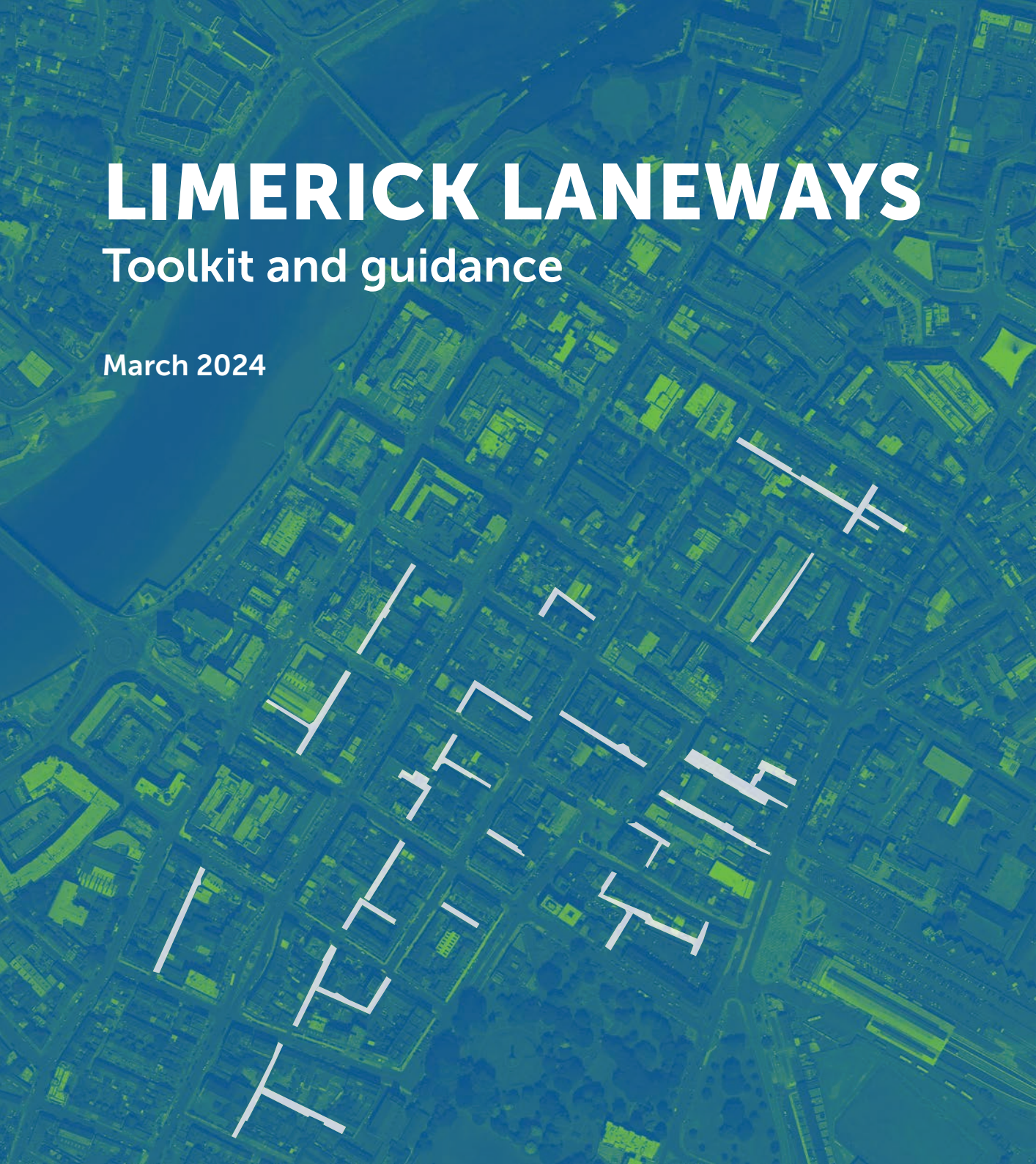
LIMERICK LANEWAYS

Toolkit and guidance

March 2024



Contents

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

Limerick's city centre is a great example of Georgian architecture, characterized by its formal and repetitive form within a regular city grid. The Laneways are located at the backs of the buildings in the centre of the blocks. Historically, Limerick's laneways were utilitarian, but they were also busy, working and making spaces where post was sorted, furniture was made, and horses were stabled. They were also social spaces with chapels, meeting houses, and billiards rooms. Additionally, they provided homes for the city's less well-off.

Despite Limerick's Georgian identity remaining strong, the quality of the public realm has deteriorated over the years, leading to high levels of vacancy and dereliction in the city centre.

This toolkit has been created to provide designers and decision-makers with clear guidance on how to implement positive changes within the laneways. The toolkit has overarching aims to provide high-quality public spaces for the community while improving the safety, occupancy, climate resilience, biodiversity, and accessibility of the laneways. The project also aims to integrate elements of heritage and innovation into the laneways to establish a modern identity rooted in Limerick's rich history and unique character.

The Laneways project is one of many endeavours being carried out by Limerick City and County Council (LCCC) to improve Limerick City's public realm. In particular, this toolkit should be read in conjunction with the Limerick City Centre Public Realm Strategy.

1.2 Project aims

This laneways project aims to re-imagine the Laneways as:

- Attractive streetscapes that will add to the Georgian neighbourhood's appeal and help to catalyse future investment
- Community-centred, social spaces for both businesses and residents, helping to improve health and well-being in Limerick
- Welcoming, accessible routes for pedestrians and cyclists
- Safe & well-lit
- Places for play, informal recreation and art
- In-line with heritage aspects of the city
- Net positive biodiversity contributors
- Innovative streets with integrated smart design
- Climate resilient with adaptation measures to mitigate microclimate issues and stormwater
- Low carbon, using good-quality, durable materials and furniture, providing longevity and value for money
- Rebalanced to prioritise walking and cycling, with a carefully considered approach to servicing

The Limerick Laneways project is part of the Living Limerick City Centre Initiative which is partially funded under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF). The realisation of the Limerick Laneways project is an objective contained within the draft Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 (Objective LL01).

The project has been commissioned by the Planning, Environment & Place-Making Directorate in Limerick City and County Council who have appointed a design team led by Tobins Consulting Engineers, working alongside Allies and Morrison, Lawlor Burns & Associates, Moloney Fox Consulting and ACP Consulting.

1 Glentworth Mews

2 No Name (Leader Lane)

3 No Name (Off Mallow Street)

4 Daly's Lane

5 Hartstonge Mews

6 Pery Square

7 Little Barrington Street

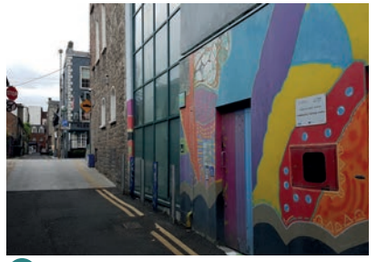
8 Limerick Lane

9 Little William Street

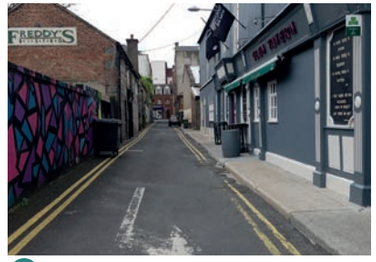
10 Off Foxes Bow A&B

11 Roche's Row

12 No name (Off Cecil Street)



13 Post Office Lane



14 Theatre Lane

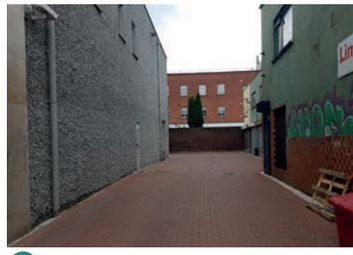
15 No Name (Off Catherine St)

16 Griffith Row

17 Watts Lane

18 Jesuit Lane

19 Lady's Lane



20 Parnell Arcade

21 Hunt's Lane

22 Little Glentworth Street

23 Davis Street

24 Schoolhouse Lane

25 James Street

1.3 Shaped through extensive engagement

The proposals for the laneways have been informed by extensive engagement with local people. The process has been iterative, with design stages interspersed with engagement to test and review ideas as they were developed. The toolkit is the result of three rounds of engagement with: local residents, businesses, community groups, Councillors, Council officers and school children.

The engagement was advertised through: a flyer drop to local addresses, the Council's social media, the local newspaper and direct emails to identified stakeholders.

Stage 1: Listening

The first round of engagement aimed to raise awareness of the project and understand what local people think are the key issues and opportunities for the Laneways. People could get involved by: visiting the online consultation, calling a member of the team or participating in a workshop.

In this round, 116 people gave feedback and 45 expressed an interest in continuing to be involved.

Stage 2: Test and review

The second stage of engagement sought to test emerging design ideas. The topics which were presented and workshopped with attendees included: the concept, character areas, typologies and the approach to functional elements and components.

Stage two included meetings with: LCCC officers, SAUL students, the Laneways forum, Councillors and CBS School. Approximately 150 people were engaged in this stage.

Stage 3: Public exhibition

The third round of engagement showcased the principles, strategy and guidance set out in this document through a digital exhibition.

The following pages highlight some of the engagement findings. The full summary reports on engagement undertaken to date can be found on the Limerick City and County Council website by searching 'Limerick Laneways Project'.

2000+
flyers delivered to local addresses

300+
people engaged

110
survey responses

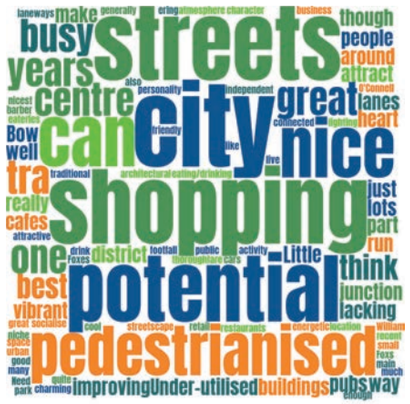
45
Laneways Forum members

25
school children involved

10
community groups involved

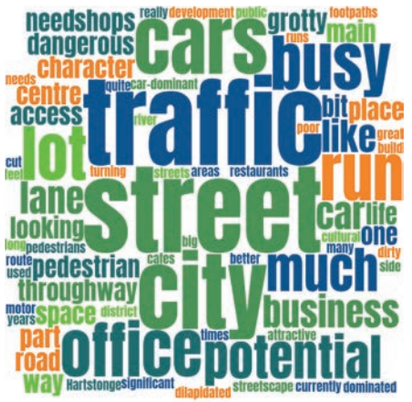
Area A: Thomas Street area

Limerick Lane, Little William Street, Off Foxes Bow A&B, Roche's Row



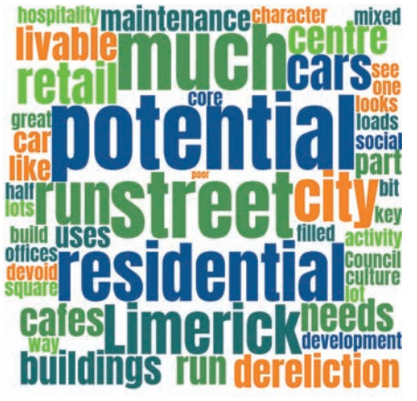
Area B: Henry Street area

Jesuit Lane, Post Office Lane, Theatre Lane



Area C: Catherine Street area

Glentworth Mews, Off Glentworth Street, Off Mallow Street, Daly's Lane, Hartstonge Mews, Pery Square, Little Barrington, Watts Lane, Off Catherine, Griffith Row, Schoolhouse Lane



Area D: Parnell Street area

Lady's Lane, Augustinian Lane, Hunt Lane, Little Glentworth Street, Davis Street, James Street

1.4 Principles for change

Safe and welcoming for people

First and foremost, investment in the laneways should make safe and welcoming places for all people.

This means getting the basics right - creating attractive, accessible and well-lit spaces.

Designs will seek to put people first, prioritising them over cars.

More people using the Laneways, in turn, will make them safer spaces for all.

Characterful and lively

Public space is where we play out our lives in public. It is where living, working, and socialising are blurred.

The Laneways will support an active community and social life. Opportunities will be created for play, recreation, art, culture, events and outdoor dining.

The Laneways shouldn't lose what makes them special and unique. Historic and characterful attributes will be kept and made a feature of.

Green in both ways

Trees and plants will be at the heart of the transformation of the Laneways.

Integrating greenery into many small spaces will collectively make a big impact.

The Laneways will become a green, natural oasis, in contrast to the urban environment of the Georgian streets.

Sustainable living will be at the heart of proposals through increasing biodiversity, integrating green infrastructure and supporting city centre living.

Catalyst for further investment

The ultimate aim of the Laneways is to demonstrate the city centre's potential.

Investment will change people's perceptions and make it an even better place to live, work, and visit.

By doing so, people will be encouraged to restore and inhabit existing buildings, tackling vacancy and dereliction.

Investment in the Laneways will catalyse further investment to revitalise the city centre.

