

SOUTH DUBLIN STREET AND BACKLANDS REGENERATION PROJECT

MONAGHAN TOWN CENTRE, CO MONAGHAN

Planning statement

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PLANNING STATEMENT

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This planning statement has been prepared by RPS on behalf of Monaghan County Council (MCC) in support of an application for full planning permission in respect of the proposed South Dublin Street and Backlands Regeneration Project in Monaghan Town Centre, Co. Monaghan.

MCC has been successful in securing “Category B” funding through the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) to deliver a Regeneration Scheme (Integrated Urban Development) for Dublin Street and its Backlands in Monaghan Town. The Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) is managed and administered by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government. The URDF is an established mechanism to support more compact and sustainable development, through the regeneration and rejuvenation of the larger urban centres in Ireland in line with the objectives of the National Planning Framework and National Development Plan.

MCC previously commissioned the preparation of the Dublin Street Regeneration Plan 2017 which proposes a regeneration strategy for Dublin Street and the backland areas to the southwest of Dublin Street (South Dublin Street) and to the northeast of Dublin Street (North Dublin Street).

It is an objective of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019 – 2025 that all development proposals in this area have regards to these plans. The Dublin Street Regeneration Plan 2017 conforms with the aspirations and objectives of the adopted plans. The plans conform with the aspirations of the Draft ‘*Urban Development and Building Heights, Guidelines of Planning Authorities*’ (DHPLG 2018).

The proposed development that is the subject of this planning application is the first phase of a regeneration plan for South Dublin Street and its backlands, and funding has been secured to progress these works.

The application seeks planning permission for the following:

- ***The demolition of buildings and structures, including street frontage buildings No's 8-11 Dublin Street and associated outbuildings and structures; the building to the rear of No. 24 Dublin Street; partial removal of the rear section of the Northern Standard building fronting the Lower Courthouse car park; storage sheds, walls, and fencing.***
- ***Construction of structural masonry walls and new facades/side elevations to No's 7 and 12-13 Dublin Street.***
- ***Creation of new urban civic spaces, streets, junctions, pedestrian pavements, steps, and cycle routes.***
- ***Construction of new public realm comprising new surfaces, kerbing, street furniture, public street and feature lighting, soft landscape planting, cycle parking and signage.***
- ***Clearance, regrading and creation of two potential development areas with supporting embankments, hardcore surfacing and boundary fencing.***
- ***New boundary treatments comprising walls, railings and fencing.***
- ***Alterations to the existing car parking layouts within the Courthouse car park and Lower Courthouse car park, and a reduction in long stay parking spaces.***
- ***Upgrading and installation of new utility services, CCTV, and a new ESB substation.***

1.1.1 Purpose and Content

This Statement identifies the key planning policy and material planning considerations of relevance to the proposed development and demonstrates how the proposal accords with the key objectives of planning policy and guidance at national and local level.

The Statement includes the following sections:

- Section 1 provides an introduction to the development and describes the Site and its surrounding area;
- Sections 2 summarises the pre-application discussions and consultation;
- Section 3 provides an overview of the redevelopment proposal;
- Section 4 sets out the planning policy framework of relevance for the Site;
- Section 5 assesses the proposal against policy considerations;
- Section 6 sets out the conclusions

This Planning statement forms part of a wider application submission package and should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- The package of planning drawings;
- Natura Impact Statement
- Environmental Impact Assessment Report, comprising of the following chapters:
 - Chapter 1 Introduction
 - Chapter 2 Project Description
 - Chapter 3 Scoping and Consultations
 - Chapter 4 Noise and Vibration
 - Chapter 5 Flood Risk and Drainage
 - Chapter 6 Water Quality
 - Chapter 7 Soils, Geology and Contamination
 - Chapter 8 Terrestrial Biodiversity
 - Chapter 9 Traffic and Transportation
 - Chapter 10 Air Quality & Climate
 - Chapter 11 Waste
 - Chapter 12 Population and Human Health
 - Chapter 13 Material Assets and Land Use
 - Chapter 14 Townscape and Visual
 - Chapter 15 Archaeology
 - Chapter 16 Interactions

1.2 Site Context and Surrounding Environment

1.2.1 Strategic Location

In strategic terms, the application site is located within Monaghan Town, which is the county town of County Monaghan, recognised as a Tier 1, Principal Town in the local development plan settlement hierarchy. Monaghan Town is the strategically located at the intersection of the N2 Dublin – Derry/Letterkenny and N54 Belfast - Galway National Routes, linking Dublin to the North-West and Belfast to the Midlands, respectively. The town is also located along the key east-west corridor linking Dundalk and Newry to Sligo. Monaghan is a key regional town located 45km northwest of Dundalk, the regional centre for the North-East Region under the National Planning Framework.

As well as serving as a critical hub in terms of transport and linkages with Northern Ireland and the North-West, Monaghan Town performs important employment, retailing and administrative functions servicing the economic needs of a large rural hinterland (and associated network of towns and villages), which extends into Northern Ireland and adjoining counties.

The town is on the N2 road from Dublin to Derry and Letterkenny. Monaghan is a key County Town that occupies a strategic border location along the Dublin to Letterkenny/Derry City corridor, and adjacent to the Dublin/Belfast eastern economic corridor.

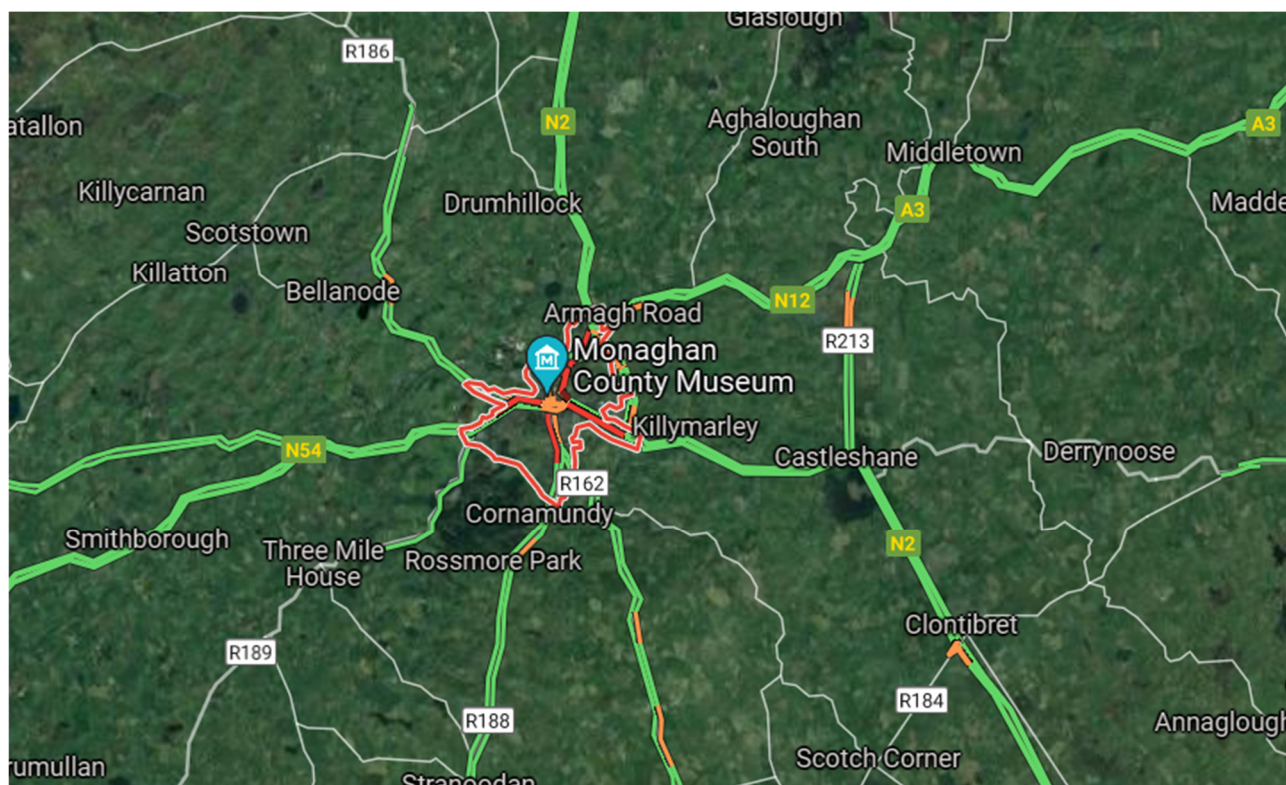


Figure 1: Strategic Location

1.2.2 Local Context

The proposed Dublin Street regeneration scheme area is located in the town centre, to the southeast of the town core, extending from The Diamond to the northwest, south eastwards along Dublin Street, and is defined to the southeast by the Presbyterian Church to the south at Old Cross Square. The application site is defined by the terraces of dwellings to Dublin Street to the northeast, and the long rear gardens to the south, as shown on Figure 2.

Historically those rear gardens extended to the Shambles River which forms part of the southern site boundary, but 20th century development resulted in the gardens being reduced to their present-day configuration, being replaced by large public surface car parking area in the southern part of the development site.

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The terraces facing Dublin Street are interspersed with 4 archways connecting the street to the courtyards, backlands and gardens to the rear via short laneways. The existing structures facing Dublin Street comprise two and three storey structures, generally of two and three bays in width. Typically, there are long rear annexes extending into the depths of the plots.

To the southeast the backlands are characterised by small courtyards created by two storey outhouses positioned parallel to the principal structure. The lands slope down from The Diamond to the north, eastwards to Old Cross Square to the southeast, and also down from Dublin Street southwards toward the public surface car park to the rear.

The site currently comprises several retail /commercial buildings (both vacant and in-use) and back land areas comprising vacant/derelict land and properties, storage areas, and rear access points. It also contains extensive areas of existing car parking, roads/road infrastructure, pedestrian alleyways, and incidental green space.

The Monaghan Shopping Centre lies immediately south and west of the site, abutting Dawson Street and the N54 Macartan (Broad) Road.

The wider context is dominated by town centre uses, including retail, business and commercial, residential, and community/ecclesiastical uses.

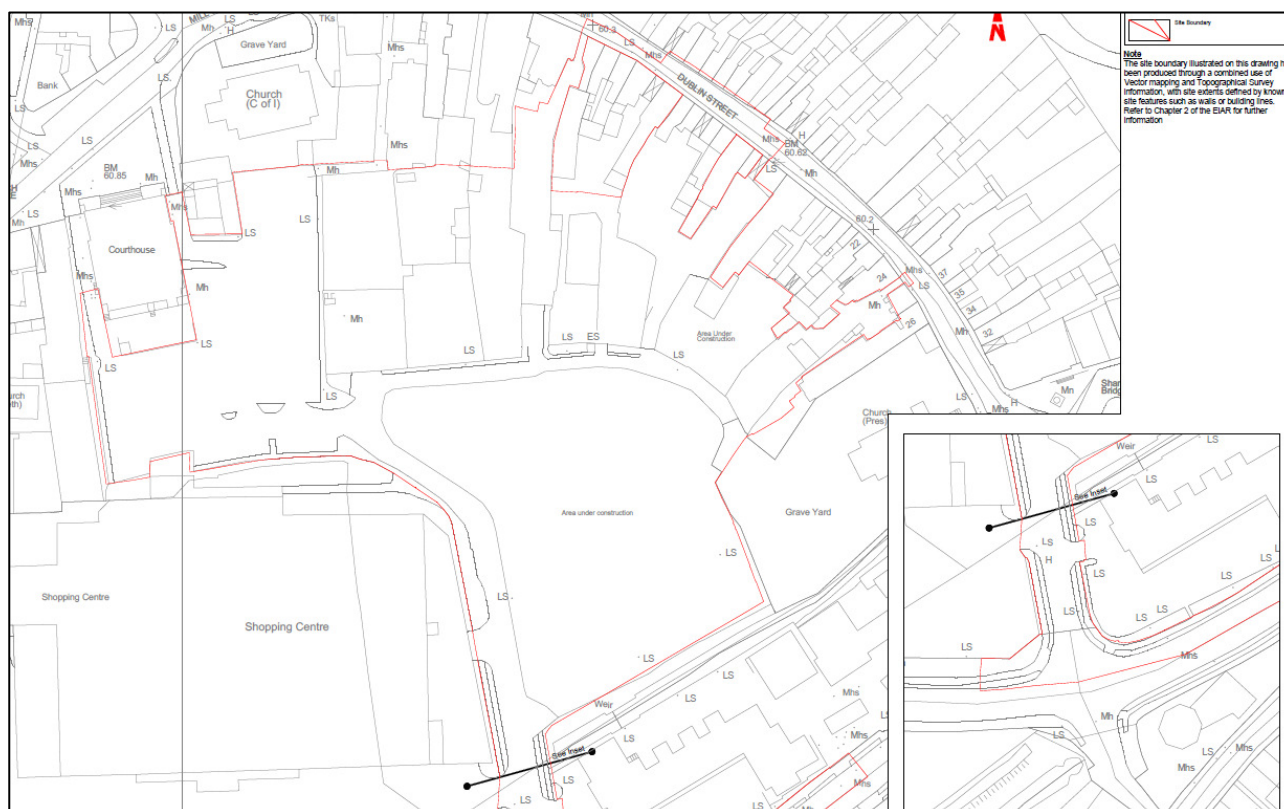


Figure 2: Dublin Street Regeneration Scheme Location

2 PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSIONS AND CONSULTATION

2.1 Pre-Application Engagement

The proposed development has been informed by a comprehensive scoping and consultation process which sought to draw on local knowledge and experience of the critical issues that needed to be addressed in order to inform the development of the final design solution.

The consultation included formal scoping of the EIA with An Bord Pleanála under the terms of Article 95 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) as well as non-statutory engagement with other stakeholders with an interest in the regeneration project. These stakeholders included:

- Landowners / Businesses within the study area
- Elected Representatives
- Internal Council Departments
- Government Departments / Prescribed Authorities
- Public bodies likely to have an interest in the proposals
- Umbrella organisations, such as the Monaghan Town Team, Chamber of Commerce & Industry
- Other interested parties, such as utility and service providers, public transport operators
- Local Groups / organisations, such as Monaghan Tidy Towns, and Monaghan Disability Network, Monaghan Public Participation Network (PPN).

Further detail in respect of the engagement process is provided in the EIAR, Chapter 3 – Scoping & Consultation.

2.2 Stakeholder Consultations

The Project Team sought to engage effectively with the local community from the outset of the project. A public notice was placed in the Northern Standard and on the Council website on 12th March 2020 advising that work had commenced on the South Dublin Street and Backlands Regeneration Project and inviting all land and property owners within the study area to get in touch with Project Team.

A further public notice was placed in the Northern Standard on Thursday 15th April 2021 announcing the intention to carry out a public consultation on the South Dublin Street and Backlands scheme. The notice advised that the draft design proposals would be available online between 19th April and 14th of May 2021, and invited the community to submit any comments/queries in relation to these proposals.

