

Castledermot Town Centre First Plan



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Metropolitan Workshop

Architecture + Urbanism

20 years ago we set out to practice architecture differently. We wanted to make more useful, more beautiful, more inspiring buildings and places, but to do this we knew that we had to find a better process that harnessed the full spectrum of society's talent.

We could see that there needed to be greater recognition of the power of collaboration and creative exchange in the design process and that this needed to change before architecture and urbanism could evolve.

Our goal was to take on complex and challenging circumstances and turn them into more virtuous conditions for better outcomes. Our aim was to engage with the public to ensure that projects were better grounded and would succeed more sustainably. As designers we wished to put end users needs first, to understand them more fully, and to resolve issues through design rather than wish them away.

Put simply, we wanted to establish better, more inclusive processes which would result in better more inclusive places and buildings. Over the past 14 years and we found many others who also think this way, and we feature a few of them here.

People make places make people.

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Market Square, Castledermot

Introduction

The Town Centre First policy is a national initiative launched by the Irish Government to support the regeneration and revitalisation of town centres across the country. It promotes a place-based approach to town development, prioritising the town centre as the heart of economic, social, and cultural activity.

In Castledermot, this policy framework provides a strategic opportunity to build on the town's historic character and strong community, strongly guided by the local Town Team.

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Town Team Foreword



Castledermot is a town with a proud past and a promising future. Nestled in the south of County Kildare, it holds a unique place in Ireland's story — from its early monastic roots and medieval heritage to its role today as a thriving and close-knit community. This Town Centre First Plan is about honouring that heritage while looking confidently to the years ahead.

At its heart, this plan is shaped by the people of Castledermot — by those who live, work, and volunteer here, and by the many who care deeply about the town's future. Through conversations, workshops, and local engagement, the community's vision has come through clearly: a town that is vibrant, welcoming, and sustainable, with a centre that is once again the beating heart of local life.

The Town Centre First approach gives us the framework to deliver on that vision. It sets out practical actions for revitalising our town, supporting local enterprise, enhancing public spaces, improving mobility and accessibility, and celebrating our cultural and natural heritage. It is a plan built on partnership — between the community, Kildare County Council, local businesses, and national agencies — all working together for a common goal.

As we move forward, this plan will serve not just as a document, but as a living commitment to the people of Castledermot. With shared effort and continued collaboration, we can ensure that our town centre remains a lively, resilient, and proud place — one that reflects both who we are and what we aspire to become.

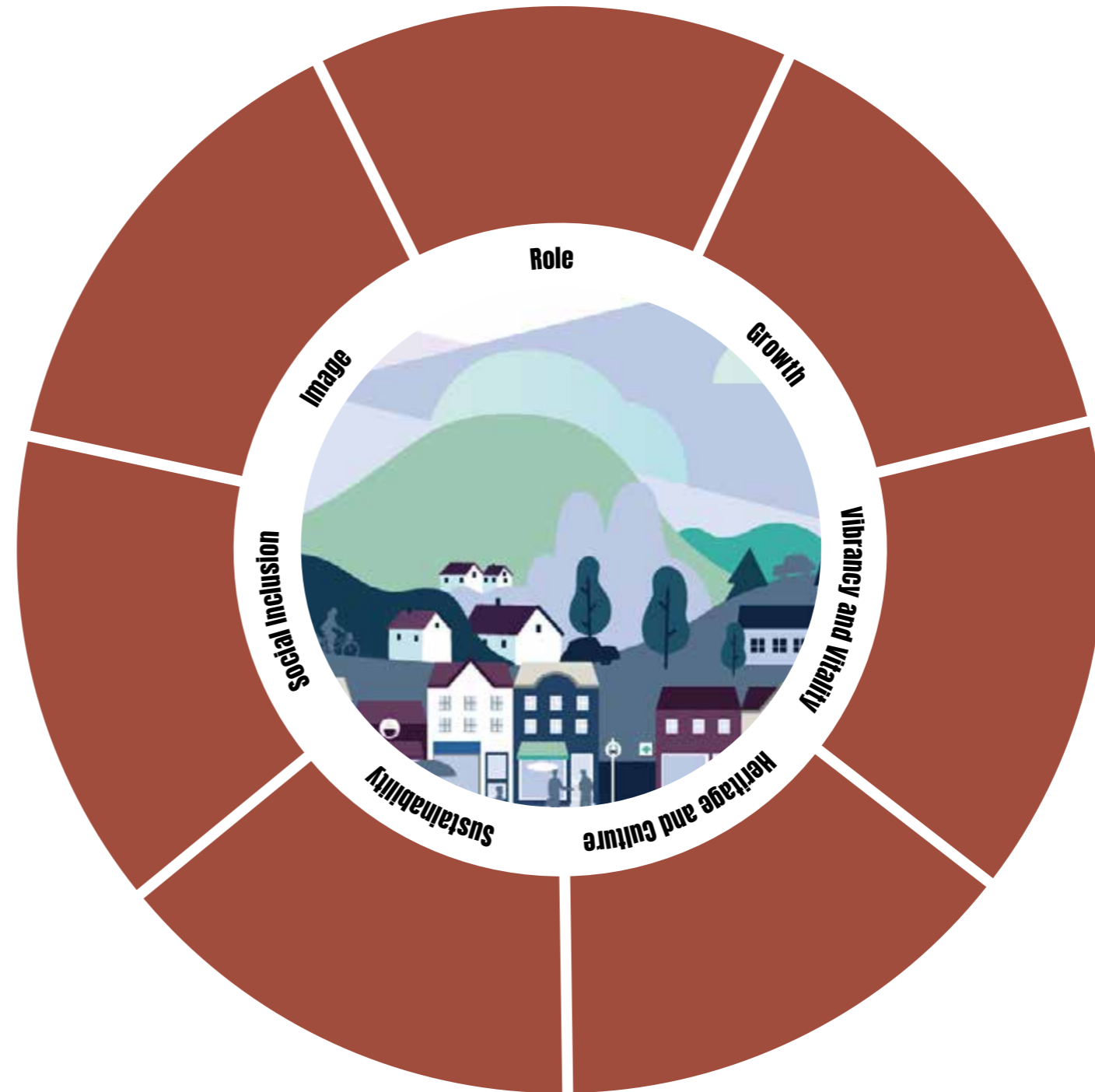
- Town Team

Town Centre First Policy

The Town Centre First Policy is a national framework which prioritises the development and revitalisation of a town's traditional centre. A tailored plan of actions and spatial interventions is created in order to strengthen the heart of the town, by encouraging investment, business, housing, and community activities within the existing centre.

This policy is primarily achieved by enhancing the usability and attractiveness of the town centre. Improvements may include upgrading public spaces, improving pedestrian access and safety, enhancing signage, and preserving historic features to create a welcoming and accessible environment for residents, visitors, and businesses.

By following this approach, Castledermot can sustain its role as a key service and social hub for the wider rural hinterland while protecting its unique heritage and sense of place, promoting sustainable growth, and preventing urban sprawl.



The Vision of the Town Centre First Policy

Castledermot Town Team

In Castledermot, the Town Team is a dedicated group of local volunteers, business owners, and community members who come together to enhance and celebrate the town.

The Castledermot Town Team fosters community pride and engagement, acting as a bridge between residents, local businesses, and the wider community. They have worked closely with groups like the active Tidy Towns committee, the Local History Group and Kildare County Council to deliver the Town Centre First Plan, to make the town more vibrant, welcoming, and sustainable for everyone.

Key members include (from left to right): Sharon Greene, Ger O'Keefe, Councillor Aoife Breslin, Emmet Kane, Suzanne Horan, Peter Behan, Denis Flannery and Patricia Berry (absent from photo).



Castledermot Town Team

Policy Context

Castledermot, a historic town in South Kildare, sits within a dynamic planning framework that spans local and national levels. Its development is shaped by a series of strategic documents that work together to guide growth, sustainability, and community well-being.

National Policy

National Planning Framework First Revision, April 2025:
Ireland 2040
National Development Plan 2021 -2030
Our Rural Future – Rural Development Policy 2021 -2025
Town Centre First - A Policy Approach for Irish Towns, 2022
The Climate Action Plan, 2025
Housing For All -A new Housing Plan for Ireland
Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets 2013
National Smart Specialisation Strategy (2022-2027)
National Biodiversity Action Plan (2023-2040)
Heritage Ireland 2040
Making Remote Work: National Remote Work Strategy 2021
Future Jobs Ireland 2019: Preparing Now for Tomorrow's Economy
Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025
Smarter Travel- A Sustainable Transport Future 2009- 2020
Urban Design Manual 2009
All Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025 – Councils: Actions to help Pollinators
Places for People - National Policy on Architecture, 2022
Regional Policy
The Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2022-2042
Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern Midland Regional Assembly, 2019 -2031
Mid-East Regional Enterprise Plan
Water Action Plan 2024: A River Basin Management Plan for Ireland



Local Policy and Guidance

Kildare County Development Plan (CDP) 2023-2029
Kildare Local Economic and Community Plan 2016- 2021
Kildare Heritage Plan 2019-2025
Kildare – Culture and Creativity Strategy 2018-2022
Kildare Hub Strategy 2022-2025
County Kildare Biodiversity Plan 2026-2031
Kildare Climate Action Office: Local Authority Climate Action Plan 2024-2029
Kildare CDP (2023–2029): Small Town and Environs Plans – Castledermot (Volume 2, Section 2.2)
Castledermot Town Walls Conservation, Management and Interpretation Plan (CMIP), 2013
Kildare County Council: Sustainable Drainage Systems Guidance Document and
Kildare Tourism Strategy 2022-2026.
Green Infrastructure in Kildare, 2017-2023
Castledermot Town Renewal Plan, 2024



National

Town Centre First - A Policy Approach for Irish Towns, 2022

The Town Centre First Policy is a transformative initiative aimed at tackling vacancy, addressing dereliction, and revitalising town centres across Ireland. It sets out 33 targeted actions to equip towns with the tools and resources needed to become vibrant, attractive places to live, work, visit, and do business.

The policy is supported by substantial investment through major Government schemes, including:

- Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF)
- Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF)
- Croí Cónaithe (Towns) Fund
- Town and Village Renewal Scheme

These actions support key objectives such as social and economic renewal, housing provision, and the protection of the environment, heritage, and culture.

In Kildare, towns like Castledermot are already mobilising local efforts to improve their environment and economy. The Town Centre First Policy recognises the value of peer learning and shared experiences, especially among towns with similar characteristics. Exchanging best practices can lead to more effective and locally tailored solutions.

Kildare County Council is actively engaging with the local community through consultation to ensure proposals are informed by local knowledge. A core element of the policy is the development and support of Town Teams, which play a central role in delivering local regeneration. This, combined with technical support and access to funding, will help drive successful implementation of the future vision of the town.

The Town Centre First Policy (2022) calls for collective responsibility among stakeholders to support sustainable town centre development, reimagine their function, and respond to the evolving needs of residents, businesses, and visitors.

By promoting a Town Centre First approach, the TCF Plan aims to develop Castledermot into a thriving settlement with a vibrant mix of uses. It focuses on employment growth by leveraging the town's tourism potential, aligning with National Strategic Outcome No. 6 of the NPF: A Strong Economy Supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills.

The TCF Plan encourages better use of existing environmental assets, including underutilised sites and buildings within the town centre, to stimulate economic activity and enhance the town centre experience for both residents and visitors.

Key challenges such as vacancy, congestion, and car parking must be addressed to unlock the town centre's full potential. Castledermot continues to face pressures from changing retail trends, particularly the growth of online shopping. To avoid persistent vacancy, the TCF Plan supports the development of new recreational, tourism, cultural, employment, and residential opportunities, offering alternative uses for the town centre in line with National Policy Objective No. 14 of the National Planning Framework First Revision.

Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework and National Development Plan

The National Planning Framework (NPF), published in April 2025, alongside the National Development Plan 2018–2027, forms part of Project Ireland 2040—the Government's overarching long-term strategy to improve Ireland for all its citizens.

The revised NPF reaffirms the importance of compact growth and town centre regeneration as key pillars of sustainable development. It promotes the revitalisation of towns through infill and brownfield development, aiming to reduce reliance on greenfield expansion.

Section 2.2 (p.16) of the NPF outlines a strategy for strengthening Ireland's rural areas. Two relevant National Strategic Outcomes include:

- NSO 1: Compact Growth – focuses on improving public health and revitalising towns of all sizes.
- NSO 7: Enhanced Amenities and Heritage – supports town regeneration through the Town Centre First approach and heritage renewal.

Our Rural Future - Rural Development Policy 2021-2025

Our Rural Future is Ireland's strategy for rejuvenating rural areas, supporting the renewal, re-population, and sustainable development of rural towns and villages. The Town Centre First policy plays a key role in delivering on the strategy's goals.

Climate Action Plan 2025

The Climate Action Plan 2025 (CAP25) is the third statutory annual update under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021. It outlines how Ireland will accelerate actions to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. [www.gov.ie]

Locally, climate resilience and adaptation are central to:

- Climate Resilient Kildare: Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019–2024, which addresses risks such as flooding, heat waves, and droughts, and aims to build resilience across the economy, environment, and

community. [www.kildareppn.ie]

- Kildare Climate Action Office: Local Authority Climate Action Plan 2024–2029, which sets out actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, enhance biodiversity, and promote sustainable transport and land use. [kildarecoco.ie]

Town centre regeneration in Castledermot contributes to climate resilience through:

- Creating walkable neighbourhoods
- Reducing car dependency
- Promoting intensive land use
- Greening urban environments
- Enhancing and protecting biodiversity

Heritage Council and Partners' Collaborative Town Centre Health Check (CTCHC) Programme, 2020

The Collaborative Town Centre Health Check programme, led by the Heritage Council and its partners, emphasises the value of heritage in Irish town centres. It seeks to leverage historic assets as central components in town regeneration strategies.

Local

Kildare County Council Development Plan 2023-2029

Chapter 11: AH A21 Investigate the designation of further ACAs at appropriate locations throughout the county including The Curragh Camp, Johnstown, Ballymore Eustace, Kilcullen, Brannockstown, Rathmore, Clane, Newbridge and Castledermot.

County Kildare LECP 2024-2029

Chapter 2 of Volume 1 outlines the Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy for County Kildare for the period 2023–2029. The Core Strategy provides a medium- to long-term, evidence-based framework for the county's spatial development. It ensures that the Development Plan and its policies are consistent with national and regional objectives, as set out in:

- The National Planning Framework (NPF) 2040
- The Implementation Roadmap (2018)
- The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) 2019 for the Eastern and Midland Region

In accordance with the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010, the Core Strategy includes:

- A settlement hierarchy
- Population and housing targets for towns, villages, and rural areas
- A clear alignment with national and regional planning goals

Volume 2, Chapter 1 – Small Towns and Environs

Volume 2 of the Development Plan focuses on the sustainable development of small towns, villages, rural settlements, and their surrounding areas across County Kildare. It aims to support local growth, employment, regeneration, climate resilience, and community well-being, in alignment with national and regional planning policies.

It promotes compact growth, serviced sites, and healthy placemaking while preserving each area's unique character and natural assets.

Castledermot

Under the Settlement Strategy outlined in Volume 1, Chapter 2 of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023–2029, Castledermot has been allocated 0.5% of the county's overall population growth for the plan period (2023–2029).

As with the previous plan (KCDP 2017–2023), the new Development Plan sets out objectives for the town across several key themes:

- Town Centre
- Public Realm
- Social and Community Infrastructure

- Natural Heritage
- New Residential Development
- Movement and Transport
- Physical Infrastructure
- Surface Water Management

Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy (RSES) 2019-2031

The RSES for the Eastern and Midland Region provides a strategic framework for guiding regional growth and implementing the NPF. It is built on three cross-cutting principles: healthy placemaking, climate action, and economic opportunity. [www.emra.ie]

Castledermot is identified within the Core Region in the RSES Settlement Strategy and is designated as a Town in the Kildare County Development Plan 2023–2029. According to the County Development Plan, towns serve local service and employment functions and are located near higher-order urban centres.

The Core Strategy of the Kildare County Development Plan allocates 0.50% of the county's total housing and population growth to Castledermot.

Page 33 of the RSES states the objective to:

“Promote regeneration and revitalisation of small towns and villages and support local enterprise and employment opportunities to ensure their viability as service centres for their surrounding rural areas.”

KCC Local Authority Climate Action Plan 2024-2029

The Kildare County Council Climate Action Plan sets out a roadmap to achieving a 51% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. It includes targets for mitigation, adaptation, energy efficiency, and climate resilience across all council functions and community initiatives.

Kildare Hub Strategy 2022-2025

In response to changes accelerated by COVID-19, the Hub Strategy outlines the development of a countywide network of enterprise, co-working, and remote-working hubs. These hubs aim to support local business, digital innovation, and work-life balance while reducing commuting and promoting regional economic activity.



Castledermot Small Town Renewal Masterplan, 2024

The Castledermot Town Renewal Masterplan outlines a series of interconnected public realm projects designed to enhance and revitalise the town over a 10-year period, with delivery planned in phases.

The identification of key projects was informed by a Town Centre Health Check, which assessed the vitality and viability of the area. This was supported by analysis and a consultation process.

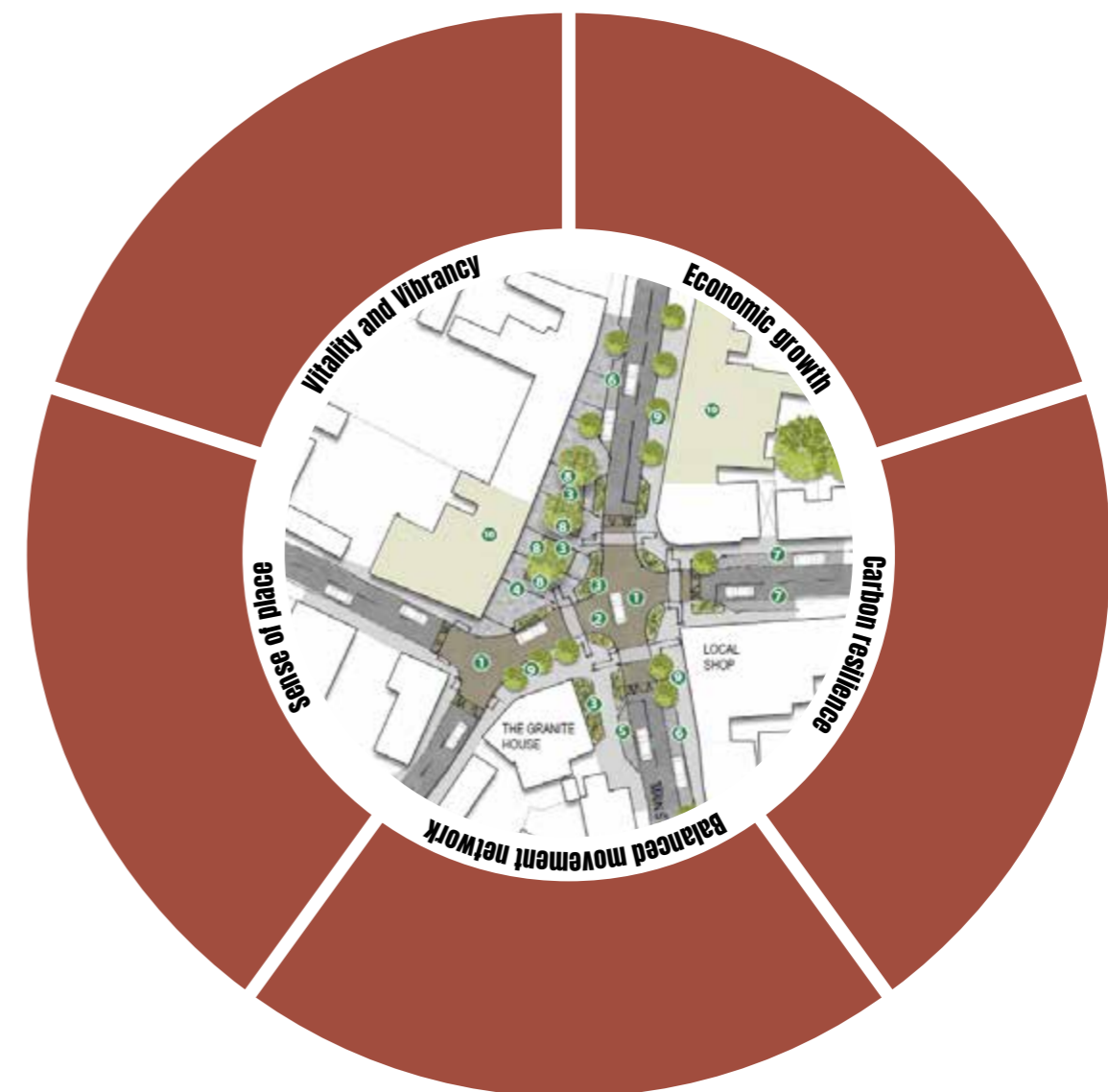
The Castledermot TCF Plan and the TRMP will play a central role in the rejuvenation of Castledermot's town centre, helping to realise national and regional policy objectives related to regeneration.



Castledermot Town Walls Conservation, Management and Interpretation Plan, 2013

Castledermot is one of 33 towns who are members of the Irish Walled Towns Network. Constructed between 1295 and 1301 the walls are an important aspect of the town's rich heritage. They enclosed an area that can still be perceived as the core of the modern town. This report was created to provide a basis for all future decisions on the conservation, management and interpretation of Castledermot's town walls. It also includes information on the broader historical, archaeological and architectural significance of the town and strategies for promoting and raising awareness of these features to the benefit of locals and tourists. It also includes important guidance regarding the statutory protection of Castledermot's heritage assets.

It is important therefore that this report (or any updated versions), should be consulted in infrastructural and public realm projects that take place in the historic town.



