

KILLARNEY



Integrated Urban Strategy

October 2025

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Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



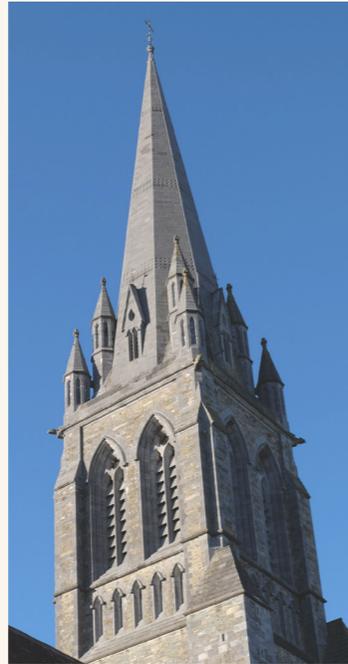
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Tionól Réigiúnach
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A

CONTEXT



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 What is THRIVE?

THRIVE is the Town Centre First Heritage Revival Scheme aimed at local authorities. It is co-funded by the Government of Ireland and the European Union and implemented through Ireland's European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Programme for 2021 - 2027. The scheme has also been co-designed by the Regional Assemblies and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to address, European, national, and regional development and policy objectives.

THRIVE funding supports the transformation of publicly owned vacant, under-utilised or derelict heritage buildings within key town centres through renovation, renewal, and adaptive reuse.

An Integrated Urban Strategy (IUS) is required to be developed alongside the heritage revival proposal. This is a comprehensive plan to guide the regeneration of the town centre in question, ensuring that the heritage restoration aligns with broader economic, social, and, environmental goals and policies from the National Planning Framework and the Southern Regional Spatial Economic Strategy.

1.2 Purpose of the Integrated Urban Strategy

An IUS has been prepared for Killarney town centre to distil the key place-making opportunities and create a strategy for regeneration. It identifies critical areas for intervention, prioritises projects that encourage the conservation and adaptive reuse of Killarney's extensive built heritage, and addresses vacancy and dereliction in the Town Centre.

The report is set out in three parts:

- Part A: Context - setting the scene for the Integrated Urban Strategy, and situating the project in context.
- Part B: Analysis - understanding Killarney town centre to inform the Integrated Urban Strategy
- Part C: Strategy - identifying key themes and projects as the basis of the Integrated Urban Strategy, including scene setting for the preferred project for THRIVE funding.



1.3 Study area and town centre context

Killarney is a picturesque town located in County Kerry, in the southwest of Ireland. As of the 2022 Census, Killarney has a population of 14,412, making it the second largest town in the county. The town covers a relatively compact area but serves as a vibrant hub for tourism and local culture. Nestled beside the Lakes of Killarney adjacent to Killarney National Park, the town is surrounded by dramatic landscapes including lush woodlands and rugged mountains like MacGillycuddy's Reeks all of which contribute to its status as a premier destination for nature lovers and outdoor enthusiasts.

The name "Killarney" is derived from the Irish Cill Airne, meaning "Church of the Sloes"—a reference to the blackthorn trees historically common in the area. Killarney's history dates back to early Christian times, with the establishment of monastic settlements such as Innisfallen Abbey on nearby Lough Leane. Over the centuries, the town evolved from a modest ecclesiastical settlement into a significant 18th- and 19th-century destination. Today, Killarney is a settlement balancing protection of an exceptional natural environment, ecology and heritage with inherent strengths in tourism, culture, amenity and other dynamic economic activities. The map illustrates the study area boundary which is the extent of the IUS.



2 POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 New European Bauhaus

The New European Bauhaus (NEB) sets a vital framework for the THRIVE funding programme. The Bauhaus is underpinned by three main pillars, “Sustainable, Beautiful and Together” which are defined as follows, each with three ambitions which reflect fundamental values of NEB. The following quotes are taken from the ‘New European Bauhaus Compass, 2022’.

Three values

Aesthetics (“Beautiful”)

Aesthetics refers to the overall quality of experience and style, beyond functionality:

- **To activate:** “A beautiful project improves the physical and mental well-being of individuals by considering their senses and emotions, on top of their needs. It activates the cultural, social, and natural qualities of a place to create unique and positive experiences. The project fosters awareness of place and heritage in all its diversity, while embracing its own aesthetic.”
- **To connect:** “A beautiful project enhances opportunities for meaningful social interactions and collective experiences. It reinforces a sense of belonging and enriches lives by connecting different places and people. The new attachments that emerge through the project foster openness and mutual care.”

- **To integrate:** “A beautiful project enables creation, and the collective re-invention of the places, lifestyles, and communities we identify with. It integrates new cultural and social values, notably through the meaningful experience of a broader ‘us’ (including the non-human world). In doing so, it aspires to anticipate future transformations, and may generate a long-lasting movement”

Sustainability

Sustainability encompasses a wide spectrum of topics ranging from climate goals, to circularity, zero pollution, and biodiversity:

- **To repurpose:** “A sustainable project aims to repurpose in order to avoid and reduce environmental impacts and favours durability, adaptability, recyclability. It aims at rethinking services, products and places to reduce pollution and carbon impacts and have minimum use of resources, materials and energy. It looks at the scale of a products’ lifecycle. Projects that repurpose are aware of the impact their initiative has on the environment and have the ambition to reduce their environmental footprint.”
- **To close the loop:** “A sustainable project aims to close the loop, reduce linear processes or transform them into circular processes to aim at zero pollution. It looks at the scale of an (industrial) system. Projects that close the loop actively involve all other actors in the cycle

of the design, production, use and discarding phase of their initiative.”

- **To regenerate:** “A sustainable project aims to give back more than it takes, enhancing rather than depleting biodiversity, incentivising the restoration and expansion of nature. Regenerative sustainability also considers how contexts and environments influence worldviews, paradigms, and behaviours. It looks at the scale of an ecosystem. Initiatives in this dimension are aware of the complete ecosystem they act in and their project’s impact over time and space on biodiversity and natural resources.”

Inclusion (“Together”)

Inclusion encourages valuing diversity and equality for all, and securing accessibility and affordability:

- **To include:** “An inclusive project grants accessibility (physical, cognitive, psychological, etc.) and affordability for all, regardless of gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, ability, age or sexual orientation. Equality of treatment and opportunities is essential but cannot be taken for granted, so it is important to prioritise less- represented individuals, groups and communities.”
- **To consolidate:** “An inclusive project fosters and equalises relations between users and/or communities, safeguarding the principle of equal treatment and social justice over time. Inclusion and open access to services

are secured by formal, structural mechanisms such as funding instruments, business models, planning, policies, regulations and other institutionalisation processes.”

- **To transform:** “Inclusion inspires new ways of living together, building on solidarity and cooperation, raising awareness of discrimination and injustice. An inclusive project becomes exemplary and replicable, and has the potential to break obsolete social models, create value and bring transformative benefits on a societal level, influencing worldviews, paradigms and social behaviours.”

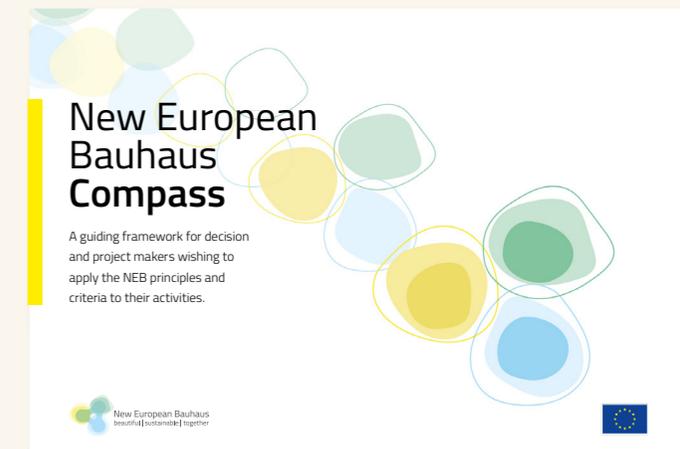


Fig 1 “The New European Bauhaus (NEB) initiative is an enabler for the green transition of our societies and economy. It calls on all Europeans to imagine and build together a sustainable and inclusive future that is beautiful for our eyes, minds, and souls.”

Three working principles

Projects are encouraged to embrace three working principles: a participatory process, multi-level engagement and a trans-disciplinary approach. Working across these principles is intended to achieve the highest level of ambitions in the three values.

Participatory process

This relates to the involvement of communities in the design, decision-making and implementation process:

- To consult: "A participatory project features already-established communication channels and stakeholder participation. At this first ambition level, participation ranges from information-sharing about the project to consultation feeding into decision-making. The information flow is static and mostly one sided: the information flows from the project owner to its audience and then back"
- To co-develop: "A participatory project engages stakeholders as key partners and advisers in defining and/or co-creating the rules and objectives of the project. The emerging ideas are developed collaboratively by the project and its stakeholders. The information flow is dynamic, exchanges are on an equal foot and information becomes co-designed."
- To self-govern: "A participatory project aims to enable stakeholders to negotiate and engage in trade-offs with

powerholders, at all stages of the project's lifecycle (design, management, implementation, monitoring and evaluation) and empowers the community to make decisions and govern the project."

Multi-level engagement

Multi-level engagement encourages consideration of effects across different scales (e.g. local / global), fields (e.g. policy / activities) and times (e.g. short / long term):

- To work locally: "A multi-level NEB project connects horizontally informal networks (e.g. groups of individuals, neighbourhoods...), and/or formal institutions (e.g. sectoral departments, political groups...) and/or and engages with them to influence the local living environment with a placed-based approach."
- To work across levels: "A multi-level NEB project connects vertically informal networks (e.g. groups of individuals, neighbourhoods...) and/or formal institutions (e.g. government, administrations...) across various scales (e.g. single municipalities with regional authorities, local studies with international research programs), and engages with them to push single-scale initiatives beyond their own dimension (e.g. local, regional, national...)"
- To work globally: "A multi-level NEB project that works at global level reaches for a wider, transformational impact beyond its initial, local scale of application

and it connects networks and/or (inter)governmental institutions that, across various levels, share similar purposes looking at the future of the entire ecosystem"

Transdisciplinary approach

This refers to a desire to integrate knowledge and expertise from different disciplines to encourage more nuanced solutions:

- To be multidisciplinary: "A multidisciplinary NEB project aims to address a common problem within one field of knowledge. Working in a multidisciplinary way means working independently alongside other disciplines that engage in similar topics."
- To be interdisciplinary: "An interdisciplinary NEB project aims to address a common problem or issue involving two or more academic disciplines or fields of knowledge. Working in an interdisciplinary way means collaborating with other disciplines towards a shared goal."
- To be beyond-disciplinary: "A beyond-disciplinary NEB project aims to integrate both formal and non-formal knowledge to achieve a common goal. It aims to bring together people from political, social and economic fields with members of the public to explore possibilities and realise new narratives. By drawing on both local and traditional knowledge and cultural norms and values, it aims to supplement and transform scientific insights for the benefit of society."

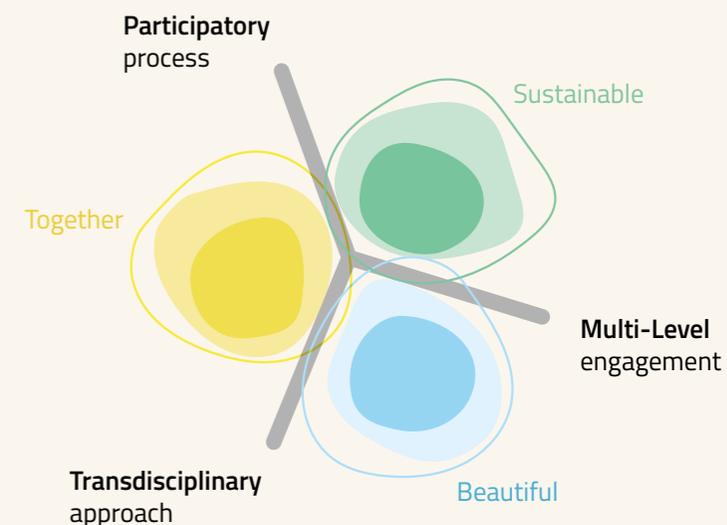


Fig 2 New European Bauhaus diagram representing the three working principles



Fig 3 National planning policy documents - Project Ireland 2024, National Planning Framework (updated Nov 2024), and National Development Plan

Fig 5 Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan

Fig 4 Regional planning policy - Southern RSES Plan and Strategy Map

Fig 6 Town Centre First Policy document

2.2 National planning context

The national planning context in Ireland is shaped by Project Ireland 2040, the government's long-term strategy for sustainable economic and social development. It consists of the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the National Development Plan (NDP), which work together to manage population growth, infrastructure investment, and climate action. The NPF sets out the spatial strategy to balance regional development, while the NDP, a €165 billion capital investment program (2021-2030), funds key projects in transport, housing, healthcare, and sustainability.

National Planning Framework (2024)

The NPF is Ireland's long-term strategic plan for sustainable development, setting the direction for the country's growth and development up to 2040. It aims to create a more balanced, sustainable, and resilient future by guiding the development of cities, towns, and rural areas. The NPF focuses on addressing housing needs, enhancing infrastructure, tackling climate change, and promoting regional growth. The NPF emphasises the importance of enhancing the economic potential of key towns like Tralee and Killarney, while supporting rural development

through improved transport links, sustainable tourism, and renewable energy initiatives.

National Development Plan (2018 - 2027)

The NDP is Ireland's capital investment strategy, outlining a €165 billion investment program for the period 2021-2030. It is designed to support the country's long-term economic, social, and environmental goals, as set out in Project Ireland 2040. The NDP focuses on key areas such as infrastructure, housing, healthcare, education, and climate action. It aims to enhance regional development, improve public services, and drive sustainability through investments in transport, renewable energy, and urban regeneration. The plan aligns with the National Planning Framework (NPF) to ensure coordinated, balanced growth across Ireland.

Housing for All (2021-2030)

Housing for All is Ireland's government policy framework aimed at addressing the country's housing crisis. Launched in 2021, it sets out a comprehensive plan to deliver 300,000 new homes by 2030, with a focus on affordability, accessibility, and sustainability. The strategy includes measures to increase the supply of homes, improve affordability, and reduce homelessness. Key actions include

supporting both private and public housing development, expanding the provision of affordable and social housing, and making it easier for people to access homeownership. The plan also focuses on improving the rental sector, increasing energy efficiency in homes, and ensuring that housing development aligns with the country's environmental and climate goals.

Town Centre First: A Policy Approach for Irish Towns

The Town Centre First Policy is a major cross-government policy that aims to tackle vacancy, combat dereliction and breathe new life into our town centres. It advocates for a holistic, place-based approach to sustainable rural development. Irish towns are facing significant challenges and opportunities that require a coordinated and comprehensive response.

Town Centre First (TCF) recognises that every town is unique and the policy will facilitate the response by towns of all sizes across the country so that their centres can function as the sustainable and vibrant heart of the communities they serve and appropriate to 21st century needs.

Connecting Ireland - Rural Mobility Plan (2021)

The Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan aims to increase transport connectivity for people living in rural Ireland. Prepared by the National Transport Authority, the plan identifies proposals to enhance Regional Corridors and Local Routes in Kerry, focusing on improved connections to Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Croom, Mallow, Kinsale and Skibbereen.

2.3 Regional planning context

The national frameworks are supported by Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSES), ensuring national objectives are implemented at a regional level while aligning with EU policies and environmental goals.