The notice provided the following information:

- Brief summary of the proposed development and location.
- Website link to view the proposals online:
<https://monaghan.ie/south-dublin-street-and-backlands-regeneration-scheme/>
- Details of a consultation event with RPS on Wednesday 5th May 2021 and how to book an appointment.
- Details of how to book a telephone appointment with RPS to discuss the proposals.
- Details of how to make a submission or provide feedback via email and post/hard copy.
- Confirmation that the deadline for receipt of submissions or feedback was 21st May 2021.

A letter and feedback form were distributed to all individual businesses and residents located within the streets and buildings adjoining the study area boundary alerting them to the forthcoming public consultation. The letter invited them to view the draft design proposals and engage with the process by submitting feedback or comments. The consultation process was also advertised through Council social media outlets.

During the public consultation process, the Project Team made direct contact with a range of stakeholders, highlighting the public consultation on the draft proposals, the website link, and sought views/feedback on the emerging proposals. The following stakeholders were contacted:

Stakeholders Consulted			
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	The Heritage Council	Monaghan County Council Planning	Bus Eireann
An Bord Pleanála	Geological Survey of Ireland (DECC)	Monaghan County Council Regeneration	Aircoach
Department of Culture, Heritage & the Gaeltacht (DAU)	Electric Ireland	Monaghan County Council Tourism	Irish Day Tours
Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport & Media	Birdwatch Ireland	Monaghan County Council Environment (Waste / Water)	Translink
Transport Infrastructure Ireland	Monaghan County Museum	Monaghan County Council Roads	Monaghan Public Participation Network (PPN)
Faite Ireland	Irish Cycling Advocacy Network	Monaghan County Council Community & Development Officer	Monaghan Tidy Towns
Chomhairle Ealaíon	Monaghan Fire Station	Monaghan County Council Heritage Office	National Council for the Blind of Ireland
An Taisce - The National Trust for Ireland	Monaghan Courthouse (Courts Service)	Irish Water	Transition Monaghan
Coras Iompair Éireann (CIE)	Garda Síochána Monaghan	ESB	National Disability Authority
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	St Patrick's Church of Ireland, Church Square	EIR	Monaghan Disability Network
National Monuments Service	Monaghan Credit Union	Flogas	Monaghan Integrated Development CLG
Office of Public Works (Head Office)	Monaghan Shopping Centre	Three	Disability Federation of Ireland
Department of the Environment, Climate & Communications	Chamber of Commerce & Industry	Vodafone	Monaghan Town Team
National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS)	Siro	National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH)	Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly

Table 1: Stakeholders Consulted

All groups were offered the opportunity of one-to-one targeted meetings. Subsequently meetings were held with Monaghan Fire and Civil Protection and An Garda Síochána.

Engagement with landowners has been ongoing throughout the project, including direct meetings with a number of landowners to discuss the detail of the proposal in respect of their specific land/property holding, during the public consultation period in May 2021.

In total 48 responses were received during the consultation exercise. They raised a range of issues, including concerns about proposals for demolition, the historic nature of the streetscape, the importance of protecting the town's heritage, the active travel design measures, management of potential disruption during the construction phase, car parking & pedestrianisation, pedestrian safety, the need to design safe spaces, details

in respect of the location & character of specific design elements, compliance with prevailing planning policy and other strategies and the wider regeneration objectives/details.

The detailed issues raised and an explanation in respect of how each has been addressed in the final design proposals is provided in the EIAR, Chapter 3. This confirms that the issues raised by the local community, key stakeholders, and landowners in respect of specific design queries and issues have been effectively addressed where possible, in the final design proposals submitted as part of this application.

The Council is also committed to on-going liaison and effective engagement with elected representatives, the local community and other stakeholders to address any emerging issues during both the construction and operational phase of this project.

2.3 Formal Consultations with ABP & Statutory Agencies

An EIA Scoping Report was submitted to An Bord Pleanála (ABP) under Article 95 Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) on 23rd December 2020.

ABP circulated a request for a response to a number of bodies in accordance with Article 95:

- Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment
- An Chomhairle Ealaíon
- An Taisce
- Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media
- Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Development Applications Unit)
- Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Fáilte Ireland
- The Heritage Council

ABP provided a written opinion on 8th June 2021, in respect of the information to be contained in the EIAR. A copy of the ABP response is provided in the EIAR, Volume II Technical Appendices, Appendix 1A for details on a copy of the ABP scoping response, which includes a copy of the response received from An Taisce.

The ABP written response provided direction on the information to be included in the EIAR in line with the requirements of Schedule 6 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, setting out the required structure of the EIAR and an outline of the specific issues considered relevant to the EIAR.

The EIAR has been prepared in compliance with the requirements set out in the ABP written opinion.

3 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Overview of the Proposed Scheme

3.1.1 Overall Design Concept

The proposed development is the first step in delivering the regeneration proposals for the Dublin Street area and its backlands set out in the **Dublin Street Regeneration Plan 2017**. This Plan sets out a strategic regeneration vision for Dublin Street and its environs, which focuses on consolidating the urban structure, to create new streets and public spaces which will integrate seamlessly with the existing town centre and introduce a new backland quarter. The Plan was adopted by Monaghan County Council and incorporated into the statutory Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 (Monaghan Town Centre Objective MPO2 and Appendix 20).

The Plan provides an overall design concept to guide the detailed design and delivery of this regeneration vision, as set out below.

Dublin Street together with its Backlands offers a unique opportunity to create a new and viable town centre quarter, with the potential to accommodate additional shopping, office, cultural, residential and new employment zone. It offers the opportunity to address the weaknesses of the area and to maximise its strengths; to enhance pedestrian and vehicular movement, to enhance the existing built heritage; to integrate with the historic streetscape in a manner that is both contemporary and forward looking while complimenting the built heritage; to create an integrated and commercially robust, viable proposal, and a vibrant and sustainable new urban quarter in Monaghan.

The design concept at the heart of the Dublin Street Regeneration Plan 2017 (shown in Figure 3) seeks to revitalise the urban structure and create a coherent framework for future development, by setting out the arrangement of streets, buildings, development areas, open space, and landscape areas, as the foundation to reinvigorating this part of the town centre.

In summary, the design concept provides for the provision of a new primary urban space and street, connecting Dublin Street through the underutilised backland areas, through to the Shopping Centre, Castle Street and the N54. The focus is on creating a vibrant urban space designed to accommodate town centre uses within a safe and attractive environment, which has a sense of ownership and community. It prioritises pedestrians, cyclists and public transport, but also accommodates necessary vehicular movements.

In addition, new and improved secondary movement routes are proposed to provide key linkages and connections with the existing urban fabric, generally comprising new streets, improved entries and footpaths where pedestrian and cycle priorities are maximised. These highly connected spaces are clearly defined and convenient for all users, ensuring access to employment, retail and local community facilities. A key design focus is creating safe and secure links within these spaces and ensure high levels of natural surveillance.

A core component of the new spaces is the provision of high-quality public realm, which plays a central role in creating a well-connected, safe and enjoyable environment within this new and improved part of Dublin Street.

This planning application and EIAR focuses on the design and delivery of these new spaces, providing an enhanced context for future development as set out in the longer term vision of the Regeneration Plan.

The street names identified in Figure 3 were proposed by the Dublin Street Regeneration Plan 2017. It is acknowledged that the naming of streets is an important part of any development process and following a grant of approval, engagement with Elected Members will take place regarding the final street names. For the purposes of the EIAR, NIS and the project description, the street names proposed in the Regeneration Plan (and noted above) are retained within the proposed development design drawings and documents for ease of cross-reference.

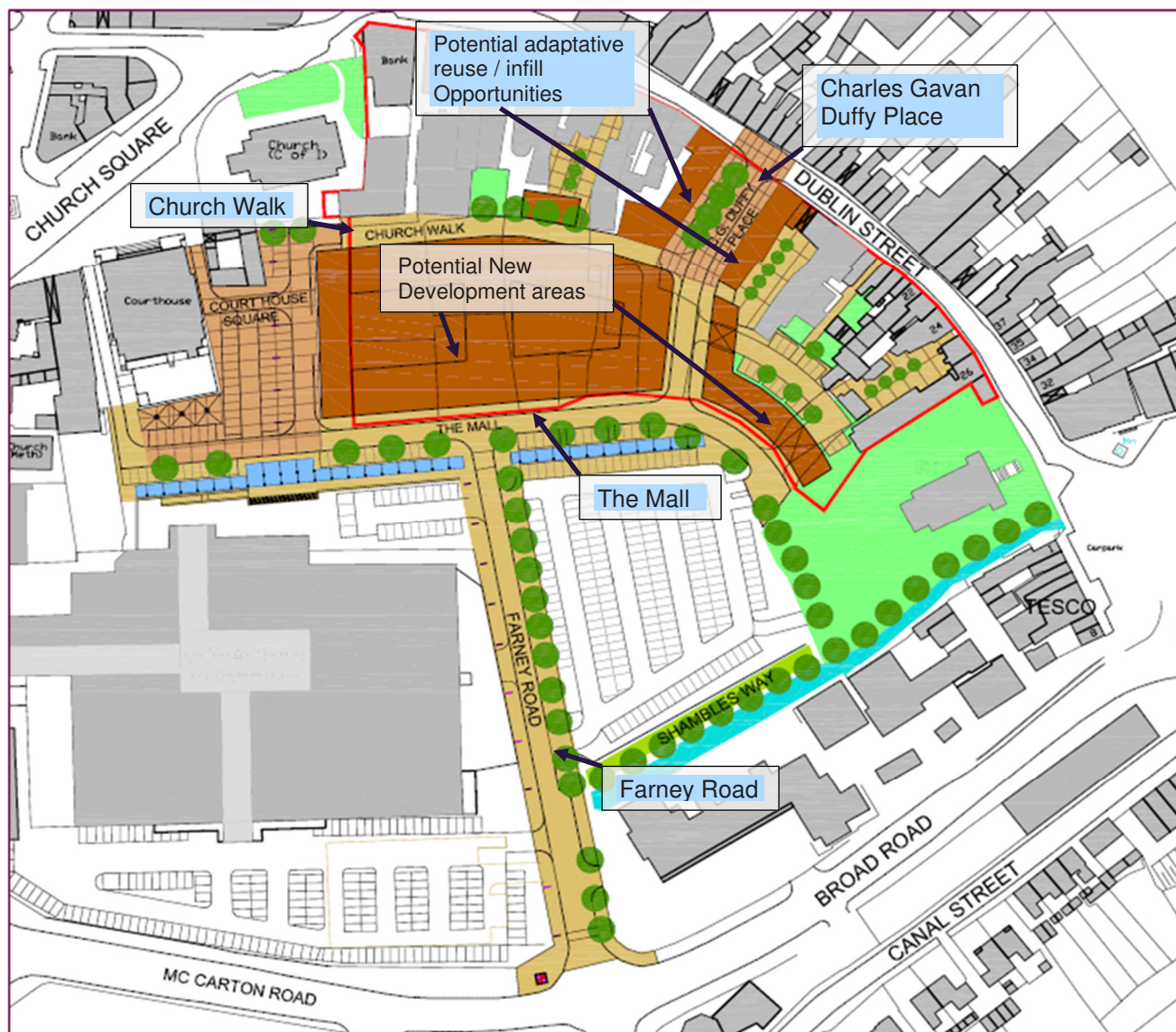


Figure 3: Dublin Street Regeneration Scheme Concept Layout

3.1.2 The Development Proposals

The proposed development works that are the subject of the planning application and the EIA process are set out in the package of planning drawings submitted in support of the application and included in the EIAR, Volume III Technical Drawings & Figures. The application plans/drawings are listed below:

- Drawing LA0001-01 Site Location
- Drawing LA0002-01 Topographic Survey (Existing Levels)
- Drawing BU1001 Demolitions & Removals
- Drawing SC1001 Site Clearance
- Drawing GA1001 Proposed General Arrangement
- Drawing A-20-001 Existing & Proposed Elevations
- Drawing A-20-002 Proposed Gable Return Elevations
- Drawing CS1014 Long Sections
- Drawing DR1001 Drainage
- Drawing KP1003 Construction Details

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- Drawing EW0001 Earthworks
- Drawing RM1001 Road Markings
- Drawing SK0013 Proposed ESB Sub-Station
- Drawing KP1004 Northern Standard Elevation

A detailed description of the development proposals is provided in the EIAR, Chapter 2 – Project Description. A summary of the development proposals is set out below.

❖ **Creation of a New Multi-Use Urban Space – Charles Gavan Duffy Place (CGDP)**

A new street and civic space are proposed midway along Dublin Street, to act as a new gateway into the backlands area, The Mall and Lower Courthouse car park and facilitate an increase in pedestrian footfall and vehicular activity. The new street will be formed by the demolition of existing structures between No 8 and No 11 (inclusive) Dublin Street to form a new junction onto Dublin Street that accommodates two-way vehicular traffic, extended footpaths and a multi-use urban space. It is capable of being temporarily cordoned off for use as an event space, a market, pop-up commercial/retail use, or occasional festival events.



Figure 4: Proposed General Arrangement of Charles Gavan Duffy Place / Dublin Street

The extent of demolition in this location is identified on Figure 5, which is an extract from Planning Drawing BU1001 (Volume III Technical Drawings and Figures).