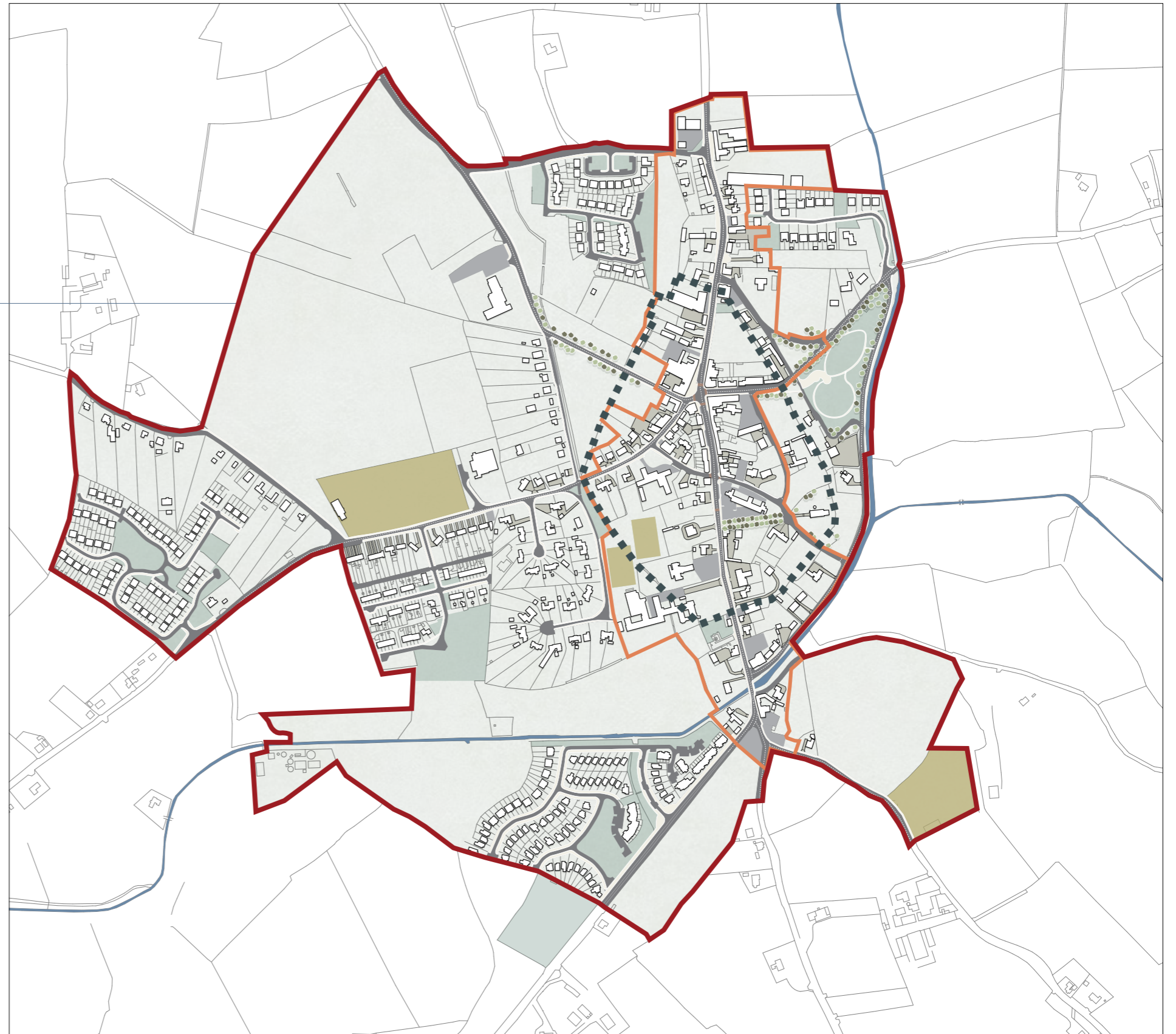
Key Principles of the Castledermot Small Town Renewal Masterplan (2024)

Town Centre First Boundary

One of the first tasks undertaken with the Town Team was to agree the boundary for the TCF Plan, as it provides the spatial framework for the plan area. The agreed boundary reflects the settlement boundary defined in the CDP.

However, it was also recognised from the outset that this boundary could potentially be adjusted as the TCF Plan process progressed, to allow for the inclusion of additional lands where appropriate.

Town Centre First Plan Boundary



Town Centre First Boundary

- Town Centre First Plan Boundary
- Town Centre Core Boundary
- Medieval Wall Boundary

2



Castledermot Aerial Sketch with Town Centre Boundary

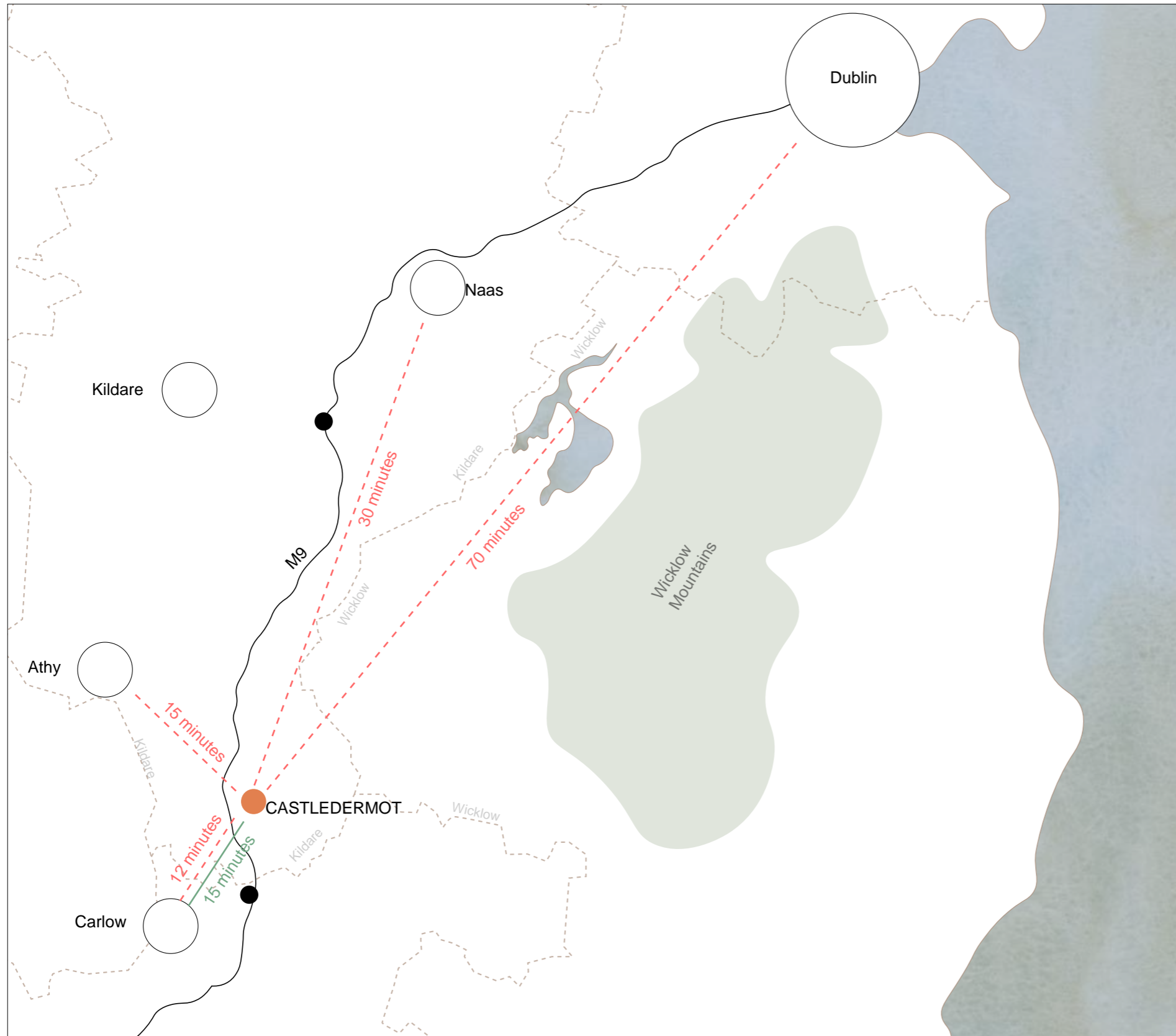
Understanding the Place

Comprehensive urban analysis of Castledermot was carried out, drawing on local insights, community engagement, and expert guidance. The Town Regeneration Team, Kildare County Council and the Castledermot Town Team's efforts supported the identification of key strengths, challenges, and opportunities, laying the groundwork for informed designs that reflect the needs and aspirations of the community.

2 Understanding the Place

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Territorial Context



- M9 Exits
- Bus
- - - Car

Castledermot (Diseart Diarmada) is a historic town located in the south of County Kildare, Ireland. It is primarily accessed via the M9 motorway, which bypasses the town to the west. The town lies approximately 10 km from Carlow and 11 km from Athy and serves as a local service centre for the surrounding rural hinterland.

Castledermot has origins as an ancient walled settlement, dating back to at least the 7th century AD, when it was founded as a monastic site by Diarmait, grandson of Áed Róin, King of Ulster. The town is rich in archaeological, architectural, historical, and cultural significance, making it a key heritage destination in County Kildare.

The River Lerr, a tributary of the River Barrow (Ireland's second-longest river), flows through the town, contributing to its scenic character. According to Census 2022, Castledermot has a population of 1,685 people. The town's primary land uses include residential, retail, commercial, with areas designated for community, sport, and agriculture.

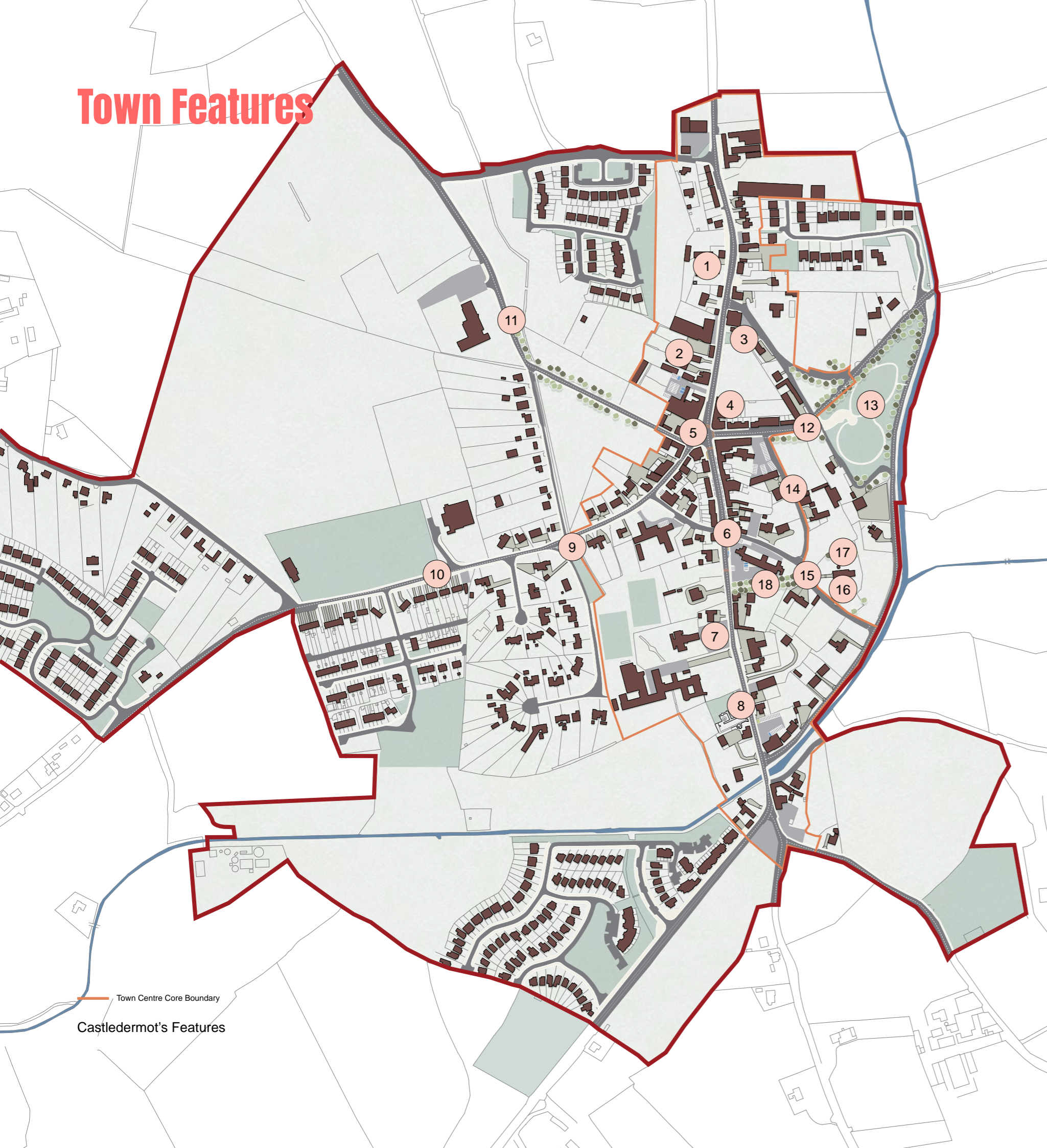
Transport Links

- The R448 is the main road through Castledermot, connecting it to Kilcullen in the north and the M9 to the west.
- The R418 and other local roads link the town to the wider regional and rural road network.
- The M9 motorway provides direct access to Dublin (north-east) and Waterford City (south).

Castledermot is served by:

- Bus route 736 (JJ Kavanagh), with services to Carlow, Waterford, Dublin City Centre, and Dublin Airport
- Local Link route 880, connecting Castledermot to Carlow and Naas
- Local Link route AH02, connecting Athy - Castledermot - Athy

Town Features



Town Centre Core Boundary
 Castledermot's Features



1 Tower St John's Priory



4 Traditional Shop Fronts



7 Church of the Assumption



2 Library



5 Market Square



8 Franciscan Abbey Ruins



3 Old Pound Park



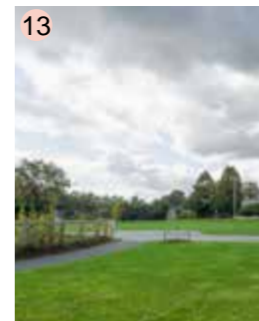
6 Junction Church Lane



9 Wall Remnants



10 Abbeylands and GAA Pitch



13 Fairgreen.



16 St James' Church and Graveyard



11 R418



14 Ivor's Lane



17 Round Tower



12 Keenan's Lane



15 St James' Place



18 The Laurels



Historical Context

The earliest known settlement at Castledermot is associated with the monastic site of Díseart Diarmada, founded around 600 AD by Diarmait, son of Diarmait mac Áed Róin, a king of the Dál Fiatach dynasty in Ulster. He was granted lands in the area by Brandubh, King of Leinster, in 594 AD.

While the term díseart typically refers to an isolated hermitage, Díseart Diarmada evolved into a significant settlement, frequently mentioned in the Irish annals throughout the early medieval period. The construction of a 20-metre round tower, two scriptural high crosses, and a Romanesque church reflect the site's wealth and importance.

This prosperity made Castledermot a target for Viking raids, recorded in 841 and 867 AD. The graveyard contains a hogback grave marker, the only known example in Ireland - indicating Hiberno-Norse contact. The round tower, dating from the 10th–11th century, is built of granite fieldstone's and features medieval crenelations added during 19th-century restoration. Unusually, its entrance is at ground level, a rare feature among Irish round towers.

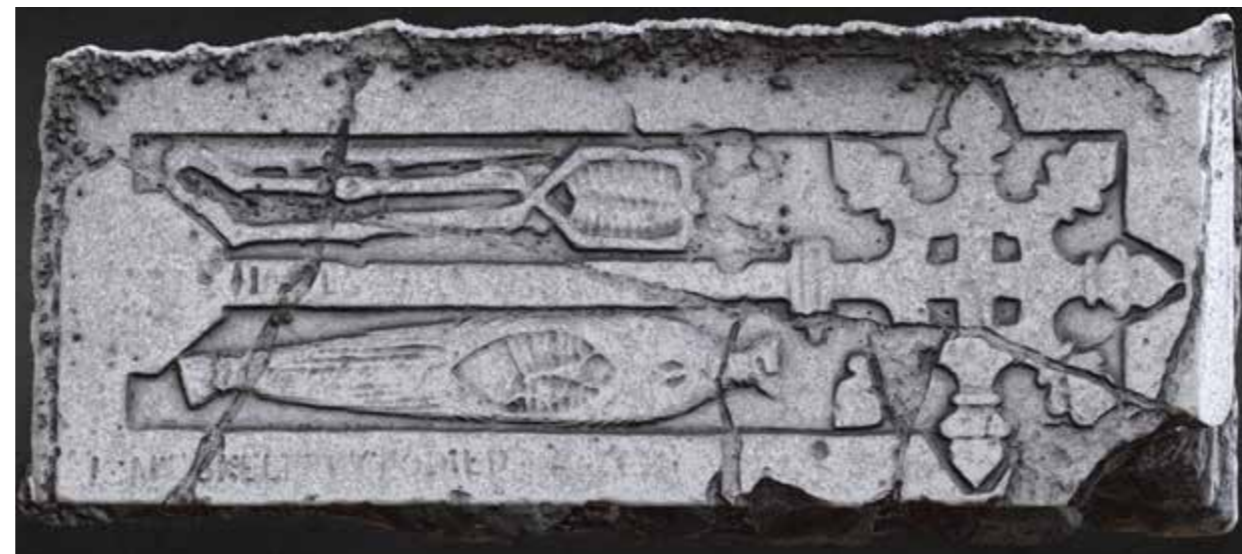
Surrounding St. James' Church, which incorporates elements of earlier monastic buildings, are:

- Two high crosses (North and South), dating from the 10th century, with biblical carvings such as the Binding of Isaac, miracles of Jesus, Daniel, and Adam and Eve
- Romanesque doorway
- Cross slabs and inscribed stones
- Holed stones, including a "swearing stone"
- Viking hogback burial stone

By the 13th century, Castledermot had become a walled town, with two major ecclesiastical centres: St. John's Priory and the Franciscan Friary. The town's strategic location on the route from Dublin to the southeast contributed to its growth in the 14th century, although this prosperity was disrupted by repeated sackings, including by Edward Bruce in 1316 and later by Crown forces and Art MacMurrough's rebellion.

The Franciscan Friary, first recorded in 1247, received royal support and was expanded in the 14th century with a north aisle, transept, and tower. Built from local granite, the friary retains its distinctive medieval character. It was destroyed during the Bruce invasion, restored, and later dissolved during the Reformation, marking the decline of Castledermot's religious prominence.

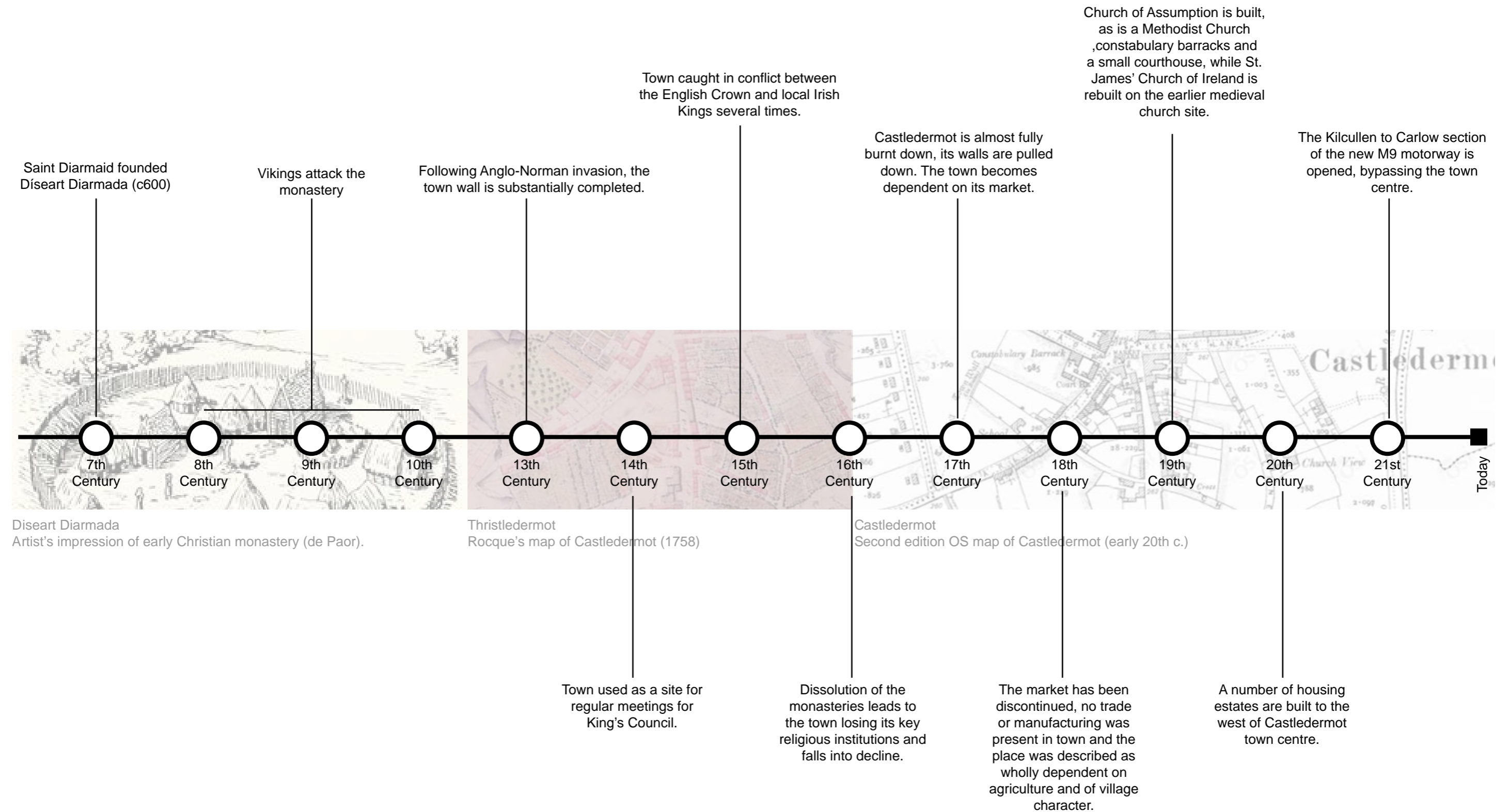
Today, Castledermot serves as a service centre for the surrounding rural area, but its rich heritage remains central to its identity.



Photogrammetry of monuments, Castledermot Local History Group
Clockwise: Hogback Stone, North High Cross, Effigy Tomb

Photography of Saint James' Church and Cemetery, Francis Morrin

Historical Timeline



Díseart Diarmada
Artist's impression of early Christian monastery (de Paor).

Thristledermot
Rocque's map of Castledermot (1758)

Castledermot
Second edition OS map of Castledermot (early 20th c.)

