

# DONABATE

## FRAMEWORK PLAN

MARCH 2024



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# Donabate

## Framework Plan

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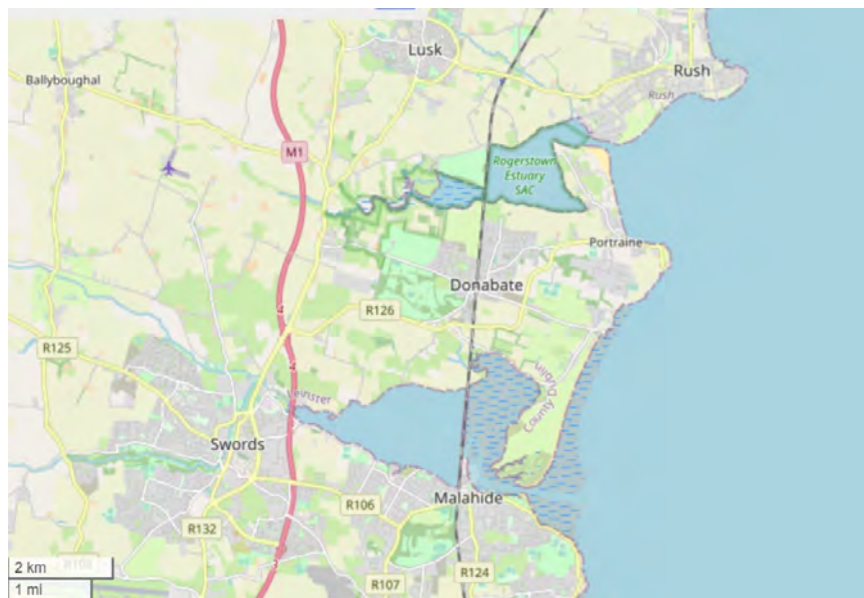
### 1 Introduction

#### 1.1 A Framework Plan for Donabate

This Framework Plan was prepared in response to a specific objective of the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 to prepare Framework Plans for a number of urban centres in Fingal, including the town centre of Donabate.

Donabate is located approximately 25km from Dublin City Centre and is approximately 11km north of Dublin Airport. The Donabate peninsula is bounded to the north and south by the Rogerstown and Malahide Estuaries and by the village of Portrane to the east.

**Fig. 1-1: Donabate Location Map**



The settlement is dissected by the Dublin-Belfast railway line which cuts through Donabate and road access is from the M1 (via Hearse Road and Turvey Avenue).

Donabate benefits from its proximity to recreational resources such as Newbridge Demesne, and plans are proposed for a major new Recreational Hub at Ballymastone which will complement existing sporting facilities within and to the east of the town.

The Donabate Peninsula enjoys many natural areas including the Rogerstown and Malahide Estuaries,

European Sites which form part of the Natura 2000 network.

**Fig. 1-2: View from Rogerstown Park**



The town is surrounded by agricultural, residential and recreational land uses and is well-connected by road and public transport, including rail and bus. Lands surrounding Donabate are zoned Greenbelt, High Amenity and Open Space.

**Fig. 1-3: Donabate Main Street**



Donabate has a distinctive and unique physical character and history. It is a linear town with commercial activity focused on the Main Street and on the streets leading

from it. The retail offer is predominantly local, independently operated convenience floorspace with supporting services.

The recently constructed Donabate Distributor Road connects Hearse Road to Portrane Road and loops to the south of the town, offering an opportunity to remove through-traffic from the town centre and provide for enhanced pedestrian, cycle and public realm opportunities in the centre of Donabate.

**Fig. 1-4: View of Donabate Distributor Road**



While Donabate has experienced substantial housing development in recent years, there are extensive areas of undeveloped residential zoned lands, most of which are included within the Donabate Local Area Plan.

#### 1.2 Scope and Remit of the Framework Plan

Development in Donabate is set against the policies and objectives of the Fingal Development Plan 2023-29 and the Donabate Local Area Plan 2016 (extended to 2026).

Together these documents identify the strategic spatial planning issues and the vision for structured development and balanced growth for Donabate (see Appendix A for an overview of the relevant planning policy documents).

As outlined in the Development Plan, Framework Plans are advisory in nature, providing a long-term vision for the future, allowing sufficient flexibility to manage change depending on the particular circumstances presenting, including societal, economic, environmental and cultural considerations.

In the case of Donabate, FCC seeks to guide careful urban improvement and to plan for appropriate future growth. This Framework Plan for the Donabate town centre area (the outline of which is shown in Figure 1-5).

The Donabate Framework Plan was prepared by FCC in consultation with the Donabate-Portrane Liaison Sub-Committee, with expert input from architectural and urban design consultants, Sheridan Woods, who prepared a detailed Public Realm Strategy to form part of the Framework Plan document.

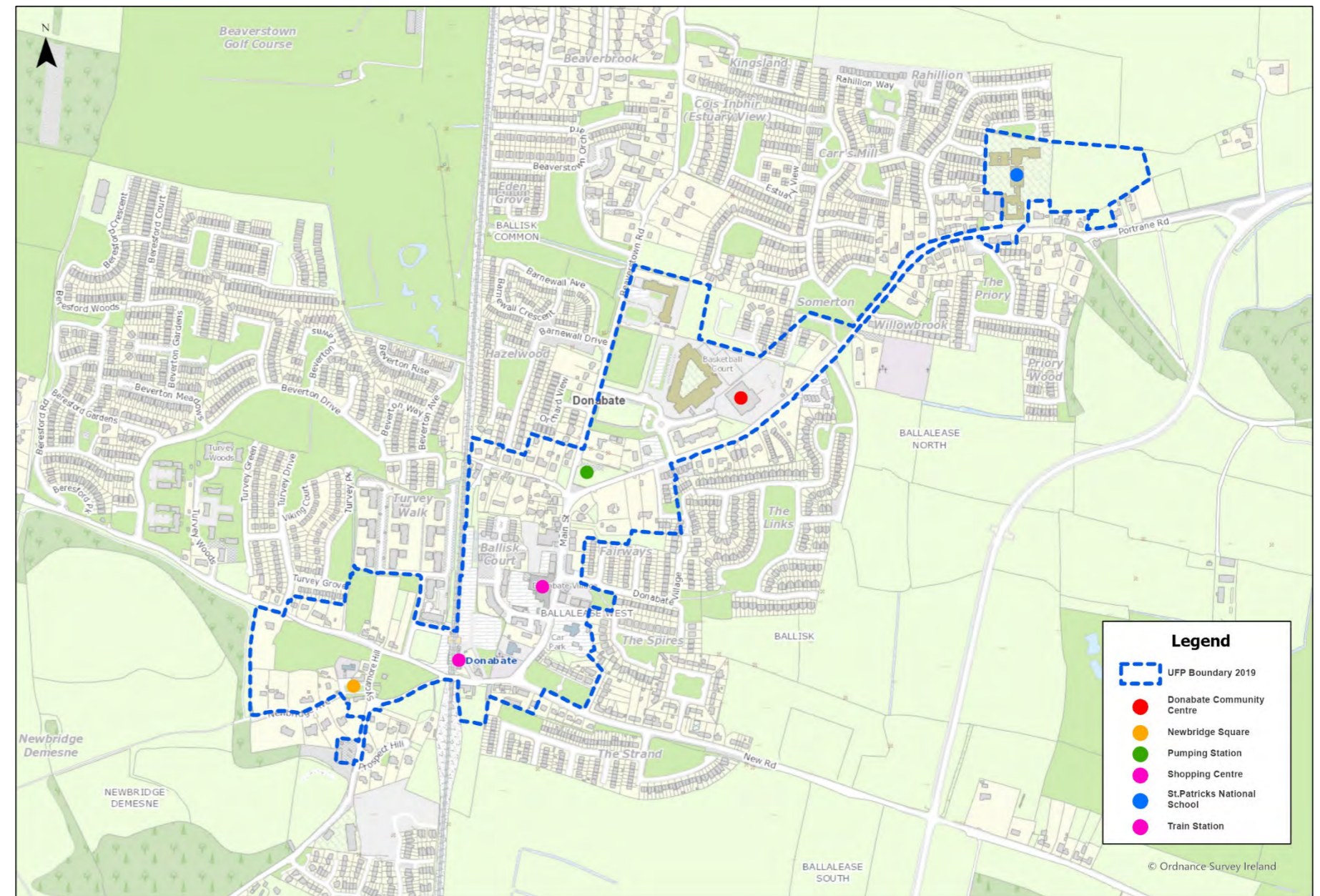
In addition, a Road Safety Assessment was carried out by Bruton Consulting Engineers to identify existing shortfalls in the current provision of pedestrian and cycling facilities as well as any existing road safety issues in the study area (see Appendix C of this document).

Environmental consultants Brady Shipman Martin have also prepared environmental screening and assessments, as required (see Appendix D and Appendix E).

Active public engagement is central to the preparation of Framework Plans, with local communities, landowners and relevant stakeholders given the opportunity to contribute to the process.

The Donabate Framework Plan has been developed in consultation with the local community and other relevant stakeholders. It will be presented to the Elected Members of the Planning Authority for agreement.

**Fig. 1-5: Donabate Framework Plan Area**





# Donabate Framework Plan

## 2 Strategic Goals and Objectives

### 2.1 Introduction

This Framework Plan will guide future development within the Donabate town centre area to create a vibrant and sustainable town core which will support and encourage economic, social and cultural development and provide an attractive, high-quality environment for existing and future residents.

It is a key objective of this Framework Plan that Donabate's physical attributes and distinctive character are strengthened and developed, whilst at the same time protected, to ensure that the unique traits associated with the area are maintained for the enjoyment of future generations.

Connectivity, accessibility, public realm improvements, improved mix of units and variety of land uses, combined with a high quality of urban design and architecture are critical to the rejuvenation of the Main Street area and to the successful development and integration of new residential communities with existing housing areas on the Peninsula.

New retail, restaurant, business and employment opportunities will be encouraged and developed, where possible, and improvements to existing tourist facilities and activities should be welcomed as a way of bringing new life and vitality to the Donabate area.

Newbridge Demesne, the beautiful beaches, together with the development of the Broadmeadow Way linking Donabate to Malahide offer a unique opportunity to capitalise and develop Donabate as a destination for visitors to North Dublin.

Fig. 2-1: Key Attributes of a Successful Town Centre



Source: Extract from 'A Framework for Town Centre Renewal, Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Retail Consultation Forum, 2017'

## 2. Strategic Goals and Objectives

### 2.2 RIAI Town and Village Toolkit

The key attributes of a successful town centre were identified in a government document from 2017 entitled 'A Framework for Town Centre Renewal.'

Building on this work, the Royal Institute of Architects Ireland (RIAI) published their document 'Creating Places for People' – The Town and Village Toolkit' in December 2019.

This document, which is supported by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, was developed by the RIAI and the RIAI Urban Design Committee in response to requests to provide expert advice for people to assess the quality of their towns and villages.

The toolkit formed the initial basis for the approach to the preparation of a Framework Plan for Donabate.

Fig. 2-2: RIAI Town and Village Toolkit



Source: [https://www.riai.ie/whats-on/news/creating\\_places\\_for\\_people\\_riai\\_town\\_and\\_village\\_toolkit](https://www.riai.ie/whats-on/news/creating_places_for_people_riai_town_and_village_toolkit)

The toolkit is based around working with and repairing our existing urban fabric, recognizing and responding to the unique qualities and value inherent in each of our towns and is focused on how people live and use our towns, and how good quality design management and

## 2. Strategic Goals and Objectives

thinking can improve the quality of life for all. The full toolkit can be downloaded from [www.riai.ie](http://www.riai.ie)

The toolkit identifies three steps to be taken in order for a town or village to start driving its future. The first step **'Create a Team'** calls for the creation of a Town Team, which should consist of volunteers, members of the business and professional community and Local Authority executive and Councillors. Architectural / urban design expertise is also advised.

In the case of Donabate town centre, a team was established with members of the Donabate-Portrane Liaison Committee, which includes local volunteers, elected representatives and members of business, professional and community groups.

The next step of the toolkit **'Create a Vision'** relates to the preparation of a town or village design statement, and demonstrates a community-led vision which sets out a roadmap with a list of tasks and projects that can be realised for the town.

This roadmap should identify opportunities for improvements from small things such as signage to larger public realm projects. It will also identify key sites and general improvements that could improve the town, and identify potential funding sources that are available to realise these projects.

As called for in the final step of the toolkit **'Start Delivering'**, this Framework Plan will allow for the delivery of projects by the local community and voluntary organisations and by Fingal County Council, drawing on Government-led and other sources of funding.

## Donabate Framework Plan

### 2.3 Strategic Aims and Objectives of Donabate Framework Plan

**This Framework Plan will guide future development within the Donabate town centre area to create a vibrant and sustainable town core which will support and encourage economic, social and cultural development and provide an attractive, high-quality environment for existing and future residents.**

Building on this overall approach, the primary aims of the Donabate Framework Plan are to:

- repair and improve the townscape;
- provide for new civic and social activities.
- improve accessibility and permeability within the area.

These aims are underpinned by a series of strategic objectives which support the sustainable principles set out as follows:

- encourage the creation of a vibrant core town centre area, attractive for both the new and existing local community and visitors to the area.
- develop a framework for providing a high standard of architecture and urban design which will introduce a dynamic/vibrancy to the character and attractiveness of the area.
- encourage sustainable transport with safe and direct routes for pedestrians and cyclists to and from residential areas to the village core, the train station, schools, community centre, Newbridge Demesne, sports clubs and the beaches.

- maximise the potential of the unique natural, cultural, built and coastal heritage of the area.
- be substantially achievable in a 10 year time frame.

Having regard to these aims and objectives, the Framework Plan identifies specific public realm works, identifies potential opportunity sites for new commercial or community development and addresses accessibility and connectivity throughout the Framework Plan area.

This Framework Plan also identifies a number of projects which may be suitable for funding applications under different programmes, such as the Town and Village Renewal Scheme and other capital grants programmes.

The Donabate Framework Plan supports the provision of town centre space for youth services to provide a much needed local youth outreach service.

The Donabate Framework Plan supports the provision of a Multi-functional Arts, Community and Youth Facility for Donabate.'

The Framework is also intended to act as a general guidance document for the Planning Authority and potential applicants for planning permission in the area and will provide general principles for future development along Donabate Main Street in particular.

The next chapter of this document provides the background context which informs and shapes the overall strategy for the Donabate Framework Plan area which is set out in subsequent chapters.

### 3 Donabate in Context

#### 3.1 Introduction

Following on from the brief introduction to Donabate provided in the opening pages of this document, this chapter provides an overview of Donabate’s environmental, historical and geographical context. Additional detail on the town’s natural and built heritage is available in the recently published FCC [Donabate-Portrane Heritage Audit Report](#).

#### 3.2 Natural Heritage and Protected Sites

The Donabate peninsula enjoys many natural areas including the Rogerstown and Malahide Estuaries, both of which are designated European Sites that form part of the Natura 2000 network. In addition, the town enjoys easy access to Portrane and Donabate Beach, Newbridge Demesne and has an Architectural Conservation Area in the form of the Square ACA. Donabate has a distinct advantage given its proximity to the Rogerstown Estuary, Portrane and Donabate Beach and Newbridge Demesne.

**Fig. 3-1: SPAs, SACs, and (p)NHAs near Donabate**



As shown in the figure above (and as discussed in detail in Appendix C and D to this Framework Plan), there are number of protected sites in the Donabate area including:

- Rogerstown Estuary to the north (which is an SPA, SAC and pNHA);
- Malahide Estuary to the south (which is also an SPA, a SAC and pNHA);
- The Northwest Irish Sea to the east (which is an SPA); and
- Portrane Shore also to the east (which is a pNHA).

There are a number of existing and proposed walkways on the Donabate Peninsula that are proximate to and interconnect with the village centre, including the Fingal Coastal Way, the Rahillion / Windmill / St Ita’s trail and Coastal Way, the Newbridge/Turvey Trail as well as the Broadmeadow Way.

Despite this proximity to natural amenities, the town centre itself has limited urban greenery. There are two formal green spaces including The Square and Chapel View (St. Patrick’s) Town Park.

There are incidental green spaces, verges and trees that occur in an unplanned and incoherent manner on the main streets, and the eastern backland area.

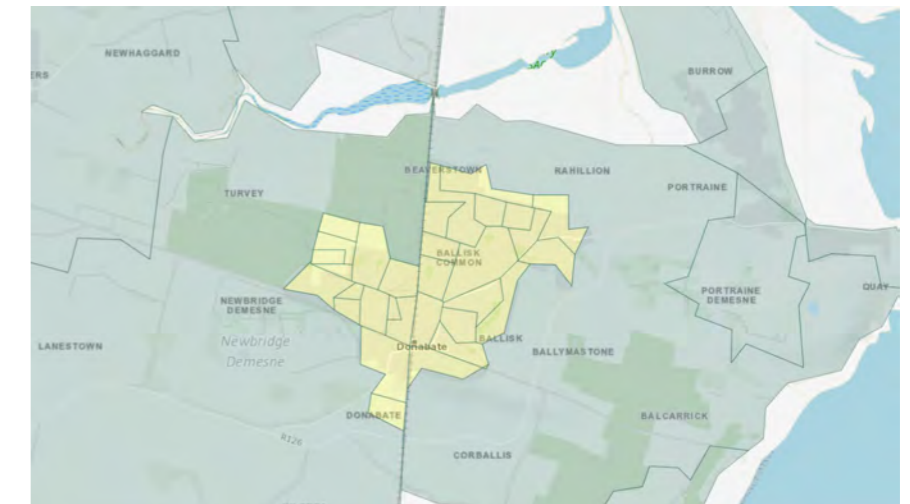
There is scope to incorporate green infrastructure, street trees and planting in a planned manner, which will help to improve the quality of the environment, while also serving ecological functions from reducing stormwater runoff, removing air pollutants, and providing a cooling effect.

#### 3.3 Population and Demographics

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) 2022 Census shows that Fingal’s population has continued to grow and is now at 329,218, an increase of approximately 12% on the 2016 figure.

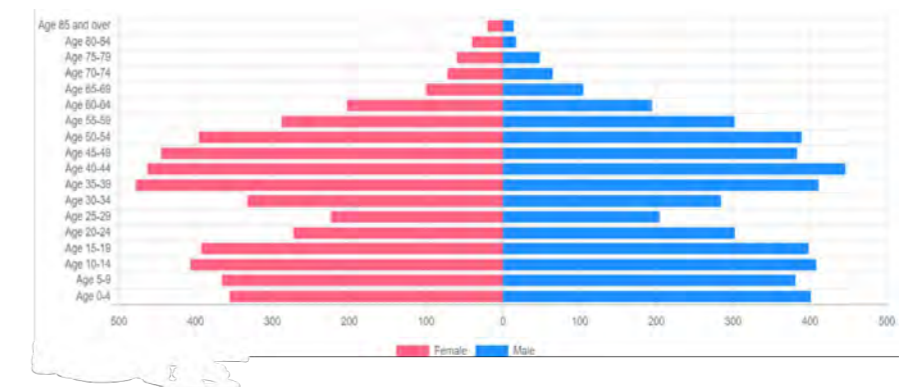
Figure 3-2 shows the relevant Central Statistics Office (CSO) Small Area Population Statistics (SAP) areas for Donabate. In 2022, these areas had a combined population of 9,669 (4,752 males, 4,917 females), which comprised 2,590 families and 3,157 total households.

**Fig. 3-2: CSO SAP Areas for Donabate**



**Age Profile:** The average age in Fingal in 2022 was 36.2 years. In comparison, Donabate has an average age of 31.2 years and an almost equal difference of male and females overall and per age cohort group. In Donabate, the proportion of young people (14 years or less) is also relatively high (24%), whilst only 3.7% of the population is over 65 years of age.

**Fig. 3-3: Population Pyramid for Donabate**



**Nationality:** 13.3% of the population were of non-Irish nationality whilst 20% were born overseas. The most common nationalities other than Irish were rest of the world (6.8%), British (5.7%), Other EU (5.5%) and Polish (1.6%).

**Household structure:** The average household size is relatively high at 3.06 which may be attributable to high

### 3. Donabate in Context

proportions of households of four persons and at least five persons when compared to other settlements.

**Tenure:** Owner occupation is the leading tenure type (77.8%) whilst 11.4% of housing in Donabate is rented from private landlords and 7.2% is social housing of which 4.8% is rented from the local authority.

**Education:** Educational attainment is relatively high with 19.3% having attained postgraduate education and a further 19.4% educated to honours bachelor's degree, professional qualification or both. However, 26.5% of Donabate's population attained a Leaving Certificate or less.

**Industry of Employment:** 65.7% of the population of Donabate are 'at work' while 14% are students. Commerce and Trade takes up the majority of the employment (29.5%) in Donabate. This is followed by Professional Services (25.1%) and then Transport and Communication (16%). The lowest share of employment in Donabate is in Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, at only 0.2%.

**Means of Travel to Work and Education:** The most common form of transport to access work or education in Donabate is by car (29%), followed by walking (18%). 17.8% of Donabate's population travel to work or education by train, DART or LUAS. In Donabate, the private car was a more common mode of transport to travel to work (49%) than education (25%).

**Commercial Properties:** There are 89 businesses in Donabate (accounting for 1.3% of NACE coded businesses in Fingal) with a further 13 businesses within 1km of the settlement boundary. In Donabate, Human Health and Social Work Activities account for 17 businesses (19.1%), Wholesale and Retail Trade (Vehicle repairs) occur at 16 businesses (18.0%) and Accommodation and Food Service Activities occupy 10 businesses (11.2%).

### Donabate Framework Plan

Greenways and high-quality cycling and walking routes, such as the Fingal Coastal Way.

There are several proposed cycle/walking routes near the Framework Plan lands provided for in the Development Plan including proposed cycle/walking routes for/along:

- Balllease South;
- Newbridge Avenue and Main Street;
- Beaverstown Road and Portrane Road to Beaverstown and St. Ita's Hospital in Portrane;
- from Main Street, via Carr's Mill to Portrane and from Main Street via Beverton Drive to Turvey;
- Broadmeadow Way, and the Donabate to Portrane Village way (via Ballymastone and Cliff Walk).

Fingal County Council has commenced preparations for the construction of the 6km Broadmeadow Greenway which will link Malahide and Donabate across the Broadmeadow Estuary via a 280m long bridge.

**Fig. 3-5: Broadmeadow Greenway Route**



With the Baldoyle to Portmarnock Greenway already opened, the Broadmeadow Greenway will be the next piece of the Fingal Coastal Way to be completed and plans for the rest of the route, which will eventually run from Sutton to Balbriggan are in preparation. The Fingal

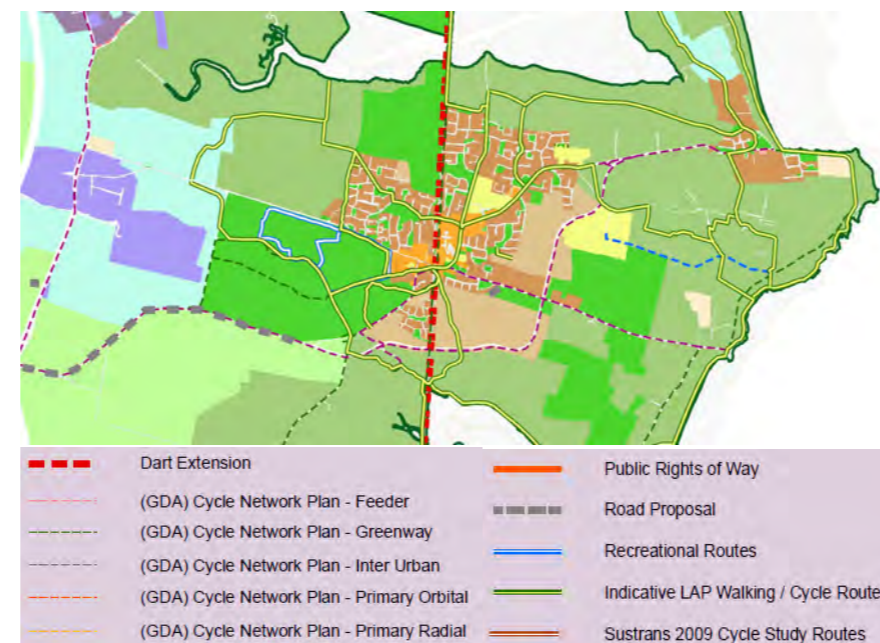
#### 3.4 Movement and Connectivity

The Framework Plan lands benefit from their proximity to the R126 (Portrane Road), the M1, and national road network. The opening of the Donabate Distributor Road to the east of the town represents a major upgrade to the road infrastructure in the area. Additional road improvement works are planned in the area including the road proposal from New Road to Corballis.

In terms of public transport, Donabate is served by 33t (Donabate to Skerries) and 33b (Portrane to Swords) local bus services with nearby stops for the 33 and 33a Dublin Bus service from Dublin City Centre to Dublin Airport, Swords and Balbriggan and Skerries. Revisions to the existing bus network are proposed under Bus Connects which will see a peak time route (X83) provided between Swords and Donabate/Portrane.

Donabate train station is served by Dublin to Dundalk Commuter services. A Railway Order has been submitted to An Bord Pleanála for the extension of DART services to Drogheda via coastal stations including Donabate.

**Fig. 3-4: Cycle and Walking Networks**



With regard to active and sustainable modes of travel, the Framework Plan lands are also close to a series of

Coastal Way will form part of the NTA's Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network and East Coast Trail.

### 3.5 Built Heritage

There is evidence of human habitation in the Donabate area from the Mesolithic period onwards. However, the present urban structure began to develop around the medieval ecclesiastical foundations, which were in existence by the early 13th Century.

The 1843 6 inch first edition Ordnance Survey (OS) map shown in Figure 3-6 on this page illustrates Donabate to the west of the newly constructed railway running north-south through the Peninsula and Ballisk Village to the north and east.

The 1908 25 inch OS map also shown in Figure 3-6 highlights the prominence of the churches in Donabate with St Patrick's Catholic Church emerging as the recognised 'centre' and 'focal point' of the Main Street Donabate as it is today. The former Roman Catholic Church is illustrated as St Patrick's Hall at this time.

