



Kells

Public Realm and Regeneration Plan

19.06.2023

BDP.

Public Realm and Regeneration Plan

Process and Design Development

October 2022

Public Consultation event to engage with community and help the design teams understanding of Kells

November 2022

First ideas, testing options, agreeing general strategy and vision

June 2023

Showcase Draft Public Realm and Regeneration Plan for Kells at Public Consultation Event

Summer 2023

Completion and publication of the final Public Realm & Regeneration Plan

KELLS Public Realm & Regeneration Plan

→ What is it ?

Meath County Council has appointed BDP to prepare the Public Realm and Regeneration Plan for Kells. The Plan will address the issues which are viewed as blockages to the redevelopment and regeneration of the town centre.

The plan will seek to be the catalyst for the revitalisation of the town centre and surrounding areas whilst pursuing a continued pattern of development that respects the inherent characteristics of the natural and built environment.

Its objective will be to set out a clear strategy and overall vision for the public realm in the town centre, focused on the enhancement of the social, economic and environmental assets of Kells.

→ What we need to know ?


Where is Kells now? What works well in the town centre? What are the key strengths which exist in Kells and should be built upon?

Where do we want Kells to be? What are the key issues in Kells which need to be addressed? What could / should work better in the town?

What do we want Kells Town Centre to look like in 5 years' time? What are the key priorities that should be included in the Plan for Kells?

How do we get there? What projects should be advanced / considered?

→ Aerial View of Kells Town Centre



→ Programme & Process

October 2022	November 2022	Dec 2022 Jan 2023	Spring 2023
Site visits, engaging community, stakeholders and understanding Kells	First ideas, testing options, agreeing general strategy and vision	Formulating a draft Public Realm and Regeneration Plan for Kells	Completion and publication of the final Public Realm & Regeneration Plan

BDP. comhairle chontae na mí meath county council



Kells

Public Realm and Regeneration Plan

Progress Meeting
23.11.2022

KELLS Public Realm & Regeneration Plan

The preparation and implementation of the Plan will address many of the issues which are viewed as blockages to the redevelopment and regeneration of the town centre in Kells. The plan will seek to be the catalyst for the revitalisation of the town centre and surrounding areas. It will also support a continued pattern of development that respects the character of the town. The Council hopes that its implementation will really improve the social, economic and environmental assets of Kells for all who live, work and visit the town.

Public Consultation

The consultation for the project took place in a variety of forms, both in person and using web based surveys, each with their own added benefits. Public engagement took place in October and November 2022 to seek the views of the community before progressing into developing strategies and ideas. This helped bring awareness to the project and helped people to gain an understanding of its ambition, possibilities, intentions, and scope.

What You Told Us

Below is a summary of the consultation feedback received.

What you like about Kells	What you dislike about Kells
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The heritageThe sense of community and peopleThe architecture and character of the older buildings in the townThe character of the existing streetscapeThe retail in the townIts walkabilityThe facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The lack of pedestrian crossings, no logical way to get around and unsafe for pedestriansTraffic speed and flow, no traffic calming measures with chaotic traffic network and therefore feel in town, uninvitingDangerous junctionsLack of parking facilities and dislike of current parking chargesNeed for additional seating areas in the town

Strengths	Challenges	Opportunities	Issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Heritage and HistoryThe Community and the localsThe Character and Sense of PlaceGreat Place to LiveThe FacilitiesWell Connected Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Heritage sites always closedDevil's housesNeed for wheelchair footpathsNot enough parking, need for off street parking, incentive long term parking outside of town centreConnectivity of spacesDangerous junctionsBetter crossing points needed at the cross/tourist centreThe street trafficOne way system was disastrous for pedestrians, if this was to be looked at again input from pedestrians is very important	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Tourist office needs coffee shop and gift shop and more tablesDedicated community centreNew car park and extended long term car parkPedestrian crossingsCycle lanes - make the town and surrounding roads cycle friendlyWalking to the ParkYouth centre/ Sport facilitiesInterpretive signage and heritage plaquesShop front strategy linked to town and its heritageMore Greenery (planting)For local craft and cultureConnect the roads with the banksMulti-generation Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Heritage assets are closed i.e. Round tower, Columba's House and Spire of UlickThe town centre retail is dyingLots of trip hazards in the townSpending agricultural subsidiesNew road signage to dominate the town centre and be placed infront of home/shop windowsThe town should be left aloneConserving the original character and streetcapesNot preserving buildings and existing character, restoring deviant buildings without keeping its existing character

The next steps: There are currently no funds in place, however, this plan and the actions within, will be used to apply for future funding to help regenerate the future of the town. The plan enables a considered holistic approach rather than a piecemeal reactive to response to change.

