



Chapter 5

Urban Design, Town Centre and Regeneration

Chapter 5: Urban Design, Town Centre, and Regeneration

Aim: To guide the long-term development of Carlow-Graiguecullen in a manner that protects and enhances the unique attributes of the joint urban area, through the implementation of best practice urban design, placemaking and urban regeneration, which improves the health and wellbeing of its residents, supports compact growth, vibrant and inclusive urban environments, local businesses and tourism, and town centre living.

5.0 Introduction – Historic and recent development trends

As discussed in Chapter 2, the urban development of Carlow-Graiguecullen has its origins in the medieval period, with evidence of this historic fabric most visible in Carlow Castle, and in the layout of Dublin Street, the western part of Tullow Street, Castle Street, and Charlotte Street. The medieval footprint of the urban area would have been confined to the north bank of the Burren River and separated from the castle by a marsh known as the Moreen. The castle was separated from the urban area until the Moreen was reclaimed in the early 18th century.

Up until the beginning of the 18th century the urban area had not extended significantly beyond its original medieval built form. However, Graiguecullen and Burrin Street were two exceptions in this regard, and it is likely their development arose during the 16th century and followed the construction of bridges over the River Barrow and Burren River. The houses in the medieval part of the urban area have been

replaced and rebuilt over the centuries, the earliest surviving house occupying Nos. 16/17 Dublin Street and bearing a plaque dated 1699. In 1731 Brown Street was extended eastwards to join College Street, and in the same period Castle Street joined the castle directly to the urban area.

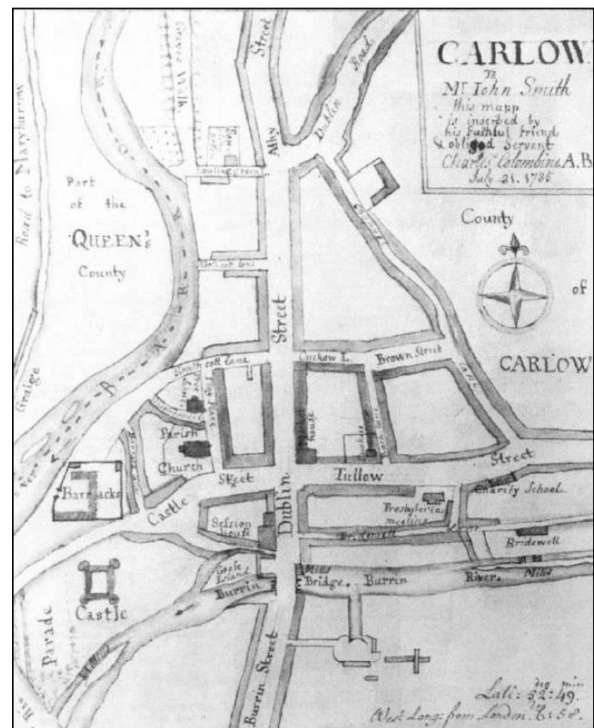


Fig. 5.1: Extract from Charles Columbine's map of Carlow Town 1735, College Street identified as 'Chapel Lane' and 'Graige' detailed in 'Queen's County' and on 'Road to Maryburrow' - (Source: libguides.ucd.ie)

There are many buildings surviving from the late 18th and early 19th centuries which appears to have been a period of expansion in the urban area. Montgomery Street and Pembroke Street were laid out in the early 18th Century, the latter formerly having been a private road. The majority of the landmark public buildings in the urban area also date from this period. After the first few decades of the 19th century there was little expansion on the outskirts of the urban

area. However, by the late 19th century and early 20th century a number of local authority housing schemes had been developed. The 20th century also heralded a new period of growth for the urban area the beginning of which can be attributed to the opening of the Carlow Sugar Factory, and later in the 1970s was reflected in the arrival of Braun and Lapple, and in the opening of Carlow Regional Technical College (RTC) as a higher education institution (now SETU).

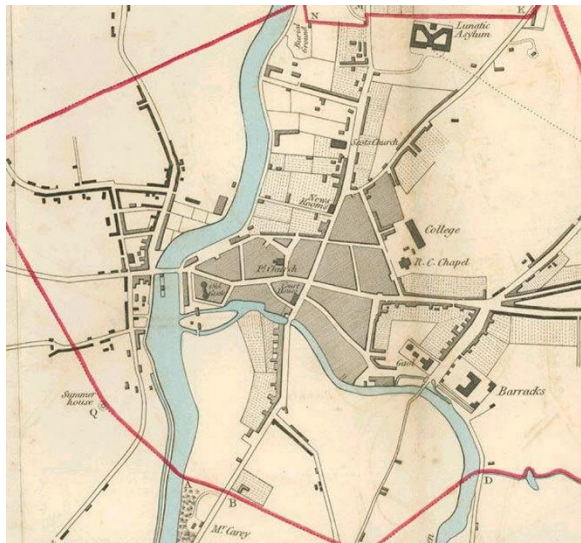


Figure 5.2: 1844 Map clearly depicting the then built form of Carlow-Graiguecullen (Source: Carlow Central Library).

Carlow-Graiguecullen’s suburban footprint largely has its origins from the 1960s, when more low-density and car-oriented developments began to appear along key approach roads to the joint urban area. Most of the population of the joint urban area now resides in residential estates which spread outwards from the traditional urban centre, and which are in many cases disconnected from the urban centre and community facilities. This suburban pattern of development was reinforced by the building

boom of the early 2000’s which witnessed the emergence of new residential, retail, and commercial developments in more peripheral and car dependent locations. Planning policy and measures aimed at prioritising and supporting urban regeneration, compact growth, and active travel, will therefore be key mechanisms to tackle legacies of the built environment, thereby ensuring the protection and enhancement of vitality and vibrancy of the joint urban area.

5.1 Urban Design and Placemaking

Urban design deals with the arrangement, appearance, and function of built environments such as Carlow-Graiguecullen. It is critical to the creation of liveable, sustainable urban areas that meet the needs of local communities. At its core is the placemaking or people-centred design approach (See Fig. 5.3), which priorities the needs of people over cars, buildings, and other infrastructure. This approach contributes to the development of more accessible and inclusive urban environments that have a sense of identity, and facilitate opportunities to reduce car dependency, support active travel, promote urban greening, and encourage social interaction.

Carlow County Council and Laois County Council have in their respective County Development Plans, prepared a suite of urban design policies, objectives, and related provisions to support and promote good urban design and quality placemaking, which should be read in conjunction with this chapter of the JULAP¹.

¹ Refer to Chapters 12 and 16 in the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 and to Chapter 13 in the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027.

