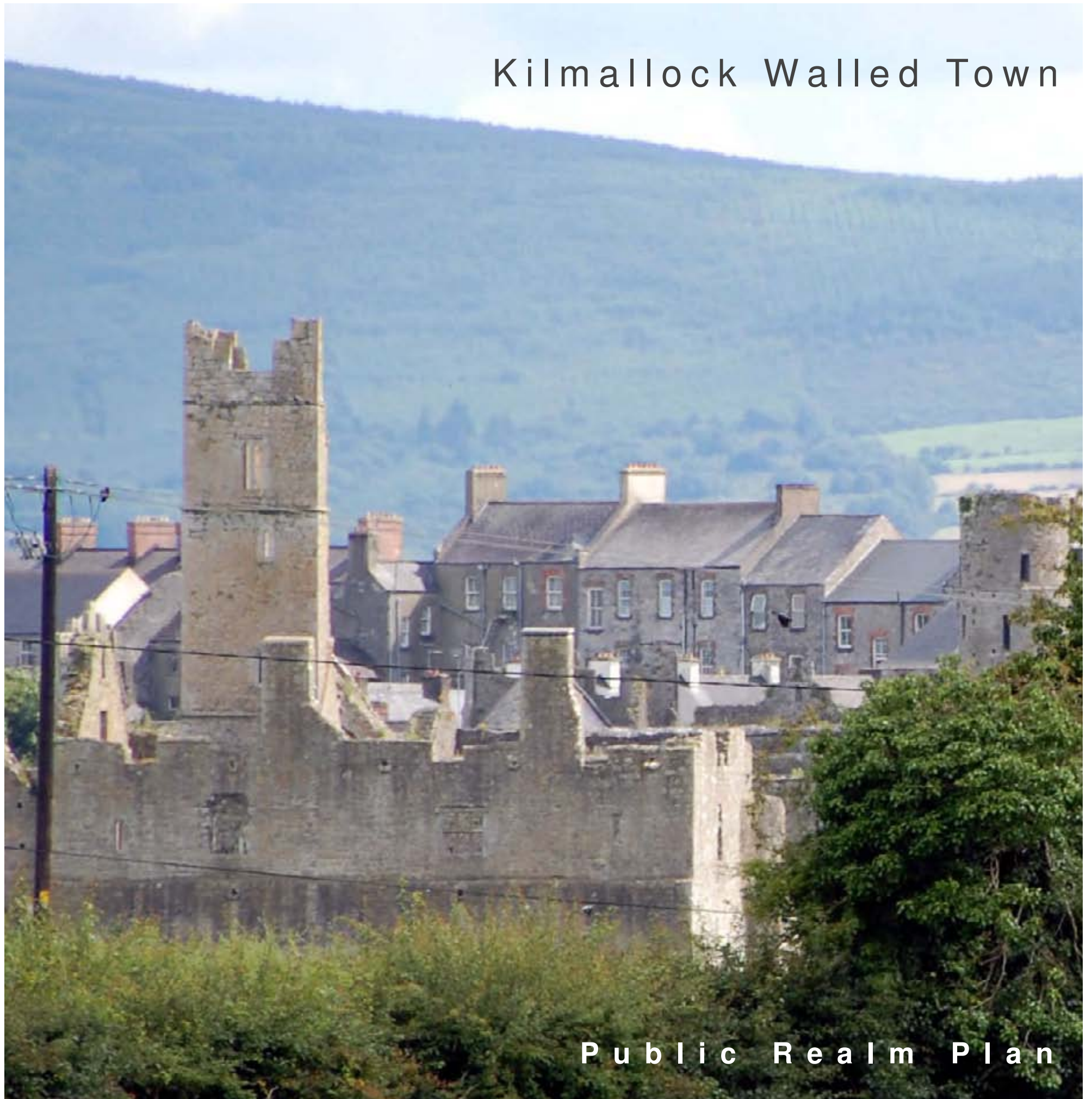


Kilmallock Walled Town



P u b l i c R e a l m P l a n



Kilmallock Walled Town

Public Realm Plan

March 2009



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The Heritage Council



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Appendix: New Development (Plans)





1.1 Purpose of the Public Realm Plan

The main aim of the study is to develop and deliver a plan for the most effective presentation, management and development of Kilmallock's Walled Town. The Plan has been prepared by Limerick County Council with funding from the Irish Walled Towns Network (Heritage Council).

The three strands of the Public Realm Plan as identified in the Brief comprise:

A. The Concept

This is primarily concerned with retaining and reinforcing the Town's sense of place, not only for visitors but also for local residents and businesses. This entails the articulation of a concept for how Kilmallock should best present itself, including consideration of:

- First impressions and the welcome towards the visitor;
- Identity and local distinctiveness as expressed through building materials, local craftsmanship and building morphology;
- Orientation and interpretation (effective signage);
- Legibility and ease of movement;
- Enhancing the sense of place;
- Reinforcing the perception of safety and well-being.

B. The Design Template

The concept is then translated into a template, tool kit or design palette for the development, management and presentation of the public realm. This includes identifying opportunities for public realm improvements and providing a common 'kit of parts' for all those involved with the development

of Kilmallock (both public and private agencies) to ensure consistency, high quality materials and presentation techniques and associated maintenance standards for all materials and products to be used throughout the Town.

C. Specific initiatives and implementation

The third and final stage comprises the identification of specific initiatives, schemes and projects that can be implemented on the ground, with particular emphasis on:

- Signage and visitor orientation (including artworks where appropriate) at strategic locations within and on the approaches to the Town;
- Interpretation facilities and lighting; and
- Outline proposals to improve the appreciation of key public spaces throughout the Town.

1.2 Conservation and Management Plan

The Public Realm Plan has been prepared in tandem with a Kilmallock Town Walls Conservation and Management Plan. This study provides an understanding of the Town Walls and their setting, an assessment of why the Town Walls are significant and how they are vulnerable or sensitive to change now and in the future. The plan also defines policies to protect and manage the Town Walls.

1.3 Process and Content

Both the Public Realm and the Conservation and Management Plans were prepared under the direction of, and following several meetings with, a dedicated Steering Group. A public consultation evening was also held at the People's Hall on 12th September 2007 to introduce the purpose and objectives of the two studies.

Following this introduction, the Public Realm Plan describes the town context by reference to existing local planning documents and the physical character of Kilmallock. Section 3 presents strategic proposals for a number of public realm projects that would benefit the overall presentation and appreciation of the Walled Town. Section 4 provides guidance on procuring a suitable range of materials for use throughout Kilmallock and introduces an urban design policy framework. The appendices provide information on recent planning applications that have influenced its continued development.



Blossom Gate



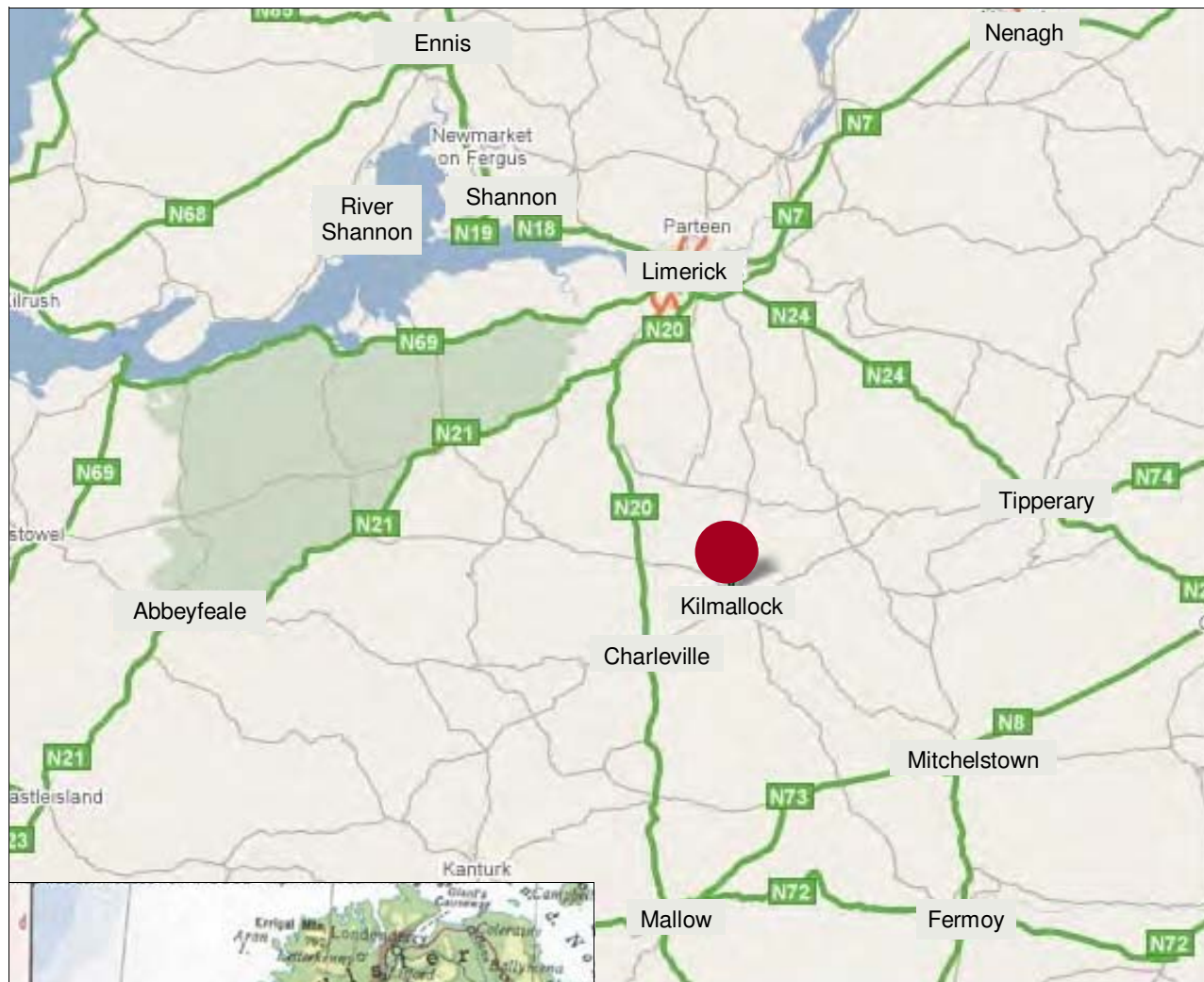
2. TOWN CONTEXT

2.1 Background

Kilmallock is an attractive town of significant cultural and heritage value. It derives its name from a monastery founded there by St. Mocheallog in the early 7th century. Historically, the town was an important centre for religion and trade and it contains many reminders of its past. The historical and archaeological importance of Kilmallock is still evident in many buildings and monuments that have survived to the present day. It is now the fourth largest town in County Limerick with a population of 1,231. The town is set in the valley of the River Loobagh, an area of natural beauty, with the Galtee and Ballyhoura mountain ranges lying to the east and south respectively.

There are large tracts of flat agricultural land to the west. Its geographic location is central to a productive farming district, approximately 40km from the major urban centres of Limerick City and Tipperary Town and in close proximity to the large towns of Charleville and Mallow. Consequently Kilmallock performs essential functions as a market, service and employment centre for the southern part of the county. It is also within commuting distance of most of the urban centres in the mid-west, such as those mentioned above.

Also in close proximity to Kilmallock is Lough Gur, the most important recreational resource in County Limerick and one of Ireland's most important archaeological sites. Lough Gur and Kilmallock form part of the tourism cluster envisaged in the Ballyhoura Strategy for South-East County Limerick (refer to section 2.3).



Locational Context

2. TOWN CONTEXT



Elizabethan map of Kilmallock 1597 (Irish Walled Towns, John Givens)



The Town Walls to the west of the town

2.2 The Kilmallock Local Area Plan 2002

The Local Area Plan (LAP) identified that Kilmallock has the potential to be one of the most interesting and historic small towns in the Mid-West region. It has a number of outstanding architectural monuments and these could be further developed to facilitate a vibrant cultural tourism industry in the town. The LAP stressed the importance of developing a partnership approach in promoting Kilmallock as a tourist town and protecting its medieval heritage:

"It is necessary that the town wall is preserved, repaired, re-instated and afforded a proper setting and access is improved. The primary objective is to stabilise the walls in their existing condition, to prevent further decay and damage and to allow research into long-term permanent improvements."

Policy: Prohibit the construction of a building within 20m of the town wall and any other development within 15m of the wall.

Other specific objectives of the Council were to:

- Improve the signposting to Kilmallock to guide people into the town and to erect signposts within the town, signifying important buildings and walkways.
- Facilitate the development of a walk around the town wall and designate an area extending 15 metres from the wall as open space.
- Utilisation of the powers under the Derelict Sites Act 1990, to remove blight from the town centre.
- Discuss and liaise with Dúchas the possibility of providing public access to the architectural monuments in Kilmallock.

The 2002 LAP is currently under review and the new plan for Kilmallock is expected in March 2009.

2. TOWN CONTEXT

2.3 Ballyhoura Attractions Cluster Development Strategy 2003

Prepared by Ballyhoura Development Ltd., this strategy is aimed at establishing a complementary attractions cluster based on recreation and heritage in this highly regarded rural tourism area. The Ballyhoura Heritage Initiative is intended to secure an authentic rural heritage and cultural experience based on a 'hub and spoke' system. The concept promoted is that Kilmallock should be developed as the interpretative hub of Ballyhoura's heritage product.

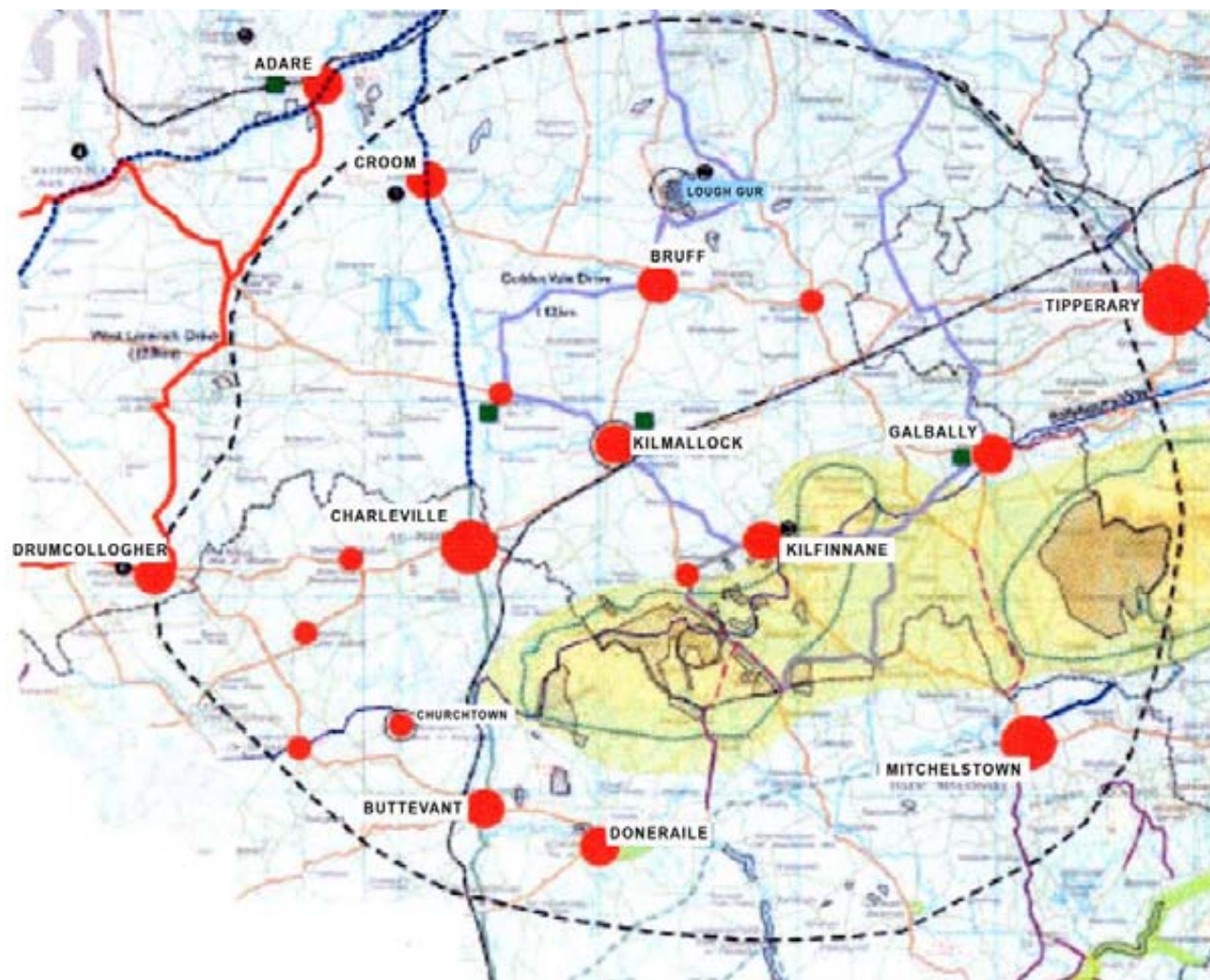
Kilmallock is strategically located in the centre of the region and has a very strong built heritage appeal. Uniquely in the region it is a walled town. Kilmallock is intended to become a tourism hub, situated close to thriving towns and cities which offer a variety of entertainment and cultural alternatives. Associated attractions include the National Tidy Towns award-winning Galbally, the attractive village of Ardpatrick with its traditional association with St. Patrick, and Bruree and its connections with Eamon De Valera, former President of Ireland. At the heart of Ballyhoura Country is Lough Gur.

2.4 Tourism Strategy for the Shannon Region 2008-2010

This Tourism Strategy, prepared by Shannon Development in collaboration with the Shannon Region Tourism Board, aims to stimulate debate about policies and priorities for the tourism sector in the Shannon Region.

The plan for action over the coming years includes a specific objective to develop South East County Limerick (Kilfinnane, Kilmallock, Lough Gur) as a new tourism product cluster of scale. Specific actions under this objective comprise:

- Complete mountain bike trail/activity pursuits at Kilfinnane/Ballyhoura;
- Implement masterplan for the development of Lough Gur as an outdoor archaeological and heritage park of international significance;
- Support urban renewal programme and archaeological conservation projects in Kilmallock.