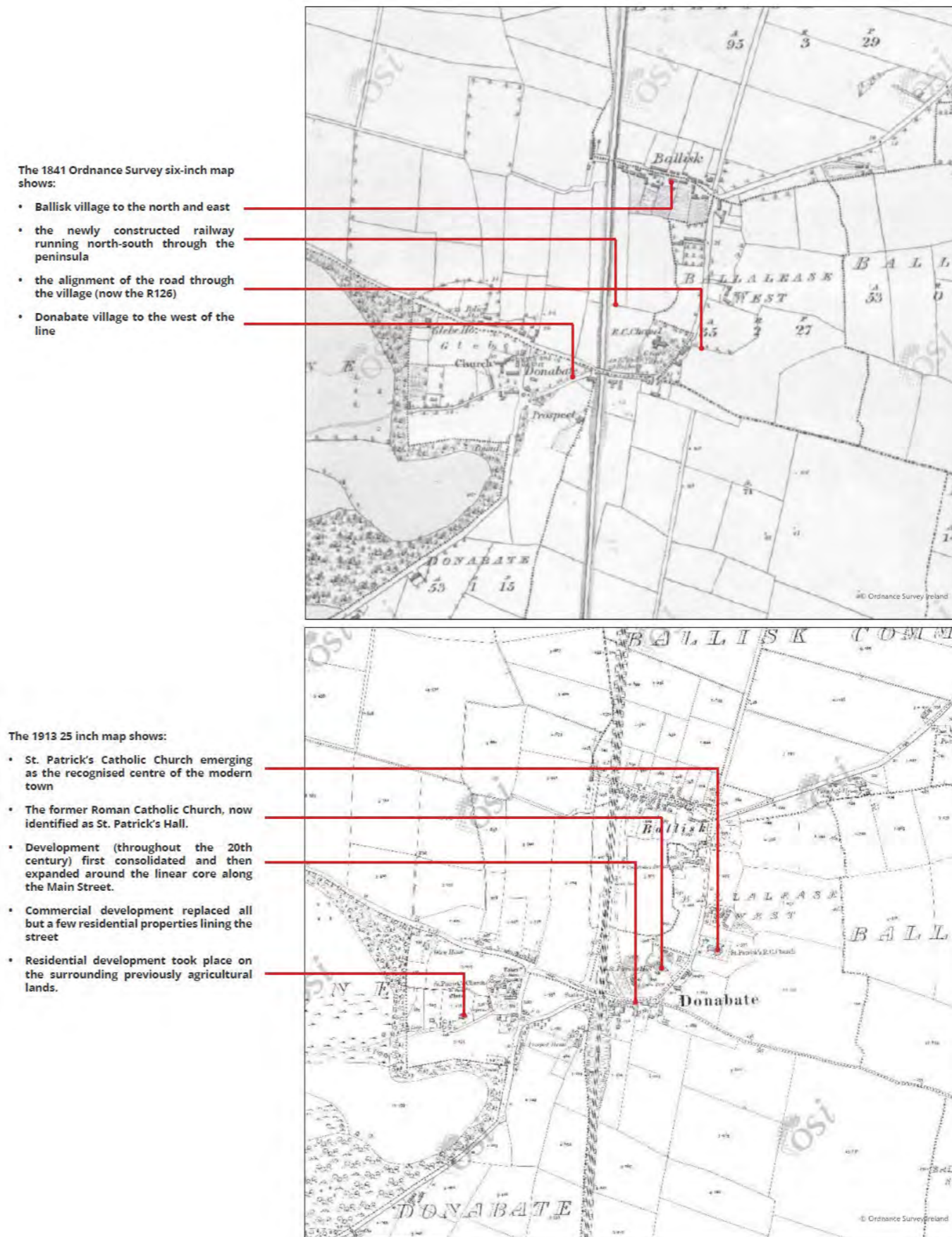
Further development occurred along Main Street throughout the latter half of the 20th Century, with considerable additional residential development taking place off of Main Street to the east and west.

Commercial development gradually replaced most of the residential properties on the street and residential development gradually moved to the lands surrounding the Village which were previously in agricultural use.

The most historic parts of the Framework Plan Area coincide with the protected structures clustered in the vicinity of The Square, the Railway Station, Donabate Cemetery, St. Patricks RC Church, Warington's House on Main Street and the thatched cottage at Ballisk.

Protected Structures and Monuments of note within the Framework Plan Study area shown in figure 3-7 overleaf and are listed in the tables 3-1 and 3-2.

**Fig. 3-6: 1837 (top) and 1908 (bottom) OS Maps**



**Table 3-1: Record of Protected Structures**

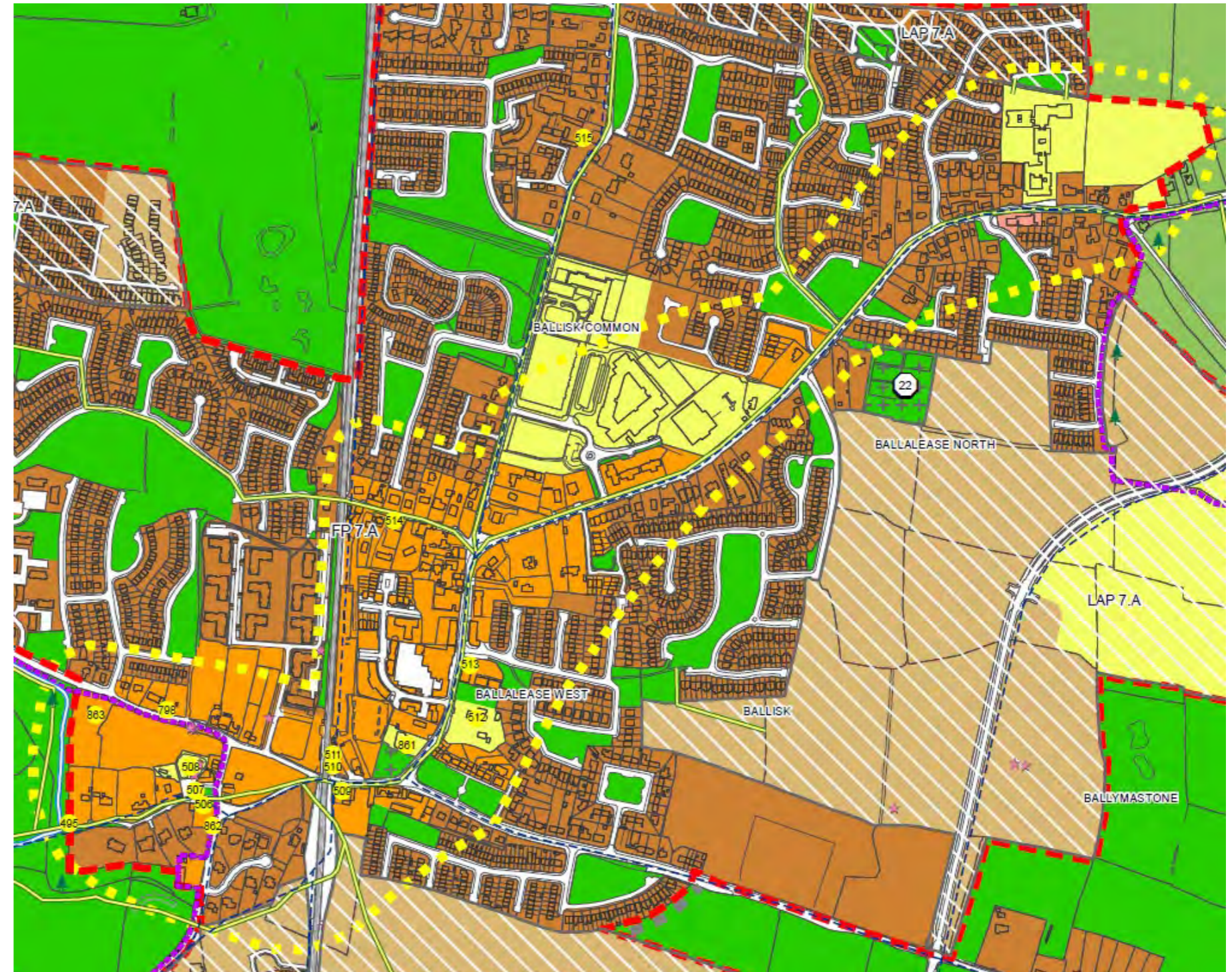
Reference	Structure
495	Former Lodge to Newbridge House
506	The Cottage
507	Water pump
508	St. Patrick's (Church of Ireland)
509	Smyth's Public House
510	Station Master's House
511	Donabate Railway Station (Railway Station, Signal Box & Pedestrian Bridge )
512	St. Patrick's Church (RC)
513	An Dun (Formerly Warington's House)
514	The Cottage (Thatched Dwelling)
515	Beaverstown House
798	Vernacular House. Turvey Avenue
861	Donabate Parish Hall
863	The Old Vicarage

**Table 3-2: Record of Monuments and Places**

Reference	Feature
DU012-00501	Church
DU012-00502-	Castle - Tower House
DU012-00503-	Graveyard
DU012-00504	Memorial Slab
DU012-082001-	Excavation Miscellaneous
DU012-082002-	Structure
DU012-082003-	Structure
DU012-082004-	Structure
DU012-067----	Enclosure
DU012-083----	Excavation Miscellaneous

Figure 3-7 also indicates that the southwestern portion of the Donabate Framework Plan is located in the Newbridge Demesne Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) and that the north eastern Framework Plan area abuts the Portrane / St. Ita's Hospital Complex ACA.

**Fig. 3-7: Built Heritage**



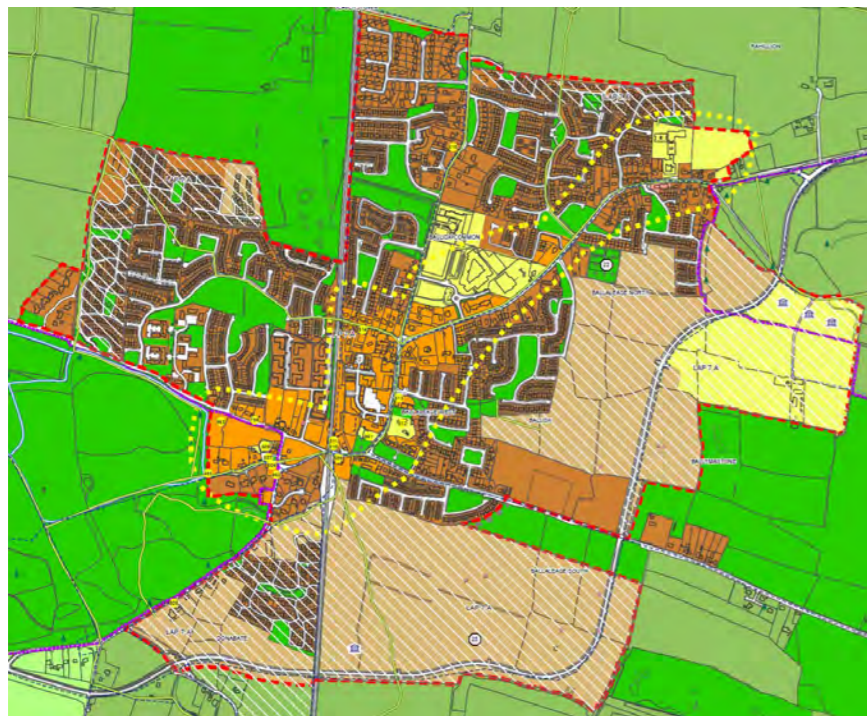
The historic structures and streets should be complemented and better framed with a simple and sympathetic public realm design, to enhance their setting, and to ensure that the historic origins of the town can be appreciated.

It is important to note that any works or projects to be carried out in the Framework Plan area will be required to comply with all relevant statutory requirements and government guidelines relating to development in or adjacent to protected structures, recorded monuments (RMPs/SMRs) and ACAs.

## 3.6 Existing Land Use

In terms of the land uses provided for Donabate in the Fingal County Development Plan 2023-2029, the lands in the centre of Donabate are generally included within zoning objective 'TC' Town Centre which seeks to: *'Protect and enhance the special physical and social character of town and district centres and provide and/or improve urban facilities.'* (These areas are shown in orange in Figure 3-8 below).

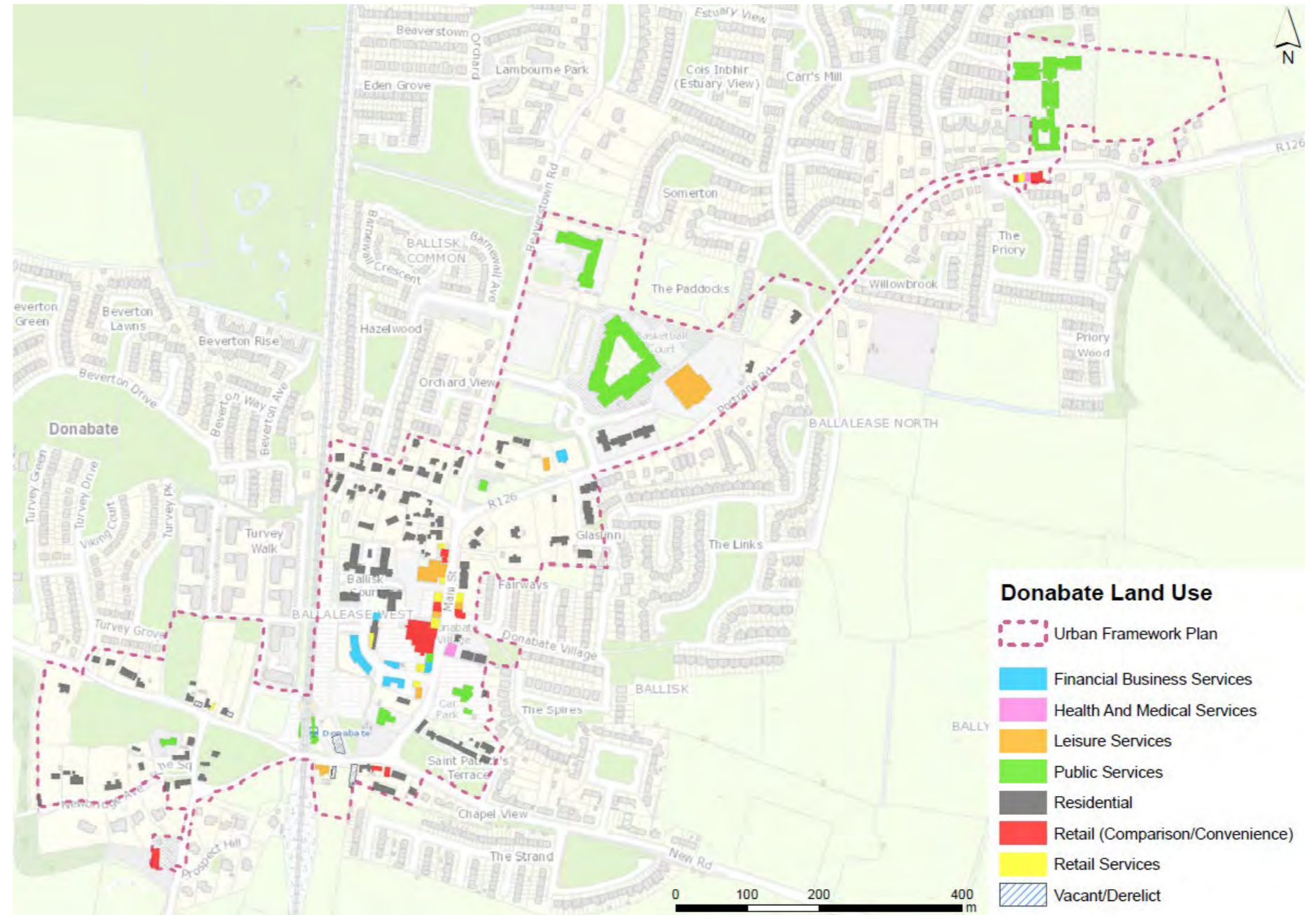
**Fig. 3-8: Donabate FP Area Land Use Zoning**



There are also areas zoned 'CI' Community Infrastructure (in yellow) to "provide for and protect civic, religious, community, education, health care and social infrastructure"; RS – residential (in dark brown) to "provide for residential development and protect and improve residential amenity" and OS – Open Space (in green) to "preserve to "provide for open space and recreational amenities."

In addition to the character area analysis described above, a detailed land use survey and public realm analysis exercise was undertaken to provide an accurate baseline of Donabate's existing built environment.

**Fig. 3-9: Land Use Survey Drawing Ground Floor**



A full description of the results of the land use study is provided in Appendix B to this document. However, as shown in the land use survey diagram above, retail, leisure service and financial/business services are focused on Main Street with concentrations of residential uses in central and western parts of the Framework Plan area.

The diagram also shows the provision of large scale public service uses in the northern half of the Framework Plan area notably at Donabate Community College, Donabate Portrane Community Centre, and St. Patrick's National School on the Portrane Road.

#### 3.7 Character Areas

A character assessment which was carried out for Donabate indicated that there are four principle character areas namely:

- the area adjacent to the train station;
- the area adjacent to Newbridge Demesne;
- the area along Main Street; and
- the area north of Main Street (Ballisk).

While a full description of the results of this assessment is provided in Appendix B to this document, each of the four areas identified can be characterised as follows:

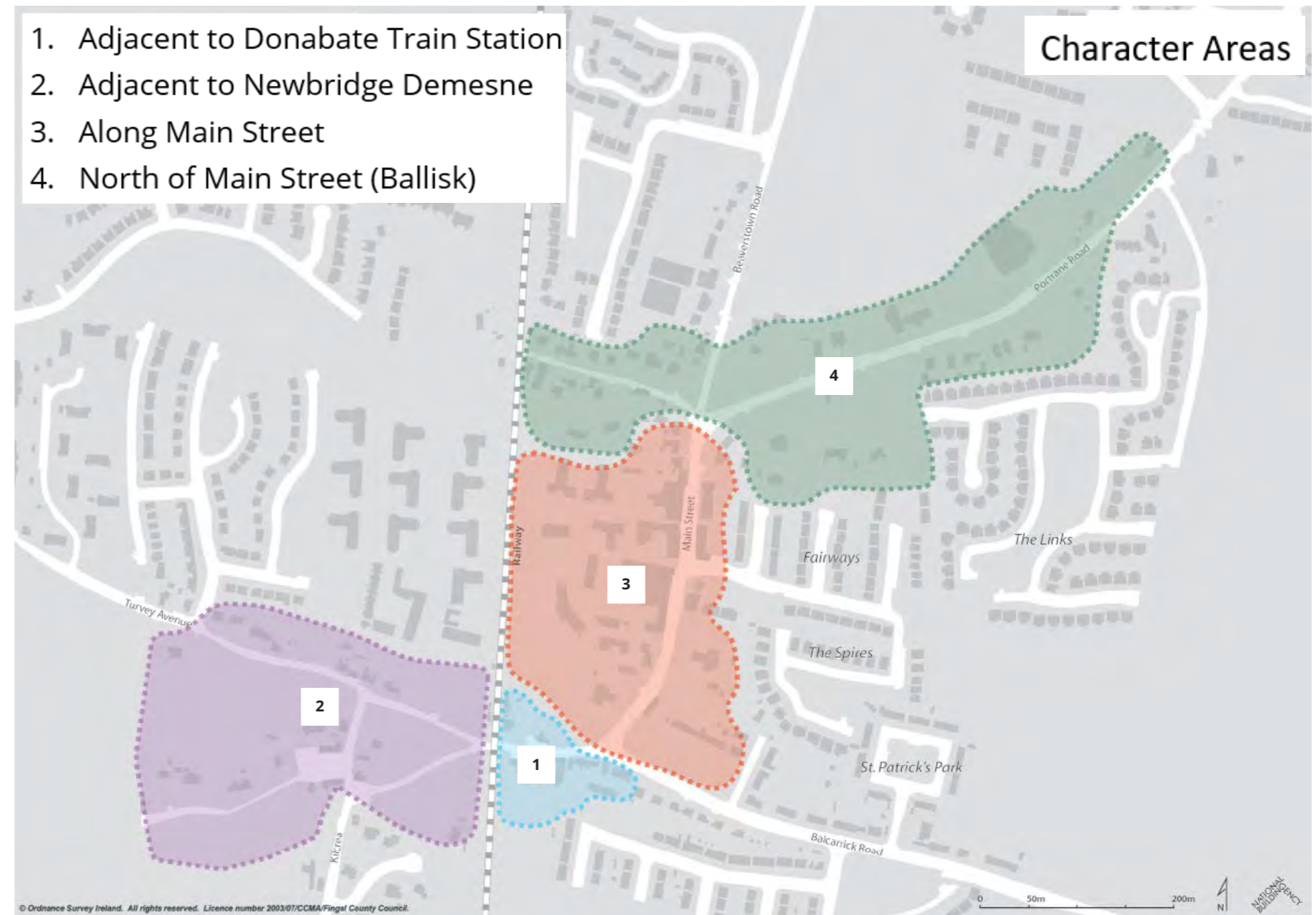
Character Area 1 includes the train station area and Smyths Pub. The space surrounding the railway buildings is dominated by parking and vehicular movement resulting in a poor public realm with pedestrian access to the train station somewhat restricted.

Character Area 2 marks the entrance to Donabate and includes part of Newbridge Demesne. The area consists of an attractive, tree-lined approach to the Village with hedgerows, stone walls and significant tree groups together with a number of protected structures including St Patrick’s Church of Ireland.

Character Area 3 Main Street / Commercial Core forms the main commercial /retail heart of Donabate and as such development has traditionally followed the linear structure of the main access route through the town, with the shopping centre -‘Donabate Town Centre’ and Supervalu acting as the core retail areas.

Character Area 4: stretches east from Hands Lane and is located to the north of the town centre primarily along the Portrane Road. The area is characterised by schools and the community centre, library and other community uses including the credit union and scout den.

Fig. 3-10: Character Areas in Donabate





## 4 Public Consultation

### 4.1 Introduction

Public consultation formed an integral part of the process of preparing this Framework Plan. This section of the Framework Plan document sets out the main steps in the public consultation process and outlines the main issues raised by members of the public and community groups relating to what works and what requires further improvement in the Donabate Framework Plan Area.

### 4.2 The Public Consultation Process

In 2019, Fingal County Council engaged with the Donabate-Portrane Liaison Committee to set up a sub-committee to oversee and drive the Framework Plan process. Staff from Fingal’s Planning and Strategic Infrastructure Department attended the September 2019 meeting of the Liaison Committee to outline the process. After agreement was given to proceed with the Framework Plan, further meetings were held which established Terms of Reference and a broad outline of how the process would proceed. Meetings then took place between the Liaison Sub-Committee and Fingal staff.

Extensive and proactive participation with the community is a key feature of Framework Plans and FCC commenced an extensive consultation process in Donabate as part of the Framework Plan process.

The involvement of the Donabate-Portrane Liaison Sub-Committee is seen as key to the process, to help achieve buy-in across the community and to add the community voice at all times through the process.

This process, of engaging with local groups and undertaking focused workshops, is recognised as a best practice method of participatory planning. Our experience in using this method for similar plans (i.e. Rush Urban

Framework Plan) has been that smaller focused workshops produced the most useful information for the resultant plans. Additionally, partnering with a local group, such as the Donabate-Portrane Liaison Sub-Committee, was seen as key.

#### 4.2.1 Community and Sporting Groups Workshop

The first part of the public participation process took place on Tuesday 21st January 2020 in Donabate Library. FCC held a Community and Sporting Group consultation. Two people each were invited from 54 local community and sporting organisations. Approximately 50 people attended the meeting, representing more than 25 groups from the area.

The workshop, which was conducted by an Independent Facilitator, was focused on community and sporting groups and the particular issues they face.

At the consultation meeting, FCC highlighted that this was the first in a series of consultations and that further consultations would include workshops with Residents Groups, Businesses and Young People.

The Senior Planner made a short presentation on the Donabate Framework Plan Process and the steps and stages involved.

The participants broke into five smaller workshops, which were facilitated by FCC Planning staff who provided maps of the area and promoted discussion around three main topic areas:

- Community Facilities;
- Public Realm and Movement; and
- Opportunity Sites.

#### 4.2.2 Information Leaflet

Following on from this initial public workshop in January 2020, an Information Leaflet on the Framework Plan was delivered to households within the locality, this leaflet detailed the Framework Plan process and outlined how to

make a written submission to Fingal County Council (either by post, by email or through the consultation portal on Fingal.ie).

Fig. 4-1: Consultation Leaflet

A copy of this leaflet was distributed to homes in March 2020. The period for lodging submissions was noted as being between 6th March 2020 to 15th April 2020.

However, this period was subsequently extended to 4th September 2020, to allow people additional time to make submissions (given the postponement of a second workshop due to Covid 19 restrictions).

## 4. Public Consultation

FCC's social media (including Facebook and Twitter) also advertised that the Council were seeking submissions in relation to the Framework Plan and flagged the extended timeframe for receipt of submissions.

### 4.2.3 Primary Schools Consultation

The involvement of children of all ages in the future planning of their local town or village is acknowledged by FCC as playing an important role in getting the views of all members of society.

The project team was delighted to be approached by Joe Usher (Assistant Professor in Primary Geography Education, School of STEM, Education, Innovation and Global Studies, Institute of Education, DCU) to collaborate on a planning project to involve the local primary schools in the making of our Framework Plan.

Mr. Usher designed 8 no. geography lessons on land-use, planning and development for 5th/6th class children, and provided CPD to primary teachers to supply them with the lesson plans and resources to enable children to develop their own Local Area Plan for their locality.

The ultimate goal is to develop an initiative and mechanism whereby children could participate and be consulted on the development of their own local areas whilst also learning geography.

Donabate offered the perfect opportunity for such a project in Fingal given the location of the primary schools within the Village and the fact that the majority of the children attending the primary schools live locally and are therefore familiar with and have good knowledge of their local environment.