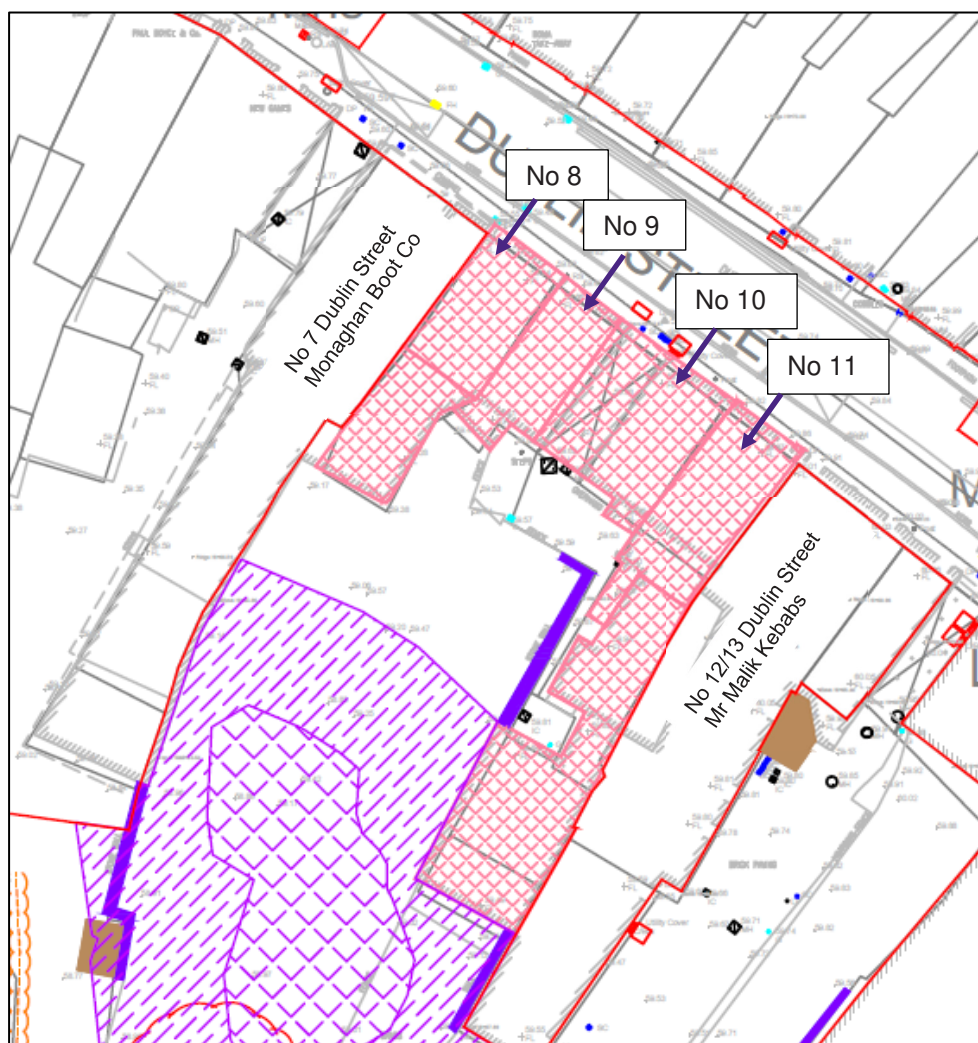


Figure 5: Demolition of properties along Dublin Street

Following demolition works, the exposed gable elevations at No's 7 and 12/13 Dublin Street will be reconfigured to provide frontage onto the new Charles Gavan Duffy Place in an enhanced urban form, that delivers animated edges to the new space, and an element of natural surveillance at this gateway location. A temporary support system will be put in place to ensure the existing gable walls of No.7 and No 12/13 are protected and supported against outward movement. This is likely to take the form of a temporary raking system or support scaffolding, which will be in place until new permanent masonry walls are constructed and connected into the existing buildings.

The construction of new gable elevations on both these properties provided opportunities to create a new aspect out onto CGDP, with new active frontage and an animated edge to the new urban space. In this context, Monaghan County Council and RPS have engaged with both affected property owners, and the proposed elevations (as set out on Planning Drawing A-20-002) have been agreed. Careful consideration was given to creating active frontage on both gable elevations where possible, to promote people activity, encourage social interaction, ensure a natural surveillance.

The new streetscape will feature shared surfaces, a range of street furniture within the extended width footpaths. This includes:

- A shared surface in high quality natural stone paving incorporating a change in levels which together with new stone paving on approach along Dublin Street creates a new sense of arrival into this gateway along Charles Gavan Duffy Place.

- Extended width footpaths on either side of the proposed junction and carriageway, accommodating more than adequate pedestrian space for movement and dwell time, as well as street furniture, planting and street lighting
- Soft landscape planting along both footpaths to prevent unauthorised parking on the footpath.
- On the western footpath, planting will be in moveable raised planters with integrated seating.
- On the eastern footpath, semi-mature soft landscape planting will be located in purpose-built tree pits, within the footpaths.
- New street lighting is proposed at various intervals to ensure a safe and well-lit environment for all people moving through the space. A lighting design has been prepared for the scheme, and comprises a variety of single headed lighting columns, with pendant lantern head (up to 10m in height).
- New inground illumination bars (strip lighting) are positioned at the back of the pavement, to provide additional lighting within the public space. This will assist in illuminating the adjacent walls / elevations, and will also improve safety within the space, and deter anti-social behaviour.
- The existing pedestrian entry adjacent to No. 14 Dublin Street is retained in this proposal and identified as an important and well-used pedestrian link.

❖ *Creation of Church Walk*

A new pedestrian and vehicle linkage is proposed to connect Charles Gavan Duffy Place to the Courthouse car park. The Dublin Street Regeneration Plan 2017 has proposed that this might be called Church Walk, in recognition of the views of the spires from St Patricks Church of Ireland and the First Monaghan Presbyterian Church.

A new single lane, one-way carriageway (3.5m width) is created connecting the Courthouse car park with CGDP. This linkage is formed through the clearance of backland areas and the part-demolition of the rear premises of the Northern Standard building which currently fronts onto the Lower Courthouse car park. This demolition exposes a previous external elevation (with existing openings), which had been concealed by historical building extensions. Figure 6 outlines the proposed demolition which includes part of the building and the associated car park.

The junction of Church Walk with CGDP is demarcated by a raised table in coloured asphalt. A vehicle layby area is provided along this carriageway, close to the potential central development area, to accommodate large vehicles servicing the large central development area adjacent.

Pedestrian footpaths are provided to connect the CGDP space through to the Courthouse car park, with a continuous surfacing of natural stone paving to enhance legibility and ease of movement for those on foot. Smaller paving unit sizes and dropped kerbs demarcate vehicular access points into private property within the wider area.

New street trees, street lighting and bicycle stands are proposed at the top of the Courthouse car park at the entrance to Church Walk, and adjacent to the Church of Ireland and current alleyway connecting through to The Diamond. The current pedestrian access, gates and walls of the Church of Ireland are not impacted by this development. The existing elevation of the Northern Standard will be retained, and this provides openings onto the new streetscape.

The existing linkage through from the Lower Courthouse car park through to Dublin Street at the rear of Monaghan County Council Planning Office is retained, and the proposals include for a resurfacing of this link in the same natural stone paving provided throughout the scheme to optimise legibility and ease of movement. Contrasting paving is provided on those areas where accessible parking spaces take priority.

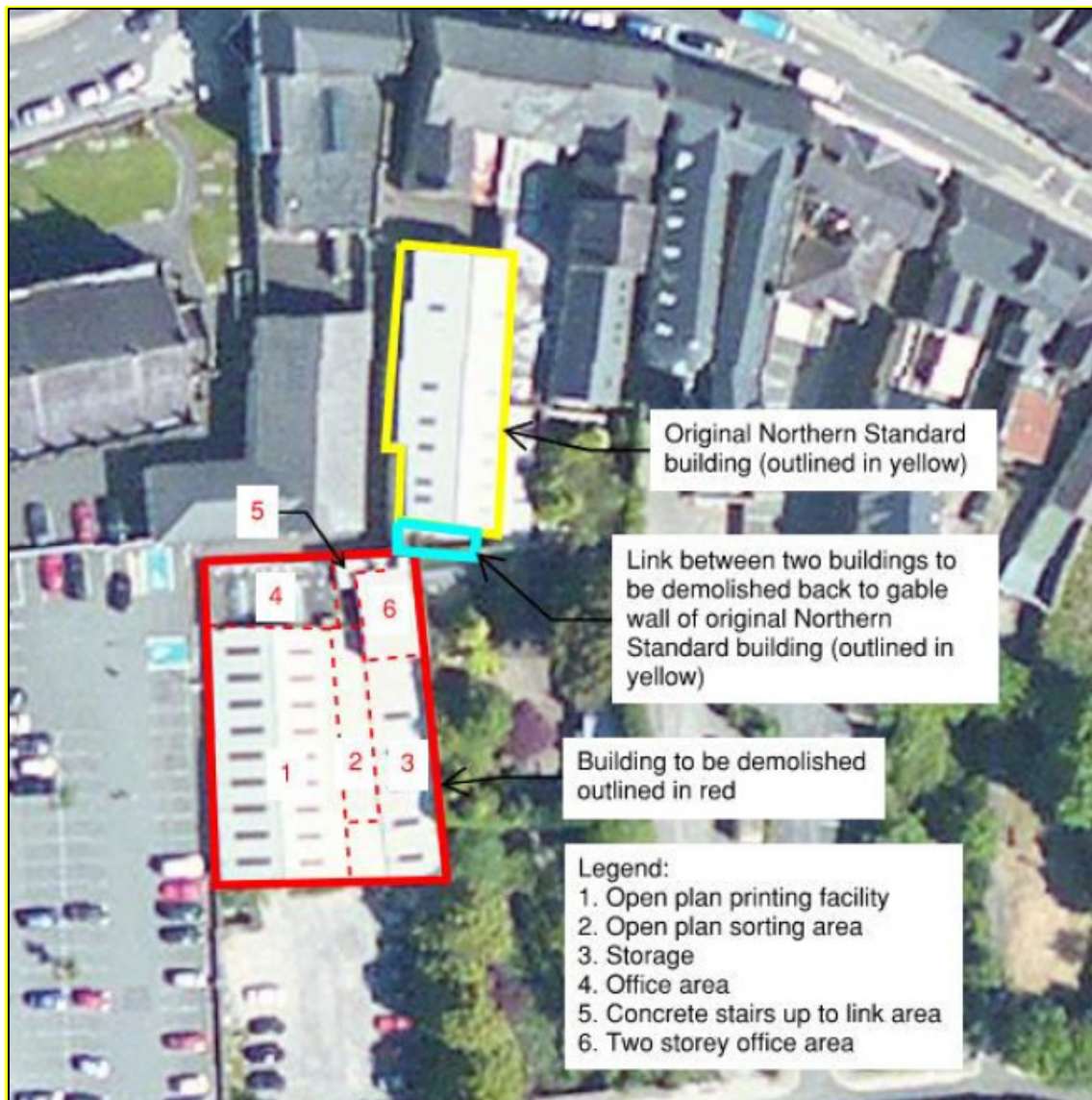


Figure 6: Proposed demolition of part of the Northern Standard premises - Church Walk

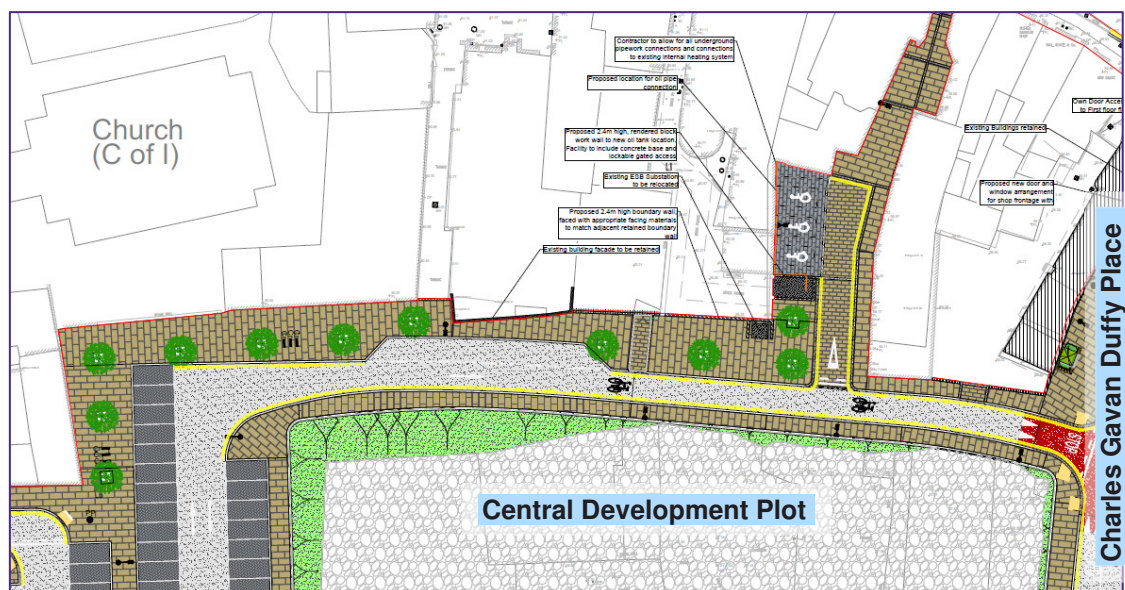


Figure 7: Proposed Church Walk Layout

This development also involves the relocation of an ESB Networks substation and a MCC oil tank. Both will be enclosed by 2.4m high screen walls and will therefore be screened from public view.

Church Walk also forms the northern boundary of the proposed central development plot, which it is hoped will accommodate new building blocks and town centre uses at some point in the future. The southern boundary of the pedestrian footpath adjacent to the development area will be demarcated by 3m high security fencing, as an interim measure until future development is brought forward.

❖ *The Mall and Farney Road*

The proposed development includes both the realignment Castle Road from the N54 Macartan (Broad) Road into the application site, and the current service road connecting the two existing car parks with Castle Road.

The Dublin Street Regeneration Plan 2017 suggests that the realigned service road may be renamed as The Mall. This formal street will traverse the site in an east/west direction connecting the Courthouse car parks, the Monaghan Shopping Centre, and CGDP. Formal footpaths are created along both roads, connecting into and extending the legible new pedestrian network into the Courthouse car park, Church Walk and CGDP. Crossing points are indicated at regular intervals along these linear streets. The proposed layout in this area is shown in Figure 8.

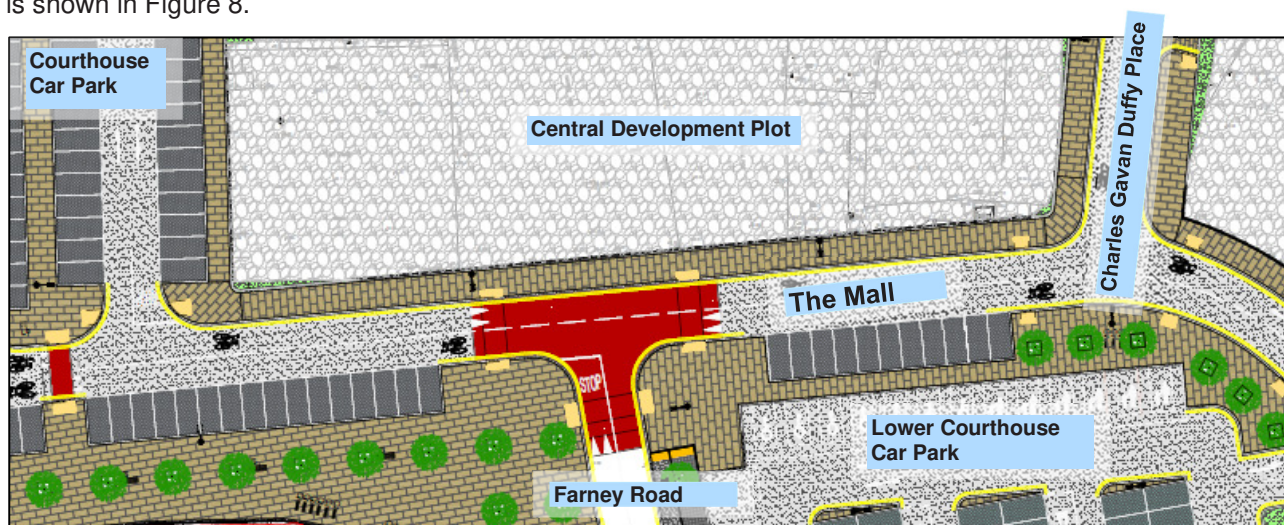


Figure 8: Proposed Mall and connection to Farney Road

The Regeneration Plan also proposes that the main spine road connecting the N54 Macartan (Broad) Road to the application site, known as Castle Road, will be realigned and renamed as Farney Road. The realigned junction of the Farney Road and The Mall will form part of a staggered junction with CGDP and proposed considerable improvements to pedestrian facilities significant pedestrian upgrades, with numerous crossing points and tactile paving areas.

