



MOATE

TOWN CENTRE FIRST MASTERPLAN

Final Masterplan for publication

May 2023



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040

Ár dTodhchaí
Tuaithe
Our Rural
Future




WESTMEATH COUNTY COUNCIL
Comhairle Chontae na hIarmhí

Allies and Morrison



ARUP



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1 INTRODUCTION

Project context

Moate is one of the first towns in Ireland to be awarded funding by the Government to prepare a Town Centre First Masterplan.

The project has been led by Westmeath County Council, working alongside the Town Team of local people and facilitated by an experienced team of consultants headed by Allies and Morrison. It has been developed through two rounds of engagement with local people and stakeholders, including workshops, public drop-in sessions, online consultation and school workshops, as well as engagement with council officers across a range of departments.

This core document is supported by the following work:

Baseline report, including the town centre healthcheck and the team's analysis of the town;

Engagement strategy, setting out the engagement process and the development of the plan in response to feedback; and

Delivery plan, providing detail on the approach to the implementation of the project ideas.



An update on Moate's Town Team

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

The masterplan is driven by a Town Team supported by the Town Regeneration Officer and a multi-disciplinary technical team in Westmeath County Council.

The Town Team was formed at a meeting held at the Carmelite Pastoral Centre on 8 February 2023. In all there are 23 team members supported by additional volunteers on sub groups including representation of the following local groups and interests:

Community & Voluntary, Social Inclusion & Age Friendly, Environment/Climate Action/Biodiversity, Business/Commercial/Social Enterprise, Elected Members, Moate Action Group, Sport, Education, Youth, Tourism, Residents Associations, Arts/Culture, Heritage & Conservation, Agriculture / Transport



We want Moate to be more welcoming

Look at local arts, crafts, and produce. Promote them in the town and bring back the market! We should be able to buy local honey and other produce

Need proactive and flexible approach for protecting and enhancing heritage buildings

Moate needs more restaurants and places to meet

Moate needs practical solutions - we need to spend our money wisely

The back of the Moate Museum has a great view to the Motte - good to explore!

The schools are great and bring people in

There's not enough for young people to do in the town

More green space

Don't make the street design fancy and complicated

The widest street in Ireland

There is a great sense of pride in Moate

The site has a poor structural environment. It disrupts public space and footpaths and is a health hazard

Tell Moate's stories with plaques and information

2 ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

Working together:

DECEMBER 2022

JANUARY 2023

FEBRUARY 2023

MARCH 2023

APRIL 2023

MAY 2023

key milestones

design team activities

Design team appointed

Westmeath County Council appoint a design team led by masterplanners Allies and Morrison Ltd, and including transport consultants Arup; conservation architects A2 Architects; and tourism, sport, and recreation specialists Repucon.

- Site visits
- Photo surveys
- Desktop research
- Baseline analysis
- Policy context analysis

STAGE 1 Engagement

Initial information and ideas gathering stage with local community and stakeholders, including:

- Stakeholder workshop event
- Drop-in event
- Public survey

- Analysis of workshop worksheets and outcomes
- Analysis of post-it note comments from table-top map at drop-in event.
- Ideas distilling and development

Town Team is formed

Westmeath County Council undertook a process to identify individuals to be in the Town Team. Representatives from local interest and community groups were put forward and a Town Team was assembled. A sub-group has also been formed.

- Ideas development
- Survey analysis
- Themes identified
- Draft vision developed

STAGE 2 Engagement

Emerging ideas and framework tested with local community and stakeholders, including:

- Stakeholder workshop event
- Three school workshops
- Public drop-in event
- Public survey

- Draft framework refined in response to feedback
- Further work developed in response to feedback
- Stakeholder 1-2-1s to help refine ideas

Review and sign-off

The draft masterplan will be presented for final edits and approval.

- Masterplan report is updated in response to feedback.

STAGE 3 Publication

Public presentation of the submission draft of the Town Centre First Masterplan.

- Implementation toolkit developed.
- Strategic Environmental Assessment / Appropriate Assessment screening
- Production of final report
- Client review and final revisions.



The events

Stage one

The first stage of engagement for the Moate Town Centre Masterplan comprised of three strands of engagement:

- A drop-in event held at Moate Library on Tuesday 31st February from 11am - 4pm.
- A stakeholder workshop held in the Carmelite Centre on Tuesday 31st February from 7pm - 9pm.
- A public survey, hosted on the council's website with hard copies available in the library, running from Tuesday 31st January - Monday 20th February.

The council promoted the events through community representatives and groups, through their website and social media channels. Notices were also displayed in council-run facilities and advertisements placed in the local newspaper.



Stakeholder meetings and workshops



Stage two

The second stage of engagement for the Moate Town Centre Masterplan encompassed the following activities:

- A public survey, hosted on the Council's website and also available in hard copy in the library, running from Tuesday 21st March to Tuesday 4 April 2023.
- An on-line briefing and Q&A session for the members of the Town Team on Thursday 23 March 2023.
- Three workshops with school groups from St. Bridget's Primary School, St. Oliver Plunkett School and Moate Community Secondary School on Tuesday 28 March 2023.
- A stakeholder presentation and workshop held in the Carmelite Centre from 7pm - 9pm on Tuesday 28 March 2023.
- A drop-in event held at Moate Library on Wednesday 29 March from 10am - 3pm.

The project team also received a series of individual written responses along with detailed comments from the Town Team.



Drop-in consultation

School work shops



Over 100 survey responses



Stage one feedback

What you told us: a summary

Town Centre Parking: Parking was the top priority for respondents. Comments included the need for a proper car park, three hour free parking, commuter parking and designated parking for shoppers.

Facilities and amenities: In regards to facilities in Moate, participants expressed that they would like to see more outdoor spaces to sit. The street furniture currently in place is in need of repair. Respondents would like to see more shops / a wider variety of shops in Moate. Respondents would also like to see a larger supermarket.

Traffic and connectivity: Traffic calming measures would be welcomed. Bus stops were frequently mentioned. More bus stops, better information on times and have the bus stops in better locations. Better traffic management by the school.

Tackling dilapidation: Building façades require improvements. Respondents see the unused buildings in Moate as an 'eyesore'. A few suggested turning the unused properties into housing. A shop front improvement scheme was suggested. Littering and dog fouling was highlighted.

Heritage and character: Respondents would like to see local crafts and produce displayed in a weekly market. Respondents would also like to tap into Moate's music history through events or festivals. Displaying Moate's history through plaques around the town. For example, the Quaker heritage.

Lighting, signage and footpaths: Designated parking signage. Consistency with signage is important. Better lighting and footpaths in the north of the town. The footpath conditions in the centre of the town are in need of improvements. More footpaths needed so children can safely walk to school.

Enterprise: Locals would like to see more businesses and jobs brought to Moate. Desire for the modernisation of Moate was mentioned, whilst retaining it's historic character and feel. People would like to see more investment being put into the town, and opportunities for community employment schemes.



Stage one survey summary:

You said the top three **challenges** facing Moate are...

P

1. **Parking**
2. **Derelict / vacant buildings**
3. **Variety of shops and services**



We asked... "What interventions do you think would **improve facilities and services** in the town?"



27% of you said...
Measures to cure dereliction

These themes are your **top priorities** in Moate:



Streets & spaces

Employment & economy



We asked...
"What do you think is Moate's **main attraction** for visitors?"



22% of you said...
Tourism attractions
e.g. Dun na Si Amenity



20% of you said...
Cycle or walking trails
(including the old rail trail)

Your top three **priorities** for improvements to **enhance access to, and movement around** are....



1. **Town centre parking**



2. **Pedestrian movement, safety and accessibility**



3. **Local bus services**



1. **Arts, culture, music and entertainment**
2. **Cycle or walking trails tourism**
3. **History and heritage**



We asked... "Do you think any of the following themes could be explored to **promote Moate as a destination**?"

Stage two survey summary:

The top **public realm strategies** you agreed with were...

1. **Minimising street clutter - 97%**
2. **Taking a more considered approach to street furniture - 97%**



We proposed **renovations** and suggested **new uses** for The Mulrean, The Old Bank, The Old Post Office and The Station buildings



Over 85% of you **strongly agreed or agreed with the proposals**

More than 85%

of you agreed with the masterplan's guiding principles



197

additional comments were shared. Key topics were...



1. **Suggested uses in the town**
2. **Car parking and traffic**
3. **Maintenance of green infrastructure in the public realm**

Suggested uses included:



1. **music rehearsal space/band stand**



2. **Restaurants**



3. **Hotel to support town events**

We asked...
"Which **pop-up or meanwhile use** could work well in Moate?"



74% of you said...
a farmers market



63% of you said...
an arts and music festival

Stage two feedback

What you told us in the survey: a summary

Town Centre Parking: Respondents were concerned about the changes to parking. Comments included acknowledging that cars were necessary to get around the area, and so a suitable amount of parking should be offered in order to make the town centre viable.

Facilities and amenities: Respondents commented that they would like to be consulted on street furniture and that the recently implemented seats on Main Street do not work for them. Some responders suggested other facilities and uses such as a music space/band stand, restaurants, a craft hub, hotel and greater use of the community centre.

Traffic and connectivity: There were suggestions to create a one-way loop on Station Road to alleviate school traffic. Other comments included reducing the speed limit and consideration of the impact of the new proposed dwellings. Some responders wanted to see cycleways on Main Street and connecting to the Greenway.

Tackling dilapidation: The strategy to tackle dilapidation was welcomed, with many commenting that short term interventions such as painting of buildings could help immediately to alleviate the town looking 'run down'.

Heritage and character: Commenters welcomed the strategy for enhancing the heritage and character of Moate, including making the Motte more publicly visible.

Lighting, signage and footpaths: Better lighting was a key concern, both throughout the centre and on foot and cycle lanes.

Green infrastructure: Respondents liked the idea of introducing more greenery to Main Street, but wanted to see a plan for ensuring its maintenance. Some commenters wanted to see more provision for teenagers, others wanted to see improvements to Dun Na Si Park and the Patrick Kelly Memorial Town Park.

Delivery: Comments included understanding the timeline and scale of the masterplan and strategy. Respondents wanted to see what the next steps would be.



What you told us at the drop-in sessions: a summary

Town Centre Parking: Some commenters suggested that active parking management was key to ensuring that new parking rules were adhered to. Limiting the number of hours that people could park on Main Street was suggested.

Facilities and uses: There were several comments about the limited offer of existing shops. Commenters wanted to see a new supermarket and a hardware shop. There was also a comment on providing spaces for teenagers.

Traffic and connectivity: Comments included ensuring that bus stops were located close to the shops and suggestions for how traffic could be alleviated at Station Road.

Tackling dilapidation: There were concerns that there was no heart or focal point in the town. Participants welcomed the renovation of older buildings to enhance Moate's character. Paint and shop front enhancements were also seen as key to improving the look of the town centre.

Heritage and character: Comments included integrating the Weighing Scales at the Old Mill into the public realm improvements. Commenters

like how the historic elements of the town were celebrated in the masterplan.

Lighting, street furniture and footpaths: Responders welcomed the improvement to the public realm and wanted to see street furniture with innovative and creative designs.

Green infrastructure: The trees and greenery as suggested on Main Street were welcomed by commenters, but there was some concern over vandalism and maintenance.



"We need a hangout space for teenagers"

"Lovely to see historical elements brought out"

"The Weighing Scales at the Old Mill need to be celebrated"

"That's the town I want to live in"
- comment in response to illustration of the future vision of Moate

What you told us at the workshops: a summary

Celebrating and realising Moate's culture and heritage

Many comments were about cycling and walking access to the Motte. There was appetite for signs, interpretation and heritage trails to historic assets.

Making sustainable movement an easy choice in Moate

Comments included lobbying for more frequent buses and introducing a two way cycle track on Main Street. There were concerns expressed over the end on parking causing slowing down of traffic.

Rebalancing Moate's streets and public spaces

The masterplan's proposals to improve pedestrian safety was welcomed. There was concern over parking not being near the shops, especially for older and less mobile residents.

Other ideas for the masterplan?

Commenters wanted to see certain areas and attractions on the map such as Dun Na Si park and the performing arts centre to show routes and access to these places. Other suggestions included solar lighting on the old railway, increasing food and beverage provision in the town, connecting with stakeholders such as Supervalu, Supermacs and Irish Rural Links.

Creating a climate resilient and adaptable Moate

Most comments were in regards to maintenance of additional greenery, such as leaves blocking drains and causing flooding, and potential for vandalism on new greenery.

A vibrant and welcoming Moate which supports a range of businesses and community needs

There was a desire for a second supermarket. There was concern over the high vacancy rate, and people welcomed the idea of a market. Further hotels/bed spaces would be needed.

Defining Moate's image, identity and role within the wider region

Comments included building with pride, creating a heart to Moate through markets and events, creating a cohesive signage strategy and the need for town marketing and branding.



