



Comhairle Contae
Laoise | Laois
County Council



MOUNTRATH TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

Project Brief for tendering design teams

Overview

Procurement of an Urban Design led multidisciplinary team to deliver a high-quality visionary upgrade of Mountrath Public Realm to meet the needs of the community of Mountrath including (a) Town Spatial Strategy, (b) Town Centre Design and (c) Part 8 Planning

DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET

Contracting Authority	Laois County Council.
Project Title	Mountrath Town Centre Public Realm Improvement Scheme
Document Title	Brief for the Engagement of Urban Planning led integrated design team
File Name	Mountrath Town Centre PRIS Project Brief.

Rev.	Issue Purpose	Author(s)	Reviewed by	Approved by	Issue Date
T01	Tender	K. Morley			12/08/26

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION.....	6
1.1	APPROVING AUTHORITY.....	9
1.2	SPONSORING AGENCY.....	9
2	PROJECT LOCATIONS, BACKGROUND & PLANNING CONTEXT	9
2.1	LOCATION.....	9
2.2	BACKGROUND	10
2.2.1	MOUNTRATH	10
2.3	PLANNING & POLICY	12
2.3.1	NATIONAL.....	12
2.3.2	TOWN CENTRE FIRST	12
2.3.3	REGIONAL PLANS.....	12
2.3.4	LOCAL PLANS	13
2.4	FUNDING	13
3	PROJECT OBJECTIVES.....	14
3.1	MOUNTRATH.....	14
3.1.1	PROJECT OBJECTIVES	14
3.1.2	MOUNTRATH TOWN CENTRE.....	15
3.1.2.1	Opportunity Sites at Town Centre / Market Square	16
3.2	SCOPE OF SERVICES	20
3.3	DELIVERY.....	20
3.4	DESIGN TEAM.....	20
3.4.1	DUTIES OF DESIGN TEAM MEMBERS	21
3.4.1.1	The Design Team Leader (Urban Designer / Planner)	21
	Urban Designer	23
3.4.1.2	Project Manager	23
3.4.1.3	The Civil/Structural/Environmental Engineer	23
3.4.1.4	Landscape Architect	23
3.4.1.5	The Mechanical & Electrical/Public Lighting Engineer	23
3.4.1.6	Project Supervisor Design Process (PSDP)	23
3.4.1.7	Quantity Surveyor	24
3.4.1.8	Conservation Architect	24
3.4.2	DUTIES OF THIRD-PARTY SPECIALISTS.....	24
3.4.2.1	Archaeologist	24
3.4.2.2	Ecologist	24
3.4.2.3	Traffic Consultant	24
3.5	OVERALL TEAM STRUCTURE	25
3.6	STATUTORY PROCESSES TO DATE.....	26
3.6.1	MOUNTRATH	26

LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL
BRIEF FOR THE ENGAGEMENT OF CONSULTANT FOR
MOUNTRATH TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

3.6.1.1	Planning	26
3.6.1.2	Section 50 Consent, Flood Risk Assessment & Protection Proposals	26
3.6.1.3	Archaeology	26
3.6.1.4	Ecological/Habitats	26
3.6.2	PUBLIC SPENDING CODE	26
3.7	PROGRAMME	27
3.7.1	CONSTRAINTS	27
4	DESIGN REFERENCES	27
4.1	REFERENCES	27
4.1.1	PLANS, STUDIES & REPORTS	28
4.1.1.1	Local	28
4.1.1.2	National	28
4.1.1.3	International	29
4.1.2	EUROPEAN DIRECTIVES	29
4.1.3	NATIONAL LEGISLATION - ACTS	29
4.1.4	OTHER REFERENCES	30
5	TECHNICAL & MANAGEMENT SERVICES	31
5.1	GENERAL DUTIES/ROLE OF THE CONSULTANT & EMPLOYER'S REPRESENTATIVE	31
5.1.1	HEALTH & SAFETY	31
5.1.2	PROJECT MANAGEMENT	31
5.1.3	MEETINGS, COMMUNICATION & PUBLICITY	33
5.1.4	STAKEHOLDERS	34
5.1.5	THIRD PARTY SPECIALISTS, SURVEYS AND INVESTIGATIONS	35
5.2	STAGE (I) TOWN SPATIAL STRATEGY FOR GREATER MOUNTRATH	36
5.3	STAGE (II A) – TOWN CENTRE DESIGN	37
5.4	STAGE (II)B – PART 8 PLANNING AND ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTATION	39
	PLANNING (PART 8)	39
	RRDF (CATEGORY 1) APPLICATION	40
5.4.1	OTHER STATUTORY CONSENTS	40
6	GENERAL	40
6.1	CLIENTS SUPPLIED DOCUMENTS	40
	APPENDIX A	41
	SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS	41

APPENDIX

NOTES

This Project Brief Document should be read in conjunction with all other Request for Tender (RFT) documents.

1. The words Client, Employer and Contracting Authority have been used throughout this and the other RFT documents. These words refer to Laois County Council whether capitalised or not.
2. The words Tenderer, Applicant and Candidate have been used throughout this and the other RFT documents. These words have same meaning whether capitalised or not.
3. Having regard to the service requirements for the project as outlined in the Project Brief Document and all other RFT documents, Applicant's shall include for all service requirements within their proposed fixed sum fee for Stage (i) Town Spatial Strategy, Stage ii (a) Town Centre Design including Order of Magnitude Cost Estimate and Stage (ii b) Statutory Planning and Part 8 Documentation with an updated Order of Magnitude Cost Estimate.
4. Laois County Council intends, following completion of this contract, to publish a separate tender competition for technical services for stages (ii c) to (v). All documentation, reports, drawings, specifications, cost estimates and other documentation prepared by the consultant under this appointment shall be provided to Laois County Council for used in a future tender for the detailed design, tender action and construction stages.
5. Applicants shall note that the Client has outlined in this Project Brief Document that it will cover costs associated with necessary third-party services / surveys / investigations works. Applicants are required to perform all other service requirements and include for same within their proposed fees.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Defined terms in this Notice shall have the meanings as defined herein.

1. All costs incurred by applicants submitting a tender must be borne by the applicants. The Client accepts no liability for these costs, irrespective of the outcome of the Procurement process, or if the Procurement process is postponed or cancelled.
2. Any instruction to commence a project stage or sub-stage is at the discretion of Laois County Council and is budgetary dependent. The client may decide not to proceed with some/all project stages under the appointment.
3. None of the information in this document shall, pending formal execution of a contract, constitute a contract or part of a contract between the Client and any applicant. The Client shall not be obliged to enter into a Contract with any applicant. No legal relationship or other obligation shall arise between any applicant and the Client unless and until a contract has been formally executed in writing by the Client and the appointed consultant and any conditions precedent to the effectiveness of contract documents have been fulfilled.
4. On completion of the Part 8, it is the intention of the Contracting Authority to apply for grant funding to progress the detailed design and construction phases.

1 INTRODUCTION

Laois County Council (LCC) intends to undertake a Public Realm Improvement Scheme in the town of Mountrath. This tender competition relates to the appointment of a Single Service Provider (SSP), Urban Designer / Urban Planning led, Multi-Disciplinary Design Team including Project Supervisor Design Process (PSDP).

The scope of services and outputs to be delivered are summarised as follows:

Project Stage (i): Town Spatial Strategy

This stage shall focus on concept development and consultation with stakeholders and shall also be informed by the existing Sustainable Community Plan for Mountrath – *Our Town, Our Future*. The aim here is not to create another *Town Centre First Plan* or *Sustainable Community Plan* for Mountrath, but rather to build on the information contained in existing plans. This project stage shall include a workshop with the Mountrath Town Team, representatives of LCC and other relevant stakeholders to inform a High-level Spatial Strategy Map/Drawing of the town of Mountrath.

The objective at this stage is to create an informed spatial representation of how Mountrath Town and Mountrath Town Centre should function into the future. The High-level Spatial Strategy Drawing shall illustrate inter alia:

- Spatial structure and hierarchy for the entire town of Mountrath
- Movement routes and connections
- Key public realm framework
- Consideration of “Opportunity Sites” which have been identified by LCC in the town centre in Figure 1 on page 7.
- Creation of additional linkages from Main Street to the river walk.

On the completion of this stage, the focus of the scheme will then narrow to the Town Centre as set out in Figure 1 on page 7 of this tender brief.

Stage (ii) a: Town Centre Design

On completion of Stage (i), the key town centre spaces (within the site boundary detailed in Figure 1 on page 7) shall be selected for further design at 1:500 scale. As part of this process, preliminary designs shall be developed for consideration by the Town Team and Laois County Council. This design shall include details such as:

- Tree planting and soft landscape structure.
- Street furniture and public realm elements.
- Surface treatments and spatial definition.

A selection of reference images will be required to illustrate design intent and character.

Once the preliminary drawings are prepared and the nature and extent of the general proposed works are agreed in principle with LCC, the Project Quantity Surveyor will review the proposals and provide an Order of Magnitude Cost Estimate to the Contracting Authority (CA). Following an assessment of these costs by the CA, a Value Engineering exercise may be required and amendments, where necessary, made to the initial design proposal. Once the preliminary design and associated costs are aligned and finalised, CGI/photorealistic visuals will be prepared (3 no.).

Stage (ii) b: Developed Design and Planning including preparation of Part 8 Planning pack.

On completion of Stage (ii a), the appointed consultant shall prepare Part 8 documentation including drawings and reports. Photorealistic visuals (3 no.) will also be required to accompany the Part 8 reports for public consultation. A public meeting will be required in Mountrath during the statutory public consultation period.

The consultant shall, in consultation with Laois County Council, prepare an application for grant funding for the next call of the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (Category 1) (RRDF). The timing of this application will be dependent on any future call for funding applications from the Department of Rural Community Development and the Gaeltacht.

Scheme Aims and Objectives

Mountrath Public Realm Improvement Scheme aims to transform and lead the regeneration of Mountrath Town Centre. The key pillars of the project include ensuring quality, safety, sustainability, connectivity, active travel, biodiversity, climate resilience and inclusivity in the historic town through high-quality public realm design. The project also aims to drive the local economy and foster tourism.

The Mountrath Public Realm Improvement scheme aims to reorient the town from private vehicle domination and towards pedestrian priority and active travel connectivity. Improved public spaces and footpaths will promote active travel through a more inclusive and safer urban realm. The scheme seeks to reinvigorate Mountrath's town centre while acknowledging its cultural heritage and the unique architectural value that defines its urban character. Where feasible, new urban greening measures will be integrated throughout the scheme, including significant nature-based solutions (NBS) infrastructure. Aims of the scheme include the following:

- Reallocate road space where possible, to increase the level of walking cycling and public transport.
- Expand, enhance and upgrade public realm and green space.
- Create a multifunctional civic space with provision for covered seating, complemented by high-quality public realm improvements.
- Improve connectivity and accessibility for all ages and abilities.
- Creation of additional linkages between Main Street and the River Walk.
- Simplify signage, reduce clutter, and integrate public lighting
- Support biodiversity with trees, planting and SUDS.