There are several public realm improvements along this access route – new cycle lanes (asphalt) and pedestrian footpaths (high quality concrete paving) will be provided on both sides of the realigned 6.5m carriageway, to encourage pedestrian and cycle movements into the areas. These are complemented by new cycle stands in various locations throughout the site, to promote safe bicycle storage.

The N54 Macartan Road (Broad Road) forms part of the Monaghan to Cavan National Secondary. It is proposed to upgrade the pedestrian facilities at the junction of the N54 Macartan Road (Broad Road) and Farney Road with a reduction in the carriageway width on Farney Road to facilitate pedestrian movements. The existing vehicular traffic arrangement at this junction will be maintained and no realignment of the N54 is proposed.

❖ *Reconfiguration of Existing Car Parks*

This proposal includes a reconfiguration of both car parks to accommodate the enhanced alignment of The Mall and Farney Road, and to maximise the area available for walking, cycling and shopping activities. There are currently 393 car parking spaces currently provided within the application site. These include 240 no. spaces associated with the Lower Courthouse and 153 no. spaces located at the Courthouse. The car parks

consist of a mixture of long and short stay parking with a split of approximately 53% (209) long stay and 47% (184) short stay spaces available.

The proposed layout results in an overall reduction of 59 spaces within the overall site car parking provision, namely 41 no. spaces associated with the Lower Courthouse and 18 no. spaces associated with the Courthouse car park.

This proposal includes a reconfiguration of both car parks (Figures 9 & 10) to accommodate the enhanced alignment of The Mall and Farney Road, and to maximise the area available for walking, cycling and shopping activities. New Parent & Baby Spaces have been identified on the northern boundary of the Lower Courthouse car park. The reconfiguration of spaces has also facilitated a consolidation of the existing disabled bay parking spaces.



Figure 9: Courthouse Car Park



Figure 10: Lower Courthouse Car Park

Both car parks will be resurfaced with asphalt, bounded by newly paved pedestrian footpaths / kerbing in natural stone finish. These pedestrian areas will become part of the wider enhanced pedestrian network, with the natural stone finish providing continuity and legibility throughout the pedestrian network. A wide pedestrian plaza area is retained and enhanced at the front of the Shopping Centre, with the same natural stone finish. These areas are complemented by a mix of corduroy and tactile paving areas to denote key crossing points.

The proposed development creates an upgraded space throughout the Courthouse car park, with realigned spaces, kerbing, natural stone paving delineating key pedestrian linkages, tactile paving, soft landscape and new street lighting to generally improve the public realm.

The Dublin Street Regeneration Plan 2017 identifies part of the existing Courthouse car park as a new major public space, with high quality landscaping, potential covered areas that will accommodate car parking, a farmers' market and an event space. The aspiration is for a flexible space, which can provide for an outdoor gathering space whilst allowing for day to day parking and will be defined by the rear /side façade of the Courthouse, the boundary of the Church of Ireland, and, in the longer term, defined by new building on the central development plot.

❖ **Sherry's Lane**

The proposed development includes for improvements to the existing movement route from Dublin Street to the rear of No 24 Dublin Street (Sherry's Pub). The existing narrow entry into this location is restricted by the buildings on either side, but it opens into a pleasant, intimate courtyard space to the rear of the frontage buildings. It is proposed to demolish a small outbuilding, to create an enhanced connection for pedestrians from Dublin Street through this space, out into the Lower Courthouse car park and connecting into The Mall pedestrian network.

Figure 11 illustrates proposed new natural stone paving throughout this area, complimenting the approach throughout the overall scheme, with new kerbing, and tactile surfaces at crossing points. New street lighting and inground strip lighting is provided throughout this area, to ensure a safe and attractive movement route could be provided. Similarly, minimal street furniture is provided in this particular location, to ensure that anti-

social behaviour is discouraged. A private gated access is provided to the rear of No 23 and No 24 Dublin Street to facilitate access and servicing.

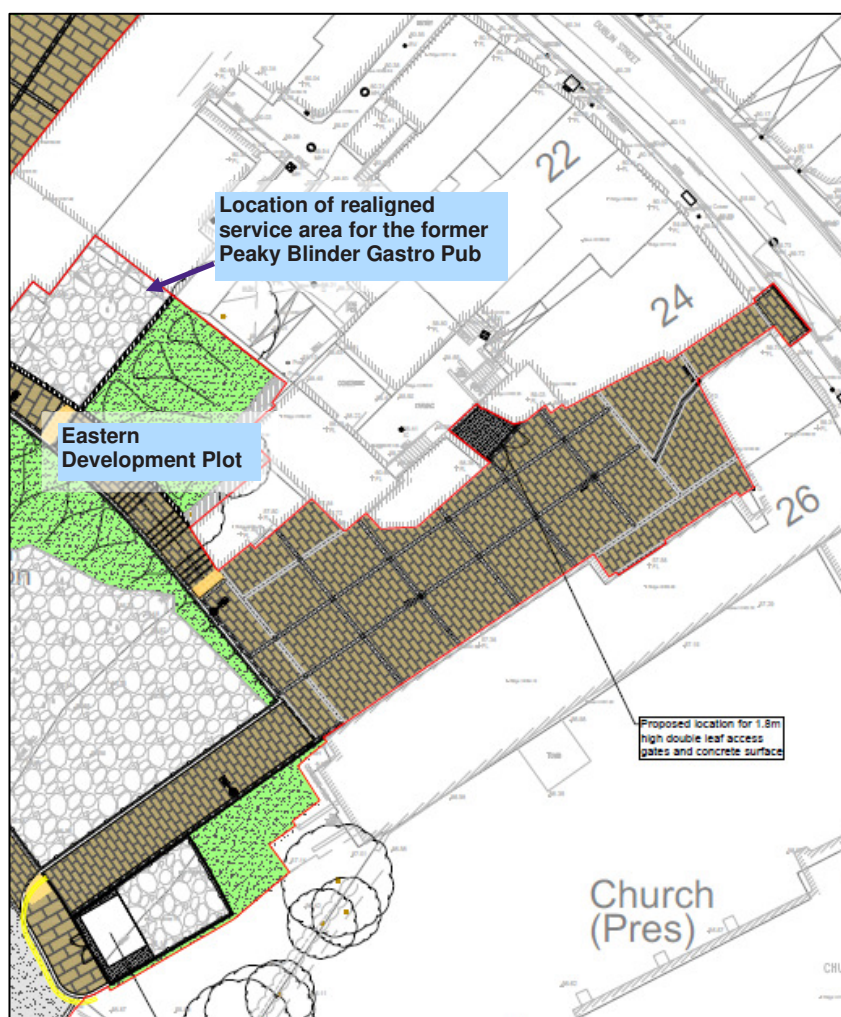


Figure 11: Proposed Layout Sherry Lane

❖ **Future Development Plots**

The proposed development will create two new potential development plots as a result of the site clearance of backland areas. The largest development plot is in the central area to the rear of those properties fronting onto The Diamond and 1-7 Dublin Street. It will be created by the demolition of properties and structures in the backlands, and construction of the newly created streets and spaces within the proposed Charles Gavan Duffy Place, Church Walk and The Mall.

The finished ground levels within this plot will be located approximately 2-3m below the proposed ground level of the carriageway and footpath proposed along Church Walk. Church Walk will be supported at this higher level by an earth embankment with slope of 1:2 within the plot, formed by the regrading of soil throughout the site where possible. The site will be enclosed by a 2.4m high green mesh paladin security fence.

There is also a difference in the finished ground levels between the eastern future development site and its boundary with The Mall Road and the east-west pedestrian linkage proposed between Charles Gavan Duffy Place and the existing pedestrian link between Dublin Street, to the rear of Sherry's Pub. This level difference (3-4m) will also be supported by an earth embankment structure within the site, with a proposed slope of 1:2, which it is anticipated, will be replaced with an appropriate supporting structure integral to the end development proposal. The embankments will comprise clean soil/fill and grassed, with hardcore on the ground. The site will be bounded by a security fence.

The proposed development does not include proposals for the future development plots identified within the wider regeneration concept. These future development plots are likely to comprise town centre land uses,

when developed. Proposals will be brought forward by either the Council or third parties as separate planning applications and assessed under the relevant planning and environmental considerations at that time.

❖ **Proposed Landscaping**

The soft landscaping elements will comprise tree planting, raised planters and grass. The following species are proposed for use in hard landscape areas:

- Pin Oak (*Quercus palustris*)
- Cypress Oak (*Quercus robur* 'Fastigiata')
- Lime (*Tilia cordata* 'Greenspire')
- Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus* 'Frans Fontaine') and
- Cherry (*Prunus* 'Sunset Boulevard')

The following trees are proposed for use in soft landscape areas are:

- Rowan (*Sorbus* Spp)
- Lime (*Tilia x euchlora*)
- Cherry (*Prunus* Spp.) or Maple (*Acer campestre* 'Streetwise')

The trees currently being considered for use in planters as multi-stemmed trees are - Birch (*Betula utilis* 'Jacquemontii'). A range of low growing shrubs/ perennials are proposed for the raised planters, and the final species will be determined in conjunction with the Councils maintenance department.

❖ **Drainage**

The majority of existing surface water is collected in pipes and discharged to the Shambles River. Some of this water is collected is discharged to the Shambles River via a stone attenuation area under the main Car Park area.

EIAR, Volume III Technical Drawings & Figures, Planning Drawing DR0001 – Drainage provides details of the new surface water networks proposed, which will include for future development within the area. The main surface water network will collect the majority of surface runoff within the project site and discharge to a proprietary attenuation crate system and pass through a petrol interceptor chamber before discharging to the Shambles River. Discharge into the river from this network will be limited to a maximum discharge rate of between 5 l/sec during the 1 in 100 year critical duration storm event using a hydro-brake chamber prior to the outfall. The attenuation system will be constructed underneath the main car park area.

A smaller surface water network will be provided to collect runoff from sections of the Farney Road and the car park where lower surface elevations prevent this runoff from being connected into the proprietary attenuation crate system. Therefore, a section of the Farney Road and car park will continue to drain unattenuated into the Shambles River. To reduce the environmental impact of this, a petrol interceptor will be installed at the outlet of this network to prevent pollutants entering the river.

SuDS drainage systems are provided throughout the project site. All chambers and gullies will have catchpits to reduce the volume of sediment that outfalls to the river. Porous paving will be provided over a substantial area of the car park with runoff infiltrating into the attenuation system and an infiltration trench has been provided on the grass verge on the south side of the car park to provide some long-term storage in the network. Due to the high risk of flooding indicated on the CFRAMS mapping for the area, non-return flow valves will be fitted to all network outfall pipes to prevent river flood flows from inundating the networks and resuspending sediments stored in the petrol interceptor chambers through back washing. Manual penstocks shall also be fitted to network outfalls to enable networks to be closed in the event of an accidental spillage

A new foul water sewer network to service the new development sites is proposed. Foul water will be separated from storm water and discharged into an existing foul sewer network at Macartan (Broad) Road. This foul sewer crosses an existing culvert on Farney Road at the Shambles River. It is proposed that this sewer will pass underneath the culvert. The construction method used to carry this out will likely be directional drilling but will be an individual Contractors decision based on safety and environmental impact which will be required to be agreed with the applicant before being carried out.

❖ Utilities

Consultation was carried out with individual utility providers and the proposals take cognisance of their requirements.

- **ESB:** There are 2 no. ESB substations which will be affected by the works - one is located in lands adjacent to rear of the Monaghan County Council offices on Dublin Street, and one located on the edge of the lower Courthouse Car Park close to the eastern development area. The proposed development includes for the relocation of an existing substation adjacent to the Monaghan County Council Planning Offices to the rear of the footpath proposed along Church Walk. ESB Networks has agreed the location and provided a proposed design, as shown on Planning Drawing SK0013

It also proposes the new substation on lands adjacent to the First Monaghan Presbyterian Church adjacent to the Courthouse car park.

There are a number of small ESB and electrical pillars and cabinets that will be removed and replaced to facilitate the new electrical equipment layout. It will be a contractual requirement for the Works Contractor to maintain power and service connections throughout the works unless with prior agreement from individual utility providers. Where buildings are to be demolished their connections to ESB plant and equipment will be removed as agreed with ESB.

A significant network of new MV and LV 125mm ducting will be installed throughout the scheme to facilitate potential future developments, without the need to carry out further excavations in the new footpaths or roads in the future. Electric car charging points are also identified on the proposed General Arrangement drawing, the aesthetics and installation method of which will only become known following procurement as individual providers have different equipment.

- **EIR:** There is minimal amount of existing EIR ducting and cabling recorded in the works area. Where buildings are to be demolished their connections to EIR plant and equipment will be removed as agreed with EIR. New EIR 110mm ducting has been provided throughout the scheme to facilitate new EIR and fibre optic cabling for future developments.
- **Watermains:** There is a minimal amount of existing watermains which will be required to be diverted to facilitate this development and potential future developments. A significant network of new 250mmPE watermains, complete with sluice valves, scour vales, hydrants and meters will be installed throughout the scheme with individual connection points to the proposed development sites included to facilitate potential future developments. All watermains works proposed will be constructed in strict accordance with Irish Water Standards.
- **5G:** It is planned to lay a significant amount of 110mm spare ducting with the intention to use for future 5G connection. This ducting will follow the route of the Public Lighting ducting with the intention that should 5G equipment be required to be installed at a future date that it could be mounted to public lighting columns if considered feasible at such a time.
- **CCTV:** Ducting will be put in place to provide power and communication network connection for the future instalment of CCTV cameras by An Garda Síochána. The infrastructure provided in this scheme aims to minimise the potential disruption that may be caused to the new surface treatment when the installation of CCTV cameras is carried out by An Garda Síochána. The locations of ducting and advanced infrastructure for these cameras have been agreed between RPS, An Garda Síochána and MCC.
- **Parking Meters:** It is proposed to retain the existing parking meters, however these will be relocated to more appropriate locations, as shown on the layout drawings. New 125mm ducting will be provided to these meters and a new electrical supply also fitted through these ducts.

❖ Demolition and Site Clearance

Details of the demolitions and removals as referenced above are provided in the EIAR, Volume III Technical Drawings & Figures, Drawings BU1001 Demolitions and Removals and SC1001 for details.