Pick your favourite streetscape approach:



Schools consultation summary

- The top **suggested facilities** were:
- 1. Indoor hang out place for young people especially for cold months**
 - 2. A gym or gym trail for under 16s**
 - 3. A basketball court for use outside of school time**



Primary school students asked for **more play opportunities: playgrounds, sports courts, swimming pool**

The pump track was well received



- What students like** in Moate?
- 1. The ice cream shop**
 - 2. Supermacs**
 - 3. The pitches and tennis court**
 - 4. Dun Na Si and the animals**
 - 5. Tuar Ard**



"Can we put a throne on top of the castle mound?"

"Everyone cycles, but not to school - we need safe routes to school"

"The new links will transform the town"

"Youth friendly facilities are needed, such as a gym, Supermacs, outdoor seating"

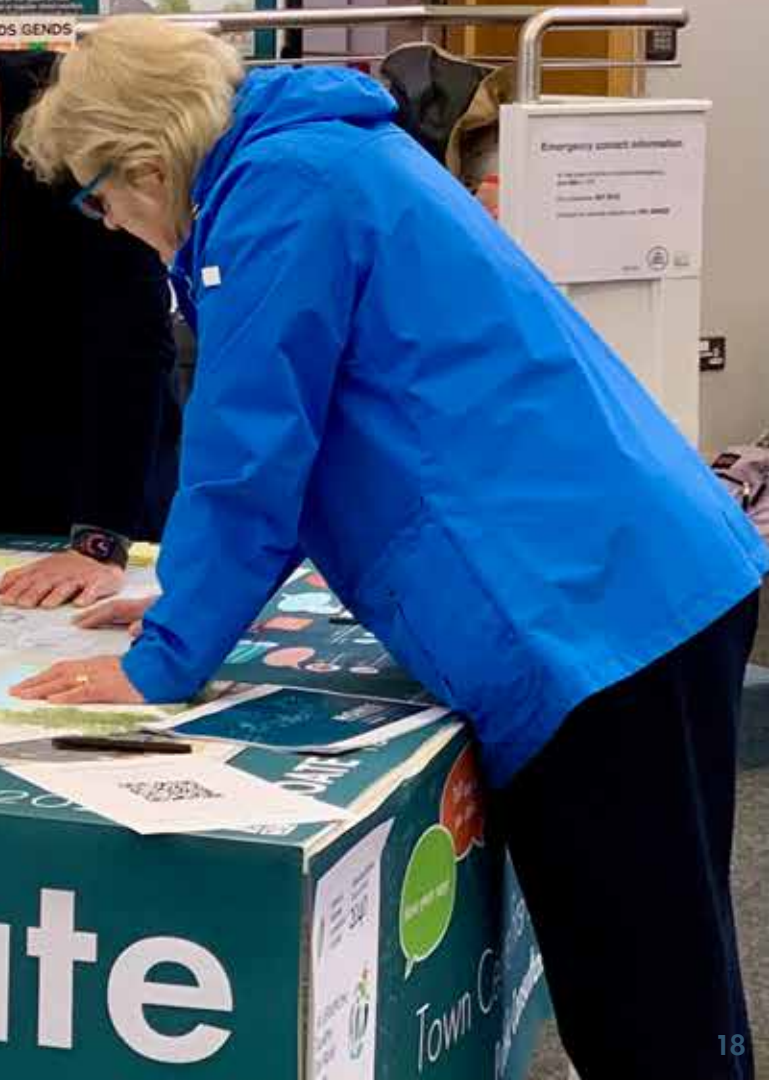
- Further ideas from the students:
-  **1. Specific graffiti spot for artwork**
 -  **2. More nature and flowers**
 -  **3. More safe places to cross the street**
 -  **4. Traffic free space in front of the school**



This illustrative map shows the proposed layout for the town centre. The blue areas represent the proposed new buildings and the green areas represent the proposed new green spaces. The blue areas are subject to many constraints, so not everything will necessarily be built as shown. Designs are likely to change as they are developed.

High Street is the focus for many of the issues and ideas raised through the first stage of consultation.

ENDS GENDS



Moate Town Centre

Have your say! Tell us what you think!

Moate

Town Centre

2040

Ar d'Íochtaí Tuaithe Our Rural Future

WESTMEATH COUNTY COUNCIL

WELCOME TO WESTMEATH



3 VISION & PRINCIPLES

The vision for Moate as a sustainable and healthy town has been developed from community input and the national and local policy context.

It is encapsulated in the following principles:



Celebrating and realising Moate's culture and heritage



Creating a climate resilient and adaptable Moate



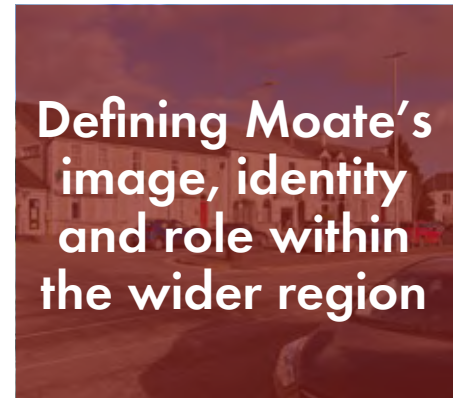
Rebalancing Moate's streets and public spaces



Making sustainable movement an easy choice in Moate



Creating a vibrant and welcoming Moate which supports a range of businesses and community needs



Defining Moate's image, identity and role within the wider region

Celebrating and realising Moate's culture and heritage

Identify, adapt, restore and reuse historic buildings...

for the benefit of the local community, whilst also creating a more attractive town centre experience, restoring pride in the historic character;

Tell Moate's stories with pride...

through interpretation, signage, wayfinding, heritage trails, events and festivals; and highlighting historic assets with possible interventions including lighting, greening and wayfaring;

Enhance Moate's presence as a historic town...

by exploring historic or cultural designations which provide opportunities for heritage funding and tourism;

Explore the use of technology...

to help celebrate and promote Moate as a heritage and cultural destination;

Tackle dereliction and improve appearance of buildings...

particularly façade improvements to buildings in the town centre to improve overall perception and attractiveness;

Reinstate the significance of Moate's civic spaces...

by rebalancing public space and parking to create opportunities for community interaction, meeting space or events.

Creating a climate resilient and adaptable Moate

Re-use and re-purpose vacant and underutilised assets...

for uses such as homes, remote working hubs, cultural or community uses;

Enhance energy efficiency of buildings...

including the thermal upgrading of the historic building stock;

Enhance connectivity of streets and places...

to encourage sustainable movement for short journeys;

Make effective use of infill and backland sites...

to deliver a mix of appropriate town centre uses which help to bring vitality to the town centre, including innovative and compact housing types;

Introduce, greening, planting, growing and sustainable drainage...

to create an attractive streetscape, improve biodiversity, create shaded areas, and help mitigate the effects of climate change such as flooding and extreme heat;

Embracing the circular economy approach...

to prevent, minimise and recycle waste.

Rebalancing Moate's streets and public spaces

Redress the balance between public space and parking...

to create a safer, more accessible pedestrian experience which improves the attractiveness and perception of the town;

Manage and improve town centre parking...

by exploring options for an improved town centre car park to deliver additional parking. This can then facilitate further conversations about options for parking on Main Street and Church Street;

Improve and provide a range of public and green spaces...

which are carefully designed to serve the whole community, performing multiple roles as places to rest, meet, play, exercise, walk the dog or host community events;

Create an accessible and inclusive streetscape...

which supports ease of movement for children travelling to school, older people, and people with reduced mobility - minimising uneven surfaces and street clutter;

Manage and improve traffic...

to lessen its impact on the town centre experience by easing congestion at peak times (school drop-off and pick-up), slowing traffic down to create a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

Making sustainable movement an easy choice in Moate

Capitalise on the Greenway as a brilliant asset...

by improving it and promoting it as an easy and safe way to get around the town centre - for students going to and from school; as a leisure asset for residents, and a tourism asset for visitors;

Improve connectivity and shorten journey distances...

by creating safe, comprehensive and accessible new walking and cycling connections which shorten journeys to key town centre services and amenities, making sustainable travel the more appealing option. Infill development should help to improve gaps in street frontages - creating more appealing and safer routes;

Consider the connectivity of new development...

to ensure it is carefully planned to provide walking, cycling and vehicle connections to the town centre and adjoining neighbourhoods, with consideration to future links beyond the life of this plan;

Create walking and cycling routes for exercise and leisure...

of varying lengths and which offer attractive and safe routes, taking in some of Moate's key natural and historic assets;

Improve signage, facilities and services which support sustainable movement...

such as cycle parking and public transport, and facilitating infrastructure to enable enhanced connections to public transport networks. Also exploring technology as a way of improving overall ease and experience.

A vibrant and welcoming Moate which supports a range of businesses and community needs

Enhance existing, and provide a range of public and community spaces...

at a range of scales - helping to strengthen community ties across all ages, offer space for activities and events, and improve the health and wellbeing of the community and visitors;

Provide a mix of well designed housing types...

which respond to local character and provide for a range of households, including town centre living for older people with ease of access to the town centre, offering independence;

Provide a strong mix of town centre uses...

which supports the needs of the community and provides opportunities for jobs and enterprise, including working hubs and experience-led retail, such as a food markets and light industry;

Enhance the town's programme of events and activities...

which celebrate aspects of the town's identity, and appeals to a range of people in the community as well as visitors;

Explore further use of technology...

to help share information within the community and promote Moate as an attractive town to live, work, visit and spend time;

Create an attractive and welcoming environment...

with well designed and considered planting, attractive shop fronts, street furniture, lighting, public art, signage and wayfinding.

A vibrant and welcoming

Defining Moate's image, identity and role within the wider region

Define and build on Moate's role within the region...

- as a stronger town centre for shopping, local services, education and health, serving both the town and the wider rural catchment area;
- as an attractive place for people to visit and spend time;
- as a welcoming place to break a journey, with good amenities;

Define Moate's image and identity...

- as an attractive historic market town which celebrates the continuity of its character and appreciates its historic assets whilst also meeting today's needs;
- as a key visitor destination along the national cycle network;
- as an important rural community hub;

Promote what is unique and special in Moate...

- a distinctive, wide and welcoming Main Street which can be improved to support walking and cycling, create space for outdoor seating and greenery as well as continuing to provide access and parking.



4 MASTERPLAN FRAMEWORK

Masterplan themes

The concepts set out in the Vision translate into project ideas which can be delivered and supported over time. Through the course of the masterplan development an illustrative plan and supporting themes have been used to develop ideas and categories them into groups which can form the basis for a delivery strategy.

The masterplan supports planning policy by illustrating what could happen on particular sites. It is important to note that the masterplan does not replace or update existing planning policy. The masterplan seeks to illustrate the key opportunities and help people to understand what policy designations could mean for individual landowners and for the wider town. It is not intended to be a developed design, and will not dictate the delivery of particular schemes on a site.

It is hoped that the ideas shared for sites help to galvanise interest through showing the potential for positive changes. It is also intended that by identifying a coordinated approach to the restoration of historic buildings, improvements to the streets and spaces and coordinated and contextual development a coordinated and cohesive strategy can be defined which will attract funding and support.

HERITAGE AND PLACEMAKING sets out the opportunities for enhancing and celebrating the historic character, heritage and cultural assets of the town.

These projects typically address existing issues and ongoing management and stewardship including projects which can be led by the Town Team and Council.

DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL considers at potential sites and development opportunities and the activities that these could deliver to support the town centre.