Heritage Assets

Castledermot is home to several significant heritage sites:

1. Castledermot Round Tower – Dating from the 9th century, this well-preserved tower is notable for its ground-level entrance, a rare feature among Irish round towers.
2. St. James' Church – Built on the site of the original monastery, it features a Romanesque doorway, high crosses, and the grave of Cormac mac Cuileannán, a bishop and king of Munster.
3. Castledermot Abbey – A ruined Franciscan Friary founded around the early 13th century.
4. High Crosses – Two intricately carved crosses and the plain base of a third from the 9th or 10th century stand in the graveyard of St. James' Church.
5. Saint John's Tower (The Pigeon Tower) – the bell tower is all that remains of St John's Friary which acted as a leprosy hospital and was founded in 1210. This is on private property.
6. The Pound – A 19th-century animal holding pen, with its back wall aligned with the medieval town wall.
7. The best preserved and most accessible part of the medieval town wall circuit is at Carlowgate; it once encompassed the core of the town and had three named gates: Dublingate, Tullowgate and Carlowgate.
8. Kilkea Castle – Located nearby, this 12th-century Norman castle has been restored and now operates as a hotel, offering a blend of medieval architecture and modern amenities.

Castledermot retains much of its 19th-century market town layout, with a broad Main Street that remains the town's central spine. The traditional arrangement of two-storey buildings and shops still defines the streetscape, reflecting its historic commercial function. The junctions, side lanes, and approach roads continue to follow the original pattern that connected the town to its rural surroundings, preserving the compact form and character typical of a 19th-century Irish market town.

The built and archaeological heritage of the town have statutory protection under the following legislation and policies:

- National Monuments Acts, 1930 – 2004 (and incoming Historic and Archaeological Heritage and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2023)
- Planning and Development Acts 2024
- Record of Monuments and Places, established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994
- National Policy on Town Defences 2008
- Local Plans & Policy

The core of the town is a Zone of Archaeological Protection (ZAP) and the town is also an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA). Town defences, including what remains below ground, are a National Monument and therefore require Ministerial Consent for any works in their vicinity [National Policy on Town Defences, 2008]."



St James' Round Tower



High Cross



St James' Church



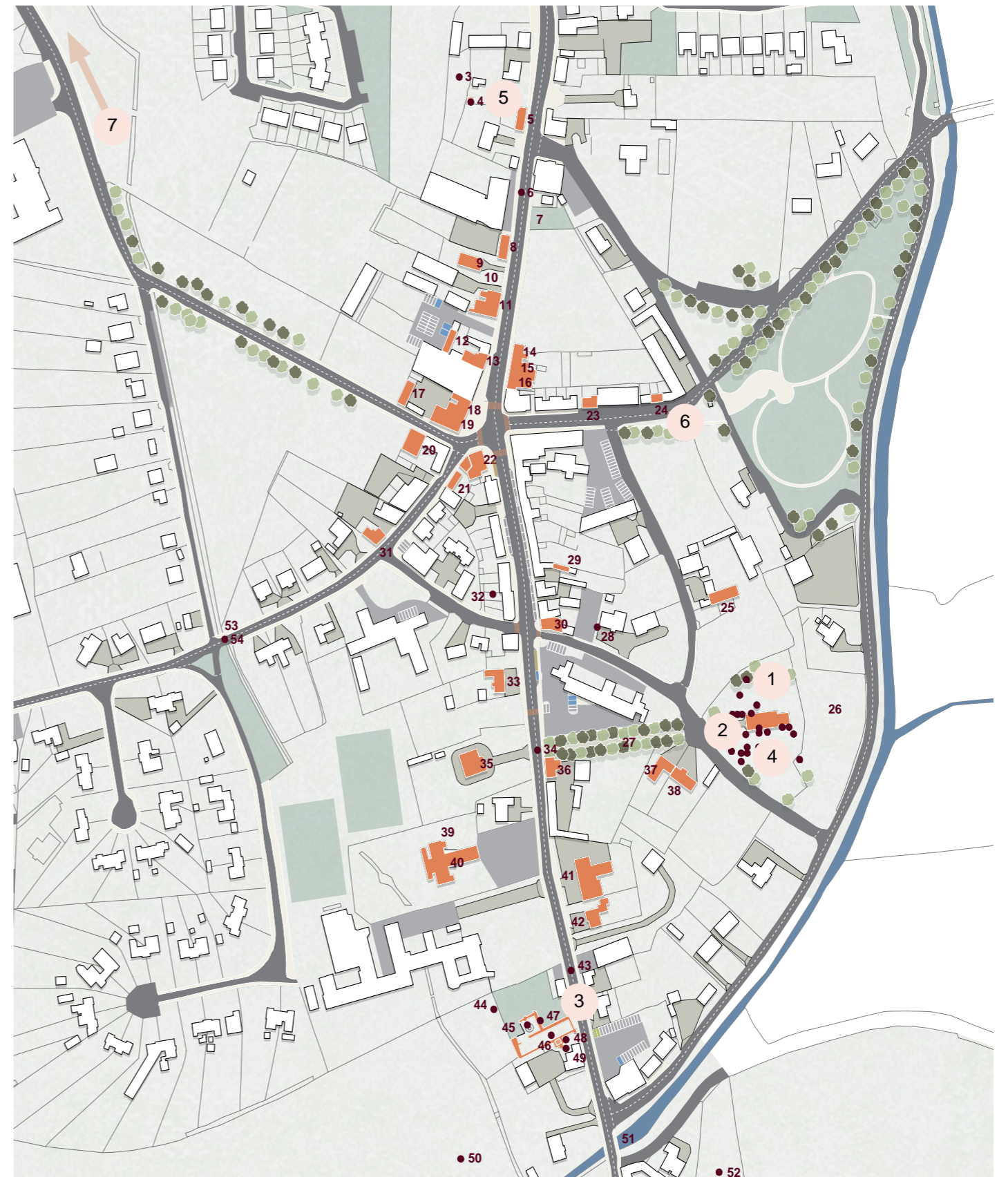
St John's Priory Tower Ruins (private)



Franciscan Abbey Ruins



The Pound



Castledermot Plan

- SMR and NIAH Structures
- Protected Structures

Historic Map Overlay

A more nuanced view emerges from the morphology overlay, which layers the 6-inch (1829–1834), 12-inch (1863–1924), and current (2024) town layouts. This composite visualisation captures key phases of growth:

- The original compact core centred on Main Street
- Modest expansion along key roads in the late 19th and early 20th centuries
- Significant recent growth at the northern and southern edges, and along regional roads

This progression illustrates how Castledermot's urban footprint has extended beyond its historic boundaries, adapting to evolving needs and opportunities. The map also quantifies this expansion.



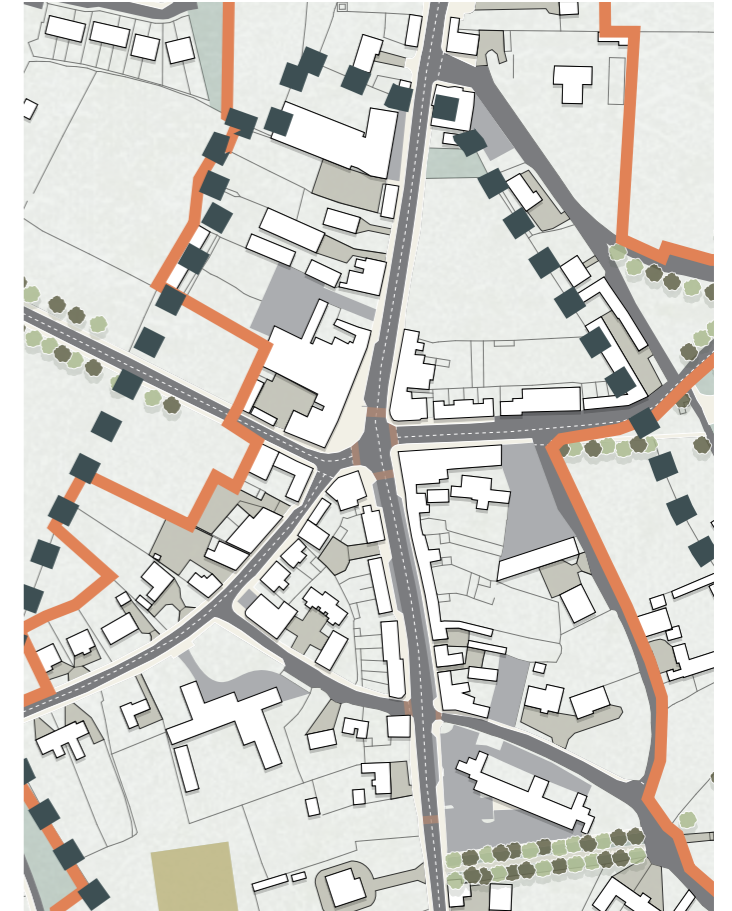
OVERLAYS OF:
CASTLEDERMOT 1829-1834
CASTLEDERMOT 1863-1924



OVERLAYS OF:
CASTLEDERMOT 1863-1924
CASTLEDERMOT 2024

Character

The traditional centre, Main Street and Market Square, form strong parts of the town's identity, having historically been a focal point for the community as a place of trade. Delineated by a strong street structure, building frontages define the central space. With a variety of building heights and eras, the predominate layout traces its origins to the 12th century with the construction of town walls.



Market Square

While the town holds significant archaeological and historical value, its character is equally defined by a strong community identity.

The active Tidy Towns group and community-led initiatives like the Seasons Shop contribute to a sense of pride and stewardship.

The surrounding landscape, including the River Lerr, leafy lanes, and proximity to agricultural lands, reinforces its rural feel.

Castledermot combines this natural setting with a solid base of modern amenities, including schools, sports and community facilities, a library, and local businesses such as the Mad Hatter Cafe and Blowdry Barn.

Rath's Londis is a popular shopping destination that draws visitors from across the wider region, with many people making frequent weekend trips to the store. Its presence adds to Castledermot's role as a local commercial hub, supporting both residents and surrounding rural communities.



Local Services



Local Businesses



Public Spaces

Block Analysis

The Urban Block and Street Analysis dissects the town into distinct blocks, examining their size, shape, and connectivity.

Castledermot comprises:

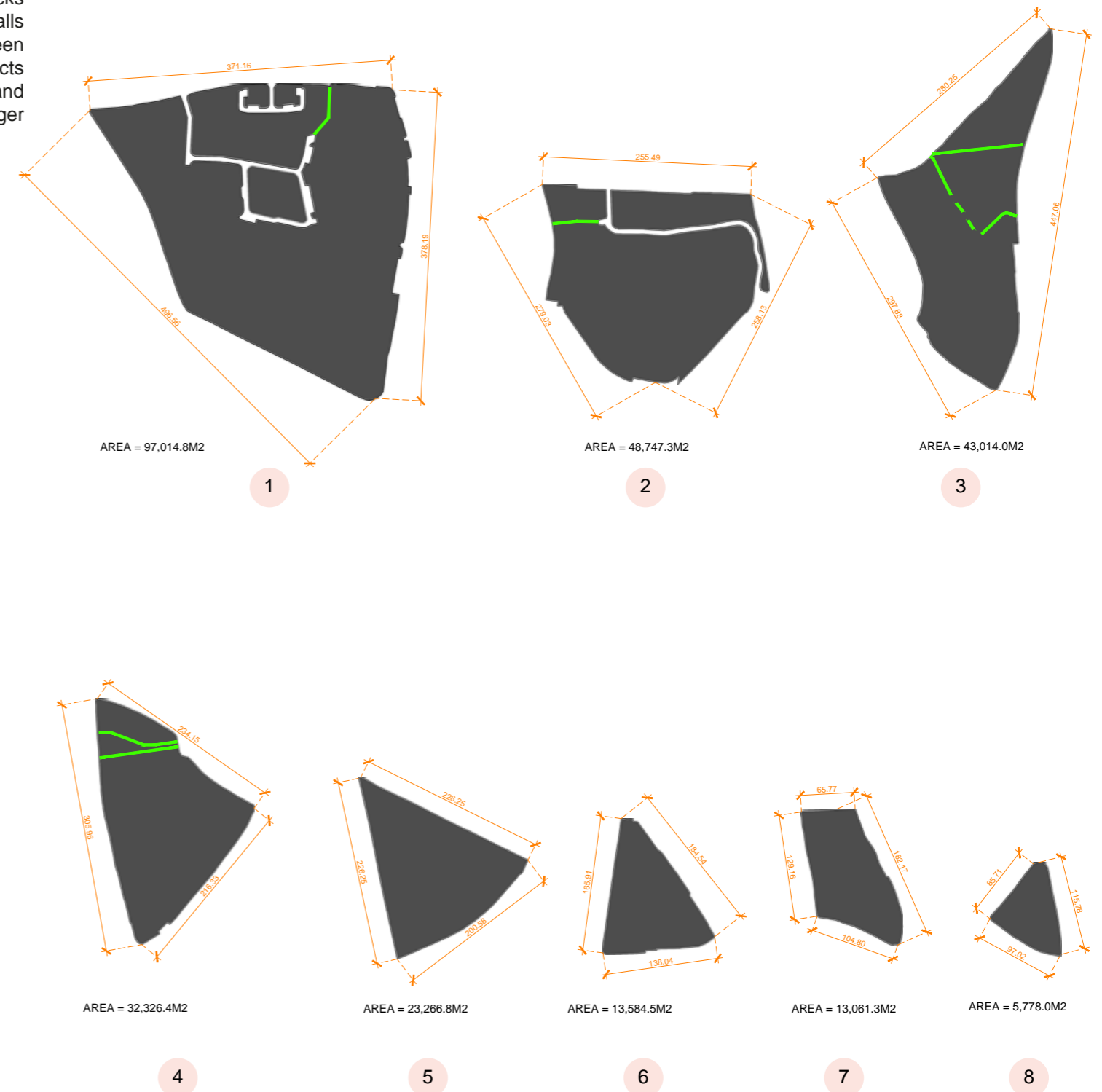
- 8 urban blocks
- 13 streets
- 6 junctions

The town centre features compact, well-proportioned urban blocks that support a walkable and legible urban structure. The town centre urban blocks are typically small to medium in size, aligning with the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS, 2013, Section 3.3.2), which recommends optimal block dimensions for pedestrian movement between 60x80 metres (4,800 m²) and 60x100 metres (6,000 m²).

The Taxonomy of Urban Block drawing categorises blocks by area and perimeter, revealing that one central block falls under the 6,000 m² range, while others range between 10,000–30,000 m². The town's spatial configuration reflects a historic, organic layout, with a clear street hierarchy and opportunities for improved mid-block connections in larger peripheral blocks.



Analysis of Castledermot Urban Blocks



Taxonomy of Urban Blocks

Long Sections

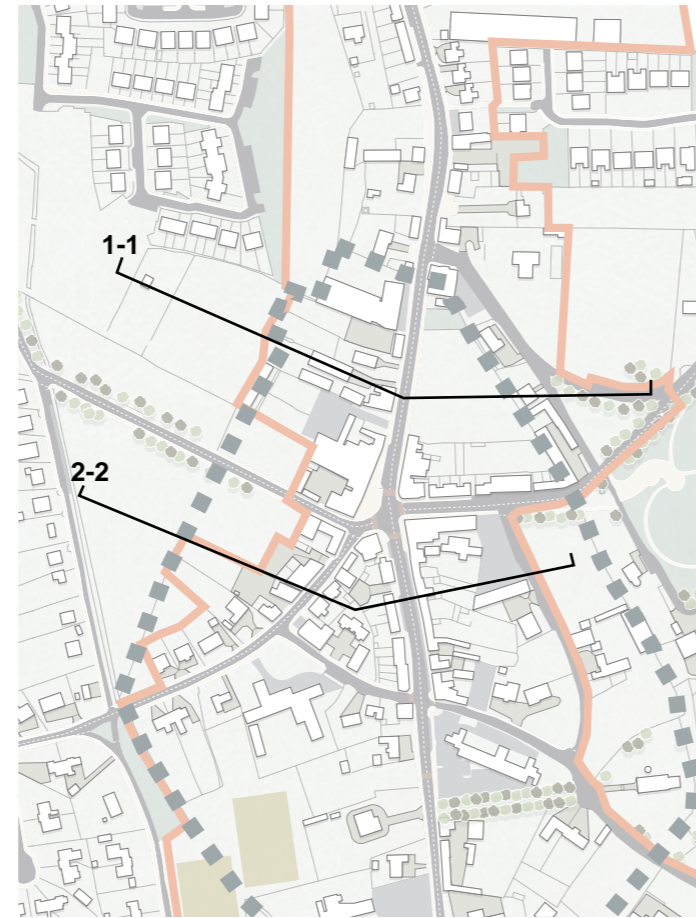
The street sections, particularly along Main Street, reveal a moderate to weak sense of enclosure, with enclosure ratios ranging from 1:2.6 to 1:9.6. The town's moderate to flat topography supports walkability and visual continuity.

Greening is minimal to moderate, with more focused landscape interventions in areas such as Laurels and to a lesser extent the Market Square. Streets leading into Main Street—such as Abbey Street, Carlowgate, and Keenans Lane—exhibit a weaker sense of enclosure in places due to lower street wall continuity and more dispersed building forms.

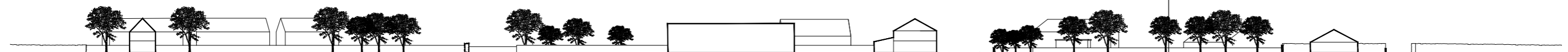
These observations align with DMURS (2013) principles, which emphasize enclosure, continuity, and landscape quality as key elements in creating legible and pedestrian-friendly urban environments. While Castledermot's core demonstrates a traditional urban structure, there are clear opportunities to enhance enclosure and greening along approach streets to strengthen the town's spatial coherence and public realm quality.

As Gordon Cullen notes in *The Concise Townscape*: "Enclosure, or the outdoor room, is perhaps the most powerful, the most obvious, of all the devices to instill a sense of position, of identity with surroundings... it embodies the idea of here-ness."

This sense of enclosure is most evident in Castledermot's core, where the block structure fosters a strong sense of place and identity.

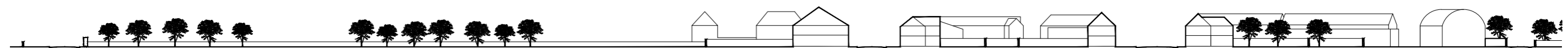


Section Lines



Main Street

Section 1-1



Main Street

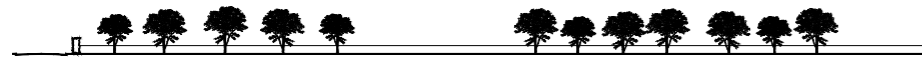
Section 2-2

Long Sections

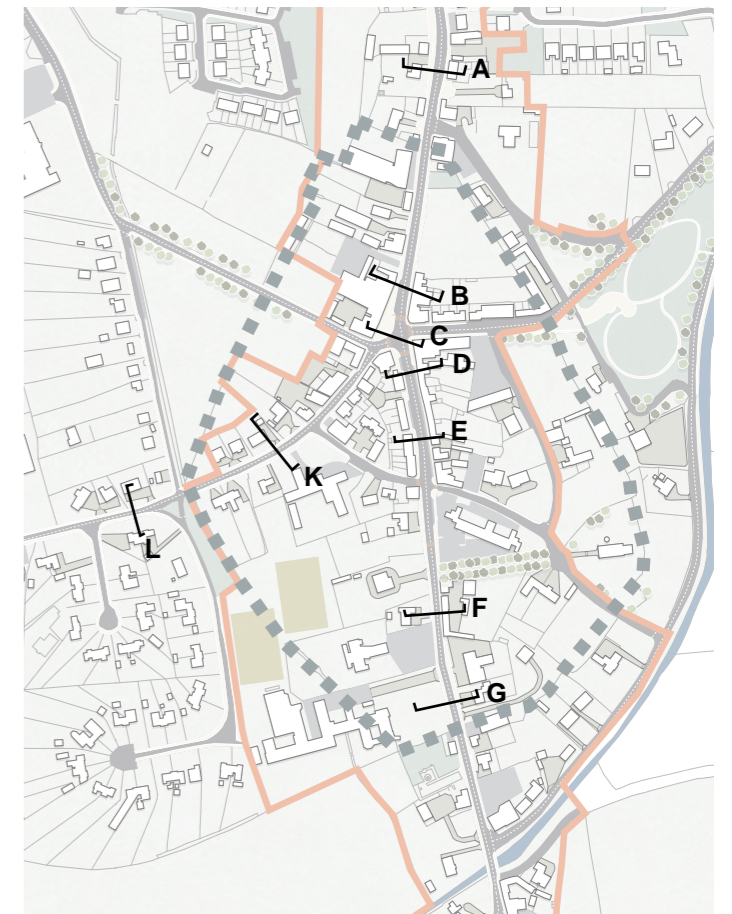
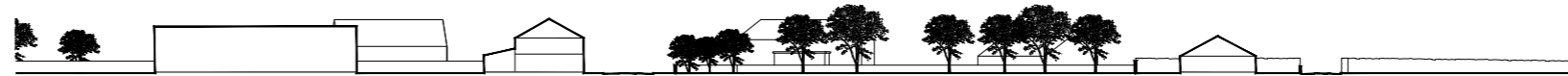
Town Centre Sections



Section 1-1



Section 2-2



Section Lines

Public Space



- Public Realm
- Community Buildings
- Sports Facilities
- Green Open Space
- Hedgerows
- 10% Fluvial AEP Event
- 1% Fluvial AEP Event
- 0.1% Fluvial AEP Event

Key

Green Space



River Lerr



Fairgreen

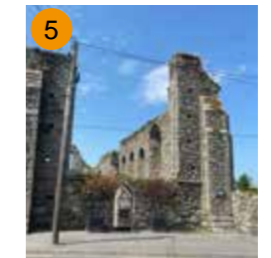


The Laurels



Playing Fields

Public Realm



Franciscan Abbey



Market Square



Library Garden



Old Pound Park

Observations

- River Lerr- area of conservation (cSAC, site code 002162)
- The Fairgreen is a big open space, but could benefit from some biodiversity measures
- Lime trees are historic and protected (see plan left)

Land Use



- Vacant Buildings
- Religious
- Convenience - Food Items
- Comparison - Electrical & Other Durable Goods
- Retail Services - eg. Hairdressers etc.
- Other Retail
- Open Space
- Health and Medicinal Services - Dental, Doctors, Vets etc.
- Public Services - Education, Library, Tourist Info etc.
- Leisure - Bars, Restaurants, Cafes etc.
- Workshop
- Agricultural
- Residential