The project commenced in late 2019 with 5 no. local primary school classes involved in total (2 x 5th classes in St Patricks Girls School and 3 x 6th classes in the Educate Together in Donabate). Joe worked with the local primary schools and significant work was carried out by teachers and students alike, which included the children mapping

out their routes to school, identifying accessibility and mobility issues, and suggesting ideas for opportunity sites.

The project team was in regular contact with Joe and were impressed with the volume of work and engagement of the local schools in the process. The students were due to present their findings to FCC staff on Thursday 26th March 2020.

However, unfortunately due to Covid-19 restrictions, this event could not take place. However, the feedback received from the students has informed this Framework Plan process.

### Fig. 4-2: Student Field Trips



### 4.2.4 Webinar / Online Consultation

Given the ongoing Covid 19 situation, it was not possible to hold live workshops with members of the public. It was decided that the second public consultation event would target local businesses and residents' associations groups in Donabate. On 20th August 2020, Fingal's Planning and Strategic Infrastructure Department held five online workshops.

Approximately 35 people attended, including Councillors, local businesses, representatives from resident's associations and members of the Donabate-Portrane Liaison Sub-Committee. Ground rules were agreed including not attributing comments to individuals and not recording the workshops.

FCC Planning staff attended each consultation workshop with an Independent Facilitator present, which ensured

## Donabate Framework Plan

that the workshops ran smoothly, and everyone had an opportunity to have their say.

There was a great deal of agreement and engagement between the participants on the attributes of Donabate, requirements for the village, key issues and opportunities.

The workshops were highly participative, constructive and friendly, with many representatives from the residents' groups offering to further assist the planners in the information gathering process.

The topics covered in the workshop generally included the following:

- positive attributes of Donabate;
- public realm and movement;
- opportunity sites; and
- heritage.

### 4.2.5 Submissions Received During the Consultation Period

A total of 37 no. submissions were received by email and via the Fingal Consult Online Portal between 6th March 2020 and 4th September 2020.

Issues that arose were similar in nature to the areas discussed in previous meetings and workshops and related primarily to:

- public realm improvements (street furniture, planting, lighting, materials, shopfronts),
- greater variety of shops and cafes needed,
- accessibility, permeability (particularly pedestrian and cycle),
- car parking and traffic management,
- the need for more signage and suggested uses for the Educate Together site and other opportunity sites in the area.

Additional public consultation events will be held as required during this draft display period, offering the local

community an opportunity to make submissions and observations.

### 4.3 Overview of Consultation Findings

Similar issues arose across all consultation events and related to public realm improvements (street furniture, shopfronts, planting, lighting, materials, colours), improved accessibility and pedestrian / cycle movement, greater variety of shops and cafes needed, creation of a more attractive village centre, car / bicycle parking and traffic management, the need for more signage, additional community facilities and the development of a clear identity for Donabate.

The following sections provide a comprehensive summary of the specific issues raised during the course of the public consultation process.

#### 4.3.1 Positive Attributes of Donabate

At the outset of the consultation process, participants were asked to identify the positive attributes and strengths of Donabate.

The majority of responses described Donabate as a safe and accessible area with a strong community spirit, with established community groups and adequate provision of community facilities, where the proximity to the surrounding historic sites, walking routes, nature reserves and beaches was highly valued.

Many of the responses were about characteristics that they would like to see retained as Donabate continues to develop in the future. Donabate and the Peninsula was described as a 'Hidden Gem' by many, with branding and marketing needed to highlight and showcase Donabate's assets.

#### 4.3.2 The Village Core

Many of the responses to the public consultation exercise called for greater diversification of uses and increased levels of planting/greening in the village.

What was also established was the desire for Donabate to become more welcoming to the pedestrian, with the introduction of additional; traffic calming measures, increased provision of waste bins, CCTV and lighting along main routes, and an increase in the number of civic spaces within the village.

Greater cohesion in shopfront designs and the refurbishment of derelict sites to help preserve and enhance the existing character of the village was also desired by many respondents.

#### 4.3.3 Signage

The need for welcome signs along the main routes into the village, alongside the implementation of pathfinding signs displaying directions to all of the local historical sites and nature reserves was established by the majority of respondents.

The need for all signs to display the Irish Language and have a unified design/colour scheme was also identified, as well as the need for signage depicting where the nearest defibrillator was located, across the village of Donabate.

#### 4.3.4 Street Furniture and Public Art

Respondents encouraged the introduction of safety measures around the village such as the widening of footpaths to make Donabate more accessible for the elderly or members of the community who may be visually impaired, have mobility issues, etc.

There was also a call for the increased provision of seating and seating areas along Main Street and the installation of murals/street art as seen across other areas of Dublin.

#### 4.3.5 New Development

The need for new developments to consist of a high-quality design that incorporate sustainability and interact

effectively with the streetscape was identified during the public consultation process.

Respondents also wanted to see new developments add to the appearance of the village, through the removal of on-street parking, increase in public open space and capping the heights of the developments to reflect the existing heights in the village.

#### 4.3.6 Active Travel, Movement and Transport

The importance of being able to walk and cycle to / from the village, the schools, train station from surrounding areas in a reasonable time and to be able to move through the village with ease were seen as important by many respondents.

The need for an increase in the number of cycle paths along the main routes in and out of the village, alongside the need for an increase in safe and secure bicycle parking equipped with bike lockers was also identified.

Many respondents wanted to see more cycle schemes being offered in the village to encourage cycling for all ages.

Prioritisation of pedestrian access within the village through the installation of bollards and other measures, along with the establishment of more walking/cycling routes to major destinations in the village (schools, train station, etc.) was also seen as a key desire of respondents.

There were many requests for additional access routes for pedestrians, cyclist and possibly public transport, segregated from other traffic, connecting the surrounding estates and the train station.

Alongside this, there were pleas for increased security presence at the train station to help prevent and deal with any anti-social behaviour. Many locals also wanted to see an increase in the provision of secure bicycle parking, equipped with bike boxes, implemented outside the train station.

In relation to the bus and train services in Donabate, there was a general agreement amongst respondents that both services were overcrowded and that these services needed to increase in frequency.

There was also an expressed need to increase the provision of bus stops in the village, especially outside the main attractions and facilities in the area (such as the Beach, nature reserves and the train station).

Some respondents also requested that the current and any future bus stops be set in off the road to prevent traffic congestion in the village.

### 4.3.7 Access for All

There was a call by many respondents for increased communication and consultation between FCC, the visually impaired and those with disabilities to help make the village as welcoming and accessible for all.

There were also requests for additional measures to make Donabate more accessible, such as an increase in the provision of designated parking for those with disabilities, as well as the addition of sound alerts to traffic crossings and ramps to footpaths for those with disabilities, mothers with prams, and the elderly.

### 4.3.8 Traffic Management

The desire to see Donabate village become more pedestrianised was identified by many respondents, along with the potential to introduce a shared streets initiative such as what was implemented in Malahide.

Many respondents expressed the need for additional off-street parking facilities if Donabate was to become more pedestrianised, (especially at main attractions such as the beach and nature reserves) and that more E.V. charging points be introduced to these facilities and across the village.

Traffic calming measures such as shared surfaces, speed bumps and speed cameras were also identified as a

necessary addition to the village by many respondents to help reduce the speed of traffic passing through the village.

### 4.3.9 Community Facilities and Community Centre

The lack of facilities for young people (teenagers) emerged as a key issue during public consultation.

Additional medical and educational facilities, alongside additional meeting points and events for the young and older members of the local community were commonly identified as necessary additions to Donabate village by respondents.

There were also calls for the existing community facilities to be assessed and reviewed as many respondents found them to be insufficient and therefore in need of upgrading. Finally, there were calls for a Garda station to be built in the village to increase Garda presence in Donabate.

Off the back of the COVID-19 pandemic, many respondents expressed their desire to see an increase in the promotion of active travel modes across the village and the implementation of infrastructure to support this.

For many respondents, the COVID-19 pandemic also helped highlight the lack of recreational services (such as bars and restaurants) in the village.

The need for a remote working hub was also identified, with many respondents claiming that not only would this support a better work/life balance and bring vibrancy to the village centre, but that a remote working hub in the village could help the creation of indigenous businesses in Donabate.

### 4.3.10 Heritage & Conservation

The importance of conserving the heritage in the village and the need to retain and enhance heritage features and sites was highlighted in the workshop discussions and submissions received. For instance, the need to link

Newbridge Demesne to Donabate Village was noted as being important.

Many respondents called for the preservation and retention of Donabate's heritage, with historic features such as Newbridge House and its walls, the churches and the many water pumps located around the village to be maintained and preserved.

There were also calls for an increase in the provision of heritage trails that visit all of the surrounding heritage sites and link the village to the Newbridge Demesne, complete with signage and linking to a cultural/heritage centre, similar to the one in Naul.

A potential site for a heritage centre that has been earmarked by some respondents is the watchtower by St. Patrick's Church.

### 4.3.11 Key Projects

There was a high level of agreement about the needs of the Donabate community: such as, the need for mixed use outdoor spaces and spaces for multi-generational use. The need for a civic / cultural / arts centre – a performance space etc. was also highlighted.

Examples suggested, included a skatepark for youth, step-down housing for older residents, smaller parks for younger children (and local residents), a cultural civic centre and performance and gallery spaces.

In developing amenities and creating spaces the participants were keen to see spaces for the diverse population: young, older, people with disabilities.

The potential of the old Educate Together site was highlighted generally across the workshop feedback and in submissions received. This site received temporary planning permission for use as a Gaelscoil (Gaelscoil na Mara). This permission has since expired.

There were many suggestions put forward as to what could be developed on the Educate Together site. The

most common requests were that the site could be used to benefit the neighbouring school or act as a meeting place for teenagers.

Other popular suggestions consisted of an arts centre with theatre spaces/drama groups, meeting rooms, music society, etc. A variety of community uses were also suggested by respondents, such as a farmer's market, a men's shed, a Multi-Use Games Area, a community garden and/or a playground.

Respondents identified a number of potential opportunity sites across Donabate village including the green space beside St. Patrick's church where respondents suggested a farmer's market or a pocket park containing a playground for small children could be developed.

The old barn beside Romayo's takeaway was identified as another potential opportunity site, with respondents suggesting a Café/restaurant or alternative retail used could be developed on the site.

The vacant shop beside the train station was also earmarked by respondents as a potential opportunity site, where respondents would like a garda station developed.

Finally, the pumping station, train station car park and lands zoned Community Infrastructure beside St. Patrick's National School are all sites that were also identified as potential opportunity sites by respondents.

### 4.4 Summary of Public Consultation

In summary, it can be seen that a number of issues were raised constantly by participants in the lengthy and extensive public consultation process carried out to inform the preparation of this Framework Plan. These issues can generally be seen to relate to the need to:

- improve the public realm in the town's core areas and on Main Street in particular;

- provide additional community facilities and areas where community events and gatherings can take place;
- ensure that new development on opportunity sites will be carried out to a high standard will be properly integrated into the built fabric of the town;
- ensure better connectivity and better facilities for active travel throughout the Framework Plan area.

Building on the insights gained through the public consultation process, the following chapter sets out an overall strategy which will address the issues raised by the people of Donabate in order to make a real improvement to encourage the economic, social and cultural life of the town.

### 5 Developing a Strategy for Donabate

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides sets out the rationale used to develop the strategy for the Donabate Framework Plan Area which identifies specific projects and interventions and which, if implemented, have the potential to make a significant improvement to the built environment of the town.

Given that the strategy is aimed at identifying opportunities for key projects as well as interventions to improve the public realm, it was essential that the strategy was prepared on the basis of input from suitably qualified design and transport professionals.

Early in the process, Sheridan Woods, an Urban Design and Architectural Consultancy was contracted to devise a Public Realm Strategy which would form an integral part of the Framework Plan.

In addition, a Road Safety Assessment was carried out by Burton Consulting Engineers to identify existing shortfalls in the current provision of pedestrian and cycling facilities as well as any existing road safety issues in the study area.

This chapter outlines overall design approach adopted by Sheridan Woods in preparing the strategy before the main recommendations of the public realm strategy are presented in detail in subsequent chapters.

#### 5.2 A Public Realm Strategy for Donabate

Reflecting the results of the public consultation process, it was realised that the key focus of the Donabate Urban Framework Plan was to provide a coherent, holistic approach to improvements to the public realm in the town.

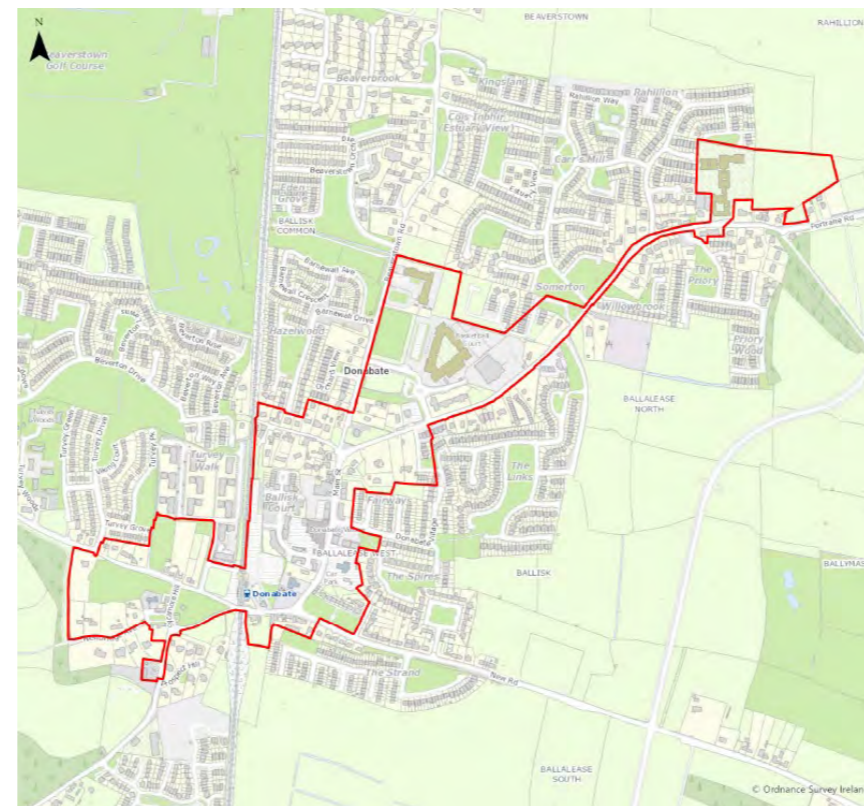
As a result, it was decided to commission the preparation of a Public Realm Strategy, which was remitted to identify

potential future works to the public realm of Donabate and to provide guidance in their design and development.

The strategy was to be informed by the findings from the consultations that have been held, and observations of the plan area, its history, historic heritage, buildings and streets, its contemporary built heritage, the nature and character of the streets and spaces.

The strategy was also to be informed by the principles set out in the RIAI Town and Village Toolkit (as discussed previously).

**Fig. 5-1: Donabate Public Realm Strategy Boundary**



The ultimate aim of the strategy was to provide an overall approach that is responsive to the character of Donabate, and that visually ties the disparate elements of the village core together, as a means to improve and enhance the physical environment and to give an overall coherence and legibly identity for the town centre.

The strategy was to:

- propose a number of potential projects that can be progressed and implemented incrementally in the short term, with a view to achieving a whole town centre vision in the longer term.
- provide guidance on potential public realm improvements that will qualify for potential future applications for funding, including publicly funded public realm work, together with public realm work delivered as part of other infrastructure developments and new developments;
- promote high quality design in all projects that is durable, sustainable, accessible, inclusive and responsive to the historic and contemporary character of Donabate.

#### 5.3 Guiding Principles of the Strategy

The starting point of the public realm strategy was an approach which views public realm as the 'space between buildings' – the streets, laneways, squares, walkways and open spaces that are available to the public and define our towns and cities.

Public realm is also seen as including the building frontages that contribute to the character of these spaces, and define their use.

A high-quality public realm improves our experience and understanding of towns, it adds to their attractiveness, and enhances their use by residents and visitors alike.

The objective of the public realm strategy is to guide the creation of an enhanced public realm in Donabate that adopts a people first approach which emphasises the following broad elements of urban design:

- designing spaces for people;
- creating a clear sense of place
- encouraging variety and viability

## Donabate Framework Plan

- promoting environmental sustainability;
- enabling connectivity, accessibility and movement.

### 5.3.1 Designing Places for People

*The strategy proposes uses and designs for key spaces in Donabate that are oriented to the varied needs of the people of the town.*

The strategy aims to create a pedestrian priority town centre, and to define places where people of all ages can meet, and places to enhance their experience of the town.

Existing spaces are redefined, and new spaces are suggested. It is intended that the spaces can play host to a wide range of one-off and regular events, including incidental play spaces for children,, age appropriate spaces for teenagers to enjoy, places for farmers' markets, garden festivals, cultural festivals, parades and other community gatherings and places that are accessible and inclusive.

### 5.3.2 Creating a Clear Sense of Place

*The strategy proposes removal of visual clutter on existing buildings and within the existing streets and space, and promotes a consistent palette of paving materials, signage, and street furniture that creates unity within the overall town centre.*

The existing streets, junctions and spaces all create a sense of place. The Strategy aims to emphasise and enhance the setting of existing landmarks to enhance the setting and visual character of the existing structures. This will consolidate the sense of place, and character of the town.

Visual clutter on the existing streets caused by modern day living including street signs, overhead wires and cars detract from the overall visual amenity and character of the place.

### 5.3.3 Encouraging Variety and Viability

*The strategy aims to increase the diversity, variety and viability of new uses in the town centre.*

There is a limited mix of public uses in the village core. The strategy will facilitate the use of spaces to the front of existing properties, to create the potential to build on existing established uses, while also attracting new business sectors, support local people to develop new business opportunities.

### 5.3.4 Promoting Environmental Sustainability

*The strategy promotes consolidation of the existing built environment, and recommends that any new development within the urban framework area respects biodiversity, harnesses natural resources/assets and reduces unnecessary infrastructure and the overuse of resources.*

Environmental sustainability is promoted, through the appropriate use of materials, the designation of spaces as potential biodiversity zones, and the use of sustainable drainage systems where possible.

### 5.3.5 Enabling Connectivity, Accessibility and Movement

*The strategy promotes pedestrian connectivity, accessibility and ease of movement throughout the town centre.*

People arrive at Donabate by foot, cycle, car and train. The strategy aims to enhance walkability and promote sustainable transport modes, encouraging people to take a trip into the village either by walking or cycling. In all cases, once they have arrived, they become pedestrians for the remainder of their visit.

In order for the town centre to be a positive experience, there must be a strong pedestrian focus, with convenient, direct and safe access throughout the centre.

## 5. Developing a Strategy for Donabate

This should not be to the exclusion of vehicular traffic, which must be able to access and exit the town centre car parking facilities.

Opportunities exist to provide a people focused street within the town centre, where pedestrians, cyclists, service vehicles and the private car can seamlessly move along the streets and provide a more comfortable, connected, and safe environment.

### 5.4 Elements of the Strategy

The strategy for Donabate sets out a vision of place, spatial interventions and design objectives for each of the different types of spaces and streets in the town. While there is a common vision for the entirety of the town, it is expressed differently depending on the role of the street or space.

The strategy takes a three-pronged approach to ensure that bespoke proposals respond to particular contexts and create special places within the town. As a result, the strategy, as outlined in the following chapters focuses on the following core elements:

- key projects (chapter 6);
- connecting spaces (chapter 7);
- streets and spaces (chapter 8).

The strategy provides the basis for a design brief for each of the elements listed above. However, it will be through detailed assessment of each site and street context together with engagement with the stakeholders that contextual design responses can be developed to apply the principles suggested.

Each of these projects need to be developed and will require detailed design expertise on a project-by-project basis depending on the relative scale and complexity.

While each area will be informed by their own context, it is important that there is some consistency in key aspects such as the materials palette, planting choices and street

furniture. Details of the recommended approach to these elements is provided in chapter 9 of this document.

Where works are proposed that will impact on the historic building stock of Donabate, and in particular for any works to or in proximity to a protected structure, the input of a conservation professional with relevant conservation expertise and experience will be required to inform the design of the intervention.

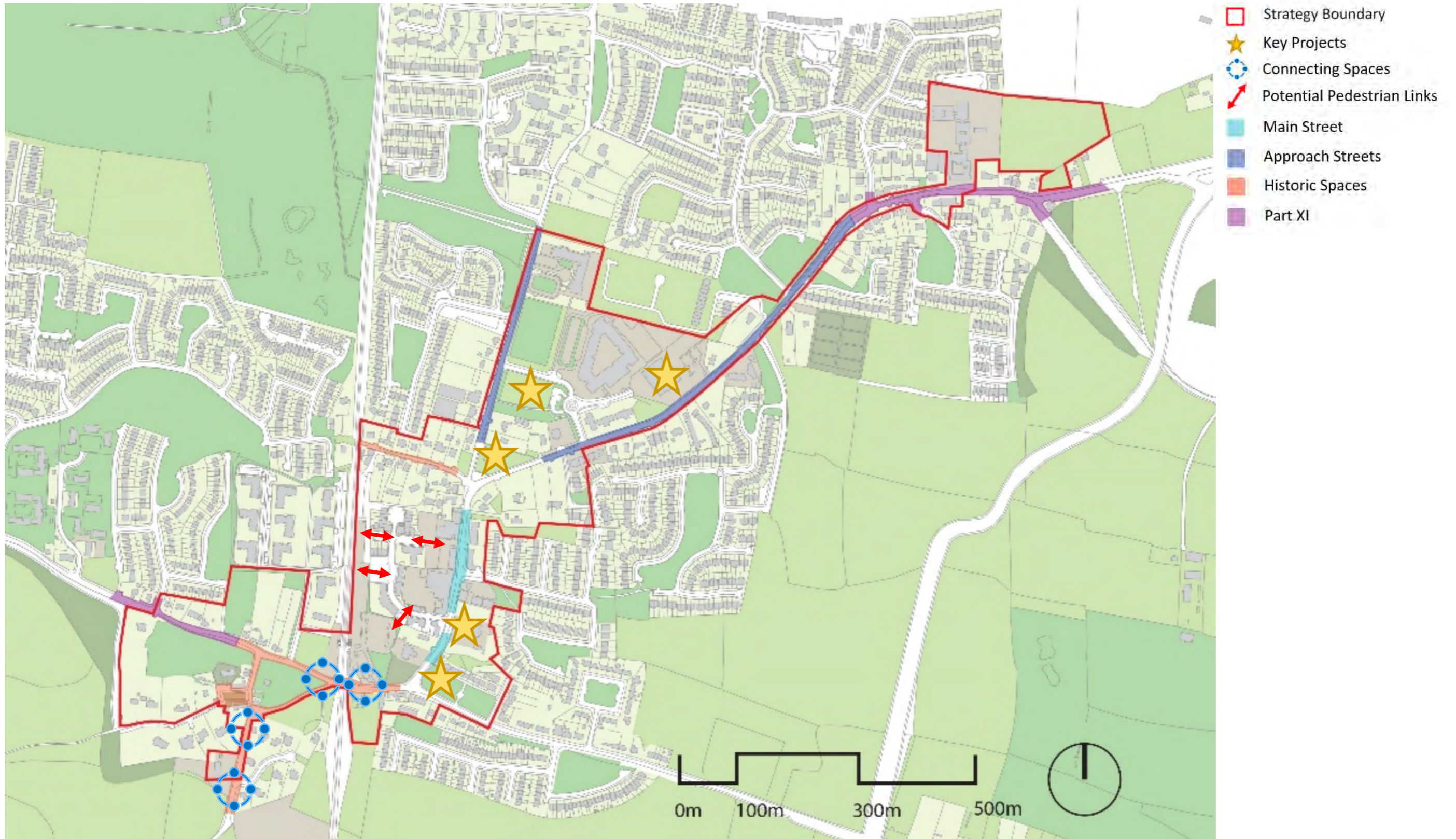
Finally, transport appraisals will also be required to be carried out for each of the projects identified in the following chapters.

These appraisals will address issues including but not restricted to safety, speed limits, footpath and carriageway quality, pedestrian crossings and accessibility for people with disabilities.

As specified in Chapter 8, in the case of Main Street, any such appraisal will include a baseline assessment, will indicate extent of works, and will consider the potential for the introduction of a one-way system on the street. It will also consider car parking provision in the area.'



Fig. 5-2: Overall Framework Plan Strategy



### 6 Key Projects

A number of key projects have been identified which have the potential to significantly improve the public realm, while also providing valuable new community spaces for the people of Donabate.

These key projects (the location of which are shown on Figure 6-1) include:

1. Donabate Village Green;
2. New Square at St. Patrick's R.C. Church;
3. The Hand Pocket Park;
4. Educate Together Recreational Area; and
5. Donabate Portrane Community Centre Public Space.

