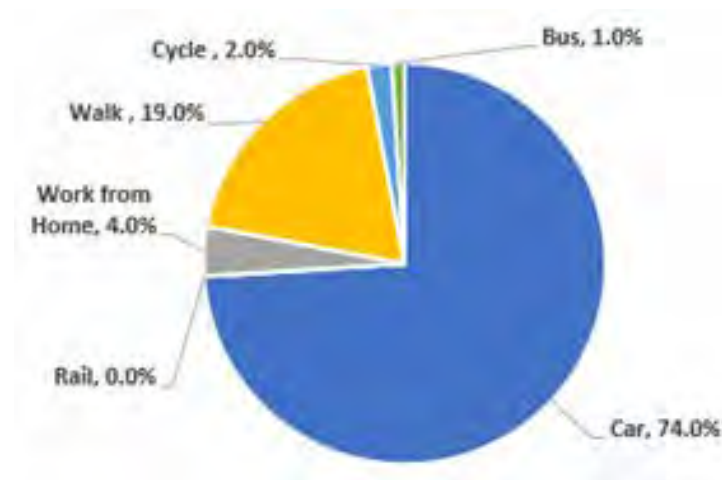
Travel patterns

The travel patterns within the study area have been sourced from census 2016 and PoWSCAR data. The modal split for work trips performed by inhabitants within the study area suggest strong dependence on car with almost three-quarters of all trips made using the car as the main mode (drivers and passengers). It's notable that this is higher than the national average of 66%. Walking is the next major mode used to travel to work, suggesting close proximity and short trip lengths. Other modes such as cycling, bus and rail have very low usage.

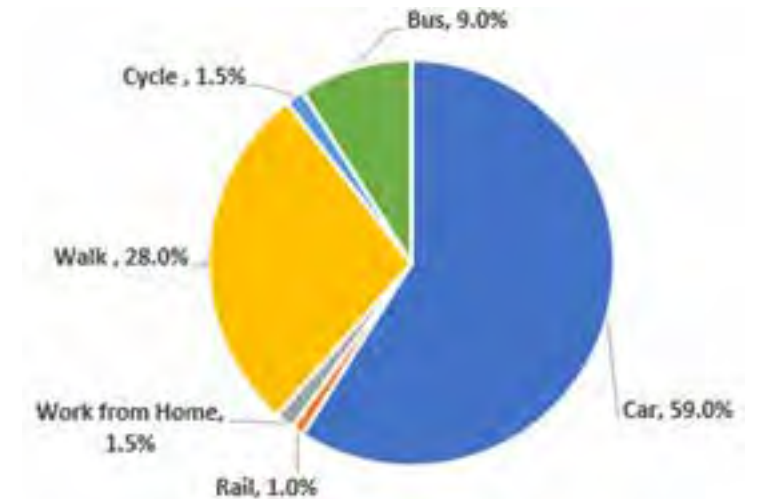
The modal split for education trips (school or college) made by residents also highlight the dependence on car with 59.0% of total trips made using the car as the main mode (drivers and passengers). Walking at 28.0% and Bus at 9.0% take a significant share of modes used to travel to school. All other modes, including cycling and rail have relatively low usage.

More than 75% of residents own a car implying that most of the residents depend on private vehicles for most of their main trips. Given the favourable cycling distances within the town and the poor modal share of cycling, the opportunity to implement a more integrated cycle network is of crucial

importance. Carrick-on-Shannon has relatively lower car ownership with 19% having no access to a car. This is especially notable in the context of poor public transport services and the scarce provision of cycling infrastructure.



Modal split for work trips in Carrick-on-Shannon



Modal split for education trips in Carrick-on-Shannon



Waterways

Carrick-on-Shannon forms part of the Shannon Navigation, which being Ireland's longest river offers numerous riverbanks and lakes that were once a major commercial waterway trade route. The Shannon Navigation continues to serve busy harbours, bays, lively villages and historical sites.

The Blueway

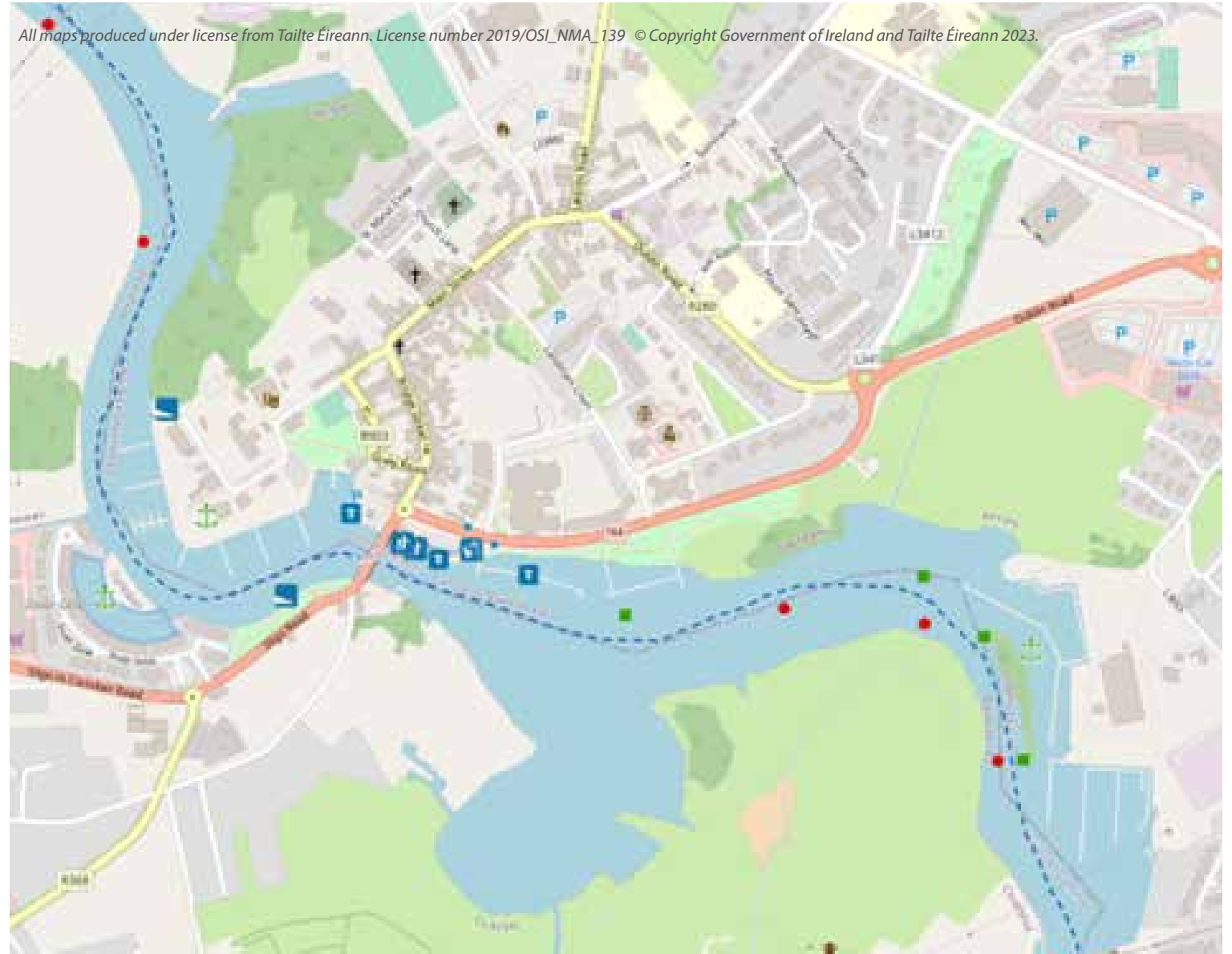
There are two main sections around Carrick-on-Shannon:

Section-1: Drumshanbo to Battlebridge

The first section of the Shannon Blueway is from Drumshanbo to Leitrim Village and follows the river course. It includes 16.5km of water trails and a series of looped walk and cycle trails that run adjacent to the river. It has Ireland's first floating 600m long boardwalk and 6.5km linear walking and cycling trail from Acres Lake to Battlebridge Lock. This section of the Shannon Blueway can be accessed from Drumshanbo, Drumhauver Bridge, Drumleague Lock, and Battlebridge.

Section-2: Battlebridge to Carrick-on-Shannon

This section of the Shannon Blueway is all on the river and offers 11km of paddling on water trails. Leitrim County Council is at present developing a project to extend the Blueway from Battlebridge to Carrick-on-Shannon. This will provide a walking and cycling trail along the river edge.



Shannon Blueway sections on Shannon river near Carrick-on-Shannon

Local Public Transport

The local public transport services in Carrick-on-Shannon comprise of Bus Eireann as well as Local Link bus services that cover the core town centre and wider suburban areas. Bus Eireann also operates school transport services, serving the local primary and secondary schools within the study area.

Dublin and Sligo are connected to Carrick-on-Shannon through Route 23 that is an interurban service operated by Bus Eireann stopping at the bus stop along the N4 near the Landmark Hotel. Other routes operated by Bus Eireann are Route 468 (Carrick-on-Shannon to Strokestown) and Route 469 (Sligo-Carrick-on-Shannon / Longford).

‘Local Link’ routes have recently commenced services thereby providing regular local bus services between Carrick-on-Shannon and Ballinamore as well as Drumshanbo, stopping at other villages along the route. Route 564 connects Ballinamore to Carrick-on-Shannon and Route 567 connects Drumshanbo to Carrick-on-Shannon.

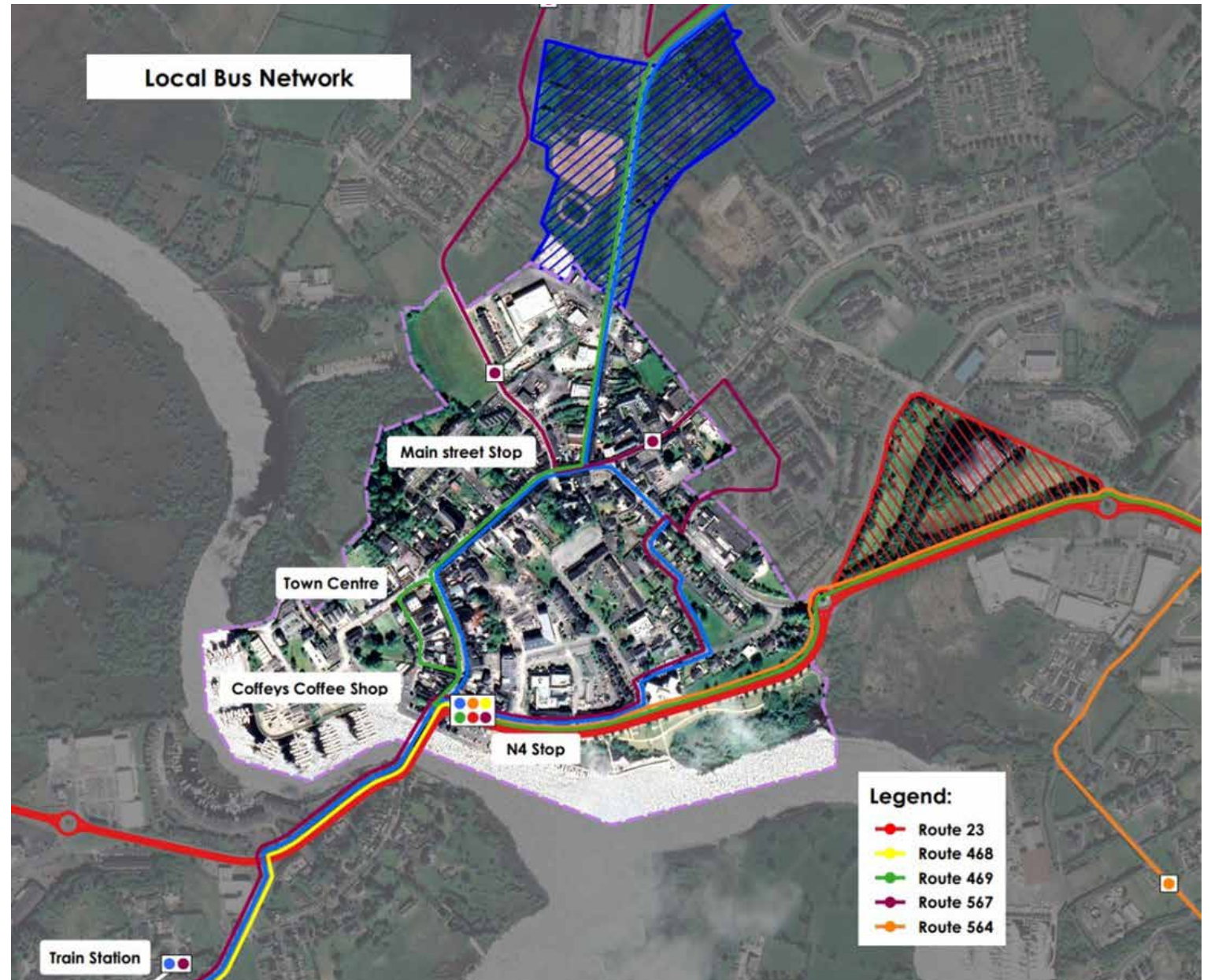
Operator	Route No.	From	To	Frequency
Bus Eireann	Route 23	Sligo	Dublin	5 buses per day in each direction
Bus Eireann	Route 468	Carrick-on-Shannon	Strokestown	2 buses per day (Mon, Wed & Sat)
Bus Eireann	Route 469	Sligo	Longford	1 bus per day (Sat only)
Local link	Route 564	Carrick-on-Shannon	Ballinamore	5 per day in each direction
Local link	Route 567	Carrick-on-Shannon	Drumshanbo	5 per day in each direction - additional services on Fri and Sat evenings

Bus services in Carrick-on-Shannon

Local Public Transport

The main bus stop is on the N4 close to the Landmark Hotel and an upgrade to the westbound stop is proposed as part of the 'Destination Towns' initiative. Local link services however, stop at several locations within the study area. Route 567 for example, stop at Lis Cara, St. Patrick's Parks, Summerhill, and the Train Station while Route 564 stop at Ros na Hinse and Ard na Si residential estates.

The overall demand and patronage for bus services is very low in general and for commuter services in particular, due to low frequency timetable and higher journey times as compared to private modes. It is also noteworthy that only one main bus stop on the N4 serves the entire town for inter-region and inter-urban services.

