

# Public Realm Plan

# Adare Local Area Plan

## 2024 - 2030 | VOLUME 2



LIMERICK

# ADARE

Comhairle Cathrach  
& Contae Luimnigh

Limerick City  
& County Council  
Forward Planning

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# 1

# INTRODUCTION

Public Realm: what it means and why it matters

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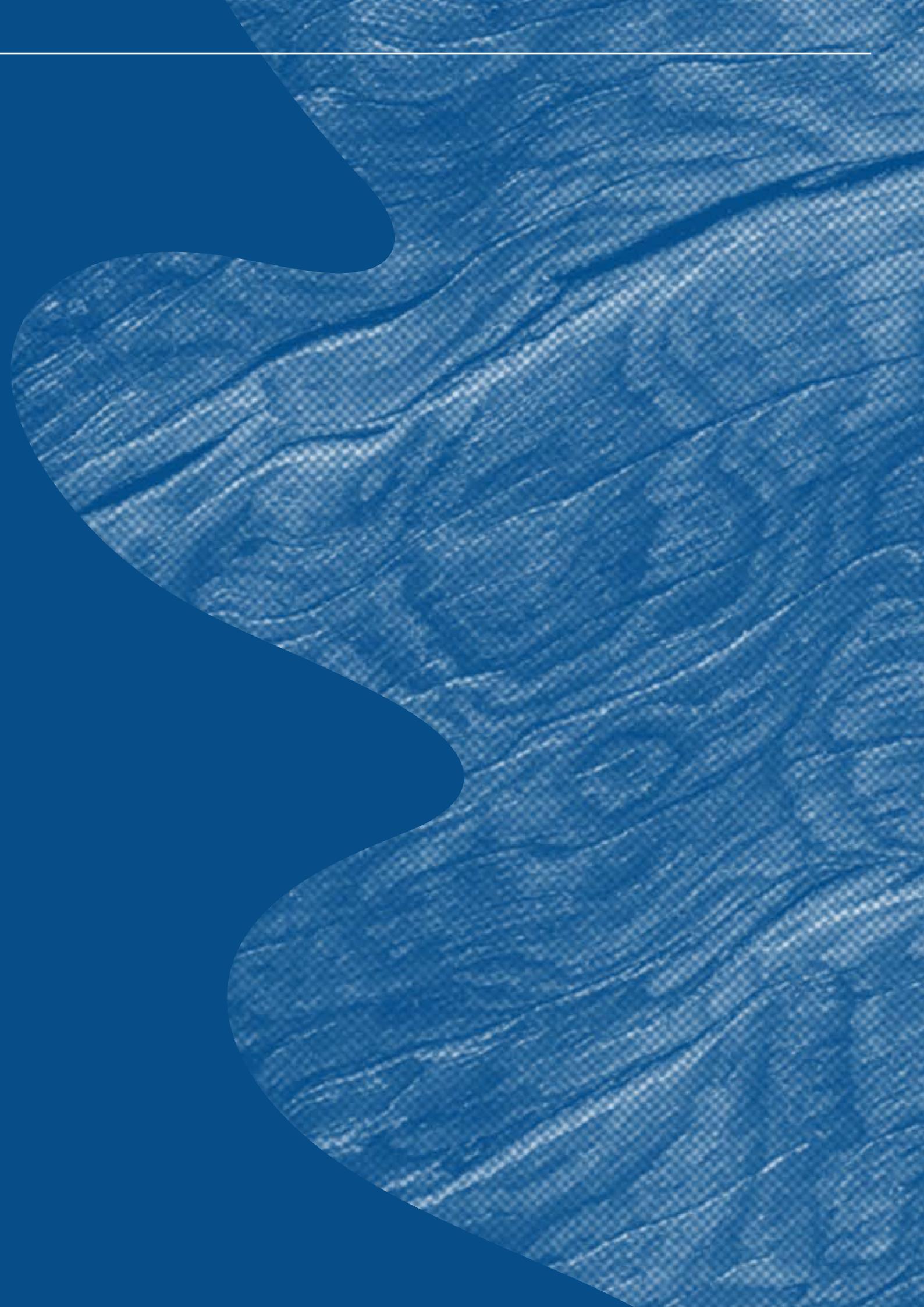
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# INTRODUCTION

## Summary

Adare is a large village with a population of 1,224 (Census 2022), a village with a vibrant community spirit and a national recognition of excellence for its heritage status. It is located approximately 18 km southwest of Limerick City, on the Limerick to Killarney National Primary Road (N21), which is the main tourist and traffic route serving the southwest.

The River Maigue, a tributary of the River Shannon, flows to the east and north, and forms an important element in the local landscape. The old Limerick to Foynes railway line runs to the northwest of the village. The modern village has developed in a linear fashion along the N21, and the L-1422 and L-1423 local roads, which serve Askeaton and Foynes to the northwest.

The original fortified village was located at the top of the tidal reach of the River Maigue and a convenient crossing guarded by the site that became Desmond Castle Adare on the opposing bank. Adare is the anglicised version of its Irish name, Ath Dara, ford of the oaks.

Adare's archaeological and architectural heritage is well recognised. There are 36 known monuments within the Local Area Plan boundary, most notably the 3 large monastic foundations, as well as the Desmond Castle Adare complex and remnants of the fortified village and its internal layout. In addition, there are a myriad of post 1700 Protected Structures throughout the village making it an architectural gem.





# Public Realm: what it means, and why it matters

## What is Public Realm?

*“The parts of a village, town or city (whether publicly or privately owned) that are available, without charge, for everyone to see, use and enjoy, including streets, squares and parks”* (Cowan, R “The Dictionary of Urbanism’)

The public realm generally refers to all areas to which the public has access, including roads, streets, lanes, footpaths, cycle lanes, signage, street furniture, parks, squares, open spaces and public buildings and facilities. A simple, uncluttered and consistent design approach is fundamental to achieving a successful public realm. This Plan seeks to address public realm design within Adare village. A further aim of the Plan is to put well-designed streets and other public spaces at the heart of sustainable communities. Additionally, well-designed streets can create connected physical, social and transport networks that promote real alternatives to car journeys, namely walking, cycling or public transport.

In preparing this Plan, it was essential to examine and learn from experience in Ireland and elsewhere. Some of the proposals put forward within this public realm plan require a shift in thinking away from business as usual approach towards more sustainable approaches, and as such it is necessary to look at the design of the Adare public streets and places and its public realm as a whole. This holistic design-led approach has been applied successfully in the UK, much of Europe and further afield.

It is an Objective of the Council as identified in the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 to prepare and facilitate implementation of Public Realm Plans for settlements including Limerick City, Adare and Rathkeale. This Adare Public Realm Plan seeks to provide a more detailed spatial framework for the public areas of Adare village, which is likely to undergo significant change within the coming years as a result of the following:

1. Climate adaptation in the form of flood defence works
2. A bypass to reduce traffic and noise which was approved by An Bord Pleanála in August 2022
3. A greenway connection to improve access and add to Adare’s amenity offer
4. The Ryder Cup is to be held in Adare Manor Hotel in 2027

These changes provide challenges but also offer opportunities to future-proof the village and its public realm. The question at hand is how the public realm can be shaped to accommodate the future needs of the village and make it more sustainable, green and inclusive. This Plan offers the rationale and the tools to enact this change required by broader government policies. By establishing a clear and cohesive Public Realm Plan, all stakeholders can agree on what is needed and how it can be achieved. It acts as a blueprint, ensuring that the public realm is designed and managed in a way that prioritises and enhances the public’s experiences, desires, and needs.

## How to use this document

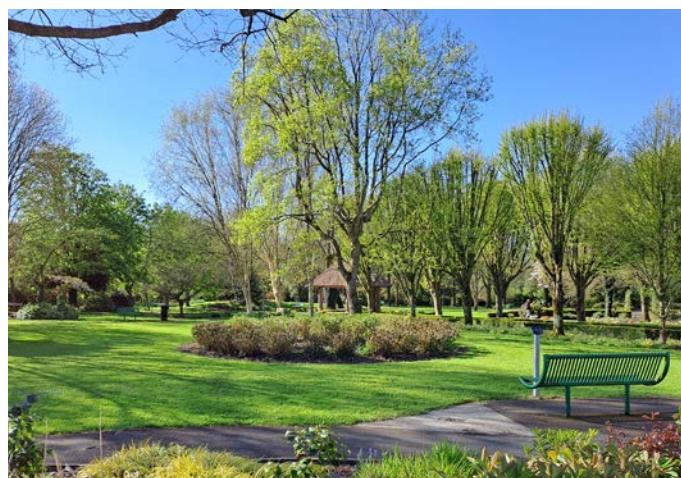
**Chapter 1** defines the Public Realm and sets out the aims and scope of the Plan.

**Chapter 2** examines Adare's Public Realm by looking in detail at what makes the village so unique in terms of its history, landscape and built heritage.

**Chapters 3** sets out the vision for the future and the challenges to this. It is broken down into three main areas: starting from the zoomed out perspective of the overall sustainable green structure of the village, then looking to the Maigue River at the median scale, and finally at a more granular level The Main Street. Each of these areas is analysed to establish its challenges, and then elaborated upon to provide design principles and proposals for the adaptation and transformation of these spaces.

**Chapter 4** sets out a suggested delivery and phasing plan that demonstrates how the projects can be incrementally implemented through the active support of residents, stakeholders and Limerick City and County Council.

Finally, **Chapter 5** summarises the recommendations being put forward and concludes the Public Realm Plan.



# What will this Public Realm Plan achieve

The vitality of a place depends on the effectiveness and efficiency of its public realm. It encompasses crucial aspects such as accessing services, conducting business and navigation. The public realm provides essential amenities like lighting, signage, cleaning, and drainage, without which the village of Adare cannot function properly. It also serves as the space where various transportation modes operate, playing a pivotal role in maintaining a healthy village.

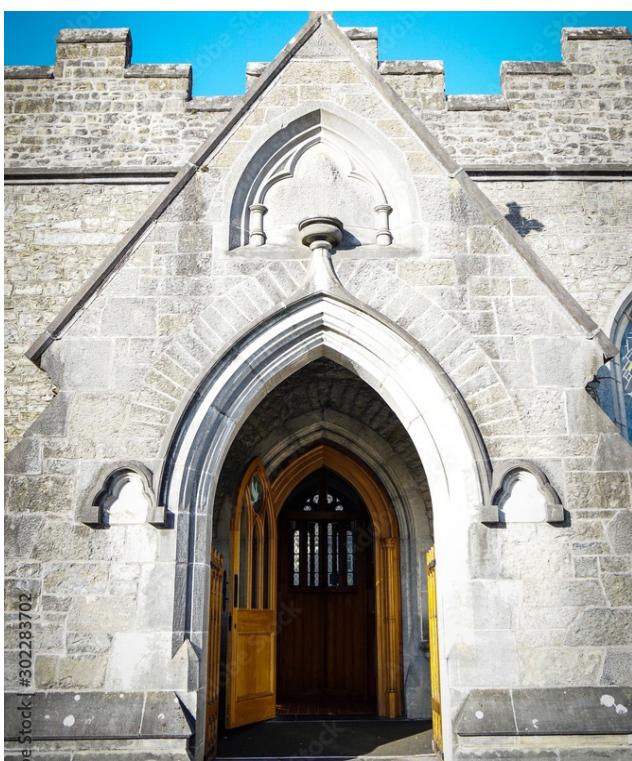
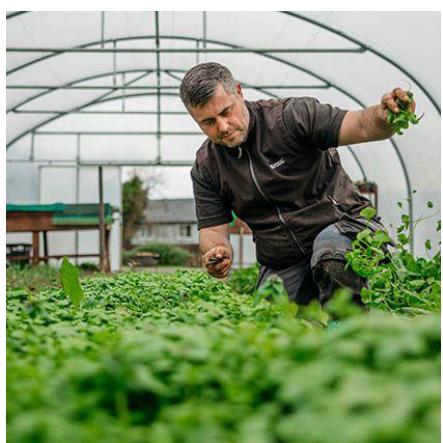
Enhancements to the public realm can bring about significant improvements in access and mobility. Upgrading surface materials can effectively eliminate trip hazards and obstacles. It can provide for the installation of accessible footpaths, benches for rest, improved lighting and enhanced thresholds to buildings. Incorporating pedestrian priority and wayfinding measures, along with reduced traffic, can greatly enhance safety, particularly for the more vulnerable members of the community.

Furthermore the public realm's appearance to outsiders greatly influences economic development and tourism. Places with pleasant, user-friendly, and well-functioning public spaces attract visitors, residents, and businesses alike. An attractive and high-quality public realm enhances Adare's competitive edge serving as a magnet for tourism. Enhancing the environment and improving accessibility to shops not only bolster the retail economy but also increase foot traffic, extend visitor stays, invigorate evening activities, attract more tourists, and ultimately result in greater expenditure.

Public realm improvements can assist in responding to flood risk and climate change adaptation, many of which are interrelated with the public realm, for example supporting sustainable transport initiatives, improving the green network and the incorporation of SuDS.

The quality of Adare's public realm is therefore paramount to its prosperity and the well-being of its residents. Achieving its full potential necessitates a shared vision and collaborative efforts to transform it into a reality. The Public Realm Plan presents a vision of this desired environment and serves as a user-friendly manual, offering valuable guidance on how existing budgets and funding sources can be effectively utilised. A limited palette of readily available durable materials and street furniture is proposed. Guidance is provided on achieving high quality design briefs, design detail, requirements in terms of skills and craftsmanship, and implementation including maintenance and management.

A design-led approach will still be expected to deliver an Adare specific solution. The plan is designed to be flexible so that it can respond to a changing context and priorities. Proposals are speculative and should be used simply as a starting point upon which a design-led solution is worked-up and tailored to the circumstances of the place. In order for the high-level proposals being brought forward in this document to reach fruition, further in-depth consultation & approvals are required.



# Policy Context

This section introduces the statutory context which informs the Public Realm Plan. Spatial plans are a key element in the implementation of more integrated public realm design. They include information on how the principles, approaches and standards of other National design manuals can be applied to promote sustainable cities, towns and villages.

The Adare Local Area Plan is set out in three Volumes:

- 1.** Volume 1 The Written Statement,
- 2.** Volume 2 The Adare Public Realm Plan and
- 3.** Volume 3 The Environmental Reports.

It is an objective of the Council to ensure that provisions of the Draft Adare Local Area Plan 2024 – 2030 for population and economic growth align with the policies and objectives of the higher-level spatial plans, such as the National Planning Framework (NPF), the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (RSES) and the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028.

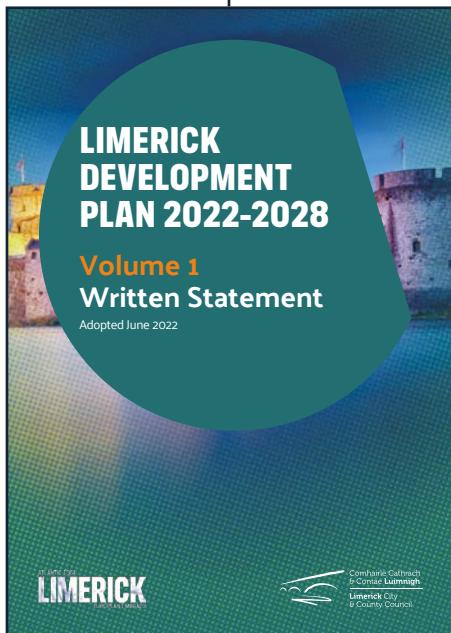
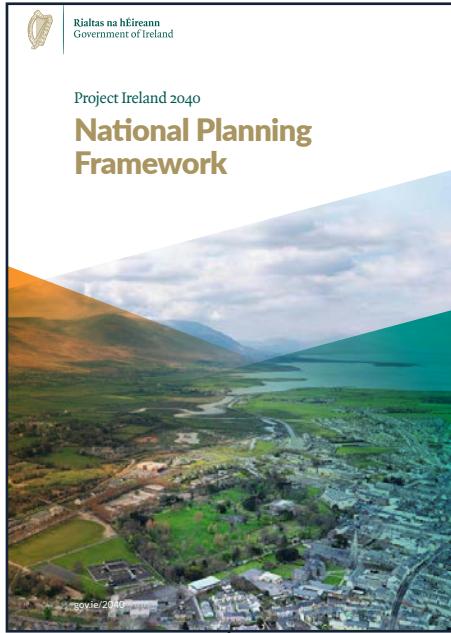
While the Public Realm Plan aligns and adheres to the objectives outlined in the Local Area Plan, it also addresses broader strategic issues that are more closely associated with detailed design outcomes. In Adare's case, the Public Realm Plan also includes detailed material palettes and specifications.

The Adare Public Realm Plan is strategically aligned with and contributes to the Strategic Objectives set out within the Limerick Development Plan as demonstrated in the table overleaf.

Along with the above policies which are directly linked to the Public Realm Plan on a local level, the Plan also takes cognisance of other National Policy related to towns and villages, as outlined below. The Town Centre First policy recognises that every town is unique and advocates for town centres that reflect the current and future needs of the local community, with quality public realm, sustainable mobility infrastructure and green spaces that facilitate vibrant connected local communities and economies.

The Town and Village Renewal Scheme aims to support the revitalisation of rural towns and villages across Ireland in order to increase their attractiveness as places in which to live and work. The particular focus of the scheme, founded on the objectives of 'Our Rural Future', is to address vacancy and dereliction in town and village centres and encourage town centre living, however funding will continue to be provided for public realm enhancements and recreational amenities in Irish towns and villages.

The Public Realm Plan takes cognisance of the new national policy on architecture, *Places for People* (2022). This policy document outlines ways to promote and embed quality in architecture and the built and natural environment. Objective 2 of this policy focusses on the delivery of quality architecture and places that are planned and designed with wide engagement, and which are accessible to all as an essential element of social sustainability.



# Co-creation and Engagement

The residents and workers in Adare possess a deep understanding of their village, encompassing its unique qualities and recognising the necessary areas for improvement. The Public Realm Strategy is rooted in the belief that consulting the community from the outset and empowering them to contribute positively is essential. The consultation process to date for developing the Public Realm Plan has included various components:

- a walking audit and workshop engaging key stakeholders and public space users to gather information and ideas about specific streets and areas,
- an online presentation event to gather local community groups perspectives on the project's issues and priorities and to table initial proposals,
- a presentation of the initial proposals for public review and feedback via Limerick City and County Councils online platform "Mypoint"
- a presentation of the Draft Public Realm document for public review and feedback via Limerick City and County Councils online platform "MyPoint"
- 2 no. exhibitions to showcase the vision for Adare's public realm in the Adare community hall.



Did the **oak**  
**of Adare** once stand here?

Village Hall **feels**  
**disconnected** from the park  
Is it possible to **walk along the Village Green**?

**more green and welcoming**

**More biodiversity** should be a priority on Village Green

**Improve pedestrian footfall** top of the town

Change street to reflect **post-bypass reduction in traffic**

There is a **step on the footpath**  
at the top of Main Street that should be removed

Is it possible to **cycle along Main Street**?

**Events** on Main Street would be great

Make the Street **universally accessible**

Can the **parking be made**  
**more efficient** at the Heritage Centre?

**Better connection to the park** needed  
Is a **connection to the river** along Station Road possible?

**Pavements are too narrow**

# Co-creation and Engagement

The walking audit and workshop event was held in Adare starting at The Community Hall, Main street on Friday, 24th of September, 2021, from 9:00 am to 16:00 pm. Various stakeholder groups were invited to participate, including resident associations, local cultural groups, and local business groups. The event was also promoted through social media and the [www.adarevillage.com](http://www.adarevillage.com) to reach the general public.

The event consisted of three parts:

- **Introduction:** The design team provided an overview.
- **Walking Audit:** Participants were taken on a predefined routes through the Village and the wider context. Equipped with a map and a workshop book attendees were encouraged to document the perceived “problems” and share their visions for the spaces along the way. Discussions took place within the group along the route, and upon returning to the venue, all feedback was gathered.
- **Review of feedback:** the feedback and workbooks were carefully examined to capture the community’s values and to delve into their ideas, hopes, and aspirations for the public realm in the village. This review aimed to assimilate the valuable input received and gain a comprehensive understanding of the community’s vision for the village’s public spaces.



# What you told us

## Reduce dominance of Cars and Provide Off-Street Parking

“Dominance of cars in centre of Village detracts from experience”, “Reduce Cars in the Village Centre through additional off street parking facilities”, “Parking is the most essential aspect”, “car parking blocks views of cottages”

## Prioritise Active Travel

“Better walkways and cycle paths around the village would be welcome”, “Improvements to the many networks of the historic pedestrian lanes needed”, “Safe cycle access should be planned / provided”

## Accessibility and inclusivity

“There is a step on the pavement on Main street can it be removed?”, “Outdoor dining needs to be considered in the context of ensuring accessibility”, “Pavements often too narrow”, “Not accessible”

## Celebrate Heritage

“Ensure the Protection of historic cottages”, “Protect and enhance the Village Hall”, “Footpath on the main bridge or new pedestrian bridge into Adare would harness a whole new area of tourism and potential for walking tours”

## Value the Maigue River

“Need for restoration and development of the river bank”, “The provision of the pontoon at Turf’s Quay will open up the river for recreational kayaking etc”,

## Increase Biodiversity & Planting

“Can main street be more green and welcoming”, “Wildlife habitat protection” “More trees and plants” “Would like to see more biodiversity within the Village green”, “expansion and upgrade of the town park needed”, “need to develop a sensory garden in Town Park”

## Clutter and disrepair

“Maintenance and care of footpaths needed”, “Surfacing is poor”, “More street furniture needed for rest”, “Heritage Centre to reduce clutter”

## Art and Street performance

“Enhance the public realm with additional pieces of physical art in the village, along the riverwalk up to the manor fields”, “Design of Public Realm to allow for more street events”

## Wayfinding and Signage

“Development of a specific urban “Ecclesiastical quarter linking all of the 4 historic churches or the archaeological ruins”,

# Vision and Design Principles

In order to make a viable Public Realm Plan that can create positive change with time, a vision for Adare that celebrates the unique and intrinsic qualities of the place, its past, and its people is required.

The vision for Adare's future public realm is to safeguard that which makes it unique, enhance its special spatial qualities, and deliver quality public spaces that redress the balance between all users of the village. It recognises the changing needs of Adare and proposes a sustainable, green and inclusive public realm. By reflecting these needs, it aspires to improve the quality of life for its residents and contribute to the overall prosperity of the locality.

The design responses outlined in this Public Realm Plan are based on the foundations of the constraints and opportunities that have been encountered through the context appraisal stage, and the views and contributions of stakeholders. They are specific to the location, history and character of Adare.

Urban design principles such as those set out in the Best Practice Urban Design Manual, and Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, play a key role in this Public Realm Plan. The urban design aims of this plan are to create public spaces that are vibrant, distinctive, safe, secure and accessible and which promote and facilitate social interaction. In line with best practice place-making and the Limerick Development Plan, the following principles of place-making have been incorporated into this plan:

- Creation of character and sense of place through valuing and understanding the cultural, built and natural heritage;
- Providing an inclusive, high quality and safe network of connected streets and spaces;
- Providing priority for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport, avoid unnecessary street clutter and providing opportunities for improved health and wellbeing;
- Coherent, legible and attractive streetscapes
  - providing continuity and a strong sense of enclosure, variety of frontages, vibrancy and interest;

In addition to the principles outlined above, a set of public realm design principles have been identified through the engagement process and baseline analysis stage including those shown in the table overleaf. The foundation of these principles are underpinned by the existing environmental protection measures and policies/objectives regarding flood risk and surface water management outlined in both the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 and the Draft Adare Local Area Plan 2024-2030. Any proposals resulting from the Public Realm Plan must adhere to these measures and demonstrate compliance with the following:

<b>Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028</b>	
<b>EH O1</b>	Designated Sites and Habitats Directive
<b>EH O2</b>	Lesser Horseshoe Bat
<b>EH O3</b>	Ecological Impact Assessment
<b>EH O4</b>	Creation of New Habitats
<b>EH O5</b>	New Infrastructure Projects
<b>EH O7</b>	All Ireland Pollinator Plan
<b>EH O8</b>	Roosting Habitats
<b>EH O10</b>	Trees and Hedgerows
<b>EH O11</b>	Invasive Species
<b>EH O12</b>	Blue and Green Infrastructure
<b>EH O15</b>	Ground Water, Surface Water Protection and River Basin Management
<b>EH O17</b>	Water Quality
<b>EH O24</b>	Light Pollution
<b>EH P8</b>	Landscape Character Areas
<b>EH P9</b>	Historic Gardens, Designed Landscapes and Parklands
<b>EH O36</b>	Preservation of the Archaeological Heritage
<b>EH O39</b>	Protection of the setting of Archaeological Monuments
<b>EH O53</b>	Architectural Conservation Areas
<b>CAF P5</b>	Managing Flood Risk
<b>CAF O20</b>	Flood Risk Assessments
<b>CAF O21</b>	Identified Flood Risk
<b>CAF O22</b>	Cooperation with Other Agencies
<b>CAF O23</b>	Flood Relief Schemes
<b>IN O12</b>	Surface Water and SuDS
<b>Adare Draft Local Area Plan 2024-2030</b>	
<b>CH O1</b>	Climate Change
<b>CH O2</b>	Compliance with Environmental Assessments
<b>CH O3</b>	Tree protection and Nature Conservation
<b>CH O5</b>	Designated Sites and Nature Conservation.
<b>CH O6</b>	Lesser Horseshoe Bat
<b>CH O7</b>	Ecological Assessment
<b>CH O8</b>	Creation of new Habitats
<b>CH O9</b>	New Infrastructure projects
<b>IU O5</b>	Flood Risk Management
<b>IU O6</b>	Flood Risk and Blue Green Infrastructure

# Design Principles & Development Plan Alignment

Public Realm Strategic Objective	Public Realm Principle	Implications for the Public Realm	Development Plan Strategic Objective Alignment
PR-SO1	Progressive & Dynamic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attract and retain visitors and businesses through improving public realm settings to retail offer, creation of quality public spaces</li> <li>Utilisation of Adare brand in wayfinding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>SO1:</b> Grow Limerick's economy and create opportunity through maximising the potential for development through the promotion and <b>enhancement of the competitive advantages of Limerick</b></li> </ul>
PR-SO2	Climate Responsive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make a green, sustainable Main Street that is climate adapted</li> <li>Make room for nature and create seasonal differences through planting opportunities</li> <li>Include Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) to control surface water outfall and protect water quality. Proposals shall have regard to the Nature-based Solutions to the Management of Rainwater and Surface Water Run-off in Urban Areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>SO2:</b> Transition to an environmentally sustainable <b>carbon neutral economy</b>.</li> </ul>
PR-SO3	People-friendly & centred spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create opportunities for sitting, resting, and relaxation, and enhance space for public life</li> <li>Create a sense of place and improve lighting where possible.</li> <li>Create a Liveable Village where individuals, families and persons of all ages can live in the village for their entire life.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>SO3:</b> Ensure new and existing residential development is of the highest quality, enabling life cycle choices and physical, community, recreation and amenity infrastructure are provided in tandem, to create <b>sustainable, healthy, inclusive and resilient communities</b>.</li> </ul>
PR-SO4	Simplified, attractive, safe public realm environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce street clutter, especially ad-hoc signage</li> <li>Develop a cohesive strategy for street furniture</li> <li>Remove overhead cabling</li> <li>Incorporate a high quality material palette for the centre of Adare Village</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>SO4:</b> Protect the unique character of Limerick. Support and facilitate revitalisation and consolidation of the City, towns and villages, <b>through public realm and place-making initiatives</b>. <b>Ensure the highest quality of public realm and urban design principles are applied</b> to all new developments, including the construction of landmark buildings in appropriate locations.</li> </ul>

PR-SO5	Better access for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve pedestrian comfort on the Main Street and prohibit outdoor dining that obstructs the pedestrian way</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>SO6:</b> Reduce car dependency and promote and facilitate sustainable modes of transport. <b>Prioritise walking, cycling and public transport.</b> Provide an appropriate level of road infrastructure, road capacity and traffic management, to support existing and future development and enhance connectivity.</li> </ul>
PR-SO6	Connected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide off-street proposals for parking with pedestrian links to Main Street via existing entrances.</li> <li>Prioritise walking, cycling &amp; public transport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>SO6:</b> Reduce car dependency and promote and facilitate sustainable modes of transport. <b>Prioritise walking, cycling and public transport.</b> Provide an appropriate level of road infrastructure, road capacity and traffic management, to support existing and future development and enhance connectivity.</li> </ul>
PR-SO7	Green & Biodiverse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance the tree cover, and green infrastructure across the village</li> <li>Enhance the space for wildlife and the habitat value</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>SO8:</b> Protect, enhance and connect areas of natural heritage, green infrastructure and open space for the benefits of quality of life, biodiversity, protected species and habitats, while having the potential to facilitate climate change adaptation and flood risk measures</li> </ul>
PR-SO8	Enhance heritage settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safeguard the Village's identity and heritage whilst adding it's unique character and sense of place through valuing and understanding the cultural, built and natural heritage of Adare</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>SO9:</b> Protect, conserve and enhance the built and cultural heritage of Limerick, through promoting awareness, utilising relevant heritage legislation and ensuring good quality urban design principles are applied to all new developments. The principle that well planned and integrated development enhances the sustainability, attractiveness and quality of an area should be at the centre of any proposal.</li> </ul>
PR-SO9	Welcoming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make Main Street visually more welcoming and attractive for residents and visitors</li> <li>Reduce traffic noise</li> <li>Support Brand Adare</li> <li>Support the development of a Greenway &amp; Blueway in Adare</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>SO10:</b> Support growth in the tourism sector in Limerick, specifically focusing on sustainable tourism, and capture key opportunities to develop the sector based around five key drivers – Greenways, Waterways, Activities, Heritage, Arts and Culture, in an urban and a rural environment.</li> </ul>

# Methodology and Process

The Public Realm Plan for Adare was carried out by a multidisciplinary team of urbanists, planners, architects', landscape architects, ecologists and engineers, all with experience in delivering public realm projects in Ireland and internationally.

A number of important studies have been prepared for the development of the village and its surroundings which are listed below. The Adare Public Realm Plan seeks to develop on the significant aims and objectives put forward in these studies, whilst remaining cognisant of their requirements.

- The Adare Local Area Plan (2024- 2023)
- Adare 5 Year Strategic Plan 2020-2025
- Adare Destination Plan (2013)
- Adare Tidy Towns Action Plan (2023-2025)
- Adare Manor Fields Masterplan (2010)
- An exploration of the recreation and amenity potential of the Maigue Rivers (2021)
- A review of local heritage websites, tourist sites, cartographic material including soils, geology, flooding, topographic maps, planning maps and domestic news issues affecting the public realm was also undertaken.

To date, the stages in the following diagram have been undertaken by Limerick City and County Council with urban design consultants, Adare's residents and local community groups:



Steps in the plan making process are listed below.

- Review the context studies that have been undertaken to date on Adare and undertake any additional studies as required;
- Review the historical studies that have been undertaken to date on Adare;
- Review the Adare Strategic Plan (2020 – 2025) and consult with the Adare Community Trust Group to consider public realm objectives referenced within the plan;
- Assess each public space, their design, impact and future use;
- Assess existing village circulation (both pedestrian & vehicular) and consider how these may be improved;
- Assess existing walking routes and trails around the village and consider opportunities;
- Assess the existing streetscape and associated infrastructure (street furniture, overhead wires, signage, lighting) and provide proposals on improvements to include;
- Assess and review existing carpark capacity within the village and provide a new parking strategy for the village to include additional permanent and overspill parking spaces;
- Assess, review and audit information/interpretation/signage as viewed by a tourist or a visitor and provide signage and wayfinding recommendations within the plan;
- Assessment of existing sculpture and public art within Adare and provide recommendations for new additions within strategic locations;
- Assess the impression of the approach roads into the village and provide advice on how these can be enhanced;
- Assess planting within the overall study area;
- Detailed assessment of the Main Street from St Nicholas' Church to the Boys National School – following the construction of the Adare Bypass - to inform a public realm upgrade plan including junction realignment, planting, street furniture and street crossings. The plan will include design specifications of materials recommended such as paving, landscaping, street furniture, street lighting, traffic calming, car parking areas, road width reductions, etc;
- Detailed assessment of public realm local to the Heritage Centre, the Village Hall and the former Fever Hospital – to include design specifications of materials recommended such as paving, landscaping, street furniture, street lighting, etc.
- Assess the existing streetscape and associated infrastructure (street furniture, overhead wires, signage, lighting) and provide proposals on improvements to include traffic calming, car parking areas, road width reductions, etc.
- Assessment of the relationship between the village and the River Maigue. Provide opportunities for improved interaction between the village and the river for the residents and visitors to the village. Consider opportunities for development of Adare Quay in collaboration with Adare Flood Relief Scheme (FRS) Steering Group
- Green infrastructure assessment for the village including analysis of key open spaces such as the Village Park and the Park adjacent to the Community Hall.