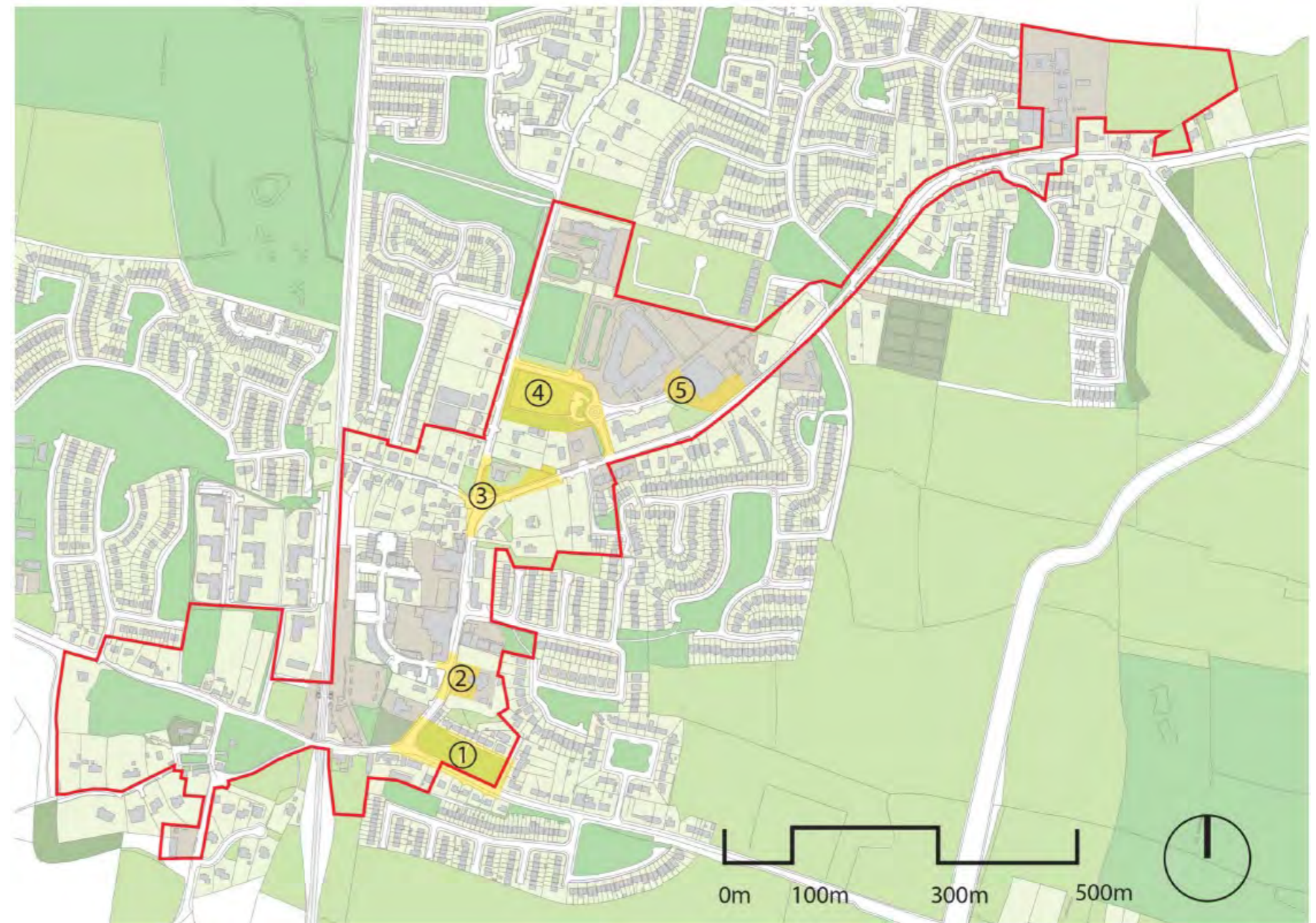
The following pages provide conceptual drawings prepared by Sheridan Woods for the improvement of each of these locations. High level principles for each key project are also provided in tabular form.

These drawings and tables are intended to form the basis for more detailed project briefs for works to improve the public realm in Donabate.

It is important to emphasise that any and all such projects in Donabate will be subject to the relevant planning and environmental assessment procedures.

In addition, it is envisaged that such proposals will be progressed in consultation with relevant local stakeholders in the town including business and property owners, community groups as well as sports clubs.

Fig. 6-1: Map of Key Projects



## 6.1 Donabate Village Green

At present, the green to the south of Patrick’s church provides a valuable green space close to the heart of the town. This key project would seek to preserve the green character of this space while also enhancing its role as a point of arrival to the town centre and providing much needed community recreation facilities including a multigenerational recreational space.

**Fig. 6-2: Current View of Existing Green**



### Key Project 1 – Donabate Village Green

Redefine the edges of the green space with new planting / hedging and trees where appropriate while retaining the existing mature trees where possible.

Provide for a wild meadow area to provide for increased biodiversity in accordance with the principles of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan

Provide for a small event space with seating to the front of the park facing onto Main Street

Incorporate new signage / artwork to signal Donabate and potential signage/ interpretation of the town.

Consider the creation of a raised table crossing Main Street to knit the space with the surrounding area.

Consider incorporating utilities to accommodate a market or events.

Consider an interactive water feature, if appropriate, as well as new paths, places to sit and play within the space.

Engage and consult with adjoining residents as part of any detailed design process

**Fig. 6-3: Key Project 1 – Chapel View Town Park**



- Boundary Line
- High Quality Surface
- Green Area/ Nature based solutions
- Trees
- New Hedging
- Signage/ Interpretation
- Seating
- Ramp to Table Top
- Shared Surface/ Pedestrian Priority
- Pedestrian Crossing
- Multigenerational Space eg. Exercise machines
- Event Space
- Pollinator Area

### 6.2 New Square at St. Patrick's R.C. Church

This key project would seek to create a new setting for St. Patrick's R.C. Church, and provide a defined gathering space for the church and the town.

Any proposed improvements will have regard to the status of St Patrick's church as a protected structure and will retain the existing boundary and railings to the front of the church.

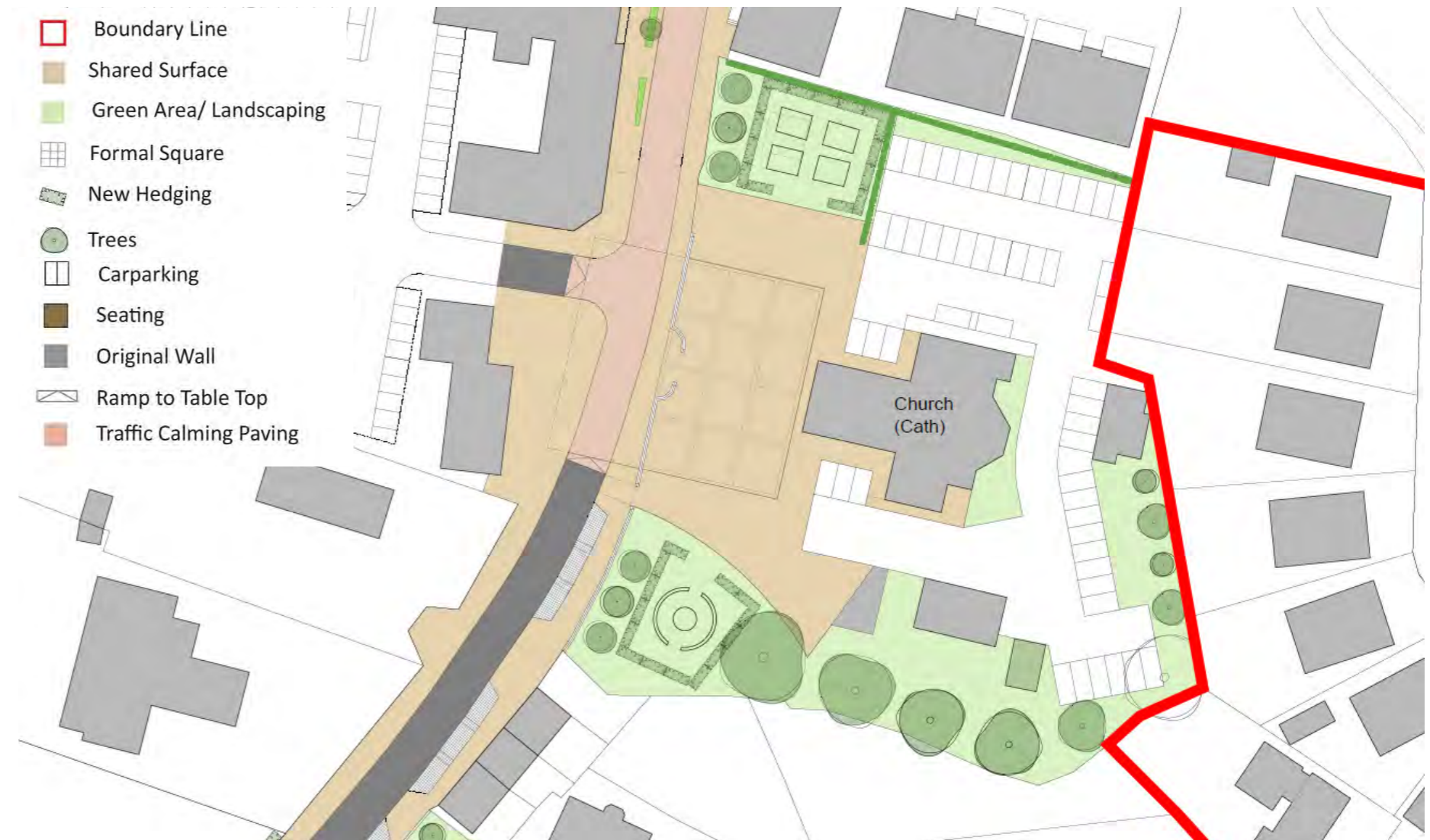
**Fig. 6-4: Current View of St. Patrick's Church**



The requirement to protect and provide for the functioning of St. Patrick's Church as an active parish church will form a key consideration for any potential design proposals for this space.

In the interests of clarity, any and all works or uses to be carried out on the grounds of St. Patrick's Church shall be subject to agreement with St. Patrick's Parish to ensure the safety and security of both the church grounds and church services.'

**Fig. 6-5: Key Project 2 – Square at St. Patrick's Church**



#### Key Project 2 – New Square at St. Patrick's R.C. Church

Create a new paved space to the front of the church using high quality paving materials having regard to the protected status of the church and its railings

Reorganise existing carparking around the church with no car parking provided to the front of the building line of the church to Main Street  
Incorporate bench seating along the existing front boundary wall and rail to the main street.

Define the space to the north and south with trees and planting to provide sheltered, green amenity spaces

Consider incorporating utilities to accommodate a market or events within the new space.

Possible names for the new square at St Patrick's RC Church, to be bilingual, will be discussed and agreed with St. Patrick's Parish."



Fig. 6-6: St. Patrick's Sq. Indicative and Existing Views



## 6. Key Projects

### 6.3 The Hand Pocket Park

The public realm strategy envisages the reclamation of this historic meeting point and cross roads to provide a pleasant place to sit, meet and hold events.

Fig. 6-7: Current View of the Hand



#### Key Project 3 - The Hand Pocket Park

Improve and expand the existing public space at the Hand to allow for greater use by the community

Set back the boundary to the existing Irish Water pump house to create additional space and consider reducing the carriageway width to adjoining roads.

Provide a new boundary treatment with the pumping station to include railing, planting and bench seating.

Provide additional seating within the space that can also provide an incidental space for play and events.

Provide for, within the first 12 months, the erection of a monument at this location to commemorate the role Donabate played in the creation of an Irish State and do this with all relevant stakeholders, including the Fingal Old IRA Commemorative Society and having regard to the requirements for public art set out in the Fingal County Development Plan.

Rationalise or relocate the existing wirescape and lampposts where possible while ensuring the area is well lit at night

Incorporate utilities to accommodate pop up food trucks, or small events.

Consider extending the space to the full width of the adjoining streets, by creating a raised table crossing at Beaverstown Road to Ballisk, Main Street, Portrane Road.

Fig. 6-8: Key Project 3 - The Hand Pocket Park



- Boundary Line
- High Quality Surface
- Green Area/ nature ba: solutions
- Signage
- Event Area
- New Hedging
- Trees
- Seating
- Ramp to Table Top
- Shared Surface/ Pedestrian Priority

## 6.4 Educate Together Recreational Hub

This key project would entail the creation of a modern interactive recreational space for all with activities for children, teens, and elderly, with potential for a multi-purpose event venue for Donabate.

This project recognises the importance of integrating the new recreational spaces with the redevelopment of the old credit union site as a public library. In this regard it is important to note that the project layout shown on this page is indicative and may be subject to change pending the finalisation of plans for library development.

**Fig. 6-9: Current Views of Educate Together Area**



### Key Project 4 – Educate Together Site

Create an inclusive multi-functional recreational space to provide for a meeting point, sheltered space / pavilion for performance, multi-sport playing surface, playground, seating.

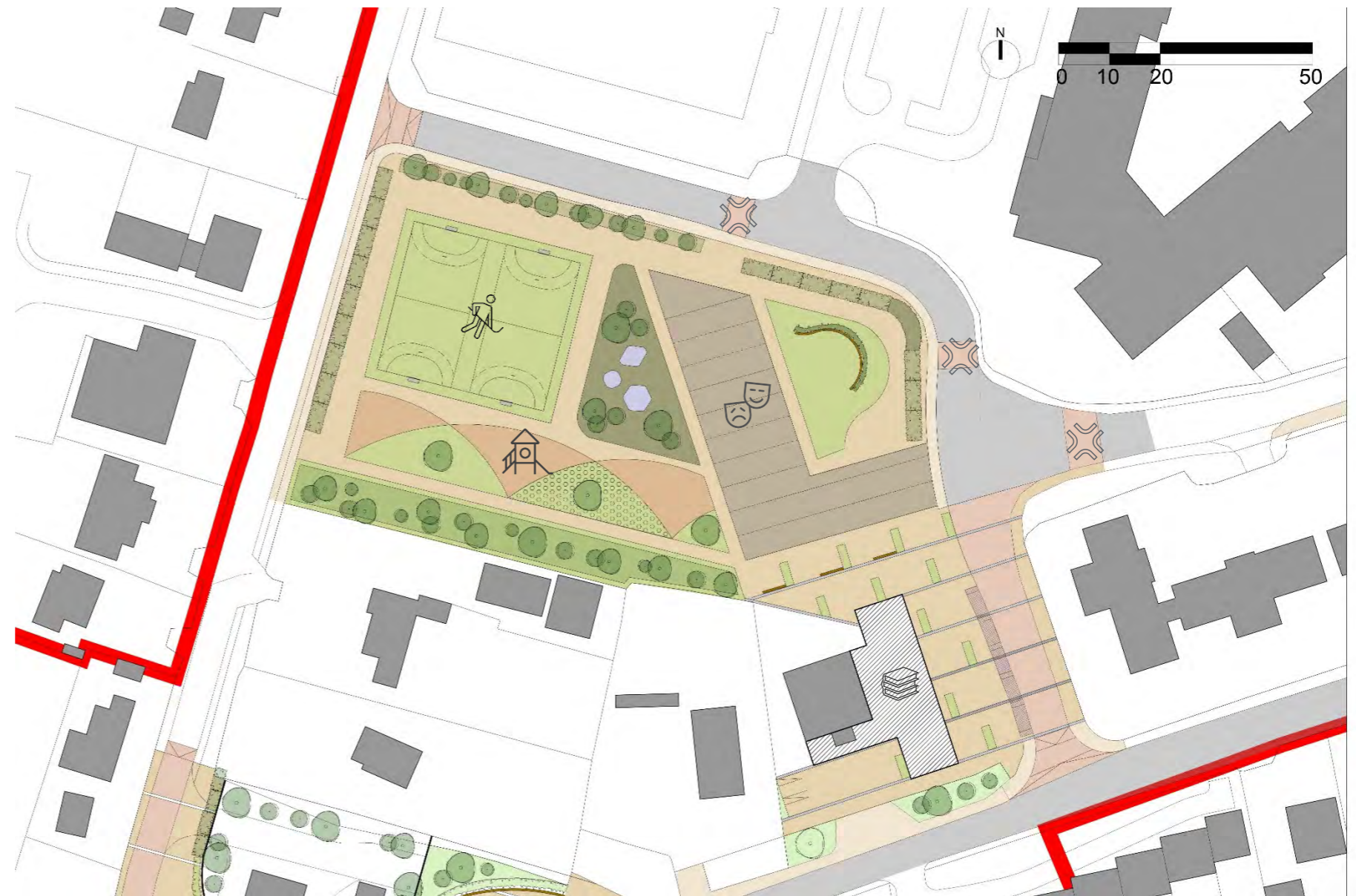
Ensure the provision of a broad range of age-appropriate play opportunities for older children and teenagers

Allow for paths to cross the park to match desire lines, and connections from Beaverstown Road, Portrane Road.

Remove existing roundabout and car parking and provide a link road to create pedestrian priority and a continuous pedestrian route to the community centre

Make use of sustainable urban drainage solutions including appropriate planting to address potential surface water issues

**Fig. 6-10: Key Project 4 – Educate Together Site**



- Boundary Line
- High Quality Surface
- Pedestrian Crossing
- Shared Surface/ Pedestrian Priority
- Multigenerational Space eg.Exercise machines
- Event Space
- Green Areas/ Nature based solutions
- Playground
- Library Extension
- Playing Pitches
- Trees
- New Hedging
- Seating
- Ramp to Table Top

### 6.5 Community Centre Public Plaza

The fifth key project provides for a new informal public space fronting the Donabate Portrane Community Centre including reconfigured and landscaped car parking areas, and pedestrian routes to adjoining schools and the multi-functional space to the west (to be provided as part of Key Project 4.)

**Fig. 6-11: View Northeast along Portrane Road**



#### Key Project 5 – Community Centre Public Space

Create a welcoming, accessible, safe and well-lit public plaza to the front of the community centre

Incorporate public seating areas, planting, trees and bespoke lighting to define the space

Reorganise the car parking surrounding the building to incorporate pedestrian routes

Carry out landscaping to provide for trees and planting pits throughout the area

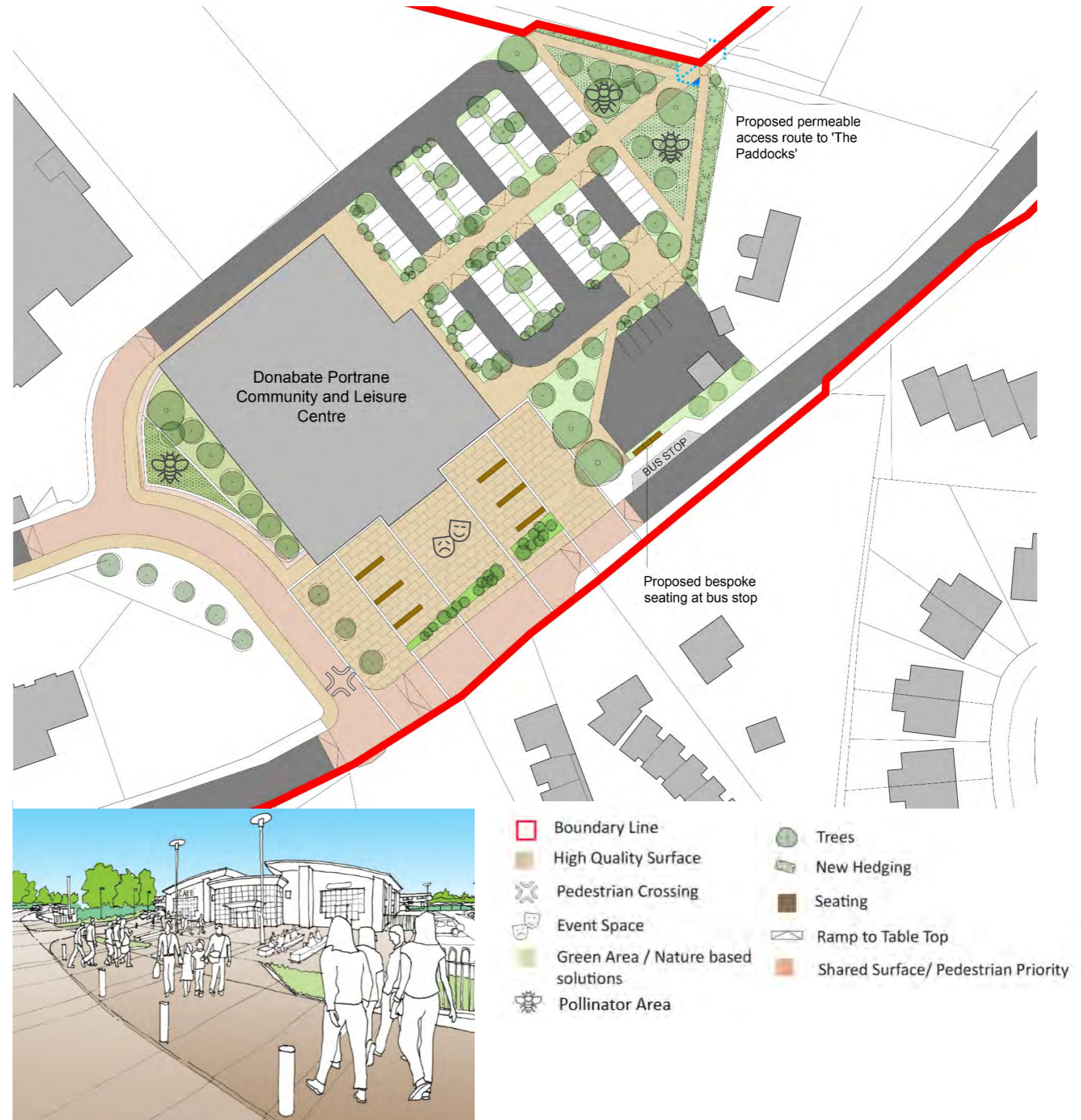
Consider the provision of a link road from the Portrane Road to provide an alternative pedestrian and vehicular route to the adjoining schools

Consider the creation of a raised table crossing to extend the space to the full width of the adjoining street

Provide for a permeable access route to the Paddocks to include, if appropriate, dished kerbing to allow buggy and wheelchair access.

Over the lifetime of the Framework Plan, and following the findings of the Community Facilities and Social Infrastructure Audit for the County (as provided for under Objective CIOSO1 of the Fingal County Development Plan 2023-2029), the Council will consider the construction of a large extension to the existing community centre in order to facilitate the growing needs of our youth, arts, culture and heritage groups.

**Fig. 6-12: Key Project 5 - Community Centre Public Site**





7 Connecting Spaces

There are opportunities for additional pedestrian and cycling connections across the Village and outside the Framework Plan boundary. The Framework Plan seeks to make a contribution to improving connectivity within and through the Village and will support future initiatives to address the issue in the wider Donabate/Portrane area. In particular, at key locations such as the Turvey area, measures will be encouraged to foster increased permeability and mitigate issues of severance.

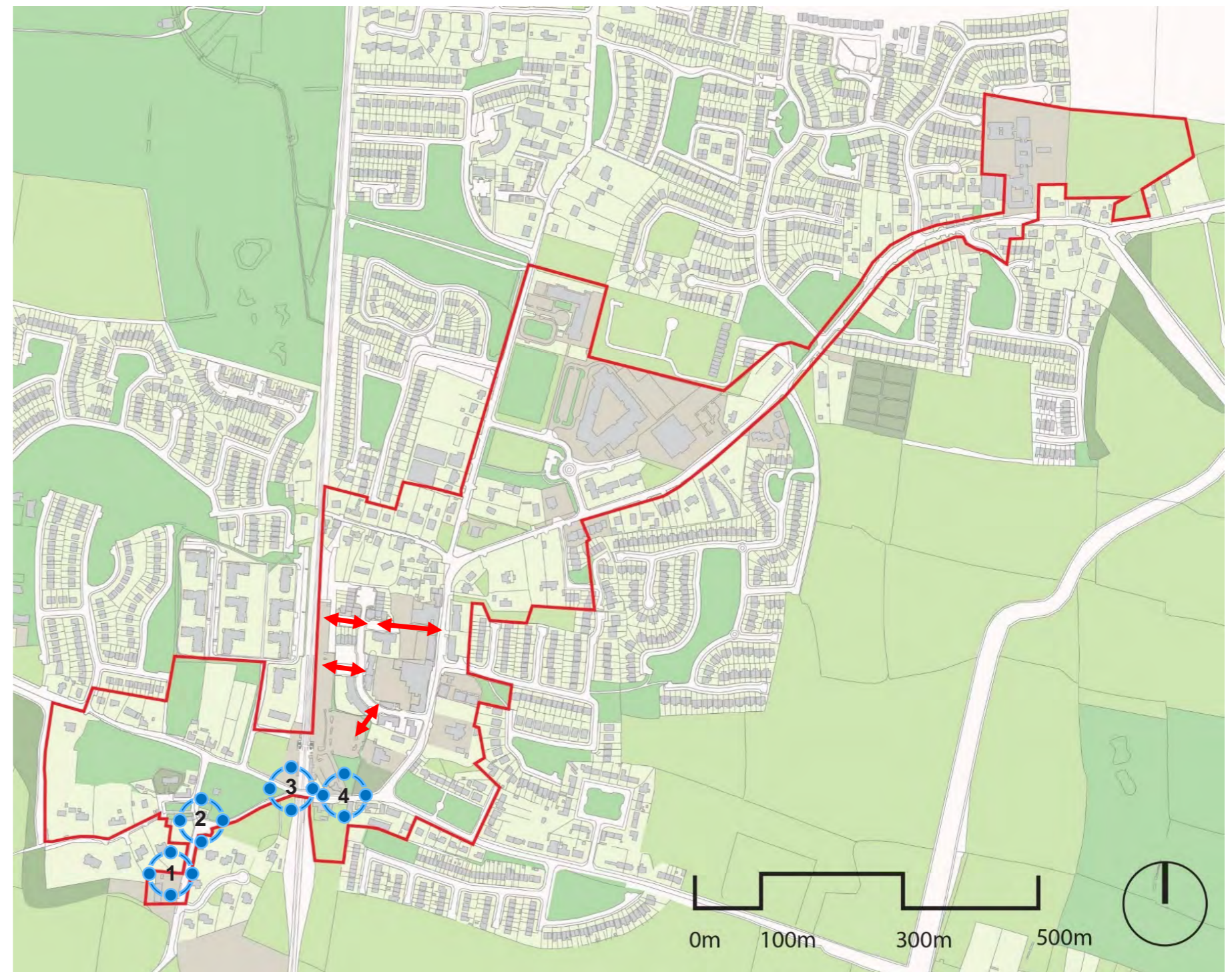
Four specific areas or sites have been identified which, if improved, would have a considerable positive impact for the town. These sites include:

1. New entrance at Semple Wood and Hearse Road
2. Enhanced public realm at junction of The Square and Hearse Road
3. Enhanced public realm junction of Turvey Road / Hearse Road and The Bridge
4. Enhanced public realm at the Smyths Pub, the entrance to the railway station, and the entrance to the lands at Corballis, and the reuse and adaptation of existing structures.

It is proposed that these areas are reimagined, with pedestrian priority and overall enhancement of the setting of historic features. In addition to the four spaces identified above, a number of locations were identified where relatively minor interventions could have a positive impact on pedestrian connectivity in Donabate. These potential new pedestrian connections are discussed at the end of this chapter.

As was the case for the key projects addressed in the previous chapter, the following pages provide conceptual drawings prepared by Sheridan Woods for the improvement of each of the four identified locations with high level principles for each also provided in tabular form.

