

Strokestown 2040

A Town Centre First Plan



Ár dTodhchaf
Tuaithe
Our Rural
Future



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Lár Bailte ar dTús
Town Centre First



Comhairle Contar
Ros Comáin
Roscommon
County Council

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Strokestown, My Town.

Steeped in your rushes and bogs, a town to pass through on the way to the west your Big House stands alongside the new Famine Museum.
Strokestown, you shaped me, giving me the run of your wide streets, my young legs sweeping from your Bawn Gates to the inkwells of Scoil Mhuire,
your long incline to the Turn of Fam the perfect runway for your Westward fleet of Scania trucks.
My town. Fashioned by a straight rule, home to processions, confessions,
fair days, show days, holy days, the witness to all my firsts: kiss, fall, medal, loss. First place to leave, first place to miss.

Up the town, from Tanner's Turn, I'm four year's old, my milk can spilling as I roll down into your Hollow, where Bernie Feeney leans forever over his farm gate.
Arm in a sling puts a short halt to the schoolyard hopscotch among your melody of McCormack, McDermott, McPhillips and McHugh.

Out of town I cycle, at seventeen, with phrases of Virgil, Kavanagh and Parnell,
gleanings from Morahan's printing press, lilting from Thady's on fleadh day,
jigs trebled on the stage in the Magnet, embroidered with threads from Donlon's,
taps and laces in Shevlin's, Connolly's shiny buttons and hemlines refashioned in Molly Larkin's smoke-filled room.

On days the Rossies win, John McManus pours his smile across his butcher's block,
the long length of his cigarette ash between his lips, a mesmerising trick,
just like the zipline of money whizzing across the ceiling of Jimmy Henry's hardware store
and Nell Flaherty's Drake that floats away over Anthony Beirne's bar.
Sweetness lingers in the paper-caned bonbons from O'Neill's;
the promise of a barley stick from Sheehan's; endless ham sliced across Greene's counter
and sleeves of scallions and ribbons of rhubarb, fresh from Pat Collins' garden.
In Berna Chapman's mural , Paddy Reilly sits alongside Percy French,
He'll never make it back to Ballyjamesduff,
never leaving you Strokestown never leaving me.

Noelle Lynskey

Strokestown Poetry Town 2021



Setting the Scene

The Strokestown Town Centre First (TCF) Plan is an ambitious strategy that sets out a pathway for the revival and rejuvenation of the once vibrant market town. This strategy sets out the following 17-year vision for the town, reflecting what it means to be in Strokestown In 2040.

“Our Vision is of a vibrant, sustainable and flourishing Strokestown, a unique place to visit and a great place to live & prosper.”



This vision means that Strokestown will be:

1. An **Enriched Heritage Town** that realises and optimises its existing cultural and heritage assets.
2. A **Vibrant Town Economy** that develops experience led retail and hospitality, and embraces digital transformation and new ways of working.
3. A **Sustainable Town Centre** that prioritises climate change adaptation, the regeneration of public spaces and town centre living.
4. A **Socially Connected Town** that supports communities through inclusive places and spaces.
5. A **Safe, Welcoming and Accessible Town Centre** that values sustainable mobility, age friendly initiatives and universal design principles.

This Town Centre First Plan brings our 2040 vision to life by identifying 8 transformational proposals and a five-year roadmap to achieve them. Our Transformational Proposals include:



Setting the Plan in Context: A Town Centre First Policy

The National Planning Framework and Our Rural Future set out a vision to develop thriving Irish Towns which are integral to national economic, social, cultural and environmental wellbeing and development. This vision is built on the interdependence of urban and rural areas, and recognises the diversity of individual towns, the centrality of people, the importance of vibrant and lived-in places and the potential to create quality jobs and sustain our shared environment.

The Town Centre First policy seeks to support the delivery of this vision and complement a wide range of Government policies impacting on towns in Ireland. It provides a cross-cutting and collaborative framework for central government, Local Authorities, public and private sector stakeholders, and especially communities, to build sustainable vibrant town centres.

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

Towns impact on quality of life and should be attractive places for people of all ages, abilities and social backgrounds to live in. There remains a focus

on enhancing work and enterprise, with new opportunities now presented by remote working. Towns also service the needs of visitors and tourists, as well as being an important source of community character and identity. The Town Centre First (TCF) plan policy will facilitate that response by ensuring that their centres can function as the sustainable and vibrant heart of the communities they serve, in ways that are adaptable and appropriate to 21st Century needs.

In December 2021, Phase 1 funding was announced as part of the Government’s ‘Town Centre First’ policy. Each county was required to select a town to engage in the initial phase of the programme and thus Roscommon County Council subsequently received a budget allocation to support the development of a Town Centre First Plan for Strokestown.

The Town Centre First Policy proposes that participating towns across should develop Town Centre First Plans in partnership with the local community and businesses, collaborating as part of the Town Team, together with all other relevant stakeholders in the town.

There is a vibrant and active community in Strokestown and an established ‘Town Team’ (consisting of local residents, businesses, councillors and community representatives) with clear ideas and visions for how the town should develop going forward.

In July 2022, Roscommon County Council appointed independent ‘place shaping’ consultants from S3 Solutions, BDP and Venturei Network to support the development of the Strokestown Town Centre First Plan.





Developing the Plan

Delivering change is difficult, but when it is led by the community and for the community then it supports the development of more successful and sustainable places.

The people that know Strokestown best are the people that live, visit and work there. The development of the Strokestown TCF plan was therefore rooted in consultation with its residents, businesses, community organisations and other key stakeholders. Their concerns, ambitions and ideas have shaped this collaborative plan for the town.

The consultation process explored what Strokestown is about and how to build on its unique identity, character, heritage, and connectivity across the region as part of a renewed vision to 2040. The process included:



6

Thematic stakeholder workshops delivered with 26 business and community groups attending.



185

Residents consulted at Strokestown Agricultural show.



147

Resident responses to an online survey.



415

Individuals were involved in shaping the Strokestown TCF Plan



8

Engagements with the Strokestown Town Team representatives.



32

Stakeholder interviews carried out including key community, business and statutory organisations.



4

Site visits and Town Walkabouts carried out by the consultant team.

The contributions of stakeholders are woven throughout this TCF plan, reinforcing its sense of ownership within the Town and its residents.

The Story

About Strokestown

Strokestown is a small town located in the east of County Roscommon, approximately 20 kilometres northeast of Roscommon Town.



Population:

18.9% population growth rate in Strokestown ED between 2016-2022, higher than the County (8.4%) and State (8%) (Census 2022).

27% of Strokestown's population are under 25, lower than the County (31.6%) and the State (33.2%) (Census 2016).

50% of Strokestown's population are aged over 45, higher than the County (43%) and the State (37.2%) (Census 2016).



38% age dependency ratio in Strokestown ED, in line with the County (38%) but lower than the State (52.7%) (Pobal 2016).

37% lone parent ratio (LPR) in Strokestown ED, compared to 16.4% for the County (Pobal 2016). Within the Strokestown Small Area 197103006, the LPR is 50%, the 4th highest LPR in the County (Pobal 2016).

1467 is the projected population of Strokestown settlement by 2031, a population growth of 28% from 2016.

Ethnicity:

86.7% of Strokestown's population identify as White Irish (County 85.7% & State 82%).

2.6% of Strokestown's population identify as Black/Black Irish or Asian/Asian Irish (County 2% & State 3.5%).

0.5% of Strokestown's population identify as White Irish Travellers, (County 0.8% & State 0.7%).


*The remaining 10.2% is classified as miscellaneous.


Deprivation:


Strokestown ED is considered **marginally below average** (-6.57) in terms of relative deprivation, more deprived than the County at -2.36 (Pobal 2016).

Strokestown ED has one area which is classed as **disadvantaged** (-10.82) which traverses Bawn Street, Bridge Street and Elphin Street, the core of the town.

Health:

 **81.4%** of Strokestown's population rate their health as good/very good (County 86.6% & State 87%).

 **2.8%** of Strokestown's population rate their health as bad/very bad (County 1.9% & State 1.6%).

 **18.8%** of Strokestown's population have a disability (County 14% & State 13.5%).

Education:



16.8%

of Strokestown's population have primary level as their highest level of education (County 15.5% and State 13.3%).



25.5%

of Strokestown's population have a third level education (County 36% & State 42%).



Connectivity

Strokestown is located at the junction of the N5 National primary route and the R368 in the north of County Roscommon. From a geographical perspective, the town is ideally located to larger urban settlements and is a highly accessible town surrounded by a quality road network with good public transport links. A new 36km road bypassing Strokestown and Tulsk in Co Roscommon is planned and will ensure upgrading of the N5 primary route does not impact on an archaeological complex. Strokestown boasts the second widest street in Ireland and across Europe. Its distinctive axial plan of the town provides a clear link from Church Street and Bawn Street to Strokestown House (as shown opposite). This unique feature is distinctive to the town's identity and heritage.

84%

of respondents to a community survey identified parking availability in Strokestown as good or excellent.

64%

of respondents to a community survey identified town centre traffic flow as good or excellent.