Ballyhoura Country - General Overview



Lough Gur - recognised as one of the most important archaeological sites in Ireland and one of the most important prehistoric settlements in north-western Europe.

2. TOWN CONTEXT



2.5 Town Approaches

Bruff/Limerick Road

This is an attractive approach with important views to the spire of St. Peter and Paul's Church. It also has a significant glimpsed view of the medieval town core. This approach has numerous trees and good quality vegetation. There are mixed developments of various sizes towards the edge of the town.



Hospital Road

Travelling from Hospital there are impressive views on the approach to the medieval centre across a pastoral riverscape with the town profile as a backdrop.



Tipperary/Knocklong Road

This approach is characterised by high stone walls and old houses in mature gardens. There are important views from the river bridge towards the historic monuments.



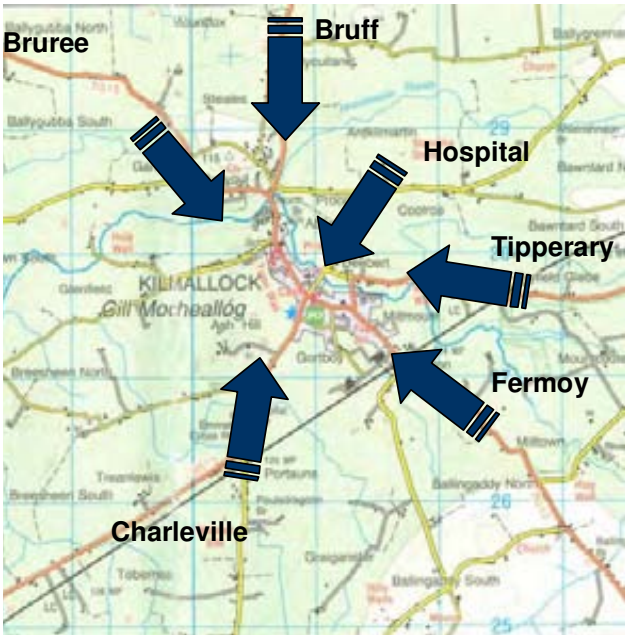
Fermoy Road

The Fermoy road has established residential character with mature gardens. The railway line signifies the entry into the town.



Charleville Road

This approach road leads directly to the Blossom Gate. There is a mix of new developments and older houses, some with mature trees and behind stone walls.



Principal Road Approaches

2. TOWN CONTEXT

2.6 Public Transport

The provision of public transport to and from the town is inadequate and developing future services was seen as a key issue during public consultation for enhancing accessibility to Kilmallock for both residents and visitors.

Rail

Kilmallock is located on the main Cork-Dublin line, and has an existing station to the south of the town, but trains no longer stop. The closest operational station is Charleville (almost 10km away), and Limerick Junction (36km away). The line and station buildings are important sustainable transport assets for the town that should be safeguarded from inappropriate development and every effort made to re-establish the stopping point.

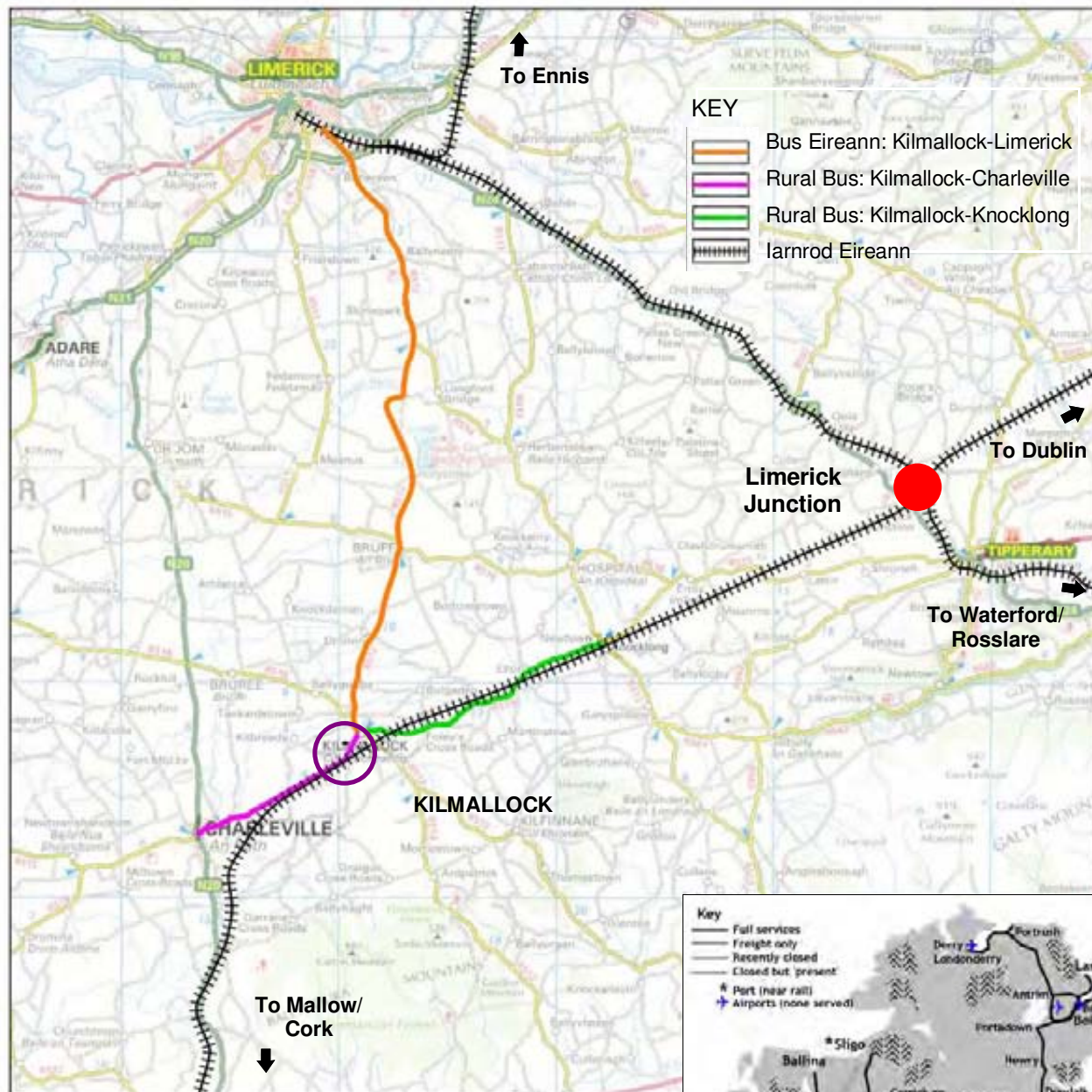
Bus

Presently services are infrequent. There is a weekday Limerick to Kilmallock service departing at 16.15pm and 17.40pm, continuing to Kilfinnane, and a Saturday service leaving Limerick at 15.00pm. From Kilmallock to Limerick there are two weekday services leaving at 07.45am and 12.15pm. The bus stops on Sarsfield Street and the single trip takes approximately 55 minutes.

The County Limerick and North Cork Transport Group Ltd operate a Rural Bus from Kilmallock to Charleville and Knocklong (one service per weekday each way).

It is an objective of the Council (Kilmallock LAP 2002) to:

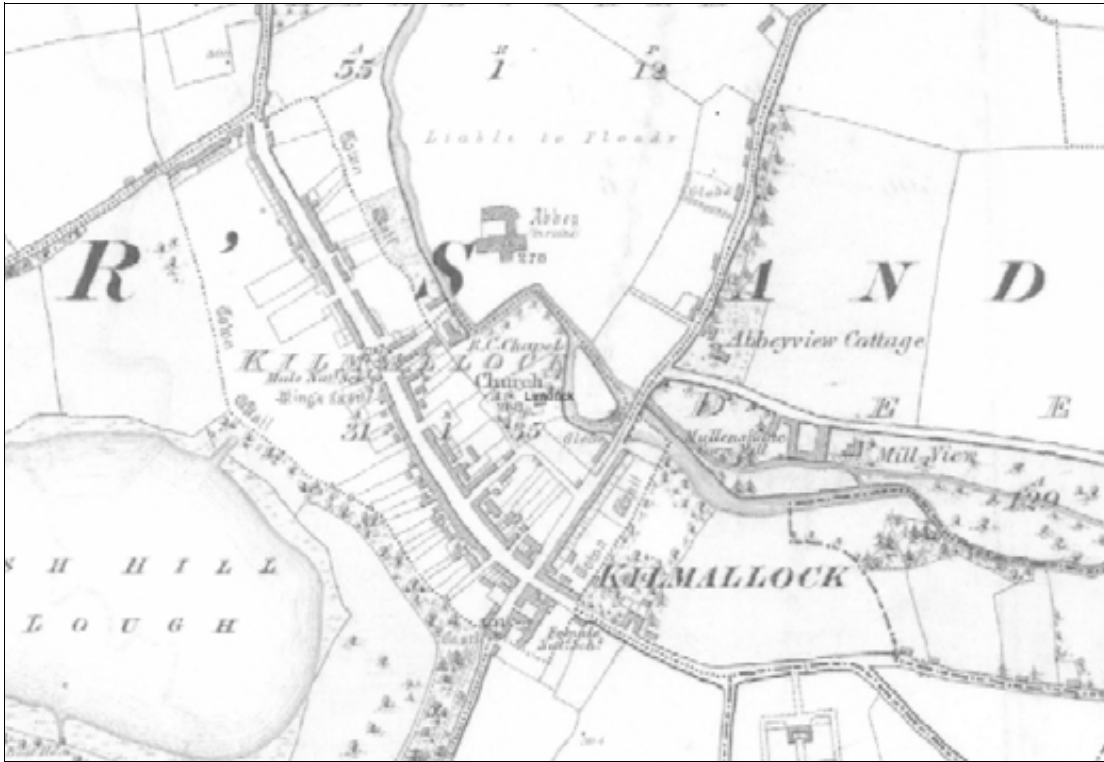
Investigate measures to encourage the extension of public transport. The Council will consult with Bus Eireann on the possibilities of improving regular bus services to the town and with Iarnrod Eireann on the possibility of reopening the rail line to Kilmallock.



Existing Rail and Bus Routes



Existing National Rail Network



OSI Historical Mapping 1829-1841



OSI Historical Mapping 1897-1913

2.7 Townscape Character

The Town Walls of Kilmallock are one of the most striking examples of medieval walls in Ireland. A distinctive sense of history pervades the town and the walls contribute greatly to the character and identity of the place. The centre retains a distinctive medieval street pattern, and many of the early burgage plots survive. Within the Walls there are several important monuments, including Blossom Gate, King’s Castle, the Collegiate Church of SS Peter and Paul, a late medieval stone mansion fronting the main street, as well as the remains of many stone buildings incorporated into the fabric of later structures.

The Walls are a prominent feature of the townscape, due to their near-completeness, their function as property boundaries and their effectiveness in defining the medieval character.

Outside the walls, the Dominican Priory, the Church of Ireland, and Mill complex/farmhouse, as well as several Recorded Monuments and Places, further contribute to the historic interest of the town.

The River Loobagh is a natural resource with considerable potential for amenity purposes. The pastoral riverside setting of the Collegiate Church and Dominican Priory provides a pleasant contrast to the tight urban form of the medieval town.

A former lake (Ash Hill Lough) to the west of the town has been planted with trees which reflect its original boundary.

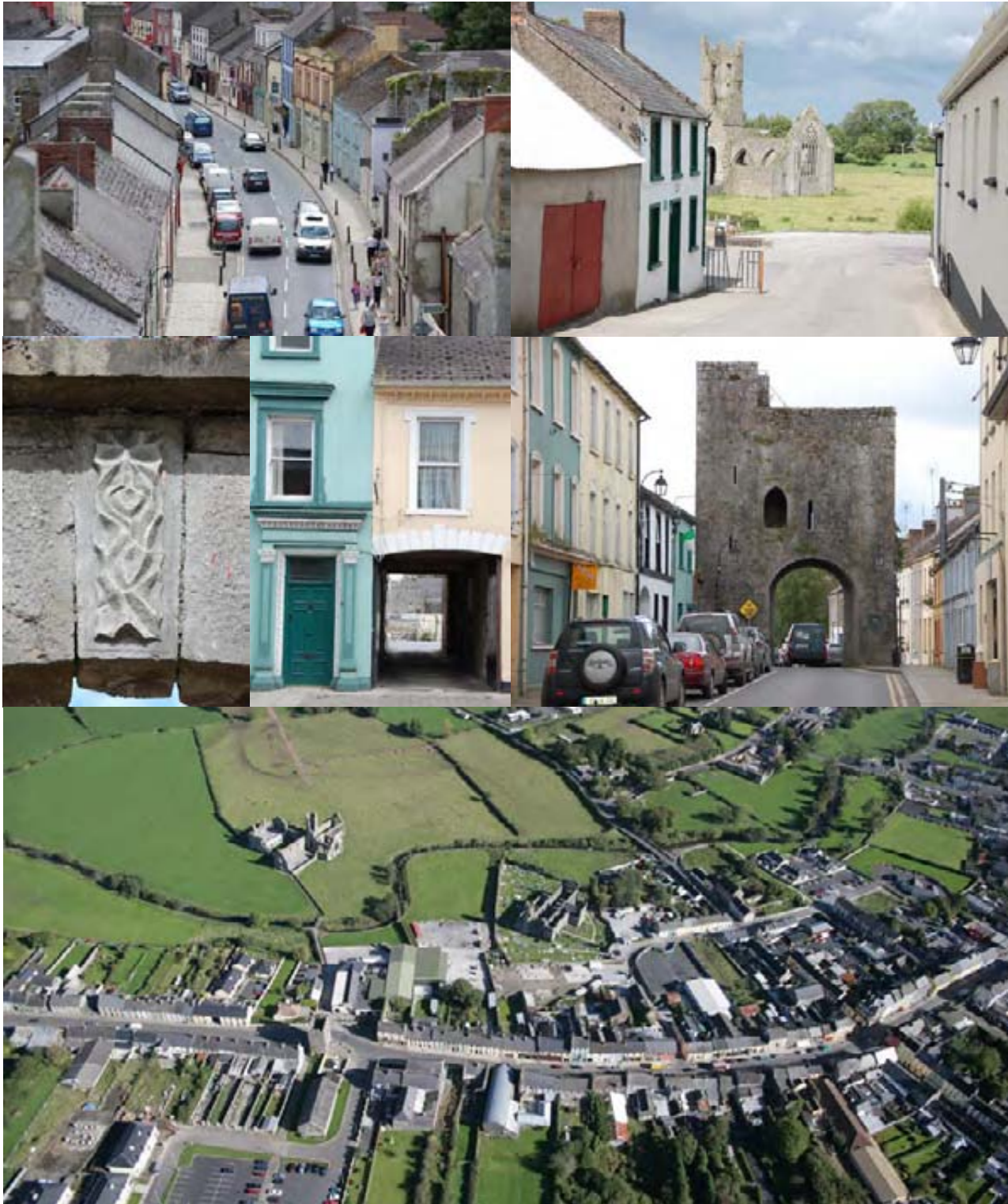
Historic mapping shows that the original form of Kilmallock has changed little since the early 17th century and the town retains its distinctive street pattern defined by buildings from various ages.



View of Town and Landmark Buildings

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Catholic Church | 5. Collegiate Church |
| 2. King's Castle | 6. Blossom Gate |
| 3. Medieval Stone Mansion | 7. Church of Ireland |
| 4. Dominican Friary | 8. Mill complex/farmhouse |

2. TOWN CONTEXT



*Characteristic townscape features (from top left):
Coherent street pattern (Sarsfield Street) - views out to landscape setting and historic monuments (Collegiate Church) -
ornate architectural detailing (key stone and doorway) - glimpsed views through archways - historic monuments as an
integral part of the streetscene (Blossom Gate) - compact urban form with dominant burgage plots.*

Continuous facades of 2 and 3-storey buildings in a variety of styles reinforce the urban pattern, including good quality later buildings, such as the stone terrace on Sheares Street, the AIB Bank, and the terrace by the Post Office.

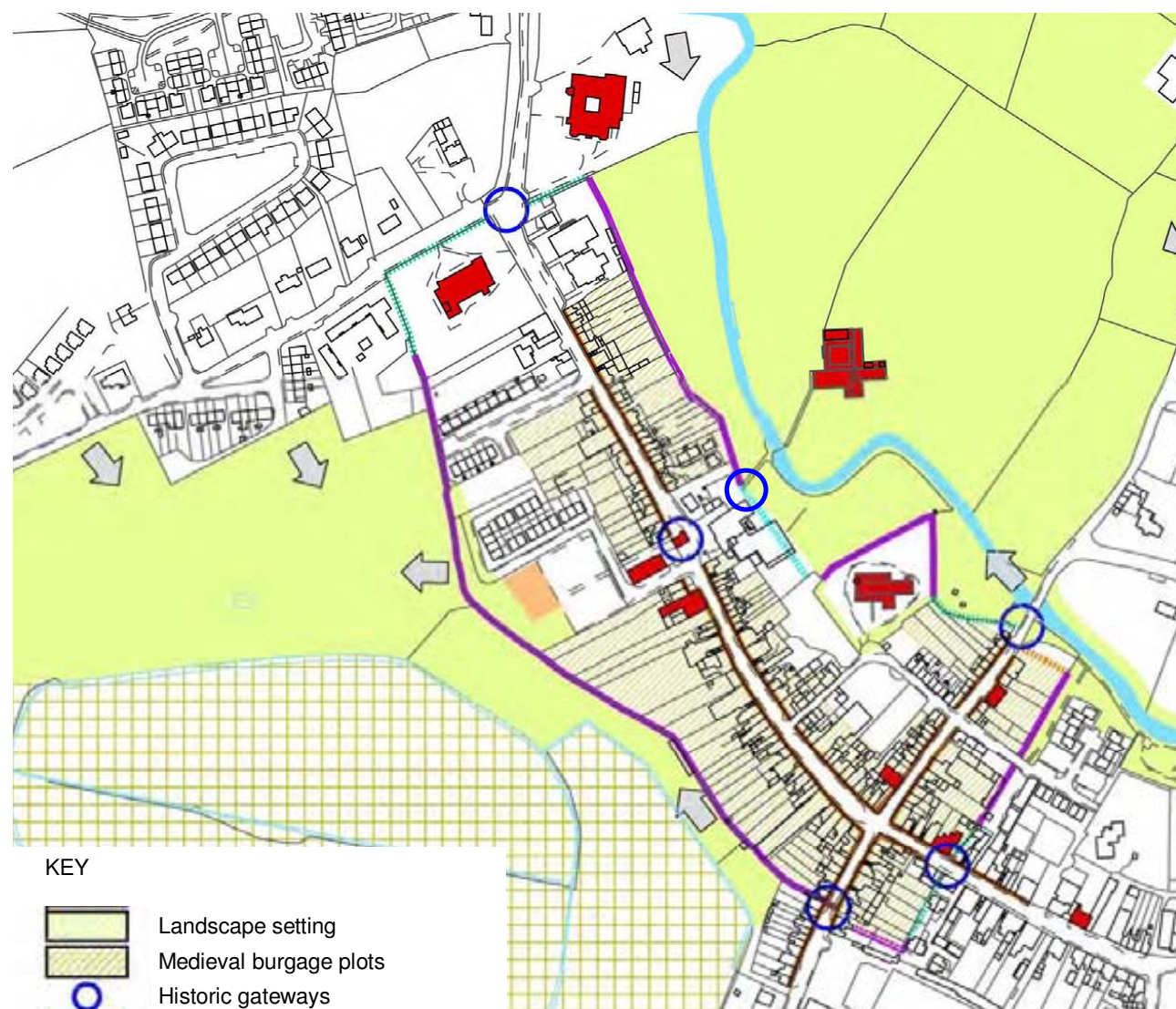
Particularly distinctive townscape elements to retain include:

- Existing streetlines.
- Burgage plot widths.
- Traditional proportions and detailing of windows, doors and shopfronts.
- Variations in building heights.
- Use of traditional materials and building techniques (generally plastered and painted facades; timber windows and doors (recessed) and dark slated roofs.