BDP. comhairle chontae na mí meath county council



Kells

Public Realm and Regeneration Plan

April 2023

Note | Public Realm and Regeneration Plan | April 2023 | BDP

Public Consultation Findings 2022

Public Consultation Findings

People's likes & dislikes



What do people like most about Kells Town Centre:

- The heritage
- The sense of community and people
- The architecture and character of the older buildings in the town
- The character of the existing streetscape
- The retail in the town
- Its walkability
- The facilities

What do people dislike most about Kells Town Centre:

- The lack of pedestrian crossings, no logical way to get around and unsafe for pedestrians
- Traffic speed and flow, no traffic calming measures
- Chaotic traffic network and therefore feel in town, uninviting
- Dangerous junctions
- Lack of parking facilities and dislike of current parking charges
- Need for additional seating areas in the town
- Poor signage and poorly displayed navigation of heritage areas
- Derelict / vacant properties
- No cycle lanes
- Narrow and uneven footpaths
- Not enough small carparks to facilitate shoppers short term and workers long term
- No local park or facilities for dogs
- Under-utilises its heritage sites



Strengths

- 01 The Heritage and History
- 02 The Community and The People
- 03 The Character and Sense of Place
- 04 Great Place to Live
- 05 The Facilities
- 06 Well Connected Infrastructure



Challenges

- 01 Heritage sites always closed
- 02 Derelict Houses- bringing them back
- 03 Need for wider/safer footpaths
- 04 Not enough parking, need for off street parking. Incentivise long term parking outside of town centre
- 05 Connectivity of Spaces
- 06 Dangerous junctions
- 07 Better crossing points needed at the cross/tourist centre
- 08 Too much Traffic
- 09 One way system was disastrous for pedestrians. If this was to be looked at again input from pedestrians is very important



Opportunities

- 01 Tourist office needs coffee shop and gift shop and more toilets
- 02 Develop and open heritage sites for tourism
- 03 Dedicated community centre
- 04 New car park and extended long-term car park
- 05 Pedestrian crossings
- 06 Cycle lanes- make the town and surrounding roads cycle friendly
- 07 Walking Park/Dog Park
- 08 Youth centre/ Sport facilities
- 09 Interpretive Signage and Heritage plaques
- 10 Shop front strategy linked to town and its heritage
- 11 More Greenery (planting)
- 12 For local craft and culture
- 14 Connect the fronts with the backs
Multi-generation Housing



Threats

- 01 Heritage assets are closed i.e Round tower, Colmcile's House and Spire of Lloyds have bad reviews on Trip Advisor
- 02 The town centre retail is dying
- 03 Lots of trip hazards in the town
- 04 Speeding agricultural vehicles
- 05 New road signage to dominate the town centre and be placed in front of home/shop windows
- 06 The town should be left alone
- 07 Conserving the original character and streetscapes, it not being spoiled by supermarkets in the centre of the town
- 08 Not preserving buildings and existing character, (restoring derelict buildings without keeping its existing character)

01

Under-utilises heritage sites

03

Dangerous traffic flow and speed within the town and especially at junctions

02

Currently unsafe for pedestrians and a lack of pedestrian crossings

05

Poor parking facilities

04

No cycling lanes

06

Poor signage

07

Lack of greenery

08

Lack of usable public space (and opportunity for seating) in the town

10

Dereliction

09

Lacking in community facilities: community centre, town/park walking route (dog friendly facilities), sport facilities

01

Celebrate and reconnect Kells with its heritage through the design approach of the public realm, while identifying ways to restore the function of a market town.

02

Introduce new pedestrian crossing points throughout the town to prioritise pedestrian movement in the town centre.

03

Implement traffic calming measures and introduce new pedestrian crossing points throughout the town

04

Reconsider balance between pedestrian, cycling and vehicular space.

05

Rationalise parking within Kells ensuring good quality short-term parking and locations for appropriate longer-term parking

06

Develop and implement a cohesive wayfinding and signage strategy for the town

07

Identify opportunities to preserve and enhance local biodiversity and introduce green and blue infrastructure within the streets

08

Create a more inviting, usable and comfortable public space.

09

Ensure existing amenities are accessible and well connected to the town centre.