The design which will be developed by the appointed consultant will be cognisant of the following guiding principles:

The People's Town

A vibrant town centre and public realm that meets the needs of those who live and work in it and those who visit including the provision of community civic space(s) in the town.

Urban Design – Smart Design

A public realm based on urban design principles that are distinctive and authentic.

A Future for Our Heritage

A public realm that not only embraces its unique heritage but promotes this heritage as a tourism asset.

The Connected Place

A Town Centre and public realm that is accessible and pedestrian friendly.

Sustainability

The assessment of the social, economic and environmental impacts of any intervention is essential as a guiding principle.

1. **Mountrath Town Centre – Site Extent (Outlined in red below):**

Main Street / Church Street from the junction at Hurler's Lane, southwards to the Market Square. Market Square, Bridge Street (including the bridge itself) and Patrick Street to the entrance to Bloom HQ and St. Fintan's Church. Link Road from Bridge Street to Shannon Street. Shannon Street (R430) from the Link Road junction to the Market Square.

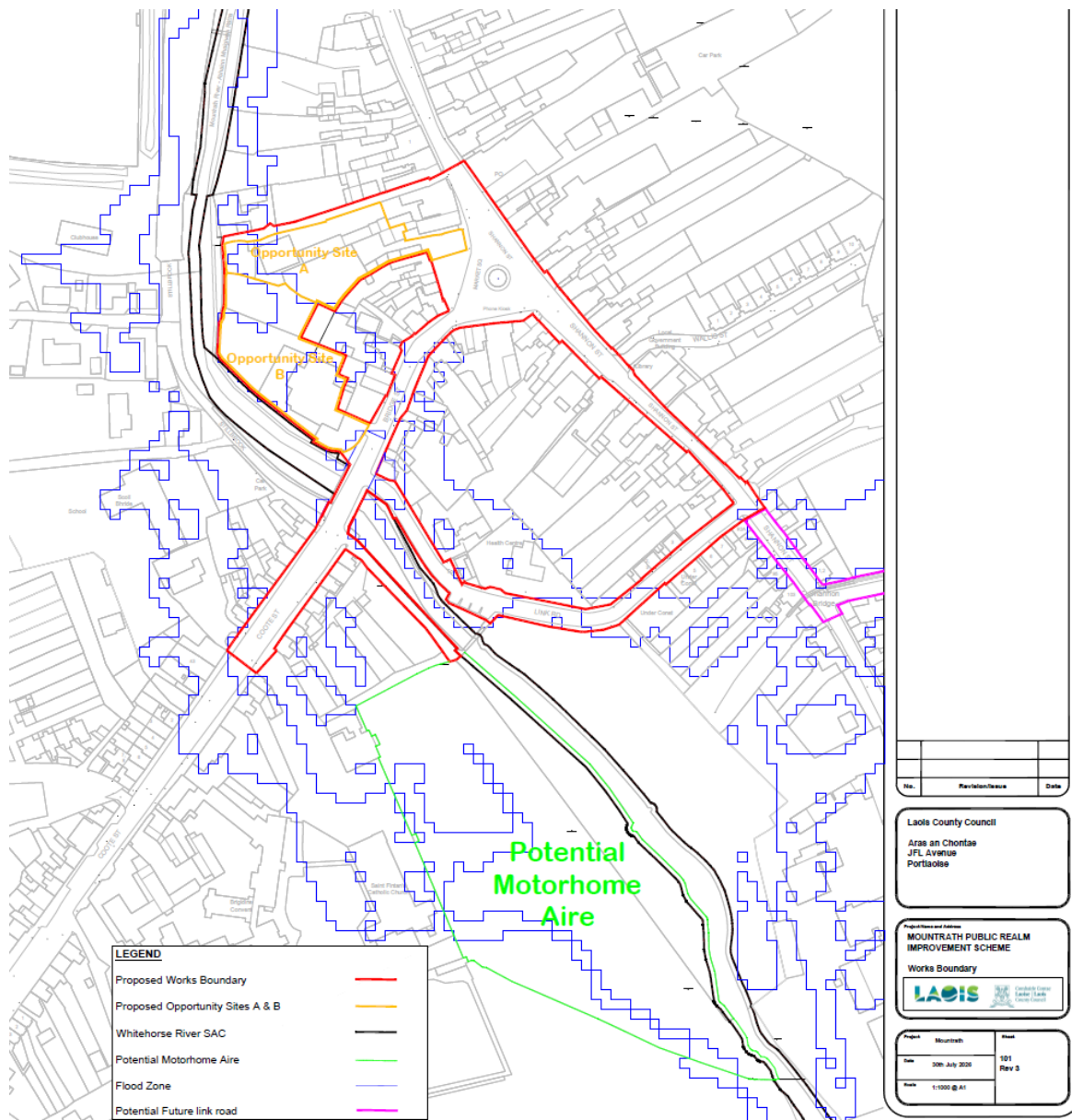


Figure 1 - Mountrath Town Centre

The site extent includes 'opportunity sites' (outlined in yellow in Figure 1) which shall be examined for possible use for housing, public realm, civic space, public amenity etc. It is an objective of Laois County

Council to reduce traffic volume through the town centre, particularly heavy goods vehicles. This objective is not included in the scope of works proposed by this brief however the appointed consultant should, in the preparation of design proposals, be cognoscente of this objective.

1.1 APPROVING AUTHORITY

At the time of publication of this tender, funding beyond stage (ii b) Scheme Design and Part 8 Planning, is not available. Project stages beyond Part 8 planning will be the subject of a separate tender competition and will be dependent on a successful application for grant funding. The consultant will, under this appointment and in consultation with Laois County Council, complete an application for Category 1 grant funding from the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF).

1.2 SPONSORING AGENCY

Laois County Council

2 PROJECT LOCATIONS, BACKGROUND & PLANNING CONTEXT

2.1 LOCATION



Figure 2: Mountrath

Mountrath is located at the foot of the Slieve Blooms on what was once the N7 Dublin-Limerick Road, now the R445, approximately 14 kms southwest of Portlaoise and 8 kms from Junction 18 on the M7/M8 motorway network. The town is midway between Dublin and Limerick, being 96km from both cities and was bypassed by the M7 motorway in 2010, leading to a significant easing of traffic congestion in the town.

2.2 BACKGROUND

2.2.1 Mountrath

Meaning Moin Ratha (Bog of the Fort), Mountrath is classified by the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027 as a Self-Sustaining Town. Self-Sustaining Towns are so designated, because they are important urban centres within their hinterlands, providing community and infrastructural facilities and services and the population base to maintain them. These towns perform important retail, residential, service and amenity functions for local, essentially rural hinterland and support the upper tiers of the urban hierarchy, including the key towns. Many of these towns have experienced high levels of population growth over the last census period, in some cases without the necessary supporting services. The population of Mountrath as per the 2022 Census is 2,070 which indicates a growth of 16.7% between 2016 and 2022. The development of these towns needs to be increasingly aimed at consolidating growth within the Self-sustaining Towns and better matching it to the development of social and physical infrastructure.

With its central location and good connectivity, the town has an important role to play in supporting the objectives set out in the National Planning Framework, County Development Plan and Mountrath Settlement Plan.

Mountrath has a compact urban form, largely influenced by the Mountrath River, flowing in a northwest to southeast trajectory, and the local road network. The layout of the town has changed little over time, retaining its original relationship with the river and features such as the Market Square. Other historic references, such as the churches and the ruins of the old foundry remain, bearing evidence of the town's historical significance and historic past. Typically, the town is urban in character with the majority of 2 and 3 storey buildings fronting directly onto the Main Street, one building deep. Mountrath's buildings are diverse in age, height, roof profiles and elevational treatments. This diversity is particularly notable within Market Square and diverging streets. Many of the building that line Main Street and Market Square are Protected Structures. These buildings are of considerable architectural merit and the planned design of the Market Square provides Mountrath with its most distinguishing feature.

Residential areas have development along the approach roads into the town, most notably along the R430 (Abbeyleix Rd) where many higher density developments have taken place. Mountrath also had a significant religious function where the Brigidine Convent located on the Castletown Rd in the early 19th Century, followed by the establishment of the Catholic Church, St Frances. Today the convent has a community and enterprise function where Bloom HQ has been located. The town has good green amenity areas, a river walk and playground facilities and is developing Youth Space on the Castletown Road. It is an aim of this scheme to develop and improve connectivity to local amenities including the river walk.

Like many towns in Ireland, Mountrath is facing many challenges including 'hollowing out' of functions and businesses in the town centre. As a result, in recent years there has been an increase in the prominence of derelict buildings within the town centre. Coupled with this the town centre is not pedestrian friendly and there is a visual dominance of parked cars. There is also a lack of civic community space in the town centre. Sections of the existing footpath are also in disrepair. Such conditions have necessitated the need for an improved public realm.

There is significant potential for the town centre to increase its residential population and foster compact development which will have benefits in terms of environmental and climate resilience. An improved public realm will enable and support compact urban growth in Mountrath, encouraging and enabling town centre living and redevelopment, which in turn is economically viable, deepens the sense of community and delivers enjoyable places for people where they want to live work and socialise. Laois County Council has identified lands in Zone 1 (Town Centre) which will be considered for future development. As part of the brief, the appointed design team will undertake an assessment and feasibility and design study of possible route options for accessing these lands. An assessment of accessibility to riverside lands which are located south of bridge street and adjacent to St. Fintan's Church is also required as part of this brief (Zone 2).

Mountrath is well-served by way of social infrastructure. The town has three primary schools Clonenagh NS, Scoil Bhride and St Fintan's (both DEIS Schools) and a community secondary school. A creche and playschool service are also located in the town.

Mountrath has a healthy community ethic which is displayed through the work of groups such as Mountrath Development Association and the Mountrath Tidy Towns Committee which both foster social inclusion through community consultation. Mountrath Town Team was established in April 2023 and includes representatives from all main community groups in the town. The town team will be a significant stakeholder in this project.

There are several community facilities including St Fintan's Hall, Macra Hall, Clonenagh Parish Hall and a designated youth centre 'Mountrath Youth Creative Space' on the Castletown Road which accommodates Mountrath Youth Theatre in addition to a public library.

Public recreational space is found at the St Fintan's GAA Club and St Aengus FC. Mountrath Golf Club to the southeast provides a valuable amenity for its members. In terms of amenity space, Mountrath is located in the foothills of the Slieve Blooms, an area rich in ecology and wildlife and popular for walking and hiking and mountain biking. The town lies on one of the main access routes from the M7 which offers significant tourism potential associated with a variety of natural amenities.

Mountrath Amenity Park includes a playground and outdoor gym and is located adjacent to the Mountrath River which is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and joins the river Nore south of the town between Castletown and Kilbricken.

Several pedestrian linkages connect the river walk with the Main Street including the Quaker graveyard and narrow laneways. The river walk was recently extended to include a Slí na Sláinte and community orchard and outdoor classroom. It is an objective of Laois County Council, to improve connectivity to the river walk by creating a new link from the town square. The lands required for this link may also be developed by Laois County Council for town centre housing in the future.

It is also an objective of Laois County Council to improve and develop the town square by redesigning the existing junction of Church Street / Bridge Street / Shannon Street, removal of the existing roundabout, undergrounding of overhead services and the introduction of a high-quality public realm. The existing design of the intersection of Main Street / Bridge Street / Market Square shall be reviewed and if appropriate, amended to provide an improved public realm and vehicular movement.

