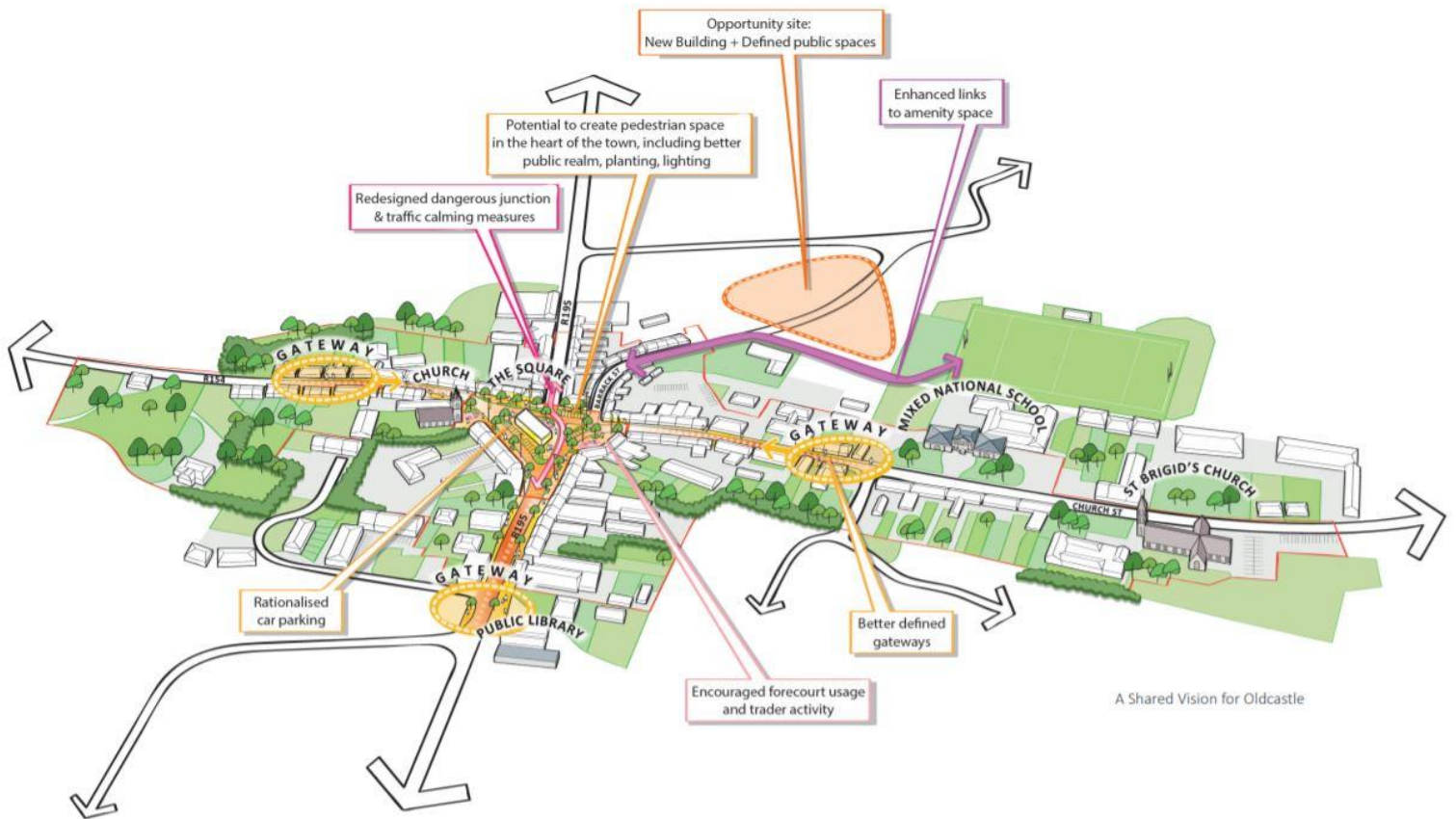


Oldcastle Public Realm Implementation Action Plan Version 1, January 2022



Introduction

The Public Realm Plan for Oldcastle was published in July 2021. Oldcastle is a characterful market town, situated within a large rural catchment. The town functions as a local centre for shoppers, workers and increasingly tourists alike. It is very much a self-sustaining town, with a variety of businesses located in the town. However, the streetscape and open spaces throughout do not match the requirements of the town. There are important benefits to be gained when the public realm is both functional and of good quality.