5.2 Key Urban Design Principles

This JULAP places a particular emphasis on encouraging design-led and responsive approaches to urban regeneration in Carlow-Graiguecullen. The key urban design principles listed below (1-11) should inform and act as a guide for all development proposals in the joint urban area:

- 1. Character:** Aim to create identity and character that reinforces locally distinctive patterns of development and landscape.
- 2. Maintain and Consolidate:** Maintain the core of the urban area while avoiding developments that cause sprawl or decentralising core functions.
- 3. Expansion:** Allow expansion where it does not have a negative impact on the existing urban centre or overall settlement fabric.
- 4. Urban Regeneration:** Prioritise the reuse, refurbishment, and redevelopment of existing buildings and sites to ensure the most efficient use of land in the joint urban area.
- 5. Continuity and Enclosure:** Ensure that public and private spaces that are clearly distinguished, and continuity of street frontages and enclosure of space by the built form, is achieved.
- 6. Public Realm:** Quality of public spaces and routes that are attractive, safe, uncluttered, and work effectively for all, including older people and people with disabilities.
- 7. Livable Environments:** Encourage walkable environments which facilitate access to public transport in order to reduce reliance on the private car, as well as the provision of a well-connected open space network.
- 8. Accessibility and Connectivity:** Provide opportunities for permeability to form new or to strengthen existing connections.
- 9. Mobility:** Prioritise pedestrian and cyclist movement and facilitate connectivity and permeability through the urban environment.
- 10. Variety and Viability:** Promote choice through a mix of compatible developments and uses that work together to ensure places respond to local needs, as well as providing for diverse and inclusive communities.
- 11. Environmental Sustainability:** Enhance local ecology by promoting biodiversity, by allowing new wildlife habitats to establish and protect existing ones.

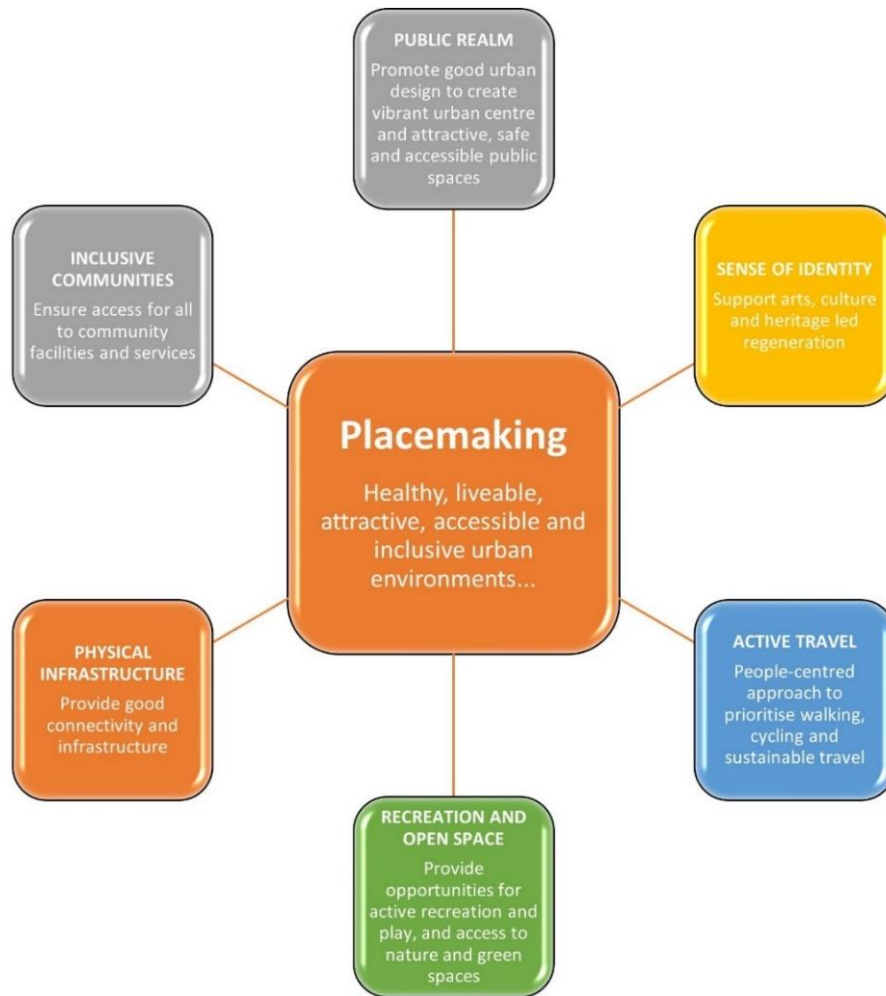


Fig. 5.3: The role of placemaking in good urban design

Urban Design and Placemaking – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

UD. P1: Provide high-quality public realm and urban spaces in Carlow-Graigucullen through support for and the promotion of good urban design and placemaking that reinforces a people centred approach to the creation of the built environment.

UD. P2: Ensure that all public and private development proposals make a positive contribution to the built environment of

Carlow-Graigucullen, through adherence to the best practice principles for urban design and placemaking as outlined in Chapters 12 and 16 of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 as applying to Carlow Town functional area in County Carlow, and Chapter 13 of the Laois County Development 2021-2027 as applying to Graigucullen functional area in County Laois.

5.3 Town Centre

Town centres remain the lifeblood of local economies, supporting business and generating employment opportunities. They also contain clusters of local services and act as transport hubs. The attractiveness and vibrancy of town centres is increasingly a key element in driving economic investment, particularly within the tourism and hospitality sectors.

The importance of town centres for local communities, including their associated localities and neighbourhoods, came to the fore during the COVID-19 pandemic. A combination of travel restrictions and home working arrangements led people to rediscover the importance of town centres such as in Carlow-Graiguecullen, for social and cultural engagement, and for economic and recreational activities.

The impact of suburbanisation and edge and out of centre commercial and retail activity as alluded to in the introduction to this chapter, compounded by a reliance on private car for travel purposes a general drift away from town centre living, has also led to a ‘hollowing out’ effect in many town centres throughout Ireland.

Like many other comparable urban areas, the town centre in Carlow-Graiguecullen has faced the issues and challenges referred to in the foregoing, which in many cases has led to a greater prevalence of vacancy, dereliction, and the underutilisation of sites and buildings.

For the purposes of this chapter, the town centre is defined as those lands zoned ‘A – Town Centre’ in the Land Use Zoning Map 12.1 included in Chapter 12.