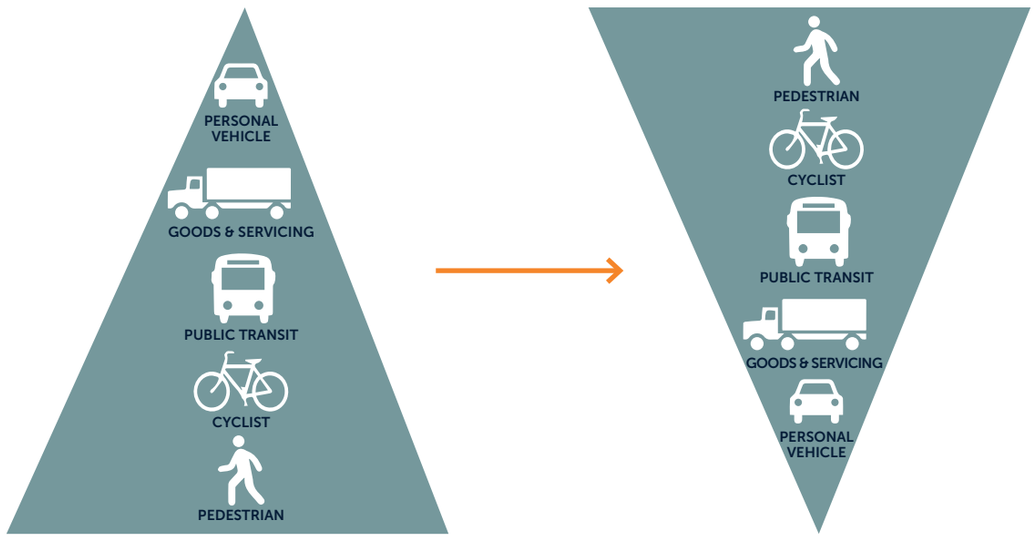


Diagram communicating the aspiration to rebalance the Laneways in favour of pedestrians and cyclists

Illustration showing the potential to transform Laneways into vibrant, active places that support community and social life

1.5 How to use this toolkit

Steps for designers & decision-makers

1. Understand design ambitions and aspirations for the laneways and establish the relevant typology and character area (Chapter 3).
2. Understand the key issues, opportunities and constraints for each Laneway.
3. Refer to guidance on materials, street furniture and planting (See Chapter 4) and refer to the Limerick City Centre Public Realm Strategy to ensure appropriate integration of streetscape elements.
4. Consider and design for the laneways' possible future activities or use (Chapter 4).
5. Engage with people who live, work in, or own buildings fronting on to the Laneway at an early stage of the design process.
6. Seek to address technical, transport, environment and planning requirements. Comply with relevant Irish and European standards, and national, regional and local policies and guidelines.

3d information: the Limerick City Model project by Fab Lab Limerick and other contributors

2 UNDERSTANDING THE LANEWAYS

2.1 A short history of Georgian Limerick

From a small fortress town...

9th century

Norse establish Limerick as a principal town in their Kingdom but are later expelled by Brian Boru at the end of 10th century

12th century

From 1106 to 1174, Limerick is the sea of the kings of Thomond, or North Munster. King John granted Limerick to William de Burgh, who founded English Town and built King Johns's Castle.

1609

Limerick receives a charter that makes the city a county. By this time, Limerick's medieval walls had expanded to include Irish Town.

Early 1700s

Edmund Sexton Pery inherits the land south of the city, formerly owned by Franciscans. Pery plans the development of a new town.

Edward Sexton Pery 1719-1806

1760s

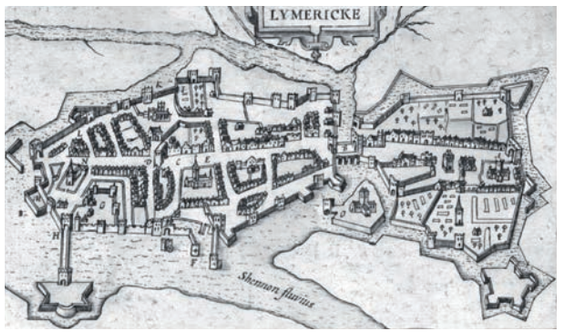
The famous medieval walls are torn down

1769

Engineer Christopher Colles is commissioned to design a town plan for Pery, based on a uniform grid of wide streets and squares

Christopher Colles 1739-1816

Plan for the new town by Colles, 1769 ©Irish Historic Towns Atlas 2010



Limerick in 1610 by John Speed showing the walled city before the development of Newton Pery ©Irish Historic Towns Atlas 2010

...to a brand new Georgian city

1760-1840

The Georgian Newton Pery is developed in stages and rapidly grows as the most fashionable place to live in Limerick - attractive for its new spacious streets, squares and elegant townhouses.

St John's Square | Bank Place | The Granary | The Crescent | Cruises Hotel | Custom House | Dominican church | Limerick Savings Bank | Trinity Church | St Michaels Church | Pery Square

Late 18th century

Canals open and Limerick becomes the main port city on western side of Ireland

1808

Roche's Hanging Gardens are created by William Roche

Roche's Hanging Gardens were inspired by the mythical Hanging Gardens of Babylon. Terraces, beds and glasshouses rose above the street with peaches, pineapples, vegetables and a multitude of flowers

1829

The city becomes known for the production of Limerick lace. Other important industries through its history included salmon fishing, electronics and computers.

1830s

People's Park is laid out (formerly Pery Square) and opened to the public in 1877

People's Park ©Limerick City and County Museum

Limerick in 1865 ©Irish Historic Town Atlas 2010

The terrace at Pery Square was the last to be built as part of the city's Georgian expansion.

1835

Wellesley Bridge is built, improving physical connectivity to the rest of the city.

Wellesley Bridge, date unknown

1834

The development of Newton Pery led to high levels of inequality between rich and poor. In 1834, Henry D Inglis writes "I know of no town in which so distinct a line is drawn between its good and its bad quarters". Old Town was predominantly populated by the working class. The bridges, whilst physically connecting the two places, also acted as community boundaries.

1840s

The railway reaches Limerick. The Limerick potato market opens.

1882

Bridge replaced with the current Sarsfield Bridge

1901

Population of Limerick is 38,000

1904

The first motor car is registered in Limerick

Mid 1900s

The 20th century saw economic decline and very little investment in Newton Pery - families move out to suburban districts and townhouses are converted to tenements such as Arthurs Quay and Bank Place. Some properties are left vacant or neglected.

Patrick Street in 1900 and George Street c1900 (later O'Connell Street)

1960s

Redevelopment of some areas of the Georgian district including the northern end of O'Connell Street replaced with 1960s modernist buildings. Conversion of Georgian houses to offices and flats.

O'Connell Street in 1960s ©Limerick, A Stroll Down Memory Lane

Early 1990s

Arthurs Quay Harbour area redeveloped as shopping complex and park (1991)

Cruise's Hotel is demolished to make way for the Cruise Street shopping development

Today

Newton Pery remains the primary retail district in Limerick. Despite alterations, conversions and even demolition over the years, the grid plan remains remarkably intact and defines the city centre to this day.

Future?

Limerick 2030 sets out a vision and plans for Newton Pery. The Living City initiative will help to breathe life back into this Georgian gem.

2.2 The laneways today

Any future design should be rooted in and respond to a thorough understanding of the existing context. This project commenced with in-depth research and analysis of the Laneways in terms of access, widths, existing utilities, heritage value, current uses and occupancy. Based on this research, the following key constraints and opportunities are summarised below and opposite.

Opportunities

1 The laneways could serve different communities

- For each lane, there is an opportunity to consider the requirements of the community they serve and to create spaces that are functional and enjoyable for those using them.
- Likewise, some lanes have sensitivities (e.g. in terms of adjacent residential uses) and therefore designs could consider where footfall and natural surveillance could help make the laneways feel safer.

2 The laneways have an informal character

- The Georgian District is typified by its formal and consistent architecture and regular grid block structure. In contrast, the lanes are less ordered and more informal streets at the centre of each block, with smaller ad-hoc architecture facing onto them.
- This informality offers an opportunity to create interest within the Laneways, providing an experience that is altogether different to the surrounding streets.

3 The laneways have visible layers of change

- The Laneways at the centre of Georgian blocks in the city centre are less historically intact with a more ad-hoc nature. Where fragments of heritage remain, they could be protected and highlighted with designs acknowledging the imperfect nature of the lanes.
- Public realm interventions could reinterpret, rather than re-creating a 'historic' condition, with designs redolent of the existing Laneways character.

4 The city centre has a blossoming cultural, art and community scene

- Limerick has a thriving arts and cultural scene - with organisations like the Belltable Theatre, Ormston House, Dance Limerick, Limerick Printmakers and many others creating in the city.
- Through engagement, it is clear Limerick also has a community of dedicated residents who are passionate about and invested in its future. This local dedication should be used wherever possible in the transformation of the Laneways.

5 Improvements are already underway

- There are excellent examples in Limerick of how the laneways can make a more positive contribution to the city. Examples such as Foxes Bow and Little Catherine Street demonstrate how space can be reclaimed for people.
- There are also other ambitious projects in the city centre, such as the CityXChange and the wider Living Georgian programme. The Laneways should work with these initiatives to achieve an outcome greater than the sum of its parts.

Constraints

1 Safety and anti-social behaviour

- Issues such as dead-ends, poor lighting, and a lack of overlooking can create a perception of laneways feeling unsafe, with issues of anti-social behaviour.
- The viability of future laneway projects hinges largely on addressing this. Active surveillance by both day and night will be important in order to tempt new visitors to meander through the laneways as opposed to simply using them as a more comfortable walking short-cut.

2 Pedestrians are not prioritised

- Historically the lanes served their respective Georgian blocks, a role they continue to play today. Over time, the laneways have become increasingly car-dominated with a high number of cars informally parked.
- The number of cars and lack of provision for pedestrians makes them an uncomfortable place for pedestrians. While emergency access and vehicular access to private properties need to be maintained, there is an opportunity to rethink the purpose of the laneways.

3 An ambitious approach is needed to reorganise bins

- Given the constrained historic fabric of buildings in the city centre, many businesses and residents end up storing their bins in the laneways.
- An innovative approach is needed to consider how bins are stored and collected, but also a wider strategy around waste in the city. This will be key to improving the laneways in the short term and accommodating a growing population in the city centre for the future.

4 The laneways have high levels of vacancy and dereliction

- The City centre is experiencing high rates of property vacancy and dereliction. This quality has often dissuaded future residents or businesses from investing in the Georgian Core.
- Investment in the laneways has the potential - alongside other measures - to break this cycle and attract investment into the city. The public realm, if well executed should become a catalyst for further improvements and investment

5 The Laneways are intimate, enclosed and constrained spaces

- The laneways vary in their width and connectivity with the majority of lanes being between 4-6m in width and many lacking any through route connection
- The varied urban forms of the laneways will inform the types of interventions and possible activities. Where constraints exist, interventions could be considered three-dimensionally, considering ways to utilise the ground plane and vertical surfaces.

6 The laneways are part of a historic environment

- Over half of the lanes are located within the Georgian District conservation area with a high proportion of National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) buildings and protected structures adjacent.
- Interventions should be sensitive to heritage assets but also be bold and intentional where fewer heritage constraints exist.

3 CHARACTER AND TYPOLOGIES

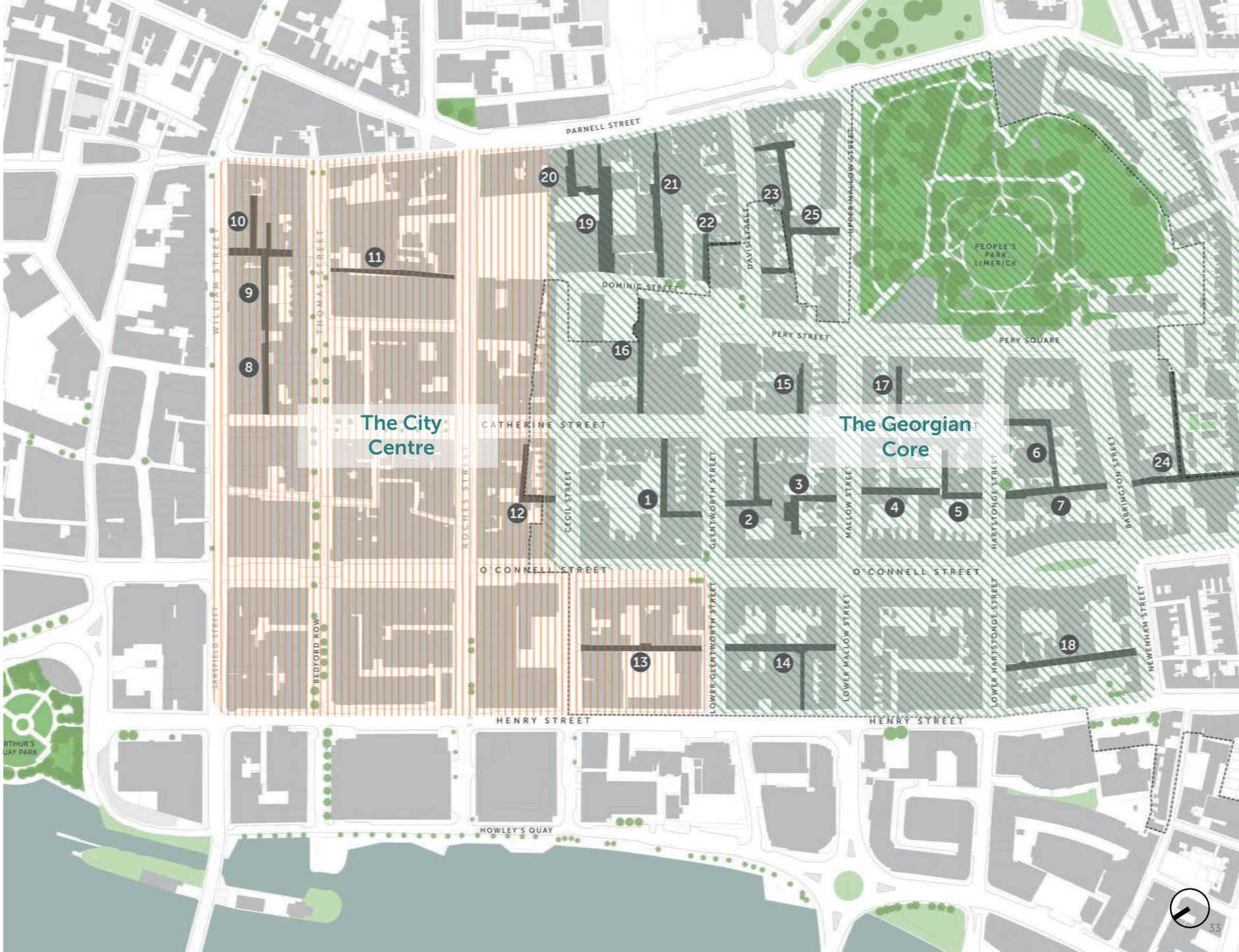
Celebrating the character, function and unique qualities of the laneways