Fig. 7-1: Connecting Spaces



Once again, it is important to emphasise that any and all such improvement projects in Donabate will be subject to the relevant planning and environmental assessment procedures and that such proposals will be progressed in consultation with relevant local stakeholders in the town.

- Strategy Boundary
- Connecting Spaces
- ↔ Potential Pedestrian Links

### 7.1 Semple Wood and Hearse Road

The entrance to new residential estates, at Semple Wood and recent road crossing and footpaths have created a new sense of arrival to the urban centre.

**Fig. 7-2: Current View of Semple Wood / Hearse Road**



There is an opportunity to formally identify this as the entrance to Donabate with specific public realm elements.

Figure 7-3 is an indicative drawing of the type of improvements which could be implemented at this location.

It is important to note that any works will be subject to additional road safety and design work which will also entail the selection of the most appropriate materials and street furniture to be installed.

#### Connecting Space 1 - Semple Wood and Hearse Road

Create a new 'entry' to Donabate at Semple Wood / Hearse Road by using high quality paving materials, street furniture and appropriate signage

Provide a pedestrian crossing to include raised tables to allow continuity of pedestrian movement across the street, and connecting to the new footpath on Hearse Road.

**Fig. 7-3: Semple Wood / Hearse Road Improvements**



## 7.2 The Square and Hearse Road

Hearse Road is an important entrance route to the town and the route follows much of the boundary wall of Newbridge House.

The setting and townscape are visually compromised with the presentation of the petrol station further along.

Potential street lighting / flag poles may ameliorate this and enhance the visual amenity of the route.

### Connecting Space 2 - The Square and Hearse Rd

New paving and reduced carriageway at the junction between Hearse Road and the entrance to The Square.

Removal of existing traffic signage (subject to road safety considerations) and rationalisation of wirescape

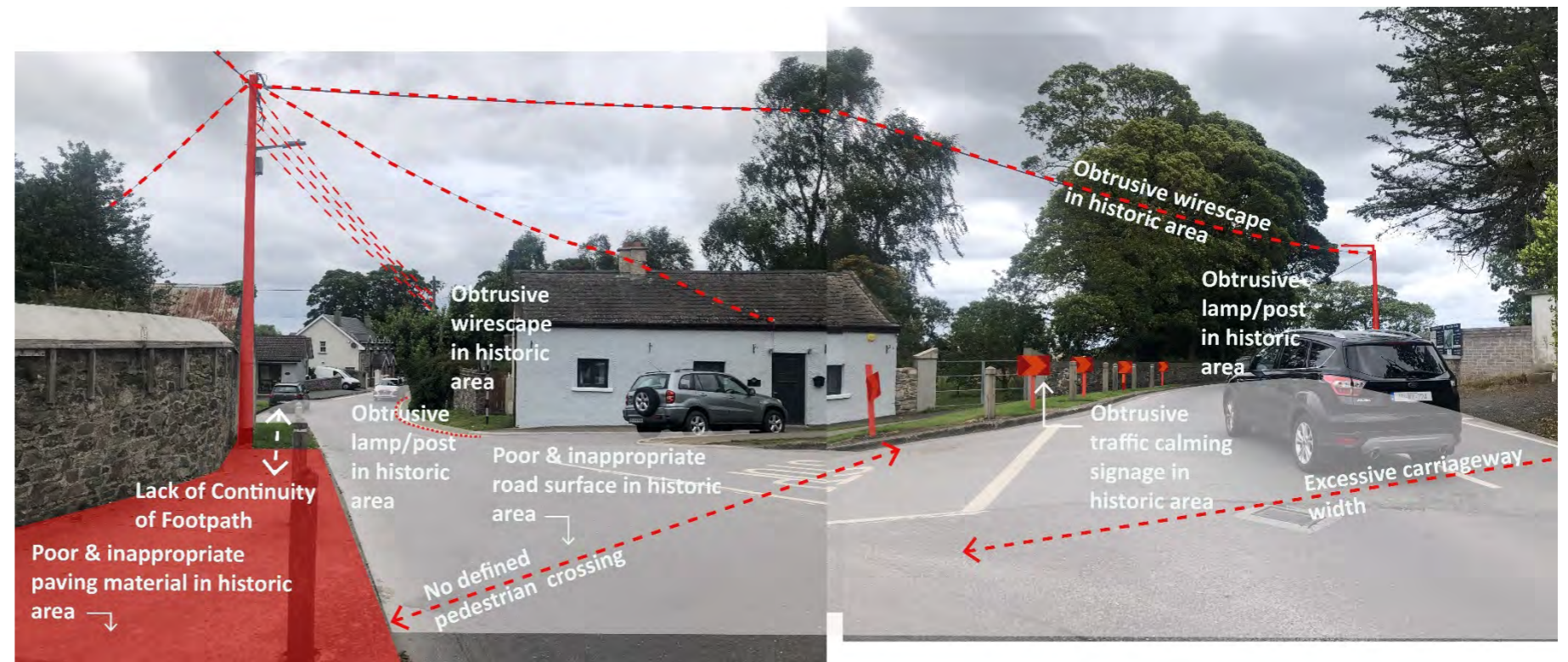
Installation of appropriate street furniture including heritage signage and high quality bollards

Provide for appropriate tree and bed planting

Consider the installation of seating and low level lighting

Address the lack of continuity of footpaths at this location and the associated poor and inappropriate paving materials

Fig. 7-4: Current, Indicative Views of the Square, Hearse Rd



### 7.3 Smyth's Pub Frontage

On the main approach to the town from the train station, two historic structures, Smyth's pub and the adjacent stone warehouse building add historical character to the town. This area is also significant given its location relative to the potential future development to the east and particularly to the south of Donabate train station at Corballis.

However, this stretch of street is currently poorly served in terms of footpaths and pedestrian safety. Potential therefore exists to support the reintegration of the street into the built fabric of the town by means of public realm improvements.

#### Connecting Space 3 – Smyth's Pub Road Frontage

Improve the public realm at this location by providing new, high quality paving and road surfaces as well as appropriate signage to mark the entrance to the town

Provide for a new pedestrian crossing subject to road safety and traffic considerations

Integrate the public realm and paving improvements to the proposed improvements on the Bridge

Ensure that all works have regard to, and are integrated with the proposed reuse of warehouse buildings

Provide for improved connections/links as well as public realm improvements from Donabate Train Station to Ballisk Court and onward to Main Street (see section 7.5)



Fig. 7-5: Current, Indicative Views of Smyth's Frontage



## 7.4 The Bridge

The bridge over the railway at the junction of Hearse Road and the L2170 also acts as the bridge to the town of Donabate as a whole.

At present excessive carriageway width, inadequate footpaths, poor pedestrian continuity, unplanned verges and a railing which corrals pedestrians all create a hostile environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

As a result, relatively minor interventions such as the removal of the existing railings, the continuation of the existing footpath to the east of the road to Smyth's pub and the provision of new crossings, has the potential to transform this key entry point to the town.

**Fig. 7-6: Current View of the Bridge**



### Connecting Space 4 – The Bridge

Create a more pedestrian friendly environment on and in the approach to the Bridge

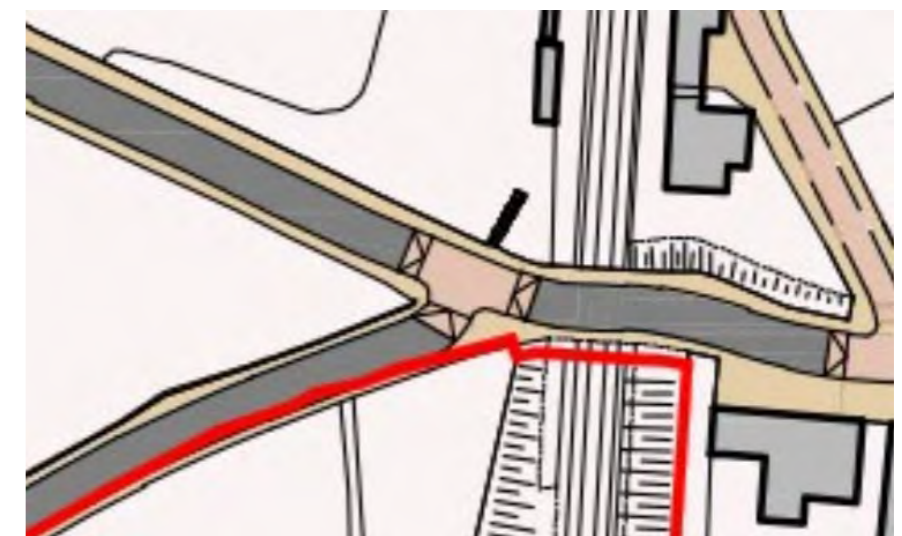
Remove railings on both sides of the road at the Bridge

Resurface the junction from the Bridge to the front of Smyth's pub with high quality road paving materials

Provide for additional pedestrian crossings and provide for reductions the carriageway widths where appropriate

Ensure that all improvements will have full regard to any and all requirements relating to pedestrian and road user safety at this location'.

**Fig. 7-7: Indicative View of the Bridge at Hearse Road**



## 7.5 Potential New Connections

As shown on Figures 7-10, despite being in direct proximity to Donabate Train Station, the area to the west of Main Street which includes Ballisk Court, has no pedestrian or vehicular access to the station.

As a result, people living or working in this area are required to access the station via the southern end of Main Street from its single existing access at the Bridge.

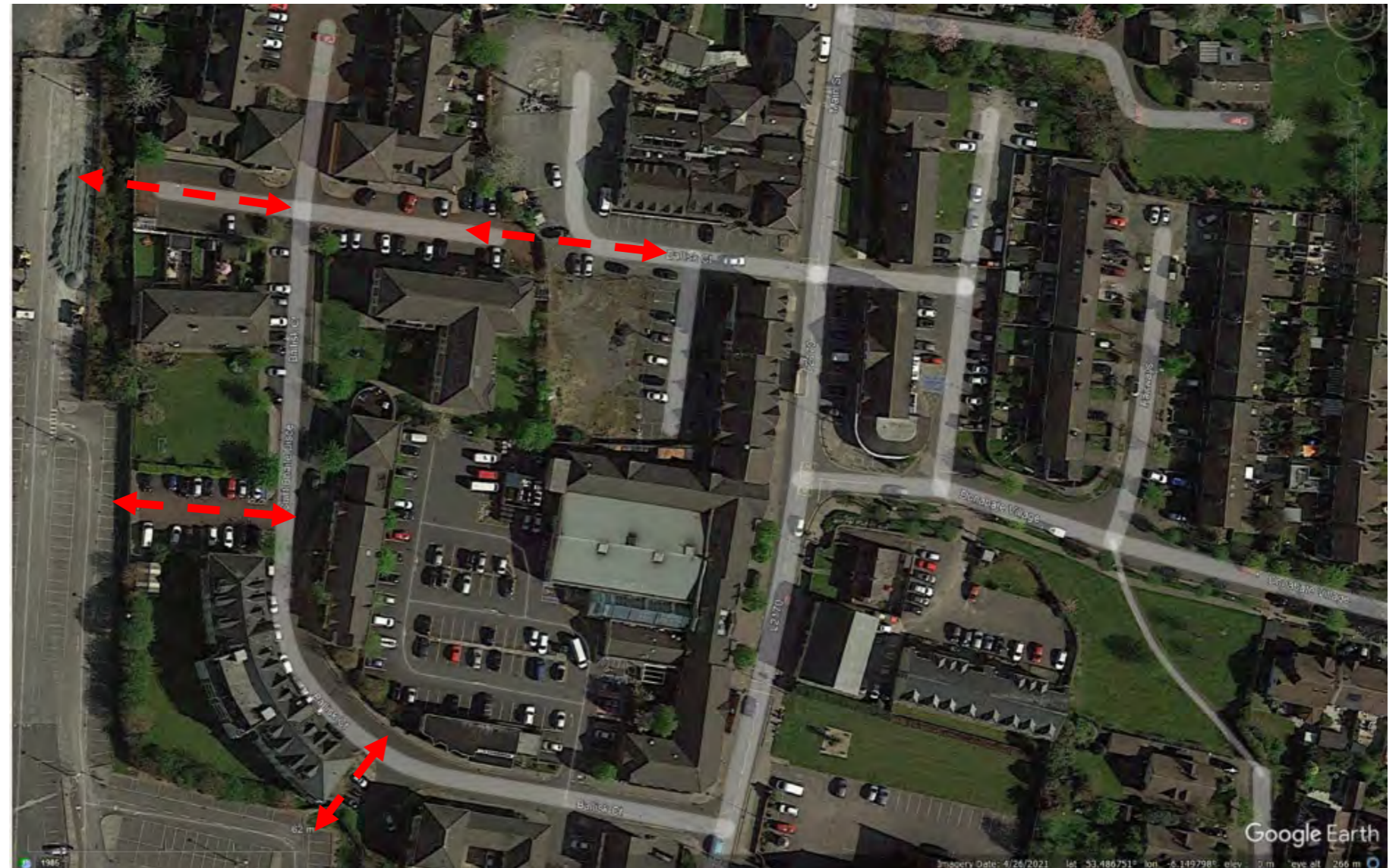
**Fig. 7-8: Wall between Ballisk Court and Main Street**



**Fig. 7-9: Barriers to Donabate Station from Ballisk Ct.**



**Fig. 7-10: Potential Pedestrian Connections**



To address this situation, consideration should be given as to how to provide direct access from Main Street to Ballisk Court and from various locations along Ballisk Court to the train station.

In addition to the active consideration of the removal of these barriers in consultation with Iarnród Éireann, landowners and other stakeholders, future applications for the redevelopment of lands in and around Donabate Train Station will be required to demonstrate how they have considered pedestrian connectivity in the area, including the link from the station to Smyth Pub frontage.

### Potential Pedestrian Connections

Actively consider the removal of barriers to pedestrian access from Main Street to Ballisk Court and from Ballisk Court to Donabate Train Station.

Consult with Iarnród Éireann and local land/property owners in relation to the creation of new pedestrian links including additional pedestrian routes from the entrance at Smyth's pub to Main Street via Ballisk Court

Consider limited vehicular access to from Ballisk Court to Donabate Train Station via the potential access directly to the west of Supervalu,

8 Streets and Spaces

While the previous two chapters of the Framework Plan provide high level guidance for improvements to specific locations in Donabate, this chapter relates to the streets and spaces that form the spine of the town. This chapter addresses the following three elements of this 'spine' namely:

- Main Street;
- Donabate's Approach Streets; and
- the Key Historic Spaces at Ballisk and the Square.

While it is not within the scope of this Plan to provide detailed street by street designs for each of these elements, the following pages do outline the overall high level approach that should be taken to improving each element.

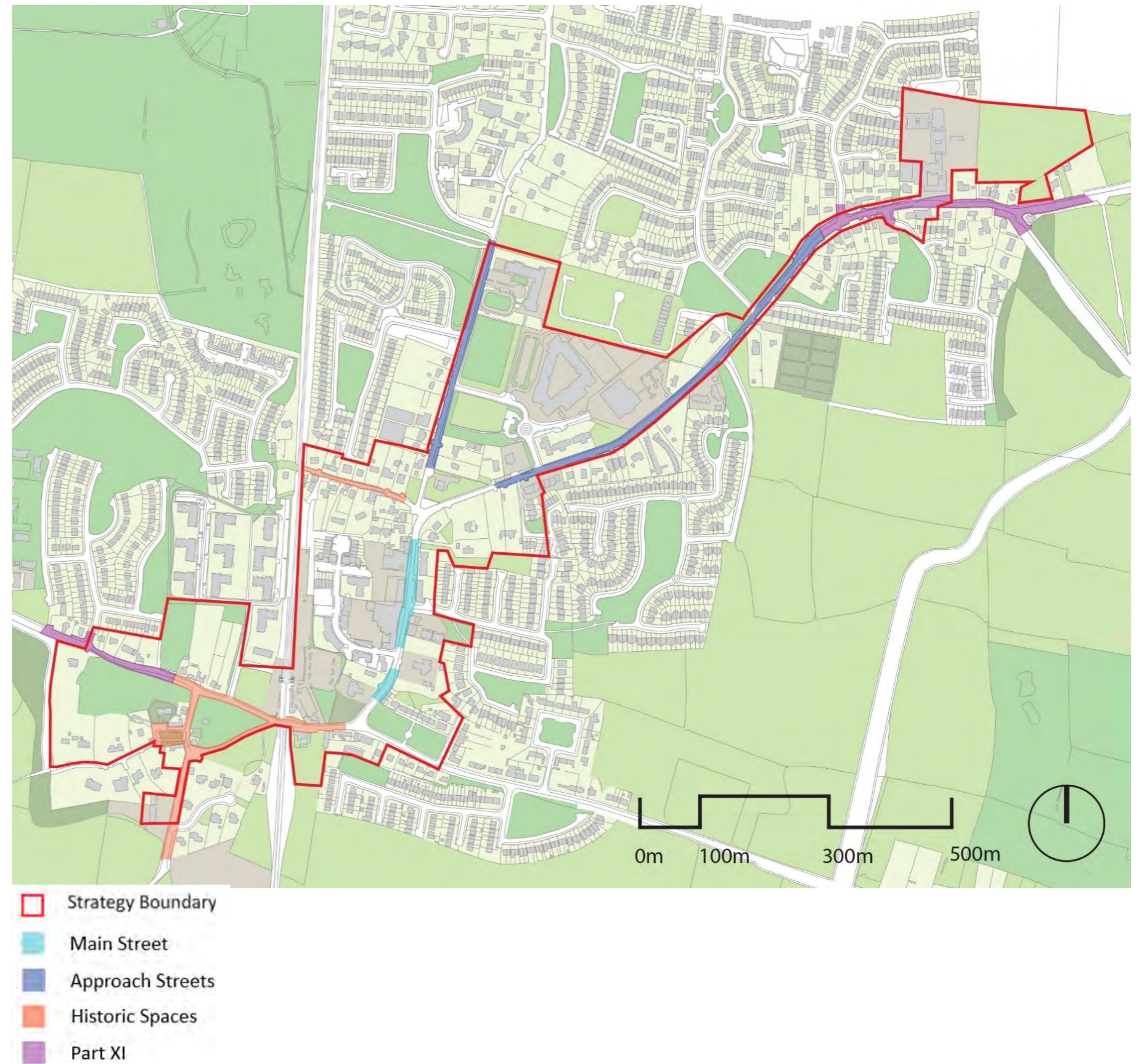
It is important that the proposed improvements are seen as part of a wider effort to improve the overall built fabric of the town. It is also recognised that additional survey and design work will be required to determine the precise design of any interventions in terms of road user safety, impact on services, materials used etc.

As stated in the Road Safety Audit (see Appendix C to this document) any detailed designs would benefit from a volume and speed survey. This information will form the basis for the choice of widths required for example.

The Road Safety Audit refers to a number of pinch points for which Road Safety Audits will be required including the area directly outside Donabate Town Centre, the entry from Hearse Road, the railway Bridge and the Bridge/Railway Station to the Main Street,

Finally, it should be noted that any proposed works will be subject to the normal planning and environmental assessment procedures and that all proposals shall have regard to the principles of the 2019 Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets.

Fig. 8-1: Streets and Spaces



## 8.1 Main Street

Donabate Main Street, street edge is generally well defined by two and three storey structures. However, there is little consistency in the architectural language of the buildings along the street.

There is a wide vehicular blacktop carriageways and footpaths that are narrow in places, and interspersed with various grass verges and planted areas, street trees, bollards and misplaced street furniture. The generous carriageway width encourages cars to travel quickly and discourages ease of pedestrian movement across the street.

There is poor pedestrian continuity along the street, and road junctions to backlands that give vehicular priority over pedestrians. Furthermore, narrow footpaths discourage pedestrians to congregate or linger.

Whilst the heart of the Village would appear to be located around the 'Donabate Town Centre' shopping centre, there is no focal point in this area where people can gather informally, or to hold an event / farmers market / community gathering. At present, the area opposite Supervalu, adjacent to St Patricks RC Church acts as an informal meeting point, but it lacks definition and offers significant opportunity for improvement.

**Fig. 8-2: Dominance of Road Traffic**



**Fig. 8-3: Analysis of Main Street**



View of Main Street—Illustrates uncoordinated streetscape, excessive carriageway width and extensive black surface, poor quality footpaths, poor pedestrian continuity, and unplanned verges and planting create an overall discordant streetscape that lacks distinctiveness and creates a poor sense of place and identity, exemplified in this section of Main Street.

**Fig. 8-4: Vehicular Priority at Junctions**



**Fig. 8-5: Isolated Seating**



Vehicular Priority



Poor positioned planting



Poor and inconsistent paving materials



In order to address the issues raised above, it will be necessary to attempt to introduce a greater coherence to Main Street in terms of the street finish, use of materials, street furniture and signage. It will also be necessary to rebalance Main Street in favour of pedestrians of all ages and cyclists by introducing elements such as levels surfaces with shallow kerbs, new street planting, etc.

In the long term, Main Street should become a 'shared space' which could facilitate the use of the street for community events. To do this, it will be necessary to investigate the possibility of making Main Street one way for private vehicles.

### Main Street - Principles for Improvement

Provide high quality stone paved carriageway and footways, making use of visual contrasting colour or texture to define use and priority.

Provide additional pedestrian crossings on Main Street subject to traffic and road safety considerations

Provide additional seating with low level lighting at different locations along Main Street

Provide additional street planting including trees in integrated constructed tree pits

Provide additional cycle parking where appropriate along Main Street using high quality materials

Rationalise and standardise existing street furniture, particularly existing bollards, lampposts and cycle stands

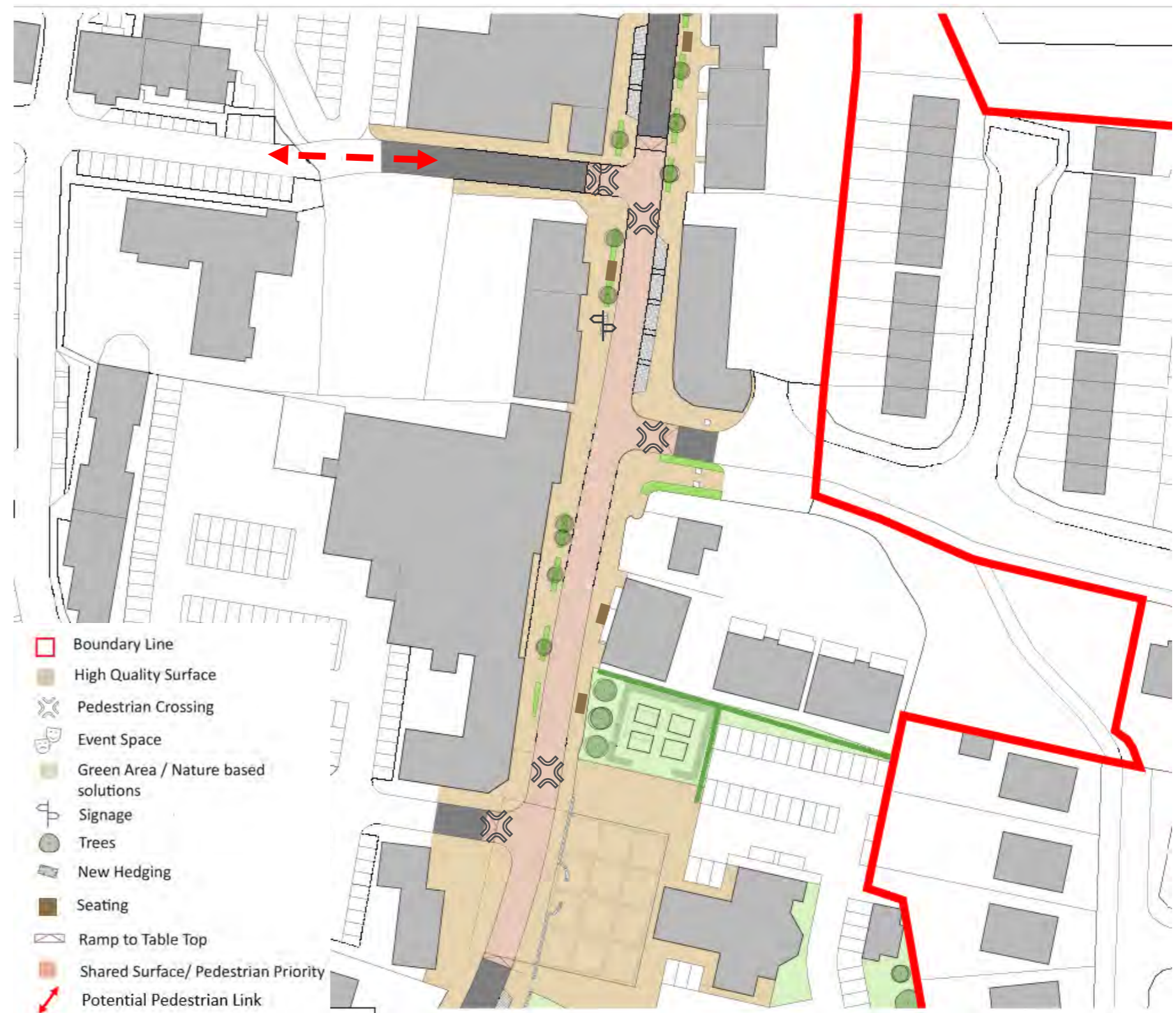
Consider level surface across the street with shallow kerbs to enhance pedestrian movement between both sides of the street and to facilitate the potential use of the main street for gatherings.

In the longer term, consider the use of a 'shared space' Main Street with a view to developing a safe and walkable street with pedestrian and cycle priority.

Investigate the possibility of making Main Street a one way street for private vehicular access.

It is recognised that any such change can only take place following a detailed, expert report on the traffic and transportation implications of such a change. As a result, it will be necessary to prepare a Transport Appraisal for the Main Street and adjoining streets to include a baseline assessment and will indicate extent of works for projects.

Fig. 8-6: Improvements to Main Street



## 8. Streets and Spaces

This appraisal will address amongst other things speed limits, car parking provision, footpath and carriageway quality, pedestrian crossings and accessibility for people with disabilities'.

