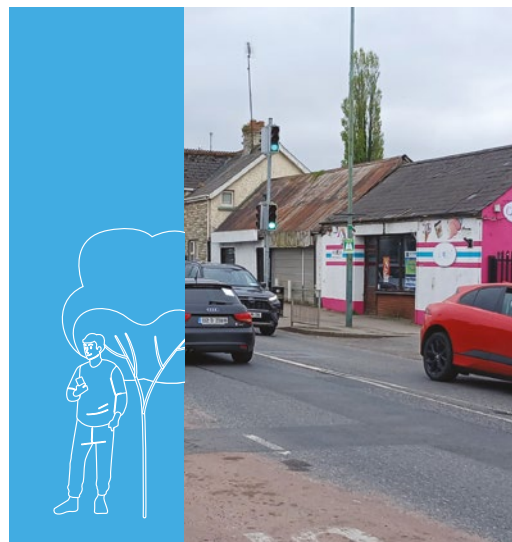




Dunshaughlin Town Centre First Plan



An Roinn Forbartha
Tuaithe agus Pobail
Department of Rural and
Community Development



comhairle chontae na mí
meath county council



Lár Bailte ar dTús
Town Centre First

A pointed arch from the aisle of the historic medieval Augustinian priory of St. Seachnall's, Dunshaughlin.

Note: (Inset) A medieval octagonal limestone baptismal font, plus the associated pre-Romanesque inset false relief carving, valuable historic artefacts that have also survived over the centuries.



Foreword

From the Dunshaughlin Town Centre First Team

It has been a privilege for all of us on the Town Team to collaborate with the residents, community stakeholders, and the Town Regeneration Officer in shaping this Town Centre First Plan. This is a ground-breaking opportunity to revitalise Dunshaughlin which faces ongoing challenges alongside a rapidly expanding population.

The residents — both long-standing and newly arrived — offered tremendous encouragement, and shared insights and ideas about how the town might evolve in the coming years. Their contribution provides the basis of a strong foundation towards strengthening Dunshaughlin's position within the region. The journey so far includes the many meetings, workshops, public consultations, a careful review of existing Town Centre First policies, along with thoughtful consideration of what would most help the local environment.

A recurring theme is that there has been the realisation that facilities and essential infrastructure had been overlooked in past rural development programmes. This plan aims to

address this, while demonstrating the benefits of small, medium, and large-scale initiatives that will enhance Dunshaughlin as a whole. Serving as a roadmap, this plan outlines how townspeople and planners can work together on practical projects to tackle issues such as traffic congestion, accessibility, and pedestrian movement. It also proposes initiatives to strengthen community spirit — through improved social spaces, biodiversity measures, and enhanced leisure amenities.

We wish to sincerely thank Town Regeneration at Meath County Council, and many other collaborators, for their invaluable guidance throughout this process, and we look forward to working closely with them as projects move towards realisation. Their expertise has helped transform our research and aspirations into a comprehensive, enduring resource for the community.

Dunshaughlin Town Team - 2025



An Roinn Forbartha
Tuaithe agus Pobail
Department of Rural and
Community Development



comhairle chontae na mí
meath county council



Lár Bailte ar dTús
Town Centre First

Contents

01 Introduction <i>p3</i>		1.0 Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats	14	1.3 Developing the plan	17
		1.1 Setting the Scene	15	1.4 Compliance with policy	18
		1.2 The process	16	1.5 Local Policy Context	20
02 About Dunshaughlin <i>p21</i>		2.0 Context	22	2.6 Architectural History + Heritage	32
		2.1 A brief history of Dunshaughlin	24	2.7 Music, the Arts and Cultural Heritage	35
		2.2 Flora and Fauna, Natural Heritage, Recreation and Amenity	26	2.8 Transportation context	43
		2.3 The Economy	28	2.9 Transport, connectivity and parking	45
		2.4 Facilities and Amenities	30	2.10 Socio-economic and demographic profile	49
		2.5 Vacancy and Dereliction	31	2.11 The Health Check, Aims of a CTCHC Report	51
03 Collaboration and Communication <i>p52</i>		3.1 The Town Team	54	3.3 The Process	57
		3.2 Engagement process	55	3.4 The Schools Consultation	59
04 Defining the place <i>p60</i>		4.0 Community Priorities, TCF Project Shortlist	62	4.2 The Town Team Priorities	66
		4.1 Key themes, Aims, Strategic Priorities and proposed interventions	63	4.3 Thematic Components, incorporating the Town Team's priorities.	67
05 Enabling the place <i>p106</i>		5.1 Process	107		
		5.2 The Town Team Priorities	108		
		5.3 Potential Funding sources	109		
		5.4 Next Steps	110		

01 Introduction

This section provides an introduction to Dunshaughlin, (Dun Seachnail), the Town Centre First policy, including the process of developing the plan, timeline of events, as well as the context of national and local policy.



Welcome to Dunshaughlin

Dunshaughlin was for the best part of the last century, the main centre of administration for the south Meath area, with the physical presence of council offices for the region, and a District Courthouse, now disused.



Retaining a single street it retains in most respects, the attractive physical character of a 19C, pre-industrial rural Irish village.

Its earliest recorded history is related primarily to an Iron age lakeshore settlement from Lagore. Later, in the early medieval times, it is believed, from the archaeological evidence, to have been a relatively substantial settlement centred around a 5th C Abbey.

In distant history it has functioned as market village, with a staging point along the horse drawn transport routes to North West out of Dublin with the vestiges of a toll house, blacksmith's, stage coach facilities, etc. still identifiable.

Dunshaughlin, located to the southern border of County Meath, just 20km to the northwest of the Dublin's M50, is today appreciated mainly as a relatively convenient base, from



which to commute. In terms of demographics, it could now be reclassified as a 'medium town'. Dunshaughlin has grown from a village of a 1,000 in the late-20th C to become today a home to approximately 6,500 people, which continues to grow year on year.

Housing is generally arranged in the many newer low-density, one and two storey residential developments, which radiate perpendicularly from this central street. As with many commuter towns, the typical household profile would comprise of the relatively new young resident families, combined with a significant older population which retain bonds to rural origins.

Town Centre First Policy

The Town Centre First Policy was launched in 2022, with the aims *"to create town centres that function as viable, vibrant and attractive locations for people to live, work and visit, while also functioning as the service, social, cultural and recreational hub for the local community"*.

It recognises the many challenges being faced by traditional town centres, but also the important social and economic role they must play in Ireland's future.

The policy sets out an innovative approach to addressing issues and opportunities, in Dunshaughlin.



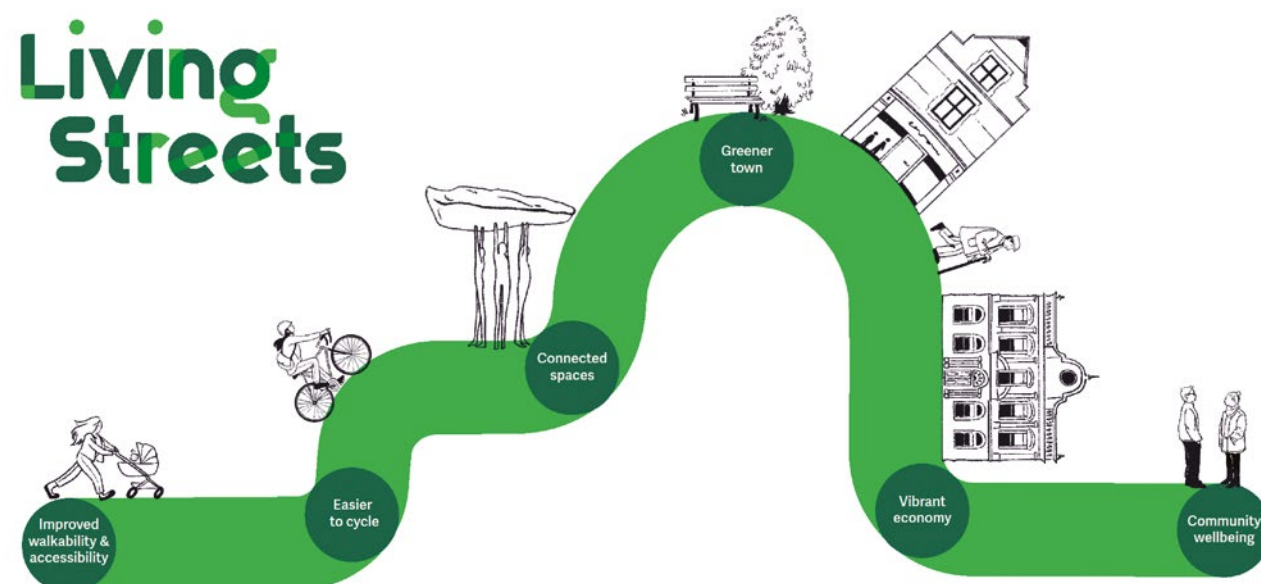
The role of this plan

The Dunshaughlin 'Town Centre First Plan' sets out a vision for the future, which identifies a series of projects through which that vision could be realised.

It is aimed at everyone with an interest in the future development of the village, including residents, communities, local groups and businesses, the local authority, central government, and private developers.

All actions that emerge from the plan will be subject to approval processes as necessary, including adherence to planning policy.

N.B. The Town Centre First plan, although being a non-statutory in nature, is however intended to be used as a resource to inform future decision-making, and support funding applications etc.



Policy Context

Two key policy references for the Town Centre First Plan are summarised as follows:

- **Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy (RES)** is the strategic plan and investment framework to shape the future development of the region with the aim of creating a sustainable and competitive region that supports the health and wellbeing of people and places, from urban to rural, with access to quality housing, travel and employment opportunities for all.
- **The Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027** sets out a strategy for the planning and development of County Meath. It sets out guiding policies and objectives in terms of physical growth and renewal, economic, social and cultural activity, and environmental protection and enhancement. Dunshaughlin is identified within the County Development Plan as a self-sustaining town with a vision to support the sustainable consolidation of the settlement with a balance of

residential and employment development supported by its strategic location and availability of highly accessible lands suitable for enterprise, while pursuing development that respects its character.

The TCF Plan proposals should incorporate the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The inclusion of the SDG's ensures effective climate action in all TCF Plan proposals, particularly important is SDG 13 (Climate Action).





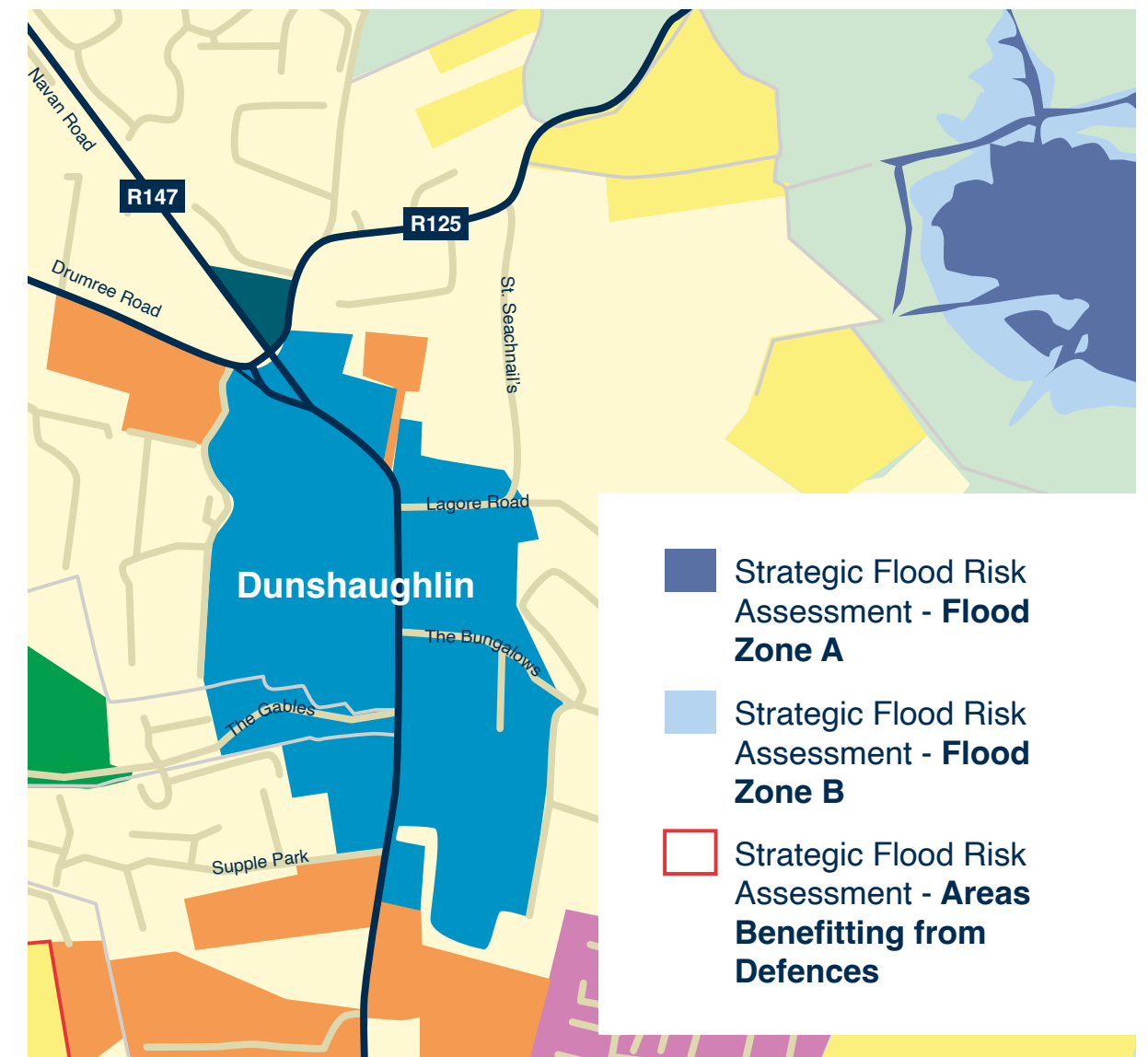
Conceptual Meath Core Strategy Map
featuring Dunshaughlin

Location and Planning Policy Context

Historically the village originally developed where the main Dublin to Cavan route was intersected with the Trim Road and number of other county roads. Dunshaughlin is thus long associated with its connectivity to the North-West, strengthened by the M3 road network. However, this excellent connectivity is underutilised and needs to be linked more effectively. Despite being quite well serviced by public bus public transport, car usage by residents remains high.

A disconnect exists between the locations of the bus stops, availability of car parking, and the proposed location of the train station, with commuter traffic causing strain locally. Dunshaughlin also encounters problems with its M3 connectivity due in the main to incomplete feeder roads. Climate change modelling would also suggest there has been a 'moderate increase' in risk in natural flood plains in the area around Grangend-commage, to the immediate east.

In addition, most of the new developments have ignored their context and historic character of the village, did not provide connectivity as was envisaged, do not provide a mix of uses, and have little public realm of any quality.



Extract from current Development Plan
2021-2027, Zoning Map.

However, there existed a very well-conceived 'Local Area Plan' which was developed in 2015. This was informed by extensive public consultation and was led by O'Mahony Pike Architects. This innovative plan, included proposals for parallel new streets, and a centrally located and historic green space and its landmark trees, being retained.

Unfortunately, none of these proposals were supported at council level or featured at development plan level. With the plans not being realised, the trees were felled in 2020 along with other site clearances and developments.

Subsequently, developments then expanded on greenfield sites, in both the centre and to the periphery of the village.

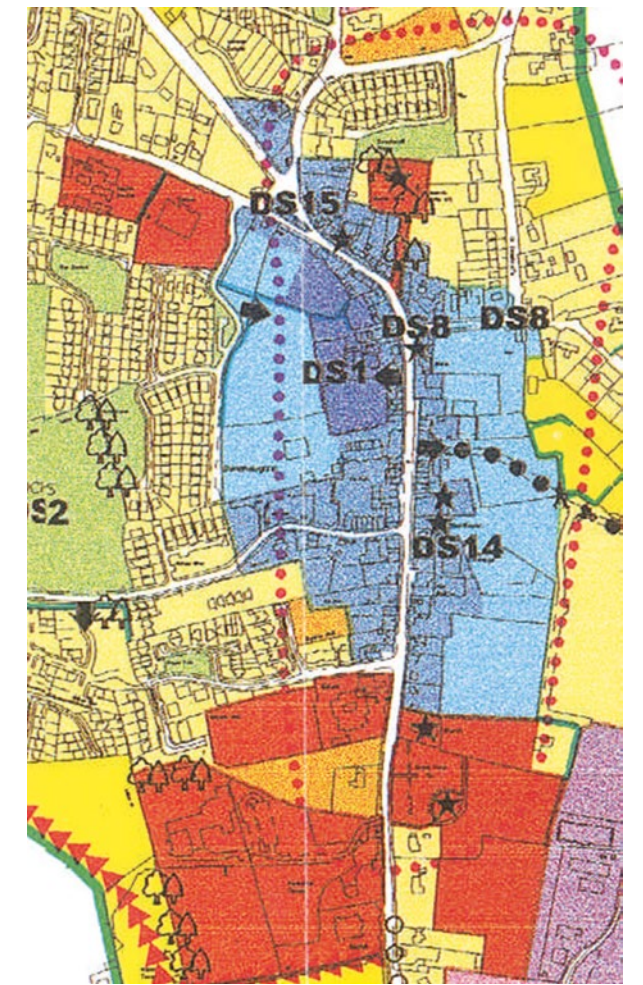
The resultant increase in car use led to less emphasis on the village centre, with erosion of 'grain'. Several developments such as the two new supermarkets although can be said to be of fair quality contemporary design, are insensitive to the context, as they do not integrate well into adjoining context, nor reinforce the urban fabric.



New development in village centre



Historically this open area was 'The Lawn', of 17C Supple Castle and has been developed as a surface car park.



Meath County Council 's Dunshaughlin Local Area Plan 2009-2025, Land Use Zoning Objectives Map, with walkways indicated, with the incorporated, Urban Framework Plan 2000 for Town Centre. By OMP Architects.

Volumetric urban proposal from 2000



Urban Design Analysis 1

(Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Challenges)
S.W.O.T. Analysis

What do we do well?

Strengths (INTERNAL)

Many active community groups including arts, volunteering and charity;

- Main St. as a focal point; Wide streets and footpaths.
- A range of educational facilities, cafés, eateries and hospitality businesses.
- Young and diverse population.
- Proximity to Nature.
- Strategic location close to the M3 motorway and with a bus stop in the village linking to Meath and Dublin.
- Variety of sporting clubs, activities, associations, and community groups.
- Proximity to M50/ Motorways / Airport/ Ferry Ports.

What can we improve?

Weaknesses (INTERNAL)

- The presentation of the town;
- A lack of accessible and affordable multi-functional community space.
- Poor public realm and pedestrian comfort within the streets, lack of pedestrian crossings and narrow footpaths; Traffic dominated town centre.
- Lack of facilities for young and older people.
- Lack of safe cycle routes and cycle parking in the town centre
- Poorly designed public spaces, limited recreational safe parkland space for community.
- Lack of available multi purpose sporting facilities during periods of high demand.
- Lack of all weather sporting facilities.

What emerging trends can we take advantage of?

Opportunities (EXTERNAL) +

- Shop front enhancements; Re-purposing heritage, vacant and derelict buildings.
- Providing multi-functional space for the community.
- Provision of Sport & Leisure Facilities.
- Protect, expand and maximize biodiversity corridors and greenspaces, encouraging native planting, along with providing increased recreational and leisure opportunities. Improve the presentation and usability of the public realm; Introduce native tree and shrub planting and street furniture which would improve attractiveness.
- Safe cycle routes and parking; Make the Main Street safer and more accessible inviting more traders and visitors; Improved public transport provision.
- Improve active travel and public transport infrastructure: Enhance cycling and pedestrian friendly infrastructure along with public transport options.
- Promote and implement waste reduction and recycling processes.
- Support and promote the retrofitting of public and private buildings for energy efficiency, along with supporting renewable energy projects.
- Areas for groups of all ages.
- For “meanwhile use” for vacant buildings/ business premises.
- Future rail link.

What economic or political issues could impact our business?

Threats (EXTERNAL)

- Poor public transport connections.
- Issues over parking provision.
- Lack of funding opportunities / Lack of available funding, insufficient resources available locally or at county level to carry out improvements / Limited funding and resources with multiple competing areas within the county.

Urban Design Analysis 2

The town team undertook an independent analysis of Dunshaughlin which was informed by map-based studies, on-site appraisals, and local knowledge and consultations. The following headings summarise key findings from that exercise, further details of which are to be found in the appendices of this document.

- Historically Dunshaughlin was a small rural village, which has seen rapid growth in recent years.
- The town's strong commercial centre has much vacancy, being supported by surrounding residential neighbourhoods.
- Although most of its buildings are modern replacements, a surprising number of older buildings still have survived, and these in general can be classed as being well-maintained due to ongoing adaptation and re-use.
- Most of the village centre buildings are in commercial use, although there are still a handful of 'over-shop' still in residential use, and there are also several civic buildings including courthouses and library.
- All of the new developments have been concentrated off and along the existing main street, a continuation but intensification of the existing pattern.
- The vacant shops and other premises present an opportunity for the community, they could provide many opportunities and alternate use, which could enhance the village.



Urban Design Analysis 3

1.0 Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats

Dunshaughlin does have a bypass, but it is under utilised, and the town still experiences high volumes of traffic on Main Street. This is due to through-traffic and residents travelling to their homes, along with considerable northbound access for the M3 routing through the village.

These have combined to restrict the village's internal vehicular access requirements, as access between residential neighbourhoods and the town centre rely on one or two access points for all users.

Permeability Links / desire lines to encourage walking and cycling to the town centre are limited.

Pedestrians are further discouraged due to traffic safety concerns on Main Street. Footpaths on Main Street are uneven and inconsistent, with few pockets of space dedicated to pedestrians.

There are opportunities to improved pedestrian safety via installation of controlled crossing points at several locations, including the school, at the access to the supermarkets 'the gables' and further along the village.

This is mainly due to the intersections of several types of traffic in the area which include bus stop, car parking, local traffic, schools drop off, and access points to adjacent residential areas.

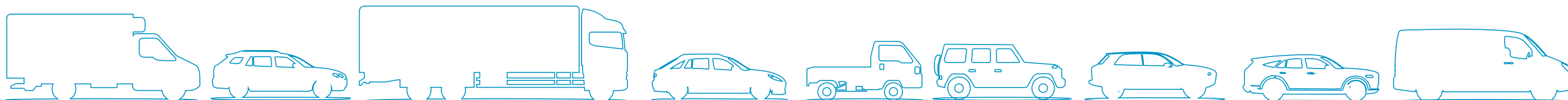
The uneven paths, lack of controlled crossings, provide a challenges even for those who are fortunate to not suffer from physical impairment.

See appendix for the detail survey data.



Meath Co Co Traffic Survey 2025, Summary findings

- Parking survey confirms that the majority of the main street parking is short term. As this is the optimal use, no restrictive measure / intervention would seem to be necessary at this time.
- Traffic – up to approx 8% of through traffic is HGV's, the majority of which could be diverted if the local M3 feeder ring road were completed as envisaged. Volumes fairly consistent at CA 12-13,000 vehicles, dropping off slightly on Sunday. Far too much for a small town.
- Speeds, only 2% of the 42000 vehicles exceeded the 50km/h limit.
- Both Main St footpaths experience same amount of pedestrian traffic in both N/S directions.





1.1 Setting the Scene

Dunshaughlin, (Dun Seachnaill), Town Centre First Plan sets out a clear strategy for the future sustainable development and revitalisation of the centre of Dunshaughlin village. The proposals detailed within the Plan shall assist in the regeneration of the village, enhancing it as the attractive place to live it currently is.

The Plan has a central focus on improving the attractiveness of the village, tackling vacancy and dereliction, embracing nature, arts and culture, encouraging climate action, and providing more opportunities to enjoy the village centre and surrounding landscape for residents and visitors alike.

The aim of the plan is to provide a strategic framework to support the community in their aspirations to revitalise Dunshaughlin. Ultimately, the plan proposed should enable the Town Team, in collaboration Meath County Council, to leverage funding to implement the identified proposals.

This plan has been prepared by Meath County Council's in consultation with Dunshaughlin Town Team. The Plan's content, particularly the identified themes and proposals, have been developed following extensive research, analysis, and community and stakeholder engagement in Dunshaughlin.

A full review of this is contained within the Policy, Profile and Priorities Report (contained in Appendix A). This report, establishes the justification and rationale for the identified themes and proposals within the Plan, drawing upon analysis of available data, policy sources and through various forms of engagement with the community and key stakeholders.

The study area covered by the plan is highlighted in Figure shown. It consists of the defined town centre, community and amenity areas and main arterial routes into the village.

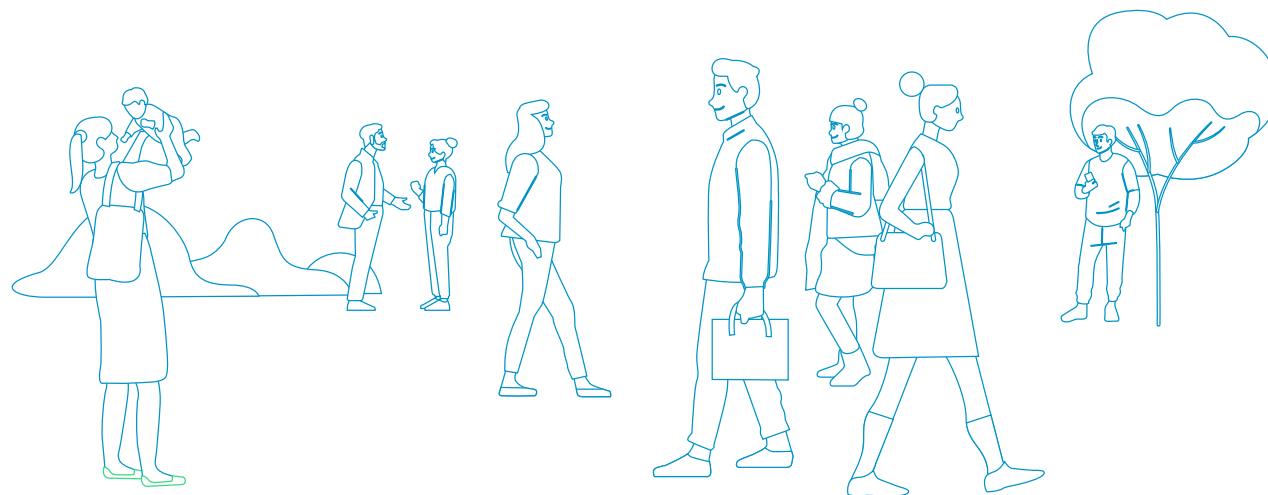
1.2

The process

The Town Centre First Policy is a national initiative for town centre regeneration. It involves the local community and businesses, with the proposing of an advisory status, new local area plan for towns. This policy includes in aims, the rejuvenation of town centres nationally through the adaption of the built environment to current requirement, and the opportunities and challenges that resulting from technological, climate and demographic change.

The policy emphasises the importance of tailoring a plan around the unique characteristics and qualities of each town. It is important that this plan reflects and responds to the vision as set out by the Town Centre First Policy. Dunshaughlin is the second town in County Meath to receive funding for a Town Centre First Plan.

A Town Regeneration Officer was appointed by Meath County Council to support and enable the Town Team as well as the delivery of the plan. The establishment of the Town Team brought together local business owners, community representatives and stakeholders who assisted in the delivery of this Town Centre First Plan.



The Vision

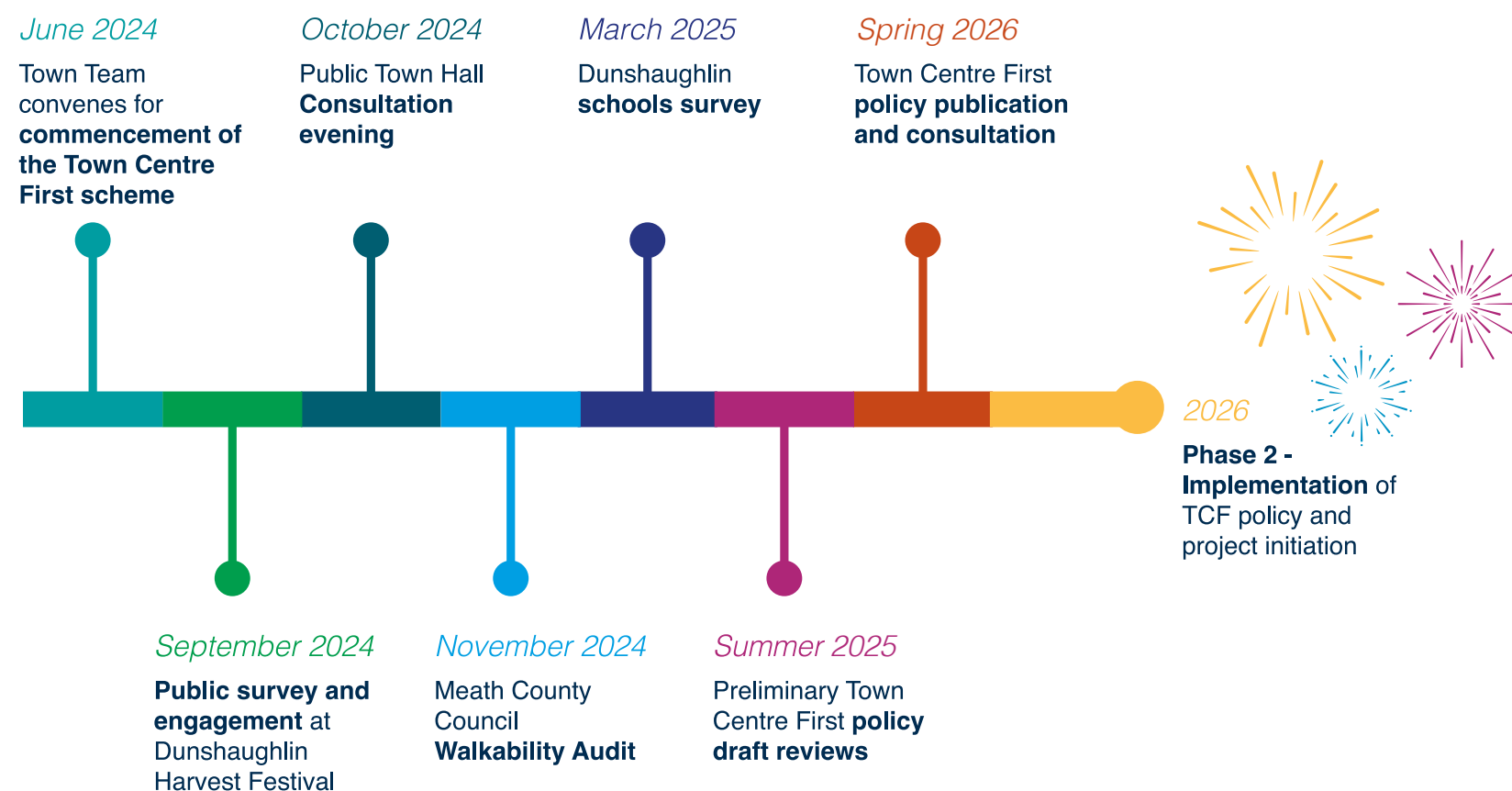
- Places that are shaped by the communities that live there, where local residents and the business community are enabled to plot the future for their own towns and villages.
- Towns that embrace the opportunities presented by technology, climate action and demographic change.
- Places that are the fulcrum of economic, social, cultural and recreational activity, with a sustainable mix of commercial, retail, service and hospitality offerings.
- Town centres that reflect the current and future needs of the local community with quality public realm, cycling facilities, sustainable mobility infrastructure and green spaces that facilitate vibrant, connected local communities and economies.
- Vibrant, accessible and lived in town centres that are home to young and old, which are not seen as a second-best option to more peripheral locations.



It is aspired that all towns would/should

- Be characterised by an attractive public realm (streets, spaces and parks) that are designed to invite people to meet, mingle and dwell.
- Contain a variety of services/shops that provide employment opportunities, enable people to shop locally and meet the needs of the local community.
- Provide a range of cultural, recreational and community spaces (that includes scope for periodic events and festivals) that bring together community members and attract visitors/ tourists.
- Contain a well maintained building stock that creates visual interest and animates streets and spaces.
- Conserve, adapt and highlight historical buildings and streetscapes that provide the town with a unique identity.
- Are attractive vibrant places for enterprises to grow and develop.
- Are well connected and accessible to sustainable modes of transport, enabling a high proportion of journeys to be made by foot and/or bicycle from the immediate hinterland (e.g. the '10 minute town' concept).
- Manage traffic within central areas so that streets prioritised vulnerable users (pedestrians and cyclists), enabling them to move about safely and in comfort.
- Provide a mix of housing typologies and tenures to cater for diverse communities in terms of age, income and mobility.
- Utilises digital technology to enhance the experience of living and working in towns, enabling greater choices in terms of location and lifestyle.
- Prioritise the well being of the residents, people living working and visiting Dunshaughlin.
- Fosters community cohesion / community engagement.
- Include for a multi-use community space, cultural spaces, sports and leisure facilities.

1.3 Developing the plan



1.4

Compliance with policy

The following provides a high level review of the national, regional and local policy context which has informed the development of this plan. A full overview of the policy context which has underpinned this plan is contained within the Need and Project Identification and Justification Report (Appendix A).

Town Centre First

The implementation of a strategic approach to town centre regeneration through utilising existing buildings and unused lands for new development, addressing vibrancy and future function while promoting residential occupancy; are all central elements to securing a sustainable future for rural towns and villages.



Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy 2021-2025

A framework for the development of rural Ireland over the next five years. The policy is forward looking and ambitious and addresses both the challenges facing rural areas and the opportunities which rural economies and communities can benefit from in the coming years.



Project Ireland 2040

Project Ireland 2040 provides overarching strategic objectives for planning for the social, cultural, and economic development of Ireland. It is underpinned by the National Planning Framework (NPF), which provides the vision and strategy for development across Ireland, and the National Development Plan (NDP) which enables the investment and capital funding to implement the strategy.



Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan

The plan sets out actions through which a range of government, civil and private sectors will undertake to achieve Ireland's 'Vision for Biodiversity', and follows on from the work of the first and second National Biodiversity Action Plans. It has been developed in line with the EU and International Biodiversity strategies and policies.



National Planning Framework (NPF)

The overarching policy and planning framework for Ireland. The NPF strongly reflects the aim of revitalising our towns and urban areas in objectives such as: compact growth, strengthened rural economies and communities, sustainable mobility, enhanced amenities and heritage, and the transition to a low carbon society.



National Development Plan (NDP) 2021-2030

The NDP mirrors the national strategic objectives of the NPF and provides specific funding measures to support the compact growth agenda, strengthened rural economies and communities, and sustainable transport. The updated plan identifies specific investment.



Climate Action Plan 2023

Sets out a road map for taking decisive action to halve Ireland's emissions by 2030 and reach net zero no later than 2050. It sets out how Ireland can accelerate the actions that are required to respond to the climate crisis, putting climate solutions at the centre of Ireland's social and economic development.



Housing for All - A new Housing Plan for Ireland

A multi-billion euro plan to improve Ireland's housing system and deliver more homes of all types for people with different housing needs. The average need is for 50,000 plus new homes each year between 2021 and 2030.



Making Remote Work: National Remote Working Strategy 2021

The Strategy's objective is to ensure that remote working is a permanent feature in the Irish workplace in a way that maximises economic, social and environmental benefits.



Regional Policy Context

Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy (RSES) 2020-2032

The RSES provides a high-level development framework for the Region with a 12-year strategy to deliver the transformational change. The five growth ambitions are: vibrant, natural, connected, inclusive and infrastructure. This is consolidated by a settlement strategy focusing on 'People' and 'Places', pursuing compact growth to ensure sustainable growth of urban and rural settlements, supported by jobs, houses, services and amenities, rather than continued sprawl and unplanned, uneconomic growth.



DRAFT Meath County Heritage and Biodiversity Plan 2025-30

Places heritage and biodiversity at the heart of public life in the county. This will be achieved through increasing awareness, participation, enjoyment, knowledge and understanding of Meath County's shared heritage to lead to its proper conservation, management and protection and safeguarding it for future generations.



Meath County Council Local Authority Climate Action Plan 2024-2029

Meath County Council developed their Climate Action Plan 2024-2029, to create a low carbon and climate resilient County, by delivering and promoting best practice in climate action, at the county level. The plan outlines actions to ensure Meath County Council achieves its climate targets.



1.5

Local Policy Context

The scheme is informed by consultation with local representative business and resident groups such as the Tidy Towns Group with independent evaluation of the proposed measures. In its aims it would be consistent with the current development plan, the LAP of 2015, all of which are informed by public consultation.

Meath County Development Plan [2021- 2027] sets out policy objectives and the 'Core Strategy Vision' of the Meath County Development Plan is:

“To continue to support the creation of socio-economically progressive vibrant, dynamic, and healthy communities throughout the County and ensure that future growth is based on the principles of sustainable development that delivers a high quality living and working environment that meets the needs of all residents, in accordance with National and Regional Guidance.”

The previous Dunshaughlin LAP, was superseded by a Written Statement and Land Use Zoning Map contained in Volume 2 of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027. This sets a 'Strategic Vision' as:

‘For Dunshaughlin to continue to develop on a sustainable platform that recognises the capacity of the settlement to accommodate both residential and economic growth due to its location along the M3 Motorway and the corridor of Phase II of the Navan Rail project.’

The principles of sustainable design and movement shall be embraced to ensure connectivity and permeability between various land uses and to support the creation of a sustainable community', etc etc.

These policy /objectives include:

- To support improvements in the pedestrian and cycling infrastructure in the town that will improve connectivity and permeability and promote more sustainable modes of transport.
- To ensure that any development in the town centre contributes positively to and enhances the streetscape of Dunshaughlin.

And also more generally:

- To facilitate the completion of the Eastern Relief Road from the Dublin Road to the Lagore Road and on to the Red Bog Road to the east and south-east of the town.
- To support the continuation of the Western Distributor Link Road from its position west of the Dunshaughlin Interchange to the R147 south of the town.
- To examine the feasibility of providing Park and Ride facilities in Dunshaughlin located in employment lands in the south western part of the town. To support the development of a primary and secondary school in Dunshaughlin to meet the educational needs of the residents of the town and its catchment.
- To support the development of playing fields and/or any other identified recreational uses on the land zoned as open space adjacent to 'The Willows' residential development in the southern part of the town.
- To support the growth of Dunshaughlin in a manner that allows the town to fulfil its function as a 'Self-Sustaining Growth Town' by facilitating sustainable residential growth and promoting the town as a centre for employment and economic development that maximizes the transport links with key settlements in the County and wider Region.
- To support the provision of a train station and associated parking in Dunshaughlin, as part of Phase II Dublin to Navan Rail project proposal.

- To secure the implementation of the Core Strategy of the County Development Plan, in so far as is practicable, by ensuring the household allocation for Dunshaughlin as set out in Table 2.12 of the Core Strategy is not exceeded.
- To support and encourage residential development on under-utilised land and/or vacant lands including 'infill' and 'brownfield' sites, subject to a high standard of design and layout being achieved.
- To continue to support the implementation of the Active Land Management Strategy in Dunshaughlin.
- To operate an Order of Priority for the release and development of residential lands with any lands identified as being 'Post 2027' not available for development until after 2027.
- To facilitate the development of local business employment and enterprises on lands zoned for employment uses.
- To facilitate the development of a 'strategic employment site' for high technology uses.

Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor

In 2021 the 'Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor' (DBEC) was an initiative to promote cross-border economic growth in what is considered a key area for IRL. To overcome perceived delays in planning permissions, and to assist in faster developments, various measures were instigated such as the Critical Infrastructure Bill (CIB). With a budget of almost €20B, several projects are now in advanced stage of planning, which includes upgrades to the railways, bridges, and in the water and electricity.

02 About Dunshaughlin

This section provides a summary of the contextual analysis of Dunshaughlin which has laid the foundations for the TCF Plan. This includes a review of Dunshaughlin's character, identity, the historic significance, and cultural history of the Town. The section also examines transport, connectivity as well as the socio-economic impacts and demographics of Dunshaughlin.





2.0 Context

Dunshaughlin is a thriving satellite town in South Meath, located at Junction 6 on the M3 motorway which connects to the capital and bypasses the village.

For the best part of the past decade, however new residential estate planning permissions were curtailed, attributed to the then inadequate sewage and water infrastructure capacity, and also the 2007 economic downturn. However in the last few years developments have recommenced, so that the village has now grown from under 1,000 residents at the turn of the C, to a current population of almost 6,600.

With 10,000 people within a 15-minute radius of the village, (from Meath.ie*) it is also expected to continue to grow at this rate. It also notable that there is a significant population of almost 1.6 million* from the catchment area of a 45-minute drive. Dunshaughlin is situated on one of the principal arterial motorways to the capital, which links to the M50, the Dublin Orbital Motorway at 30 minutes and at 39 minutes to

Dublin Airport. Although it is quite well serviced by food retailers, as with many similar small towns and villages, Dunshaughlin does have to contend with the challenges of out-of-town retail.

Dunshaughlin has a great community spirit, annually which includes an Harvest Festival, which is a celebration of the village's rural heritage. This event features music, drama, dance, heritage events, food and craft markets, country sports and children entertainment.

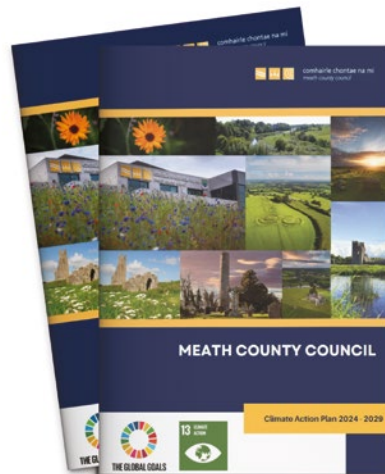
Dunshaughlin also has facilities for many varied sports, including a very large Gaelic football club, soccer, basketball, athletics. The adjacent village of Ratoath caters for the Rugby players. Being located close to nature, is also within reach of areas of significant heritage such as Dunsany, Kileen, Skyrne, and Tara, as well as the greater Boyne Valley region, which are noted as being areas of outstanding natural beauty.