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# UNDERSTANDING ADARE

Landscape of Adare

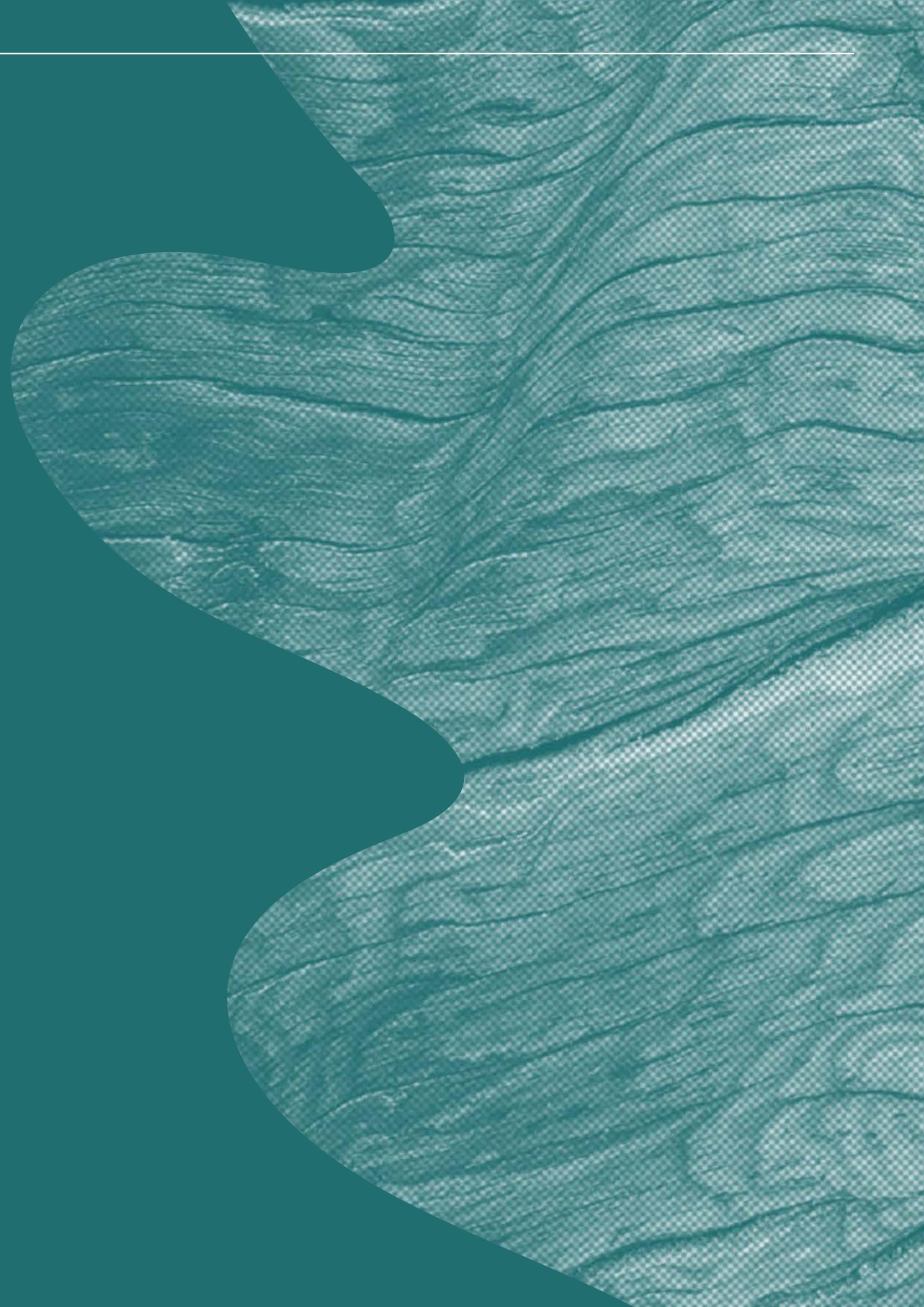
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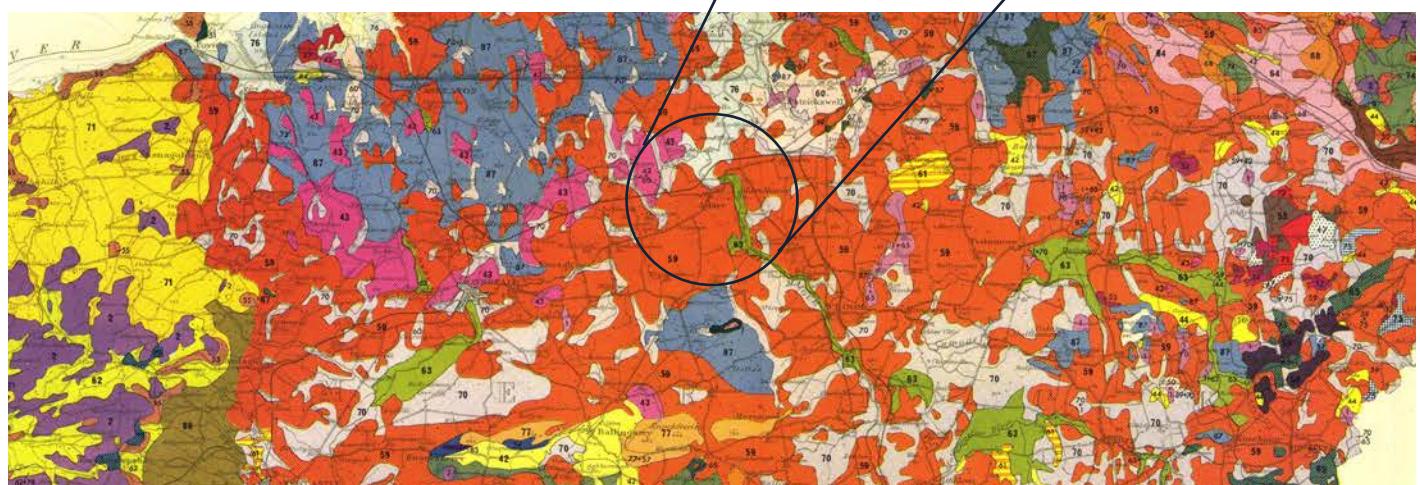
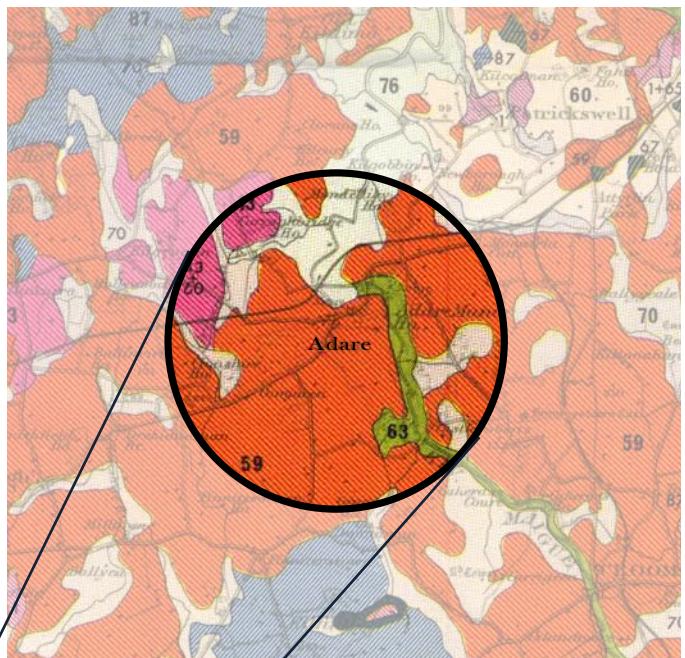
## Landscape of Adare

Adare has a bedrock geology of limestone, over which layers of glacial drifts laid down form its current landscape.

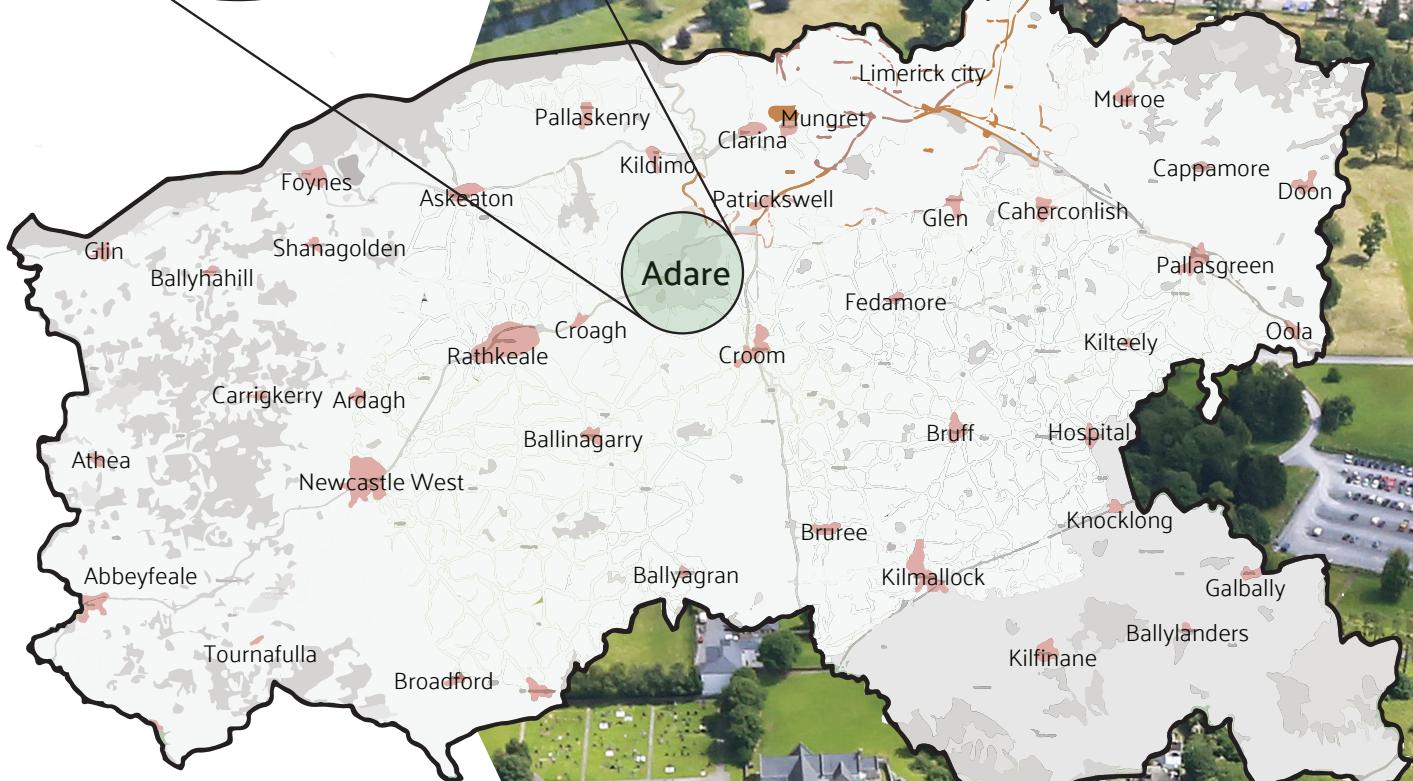
The melting of these glacial drifts formed glacial rivers which deposited sands and gravels as found along the river areas of the Maigue and Clonshire. During the post-glacial period, fine loamy soils, excellent for farming, along with clayey drifts were laid down defining the landscape. Field patterns show a perceptible distinction between the dynamic river landscape and the higher elevated landscapes of loam and clayey drifts. Limestone is the predominant material palette and can be seen in the public realm to this day.

This differentiation is a key characteristic feature to be emphasised in the public realm plan through the material pallet proposed along with the proposals around green links which respect the patterns present within the landscape.

- Orange: Fine Loamy drift with limestones (good tillage/pasture land)
- Green: River alluvium (glacial sand and gravel)
- Pink: Glacial drift and colluvium of shale origin
- Yellow: Estuarine alluvium



Landscape Character of Adare shown in Teagasc soil maps



# Natural Heritage

The Plan area is rich in biodiversity, with many significant protected habitats and species including terrestrial habitats supporting a range of species and flora including otters, bats, wildfowl, salmon, lamprey amongst others. Other habitats, although not protected are very important for providing links between the protected habitats, allow migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild plants and mammals. Examples include scrub, hedgerows, tree lines, roadside verges, housing estate open spaces and gardens. The presence of several archaeological sites, as well as vernacular older buildings offer refuge and roosting space for bird and bat species in particular. Natural heritage in the plan area includes a wide range of natural features that make an essential contribution to the environmental quality of the plan area. Two designated sites are present within the Adare plan area as follows:

Lower River Shannon Special Area of Conservation (SAC). This site is protected under the EU Habitats Directive, and is located along the River Maigue. Ireland has an obligation under this Directive to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest of the Lower River Shannon SAC. These habitats and species in relation to the River Maigue at Adare include species Sea Lamprey [1095], Brook Lamprey [1096] River Lamprey [1099] Salmon [1106] and Otter [1355] and habitat Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculion fluitantis* and *Callitricho-Batrachion* vegetation [3260]. This habitat includes

a sub-type which includes Triangular Club-rush (*Scirpus triquetus*) and Opposite-leaved Pondweed (*Groenlandia densa*). Both aquatic plant species are present in Adare and are also protected under the Wildlife Acts (1976 and 2000) and listed on the Flora Protection Order 2015 (National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), 2012a).

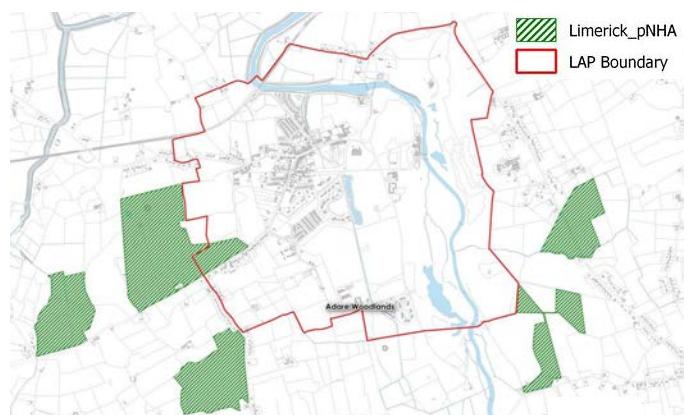
Additionally, the lower reaches of the River Maigue, approximately 8km downstream is protected under the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries Special Protection Area (SPA), which supports the largest numbers of wintering waterfowl in Ireland. Twenty one qualifying interest birds' species are protected under this SPA, of which the following have been recorded in Adare: Eurasian Curlew, Eurasian Teal, Eurasian Wigeon, European Golden Plover, Northern Lapwing, Whooper Swan.

Adare Woodlands proposed Natural Heritage Area, is protected under the Wildlife Amendment Act (2000), Natural Heritage Areas (NHA) are legally protected from damage from the date they are formally proposed for designation. The aim of the NHA network is to conserve and protect nationally important plant and animal species and their habitats. They are also designated to conserve and protect nationally important landforms, geological or geomorphological features. Article 10 of the Habitats Directive together with the Habitats Regulations 2011; place a high degree of importance on these sites as features that connect European sites.

The Adare Woodlands proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) is located to the west of the village and is partly within the plan boundary. This woodlands forms part of the Adare Woodlands (Code 429) pNHA which comprises in total seven separate areas of woodland located in the vicinity of Adare. The Adare Woodlands pNHA is believed to be one of the oldest woodlands in the country, perhaps remnants of an ancient forest that once covered large areas of the Shannon Basin, and therefore of national importance.

The Adare Local Area Plan includes areas in which the Habitat's Directive Annex II species lesser horseshoe bat is likely to be present. There are five known lesser horseshoe bat roosts within Adare Plan Area, which are monitored by the National Parks and Wildlife Service. Lesser Horseshoe Bat is an Annex II species and is a Qualifying Interest of Curraghchase Woods SAC, located 4km from Adare. This species is particularly sensitive to artificial light and artificial illumination can lead to loss of otherwise suitable habitat for the species and create barriers preventing commuting between habitats or movement to suitable habitat elsewhere. Woodland, treelines and linear features in the landscape are particularly important for lesser horseshoe bats. Such habitats are present in a range of areas within the plan area, in particular the Maigue River running through the plan area with associated natural habitat on both sides and also the parkland and woodland area to the west of the plan area adjoining Adare Woodlands proposed Natural Heritage Area.

Outside the protected sites, implementing measures to preserve and enhance wildlife corridors and stepping stones can greatly contribute to the protection of our wildlife. By safeguarding features such as hedgerows, treelines, stone walls, wetlands, and wildlife-friendly gardens and demesnes that provide shelter and food, we can help maintain functional corridors for movement, refuge, shelter, foraging, and nesting habitats in Adare. Protecting and restoring these essential elements will prevent the erosion and loss of biodiversity, ensuring a more connected and thriving landscape for wildlife.



Map of Natural Heritage Areas, Woodlands of Adare

# Historical Development

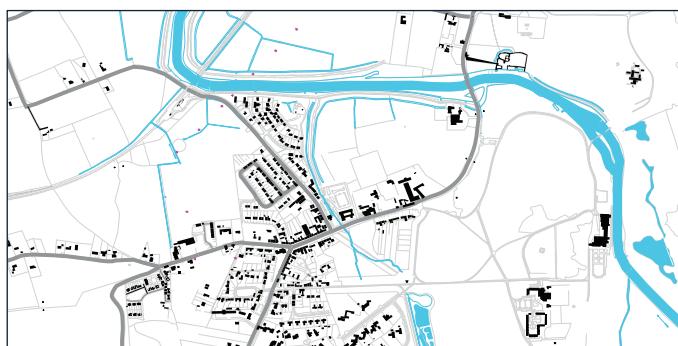
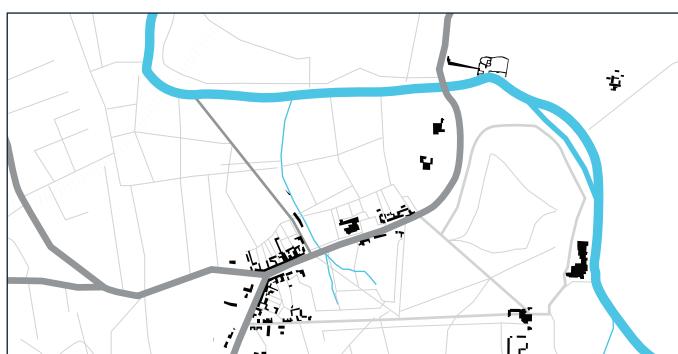
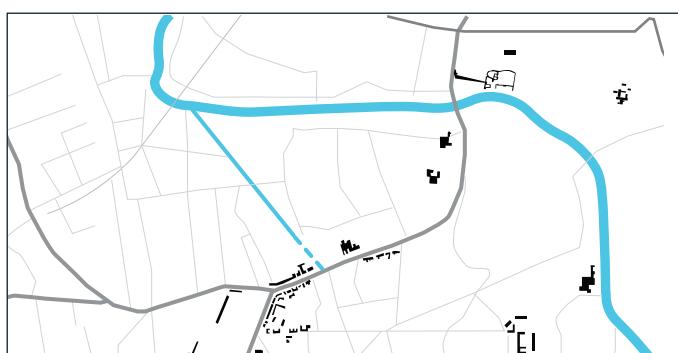
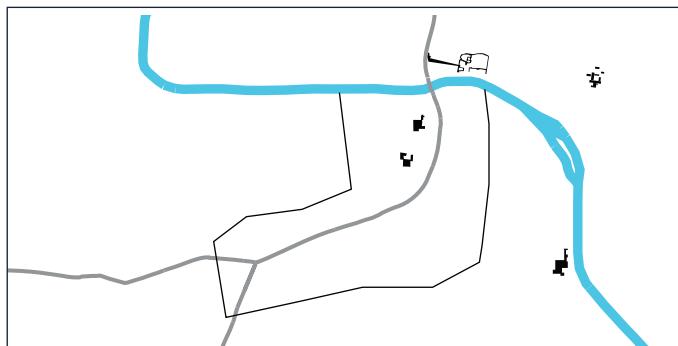
The river had an extensive flood plain that extended to the current day Village Hall, where an oak reportedly stood, recalling the village's Gaelic name, Ath Dara, the ford of the oak. Several ecclesiastical settlements were constructed nearby Desmond Castle Adare, including the Trinitarian Abbey, the only one in Ireland (1230) south of the Maigue , the Augustinian Friary (1316) south of the Maigue and Franciscan Friary (1446) east of the Maigue.

The presence of a medieval road surface, discovered in archaeological excavations, beneath the Main Street in Adare demonstrates that an urban nucleus existed separate from the castle as early as the 13th/14th century.

The village had dwindled to a backwater by the 1800's, when the Earl of Dunraven planned to create a new village. Remnants of this period characterize much of the village's unique identity, including the Manor House, the row of thatched cottages and the Village Hall, the Fever Hospital and the Methodist Church.

The village later developed westwards where it formed a 19th Century Main Street (The Rathkeale to Limerick road), that still forms the commercial core of the village to this day. The village has continued to expand westwards along its main roadways with the construction of individual houses, suburban developments and residential clusters.

Opposite: Diagrams showing the historical development of Adare



# Archaeological & Built Heritage

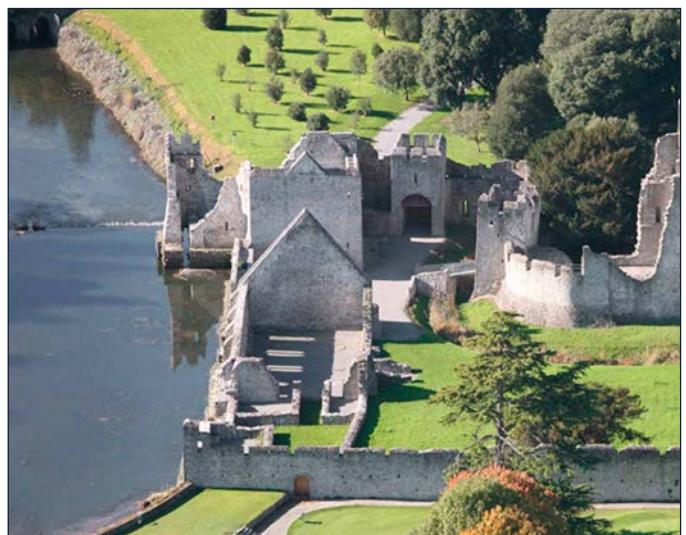
The archaeological richness of Adare has always been evident in its medieval standing structures, the castle and the three religious houses. This is attested to by the wealth of sketches and paintings created by antiquarians and visitors from the eighteenth century onward. In more recent times, however, sub surface and low surface register archaeological material has been recorded and brought to public attention, both from the main street and from green field sites. The line of eastern town defences has been established with associated burgage plots, while a formalised road surface has been traced from the Dunraven Arms to the Heritage Centre.

Archaeological remains, both upstanding and below ground, and their settings are all afforded protection under the National Monuments Act 1930-2014 and through the Local Authority's Local Area Plan (LAP) & overarching Development Plan. There are 36 known monuments within the Draft LAP, a large part of the current town is included within the RMP L1021-032001, classified as the Historic Town of Adare, while 5 of the 36 are also designated National Monuments, the castle, the three religious houses and the town defences.

A protected structure is a structure considered to be of special interest from an architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical point of view. There are 108 Protected Structures in the village of Adare, 76 of which are on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.

An Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) is a place, area, group of structures or townscape, taking account of building lines and heights, that is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or that contributes to the appreciation of a protected structure. Adare has an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) which extends along Main Street and parts of Rathkeale Road and Blackabbey Road.

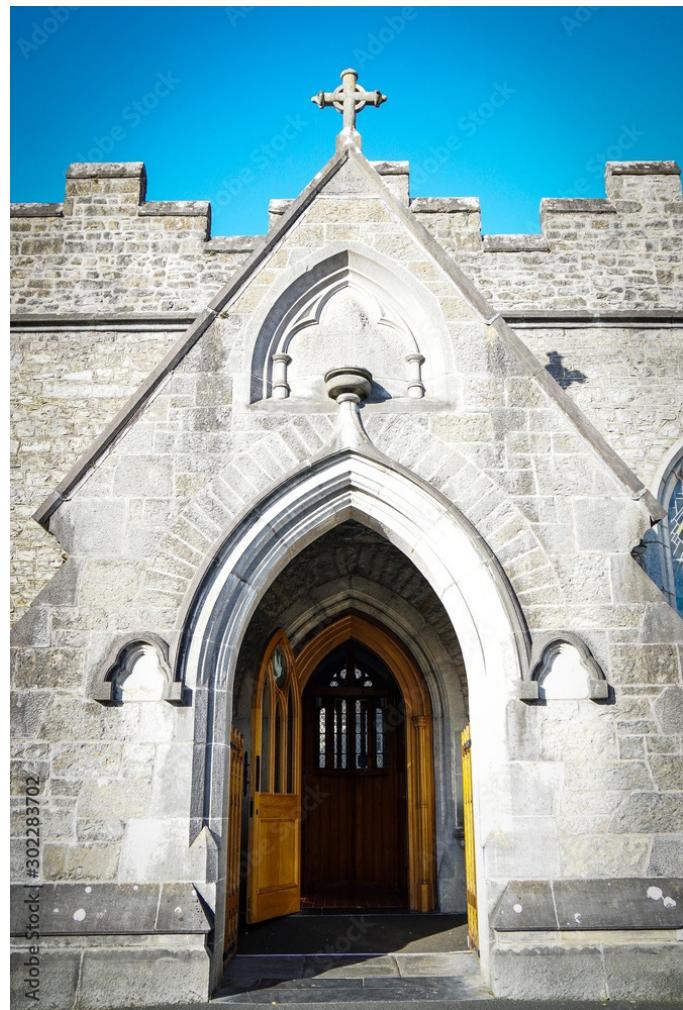
The safeguarding of Adare's archeological & built heritage sites plays a crucial role in safeguarding its unique architectural, historical, and cultural character. From notable ecclesiastical sites and the grandeur of Adare Manor to the carefully planned streetscapes along Main Street, these elements contribute significantly to the village's built heritage. By preserving these sites, Adare maintains its distinctive identity and an established streetscape that embodies the village's rich history and charm.



# Spatial Qualities

Adare has many unique spatial attributes, from its historic core right through to its surrounding landscape. The village possesses distinct heritage regions within its public space, including notable areas such as Desmond Castle Adare and its accompanying bridge, the Cottages, the 19th Century central core, the medieval Friaries and Abbey, and Adare Manor with its elegant demesne, enclosed by its iconic limestone walls.

The 19th century historical core of the village is delineated by the Village Hall east to the Cottages. The Maigue River, is a tributary of the Shannon and flows around the east and north of the village – confluencing with the Shannon approximately 12km downstream.



# Tourism Destinations & Amenities

Adare is a destination within itself as well as near the Wild Atlantic Way. It has a well-established tourism infrastructure with a dedicated Heritage Centre and tourist information office, which acts as a key resource for many tourists to the village and wider area. Adare has several renowned tourist attractions; Desmond Castle Adare, a 14th century Augustinian Friary, Trinitarian Abbey founded in c.1230, the 15th century Franciscan Friary, later structures such as Adare Methodist church are of great appeal.

The Cottages, the Village Hall, the Village Park and many unique heritage buildings and artefacts are situated throughout the village. The Manor and golf course offers an exclusive getaway location, and the village is well served by two more very popular hotels, The Dunraven Arms on the Main Street and the Woodlands, a little further outside the village as well as numerous Bed & Breakfasts and Air B&Bs.

There are several walking trails in and around the village that have great potential to be extended. Adare also has several local amenities which could benefit from being linked to the village's sustainable network. These include schools, public sport amenities, the Manor Fields, the Adare GAA club, and the Maigue River Park.

Adare Heritage Trust Ltd. commissioned a report to be carried out on Adare Tourism, the findings of which been taken into account in the preparation of this document.



Some limitations for popular tourist attractions identified within the report are outlined below:

- Desmond Castle Adare is open to tourists from June to September only. A good vantage point can also be obtained from the bridge refuges, however the traffic and lack of pedestrian footpath mean that seeking a vantage from this point is not advisable
- The Old St Nicholas Church is a ruin close to Desmond Castle Adare, but is located within the confines of the Adare Manor Golf Course. Public access is possible with consent, however, it is not promoted due to potential conflict with the golfers and health and safety risk, and as such access is limited. The ruin is only partially visible from the road
- The Franciscan Abbey, constructed by the 7th Earl of Kildare, close to Old St Nicholas Church on the Adare Manor Golf Club and has the same access issues for tourists.

Tourists arriving by coach often only have a one-hour stop and travelers by car or bus often use the town as a stop-off or gateway to southwest destinations.  
(e.g.Kerry)

Fáilte Ireland identifies that domestic tourism is a key growth market for tourism in Ireland. The general age profile of the domestic market is slightly older than the national age profile (<2013 URS) Fáilte Ireland denotes that in order to entice visitors to stay longer tourism hubs need to have a good range of supporting services such as accommodation, shops and good restaurants/evening entertainment, but also a range of amenities available within the public realm such as walking and cycling trails or loops and unique public artwork that engages discussion and spark curiosity.

Golfing, walking, cycling, horse riding and angling are all popular outdoor activities in Adare, with golfing being the most promoted/utilised for attracting visitors from other countries to Ireland.



# Trends

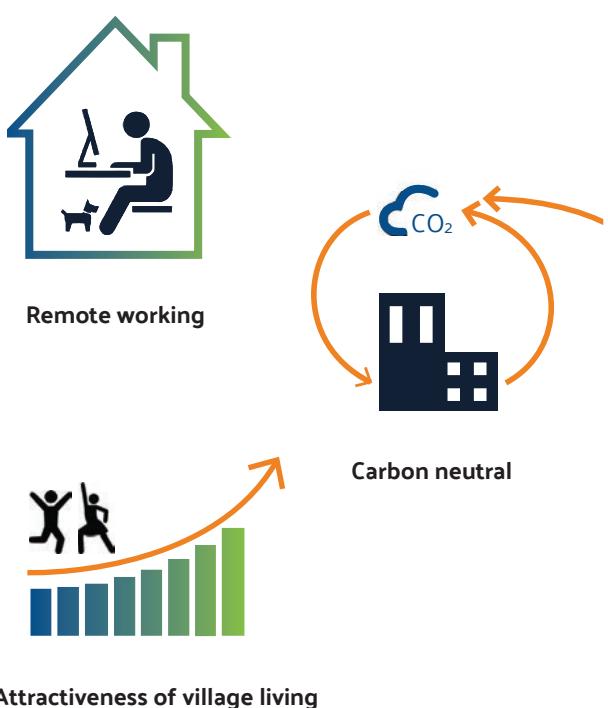
The COVID-19 pandemic has emphasized the significance of villages such as Adare in supporting local communities. With remote work becoming more prevalent, many individuals have rediscovered the value and convenience of shopping locally, as well as the importance of their villages as a hubs for social and cultural engagement. This shift towards remote work also means that many individuals can reduce their commuting time and spend more time actively participating in their own communities.

This change underscores the ever-evolving role of Adare village and emphasizes the need for adaptation in order to evolve in response to these trends. Adare must chart its own path of development and transformation to effectively meet the changing needs and preferences of its residents whilst protecting its historic character and sense of place. Today's post-pandemic world involves an increase in remote working, online trade and a more urgent shift to a carbon neutral economy (i.e. sustainable mobility and energy production).

Climate adaptation is an increasing requirement in order to address the symptoms of change in the environment including issues such as flood protection and air quality. Adare is subject to flooding and high-level studies for significant flood protection works have commenced. Adare is also preparing for a bypass as part of the Limerick Foynes bypass which should reduce traffic volumes by 77% through the Main Street.

Investing into a greener and more sustainable public realm is a proven method to improve the village at many levels, expanding on its attractiveness, increasing the quality of life of its inhabitants socially and economically. The reduction of traffic and noise in the village centre will reinforce this and contribute to the overall sense of community, ultimately creating a better place to live, work and visit.

As one of Ireland's "Prettiest Villages", Adare serves an attractive alternative to bigger urban areas for a post-pandemic professional population who now have the option to work partially or in some cases fully remotely.



Above: Global post-pandemic trends which have recently emerged

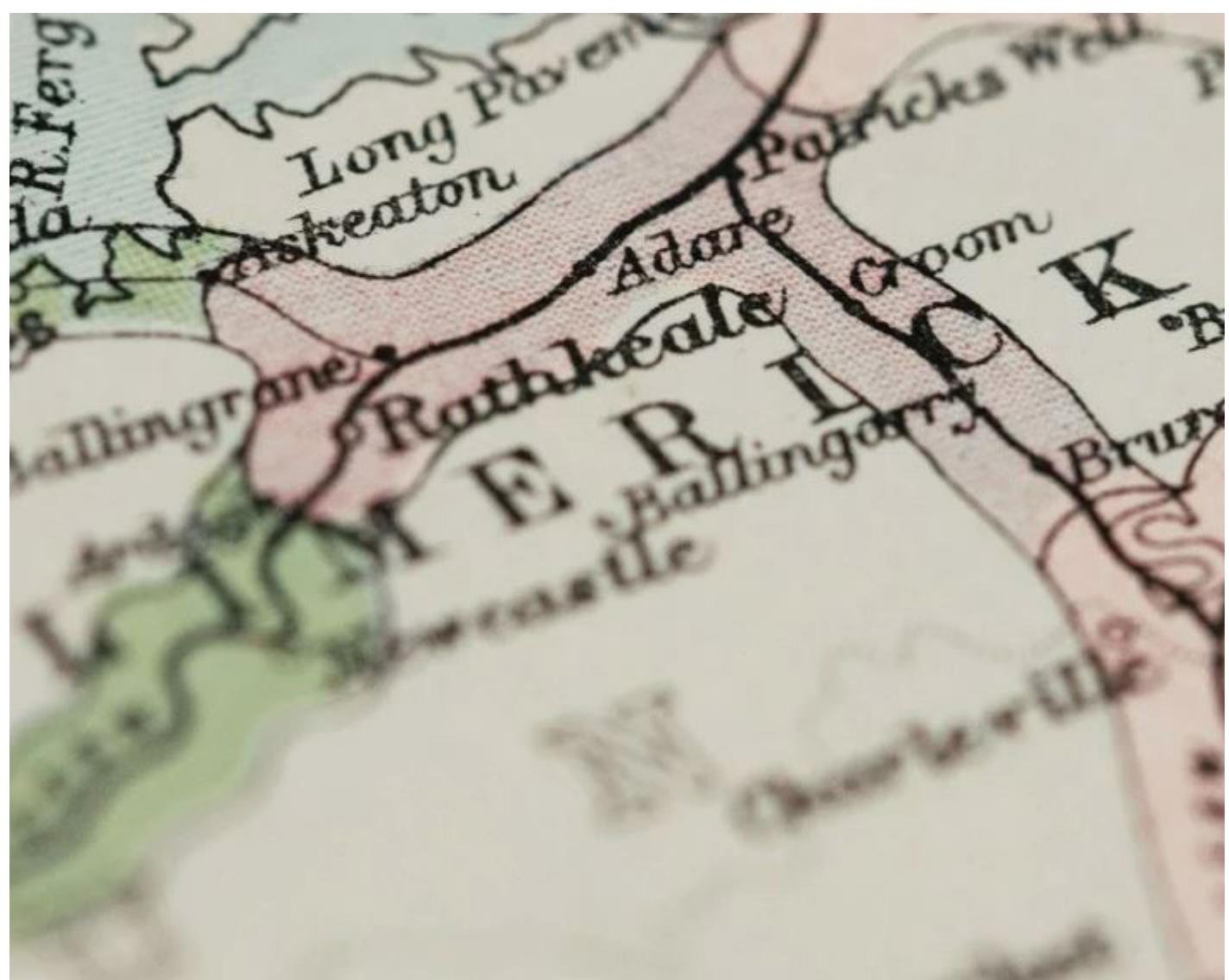
# Urban Design Analysis

Undertaking an urban design analysis of Adare's streets and public spaces brought to light a set of recurring issues throughout the village core which are symptomatic of streets that have been designed largely with vehicular movement in mind.