A considerable amount of Japanese Knotweed has been identified within the site, because of early ecological surveys. Due to the nature of the urban location and the works involved in the proposal, it is proposed to excavate the relevant areas and remove the infected material (including material within a surrounding buffer area) off site to landfill in line with best practice as detailed in EIAR, Chapter 8 and its associated appendices. Planning Drawing BU1001 Demolitions and Removals provides details of the extent of the Japanese Knotweed and the area to be removed as part of this project.

4 PLANNING LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 Legislative Context

The legal framework for the planning system in Ireland is the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended (*'the Act'*). The Act states that the purpose of the legislation is:

"....to provide, in the interests of the common good, for proper planning and sustainable development"

Section 34(2)(a) of the Act confirms that when making a decision in relation to a planning application, the planning authority shall be restricted to considering the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, regard being had to:

- (i) the provisions of the development plan
- (ii) the provisions of any special amenity area order relating to the area
- (iii) any European site or other area prescribed for the purposes of section 10(2)(c)
- (iv) where relevant, the policy of the Government, the Minister or any other Minister of the Government
- (v) the matters referred to in subsection (4), and
- (vi) any other relevant provision or requirement of this Act, and any regulations made thereunder.

The proposal is identified as a class of development specified in Part 2, Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. The project was screened under Category 10(b)(vi) - Infrastructure Projects, and due to its size (2.11ha) is considered to constitute *'EIA development'*. An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) has been prepared in support of the planning application, which is being submitted under Section 175 Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

The project has also been subject to Screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) to assess whether the proposed development, individually or in combination with any other plans or projects, was likely to have a significant effect on any European site. The report concluded that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment was required, and a Natura Impact Statement is included within the planning submission. In that context, the provisions of Section 177AE of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) also apply.

4.2 Planning Policy & Other Material Considerations

4.2.1 Policy & Other Material Considerations

The ABP Scoping response provided direction on the policy context, citing the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 as the primary policy consideration. The scoping response also references the critical environmental matters that need to be assessed in the EIA process in order to address the material considerations that arise as a result of location, nature and scale of the Proposed development.

In that context and in light of the requirements of section 34 of the Act as set out above, the final design solution being brought forward for submission has been prepared and assessed against the following key considerations:

- National Development Plan/National Planning Framework 2040
- Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy for the Northern & Western Regional Assembly 2019-2040
- Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025
- South Dublin Street & Backland Regeneration Plan
- Identified critical environmental considerations:
 - Population & human health including potential noise, transport, air quality, amenity, water quality, flood risk & drainage impacts
 - Biodiversity including potential impacts on designated sites and other acknowledged ecological interests

- Land & soil including potential contamination, management of materials and surface waters
- Water including potential impacts on surface and ground waters, flood risk and drainage including consideration of climate change
- Air quality and climate
- Cultural heritage including archaeological and built heritage interests
- Landscape including impacts on the urban landscape and acknowledged heritage interests

4.2.2 National Planning Policy

National Planning Framework, February 2018 & National Development Plan

The National Planning Framework (NPF) is the Government's long-term spatial strategy for shaping the future growth and development of the country to the year 2040, making provision for an additional one million people expected to be living in Ireland by 2040, as well as a further two thirds of a million jobs. It seeks to empower each region to lead planning and development in the communities by setting out national objectives and key principles that set the context for more detailed and refined plans at regional and local level.

The Strategy covers a number of key areas such as creating successful sustainable places, low carbon places, naturally resilient places and connected places. It sets about achieving the vision by:

- developing a new region-focused strategy for managing growth
- linking this to a new 10-year investment plan, the Project Ireland 2040 National Development Plan 2018-2027
- using state lands for certain strategic purposes
- supporting this with strengthened, more environmentally focused planning at local level
- backing the framework up in law with an Independent Office of the Planning Regulator

The Proposed development is in line with the strategic objectives of the NPF which focuses on a new strategy for managing growth to provide more balanced growth across the regions. More balanced growth means more concentrated growth and a major new policy emphasis on renewing and developing existing settlements. This will involve transforming settlements of all sizes through imaginative urban regeneration and bringing life/jobs back into cities, towns and villages

In that context the Proposed development will contribute to the delivery of a number of the National Strategic Outcomes and Priorities of the NPF and National Development Plan in facilitating:

- Compact growth
- Enhanced regional accessibility
- Strengthened rural economies and communities
- Sustainable mobility
- Enhanced amenity & heritage

Under the heading of '***Securing Compact & Sustainable Growth***', the NPF emphasises the importance of:

- The 'liveability' or quality of life of urban places – how people experience living in cities, towns and villages. This includes the quality of the built environment, including the public realm, traffic and parking issues, access to amenities and public transport and a sense of personal safety and well-being
- Making the continuous regeneration and development of existing built up areas as attractive and as viable as greenfield development
- Tackling legacies such as concentrations of disadvantage in central urban areas through holistic social as well as physical regeneration and by encouraging more mixed tenure and integrated communities

Well-designed public realm including public spaces, parks and streets, as well as recreational infrastructure are important in ensuring that our cities, towns and villages are attractive and can offer a good quality of life. The Proposed development will contribute to a much enhanced public realm in Monaghan town centre.

The NPF sets out that addressing economic resilience and connectivity will be strategic priorities for the Northern and Western Region, particularly in and around Cavan and Monaghan.

The proposed development complies with and will assist in the delivery of the following National Policy Objectives:

- **National Policy Objective 4**

“Ensure the creation of attractive, liveable, well designed, high quality urban places that are home to diverse and integrated communities that enjoy a high quality of life and well-being”.

- **National Policy Objective 6**

“Regenerate and rejuvenate cities, towns and villages of all types and scale as environmental assets, that can accommodate changing roles and functions, increased residential population and employment activity and enhanced levels of amenity and design quality, in order to sustainably influence and support their surrounding area”

- **National Policy Objective 7**

“Apply a tailored approach to urban development, that will be linked to the Rural and Urban Regeneration and Development Fund, with a particular focus on...Strengthening Ireland’s overall urban structure, particularly in the Northern and Western and Midland Regions...; Reversing the stagnation or decline of many smaller urban centres, by identifying and establishing new roles and functions and enhancement of local infrastructure and amenities”

- **National Policy Objective 11**

“In meeting urban development requirements, there will be a presumption in favour of development that can encourage more people and generate more jobs and activity within existing cities, towns and villages, subject to development meeting appropriate planning standards and achieving targeted growth”.

- **National Policy Objective 12**

“The Government will establish a National Regeneration and Development Agency to work with local authorities, other public bodies and capital spending departments and agencies to co-ordinate and secure the best use of public lands, investment required within the capital envelopes provided in the National Development Plan and to drive the renewal of strategic areas not being utilised to their full potential.”

- **National Policy Objective 27**

“Ensure the integration of safe and convenient alternatives to the car into the design of our communities, by prioritising walking and cycling accessibility to both existing and proposed developments and integrating physical activity facilities for all ages”.

Based on the foregoing, it is considered that the proposed development accords with the key principles of the National Planning Framework

4.2.3 Town Centre First

Town Centre First – A Policy Approach for Irish Towns was published by the Department of Housing Local Government & Heritage and the Department of Rural & Community Development on 3rd February 2022.

The Town Centre First (TCF) policy recognises that every town is unique. It lays the foundation for each town to develop, at a local level, their own plan-led path forward. This will be expressed through a tailored TCF plan which is underpinned by a clear diagnosis of local strengths and challenges. The Town Centre First policy sets out a range of Actions which collectively will create the framework required to support towns to achieve the desired outcomes and deliver on their own unique vision.

The TCF policy recognises that each town is unique, varying in their size, characteristics and central function and that they remain the lifeblood of local economies, supporting business and generating employment opportunities. They provide a sense of place and belonging, while also being central to the tourism product. The built heritage of towns and villages is key to a community’s sense of place and to attracting both visitors and new residents. The relative attractiveness and vibrancy of towns and villages has also become an increasingly key element in competitive advantage and in driving economic investment.

TCF recognises that many Irish towns have already implemented significant place-making initiatives that are having a transformative effect on the town centre environment and its ‘sense of place’. These provide the

template for place-making in the Town Centre First policy. The Dublin Street Regeneration Plan, of which this Proposed development forms a key part, is used as a case study and is heralded as being:

“..ambitious in scale, and creates opportunity for mixed use development in a historic town centre location and ensuring connectivity the existing historic streetscape. The proposal has a strong focus on underutilised backland and will both create and to upgrade public spaces, streets, footpaths and car parking, create new connections with new streets and spaces which enhance the urban structure, and quality of the public realm of Dublin Street.

The project enables a range of development types and includes provision for residential, commercial and retail floorspace in the core of the town.”

The proposed development is supported by the Town Centre First Policy.

4.2.4 Regional Planning Policy

Regional Economic & Spatial Strategy 2020-2032

This RSES provides a high-level development framework for the Northern and Western Region that supports the implementation of the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the relevant economic policies and objectives of Government. It provides a 12-year strategy to deliver the transformational change that is necessary to achieve the objectives and vision of the Assembly.

The overall vision of the RSES is ‘to play a leading role in the transformation of this region into a vibrant, connected, natural, inclusive and smart place to work and live.’

At its core the RSES recognises a problem with weak urban infrastructure in the region and sets out a clear strategy for compact growth to address this. One of the identified ten national strategic outcomes is:

“Carefully managing the sustainable growth of compact cities, towns and villages, will add value and create more attractive places in which people can live and work. Activating centrally located development areas and achieving effective density and consolidation is a top priority.”

Monaghan is identified as a key town where there will be strong emphasis on place making, compact growth, regeneration and renewal of brownfield sites. This regeneration project is one of the key future priorities identified for Monaghan town:

“Deliver 20% of projected growth through regeneration and renewal of a significant area of the town centre. There are four specific target areas within the town centre whereby regeneration and renewal will be pursued but there are several smaller town centre sites that could also potentially become available for redevelopment.”

The Proposed development is therefore a key constituent part in delivering the objectives of the RSES.

4.2.5 The Development Plan

Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025

4.2.5.1 The Principle of the Development

The Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 (‘the CDP’) is the relevant development plan for the purposes of Section 9 of the Planning & Development Act, as amended. In accordance with the mandatory requirements, the CDP sets out objectives for the development and renewal of areas that are in need of regeneration. The subject lands are identified as being within a Local Area Action Plan and the Dublin Street Regeneration Plan (2017), which provides the framework for the regeneration of these lands, has been incorporated within Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 (‘the CDP’) at Appendix 20 to the CDP.

The proposed development is therefore supported in principle by the CDP.

The Regeneration Plan has been prepared to provide guidance and options for the future development of the Dublin Street back land area. The aim of the Regeneration Plan is to:

- Realise the potential for growth and to improve the range and quality of retail and non-retail Offers
- To deliver a more attractive shopping and visitor environment
- To develop the town as a service centre given its strategic location
- To increase the number of people visiting Monaghan for shopping and other purposes

PLANNING STATEMENT

It is an objective of the Development Plan 2019-2025 that all new development in the Dublin Street regeneration area and its associated backlands has regard to this plan. Monaghan County Council will promote and encourage the redevelopment of brownfield and derelict sites to consolidate the town centre.

The site is located within the Monaghan town centre boundary and is not allocated for a specific land use.

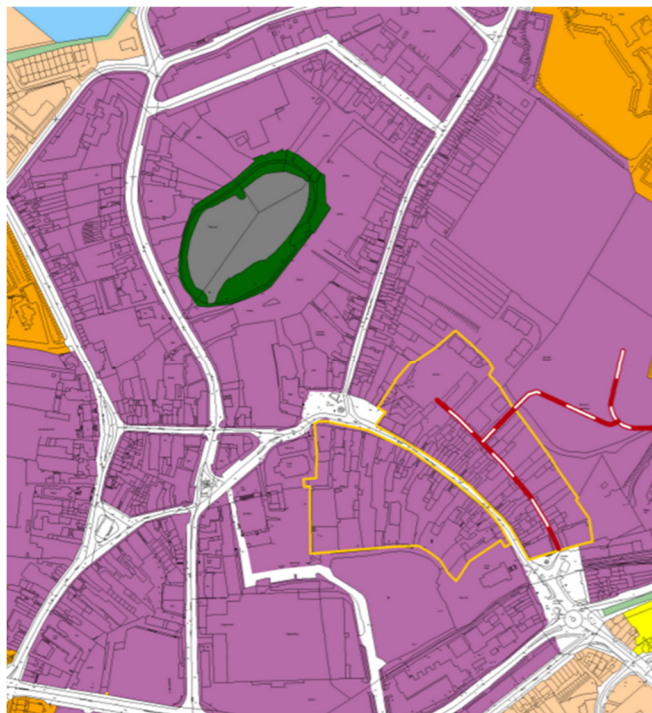


Figure 12: Monaghan County Development Plan Town Centre Proposals

In relation to Monaghan Town Centre, the relevant key objectives are as follows:

- **MTSO 1** - It will facilitate the development of Monaghan to maintain its position as the principal town in the County at the top of the settlement hierarchy and to ensure that its expansion takes place in an orderly and sustainable fashion that will not detract from the vitality and viability of the town centre.
- **MPO 2** – The development proposals have regard to the regeneration strategy and development objectives of the Dublin Street Regeneration Plan.
- **MPO 4** – The Proposed development will refurbish existing buildings and back lands in order to eliminate dereliction and reinforce the town centre.

Further support for the Proposed development is provided in the CDP at paragraph 1.19 where it emphasises the importance of renewal and regeneration of the towns and villages in driving significant economic development within the County.

Section 9.6 of the CDP – Regeneration & Redevelopment of Vacant Land also supports the Proposed development as the CDP will promote and facilitate the rejuvenation of regeneration areas and references the Dublin Street Plan as an example of the Councils proactive stance on regeneration.

The CDP also promotes the development of town centres subject to compliance with relevant policy objectives. In this instance the Proposed development complies with the following CDP town centre objectives:

- **TCO 1** – Promote and develop the town centres as the principal location for retail, office, leisure, entertainment, cultural and service uses and to encourage the refurbishment, renewal and re-use of existing buildings and derelict sites within it.
- **TCO 2** – Protect the vitality and viability of the town centres by promoting a diversity of uses, with a presumption in favour of development that would make a positive contribution to ensuring that the town centres continue to provide a focus for shopping.
- **TCO 4** – Use statutory legislation to discourage and prevent dereliction and encourage regeneration and development in the town.
- **TCO 5** – Ensure that sufficient parking is available for town centre uses.

- **TCO 6** – Continue to provide public investment directly and in partnership with the voluntary and private sector to support the vibrancy of the town.
- **TCO 9** – Continue to encourage and accommodate the regeneration of back lands in the towns were appropriate, including the construction of new urban streets to provide access to inaccessible lands.

4.2.5.2 Detailed Policy & Environmental Considerations

Built & Cultural Heritage

The site location extends close to The Diamond ACA and the Dublin Street ACA, as shown on Figure 14.