The town has developed around the traditional 'Town Square' defined by the intersection of two locally important roads which forms the commercial town centre.

The plan vision statement is as follows:

'Improve the public realm in Oldcastle through reorganising the heart of the town and the addition of new public spaces, pedestrian crossings and reorganised parking. Links to open amenity areas, heritage and tourism opportunities should be enhanced and celebrated.'

Stakeholders/ Partners

The public realm plan for Oldcastle sets out an ambitious and practical set of projects. 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 Plan largely focuses on enhancing the daily experience of people who live and work in Oldcastle.

Key Stakeholders include Public and Private Sector Bodies, Community Groups and Individuals. Depending on the nature and scope of a particular project different stakeholders will need to take the lead in implementing the plan. 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 and property owners and individuals will be responsible for projects relating to 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 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 Oldcastle will not happen overnight, the public realm plan for Oldcastle is the first step towards improving the built environment and streetscape in the town centre. The plan needs to be

embraced and implemented to encourage positive change in the town centre. In order for this plan to success, close cooperation and coordination is vital between local community groups, the local business community, landowners, the general public, Kells Municipal District and Meath County Council.

Implementing the Plan

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

1. The Public Realm Plan identifies a number of strategic projects which will have to be developed in order to achieve full implementation of the plan. These are listed in the tables below.
2. Establish a project priority list with funding sources clearly identified and planning approvals in place, where applicable.
3. Recent RRDF funding announcement for Oldcastle Town Centre which provides €854,502 towards public realm upgrades and the Fairgreen area of the town.

<u>Projects</u>	<u>Actions</u>	<u>Partners and Stakeholders</u>	<u>Funding</u>
New Town Square	<u>A Pedestrian Friendly Environment;</u> i. New pedestrian crossings. ii. New and resurfaced pedestrian spaces. iii. Widened pavements for pedestrian movement. iv. Street furniture coordination, to avoid visual clutter. v. New street lighting throughout the town.	- MCC Depts; Transport, Community, Economic Development Projects - Kells MD - Community Groups	- RRDF - Private Investment
	<u>Rationalisation of vehicular movement;</u> i. Reorganised road layout. ii. Introduction of raised tables. iii. Resurfaced access roads to reorganised parking areas. iv. Introduce timed restrictions for parking in town centre	- MCC Transport Department - NTA - Kells MD	- Active Travel Fund - Streetscape Enhancement
	<u>A green and sustainable square;</u> i. New tree planting.	- MCC Depts; Projects, Community,	- RRDF - Town and Village Funding - Private Investment

	ii. Rain gardens along the edge of footpaths.	Economic Development - Kells MD - Community Groups - Tidy Towns - Local Business	- Streetscape Enhancement - Community Funding
Enhanced Pedestrian and Cyclist provisions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Carriageway width narrowed to 7.3 m to redefine the balance between vehicles and pedestrians. 2. Regular crossing points. 3. Removal of some car parking spaces to ensure safe crossing points. 4. Introduction of cycle racks. 	- MCC Transport Department - NTA - Kells MD	- Active Travel Fund - Streetscape Enhancement
Trees and Planting	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preserve and enhance trees and vegetation in appropriate positions in the town. 2. Enhance the visual appearance and user experience of the town through the introduction of street trees and planting. 	- MCC Depts; Projects, Community, Economic Development - Kells MD - Community Groups - Tidy Towns - Local Business	- RRDF - Town and Village Funding - Private Investment - Streetscape Enhancement - Community Funding
Wayfinding and Signage	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Opportunity for a range of signs providing direction, interpretation and information 	- MCC Depts; Projects, Community Economic Development - Kells MD	- RRDF - Private Investment - Streetscape Enhancement

Conclusion

The success of the Oldcastle Public Realm Plan will depend exclusively on the buy-in and ownership taken by all stakeholders involved in the town. The number and range of stakeholders have been identified above in order to highlight the level of coordination and collaboration that will be required to implement the plan. Detailed analysis and assessment of both Oldcastle town centre, together with the views of the people of Oldcastle, has informed the content of the plan.

Meath County Council, together with Kells Municipal District Staff and Elected Members will be central to plan implementation, ultimately it will be about the combined efforts of all stakeholders to implement the plan.

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