Southern Regional Spatial Economic Strategy (RSES)

The Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) is a strategic plan that guides sustainable growth and development across the Southern Region of Ireland. It aligns with the National Planning Framework (NPF) and Project Ireland 2040, aiming to promote balanced regional development, economic resilience, and environmental sustainability. The strategy focuses on enhancing urban centres such as Cork, Limerick, and Waterford as key drivers of growth, while also supporting rural communities, including counties like Kerry, by improving transport infrastructure, tourism, renewable energy, and local enterprise. The Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans (MASPs) within the RSES provide detailed frameworks for the major urban areas - Cork, Limerick, and Waterford - to ensure coordinated investment and development.

Killarney has been identified as a 'key town' in the RSES and as an economic driver in the strategic road network and Atlantic Economic Corridor. Regional guidelines call for population and employment growth within the Tralee-Killarney hub, supported by serviced land, job creation—especially in tourism, creative industries, and knowledge economy.

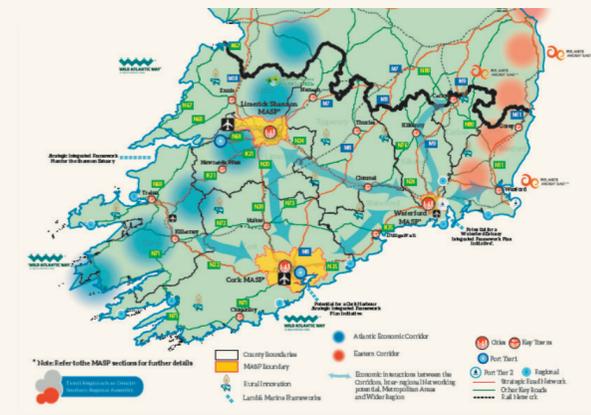


Fig 7 RSES Strategy Map - Kerry County Development Plan 2022 - 2028

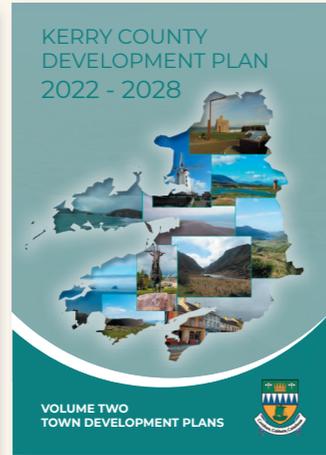


Fig 8 Kerry County Development Plan, volumes one and two



Fig 9 Kerry County Development Plan Core Strategy Map



Fig 10 Kerry Cycle Network

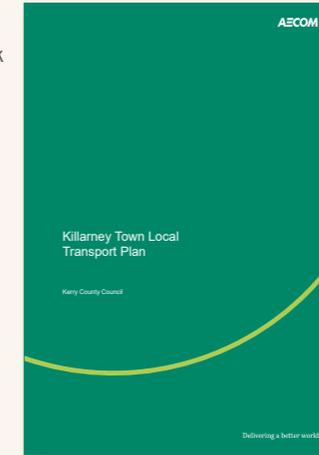


Fig 11 Draft Killarney Town LTP

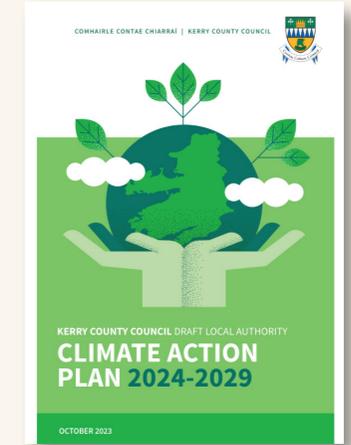


Fig 12 KCC Climate Action Plan

2.4 Local planning and policy context

Kerry County Development Plan, 2022 - 2028 & Draft Town Plan - Variation No. 2 of Kerry County Development Plan

Killarney’s planning strategy, as outlined in both the 2022–28 Kerry County Development Plan and the Draft Town Plan - Variation No. 2 of Kerry County Development Plan, seeks to establish the town centre as a vibrant, compact hub that mirrors the unique “town-in-the-park” identity. Kerry County Council in collaboration with other stakeholders has been successful in sourcing funding for various projects. These include regenerating derelict sites (e.g., Áras Phádraig) into cultural and community hubs, designating a crafts quarter (“The Glebe”), and enhancing the public realm (New Road, Beech Road, College Street, High Street) to promote liveability, investment, and tourism.

Planning policies seek to prioritise the strengthening of Killarney’s role as a regional economic driver and Ireland’s premier tourism destination. This is to be achieved by leveraging its world-class natural assets, developing the Destination Experience Development Plan in partnership with Fáilte Ireland, and extending the tourism season through cultural quarters, authentic local experiences, and

events. The economic vision of Killarney is anchored in its strategic location and its strong urban structure. With its manufacturing industry, sustainable tourism, education, retail and other competitive advantages, Killarney will continue to be a driver of county and regional prosperity.

A key priority is increasing town-centre living to support a diverse, resilient community and reduce car dependence. Policies address vacancy, dereliction, and underutilised properties in the urban core, encouraging residential and mixed-use redevelopment. Recent housing proposals for infill development are carefully evaluated to avoid ecological impacts, such as on nearby bat habitats in the National Park .

Climate resilience and ecological protection are also a key feature. Policies support low-carbon development, improved energy performance, and nature-based infrastructure. Initiatives like Sustainable Killarney 2030 and the Destination Plan emphasise biodiversity protection in the park, waste reduction (e.g., banning single-use cups), and managing visitor impact.

The plan commits to multi-modal transport, emphasising pedestrian, and strengthened cycle networks within the centre, redirecting through-traffic away from key areas.

Road upgrades (e.g., N22 inner-link road), improved public transport links to Farranfore Airport and Cork/Dublin rail services, as well as proposed greenways, aim to reduce congestion and enhance accessibility while accommodating tourists and residents.

CycleConnects - Kerry Cycle Network (National Transport Authority, 2024)

The CycleConnects initiative aims to create a comprehensive cycle network for each county including Kerry. Proposals seek to enhance and integrate existing cycle networks (e.g. urban cycle routes, greenways and interurban routes) and supplement them with proposed cycle connections to maximise community coverage.

In Killarney, the scheme builds on active travel infrastructure already in motion—routes along Rock Road, Lewis Road, Park Road, Deerpark Road, New Road and Gaelscoil Road—backed by substantial public investment and detailed designs under the 2024 Kerry County Council Rock Road project, supported by NTA funding.

Kerry County Council Local Authority Climate Action Plan 2024 - 2029

The Kerry County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 details how the local authority will implement measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change. This plan supports Ireland’s national climate obligations and the government’s goal to achieve a climate-neutral, environmentally sustainable, and resilient economy by 2050.

Draft Killarney Town Local Transport Plan, 2025

The draft LTP analyses current transport conditions in Killarney, alongside an assessment of the potential impacts of future development on the transport network. It outlines a range of proposals to enhance transport conditions for active travellers, public transport users, and private motorised vehicles.

The plan sets out a range of principles relating to the overall transport strategy, and individual modes including walking, cycling, public transport, roads and parking.

A range of short, medium and long-term options are identified for each mode which will be considered in response to public consultation on the draft LTP as part of the broader engagement process for Killarney Municipal District Settlement Plan.

3 CURRENT PROJECTS

Killarney town centre already benefits from a range of URDF-funded projects in Killarney under the €16million allocated to the “Destination Killarney” scheme.

The key project is the transformation of the derelict Áras Phádraig site into a vibrant, multi-use cultural hub. Plans include a 300-seat theatre, art gallery space, offices, café, meeting rooms, HSE primary care centre, and a flexible public plaza that can host markets and community events.

Complementing the Áras Phádraig development are targeted public realm upgrades across Beech Road, College Street, New Street, Main Street and High Street. These streetscape improvements aim to improve pedestrian access, enhance market and cultural connectivity, and cultivate a new “Glebe Craft Quarter” showcasing local artisans. These initiatives seek to strengthen the town centre’s “town-in-the-park” identity, stimulate economic vitality, and enrich both visitor and resident experience.

URDF funding also supports the construction of a link road to reduce through-traffic in the core town centre. Complementary active travel interventions include cycleway and pedestrian improvements, which are part of a broader effort funded via national active travel grants.

These URDF-backed projects represent a coordinated investment which will reinforce its position as a destination town.

Other opportunity sites are identified as set out in the Kerry County Development Plan.



Fig 13 Plan showing current projects

B

ANALYSIS



4 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

4.1 Location in Kerry

Killarney is located in County Kerry, in the southwest of Ireland. Nestled beside the famous Lakes of Killarney and surrounded by the rugged beauty of Killarney National Park, it lies at the foot of the MacGillycuddy's Reeks mountain range. Its geographical position places it at a vital junction between the Ring of Kerry scenic route and key transport links connecting the region to the rest of Ireland, making it an ideal base for exploring the natural and cultural heritage of the area.

Functionally, Killarney plays a central role in the region's economy and tourism sector. As one of Ireland's leading tourist destinations, the town is renowned for its hospitality industry, boasting a wide range of hotels, restaurants, and visitor attractions.

There is also a strong manufacturing sector in Killarney which helps to balance an over reliance on tourism. Killarney is also the services centre and economic driver of South Kerry.



Fig 14 Plan showing Killarney's position in County Kerry

4.2 Killarney and its surrounds

Killarney acts as a service hub for the surrounding rural areas, providing retail, educational, and medical facilities. Killarney's strengths lie in its stunning landscape, rich cultural history, and strong infrastructure, all of which contribute to its prominence both within Kerry and on a national scale.

Killarney serves as the gateway to the Ring of Kerry, a famous 179-km circular route around the Iveragh Peninsula, and is a popular base for exploring the Dingle Peninsula and Wild Atlantic Way. The town is also the starting point for visits to Killarney National Park, which features the Lakes of Killarney, Muckross House, Torc Waterfall, and Ross Castle, all easily accessible by car, bike, on foot, or via traditional jaunting cars.

Visitors also use Killarney as a launching point for outdoor adventures such as hiking the Gap of Dunloe or climbing Carrauntoohil, Ireland's highest peak in the nearby MacGillycuddy's Reeks. The town is well connected by road, rail, and air, with direct train services from Dublin and Cork, regular buses, and proximity to Kerry Airport. These connections, combined with its central location amid Ireland's most iconic natural attractions, make Killarney a key tourist destination in the region.



Fig 15 Plan showing Killarney in its local context

5 HERITAGE

5.1 Historic overview

Killarney lies within County Kerry, beside the Killarney National Park and bounded to the west by Lough Leane and Muckross Lake. Beyond the lakes are MacGillycuddy's Reeks, Ireland's highest mountain range which provide a striking backdrop to the town. The town's location over time has benefitted from these local natural resources and scenic beauty.

Killarney town was notably expanded by the Earl of Kenmare, part of the Browne family, in the 18th and early 19th centuries. They helped develop Killarney as a town, building road infrastructure and homes. By the mid-1700s, Killarney was functioning as a recognisable town.

An important aspect to Killarney's history is its development as a tourist destination. The Kenmare family helped promote the area through developing local infrastructure, funding boat services and giving access to their estate lands. The arrival of the railway in 1853 was supported by the Kenmare family and encouraged tourists to come to the area. In 1861, Queen Victoria visited the town which greatly increased the town's profile. Many hotels opened with the help of the Kenmares, including the Great Southern Hotel (pictured adjacent) which opened in 1854 and is still a popular destination today. Killarney House was built in 1872 by Valentine Browne, the 4th Earl of

Kenmare. The building burnt down and was re-built in 1913 by converting the old stable block. The house is now part of Killarney National Park.

In the 19th century, Killarney saw some conflict during the Irish War of Independence (1919-1921) and the Irish Civil War (1922-1923). During the War of Independence, the town was used as a base by British forces, and several local IRA units were active in the surrounding rural areas. During both wars, conflict was more present in the surrounding areas of Kerry, although events such as the Ballyseedy massacre happened closer.

Following independence, Killarney gradually re-established its reputation as a destination for tourism. Killarney National Park was established in 1932, giving a formal status to the landscape.

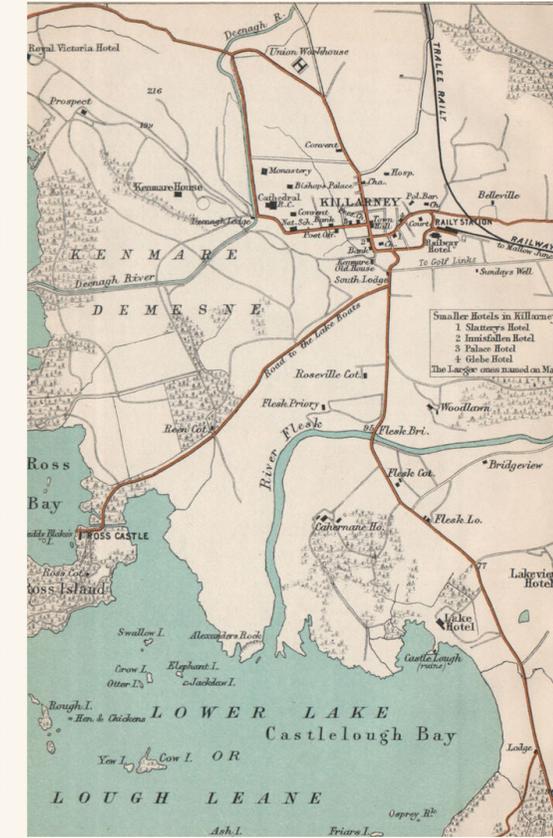


Fig 16 Historic photos from Killarney

5.2 Architectural Conservation areas and Protected Structures

Killarney Town Centre is home to a wealth of heritage assets, including several Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) such as the Cathedral Place/Port Road/Saint Mary's Road ACA, which plays a key role in preserving the town's historic character. The designation of ACAs reflects a commitment to protecting Killarney's built heritage and ensuring that the town's visual identity remains intact for future generations.

In addition to the ACAs, Killarney town centre contains a number of Protected Structures, which are recognised for their architectural, historical, and cultural significance. Some of the most notable of these include Killarney Railway Station, an important Victorian-era structure that reflects the town's development as a transportation hub, and St Mary's (Church of Ireland), a prominent religious building with a distinct architectural style.

Other significant structures include the former Killarney Workhouse, which is a key part of the town's social history, and several Georgian and Victorian terraced houses that line the main streets, contributing to the town's elegant urban fabric. These Protected Structures are crucial to maintaining Killarney's heritage, and the Kerry County Development Plan outlines comprehensive conservation strategies to ensure their long-term preservation and to mitigate the impacts of any proposed changes or new developments in the area.