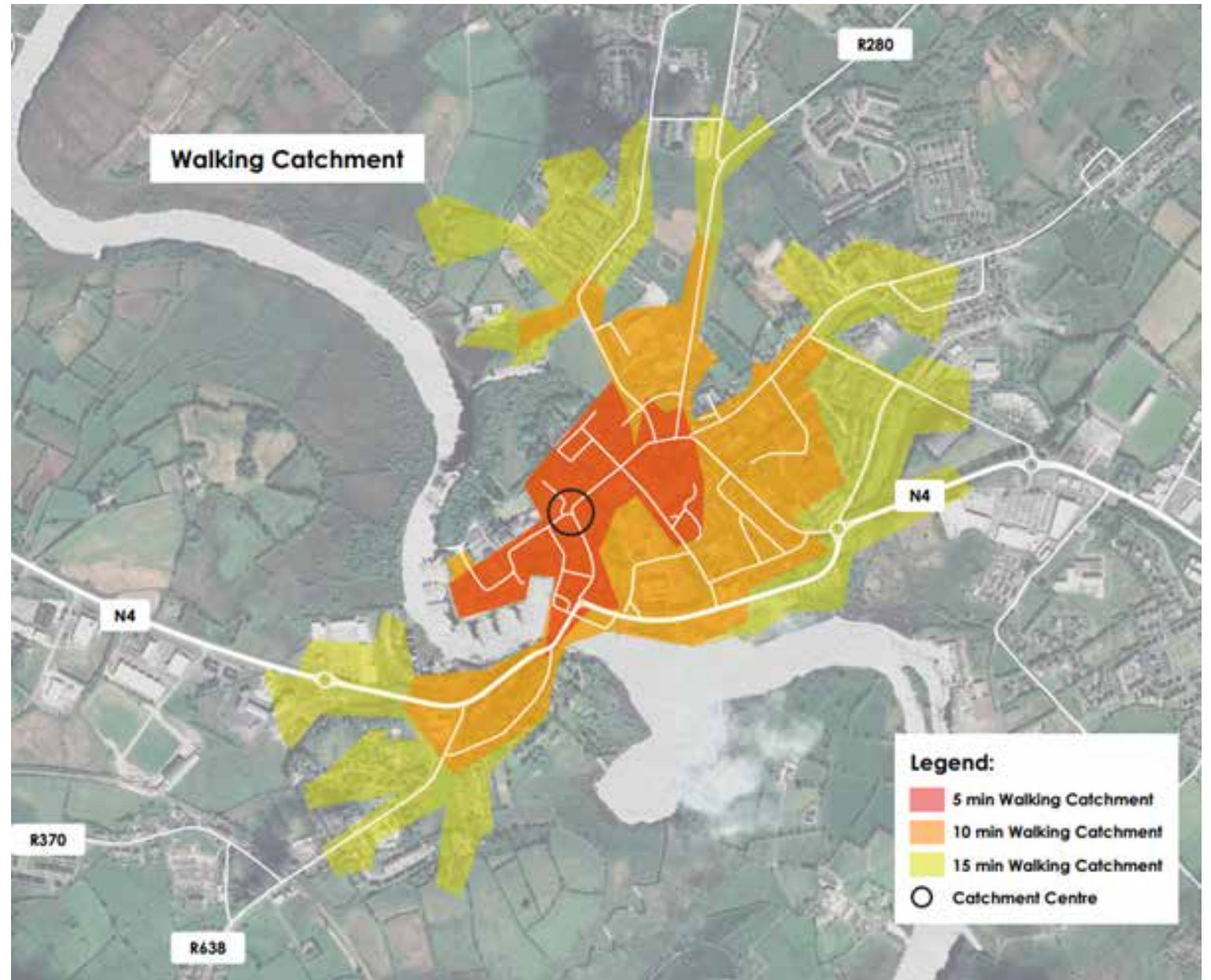




Walking

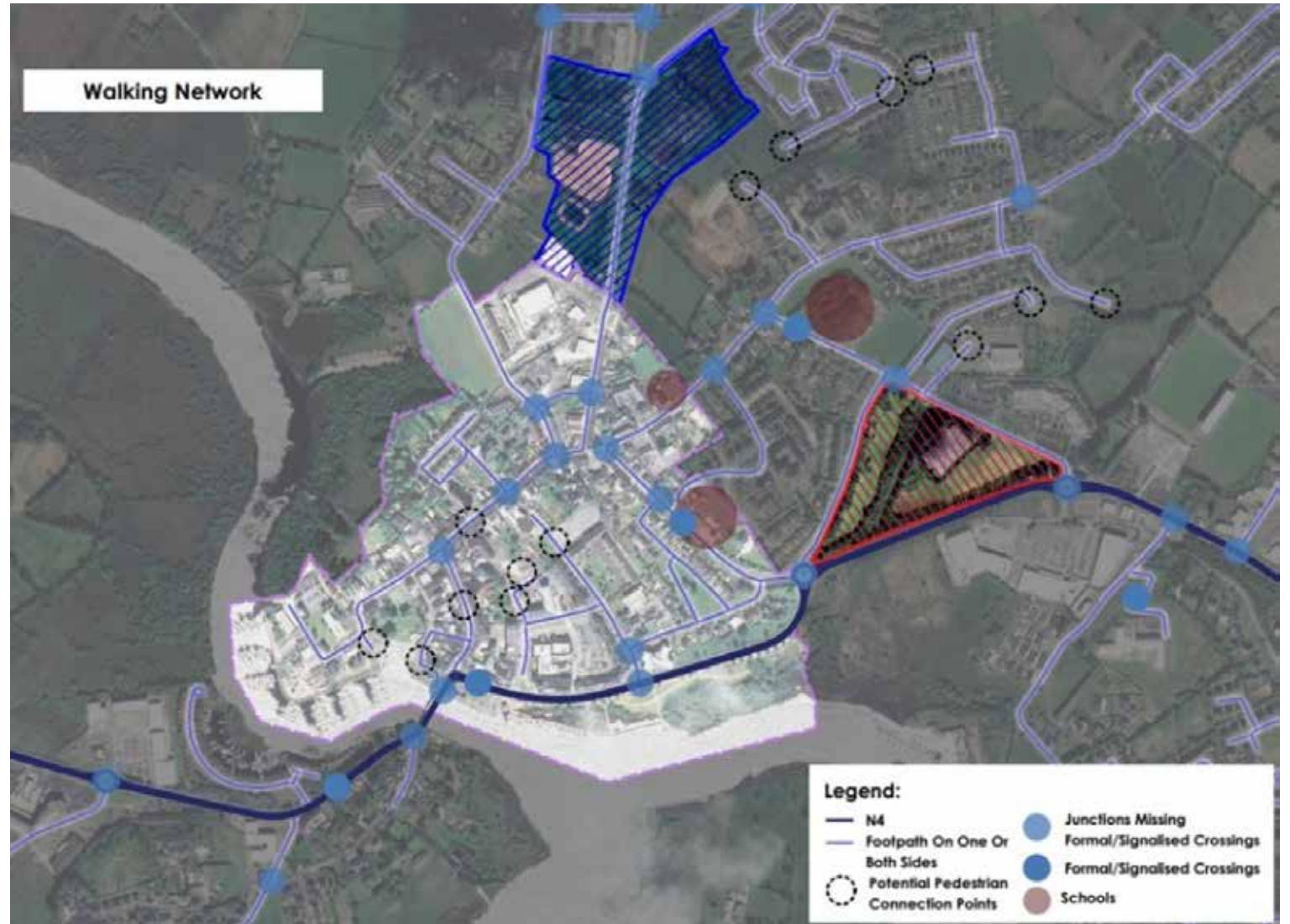
The walking infrastructure within the study area includes recent improvements in the town centre as part of the Main Street public realm. The improvements have resulted in widened footpaths and created an attractive walking environment. The footpaths are provided on both sides of the road along most of the main roads and routes. Some important road sections where footpaths are missing in Carrick-on-Shannon are along Summerhill – including poor quality and missing footpath on southern side of road.

The lack of facilities at junctions is observed to be a fundamental issue within the walking network. Wider turning radii at junctions increase crossing distances at many locations while the lack of formal crossing facilities can make it difficult to cross the road at major junctions. The N4 in particular is a barrier to pedestrian movements, given the width of the road and lack of formal crossings. In many cases, pedestrians wait for ‘gaps’ in traffic to cross which can make it difficult for more vulnerable road users to reach destinations and amenities, especially along the riverside.



Walking

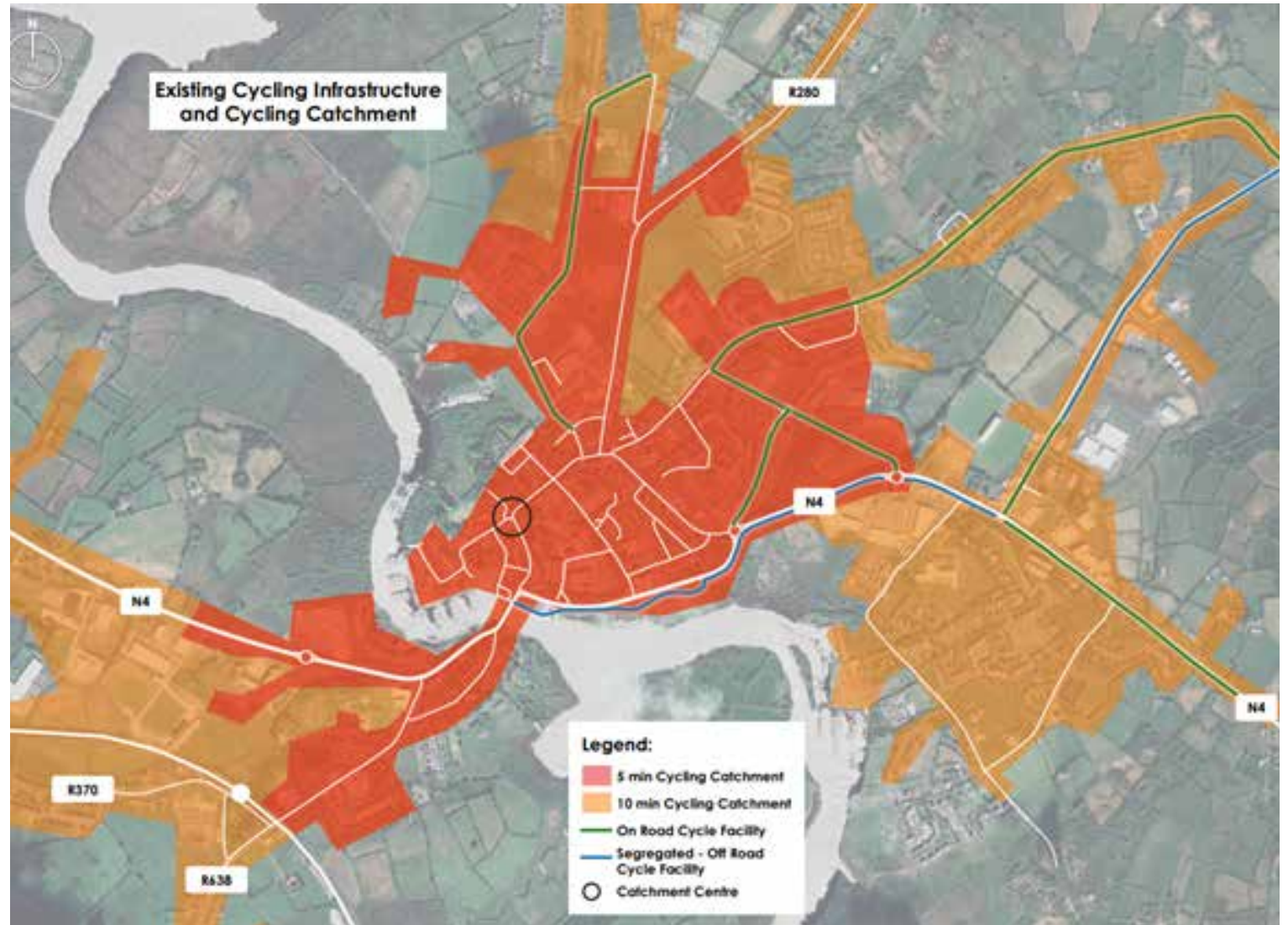
A new pedestrian and cycle bridge was constructed in 2009 along the River Shannon Bridge but the route to this pedestrian bridge is not clearly signed. Access to this bridge requires routing through the Quay Road car park which is undesirable, or alternatively, by using the pedestrian crossing at the roundabout. The study area is compact in nature, with a good walking catchment and the ability to reach many key destinations within 15 minutes from the town centre. There is however, a lack of an orbital connection between Priests Lane, Leitrim Road and Summerhill.



Cycling

The quality of the cycling network is mixed overall but infrastructure along the N4 (north of the River Shannon) and Castlecara Road is good quality. Carrick-on-Shannon town is relatively compact in nature and therefore cycling provides a realistic alternative to travel by car. Some cycling facilities are of inadequate quality and don't offer much safety or protection. The cycle crossings at junctions are typically either absent or are informal and poor provision for cyclists. Good quality cycle parking facilities has been provided as part of public realm improvements. However, facilities are limited elsewhere in the study area. Cycle parking is observed to be restricted to small areas throughout the town.

The proposed blueway sections that will connect Carrick-on-Shannon with Leitrim Village and Battlebridge are expected to improve active travel provisions and offer a high-quality amenity. The blueway connection with the active travel network within the town, would provide a safe and attractive alternative to travel by car.



Parking

There is a mix of on-street and off-street parking facilities in Carrick-on-Shannon. However, parking in the town centre is mainly on-street and organised along the N4 and Main Street where a new public realm improvement scheme has been implemented.

The off-street public parking locations in Carrick-on-Shannon are restricted to a limited number of Council-owned public car parks:

- Marina car park
- Quay Road West car park, on the west side of the Shannon Bridge
- Quay Road East car park, on the east side of the bridge; and
- Town Centre car park

Parking close to the River Shannon acts as a visual and physical barrier limiting the accessibility to the attractive waterfront and riverside.



Marina car park



Quay Road West car park



Quay Road East car park



Town Centre car park

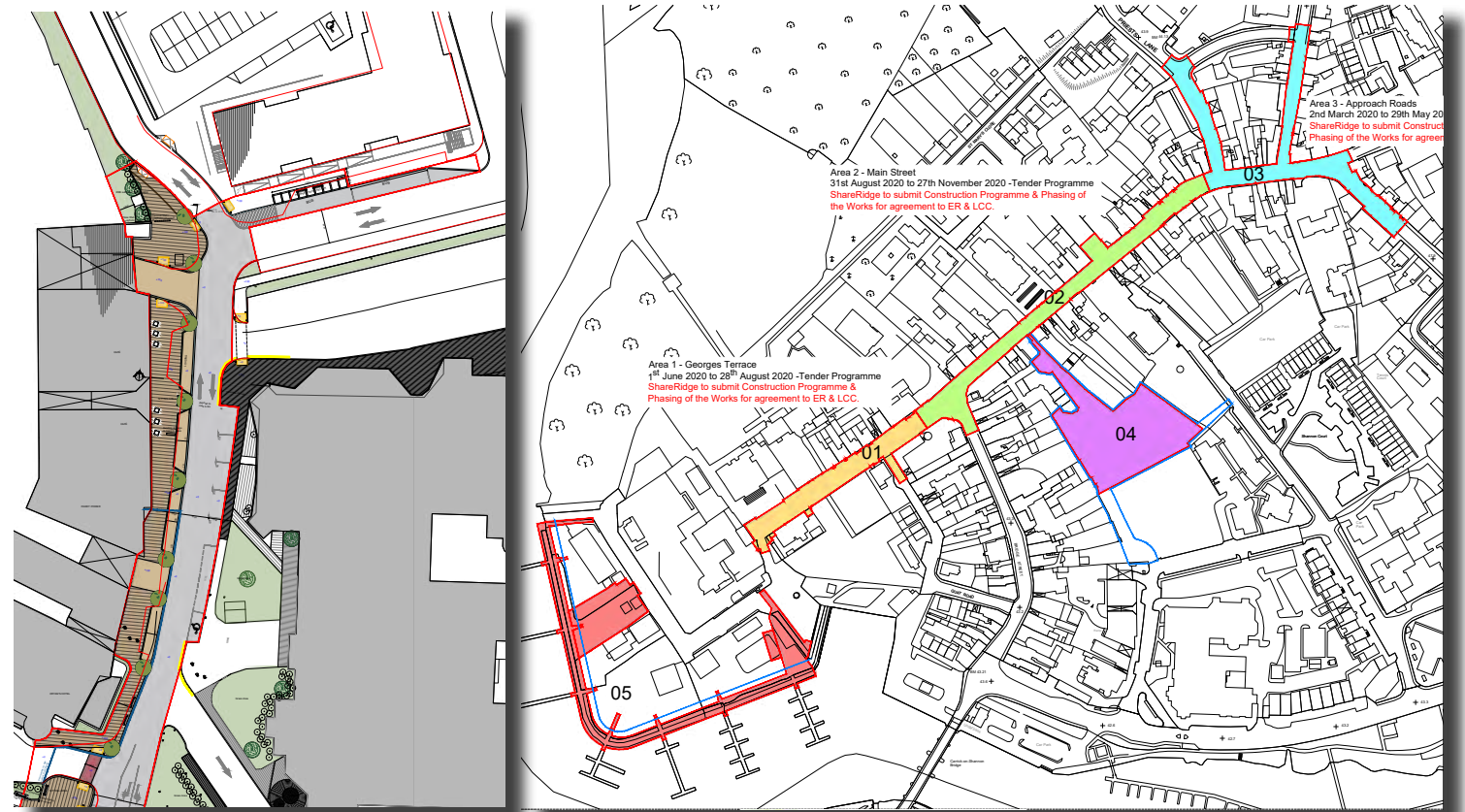
Recent and planned investment

The town has recently benefited from a comprehensive programme of public realm improvements along the Main Street axis on the approach to the town from the east and extending along St George's Terrace.

These improvements resulted in the displacement of some on-street parking capacity. However, the new Town Centre car park behind Main Street and Bridge Street has played a critical role in mitigating this loss and consolidating public town centre parking in one central and highly accessible location.

Further investment is planned as part of the Destination Towns initiative to deliver improvements to bus and coach stopping facilities and arrangements in the area around the Landmark Hotel.

These investments provide a very strong foundation for the plan in terms of investment in the environmental quality of the town centre.



DESTINATIONS TOWNS

PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

N4 Carrick-on-Shannon to Dromod Project

The N4 Carrick-on-Shannon to Dromod Project has been prioritised for delivery under the National Development Plan 2018-2027. The initial stage of this project, which deals with the bypass for Carrick-on-Shannon, is currently being progressed through pre-appraisal and early planning stages.

The N4 forms part of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) providing a strategic link between Dublin and Sligo, which was designated a regional centre in the 2018 National Development Plan and National Planning Framework.

Carrick-on-Shannon has become a bottleneck for longdistance and regional traffic. Carrick-on-Shannon remains the only regional strategic centre on the N4 between Dublin and Sligo which has not been bypassed to date.

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N4 Carrick-on-Shannon to Dromod Project will have a significant impact on the central area of Carrick-on-Shannon. It will provide a more appropriate through route, particularly for HGVs, avoiding the old masonry road bridge and reducing traffic levels in the town.



Issues and opportunities - a summary

Reflecting on baseline analysis, site visits and early engagement, key **issues** and **opportunities** for the plan include:

- **Strong backbone** – Main Street and Bridge Street remain the backbone of the town
- **Grain and lane** – the network of lanes reflect the town's grain and help define its character. They should be improved
- **Roads as spaces** – the recent public realm improvements has helped create these key routes as spaces as well as routes
- **Limited river address** – whilst river activity is vibrant, the town and river operate largely independently
- **Wonderful river front aspect** – the town's principal environmental asset, with more to give. Transform the area as a place for people
- **Carrick-on-Shannon's green chain** – improve the network of green spaces sweeping through the town: Summerhill Park; Waterside Park; Quay Road; Town Park (People's Park); linking up to Priests Lane open space
- **Parking strategy** – potential for gateway car park with a transit link created with the town – land train; e-bike hire; part of Green Travel Plan for major employers?
- **Backlands and infill** – the Town Centre car park is a major asset but its edges could be improved
- **Northern approach** – regeneration of Fire Station area to create better northern gateway



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Summary diagram which captures the principal issues and opportunities relevant to the Carrick-on-Shannon plan (A2 Architects)



Vintage car festival on the Quay Road West car park

(Photo by Keith Nolan)



COLLABORATION & COMMUNICATION



Introduction

Communication and collaboration are key elements of the development and progression of the Town Centre First Plan. An extensive engagement strategy and process has underpinned the development of key ideas in the plan.

The process has helped to draw out the needs and desires of the local community and stakeholders, helping the team to develop an in-depth understanding of the issues and challenges Carrick-on-Shannon faces and the potential solutions needed to resolve these.

This section sets out the findings from this engagement process and the key feedback which has shaped the plan during the process.

Town Team

Key to the success of the plan is the local community and stakeholders who have come together to help shape and implement the plan.

The plan is driven by a Town Team supported by the Town Regeneration Officer and a multi-disciplinary technical team in Leitrim County Council (LCC).

The Carrick-on-Shannon Town Team was initially established in 2014, following the success of Carrick 400, a year-long celebration marking Carrick-on-Shannon's 400th anniversary in 2013. The Town Team has led on many initiatives, with the support of Leitrim County Council, including Purple Flag Award, The Market Yard project, the public realm investment to mention a few. It has since evolved to include a number of stakeholders representing a range of groups in the town, including:

- Chamber of Commerce
- Business owners (day and night time economy)
- Tourism
- Tidy Towns Community Group
- Cultural and arts groups
- Sports and leisure groups
- Heritage groups
- An Garda Síochána



Summary approach

The approach to engagement has been to involve local people and key stakeholders, at each stage of the process.

Inception - November 2022

The project inception included a workshop and site walkabout day in Carrick-on-Shannon with the officer and consultant team, including reviewing and confirming the engagement plan as part of the overall project programme.

Stage one - January / February 2023

The first stage of the consultation process included both online and in-person events, including a workshop with the Town Team and a public drop-in engagement event in the Market Yard. The aim of the first stage of the engagement was to inform the team's understanding of the town and gather information about the challenges and opportunities. It also provided a good opportunity to draw out the things which local people wanted to identify as priorities for the project.

The consultation was supported with a range of material, including large format maps and images, creating a context

for the discussions and as a way to gather information. An online survey, which ran for 18 days, provided the opportunity for people to share information, views and aspirations for the town.

Stage two - April 2023

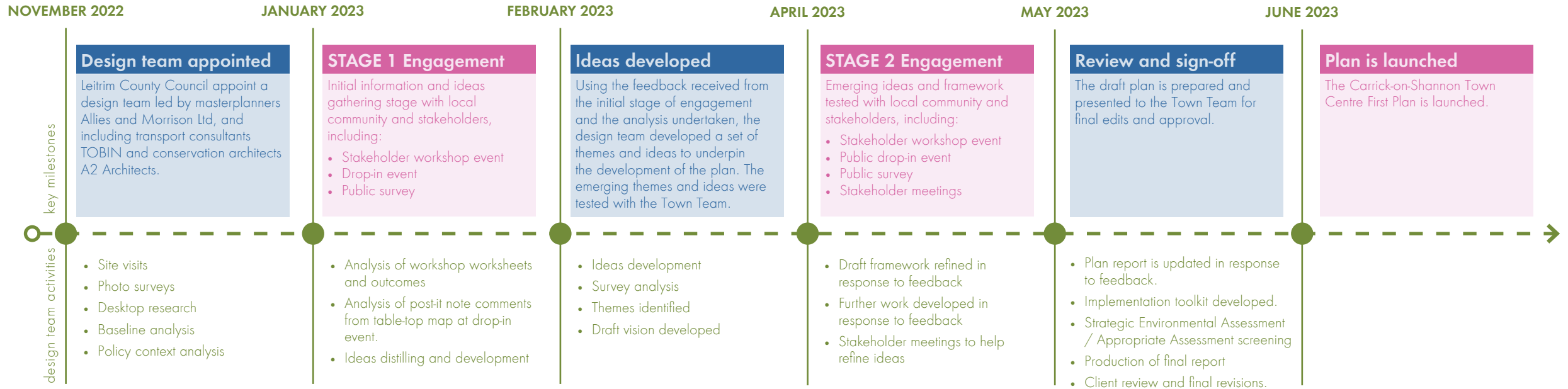
The second stage of consultation ran for a further two week period. As with the first stage of engagement, it included online and in-person engagement including a stakeholder workshop, drop-in consultation event and stakeholder meetings. A range of materials were used to set out the draft approach and ideas, both in person and online.