Recent townscape improvements have considerably contributed to the general appearance of the town and its public realm (including paved footpaths with limestone kerbs, under-grounding of services, new street lighting and road signs, as part of UVR Programme 1996 (with works implemented in 1999/2000).

The present tourist office is located at the Friar's Gate Theatre, which also stages productions throughout the year and functions as an exhibition centre. A medieval festival was held for the first time in Kilmallock in 2006, featuring concerts, battle re-enactments and a street market, and is intended to become an annual event.

2. TOWN CONTEXT



Townscape Appraisal Plan



Walled area: 13 hectares
Circuit perimeter: 1,700 metres

Walled Town Features
(from 'Irish Walled Towns', John Givens)



2.8 Record of Protected Structures



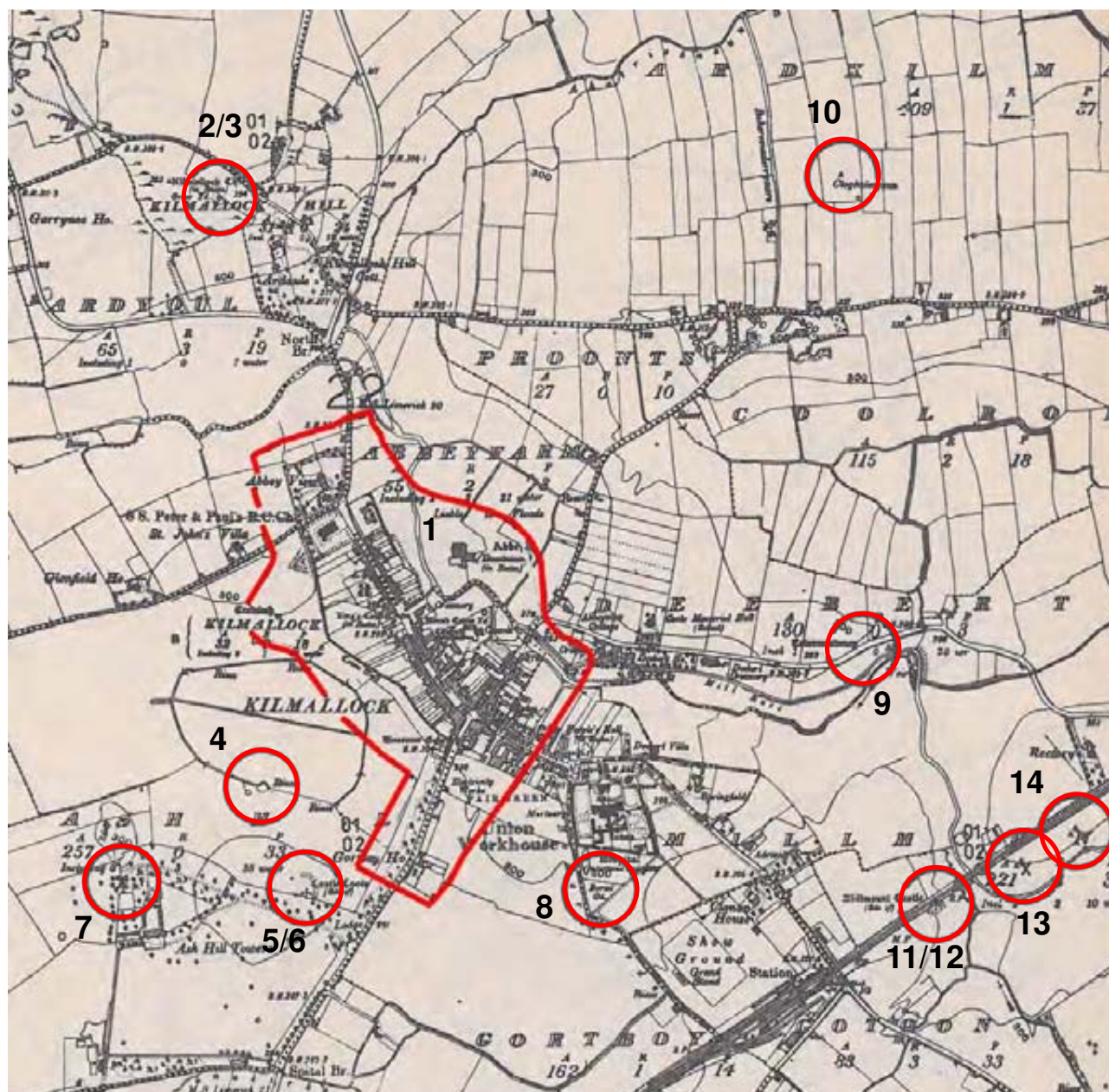
Location of Protected Structures

- 1. Presbytery, Kilmallock - KMK(27)
- 2. Convent, Abbeyfarm - M(15)
- 3. Church (Catholic) - M13
- 4. 2 Bay House, Sheare's Street - KMK(28)
- 5. 2 Bay House, Sheare's Street - KMK(29)
- 6. Dominican Friary, Abbeyfarm - M(25)
- 7. 2 Bay House, Sheare's Street - KMK(30)
- 8. 3 Bay House, Sheare's Street - KMK(32)
- 9. King's Castle - M(30)
- 10. Stone Mansion, Sarsfield Street - M36
- 11. Shops, Kilmallock - M(32A) M(32B)
- 12. Cinema, Kilmallock - M(28A)
- 13. MJ Feore Shop, Kilmallock, - KMK(34)
- 14. Stucco Fronted House, Sarsfield Street - KMK(35)
- 15. Collegiate Church - Kilmallock M(38)
- 16. Bridge, Kilmallock - M/H(39) (vi)
- 17. Terraced Cottages - Kilmallock M(39 i-v)
- 18. Medieval House
- 19. Giftline, Kilmallock - M(43)
- 20. McAuliffe's Public House, Sarsfield Street - KMK(38)
- 21. Unidentified
- 22. Warehouse, Wolfe Tone Street - KMK(42)
- 23. 2 Bay 2 Storey House, Wolfe Tone Street - KMK(40)
- 24. 3 Bay 2 Storey House, Wolfe Tone Street - KMK(39)
- 25. Fraser, Kilmallock - M(29)
- 26. Lee's Law Office, Lord Edward Street - KMK(44)
- 27. Blossom's Gate, Kilmallock - M(31)
- 28. Bank, Kilmallock - M(26)
- 29. Gate, Kilmallock - M(37)
- 30. O'Cearbhaill, Kilmallock - M(40)
- 31. Terraced 3 Storey, Kilmallock - M(41 i-v)
- 32. Dwelling, Gortboy - M(47)
- 33. Former Commercial Premises, Lord Edward Street - KMK(47)
- 34. Mill Complex, Coolroe - M(34)
- 35. Church of Ireland, Kilmallock - M(22)
- 36. FCA Company Headquarters, Kilmallock - KMK(43)
- 37. Former Commercial Premises, Lord Edward Street - KMK(48)
- 38. People's Hall, Millmount - M(17)
- 39. Council Area Office / Courthouse - KMK(50)
- 40. Former Parochial House, Kilmallock - KMK(52)
- 41. Former Laundry House of the Workhouse, Kilmallock - KMK(51)
- 42. 2 Storey Late Victorian. Edwardian Style House, Ardpatrick Road -KMK(54)
- 43. Clonan House, Ardpatrick Road - KMK(57)
- 44. 2 Storey Arts and Crafts House, Ardpatrick Road KMK (55)
- 45. O'Sullivan, Kilmallock - M(42)
- 46. Railway Station, Gortboy M(1)
- 47. Town Wall, Kilmallock - M(60)

2. TOWN CONTEXT

2.9 Recorded Monuments and Places

1. Historic Town (LI047-022) Kilmallock
2. Church (LI047-019001), Kilmallock Hill
3. Graveyard (LI047-019002), Kilmallock Hill
4. Enclosure (LI047-020), Ash Hill
5. Enclosure (LI047-021001), Ash Hill
6. Castle (LI047-021002), Ash Hill
7. Earthworks, (LI047-018), Ash Hill
8. Burial Ground (LI047-23), Millmount
9. Holy Well (LI047-24), Deebert
10. Standing Stone (LI047-025), Ardkillmartin
11. Enclosure (LI047-026001), Gotoon
12. Castle (LI047-026002), Gotoon
13. Enclosure (LI047-027), Millmount
14. Enclosure (LI047-028), Millmount



Location of Recorded Monuments and Places



Painting of Main Street, Kilmallock, by John George Mulvany (early 1800s)
As reproduced in 'Irish Walled Towns', John Givens,
©The Heritage Council (2008)



2.10 Recent Planning Applications

During the past five years Kilmallock has seen a considerable amount of development both within the town walls and the immediate surroundings.

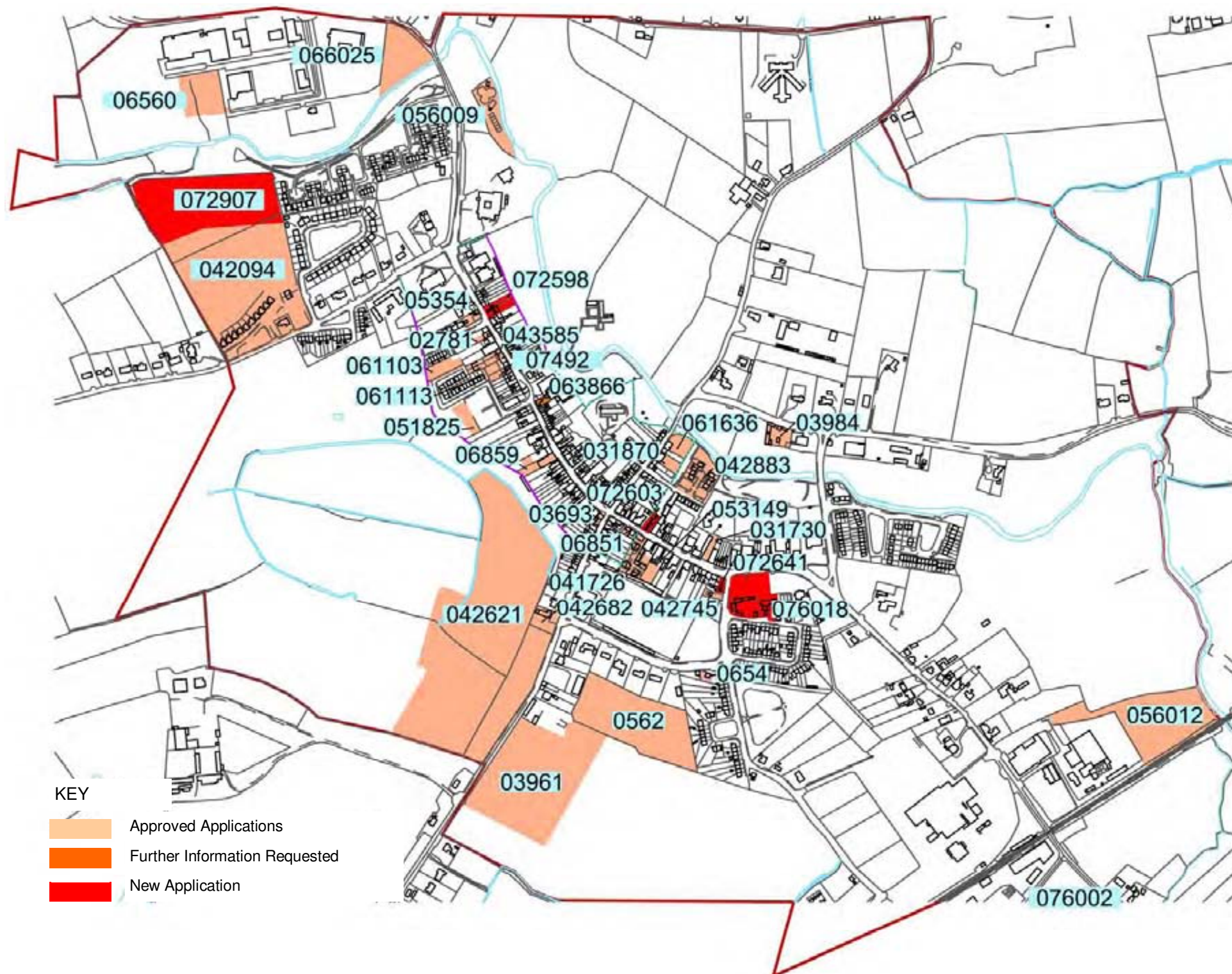
Substantial new developments have been granted for housing at Glenfield to the north and at Ash Hill and Gortboy to the south of the town, and for a hotel at the Mill Complex, Deebert. Within the town centre, smaller infill developments include retail units and apartments in Sarsfield Street, Lord Edward Street and Wolfe Tone Street, and town houses in Wolfe Tone Street, Sheare’s Street and Castle Court.

The most noteworthy recent development for Kilmallock is the Courthouse works in Railway Road, consisting of a new civic precinct of public buildings, a new regional library and Local Area Office (see 3.1).

In addition to the planning approvals, a number of schemes (4-5) have been refused due to likely adverse impact on the setting of the town wall, and/or contravention of Council policy to prohibit the construction of a building within 20m of the town wall and any other development within 15m of the wall.

The over-riding approach to future development in Kilmallock town centre, and especially within the town walls, will wherever possible be one of retention, restoration, consolidation and improvement of the existing building and townscape fabric, in a manner which respects its special character. It is generally recognised that the best method of conserving historic buildings is to keep them in active use (see 4.4 Policy Recommendations).

Ref #	Address	Brief Description	Status
02781	Sheare’s Street	1 dwelling house	Approved
03693	Sarsfield Street	1 retail unit, 3 apartments	Approved
03961	Gortboy	65 dwelling houses & crèche	Approved
03984	The Mill Complex, Deebert	Hotel	Approved
031730	Lord Edward Street	2 apartments and 1 retail unit	Approved
031870	Wolfe Tone Street	9 apartments	Approved
041726	Lord Edward Street	6 houses, 1 duplex, 4 terraced houses, offices.	Approved
042094	Glenfield	74 houses & 16 apartments & crèche	Approved
042621	Ash Hill	137 houses, 1 shop, 1 crèche, 3 overhead apartments, 15 serviced sites	Approved
042745	Gortboy	9 apartments	Approved
042883	Wolfe Tone Street	6 town houses	Approved
0562	Gortboy	All weather play area	Approved
05354	Sheare’s Street	3 dwelling houses	Approved
051825	Sarsfield Street	Playground	Approved
053149	Lord Edward Street	4 detached houses	Approved
053585	Castle Court	2 dwelling houses	Approved
056009	Abbeyfarm	Wastewater treatment upgrade (Part 8)	Approved
056012	Gotoon	Office, store & workshop (Part 8)	Approved
0654	Gortboy	Dwelling house	Approved
06560	Industrial Estate	Factory	Approved
06859	Sarsfield Street	4 apartments, office, store, toilets, parking	Approved
06851	Lord Edward Street	1 apartment, 1 retail unit	
061103	Castle Court	6 Dwelling houses	Approved
061113	Castle Court	2 dwelling houses	Approved
061636	Wolfe Tone Street	6 dwelling units	Approved
062608	Glenfield	Pumping station	Approved
062682	Ash Hill	Dwelling house	Approved
063866	Sarsfield Street	1 commercial, 3 apartments	Further Information
07492	Castle Court	2 Dwelling houses	Approved
072598	Sheare’s Street	2 dwelling houses	New Application
072603	Lord Edward Street	2 apartments, 3 duplexes, 3 three storey dwellings	Approved
072641	Lord Edward Street	5 apartments	New Application
072907	Glenfield	63 dwelling houses	New Application
076018	Railway Road	Courthouse works (Part 8)	New Application



Note: For copies of Application Plans refer Appendix

Location of Recent Planning Applications

2. TOWN CONTEXT

2.11 Townscape Issues and Opportunities

The main issues and opportunities arising from the public consultation and town appraisal exercises can be summarised as follows (according to theme):

Built Form

- Kilmallock's unique historical and architectural heritage is not immediately apparent on first impressions.
- Many traditional buildings have been inappropriately altered.
- There are some insensitive recent developments that detract from the historic character of the town.
- The removal of traditional building elements (e.g. windows and doors) and replacement with modern artificial materials, cumulatively detracts from the historic integrity.
- The Medieval Mansion on Sarsfield Street needs to be sensitively renovated and put to a positive use (such as a multi-purpose community or arts facility).
- King's Castle interior needs to be sensitively improved, with the possibility of supervised public access).
- The stone building beside King's Castle (car valeting centre) could be adapted to accommodate a heritage type use (e.g. Town Interpretation Centre and Museum).
- The 18th century building on Wolfe Tone Street could be sensitively renovated to provide accommodation for new uses (e.g. cultural and/or residential).
- Appropriate infill development to backlands on the south side of Orr Street would improve the townscape character and the approach to the Collegiate Church.
- The preparation of design briefs would help ensure the appropriate development of backlands to the rear of the main streets.