General context map of Dunshaughlin

Local Authority Climate Action Plan 2024-2029: Dunshaughlin Decarbonisation Zone

As part of Meath County Councils Local Authority Climate Action Plan 9 Decarbonisation Zones (DZs) have been identified, Dunshaughlin is one of the 9 DZs alongside: Navan, Ashbourne, Trim, Kells, Dunboyne, Laytown/ Bettystown, Ratoath, and Duleek.



A DZ is a chosen area where local authorities, businesses, and communities work together to reduce the amount of carbon produced by their everyday activities. By looking within the community for ways to live, work and play more sustainably, these zones can find local solutions to global problems, such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving air quality, saving energy and reducing waste.

There are 6 targets and purposes for each DZ.

- Collaboration by all stakeholders.
- Place based focus on climate actions.
- Harness and facilitate funding and investment.
- Harness co-benefits of climate actions.
- 51% Reduction in Carbon Emissions by 2030.
- Net Zero by 2050.

Dunshaughlin's Baseline Emissions Inventory:

The main source of emissions in Dunshaughlin DZ come from 4 main sectors, these are: residential, manufacturing & commercial, transport, and waste.

Emissions breakdown of Dunshaughlin DZ

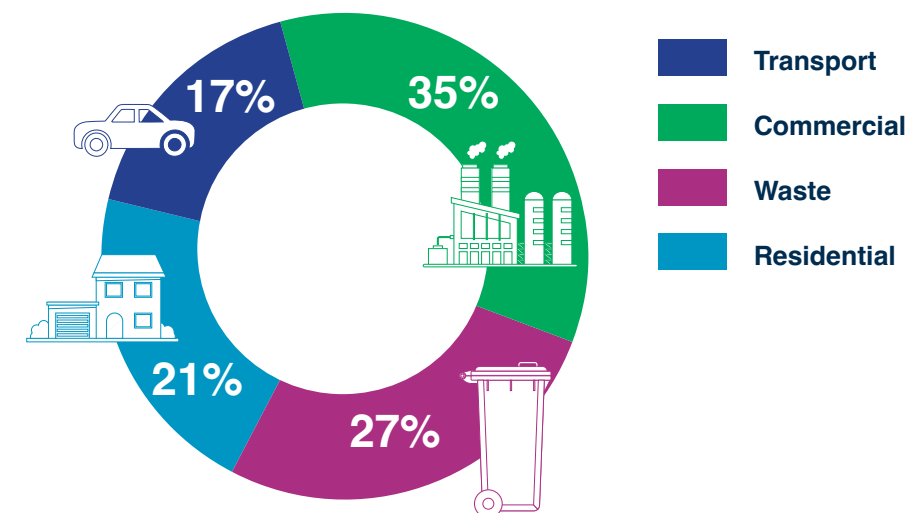
Emissions from the Dunshaughlin DZ represent 1% of the total emissions for County Meath, emissions from the Waste Sector represent 4% and Commercial and Residential Sectors both representing 3% of the respective sector, with the Transport representing 2% of totals for County Meath.

Total emissions from Dunshaughlin DZ account for 52 ktCO₂eq. These are broken down per sector as follows:

- Commercial Sector: 18 ktCO₂eq
- Waste Sector: 14 ktCO₂eq
- Residential Sector: 11 ktCO₂eq
- Transport Sector: 9 ktCO₂eq

The Dunshaughlin Town Centre First Plan is a core aspect for the implementation of climate actions in the town over the coming years to ensure that all development incorporates climate action and sustainability, thus contributing to Meath as a County achieving its climate targets. The proposals outlined below in this plan provides a strategic pathway in order for Dunshaughlin DZ to contribute to Meath reaching these targets while at the same time improving the livelihood of those who live and use the services in the town.

Emissions breakdown per sector %



2.1

A brief history of Dunshaughlin

Dunshaughlin, translated as ‘the fort of Seachlainn’, or alternatively, Domnach Sechnaill (Modern Irish Domhnach Seachnaill) “the church of Seachnall”, a placename which has apparently undergone a transition over the centuries, as confirmed on the Placenames Database of Ireland[†]. Nomenclature aside, Dunshaughlin has been shaped by historical factors combined with its somewhat strategic physical location along a raised ridge and crossing point, adjacent to the ancient ‘Sli Mor’ from Tara.

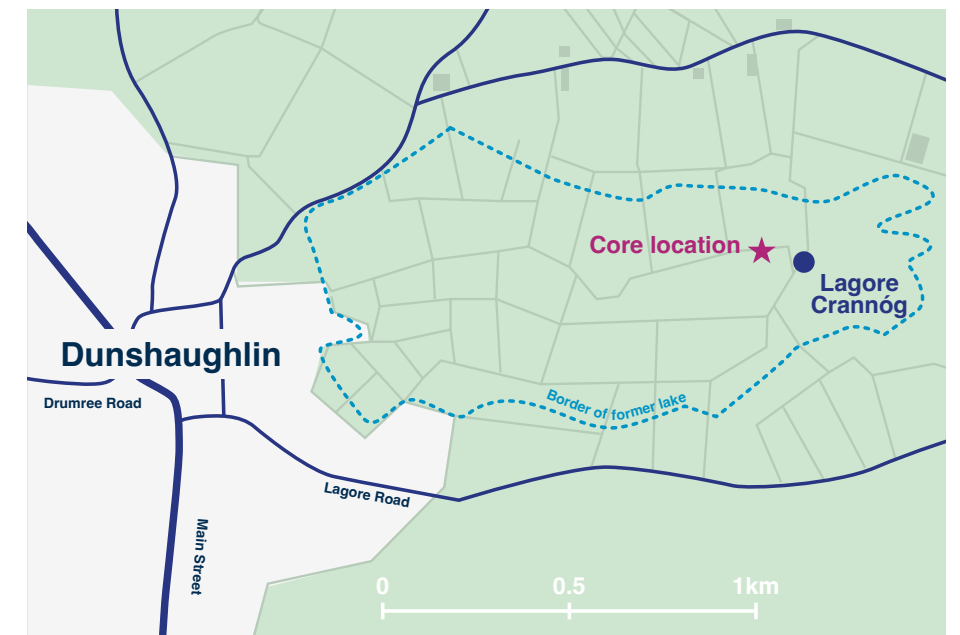
There is evidence of habitation around the northerly high point of the Village from earliest times, where a deep defensive ditch enclosure is still visible. This may originally may have been the support settlement for the large, one time well-known crannog of ‘Inis Locha Gabur’, one mile to the East the east of the village, now a cutaway black bog. Lagore is referred to in the ‘Annals of the Four Masters’ as the residence of the 1st to 12C ‘Kings of Mide’ after they relocated there from Tara. Mide, or “middle”, denotes that the Meath originally extended to the Shannon.

Although there is evidence generally of contacts with Roman culture in terms of trade, placenames, and cultural appropriations such as the ubiquitous penannular brooch, and ‘gladius-type’ swords, it is understood that Ireland remained largely outside its direct sphere of influence, until Christianity arrived during the mid 5C. This is signified by the a monastery dedicated to Saint Seachnall being founded there, however the only surviving fragments of this establishment are 6-8C carvings, and lintel of the pre-Romanesque church. Archaeology has also uncovered evidence of extensive early medieval settlements around this monastic enclosure, the location is still known as ‘the grange’. This is a similar to the settlement pattern of many other monastic sites such as those in Dublin, Trim, Kells, etc.

[†]Domhnach Sechnaill can be translated as Church of St. Seachnall (Latin, Secundus ~ trans: ‘the second’) where a religious house was established here in the 5th Century. The alternative name ‘Domhnach Seachnaill’ continues in the vernacular and is generally also widely acceptable and in some cases preferable.



The making of a motte and bailey from the Bayeux Tapestry, shown as a stripey mound of earth and stones (Caestra means castle in Saxon-Latin).



Above: Dunshaughlin, Lagore with historical extents of lake indicated

Left: Map of Lagore and district, 900 AD

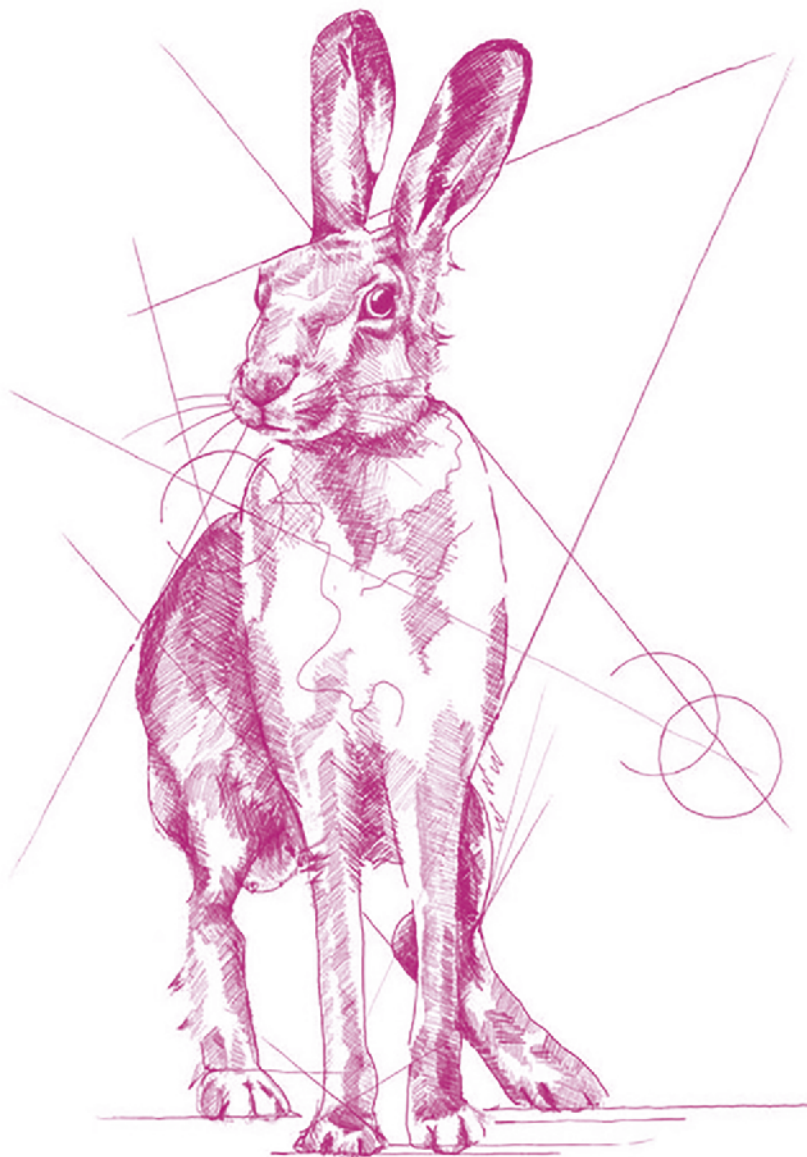


Right: The Lagore Brooch, NMI

Below: ‘Sub-Roman’ double edge iron sword CA. 600mm long, from Lagore.



2.2 Flora and Fauna, Natural Heritage, Recreation and Amenity



The Broadmeadow Water River, rises at its source at Grangend Common at Dunshaughlin, and flows easterly through the 'Black Bog' of Loch Gabhar (Lagore), meaning "Lake of the Goats. It is one of the larger watercourses by volume in County Dublin. (Irish: Abhainn Ghabhra unlikely translated as 'goat river' could also quite possibly be a corruption lost over time of the word for blacksmith Gabha).

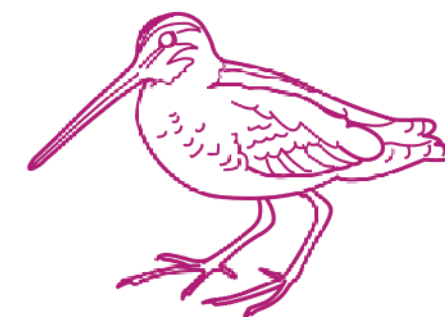
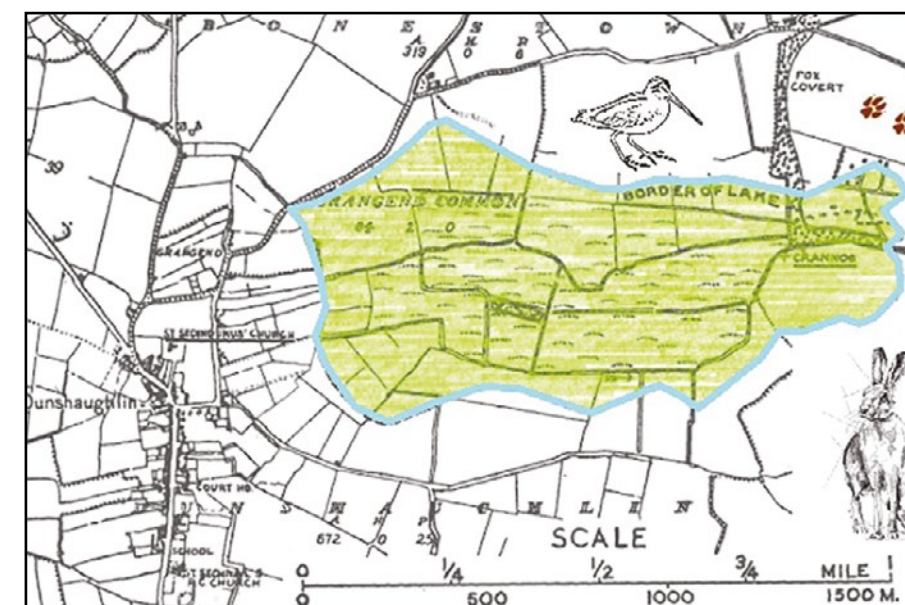
At any rate this small river is limestone based and is host to invertebrates and also a stock of small wild brown trout, but has unfortunately suffered badly from recent pollution.

This includes domestic pollution, and also run-off from agriculture, although is under the responsibility of Meath Co Co, and Fingal, with oversight from the EPA.

This stream flows easterly through the adjacent village of Ratoath, and then for circa 24 km across rich pastureland, gradually broadening, before it reaches the large sea nature preserve in the estuary north of Malahide, Co. Dublin,

Relatively uncommon for this part of Meath, these two peatlands which are on the outskirts of the village, the red and black bogs, include highly species diverse and are referenced in the scope of the current Biodiversity Plan for Dunshaughlin.

Relatively rare birdlife including snipe, duck, heron, and the owl have been observed. The surrounding locality is also a haven where mammalian wildlife can also be observed, which includes, foxes, badgers, pine martins, the native Irish Hare.



‘Green Infrastructure’ and Village Trees



Existing scattered trees contribute somewhat to the network of green infrastructure and open space within the town, particularly.

- Along the street
- Defining somewhat the northern end of the village.

However some trees are causing a major problem, in some cases where poor or inappropriate plantings and paving details, have contributed to damage to footpaths.

-  Public Green Spaces
-  (Unsurveyed) Mature Trees
-  Groups

2.3 The Economy



Although Dunshaughlin does have a small industrial estate, the village serves in the main as a dormitory or commuter town serving the surrounding area, with many residents working in north Dublin, the airport, and or, the city.

Dunshaughlin business park, managed independently, is located to the south of the village, and access to the adjacent M3 is currently through the main street. There are several guesthouses within a short distance from the village, which serve the local community.

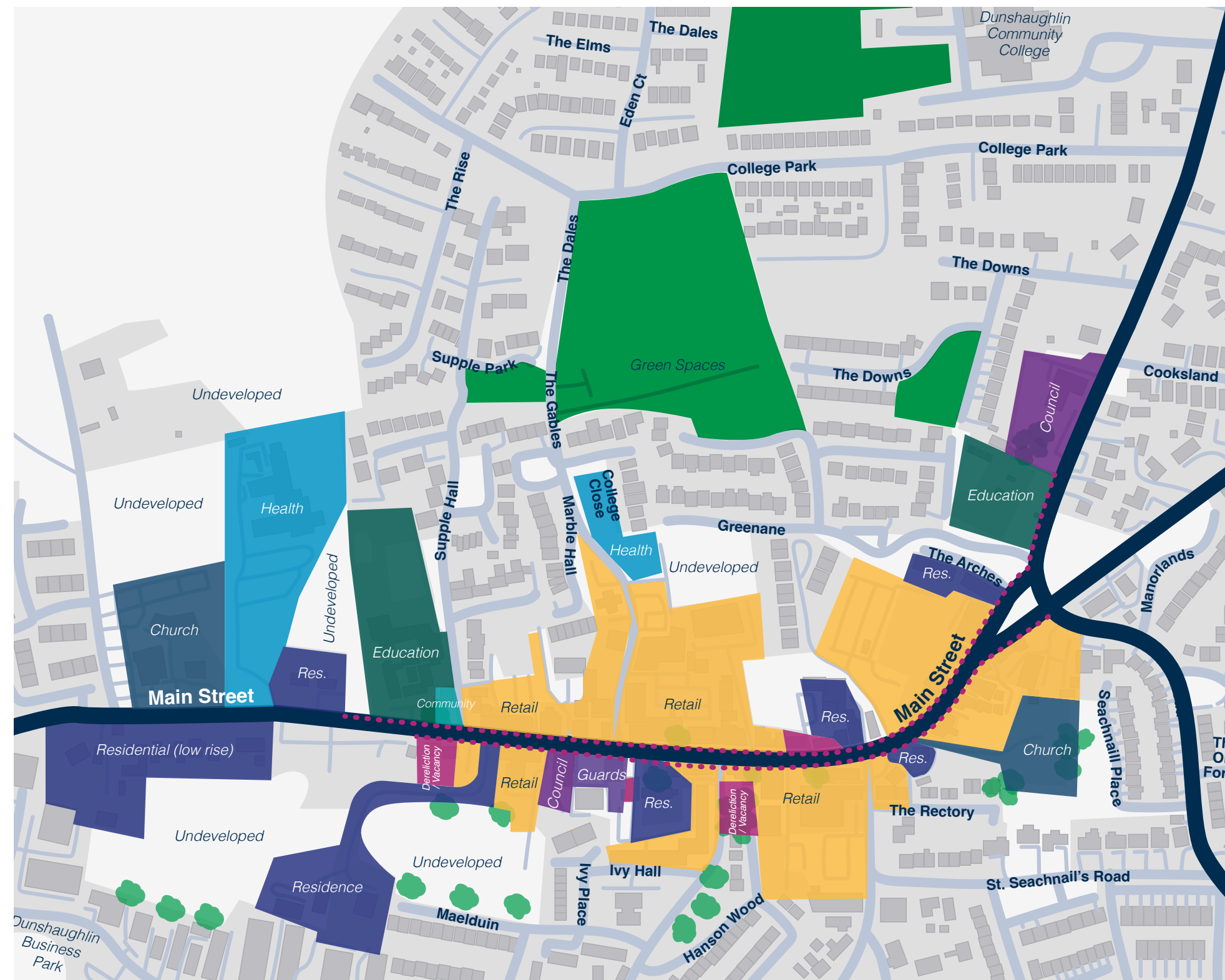
In addition, it has a service economy along the main street of hairdressers, shops, boutiques and the like with several restaurants and pubs.

The local economy also benefits somewhat from tourism, giving its proximity from Killeen Castle, and the Boyne Valley, and being within Ireland's 'Ancient East' a popular touring route of rich landscapes and rural towns. Dunshaughlin also could be a destination on the emerging cycle network for the greater Dublin way, cycleway project which may bring an increase in visitors.

There is a gym, car parts centre and other local enterprises. All supermarkets are important local employer in the village. Remote working facilities are available at the County Council office (Remote Working Hub) which helps support a good work life balance and contributes towards reducing carbon emissions.



Main Street land use



Land and Building Use along centre with 'Green' Space

- Many active (retail) frontages
- Few facilities for community/ recreation
- Residential park relatively central



2.4 Facilities and Amenities



Dunshaughlin provides an important retail, educational and service function for its catchment area, which includes south Meath and extends into County Dublin.

Retail and commercial uses are primarily located along the Street which provides convenience shopping, hospitality, and professional services with some well-established local businesses. In addition, the village is served now by the three food retailers, Aldi, Lidl, with SuperValu.

Dunshaughlin also has a public Library located in the former Church. The local community is serviced by several medical GP practices, along with a large HSE medical centre. Dunshaughlin has two secondary schools, two primary schools as well as a Gaelscoil. All the schools generate considerable traffic before and after school opening hours. Dunshaughlin has also several local pre-schools/ crèches which are vital to life in the town although are currently insufficient in capacity and number.

Many of the amenities are dispersed throughout the town centre. Although short in distances, the lack of a comfortable environment for pedestrians and cyclists has led to a car dominated town centre with people regularly driving from one amenity to the next and seeking to park as close as physically possible to their destination.

Dunshaughlin has many sporting clubs, community organisations and a very active the local Gaelic Football Club which has won several senior county championships in recent history.



2.5 Vacancy and Dereliction

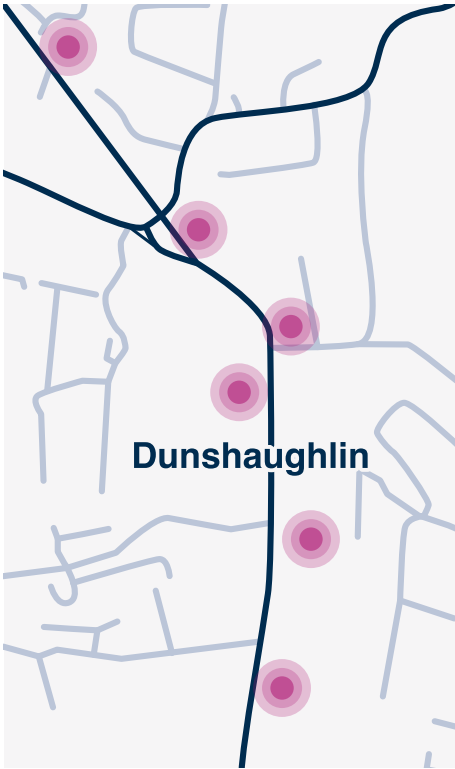


Dunshaughlin, unlike many similar small rural villages, has not suffered the loss of key industries but however has still a relatively high rate of vacant premises along main street.

Despite reductions in vacancy over time, this continues to be a key priority for Dunshaughlin, and as such has been a key feature in discussions with the town team and the community as part of the process of making this plan.

It is also identified that there is housing need, including social housing demand within the Municipal District as per the current County Development Plan.

- Relatively low level of vacancy



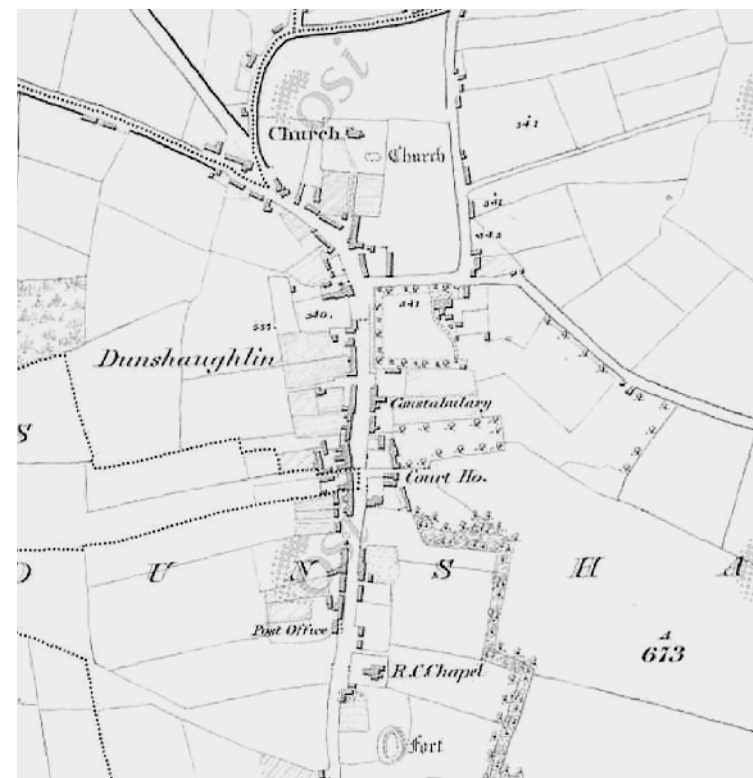
2.6 Architectural History + Heritage



Dunshaughlin's history can be traced back to the earliest times. Dunshaughlin has several key historic features, including monastic and religious structures, a historic core, street pattern, plot arrangement and historic streetscapes. Below is a summary of the some significant historic structures that can be found in the village.

- **The Courthouse**, recorded as being built by Matthew Curran in 1815 but attributed to Francis Johnston. As it has been remodelled over the years there are few historical surviving features internally of significance, and no longer remains a functioning courthouse.
- **The 'Fingal Arms' former hotel**, used by passengers from the, now closed, railway line to Drumree. Its stable yard derelict since the 50's had survived until recently. A section of the stables building was recreated as a feature for the retail development.

- **Toll House**, servicing the toll gates to the turnpike roads from the 1792, the Dublin to Navan Coach Road.
- **St Seachnall N.S.**, dated as built in 1887 (the former National School (Irish Primary School), and now used by the community as a parish hall.
- **St. Seachnall Church**, built in 1814 to the generic design signed by Architect Joseph Welland MRIAI, built over and on the ruins of the 6-15C abbey, which adds interest.
- **Library** The library is the converted former Dunshaughlin Parish church dating from the early 19C, decommissioned in 1982 and is within a 12C medieval bailey enclosure, the original Architect if any is unknown but it was remodelled by Ralph Henry Byrne FRIAI, of W. H. Byrne in the 1940's.





Architectural Heritage II, Registered Protected Structures, National Inventory of Architectural Heritage



Unrecorded historic structures along main street which form part of setting.



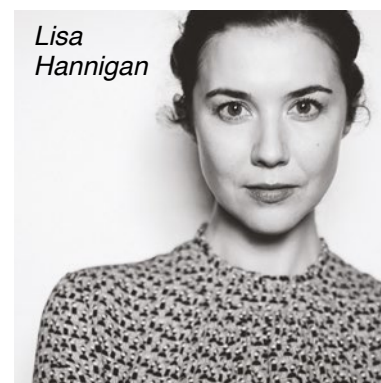
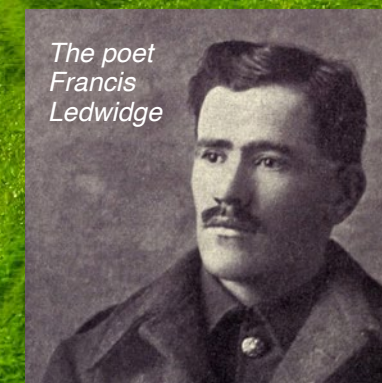
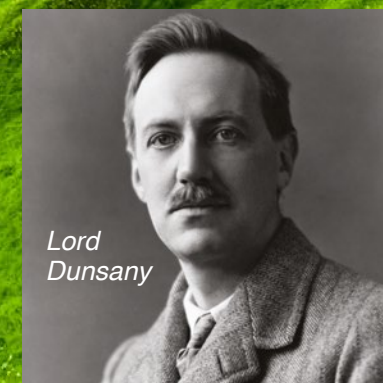


2.7 Music, the Arts and Cultural Heritage

Dunshaughlin's principal 'built-heritage' significance lies in the survival of its main historic street, with the arrangement along it of several distinctive landmark buildings along the route, along with its countryside setting. A combination of architecturally coherent buildings, extant and traditional shop fronts mark Dunshaughlin's unique significance. For its size, Dunshaughlin contains quite a number of buildings of national or regional significance. The village as a whole is potentially very attractive. In addition, several sites around Dunshaughlin have strong cultural significance and attract many visitors due to their cultural connections, including the Hill of Tara and Newgrange.

However, Dunshaughlin and the surrounding areas of south Meath also have a strong cultural history, as exemplified in the patronage by Lord Dunsany of the WW1 poet Francis Ledwidge and Mary Lavin spanning a century almost.

Dunshaughlin has more recently been the hometown to and is associated with many other well-known popular musicians and producers, including John Logan, Frank MacNamara, Siobhan Fahey, Lisa Hannigan and Ronan Keating among others.

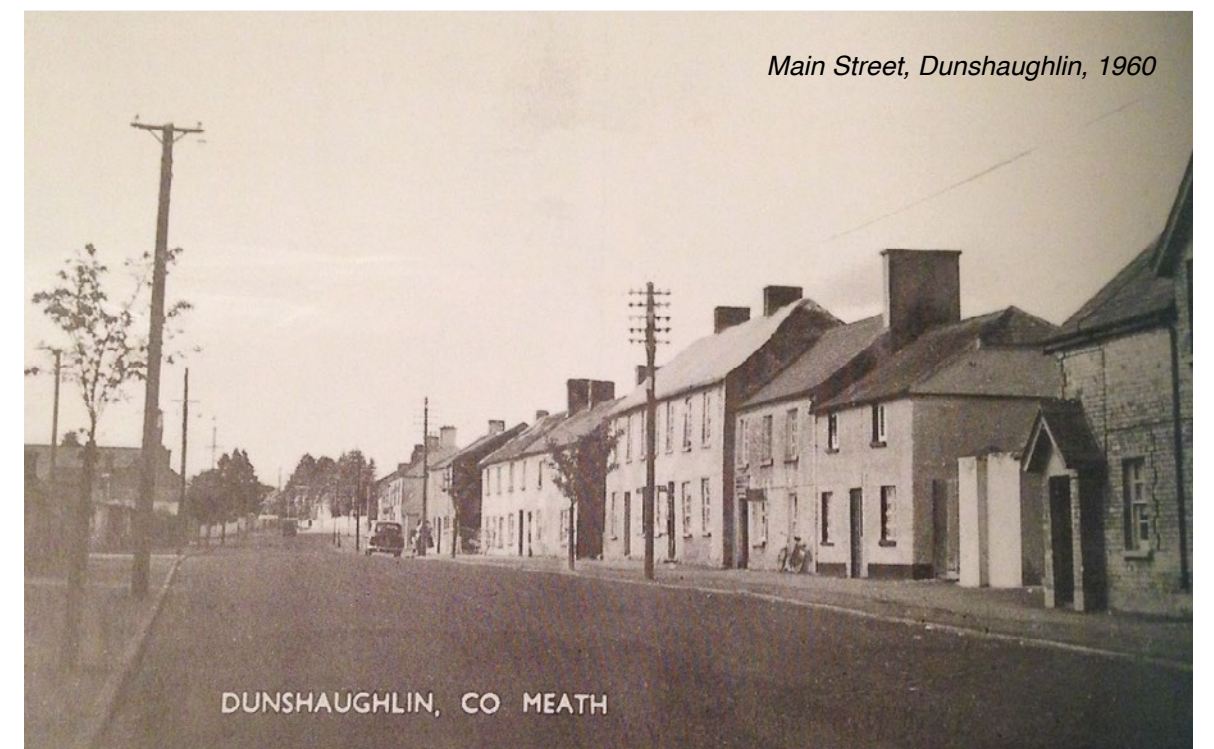


Historical and contemporary photographs of Dunshaughlin

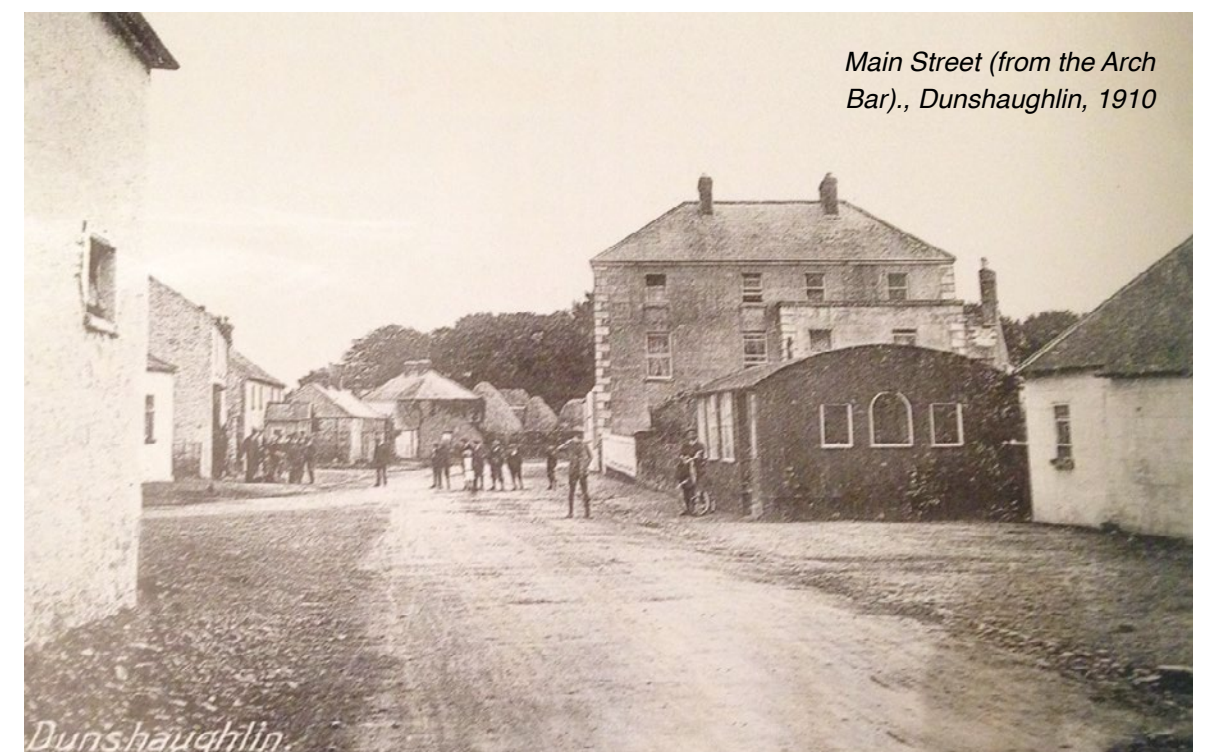
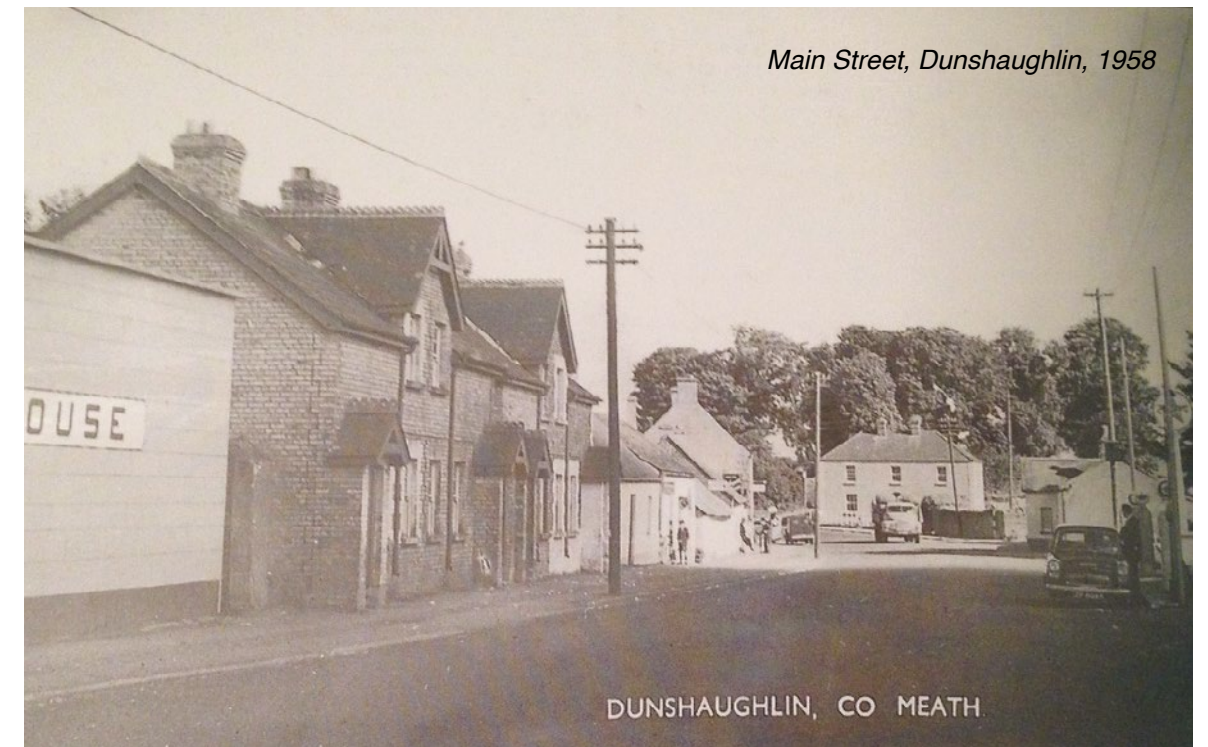
Present day photo looking south from Lagore road junction, and historical photo of same location.



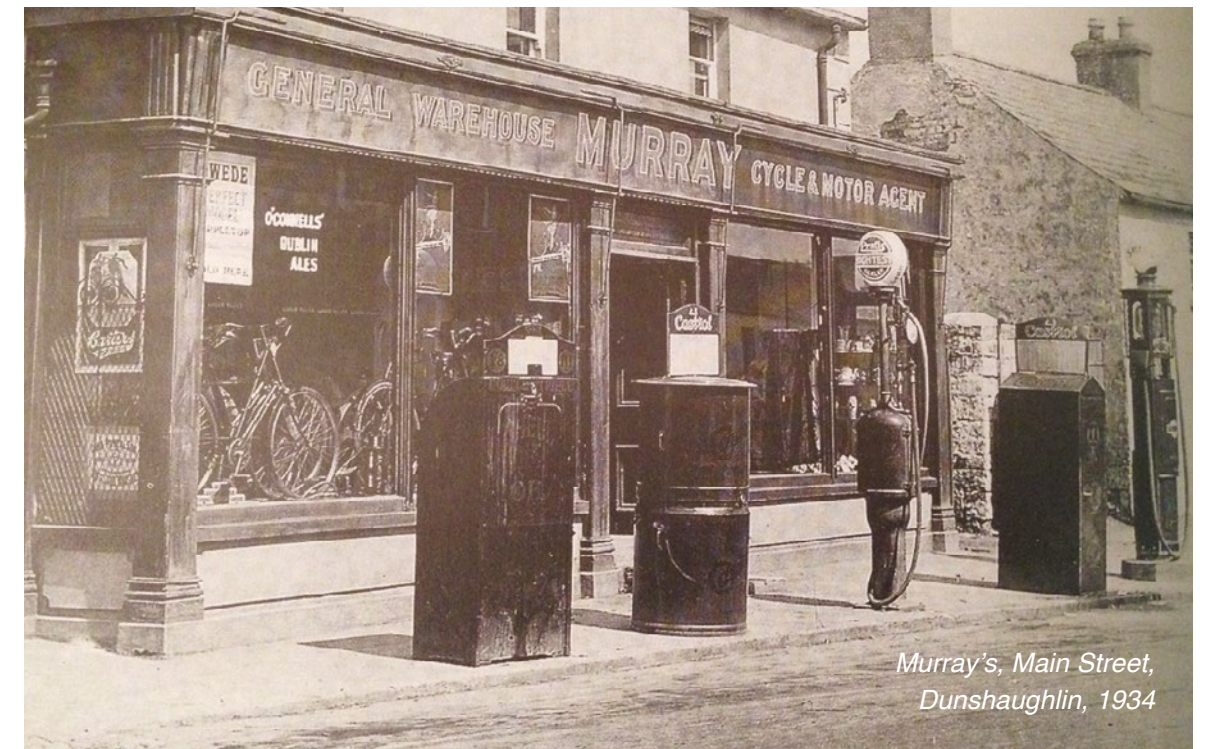
Present day photo looking south from mid point of village, and historical photo of same location.



Present day photo looking north from mid point of village, and historical photo of same location.



Unrecorded historic structures along main street which form part of setting visually.



19C cottage which survived until early 20C opposite the Arch Bar.



The Fingal Arms hotel





Aerial view of Dunshaughlin



Church gates 1911, with both Art and Liz Plunkett of Fingall Castle.



Gabriel Beranger's 1776 depiction of the Anglican Chapel, and today's view



*Carberrys, Main Street,
Dunshaughlin*



*Main Street,
Dunshaughlin*



2.8

Transportation context

This section summarises the existing transport and movement conditions across Dunshaughlin.

A detailed traffic and parking survey can was carried out in March 2025, and the details are contained in the appendix.

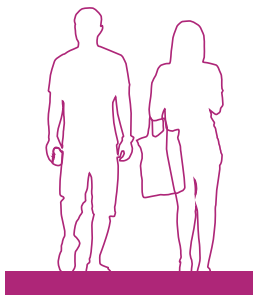
Traffic | Traffic is busiest in Dunshaughlin town centre on weekday mornings and afternoons. The predominant flows are along the ‘Main Street’, with approximately **90% of motor vehicle traffic is cars. 8% is light goods vehicles (LGVs)**, and the remaining is other goods vehicles (OGVs) and public transport. The village can become particularly congested during events such as weddings, funerals etc. There are also five schools in the village that impact hugely on the traffic. It should be noted that there can be a significant volume of farm machinery at seasonal times during the year which can impact traffic in the affected area.

Parking | There is on street parking in the town centre, with a total of **437 spaces**. There are c.37 parking spaces on-street. The majority of these free parking, however Dunshaughlin also has three large off-street car parks, while Lidl and Aldi also provide parking for their customers. Off-street parking i.e. supermarkets, is subject to clamping. They are generally busiest on Saturdays, with Saturday afternoons reaching over 90% occupancy. The most common pattern of parking is for people to stay for 2 hours or less in the afternoon. There is no off-street car park per-se in the town centre for town centre users which has led to an abundance of on-street parking at the expense of safe pedestrian and cyclist space. There is a lack of EV charging in the town centre, but there are a number of charging points provided at Lidl and Aldi.