3.1 City Centre and Georgian Quarter

Limerick's city centre is a diverse and interesting place, with varied character as you traverse it. Detailed analysis of the laneways and conversations with local people have highlighted the physical and perceived difference between laneways. The design approach seeks to embrace and emphasise this varied character, considering the lanes as part of two broader character areas. These align with the character areas highlighted in the Limerick City Centre Public Realm Strategy.

The Georgian Core: The area with some the most beautiful and intact Georgian architecture in the city centre, with huge potential for the laneways to play a greater role in the urban fabric and for surrounding communities.

The City Centre: This district is the city's primary shopping area and a popular destination for tourists and locals alike. Taking cues from successful examples at Foxes Bow and Little Catherine Street, these laneways have the potential to become vibrant and engaging locales that take advantage of the area's high foot traffic.



The Georgian Core

The area with some the most beautiful and intact Georgian architecture in the city centre, with huge potential for the laneways to play a greater role in the urban fabric and for surrounding communities.

For further guidance on the public realm character including guidance on public realm components (such as materials, seating, lighting and planting), designers should refer to the laneways typologies (section 3.2) and the Limerick City Centre Public Realm Strategy. This section sets out some of the key constraints and opportunities specifically related to laneways in this area.

1. Glentworth Mews
2. No Name (Leader Lane)
3. No Name (Off Mallow Street)
4. Daly's Lane
5. Hartstonge Mews
6. Pery Square
7. Little Barrington Street
14. Theatre Lane
15. No Name (Off Catherine Street)
16. Griffith Row
17. Watts Lane
18. Jesuit Lane
19. Lady's Lane
20. Parnell Arcade
21. Hunt's Lane
22. Little Glentworth Street
23. Davis Street
24 Schoolhouse Lane
25 James Street

Constraints

- The area has high levels of dereliction and vacancy. In particular, people who participated in the engagement process felt laneways to the east of Pery Street were run-down and did not feature in their mental map of the city
- Many laneways are disconnected from one another with dead-ends, poor overlooking, and lack of lighting creating an unsafe environment.
- A large portion of the Georgian Core is within a conservation area,with NIAH buildings and protected structures adjacent to laneways.
- Within the Georgian Core conservation area, many of the laneways are typically narrow, with private vehicle access requirements. This may preclude certain activities from being introduced to more constrained laneways conditions.
- Given the historic nature of many buildings in the Georgian Core, some buildings struggle to store domestic and commercial bins within their property demise. An innovative approach is needed to address this issue.
- Many laneways provide private vehicular access to the rear of adjacent properties or to private car parking areas. This may limit the potential for interventions and activities. Informal/illegal parking on the laneways is also a prevalent issue.
- The proximity of some lanes to residential uses may limit certain activities on laneways, particularly night-time activities.

Opportunities

- People who participated in the engagement have expressed that the area, especially the centre of the Georgian Core, has a lot of potential to become a unique village-like quarter with independent shops and cafés. The area has a mix of residential and commercial uses, and the laneways have the potential to provide new public space and amenities for the local communities.
- Several major cultural, civic and creative institutions, such as the Belltable Theatre, the Life Centre, and the Limerick Youth Service, are adjacent to the laneways. Collaborating with these institutions could activate the laneways and create interventions to support local communities.
- Several lanes to the east of the 'Georgian Core' sit outside the conservation area, and therefore have fewer heritage sensitivities. These lanes are wider and have the potential for significant transformation through, for example, play, artwork and installations.
- There is a lack of green space and streetscape planting across the Georgian Core. The laneways, given their informal nature, could become part of a connected green infrastructure, helping to increase biodiversity and climate resilience.
- Limerick Colbert Station is located just east of the Georgian Core, but some stakeholders feel that it is disconnected from the Georgian Core. By implementing interventions such as signage, wayfinding, and activation/events, the laneways could strengthen walking and cycling to and from the station.

Stanhope Mews, London - a residential lane where residents have put out potted plants out on the public realm and bring tables and chairs, using the lane as an informal place for meeting and gathering.

Rivington Street, Shoreditch, London - a series of streets and lanes paved with high-quality materials. A consistent suite of furniture and materials create a place identity, while trees, informal play features and outdoor dining providing moments of interest and activity.

The City Centre

This district is the city's primary shopping area and a popular destination for tourists and locals alike. Taking cues from successful examples at Foxes Bow and Little Catherine Street, these laneways have the potential to become vibrant and engaging locales that take advantage of the area's high foot traffic.

For further guidance on the public realm character including guidance on public realm components (such as materials, seating, lighting and planting), designers should refer to the laneways typologies (section 3.2) and the Limerick City Centre Public Realm Strategy. This section sets out some of the key constraints and opportunities specifically related to laneways in this area.

8. Limerick Lane
9. Little William Street
10. Off Foxes Bow A&B
11. Roche's Row
12. No name (Off Cecil Street)
13. Post Office Lane

Constraints

- In comparison to the Georgian Core, this district has generally lower levels of vacancy and dereliction. However, there are many disused buildings and underutilised spaces fronting onto the laneways leading to issues of safety.
- Given the significant number of commercial and residential uses in the area, some lanes are blighted by large numbers of commercial bins. A collaborative approach with local stakeholders and businesses is needed to find an appropriate solution.
- Many laneways provide private vehicular access to the rear of adjacent properties or to private car parking areas. This may limit the potential for interventions and activities. Informal/illegal parking on the laneways is also a prevalent issue.

Opportunities

- People who participated in the engagement described this area as a busy shopping district with lots of potential. Reinvention of the laneways could harness this footfall and add to the buzz of activities around the city centre.
- With exception of Post Office Lane, laneways in this district do not sit within any heritage conservation areas and have relatively few heritage buildings adjacent.
- With exception of Limerick Lane and Little William Street, which are currently disconnected by a gate, laneways in this district do not have dead ends and could form useful walking connections through the city centre.
- There is a lack of green space and streetscape planting across the City Centre. The laneways could help to provide space for greenery, although this would need to be balanced with other uses.

Melbourne Laneways - a network of busy lanes hosting street art, cafés, bars and independent shops. Many lanes have their own unique character, with some covered in lush greenery, while others are dedicated to street art and play.

The Lanes, Brighton - are a collection of narrow alleyways and hidden squares with places to eat and drink. Retail and Food & Drink uses front onto the lanes, animating them throughout the day and night. Street art painted on blank walls and shopfronts is attractive and quirky, and reinforces a sense of place.

3.2 Laneway typologies

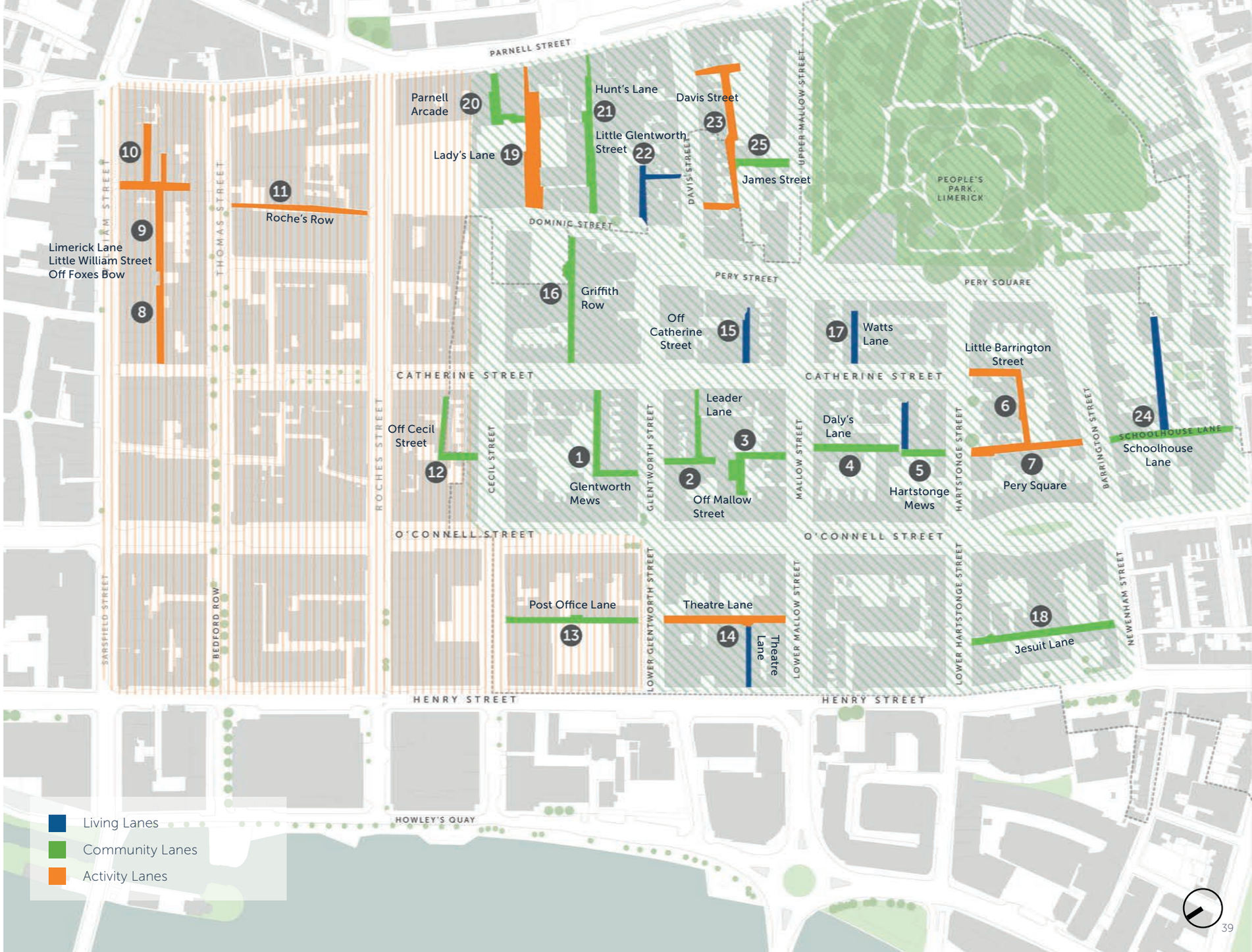
The character areas (section 3.1) go some way to reflect the difference between the Laneways and to inform the design approach. However, within the character areas, the lanes have different characteristics and potential roles, captured as three broad 'typologies'. These three typologies, overlaid with the character areas, should help to guide decision making and approaches to different Laneways. For details on each, see later pages in this section.

The typologies are representative of the potential strengths or opportunities for each lane, considering factors such as adjacent land uses, lane widths, connectivity, and existing heritage features. The map opposite has been developed in consultation with local stakeholders and highlights the potential for each lane. Note that in some instances laneways with multiple 'spurs' have different typologies. Designers should note that this strategy is advisory/representative of existing characteristics and should not control the type of development that occurs on the laneways.

Living Lanes - laneways that could serve their immediate block with minimal/light-touch interventions designed to meet the needs of the residents and businesses facing the lane.

Community Lanes - could be designed to serve the needs of local and wider communities. Interventions could help to make the laneway environments safe and attractive.

Activity Lanes - potentially vibrant places that could attract visitors from the wider city and further afield. These might be activated through, for example, events, artwork or play.