The Main Street area was originally designed with a dirt road for horses and designated footpaths. Its width, approximately 23m, was dimensioned to facilitate the right-angled parking of carts and horses, which serviced its role as a market village for the surrounding agricultural community. Nowadays, superfluous poles and poorly located street furniture and signage clutter create barriers to pedestrian movement. There are too few pedestrian crossings, dropped kerbs are used inconsistently and surfacing is frequently in poor condition.

Pavements are often too narrow; Main street width has historically been determined by a consistent carriageway width, therefore when distances narrow between historic stone walls it tends to be the pavements which are squeezed. Car parking obstructions detract from the environment, however engagement with stakeholders has highlighted that there is a need to provide comfortable off-street car-parking facilities. This Plan recognises the need for car usage in a rural context to access the village centre, particularly given the limited means of alternative methods of transportation and absence of active travel infrastructure.

Overall, the village's streets fall below accessibility standards. This plan wishes to address these challenges by putting forward ambitious and innovative proposals to make Adare more pedestrian and cycle-friendly, accessible and inclusive, a place where people of all abilities can move with ease.



# Mobility and Safety

As aforementioned, this Public Realm Plan seeks to align with Local and National policy objectives. The creation of cycle infrastructure within a rural context is supported within many National level policy documents. The government is committed to rural regeneration, as can be demonstrated further through policies such as Town Centre First and Our Rural Future, and throughout various National policies there are individual actions directed at improving rural active travel measures which reinforce this ambition, some of which are highlighted below.

A key target outlined in “Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future. A new transport Policy for Ireland 2009-2020” is to ensure that alternatives to the car are more widely available, mainly through a radically improved public transport service and through investment in cycling and walking. A separate Smarter travel Policy Framework outlines the vision for cycling to be a normal way to get about rural areas, particularly for short trips. Is it now widely accepted that cycling contributes to an improved quality of life and quality of public realm, a stronger economy and business environment, and an enhanced spatial environment. Objective 3 of the National Cycle Policy is for the provision of designated rural cycle networks, and Objective 4 importantly focuses on the provision of cycle-friendly routes to schools.

At a local level, Objective SM 1 Movement and Accessibility of the Local Area Plan states that is an objective of the Council to:

- a)** Enhance the walking and cycling networks through the village within the lifetime of the Plan and seek to improve direct pedestrian linkages, cycle networks and infrastructure throughout the village and improve connectivity to the village centre and existing services.
- b)** Deliver a Transport Plan for the village within the lifetime of the Plan, which will consider traffic flow and parking around the village and improved pedestrian and cyclist provision. High quality public realm will be required as part of any village centre redevelopment in line with the Public Realm Plan.
- c)** Facilitate and implement school streets and school zones, including slow zones around the school, and promote/facilitate active travel options for school children to reduce the health and safety risks associated with traffic congestion, pollution and inactive lifestyles. This includes the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Programme in partnership with the NTA and Green schools.
- d)** Incorporate Sustainable Travel measures in all new developments in the village and along the full length of the proposed indicative link road from the Rathkeale Road to Station Road and along the L1422-314 to the GAA grounds and along the N21 southwards to the Ballingarry junction and northwards to Desmond Castle, Adare.

Main Street forms a two-way street with a speed limit

of 50 kph, leading to Rathkeale Road with speed limits of 80 kph beyond Scoil Naomh Iosaf. Major traffic delays are currently experienced through Adare Village (18,300 AADT) on the N21\*. Noise and air particle pollution, pedestrian and cycle safety and pedestrian comfort are ongoing issues for the quality of life on Main Street. 2011 Census data shows that 62% of the population still travel by car for work, school or college journeys, and is therefore the dominant means of travelling in Adare, with just 23% walking, 9% public transport and 0% cycling.

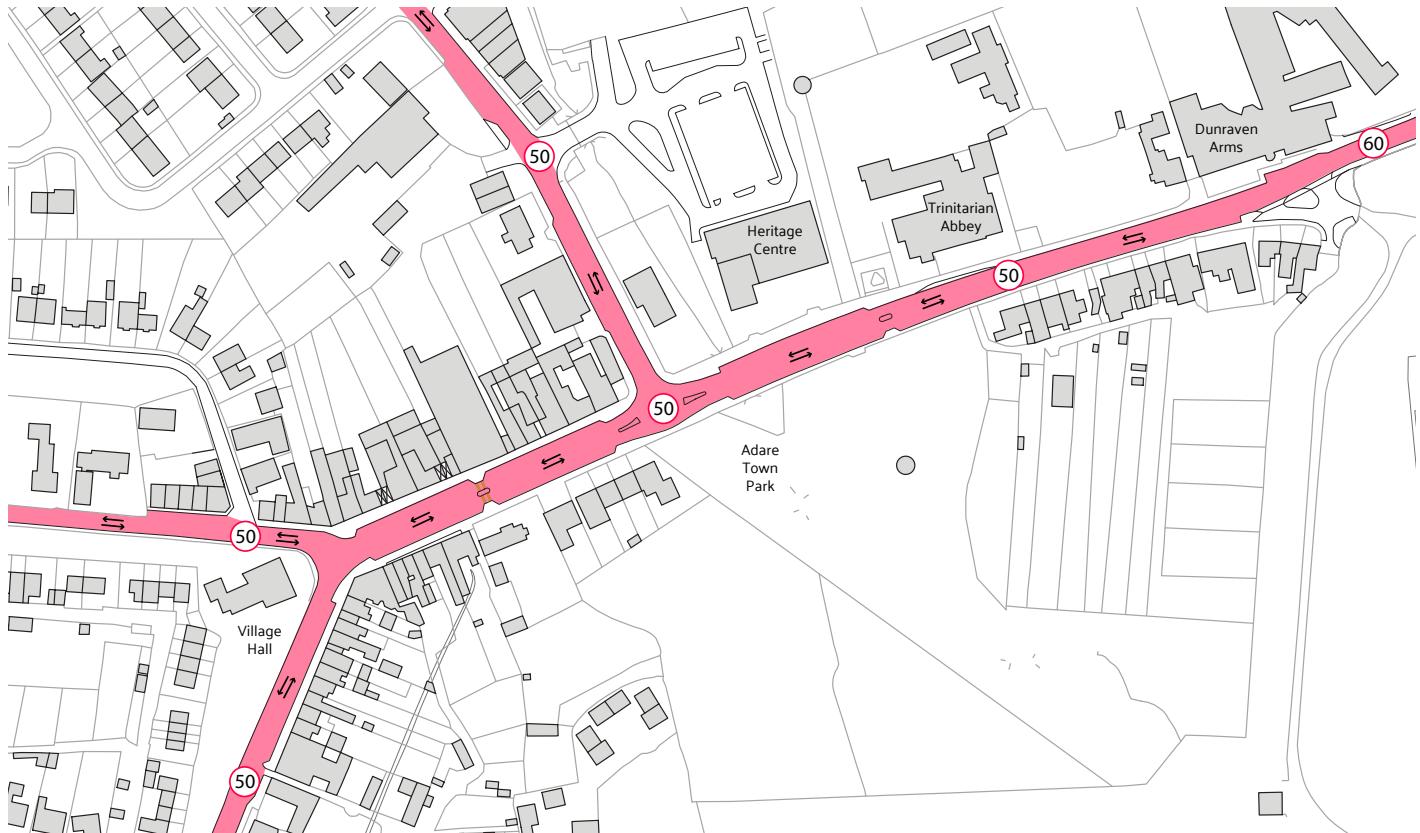
This last mode offers significant development

potential for residents and tourism in the long term, especially through the core of the village, to the schools and in the context of a future Greenway. The implementation of cycle routes in the village would be further supported by the development of the proposed Adare bypass which is expected to provide a 77% reduction in traffic levels\*\* along N21 through Adare Village with a proportionate reduction in noise and air pollution. A projected reduction in HGVs from 1770 per day to 390 per day is also anticipated as a result of the bypass project.\*\*\*

\* Foynes to Limerick Road (including Adare Bypass) EIAR submission, chapter 5 - Traffic analysis

\*\* Foynes to Limerick Road (including Adare Bypass) EIAR submission, chapter 5 - Traffic analysis

\*\*\* An Bord Pleanála Inspectors Report ABP-306146-19 & ABP-306199-19

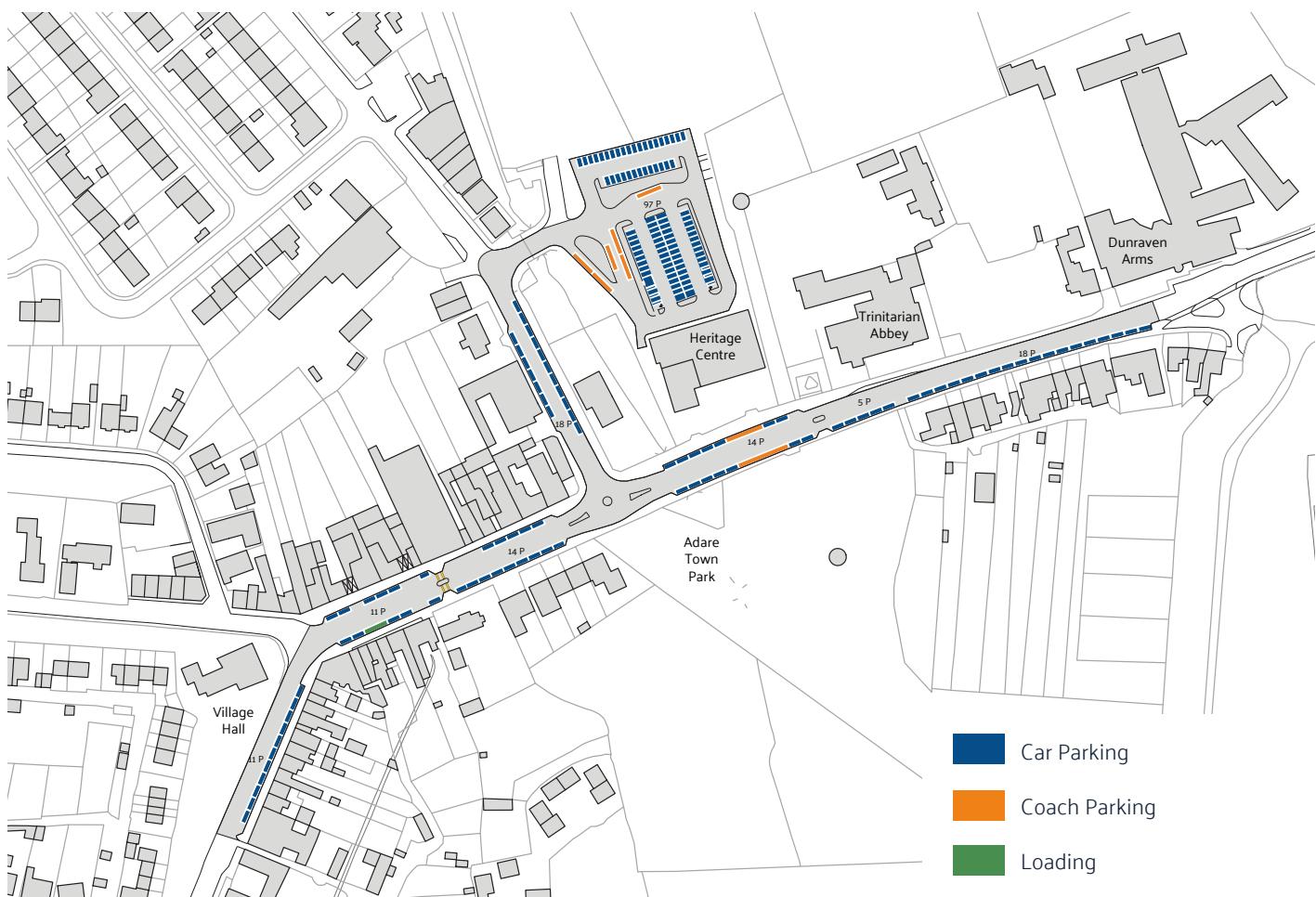


Existing mobility and speed map of Main Street Adare

# Parking

Most visitor and residential parking is located on Main Street from the Village Hall to the Dunraven Arms inclusive of Station Road to the Heritage Centre and Rathkeale Road to Collins Bar. This includes approximately 90 public parking spaces, 2 accessible spaces, 1 loading bay, 2 bus stops and 1 Garda space. The Heritage centre has 91 customer parking spaces, 6 accessible spaces and 6 parking spaces for coaches. The section of Rathkeale Road between the Village hall and Collins bar has 11 parking spaces while a satellite parking area on Rathkeale Road across from Scoil Naomh Iosaf has 31 car parking and 2 accessible spaces. Several pockets of off-street (private) parking also exist at adjacent side roads. Parking is at capacity on Main Street and no more space is available. Discussions with stakeholders indicated that there is a need to assess parking capacity, while

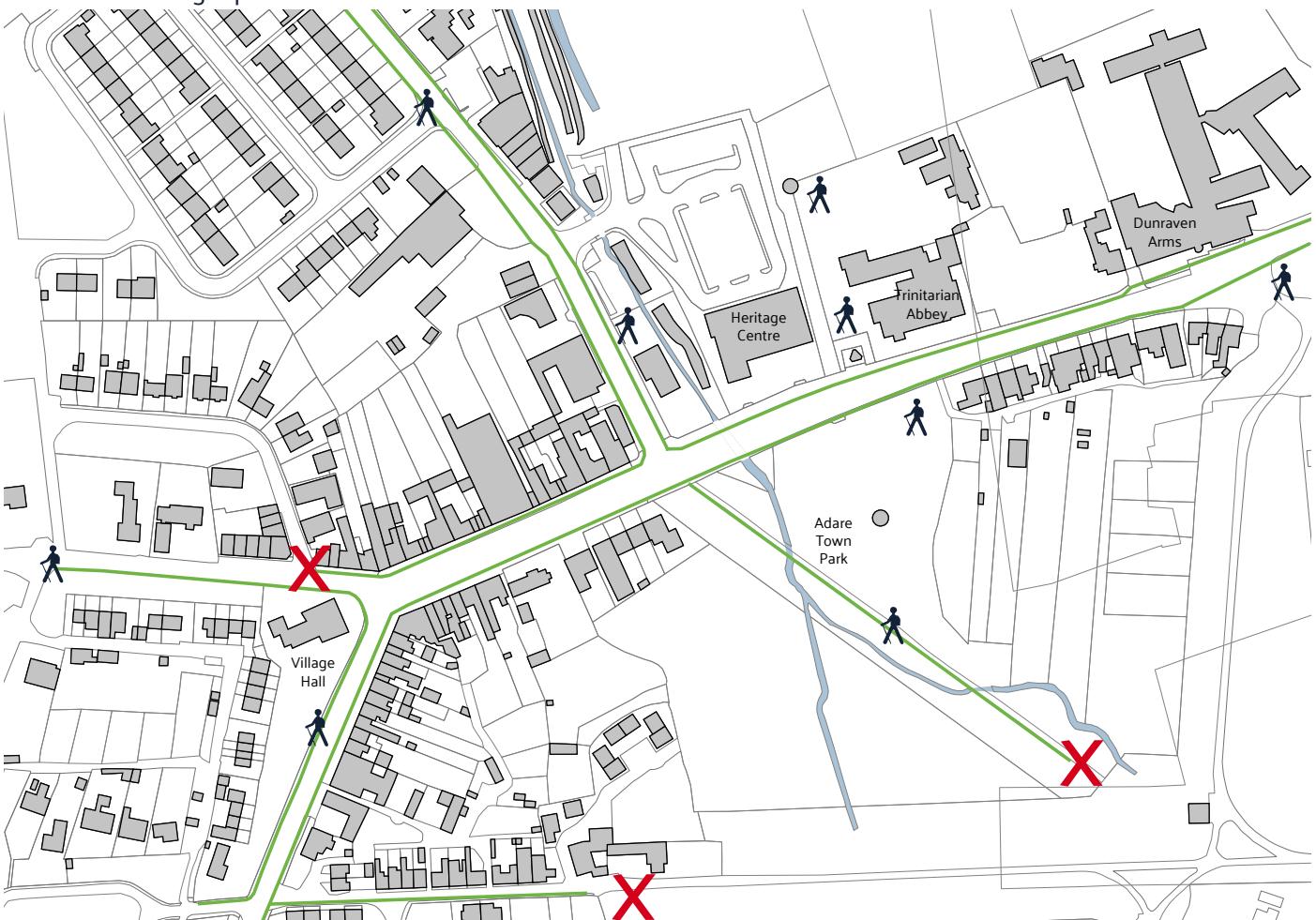
improving the quality of life on Main Street and the health of the community. The current streetscape is dominated by cars, which can be perceived as harsh and unwelcoming for visitors and residents alike. A balance needs to be struck by carefully managing vehicle movement so as to ensure that streets are accessible places that are not dominated by cars and car parking. The initial challenge of car parking loss from the Main Street could result in a positive opportunity to address universal design, street furniture for the elderly, and trees. Alternative parking concepts will be required to deliver a sustainable village centre. A combination of visitor short-stay car parks within walking distance of the Village centre and more peripheral 'park and ride/park and bike' long-stay car parks could reduce private vehicle use within the Village and encourage active movement.



Parking map of main Street Adare. There is a mix of public (90 on-street parking), Heritage Centre parking (97 parking), 6 coaches, and several pockets of off-street private parking

# Existing Walking Routes

Main Street currently has a pedestrian route that connects to nearby areas. However, there is a significant opportunity to enhance its appeal by establishing a broader network of interconnected routes. This network would offer more diverse pathways and experiences, eliminating the need for pedestrians to backtrack when they encounter dead ends. There are several issues that need to be addressed to improve the pedestrian experience. Firstly, there is a shortage of pedestrian crossings, which hampers safe and convenient movement, and the condition of the pavement is poor in places. The pavements are often too narrow, as the street design tends to prioritize maintaining a consistent carriageway width. Consequently, when distances between buildings narrow, it is the pavements that suffer from being squeezed.



Pedestrian walking routes with interruptions

Moreover, the wide turning radii for cars compromise visibility for pedestrians at corners. Street furniture and signage are often poorly placed, creating obstacles that hinder pedestrian movement. Unauthorized street furniture and car parking obstructions further detract from the overall environment.

Adare has a walkable street structure with small urban blocks and fine urban grain, particularly at the Village Hall where streets converge. Invariably, there are locations where connectivity is restricted, for example large private sites with no through access. To improve walkability, defined routes along pedestrian desire lines that connect into the surrounding street pattern and hierarchy should be introduced.

# Pedestrian Comfort

Some stretches of pavement areas, notably at the Cottages, have 75% of the street section dedicated to car use. There is a step on the footpath at Upper Main Street that could be replaced with a slope for improved accessibility. Pedestrian comfort could be enhanced throughout the village centre by widening the pavement. In general, street life (terraces, seating) has been reduced by narrowing pavements and encroaching parked cars. There is an opportunity to widen these areas and create a more welcoming streetscape. Improving walkability provides people with a sense of safety, encourages pedestrian movement, encounter and exchange, enables social and economic interaction and enhances community life.



# Existing Landscape of Main Street & Surrounds

The natural qualities of Main Street are largely determined by adjacent green areas such as private gardens, the village park and less by planting in the public street itself. The northbound carriageway is defined by the trees in the public realm as is Station Road.

The plan seeks to enhance the tree cover, and green infrastructure across the Village centre through a street tree and planting programme to the Village green, Main Street & Station Road.



Landscape of Main Street

# 3

# KEY PUBLIC REALM OPPORTUNITIES

Sustainable Green Infrastructure

Maigue River Park

Main Street Area

Detailed Improvements to Main Street & Surrounds

General Streetscape Principles

Celebrating Adare's Uniqueness



# KEY PUBLIC REALM OPPORTUNITIES

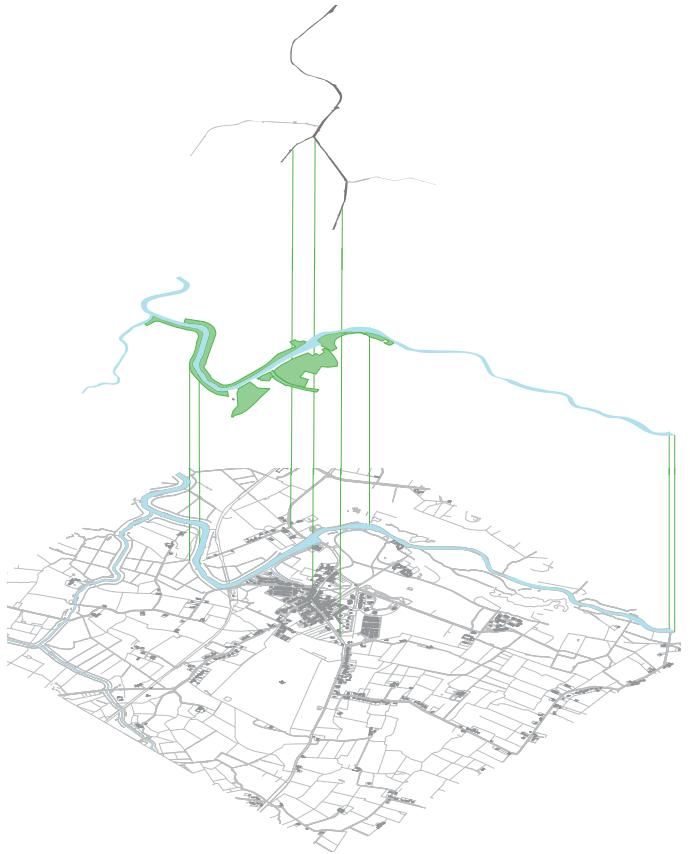
## A Multi-Layered Approach

Having studied the unique qualities of Adare, we have selected three key layers which form the focus of the Public Realm Plan. These layers integrate the requirements of the public realm from micro through to macro level to give an overarching vision for transformation.

They include:

1. Sustainable Green Infrastructure
2. Maigue Riverpark
3. Main Street area

The Plan does not attempt to solve all of the issues currently present within the public realm, however it does offer a framework to interpret spatial questions while remaining flexible enough to allow for unseen and as yet unknown future requirements



# 1. A Sustainable Green Infrastructure

As a first step for the public realm, the overall structure of Adare's wider public realm environs has been considered. As a basis for identity, the geomorphology of Adare shows that there are two distinguishable landscapes present; a river landscape and a developed demesne landscape. These offer a basis for differentiation to underpin and strengthen the identity and development of the village in a specific place related way. It is recommended that this landscape differentiation be used as a basis to inform identity and future urban development. This wider perspective reframes the public realm at a different scale. While discussing the future of the village with stakeholders new ideas emerged that were potentially beneficial for both long and short-term projects. Wouldn't it be beneficial to have safe green connections and walking loops connecting different areas of the village? Wouldn't it be wonderful to allow children to safely walk or cycle through the village? To capture these ideas a sketch was developed to show a sustainable green structure at the scale of the village. The map combines permeability for active travel with strategic green infrastructure i.e green areas and connections. The maps can be applied as a template for discussion and future development based on the Development Plan. As a high-level plan, it is important to note that these connections are not agreed with landowners, nor is their location finalized. Instead, the map demonstrates the need for these green areas and connections, when sites in the Local Area Plan are developed in the future.

At that point, these needs can be translated into more detailed proposals in collaboration with landowners. The legend of the map details the typology of green spaces proposed and the overall objective is to improve permeability and characterize typologies of green spaces for the village, to benefit residents in the future. Objective C2 'New Amenity Areas Walkways and Cycleways' of the Draft Local Area Plan states that it is an objective of the Council to:

- a)** Continue to facilitate the development of walkways and cycleways as indicated on the Amenity and Sustainable Transport Map and the Public Realm Strategy
- b)** Encourage walking and cycling as more convenient, popular and safe methods of movement in Adare, and facilitate the provision of an attractive and coherent network of off-road footpaths and cycle facilities.
- c)** Support the provision of a new Greenway linking Adare with Rathkeale and the wider Greenway \ Active Travel network.
- d)** Provide secure cycle parking facilities at appropriate locations as opportunities arise.
- e)** Encouraging combined footpath and cycleway links along the proposed Active Travel route through lands at Blackabbey and along the N21 southwards to the Ballingarry junction, northward to Desmond Castle Adare and to the GAA field through the village.
- f)** Support proposals to provide better connection between the Village Park and the Main Street of the village.

# Develop Cycle and Pedestrian Connections

Walking and cycling has great potential to develop in Adare, a relatively small village with a commercial core. Expanding walking and cycling options to promote greater use of active travel can support our climate targets to reduce emissions as well as improving fitness levels and public health, and reducing congestion and private car use. Diverting short car trips to active modes will have a particular benefit in reducing air pollution. The overarching objective in the Village centre should be to focus more on the movement of people rather than the movement of the private car.

The Draft Local Area Plan has been used as a basis to demonstrate how a network for sustainable mobility can be developed for the village and this will be explored further the delivery of an Adare Transport Plan within the lifetime of the Local Area Plan which will consider transport and sustainable mobility (including car parking, coach parking and public realm upgrades).

Integral to this approach is access to key amenity locations within the village such as sport and educational facilities and public amenities such as parks and graveyards. The map can serve as a basis for public realm and mobility requirements for a programme of requirements for future developments. This ensures an integrated vision for sustainable mobility and public realm can be achieved.

It is an objective of the Council to encourage walking and cycling as more convenient, popular and safe methods of movement in Adare, and facilitate the provision of an attractive and coherent network of off-road footpaths and cycle facilities (SM 1). As part of these active travel objectives, the walking routes to surrounding community destinations are proposed to be extended subject to further analysis under the Transport Plan:



## Walking Routes

1	A pedestrian route from Main Street to the GAA club
2	A pedestrian route from Main Street to Desmond Castle and onto Adare Golf Course
3	A pedestrian route from the Village Park to the Avenue
4	Enhancement of pedestrian route on Station Road
5	A pedestrian route connecting Blackabbey Road to N21 via the Deerpark housing scheme
6	Delivery of pedestrian routes & associated utility infrastructure along the Rathkeale Road to Murphy's Cross via the Adare Western Approach Improvement scheme.
7	A walking route/trail around the grounds of the Manor Fields
8	Explore the extension of existing trails along the River Maigue including the provision new walking routes & trails to Desmond Castle, the Franciscan Friary and the Heritage Centre from the River.
9	New walking routes for future residential and other developments as proposed by the Local Area Plan. This will ensure that the village of Adare remains well connected for all its residents.

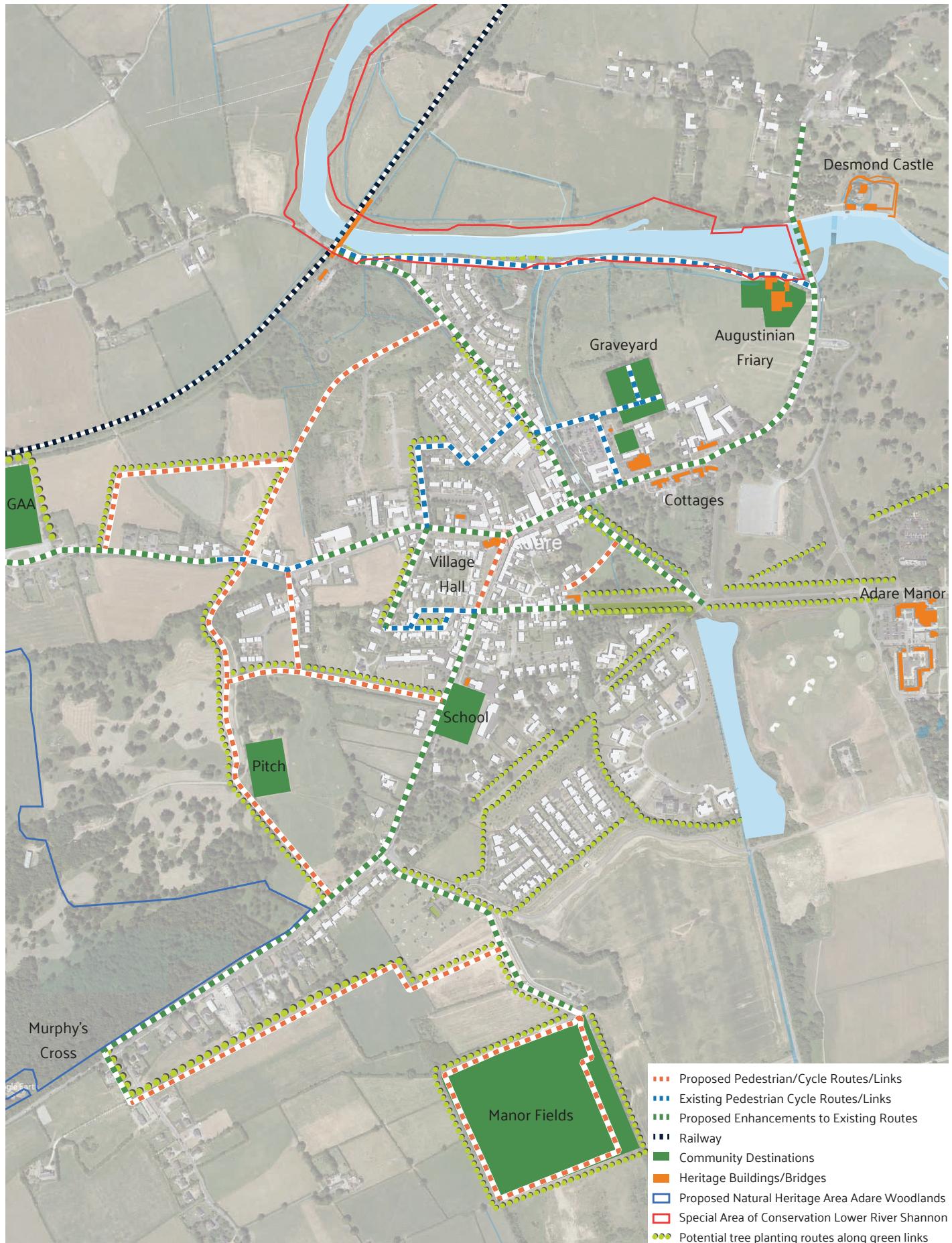


Despite certain constraints posed by the historical fabric of certain streets, this Plan makes proposals for how new cycle routes can be incorporated subject to further analysis under a future Transport Plan. New routes will typically be one of two categories; on-road integrated facilities or segregated cycle tracks. On-road integrated routes will typically share the carriageway with cars, but only where lower speed limits and lower traffic volumes meet the required principles of safety as set out in the National Cycle Manual.

**Segregated cycleways** Segregation refers to the physical separation of cyclists from motorised traffic where speeds need to remain higher. These will be designed as cycle tracks, cycle trails or cycleways. Notably the western approach road (N21) makes a recommendation for a segregated off-road cycle track. This is to retain the highly attractive tree lined entrance route to the village of Adare and provide safe cycle access. The following indicative cycling proposals are being put forward subject to further analysis under the Transport Plan, and will be informed by the National Transport Authority's Cycle Design Manual in collaboration with the NTA.



Cycle Routes	
1	A cycle route along Main street
2	A cycle route from Main Street to the GAA club
3	A cycle route from Turf's Quay to Main street along Station Road
4	A cycle route from the Village Park to the Avenue
5	A cycle route connecting Blackabbey Road to N21 via the Deerpark housing scheme
6	Delivery of a cycle route along the Rathkeale Road to Murphy's Cross via the Adare Western Approach Improvement scheme
7	A cycle route connecting the Manor Fields to Rathkeale Road
8	Explore the inclusion of a cycle trails along the River Maigue as part of the flood defence proposals.



- Proposed Pedestrian/Cycle Routes/Links
- Existing Pedestrian/Cycle Routes/Links
- Proposed Enhancements to Existing Routes
- Railway
- Community Destinations
- Heritage Buildings/Bridges
- Proposed Natural Heritage Area Adare Woodlands
- Special Area of Conservation Lower River Shannon
- Potential tree planting routes along green links

# Green Strategy

As a counterbalance to future built development, the Draft Local Area Plan for Adare has earmarked locations for green development to include Open Space and Recreation, Semi-natural open space, Proposed Natural Heritage areas, Special Control areas and Agricultural areas. The green strategy proposed by the Public Realm Plan is to add green connections between these spaces in the form of tree lined routes or improved biodiversity planting and spacious green verges. By integrating trees and planting native species, the environment's quality can be enhanced while simultaneously fulfilling important ecological roles. These roles include mitigating stormwater runoff and purifying the air by removing pollutants.