Following the conclusion of the engagement period and analysis of the responses, the officer and consultant team reviewed the feedback and made recommendations for updates and revisions to the plan approach which will be tested and approved through a detailed workshop with the Town Team.





The overall process



"Great to live in Carrick - lovely walks."

Carrick is a fabulous town with an active and engaged local community and great facilities - improved sporting and educational facilities are required to support the expanding local community...

More sporting facilities within a reasonable distance of the town...

Promotion of Carrick as a business centre...

"Best thing about Carrick - the people!"

We need activities to do in the evening that are not the pub!

Less stags and hens more tourists...

More variety of retail businesses...

"Wonderful town"

"Amazing market and produce!"

Carrick is going very well and improving all the time

To get a cycleway/walkway connecting Leitrim/Battlebridge constructed...

Keep it a good value destination, don't overprice, add quality shops to the high street...

Summary of key messages

Pop-up event

178 comments were generated on the table-top map from attendees at the pop-up event. A number of emerging themes came out of the process. Some of the key themes and messages are set out here:

Market: This was the most popular topic from the comments, possibly due to the fact that the pop-up was located there. Respondents would like to see the market open more frequently as many enjoy the social aspect it brings to the community. Locals enjoy having access to local produce and crafts and they believe it draws people into the town. Respondents would also like to see the space used for other events such as concerts.

Recreation and Facilities: Most comments related to a desire for more options for younger people to do, particularly in the evenings. Suggestions also included a playground for children and their families; more restaurants and eateries in the town particularly restaurants which focused on healthy eating; green spaces and dog parks; a library and a wider selection of shops.

Tourism: Half of the tourism responses expressed negative opinions about the hens and stag parties that use the town

at weekends - with the perception that these keep locals and families out of the town centre. Respondents noted that Carrick-on-Shannon can be more than a destination for hens and stags and would like to see the river and the market promoted as a reason to come and visit. They would also like to see more connectivity between the town and the river.

Transport: In terms of transport, cycling was a very popular comment from locals. Locals would like to see improvements in cycle infrastructures such as cycle lanes to encourage children to cycle to school safely. In terms of safety, many respondents said that car speed is an issue in Carrick-on-Shannon especially coming into the town. Respondents would like to see attention brought to car speeds to allow for freer movement for pedestrians and cyclists.

Parking: People said that the new car park has helped, and it has changed the dynamic of the street for the better, making it a lot friendlier than it was previously. It was however, suggested to have better signage for the new car park as it can be difficult to locate. Respondents would like to have more designated parent and child parking and more disabled parking spaces. Some suggested parking was too expensive, and there should be free parking during market hours.



ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS



Stage 1 survey outcomes

You ranked these two themes as your top priorities for Carrick-on-Shannon



1. **Public and open spaces**



2. **Supporting future growth**

You said the **top three things** you would deliver improvements to in Carrick-on-Shannon are:



Night-time safety and security was your top priority



and...

Building and shop frontages



and...

Seating and spaces to gather

We asked... "What improvements would you support to **enhance access to, and movement around**, Carrick-on-Shannon?"



Most people said...

Improvements to pedestrian movement, safety and accessibility



You also said...

Footpath obstacles & inadequate pedestrian crossings are the **main challenges** for vulnerable pedestrians or people with disabilities as they move around the town centre.

60% of respondents considered **vacancy and dereliction** to be an issue in Carrick-on-Shannon.



We asked... "which themes do you feel are most important to help the town **attract more visitors**, users and longer stays?"



1. **Culture, music and entertainment**
2. **River and water-based tourism and activities**
3. **Food and food-focussed markets**

When we asked... What particular aspects of Carrick-on-Shannon's **history or heritage** do you think should be shared or celebrated? You mostly mentioned



The River



Historic buildings



STAGE 2 Engagement **Testing emerging ideas**

The second stage of engagement for the Carrick-on-Shannon Town Centre First Plan took place in April 2023 and included a pop-up event, public survey, stakeholder workshop and meetings.

The purpose of this stage of engagement was to test the emerging ideas for the plan, which had been informed by the earlier stage of engagement as well as the team's analysis of the town and stakeholder conversations.

A pop-up event at the farmer's market was held on 20th April 2023 between 10am and 2pm to enable members of the public to speak to the design team, find out more about the emerging ideas, and to provide feedback.

An online survey was also available to gather feedback from the public, which was open for two weeks from 20th April.

As well as this public engagement, a workshop with key stakeholders, including representatives from the local community and resident groups, officers, business owners and the Town Team, took place on 20th April 2023. Stakeholders were asked to respond to the emerging ideas and create a deeper dialogue to sharpen the vision for the plan.



Great ideas regarding proposed improvements along the river

There is more to Carrick than hens and stags - for many that is all Carrick is known for

Blueway would be a great addition and connection between Carrick and Leitrim village

I think the most important theme is improving town centre vitality, as that is the real showcase for the town. We should be encouraging more family holidays and less stags

"Looks amazing!"

Seating in sunny areas please!

Market yard is a stunning space

"Best thing about Carrick - the people!"

Improvements to access, paths, lighting and parking needs to be included for St Mary's Close

Derelict and vacant buildings must be transformed into quality homes for families and people who want to live in the town.

Wetlands could be a lovely area for kids

Get businesses back to the town

Improving the arrival gateway - most importantly the R280 as it is extremely shabby looking

Lovely idea with activity and events on the river front by the bridge

Summary of key messages

Pop-up event

89 comments were generated on the emerging ideas map from attendees at the pop-up event. Attendees were guided to respond to visualisations and three main themes: improving the river front, improving the gateways and improving town centre vitality. Some of the key themes and messages are set out here:

Recreation and Facilities: Plans to revitalise the town centre, including its derelict and empty buildings, were welcomed. Some commented that this could, in part, be achieved by creating more town centre living, for example, above shops. People want to see the river and the market square used for more, including evening events. Additionally, there was a desire to see things such as more playgrounds centrally for children and further outdoor recreation activities such as an outdoor gym. Greater provision of public toilets was mentioned by more than one person. Many people wanted to see indoor and outdoor facilities and ‘hang out’ areas for young people and teens.

Tourism: As in the first stage of engagement, there was a desire by many people to re-establish Carrick as a walking, cycling and watersports centre/destination, rather than for stag and hen parties. Comments included marketing

the town in this way through signage, and new museums or information centres such as a Waterways centre. Some comments also mentioned having space for campervan parking near the Shannon.

Transport: The Blueway proposal was widely supported by respondents and some commented that it was important that there was sufficient infrastructure, such as bicycle racks at key locations to support this. There were positive comments on the N4 proposals.

Parking: Many responses did not want to see a reduction in parking spaces as ease of access to the town centre was crucial for many. This was somewhat countered with others wanting to see a more car-free Carrick town centre. Campervan parking was mentioned by many, with areas such as by the river, near Supermacs or near the train station mentioned as being suitable. Some comments were opposed to campervan parking near the Shannon due to them obscuring views.

Public Realm: Comments included wishes for more seating and covered areas, street art, support for shop front enhancements, ongoing maintenance of paths and pavements, as well as improvements to St Mary’s Close.



Summary of key messages

Stakeholder workshops

1 **Improving the connection to the riverfront** *Creating a stronger experience of arrival through the provision of new, rich parkland areas, formal planting and green connections to the town centre...*

Workshop attendees were supportive of the wetland which they felt that children would especially love.

There was support for the events space by the river, and agreed that a strong programme of events would help create a new focal point and visitor attraction.

There was a desire to develop and support watersports and hiring facilities, as well as renovation of fishing platforms.

Attendees also wanted to see improvements to the information and advice about available facilities, activities and history of the waterways upon reaching the river.

2 **Improving arrival gateways** *Creating a stronger experience of arrival through the provision of new, rich parkland areas, formal planting and green connections to the town centre...*

The Blueway and cycle route was welcomed.

Lack of, or reduced parking remained a concern for workshop attendees. Some groups commented on needing parking for the Blueway at the northern gateway, and that parking on the N4 could cause objections.

Information centres and points at the gateways were wanted, as were cycle racks and museums, such as a Heritage and Culture Centre and a Waterways Museum.

3 **Improving town centre vitality** *Supporting town centre life and activity with safe, attractive streets and spaces and a more diverse range of market, business, community and other development opportunities...*

Workshop attendees wanted to see more places for young people and teenagers to 'hang out', ideas included teen-friendly furniture and spaces in parks, bicycle and skate parks.

Equally, more sports facilities were supported by groups including running track and watersports and boat hire.

There was concern over increase market frequency and ensuring that it did not conflict with businesses.

More covered areas were welcomed to protect from cold and wet weather.

There was further concern about loss of parking and comments about how this could negatively effect businesses.

Many comments were about fear of antisocial behaviour on lanes and how this could be mitigated against e.g. through closing these routes at night.

Survey key results

58%

of respondents ranked **improving town centre vitality** as the top priority for Carrick-on-Shannon



We asked... "do you have **other initiatives or actions** to help improve the town centre?"

1. **Improving the public realm and parking around St Mary's Close**
2. **Improving walkability to the school**
3. **Encouraging active leisure activities such as walking, cycling and watersports**

You said the **top things you wanted to improve** were:



Night-time safety and security

and...



Facilities and recreation for young people, especially teenagers

and...



Access to a community space

When we asked which ideas you most strongly agreed with

88%

agreed or strongly agreed with



Tackling vacancy and dereliction

83%

agreed or strongly agreed with



Improving the Leitrim Road approach

82%

agreed or strongly agreed with



Improving the environment along the laneways

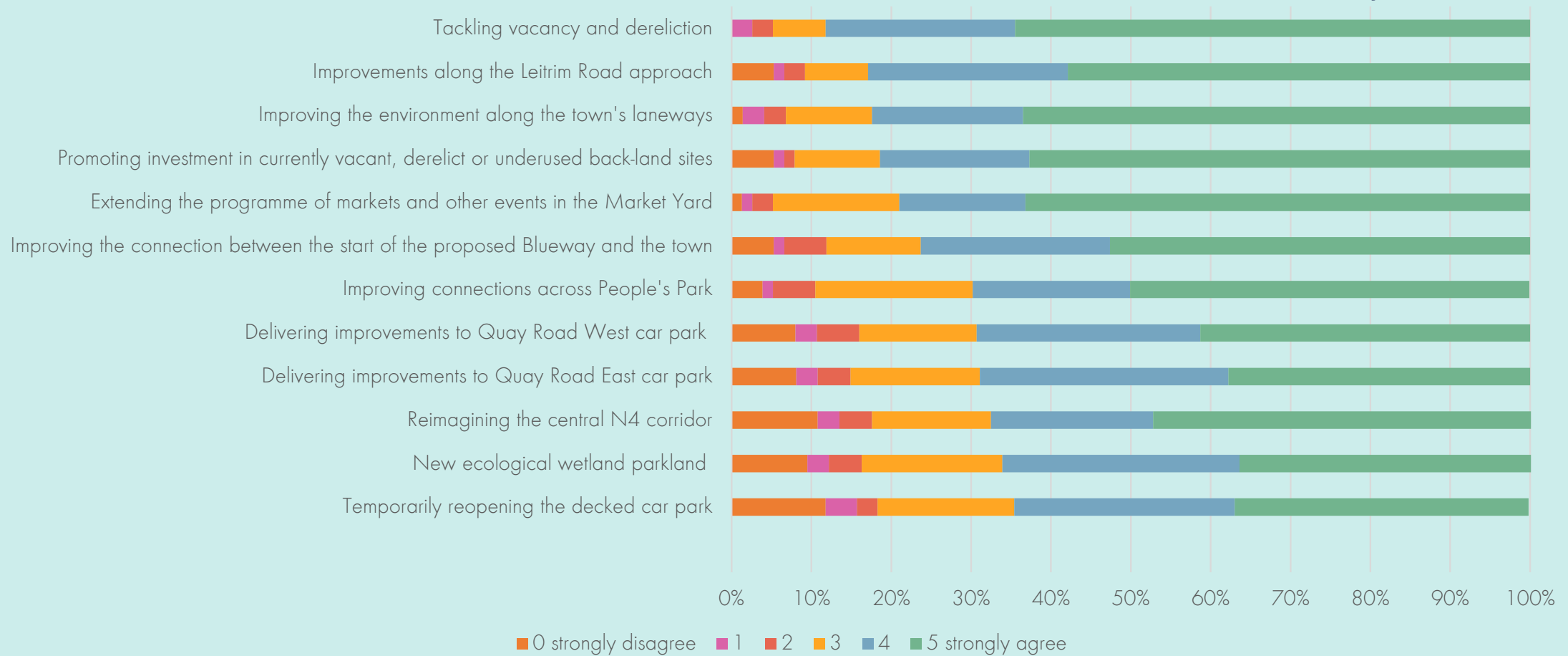
71%

of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the three identified major project themes

We asked

to what extent do you agree with the idea of...

Over 65% of people agreed or strongly agreed with each of the ideas



≡ KEY FINDINGS & APPRAISAL







4

DEFINING THE PLACE



Analysis of Carrick-on-Shannon's...

The National Town Centre First policy calls for an understanding of a place's strengths, challenges, opportunities and threats. Reflecting on the early analysis work, these can be summarised as follows:

STRENGTHS

- Expansive Shannon river-front
- Town's intact historic character
- Strong local independent retail sector
- Market Yard
- Recent delivery of the public realm improvements to key streets and spaces
- Strength of the river cruise industry
- Evening economy
- Council offices being located in the town centre

CHALLENGES

- Balancing the impacts of a thriving evening economy whilst protecting residential amenity
- Balancing the needs to provide space for cars and good quality space for people

OPPORTUNITIES

- Improve relationship between River Shannon and the core town centre
- Re-imagine role and function of key and central riverside sites
- Expand the programme for Market Yard
- Build on aspirations of Destination Town initiative
- Improve links and connections to and through new main car park
- Capitalise on benefits from planned new bypass
- Build on successes and improvements from recent public realm works
- Town centre living

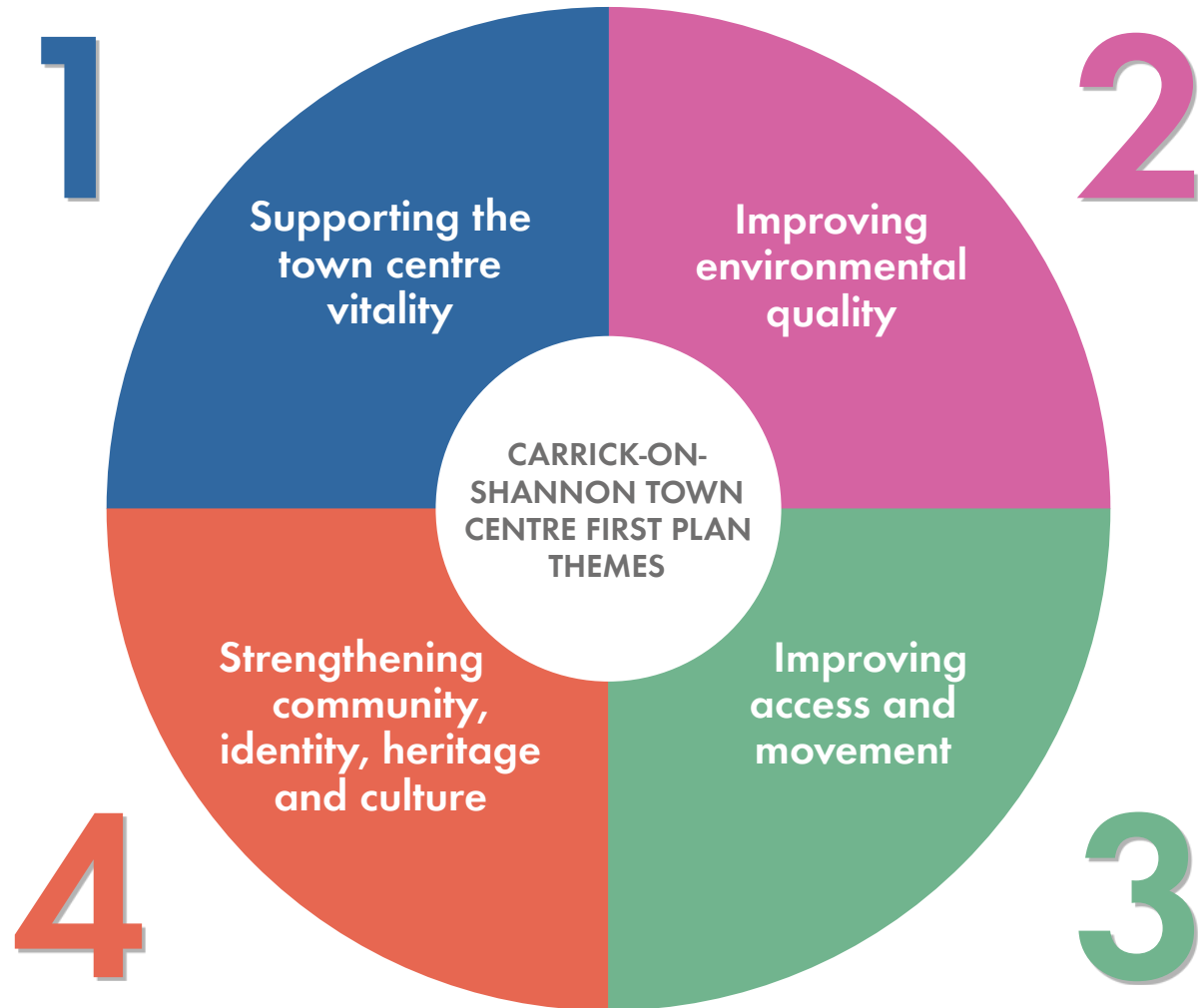
THREATS

- Strengthening of out-of-centre offer - management needed to ensure complementary not competing offer
- Prioritising road and parking space over public realm
- New developments not respecting local character
- Climate change and flood risk
- Lack of investment / funding to support delivery of improvements

Plan themes

The Town Centre First Policy, which provides the key policy context and guidance for this plan, has a number of priority themes and objectives. It is therefore important that the Carrick-on-Shannon Town Centre First Plan's priority themes respond to this national policy agenda whilst addressing the town's own particular opportunities and challenges.