Key connectivity issues/challenges identified in Strokestown Town Centre include:

Traffic congestion

Whilst most respondents to the community survey identified traffic flow as good/excellent, substantive issues were identified in relation to the volume of vehicular activity in the area

caused mainly by poor bus stop locations at Bridge Street and a lack of organised parking at Bawn Steet. These result in significant traffic build up in and around these parts of town, disrupting traffic flow and creating road safety concerns. Consultation highlighted the need to address these issues specifically to enhance traffic flow throughout the town and introduce traffic calming measures to improve safety.

Lack of safe cycling/pedestrian routes

The street layout restricts physical and social connectivity with travel as it is vehicle oriented with limited pedestrian connectivity. There are also concerns with the speed of traffic and road safety, which discourages active travel. Clean and safe pedestrian and cycle routes should be prioritised, along with improved cycle facilities and infrastructure.

History and Heritage

Strokestown is one of the 27 designated Heritage Towns in Ireland: a planned town within 'Ireland's Hidden Heartlands' with formally aligned streets and prominent public buildings. The town centre lies within an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) with many historic buildings adding character and identity to the town.

Many of the buildings and streets located within Church Street and Bawn Street have designated conservation status as shown in the adjacent image. The ACA is of specific architectural interest due to its town planning origins. The ACA extends from the entrance to Strokestown Park House, with the buildings lining Bawn Street making a significant contribution to the setting of the entrance to Strokestown Park House.



Strokestown Park House

The town is home to Strokestown Park House, an 18th century mansion which is home to the National Famine Museum. The lands were acquired by the Westward group in 1979 and following the discovery of a major archive of documents during restoration work, the National Famine Museum was established within Strokestown House in 1994. Since 2015, Strokestown Park House and the National Famine Museum are managed by the Irish Heritage Trust.

Strokestown Park House is a major asset for the town and a key visitor and tourism attraction. Respondents to a community survey frequently highlighted accessing Strokestown Park House grounds as a central reason for visiting Strokestown.

The National Famine Way

The National Famine way is a waymarked 167km historic trail that traces the footsteps of the famine emigrants that left Strokestown in 1847, connecting the National Famine Museum in Strokestown with Ronan Gillespie's Famine memorial on Custom House Quay in Dublin. The route commences at Strokestown Park House and makes its way through the town.

County Roscommon Heritage and Genealogy Centre

The County Roscommon Heritage and Genealogy centre conducts genealogy research for people with Roscommon roots, attracting significant domestic and overseas tourism. The centre is housed in a unique architectural octagonal building built in c.1820 which serves as another significant focal point for visitors to the town.

Strokestown is a town with a rich history and heritage which should be preserved and considered as part of any future developments and proposals.



Town Economy

Strokestown's unemployment rate is over 50% higher than the state average but largely aligned with other rural towns across the region. Employment opportunities in Strokestown are reflective of traditional labour sectors including agriculture, construction, retail and public sector with few larger companies operating in the town. Most residents in Strokestown commute to other surrounding towns such as Carrick-on-Shannon and Roscommon Town to work.



18.75%

unemployment rate for males



17.22%

unemployment rate for females

However, consultation highlighted that Strokestown Park House is hidden from view and that this limited visibility from the town (and vice versa) leads to disconnect and few visitors coming into the town centre. Sliabh Bawn Trails has become a popular destination for outdoor pursuits and Strokestown Golf course is the first 9 hole PGA recognised golf course once you cross the Shannon.

Whilst Strokestown town centre hosts a number of businesses and services, it was consistently the view of residents and stakeholders that Strokestown town centre is not maximising its economic potential. Respondents to a community survey highlighted the following suggestions which would entice them to visit the town centre more frequently:



More Shops/Businesses including clothes shops and gardening centre



More Cafés & Restaurants



Improving town attractiveness

Strokestown was a once vibrant market town but has experienced significant business closures, vacancy rates of 35-40% and dereliction throughout the town centre, resulting in reduced footfall and economic activity. However, local businesses and enterprise in Strokestown continue to make a valuable contribution to the economic and social infrastructure of the town. This includes:

- **Agriculture, Commercial & Industry:** Strokestown is home to a number of medium employers such as Westward/Hanlys Quarry.
- **Hospitality and Accommodation:** There are two guesthouses/B&Bs in the town. The Percy French Hotel on Bridge Street is regularly used for community functions and provides accommodation for visitors to the town.
- **Professional & Retail Services:** Strokestown is home to a range of professional services including legal, financial, architectural, web design, estate agents, logistics and storage companies.
- **Tourism:** Strokestown is the centre of some of the key tourism attractions in Roscommon. Strokestown Park House and the National Famine Museum attract significant tourism numbers.

The Town Centre First Plan should prioritise ways in which the town centre can be enhanced and consolidated as a resilient and vibrant urban centre that will provide a sustainable employment base for Strokestown into the future. This should include supporting existing businesses and start-ups to reduce town centre vacancy and developing tourism and other sectors in Strokestown.

Social and Community Interaction

Strokestown has a strong local community base. The town is well resourced by key community drivers and stakeholders who lead on a range of community-based initiatives and are engaged in decisions about the town. The strong community ethos, coupled with support from Roscommon County Council will be a key enabler for the implementation of the Town Centre First Plan.



The town provides a range of community and leisure amenities and facilities including Strokestown Community and Sports Centre, G.A.A Centre, Strokestown United Soccer Club, Strokestown Golf Club, Crèche and after-school childcare facilities.

The grounds of Strokestown Park House provide significant space for the local community to access outdoor recreation and activity and there are a variety of scenic routes and trails which connect Sliabh Bawn, Cloonslanor and Kilglass for walkers, runners and cyclists. Strokestown is also surrounded by a fantastic network of lakes and rivers, including the River Shannon, which provide opportunities for a range of water sports, cruising and angling.

The Town Centre First Plan will ensure that community infrastructure is enhanced to enable the town to meet ranging needs, offering cradle to the grave opportunities and embracing the changing and growing populations that settle in Strokestown.

Despite existing provision, spaces and places for people to interact, engage and socialise in Strokestown are limited. Central issues include:

- A complete lack of appropriate outdoor 'green space' (other than at

Strokestown Park House) within the town.

- Poor street lighting and limited pedestrian crossings restrict opportunities for walking, cycling and active travel in the town centre.
- The town is fairly well serviced in terms of sports facilities however they are generally operating at capacity which restricts additional usage.
- A lack of suitable outdoor seating, social areas, and safe public spaces that can help to bring people together.
- Little to no social or community space for meetings, workshops and group based activity as well as little support for remote working
- Limited facilities and spaces for young people (teenagers) to participate in local activities, particularly during evenings.
- Underutilisation of the existing playground caused by limited car parking.

For Strokestown to be engaging, it must address problems with public space. Until now, priority has been placed on cars and to moving traffic and goods through and around the town. The town needs a strategy for growth that integrates movement and destinations to provide walkable communities.

Strokestown must consider how people can be more active in and around the town centre, particularly given that the historic layout and street architecture does not currently lend itself to 'active travel'.

Culturally led regeneration should be a priority for the town and can be achieved by celebrating Strokestown's unique heritage. Creative and engaging placemaking can have a role to play in creating places and spaces that embody the culture, heritage and stories of the town. Enlivening dead or vacant spaces will also improve liveability and social cohesion.



Housing

Strokestown is an attractive and appealing place for people to live as it generally offers more value for money for homeowners which could further grow its population. The town possesses good quality and reputable schools and education providers which makes the area appealing to young families and families from outside the area. Due to the popularity of Scoil Mhuire Secondary School, it is near capacity and future investment may be required.

Despite this, there is a large number of vacant homes in Strokestown, particularly in the Town Centre. There are also significant 'backland' opportunity sites in Strokestown which are underutilised. These sites could be brought into more functional mixed use and support better connectivity with the town centre.

28.6%

Home Vacancy Rate excluding holiday homes (State 20.3%)

36.6%

Residential Vacancy Rate for Town Centre. Vacancy rate is higher for Church Street than Bawn Street



Currently, Strokestown's street layout restricts physical and social connections as there is limited pedestrian connectivity between housing estates and the backlands with the town centre. Local neighbourhood connectivity, where people are less isolated, and building greater cohesion and social connection was found to be extremely important for Strokestown during consultation.



Town Centre Sustainability

Consideration of public realm is central to the sustainability of Strokestown town centre. Public Realm is a term used to describe areas where all members of the public have routine access to; it includes streets, public buildings, riverbanks, squares, as well as parks and green spaces. Consultation highlighted that quality elements of public realm haven't developed or been significantly invested in to promote Strokestown as an attractive place to do business or spend time in. Whilst the core town area around Church Street, Bawn Street, Bridge Street and Elphin Street houses the majority of commercial and retail provision and the architectural street layout provides significant space, car parking provision is not optimised which contributes to congestion and road safety concerns within the town.



There is also concern among the Strokestown community about the lack of appropriate spaces and facilities within Strokestown town centre for people to meet and socialise. The high volume of redundant brownfield and backland sites in the town centre area provides substantial opportunity for new developments to enhance and improve public spaces in Strokestown to maximise and increase community use. Additionally, better use of existing assets such as Strokestown Park House and the town's Architectural Conservation Area status can be used to capitalise on new opportunities to develop and share Strokestown's unique identity with residents and visitors moving forward.