Urban Design and Planning

Roads, Traffic & Parking Issues:

- Vehicle focused road design and carriageway widths, creating an unattractive urban environment.
- Vehicle dominated public spaces with a hostile environment for pedestrians, particularly vulnerable users.
- Lack of universal access throughout the town.
- Revised junction layout required at the town square to provide optimal operation for traffic flow and safety.
- Dominance of Heavy Goods Vehicles on the road network. Revised traffic management plan to be considered to alleviate pressures on the thoroughfare through the town.

Footpaths:

- Inadequate footpath widths for the high volume of pedestrian traffic, cluttered public space and footpaths due to poorly designed street furniture and overhead services.

Accessibility & Vulnerable Users:

- Clutter including signage, bins, bollards, planters, lighting standards, etc. create physical barriers for pedestrians.
- Inconsistent signage making way-finding difficult within the town.
- Inconsistent lighting throughout the town.
- Introduction of active travel measures and improved connectivity throughout the town.

Streetscape:

- Inconsistent lighting typologies.
- High volumes of overhead services.
- Poor legibility of heritage monuments and the unique townscape.
- Inadequate social spaces / community civic spaces to facilitate gatherings and establish a people-focused town centre.
- Consideration to be given to the installation of lighting on Patrick Street Bridge and the introduction of bridge railings to expand the eyeline of the river.

Landscape:

- Lack of urban greening within the town.
- Absence of Sustainable Urban Drainage Solutions / Nature Based Solutions.

2.3 PLANNING & POLICY

The planning context is determined by a hierarchy of plans which range from national to local scale. Below are set out the key policy documents:

2.3.1 National

Project Ireland 2040:

The national plan contains two key plans: 'the National Planning Framework' and the 'National Development Plan Framework' which, in tandem, set out infrastructural and regional development priorities for the country. Across the two plans, it is sought to achieve ten strategic outcomes, building around the overarching themes of wellbeing, equality, and opportunity. It is recognised, within the NPF that three quarters of new growth in Ireland will be outside Dublin, with 50% of the projected population growth planned for our towns, villages, and rural areas.

2.3.2 Town Centre First

The Town Centre First Policy, launched on 4 February 2022, is a major cross-government policy that aims to tackle vacancy, combat dereliction, and breathe new life into our town centres. It advocates for a holistic, place-based approach to sustainable rural development. Irish towns are facing significant challenges and opportunities that require a coordinated and comprehensive response.

Town Centre First (TCF) recognises that every town is unique, and the policy will facilitate the 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.

2.3.3 Regional Plans

Regional Spatial Economic Strategy

Mountrath is identified in the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly (EMRA) Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) as a Self-Sustaining Town. Within the context of the RSES and the associated Laois County Development Plan 2021–2027, the following key points are noted regarding Mountrath:

- **Town Classification:** It is classified as a town with high levels of population growth and a weak employment base, which is reliant on other areas for employment and services.
- **Targeted Growth:** The RSES supports balanced regional development in the Midlands and encourages targeted "catch-up" investment to make the town more self-sustaining.
- **Strategic Location:** Mountrath is recognized for being strategically located along major transport corridors.
- **Development Focus:** The strategy emphasizes compact growth, directing future residential development (such as on Shannon Road) toward existing serviced settlements to reduce car dependency.

Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly (EMRA) Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) <https://www.emra.ie/rses/>

Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027

<https://consult.laois.ie/en/consultation/laois-county-development-plan-2021-2027>

Settlement Strategy:

<https://laois.ie/sites/default/files/2024-09/Volume-2-Settlement-Strategy-of-Adopted-LCDP-2021-2027.pdf>

Maps of Mountrath:

<https://laois.ie/sites/default/files/2024-09/Map-4.3-A-Mountrath-1.pdf>

<https://laois.ie/sites/default/files/2024-09/Map-4.3-B-Mountrath-2.pdf>

2.3.4 Local Plans

Reimagine Mountrath – A Sustainable Community Plan

Launched in April 2023, "Reimagine Mountrath: A Sustainable Community Plan.

<https://laois.ie/sites/default/files/2024-10/Sustainable%20Community%20Plan%20for%20Mountrath.pdf>

Mountrath Biodiversity Action Plan 2021 - 2025

This Biodiversity Action Plan aims to guide the local community and stakeholders in their efforts to protect and restore some of this natural heritage and maximise the benefits that nature can provide for the people of Mountrath.

[Mountrath-Biodiversity-Action-Plan-2021-to-2025.pdf](https://laois.ie/sites/default/files/2024-10/Mountrath-Biodiversity-Action-Plan-2021-to-2025.pdf)

Mountrath Landscape Plan 2023 – A copy of this plan is supplied as part of the tender documents as background information.

2.4 FUNDING

Project stages (i) *Town Spatial Strategy*, (ii a) Town Centre Design, and (ii b) Developed Design and Part 8 planning process, are being funded by Laois County Council. This will enable these stages to commence promptly following the appointment of the lead consultant.

LCC intends to apply for appropriate grant funding (e.g. RRDF Category 1 Funding) to progress subsequent project stages.

Following an announcement from the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht (DRCDG) regarding the next call of Category 1 RRDF Funding, the appointed design team will complete (in consultation with LCC) an application for RRDF grant funding. A completed grant application is a deliverable/output under this appointment.

The grant application will seek funding for the following project stages: Detailed Design and Tender Documentation, Tender Action and Contract Award, Construction and Handover.

LCC will, at the appropriate time and subject to the availability of funding, publish a separate tender for technical services relating to project stages (iii) to (v).

3 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

3.1 MOUNTRATH

Laois County Council is committed to designing and implementing a high-quality public realm improvement scheme for Mountrath whilst also unlocking the town's potential housing, economic and tourism opportunities. A quality public realm will integrate the town centre with the River Walk, Bloom HQ, St. Fintan's Church, the amenity park on the Link Road, Cottage/Farmer's Market, Town schools and proposed tourism facilities (for example a possible new motor home Aire at the Mountrath river adjacent to Bloom HQ) creating an integrated network of high-quality public amenities and tourism destinations.

3.1.1 Project Objectives

Enhanced Town Centre - Create an enhanced environment for people living, working, and visiting the town through housing and public realm enhancements with an overall aim to encourage and stimulate economic growth. This will be achieved by providing a robust town centre strategy which will seek to consolidate and strengthen the core area. As more residents live distant from the core, private vehicles are used as a primary means of transport. The increase in vehicles and associated car parking has dominated the public realm and contributed to increased dereliction and a utilitarian appearance when compared to its historical impact.

Improved Pedestrian facilities - Create multi-functional streets that balance movement and place and provide safety for all within a traffic calmed environment.

Connected Amenity Destinations - Maximise connectivity to existing amenities and assets with a particular focus on pedestrian linkages to the River Walk. Integrate main street, lanes, heritage sites and attractions into an orientation plan to encourage visitors to explore the town centre. Wayfinding needs to be erected in the existing public car parks, to entice exploration of the town's amenities.

Promote the heritage and tourism assets of the town particularly through an interactive and animated Public Realm which would aim to establish/enhance an image and identity for Mountrath that is distinctive and authentic.

Town greening opportunities – enhance landscape quality and positive 'sense of place' which improves the presentation of the town.

Dereliction – Seek and encourage redevelopment of vacant and derelict sites which could be repurposed for commercial, social, tourism or residential use.

While the project will concentrate, in the main, on Mountrath Town Centre the project design should be developed to provide an integrated coherent relationship between the centre and adjoining streets/lanes etc. The project design will also preserve the essential character of Mountrath town. Further details on the scheme themes and objectives are set out in Section 3 below.

Mountrath Town has protected structures and other unique features / spaces / buildings. It is important therefore to put a particular emphasis on these in terms of design and interpretation. The integrated design team shall include a Conservation architect to advise regarding any constraints and considerations relating to existing structures located within the project zones.

3.1.2 Mountrath Town Centre

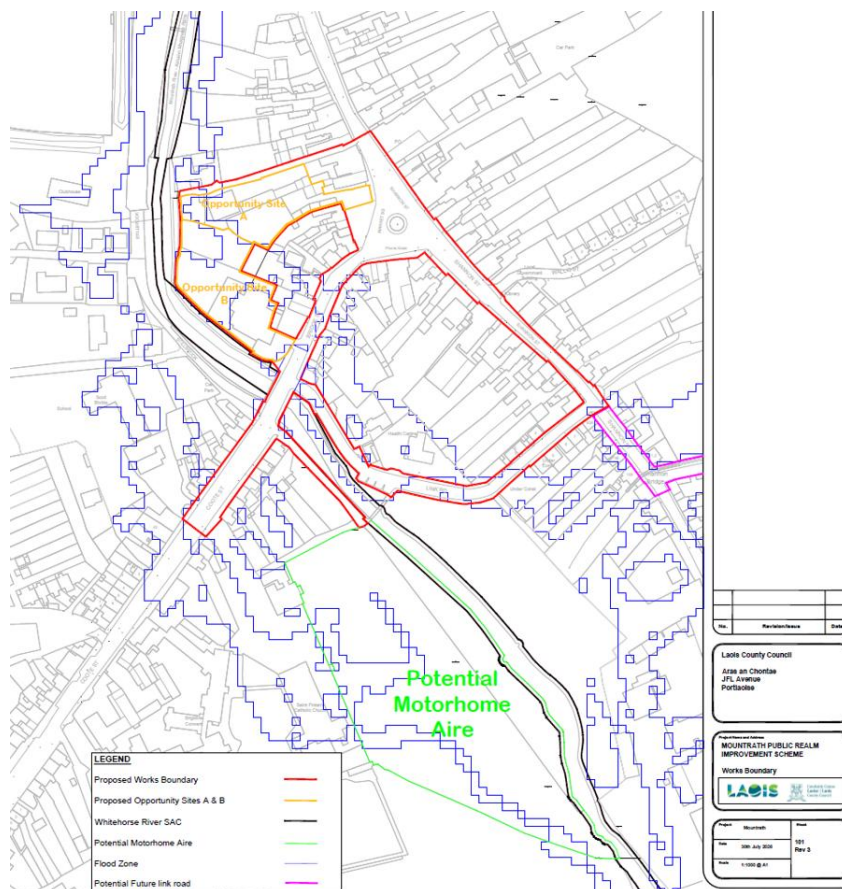


Figure 3: Mountrath Town Centre

Streetscape improvement works which would include:

- Creation of a Civic plaza to accommodate community events and gatherings.
- Enhancement of access to the river walk. This may include the provision of a new pedestrian link from Market Square to the river via an “opportunity Site” which has been identified by Laois County Council.
- Improvement of visibility of the Whitehorse River.
- Additional linkages between Main Street / Town Centre and the River Walk.
- Upgrading (where appropriate) of road, kerbs and footpaths.
- New public lighting
- Undergrounding of services where feasible.
- New planting of appropriate tree species and/or planters
- Simplify and declutter streetscape including obtrusive street furniture and signage.
- New street furniture installed to specific and consistent design code.
- Wayfinding - enhance wayfinding throughout the town centre through the delivery of a coherent and high-quality signage system.
- Alterations to the existing bridge over the Mountrath river to enhance visual amenity and the public realm. Appropriate lighting of this area shall also be considered.
- Consideration of uses for, and the integration of, the opportunity sites outlined in yellow in the Fig 3 above.