- Protected Structure
- Architectural Conservation Area

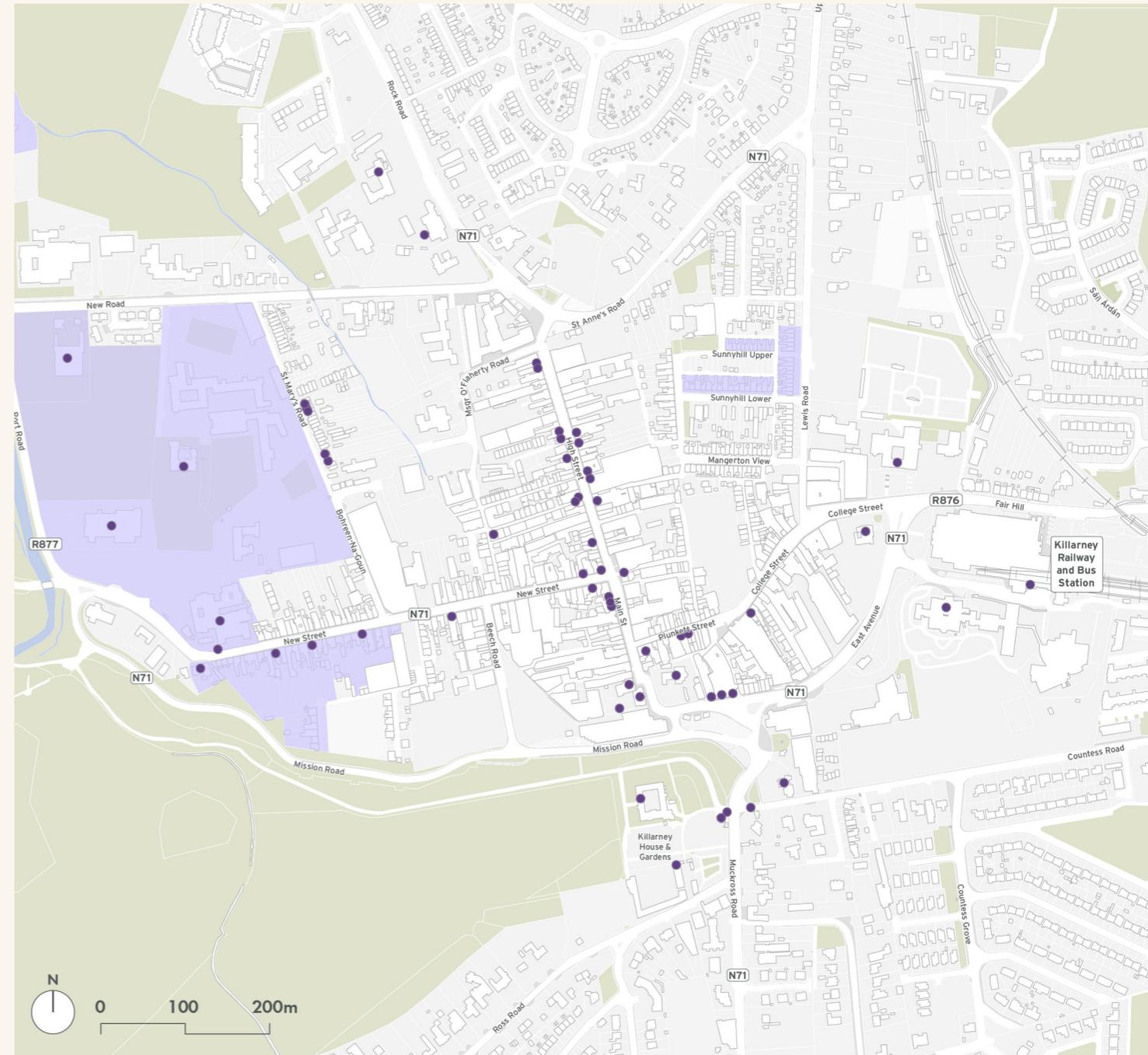


Fig 17 Plan showing Killarney's architectural conservation areas and protected structures

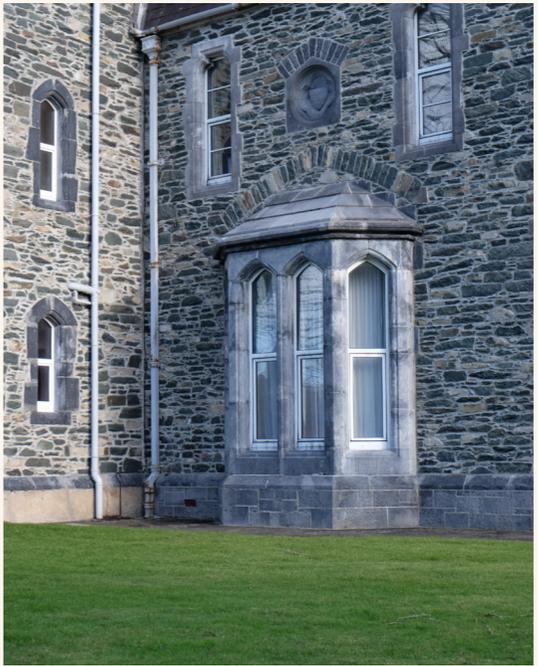
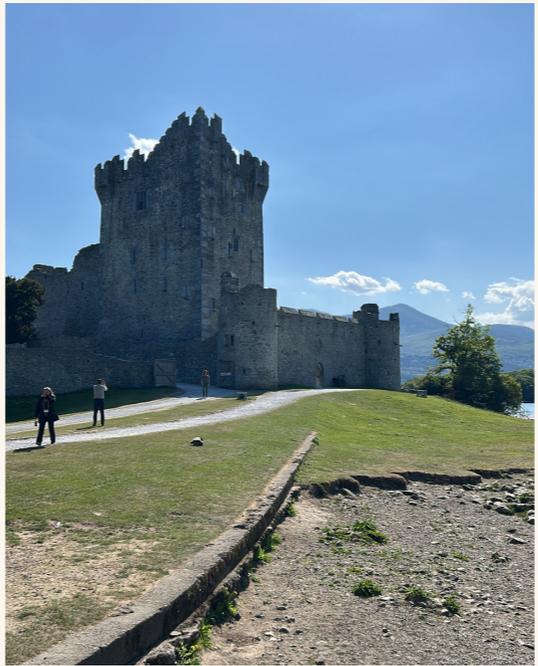


Fig 18 Photos showing Killarney's built heritage

6 BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND CHARACTER

6.1 Character areas

The following character areas have been identified in the IUS around Killarney town centre. Each has a unique identity due to a combination of townscape features such as heritage, urban grain, streets and spaces, and uses:

- St. Mary's
- New Street
- High Street
- Main Street
- College Street
- St. Mary's Terrace
- Sunnyhill
- Station Hub
- St. Anne's
- Countess Road
- Killarney House and Gardens

Fig 19 Plan showing Killarney's character areas



6.2 Urban grain

Killarney Town Centre's urban morphology is characterised by a compact, traditional layout that reflects its historical evolution as a market town and tourism hub. The town centre is centred around Main Street / High Street, which serves as the spine connecting key commercial, cultural, and civic spaces. This central axis radiates out into a network of narrow, pedestrian-friendly lanes, creating a dense, mixed-use urban environment. The morphology is marked by a blend of linear streets with strong visual connections to key landmarks such as St Mary's Cathedral and the Killarney Railway Station.

The compact street grid is interspersed with open public spaces like Market Cross, enhancing the pedestrian experience and contributing to the town's vibrant atmosphere.

The town's layout also reflects a strong sense of enclosure, with tightly-knit buildings that define the urban edges. The presence of heritage structures, including Georgian terraces, Victorian buildings, and ecclesiastical landmarks, adds both historical depth and architectural variety to the urban form.

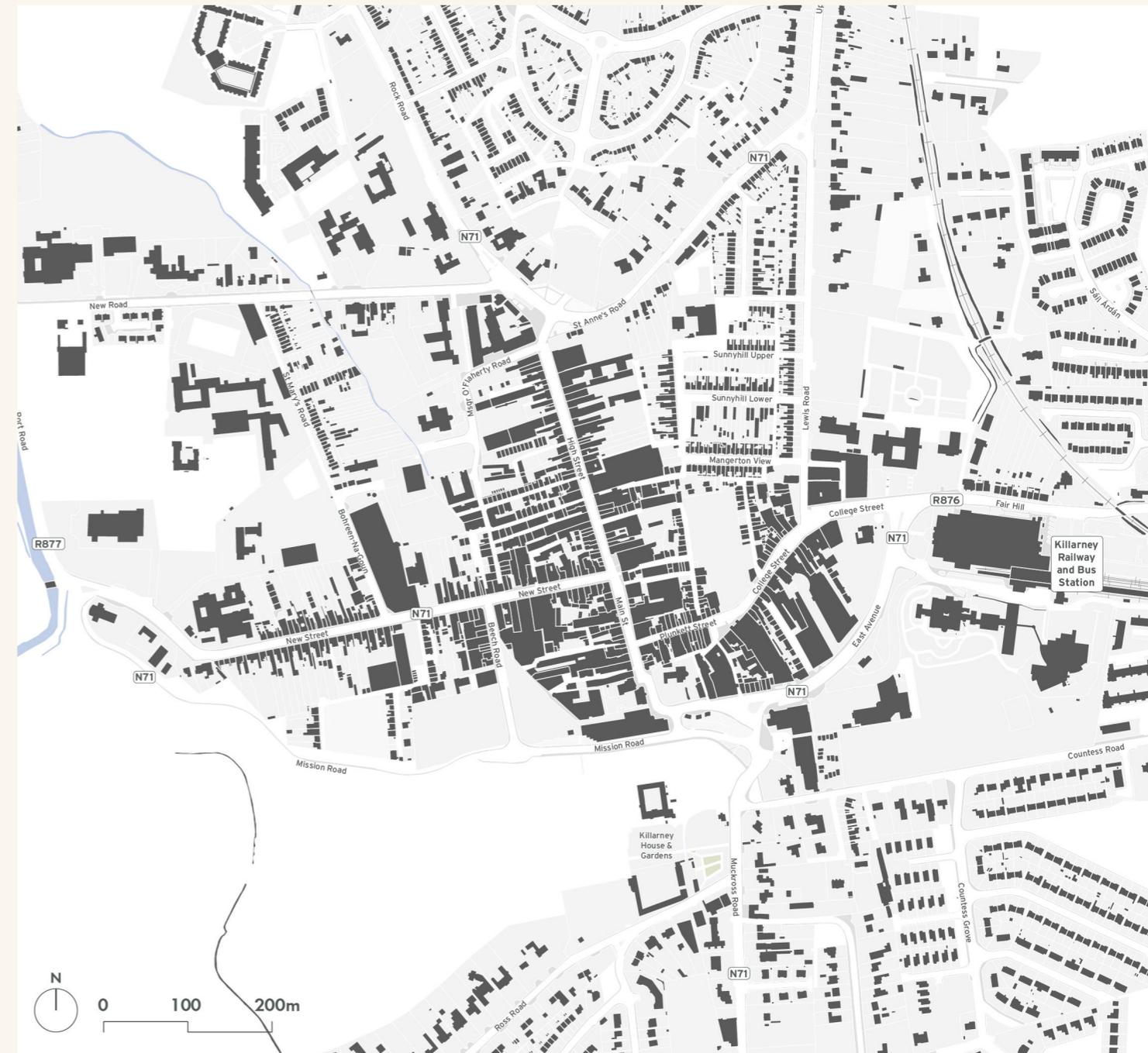


Fig 20 Plan showing Killarney's urban grain

6.3 Key landmarks and points of interest

Killarney Town Centre is home to several prominent landmarks that are central to both its historic character and its role as a tourist destination. One of the most significant is St. Mary's Cathedral, an iconic neo-Gothic, which dominates the skyline. Completed in the 19th century, it is a key feature of the Cathedral Place/Port Road/St. Mary's Road ACA and a symbol of Killarney's ecclesiastical and architectural heritage.

Other important landmarks include the Killarney Railway Station, which dates back to the Victorian era and marks the town's historical connection to the rail network, enhancing its status as a gateway to the larger Killarney National Park. St. Mary's (Church of Ireland), with its distinctive design and historical significance, is another key landmark in the town's centre, contributing to the religious and architectural fabric of the area.

Killarney Courthouse is another building of interest with elegant neo-classical architectural detailing and presents a formal and symmetrical layout at a prominent location upon entry to the town.

Other buildings including the Town Hall and hotels such as the Killarney Plaza and Great Southern Killarney are key landmarks which aid legibility.

- Civic Building / Cultural Landmark
- Religious Building
- Local Government Building
- Train / Bus Station
- Public Space
- Park



Fig 21 Plan showing Killarney's key landmarks and points of interest

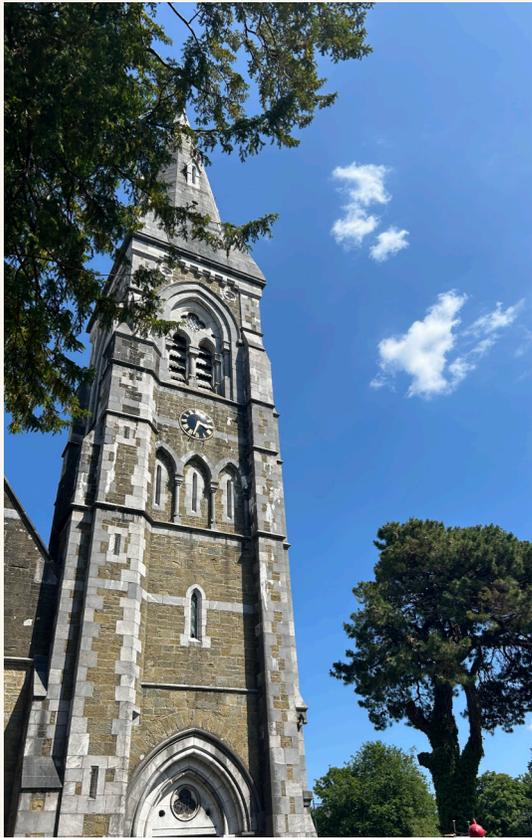


Fig 22 Photos showing Killarney's key landmarks and points of interest

6.4 Public realm and laneways

Killarney town centre is defined by a network of well-used public spaces that contribute to its vibrant character and walkability. New Street, High Street, and Main Street form the main commercial thoroughfares, lined with shops, cafes, and heritage buildings that create a lively streetscape. These streets are compact, pedestrian-friendly, and retain a traditional town centre layout that encourages activity and social interaction. Plunkett Street, now largely pedestrianised, has become a key civic space that supports outdoor dining and seasonal events, enhancing the town's appeal to both residents and tourists. However, there is a lack of public spaces in the town to facilitate gatherings and events. The layout of these streets promotes a sense of enclosure and continuity, with shopfronts and façades that reflect the town's architectural heritage and scale.

In addition to the main streets, Killarney's charm is further enriched by its narrow laneways that offer quieter, more intimate public realms. New Market Lane and Clovers Lane are examples of historic passageways that provide alternative pedestrian routes and a sense of discovery within the town centre. Spaces like Market Cross serve as informal gathering points and play a key role in the town's social life. These interconnected streets and laneways maintain a human scale, encourage foot traffic, and contribute to the permeability and liveliness of the urban fabric. There is also a proposed connection from High Street-Hogans Lane-Mangerton view and onto the Lewis Road Carpark.

- Laneways
- Public Space
- Parkland



Fig 23 Plan showing Public realm and laneways



Fig 24 Photos showing Killarney's laneways



Fig 25 Photos showing Killarney's varied townscape character



Fig 26 Photos showing Killarney's architectural detail and materiality



Fig 27 Photos showing examples of public art, murals and adverts in Killarney

Fig 28 Photos showing Killarney's Street Art

7 LAND USE

7.1 Land use and vacancy

Killarney town centre displays a vibrant and diverse mixed-use land use pattern, grounded in its role as a regional service centre and destination. Ground-floor retail remains a dominant feature along key streets such as Main Street, New Street, and High Street, with cafés, restaurants, and visitor-orientated services. The upper floors of many buildings accommodate offices, professional services, and residential dwellings.