2. TOWN CONTEXT



- All new development applications need to be carefully monitored to ensure that they contribute positively to the heritage character of the town.

Natural Environment

- The simple and natural qualities of the riverside landscape need to be protected.
- Vistas of open countryside, particularly from the Hospital approach and Wolfe Tone Street Bridge and westwards from the open space below Sheares Avenue, should be maintained and enhanced where necessary.
- The long distance view from the Bruff approach to the town should be further exploited (e.g. lay-by and information panel).
- Although a good riverside park has been created south of the bridge, much of the northern River Loobagh landscape remains inaccessible.

Town Walls

- The Town Walls are in poor condition and have been breached in a number of locations.
- As part of the conservation process, the Walls should be made more accessible to the public.
- The section of wall to the rear of the Sarsfield Street car park would benefit from improved interpretation.
- Rural views outwards from this location need to be protected.

Access and Circulation

- Public transport to and from the town is inadequate.
- There is no direct pedestrian linkage between the monuments and the northern riverside.
- Pedestrian movement around the outer edges of the town is poor.

- There is a general perception that car parking is not adequate, and that there is not enough on-street parking.
- Presently the off-street car parks can be under-utilised (Courthouse, Wolfe Tone Street and behind King's Castle).
- Recent adoption of parking byelaws (and appointment of traffic warden) has helped to reduce congestion.
- Parking on both sides of the streets, and occasional double-parking, can result in congestion and safety issues.

Visitor Provision

- Visitor facilities are generally poor.
- The local museum is not in the most appropriate setting and needs up-dating.
- The existing visitor information point by King's Castle would benefit from improvement.

Public Realm

- A continuous Walled Town walk along the outer edge of the west walls should be developed, together with associated public open space improvements.
- The presentation of the Collegiate Church and the Dominican Abbey needs to be substantially improved, with better access from King's Castle in particular.
- Public access to the northern part of the river should be improved.
- The existing historical town walks should be safeguarded and enhanced.
- A long distance walkway along the river and around the town would greatly contribute to the appreciation of its heritage and landscape qualities.
- Signage within the town centre, and on the approaches to Kilmallock, should be improved.

2. TOWN CONTEXT

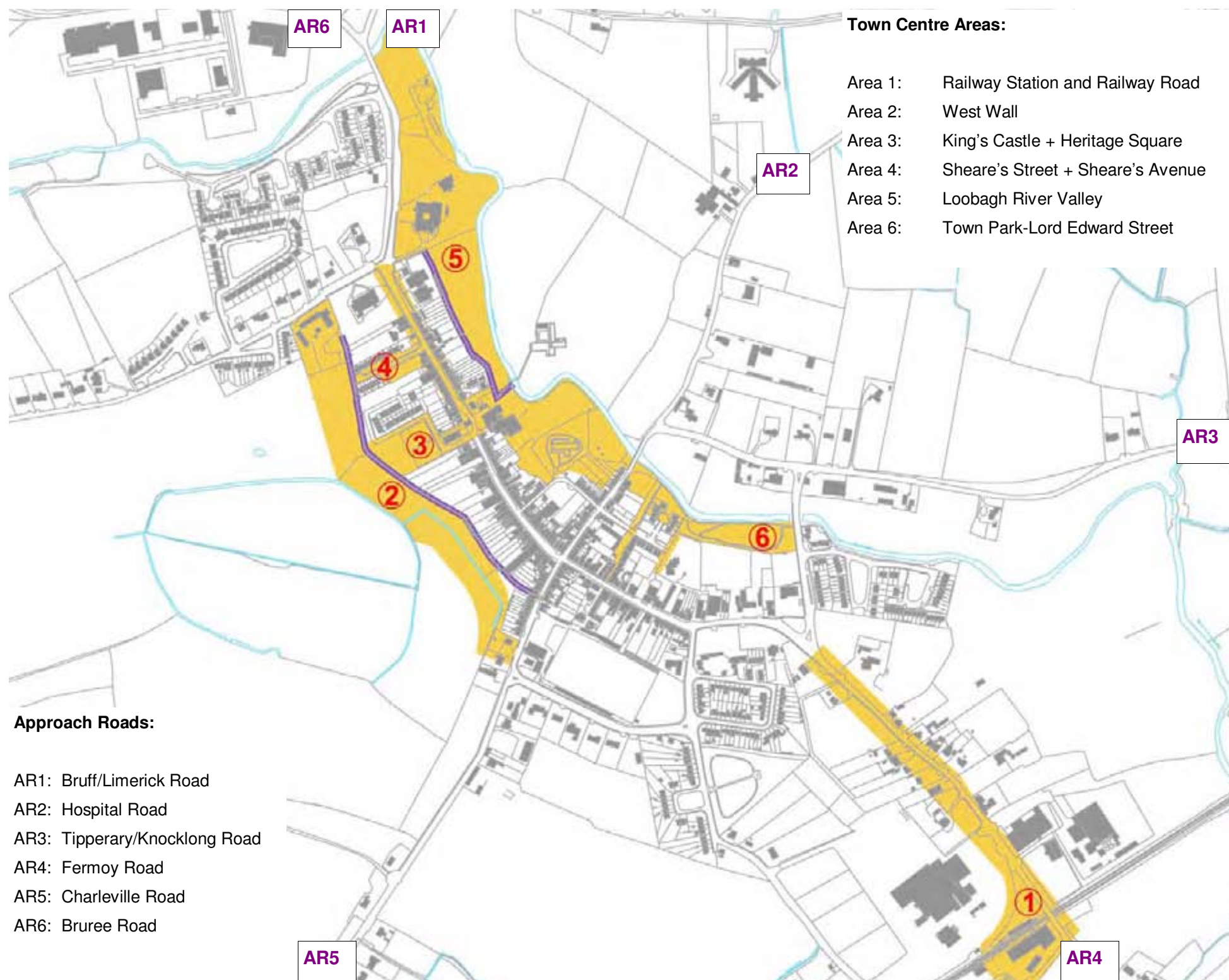
- The north and south entrances have no arrival feature or gateway and would greatly benefit from an intervention to enhance the arrival experience.
- Additional streetscape improvements would contribute to the substantial works already successfully completed.
- Future improvements should include under-grounding of remaining services and relocation or screening of intrusive utility equipment.
- Most of the business premises were well presented. Several shop frontages were admired. However, a few commercial properties need attention (five of these stand out together on the entrance to the town).
- The entrance gates to Golden Vale Marts badly need painting.
- The concrete fencing at the Paul & Vincent site needs to be replaced or repaired.
- The heaps of fertiliser bags at the Kerry Group might be moved back from the frontage, or screened.
- The Keltec site also suffers from open storage along the roadside, detracting from the amenity of the area.
- Sections of the high stone wall to the rear of both Sheares Avenue and Castlecourt would benefit from improved access.
- The Riverside Park is a prominent feature, however, the timber name board is starting to rot and the bollards at the pedestrian entrance from Wolfe Tone Street need painting.
- The River Loobagh provides a broad range of habitats and this potential could be extended by judicious planting of more native trees, especially oak – the Riverside Park might be a good starting point and the grounds of Colaiste Iosaef would draw in the pupils there.
- Part of the river bank is being undermined by erosion, and the remedial work already undertaken needs to be extended.
- The extensive presence of Giant Hogweed beside the river, if confirmed, needs to be addressed.
- The residential areas are mostly well presented, but the Cois Abhainn estate is suffering from the erosion of green areas (scarred by vehicles).
- Cars are also creating problems at Millmount estate (it is becoming congested and cluttered).
- Most of the road notices and direction signs in the town appear in good condition, although there are some problems with road surfaces and parking areas which might be examined more closely.

Tidy Towns

‘The Adjudication Report of the Tidy Towns Competition’ (2007) identified a number of issues that should be addressed to further improve the appearance and presentation of the town, including:



3.0 Strategy Project Areas



Strategy Proposals Plan

3.1 Area 1: Railway Station and Railway Road

Key Proposals

Railway Station

- Pursue provision of stopping service for Charleville-Limerick Junction trains.
- Reinstate platforms.
- Refurbish station buildings and footbridge.
- Form car parking area + 'Park-and-Ride' facility.
- Information signage.
- Directional signage at junction with Fermoy Road.
- Forecourt and approach improvements, including re-surfacing, lighting and landscaping.
- Boundary improvements and tree screening to adjoining industrial uses.

Railway Road

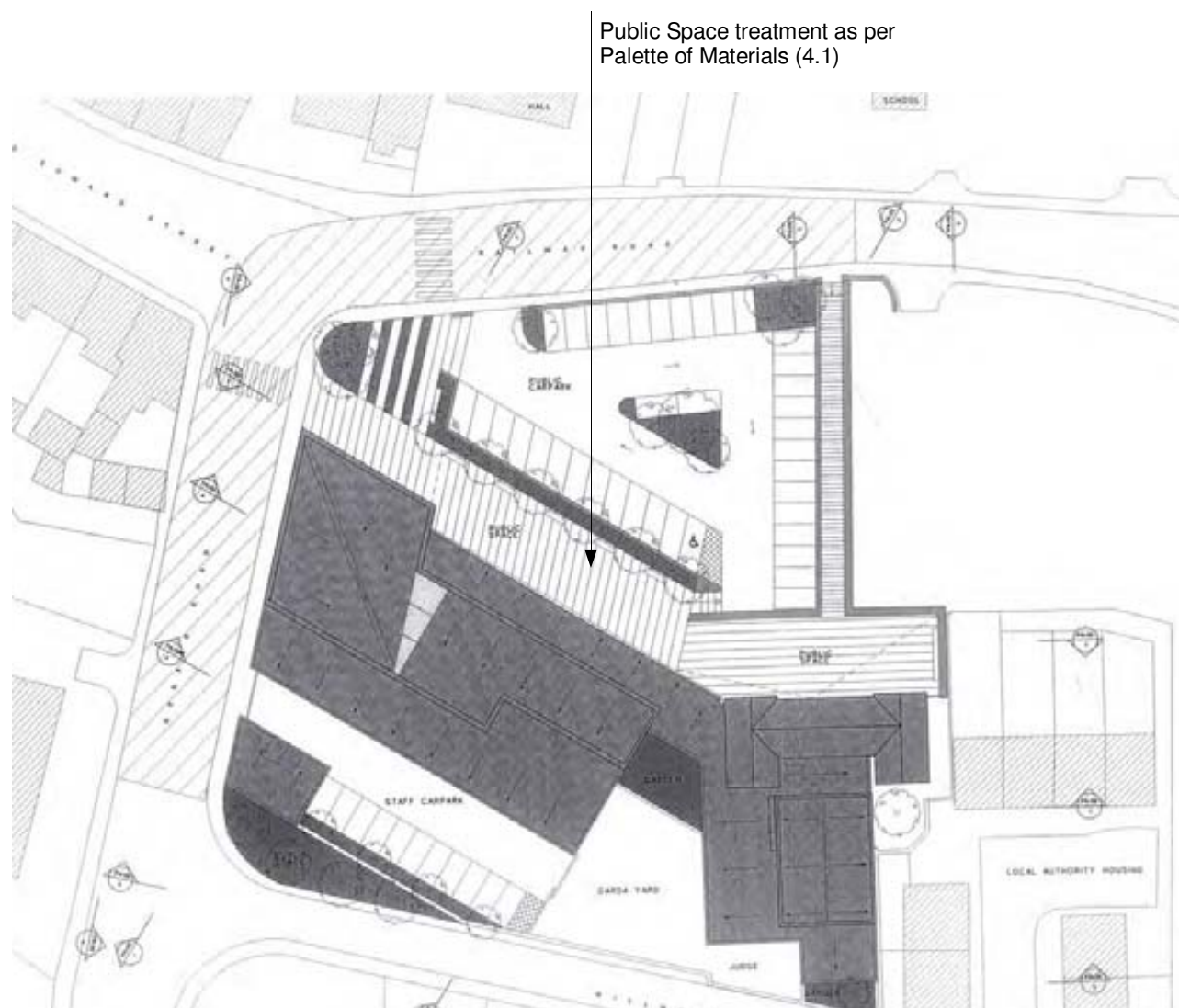
- Widen and re-surface western footpath.
- Improve street lighting.
- Under-ground utility cables.
- Explore pedestrian link to Outer Route Trail (refer Section 3.10).
- Consider street tree planting (e.g. in private front gardens).
- Public realm works associated with new Court House (see over).



Key Proposals Plan



Railway Station as Existing



Building Plan

Kilmallock Area Office, Library and Courts Services

The project proposes to form a new civic precinct of public buildings located on the southern portion of the site. The new regional library and Local Area Office are set out so as to extend the building line of Lord Edward Street. This will reinforce the vista along Lord Edward Street to the existing workhouse building.

A linear, tree-lined public space is proposed along the front of the civic buildings. This will form a new public route linking the town to the civic buildings with all entrances being located off this public space. The lower car park is for use by both the public and the occupants and users of the new buildings.

To the rear of the site, it is proposed to realign the site boundary along Millmount to form a new public pavement to the northern side of the street. This will allow for the safe crossing of pedestrians. It is also proposed to form a new generous public green area at the corner of Millmount and Gerard Road.



Kilmallock Area Office artists impression

3. STRATEGY PROPOSALS

3.2 Area 2: West Wall

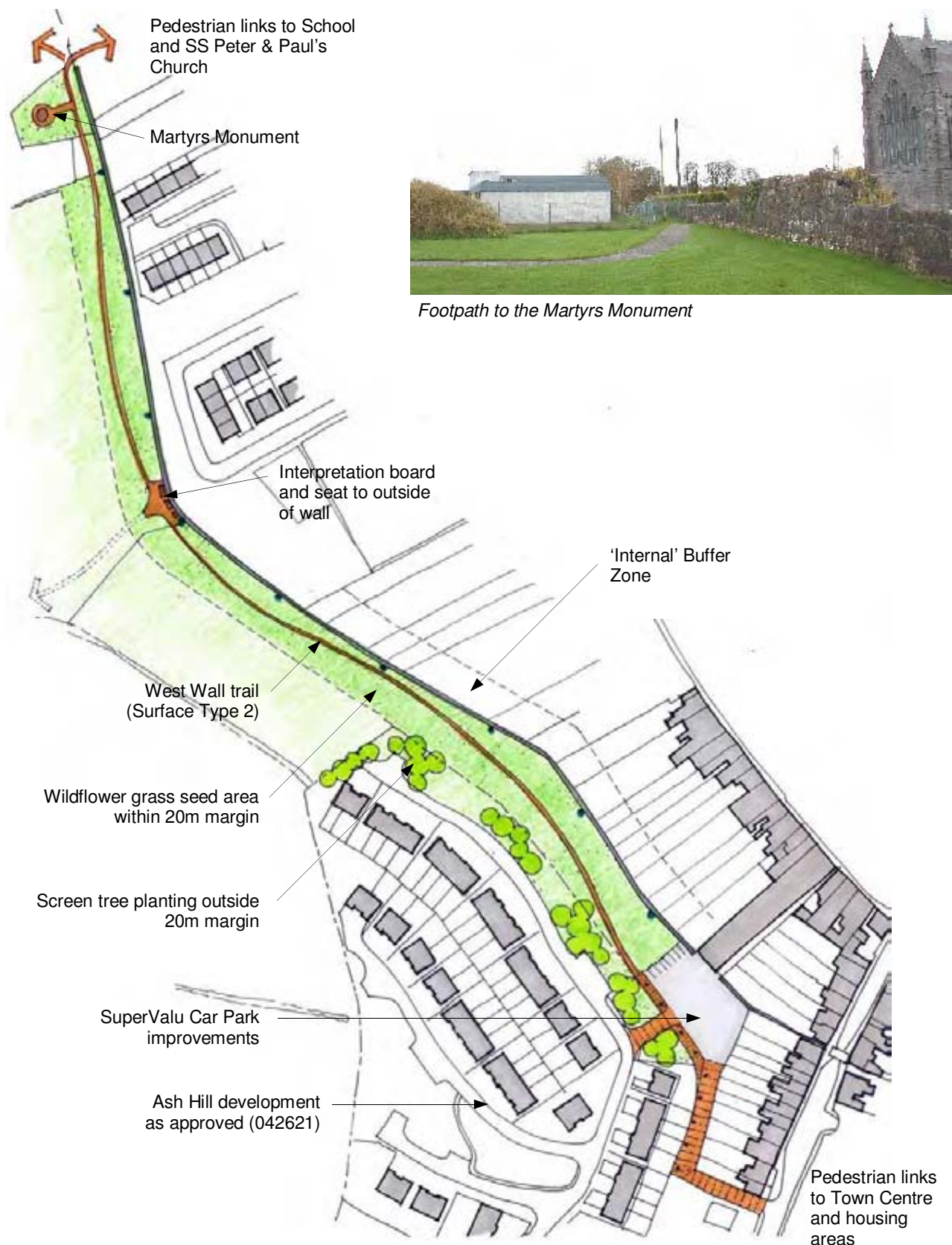
Key Proposals

West Wall Trail

- Pursue acquisition of the exterior open space margin in order to secure the visual integrity of the wall and associated environmental improvements.
- Carry out essential repairs to Wall, as per Conservation and Management Plan recommendations.
- Removal of scrub vegetation from base of wall, cultivate and re-seed (wildflower mix) 20m wide open space buffer.
- Create surfaced footpath avoiding the line of the ditch - Surface Type 2 (4.2).
- Appropriate lighting to footpath.
- Subtle floodlighting to external face of wall at regular intervals.
- Informal seating area with interpretation board on interior side of wall in vicinity of existing play area.
- Wall trail continued along west boundary as far as Martyrs Monument, with access paths to school and SS Peter & Paul Church.

SuperValu Car Park

- Pursue improved rear building elevation, storage and delivery facilities.
- Form shared surface to access road, Surface Type 1 (4.2), with directional signage at Emmet Street entry and suitable lighting marking pedestrian route.
- Form defined pedestrian route through car park, with links to Ash Hill development.
- Provide interpretation board and directional signage at start of West Walls trail.
- Pursue high quality landscape screening to interface with Ash Hill development.
- Columnar tree screen to school boundary.
- Under-grounding of utility cables.