Key

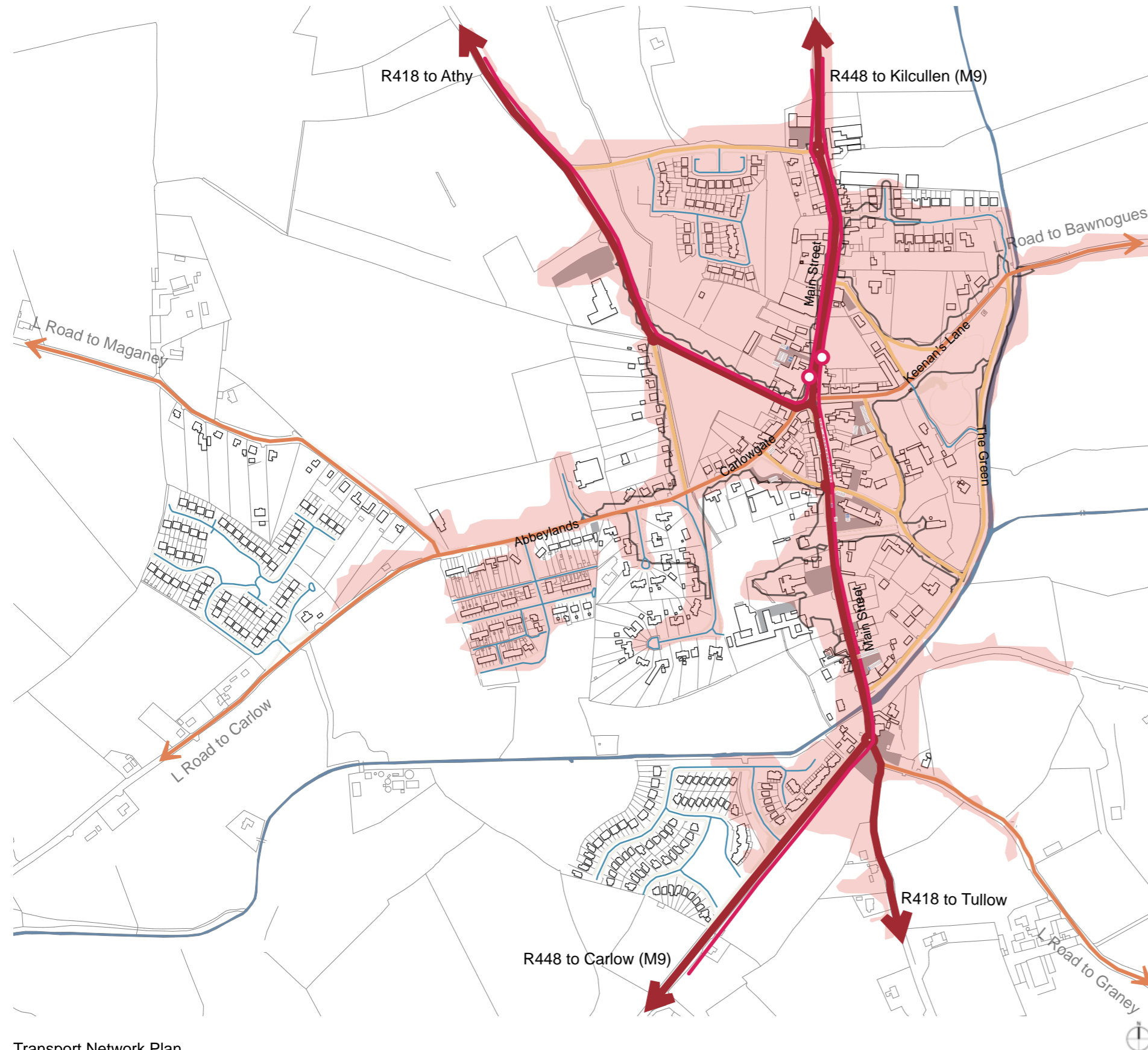
GOAD Ground Floor Classification Map

- The GOAD Ground Floor Classification Drawing offers a snapshot of current ground floor uses within the town centre, distinguishing between retail, leisure, residential, and vacant units.
- The drawing reveals a predominance of residential and retail uses, with commercial activities such as cafés, restaurants, pubs, and takeaways concentrated along Main Street and radiating outward along key approach roads.
- Notable vacancies within the town centre suggest opportunities for regeneration and mixed-use development, particularly in underutilised buildings. This analysis provides valuable insight into the town's commercial vitality and potential for economic renewal.

GOAD Ground Floor Classification Map



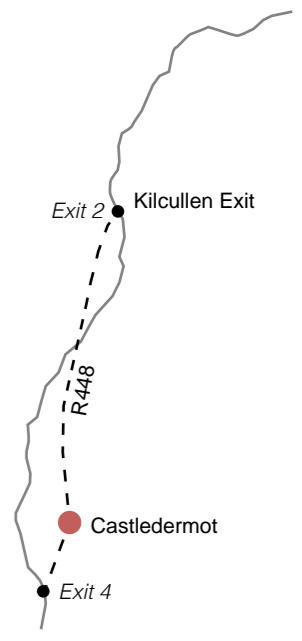
Transport Network



- Key**
- R Road
 - L Road
 - Link Road
 - Internal Road
 - Bus Route
 - Bus Stop
 - 10 Minute Walk
 - 5 Minute Walk

The Town Team indicated that HGVs were bypassing a section of the M9 by exiting at Kilcullen and opting to go through Castledermot.

They explained this was because drivers could not take the turn onto the R418 towards Tullow, and therefore were driving through the centre.



Proximity and Walkability Drawing

To support the transition to a low-carbon society, improvements in public transport and active travel infrastructure (walking and cycling) are essential. Creating an environment that removes barriers to sustainable mobility and offers viable alternatives to private car use is critical to reducing car dependency.

The Kildare Local Area Plan 2023–2029 plays a key role in enabling residents to lower their carbon emissions by promoting sustainable mobility and implementing the 10-minute settlement concept.

- Nearly the entire town centre core is within a 5-minute walk
- The 10-minute zone covers most residential areas, with lesser exceptions in the southern and western zones (e.g., Maganey Road and The Bridge Road)

This compact layout supports sustainable mobility, reduces reliance on cars, and enhances accessibility.

Movement Analysis

The plan outlines primary, secondary, and internal roads, along with major nodes and bus routes such as Local Link 880, the Athy-Castledermot route and bus 736 route, with services to Carlow, Waterford, Dublin City Centre and Dublin airport. It reveals a clear hierarchy that supports both local and regional connectivity.

However, spatial barriers such as boundary walls and limited river crossings affect permeability and movement. Large, impermeable urban blocks (e.g., recent suburban development areas) result in longer, indirect trips for pedestrians and cyclists. Improving connectivity is essential to making active transport modes more attractive and viable.

Parking



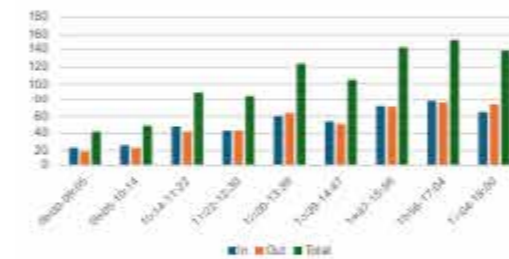
On-Street Parking

Parking

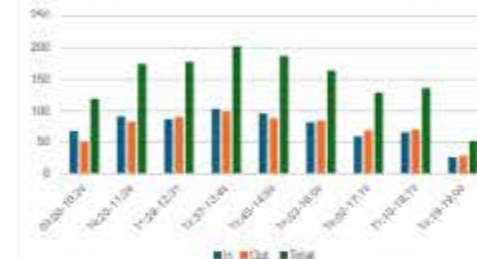
Key

1 Rath's Parking

Weekday and Weekend Movements



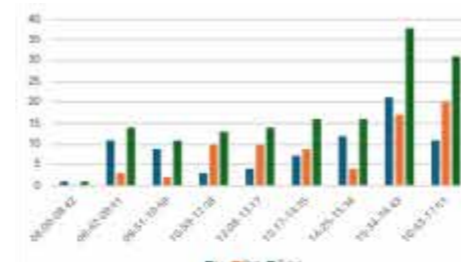
Total Daily Two-Way Vehicle Movements 932



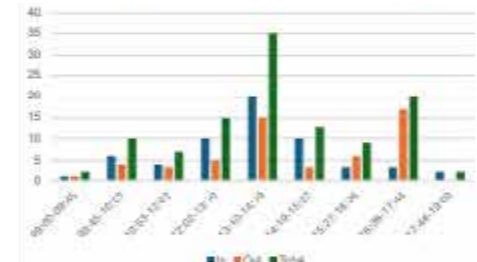
Total Daily Two-Way Vehicle Movements 1.330

2 Community Centre Parking

Weekday and Weekend Movements



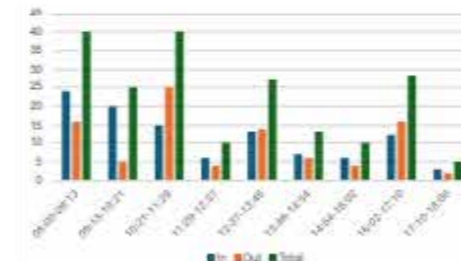
Total Daily Two-Way Vehicle Movements 154



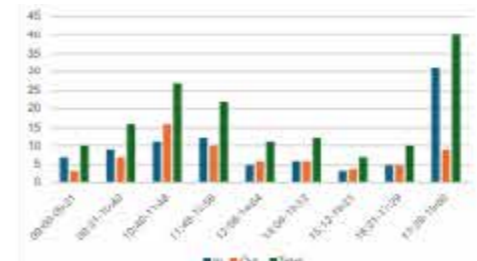
Total Daily Two-Way Vehicle Movements 154

3 Church of the Assumption Parking

Weekday and Weekend Movements



Total Daily Two-Way Vehicle Movements 198



Total Daily Two-Way Vehicle Movements 113

Observations

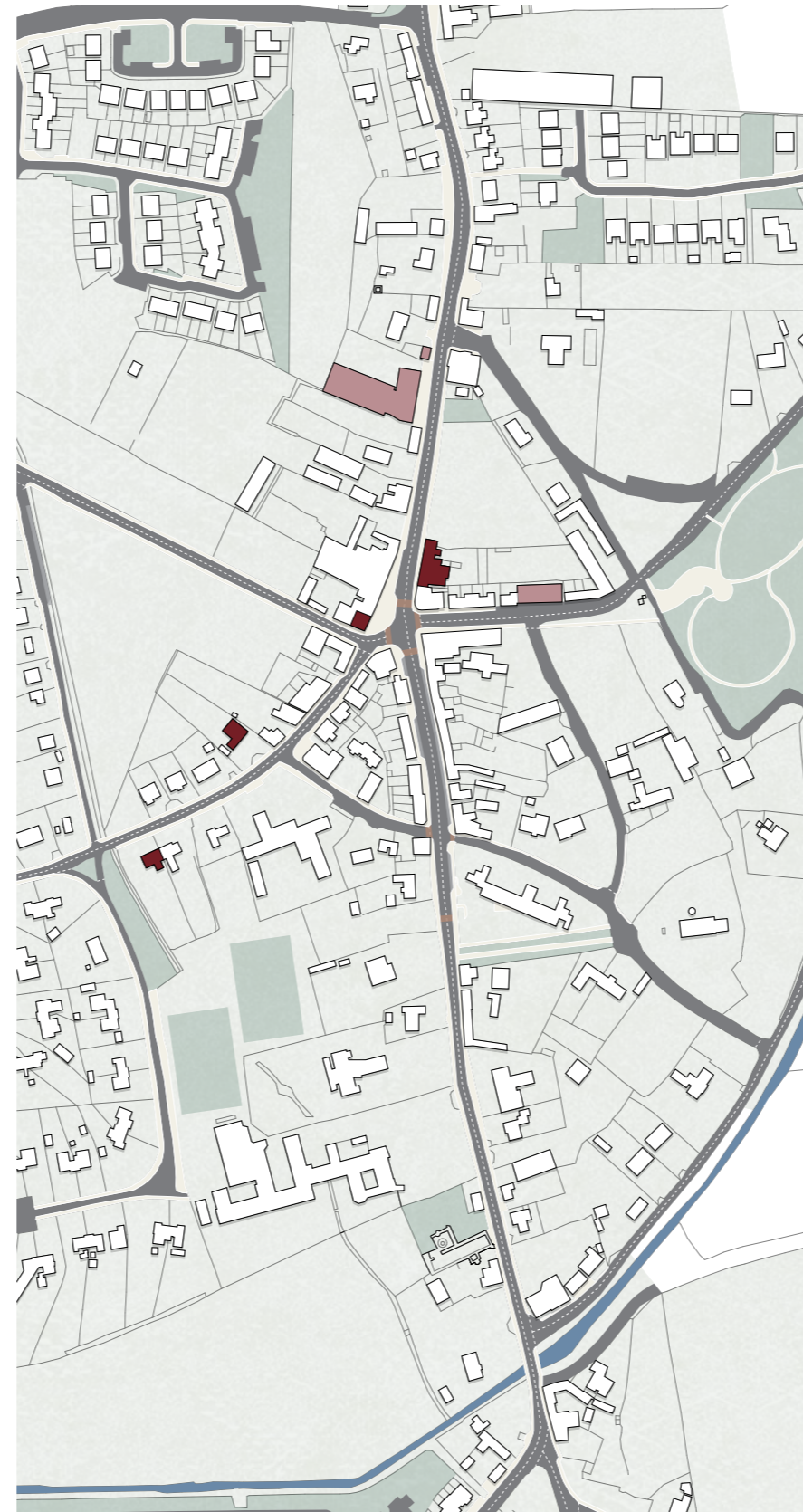
- Stress is not an issue- demand does not outweigh supply
- Clear lack of accessible parking
- Lack of municipal car park
- Lack of parking close to playground, resulting in inappropriate parking on Keenan's Lane
- Residents are using on-street parking as residential parking
- Parking lots might be potential locations to host pop up events such as food markets/craft fairs



Dereliction and Vacancies



Castledermot TCF Boundary Ground Floor (surveyed 2025)



Castledermot TCF Boundary First Floor (surveyed 2025)

- Vacant Buildings
- Undergoing Works
- Vacant Land

Key

Ground and First Floor Vacancy Map

The Ground and First Floor Vacancy Maps support the Council's objectives to:

- DV1: Identify and secure the development and renewal of obsolete areas within the development boundary using legal powers under the Derelict Sites Act 1990.
- DV2: Compile a register of derelict properties within the town.

The maps show that most vacant buildings are clustered along Main Street, within the town centre. There are:

14 vacant ground floor units:

- 7 residential
- 3 non-perishable goods
- 2 storage
- 2 leisure (e.g., bars or restaurants)

7 vacant first-floor units:

- 3 residential
- 1 non-perishable goods
- 2 storage
- 1 leisure

Please note:

A garage on the Main Street and buildings on Keenan's Lane—are currently under urban renewal works.)

Despite these vacancies, the town centre core maintains a healthy occupancy rate, with:

- Ground floor vacancy at 6%
- First floor vacancy at 3%

Within the Town Centre First (TCF) Plan boundary, vacancy rates are even lower:

- Ground floor: 1.6%
- First floor: 0.8%

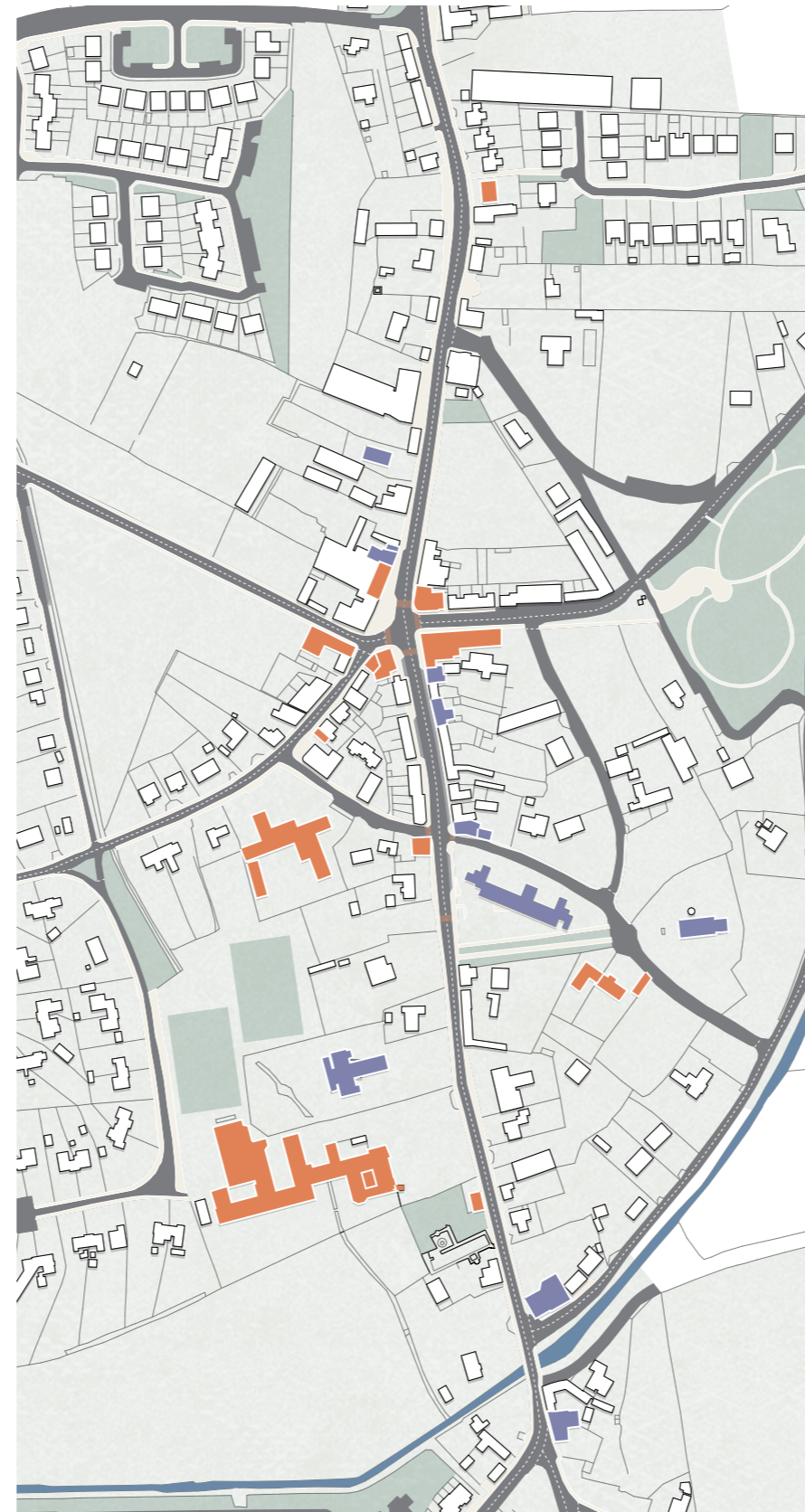
These figures highlight areas with potential for economic renewal, adaptive reuse, and targeted investment, supporting the broader goals of town centre regeneration.



Activity and Frontage



Castledermot Active Frontage



Castledermot Day and Night Activity

- Active Frontage
- Inactive Frontage
- Day Activity
- Day and Night Activity

Key

Active and Inactive Frontage Plan

This analysis distinguishes between active frontages - frontage to buildings that are occupied with openings that allow passive surveillance of the street - and inactive frontages, which are blank, underused, or visually disengaging. Active frontages contribute to vibrancy, safety, and a sense of place. Inactive areas present opportunities for design interventions to improve street life, commercial appeal, and pedestrian experience.

Observations

- Lack of active frontage on Ivor's Lane
- Lack of active frontage adjacent to the Playground
- Lack of active frontage on R418 to Scoil Diarmada
- Complaints of anti-social behaviour, especially amongst teenagers
-

Day and Night Activity Plan

This drawing visualises patterns of activity across different times of day. The town centre maintains consistent activity both during the day and at night, while peripheral areas tend to be quieter. Understanding these temporal dynamics supports better planning for lighting, security, and amenities tailored to different user groups and timeframes.

Observations

- Lack of night activity in the centre deters locals from going to the centre at night
- Concerns about lack of safety at night



Demographics

Population and Age Distribution

According to the Central Statistics Office (CSO) 2022, Castledermot had a population of 1,685 residents within its defined built-up area. The population is distributed across three zones:

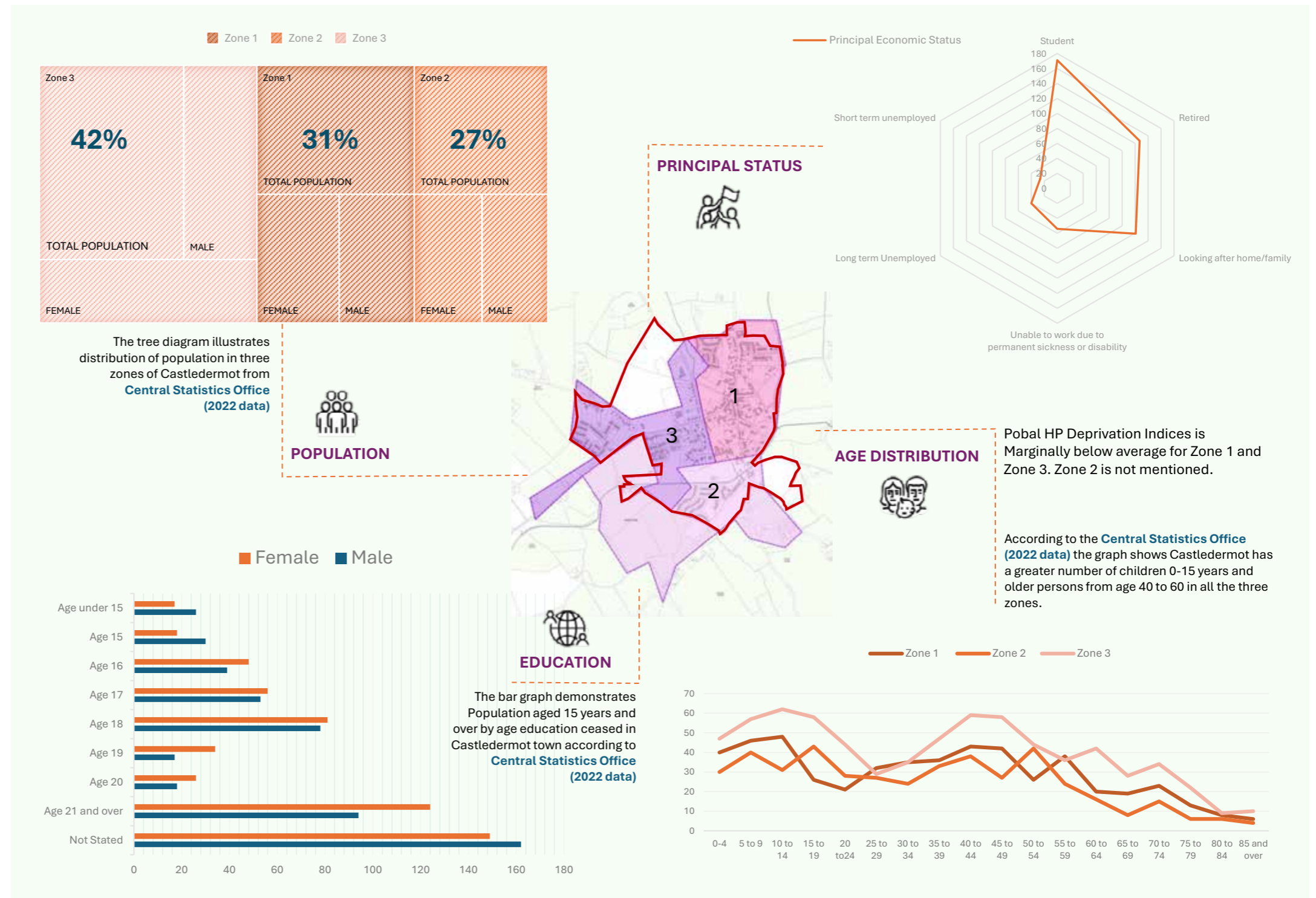
- Zone 1: 42%
- Zone 2: 31%
- Zone 3: 27%

The gender distribution is evenly balanced across the town. The age profile is notably youthful, with a significant proportion of children aged 0–15 years and a substantial cohort of adults aged 40–60 years, particularly concentrated in Zone 3, followed by Zones 1 and 2. This demographic structure indicates a strong demand for childcare and educational facilities.