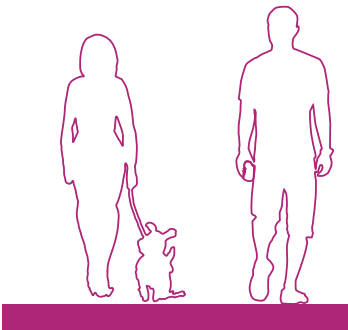
Pedestrian Activity & Footway Width

Diagram showing the amount of space needed for pedestrians to pass each other with regard to pedestrian levels.



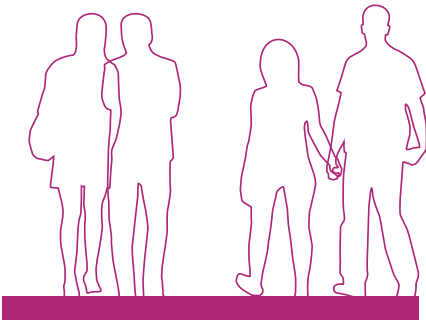
Minimum space for two people to pass comfortably. Areas of low pedestrian activity.

1.8m



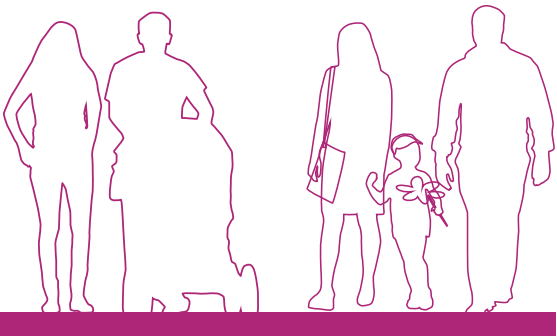
Desirable space for two people to pass comfortably. Areas of low to moderate pedestrian activity.

2.5m



Minimum space for small groups to pass comfortably. Areas of moderate to high pedestrian activity.

3m

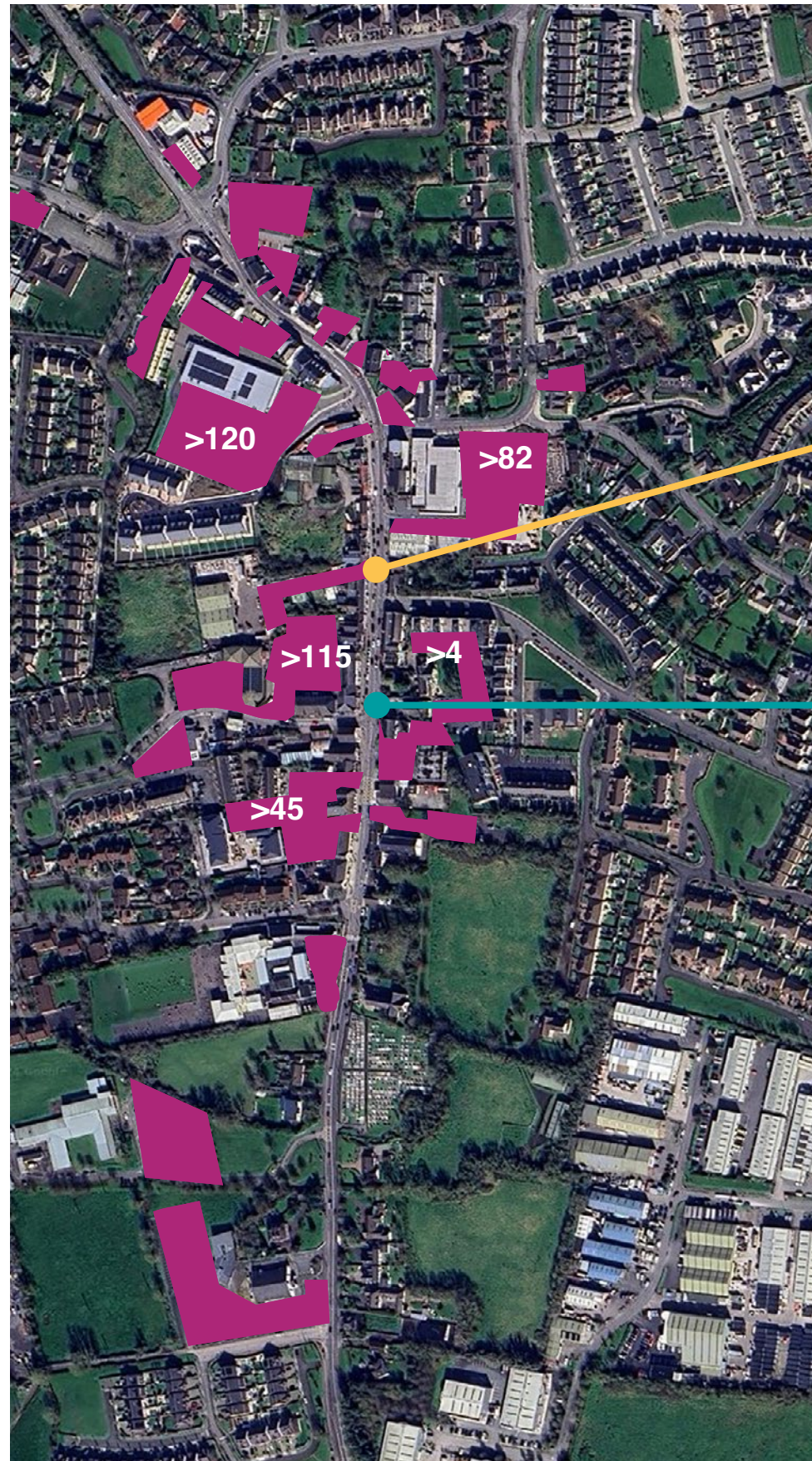


Minimum space for larger groups to pass comfortably. Areas of high pedestrian activity.

4m

Parking

- Large percentage of town centre space dedicated to parking.
- Fragmented and inefficient lots.



Aerial Photos with parking highlighted



Back lot Parking, Typical



'Main St' Parking

2.9

Transport, connectivity and parking

Accessibility I Accessibility and wayfinding in Dunshaughlin is considered poor, due to a lack of maintenance on the roads and footways which show many major and minor defects. It can be difficult for those with poorer mobility such as elderly people, disabled and parents with buggies.

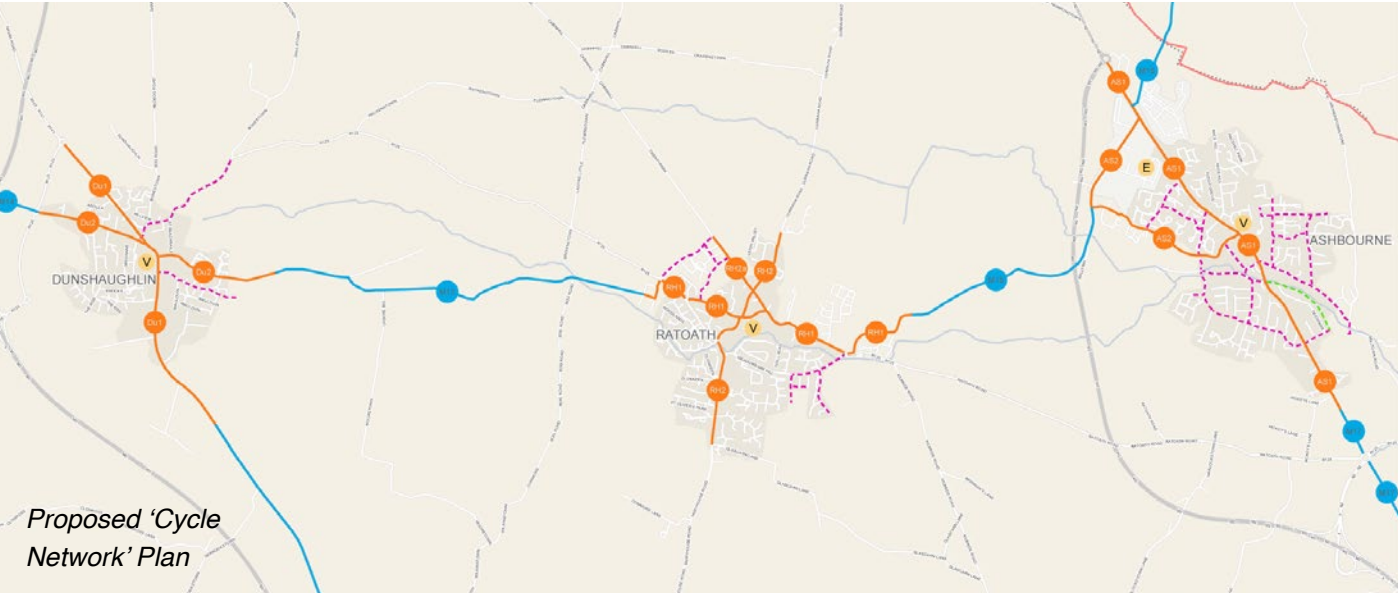
Some of the pavements are very narrow, creating a feeling of being too close to the traffic with little room to pass oncoming pedestrians. The wayfinding is poorly presented, and could be better organised.

Pedestrian Environment I There is a poor pedestrian environment in Dunshaughlin town centre due to vehicle dominance and a lack of crossing points.

A detailed traffic and parking survey was carried out, which provides details of the pedestrian counts, and where the pedestrians are crossing.

Cycling I There is a clear desire to cycle within the town centre and wider context. As the historic road patterns with varying widths present a challenge to provide dedicated cycle lanes, instead opportunities for other routes need to be explored. Revised street layouts including traffic calming measures need to be introduced to encourage more cycling and make it safer. There is also a lack of cycle parking which limits the opportunity for passing cyclists to spend time in the town centre.

Public Transport I Feedback from stakeholders and observations on site indicate that public transport is well used in the town, although buses are considered adequate, can be at times erratic although a relatively late evening service now exists. There are a number of bus stops in Dunshaughlin, including one adjacent to the Lidl, and the other outside the BOI. The bus stops serve four bus routes which serves Dunshaughlin up to half-hourly in each direction.



The bus stop to Dublin

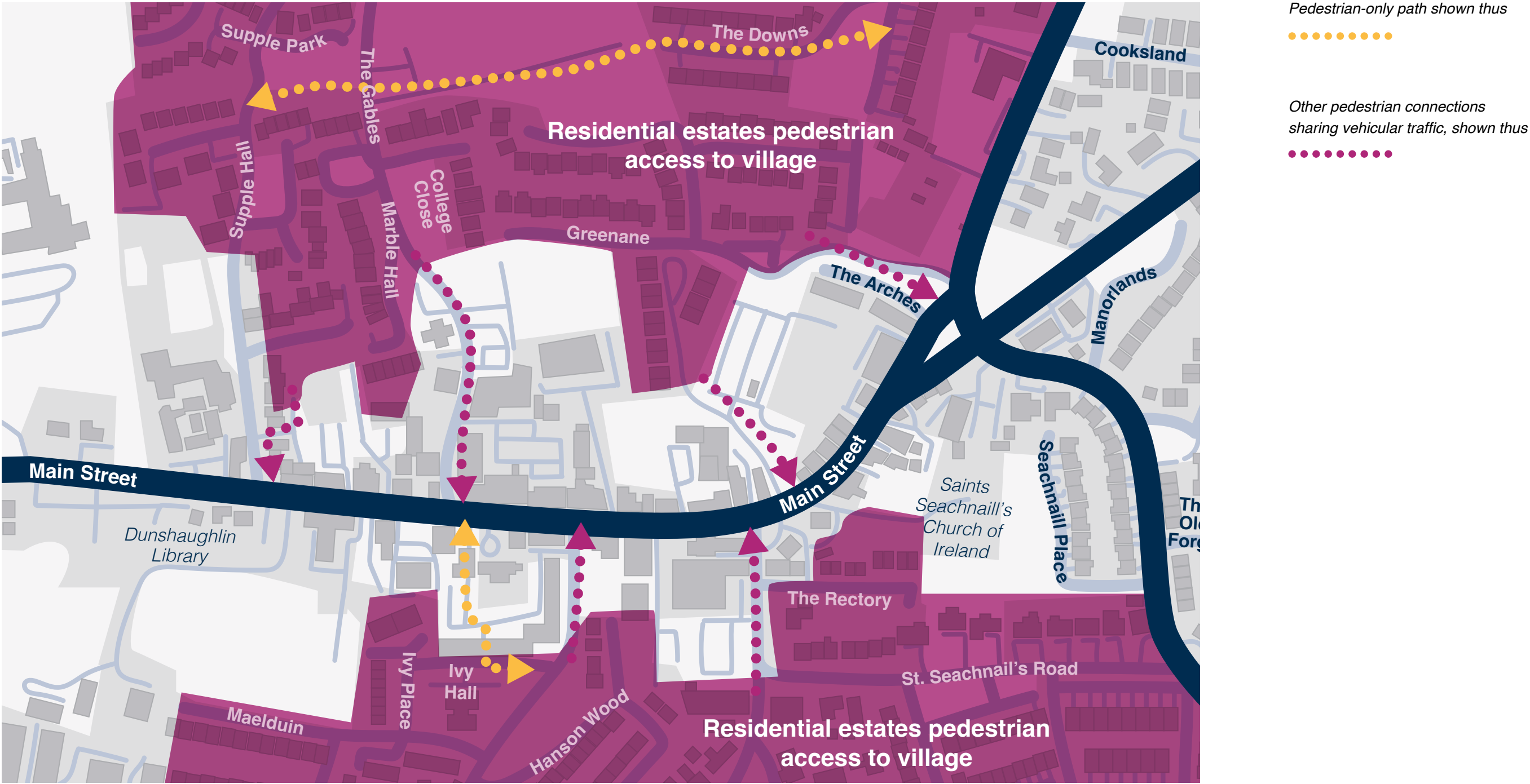
3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

13 CLIMATE ACTION

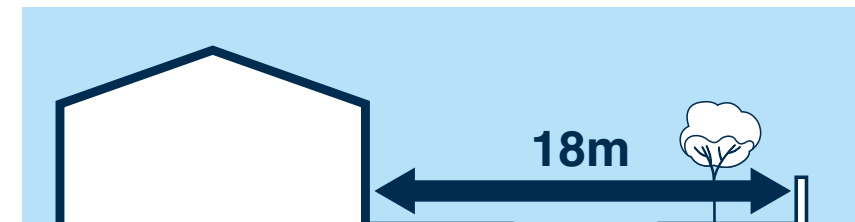
Existing Connectivity



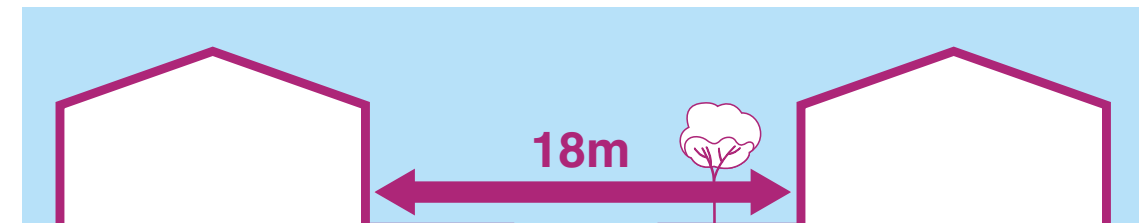
Streets Analysis



- Enclosure Ration 1:2 approx.
- Moderate Enclosure
- Wall Street Continuity 50-100 %
- Street Character Heritage / Civic / Retail
- Topography 1:50, gradual slope from south
- Greening, Minimal



Typical cross Section 1 at midpoint of village.

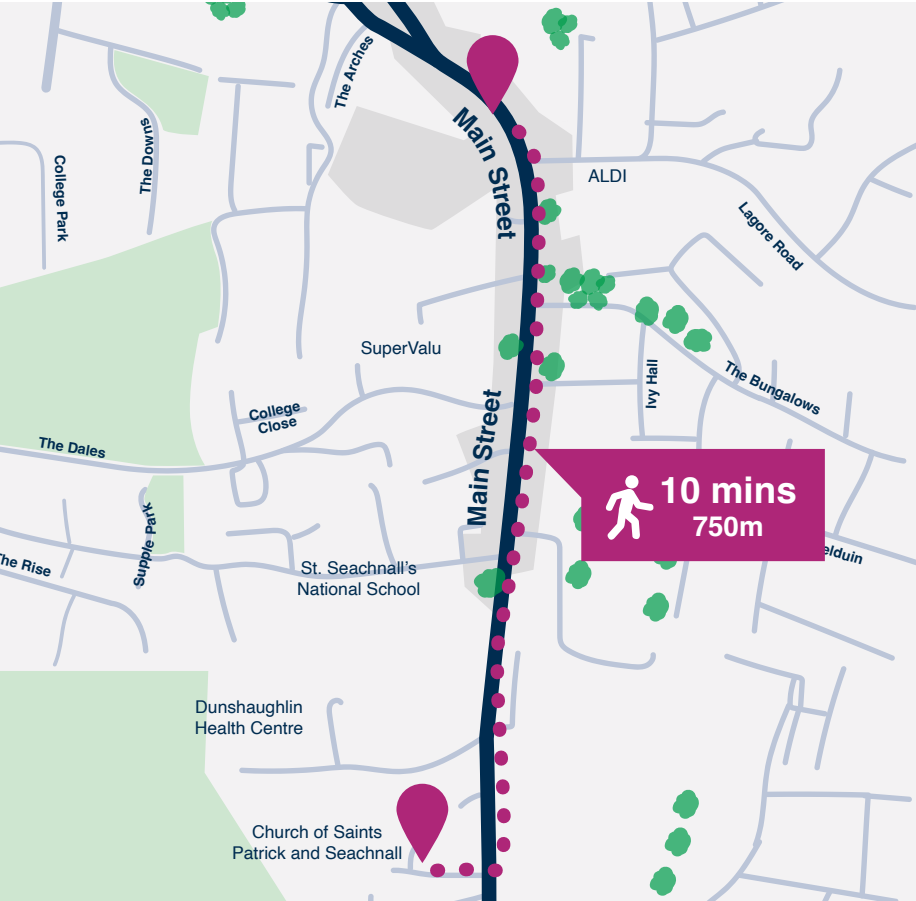


Existing, Typical cross section at midpoint of village, at representative midpoint. Note: height and widths are generally uniform along the street.

Dunshaughlin Walkability Audit report summary and overview

The audit involved 20 participants on 19th November 2024, focusing on a 1 km route from the church car park to Costa Coffee. The purpose was to evaluate footpath conditions, crossings, street furniture, and overall accessibility, with a view to enhancing walkability for older residents.

The Universal Design approach was used as the primary framework for this assessment. The audit considered how well people of all ages and abilities, particularly, older people, people with limited mobility and those using walking aids and people with prams, could use the streets, and identify areas for improvement.



The Route

Route and Group Division

- The route was split into two groups walking on opposite sides of the main road, covering the same 1 km stretch.
- Local requests to extend the route to include the secondary school and other areas were noted, but limited by route length constraints.

Findings from Group 1

- Footpaths were generally in excellent condition—wide, well-paved, and clear, with minor leaves.
- Planters outside the library could be repositioned to avoid narrowing the footpath.
- Some minor issues included small bricks at drain pipes, a telephone pole obstructing the footpath, and puddles revealing uneven surfaces that could become hazards in colder weather.
- Uneven dips at crossing points and a steep, uneven concrete ramp posed risks for wheelchair users.
- Outside the old courthouse, cracked and pooled pavement was noted, with plans for refurbishment delayed due to funding withdrawal.
- Bins obstructed some ramps, and a leaning tree with exposed roots created a serious trip hazard, with fallen leaves blocking drains.
- Seating was available but not all age-friendly; crossings near Lidl and Costa Coffee were confusing and difficult, with busy roads and inadequate crossing points.

Findings from Group 2

- Footpath surfaces varied, including tarmac, cobble, and concrete, with some sinking or narrowing, especially at edges and intersections.
- Puddles and ponding due to sinking paths reduced accessible width and could cause slips.
- Potholes on the main street could splash pedestrians, and some utility covers lacked visual contrast, posing trip hazards.
- No issues with outdoor café seating or signage; traffic was manageable during the audit.
- The town felt lively but predominantly vehicle-oriented, with limited pedestrian crossings. Additional crossings or narrowing roads at crossings could improve safety.
- Path widths were generally good in town center but narrowed at outskirts, with some uneven surfaces and roots from mature trees creating hazards.
- Several well-maintained seating areas were noted, though more age-friendly options could be beneficial.

Conclusion

- Dunshaughlin is vibrant but underused by pedestrians, partly due to hazards like water pooling, uneven surfaces, and poor crossing infrastructure.
- Traffic volume and large vehicles near pedestrian routes are concerns.
- Recommendations include improving water drainage, addressing trip hazards, reconsidering road narrowing at crossings, and enhancing street furniture and signage for better accessibility, especially for visually impaired users.

2.10 Socio-economic and demographic profile



Dunshaughlin was recorded as the fastest growing town in County Meath with its population growing by a staggering 65 per cent in the last six years, and now has a larger population than the town of Kells.

This page summarises the socio-economic and demographic context of Dunshaughlin.

Population: According to census data, Dunshaughlin has a population of 6,644 (2022), with an even split of males and females, and has increased by almost seven-fold since the 1980’s when its population was about 1,000. This increased to 3,500 in 2011 and the 2022 census indicated a further increase to over 6,600 people and building is continuing. In addition, it is adjacent to the rapidly expanding towns of Ratoath (10,000) and Ashbourne (15,000), and surrounding areas.

The town has a relatively young age profile, as the majority of the population falling within the 0 to 59 age categories and 27% of its population under the age of 18, with only 540 residents being 65 and above, and the largest proportion of the population falling into the 30-39 category (1,366), making it one of the youngest towns in the country.

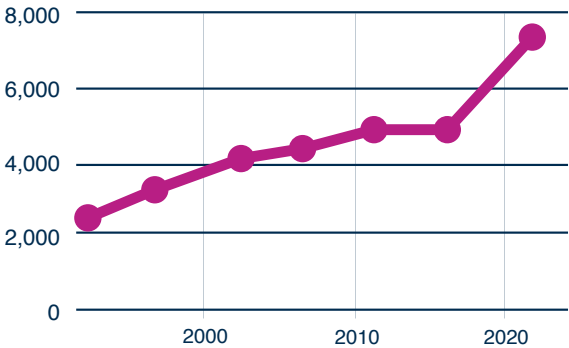
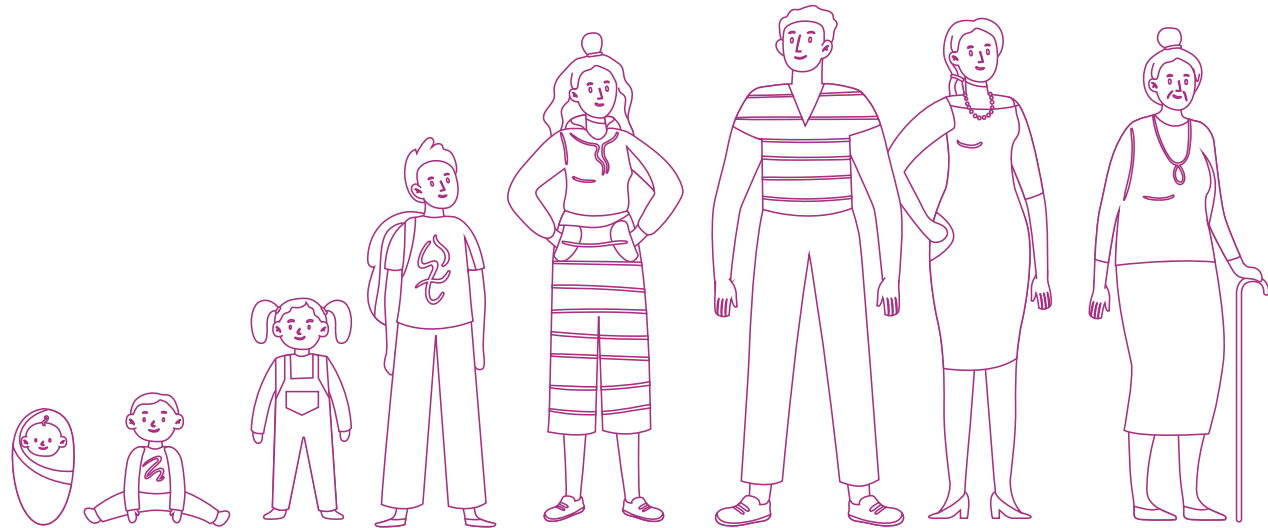
Almost 80% of the population were born in Ireland, with the balance overseas, which would be representative of the similar population trend nationally, although high compared with 2% of the population of County Meath generally (as based on the 2022 Census figures).

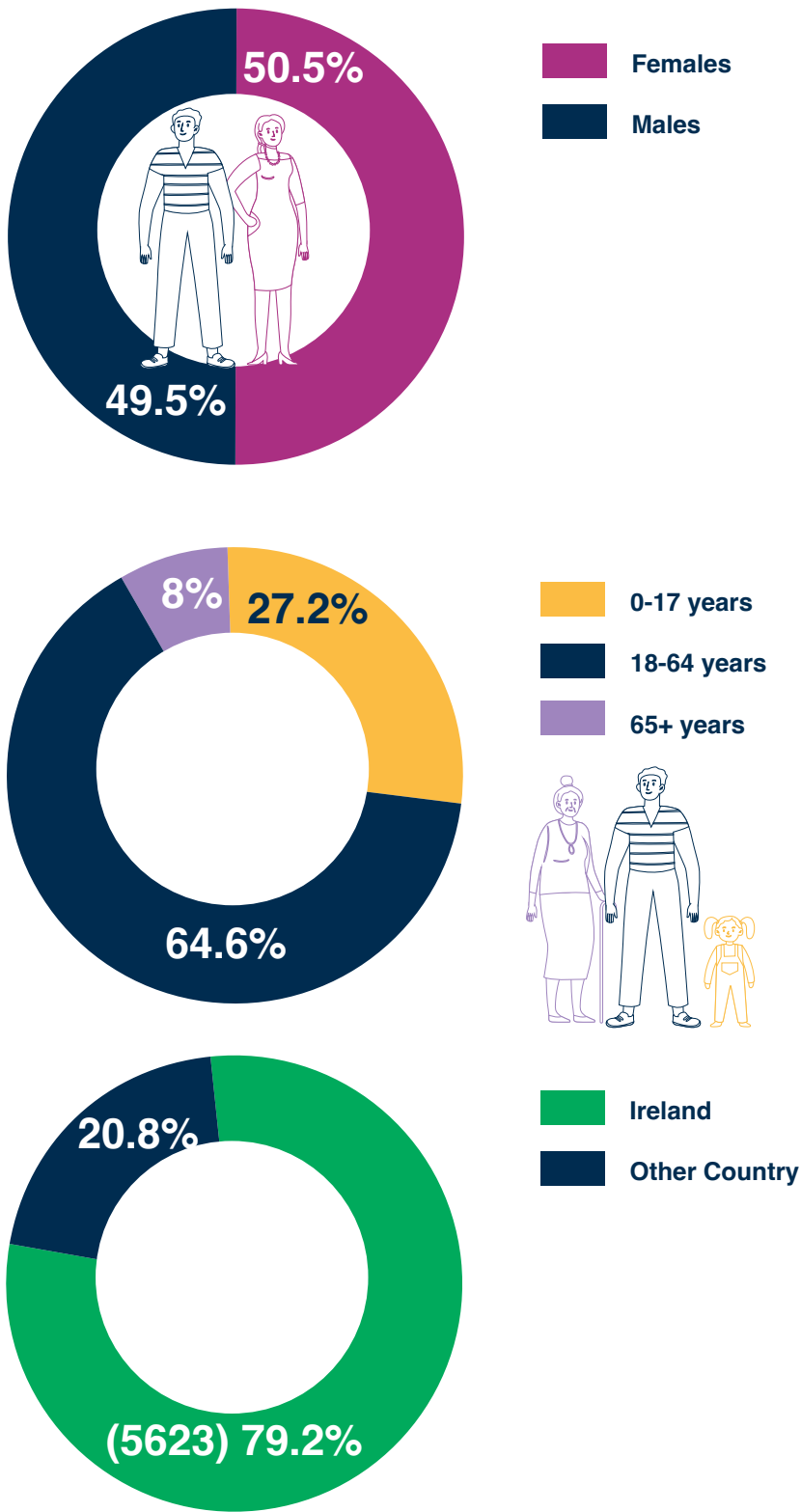
For comparison, during the same period, the population of County Meath has increased by 2.1%, while over the same period, Ireland’s population grew by 8%.

Age: Dunshaughlin’s population is dominated by the 25-50 age group, exceeding the County rate in these age categories (in percentage terms). It is expected that these are working adults, likely to be in the labour force, with many having families thus indicating the need for a range of affordable family friendly facilities, services and activities. Dunshaughlin displays lower numbers of population in the 55-74 age categories which is below the County levels for the same age groups.

Citizenship: Dunshaughlin displays a significant level of population diversity with over 20% or 1,300 of its residents having a country of birth other than Ireland.

Education: According to the Census 2022, about half of Dunshaughlin’s residents have achieved a Degree level education, or above, although a considerable 20% are only achieving a Leaving Certificate. However, this latter figure is in line with national average.



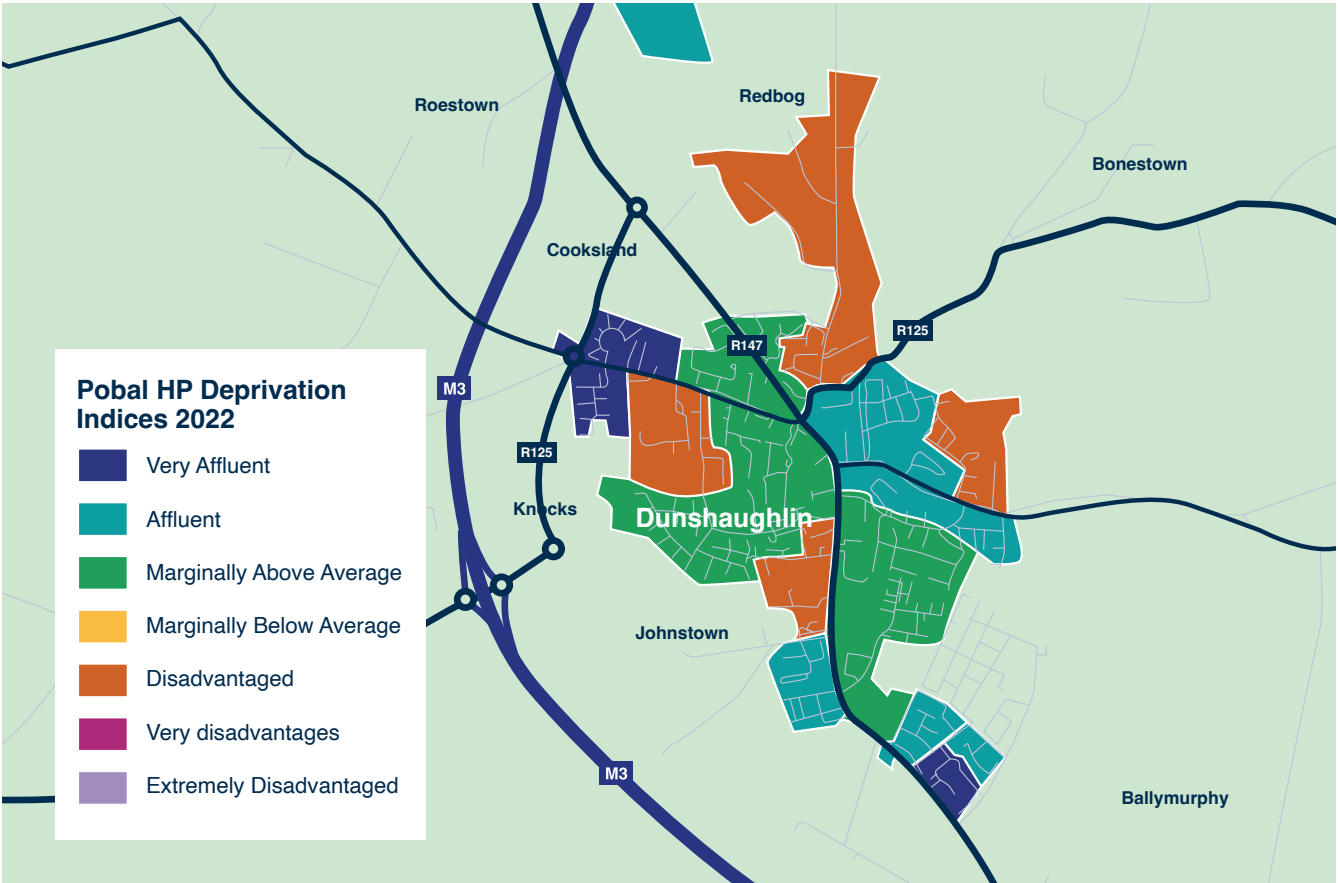


Employment: By far the largest group are those who work in ‘professional occupations’, consisting of 20.6% of the overall total. ‘Associate professional and technical occupations’ comprises the second largest cohort on 13.6%. These statistics again further emphasise the skilled and educated nature of Dunshaughlin’s residents, with just 1.5% being agricultural workers which is well below average.

The Census also records this information and groups respondents into broad industry types. In Dunshaughlin the largest industry of employment recorded for residents is ‘commerce and trade’ which represents almost 27% of the working population (26.9%). Professional services are the second largest industry of employment, with ‘transport and communications’ the third largest of those stated (12%). These figures would indicate a highly skilled, well educated, and potentially higher earning workforce in Dunshaughlin.

Deprivation: The Deprivation Map by Small Areas indicates that the centre of Dunshaughlin does not suffer from deprivation. The Pobal Deprivation Indices by Electoral Division (2016) shows Dunshaughlin village centre with overall deprivation at marginally above average.

Religion: Dunshaughlin’s religious profile would be reflective of the national average, nominally dominated by the Christian faith of typically at about 70-2 % percent Catholic/C.o.I, with a small minority of 3% Muslim, 2% Hindu, Orthodox, etc.. An increasing number are indicating that they have ‘no religion’, which is one of the most significant trends in the Census information across the past two periods. However, it can be said that Dunshaughlin displays a similar religious split settlement compared to the Country.



2.11 The Health Check, Aims of a CTCHC Report



This report describes the findings that were gathered as part of the TCF process which closely follows the CTCHC process but in a more expanded form and which includes a new section of proposed interventions. This CTCHC process has been fully incorporated into this TCF Plan.

Background I A fifteen step Health Check (CTCHC) Programme, which was a collaborative programme was established by the Heritage Council in 2010, and preceding the TCF initiative, is considered a critical component of the Town Centre First Plan.

A Health Check was a descriptive tool for determining some of the issues with the town and can be used to compare its 'health' or vibrancy. Town Centre Health Checks provided a baseline, to help monitor and drive the development of town centres going not backward, forward.

A scaled-up version of the Heritage Council's Collaborative Town Centre Health Check model could potentially result in a national database of towns. The CTCHC Programme was also intended to inform local area plans and included in its scope, Arts, Heritage and Culture; Climate Change Adaptation; Community Health and Well-being; Public Realm, Cultural

Tourism; Heritage-led regeneration; Living in the Town Centre; Strategic Planning and Place-making, among others.

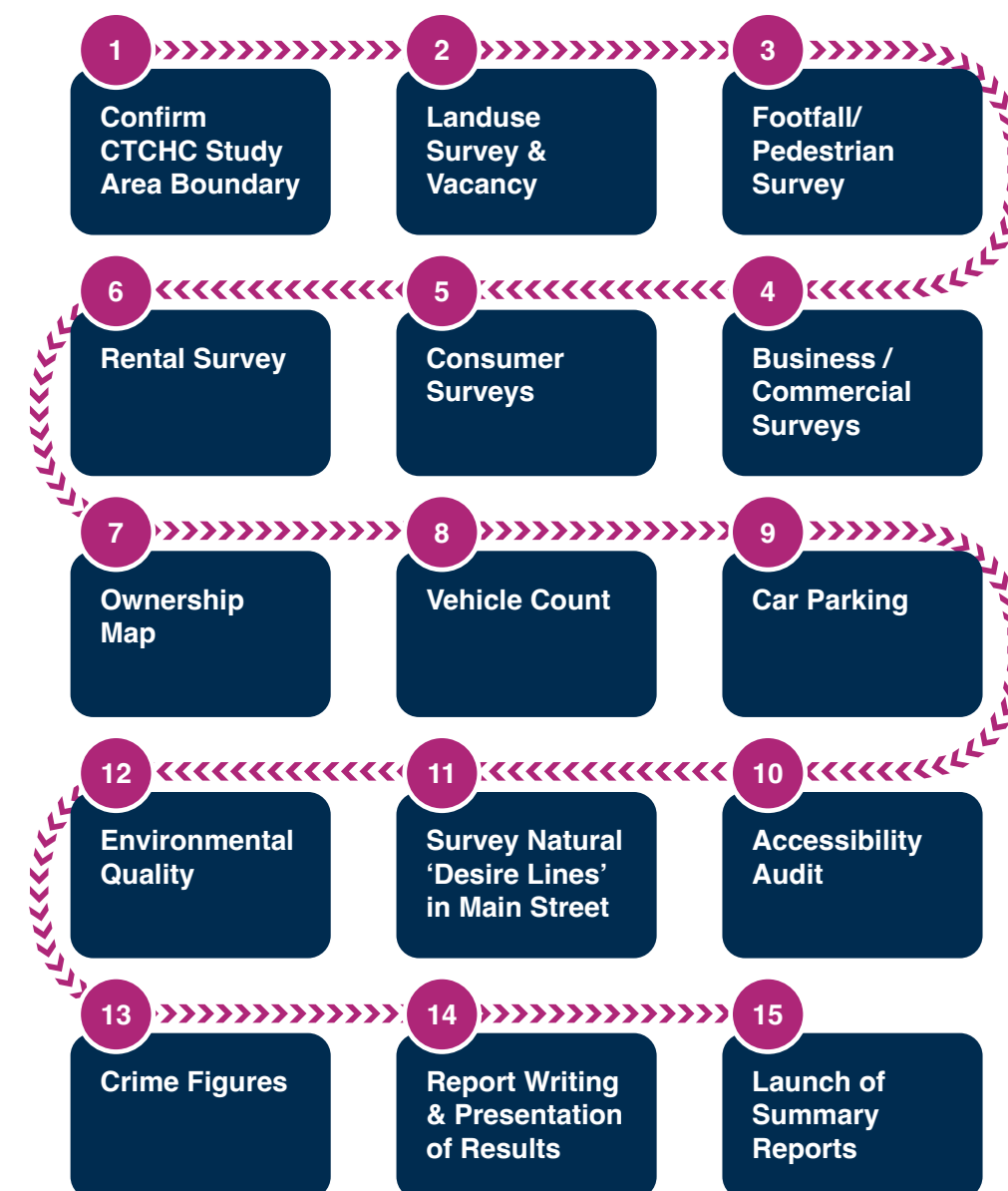
The Collaborative Town Centre Health Check Programme brought key stakeholders and agencies together to take stock of how a town is faring across a variety of parameters through a 'health check' process. It sought to work collaboratively to build on a town's strengths and to address particular challenges which it might face. It aimed to establish an empirical base initially and then bring partners together to work hand in hand with state agencies to attract people back into town centres, to re-imagine the possibilities for a town and to ensure a vibrant future for it.

The output from Health Checks are readily accessible, featuring infographics on a variety of parameters. It formed strong linkages with third level institutions who have been of significant assistance in gathering data and providing an evidence base. The empirical baseline helped monitor and drive development of the town centre.

Work to date included:

- Land Use surveys to establish the overall vacancy rates in the town.
- Pedestrian counts to establish actual town centre visitor numbers.

The 15 Step CTCHC Process



03 Collaboration and Communication

The development of the Dunshaughlin TCF Plan is rooted in consultation with its residents, businesses, community organisations and other key stakeholders. This section summarises how the plan has developed through invaluable involvement and feedback from the local community and key stakeholders.





3.1 The Town Team

In the summer of 2024, the community, was initially invited to attend the inaugural Town Team meeting which was on the 16th of July 2024. Although advertising and the internet was used, the invitations were done primarily face to face with an accompanying leaflet, dropping in to business along the street. The leaflet set out the broad aim of the TCF plan, along with contact details for Meath Regeneration.

This initial public meeting was held in the county council buildings in Dunshaughlin, and was hosted by Meath County Council regeneration team. At this meeting, the attendees were informed of the need to establish a Town Team, which was to assist in the development of the 'Town Centre First' Plan. The Dunshaughlin Team was established early on, and included in its volunteer membership a representation from the many and diverse groups and organisations of Dunshaughlin, with businesses. The Town Team is made up of about 12 individuals all who live or work in Dunshaughlin. Members are committed to the TCF Plan, being the most recent plan to improve the

environs of Dunshaughlin. All worked in collaboration with Meath County Council to assist in compiling this 'Dunshaughlin Town Centre' study.

Later on, in September and during two days of the Harvest Festival, a wide-ranging consultation survey was distributed by hand to Dunshaughlin residents, which was also made available online. This got a very good response of almost 400 completed surveys. A subsequent 'Town Hall' public meeting was held which was well attended and received.



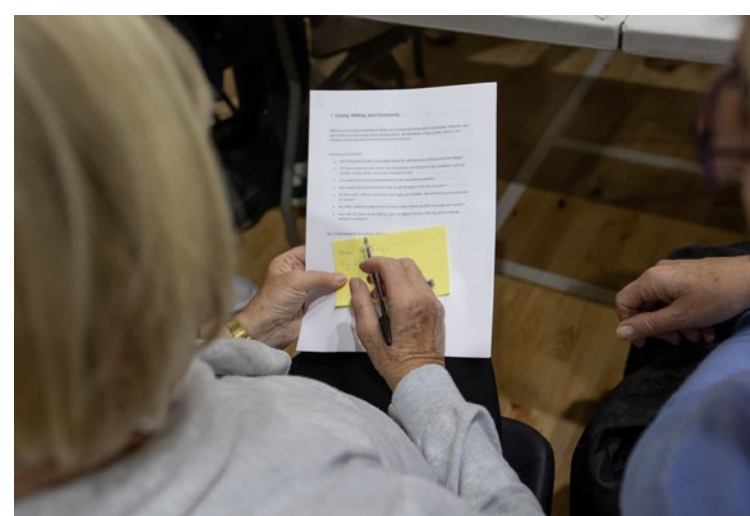
3.2 Engagement process

Several consultation events and meetings have been undertaken, which includes members of the public, the Town Team, County Council members and officers, educational establishments, other local groups and consultant organisations.