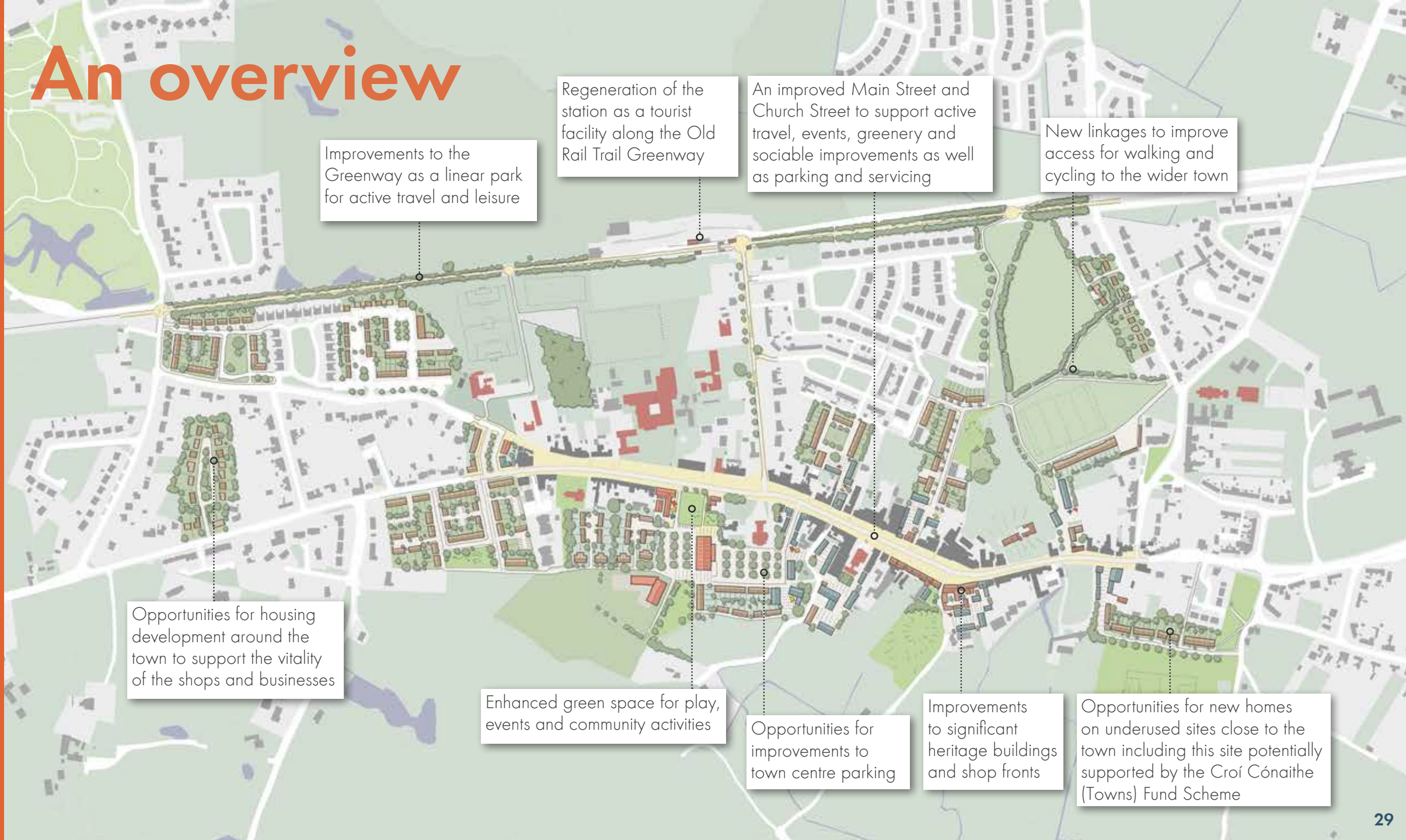
Most of the development projects are on sites in private ownership. The Council and Town Team have a role to play in stimulating interest and guiding schemes as they develop.

MOVEMENT & CONNECTIONS looks at the strategic road network and also includes ideas for better walking and cycling links, and parking.

Public realm and green space projects cover a mix of public and private spaces. The Council and Town Team have a key role in planning and delivering improvements to key streets and spaces, as well as coordinating and facilitating improvements to private space.

GREEN SPACES & LEISURE identifies opportunities for improvements to existing and formalised new green spaces, public spaces and routes.

An overview



Improvements to the Greenway as a linear park for active travel and leisure

Regeneration of the station as a tourist facility along the Old Rail Trail Greenway

An improved Main Street and Church Street to support active travel, events, greenery and sociable improvements as well as parking and servicing

New linkages to improve access for walking and cycling to the wider town

Opportunities for housing development around the town to support the vitality of the shops and businesses

Enhanced green space for play, events and community activities

Opportunities for improvements to town centre parking

Improvements to significant heritage buildings and shop fronts

Opportunities for new homes on underused sites close to the town including this site potentially supported by the Croí Cónaithe (Towns) Fund Scheme

Heritage and Placemaking

The strength and value of Moate's heritage and identity have been a consistent thread throughout the process of consultation and research for this masterplan. Local people are proud of their town, and would like to see the restoration of historic buildings and spaces which can in turn support activities which bring the community together and which showcase the best that Moate has to offer locals and visitors.

The theme of heritage and identity brings together a range of heritage restoration projects and activation of key spaces which are at the heart of the town and which together form an important strand of project delivery.

The restoration of historic buildings and the shop front enhancement of the key groups building frontages along Main Street represents one of the most significant tasks for the Town Team. There are a number of key funding streams which will be available to support this, and the masterplan demonstrates the potential scope and nature of the task.

The activation and ongoing programming of events and markets in the town centre is also a key opportunity, and one which could help to galvanise rapid change and quick wins.

Right: Illustration showing the potential for the restoration of the Mulrean's building and adjoining terrace of shops, supported by public realm enhancement.



You said...

"Post Office or Bank of Ireland building as a work hub, restaurant, community centre"

- survey comment

We asked... "Are there any derelict or vacant historic buildings in Moate which you feel should be refurbished and / or re-purposed?"

Your top 3 answers were...

1. The Old Post Office
2. The Old Bank; and
3. Mulrean's Building

Derelict / vacant buildings was one of the top challenges facing Moate.



"Dereliction is a blight on the town and vacant premises."

- survey comment

"Improve the existing shops that are there."

- survey comment

Most people selected 'Tourist attractions' as Moate's main attraction for visitors.



"The Motte should be visible..."

- survey comment

History and heritage was one of the top themes chosen by you to be explored to promote Moate as a destination



"I hope to see all the old shops, buildings and bars being renovated."

- survey comment

"...work on improving public spaces, eradicating vacant units and improving shopfronts"

- survey comment

We asked...

"What interventions do you think would **improve facilities and services** in the town?"

27% of you said...

Measures to cure dereliction



Key moves...



Old station buildings provide an opportunity for a new hub supporting walking and cycling on the Greenway.

Group refurbishment of historic terrace and re-purposing of key vacant buildings.

Enhanced setting for the Quaker burial ground.

Existing historic buildings refurbished and a clear new entrance established towards the park.

Potential for co-working space and cycle cafe

Re-thinking the space outside Tuar Ard as a location for events and day-to-day activities

Heritage centre or community hub with homes on the upper floors

Celebrating the Motte with enhanced views and potential for access.

Potential community hub, co-working space, restaurant or gallery space

Heritage and placemaking

Town Centre activation

Projects H2, H5

Alongside the building and public realm interventions, there are a number of initiatives which can be developed which move beyond the scope of the masterplan, but which deliver on the potential that the masterplan facilitates. This includes events and activities, organisation of markets, promotion of the town for visitors etc. A further opportunity is the assistance in marketing the town to attract people to run new businesses such as hotel/guest house, restaurants etc.

This project can be undertaken as an ongoing programme of work, and ideally should be part of delivering early quick wins through activation of existing spaces as well as delivering ongoing management and curation.



Celebrating Moate's culture and heritage

Climate resilience and adaptability

Rebalancing Moate's streets and public spaces

Enabling sustainable movement choices

A vibrant, welcoming Moate

Moate's image and identity within the wider region

Heritage and placemaking

Historic buildings and shop fronts

Projects H1, H3 - H7, H9 - H12

The masterplan identifies a series of opportunities to work with the built heritage of the town. These include working with empty buildings to bring them back into active use (e.g. Bank and Post Office); saving and improving vacant and derelict buildings (eg Mulrean's and Dr Cuppaige's); and improving the condition of heritage buildings such as the key terrace on the south side of Main Street and the Castle.

There are a series of projects under this theme which can be advanced as a group of independent but connected works. The masterplan provides the basis for funding bids against a number of sources of funding which could help to unlock these improvements as relatively quick wins.

Right: Ministers Heather Humphreys, Malcolm Noonan TD and Peter Burke TD from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage visiting Mulreans



Celebrating Moate's culture and heritage

Climate resilience and adaptability

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Shopfront enhancement

Vacant and dilapidated shops have a huge impact on the image and perception of Moate. A shopfront enhancement strategy should be considered which includes site-specific guidance for Moate.

Guidance should include how shopfronts should be improved in terms of their form, materiality, colour and quality in a way which respects local character and remains in-keeping with existing high quality shopfronts. Guidance should also include information about methods and cost, as well as opportunities for funding.

Government funding is often made available for such schemes, including Westmeath County Council's own Shopfront Enhancement Grant Scheme which has been in place since 2019. The Town Team could help to promote such funding opportunities and associated guidance in the town. A local team could be established to plan and deliver improvements.



Examples of high quality local shopfronts



Examples of derelict and vacant shopfronts in Moate

Buildings and shop fronts

General guidance

The 'Streetscape Enhancement Initiative' established in 2021 by the Dept of Rural and Community Development as part of the 'Our Rural Future' Campaign is intended to make rural towns and villages more vibrant and attractive places to live, work and visit.

The types of projects that could be supported include:

- Strategic collaboration between property owners to paint buildings and/or shopfronts in vibrant colours;
- Upgrade or restoration of historic / traditional shopfronts;
- Provision of street planting, shrubbery, trees and flowers boxes;
- Installation of canopies; and
- Murals/public artwork

Moate is ideally placed to benefit from funds such as this, with the Town Centre First Masterplan defining the clear potential and the Town Team and Council working together to support bids and delivery in a coordinated way.



Examples of shops in other towns which have benefited from shop front enhancement schemes

Case study



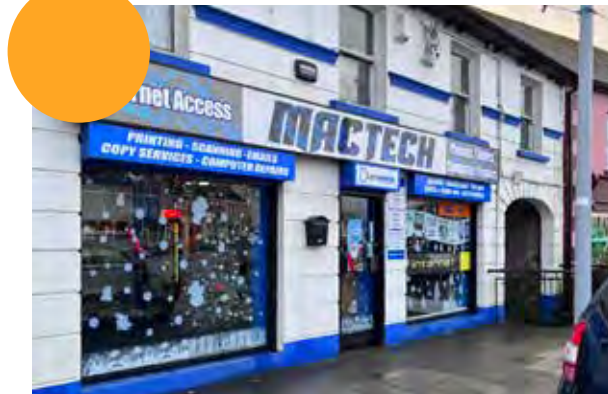
In Moate, a number of property owners have already benefitted from Westmeath County Council's Shopfront Enhancement Grant Scheme, including Peadar's Bar shown above.

Buildings and shop fronts



High Priority - empty historic buildings

Buildings such as Mulrean's, the Old Post Office and the Old Bank represent the most significant and urgent challenge for restoration. They firstly need to be made weather-tight and secure to protect the overall fabric of the building. Beyond this they are likely to require internal updates to provide a habitable environment, as well as historically appropriate external refurbishment to make them both attractive to let and also enhance their contribution to the town centre.



Light touch - older buildings

There are a number of older buildings in the town centre which would benefit from de-cluttering and enhancement of the street frontage to better support their existing use and the wider Main Street character. This would involve careful consideration of colour scheme and details such as modern signage boxes and shutters as well as the overall condition of the building frontage.



Light touch - modern buildings

There are a number of more modern buildings on Main Street which are unoccupied, despite being in a good location and in reasonable condition. Their attractiveness as a space to let could be enhanced by refreshing and updating their frontage using a tasteful colour palette and with attractively sign-written graphics to suggest occupation. The windows of empty units could feature temporary displays associated with the town, such as local culture, history and events.



Celebrate and support

There are already a number of shop fronts in Moate which set a high standard of presentation and create a good precedent for further work.

These could usefully form part of good practice guidance as well as potentially benefitting from future support for maintenance and improvements such as additional lighting, security or decoration.

Buildings and shop fronts

- High Priority - empty historic buildings
- Light touch - older buildings
- Light touch - modern buildings
- Celebrate and support



Church Street north side



Church Street north side | Main Street north side

Buildings and shop fronts

- High Priority - empty historic buildings
- Light touch - older buildings
- Light touch - modern buildings
- Celebrate and support



Buildings and shop fronts

- High Priority - empty historic buildings
- Light touch - older buildings
- Light touch - modern buildings
- Celebrate and support

The Mill is an important gateway to the tow centre



Main Street south side



Priority project for coordinated group referurbishment

Main Street south side

Buildings and shop fronts

- High Priority - empty historic buildings
- Light touch - older buildings
- Light touch - modern buildings
- Celebrate and support



Main Street south side



Main Street south side

Church Street south side

Buildings and shop fronts

- High Priority - empty historic buildings
- Light touch - older buildings
- Light touch - modern buildings
- Celebrate and support