Key Proposals Plan



West Wall as existing



West Wall Trail as proposed

West Wall Trail

Main Features:

1. Essential wall repairs as per Conservation and Management Plan recommendations.
2. Cultivation and re-seeding (wildflower mix) of amenity buffer space.
3. 2m wide surfaced footpath - Type 2 (4.2).
4. Subtle floodlighting to wall.

3. STRATEGY PROPOSALS

3.3 Area 3: King's Castle and Heritage Square

New Heritage Square:

1. Car Valet building acquisition and improvements for proposed Option B Heritage Centre.
2. Creation of new public square with relocated Fenian Monument as focus, high quality surfacing - Type 3 (4.2), street lighting, formal seating and interpretation board.
3. Improved public access to King's Castle.
4. Traffic calming (raised table and textured surfacing) to roadway.



King's Castle as existing

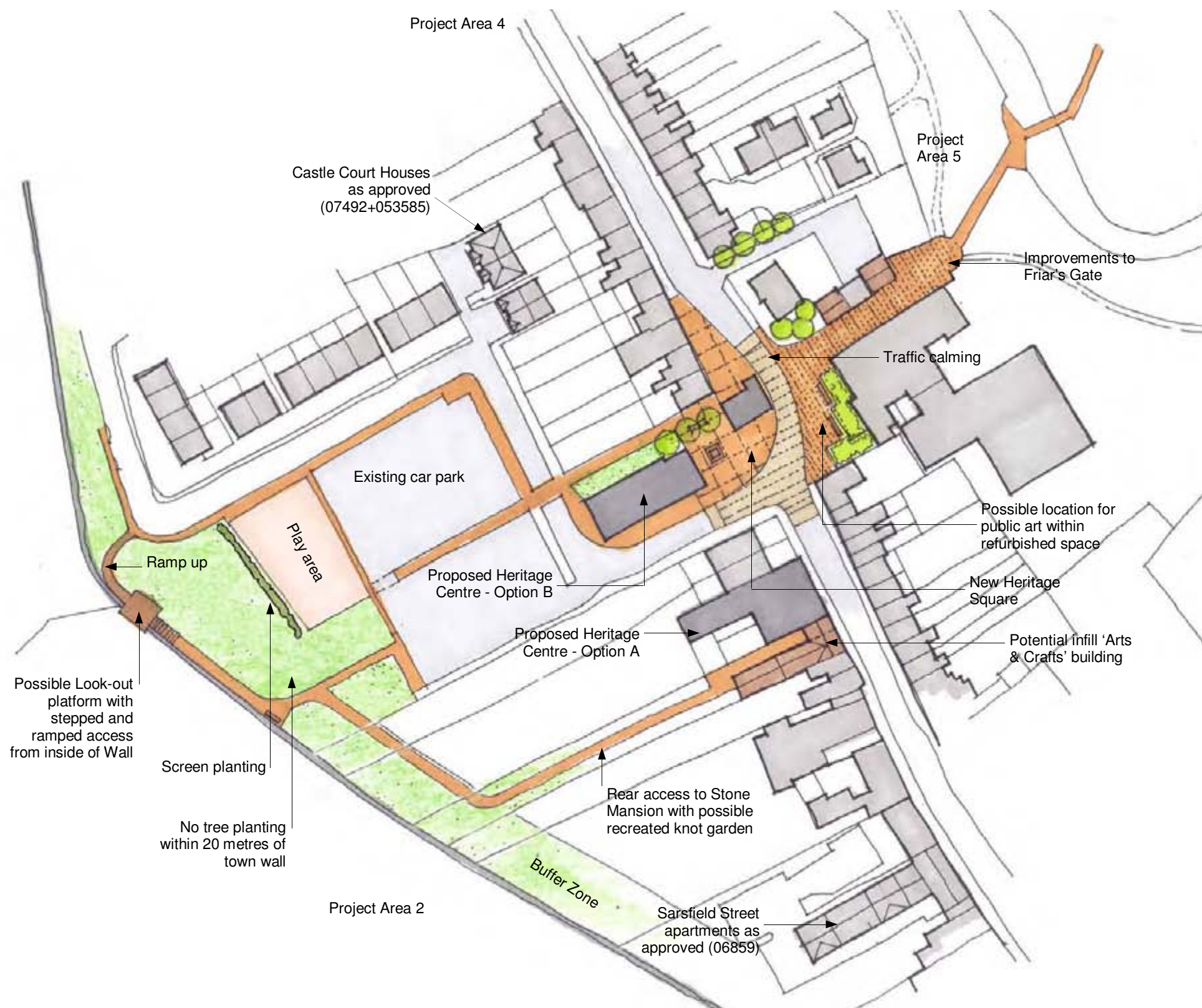


Heritage Square as proposed

Key Proposals

- Improved visitor access to King's Castle.
- Development of new Regional Heritage Centre:
 - Option A - to rear of the medieval stone mansion. In later building.
 - Option B - acquisition of Car Valet building, immediately beside King's Castle.
- Relocation of Ballyhoura Information Hub/ Information Centre to proposed new Heritage Centre.
- Rear access to Stone Mansion with possible recreated Knot Garden.
- New Heritage Square.
- Relocation of Fenian Monument as focal point to new square.
- Refurbishment of existing corner space with new raised planting beds and public art feature.
- Textured road surface around Castle as traffic calming measure.
- Potential redevelopment site for 'Arts & Crafts' adjoining Stone Mansion, with archway pedestrian access from Sarsfield Street and rear access maintained from Buffer Zone.
- Improvements to Site of Friar's Gate.
- Essential repairs to Wall as per Conservation and Management Plan recommendations.
- Possible look-out platform with stepped and ramped access from inside of Wall.
- Existing grass area beside Wall re-cultivated and seeded.
- Screen planting to existing play area.

3.3 Area 3: King's Castle and Heritage Square



Key Proposals Plan

3.4 Area 3: Options for new Regional Heritage Centre

OPTION A

Key Features

- Heritage Centre located within an ancillary structure to the rear of the Stone Mansion.
- Approximate available area is 250sq.m.
- Principal historic part of the Stone Mansion retained for appropriate undetermined use.
- Access from Sarsfield Street via passageway, or eventually from rear yard area.

Advantages

- Building in public ownership (National Monuments Service DEHLG).
- Associated with key historic building.

Disadvantages

- No immediate presence within the town.
- Substantial refurbishment required for three connected structures with variable roof heights.
- Indirect pedestrian access from public car park.
- Would not help facilitate creation of new town square.



OPTION B

Key Features

- Heritage Centre located within the acquired Car Valet building.
- Approximate available area is 280sq.m.
- Access from Sarsfield Street and public car park.

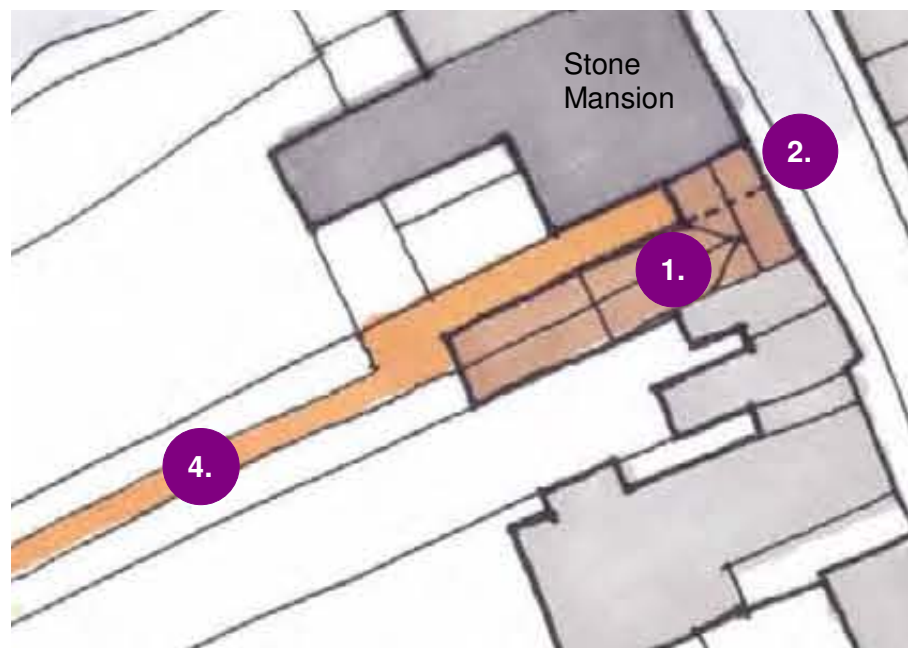
Advantages

- Immediate presence within the town.
- More appropriate use for potentially interesting building.
- Single large space capable of accommodating variety of interpretation media.
- Adjoined to key historic building (King's Castle).
- Would help facilitate delivery of new public square.
- Direct, convenient and safe pedestrian access.
- Immediately adjacent to public car park, providing direct access for visitors.

Disadvantages

- Building in private ownership (acquisition necessary).
- Some refurbishment required, including removal of frontage addition.

3.5 Area 3: Possible infill development next to Stone Mansion



Infill development plan as proposed



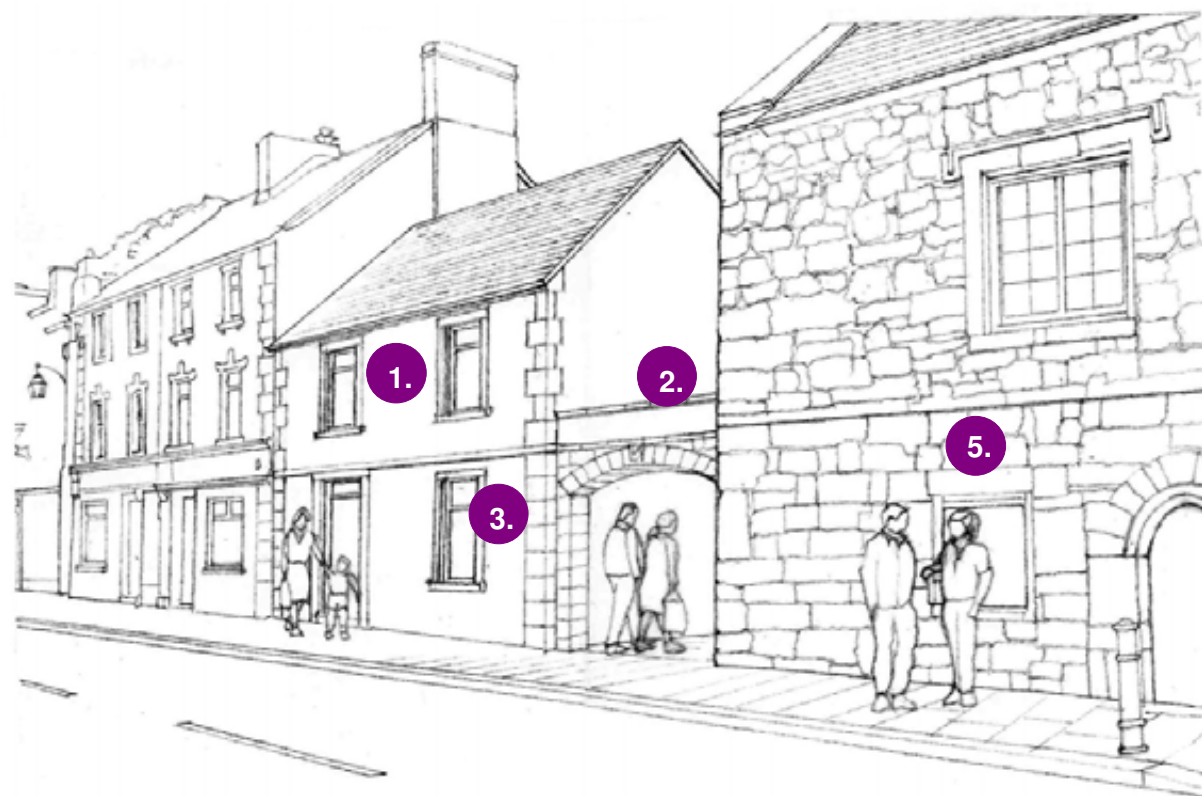
Site as existing

Key Features

1. Two-storey building extending along laneway to rear for possible 'Arts & Crafts' uses.
2. Arched entrance to laneway.
3. Information/Directional plaque.
4. Possible future Knot Garden to rear.
5. Renovation of Stone Mansion for compatible use and/or new Visitor Centre to rear (as Option A).



Views of infill development as proposed



Infill development as proposed

3. STRATEGY PROPOSALS

3.6 Area 3: Corner Site and Site of Friar's Gate

Refurbishment of existing corner site:

- Raised planters and seating.
- Relocated information boards (to New Square).
- Relocated Fenian Monument (to New Square).
- Surface improvements - Type 3 (4.2).
- Re-surface roadway - Type 1 (4.2).
- Additional bollards.
- Suitable lighting



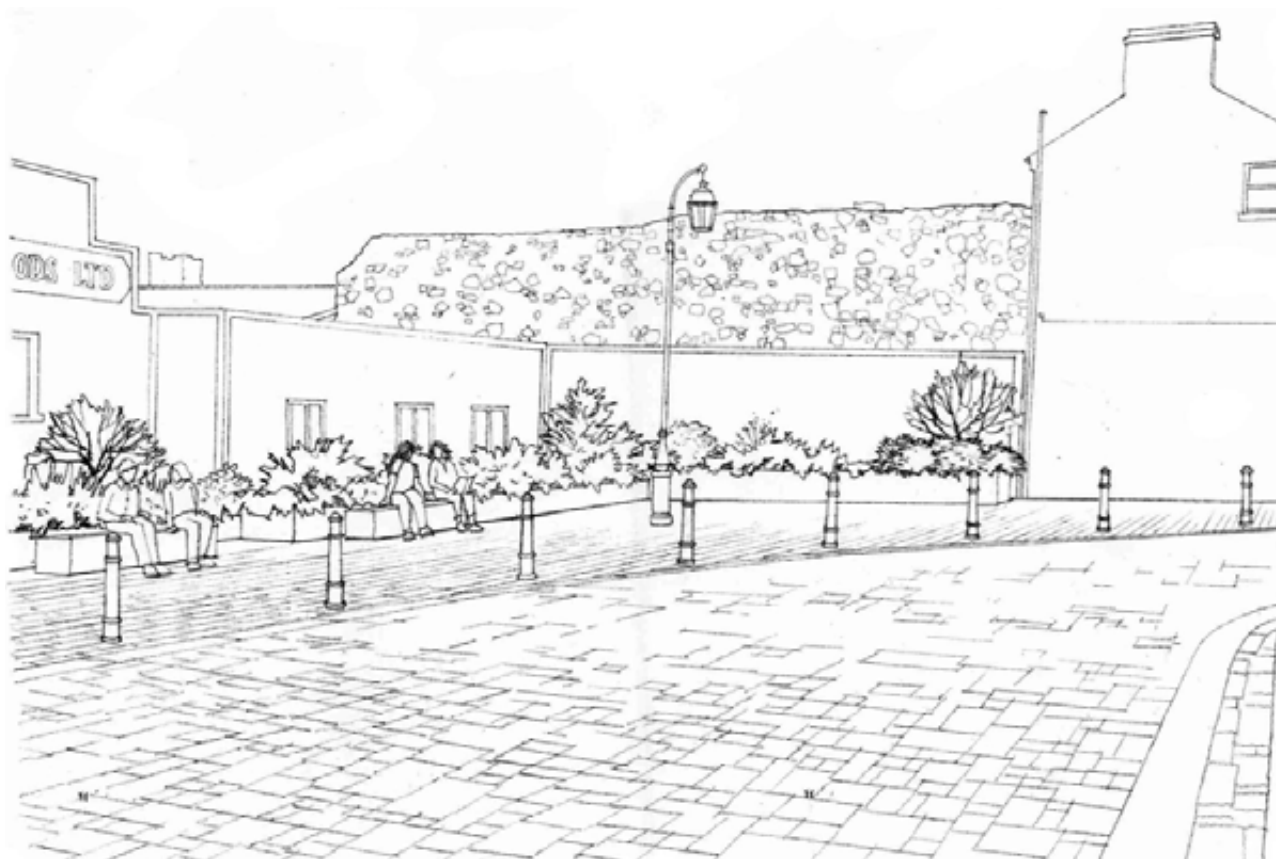
Corner site as existing



Entry lane to Site of Friar's Gate as existing



Friar's Gate as existing



Corner site improvements as proposed

Site of Friar's Gate:

- Surface improvements - Type 1 (4.2) and suitable lighting.
- Directional sign at entry and interpretation plaque at Site of Friar's Gate.