The figure below shows examples of shared surfaces that delineate pedestrian and vehicular zones without relying on kerbs; use of a variety of materials, colour and texture; and have clearly defined zones along the street for ease of pedestrian movement, street furniture, and planting.

**Fig. 8-7: Examples of Shared Surface**



Figure 8-8 shows examples from Ireland of public realm improvements which have made use of planting, high

quality paving and street furniture to improve and provide for new public spaces.

**Fig. 8-8: Examples of Public Realm Improvements**



## Donabate Framework Plan

Figure 8-9 below shows example of how temporary street closures allow for the use of suitably designed streets for community events and markets, street feasts festivals and parades.

**Fig. 8-9: Example of Temporary On-Street Uses**



### 8.2 Approach Streets

The section of street from Beaverstown Road and Portrane Road to The Hand are characterised by lack of continuity of footpaths, wide carriageways, and intermittent grass verges.

The focus for these approach streets is to lift the quality of streetscape by creating continuous footpaths where possible, maintaining verges and hedgerows, protecting historic boundaries, and by adopting a consistent approach to design and the use of materials.

It should be noted that there are two permitted public realm projects at Portrane Road (Part XI/00519) and at and Turvey Avenue to the southwest of Main Street (Part XI/006/19). The works are intended to rationalise carriageways and paths, and provide for safer pedestrian movement.

A pragmatic approach should be taken to the upgrading of Donabate's approach streets, with a focus on achieving consistency on key elements, such as kerbs and pavement widths, which can be implemented as part of maintenance, renewal or when the opportunity arises through infrastructural investments.

#### Approach Streets – Principles for Improvement

Rebalance pedestrian and vehicular space, with maintenance of verges, hedgerows and historic boundaries where practical and appropriate

Provide for additional planting, including tree planting along Portrane Road where appropriate

Provide additional pedestrian crossings where appropriate (including on the Portrane Road near Cobbe Court/Glaslinn) to include raised tables to allow continuity of pedestrian movement / level crossings at road junctions.

Provide consistent lighting along both streets.

Consider visually contrasting paved paths and crossings.

Incorporate cycling infrastructure where possible.

Continue to progress the Part XI projects on Turvey Avenue and at St. Patrick's national school

Fig. 8-10: Indicative, Current Views of Beaverstown Rd



Fig. 8-11: Indicative, Current Views of Portrane Road



## 8. Streets and Spaces

### 8.3 Historic Spaces

The historic laneway at Ballisk and the Square at the entrance to Newbridge Demesne are characterised by historic buildings and street lines.

Ballisk to the north of the town retains historic building lines that are reminiscent of the past and the laneway provides an important connection under the rail to new residential areas to the west of the town.

**Fig. 8-12: Current Views of Ballisk Laneway**



It is important to note that the emerging preferred route for the Fingal Coastal Way takes in the roadway and paths from the Hand to Beverton Drive via the railway tunnel.

The overall approach to this area should be one of limited and sensitive intervention with a focus on maintaining and restoring historic paving and kerbs where possible.

The Square and access to the Square from both Hearse Road and Turvey Avenue retains historic elements that need to be valued, protected and maintained, including the historic boundaries, historic structures defining the edges of the spaces and routes, the Square defined grassed area, and stone kerbs.

As stated above, there is currently an important pedestrian connection from Ballisk Lane to the nearby Beverton Estate which is located to the west of the railway line, outside the boundary of the Framework Plan area. However, at present there is currently a gate which restricts pedestrian access via this connection after 10:30pm. In the interests of permeability in the area, scope exists to consider the opening of this access on a 24 hour basis. Any such opening will be carried out by the Council in consultation with residents and local stakeholders as appropriate.

**Fig. 8-13: Current View of The Square**



## Donabate Framework Plan

**Fig. 8-14: View of Parking at the Square**



However it is also noted that the parking to the front of St. Patrick's C.O.I. Church currently detracts from the overall visual appearance of the church and its setting. As a result, this area would benefit sensitive control of parking within the Square without the need for yellow line road markings.

Given the sensitivity of the area due to its built heritage, the overall approach to this area should also be one of limited and sensitive interventions.

### Historic Streets / Spaces - Principles for Improvement

Maintain and restore historic paving and kerbs where they survive.

Retain or reinstate edges, cobbles and grass verges where possible in the Square.

Investigate the repositioning of car parking to the front of St. Patricks Church (C.O.I.).

Require the input of a conservation professional with relevant conservation expertise and experience for any works to or in proximity to a protected structure

Consider the opening of the existing pedestrian access to Ballisk Lane from the Beverton Estate on a 24 hour basis

Consider the opening of the existing pedestrian access to Ballisk Lane from the Beverton Estate on a 24 hour basis

## 9 Improving the Public Realm

### 9.1 Introduction

In addition to specific projects addressed above, it is important that a unified approach is taken to the overall improvement of the public realm in Donabate, and in the centre of the town in particular.

Improvements to the public realm can lead to improved vitality and vibrancy along Main Street and in the wider Framework Plan area, including the provision of new seating areas, paving and footpath improvements, shopfront painting and improved signage and planting and landscaping.

The following chapter includes a series of high level recommendations aimed at improving the public realm in the town in relation to road surfaces, footpaths and paving; street furniture; planting; street lighting and wirescape; and shopfronts and signage.

After a brief overview of the current state of each of the elements identified above, specific, high level recommendations are provided to address the main issues raised.

It should be noted that the information provided in this chapter is illustrative and that the final design and specification of improvements to the public realm in Donabate will be determined on a project by project basis, having regard to the need to provide a unified approach to the public realm in the town.

Regard will also be had to any guidance produced by Fingal County Council in relation to the design and specification of public realm works across the County.

### 9.2 Road Surfaces, Footpaths and Paving

There are numerous areas within the Framework Plan area where the road surfaces and footpaths are of poor quality or of narrow widths.

As addressed previously, areas along Main Street show evidence of unsafe parking, poor junction layouts, footpaths with uneven surfaces and different materials, which is unattractive.

**Fig. 9-1: Poor Quality Paving on Turvey Avenue**



When moving away from the town centre there are a number of areas where footpaths are dangerously narrow, only exist on one side of the road or abruptly end. These areas primarily include the area near the railway station and along certain parts of the Portrane Road and the northern edge to Turvey Avenue.

Public realm improvements could include uniformity of paving materials, a re-organisation of parking bays, designated seating areas, improved signage, bicycle

## 9. Improving the Public Realm

parking, planting would result in a more attractive town centre area.

High-quality Irish paving materials should be used, where budget permits – granite or limestone - and deliver durable paving with good detailing to ensure robustness and longevity as appropriate to the context. The images below provide examples of high quality paving materials appropriate to particular contexts which combine the use of stone, concrete paving, stabilised gravel materials etc.

It should be noted however, that these are for illustrative purposes only and that the final selection of paving as part of the final project design process, should have regard to the ongoing road and footpath maintenance requirements of Fingal County Council.

**Fig. 9-2: Examples of High Quality Paving**



### Footpaths and Paving – Principles for Improvement

Address existing deficiencies in footpath continuity and design in the Framework Plan area where feasible

Ensure that any improvements to road surfaces, footpaths and paving are carried out according to a unified design approach within the Framework Plan area

Use high-quality Irish paving materials which are appropriate in terms of cleaning and maintenance

## 9. Improving the Public Realm

### 9.3 Street Furniture

There is currently a range of street furniture and elements in the public realm that sometimes undermines the visual and architectural identity of the town.

This furniture clutters some spaces and streets, lacks cohesion and obstructs pedestrian movement in the town.

Superfluous poles and poorly located street furniture and signage clutter the street and create barriers to pedestrian movement.

There are currently two cycle stands on Main Street, one in front of St. Patrick's R.C. Church and one outside the pharmacy.

Street furniture in the town could be of a much higher quality and more consistency is required in terms of design and use of materials.

Street furniture should be coordinated, with a consistent palette that compliments the character of Donabate.

Rationalising the type and position of street furniture will create greater visual cohesion and help to make all streets more accessible.

The following section of this Framework Plan provides high level guidance in relation to the following types of street furniture:

- seating;
- litter bins;
- bollards;
- cycle stands;
- water pumps; and
- bus stops.

## Donabate Framework Plan

**Fig. 9-3: Seating Outside St. Patrick's Church**



**Fig. 9-4: Cluttered Street Furniture on Main Street**



**Fig. 9-5: Cycle Stand on Main Street**



### Seating

The design of seating should suit the surrounding context—with both off the shelf seating and bespoke/site specific seating used, as appropriate.

**Fig. 9-6: Examples of High Quality Public Seating**



Seating designs should consider accessibility and user needs through the provision of backrests and arm rests, to comply with Inclusive Design standards and to promote age-friendly initiatives.

### Litter Bins

Litter bins/recycling should be located so as not to obstruct pedestrian movement or building entrances. Where space permits, litter bins should be accompanied by an adjacent recycling bin to encourage recycling.

**Fig. 9-7: FCC Solar Powered Compactable Smart Bin**



## Donabate Framework Plan

### Bollards

The use of bollards across Donabate should be minimised to reduce street clutter. The type, design and colour of bollards should become standardised across the town, with the exception of historic bollards, which should be retained and restored where possible.

**Fig. 9-8: Example of Consistent Use of Bollards**



### Cycle Stands

Cycle parking provision should be considered to ensure that there is a sufficient amount to meet user needs.

Cycle stands to be positioned within furniture zones, or carefully positioned so that they do not interrupt pedestrian movement. Cycle stands should be consistent with other street furniture in terms of colour and finish.

The placement and installation of additional cycle stands in Donabate as well as the relocation of existing cycle stands should be a key consideration when finalising the design of the public realm projects outlined in Chapters 6, 7 and 8 of this Framework Plan.

**Fig. 9-9: Example of Cycle Stands in a Historic Area**



### Water Pumps

A distinctive feature of the streetscape in Donabate are the traditional water pumps which are found outside Warrington's House and at the Square adjacent to Newbridge Demesne and within the village green along Main Street. There is also a traditional water pump on Hand's Lane. These older streetscape features add great character and interest and should be well maintained and protected.

**Fig. 9-10: Old Pump on Hand's Lane**



## 9. Improving the Public Realm

### Bus Stops

With regard to the provision of bus stops and shelters in the Framework Plan area in the town it should be noted that the National Transport Authority (NTA) has responsibility for the planning and development of public transport infrastructure, including the provision of bus stops and bus shelters.

Given the importance of ensuring that any new bus stops or shelters to be provided are well lit and of a high quality design, Fingal County Council will actively engage with the NTA in relation to any new bus stops or shelters to be provided in the town.

### Street Furniture – Principles for Improvement

Adopt a consistent and integrated approach to the provision of street furniture across the entire Framework Plan area or have regard to any guidance on public realm produced by Fingal County Council

Ensure any additional seating is of high quality and has regard to accessibility and the needs of all users

Ensure that litter bins/recycling are located so as not to obstruct pedestrian movement or building entrances.

Minimise the use of bollards in the study area to reduce street clutter, adopt a standardised design for new bollards and retain historic bollards where possible.

Provide additional cycle parking capacity in the study area as part of the delivery of the projects and improvements set out in previous chapters.

Maintain and protect street furniture which has historic character and interest including the town's traditional water pumps

Engage with the NTA in relation to the provision of new bus stops or shelters in the Framework Plan area

## 9. Improving the Public Realm

### 9.4 Planting

Throughout Donabate several planted beds can be found, mostly along Main Street and at the junction of Portrane Road and Beaverstown Road.

**Fig. 9-11: Planting and Baskets on Main Street**



Along the western edge of Main Street, planted beds have been implemented as part of streetscape improvements, which aim to create a positive visual amenity, an environmental buffer to the road and a comfortable enclosure ratio to the street.

However, these are not of good quality with poor plant cover at many times of the year and can cause obstruction if there is heavy pedestrian traffic on the pavements.

Planted beds, window boxes and hanging baskets are important elements which help define the quality of a streetscape, but in order to positively impact the streets and the town's image, planted beds should have complementary designs and materials that are continuously maintained.

Significant mature trees play an important role in the town's streetscape by adding variety and enclosure to the streets and skyline. Where possible these should be maintained and protected.

**Fig. 9-12: Example of Rain Garden along Road / Path**



Where appropriate, integrated constructed tree pits and rain gardens should be added to the paved areas to augment water sensitive design and green/blue infrastructure in the public realm areas.

#### Planting - Principles for Improvement

Increase the overall level and quality of planting in the Framework Plan area, where appropriate.

Planted beds should have complementary designs and materials that are continuously maintained.

Identify opportunities for long-term street trees or landmark tree planting and add integrated constructed tree pits and rain gardens to paved areas where feasible

## Donabate Framework Plan

### 9.5 Street Lighting and Wirescape

A number of different street light designs are evident throughout the town and help to define the character of particular areas.

Along Main Street a modern neo-traditional style lamp standard is used that is of a sufficient height so as not to dominate the streetscape. However, as moving away from Main Street along Beaverstown Road and Portrane road to the north and Kilcrea Road and Turvey Avenue to the south, the streetlights become more standardised and utilitarian in nature.

**Fig. 9-13: Lamp Posts and Wirescape on Main Street**



It is recommended that a unified approach to lampstands, material and colour is used within the Main Street area to



## Donabate Framework Plan

help to define the commercial core. The spacing and mounting of lighting should respond to the hierarchy of different street. Pedestrian priority routes should have lower mounting heights.

To further enhance the physical fabric and attractiveness of the town centre of Donabate, the undergrounding of utilities and services shall be supported and facilitated where feasible and appropriate, in collaboration with the relevant service providers. The undergrounding of services and utilities shall be considered as part of any programme of public realm works for the town centre.'

**Fig. 9-14: Example of Lighting in the Public Realm**



Where feasible, street lighting should be wall mounted where to minimise obstruction on the pavement. To avoid duplication of posts and reduce street clutter, lighting columns should generally be used for signage, where possible.

Finally, the removal of wirescape on the approaches to the town centre and within the town centre should be considered as part of any programme of public realm works in the town.

### Lighting and Wirescape – Principles for Improvement

Adopt a unified approach for the provision of lampposts and lampstands in the Framework Plan area

Ensure that all public realm projects and works have regard to the need to provide place-appropriate lighting

Consider the rationalisation and removal where feasible of overhead wiring on the approach to the town and on Main Street

### 9.6 Signage and Shopfronts

Signage on shopfronts and commercial premises is also of varying quality, with a proliferation of signage on many facades. There is also a distinct lack of directional and information signage for visitors to the area.

**Fig. 9-15: Existing Shopfronts on Main Street**



**Fig. 9-16: Existing Signage on Façades**



## 9. Improving the Public Realm

It is acknowledged that shop front design and appearance have a significant influence on the character of a place where people come to shop and spend time in an attractive environment.

Where shops do not display goods, an imaginative approach will assist in avoiding the deadening effect these premises can have on the character of the street.

The design of shop fronts should respect the proportion, scale, materials and decoration of the original building. A modest approach to design is promoted along with the simple use of window and door openings, to create an understated aesthetic.

**Fig. 9-17: Example of Appropriate Shopfront Design**



Signs and their illumination should also be designed for the specific building, with corporate impacts adapted to suit the location and context.

Hanging signs should be of a similar character to the fascia, and no more than one hanging sign on each shopfront is recommended.

Individual mounted or applied lettering can be very effective, or traditional sign writing can add character. A proliferation of window stickers can detract from the

## 9. Improving the Public Realm

character of the street, if used they should be grouped and cover no more than 10% of the total window.

Where possible, signage should be rationalised and located on light columns, walls or combined onto a single post. This includes both vehicle and pedestrian signage.

The use of surface mounted signage at junctions and key moments should reduce the need for upright signage in the public realm.

Additional detailed guidance on the design of shopfronts and signage is provided in Chapter 14 'Development Management' of the [Fingal County Development Plan \(2023-2029\)](#).

In addition, FCC's [Draft Heritage Signage Guidance](#) provides detailed information on best practice in terms of the provision of public and heritage signage in the County. Figure 9-18 which is taken from this guidance shows the standard signage scheme which is in place for Fingal.

Another useful source of guidance in this respect is the Fingal Design Guide for Shopfront and Main Street Residences Painting and Improvement Grant Scheme 2021 which is discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

### Signage and Shopfronts – Principles for Improvement

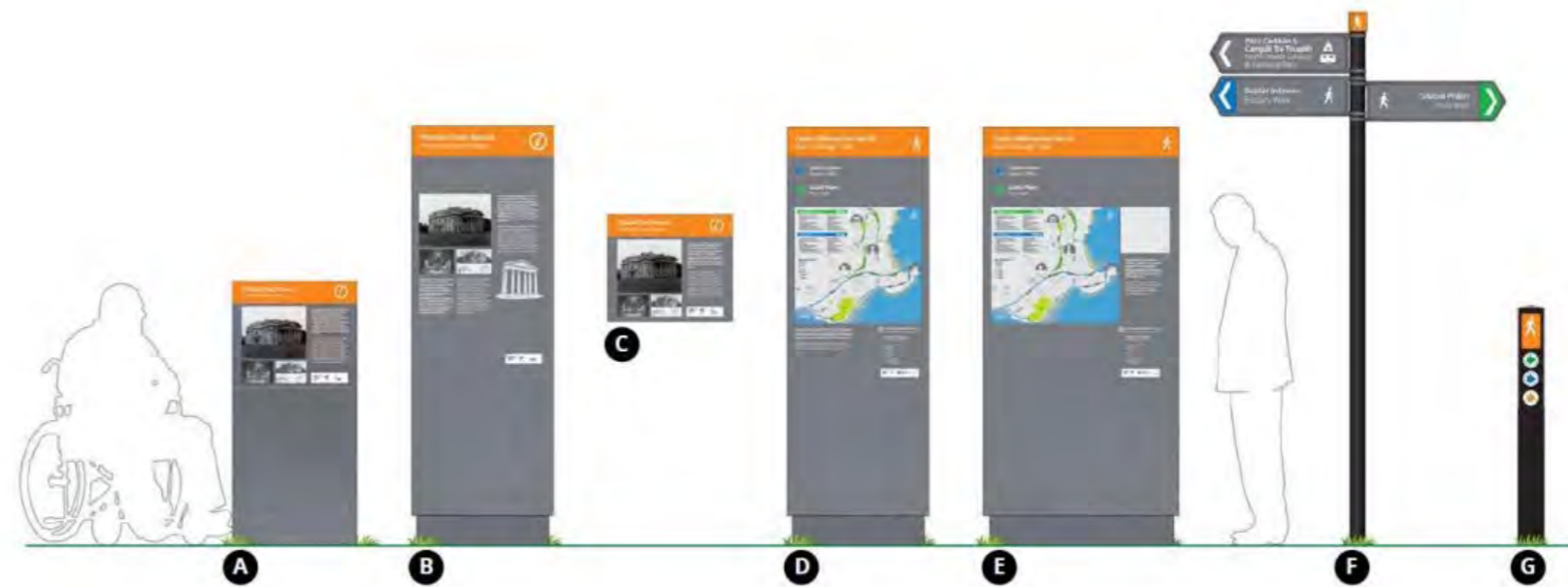
Encourage improvements to existing shopfronts in Donabate having regard to the principles set out in Chapter 14 of the County Development Plan and any forthcoming Shopfront Scheme by Fingal County Council for the town centre.

Ensure that all public signage is provided in accordance with the FCC's Draft Heritage Signage Guidance

Fig. 9-18: Indicative Improvements to Shopfronts



Fig. 9-19: Fingal's Standard Signage



- Heritage Trails
- Park Trails
- Coastal Walk

- A** Freestanding 'lectern style' interpretive display panel
- B** Freestanding medilith interpretive display panel
- C** Wall mounted interpretive display panel

- D** Freestanding medilith mapboard display panel
- E** Freestanding maxilith mapboard display panel
- F** Round pole with fingerpost
- G** Markerpost

## 10 Implementation

### 10.1 Introduction

Chapter 6 to 9 of this Framework Plan include a range of projects, interventions to the built environment and other actions, which if implemented, will help to transform the town of Donabate for the better.

Together, the actions identified in this Framework Plan document form the basis for a comprehensive Action Plan for Donabate which is set out in tabular form at the end of this chapter.

It is important to note that in order to ensure the protection of environmentally sensitive and designated Natura 2000 sites in the Donabate area, any works to be carried out will require Habitat Directive Assessment screening. Any development which adversely impacts on any protected habitats or species will not be advanced.

### 10.2 Key Stakeholders

The Schedule of Actions set out on page 49 of this Framework Plan provides details relating to each of the projects proposed for the area as well as including details of the stakeholders who would be responsible for the implementation of each project.

The extent to which different stakeholders will need to take the lead in implementation will vary depending on the nature and scope of the proposed project or projects, and the priority attached to them.

In general terms, the Council will need to take the lead in street and public space projects, whereas community groups and individuals will be primarily responsible for projects relating to private property, with input from the Council as appropriate.

There may be considerable scope for public private partnership arrangements or joint ventures, particularly

where land, buildings or supporting infrastructure necessary to facilitate projects are in public ownership.

Key stakeholders whose input will be directly or indirectly needed include the Donabate Portrane Framework Plan Liaison Group, Fingal County Council, the Heritage Council, the Tidy Towns Team, Community Groups and private sector individuals.

There will be close consultation with Disabled Persons Organisations prior to, and during implementation of this plan.

### 10.3 Establishing Priorities

Implementing the plan in full will require substantial works and investment over the short, medium and long term. This requires the identification of priorities in terms of the potential costs and benefits of each project and their likely timescales, so that delivery (and expectations) can be managed effectively.

#### 10.3.1 Immediate / Short Term Priorities

In the short term, 'quick wins' should be prioritised in order to maintain the momentum established through the consultation progress.

Such actions relate primarily to the need to improve the public realm in Donabate and will be guided by the principles set out in Chapter 6 of this document.

As set out in Chapter 5, these improvements are required for Donabate's Main Street, its approach streets and its historic streets and would include the following:

- the rationalisation of street furniture including bicycle parking and bollards;
- improvements to raised street surfaces and upgrades to existing paving;
- additional tree and lower planting
- the promotion of a paint and shopfront improvement scheme for Main Street.

Additionally, in the consideration of planning applications for development in the area, a renewed focus will be placed on issues such as improved design, the de-cluttering of facades, and the removal of superfluous signage.

#### 10.3.2 Medium and Long Term Priorities

The delivery of the specific key projects outlined in Chapter 6, but also other improvement work to specific roads in the area will require additional work and resources and as a result should be considered as more medium to long-term priorities in the context of this Plan. As outlined previously, these projects include:

- the Village Green;
- Church Square;
- the Hand Pocket Park;
- the Educate Together Site; and
- the Portrane Road Community Space.

It should be noted that while the last two projects listed above are currently under active consideration by Fingal County Council, the first three projects will require further study over the medium term to identify suitable sources of funding and to identify relevant stakeholders.

In addition to the above, a number of interventions in the streetscape are identified for Main Steet and for the locations discussed in Chapter 6 which include:

- Semple Wood and Hearse Road;
- The Square and Hearse Road;
- Smyth's Pub Frontage; and
- Turvey Road, Hearse Road and the Bridge.

Finally, a range of public realm improvements have been identified for Main Street and the Approach Streets to Donabate, with more minor upgrades proposed for the Ballisk Land and the Square Areas.

## 10. Implementation

### 10.4 Funding Opportunities

Opportunities for different sources of funding for each of the project and actions identified in this Plan should be explored, particularly in terms of their potential to unlock properties for suitable business and/or community initiatives and to provide for significant improvements to the public realm.

Although limited in scope, there are a variety of funding mechanisms available to support the implementation of the plan, including community and local business initiatives including:

- the Town and Village Renewal Scheme (TVRS);
- the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund;
- National Transport Authority Funding;
- Heritage Council Grants Scheme;
- Business Improvement Districts (BIDs);
- Fingal Shopfront Improvement Grant Scheme.

It is important to note that additional preparatory work and consultation with the community and relevant funding bodies will be required in order to apply for each of the sources of funding listed above.

As a result, the following section will only provide outline details in relation to each of the possible funding sources as well as providing examples of how these funds were successfully used elsewhere in Ireland.

#### 10.4.1 Town and Village Renewal Schemes

The Town and Village Renewal Scheme (TVRS) is an initiative under the Government's Action Plan for Rural Development, 'Realising our Rural Potential', and is part of a package of national and local support measures to rejuvenate rural towns and villages throughout Ireland.

Donabate may be eligible for funding under the scheme which targets three main categories of towns and villages:

- Category 1: Towns and villages with a population of up to 5,000 people.

- Category 2: Towns with a population of 5,001 to 10,000 people.
- Category 3: Larger towns with a population of up to 15,000 people.

**Fig. 10-1: Example of TVRS funded Public Realm Works**



The TVRS supports the following type of applications:

- Applications regarding the acquisition of land in town centres to support town regeneration / community focused projects (to include possibly town parks / plazas, the development of surrounding properties already in Local Authority ownership etc).
- Projects to develop town / village centre plazas, public outdoor dining spaces, parks, green spaces (including allotments and community gardens) and recreational spaces/amenities (to include outdoor sports facilities such as skate parks, basketball courts, tennis courts, etc.) in town centres to make them vibrant hubs for community enjoyment, and to increase footfall for local businesses.
- Projects to support the upgrade and enhancement of shopfronts and street facades (including murals) in towns and villages. Local authorities are

## Donabate Framework Plan

encouraged to engage with local business and property owners to examine how group projects can add colour and vibrancy to main streets.

Each application submitted by Local Authorities to the TVRS in relation to larger towns such as Donabate are assessed using a detailed framework, with funding granted where the application is of a high quality and outlines a strong need for the investment, good value for money and positive outcomes that will have a substantial impact on the town.

The village of Balrothery in Fingal has benefited from funding by the TVRS in the past, having been granted funding in 2016 to undertake landscaping improvements at both the entrance to and exit from the village, and to build a new pathway to link Glebe Park with the existing heritage trail in the village.

In 2020, Balrothery village was once again granted funding for improvement works such as the implementation of additional street lighting, cycling and walking facilities, street furniture, and safety bollards across the village.