The following themes and objectives have been informed by an understanding and appreciation of Carrick-on-Shannon's historic, environmental, economic, social and policy context, and are underpinned by Town Centre First policy objectives.

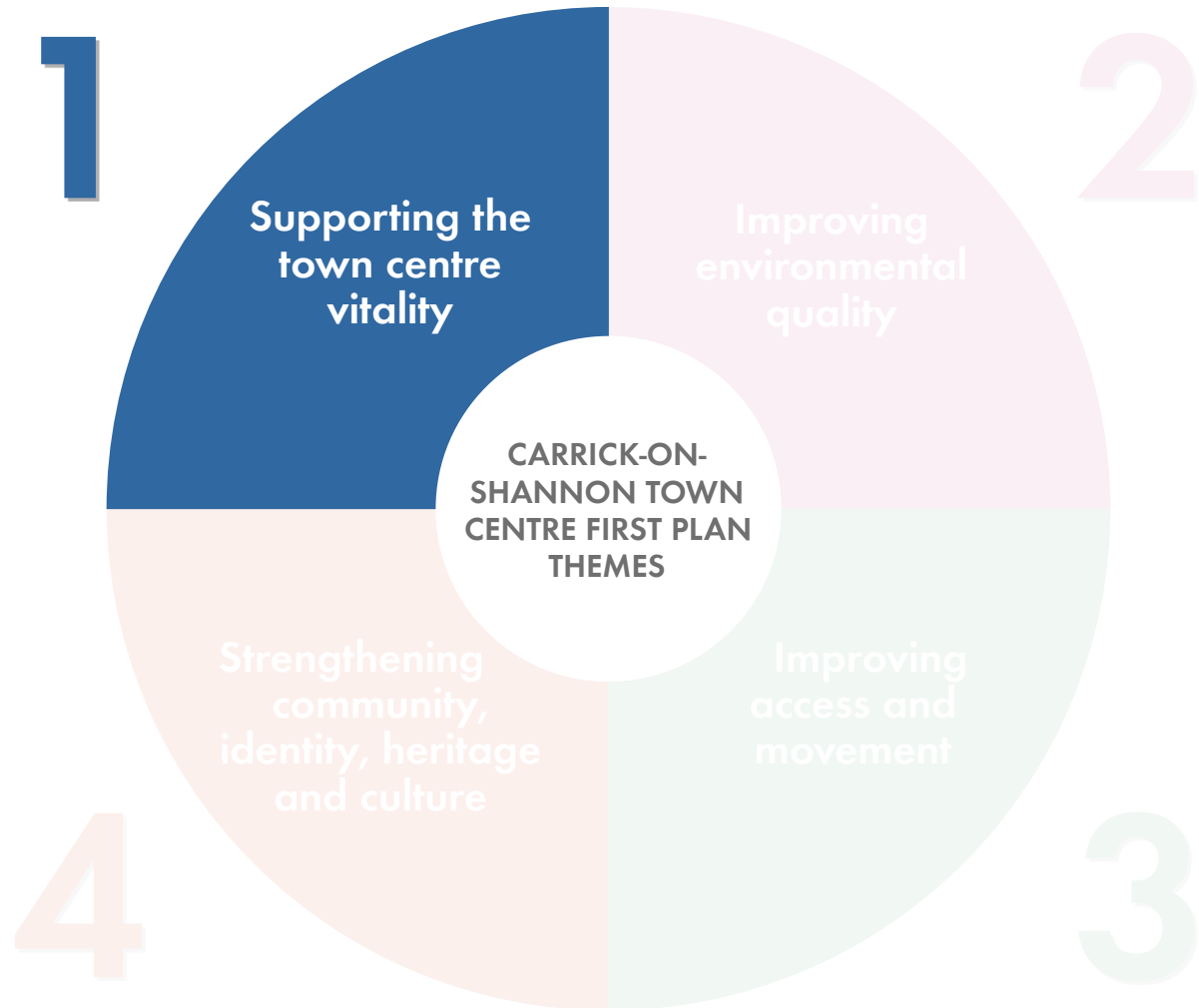


1. Supporting the town centre vitality

Seeking to support existing and encourage new business and investment in the town centre, this theme relates primarily to the commercial activity in the town centre – supporting the daytime and evening economies. This covers a wide and diverse spectrum of opportunities, ranging from promoting more events and festivals in the town, bringing derelict and vacant property back into use and bringing underused land forward for redevelopment to incorporate new uses. New uses including retail, leisure, commercial, community and residential could all be included in mixed-use development opportunities.

Specific objectives relating to supporting the town centre vitality are:

TCV1	Support a full and diverse programme of events in the town centre
TCV2	Tackle retail and other vacancy and dereliction
TCV3	Promote town centre living utilising existing vacant properties and new infill development
TCV4	Encourage a vibrant mix of uses, including those which make it a more successful destination
TCV5	Continue to support the evening and visitor economy

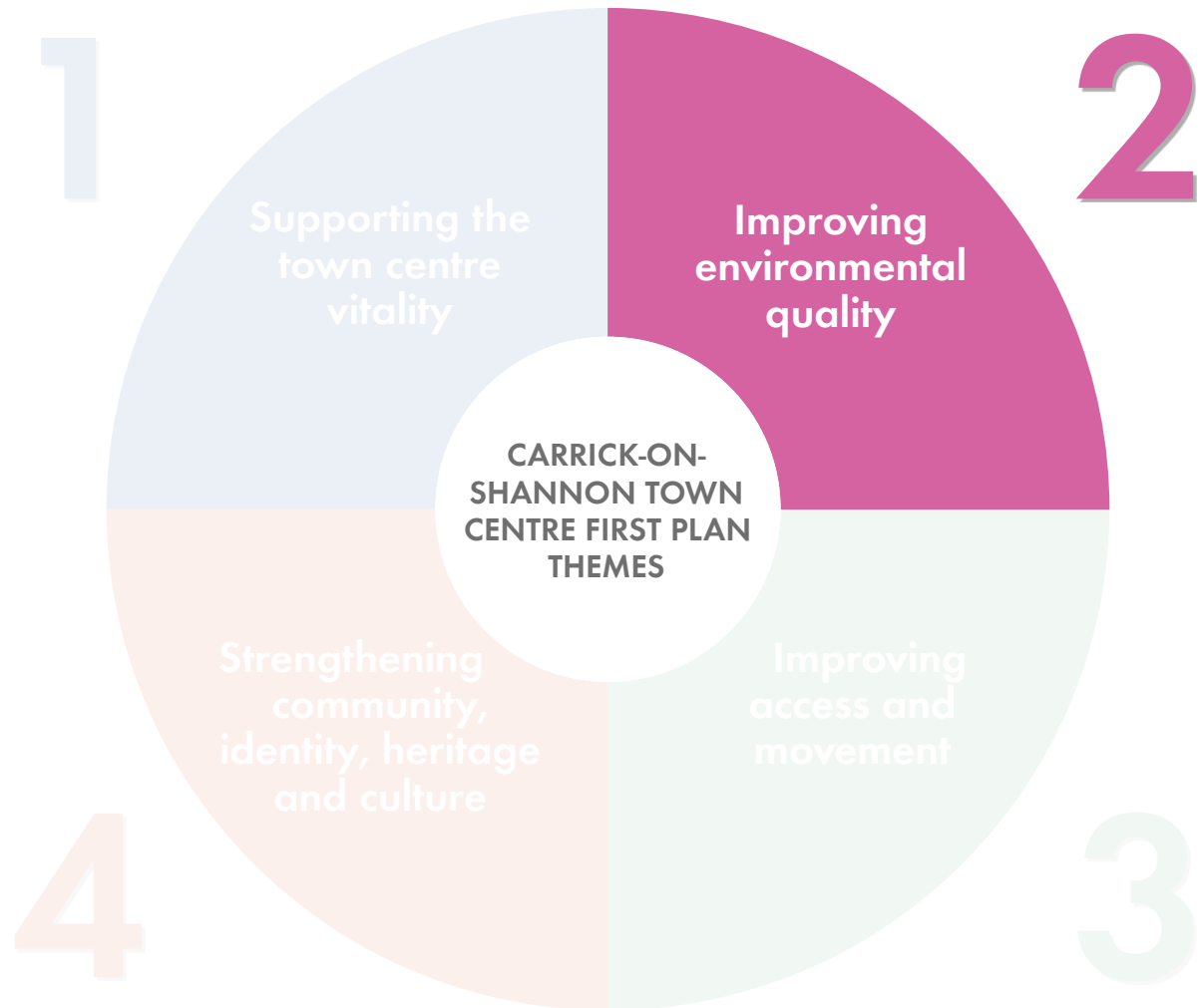


2. Improving environmental quality

Whilst the Town Park is the only public green open space in the town, the expansive river frontage is the town’s principal environmental asset. Improving access to the riverside and the quality of spaces alongside it is the priority and an opportunity. This theme also relates to climate resilience and the need to help mitigate against the risks of flooding in the town. Making better use of the expansive areas of open land around the centre, particularly to the north along the Leitrim Road corridor will be important.

Specific objectives relating to improving environmental quality are:

EQ1	Improve the river front - making it more accessible for people
EQ2	Create a green walking and cycling loop through and around the town centre
EQ3	Create more attractive, accessible and flexible town centre spaces, designed for people
EQ4	Improve the Leitrim Road approach corridor
EQ5	Make the town more resilient to climate change

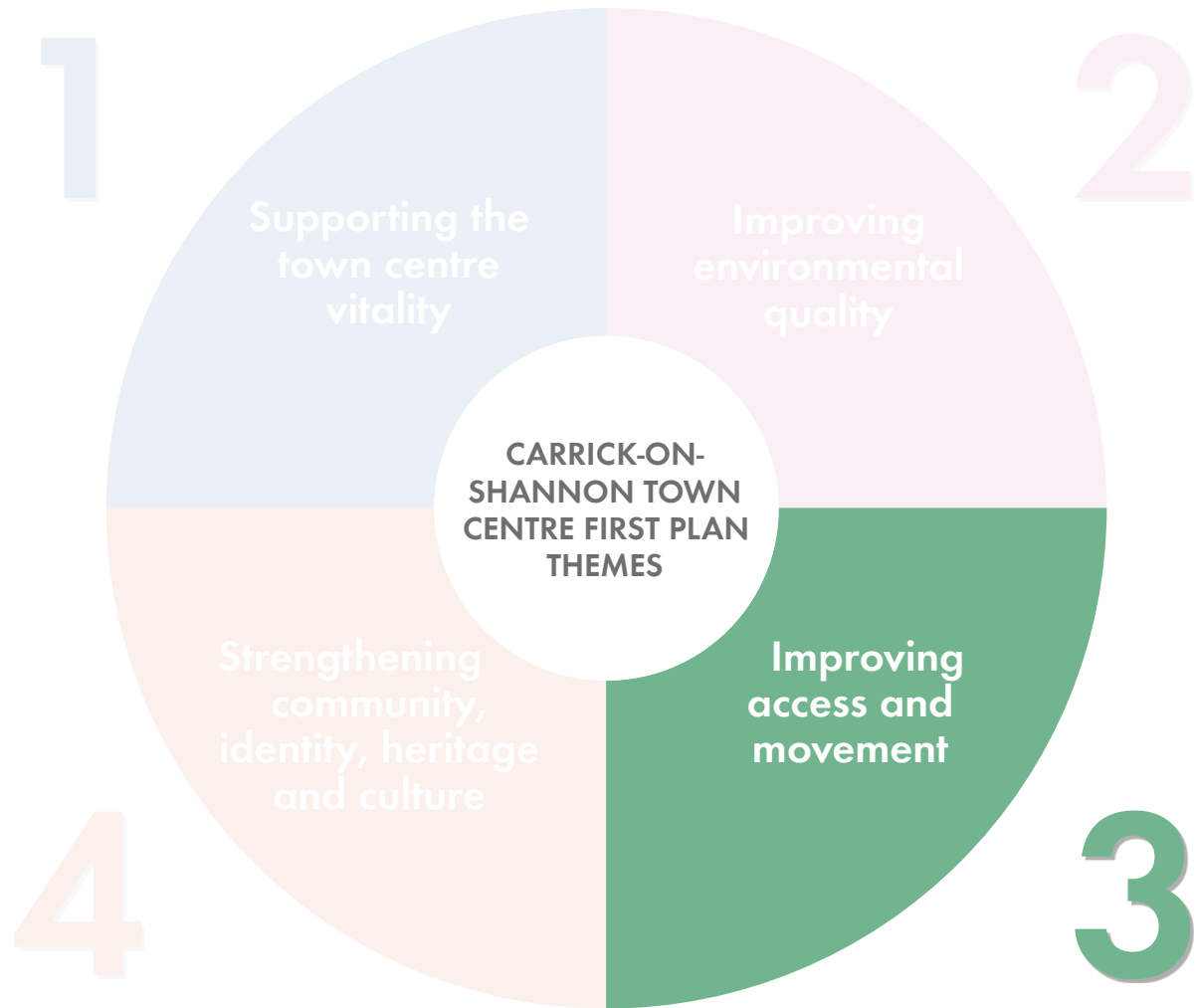


3. Improving access and movement

Building on the benefits that would come from the delivery of a new bypass to the south of the town, active and sustainable travel initiatives could be delivered along the town’s major approach corridors. These could be supported by smaller scale improvements to pedestrian routes and lanes within the centre.

Specific objectives relating to improving access and movement are:

AM1	Support the delivery of the Carrick-on-Shannon bypass
AM2	Continue to promote active and sustainable travel
AM3	Reimagine the post bypass N4 corridor
AM4	Improve the quality of the town centre car park
AM5	Improve Carrick-on-Shannon’s historic laneways

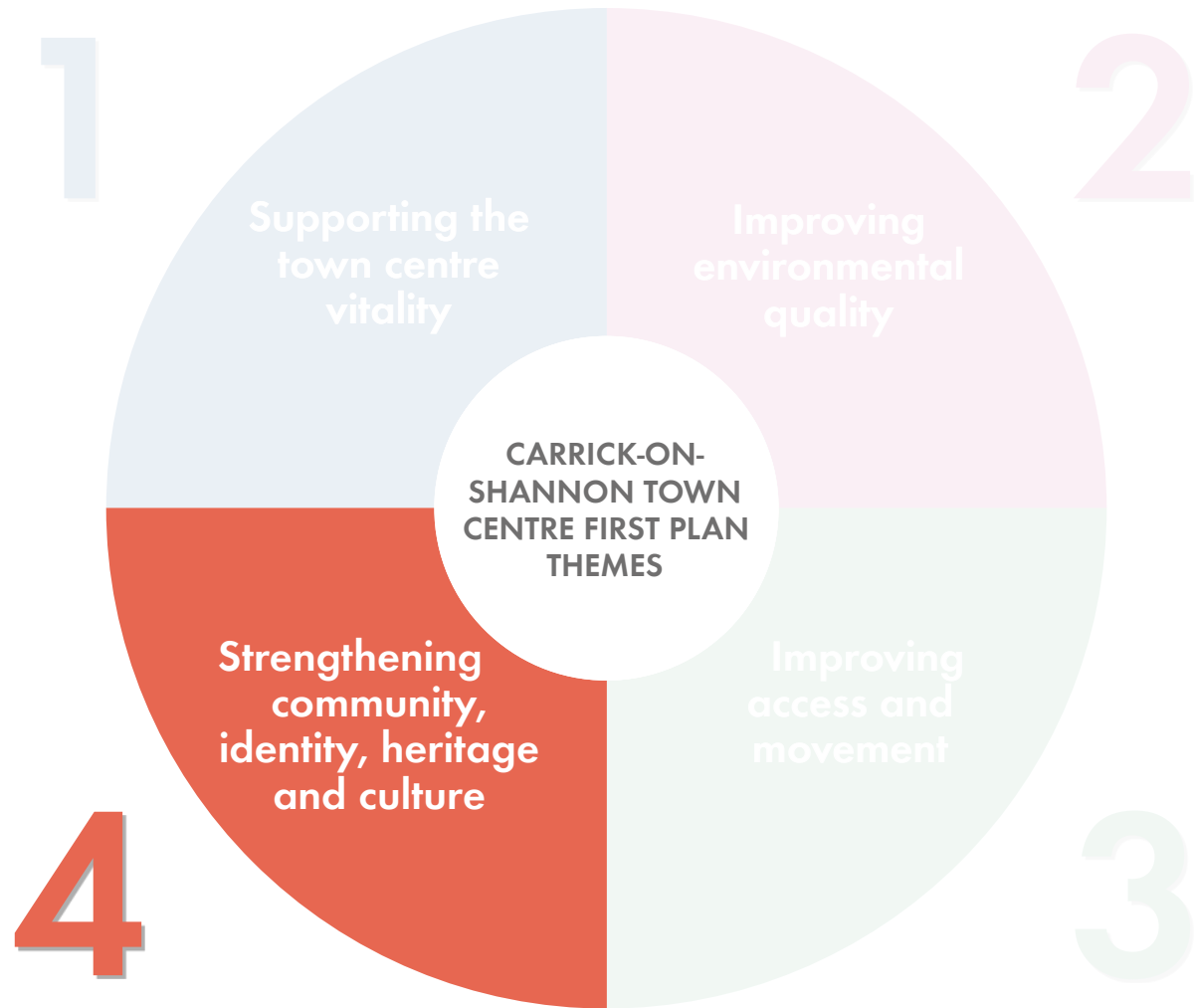


4. Strengthening community, identity, heritage & culture

Already a hub for small independent and creative businesses alongside a thriving visitor economy, Carrick-on-Shannon is known for its historic character and exceptional riverside setting. A thriving and active local community need dedicated space to continue to flourish.