3.7 Area 4: Sheare's Street + Sheare's Avenue

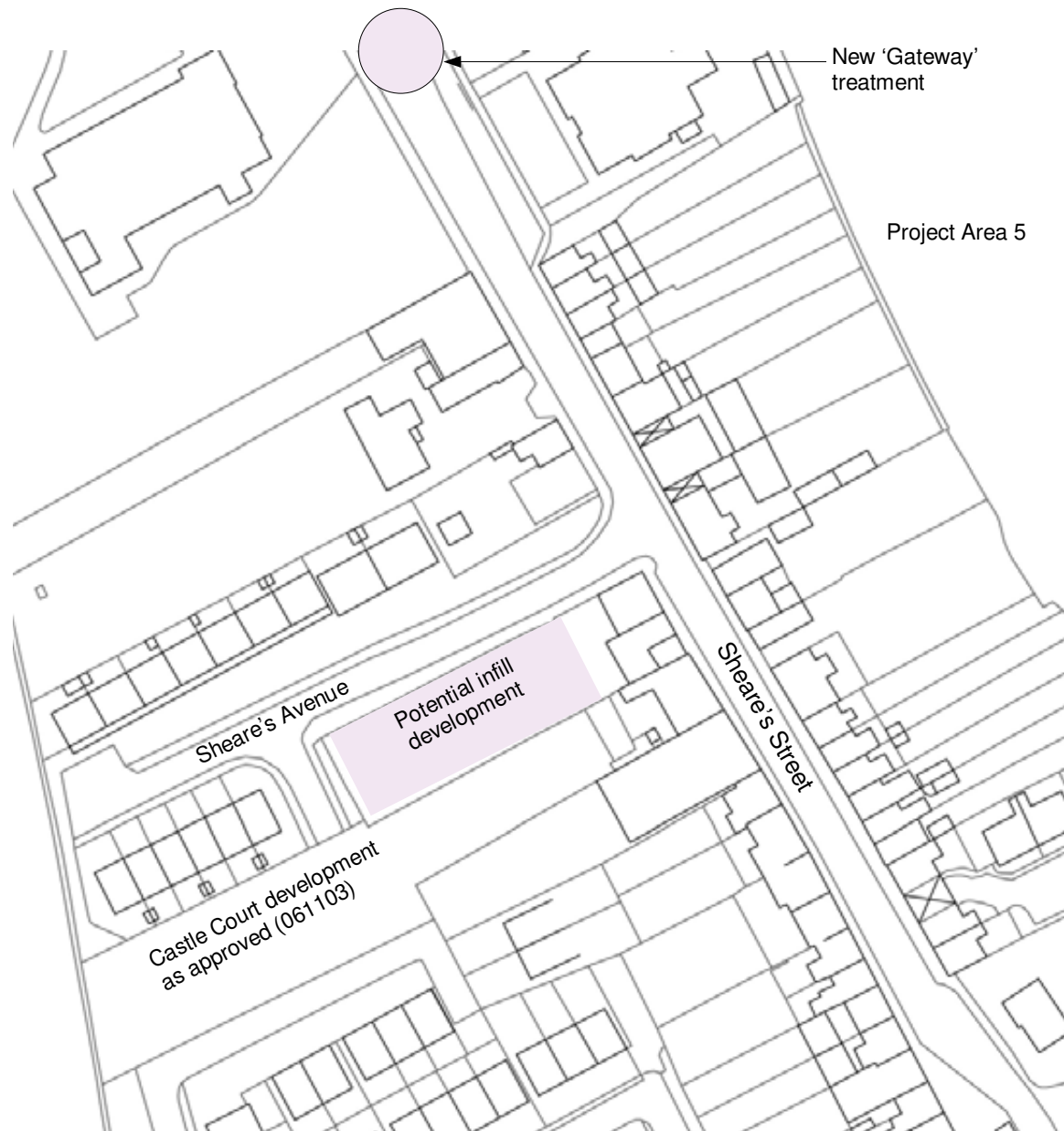
Key Proposals

Sheare's Street

- Continuation of streetscape improvements, including re-surfacing of footpaths, Type 1 (4.2), limestone kerbs, new street lighting, street name plates and directional signs, and defined parking bays where space permits.
- New 'Gateway' treatment at site of North Gate (see over).
- Future development potential of National School for appropriate uses.
- Future developments potential of existing library site.

Sheare's Avenue

- Potential infill residential site to south side of avenue, with improved pedestrian link to approved Castle Court development (6 houses).
- Avenue tree planting.
- Essential repairs to wall, as per Conservation and Management Plan recommendations.
- Directional sign to walls at junction with Sheare's Street.
- Pursue increase in width of open space buffer at end of Sheare's Avenue, tidy up rubbish.
- Under-ground utility cables, particularly at end of avenue near the town wall.



Key Proposals Plan



Sheare's Street northwards



Sheare's Avenue westwards



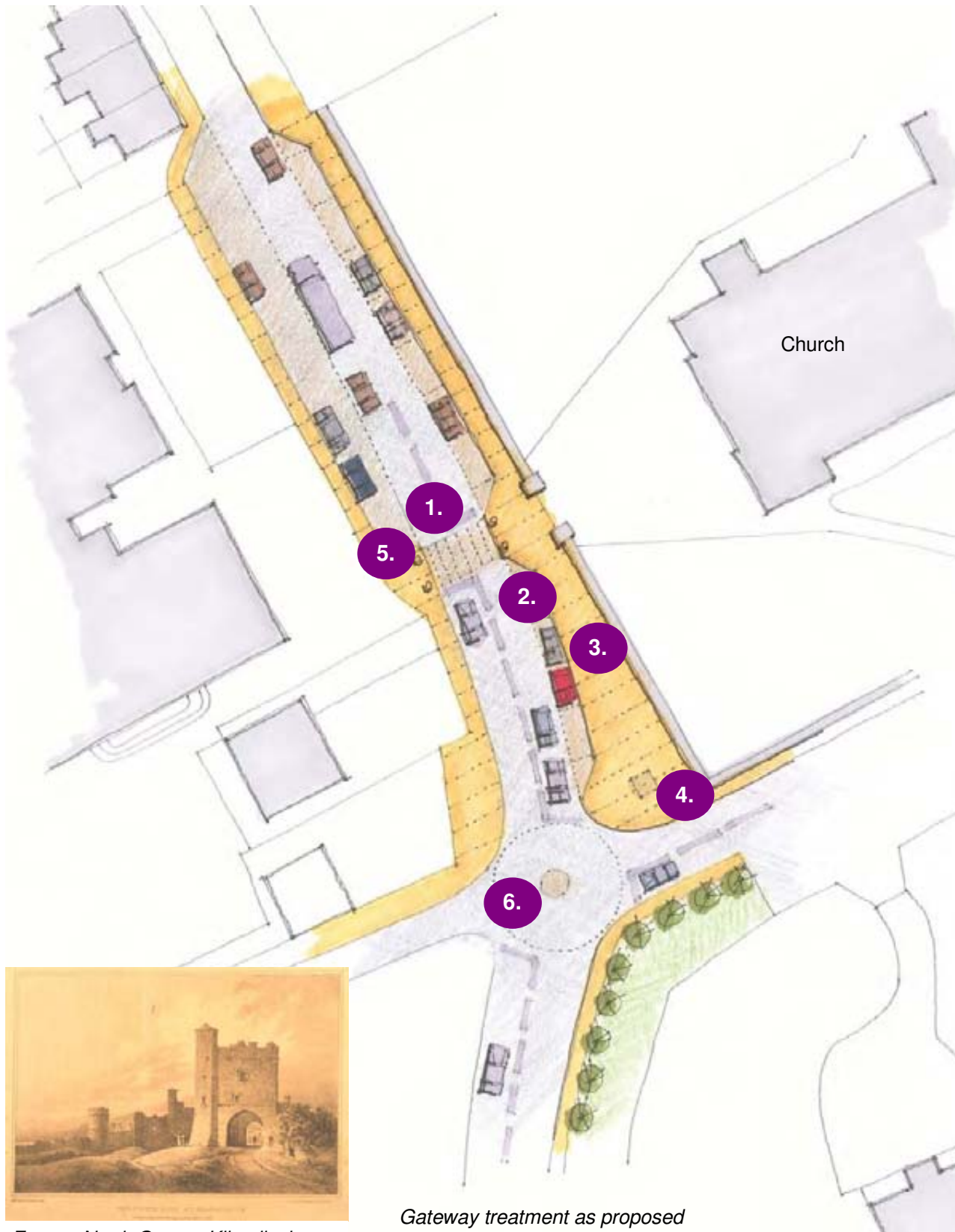
End of Sheare's Avenue requiring improvement

3.8 Area 4: Sheare's Street and North Gate

Key Proposals

Enhanced arrival experience to Kilmallock from the north, reinforcing location of original North Gate, traffic calming and provision of a defined pedestrian link between the Coláiste Iosaef, the Catholic Church and the West Wall Trail, including:

1. Road narrowing and provision of pedestrian crossing on raised table.
2. Rationalised on-street parking - presently there are approximately 15 un-marked parking spaces outside the Church. The proposal could cater for 11 parking spaces (representing a loss of 4 spaces immediately outside the main gates to the Church).
3. Increased footpath space outside Church - Surface Type 3 (4.2).
4. Sculptural element signifying location of the North Gate.
5. New directional signage and street lighting.
6. Mini roundabout at junction as traffic calming measure.
7. Under-grounding of cables.



Former North Gate at Kilmallock

Gateway treatment as proposed

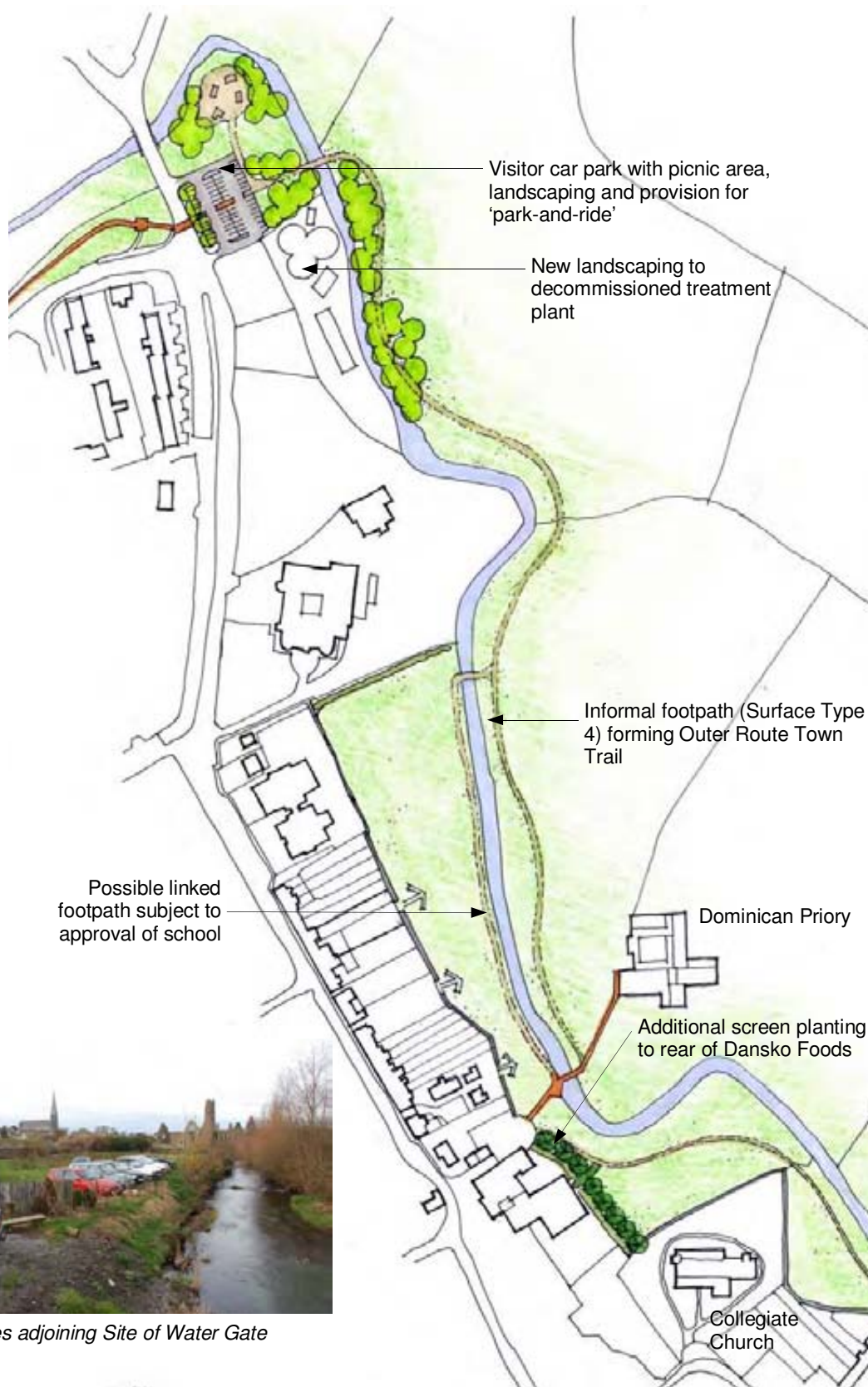


As existing

3.9 Area 5: River Loobagh Valley

Key Proposals

- Informal footpath links northwards from Site of Friars Gate with agreement of School (restricted access).
- Informal footpath links southwards to Site of Water Gate.
- Existing screen hedge planting extended around eastern boundary of Dansko Foods.
- Low hedge planting to screen car parking within school grounds.
- Possible car park (approx. 40 spaces) at entry to town on Bruff road, with provision for 'park-and-ride' and linked to Outer Route Town Trail.
- Informal picnic and seating area with information signage within bend of river and adjacent to proposed car park.
- Indigenous planting along river bank around car park and on site of sewage treatment plant (to be decommissioned).
- Under-grounding of utilities.
- Removal of non-conforming uses adjoining Site of Water Gate.
- Directional and information signage at Site of Friars Gate and by river bridge on Wolfe Tone Street.



Non-conforming uses adjoining Site of Water Gate



Required boundary improvements and under-grounding of cables to rear of Dansko Foods

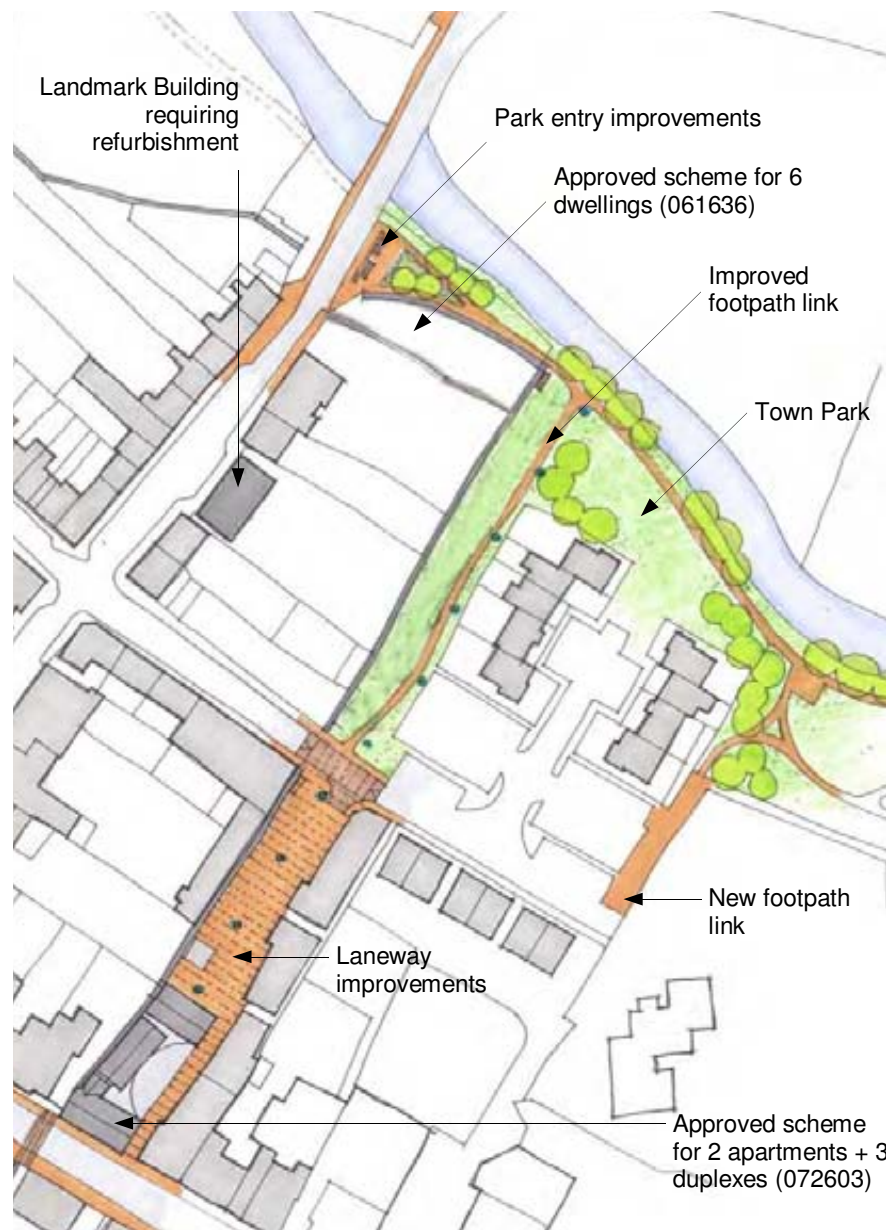
Key Proposals Plan

3.STRATEGY PROPOSALS

3.10 Area 6: Town Park to Lord Edward Street

Key Proposals

- Improvements to laneway from Lord Edward Street - shared surface treatment, Type 1 (4.2), suitable lighting and directional signage.
- Site of Ivy Gate signified by local stone setts in roadway and footpath, and marked by interpretation plaque.
- Raised table traffic calming feature by entry to new houses off Wolfe Tone Street.
- Re-location of existing sub-station away from town wall, or suitable screening.
- Wall repaired as per Conservation and Management Plan recommendations.
- Removal of scrub vegetation adjacent to wall.
- Footpath improvements to Town Park - re-surfacing, Type 2 (4.2), trees and illuminated bollards.
- Information signage at junction with Town Park footpath.
- Pursue renovation of 18th century building on Wolfe Tone Street.
- Open space improvements at bridge on Wolfe Tone Street, including improved surface, Type 2 (4.2), seating, raised planting beds, signage and lighting.
- Additional pedestrian link from Town Park along eastern side of new houses.



