



GORT

TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM

Design and Planning Statement

OCTOBER 2024



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council



An Roinn Forbartha
Tuaithe agus Pobail
Department of Rural and
Community Development

momentum
transport consultancy



BDP.



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1.1 Introduction & Planning Policy Background

Galway County Council appointed BDP to prepare the Town Centre First Plan (TCF) and Public Realm Improvement Plan for Gort Town Centre. This TCF plan has now been prepared as part of a collaborative process with the Galway County Council, The Town Team, stakeholders, and the community within Gort.

The vision for Gort is of a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable town, steeped in history and character, with Market Square at its heart and access to green space and the Gort River. A desirable place to live, work, learn and visit.

One of the proposals emerging from the TCF Plan is the Gort Public Realm Enhancement Project. Gort has been successful in attracting considerable funding to enhance the public realm within the town centre. The town today is dominated by traffic and parking which detracts from the enjoyment of the town, the safety of all users and the heritage value and appearance.

The proposal is for the re-imagination of the heart of Gort's public realm in the town centre including the Market Square, Bridge Street, Crowe Street, Barrack Street, Queen Street and Canon Quinn Park

The scheme would include:

- New road alignments, narrower carriageways;
- Safer crossing points and more comfortable footpaths;
- New lighting throughout;
- A signage and way-finding scheme;
- New street furniture including designated cycle parking;
- Rationalised on street car parking with the provision of new, public use off street car parks;
- Addition of street trees, low level planting and sustainable urban drainage;
- The creation of a multifunctional pedestrian space in the

Market Square;

- An enhanced town park with components for all age groups and users – Canon Quinn Park;
- Celebrate the heritage of the town through the sensitive design of the public realm and appropriate information and interpretation;

The benefits of the scheme shall:

- Improve the quality of life for residents of Gort;
- Create a more attractive town centre encouraging more visitors and increasing the time people stay in the town;
- Introduce an organised system of parking for all user;
- Improve safety for all users and modes of transport;
- Improve the biodiversity of the town centre;

The following paragraphs sets the scheme in the context of the National Planning Framework, Galway County Development Plan and and Gort Local Plan. These frameworks, alongside the Town Centre First Plan provide key objectives that will drive the regeneration.

Project Ireland 2040

Project Ireland 2040 provides overarching strategic objectives for planning for the social, cultural and economic development of Ireland. It is underpinned by the National Planning Framework (NPF), which provides the vision and strategy for development across Ireland, and the National Development Plan (NDP), which enables the investment and capital funding to implement the strategy.

National Planning Framework (NPF)

The overarching policy and planning framework for Ireland. The NPF strongly reflects the aim of revitalising our towns and urban areas in objectives such as: compact growth, strengthened rural economies and communities, sustainable mobility, enhanced amenities and heritage, and the transition to a low carbon society.

These objectives are reflected through the scheme's aims to reimagine the public realm of the town centre and celebrate the town's heritage, improve the pedestrian connectivity of the town, improve amenities including Canon Quinn Park, and create flexible spaces for events and markets. The scheme is designed to improve the town centre experience, to support local cultural life, local businesses and encourage visitors spend time in the town centre, all of which directly support the national strategic outcome of compact growth, by activating strategic town centre areas, and the goal of enhanced amenities and heritage. A key ambition of the scheme is to ensure that the public realm acts as a catalyst to drive and support Gort's attractivity and the local economy, which directly reflects the NPF's objective to strengthen rural economies and communities. The scheme also directly supports the transition to a low carbon society, by improving pedestrian connectivity and reducing the dominance of cars on core town centre streets, to encourage active travel.

National Development Plan (NDP) 2021-2030

The NDP mirrors the national strategic objectives of the NPF and provides specific funding measures to support the objectives including compact growth agenda, strengthened rural economies and communities, and sustainable transport.

1.1 Introduction & Planning Policy Background

Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy 2021-2025

A framework for the development of rural Ireland over the next five years. The policy is forward looking and ambitious and addresses both the challenges facing rural areas and the opportunities which rural economies can benefit from in the coming years. The policy has a series of key deliverables of relevance to the scheme including revitalising rural towns and villages, enhancing the participation, leadership and resilience of rural communities, enhancing public services in rural areas, and nurturing culture and heritage.

National Sustainable Mobility Policy

The National Sustainable Mobility Policy sets out a framework to 2030 for active travel and public transport to support Ireland's overall requirement to achieve a 51% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. The purpose is to support:

- Safe, accessible, comfortable and affordable journeys to and from home, work, education, shops, and leisure.
- Travel by cleaner and greener public transport
- A shift away from the private car to greater use of active travel and public transport.

The policy recognises that promoting safe, green and more sustainable mobility is not only critical to meeting climate change commitments, but also provides an opportunity to reorientate communities across the country so that they become more people-focused, liveable places. Improved walking, cycling, and public transport infrastructure and services can improve citizens' health and well-being, boost quality of life and enable economic growth.

The scheme is directly aligned with the National Sustainable Mobility Policy in its objectives to re-orientate the town centre around pedestrian-friendly movement, reducing reliance on and dominance of vehicles. The major

component of rationalising the parking provision aims to make the town centre more enjoyable and attractive, shifting away from private car use and encouraging active travel and the use of public transport. The objectives to provide a signage and wayfinding strategy along with providing lighting and street furniture further aim to improve the comfort, safety and attractiveness of the town centre.

Regional Planning Policy Context

North West Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) 2020-2032

The RSES provides a high-level development framework for the Northern and Western Region with a 12-year strategy to deliver transformational change. The five growth ambitions are: vibrant, natural, connected, inclusive and infrastructure. This is consolidated by a settlement strategy focussing on 'People' and 'Places', pursuing compact growth to ensure sustainable growth of urban sprawl and unplanned, uneconomic growth.

The scheme contributes towards the growth ambitions: firstly, vibrant region, by seeking to create conditions to make Gort more attractive to visitors and to drive the local economy. The scheme supports the ambition towards a natural region by introducing vegetation and new trees throughout the town centre of Gort, on the Market Square and in Canon Quinn Park, increasing biodiversity across the town centre. The objectives to improve pedestrian connectivity and encourage sustainable travel aligns with the growth ambition of a connected region. The scheme aims to create a healthy environment by reimagining the public realm to be more people-focussed than car-dominated and create flexible, safe and attractive spaces for all of the community, which supports the growth ambition of an inclusive region as included in the RSES.

Local Planning Policy Context

Galway County Development Plan (CDP) 2022-2028

The Galway County Development Plan sets out policy objectives for development across the county until 2028. The Development Plan aims to “promote the visit and enable businesses to flourish in an attractive environment that offers a range of housing options, robust and diverse range of employment opportunities, access to quality infrastructure and community facilities with a high-quality sustainable environment for all”.

The Galway County Development Plan identifies Gort as a self-sustaining town, which entails high levels of population growth and a limited employment base which is reliant on other areas for employment and or services which require targeted “catch-up” investment to become more sustaining.

The growth strategy for Gort is to consolidate its designation as a self-sustaining town and continue to support expansion of its employment base along with facilitating residential development to support the sustainable growth of Gort.

The scheme is particularly aligned with the Galway CDP's Policy Objectives relating to Placemaking, Compact Growth and Regeneration, Galway Transportation Strategy and Natural Heritage and Biodiversity.

1.1 Introduction & Planning Policy Background

Galway County Heritage and Biodiversity Plan 2017-2022

This plan places heritage and biodiversity at the heart of public life in the county. This will be achieved through increasing awareness, participation, enjoyment, knowledge and understanding of Galway County’s shared heritage to lead to its proper conservation, management, protection and safeguarding it for future generations. The scheme supports the plan by pursuing a design which celebrates the town’s heritage and provides biodiversity in the town centre in the form of planting, new trees across the core streets, Market Square and Canon Quinn Park.

Gort Local Area Plan (LAP) 2013-2023 (As Extended)

The Gort LAP sets a strategic vision as “Gort will be a sustainable, self-sufficient, vibrant, socially inclusive and innovative growth centre within the country, protecting and enhancing its medieval character and natural environment, supporting services/facilities/amenities and with a high quality of life for the local community. This will be delivered through a managed and phased development strategy on appropriately zoned lands in a manner that is balanced and sustainable for Gort and the immediate environs that it serves.

The strategic vision is informed by a number of guiding principles:

- Realising the town’s potential;
- Reflecting the needs and aspirations of local communities;
- Promoting sustainable land use and transport;
- Maintaining a strong and vibrant town centre;
- Facilitating the provision of a range of facilities, amenities and supporting services;
- Fostering economic development and employment

creation;

- Supporting the delivery of support infrastructure;
- Promoting strong community spirit, social inclusion, civic pride and local identity;
- Protecting and enhancing the heritage and character.

The scheme meets the requirements as set out by policies in the LAP, including:

Policy UD1 – Urban Design and Landscape, by focussing on the development of a high-quality, well-landscaped and appropriately scaled built environment with a strong civic and commercial core. It also supports policy.

Policy BH1 – Built Heritage, as the scheme aims to celebrate the heritage of Gort, providing a more appropriate setting for key heritage assets and the Architectural Conservation Area.

Policy BH2 – Cultural Heritage, as the design provides flexible spaces for events, markets and activities, to support cultural life and provide space for performance, art installations, gatherings and self-expression.

Policy NH1 – Natural Heritage and Biodiversity, as the scheme will enhance biodiversity across the town centre.

Policy CF1 – Community Facilities and Amenities, the scheme will be in accordance with this policy as it seeks to improve local amenity space at Canon Quinn Park and the public realm space in the town centre which will provide accessible space for the community.

Policy ED1 – Economic Development, the scheme will support economic development and employment creation in Gort by creating a more attractive and vibrant town centre.

Policy TI1 – Sustainable Transport, walking and cycling, the scheme will create an improved environment for pedestrians and reduce car dominance, in line with this policy.

Policy TI2 – Roads, Streets and Parking, as the

rationalisation of parking will create a safer and more convenient parking system, whilst still ensuring there is adequate capacity to accommodate demand.

1.2 Proposed Planning boundary & Key spaces

Within the planning boundary there are a number of key spaces and adjoining streets, covering an important park of Gort Town Centre. These spaces are listed in the adjacent diagram.

Project Boundary

1. Crowe Street
2. Crowe Street Off-street parking
3. Market Square
4. Barrack Street
5. Barrack St off-street parking
6. Bridge Street
7. Church Street
8. Queen Street
9. Canon Quinn Park
10. George Street



1.3 The Site & Context

Gort is a market town in the west of Ireland, in South County Galway. The town is located approximately 32 kilometres South of Galway and 64 kilometres North from Limerick Gateway on the Atlantic Economic Corridor. Gort is connected to the M6 Galway to Dublin Motorway via the N18 to Oranmore and via N66 at Loughrea.

The railway station operates daily connections to Galway and Limerick. Shannon airport is approximately a 40-minutes drive from the town. The strategic geographical location of Gort makes it accessible to most major towns and tourist attractions in County Galway and County Clare.

As an early settlement, Gort developed on elevated ground adjacent to the present Market Square which forms the principal open space and focus of the town. The Cannahowna/Gort river, which meanders from the south through this land, is subject to considerable flooding and has acted as a constraint on the development of some areas.

Two civic spaces lie at the heart of the town, the Market Square and Canon Quinn park to the rear of St. Coleman's Catholic church.

Church Street and Queen Street form part of an urban block with Bridge Street and Market Square at the centre. Barrack Street, running broadly northeast from Market Square, leads to an area which includes the former barracks, workshops and local Garda Station. The main road, defined by Crowe Street, Bridge Street and Georges Street is part of the R458, and Gort is served by bus route 434 to Galway and 934 to Loughrea.



1.3 The Site & Context



1.4 Historical Context

Gort is a historic market town with a rich architectural heritage. The town centre counts many significant heritage features including ecclesiastical, monastic and religious buildings and structures. The main streets - Bridge Street, Church Street and Crowe Street - converge towards Market Square, a large triangular space at the heart of the town, where many listed buildings and structures can be found. This general street pattern, plot arrangement and historic streetscape participate to the character of the town.

Gort Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) covers the majority of the town centre, all areas included in the public realm enhancement plan sit within Gort's ACA. The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) lists 55 monuments, buildings and structures of regional significance in Gort's Town Centre. These are illustrated in the adjacent map.

Whilst all monuments, buildings and structures are listed by the NIAH under the same category, we are highlighting here 9 of these listed buildings and structure, considering their public nature, special significance in the town centre or prominent location:

- 1. Gort Courthouse
- 2. Criost Ri Monument
- 3. Weigh house
- 4. Saint Coleman's Church
- 5. The Barracks
- 6. Gort Library
- 7. Saint Patrick's Convent House & School
- 8. The Workhouse
- 9. Saint Coleman's Hall



1.4 Historical Context

One of the objectives at the centre of the design proposals is to protect, preserve and enhance Gort's heritage. This will be achieved by:

- Improving the general quality and aesthetic value of the streetscape within the ACA and surrounding the listed structures and buildings;
- Preserving key sightlines to listed structures and buildings;
- Proposing materials consistent with the historic nature of the town centre;
- Improving the signage and wayfinding in the town centre to celebrate the history of the town, making it further accessible to visitors.



1.5 Engagement & Consultation

Numerous consultation events and meetings have been undertaken since the start of January 2023 with:

- Members of the public and local businesses;
- The Town Team;
- County Council Members and officers;
- Other local groups;
- Consultant organisations.

Engagement activities and consultation events were facilitated by the BDP team with support from GCC.

These meetings have resulted in a wide range of comments which ultimately helped to define and inform the following:

- The local context and broader community needs and aspirations;
- An understanding of how spaces are used;
- An understanding of the current provisions in Gort and any deficits or desires regarding what people would like to see provided;
- The issues and constraints of the sites and wider area;
- The overarching aspirational vision statement;
- Objectives and principles for positive change;
- The design proposals.

The meetings have also helped to improve people's awareness of the project and helped them to develop an understanding of its size, possibilities, intentions and scope.



1.5 Engagement & Consultation

Below are some of the comments received and finding gathered in the various public consultation events relating to the town centre.



What do you like most about the town centre?

Architecture
Heritage
River Walk
The Square
Wide streets & footpaths
Cafes & eateries
Community



What do you dislike most about the town centre?

Traffic speed
Parking
Disrepaired & vacant buildings
Lack of trees & greenery
Dangerous crossings



How could the town centre be enhanced?


Improve footpaths & crossings
More public seating
More plants & trees
Improve the presentation of streets (more colours)
More & improved lighting
More green areas
Open usable space in the town centre



What are your top priorities for the town centre?

- 01 Addressing dereliction & vacant sites
- 02 Public space
- 03 Community facilities
- 04 Greening
- 05 Walking & Cycling
- 06 Commercial development
- 07 Public transport
- 08 Parking
- 09 Housing development

Transport initiatives: what is needed & important?



- 50% off-street car park
- 30% cycle parking
- 10% traffic management for pedestrian safety
- 5% bus stop location
- 5% loading bays

1.6 The schemes objectives

Following preliminary analysis, site visits, consultation events and design workshops with the local community and key stakeholders, the emerging design principles have been developed to ensure the needs of the local community were met in addition to the alignment with the Town Centre First Plan.



01

Reimagine the public realm of Gort while respecting the historic setting and celebrating the town’s heritage

02

Improve pedestrian connectivity throughout the town centre with new pedestrian crossings and accessible wider footpaths that encourage healthy and low carbon lifestyles

03

Introduce a quality palette of materials to enhance and compliment the historic character of the town

04

Introduce vegetation and new trees throughout the core streets of Gort, on Market Square and in Canon Quinn Park to increase the biodiversity and attractiveness of the town centre

05

Create flexible spaces for events, markets and activities that will boost and support the local cultural life on Market Square as well as in Canon Quinn Park

06

Ensure an adequate provision of on-street parking throughout the town centre, including disabled, age friendly and short stay parking facilities

07

Create new off-street parking facilities for longer stays to help serve businesses and events, whilst preserving the core streets from being car dominated

08

Transform Canon Quinn Park to maximise its use with a larger open lawn, flexible event space, play and amenities for children and young people

09

Improve the streets for cycling where possible an ensure connections to wider natural trails and cycleways

10

Provide a comprehensive lighting and street furniture strategy to improve comfort, safety and attractiveness in the town centre

11

Provide a signage and wayfinding strategy to make the centre legible, accessible to tourists and visitors and promote sustainable mobility

12

Ensure the public realm acts as a catalyst to drive and support Gort’s attractiveness and the local economy

1.7 Relation to Town Centre First Plan

Under a separate commission, BDP, Momentum, Venturei Ltd were appointed by Galway County Council to prepare and deliver a Town Centre First (TCF) Plan for Gort. This plan will form the basis of the future development of the town centre and public realm enhancement scheme.

BDP have completed the TCF Plan and have ensured that the newly developed principles set out within it are adhered to in the design of the public realm works.

The TCF Plan has identified 10 overarching themes with associated proposals that will achieve the vision statement. One of these themes is *Point 4.3 - Theme 10 ‘re-imagining the public spaces’* (p.59 of TCF Plan) with proposals for Canon Quinn Park and public realm enhancement.

The vision for Gort is of a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable town, steeped in history and character, with Market Square at its heart and access to green space and the River Gort. A desirable place to live, work, learn and visit.



4.3 Theme 10 | Re-imagining public spaces

Introduction

Gort today is dominated by vehicles - both traffic and those which are parked. This is at the detriment of other uses and the enjoyment of the town centre. The built and natural assets will be greatly improved with the re-imagining of public spaces, as will the attractiveness of the town centre as a whole. This theme looks to improve the spaces and accessibility for all users which in turn will help shops and businesses and make Gort a more desirable place to live, work, visit and study.

Proposals

01 - Canon Quinn Park

Background | Canon Quinn Park is a historical green courtyard behind the church, which was once the place where sheep were washed on market day. It is now a recreational area owned by the church and maintained by local volunteers. However, the park is underused and requires improvement to provide a welcoming, safe green space for locals and visitors.