Living lanes

5. Hartstonge Mews
14. Theatre Lane
15. No Name (Off Catherine Street)
17. Watts Lane
23. Davis Street
24. Schoolhouse Lane

For Living lanes, the focus is on lifting the quality of the streetscape and achieving consistency in the design approach.

Public realm upgrades should primarily focus on the consistency and quality of key elements such as paving and lighting. Both elements should be simple and robust, meeting the needs of users on the lane.

Designers are advised to refer to the detailed guidance for relevant public realm components, which is outlined later in this document. Additionally, it is recommended that the Limerick City Centre Public Realm Strategy be consulted before commencing any design work. The list opposite outlines the typical characteristics and recommended approaches to different public realm components for this typology. Opposite a 'typical' Living Lane condition is illustrated.

Scale

- Local - serves the local block

Typical activities / characteristics (See section 3.2)

- Homes and informal community activities

Streetscape Materials (See section 4.13)

- Varies by character area. Typically natural stone

Lighting (See section 4.12)

- Type: 'standard' street lighting
- Colour: Warm white
- Illuminance: Typically lower lux levels and directional lighting to reduce light trespass
- Mounting: low level lighting (3-4m) with clearance for emergency access, as required

Planting (See section 4.3)

- Where possible, integrated planting for residential amenity
- Principally informal planting by residents and businesses encouraged on the Laneways

Play (See section 4.7)

- Informal doorstep play

Street furniture & signage (See section 4.8)

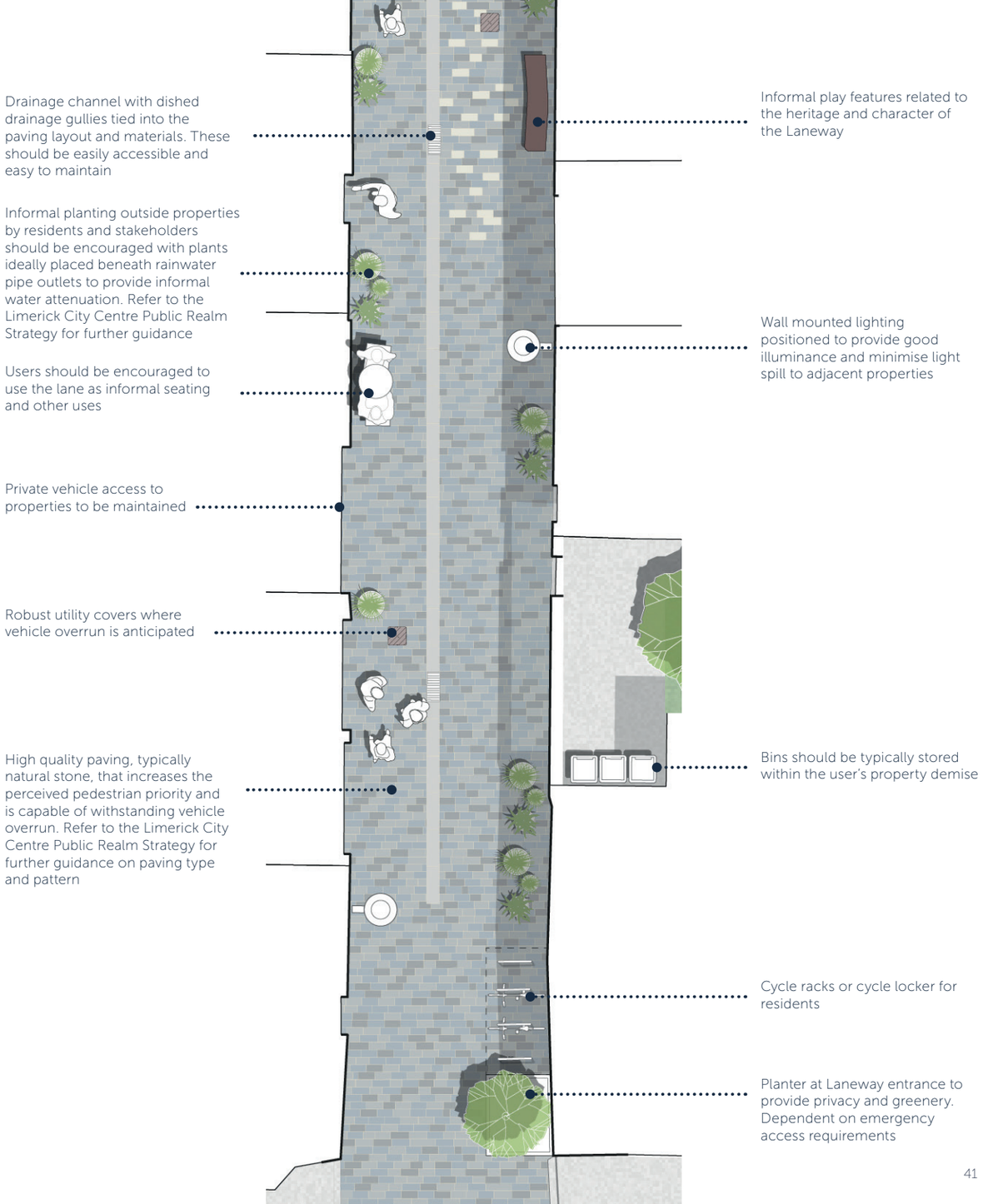
- No formal requirement
- Residents and businesses should be encouraged to bring furniture out onto the Laneways
- Where appropriate, secure bicycle parking/ bike lockers could be provided for residents
- Placement of street furniture must ensure road sweepers can easily access all new pavement areas
- Street furniture must be durable and easily replaceable

Vehicle access and servicing (See section 4.10)

- Minimal /low traffic
- Access controls to be robust and easily replaceable

Other considerations

- Living lanes are the most sensitive in terms of privacy and safety and designs should consider stakeholder needs as part of the process.



Community Lanes

1. Glentworth Mews
2. No Name (Leader Lane)
3. No Name (Off Mallow Street)
4. Daly's Lane
5. Hartstonge Mews
12. No name (Off Cecil Street)
13. Post Office Lane
16. Griffith Row
18. Jesuit Lane
20. Parnell Arcade
21. Hunt's Lane
24 Schoolhouse Lane
25 James Street

Community lanes are perhaps the most important types of Laneways - they have a dual purpose of serving local communities and being destinations in their own right. Community lanes will also form the backbone of the Limerick Laneways, being places with lush planting that provide an oasis in the city centre.

Designs should seek to animate and activate these Laneways through activities such as food & drink, events, play and art. The public realm will be a high-quality, robust backdrop that supports these activities with good lighting, paving and street furniture.

Designers are advised to refer to the detailed guidance for relevant public realm components, which is outlined later in this document. Additionally, it is recommended that the Limerick City Centre Public Realm Strategy be consulted before commencing any design work. The list opposite outlines the typical characteristics and recommended approaches to different public realm components for this typology. Opposite a 'typical' Community Lane condition is illustrated.

Scale

- Neighbourhood - serving surrounding community

Typical activities / characteristics (See section 3.2)

- Urban Greening, play, art and food & drink
- Typically small or informal events

Streetscape Materials (See section 4.13)

- Varies by character area. Will need to be robust, especially in higher footfall and vehicle overrun areas

Lighting (See section 4.12)

- Type: Standard LED fixtures and feature lighting to highlight special features and bring vibrancy
- Colour: Warm white
- Illuminance: Medium illuminance with higher lux levels in localised instances
- Dispersed / varied lighting to achieve desired illuminance
- Variable lighting controls to adjust street lighting according to time of day or when events take place

Planting (See section 4.3)

- Integrated and layered planting - rain gardens, trees, climbing plants. Planting should be utilised as part of SuDs to manage water run-off and should foster biodiversity
- Green walls could be installed, where appropriate, on a trial basis with an agreed maintenance strategy

Play (See section 4.7)

- Integrated informal play opportunities

Art / installations

- Art should draw people to the Laneways, highlight unique features and tell narratives of the Laneways

Street furniture & signage (See section 4.8)

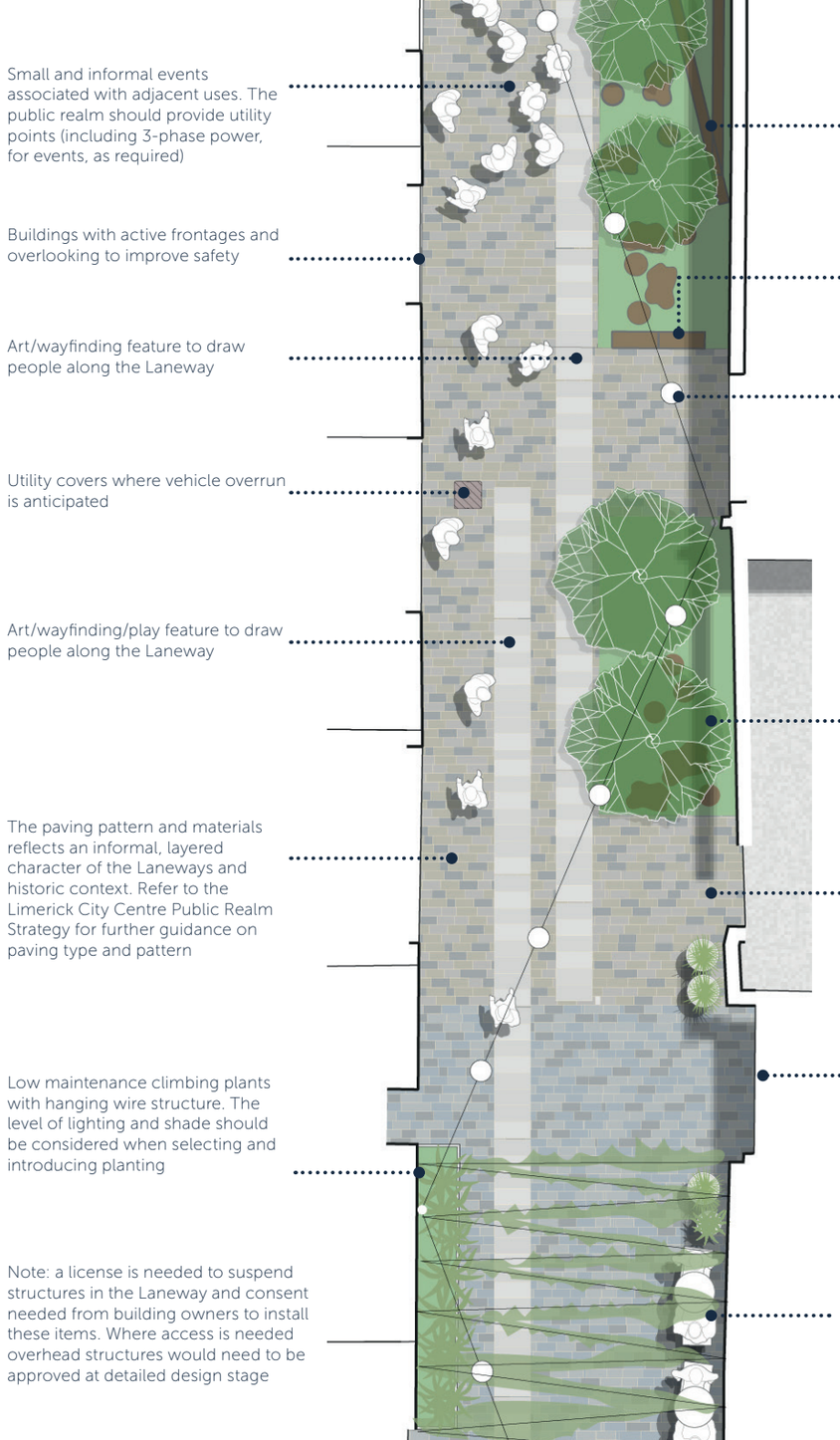
- Signage to highlight special features and provide guidance
- Public seating in overlooked positions and outdoor dining seating
- Placement of street furniture must ensure road sweepers can easily access all new pavement areas
- Street furniture must be durable and replacements must be readily available and economically feasible

Vehicle access and servicing (See section 4.10)

- Potential timed access and rationalising vehicle movements to activate the Laneways
- Access controls to be robust and easily replaceable

Other considerations

- Integrated utility supply points to be provided in locations with anticipated future events
- Allowance to be made for future shared sustainable infrastructure



Illustrative examples of Community lanes and potential interventions

Stone wall should be highlighted at night to provide interest and subtle illuminance

Outdoor dining area with hanging decorations, festoon lighting and informal planting. A license would be required to suspend structures in the Laneway. Where access is needed, overhead structures would need to be approved at detailed design stage

Planting provides colour, SuDS and biodiversity. Plants should be hardy perennials with low maintenance requirements

Planting edge provides an opportunity for informal play

Bins screened as part of planting design

High quality natural stone paving responds to the historic context

Informal planters by adjacent users

Shrubs, tree planting and rain gardens help to transform the appearance of the lane and improve biodiversity

Light columns to provide utility supply for events

Feature lighting to be used in conjunction with standard LED luminaires to achieve desired illuminance.