The Kerry County Development Plan promotes this active mix and aims to support vacancy reduction and reuse of underutilised premises.

- | | |
|--|---|
|  Residence |  Sport and Leisure |
|  Commercial / Retail |  Nursing Home |
|  Bus Station |  Hospital |
|  Cinema |  Civic |
|  Post Office |  Local Government |
|  Petrol Station |  Secondary School |
|  Public House |  Primary School |
|  Police Station |  Multi-use |
|  Religious Building |  Outbuilding |
|  Church of Ireland Church |  Food and Beverage |
|  Catholic Church |  Education |
|  Library |  Hotel / Inn |
|  Courthouse |  Public / Business Service |
|  Bank |  Fire Station |
|  Community |  Train Station |
|  Health |  Other |
|  Warehouse | |

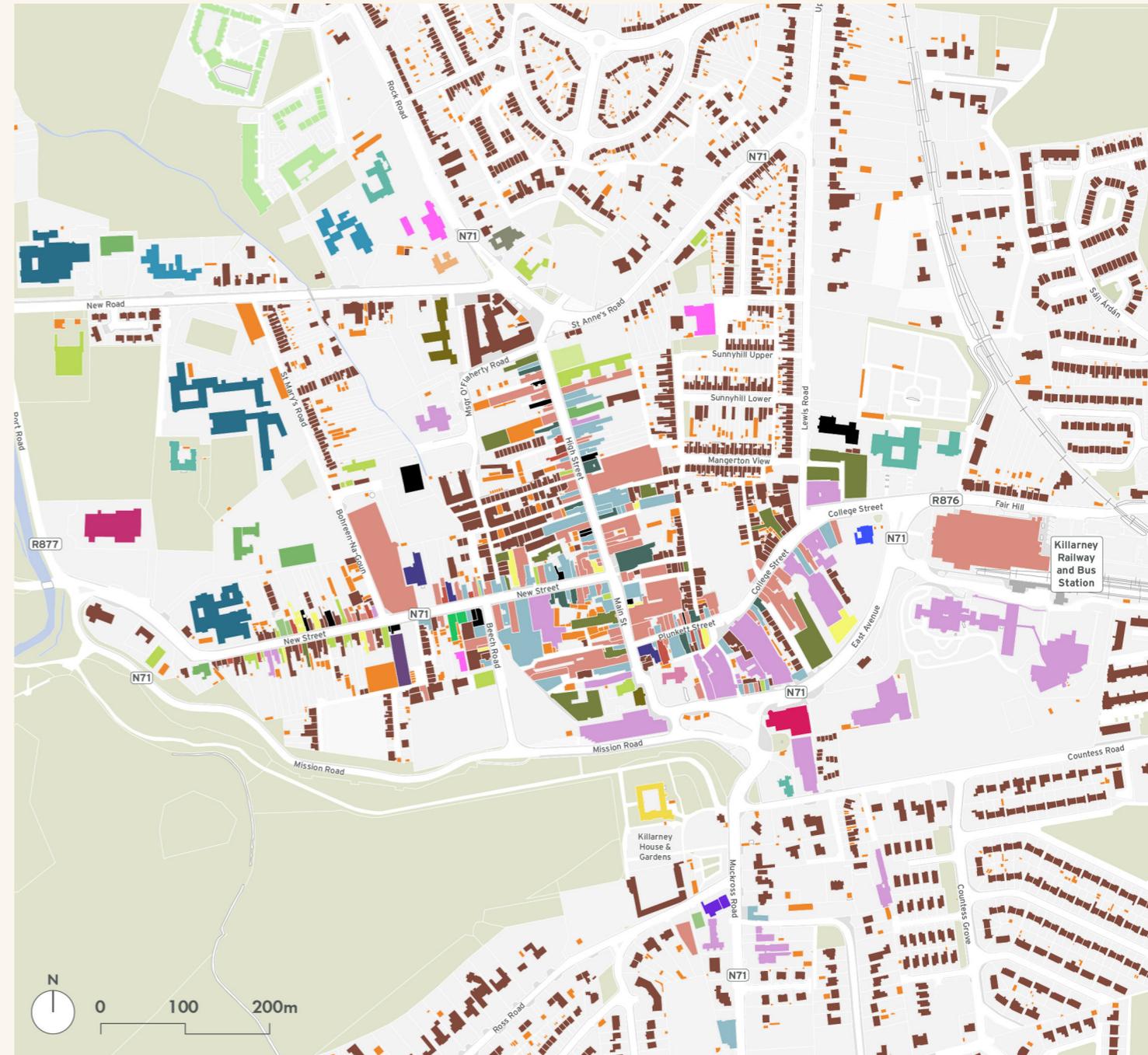


Fig 29 Plan showing land use and vacancy

8 LANDSCAPE AND NATURAL CHARACTER

8.1 Ecology and green spaces

The core part of Killarney town centre has a lack of green spaces. There is also a lack of public gathering spaces with flexibility to cater for a range of community /economic activities and uses. However, a series of significant green spaces at the edges of the town centre form strong connections into the surrounding landscape, including the National Park.

Local groups are actively removing invasive rhododendron, planting native wildflowers, installing wildlife information panels, and fostering habitats for bats, swifts, and eagles along rivers and parks near the centre. These interventions are intended to strengthen ecological connectivity with adjacent Killarney National Park.

These local actions reflect and reinforce key priorities of the Kerry County Development Plan 2022-2028, particularly its commitment to “Natural Assets & Environment” and implementation of the County’s Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) 2022-2028, which aligns with national and EU biodiversity goals.

- Surface Water
- Park
- Green Space
- Woodland
- Sports Ground



Fig 30 Plan showing ecology and green spaces

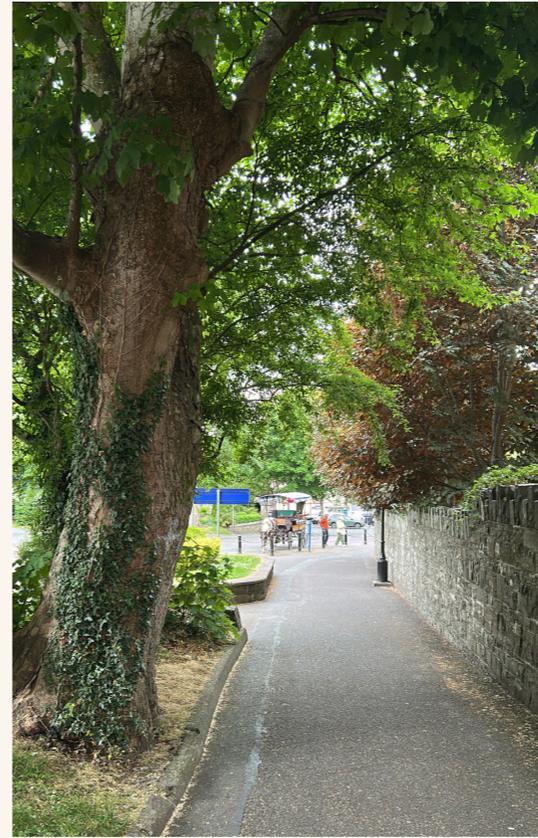


Fig 31 Photos showing Killarney's ecology and green spaces

8.2 Flooding

Killarney town centre lies within areas identified by the OPW's Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management mapping as being at moderate to high fluvial flood risk (Flood Zone A and B), particularly along the River Flesk and its tributaries.

- Surface Water
- Flood Zone A - High probability of flooding - Where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is highest (greater than 1% or 1 in 100 for river flooding)
- Flood Zone B - Moderate probability of flooding - Where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is moderate (between 0.1% or 1 in 1000 and 1% or 1 in 100 for river flooding)

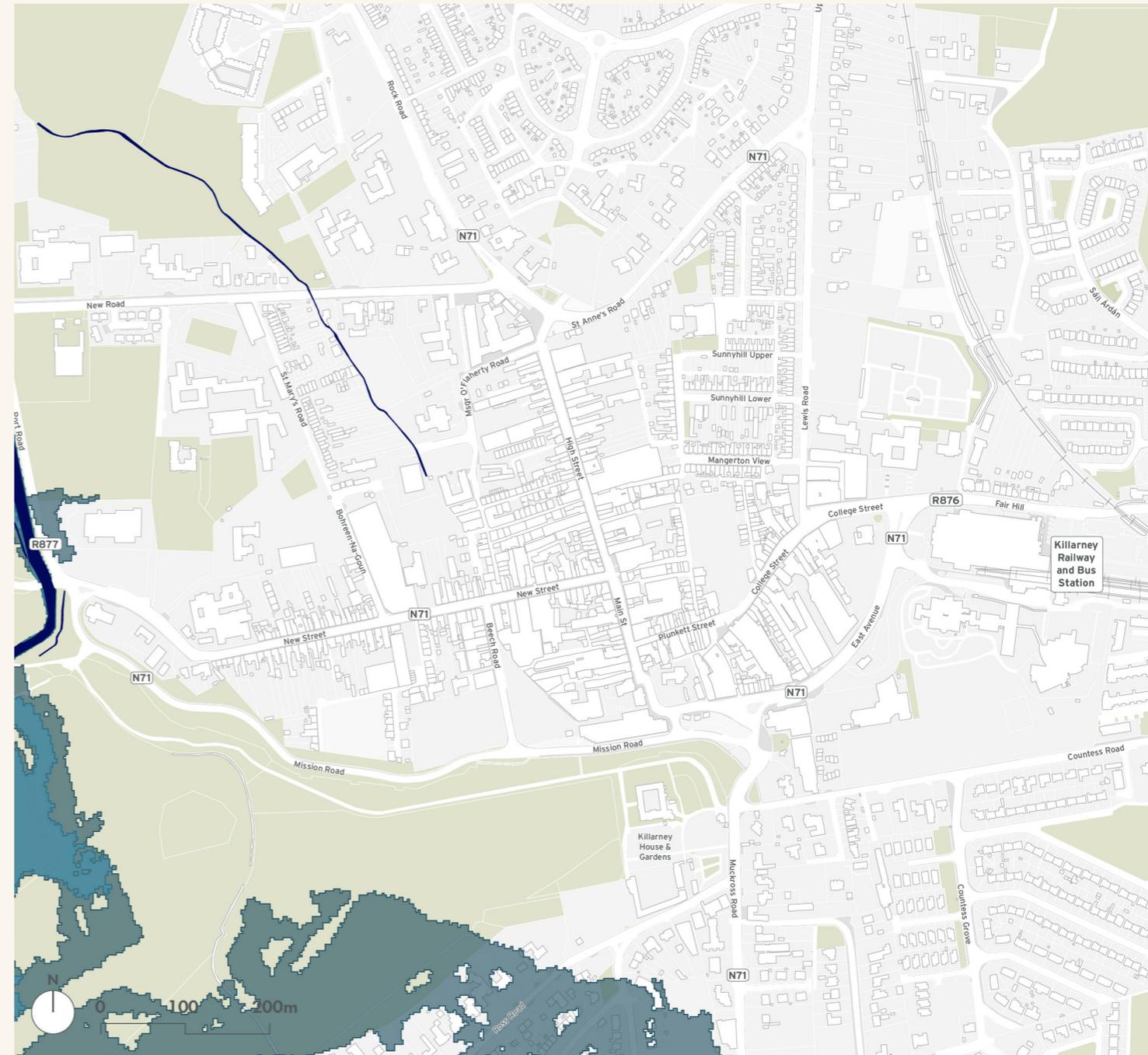


Fig 32 Plan showing flood zones

9 MOVEMENT

9.1 Vehicular movement

Killarney town centre's vehicular movement is largely focused on a network of arterial streets that bring traffic into and out of the town. The existing Killarney bypass feeds traffic into Lewis Road and the Cleeney Roundabout, while Muckcross Road, Park Road, Rock Road, High Street, New Street, Plunkett Street, and Main Street form the town centre network.

A number of initiatives are being developed through the 2025 draft Local Transport Plan (LTP) including short- and long-term initiatives. These will complement the Kerry-Cork Economic corridor, an Inner Link Road between New Street and High Street (Bohereen-Na-Goun), and relief for Cleeney Roundabout via improved slip-lanes.

- Regional Roads
- Primary Roads
- Secondary Roads
- Tertiary Roads
- Streets

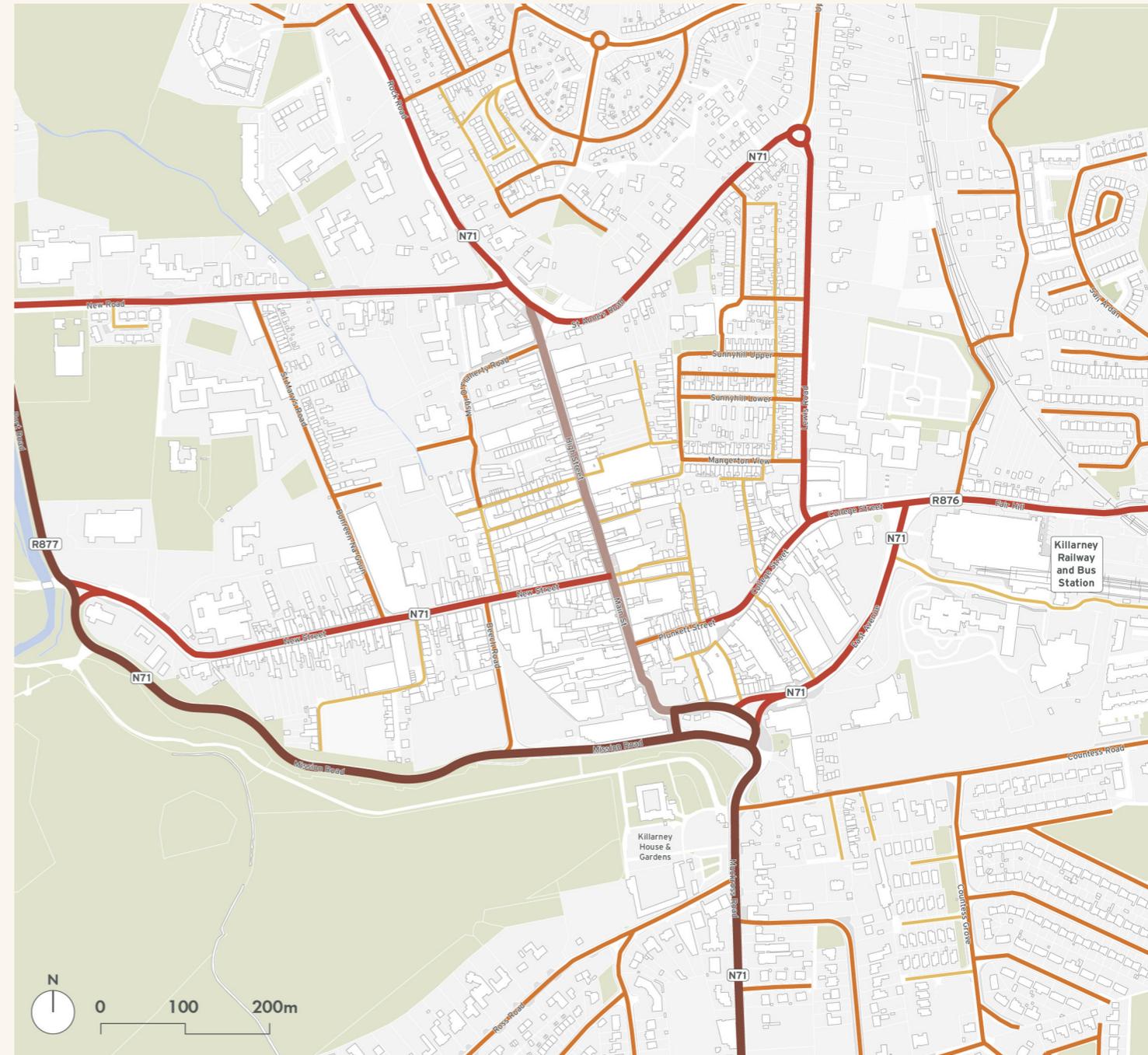


Fig 33 Plan showing Killarneys vehicular movement

9.2 Public transport

Killarney railway station is located on the Mallow-Tralee line, providing three daily return services to Cork and Dublin Heuston via Mallow. The station is well-located adjacent to the town bus station and Outlet Centre, enabling multimodal transfers.