Proposal | The proposal is to improve the entrances to the park to allow prams and wheelchairs and provide an enhanced sense of arrival. The footpaths would be widened and upgraded to ensure accessibility. An activity zone would be developed in the north section of the park to provide facilities for play for young children and spaces to 'hangout' for older children, teenagers and adults, along with seating and picnic tables. Consideration should also be paid to creating quiet and safe spaces for older people in parks.

Benefits

- Improving and encouraging the use of this vital green space;
- Discouraging anti-social behaviour;
- Improving access to town centre green space.

02 - Public realm enhancement

Background | Gort has been successful in attracting considerable funding to enhance the public realm within the town centre. The town today is dominated by traffic and parking which detracts from the enjoyment of the town, the safety of all users and the heritage value and appearance.

Proposal | The proposal is for the re-imagining of the heart of Gort's public realm in the town centre including the Market Square and radiating streets. The scheme would include:

- New road alignments, narrower carriageways;
- Safer crossing points and more comfortable footpaths;
- New lighting throughout;
- A signage and way-finding scheme;
- New street furniture including designated cycle parking;
- Rationalised on street car parking with the provision of new, public use off street car parks;
- Addition of street trees, low level planting and sustainable urban drainage.
- Better quality of life for residents to Gort;
- A more attractive town centre encouraging more visitors and increasing the time people stay in the town;
- An organised system of parking for all users.

Proposed indicative sketches | Source: BDP

Theme 01

Reanimating Heritage

Theme 02

Revitalising culture & The Arts

Theme 03

Social inclusion, community spirit & well-being

Theme 04

Connectivity

Theme 05

Repurposing vacant & derelict buildings

Theme 06

Vibrant local economy

Theme 07

Sustainable urban living

Theme 08

Attracting visitors

Theme 09

Natural environment & biodiversity

Theme 10

Reimagining public spaces

1.8 Existing town centre issues

Throughout our study we have identified issues with the existing public realm and streetscape. These have been determined through site visits, surveys, public consultations, desktop studies and specialist consultants reports.

The aim of the public realm enhancement scheme is to address these issues and take them into consideration when drawing up the proposals for the town centre. The main issues identified are listed and illustrated here.



1. Lack of pedestrian crossings



2. Streetscape dominated by cars



3. Uneven and poor quality surfaces



4. Narrow or non-accessible footways



5. Occasional street clutter



6. Lack of defined carriageway edge on Market Square



7. Excessive vehicles speed



8. Lack of greening, vegetation and biodiversity



9. Lack of street trees or existing trees in poor conditions



10. Lack of sense of arrival and non-accessible entrances in Canon Quinn Park



11. Lack of a comprehensive wayfinding strategy to promote the existing heritage trail and further invite to the discovery of Gort



12. Street furniture lacks a coherent approach



13. The heritage, in place, is lost due to the abundance of vehicles



14. Uneven lighting levels in the public space; lack of consistency in lighting columns



15. Lack of amenities and sense of destination in Canon Quinn Park

1.8 Existing town centre issues



3. Uneven and poor quality surfaces



4. Narrow or non-accessible footways



5. Occasional street clutter



8. Lack of greening, vegetation and biodiversity



9. Lack of street trees or existing trees in poor conditions



10. Lack of sense of arrival and non-accessible entrances in Canon Quinn Park



13. The heritage, in place, is lost due to the abundance of vehicles



14. Uneven lighting levels in the public space; lack of consistency in lighting columns



15. Lack of amenities and sense of destination in Canon Quinn Park

2.0

Approach

2.1 | *Pedestrian movement*

2.2 | *Cycle movement*

2.3 | *Road layout*

2.4 | *Bus stops*

2.5 | *Loading & Servicing*

2.6 | *On-street parking*

2.7 | *Off-street parking*

2.8 | *Hard landscape & Edging*

2.9 | *Soft landscape & Vegetation*

2.10 | *Drainage & SuDs*

2.11 | *Street furniture*

2.12 | *Signage & Interpretation*

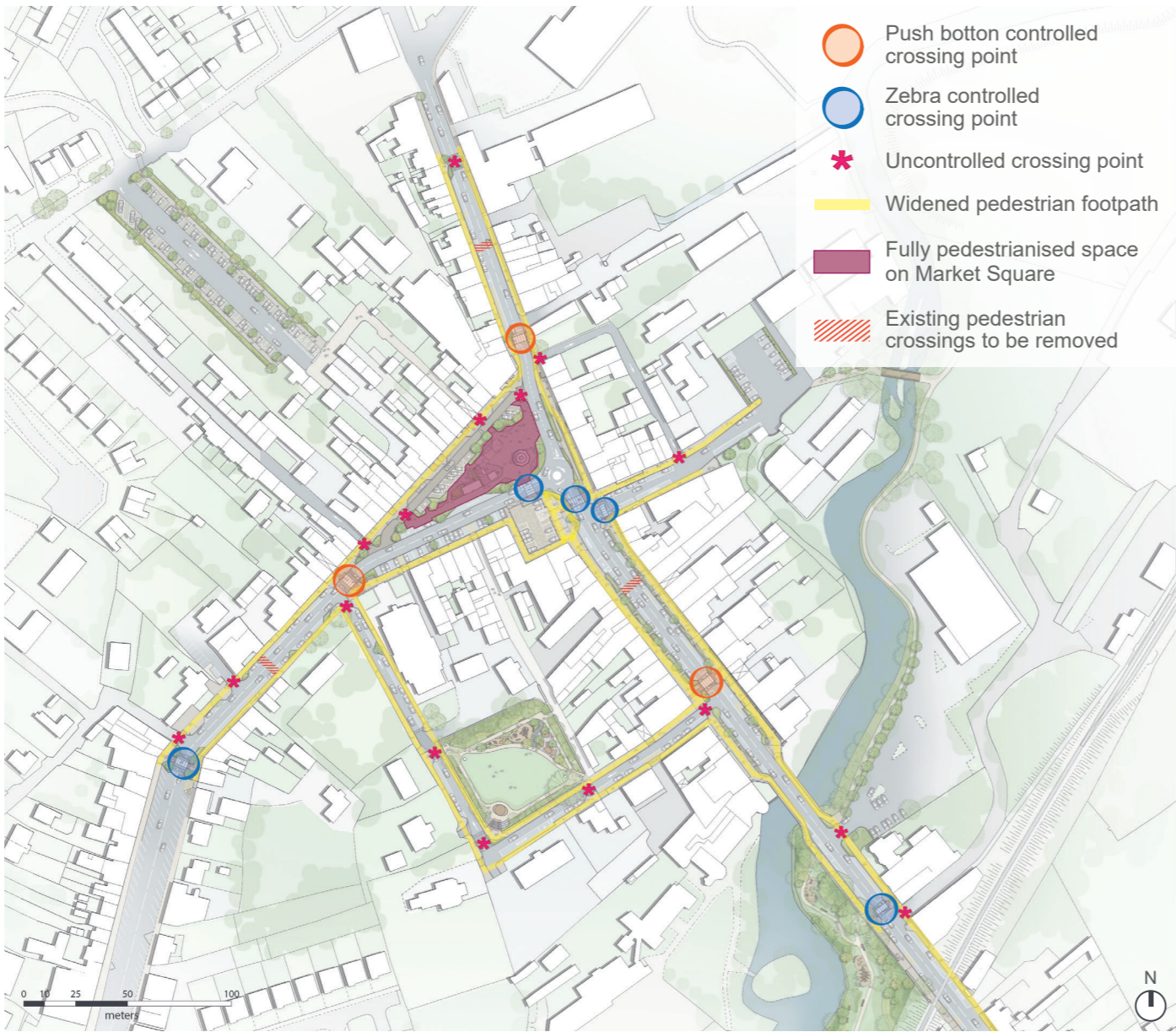
2.13 | *Lighting Strategy*

2.1 Pedestrian movement

The intention of the scheme is to significantly improve pedestrian connectivity throughout the town centre. The design proposals include:

- Tightening of carriageway widths to 6.4m throughout the town centre to help reduce vehicles speed, crossing distance for pedestrians and gain space for footpaths;
- Increased pedestrian footpaths width to a minimum of 1.9m and up to 4.5m;
- Inclusion of 7 new controlled crossing points on Church Street, Market Square, Crowe Street, Bridge Street and George Street;
- Inclusion of 17 new uncontrolled raised crossing points on Church Street, Queen Street, Market Square, Crowe Street, Bridge Street and George Street;
- Overall, a new crossing point is provided every 80 - 120m on average to ensure the roads can be safely crossed throughout the town centre;
- Provision of a planting buffer segregating the carriageway from the widened footpath on Bridge Street and some locations on Market Square;
- Improved access to Canon Quinn Park with uncontrolled crossings and wider entrances;
- Creation of a fully pedestrianised public space on Market Square.

The design prioritises pedestrian safety, especially for most vulnerable groups such as school children, by providing even, un-cluttered, fully accessible footpaths.

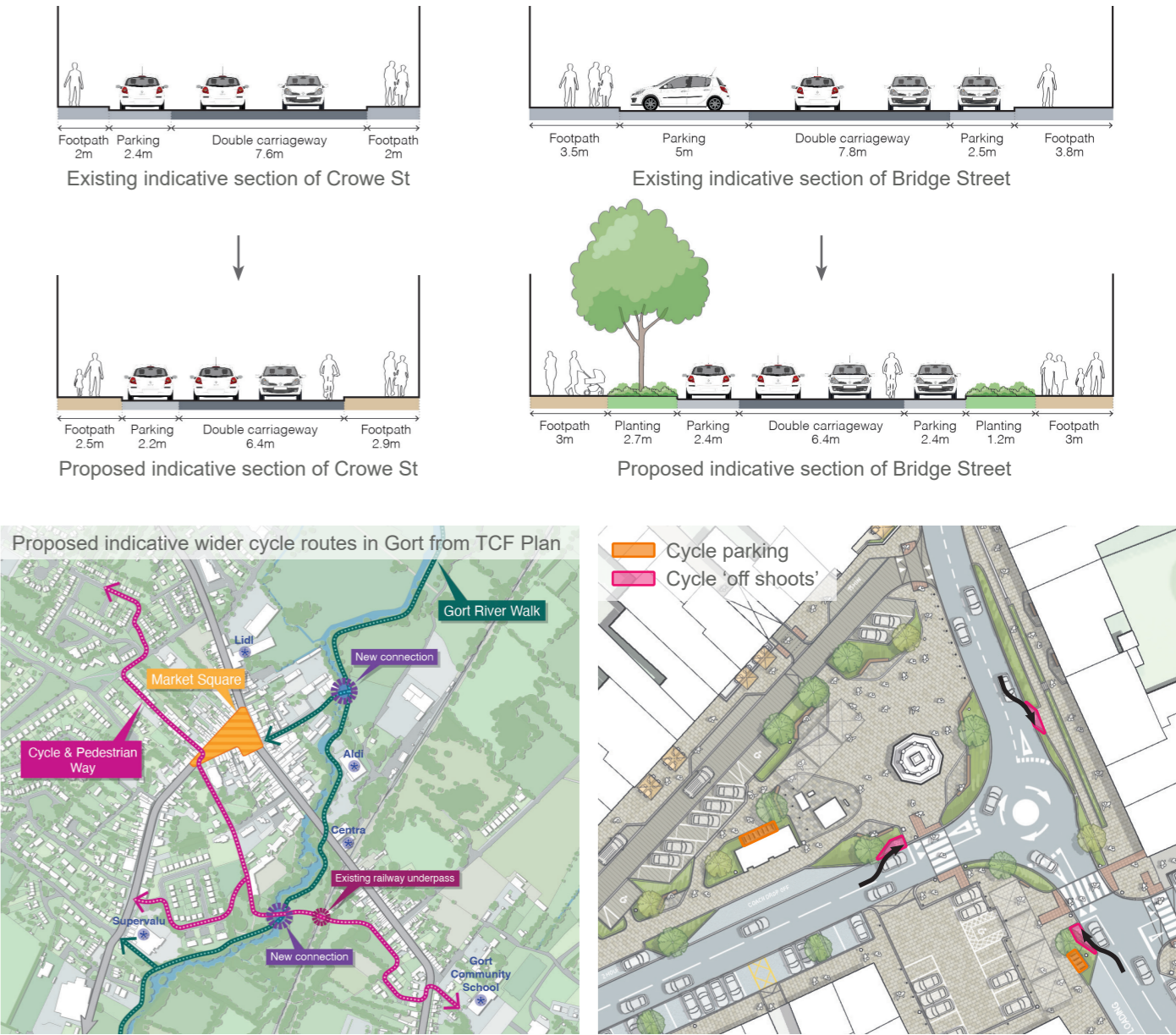


2.2 Cycle movement

The aim of the proposal is to promote sustainable movement and encourage cycling in the town centre. Throughout the consultation process, the aspiration to have cycle infrastructure in the core area of the town has been identified as an important requirement for the public. The historic road patterns with varying widths present a challenge to provide dedicated cycle lanes. Extensive design study has been undertaken by BDP and specialist consultants (Momentum) and a Cycle Feasibility Report was produced to inform the design proposal. Other routes have been explored and the design proposal is for cyclists to share the roadway with vehicles in the town centre. Several traffic calming measures and design proposals are put in place to encourage more cycling and make it safer:

- Reduce carriageway widths and introduce a road layout which naturally slows vehicular speeds and makes the town centre environment safer for cyclists;
- More cycle parking provision throughout the town centre and within Market Square;
- Shared pedestrian and cycle space on Market Square;
- Cycle 'off shoots' at each of the new roundabout access road to allow cyclists to safely dismount, park, or continue their way onto Market Square.

The TCF Plan includes a proposal for the creation of walking and cycle routes which connect key destinations in Gort wider area and take the opportunity to use potential links both off road and on quieter streets. The proposals included in this public realm enhancement scheme will in term complement this wider vision and help promote sustainable mobility and healthy lifestyles in Gort.



2.3 Road layout

The changes to the road layout in the town centre are significant and aim at increasing road safety for all users, whilst allocating space for quality public realm, pedestrian users, vegetation and events.

On Church Street, Crowe Street, Bridge Street and George Street, the carriageway width is reduced to 6.4 meters to reduce speed and promote road safety. By reducing the carriageway width, more space is reclaimed for pedestrians, making footpaths wider and the streetscape more pleasant. Furthermore, many controlled and uncontrolled crossing points are created throughout the town centre.