Church Street south side



Church Street south side

Heritage and placemaking



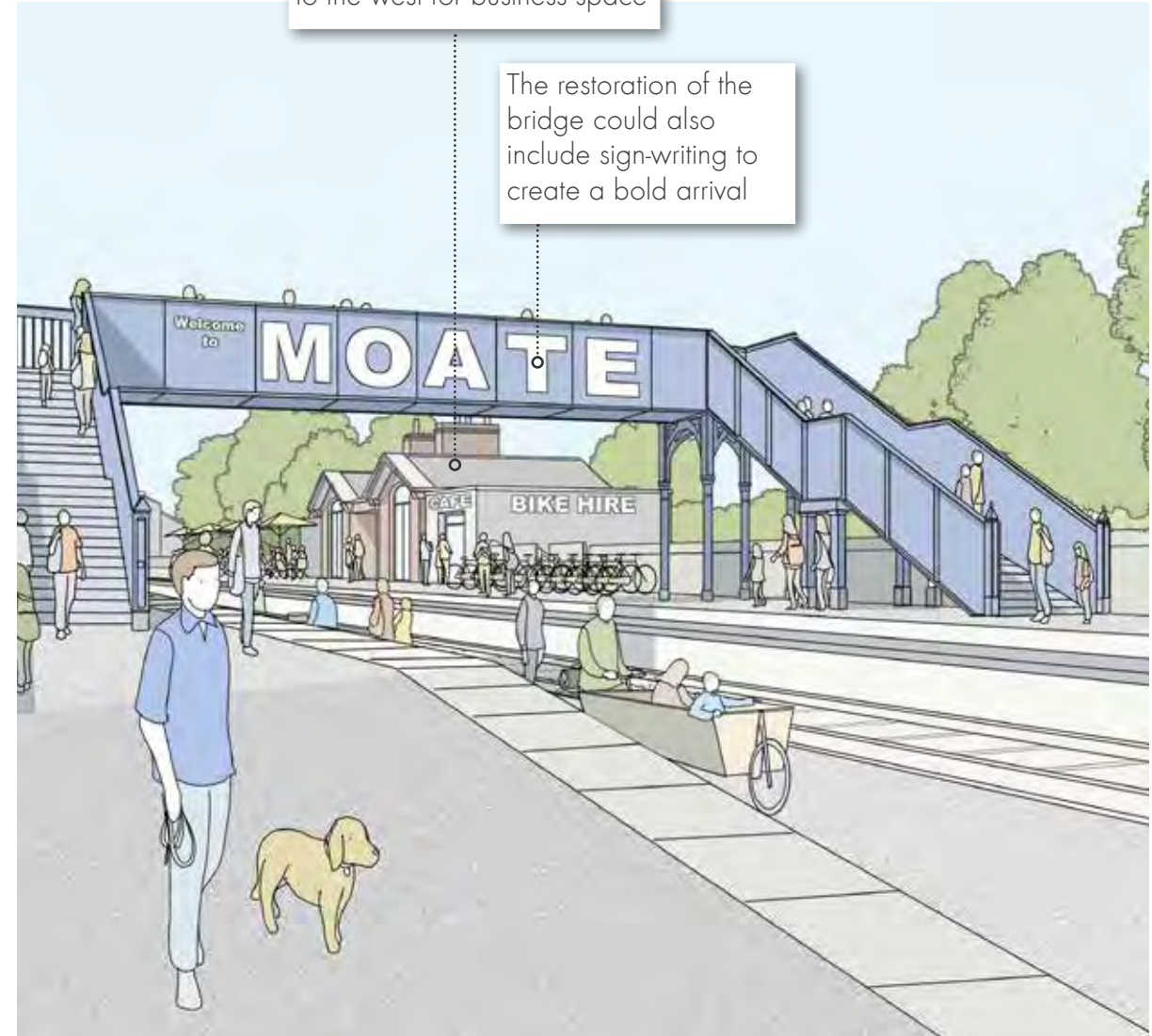
H1. Station buildings

The buildings of Moate Railway Station, including the main station house and the signal box form a key project for the town presenting an opportunity to develop and enhance the tourism offering in Moate while restoring the architectural heritage of the former railway buildings.

Significant local work has already been done to compile surveys of the existing building and establish the early stages of concepts and feasibility for transformation. This has identified that there is scope to supplement

the existing historic buildings with modern additions to create space for local enterprises, particularly things such as food production which can inter-act with a cafe at the station and the flow of visitors along the Greenway.

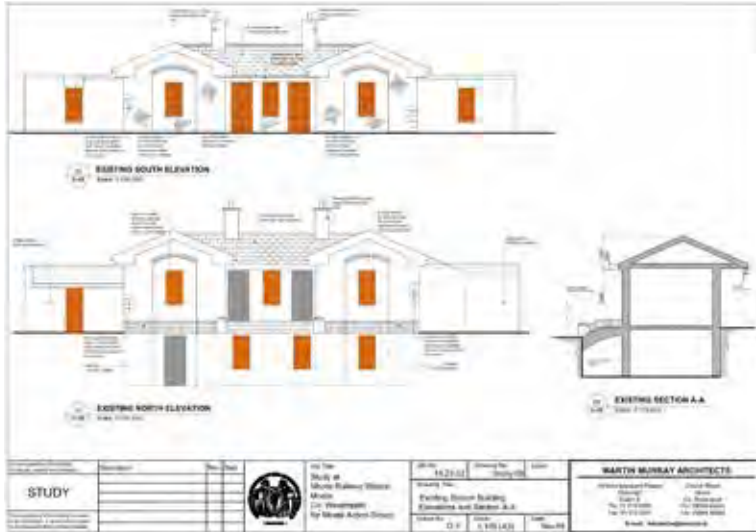
As the reputation of the Greenway grows and the route is extended to connect from Galway to Dublin this is an opportunity for Moate to establish itself as a significant tourist stop, supporting other aspects of the local visitor economy, including accommodation, shopping, food and drink.



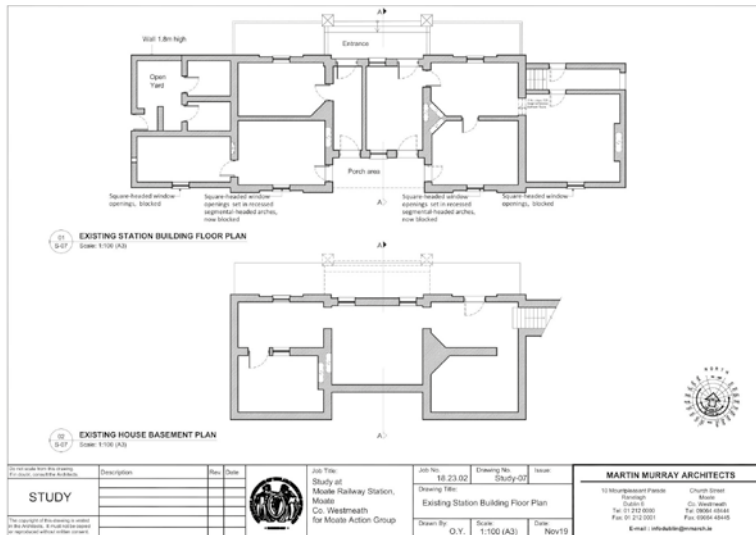
The restored buildings are ideal for re-use, and can be extended with new elements to the west for business space

The restoration of the bridge could also include sign-writing to create a bold arrival

Heritage and placemaking



Extracts from an existing body of work by Martin Murray Architects on behalf of the Moate Action Group which form a strong body of knowledge and ideas for the project to be developed.



Case studies



Jack's Stop, Streamstown

Jack's Stop is a new cafe on the Old Rail Trail Greenway in Streamstown which opened in March 2023, serving both locals and people walking and riding the route.

The cafe occupies the restored station buildings and makes use of the old platforms to provide a large terrace for eating and drinking. The building refurbishment was undertaken by Westmeath County Council and the cafe is run by a local independent operator.



Kilmacthomas Workhouse on the Waterford Greenway

was once a famine workhouse and is now a heritage site which has been converted into a range of new businesses to support cycle tourism, including bike hire and a place for bike repairs mid-way on the greenway. The converted structures also contain a business centre, a successful coffee shop/restaurant, events space, bathroom facilities, a falconery, a distillery and visitor accommodation.

Heritage and placemaking



H2. Tuar Ard green space

The green space outside Tuar Ard represents a significant under-used asset for the town centre. Proposals for the physical change of the space are covered under project M7. Project H2 should consider the ongoing use and management of the space, including the programming of special events.

Community feedback has indicated that Moate has a strong history of music and culture. The town already has a good range of venues and public spaces which could provide the opportunity for a town-wide festival celebrating its cultural offerings. An improved civic green outside Tuar Ard could provide opportunity for range of meanwhile uses including outdoor cinemas, festivals and play.

An example of green space where active use for play and community events are encouraged.



Heritage and placemaking



H3. The Old Bank

The Old Bank is centrally located with a number of public amenities close by such as parking, schools and retail, making it an ideal location for a co-working space with a cafe or restaurant on the ground floor. The wide pavement in this location could allow space for the creation of a terrace and improvements to the ramps accessing the building which would improve its presence on the street and make great use of the south facing frontage.



Co-working space in the upper parts of the building to support start-ups and hybrid working. Refurbishment required to create attractive workspace and include key features as high speed broadband.

Public-facing ground floor use such as cafe which can also offer more informal co-working and social space

Potential improvements to the building access to create a front terrace, improving the connection with the street and delivering good step-free access.

Heritage and placemaking



H4. The Old Courthouse

The former courthouse which has been converted into the town's library represents one of the significant recent successes for projects delivered in Moate. Alongside this, the former fire station adjacent to the main building has been identified for refurbishment to provide premises for the Town Team and the rear part of the property which provides space for heritage team activities.



H5. Main Street markets

Moate was once a thriving market town. Its wide street and open spaces offer plenty of opportunity to reinstate a regular market which celebrates all that Moate and the wider Westmeath region has to offer in terms of produce, craft, art, food and drink. The length of Main Street between the library and the Motte provides the best opportunity for this, and could include a mix of regular local markets as well as specialist markets and festival markets such as Christmas Fairs.



H6. Main Street historic terrace

Improving the frontages of whole terraces which front onto Main Street and which can be seen on approach into the town, should be prioritised. Tackling groups of buildings can result in a bigger visual impact than addressing individual buildings. This terrace, which includes Mulrean's building, is in a poor state with some notable exceptions.

Undertaking a comprehensive project for the terrace will support the already good elements of the group,

and address the areas which would benefit from improvement. These include restoration of key historic features, ideally include the windows if budgets allow; tackling any failing elements of shop fronts and front doors with new carpentry; addressing any inappropriate modern additions which can be addressed; and planning and implementing an overall decorative treatment which allows the individual buildings to maintain their own identity, but which clearly establishes the group.

Heritage and placemaking



H7. Mulrean's Building

This building holds a prominent position in Main Street. Future uses should consider its relationship to the Motte and Bailey to the rear, with possible use as a heritage and interpretation centre or community use with homes on the upper floors. Opportunities for wayfinding to the Motte could be explored by painting the side of the building. The potential has also been identified for Mulrean's itself to provide an access to the Motte through the building.



H8. The Motte

Opening up access to the currently under-celebrated and under-appreciated Motte and Bailey will give greater prominence to this unique feature of the town and emphasise its importance in the shape of the place and the town's name. Creating a walking route up the Motte, forming part of a wider set of green routes in the town, could enable it to be well used and enjoyed. It would also provide a new public green space for the town, offering glimpses of the castle and wider surrounding landscape.

Heritage and placemaking



H9. Old Post Office

The Post Office has retained its attractive late 19th century character and form. It has potential for a number of different uses, including community, co-working space or a cafe/restaurant and gallery whilst retaining the historic identity of the building. The lack of engagement with the street due to high placement of windows means retail may not be an appropriate use in this location. Wider work to the public realm should be used to help address access into the building and establish a more welcoming frontage.



Case studies



Renovation of former school into new library

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.

Heritage and placemaking



H10. The Castle

The castle is an imposing building with a fascinating history revealed in its multi-layered construction and architecture. Opportunities to make it structurally sound, improve its environmental performance, restore and refurbish should be sought. Lesser interventions could include up-lighting to highlight features, creating a moment of interest glimpsed as you enter the town. Other opportunities, such as opening up areas of the land to the public for community growing could also be explored.



Image credit: Nicholas Dolan and John Greene



H11. Dr Cuppaige's historic buildings

These buildings represent an opportunity to improve perceptions of Moate on the approach into the town. As well as their historic importance, they also offer opportunities for conversion use to encourage town centre living. Initial work should be carried out to make the buildings structurally sound, with improvements made to the frontages to meet the standard of the adjacent terrace, creating a more fitting and attractive welcome to the town.

Heritage and placemaking



H12. The Old Mill Building

Successive additions and architectural interventions have impacted the visual appearance of the Old Mill building, and its historic quality. Its prominent position on the approach into Moate creates a poor first impression of the town. Opportunities to sensitively restore and refurbish the Old Mill to reflect its original historic character could help to improve the perception of the town whilst providing opportunities for town centre living. Historic references such as the livestock scales could also feature.



H13. Former chapel

The ruins of the former Baptist Church building to the rear of Moate Motors could form the basis for a number of projects. Subject to advice about the existing structure it may be possible to use this as the basis for re-inhabiting the space. Alternatively, it could be treated as an open structure whilst preserving the integrity of the remaining historical built form.

Historic photo of Main Street with the tripods of the livestock scales visible as an important feature



Development potential

One of the key opportunities for Moate is to use existing available sites to deliver new development, providing more homes in and around the town centre to help meet the housing challenge and also to support the vitality and viability of the town centre. Alongside new homes, there should also be a focus on delivering space around the town centre for a variety of workspace, creating many more options for people to live and work locally, and covering a range of different opportunities from flexible office space to workshops, studios and light industrial units.

New development can also play an important part in supporting the community infrastructure, helping to provide space for social and community functions and support a stronger, growing town.

The large majority of the sites identified and explained in this section of the report are already part of local planning policy, and some have a history of previous schemes and ideas. Any proposals will be subject to the usual planning controls, but this plan is particularly able to identify how sites might work together and consider the wider opportunities for the town so that every chance is realised to deliver strategic benefits that support the future of Moate.



You said...

"There should be a new housing scheme."

- survey comment

"Dedicated smaller unit housing for people wanting to down size without moving away."