Local and regional bus connectivity is a strength of the town. Bus Éireann routes link Killarney to Cork, Tralee, Kenmare, Limerick, Skibbereen, and Dingle (seasonally). The main bus hub lies at the station complex, with key stops on East Avenue and Mission Road serving routes 271 (Tralee), 300, 40 (Cork), 270 (Kenmare), 276 (Dingle summer), 257 (Macroom), 722, and KY03. TFI Local Link regional services provide on-demand public transport and enhance rural connectivity.

The draft 2025 Local Transport Plan builds on county-level ambitions. It proposes demand-responsive Local Link bus services, improved bus stop infrastructure, real-time service information and signage, and smarter integration with rail services.

- Railway Line
- 🚆 Train Station
- 🚌 Bus Station
- 🛑 Bus Stop
- 🟡 Bus Route 300
- 🟠 Bus Route KY03
- 🟤 Bus Route 40
- 🟢 Bus Route 279

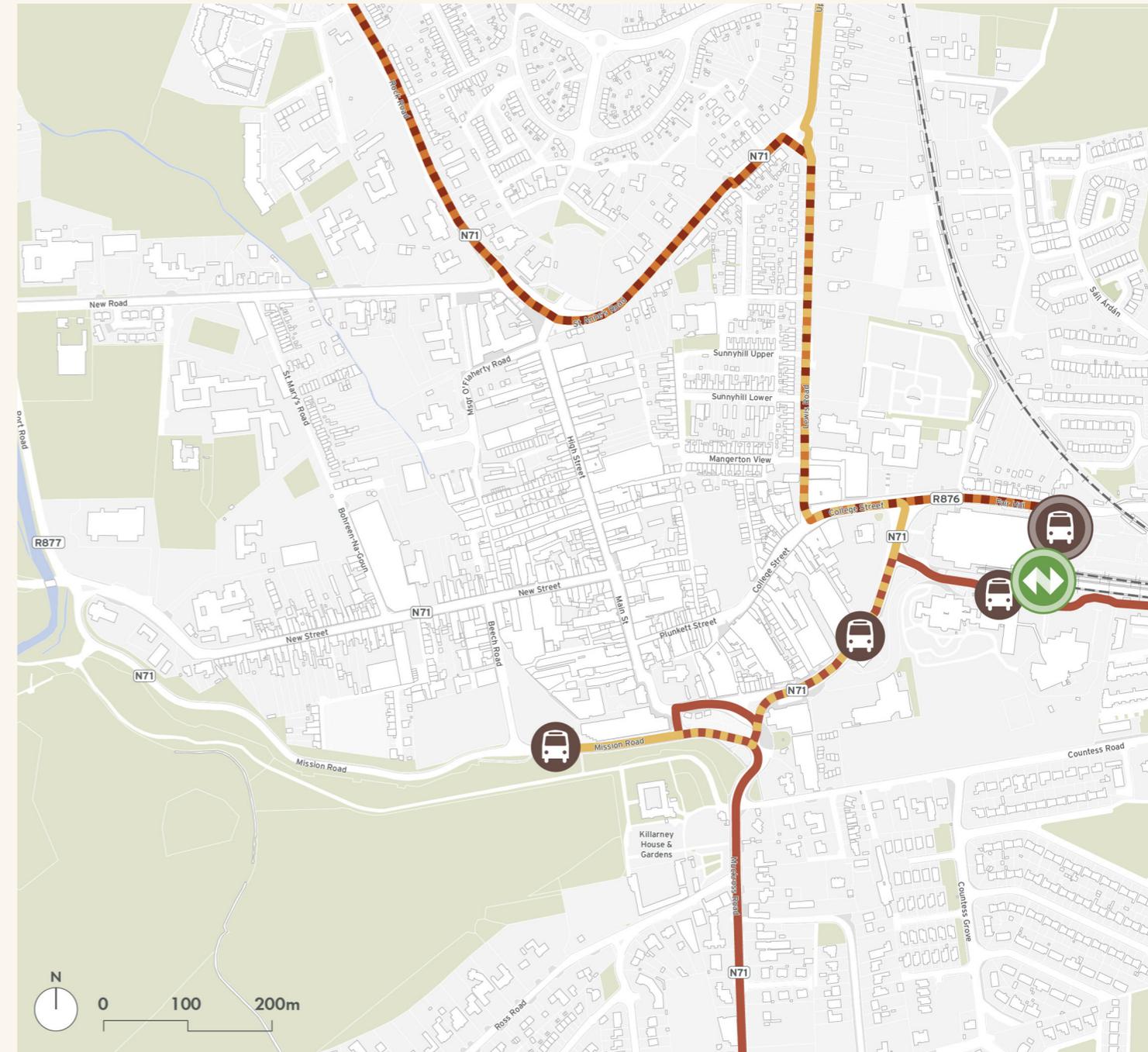


Fig 34 Plan showing Killarney's public transport

9.3 Pedestrian and cyclist movement

Killarney town centre features a developing hierarchy of walking and cycling routes, structured around primary arterial corridors like Rock Road, Park Road, Lewis Road, New Road and Deerpark Road. These are supported by secondary connectors such as Gaelscoil Road and the Flesk Walkway/Cycleway, linking schools, residential areas, and commercial zones. While key streets in the core have continuous footpaths, several secondary streets still lack adequate pedestrian infrastructure. Cycling infrastructure is mixed—some areas, like Rock Road, offer painted lanes, while others, like the Flesk corridor, provide more segregated facilities. There is a specific need to develop a Laneways Plan to maximise the potential of the town’s laneways as pedestrian through-ways as well as address public hesitancy to using them. This also provides a strong place-making opportunity.

Improvements are actively being delivered through both the current Kerry County Development Plan and the draft 2025 LTP. These policies back the creation of an integrated Active Travel Network and aim to make Killarney a “10-minute town,” ensuring amenities are safely accessible by foot or bike. The LTP also includes safer school routes and improved pedestrian crossings.

- Laneway
- Cycleway
- - - Walkway

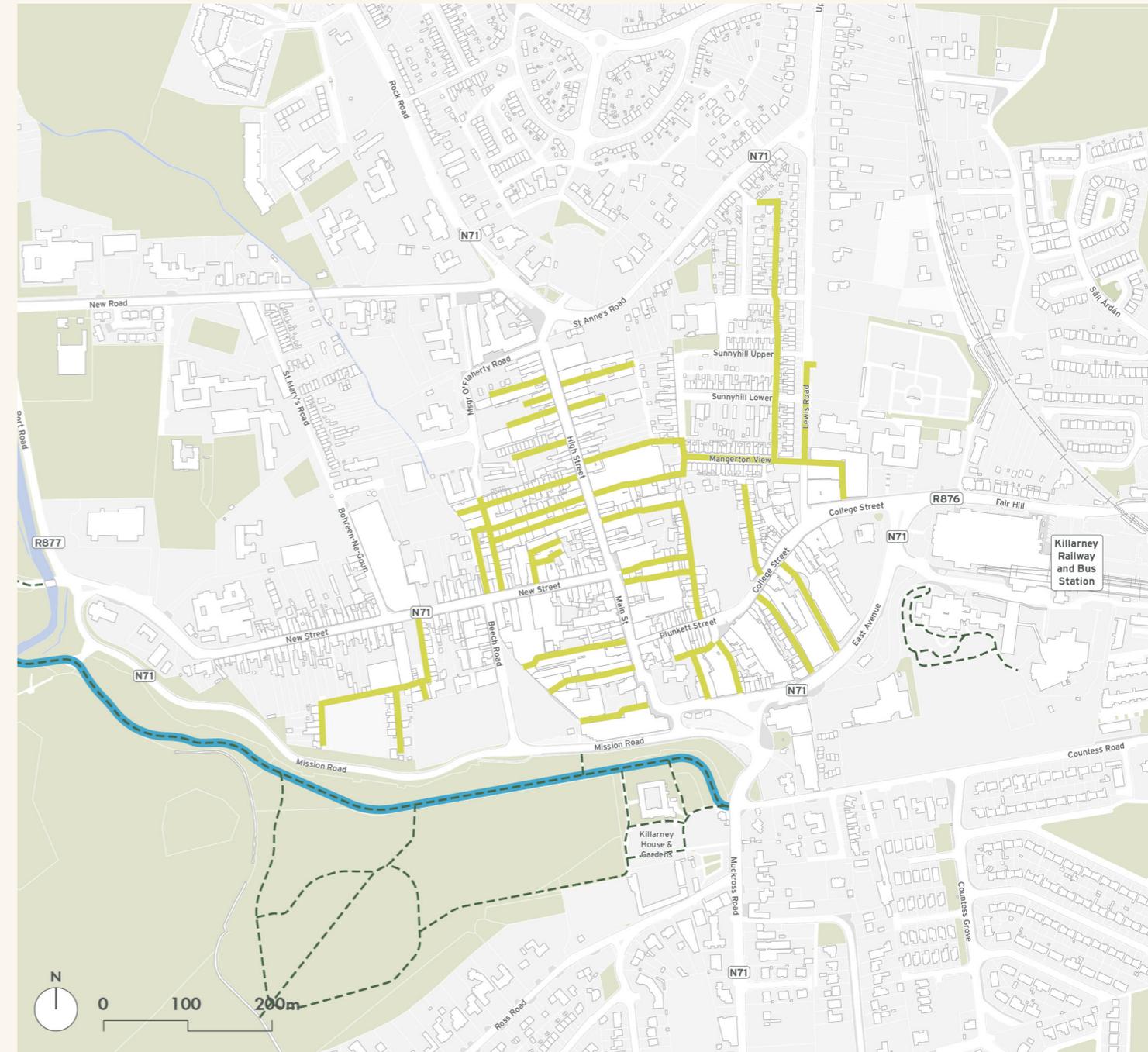


Fig 35 Plan showing Killarney’s pedestrian and cyclist movement



10 LOCAL ECONOMY

10.1 Economic context

Killarney is a key economic hub in County Kerry and plays a central role in the Southern Region's economic framework. Situated on a strategic road network and rail line, it is a significant node in the Kerry Hub Knowledge Triangle alongside Tralee and Killorglin. While tourism is the town's dominant sector, Killarney is also recognised for its growing economic diversification and is a key location for employment.

The service sector—particularly accommodation, food services, retail, and recreation—accounts for the largest share of employment, reflecting Killarney's standing as one of Ireland's premier tourist destinations. However, the town also has a solid base in manufacturing and industry, with companies such as Liebherr Container Cranes Ltd and Tricel providing high-value employment and exports from the region. Killarney's ability to support both global industrial operations and small- to medium-sized enterprises adds resilience to its local economy.

The town is home to a cluster of hotels, guesthouses, and tourism-related businesses that operate year-round, contributing significantly to the local economy. Recent strategic initiatives focus on enhancing the town's competitiveness beyond tourism, including efforts to develop digital infrastructure, promote smart working hubs, and support the growth of creative and knowledge-based

industries. The Killarney Innovation Centre provides space and services for startups and remote workers, supporting local enterprise and innovation.

Tourism

Tourism is the cornerstone of Killarney's economy. Its proximity to Killarney National Park, the Ring of Kerry, and the Wild Atlantic Way ensures a continuous influx of visitors from Ireland and abroad. The town's reputation for hospitality, natural beauty, and heritage—combined with extensive accommodation and event infrastructure—supports a wide variety of tourism activities including ecotourism, heritage tours, festivals, and active holidays. Killarney is also a gateway to the Lakes of Killarney and is closely linked to the Reeks District Experience and Destination Development Plan, with potential for growth in sustainable and nature-based tourism.

While tourism provides substantial employment and vibrancy, there is increasing focus on ensuring the sector's sustainability through seasonality planning, additional amenity and enhancement opportunities, environmental protection, and infrastructure investment.

Knowledge, higher education and research

While Killarney does not currently host a university campus, it benefits from its proximity to Munster Technological University in Tralee and initiatives such as Skillnet and local training providers, which support upskilling in areas like hospitality, green energy, and digital business. There is a growing interest in expanding remote working infrastructure and integrating the town more fully into regional education and innovation networks. Strengthening linkages with third-level institutions will be important for supporting enterprise, particularly in tourism, environmental science, and SME innovation.

As noted in the Killarney Municipal District Settlements' Plan, there are plans for a new third level campus in partnership with the Kerry Education and Training Board as a training facility for graduates to work in the tourism and hospitality sector at the Sara Lee site. This important investment by Kerry ETB aims to create and promote the development of a lifelong learning society in Kerry.

Economic diversity

Killarney's future economic development strategy focuses on balancing its tourism-led economy with greater sectoral diversification. The Kerry County Development Plan and local economic strategies emphasise increasing the mix of town centre uses—including public services, business hubs, cultural facilities and flexible public space for economic activity—to maintain vibrancy and ensure economic resilience. Revitalising underused spaces and enhancing liveability are key to sustaining Killarney as a place to work, live and visit, ensuring it remains economically and socially dynamic in the years ahead.

11 ENGAGEMENT

11.1 Engagement Activities

Engagement Strategy

Our engagement strategy was influenced by the principles and working practices identified by the New European Bauhaus (NEB).

There was particular emphasis on Ambitions I and II of the Participatory Process strand, Ambition I of the Multi-Level engagement strand, and all three Ambitions of the Transdisciplinary approach strand. Our interactive engagement process was founded on working locally with a broad spectrum of stakeholders, sharing appropriate levels of information from our technical design process which enabled genuine engagement and co-development of proposals.

The two stages of engagement corresponded with the three model phases of participation outlined in the NEB toolkit (Identification, Exploration, Refinement):

- Stage 1 - Identification of issues
- Stage 2 - Exploration and Refinement of proposals
- Ongoing stakeholder engagement - Identification, exploration and refinement.

Activities and key findings are detailed below for reference.

Fig 37 Worksheets for the first workshop to identify key issues



Ongoing stakeholder engagement

The consultant team has undertaken a number of one-to-one sessions with key local stakeholders. The sessions were focused on the identification of broader town centre issues, feeding into the preparation of the Integrated Urban Strategy, as well as exploring the selection of a Heritage building with potential for development.

11.2 Stage 1 - Identifying Key Issues Workshop Killarney THRIVE

Local people including stakeholders and members of the public attended a workshop on 4 February 2025 at ANAM. The event was well-publicised and advertised widely by Kerry County Council.

The session commenced with an introduction to THRIVE by Kerry County Council and the project team. The team presented a summary of the historic character of the town centre, an overview of current projects and an invitation to shape the direction of the IUS and selection of potential projects in Killarney.