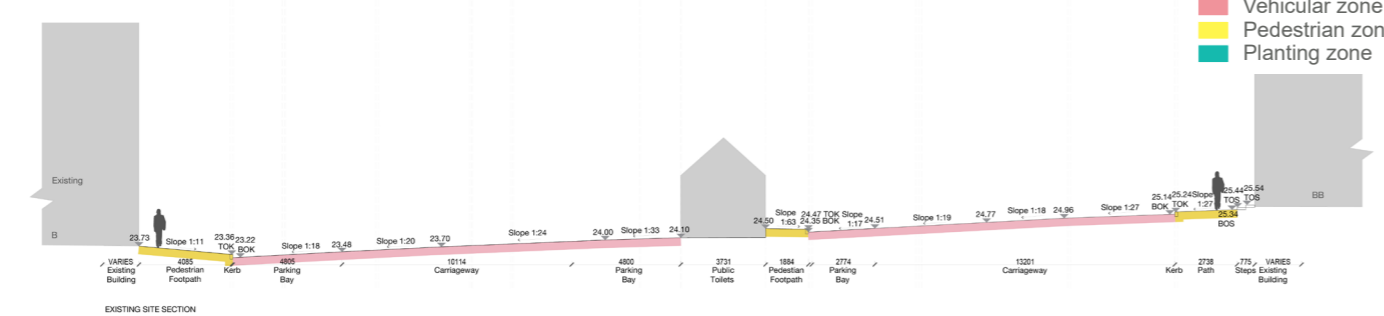
Existing road layout on Market Square



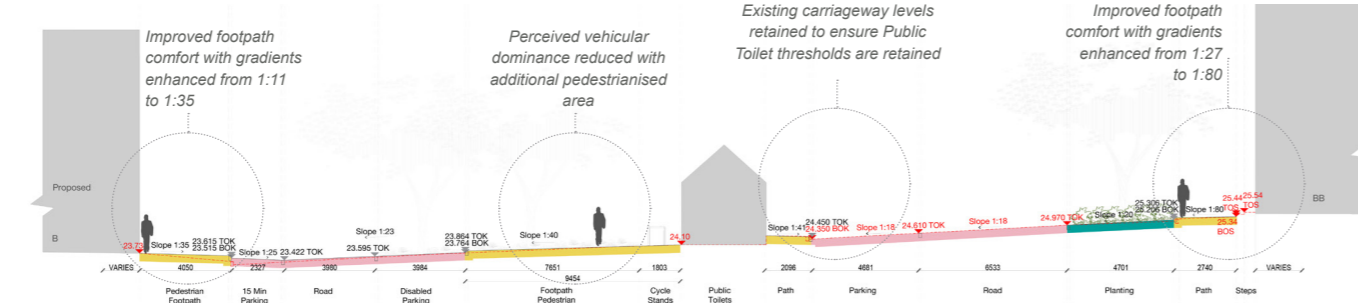
Proposed road layout on Market Square



Existing Section A¹



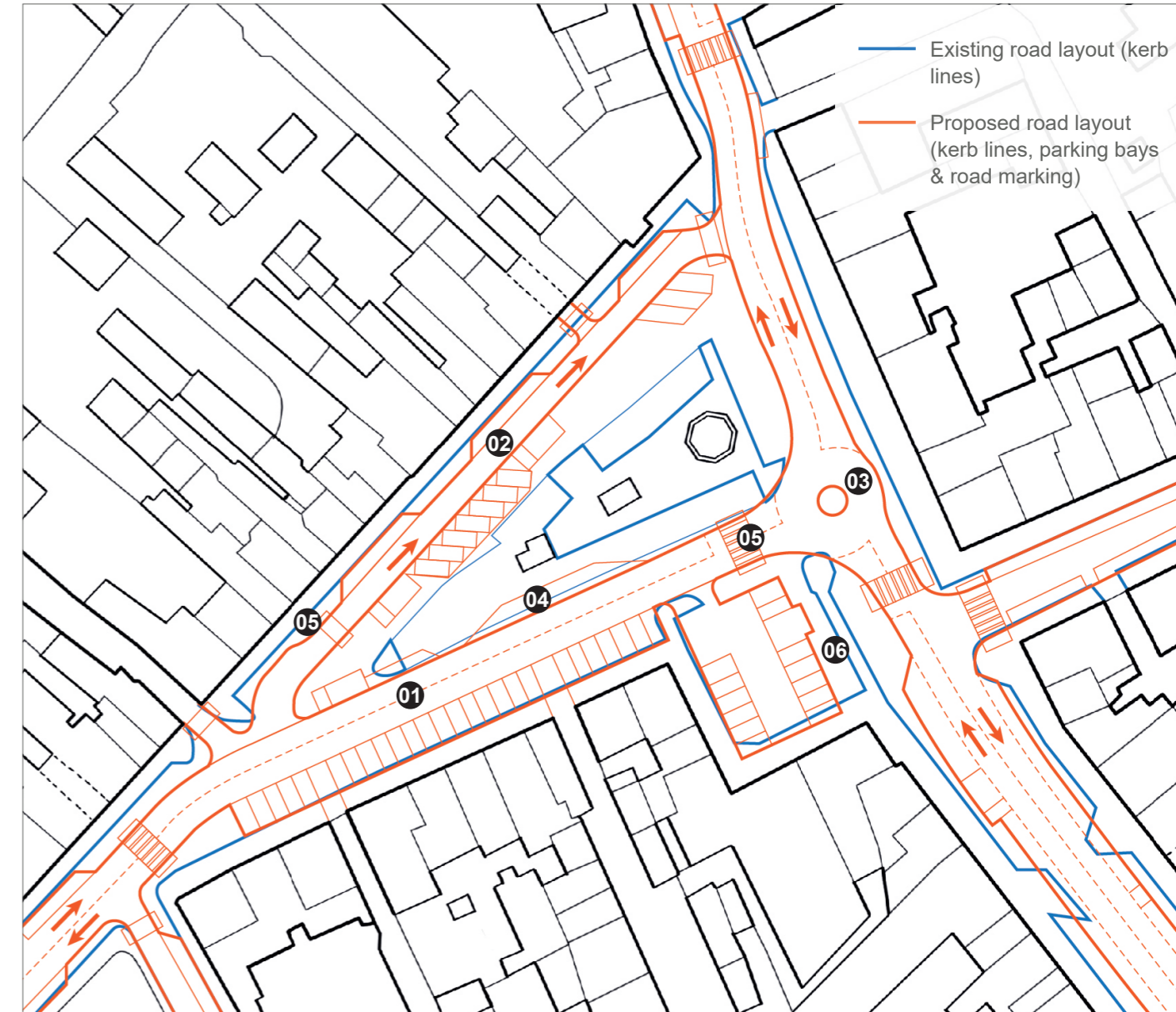
Proposed Section A¹



2.3 Road layout

The most significant part of the changes to the road layout is on Market Square. These include:

- 01** Reduction of carriageway width to 6.4m;
- 02** Creation of a 3.6m one-way access road with concrete block pavers surfacing, lay-bys and car parking along the northern facade of the square;
- 03** Mini roundabout at the junction of Church St, Crowe St and Bridge St to retain the fluidity of traffic flows. Several options have been tested at this location - The introduction of a signalised junction was ruled out as it would have caused significant tail backs in traffic during peak hours;
- 04** Coach drop-off bay and short stay car parking pocket in front of Sullivan's Hotel;
- 05** Inclusion of 4 controlled and 4 uncontrolled crossing points;
- 06** Rationalisation of on-street parking to reduce vehicular dominance and create pedestrianised spaces.



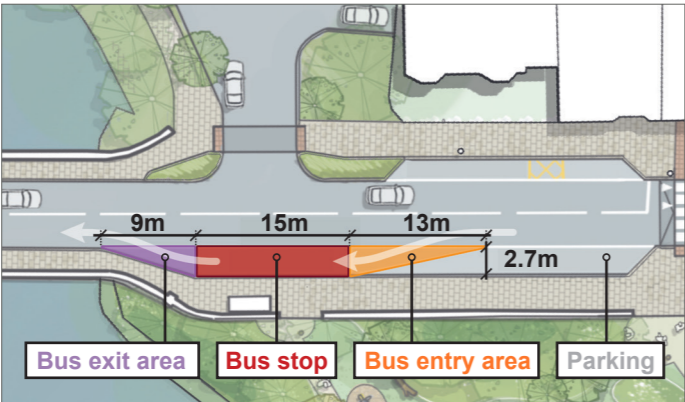
2.4 Bus stops

The 2 bus stops previously located on Market Square opposite each other will be relocated to the South of Bridge Street and George street. The northbound will be located stop before the bridge over the Cannahowna/Gort River, whilst the southbound stop will be located after the railway bridge. The proposal also includes a bus lay-by on Queen Street.

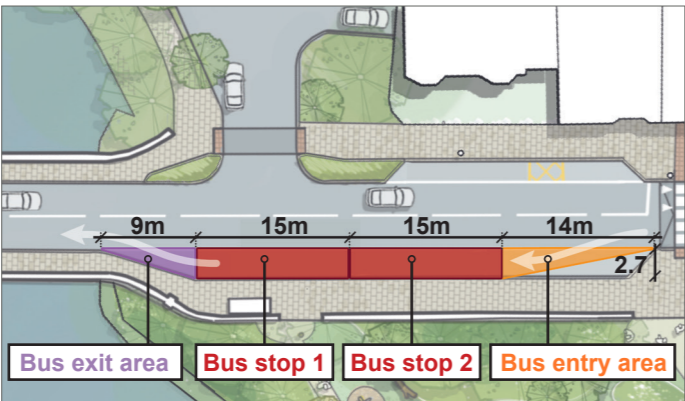
The design proposal currently provides a 15 meters long bus lay-by at each bus stop, allowing 1 bus to stop at a time. However, the general street layout includes the possibility to extend the length of the bus lay-by to 30 meters, enabling 2 buses to use the bus stop simultaneously. While this allows for increased capacity and efficiency should the public transport frequency increase in the future, it also means sacrificing 2 to 3 on-street parking spaces which is not desired at this time.

The below diagrams illustrate how the bus stop layout has been future-proofed, allowing for the future extension of the bus lay-by. The proposed bus stops shown here is the one located on Bridge Street, South of the bridge.

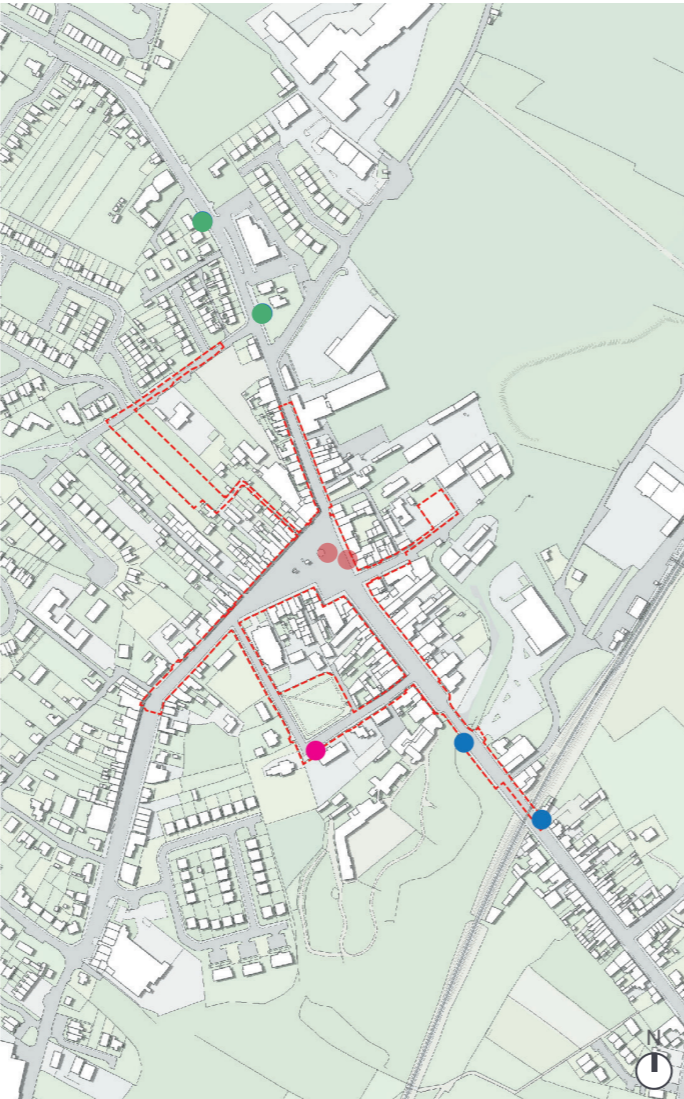
Bus stop layout_Day 1 of new public realm scheme, bus stop for one bus



Bus stop layout_Futureproof layout for 2 bus stops to stop simultaneously



- Existing bus stop to be relocated
- Relocated bus stops
- Bus lay-by on Queen Street
- Potential future stops to the north



2.5 Loading & Servicing

Loading and servicing has been considered throughout the design process and loading bays have been included in the proposal to enable the good functioning of businesses. Vehicular access to current residential properties and businesses has been maintained and the design has been adjusted to accommodate these.

The proposal includes:

- 1 loading lay-by on Market Square
- 1 loading bay to the North of Bridge Street
- 1 loading bay on Barrack Street (there is also an existing loading bay on Barrack Street outside the scheme's boundary)
- 1 loading bay on George Street
- A coach drop-off space located in front of the Sullivan's Hotel on Market Square



2.6 On-street parking

There is currently ample on-street parking in Gort, with a total of 437 spaces in the whole town centre. There are 252 parking spaces included in the public realm enhancement scheme area, of which 119 are located on Market Square and receive the highest occupancy rates out of all of the parking.

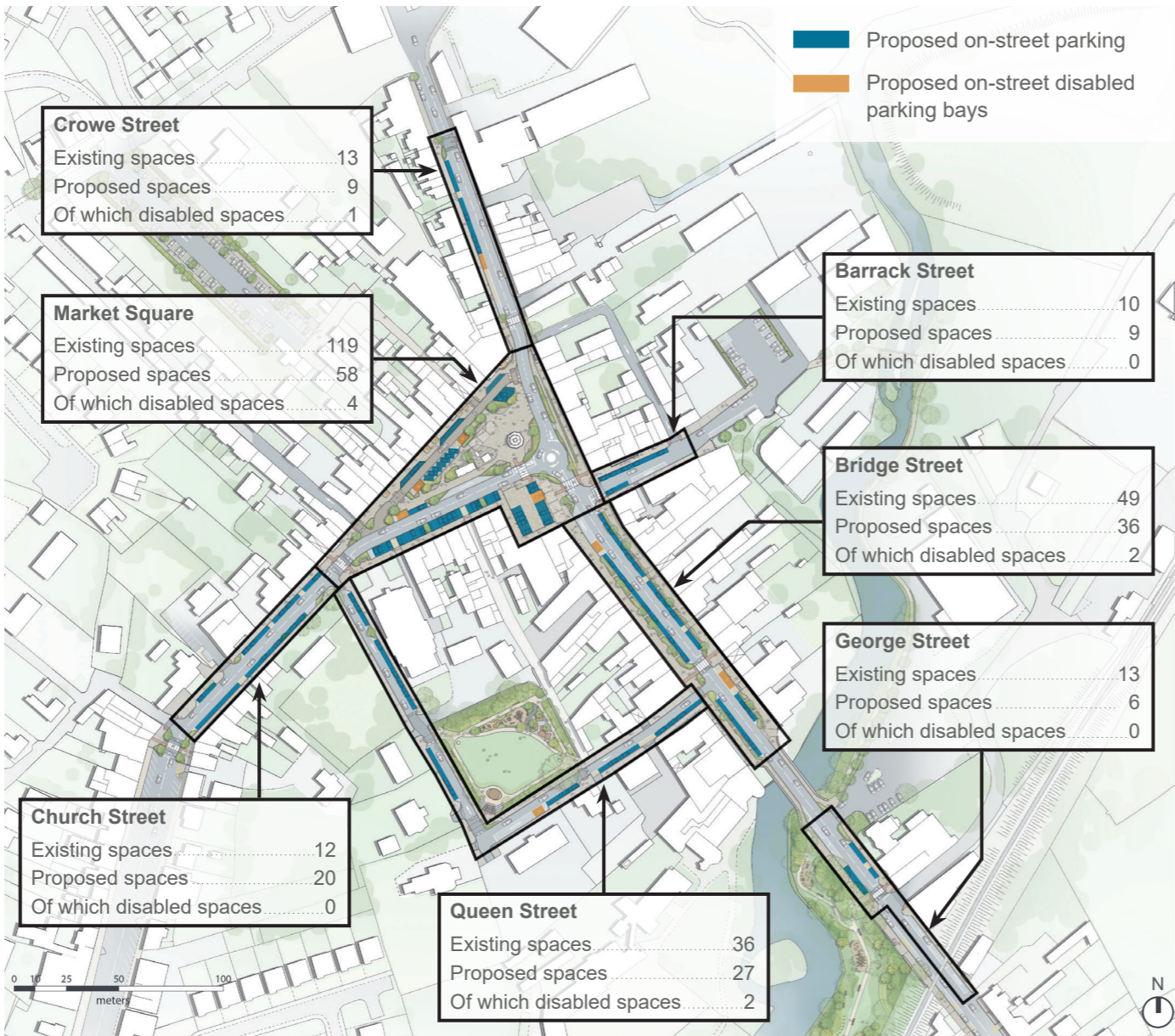
The proposal includes the rationalisation of on-street parking in the core area of the town centre. The parking spaces are drawn to standard dimensions and their location has been determined considering general traffic flows, pedestrian and cyclists safety and large vehicles tracking paths. The functionality of the streetscape has been improved with the relocation and redefinition of bus stops and loading areas and the inclusion of new street trees and vegetation to split large sections of parking and enhance the visual aspect of the streetscape.

The on-street parking provision is split between 15 minutes maximum stay and 2 hours maximum stay bays. It also includes age friendly and disabled bays located in close proximity to businesses.

The proposed on-street parking provision is as follows:

- 165 on-street parking bays
- 9 on-street disabled parking bays

Please refer to 3160 BDP-00-XX-DR-L-0003 Parking Allocation Plan for full proposed parking details.



2.7 Off-street parking

Currently, there are 3 off-street car parks in Gort: at the train station, Lidl and Aldi. There is no off-street car park for town centre users, which has led to an abundance of on-street parking, sometimes at the expense of pedestrians and cyclists safety. The design proposal includes the creation of two off-street parking facilities in Gort, dedicated to town centre users. This will support the rationalisation of on-street parking to increase pedestrian and cyclists safety, whilst still providing an ample parking provision to the town centre. The proposed parking facilities will also have the capacity to accommodate community uses on a temporary basis.

01_New Barrack Street off-street parking facility

21 total spaces including:

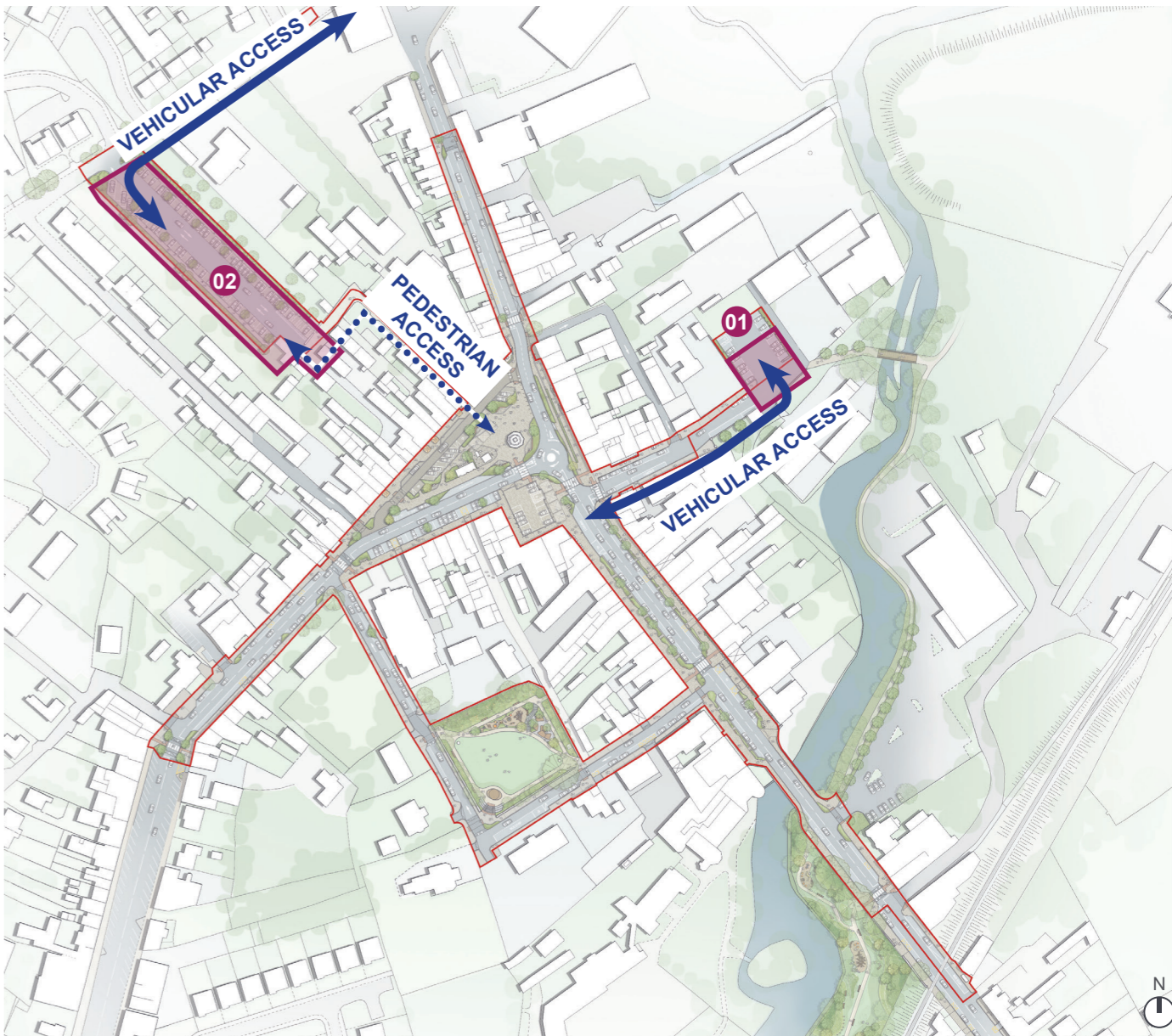
- 1 disabled space
- 10 electric vehicle space
- Access from Barrack Street
- Located 140m from Market Square, approximately 2 minutes on foot

02_New Crowe Street off-street parking facility

79 spaces including:

- 5 disabled spaces
- 12 electric vehicle space
- 4 Recreational Vehicle (RV) spaces
- Vehicular access from Crowe St to the North of car park
- Pedestrian access to Market Square through Lowry's Lane
- Located 180m from Market Square, approximately 2 to 3 minutes on foot

Please refer to 3160 BDP-00-XX-DR-L-0003 Parking Allocation Plan for full proposed parking details.