Key Proposals Plan



Footpath link



Laneway from Lord Edward Street



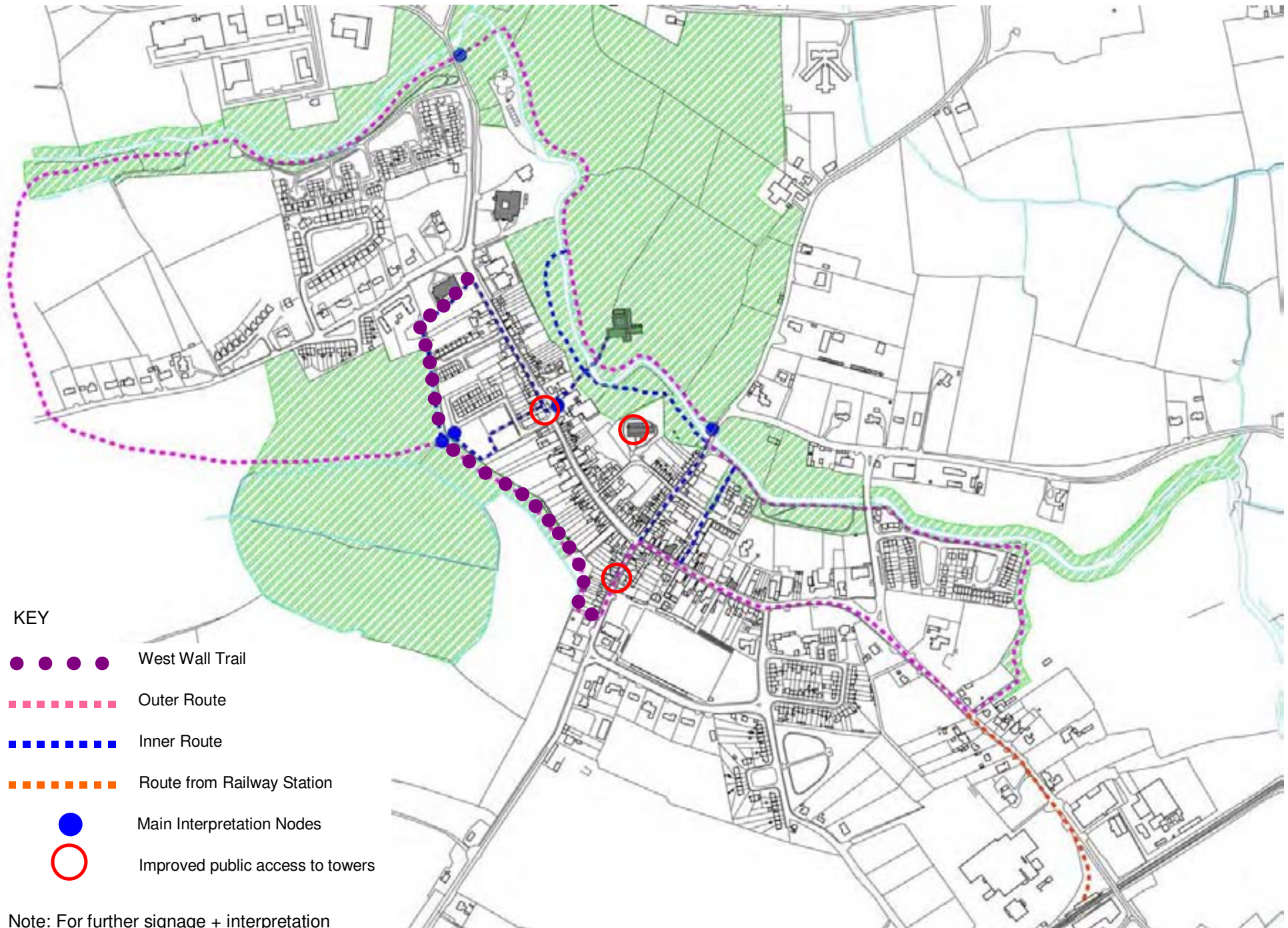
Improved footpath link to Town Park as proposed

3.10 Town Trails

Improved public access into:

- Round Tower of Collegiate Church
- Blossom Gate
- King's Castle

A series of looped walks are proposed as Town Trails, comprising Outer Routes from where the landscape setting of the town can best be appreciated, and Inner Routes in closer proximity to the town walls. All routes should be way-marked and with interpretation boards at key locations (see 4.1)



Key Proposals Plan

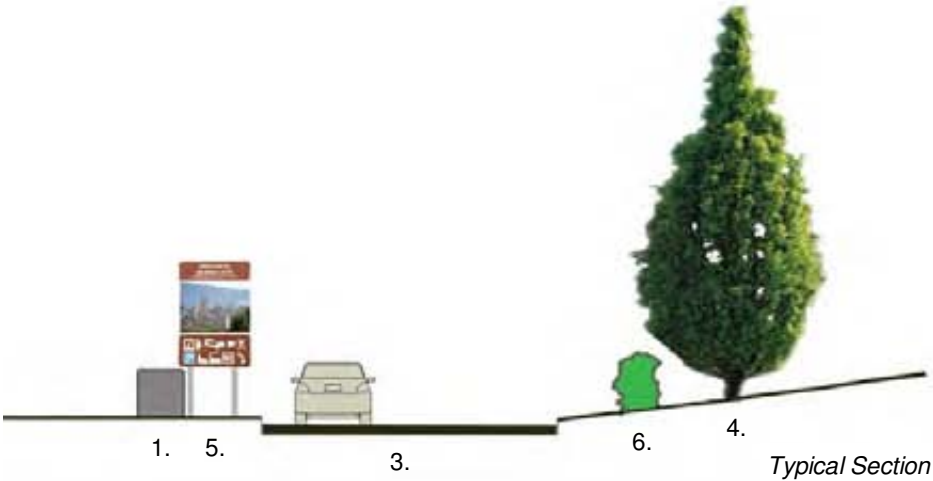
Note: For further signage + interpretation proposals see 4.2.



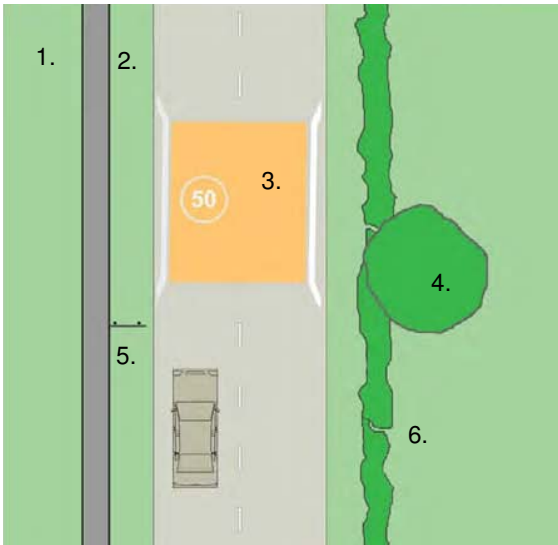
3.12 Approach Roads

The approach roads need to more effectively signify to motorists that they are entering the historic town and to drive accordingly. A series of gateways are proposed for the main and secondary approaches, typically comprising:

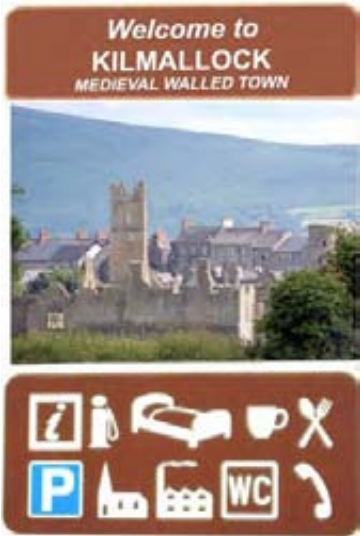
- 1. Repaired stone walls.
- 2. Well-maintained grass verge.
- 3. Traffic calming textured road surface and speed signage.
- 4. New signature tree planting.
- 5. Welcome signage (main approaches only).
- 6. Hedgerow reinstatement.



Typical Section



Typical main approach roads treatment



Possible Welcome signage as proposed on main approaches



Bruff/Limerick Road (AR4) approach as proposed



Typical secondary approach roads treatment

4. IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 Public Realm Elements

Existing Situation

Kilmallock is fortunate in having a public realm of generally good quality. As part of the Urban & Village Renewal Programme 1996 townscape improvement works were undertaken during 1999 and 2000, including footpath re-surfacing and provision of limestone kerbs, under-grounding of services, new street lighting and road signs.

The materials and products used were mostly traditional, and in sympathy with the historic character of Kilmallock. They have for the most part been consistently applied throughout the town.

The existing features of the public realm are considered under the following headings:

- Surfacing
- Street Lighting
- Street Furniture and Signage
- Detractors

Surfacing

A simple range of surface types occur throughout the town, consisting mostly of pre-cast concrete setts (rectangular, grey-charcoal) with either broad limestone or narrow concrete kerbs. The most effective combination is demonstrated in Emmet Street, which comprises rectangular concrete setts in three different sizes and with broad limestone kerbs.

Road and parking surfaces are asphalt.



*Concrete setts to footpaths with limestone kerbs -
Emmet Street, Sarsfield Street, Lord Edward Street,
Sheare's Street*

4. IMPLEMENTATION



Standard light columns -
Emmet Street (south),
Sheare's Street



Heritage light columns -
Emmet Street, Lord
Edward Street, Sheare's
Street



Heritage wall lights -
Emmet Street, Sarsfield Street and Lord
Edward Street

Street Lighting

Heritage-style street lighting occurs throughout the town, both pole and wall-mounted types. The style used is appropriate to the historic context of Kilmallock. Towards the edges of the town centre, more utilitarian streetlights are common, such as at the southern end of Emmet Street and within the surrounding housing estates.



Standard street light on Sarsfield Street that needs to be replaced with heritage type

4. IMPLEMENTATION

Street Furniture and Signage

Existing street furniture in the town centre is mostly limited to bollards and litter bins. There are few opportunities for public seating due to the lack of open spaces. The bollards and litter bins are simple cast iron types, finished in black (with gold trim on some of the bins). Although functional, the bins appear bulky and for the most part sit uncomfortably on the street. Bollards are robust and traditional (canon style), and should be maintained as the town type. All existing street furniture and signage poles are predominantly black.

Signage includes information and interpretation sign boards, directional signs, and regulatory traffic signs.

The town would greatly benefit from improved interpretation of the many monuments and places, through a new signage strategy specifically commissioned to reflect the distinctiveness of Kilmallock.

Similarly, a consistent style of pedestrian directional signage (finger posts or way markers) would further contribute to the understanding and appreciation of the town.

Regulatory traffic signage (e.g. parking and loading restrictions, speed limits, traffic direction, etc) is unavoidable but should be minimised so as not to over-dominate the streetscene and/or contribute to visual clutter. Opportunities should be taken to incorporate essential signage on existing poles wherever possible.

Recently installed street name plates (cast iron with distinctive logo) are a welcome addition to the signage of the town and present the basis for developing a unified style of signage throughout the historic core.



Bollards, information signage, seat, litter bin and planters opposite John's Castle, Sarsfield Street - variety of styles and amount of furniture results in visual clutter that detracts from the setting of the historic monument

The new Kilmallock logo, as incorporated on replacement street name signs, presents a fresh image for the town. The logo could also be used on litter bins and signage.



Typical regulatory signage



Cast iron bollards - Sarsfield Street and off Sheare's Street



Cast iron litter bins - Emmet Street, Sarsfield Street and Lord Edward Street



Examples of regulatory signage, road markings and utility pole that detract from the historic context



Intrusive overhead cables - Railway Road, footpath to Martyrs Monument, end of Sheare's Avenue, and on the Bruff road approach outside the Church



Examples of unsightly sub-stations and mini-pillars to rear of Lord Edward Street, on the car park approach road off Sheare's Street, and on Emmet Street and Lord Edward Street, that could be relocated to less obtrusive positions, painted to match the colour of the building behind, or screened by planting.





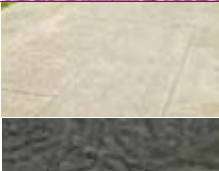






Detractors

Although the public realm is generally of good quality and well-maintained, there are certain elements that detract from the overall presentation and appearance of Kilmallock's streetscene. These are largely related to utility infrastructure and road signage/markings.

The quality of the finish of the public realm is of particular importance and needs to be carefully considered by all those involved with development in the town, including the service providers who should ensure that all new service infrastructure is located in a sensitive manner. Where necessary and practicable, existing service infrastructure that detracts from the appreciation of the town should be relocated, screened or under-grounded as necessary in order to complement the existing and planned improvements to the public realm.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

4. 2 Palette of Materials




Surfacing			
Element		Description	Location
Town Centre Footpaths Surface Type 1		PC conc setts, Tegula, naturally weathered stone appearance, colour Bracken. Random rectangular linear bond. As supplied by Tobermore Concrete Products Ltd, or equivalent.	Emmet Street, Sarsfield Street, Lord Edward Street, Sheare's Street.
Formal parkland Surface Type 2		Natural aggregate resin-bound surface system, anti-slip + wheelchair friendly, colour: Buff. As supplied by Topcoat Systems, Co. Clare, or equivalent.	Town Park footpaths and approaches.
Formal Spaces Surface Type 3		PC conc slabs, 600x450x63mm, colour: Natural. Linear bond, with Liscannor Stone trim/highlights where appropriate. 'Perfecta', as supplied by Marshalls (UK) Ltd., or equivalent.	Proposed Heritage Square and extended footpath outside Catholic Church.
Informal trails Surface Type 4		Compacted gravel with turf edge.	Outer town trails.
Road kerbs		Kilkenny limestone, 250x900x255mm.	All town centre streets.
Surface Art		Bespoke cast bronze ground plaques at key locations. As created by Liam Lavery + Eithne Ring, or equivalent.	King John's Castle, Stone Mansion, town Gate locations.
Street Furniture			
Element		Description	Location
Seats Type 1 Formal	Bespoke.	Solid ends (mild steel or stone) with hardwood slats, type to be developed by public artist.	Proposed Heritage Square and footpath outside Catholic Church.
Seats Type 2 Informal		Hardwood construction throughout, with or without backrest according to location.	Town Park and along Town Trails.
Litter Bins Type 1 Formal		Cast iron or die-cast aluminium, colour: Black As supplied by CastlIt Ltd (Waterford) or equivalent.	Town Centre streets.
Litter Bins Type 2 Informal		Hardwood construction throughout.	Town Park and at start (only) of Town Trails.
Bollards		Cannon style, cast iron or die-cast aluminium, colour: Black As supplied by CastlIt Ltd (Waterford) or equivalent.	Town Centre streets.




Opportunities for new public realm works should aim to achieve high quality detailing and the use of a limited range of materials, complemented by lighting, signage and street furniture that respects the traditional character of the surroundings.

In the majority of cases the established palette of materials should be followed. Where more substantial works are possible, for example at the proposed new Heritage Square adjacent to King's Castle, a wider range of materials may be suitable. Similarly, a coherent range of new signage would greatly complement the presentation and useability of the town.

In all cases the aim should be to achieve simplicity, selecting materials that are robust and require minimal long-term maintenance. Materials should also be readily available (to simplify replacements where necessary).



Street Lighting		
Element	Description	Location
Town Centre	 Decorative Heritage Series, pole or wall mounted, metal halide (white) light, as supplied by Light.ie (Waterford) or equivalent.	Emmet Street, Sarsfield Street, Lord Edward Street, Sheare's Street.
Informal Areas	 Climat Lantern Dome on 5m high glued laminated timber, metal halide (white) light, as supplied by Woodhouse (UK) Ltd, or equivalent.	Town Park footpaths and approaches.
Floodlighting	 Up-lighters, metal halide (white) light.	Key monuments and the Town Walls.

Signage			
Element	Key (Page 37)	Description/Content	Location
Information Boards		General information on Ballyhoura Country, including scenic drives, cycleways, long distance footpaths, places of attraction. General information on Kilmallock and key attractions, including street map with location of inner and outer Town Trails.	King 's Castle Heritage Square; Railway Station; West Wall Trail; Car park / picnic area (as proposed to north of town).
Interpretation Plaques		Descriptive text for specific sites of interest.	King's Castle; Stone Mansion; North Gate, Friar's Gate, Water Gate, Ivy Gate, Blossom Gate; West Walls earthen bastion; Dominican Friary; Collegiate Church; Catholic Church; Mill Complex; Church of Ireland.
Finger Posts		Pedestrian directional signage.	Start of Town Trails; key changes in direction; node points.
Street Name Plates	Not shown	Existing style and logo.	All Town Centre streets.
Welcome Signs	As 3.11	Town 'offer'.	Main town approaches .

Signage

A new signage strategy needs to be developed for the town in order to enhance visitor orientation and interpretation. The signage throughout the town should consist of a co-ordinated range of information, way-finding and building signage, incorporating common design elements that are sympathetic to the built heritage as well as its surroundings.

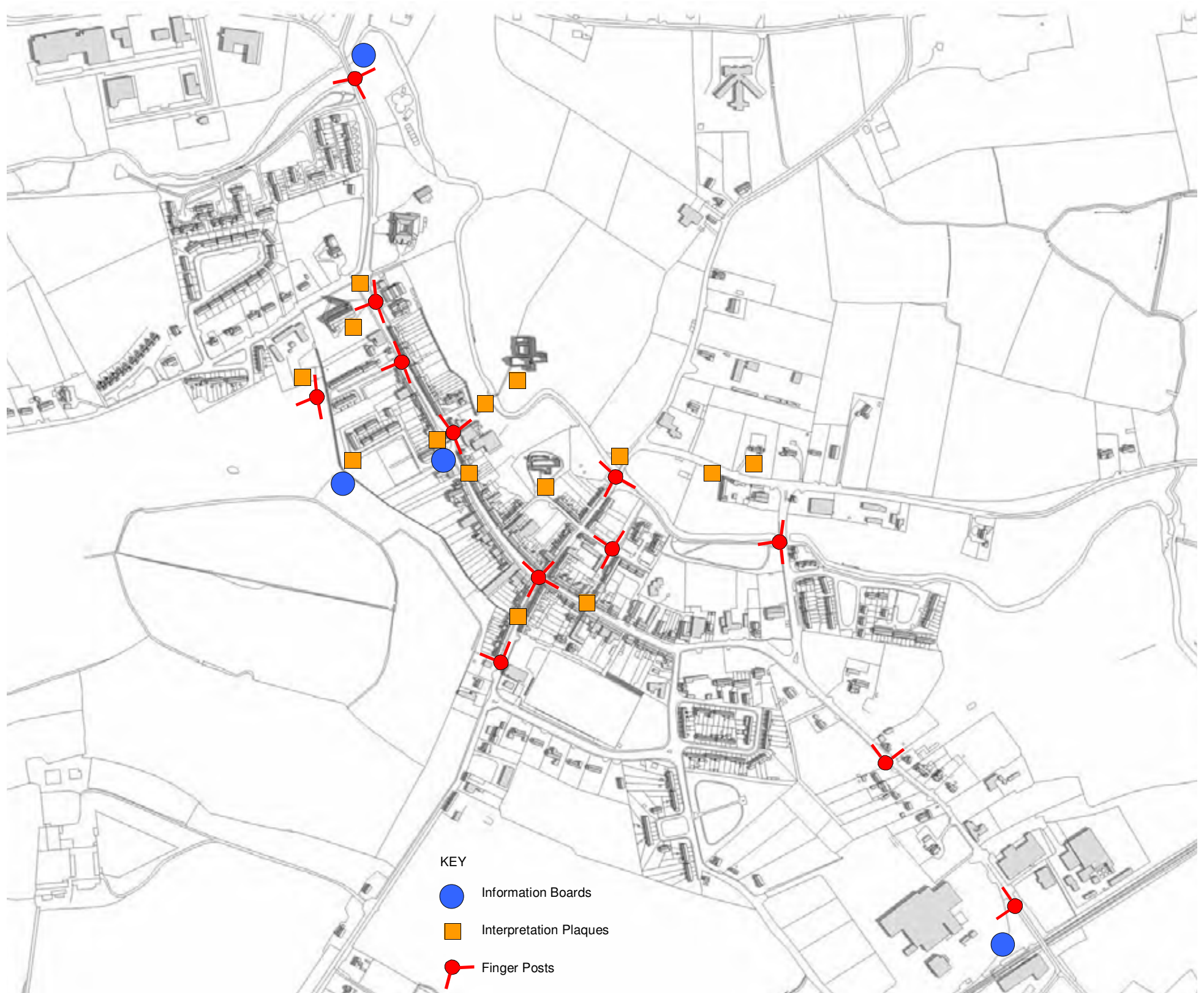
The signs should be of high quality in both design and materials, and distinctive to Kilmallock. They should be located to enable visitors to easily find their way around the town, without being intrusive, to particular locations and points of interest. All signage should use a consistent type face and graphic style with the font size adjusted to suit each signs function and location.