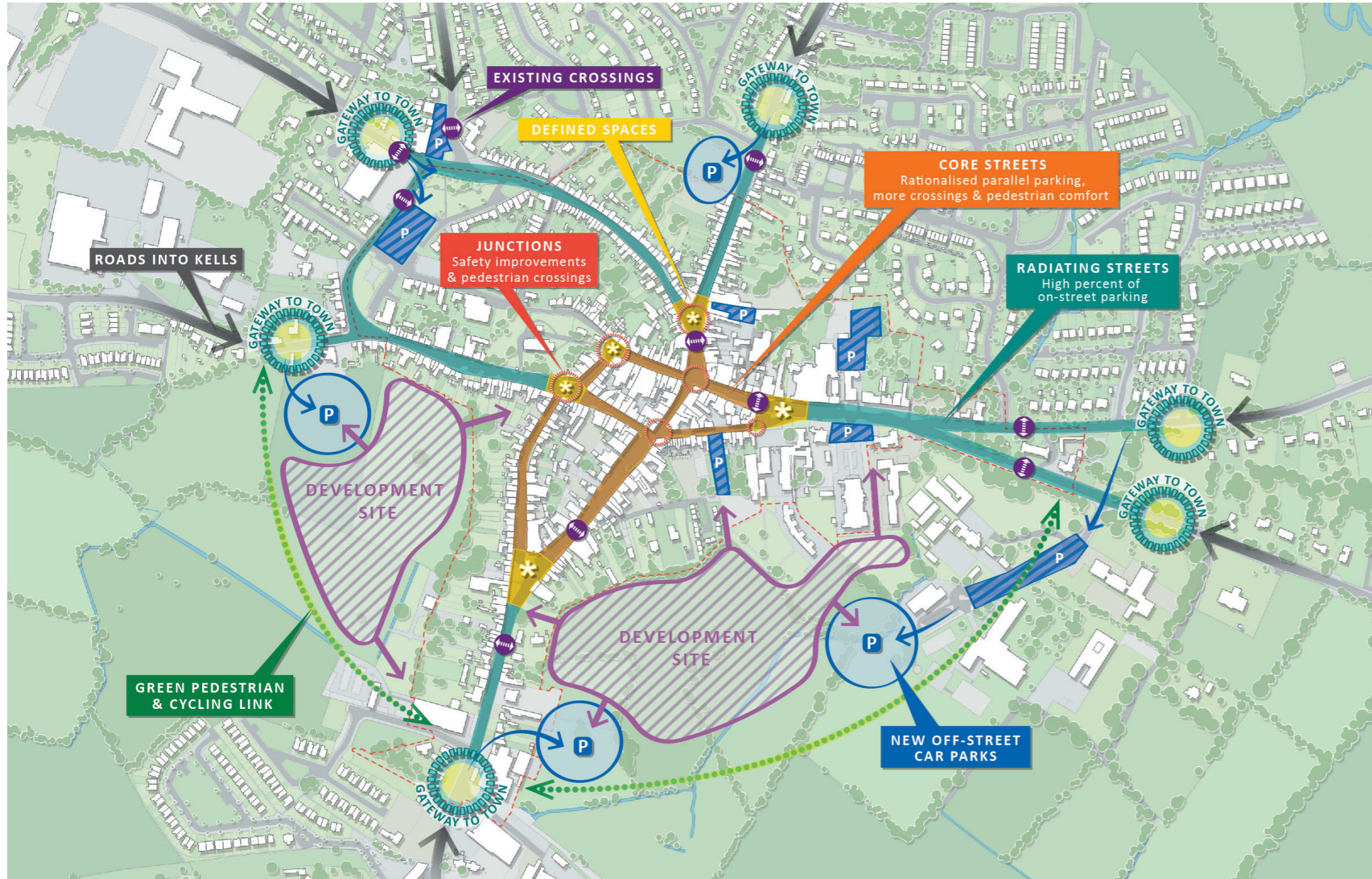
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Encourage the reuse of derelict building by improving the adjacent public realm while restoring the architectural heritage and character of the town.

Emerging Design Strategy

Emerging Design Strategy

Concept Development



1. Inclusive streets for all
2. An improved town centre core
3. Improving parking
4. Finding a new future for vacant buildings
5. Revitalising building facades
6. Celebrating Arts and Culture
7. Connecting heritage through way-finding