Recently, Fingal County Council has secured €40,000 for streetscape enhancement projects in Donabate through the TVRS Our Rural Future Strategy and will support the upgrade of commercial premises, residential and community buildings in Donabate.

In addition, an application was recently submitted to the Department of Rural and Community Development for funding to convert the old Credit Union site on the Portrane Road to a public library and community facility.

#### 10.4.2 Urban Regeneration and Development Fund

The €2 billion Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) was announced as part of Project Ireland 2040, to support the compact growth and sustainable

development of Ireland's five cities and other large urban centres.

The URDF applies to Dublin, Cork, Galway, Limerick and Waterford City and their respective metropolitan areas.

The URDF is specifically focused on towns with a population over 10,000, as well as towns which may have a population of less than 10,000 people but provide over 2,500 jobs and/or function as significant centres of employment.

Due to recent development proposals in the town and adjacent areas, it is envisaged that Donabate's population will likely exceed 10,000 people in the near future, therefore, making the town eligible for URDF funding.

In the context of this Framework, proposals for URDF funding are made by a public body and proposals that are eligible typically include (but are not limited to) the following:

- the development of areas, sites and buildings;
- public amenity, planting, streetscape/public realm, parks, recreational facilities, safety, security and/or crime prevention works;
- community facilities, which may include childcare;
- infrastructure that enables improved accessibility, in particular sustainable modes such as walking and cycling, public transport and multi-modal interchange, but also including roads, bridges and car parking.

A recent example of the type of projects supported by URDF is the Abbey Quarter in Kilkenny City Centre which received €6 million to help fund significant public realm areas and community and cultural infrastructure projects in the area including a riverside park and a public library.

In Fingal, two separate rounds of URDF were approved to part-fund eight of the projects identified in the Council's Our Balbriggan Plan - €2.5 million under the first call in

2019, which the Council has been drawing down, and an allocation under the second call in 2021 of €25.48 million.

**Fig. 10-2: URDF Funded Project Planned for Balbriggan**



The eight projects centre around Quay Street, the harbour area, Bridge Street, Railway Street, Millpond Park, Promenade and Coastal Improvements and the Castle to Castle Cycleway (Balbriggan – Skerries section of Fingal Coastal Way).

### 10.4.3 NTA Active Travel Investment Programme

In 2023, €290 million was allocated by the National Transport Authority (NTA) to enhance the delivery of hundreds of projects across Ireland.

**Fig. 10-3: Active Travel in Fingal**



This includes over €17 million which was provided to Fingal County Council through the Active Travel Investment Programme. The programme includes a wide range of projects in the County including:

- The Donabate Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge – Which has been allocated €450,000.
- The Donabate Hearse Road/Main Street/Portrane Road (Link 1 and Link 2) – Which has been allocated €200,000.
- The Donabate to Portrane (R126) Distributor Road to Portrane Avenue Active Travel Routes – Which has been allocated €40,000.

In addition to providing funding for specific projects, the NTA has a dedicated Active Travel team who work in collaboration with Local Authorities across the country to identify and deliver new Active Travel projects such as the development of segregated cycle lanes and widened footpaths, new walking and cycling bridges, and new pedestrian crossings.

### 10.4.4 Heritage Council Grants Scheme

The Heritage Capacity Fund aims to build the capacity of non-governmental organisations working in the heritage sector in Ireland by providing funding towards their core costs, such as:

- Supporting the development and strengthening of skills, processes, and resources that heritage organizations need to survive, adapt, and thrive in the uncertainty of recent times.
- Supporting heritage organisations who play a key role in the heritage infrastructure of Ireland and who are vital to the delivery of national policy and plans.

The scheme is open to not-for-profit non-governmental heritage focused organisations with demonstrated national relevance.

The Heritage Council recently published the Historic Towns Initiative 2023, where a number of applications that support heritage have been allocated funding, which has totalled over €1.2 million. Examples of projects that have been funded through the grants scheme include:

- the 'Home is on Main Street' project in Castleisland Co. Kerry which supports the community-led regeneration of Castleisland's main street.
- the Heritage led Regeneration Plan for Castle Street and New Street in Macroom Co. Cork which is aimed bringing derelict buildings back into use in a heritage rich residential part of Macroom.

### 10.4.5 BIDS Schemes

Business Improvement District Schemes are a well-established process where Local Authorities and local business owners form a collaborative process whereby significant aesthetic and environmental improvements might be achieved.

This involves establishing a common platform for improvements and a design led scheme of intervention whereby necessary infrastructural improvements (provided via the Local Authority) are paired with similar improvements by private owners of shops, businesses and residences.

In 2009 Dundalk was the first town in Ireland to adopt a Business Improvement District Scheme (BID) and there are now currently five BIDs companies in Ireland with this number expected to grow further in the coming years.

The Dundalk BID CLG have been involved in various projects over the past 15 years. In their first two terms they invested over up to €1m in projects. They have also organized and assisted in visual art displays, living walls, street floral displays, street cleaning and public and private realm graffiti removal and the implementation of a successful shopfront grant scheme.

BIDs schemes work best when applied to specific character areas or specific quarters or streets. It is proposed that the Local Authority initiate discussions about establishing such a BID (business improvement district) for the core Main Street area.

The key elements of any potential BIDs scheme for Main Street should concentrate on specific elements for their special qualities and the opportunity for improvement. Shop front painting and improvements, pavement improvement works, marketing, branding and a 'Donabate logo' would be the initial focus of any such scheme.

### 10.4.6 Fingal Shopfront Improvement Grant Scheme

Fingal County Council in partnership with the Dublin Fingal Chamber of Commerce, Balbriggan Chamber of Commerce and Malahide Chamber of Commerce developed a Shopfront and Main Street Residence Painting and Improvement Grant Scheme.

**Fig. 10-4: Images from 2021 FCC Shopfront Scheme**



The scheme which ran during 2021 focused on the core of the towns and villages of Fingal, with an emphasis on properties on the Main Streets as well as including streets leading directly off the Main Street of the town/village.

In May 2023, Fingal County Council Regeneration Office together with the Our Balbriggan Office launched a shopfront painting, decluttering, signage and improvement scheme for the town. The scheme provides contributions to a maximum amount of €1,500.00 for improvement along eligible streets in Balbriggan.

The Town Regeneration Office within the Council managed a shop front scheme in Donabate in 2023, funded through the Town and Village Renewal Scheme. The Town Regeneration Office will shortly be announcing a 2024 county-wide shopfront scheme which will also be open for applications from Donabate, subject to usual eligibility criteria.

### 10.5 Monitoring Progress

Monitoring should take account of baseline data prepared at the pre-plan and the plan preparation stages in order to establish sufficient indicators against which progress can be measured at the review stage. Monitoring should be undertaken on an annual basis and take account of indicators such as:

- the main physical, economic, social and environmental characteristics of the town centre;
- the actions completed;
- funding opportunities identified and applied for.

### 10.6 Schedule of Actions

Table 10-1 overleaf is an outline schedule of the main actions arising from this Framework Plan. The schedule includes details as to the ownership of each action, bodies which are expected to provide project support, sources of potential funding as well as indicative timelines. It should be noted that as many of the actions identified as part of this Framework Plan are likely to be subject to additional detailed design and permitting / environmental assessment the overall timeframe for the completion of all actions could take 5 to 10 years in total.

## Schedule of Actions

**Table 10-1: Schedule of Actions**

Project	Actions	Owner(s)	Project Support	Potential Funding Sources	Indicative Timelines
Donabate Village Green	Prepare detailed drawings	FCC	Church of Ireland, Local Residents, Local Community	TVRS, URDF	Medium Term
	Seek consent through Part XI (or other appropriate process)	FCC			
	Submit funding application	FCC			
New Square at St. Patrick's R.C. Church	Prepare detailed drawings	FCC	St. Patrick's R.C. Church, Local Businesses	TVRS, URDF	Medium to Long Term
	Seek consent through Part XI (or other appropriate process)	FCC			
	Submit funding application	FCC			
The Hand Pocket Park	Prepare detailed drawings	FCC	Irish Water, Local Community	TVRS, URDF	Medium Term
	Seek consent through Part XI (or other appropriate process)	FCC			
	Submit funding application	FCC			
Educate Together Community Multi-Functional Space	Prepare detailed drawings	FCC	Educate Together, Gaelscoil na Mara, Sea Scouts, Local Community	TVRS, URDF	Medium Term
	Seek consent through Part XI (or other appropriate process)	FCC			
	Submit funding application	FCC			
Community Centre Public Space	Prepare detailed drawings	FCC	Donabate Portrane Community Centre, Educate Together, Local Community	TVRS, URDF	Medium Term
	Seek consent through Part XI (or other appropriate process)	FCC			
	Submit funding application	FCC			
Semple Wood and Hearse Road	Undertake a Transport Appraisal	FCC	NTA	Active Travel Investment Grant	Short to Medium Term
	Seek consent through Part XI (or other appropriate process)	FCC			
The Square and Hearse Road	Undertake a Transport Appraisal	FCC	NTA	Active Travel Investment Grant	Short to Medium Term
	Seek consent through Part XI (or other appropriate process) and Submit funding application	FCC			
Smyth's Pub Frontage	Undertake a Transport Appraisal	FCC	NTA	Active Travel Investment Grant	Short to Medium Term
	Seek consent through Part XI (or other appropriate process) and Submit funding application	FCC			
The Bridge	Undertake a Transport Appraisal	FCC	NTA	Active Travel Investment Grant	Short to Medium Term
	Seek consent through Part XI (or other appropriate process) and Submit funding application	FCC			
Main Street	Undertake a Transport Appraisal for the Main Street and adjoining streets. This should include a baseline assessment, will indicate extent of works for projects and will address issues including car parking, speed limits provision, footpath and carriageway quality, pedestrian crossings and accessibility for people with disabilities	FCC	NTA, Local Businesses, St. Patrick's R.C. Church, Local Community	Active Travel Investment Grant	Short Term
	Seek consent through Part XI (or other appropriate process) and Submit funding application	FCC			
Approach Streets	Undertake a Transport Appraisal	FCC	NTA	Active Travel Investment Grant	Short to Medium Term
	Seek consent through Part XI (or other appropriate process)	FCC			
	Submit funding application	FCC			
Pedestrian Connections	Undertake a Transport Appraisal	FCC	Iarnród Éireann, Local Landowners	Active Travel Investment Grant	Short to Medium Term
Historic Spaces	Continue to support conservation and protection of these areas	FCC FCC	Church of Ireland, Newbridge Demesne, NTA	Heritage Council Grants Scheme	Long Term
Public Realm	Prepare detailed drawings	FCC			
Monitoring	Ongoing	FCC	Local Community		





### Appendix A – Relevant Planning Policy

#### National Planning Policy

##### National Planning Framework and National Development Plan

The National Planning Framework (NPF) was published in February 2018 and is the Government’s high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of our country out to the year 2040. It is a framework to guide public and private investment, to create and promote opportunities and to protect and enhance the environment.

The NPF contains national objectives and key principles from which Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies will follow. It introduces more strategic and coordinated planning of our cities and large towns across local authority boundaries, including statutorily backed Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans (MASPs) in the five cities of Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford.

Accompanying the NPF is the National Development Plan (NDP). This sets out the investment priorities that will underpin the implementation of the NPF and will guide national, regional and local planning and investment decisions in Ireland.

This ten-year strategy represents a public capital investment of almost €116 Billion. The NPF identifies key future planning and placemaking priorities for the EMRA and Dublin and these are aligned with the major national infrastructure projects and public investment priorities identified in the NDP. Of particular relevance to Fingal are:

- the preparation and implementation of a regional priorities programme, to shape and inform delivery of the Regeneration and Development Fund (€3 Billion across 10 years); New branding and directional signage schemes;
- Improved access to Dublin Airport, including public;

transport, connections from road network from the west and north and heavy rail in longer term

- New parallel runway for Dublin Airport/New Visual Control Tower at Dublin Airport;
- Metro Link (estimated completion 2027) / Dart Expansion/Bus;
- Strategic Park-and-Ride Programme at Swords;
- Eastern and Midlands Water Supply Project/ Greater Dublin Drainage Project;
- Public realm and amenity projects (€1.4 Billion);
- Enhancing and linking networks of green spaces / Metropolitan cycle network GDA Cycle Network Plan;
- Outpatient Departments and Urgent Care Centres at Connolly Hospital Blanchardstown / National Forensic Mental health service Hospital at Portrane;
- Investments planned for all of Ireland’s Universities and development of Technological Universities (TU4Dublin, includes IT Blanchardstown).

#### Town Centre First Policy

Irish towns are facing significant challenges and opportunities that require a coordinated and comprehensive response.

The Town Centre First policy aims to facilitate that response by towns of all sizes across the country so that their centres can function as the sustainable and vibrant heart of the communities they serve, in ways that are adaptable and appropriate to 21st century needs.

The Town Centre First Policy also provides a co-ordinated, whole-of-government policy framework to proactively address the decline in the health of towns across Ireland and support measures to regenerate and revitalise them.

The Fingal County Development Plan 2023 – 2029, aims to support the implementation of the Town Centre First Policy across the lifetime of the plan. Fingal County

Council aim to do this by achieving the following policies and objectives:

- Policy SPQHP4 – Town Centre First: A Policy Approach for Irish Towns: Promote a strategic approach to town centre regeneration through ‘Town Centre First: A Policy Approach for Irish Towns’ by utilising existing buildings and unused lands for new development, promote increased residential occupancy in rural towns and villages, support high quality design of the public realm and provide for a mix of uses within these areas, including arts, educational, cultural, community and residential uses as appropriate.
- Objective CSO23 – Town Centre Regeneration: Continue to develop a strategic approach to town centre regeneration through Town Centre First: A Policy Approach for Irish Towns within settlements forming part of the Dublin City and Suburbs Area by utilising existing buildings and unused lands for new development, promoting residential occupancy, and providing a mix of uses within these areas, including cultural and community uses and residential uses, as appropriate.

The Development Plan promotes a Town Centre First: A Policy Approach for Irish Towns and seeks to implement a strategic approach to town centre regeneration by utilising existing buildings and unused lands for new development and promote residential occupancy.

Fingal County Council also recognise that taking a Town Centre First Policy approach to development is key for revitalising Fingal’s towns and villages and making them vibrant places to live, work, shop and do business in.

### Regional Planning Policy

#### RSES for the East and Midlands Area

In 2014 the Regional Authorities were amalgamated, and 3 new Regional Assemblies were formed. Fingal is part of the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly.

The Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly was established on 1st January 2015. One of the principal functions of the Assembly is the delivery of Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSES), a new concept in Irish planning where not only the spatial but also the economic factors that go into the future of the region are brought together into one all-encompassing strategy.

The RSES is primarily focused on the preparation and implementation of Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSES), integration of Local Economic and Community Plans (LECPs), management of EU Operational Programmes, EU project participation, implementation of national economic policy, and working with the National Oversight and Audit Commission. Donabate (and Fingal) form part of the Dublin Region.

The principal statutory purpose of the RSES is to support the implementation of the emerging National Planning Framework (NPF) – ‘Ireland 2040 - Our Plan’, and the economic policies and objectives of the Government by providing a long term strategic planning and economic framework for the development of the regions.

Donabate and its beach is also identified in the RSES as one of the many ‘Strategic Natural, Cultural and Green Infrastructure Assets in the Eastern and Midlands Region’.

#### Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP)

The MASP is an integrated land use and transportation strategy for the Dublin Metropolitan Area that sets out:

- A Vision for the future growth of the metropolitan area and key growth enablers, identifying strategic corridors based on their capacity to achieve

compact sustainable and sequential growth along key public transport corridors, existing and planned.

- Large scale strategic residential, employment and regeneration development opportunities and any infrastructure deficits or constraints that need to be addressed.
- A sequence of infrastructure priorities to promote greater co-ordination between local authorities, public transport and infrastructure providers for the phased delivery of sites.

The MASP is aligned with a number of Regional Strategic Outcomes in the RSES which include managing the sustainable and compact growth of Dublin, the regeneration of cities and better use of under-used land, integrated transport and land use and the promotion of Dublin as a global city region.

The boundary of the Dublin Metropolitan Area (DMA) was established in the Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) for the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) 2010- 2022 and the NTA Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) 2016 – 2035.

There are seven local authorities in the metropolitan area including all of Dublin City, South Dublin and Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown and parts of Fingal, Meath, Kildare and Wicklow.

The vision for the MASP was developed in collaboration with key stakeholders in tandem with and complementary to the vision for the RSES. The visioning process identified some key strengths and place attributes to determine current issues and opportunities and building on this, developed a vision for where the Dublin metropolitan area should be in 12 to 20 years.

The MASP also envisages a population of 1.65 million in the metropolitan area by 2031, an increase of 250,000 people or 18% from 2016.

#### MASP Boundary



To achieve the vision the MASP identifies a number of Guiding Principles for the sustainable development of the Dublin Metropolitan Area, such as:

- Establishing Dublin as a Global Gateway
- Achieving compact sustainable growth and accelerated housing delivery.
- Integrating Transport and Land Use
- Increasing Employment density in the right places
- Aligning growth with enabling infrastructure
- Facilitating Social Recognition
- Identifying future development areas
- Implementing metropolitan scale amenities
- Achieving co-ordination and active land management

There have been four strategic residential and employment development corridors identified as part of the MASP:

- City Centre within the M50 (Multi Modal)
- North – South Corridor (DART Expansion)

## Donabate Framework Plan

- North – West Corridor (Maynooth/Dunboyne line and DART expansion)
- South – West Corridor (Kildare line, DART expansion and Luas red line)

Donabate is referred to in relation to the North – South Corridor (DART expansion) and the following is noted:

*'The DART Expansion Programme, to be delivered by 2027 will increase capacity on the northern commuter line and support ongoing large-scale urban expansion of the North Fringe lands and Donabate. On the south-eastern commuter line capacity is unlocked by a new station at Woodbrook - Shanganagh, with the consolidation and westward expansion of Bray to Fassaroe and Old Conna linked to improved public transport connections.'*

Donabate is also identified in the MASP as a 'Strategic Development Area' and is noted as being strategically located with significant residential capacity.

### Local Planning Policy

#### Fingal County Development Plan 2023-2029

Development in Donabate is set against the policies and objectives of the Fingal Development Plan 2023 - 2029 and the Donabate Local Area Plan 2016 – 2022 (extended to 2026). Together these documents identify the strategic spatial planning issues and the vision for structured development and balanced growth in Donabate.

The Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 identifies Donabate as a Self-Sustaining Growth Town in line with the Eastern Midland and Regional Assembly Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy EMRA RSES.

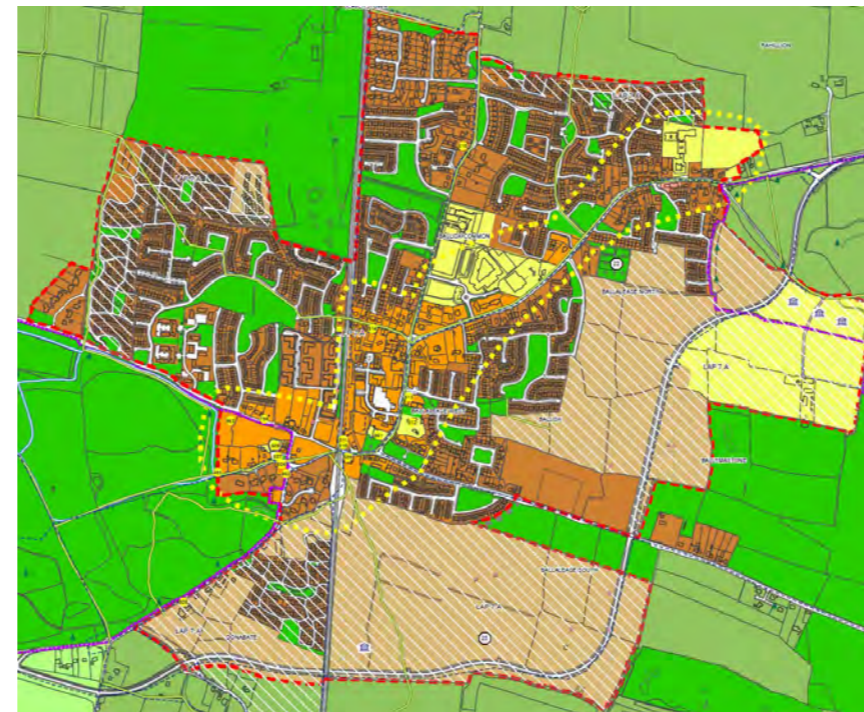
Donabate is identified as a 'Level 4 Centre' (within the Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area, 2008-2016 and Fingal Retail Strategy, App 2, FDP 2011-2017) and as a 'Self Sustaining Growth Town' within the Metropolitan Area in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019-2031 (RSES).

Donabate is also identified on the North-South Strategic Corridor (DART expansion). The DART Expansion Programme, to be delivered by 2027 will increase capacity on the northern commuter line and support the ongoing urban expansion of Donabate.

The development strategy for Donabate as set out in the Development Plan is to 'promote the creation of a vibrant town core by providing for a high-quality living environment for existing and future populations and provide all necessary community, commercial, cultural and social facilities in tandem, with new residential development'.

The Development Plan also supports the preparation and implementation of a Public Realm Framework for Donabate with particular focus on Main Street, entrances to the town and key public realm enhancement opportunities.

#### Donabate Framework Plan Area Land Use Zoning



In terms of land use zoning, the lands in the centre of Donabate are generally included within zoning objective 'TC' within the Fingal Development Plan 2023-29, which

## Appendix A – Relevant Planning Policy

seeks to: *'Protect and enhance the special physical and social character of town and district centres and provide and/or improve urban facilities.'*

The Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 contains the following policies and objectives which relate directly to Donabate:

#### Policy CSP32-Donabate LAP

*Facilitate development on zoned residential lands within the settlement boundary of Donabate as prescribed in the Donabate LAP. Support the provision of the necessary social and community infrastructure including recreational facilities and strengthen and enhance the public realm, providing improved levels of connectivity and permeability.*

#### Policy CSP33 Consolidate Development and Protect Unique Identity of Donabate

*Consolidate the development and protect the unique identity of Donabate.*

#### Objective CSO45 – LAPs and Framework Plans for Donabate

*Implement the existing Local Area Plan within Donabate  
Prepare and implement a Framework Plan over the life of the Plan to guide and inform future development and to include measures to improve and promoted the public realm of the village.*

*Promote and support the provision of a sewage mains connections for Corballis/Balcarrick residents.*

#### Objective CSO46 – Donabate Town Centre

*Channel and concentrate the development of additional commercial, social, community and civic facilities within Donabate town centre and promote high quality urban design in such development.*

#### Objective CSO47 Donabate Peninsula

*Develop a continuous network of signed pathways and cycleways as appropriate, around Donabate Peninsula linking Portrane and Donabate to Malahide and Rush via the*

Rogerstown and Malahide Estuaries whilst ensuring the protection of designated sites and avoiding any routing along the northern boundary of Malahide Inner Estuary by virtue of its ecological sensitivity.

### **Objective CS048 Pedestrian and Cycleways in Donabate**

Provide for a comprehensive network of pedestrian and cycle ways linking residential areas to one another, to the town centre, schools, the recreational campus at Ballymastone and the railway station.

### **Objective CS049 – Corballis/Balcarrick – Sewage Mains Connections**

Promote and support the provision of a sewage mains connections for Corballis/Balcarrick residents.

### **Objective CS050 – Active Travel Connections Between Donabate-Rogerstown Park and Lusk-Rush.**

Investigate all options in looking at the delivery of active travel connections between Donabate Rogerstown Park and Lusk-Rush.

### **Donabate Local Area Plan**

Donabate Local Area Plan 2016 – 2022 (extended to 2026) covers 138 hectares (340 acres), which are divided into four land parcels of Corballis, Ballymastone, Rahillion, and Turvey.

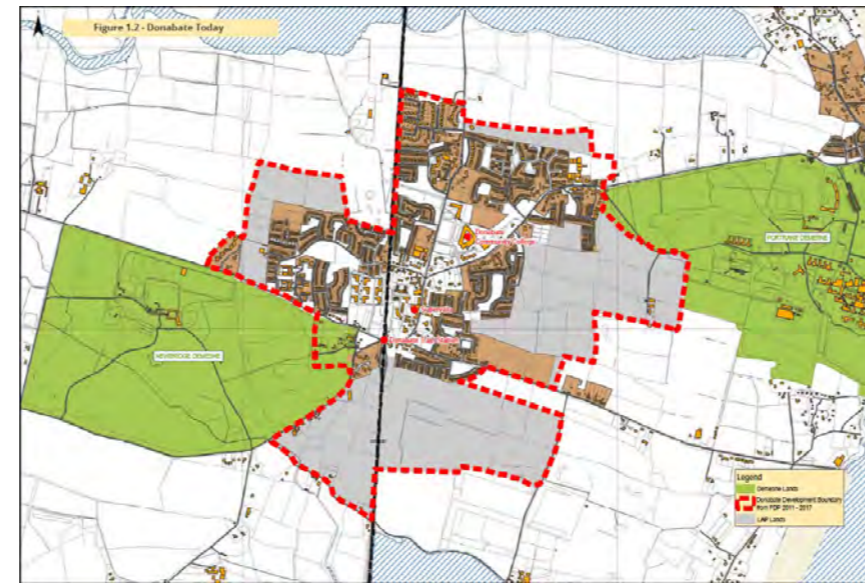
The LAP supports the successful integration of the new development areas into the existing settlement and the provision of supporting infrastructure to ensure that Donabate continues to be a successful and attractive place for current and future residents.

It is a key focus of the LAP to ensure that any new development in Donabate is accompanied by the required community, educational, transport, drainage, and recreational infrastructure to ensure the protection and enhancement of local amenities and the continued growth of local services in Donabate.

It is a key objective of the LAP that the strategic aims and design principles assist in the creation of a new urban environment that will enhance and reflect the character of the area, create a distinctive identity and a sense of place which provides a mix of dwelling types and integrates with the existing village of Donabate.

As listed in the LAP, any planning applications seeking permission must have regard to the strategic aims and objectives of the LAP, such as the Green Infrastructure and Movement and Transportation strategies, as well as the Urban Design strategy, including the twelve design principles.