Engagement activities and consultation events were facilitated by the Town team with support from Meath County Council.

These meetings have resulted in raising awareness and establishing a wide range of comments which ultimately helped to define and inform the following:

- The local context and broader community needs and aspirations.
- An understanding of how spaces are used.
- An understanding of the current provisions in Dunshaughlin and any deficits or desires identified.
- The issues and constraints of the sites and wider area.
- The overarching aspirational vision statement.
- The six key themes which summarise the underlying principles for positive change.
- The proposals.



Engagement process Summary

Public consultation drop in events on

- 16 July 2024 - First public meeting to inform and establish the Town Team, with follow on meetings.
- Meeting and publicising the Public Consultation survey during the Dunshaughlin Harvest Festival, 29-29 September 2024 with over 400 responses collected.
- Town Hall meeting of 17th October 2024 which was attended by upwards of 100 persons.
- Online workshops are proposed to be held with business owners and stakeholders. This can include updates to the project as required throughout the process.
- A door to door leaflet drop about the commencement of the Town Centre First process was carried out by Meath County Council and business owners were encouraged to join the Town Team.
- Schools consultation in person led by the Town Team in February 2025

These events were set up to raise awareness amongst the local community about the regeneration study, the TCF process and inform them on how to get involved and share their views. The events helped to establish an understanding of how people are using the town, along with the strengths, challenges and opportunities from a local perspective. The experience also provided a space to facilitate conversations between the community and the design team. These events were well attended, which resulted in gathering hundreds of comments and informative insight for the plan.

Information boards were placed on public display to present details on the plan.

Online Consultation Survey

- The consultation survey was used to gain an understanding of the likes and dislikes of the local community regarding their town about their town and further record areas of improvement. The surveys were accessible in paper format on the public consultation day in September, and in online format throughout with the possibility of sending through additional comments for the design team or Town Team, with over 400 responses collected.

Workshops with invited community representatives

- The workshop was an opportunity for the design team to present and discuss the initial findings of the public consultation with the Town Team and other locals interested in the project and to explore more detailed aspects of the project.
- Following a low attendance and response rate from younger age groups within Dunshaughlin, the design team engaged in the form of an in-class 'Workshop' with all the area primary schools, and the Transition year students from the Dunshaughlin local community college, with ages ranging from ten to sixteen years.
- This session and discussions recorded the young students' comments in response to relevant issues surrounding how the village centre and existing amenities in Dunshaughlin could be improved, and what they would like to see within the town.

Semi-structured one-to-one sessions with key stakeholders

The Regen Team intend to conduct one-to-one engagement sessions with key members of the community to gain more detailed input into the plan, including:

- Their perceptions on the town generally.
- The facilities and amenities.
- How Dunshaughlin could be improved, particularly regarding business, culture, education, facilities, arts and housing.

This engagement shall take the form of written responses, followed up by phone calls and meetings, and the responses will help to shape the outcomes of the plan.



3.3 The Process

First Consultation

As noted, the first consultation gathered insight into resident's thoughts and aspirations for the village centre.

This consultation, launched at the Harvest Festival, ran over several weeks in the fall of 2024, during which an online survey was available. An in-person 'town hall' event was also held later in October 2024.

In general the results confirm the status of the village with the majority of the respondents dwelling within a short distance from the main street, commuting to work, and visiting the village mainly for retail and social. However a significant and quite surprising proportion, despite the potential for surveys to be loaded in nature, was that on analysis over 90% of respondents confirmed that they currently use the train to get to Dublin - despite the nearest station being at some 12K distance away, close to Dunboyne.

In addition and in general, the respondents could be said to be unhappy with the current public realm, walking, parking, and public transport provisions, while the public park and playground was confirmed as desiring further work.

The next two pages and appendices, show present the feedback received from the public engagement, consultation and surveys carried out during the development of the Town Centre First Plan for Dunshaughlin.



Second Consultation

A lively in-person ‘town hall’ event was also held later in October 2024.

The following pages present the survey results for the questions asked. The findings based on the first consultation are the basis of the TCF plan.

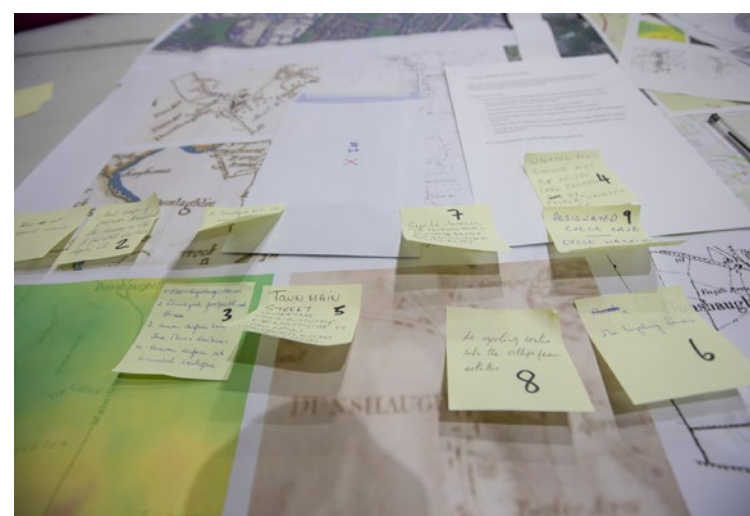
The second consultation was very informative as several areas of concern were teased out in particular, security concerns of the village, such as St Seachnall grounds, were brought to the fore in a way which was not apparent from the online consultation.

The following headings were used to prompt discussion:

- Cycling, Walking, and Connectivity
- Public Transport, Traffic and Parking
- Streets and Public Spaces
- Amenities and Recreation
- Social Contact
- Feeling Safe

Participants to the workshops were given a set time to review and finalise points under these headings.

The groups then rotated onto the next topic until all had an opportunity to review and input. As a further aid to the discussions these headings were further expanded on, and the results edited and as presented as on this last page.



3.4

The Schools Consultation

With thanks to the participants from An Gaelscoil, Dunshaughlin N.S., Community N.S., Coláiste Ríoga, and the post primary Community College, led by Dunshaughlin Town Team.

A lively response was obtained from the younger age groups within Dunshaughlin, during sessions that took place in March-April 2025. The Town Team led the engagement in the form of an in-class 'Workshop', for all the area primary schools, plus the Transition year students from the Dunshaughlin local community college, with ages ranging from ten to sixteen years.

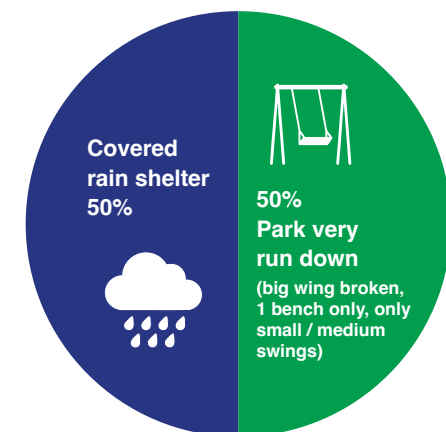
The following below pages present the a summary of the survey results for the questions asked, which was very informative as several areas were of concern were teased out.

Play Areas	Travel to School	Streetscape + Village	Park
Not enough 12 Cycle track 8	Walk 12 Bus 3 Bicycle 6	Run down buildings 14 So many potholes 10 Impossible to get out at Clara Road 9 Caretts + others beside bus horrible 9	More swings older teenagers neg them 12- only for different ages
After school activities	Travel to friends	Negative about Village	Shops
Walk - 14 Cycle - 1 Driven - 15	Walk - 7 Cycle - 0 Driven - 7	Too many houses 8 Should have entrance AND Exit at bottle bank 6 Too many cars 9	Would like more shops

"Could that be made into a place for us to meet and play our board games or table tennis?"
(The Old Courthouse)

Public Realm:

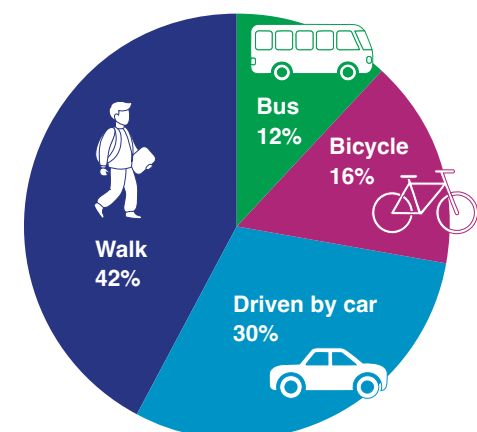
- With regard to play there was a general need for more facilities expressed. A transition year highlighted the need for indoor play areas.
- A third of the children also have prioritised a grading of the play facility by age groups.
- A fairly even split of requirements were identified, a significant percentage requesting basketball facility, and with a priority list of most desirable play equipment.



Transport:

- Negative aspects of the village are primarily traffic related - traffic congestion was a big issue, with parents trying to get them to and from school and then trying to get to work in time etc, and a lot of conversation on the bypass not really working satisfactorily.
- A significant portion walk to school with the balance by other means such as car bicycle and some by bus. The older children surveyed don't use bicycles at all.
- Travel generally is by foot, with car generally in second and cycling being in the minority.

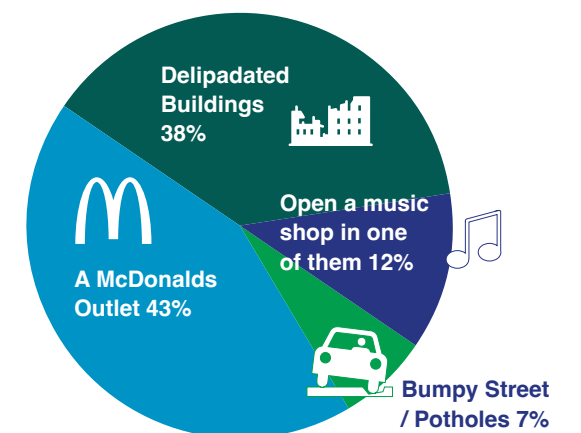
Travel to School



Regeneration:

- A significant concern raised by in the village centre was to do with dereliction, with many questions and good suggestions as to the alternate uses of the buildings.
- The stalled Courthouse project was raised as a big disappointment for the transition year.
- Over-development of (only) housing was also raised.
- More shops desirable

Older children's Streetscape & Village concerns



04 Defining the Place

Defining the place, Key themes, strategic priorities and proposed interventions. This section sets the vision and key themes derived from analytical and engagement work. A series of proposals are presented here which also include many of the identified priorities. The proposals comprise of preliminary concepts and potential opportunities for Dunshaughlin's future.



The vision

A primary aim for a 'Town Centre First' plan, is to generate a vision for the future of an urban settlement.

This resultant plan is the end result of the productive collaboration between residents and Meath County Council.

The following Vision Statement was built on existing strengths, and by incorporating priorities that had emerged from the public consultations, identified practical steps to achieve an improved physical environment.

“This plan responds sensitively to the existing environment, and sets a strategy for adapting and enhancing the village for the 21C” - Dunshaughlin TCF Team.

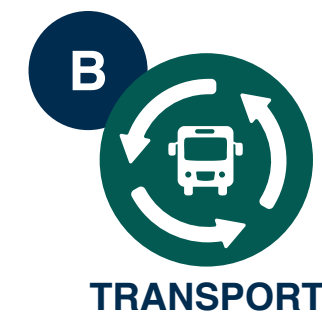


4.0 Community Priorities, TCF Project Shortlist

Respondents to the online, consultation naturally confirmed a desire to see many more facilities and services brought to the village as well as identifying issues and concerns regarding the physic environment. This first survey in September 2024 also identified a need for improved youth facilities which have been notably limited historically in Dunshaughlin.

Using the survey information, a second 'workshop' consultation, took place in October 2024 to develop further the information received from the first survey. For this, a range of six no main 'areas for improvement' themes were developed, and a consensus formed regarding actions to be taken to resolve the issue at hand. Following this successful 'Town Hall' meeting, an agreed priorities list was established, by the Town team.

This Town Team priority list includes improved public realm, new pedestrian routes, completion of ring roads, park and ride, redesign of main street junctions, upgrade of parks and new civic spaces. This list under the headings below, A to F inc., has been incorporated into priority actionable items in the Town Centre First Plan.



4.1 Key themes, Aims, Strategic Priorities and proposed interventions

The structure, derived from the outcomes from the ‘Town Centre First’ consultation process can be understood and interpreted as follows: These six number overarching themes which have emerged through engagement and contextual analysis, and reflected throughout as the strategic priorities and proposed interventions.

As noted previously, these six main ‘areas for improvement’ A to F inclusive, represent the priorities from the below list, regarding the most prevalent issues, identified by the Town Team.

The aim would be to endeavour to eventually deliver on every project within the Town Centre First Plan, be it one, two or in combination within the same proposal.

The plan endeavours to ensure that all project proposals contained are carried out with due regards of the 17 SDG’s..



The UN Global Goals for Sustainable Development

A		Connectivity	A compact urban location for walking and cycling.
B		Transport	Enhancing and improving existing strong regional links.
C		Public Realm	Buildings and spaces of the highest quality design and upkeep.
D		Amenities	A good environment for people.
E		Social	A friendly and safe place with accessible spaces for everyone.
F		Security	An active and supported community and flourishing economy.

Proposals within each of the following themes, outline the key priorities and interventions to drive the revitalisation of Dunshaughlin in a sustainable manner. The proposals have been driven by the community’s aspirations, the design and research analysis, and the wider policy context.

Climate concerns



The climate crisis presents a significant challenge for towns and settlements across the country, particularly smaller but rapidly growing towns such as Dunshaughlin. Its impacts are evident in issues like biodiversity loss within town centres and pressures on natural environments caused by emissions and increasing traffic volumes.

As a DZ in the County, The Dunshaughlin Town Centre First Plan responds to these challenges by prioritising climate action and sustainability throughout its vision and implementation. While individual objectives do not get into the specific details every sustainable measure, the principles of climate resilience, best practice, and nature-based solutions will underpin all future projects and designs.



Key approaches include:

Greener Transport Infrastructure

Expanding sustainable transport options through improved public transport connections, enhanced facilities, and alternative modes of travel. This includes safer pedestrian linkages and dedicated cycling routes to reduce car dependency and emissions in line with Meath County Council's active travel plans.



Green Public Realm and Amenity Spaces

Assessment of exiting public realm and amenity spaces to determine quality of the existing infrastructure. Assessment can then determine the need/requirement for the delivery of any further high-quality, accessible public spaces that incorporate planting, greening, and biodiversity enhancements to improve air quality and create a more pleasant, healthier environment for residents and visitors.



Resource Efficiency through Adaptive Reuse of Existing Building Stock

In line with Sustainable Development Goal 13 and national policy, the plan promotes reactivating and re-purposing existing buildings ahead of new-build development, reducing embodied carbon and supporting compact growth. The delivery of this objective is largely in the control of the private land/property owners.



Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy

Accelerate retrofitting, promote renewable energy uptake, and reduce energy poverty in the town.



Through these measures, the TCF Plan seeks to position Dunshaughlin as a model for sustainable town centre regeneration, ensuring that climate action is embedded in every stage of planning and delivery.

4.2

The Town Team Priorities

The below items include the priorities that were proposed by the Town team, are all included in the TCF Plan themes, along with E (Social) and F (Security) from previous page.



(A.) Active Travel, (Walking, Cycling), Connectivity

- Path Quality (Level, Consistency, Crossings)
- Street Lighting Enhancements
- Physical Clutter (Advertisements, Planters)
- New Path: Workhouse (MCC CASE: 313229)
- New Path: Water Tower
- New Path: Supple Link to Park



(B.) Traffic, Parking and Public Transport

- Link Road(s)
- High Priority for Train Station with hourly Dublin Passenger Service
- Park & Ride
- Road Markings
- SuperValu Junction/Parking



(C.) Str Seats and Public Spaces

- Derelict/Vacant Building Usage
- Main St. Façade Coherence
- Greenspace: Council Offices
- Greenspace: Medical Centre
- Town Centre Plaza (Fire Station)



(D.) Amenities & Recreation

- Courthouse (Civic, Cultural, Community Space)
- New Park: Eco Park (7th Meath Scouts/ Newell)
- Astro Pitches (DYFC)
- Allotments
- Historical Site Highlighting
- Sensory Garden (Tidy Towns)

4.3

Thematic Components, incorporating the Town Team’s priorities.

The following pages illustrate the Town Centre Projects, organised into ten thematic groupings. Although they can vary in scale and character, all seek to fulfil the vision and aims for the town.



Theme 01	Revitalising Culture & the Arts Courthouse (Civic, Cultural, Community Space) / Historical Site Highlighting
Theme 02	Reanimating Built-Heritage Path Quality (Level, Consistency, Crossings) / Street Lighting Enhancements / Physical / Clutter (Advertisements, Planters) New Path: Workhouse (MCC Case: 313229) / Road Markings / SuperValu junction / Parking
Theme 03	Social inclusion, Community Spirit, Nature & Well Being New Park: Eco Park (7th Meath Scouts / Newell)

Theme 04	Connectivity Pathing Quality (Level, Consistency, Crossings) / New Path: Water Tower / New Path: Supple Link to park / Transportation Improvements / Link road(s) / Park & Ride
Theme 05	Re-Purposing Vacant & Derelict Buildings Derelict / Vacant Building Usage
Theme 06	Vibrant Local Economy Main St. Façade Coherence
Theme 07	Sustainable Urban Economy Allotments

Theme 08	Attracting Visitors Sensory Garden (Tidy Towns)
Theme 09	Natural Environment & Biodiversity Greenspace: Council Offices / Greenspace: Medical Centre
Theme 10	Re-Imagining Public Spaces Town Centre Plaza (Fire Station)

Theme 01



Revitalising Culture & the Arts

Introduction

Dunshaughlin has a long-standing record of a vibrant artistic and cultural scene, driven in the main by amateur and volunteer groups. These include the work by the Dunshaughlin Players, Dunshaughlin Choral Society, Acting Academy Dunshaughlin, Dunshaughlin Harvest Festival, Dunshaughlin Dance, Dunshaughlin Poetry Town, Dunshaughlin Adult Book Club, The Friday Club and the Brownies, the work of many local artists, to name but a few.

In order to address a significant deficit in provision for the arts, culture and creative sectors, the TCF plan aims to strengthen the local arts and culture scene. As it is recognised that there are a range of existing cultural and artistic activities ongoing in Dunshaughlin. It is the intention of the plan, and features as proposals within it, to support and grow these existing endeavours.

The aim is to provide appropriate space to encourage the arts to grow and become a focus of the town, and breathe new life into the village centre.

The emphasis on arts and culture within this plan has been strongly supported by the wider community who showed a shared ambition to provide more spaces, support and opportunities for arts and culture in Dunshaughlin Town Centre.



A 2019 Review of Arts Centres and Venues, commissioned by the Arts Council and City and County Management Association (CCMA), found that the overall national provision of arts centres and venues is 2.9 per 100,000 persons, but the figure for County Meath (excluding Meath) is just 1 per 100,000, which is well below average. The Arts Council and CCMA Framework for Collaboration agrees that they will work together more strategically in developing the arts in Ireland. A priority for the partnership is to develop the infrastructure for the arts.



*Above: Extract with inset, from the previous 2015 LAP, including a OMP 'DUF * 2000.*

Proposal 01 - The Performance Space (Cont.), Town Plaza Civic Space (The ‘Old Fire Station’)

Background I As noted previously, there is an existing proposal for re-use of the court building in this location. The 18C courthouse project is a key heritage building in Dunshaughlin. Being listed as of regional rating under the NIAH as of special Interest under Architectural, Historical, Social, and Technical, is a Protected Structure.

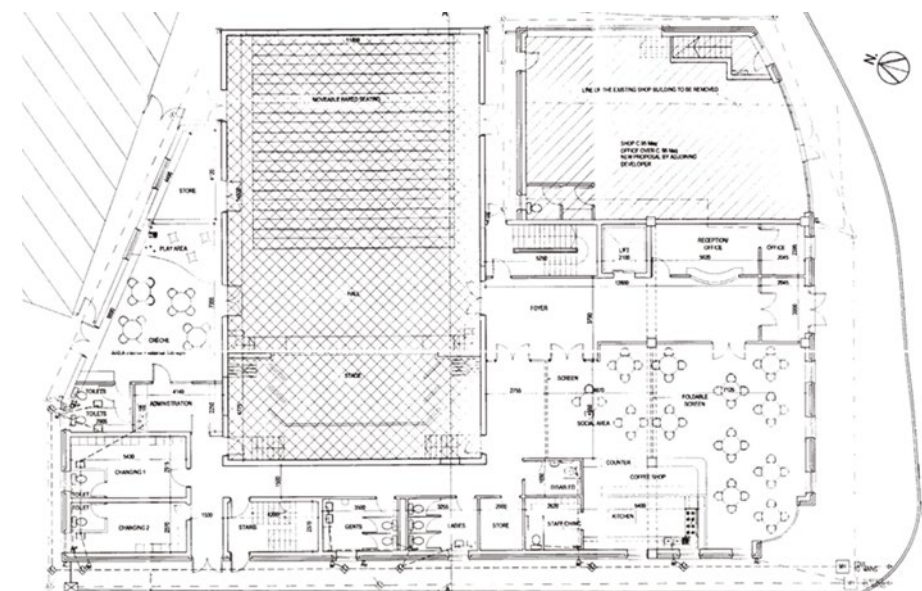
There exists a very successful local theatre group ‘Dunshaughlin Players Drama Group’ who have been running productions for over 25 years. Although there is no dedicated performance space at the moment locally, this group stages a minimum of two shows annually, a main play in spring and with a Comedy Festival at the Arch Bar in Winter.

Proposal I The proposal currently is for the renovation of the building including roof repairs and interior works to support the community activities which shall include the work of the Theatre Company and local artists. Bringing this historic structure which has a 60ms multi purpose performance space to a higher standard, would be invaluable to the town of Dunshaughlin. Plans include improved accessibility, rehearsal and performance spaces for the local community. With Dunshaughlin being a DZ this proposed civic space would play a vital role as a location for climate action related talks and workshops along with other outreach events. This proposal is important for the successfulness of Dunshaughlin DZ as a core focus for each DZ is to build capacity in the area of climate action for residents who live in and around it.

Benefits can include I In providing the right environment to promote media and performing arts;

- Recognise the role for everyday creative practices and forms.
- Use creative arts to address social issues.
- To encourage alliances and inter-linkages between groups and institutions that reflects the challenging complexity, diversity and cooperation that characterises everyday life.
- Retaining and enhancing existing character and distinctiveness, using the heritage assets of the quarter as an inspirational starting point.
- Help to increase night-time trade for local cafés, restaurants and hotels.

It was noted during consultations that the existing town centre location of the fire station may not be optimal location for this service. While the Dunshaughlin Garda Station is open at times to the public, it functions in the main as the Divisional Traffic Corps base, which of necessity requires many and varied specialist vehicles. Similarly, as with the court building, modernisation and rationalising of building infrastructure may present an opportunity in the future, for both fire station and the Garda station to be relocated to a purpose-built facility. The sites could then be acquired, and the sites and buildings be reused into a plaza envisioned, as per the artists impression of the Town Civic Space.



G.A. plan of 'The Venue' Ratoath, by D-L Architects, a similar scope of project to Dunshaughlin. Note the ratio of 60:40 generally required support spaces, cloaks, refreshments etc, to the actual net performance area.

T2. Town Plaza (Fire Station) including the courthouse project

The multi-purpose remote working, innovation, cultural & community centre.

Background I Dunshaughlin has an identified deficit in multi-functional community spaces and an ambition to build the remote-working, cultural, creative and community sectors in the town centre.

The provision of this could ensure Dunshaughlin's liveability as a vibrant hub and ensure that Dunshaughlin will be the premier location for talented people to work and live, a town to develop careers and economic potential and to raise families through working closely with the Local Economic Development section in Meath County Council and Dunshaughlin Enterprise Hub. International and national precedence demonstrates that community centres rooted in and driven by a committed community are valuable arts, culture, heritage and tourism contributors and have a strong educational, community and social inclusion and integration remit.

A compelling innovation as a vibrant hub could ensure that Dunshaughlin will be the premier location for talented people to work and live, a town to develop careers and economic potential and to raise families. In addition this centre with a dynamic management commitment, operated by skilled and

knowledgeable management, marketed on a local, regional and national basis, energised through stimulating educational programmes, would significantly enhance the facilities offering in South Meath.

Remote working facilities are proven to provide communities with a higher quality of life, generating material benefits for the local economy and the society, directly and indirectly. At the same time reducing their climate impacts associated with transport emissions commuting to and from the workplace. Our Rural Future 2021-2025 sets out the government's focus for the development of our rural communities over the coming years, its focus on the opportunities remote working offer to revitalising rural communities is the cornerstone of the vision for the future which focuses on "importance of vibrant and lived-in rural places, and the potential to create quality jobs".

The proposals to reuse the courthouse building has been spearheaded over the last decade, by the local community. This proposed renovation of an existing buildings is a great example of the sustainable use of existing buildings in an urban setting, through reduced requirement of new raw materials which would be required for new builds.

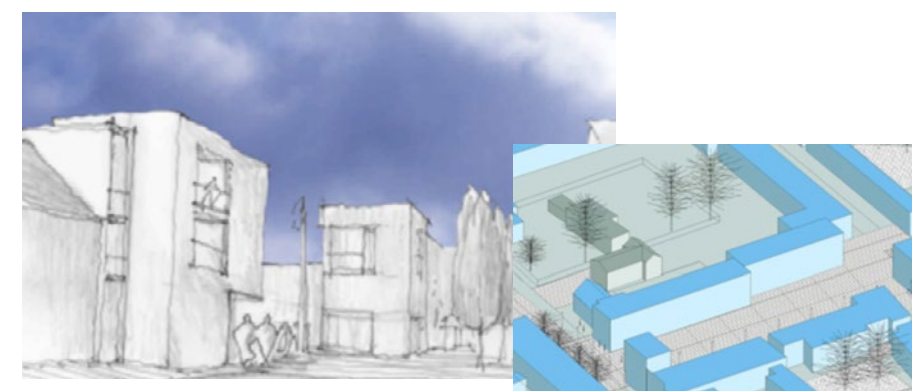
This prominent historic building in the centre of Dunshaughlin could facilitate the provision of a centre for the innovation, community and arts within Dunshaughlin, both meeting the existing needs of the local population and attracting visitors to the town.

The building is an imposing, historically important building in the heart of the village, dating from 1799, and although listed as a protected structure, is currently at risk of falling into disuse and disrepair. The size of the building and the potential refurbishment costs may indicate that a single use proposal may not be feasible.

Dunshaughlin's Fire Station being sited in the middle of Dunshaughlin has its own challenges around access / egress etc, especially with the ever increasing traffic volumes in the town. It is proposed that a new space is identified and invested in to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of essential emergency services in optimised. In addition, the current ESB premises could also be reconsidered whether it is suitable for such a central location. This area could be put back into the public realm as a central plaza, civic meeting space used for markets, events, gatherings, and general use by the public.



Cross section from the main street through suggested new Civic Space.*



The redevelopment and retention of this prominent historic building in the centre of Dunshaughlin will facilitate the provision of a hub for the innovation, community and arts within Dunshaughlin, both meeting the existing needs of the local population and attracting visitors to the town.

Adjacent sites which include an existing fire station building of approximately 250 square meters, and a older phone exchange of approximately 500ms in area, represent a significant potential for a related additional development opportunity.

Proposal I To acquire and renovate several buildings in the adjacent area which are redundant or no longer fit for purpose, to the side and rear of the courthouse. The courthouse and adjoining buildings could be refurbished into a multi-purpose innovation, cultural and community centre which could host an art gallery, workshops, a display area, and concerts.

This will offer independent, dedicated and customised facilities for a range of complimentary uses, innovative, enterprise, community, artistic, heritage and cultural endeavours. The climate impact of this project is seen throughout this proposal with the efficient use of existing buildings, giving them new life and purpose, also the end use of the buildings as a remote working facility and community hub will result in reduced commuting for those who use the buildings.

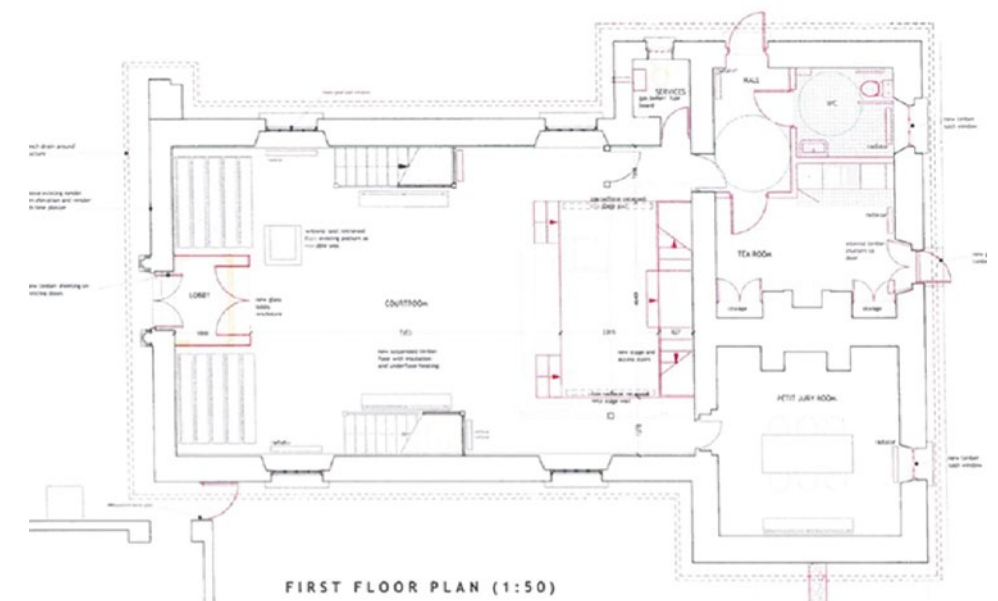
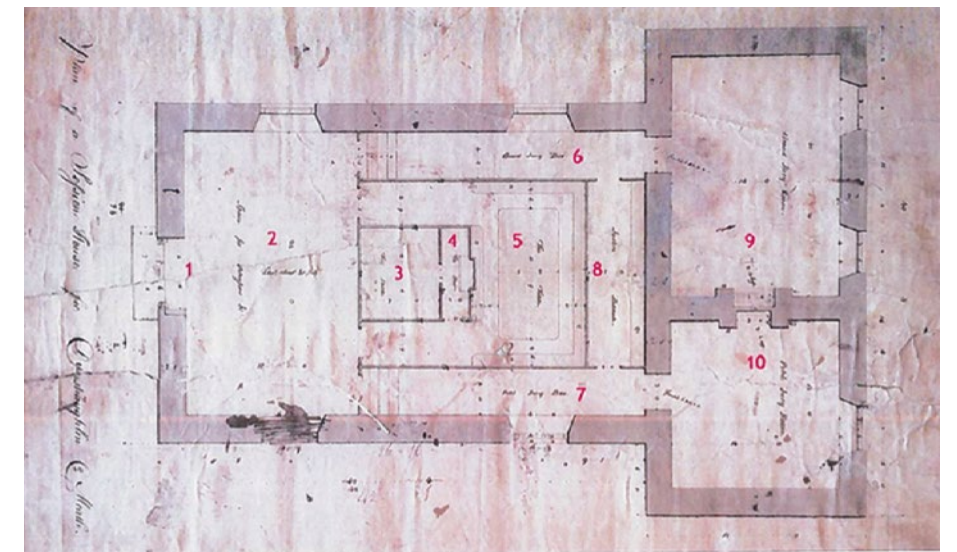
The centre will accommodate and develop the activities of existing business, including remote working facilities as well as local arts and performance-based groups; provide exhibition space for visual media and conference and meeting facilities for local and regional businesses and agencies.

The buildings involved in this project will be restored in such a way that the heritage of the building is safeguarded, and any historical and cultural significance of the building

truly enhanced, leaving a lasting legacy for the in the local community. During the development and renovation of buildings associated with the project, sustainability will be a central focus, for example, taking due regard for energy efficiency technology and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUD's).

The conceptual vision is that the complex shall facilitate the following: A multi-purpose performance and exhibition space to facilitate all types of performance such as visiting national and international groups, but with a strong emphasis on community drama and musical groups in a commercial context. This could include retractable seating bank providing a capacity for around 60 persons along with a removable stage area. The “Hub” - A place where entrepreneurs and other members can convene, network, learn, create, and celebrate. The “Hub” is to be housed in an iconic building redesigned to facilitate connections and collaborations and will host events big and small. The “Hub” may also be home to partners who wish to co-locate and may feature a café or other spaces for informal meetings, reflection, or refreshment. Social community facilities and providing seamless access to support & services.

Dunshaughlin Courthouse is in a focal point of the town and already the subject of a revitalisation plan to enhance its standing and function within Dunshaughlin. Once the interior work is completed it is intended that the space is used for community group meetings, exhibition events, markets etc.



A proposal by Richard Mc Loughlin and Desmond Byrne Architects, (Lotts) from 2014

Proposal 02 - Enhancing and developing existing strong Literary links and connections.

Literary links: Developing connections to Dunsany and Lavin, and many others.

Background I Dunshaughlin has a strong cultural history, embedded in the founding of the Irish literary scene and the legacy of Lord Dunsany and Mary Lavin, among others. Dunshaughlin has the potential to strengthen and better promote these links, providing space and support for these endeavours to flourish.

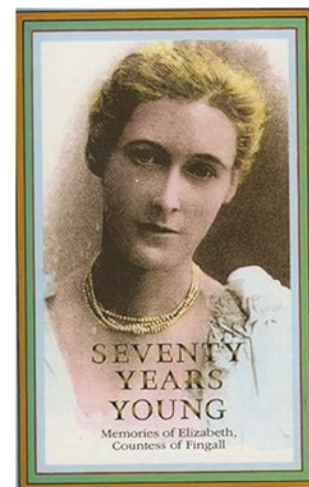
Proposal I The proposal is to consider and explore how connections to the Irish Literary Scene, can be strengthened and promoted, capitalising on existing connections through creative performance.

Festivals and events which could provide dedicated exhibition space to explore and animate the literary links of Dunshaughlin, could be coordinated through a permanent facility.

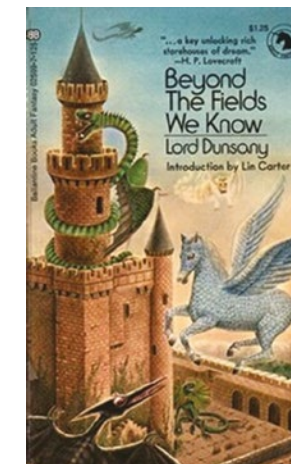
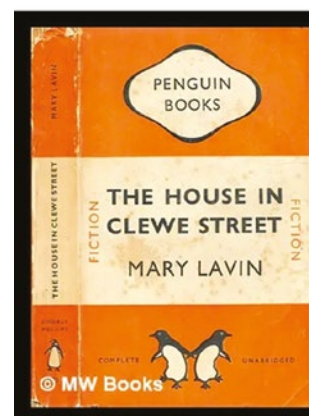
Benefits

- Developing Dunshaughlin's unique cultural identity.
- Providing opportunities to attract more visitors.
- Increasing trade for local cafés, restaurants and hotels.
- Ensure the legacy of the Irish Literary scene remains alive.

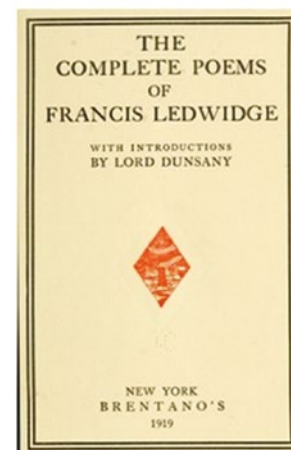
One of the great Anglo-Irish memoirs, by Elizabeth Burke (11th Countess of Fingall) 1937



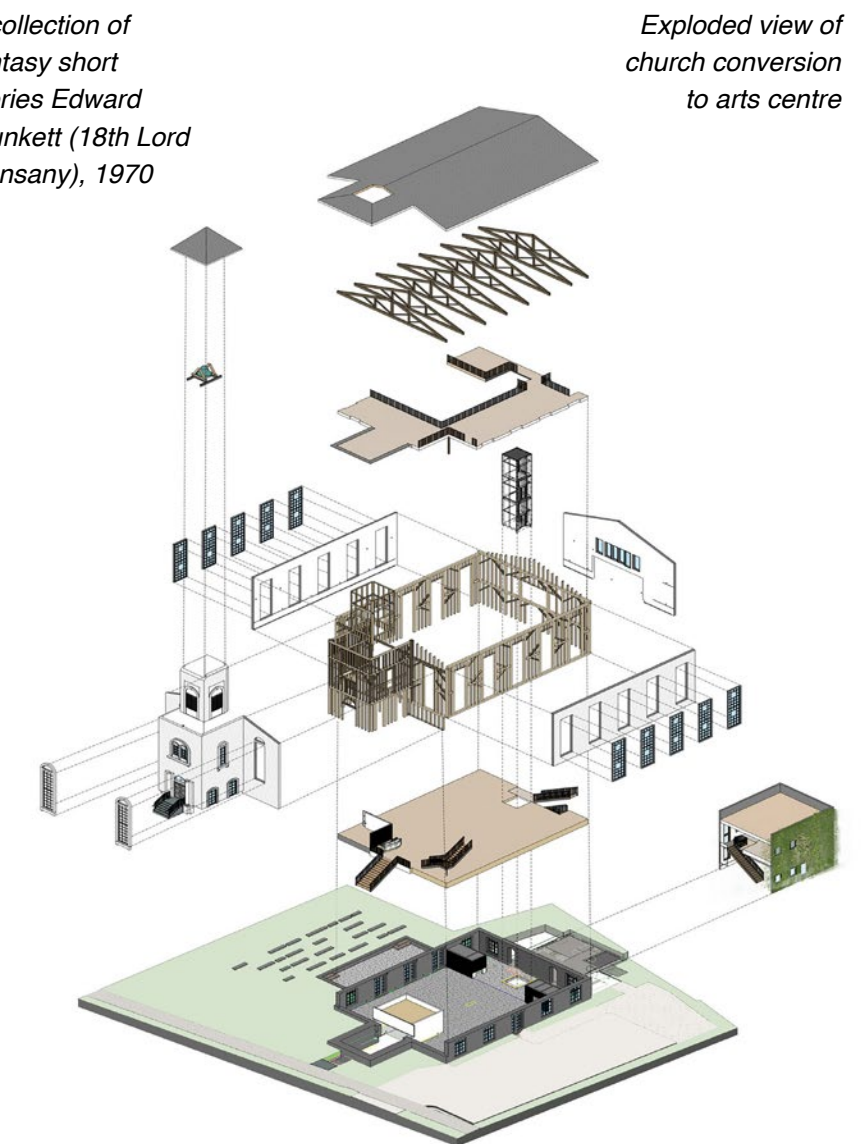
An absorbing catholic family saga, Mary Lavin, a pioneering women's writer, former Bective resident, 1945.



A collection of fantasy short stories Edward Plunkett (18th Lord Dunsany), 1970



Francis Ledwidge, from Slane, WW1 poetry, 1917.



Exploded view of church conversion to arts centre

To the northerly end of the village , an early 5C missionary known as Seachnall is believed to have a religious establishment where the present-day Church of Ireland is located. This site, somewhat setback is located after the Village Grill and just before the Veterinary Hospital.

Should this St.Seachnall's become surplus to the Anglican liturgical requirements in the future, a ready community use could be provided for the facility. The heritage-listed church in Dunshaughlin could potentially be re-purposed into a literary venue /destination to celebrate the generally Anglo-Irish literary nearby connections with the village.

Within the grounds it is also noteworthy that, just a few metres from the 18C church, a large arch is still standing, along with other masonry fragments.

These are surviving remnants from the much earlier and larger Augustinian foundation. In addition and fortunately the associated eight-sided, symbolically - important, baptismal font from this abbey chapel has survived. Other significant ancient artefacts include a pre-Romanesque carved door lintel, pre-dating the Norman establishments. This false-relief carved stone lintel , of probably eight century origin, illustrates of a Christian scene, which a variation of a dominant theme that also appears on several other Co Meath medieval Christian artefacts.

The proposal could include a theatre as well as permanent museum location to house and preserve the many significant historic surviving stone sculptures in situ, and objects of interest.