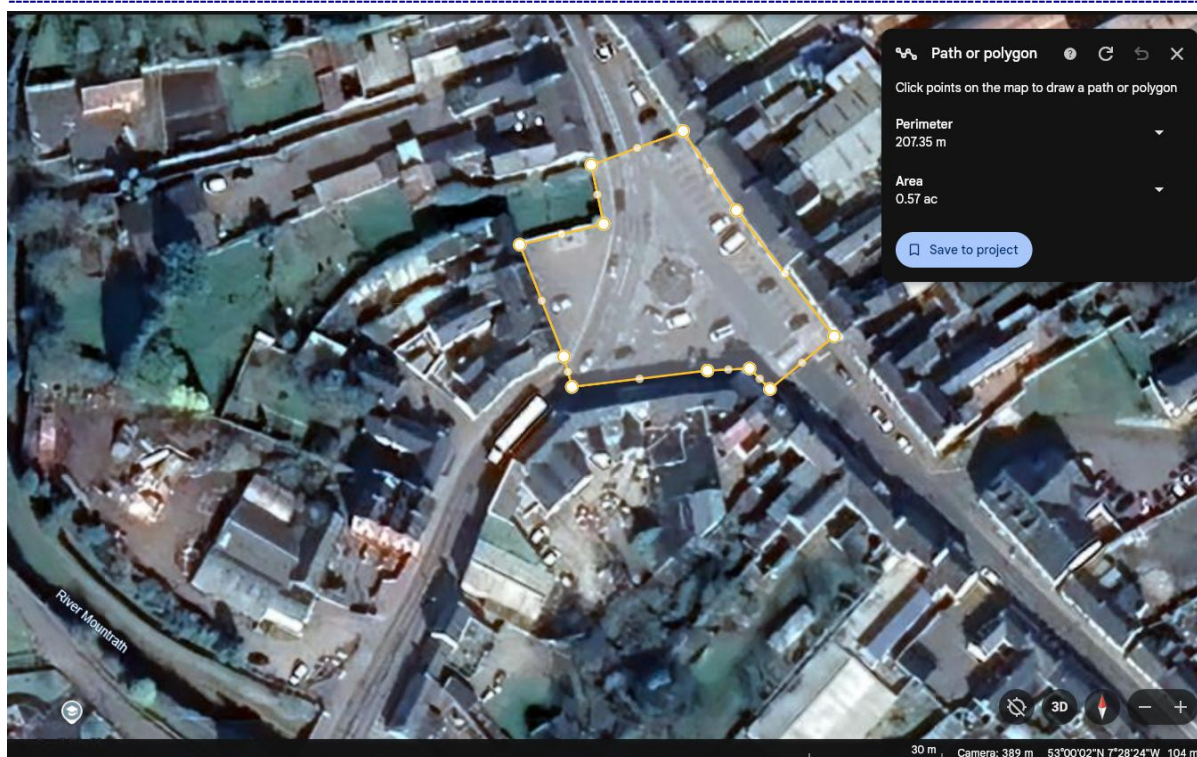


Figure 4 – Market Square

Streetscape improvement works at Market Square may include but not be limited to:

- New high-quality paving with a continuation of paving materials into parking bays at certain locations to be confirmed by consultant.
- Consideration to be given to redesign of traffic flow at the junction of Main Street / Market Square / Shandon Street including the removal of the existing roundabout.
- In conjunction with the junction redesign, provision of a new pedestrianised area including covered canopy structure.
- New public lighting.
- Undergrounding of services where feasible.
- New planting of appropriate tree species.
- Introduction of SUDS / NBS.
- Simplify and declutter streetscape including obtrusive street furniture and signage.
- New street furniture installed to specific and consistent design code.

Note: It is an objective of Laois County Council to reduce the volume of traffic passing through Mountrath Town Centre, and particularly the volume of heavy goods vehicles / articulated trucks. Drawing Nr. 100 of the tender pack includes an indicative route for an inner relief road (outlined in purple). The development of a relief route / link road is not a requirement of this project brief however the appointed consultant, when developing design proposals, shall be cognoscente of this objective.

3.1.2.1 Opportunity Sites at Town Centre / Market Square

Laois County Council considers that derelict and vacant lands located between Main Street and the river (see images below) could be developed for several uses including a possible river link / greenway. The appointed design team will be required to liaise with LCC regarding the uses for these sites together with vehicular and pedestrian accessibility requirements. The appointed design team will be required to undertake an assessment and feasibility study of possible vehicular and pedestrian access routes from main street to the site and to advise Laois County Council on a preferred option.

Project Theme and Objective: Connectivity, Public Realm & Housing Stock

Opportunity sites to facilitate connectivity between Market Square and the River Walk, which may also be developed for housing and other uses.

Public Realm improvement works may include but not be limited to:

- Creation of a pedestrian link between Market Square and the river walk using high-quality paving and lighting.
- Provision of Town Centre residences.
- Landscaping including planting of appropriate tree species and/or planters.
- Provision of public seating
- New furniture installed to specific and consistent design code.
- Identification and feasibility assessment of options for vehicular access to the lands.

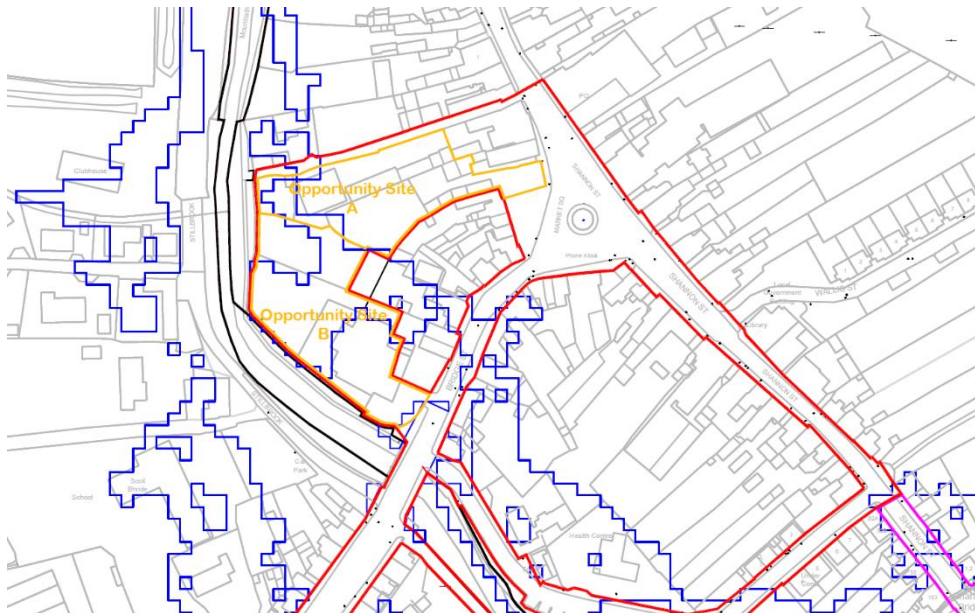


Figure 7. Boundary of opportunity sites is shown in yellow.

The appointed consultant shall investigate, assess and present options for vehicular and pedestrian access to the opportunity sites which have been identified for possible development (Opportunity Site A above). In this regard, Laois County Council has identified a riverside site adjacent to the bridge (Opportunity Site B) which shall be examined as a possible access route to the lands located further north / upstream. Opportunity Site B may also be suitable for other uses for example carparking and/or public realm.

1. Opportunity Site B known as The Old Mill / Foundry (figure 8 below)



Figure 8 – Vehicular Access Option No. 1 – Old Mill/Foundry site which may be developed to facilitate the construction of a new access road and to provide alternative Town Centre car parking.

2. Hurler's Lane between Main Street and the River Walk (see image below)



Figure 9 – Access Option No. 2 Existing Laneway between Main Street and the River Walk. Objective to enhancement of the existing Bridge at Mountrath River.

Redesign of the existing bridge wall to provide improved visual amenity of the river. Consideration to be given to the incorporation of railings and appropriate lighting at the bridge (subject to ecological considerations and any other possible constraints)

Connectivity to Opportunity Site which has been identified for possible development.

As part of the design considerations, the appointed consultant shall also include proposals for the improvement of connectivity between Bridge Street and the riverbank opportunity site which is located south / downstream of the bridge. (outlined in yellow below)



Figure 12 – Opportunity Site identified for possible tourist development. Connectivity from Bridge Street to this land shall be considered as part of this brief and presented in the Part 8.

Link Road / Shannon Street.

For the purposes of this brief, the Town Centre also includes the Link Road from Bridge Street to Shannon Street and Shannon Street from the junction with the Link Road to Market Square. This section of public realm is considered 'Town Centre' and provides access to the existing Amenity Park and the river. There are also public toilets located on the link road.

Award Criteria – Cost element.

As a guide for tenderers, the Contracting Authority estimates that the capital value of the project may be in the region of €7,000,000.

Stage (i) *Town Spatial Strategy* (ii a) *Town Centre Design* and (ii b) *Developed Design and Planning including Part 8 documents* shall be priced on a fixed price lump sum basis.

The completion by the appointed consultant of an application for RRDF Funding shall also be priced on a fixed price lump sum basis. A separate item has been included in the pricing document for this work.

See Pricing Document for further information.

3.2 SCOPE OF SERVICES

Laois County Council wishes to appoint a Single Service Provider (SSP), to provide an Urban Design / Urban Planning Led Multi-Disciplinary Design Team including PSDP for Mountrath Town Centre Public Realm Improvement Scheme. Stages (i), (ii a) and (ii b).

Stage (i) Preliminary Stage and Town Spatial Strategy, consultation and concept development.

Stage (ii a) Town Centre Design, Order of Magnitude Cost Estimate

Stage (ii b) Developed Design and Planning including Part 8 documentation and in due course, preparation of the application for RRDF Category 1 funding.

The design team will as part of the Stage (ii a) and (ii b) deliverables, provide Laois County Council with construction cost estimates which will enable the County Council to then apply for grant funding for stages (ii c) *Detailed Design and Tender Documentation*, (iii) *Tender Action and Contract Award*, (iv) *Construction* and (v) *Handover*.

3.3 DELIVERY

On appointment of the SSP, LCC expects to promptly commence the project.

The lead consultant shall be an Urban Designer / Urban Planner and will be required to lead and manage a multi-disciplinary team to deliver the project. The SSP will be responsible delivering a high-quality public realm design, design coordination; public engagement; workshopping and consultation with key stakeholders. Public and stakeholder consultation shall form a significant element of the initial project stages.

3.4 DESIGN TEAM

LCC will enter into a contract with a Single Service Provider (SSP) for this project. The SSP may where appropriate, enter into a sub consultancy agreement with the other consultants in order to deliver the full scope of services and deliverables required by this brief.

The Lead Consultant (Urban Designer / Planner) for the project shall have experience in public realm, road design and urban design-focused projects.