In addition the Public Realm Plan recognises possibilities for enhancing existing micro open spaces within the Village. These spaces could accommodate additional trees, seating areas, and contribute to the greening of the Village, promoting biodiversity and increasing resilience to climate change. In line with the plan's age-friendly goals, these spaces would serve as resting spots and could also serve as settings for intimate public art installations.

Green connections with improved biodiversity can also be developed on private lands in partnership with land owners as part of the overall Biodiversity Action Plan. Notably the agricultural fields to the north of Main Street, crossing from Adare Bridge to the Village centre are proposed as a semi natural open space/special control area and forms an important part of the setting of Adare Village. Due to its locational importance this space with tree planting along the main road should be protected and enhanced. Tree lined routes with amenity green verges have been proposed to extend around the

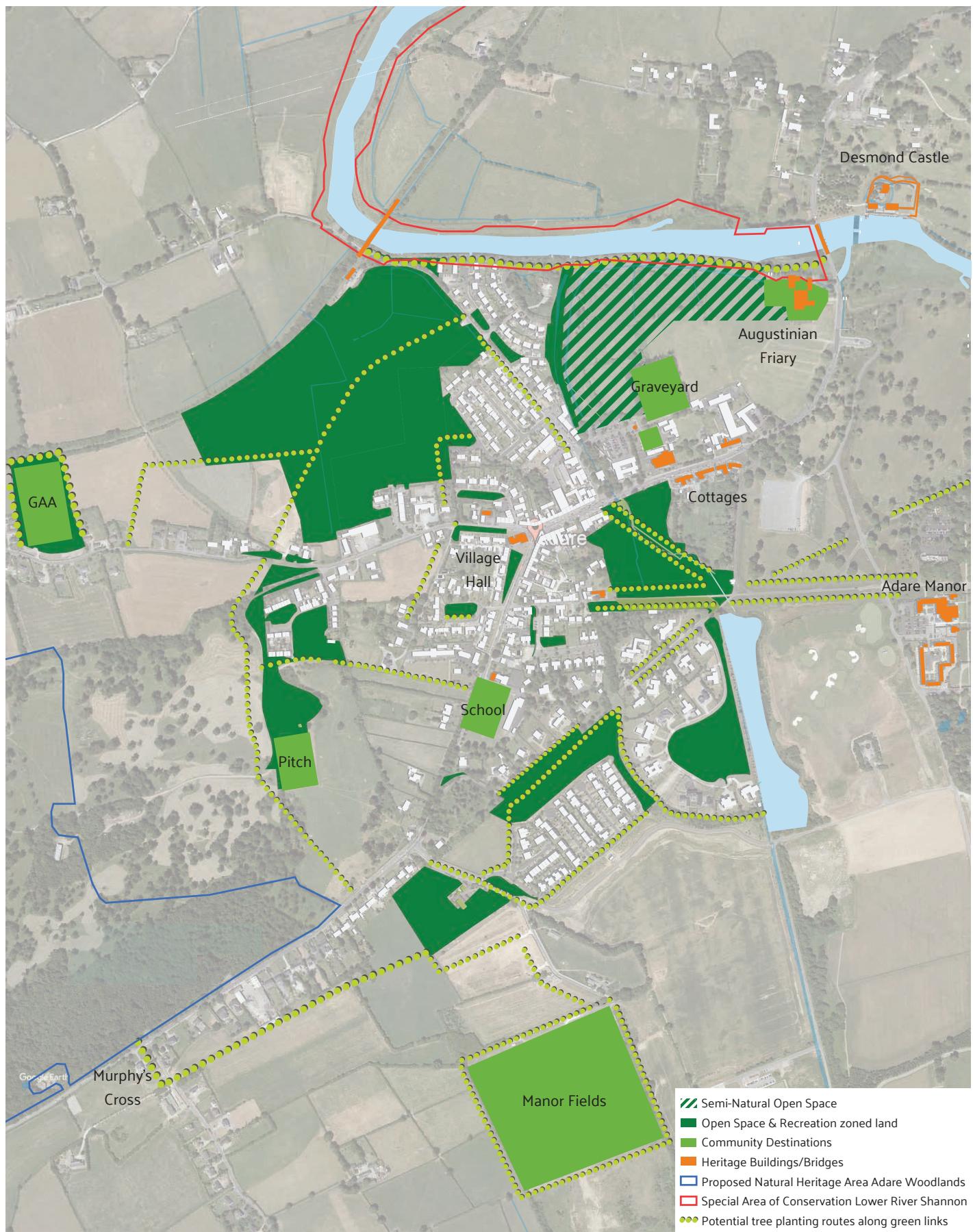
Manor Fields and GAA lands. In the future new green routes are proposed to connect with future residential areas as well as the proposed Natural Heritage area at Deerpark. The integration of existing hedgerows, trees and topography into these green connections and routes should be encouraged to help biodiversity and retain the existing character of the landscape.

This green strategy is aligned to a number of objectives from the Limerick Development Plan including:

**Objective SCSI 08** - Develop and protect an open space network and hierarchy of quality public and community spaces, to extend close to where people live and which can accommodate a variety of recreational amenities and facilities for the community at large.

**Objective SCSI 08** - Incorporate specific facilities and amenities that would promote exercise and movement as well as rest and relaxation in a natural way and in a variety of settings.

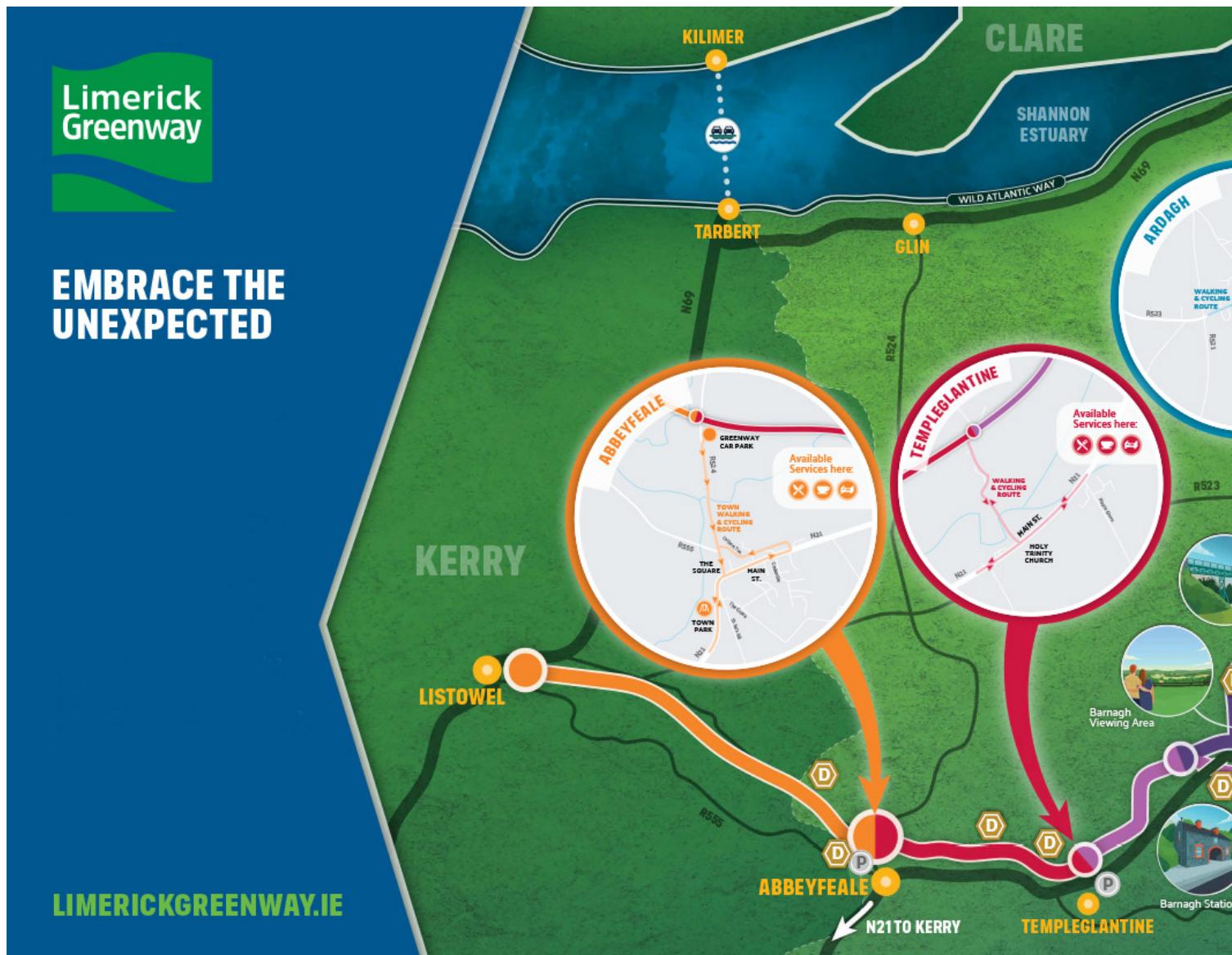
**Objective EH 020** - Protect areas which are considered to be quiet or which offer a sense of tranquility, through a process of identification and validation followed by formal designation of 'Quiet Areas'.



# Connection to Greenway

The success of established greenways in Waterford and the Great Western Greenway in Mayo clearly demonstrates their potential as contributors to rural communities' economies through increased tourism. Additionally, the benefits for the health and well-being of local communities utilising greenways for recreational purposes are significant. These positive outcomes have had a transformative effect on numerous small towns situated along or near those greenways.

The Limerick Greenway, also known as the Great Southern Trail (GST), offers a distinctive 85km stretch of countryside in West Limerick/North Kerry. It was developed along a stretch of the 85km Limerick to Tralee railway line which operated for nearly one hundred years – opening in the late 1880s and closing in the 1970s. The route, which was also known as the North Kerry line Limerick Greenway provides a suitable off-road route of approximately 40km for walking and cycling. There is a significant opportunity to extend the Limerick greenway from Rathkeale to Limerick City via Adare creating opportunities for Adare to serve as a hub for visitors interested in exploring the various trails during an extended stay.



A study to determine the best route for the greenway will need to examine all options based on first principles. A preliminary assessment has been completed which supports the provision of a Greenway between Rathkeale and Limerick city. Discussion is also taking place with Irish Rail to examine opportunities that may arise as part of the ongoing rail freight upgrade works. As of July 2023, no route for the Greenway has been selected.



## 2. Maigue River Park

Adare's settlement has a rich historical connection to the Maigue River, which flows into the Shannon estuary. Enhancing the link between the river and the village is a crucial objective for Adare's future development. Desmond Castle Adare, a defensive fortress and a focal point of the earliest settlements, bears witness to the village's historical connection to the river.

As outlined in chapter 2 the Maigue river and many of its tributaries are of ecological and ornithological importance, supporting nationally important breeding populations of invertebrate and vertebrate species. This system supports a high level of in-stream biodiversity (fish, invertebrates, aquatic plants and algae) and riverbank biodiversity (in riparian habitats). The Maigue catchment supports a number of Natura designated Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) for a range of habitats under the EU Habitats Directive, as well as Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for bird species under the EU Birds Directive. The area between the embankments downstream from the bridge is a Special Area of Conservation designated as the Lower River Shannon SAC, which contains a range of protected habitats & species, also supporting a wealth of flora and fauna. The tidal effect of the river has the potential to further increase the rich biodiversity in this area.

The study area encompasses not only the river and its banks but also adjacent lands that may experience periodic flooding. The existing River Park boasts noteworthy features such as characteristic embankments, bridges, quays and weirs.

There is an exciting opportunity to capitalize on the

potential of the River Maigue by offering a range of activities centered around its utilization. Aside from the existing Riverside Walk, the river remains underutilized as a resource for visitors. However, waterways, in general, are increasingly recognized as attractions that draw and support visitors to destinations, with some cases where they become the primary motivation for visits. In this context, the River Maigue holds great potential for various water-based activities, including boat rides, angling, canoeing, and kayaking.

To attract new users of all ages and maximize the park's resources, several ideas have been proposed. These concepts, such as meditation areas, fitness points, and seating, will be further reviewed in the context of a more detailed design.

The river park area underwent a thorough assessment, studying existing reports, including the work conducted by the Maigue Rivers Trust. Valuable input from the public was also collected during the walkabout, which contributed to the development of a fresh vision for the park. This vision encompasses a set of proposals that will be pursued, subject to flood defence design outcomes, as well as detailed studies and environmental assessments: at project design level.

- Consider improvements to the connection of the village to the Maigue River and develop the potential of the river as a critical green resource for Adare. Improve walkways to prioritize accessibility and consider inclusion of sufficient widths for both pedestrians and cyclists as part of

flood defence design outcomes (where possible).

- Consider improvements to the heritage and nature potential of the Maigue & increase biodiversity. Protect the habitats along the river routes, preserving their rugged and wild characteristics. Support the all-Ireland Pollinator Plan which aims to help pollinators by improving biodiversity.
- Opportunities should be assessed to introduce elements of activity, such as seating, play areas, planting, and art, in designated pockets of space along the walkways as part of a Blueway feasibility study.
- Consider the redevelopment of Turf's Quay to provide a new slip way and safe access point to the river for recreational purposes as part of a Blueway feasibility study.
- Develop a heritage trail to connect Desmond Castle Adare, the Augustinian and Franciscan Friaries, the Trinitarian Abbey, the medieval walled village and to the Heritage Centre into a single experience.
- Develop a nature trail from the library to the Maigue River as an educational resource.

An openness to integrate local ideas and proposals, which tie in to the basic concept (for example ecological initiatives in biodiversity areas) should be explored and incorporated where appropriate. This needs to be supported with a level of spatial supervision from a qualified designer to ensure that the capacity of the park, its spatial concept and balance of needs is retained. Several challenges were identified in the park and are described in more detail overleaf.



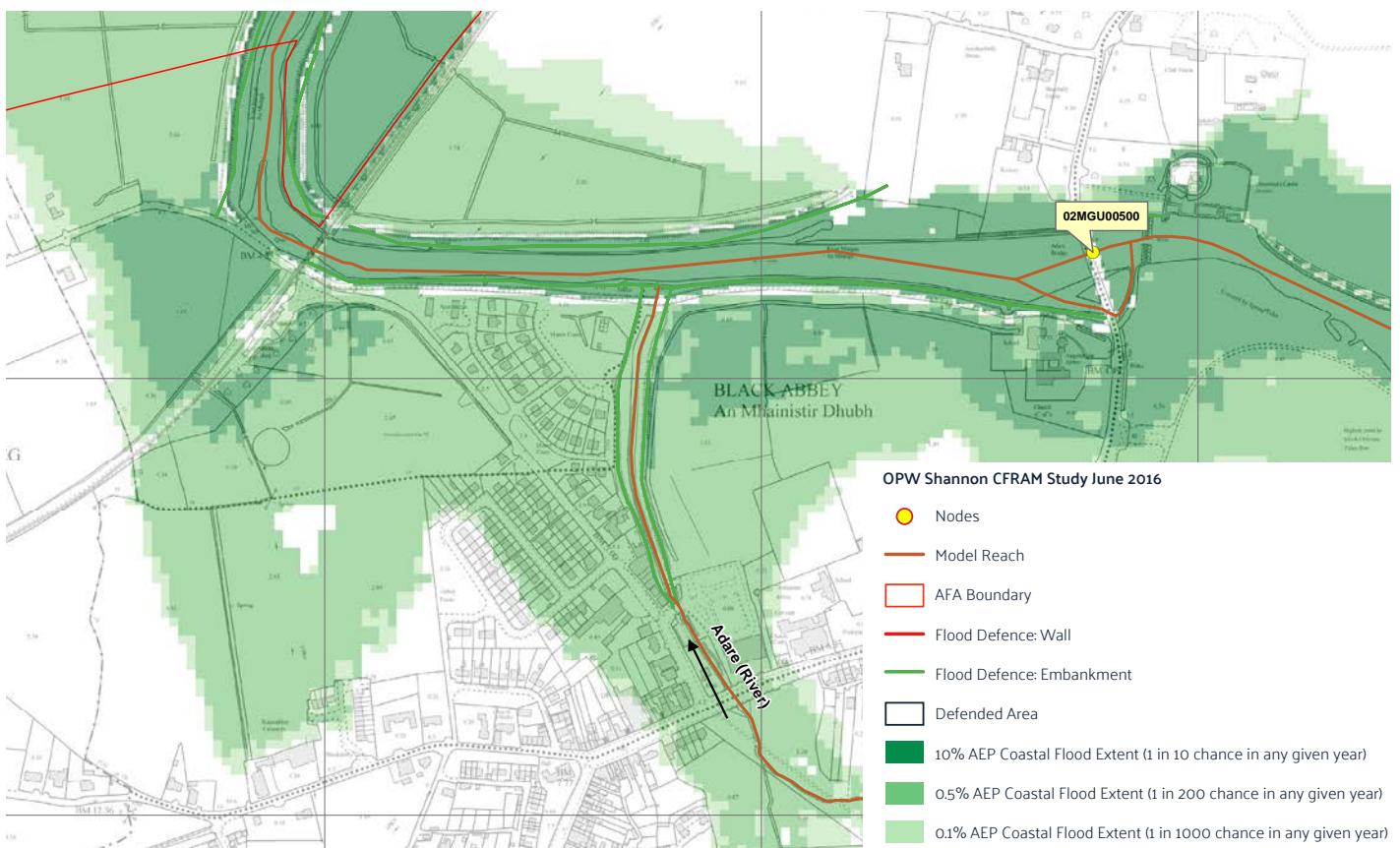
# Flooding Zone

Flooding is a natural process that has a potential for increasing biodiversity and variation in the landscape of the park. This variation needs to be more clearly expressed into proposals to develop biodiversity and offer variation in experience. The river bank walk along the River Maigue provides an area of passive and active amenity and is an important contributor to the quality of life of the residents of the village, surrounding areas and visitors to the village.

The Adare Flood Relief Scheme is being progressed by the OPW and Limerick City and County Council and works are likely to include raising and improving flood defence walls, installing non-return valves and providing a flood warning for the village. A drawback to this approach is that water bodies can become visually and ecologically less connected with their surroundings. It is essential that active collaboration

with the Flood Defence strategy is undertaken to effectively manage the water's edge and ensure public realm improvements are integrated into flood defence schemes.

The design of the public realm affects the village's ability to withstand or accommodate the impacts of a changing climate. Each space should actively promote sustainable drainage, and public areas within or near flood risk zones should prioritize sustainable flood water management to the fullest extent possible. The improvements to the Public Realm offer a significant opportunity to incorporate flood related policy, in particular Objective IU 04 from the Draft Local Area Plan which would include provision of SuDS and Nature-based Solutions to the Management of Rainwater and Surface Water Run-off.



# Blue Route

A Blueway is defined as a network of approved and branded recreational trails and sites that offer various activities, closely linked to water. These trails are typically explored using kayaks, Canadian canoes, or stand-up paddleboards (SUP).

When a Blueway receives accreditation, it gains the privilege of utilizing the official Blueway brand in user information and signage. This association with the brand enhances recognition and awareness among consumers. External accreditation also plays a crucial role in increasing consumer recognition and understanding of the Blueway concept.

To guide the process of achieving Blueway accreditation, Blueways Ireland has introduced the Blueway Management and Development Guide. This comprehensive guide outlines the necessary steps to be taken. While the development of a Blueway would require a thorough feasibility study, it is evident that the potential benefits it could bring to the Village strongly support the implementation of the accreditation process.

The Maigue River holds immense potential as a Blueway water amenity. There is an exciting opportunity to develop an extended trail along the river, potentially expanding from Croom to the Ferry Bridge, with Adare serving as a convenient stopover location. However, the creation of these trails would necessitate a comprehensive study to assess crucial factors such as access points, river conditions, and navigation around obstacles like weirs and bridges. It is important to note that the lower Maigue waters are tidal, requiring knowledge of the tidal regime and navigational skills to navigate the mudflats

safely. In addition, consultation with property owners and fisheries would be essential to ensure the successful implementation of these trails. The envisioned Croom-Adare-Ferry Bridge Trail would cover a distance of approximately 9km and would be classified as an advanced trail.

The Newtown Rowing Club is currently involved in a project that focuses on training young people in gandelow boat-building and navigation techniques. Enhancing amenities at Ferrybridge, including safe access, parking, WC facilities, and changing facilities, would be beneficial to facilitate these activities. The Maigue River Trust have also undertaken a speculative project to restore the old Turf's Quay on the Maigue near the railway crossing. Additionally, a pontoon at Turf's Quay could restore former quayside access, facilitating mooring of boats, and potentially adding small fishing points along the river. Incorporating these projects into future recreational plans for the Maigue River could prove valuable and is supported by this Public Realm Plan.

Any development plan for Turf's Quay and water activities on the Maigue are subject to future flood protection works by the Office of Public Works and Limerick City and County Council. In addition future proposals must incorporate thorough environmental impact assessments and consultations with fisheries. These assessments and consultations are vital to ensure that proposed developments take into account the environmental impact and maintain the ecological balance of the area.

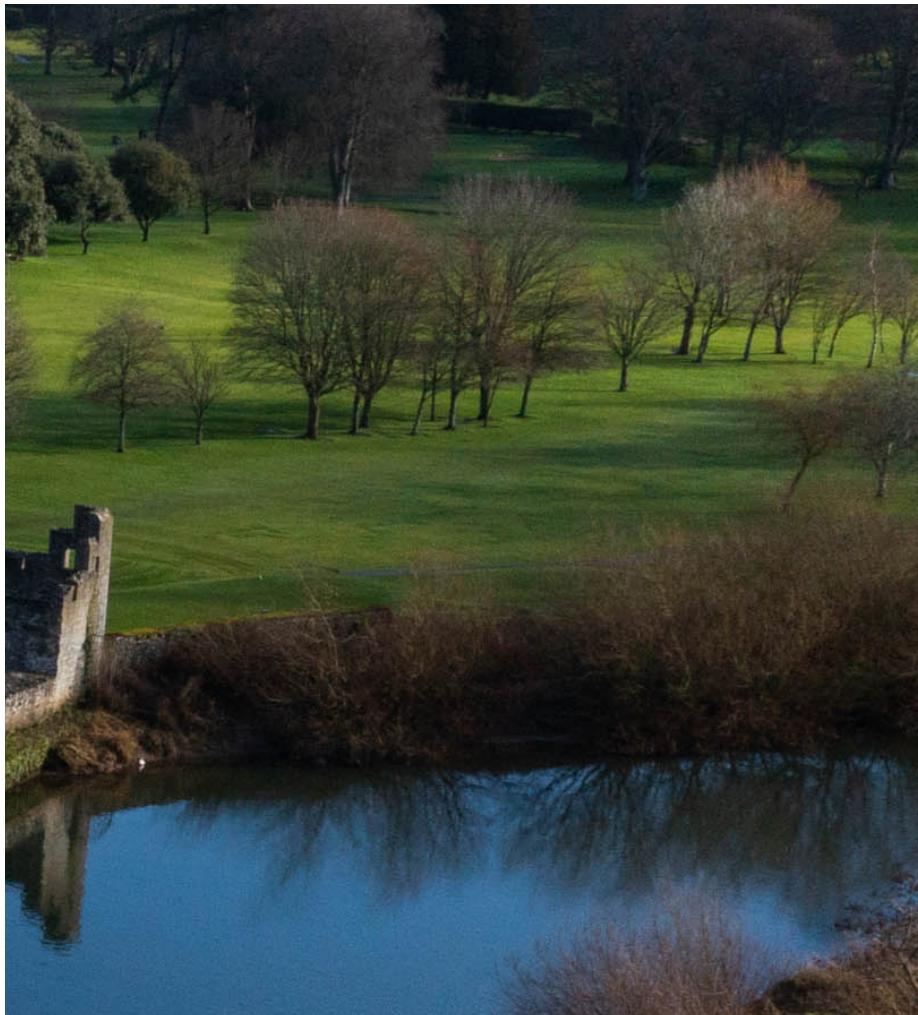
# Future Maigue River Park

The origins of Adare's settlement are strongly related to the Maigue River, a tidal river navigable to the the Shannon estuary. Connecting the river to the village and its environs is a key objective for the future development of Adare. The image shows Desmond Castle Adare, historically a defensive castle and a focus point for the first settlements. It was a place of changing ownership which reflects the country's history. This river had an extensive flood zone up to the current location of the Village Hall.

The project area includes the river, the embankments, but also nearby lands that potentially experience periodic flooding. The River Park has many key features including characteristic embankments, bridges, quays, weirs and extensive inundation areas. As supported in the Draft Local Area Plan, the River Maigue offers opportunities for the development of a Blueway in Adare. The Adare 5 Year Strategic Plan also focusses on developing new experiences in Adare, one of which is to support the development of walking, cycling and Blueway trails around the Maigue.

A review of the river park area was undertaken through examination of existing reports (such as the Maigue Rivers Trust work) along with the generous public engagement feedback received from the walkabout, out of which a new vision for the park developed to include the following objectives:

- Improve the connection of the village to the Maigue River and develop the potential of the park as a critical green resource for Adare.
- Develop the heritage and nature potential of the Maigue.
- Develop walking (and if possible, cycling) loops for everyday visitors and tourists to and around the river.
- Develop a heritage trail to connect Desmond Castle Adare, the Augustinian and Franciscan Friaries and the Trinitarian Abbey, the Manor grounds, and the medieval walled village with the heritage centre into a single experience.
- Develop a nature trail from the library to the Maigue River as an educational resource.
- Activate water amenity potentials along the river.
- Develop increased biodiversity in the park.
- Connect the Maigue to its environs.



# Riparian Biodiversity

The public realm plan aims to leverage the Adare's unique position as a convergence point for a diverse range of riparian habitats and species such as wet woodlands, tidal mudflats, estuaries and for species such as otter, salmon and lamprey. The ecology of the River Park is built around a set of complementary ecological subsystems that work in unison to create the diversified biodiversity of a riparian landscape. A key focus will be on enhancing the space for wildlife and maximising its habitat value along the river Maigue.

To achieve this, several key measures are proposed:

- Safeguard and enhance the riparian zone along the River Maigue, protecting habitats, providing flood protection, and maintaining water quality.
- Seek opportunities to improve the quality of aquatic and riparian habitats in the waterways areas while controlling invasive species. Develop a riparian corridor & establish connections between fragmented parcels of habitat to enhance their overall value to wildlife through continued vegetation corridors for foraging.
- Promote the benefits of wetlands & natural flood management techniques for flood prevention.
- Acknowledge and incorporate the unique characteristics of the riparian environment into the embankment edges. Utilise the embankments for the development and maintenance of extensive biodiversity corridor of grass systems and pollinator planting.

- Develop an eco-trail with educational and interactive points such as nest boxes & bat boxes

These measures will contribute to the preservation and enhancement of biodiversity in Adare, promoting a harmonious coexistence between village life and the natural environment. In advance of implementation environmental surveys will need to be conducted to ensure the viability and alignment of proposals with ecological and heritage objectives.



# Heritage and eco walking routes

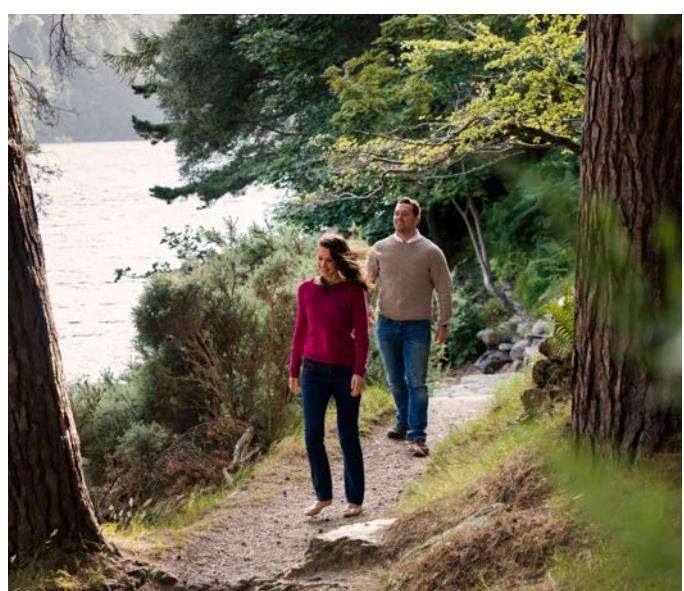
The following concepts present initial ideas for the development of the Maigue River Park, with a focus on heritage and eco walking routes. It is important to emphasise that these are preliminary proposals, and their implementation would require thorough assessments, detailed designs, and extensive environmental surveys to ensure feasibility and alignment with ecological and natural heritage objectives.

To begin, enhancing and expanding the existing assortment of walking and cycling loops and trails is essential to provide improved access to the village's heritage and biodiversity sites. The potential for additional trails on the north side of the Maigue should be examined, considering future flood works and their compatibility. Currently, pedestrian access to Desmond Castle Adare, a prominent visitor attraction, poses safety concerns as there is no footpath on the bridge.

Furthermore, incorporating pedestrian access to the castle and extending a route North East from the Castle through the graveyard to the Franciscan Friary will be a crucial component of future heritage trails. One proposed option is to create a segregated pedestrian connection from Adare Bridge to Desmond Castle Adare within the existing bridge profile, subject to the implementation of a reduced speed regime and change to the designation of the road from a National road to a Regional road (post bypass). Another proposed solution would involve the

construction of a separate independent foot bridge near Adare Bridge, spanning the river. Any such proposal would need to be thoughtfully designed and executed to preserve the area's built heritage under the guidance of a Conservation Architect/Engineer.

To enhance the heritage destinations in the village centre, establishing a cycle route from Main Street to Adare Bridge and Desmond Castle Adare is recommended. Another potential cycle connection would involve creating a new route along Station Road to link to a potential future Greenway route parallel to the railway line with the Heritage Centre and Main Street. It is also worth considering integrating a cycle route into the embankments on the south side of the river, as part of the flood defence works, if it proves feasible. This alternative route to Main Street via the river Maigue would provide an appealing alternative while also enhancing access to the river and its amenities.



## 3. Main Street Area

The village has a simple linear street layout characteristic of many Limerick villages. Main Street is dominated by late nineteenth century architecture of two storey terraced buildings, which climb a gentle slope to the Village Hall at its apex, where the street forms a Y junction.

Main Street was originally designed with a dirt road for horses and designated footpaths. Its width, approximately 23m, was dimensioned to facilitate the right-angled parking of carts and horses, which serviced its role as a market village for the surrounding agricultural community. Today it forms the heart of a level 4 large village with a mix of services for surrounding areas.

Transforming a Main Street for future use is not a single step process. It requires a series of well-orchestrated decisions and actions which are referred to as design principles. If supported by the community of Adare and applied in unison, these can solve many of the challenges facing the Main Street and provide room for its future transformation. The long-term vision seeks to replace much of the parking in the core of Main Street with off-street parking, and to allocate alternative uses to this space to improve the experience of Main Street to attract and retain visitors.

In collaboration with stakeholders, a set of public realm objectives for Main Street has been developed based on compiled guiding principles. These

objectives serve as a foundation to generate ideas and proposals, many of which will be further explored and incorporated into the upcoming Transport Plan for Adare. The following high-level objectives for Main Street have been expanded upon in the following pages:

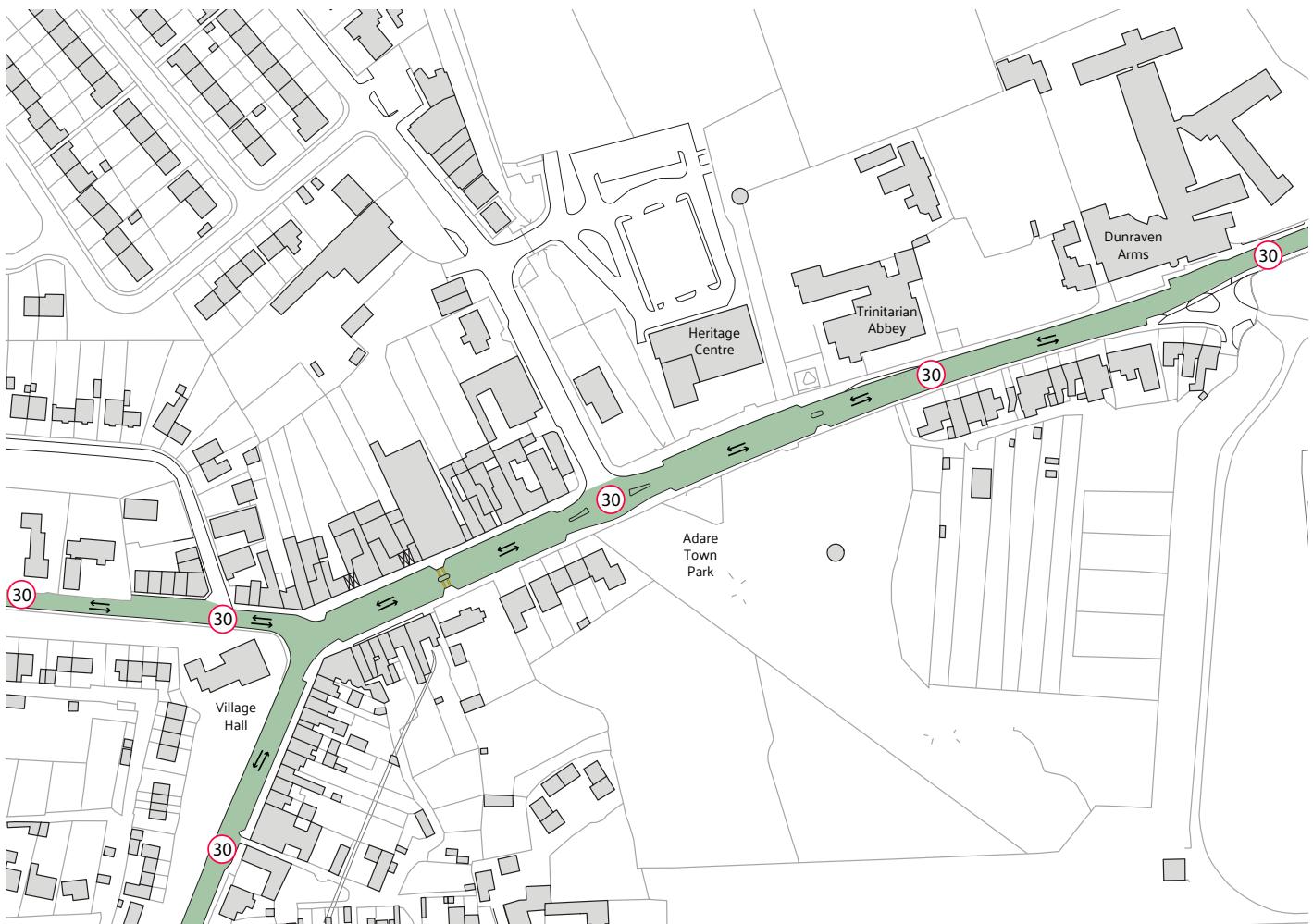
- Reduce speeds
- Develop off-street parking
- Extend pedestrian area
- Develop a cycle network
- Add trees & planting



# Reduce Speeds & Increase Safety

In many communities throughout Ireland, it is perceived that some or all vehicular traffic is travelling too fast and should be directed elsewhere. (Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets). The impacts are seen as a threat to the safety of the community and a negative element that detracts from the attractiveness of the road or street and the comfort of those using it.