2.8 Hard landscape & Edging

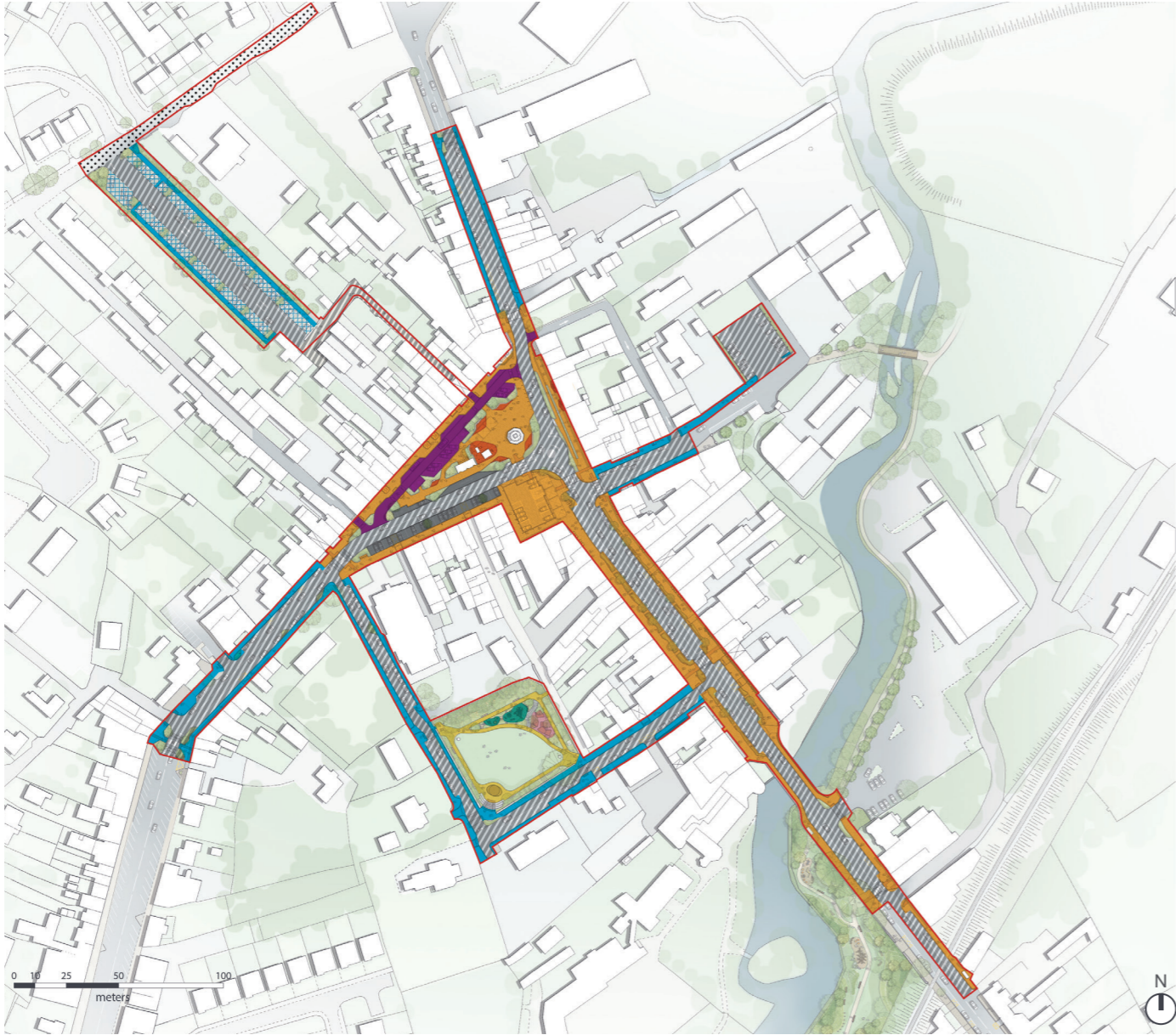
A new cohesive palette is proposed to support the enhancement of the public realm. The strategy is to bring a consistent approach to all surfacing, offering a distinctive character to some core areas of the scheme, such as Market Square, by using natural stone paving, concrete block pavers and rolled buff asphalt in some areas. Simpler yet robust materials are preferred for secondary spaces.

The palette for Canon Quinn Park is simple and naturalistic, designed to tie in with the existing character of the park whilst bringing a much needed upgrade to the footpaths and interest to the newly created recreational spaces.

Permeable surfacing is used to the large off-street car park off Crowe Street and to some parking bays in town. This ties in with the SuDs strategy for the town centre that aims to increasing sustainability on site by reducing the water discharge to the sewer system.

- General hard surfacing:**
- Natural stone paving
 - Feature paving
 - Concrete block paving (includes permeable paving)
 - Insitu exposed aggregate concrete with sett band
 - Vehicular grade asphalt
 - Vehicular grade asphalt with rolled buff chippings (includes permeable paving)
 - Permeable gravel retention surface
 - Existing surfacing to be retained

- Canon Quinn Park:**
- Self binding gravel
 - Bark mulch chipping play surfacing
 - Resin bound gravel surfacing



2.8 Hard landscape & Edging

The below images provide an indicative overview of the surfacing palette for Gort. The colours and finished will be specified at detailed design stage.



Natural stone paving



Feature paving



Concrete block paving (includes permeable)



Insitu exposed aggregate concrete with sett band



Vehicular grade asphalt



Vehicular grade asphalt with rolled buff chippings



Permeable gravel retention surface



Canon Quinn Park



Self binding gravel



Bark mulch chipping play surfacing



Resin bound gravel surfacing



2.9 Soft landscape & Vegetation

The soft landscape and vegetation palettes have been carefully selected to maximise the potential biodiversity gain and includes a number of Irish native, naturalised and pollinator friendly species that supports the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan. The soft landscape palettes have been strategically categorised into three overarching character areas, “Market Square,” “Connecting Streets” and “Canon Quinn Park” to showcase the key areas of Gort, whilst still providing an overall palette that links the town together through out the seasons.

The following pages explore the selected tree and planting mixes of the three character areas in more detail, demonstrating a key planting palette for each area as well as a location plan to showcase how the soft landscape supports the wider SuDs strategy simultaneously. The full planting lists can be found on page 37 and 40.

Planting Character Areas:

- Market Square
- Connecting Streets
- Canon Quinn Park



2.9 Typical Planting Structure

The following pages look to provide overall planting location plans each of the character areas described on the previous page. Within these character areas, there are three plant palettes that respond to the specific requirements for Gort Public Realm. These palettes are grouped under the following headings:

1. Rain Garden Palette
2. General Planting Mix
3. Roadside Mix

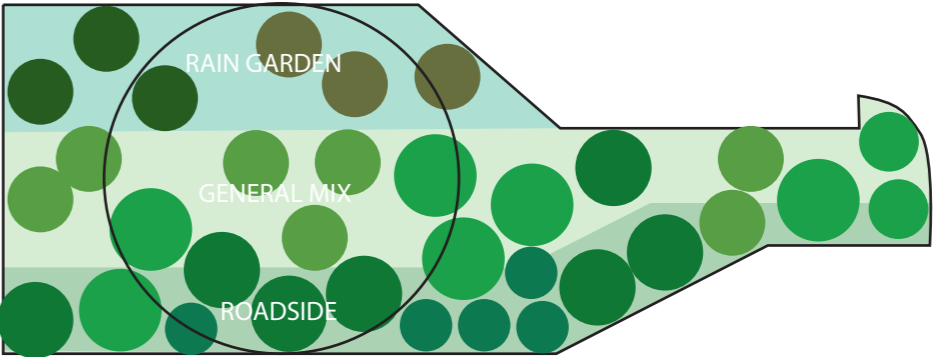
In addition to the above, Canon Quinn Park has its own unique planting palette to respond to the existing trees and soil conditions.

Planting beds with a strong variety of species helps provide added biodiversity to Gort Public Realm. Although the species selected are of low demand in terms of rate of growth and natural form, maintenance will be needed for the future success and establishment. The following suggestions apply to the above palettes:

- Shrubs: Annual prune where necessary in early spring.
- Ornamental Deciduous Grasses: Annual cut back to the base in early spring. Retain for structural interest over winter.
- Evergreen Grasses: Annual tidy in early spring to remove dead material.
- Herbaceous perennials: annual tidy and cut back in autumn, leaving some with structural interest/seed heads over winter to be cut back early spring.

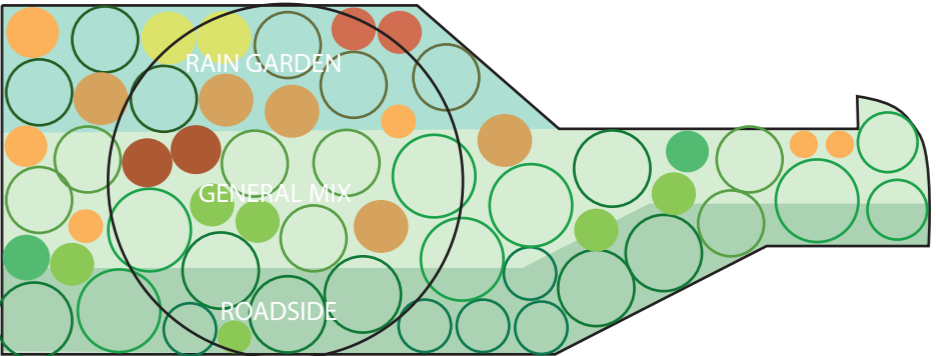
The diagrams below illustrates how each planting bed could consist of all three palettes listed above, depending on its location. It also demonstrates the principle that all planting beds will have a mix of evergreen and deciduous species to ensure year round structure and visual interest in the winter months.

Example planting bed
Evergreen species highlighted



.....>
Evergreen shrubs distributed across the bed to give year-round structure, with a higher percentage of evergreen shrubs within the roadside mix to form a division with the road.

Example planting bed
Deciduous species highlighted



.....>
Deciduous shrubs, grasses and colourful herbaceous perennials are interspersed across the bed, with a higher percentage to the areas closest to the footpaths. Even if not evergreen, some of these will still provide structural interest throughout winter.



2.9 Market Square Tree Location Plan

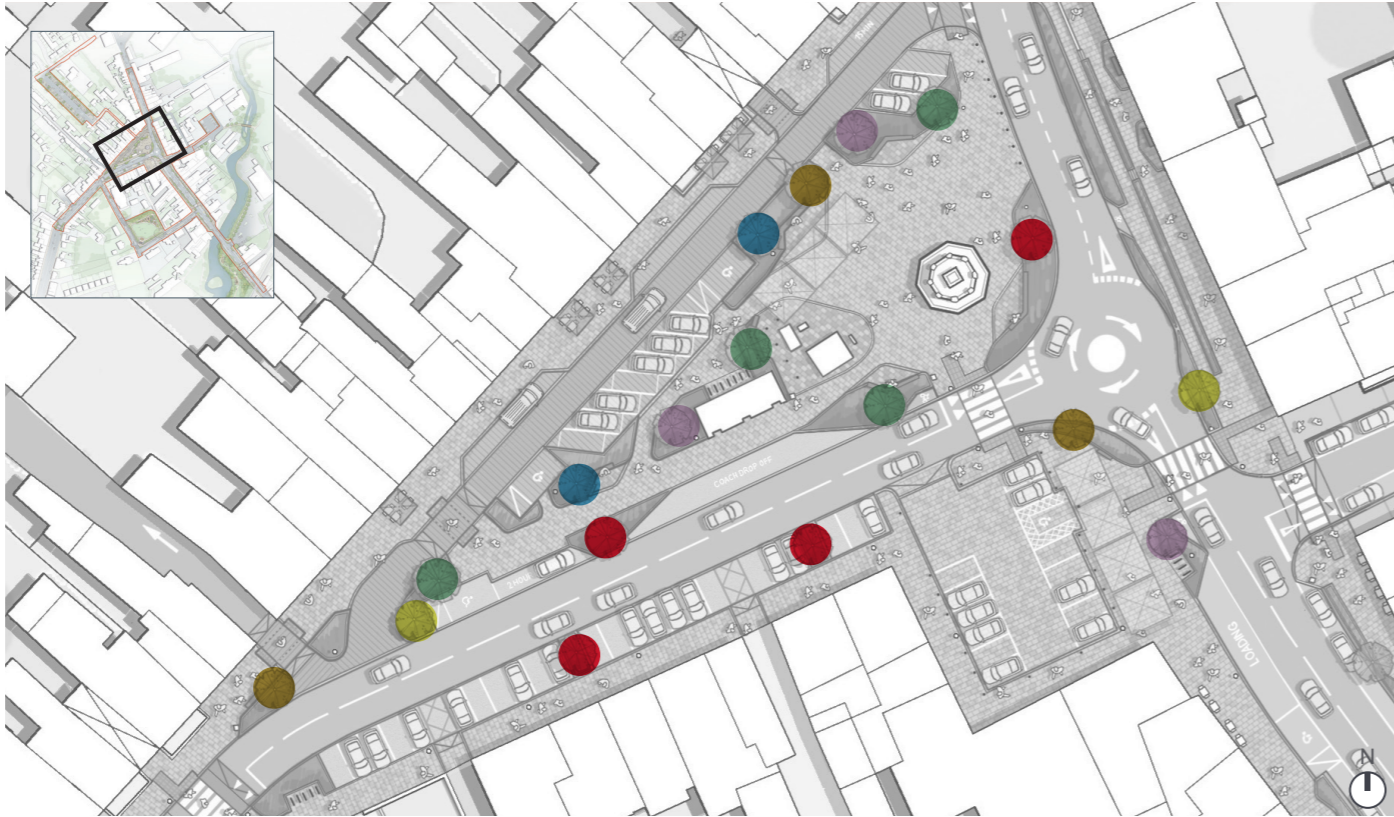
A variety of tree species evenly distributed across the square to provide seasonal interest and character, and to create a distinct setting for the heart of the town.

These species have been selected based on the following key principles:

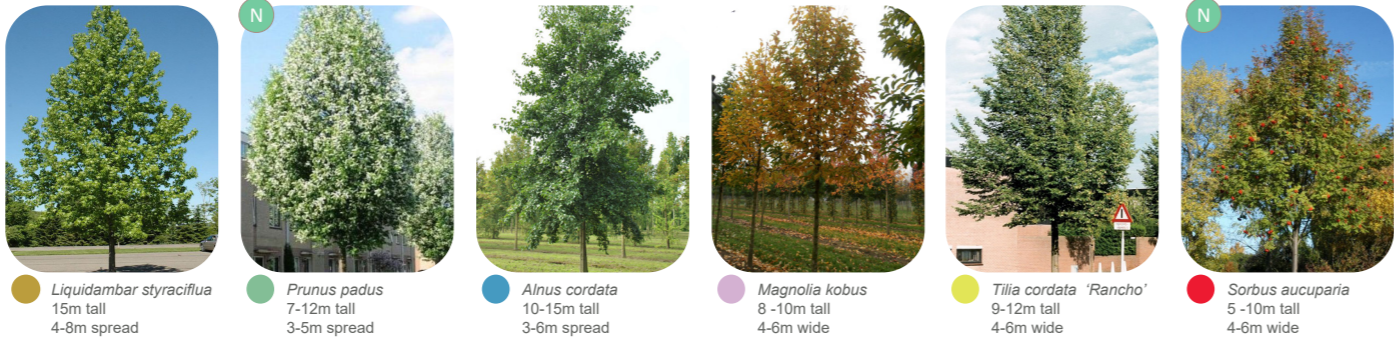
- Trees with distinct seasonal interest and character to define the square as the heart of the town.
- Will help to soften the hard landscaping.
- Evenly distributed across the centre so as not to obstruct views on arrival to or across the square.
- Specially selected species for the rain gardens.
- Placed so not to impede key views and legibility within the square.

Planting Palette Key:

-  Native / naturalised
-  All-Ireland Pollinator Plan target species



Proposed tree location plan and species:









2.9 Market Square Planting Plan

The proposed planting to Market Square seeks to balance both functionally but also aesthetically to create a moment of visual interest and celebrate the historic square and surrounding buildings.