The appointed Multidisciplinary Design Team shall have the relevant expertise to successfully deliver the brief and scheme objectives and will provide all necessary consultancy services for the performance of the service described in the brief. The team must be experienced in implementing public realm schemes using sustainable methods and materials. The team must be dynamic, innovative, and progressive in their approach to consultation with stakeholders and public realm design.

In addition to the services denoted in the Schedule of Services the design team must include a specialist consulting engineer to assess transportation, active travel, Nature Based Solutions, and mobility options and must also include an Environmental Engineer as part of the overall team.

LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL
BRIEF FOR THE ENGAGEMENT OF CONSULTANT FOR
MOUNTRATH TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

The multi-disciplinary team for this project requires, as a minimum, the following design team disciplines and experience:

	Consultant	Key Expertise Required	Years Experience Required (minimum)
1	Lead Urban Designer/ Planner (Project Director)	Urban Design; Hard Landscaping; Urban Greening; SUDS & NBS Landscape Design Expertise; Gender-Sensitive Design; Climate Mitigation; Public Engagement / Public Consultation Processes. Urban Planner.	Masters (level 9) degree in Regional and Urban Planning / Urban design / Planning and Development. Min. 10 years post-graduate experience
2	Landscape Architect	Urban Design Urban Greening, SUDS & NBS Landscape Design Expertise	Min. 10 years post-graduate experience
3	Civil Engineer	DMURS, Urban Design, Road Junction Design, Urban Greening, flooding, SUDS & NBS. Senior Civil Engineer	Min. 10 years post-graduate experience
4	Quantity Surveyor	Cost Estimates, Value Engineering	Min. 10 years post-graduate experience
5	Project Supervisor Design Stage (PSDP)	Health & Safety	Min. 10 years post-graduate experience
6	Licensed Archaeologist	Responsible for surveys, investigations	Min. Grade II with min 5 years post-graduate experience
7	Mechanical & Electrical/ Public Lighting Engineer	Lighting, Underground Service Planning	Min. 5 years post-graduate experience
8	Conservation Architect	RIAI Grade 3 Conservation Accreditation or equivalent. Advise and inform re any constraints associated with structures which are of architectural / heritage / historic significance.	Min. 5 years post-graduate experience
9	Ecologist	BSc. In Ecology (Ecology & Environmental Biology / Environmental Science with Ecology) or equivalent environmental sciences, with demonstrable experience in ecology, including the membership of CIEEM or equivalent organization.	Min. 5 years post graduate experience in working on urban or public realm projects – with experience in working closely with design teams, landscape architects etc. in the design and implementation of measure for identifying opportunities of biodiversity gain, and enhancement of green corridors.

3.4.1 Duties of Design Team Members

3.4.1.1 The Design Team Leader (Urban Designer / Planner)

The Design Team Lead shall be an Urban Designer / Urban Planner who shall be responsible for the scheme development, Spatial strategy, Town Centre Design, Part 8 Planning. The project lead shall ensure that the design is functional, and all aspects of the design are aesthetically pleasing, incorporating the specialist input provided by the Design Team.

The Design Team Leader will ensure with all reasonable skill and care that all information relevant to the roles of each member of the design team is conveyed to them in sufficient time to allow them carry out their services on the project.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of services which the consultant will be required to undertake on behalf of LCC:

1. Review all existing background information in relation to the project.
2. Advise as to the extent of all surveys required for the completion of the design of the works. Laois County Council has recently (2025) undertaken Topographical, Underground Utility, Parking and Ecological Surveys in Mountrath and these reports are provided with the tender documents. It is notable that an area adjacent to the Mountrath River is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

3. Advise LCC regarding any other additional surveys required for the design. The Consultant shall administer the procurement, appointment and management of any additional consultants/specialists/contractors involved in these surveys.
4. Liaise with Laois County Council Roads, Housing and Town Regeneration departments and Mountrath Town Team in relation to the preliminary and developed scheme design. An in-person 'kick-off' meeting / workshop will be required between the Design Team and Senior Management of Laois County Council at the beginning of Project Stage (i) *Preliminary Stage and Town Spatial Strategy, consultation and concept development*. This meeting will occur at Áras an Chontae, JFL Ave., Portlaoise, Co. Laois R32 EHP9.
5. An in person public event / consultation will be held in Mountrath as part of Stage (i).
6. A remote (Microsoft Teams) progress meeting will occur between the Consultant and Laois County Council's project management team at the end of Stage (i) to review the stage and to agree on how Stage (ii a) should proceed.
7. A remote (MS Teams) meeting will occur between the consultant and LCC's project management team during Stage (ii a) *Town Centre Design, Order of Magnitude Cost Estimate*.
8. Stage (ii b) *Developed Design and Planning including Part 8 documentation*. In advance of finalising the Part 8 design, the design team shall meet with LCC's project team Áras an Chontae, JFL Ave., Portlaoise, Co. Laois R32 EHP9 to review the Part 8 design and associated cost estimate. On the same day, the Design Team will present (in person at County Hall) the Draft Part 8 Developed design to the elected members and then to the Mountrath Town Team. Following these 3 in person meetings, the design team may, if required, and in consultation with LCC, make amendments to the design prior to proceeding to Part 8.
9. Complete the designs and associated Order of Magnitude costings and, where required by the Contracting Authority and if required, undertake a Value Engineering exercise in consultation with Laois County Council.
10. Provide LCC with 3D CGI drawings and virtual reality tour of the developed design Stage (ii a) along with a virtual reality tour of the town encompassing the proposals. Allow a total of 3 CGI images.
11. Manage all statutory processes including Part 8 Planning.
12. The consultant will be required to attend 2 In Person Public Meetings. One as part of the preliminary design stage (i) and a second public meeting as part of the Part 8 planning process (Stage ii b). These meetings are in addition to the meeting with LCC's project management team which are detailed in the items above.
13. Prepare budget construction cost estimates at end Stages (ii a) and (ii b) following completion of the Part 8 process,
14. Complete the Part 8 design for the scheme including public realm.
15. Prepare an application for RRDF Category 1 Funding in consultation with Laois County Council. The application will be based on the final/adopted Part 8 design. The RRDF Application shall include updated cost estimates.
16. Provide the Contracting Authority with all designs, drawings and reports as these will be required for subsequent project stages (iii), (iv) and (v). In due course and subject to the availability of funding, a design team for the remaining project stages will be procured separately by the Contracting Authority.
17. Accept appointment as PSDP and continue in the role for project stages (i), (ii a) and (ii b).
18. Undertake the role of Designer.
19. Prepare a Project Consultation Strategy, to include the listing & engagement with all stakeholders during the design and planning stages.
20. Liaise with all relevant service providers / utilities in relation to their existing services and their requirements re the proposed public realm improvement scheme.

Urban Designer

The Urban Designer (Team Lead) shall work closely with the other members of the design team to:

- Create a vision and spatial strategy for the overall layout and character of Mountrath, considering its unique context, history, and future needs.
- Develop an outline public realm design in keeping with DMURS and Client's requirement.

The successful design consultancy team will be required to complete the Spatial Strategy, integrated design and layout for the project. This shall be agreed with the Client prior to progressing to Part 8.

The project will require Part 8 Planning. The Consultant shall provide all technical and management services to assist Laois County Council in administration of the Part 8 planning process for the project. This shall include preparation of all necessary documentation and planning drawings as set out in Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations. Laois County Council will manage the statutory advertising procedures and erect the required site notices.

3.4.1.2 Project Manager

The consultant shall appoint a Project Manager for the scheme who shall have overall responsibility for the management and delivery of the project.

3.4.1.3 The Civil/Structural/Environmental Engineer

The Civil/Structural/Environmental Engineer shall liaise with the other Design Team members to ensure that all civil and structural information relevant to the roles of those parties is conveyed to them in a timely manner to allow them carry out their services on the project. A review shall be undertaken of the layout and performance of existing road junctions and in particular, Market Square junction. Where appropriate, and in consultation with LCC's Roads and Transportation Department, alterations to junction layouts will be incorporated into the design.

3.4.1.4 Landscape Architect

The Landscape Architect requirements shall include the following:

- Detail landscape and public realm design in accordance with DMURS
- Detail Part 8 planning layouts
- Provide details on external finishes, landscape design and finishes and agree these elements with LCC
- Produce relevant Part 8 drawings and Design Statement documentation.

3.4.1.5 The Mechanical & Electrical/Public Lighting Engineer

The Mechanical and Electrical (M & E) Engineer shall be responsible for the assessment of the existing M & E services, such as electrical, public lighting, traffic control etc and the design of new services through all stages of the project and providing cost information and summary specifications for inclusion in budget cost for all design options.

The design team shall liaise with the Roads and Transportation Department of Laois County Council in relation to the public lighting design for the scheme.

3.4.1.6 Project Supervisor Design Process (PSDP)

The Lead Consultant (or appropriate member of the multidisciplinary design team) shall act as Project Supervisor (Design Process) in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations, 2013 for all appropriate elements of the Project.

3.4.1.7 Quantity Surveyor

The Quantity Surveyor (QS) shall be responsible for the financial control of the project, through all stages. An updated cost estimate will be required for inclusion in a grant application for RRDF Category 1 funding.

Cost Plans will be required at the end of each project stage and following completion of the Part 8 process. A Value Engineering exercise may be requested by the Contracting Authority with a view to identifying cost savings.

3.4.1.8 Conservation Architect

The Conservation Architect will provide historical/heritage support to the design team including assessment and analysis of relevant sites and structures to enable the design to preserve and enhance the character of historic buildings and areas in Mountrath.

3.4.2 Duties of Third-Party Specialists

3.4.2.1 Archaeologist

The Consultant will be responsible for the procurement (if required) of a suitably qualified archaeologist, and for the procurement (in accordance with public sector procurement requirements) of all archaeological services and works. This will include the preparation of tender documentation, advertisement for tender (including dealing with any tender queries), tender assessment and reporting, tender evaluation, tender recommendation, supervision and project management of archaeological works, recommendation re payments to the archaeologist, agreement of final accounts and closeout.

Client's approval will be necessary before any contract is awarded. They will also be responsible for obtaining approval from the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht through National Monuments Division, and any other statutory body deemed necessary. The consultant and the archaeologist will also be required to liaise with the Heritage Section of LCC.

3.4.2.2 Ecologist

The design team shall include an Ecologist who shall advise in relation to any works proposed by the scheme design. LCC has recently (2025) undertaken a Baseline Ecology Report, a Bat Survey at the Mountrath/Whitehorse River Walk, and produced a Habitat Map. LCC also previously commissioned, a Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2021-2025) for Mountrath. A copy of (and/or links to) these reports is included in the tender pack.

3.4.2.3 Traffic Consultant

The consultant will be required to procure a traffic modelling specialist for the proposed concept design and junction reconfiguration at Market Square to ascertain the potential implications during the construction phase and post completion of the works.

The model shall enable the complete assessment of the traffic impacts of the public realm proposals, that will be developed and agreed with the client.