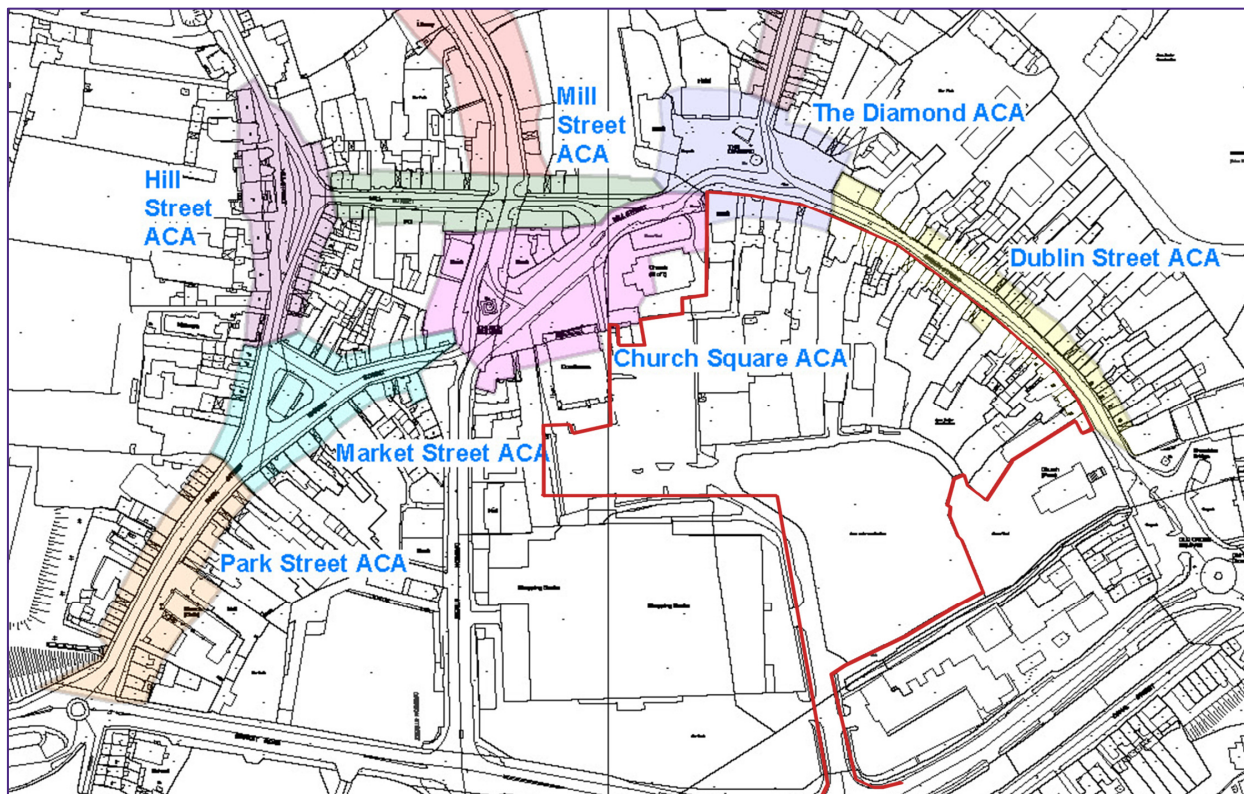


Figure 13: Monaghan Town Centre ACA Boundaries

The proposals for development are not located within The Diamond ACA or the Dublin Street ACA, however are considered to be within the setting of both ACAs.

There are fourteen Protected Structures in close proximity to the site location. Other Protected Structures surrounding The Diamond and Church Square make up the 'important urban space and focal area' as previously discussed.

The proposed development does not involve demolition of any building on the Record of Protected Structures.

In line with the direction of the ABP scoping response for the purposes of the EIA process, the proposed development has been subject to an assessment of the potential impacts on the cultural and built heritage resource.

The proposed works aim to integrate with the historic streetscape in a manner which is contemporary and forward looking while complimenting the built heritage.

New connections and spaces are to be formed to integrate both the existing Dublin Street ACA, The Diamond ACA and the new backlands areas, and to better enhance other connections around the town. The main intervention for improving permeability is the proposed creation of Charles Gavan Duffy Place. Additionally, by creating new streets (Church Walk and The Mall) within the unutilised backlands area with new opportunities for commercial, leisure and residential facilities will further improve this permeability. Improved access from N54 Macartan (Broad) Road and a new vehicular route from Dublin Street will improve accessibility to the town centre and better utilise existing car parking. The implementation of a new high-quality public realm will form consistent and attractive routes between both Dublin Street and the backlands area, stitching both old and new together.

The Cultural Heritage assessment concludes that in accordance with **Policy BHP1**, the overall objective of the proposed development is to retain, restore and enhance the integrity and significance of the protected buildings within their wider context.

As the focus of the proposed regeneration works are public realm improvements it is concluded that there will be no harm to the Protected Structures or indeed majority of the other buildings which line the streets. Generally, the regeneration plans for Monaghan Town aim to revitalise and enhance the urban environment to ensure long-term vibrancy and use of the existing buildings, environs. The proposed works will serve to enhance the buildings providing an improved setting for them using appropriate quality materials.

It can be concluded that the planning application proposes no demolition of buildings on the Record of Protected Structures.

This assessment concludes that there are no direct impacts on Protected Structures other than adjustment outside of their thresholds and that the works have negligible impact on the heritage overall with minor changes to the historic landscape character. The works will generate positive and permanent outcomes for improving the quality of the heritage environment.

A number of buildings are proposed for demolition to facilitate the formation of a new public space – Charles Gavan Duffy Place.

Building numbers 8, 9, 10 and 11 are proposed for demolition as part of this planning application. Other demolitions include a small two-storey outbuilding to within the alley beside Sherry's Public House, as well as part-industrial/commercial premises (Northern Standard) within the backlands areas.

No. 10 Dublin Street was previously a Protected Structure (RPS Ref 41001071) which has now since been deleted from the Recorded Protected Structures list. The building was deleted from the RPS under Section 55 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) in May 2021 following a detailed consideration of the architectural and heritage merits of the building and its history. This process was supported by a detailed heritage report prepared by Monaghan County Council. The Report has been included in the EIAR, Volume II Technical Appendices 'Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment' assessment of No. 10 Dublin Street.

The assessment of No. 10 Dublin Street concludes that *'The building fabric has been substantially altered over time and this has eroded its architectural significance'... 'We would therefore consider the building to have 'neutral' significance and that it no longer meets the test for special characteristics in terms of its architecture or artistic merit.'*

With regards to the limited regional significance in terms of social and historic value, it is proposed that the Birthplace of Charles Gavan Duffy is celebrated within the new vibrant civic space to be named 'Charles Gavan Duffy Place'.

Policies for the ACA and Protection of Built Heritage (ACP2, SNO7, SNO9, SN010) seek to ensure that repair and refurbishment of the existing buildings will be favoured over demolition and new build, and that development in the vicinity of buildings of architectural heritage shall respect the character and integrity of these.

In that context the assessment concludes that the decision to remove rather than reuse is based on a detailed analysis of the existing structures, and how these could be integrated into the proposed scheme. The analysis led to the conclusion to demolish rather than replace for the following reasons:

- The proposal is part of a wider public benefit to the whole of the town centre,
- The combination of the erosion of character of the existing buildings through modern interventions and alterations, coupled with the predicted public benefit of the proposal can be seen to outweigh the loss of the existing building.

The principal tenet is that the greater public interest will be served by demolition of the existing building and creation of a new public space can be argued for the following reasons:

- The proposal relates to a wider public realm and opportunity for Monaghan to drive regeneration into the town centre.
- The properties as outlined above have limited architectural significance and whilst it forms part of the streetscape of Dublin Street, so too the new proposal will create a new and enhanced streetscape.
- For Charles Gavan Duffy Place, the social significance of the building will still be recognised in the creation of the new urban place and the social / historical significance will be more evident and legible to the public than it is currently.

The proposed creation of Charles Gavan Duffy Place is predicted to enhance the special character of the ACA setting through the quality of the design and the positive introduction of public artwork and social history information which will tell the story of Charles Gavan Duffy.

The assessment draws the following conclusions that demonstrate that the Proposed development is compliant with planning policy in respect of built heritage:

- **BHP1** – The works are concerned with Public Realm and will enhance the Protected Structures in terms of setting. The regeneration scheme will ensure the long-term viability of Protected Structures within and adjacent to the area by increasing footfall and activity opportunities within Monaghan Town without detracting from the buildings special interest and character.
- **BHP2** – Proposals are in accordance with Monaghan County Development Plan 2019 – 2025.
- **BHP3** – Proposals are in accordance with Monaghan County Development Plan 2019 – 2025. The identified Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) have been recognised as they contribute positively to the heritage of the County.
- **BHP4, BH5 & SNO6** – The proposals do not involve works/demolition affecting a Protected Monument or Structure.
- **BHP6 and SNO11** – Regarding the public realm proposals, these works are adjacent to rather than concerned with the Protected Structures themselves. The proposals are compatible with their special character in terms of layout and materials so that the integrity of the structure and its curtilage is preserved. New development sites proposed within the backlands area in the context of adjacent ACAs and Protected Structures will be assessed as separate planning applications to ensure that they are sympathetic in terms of design, scale, massing and materials.
- **BHP7 and SNO10** – Monaghan Development Plan aims to address re-development of backlands and derelict sites within the scheme. Derelict or vacant Protected Structures are not a concern within the proposals. The improvement of the setting with public realm seeks to encourage rehabilitation, renovation and re-use of existing Protected Structures for their own economic benefit and that of the area in which they are located.
- **BHP8** – Works are proposed outside the threshold of Protected Structures.
- **BHP9** - Derelict or vacant Protected Structures are not a concern within the proposals.
- **BHP10** – Not applicable.
- **ACP1** – Appraisals of Monaghan Town ACA and Protected Structures conclude that the public realm proposals represent a contemporary design approach of sufficiently high quality, principally achieved by the use of appropriate and quality materials, which do not detract from the character of the historic fabric of the Protected Structures. The proposals respect the special character of the ACA setting.
- **ACP2 and SNO7** – The majority of the proposed works are public realm works. The benefits of forming Charles Gavan Duffy Place can be considered to outweigh the consequential impact of demolitions within the ACA. The new gables formed to Charles Gavan Duffy Place are formed by the existing structures remaining either side of the new opening and therefore true to the streetscape in terms of scale and materials.

There are two recorded archaeological sites located within the site boundary of the Proposed development. These sites comprise a castle or fortified house (MO009-060003-) and associated bawn (MO009-060013-) built in the early 17th century and depicted on later mapping. As such Development on the location of the recorded archaeological site will result in a direct impact.

A further 11 recorded archaeological monuments are located outside the site boundary of the Proposed development but within the study area. None of these sites will be directly impacted by the Proposed development.

The works will take place within the Area of Archaeological Importance for Monaghan and the National Monuments Service Zone of Notification for the historic settlement of Monaghan. The assessment has concluded that much of this area has been subject to modern intervention in the form of asphalt and concrete surfacing, concrete kerbing and ducting for electrical, sewerage, water mains and other services, leaving few undisturbed or green areas. The green areas that remain have been landscaped and may have been subject to ground reduction in the past. In addition, the proposed works in some areas will require removal of existing surfacing and replacement with new material, rather than deeper excavations into previously undisturbed deposits.

The potential of this area to contain significant archaeological deposits subsurface can be considered moderate to low. However, the potential exists for archaeological remains within the area proposed for development and if identified would likely be directly impacted by development.

Mitigation is proposed in the form of an archaeological programme during construction works in order to mitigate the impact on previously unrecorded archaeology.

In that context the Proposed development is compliant with the policies on Protected Monuments & Places (PMP 1- PMP 7).

Natural Heritage & Biodiversity

An Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) of lands within Monaghan town centre and the proposals for redevelopment of this site, as detailed in Chapter 8 Biodiversity of the EIAR. The scope of the EcIA was to identify ecological constraints within the study area at Monaghan town centre, by means of the following:

- Identifying the Zone of Influence (ZoI) of the Proposed development on the natural environment;
- Establishing the baseline with regard to terrestrial and aquatic habitats, ecotopes, flora and fauna (volant and non-volant mammals, invertebrates, avifauna etc.) within the zone of influence of the proposed works;
- Ascertaining the potential impacts upon all ecological receptors within the development footprint and zone of influence to include, but not be limited to, species protected under the European and National Legislation, including the EU Habitats and Birds Directives and Irish Wildlife Acts (1976 to 2012, as amended); and,
- Presenting measures to avoid or minimise potential damage to any sensitive ecological receptors supported within the receiving environment.

The assessment has drawn the following key conclusions:

Designated Sites & features of Natural Heritage Importance:

- The proposed development at the construction stage will involve no works within any site designated on account of its natural heritage interest.
- The proposed development is sufficiently distant from designated sites in the locality to ensure that no indirect effects upon these sites arise as a result of the proposals. It is noted however that the Application Site is hydrologically connected to the Lough Neagh and Lough Beg SPA, via a number of intervening watercourses.
- Potential construction phase impacts upon the Lough Neagh and Lough Beg SPA are associated only with the hydrological link supported between this SPA and the Application Site and are limited to the risk for accidental release of chemicals, pollutants or sediments into the freshwater environment, in addition to the risk for spread of the invasive species Japanese knotweed into the terrestrial elements of the SPA via this hydrological connection.
- Potential operational phase impacts upon this hydrologically linked European site are associated only with the risk of release of petrochemical fuels and other contaminants into the freshwater environment.
- The proposed development builds in a range of mitigation measures in line with best practice and following Irish and International guidelines. Subject to the appropriate implementation of these mitigation measures it is concluded that any potential effects on designated sites will be fully mitigated.

Habitats:

- The proposed development, at construction stage, will give rise to the loss of the majority of semi-natural habitats within the site including all areas of scrub, tall ruderal, amenity planting, amenity grassland, recolonising bare ground and a number of scattered coniferous and broadleaved scattered trees and hedgerows.
- The proposals will largely retain areas of unnatural habitat within the site including buildings and hardstanding, however some losses to these habitats will occur.
- All habitats within the application Site are considered of ecological importance at the **site level** only.
- The proposed development, which will not involve the loss or impacts to any habitats during operation, and as such has no potential to give rise to any operational impacts upon habitats within the site.
- The impact of the proposed development on habitat is therefore **negligible and not significant**.

Bats:

- A single block of buildings, along Dublin Street, will be demolished at construction phase of the proposed development, to facilitate the proposed vehicular access from Dublin Street. These structures were considered to have potential to support roosting bats and were subject to emergence/re-entry survey for these species. No roosting bats were recorded in these buildings.
- No further buildings, structures or trees with potential to support roosting bats will be lost as a result of the proposed development.
- The proposed development will result in the loss of habitats which are likely to be of some limited value for foraging and commuting bats. However similar opportunities for these species are available in the wider locality and as such impacts upon this group arising as a result of these losses at construction stage are considered to be **negligible** and **not significant**.
- The proposed development also builds in ecological enhancements through provision of additional roosting opportunities for bats.

