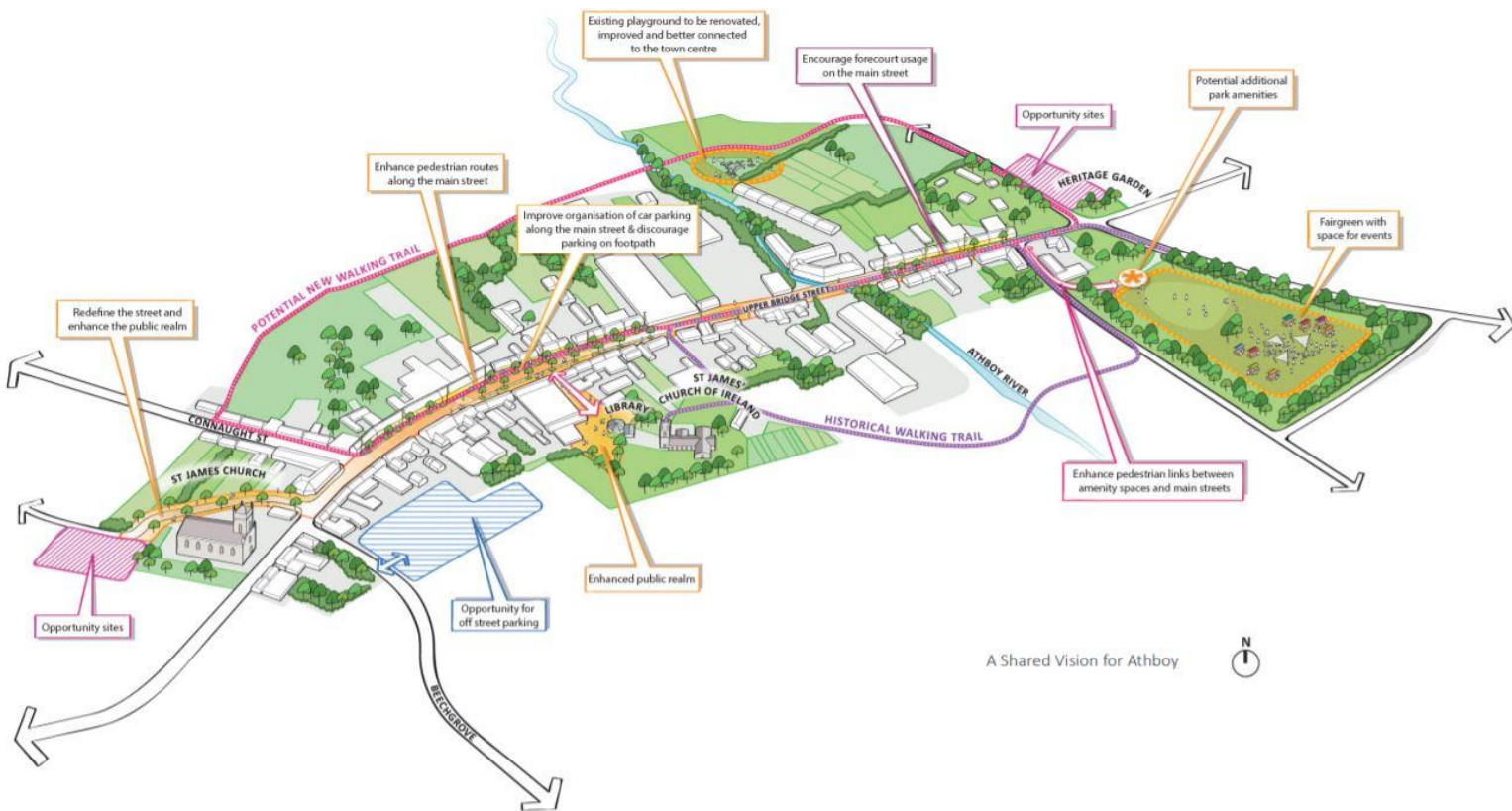


Athboy Public Realm Implementation Action Plan Version 1, January 2022



The Public Realm Strategy for Athboy was published in July 2021, and sets out the approach to provide a robust strategy for the future development of the urban landscape of Athboy.

The core of Athboy stretches along the main street shops and businesses, catering for a wide catchment area. However, car parking arrangements and a large carriageway has created a discontinuous narrow arrangement of public open space, resulting in the streetscape not matching the current requirements of the town.

The implementation of the Public Realm Strategy will transform the town into a more attractive place for people to live, work, visit and socialise.

The aim of Athboy vision statement is to:

'Improve the public realm of Athboy for all users through enhancing pedestrian movement, exploring new connections and linking amenity spaces. In addition, the street scene should be enhanced by improving the layout, pedestrian crossings and car parking along with protecting the existing trees and vegetation.'