It is a priority that the Town Centre First Plan can support the delivery and enhancement of Public Realm in Strokestown and help to resolve issues that impact on the quality of spaces and places provided.



The Response

The following section sets out eight transformational proposals to be delivered over the first 5 years of the Strokestown 2040 Vision. In the subsequent sections we describe each proposal, why it is important, its current state of play, the key actions required to deliver it and the lead accountable organisation. The 8 proposals include:



A connected public realm improvement scheme



An integrated Strokestown park house & gardens



Strokestown Identity and Marketing



A social, community & wellbeing hub



A walkways and river access initiative



Unlocking the backlands



Delivery of the N5 Strokestown / Tulsk bypass



Tackling vacant buildings and dereliction

Some of the proposals will be delivered in full during the first five years, whereas others are about making progress. Whilst the proposals can be transformative in their own right, collectively, they reflect a practical manifestation of the 2040 vision for Strokestown. Each of the proposals will have a unique set of actions and a unique context but each will be underpinned by a commitment to a consistent set of principles which align closely with the TCF plan Policy.

These include a commitment to positively contribute to climate action and net zero objectives, accessibility to all, sustainability, collaboration and ensuring the voice of the people that live in Strokestown is retained and embedded throughout the practical implementation of the plan.



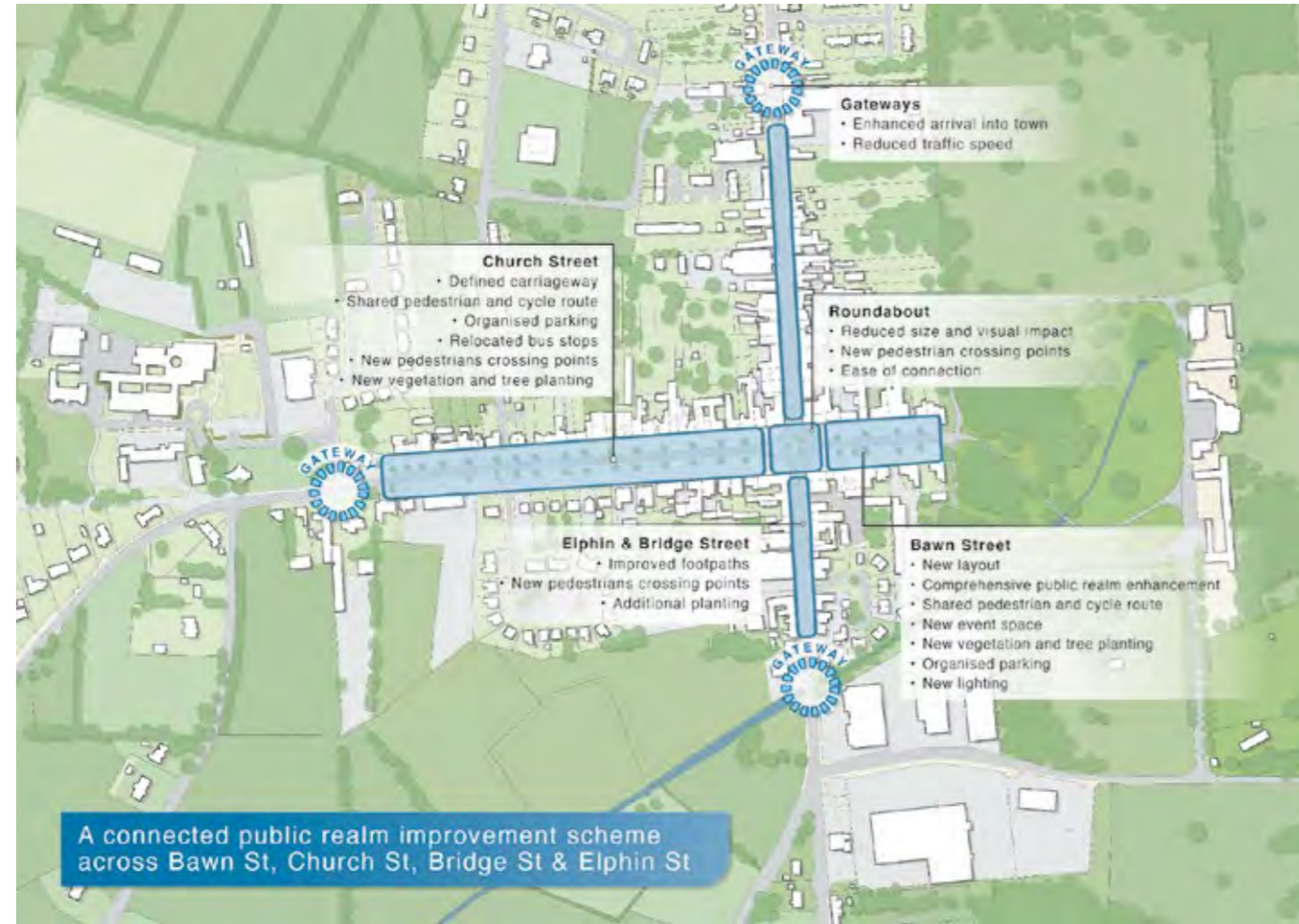
Transformational Proposal 1 – A Connected Public Realm

What is the proposal?

The town core area comprises Church Street, Bawn Street, Bridge Street and Elphin Street which collectively provide the primary commercial and retail offer in Strokestown.

Whilst the architectural street layout provides significant space, there are a range of challenges that are negatively impacting on the quality of public realm in the town.

The delivery of a **connected** public realm scheme across the core town area is a critical component of the Town Centre First Plan.



Why is this transformational proposal important?

Public Realm is a term used to describe areas where all members of the public have routine access to. It includes streets, public buildings, riverbanks, squares, as well as parks and green spaces. It can consist of many elements such as overall layout, shopfronts, architecture, street furniture, planting, signage, paving, footpath maintenance, colour schemes, traffic management, cycling and pedestrian facilities. The consultation process in Strokestown highlighted that quality Public Realm hasn't significantly developed or received sufficient investment to promote Strokestown as an attractive place to do business or spend time in. There are a range of challenges that can be addressed by this proposal, including:





A lack of safe pedestrian and cycle routes throughout the town discourages pedestrian access and active travel



Congestion at Bawn Street leads to unorganised parking and road safety issues



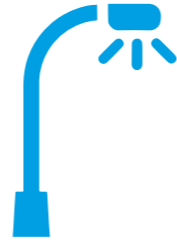
Bus stop locations aren't ideally placed at Bridge Street which results in significant traffic build up coming in and out of town



Lack of public bins can lead to high levels of littering and fly tipping throughout the town centre



Vehicles travelling at high speed coming in and out of town leads to significant road safety concerns



Poor street lighting and limited pedestrian crossings reduce town centre engagement



The town lacks an adequate space to build on its highly successful events missed opportunity to stimulate positive economic activity



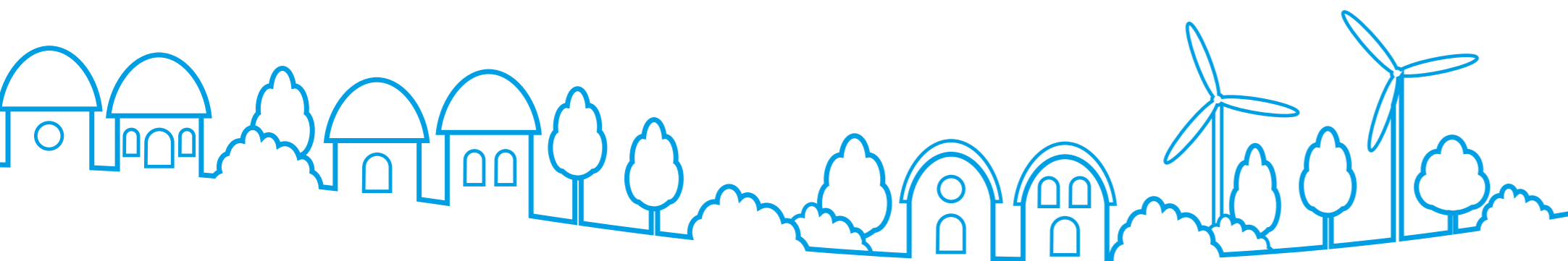
The Town is not doing as much as it could from an environmentally friendly perspective, there is a strong aspiration for a greener town centre



Limited retail & hospitality provision in the town some of which is perceived to be linked to a poor public realm



Lack of organised / structured car parking throughout the town contributes to congestion and road safety concerns as well as 'putting people off'



Delivering the Proposal

The following sets out a summary of the current state of play for a connected public realm scheme in Strokestown and outlined the key steps and actions required to progress such a scheme over the course of this TCF plan.

State of Play

1. Consultants have been commissioned by Roscommon County Council to advance designs and Part 8 planning applications for public realm schemes in both Bawn Street and Church Street.
2. Consultation with local residents was embedded in the consultation process for this TCF plan.
3. Part 8 Planning is expected to commence on the scheme at Bawn Street and Church Street by Quarter 3 2023.
4. Thanks to the TCF plan planning process, the designs for Bawn Street and Church Street have considered their future connectivity to and alignment with Elphin Street and Bridge Street - ensuring a consistent and connected Public Realm.