Birds:

- The proposed development will result in the loss of a range of habitats including scrub, scattered trees, hedgerows and amenity planting with potential to support nesting birds, including a range of common and widespread species. Furthermore, buildings within the scheme were noted to support nesting starling and swift.
- It is not considered that the loss of these habitats would have potential to give rise to significant effects upon the local populations of bird species of conservation concern.
- In the absence of mitigation, the proposals at construction stage have potential to give rise to impacts upon nesting bird species, through the destruction of these nests or the disturbance to nesting birds during demolition of buildings and clearance of areas of scrub and other vegetation within the Application Site.
- The construction phase of the proposed development will be managed to avoid demolition of buildings during the bird breeding season which will prevent any direct impacts on breeding birds. Ecological enhancements via provision of nest boxes are also recommended.

The assessment concludes that the proposed development will not give rise to any unacceptable impacts on the natural heritage and biodiversity interests assessed.

The proposed development complies with the objectives for protection of Natural Heritage and in particular **SNO 5** in that the development proposals have regard to key nature conservation issues and do not detrimentally impact on habitats, species, or features worthy of protection.

The Proposed development is therefore compliant with the relevant **Heritage, Conservation & Landscape Policies** of the CDP and in particular policies **HLP 4, HLP 13, HLP 16 and HLP 17**, all of which seek to protect the integrity, qualifying interests and conservation objectives of designated sites.

The Proposed development also complies with **Policy ISP 1** which seeks to ensure that development proposals do not lead to the spread of invasive species and to ensure that landscaping proposals do not include invasive species and **Policy ISP 2** through provision of details on how the Japanese Knotweed present on the development site will be managed and controlled.

Flood Risk & Drainage

The proposed development has been subject to a Flood Risk & Drainage Assessment as detailed in EIAR, Chapter 5 Flood Risk & Drainage.

There are areas of the site currently estimated to be at risk of flooding from fluvial events with a frequency of 0.1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) and greater, as identified during the North-Western Neagh Bann (NWNB) Catchment-based Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Study. The areas affected are Castle Road and the adjacent car park.

The site can be considered to be affected by areas of Flood Zone A (high probability of flooding) and Flood Zone B (moderate probability of flooding) as described in the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities.

The existing surface water sewer that serves the area outfalls into the existing 900mm culvert, which then discharges directly into the Shambles River.

The assessment confirms that there are no construction works proposed to the Shambles River or its tributary that runs through the site. The storm runoff from the development area under construction will be the same as at present, so there will be no change in the volumes of surface runoff at the construction stage. During the construction phase, any runoff from the construction site will be collected and controlled by the Contractor as described in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

The assessment has identified all sources of flood risk to and from the proposed development. While there are areas of the site that are affected by river flooding, there will be no change in ground levels to the areas of the Proposed development in the floodplain and therefore these areas will still be available to receive flooding. The new roads, streets and spaces have been designed so that there will be no negative impacts if the area floods. The proposed development will therefore have no increase in fluvial flood risk. Due to its nature, no flood emergency procedures are proposed specifically for this development. Higher ground outside of the floodplain is available to the north, within easy pedestrian access. No mitigation measures have been proposed.

All surface water from the proposed development will collect in a new surface water network that drains to attenuation units in the southern car park. The existing surface water sewer is to be removed but the existing 900mm culvert will remain in place. The attenuation cells will outfall to a single point on the Shambles River which will have a hydro-brake chamber installed to limit the discharge. The proposed development will therefore have no increase in surface water flood risk, and in fact it may be possible to decrease the current runoff rate to the river using the proposed attenuation. No mitigation measures are required.

The 'Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines' classify different types of development in terms of their vulnerability class. Amenity open space is classed as a Water-compatible development. The Guidelines identifies the type of development that would be appropriate to each flood zone and those that would need a Justification Test. Water-compatible development is appropriate in all flood zones and therefore a Justification Test is not required. The proposed development has therefore been shown to be compliant with the 'Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines'.

The proposed development therefore complies with the relevant CDP Flood Risk Management Policies and in particular:

- **FMP 2:** in that the FRA demonstrates that the flood risk can be managed to an acceptable degree and without increasing flood risk beyond the site itself.
- **FMP 3:** the planning application is supported by a site specific FRA carried out in accordance with the methodology set out in The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2009, by competent professionals with hydrological experience and identify the risk and extent of any proposed mitigation measures.
- **FMP 4:** The proposed development is a 'water-compatible development' that is appropriate in all flood zones and therefore a Justification Test is not required as set out in the Flood Risk Management Guidelines.

The proposed development also complies with the relevant CDP Surface Water Drainage Policies in that:

- **SDP1:** The proposals incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems designed to ensure both water quality protection and flood minimisation in line with Monaghan County Councils Storm Water Technical Guidance Document 2017.
- **SDP 2:** The proposed development is adequately serviced with surface water drainage infrastructure and promotes the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems to minimise the effect of a development on flooding and pollution of the existing waterways.
- **SDP 3:** This planning application are accompanied by a comprehensive assessment that addresses run-off quantity, run-off quality and its impact on the existing habitat and water quality and demonstrates that no unacceptable impact will arise.
- **SDP 4:** The storm water discharges are be restricted by appropriate onsite attenuation to the pre-development levels of the development, taking account of climate change.
- **SDP 5:** Discharge will be restricted to the pre-development levels by storm water attenuation on site and use of SUDs (sustainable urban drainage systems). The Proposed development will not result in any increase in surface water flood risk, and in fact it may be possible to decrease the current runoff rate to the river using the proposed attenuation.

Water Quality

An assessment of the potential impact of the proposed development on water quality within the study area and the risk to water quality dependent designations in the surrounding environs was undertaken as part of the EIA process as detailed in EIAR, Chapter 6 – Water Quality.

The assessment was undertaken in the recognition of the fundamental requirement of the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) and the environmental objectives for a water body is to attain good ecological and chemical water quality status and ensure that any deterioration in the status of waters is prevented. Any new development must ensure that these two fundamental objectives of the Directive are not compromised, nor are there any detrimental impacts to nearby EU designated Natura 200 sites.

Baseline water quality within the receiving environment was established through review of national monitoring data used to establish water quality status in the context of the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) and supporting environmental standards.

Using baseline water quality data, an assessment of the development of the Masterplan was conducted to determine the likelihood of significant impacts on water quality using the criteria for rating significance and magnitude as set out in the National Roads Authority (NRA) publication “*Guidelines on Procedures for Assessment and Treatment of Geology, Hydrology and Hydrogeology for National Road Schemes*” (NRA, 2008) and appropriate mitigation measures to reduce impacts were proposed, where necessary.

During construction the risk of water quality impacts associated with works machinery, infrastructure and on-land operations (for example leakages/spillages of fuels, oils, other chemicals and wastewater) will be controlled through good site management and the adherence to codes and practices which limit the risk to within acceptable levels. The management measures will be delivered through a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

The proposed development incorporates mitigation/control measures through onsite attenuation and the use of interceptors to prevent pollution during the operational stage of the development.

Full implementation of the proposed mitigation measures during the construction and operational phases of the development will ensure that the impact on the water quality in the area will be *negligible*. The development of this site is therefore not expected to have a significant effect on the water quality of the receiving waters either directly, indirectly or cumulatively.

It can therefore be concluded that the project works are compliant with the requirements and environmental objectives of the EU Water Framework Directive and the other relevant water quality objectives for these water bodies and with the relevant CDP **Water Quality Policies WPP 1-19**.

Contamination

An assessment of the effects of the existing ground conditions on the Proposed development and the potential effects of the Proposed development on the soils, geology and hydrogeology of the site and surrounding areas was undertaken as detailed in EIAR, Chapter 7 - Soils, Geology & Contaminated Land.

The assessment is supported by a Preliminary Risk Assessment (EIAR, Vol. II Appendix 7A). It concluded that:

- While ‘made ground’ underlying the site would have the potential to contain contamination, previous ground investigations did not identify any obvious ground contamination. In addition, pathways for exposure to ground contamination are considered to be minimal as the majority of the site will be covered in hardstanding with landscaping comprising tree pits, raised planters and grass.
- A review of historical uses confirms that the street network around Monaghan such as South Dublin Street and The Diamond to the northwest have been occupied by infrastructure developments such as commercial properties. Such activities once occupying the site footprint are not considered with an overly contaminative nature, any contamination if present in the past will have likely degraded and diluted overtime and the chance of this impacting the application site today is minimal.
- Current offsite contamination sources are limited but may be associated with any fuel tanks in the site vicinity and the wastewater treatment works to the east of the site at c.330m. There is an *Applegreen* petrol filling station located approximately 450m west of the site boundary. This has the potential to be a source of contamination, but the risk is considered to be low, given the substantial distance from the site. A second petrol filling station is present approximately 20m south-west of the site, but it is downgradient from the site and will not impact the study site.

- Historical uses off-site that could contribute to contamination include a former quarry, an infirmary, a large gaol, a brewery, a gas works, saw mill, and a grave yard. It is noted that none of the above off site potential contamination sources have survived to the current day. Any contamination associated with these former industries if present in the past will have likely degraded and diluted overtime and the chance of this impacting the application site today is minimal.
- The desk study has highlighted that no significant pollutant linkages are considered to be present within the study area. Upon completion of the public realm upgrade, paving and or hardstanding will cover the majority of the site negating any potential risk to human health.
- The impact of the development on soils and geology is considered to be Neutral as there will be minimal impact on geological conditions with a minor loss of urban soils due to the presence of Japanese Knotweed at six locations within the site and one location close to the western site boundary at Monaghan Shopping Centre. This invasive species issue is addressed fully in the EIAR Chapter 11 Waste.
- The impact of the development on groundwater is considered to be Neutral as there will be no significant earthworks which would impact groundwater.

The proposed development complies with the CDP policies on contamination and in particular **Policy WMP 9** which requires that the treatment/management of any contaminated material shall comply as appropriate with the Waste Management Act 1996 (waste licence, waste facility permit) and under the EPA Act 1992 (Industrial Emissions licensing, in particular the First Schedule, Class 11 Waste). These measures will ensure that contaminated material will be managed in a manner that removes any risk to human health and ensures that the end use will be compatible with any risk.

As confirmed in EIAR Chapter 11 – Waste, the Japanese Knotweed will be managed in accordance with the Invasive Species management Plan (EIAR, Vol. II, Appendix 8B) and other site excavation and construction waste will be managed in accordance with a Site Waste Management Plan compliant with the requirements of the Waste Management Act and following consultation with the EPA.

Transport

Section 7 of the CDP relates to the provision and maintenance of an efficient, safe and sustainable transportation system and explains how it is essential in delivering the county's economic competitiveness, improved quality of life and improved social inclusion. It highlights that there is a strong interrelationship between land use and transportation and the Settlement Strategy within the plan which aligns with national policy to direct a significant portion of future development to existing towns and settlements in order to reduce car dependency and to facilitate the economic provision of public transport. The implementation of the Core Strategy for Monaghan Town Centre will strengthen this relationship by creating more compact urban forms which make the use of public transport, cycling and walking more viable.

The EIAR (Chapter 9 – Traffic & Transportation) assesses the potential impacts on traffic and transportation. It outlines the key issues and provides an overview of the likely significant effects of the Proposed development on transportation. The scoping report was used as a basis of initial consultation with the transportation related statutory authorities including the Council as the statutory road authority and TII (Transport Infrastructure Ireland) as the relevant authority for the strategic road network, including the N54, the closest strategic road to the site.

The assessment of the construction phase confirms that the earthworks stage will produce the greatest volume of HGV traffic as material is taken off site. It is predicted that approximately 27 HGVs will enter and leave the site over a 6-hour period as a worst case, and which is considered to be robust considering the operation of construction site over an 8-hour period including breaks. This worst case would not be consistent throughout the entire construction period and is to signify a peak construction activity scenario. Furthermore, it is anticipated that this temporary HGV traffic will only access the site during off-peak commuter times, i.e., after 9am and before 5pm.

The construction traffic operation times will be agreed with the local authority during the appointment of a contractor and through the preparation of the Construction Traffic Management Plan.

For the operational phase it is acknowledged that, although there are currently good pedestrian and public transport facilities which will serve the site and within an acceptable walking distance, private car trips will still provide a portion of trips to / from the site and therefore a traffic impact assessment was required within the EIAR TTA.

An accessibility review was undertaken to assess the opportunities for travel to the site by all relevant modes of transport and review walking, cycling and public transport provision, as well as access by private car. The

site is located within an existing and established urban centre and therefore benefits from good pedestrian and cycle links. The proposed development will significantly improve pedestrian and cycle facilities within the scheme area.

A detailed junction capacity analysis was undertaken using approved traffic modelling software to ensure that the existing road network could accommodate the traffic impacts resulting from the proposed development. The modelling results demonstrate that the site access points associated with the proposed development are predicted to operate within capacity for all assessment years and scenarios considered and with the cumulative development traffic added to the surrounding road network. Therefore, it is concluded that the proposed development can be accommodated within the surrounding road network.

On the basis of the assessment, it can be concluded that the proposed development is compliant with CDP policy on traffic, roads and transport:

- **Policy TP2 and TP4** which support the creation of an integrated and sustainable transport system in order to promote a choice of transport modes including public transport, cycling and walking facilities. The policies also ensure that new development does not prejudice the expansion of road and cycling corridors in the County.
- **Policy CWP 1 and CWP 2** which seek to promote and facilitate the development of walkways, cycleways and recreational routes in appropriate locations throughout the County to deliver the objectives of the County Walking and Cycling Strategy and **Policy CWP 4** which encourages the provision of bicycle infrastructure such as shelters and parking facilities in appropriate locations and make provisions for such infrastructure in new developments.
- **National Roads Policy (NRP 4)** in avoiding an impact on the carrying capacity and/or safety of any national/primary road and **Non-National Routes Policy (NNRP 5)** in delivering the upgrade roads, junctions, footpaths and car parking facilities within Monaghan town centre in accordance with the provisions of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets subject to the availability of resources and **NNRP 6** in helping to relieve traffic congestion and facilitating the development of new roads and safe access points to serviceable lands, in partnership with benefiting landowners and developers, to improve traffic management and access in and around Monaghan town centre.

Air Quality & Climate Change

An assessment of the likely impact of the proposed development on air quality in the locality and climate change was undertaken as detailed in EIAR, Chapter 10. Due to the nature of the proposed development which involves ground level works or low structures only, no significant impacts on microclimate, such as shading or wind tunnelling, are expected and therefore were scoped out of this assessment.

The assessment recognised that potential effects to air quality may arise during the construction phase, such as from the generation of construction dusts and construction traffic. The construction activities have been examined to identify those that have the potential for air emissions. The operational development will give rise to potential emissions from road traffic. Each of these potential sources have been identified and emissions have been evaluated using standard procedures.