Stakeholders / Partners

The Public Realm Strategy for Athboy sets out an ambitious and practical set of projects for delivery by a range of stakeholders. Projects should be delivered by a range of stakeholders to share the costs and resources required for implementation and ultimately to provide a sense of ownership for all involved. It is recommended that the Public Realm Strategy largely focuses on enhancing the daily experience of people who live and work in Athboy.

Key Stakeholders include Public and Private Sector bodies, Community Groups and Individuals. Depending on the nature and scope of project/projects different stakeholders will need to take the lead in implementing the proposed strategy. In general terms, Meath County Council, in conjunction and collaboration with Kells Municipal District, will take the lead on street and public space projects, whereas community groups, business, property owners and individuals will be responsible for projects relating in/on private property.

Other inputs from Key Stakeholders include, Meath Chamber of Commerce, Fáilte Ireland, Tidy Towns Committee, Community Groups and Private Sector Individuals.

The engagement/agreement of private landowners is critical for the progression of a number of projects.

Funding

Each project will be dependent on funding and approvals, which will involve detailed design and public consultation. Community initiatives and funding opportunities should be actively pursued for the delivery of community led projects.

Project Ireland 2040 is a clear source of funding which supports ambitious and strategic projects which contribute to sustainable Urban/Rural Regeneration and development. Other sources will include

Fáilte Ireland, Rural Regeneration Development Fund and Town and Village renewal schemes. Achieving this new vision for Athboy will not happen overnight, the public realm strategy for Athboy is the first step towards improving the built environment and streetscape in the town centre. The strategy needs to be embraced and implemented to encourage positive change in the town centre. In order for this plan to succeed, close cooperation and coordination is vital between local community groups, the local business community, landowners, the general public, Kells MD and Meath County Council.

Implementing the Plan

The following are the key steps to implementing the Public Realm Plan for Athboy:

1. The Public Realm Plan identifies a number of strategic projects which will have to be developed and delivered in order to achieve full implementation of the plan. These are listed in the table below.
2. Establish a project priority list with funding sources clearly identified and planning approvals in place, where applicable.

Projects	Actions	Partners and Stakeholders	Funding
Main Street Enhancement	<p><u>Reorganisation of on street parking and pedestrian crossing facilities.</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parallel parking on main street to replace echelon parking. 2. Addition of more regular safe crossing points. 3. Resurface footpaths and realigned carriageway. 4. Provision of new wider disabled parking bays. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MCC Transport Department - NTA - Kells MD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Active Travel
	<p><u>A Pedestrian Friendly Environment</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Creation of active forecourts where possible. 2. Removal of street clutter. 3. Resurface and widen footpaths. 4. Enhance links between amenity space and main street. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MCC Depts: Transport, Community, Economic Development - Landowners - Local Business - Tidy Towns - Community Groups - Kells MD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Streetscape Enhancement

	<p>5. Preserve and enhance trees and vegetation in appropriate positions in the town centre.</p>		
	<p><u>Green spaces</u></p> <p>1. Create a pocket space/park including timber benches with arm and backrests.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Landowners - MCC Depts; Community, Projects - Kells MD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Private Investment - Community Amenity Project Scheme
<p>Amenity Improvement;</p> <p>a) The Fairgreen</p> <p>b) Playground</p>	<p><u>a) The Fairgreen</u></p> <p>1. Potential for additional park amenities.</p> <p>2. Provision of timber benches and litter bins at all entrances.</p> <p>3. Resurface paths with timber edging.</p> <p>4. Removal of shrubs blocking pedestrian movements from the entrance.</p> <p>5. Introduce grass strips to all edges of the Fairgreen to create biodiverse green buffers.</p> <p><u>b) Playground</u></p> <p>6. Existing playground to be renovated, improved and better connected to the town centre.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Landowners - Community Groups - Tidy Towns - MCC Depts; Community, Projects - Kells MD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Private Investment
<p><u>Western Masterplan</u> (site behind St. James Church) Has been identified as a preferred position for the relocation of the bus stop.</p>	<p>1. Enhance built environment by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improving pedestrian movement for all users, - Defined parking, - New bus stop with bus shelter, - High quality street trees and greenery, - Relocate clothes/ bottle bank, <p>2. Future development – Proposed for lands north of the bus stop; potential for a new multi-use development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Landowners - Community Groups - MCC Depts; Transport, Economic Development. - NTA - Kells MD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Active Travel - Streetscape Enhancement
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Landowners - MCC Depts; Community, Projects, Economic Development. - Kells MD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Private Investment - RRDF

Conclusion

The success of Athboy Public Realm Plan will require significant buy-in from all stakeholders involved in the town. The number and range of stakeholders have been identified in the above table in order to highlight the level of coordination and collaboration that will be required to implement the plan. Detailed analysis and assessment of the town, together with the views of the people of Athboy, has informed the content of this plan.

Meath County Council, together with Kells Municipal District Staff and Elected Members will be central to the work, but ultimately it will be about the combined efforts of all stakeholders to deliver on this plan for a better Athboy in which to live, work, play and visit.

This implementation plan is a live document and will be updated as the projects are actioned.