- survey comment

"Residential needs to be done well, if done."

- drop-in comment

"Housing! Make the town feel safe, clean and fresh. The new families will support the volunteer groups to initiate new life."

- survey comment

'Employment & economy' is one of your top priorities for Moate

- survey outcome

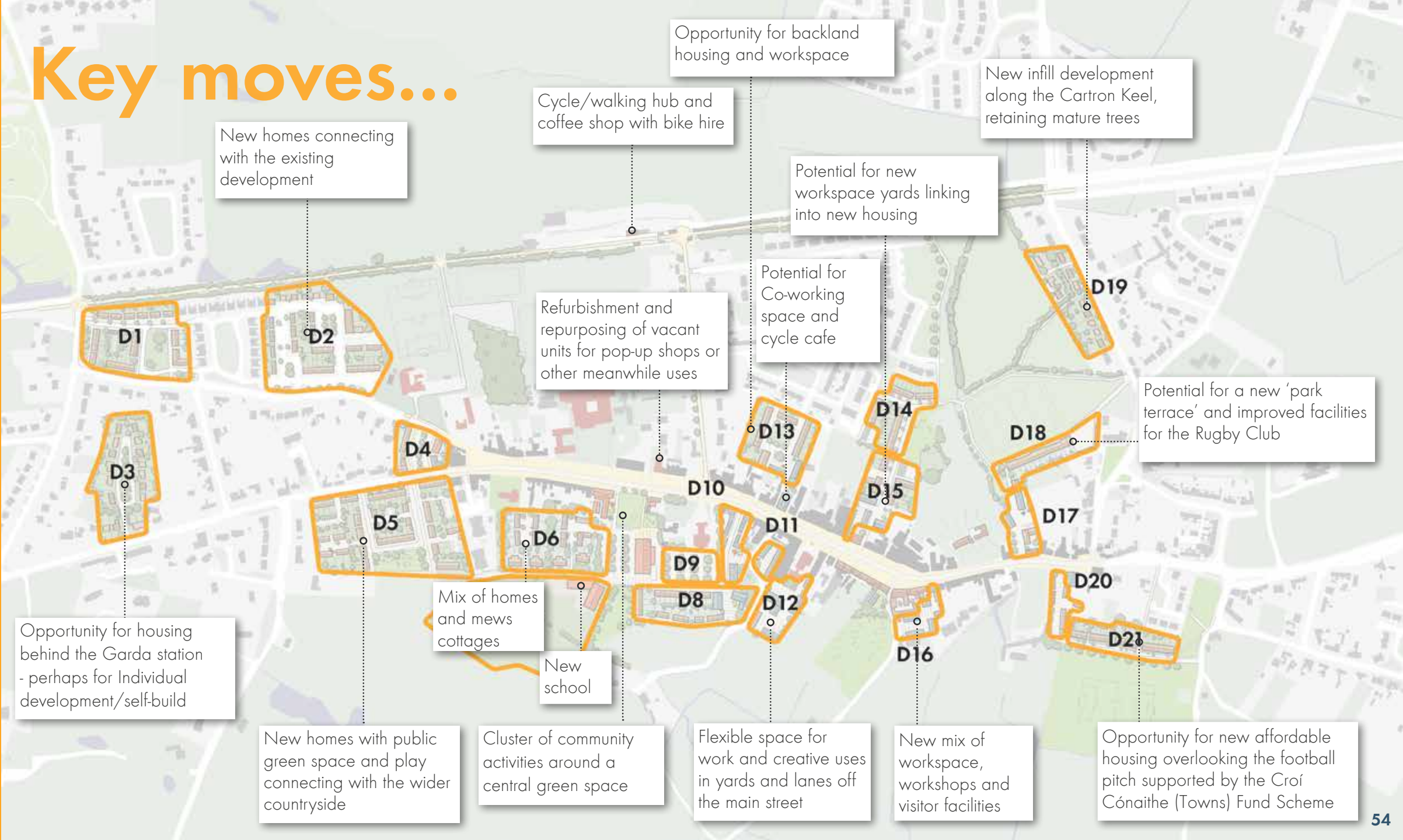
"Remote working hubs!"

- survey comment

"Reuse or redevelop businesses and houses that are vacant/derelict. Potential to develop behind the Main Street."

- drop-in comment

Key moves...



New homes connecting with the existing development

Opportunity for backland housing and workspace

New infill development along the Cartron Keel, retaining mature trees

Cycle/walking hub and coffee shop with bike hire

Potential for new workspace yards linking into new housing

Potential for Co-working space and cycle cafe

Refurbishment and repurposing of vacant units for pop-up shops or other meanwhile uses

Potential for a new 'park terrace' and improved facilities for the Rugby Club

Opportunity for housing behind the Garda station - perhaps for Individual development/self-build

Mix of homes and mews cottages

New school

New homes with public green space and play connecting with the wider countryside

Cluster of community activities around a central green space

Flexible space for work and creative uses in yards and lanes off the main street

New mix of workspace, workshops and visitor facilities

Opportunity for new affordable housing overlooking the football pitch supported by the Croí Cónaithe (Town's) Fund Scheme

Development potential

Community Hub

Sites D6 - D12

The masterplan sets out a cluster of small sites and public realm opportunities which are clustered together to the west of the town centre and include the recommended site for new town centre car park. A detailed planning and delivery framework for the area is needed to develop the approach, work through the land ownership and technical design issues and consult on the options to reach a deliverable position. This could include exploration of the opportunity to provide a new town centre food store. This will identify sites and projects for public delivery and future funding bids, as well as define the nature of projects for independent delivery by private landowners.

This is a high priority short-term project to explore the delivery of parking provision as part of any development which in turn will create the scope for options to improve the quality of the public realm on Main Street.

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Development potential

Site design guidance

Sites - All

There are a wide number of development opportunities across the town which together total approximately 12 hectares and together with unlocking incidental plots and homes above shops could deliver a significant number of homes and jobs across the whole of the town subject to the Westmeath County Development Plan (CDP) Core Strategy and associated land use zoning. It's important for the town that these are well designed in terms of built character and sustainability and that they deliver the strategic connections and benefits which the masterplan intends.

There is opportunity for design guidance and potential funding bids to support leadership around design principles and quality, supporting land owners and developers in recognising the potential of their sites in ways can support Moate Town Centre. This could include design guidance for key sites and potentially forming a developer forum to build momentum around delivery.

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Development potential



D1. Lake Road West

Residential opportunity on the corner of Athlone Road and Lake Road, backing on to the Greenway. Opportunity for mixed housing and flats, along with green space. Opportunity to build on the previous planning history of the site here. Potential to capitalise on existing built connections into the adjoining housing and to create active frontage onto Athlone Road and Lake Road



D2. Lake Road

Residential opportunity fronting Lake Road, backing on to the Greenway. Opportunity for mixed housing and flats, along with green space. Opportunity to build on the previous planning history of the site here.



D3. Athlone Road

Land off Athlone Road to the rear of the Garda station. Opportunity to bring a dormant site into more active use subject to compliance with the CDP land use zoning. This could include low density housing, or possibly green uses such as allotments to align with housing and population projections for the town. This site is not critical in terms of wider benefits but could help to diversify Moate's housing mix.



D4. Land west of the Gap House

Land to the rear of the Gap House identified in planning policy for town centre consolidation. This site could provide an important role in support access and parking serving the town centre, schools and college as well as delivering a mix of development which complements and supports the existing town centre.

Development potential



D5. Former Farm Store site

Land including the former Farm Store site with frontage to the Athlone Road, delivering a residential scheme that establishes new street frontage, new walking and cycling links connecting to the south forming a new east-west route, and new public green space connecting with the wider landscape. Identified in planning policy as for town centre consolidation.



D6. Land south of St Mary's Church

Land to the rear of St Mary's Church and Tuar Ard, delivering new infill / mews housing and an element of public or commercial development adjacent to Tuar Ard. Identified in planning policy for town centre consolidation. Has a role to play in enabling the creation of an east-west walking and cycling link parallel to Church Street.



D7. Reserved school site

Site identified in planning policy for Community, Education and Institutional use, understood to be intended as a new primary school.

Case studies



Conversion of historic outbuildings into workspace and workshops

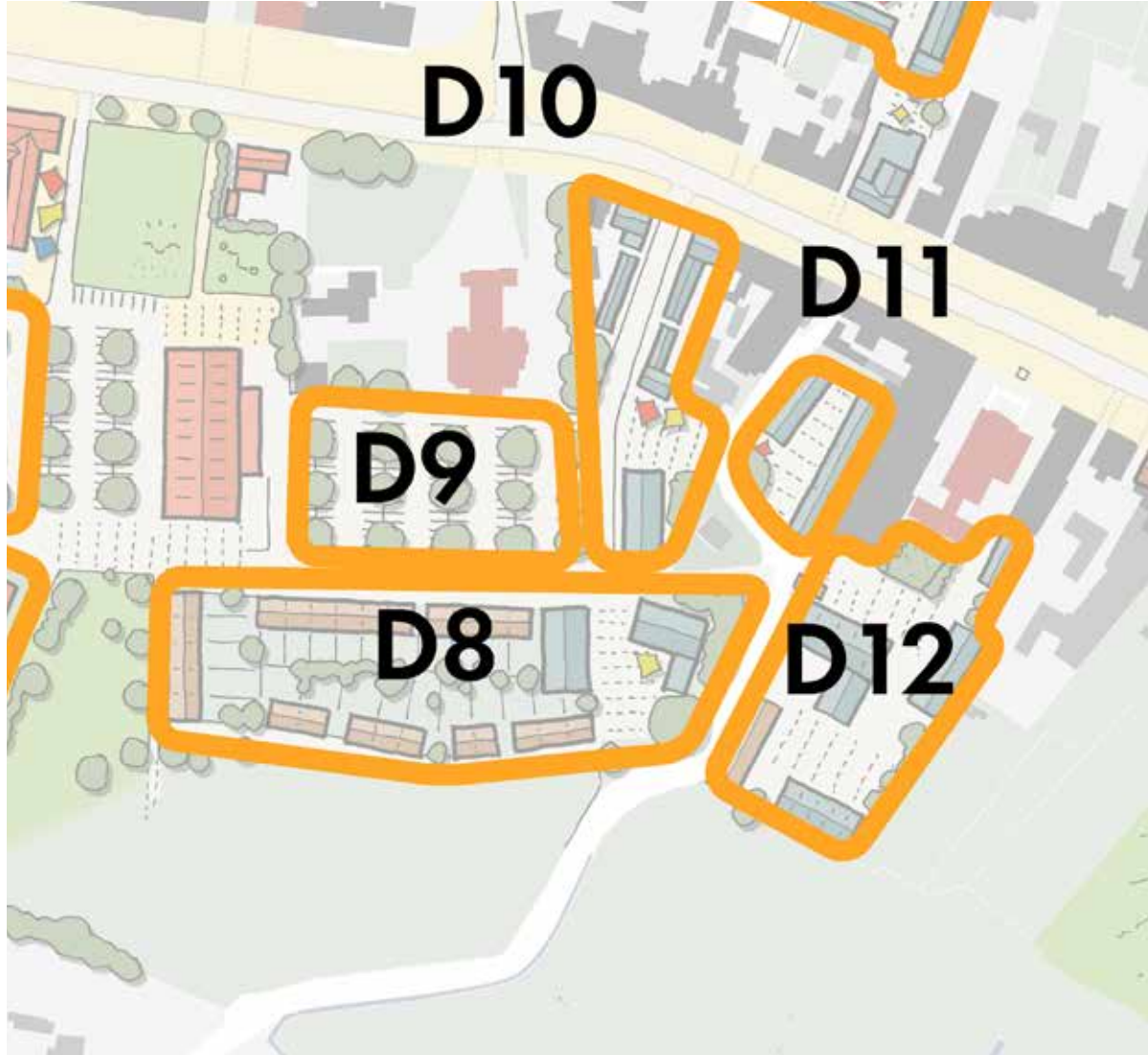
Bowhouse, Fife



Conversion of historic outbuildings into food hub for small producers and businesses

Bowhouse, Fife

Development potential



D8 - D12. Sites south of Main Street

The collection of sites south of main Street represents a cluster of individual development opportunities, which could collectively unlock significant benefits for the wider town. These sites would also benefit from careful coordination and collaboration to achieve the best results for both the community and to the land owners.

Together, they offer the potential to support the town centre through the delivery of an element of parking, extending the space available for workspace and other town centre uses, and also in delivering housing which can contribute to town centre vitality.



D13. Land to the north of the Old Bank

Backland site delivering housing and some workspace across an under-used parcel of land. Includes a key strategic opportunity to deliver a north-south walking and cycling link from St Patrick's Crescent to Main Street via the side lane at the former Bank. Residential vehicle access would be via St Patrick's Crescent.

Development potential



D14. Land adjoining Cois Na hAbhainn

Residential development to create active frontages to the green space and deliver walking and cycling connections to the Main Street from Cois Na hAbhainn



D15. J Grennan and Sons

Mixed use development which can be delivered in the event that existing owners and tenants wish to diversify the uses on the site. Development could deliver workspace and town centre-related uses in the south with residential to the north and must include the provision of a north-south walking and cycling link which connects into the green space and towards Cois Na hAbhainn.