What needs to happen next

Headline Action	Timeframe • short term (1-2 years) • medium term (3-4 years) • long term (5-7 years)	Action Owner
Completion of preliminary design and Part 8 Planning process for Church Street and Bawn Street	Short term	RCC & Town Team
Funding applications submitted to deliver the public realm schemes in Church Street and Bawn Street (subject to Part 8 being achieved that meets funding scheme criteria)	Short term	RCC & Town Team
Funding applications submitted to deliver design elements of the public realm schemes in Elphin Street and Bridge Street	Medium term	RCC & Town Team
Design team commissioned to prepare preliminary designs, costings and Part 8 planning for public realm schemes in Elphin Street and Bridge Street	Medium term	RCC & Town Team
Funding applications submitted to deliver the public realm schemes in Elphin Street and Bridge Street (subject to successful Part 8 being achieved that meets funding scheme criteria)	Long term	RCC & Town Team
Maintenance and upkeep of new green areas and public rights of way	Medium term	Tidy Towns, Town Team, RCC
Identify opportunities and deliver new and enhanced events in public spaces throughout the town	Short - Medium Term	Town Team, Tidy Towns, Local Community Groups

Transformational Proposal 2 – An Integrated Strokestown Park House

What is the proposal?

This transformational proposal seeks to harness and strengthen the role of Strokestown Park House, Gardens & National Famine Museum in the fabric of the town centre by increasing its visibility to the town and enhancing access for local residents and those who visit.

The proposal will include the development and delivery of a specific recreational and amenity plan for Strokestown Park House and gardens which sets out how to develop new recreational green spaces, play and activity areas, woodland preservation and enhance the arrival space and long views into the House from the town.



Why is this transformational proposal important?

Strokestown Park House, Gardens & National Famine Museum are major assets for the town and are the primary visitor and tourism attraction. Fáilte Ireland's investment of €3.9million, matched with private investment of €1.2million in the National Famine Museum is one of the largest ever investments in a visitor attraction in Ireland's Hidden Heartlands. The National Famine Museum is expected to attract 115,000 visitors annually, it also acts as the start and/or end point of the historical National Famine Way, a walking and cycling trail following in the footsteps of the 1,490 people who were forced to emigrate from the Strokestown Estate in 1847. The trail links Strokestown with Dublin across the flat and well-surfaced paths along the Royal Canal.

Standing alongside the new Museum, Strokestown Park House is one of the only remaining historic properties in Ireland to retain its original features and collections whilst its 6 acres of walled gardens and woodlands offer a significant outdoor attraction.





There is a significant opportunity to develop a new 'walking trail' in the grounds of SPH which could connect visitors to the main entrance at Bawn Street



There is a visual and physical disconnect between Strokestown Park House and the town centre thus the town centre is not realising its potential for visitors.



There is a lack of appropriate outdoor 'green space' within the town other than at Strokestown Park House which is not maximised.



The existing playground (located beside the childcare facility) is not at an appropriate standard and children have limited unstructured, safe, play spaces in the town.



The town lacks suitable outdoor seating/ social areas/ safe public spaces that can help to bring people together. The development of a new Town Park in Strokestown which provides outdoor green space, social space, horticultural space and play space for people of all ages was identified as a priority during consultation.



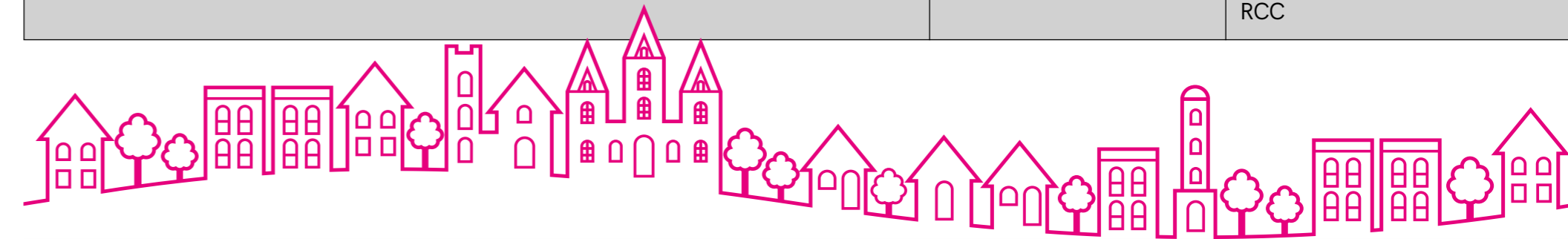
Delivering the Proposal

The Strokestown Park House, Gardens and the property housing the museum are in private ownership. The owners of the property have worked collaboratively with the Irish Heritage Trust and in partnership with Fáilte Ireland to develop the new museum and they have participated fully and enthusiastically in the development of this Town Centre First plan. Strokestown Park House also has an existing 10 year plan.

Any further development at Strokestown Park House and gardens will require a collaborative approach between the local residents, funders, the local authority and the property owners. The key actions identified in progressing plans towards an integrated Strokestown Park House and gardens include:

What needs to happen next

Headline Action	Timeframe • short term (1-2 years) • medium term (3-4 years) • long term (5-7 years)	Action Owner
Ongoing engagement between the property owners at Strokestown Park House and the Strokestown Town Team to develop a brief for a more integrated SPH and the town	Short term	Strokestown Town Team & Strokestown Park House
Secure funding to commission the development of a recreational & amenity plan for SPH and Gardens, including detailed designs for play, recreational green and social space, trails, biodiversity and enhanced entrance/arrival space	Short term	Strokestown Park House, Strokestown Town Team and RCC
Where appropriate, progress planning applications to bring agreed designs and plans to a state of readiness	Short term	Strokestown Park House, Strokestown Town Team and RCC
Funding applications submitted to deliver the agreed recreational and amenity proposals at SPH	Medium term	Strokestown Park House, Strokestown Town Team and RCC



Transformational Proposal 3 – Tackling Vacant Buildings and Dereliction

What is the proposal?

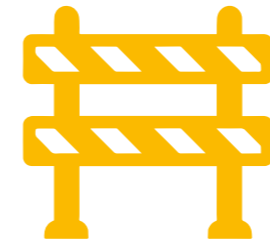
This transformational proposal is about a targeted and focused approach to address dereliction and vacancy within the town centre, with an ambitious aim of eliminating vacancy rates by 2040.

The proposal focuses on engagement between key partners, stakeholders including the Strokestown diaspora to explore and encourage imagination and creativity in bringing vacant properties back into use for business and enterprise activity and to support town centre living. This will be achieved by maximising the use of key funding streams such as the Croí Cónaithe (Towns) Fund and others as a key focus of this proposal.



Why is this transformational proposal important?

Strokestown was a once vibrant market town but in recent years has experienced significant business closures, vacancy rates and dereliction throughout the town centre which has resulted in reduced footfall and economic activity. Strokestown town centre accommodates a number of small to medium scale retailers, professional service companies, a hotel, public houses and a number of food outlets. These local employers and service providers make a valuable contribution to both the economic and social infrastructure of the town, supporting the local community, and that of its wider hinterland. However, it was consistently the view of residents and stakeholders that Strokestown is underserved in terms of restaurant and café provision.



Recent analysis of the geo directory indicates approximately 41 properties that are/could be vacant and unused within the Town Centre



Dereliction and vacancy rates in Strokestown are considered by residents to have serious negative social impacts on the local and surrounding communities.



Building vacancy rates/ high levels of dereliction was ranked the 3rd biggest issue or challenge in the town centre. A lack of café/restaurant provision was ranked number 1 (linked to vacancy)



Addressing vacancy and maximising the use of existing housing stock is a primary objective of Government. The re-use and regeneration of vacant properties in towns can provide much needed housing and have a transformative impact.



Delivering the Proposal

Roscommon County Council alongside the Strokestown Town Team and local residents have identified addressing dereliction and vacancy as a strategic priority in this Town Centre first plan. Through targeted and focused promotion, raising awareness, and the subsequent administration

of grant funding – this proposal seeks to eliminate vacancy rates in Strokestown by 2040, and to reduce vacancy rates by 20% in the next 5 years (circa 2 per year).

Headline Action	Timeframe • short term (1-2 years) • medium term (3-4 years) • long term (5-7 years)	Action Owner
Carry out a detailed assessment of vacant properties in Strokestown and establish baseline status in terms of condition, ownership and vacancy	Short term	RCC
Organise and facilitate a series of workshops and information sessions on available funding opportunities including Croí Cónaithe (Towns) Fund and the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) programme	Short term	Strokestown Town Team and RCC
Targeted and focused marketing and engagement campaign to the Strokestown Diaspora, to property owners (where appropriate) to promote this TCF plan, this specific transformational proposal and the various funding opportunities	Short term	Strokestown Town Team and RCC



Transformational Proposal 4 – Walkways and River Access Initiative

What is the proposal?