5.4 Town Centre First

Town Centre First – A Policy Approach for Irish Towns’ (2022), is the Government’s recent overarching strategy for the renewal and regeneration of Irish Towns. The strategy includes policies aimed at tackling vacancy, combating dereliction, and breathing new life back into town centres. It also includes 33 actions which are intended to give towns the tools and resources they need to become more viable and attractive places in which to live, work, visit and run a business. The policy is underpinned by multiple existing and future multi-billion-euro investment programmes spread across major Government schemes such as the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF), Town and Village Renewal Scheme, and Croí Conaithe (Towns).

5.5 Active Land Management

5.5.1 Town Regeneration Officers and Town Teams

Managing the implementation of the Town Centre First policy at local level is the responsibility of Carlow and Laois County Council’s Town Regeneration Officers (TROs). The TRO role stems from Action 3 of the Town Centre first policy. The role is also crucial to supporting and building the capacity of the Town Teams. Town Teams comprise representatives of local residents, business people, community/voluntary groups, and other stakeholders, who will be empowered and supported to take a lead on the development of interventions that can make positive long-term changes for Carlow-Graiguecullen.

Carlow County Council has already developed a Town Centre First Plan in the form of Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration. This

non-statutory regeneration strategy identifies challenges, actions, and integrated responses across a number of core themes and intervention areas as discussed in more detail in Section 5.6. Project Carlow 2040 seeks to maximise the impact of investment from funding streams available for town regeneration, including the URDF.

In addition, in 2023 Carlow County Council completed a vacancy survey for Carlow Town, which has revealed that there are circa 200 commercial and residential properties currently vacant and/or in a derelict condition. This survey encompassed that part of the Graiguecullen area in County Carlow. Specific funding has been received under Call 3 of the URDF which is designed to address long term vacancy and dereliction, as well as the acceleration of residential accommodation in the town.

Town Centre – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

TC. P1: Support the town centre led economic regeneration of Carlow-Graiguecullen, leveraging its strategic location and accessibility on regional and inter-regional road and rail networks, and building on its inherent strengths of education, connectivity, skills, innovation, enterprise, tourism, arts and culture, and retail services.

TC. P2: Support the role of the Town Regeneration Officers and Town Team in carrying out their duties in respect of prioritising the regeneration of Carlow-Graiguecullen through the application of the Government’s Town Centre First Policy approach.

TC. P3: Reinforce the role of the town centre as a primary location for commercial, civic, social, and cultural development through the promotion of new high-quality infill and backland development that consolidates the existing urban core.

TC. P4: Protect the character of the town centre and ensure that new development responds positively to its established built form, scale, and character and to continue implementing environmental improvements to sustain and improve its attraction for living, working, visiting and investment.

TC. P5: Protect the vibrancy, ambience, quality, and vitality of the town centre by:

- a) Promoting an appropriate mix of day and night-time uses.
- b) Preventing an excessive concentration of less desirable uses unless carefully managed through an appropriate sympathetic design approach.
- c) Facilitating development that will attract and retain commercial and retail activities in the town centre.
- d) Encouraging the re-use of vacant units for alternative functions and uses such as live-work units, residential units, remote working hubs, enterprise incubation, tourist spin-off enterprises, tourist accommodation, niche retail including food or craft enterprises, and cultural offerings such as theatre or museum.

TC. P6: Encourage and facilitate the full use of buildings and in particular the use of upper floors and backlands, with particular regard to high quality urban design and materials used as well as integration, and linkages.

TC. P7: Encourage and facilitate the appropriate intensification of town centre sites where high standards of architectural design are achieved and impacts on the character of the area are positive.

5.5.2 Croí Cónaithe (Towns)

The Croí Cónaithe (Towns) Fund delivered by local authorities, provides new choices for people to live in urban areas such as Carlow-Graiguecullen. The first element of the fund was launched on 14th July 2022 and provided grant funding to support the refurbishment of vacant properties for residential use. The grant is known as the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant.

Croí Cónaithe (Towns) – Policy

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

CC. P1: Support and promote the role of Croí Cónaithe (Towns) in delivering the refurbishment of vacant properties in Carlow-Graiguecullen for residential use and as a means of encouraging town centre living in the joint urban area, and subject to compliance with proper planning and environmental considerations.

5.5.3 Vacant Homes Officers

The appointment of local authority Vacant Homes Officers is part of the Government’s ‘Housing for All’ plan to 2030 to provide information, advice, and support for owners of vacant homes. More specifically, the Vacant

Homes Officers are responsible for administering the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant under the Croí Conaithe (Towns) fund and Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) programmes.

Vacant Homes Officers and Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs) – Policy

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

VH. P1: Support and promote the role of the Councils’ Vacant Homes Officers in addressing vacancy and the efficient use of housing stock in Carlow-Graiguecullen, as part of the implementation of the Government’s ‘Housing for All’ plan to 2030 and Town Centre First Policy approach.

5.5.4 Land and Site Activation Measures

Underutilised/Vacant/Derelict buildings and sites represent both a challenge and an opportunity for Carlow-Graiguecullen. While such buildings and sites detract from the visual aesthetics and vibrancy of the joint urban area, they have the potential to be repurposed for additional housing, employment, cultural and other uses.

The Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT) was introduced in the Finance Act 2021 as part of the Government’s ‘Housing for All’ plan and with the intention of replacing the outgoing Vacant Site Levy. The objective of the tax is to activate land that is serviced and zoned for residential use or mixed use, including residential use, in order to increase housing supply and to ensure the regeneration of vacant and idle lands in urban locations. Local Authorities are required to map the lands in scope for the tax. The RZLT will be administered by the Revenue Commissioners. The RZLT is part of the continued shift in

Government policy towards active land management within urban areas and can have an important role to play in in Carlow-Graiguecullen with regard to activating regeneration lands, vacant, derelict, and idle lands, and lands zoned for residential use.

In relation to derelict buildings Carlow and Laois County Councils will, where appropriate, continue to use their powers under the Derelict Sites Act 1990 (as amended) to deal with the issue of dereliction in the joint urban area.

Land and Site Activation Measures – Policy

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

UVD. P1: Encourage and facilitate the appropriate regeneration and reuse of underutilised, vacant, and derelict buildings and sites. Both Councils will continue to use their statutory powers, where appropriate, to consider such buildings and sites for inclusion in the Residential Zoned Land Tax or Register of Derelict Sites.

5.6 Urban Regeneration and Urban Development

5.6.1 Carlow Town

Settlement Consolidation Sites and Regeneration Sites – Carlow Town

A total of 4 no. settlement consolidation sites and 3 no. regeneration sites have been identified in Carlow Town (See Objectives Map, Chapter 4, Figure 4.2). These settlement consolidation and regeneration sites are located within the existing built-up area and in most cases are in or adjoining the town centre. The sites have been identified on the basis of their potential to generate wider regeneration benefits to the

town and to deliver significant housing provision or commercial, employment or mixed-use developments which contribute to consolidated urban growth. They include:

Settlement Consolidation Sites

- Former Greenvale Site
- Barrow Track Site
- Pembroke Sites (2 no.)