Feedback and opportunities were noted as follows:

- Celebrate the unique history of Killarney - including the buildings, parks and gardens.
- Opportunities to promote traditional arts, craft and cultural activities in the town centre.
- Significant emphasis on improving the laneways working with local groups such as Tidy Towns - they are a distinctive historic feature and could play a stronger role in strengthening safer connections across the town centre, and be a focus for activities.
- Think about the setting of the historic buildings and areas in the town centre by improving streets and managing the character of new development.
- A number of heritage buildings were identified as having potential - the Integrated Urban Strategy will explore potential projects.
- Accessibility is a top priority.



Fig 38 Workshop 1

11.3 Stage 2 - Exploring and refining the THRIVE proposals

Schools workshops

The project team facilitated two workshops with primary schools at Killarney Library on 20 May 2025. Pupils from Holy Cross Mercy Primary School attended the first session, and Presentation Monastery Primary School attended the second workshop.

Following a short presentation which introduced the THRIVE project, we invited students to undertake an exercise to design their dream laneway. The worksheets encouraged them to draw ideas for the street itself, and the buildings along the laneway. The students were encouraged to draw, doodle or write on their plans to express their ideas.

Designing a dream community Laneway:

The students were very engaged in the laneway design activity.

Proposals for outdoor spaces on the laneways themselves:

- Tree planting, greening, habitats
- Water features.
- Seating.
- Community areas.
- Areas for cafes to spill out onto.

- Zones for relaxation, reading or art.
- Performance spaces.
- Spaces for animals.
- Spaces for activity and sports.
- Animation of buildings through public art.
- A sensory lane.
- Colourful surfacing to bring the laneway to life.
- Statues.

Indoor space proposals included the following:

- Spaces for businesses, leisure and recreation
- Indoor community event spaces.
- Gym, or soft play.
- Daycare.
- Areas which are welcoming, calm or active.
- Civic spaces

A number of students decided to name their laneway and came up with ideas such as: 'The Colour Laneway' and 'The Interesting Laneway'.



Fig 40 Photos from the workshop sessions with local primary schools

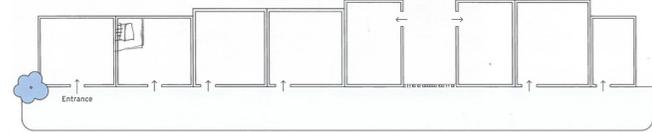
YOUR DREAM LANEWAY

What does your dream laneway look like?
Tell us your ideas for the spaces and buildings.
Draw, write or doodle your ideas!

Use this drawing to show your ideas for the space in the street...



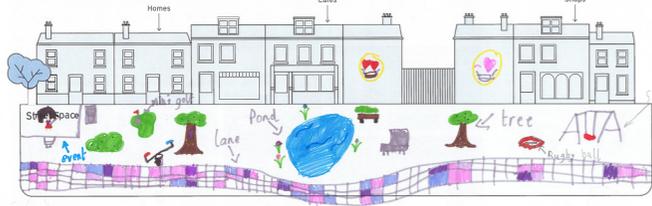
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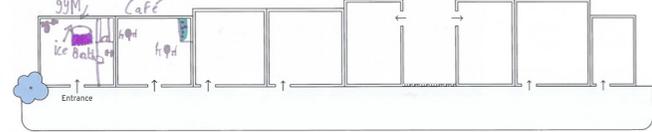


Fig 41 A selection of sketches which illustrate the dream laneways prepared by young people in Killarney

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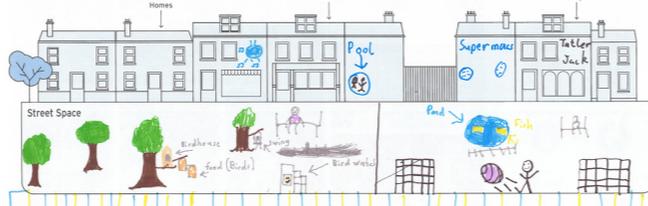
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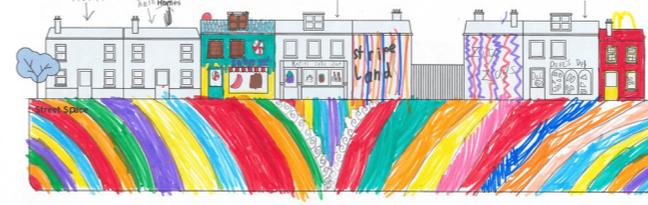
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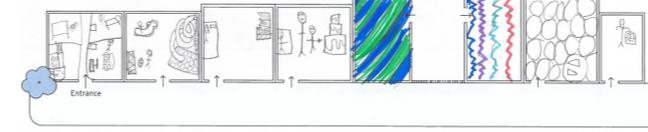
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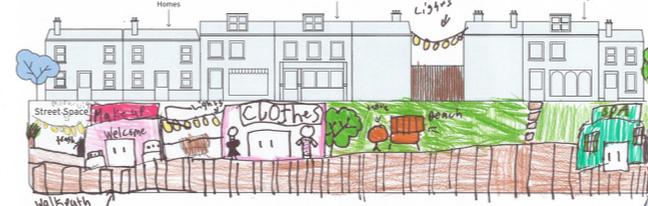
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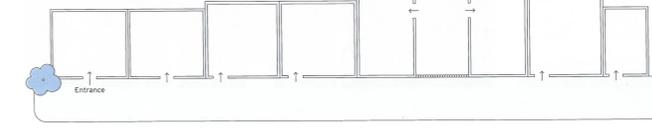
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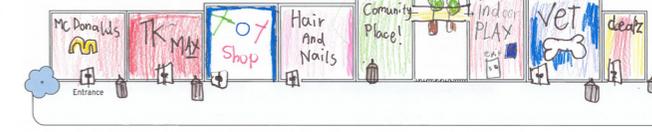
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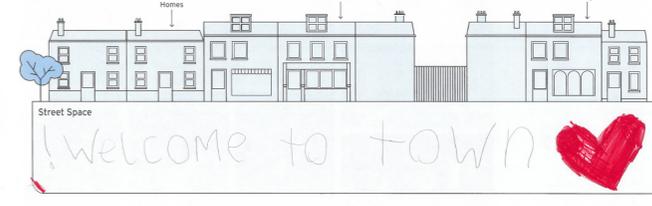
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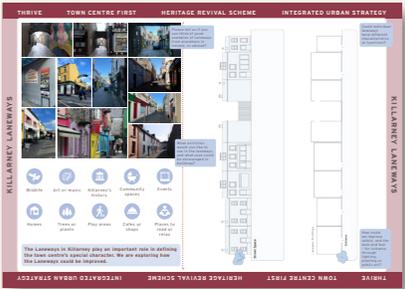
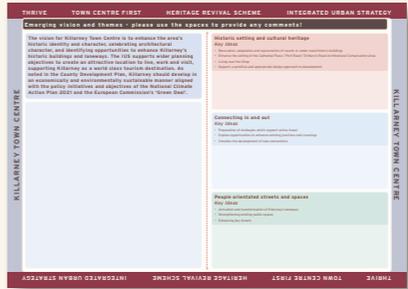


Fig 42 Worksheets for the second workshop to shape IUS proposals

Evening workshop with local stakeholders and community

A follow-up workshop session was held on 20 May 2025 at the Killarney Plaza Hotel. A number of individuals who attended the first workshop in February participated in the session, alongside some new attendees. Following an introduction from the Council, the project team presented an update. This included a summary of the THRIVE context, and explanation of the NEB.

The presentation summarised key topics arising from the first round of engagement, and how these findings had informed the emerging vision and themes for the IUS. A series of targeted questions were identified under each theme with a view to directly informing the identification of other projects.

The following section outlines the feedback provided under five broad themes.

People-Oriented Streets and Spaces

Participants expressed a strong interest in reimaging Killarney's streets and public areas to prioritise pedestrians, over vehicles. Suggestions included transforming New Market Lane into a vibrant plaza for farmers' and craft markets, and redesigning Milk Market as an event space with potential for a pop-up stage and ticketed entry via its two access points. Outdoor dining, planting, and informal gathering areas—particularly at Market Cross, Old Market Lane (off the Market Cross), and East Avenue—were also seen as important enhancements. There was strong support for retaining and integrating green space when redeveloping sites. Several responses called for the creation of trails focusing on literature, art, and heritage, and for making laneways welcoming settings for families and housing. These ideas were aimed at fostering a more inclusive, accessible, and sociable urban experience.

Heritage and Culture

The community showed deep appreciation for Killarney's rich cultural history and called for it to be more visibly celebrated. This included highlighting changes over time—such as the loss of traditional thatch roofs—and reviving traditional skills through local initiatives, as seen in West Cork. Participants supported developing flexible community spaces that complement ANAM, such as third-space buildings for crafts, woodworking, or small-scale cultural events. Ideas included a mobile sound stage (“gig rig”),

using St. Mary's Parish Hall to explore local heritage like the Annals of Inisfallen, creating a specialist printing workshop, and strengthening the Courthouse as a civic landmark. There was also a desire to honour historical figures (including literary figures such as Shelley, Brontë, Stoker) and provide inclusive social enterprise spaces such as an LGBTQ+ hub. Existing all-weather cultural activities, such as Killarney House tours, were also noted as valuable.

Movement

Mobility improvements were a key theme, with participants advocating for a free local bus service and a Park and Ride system to reduce congestion. There was a strong call for enhanced cycling and walking conditions, including safer crossings (especially on Mission Road), more bike infrastructure, and, potentially colourful, visually engaging pedestrian crossings inspired by Cork. Electric vehicle facilities were also suggested, along with a study on the feasibility of a multi-storey car park near the outlet centre. Feedback stressed the need to improve accessibility, especially the pedestrian route between the train and bus stations, and to ensure safer cycling routes. Consideration for animal crossings, especially for deer, and better parking placement were also raised. Signage and branding were highlighted as areas for creative improvement.

Laneways

Laneways were widely viewed as a cultural and spatial asset for the town. Respondents suggested painting walls white, installing creative lighting, and commissioning murals that reflect Killarney's heritage and instil pride of place. Ideas included using laneways for informal community activities like games, pop-up events, or small exhibitions. Many saw potential for storytelling trails that celebrate authors connected to the town, and for integrating these routes into the broader cultural and pedestrian experience of the town centre.

Other

The proposed redevelopment of Áras Phádraig was noted. Healthcare access, particularly hospital improvements, was also raised. Housing emerged as a consistent topic, with feedback supporting compact, affordable urban living that supports young people, families, and those working in the town. Overall, contributors were clear in their desire for Killarney to evolve as a well-balanced, inclusive, and culturally expressive town that harmonises nature, heritage, and modern life.

C

STRATEGY



12 VISION AND THEMES

12.1 IUS Vision

The IUS is founded on the following vision statement. The vision embraces the ambitions of the THRIVE programme, focusing on a heritage-led and community facing direction which complements the overarching vision for Killarney town centre as defined in the Kerry County Development Plan, and embracing the New European Bauhaus principles:

The vision for Killarney Town Centre is to create a vibrant, inclusive, and resilient heart of the community that celebrates its historic identity and architectural character. Through the enhancement of heritage buildings and laneways, the creation of dynamic public spaces, and improved connectivity, the Town Centre will become a thriving, sustainable destination that supports local culture, business, and everyday life.

The IUS supports wider planning objectives to create an attractive location to live, work and visit, supporting Killarney as a world class tourism destination.

As noted in the Kerry County Development Plan, Killarney should develop in an economically and environmentally sustainable manner aligned with the policy initiatives and objectives of the National Climate Action Plan 2025 and the European Commission's 'Green Deal'.

12.2 Themes

Through engagement and analysis of feedback received from the public, a clear narrative emerged detailing what people love about Killarney, as well as identifying areas where improvements could be made. Three themes emerged for Killarney Town Centre as a result of this engagement to inform an integrated approach to address identified development needs of the area and explore its potential.

Each theme sets the context for a series of ideas. These interventions fall into two categories. First, key ideas which have a town centre-wide reach, and secondly, spatial opportunities which are location-specific interventions.

The ideas and opportunities have been informed and shaped by conversations with the community through our engagement activities, and supplemented by our own assessment of key opportunities in Killarney town centre. They are intended to complement key strategies and initiatives outlined in the Kerry County Development Plan, and existing programmes including URDF. They have an explicit heritage and community focus, and have the potential to drive transformational change, embracing key New European Bauhaus and priorities of beauty, sustainability and inclusion.

The IUS sets out three main themes which articulate the key priorities and interventions to realise the IUS vision:

- **Historic setting and cultural heritage;**
- **Connecting in and out;**
- **Streets and spaces for people.**

It is important to note that the IUS is a non-statutory document, and the Town Plan and Local Transport Plan (emerging at time of publication of the IUS) will take precedence for decision-making purposes. In relation to transport and movement initiatives, readers should make direct reference to the LTP in the first instance. The IUS identifies potential opportunities which may be explored having regard to the LTP.



Historic setting and cultural heritage



Connecting in and out



Streets and spaces for people

13 HISTORIC SETTING AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

13.1 Overview

This theme focuses on the celebration and activation of Killarney's historic buildings and supporting the development of cultural, community and social infrastructure in the town centre. This theme will support Killarney in bringing its special historic environment to the fore, and realising wider objectives as a successful place to live, work and visit.

Key ideas

- **Renovation, adaptation and rejuvenation of vacant or under-used historic buildings, which could include Killarney Courthouse.** These buildings have the potential to be re-cast as cultural and community destinations, breathing new life into buildings which are well-loved and part of the collective sense of local identity.
- **Enhance the setting of the Cathedral Place / Port Road / St Mary's Road Architectural Conservation Area** by considering local townscape views, surrounding views and design guidance, including the New Street Area.
- **Living over the Shop**, encouraging town centre living which would reduce upper floor vacancy, as well as providing for increased activity and passive surveillance in the town centre.
- **Support appropriate development** of the identified sites in the current Kerry County Development Plan, and future plans.

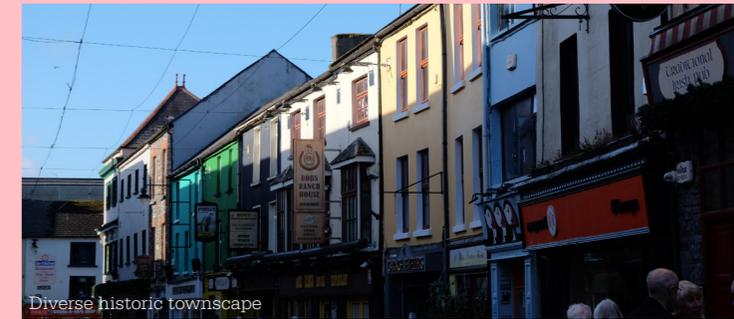
WHAT YOU TOLD US ABOUT KILLARNEY...