All traffic re-routing options at each works location shall be considered. The identified key junctions within the study area shall be individually modelled for performance including queue lengths, delay and capacity for each of the design option. The junctions to be assessed include:

- Junction at intersection of Main Street / Shannon Street / Bridge Street (Market Square)
- Junction at Bridge Street / Link Road

Standard capacity assessment software ARCADY and LinSig or equivalent shall be used to assess the operation of the junctions.

In addition, a microsimulation modelling software which captures the impacts of individual driver behaviour characteristics on the performance of road networks and junctions shall be developed for the emerging design options. This model shall show the operation of the modelled network graphically in real time and provides a more accessible representation of modelling results than traditional modelling outputs. The extent of this model shall be agreed at the progression meeting on emerging design options.

Accessibility and ease of movement for all modes of transport including pedestrians, cyclists, cars, Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) and public transport shall be considered. The existing provision of parking and loading bays shall be considered and the impact of the proposed public realm improvements assessed.

There is anecdotal evidence that currently, a significant number of heavy goods vehicles pass through Mountrath town in order to avoid the toll on the M7 Motorway. The proposed scheme design for Mountrath shall consider design elements which would discourage HGV and other large vehicles from using Mountrath Town to avoid the motorway toll. This requirement shall be considered in conjunction with the requirement to accommodate vehicles including HGVs) regarding essential access local businesses for deliveries etc.

The appointed design team shall liaise with the roads department of LCC and with local stakeholders in this regard.

The outcomes of the modelling shall also inform the traffic consultant on how to best sequence/phase the works regarding the different working locations to minimise traffic disruption within the town.

It is an objective of Laois County Council to reduce the volume of traffic passing through Mountrath. It is anticipated that in due course, a link road / relief road will be required to achieve this objective. Drawing 100 includes a reference to a possible corridor for an inner relief road. The design of an inner relief road is not required by this project brief however the appointed design team shall be cognoscente of this objective.

3.5 OVERALL TEAM STRUCTURE

Where tendering consultants consider that additional specialist design team services are required to deliver the services and deliverables required for the project, they must advise the Contracting Authority as soon as practicable and in advance of date set for the return of tender submissions. Requests for the engagement of additional specialist design team services following receipt of tenders will not be considered.

3.6 STATUTORY PROCESSES TO DATE

3.6.1 Mountrath

3.6.1.1 Planning

Planning will be via the Part 8 Process

3.6.1.2 Section 50 Consent, Flood Risk Assessment & Protection Proposals

No discussions have been held with the Office of Public Works in relation to the Project. No assessments have been completed. The flood zone for Mountrath is identified on Drawing 100.

3.6.1.3 Archaeology

Archaeological Monitoring or Investigation Licence applications have not been made.

3.6.1.4 Ecological/Habitats

Mountrath Baseline Ecology Report was undertaken in 2025 by AtkinsRéalis and a habitat map has been produced. A Bat Survey was also undertaken in 2025 along the Mountrath / Whitehorse River Walk. There is also Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2025 for Mountrath. Copies of (or links to) these reports are included with the tender pack.

It is noteworthy that a Special Area of Conservation exists along the riverbank of the Mountrath (Whitehorse) River. No contact has yet been made with the National Parks and Wildlife Service in relation to this scheme.

3.6.2 Public Spending Code

As per the terms of the Public Spending Code (PSC), Laois County Council will be required to complete Preliminary Business Cases for the project (for RRDF applications). The appointed design team will be required to complete the RRDF Category 1 application (when announced by the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht including the required business cases and associated financial assessment for the project).

A copy of the most recent RRDF Category 1 application form is included with the tender documents (by way of background information) in order to inform tendering consultants of the nature and extent of the work required to complete an RRDF application. A line item has been included in the pricing document for completion of the RRDF application.

3.7 PROGRAMME

Item	Mountrath	Weeks	Date
1	Appoint Consultant / Contract Award	October-26	Oct-26
2	Stage (i) Town Spatial Strategy (including consultation with LCC management team and public/stakeholder consultation)	9	Dec-26
3	Stage (ii a) Town Centre Design and Order of Magnitude Cost Estimate (including palette of material types, street furniture etc). In Person presentation / briefing to Senior Management of LCC and elected members prior to finalisation of Developed Design and prior to publication of Part 8 Notice and Public display period. (Jan – March 2027)	12	Mar- 27
4	Stage (ii b) – Developed Design for Planning, finalise Part 8 documents and Publication of Part 8 Notice (6 th April 2027)	2	April 2027
5	End of Part 8 public display period and 2-week period for observations /submissions	6	May 2027
6	Approval/adoption of Part 8 design by Elected Members at meeting of Laois County Council.	2	May 2027
7	Application for RRDF Category 1 Grant funding including financial appraisal and business case (which is to be completed by the appointed design team in consultation with Laois County Council)	Dependent on Funding announcement by DRCDG	TBA

3.7.1 Constraints

The following is a non-exhaustive listing of constraints to be considered by the Tenderers in the preparation of their tender:

- Minimise the parking loss resulting from proposed design.
- Facilitation of heavy goods vehicles which deliver to businesses in Mountrath.
- RRDF Approval Gates (Final Business Case)
- Information gathering role, liaison with stakeholders & procurement and undertaking of surveys.
- Part 8 Planning and Public Consultation with stakeholders.
- Engagement with LCC and stakeholders during the design stages and Part 8 process.
- Special Area of Conservation in the vicinity of Mountrath / Whitehorse River.
- Requirement for LCC to acquire lands (Opportunity Sites) for elements of the proposed scheme. (e.g. link between Market Square and the river for housing and for the development of a greenway/link to river)
- Possible resistance to the removal of vehicular parking to facilitate an improved public realm, active travel measures and a pedestrian friendly public realm.

4 DESIGN REFERENCES

4.1 REFERENCES

In preparing the Design, the Consultant shall have regard to the items listed in Sections 5.1 to 5.7. The Consultant proposals shall comply with all relevant National & European Legislation, guidance, and best practice, including but not limited to those included in the non-exhaustive list in Sections 4.1.1 to 4.1.4 below.

4.1.1 PLANS, STUDIES & REPORTS

4.1.1.1 Local

- Laois County Development Plan 2021 -2027 – <https://consult.laois.ie/en/consultation/laois-county-development-plan-2021-2027>
<https://laois.ie/sites/default/files/2024-09/Map-4.3-A-Mountrath-1.pdf>
<https://laois.ie/sites/default/files/2024-09/Map-4.3-B-Mountrath-2.pdf>
- Laois Climate Adaption Plan 2024 - 2029 available at <https://laois.ie/climate-action/climate-action-in-laois/climate-action-plan#CAP>
- Mountrath Sustainable Community Plan 2023 available at <https://laois.ie/mountrath>
- Local Biodiversity Action Plan for Mountrath (2021-2025) available at [Mountrath-Biodiversity-Action-Plan-2021-to-2025.pdf](#)
- Local Biodiversity Action Plan for Mountrath (2015) available at [Mountrath-Laois-Biodiversity-Action-Plan-2015.pdf](#)
- Flood Risk Management Plans available at <http://www.floodinfo.ie>
- Flood Maps available at <http://www.floodinfo.ie>
- River Basin Management Plans & Water Framework Directive available at <https://www.catchments.ie/>
- Laois Local Economic and Community Plan available at <https://laois.ie/sites/default/files/2026-01/Final%20-%20Q3%202025%20LECP%20Review%20Report%202023-2028.pdf>

4.1.1.2 National

- Green Public Procurement Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2027, available at: <https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/buying-greener-green-public-procurement-strategy-and-action-plan-2024-2027.pdf>
- Ready, Steady, Play! A National Play Policy, available at: [NCO Play Policy/English \(assets.gov.ie\)](#)
- The National Planning Framework available at [Project-Ireland-2040-NPF.pdf](#)
- Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, addendums and supplements <https://www.dmurs.ie/>
- Nature-based solutions to the Management of Rainwater and Surface Water Runoff in Urban Areas, available at <https://assets.gov.ie/219872/409cd225-5afc-44b8-a7b1-bb595632a904.pdf>
- Climate Action Plan 2021, available at: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/6223e-climate-action-plan-2021/>
- National Sustainable Mobility Policy, available at: [gov.ie - National Sustainable Mobility Policy \(www.gov.ie\)](#)
- Eastern and Midland Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy available at <https://www.emra.ie/rses/>
- Universal Design Guides and “Shared Space, Shared Surfaces and Home Zones from a Universal Design Approach for the Urban Environment in Ireland” available at <http://universaldesign.ie>
- 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
- Failte Ireland Irelands Ancient East Branding Guidelines <https://www.failteireland.ie/Regional-experience-brands/Ireland-s-Ancient-East.aspx>
- National Transport Authority Permeability Best Practice Guide https://www.nationaltransport.ie/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/NTA_Permeability_Report_-_Web.08.20151.pdf
- Nature-based Solutions to the Management of Rainwater and Surface Water Runoff in Urban Areas – Best Practice Interim Guidance Document

<https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/219872/409cd225-5afc-44b8-a7b1-bb595632a904.pdf#page=null>

4.1.1.3 International

- Trees in Hard Landscapes: A Guide for Delivery, available at: [Trees in Hard Landscapes: A Guide for Delivery - Trees and Design Action Group \(tdag.org.uk\)](#)
- SUDS Manual
<https://www.ciria.org/ItemDetail?iProductCode=C753F&Category=FREEPUBS>
- UK Manual for Streets and associated documents available at
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/manual-for-streets>
- Inclusive Healthy Places, Gehl Institute, 2017. [Home - Inclusive Healthy Places \(gehlpeople.com\)](#)
- Urban Lighting for People: Evidence-Based Lighting Design for the Built Environment ISBN 9781859468210
- Guidance for using the IUCN Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions
<https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/2020-021-En.pdf>

4.1.2 EUROPEAN DIRECTIVES

The Consultants proposals shall comply with all relevant European Directives, including but not limited to those listed below:

- Directive 2007/60/EC on the assessment and management of flood risks
- Council Directive 85/337/EEC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (EIA Directive)
- Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (The SEA Directive)
- Directive 2004/18/EC on the coordination of procedures for the award of public works contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts

4.1.3 NATIONAL LEGISLATION - ACTS

The Consultants proposals shall comply with all relevant National & European Legislation including but not limited to the Acts listed below (and any associated Acts, Amendments, Regulations and implemented Statutory Instruments).