This transformational proposal aims to improve the pedestrianisation and permeability of Strokestown to create attractive, vibrant and safe places that are accessible by walking and cycling – as well as connecting Strokestown to its hinterlands and the wider region through Active Travel.

The proposal involves the development of a coordinated plan for walking and cycle schemes in Strokestown – including maximising natural resources and assets as well as advocating for the inclusion of Strokestown as a destination on greenway initiatives in the region such as the Mid Shannon Greenway.



Why is this transformational proposal important?

For Strokestown to be engaging, it must address problems with public space, where the priority until now has been favoured towards the car and to moving traffic and goods through and around the town. Strokestown needs to consider how people can be more active in and around the town centre, encouraging active travel, where limited infrastructure currently exists. Highlighted consistently during the consultation process was a feeling of disconnect within the town between major streets, assets and infrastructure which impacts on the accessibility of the town centre. The street layout restricts physical and social connectivity with travel being

more car/vehicle oriented, with limited pedestrian connectivity between housing estates and the backlands within the town centre. Safe and clean streets were highlighted as a priority for many in the engagement process. The need to prioritise clean and safe pedestrian and cycle routes was referenced, along with improved cycle facilities and infrastructure. Local neighbourhood connectivity, where people are less isolated, builds greater cohesion and social connection, which is extremely important for Strokestown.



Strokestown is positioned to capitalise on emerging developments in relation to green and blue infrastructure. The National Famine Museum and Strokestown Park House and Gardens provide things to see” which establishes Strokestown as an ideal town for inclusion on new green and Blueway developments.



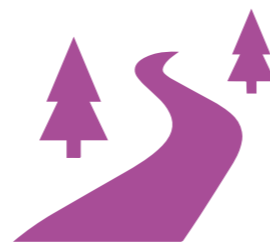
The National Famine Museum acts as the start and/or end point of the historical National Famine Way, a walking and cycling trail that links Strokestown with Dublin across the flat and well surfaced paths along the Royal Canal.

Roscommon County Council is currently exploring the feasibility of Cycleway and Greenway Schemes including the Mid Shannon Greenway and how these can connect to towns and villages across Roscommon and to other Greenways.



The commitment and ambition to enhance how people experience the town through active travel has a catalytic and connected impact on economic, social and climate-based ambitions within this Town Centre first plan.

Evidence is growing of the economic advantages of embracing a green agenda, particularly early opportunities for new growth sectors as part of the transition to net zero and a green economy.



Evidence points towards the need to reduce emissions and tackle air pollution, but also to adapt to more sustainable ways of living, including how people get around.

Thinking more sustainably will include tackling air pollution, and waste, but also enhancing biodiversity and green and blue infrastructure in the town. New blue and green infrastructure for climate resilience and the connection and activation of green space & pedestrian access should take place. This was identified as an important priority for Strokestown during the consultation process.

Delivering the Proposal

The development of a Walkways and River Access initiative involves a unique mix of land ownership and will require significant collaboration, commitment and good will to deliver. The starting point for this initiative is

the development of a clear, coordinated plan for walking and cycle schemes that can be broken down into prioritised phases through engagement with various landowners and partners. The following key actions are identified.

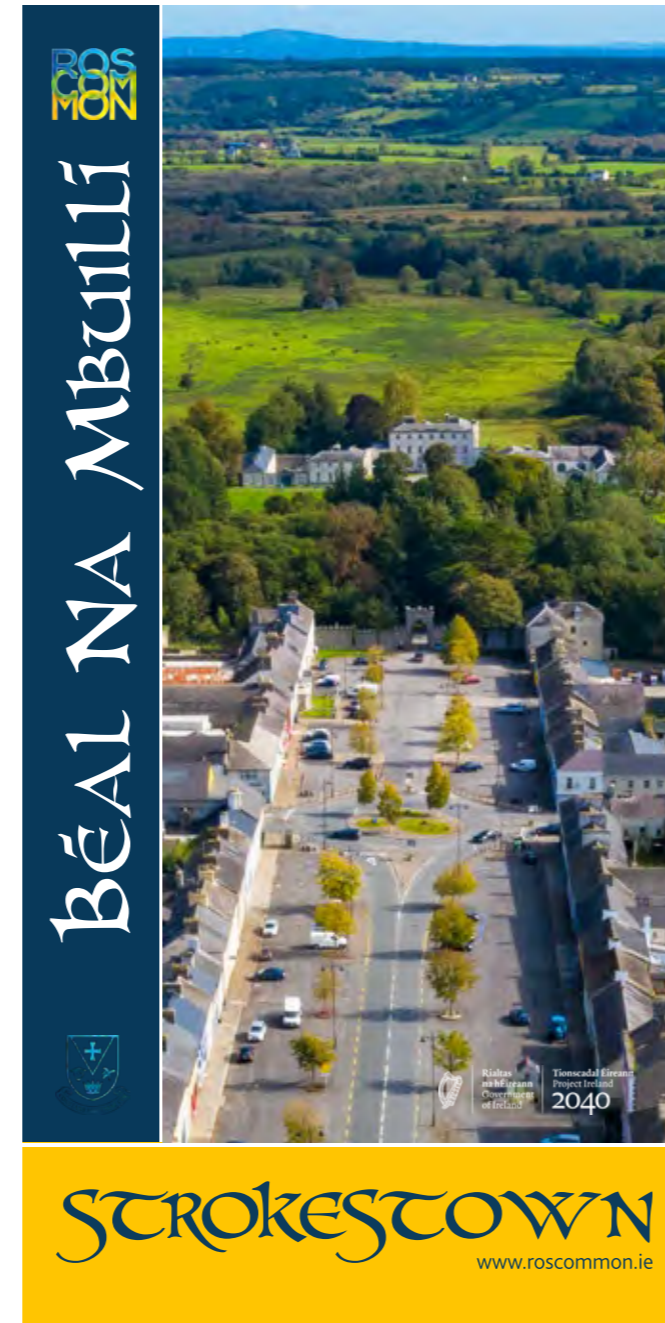
Headline Action	Timeframe • short term (1-2 years) • medium term (3-4 years) • long term (5-7 years)	Action Owner
The development of a coordinated plan for walking and cycling schemes within Strokestown including identification of land ownership	Short term	Strokestown Town Team supported by RCC Active Travel/ RLP/LSF
Prioritisation of 'quick win' Active Travel schemes within the town and submission of planning applications for 2-3 schemes	Short term	Strokestown Town Team and RCC Active Travel
Submission of funding applications to deliver prioritised 'quick win' Active Travel Schemes	Short term	Strokestown Town Team
Host and facilitate workshops on the potential business spin offs of greenways and active travel initiatives	Short - Medium Term	Strokestown Town Team and RCC
Commence initiatives for regional/national outdoor walking and cycling events in Strokestown	Short - Medium Term	Strokestown Town Team/RLP/ Local Sports Partnership
Engage with Roscommon Local Sports Partnership to develop a community sport and physical activity hub (CSPH) initiative in Strokestown linked to active travel	Short term	Strokestown Town Team/RCC/ Local Sports Partnership
Engage with Roscommon County Council and others to promote the inclusion of Strokestown as a destination on the Mid Shannon Greenway	Short - Medium Term	Strokestown Town Team

Transformational Proposal 5 – Strokestown Identity and Marketing

What is the proposal?

Strokestown is an important location in the Roscommon County Council area, and perhaps could be considered a destination town. It includes Strokestown Park House and the National Famine Museum as a major (particularly after the recent capital investment) attraction for visitors including out of state visitors. Equally the Town has developed a number of festivals and events across the past years which also bring visitors to Strokestown.

Feedback received during the public engagement processes leading to the development of the Strokestown Town Centre First Plan confirms that there is a need to have a much more strategic, integrated and focused approach to the identity and marketing of the Town and the marketing of specific events and activities in it across the year. This will include the development of an agreed annual marketing, promotional and events programme. Strokestown Park House has secured funding for and recruited a Marketing Officer/Events Manager and there is the potential to work collaboratively with this visitor attraction and the appointed officers to have a much more effective approach to the branding, identity, promotion and communication of Strokestown.



Why is this transformational proposal important?

Strokestown is one of the important/emerging destinations in both County Roscommon and the wider Ireland's Hidden Heartlands regional offering. The Town has a reputation for developing quality events (arts, foods, heritage and sports) and has benefited from significant capital investment in Strokestown Park House and the National Famine Museum. If the economy of the Town Centre is to develop it must start to create the conditions for more people to visit, stay longer and spend more. This Transformational

Proposal has the potential to directly build on the capital investment which has taken place to date, and which will take place through the implementation of this Town Centre First Plan to create the conditions for increased spend in the Town leading to its longer term sustainability and growth. There are a range of challenges which can be addressed by this Transformational Proposal:



Awareness of the wider Strokestown offer.



Improve the performance of the Town Centre by attracting more visitors to stay longer and spend more.



Co-ordination between Strokestown Park House/the National Famine Museum and local organisations to develop an annual programme of events and activities.



Promote Strokestown as a focal point for heritage, arts and history.

Delivering the Proposal

The following sets out a summary of the current state of play for the Strokestown identity and marketing transformational proposal and the key sites and actions required to progress it over the life course of this TCF plan.