Moving cars and heavy goods vehicles at high speeds can be loud and intimidating, and generally reduce pedestrian comfort for walking, sitting, and meeting. Lower speed limits help protect the most vulnerable in society, like the elderly and children. To encourage sustainable movement, in line with the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028, it is recommended that speeds in the core (from Adare Bridge to Scoil Naomh Iósaf) be reduced to 30 kph subject to agreement with Transport Infrastructure Ireland and/or the downgrading of the N21 road post bypass.



# ... and Develop Off-Street Parking

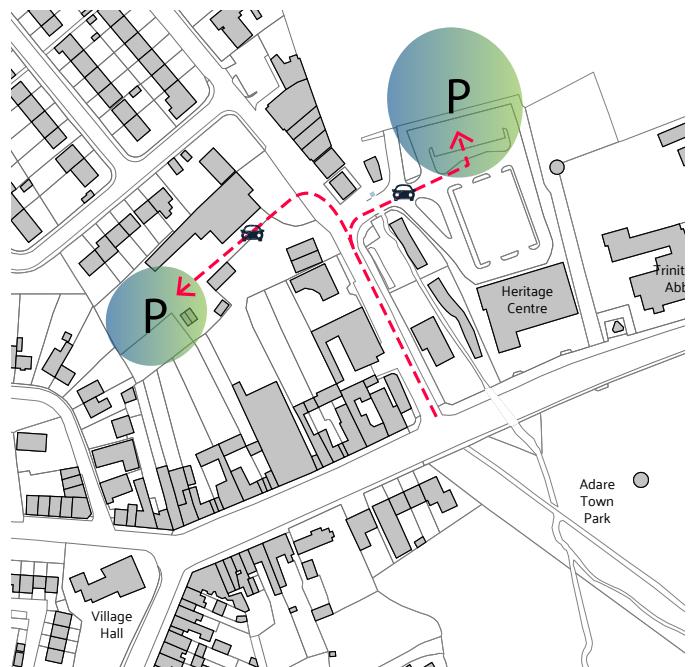
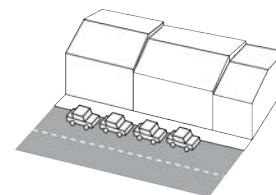
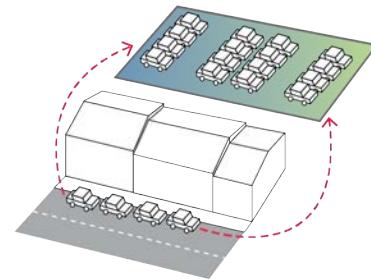
Parking on Main Street in Adare has reached its capacity, resulting in visual and physical obstructions across the street and encroachment on pavements. This situation not only hampers pedestrian and cyclist comfort but also diminishes the appeal of walking and cycling, which has great potential for growth with the introduction of the bypass. In addition, during the public consultation process, the lack of available car parking (despite extensive on-street parking) in the village was highlighted as a concern.

To tackle this issue, a new parking concept is proposed, utilising the space behind the 19th-century façade of various locations along Main Street. There is ample spatial potential to replace and even expand parking on Main Street, but it requires careful consideration and study to strike the right balance. Such a study should account for criteria outlined in the Local Area Plan, as well as the impact on residents, heritage preservation, and amenity areas. By incorporating thoughtful design, it is possible to mitigate the negative effects associated with parking.

Two specific areas, identified as Opportunity Sites in the Local Area Plan (Sites 1 and 5), offer potential for additional public car parking. However, any development in these areas must undergo thorough environmental assessment, including proposals for the preservation of existing trees on the sites. To ensure easy access to the village centre and key attractions, it is important to clearly designate suitable car parks with effective signage. Emphasising pedestrian movement within the village, traffic should be directed towards car parks located within the village, allowing convenient access from these car parks to points of interest.

Enforcing a maximum 2-hour parking limit on Main street is also proposed to help manage parking

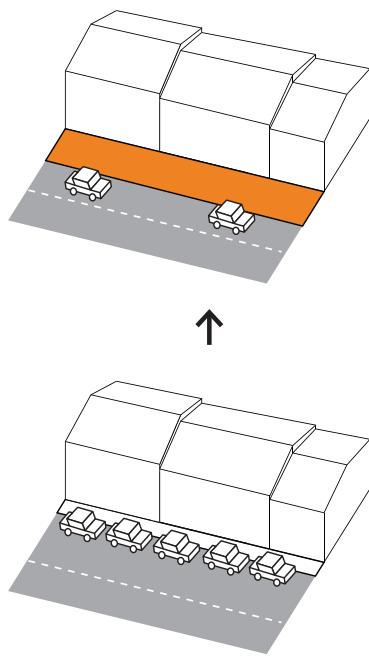
availability. It is also recommended that staff and owners of businesses on the main street utilise designated parking areas to free up spaces near their properties. In addition, it is recommended that an economic and cost benefit analysis be conducted to specifically evaluate the implementation of minimum parking charges for the Heritage Centre Car Park. It is recommended in this plan that on-street parking on Main Street be limited in order to improve the quality of the public realm for everyone by creating open spaces and improving visibility.



# Extend Pedestrian Area

Adare's Public Realm Plan seeks to rebalance priorities by giving preference to pedestrians and cyclists over vehicular traffic. The plan aims to achieve a high-quality public realm by reducing the dominance of vehicles while upgrading physical elements, encompassing both hard infrastructure and soft landscaping.

By implementing off-street parking solutions, space can be freed along Main Street, allowing for the repurposing of existing road and parking areas. This presents an opportunity to create new greener spaces with places to rest that contribute to the overall enhancement of the public realm in Adare. The streets and spaces within the village serve as its public face, and improving walkability plays a crucial role in fostering mutual respect among pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers, resulting in a heightened sense of safety for all. Furthermore, these enhancements promote pedestrian movement, interactions, and economic exchanges, thereby enriching community life.



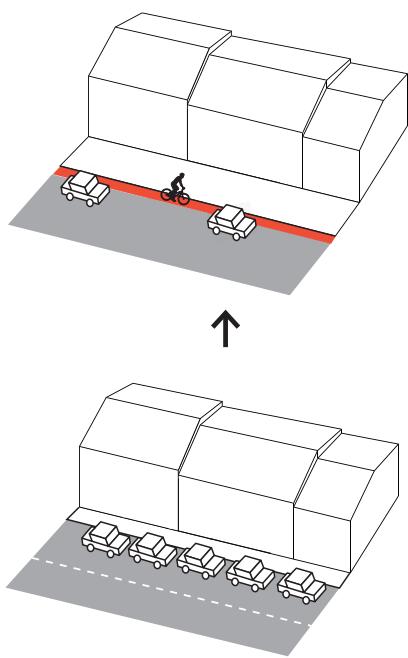
To significantly improve the overall appearance of the village, it is essential to focus on well-designed, walkable surfaces using attractive materials and finishes that harmonize with the Village's historic character. Incorporating high-quality planting, removing visual clutter and overhead wires, integrating utilities, managing signage, and introducing softer directional lighting are all integral components that should be incorporated into any future proposals concerning the reconfiguration of Main Street.



# ... and Develop Cycle Network

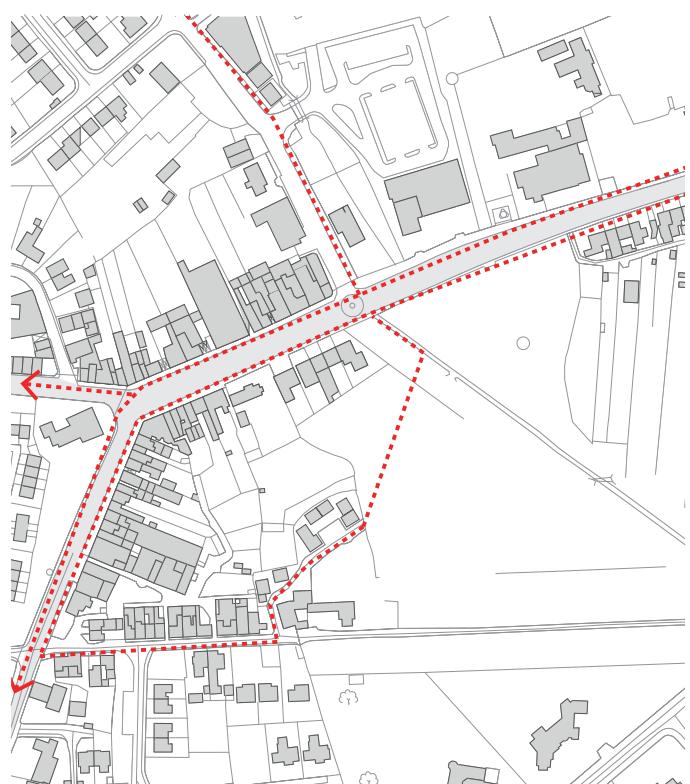
'Smartertravel – Irelands First National Cycle Policy Framework' sets out a vision for Ireland that 'all cities, towns, villages and rural areas will be bicycle friendly'. The aim is to develop bike-friendly villages and promote a transition to cycling, particularly for short journeys. Next to walking cycling is envisioned to become the most popular mode of transportation to school.

'Cycling contributes to improved quality of life and quality of the public realm, a stronger economy and business environment, and an enhanced environment.\* Cycling offers numerous benefits, including increased exercise, longer life expectancy, and improved happiness. Cyclists are unaffected by congestion, and can conveniently park their bicycles close to their destinations. Moreover, cycling contributes to the reduction in fossil fuel consumption, pollution (such as noise and air pollution), enhances safety in villages for children, and reduces transportation costs, making it an attractive proposition.



To encourage a modal shift from cars to bicycles and better connect users of the future Greenway to Adare, cycle facilities can be incorporated on to Main Street. These cycle routes would directly link the Village core to local schools, sports areas, heritage sites, and surrounding residential areas. They would provide safe and child-friendly routes for both residents and visitors alike. While there may be an adjustment period for some residents, the implementation of cycle routes would greatly benefit the community's health and economy. The proposed cycle routes in this plan are indicative, will be subject to further review under the future transport plan for Adare. Future designs must adhere to national standards outlined in the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets and the National Cycle Manual. Final design will be informed by the National Transport Authority's Cycle Design Manual, and in collaboration with the NTA.

\*Smartertravel – Irelands First National Cycle Policy Framework'



# Rationalise Coach Parking

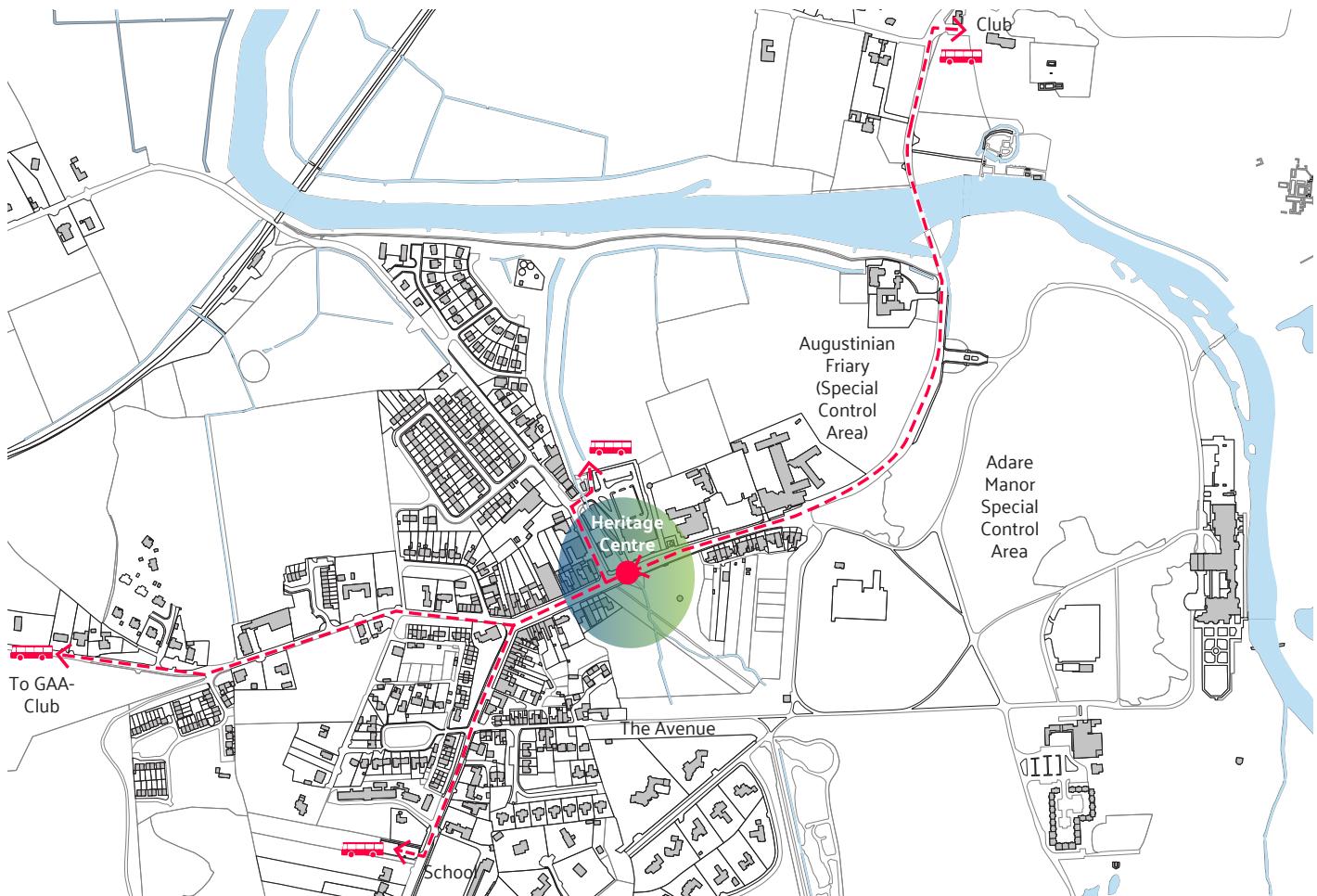
In order to accommodate the arrival of visitors who travel by coach or bus to Adare, a new drop-off and pick-up point is proposed to be established within the Heritage Centre Car Park. This designated area will provide a convenient location for visitors to begin their exploration of the village. From there, they can choose to follow the heritage or nature trails that lead to the River Park and other tourism amenities in the area.

To minimise congestion and optimize the use of space, visiting coaches will be directed to park in specific areas located outside of the village centre. This approach aims to reduce the number of coach parking spaces required at the Heritage Centre, allowing for the reconfiguration of the existing facilities. Several potential sites have been identified

for further assessment as part of the evaluation process.

During the assessment, various factors will be considered to determine the best options. These factors include the provision of amenities for coach drivers, ensuring their comfort and convenience, and optimizing the utilisation of existing services.

The goal is to identify the most suitable locations that offer the optimal balance of functionality and efficiency for both visitors and the local community. By carefully examining these criteria, the plan can ensure that the chosen sites align with the overall objectives and provide the best possible experience for all stakeholders involved.

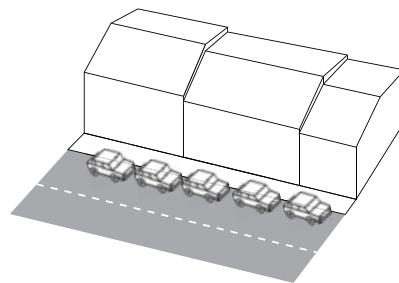
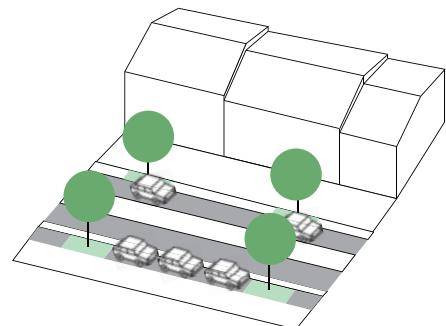


Designated drop-off to be kept in the Heritage Centre. Off-site coach parking to be explored in Transport Plan

# Add Trees & Planting

Widened footpaths affords the opportunity to incorporate a combination of trees and colourful perennial plantings to further enhance Main Street. When planting street trees, it is crucial to ensure that they are crowned up to a height of 5 meters and carefully selected to match the scale of their surroundings. This is important to maintain visibility at street level without obstruction. Additionally, tree pits with a minimum volume of 2m<sup>3</sup> can serve the dual purpose of retaining surface water to mitigate flooding effects.

When planning for long-term growth, it is essential to allocate sufficient space below ground for the trees' root systems. Integration of tree pits alongside underground services should also be considered to avoid any conflicts. The specific configuration and maintenance approach for the plantings can vary based on the chosen model, taking into account factors such as species selection, planting density, and ongoing care.



Images of Westport at a similar scale to Adare for tree planting

# Detailed Improvements to Main Street

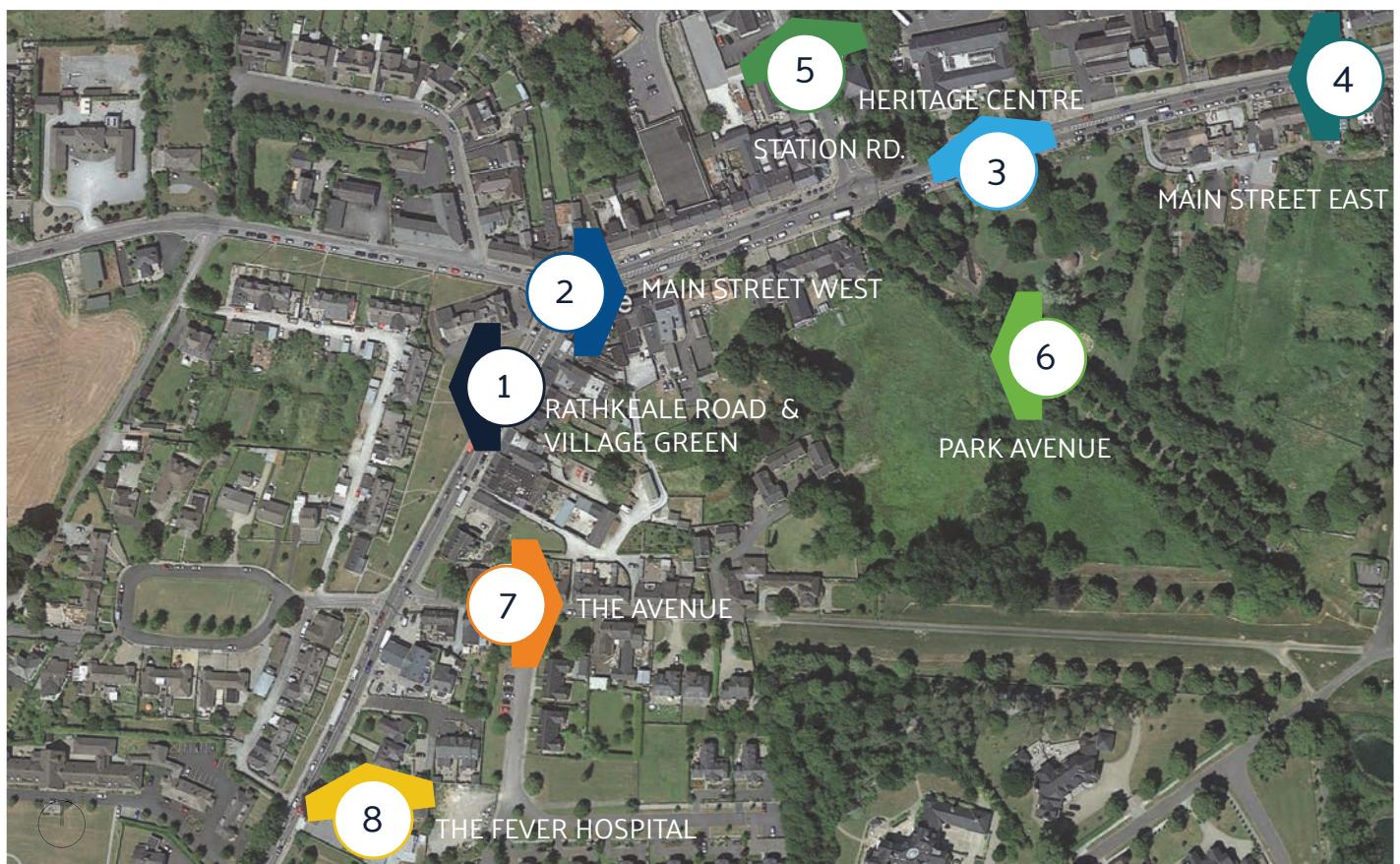
By applying the design principles to the Main Street, Adare has the potential to develop a high-quality pedestrian area in the commercial core that can act as a destination space.

This is key to enable the village to attract and retain new residents and visitors, thereby improving the overall vitality of the village. Several areas have been selected to demonstrate the modifications for a revitalised public realm. These include the following:

1. Rathkeale Road and Village Green
2. Main Street West
3. Heritage Centre
4. Main Street East (the Cottages)

And further enhancements to:

5. Station Road
6. The Park Avenue
7. The Avenue
8. Former Fever Hospital / Scoil Naomh Iósaf



**Town Hall**  
Haile Baile

**Heritage Centre**  
Ionad Oidhreachta

**Town Park**  
Páirc

**Greenway**  
Bealach Glas



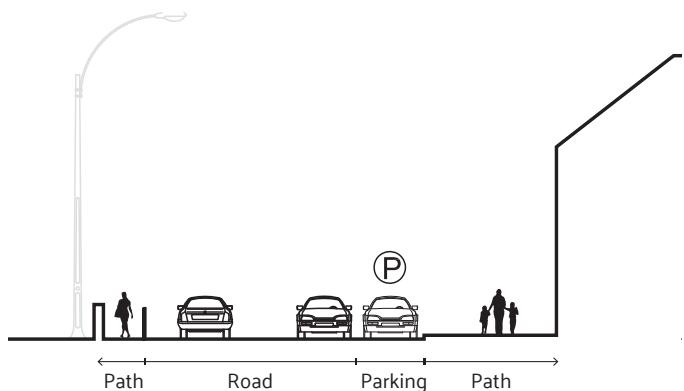
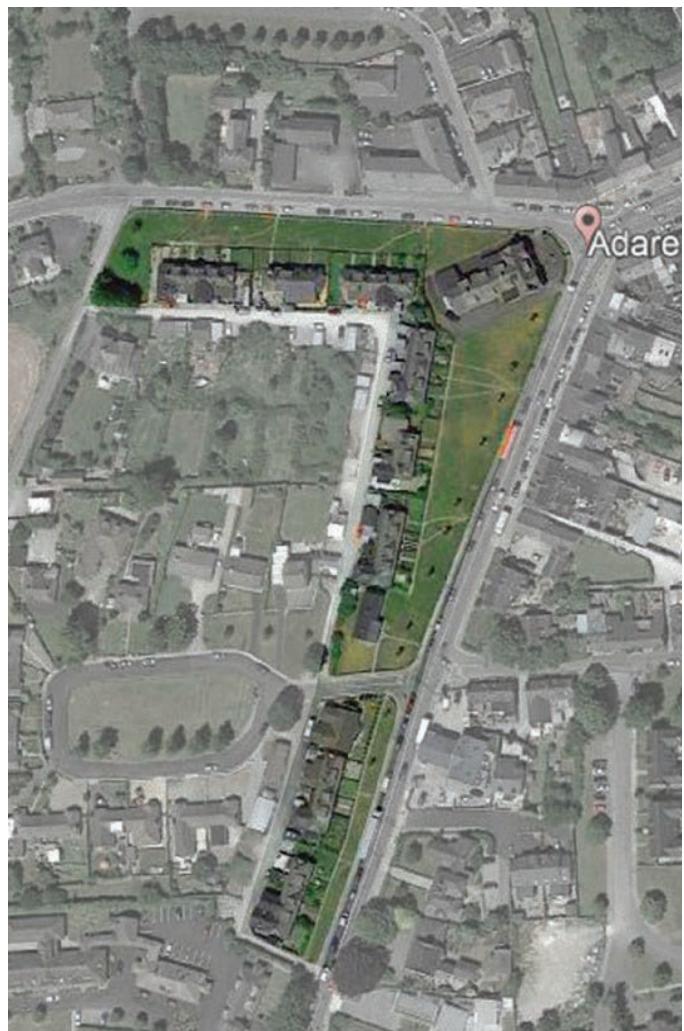
# Rathkeale Road & Village Green

The Village Green was traditionally a gathering area for community activities in the village. The original design by Clifford Smith, includes a composition for the Village Green, the Hall, and the adjoining houses. His plan also includes the architectural design for the buildings in the Arts and Craft style.

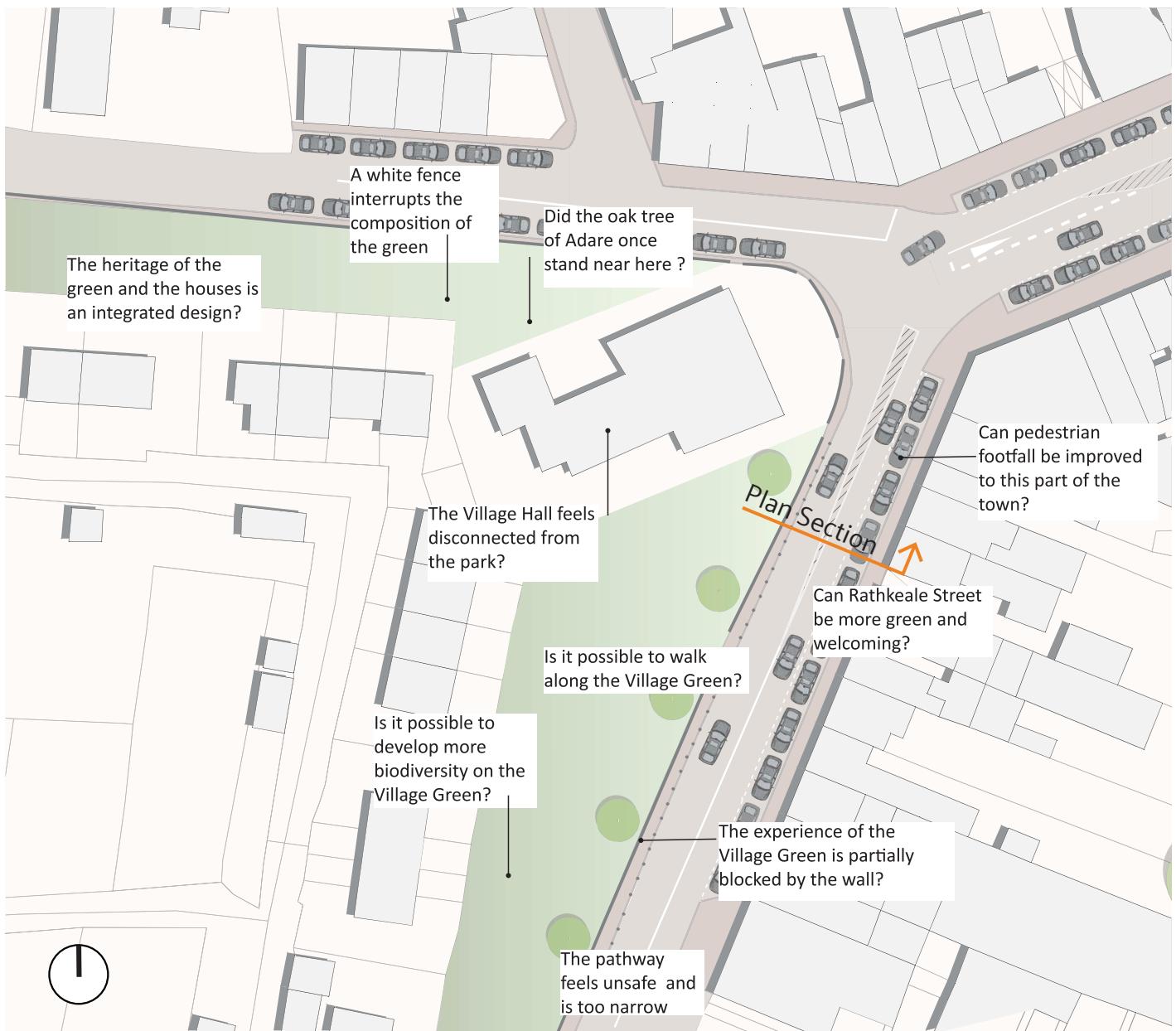
The quality of the plan, which determines much of the western approach to Adare relies on retaining the overall composition and design principles. Within this, small amendments are possible if they strengthen the composition and address issues (listed in the plan) to better reflect current needs.

The Village Hall, while rich in history, is in need of significant restoration work. Being a protected structure, any repairs or renovations must be undertaken with the guidance of a conservation Architect/Engineer. The Council supports and encourages actions to carry out remedial works to the Village Hall in line with best conservation principles.

Rathkeale Road itself is a narrow heavily trafficked route which connects the village to Scoil Naomh lósaf, the Manor Field's Sport complex and potential new residential areas to the west.



Existing Section through Rathkeale Road



Existing plan of Village Green with comments received from stakeholders

# Proposal for Rathkeale Road & Village Green

The Rathkeale Road is set to undergo reconfiguration, including the implementation of a cycle route connection and a widening of existing footpaths. Additionally, parking will be relocated to a nearby off-street car park. To enhance the visibility of the Village green area from the approach road, it is proposed to lower the wall and install a railing on top, ensuring the safety of children who use the green park from the road. Inside the park, a hoggin park path is suggested to run alongside the railing.

A series of green measures are proposed for the Village Green to strengthen its composition. These include the planting of hedges along the garden boundaries, the continuation of a path along the houses, the planting of a large oak near the Village Hall, the extensive maintenance of grassland to enhance biodiversity. Vehicular access around the Village Hall is to be controlled and the area is to be resurfaced in hoggin to enhance the park setting.

Hoggin (shown left) is a mixture of clay, gravel and sand or alternatively dust that produces a buff coloured bound surface. It is stable, low-maintenance, semi-permeable, and has a crunchy texture underfoot. A raised area of perennial planting is proposed to connect the Village Hall with the Green.

It is worth noting that the proposed pathway routes through the green will be subject to agreement with landowners and local residents. The plan highlights the significance of establishing these connections

and implementing green measures. Moreover, incorporating a cycle route on Rathkeale Road becomes feasible, addressing the space constraints that exist if the pathway were to remain outside the wall of the green. More comprehensive proposals can be formulated in close collaboration with landowners and residents to address specific requirements in detail.