### **Donabate LAP Area**



The LAP is underpinned by a number of strategic aims, which have been created to support the sustainable development in Donabate and the overall vision for the area. These strategic aims are the following:

- Provide a framework for a growing population with phased development of new housing delivered in tandem with supporting community and physical infrastructure.
- Support Donabate Village as the primary location for commercial, retail, community and cultural development serving the Town and Peninsula generally.
- Provide infrastructural investment to address traffic, pedestrian safety and movement challenges including the early delivery by FCC of a new road & bridge providing an alternative access to Donabate and Portrane.
- Protect and enhance the existing natural amenities of Donabate together with improving access to established local amenity areas through the creation of a network of designated green routes.

Appendix B – Background Studies

Donabate Character Assessment

Introduction

A character assessment which was carried out for Donabate indicated that there are four principle character areas namely:

- the area adjacent to Donabate Train Station;
- the area adjacent to Newbridge Demesne;
- the area along Main Street; and
- the area north of Main Street (Ballisk).

Character Area 1: Adjacent to the Train Station

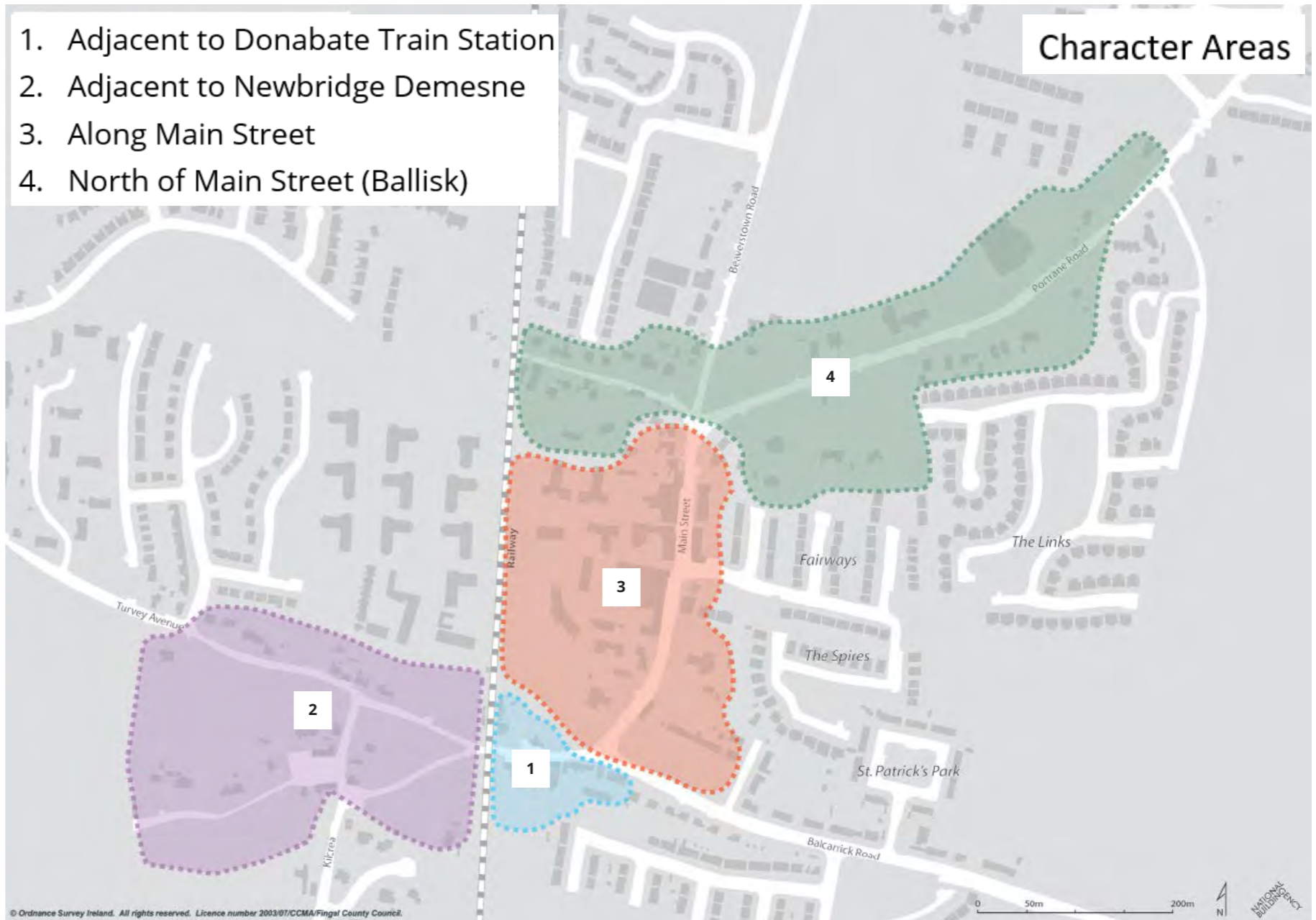
The area adjacent to the Train Station is composed of several vernacular and standalone buildings dating from the early to late 19th century.

View of Rail Station from Pedestrian Overbridge



The Train Station with its associated parking and infrastructure is located immediately east of the rail line and creates a high level of public activity in this area.

Character Areas in Donabate



The Train Station itself consists of a detached two-bay two-storey red brick stationmaster's house, which was built in c.1890.

### Donabate Train Station



The roof of the train station is double pitched consisting of slate, terracotta roof ridge tiles, red brick chimney stacks, yellow clay pots and cast-iron gutters. The walls are red brick laid in Flemish bond.

The openings are square headed with red brick quoining surrounds, limestone cills with uPVC casement windows.

The space surrounding the railway buildings is dominated by parking and vehicular movement resulting in a poor public realm with pedestrian access to the train station somewhat restricted.

### Parking Areas around Donabate Train Station



There is also a vacant building (Daybreak) at the entrance to the train station which presents a poor façade to the streetscape at this location.

Across Main Street to the south of the train station is Smyth's Pub, a detached six-bay two-storey former house built in c.1840.

The roof consists of slate with terracotta ridge tiles and newly rendered chimney stacks and clay pots. The walls are random rubble with unusual round ended quoining to the left of the front elevation.

### Smyth's Pub



The openings are square headed with granite cills supported on granite corbels. Associated with its curtilage are a number of outbuildings, the most prominent of which is a two storey stone mill building worthy of

retention and reuse. Some significant trees on the site reinforce the sense of enclosure in the area.

The footpaths in this area require upgrading and the accessibility improved for people accessing the train station and Newbridge Demesne from the Village.

The railway bridge is narrow with a footpath on one side only which is very problematic for pedestrian access in this area.

### Railway Bridge Footpaths



### Character Area 2: Adjacent to Newbridge Demesne

The area close to Newbridge Demesne provides an attractive, tree-lined approach to the Village with hedgerows, stone walls and significant tree groups together with a number of protected structures including St Patrick's Church of Ireland.

The spaciousness and landscaping of the plots, as well as the large scale and architectural quality of the buildings and their spatial separation creates a unique character within this transitional area, between the Village centre and the Demesne.

### Newbridge Avenue Walkway



The Newbridge Square area is included within Newbridge Demesne Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) and recent development along Newbridge Lane incorporates an attractively landscaped and segregated pedestrian footpath which provides good access from Newbridge Square to Newbridge Demesne.

There is natural limestone edge kerbing to the 'green' in the centre of Newbridge Square and a cast iron water pump feature which is designated as a protected structure.

Buildings of particular interest in the Newbridge Square area include 'The Cottage' and St. Patrick's (Church of Ireland) Church. There is also an attractive water pump which is a feature of the square.

### 'The Cottage' and Water Pump at Newbridge Square



'The Cottage' is a detached five-bay two-storey house built c.1840, with projecting entrance porch. The roof is double pitched with terracotta ridge tiles and brick stacks with clay pots.

The walls are pebble-dashed with square headed openings with rendered reveals and granite cills. Timber sash windows; timber casements; timber tongue and grooved front door with glazed overlight complete this attractive vernacular composition.

Saint Patrick's (Church of Ireland) Church is a detached church built in approximately 1775, with a gable-fronted projecting entrance porch to the south elevation. A pre-1700 rubble stone square profile tower is situated to the north elevation.

### St. Patricks Church (Church of Ireland)



The roof is double pitched consisting of slate and terracotta ridge tiles with cast-iron rainwater goods. The walls are rough-cast render with random rubble walls to the tower element. The openings are round headed with rendered reveals and granite cills.

### Character Area 3: Main Street / Commercial Core

Main Street as a whole forms the main commercial /retail heart of Donabate and as such development has traditionally followed the linear structure of the main access route through the town, with the shopping centre - 'Donabate Town Centre' and Supervalu acting as the core retail areas.

### Main Street – Retail Core



Main Street is composed of a number of modern buildings dating from the late 1980's /early 1990's and interspersed amongst these are older style detached properties dating from the late 19th century.

Land use in this area includes a mix of commercial (retail and services), civic (church and community) and residential. Density varies depending on the land use. Site coverage is generally high on the commercial properties, low on the civic (church / community) property and variable on the residential properties.

Building heights are generally low and predominantly two storeys with some three storey structures. The commercial buildings fronting the street generally comprise shops / takeaways / pharmacies / betting offices

on the ground floor, with offices and residential use on some of the upper floors.

Recent developments have established a strong building line on the street. There is no uniformity in the architectural style or materials of the commercial buildings, and the same is true for the recent residential developments.

The one material that is common to both commercial and residential buildings is red brick. This is in reference to the church, the focal point of the town centre and the town's principal landmark.

### St. Patrick's R.C. Church



The distinctive red Portmarnock brick of which it is built is characteristic of the civic buildings of Donabate and the environs. The same (or similar) brick is used in the old school building at Portrane Road and St. Ita's Hospital.

Focal buildings of note along the Main Street include Saint Patrick's Roman Catholic Church and Warrington's House. Saint Patrick's RC Church is a detached gable-fronted cruciform plan church built in 1903, with a tower to the right-hand side.

The roof is double pitched of clay tiles and terracotta ridge tiles with cast-iron rainwater goods. The walls are constructed of red brick with decorative buttressing. The openings of the church consist of pointed arched doors with limestone surrounds and tongue and grooved timber doors with cast-iron hinges.

The front elevation has an ornate rose window with lancet windows, limestone surrounds and stained glass. It is a very impressive and prominent feature on the Main Street and currently acts as a focal point in this area.

Warrington's House is a detached four-bay two-storey house, c.1860, with projecting entrance porch and original fenestration. The roof consists of a double-pitched slate roof with terracotta ridge tiles, two brick chimney stacks with terracotta pots.

### Warrington's House With Water Pump To Boundary



The walls are coursed rubble stone with tooled limestone quoining. The openings consist of rusticated limestone dressed window openings, granite cills and timber sash windows.

In recent years, the area has experienced some significant development of the backland areas - specifically on the



## Donabate Framework Plan

western side of the Village, in the area between Main Street and the railway line.

The emerging pattern is one of freestanding blocks of 3 to 4 storeys surrounded by areas of surface parking and open space.

### Residential Units at The Gallery, Donabate



Opportunities exist for creating a new street network in this area, having regard to the existing railway station and associated car park.

### Character Area 4: North of Main Street

This character area stretches east from Hands Lane and is located to the north of the town centre primarily along the Portrane Road. The area is characterised by schools and the community centre, library and other community uses including the credit union and scout den.

### Pedestrian Link along Hands Lane



A restricted vehicular and pedestrian connection exists underneath the railway line connecting existing residential developments to the west with the town centre. This provides a valuable link between the Beaverton Estate and the Village and schools.

### School Facilities and All-Weather Pitch



The area is characterised by community uses interspersed with single use residential plots of low density, although in recent years infill development has taken place in the form of small scale residential developments on roads leading from the Village, along Portrane Road.

## Appendix B – Background Studies

### New Housing on Portrane Road



The school quarter contains Donabate-Portrane Educate Together National School and Donabate Community School which includes a large multi-use astro pitch.

There is also the old Credit Union site which has been recently acquired by the Council. It is envisaged this building will be repurposed to provide a new public library for the town.

### Donabate Community Centre and Library



### Former Credit Union



Other buildings of note in this character area include a thatched cottage along Hands Lane and Portrane National School on the Portrane Road.

### Thatch Cottage, Hands Lane



The thatched cottage consists of four-bays and is single-storey. Its origins date from c.1795. The roof consists of a double pitched thatched roof having curved swept hip ends and a rendered chimney stack. The walls are nap

rendered with a high plinth course. The openings are square headed with rendered reveals with stone cills.

The former National School is a detached eight-bay two-storey red brick former school built c.1880. The roof is a double pitched slate roof with decorative terracotta ridge tiles and granite coping and corbels to gable ends. The brick chimneys also have granite copings.

### Former Portrane National School



The walls consist of red brick with high brick plinth. The openings consist of brick arches, keystones, reveals and granite and brick cills.

The former National School has been converted into residential use and forms part of a small residential development.

This area also includes the small neighbourhood centre opposite St Patrick's National School, which includes a bakery, convenience store, hair salon and pharmacy.

### St. Patricks National School



### Neighbourhood Centre on Portrane Road



**Land Use Survey**

In addition to the character area analysis described above, a detailed land use survey and public realm analysis exercise was undertaken to provide an accurate baseline of Donabate’s existing built environment.

**Findings of Land Use Survey**

A land use survey of Donabate was undertaken to establish existing land use on the Main Street, the overall vacancy rate within the study area and to ascertain upper floor uses.

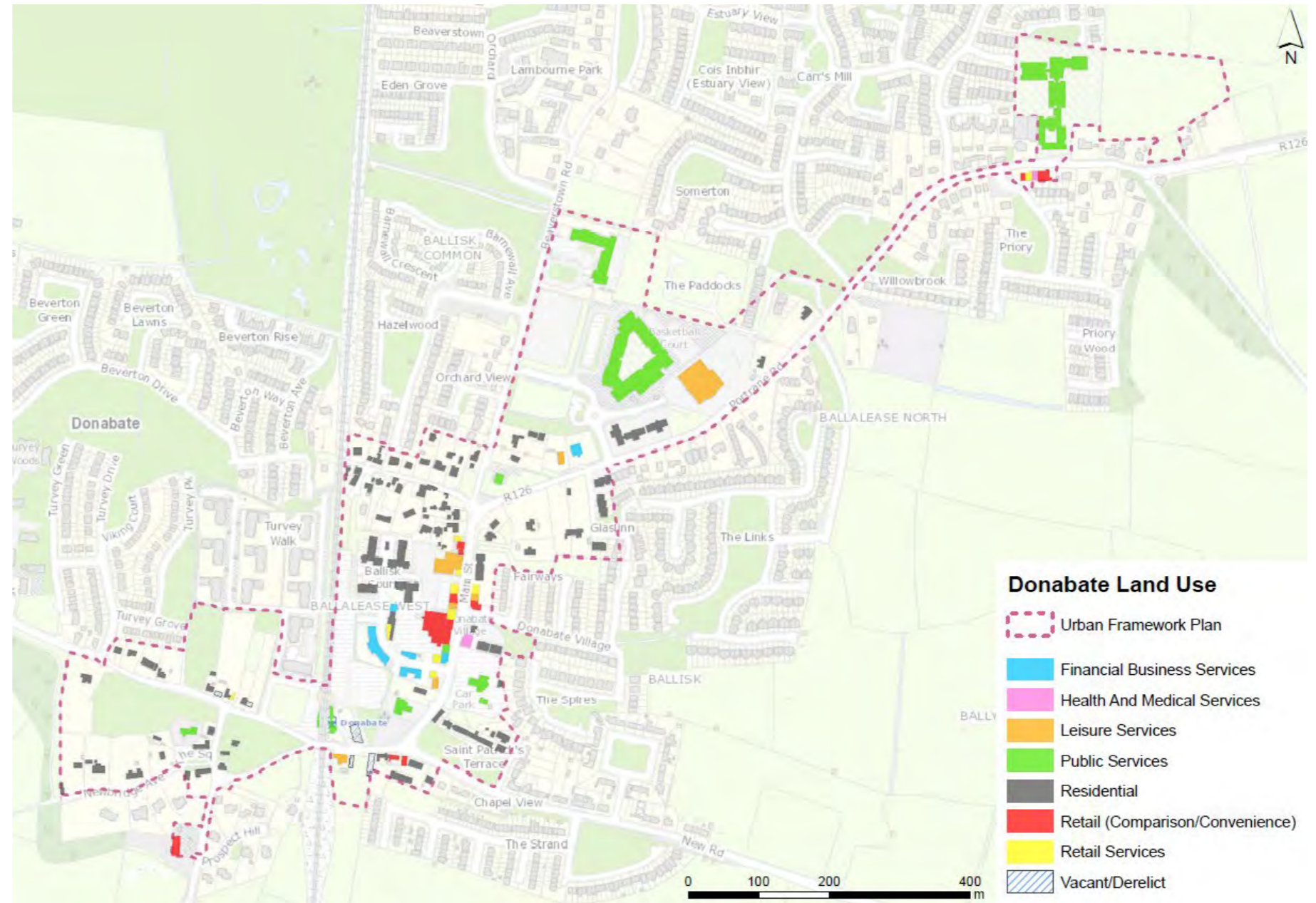
The survey was carried out based on the Goad Classification of Land Use, which gives a detailed breakdown of land-uses under the categories shown in the Land Use Survey Results table below:

**Land Use Survey Results**

RETAIL BREAKDOWN (Total)	NO. OF UNITS
Retail (Comparison & Convenience)	20
Retail Services	10
Leisure Services	7
Financial and Business Services	8
Health and Medical Services	3
Public Services	12
Residential	99
Vacant / Derelict	8
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>167 (Approx)</b>

It should be noted that the retail comparison and retail convenience categories were grouped into a single category for Donabate Main Street.

Land Use Survey Drawing Ground Floor



### Retail Comparison

Comparison goods are non-perishable goods for retail sale which are often stocked in a wide range of sizes, styles, colours and qualities, including furniture, clothes, hardware, opticians, etc.

### Retail Convenience

Convenience goods are goods which are frequently purchased by consumers who are usually not willing to shop around. Examples of these goods include sweets, cigarettes, prescription drugs, magazines, and most grocery products. Units include bakery, newsagent and confectionary, butchers, etc.

Retail use is concentrated within the core area on Main Street, anchored by the shopping centre (SuperValu) and adjacent uses including the Post Office, newsagent, butchers, etc.

The only other concentration of retail comparison / convenience use is at the small neighbourhood centre opposite St Patrick's National Schools, which includes a newsagent, bakery, butcher, pharmacy etc.

Retail (comparison and convenience) covers approximately 12% of land use along Main Street, which is a fairly low percentage given that it is the Main Street of the town serving a large population catchment in the hinterland.

### Retail Service

Retail services are units which are providing specialised tasks including Dry Cleaner & Laundrette, hair and beauty salons, barbers, dog groomers, etc.

There is a general mix of retail services on offer along Main Street (covering approximately 4% of land use) principally comprising hair and beauty salons. There is also a small amount of retail service at upper floor level along the Main Street.

### Leisure Service

The leisure services are made up a range of businesses supplying entertainment including pubs, fast food takeaways, sports and leisure facilities, community centre, etc. Pubs and take-aways dominate the leisure service use along Main Street and this use comprises approximately 4% of land use on Main Street at ground floor level.

### Financial and Business

Financial services and legal services include insurance, finance, solicitors and architects' offices and this use comprises approximately 5% of land use at ground floor level.

### Public Services

Public services include community buildings such as community centre, civic centres, community health centre, library and theatre buildings, churches, etc, and account for approximately 7% of land use within the study area.

The area close to the St Patrick's Church includes public service buildings and the area around the community centre and schools provides a concentration of public services.

### Health and Medical Service

The health and medical services category includes doctors, dentists and medical centres and these are evenly dispersed along Main Street and contribute approximately 2% of floor area to overall land use on Main Street.

### Residential

As there are a significant number of properties on the Main Street in residential use (at ground and first floor level), it was considered appropriate to record these premises to accurately reflect the dominant land use on Main Street.

Residential land use is the prevalent land use at ground and first floor area and comprises approximately 60% of overall land use within the Framework Plan study area.

Given the relatively large boundary for the Framework Plan study area, it incorporates a lot of residential areas that lie adjacent to the town core, including lands at the Gallery (near the train station), the area around St Patrick's Terrace, Hands Lane and the residential development areas along Portrane Road.

The land use pattern emerging clearly shows that the core retail area is concentrated around the shopping centre and SuperValu and this is supported by residential areas as one moves away from the Village core.

### Vacant / Derelict

The survey also looked at the buildings on Main Street that are currently vacant and / or derelict.

For the purposes of calculating the vacancy rate, a vacant property was defined as 'any ground floor retail unit which is available and suitable for use but is unoccupied'.

The survey also included any buildings that were derelict or under construction (i.e. boarded up or in extremely poor state of repair).

The first two figures overleaf show vacant buildings at the entrance to the train station and at Turvey Avenue, respectively.

## Vacant Buildings at Train Station / on Turvey Avenue



The figure below shows warehouse buildings beside Smyths Pub, which offer a significant opportunity for a village centre redevelopment.

It is noted that a planning permission has been granted for the redevelopment of this site as part of a wider mixed use and residential development (reg. ref. SHD/006/20 / ABP-311059-21 and F20A/0204 / (ABP-308446-20).

## Warehouse Buildings beside Smyths Pub



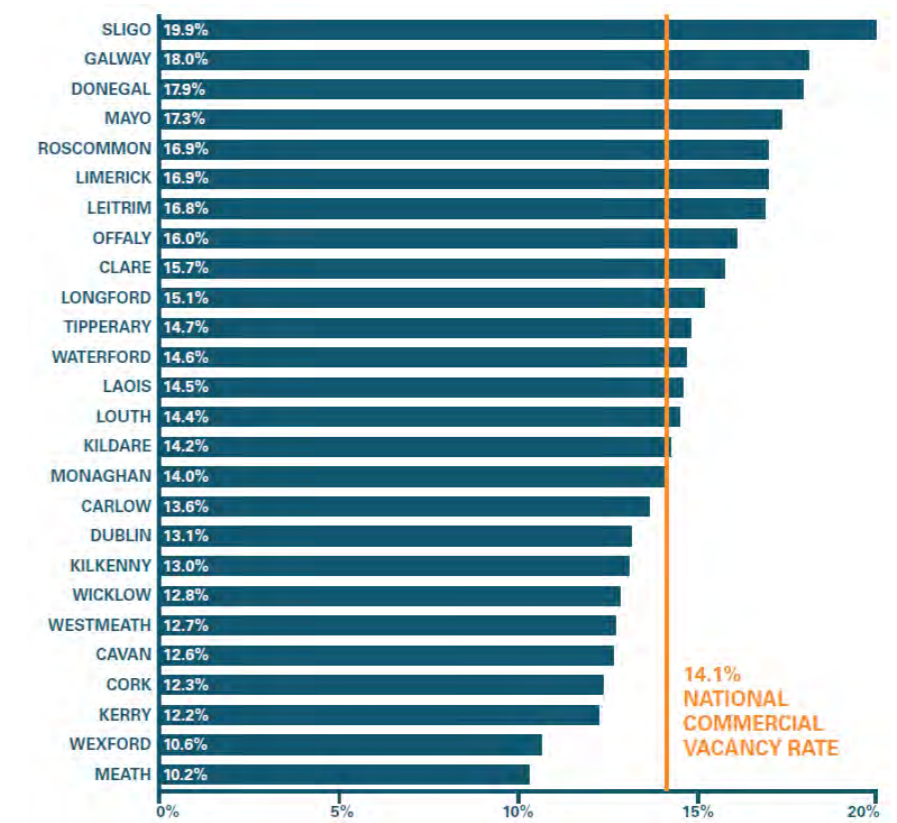
When undertaken, the survey indicated that there is a vacancy rate of approximately 5% at ground floor level within the study area.

Based on Geodirectory's most recent Commercial Building Survey report, the commercial vacancy rate in Ireland stood at 14.1% in Q2 2023, increasing by 0.2pp since Q2 2022. Despite the marginal increase, this marks the highest vacancy rate recorded since the first issue of the report in 2013.

The Geodirectory report notes that despite the ongoing lift in the economy, commercial vacancies nationwide have still been increasing. Some 20 counties out of the 26 surveyed have had a rise in empty commercial properties since last year.

The report also notes that the increasing costs of doing business in regard to energy costs, food inflation and interest rate increases are generating some pressures for commercial owner occupiers and tenants.

## Commercial Vacancy Rates by County – Q2 2023



Source: GeoDirectory Database.

The report observed that shifts in the working environment towards a more hybrid model, which is impacting the viability of some commercial space. This is showing up in an increased commercial vacancy rate nationally and a modest decline in the commercial stock.

Donabate's Main Street vacancy rate of approximately 5% appears to be lower than the national commercial vacancy rate of 14.1% (source: GeoDirectory 2021). Whilst Donabate does not suffer from an excess of vacant units along Main Street, it does suffer from a lack of variety and mix of uses.

Building condition is generally fair, with a number of buildings in need of minor maintenance and improvement works including shop-front renewal, painting, signage improvements, etc.

### Car Parking / Traffic

There is generally a good mix of car parking available in Donabate with the largest areas of car parking located at the train station, at SuperValu and a smaller area around St Patrick’s Church.

### **Car Parking Areas at Train Station**



### **Car Parking Areas to the Rear of SuperValu**



### **Car Parking Area at St. Patrick’s Church**



The public consultation and survey feedback in Donabate noted that there is generally a good amount of car parking at SuperValu but that it is difficult to get parking when there are certain events in the town, such as funerals and weddings.

The public consultation exercise also noted that there can be difficulties parking and general congestion at the beach areas during the summer months.

### Appendix C – Road Safety Assessment

Please see A4 document appended to this A3 document.





### Appendix D – SEA Screening Report

Please see A4 document appended to this A3 document.



### Appendix E – AA Screening Report

Please see A4 document appended to this A3 document.



**Comhairle Contae Fhine Gall**  
Fingal County Council



**Fingal County Council, County Hall, Main Street, Swords, County Dublin, K67 X8Y2**