- Significant capital has been invested in Strokestown Park House and the National Famine Museum to reinforce its position as a visitor attraction bringing external visitors to both Strokestown and County Roscommon.

- Strokestown Park House and the National Famine Museum employs a Marketing Officer/Events Co-Ordinator, collaborative working would enhance the efforts of the Town Team and others.
- A number of organisations have already organised successful arts, food, and heritage related events and activities; there is clear potential to build on this.
- There has been promotional media and online campaigns by local groups to promote Strokestown.

What needs to happen next

Headline Action	Timeframe • short term (1-2 years) • medium term (3-4 years) • long term (5-7 years)	Action Owner
Agree a shared Marketing, Brand Development, Events and Promotional Plan	Short	Strokestown Town Team, Strokestown Park House and other local groups
Secure revenue funding to develop existing events and festivals and introduce new calendar events which fill gaps in the current annual programme and utilise new spaces developed as an output of implementing the Strokestown TCF Plan	Short	Strokestown Town Team, Strokestown Park House and other local groups
Enhance existing and pilot new events to promote and develop the town i.e. extension of the Strokestown International Poetry Festival	Short	Strokestown Town Team, Strokestown Park House and other local groups
Develop a Regional level event and explore outdoor events on Sliabh Bawn and Strokestown Park House	Medium	Strokestown Town Team, Strokestown Park House and other local groups
Link with the Strokestown diaspora to promote the town as a place to visit, invest in or promote	Medium	Strokestown Town Team, Strokestown Park House and other local groups
Explore the potential to commission artwork (engage with the community) and locate in Strokestown area under the N5 Bypass per cent for Art Scheme	Medium	Strokestown Town Team, Strokestown Park House and RCC

Transformational Proposal 6 – A Social Community and Wellbeing Hub

What is the proposal?

This proposal will develop a Social Community and Wellbeing Hub on an existing underused site, a derelict/vacant building or adjacent to or part of an existing community space.

The Social Community Wellbeing Hub will provide a space where community organisations and the community can come together to access a range of social activities/opportunities, health and wellbeing programmes, arts and creativity programmes, as well as opportunities for enterprise linked activity or remote working. It will also serve as a focal point and base for external and statutory and voluntary agencies to deliver services and activities in Strokestown on an outreach basis.

These might be for the wider community or for specific components of that community e.g. young people older people, parents, people with specific support requirements. There might be potential to combine the Social and Community Wellbeing Hub with the library function or other complimentary community spaces.



Tommy Mackem Arts Centre



Why is this transformational proposal important?

Public engagement leading to the development of the Strokestown Town Centre First Plan has identified the need for multifunctional community space. It is recognised that Strokestown presents some of the best multi-sports facilities (indoor and outdoor) across County Roscommon. Equally, it is recognised that there is no specific focal point in the town or multifunctional space which can address the need for programmes and activities which support better physical and emotional health and wellbeing choices, and space which supports social connection of local groups to deliver more activities and services and facilitates external statutory and voluntary agencies to deliver services and activities in Strokestown on an outreach basis.

Many of these health and education challenges can be addressed through community activities, programmes and initiatives subject to appropriate multi-functional space being available. There can be a range of challenges which can be addressed by this transformational proposal:



The lack of accessible multi-functional space



Opportunities to address dereliction, vacancy or underused buildings /sites through identification of a target building /site to develop the social and community wellbeing hub



Lack of educational attainment post primary and particularly at third level and loss of graduates from the area post-secondary school



Address loneliness and social isolation, poverty and deprivation through a range of community based activity



Delivering the Proposal

The following sets out a summary of the current state of play for the Social and Community Wellbeing Hub transformational proposal in Strokestown and the key steps and actions required to progress it over the life course of this TCF plan.

- A number of potential site and building options have been identified through public engagement – there is a potential to amalgamate or join up services in new fit for purpose space.

- Strokestown Town Team supported by Roscommon County Council needs to implement a process of site/building appraisal to identify an appropriate site or building which is available, affordable and suitable.
- A full feasibility study is required to determine the needs (local groups, the local community, statutory and voluntary agencies) which might require access to multi-functional space in Strokestown.
- A suitable governance vehicle must be identified.

What needs to happen next

Headline Action	Timeframe • short term (1-2 years) • medium term (3-4 years) • long term (5-7 years)	Action Owner
Secure funding to commission a feasibility study including the exploration of needs, development of a concept design and identification of a preferred site/building	Short	RCC and Strokestown Town Team
Subject to a positive feasibility study, Commission design options and capital cost proposals and a Public Spending Code Appraisal for the agreed site/building option. This should also explore management and operating model	Short	RCC and Strokestown Town Team
Ensure the active involvement of the Town Team in the feasibility process as part of the TCF capacity building programme	Short	RCC and Strokestown Town Team
Apply for planning consent	Short	RCC and Strokestown Town Team
Pilot new groups and activities that could be extended/enhanced in any new facility as a means of proving need and demand (i.e. drama club, history/cultural activity)	Short	Strokestown Town Team and other local community groups
Apply for capital funding to deliver the preferred option	Medium	RCC and/or Strokestown Town Team (depending on funding source)
Procure contractor and deliver the Social and Community Wellbeing Hub	Medium	RCC and/or Strokestown Town Team (depending on funding source)

Transformational Proposal 7 – Delivery of the N5 Strokestown/Tulsk ByPass

What is the proposal?

The proposal is the construction of a 33km road between the Ballaghaderreen Bypass and Scramogue. The €200 million scheme will bypass the towns of Frenchpark, Ballinagare, Tulsk and Strokestown and boost economic, social and tourism development in the region by enhancing connectivity between the west, midlands and Dublin.

The proposal is widely referred to as the 'Gateway to the west'.

The planned route, a 33 km (21 mi) stretch of single carriageway, was approved by An Bord Pleanála in January 2019.



Why is this transformational proposal important?

Strokestown is located at the junction of the N5 National primary route and the R368 in the north of County Roscommon. From a geographical perspective, the town is regarded as being ideally located within close proximity to larger urban settlements and is a highly accessible town surrounded by a quality road network with good public transport links.

Whilst the town is well connected in terms of transport routes there is significant volume of vehicular activity within the town which disrupts

traffic flow and provides road safety concerns amongst residents. The planned Strokestown and Tulsk Bypass will also play an important role in terms of 'decluttering streets', moving unnecessary traffic out of the town centre and focusing on the 'place' function of streets through the city will help encourage more people to walk and cycle. The bypass is considered an enabler for some of the other transformational proposals identified in this TCF plan, the removal of through traffic and in particular HGVs is anticipated to deliver key benefits to Strokestown including:



Providing a consistent high quality road along the N5 corridor to encourage and support investment and employment in County Roscommon and Strokestown in particular



Improving safety for all road users in Strokestown including pedestrians and cyclists this was highlighted consistently as a challenge during the consultation process



Improving the environment, including a reduction in air pollution and by encouraging more active travel within the Town



Enhances Strokestown as a destination to visit rather than a town you pass through, increasing the quality and purpose of visits to the town.

This strategic proposal is led by Roscommon County Council with an expected completion of 2024/2025.

Transformational Proposal 8 – Unlocking the Backlands

What is the proposal?

The population of Strokestown is projected to grow by 155 by the end of the current County Development Plan and by 235 by 2031.

The town has the potential for a range of mixed development proposals including a combination of residential, commercial and community initiatives in compact growth sites in and around the town core – known as the Backlands.

This proposal is about exploring opportunities and developing ideas for land assembly and mixed-use developments in advance of a review of the Roscommon County Development Plan in 2026 and the next iteration of the CDP in 2029.



Why is this transformational proposal important?

Many central areas of Strokestown consist of redundant brownfield sites and backland areas, some of which have accessibility issues which may hinder their development potential. The high volume of 'backland' sites provides significant opportunities for new developments to enhance and improve public spaces in Strokestown to maximise and increase community

use and enhance the future sustainability of the town. The potential for urban expansion through land assembly and amalgamation across the key Backlands opportunity sites is therefore a key priority for the town and the inclusion of a specific proposal focused on 'unlocking the backland' is a recognition of this opportunity.