These species have been selected based on the following key principles:

- Where water is drained into planting beds, rain gardens will be created and planted with appropriate species.
- Roadside buffer planting to create a barrier between pedestrians and the road, primarily robust, evergreen species.
- General shrub and herbaceous planting to create year-round interest through colour, texture, form and biodiversity value.

Planting Palette Key:

-  Native / naturalised
-  All-Ireland Pollinator Plan target species
-  **Rain Garden planting mix**
(Species tolerant of damp soil and short periods of flooding)
-  **General Shrub & Herbaceous planting mix**
(Mix of species with some tolerant of damp soils)
-  **Roadside planting mix**
(robust species for interface with vehicular routes and kerb lines)
-  Native hedge planting

For the full planting list, refer to page 39



Proposed plant mix location plan and key species:



2.9 Connecting Streets Tree Location Plan

Tree planting to enhance views along the street and to the Town Centre. Species chosen form light and small to medium sized canopies and are positioned central to division lines of façades, so as not to block building frontages. The trees within soft landscape will create a soft buffer between pedestrians and the road.

These species have been selected based on the following key principles:

- Light and small to medium canopy spread.
- Enhance views along the street to the town centre.
- Directional.
- Strategically located to sit central to division line of the facade so as not to block building frontages.
- Planted within greening where possible creating a soft buffer between pedestrians and the road.

Planting Palette Key:

- N Native / naturalised
- 🐝 All-Ireland Pollinator Plan target species



Proposed plant mix location plan and key species:



Gleditsia tricanthos
8-12m tall
6-7m wide



Amelanchier x grandiflora
3 -5m tall
4-5m wide



Crataegus x prunifolia
6 -7m tall
6-7m wide



Sorbus aucuparia
5 -10m tall
4-6m wide



Magnolia kobus
8 -10m tall
4-6m wide



Tilia cordata 'Rancho'
9-12m tall
4-6m wide

2.9 Connecting Streets Typical Planting Plan

The planting along Bridge Street creates a green backdrop to encourage outdoor dining and street activation. It also ties into the overall SuDS strategy with a series of interconnected rain gardens.

These species have been selected based on the following key principles:

- Rain garden species to be selected to be water tolerant whilst still providing year around structure and seasonal interest to retain plant coverage
- Where additional planting species can be introduced to the Western edge, general shrub and herbaceous planting will increase biodiversity value and support the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.

Planting Palette Key:

- N Native / naturalised
- 🐝 All-Ireland Pollinator Plan target species
- 🌊 **Rain Garden planting mix**
(Species tolerant of damp soil and short periods of flooding)
- 🌿 **General Shrub & Herbaceous planting mix**
(Mix of species with some tolerant of damp soils)
- 🌳 **Roadside planting mix**
(robust species for interface with vehicular routes and kerb lines)

For the full planting list, refer to page 39



Proposed plant mix location plan and key species:



Sarcococca hookeriana
var. *humilis*



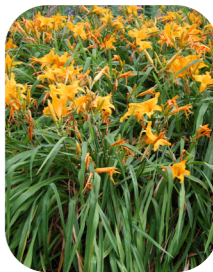
Blechnum spicant



Deschampsia cespitosa



Crocosmia 'Lucifer'



Hemerocallis 'Burning Daylight'



Veronica cupressoides
'Boughton Dome'

2.9 Crowe Street Car Park Planting Plan

Crowe Street car park planting has the opportunity to provide an increase in biodiversity value with generous rain garden swales, tree planting and additional planting beds between car parking spaces. The planting mix ties into the overall Gort planting palette, but curated in this location to feel informal and more naturalised to tie into the surrounding plots.

Planting Palette Key:

- N Native / naturalised
- 🐝 All-Ireland Pollinator Plan target species
- 🌊 **Rain Garden planting mix**
(Species tolerant of damp soil and short periods of flooding)
- 🌳 **Roadside planting mix**
(robust species for interface with vehicular routes and kerb lines)

For the full planting list, refer to page 39



Proposed plant mix location plan and key species:



N *Cornus sanguinea*



N *Carex divulsa*



N 🐝 *Euphorbia amygdaloides* var. *robbiae*

2.9 Market Square and Connecting Streets Plant Mix Palettes

Planting Palette Key:

- N Native/naturalised
- 🐝 All-Ireland Pollinator Plan target species
- 🌳 Evergreen/semi evergreen

🌊 **Rain Garden planting mix**
(Species tolerant of damp soil and short periods of flooding)



🐝 *Sarcococca hookeriana* var. *humilis*



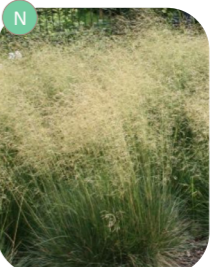
N 🌳 *Blechnum spicant*



N *Cornus sanguinea*



N 🐝 *Viburnum opulus* 'Compactum'



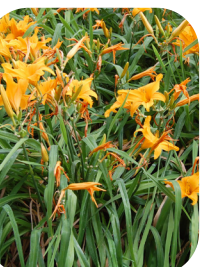
N *Deschampsia cespitosa*



N *Molinia caerulea*

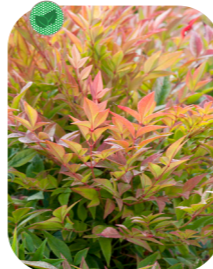


Crocosmia 'Lucifer'

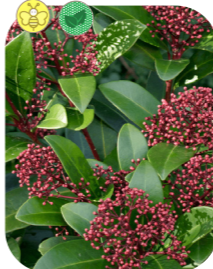


Hemerocallis 'Burning Daylight'

🌳 **General Shrub & Herbaceous planting mix**
(Mix of species with some tolerant of damp soils)



🌳 *Nandina domestica* 'Golf Stream'



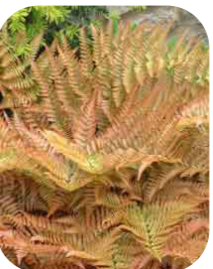
🐝 🌳 *Skimmia japonica* 'Rubella'



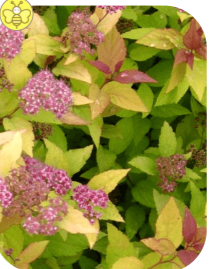
N 🌳 *Carex divulsa*



Calamagrostis 'Karl Foerster'



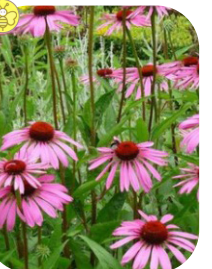
Dryopteris erythrosora



🐝 *Spiraea japonica* 'Fire-light'



Hylotelephium 'Herbstfreude'



🐝 *Echinacea purpurea*

🌳 **Roadside planting mix**
(robust species for interface with vehicular routes and kerb lines)



🐝 *Veronica cupressoides* 'Boughton Dome'



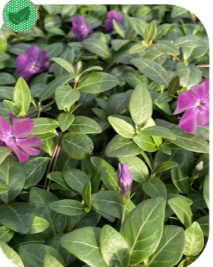
🐝 🌳 *Skimmia japonica* 'Kew Green'



🌳 *Hypericum x dummeri* 'Peter Dummer'



N 🐝 🌳 *Euphorbia amygdaloides* var. *robbiae*



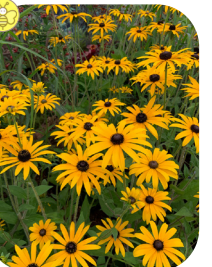
🌳 *Vinca minor* 'Atropurpurea'



🌳 *Liriope muscari*



Alchemilla mollis



🐝 *Rudbeckia fulgida* var. *deamii*

2.9 Canon Quinn Park Proposed Tree Location Plan

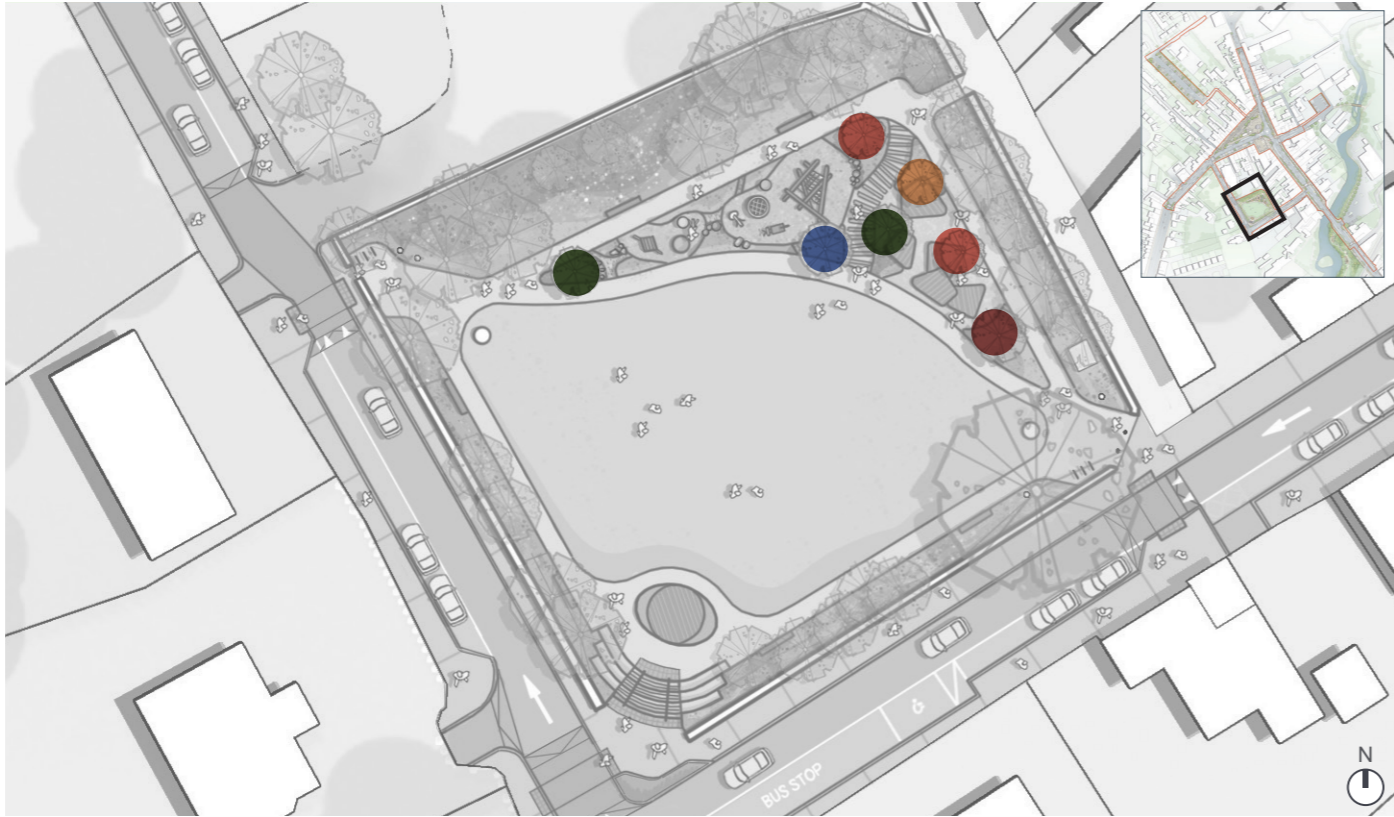
In addition to the existing trees, the proposed trees look to contribute to natural play space by adding structure, visual interest in the Spring through the blossoming flowers and shade coverage in the summer months for those located near the feature seating.

These species have been selected based on the following key principles:

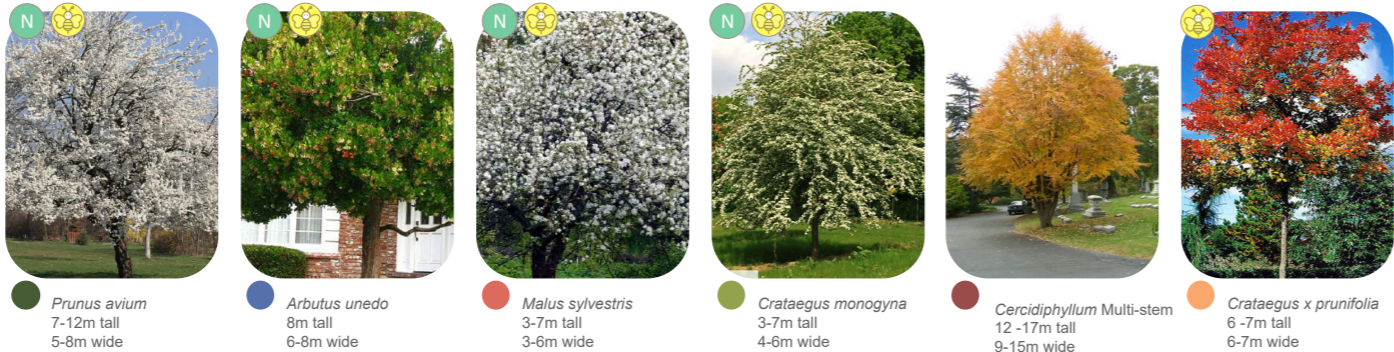
- Variation in height and form.
- Organic placement of new trees to fit with current natural character.
- Improved biodiversity value.

Planting Palette Key:

- N Native / naturalised
- 🐝 All-Ireland Pollinator Plan target species



Proposed plant mix location plan and key species:



2.9 Canon Quinn Park Proposed Planting Plan

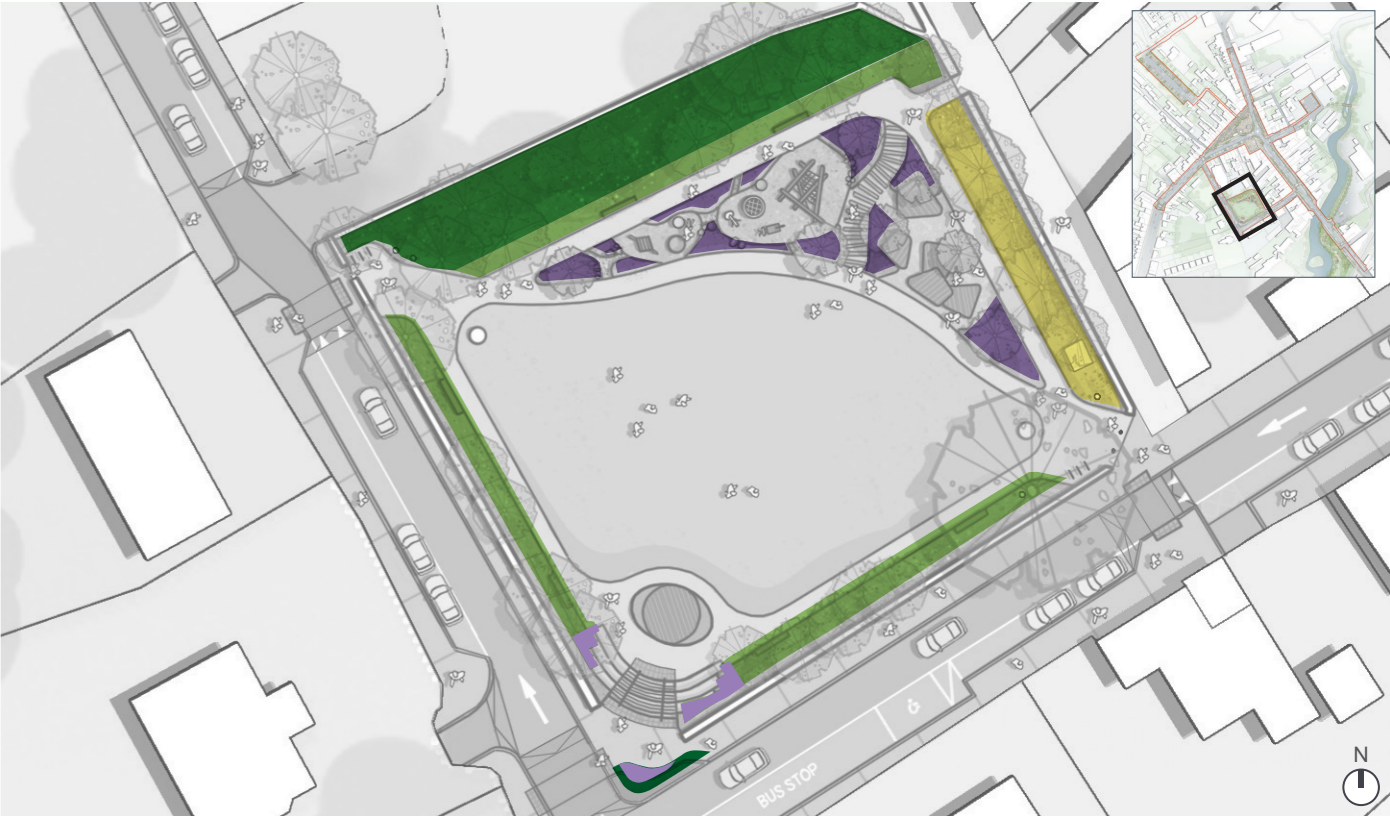
The proposed planting plan seeks to compliment the existing site conditions, both in terms of the sun and shade tracking and also enhance the existing mature trees. The below bullet points list out the key principles of each mix:

- Mix 1 to provide suitable species for planting under the existing Leylandii trees.
- Mix 2 to provide ground cover with shrub planting, some with spines species to act as a deterrent for anti-social behaviour.
- Mix 3 for a low growing ground cover mix to line the footpath.
- Mix 4 to provide interest through colour and texture to enhance the play area and entrance.