Regeneration Sites

- Crotty's Site
- Court Place Site
- Former Braun Site
- Kelvin Grove Site

It is important to note that a number of these sites overlap with the Intervention Areas the subject of Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration.

5.6.2 Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration

The purpose of Project Carlow 2040 is to guide the long-term development of Carlow Town by re-purposing the town centre and re-establish a definable core. The strategy seeks to build on its unique attributes and attractions in combination with addressing its existing challenges to make the town a place for its people, where residents, workers and visitors alike will be encouraged, to access everything the town centre has to offer. It acknowledges that significant investment is required to re-establish the town centre as a destination of choice for people to shop, work, visit, spend time and live.

The Strategy is grounded in a Vision and Guiding Principles, a Regeneration Action Plan, and a Regeneration Strategy which includes a number of physical Intervention Areas. To date, a total of €23m has been awarded under the Urban

Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) for key project identified in Project Carlow 2040.

The Strategy encompasses the existing town centre area, from the Potato Market through to Barrack Street, Carlow College and the Railway Station as well as link streets such as Tullow Street, Dublin Street and Shamrock Square, and also a section of the River Barrow to the west, including the Barrow Track, Carlow Castle, the Burren River, and the Pembroke area.

Through the implementation of the Strategy and its individual elements, it will improve health and wellbeing, create better urban spaces, enhance competitiveness and commercial activity, encourage town centre living and encourage building enhancements in order to improve the long-term viability of the area.

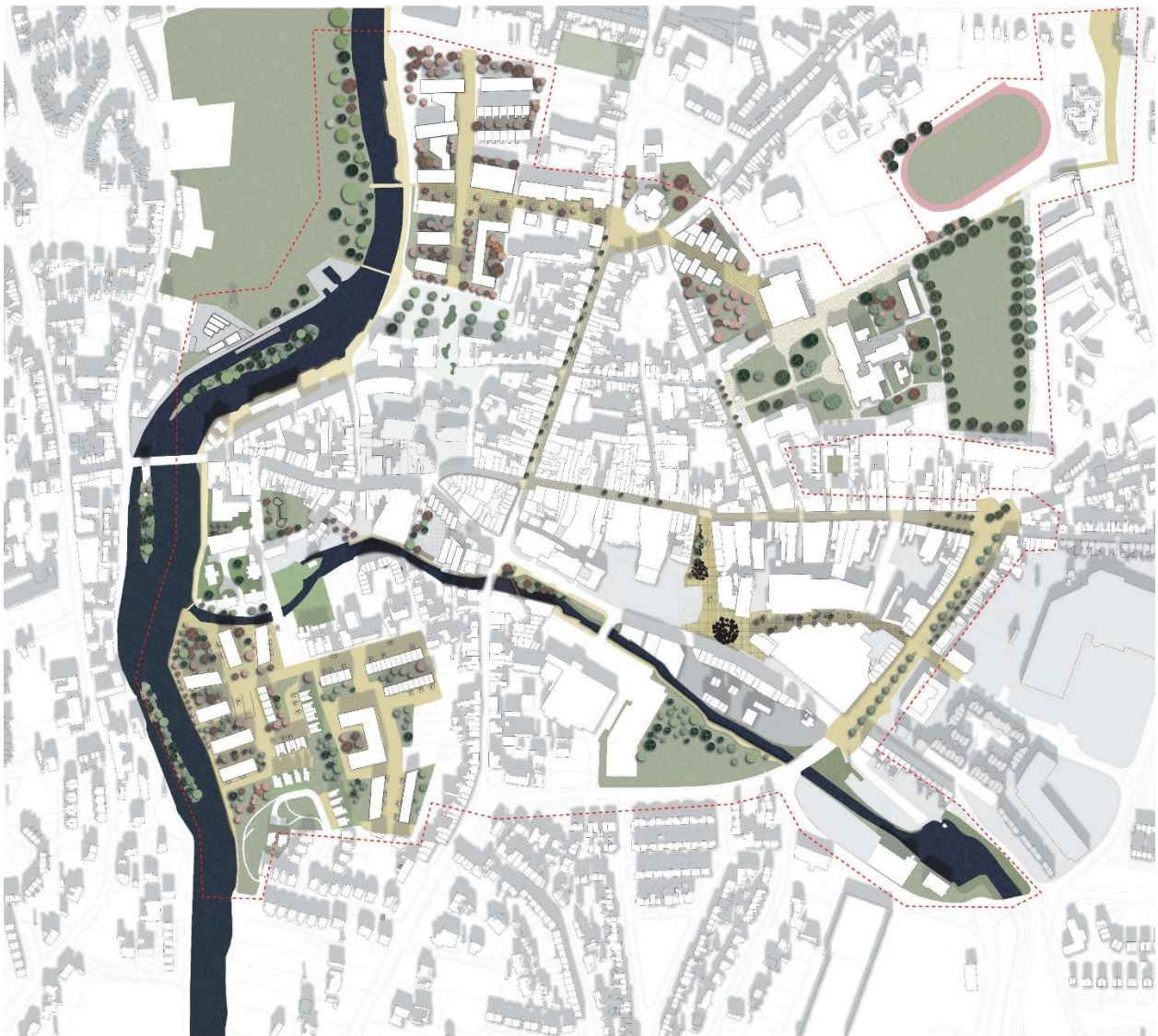
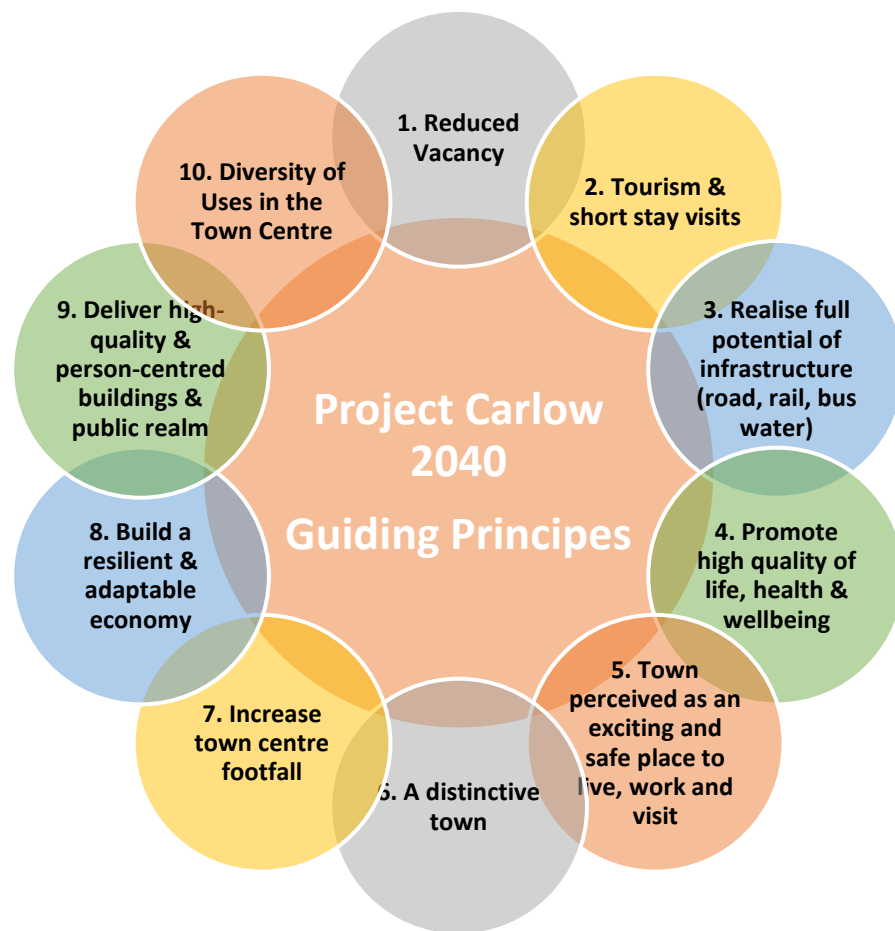