Specific objectives relating to strengthening community, identity, heritage and culture are:

CIHC1	Promote Carrick-on-Shannon as a destination
CIHC2	Promote the town as a gateway for local arts, culture and produce
CIHC3	Promote and maintain Carrick-on-Shannon's historic assets
CIHC4	Provide dedicated space for community and cultural activities

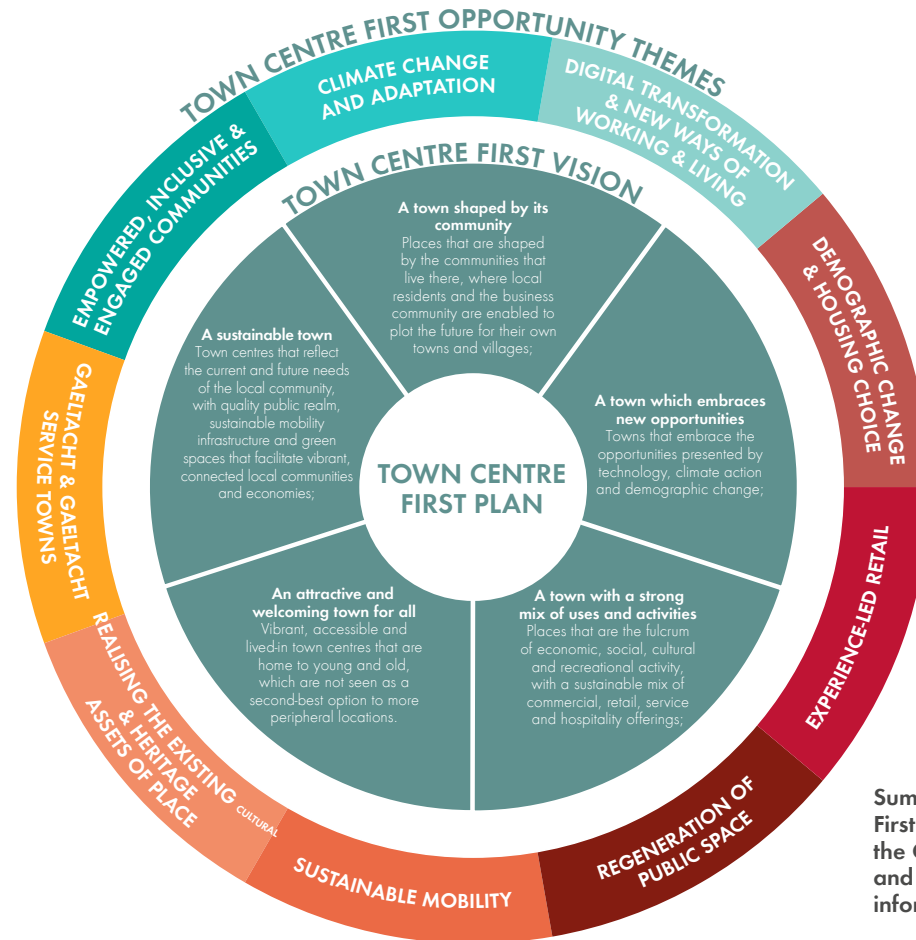


Plan Themes & TCF Policy Objective Themes

These key themes and their objectives encapsulate the priority issues identified by the local community during the production of the Carrick-on-Shannon Town Centre First plan. They provide a platform on which a range of more specific project opportunities have been identified through which these objectives will be delivered as the plan is implemented.

This is not a blueprint. Not every project will be delivered. Some projects will morph and adapt, others not currently identified may emerge. But the themes and their objectives provide a high-level framework which will remain relevant during the short, medium and longer terms as the Town Team work collaboratively to secure new funding, deliver improvements and attract new investment. Engagement with key stakeholder and the wider local business and residential community will be essential throughout.

The matrix on the next page shows how these themes and objectives address, either directly or indirectly, the key priority themes of the national town centre first policy agenda.



Summary of the national Town Centre First policy context which has informed the Carrick-on-Shannon Plan themes and objectives. See Section 1 for further information about this policy

Plan Themes & TCF Policy Objective Themes

CARRICK-ON-SHANNON TOWN CENTRE FIRST PLAN REF THEMES & OBJECTIVES	T O W N C E N T R E F I R S T P O L I C Y T H E M E S								
	CLIMATE CHANGE AND ADAPTATION	DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION & NEW WAYS OF WORKING & LIVING	DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE & HOUSING CHOICE	EXPERIENCE-LED RETAIL	REGENERATION OF PUBLIC SPACE	SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY	REALISING THE EXISTING CULTURAL & HERITAGE ASSETS OF PLACE	TOWN CENTRE VITALITY & IMAGE	EMPOWERED, INCLUSIVE & ENGAGED COMMUNITIES
1 SUPPORTING TOWN CENTRE VITALITY									
TCV1 Support a full and diverse programme of events in the town centre									
TCV2 Tackle retail and other vacancy									
TCV3 Promote town centre living utilising existing vacant properties and new infill development									
TCV4 Encourage a vibrant mix of uses, including those which make it a more successful destination									
TCV5 Continue to support the evening and visitor economy									
2 IMPROVING ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY									
EQ1 Improve the river front - making it more accessible for people									
EQ2 Create a green walking and cycling loop through and around the town centre									
EQ3 Create more attractive, accessible and flexible town centre spaces, designed for people									
EQ4 Improve the Leitrim Road approach corridor									
EQ5 Make the town more resilient to climate change									
3 IMPROVING ACCESS AND MOVEMENT									
AM1 Support the delivery of the Carrick-on-Shannon bypass									
AM2 Continue to promote active and sustainable travel									
AM3 Reimagine the post bypass N4 corridor									
AM4 Improve the quality of the town centre car park									
AM5 Improve Carrick-on-Shannon's historic laneways									
4 STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY, IDENTITY, HERITAGE AND CULTURE									
CIHC1 Promote Carrick-on-Shannon as a destination									
CIHC2 Promote the town as a gateway for local arts, culture and produce									
CIHC3 Promote and maintain Carrick-on-Shannon's historic assets									
CIHC4 Provide dedicated space for community and cultural activities									

3 BIG IDEAS

1 Improving the connection to the river

Rejuvenating the relationship with the Shannon to establish better connections, and create new spaces to enliven the town...

2 Improving arrival gateways

Creating a stronger experience of arrival through the provision of new, rich parkland areas, formal planting and green connections to the town centre...

3 Promoting town centre vitality and activity

Sowing the seeds of a successful and vibrant town centre with safe, attractive streets and spaces and opportunities for a diverse range of market, business and community spaces...



1 Improving the connection to the river

Rejuvenating the relationship with the Shannon to establish better connections, and create new spaces to enliven the town...

1. Reimagine Quay Road West car park
2. Reimagine Quay Road East car park
3. Reimagine the N4 corridor
4. Improvements to the Town Park (People's Park)
5. Water-based leisure activities and information centre
6. Green Loop around the town for walking and cycling



KEY

- Proposed walking and cycling loop
- Aspiration for walking and cycling loop
- Indicative preferred Blueway route
- Improved walking and cycling route into town centre
- Enhanced routes for pedestrians: public realm, greening, activity
- Enhanced public realm to accommodate activity and programme of events

1. Reimagine Quay Road West car park



Transformation of this space should ensure it is designed primarily for people, to help ensure the space is able to make a more meaningful contribution to the life of the town. In addition to parking, this key space should be able to support and host a wide range of activities and events which attract stronger footfall flows between the commercial centre and the riverside. Supported by a managed programme of events, this investment will deliver environmental, social and economic benefits to the town, whilst not undermining its 'normal' parking function.

Project context

This is one of a pair of central, public, surface car parks, located right in the historic heart of the town and with primary vehicular access from Quay Road via Bridge Street. This Council-owned car park site is one of the most prominent waterside sites in the town. Dedicating them entirely to surface car parking can be seen as a missed opportunity.

Project components:

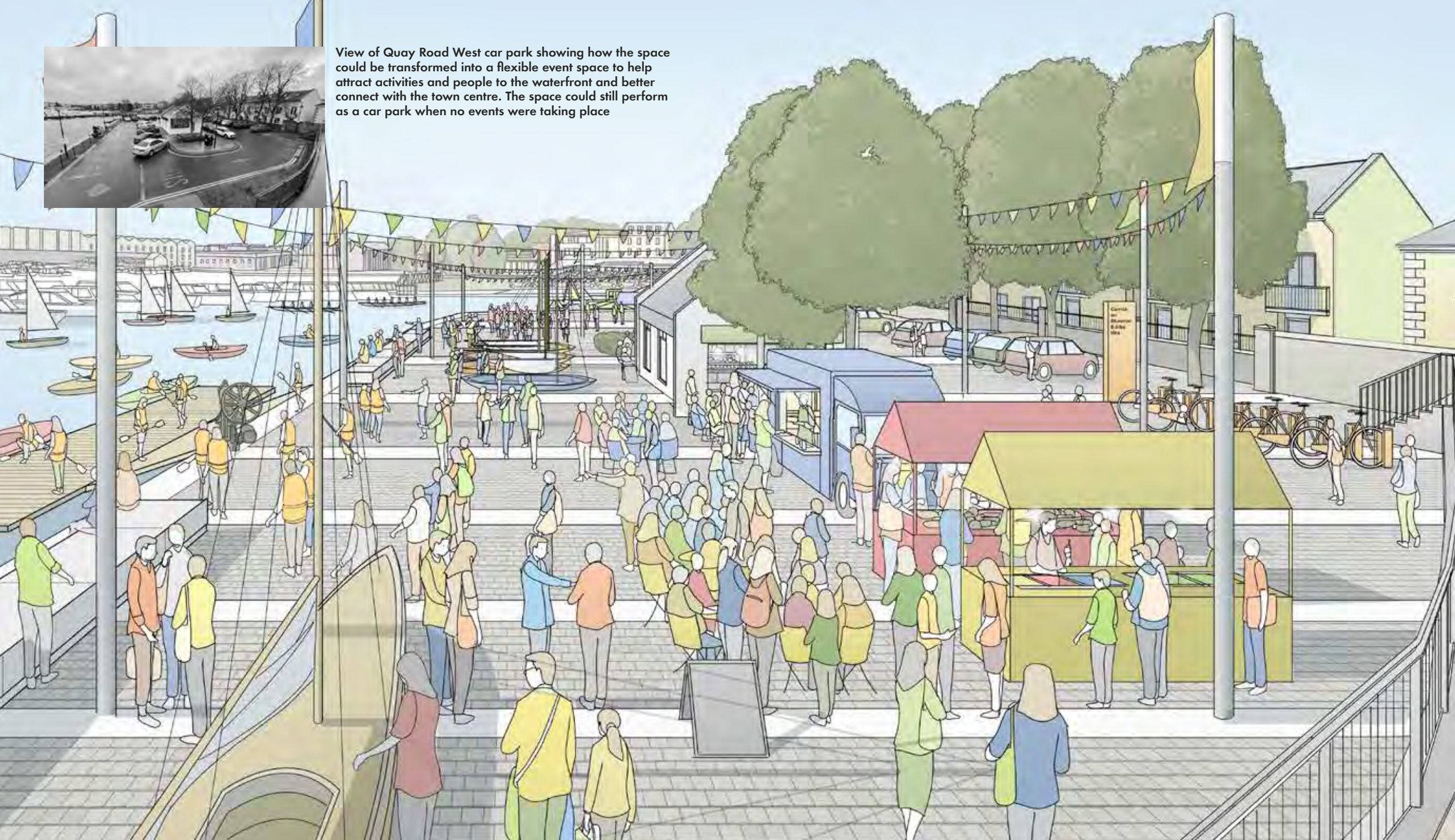
- Retention of space as car park but adapted to better facilitate people and events
- Better surface treatment, lighting, seating, landscaping and sustainable drainage features
- Potential adaptation of the small Chamber of Commerce building into a cafe
- Potential mooring of bar/restaurant boat to help attract visitors throughout the year
- Cycling facilities, including the site being a potential e-cycle hire docking station
- Development of a diverse programme of events to complement (not compete with) existing and planned activities in the town centre

Key considerations and next steps:

- Drawing up a brief as the basis for further feasibility and design development
- Liaison with key stakeholders including Waterways Ireland and other relevant statutory agencies
- Improvements can positively contribute to Irish Waterways and Fáilte Ireland's Tourism Masterplan for the River Shannon
- Scope for the site to become a hub for accessible and family friendly water-based sports and recreation to enhance the town's tourism offer
- Use of the site would require co-ordination with those managing the Market Yard to ensure complementary activities
- More people-friendly intensive use of the site would be complemented by availability of alternative additional public parking capacity



View of Quay Road West car park showing how the space could be transformed into a flexible event space to help attract activities and people to the waterfront and better connect with the town centre. The space could still perform as a car park when no events were taking place





View of Quay Road West car park showing how the space could be transformed into a flexible event space but that it can continue to serve as a car park when no events are taking place



2. Reimagine Quay Road East car park



Transformation of this space should ensure it is designed primarily for people, to help ensure the space is able to make a more meaningful contribution to the life of the town. In tandem with improvements to Quay Road West car park, this key space should be able to support and host a wide range of activities and events which attract stronger footfall flows between the commercial centre and the riverside, in addition to its existing role as a car park. Supported by a managed programme of events, this investment will deliver environmental, social and economic benefits to the town, whilst not undermining its 'normal' parking function.

Project context

This is one of a pair of central, public, surface car parks, located right in the historic heart of the town and with primary vehicular access directly from the N4. This Council-owned car park site is one of the most prominent waterside sites in the town. Dedicating them entirely to surface car parking can be seen as a missed opportunity.

Project components:

- Retention of space as car park but adapted to better facilitate people and events
- Better surface treatment, lighting, seating, landscaping and sustainable drainage features
- Potential to enhancement of historic tourist office
- Potential mooring of bar/restaurant boat to help attract visitors throughout the year
- Cycling facilities, including the site being a potential e-cycle hire docking station
- Development of a diverse programme of events to complement (not compete with) existing and planned activities in the town centre

Key considerations and next steps:

- Drawing up a brief as the basis for further feasibility and design development
- Liaison with key stakeholders including Waterways Ireland and other relevant statutory agencies
- Continuity of operations for existing businesses will be an important consideration
- Improvements can positively contribute to Irish Waterways and Fáilte Ireland's Tourism Masterplan for the River Shannon
- Scope for the site to become a hub for accessible and family friendly water-based sports and recreation to enhance the town's tourism offer
- Use of the site would require co-ordination with those managing the Market Yard to ensure complementary activities
- More people-friendly intensive use of the site would be complemented by availability of alternative additional public parking capacity



View of Quay Road East car park showing how the space could be transformed into a flexible event space to help attract activities and people to the waterfront and better connect with the town centre. The space could still perform as a car park when no events were taking place





View of Quay Road East car park showing how the space could be transformed into a flexible event space but that it can continue to serve as a car park when no events are taking place



3. Reimagining the N4 corridor



The bypass would enable the possibility of a radical transformation of the existing N4 corridor passing through the town. Reallocation of road space to encourage active and sustainable travel patterns and improve crossings would help to reconnect the town with the riverfront, repairing this relationship which is so important for the town's success.

Project context

Carrick-on-Shannon's history is inextricably linked with the River Shannon. As a strategic fording point, the town was historically a major depot for river trade transported from Dublin, Athlone, and Limerick. However as the town has grown, its relationship with the river has changed. Now a major hub for leisure cruises, the town's central area is separated from the riverfront by the busy N4 corridor.

Recent improvements have successfully transformed parts of the riverfront with the recent floating boardwalks and environmental improvements. The most central areas have however received less investment and the N4 corridor becomes busier with heavy good vehicles crossing the Shannon.

The N4 Carrick-on-Shannon to Dromod Project will create a by-pass road around the town as part of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) providing a strategic link between Dublin and Sligo. Delivery of this important infrastructure project opens up exciting opportunities for the town centre.

Project components:

- Narrowing of carriageways to give more space to pedestrians and cyclists
- Investment in public realm and landscaping to improve local environmental qualities and reduce flood risk
- Contribute to an integrated programme to support cycling in and around the town, with potential for cycle hire facilities
- Greater pedestrian priority given at key crossing points to better connect the town centre with the riverside
- A review of parking, with opportunities to introduce parking management and controls to help support the objectives of the N4 Carrick-on-Shannon to Dromod Project

Key considerations and next steps:

- Contingent on progress being made on the N4 Carrick-on-Shannon to Dromod Project
- Would need to co-ordinate with existing proposals to improve coach parking and bus facilities as part of the Destination Towns initiative
- Scheme may have potential to incorporate some additional public parking to support the centre and encourage more active and sustainable travel patterns

View of the N4 looking east showing how, with the support of the bypass, the N4 road space could be transformed and reimagined to enable a much stronger connection between the town centre and the river front. The N4 road no longer acts as a barrier between the river and the town, with narrow roads, improved landscaping and investment in cycle infrastructure



4. Improvements to the Town Park (People's Park)



To strengthen the Park's position as the town's principal open space for families and local people through improved access arrangements from Quay Road and improve facilities, particularly for children. The much longer-term vision for this important community space could be to directly connect the Park with the water's edge. This however would likely require relocation of the Rowing Club to an improved facility to ensure their operations would not be adversely impacted.

Project context

The Town Park (People's Park) is the town's principal public green space. Access to the space is compromised however, with a narrow and discrete entrance from Quay Road on the east side. Whilst very close to the marina, the historic Carrick-on-Shannon Rowing Club extends across the length of the park between it and the water's edge.

Project components:

- Public realm improvements to the eastern gateway to the park
- Improvements in surface treatment, lighting, hard landscaping, boundary treatment and sensitive work to the railings to provide a more open, accessible, prominent and welcoming entrance via Quay Road
- Consider provision of new children's play facilities within the park to encourage more families to visit and spend time in the town centre

Key considerations and next steps:

- There may be heritage considerations in relation to the eastern gateway
- Any improvements would need to be agreed through local consultation with local businesses, residents, the Rowing Club and other stakeholders
- Improvements to the eastern entrance should be designed and delivered in conjunction with wider public realm improvements associated with Project 1 Reimagine Quay Road West car park



Community garden, Hortus Veemarkt Utrecht The Netherlands Co-designed community garden with incidental play, a gently sloping ground level with a natural, luxuriant layout featuring flowers and flowering trees

5. Water-based leisure activities and information centre



A potential Shannon Waterside Centre could support a range of facilities. Such a centre would potentially provide information on the regions varied waterways, to which Carrick-on-Shannon acts as a gateway. The 'centre' could improve access to the water and support more water-based leisure activities for families and young people and help support the local tourism offer.

Attractions: water activities (no family activities currently)

Develop and support watersports and hiring facilities.

Encouraging active leisure activities such as walking, cycling and watersports

Project context

Stakeholder feedback lent support for the provision of more water-based leisure activities and information. A potential Shannon Waterside Centre could support a range of facilities.

Project components:

- A small built facility with flexible accommodation on a prominent waterside location
- This could support small scale commercial water-based attractions such as kayaking
- Accessibility would be key to ensure benefits would be felt across the centre as a whole – to support linked trips to other town centre attractions, services and facilities

Key considerations and next steps:

- Improved facilities of this nature would support the objectives of Waterways Ireland's Shannon Tourism Masterplan
- Waterways Ireland, Fáilte Ireland and other related agencies and stakeholders should be consulted
- Opportunities for any such investment to be made in junction with the Carrick-on-Shannon Rowing Club should be considered as there might be scope for shared and mutual benefits
- Locations within easy reach of the Marina Car Park would provide easy and family friendly direct access to the water



Lea Rowing Club, London Lea Rowing sits on the River Lea which has a fleet of fine and recreational boats of all sizes, a well-equipped gym, and regularly hosts events in the Boathouse. There is also a cafe next door, and clubhouse which is hired as an event space for weddings and parties.

6. Carrick-on-Shannon Green Loop for walking and cycling



Chiefly a leisure concept, the Carrick-on-Shannon Green Loop would encircle the town and provide a movement and ecological corridor between the town's principal environments. The waterside routes are largely already in place, but connections are required around the town's northern and eastern edges.

Project context

There was considerable public support for the prospect of a new green walking and cycling loop around the town. Major components of such a loop are already in place but work would be required to complete the loop.