Planting Palette Key:

- 🐝 All-Ireland Pollinator Plan target species
- **Planting Mix 1**
(Plant species suited to acidic soil and under trees)
- **Planting Mix 2**
(Shrub planting mix)
- **Planting Mix 3**
(Groundcover planting)
- **Planting Mix 4**
(Shrub and herbaceous mix)
- **Roadside Planting Mix**
(Continuation of connecting streets palette)

For the full planting list, refer to page 42



Proposed plant mix location plan and key species:



2.9 Canon Quinn Park Plant Mix Palettes

Planting Palette Key:

- Native/naturalised
- All-Ireland Pollinator Plan target species
- Evergreen/semi evergreen

Planting Mix 1
(Plant species suited to acidic soil and under trees)



Camellia japonica 'White Swan'



Sarcococca hookeriana var. *humilis*



Euphorbia amygdaloides var. *robbiae*



Liriope muscari



Viburnum tinus 'Eve Price'



Vinca minor 'Atropurpurea'



Anemone x hybrida 'Honore Jobert'



Blechnum spicant

Planting Mix 2
(Shrub planting mix)



Berberis x stenophylla 'Corallina Compacta'

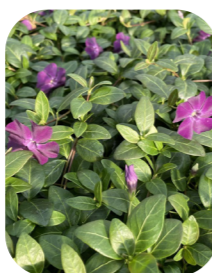


Mahonia aquifolium



Hedera hibernica

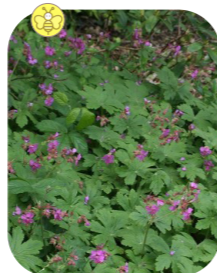
Planting Mix 3
(Groundcover planting)



Vinca minor



Anemone x hybrida 'Honore Jobert'



Geranium macrorrhizum



Bergenia 'Silberlicht'

Planting Mix 4
(Ornamental shrubs and herbaceous mix)



Veronica cupressoides 'Boughton Dome'



Skimmia japonica 'Rubella'



Carex divulsa



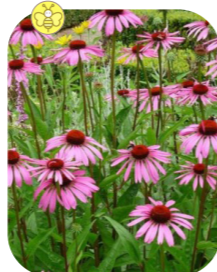
Cornus sanguinea



Spiraea japonica 'Firelight'



Deschampsia cespitosa



Echinacea purpurea



Narcissus pseudonarcissus

2.10 Drainage & SuDS

The drainage and SuDS strategy is a robust and multi-tiered approach to reduce the rate in which surface water is discharged into the below ground surface water network. The proposed strategy takes into consideration the existing site topography and falls to create a system that captures the rain fall at multiple points across the public realm.

The supporting diagram demonstrates these principles within the core area of Market Square. Permeable surfacing has been applied to parking bays, with rain gardens strategically located to capture immediate water run off to the square's perimeters. These permeable areas are interlinked with an underground filter drain with regulated chambers, when reaching a overflow limit, release the surface water back into the water network. In addition, surface level channels (both within the footpath and following the road kerb profile), with drainage gullies also connecting back into the network.

Permeable Surfaces:

- Permeable block paving
- Permeable asphalt
- Rain garden with specialist planting

Drainage Types:

- Road channel line with gulleys connected to surface water network
- Surface level footpath channel
- Underground filter drain
- Regulator chamber with overflow to surface water network

Falls:

- Direction of surface water fall




2.10 Drainage & SuDS

The supporting diagram demonstrates how the overarching SuDS strategy is applied along Bridge Street.

As well as the regular road channel line gulleys, the street is supported with a series of interconnected paving channels and rain garden with underground filter drains to collect and slow down the release of rain water into the surface water network.

The existing directional falls and levels have determined that the Eastern side of Bridge Street is consistently at a lower level than the Western edge, and therefore the proposed levels work to always drain the water away from the building entrances and maximise the rain garden's capacity before releasing the surface water back into the water network.

Permeable Surfaces:

 Rain garden with specialist planting

Drainage Types:


 Road channel line with gulleys connected to surface water network

 Surface level footpath channel

 Underground filter drain

 Regulator chamber with overflow to surface water network

Falls:

 Direction of surface water fall



2.10 Drainage & SuDS


The Crowe Street car park has an opportunity to maximise the SuDS strategy as demonstrated in the supporting diagram.

The proposed falls look to capture the water within the gravel surfacing of the car parking spaces. An underground filter drain links all spaces together with an additional overflow to be slowly released into the linear rain gardens towards the perimeters. It is assumed that no or only minimal connection will be needed to the surface water network, and assumed the water can naturally percolate into the ground water.

Permeable Surfaces:


 Permeable block paving

 Permeable gravel retention surface

 Rain garden with specialist planting

Drainage Types:

 Underground filter drain

 Regulator chamber with overflow to rain gardens

Falls:

 Direction of surface water fall



2.11 Street furniture

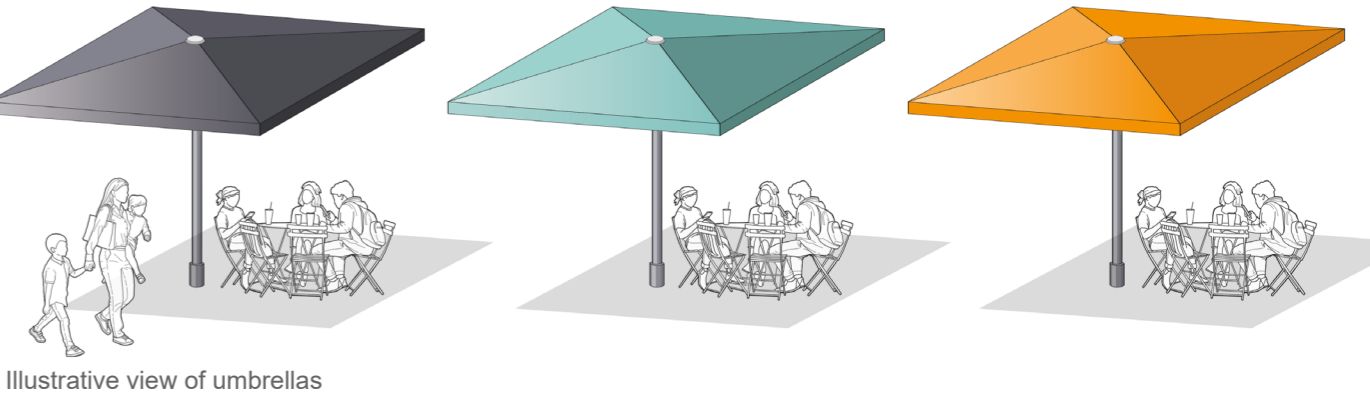
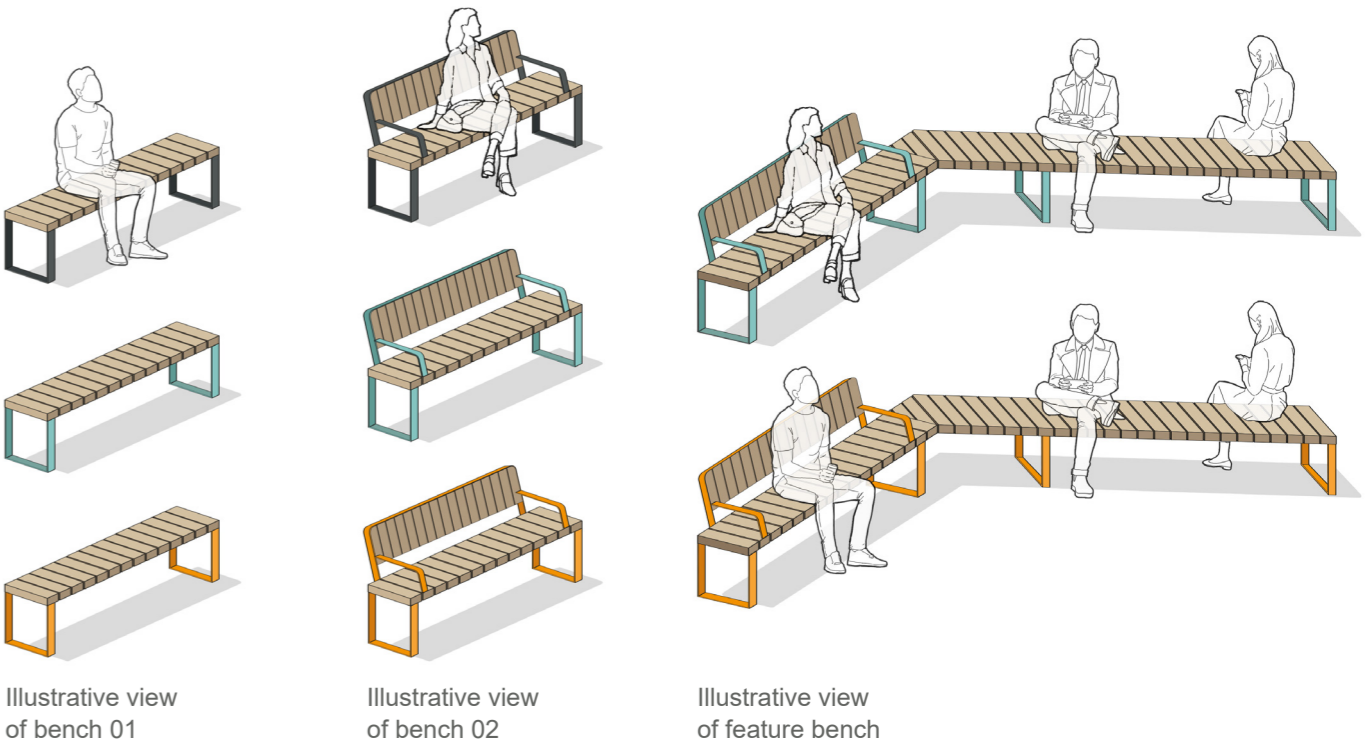
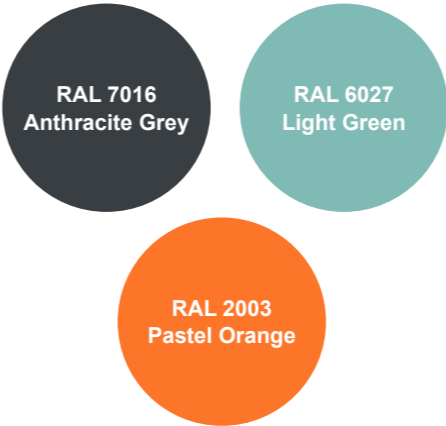
The furniture palette for the scheme is based on functionality and the selection of quality and robust components. Different types of furniture are provided as part of the scheme such as benches, feature benches, umbrellas, but also cycle stands and litter bins, to deliver a pleasant and functional public realm for users to enjoy and dwell in.



2.11 Street furniture

The design proposal for seating in Gort town centre includes a family of powder coated metal benches with timber tops, ranging from a simple, robust metal bench to a feature bench on Market Square. There are several colour options for the metal frame including an anthracite grey, a light green to match the wayfinding strategy colour scheme and a contrasting orange.

- **Bench 01:** Metal bench with timber slated top.
- **Bench 02:** Metal bench with timber slated top, armrests and backrest.
- **Feature benches:** Long bench on Market Square with armrests and backrest to one section of the bench.
- **Umbrellas:** 5x5m robust retractable umbrella with in-ground socket cast into concrete footing. As for the benches there are several colour options available.

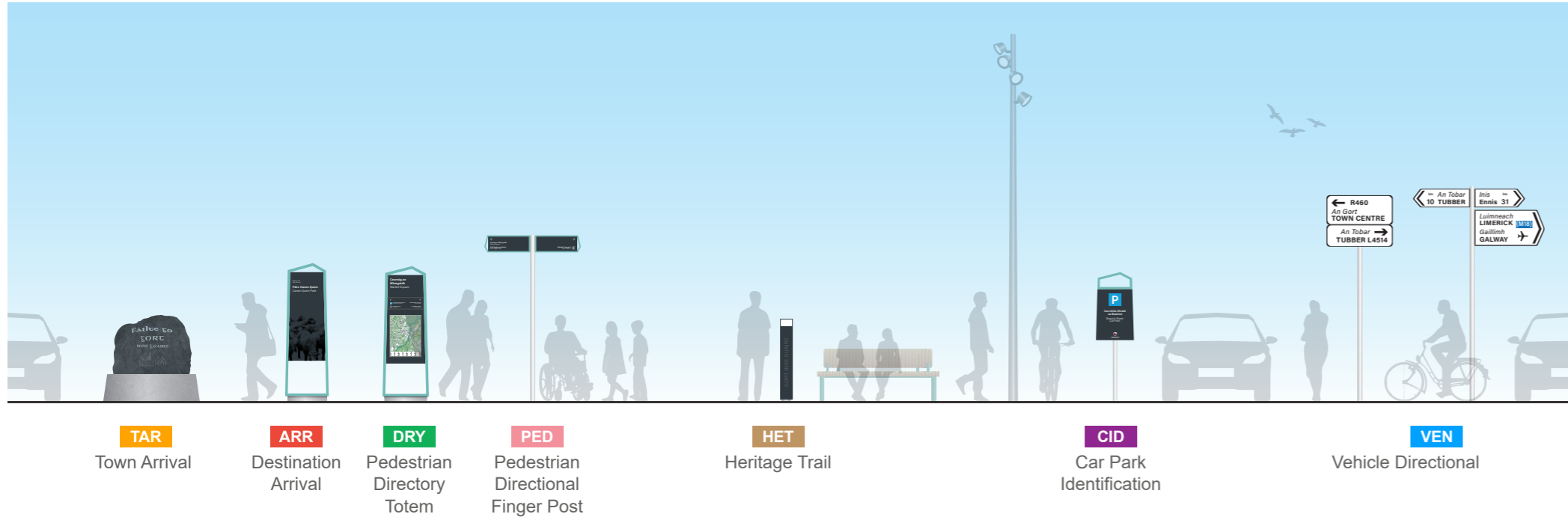


2.12 Signage & Interpretation

The signage and interpretation palette looks to provide a comprehensive user experience to navigate Gort and provide information that is useful for local residents, visitors and tourists alike. The design look to produce a series of signage that increases and decreases in scale as appropriate for vehicular and pedestrian users, but maintains a common design language appropriate to Gort.

Both the Irish and English languages will be included.

Particular reference will be made to ensure users are directed to the new off street car parks.



2.12 Signs location plan



2.13 Lighting Strategy

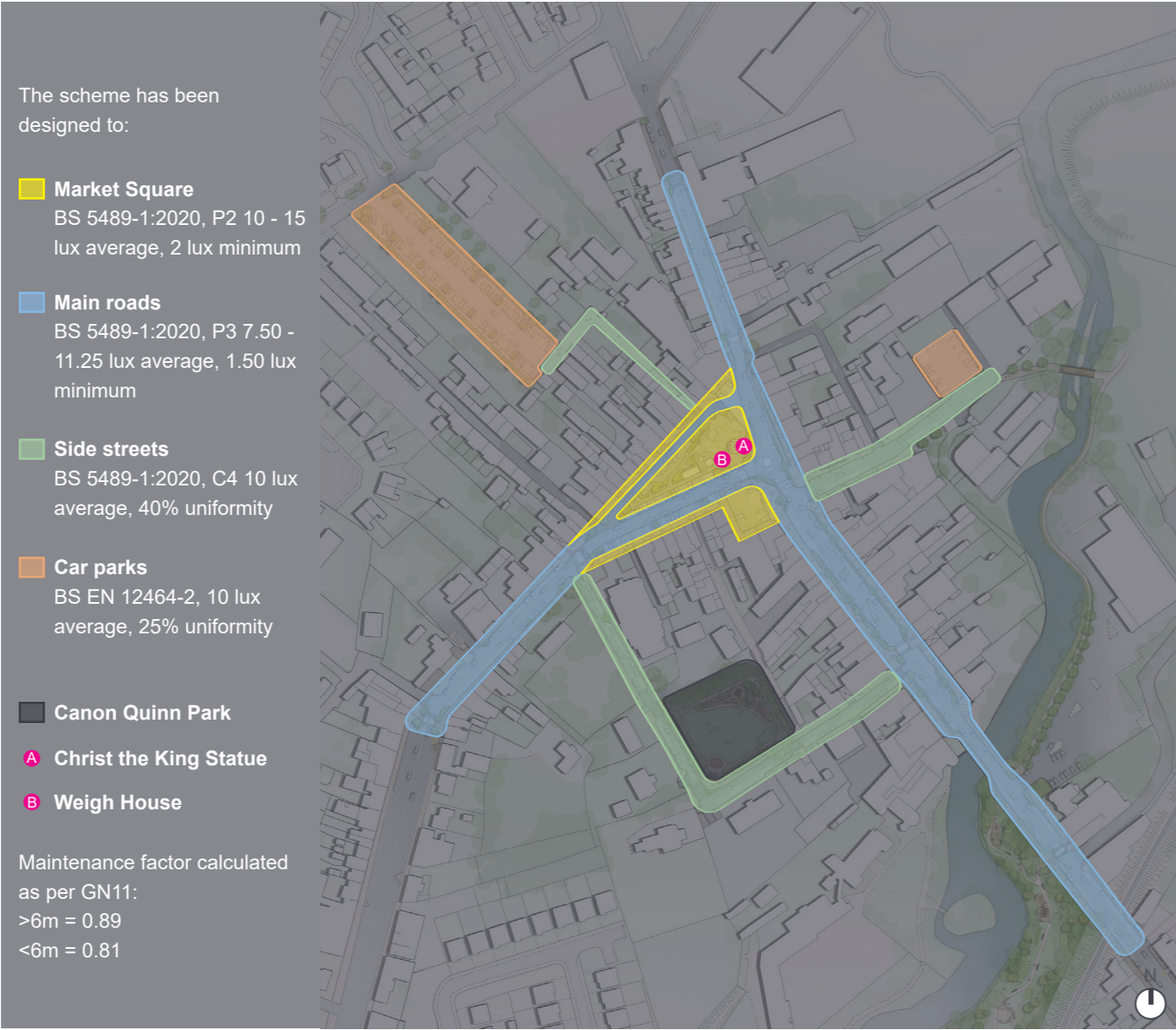
Lighting must provide a safe environment for all users of Gort Town Centre. This includes providing code-compliant light levels and high-quality and robust fittings. Lighting must always promote accessibility: highlighting level changes and designing with DDA requirements in mind are key. Light should encourage social interaction which ultimately benefits the night-time economy. We aim to create a memorable place for people.