Fig. 5.4: Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration (Study Area and Context Map)

5.6.3 Vision and Guiding Principles

The Vision for Project Carlow 2040 is that *Carlow Town Centre will be a place for its people, where residents, workers and visitors alike will be encouraged, through enhanced connections and improvements in the public realm, to access everything the Town Centre has to offer including business and retailing, education, amenity spaces and cultural heritage. The enhancement of the unique attributes and attractions of Carlow Town will significantly improve the health and wellbeing of its people, support local business, facilitate tourism, and encourage people to live within the Town Centre.*

As this vision is, by its nature, both broad in its remit and aspirational in its aims, 10 no. guiding principles were also formulated to provide the framework and co-ordination approach to deliver the vision. The guiding principles seek to address the existing challenges facing Carlow Town by building on its many assets and attractions. The application of the guiding principles to each of the intervention areas and other future projects will ensure that strategic sites are brought forward in line with, and will contribute to, the realisation of the vision.



5.7 Regeneration Action Plan

As part of the preparation of the Strategy four core themes emerged which were explored and refined through Carlow County Council’s consultation and collaboration with key stakeholders and the public. These themes structured the undertaking of the background study and analysis that informed a series of the long-term strategy and approach to the spatial development of the town. The four core themes are:

- Economic and Investment
- Transport and Movement
- Health and Wellbeing
- Environment and Sustainability

A further series of outcomes and actions were developed for each of these themes. The actions for each theme are summarised in Table 5.1.

| Economic and Investment | | Transport and Movement | |
|-------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. | Enhancing the vitality and viability of the Town Centre | 1. | Support sustainable communities with emphasis on active travel |
| 2. | Public Realm Enhancements | 2. | Provide new pedestrian routes through each intervention area |
| 3. | Support Key Town role | 3. | Deliver high-quality public transport |
| 4. | Delivery of intervention areas | 4. | Implement cycling strategy |
| 5. | Develop local authority sites | 5. | Build on natural assets and biodiversity and particularly R. Barrow and Burren River |
| 6. | Support collaboration of SETU and Carlow College | | |
| 7. | Provide business support through Local Enterprise Office and available funding | | |
| Health and Wellbeing | | Environment and Sustainability | |
| 1. | Support urban life and public health in post-Covid society | 1. | Support reduction in resource consumption and transition to low-carbon society through climate change mitigation and adaptation |
| 2. | Promote physical activity | 2. | Introduce sustainable growth principles in the regeneration of Carlow Town |
| 3. | Promote role of improved design and planning in regeneration of Town Centre | 3. | Protect and enhance unique biodiversity and landscape |
| 4. | Actively improve air, water, and soil quality | 4. | Support innovative building solution in the intervention areas |
| 5. | Ensure all members of community have good opportunities to be healthy | | |
| 6. | Promote the delivery of sporting facilities | | |

Table 5.1: Summary of actions for each of the Core Themes in Project Carlow 2040

5.8 Implementation

The Strategy focuses on six Intervention Areas containing public realm projects and development opportunities in and around the town. The Intervention Areas were informed by extensive public consultation and include:

1. Town Centre – Potato Market and Barrack Street
2. Cultural Quarter (including links to Railway Station)
3. The Barrow Track/Civic Spine
4. The Pembroke District
5. The Burrin Riverfront
6. Link Streets (Dublin Street and Tullow Street)

Each of the Interventions Areas are shown in Tables 1 to 6 along with a summary of the urban design approach for each. The high-quality urban design principles underpinning each of the Intervention Areas are outlined in Appendix I of the Strategy. The focus is on place-making and the ‘Pedestrian First’ approach, through creating vibrant places with a strong sense of identity, and with linkages and legible pedestrian routes. Some of the key aspects of the interventions are:


- Improve Town Centre linkages and increase pedestrian mobility
- Permeability through Carlow College as a public space
- Connect the River Barrow and the Burren River back to the Town, helping to provide the Town Centre with a unique character and identity while utilizing the opportunity for amenity and recreation along the riverfront while providing sustainable public realm spaces and routes
- Deliver a ‘Civic Spine’ development across Local Authority owned lands and into Carlow College

- Create a residential quarter within Carlow Town in the Pembroke area
- Provide a linear area, encompassing Carlow Castle, with a mix of cultural, historical, recreational, leisure and retail uses

In addition to the foregoing, the rationale for each of the Intervention Areas is also underpinned by a series of health and wellbeing principles based on:

- Improvements in the built environment
- Greater access to urban green and blue space for walking, cycling and exercise
- Increased opportunities for physical activity
- Improved air quality (reduction in car numbers)
- Contribution to positive outlook and good mental health
- Promoting community initiatives
- Promoting walking and cycling as primary modes of transport
- Promoting public transport
- Creation of inviting spaces through interventions in the physical environment
- Places for community and social environment to thrive
- Connection to Barrow Way
- Open riverfronts

In addition to the six Intervention Areas which contain individual projects and regeneration objectives, the Strategy also incorporates a number of Character Areas which together, help identify the key characteristics across the Town Centre area. Each Character Area can incorporate elements from the different Intervention Areas and their purpose is to identify the key existing characteristics and features which should be protected and/or enhanced by, and inform, new development in the town.