D16. Castle yards

Opportunity for infill town centre-related uses to the rear of the old Post Office and with an aspect to the Castle Mound. Suitable for a mix of town centre uses including workshops and homes, and ideally taking advantage off the setting of the castle mound.



D17. Dr Cuppaige's

Redevelopment of the former Dr Cuppaige's public house site to include refurbishment of the historic buildings, and removal of the modern building to establish a new north-south access towards the playing field and unlock capacity to deliver further workspace and residential development. Potential to de-culvert some part or parts of the water course.

Development potential



D18. Park Terrace

Development of terrace of housing fronting the open space and helping to deliver improved access and parking for the rugby club as well as walking and cycling connections.



D19. Land west of Cartron Keel Road

Development of housing off the Cartron Keel Road, including the retention of nature trees, delivery of a pedestrian connection into the planned green space and creation of elements of frontage development facing towards the town.



D20. Land to the rear of Gillivans

Infill lane opportunity to the rear of the Gillivan Brothers site, creating space for mixed use development and establishing a new walking and cycling link through to proposed development and the planned soccer pitch



D21. Land off the Clara Road

Proposed residential development fronting onto the proposed soccer pitch, with vehicle access from the east. Zoned for residential development in the Local Plan

Movement and public space

Movement and public space bring together two inter-related themes: Movement and connections; and public realm and green space. In many cases, there are examples such as the Greenway where spaces play a role in travel, leisure use and ecology.

These related themes are significant for the regeneration of Moate as they largely address projects which are in publicly owned spaces and which can be implemented by the Council and Town Team with less reliance on third party land owners. This makes public realm enhancements key opportunities for change, including the potential for quick wins at the earlier stages of the masterplan.

Projects for the public realm and green space were some of the most frequently raised items through the consultation. There is strong support to deliver improvements to the Greenway and support for the greening of public spaces. Alongside this, the issues of traffic and parking in the town centre were also the focus of significant debate. Whilst improved provision for walking, cycling and buses was supported, the process also highlighted the need to ensure that any schemes for the streets are developed through detailed engagement with the local shops and businesses to address the need for parking and servicing.

Right: Illustration showing the potential for the transformation of Main Street



You said...

Improvements to town centre parking was rated top of improvements that would be supported to enhance access to, and movement around, Moate.

- survey question result

"Main road is not cycle friendly - heavily trafficked."

- workshop feedback

"Need bus stop in a central location."

- drop-in feedback

Parking is the main challenge facing Moate town centre

- survey question result

"Need to get cars out of streets at school run time"

- drop-in comment

"Take parking off streets"

- drop-in comment

"More parking needed in the town centre"

- drop-in comment

"Staff and business parking on street blocks shoppers parking"

- drop-in comment

"Need traffic calming measures - speeding tractors"

- post-it note from drop-in and workshop feedback

"Traffic - tractors cause noise nuisance and speed thats affecting the town"

- post-it note from drop-in

"Impact of school traffic, particularly at junction of Church Street and Station Road, need to investigate alternatives drop off / set down arrangements."

- workshop feedback

"Provide cycle lane from Greenway to town centre with clear signage with amenities."

- survey comment

"Greenway - access from that to town centre."

- workshop and drop-in comment

"Grey routes - walking routes around town. "

- drop-in comment

"Loop - walking and cycling."

- post-it note from drop-in

"Bike paths on Station Road!"

- survey comment

You said...

"Linear park and defined routes."

- post-it note from drop-in

"Loop - walking and cycling."

- post-it note from drop-in

"Need a dog friendly town centre."

- post-it note from drop-in

"A playground in the middle of the town... green spaces for children to explore and parents to socialise."

- survey comment

"Somewhere to sit outside with my child and dog and have a cup of tea..."

- drop-in comment

"Current seating is crazy..."

- survey comment

"Green spaces on street with better seating."

- survey comment

We asked... "What would encourage you to use the Greenway more?"



44% of you said...

Points of Interest

- interactive play areas, outdoor gym facilities

Movement and connections

Church Street / Main Street public realm

Area M5

The masterplan concept for Church Street / Main Street provides the starting point for a more detailed study to establish an agreed design. This will need to address the concerns flagged through consultation on the parking and loading issues as well as further technical work to produce a settled design. The importance of town centre activities, planting, heritage and accessibility should broaden the scope of this work beyond a purely highway-led scheme focusing instead on the benefits of healthy placemaking to transform Moate Town Centre into an attractive and thriving town centre. The developed design will then support a funding bid for capital funding to deliver the technical design, procurement and construction.

This is a priority project to support the transformation and improvement of the town centre. It is contingent on the identified need to resolve parking provision and may be delivered as a series of phases.

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Image credit: Nicholas Dolan and John Greene

Movement and connections

Station Road public realm

Areas M10 - M12

There is general agreement that access for pedestrians to the schools on Station Road needs to be improved; current vehicular arrangements are poor resulting in congestion and haphazard parking creating a poor walking and cycling environment, especially for children. The masterplan will identify objectives for the street, along with options for further exploration through more detailed design development and consultation to relieve traffic problems and facilitate the creation of cycle and pedestrian priority measures. The developed design will then support a funding bid for capital funding to deliver the technical design, procurement and construction.

This is an important project, both to support active travel to schools and also to directly link the Greenway to the town centre. It could be developed as a connected piece of work alongside the Church Street / Main Street commission or as a separate study.

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Public realm and green space

Green space and leisure provision

Projects M7, M13, M14, M15

The masterplan identifies a series of related green space projects which cover sports, play, leisure and visitor attractions. These could usefully be grouped and developed as a coordinated project with a series of components which might each attract elements of funding. Opening up access to green space can include accessible routes that relates to wider walking and cycling connectivity, improvements to the setting of the Quaker burial ground and the potential relocation of the Patrick Kelly Memorial as well as the opportunity to deliver new play facilities related to the town centre.

This work can be undertaken as an independent element, but will support and connect with wider active travel and green space improvements in other projects. Related projects include the opportunities for the green space at Tuar Ard and the existing provision at Dun Na Si.

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Public realm and green space

Greenway strategy

Areas M1, M2, M3, M9, M12

The Greenway is important for local trips, leisure routes, tourism and green infrastructure. The masterplan has identified options for new and improved access points, as well as consideration of lighting and landscaping which would be considered necessary to make it a functioning part of the local walking and cycling network around the year. A scheme should be developed which can support a capital funding bid and further consideration of the more ambitious elements such as the ramps and crossings north of the new park (see project M12).

This work can be undertaken as an independent element, but will support and connect with wider active travel and green space improvements in other projects.

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Key moves...



Low traffic street to create safer routes to school and the town centre

Access to the college maintained from the south via the new car park

Improved links to the Greenway, from the schools and college

Improvements to Station Road to provide a safe route for active travel connections to the school and the Greenway

New walking and cycling links could be created across the green space

-  Town Centre street transformation
-  School Street (resident access only/restricted hours)
-  Filtered Street, resident access only
-  Reduced speeds to improve safety
-  New/improved walking and cycling links

Continuous lane running parallel to Church Street/Main Street

New short-stay car-park providing easy set-down and pick-up for the college and schools

Proposed new town centre car park with direct access to the main shopping area

Main Street and Church Street transformed to support all modes of travel

Improving the streets



Minimising street clutter

Poorly planned and poorly located street furniture and signage can be an eyesore and impact on the accessibility of a place. An audit should be undertaken to ascertain the quality, location, positioning and purpose of existing street clutter - and consideration given to where this can be improved, removed, relocated or redesigned to improve the visual appearance of the streetscape, overall accessibility, or use of a space.

A coordinated approach to street furniture

While efforts have been made to provide a range of street furniture around the town, they are often in a poor state of repair or have been ill conceived in their placement. A coordinated and considered approach to be taken to future street furniture to ensure it is appropriately located to enable good accessibility, that it is simple in design, easy to use and to maintain, and that it makes a positive visual contribution to the streetscape.



Examples of high quality street furniture and streetscapes



Credit: Cork County Council Architects Department

Clonakilty, Cork - reduced street clutter and high quality paving materials



Utility box public art commission by Dublin City Council

Opportunities for a connected network of new and enhanced green spaces



A daisy-chain of green spaces

There are opportunities all through the town centre to introduce small moments of green space, creating pleasant places to sit and bringing ecological benefits. This can include planters within the main streets, tree planting, or more substantial areas of green space. Individual properties can also contribute to the green environment through planting in lanes and passages and the addition of tubs and planters in front of buildings where the pavement width allows.

The addition of seating to the street where it is well placed to allow people to relax extends the enjoyment of the space, particularly for people who may need to rest. Including playable elements of streetscape makes the town centre fun for everyone.



Access to green spaces

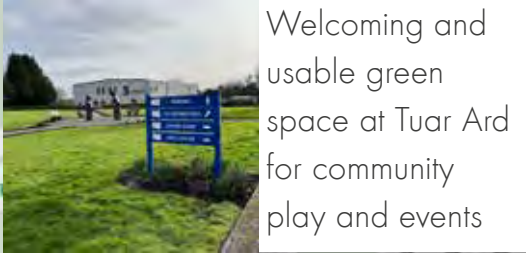
The land north of the castle could be opened up to include new routes as well as improved biodiversity.



Space for events and activities

The green space at Tuar Ard could be designed for much more active use and enjoyment.

Opportunities for a connected network of new and enhanced green spaces



Welcoming and usable green space at Tuar Ard for community play and events

Outside the Carmelite Church as a key threshold approaching the town centre



In front of the Gap House, linking with the removal of through-traffic from the eastern end of Lake Road



In front of the Library at the heart of Main Street



At the junction of Station Road and Main Street as a key arrival point from the Greenway



At Dr Cuppaige's as an entrance to green space and walking routes



Recommendations from the Town Team



Managing traffic to reduce its impact on the town



1. Traffic calming measures to reduce speed of vehicles approaching town including signage, speed bumps, and carriageway narrowing to support a lower speed environment.



2. Traffic filtered street creating a quieter, safer, residential street. Low traffic street to create safer routes to school and the town centre spaces for short-stay visitors.



3. Safer spaces including wider and protected pavements outside schools and safe places to cross to that children and their parents feel safe walking and cycling to school if they can.





Making sustainable travel the easy choice



1. New access from the Greenway into the town centre to make short walking and cycling trips safer and easier and to attract visitors from the greenway into the town centre.



2. New links included within developments to make walking and cycling easy and also to better connect existing homes with the town centre for short trips.



3. Safer streets outside schools to make it easier and safer for children and parents to walk or cycle to school where they can.



4. Enhanced walking and cycling connections offering multiple routes and loops, connecting the town centre with the surrounding homes and countryside.

Mobility strategy

Vision and principles

This transport strategy has been developed to support the Masterplan's vision to ensure Moate is a great place to live, visit and do business. This will be reflected in improving the connectivity and ease of access for all and by enhancing use of sustainable transport modes.

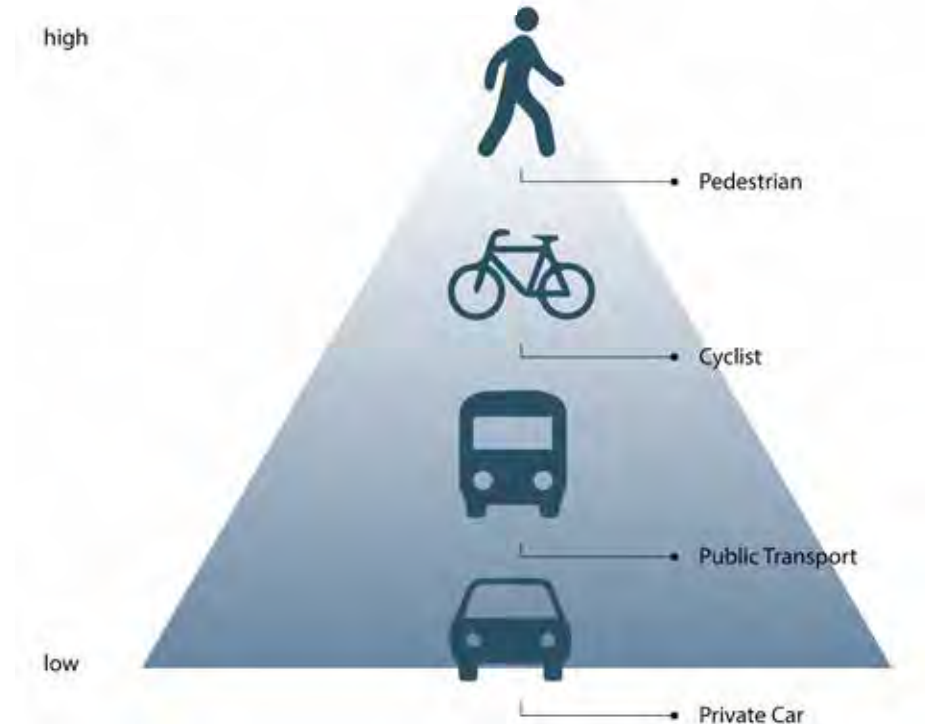
Consistent with local, regional and national policy, a hierarchy of transport modes has also been established that promotes the use of sustainable and active travel modes. In the case of Moate, providing for pedestrians is the highest priority, including the focus on access to public transport.