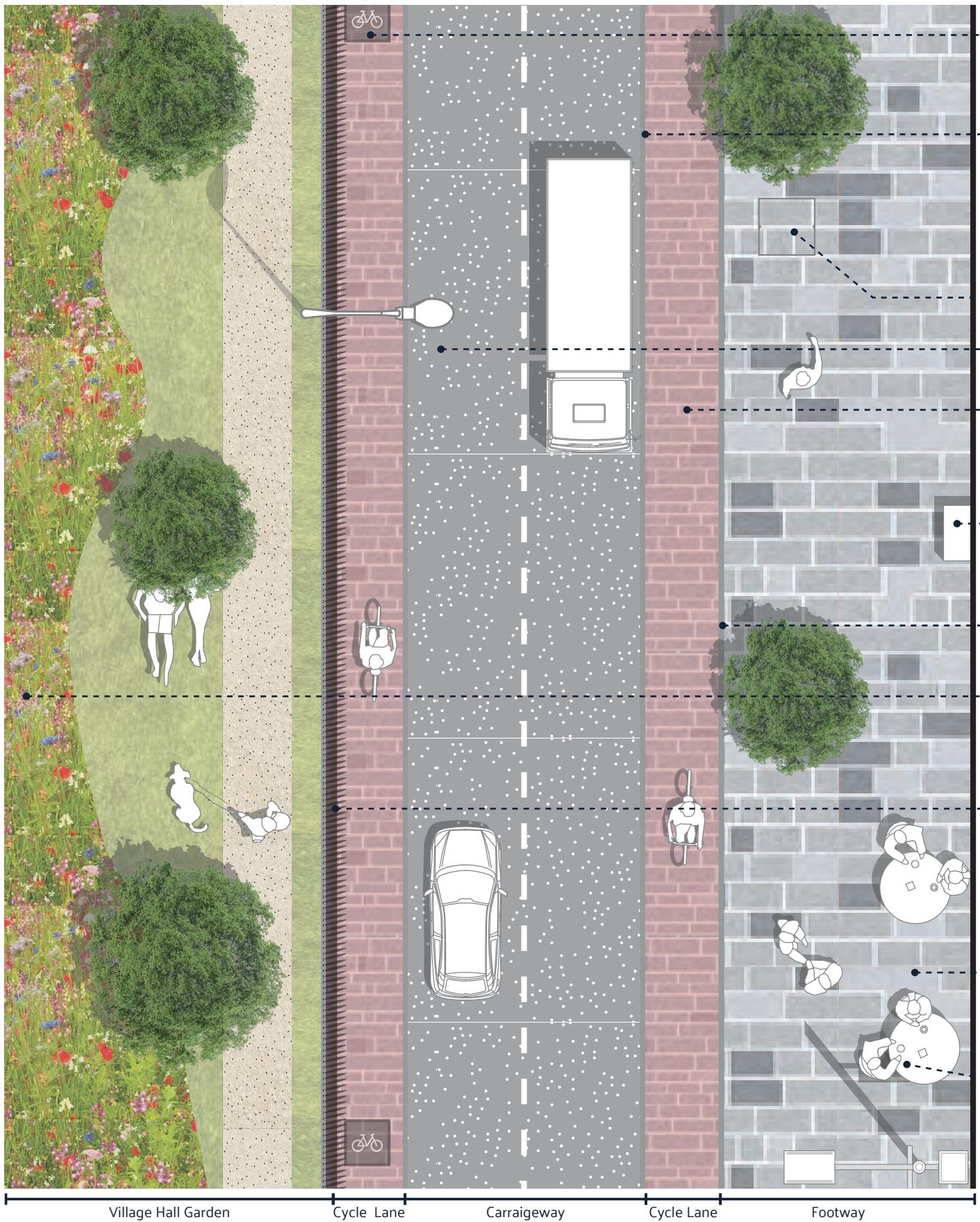
Proposed plan and section through Village Green

1. A new oak tree
2. Access to cars is restricted by bollards. Front wall is retained
3. A raised bed of colourful perennials, corten steel planter
4. Existing asphalt is resurfaced with light-coloured hoggin to create a park setting for the Village Hall
5. Terrace of flagstones near Village Hall for outdoor activities
6. Hedges and wooden fences and path are reinstated
7. Clusters of trees to be added
8. Flowering maintained grasslands to enhance biodiversity
9. Mowed grass.
10. Existing wall is lowered and topped with transparent steel fence to improve visibility to the green
11. New light-coloured hoggin walking path, subject to agreement of long-term lease
12. Cycle paths added
13. Street trees

# Material Palette, Village Green/Rathkeale Road

## \* General Notes:

1. Configuration of the pathways/cycle lanes are indicative only and will be subject to further review at design level
2. All overhead cabling to be ducted in ground to reduce visual clutter



## Natural stone cycle marker

Natural stone delineation strip in contrasting colour between asphalt and cycle way to provide distinct colour contrast to pathway in wet and dry conditions

Recessed utility covers with paving infill typically. Cast iron utility covers required for some utilities and/or where heavy vehicle overrun is anticipated

### Dark-grey asphalt road carraigeway

### Pink-red natural stone cycle lane

Litter bin/recycling bin at rationalised locations and located adjacent to building

Natural stone kerb colour to provide distinct colour contrast to pathway paving in wet and dry conditions

Extensively maintained flowering grasslands to enhance biodiversity

Existing wall lowered and topped with transparent steel rail in order to improve visibility to the green

Natural stone pavers in blue grey colour tone alongside 150mm natural stone kerb in dark grey colour to delineate parking bays and carriageway

#### Outdoor dining subject to necessary licenses



## Photomontage of Rathkeale Road / Village Green

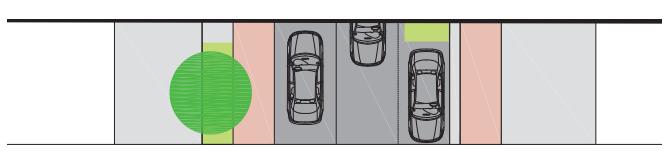
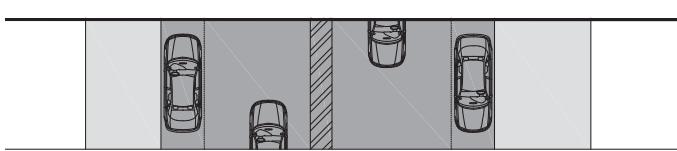
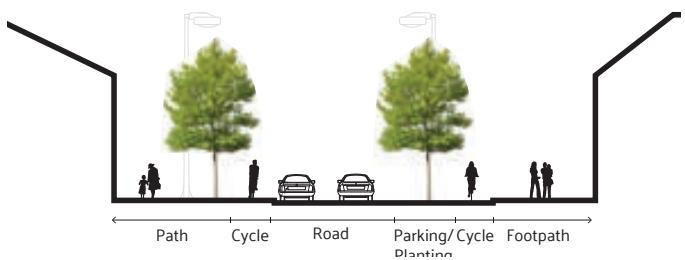
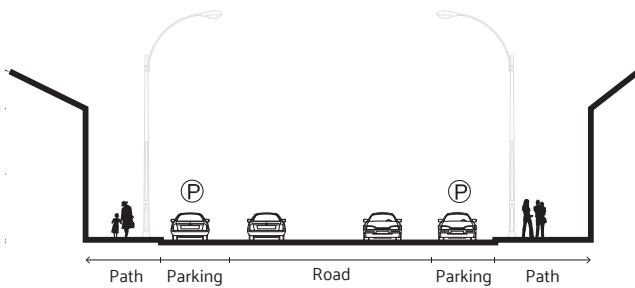




Streetview of existing situation on Main Street West

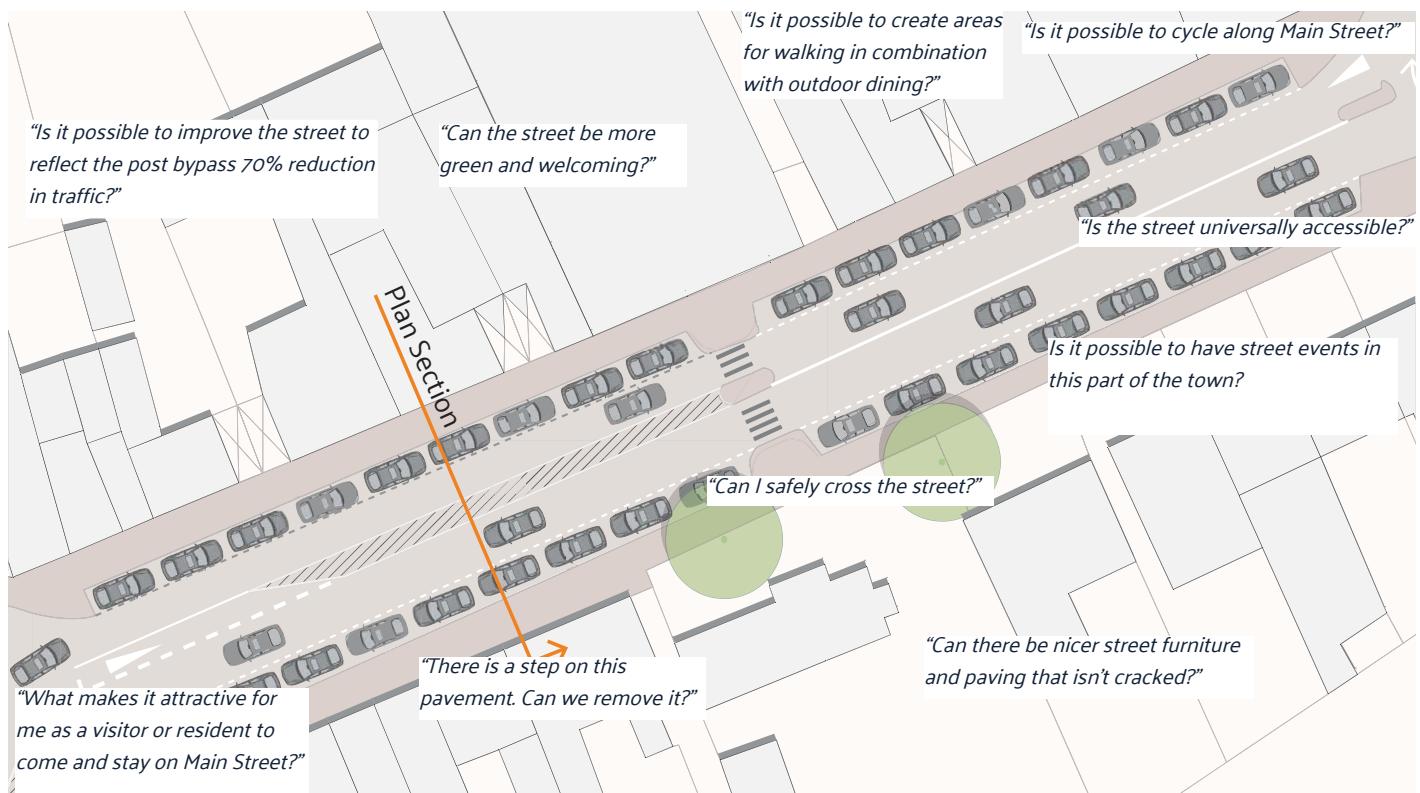
# Existing Situation, Main Street West

The application of the Public Realm design principles allows for multiple design outcomes for Main Street. Several options have been developed, taking into account the input and feedback from stakeholders. The preferred option, reflecting the collective discussions, presented here will be subject to further analysis under the Transport Plan.



Existing section (above left) through Main Street West

Proposed section (above right) through Main Street West



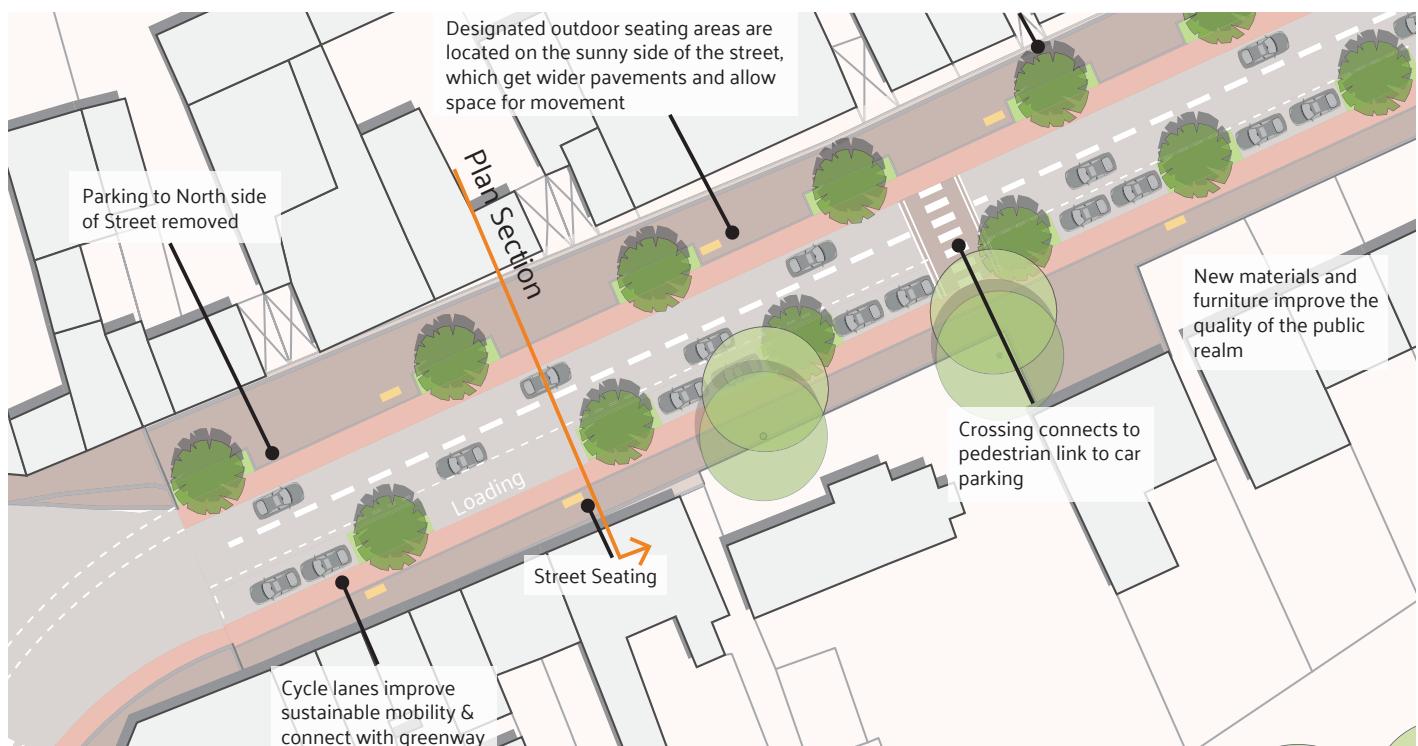
Existing plan through Main Street West

# Proposed Enhancements, Main Street West

The proposed design involves expansion of pedestrian areas to both sides of the street to create a zone that is more accommodating to pedestrians and cyclists. On the south side of the street, parking spaces (including a loading space) will be provided, while on the north side, off-street parking will replace the current on-street parking arrangement. Cycle routes can be accommodated to both sides of the street. To enhance the aesthetic appeal, two rows of trees, carefully selected to match the street's scale, will be planted in a staggered pattern along both sides of the carriageway. The village's overall appearance will be significantly enhanced by implementing the following design measures:

- The footways, crossings, cycle lanes and parking bays will feature high-quality natural stone paving. The size, depth, format, and sub-base of the paving will be designed to meet the requirements of vehicular traffic where required.
- Pedestrian crossings will be designed as raised tables, with the pavement material extending seamlessly across the carriageway.

- Tactile paving to be provided at pedestrian crossings
- Street lighting will be strategically positioned on either the pavement areas or potentially combined with wall-mounted lighting to ensure sufficient illumination along the street.
- Visual clutter to and overhead wires are to be eliminated by integrating utilities within footpaths and carriageways and effectively managing signage. Recessed inspection covers featuring paving infill matching the surrounding surface or cast iron utility covers to withstand anticipated vehicle loading to be utilised.
- Street furniture will be rationalized and placed either adjacent to the back of the kerb or in close proximity to buildings. Commercial establishments must obtain the necessary licenses for placing furniture such as tables and chairs on the public footpath.
- Bins will be strategically provided at carefully considered locations.

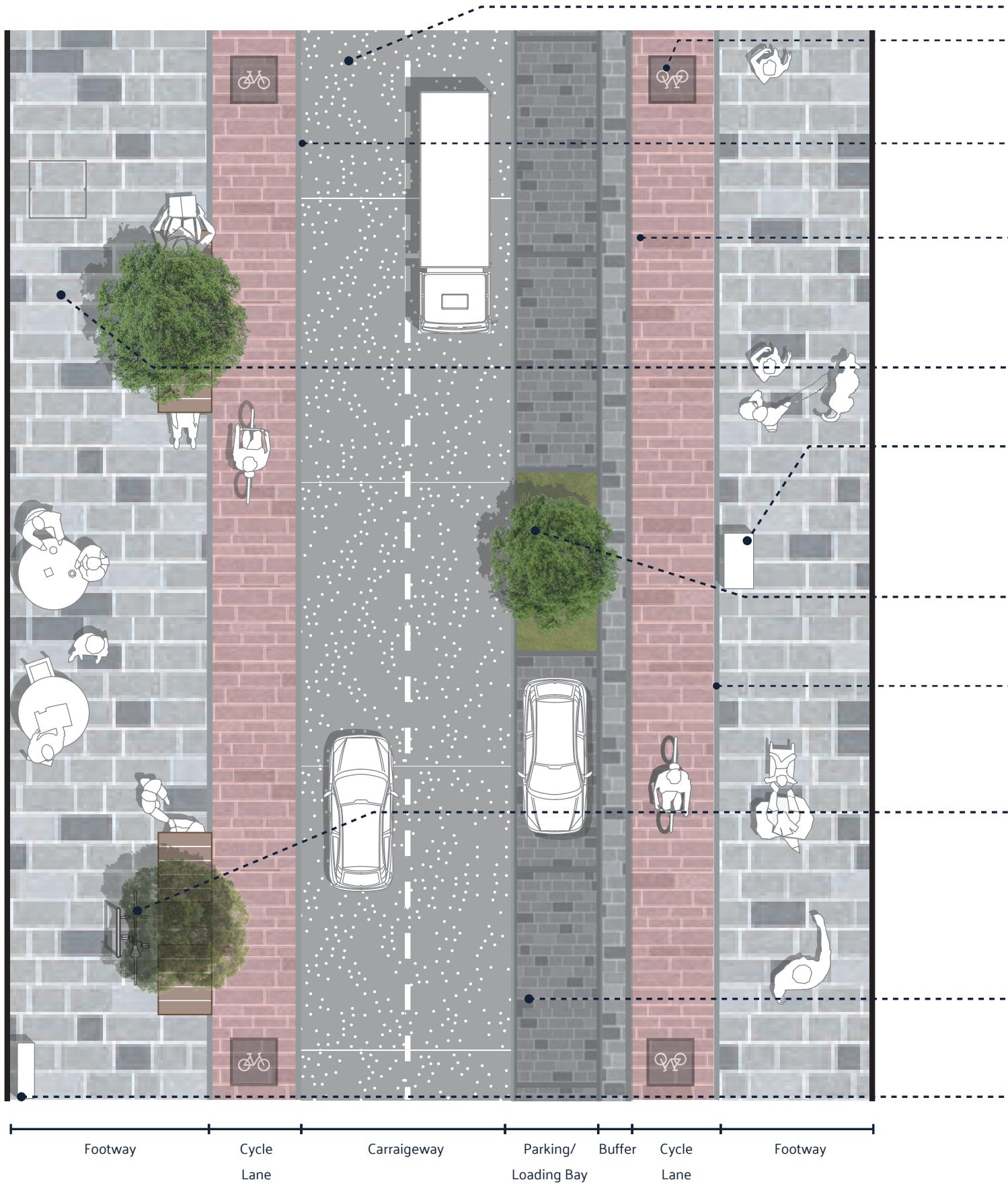


Existing plan and section through Main Street West

# Material Palette & Potential Future Layout

#### \* General Notes:

1. Configuration of the pathways/cycle lanes are indicative only and will be subject to further review at design level
2. All overhead cabling to be ducted in ground to reduce visual clutter



Dark-grey asphalt road carriageway

Natural stone cycle marker

Natural stone delineation strip in contrasting colour between asphalt and cycle way to provide distinct colour contrast to pathway in wet and dry conditions

Paving to parking loading bays and parking bays to be trafficable and to provide a colour contrast between the pathway.

Recessed utility covers with paving infill typically. Cast iron utility covers required for some utilities and/or where heavy vehicle overrun is anticipated

Litter bin/recycling bin at rationalised locations and offset 450mm from front of kerb edge

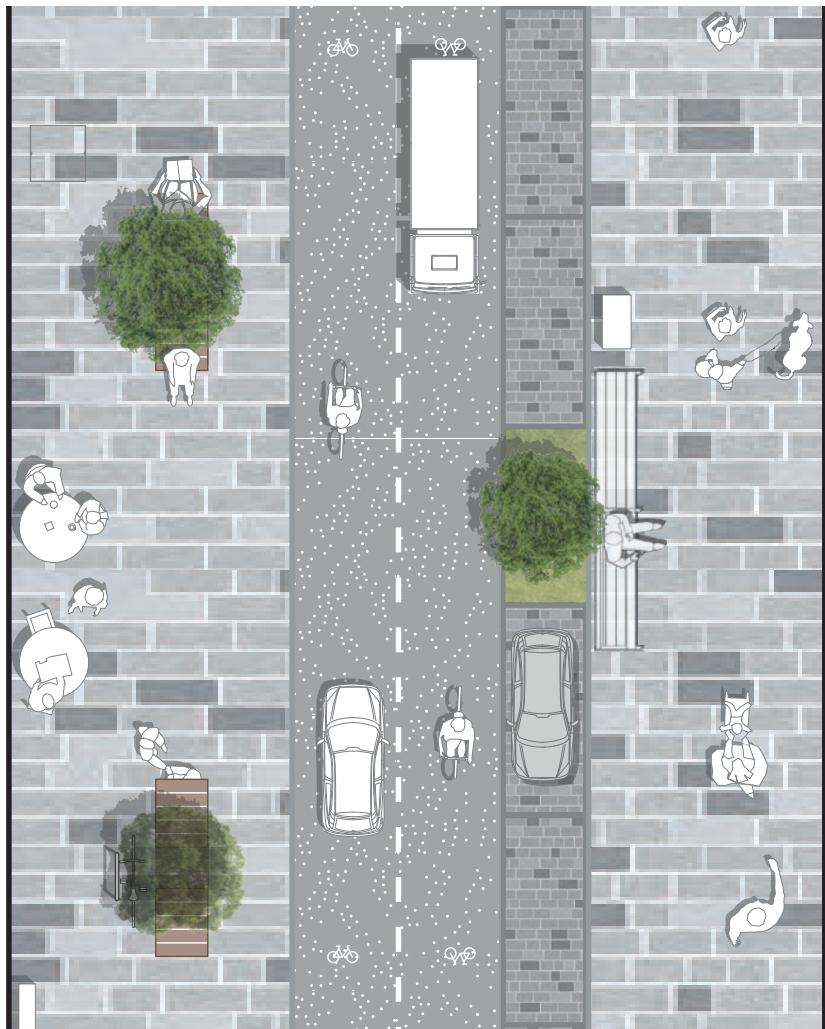
Appropriately scaled and selected street trees to be staggered across street between parking rows, sightlines for exiting parked cars to be maintained through formative pruning in Summer/Winter

Natural stone kerb colour to provide distinct colour contrast to pathway paving in wet and dry conditions

Where space permits, and in appropriate locations such as adjacent to grocery stores, cycle stands to be placed perpendicular to kerb with 900mm offset from front kerb edge

Natural stone pavers in dark grey colour tone alongside 150mm natural stone kerb in contrasting colour to delineate parking bays and carriageway. Contrast to be visible in both wet and dry conditions

Utility cabinet located adjacent to building line and where appropriate deliver Arts project for utility boxes



Alternative cycle lane arrangement with an integrated cycle lane in each direction

## Photomontage of Main Street West





Streetview of existing situation on Main Street West

# Existing Situation, Heritage Centre

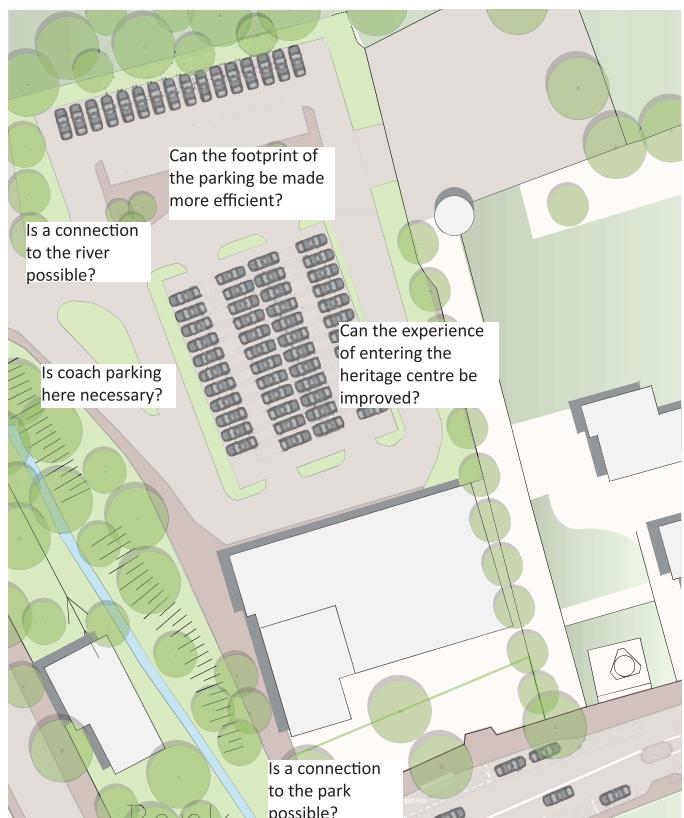
The Heritage Centre is a busy hub for Adare. For many tourists, it is the first introduction to Adare village. It has a shop, a restaurant, an information point and an exhibition space outlining the history of Adare. It also includes a car park with capacity for 97 cars and 6 coach parking bays and a public recycling facility accessed from Station Road.

The limestone-clad, Visitor / Heritage Centre building with its feature brick-course detailing and traditional doubled-pitched slated roofs seeks to harmonise within the contextual built fabric of the surrounding village setting. Constructed in the 1990s, the centre presents as a series of accommodation blocks arranged such as to reduce the overall mass of the building. The primary south-facing elevation addresses the Main Street across a softly landscaped foreground setting.

The availability of parking is central to the operation of the Visitor Centre. The offering of free parking close to the Main Street renders Adare a convenient stopover destination for passing trade. Such operational convenience, combined with the tourist offering, makes the Visitor Centre an attractive journey-break destination for coach tour operators

In the Draft Local Area Plan, the Heritage Centre carpark is designated as Opportunity Site No.1, offering potential for various improvements. The plan highlights the importance of evaluating the current parking arrangements, with a specific focus

on exploring the potential for age-friendly parking spaces. Additionally, it suggests examining the feasibility of creating a dedicated drop-off point for coaches and considering the provision of long-stay coach parking facilities outside the existing Heritage Centre carpark. Furthermore, the plan suggests the possibility of utilizing undeveloped lands at the rear of the carpark as an overflow coach parking area, providing an additional option to meet the needs of visitors.



Existing plan at Adare Heritage Centre

# Proposed Enhancements, Heritage Centre

The proposed development aims to establish physical connections between the Heritage Centre and the village's built heritage and nature trails. A new plaza is envisioned in front of the Heritage Centre, extending as a raised table across the carriageway to enhance the link between the Centre and Adare Park while providing traffic calming. Furthermore, pedestrian routes will be created through the parking spaces to the rear of the building, connecting the centre and the library to heritage sites such as the Dovecote and the graveyard as well as the local school.

In response to the growing focus on sustainable development, the implementation of Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs) systems in surface parking areas has gained traction. These systems employ various measures that mimic natural drainage processes, reducing pollutant concentrations and mitigating the rate and volume of urban runoff into natural water systems. To align with these sustainable principles, it is proposed that the parking area will be reconfigured and reconstructed utilising Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs) systems. By relocating coach parking to areas outside the village core (as detailed in the subsequent section), approximately forty additional parking spaces can be accommodated within the same area. However, to fully realize the proposed improvements for Main Street and Rathkeale Road approximately forty spaces will be removed from the street. It is therefore recommended to designate a second off-street parking area adjacent to Main Street.



Proposed plan at Adare Heritage Centre

## Photomontage of Heritage Centre Entrance

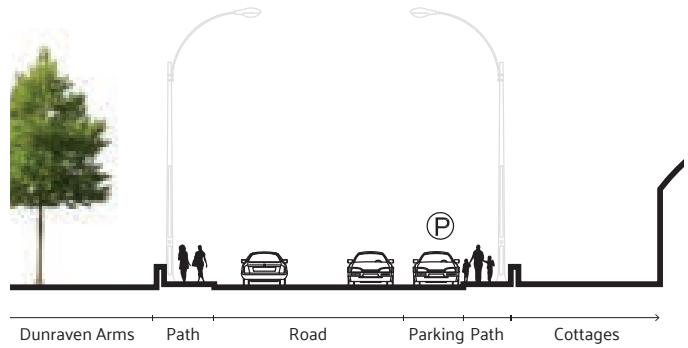




Streetview of existing situation at Heritage Centre entrance

## Existing Situation, Main Street East (Cottages)

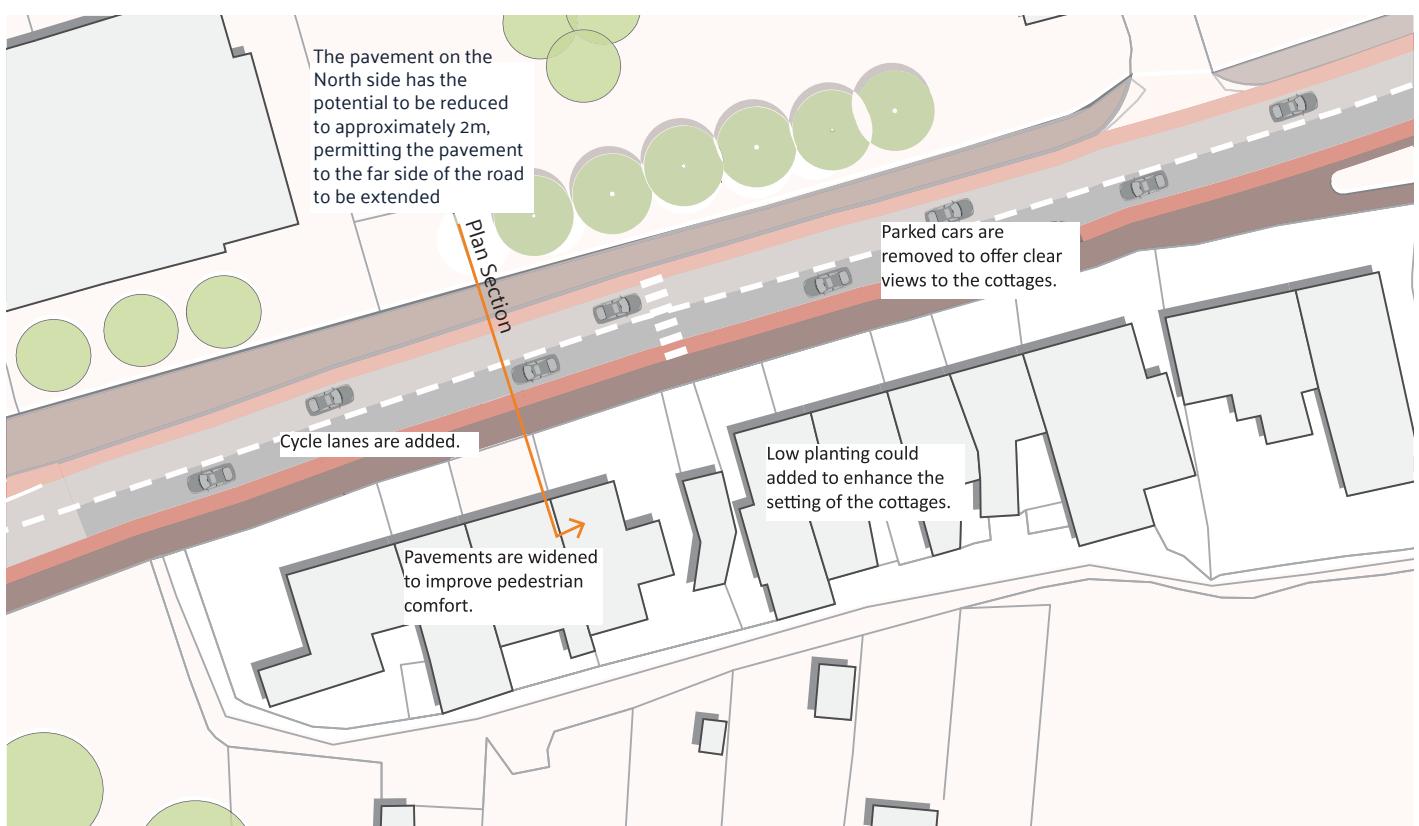
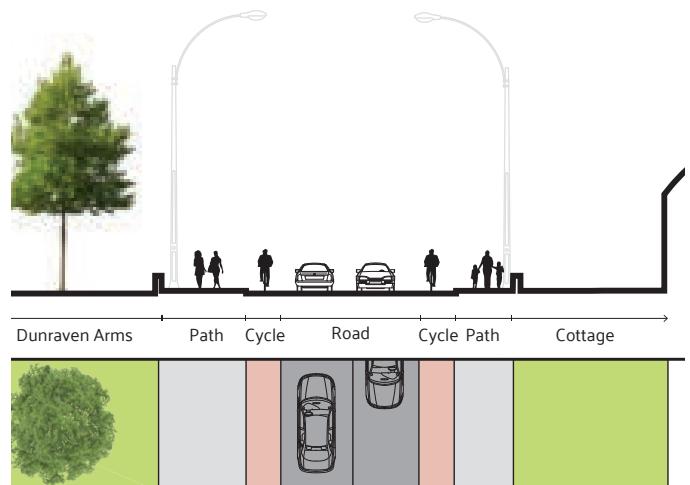
The thatched Cottages are one of Adare's signature site for visitors, however the visual and comfort amenity of the Cottages is detracted by parked cars coupled with a narrow pedestrian footpath. The parking situation contributes to congestion, noise, and pollution, adversely affecting the overall experience.