Public Realm Views



Existing View: Farrell Street



Existing View: Arrival at John Street



Existing View: Market Street



Artists impression: Farrell Street

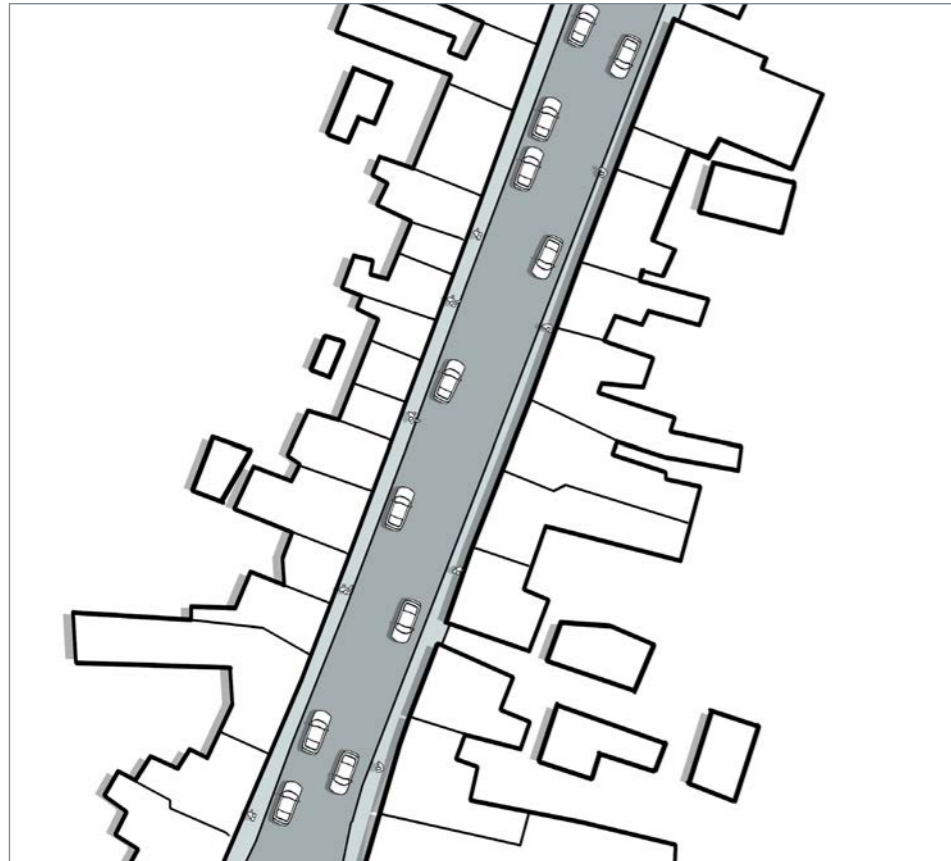


Artists impression: Arrival at John Street

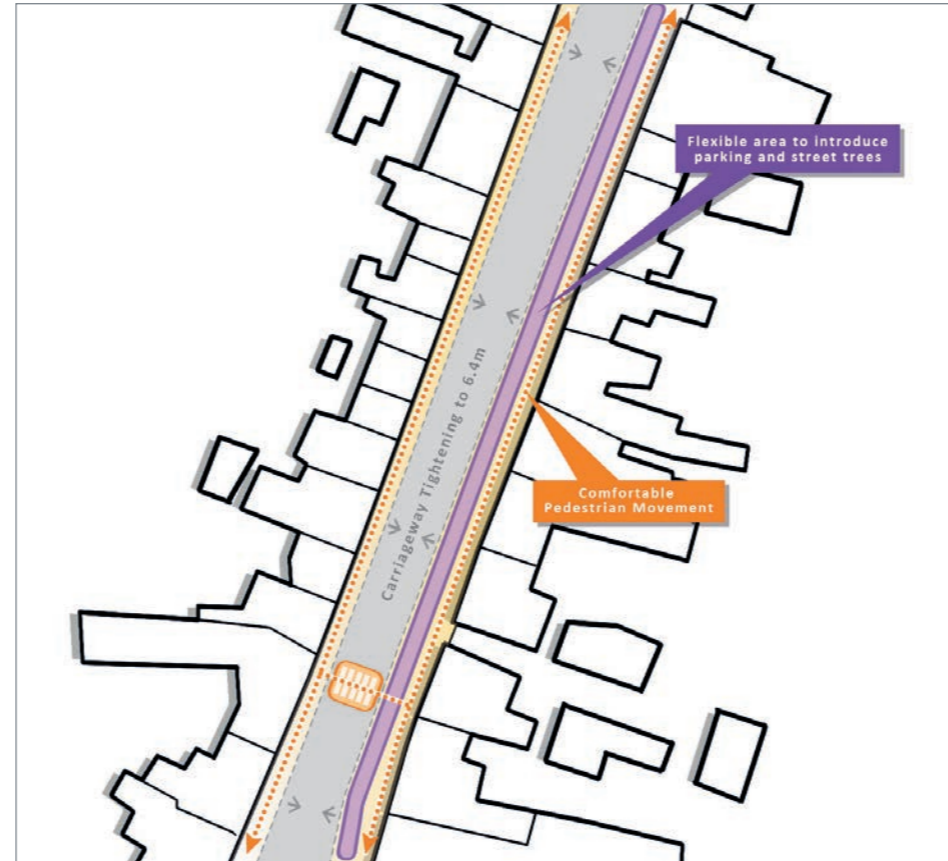


Artists impression: Market Street

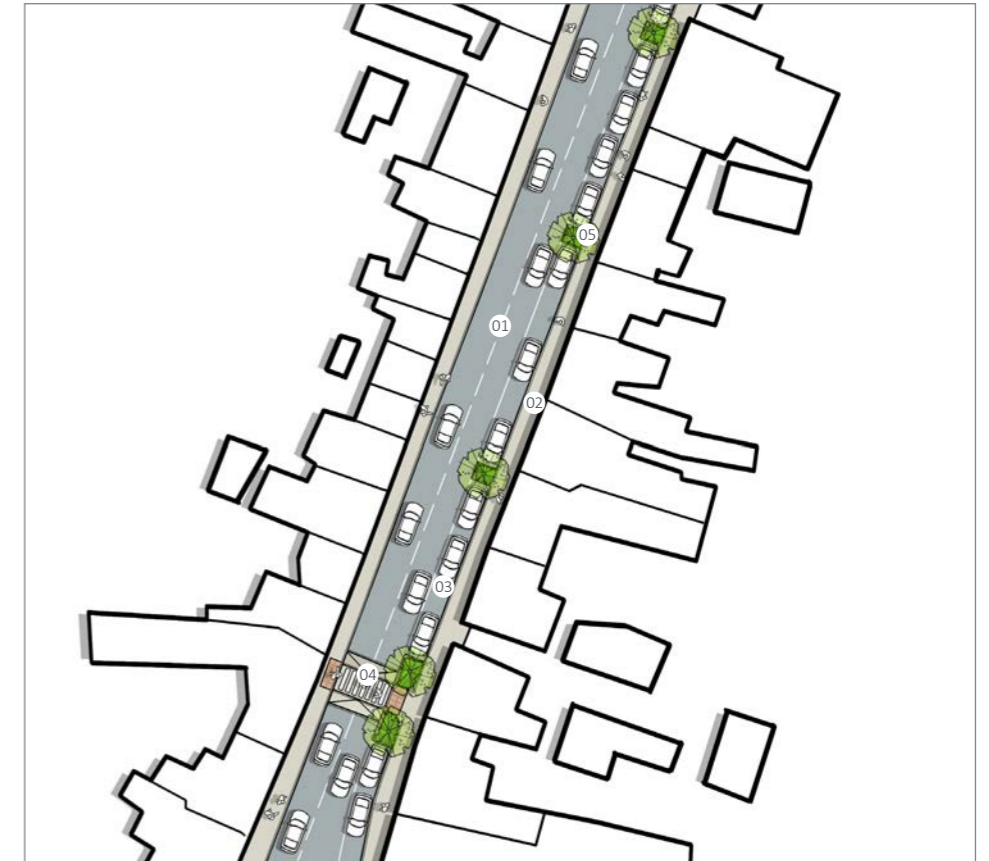
Existing Radiating Street (Maudlin Rd)