The Character Areas are listed below and shown in Fig. 5.5.

- Town Centre
- Retail Quarter
- Cultural Quarter
- Historical Quarter
- Residential Quarter
- Recreation and Leisure Quarter
- Civic/Hotel Quarter

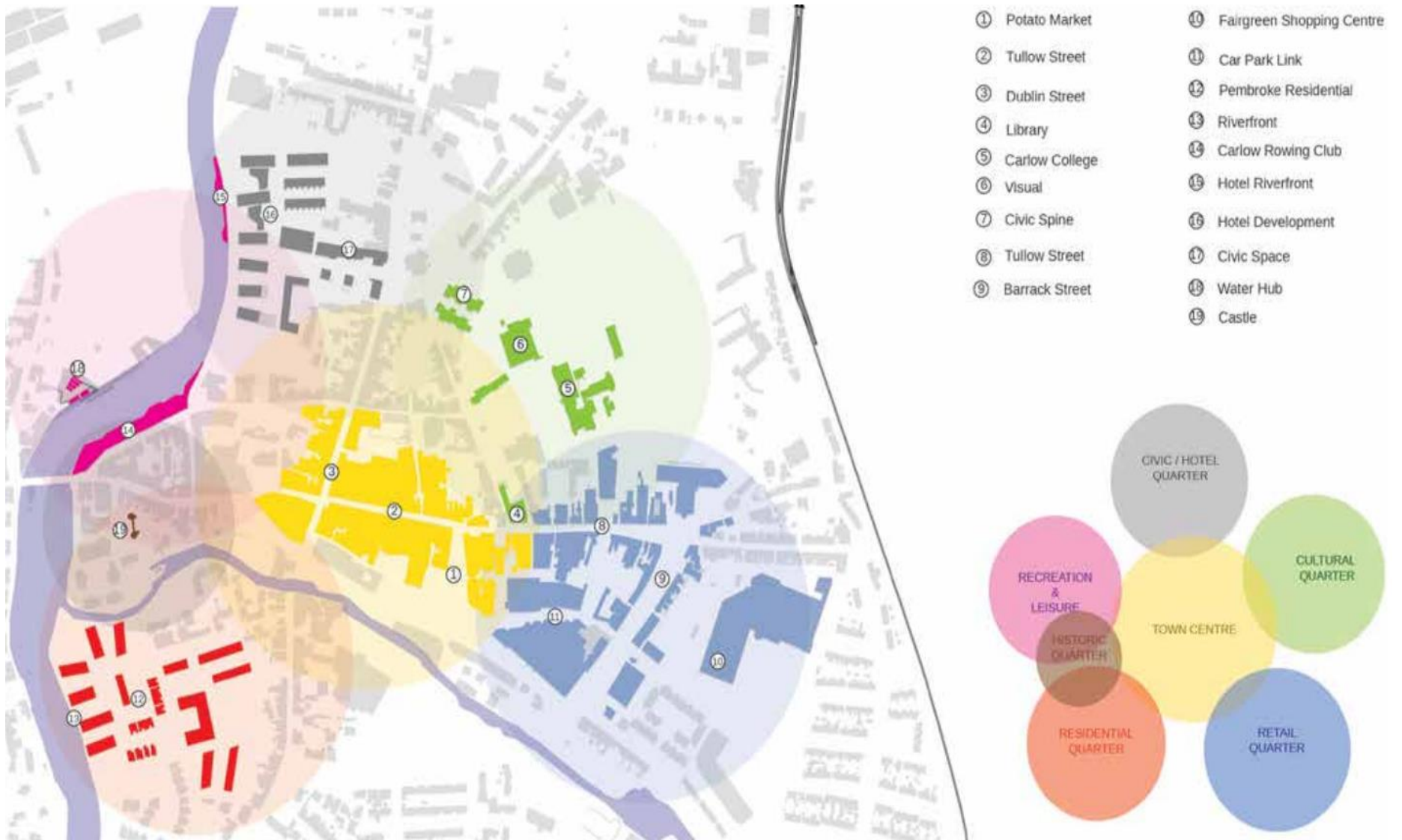


Fig. 5.5: The Character Areas incorporated into Project Carlow 2040

TABLE 1: INTERVENTION AREA 1 - TOWN CENTRE

The purpose of this Intervention is to improve Town Centre linkages and increase pedestrian mobility from Potato Market through to Barrack Street with wider connectivity to Carlow College and the Railway Station. Better management of cars and pedestrians will serve to improve the overall quality of the space and serve to reinstate the area as the 'Heart of the Town'.

Connections between Potato Market and Barrack Street will provide additional routes around the Town Centre and improves overall circulation leading to a better experience of the area. The integration of link streets such as Tullow Street, Dublin Street and Shamrock Square are important facets of this intervention and they serve to enhance the vibrancy and viability of this space.