This assessment has also considered the requirements of the EIA Directive in relation to climate change and has provided:

- A description of the factors in relation to climate (for example greenhouse gas emissions, impacts relevant to adaptation) likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development;
- A description of the likely significant effects of the proposed development on the environment resulting from, inter alia, the impact of the project on climate (for example the nature and magnitude of greenhouse gas emissions) and the vulnerability of the project to climate change.

Annex IV to the 2014 EIA Directive includes direct reference to climate and climate change in two provisions. The emphasis is placed on two distinct aspects of the climate change issue:

- Climate change mitigation: this considers the impact the proposed development will have on climate change, through greenhouse gas emissions primarily; and,
- Climate change adaptation: this considers the vulnerability of the proposed development to future changes in the climate, and its capacity to adapt to the impacts of climate change, which may be uncertain.

Mitigation measures are proposed primarily in respect of the construction phase of the development. The measures are divided into general measures applicable to the entire site and measures applicable specifically to the defined construction activities (i.e., demolition, earthworks, construction and track-out). As the risk of

dust impact on receptors from soiling has been identified to range from medium to high during the demolition stage specifically, the highest risk category should be applied when considering general mitigation measures (IAQM, 2016).

A Dust Management Plan (DMP) will be prepared by the appointed contractor for the site and submitted to the Monaghan County Council for approval prior to commencement of construction. The DMP will at a minimum include mitigation measures to minimise and manage potential dust emissions through effective site management, specific measures to manage demolition and excavation/site clearance works and the management of construction materials and construction traffic.

The assessment concluded that emissions to air of both pollutants and greenhouse gases during the operational phase are not significant and there is no requirement for mitigation measures. Nonetheless, the development of such a brownfield site reduces the need for further land-use change, which impacts climate. The Proposed development incorporates design mitigation measures including:

- Reuse/recycling of crushed concrete and concrete slabs from on-site where possible reducing emissions related to production of virgin materials;
- LED public street lighting, which is proven to use 75% less energy when compared to traditional incandescent bulbs will contribute to further reduce already minimal indirect emissions due to electricity use (EIAR, Vol. II, Appendix 2F – Outdoor Lighting Report); and,
- Planting of trees contribute to carbon sequestration and improved air quality.

The proposed development complies with CDP policy on air quality and climate change:

- **Policy CCP 3:** The development involves the re-use of brownfield lands consolidating Monaghan town centre and integrating of land use and transportation.
- **Policy CCP 4:** The new development is appropriately located, so as not to be exposed to risk of flooding.
- **Policy AQP 2:** The development contributes towards compliance with air quality legislation; greenhouse gas emission targets; management of noise levels; and reductions in energy usage.
- **Policy LP 1:** The lighting design will control to minimise impacts on residential amenity and habitats and species of importance.
- **Policy LP 2:** in the use of energy efficient public lighting in the development proposals.
- **Policy LP 3:** The lighting fixtures provide only the amount of light necessary for personal safety and are designed to avoid creating glare or emitting light above a horizontal plane. Lighting fixtures will also have minimum environmental impact and protect light sensitive species such as bats

Noise

The Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment (NVIA) is detailed in Chapter 4 of the EIAR. The assessment examines the potential impacts from the construction activities of the proposed development on the nearest noise sensitive receptors.

During the construction phase, there is potential for noise and vibration impacts at the nearest noise sensitive properties from the use of noisy plant and equipment, from construction traffic, and vibration impacts from the use a certain construction phase activity including demolition of buildings.

The worst-case predicted noise levels for the various stages of the construction and demolition phase and detailed construction noise predictions are provided within EIAR Volume II – Technical Appendices Appendix 4B Construction Noise Assessment.

Pre-mitigation, the predicted construction noise impacts are anticipated to result in effects ranging from negligible to major at construction noise receptors.

The CEMP will include specific control measures including monitoring to be undertaken. Mitigation by careful scheduling of the works, timing of activities and using best practicable methods will be implemented such that no significant effects arise, and levels are as low as possible. Residents will be informed by the appointed contractor of the timing and duration of activities that may produce high noise or vibration. Elevated levels can be tolerated if prior notification and explanation is given.

Temporary slight adverse impacts due to construction noise have been identified at the closest receptors to proposed construction works. No permanent residual noise and vibration impacts are predicted during

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construction of the proposed development and no significant residual effects are anticipated following mitigation.

No residual significant effects are predicted for the operational phase of the proposed development at residential receptors.

In that context the Proposed development and the assessment undertaken complies with the requirements of the CDP and in particular **Policy NP 1** in that the development will be implemented in a manner that promote the implementation of the Noise Directive 2002/49/EC and associated Environmental Noise Regulations 2006.

4.2.6 Planning History

A review of historical planning permissions was undertaken to identify whether there is any planning history on or adjacent to the application site that either impacts on the prospects of planning permission being granted for the Proposed development, or that could be impacted upon by the Proposed development. A search was undertaken using the Council's online system and evidenced the following planning relevant applications:

Planning Reference	Address	Applicant	Proposal	Current Status
17453	Land at the junction of Macartan Road (N54) and the R162 Glen Road, Monaghan Town	Aldi Stores	Discount Foodstore (single storey), gross floor area 1814 sqm & associated works	Approved
2015	Existing Go Filling Station, Mall Road, Monaghan Town (opposite Farney Rd)	Lissan Coal Co Ltd	Redevelopment of existing Filling Station Forecourt, for an unattended 24hr filling station (retain signage, new pumps, kerbing, boundaries, drainage etc)	April 2018
9830001	New Road Tirkeenan Monaghan	Frank Kierans	Proposed modifications to site layout including proposed public entrance at existing works entrance position also proposed pedestrian access walkways at development	Refused May 1998
9630020	Tirkeenan Monaghan	Frank Kierans	Mixed Development comprising of commercial/retail units/apartments/associated car parking and associated development works	Sept. 1996
19474	Rear of 6/7 The Diamond, Roosky Td., Monaghan	JCEP Developments Ltd.	Permission to develop a mixed-use residential/commercial infill development. The proposed development is to contain 25 no. apartments arranged in two blocks over 4/5 floors, linked via landscaped courtyard garden with lower level office/storage space beneath.	Refused December 2019
ABP-306360-20	Site to the rear of No & 7 The Diamond, Rooskey TD, Monaghan, Co Monaghan	JCEP Developments	Mixed Use residential and commercial development	Dismissed (on Appeal) Sept. 2020
9530014	Diamond Monaghan	Northern Standard	Increase height of existing boundary wall	Unknown
1230003	Rooskey, Monaghan	DPT Mixed Use Dev. Ltd	Reinstate original ground levels to provide car park for 239 car, lighting, trolley bays, parking meters, bring-bank facility & reinstatement of boundary wall, fences & gates to Monaghan First Presbyterian Church (Protected Structure)	April 2012
0430079	Nos. 8 & 9 The Diamond & No. 1 Dublin Street	Kieran McGuigan	Demolish all buildings to the rear of the offices of Monaghan Town Council whilst protecting & retaining intact the protected facade of the above mentioned building & construct New 5 storey over ground Hotel complex with two storey underground car park	February 2005
PL72.214598	Nos 8 & 9 The Diamond & 1 Dublin Street Monaghan	Kieran McGuigan	Demolish existing structures & construct a hotel with two-storey ug car parking. Refused on impacts on character, protected structure, nuisance, amenity and substandard form	Dismissed (on Appeal) April 2006
9930095	8 The Diamond, Monaghan	Kieran McGuigan	Change of use of first floor living accommodation to offices, second floor living accommodation to 2 No. Apartments, Construct new extension incorporating new offices on first floor, 6 No. Apartments on second floor on top	January 2000

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			of premises already granted Planning Permission on foot of M.U. 74/97 - 8 The Diamond, Monaghan and M.U. 75/97 - 9 The Diamond, Monaghan with accommodation stairs, roof garden and ancillary works at premises currently known as Aladdin's Cave and Top Lady.	
0130018	The Diamond, Monaghan	Kieran McGuigan	Change of use of first floor living accommodation to Offices, second floor living Accommodation to 2 no. Apartments, construct new extension incorporating new offices on first floor, 6 no Apartments on second floor on top of premises already granted	Sept. 2001
0430054	No.8 The Diamond Monaghan	Kieran McGuigan	Alterations & material change of use premises. The development will consist of the following (a) Extension of coffee shop known as Greedy B into premises known as Fe.Mail.Com (b) change of use of premises known as Fe.mail.com from commercial unit to a licensed coffee shop/restaurant (c) change of elevation including new shop-front, new entrance & erection of new signage. This application relates to a protected structure in an area of Architectural Conservation.	April 2005
0330023	Nos 2 & 3 Dublin Street Monaghan	Terry Connolly	Full planning permission to demolish single and two storey rear extensions and replace with 3 storey extension consisting of ground floor shop and extension of 2 no. existing shop units, erection of 2 no. shop fronts, first and second floor offices and extension of existing residential accommodation and associated site works at no.'s 2 & 3 Dublin Street, Monaghan.	July 2003
178011	Monaghan Town Hall Building, Dublin Street, Monaghan	Monaghan CC	Permission to renovate and restore the former Town Hall which is a Protected Structure, to demolish the 1929 rear extensions to the original structure and to erect a new single and 2 storey extension of office accommodation measuring 328m ²	February 2018
9630036	24 Dublin Street Monaghan	Thomas Sherry	Convert & renovate existing flat and store to dwellinghouse at rear of existing premises	October 1996
19465	24 Dublin Street Monaghan	Tony Sherry	Permission for development consisting of change of use of existing 2 storey stone buildings from residential use to commercial retail use, to include associated internal alterations, to construct an extension to the south west facing elevation (facing the town carpark) and all associated site works	March 2020
PL18.300998	24 Dublin Street, Monaghan Town	Tony Sherry	CoU from residential to retail/commercial use including extensions and alterations	Approved
0430080	No's 16-22 Dublin St., Rooskey Td, Monaghan Town	George Wright & Bellevue Tavern Ltd	(a) Demolish all buildings to the rear of the building known as "The Bellevue Tavern" whilst protecting and retaining intact the protected facade of the above mentioned building and construct a new building comprising of 3 no. ground floor shop units, one facing Dublin St. and the others facing the public right of way to public car park with 3 no. first floor and 3 no. second floor self contained apartments over together with connection to all existing services and all ancillary site works, shop fronts and signage. (b) construct new ground floor licensed premises to rear of No's 15,16,17,18,19,20,21 & 22 Dublin street which will front onto public access to the car park and the public car park with first floor office space over and 4 no. self contained apartments on second floor, provide on site car park space for 11 no. vehicles and ancillary bin storage and access to car parking spaces. (c) connect to all existing town services and all ancillary site works	February 2005
1130022	Nos 22 & 23 Dublin Street, Monaghan	Gerard Trainor	(a) Alterations and extension of existing Butcher Shop (No. 22 Dublin Street) to extend into adjacent building (No. 23. Dublin Street).	April 2012

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			(b) Provision of new shop front and signage. (c) Alterations and rear extension at first floor level above Flower Shop (No. 23 Dublin Street) to provide independent access to the existing apartment above existing Butcher Shop (No. 22 Dublin Street), the further information/revised plans consist of the following: Omission of the alterations and rear extension at first floor level above Flower Shop (No. 23 Dublin Street) to provide independent access to the existing apartment above existing Butcher Shop (No. 22 Dublin Street)	
030073	Nos. 16 & 17 Dublin Street Monaghan	Noel McConnell	Part Demolition, addition of two storey extension and refurbishment of existing public house	March 2001
9630043	The Shamrock Bar, 16 Dublin Street, Monaghan	Noel McConnon	New shop front and single storey extension to kitchen and stories to the rear	October 1996
0130072	No.13 Dublin Street, Monaghan	Helen Drum	Construct, alter rear elevations, demolish rear section of No.12 and change of use from retail to restaurant and takeaway at No.13 Dublin St. Construct one bedroom apartment to first floor and alter entrance to apartment to No.12 Dublin St. at this level. Construct two -bedroom apartment at second floor level	January 2001
0230024	No.12 & 13 Dublin St., Monaghan	Helen & Vincent Drum	Change of use of retail shop to Takeaway Restaurant. Extension to rear of premises & alterations to front elevations premises	July 2002
0630070	12 & 13 Dublin Street, Rooskey, Monaghan Town	Helen Drum	changes made to structure under previously granted planning reference M.T. 24/02. Retention planning permission is required for - Demolition of extensions to the rear of the property. Extension to existing apartments and construction of a new apartment to the rear of the property.	January 2007
0230030	No.11 Dublin Street, Monaghan	Leslie Crawford	Demolition of existing cold storage facility and storage areas, provision of one no. one bedroom apartment over existing retail unit including new concrete flat roof over existing food preparation room, to form access relocation of existing connection to town sewerage and water mains and all associated works	August 2002
0430085	No.11 Dublin Street, Monaghan	Leslie Crawford	Two N. Two storey townhouses, connection to town sewer and town mains and all associated site development works, all at the rear of premises	Refused Feb 2005
0030031	No.14 Dublin Street, Monaghan	Robert Scott	Pedestrian pathway, boundary walls and works to car park at rear of No.14 Dublin St	October 2000
0030084	Nos 9 &10 Dublin Street, Monaghan	Houston Scott	Demolish existing building & erect a funeral home to rear of Aileen's & access onto public car park at 9 & 10 Dublin St	Refused Feb 2001
1330021	No. 2 Dublin Street, Monaghan	Thomas Hughes	Retention permission for COU of 3 shops to casino at ground floor of a 3-storey building, signage and all associated site works	May 2014
0230068	No. 2 Dublin Street, Monaghan	Thomas Hughes	To demolish existing single storey snooker hall and construct 3 storey building consisting of 3No. ground floor shop unit, first floor and second floor snooker halls and second floor offices and associated site works.	Aug 2005

Table 2: Planning History

The key issues emerging from the analysis of the planning history is that there is an established history of the demolition of Dublin Street backland development being acceptable in principle.

5 CONCLUSION

The reports submitted in support of the application demonstrate that the proposal would comply with the relevant policies of the local development plan and the National Planning Framework in relation to the principle of development and the regeneration of the town centre, design quality, heritage preservation and enhancement, transport, sustainability and environmental impacts.

The proposed regeneration proposals are included in the Dublin Street Regeneration Plan 2017, which was varied into the statutory County Development Plan 2019-2025.

The proposed development will provide a high-quality development that will revitalise the site and the surrounding area, and generate positive effects on the levels of expenditure, footfall and vitality of the whole city centre in line with the objectives of the CDP.

In short, positive economic effects of the proposed development would be beneficial to the vitality and viability of the primary retail and commercial function of the town centre in the long term in accordance with the strategic objectives of the County Development Plan and National Planning Framework.