Education and Principal Economic Status

CSO 2022 data shows that by age 18, approximately 50% of individuals had completed formal education, with a higher proportion among females. Among those aged 21 and over, this figure rises to 80%, again with females representing a greater share.

In terms of principal economic status, the largest group is students, followed by retired individuals and those looking after home or family. This reflects a community with a strong presence of young people in education, alongside a significant number of retirees and homemakers.



Demographics

Housing

Housing analysis reveals that Zones 1 and 2 contain the majority of Castledermot's residential areas, predominantly comprising houses and bungalows. Apartments are present but remain relatively few.

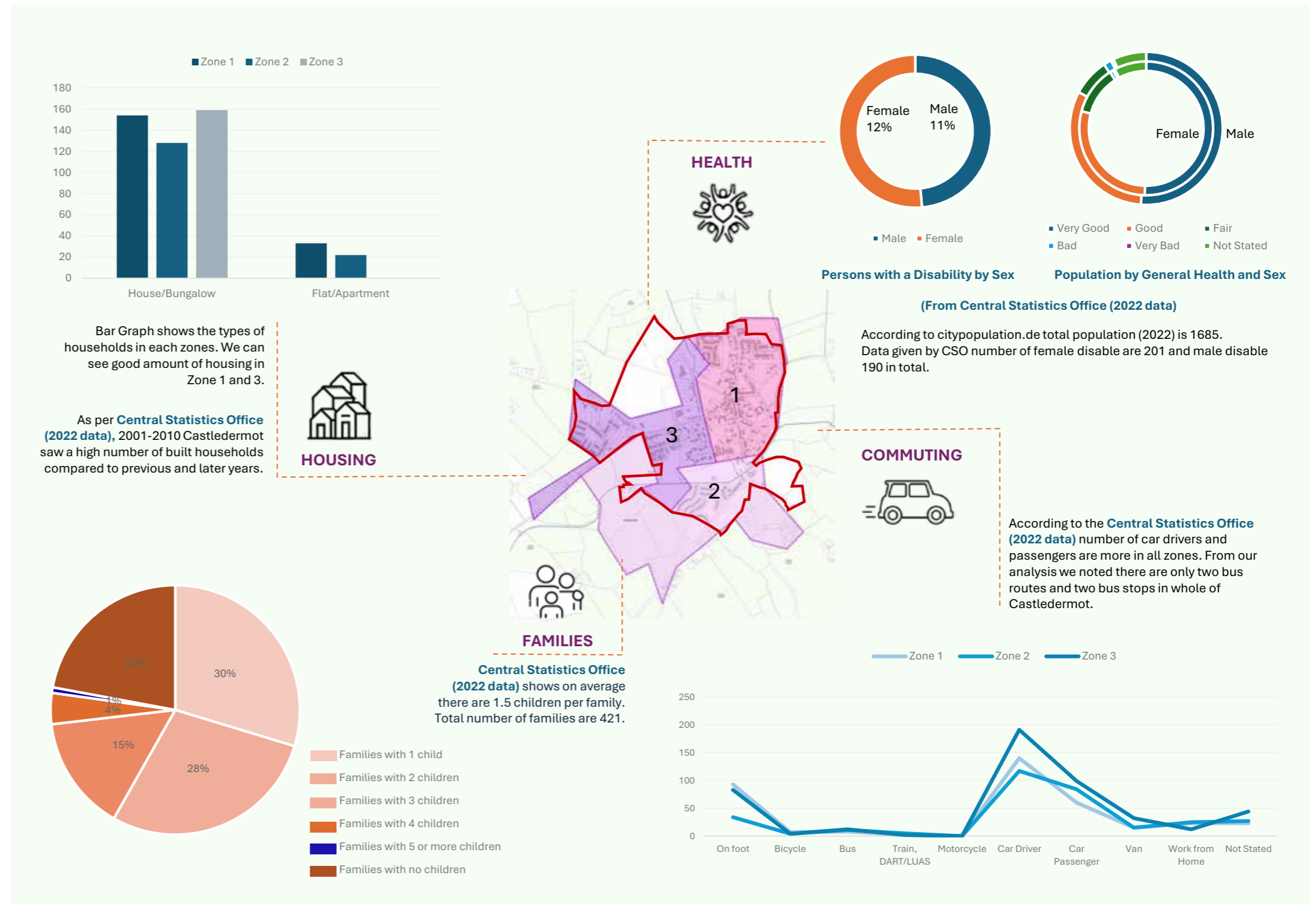
Between 2001 and 2010, approximately 90% of new households were constructed, with a sharp decline to just 6% in the years following. According to CSO the average number of children per family is 1.5

According to CSO housing completion data, 27 new housing units were built within the town's defined settlement boundary between 2017 and 2023 (CSO Table NDA06).

Health and Transport

The 2022 census recorded 201 females and 190 males in Castledermot as having a disability. Overall health status ranges from Very Good to Very Bad, with the majority reporting Good or Very Good health.

Transport data shows that car drivers and passengers dominate across all zones. Castledermot is served by two bus routes and has two bus stops, indicating limited public transport infrastructure.



Digital Town Blueprint

The Digital Town Blueprint analyses digital readiness across seven dimensions. This is accomplished through a combination of primary research, desk research, secondary data, key informant interviews and automated data collection techniques. The findings of the assessment are synthesised into a digital town readiness score and assessment report.

Funded by the Department of Rural and Community Affairs, the report was carried out by .ie and the Irish Institute of Digital Business at DCU. The report was published in 2024.

Castledermot's Digital Readiness score is 50.6%.



Infrastructure For Connectivity

- Fixed broadband**
 There is 100% fixed broadband coverage in Castledermot. This compares well with the EU average of 97.7%.
- Mobile broadband**
 There is near universal mobile broadband coverage in Castledermot. However, this coverage displays variability across townlands in relation to data speed.
- Competition**
 There are 11 providers offering their services in Castledermot. Of these, 4 offer 5G.
- Free Public WiFi**
 Public WiFi is available in municipal buildings. However, it is not available outdoors, at accommodation, hospitality, retail or tourism sites.
- Digital rural hubs**
 There is no connected hub in the town.




Digital Business

- Website Technology Intensity Score**
 83% of the 36 businesses analysed had some sort of online presence. 42% scored medium, high or very high in relation to digital sophistication.
- Digital technology take-up**
 69% have a social media presence. 50% show evidence of mobile targeting.
- eCommerce take-up**
 19% show evidence of the ability to sell online.




Digital Public Services

- e-Health**
 6 healthcare providers were analysed. 67% use e-prescriptions as well as digital data transfer. 17% offer online consultations.
- Open data**
 Irish public sector bodies are required to adhere to the principle that public sector data should be open by design and default. A review of relevant plans and reports showed two open datasets, which related to weather data.



Digital Education

- Digital skills courses for young people**
 E-learning courses are available at Castledermot, but there is no evidence that these are targeted at young people. Colaiste Lorcain does not offer computer science at junior or senior cycle.
- Vocational and further education digital skills courses**
 There is no evidence of vocational or further education in digital skills. Digital skills are crucial for the economy. 40% of all job adverts explicitly mention digital skills.
- Digital skills courses for seniors**
 There is no evidence of digital skills aimed specifically at seniors.
- Other digital skills courses**
 Yes.



Digital Civil Society

- Website Technology Intensity Score**
 16 social and voluntary groups were identified. 69% have a low, very low or non-existent score in relation to digital sophistication.
- Digital technology take-up**
 94% use social media. 44% show evidence of mobile targeting.
- eCommerce take-up**
 31% show evidence of the ability to sell online.



Digital Tourism

- Digital readiness of Tourism Businesses**
 16 accommodation, hospitality and retail businesses were assessed. 100% scored high or very high in relation to digital sophistication.
- Smart Tourism and Digital Infrastructure**
 While free public WiFi is available in municipal buildings, other smart tourism infrastructure such as digital signage and kiosks, online itineraries, mobile apps, augmented and virtual reality and QR codes are not used.
- Tourism destination website and maturity**
 Castledermot does not have a destination website.



Governance of Digital Initiatives

- Horizontal integration**
 Coordination of digitalisation measures the extent to which different digitalisation initiatives within a town are coordinated. While the evidence does not show digital coordination, Castledermot has been selected as a target town under the Town Centre First initiative.
- Vertical integration**
 This refers to cross-departmental integration. Nine relevant plans and reports were analysed. Castledermot was mentioned, specifically in relation to BCP and connected communities.



Place Standard

The Place Standard Tool is a visual framework used to assess both the physical and social aspects of a place. Comprising 14 themes, it helps identify a community's strengths and areas for improvement, guiding future planning and investment. The tool was adapted from resources provided by Play Scotland and HiLocalGov.ie and applied to Castledermot to evaluate its current conditions by the Town Regeneration Team, Kildare County Council in collaboration with the Castledermot Town Team.

Key Findings

- Identity and Belonging and Social Interaction scored highly, reflecting Castledermot's strong community spirit and active volunteer culture.
- Natural Space also performed well, thanks to accessible green areas such as St. James' Cemetery and Castledermot Playground.
- Facilities and Services and Influence and Sense of Control received moderate ratings.
- Streets and Spaces are appreciated for their heritage value and visual appeal, though traffic congestion limits enjoyment and pedestrian comfort.
- Play and Recreation, Work and Local Economy, Housing and Community, and Feeling Safe showed mixed results. The playground is well-used but lacks inclusive design for all age groups, and footpath lighting is insufficient, affecting perceptions of safety.

Areas for Improvement

Moving Around and Public Transport scored lower due to:

- Limited bus stops
- Poor pedestrian crossings
- Lack of footpaths, particularly on Keenan's Lane

Care and Maintenance requires attention, with several public spaces needing upkeep.

The lowest score was recorded for Traffic and Parking, highlighting:

- Absence of bike racks or designated cycle parking
- General congestion
- Limited infrastructure supporting active travel

Overall Insights

The Place Standard diagram highlights Castledermot's compact layout and strong local character, while clearly pointing out areas that need targeted planning and investment. It serves as a valuable tool for guiding future development and enhancing quality of life in the town centre.



Analysis Summary

Retail + Leisure
 Heritage
 Activity
 Educational
 Opportunity Points
+ Anchor Points

Key

Opportunity Points

- 1 Market Square
- 2 Main Street
- 3 Fairgreen Access
- 4 Community Centre
- 5 St James' Church and the Laurels
- 6 Carlowgate Junction
- 7 Targeting Vacancy and Dereliction

5 minute walk

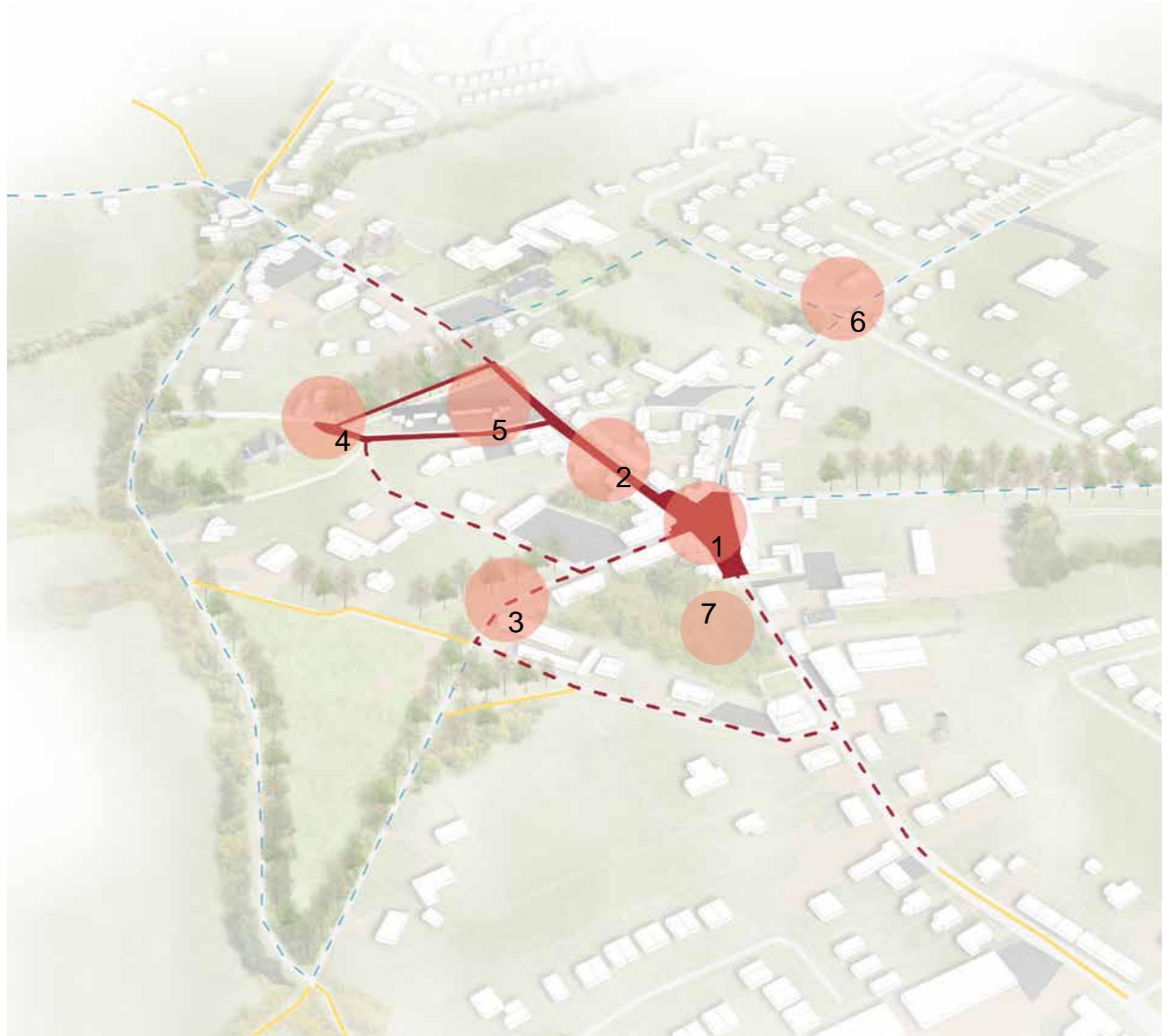
10 minute walk



Castledermot Plan

Opportunity Points and Connectivity Improvements

The diagram summarises the key findings and concept arising from the urban analysis. It outlines a series of potential projects linked by a cohesive network of public realm enhancements, featuring SuDS and nature-based solutions, street greening, quality materials, seating, and formalised parking in the core.



Key

Connectivity Improvements

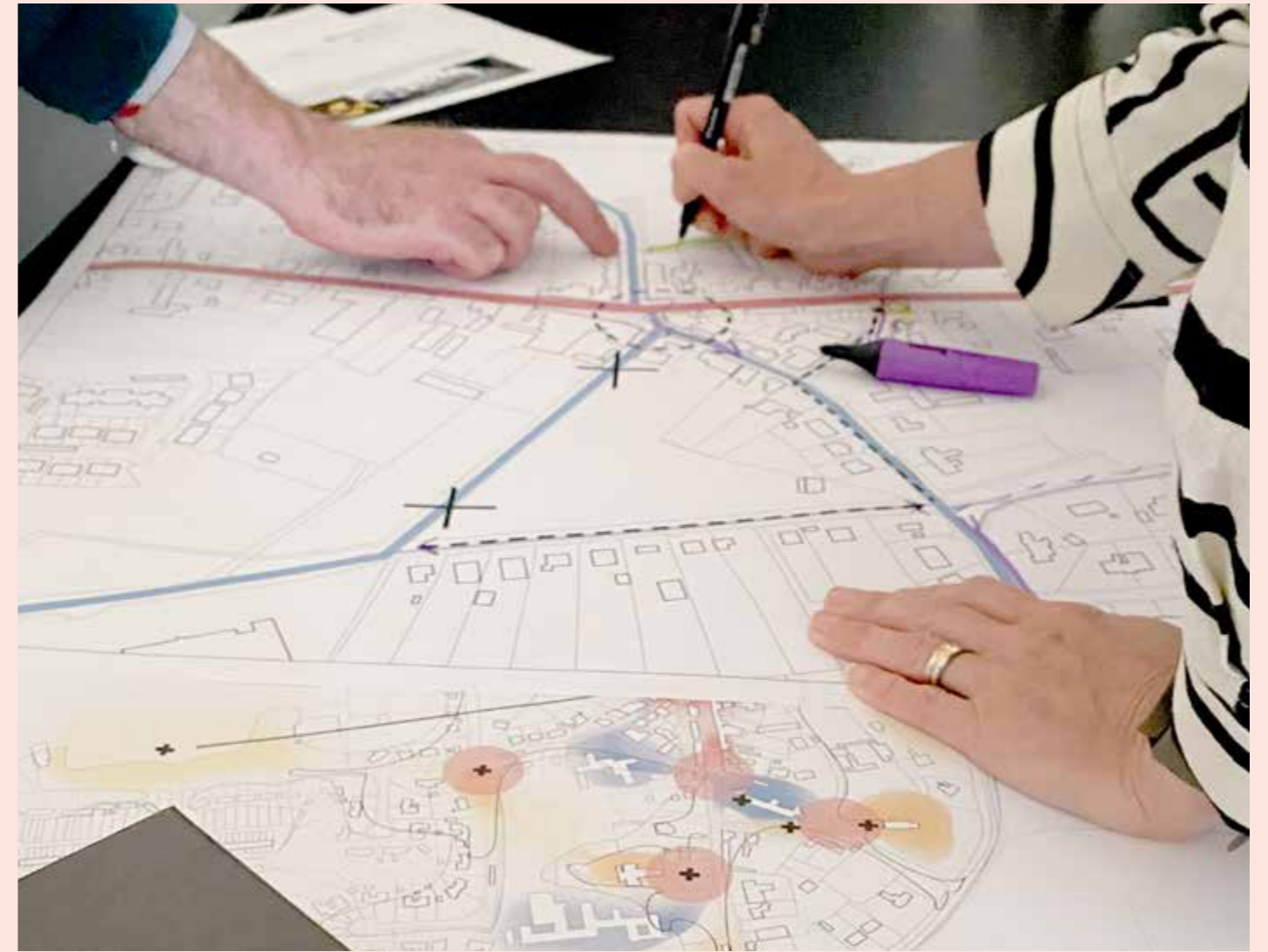
- Public Realm Core
- High Quality Public Realm
- Improved Pedestrian Cycle Connectivity
- Improved Active Travel

Opportunity Points

- 1 Market Square
- 2 Main Street
- 3 Keenan's Lane
- 4 St James' Church and the Laurels
- 5 Community Centre
- 6 Carlowgate Junction
- 7 Targeting Vacancy and Dereliction



3



Co-Design Workshop

Collaboration and Communication

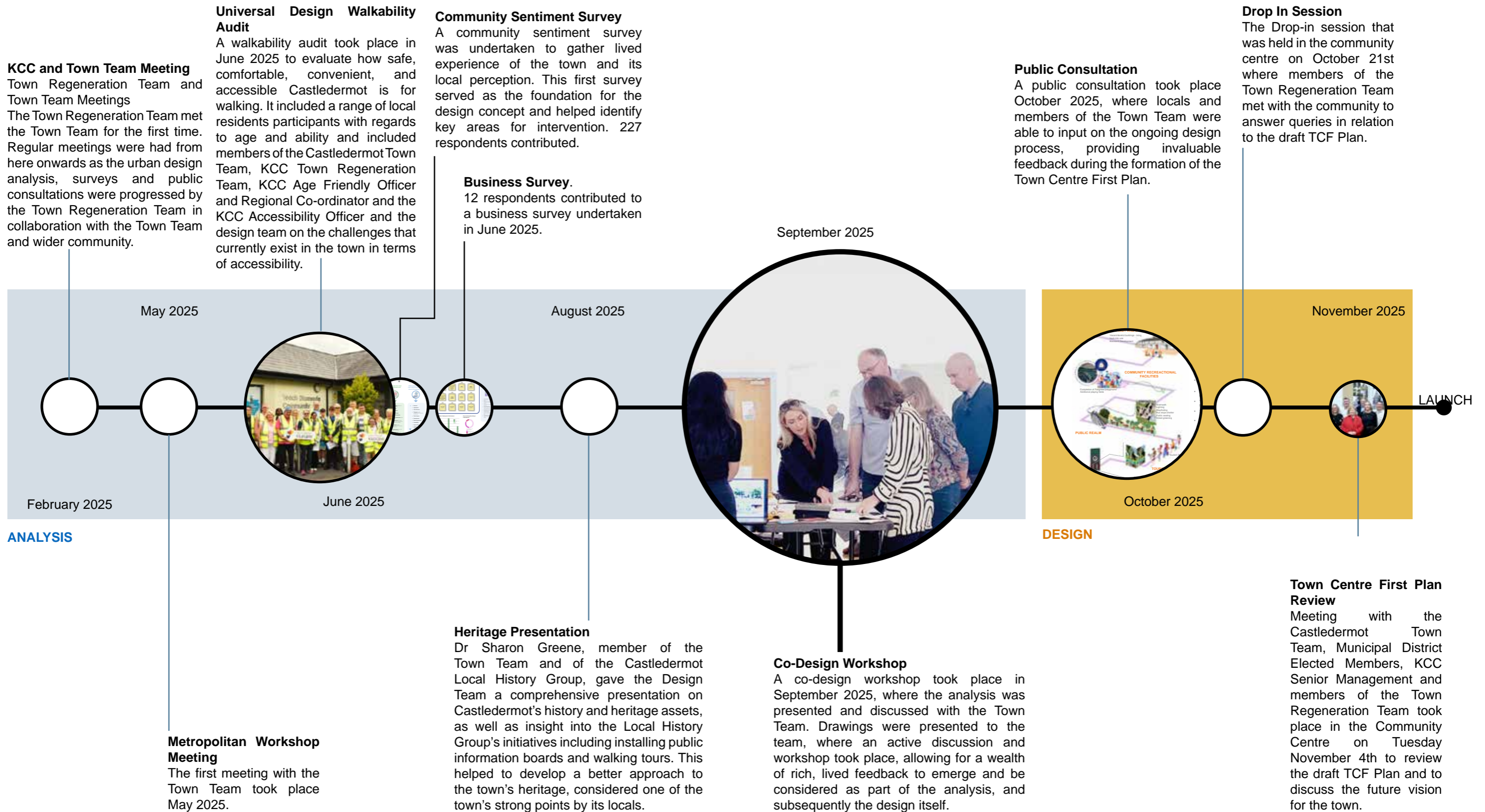
The Town Team and local community of Castledermot actively participated in the plan-making process, offering valuable feedback on emerging themes and project opportunities. Engagement activities such as workshops and surveys provided meaningful opportunities for input.