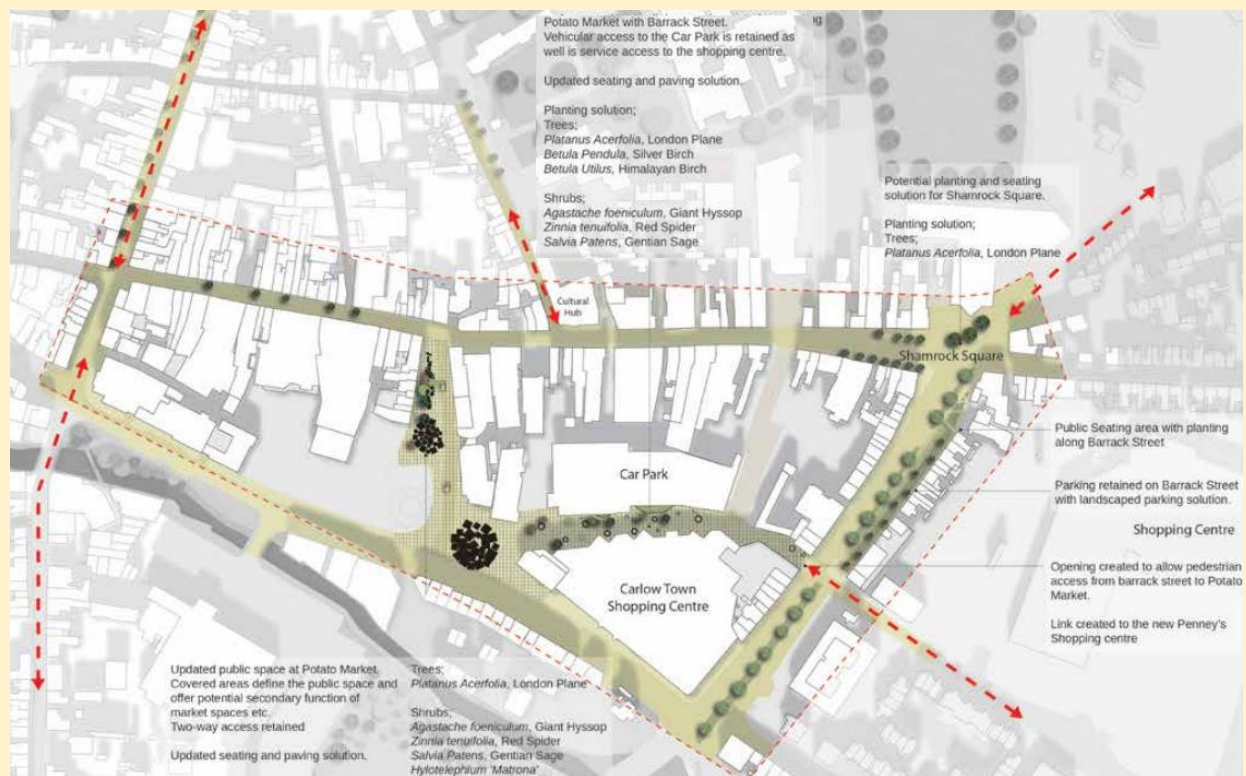


TABLE 2: INTERVENTION AREA 2 - CULTURAL QUARTER

The Cultural Quarter consists of the Carlow College campus, Visual, and the Carlow Courthouse. Ideally located within the Town Centre, Carlow College is situated within an expansive eighteenth-century campus positioned behind the main shopping district. The original campus entrance on College Street is located approx. 100m from Tullow Street and is the main pedestrian entrance for students in the College. The campus is also located a short distance from the Railway Station on St. Joseph's Road, however, there is no direct access between the two.

This Intervention will improve the connections between key retail, recreational, educational, and civic spaces in Carlow Town as well as to public transport and will entice people to spend more time in a vibrant and modern Town Centre. It will further act to support and enhance the strategic partnership between Carlow College and SETU Carlow. Through enhanced connections with public transport, improvements in the public realm and general enhancements to the attractiveness of the Town Centre, this Intervention will support Carlow in becoming a first-class destination for higher education.

Carlow College is an important asset in the Town and is a key employer and education provider serving the Town and wider area. The College occupies a major landholding and contributes to civic, cultural, religious, educational, and recreational amenities for Carlow Town. The Vision for this Intervention Area is to provide additional connectivity through the Town Centre, from east to west and from north to south.



TABLE 3: INTERVENTION AREA 3 - BARROW TRACK/CIVIC SPINE

The River Barrow is not utilised to its full potential within the Town. This intervention area seeks to unlock the potential of Carlow's Riverfront, specifically the lands at Barrow Track which are currently vacant and underutilised. This includes lands that have approx. 300m of prime river frontage, with a site that presents an opportunity to deliver an innovative, mixed-use urban quarter, the integration of which with the River Barrow will be a defining feature of the area.

It is envisaged that the site can support a significant level of high-quality development that will integrate innovative design solutions and a mix of uses. The development of this area also provides the opportunity to integrate the site with the Town Core, thereby delivering enhanced connections through to the Courthouse, to the VISUAL and to Carlow College. The delivery of this 'Civic Spine' through the centre of Carlow Town will require cooperation between multiple landowners including Carlow County Council. A collaborative effort is required on multiple fronts to achieve this visionary development for the benefit of the Town as a whole.



TABLE 4: INTERVENTION AREA 4 - PEMBROKE DISTRICT

The vision for this area as an Intervention is to reimagine it as a new and vibrant residential quarter that benefits from its position on the banks of the River Barrow, new public spaces, and enhanced connections with the Town Centre. This Intervention is central to realising one of the key aims of this Strategy, the promotion and delivery of Town Centre living.

Under the Intervention the area will be transformed to facilitate a range of residential types and densities, attractive to both residents and visitors due to a new public riverfront park, enhancements to the public realm, public riverfront connections and improved connectivity through the provision of two new bridges across the Burren River.