"Celebrate the history of furniture making and wood work"

"Create trails which focus on the heritage with different themes - including literature and art "

"Tell stories about history at the station"

"Use heritage buildings to create new spaces for local people and groups"

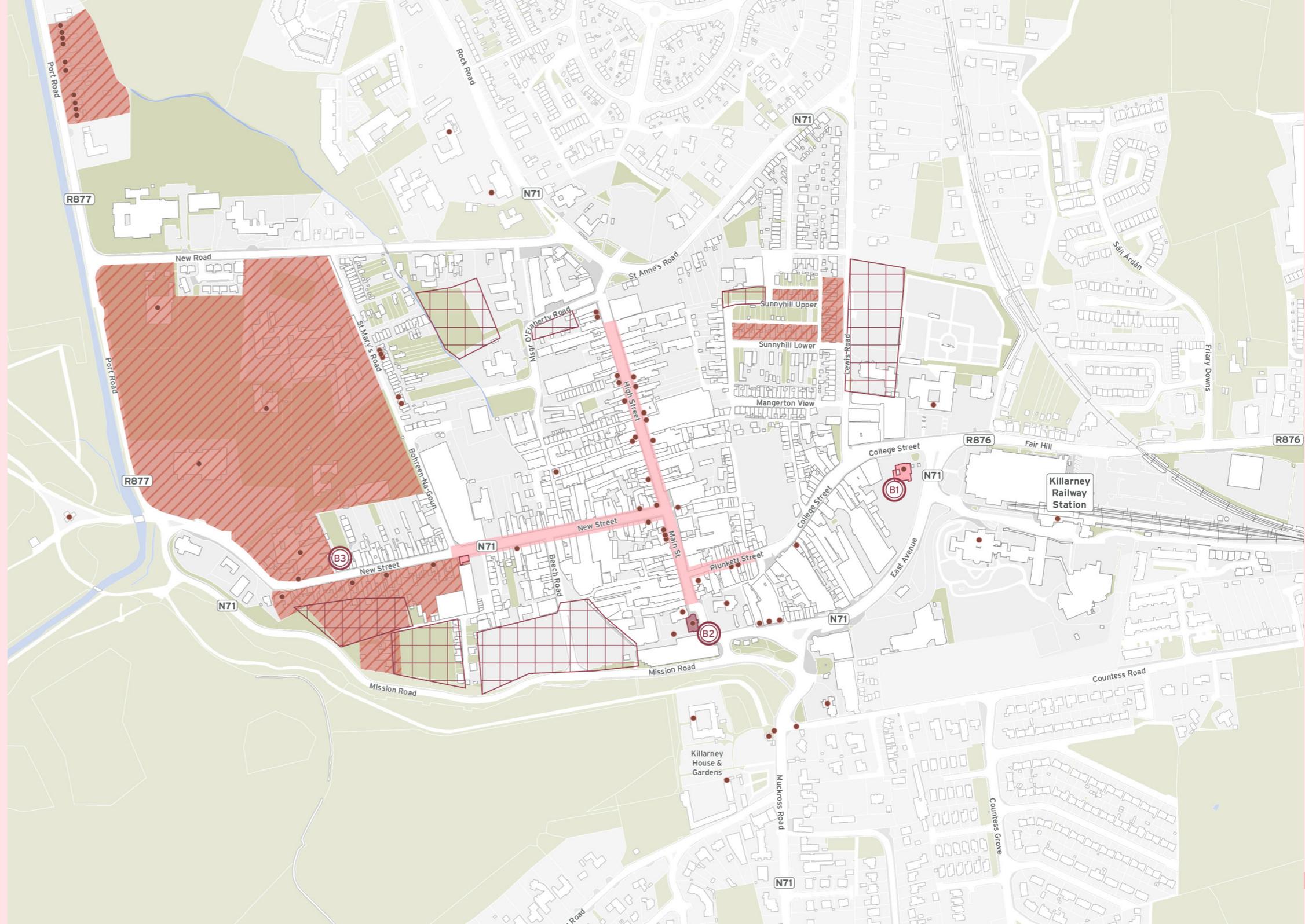


Framework Plan: Historic Setting and Cultural Heritage

- Architectural Conservation Area
- Protected Structures
- Retail core area
- Historic building renovation opportunity
- Identified opportunity site in KCDP

- Renovation opportunities
- B1 Killarney Courthouse
- B2 Town Hall

- Area Strategy to enhance setting
- B3 Cathedral Place / Port Road / St. Mary's Road Architectural Conservation Area



13.3 Key ideas

Living Over the Shop

Description and benefits: Strategy to identify priority locations for “living over the shop” interventions in line with the Kerry County Development Plan (see para 4.3.7 of Volume 1). Consider mechanisms to implement this project. For example, this might include title searches and focused discussions with landowners, and reductions in development contributions for some vacant residential and commercial properties (similar to the Kerry County Council Development Contributions Scheme 2017).

Timescale: Medium

Shop-Front Enhancement Scheme

Description and benefits: This scheme would improve the streetscape environment by encouraging and supporting business owners to upgrade their shopfronts. This would result in more attractive town streetscape for residents, visitors, shoppers and business. It would also promote Killarney as an attractive place for social and business interaction. Opportunities to align this project with the laneways improvement strategy (see “Streets and Spaces for People” theme) should be actively pursued.

Timescale: Medium

Studio collective space

Description and benefits: There is interest in the creation of a new local studio collective space for artists and makers. This could include a print workshop. Potential to explore a brief for this facility and identify opportunities to locate the space in a renovated historic building in Killarney. Subject to further exploration, it is recommended that location options and feasibility are assessed as part of a subsequent project.

Timescale: Medium

13.4 Spatial opportunities - renovation

A number of opportunities exist to refurbish and re-use historic buildings in the town centre. Various options exist including repair of existing fabric, enhanced accessibility and energy efficiency, maintaining the viability of the buildings for existing uses and enabling the introduction of alternative town centre uses including flexible space for community or cultural use. Other opportunities exist beyond the town centre including St. Finian’s Hospital (Rock Road) and the Gate Lodge of St. Columbanus’s Community Hospital.

B1. Killarney Courthouse

Description and benefits: Description and benefits: Conservation-led extension and upgrade of the Courthouse. This could include a sensitive extension and roof terrace area which will support the existing operation of the building, and the potential introduction of additional community and/or economic uses and flexible spaces which are accessible, and energy efficient.

1. Developing design proposals for conservation-led extension and upgrade of the Courthouse.

Timescale: Short

2. Completion of works (dependent on grant funding)

Timescale: Medium - Long

B2. Town Hall

Description and benefits: Very prominent location with a stunning bowed gable that closes the vista up Main Street. It shares its context with St. Mary’s Church directly opposite as well as St. Mary’s Well on a laneway to the rear of the Town Hall. Opportunity to enhance accessibility, create flexible community spaces and explore future use of the flat roof space and/or the external space to the rear of the building. Initial step would be a feasibility study, working closely with the Killarney Municipal District. Close links with opportunity B3.

Timescale: Medium

B3. Enhance the setting of the Cathedral Place / Port Road / St Mary’s Road Architectural Conservation Area

Description and benefits: Assessment of opportunities to enhance the special character of the Conservation Area, and consideration of potential risks of development beyond the ACA. Identification of key principles relating to reviews and townscape / landscape character associated with the implementation of future development sites. Consideration of the New Street area including enhancement of Protected Structures, streetscape and future infill / redevelopment opportunities.

Timescale: Short

Fjordsgade Community Centre, Aarhus, Denmark

Significant renovation in 2018 transformed a historic school building into a vibrant community hub with various recreational and cultural activities. The centre demonstrates a testament to the adaptive reuse of historic buildings with modern functionality.



The Maltings, Farnham, England Community and arts centre in a historic Maltings building with monthly indoor and outdoor markets, a range of cultural and creative activities, theatre, pop-up cinema, and hire space.



14 CONNECTING IN AND OUT

14.1 Overview

This theme focuses on improving connections through Killarney, consolidating projects which are already under development via URDF funding. This theme will support Killarney in improving the experience of arriving in the town centre, supporting the town centre as a place to live, work and visit.

Key ideas

- **Preparation of strategies which support active travel,** including walking, cycling and traffic management. Strategic principles and projects will be established through the other initiatives including the forthcoming Local Transport Plan.
- **Explore opportunities to enhance existing junctions and crossings,** focusing on improving safety for all users in the town centre including those with mobility impairments, pedestrians and cyclists.
- **Consider the development of new connections,** to establish a more legible town centre to move around, unlocking linkages to main destinations including the railway station and Killarney House.

WHAT YOU TOLD US ABOUT KILLARNEY...

"Make the town centre more accessible and easier to get around"

"Traffic and congestion is a big issue in the town and has an impact on tourism"

"Parking is important - we need spaces in the right locations to support businesses and the tourist economy"

"Create beautiful signage to welcome people when they arrive in Killarney"

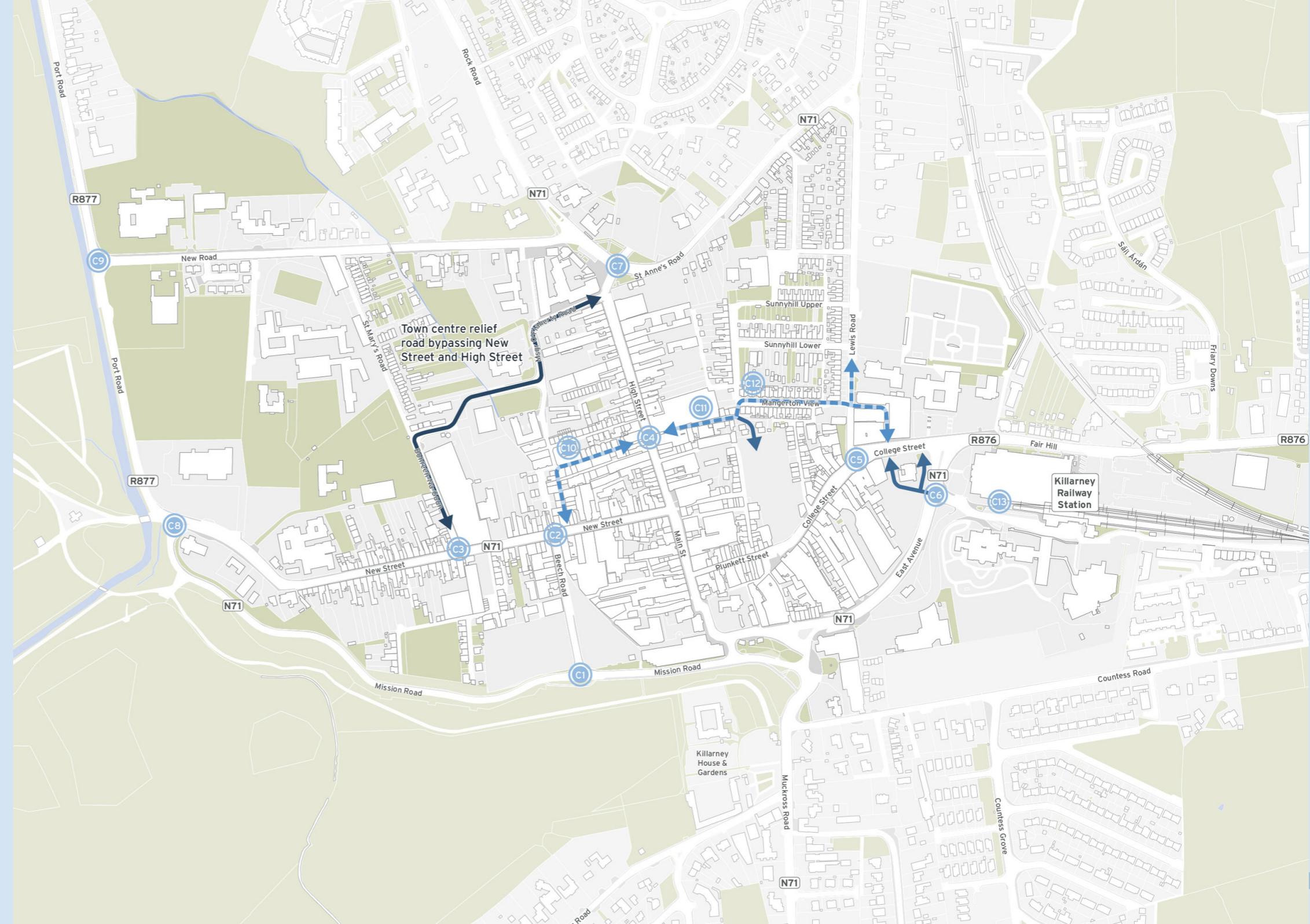
"There are opportunities for more buses, as well as better crossings"



Examples of streets and spaces across Killarney

14.2 **Framework Plan:
Connecting in and out**

- ➔ **Town centre relief road**
 - ➔ **New connection routes**
 - ➔ **New laneway connection routes**
-
- **Junction and crossing improvement**
 - C1 Mission Road / Beech Road
 - C2 New Street / Beech Road
 - C3 New Street / Bohreen-Na-Goun
 - C4 High Street / Hogan's Lane / Barry's Lane
 - C5 Lewis Road / College Street
 - C6 Station Road / East Avenue
 - C7 St Anne's Road / High Street
 - C8 New Street / Mission Road
 - C9 New Road / Port Road
-
- **New Connections**
 - C10 Barry's Lane
 - C11 Hogans Lane
 - C12 Mangerton View
 - C13 Railway station



14.3 Key ideas

Active travel

Description and benefits: Progression of an overarching movement strategy for the town centre, placing an emphasis on achieving positive active travel outcomes which benefit the overall historic identity and character of Killarney, with reduced dominance of vehicular traffic. This IUS strategy idea may be incorporated as part of the emerging Local Transport Plan (LTP), building on URDF initiatives including the new town centre relief road which will bypass New Street and High Street.

The draft LTP analyses current transport conditions in Killarney, alongside an assessment of the potential impacts of future development on the transport network. It outlines a range of proposals to enhance transport conditions for active travellers, public transport users, and private motorised vehicles.

A range of short, medium and long-term options are identified for each mode which will be considered in response to public consultation on the draft LTP as part of the broader engagement process for Killarney Municipal District Settlement Plan.

Timescale: Short

14.4 Spatial opportunities - junction and crossing improvements

Description and benefits:

A number of opportunities to improve existing junctions and crossings have been identified. Potential enhancements will be validated and progressed through the Local Transport Plan on adoption, and building on URDF initiatives. More detailed studies, surveys and assessments would be required for each location considering safety, active travel and broader movement and place-making priorities in the LTP:

- C1. Mission Road / Beech Road
- C2. New Street / Beech Road
- C3. New Street / Bohreen-Na-Goun
- C4. High Street / Hogan's Lane / Barry's Lane
- C5. Lewis Road / College Street
- C6. Station Road / East Avenue
- C7. St Anne's Road / High Street
- C8. New Street / Mission Road
- C9. New Road / Port Road

Timescale: Medium

14.5 Spatial opportunities - new connections

Description and benefits:

Similar to the collection of potential junction and crossing improvement locations (C1 to C9), a series of opportunities have been identified to create new connections across the town centre. These include extensions to existing Laneway routes, and new connections which respond to desire lines to key destinations. Bridging the gap from the core town centre to locations on the periphery is particularly important.

C10. Barry's Lane (creating a stronger loop between the High Street and New Street)

C11. Hogans Lane (Strengthening the connectivity via Glebe car park)

C12. Mangerton View (Connecting to College Street via a new crossing to the Courtyard)

C13. Railway station (Improving the threshold to the station)

Timescale: Medium

Zwolle Station, Netherlands Zwolle Station has undergone significant urban design transformations to enhance connectivity, sustainability, and community engagement. The station square has been reimagined to enhance the arrival experience, featuring integrated greening and SuDS as well as improved pedestrian pathways, seating areas, and clear signage. These changes aim to create a welcoming environment for travelers and visitors alike.



Place Thorel, Normandy, France The area has been transformed into a vibrant and accessible public space, as well as serving strategic road connections. It is an important gateway, enhancing connectivity and accessibility locally and within the region. The regeneration focuses on sustainable mobility by prioritising walking and cycling infrastructure, fostering a pedestrian-friendly environment that encourages active travel. Pedestrian crossings have been implemented to enhance safety and connectivity, facilitating smooth movement for walkers and cyclists.