- Arterial Drainage Act 1945 and Amendment Acts 1955 & 1995
- Building Control Act 2007
- Chemicals Act 2008 and Amendment Act 2010
- Competition Act 2002 and Amendment Acts to 2017
- Dangerous Substances Act 1972 and Amendment Act 1979
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992
- Environment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2015
- Fisheries Act 1980 and Amendment Acts
- Fisheries and Foreshore (Amendment) Act, 1998
- Foreshore Act 1933 and Amendment Acts 1992 and 2011
- Foreshore and Dumping at Sea (Amendment) Act 2009
- Freedom Of Information Act 2014
- Health Act 2008 and Amendment Acts to 2017

- Inland Fisheries Act 2010 and Amendment 2017
- Local Government (Roads and Drainage) Act, 1968
- Local Government (Roads Functions) Act 2007
- Local Government (Water Pollution) Act 1997 and Amendment Act 1990
- Local Government Act 2019
- Maritime Safety Act 2005
- National Monuments Act 1930 and Amendment Acts 1954, 1987, 1994, 1999 & 2004
- Planning and Development Act 2024
- Road Traffic Act 2016 & Amendment Act 2018
- Road Traffic and Transport Act 2006
- Roads Act 2007
- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and S.I. No. 291/2013 - Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013
- Sustainable Energy Act, 2002
- Waste Management Act 1996 and Amendment Act 2001
- Water Services Act 2007, 2013, 2017 and amendments
- Wildlife Act 1976 and Amendment Acts 2000, 2010 & 2012

4.1.4 OTHER REFERENCES

The Consultants proposals shall comply with all relevant Standards (Irish, European & British), Guidance Notes and relevant Government Departmental Circulars including but not limited to:

- Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
- Department of Finance
- Department of the Housing, Planning & Local Government / Housing Guidelines.
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Health Services Executive
- Health & Safety Authority
- Local Government Computer Services Board
- The Heritage Council
- Office of Public Works
- Sea Fisheries Protection Authority
- Department of Agriculture, Food & Marine.
- National Parks & Wildlife Service
- National Transport Authority
- National Disability Authority
- Design manual for Urban Roads and Streets
- Uisce Eireann
- Electric Ireland
- Eir
- Eirgrid
- Gas Networks & Gaslink
- Airtricity

5 TECHNICAL & MANAGEMENT SERVICES

The following Sub-Sections outline the main duties and deliverables required in the various Stages of the Consultancy Service. Section 5.2 to Section 5.7 outline the duties and deliverables Stage (i) *Preliminary Stage and Town Spatial Planning*, Stage (ii a) *Town Centre Design / Scheme Design*, (Stage (ii b) *Developed Design and Planning* (Part 8) . Section 5.1 outlines the normal and general duties that apply to all stages.

The tender proposal shall include for all costs and expenses associated the duties described in Sections 5.1 to 5.7 of the Brief (and any other duties included in sections 1-4) and outline in Appendices A-F.

5.1 GENERAL DUTIES/ROLE OF THE CONSULTANT & EMPLOYER'S REPRESENTATIVE

Client's Objectives	Project Stages (i) Town Spatial Planning for greater Mountrath, (ii a) Town Centre Design - Scheme Design and (ii b) Developed Design and associated documentation for Planning. (Part 8) The appointed design team will, following an announcement from the DRC DG re the next call for grant funding, complete an application for RRDF Category 1 funding. Subsequent project stages i.e. (ii c) Detailed Design and Tender Documentation, (iii) Tender Action and Award, (iv) Construction and (v) Handover, will be delivered at a future time under a separate appointment for technical services.
----------------------------	--

5.1.1 Health & Safety

PSDP	The Consultant shall act as Project Supervisor Design Process in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations, 2013 for all appropriate elements of the Project. The PSDP shall undertake all duties required by the Regulations which will include the co-ordination, in so far as is reasonably practicable, activities of the designers in respect of their duties under the Construction Regulations 2013 and together with the PSCS, facilitate co-operation between the permanent works designers and the temporary works designers, as may be necessary.
-------------	--

5.1.2 Project Management

Lead Consultant	The Lead Consultant who shall be an Urban Designer with a FETAC Level 9 qualification in planning, shall coordinate the activities of Team members and sub consultants throughout all stages of the Project.
------------------------	---

LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL
BRIEF FOR THE ENGAGEMENT OF CONSULTANT FOR
MOUNTRATH TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

Project Director & Project Manager	The Consultant shall nominate a senior member as Project Director for the full duration of the project. The Consultant shall prepare an organogram clearly detailing the lines of communication between the Client's Project Manager, the Consultant's Project Manager and all Contractors and subcontractors. This shall be updated should members of the Consultant's Project Team change.
Programme	The Consultant's Project Manager shall prepare a fully resourced programme for the project within 14 days of appointment. The programme shall include appropriate and realistic timelines for approvals and pauses at relevant Gates. The timeframe for completion of the project stages is set out in Section 3.7 of this Project Brief.

5.1.3 Meetings, Communication & Publicity

Schedule of Meetings	Refer to Schedule of Meetings at Appendix A
Steering Group Meetings & Reporting	Following the appointment of the Consultant, an initial ‘kick off’ meeting will be held between the design team and senior management of Laois County Council. This meeting will be held ‘in person’ at Áras an Chontae, JFL Ave., Portlaoise, Co. Laois R32 EHP9. An in-person meeting (Public Engagement Event) will then be held in Mountrath during Stage (i) and shall be attended by the Design Team and LCC Project Team. At the end of Stage (i), a remote meeting (MS Teams) will be held between the design team and LCC to review Stage (i) and to preview Stage (ii a) . A 4th meeting (remote) will be scheduled at approximately the mid-point of Project Stage (ii a) where the design team will brief LCC on progress on the proposed scheme, direction of the developed design and outcomes from public consultation undertaken during Stage (i). (Remote - Microsoft Teams) An “in person” meeting/briefing will be required towards the end of Stage (ii a) before finalising the developed design and Part 8 drawings. This meeting will be held at Áras an Chontae where the design team shall firstly meet with LCC Senior Management, secondly, with LCC elected members and finally with the Mountrath Town Team. The purpose of this meeting is to (a) brief stakeholders on the developed design and (b) allay any concerns and/or issues which the elected members or Town team may have in relation to the scheme in advance of proceeding to Part 8. The design shall be sufficiently developed at the time of the meeting to communicate to the elected members the main interventions proposed by the design. The design team shall consider any observations / comments made by LCC Senior Management, the elected members and the Mountrath Town Team and where appropriate, amend the developed design prior to proceeding to Part 8. The Consultant shall provide progress reports including (but not limited to) details of: • Progress to date. • Programme for the remaining project stages • Archaeology/Heritage/Environment/Flood considerations. • Investigations/Surveys Required • Design Issues • Finance / Cost Estimates as appropriate. • Public & Stakeholder Relations and where relevant/appropriate, how stakeholder comments/observations have been considered.

5.1.4 Stakeholders

Consultation with Stakeholders & Third Party Agencies	Local stakeholders include (but are not limited to): • Mountrath Town Team • Mountrath Tidy Towns • Mountrath Community Forum • Mountrath Development Association (DA) • Local Schools • Businesses • Laois Chamber Alliance • Mountrath Scout Den • Mountrath Men's Shed • Local sports clubs (e.g., St Fintan's GAA Club, St Aengus FC, Mountrath Golf Club) • Bloom HQ / Brigidine Convent enterprise/community hub (and tenant groups) • Community safety / policing (e.g., local Garda engagement) and fire/emergency services (as stakeholders for traffic management during work) • Laois County Council and its relevant departments (Mountmellick Area Office, Roads, Active Travel, Public Lighting, Parks, Town Regeneration, Environment, Housing, Heritage, Fire Service etc.) The finalised list together with any associated constraints (e.g. delivery timings to businesses) and liaison requirements shall be included in the Construction Tender documents. The Consultant shall where appropriate, liaise with Third Party Agencies, Public Utilities Companies and Statutory Bodies as required. The Consultant shall liaise with all interested parties as appropriate, including, but not limited to: • An Coimisiún Pleanála • An Taisce • Birdwatch Ireland • Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage • Department of Finance • Department of Public Expenditure and Reform • Department of Rural and Community Development • Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications • Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media • Department of Transport • Eir, Eirgrid, Enet, Virgin • Environmental Protection Agency • ESB Networks • Geological Survey Ireland • Health & Safety Authority • Heritage Council • Uisce Eireann • Local Government Management Agency • National Parks and Wildlife Service • Office of Public Works
--	---

	• Teagasc • Transport Infrastructure Ireland • National Transport Authority
--	---

5.1.5 Third Party Specialists, Surveys and Investigations

The Consultant shall note that all surveys required to complete the design and statutory process are to be notified promptly to LCC following appointment of the Consultant and shall be progressed promptly (with the approval of LCC).

Third Party Specialists, Surveys and Investigations – Consultants Duties	Laois County Council has recently (2025) undertaken the following third party surveys in Mountrath: • Underground Utilities Survey and topographical survey (Apex Surveys) • Parking Assessment Survey (Tradeco Ltd. t/a Roadplan) • Ecology Survey (including a Bat Survey) of the Mountrath / Whitehorse River area (Atkins Realis) The appointed Consultant shall be required to perform the following specific services in relation to third party surveys and site investigation works. The Consultant shall, at an early stage of the Project, establish the requirements for any further third-party surveys and site investigation works required to develop the scheme to Part 8 planning. These requirements (if any), including scope and detailed cost estimates shall be submitted as a single report titled – <i>Third Party Surveys and Site Investigation Works</i>, for approval by Laois County Council. The report shall set out recommended selection and award criteria for each of the proposed procurements. The Consultant shall satisfy himself that the scope of the Surveys/Investigations being undertaken are sufficiently detailed. The Consultant shall prepare detailed and comprehensive tender documents for the procurement of the various third-party surveys and site investigation works in compliance with National Procurement Policy and Green Public Procurement principles. It is anticipated that only surveys which are required to produce Part 8 design will be undertaken under this appointment. Tender documents shall utilise where applicable, the appropriate form of Contract from the Department of Public Expenditure, Infrastructure, Public service Reform and Digitalisation and shall include all documents, specifications, and drawings necessary to ensure with all reasonable skill and care, that a clear and complete scope of works is tendered. Tender documents shall be submitted to Laois County Council for approval. The Consultant shall recommend proposed service providers or contractors where it is proposed to invite tenders. Quotations / tenders shall be sought by the consultant, and the tender process shall be administered by the consultant. On completion of the tender process for each third-party survey, the appointed consultant shall provide LCC with a tender report and recommendation regarding the preferred consultant/ service provider. Where tenders are to be advertised (rather than direct invitation), the Consultant shall provide all required information to assist Laois County Council to advertise the tender on etenders.ie in accordance with current Laois County Council and EU procurement rules.
---	--

LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL
BRIEF FOR THE ENGAGEMENT OF CONSULTANT FOR
MOUNTRATH TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

Third Party Specialists, Surveys and Investigations – Consultants Duties (continued)	The Consultant shall issue tender documents to tendering specialist service providers and respond to all requests for clarifications during the tendering period. The Consultant shall comprehensively evaluate tenders and assess these against the approved selection and award criteria. Evaluations shall include seeking written or verbal clarification by interview from Tenderers when appropriate. The Consultant shall prepare and issue Report(s) on Tenders to Laois County Council for approval. The Report(s) on Tenders shall include where applicable, a separate section an assessment of the competence of the recommended tenderer(s) to act as Project Supervisor Construction Stage. The Consultant shall provide detailed feedback to both unsuccessful and successful Tenderers. The Consultant shall forward Contractor's insurances to the Council's Insurance Section for review. The Consultant shall act as Client's Representative for all third-party surveys and site investigation works contracts. The Consultant shall supervise and administer the Contracts, certify work complete and payment thereof, advise on claims and settlement thereof. The Consultant shall provide an appropriate level of competent site supervision commensurate with the scale, scope and complexity of the surveys/works being carried out by third parties. The Consultant shall communicate with affected landowners and shall keep them informed of the nature and progress of the surveys and site investigation works as necessary. The Consultant will undertake the duties of the PSDP. The Consultant shall take account of the results of the Third-Party Surveys and Investigations in the design. Third Party Specialists, Surveys and Investigations, for which separate payment will be made by Laois County Council, may include but not be limited to: - Roads Safety Auditor - Traffic Modelling - Archaeological Surveys - Ecological/Ornithological Surveys - Invasive Species Surveys etc. - AA Screening - Built Heritage Assessment - Archaeology Assessment
---	--