Concept Diagram



What a radiating street could look like



- Reduce road widths to between 6 and 6.4m wide
- Widen footpaths where possible
- Crossings where necessary and at intervals along the street
- Try to have as much parallel parking as possible. Longer time duration, cheaper

- 01. Carriageway tightened to 6.4m width
- 02. Pedestrian footpaths
- 03. Parallel on-street parking to one or both sides of the street when width allows
- 04. Pedestrian crossings with raised table
- 05. Small pockets of planting and street trees

Inclusive Streets for All

Street Typology

Existing Core Street (Farrell St)



Concept Diagram



What a core street could look like



- Prioritise pedestrian movement
- Reduce road widths to between 6 and 6.4m wide
- Widen footpaths where possible
- Have crossings at all junctions, with buildouts where possible to shorten the crossing distance, crossing raised to footpath level, ramps for cars
- Pull back parking from crossings
- All parking parallel
- Allow forecourts to buildings where possible
- Consider permanent parklets for cafés
- Allow parking in remaining spaces, times duration/paid
- Higher quality materials

01. Pedestrian crossings with raised table
02. Permanent parklet
03. General paving to wide pedestrian sidewalk
04. Distinct paving to businesses forecourts
05. New trees
06. Cycle stands
07. Seating
08. Paved drives
09. Existing trees integrated in regeneration scheme
10. Pockets of planting