This feedback has played a key role in shaping the plan to reflect local priorities and respond to community concerns.

3 Collaboration and Communication

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Business Survey	45
Co-Design Workshop	46
Public Consultation	4

Engagement Process and Events



Walkability Audit

The walkability audit took place in June 2025 and was attended by 11 members of Castledermot's community, of varying gender, ages and abilities.

2 routes

Date of Audit: 20/06/2025

Start Time: 10.30

End Time: 15.00

Weather: Sunny and Dry Conditions

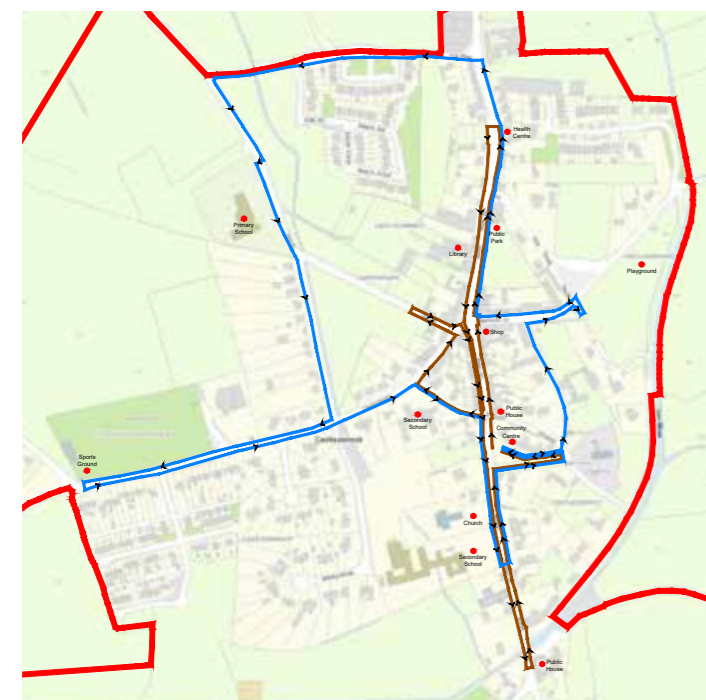
No. of Participants: 6 female & 5 male

Participants were of varying ages and abilities

Proposed Improvements

1. More pedestrian crossings and better footpaths required.
2. Improved footpaths and parking to playground area
3. Better signage to toilets/playground etc.
4. Heritage trail, considering the historical assets and heritage of the town. (There are 12 no. National Monuments)
5. More refuse bins
6. Lack of street greening/floral displays

Note: Please refer to the Universal Design Walkability Audit Report for more detail.



Route 1

Route 2

Walking Routes



Route 1



Route 2

Community Sentiment Survey

“Shopping brought me into town today, then I went for a walk”

“Pubs are very quiet”

“There is no nightlife.”

“Fantastic park for kids but no parking available”

“Apart from the sporting outlets, there’s not much for the youth to do in between the ages of 13-18”

“Especially at the park, streetparking seems to fill up very quickly”

“I stop on my way home from work: Rath’s is that attraction”

“parking’s good most of the time but at times it’s hard to get a parking spot near the doctors if you’re not good on your feet”

Town Centre Usage and Perceptions

- 70% of respondents visit the town centre daily
- 26% visit weekly
- Most residents live within a 5–10 minute drive of the centre
- Walking is the most common mode of travel, followed by car or motorbike

Daytime comfort:

- 45% were comfortable, 12% were unsure, 40% found it as good and 3% poor.

Night-time comfort:

- 45% were unsure
- Concerns included anti-social behaviour, poor lighting, and limited nightlife or youth activities

Parking and Accessibility

- 43% rated parking as adequate
- 46% rated it as poor
- 11% rated it as good

Issues raised:

- Limited parking near businesses and the playground
- Dangerous parking on corners
- Poor wheelchair accessibility
- Lack of awareness about community centre parking

Accessibility for people with disabilities was a recurring concern, with calls for improved provision.

Reasons for Visiting Castledermot

Primary reasons include:

- Shopping
- Visiting archaeological sites
- Dining
- Attending the library
- Participating in sports and summer camps
- Using medical services
- Visiting family

Residents also value the town’s sports fields, clubs, public spaces, and road infrastructure.

Strengths

Residents and visitors expressed strong appreciation for Castledermot’s sense of community, unique identity, and amenities such as parks, play areas, and seating. The town’s heritage and history were also highly valued.

Top strengths of the town centre included:

- Its heritage
- Availability of essential services
- Overall functionality of infrastructure

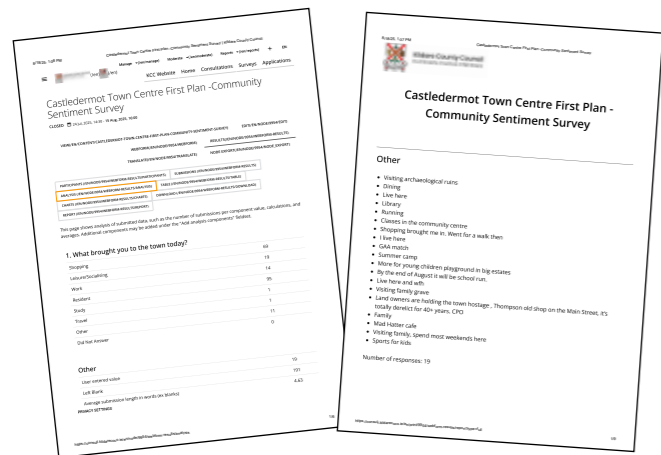
Improvements to be made

Key opportunities for improvement identified by residents:

- Enhancing business activity
- Improving the town’s appearance
- Expanding youth services
- Increasing public transport frequency
- Upgrading public spaces, entertainment options, road infrastructure, accessibility, sports and recreation facilities, and housing
- Advancing environmental initiatives, especially those addressing climate adaptation

Top three priorities for improvement:

1. Town centre appearance
2. Range and quality of facilities, including leisure amenities
3. Overall infrastructure performance



Key

- Identity (orange circle)
- Mobility (black circle)
- Economy (blue circle)
- Sustainability (green circle)

Business Survey



Business Survey (31 July – 22 August 2025)

Responses were received from a diverse range of businesses, including:

- Hair salons
- Cafés
- Service stations
- Haulage companies
- Construction firms
- Steelwork and equipment repair businesses

Many have operated for decades, with some over 100 years. Most employ 0–10 staff, including full-time, part-time, and seasonal workers.

Business performance ratings:

- 50%: Good
- 30%: Satisfactory
- 20%: Poor

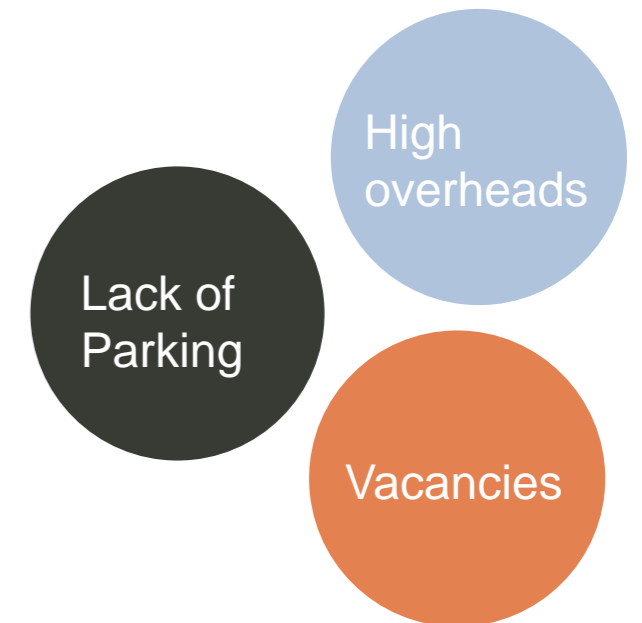
Suggested solutions:

- Greater support for local businesses
- Zoning for industrial property
- Apprenticeship incentives
- Improved parking
- Measures to attract footfall
- More housing
- Better infrastructure

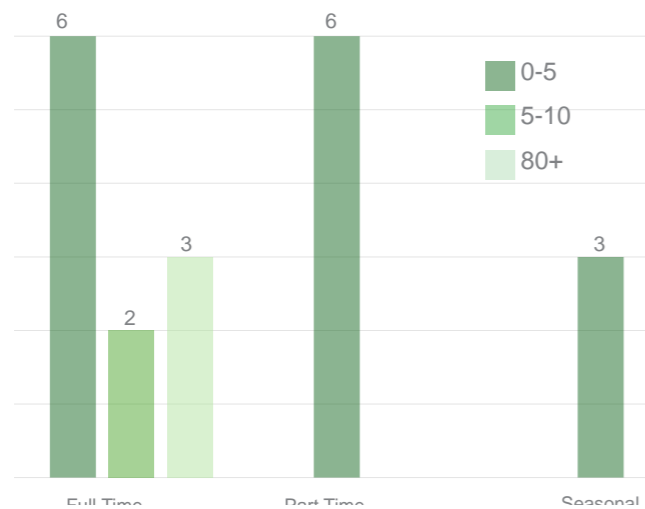
Challenges faced by businesses

Challenges identified:

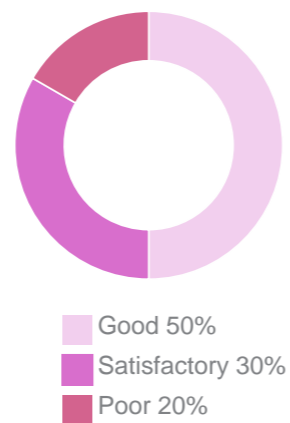
- High overheads, rates, and rents
- Rising operational costs
- Lack of workspace
- Parking difficulties
- Competition from larger chains
- Difficulty recruiting young apprentices
- Heavy goods traffic
- Impact of vacant and derelict buildings



Number of employees in the business



How are businesses doing in Castledermot?



Co-Design Workshop

The co-design workshop took place in the Castledermot Community Centre in September 2025. It was attended by the KCC Town Regeneration Team, Metropolitan Workshop and the Castledermot Town Team.

Rural Community

The Town Team noted the rural character of Castledermot, and the importance of this to be maintained. They recognised the need for roads suited to heavy agricultural vehicles, such as tractors and machinery, and also stated that it was in part this through traffic that contributed to the town's vibrancy. It was stated that any design decisions, be they concerning traffic management, greening or lighting, should consider Castledermot's rural feel.

Public Realm

The Town Team described a lack of public realm off of Main Street, and a general lack of activity on Market Square. This was generally put down to a lack of pedestrian accessibility and crossings, and a lack of businesses and activity generally within the centre. In fact, it was said by one member that, functionally, residents considered the centre to be the churches and community centre rather than Market Square and its surroundings.

Traffic management

The Town Team explained that traffic on Main Street was very disruptive, with HGVs generating a lot of noise and unsafe conditions. They believed that bringing the gateways closer to the centre might encourage people to slow down, whilst more crossings would allow for easier pedestrian access into the centre.

Parking

The Town Team described that many prior car parks have been built over, due to a lack of use. They recognised the need for better parking around the playground, but otherwise preferred stakeholder-involved solutions to improve existing car parking around Rath's, the community centre and Church of the Assumption.

Fairgreen

The Town Team informed the Design Team that the playground was in fact subject of a Part 8, and that following the first part of construction, the remainder of the project was never completed. This project was to include spaces for teenagers and outdoor classrooms, fulfilling the needs drawn out by the analysis of the Town.

During the workshop, this was highlighted as a key area for development by the Team.

Lighting

In keeping with the rural feel of the Town, the Team recognised the need for lighting, notably around the playground, but wondered if methods might be used that would cause the least light pollution and disruption to local wildlife.

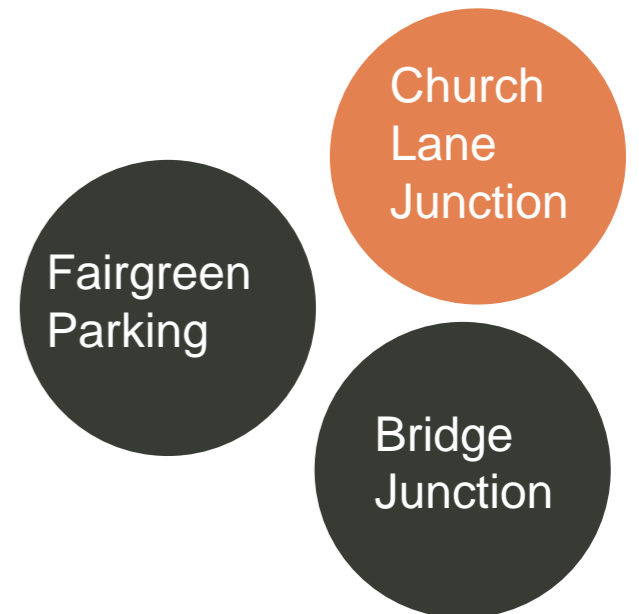


Co-Design Workshop

Favourite Place



Room for improvement



Key

- Identity
- Mobility
- Economy
- Sustainability

Public Consultation

The public consultation took place in October 2025. It was attended by the KCC Town Regeneration Team and the Castledermot Town Team.

Vacancy and Dereliction

- The long term derelict properties opposite the Bread and Beer Pub/Restaurant should be addressed as a matter of priority.
- Address vacant/derelict buildings in the town centre to bring back into use
- Support and encourage backland development in the town including the large areas to the west and east of the main street - adjacent to the row of derelict shops.
- Site area where the wall is broken (in front of the garage) can be the ideal place for car parking/housing.

Public Realm

- The location around the Franciscan Abbey would provide an opportunity for new open space
- Explore potential riverside walk from Franciscan Abbey along river to the Sewerage Treatment works
- The streetscape needs to be vastly enhanced, particularly in the town centre.
- The fencing along Hamilton Road has been down for a number of years and should be addressed
- Bring the rear lanes and alleyways of William Pearse Terrace up to a standard that will allow the residents to use them once again.
- Appropriate surface water drainage be installed at lower Abbeylands opposite the GAA entrance.
- A walkway should be provided along the river.
- Additional lighting at the park
- Wayfinding Strategy
- No shelter for bus stops – only on 1 side
- Provide seating near the Abbey Lands and along the main street to support older residents walking from Centra, as there are currently no informal spaces for social interaction.

Community and Recreational Facilities

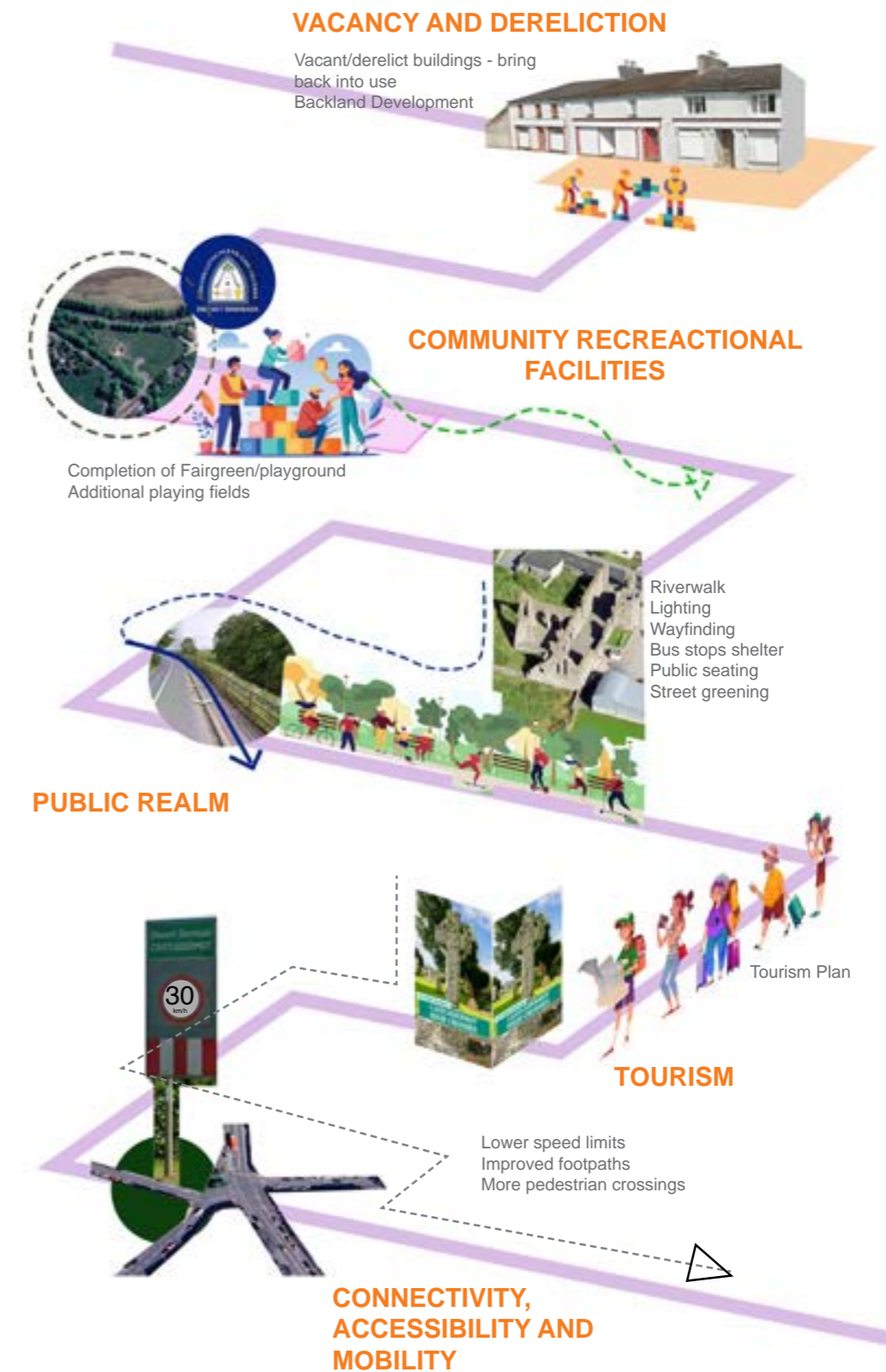
- Concentrate on finishing playground
- Consideration for additional playing fields for the GAA club.

Tourism

- Commissioning of a dedicated Tourism Plan for Castledermot.
 - Exploring the creation of an audio or in-ear walking tour guide to enhance the visitor experience.
- This initiative would support local businesses and strengthen Castledermot's profile as a heritage destination.

Connectivity, Accessibility and Mobility

- Reduce the speed limit for traffic to 30 km/h to improve safety and create a more pedestrian-friendly environment.
- More car parking for the playground
- Enhance connections for pedestrians and cyclists, particularly linking the soccer pitch to the town centre.
- Address pinch points on footpaths near O'Neill's Bar, and consider a new pedestrian bridge over the River Lerr. Also improve connectivity from the Green Bridge to the town centre, including the T-junction at St. John's and the area near R14 PX23.
- Install a crossing near the school or church, which would greatly improve pedestrian movement during busy times
- Many footpaths are too narrow for pedestrians and cyclists to pass safely, often requiring people to step onto the road.
- Junction Improvement at R448/R418/L4015 - proposing the installation of a roundabout at the junction of the R448, R418, and L4015.
- Speed limits on the L4011 need to be reviewed and reduced.
- The roads surrounding St John's Lane and Keenan's Lane are in a state of disrepair and require urgent resurfacing and drainage improvements.
- Castle Villa FC are implementing a new one-way system at Mullarney Park as part of their development of adjacent land to the north of the complex. The Council should complement this by installing footpaths along the pitches to ensure safe pedestrian access to the sports facilities, particularly for children and families.
- That a pedestrian crossing be immediately considered from in or about the secondary school to link up with the community centre and shops on the opposite side of Main Street.
- Vehicle speed at the northern entrance to the town is high, even with a speed limit sign in place. The speed limit should be reduced, and the sign should be positioned before the town begins.
- Not sufficient public transport in Castledermot.
- No disable parking spots.
- Supermarket parking is always full. Need to walk up to the supermarket by parking at the community centre.
- Parking at the Church is difficult in the mornings due to school timings and on the days of funeral. The Church parking is busy from 10-5, 5 days a week.



4



Saint James and the Laurels

Defining the Place

Under the Town Centre First policy, “defining the place” is a vital first step in the planning and regeneration process. It involves building a clear, shared understanding of the town—its character, identity, challenges, and opportunities—through local knowledge, community engagement, and data-driven insights.

In Castledermot, this work has been carried out in direct response to the needs previously identified through both detailed town analysis and extensive community feedback. These inputs highlighted key priorities such as addressing vacancy, improving public spaces, enhancing local services, protecting and celebrating the town’s heritage.