Early Christian art, Dunshaughlin



Dunshaughlin's Medieval Christian art font



Interior of chapel

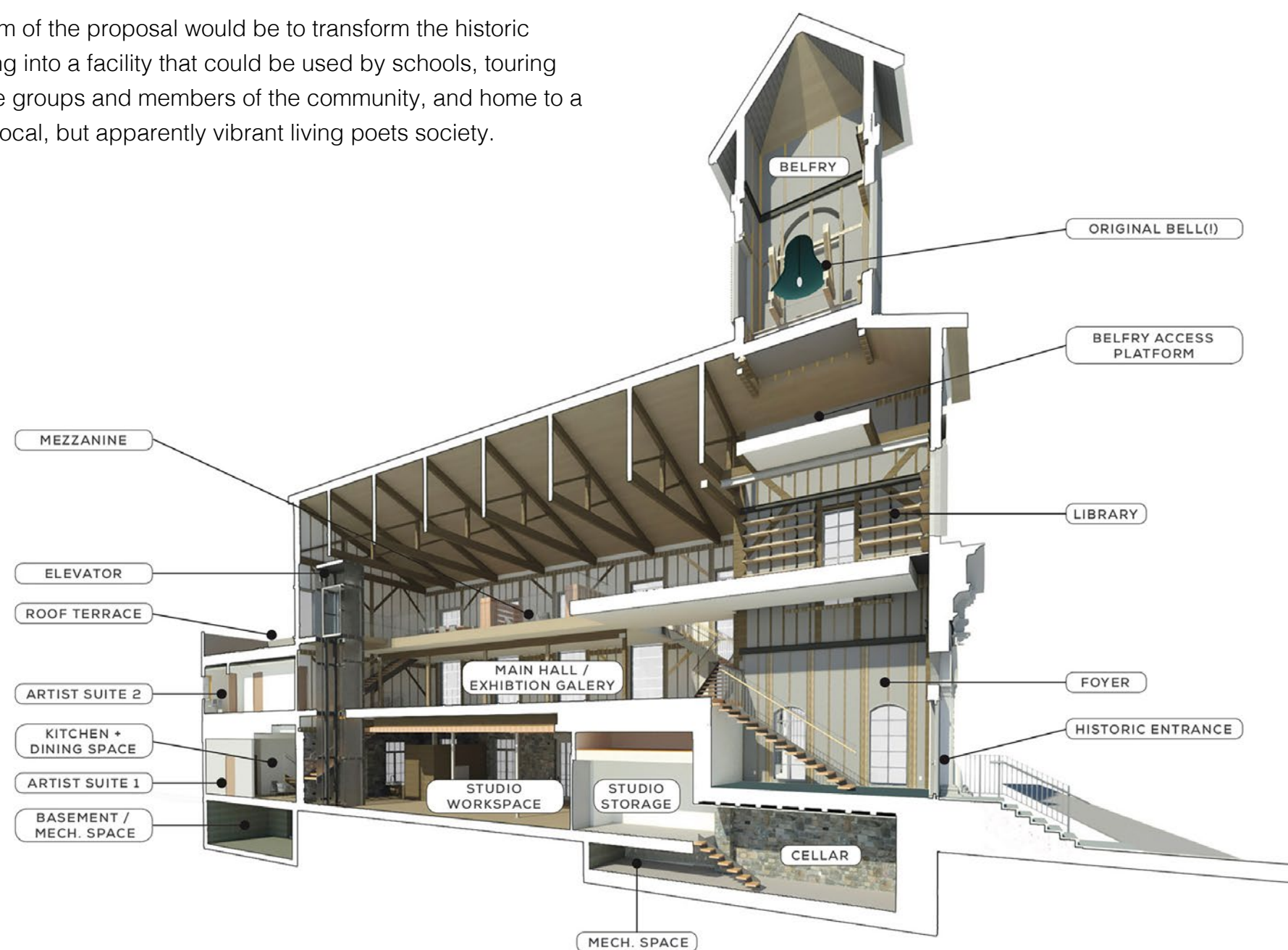
Background I With the trend in increasing secularisation which is not unique to Ireland, and congregations continue to shrink, many churches are now being less and less for their traditional purpose, are being de-consecrated with ownership being de-vested from religious orders.

When left underused they can tend to become slowly derelict, but as they are generally very spacious and bright, numerous architects have converted them to serve a variety of new uses varying from public services as well as private residences.

The aim of the proposal would be to transform the historic building into a facility that could be used by schools, touring theatre groups and members of the community, and home to a small local, but apparently vibrant living poets society.

Sancti venite, Christi corpus sumite, Sanctum bibentes, quo redempti sanguinem.

Et cetera ... (The church's Oldest, the 7C latin eucharistic hymn 'Sancti venite' was, according to a legend, first sung by angels here in Dunshaughlin.)



MOVEMENT: a continuation of the pedestrian friendly civic walk with indicative possible sensitive additions could include an info-stand.

Proposal 03

Public Art/ Gallery

The proposal is to identify and incorporate public art into the fabric of the town to inspire creativity and reinforce the identity of the town, with the establishment of dedicated exhibition spaces such as a gallery within the town. New suitably located space to accommodate art/sculpture exhibition should be identified, that would complement what exists today.

- Assessment of existing installations and sculptures;
- Identify other complementary locations for new public art in the town centre;
- Ensure the process is collaborative and engaging the community and in consideration of Dunshaughlin's heritage;
- Identify space for a gallery to showcase local artists and their creativity;
- Identify a gallery and workshop space, for showcasing artists and skill sharing that also includes workshop spaces for community hands-on engagement.

Benefits

- Provides a focal point for the town centre.
- Creates a sense of local identity.
- Community/local ownership.
- Opportunities for local artists and creative businesses.
- Attract visitors and new users to the town.
- A more pleasant experience of the town will increase visits and time spent in town.

Outdoor performance space

Background I Currently there is limited car free space within the village centre that can be used for activities and events. The village shops utilise the existing parking spaces and are difficult to access given the dominance of roads and vehicles. The only open green space within the town centre is Park, which could however also provide a setting for outdoor performances with a park setting.

Proposal I The proposal is to ensure that the public realm improvements to the town centre create usable, flexible and accessible car free space. This includes:

- A revitalised Square which can be used by the market and is able to facilitate a programme of events throughout the year.
- Consideration of the provision of shelter and infrastructure such as power supplies to facilitate events.
- Creation of a small amphitheatre space and associated stage in Park.
- Improved access to the public spaces for all users.
- Carry out native tree and shrub planting.
- Incorporation of NBS throughout

Benefits

- More people spending time in the town centre.
- Opportunity for a programme of events to take place without the need to use parking spaces.
- Opportunity for local artists to use the town centre in a creative way to showcase their talents.
- Encourage all ages to be involved including links with the schools and theatre.



Recent St. Seachnall's N.S. Art Expo.



Recent art exhibition in Dunshaughlin Library with celebrated Artist, Robert Ballagh.

Theme 02



Reanimating Built-Heritage



Introduction

This vision for Dunshaughlin includes the strengthening of its heritage and history.

A village with ancient roots, some of the historic architecture of Dunshaughlin survives in the town's plan layout, and several buildings listed as being of regional significance.

The village, and the wider area, already attracts a number of visitors for the purposes of heritage and cultural tourism, but it could do more to emphasize its natural, built and cultural heritage.

Although many of Dunshaughlin's buildings are quite well maintained, the public realm is notably neglected. Interventions are now proposed to improve its presentation, notably and with regard to pedestrian priority and safety.

This plan includes proposals which reflect the strong local interest in history, for the conservation of surviving features.

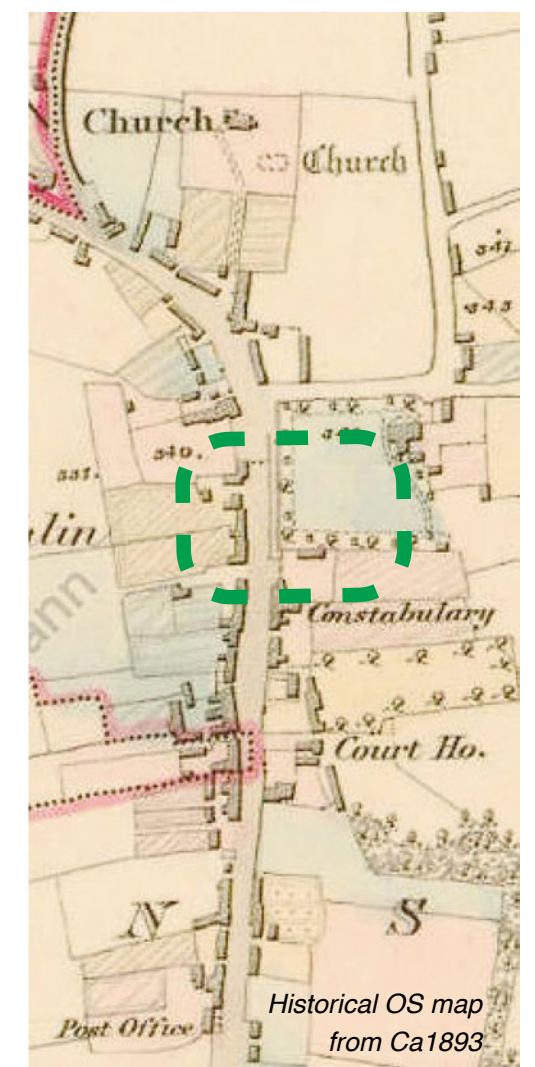
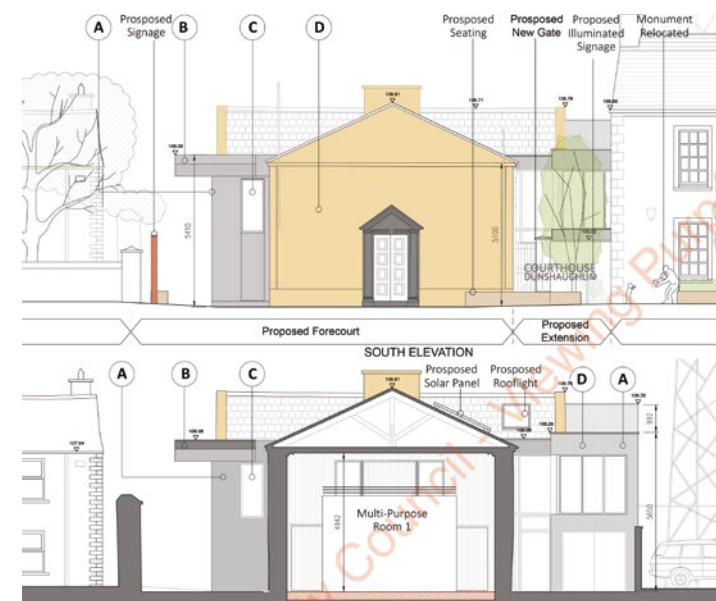
Courthouse Project

This building and surrounding area considered to be a key heritage asset for the town, is located centrally on main Street. Although currently unoccupied, up to fairly recently it had housed the District Court. Part 8 planning is in place for its re use as a theatre.

In addition, a feasibility study and master plan will be undertaken to consider the use of adjacent land and buildings, including the phone exchange building and relocation of the fire station through engagement with respective authorities,

This urban renewal would include benefits such as:

- Preserving the heritage of the town.
- Connections to new pedestrian routes.
- Providing a venue for exhibitions and events.
- Enhanced appeal to both residents and tourists.
- Reuse of unoccupied buildings.



Updated & Enhanced Heritage Trail

Background | A Heritage Trail was produced in 2011 by the Dunshaughlin & District Historical Society and Dunshaughlin Tidy Town committee, with the support of the Meath Leader programme. The trail provides a valuable resource to pinpoint the town’s key heritage assets and share interesting stories linked to their existence.

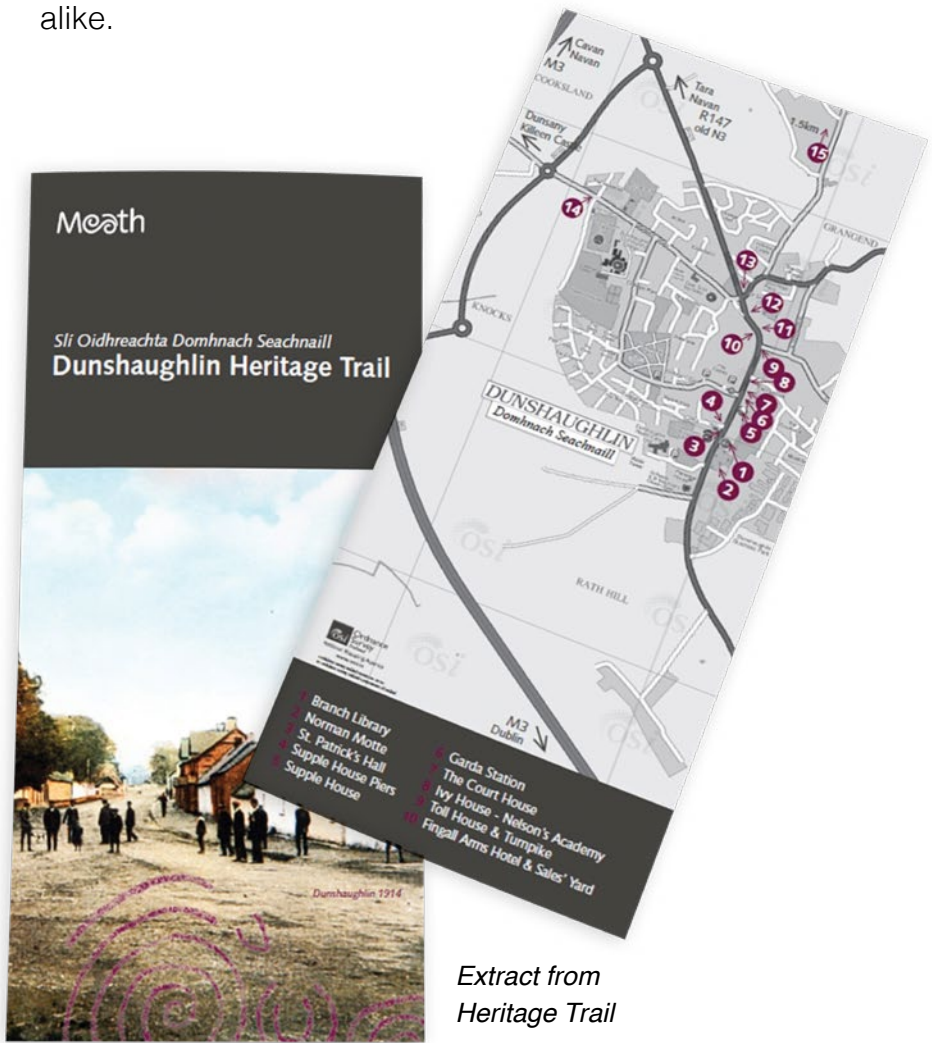
This Heritage Trail comprises of a tour of 17 no sites and locations of local historical significance, each marked with a plaque giving a brief history. It includes such sites as a Norman motte, a crannóg, a workhouse, historic churches, including early Christian stone carvings dating back to the 6thC.

Proposal

- Update and expand the existing heritage trail – including stories from the local community.
- Trail markers and signage to tie in with the overall wayfinding.
- Lighting of heritage buildings/frontages.
- Create an online Heritage Trail resource for locals and visitors to use.
- Opportunity to incorporate events and performances within these historic settings.

Benefits

- Strengthened local identity.
- Improve the visitor experience of Dunshaughlin.
- Education resource for locals/site visits.
- Ensures the historic built environment is well maintained.
- Opens historic sites which are currently under -utilised.
- This is an attractive resource both residents and visitors alike.



Heritage Trail/ Historical Site Highlighting

The Dunshaughlin & District Historical Society, founded in 2009, is dedicated to preserving and promoting local heritage.

With around 25 active members, they organise historical talks, exhibitions, and commemorations, while also maintaining three local heritage graveyards and producing historical publications. They have contributed to key projects such as the restoration of the Parnell Banner, feasibility studies on Dunshaughlin Courthouse, and securing historical preservation efforts with Lidl and Aldi.

This year, there are plans to update the Dunshaughlin Heritage Trail to include five new sites showcasing 14 years of community initiatives. They are also expanding the graveyard history documentation and participating in the Heritage Keepers programme. Working closely with Meath Heritage Office, they will continue to secure grants and collaborate with local groups and schools on new projects that celebrate our shared history.



Theme 03



Social inclusion, Community Spirit, Nature & Well Being



Introduction

A 2024 social study by NUI Maynooth titled, ‘InPLACE: Investigating Planning, Place-Making and Commuting’ would suggest that Dunshaughlin could share similar issues to many other similar dormer towns.

These include economic, social and cultural challenges, as it has including a comparably young population, with a high proportion of adults commuting to work. In addition, although Dunshaughlin also has a large number of residents and families, who have made the town their home since the 1990s, it must be said that a significant number of residents have lived in Dunshaughlin intergenerationally, with strong family roots and interconnections.

A sense of community and social inclusion is a key element of a thriving town. This Plan aims to promote and strengthen Dunshaughlin’s existing strong sense of community, by identifying key priorities and proposals, some of these have emerged through engagement with the local community.

These include reported concerns and issues raised regarding children and young people generally having insufficient spaces for recreation.

It is possible that social services etc., could be co-located into a singular location that could allow access to all these kinds of services together.

Proposals Include:

- Scout eco den
- Town Plaza (Fire Station)
- Multi-sports facility
- Sensory Garden



Proposal - Scout eco den

Introduction

Scouting Ireland is dedicated to enabling and empowering young people to realise their potential, through its core values based on the Scout Promise and Law, fostering active citizenship and with the aim to create a better community; society and world.

The Aim Putting biodiversity and climate action at the center of this proposal to encourage the social, physical, intellectual, character, emotional and spiritual development of young people so that they may achieve their full potential and, as responsible citizens, to improve society.

Proposal The (7th Meath) local Scout Group propose to create a state of the art Scout Eco Den. The facility aims to be climate neutral and biodiversity rich in the townland of 'Knocks'.

Although it is approx 1Km or ten minutes walk, from the main street, it is currently inaccessible.

The proposed location is adjacent to a natural habitat which would sustain native species of plants and wild life, creating an environment for experiential learning for our scouts and the wider community which is a core focus area for the DZ of Dunshaughlin to build capacity of the public in the area of climate action.

This proposed eco den sited on an identified land parcel of 6 hectares. The aim of this proposal is for the site to be carbon neutral and a natural habitat which would sustain native species of plants and wildlife which the community could avail of. It would showcase the very best of scouting principles where scouting would act as an umbrella for other environmentally conscious community groups.

The proposal aims to develop Eco den, nature and play area, permeable surface car park, wild life pond, woodland walk, planting of riparian zone, and a larger woodland area.

In addition make this land and the facilities could be made available to groups such as Men’s Sheds, Tidy Towns and the Harvest Festival and Dunshaughlin’s Community Harvest & Biodiversity group while further developing our relationships with these groups that are embedded in Community.

These voluntary groups include:

- Civil Defence, First Responders and Tidy Towns.
- Dunshaughlin Harvest Festival / Dunshaughlin Community Harvest Dunshaughlin Historical Society
- Other scout groups and volunteers in the Meath Area



Proposal - Community facilities, office, RW Hub, Cinema, Town Centre Living, etc.

These facilities could provide seamless access to support, services and information, the location will operate as a one stop shop for the town. There will also be capability to operate back to work schemes with access to the remote working facility, with training and bridge job opportunities.

Community cinema facilities - a successful community cinema in Dunshaughlin.

In this could include a range of independent film-makers work, films of local interest or films that celebrate the culture and heritage of ethnic communities. It could also act as a base for film clubs.

They would benefit from being co-located alongside the resource centre as the design and layout of the building can take account of the sensitive and confidential nature of both organisations operations and provide shared space to carry out these functions.

In addition, the benefit of co-locating the DSP with the innovation hub and remote working facility will create a symbiotic relationship between the job creation, training and those unemployed or looking for new skills.

The existing Dunshaughlin remote working facility has been operating for some years from the county council offices Drumree Road. This could provide more long-term and permanent facilities to grow and expand.

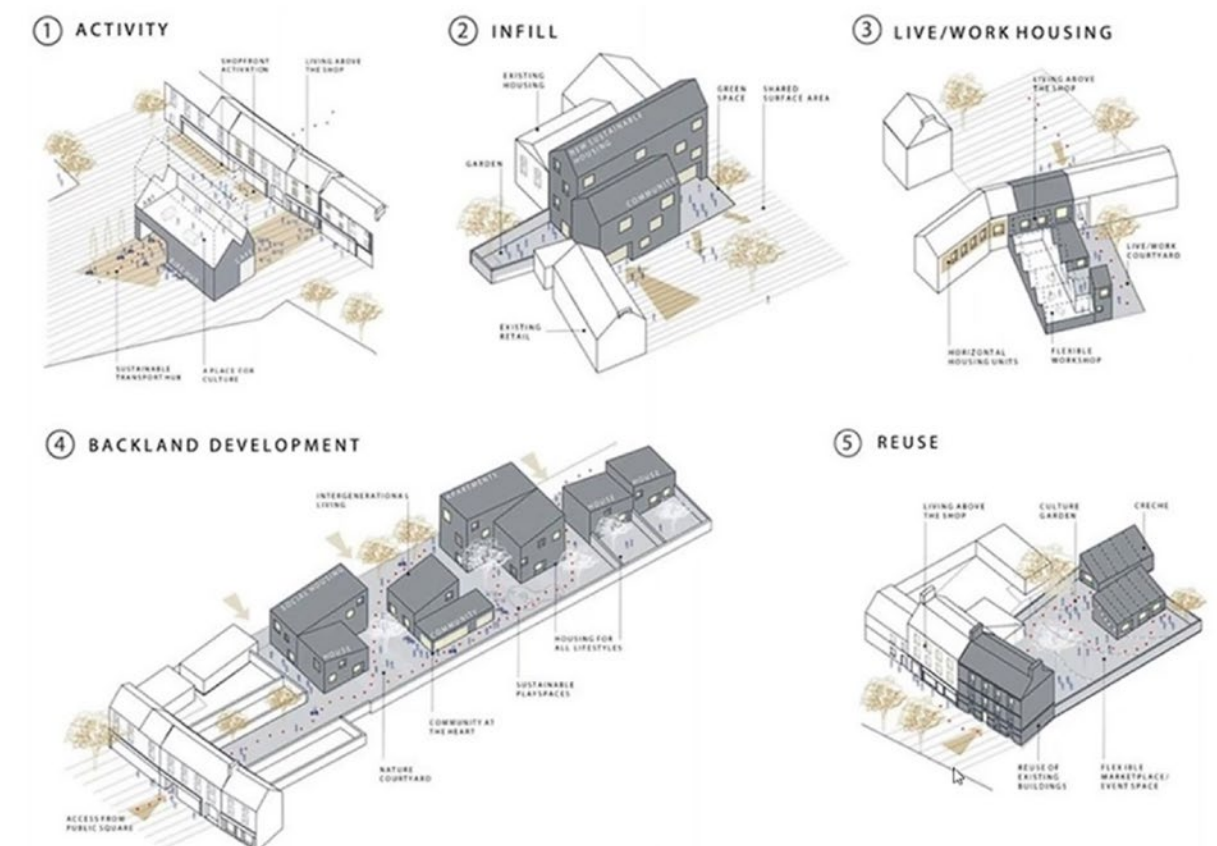
There is also further potential to redevelop the adjacent lands, which could form part of a wider proposal to provide town centre living, such as apartments, along with access improvements from the square.

Benefits

- Offer local employment opportunities and a high-quality working environment.
- A combination of social, cultural and community services in a one-stop shop.
- Sustainable restoration and re-purposing of a key heritage asset, preventing urban decay and reducing dereliction.
- Potential to have a knock-on effect for trade at local cafés, shops, restaurants and hotels.

Promoting a strong sense of community

Ensuring that there are a range of facilities, amenities and supporting services including educational, recreational, social, community and civic requirements for children, youths, adults, the elderly, to serve a growing community;



*Roscrea backlands regeneration plan
by McCullough Mulvin Architects*

Proposal - Multi-sports facility including new pitches, boxing facilities, tennis, ball courts, and Astro-pitches

Background | Stakeholder engagement has identified that team based sports, recreation and leisure should be an important theme/consideration within the Dunshaughlin Town Centre First Plan. The rationale for this is as follows:

- The town has a young population in comparison to many other communities across the county. Access to sports, recreation and leisure facilities adds to the attractiveness of the settlement from a family perspective and also to the quality of life experience to these young people, although there also should be considerations for provisions alternatives to traditional sports.
- Indoor and outdoor facilities are required which are accessible and affordable.
- Families and older people also require access to casual recreation space (outdoor parks, walks as an example).
- There is limited existing facilities which could be used by sport clubs and informal groups of people; potential to share multi- use sports facilities/pitches/3G provision with the community school and the wider community.
- Some of the local sports groups, such as Dunshaughlin & Royal Gaels GAA, Dunshaughlin (AC) Athletic Club, IB Health & Fitness, Dunshaughlin GAA Club, Dunshaughlin Youth(s) Soccer Club, Royal Gaels Ladies GAA Club, Black Bush Golf Club, Dunshaughlin Rockets Basketball Club, have difficulty at times in locating suitable and appropriate facilities in the town.
- There is limited existing permanent facilities which could be used by sport clubs and informal groups of people; potential to share multi use sports facilities/ pitches/ 3G provision with the community school and the wider community.

Dunshaughlin Youths Football Club is a community based club. Their facilities date from the 1990's. The club's teams compete in the North Eastern Regional League, while both the men's senior teams, and the women's compete in respective leagues. It fields over 35 teams providing football for over 600 male and female players each week, the club continues to grow and go from strength to strength, and is a vital part of our local community, with a mission is to provide a friendly, equitable and competitive environment for the children of Dunshaughlin and surrounding area.

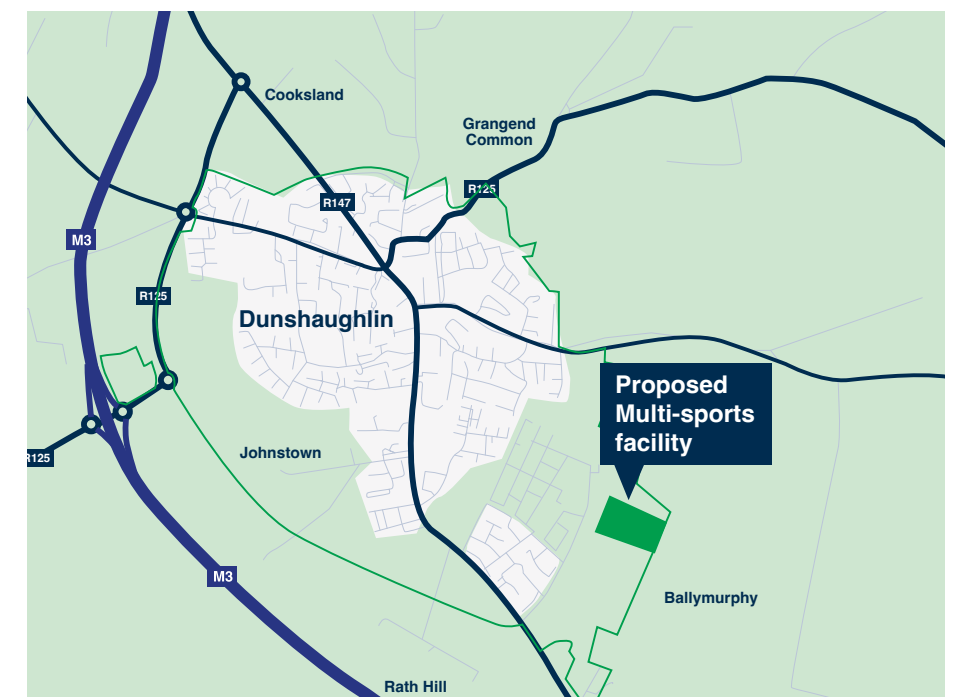
Proposal

- A multi-use/functional indoor sports and leisure hub to support multiple sports.
- Potential for an additional pitch/3G pitch adjacent to Dunshaughlin Community School used by the school during the school day and by the community in the evening.
- Identify space for a boxing facility; St Seachnall's Amateur Boxing Club.
- Additional, synthetic fibre artificial turf surface for the / Dunshaughlin Youths Football Club'.
- Incorporation of NBS throughout

Benefits:

- Promote healthy lifestyles.
- Provide recreation facilities, particularly for the younger population.
- Provide opportunities for integration with different cultures and nationalities.

The delivery of these projects will be a objective for each club/ club(s).



Astro Pitches (DYFC)

Enhancing existing recreational amenities is a feature of TCF objectives, so Dunshaughlin Youths Football Club's intention to add an all-weather pitch to their grounds. This would have obvious benefits to the teams that use these facilities for training or matches, but it also opens up a recreational space for public groups to rent the pitch(es)



Dunshaughlin U15's celebrate after their recent win over Summerhill in the premier 1 final

Proposal - Biodiversity Sensory Garden

Background I Stakeholder engagement has identified that this should be an important theme/consideration within the Dunshaughlin Town Centre First Plan. The rationale for this is as follows:

- Is a significant step towards creating a more inclusive and climate and environmentally conscious community.
- This initiative will not only provide a new green space for the village but will also promote climate action and biodiversity.
- Creating a space that not only stimulates the senses but also serves as a place of remembrance.
- The garden will provide numerous benefits to the community including:

Increased Community Engagement: The gardens will stimulate our senses through touch, sight, scent, taste, and hearing.

Promotes Biodiversity: The gardens will encourage the use of native trees and plants, and provide pollinator friendly landscaping driving climate action throughout the site.

Promotes climate action: The planting of native trees and shrubs in the garden will allow for increased intake of Greenhouse gas emissions through carbon sequestration. Also helping to reduce flooding with reduced hard surfaces and root uptake of water.

Educational: The gardens will be an interactive learning zone full of exciting things to touch and smell.

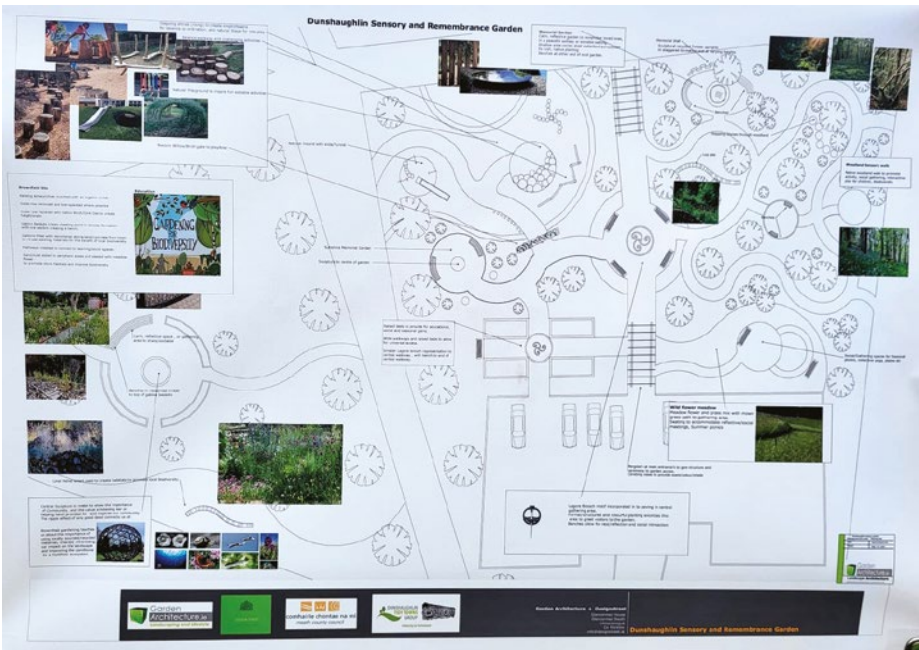
Socialising Space: The gardens will provide a new community space perfect for socialising and holding events; connecting people, plants, and places.

Promotes Mental Health: The gardens will bolster mental health by providing a unique and stimulating environment while also providing a space for reflection with scented plants and restful seating. The addition of a quiet reflective space dedicated to pregnancy and infant loss will provide a compassionate space for people to pause and reflect on the lives that have deeply touched their own in a tranquil environment.

These benefits make the sensory and remembrance garden a valuable addition to Dunshaughlin enhancing the quality of life for its residents and visitors alike.

This journey will bring people together, raise awareness, finances, knowledge and motivate climate action. It will engage children, young people, families, older people, and particularly people across all abilities and developmental conditions. Creating an inclusive society for all while “nurturing nature together”.

Detailed plans have been received from a landscape architect, with a focus on themes of nature, the senses and remembrance. The Dunshaughlin Town Centre First Plan will strengthen the possibility of it becoming a reality.



Plan of proposed sensory garden in park by, Garden Architecture Landscape Architects



Theme 04



Proposal - Improving sustainable transport connectivity (walking, cycling and public transport)

Connectivity

Movement within and around Dunshaughlin is a key issue when considering the future of the town. The town needs to become better connected, easy to move around by pedestrians, cyclists and through public transport, with less reliance on the car.



Artist impression
new pedestrian
and cycle routes.

Background I Dunshaughlin is well connected by road due to its location between Dublin and Navan, just 40 minutes from Dublin Airport. Dunshaughlin is poised to develop as an important local growth centre offering an alternative solution to business and residents refocusing development outside of major towns like Dublin, and Navan. However, Dunshaughlin is a car-dominated town, with a lack of priority given to walking, cycling and public transport. As a DZ a core focus area for the town is sustainable travel modes to reduce reliance on car dependency directly reducing transport related emissions. This should be reversed, to encourage active, sustainable lifestyles and to help reach our climate action targets. Therefore, the following proposals aim to provide a high-quality people-focused town centre, improving the pedestrian, cyclist and public transport accessibility, with consideration to all users including those with reduced mobility.

Proposal I Improve the connectivity of Dunshaughlin via active and sustainable transport modes (walking, cycling and public transport).

This includes:

- Improving the pedestrian environment generally.
- Wider footpaths, regular and safer crossing points.
- New dedicated connected walking and cycle routes.
- Improve road layout, reduced speeds, divert non-essential heavy vehicles on completion of ring road.

- Re-examine the bus stops location and treatment.
- Simplifying signage.
- Improve the connectivity of Dunshaughlin town centre, to include breaking a new pedestrian street, direct route from main street.
- Work with public transport services to improve local connectivity with 5-10km, e.g local links services or request more bus stops in outlying areas etc.
- Secure Feeder bus connection to the commuter train service.
- A new high quality-dedicated pedestrian and cycling route (permeability link) from the town and residential areas/catchments should be included/conditioned as part of the proposed Navan - Dublin rail station.
- Delivery of rail line/station should be an objective in the transport theme. The high quality well-lit and dedicated pedestrian / cycling route, from town centre to include possibly residential areas, to the rail line/station should also be included in the plan.

Benefits

Better quality of life for residents to Dunshaughlin; Improves the sustainability of the town; Reduces reliance on cars; Improved safety and accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists. Reduces greenhouse gas emissions associated with transport, mainly through reduced car dependency.



Proposal

- Roundabout Sculpture

Background I A key ambition of Dunshaughlin's is to capitalise on its cultural and natural heritage, including the links with the Irish literary scene and to famous natural resources including the Boyne Valley Trail. This is increasingly important considering the emerging Meath Cycleway which will provide a walking and cycling route from Dublin to Meath.

Proposal I A soft landscaping scheme incorporating public art on the roundabout and grass verges of Junction 6 exit from the M3 at the entrance of Dunshaughlin Town. The design should seek to dramatise this location as a gateway to the Meath Trail. The existing featureless landscape provides no visual enticement to see all of what Dunshaughlin has to offer. The landscape plan will seek to replicate similar such sites helped through sustainable native planting.

Benefits I Create an increased sense of arrival into Dunshaughlin town; Add interest and a stronger connection to the links between Dunshaughlin town, tourist Trail; Raising awareness around Dunshaughlin's and increasing biodiversity in area around roundabouts.

Proposal

- Improving paving quality, and safety

Background I The following proposals aim to provide a high-quality people focused town centre, improving the pedestrian, cyclist and public transport, incorporating improvements in levels.

Proposal I Improve public realm of Dunshaughlin via walks which includes:

- Improving the pedestrian environment through wider footpaths, regular and safe crossing points and opportunities to dwell within the town centre.
- Reduce carriageway widths and introduce a road layout which naturally slows vehicular speeds and makes the town centre environment safer for all users, including pedestrians and cyclists.
- Improve accessibility for persons with reduced mobility.
- Improve wayfinding and signage; Improve the connectivity of Dunshaughlin town centre to Park.
- Work with public transport services to improve local connectivity with 5-10km, e.g local links services or request more bus stops in outlying areas etc.

Benefits

- Better quality of life for residents to Dunshaughlin; Improves the sustainability of the town through increased modes of active travel; Reduces reliance on cars; Improved safety and accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists along with reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with transport..



Example of retrofitting of existing junction for active travel, to improve the safety and comfort of vulnerable road users at existing priority junctions with existing path and pedestrian crossing. Note before (upper image) and after (lower image) [Extract from 'low-cost', 'Priority Junction Tightening Measures', best practice DMURS guidance].

Traffic, Parking and Public Transport ~ Link Road(s)

Excess pressure is being put on to Dunshaughlin’s Main St by some M3 users avoiding the toll. In excess of 9,000 cars may pass through the town on a daily basis. To ensure future viability of access to the town there are 3 proposed vehicular roads.

- 1. **Link Road** – Already proposed in the Meath County Development Plan (ref.)
- 2. **Relief Road A**– Developer-driven road that will connect around The Willows to the Lagore Road
- 3. **Relief Road B** – A continuation of the Relief Road to the R125 towards Ratoath to ease connectivity.



Proposed routes are indicative only

Proposal - Transportation Improvements

Scheduled completion of Link Roads

Background I At rush hours, there is considerable congestion on the R147, which is the main route to Dublin from the village, and for the majority of people travelling for work. In addition there is evidence of cars travelling through the village to avoid the tolls at pace.

Some consideration on possible route options has been given around the possibility of completing the link road section from Dublin side of Dunshaughlin to M3. The required (prelim.) capital appraisal for a Link Road between the M3 and R147 has been submitted to ‘An Roinn Iompair’, (the Dept. of Transport).

This proposed Link Road would deliver much-needed traffic calming and relieve some of the pressure for commuting residents during the morning and evening rush hours.

Benefits would include:

- Better quality of life for commuters.
- Improves the sustainability through improved air quality within the town.

Road Markings

Road markings have deteriorated throughout the town’s main street and surrounding roads. For safety and clarity this should be resolved.



SuperValu Junction/Parking

Capacity and parking enforcement issues persistently increase risk of an incident occurring outside SuperValu.

Problem areas are indicated below where vehicles are routinely parked in areas that impair drivers’ ability to safely access oncoming traffic and pedestrians when entering or exiting the car park.

Connectivity Vehicular

Proposal - Transportation Improvements

This schematic indicates a proposal for traffic re-direction and new pedestrian routes

One-way traffic post completion of ring road.

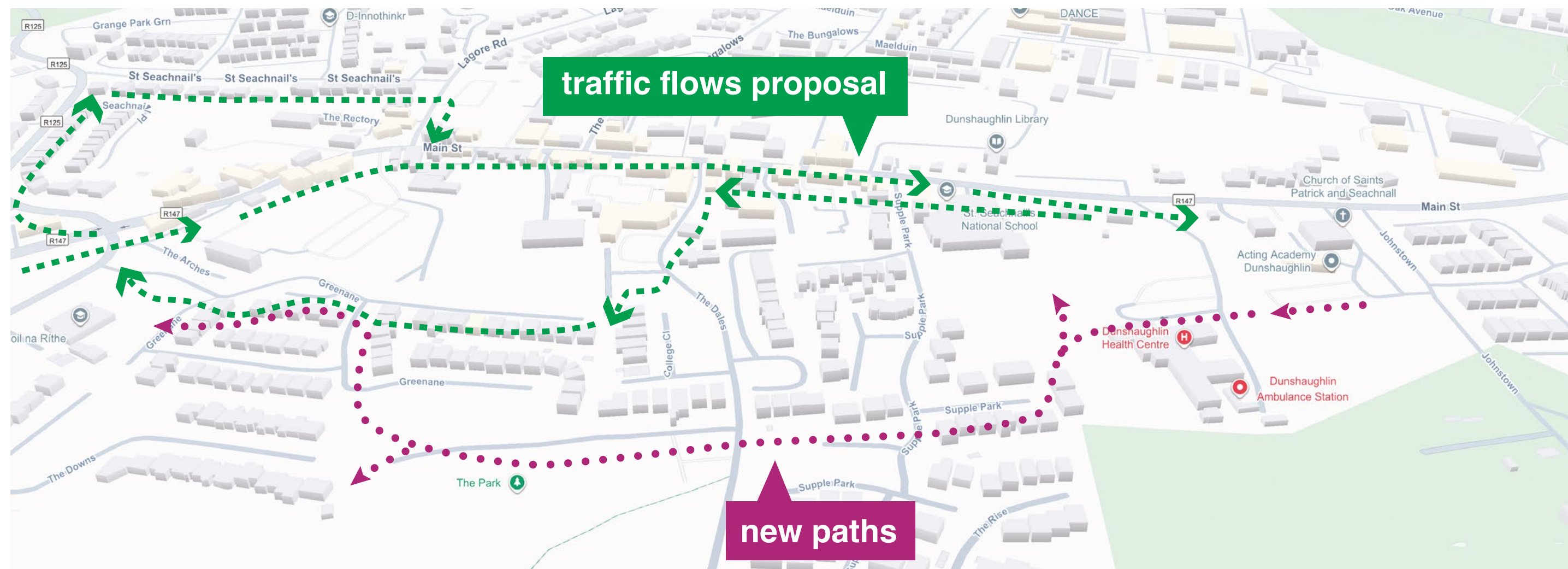
Background I Commission a traffic report for a proposal to instigate a one-way traffic management system recommendations, to improve vehicular and pedestrian traffic flow through the town centre via changes to traffic flow, junction controls and street layouts.

Proposal is for a one-way traffic management system, to improve vehicular and pedestrian traffic flow through the village centre via changes to traffic flow, junction controls and street layouts. Revisions include alterations to traffic lights, with wider, safer pavements, as well as significantly reduce waiting

time at traffic lights. Bus stops would only be required on one side of the road allowing traffic to flow freely past waiting buses.

Measures to be introduced include traffic flow clockwise direction of the one-way system. The installation of well-lit zebra crossings at key pedestrian desire lines is provided. Raised tables at several of the crossings will aid in managing traffic speeds.

- Improvement of air quality due to reduction in vehicles.
- Improved safety and accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists.