The functional lighting scheme for Gort is designed to achieve good maintained illuminance levels on all roads, lanes and spaces to allow safe pedestrian and vehicular movement at all times.

An emphasis is put in the lighting strategy on Market Square, as it will contribute to creating a welcoming and vibrant space at the heart of Gort, which celebrates the centre of the local community. The landmarks on Market Square are a key feature within central Gort and offer up a fantastic opportunity for feature lighting.

The new off street car parks are essential for the town's infrastructure and should be illuminated appropriately as functional spaces.

Artificial lighting in Canon Quinn park is not recommended as part of this scheme. This space will not be used at night-time and there is no pedestrian route through we want to encourage. Keeping the light levels to a minimum will also ensure optimum conditions for the local nocturnal wildlife.

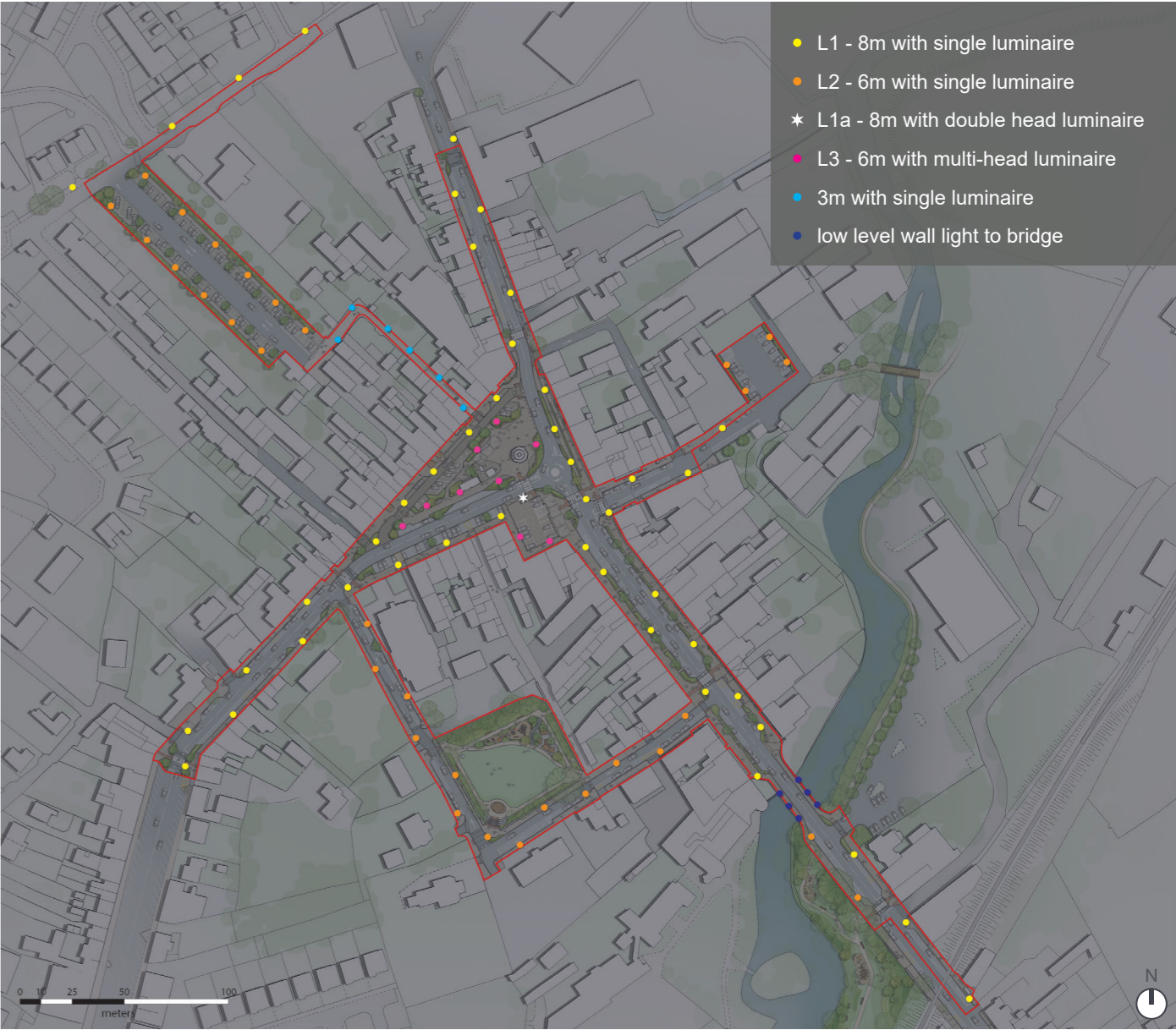


2.13 Lighting Strategy

Currently there are varying levels of general lighting along the streets which are all luminaires mounted on lighting poles or utility poles. As the public realm strategy includes undergrounding of all cables, this is an excellent opportunity to create a more consistent language for the lighting as well.

Key considerations:

- Consideration should be given to providing sufficient lighting for vehicular traffic, while creating a warm and welcoming environment for the pedestrians;
- Simple discreet column aesthetic is proposed, to avoid visual clutter as much as possible; Column heights have been be studied to minimise light pollution;
- Additionally, pockets of planting and urban furniture should be softly illuminated, to bring the light lower, closer to people, creating a more intimate ambience.
- There are three environmental sensitive areas within the project area: 1) The bridge on the main street over the river 2) Barrack Street off street Car Park & 3) Crowe Street off street car park. Across the bridge it is intended to use low level lights attached to the inner face of the wall that spill light onto the footpath only. In the carparks it is intended to use 6m columns with 2400K light sources directed downwards and the lights are reduced to 50% output between midnight and dusk between April and September.



2.13 Lighting Strategy

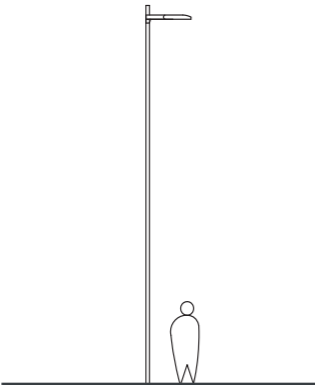
The scale, varied architecture and character of Gort Town Centre means that lighting is an important tool to bring together the public realm as one space.

The lighting columns selected are robust, elegant and simple in design to seamlessly blend in the streetscape, not distract from other points of interest and keep the town centre as clutter free as possible.

It is proposed that the ambient lighting of the scheme is 3000K warm white throughout. This allows for accent and feature lighting to key elements, such as monuments or possibly some heritage facades, in warmer light such as 2700K warm white for a diverse visual environment. In sensitive environmental areas the light has been reduced to 2400K (at the bridge over the river and the two off street car parks)

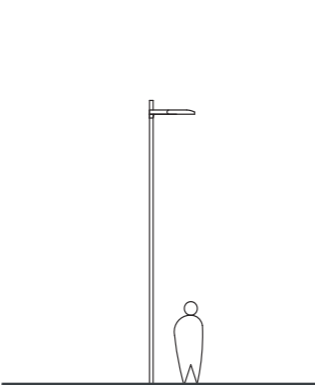
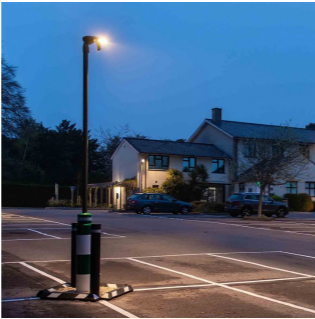


Yellow dot: Urbis Schreder Hestia Gen 2 at 8m



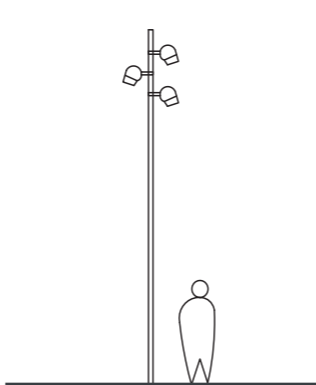
8m tapered or cylindrical column
Single pole-top luminaire
Street lighting optics

Orange dot: Urbis Schreder Hestia Gen 2 at 6m



6m tapered or cylindrical column
Single pole-top luminaire
Street lighting optics

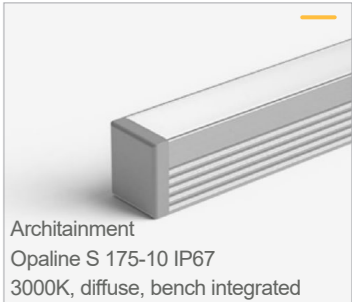
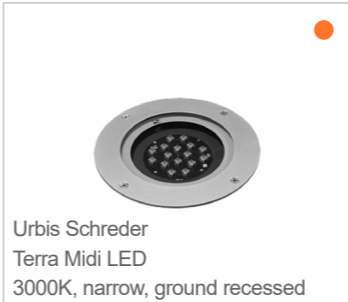
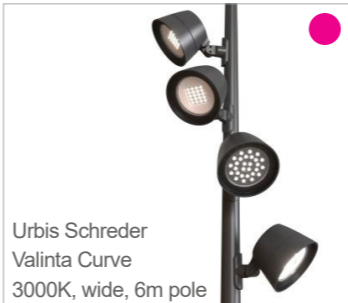
Pink dot: Urbis Schreder Valinta Curve at 6m



6m tapered or cylindrical column
Adjustable spotlights
Wide / medium / narrow light distribution, as required for footpaths and monument accent

2.13 Lighting Strategy

The main roads on Market Square are to be lit using 8m tall columns with a single luminaire, whilst 6m tall columns with adjustable spotlights provide general lighting to the square. Concealed lighting under benches provide a soft glow and create an inviting atmosphere. Uplighting to key trees create an attractive feature and bring light closer to pedestrians.



3.0

Project Areas

3.1 | *Market Square*

3.2 | *Canon Quinn Park*

3.3 | *Bridge Street*

3.4 | *Crowe Street*

3.5 | *George Street*

3.6 | *Barrack Street*

3.7 | *Church Street*

3.8 | *Queen Street*

3.9 | *New off-street car park*

3.1 Market Square

Market Square is the most significant public open space in Gort and lies at the heart of the town. It is a prime location for retail and includes some well established businesses, as well as a popular weekly market.

The objective of the proposal is to transform the layout on Market Square to create a large civic space at the heart of the town, set in a pedestrian friendly environment, whilst delivering a functional scheme for all users including businesses, market traders and visitors.

The design actions are as follows:

- Transform road layout, introduce a mini-roundabout and tighten carriageway widths to reduce vehicular speed and dominance;
- Rationalise on-street parking to reclaim public space for pedestrian users and introduce cycle parking;
- Introduce safe and well-located crossing points to make the streetscape pedestrian friendly and easy to navigate;
- Create a fully pedestrian and flexible space at the heart of the square, that celebrates the local heritage and character, allows local events to take place and can host the weekly market;
- Make Market Square a pleasant space to dwell through the introduction of planting beds, street trees, new feature benches, retractable umbrellas, high quality surfacing and lighting.

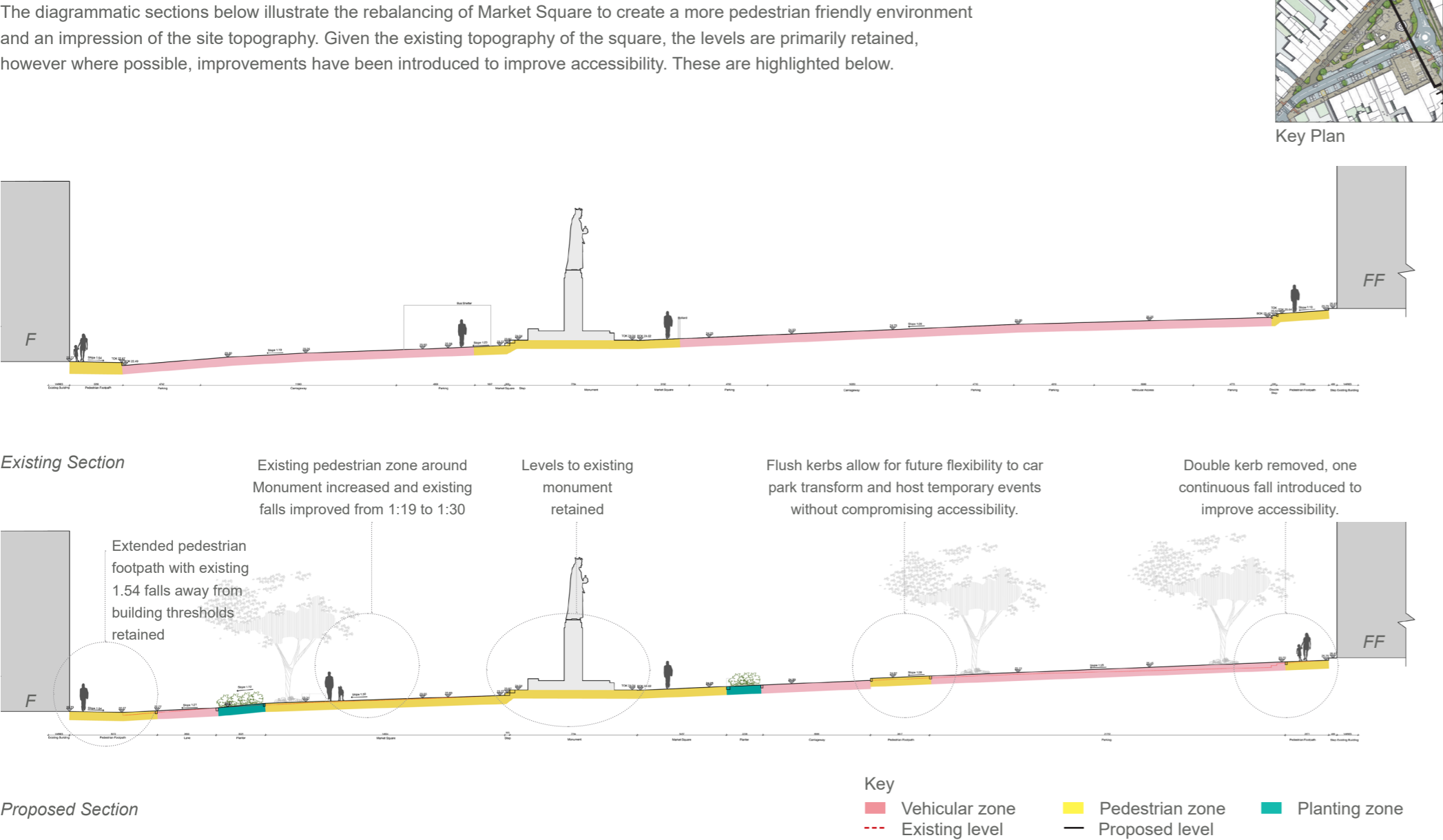
- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|-------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Fully pedestrianised flexible space for markets & events | 01 | Native planting pockets with street trees | 11 |
| Pocket spaces on the square with feature paving, native planting, trees and feature benches | 02 | Existing and potential forecourts | 12 |
| Double carriageway width reduced to 6.4m | 03 | 3.6m access road with concrete block pavers surfacing | 13 |
| Rationalised & standardised on-street parking on the square | 04 | Mini roundabout | 14 |
| Controlled pedestrian crossing | 05 | Short stay parking pocket | 15 |
| Uncontrolled pedestrian crossing | 06 | Existing access to residential/businesses retained | 16 |
| Wider, resurfaced footpath | 07 | Lowry's Ln: pedestrian access to off-street car park | 17 |
| Cycle stands | 08 | | |
| 5x5m retractable umbrellas with in-ground sockets | 09 | Loading bay | ● |
| Resurfaced flexible parking & events area | 10 | Disabled parking bay | ● |
| | | Coach drop-off | ● |



3.1 Market Square



3.1 Market Square



3.1 Market Square



3.1 Market Square

Artist's impression of Market Square as existing



3.1 Market Square

Artist's impression of Market Square as proposed



3.2 Canon Quinn Park

Canon Quinn Park is the only open green space at the heart of the town. Along with Market Square, it is a key public space in Gort Town Centre and should be celebrated as such. Located at the rear of Saint Coleman’s Catholic Church and facing Queen Street, it is a quiet area of the town centre, whilst still lying only 150 meters away from Market Square.

The proposal focuses on retaining the openness, existing character and flexibility of the park, whilst providing opportunities for new recreational uses of this valuable green space in town.

The general location of the existing path network is generally retained, with the introduction of a gentle curve to the diagonal central path to allow for a larger continuous open lawn to be retained at the centre of the park for informal recreation and kick-around. A new event space with a raised stage and amphitheatre is created to the south-west corner of the park, along with a new universally accessible entrance from Queen Street. To the north-east of the park, a series of pocket spaces host a variety of play equipments catering for all age groups. Adjacent to this area is an informal ‘hang-out’ area with large seating plinths dedicated to older children and young adults. 6 new trees are introduced in this central area.

The two existing entrances to the park are widened to allow universal access and include wayfinding. A mixed planting buffer to all edge of the park will increase the biodiversity on site. New benches are located along the planting around the perimeter of the park.



- Retained open lawn 01
- Mixed biodiverse planting to the edges of the park 02
- Pockets of play equipment nested in planting 03
- Informal playful path 04
- Seating timber ‘plinths’ / hang out area 05
- Raised stage for events 06
- Amphitheatre for events 07
- New entrance to the park from Queen Street 08
- DDA compliant, widened entrances with signage 09
- New entrance to the park from adjacent lane, opportunity to create a direct pedestrian link to Market Square in the future 10
- New and resurfaced footpaths 11
- Relocated heritage mill stones 12
- Benches along planting areas 13
- Cycle stands at park entrance 14
- New trees 15



3.2 Canon Quinn Park

Artist's impression of Canon Quinn Park as proposed



3.3 Bridge Street

Bridge Street is a key street in Gort Town Centre: it is the main road coming into the town from the South and connects Market Square with the other bank of the Cannahowna/ Gort river through the bridge. With approximately 20 meters width, it is one of the wider streets in the town core, offering many opportunities for public realm enhancement.