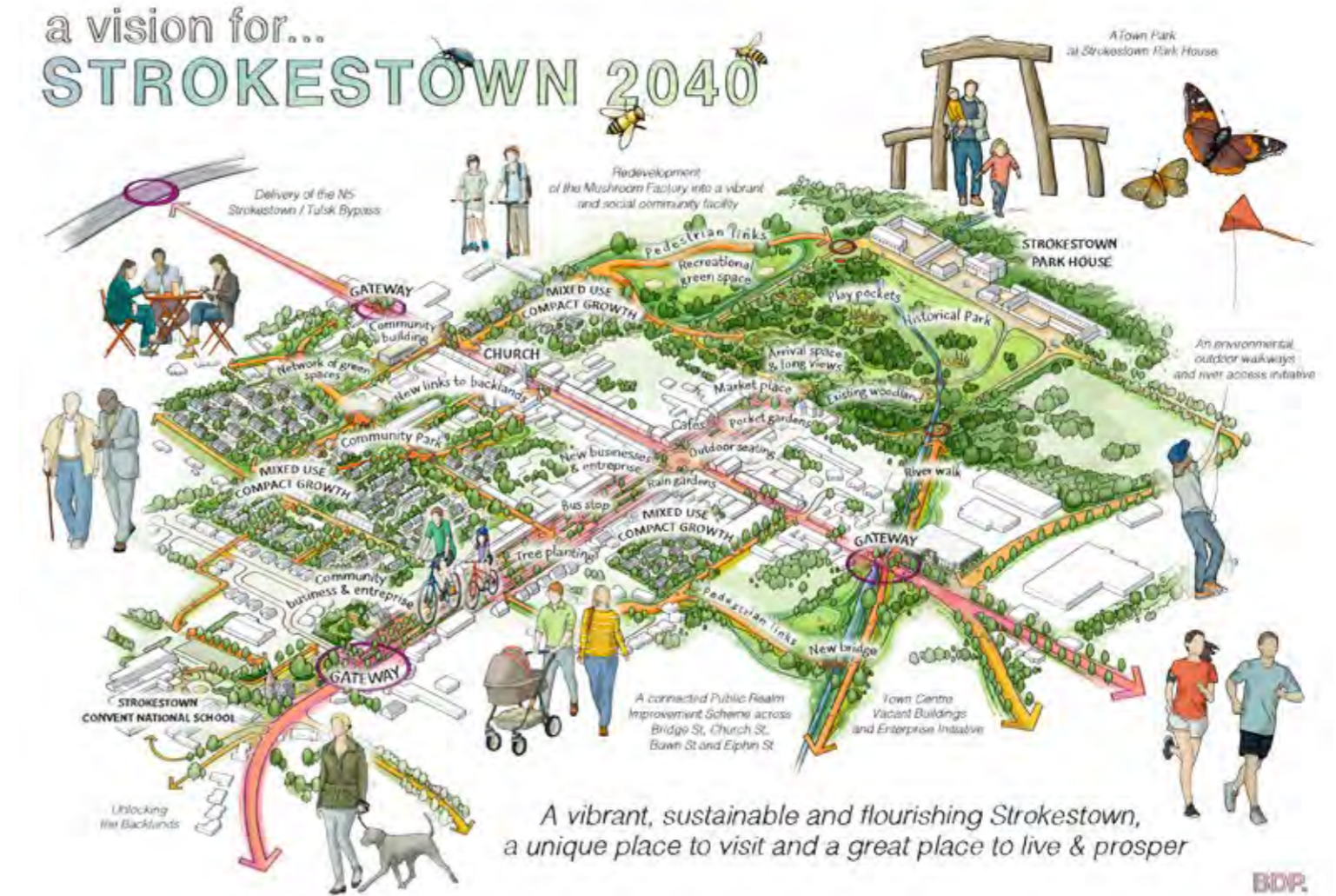


Delivering the Proposal

Headline Action	Timeframe <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • short term (1-2 years) • medium term (3-4 years) • long term (5-7 years) 	Action Owner
Establishment of a 'Unlocking the Backlands' working group to explore innovative, best practice projects that could be implemented to repurpose backland spaces. This includes carrying out best practice visits to other towns as part of the TCF capacity building programme	Short term	Strokestown Town Team
Carry out an initial review of existing Backlands space within Strokestown Town Centre and including the exploration of potential land assembly and amalgamation options or opportunities	Short term	Strokestown Town Team
Via the Backlands working group, facilitate engagement with residents and landowners to determine potential future land amalgamation and land assembly options	Medium term	Strokestown Town Team and RCC
Contribute to the review of the existing County Development Plan (circa 2026) and the development of a future County Development Plan (2029) with developed views on future use of the backlands	Medium term	Strokestown Town Team



What does Success Look Like



Monitoring the TCF Plan

This plan reflects a vision until 2040 but includes a focused 5-7 year action plan that ensures we are making progress. The following represent the key success metrics that we will use to measure the success or otherwise of this plan **by 2028**.

Transformational Proposal	Success Measure 1	Success Measure 2	Success Measure 3
1 – A Connected Public Realm	Public Realm Schemes complete in Bawn Street & Church Street	Plans agreed and planning secured for public realm schemes in Elphin Street and Bridge Street	Strokestown nominated for National Tidy Towns award
2 – An Integrated Strokestown Park House	A recreational and amenity plan for SPH is agreed and signed off	Value of funding secured to implement the recreational/amenity plan	% of residents & visitors surveyed that report positively on the enhanced recreational and amenity offer at SPH
3 – Tackling Vacant Buildings and Dereliction	The number of applications for relevant funding streams increases from Strokestown year on year	The number of vacant/derelict buildings brought back into use (circa 10 by 2028)	
4 – A River Access and Walkways Initiative	A Community Sport and Physical Activity Hub is established in Strokestown	Number of 'Active Travel' schemes (i.e. walkways/trails) delivered – target 2 by 2028	Strokestown identified as a destination on the Mid Shannon Greenway
5 – Strokestown Marketing & Identity	Number of events hosted in Strokestown increases from baseline (2023)	The reach and engagement on social media and Strokestown website increases year on year	Total number of people attending events in Strokestown increases year on year
6 – A Social Community & Wellbeing Hub	# of new groups piloted/started in Strokestown	Feasibility study complete and project/site/building agreed	Value of funding secured and Social, Community Wellbeing Hub operational
7 – Delivery of the N5 Strokestown/Tulsk Bypass	N5 complete		
8 – Unlocking the Backlands	# of meetings/site visits completed by backlands working group	# of submissions made to evaluation of existing CDP and new CDP	



Implementing the Plan

Introduction

Central to the effective implementation of any of the Town Centre First Plans across Ireland will be the capacity of the local community and its representative organisations to lead on elements included in the Town Centre First Plan. Their leadership will involve a number of strands including:

- Engaging with the County Council around engagement, design and communication relating to core public realm proposals and the transformation of public space in line with the Town Centre First Plan vision
- Specifically leading on proposal development processes e.g. the development of community space or the development and delivery of community led events/festivals
- Developing effective funding applications for revenue and capital funding

This section sets out a specification for the Strokestown Town Centre First Community Capacity Building.

It is proposed that the Community Capacity Building Programme supports community organisations (Strokestown Town Team and other stakeholder groups) to get ready to play their role in the effective implementation of the agreed Town Centre First plan. The capacity building and support programme will provide four elements as follows:

- Understanding the principles of effective community leadership.
- Understanding effective proposal development and assessment processes.
- Understanding how to develop effective funding applications.
- Implementing a practical/learning proposal.



Process Diagram



Appendix 1

Benefits in bringing a vacant home back to use



Research on existing Policies, Initiatives & Funding

Vacant Homes Action Plan 2023-2026



Key Policies addressing vacancy

- National Planning Framework (2018)
- Pathway 4 of Housing for All - Government's housing plan to 2030 (2021)
- Town Centre First - A Policy Approach for Irish Towns (2022)

Actions & Funding to address vacancy

- Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant
- Ready to Build Scheme
- Repair and Leasing Scheme
- Buy and Renew Scheme
- The Living City Initiative
- Historic Towns Initiative
- Fair Deal Scheme reformed
- Planning Permission exemptions for certain vacant commercial premises

Bringing back homes Manual for the reuse of existing buildings 2018



Step	Considerations
Assess	
Step 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the condition of the existing building? What heritage value (if any) does the building have? What are the building's potential uses? What incentives/grants are available? What are the likely costs of the proposed works? Are there any site specific constraints? What utility connections are required e.g. electricity, gas, water, sewerage?
Step 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do the works require planning permission? Do the works qualify for an exemption under Exempted Development Regulations, 2018? Do the works require a Fire Safety Certificate? Do the works require a Disability Access Certificate?
Design	
Step 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What standards (planning, building or rental) apply to the works? Are there other site specific risks which should be considered in the design e.g. sound insulation on busy streets, walls, etc?
Approval	
Step 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has Planning Permission / Fire Safety Certificate been granted? Are other specific permits required or restrictions e.g. Road Closure Licence? Refuse skip? Utility connections e.g. water, electricity, etc?
Build	
Step 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is a Commencement Notice required? When can I start work? Will the Safety, Health, Welfare at Work Regulations apply?

Vacant Home.ie Website



Guidance on how to register a vacant building

Guidance for vacant buildings owners

Research on existing Policies, Initiatives & Funding

Bringing back homes
Manual for the reuse of existing buildings 2018



This manual has been developed to support and facilitate the reuse of older/vacant buildings in our towns and cities for residential use. The manual provides clarity on the application of the current regulatory requirements to common existing building types and guidance on how best to facilitate their reuse.