Project components:

- Dedicated, principally off-road, walking and cycling route with priority measures at road crossing locations
- Wayfinding, signage and supporting on-line resources to support and encourage use and raise profile of facilities
- The route can connect with the existing route networks – both on and off road – together with the prospect of the delivery of the Carrick-on-Shannon to Battlebridge Blueway

Key considerations and next steps:

- Opportunity to tie in with wider regional and national cycle networks



2 Improving arrival gateways

Creating a stronger experience of arrival through the provision of new, rich parkland areas, formal planting and green connections to the town centre...

7. New wetland ecology park
8. Leitrim Road corridor improvements
9. Carrick-on-Shannon to Battlebridge Blueway & Trailhead
10. Explore potential for gateway car park
11. Cycle hire scheme and wider cycle infrastructure
12. Improved mooring and overnight stay facilities
13. Northern town threshold gateway improvements
14. Eastern town threshold gateway improvements



KEY

- Enhanced arrival experience - road improvements, planting, signage
- Gateway - facilities for those arriving into the town
- Indicative preferred Blueway route
- Improved walking and cycling route into town centre

7. New wetland ecology park



A major new wetland ecology park would bring wide ranging benefits to the town and sub-region. It would help to mitigate significant flood risks and thereby offer the town more flood protection. Local biodiversity would increase which would help to contribute positively to making the town and region more resilient to climate change. The establishment of a new wetland ecology park would also support the town's visitor economy and provide a community resource, with opportunities for education and interpretation and community spaces.

Project context

The development potential of the open land north of the town centre is significantly compromised by flood risk. Significant swathes of this land are in public ownership although public access is generally limited. The northern approach to the town is underwhelming, with limited landscape character. The open character of the landscape is an asset here – but investment is needed.

Project components:

- Wetland landscape, with managed public access.
- Opportunities for landscape management to attract diverse habitats for native flora and fauna
- Purpose built visitor facilities with associated interpretation, education and visitor facilities
- The park and its built facility has the potential to become a signature project and destination for Carrick-on-Shannon, County Leitrim and the wider region

Key considerations and next steps:

- Any form of development will need to positively address flood risk issues
- A wetland ecology park concept should be devised with the associated natural environment agencies and stakeholders
- A business case will need to be devised with clear management regime and an understanding of realistic revenues
- Liaison with all relevant land owners will be required – the outcome of these discussions will determine how any such facility might be delivered



Nature play, Playground Choriner Strasse, Berlin
The playground in the Choriner Street, Berlin, offers a fantastical world for children's play. It started off as an overgrown, neglected, hidden playground with a certain kind of magical feeling of a ruin to it. The new design retains this wild magical feeling, keeps as many of the old structures intact and introduces new play elements with a special story.



Wetland ecology park examples



Rainham Marshes, east of London

Once a military firing range, Rainham Marshes now explodes with wildlife which thrive on the ancient grazing mashes of the Thames Estuary. Its mix of wet grasslands and ditches which, together with dry grasslands and scrub, are home to a wide variety of birds and scarce wetland plants and insects.



Rainham Marshes, east of London

The reserve is carefully managed to make sure it has the perfect conditions for its wildlife. Cattle graze and water levels are managed to create a patchwork of tussocky wet grassland and semi-permanent pools. This creates ideal habitat for marshland birds such as lapwings and redshanks as well as for wintering wildfowl, waders and some birds of prey.



Welney Wetland Centre, Cambridgeshire

There are various education and training sessions at the centre with no need to bring your own equipment to help not spread wildlife diseases. The pond-dipping stations are perfect for wheelchairs and pushchairs.



Lankheet Water Purification Park, The Netherlands

A water purification plant but also a public water park and a nature area: this combination can be found on the Lankheet country estate. This scientific experiment is designed as 'a poetic water spectacle'.



Rainham Marshes, east of London

RSPB Rainham Marshes has developed into a fantastic home for nature, helped by the tremendous support of many individuals, groups and organisations. In addition to RSPB members and supporters, local community members and a tireless team of volunteers, the centre is also supported by many corporate donors and sponsors.



Welney Wetland Centre, Cambridgeshire

Welney takes in 1,000 acres of the northernmost part of the Ouse Washes - Britain's largest area of seasonally-flooded land and the setting for one of the most magical events in the UK's nature calendar - mass winter gatherings of many thousands of wild ducks, geese and swans.



Welney Wetland Centre, Cambridgeshire

In summer, the site is carpeted with wildflowers, among them rarities such as the hair-like pondweed and the greater water-parsnip. More than 300 species of butterfly and moth have been recorded.



Lankheet Water Purification Park, The Netherlands

New woods will be planted on the country estate. Some of the existing woods on the estate will be enhanced with new planting and flowering shrubs. New woodland will be planted on wet parts of the estate, with a network of boardwalk paths throughout.

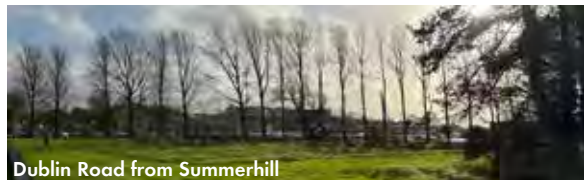
8. Leitrim Road corridor improvements



Leitrim Road approach



Dublin Road, N4



Dublin Road from Summerhill

Improving the Leitrim Road approach into town by creating a formal tree-lined route, like those on Dublin Road, and including dedicated cycle infrastructure.

Project context

The Leitrim Road corridor is an important approach to the town, connecting Carrick-on-Shannon with the network of towns and villages north of the town, including Leitrim Village, Drumshanbo and Ballinamore. However, the landscape quality is varied and the threshold with the town centre exposed and of poor townscape quality.

Project components:

- Formal tree-lined street planting programme
- Dedicated cycle lanes

Key considerations and next steps:

- Land ownership issues if additional land is required
- The tree species will be important – and ecological and landscape advice will be required
- Account will need to be taken of road safety and maintenance considerations



9. Carrick-on-Shannon to Battlebridge Blueway & Trailhead



There is considerable public support for the Blueway. Signage and cycle improvements should provide a high-quality connection to the start point on Priest Lane from the town centre. The alignment of this connection should follow Priest Lane and connect with Main Street. The establishment of a trailhead here could support complementary commercial facilities which has a wider reach.

Project context

Progress is well underway on the delivery of the Blueway between Carrick-on-Shannon and Battlebridge. Delivery of this leisure route will contribute positively to a range of complementary project and improvement opportunities identified in this plan. The route commences on Priest Lane, but improvements should be delivered to connect this route to the town centre. Facilities associated with a trailhead offer commercial activities which would strengthen the Blueway concept and benefit the town as a whole.

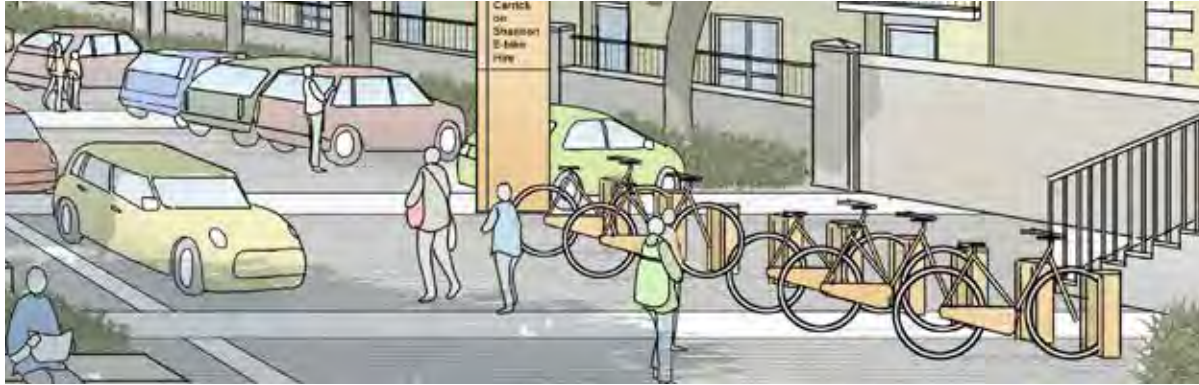
Project components:

- The area of Priest Lane closest to the town is currently one-way working. This provides the opportunity for the provision of dedicated cycle lanes and signage improvements to help better connect to the Blueway and its trailhead
- The town has already benefited from a streetscape improvement programme – which could be extended to link with the Blueway start location on Priest Lane

Key considerations and next steps:

- Traffic management measures will be required to give greater priority for cyclists and pedestrians between the start of the Blueway and the town centre
- The vacating of the former library building and the associated parking arrangements in front of this building might also present opportunities

10. Explore potential for gateway car park



There may be an opportunity to support the town with long-stay parking capacity at one of the town's gateways, to help reduce the demand on more central parking spaces in the centre. The spaces would be suitable for major employers in the town and, as part of a Green Travel Plan, should be supported by improved connections with the town centre such as through improved cycle facilities.

Project context

In making the town a more enjoyable place for visitors to spend time, and pedestrians to move around safely, there is an opportunity to support long-stay parking capacity through the identification of gateway locations for a long-stay car park.

Project components:

- Use of underused edge-of-town centre sites on a temporary or longer term basis
- Could be done in conjunction with a new active travel plan or cycle hire scheme
- Should be done through contracts with major local employers

Key considerations and next steps:

- Could be considered in the context of the opportunity to reimagine the N4 corridor

11. Cycle hire scheme and wider cycle infrastructure

Capitalising on Carrick-on-Shannon's role as gateway to the Shannon with the establishment of a cycle and/or scooter hire scheme. This promotes active and sustainable travel behaviour which also enhances the town's role as a hub for visitors to the region.

Project context

Cycle and scooter hire, including e-hire schemes are becoming more and more popular across towns and cities. In particular, they can be very effective in supporting towns with strong visitor numbers. Carrick-on-Shannon, the county town of Leitrim, is one of the fastest growing inland resorts in Ireland and the cruising capital of the Shannon.

Project components:

- Locate hire / docking stations in prominent town centre and waterfront locations
- Scheme should be designed to support visitors, workers in the town and residents
- Work in partnership with accommodation providers to provide incentivised schemes for visitors

Key considerations and next steps:

- Undertake feasibility work on the business case for a cycle (and/or scooter) -hire scheme, potentially with electric docking stations
- Could be delivered in conjunction with improvements to key public spaces, along the N4 corridor and as part of improvements to key gateway locations



Lime bikes, Castlebar Co. Mayo

Micromobility Ebike/Hire Schemes are becoming popular in towns and cities across Ireland. Currently Mayo County Council has partnered with LIME for the hire of Ebikes within the Town of Castlebar Co. Mayo. Bikes are located throughout the town and persons may use them for a fee, however there is no requirement to return the bike to a designated location, rather courteously parked as to not obstruct pavements, and no need to lock up bikes on account of location tracking built into the bike.

12. Improved mooring and overnight stay facilities



Improving public mooring provision will help attract more visitors to the town. Most of the mooring spaces in the town are privately controlled and these make a very important contribution to the town. More public mooring facilities would however attract more visitors to Carrick-on-Shannon. There is scope for improved facilities on both the environment east of the Shannon bridge which is much livelier and vibrant together with the more tranquil areas to the west and north.

Project context

Public moorings are currently limited to a stretch of the waterfront outside the Landmark Hotel. Their very limited availability would suggest that an increase in provision would help to meet demand not currently being met. Facilities for mobile home visitors is also an issues for the town and opportunities to provide dedicated facilities should be explored.

Project components:

- Potential to complement and expand existing nearby private mooring facilities north of the town with new public mooring capacity
- Combined with improved physical linkages to the town, this would help to attract visitors
- Opportunities to expand existing public mooring to the east of the Shannon bridge should also be explored

Key considerations and next steps:

- Facilities could be provided in conjunction with potential mobile home facilities at gateway locations
- Liaison with affected land owners will be important
- Management issues will be a key consideration for what should be considered to be family friendly facilities with easy access to the town centre

13. Northern town threshold gateway improvements



A co-ordinated range of improvements could be considered to help improve the arrival experience from the north of the town. The impact of these improvements should combine to create a higher quality environment which improves townscape quality and supports the economic and community life of the town. The opportunities should be explored through a spatial strategy for this specific area.

Project context

The northern gateway approach presents a number of further opportunities. This gateway threshold to the town plays an important role in defining the arrival experience.

Project components:

- A spatial strategy should be prepared with the involvement of relevant landowners and stakeholders
- Opportunities for high density forms of development should be explored along to ensure more efficient and effective use of land
- Care should be given to strengthening and improving key street frontages to create better quality street edges and a more clearly defined public realm
- A review of parking provision given the important role parking in this location plays for the town, with the objective of strengthening the parking function played by this area to help support the town
- Explore the opportunity for the area to become an active travel gateway at the threshold between the town centre and the proposed Blueway through the provision of cycle infrastructure and bike-hire facilities

- Explore opportunities to introduce further public art initiatives in this gateway location (note that some already exist in the area)

Key considerations and next steps:

- Facilitate engagement with and between landowners and businesses in the area to understand the issues they face

14. Eastern town threshold gateway improvements



Further environmental and access improvements to the town's principal gateway to help improve first impressions and lend greater support to the town centre.

Project context

The town's eastern gateway is the town's principal approach on the axis between Dublin and Sligo. The environmental quality of the approach is good with mature tree-lined roads and well-maintained verges, but further improvements should be considered.

Project components:

- Improved crossing facilities at the N4 roundabout to better connect the Business Campus area and Summerhill with the town centre
- Consider opportunities to consolidate public parking to help support the town centre and reduce pressure on more central parking space availability
- Consider opportunities for public art at this prominent gateway location to improve the arrival experience
- Improve public access to and facilities within the green open space along Summerhill east of the decked car park

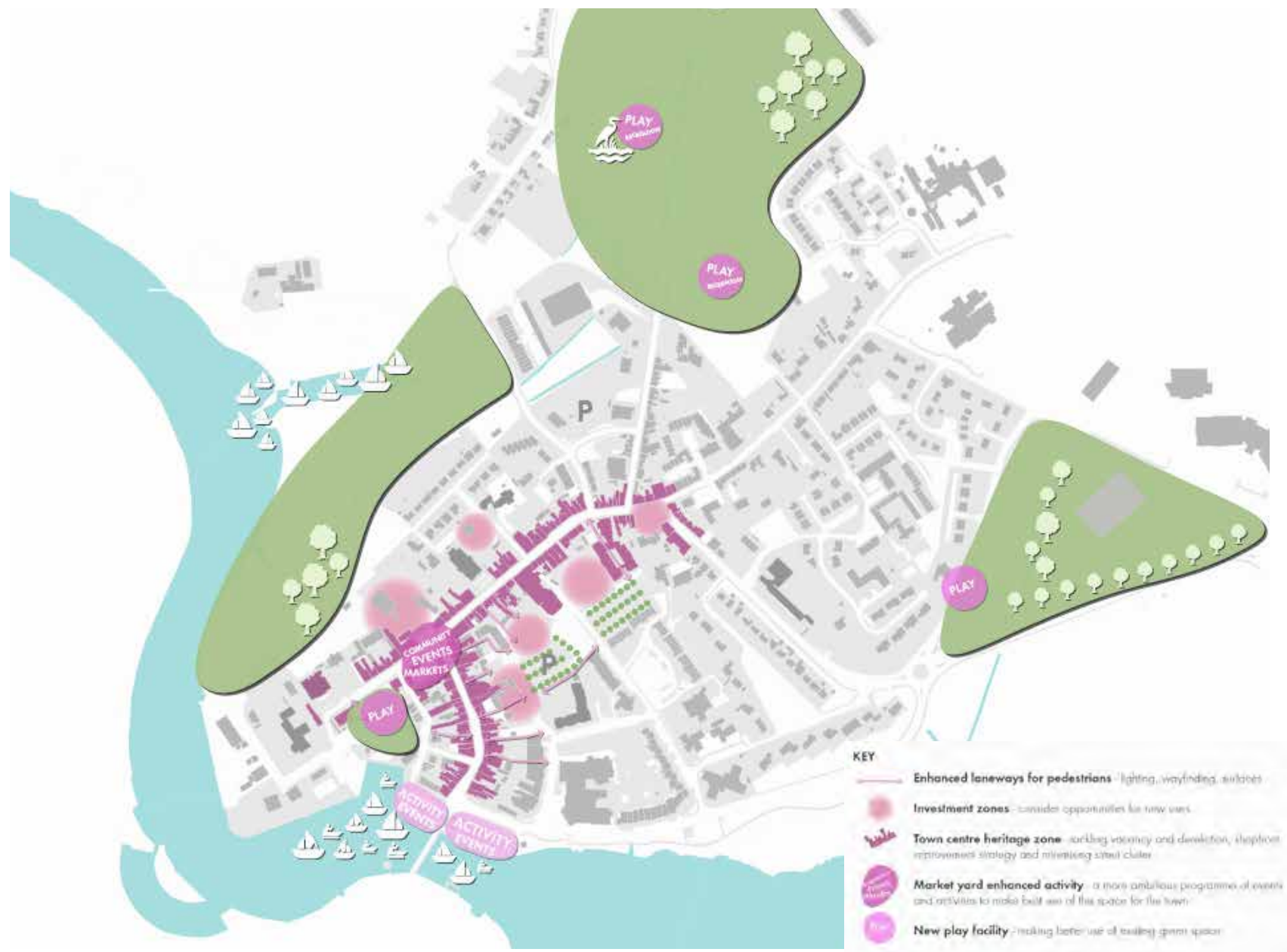
Key considerations and next steps:

- Improvements should be considered in this location in conjunction with any progress made on related projects and initiatives such as improving linkages between the Business Campus site and the town

3 Promoting town centre vitality and activity

Sowing the seeds of a successful and vibrant town centre with safe, attractive streets and spaces and opportunities for a diverse range of market, business and community spaces...

- 15. Town centre development opportunities and Destination Centre
- 16. Living above the shop
- 17. Shopfront improvements
- 18. Dedicated flexible community spaces / new library
- 19. Enhanced activities and events programme
- 20. Carrick-on-Shannon Laneways
- 21. Environmental improvements to town centre car parks
- 22. Improved children's playspace and facilities for younger people



15. Town centre development opportunities and Destination Centre



Given the overall context of the location, the town has a number of back-land development opportunities, mostly in private ownership. These present good opportunities for high quality mixed-use development, in-line with relevant policy and guidance. Delivery of a 'Destination Centre' could help to attract more people to visit the town centre, supporting existing businesses and town centre vitality.

Project context

The Town Centre First policy encourages the concentration of uses, activities, services and facilities within existing town centres. This will help to improve their economic fortunes and help to ensure development is delivered in the most sustainable locations. Carrick-on-Shannon, whilst already compact, does present a number of development opportunities in this regard. There are local aspirations for a Destination Centre project which could provide a range of services and uses, attracting visitors and providing space for the local community, thus supporting local businesses and town centre vitality.