15 STREETS AND SPACES FOR PEOPLE

15.1 Overview

This theme focuses on enhancing the streets and spaces in Killarney Town Centre, with a major emphasis on the Laneways which make such an important contribution to the historic identity of the town. The town centre lacks a main focal point or key public space - this theme will enable improvements and activation of existing spaces. The objective is to create a more welcoming experience for people using the town centre including residents, workers and visitors.

Key ideas

- **Activation and transformation of Killarney's laneways**, recognising their historic character and potential to add life to the town centre with potential for a diverse range of activities and functions including living, play, food and drink, events or greening.
- **Strengthening existing public spaces**, exploring possibilities for provision of an additional public meeting space of scale, alongside opportunities to create welcoming thresholds and spaces for flexible events, activities or greening (e.g. a location for a farmers market).
- **Enhancing key streets**, improving key streets as more welcoming active travel routes and improved environments for adjacent residential and business areas, including a number of Protected Structures.

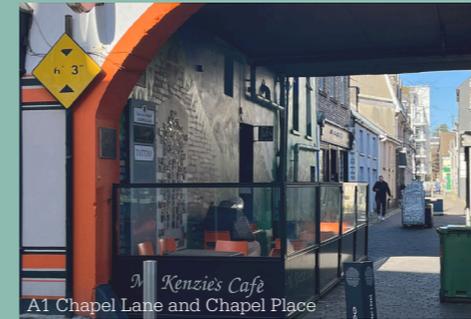
WHAT YOU TOLD US ABOUT KILLARNEY...

"The Laneways are a great way of connecting people"

"We need to create some greener spaces within the town centre"

"A space for a farmers market would be a great addition to the town"

"Make better uses of spaces for events and performances"



A1 Chapel Lane and Chapel Place



A2 Bishop's Lane



A1 Chapel Lane and Chapel Place



A3 Pawn Office Lane



A3 Pawn Office Lane



A4 Barry's Lane



A5 Fleming's Lane



A5 Fleming's Lane



A14 New Market Lane



A15 Old Market Lane



A21 Church Lane

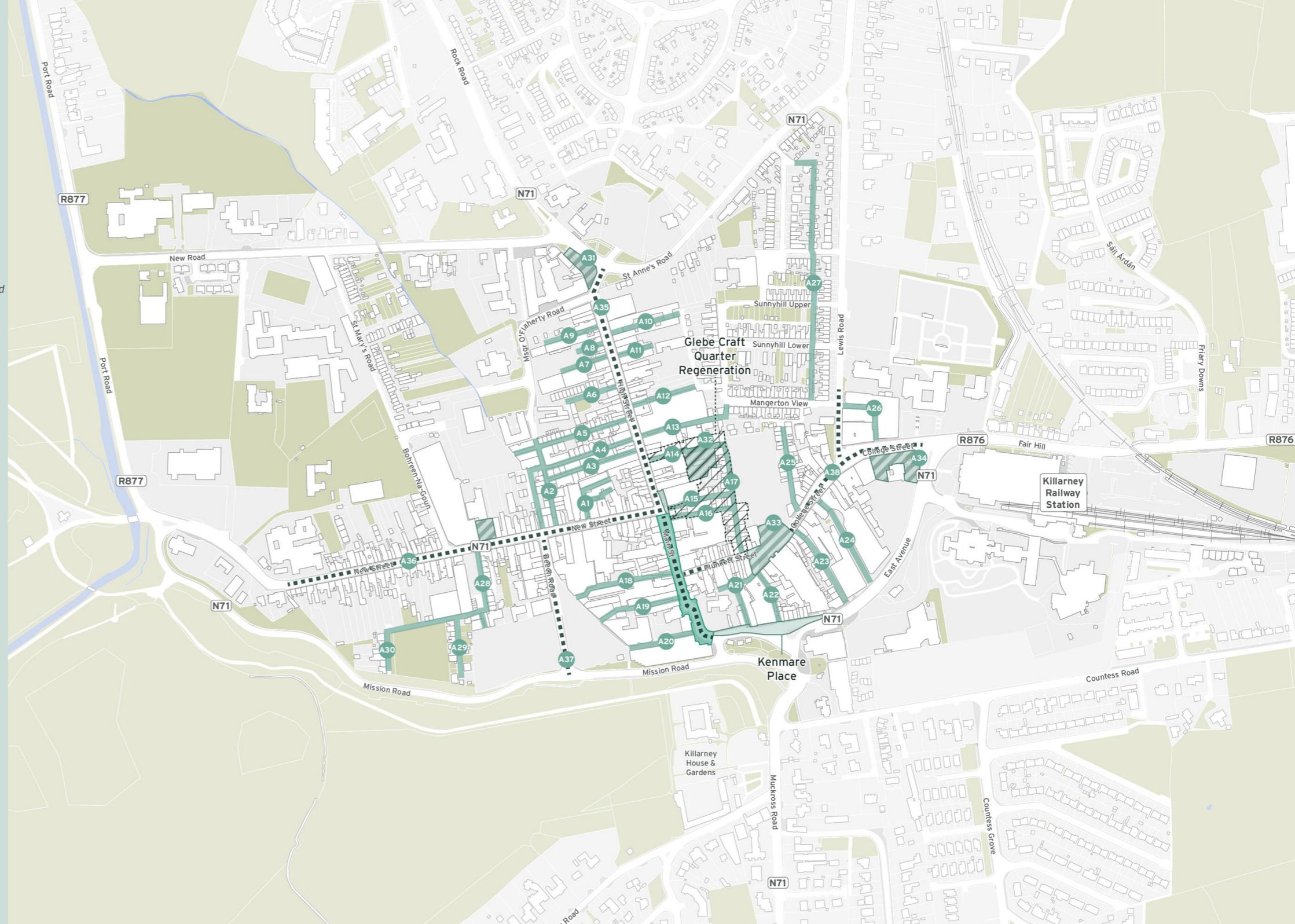


A21 Church Lane

15.2 Framework Plan: Streets and spaces for people

- **Laneway regeneration**
- A1 Chapel Lane and Chapel Place
- A2 Bishop's Lane
- A3 Pawn Office Lane
- A4 Barry's Lane
- A5 Fleming's Lane
- A6 Bowers Lane
- A7 No name / O'Sullivan Cycles
- A8 Ball Alley Lane
- A9 No name / The Authentic Barber Shop
- A10 Grosvenor Court
- A11 O'Donovans Courtyard
- A12 Ducketts Lane
- A13 Hogans Lane
- A14 New Market Lane
- A15 Old Market Lane
- A16 Bohereencael
- A17 Bohereencael Glebe
- A18 Well Lane South
- A19 Tuohills Lane
- A20 No name / St Mary's Well
- A21 Church Lane
- A22 Brewery Lane
- A23 St Anthony's Place
- A24 Scotts Street
- A25 Clovers Lane
- A26 The Courtyard
- A27 Mangerton View, Sunnyhill Lower and Sunnyhill Upper
- A28 Bridewell Lane
- A29 Pond Lane
- A30 Green Lane

- **Public space enhancement**
- A31 Top of High Street / St Anne's Rd
- A32 New Market Lane
- A33 Space around the Courthouse
- A34 Taxi area, Glebe car park
- **Key street improvements**
- A35 High Street
- A36 New Street
- A37 Beech Road
- A38 College Street



15.3 Key ideas

Laneways Strategy

Description and benefits:

Preparation of an overarching Laneways regeneration strategy. This should include a detailed analysis of the historic evolution and existing character of laneways in Killarney with a view to defining key principles and categories of laneway (character / typology). Through an engagement-led approach, the strategy would then explore the different priorities and functions which might play out in individual laneways. For example, proposals might include urban greening, historic building renovation, public art, new homes, play and recreation, vehicle access, lighting and streetscape enhancements and outdoor events. The Strategy might also define relative levels of priority for specific laneways based on key criteria.

Timescale: Short

Greening and Biodiversity Strategy

Description and benefits:

Opportunities to green the town centre and enhance biodiversity might include connecting the natural landscape into the town centre by providing areas of habitat interwoven into an improved public realm, which connect to the wide expanse of the Killarney National Park. This could support the health of the resident urban population. It would also enable residents and visitors to reconnect and experience nature and wildlife in their daily lives. SuDS should be considered as part of any opportunities alongside opportunities to support pollinators and integrate the town's architectural heritage, for example, installing swift nest boxes.

Timescale: Short

15.4 Spatial opportunities - Laneway regeneration

Description and benefits:

As noted in section 15.3, Killarney's laneways offer major potential for regeneration. Drawing on the content of the Laneway Strategy which might define different types of Laneway, individual projects might focus on key themes (e.g. heritage, play, planting, community, food and drink, events, public art etc). Careful consideration of ownership will be required alongside opportunities to align with other priorities (e.g. Glebe Craft Quarter).

- A1. Chapel Lane and Chapel Place
- A2. Bishop's Lane
- A3. Pawn Office Lane
- A4. Barry's Lane
- A5. Fleming's Lane
- A6. Bowers Lane
- A7. No name / O'Sullivan Cycles
- A8. Ball Alley Lane
- A9. No name / The Authentic Barber Shop
- A10. Grosvenor Court
- A11. O'Donovans Courtyard
- A12. Ducketts Lane
- A13. Hogans Lane
- A14. New Market Lane
- A15. Old Market Lane
- A16. Bohereencael
- A17. Bohereencael Glebe
- A18. Well Lane South
- A19. Tuohills Lane
- A20. No name / St Mary's Well
- A21. Church Lane
- A22. Brewery Lane
- A23. St Anthony's Place
- A24. Scotts Street
- A25. Clovers Lane
- A26. The Courtyard

- A27. Mangerton View, Sunnyhill Lower and Sunnyhill Upper
- A28. Bridewell Lane
- A29. Pond Lane
- A30. Green Lane

Timescale: Short

1. Animation of Laneways: planting, public art, visual improvements

Timescale: Short

2. Public realm upgrade and improved connectivity.

Timescale: Medium

15.5 Spatial opportunities - public space enhancement

Description and benefits:

Several existing spaces have been identified as having potential for enhancement. These represent key thresholds and focal points for the town centre and could improve the character and identity of Killarney, particularly in terms of the arrival experience. The next step would be to work with local stakeholders to develop feasibility and concept designs for each.

- A31. Top of High Street / St Anne's Road: This space appears disconnected from the historic High Street. Investment in the public realm, lighting and greening would make a significant impact.
- A32. New Market Lane: New Market Lane benefits from an interesting range of independent businesses. Options to enhance the adjacent space should be examined. For example, in the short-term it might be possible to introduce greening while retaining the car parking.

- A33. Space around the Courthouse: Alongside proposals for the renovation of the Courthouse (see B1), consider opportunities to enhance the spaces around the building for public / community use.
- A34. Taxi area, Glebe car park: The taxi rank plays an important role for the town centre. Opportunities exist to consider the short and long-term character and role of this space. For example, the overall character of the street scene might benefit from tree planting.

Timescale: Medium

15.6 Spatial opportunities - key street improvements

Description and benefits:

Focused public realm enhancements to key streets, creating a more attractive environment which contributes to the arrival experience:

- Kenmare Place: The development of a public realm area would create a centre focal point and a space for both locals and visitors.
- A35. High Street: Core street for the town centre - focus on overall design quality alongside potential for greening, SuDS, temporary events and activities.
- A36. New Street: Important secondary street with diversity of businesses. Opportunity to enhance streetscape alongside linked projects to enhance ACA setting.
- A37. Beech Road: Forms a key connection to Killarney House and Gardens, presenting an opportunity for a more attractive environment.
- A38. College Street: Opportunity for a coordinated approach to public realm enhancements on this key entrance point to the town centre.

Timescale: Medium



Borough Yards, London The blend of uses ensures that the area is alive throughout the day evening, creating passive surveillance. The Yards are built on historic lanes, which creates intimate streetscapes that feel comfortable. Human-scaled proportions encourage social interaction.



Union Yard Arches, London A small lane revitalised into a vibrant community space through good urban design, improved street lighting and the opening of cafes and restaurants. Occupation by a diverse mix of uses creates a feel of vitality and robust use. Irregular yard and alley environment fosters a sense of intrigue and discovery, providing an alternative walking route.



Longford Street, Middlesbrough Alleyways enlivened by community clean-ups, new seating and planters, and colourful murals by residents and local artists.



Desmond Street, Dun Laoghaire, Ireland Neighbourhood traffic calming scheme with tree planting, street corner radii tightened, carrigeway narrowed, resurfacing, off-set parking and raised tables.



Street Feast, North Great George's Street, Dublin Part of Ireland's national initiative encouraging neighbours to share meals to strengthen community bonds. The street's historic Georgian architecture provides a picturesque backdrop.



Thisted, Denmark A revitalised passageway transformed into a series of spaces with new paving, lighting, seating, planting and play, demonstrating how blank facades and alleys can be enlivened through simple interventions.



Eliza Dorusstraat, Delft, Netherlands Regenerated laneways with accessible paving, integrated greening and public seating.

Royal Seaport, Stockholm, Sweden New development with greened and accessible lanes, shade-loving plants, lighting, cycle parking and permeable paving.



Southgate, Bath, England Within close proximity to Bath Spa station, Southgate is a pleasant gateway into the town centre. The station square has been enhanced by introducing greenery, public art, street furniture & lighting.



16 DELIVERY STRATEGY

Relationship with statutory planning documents and other strategies

The Integrated Urban Strategy (IUS) is a non-statutory document. The IUS establishes a heritage-led framework, identifying a range of projects which would support the realisation of the IUS priorities, and other planning policy objectives. In that context, the IUS is intended to complement and support the implementation of existing adopted policies, and future plans and proposals including the Killarney Town Development Plan as contained in Volume 2 of the CDP. This revised planning guidance is emerging in parallel with the IUS.

The IUS will be referenced in parallel with statutory plans but adopted policy will take precedence for decision-making purposes in all cases.

Future engagement strategy

Kerry County Council (KCC) will continue to engage in an ongoing dialogue with key stakeholders including Community Groups and the wider public to progress specific projects and key ideas as they evolve, building on the positive conversations which have shaped the IUS and the THRIVE building proposals.

Potential project partners

Kerry County Council will work closely with key stakeholder and community groups and other partners to progress individual projects. Ongoing dialogue will help to shape and evolve any future proposals and assist their delivery and implementation.

The following organisations represent some of those key partners with others to be defined as the IUS is taken forward. The Council will work collaboratively to identify specific partners on a project-by-project basis. Additional stakeholders will be identified as appropriate.

- Courts Service of Ireland
- Engineers' Ireland
- HSE
- Kerry Archaeological and Historical Society
- Kerry Education and Training Board
- Kerry Public Participation Network
- KCYS Killarney Youth Centre
- Killarney Chamber of Tourism and Commerce
- Killarney House and Gardens
- Killarney Immigrant Support Centre
- Local ecology groups and experts
- Tidy Towns

Future projects

The IUS has been prepared as part of the overall THRIVE initiative for Kerry. Project B1 (Killarney Courthouse) has been developed as an initial set of design concepts which has the potential to be progressed as part of future funding bids as and when funding streams are identified. This will be a key initial priority project for the implementation of the IUS, and will establish a high bar for heritage-led investment projects in the town centre and beyond.