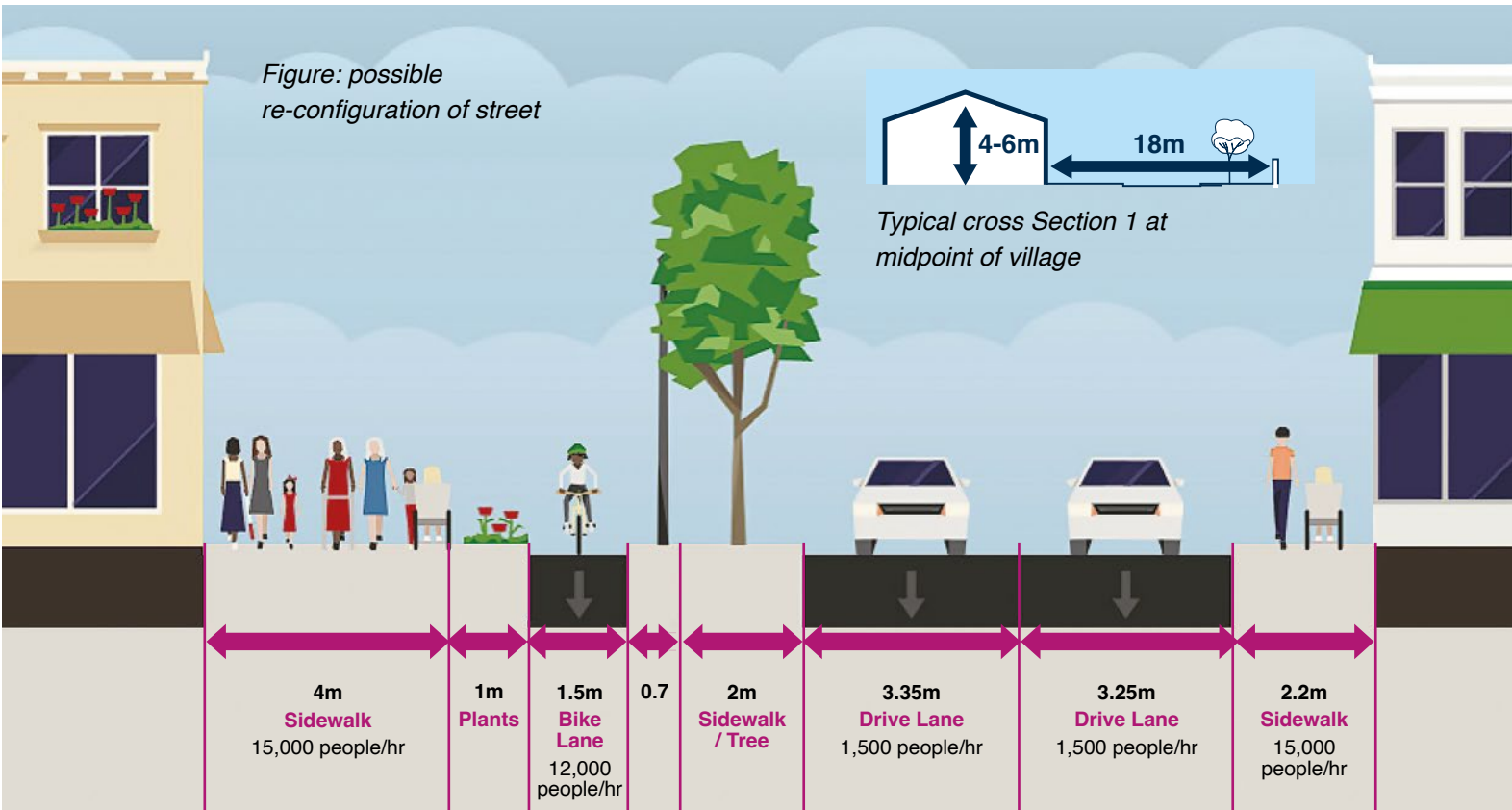
Possible indicative re-design of main street to enhance traffic calming



With a reduction in vehicular lanes to 3.55m in line with guidelines, it would still allow:

- Drive lane:** 3,000 — 4,000 people/hour
- Bike lane:** 12,000 people/hour
- Sidewalk:** 30,000 people/hour

This accords with the actual current and projected vehicular requirements, which even at peak, is less than 1,000 vehicles per hour.

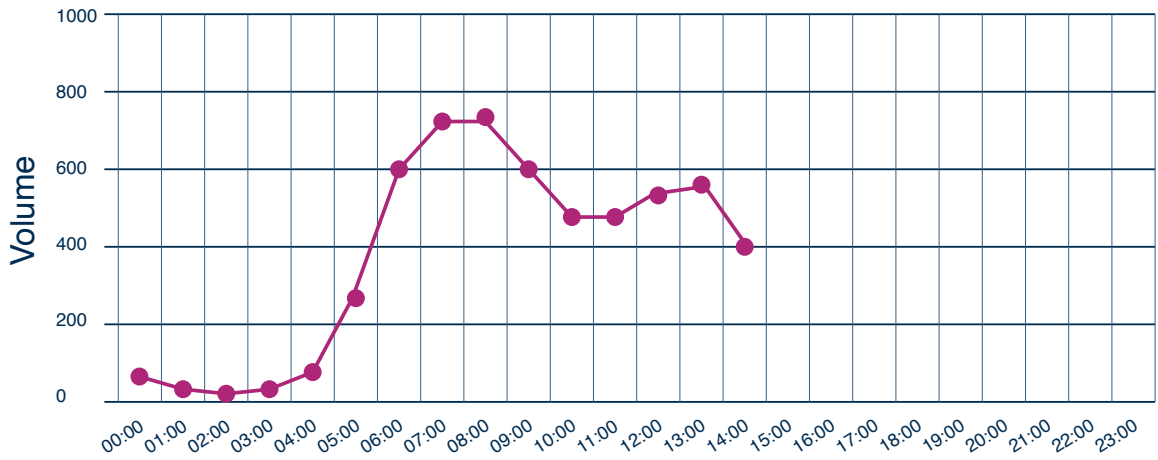


[Source: Passenger capacity of different transport modes, Transformative Urban Mobility Initiative (TUMI)]

Multi-Day Volume Report

NRA 000000020033 2024-06-11

Tues 11 Jun



3-d view of possible re-configuration of street

Park and ride

Background I A need has been identified for a dedicated park and ride, bus interchange facility at the periphery of the village. At present commuters in outlying areas have no alternative to parking in the village, if they wish to avail of bus commuter services. This creates unnecessary congestion and takes over valuable public realm space and prevents the existing free parking in the village being available for traders and shoppers alike.

A new park and ride facility was a common suggestion from the local public consultations. A proposed optimal location was suggested for it being at the water tower, as that location is currently serviced by most bus routes (apart from 109B) and it appears to have has good access with adequate space.

This proposed facility would deliver much-needed connection calming and relieve some of the pressure for commuting residents.

In addition there is capacity for some of the large car parks to provide a more formalised long term parking, such as at the church which can be developed further in conjunction with stake holders.

Benefits include

- Better quality of life for residents to Dunshaughlin.
- Improves the sustainability of the town due to lower numbers of commuters driving to work.
- Improvement of air quality due to reduction in vehicles.
- Improved safety and accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Eases the pressure on the limited car parking spaces in town.



Shuttle Bus to Pace, a better bus interchange provision of shuttle to M3 train.

Background I The recent survey confirmed that these commuters, over 90% travel by car to the nearest train station in Dunboyne, however as yet, there is no feeder bus provision.

Proposal I To provide shuttle bus to train, in line with policy.

Benefits would include I Better quality of life for commuters. Less pollution, etc.



Diagram from current national policy on transport





Connectivity Pedestrian

Proposal - New path routes

Background I A key ambition of Dunshaughlin's is to capitalise on its existing landmarks to provide connected amenity walkways.

Proposal I A landscaping scheme incorporating Path: Water Tower /New Path: Supple Link to Park/ Cycle to Kileen / Workhouse.

- New dedicated walkways
- New path: Water Tower
- New path: Supple Link to Park
- Drive and Park / Cycle to Kileen / Workhouse
- Park & Ride

Public Realm, Regeneration of Town Centre Public Realm.

Regeneration of town public realm for people who and visit and to attract additional investment to the town.

Public realm improvements e.g., replacing worn out footpaths and road surfaces in disrepair, introducing biodiverse landscaping through native planting of tree and plant, new LED street lighting etc. can be incrementally delivered.

Interventions can be locally delivered through community projects, with strong commitment required from public funding to target more permanent interventions that deliver a common vision. The next step will be to build on existing work and showcase Derrintum through a consistent public realm. It is envisaged that a public realm design guide will be

developed or the village. This will establish guidance for paving materials, street furniture, lighting, advertisements, signage, native planting, SUDS etc.

Accessibility for all and age-friendly design should be guiding principles and inform footpath widths, the provision of rest places and seating opportunities, crossing points, and dropped kerbs. The maintenance of good shop fronts and the encouragement of a high quality and consistent public realm is vital to the improvement and legibility of an area.

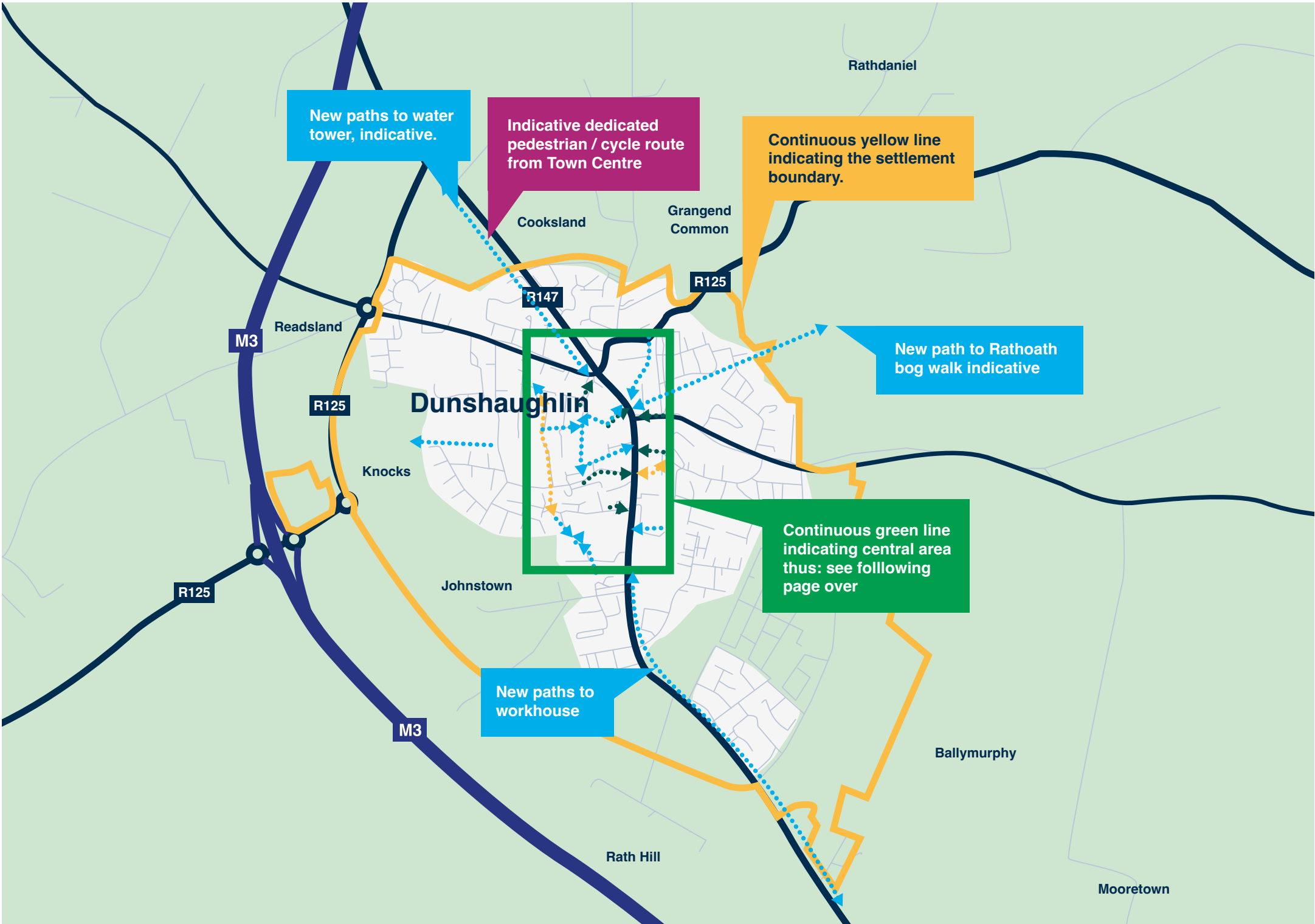
The examples shown right are indicative of where good design principles where implemented to achieve a cohesive public environment.

Benefits I Promote climate action throughout the town, through increased native tree and shrub planting. Installation of LED street lighting, and carrying out SUDS where possible.



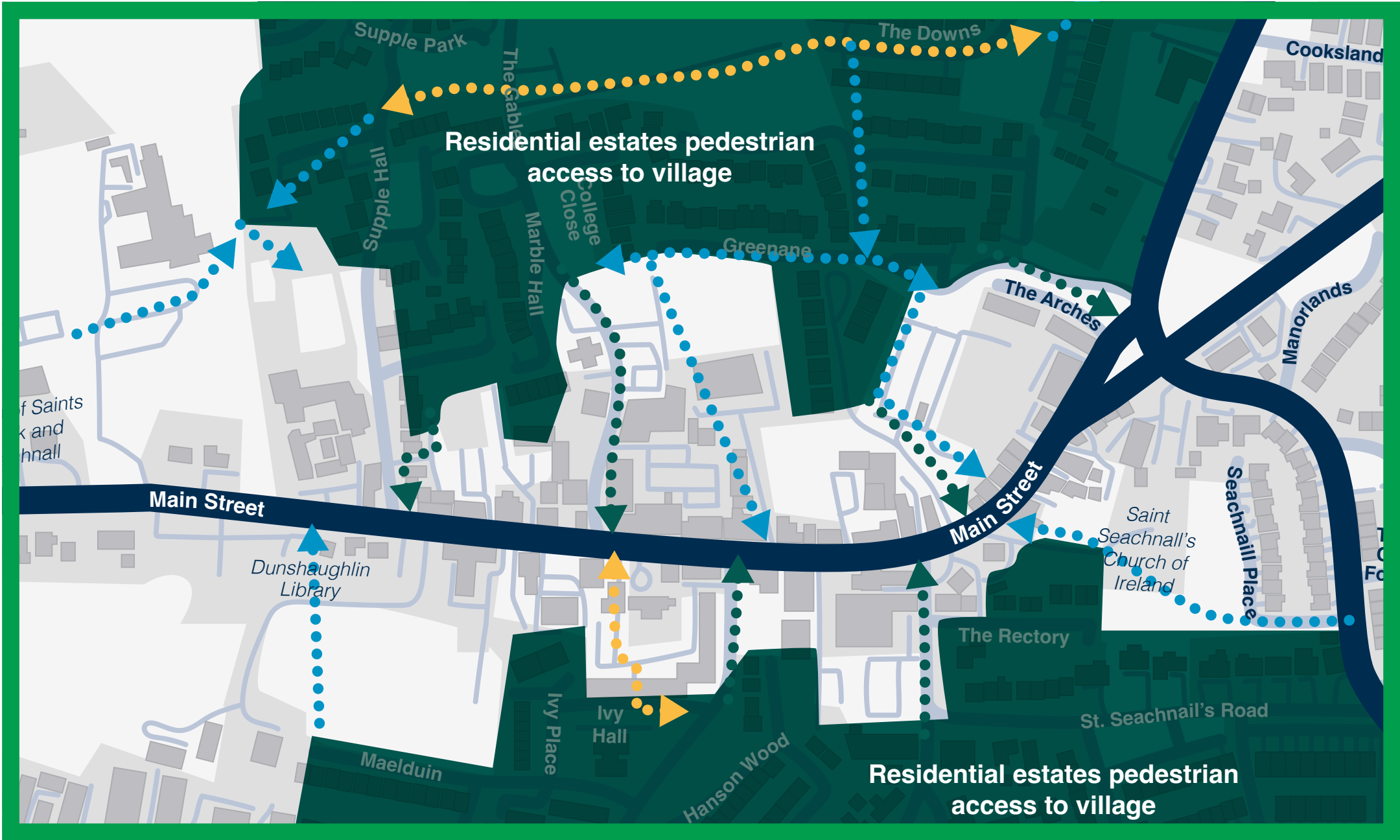
Illustration used in DMURS showing high quality material, planter buffers between road and paths, Monkstown Crescent, Co Dublin

Proposed outline routes for additional pedestrian connectivity, large scale diagram



* All routes to be assessed for need, cost and deliverability.

Proposed outline routes for additional pedestrian connectivity, village centre



Proposed enhanced and extended existing pedestrian-only routes shown thus



Other pedestrian connections sharing vehicular traffic, shown thus



Proposed new and extended pedestrian-only / 'safe routes to school' shown thus



Paths, Quality, Level, Consistency, Crossings, Lighting

Public consultations and inspections confirmed that paths throughout Dunshaughlin town are inconsistent in terms of quality, safety, and surface material.

A project is required to comprehensively access the viability of pedestrian walkways to ensure there are appropriate crossings, visual cohesion, and enhanced permeability.

Public consultation and engagement will also be important give new permeability routes are to be successful.

Notable issues raised include:

- Effect of tree roots on Main St. paths.
- Ill-defined pedestrian and vehicular road usage at SuperValu.
- (No) Paths connecting from Aldi (Lagore) and Cnoc Tiarnach.
- Drainage issues enforcing poor crossing conditions at Tara News junction.

Currently the ad-hoc linkway between Supple Park and The Dales, is not surfaced or sufficiently illuminated. Is it currently poses a danger to users in winter-time and times of darkness due to an uneven, loose surface, it is proposed to have its surface included in the upgrade and new works for the 'safe way' to school route, proposed to be fed from the church car-park.

Street Lighting Enhancements:

There are several styles of streetlights used throughout Dunshaughlin, including some apparently older fixtures that are less effective and efficient with energy usage that current standards.

Physical Clutter (Advertisements, Planters):

The Town Team propose a local ruling on the usage or placement of advertisement sandwich- boards and other physical items that clutter pedestrian walkways on the Main Street. It is also noted that there are large planters that inhibit path navigation.

New Path: Workhouse

A pathway is proposed to continue the path from the pedestrian crossing at the entrance to The Willows up to the Dunshaughlin Workhouse and Famine Graveyard, connecting the town with its heritage and ensuring a safer pedestrian access to a local convenience store.

New Path: Water Tower

A pathway is proposed to connect Grange Hall down to the roundabout at the Water Tower, at the north end of the town. This path could connect south-west again to create a pedestrian loop back to the Drumree Road.

New Path: Supple Link to Park

A new walkway is propose to divert pedestrian traffic from roadside pathways to a new path connecting from behind St. Seachnall's Church, through Supple Park, and continuing to the Park. A large number of school-children would traverse this way to connect to schools and activities.



Wayfinding & signage strategy, benefits

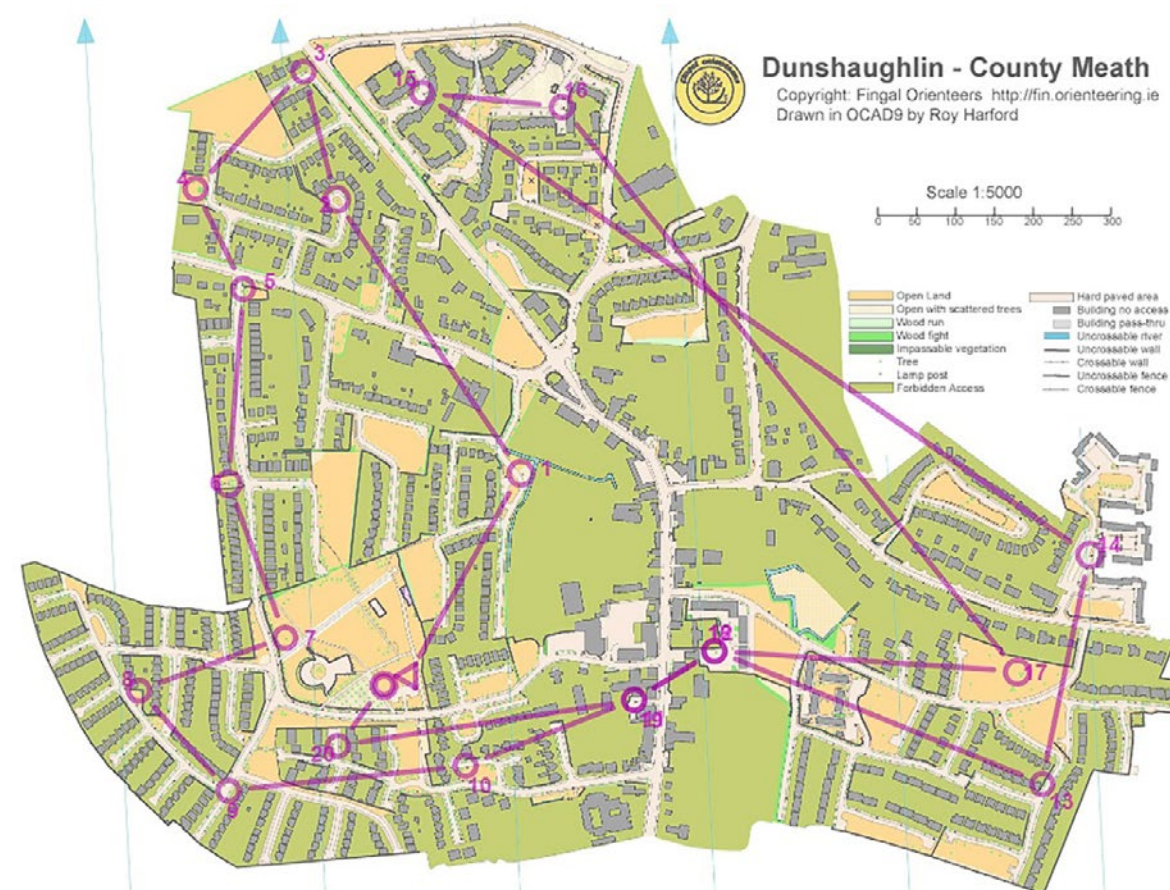
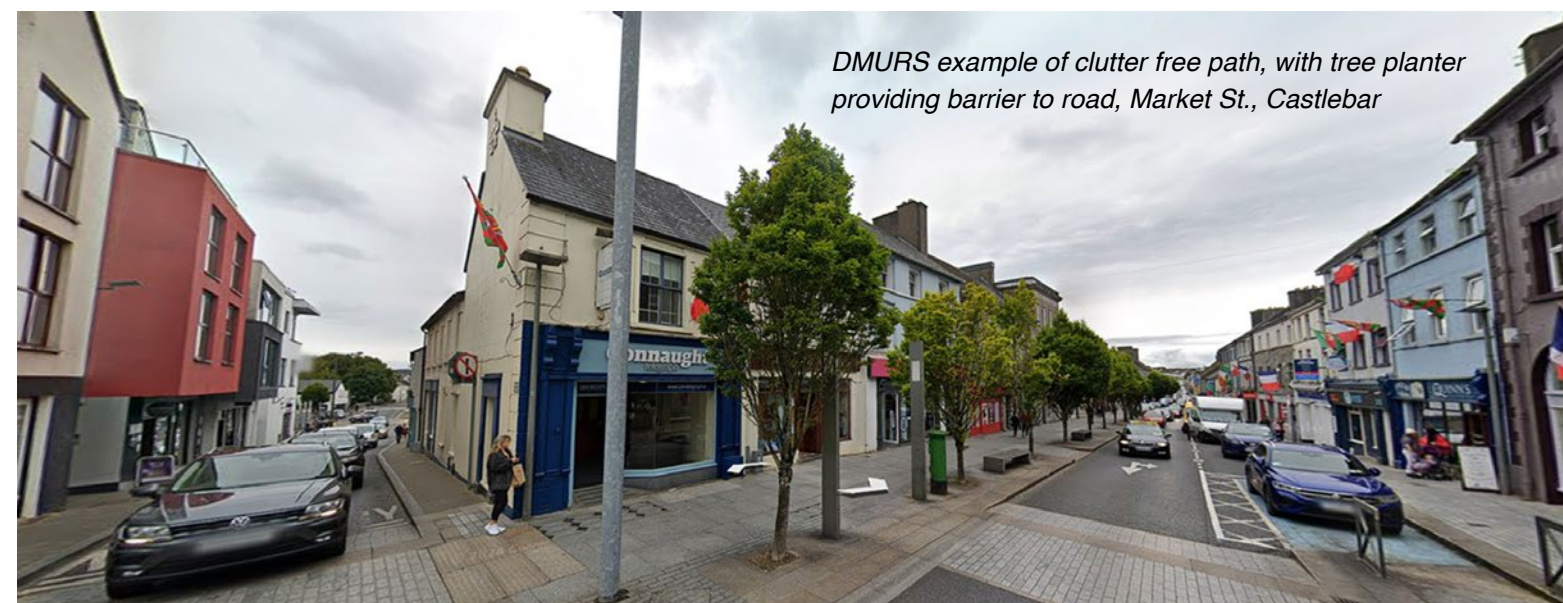
Background I Currently there is an array of different sign types and messages throughout the town. A strategy is needed to rationalise and coordinate what signage is required to ensure ease of understanding and minimise street clutter.

Proposal I Complete a full assessment of the existing signs within the town and produce a strategy which coordinates for all users including pedestrian, cyclists and vehicles.

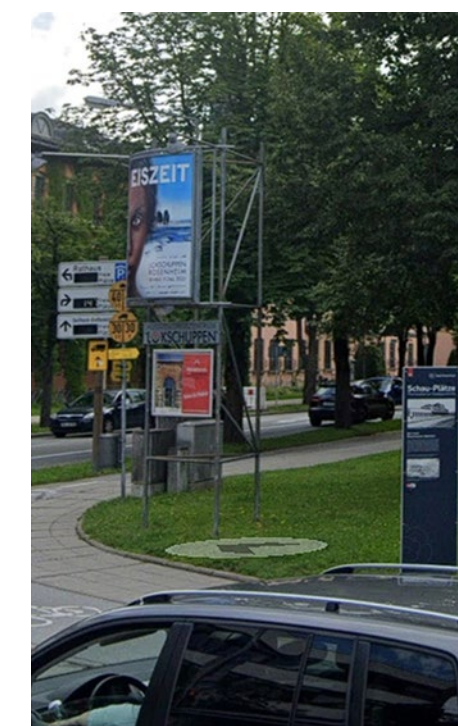
This includes a consideration for the position of all statutory road signs and parking signage. Given there is much heritage in the street and spaces within the town an effective way to provide in interpretation also needs to be considered.

All new signage will be mindful of people with disabilities with regards to the height, size, colour choice and font.

A well coordinated town centre; Better for visitors and tourists to find their way around; Reduction of clutter on the streets.



Orienteering Plan 2017, Irish Orienteering Association



Theme 05

Re-Purposing Vacant & Derelict Buildings



Introduction

The economic vibrancy of towns and villages can be measured by the level of vacant properties; with vacancy representing a significant issue for many towns and villages across the Region. Apart from the loss of a much-needed housing stock, vacant and derelict properties detract significantly from the attractiveness and presentation of the settlement.

Reducing the level of vacant properties within towns and villages will be a key component in revitalising the economy and implementing the population and compact growth targets outlined in the National Planning Framework and the Calculations. As a DZ reducing the level of vacant properties is a focus which has numerous climate benefits associated, reducing the need to build new developments on otherwise green or brownfield sites.

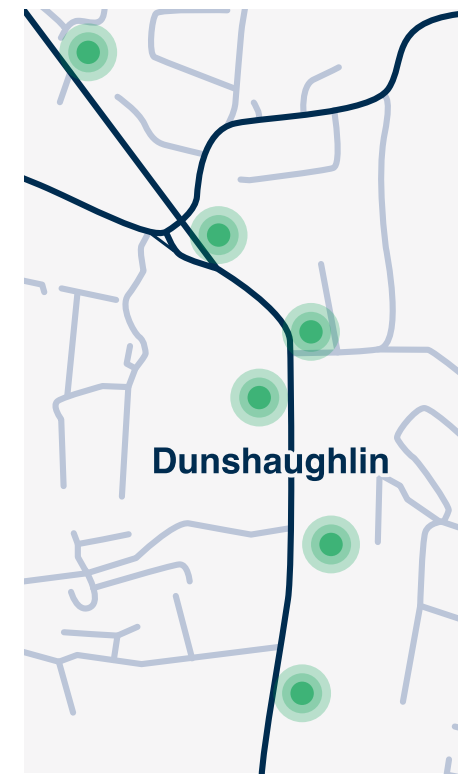
With County Commercial Vacancy Rates for Meath at 10.1%, it remains as the county with the lowest commercial vacancy rate in the state. However these statistics still confirm that commercial vacancy remains a major challenge in Dunshaughlin and one which the plan should seek to address.

Residential vacancy is also on a par for the state at 2.4% (Jan 2024) compared to a national average of 2.4%. Although

Dunshaughlin has a lower rate of residential vacancy than the Region, the importance and urgency of this issue was further highlighted through the community survey undertaken during the development of this plan. It found many of survey respondents identified public spaces and dereliction as their first priority to address in Dunshaughlin town centre. This confirms the importance of the issue amongst the local community. As such, this plan contains a range of proposals which should seek to create the conditions to reverse this scenario, including the following proposal which is targeted specifically at this issue.

Proposals and Benefits

- Improve the compactness of the town centre, by having facilities and amenities located close to one another.
- Increase sales potential once the building is refurbished.
- Reinvigorate the town centre through renewed footfall, activity and businesses; Increase the perceived safety of the town; promoting sustainability through refurbishment of old buildings, rather than developing new ones, and reducing car dependence for those living near the center.
- Provision of homes to those in need of housing.



Main Street vacancy data, June 2025



Improving the use and presentation of vacant and derelict buildings

Background I Although Dunshaughlin has a lower vacancy rate than the national average for both commercial and residential properties, it still contributes to a poor street scene, lack of attractiveness and generally unappealing image.

Proposal I The proposal is to implement a scheme to encourage shop and building owners to address the presentation and use of vacant and derelict buildings while at the same time also shows leadership in terms of sustainability re-purposing existing buildings rather than constructing new ones. There are currently a number of funds available to help the enhancement and reuse of buildings which should be encouraged for the benefit of the town, as a whole.



Vacancy and Dereliction along 'Main St.'

Theme 06

Vibrant Local Economy



Introduction

The success of towns relies on an active, functional and sustainable economy. Dunshaughlin has a population and hinterland which can support the shops, businesses and amenities within the town centre. It is important to ensure that the town is accessible, attractive and a place where people want to be and spend time within.

Proposals - Dunshaughlin Smart Town

Background I In March 2023 Dunshaughlin had a Digital Town Blueprint Assessment which analysed the digital capacity of the town across infrastructure, business, public services, education, civil society and tourism. Dunshaughlin had a digital town score of 4 out of 10, meaning that digital readiness is ad-hoc and mostly not documented.

The assessment recommended a series of interventions to increase the digital capacity of the town which can improve the quality and accessibility of services, address challenges and provide opportunities in the digital economy.

Proposal I To implement a coordinated digitisation of Dunshaughlin including improvements across:

- A town website or portal.
- Increase the number of websites for local businesses.
- Improve the availability of digital skills courses for young and senior people.
- Increase the availability of co-working spaces in the town centre.
- Implement the availability of municipal public WIFI.

Benefits

- Improve the quality and accessibility of services; reducing need to travel to other urban centres.
- Address challenges facing rural towns.
- Provide opportunities in the digital economy.
- Improve the online marketing of Dunshaughlin.
- Attract new visitors and businesses.



Commercial buildings along W side of Dunshaughlin's street



Commercial buildings along E side of Dunshaughlin's street



Shop frontage Improvement Scheme

Background I Dunshaughlin has a historic streets with some well-preserved traditional shop fronts which creates an attractive setting in the town centre and supports local businesses. The community engagement revealed that local people were keen to add more coherence to the village centre but to preserve the historic character of the street.

Proposal I Promote a Streetscape Enhancement Scheme for local building owners/occupiers:

- Encourage residents and shop owners to engage with the good practice design guide and use the principles to restore their building according to the established principles.
- Empower residents to be able to access funds or schemes to be able to carry out restoration and improvement projects.
- Introduce a thoughtfully designed lighting scheme to sensitively highlight the qualities and colours of the building frontages, whilst respecting the historic character of the town routes.
- Provide street furniture and native tree and shrub planting across the historic core and adjoining streets to further enhance the experience of spending time within the town along with incorporating NBS throughout.
- Create a Frontage Design Guide to help give guidance for

how improvements to frontages should be implemented.

- Similarly, excessive signage, poles and overhead wires which can contribute to an effect of visual clutter should be evaluated as part of an overall design proposal, to include new carefully designed signage which should minimise detrimental effects on the visual amenity of the streetscape.

Benefits

- Restoration of traditional painted frontages; High quality material palette; Improved identity and aesthetic of the town; Increased spill out space for local businesses; Improved and increased community spaces; Phased design approach which allows for future phases; Sensitive lighting to encourage the night time economy, particularly in winter. Increasing greening of the streets through native planting along with reducing the risk of flooding through the inclusion of NBS.

*The delivery of this objective is largely in the control of private land owner(s).

“There are a myriad of architectural design and standards used throughout Dunshaughlin’s main street. The Town Team proposes a cooperative effort to enhance façades using painting schemes, signage standards etc.”

Enhancements possible



West Main St. Façade Coherence



East Main St. Façade (In)coherence



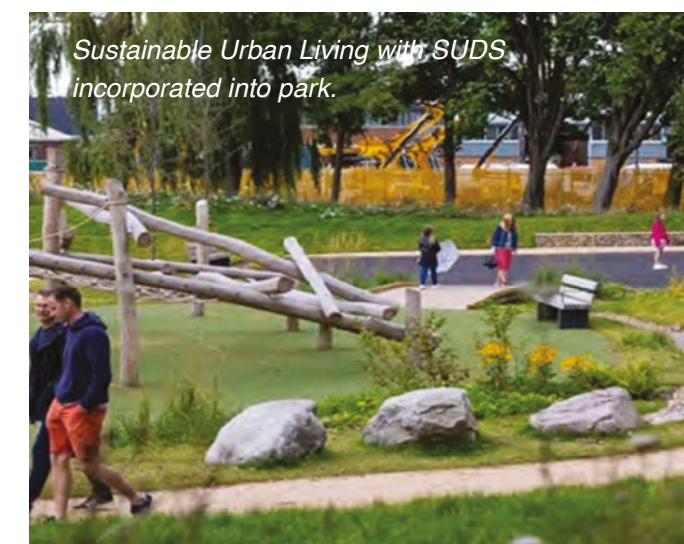
Theme 07

Sustainable Urban Economy



Introduction

Urban areas in Ireland are under increasing land pressure, where demand is high and increasing. Development of land within urban areas can have the potential to rejuvenate towns and cities, by providing much-needed services, community uses and town centre housing. One of Ireland's key policy directives (within the National Development Plan, National Planning Framework and the Town Centre First Policy) is to promote compact growth. Promoting compact growth is a key focus area for Dunshaughlin as a DZ as this type of development focuses on urban infill lands rather than developing in an unsustainable manner in rural locations.



Proposal - Existing Park upgrades

Background | The local community in Dunshaughlin have identified the need for a upgrading of the existing park as well as the addition of a new town park to the periphery that is indicated on the current development plan.

Proposal | The proposal is to provide improvements to the village park which provides additional amenity for the community, including:

- A skate park facility; spaces to dwell and enjoy being within green space.
- Activity spots with a mix of play, recreational and exercise facilities.
- Biodiversity and natural areas containing native planting throughout.
- SUDS incorporated into park.

Proposal - New Park

The proposal is to create a new town park which provides additional amenity for the community, including:

Benefits | Dunshaughlin has one park which is also in need of enhancement. This new town park would very much complement the existing offer within the town centre and provide access to further green space.

Opportunities for further growth to Dunshaughlin town centre; Potential to provide new housing, services, or community facilities at this site; Promoting compact growth for the town centre.

Community events such as a regular Park Run and Harvest Festival activities. Promote biodiversity and increase carbon sequestration in both the existing and new park locations.

Climate Adaptation through SUDS.

Proposal - Potential Future Development, Town Centre Backlands

Background I The figure shown here highlights the potential backland areas in Dunshaughlin centre which may be appropriate for development depending on their ownership and subject to the appropriate environmental screening and planning permissions.

There are several significant plots of land in the environs of Dunshaughlin’s centre which are readily identifiable, from visual survey, and are understood to be currently in private ownership. Some of these are also fronted by vacant and derelict sites which have come to the attention of Meath county council’s derelict register.

Although some have been part of historic proposals, which include planning permits for mixed commercial or residential and have been remained undeveloped despite the village continuing to develop outwardly on the fringes, As these are less than 250m from the village centre, they would be considered more sustainable urban centre reducing the need for new developments on greenfield sites which also would require more raw materials during the construction stage The site are in close proximity to existing shops, services and public transport.

Proposal I This proposal relates to the potential future development of vacant and underused backlands within Dunshaughlin town centre. The first stage would be to establish the ownerships and status of the identified lands, to start to think about how the development of these lands may support the sustainable growth of Dunshaughlin town centre.

The proposal is for a potential future development at these sites. As part of this potential development, it is the intention that Meath County Council would seek to acquire existing sites (both undeveloped lands and derelict properties) in order to assemble a land holding capable of being developed. This would enable the local authority to assemble a strategic land bank and make the lands available for a range of uses in a controlled manner which will bring long-term stability to the market.

The proposal is for a potential future development at these sites which could provide opportunities for a range of uses such as residential, commercial and community, subject naturally to ownership, access and planning concerns.

Several main street properties are unused, vacant, or derelict, as indicated. There should be an onus on owners to revitalise these spaces for the benefit of the town. Converting these spaces to retail/hospitality outlets, civic office space for usage/rent by local groups. Setup of a tourist office or information space. Using these spaces would also revitalise and enhance the aesthetic of the main street.

Benefits

- Re-purpose vacant and under/ dis used land in the town centre promoting sustainable use of lands and buildings.
- Potential to provide spaces for increased town centre amenities and facilities.
- Potential to provide sustainable town centre homes in Dunshaughlin.
- Promote and create a more compact town centre growth reducing travel distances.
- Increase the level of activity and connectivity.
- Opportunity to incorporate pedestrian only routes into development.
- Provide space for local services to bring more people into the town.
- Provide opportunities for future growth in Dunshaughlin.
- Increase activity in the town centre, to provide a more vibrant and lively feel.



Map including the many potential backland areas in Dunshaughlin

Proposal - Grow It Yourself' branch Dunshaughlin, new community allotments

Background | Stakeholder engagement has identified that this should be an important theme/consideration within the Dunshaughlin Town Centre First Plan. Dunshaughlin as a DZ also must lead the way in the area of sustainable food production and consumption, this such proposal along with the educational aspect is a great example of this. The rationale for this is as follows:

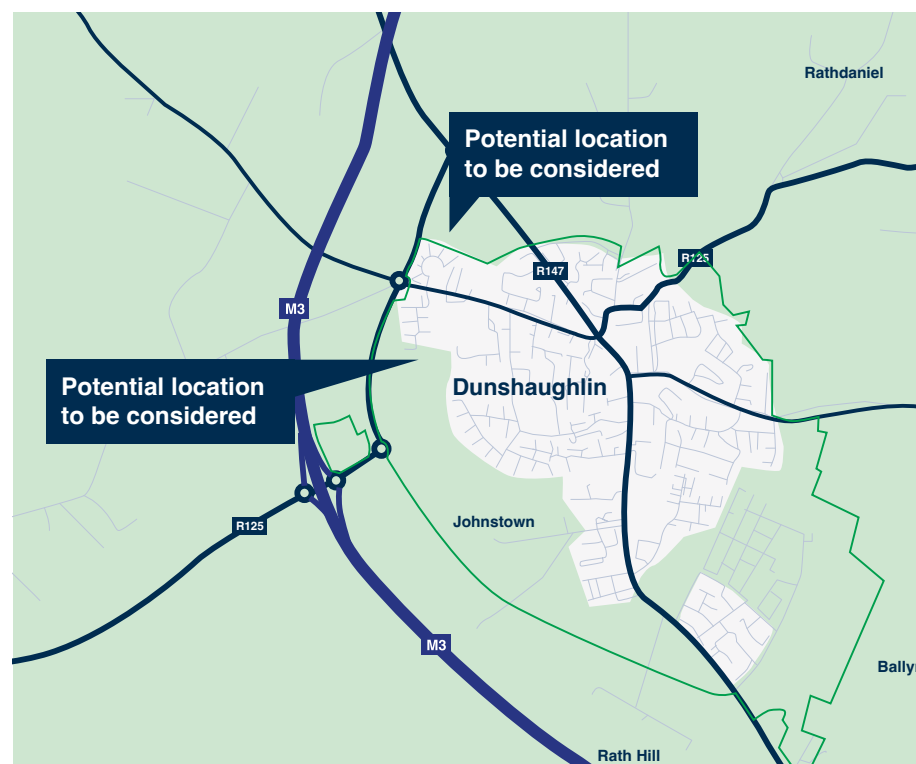
- The town has a young population in comparison to many other communities across the county. Access to sports, recreation and leisure facilities adds to the attractiveness of the settlement from a family perspective and also to the quality of life experience to these young people.
- 'Grow It Yourself' branch Dunshaughlin, does not have a dedicated community allotments.
- There is limited permanent existing facilities which could be used by informal groups of people.
- Potential to share facilities with the community school and the wider community grow their own food.
- Potential for additional facility such as pavilion type tea room, mens shed, social club.

Proposal | Potentially located on suitable land / close to school for educational use by schools during the school day and also by the community. Handing down knowledge. Identify space for a allotment.

Benefits | Promote healthy lifestyles; Provide recreation facilities, particularly for the younger population; Provide opportunities for integration with different cultures and nationalities. Building climate resilience through production

of own food, reducing climate impact associated with food production and waste. Rainwater harvesting on the proposed site will also reduce water usage.

Allotments: Several greenspaces throughout Dunshaughlin could be designated for garden allotments. Communal allotment gardens foster social connections, improve mental and physical well-being, enhance food security, and promote sustainable food production. They provide a space for education, cultural exchange, and environmental benefits, creating stronger, healthier, and more resilient communities.