The mounting height accommodates emergency vehicles

Blank walls that could be used for public art

Informal play feature integrated with rain garden planting. The size and positioning ensure existing vehicle access requirements are maintained

Public seating in an overlooked position

Robust and simple materials capable of supporting vehicles and deliveries but also capable of providing attractive and accessible space

Activity lanes

6. Pery Square
7. Little Barrington Street
8. Limerick Lane
9. Little William Street
10. Off Foxes Bow A&B
11. Roche's Row
14. Theatre Lane
19. Lady's Lane
23. Davis Street

Activity lanes are potential destinations within the city centre that are active and ever-changing with interest during both the day and night.

At present, many of these lanes are under-performing with spaces that lack activity and that do no prioritise pedestrians. The success of this typology will hinge on upgrading of disused buildings, identifying existing uses on the adjacent streets which can feed backwards into lanes, and further engagement with building owners/occupants in order to get understanding of their needs and concerns. Designers should consider the full toolkit to realise the potential of these Laneways, prioritising interventions that make Activity Lanes safe and able to support a variety of activities.

Designers are advised to refer to the detailed guidance for relevant public realm components, which is outlined later in this document. Additionally, it is recommended that the Limerick City Centre Public Realm Strategy be consulted before commencing any design work. The list opposite outlines the typical characteristics and recommended approaches to different public realm components for this typology. Opposite a 'typical' Activity Lane condition is illustrated.

Scale

- City-wide - attracting visitors from further afield

Typical activities / characteristics (See section 3.2)

- Art, events, and food & drink activities

Streetscape Materials (See section 4.13)

- Varies by character area. Will need to be robust and fit-for-purpose, giving priority to pedestrians throughout

Lighting (See section 4.12)

- Type: Feature lighting that brings interest and variety
- Colour: Warm white / white light
- Illuminance: Typically higher than other types
- Dispersed / varied lighting to achieve desired illuminance and highlight special features
- Light fixtures should have capacity to affix artwork, decorations or signage

Planting (See section 4.3)

- in busier areas: Minimal public plants with climbing plants and private planters
- In other areas: rain gardens and curated planting to compliment potential activities

Play (See section 4.7)

- Varies - integrated informal play

Art / installations

- Actively encouraged. Installations should be both temporary and permanent

Street furniture & signage (See section 4.8)

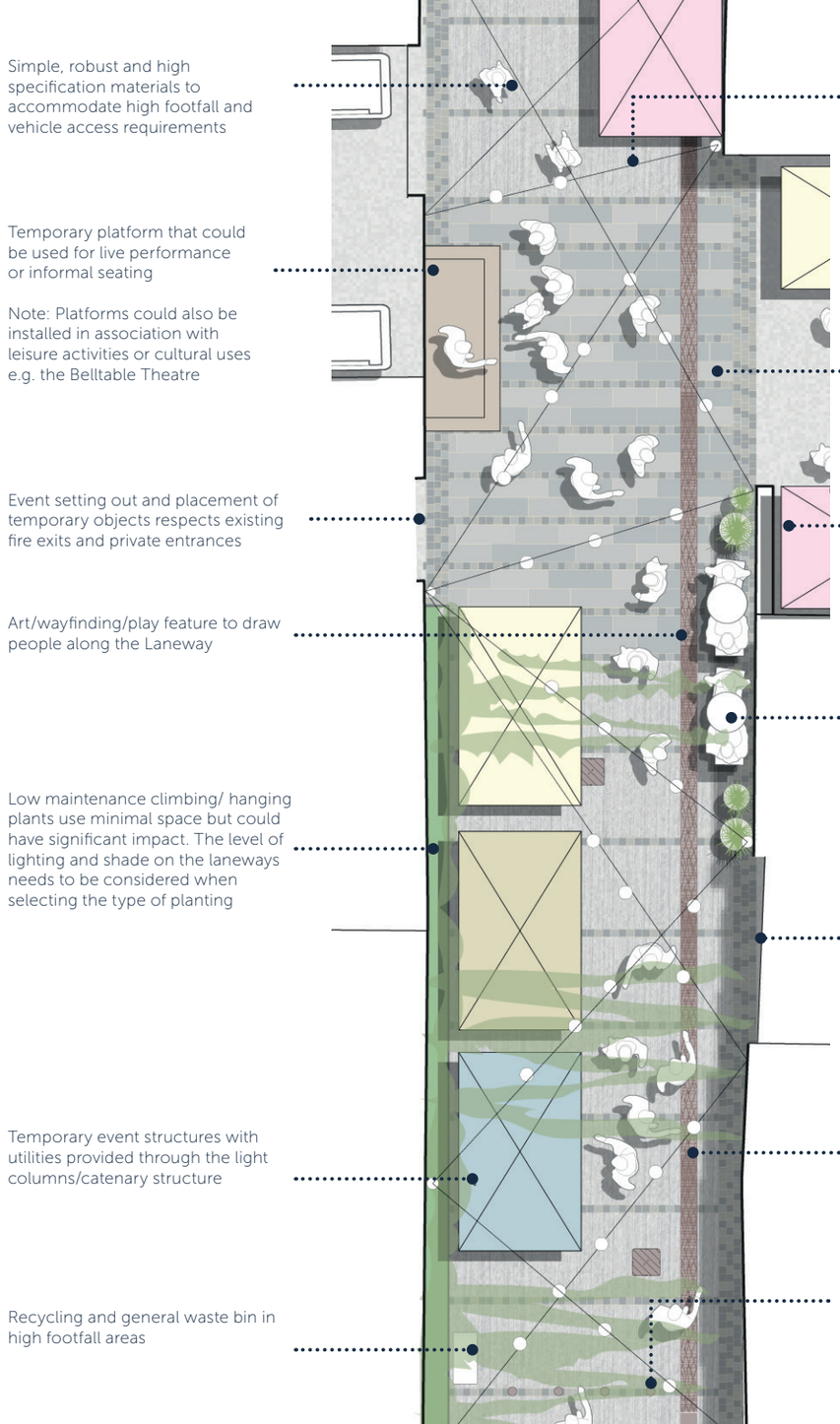
- Bespoke signage to highlight special features
- Opportunities for outdoor dining seating as part of events and local uses
- Placement of street furniture must ensure road sweepers can easily access all new pavement areas

Vehicle access and servicing (See section 4.10)

- Access controls required to enable frequent events
- Domestic and commercial bins should be removed from lanes to enable activities
- Access controls to be robust and easily replaceable

Utilities

- Utility supply points required for events



Hanging feature lighting provides good illuminance and interest to the public realm. The hanging structure could also be used for decorations or artwork. A license would be required to suspend structures in the Laneway. Where access is needed, overhead structures would need to approved at detailed design stage.

Stone wall highlighted with coloured feature lighting

Artwork to animate blank frontages. Consent would be required from building owners

Street furniture to supply utilities for events

Outdoor dining helps to animate the lane during the day and night

Paving is simple,robust and suitable for high footfall

Events to attract different users to the lane

4 VISION AND STRATEGIES

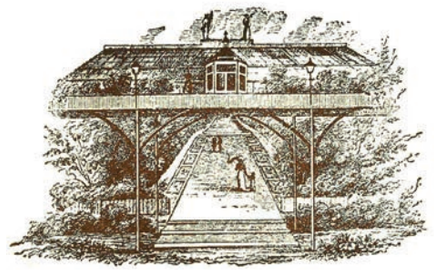
Strategies and tools for the Laneways

4.1 The Limerick Laneways

In the early 19th century, local merchants Thomas and William Roche created an acre of terraced gardens near Henry Street. Grapes, pineapples, peaches, and oranges were grown on arches in the heart of the Georgian city. The Gardens were described as Limerick's greatest curiosity. The vision for the laneways takes inspiration from the Roches' visionary concept with the intent to create a network of hidden gems in the heart of the city. Limerick's next great curiosity.

The laneways will create attractive, community-centre social spaces for businesses, residents and visitors. They will be welcoming, safe, and accessible with legible connections encouraging walking and cycling across the city. Play, artwork and events will foster community cohesion and create an enriched public realm.

Greenery will be a common thread throughout, encouraging biodiversity and enabling climate resilience. Designs will celebrate local heritage, with carbon-conscious interventions ensuring longevity for future generations.



Roche's Hanging Gardens © Limerick City Library

4.2 Designing for safety

Designing for safety must be the highest priority for Laneways. Our approach to safety follows EU crime prevention principles (summarised opposite), particularly the following:

'Continuity of Urban Fabric' - eliminating dead-end Laneway routes

- 'Good accessibility is essential to foster flows of movement which produce vitality, natural surveillance and therefore increased safety. To guarantee continuity of movements it is thus important to avoid fractures in the road and pedestrian networks.'

Lighting

- 'To obtain good visibility, a high level of lighting is not enough. The distribution, the position and design of fixtures are also very important'
- Planting and lighting should also be considered together to ensure that tree growth does not obscure lighting and create dark areas

Improving accessibility

- Designs must ensure that the Laneways are accessible to all - with suitable surface materials, provision for disabled access and safe, well-lit level changes.

'Clear orientation of pedestrians' - ensuring clear wayfinding and signage

- 'The ability to grasp immediately the organisation of a site and to see what is ahead along a route is important to feel safe and to be safe.'
- People using the lanes will need visual cues, such as passing trade, lighting or signage to know where the lanes lead and that the lanes don't terminate with a dead end.
- Gates on public routes are not encouraged - people should know a through route is available both day and night.
- The Parnell Street area lanes, in particular, could be improved to demonstrate their connections to and from Colbert Station.

'Creating vitality' - animating Laneways

- 'Mixed use generates vitality and natural surveillance'. Wherever possible, lanes should be activated with outdoor dining, festivals and events during both the day and night.

'Visibility' - creating active frontages and overlooking

- Activities on the lanes should be overlooked to ensure safety. Active frontages and uses that open out onto the lanes should also be encouraged to increase safety.

Maintaining quality and preventing decay

- 'It is important to use proper materials that help to prevent decay. Good quality of landscaping elements and materials communicates a positive message which induces respect and care.'
- Similarly, maintaining a clean and maintained appearance (e.g. managed refuse on Laneways) has the potential to improve perceptions.

Precedent of a lane with good lighting, accessible surface materials, clear orientation, with active frontages, and night-time activities providing overlooking

LCCC have been granted planning permission for the development of 58 O'Connell Street to include a new pedestrian link between Glentworth Street and Mallow Street. The redevelopment will include a pedestrian link here. The new link has the potential to increase footfall and safety

URBAN PLANNING STRATEGIES
Considering existing social and physical structures
Guaranteeing accessibility and avoiding enclaves
Creating vitality
Providing mixed status
Creating adequate urban density
Avoiding physical barriers and waste land

URBAN DESIGN STRATEGIES
Continuity of urban fabric
Location of activities
Time and calendar of activities
Visibility
Accessibility
Territoriality
Attractiveness
Quality of materials to prevent decay

MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES
Mainteinance
Surveillance
Rules governing conduct in public spaces
Receiving particular groups
Communication with the public
Target-hardening

Strategies from the European Commission 'Planning Urban Design and Management for Crime Prevention Handbook'

4.3 Urban greening

Public engagement with the landowners of properties along the laneways is important in terms of collectively agreeing the type of greening and maintenance. Key considerations for urban greening are set out below. This guidance should be read in conjunction with relevant LCCC policies and the Limerick City Centre Public Realm Strategy.

Use different types of planting for maximum effect

- Urban greening including; trees, rain gardens, climbing plants, hanging plants and planters should be used to make distinctive planting interventions.
- Informal planting by locals and businesses e.g. window boxes or planters should also be encouraged to enhance the overall planting effect. Responsibility for watering and maintenance will be shared by LCCC, local stakeholders and residents.

Ensure the longevity of planting

- Planting should be integrated to ensure longevity, with planting zones and underground infrastructure carefully designed to enable healthy planting growth.
- Designers should select hardy species with low needs and must liaise with LCCC to ensure plants can be suitably maintained throughout their lifespan.

Incorporate sustainable drainage

- Planting should help to sustainably manage stormwater run-off in the lanes.

Locate planting in suitable locations

- Select trees and planting with a suitable shape and size for their ultimate setting and consider private and emergency vehicle access when placing planting.
- Consider microclimate requirements for planting (i.e. sufficient sun or shade) when selecting plant species

Consider wider benefits of planting

- Use planting that encourages ecology and biodiversity in the Laneways
- Consider planting that has a dual purpose for foraging e.g. rosemary bushes
- Maximise microclimate benefits of planting to, for example, improve air quality, shelter from sun or rain, and reduce urban heat island effect.