The proposal is to rebalance the available space, moving away from vehicle dominance and giving space to pedestrians, businesses, visitors and vegetation, making the most of the available street width.

The design actions are as follows:

- The double carriageway width is tightened to 6.4m to calm traffic down and reduce vehicle speed. On-street parking is retained both sides of the street.
- The pedestrian footpaths width is maintained / increased to approximately 4m both sides, giving ample space to pedestrians and local businesses to make use of their forecourts for display and outdoor terraces.
- The footpaths are resurfaced using the same natural stone paving as Market Square, tying in these two prime spaces.
- A controlled crossing point is created to the North of the junction with Queen Street, enhancing pedestrian movement
- Pockets of biodiverse and native planting create a feature along the full length of the street, separating pedestrians from traffic and creating an enjoyable environment. These include benches and street trees.



3.3 Bridge Street

Artist's impression of Bridge Street as proposed



3.4 Crowe Street

Crowe Street is the main road coming into town from the North, it connects directly with Market Square. This axis has one of the predominant flows of traffic in town.

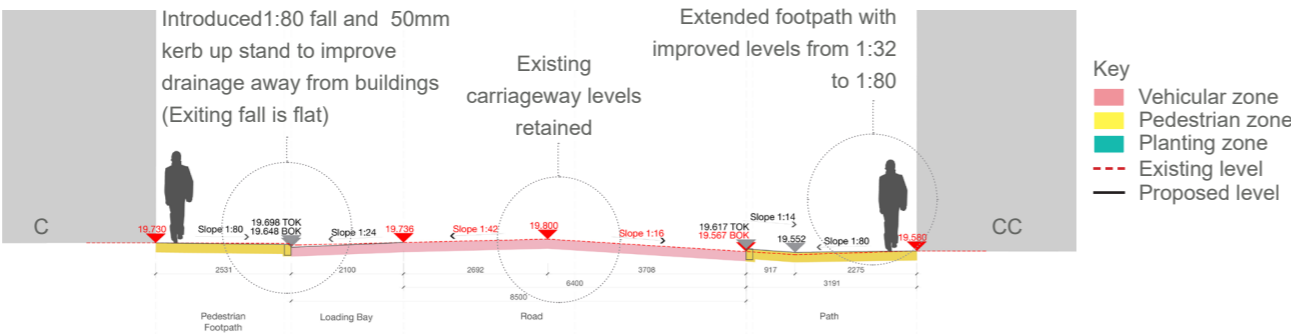
The proposal for Crowe Street is to enhance the public realm to create a sense of arrival in town. This is done by rationalising the road layout and on-street parking, de-cluttering the streetscape and enhancing the pedestrian environment.

The design actions are as follows:

- The double carriageway width is tightened to 6.4m to calm traffic down and reduce vehicle speed. Tracking has been conducted through the detail design process to ensure large vehicles can safely circulate on Crowe Street.
- The pedestrian footpaths width is increased to approximately 2.7m both sides of the street and resurfaced, thus enhancing the pedestrian environment.
- A continuous strip of on-street parking is retained to the eastern side of the street.
- A controlled crossing point is created to the South of Crowe Street, along with an uncontrolled crossing point to the North.



Proposed Section



3.5 George Street

George Street is the direct continuation of Bridge Street on the Southern bank of the Cannahowna/Gort River. It is envisioned that the future Town Park could sit on the adjacent river bank and be accessed from George Street, thus making it an important space for pedestrian connections.

The proposal for all the streets included in the public realm enhancement area is to create a consistent, robust and easy to navigate public realm with enhanced pedestrian spaces and safe crossing points.

The design actions are as follows:

- The double carriageway width is tightened to 6.4m to calm traffic down and reduce vehicle speed.
- The pedestrian footpaths width is increased to approximately 3.8m both sides of the street and resurfaced, thus enhancing the pedestrian environment.
- The two bus stops currently located on Market Square are relocated on George Street on both sides of the railway bridge. There is ample pedestrian space for people to wait for the bus and the possibility to increase the bus stop length in the future to accommodate two buses simultaneously.
- A controlled crossing point is created in front Centra, along with an uncontrolled crossing point on Station Road.

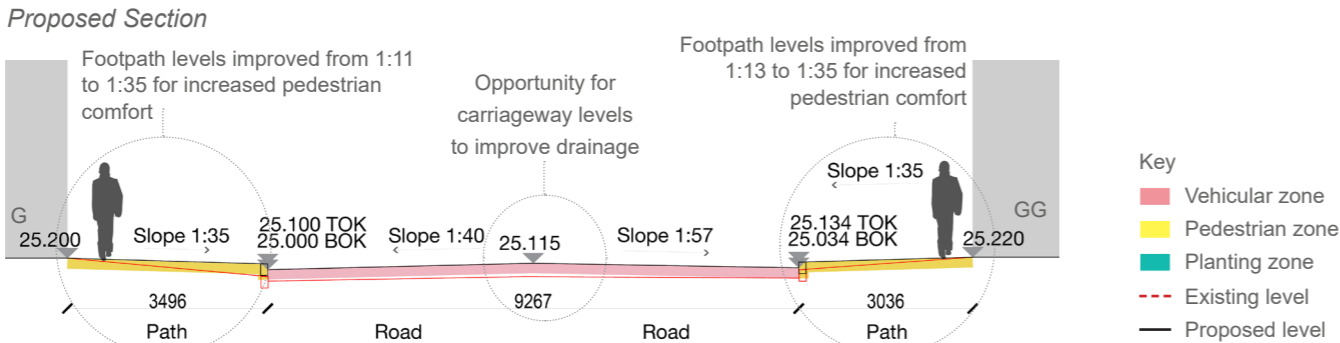


3.6 Barrack Street

Barrack Street runs northeast from Market Square, leading to an area which includes the former barracks, workshops and police building. It is a narrow and quiet street with no through traffic.

The proposal consists in rationalising the road layout, increasing the footpath width wherever possible, resurfacing all hard standing areas and creating two uncontrolled pedestrian crossing points.

Most importantly, one of the two new off-street parking included in the public realm plan sits at the end of Barrack Street. This parking includes 22 new parking bays, including for 1 disabled and 10 electric vehicles.



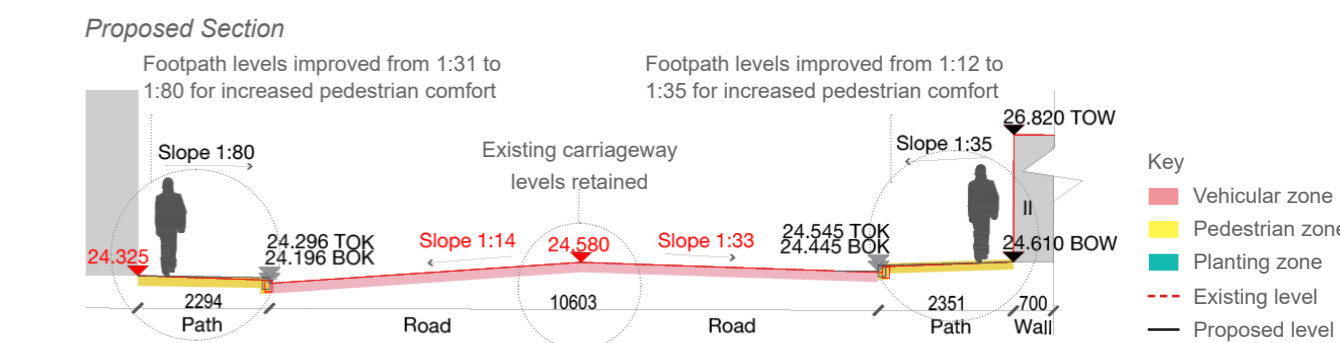
3.7 Church Street

Church Street is the main road coming into town from the southwest, just like Crowe Street and Bridge Street, it connects directly with Market Square.

The proposed layout for Church Street is functional, geared towards efficient pedestrian and vehicular movement whilst introducing some pockets of vegetation and street trees where space and services allow.

The design actions are as follows:

- The double carriageway width is tightened to 6.4m to calm traffic down and reduce vehicle speed.
- The pedestrian footpaths is retained as existing: 1.9m on the northern side of the street and 2.4m on the southern side. This is to allow the inclusion of on-street parking both sides of street.
- On-street parking is introduced on the southern side of the street to allow visitor to park in close proximity of Market Square and support local businesses nearby.
- The existing controlled crossing point in the centre of Church is relocated further down South the street. With the inclusion of another controlled crossing point to the South of Market Square, this allows an even distribution of opportunities to cross the street, enhancing pedestrian connectivity.



3.8 Queen Street

Queen Street circles around Canon Quinn Park and connects Bridge Street to Market Square. It is a fairly narrow, quiet, one-way street bordered by vegetation from adjacent properties and Canon Quinn Park; Gort Library is also accessed from Queen Street. The design proposal seeks to enhance this existing character and make it a pleasant pedestrian environment for locals and visitors.

The design actions are as follows:

- The single carriageway is tightened to 3.8m to calm traffic down and reduce vehicle speed, whilst still allowing large vehicles to safely circulate.
- The pedestrian footpaths width is increased to approximately 2.6m to 3m both sides of the street and resurfaced, thus enhancing the pedestrian environment.
- Additionally, the two existing entrances to Canon Quinn Park are resurfaced and widened and a new one is created, adding further interest and opportunities for pedestrian walking down Queen Street.
- On-street parking is retained on one side of the street, with a rationalised layout and standardised dimensions.
- 5 uncontrolled crossing points are created to enhance pedestrian connectivity and allow good access to Canon Quinn Park.
- The existing bus bay in front of the Library is retained.



3.9 New off-street car park

Behind Lowry’s Lane a new off-street car park is proposed with free, long stay parking. In order to facilitate the possibility of increased traffic along Crowe Street to access the entrance of the new car park, passing bays have been provided where larger vehicles can pass.

The car park itself has a mixture of parking bays and cycle stands to accommodate a number of users. These include electrical charging points, larger Recreational Vehicle (RV) parking bays, disabled parking bays as well as regular parking bays.

The proposed site has been designed to be largely self-draining with permeable paving and proposed swales to allow for surface water to naturally percolate into the existing ground.

New lighting and an uncontrolled crossing is also included within the design actions create a safe and accessible safe at all times.



- Key
- Vehicular zone
 - Pedestrian zone
 - Planting zone
 - Proposed level

4.0

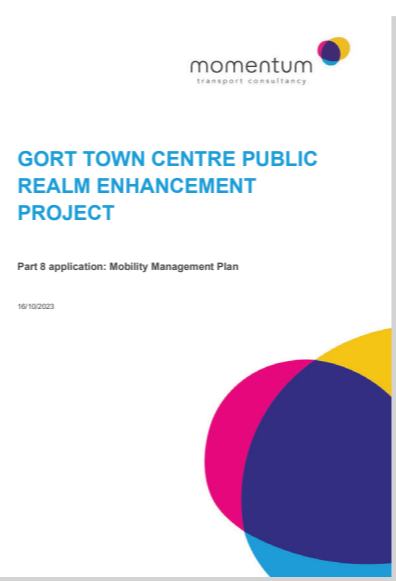
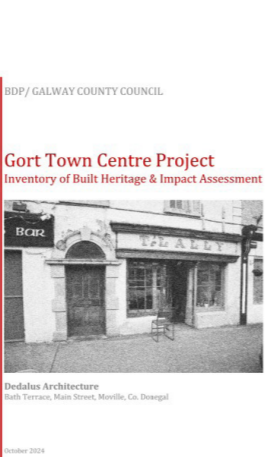
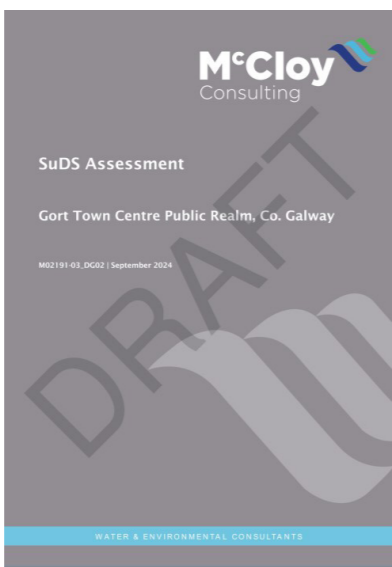
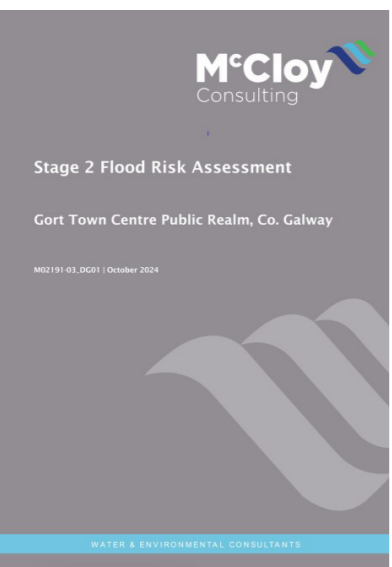
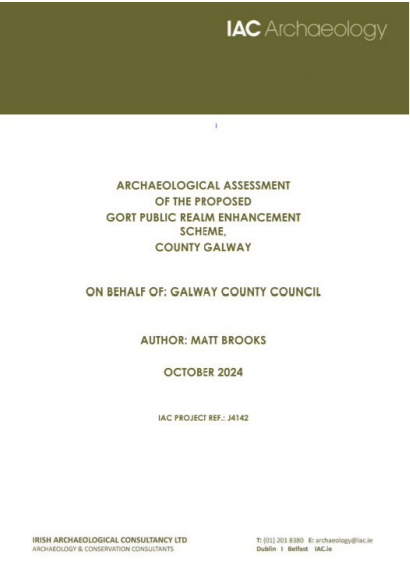
Appendix

4.1 | Specialist Consultants' reports

4.1 Specialist consultant’s report

The following consultants have provided specialist knowledge and design review to ensure the Public Realm Enhancement Plan is comprehensive and its proposals considerate to the wider planning context. Each consultant has produced their own individual supporting documents which explore these areas of expertise in greater detail.

Archaeology	Flood Risk Assessment	SuDS Assessment	Conservation / Built Heritage Impact Assessment:	Transport and Mobility
Consultant: IAC	Consultant: McCloy Consulting	Consultant: McCloy Consulting	Consultant: Dedalus	Consultant: Momentum
Specialist: Faith Bailey	Specialist: Paul Singleton	Specialist: Paul Singleton	Specialist: Duncan McLaren	Specialist: Ben Stutman



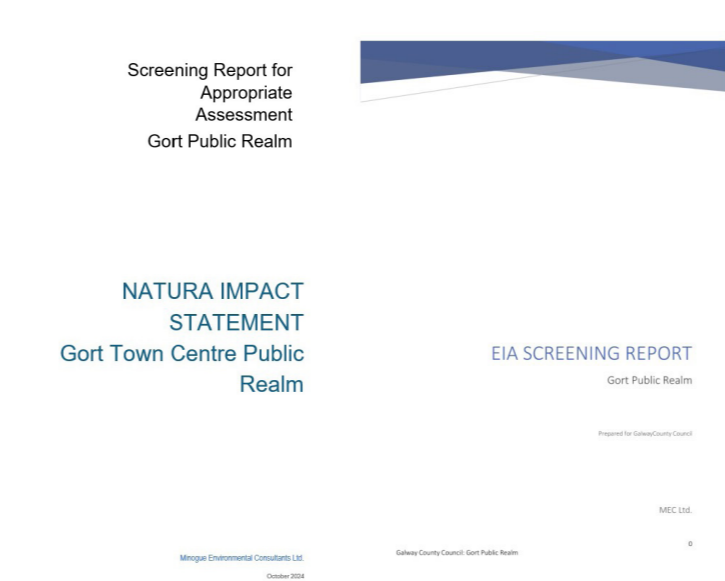
4.1 Specialist consultant’s report

EIA Screening Report

Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment

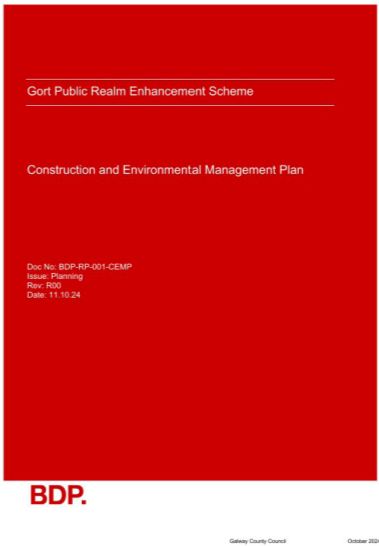
Natura Impact Statement

Consultant: Minogue Environmental Consultants Ltd
Specialist: Ruth Minogue



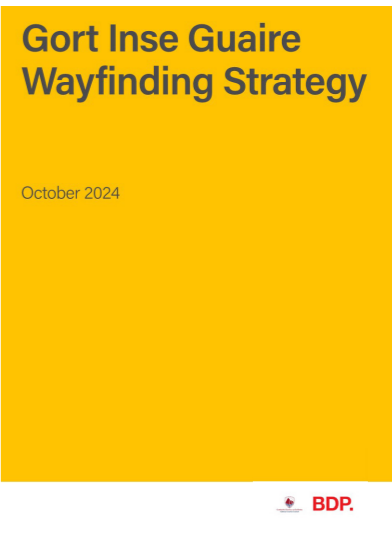
Construction and Environmental Management Plan

Consultant: BDP
Specialist: Terry Kennedy



Signage & Wayfinding

Consultant: BDP
Specialist: Dan Lane



Road Safety Audit

Consultant: CST Group
Specialist: Stuart Summerfield