The Strategy is framed by a comprehensive set of guiding principles that encapsulate the desired outcomes for Moate. These include aspects pertaining to quality, sustainability, safety, climate resilience, all of which relate to the quality of life of residents and visitors.

Maintaining and enhancing the strategic capacity of the Main Street, while enhancing the pedestrian realm in the town is an important principle. It is also considered essential, that connectivity to Moate's immediate hinterland as well as

to towns such as Athlone, Tullamore and Clara (nearest rail station) is enabled by cycling and bus, rather than private car.

The Transport Strategies that are intended to address the vision and principles of the masterplan are presented in the following section.



Mobility Strategy

Active travel strategy

In order to improve the conditions for walking and cycling across the town, a number of interventions have been identified, some of which are relevant to other strategies, in addition to active travel.

Aligning with the Westmeath CDP 2021, the recommended measures seek to support the development of a low carbon transport system by continuing to promote modal shift from private car use towards increased use of more sustainable forms of transport such as cycling, walking and public transport.

Pedestrian improvements

One of the main elements of the masterplan is the proposal to significantly change the character of Main Street / Church Street from its present car-dominated layout to a much more pedestrian-friendly character. To do this, the masterplan proposes a number of interventions, under the umbrella of a Town Centre street transformation, including:

- Widening of footpath along the southern side of Main Street to improve convenience of pedestrians' movement, mostly by reorganising on-street car parking and re-addressing some of the excessive carriageway widths.
- Enhancement of pedestrian crossings at key locations along Main Street and Church Street, namely at the following points:
 1. Immediately west of the junction with Moate Hill Road;
 2. Opposite Moate Public Library;
 3. West of junction with Station Road; and
 4. Opposite Moate Community School.



Mobility Strategy

In addition to the core of the town, it is also proposed to enhance the pedestrian environment along other streets and roads, including the Dublin Road and the Newtown to the east and the Athlone Road to the west. This will be done by applying traffic calming measures to reduce traffic speeds.

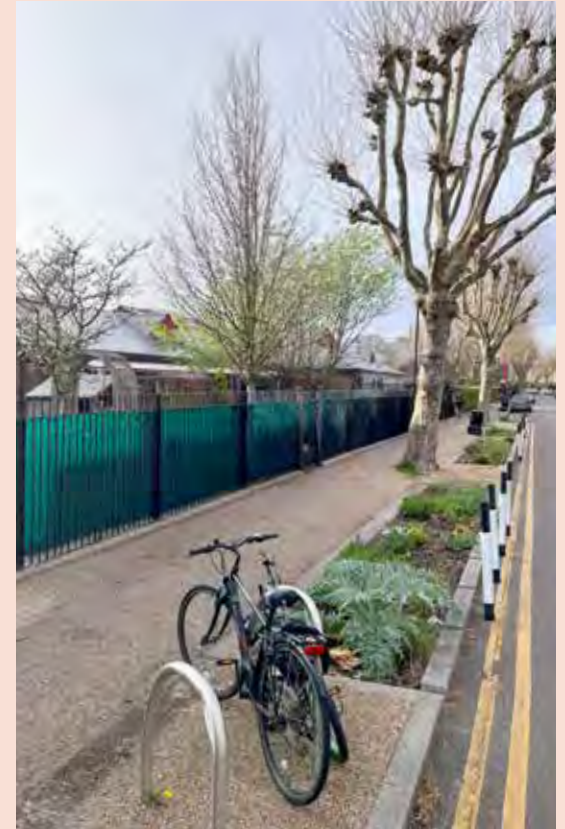
The proposal to open up access to the open space east of the town centre will unlock the pedestrian connectivity from residential areas along Ballymore Road and Cartron Grange, to the Main Street.

On Athlone Road, two new pedestrian crossings are proposed, part of interventions proposed for the area immediately to the west of the Lake Road junction. These are:

- Immediately west of the junction with Lake Road; and
- On Athlone Road, approximately 120m west from junction with Lake Road.

One of the most relevant interventions proposed is the suggested change to the junction of Lake Road and Church Street, which would be closed to vehicles to prioritise pedestrians at this key location around the school and college entrances. Whilst vehicle access to all properties on Lake Road will be retained from Athlone Road, this change is expected to significantly shift the character of this street to a more pedestrian friendly environment, where only local vehicular access will be present. Lake Road is an important link with regards to access to schools and this intervention will enable the creation of an attractive public space at the western end of Church Street.

Case studies



Example of an improved pavement outside a primary school to create a safer environment. This approach also includes raingarden planting to help manage water run-off and improve biodiversity Walthamstow

Mobility Strategy

Cycling improvements

Unlike many rural settlements, Moate benefits significantly from existing cycle infrastructure in the form of the National Cycle Network (NCN) that runs along the north of the town. Furthermore, given the fact that the vast majority of the population of Moate is within cycling distance of most local attractors (schools, town centre uses, employment), measures to increase the attractiveness of cycling as a local transport mode are proposed as part of the Masterplan including:

- Exploring the potential for safe cycling along Church Street and Main Street to connect people with the heart of the town centre including the schools;
- High-quality cycle parking facilities on Church Street and Main Street as well as at the schools and college;
- Accommodation of cycle crossing facilities with proposed Main Street, Church Road and Athlone Road proposed crossings;
- Providing new infill development with walking and cycling infrastructure; and
- Improved links to the Greenway.



Mobility Strategy

Public transport

Bus is the main public transport mode in Moate and is a focus of the Masterplan. Bus services are proposed to be improved through TFI's Local Link programme, which will enhance the connections to Athlone, Tullamore and other towns further afield. These are important connections, as they enable access to employment, education, health, retail and leisure.

Moate would benefit greatly from increases in the frequency of the bus services that presently serve the town. This is an element of the strategy that will require liaison with the NTA.

It is proposed to improve the bus stops in the town centre, to ensure these are convenient, attractive and comfortable points to access the bus network. The bus stops should be provided with good quality facilities such as shelters or seating and should be well lit to ensure safety during periods of darkness.

To ensure the maximum possible share of Moate's population is within walking distance of the bus services, it is proposed that additional formal bus stops are located along Main Street, Church Street and Athlone Road. These will be associated with local attractors as well as pedestrian connections with the local area.

In addition, and to maximise the potential of the bus service to Tullamore, through Clara, new bus stops should be located to serve the businesses along the Clara Road. Associated with increased frequencies and reliability, these will enable internal home-work trips to be undertaken by bus, particularly between the residential areas to the west of the town and the employment along the Clara Road.

The bus connection to Tullamore in the southeast also provides a direct connection to Clara, where train services can be accessed. Improved connectivity to rail will increase the range of mobility options for the population and needs to be considered.

To ensure this comes to fruition, the increased bus frequencies between Moate and Tullamore need to be considered in tandem with the interchange between bus and rail at Clara. At present this is not seamless, with the bus stops nearly 500m from the train station.



Mobility Strategy

Traffic and parking

The potential for the development of new approaches to road space along the Main Street – Church Street corridor will be reflected in the way traffic will interact with the town and how it could be organised through the careful location of car parking.

All of the traffic and car parking related interventions are guided by the aspiration to improve the environment for vulnerable road users (pedestrians and cyclists) within Moate. They are, however, cognisant of the town's needs for vehicular access and do not preclude accessibility to any part of town.

Reducing vehicle speed in the town centre, and supporting this with reductions in the road widths will support greater pedestrian safety. The addition of raised pedestrian crossings and the careful design of the pedestrian spaces and car parking along these links will also have the effect of shifting the streets' character away from car-dominated to a more attractive environment. The intention is to apply principles of good streetscape design, associated with sound traffic engineering to transform the character of Main Street and Church Street from a 'road' to a 'street'.

One of the Masterplan's most relevant traffic management interventions consists of the blocking of direct vehicular between Church Street and Lake Road, with the pedestrianisation of a short section of the latter south of Moate Business College. This will act as a deterrent for vehicular trips to use the rest of Lake Road, which will in turn make it more pedestrian and cycle friendly.

A new traffic-calmed vehicular link between Athlone Road and Lake Road, associated with a small public car park is proposed through the presently vacant land to the west of the Gap House.

Another important intervention would be the conversion of a small vacant plot off Station Road, south of St Brigid's Primary School, into a "drop-off and pick-up area" with access and egress from/to the south to mitigate congestion at school drop-off and pick-up times at this location. This would support the widening of the eastern footpath on Station Road to maintain good quality infrastructure for pedestrian movement.

Case studies



Example of a modal filter used to transform one end of a street, as is proposed at the eastern end of Lake Road. This approach will create a safe and easy environment for walking and cycling at a location of high footfall outside the schools and college. It can also include green elements raingardens. The road is still accessible for vehicles, but only from one end. Leyton

Mobility Strategy

Parking

Any potential for improvements to Main Street and Church Street need to be considered within the wider context of the vitality of the town centre, the viability of local businesses and the need for parking. The needs of the town associated with direct car access to retail premises has been discussed and considered in the proposals. As such, a reasonable quantum of car parking spaces should form part of any options for the Main Street - Church Street corridor, but carefully integrated with pedestrian realm and environmental/landscaping improvements.

Options which increase the parking provision off the main street are set out in the proposals to provide space within a very short distance from the main town core. This will maintain a high-level of accessibility to shops and other services within the town and would be well suited to people working in or making longer trips to the town centre.

Providing more space in this way will in turn allow for more flexibility in terms of the options development for the main space, including better provision for walking, cycling and public transport.

It is proposed that consideration should be given to the management of car parking within the town, to ensure that spaces are adequately used for the benefit of local retail and services. It is important to avoid day-long free parking on locations where a high turnover of occupancy would be reflected in higher local footfall and business viability. The piloting of trial measures such as One Hour Parking initiatives would help business owners and customers who have suffered from people parking outside shops and businesses all day long.

The location of town centre car parking at two distinct types of locations (i.e. on the main thoroughfare; and just outside it) will allow for time restrictions to be applied to those spaces that are most suited to short-term needs associated with local retail and services. These restrictions may or may not include the implementation of car parking charges.

The new and relocated public car parking will include the necessary facilities to accommodate EV charging, which is consistent with the Government's drive towards the decarbonisation of transport.

Case studies



Short-stay parking measures developed by the Town Team in Castlerea, Co Roscommon



Mobility Strategy

Parking for new development

The illustrative plans in this report show the potential for new development in and around Moate Town Centre. These sites will need to be designed and constructed to conform to the existing planning policy context, including the provision of suitable levels of car parking.

Whilst sites on the outskirts of the town centre will be most likely to have private parking provision, smaller schemes in the heart of the town which benefit from easy walkable access to shops and services may have less need for dedicated private spaces and may benefit from the efficiencies to be gained from shared spaces.

At every stage of the design process, consideration should be given to the character of the places and spaces created. Particularly in and around the historic core of the town, parking should be discreet, using options such as mews garages and courtyards rather than the standard suburban approach of front driveways which would be out of keeping with the historic character.

Servicing and deliveries

The viability of the town centre is intrinsically linked with the capability that businesses have to operate deliveries and waste collection in the most efficient manner. However, it is also acknowledged that these operations can have a significant negative impact on the overall amenity, namely on the safety of vulnerable road users and on the attractiveness of a place.

Considering this, it is proposed that, wherever possible, businesses use servicing facilities away from the main frontages. It is clear that in some cases, servicing from the main frontage will be required, and as such it is proposed that time-bound limitations are implemented, whereby service operations must take place before or after the main periods of pedestrian activity.

It is proposed that a number of parallel car parking spaces along Main Street and Church Street be subject to a time-bound loading status, outside which the space reverts to short-stay car parking. This will enable the optimisation of the kerbside space.

Main Street is the focus for many of the issues and ideas raised through the consultation.

You told us that parking is important, along with supporting local businesses, tackling disrepair of buildings and making it safer for walking and cycling.

These illustrations show how the ideas in the Masterplan could be implemented on the ground.

Any detailed scheme will need to be developed through ongoing consultation with local residents and businesses to ensure that the space works for everyone.