This place-based approach ensures that the vision and actions developed are firmly rooted in local realities. Rather than applying a “one-size-fits-all” solution, it empowers the community to shape and lead the town’s future in a way that reflects its specific needs, strengths, and aspirations.

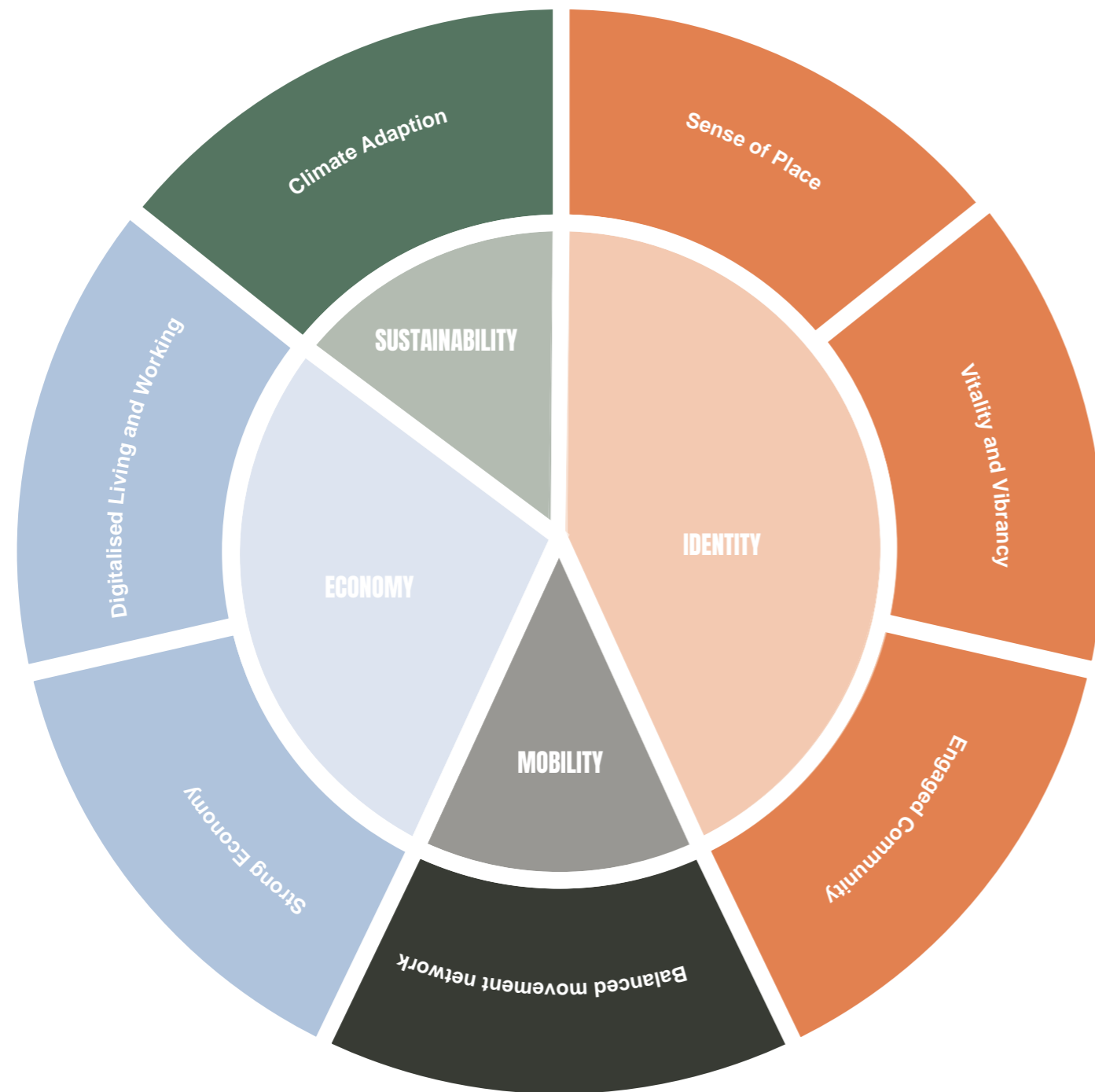
4 Defining the Place

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Themes and Objectives

The framework outlined in Castledermot's Town Centre First Plan is structured around the themes of Identity, Mobility, Economy, and Sustainability, aiming to support the town's regeneration and help it achieve its full potential.

The objectives outlined in each key theme are based on community and business surveys, the co-design workshop, comprehensive site analysis and existing policy- including the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.



Themes and Objectives Diagram

Projects and Actions

These objectives are expressed through a series of key projects which represent defined spatial interventions, many of which address multiple objectives simultaneously and serve as key nodes within the framework. The accompanying actions represent broader, more general interventions. Also note all Projects and Actions are high level and remain subject to detailed appraisal and surveys

Projects

- Market Square
- Main Street Public Realm Improvements
- Keenan's Lane
- St James' Church and the Laurels
- Community Centre
- Carlowgate Junction
- Tackling Vacancy and Dereliction

Actions - Additional Projects

Identity

- ID1 Heritage Centre
- ID2 Youth Hub
- ID3 Improvements to Fairgreen
- ID4 Community Gardens
- ID5 Heritage Trail
- ID6 Street Lighting

Mobility

- MO1 Gateways and Traffic Calming
- MO2 Public Realm Improvements
- MO3 Improvements in Connectivity to support Active Travel
- MO4 Bus Service Improvements
- MO5 School Zones
- MO6 Cycle Buses
- MO7 R448 / R418 / L405 Junction

Economy

- EC1 Castledermot Website
- EC2 Digital Hub
- EC3 Farmer's Market
- EC4 Shop Local Campaigns
- EC5 Heritage Tourism

Sustainability

- SU1 Protecting the Lime Trees
- SU2 Street Greening and SuDs
- SU3 River Management Plan
- SU4 Biodiverse Parkland
- SU5 Sensory Garden
- SU6 River Lerr Walk

Note: All design proposals and projects are illustrative only and will be subject to further consultation, technical assessment and analysis at detail design stage. This will include any associated maintenance strategies.

Vision

From these themes and objectives, a clear vision was developed to guide the town's regeneration. This vision sets the benchmark for the town centre's success, with every subsequent project and action contributing towards its realisation.



Castledermot Town Centre will be a **vibrant hub** where the town's **unique heritage** and **active community** come together. Enhanced access for both pedestrians and vehicles will help revive the historic heart of the town, making it more welcoming and accessible. A revitalised Market Square will serve as a central gathering space, drawing people and activities into the town centre while strengthening Castledermot's **identity** and **sense of place**.

The town's rich heritage will be celebrated through **high-quality public realm improvements** focused on the historic core, helping to **attract tourism** and **support local pride**. With a focus on **durability and sustainability**, Castledermot will become a thriving, well-connected place to live, work, and visit.

Descriptive purposes only.

Plan Framework



Projects

1. Market Square
2. Main Street
3. Keenan's Lane
4. Saint James' Church and the Laurels
5. Community Centre
6. Carlowgate Junction
7. Targeting Vacancy and Dereliction

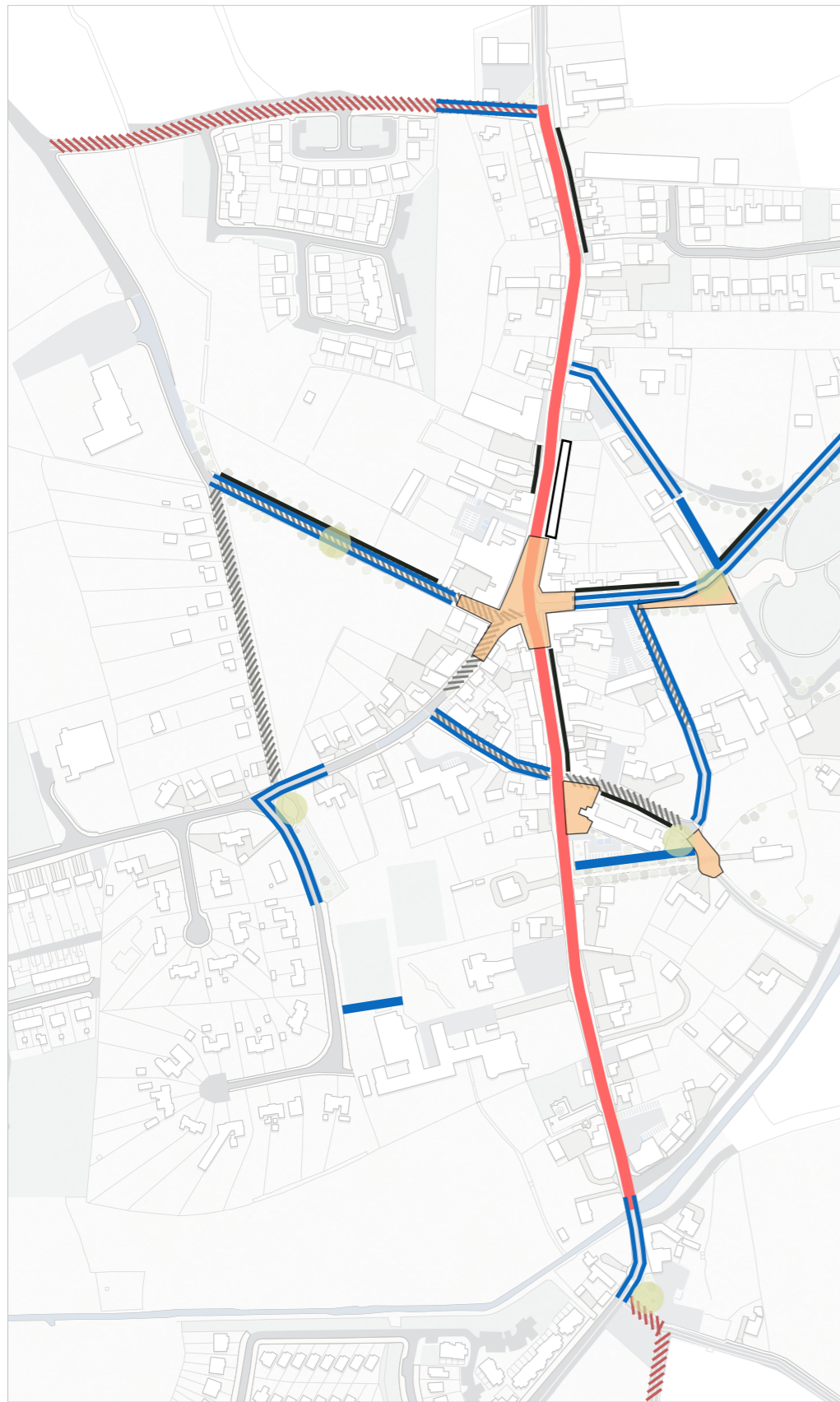
The Plan Framework proposes a comprehensive enhancement of the public realm, centred on improving connections between key public spaces.

Through the reallocation of road space in favour of people-oriented environments, the framework seeks to link Castledermot's heritage assets and unique historical features, reinforcing the town's rich character and sense of identity.

A triangular connection between Market Square, Church Lane, and the Fairgreen establishes a consolidated town centre that serves both the community and visitors. Strengthening this core is intended to attract activity and business into the heart of Castledermot, fostering a vibrant and welcoming place to live and visit.

Note: All design proposals and projects are illustrative only and will be subject to further consultation, technical assessment and analysis at detail design stage. This will include any associated maintenance strategies.

Castledermot Town Centre First Plan Framework



Conceptual Diagram of Public Realm Improvements

This conceptual diagram shows the range of public realm improvements within the framework, highlighting the upgrades to Castledermot and showcasing its strengthened town centre.

Note: All design proposals and projects are illustrative only and will be subject to further consultation, technical assessment and analysis at detail design stage. This will include any associated maintenance strategies.

Main Street Public Realm Improvements

Public realm improvements on Main Street include traffic-calming measures, widened and upgraded footpaths, enhanced pedestrian crossings, additional seating, street greening, and sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS), all delivered using high-quality, heritage-sensitive materials.

One-Way Road

Strengthened Road

The implementation of a one-way traffic system in Castledermot would be contingent upon the strengthening of Abbey Street to the south and Turn Pike Road to the north, in order to provide an alternative route for HGVs. This enhancement would divert heavy goods traffic away from the town centre, creating a quieter and more pedestrian-friendly environment, while still ensuring continued access for HGVs and agricultural vehicles.

Improved Footpaths

Pedestrian Routes

An improved active travel network would strengthen connections throughout Castledermot, enhancing the town's appearance and accessibility, and contributing to the rebalancing of the movement network.

Formalised Parking

Formalised on-street parking would improve access to Castledermot's town centre. The framework ensures that all projects contribute to increasing the number of formal and accessible parking spaces. However, a comprehensive parking audit is strongly recommended prior to the further development of any projects.

Greening

The greening spots highlighted in the diagram indicate areas of extensive planting and public open space. It should be noted that the proposed street improvements also include the integration of street greening and sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS), which will enhance the town's overall appearance and contribute to its long-term environmental sustainability.

Open Space

New public realm spaces will enhance the vibrancy of the town, providing active areas for social interaction, gathering, and community events. It is essential that these spaces are delivered using heritage-sensitive materials, reinforcing Castledermot's strong historical character and sense of identity.

Mixed-use or Housing Infill

New mixed-use and residential development should help activate currently inactive frontages, bringing renewed vibrancy to the town centre while discouraging further suburban sprawl.

Market Square



Existing Plan

Market Square

Existing conditions show that Market Square is heavily dominated by traffic, with both the community survey and the Town Regeneration Team highlighting particular concerns about vehicular movement and HGVs.

To address these issues, the proposal introduces a one-way traffic system, reducing the R418 and Carlowgate to a single lane. This minimisation of road space — and the simplification of the junction between them — creates the opportunity to significantly expand Market Square.

A raised table across all five connecting streets encourages pedestrian movement into the centre, fostering a stronger sense of vitality at the heart of Castledermot. The addition of street trees and seating enhances this effect, transforming Market Square into a lively, welcoming space — a true civic centre where people can gather, linger, and participate in community life.



Proposal Plan

Note: All design proposals and projects are illustrative only and will be subject to further consultation, technical assessment and analysis at detail design stage. This will include any associated maintenance strategies.

- 1. One way
- 2. Current vacancy could be turned into digital hub
- 3. Increased public realm
- 4. Raised table slows traffic
- 5. Street greening (SuDs raingardens)
- 6. Safer crossings

Key



Tramore Public Realm by dhbArchitects



Dominant Roadways

Vacant Buildings

Unused Public Realm

Overhead Wires

Note: All design proposals and projects are illustrative only and will be subject to further consultation, technical assessment and analysis at detail design stage. This will include any associated maintenance strategies.



Main Street Public Realm Improvements



Existing Plan



Proposal Plan

Main Street

Main Street currently functions primarily as a vehicle thoroughfare, with the needs of pedestrians and cyclists appearing secondary. The proposed improvements — including widened footpaths and new pedestrian crossings — will significantly enhance Active Travel connections into the Town Centre. In addition, the introduction of formalised on-street parking will improve accessibility and contribute to a more attractive and cohesive streetscape, complemented by new street greening initiatives.

Note: All design proposals and projects are illustrative only and will be subject to further consultation, technical assessment and analysis at detail design stage. This will include any associated maintenance strategies.

- 1. One way
- 2. Improved visibility and crossings
- 3. Wider footpaths
- 4. Public car parking

Key



Blackrock Village, active travel improvements and street greening



Carlow Town Raingardens



- Overhead Wires
- Lack of Boundary
- Entrances Not Signalled
- Informal Parking
- Underutilised Space
- No Crossings

Note: All design proposals and projects are illustrative only and will be subject to further consultation, technical assessment and analysis at detail design stage. This will include any associated maintenance strategies.



Keenan's Lane



Existing Plan



Proposal Plan

Keenan's Lane

Keenan's Lane currently experiences a high level of informal parking, as the lack of dedicated municipal spaces near the park often leads visitors to park illegally. In addition, the absence of suitable footpaths discourages walking and results in more people driving to the park.

The proposed improvements — including wider footpaths — will strengthen the pedestrian connection between Market Square and the Fairgreen. A new public realm space, along with a crossing and raised table, will provide a safer and more comfortable environment for families with prams and young children to access the park on foot. Finally, the introduction of formalised on-street parking will ensure that visitors from further afield can conveniently access the Fairgreen while improving the overall appearance and functionality of Keenan's Lane.

Note: All design proposals and projects are illustrative only and will be subject to further consultation, technical assessment and analysis at detail design stage. This will include any associated maintenance strategies.

- 1. Public car parking
- 2. Improved footpaths
- 3. New public realm
- 4. Raised table
- 5. Mural

Key



Tidy Towns
Planting acting
as bollards

Working Farm
Protected Lime Trees

Informal
parking

Note: All design proposals and projects are illustrative only and will be subject to further consultation, technical assessment and analysis at detail design stage. This will include any associated maintenance strategies.



Saint James' Church and the Laurels



Existing Plan



Proposal Plan

Saint James and the Laurels

The existing space is currently tarmacked and functions primarily as a drop-off point for Saint James' Church. It lacks a clear connection between the Laurels and the Church.

With limited local access points, Church Lane has the potential to once again serve as a meaningful link between the Church and the Laurels. Introducing a raised table with high-quality paving, designed in harmony with the area's rich historical character, would reinforce the heritage core of Castledermot. This improvement would not only enhance the community's experience but also appeal to visitors and tourists.

Note: All design proposals and projects are illustrative only and will be subject to further consultation, technical assessment and analysis at detail design stage. This will include any associated maintenance strategies.

- 1. One way
- 2. Connection point
- 3. New public realm
- 4. New Footpath

Key



Waterford Viking Triangle by GKMP, heritage-sensitive public realm



Protected Lime Trees Disconnected Surface Informal Parking St James'

Note: All design proposals and projects are illustrative only and will be subject to further consultation, technical assessment and analysis at detail design stage. This will include any associated maintenance strategies.



Community Centre



Existing Plan



Proposal Plan

Community Centre

The community centre is a vibrant, active location for Castledermot. This project would see its external spaces activated, with a new public realm space to the West, and community gardens to the East. Links to Main Street, the Laurels and Saint James' Church would be strengthened, to integrate the centre within its urban context.

Furthermore, this proposal would maintain the existing number of car parking spaces in the Community Centre, whilst providing 10 additional public car parking spaces along Church Lane- improving access to St James' Church and to the Fairgreen.

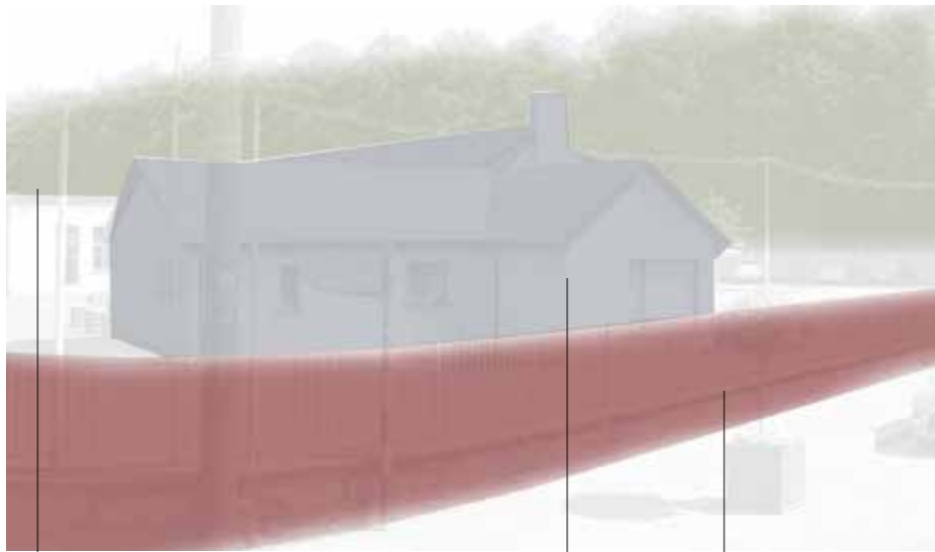
Note: All design proposals and projects are illustrative only and will be subject to further consultation, technical assessment and analysis at detail design stage. This will include any associated maintenance strategies.

- 1. Public realm
- 2. Parking court
- 3. Public car parking
- 4. New footpath
- 5. Community garden

Key



Meakstown Community Centre by Henchion Reuter Architects, active open spaces and community gardens



Protected Lime Trees

Building Isolated from its Surroundings

Solid Walls

Note: All design proposals and projects are illustrative only and will be subject to further consultation, technical assessment and analysis at detail design stage. This will include any associated maintenance strategies.



Carlowgate Junction



Current Plan



Opportunity to consolidate land for open space
 No Footpath
 Overhead Wires
 Green Space
 Historical Feature

Carlowgate Junction

Given the site's significant heritage, realigning the junction would further enhance connectivity by providing improved access to the Old Wall through a dedicated footpath and thoughtfully designed public realm. Together, these interventions would not only celebrate the area's historical significance but also create a safer, more attractive, and accessible environment for pedestrians, strengthening Castledermot's role as a vibrant heritage destination.



Proposal Plan

Note: All design proposals and projects are illustrative only and will be subject to further consultation, technical assessment and analysis at detail design stage. This will include any associated maintenance strategies.

- 1. Public realm
- 2. Green space
- 3. New footpath
- 4. Realigned junction

Key

Tackling Vacancy and Dereliction



Current Plan



Precedent: Revitalising Old Buildings in Dún Laoghaire

The KCC Town Regeneration Team through continuous engagement and communication with property owners have been responsible for re-activating and re-purposing vacant and derelict buildings in County Kildare through a number schemes over the past 2 years as follows:

- The Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant,
- The Repair and Leasing Scheme,
- Buy and Renew,
- URDF Call 3
- Vacancy and Dereliction Activation programme

Kildare County Council's Local Enterprise Office have a range of supports and grants available to assist local businesses; from enhancing the exteriors of their premises playing a vital role in bringing a vibrant and attractive feel to the streetscape of the towns and villages county-wide, to management development and training opportunities.

Particular focus has been placed on addressing vacancy and dereliction in Castledermot since the beginning of the Town Centre First process, previously vacant and derelict units have been reactivated following engagement, and a number of properties within the Town Centre have been approved for supports and are under development.



Proposal Plan

Note: All design proposals and projects are illustrative only and will be subject to further consultation, technical assessment and analysis at detail design stage. This will include any associated maintenance strategies.

1. New built edge to street (potential housing/mixed use development)
2. Potential for further development and community use/ car parking/green space

Key

Actions Additional Projects

Note: All additional projects are indicative and for illustrative purposes only. They will be subject to further consultation, detailed technical assessment, feasibility review, and design development. This process will also include maintenance requirements before any final proposals are progressed.