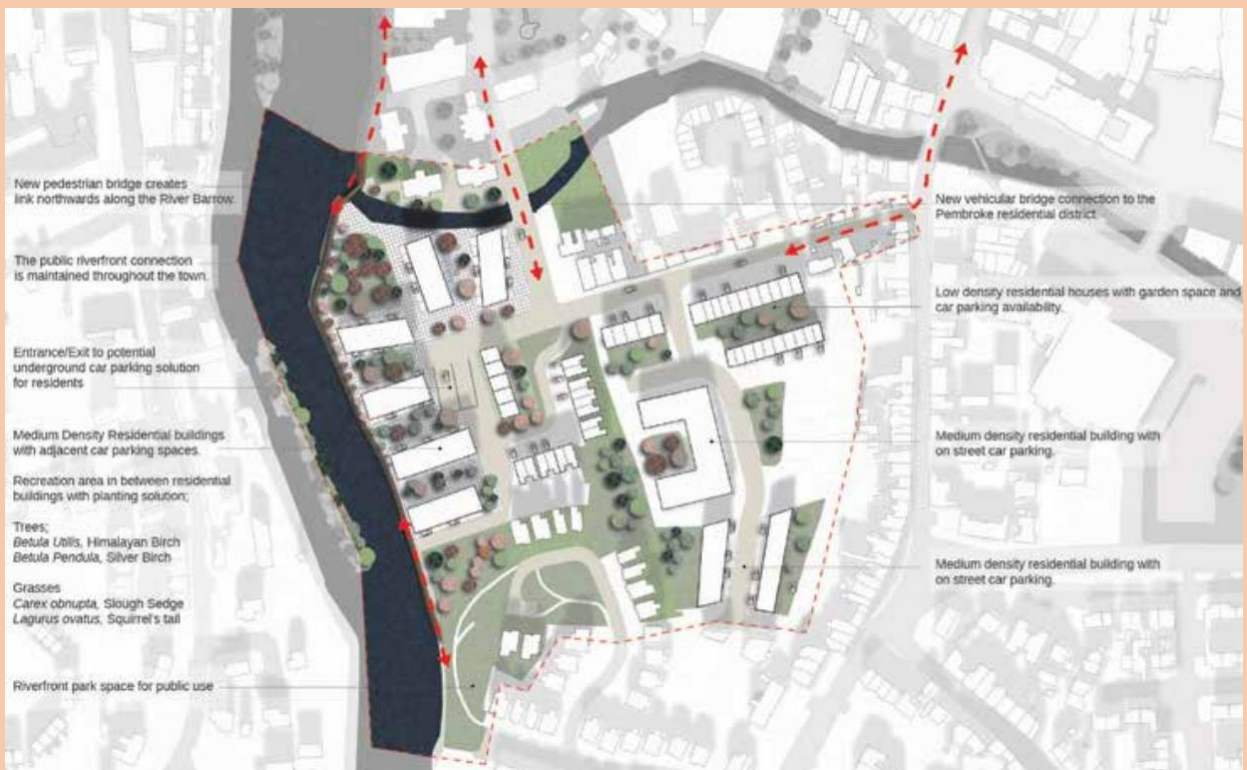


TABLE 5: INTERVENTION AREA 5 - THE BURRIN RIVERFRONT

The vision for this Intervention is to create a continuous link that facilitates an ecological corridor through the Town, exposes the potential benefits that the Burren River presents as an amenity corridor, as well as acting to connect and integrate existing green spaces, Intervention Areas and Carlow Castle into the wider urban fabric of the Town.

The Intervention Area extends beyond the banks of the Burren River seeking to deliver an animated and usable blue connection that runs to the River Barrow and incorporates pedestrian links along the riverfront and a new connection with the historic Carlow Castle.



TABLE 6: INTERVENTION AREA 6 - LINK STREETS (DUBLIN ST. AND TULLOW ST.)

Dublin Street and Tullow Street are already primary retail streets with independent shops, restaurants, cafés, pubs, and nightclubs. They also provide for the movement of people in the Town, both east to west and north to south. The upgrading of these streets will deliver key connections and ancillary services for the community, students, and visitors alike. The Intervention Area has looked at ways in which existing public space can be enhanced and largely traffic-dominated streets can be 'greened'. Through the consolidation of on-street parking, along with the introduction of trees, planting and new seating areas, the critical role of the Town Centre as the heart of Carlow will be reinforced.



5.8.1 Strategic Intervention Area – Graiguecullen

In addition to the provisions of Project Carlow 2040 as detailed in the foregoing, this JULAP has also identified a strategic Intervention Area for Graiguecullen in County Laois (Refer to Table 7 below).

TABLE 7: INTERVENTION AREA - TÍRLAN (GLANBIA) SITE

The vision for this intervention area is to unlock the development potential of what is a significant landbank and underutilised site on a key approach to Carlow-Graiguecullen from the Midlands Region (including Portlaoise) on the N80.

It is envisaged that the site could support a significant level of high-quality commercial development that would integrate with the adjoining Shamrock Business Park, and potentially deliver an enhanced public realm, with new connections and permeability between the R924 (Ballickmoyler Road) to the north and Church Road to the south, for existing neighbouring commercial and residential areas.



Urban Regeneration and Urban Development – Policies

It is the policy of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

- URD. P1:** Promote the town centre as the priority location for commercial, civic, social, and cultural development, along with a focus on urban regeneration that supports compact growth through the development of key brownfield, infill, and backland sites.
- URD. P2:** Promote the consolidation of the town centre with a focus on the regeneration of underutilised/vacant buildings and strategic sites and the establishment of a mix of uses to encourage greater vibrancy outside of business hours.
- URD. P3:** Ensure that urban regeneration and new development enhances the character of the built environment of the joint urban area and the quality of the public realm, taking account of the Key Urban Design Principles referred to in Section 5.2.
- URD. P4:** Encourage the full utilisation of buildings and sites, in particular use of upper floors and backlands where appropriate, with due cognisance of quality of urban design, integration, and connections.
- URD. P5:** Require that development proposals facilitate a connected network of streets and spaces which prioritise pedestrians and cyclists and provides for the possibility of connections to future development on adjacent lands.
- URD. P6:** Actively engage with local communities, landowners, developers, and other agencies to secure resources for the enhancement, renewal, and regeneration of the town centre.
- URD. P7:** Support increased building heights for river frontage lands in the joint urban area, including along the River Barrow, subject to compliance with best practice urban design, and proper planning and environmental considerations.
- URD. P8:** Promote the utilisation of available funding to support the plan led development and regeneration of publicly owned land banks in Carlow-Graiguecullen.
- URD. P9:** Require all development proposals for strategic regeneration, brownfield, infill, and backland sites in the joint urban area to be accompanied by a site brief and/or masterplan that sets out a phased programme for the regeneration of the site and demonstrates how the development proposal complies with statutory guidelines that seek to integrate principles of high-quality urban design and placemaking.
- URD. P10:** Improve the public realm and attractiveness of the Town Centre through development and connectivity of key urban regeneration locations in the town centre with improved accessibility from the historic town centre to the Railway Station and Fairgreen.
- URD. P11:** Support the development of underutilised lands along the River Barrow as a strategic natural asset for the town. Any future development of

these lands or proposals for an additional bridge should be subject to further studies to inform the exact nature and intensity that could be accommodated without giving rise to adverse effects on sensitive Natura 2000 habitats and consider any in combination effects arising from proposals for a bridge.

Urban Regeneration and Urban Development – Objectives

It is an objective of Carlow County Council and Laois County Council to:

URD. O1: Support and facilitate the implementation of the Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration as set out in its Regeneration Action Plan and Urban Design and Implementation Plan, and actively seek further funding from relevant agencies and Government sources including the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) to secure financial support for all regeneration and urban development projects in Carlow Town.

URD. O2: Support, advance, and facilitate the regeneration and development of the 6 no. Intervention Areas detailed in Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration, and in accordance with the urban design and implementation framework detailed in the regeneration strategy:

1. Town Centre – Potato Market and Barrack Street
2. Cultural Quarter (including links to Railway Station)
3. The Barrow Track/Civic Spine
4. The Pembroke District

5. The Burrin Riverfront
6. Link Streets (Dublin Street and Tullow Street)

URD. O3: Ensure for the benefit of surrounding land uses and local communities that urban regeneration and new developments respond to and support, protect, and enhance the characteristics and roles, as appropriate, of the Character Areas identified in Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration. The Character Areas are:

1. Town Centre
2. Retail Quarter
3. Cultural Quarter
4. Historical Quarter
5. Residential Quarter
6. Recreation and Leisure Quarter
7. Civic/Hotel Quarter

URD. O4: Support and facilitate the regeneration and development of the Tírlan (Glanbia) Intervention Area as detailed in Table 7, including the full utilisation of the site in a manner that enhances the character of the built environment and the quality of the public realm, taking account of the Key Urban Design Principles referred to in Section 5.2.