Existing Building	Reuse Options	Do the works require Planning Permission?	Do the works require a Fire Safety Certificate?	Do the works require a Disability Access Certificate (DAC)?
Figure 2 Existing Building	Option 1 Refurbishment	There is no change to the building use, so planning permission is not required.	A Fire Safety Certificate is not required for a dwelling house.	A Disability Access Certificate is not required for a dwelling house.
	Option 2 Conversion of dwelling into two dwellings NOTE: This is a material change of use.	Planning permission is required for change of use to two dwellings.	A Fire Safety Certificate is required for a building which undergoes a material change of use for the whole building.	A Disability Access Certificate is not required.
Figure 3 Type 2 Two-storey Building with Over-the-Shop Accommodation	Option 1 Inclusion of an ancillary shop in part of the existing dwelling	Planning permission generally not required.**	Fire Safety Certificate is not required for a dwelling house.	A Disability Access Certificate is not required for a dwelling house.
	Option 2 Conversion of ancillary shop to an independent shop with an existing dwelling overhead NOTE: This is a material change of use* for the shop only.	Planning permission generally required due to the change from ancillary shop to permanent shop.	A Fire Safety Certificate is required for a building which undergoes a material change of use*, i.e. the shop only.	A Disability Access Certificate is required for the shop only, as Part M applies to a material change of use* to a shop. (See Appendix 2)
	Option 3 Conversion of an ancillary independent shop to an independent dwelling unit with another dwelling overhead NOTE: This is a material change of use*.	Planning permission required unless the European Development Regulations, 2018 apply. (See Appendix 1)	A Fire Safety Certificate is required for a building which undergoes a material change of use*, i.e. the whole building.	A Disability Access Certificate is not required.

Figure 3 Type 1 Existing dwelling - Reuse Options

Option a
In-situ refurbishment

- No requirements for owner occupation, but an upgrade of finishes (painting, floor finishes) is likely to be carried out.
- Building Regulations* apply where:
 - Services are being renewed e.g. WCs, stoves, etc.
 - Windows and external doors are being replaced
 - Doors are being renewed
- Rental Regulations apply in any case where it is proposed to offer a dwelling for rental.**

Option b
Conversion of dwelling into two dwellings

Typical works will include:

- Fire separation and sound insulation between dwelling units and floors
- Provision of independent services (including heating, lighting and plumbing)
- Installation of integrated fire alarm system in the building (where common access exists)
- Upgrade of thermal insulation
- Replacement of windows (except display windows)

Rental Regulations apply in any case where it is proposed to offer a dwelling for rental.**

Figure 4 Type 2 Two-storey building with over-the-Shop Accommodation - Reuse Options

Option a
Inclusion of an ancillary shop in part of the existing dwelling

- Typical works will include:
- Fire separation and sound insulation between shop and dwelling units and floors
- Provision of independent services (including heating, lighting and plumbing)
- Installation of integrated fire alarm system in the building
- Replacement of windows (except display windows)

Rental Regulations apply in any case where it is proposed to offer a dwelling for rental.**

Option b
Conversion of ancillary shop to an independent shop with another dwelling overhead

- Typical works will include:
- Fire separation and sound insulation between dwelling units and floors
- Provision of independent services (including heating, lighting and plumbing)
- Installation of integrated fire alarm system in the building (where common access exists)
- Upgrade of thermal insulation
- Replacement of windows

Rental Regulations apply in any case where it is proposed to offer a dwelling for rental.**

Option c
Conversion of independent shop to an independent dwelling unit with another dwelling overhead

- Typical works will include:
- Fire separation and sound insulation between dwelling units and floors
- Provision of independent services (including heating, lighting and plumbing)
- Installation of integrated fire alarm system in the building (where common access exists)
- Upgrade of thermal insulation
- Replacement of windows

Rental Regulations apply in any case where it is proposed to offer a dwelling for rental.**

Case study: Example in County Kilkenny

2 Upper Bridge Street - Callan - County Kilkenny

Local Authority: Kilkenny County Council
Project size: 360m²
Completion date: January 2020
Architects: CANICE Architects

Project data sheet produced by CANICE Architects

2 Upper Bridge Street

This development of an apartment in Callan, Co.Kilkenny is unique in its approach in addressing problems which are so often in modern day Ireland that in homelessness, housing shortages, many who in urban areas and the following use of previously vacant town centres.

The site sits at the vital point of the main street of what was once a vibrant town which once had a strong urban grain and tight knit community. The town development of the building was left half finished and abandoned in 2010, as all was left in sight ubiquitous with ill conceived Celtic Tiger era development.

As one point this site was once a busy street was the main road linking Kilkenny with Carth and would have served plenty of passing trade to supplement its regular farming community demands.

The arrival of the motorways, population shift towards large urban settlements and out of town living saw a general decline in Callan. This decline accompanied with vacant buildings and vacant sites presents the town to reinvent and sustain.

It is in this context that the Good Shepherd Centre an organisation which provides social housing for people experiencing difficulties accessing a home in Kilkenny and it's various support to reinvent this vacant building and provide quality and affordable homes to high people and families.

Working with Kilkenny based CANICE Architects the proposal involved a change of use to ground floor level from commercial to residential development providing six new single bedroom apartments each with their own outdoor space along with a larger modern commercial unit to the rear at ground floor.

The architect believed it was important to address the brief while also addressing the historical and urban context of the site. As a commercial street they believed it vital that a change of use to ground level to residential does not mean that the streetscape should lose its retail aspect.

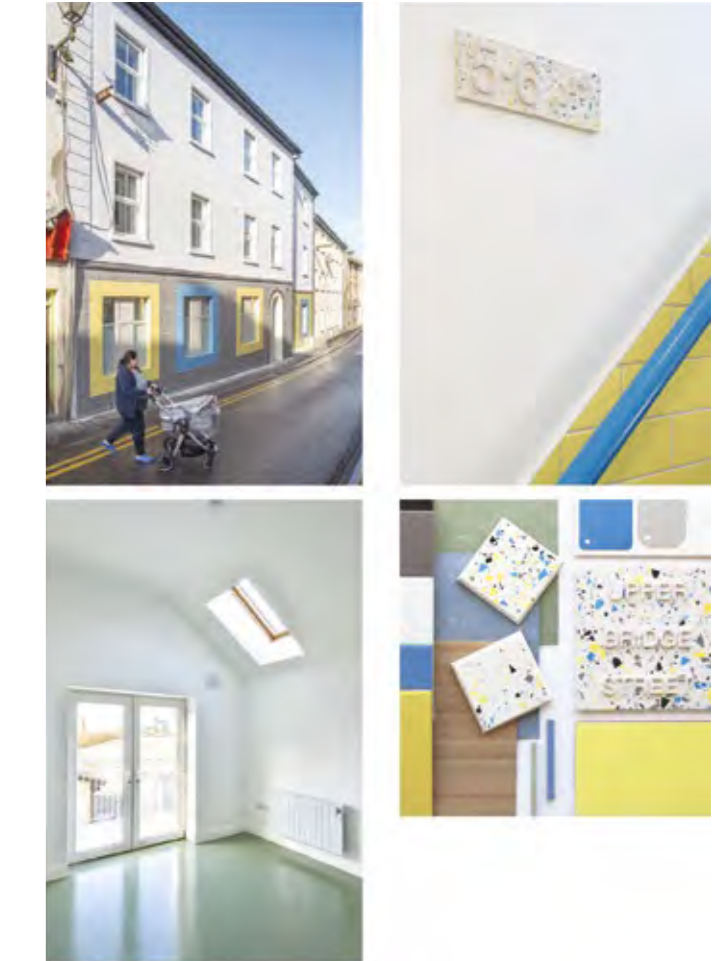
First priority was needed due to the location of the building within an Architectural Conservation Area and the fact that the building itself is a Protected Structure.

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Before photo

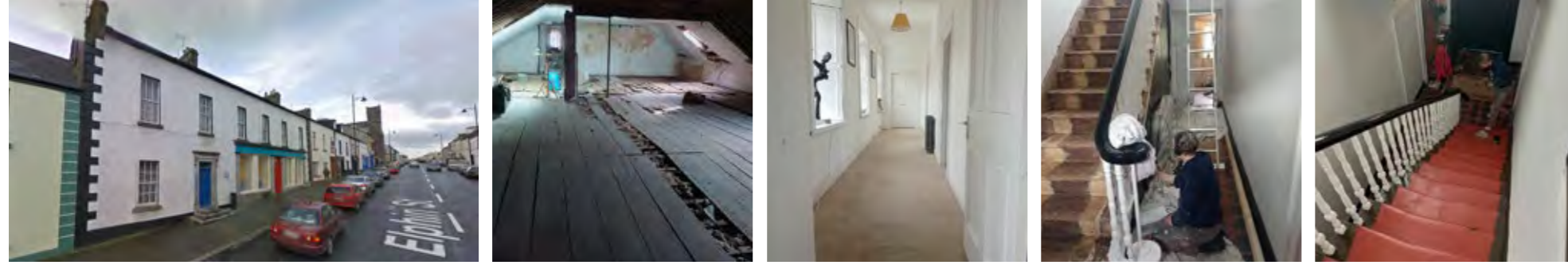


Completed project



Case study: Example in Strokestown, Elphin Street

Before refurbishment



After refurbishment



Case study: Example in Strokestown, Church Street

Before refurbishment



After refurbishment: Mane Attraction Hair Salon



Case study: Example in Strokestown, Church Street

Before refurbishment



After refurbishment



Strokestown 2040

A Town Centre First Plan