St. Seachnalls existing
School Garden



Example 'Mud Island Community Garden', North Strand, D1., Google Earth.

Theme 08



Attracting Visitors

Introduction

Ireland's tourism sector is undergoing a dramatic and fundamental change. Failte Ireland has identified the specialist activities (e.g. authentic culture and heritage) market as playing a vital role in the sustainability of Irish tourism.

They emphasise that such activities play a general role in facilitating visitors' interaction with the Irish landscape and people and are also ideally aligned to the general strategic objectives of regionality, seasonality and yield.



Proposals - Improved tourist facilities

Background I Dunshaughlin is an attractive town to visit and has strong connections with resources such as the Boyne valley. Dunshaughlin is also a location on the emerging Meath cycleway. Furthermore, Dunshaughlin has strong links to natural, cultural and architectural heritage including the Irish literary scene. Therefore, Dunshaughlin is poised to capitalise further on its tourist potential, and better promote itself as a traditional Irish market town with a wealth of things to see and do.

Proposal | Improve the tourist facilities at Dunshaughlin, including:

- Smart interactive tourist facility which could utilise QR codes, for example.
- Footprints providing visual links to culture and heritage.
- Dedicated tourist office.
- Provide coach drop off in the town square to reduce dependence on cars.
- Provide recreational vehicle parking in proximity to the town centre.

The proposal aims to specifically maximise the benefits of the cycleway, festivals and events and of being located within Ireland's Ancient East.

Benefits

- Increased footfall in the town centre.
- Increased revenue for local businesses, hotels, pubs and eateries.
- Provide jobs.

Proposals - Programme for festivals and events

Background I Dunshaughlin has a rich heritage and culture. There is an opportunity to showcase this through a programme of events throughout the year, building on existing events and

encouraging and inviting new talent to emerge for the enjoyment of the community.

Proposal I To produce a coordinated approach to event and activities in the town centre. Ensuring that all events in the town run in a sustainable manner, to ensure the footprint of festivals are as limited as possible having a sustainability event such as the Harvest Festival is a great way to ensure sustainability is a focus area for all events and festivals. Building on the proposal to create a central open public space and performance areas.

Benefits

- Attracts more people to come to the town centre which increases footfall and helps local shops and businesses.
- Builds the local culture and showcases local talent.
- Greening of festivals will ensure limited impacts on the climate.

Proposals - Cycleway readiness

Background I The proposed cycleway is a significant opportunity for Dunshaughlin. This will attract new people to the town centre and also provide recreational access for the community.

Proposal I To ensure potential connections can be made at the point of the arrival, building upon the existing and future extended Dunshaughlin walks. Also to ensure the town and its public realm is welcoming to those on foot and cycling, as well as those with wheelchairs and disabilities with the appropriate infrastructure to support this.

Benefits Background I Dunshaughlin's proximity to the Ancient East and the Boyne Valley, is an opportunity to enhance. Currently the links are not maximised and much could be done to enhance these connections.

Proposal I Carry out a feasibility study which looks at the options for better connectivity. This could include a new bus links to Dunshaughlin, improved cycling and walking routes.

Benefits I Better connection and movement of people, and reduce transport related emissions in the town.

Theme 09

Natural Environment & Biodiversity



Introduction

The natural environment and biodiversity are essential for the processes that support our daily lives and must be considered within urban areas, with Dunshaughlin being a DZ this will be a core theme in all future development in the town to ensure wider climate action is incorporated into all developments. Conserving existing green spaces along with creating new natural space, introducing street trees and planting, will significantly improve our town centres for those who live within them and those who visit, while at the same time also having a positive impact on the climate. Protecting and enhancing the existing biodiversity, including both flora and fauna which exists within Dunshaughlin is fundamental to sustainability for the future.

Proposals - Town greening and biodiversity enhancement

Background I Dunshaughlin sits within a rural environment however the streets and recreational spaces are void of green infrastructure and natural elements. Although a stream has its

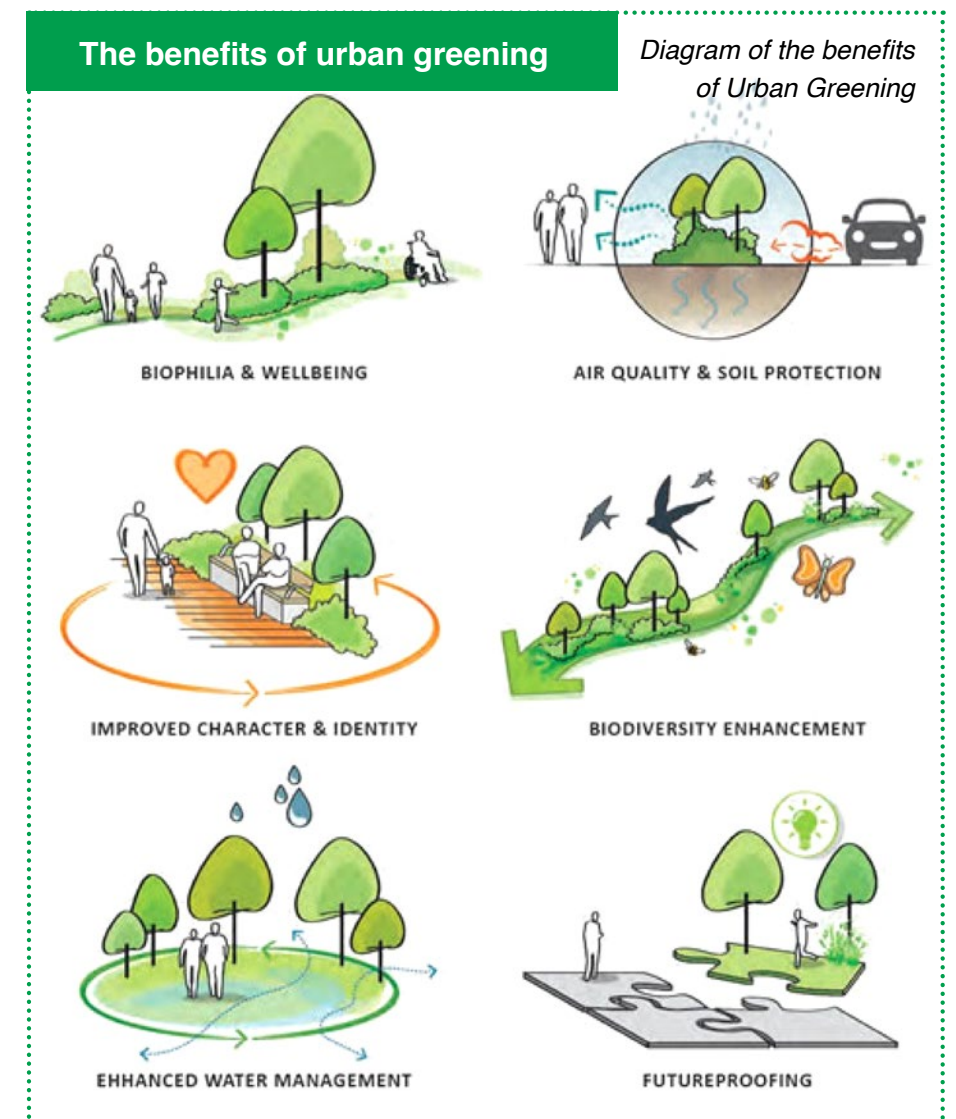
origin at the edge of the village, and the village accommodates potentially significant green spaces, they are currently hard to access. However they have a potential to add significant value to the centre.

Proposal I To determine opportunities for greening the town centre, its associated parks and ensuring that the maximum amount of accessible green space is created. The components could include:

- New appropriate native street trees within the main street and radiating streets and protecting existing native vegetation.
- Low level bio-diverse planting within the streets.
- More diversity of species with the parks and open green spaces.
- Introduction of sustainable urban drainage as appropriate within the streets in connection with any public realm enhancements.
- Signage throughout the town to help educate the community about the value of biodiversity in our towns and the inclusion of green and blue infrastructure.
- Elimination of invasive species including those which are pervasive around the town.
- Development of biodiversity corridors throughout the town.

Benefits

- Improve the comfort and enjoyment of the town centre; Access to nature and biodiversity; More sustainable approach to water management. All round positive examples of climate action.



Proposals - Wetlands Walk

Background I The source of the northern branch of the Broadmeadow (Abhainn Ghabhra) River's, rises as a stream at the centre of the village, flows through the centre of the Lagore boglands, on route to a Broadmeadow estuary near Swords.

This river is notably host to trout fishing under oversight of the EPA, and the bogland of Loch Gabhar or Lagore, a reclaimed lakebed, features significantly in the village's ancient history. In ancient times, Lagore was home to a large crannóg, a defensive artificial island, built up from the lake bed, which maximized the defensive advantage of the terrain.

Today the wetlands assist in providing important habitats for biodiversity which are managed appropriately, considering the threat of climate change.

Proposal I A walking trail encompassing the boglands with greater connectivity to Dunshaughlin centre. Looking to other examples of it would be possible to combine with an educational experience focusing on biodiversity and climate, and potentially a bridle way, linking to Ratoath.

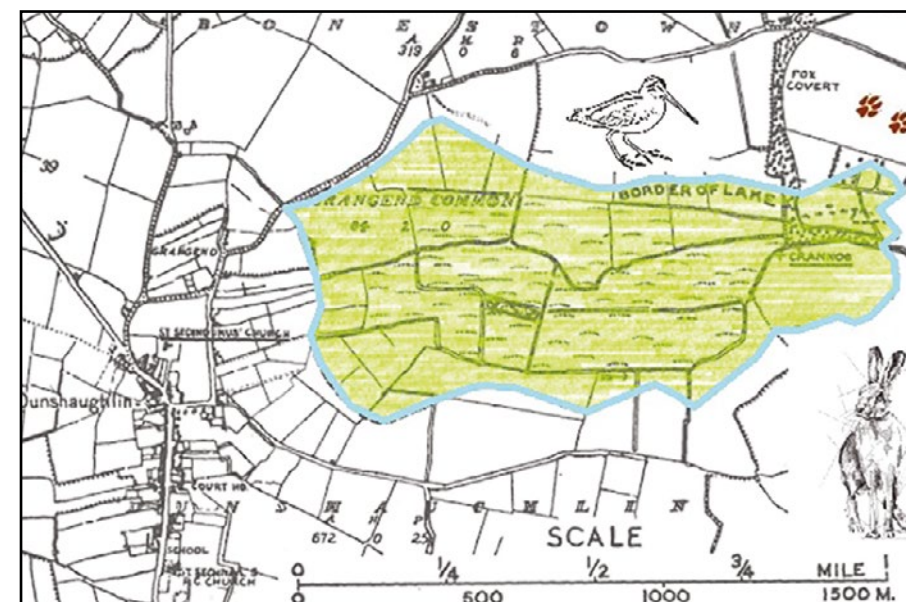
The aim would be to maximise the benefits of this natural resource, to tourism, education, in the process of ensuring it is more accessible. There is now a global awareness of the critical importance of these richly biodiverse and productive ecosystems.

Benefits

- Potential to increase awareness of the role of the wetland for biodiversity and climate change in the town's history.
- Improved access to the area for all users, enabling access to the natural environment and recreation facilities.
- Encourage tourism; Improved opportunities for recreation and socialising will support local businesses and community.
- Increase in biodiversity and preservation of natural assets.
- Increased access to nature, improvements in health and education.
- Enhance linkage to Meath cycleway, orienteering etc.



Example of suitable wetlands
walk boardwalk



Indicative extent of wetlands



Lagore Brooch,
discovered by Sir
William Wilde in 1848,
now in the National
Museum

Proposals - Utilising Green Space at council office, and Medical Centre

Background I The village currently is in possession of potentially significant green spaces in public ownership, which generally are currently hard to access.

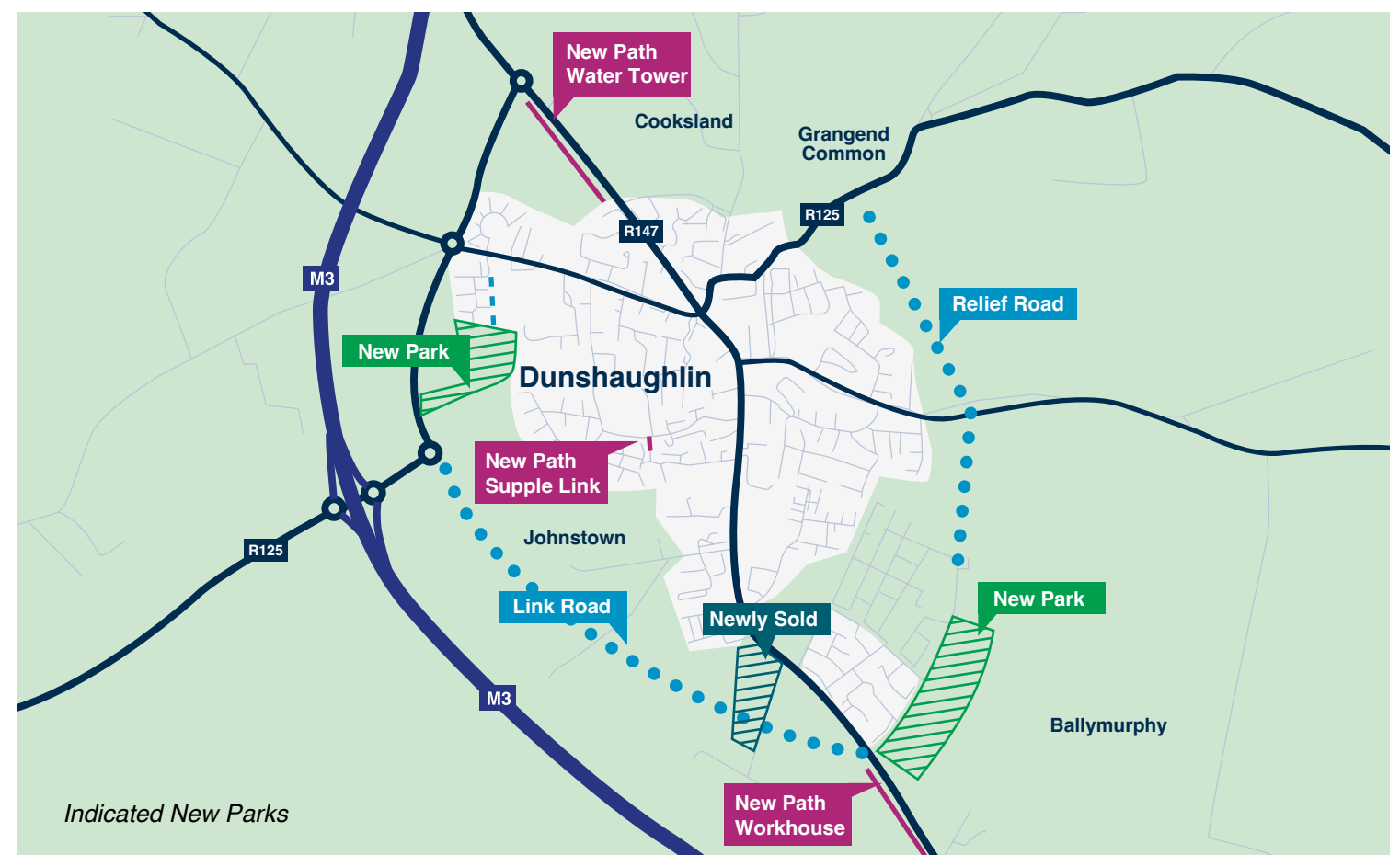
Proposal I A walking route could be proposed which would encompass these disparate parcels of green space, for public amenity.

This could include improved street lighting, re-paving in higher quality material, way signing, soft and hard landscaping, ensuring native tree and shrubs throughout to increase green corridors around the town along with the use of SUD's, and the forming of stopping points and sheltered rest areas, and interconnections with new pedestrian only routes. Education signage on importance of biodiversity and other climate actions throughout these green spaces around the town.

The aim would be to maximise the benefits of this existing resource, and build on them, and in the process ensure it is more accessible.

Benefits

- Improved access to the area for all users, enabling access to the natural environment and recreation facilities.
- Increase in biodiversity and preservation of natural assets.
- Increase awareness of importance of biodiversity and climate action.
- Increased access to nature, in general health benefits from increased availability of exercise.



Greenspace: Council Offices

Given the lack of greenspace available for community use, it is proposed that the unused space behind the council offices could be made available for research and teaching purposes for local or educational groups. The space could also be used for community allotments to promote awareness of sustainable food growth.

Greenspace: Medical Centre

Dunshaughlin Medical Centre retains a sizable portion of unused greenspace beside the R147 south of the Main Street. It seems feasible that a portion of this space is ceded to the public to use as a breakaway area away from the road. This space could be used for rest benches, allotment areas, Tidy Towns floral spaces, wild meadow area etc.

Theme 10

Re-Imagining Public Spaces



Introduction

Dunshaughlin today is dominated by vehicles - both traffic and those which are parked. This is at the detriment of other uses and the enjoyment of the town centre. The built and natural assets will be greatly improved with the re-imagining of public spaces in a sustainable manner, as will the attractiveness of the town centre as a whole. This theme looks to improve the spaces and accessibility for all users which in turn will help shops and businesses and make Dunshaughlin a more desirable place to live, work, visit and study.



Proposed indicative sketches

Proposal - The park requires improvement to provide a welcoming, safe green space for locals and visitors.

Proposal I The proposal is to improve the entrances to the park provide an enhanced sense of arrival. The footpaths would be widened and upgraded to ensure accessibility. An activity zone would be developed in the north section of the park to provide facilities for play for young children and spaces to 'hangout' for older children, teenagers and adults, along with seating and picnic tables. Consideration should also be paid to creating quiet and safe spaces for older people in parks.

Benefits

- Improving and encouraging the use of this vital green space.
- Discouraging anti-social behaviour.
- Improving access to town centre green space.



Proposal - Public realm enhancement

Background I Dunshaughlin has not been very successful in attracting the required funding that would be required to enhance the public realm within the town centre.

The town today is dominated by traffic and parking which detracts from the enjoyment of the town, the safety of all users and the heritage value and appearance.

Proposal I The proposal is for the re- imagination of the heart of Dunshaughlin's public realm in the town centre including the Market Square and radiating streets. The scheme would include:

- New road alignments, narrower carriageways.
- Safer crossing points and more comfortable footpaths.
- New LED lighting throughout.
- A signage and wayfinding scheme.
- New street furniture including designated cycle parking.
- Rationalised on street car parking with the provision of new, public use off street car parks.
- Addition of native street trees, low level planting and sustainable urban drainage.

Benefits

Better quality of life for residents to Dunshaughlin; A more attractive town centre encouraging more visitors and increasing the time people stay in the town; An organised system of parking for all users. Increased climate action through promoting of active travel measures, widescale planting and incorporation of SUDs.

05 Enabling the Place

This section is focused on the steps to implement the proposals as set out in Section 4.



5.1 Process

Dunshaughlin has a strong base to help deliver a successful Town Centre First Plan. The focus should initially be on the proposals and practical initiatives that are site-specific.

These are primarily the restoration and re-purposing of identified buildings, urban design interventions. As Dunshaughlin has been identified as a DZ all climate action related proposals must be prioritised with.

Starting the regeneration process by initiating the proposals contained within this plan will shift perceptions around Dunshaughlin, creating momentum to encourage involvement from the private sector. This should enable an environment where further initiatives come forward, both from this plan and additional ideas that may not be included.

The successful delivery and implementation of this plan are intrinsically tied to the collaborative involvement and contributions of various stakeholders as listed in the following:

- Meath County Council.
- Local elected members.
- Town Team.
- Local community.
- National Town Centre First Office.
- National Oversight and Advisory Group (NOAG).
- Private landowners and developers.

The following pages include a high-level delivery plan and set of actions to take forward the proposals contained within this plan.

Dunshaughlin Harvest Festival



5.2 The Town Team Priorities

N.B. Inclusive of the priorities as proposed by the Town team, included in the TCF Plan themes.

(A.) Active Travel, Objective	Priority H/M/L	Timeline for Delivery/ Years	Key Contributors / Stakeholders (Non- Exhaustive)	MCC Comments & Indicative Funding Steams
Path Quality (Level, Consistency, Crossings)	H	3 years +	1,2,9,10,13	RRDF, ERDF, SMIP, Failte IRL, JT.
Street Lighting Enhancements	H	3 years +	1,2,9,10,13	RRDF, ERDF, SMIP, Failte IRL, JT.
Physical Clutter (Advertisements, Planters)	H	2-4 years	1,2,3,5	RRDF, ERDF, SMIP, Failte IRL, JT.
New Path: Workhouse (MCC CASE: 313229)	L	4-8 years	1,2, ,9,10	RRDF, ERDF, SMIP, Failte IRL, JT.
New Path: Water Tower	M	4-8 years	1,2,9,10,13	RRDF, ERDF, SMIP, Failte IRL, JT.
New Path: Supple Link to Park	M	2-5 years	1,2,3,9	RRDF, ERDF, SMIP, Failte IRL, JT.

(B.) Transportation, Objective	Priority H/M/L	Timeline for Delivery/ Years	Key Contributors / Stakeholders (Non- Exhaustive)	MCC Comments & Indicative Funding Steams
Link Road(s)	L	8-12 years	1,2,10,13	RRDF, ERDF, SMIP, Failte IRL, JT.
Train Station with hourly Dublin Passenger Service	L	8-10 years	1,2,10,13	RRDF, ERDF, SMIP, Failte IRL, JT.
Park & Ride	L	5-10 years	1,2,10,13	RRDF, ERDF, SMIP, Failte IRL, JT.
Road Markings	M	1-3 years	1,2,10,13	RRDF, ERDF, SMIP, Failte IRL, JT.
SuperValu Junction/Parking	H	1-2 years	1,2,9,10,13	RRDF, ERDF, SMIP, Failte IRL, JT.

(C.) Public Realm Objective	Priority H/M/L	Timeline for Delivery/ Years	Key Contributors / Stakeholders (Non- Exhaustive)	MCC Comments & Indicative Funding Steams
Derelict/Vacant Building Usage	H	Ongoing	1,2,6	RRDF, ERDF, SMIP, Failte IRL, JT.
Main St. Façade Coherence	M	2-5 years	1,2,6	RRDF, ERDF, SMIP, Failte IRL, JT.
Greenspace: Council Offices	L	5 years +	1,2,3,5,6	RRDF, ERDF, SMIP, Failte IRL, JT.
Greenspace: Medical Centre	M	3-6 years	1,2,3,5,6	RRDF, ERDF, SMIP, Failte IRL, JT.
Town Centre Plaza (Fire Station)	M	1-3 years	1,2,3	RRDF, ERDF, SMIP, Failte IRL, JT.

(D.) Amenity Objective	Priority H/M/L	Timeline for Delivery/ Years	Key Contributors / Stakeholders (Non- Exhaustive)	MCC Comments & Indicative Funding Steams
Courthouse (Civic, Cultural, Community Space)	H	1-3 years	1,2,6	RRDF, ERDF, SMIP, Failte IRL, JT.
New Park: Ballymurphy	L	5-10 Years	1,2,6	RRDF, ERDF, SMIP, Failte IRL, JT.
New Park: Eco Park (7th Meath)	L	5-10 Years	1,2,3,5,6	RRDF, ERDF, SMIP, Failte IRL, JT.
Astro Pitches (DYFC)	L	5-10 Years	1,2,3,5,6	RRDF, ERDF, SMIP, Failte IRL, JT.
Allotments	M	2-5 Years	1,2,3	RRDF, ERDF, SMIP, Failte IRL, JT.
Historical Site Highlighting	H	1-3 years	1,2,3,4,9	RRDF, ERDF, SMIP, Failte IRL, JT.
Sensory Garden (Tidy Towns)	H	1-2 years	1,2,3	RRDF, ERDF, SMIP, Failte IRL, JT.

Key Contributors / Stakeholders

1. Meath County Council,
2. Town Team,
3. Local Groups,
4. Arts Society,
5. Local Businesses
6. Landowners
7. 7th Meath (Scouts)
8. Tourism, Coach Tours
9. NTA (National Transport Authority)
10. TII (Transport Infrastructure Ireland)
11. Residents/Associations
12. LEO (Local Enterprise Office)
13. DoT (Department of Transport)
14. ESB, Water, Telecom, Misc Utility Co's.

5.3 Potential Funding sources

Active Travel Funds

Support the development of high quality cycling and walking infrastructure outside of cities; Specifically targeted at towns and villages; Additional Outdoor Infrastructure Fund; Additional €15 million fund set up to ensure a 'Safe Outdoor Summer'; Designed to be used to enhance outdoor urban space and improve walking and cycling infrastructure.

Community Climate Action Programme

The Community Climate Action Programme (CCAP) is an initiative of the Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment to provide support to community groups interested in undertaking projects climate actions which help to build low carbon, sustainable communities to contribute to national climate and energy targets. €811,000 has been allocated to Meath administered through Meath County Council.

Community Enhancement Programme (CEP)

- Small capital grants for community groups to allow them to enhance facilities in disadvantaged areas.
- Administered by Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs), with support from their local authorities.

Community Heritage Grant Scheme

- Supports capital projects that improve access and inclusion to heritage sites.

Connected Hubs Fund

- €5 million fund to expand existing hub facilities, providing additional hot desks, office space and meeting rooms for remote working.
- Can be used to provide electric car charging, upgrade disability access and improve IT facilities located in Hubs or Broadband Connected Points (BCPs).

Historic Structures Fund

- Supports historic and protected structures safeguarding and maintenance; Grants of between €15,000 and €20,000 for the owners and custodians of historic structure.

Historic Towns Initiative

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

LEADER Programme

- Fund for projects that improve the following:
 - Rural tourism; Enterprise development; Broadband; Basic services targeted at hard-to-reach communities;
 - Rural youth.
 - Protection and sustainable use of water resources.
 - Local biodiversity.
 - Renewable energy.

Outdoor Public Spaces Scheme

Support for LAs to adapt, equip or improve public spaces for cultural events and activities; LAs are invited to propose capital projects for flexible outdoor spaces for year-round use; Up to €250,000 at a project funding rate of 90%.

Outdoor Recreation and Infrastructure Scheme

Supports key objectives for 'Our Rural Future'; Funding to develop natural amenities in rural areas; Development of outdoor sport facilities, including outdoor trails, walkways, cycleways, Blueway's, tidal pools, floating boardwalks and bridleways; Funding ranges from €20,000 to €500,000 depending on the size of the scheme.

Rural Regeneration and Development

Fund €1 billion commitment from government to be invested from 2019 to 2027; Aims to support job creation in rural areas, address de-population and support investment into towns and villages with a population of less than 10,000.

Town and Village Renewal Scheme

Set up to support the revitalisation of towns and villages to improve the living and working conditions in their communities and increase their potential to support increased economic activity; Maximum grant of €500,000; The projects that will receive funding will: Increase the attractiveness of the town or village as a local commercial centre;

- Enhance the areas environment and amenities in the interests of residents, businesses and visitors.
- Promote the areas potential for tourism.

UBU – Your Place, Your Space

- School supports to young people.
- Mostly community based activities.

5.4 Next Steps

The Town Team

As set out by the Town Centre First Policy, the Town Team, in collaboration with the local authority, are responsible for the delivery of projects.

The Town Team shall have a continuous role in overseeing the delivery of projects, communicating with stakeholders and reviewing this plan.

The Town Regeneration Officer

The Town Regeneration Officer shall continue to support the ongoing work of the Town Team, ensuring the development and delivery of the Town Centre First Plan.

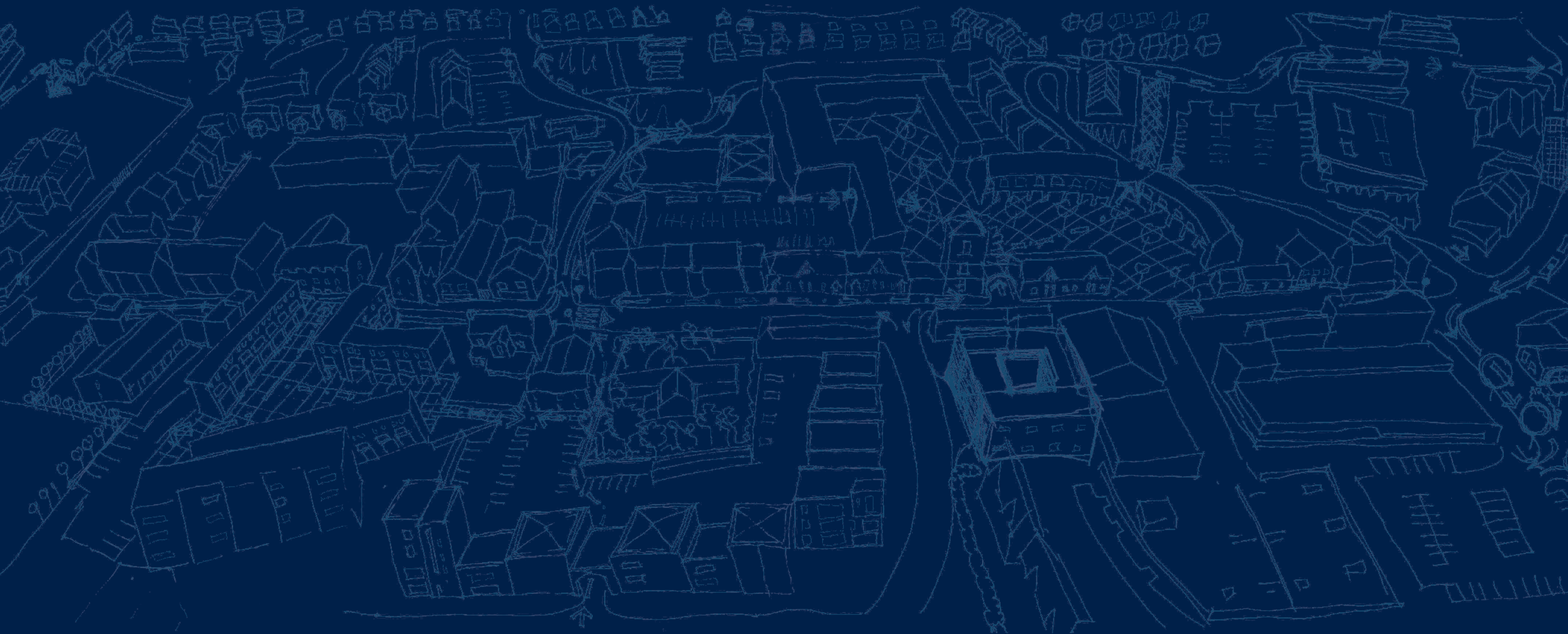
Monitoring the Plan

It is imperative that the Town Team and Town Regeneration Officer regularly assesses the progress of the plan.

This shall include measuring outcomes based on the objectives set out in the plan and ensuring the alignment of the plan with changing circumstances and wider factors.



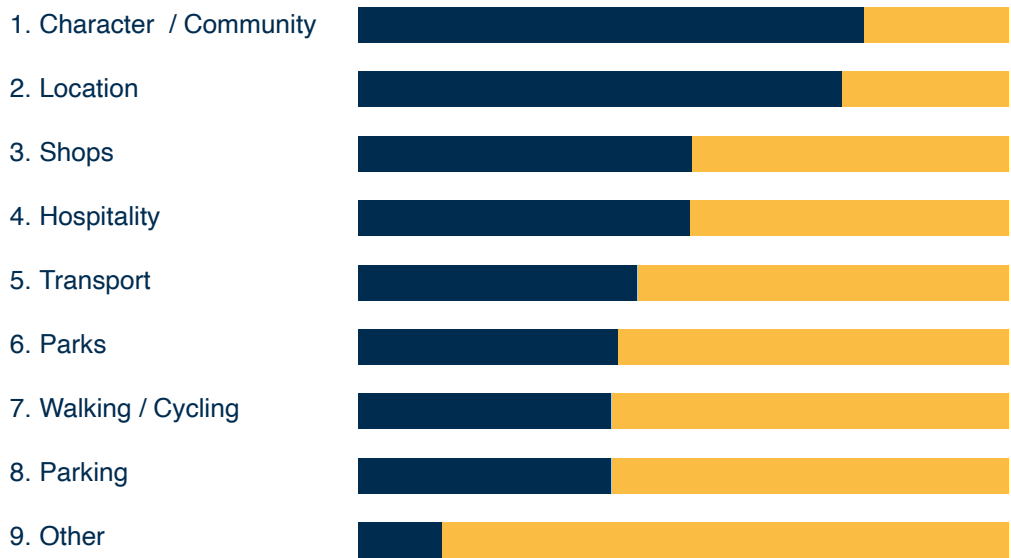
Appendices



Appendix: First Consultations - 397 Responses

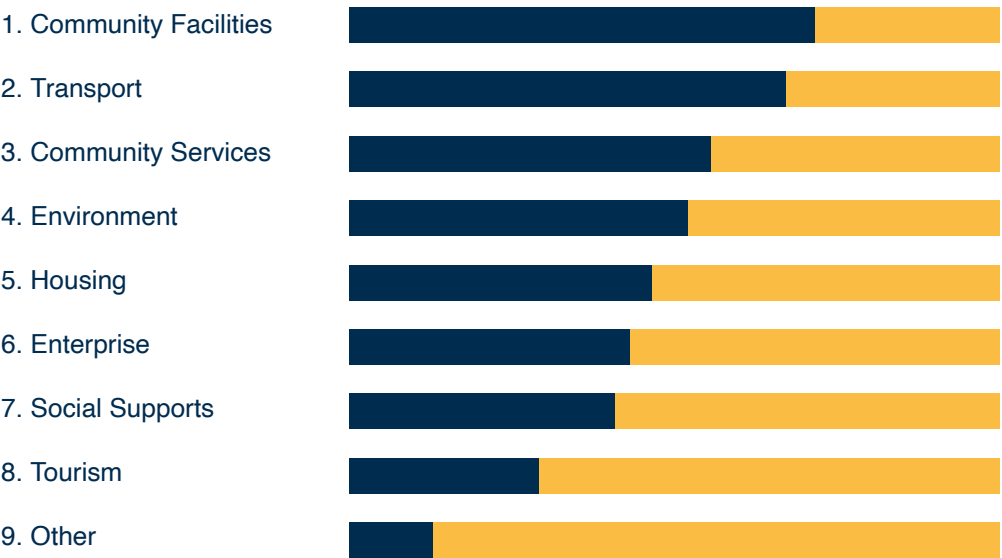
What is the most appealing feature about Dunshaughlin?

Rank in order with most significant first.



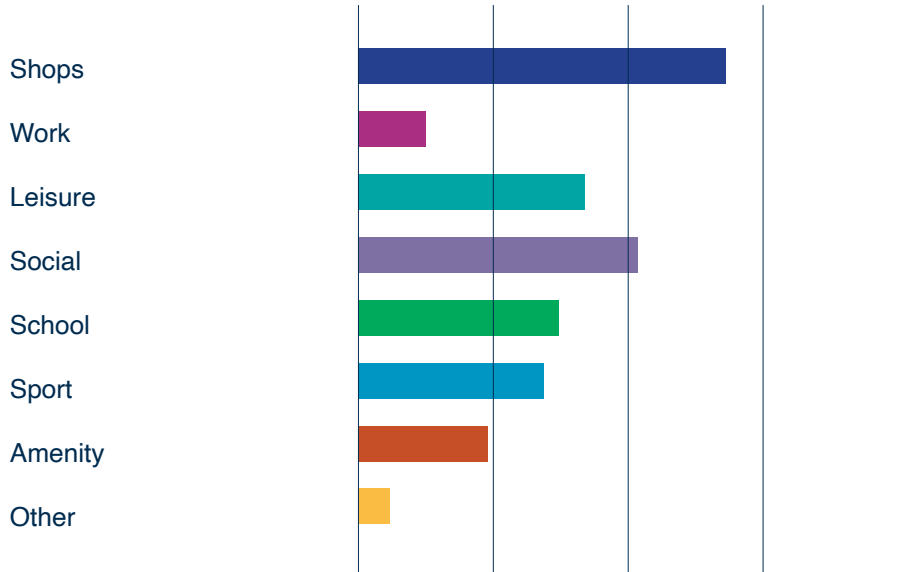
For the next five years what would be your priority for Dunshaughlin?

Rank in order with most significant first.



What would be your reasons for visiting Dunshaughlin?

Rank in order with most significant first.





Please feel free to note briefly below any other comments or questions you might have.

“Consider the needs of those outside of Dunshaughlin who must use a car to access the village/town parking. No more traffic lights. Do not do what has happened in Ashbourne, narrow the roads and put in cycleways on both sides of the roads which are rarely used. Buses and lorries unable to pass each other . The motorist is the only one who pays road tax and those in the country do not have access to buses so must use cars.”

“No proper parking for main street areas”

“Bring the workhouse into the public ownership”

“New housing estates should be designed like min villages - a square that is a meeting place with cafés, seats,fountain, trees, shops - leafy pathways to Dunshaughlin centre.”

“Why is planning given for all the new houses & apartments and there are no new facilities.”

“Thank you for asking us our opinion”

“The city council approved too many housing projects without adapting all the other needs for a good developing community, they have to work in parallel”

“More crèche facilities and a park. Also more frequent buses “

“Communities work best when they are involved in the planning and decision making process. Communication is key”

“Thank you to the Tidy Towns & other groups who do a great job improving our village”

“Artefacts in (national) Dublin museum displayed in courthouse”

“Police station is only staffed two days a week in a town with a population of 19k people unacceptable”

“Lovely place to grow up & live”

“Police station (GS) is only staffed two days a week in the town with a population of 10k people - unacceptable”

“I love Dunshaughlin, I love the sense of community and I think any idea of facilitating community growth and spirit with the people of Dunshaughlin will make it such an amazing town even more then it is already”

“More special needs supports for local residents /families”

“Transport links directly to train stations and the Sports Campus. Best sports facilities in the country 20/25 minutes away and it takes over an hour to get there on public transport (without wait time) 2 buses and up to a twenty minute walk. If a pool can't be provided at least have access to one. Path to Killeen Caste (for walks) and out local country roads, to Ratoath and on to Ashbourne would provide a safe walk/run to surrounding villages. Dog park very badly needed.”

“A dog park would be nice”

“Please let this be an opportunity to turn Dunshaughlin into a vibrant /attractive town that people can be even more proud of. I hope this initiative doesn't go the way of other projects that have been proposed in the past. Looking forward to the sea

change regards Shay Fitzpatrick”

“Overall Dunshaughlin is a great place to live, with a great community, always trying to improve for all. Tidy towns group do great work. The library is also a great place for all the workshops / classes that are held there”

“Provide street lights / lamp posts from Rathbeggan to water tower”

“Train”

“No. Happy enough here - nowhere's perfect.”

“More Gardaí presence around the village i.e. park etc especially at night, as so many new housing estates going up. Q11 Public Transport ; need more covered stops, when it is raining so many people are not covered”

“Parking not good”

“More public parking needed in the town”

“Get more people involved in community work. More buses to Ratoath Dublin (half hourly)”

“The courthouse in dunshaughlin would be a perfect central meeting place for all”

“Very impressed with the drive by locals to improve our local village”

“There is nothing for teenagers not involved in organised sports club. No one wants them ‘hanging around’ yet there is no other



option for them to gather/ entertain. Goals at the park would create a social gathering point in view and safety.”

“McDonalds”

“Build a community swimming pool”

“Super value”

“Cycle paths to encourage children on way to school. Walking bus corridors”

“Turn the fields into more parks”

“No where for youth to go”

“Facilities in Dunshaughlin have been a complete afterthought. Simply not good enough. Planning permission for the sheer number of houses should not have been granted without a significant upgrade on what was here. Unless this shortfall is addressed, there will be inevitable antisocial behaviour issues in the medium term. The bus “service” to and from Dublin is a complete joke. Much like the rest of the so called “Green initiatives” in the county. Buses consistently late, or simply don’t show up. Buses then routinely skipping stops returning from Dublin. At a minimum, Dunshaughlin should be first on the list for a council gym and pool, seeing as it seems to be single handedly trying to solve the housing crises on its own. Bus service needs a significant upgrade in terms of frequency and reliability. Alternative routes also required (To Maynooth University and to Swords), connection to the train line should be a medium term ambition. Large public park should also be

provided. Existing park is too small for new population.”

“Need to become more sensory & wheelchair friendly “

“The lack of planning of infrastructure to cater for the development of the town is leading to problems for those of us living in the community. Traffic congestion along Main Street by those passing through the town, is creating “Rat runs” on neighbouring roads. The housing development along the R125 & the proposed development along Lagore Road are a clear indication that “town planners” only look at plans rather than the community as a whole.”

“I would like to see better public transport to and from Dunshaughlin. This will encourage people to come out this way and visit the great pubs and restaurants in the village. ATM it is too awkward and we find we are socialising in more accessible areas such as Dunboyne and Blanchardstown. There needs to be a good bus service added to service south Dublin City centre/ quays with multiple pick up and drop off points in and around the city centre. Bus Arás is not accessible as it can be a 30 minute walk from the south city centre where many are working, shopping and visiting restaurants and pubs. At 9 months pregnant I had to walk across town to Bus Arás to get home so the bus service to Dunshaughlin was accessible for me”

“Traffic control in place leaving/entering junction to SuperValu - public transport increase / more frequently”

“Improve bus connection to city & airport, with additional bus stops at grangened”

“Yes, more small shops like, spar or Centra and opening hours are not suitable, especially when you have sick children at home”

“Remove Eir mast, revamp courthouse, remove or revamp fire station as community hub”

“ Town needs Garda presence at nights to reduce vandalism and people trying to open cars etc. We have a good community here but need Garda support.”

“Playground not supervised against criminal activity”

“We need more GPs”

“Make a ring road as the traffic is mad can’t get out at junction of SuperValu”

“We have been waiting for the train for 20 years. In vain.”

“Too many houses delivered in recent times without expanding all related services to manage with the growing population. The closest GP I could get it is 40 minutes drive away”

“There isn’t anything really culturally impactful in Dunshaughlin The old Garda station looks nice and the library in the old church It could do with an old Quarter Always a more business focused town What about a weekly market? A cycle / greenway would be lovely”

“Reduce traffic on the Main Street”

“The paths and roads need to be more accessible for those



who are elderly, vision impaired or wheelchair users. Traffic management needs to be improved with Lidl, Aldi and SuperValu difficult to enter and exit because of poor traffic light placement.”