Identity

ID1 Heritage Centre



Medieval Mile Museum by McCullough Mulvin Architects

Castledermot's heritage is regarded by the local community as its primary asset. Establishing a dedicated heritage centre would both celebrate this rich history and attract visitors, thereby generating valuable income for the town. The centre could incorporate a museum and an information centre, serving as a base for historical seminars, exhibitions, and guided walking tours.

Actions

- Carry out a site selection and feasibility study
- Approach Heritage Council for funding
- Develop an exhibition design that balances local history, stories and digital media

ID2 Youth Hub

A secondary issue described in the Community Survey is a lack of activities available for teenagers in Castledermot. While improvements to the Fairgreen (see Action 3) will include sports equipment suited to that age, an important social initiative would be the Youth Hub, which could be based in the Community Centre.



The Hive, Kildare Youth Hub

Actions

- Complete a feasibility study to assess the potential requirement for a Youth Hub
- Liaise with Kildare Youth Services to discuss funding

ID3

Improvements to Fairgreen



Part 8 Approved Playground Design

An existing Part 8 exists for Castledermot Playground, of which approximately one-third has been completed. The remaining works should include spaces for teenagers, and relevant sports equipment such as ping-pong tables or BMX tracks, to reduce the risk of antisocial behaviour around the town.

Actions

- Consider features for teenagers, which could help deter antisocial behaviour.
- Consider biodiverse spaces to link with the River Lerr.

ID4

Community Gardens

The creation of a community garden and/or allotments would link well with the Season's Shop, expanding beyond Tidy Towns and opening year round, where produce grown could be sold to generate venue for the gardening group. This group could cater to both youths and adults to learn and practice food production.

Space has been allocated to this initiative within the Community Centre project; however, the area to the rear of the library also represents a suitable location for a community — and particularly a sensory — garden (see SU5). In addition, the suggestion of a medicinal planted garden to the rear of the library has been noted as a complementary feature



The Old Garden, Clane, Co. Kildare

Actions

- Liaise with property owners at the Library and Community Centres to propose communal gardens and allotments.
- Establish a Castledermot Gardening Club. This could be separate/in extension to the Tidy Towns Group.

ID5

Heritage Trail



Athea Heritage Trail, Co. Limerick

Castledermot's residents listed its rich heritage as one of their favourite aspects of the town. To celebrate this, a Heritage Trail should be established and distributed in the form of a mural, hand outs and digitally. This illustration is an opportunity to work with local artists, and will serve as a support to the upgraded public realm and a signal to the town's visitors.

Actions

- Castledermot Local History Group should lead the project, in collaboration with the Town Team, KCC's Town Regeneration Team and LEO/Kildare Tourism Officer
- Town Team should help promote the trail, through printed and online resources
- Installation of panels at key sites of the Heritage Trail
- Inclusion of QR codes linked to the Town's website to provide visitor's with information
- Creation of a mural on Keenan's Lane

ID6

Street Lighting

Improved public lighting is needed in Castledermot, particularly along Keenan's Lane, to enhance safety and accessibility for pedestrians. To retain the village's rural character and minimize light pollution, the lighting should be sensitively designed and sensor-activated, ensuring it operates only when needed. This approach would improve safety while preserving the area's distinctive rural feel and dark-sky quality.



Redevelopment of Ferdinando Savoia Square by CLAB architettura

Actions

- Conduct a heritage and wildlife- sensitive lighting audit to assess current coverage and quality and minimise impact of lighting on wildlife e.g. bats.
- Prioritise installation in areas prone to antisocial behaviour

Mobility

MO1

Gateways and Traffic Calming

Proposed Gateways Design and Traffic calming measures for Castledermot.



Precedent: Gateway Design by Kildare County Council

Actions

- Gateway features should be brought closer into the town centre and be strengthened to deter speeding
- Chicanes either side of Market Square to reduce speed ahead of the raised table
- Feasibility Study 30kph Zone
- Different measures like speed limits, raised areas, narrowed roads, better crossings, cycling paths, improved lighting, and clearer signs can all help slow down traffic on the main roads into town.

MO2

Public Realm Improvements



Liffey Street by Cairn Construction

Public realm improvements should include wider footpaths, high-quality paving, improved signage and a use of materials that are sensitive to the town's heritage character. Enhancing accessibility for all users will ensure the area is welcoming and inclusive, while the upgraded finishes and design details will create a more attractive, comfortable, and cohesive streetscape.

Actions

- Further engagement with the local community and relevant stakeholders is key to establish where interventions are needed
- Opportunities for cycle routes should be explored, such as along Abbeylands to create access to the GAA facilities

MO3

Improvements in connectivity to support Active Travel

Improving connectivity throughout Castledermot is essential to support active travel and reduce reliance on private cars. Enhancements should prioritise safe, continuous walking and cycling routes that link key destinations such as the town centre, schools, community centre, and nearby residential areas. Upgraded crossings and clear wayfinding would encourage more sustainable travel choices, while integrating these routes with public transport connections would strengthen accessibility and promote healthier, low-carbon mobility options for residents and visitors alike.

Improvements should contribute to creating an inclusive environment, complying for instance to ASPECTSS guidance.



Active Travel Programme and Investment Fund

MO4

Bus Service Improvements

Enhancing public transport provision is key to improving connectivity and reducing car dependency in Castledermot. The Town Team will work with the Active Travel Team in relation to new proposed bus shelters in the town.



Existing Bus Stop

Actions

- Consideration will need to be given to the location for bus lay-bys and parking to accommodate tourism requirements.

MO5

School Zones

Creating designated school zones is essential to promoting active travel and fostering a child-friendly environment. Key measures should include clearly defined pedestrian crossings, reduced vehicle speeds, and upgraded footpaths and cycle routes linking residential areas to local schools. The introduction of traffic-calming features, dedicated drop-off areas, and enhanced signage will further prioritise pedestrian and cyclist safety. It is vital that all materials and signage used within these zones are heritage-appropriate, particularly in the vicinity of Coláiste Lorcáin, given its proximity to the Abbey ruins and The Laurels.



School Zone in Barry Avenue, Finglas West

Actions

- Consider all schools for the Safe Routes to Schools Programme
- Feasibility study of potential changes to the carriageway and signalling around the schools

MO6

Cycle Buses

Introducing a cycle bus initiative could further encourage active travel and foster a culture of safe, sustainable mobility among schoolchildren. A cycle bus—where groups of students cycle to school together along a set route, supervised by adults—would promote road safety awareness, physical activity, and community engagement. Supporting infrastructure such as dedicated cycle lanes, secure bike parking, and clear wayfinding would help make the initiative successful and accessible.



Cycle Bus

Actions

- Organise public group on social media for the cycle bus

MO7

R448 / R418 / L405 Junction

To facilitate a right turn for HGVs from the R448 to the R418 / L405 an Action has been identified which would involve a realignment of the road at this location. A benefit of this Action is improved active travel integration and the creation of areas of green and public realm and potentially car parking.



Proposal Drawing

Actions

- Undertake vehicle tracking exercise.
- Undertake utility / topographical surveys.
- Collect junction turning count data.

Economy

EC1

Castledermot Website



Website for Tullow, Co. Kildare

Developing a dedicated website for Castledermot could serve as a central hub for both tourism and community engagement. The site could showcase the town's heritage, attractions, walking routes, and local businesses, while also providing up-to-date information on community events, markets, festivals, and cultural activities. An interactive, user-friendly design with event calendars, maps, and links to social media would help attract visitors, support local enterprises, and encourage resident participation. By celebrating Castledermot's unique character and fostering connections between visitors and the community, the website would strengthen the town's identity as a vibrant, welcoming destination. This action is recommended as part of Castledermot's Digital Town Blueprint.

Actions

- Design, publish and manage a Town website and social media channels
- Manage content by running regular event campaigns for the Farmer's market, community gardens, local business events, etc.
- Link signage through QR codes to dedicated web pages

EC2

Digital Hub

Establishing a digital hub in Castledermot would provide a flexible, technology-enabled space to support local businesses, remote working, and community learning. Equipped with high-speed internet, co-working facilities, and meeting rooms, the hub could foster entrepreneurship, innovation, and digital skills development for residents of all ages. This action would support Castledermot's Digital Town Blueprint by providing dedicated space for digital training.



MERITS, Naas, Co. Kildare

Actions

- Feasibility study for converting one of Market Square's vacant premises into a Digital Hub
- Digital Hub to include: remote work desks, meeting rooms (for Coderdojo sessions, or digital marketing training programmes)

EC3 Farmer's Market



Ardrahan Farmers Market, Galway

Introducing a regular farmers' market would support local producers, attract visitors, and foster community interaction. By providing a dedicated space for vendors to sell fresh, locally sourced food and artisanal products, the market would strengthen the local economy and promote sustainable, regional supply chains. Combined with complementary events and activities, a farmers' market could become a vibrant social hub, encouraging residents and visitors alike to engage with Castledermot's community and heritage.

- Actions**
- Liaise with local producers to establish the opportunities for instating a farmer's market in Castledermot
 - Consider need for power supply and refuse management in Market Square design
 - Publicise the initiative to the community and to the weekend visitors from the wider region

EC4 Shop Local Campaigns

Promoting shop local campaigns can help strengthen Castledermot's independent retail sector and support the town's economy. Targeted initiatives—such as loyalty schemes, special events, and promotional activities—can encourage residents and visitors to explore local shops, cafés, and services. By highlighting the unique character, quality, and heritage of Castledermot's businesses, these campaigns can increase footfall, foster community pride, and create a more vibrant and resilient town centre.



Monmouthshire, Wales, UK Shop Local Campaign

- Actions**
- Central public car parking will help access local shops and businesses
 - Shop Local Campaigns will raise awareness of local retailing and encourage the weekend visitors from the wider region to engage with the town's economy
 - This initiative should be led by the Town Team, with support from KCC's Town Regeneration Team and LEO

EC5

Heritage Tourism

Castledermot's remarkable heritage — from its ancient round tower and high crosses to medieval ruins — offers strong potential for heritage tourism. By enhancing preservation, signage, and visitor experiences, the town can attract tourists, boost the local economy, and celebrate its unique history as an important early Christian and medieval settlement. This action should be developed in conjunction with the recommendations of the Digital Tourism section of Castledermot's Digital Town Blueprint.



Skibbereen Heritage Centre

Actions

- Wayfinding and signage would help guide visitors around the town's sites
- Consider opportunities to develop visitor experiences- including a heritage information centre

Sustainability

SU1 Protecting the Lime Trees



The Laurels

Protecting the town's historic lime trees is essential to preserve Castledermot's heritage, character, and environmental quality. Measures should include careful maintenance, monitoring, and protection during nearby development or public realm works, as well as promoting awareness of their cultural and ecological value.

Actions

- Ensure the trees, particularly the Laurels, are registered for Tree Preservation Orders due to their historical significance and contribution to the character of the Town

SU2 Street Greening and SUDs

Implementing street greening measures can significantly enhance the town's visual appeal, environmental quality, and overall liveability. Planting trees, shrubs, flower beds and rainwater gardens along streets and public spaces, as well as incorporating planters and green verges, would create a more attractive, welcoming environment for residents and visitors.

Greening initiatives also support biodiversity, improve air quality, provide shade, and help manage surface water through sustainable drainage, all while complementing Castledermot's heritage character and contributing to the rural feel of the town.



Carlow Town Raingardens

Actions

- Further engagement with the local community and relevant stakeholders is key to establish where interventions are needed

SU3

River Management Plan



River Basin Management Plan 2022-2027

Developing a comprehensive river management plan would help protect and enhance the River Lerr while supporting environmental sustainability and community amenity. The plan might include measures to improve water quality, manage flood risk, restore natural habitats, and create accessible riverside paths for walking and cycling.

Actions

- Liaise with relevant water and environmental authorities
- Examine current flood risk and potential flood prevention measures
- Consider ongoing river maintenance and dredging

SU4

Biodiverse Parkland



All-Ireland Pollinator Plan

Creating biodiverse parkland as part of the Fairgreen regeneration would provide a multifunctional green space that supports wildlife, enhances ecosystem services, and offers recreational opportunities for the community. By incorporating native planting, wildflower meadows, wetlands, and varied habitats, the parkland could promote biodiversity, improve air and water quality, and offer educational opportunities for schools and residents.

Actions

- Ensure the Playground redesign contains biodiverse swathes
- Consider options for ongoing management

SU5

Sensory Garden



Dún na Sí Sensory Garden

Establishing a sensory garden behind the Library would create an inclusive and engaging green space designed to stimulate all five senses through diverse planting, textures, scents, sounds, and visual features. It would also allow for the beehives to be within close access to pollen. Such a garden would provide therapeutic and educational benefits, supporting well-being for people of all ages and abilities, including children and older residents- strengthening the community (refer to Action ID4).

Actions

- Feasibility study to be carried out for the creation of a sensory garden behind the Library
- Liaise with relevant stakeholders on the questions of accessibility and heritage
- Local History Group to play important role in deciding on historically-sensitive design

SU6

River Lerr Walk



Coolaney River Walk, Co. Sligo

The proposed River Lerr Walk would create a peaceful and accessible walking route that celebrates Castledermot's natural and historical character. The project would link key points in the town, providing safe pathways, seating areas, and informative signage about local wildlife. Native planting and gentle landscaping would enhance biodiversity while protecting the riverbank environment. The existing fencing should be reviewed, to create a better connection between pedestrians and river. By connecting the community with the River Lerr, the walk would offer both residents and visitors a place to enjoy nature, promote well-being, and strengthen Castledermot's identity as a vibrant rural town.

Actions

- Feasibility study to be carried out for the creation of a river walk, and extending the existing pavement which stops at the edge of the Fairgreen
- Liaise with relevant stakeholders on the questions of accessibility and biodiversity

5



Enabling the Place

Dedicated funding and a clear delivery action plan support the Castledermot Town Team and KCC's Town Regeneratio Team by outlining priorities, timelines, and responsibilities. This ensures resources are targeted effectively, progress is measurable, and projects align with local goals to deliver sustainable, community-led town centre regeneration.

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Primary Stakeholders

Castledermot Town Team

The Town Team is a key local stakeholder group that brings together representatives from the community, local businesses, voluntary organisations, and public sector partners. The team plays an essential role in supporting the Town Centre First Plan, providing local insight, collaboration, and advocacy to help guide regeneration efforts. By championing local initiatives and strengthening community engagement, the Town Team contributes to shaping, promoting, and sustaining the long-term success of the plan. Without their involvement, the plan risks being less responsive to local priorities and losing community support.

Kildare County Council

Kildare County Council is a primary stakeholder in the Town Centre First plan because it is the statutory authority responsible for planning, development, and the overall management of the county's towns. Its involvement is essential to ensure that the plan aligns with local and regional policies, regulatory frameworks, and strategic objectives.

Town Regeneration Team

The Town Regeneration Team is led by the Town Regeneration Officer and supported by a multidisciplinary team of both technical and administrative staff. The Town Regeneration Team is a primary stakeholder in the Town Centre First plan because it represents the local authority with knowledge, and initiatives that are essential for the success of the plan. They are a key partner in shaping, promoting, and sustaining the Town Centre First plan.

Private Sector

The private sector is a primary stakeholder in the Town Centre First plan because businesses, developers, and investors play a crucial role in shaping the economic vitality, character, and functionality of the town centre. Their involvement is essential to ensure that the plan delivers sustainable growth and meets both community and commercial needs.

Funding

RRDF

The RRDF (Rural Regional Development Fund) is a government-backed initiative aimed at promoting economic growth, infrastructure, and social development in rural and under served regions. It provides financial support for local projects, encourages entrepreneurship, improves public services, and fosters sustainable development to reduce regional disparities and enhance community well-being.

Historic Towns Initiative

The Historic Towns Initiative provides funding to conserve and regenerate Ireland's historic towns. Managed by the Heritage Council, it supports heritage-led projects that protect architectural character, enhance public spaces, and stimulate local economic growth. The initiative fosters pride of place, encourages tourism, and ensures long-term preservation of historic urban areas.

Heritage Council

The Heritage Council Fund supports the preservation, protection, and promotion of Ireland's cultural, architectural, and natural heritage. It provides grants to individuals, communities, and organizations for conservation projects, education initiatives, and heritage research, fostering public engagement and ensuring Ireland's heritage is valued and safeguarded for future generations.

DAF Growing Social Enterprise Fund

The DAF Social Enterprise Fund supports innovative social enterprises that address key social, economic, or environmental challenges in Ireland. Funded by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, it provides financial assistance to rural social enterprises, promoting sustainable development, job creation, and stronger communities in rural and coastal areas.

ORIS

The Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) is a government initiative that supports the development and improvement of outdoor recreation facilities. It promotes access to nature, sustainable tourism, and healthier lifestyles while enhancing the social and economic vitality of rural communities.

LEADER

The LEADER Programme is an EU and government-funded initiative that supports rural development through community-led projects. It encourages local enterprise, environmental sustainability, and social inclusion to strengthen the economic and cultural vitality of rural areas.

TVRS

The Town and Village Renewal Scheme supports the revitalization of rural towns and villages across Ireland. Funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development, it provides grants for projects that enhance public spaces, support local businesses, promote tourism, and improve infrastructure, helping to make communities more vibrant and sustainable.

IAF Re-imagine

The IAF Re-Imagine Fund, led by the Irish Architecture Foundation, supports communities in creatively rethinking and improving their built environments. Through collaboration with architects and designers, it funds projects that address local challenges, enhance public spaces, and foster placemaking, aiming to empower communities and promote inclusive, sustainable design solutions.

Local Biodiversity Action Fund

The Local Biodiversity Action Fund supports projects that promote biodiversity at a local level in Ireland. Funded by the National Parks and Wildlife Service, it enables local authorities to implement actions that protect habitats, species, and ecosystems. The fund encourages community engagement and strengthens Ireland's commitment to biodiversity conservation.

Active Travel Investment Programme

The Active Travel Investment Programme funds walking and cycling infrastructure across Ireland. Led by the National Transport Authority, it supports safer, more sustainable transport options through the development of cycle lanes, footpaths, and related projects. The goal is to reduce car dependency, lower emissions, and promote healthier, more connected communities.

HSFA

The Historic Structures Fund and Built Heritage Investment Scheme (HSFA) is a government programme that supports the conservation and enhancement of historic buildings. It provides funding to protect architectural heritage, promote sustainable reuse, and strengthen the cultural and social value of historic structures within communities.

Delivery Action Plan

Projects

Project	Significance	Lead	Funding	Cost
Market Square	County	Town Team, Town Regeneration Team	RRDF, Just Transition, Failte Ireland, Heritage Council, IAF, TVRS	€€
Main Street Public Realm Improvements	Local	Town Team, Town Regeneration Team	RRDF, Just Transition, Active Travel Investment Programme, TVRS, IAF	€€€
Keenan's Lane	Local	Town Team, Town Regeneration Team	RRDF, Just Transition, Active Travel Investment Programme, IAF	€
Saint James' Church and the Laurels	County	Town Team, Town Regeneration Team	RRDF, Just Transition, Failte Ireland, Heritage Council, TVRS, IAF	€
Community Centre	Local	Town Team, Town Regeneration Team	Community Centres Investment Fund, Heart of the Community Fund, RRDF, TVRS	€€
Carlowgate Junction	Local	Town Team, Town Regeneration Team	RRDF, Heritage Council, TVRS, Local Biodiversity Action Fund	€
Tackling Vacancy and Dereliction	Local	Town Team, Town Regeneration Team	SHIP, B&R, Heritage Council, TVRS, Local Biodiversity Action Fund	€€

Key € Under €1m
 € € €1m to €5m
 € € € €5m to €10m

Identity

Project	Significance	Lead	Funding
Heritage Centre	Local	Town Regeneration Team, Town Team	Failte Ireland, Heritage Council, TVRS, RRDF, IAF Re-Imagine
Youth Hub	County	Kildare Youth Services, Town Regeneration Team, Town Team	DAF Growing Social Enterprise Fund, RRDF, BAM
Improvements to Fairgreen	Local	Kildare Youth Services, Town Regeneration Team, Town Team	ORIS, Play and Recreation Funding Scheme, TVRS
Community Gardens	Local	Town Team, Seasonal Shop	TVRS, DAF Growing Social Enterprise Fund
Heritage Trail	County	Town Team, Local History Group	Failte Ireland, Heritage Council, TVRS
Street Lighting	Local	Town Team	TVRS

Mobility

Project	Significance	Lead	Funding
Traffic Calming	Local	Town Team, Town Regeneration Team	Active Travel Investment Programme, RRDF, TVRS, Just Transition
Public Realm Improvements	Local	Town Team, Town Regeneration Team	Active Travel Investment Programme, RRDF, TVRS, Just Transition
Active Travel	Local	Town Team, Town Regeneration Team	Active Travel Investment Programme, RRDF, TVRS, Just Transition
Bus Service Improvements	County	Bus Eireann	Department of Transport
School Zones	Local	Town Team, Town Regeneration Team	Active Travel Investment Programme, RRDF, TVRS, Just Transition
Cycle Buses	Local	Town Team	RRDF, TVRS, Just Transition
R448 / R418 / L405 Junction	Local	Town Team, Town Regeneration Team	Active Travel Investment Programme, RRDF, TVRS, Just Transition

Economy

Project	Significance	Lead	Funding
Castledermot Website	County	Town Team	TVRS, Historic Towns Initiative
Digital Hub	County	Town Regeneration Team	RRDF, TVRS
Farmer's Market	County	Town Team	LEO, TVRS
Shop Local Campaigns	Local	Town Team, Town Regeneration Team	Private sector, Local businesses
Heritage Tourism	Local	Town Team, Town Regeneration Team	Faillte Ireland, Heritage Council, TVRS

Sustainability

Project	Significance	Lead	Funding
Tree Preservation Order for Lime Trees	Local	Town Regeneration Team	Local Biodiversity Action Fund, ORIS, RRDF, TVRS
Street Greening and SUDs	Local	Town Team, Town Regeneration Team	LAWPRO, RRDF, TVRS
River Management Plan	National	Town Regeneration Team, Office of Public Works	CFRAM Programme, LAWPRO Community Water Development Fund
Biodiverse Parkland	Local	Town Team, Town Regeneration Team	Local Biodiversity Action Fund, TVRS
Sensory Garden	Local	Town Team	Local Biodiversity Action Fund, TVRS
River Lerr Walk	Local	Town Team, Town Regeneration Team	Local Biodiversity Action Fund, TVRS

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