Project components:

- Key sites include back-land sites which address the new Town Centre car park, land between the town's two churches on St. Mary's Close, land around the An Post on St George's Terrace and the eastern threshold of the town where Dublin Road meets Main Street.
- These development opportunities would be suitable for community uses, potentially including a new library facility and community centre, town centre living

accommodation, and other commercial uses suitable in a town centre location

- These development sites are relevant in the context of the need to find suitable locations for a new town centre library and the Carrick-on-Shannon Destination Project

Key considerations and next steps:

- These are privately owned sites and liaison with relevant landowners and stakeholders will be critical
- Flooding issues affect much of the town centre and a flood risk assessment will need to accompany any development proposals
- Heritage issues will be an important consideration in the design of any new development, with most of the town centre falling within the Architectural Conservation Area
- Principal planning matters including land use, flooding and heritage issues will be an issue addressed in the Carrick-on-Shannon and Cortober LAP currently being prepared jointly by Leitrim and Roscommon Local Authorities

16. Living above the shop



Whilst there is no major issue with vacancy at ground floor level, there is an opportunity to support an initiative to work closely with existing landlords and property owners to bring into use properties on vacant upper floors in the town centre. This helps create more compact towns, is in line with the principles of sustainable development, and will increase footfall in the town centre which will benefit shops and services.

Project context

Whilst vacancy and dereliction is not an acute issue at the ground floor level in Carrick-on-Shannon, residential accommodation on the upper floors of centrally located property will still have an important role to play in the drive towards compact growth, an important concept under Town Centre First policy.

Project components:

- Outreach to existing landlords, businesses and property owners in the town centre to bring vacant and underused accommodation on upper floors into productive use
- The rental market in Carrick-on-Shannon is very strong and provides opportunities in this regard, particularly for above shop dwellings
- Providing support and advice on processes and procedures

Key considerations and next steps:

- Environmental health issues may be relevant as well as planning issues
- Fire, safety and access issues may also be relevant

The most difficult part of improving town centre vitality rests with repurposing existing building and encouraging living over the shop again.

Above shop units are under utilised in Ireland compared to other countries. They should be brought back into accommodation for people to live in Carrick.

People back living in Carrick would create sustainable footfall for shops, coffee shops and restaurants during the day. Might encourage other businesses to open.



Living over the shop – Former Glove Factory, Tipperary Town

The former Glove Factory in Tipperary Town is being developed into four apartments over commercial space. The project was awarded €163,000 in funding under the 2022 Historic Towns Initiative. The funding was awarded under the re-use of historic buildings element of the scheme. The building has been vacant for almost 50 years and is of regional significance. (source www.heritagecouncil.ie)

17. Shopfront improvements



Examples of shopfronts and residential properties in Carrick-on-Shannon which took part in the town painting scheme

Building on the council's existing shopfront improvement initiatives, further work with local business owners, traders and land owners should be undertaken to deliver shopfront improvements. Support could include grant aid and professional advice. Some parts of the town centre are more of a priority than others, with Lower Bridge Street being a particular priority area.

Project context

Carrick-on-Shannon town centre is characterised by historic buildings and independent shops. There are some amazing examples of traditional shopfronts with businesses taking great pride in the displays which make a wonderful contribution to high street character and appearance.

Project components:

- Tapping into appropriate funding streams and then promoting the support available to traders, property owners and businesses
- The scheme will require continued proactive working from Council staff to promote the funding opportunities and encourage take-up
- Support should be available right through the design and delivery process
- Lower Bridge Street is a particular priority area which would benefit from investment and improvement in the quality of shopfronts

Key considerations and next steps:

- Heritage considerations, such as the centre's Architectural Conservation Area status, and other controls may be an issue for some properties
- Any improvement scheme is likely only to cover properties within the Carrick-on-Shannon Architectural Conservation Area
- Any improvement scheme will need promotion and close collaboration. Working with the Tidy Towns group might help in these efforts



Lower Bridge Street where recent shopfront improvements have taken place

18. Dedicated flexible community space / new library



A new purpose built or prominent refurbishment project to deliver a landmark library and flexible community facility for the town centre. The building would be a high-quality design in a prominent location in the heart of the centre.

A new library development that can accommodate and facilitate events, activities, exhibitions, workshops etc which is part of a larger community amenity/space in the town centre.

Indoor community areas badly needed for youth, elderly and other groups

There needs to be a community centre in Carrick, where groups of all ages can meet.

Project context

The Town Team and the local community have been clear that there is a need for more dedicated community space within the town centre. The Library's temporary relocation to a former pharmacy store on Bridge Street has been a success, but a larger facility is required.

Project components:

- A new purpose-built high-quality library which would replace the current temporary facility on Bridge Street
- The project should also prioritise the delivery of new flexible community spaces which would support a wide range of local stakeholder and community events and activities
- The project could deliver a landmark new build facility or conversion of an existing building

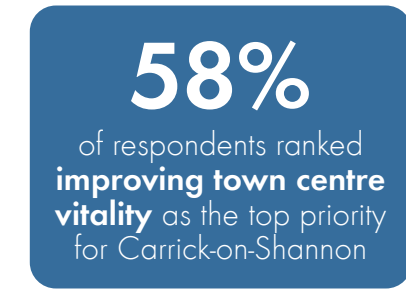
Key considerations and next steps:

- The brief for the facility will need to be prepared collaboratively, with input from key local community groups
- The existing library should remain open during construction of any replacement facility

You said one of the **top things you wanted to improve was...**



Access to a community space



Renovation of former school into new library, Kinnegad
WCC received Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) to restore, refurbish and extend a former national school located on the Main Street in Kinnegad, Co. Westmeath for use as a new Community Library, Education and Training Centre, as part of a larger rural regeneration and development strategy.

19. Enhanced activities and events programme



Working collaboratively with the local community, voluntary groups and local businesses, as well as the council's Economic Development, Tourism, Transport and other relevant Leitrim County Council services, an enhanced programme of activities and events could be developed, which complement those already in place. Investment in key riverside spaces to make them more suited to a range of events (Project 1 and 2), could help to support this.

Project context

Carrick-on-Shannon is a popular tourism and visitor centre. It is the gateway to The Shannon and one of the national hubs for Ireland's river cruise industry. The town's well managed and thriving evening economy has been recognised through its Purple Flag status. The Market Yard is the town's key event space, with a regular farmers' market.

Project components:

- The Market Yard will continue to be the focus for public and community events but following a new round of investment and improvement greater use will be made of this fantastic covered space
- Investment in other town centre spaces, including the two car parks either side of the Shannon bridge, will support a more ambitious programme of events – strengthening the town's tourism offer

Key considerations and next steps:

- The stakeholder networks are already in place to consider how an annual programme for events for Carrick-on-Shannon might be expanded and enhanced
- As businesses and community life emerge and recover from the COVID pandemic, lessons will have been learnt about how businesses can utilise street-space to support their operation

20. Carrick-on-Shannon Laneways



Working with relevant landowners and through lighting, public realm, security and landscape improvements, the existing network of laneways which provide connections, most particularly between the principal shopping streets and the new Town Centre car park, shall be extended and improved.

Project context

Given the largely intact heritage character of the town, the town is characterised not only by the traditional grain of narrow and deep high street shop frontages, but also regular gaps between them forming a network of lanes. These are an asset to the town and whilst mainly in private control, targeted improvements should be encouraged.

Key considerations and next steps:

- Undertake conditions and opportunities survey of existing and potential laneways in the town
- Identify potential priority projects
- Work with relevant land owners to agree scope and deliver improvements

21. Visual improvements to town centre car parks



The new car park at Town Centre is a key public space for the town centre and would benefit from improved landscaping to help with sustainable drainage, natural shading and biodiversity. Trees should be introduced to improve the environmental quality of the space. The objective should be to not lose parking capacity.

Project context

The delivery of the Town Centre car park has been one of the most significant town centre investments in recent years, re-providing some of the spaces lost through the delivery of the streetscape improvements and consolidating parking in one accessible location with excellent links to high street shops and services.

22. Improved children's play-space



A programme to deliver new and improved facilities for children and young people across the town should be undertaken. Play equipment, outdoor gyms and facilities for teenagers could all be delivered in conjunction with other improvements to the town.

Project context

Community feedback was clear in its support for improved play space and facilities for children. This would help to make the town centre better equipped to support families visiting the town.

Candidate locations include the Town Park (People's Park); open areas north of the town including the Priest's Lane area and the potential new ecology park; improved or additional facilities at the open space on Summerhill.

You said one of the **top things you wanted to improve was:**



Facilities and recreation for young people, especially teenagers

Should give young people a reason to stay in the town.

Playground in People's Park

Need play facilities in the town centre

More places for young people and teenagers to 'hang out', ideas included teen-friendly furniture and spaces in parks, bicycle and skate parks.

More playgrounds centrally for children and further outdoor recreation activities such as an outdoor gym.

Consider play facility in park area - design to factor in anti social behaviour - close at night



Community garden, Hortus Veemarkt, Utrecht

Co-designed community garden with incidental play, a gently sloping ground level with a natural, luxuriant layout featuring flowers and flowering trees.



Recreation grounds, Asplan Viak, Oslo Norway

The extension of Lakkegata school's recreation grounds is a new public urban space that will benefit the whole neighbourhood, also outside school hours. Children and teenagers in the area now have a new meeting place and space for activity. The goal is to create a safe space in an area previously known for unwanted activity.



ENABLING THE PLACE



Action Plan

Each project identified in the preceding ‘Enabling’ section of the report is included in the Carrick-on-Shannon TCF Plan Action Plan. This Action Plan is for everyone in the town to take and use to deliver change in Carrick-on-Shannon. Implementation of the ideas set out within the plan do not rest solely with one body, but will rely on the collaborative and collective involvement of many stakeholders. The Town Team and Leitrim County Council will be the custodians of the plan and, working alongside the community, stakeholders, and a range of partners, will help programme actions, keep projects under review and include new potential initiatives in the context of the wider plan opportunities.

The Action Plan contains the following information relating to each project opportunity identified:

- Term – which categorises each project as a short (0 – 3 yrs), medium (3 – 5 yrs) or longer (5 + yrs) project
- Priority – which assigns each project with an informal assessment of the priority of important each project could be considered to have in the context of the plan as a whole
- Significance – which informally considers the degree to which any given project is felt to address issues of a local, county/regional or national significance

- Lead – the singled named agent or stakeholder who will be chiefly responsible for the delivery of the project
- Partners – other relevant agents or stakeholders who we anticipate having an involvement in the delivery of projects, working alongside and supporting the lead stakeholder
- Funding – which lists the potentially relevant funding streams which might play a role in supporting delivery for any given project

Plan objectives

Any given project might address a number of different plan objectives. The Action Plan matrix seeks to highlight any given projects with the range of plan objectives that might be addressed by that project. This is not an exact science, but the matrix does demonstrates how each of the three ‘big idea’ themes tends to address specific themes and their respective objectives. With the objectives having already been cross tabulated with the national Town Centre First policy priorities, it also demonstrates how the plan projects address those higher order national policy priorities and objectives.

Relationship with Local Area Plan

It should also be noted that this plan is a key input document to the Local Area Plan Document (LAP) and the LAP will be monitored in context with the relevant legislation.

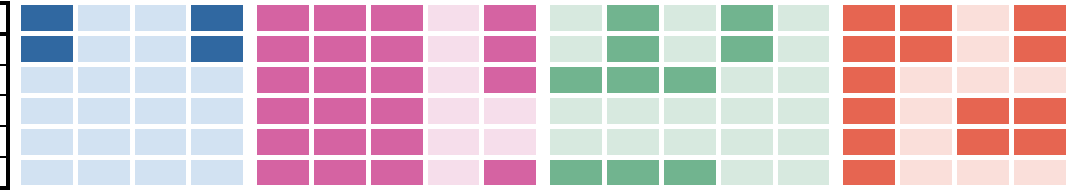


DELIVERY AND FUNDING

SUPPORTING TOWN CENTRE VITALITY				IMPROVING ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY					IMPROVING ACCESS AND MOVEMENT					STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY, IDENTITY, HERITAGE AND CULTURE			
TCV1	TCV2	TCV3	TCV4	EQ1	EQ2	EQ3	EQ4	EQ5	AM1	AM2	AM3	AM4	AM5	CIHC 1	CIHC 2	CIHC 3	CIHC 4

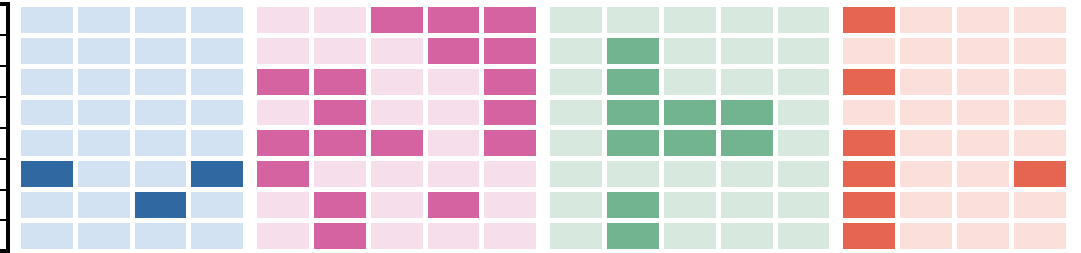
BIG IDEA 1 - Improving connection with the river

Ref	Action / Project	Term	Priority	Significance	Lead	Partners	Funding
1	Reimagine Quay Road West car park	M/L	☆☆☆	C/R	LCC	CoSTT	2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9
2	Reimagine Quay Road East car park	M/L	☆☆☆	C/R	LCC	CoSTT	2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9
3	Reimagining the N4 corridor	L	☆☆☆	Nat	LCC	TII, NTA, CoSTT	5, 6, 13
4	Improvements to the Town Park (People's Park)	M	☆☆	Loc	LCC	CoSTT	2, 4, 6, 8
5	Water-based leisure activities and information centre	M/L	☆☆	C/R	LCC	CoSTT, WI, Fáilte	12, 13
6	Green Loop around the town for walking and cycling	M	☆☆	C/R	LCC	CoSTT, NTA, TII	2, 4, 5, 8, 13



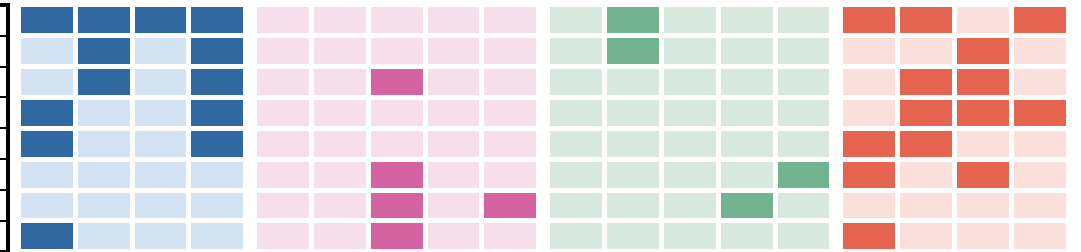
BIG IDEA 2 - Improving arrival gateways

7	New wetland ecology park	L	☆☆☆	Nat	LCC	CoSTT, Private	2, 4, 6, 8
8	Leitrim Road corridor improvements	M	☆☆	C/R	LCC	NTA, TII, CoSTT	5, 8, 13
9	Carrick-on-Shannon to Battlebridge Blueway & Trailhead	M	☆☆☆	C/R	LCC	CoSTT, Private, WI, Fáilte	5, 11, 12, 13
10	Explore potential for gateway car park	S/M	☆	Loc	LCC	NTA	5, 13
11	Cycle hire scheme and wider cycle infrastructure	M	☆☆	C/R	LCC	CoSTT, NTA, TII, Bike Co.	5, 8, 13
12	Improved mooring and overnight stay facilities	M/L	☆☆	C/R	Private	LCC, CoSTT, WI, Fáilte	11, 12
13	Northern town threshold gateway improvements	M	☆☆	C/R	LCC	CoSTT, Private, COC	2, 4, 6
14	Eastern town threshold gateway improvements	M	☆	C/R	LCC	CoSTT, COC, TII, NTA	5, 6, 8, 13



BIG IDEA 3 - Promoting town centre vitality and activity

15	Town centre development opportunities and Destination Centre	M	☆☆☆	C/R	LCC	CoSTT, Private, LCDC, COC	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14
16	Living above the shop	S	☆☆	Loc	Private	LCC, CoSTT, COC	3, 7, 8
17	Shopfront improvements	S	☆☆	Loc	Private	LCC, CoSTT, COC	10
18	Dedicated flexible community space / new library	M	☆☆☆	C/R	LCC	CoSTT	2, 6, 15
19	Enhanced activities and events programme	S	☆☆	C/R	CoSTT	LCC, COC	9
20	Carrick-on-Shannon Laneways	S/M	☆	Loc	LCC	Private, CoSTT	2, 6, 7
21	Environmental improvements to town centre car parks	S	☆	Loc	LCC	CoSTT	5, 6, 8, 13
22	Improved children's playspace and facilities for younger people	S	☆☆	Loc	LCC	CoSTT, LSP	6, 16, 17



Priority

- ☆ Lower priority - desirable but not critical
- ☆☆ Medium priority - an important local project for Carrick-on-Shannon
- ☆☆☆ High priority - a project of strategic importance to the town and wider region

Term

- S Short term: 0 - 3 years
- M Medium term: 3 - 5 years
- L Long term: 5+ years

Agency

- CoSTT Carrick-on-Shannon Town Team
- LCC Leitrim County Council
- Private Private landowners and developers

Funding options

- 1 Urban Regeneration and Development Fund
- 2 Rural Regeneration and Development Fund
- 3 Housing For All Programme - Croí Conaithe (Towns) Fund
- 4 European Regional Development Fund
- 5 Active Travel Grants
- 6 Town and Village Renewal Scheme (TVRS)
- 7 Historic Towns Initiative
- 8 Climate Adaption / Retrofitting Initiatives
- 9 Arts, Tourism and Festival Schemes
- 10 TVRS Streetscape Enhancement Scheme
- 11 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme
- 12 Fáilte Ireland Schemes
- 13 Local Authority Resources
- 14 Local Enterprise Office
- 15 Libraries Capital Programme
- 16 Play and Recreation Capital Funding Scheme
- 17 Leitrim Sports Partnership

Other funding opportunities

- Built Heritage Investment Scheme
- Historic Structures Fund
- Community Monuments Fund
- Heritage Council Community Grant Scheme
- Local Biodiversity Action Fund
- Waterways Ireland Heritage in Community Grant Scheme
- Community Water Development Fund
- Repair and Leasing Scheme, Buy and Renew Scheme
- Social Enterprise Capital Grants Scheme
- Community Support Fund
- Community Centre Investment Fund
- Heart of the Community Fund
- PEACE Plus
- LEADER
- CIAR
- Dormant Accounts Fund

Funding

Introduction

Town Centre First Policy is supported by a targeted investment programme. This includes the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund and Rural Regeneration and Development Fund, dedicated funds committed by the Government in Project Ireland 2040 and through funding streams within government programmes. This report reviews funding options which may be targeted to support delivery of plan proposals.