Trees in hardstanding

- 2m minimum clearance for tree substructure
- Allot sufficient space below ground for long-term growth and consider competing needs below ground (basements/vaults, water and electrical utilities, archaeology)
- Use tree pit systems to support surrounding paving and accommodate utilities. Designers should refer to the LCCC tree policy

Trees in rain gardens

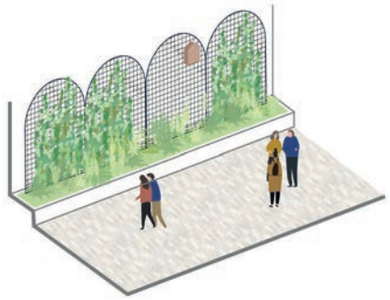
- 2m minimum clearance for tree substructure
- Allot sufficient space above & below ground for long-term growth
- Use tree pit systems suited to rain gardens (designers should refer to the LCCC tree policy)
- Use rain gardens for sustainable drainage with petrol/oil separators and silt traps, as required

Rain gardens

- Ideally 1.5-0.75m (min) size
- Utilise a protective raised edge with inlets when used on a trafficked Laneway
- Use rain gardens for sustainable drainage with petrol/oil separators and silt traps, as required

Climbing plants

- Ideally 1.5-0.75m (min) size
- Consider utilising climbing structures to avoid damage to adjacent properties. Consent from adjacent building owners will be required
- Consider using different structures for climbing plants e.g. wall trellis, light columns, hanging structures etc.



4.4 Festivals & events

Festivals and events are temporary, comparatively low-cost and could be transformational for the laneways. Decision-makers and event organisers should consider ways to incorporate the laneways into existing events programmes (e.g. St Patrick's' Day, Christmas Markets etc.) and should take into account the following factors when considering laneway activation.

Demonstrate the potential of the laneways

- Activities could help to highlight the unrealised potential of the lanes. Activities/installations could be temporary, portable and meanwhile, as well as testing potential longer term change.

Use events to get communities involved

- Events should encourage local people and businesses to get involved and invested in their local laneway.
- Several creative, cultural and civic institutions sit adjacent to the laneways. Consider ways to utilise these partnerships to animate laneways.

Be ambitious and programme a diverse range of activities, urban art & installations

- Activities such as: outdoor screenings, performance, installations, play, artwork, and play days could help to attract different types of people into the laneways.
- Consider ways to programme events at different times of day, week and year to attract diverse audiences.

Consider physical and infrastructural needs

- Consider the necessary infrastructure to support events, i.e. utility supply and lighting, including ways to temporarily restrict vehicle access.
- Understand the physical limitations of the laneways, particularly widths limitations, dead-ends, and potential sensitivities for adjacent users (particularly residential users).

Coordinate with LCCC Events Team

- Designers and event organisers should coordinate with the LCCC event team to streamline the processes for events licenses, and potential road closures.

Markets can be an attractive draw for different users and could be programmed regularly


Example of a community event on a laneway


Outdoor screening with deck chairs as an example of a pop-up event

4.5 Outdoor dining

Allowing people utilise the laneways for outdoor dining could help to make them active and welcoming. Any outdoor dining will require licenses. Stakeholders and businesses should consider the following when assessing opportunities for outdoor dining within the laneways.

Ensure suitable positioning of outdoor dining and associated street furniture

- Outdoor dining areas should be demarcated, with planters or barriers, with a clear pathway retained for pedestrians or vehicles. The extent of outdoor dining should ideally be proportionate to the scale of the laneway.
- Suspended canopies for weather proofing can be valuable but will require a license, with consent from building owners where the canopy is affixed. The height of suspended structure will also need to ensure clearance for emergency access vehicles. As an alternative, where relevant, consider using existing bows as covered outdoor dining space.

Consider managed Laneway vehicle access

- To increase the capacity of outdoor dining, road closure licenses - e.g. for restricted evening or weekend access - could be obtained by businesses.
- Where vehicle access is temporarily amended, designs must ensure emergency vehicle access is retained.


Example of a laneway outdoor dining area with a temporary covered structure to provide shelter and demarcate the outdoor dining area


Example of a covered outdoor dining area with private planters demarcating the extents

4.6 Public art

Raising the quality and diversity of public art within the laneways will help to make them enriching places to visit and explore. As set out by LCCC, all public realm improvements must allocate 1% of their budget to public art.

Designers should refer to the LCCC Public Art Policy, and the Culture and Creativity Strategy which sets out four strategic priorities and overarching aims:

Connections

- Aim 1: to connect different communities across Limerick City and County by nurturing creativity
- Aim 2: to engage, inspire and connect people across all generations
- Aim 3: to connect Limerick to the World, and the World to Limerick

Place-making

- Aim 4: To facilitate and support the development of creative spaces
- Aim 5: To celebrate and safeguard Limerick's heritage and cultural identity by stimulating, nurturing and empowering our artists and creative workers, encouraging them to use Limerick as their inspiration.

Change-making

- Aim 6: To promote, facilitate and support creative change-making across a diverse range of settings.
- Aim 7: To contribute to Climate Action and Biodiversity initiatives, advocacy and awareness raising.

Innovation and Creative Careers

- Aim 8: to support the growth, diversification and diffusion of Limerick's Film, Screen and Digital Technology sectors.
- Aim 9: To facilitate the incubation of innovative ideas, the sharing of knowledge and the career progression of creative entrepreneurs.

Ideas for locating art in the public realm

Art may enhance existing building niches or highlight special features

Locate art at the threshold of laneways and at prominent corners

Animate blank walls

Public realm artwork precedents

© Cleary Connolly


© Mark Dalmulder

© Ian Taylor


© William Murphy

4.7 Play and recreation

Play is an essential way to make Limerick's laneways welcoming for everyone, especially children and young people. The map opposite sets out a potential distribution of play and recreation. This is not prescriptive, but instead demonstrates the need to a network of play opportunities.

Locate play in appropriate places

- Locate play and recreation in spaces that are: welcoming for children, away from dangerous roads and overlooked by other activities.

Make play and recreation accessible

- Ensure a good distribution of play across the city centre to meet the needs of children and the communities they live in.

Provide opportunities for informal play wherever possible

- Informal play can take many forms, e.g. a wall to run along, some rocks to climb, or a pattern in the ground. Where possible, designers should provide opportunities for informal play, with designs that are bespoke and appropriate to the laneways.

Make play welcoming for everyone

- Integrate varied types of play suitable for boys and girls, children of different ages, and children with disabilities.

Promote walking, cycling and exploring through the laneways

- Where possible, create connections between the laneways to promote exploring, walking, running and cycling through the lanes.


© muf architecture/art


© Paul Krueger

4.8 Wayfinding and signage

Navigating Limerick's laneways should be an enjoyable and unique experience that encourages exploration. Designers should consider the following.

Prioritise wayfinding features over signage

- Allowing people to explore and discover different parts of the laneways without overly prescribed signage.
- Consider providing public Wi-Fi and wayfinding apps for those wanting to explore attractions along the laneways.

Use public realm features to draw people in

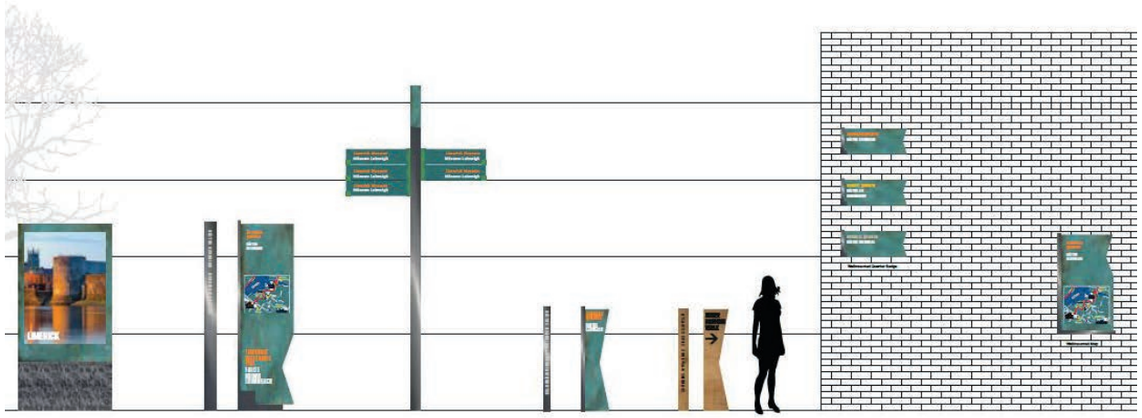
- Use greenery as a primary means of guiding people through the laneways. Other visual markers such as; paving, lighting and artwork could also be used.

Use bespoke and site-specific signage

- Totems, finger posts and obstructive signage will not be appropriate for the laneways.
- Any signage should compliment and align with the LCCC signage and wayfinding strategy - for example using complimentary colour, font and material.
- Utilise signage that is light-touch and sensitive to the historic context (e.g. wall mounted, paving signage, painted signage or light column mounted signage).

Make signage that is accessible

- Ensure signage is accessible to all people including; people with visual impairment and people of different languages, through innovative use of symbols, colour and texture.



© Placemarque / Limerick Wayfinding Strategy

Extract from the Limerick Wayfinding Strategy showing the proposed pedestrian wayfinding concept design

"Wayfinding signage provides a wonderful opportunity to present and communicate the identity of a place, with signs acting as a series of branded navigation touch-points experienced by users, expressing the town's values and vision as well as giving direction."

- Limerick Wayfinding Strategy

4.9 Building restoration and development

One of the ultimate aims of the project will be to catalyse investment and restoration of existing buildings along the Laneways. Building restoration and development should consider the following:

Restoration and refurbishment before redevelopment

- New development should seek to retain the existing fabric of the Laneways and apply light-touch refurbishment rather than complete redevelopment.

Make positive contributions to the Laneways

- The Council may seek a special contribution for laneway enhancement that would help benefit the development.
- Any new development should aim to improve the Laneways by providing active ground floor uses, good frontage and overlooking.
- Similarly, new development should seek to provide visual connections into any courtyard spaces through permeable gates/fences.
- Designers should consider opportunities to utilise coach houses and Laneway buildings for low-cost art or community spaces, as well as new residential accommodation.

Respect the scale of the Laneways

- New development should respect the scale of the Laneways and acknowledge the difference between the formal, grand Georgian Houses and the smaller, more informal Laneway buildings.
- The height of any new development should also consider daylight issues and overshadowing, particularly next to narrow Laneways.

Car-free development

- To promote active travel/sustainability and prevent increased vehicle movement along the lanes, new development must not include any private parking or servicing bays on the laneway itself.

Integrated bin storage

- Space for bins should be incorporated into the property demise of any new development.
- For complex developments, designers should consider opportunities to provide consolidated bin storage for the surrounding Laneways.

Seek opportunities to intensify

- Traditionally, buildings on the Laneways would have been a dense mix of different activities servicing the adjacent Georgian houses and city centre. Designers should seek opportunities to utilise yards, parking areas and garages for more active uses to bring people and life to the Laneways.

Existing photo of a typical Laneway with garages and vacant buildings

Illustration showing the potential to increase the amount of active uses and frontages onto the Laneways through new development and refurbishment of existing buildings.

4.10 Vehicle access and servicing

Maintain existing vehicle and emergency services access

- The Laneways must retain existing emergency vehicle access as far as possible, including locations with access controls. Designs must also retain existing private vehicle access to garages or yards.
- Suspension on any road openings (except for emergencies) in newly completed areas should be considered for a significant potential time period upon handover.

Rebalance in favour of pedestrians

- Wherever possible, space for vehicles should be reduced to a minimum with passing places and space for turning movements provided, as necessary.

Controlling and discouraging vehicles

- Access controls should be integrated into Laneways that frequently host events or outdoor dining with timed vehicle access, as required, for servicing.
- Designs should utilise access controls, modal filters and signage to discourage use of the Laneways as cut-throughs and informal parking for delivery vehicles.
- If Bollards are being installed they will need to be robust and economically feasible to change/upgrade as they need to be regularly replaced. Demountable bollards may be required for cleansing purposes
- Where frequent servicing is required, designs should aim to provide a short-stay loading bay near the Laneway entrance.

Enforcing parking

- As a general rule, parking should not be designated anywhere in the Laneways.
- Where frequent illegal parking occurs, designers should consider access controls that restrict private vehicles but maintain emergency services access.

Vehicle access controls

The following recommendations outline potential opportunities to reconfigure private vehicle access on the laneways. In all instances, existing emergency services access would need to be maintained, except in instances where access is already restricted.

A Glentworth Mews

Potential to amend vehicle access onto the laneway from Glentworth Street. Emergency access would not be impeded - as this part of the Laneway already has height restrictions due to the existing bow. Private parking access could also be provided via Catherine Street. In addition, temporary access controls - on evenings or weekends - at the Catherine Street Laneway entrance could enable outdoor seating for the Commercial Pub.

B Off Glentworth Street

Potential to extend vehicle access restrictions to enable future events and activities on the eastern arm of the Laneway. The Laneway access configuration could be reviewed as part of a planned upcoming development on Catherine Street.

C Off Mallow Street

Potential for access controls to create an amenity space. Existing emergency access is restricted by a bow at the entrance to this Laneway and there are currently parking access requirements for the lane.

D Limerick Lane / Little William Street / Foxes Bow

Rising bollards on Little Catherine Street and Foxes Bow already restrict vehicle access on these lanes during certain hours. The strategy proposes a review of existing measures to mitigate illegal parking on these lanes.

E Roches Row

Although Roches Row has minimal traffic movements at present, additional controls could be introduced to enable more activities on this lane. The Laneway currently has no requirement for private parking access and has a restricted width at the Thomas Street entrance.