Existing plan and section at Main Street East (Cottages)

# Proposed Enhancements, Main Street East

By removing car parking spaces in front of the thatched cottages, the opportunity arises to expand the footpath, providing additional room for pedestrians and incorporate a dedicated cycle path. Furthermore, the introduction of small scale shrubs and planting, proportionate to the scale of the cottages, will help to soften the appearance of the roadway. The existing on-street car parking will be relocated to either an off-street car park or the reconfigured Heritage Centre car park.

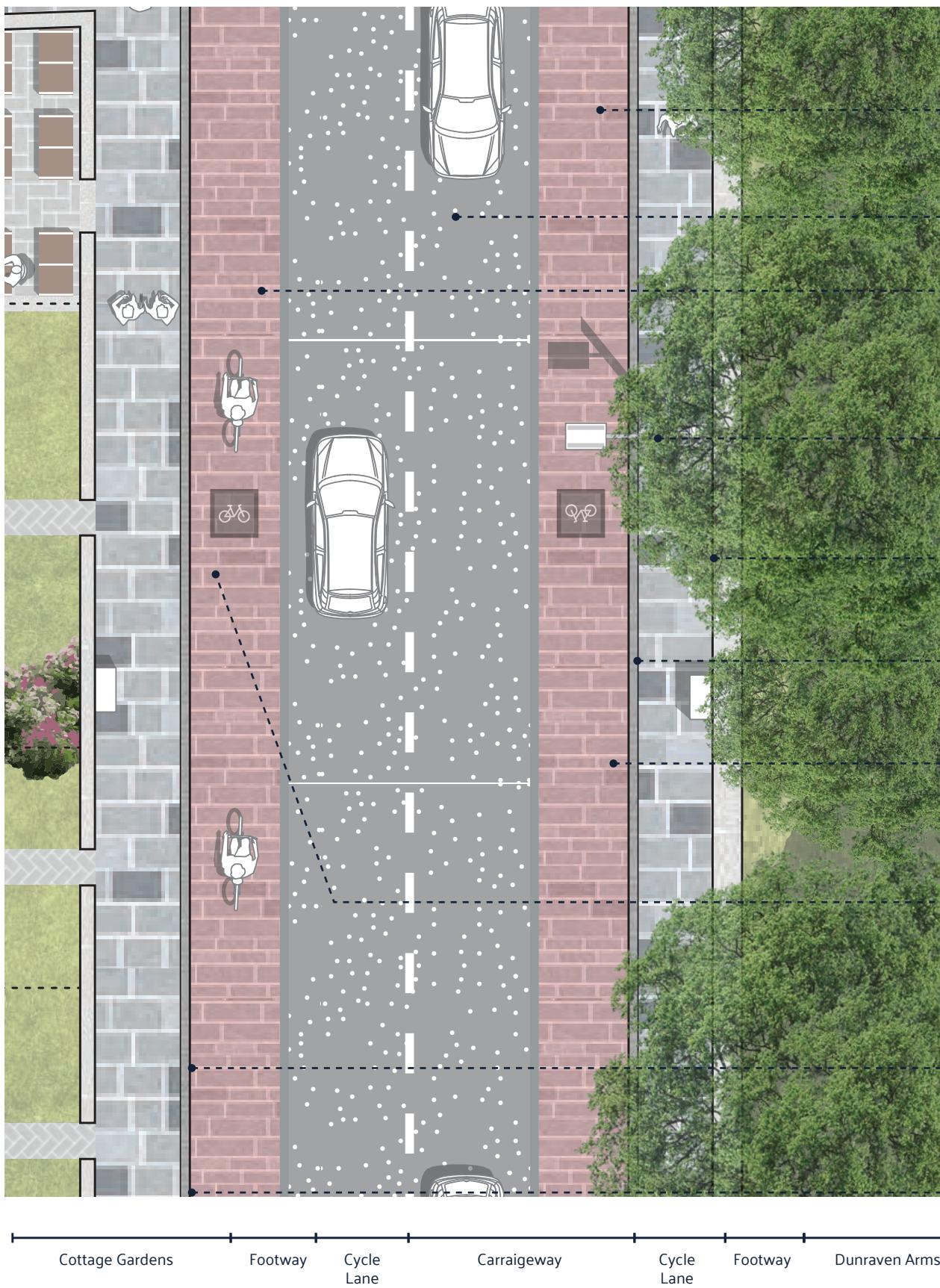


Proposed plan and section at Main Street East (Cottages)

# Material Palette, Main Street East

## \* General Notes:

1. Configuration of the pathways/cycle lanes are indicative only and will be subject to further review at design level
2. All overhead cabling to be ducted in ground to reduce visual clutter



Natural stone delineation strip in contrasting colour between asphalt and cycle way. Note cycle lane natural stone to provide distinct colour contrast to pathway in wet and dry conditions

Dark-grey asphalt road carraigeway

### Natural stone to outside Cottages

Lighting column with high and low level lights and attached traffic signage aligned to one side of street

Narrow bin located to building & wall line-height of bin to align with height of wall

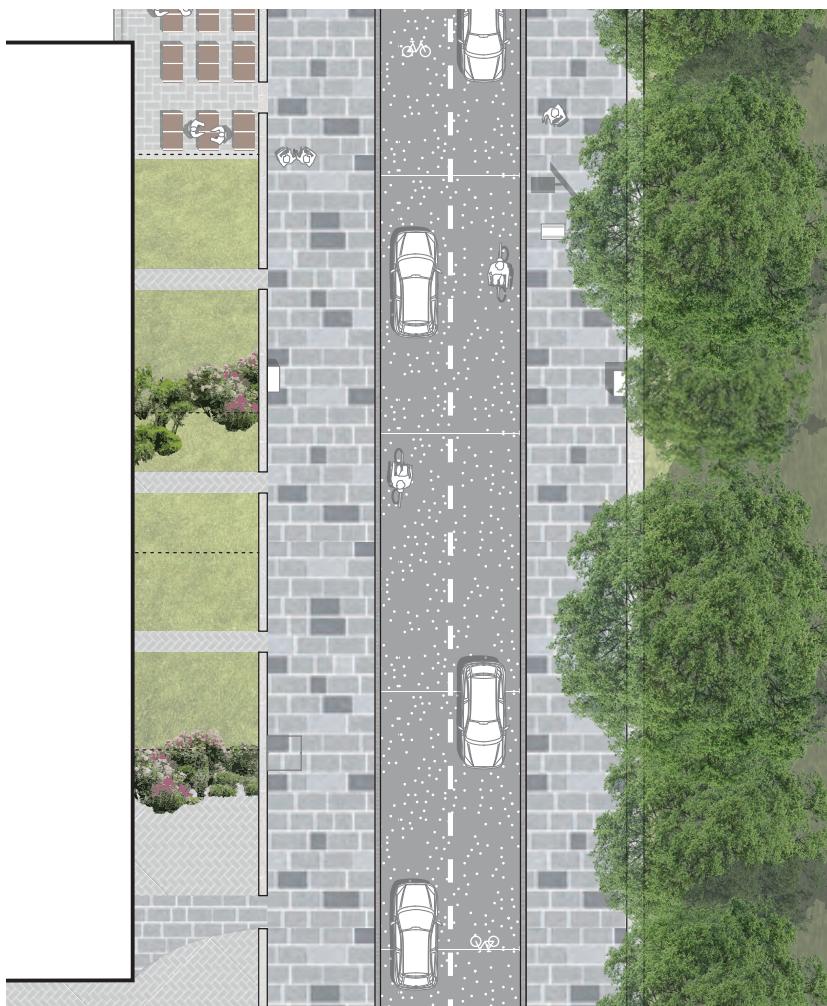
150mm natural stone between footway and cycle lane

Red/pink natural stone to cycle lane

Utility cabinet placed adjacent to building/wall line

Cycle-friendly drainage gully grate.  
Alternatively recessed drainage outlet  
could be utilised if deemed appropriate.  
Location and frequency dependent on  
street conditions. Offline positioning  
preferable.

Natural stone kerb colour to provide distinct colour contrast to pathway paving in wet and dry conditions



Alternative cycle lane arrangement with an integrated cycle lane in each direction

# Photomontage of Main Street East (Cottages)

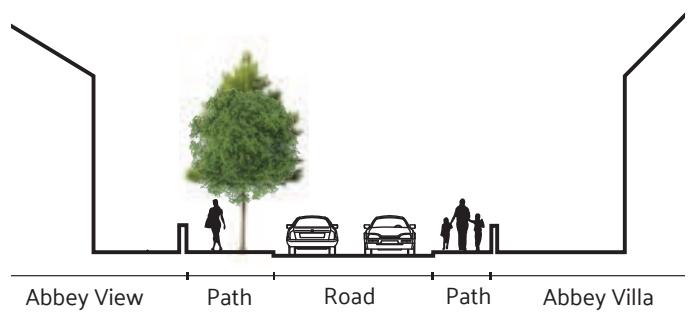
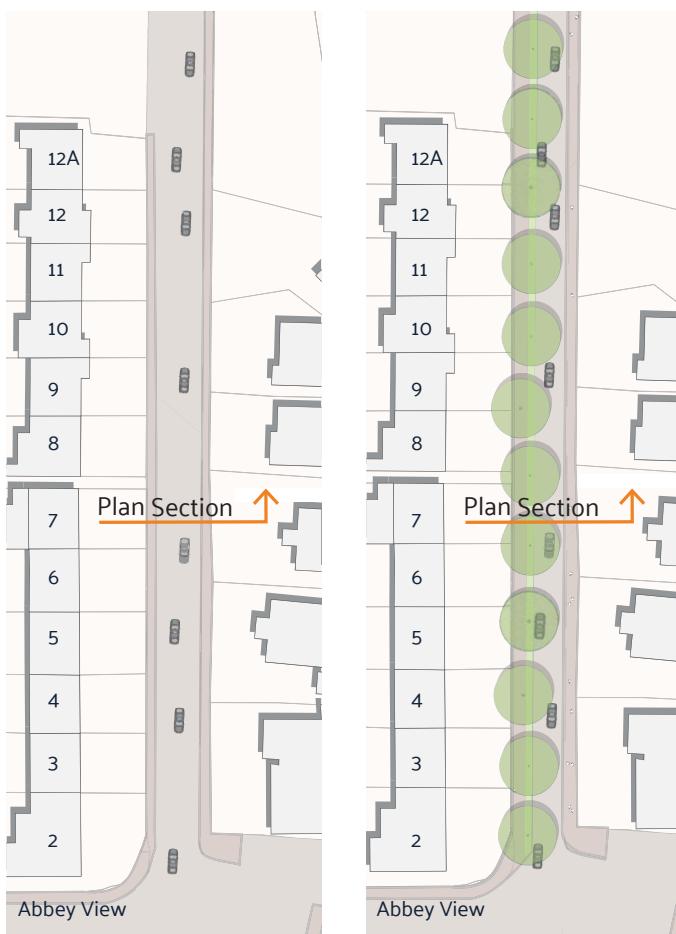




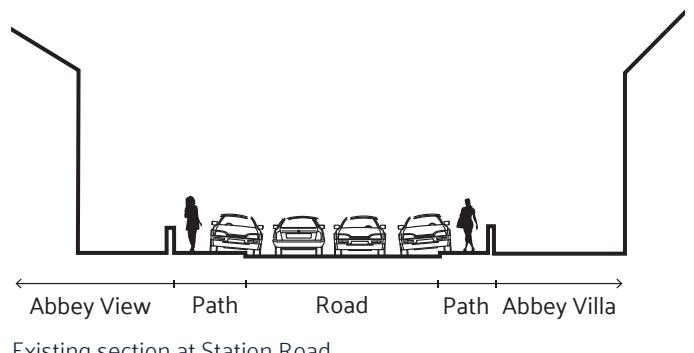
Streetview of existing situation at the Cottages

# Proposed Improvements to Station Road

The redevelopment of Station Road involves expanding the current pathways and introducing a green verge, which will be adorned with trees wherever feasible. Following the implementation of the By-pass and subsequent evaluation under the Transport Plan, it is suggested that the road be narrowed to 5.5m and the speed limit reduced to 30 kph. This transformed road will serve as a shared space for both cyclists and vehicles. The revised layout will facilitate a safe pedestrian and cycling link from the railway line to Main Street.



Proposed section at Station Road, a shared cycle - traffic roadway

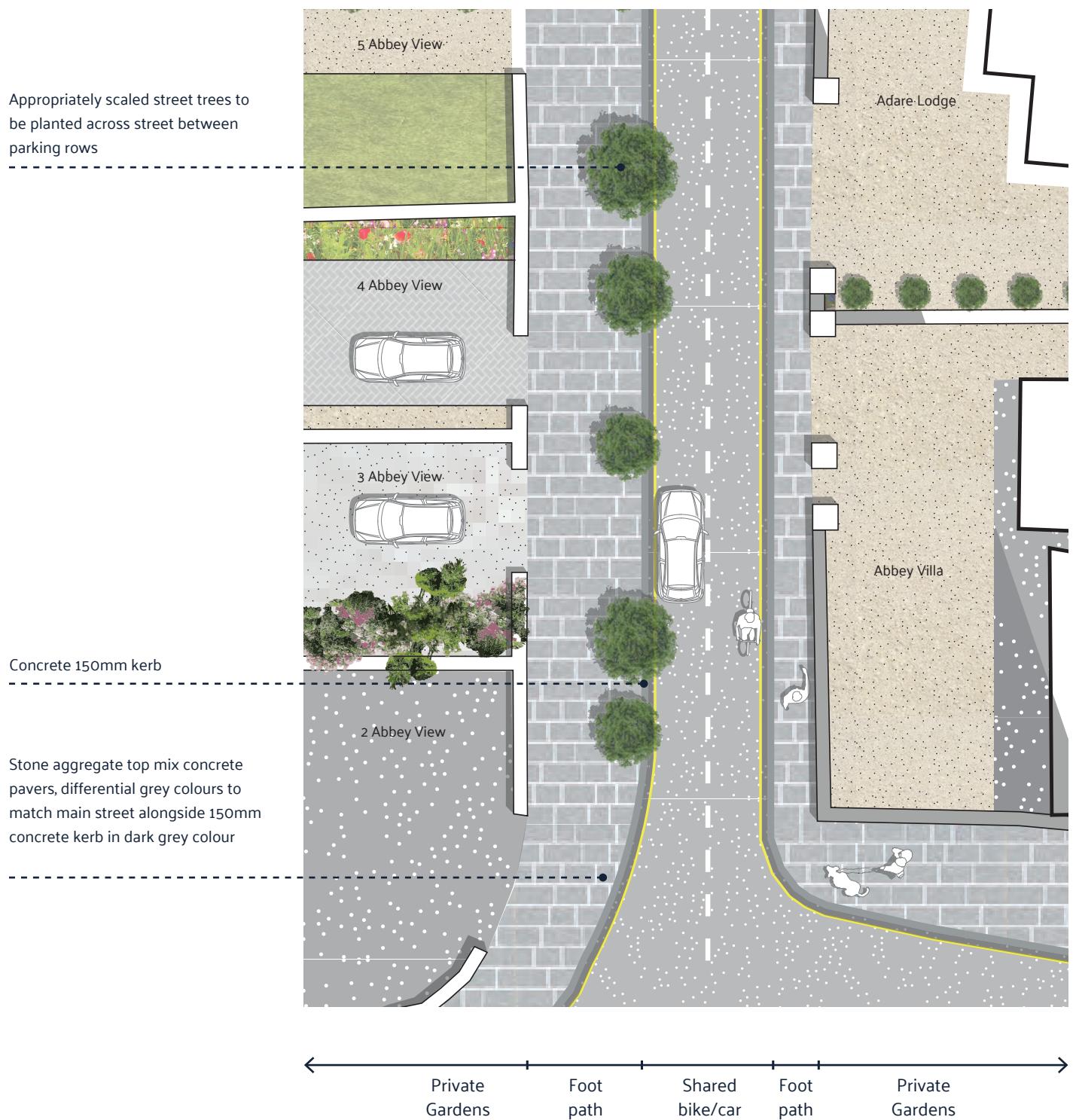


Existing section at Station Road

# Material Palette, Station Road

## \* General Notes:

1. Configuration of the pathways/cycle lanes are indicative only and will be subject to further review at design level
2. All overhead cabling to be ducted in ground to reduce visual clutter



# Proposed Improvements for Village Park

The Village Park is a wonderful resource.

Stakeholders observed it has potential to be better used if it was more connected to Main Street. The park avenue, locally known as the Chestnut Walk, holds historical significance as it once served as a key axis between the Manor House and the River Maigue within Adare's demesne landscape. As part of the conservation of Adare's demesne landscape it is proposed to transform the Chestnut Walk into a multifunctional pedestrian and cycle route which could potentially link to the Avenue through lands zoned for open space and recreation. This transformation would also make the walkway suitable for hosting events like markets. As part of these improvements, a new entrance gate from the park to Main Street is suggested (near the roundabout), featuring a contemporary design inspired by the existing gates in the park. Additionally, a range of short term and medium term proposals are outlined below to gradually enhance the park over time.

- A sensory garden of national appeal to be located to the south of the park
- Informal tree lighting along the Hornbeam Lane to the Pavilion Building.
- An adventure play area along the eastern periphery of the park. Information and signage for specific points in the park such as the washing area.
- A contemporary ironwork gate at the Avenue entrance to the park on Main Street, to mark the former connection to the Manor House from the former Canal.
- Extending the park as a biodiversity area with a flood retention function.



Existing Avenue with gate to demesne



Light coloured clay-bound pathway



Sensory garden



# Proposed Improvements for The Avenue

The Avenue is historically a key axial connection between the village and the Manor. A series of interventions are proposed to enhance the visibility and attractiveness of this important historical axis.

The interventions are listed below.



1. Plant area to develop green entrance to street. Improve pedestrian comfort by continuing footpath where currently absent.

2. Remove undergrowth and plant new tree, with 4-5m stem. Plant hedges as boundaries to replace fences and walls.

3. Remove planting in order to open up view along the Avenue

4. Investigate relocation of on-street parking in Transport Plan

# Proposed Improvements to Former Fever Hospital

The prominent former Fever Hospital building is situated along the Rathkeale Road, adjacent to Scoil Naomh Iosaf, and across from the recently constructed public car park. Recognised as a protected structure in Adare, the proposals within the building's premises have duly considered its status. Unfortunately, the building currently remains vacant, despite its significant presence as one approaches the village. This area has been designated as Opportunity Site 3 in Volume 1 of the Local Area Plan.

To revitalize the surroundings of the former Fever Hospital, there is a vision to transform it into a living laboratory dedicated to sustainable organic food production, nature conservation, biodiversity, and rainwater management. The plans aim to actively involve students in gaining practical knowledge and understanding of sustainable and organic principles. Key elements of the proposal include the development of a biodiversity garden, a geodome, a rain garden, and designated spaces for organic food production.



1. New small fruit trees (pear or apple)
2. Food garden
3. Geodome
4. Biodiversity garden.
5. Rain garden
6. Bulbs in space
7. New pathways (compacted clay hoggin finish)
8. Grass
9. Parking



# General Streetscape Principles

Adare possesses a diverse range of materials and street furniture within its public spaces, including visually appealing features like limestone kerbs and walls. However, as outlined in Chapter 2, the current state of the pavements is in places unsatisfactory, there has been an inconsistent use of modern materials and street clutter is a prevalent issue. While the Village has much visual appeal, there is a need for uniformity in signage, furniture and material selection.

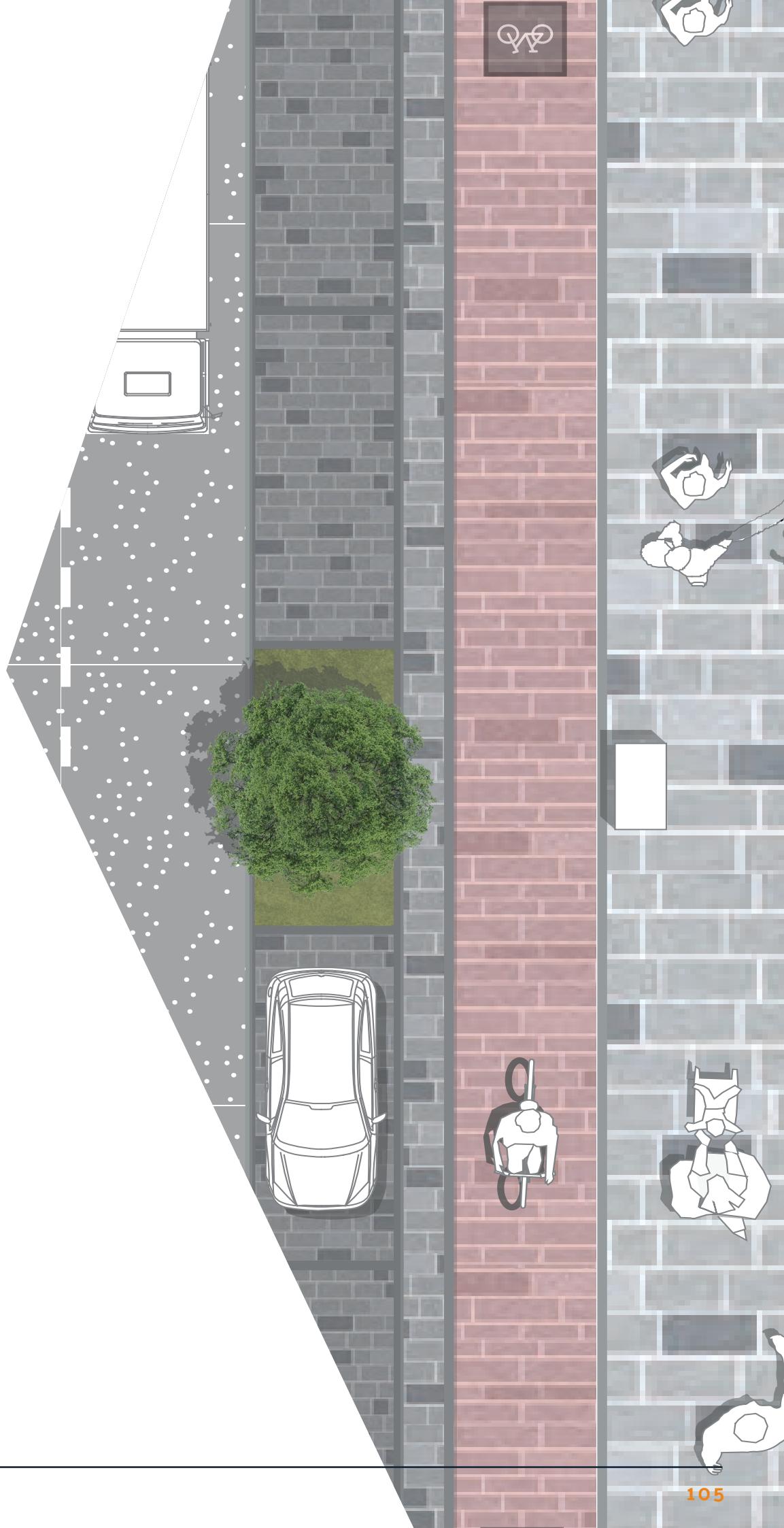
Local authorities in Ireland are charged with the management of the public realm. This includes elements such as safety, flow of people, accessibility, protection of historic buildings and presentation among many other elements. Limerick City and County Council will exercise control over the location and quality of street furniture in the interests of ensuring a high-quality public domain is retained in Adare. All outdoor furniture and signage provided by private operators including retailers, publicans and restaurateurs, etc. should be located to prevent any obstruction or clutter of the footpaths and paved areas and should reflect highest quality, should be of good design and respect the overall character of the Village. Street furniture requires either a licence under Section 254 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) or planning permission (including street furniture erected on private lands).

In both instances, the applicant is required to submit details of the location, design, specification and quality of the proposed elements of street furniture. Guidelines on “what looks good” are set out in the Failte Ireland’s “Best Practice Guidelines for Outdoor Dining and Urban Animation” through diagrams and existing precedents of streets and public spaces. When considering the incorporation of materials is important to ensure the materials being specified

are fit for purpose and have been assessed in terms of durability and expected lifespan having regard to the materials properties. When specifying natural stone in particular it must be confirmed that principle aspects affecting each stone material’s longevity in use including its resistance to freeze thaw action, its design use and its abrasion resistance have been considered. It must be ensured that natural stone performance requirements for compressive strengths, bending / flexural strength, abrasion resistance, porosity, water absorption, durability, surface finishes and slip / skid resistance are being met in accordance with DMURs “ADVICE NOTE 2 - Materials and Specifications”.

The street surface underscores the character of place and the appreciation of Adare’s built heritage. It is for this reason that new and contemporary public realm design solutions must acknowledge this setting, and should include considerations relating to colour, tone, texture, type, geometry, detailing, style and pattern. The consideration of the Architectural Conservation Area, as well as historic buildings, walls, gate surrounds, street vistas, and existing paving materials like cobbles, flags, and kerbs, should inform this approach.

Establishing a unified material palette is crucial to create a cohesive and high-quality public realm. It ensures that the proposed designs are fit for purpose, cost-efficient and capable of distinguishing “special places” within the village of Adare. This chapter outlines the typical streetscape arrangements for various public realm typologies. Each typology showcases a unique design approach and the application of specific materials and streetscape elements. Annotated illustrative drawings within each typology highlight technical considerations for different street conditions, offering guidance on how to implement the design intent.



# Proposed Materials

Throughout the plan process, active engagement with residents and stakeholders resulted in a request for a cohesive range of long-lasting materials for the public realm. This encompassed various elements such as paving, lighting, bins, and signage.

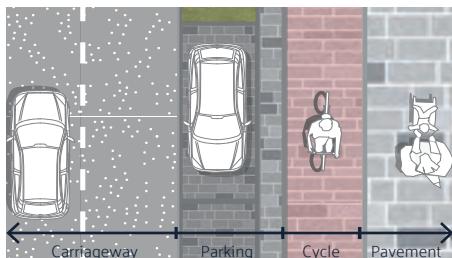
An overall strategy has been prepared as a guideline for future works. In general, three character areas have been distinguished to differentiate materials; village centre (urban), village extension (residential areas) and park areas. High end finishes in the historical village centre are balanced with low maintenance robust finishes in residential areas.

A palette of furniture (overleaf) has been selected to reflect a contemporary yet timeless image for the village. Dark grey/charcoal is selected for furniture and signage elements to develop a cohesive approach that ties into a single signature for the overall branding for Adare that has been recently developed.



# Proposed Materials: Village Core

1. Street surface: Navy coloured high quality asphalt with flint chips.
2. Kerbs: Grey natural stone, min. 15 cm wide.
3. Cycle path: light pink natural stone, cut on all sides, small elements, differential surface finishes. Distinctive colour contrast to be provided between pathway, cycle path & parking bays. Paving size, depth, format and sub-base to be designed to meet vehicle loading requirements.
4. . Parking bays: Dark grey natural stone, cut on all sides, differential surface finishes. Distinctive colour contrast to be provided between pathway, cycle path & parking bays. Paving size, depth, format and sub-base to be designed to meet vehicle loading requirements.
5. Offstreet parking (adjacent to Main Street): permeable block paving with rain gardens, hedging & tree planting between parked cars.
6. Park pathways (Village Green): clay-bound hoggin paths with pre- fabricated concrete edging in park areas.
7. Pedestrian crossings: Raised area of dark grey and white natural stone in strips, cut on all sides, small elements, differential surface finishes
8. Pathway: Three tone blue/grey mixed palette of natural stone. Distinctive colour contrast to be provided between pathway, cycle path & parking bays.



# Proposed Street Furniture: Village Core

1. Bins: Dark grey powder coated steel, contemporary.
2. Signage: as per wayfinding strategy section
3. Bike parking: Stainless steel U-frame, contemporary.
4. Seating: clusters of singles, doubles sets with backrests. Steel frame and armrest, contemporary urban.
5. Tree base: self-binding hoggin clay base
6. Bollard: stainless steel with a reflective strip
7. Fencing: Dark grey powder coated steel railing, contemporary urban, for transparency and strength.

8. **Lighting**, main poles: LED, dark grey powder coated steel, contemporary.

**Feature lighting:** dark grey/black powder coated steel lighting bollards for Pedestrian Plaza.

**Uplighters:** to Historical features.

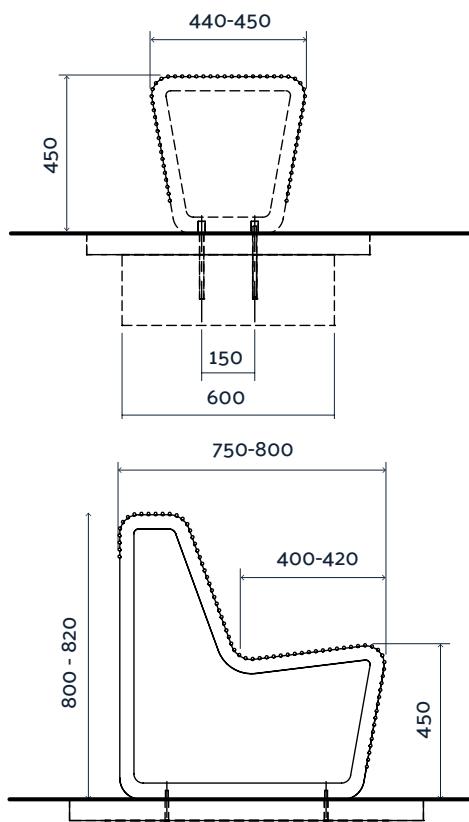
All illuminance levels, LUX levels, colour and hue of lighting is to adhere to and be in accordance with Limerick City and County Council Public Lighting and Product Specification 2022.



# Seating

## Key considerations:

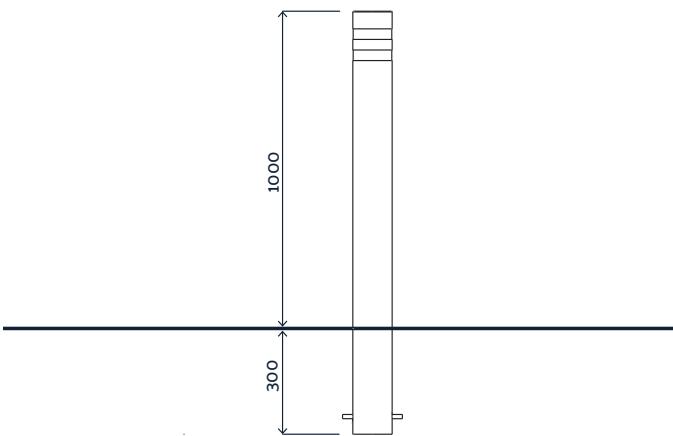
- Use of a mixture of off the shelf seating and bespoke seating should be considered
- Seating should be easily maintained with a long life-span, cost effectively replaceable and repairable.
- Moisture resistant materials which are sustainably sourced are a prerequisite
- Given Adare's historic character, seating design should preference transparency for preserving views through to heritage sites.
- Accessible street furniture should be allowed for in all instances.
- A variety of seating types should be allowed for, single and multi -seaters, with & without backrests



# Bollards

## Key considerations:

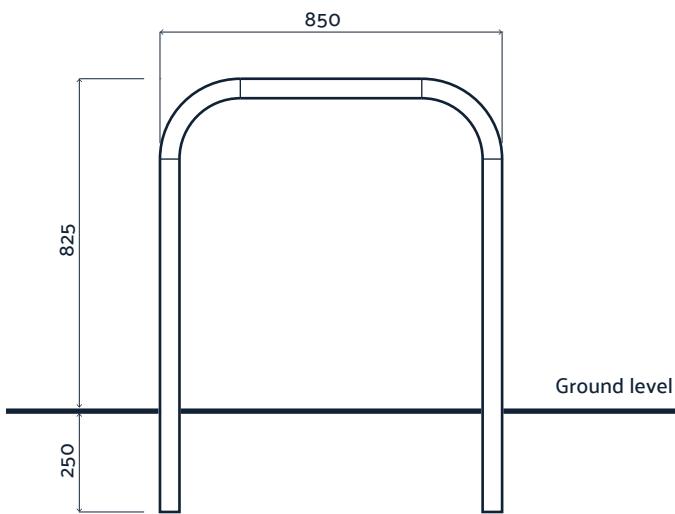
- Bollards should be used to prevent unlawful parking on footways at typical spacing of 3 meters, and should be minimised to reduce street clutter.
- Where positioned on footways, they should not be provided on a footway which does not exceed 1.5 metres in width, should not prevent the movement of pedestrians between the bollards, and should not obstruct an entrance to premises or land adjoining the road.
- Stainless steel ground socket box fixed bollards with white reflective strip.
- Carefully positioned street furniture such as seating & cycle racks can provide an alternative barrier that is preferable to a line of bollards
- Type, design and colour should be standardised in Adare, however historic bollards of significance should be restored and retained.



# Cycle Stands

## Key considerations:

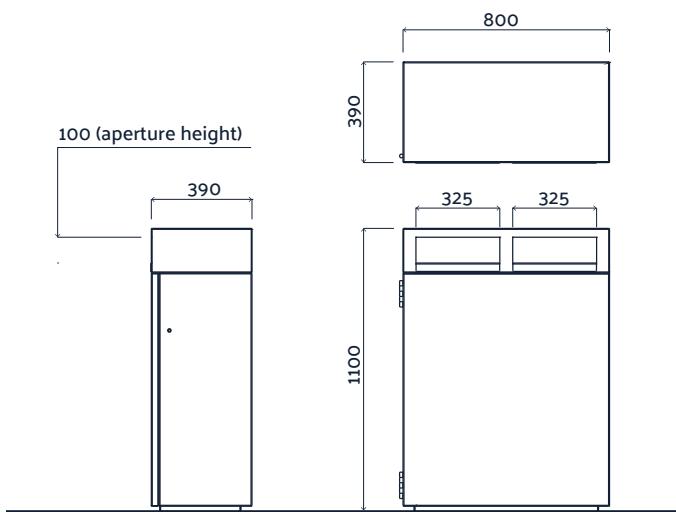
- Cycle Stands should be U-Shape 316 grade stainless steel with a brushed polish finish.
- Ample cycle parking to be provided for visitors and local cyclists so as to reduce the number of bicycles locked elsewhere e.g. on light poles which may impact pedestrians.
- Where streets are narrower, cycle stands can be organised parallel to the cycle lane. Generous centres (c.2500mm) can allow pedestrians to move in-between the cycle stands.
- Where streets are wider it is possible to arrange cycle stands perpendicular to the cycle lane.