Signs will be required to meet the requirements of BS 8300:2001 and the Disability Act 2005 in terms of being read by people with visual impairments.

It is proposed that a public artist is appointed to develop a unique range of signs for Kilmallock, comprising the following broad types (see adjacent table):

- Information Boards
- Interpretation Plaques
- Finger Posts
- Welcome Signs

Possible locations for the different types of signage are shown on the following plan.



Signage Strategy



4. 3 Improvement Projects Summary

Public Realm Projects:

Area 1: Railway Station and Railway Road

- 1.1 Station reinstatement
- 1.2 Car park improvements
- 1.3 Approach road improvements
- 1.4 Boundary improvements
- 1.5 Railway Road improvements
- 1.6 New Court House public spaces

Area 2: West Wall

- 2.1 SuperValu building improvements (rear)
- 2.2 Car park and access road improvements
- 2.3 Landscaping to west wall trail
- 2.4 Under-grounding of cables

Area 3: King's Castle

- 3.1 New Heritage Centre and Public Square
- 3.2 Refurbished corner space
- 3.3 Traffic calming measures
- 3.4 Improvements to Site of Friars Gate
- 3.5 Lookout platform to west wall
- 3.6 Infill development adjoining Stone Mansion

Area 4: Sheare's Street + Sheare's Avenue

- 4.1 Entrance feature and traffic calming
- 4.2 Sheare's Street improvements
- 4.3 Sheare's Avenue improvements

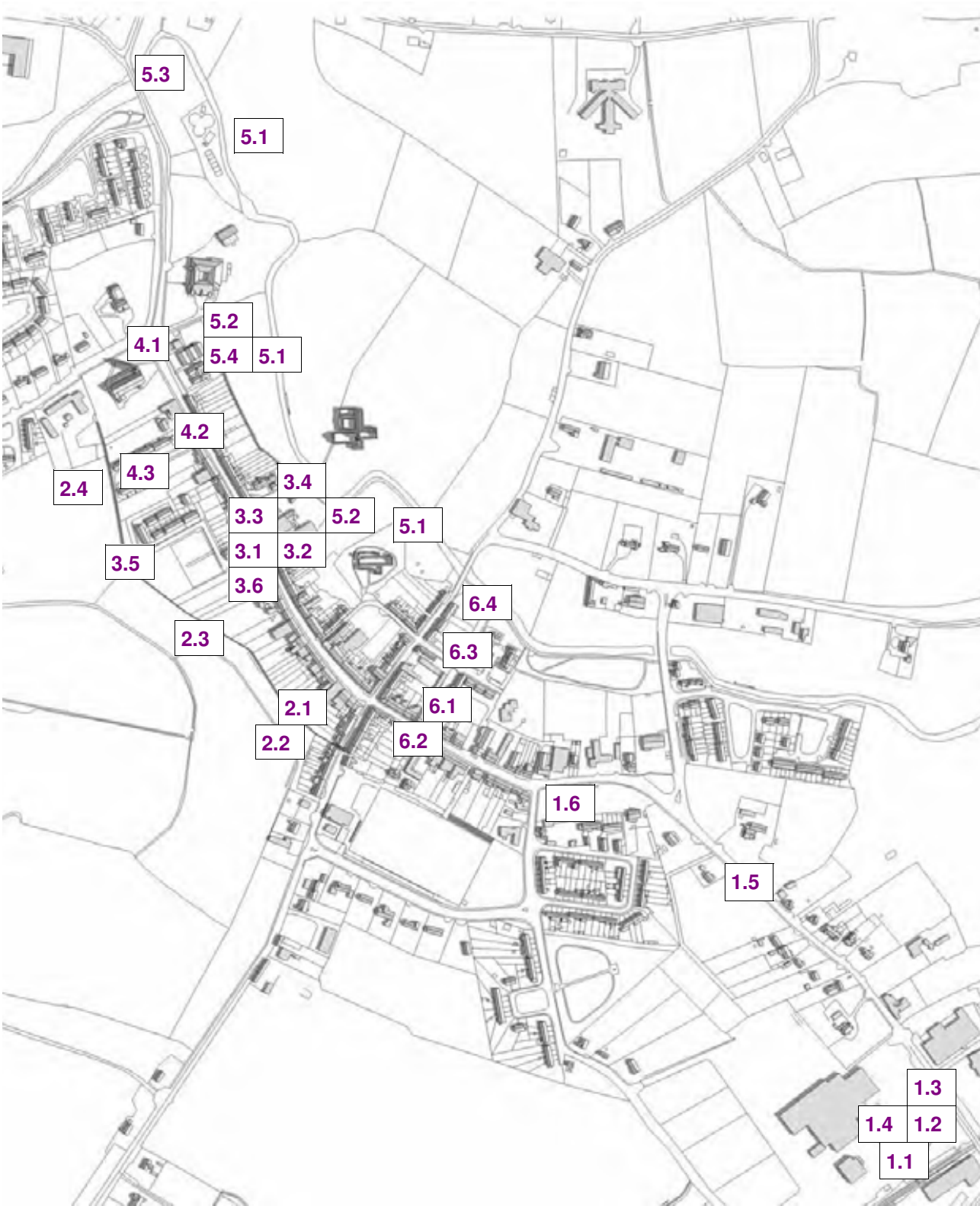
Area 5: Loobagh River Valley

- 5.1 Informal footpath links and 2no. footbridges
- 5.2 Screen planting
- 5.3 Car park and picnic area
- 5.4 Under-grounding of utilities

Area 6: Town Park-Lord Edward Street

- 6.1 Laneway improvements and traffic calming
- 6.2 Ivy Gate demarcation on carriageway
- 6.3 Footpath improvements to Town Park
- 6.4 Improvements in vicinity of bridge

Plan to be read in conjunction with Town Trails (3.11) and Signage Strategy (4.2).



Key Proposals Plan

4. IMPLEMENTATION

4.4 Policy Recommendations

Irish Walled Towns Network and the IWTN Fund 2008

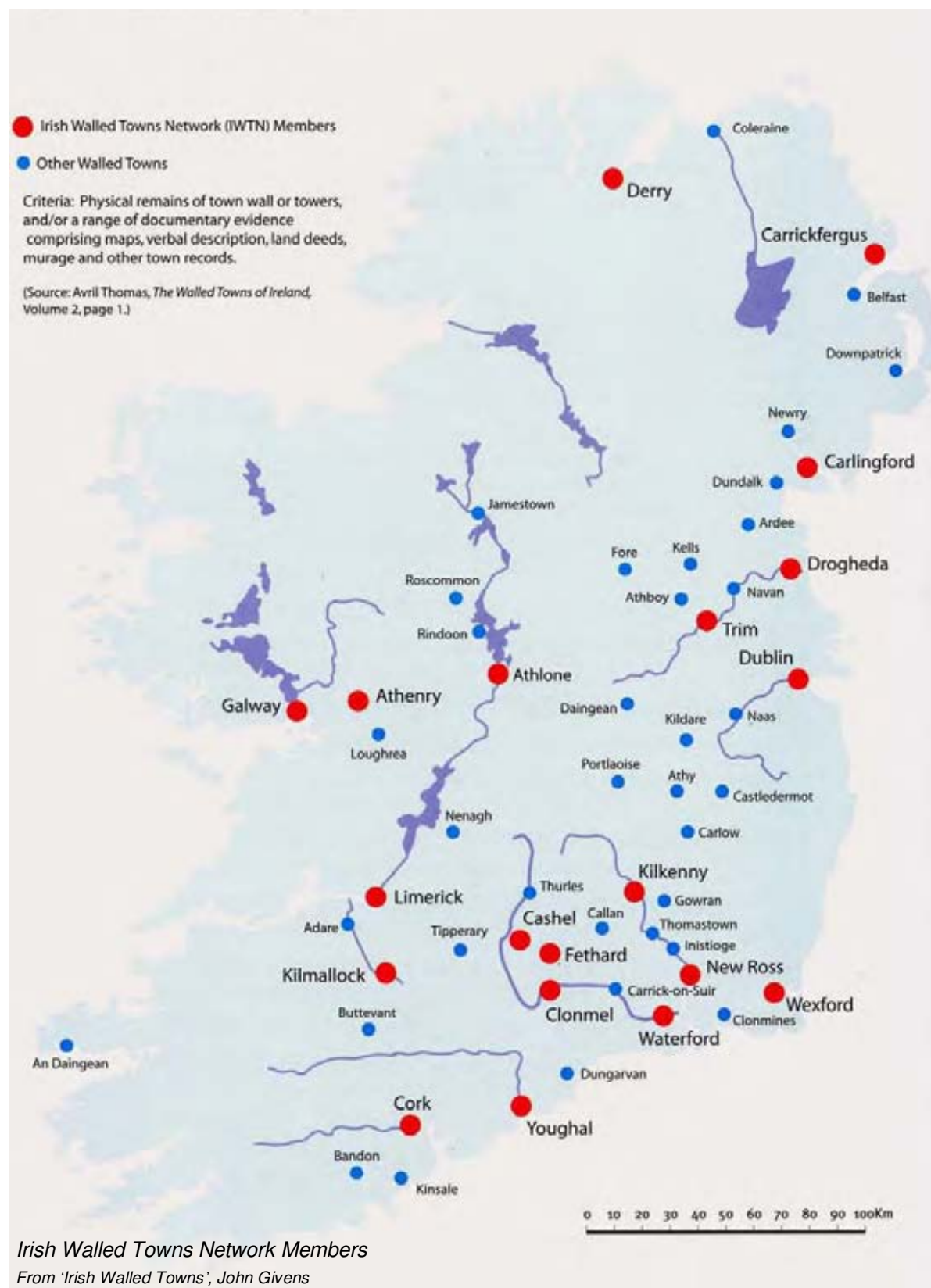
Kilmallock is one of the 20 towns in the Irish Walled Towns Network (IWTN), established by the Heritage Council in April 2005 to unite and co-ordinate the strategic efforts of local authorities involved in the management and conservation of historic walled towns in Ireland, both North and South. The IWTN is formally linked to the International Walled Towns Friendship Circle (WTFC), which is the international association for the sustainable development of walled towns, walled cities and fortified historic towns.

The IWTN Fund in 2008 aims to support the implementation of a suite of Conservation and Management Plans (CMPs) prepared in 2007, etc., through capital works (including interpretation/signage) to conserve, preserve and promote the historic town Walls and their settings, in accordance with the IWTN's 3 Year Action Plan.

Preparation of National/All-Island Guidelines for the Sustainable Management, Protection, Conservation and Enhancement of Historic Walled Towns in Ireland

These National/All-island Guidelines have been formulated in partnership with EHS NI and others dealing specifically with the long-term sustainable management, protection, conservation and enhancement of historic Walled Towns in Ireland, both north and south.

The Guidelines comprise aims, objectives and policies in relation to the sustainable management, protection, conservation and enhancement of Ireland's historic walled towns, to be included within statutory development plans and strategies at a regional, county and local level.





The Guidelines are set out in two parts: first, to examine the conservation and preservation of remaining town and city walls/monuments; and second, to set out a clear framework for future planning and development within Irish walled towns.

It is recommended that the Guidelines be prepared in accordance with ICOMOS's Bruges Resolutions, which have specific relevance *"to historic towns where distinctive qualities and value are deemed as being worthy of retention and enhancement"*.

ICOMOS recommends that planning in historic towns should endeavour to:

- *Observe the existing scale of the town in all new developments, to respect its character, its dominant buildings and its relation to the landscape;*
- *Retain the specific visual qualities of urban spaces, streets and squares not only in isolated 'tradition islands' but throughout the town's fabric, so as to provide at the very least, a continuous network linking the main points of interest;*
- *Avoid the destruction of historic elements which at first sight, might seem to be of minor importance but whose cumulative loss would be irretrievable; and*
- *Search for appropriate new uses for empty buildings, which would otherwise be threatened with decay.*

In addition, the Guidelines have been prepared in accordance with the *International Walled Towns Friendship Circle's Piran Declaration 2003*, which is endorsed in the Irish Walled Towns Network Draft Action Plan 2006-2008. The Piran Declaration states that:

'Walled Towns are unique inheritances from times long past and should be treasured, maintained and safeguarded from neglect and destruction and passed on to perpetuity as irreplaceable Time-stones of History'.

The study involves the following main packages:

1. Project Management (PM) and Quality Assurance;
2. Legislative and Planning Context Review (International/UNESCO, European, National, Regional and Local);
3. Review of International Best Practice Models, e.g. Italy and France, e.g. review use of *cordon sanitaires* in French Walled Towns, etc.;
4. Desk-Top Review (Review of Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), Record of Monuments and Places (RMP), Register of Historic Monuments (RHM), Record of Protected Structures (RPS), etc.) – GIS capabilities;
5. Key Stakeholder Consultation;
6. Formulation of Draft Guidelines and GIS model for consultation including methodology for monitoring and controlling;
7. Public Consultation of Draft Guidelines;
8. Formulation of Final Guidelines – Launch of Guidelines.

The Guidelines will ensure the long-term sustainable development of these unique national heritage assets for the enjoyment and benefit of current and future generations in Ireland and further afield.

The five partner groups involved in the design and implementation of the project are, as follows:

1. The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government;
2. Environment and Heritage Service Northern Ireland (EHS NI);
3. Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland;
4. Irish Planning Institute (IPI);
5. Northern and Southern Branches of the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI).

National Policy on Town Defences

During the final preparation of the Public Realm Plan for Kilmallock this further guidance was published by the DEHLG (November 2008) setting out National Policy on Town Defences, in line with the IWTN publications and guidance.

The Policy Declaration states:

"The known and expected circuits of the defences (both upstanding and buried, whether of stone or embankment construction) and associated features of all town defences are to be considered a single national monument and treated as a unit for policy and management purposes. There should be a presumption in favour of preservation in-situ of archaeological remains and preservation of their character, setting and amenity.

Urban settlements will and must continue to change and develop. However, this necessary continuum must recognise and preserve the character, setting and amenity of all upstanding urban defences and the archaeological evidence that survives, or may survive, below ground. Urban defences are to be considered of primary importance where they are found".



4. IMPLEMENTATION

Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (February 2008)
Consultation draft guidelines for planning authorities

These draft guidelines comprise a review and updating of the 1999 Guidelines and are intended to assist planning authorities, developers, architects and designers in delivering quality residential development into the future. The draft guidelines are accompanied by a best practice urban design manual which sets out and illustrates essential criteria for sustainable residential development, and demonstrates how new developments can be integrated and facilitated across a range of scale and locations.

The draft guidelines stress that planning authorities should promote good urban design in their policy documents and in their development management process. Clearly defined policies create more certainty for potential developers and their design teams, and also provide a basis for developing a shared, collaborative approach to pre-application consultations with the planning authority.

The companion urban design manual shows how urban design principles can be applied in the design and layout of new residential developments, at a variety of scales of development and in various urban settings.

In particular, the design guide sets out a series of 12 criteria which can be used at pre-application meetings and in the assessment of planning applications and appeals (see opposite).

Such guidelines will be of fundamental importance to the future development of Kilmallock, which has already seen considerable new residential development outside the Town Walls, as well as increasing pressure for infill development on the medieval burgage plots within the walled town.

It will be necessary for the guidelines to underpin the objectives and policies of the forthcoming Local Area Plan for Kilmallock, particularly in regard to protecting and enhancing the unique heritage of the walled town, so as to ensure that the highest quality of environment is achieved.

The quality of the finish of the public realm is of equal importance and needs to be carefully considered by all those involved with development in the town, including the service providers who should ensure that all new service infrastructure is located in a sensitive manner. Where necessary and practicable, existing service infrastructure that detracts from the appreciation of the walls should be relocated, screened or under-grounded as necessary in order to complement the existing and planned improvements to the public realm.

Generally all new development should:

1. Be of the highest standards of sustainable urban design and architectural quality;
2. Improve the quality of adjacent spaces around or between buildings, showing careful attention to the definition, scale, use and surface treatment;
3. Use high quality, durable and, where possible, indigenous materials appropriate to the building and its setting;

And should respect and, where necessary, maintain:

4. The character, urban grain, scale and hierarchy of existing buildings and the spaces between them;
5. The character, scale and pattern of the medieval plots and passageways;
6. The integrity of the Town Walls in terms of set-back and scale of new development; and
7. The open unspoilt character of open spaces that provide a setting for the Town Walls and areas from where they can be best appreciated.

BEST PRACTICE DESIGN GUIDE CRITERIA

Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (February 2008) - Urban Design Manual

- | | | |
|-----|------------------|---|
| 1. | Context: | How does the development respond to its surrounding? |
| 2. | Connections: | How well is the new neighbourhood/site connected? How easily can people use |
| 3. | Inclusivity: | and access the development? |
| 4. | Variety: | How does the development promote a good mix of activities? |
| 5. | Efficiency: | How does the development make appropriate use of resources, including land? |
| 6. | Distinctiveness: | How does the proposal create a sense of place? |
| 7. | Layout: | How do the proposals create people-friendly streets and spaces? |
| 8. | Public Realm: | How safe, secure and enjoyable are the public areas? |
| 9. | Adaptability: | How will the buildings cope with change? |
| 10. | Privacy/Amenity: | How do the buildings provide a decent standard of amenity? |
| 11. | Parking: | How will the parking be secure and attractive? |
| 12. | Detailed Design: | How well thought through is the building and landscape design? |