“Ensure facilities in place before allowing more planning permissions in the village There are enough examples in neighbouring towns and further afield of issues re antisocial behaviour etc Set up think tanks with areas where this has worked/ helped/ rather than falling into same trap”

“Overall, a well designed questionnaire. Congratulations.”

“Dunshaughlin is a great town but has under gone huge change quickly. Our facilities are badly lagging behind. We have a young population, we don't want it like Ratoath (sorry Ratoath) with gangs of kids hanging around. Give them somewhere to go. Somewhere to play. Something to interest them.”

“Think Tidy towns do a great job”

“More zoned land that is already serviced”

“Reliable frequent transport offerings to various parts of Dublin and throughout the country”

“A train line would be transformative for the area”

“ - With so many houses built and continuing to be built the youth need more social outlets perhaps”

“Traffic travel too fast through the village, need speed bumps

and traffic lights to control this. Dunshaughlin needs a proper park/running track for inclusive of everyone and free of charge to use.”

“Dunshaughlin is expanding at an alarming rate. So many new houses built in recent years and continue to be built. Infrastructure and facilities need to increase and expand at the same rate”

“Better traffic layout to avoid congestion at peak times, traffic lights and pedestrian crossings needed at busy junction at SuperValu”

“Train line would be a game changer for the area”

“If more bus lanes where added to the Navan Road after the m50 it would make it much better to commute to and from dunshaughlin and it would make me take the bus over the car.”

“It would be great if the council could become involved and advocate for the permanent school buildings in Dunshaughlin. There has been no progress in relation to this in the last 3 years and given the growing population in Dunshaughlin, this issue should be prioritised. Children attending school prefabs on construction sites and non permanent sites is disruptive and should not be viewed as a solution to the issue.”

“Full time Garda station.”

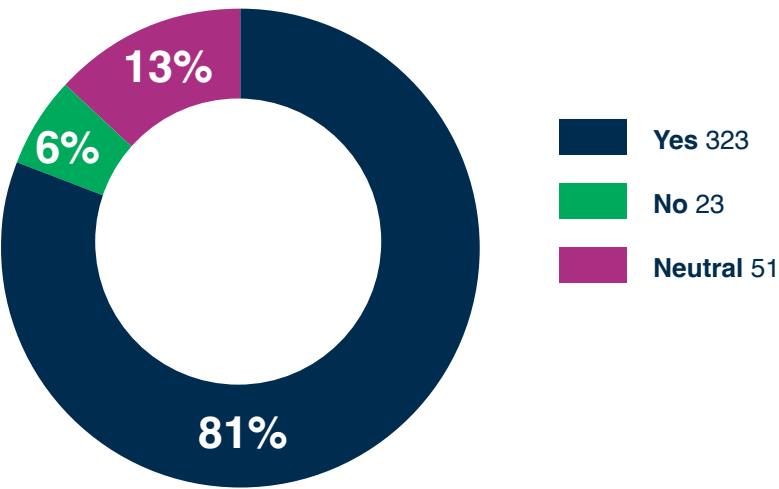
“There is a gap of social clubs and free places to go to socialise. This leads to the antisocial behaviour we are starting to see emerge - such as the incident with fire at the Harvest Festival. Teens should be able to be teens without having to resort to potentially life-changing attention-seeking behaviours. Even outside of this demographic, apart from the library, there is a derth of places to go that doesn't involve either drinking or gambling.”

“More supports for new mothers to meet up while on maternity leave”

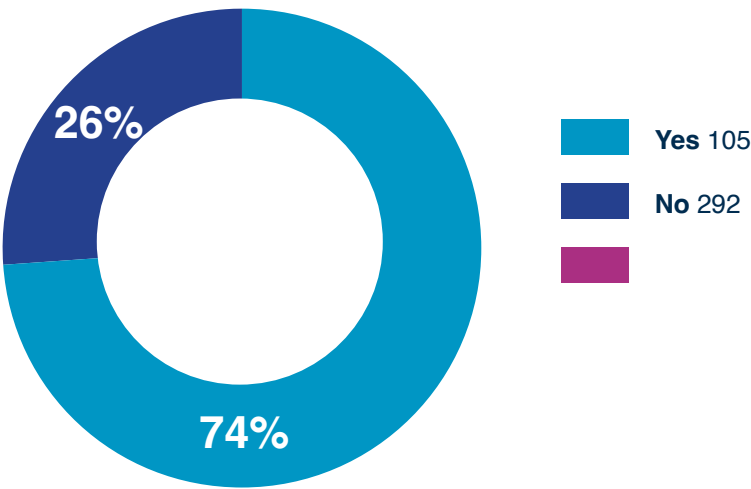
“A by-pass is badly needed. The traffic is awful at certain times.”

“Enforcement of more green areas and social spaces in the newly constructed and in the process of being constructed housing estates. Make them more of a community based place than a quantity of housing based place.”

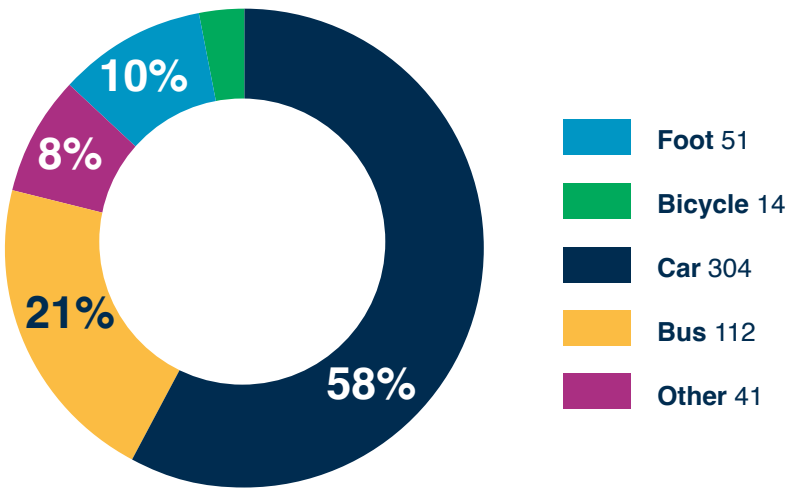
In general, do you feel that the Village of Dunshaughlin is a safe place to, visit, live, work, socialise around, etc ?



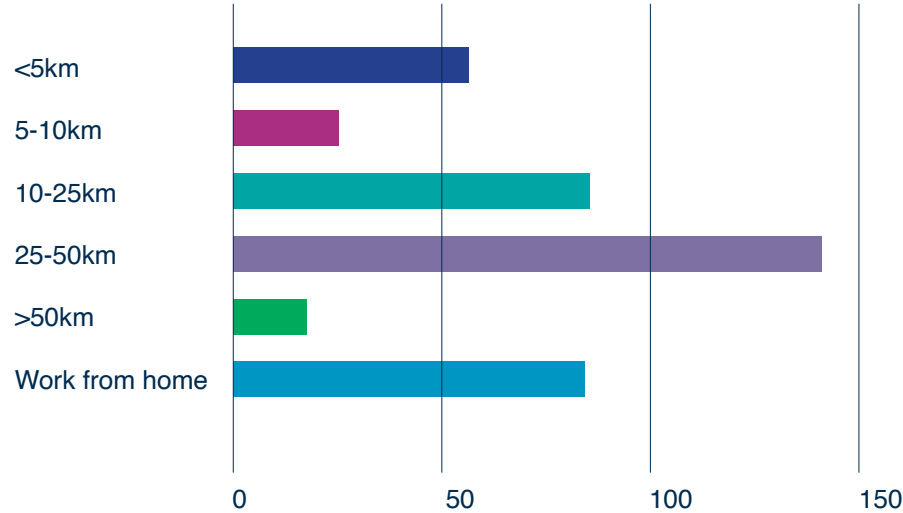
Do you think the existing public transport, waiting areas, information, etc are all satisfactory?



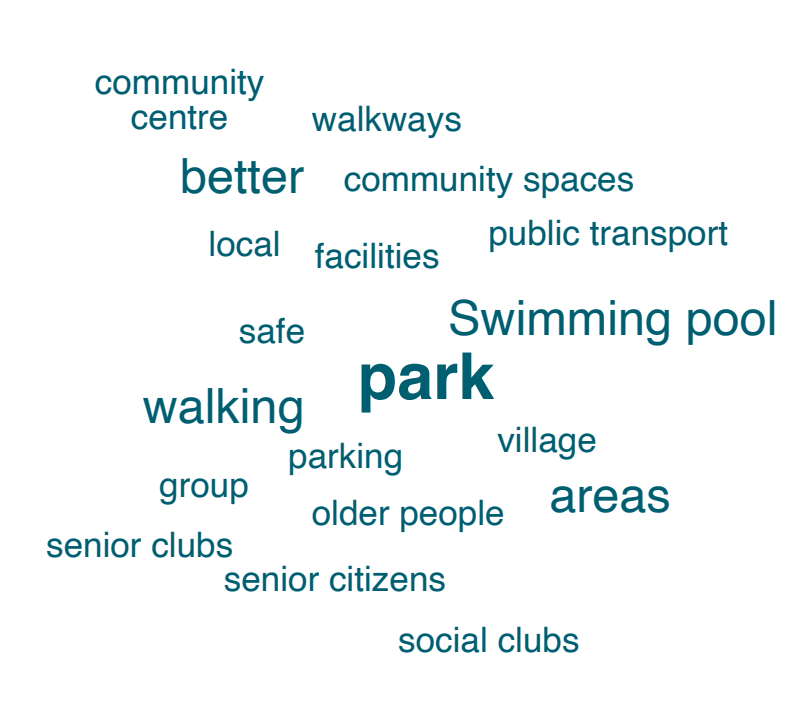
By what modes of transport, or combination of modes, do you use to travel to work?



How far do you commute to your work, (in KM)?



What local facilities would you like to be prioritised for senior citizens?



Latest Responses

“Retirement village outdoor meeting community areas”

What local facilities would you like to be prioritised for young people?



Latest Responses

- “Youth cafe. Meeting rooms. Discos. Sport facilities.”
- “More ground at gaelic athletic club to cater for explosion...”
- “More amenities”

What local facilities would you like to be prioritised for pre-schoolers?



Latest Responses

- “Crèche facilities. Some safe space to play”
- “Crèches in each large estate”
- “More affordable crèches”

Appendix: Second Consultations

1. Cycling, Walking, and Connectivity

Walking and cycling contribute to health and environmental benefits. Accessible, pleasant, and safe routes can encourage active transportation. All amenities, shops, public spaces, and transport should be well-connected to ensure inclusivity.

Questions to Consider:

- Are there good-quality, accessible routes for walking and cycling across the village?
- Do these routes provide direct and convenient connections to key locations, such as schools, shops, parks, and public transport hubs?
- Are pedestrians and cyclists prioritised over cars where feasible?
- Are routes well-maintained and safe to use throughout the day and year?
- Do the routes cater to individuals of all ages and abilities, with seating and resting areas as needed?
- Are there sufficient walking and cycling routes in terms of both coverage and quality?
- How safe do these routes feel for users at different times of the day and in varying weather conditions?

2. Public Transport, Traffic, and Parking

Reliable and affordable public transport helps reduce traffic and benefits the environment. Effective traffic and parking management enhances the overall experience for residents, workers, and visitors.

Questions to Consider:

- Is public transport frequent, reliable, and accessible to people of all ages and abilities?
- Are bus stops conveniently located within walking distance of homes, and do they provide seating and shelter?
- Are traffic-calming measures in place to improve safety and quality of life?
- Is there a priority between the availability of parking and public transport availability?
- Where could a Park & Ride facility be put to ease parking and traffic congestion?
- Is access to the (M3 Parkway) train station adequate, with facilities such as toilets, secure parking, and cycle storage?

Top 3 Improvements for Public Transport, Traffic, and Parking:

3. Streets and Public Spaces

Well-designed streets and public spaces can enhance the appeal of a village. Natural features, landmarks, and thoughtful design create spaces that are both functional and aesthetically pleasing.

Questions to Consider:

- Are the village’s buildings, streets, and public spaces attractive and easy to navigate?
- Are there enough green spaces, parks, or safe walking routes that encourage outdoor activity?
- Is the main street well-maintained, with well-designed shop fronts and public spaces?
- Do natural or historic landmarks add to the village’s charm, and are they well-integrated into the design of public spaces?
- Have you proposals for any derelict properties or vacant lots in the Village?
- How well does the village accommodate different seasons, times of day, and weather conditions?
- Do public spaces feel safe and inviting for people to spend time in?

Top 3 Improvements for Streets and Public Spaces:

4. Amenities and Recreation

Access to amenities and recreational facilities improves quality of life. From play areas for children to leisure opportunities for adults, these spaces help build healthy, thriving communities.

Questions to Consider:

- Are there adequate play and recreation spaces for different groups, including children, teenagers, and older adults?
- Are these spaces well-maintained, accessible, and affordable for all residents?
- Do recreational spaces provide opportunities for everyone, regardless of age, ability, or socioeconomic status?
- Are there enough facilities for community needs, such as sports, relaxation, and leisure activities?
- Do local amenities, such as shops, schools, and health services, meet the needs of the community?
- How well do local amenities support a healthy and active lifestyle?
- Are there any gaps in the availability of entertainment, shopping, or leisure facilities?
- Are recreational areas and facilities safe and inviting at all times of day and year?

Top 3 Improvements for Amenities and Recreation:

5. Social Contact

A strong sense of community is built through spaces where people can meet and interact. Offering varied opportunities for social contact can combat isolation and foster inclusivity.

Questions to Consider:

- Are there enough opportunities and spaces for people to meet and interact across different age groups and backgrounds?
- Do indoor and outdoor spaces support social interactions in different seasons and weather conditions?
- Are there dedicated spaces for specific groups, such as youth clubs, cafés, or social facilities for older residents?
- Are informal and formal meeting spaces well distributed across the village and accessible to everyone?
- Are there any social groups or events that are missing from village? e.g. Park Run, Seasonal Events

Top 3 Improvements for Social Contact:

6. Feeling Safe

A sense of safety is crucial for a thriving community. Well-designed spaces and routes contribute to reducing crime and creating a secure environment for all.

Questions to Consider:

- Do public spaces and routes feel safe at different times of the day and throughout the year?
- Are buildings and public areas designed to overlook streets and spaces, improving safety through visibility?
- Is the village free of derelict buildings, crime, and antisocial behaviour?
- How safe do residents and visitors feel both at home and while out and about in the community?
- Does the design of spaces accommodate the safety needs of everyone, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, or ability?

Top 3 Improvements for Feeling Safe:

Amenities & Recreation

Courthouse ①
- Craft Centre
- Theatre
- ? Youth
- Drop in centre

Night time
Economy

No Meeting Place
for Community
and for Hotel



IMPROVE
PLAYGROUND
FACILITIES

New Cultural
Community
Centre

Upgrade children's
playground



Swimming pool



1 Venue similar to
RATHATH Venue -
needed badly
2 ~~Sw~~

The Theatre
like Rathath

Courthouse
Empty at the
moment

Meeting Rooms
for ART -
Recreational -
additions -
Civic venue

1) Swimming Pool
Leisure Centre
with
GYM

①

Bigger gym

Development of
Gym

2) Hotel

Hotel

①

- Expand
the primary
health
centre

Hea

* Emergency

Clinic

[v]

Health Service
(G.P.s)

More GP's
& Local Medical
Diagnosticians
MEDIC

Appendix: Second Consultations

1. Cycling, Walking, and Connectivity

- In-adequate crossings, ramps, lights, traffic calming
- Dangerous, damaged and uneven footpath, cluttered, and illegal parking, Parking on Footpaths
- Well lit walkway around Dunshaughlin with benches, and from church parking to NS and shops
- More cross village connectivity desirable
- Cycle routes and stands, to designated as first town for safe cycling

2. Traffic, Parking and Public Transport,

- Traffic lights not coordinated
- Traffic calming plus ring road completion needed to ease traffic congestion
- Park + ride , plus additional parking, restricted metres
- Shuttle bus (none) to M3 parkway (Train), bus unreliable including airport service
- More seating & cover for bus shelter
- Bus routes connecting to other towns

3. Streets and Public Spaces

- Run-down buildings, courthouse and area refurbishment / bailey / famine graveyard more accessible / new improved library
- General lack of green spaces and suitable walking spaces
- The playground could it be updated
- More bins & benches in the park, lighting CCTV on existing green spaces, pocket forest, more activities in park / more disable parking

4. Amenities and Recreation

- Digital hub in Meath extended opening council office
- Swimming gym/ emergency
- The theatre cultural courthouse project
- Meeting rooms /hotel
- Retail / parks for new housing estates
- Allotments
- Walking paths, nature reserve
- Exploit the adjacent historical sites e.g. Dunsany, boglands, workhouse

5. Social Contact

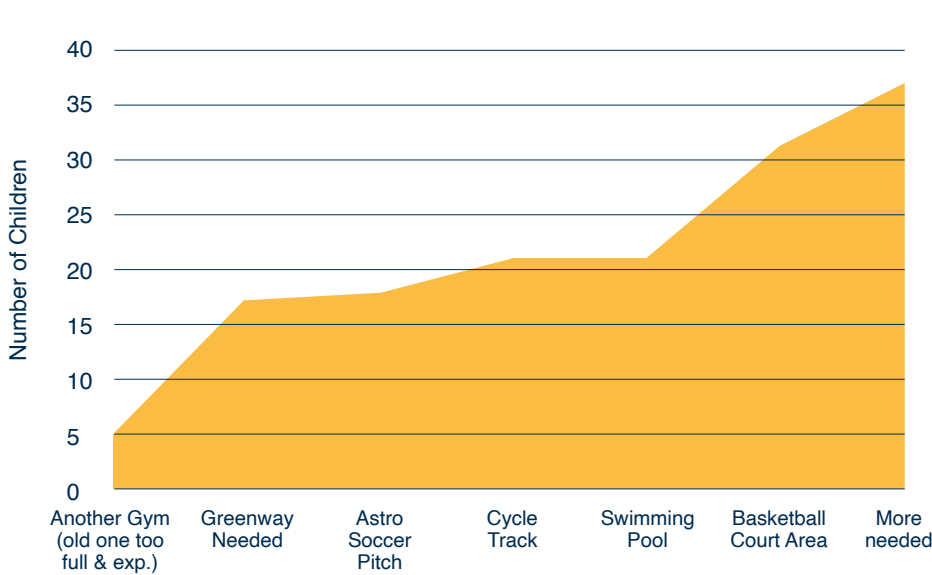
- Senior citizens club/support
- Public walking space with lighting
- Traffic free tennis court
- Additional sports hall
- Meeting area for aged persons with activities
- Youth cafe, facilities for teenagers youth group
- Arts centre - artists workshop space
- Table tennis in park / small sport campus

6. Feeling Safe

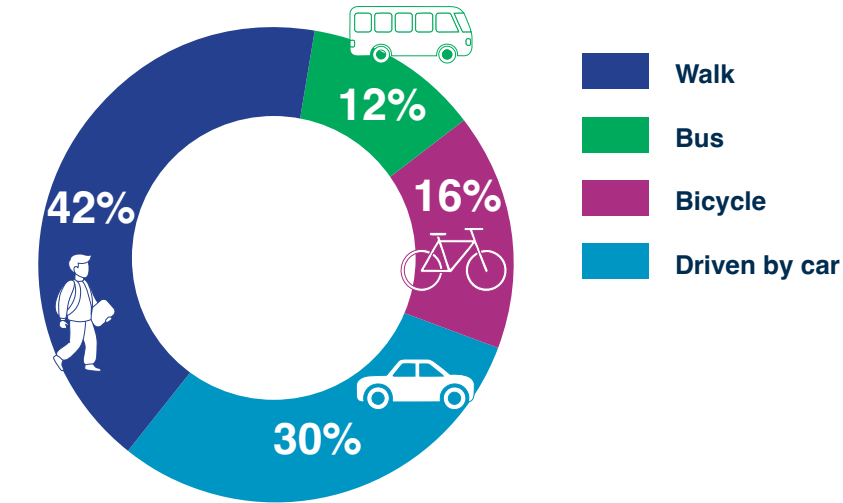
- Church at night lock gates, better lighting at known drinking locations
- Electric scooters on footpaths
- More garda presence /manned station / community garda presence / CCTV scheme
- Path opposite arch bare very dangerous for walking cycling/ lighting not working in other areas
- SuperValu junction not safe
- Re-order pedestrian crossing / barrier at school at supple park

Appendix: Third Consultations - The Schools Consultation

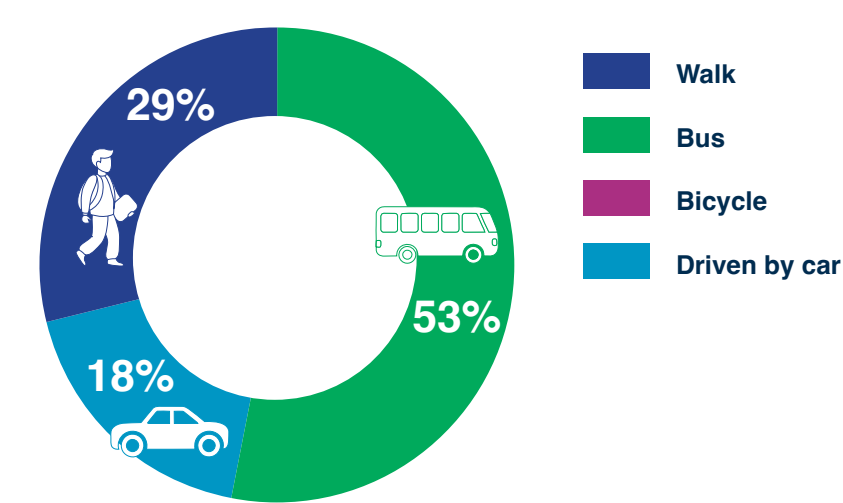
Play Area Priority



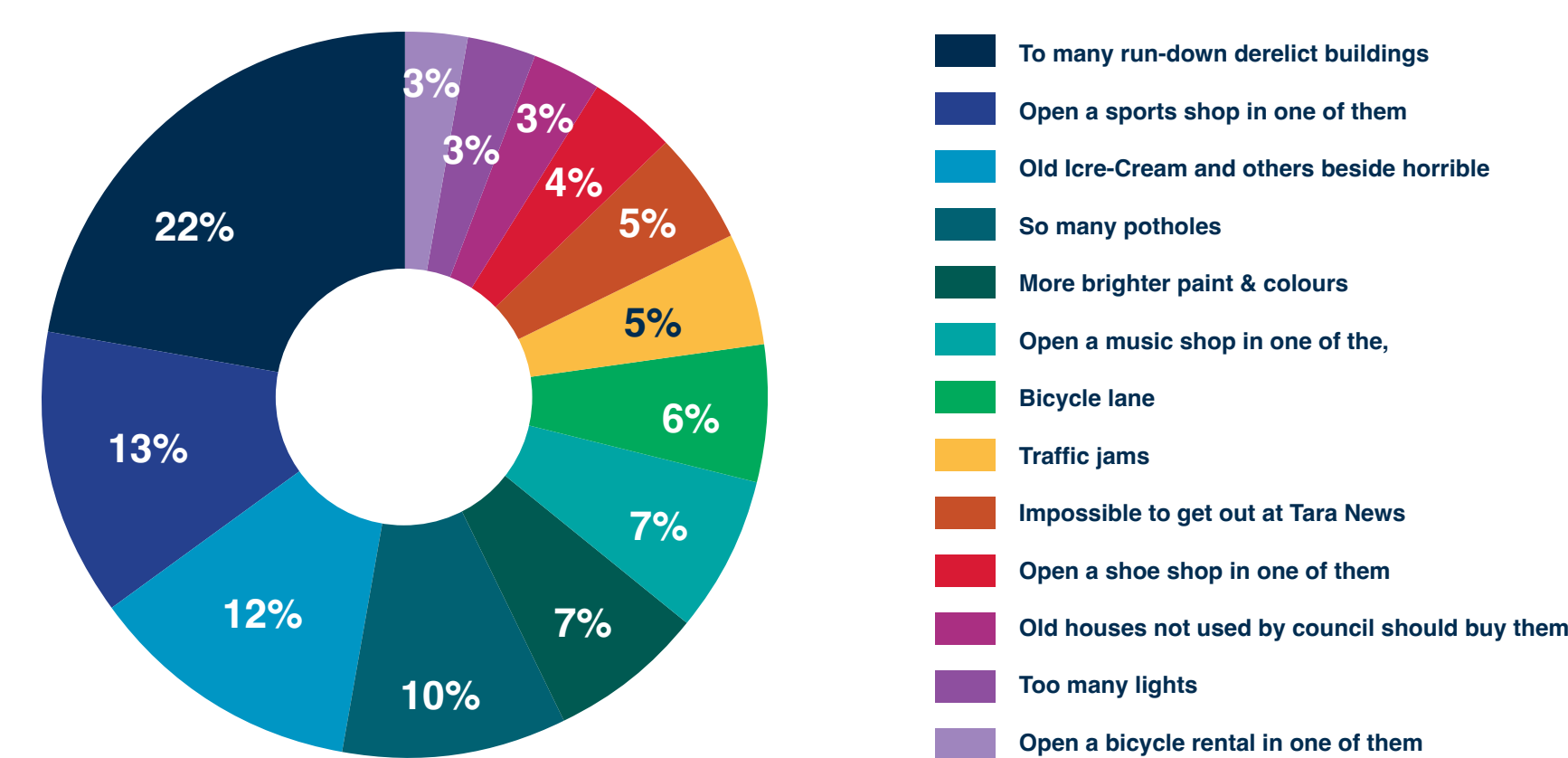
Travel to School



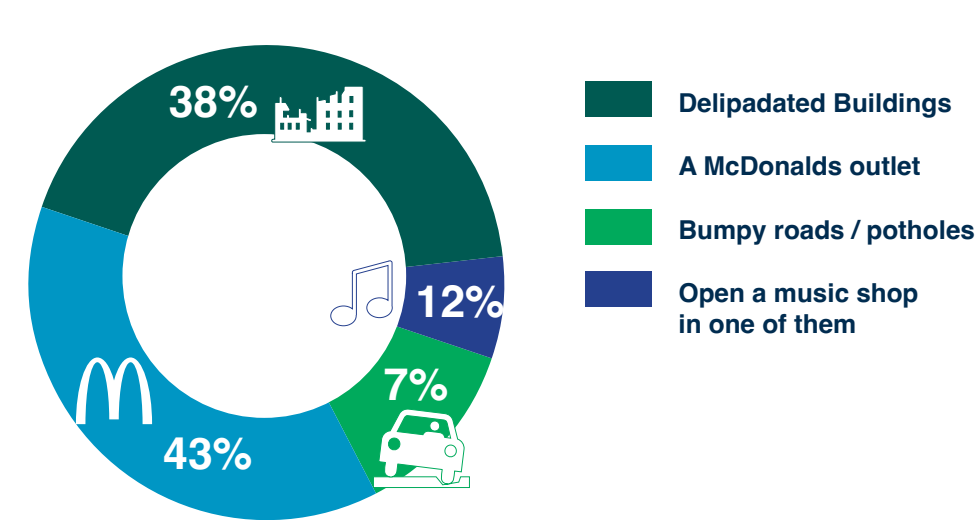
Older Children, Travel to School



Streetscape & Village Concerns



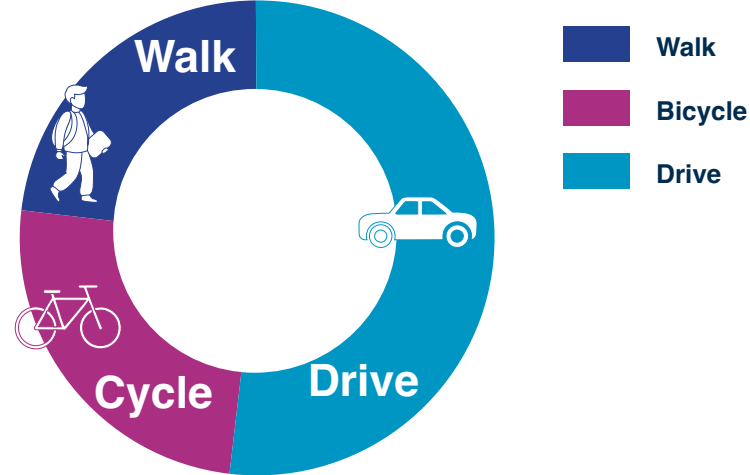
Older Children, Streetscape & Village Concerns



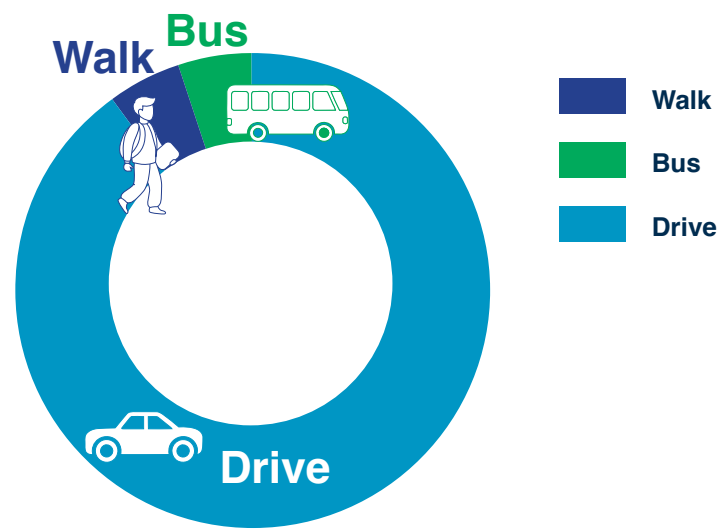
Park Priorities



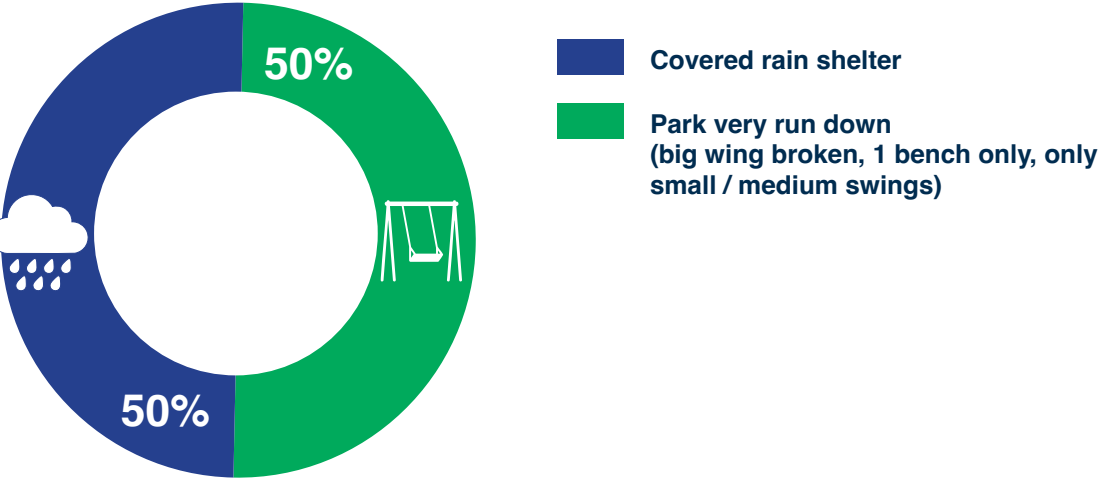
After-School Activities



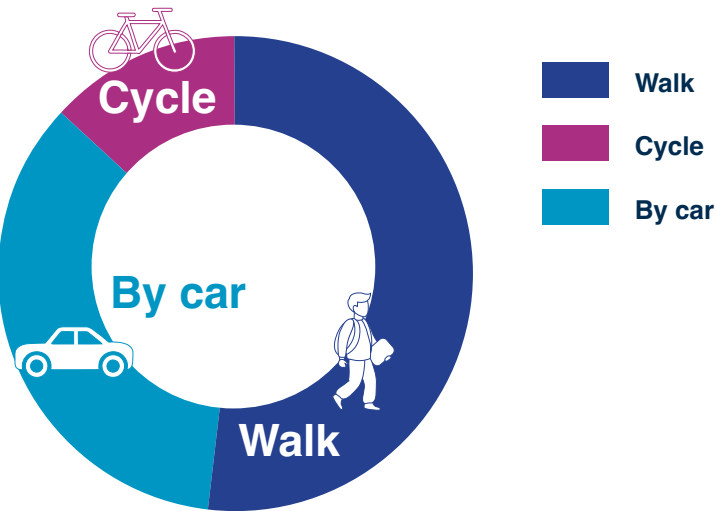
Older children’s After-School Activities



Older Children’s Park Priorities



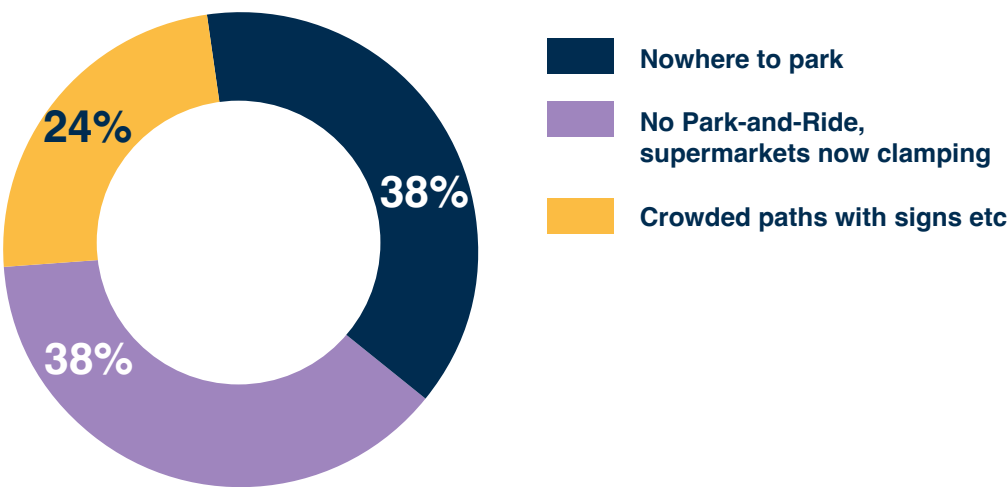
Travel to friends



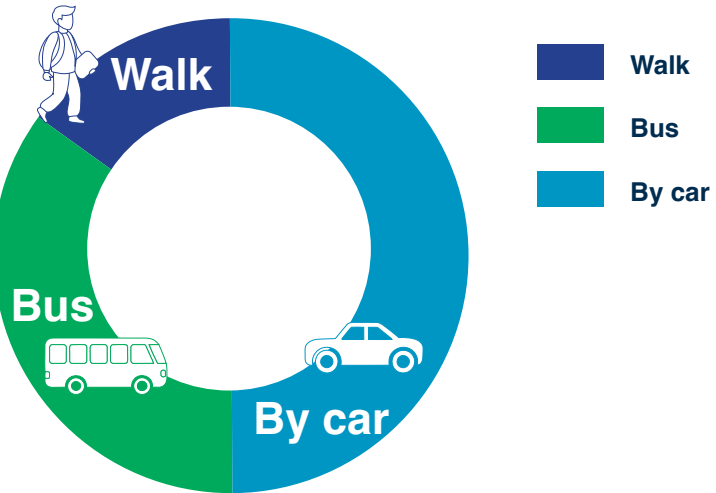
Negatives about village



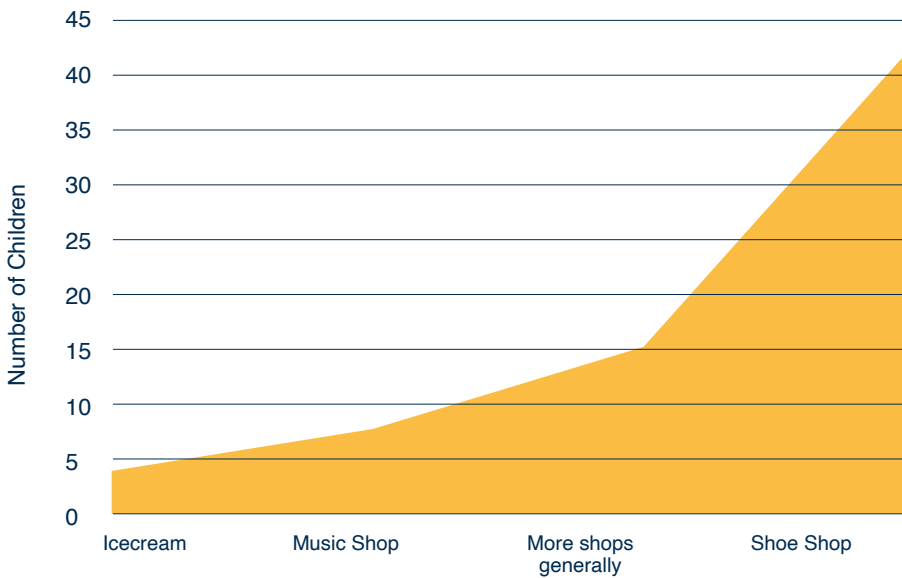
Older Children on negatives about village



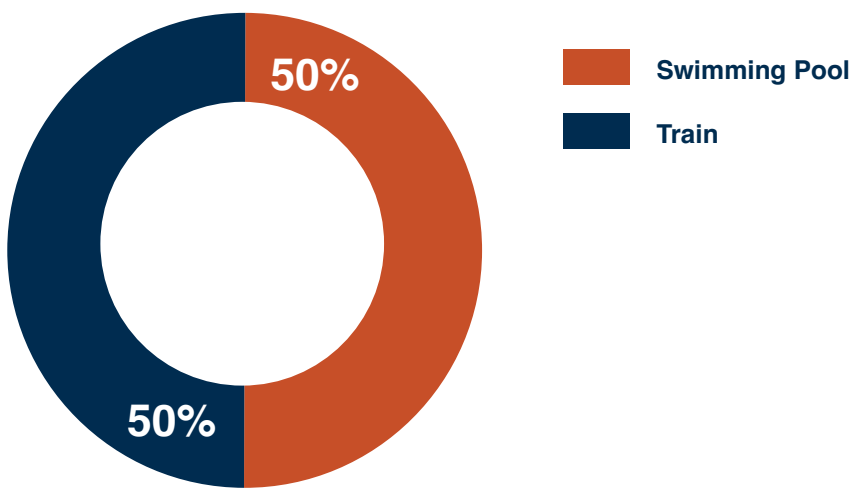
Older children Travel to friends



Shops

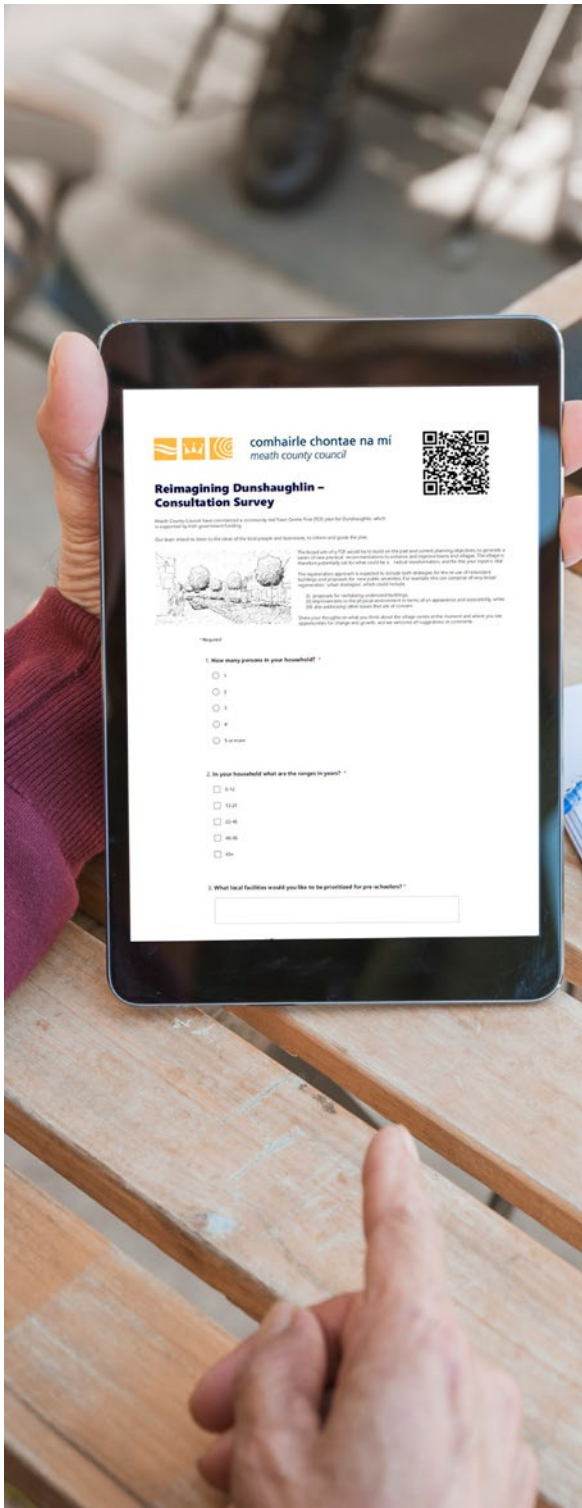


Older children on amenities









This report was compiled in 2025 by Architect Benan Clancy MRIAI, who works in MCO for Rural Regeneration. Qualifying from the Bolton St. School of Architecture (TU Dublin), he worked in Munich and Berlin and has a broad-based professional career in IRL. Most recently his experience includes a decade working in Architectural Conservation in the private sector, with ten years' experience of the public sector. Benan attended primary school in Dunshaughlin, with secondary (OC '86) in Kildare, and now lives in Dublin.



comhairle chontae na mí
meath county council



Lár Bailte ar dTús
Town Centre First

Document design by
BAMMEDIA