# Litterbins and Recycling

## Key considerations:

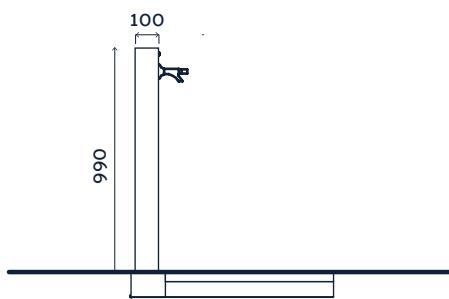
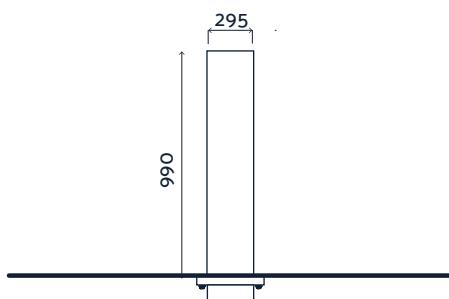
- Litterbins should be galvanized steel and aluminium with a powder-coated finish in dark-grey colour with light toned green colour signage for recycling. Litter bins should be of a plain, simple design, emblazoned with no logos and only necessary instructions for use.
- Litterbins should be visible, however entrances to building and pedestrian thoroughfares should be avoided in terms of their placement.
- Recycling should be incorporated within the design of the litterbin in all instances unless spatial constraints are brought about due to heritage sites.
- Litterbins which are placed adjacent to low stone heritage walls should align with the height of the wall.
- Bins should be closed but easy and safe to open to facilitate proper waste collection services.
- Bins should be set back from the kerb by a minimum of 450mm



# Drinking Fountains

## Key considerations:

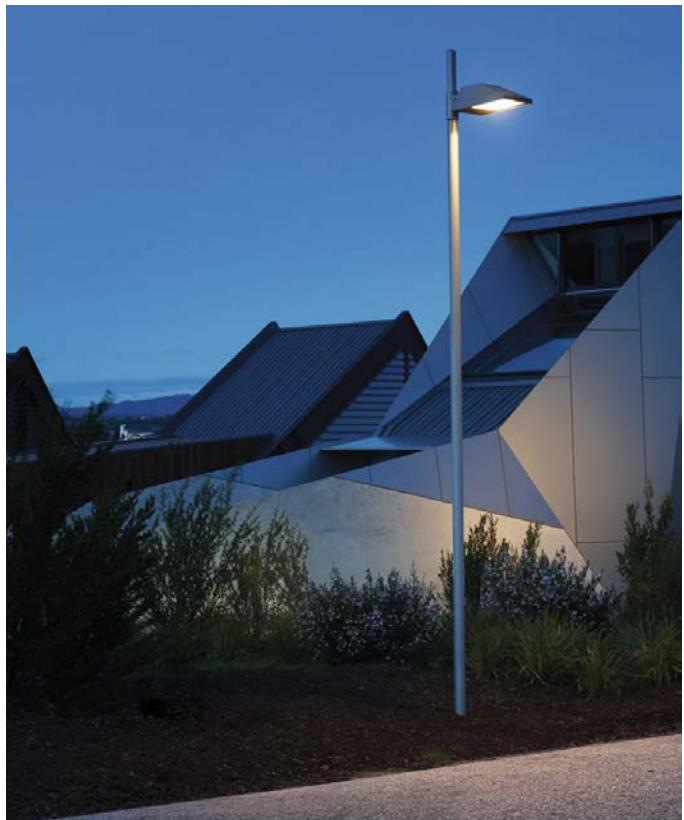
- Stainless Steel finish with decorative drain grille.
- Drinking fountains should be located in areas of high pedestrian footfall where areas would benefit particularly in summer months.
- Drinking should allow for pedestrians to pass by and around them.
- These should be accessible to all. Heights can be arranged to suit all users.
- Where possible, drinking should be located adjacent to buildings.
- Drinking fountains should be of a plain, simple design, emblazoned with no logos and only necessary instructions for use.



# Street Lighting

## Key considerations:

- Dark grey powder coated pole and street lighting system for use with LED light sources
- Light bulb colouring in all instances should be warm toned, not cool.
- A variety of different heights can be used in lighting to distinguish different areas/situations. Lower level lighting is used for pedestrian routes compared with vehicles areas.
- Where possible lighting should be wall mounted or adjacent to buildings in order to maintain clear pedestrian routes.
- Poles for lighting may also be used for signage and vice versa.
- Lighting beneath street furniture and low level uplighters can create variety and visual interest.
- Lit-up Artwork can be used as a visual focus.



# In-Ground Street Trees

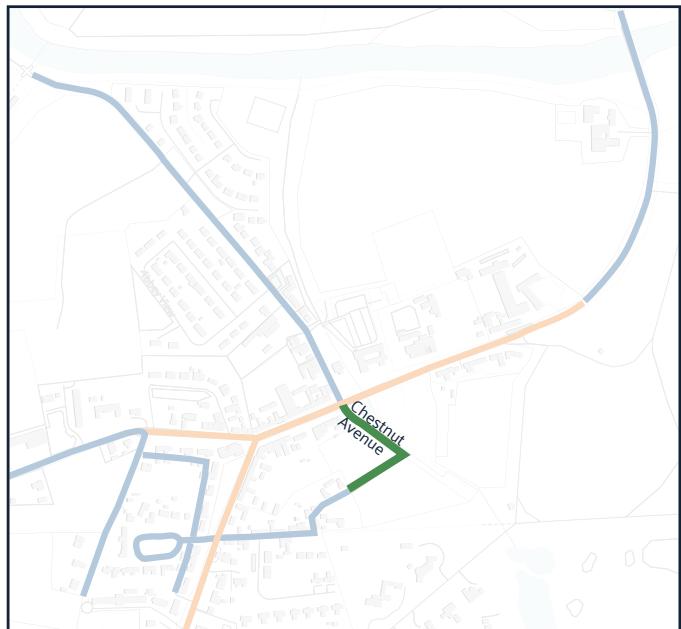
## Key considerations:

- Advanced nursery stock 20-25cm girth native Irish trees where suitable such as Birch (Betula Pendula), or non-native tree species such as Hornbeam (Carpinus Betulus) with a clear-stem of 2m should be planted. Consideration to be taken for formative pruning in the early years following planting in order to achieve good branch structure, frame street views, and maintain clear sightlines.
- Linear ribbed root barriers should be installed and care paid to tree placement in line with presence of underground services.
- An irrigation system to the rootball for watering and liquid fertiliser should be accommodated, along with a mini soakaway in the base of each tree pit. Alternatively a connection from the pit to a positive drainage outfall should be allowed for.
- Street trees should be planted at the same depth as in nursery
- Allow for underground guy wires/strapped rootball anchor system in place of tree stakes.
- Allow for a SuDS tree base of bound-clay over an area of 1m diameter around the tree



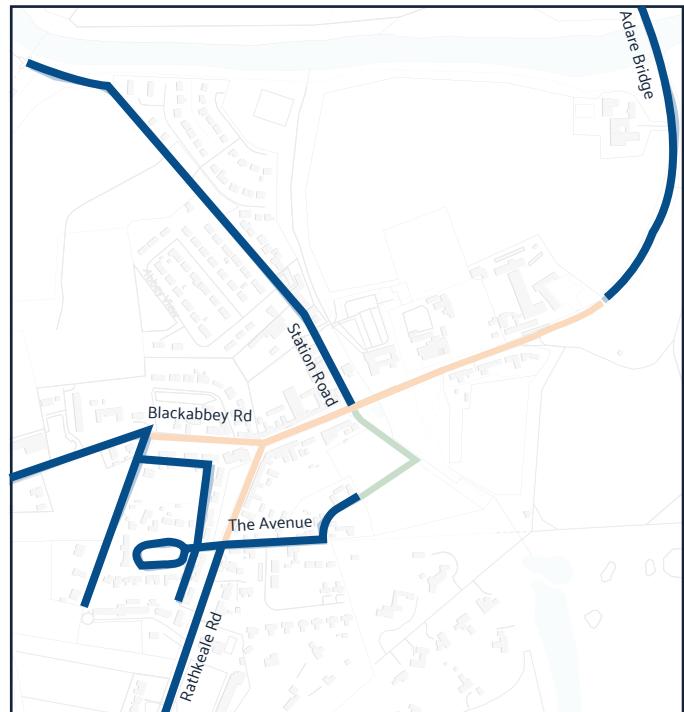
# Proposed Materials & Furniture: Park Settings

1. 2-tone paving where appropriate for informal play
2. Warm white solar powered festoon lighting
3. Transilluminated dark grey powder-coated lighting bollards
4. Clay bound paths with pre- fabricated concrete edging in park areas.
5. Dark grey powder-coated hooped fencing
6. Bespoke multi-purpose furniture which can accommodate play, seating, event set-up etc
- 7 Hardwood seat and powder-coated steel legged tree seat surround
8. Hardwood seat and powder-coated steel legged bench
9. Bins: Dark grey powder coated steel, contemporary



# Proposed Materials & Furniture: Village Extension

1. Paving: stone aggregate top mix concrete pavers, three tone blue/grey mixed palette.
2. Kerbs: concrete pavers, min 15cm wide.
3. Cycle paths: Dark grey red, asphalt.
4. Parking bays: concrete pavers, dark grey colour. Paving size, depth, format and sub-base to be designed to meet vehicle loading requirements.
5. Street surface: High quality Asphalt
6. Lighting: LED, dark grey powder coated steel lighting poles, contemporary.
7. Tree bases: self-binding hoggin clay base
8. Fencing: Wooden and wire diamond rail fencing for livestock.



# Events

The unique character of Adare village along with its rich heritage provide opportunities to further reflect this character in the public realm design and the materials used in streets and spaces. Many of the small scale spaces are some of the most successful in the city. These spaces provide links back to the history of the city and the way spaces were used in the past. New spaces should reflect this character. The vibrancy of the village centre and the intensity of activity along the spine of its Main Street is a positive spatial attribute and therefore the intention is expressly not to dilute, displace or overly manage this. Rather the public realm needs to become a resilient backdrop for culture and activity. Key places and spaces need to be equipped and incorporate services to become an effective stage for special events.

Events and festivals contribute a number of strategic values for the village of Adare. They have the ability to raise awareness of the village; they can drive visits (both day and overnight) to the destination; they can often bring positive and sometimes global media coverage such as the golf tournaments that have been held to date; and they can be used to drive business in the “off-season” periods for tourism. However, they also have certain drawbacks. They can often require significant organisation; they can also be costly to organise and manage; poor organisation and management can sometimes lead to negative media exposure and coverage for the destination; and, in economic terms, they can often displace other visitors. As a result, events and festivals need careful planning,

and a clear rationale to support any investment being made.

The Festival of the Maigue – Feile na Maighe - as an annual event celebrates local culture and the arts. Scheduled in May, the festival also has the capacity to drive visitors to the village during the off-season. In addition, the recent hosting of the Dog Shows at the Fitzgerald's Wood-lands House Hotel, Irish Festival of Speed at Adare Manor, Chess Championships at Dunraven Arms Hotel and various horse riding events at Clonshire Equestrian Centre demonstrates that operators are seeking to exploit the potential pull of events to support their activities. The Adare Destination Plan, Strategic Evaluation and Options Assessment points to potential suitable events that should be considered for addition to the annual event programme. Some public realm specific event examples are shown below:

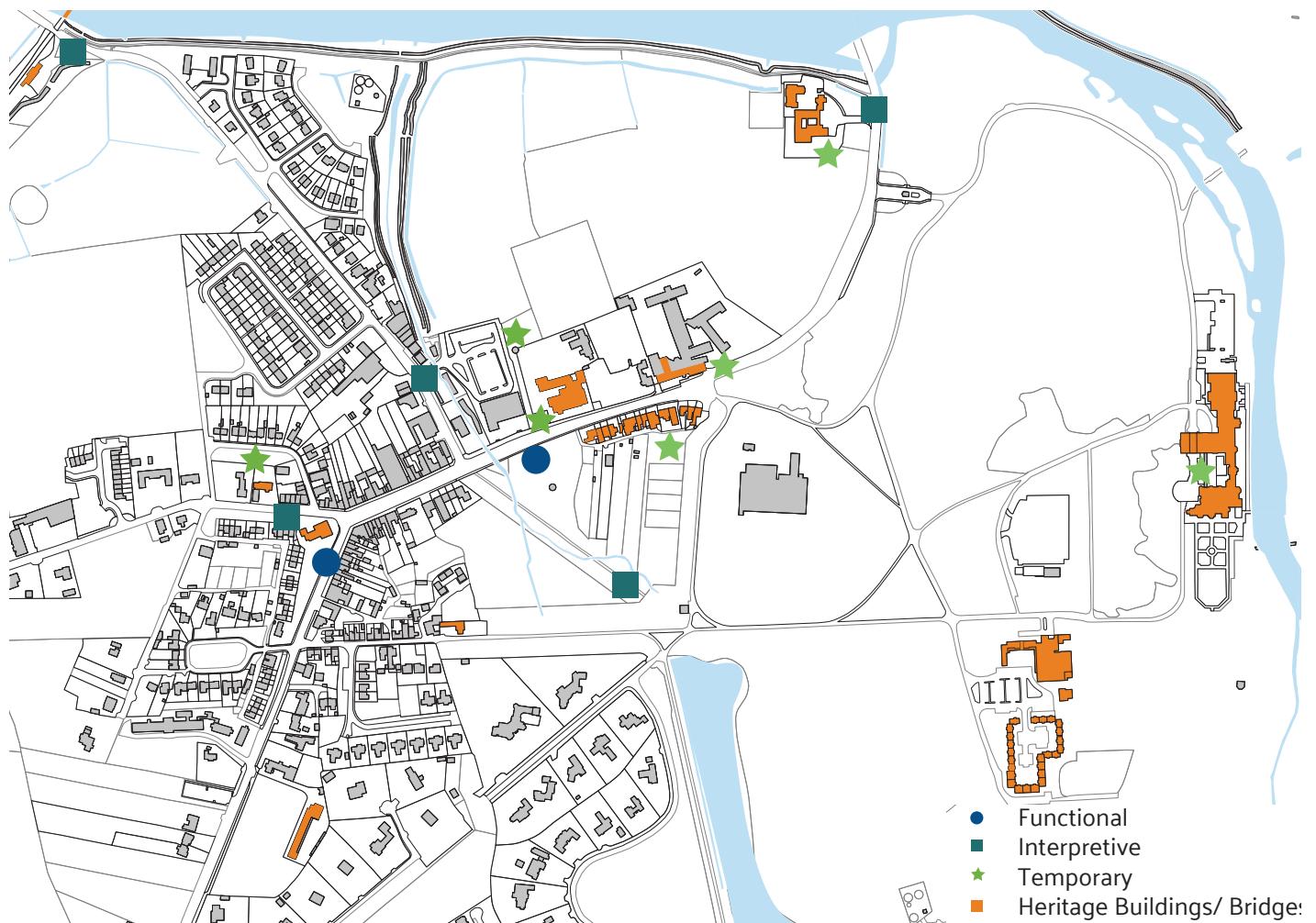
- Adare Antiques Fair – a fair dedicated to antiques, drawing synergy with the historic character of the village.
- Outdoor music festivals/competitions – ‘Opera in the Park’, a local ‘battle of the bands’
- Small but regular events such as outdoor markets, local dramatisations, music gigs, and Céilidh’s also add to the renown of villages such as Adare in visitor terms and ensure that visitors to the village have access to some form of cultural experience during their stay, regardless of the time of year.

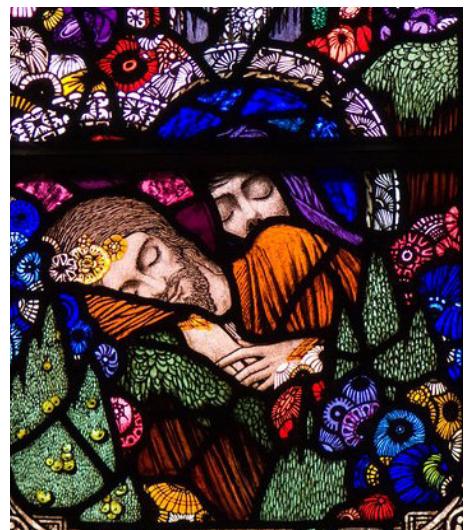


# Art Strategy

Art and sculpture has the potential to play an important cultural contribution to Adare's public realm. To widen the scope of possibilities for art it is recommended to tie specifically into the translation of heritage themes and historical narratives for the village. The strategy offers scope for new artistic interpretations but retains a focus on the unique selling point of Adare, its heritage status. During visits, many interesting narratives were shared by stakeholders about characters, events and places and offer a rich source for inspirational art.

Three forms of art are proposed in the strategy. Functional, where art has a function for example a specially designed gate; interpretive, art for art's sake and temporary art; installations with a short lifespan such as a light festival to showcase heritage points in the village. The strategy can be extended to include other locations including sport and amenity areas such as the Manor Fields.





# Branding

Adare's new brand identity provides a revitalised platform to tell Adare's story effectively and comprehensively, creating buy-in and support from residents, key businesses and stakeholders and deepening tourist appeal. Brand Adare is central to maximising opportunities from the lead-up to, duration and aftermath of the 2027 Ryder Cup, to ensure a legacy that helps Adare develop and grow sustainably. It also plays a vital role in helping Adare become more of a support and strength for "Brand Limerick"; widening the meaning and relevance of Adare to drive positive reappraisal by potential visitors, away from being just a brief stopping point and towards recognition as a fully-rounded destination in its own right.

Branding when applied consistently has the potential to create impact locally and provide a halo beyond the village. It speaks to a shared vision that promotes Adare as a destination for tourism and as an outstanding place for people to live and work in, therefore it is important that public realm projects can leverage the use of these brand guidelines. These could include but are not limited to signage, opportunities for creative custom seating spaces, right through to the specification of new native oak planting in suitable parkland areas. In order for Brand Adare to reach full fruition, the message for Adare must be communicated in a clear, consistent and compelling way.





# Wayfinding Strategy

A wayfinding strategy is to be implemented to support a sustainable network and indicate the most important tourist destinations and local amenities. The strategy will tie in with all existing digital tourist information systems and apps. The physical implementation will review existing signage with a view to decluttering and applying a cohesive style for rural villages developed by Limerick City and County Council.

An increase in information and decrease in signage is proposed, using virtual information in particular QR codes and an interactive models, for example at the heritage centre. For wayfinding, a cohesive suite of signage that is aligned with the overall Limerick Wayfinding signage and Brand Adare is proposed. This unified signage family will be implemented in the coming years across the entire county, and will encompass gateway signs (largest), map totem (medium) and fingerpost (smallest) sign designs.

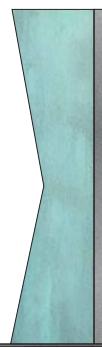
The Limerick Wayfinding Strategy is such that the visitor experience of Limerick is a cohesive one, and wayfinding signage is key in reflecting that. It is proposed that the signage for Adare be consistent with the overall design approach in terms of signage form and colour, but that it would be to reflect the unique identity of the village. This adaption of town and village signage is as yet unspecified, and needs to be further examined in conjunction with further engagement.

Flexible pole systems with multiple signs at key locations and map totem poles are proposed on the following map. A colour selection that takes cognisance of the aforementioned Adare Brand Guidelines is recommended to tie in with bins, lighting and other components of the material strategy. The Adare wayfinding strategy can be extended to include other locations including sport and amenity areas such as the Manor Fields.





WELCOME



4

# DELIVERY PLAN

Drivers for Change

Funding & Regulatory Supports

Future projects



# DELIVERY PLAN

## Drivers for Change

The Adare Public Realm Plan sets out a series of projects based on three scales; Main Street and surroundings, The Maigue River Park and a Sustainable Green infrastructure. They vary in complexity with some actions suited to short-term delivery, while others will take longer to realise. The delivery of the projects will lead to the incremental transformation of Adare's public realm, improving sustainable mobility and future proofing the village for the coming 10-20 years.

Many projects will depend on the availability of funding and will be subject to further design development, local engagement, and where necessary, planning approvals. Other projects however can be driven forward by collaboration, volunteer work, local support, and committee agreement. The residents need to play a leading role in driving the projects forward with the support of Limerick City and County Council. These projects will be listed overleaf.

The bypass is an important driver for change, however in theory, proposals could be implemented pre-bypass, with the active support of Transport Infrastructure Ireland. Funding provision for Active Travel and Public Realm is currently available for sustainable plans that intend to reconfigure village centres for people. Another impetus for change is the creation of off-street parking, which would create additional space on Main Street, facilitating transformations. Lastly, the forthcoming Ryder Cup in 2027 will also serve as an incentive for change.

Co-ordination and oversight of the plan and its delivery will require a continued process of partnership between Limerick City and County Council with local groups and businesses within the village.

Responsibility for the delivery of the actions should be shared between different organisations and groups, including Limerick City and County Council as well as other public bodies, community groups and the private sector.

The following page sets out a list of future projects, which should be reviewed and updated at regular intervals (every two years) during the next 10 to 20 years, as projects are delivered, and circumstances change.





# Funding & Regulatory Supports

The delivery of the public realm interventions described in this Plan will be supported through co-ordinated and focused funding instruments and regulatory interventions.

The National Development Plan outlines an unprecedented level of investment in our towns. Under Strategic Outcome no. 3 . Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities, a new Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) of €1 billion has been committed by government for investment in rural renewal to allow towns, villages and outlying rural areas to grow sustainably, over the period 2019 to 2027.

This fund has the potential to support projects outlined in the Public Realm Plan such as development of road and bridge infrastructure including those put forward for Main Street and Adare Bridge, and the improved off-street car parking facilities conceptualised in Chapter 3. There are also funds available for the enhancement of heritage and community assets which include the provision of recreational facilities.

Projects proposed in the Plan that fall under this category include the Fever Hospital community garden, the Heritage Centre sustainable urban drainage designed car park extension, and the improved pedestrian comfort link along the Town Hall site.

Founded on the objectives of 'Our Rural Future' is the Town and Village Renewal Scheme. This scheme aims to support the revitalisation of rural towns and villages across Ireland in order to increase their attractiveness as places in which to live and work. A particular focus of the scheme is to address vacancy and dereliction in town and village centres, encourage town centre living and support remote working hubs, however funding will continue to be provided for public realm enhancements and recreational amenities in villages such as Adare.

The scheme will support the development of rural towns that enable people to live and work in a high quality environments.

The scheme invests in projects that support economic activity and increased footfall in towns and villages, which improve the public realm, and provide the necessary services infrastructure to support town and village regeneration and sustainable growth. As the Public Realm Plan addresses the aforementioned, this scheme has been identified as a potential funding source for the action projects outlined in this Chapter.



Ríaltas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

## Our Rural Future

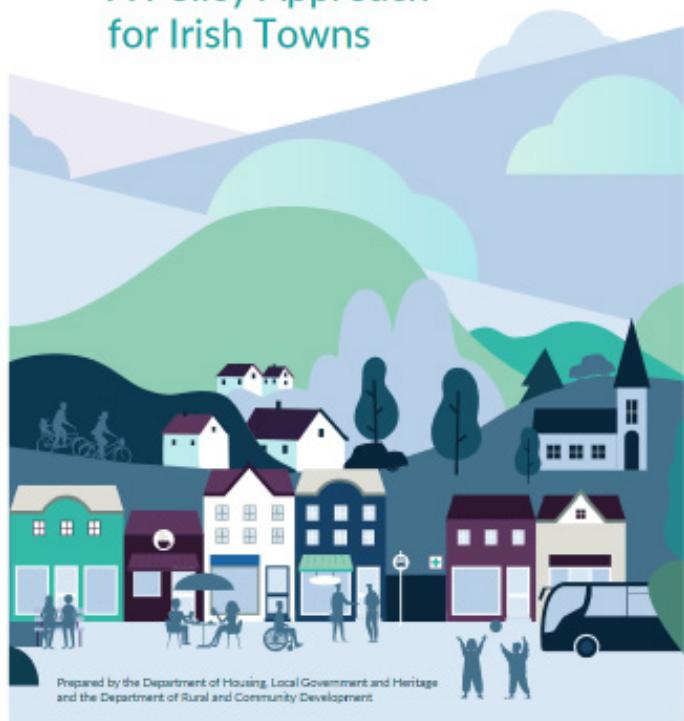
### Rural Development Policy 2021-2025



Ríaltas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

## Town Centre First

### A Policy Approach for Irish Towns



Prepared by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage  
and the Department of Rural and Community Development

# Future Projects

Project Type	Project Description	Lead Responsibility	Timeline
1	<p>Transport, sustainable mobility and Parking</p> <p>Deliver Adare Transport Plan within the lifetime of the plan to consider transport and sustainable mobility (including car parking, coach parking and public realm upgrades). The Transport Plan should consider the following options and should be subject to relevant Environmental Assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heritage Centre Carpark reconfiguration</li> <li>• Explore options for the development of a new off road carpark</li> <li>• Develop a coach strategy</li> <li>• Prioritize pedestrian &amp; cycle movement on the Avenue and consider new carpark facilities for residents if required</li> <li>• The developments of the Western approach scheme &amp; install storm water services. Provide for high quality public realm at Rathkeale Road in front of Village Park. Pedestrian routes to be provided from Village Hall to Ballingarry Junction.</li> </ul>	<p>LCCC Transport and Mobility Directorate /Planning, Environment and Place-making</p> <p>Designated Activity Company (DAC), LCCC</p>	Short Term

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The enhancement of pedestrian and cycle connectivity along station road &amp; planting of new trees</li> <li>• New public realm to main street from the Cottages to Village Hall - <i>note: can be developed in phases. Full scheme implementation contingent on off street carpark and bypass being delivered.</i></li> <li>• Explore pedestrian connections from Main Street to Desmond Castle Adare, &amp; Adare Golf Club</li> <li>• Ensure completion of pathway connection to GAA Club</li> <li>• Provide provision for pedestrian walking route and cycle route connecting Blackabbey Road to N21 via Deerpark housing scheme</li> <li>• Provide new cycle &amp; pedestrian link from Village Park to the Avenue</li> </ul>		
2	Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop Art Strategy for Adare</li> <li>• Develop Wayfinding Strategy for Adare in accordance with Brand Adare</li> </ul>	LCCC Planning, Environment and Place-making Section
3	Parks/Greens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop Sensory Garden in Village Park, and consider widening avenue entrance off roundabout to Main Street &amp; pathway upgrade works to park</li> <li>• Enhance Village Green to compliment Village Hall</li> </ul>	Short Term

# Future Projects

4	Greening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Select appropriate trees for pollarding as required to front of Desmond Castle Adare to improve views</li> <li>Develop ecological enhancement strategy to River Maigue</li> <li>Consider cycle network for Village which will connect to future Greenway</li> </ul>	NTA, Roads Design Office, Department of Transport, LCCC Transport and Mobility Directorate	Short Term      Medium- Long Term      Long Term
5	River Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and enhance blue infrastructure opportunities throughout Adare. Explore options for amenity and access to River Maigue as part of flood relief scheme, which will be subject to its own detailed study and environmental assessments.</li> </ul>	Planning, Environment and Place-making Section	Long Term
6	Community Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of play facilities at Manor Fields</li> </ul>	LCCC Transport and Mobility Directorate/ LCCC	Medium Term
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exploration of food growing hub to Fever Hospital</li> <li>Identify a suitable site for a graveyard in the vicinity of the village</li> </ul>	Planning, Environment and Place-making Directorate	Medium Term



# 5

# CONCLUSION

Conclusion &  
Recommendations



# Conclusions and Recommendations

Public realm is the essence that holds a village together; the streets, the parks the rivers, but also that aspect of a village's landscape that shapes its appearance and impacts the day to day lives of its residents; the views, mobility, the appearance of properties, places to sit, rest or come together for celebrations. If achieved, the enhancements in the public realm will deliver long-term benefits to substantially improve the quality of life in Adare for residents and visitors and strengthen its economic resilience

## **Commitment and cooperation of stakeholders.**

Achieving the vision for the village requires a long-term commitment and focused effort by all parties. The nature of any public realm plan is that it is public. It requires a strong, if not unanimous consensus from the people of Adare to achieve overarching gains for the local community. With this commitment, residents and stakeholders will need to cooperate in terms of decision making and a shared vision to solve the wider problems in the village, especially with issues such as off-street parking and infrastructure.

Change can be confrontational, but careful design can play a large role in mitigating the potential negative effects of change. By demonstrating through design what change could look like, many genuine concerns can be addressed.

## **Incremental development and celebrations**

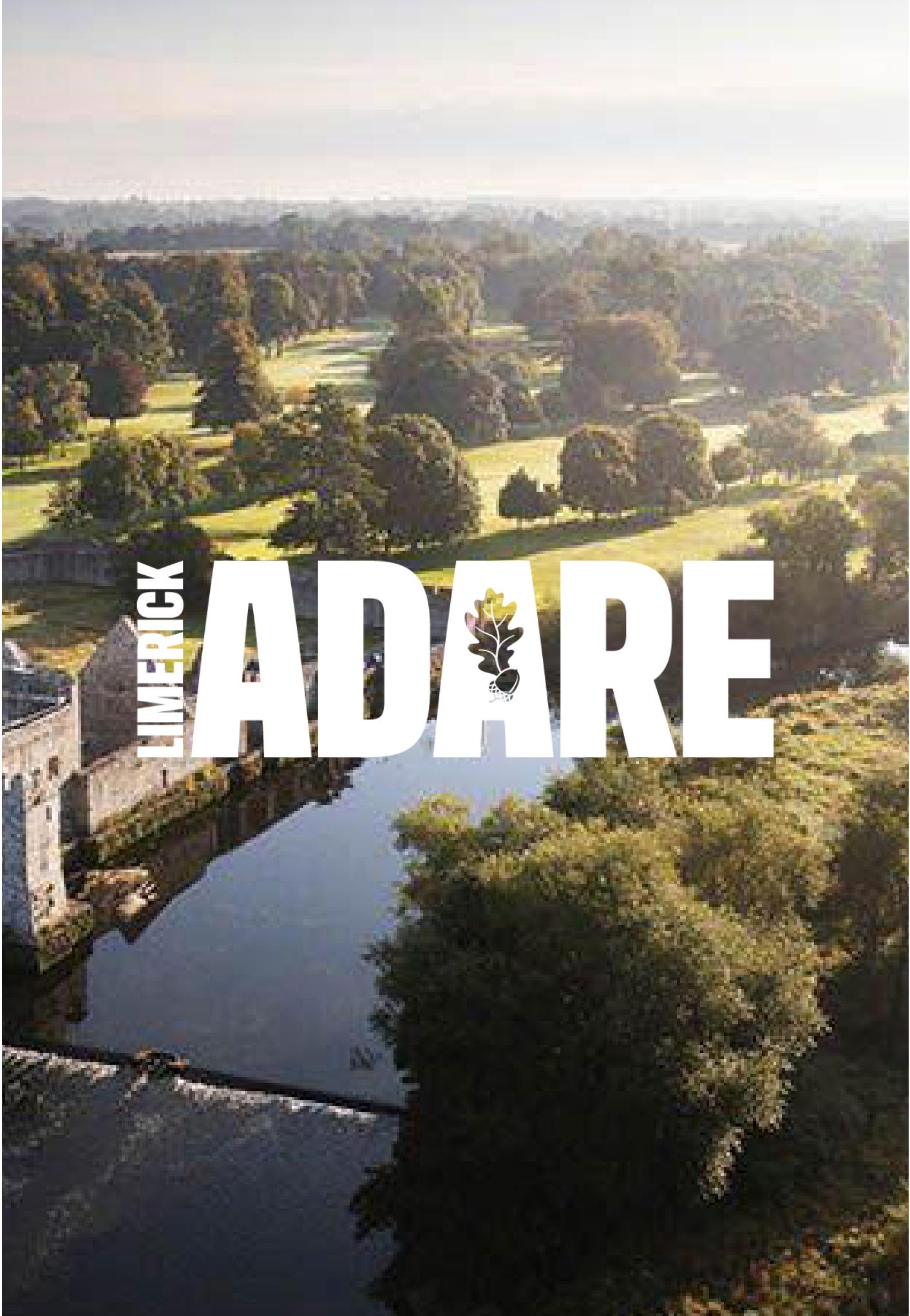
The integrated approach of the Plan requires a prioritization of projects. While long term projects are being prepared or incrementally developed, other short-term projects can be delivered. It is important that these milestones of success are celebrated and shared publicly and used as a basis for the next step.

## **Quality and design**

For every project, a high level of professional design quality should be expected and not compromised on. Quality is not just about funding or high-quality materials. It is also about creativity, problem solving and the use of time. The role of design can be fragile in long term processes. It is important that stakeholders recognize and support design as a key driver in achieving optimum results for their public realm.

## **A Template for opportunity**

The Adare Public Realm Plan demonstrates how the village can respond to its future needs to make it more sustainable, green and inclusive. It is a shared template for opportunity which can greatly improve the village for the benefit of the people who work, live, and visit there. The Plan is the next step in consolidating the existing qualities of place, history and people to develop Adare to its full potential for the benefit all.



# CLARE ADARE



LIMERICK



ADARE