1. Key Town Centre First Funding Options

Key funding options identified in the Town Centre First Policy document that can deliver impactful change are as follows:

Urban Regeneration and Development Fund

As a key activator of Project Ireland 2040, the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) supports urban regeneration and compact urban growth, enables a greater proportion of residential and mixed-use development to be delivered within existing built-up footprints and enables urban areas to become more attractive and vibrant places. The fund is administered by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. To date, some €1.277 billion has been allocated to metropolitan areas, while some €323 million has been made available to towns. The latest round of URDF funding addresses long term vacancy, dereliction and the acceleration of the provision of residential accommodation, supporting the delivery of Housing for All and Town Centre First Policy.



Rural Regeneration and Development Fund

The Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) supports the regeneration and development of rural towns and villages with a population of less than 10,000. The fund is administered by the Department of Rural and Community Development, with a commitment of €1 billion in funding up to 2027. Funding is awarded by a competitive bid process. The RRDF supports ambitious investments of scale to deliver town centre regeneration including projects which aim to repurpose derelict, disused or heritage buildings, deliver remote working and enterprise spaces, build or transform libraries, deliver tourism infrastructure and generally support greater activity, footfall, business and residency.



Housing for All Crói Cónaithe (Town) Fund

Housing for All aims to improve Ireland's housing system and deliver more homes of all types for people with different housing needs. There are two schemes under the Housing for all Crói Cónaithe (Town) Fund to support housing delivery, these are managed and administered by Local Authorities on behalf of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. The Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant provides people with a grant to support the refurbishment of vacant properties. Under the Ready to Build Scheme, Local Authorities make serviced sites available at a discounted rate to individuals who want to build their own home.

European Regional Development Fund

The European Regional Development Fund 2021–2027 programmes set out an investment strategy for €853 million, of which €396 million is financed by the EU. Funding is managed by Regional Assemblies to ensure alignment with Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies and to support Local Authorities in delivering the sustainable regeneration of towns and urban centres. The fund aims to address regional imbalance, sustainable economic development, environmental sustainability and build low carbon and climate resilient communities. Tackling vacancy and dereliction in towns, in support of the Town Centre First approach is a particular emphasis of this fund.

Active Travel Grants Programme

The Active Travel Grants Programme administered by the National Transport Authority supports strategic pedestrian and cyclist routes, access to schools, permeability links, urban greenways, minor public transport improvement projects, dedicated infrastructure schemes such as the Safe Routes to School Programme and behavioural change programmes such as Green Schools. In 2022 the programme allocated €289 million funds to Local Authorities for over 1200 walking and cycling infrastructure projects nationally.

Town and Village Renewal Scheme

The Town and Village Renewal Scheme provides grant funding to support the economic and social recovery of rural towns with a population of less than 10,000. Applications are submitted to the Department of Rural and Community Development through Local Authorities and the scheme focuses on projects that have a positive impact in terms of place making and town centre regeneration. Projects funded have included the regeneration of banks, courthouses, cinemas and halls for community use, the development of public plazas, town parks, playgrounds, community gardens and dog parks. The scheme also funds projects at pre-development stage and the acquisition of suitable vacant or derelict properties that could be taken into public ownership and converted for community use. The scheme also provides specific funding to enhance streetscapes and shopfronts. Carrick-on-Shannon was one of 26 towns to benefit from funding under the streetscape enhancement initiative in 2022.



Climate Adaptation/Retrofitting Initiatives

The government's commitment to climate action is supported by funding to meet 2030 and 2050 climate targets. For example Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland provide sustainable energy grants to help homeowners, business owners, communities and industry reduce energy costs and greenhouse emissions. Local Authorities are funded in undertaking a programme of insulation retrofitting of the least energy efficient social homes. The Regional and Local Road Grant Programme support the maintenance of public roads in towns. The Active Travel Grants programme also provide supports for more sustainable travel modes to local schools, residential areas and places of employment.

Historic Towns Initiative

The Historic Towns Initiative is a joint undertaking by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the Heritage Council, it aims to promote the heritage-led regeneration of historic town centres. The initiative has two streams of funding: Capital works to repair and enhance the heritage of town through heritage-led regeneration projects that address dereliction and residential vacancy, the conservation of landmark buildings, streetscape and public realm conservation led projects; Funding for heritage-led regeneration plans to determine conservation focused interventions for a town.



Table 1 - Overview of Key Town Centre First Funding Options

Based on current programmes, objectives and funding levels can vary per call for applications.

Fund	Lead	Area of focus	Funding Level	Operation
Urban Regeneration and Development Fund	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	Long term vacancy and dereliction	€150m nationally, further details to be announced	Individual allocations to each Local Authority
Rural Regeneration and Development Fund	Department of Rural and Community Development	Vacancy, dereliction, town centre residency, enterprise development	€500,000 minimum for projects. Up to 80% of the total project value.	Grant
Housing for All Crói Cónaithe (Towns) Fund	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	Vacancy, dereliction, housing delivery	€30,000-€50,000 under the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant Up to €30,000 under the Ready to Build Scheme	Grant Local Authorities make serviced sites available at a discounted rate
European Regional Development Fund	Regional Assemblies	Regional imbalance, sustainable regeneration, environmental sustainability, low carbon and climate resilient communities	Determined on a case by case basis	EU funding matched by a set percentage of national funding.

Fund	Lead	Area of focus	Funding Level	Operation
Active Travel Grants Programme	National Transport Authority	Active travel	Determined under various programmes	Grant
Town and Village Renewal Scheme	Department of Rural and Community Development	Place making, town centre regeneration	€20,000 to €500,000 under main scheme Up to €400,000 under building acquisition measure €100,000 to each town selected under streetscape enhancement initiative	Grant, 90% of the total cost of a project, the remaining 10% by Local Authority and/or community and/or Philanthropic contributions Grant, 100% of purchase cost Grant
Climate Adaptation/Retrofitting Initiatives	Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland, Local Authority, National Transport Authority	Climate adaption	Determined under various programmes. Up to 100% of project value	Grant
Historic Towns Initiative	Heritage Council, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	Heritage-led regeneration	€150,000 - €250,000 for stream 1 heritage led regeneration projects Up to €40,000 for heritage-led regeneration plans	Grant, match funding of 20% by Local Authority or owners Grant, match funding of 20% from Local Authority

2. Other Funding Supports

There are a wide range of government schemes, many of which are administered at local level, that can provide investment and support the Town Centre First approach. These are advertised as they come available during the year. Key schemes administered or supported by the Local Authority are outlined in **Table 2**.

Local Authority resource allocations from its annual budget can support the plan and the Local Authority Development Contribution Scheme can provide contributions for public infrastructure and facilities benefiting development in the area.

Specific state grants to Local Authorities by various government departments for particular services can, subject to availability, support the plan (**Table 2**).

Work with partners such as Fáilte Ireland, Waterways Ireland, Transport Infrastructure Ireland and the National Transport Authority, programmes being advanced for the development of greenways/blueways, enterprise, rural and community development along with initiatives such as Tidy Towns and Pride of Place can also support the delivery of the plan in collaboration with the community (**Table 3**).

Table 2 - Other Funding Supports

Fund	Details	Lead
Built Heritage Investment Scheme	The Built Heritage Investment Scheme assists owners of heritage structures, including those on the Record of Protected Structures and in Architectural Conservation Areas, to conserve and repair historic structures by providing match-funded grants. The 2023 scheme awarded up to €15,000 for a standard project and up to €20,000 for a thatched structure project.	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Historic Structures Fund	The Historic Structures Fund aims to conserve and enhance heritage structures and historic buildings, in both private and public ownership, for the benefit of communities and the public. Grants in 2023 were offered under three streams. Stream 1 offered grants from €15,000 up to €50,000, with a maximum of 80% awarded relative to eligible costs. Stream 2 offered grants from €50,000 up to €200,000 for larger enhancement, refurbishment or reuse projects, with a maximum of 50% awarded relative to eligible costs. Stream 3 offered grants of between €5,000 to €10,000 to support conservation repairs and small capital works to vernacular structures.	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Heritage Council Community Grant Scheme	Local Authorities support and facilitate community groups in their applications to the Heritage Council Community Grant Scheme. The aim of the scheme is to support capital projects that improve access and inclusion to heritage sites and that apply good heritage practice to the management of places, collections, or objects (including buildings). The scheme also supports the purchase of essential equipment. The scheme is intended to enable communities and heritage non-governmental organisations to continue their work or to start new initiatives. The Heritage Council allocated in the region of €1.5 million to the 2023 scheme.	Heritage Council
Local Biodiversity Action Fund	The Local Biodiversity Action Fund to Local Authorities supports biodiversity projects and the implementation of Local Biodiversity Action Plans that align with actions under the National Biodiversity Action Plan. €3m was made available to the 2023 scheme nationally.	National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage



DELIVERY AND FUNDING

Fund	Details	Lead
Community Monuments Fund	The Community Monuments Fund aims to protect and promote archaeological heritage, supporting community development, traditional skills, jobs, tourism, regional and rural development. €6m was made available to the 2023 fund nationally.	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Waterways Ireland Heritage in Community Grant Scheme	Waterways Ireland Heritage in Community Grant Scheme supports communities seeking assistance for projects related to inland waterways heritage projects that fulfil or complement delivery of the Waterways Ireland Heritage Plan. €20,000 was made available for the 2023 scheme.	Waterways Ireland
Community Water Development Fund	The Community Water Development Fund is open to community and voluntary groups to assist in the protection and management of water quality. Examples of projects funded include feasibility studies, surveys and plans, biodiversity signage, water conservation measures, invasive species control, riparian management and planting, training workshops and citizen science initiatives. The fund is administered by LAWPRO on behalf of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. €500,000 was available under the 2023 fund.	Local Authority Waters Programme
Repair and Leasing Scheme	The Repair and Leasing Scheme provides upfront funding of up to €60,000 per unit (including VAT) for any works necessary to bring privately owned property up to standard and in return the property owner agrees to lease the dwelling to the Local Authority or an Approved Housing Body.	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Buy and Renew Scheme	The Buy and Renew Scheme supports Local Authorities and Approved Housing Bodies in purchasing and renewing housing in need of repair and makes them available for social housing use. It is a complementary initiative to the Repair and Leasing Scheme.	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Libraries Capital Programme	Funding is provided for the delivery and upgrade of library buildings and associated infrastructure through the Libraries Capital Programme. A €33 million programme was announced in 2023 and Local authorities are to be invited to submit proposals to the Department of Rural and Community Development.	Department of Rural and Community Development

Fund	Details	Lead
Community Enhancement Programme	The Community Enhancement Programme provides small grants to community groups to enhance facilities in disadvantaged areas.	Department of Rural and Community Development
Community Support Fund	The Community Support Fund provides support to community and voluntary groups impacted by rising costs. It is a once off fund under the Community Enhancement Programme and is administered by the Local Community Development Committee. The Local Authority secured €265,201 in funding for community, voluntary groups and clubs in the county.	Department of Rural and Community Development
Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme	The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme provides funding to tackle poverty and social exclusion through local engagement and partnerships between disadvantaged individuals, community organisations and public sector agencies. It is co-funded by the government and European Social Fund Plus.	Department of Rural and Community Development
Community Centre Investment Fund	The Community Centre Investment Fund supports community groups to upgrade and develop their community centre facilities. The scheme is administered directly by the Department of Rural and Community Development. Grants were available under three categories in 2022: Small scale projects/improvements to facilities €10,000 to €25,000; Larger scale projects €25,001 to €100,000; Major projects €100,001 to €300,000. A minimum contribution of 5% of the total project costs was required from applicants own funds for category two and three.	Department of Rural and Community Development
Heart of the Community Fund 2023	The Heart of the Community Fund is for not-for-profit organisations delivering vital services/support that promote and support peace, culture, education and community development. Grants between €5,000 and €25,000 were available in 2023. The fund also provides organisational investment grants.	The Ireland Funds
Leitrim Sports Partnership Programme	Funding provided through Sports Partnership includes for the provision of sports equipment and capital grants. In 2023, €10,365,000 was allocated to Local Sport Partnerships nationally.	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media



DELIVERY AND FUNDING

Fund	Details	Lead
Play and Recreation Funding Scheme	The Play and Recreation Funding Scheme supports the refurbishment of existing play and recreation facilities and new play and recreation facilities. Under the 2023 scheme Local Authorities could nominate one project for funding and funding was capped at €18,000 per project. The award of funding was contingent on the Local Authority match funding at least 25% of the amount provided by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth
Creative Ireland Programme	Creative Ireland projects enable local community engagement with creativity to support individual and community wellbeing, social cohesion, and economic development. Place-making is central to the initiative.	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Creative Ireland
Arts Programme	The Arts Office sets out a programme for funding, developing and promoting the arts in County Leitrim. Opportunities for funding arise throughout the year as government departments offer funding schemes and through programmes which the Arts Office organises or works with, such as Creative Frame, Spark, Culture Night, Creative Ireland.	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Arts Council
Per Cent for Art Scheme	The Per Cent for Art Scheme is an initiative where 1% of the cost of any publicly funded capital, infrastructural and building development can be allocated to the commissioning of a work of art. Capital programmes where the scheme applies include public housing projects, transport and environmental schemes, public buildings, conservation works carried out to public buildings and sites and urban and village renewal schemes.	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Arts Council
Arts Festival Investment Programme	With the support of the Arts Council, the Arts Festival Investment Programme provides financial support to festivals that provide opportunities for the public to access high quality arts events, that develop the work of artists and/or develop artforms, that have a long-term strategy that considers programme, audience and festival management. In particular, the scheme looks to support arts festivals that collectively encompass a wide range of artforms and locations across the county. The fund has qualifying conditions and provides grants between €1,000 and €5,000.	Local Authority

Fund	Details	Lead
Tourism Festival Investment Programme	The Tourism Festival Investment Programme is to support festivals to help drive domestic and international tourism visitors to Leitrim, increase bed nights, stimulate local economic activity and help improve the county's visitor experience. Eligible festivals include general festivals (literary, historical, traditional culture, music or family-focused), food festivals and angling competitions. The fund is limited and has qualifying conditions. Applications are evaluated competitively.	Local Authority
Community Festival Investment Programme	The Community Festival Investment Programme seeks to support the development of festivals that encourage a strong sense of community spirit, that make significant efforts to be inclusive in the organising of the festival and engagement of the wider community for the events held.	Local Authority
Local Enterprise Office	The Local Enterprise Office provides training, mentoring programmes and a range of financial supports designed to assist with the establishment and/or growth of businesses including Business Priming Grants, Expansion Grants, Feasibility Grants, Brexit supports, Agile Innovation Grants, Trading on-line Vouchers, Green for Micro, Lean for Micro.	Department of Rural and Community Development Enterprise Ireland
Social Enterprise Capital Grants Scheme	The Social Enterprise Capital Grants Scheme benefits smaller or start-up social enterprises which do not necessarily have the capacity to compete for larger grants, but which nonetheless have a need for upgraded/additional equipment to help them to deliver their services.	Department of Rural and Community Development

Table 3 - Other Programmes and Initiatives that can support Town Centre First Plan delivery

Fund	Details
PEACE PLUS	The PEACE PLUS Programme builds on PEACE and INTERREG EU funded programmes and aims to strengthen peace and prosperity within and between the border counties of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The programme aims to address social, environmental and economic challenges and has a community-led focus. The programme has a total budget of €1.1 billion from 2021-2027 and targets investment in six key thematic areas: Building Peaceful and Thriving Communities; Delivering Economic Regeneration and Transformation; Empowering and Investing in Our Young People; Healthy and Inclusive Communities; Supporting a Sustainable and Better-Connected Future; Building and Embedding Partnership and Collaboration.
Work with Fáilte Ireland	As the National Tourism Development Authority, Fáilte Ireland’s role is to assist the long-term sustainable growth of tourism and to help develop destinations including Carrick-on-Shannon. It also provides consumer and buyer insights, mentoring, business initiatives and training programmes and buyer platforms to help tourism businesses innovate and grow.
Work with Waterways Ireland	Waterways Ireland is responsible for the management, maintenance, development and promotion of inland navigable waterways, principally for recreational purposes. Waterways Ireland, in association with Fáilte Ireland and Local Authorities within the Shannon region, developed the Shannon Tourism Masterplan 2020-2030 to reposition the River Shannon and Shannon-Erne Waterway (collectively referred to as ‘the Shannon’) as a key tourism destination. The masterplan divides the Shannon into three regions and identifies Carrick-on-Shannon as a key hub town at the core of discovery zone 1. It also sets out an action plan for future tourism investment and supports interventions such as enhanced harbours and waterside public realms in towns, improved amenities for boat users and infrastructure for activity providers, remote moorings and tranquillity zones and new recreational infrastructure including a substantial network of walking and cycling trails.
Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways	Funding under the Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways to Local Authorities and state agencies aims to integrate Greenways into town centres by ensuring funded projects bring access from a Greenway to places of education, employment and entertainment in town centres. Transport Infrastructure Ireland is responsible for the national and regional greenway programme.
Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme	The Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme supports the provision of outdoor recreation infrastructure in the countryside that contributes to healthy active lifestyles and the economic and tourism potential of the area for both local communities and tourist visitors alike. In particular, the scheme provides funding for trails, cycleways, blueways, bridleways, as well as outdoor amenities located near rivers, lakes and beaches. The scheme is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development in partnership with Fáilte Ireland. Approximately €15 million was available under the 2022 scheme, with funding provided under four categories based on the size of the investment requirement.

Fund	Details
Regional Enterprise Development Fund	The Regional Enterprise Development Fund, administered by Enterprise Ireland, supports significant regional initiatives that build on sectoral strengths and/or to better leverage identified resources to improve enterprise capability, in order to help sustain and add to employment at county, regional and national level.
Rural Development Programme (LEADER)	The Rural Development Programme, widely known as LEADER, provides capital funding for rural development and job creation, with a focus on climate change and sustainability of the rural environment.
CLÁR	The CLÁR programme (Ceantair Laga Árd-Riachtanais) provides funding for small scale projects in rural areas that have experienced significant levels of population decline. The programme includes supports for the development of community and sport facilities, with grants from €5,000 to €50,000 available under the 2023 programme. These grants are administered by Local Authorities for the Department of Rural and Community Development.
Dormant Accounts Fund	The Dormant Accounts Fund can support the development of services to support the personal and social development of persons who are economically or socially disadvantaged, the educational development of persons who are educationally disadvantaged, persons with a disability.
Grants to support Town Team, Tidy Towns, Resident Associations and Community Awards Pride of Place and Love Where You Live	The Local Authority works with the Town Team, community groups and through initiatives such as Tidy Towns, Pride of Place and Love Where You Live to enhance the environment and make it a safe, clean and greener place.
Leitrim Age Friendly Strategy Programme	The Leitrim Age Friendly Strategy Programme seeks to provide walkable attractive communities and age friendly spaces, housing and transportation options, access to key services and opportunities for older people to participate in community activities.
Comhairle Na nÓg Iatroma	Comhairle Na nÓg Iatroma provides an opportunity for young people to identify the issues that are important to them and bring forward ideas and suggestions for bringing about change.
Healthy Ireland	Healthy Ireland aims to improve health and well-being, in line with Healthy Ireland, ‘A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013-2025’.

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