5.2 STAGE (I) TOWN SPATIAL STRATEGY FOR GREATER MOUNTRATH

Deliverables	Town Spatial Strategy with Approved Design Options and Feasibility Report. Scoping procurement and management of Third-Party Surveys Public & Stakeholder Consultation
---------------------	---

LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL
BRIEF FOR THE ENGAGEMENT OF CONSULTANT FOR
MOUNTRATH TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

Town Spatial Strategy & Design Options and Feasibility Report	The Consultant shall produce a detailed Options Report. The report shall include: • All drawings necessary to adequately illustrate all proposed works and options proposed by the appointed consultant. • Outline designs for alternatives considered, to demonstrate the feasibility and economics of the recommended proposals. • Details of all cost estimates for the proposed scheme and for the various alternatives considered. • Relevant submissions from all disciplines within the Design Team relating to and explaining the recommended design options/costings for the project and demonstrating the feasibility and economics of the recommended solution This Stage will include a public consultation event to be held in Mountrath for the purposes of informing stakeholders of the proposed scheme and to facilitate observations and/or submissions. The Consultant shall submit 1 no. Digital Copy of the Draft Options Report to Laois County Council for comment. The Consultant shall complete any necessary revisions to the Draft Options Report following review by Laois County Council. The Consultant shall submit 1 no. Digital Copy of the Approved Options Report to Laois County Council. The Consultant shall undertake the role of Project Supervisor design Process
--	--

5.3 STAGE (II A) – TOWN CENTRE DESIGN

Following Instruction to commence Stage (ii a) the Consultant shall continue in the role of PSDP and undertake the following:

Deliverables	Town Centre Design / Developed Design Preliminary Designs shall be developed for consideration by LCC and Mountrath Town Team. The design shall include details such as - Tree planting and soft landscape structure - Street furniture and public realm elements - Surface treatments and spatial definition. All Statutory Permissions required to complete the Project Scope and procure any further assessments required for planning. Scheme Design (Planning Level of Detail), Landscape Architecture, Planning Drawings and material palettes, street furniture options. (Note the Part 8 Planning Process and associated documents will be finalised and delivered under Project Stage (ii b) Stage (ii a) Report including Cost Estimate. CGI images of the proposed scheme.
Design Standards	The Developed Design of the Project and the specification/selection of materials shall be in full compliance with all relevant EU directives, National Legislation, Regulations and Standards.

LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL
BRIEF FOR THE ENGAGEMENT OF CONSULTANT FOR
MOUNTRATH TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

Movement Strategy	The Consultant shall develop a Movement Strategy addressing access by walking, cycling, public transport and other sustainable means.
Proposed Changes	The Consultant shall agree any proposed layout changes or any proposed changes to traffic movements with the Non-National Roads Design and Laois County Council Road Design and Area Office
Disability Access & Universal Design	Project proposals shall comply with the Building for Everyone: A Universal Design Approach and the 7 Principles of Universal Design. http://universaldesign.ie/Built-Environment/Building-for-Everyone/ http://universaldesign.ie/What-is-Universal-Design/The-7-Principles/
Parking	Proposed car-parking layout shall allow for disabled parking spaces in accordance with current design standards and shall mitigate any potential vehicle/pedestrian conflicts as much as possible.
Antisocial Behaviour	All design proposals including landscaping, lighting, street furniture etc. must consider potential vandalism and the need to avoid “hidden areas”.
Design	The Scheme Design shall include material palettes / specifications, plans and drawings required to complete the Planning processes. Detailed Design and Tender Documentation will be undertaken at a later project stage. (Stage ii b) 3D CGI drawings encompassing the proposals will be required for Part 8 Planning.
Amendments to Design	The Consultant shall amend the design and update costings as necessary following receipt of feedback from public consultations, consultations with Municipal District Engineers, Elected Members, consultations with other stakeholders and from the Steering Group workshops.
Public Lighting	The consultant shall liaise with Laois County Council Public Lighting Design Advisor and include in the Designs and Tender Documents for all Public Lighting requirements to meet DMURS Standards.
Utilities	Laois County Council will pay any fees / costs sought by utility companies re diversions / undergrounding of their assets as required by the design. These costs/fees shall be provided to LCC (on a Zone-by-Zone basis) for inclusion in any application for grant funding.
Wayleaves	The consultant shall advise Laois County Council regarding any wayleaves (temporary and/or permanent) or land acquisitions required by the design.
Archaeological Assessment & Monitoring	The Consultant shall: - Procure all Archaeological Assessments, Monitoring and Licences that are necessary to complete the Statutory Processes and Construction. - Take account of the results in the design and in the preparation of the Tender Documents.

5.4 STAGE (II)B – PART 8 PLANNING AND ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTATION

The Consultant shall continue in the role of PSDP.

When the developed design is sufficiently progressed (at the end of Stage (ii a), the consultant shall present the design to Laois County Council Senior Management and to LCC elected members and to Mountrath Town Team by way of three separate “in person meetings” at Áras an Chontae, Portlaoise. It is envisaged that these meetings will occur on the same day.

The consultant shall subsequently make any amendments to the design as may be appropriate and submit the amended design to LCC for approval. On approval of the design, the consultant shall finalise the Part 8 documents and LCC will publish the Part 8 Public Notice and facilitate public viewing of the scheme design and Part 8 documents at County Hall. LCC will also upload the Part 8 Documents to its planning portal. The Consultant shall provide the client with a complete set of Part 8 Documents in hard copy for public display at County Hall. The consultant shall also provide Laois County Council with a complete set of documents in PDF format for upload by LCC to its planning portal. The consultant shall attend 1 public event during the 4-week public display period. This event will be held in Mountrath.

Planning (PART 8)

Part 8 Planning Permission	The Consultant shall: • Provide all Technical and Management Services required to assist Laois County Council in the administration of the Part 8 process. • Prepare and submit 1 paper copy of all draft Part 8 documentation for approval. All documentation shall be also submitted in digital PDF format. Once the documentation has been approved by LCC, the Consultant shall submit 1 No paper copy and a complete PDF file of the approved suite of documents. Deliverables shall include but not be limited to: • Part 8 documentation • Attendance at Public Consultation event to be held in Mountrath. • 3D CGI drawings along with a virtual reality tour of the town encompassing the proposals. • Preparation of wording for newspaper advertisement(s) • Consideration of any submissions received and preparation of a report to assist Laois County Council in preparing the Chief Executive's Report in accordance with the Planning and Development Act, and Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations. • Preparation of a briefing note for the Chief Executive. Following completion of planning process, the Consultant shall prepare a bound file copy of the Part 8 planning documentation to include all relevant documentation and responses to observations and submissions. A single PDF file shall also be prepared. Note: Laois County Council will issue the required statutory notices, receipt and acknowledgement of observations etc. and facilitate public display of the Part 8 documentation.
-----------------------------------	---

RRDF (Category 1) Application

In due course, it is anticipated that the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht will announce the next (7th) call for of RRDF Category 1 applications. RRDF Category 1 funding provides large-scale, "shovel-ready" capital grants ranging from €500,000 to €10 million for ambitious rural regeneration projects across Ireland.

Managed by the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht, the scheme focuses on towns and villages under 10,000 people to tackle vacancy, dereliction, and boost local economies.

To apply for this funding, projects must have all planning and statutory consents in place. It is a requirement of this project brief that the appointed design team shall ensure that the proposed scheme complies with these conditions.

At the appropriate time, the appointed design team will be required to complete the following in consultation with Laois County Council:

1. RRDF Category 1 Application Form.
2. RRDF Evaluation and Monitoring Plan
3. Financial Analysis template.
4. Certified copies of statutory consents (where required) and planning permission.

For information purposes, sample documents from the 6th call for RRDF Category 1 applications are included with this tender pack.

5.4.1 Other Statutory Consents

Archaeological Assessment & Monitoring	The Consultant shall: • Procure all Archaeological Assessments, Monitoring and Licences that are necessary to complete the Statutory Processes.
---	---

6 GENERAL

6.1 CLIENTS SUPPLIED DOCUMENTS

The following documentation will be made available to the successful consultant:

- Mountrath Parking Survey Report (2025)
- Ecological Report (undertaken in the vicinity of the Mountrath/Whitehorse River) (2025)
- Utilities Survey (2025)
- Topographical Survey (2025)
- Reimagine Mountrath – Sustainable Community Plan (2023)
- Mountrath Landscape Plan 2023
- RRDF Category 1 Application – sample document from the 6th Call (July 2026)

APPENDIX A

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL
BRIEF FOR THE ENGAGEMENT OF CONSULTANT & EMPLOYER'S REPRESENTATIVE
MOUNTRATH PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

Stages	Meeting Type	Frequency	Chair & Minutes	Attendance	Optional Attendance	Location
Stage (i),	Steering Group / LCC Senior Management	'Kick Off' meeting at beginning of Stage (i)	DT Lead	LCC / Core Design Team	Support Discipline Experts as required	LCC * In person Kick Off meeting in Aras an Chontae, Portlaoise. Subsequent meeting can be remote (Microsoft Teams)
Stage (i)	Public Consultation Event in Mountrath.	One meeting to be scheduled early in Stage (i).	DT Lead	LCC / Core Design Team	Support Discipline Experts as required	Mountrath Co. Laois. Venue to be confirmed by LCC.
Stage (i)	Remote (MS Teams) meeting to review Stage (i) and to preview Stage (ii a).	One meeting.	DT Lead	LCC / Core Design Team	Support Discipline Experts as required	Remote (MS Teams)
Stage (ii a)	MS Teams meeting during Stage (ii a) to brief LCC project management team on progress. Second set of meetings to be held on a single day towards the end of Stage (ii a) in person in County Hall Portlaoise (a) with LCC project management team and (b) with elected representatives and (c) Mountrath Town Team (3 x 'in person' briefings on the same day in Aras an Chontae, Portlaoise)	1 meeting to be held remotely during the stage with 3 'in person' meetings/briefings on the same date (prior to finalizing the design and Part 8 documentation)	DT Lead	Remote Meeting: LCC project Management Team and Design Team. In Person Briefings: (1) LCC Project Team and Design Team (2) Elected members, LCC Project Team and Design Team (3) Mountrath Town Team, LCC Project Team and Design Team.	Support Discipline Experts as required.	LCC 1 x Remote Meeting and an in person visit to Aras an Chontae, Portlaoise to brief (a) LCC Senior Management, (b) elected representatives and (c) Mountrath Town Team
Stage (ii b)	Public "in person" event in Mountrath as part of the Part 8 planning process.	One.	DT Lead	Core Design Team, LCC Project Team.	Support Discipline Experts as required	Mountrath.