F Lady's Lane

Potential to reconfigure on-street parking provision to create a small amenity space at the eastern end of Lady's Lane. This could be enacted in tandem with Parnell Arcade proposals (right). Lady's Lane is also proposed as a location for events - potentially on weekends when demand for parking may be lower.

G Parnell Arcade

Vehicle controls to mitigate informal vehicle parking on the lane could create a small amenity space. This could help to revitalise the adjacent vacant retail units.

H Hunt's Lane

Vehicle access controls on this lane could help to address widespread informal parking along the laneway. This, in turn, could enable the space to be used for different activities with scope for significant public realm improvements.

J Theatre Lane

A modal filters and signage - e.g. local traffic only (or similar) could help to discourage vehicles using the lane as a cut-through. In addition, temporary access controls, on evenings or weekends, could help to enable potential events and allow outdoor seating for F&B users along the laneway.

K Post Office Lane

Similar to Theatre Lane; modal filters and signage could help to discourage the lane being used as a cut-through. Existing access is height restricted at the northern end of the Laneway by an existing bow so emergency access would need to be maintained from Lower Glentworth Street.

Existing vehicle access controls

Existing rising bollards on Foxes Bow

Proposed vehicle access controls

Telescopic or folding bollards with padlocks could be used to restrict private access while maintaining emergency or servicing access

Modal Filter

Example of temporary modal filter planters with signage to prevent through-traffic and encourage cycling

Maintaining private vehicle and emergency access

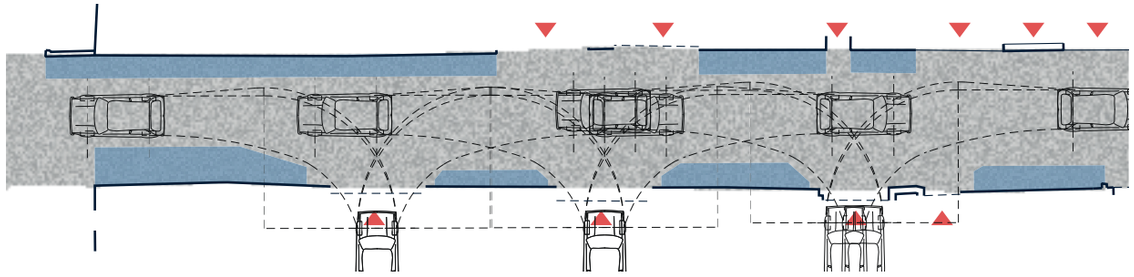
Designers must retain private vehicle access and emergency access requirements - Fire, Ambulance and Gardai - as far as possible within the laneways.

The spaces between these vehicle movements should be considered as potential locations for interventions e.g. planting, artwork or light columns.

Although these are often disaggregated pockets of space, the design of the laneways should feel unified and integrated.

In particular, the design of laneways must consider Building Regulations Part B and must ensure designs are compliant with all relevant technical and highways requirements, including:

- 4m clear driving width for lanes that allow fire access (e.g. wider lanes which go all the way through an urban block, such as Jesuit Lane) with allowance, where possible, of circa 6m for fire teams to get out of their vehicles and access the lockers within them.
- 3.1m width clearance between gate posts for fire tender access.
- Maximum 45m distance between hardstanding and buildings, where fire access is required.
- 4m minimum height clearance for suspended structures, where fire tender access is required.
- Obtaining necessary licenses to suspend structures in the Laneway and obtaining consent needed from building owners to install these items.
- Considering the impact of height and width restrictions on emergency access.
- Providing appropriate signage where laneways have height restrictions (e.g. bows) or access restrictions.
- Allowing sufficient turning space for emergency vehicles (e.g. on narrow lanes with tight turning points). A minimum 1.8m kerb radius is recommended, although this should be assessed on a lane-by-lane basis.



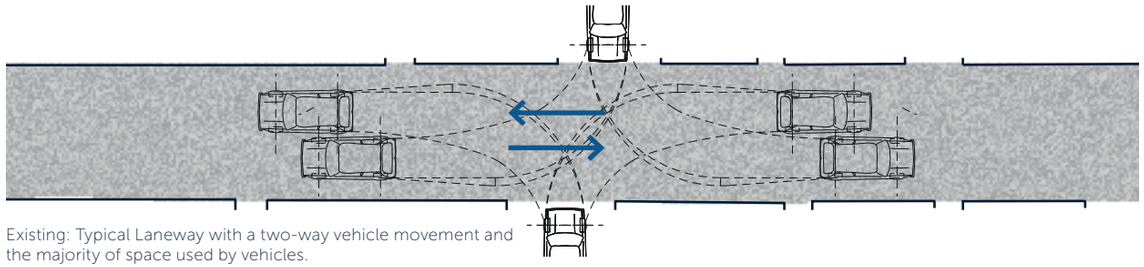
Analysis of a Laneway showing potential space for intervention between existing private vehicle access paths.

Rebalancing in favour of pedestrians

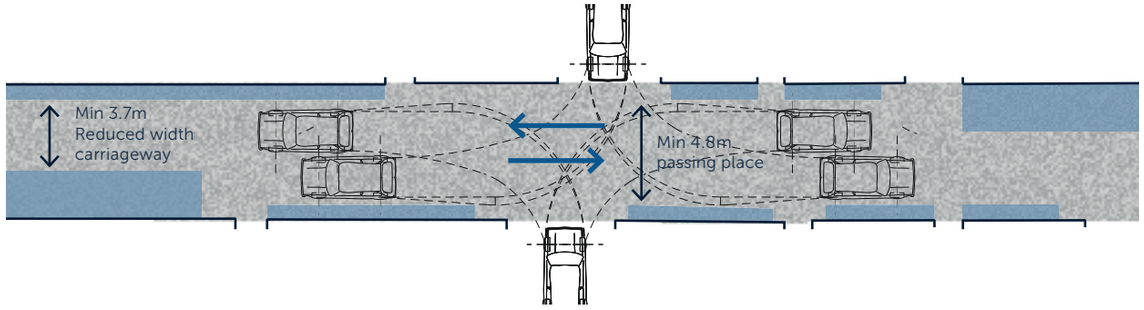
In addition to proposed vehicle access controls, designs for the Laneways should identify opportunities to reduce space for vehicles and prioritise pedestrians.

Any interventions must retain a typical 4m clear width for fire access (where required) and should incorporate a minimum 4.8m for vehicle passing places at intervals. In most instances, making allowance for private vehicle access movements will enable this requirement to be met.

Example of a 'Woonerf' or 'Home zone' street where planting and pedestrian space is maximised and space for vehicles is reduced to a minimum



Existing: Typical Laneway with a two-way vehicle movement and the majority of space used by vehicles.

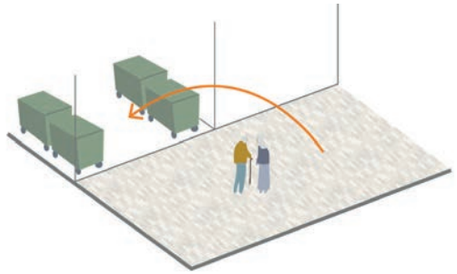


Proposed: Typical Laneway showing potential to reduce space for vehicles. Any interventions must maintain a 3.7m minimum width for fire access and passing places for vehicles (4.8m minimum).

Bins and servicing

Rationalising bins stored on Laneways and servicing access will have a significant impact on people's perception of the public realm. Designers should consider that refuse vehicles do not enter the Laneway and therefore managing waste will need to be achieved according to specific Laneway conditions. Some potential approaches to bins are set out below. When approaching bin storage, schemes should be stakeholder-led on a lane-by-lane basis, with those in each Laneway encouraged to consider options available to them. LCCC are currently undertaking stakeholder-led pilot projects that should also be reviewed as a possible route forward. In conjunction with waste management, opportunities for waste reduction should also be identified in consultation with Laneway stakeholders.

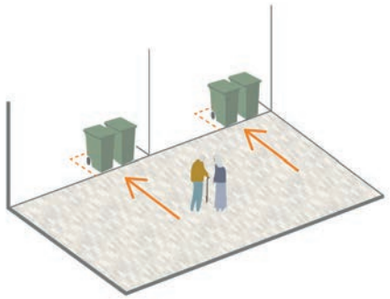
1. Consolidation
For areas with high numbers of commercial bins, consider opportunities to create consolidated bin stores. Alternatively, consider ways to rationalise bin collection operations to negate the need for bins being stored on the Laneways



2. Rationalisation
Relocate bins into consolidated locations (off the lane) or relocate them onto main streets - with screening and planting to minimise visual impact. These could be located away from public bin collection points to prevent overlap

3. Screening
Screen bins on the lanes using enclosures and planting. Where possible, bins should be grouped together and moved to locations with the least visual impact

4. Enforcement
Ensure users store bins within their property demise and only leave bins on the lanes for a short period during collection days



4.11 Mid-block crossings

Implementing junctions and mid-block crossings will help pedestrians to safely move between Laneways and through the city centre. Designers should refer to the Limerick City Centre Public Realm Strategy for further guidance on crossings.

Prioritise crossings where they are needed most

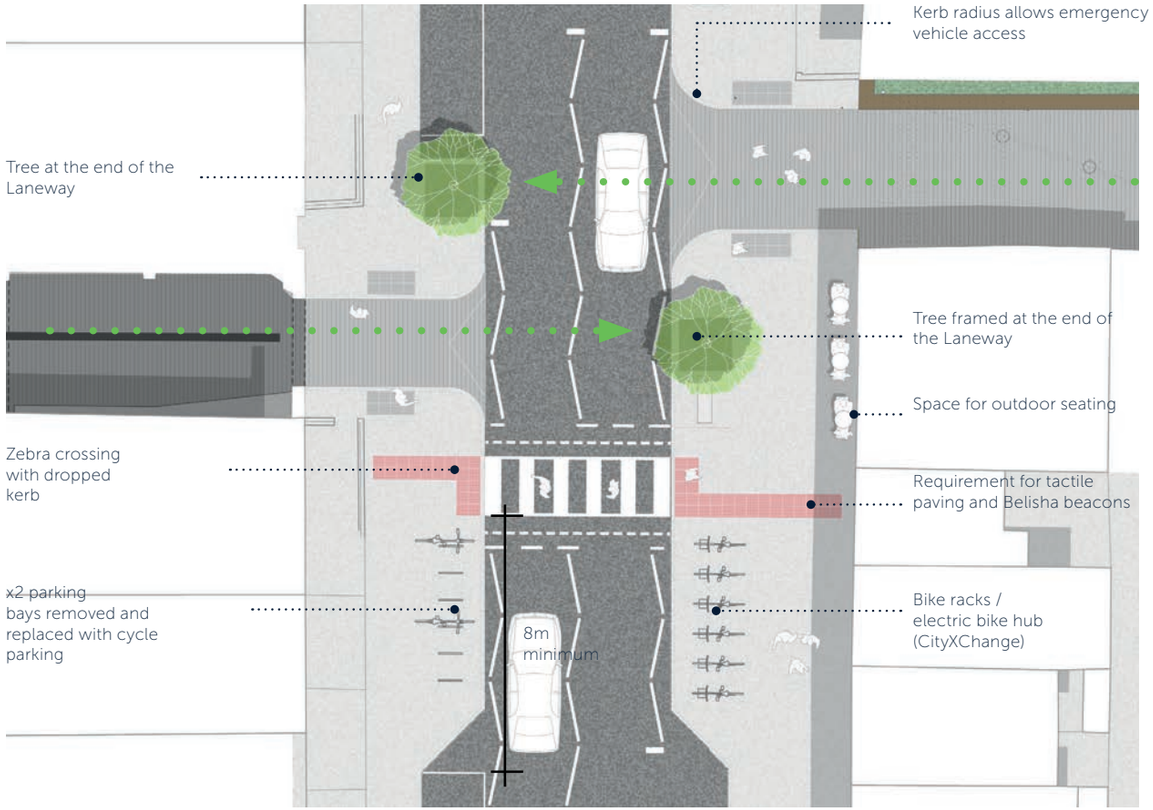
- Areas with a deficiency of crossings or important connections between Laneways (e.g. routes used by schoolchildren) should be prioritised in the first instance.
- Crossing locations should be coordinated with wider roads strategies for the city centre. The location and type of crossing must also be appropriate to the existing road conditions. For example, Mallow Street - as part of the designated strategic road network - may require a controlled crossing.

Consider crossings as nodes between the Laneways

- As shown overleaf, crossing points could seek to provide 'pocket squares' between the lanes, with amenities such as trees, cycle parking, electric vehicle charging and seating.

Consider potential loss of parking

- In most instances, incorporating a safe pedestrian crossing will require some loss of parking near to the Laneway junctions.
- Designs should consider controlled crossings or raised tables and should assess the most appropriate crossing type in each scenario.