Refurbished buildings to restore town centre living

Shopfront enhancements to tackle dereliction and improve appearance

Town centre parking remains an important feature of the street



Potential for tree planting, providing shade and interest

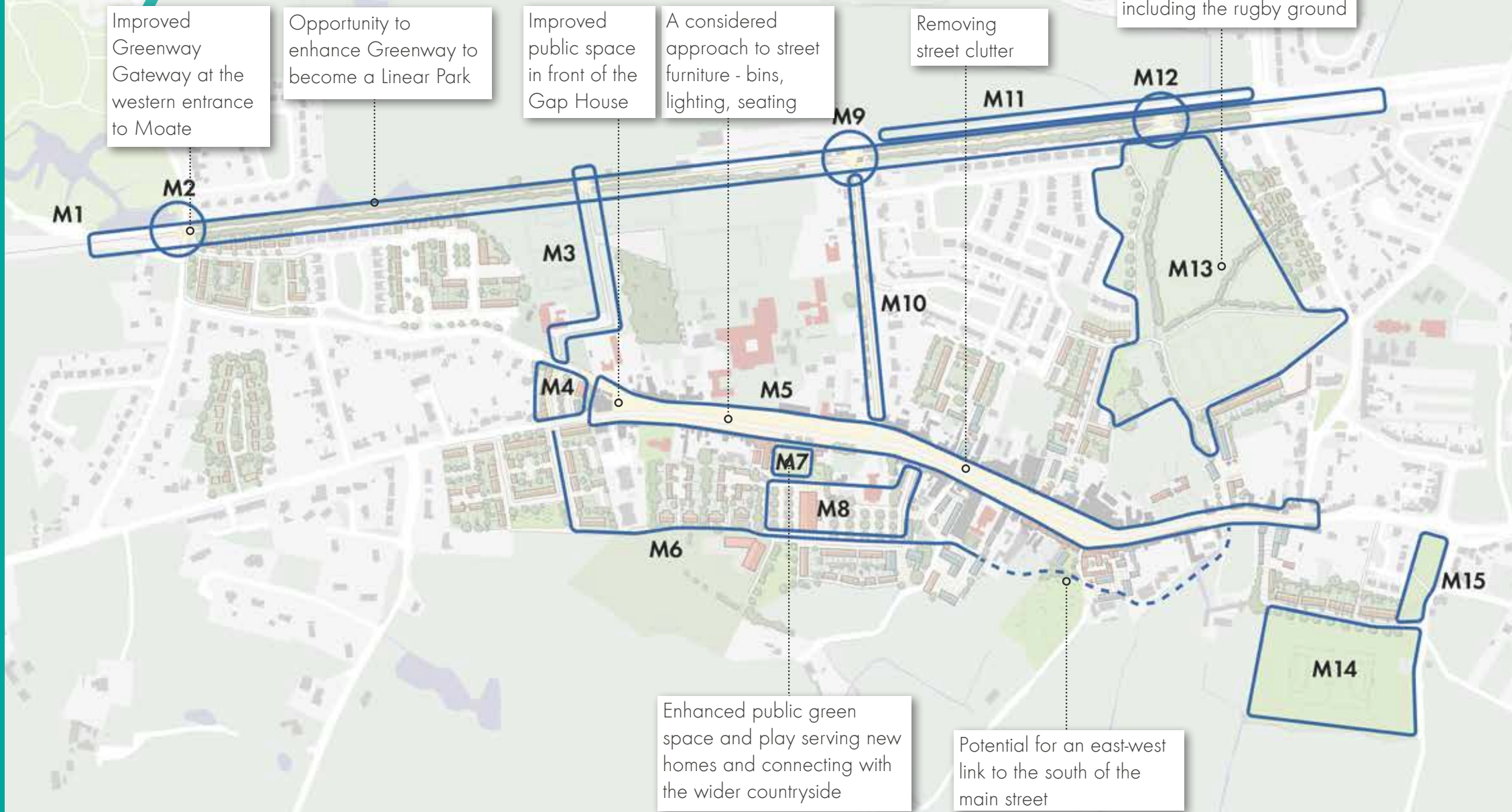
Wider continuous pavements on the south side of the street to support business

New places to pause with seating and greenery

As part of the design of the street we will be looking at the design and layout of the lighting

Safe places to cross at frequent intervals

Key moves...



Movement and public space



M1. Enhanced Greenway

The Greenway is a significant asset for Moate at a local and a wider strategic level. There are a series of opportunities for improvement, including low level lighting to improve accessibility for local trips at all times of year; signage and wayfinding for visitors; and planting and biodiversity enhancements. This projects forms the spine of a wider community project to establish a linear park of connected green spaces.



M2. Enhanced Greenway junction

Creating an enhanced Greenway crossing on the Athlone Road will improve safety and accessibility, whilst improved signage and wayfinding for visitors will strengthen the links between the Greenway and the town centre, as well as the links on towards Dun Na Si.



M3. New Greenway access

Potential for a new Greenway access into the college and schools, including a connecting access down to the Lake Road. This could enhance access and provide a safe route for school and college students, as well as unlocking links to the sports facilities to support active travel.



M4. Land west of the Gap House

New public parking on land to the rear of the Gap House, including continued provision of access to the college and north-south walking and cycling links. This has the potential to be an important project to unlock the delivery of wider public realm changes to Church Street and to improve access to the schools and college. The site is zoned for consolidation uses in the Westmeath County Development Plan (CDP) 2021

Movement and public space



M5 Church Street / Main Street

The public realm of Church Street and Main Street has the potential for significant improvements. An initial sketch option prepared for the consultation was successful in stimulating debate and starting to draw out the detailed issues including parking, servicing, facilities for buses and the support for safe and attractive walking and cycling.

MOVEMENT & CONNECTIONS

You said...

Improvements to town centre parking was rated top of improvements that would be supported to enhance access to, and movement around, Moate.
- survey question result

"Main road is not cycle friendly - heavily trafficked."
- workshop feedback

"Need bus stop in a central location."
- drop in feedback

Access to the proposed Town Centre car park giving a short and clear walk to the schools and to Main Street

Main Road width will still allow two large vehicles to pass safely

New protected cycle route on the north side of the street

The cycle lane provides an extra buffer from the traffic for outdoor seating

Existing vehicle accesses retained

Keeping existing kerbs and drains where possible will help to reduce cost and make the scheme more deliverable

More safe places to cross the street with slower traffic

End-on parking provides more spaces where they are most needed

Wider pavements on the southern side to support pedestrians and help businesses

Better, safer bus stops in the heart of the town

43

Right: Extract from the March 2023 consultation

Movement and public space



M6. East-west lane

East-west lane parallel to Church Street / Main Street which provides an alternative walking and cycling link as well as access to a limited number of small development sites. For the western part of the route there is the potential deliver this as a stand-alone project and/or through the coordinated development of key sites along the route. East of the library site where there is more complex land ownership and less development anticipated the options for a route may be more complex to deliver.

M7. Tuar Ard green space

Change to the gardens outside Tuar Ard to create a welcoming green space suitable for play and events. A small amount of change could enable the space to be much more actively used, supporting the arts centre and cafe activities and providing space around the year for people to meet, children to play and events to be staged. It has the potential to be Moate's outdoor community space

A companion project is listed at project H2.

M8. Town Centre parking

Off-street public parking will play a significant role in enabling improvements to the town centre and particularly to the Main Street public realm. This area of the town includes both existing parking and proposals for new parking which need to be coordinated and delivered ahead of any works to Main Street. Whilst this project is focussed on the delivery of parking, it will take place in the context of projects D8 - D12 which consider development potential.

Movement and public space



M9. Old Station

Landscape and public realm improvements to enhance the arrival at the top of Station Road and into the town centre from the Greenway. This is an important project to complement the wider plans for the Greenway and to accompany the improvements to the station (project H1) as a signature project for the town and visitor economy.



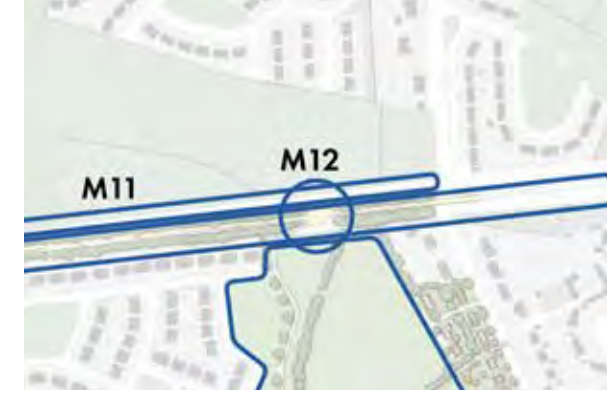
M10. Station Road

Development of options for Station Road to create a safer environment for walking and cycling to the schools and for the connection from the Greenway to the town centre. Options to be explored include improved set-down and pick up to reduce dangerous vehicle movements, wider pavements to improve pedestrian access and the option to explore a one-way street incorporating Back Lane north of the Greenway as an exit.



M11. Back Lane

Back Lane would benefit from improvements to enhance accessibility in the area.



M12. Greenway access and viewpoint

Proposal to create a route from Back Lane up and over the Greenway to connect into the growing network of walking and cycling routes on towards the town centre. This would include a new vantage point with views over the green space, Castle, Castle Mound and the roofscape of the town.

Movement and public space



M13. Land north of the Castle

Improvements to the existing green space, including the introduction of connecting pathways, new children's play area and enhanced rugby club facilities. The area is not intended for development as a formal park, but could include elements of nature conservation and wild space. As part of the project consultation should take place on both the setting of the Quaker Burial Ground and the potential relocation of the Patrick Kelly Memorial. The land is zoned for open space, and sports / recreational use.



M14. Soccer pitch

Delivery of existing proposals for the development of a soccer pitch on the former land fill site. Related to this, consideration of the existing play equipment and recycling centre should be undertaken. The play equipment feels isolated and the recycling facility creates a poor context for play.



M15. Patrick Kelly Memorial Park

As part of any wider improvements to the green space around the town a request has been made to consider the relocation of the Patrick Kelly Memorial to a more central and prominent location. If this happens, some future consideration will need to be given to this space as a remodelled green area.



M16. Bike and skate park

Through the consultation, support has been gathered for the idea of creating a cycle park on some location around the town. This could include a pump track suitable for mountain bikes, as well as skate/BMX park. The idea has been welcomed by local young people, and would be a positive and healthy activity. The nature of a MTB course would work well in parallel with nature and conservation enhancements.

At this point, no detailed location has been defined.



5 DELIVERY

Delivery groups

HERITAGE AND PLACEMAKING sets out the opportunities for enhancing and celebrating the historic character, heritage and cultural assets of the town.

These projects typically address existing issues and ongoing management and stewardship including projects which can be led by the Town Team and Council.

TOWN CENTRE ACTIVATION GROUP

Group to plan, support or deliver activities and events in the town centre.

HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND SHOPS

Working group to provide oversight, support funding bids and engage with land owners and businesses. Potential for the appointment of a local trades including shopfitters and signwriters to deliver an ongoing programme of work subject to the normal requirements of the public procurement process.

DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL considers at potential sites and development opportunities and the activities that these could deliver to support the town centre.

Most of the development projects are on sites in private ownership. The Council and Town Team have a role to play in stimulating interest and guiding schemes as they develop.

DESIGN GUIDANCE GROUP

Collaboration with the Council to develop tailored guidance for town centre enhancement with a specific focus on Shop Front treatment to promote the uptake of Shop Front Enhancement funding opportunities

COMMUNITY HUB GROUP

A group which leads the preparation of a detailed masterplan for the sites at the western end of Main Street. This would coordinate the different sites to unlock development potential, parking and community infrastructure.

The role of the Council and the Town Team in delivering the work will vary across the masterplan themes. It will be important to focus energy and resources where it will have the most impact.

MOVEMENT & CONNECTIONS

looks at the strategic road network and also includes ideas for better walking and cycling links, and parking.

Public realm and green space projects cover a mix of public and private spaces. The Council and Town Team have a key role in planning and delivering improvements to key streets and spaces, as well as coordinating and facilitating improvements to private space.

PUBLIC REALM GROUP

Working with County officers to commission and oversee the development of detailed schemes for the design of streets and spaces in the town, including provision for active travel, public transport and parking.

GREEN SPACES & LEISURE

identifies opportunities for improvements to existing and formalised new green spaces, public spaces and routes.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE GROUP

Working with County officers to plan the creation, delivery and management of green spaces whilst also working at the local community level on the day to day care of smaller green space projects



NEED TO GET OUT OF THE TOWN AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK

Need a better playground in a central location!!

NEED TO SOUTH OF TOWN - NEEDS TO BE IMPROVED

EMPLOYMENT CHANGES - NO LUNCH / AFTERNOON - MUST BE ALTERNATIVE?

Need more places to go in town - more variety

PROVIDE AN AFTERNOON FOR 3-5pm COMMUNITY HALL

PARKING - MORE RECREATION - SENSE OF PRIDE IN WHAT WE HAVE

HARD TO GET WORKERS TO CARRY OUT MAINTENANCE

More variety of facilities and shops

Build on character of town when enhance streetscape

STREET FURNITURE IS TILED

CREATE VIEWS / VISIBILITY



MOATE TOWN CENTRE FIRST MASTERPLAN

HAVE YOUR SAY!

Moate has been chosen to receive funding to develop a plan under the Government's Town Centre First Initiative. Westmeath County Council is leading the development of the plan which will set out a strategy for the future of the town.

Your involvement is really important - we want to hear what you think about Moate, and what the masterplan should say. Your views will help shape the draft plan for Moate to be a great place to live, work and visit. Find out how you can comment overleaf.

Tell us what you think!

Complete the survey!

APPEARANCE PUBLISHING BILLS ON WINDOWS PLACES - GAA TAKE DOWN ONCE FINISHED







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