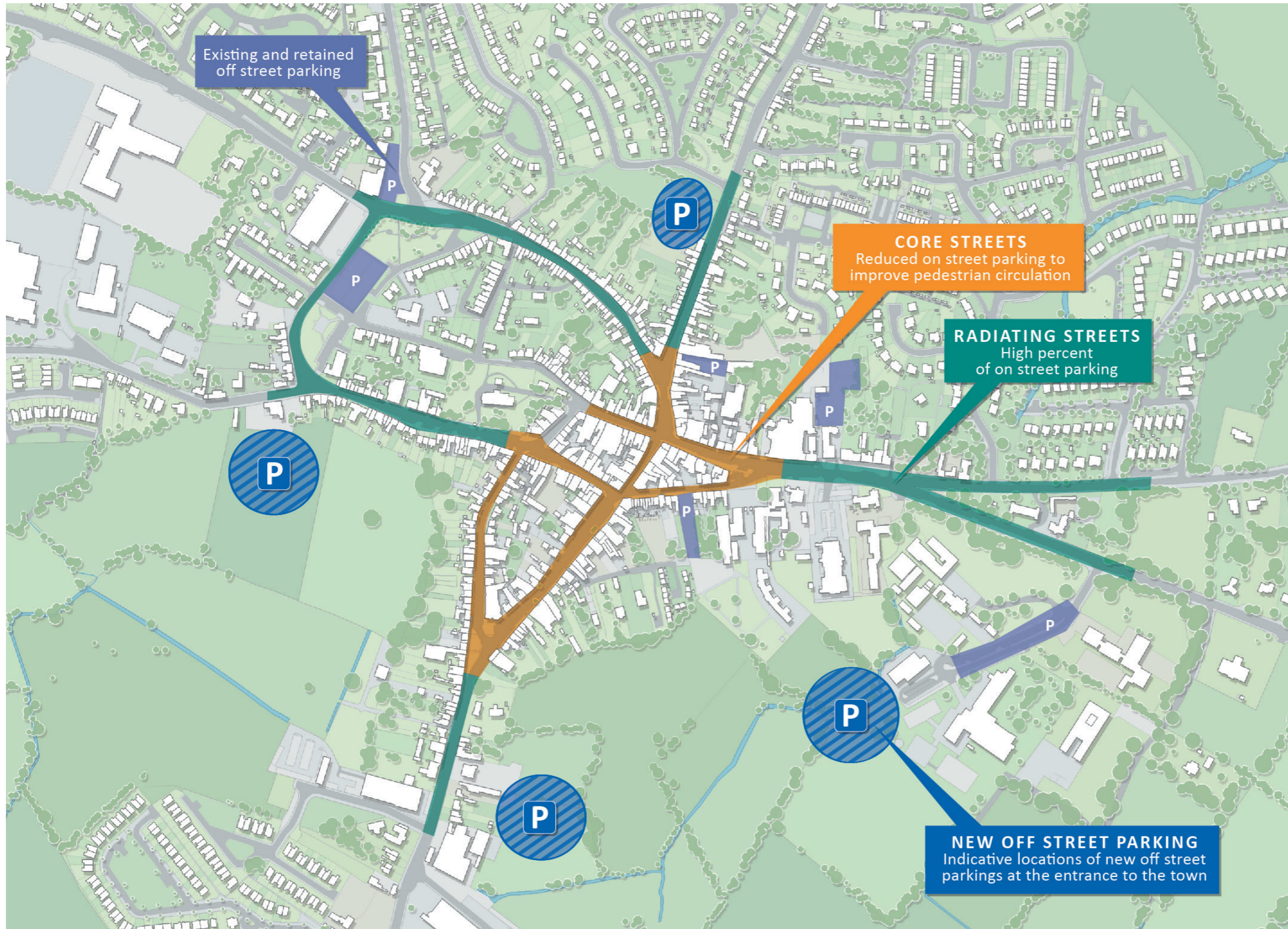
An Improved Town Centre Core



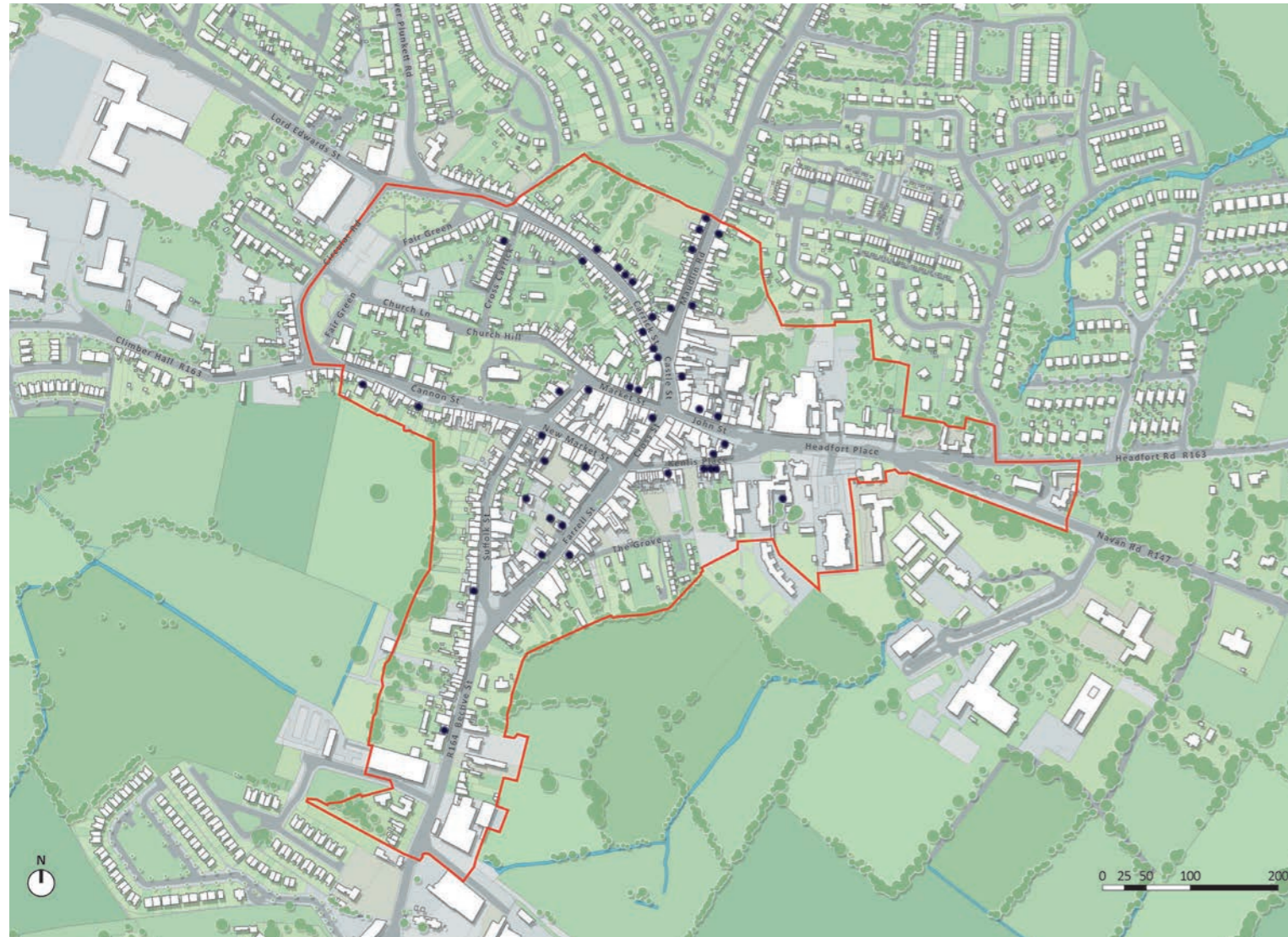
An Improved Town Centre Core



Improving Parking



Finding a Future Use for Vacant Buildings



Revitalising Building Facades



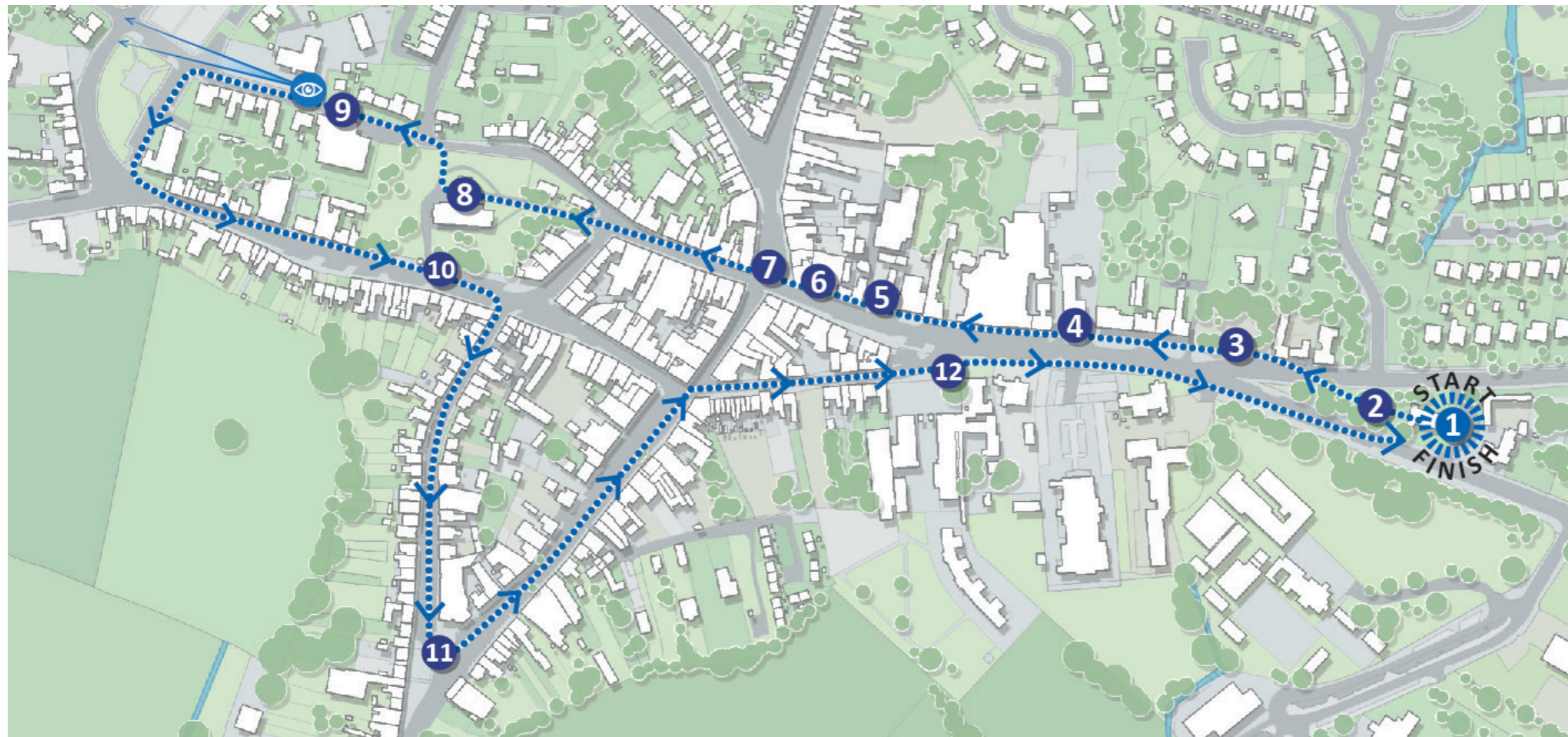
This shows an example of a scheme to rejuvenate buildings by painting each property in a selected palette of colours.

Connecting Heritage through Wayfinding



-  Architectural Conservation Areas
-  Protected views (MDP 2021-27)
-  Key landmarks

Heritage Trail



Linking to Kells town to its heritage.

One of Kells annual festivals is "Type Trail" We propose that this is used in the design of the streets through paving design, the signs and the interpretation.

Proposed celebrated heritage walking tour:

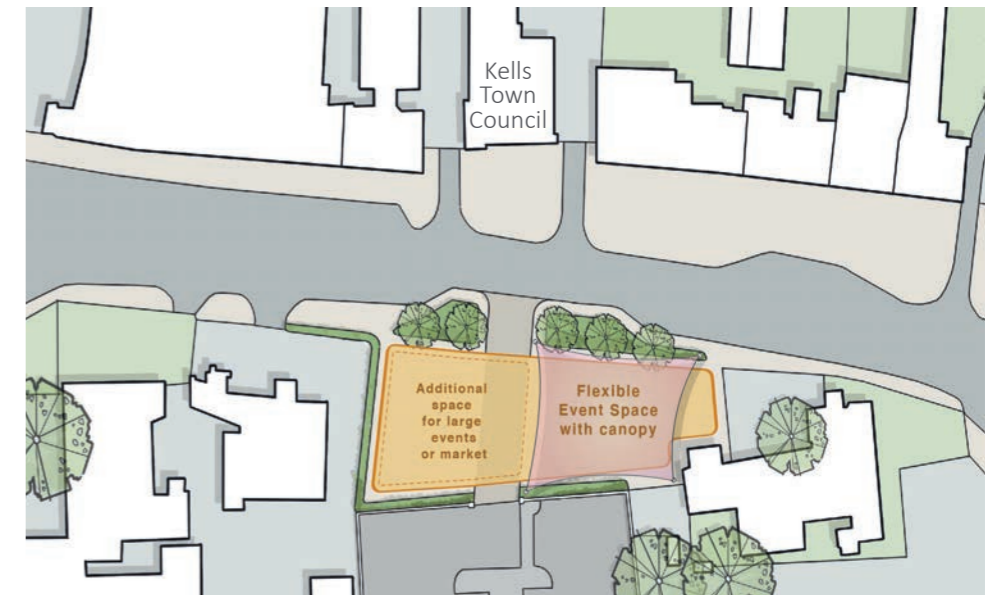
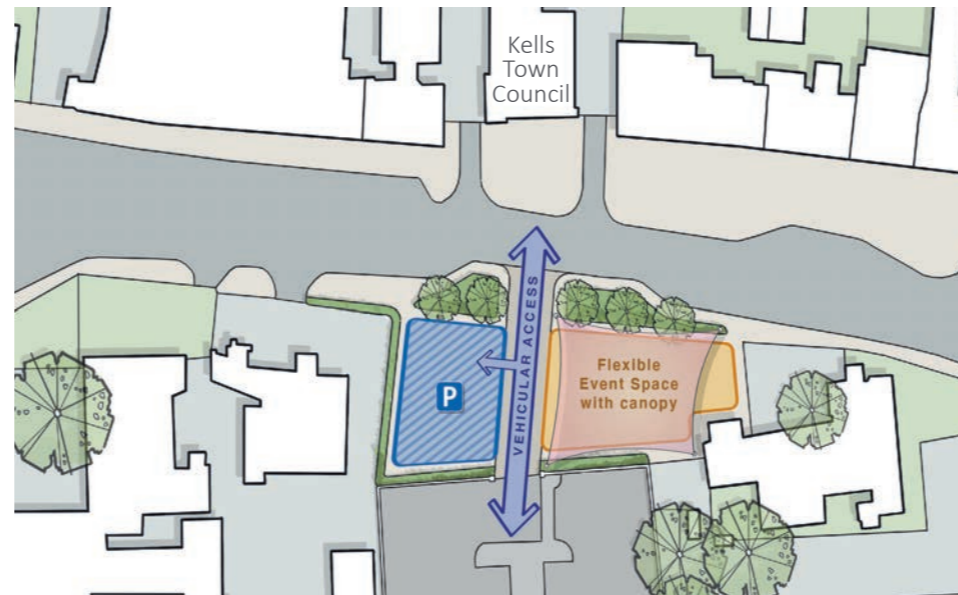
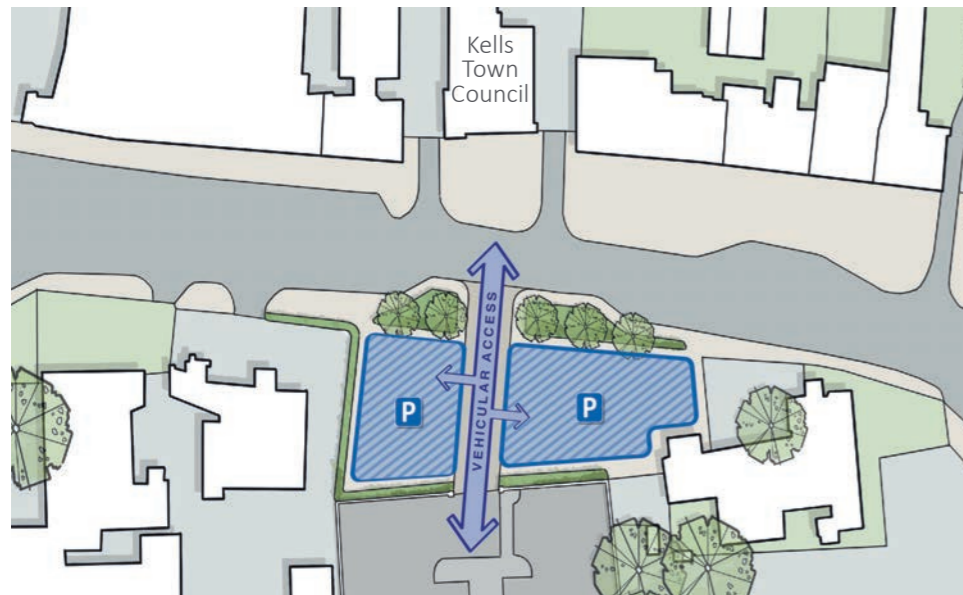
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|---|--|---|
| 1 Old Courthouse- Tourism and Cultural Hub | 5 Oliver Usher Auction Rooms | 9 St Colmcille's House & View of Spire of Lloyds |
| 2 The Cross | 6 Fitzsimmons Bakery | 10 Monastic Site Round Tower |
| 3 St John's Cemetery | 7 Cross Roads, Previous location of Market Cross and general location of Kells Castle (1178-1800) | 11 Bective Square |
| 4 Kells Town Hall | 8 Kells Monastic Site | 12 Parnell Garden |

Celebrating Arts and Culture

Kells is a town of historic importance with significant heritage which makes it a unique town in the County. This history and heritage make it an important tourist destination in 'Ireland's Ancient East' and the Boyne Valley. Kells has a strong community base with a number of community, social, sporting, business, historic, cultural and education orientated groups.

This Proposal aims to support the growth of facilitating Arts and Cultural events in Kells Town Centre.

The focus of the project is to create an outdoor flexible space that can be used for events, activities and markets. This is then linked to a number of key buildings that have been identified that are currently in use. Wayfinding, signage, interpretation, ease of access, movement between the venues are all considered important aspects to allow the town's art and culture to continue to grow and further enhance the experience.



Next Steps

- Gathering responses from recent public consultation to inform development of report
- Complete Kells Public Realm and Regeneration Plan Report and make accessible to the public in August
- Use the Report to gain funding for projects