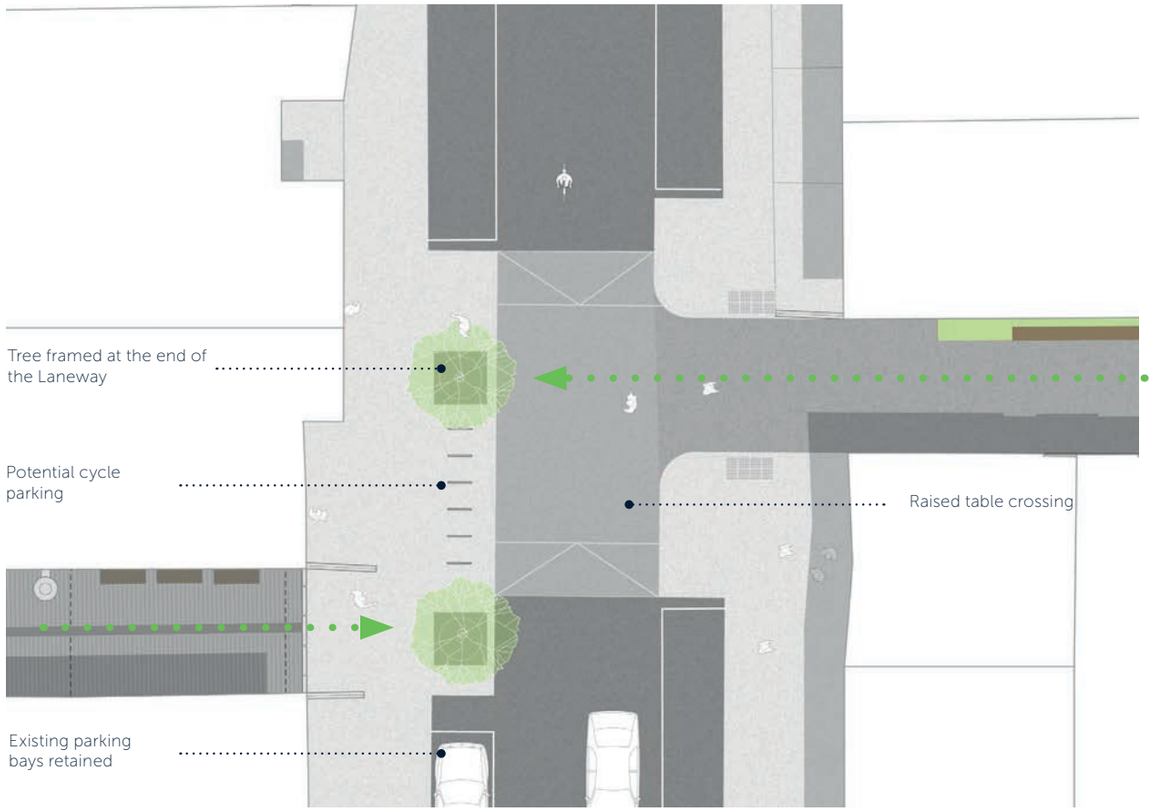


Illustrative proposal for a controlled mid-block crossing on Mallow Street.
Any design must adhere to relevant highways standards and requirements.

Controlled mid-block crossing

Controlled crossings have greater safety than uncontrolled crossings but also have greater complexity.

The positioning requirements for controlled crossings means their location may not follow the desire line between laneways and - in most instances - controlled crossings will require a higher number of car parking spaces to be removed / relocated.



Illustrative proposal for a raised table on Glentworth Street.
Any design must adhere to relevant highways standards and requirements.

Raised table/uncontrolled crossing

Raised tables may be simpler and more cost-effective than controlled crossings but also provide less safety for pedestrians.

Raised tables typically require fewer car parking spaces to be removed.

4.12 Lighting

The approach to lighting will be one of the most significant factors in creating a safe and welcoming environment after dark. Designers should adhere to lighting guidelines set out in BS 5489-1:2020 and relevant LCCC policies.

The public lighting team should be consulted to review and approve lighting specifications and details prior to any design. Lighting designs should also be coordinated with recommendations from the Limerick City Centre Public Realm Strategy.

Provide suitable illuminance

- Lux levels should respond to: patterns of use, character and context. Typically more active lanes or lanes with potential safety issues should have higher lux levels.
- Where relevant, utilise both standard LED street lighting and feature lighting (see opposite) to both highlight special features (e.g. bows, stone walls or trees) and achieve the required illuminance levels.

Save energy and reduce light pollution

- Save energy wherever possible by; minimising lighting (where it is safe to do so), using lighting control systems and adaptive lighting systems - i.e. varied light levels at different times of evening and night.
- Manage light spill next to residential uses and natural habitat areas.

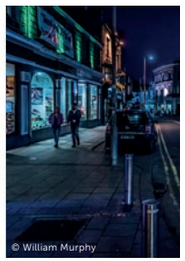
Create warm, welcoming light

- Utilise a consistent warm white light, where possible to create inviting lanes.
- In conjunction with standard lighting, consider opportunities to introduce feature lighting to bring interest and variety (see opposite).

Consider mounting and multi-use lights

- Where possible use wall mounted or suspended lighting to de-clutter the laneways. Where vehicle access is required, lighting should be mounted with a minimum 4m clearance.
- Ensure light columns are capable of supporting signage and where required incorporate utility points (for festivals/events) or wifi systems.

Colour temperature



Illuminance

Mounting

4.13 Streetscape materials

Refer to Limerick City Public Realm Strategy for further information around paving type and detail.

Use high-quality, sustainable materials

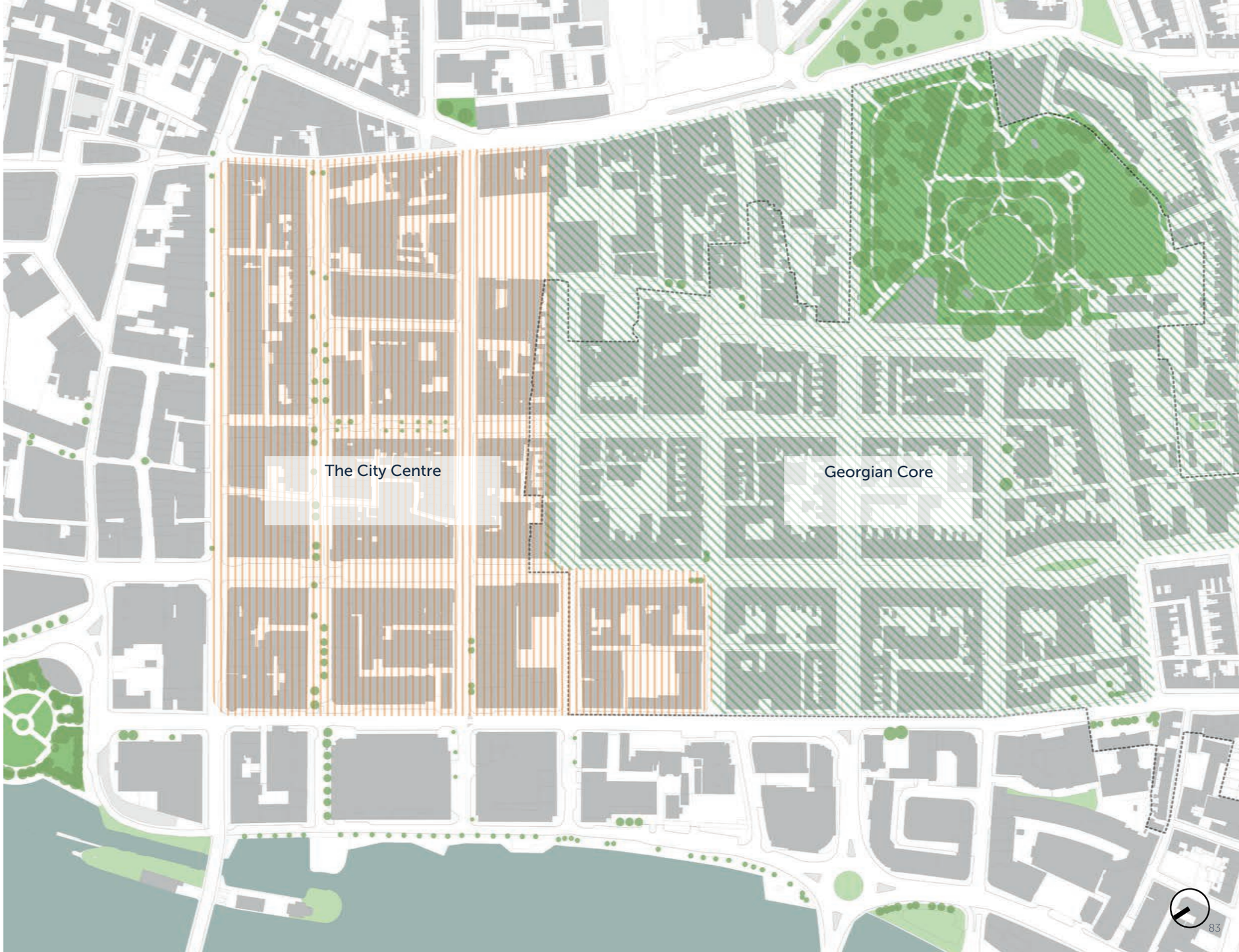
- Designers should use locally sourced, high-quality materials with a low whole-life embodied carbon cost and should minimise use of virgin materials e.g. prioritising use of recycled aggregates.
- Use materials that will have longevity, durability and that minimise the need for regular repair and replacement.
- Areas with higher footfall and trafficked areas demand durable paving with proper detailing and sub-surface specification.

Respond to character and context

- The approach to materials should reflect the character areas and context. Paving design could also respond to unique features/functions in the Laneways.
- Where relevant, materials must be historically appropriate and sensitive to the historic Georgian context. Where using historic paving types or finishes, designers must seek to address technical and accessibility standards.
- To bring variety and interest, designs should not be overly-repetitive and should acknowledge the imperfect, layered nature of the lanes.

Technical compliance

- All road and pavement design should be reviewed with LCCC Roads, Traffic and Cleansing department and should be in compliance with Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS), and relevant technical guidance & standards.
- Where relevant, designers should also refer to Paving: The conservation of Historic Ground Surfaces (Department of Art, Heritage and the Gaeltacht).



4.14 Implementation and engagement

Moving forward, it is important that designers and decision-makers consider other relevant initiatives in the city centre, and ways to enable partnership working to encourage high-quality implementation.

Consider other ambitious projects within Limerick city centre

- Many ongoing projects in Limerick have relevance to the Laneways. These include short-term/ temporary installations and open call processes, such as the CityXChange programme. Where possible, designers should consider ways to coordinate and collaborate with these projects, exploring opportunities to use short-term ideas to test longer-term ambitions in the Laneways.
- Designers should also consider the excellent examples of high-quality public realm that have been delivered in Limerick city centre in recent years. Projects such as Bedford Row, Foxes Bow, and Little Catherine Street demonstrate how the public realm can be positively transformed, but they should also be critically reviewed to understand their positive and negative outcomes.
- Similarly, pipeline transformational projects in the city including, for example, the O'Connell Street upgrades, the waterfront, and the Opera Square development could be critically analysed to review outcomes and potential lessons learned.
- Designers must also coordinate with related project synergies, including the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy, Limerick City and County Council's Limerick 2030 Plan, Wayfinding strategies, and the emerging Public Engagement and partnership working

Pilot projects and 'quick-wins'

- Designers and decision-makers should explore opportunities for pilot projects and 'quick wins.' Temporary works, such as planting, lighting, and patch repairs, can provide insights into the potential of lanes and inform longer-term interventions.
- After an initial round of callouts for tactical urbanism projects, LCCC is developing its approach to encourage and support community-led projects and interventions.

Engagement and partnership working

- Extensive engagement with local communities has been conducted to inform the principles, detailed guidelines, and ideas presented in this toolkit. These findings should serve as guidance for designing all Laneways.
- To create a public realm that meets the needs of local people, it is crucial to liaise with stakeholders and take a proactive approach to engagement. Designers should consider opportunities to engage with local residents, businesses (especially those fronting the relevant Laneways), and community groups at appropriate stages of design development.
- Moreover, cross-partnership collaboration with LCCC teams, including transport, environment, planning, and regeneration, will be essential to enable coordinated public realm outcomes.

Ensuring high-quality delivery

- Good design and high standards of delivery must be maintained across Limerick Laneways public realm to allow for an attractive, durable public realm that has longevity. High-quality design with robust installation and considered detailing will be required.
- Likewise, designers must ensure that the public realm is maintainable, with maintenance needs integrated into all designs. For example, materials and street furniture selected that can be easily cleaned, repaired and sourced to allow for elements that can be replaced like-for-like.

Recently built public realm projects in Limerick City Centre (Left to right: Foxes Bow, Bedford Row, Little Catherine Street, Thomas Street) should be critically analysed to assess outcomes and potential lessons.

CityXChange demonstration projects. The programme is both exciting and ambitious in its approach to create climate-friendly and sustainable urban environments. ©CityXChange.eu

Photos of the O'Connell Street Revitalisation Project

TOBIN
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

Allies and Morrison

LAWLOR
BURNS &
ASSOCIATES
CHARTERED QUANTITY SURVEYORS
PROJECT MANAGERS

MOLONEYFOX
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

ACP
Architectural Conservation Professionals