Comhairle Chontae Liatroma
Leitrim County Council

Mohill Regeneration Project Brief
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Introduction

Leitrim County Council invites tenders from suitably qualified and experienced multi-disciplinary teams to carry out a feasibility study and to develop a Masterplan for the regeneration and redevelopment of brownfield, underutilised lands in multiple land ownership to the south of Main Street / west of Hyde Street in the town of Mohill, Co. Leitrim. The intention of the Local Authority is to apply for funding in 2027 for a Category 2 RRDF application to bring the project through to the necessary design, planning consent process and / or procurement process. The RRDF Scheme provides that where critical to delivery, proposals may also cover expenditure on enabling initiatives, such as property or land purchase necessary to deliver major regeneration work in a town or village. However, work which establishes the rationale or helps make a case for the capital investment, such as feasibility studies or research to underpin a business case, is not covered. Hence, the need to undertake such work at this initial stage and funded directly by the Local Authority.

The successful team should be led by a suitably qualified Urban Designer with input from Town Planners to perform all necessary analysis and diagnosis to deliver a tailored high-quality, place-led Masterplan that will provide a clear and implementable framework for the sustainable regeneration, development, and long-term management of the subject lands. The Masterplan shall be grounded in strong urban design principles and will seek to foster a distinctive local identity and sense of place.

Site Description

The lands in question are bound by Main Street to the north, Hyde Street to the east and Eivers Lane to the west while the southern edge of the lands comprise of mainly vacant sheds and was identified in the *Mohill Urban Framework for Living 2020* and subsequently incorporated into the Council's current County Development Plan 2023-2029.

The structures fronting onto Main Street are included in the Architectural Conservation Area for Mohill and also includes the area known as "*The Butter Market*" which provides potential partial access from Main Street to the backlands and is currently in use as a car park.

These lands present challenges relating to access, multiple ownership, servicing, and visual amenity, but also offer substantial regeneration potential. The identified backlands area represents a significant opportunity to consolidate the town centre, encourage compact growth, improve connectivity and permeability while delivering a high-quality public realm and development opportunities.

There are no Protected Structures contained within the site as identified by the Local Authority. There are 2 buildings deemed to be of regional significance in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.

30816040 Hotel (Architectural interest)

Description End-of-terrace three-bay three-storey house, built c.1870, now in use as hotel, with five-bay extension to rear and modern outbuilding in use as night club. Pitched tiled roof with rendered chimneystacks. Ruled-and-lined render and channelled stucco to façade with sill courses. Timber sash windows with stucco surrounds and sills. Replacement uPVC windows to extension. Timber panelled door with fanlight. Hotel fronts directly onto street.

	Appraisal	This end-of-terrace building is quite a dominant structure in comparison to the two-storey terrace which it abuts. The channelled stucco of the ground floor makes a strong statement in the otherwise modest terrace. Features such as the sill course and the moulded window surrounds are representative of nineteenth-century design.
30816041	Dwelling, Main Street (Architectural and Technical interest) Since redeveloped with the recessed vitrolite and chrome shopfront with display windows and fascia board lost.	

There is no recorded monuments or zone of notification within the identified Master Plan site.

Background

The ***Mohill Urban Framework for Living*** was prepared in December 2020 by Sheridan Woods Architects & Urban Planners on behalf of Leitrim County Council. This project sought to develop a '*designed framework for living*' plan that would bring together an innovative combination of traditional urban master-planning that addresses town centre vacancy, the demise of traditional retail and the need for public spaces and sustainable town centre travel options as identified in the *Mohill Economic Development Plan*, produced in 2019.

The Mohill *Urban Framework for Living* identified strategies for the future development of the overall town:

- Enhance pedestrian and cycle connections from peripheral residential and employment areas to the town centre.
- Create potential pedestrian/cycle routes along the former railway (Greenway) and the river (Blueway).
- Create linkages within the town core itself, along the existing public streets and spaces, and connections through backlands.

The objective was to create an overall permeable town centre, so that residents and people employed and visiting the town centre can use the new improved pedestrian and cycle infrastructure in their daily lives, as ways to get to schools, shops, community uses and employment centres, while also being functional as recreational routes. It is envisaged that the backlands will create opportunities for additional open space, car parking areas, improved traffic movement in and through the town. In the longer term, the backlands have the potential to facilitate new housing areas, and employment and business opportunities to create an integrated and sustainable town centre.

The *Mohill Urban Framework for Living* was developed to support an application for funding which was made in 2020 by Leitrim County Council for a Category 1 RRDF application for a Public Realm Scheme which was successful and has been implemented.



Figure 1: Geographical Extent of Proposed Framework Plan

In addition to the support of the public realm project, the *Mohill Urban Framework for Living* plan selected this area for further advancement graphically as a Case Study Area. It was developed to review the potential benefit of progressing access to the backlands, and to ascertain the potential benefit, and development opportunities that would arise.

The Urban Regeneration Strategy proposed the following:

- Connection from the Butter Market to the lane to the rear
- Connection from Eivers Lane to the rear
- Connecting Route from Hyde Street to Eivers Lane
- Creation of two public spaces with on street parking, public car park to adjoining the Butter Market and potential for town centre supermarket / commercial use.

The existing configuration is shown first for context (Figure 2). An indicative Strategy (Figure 3) was developed which showed building blocks / layouts. These appear primarily residential in nature

although could include a commercial element at ground floor or for individual buildings. Car parking was shown along streets and between buildings.



Figure 2: Existing Context – Eivers Lane, The Butter Market & Hyde Street

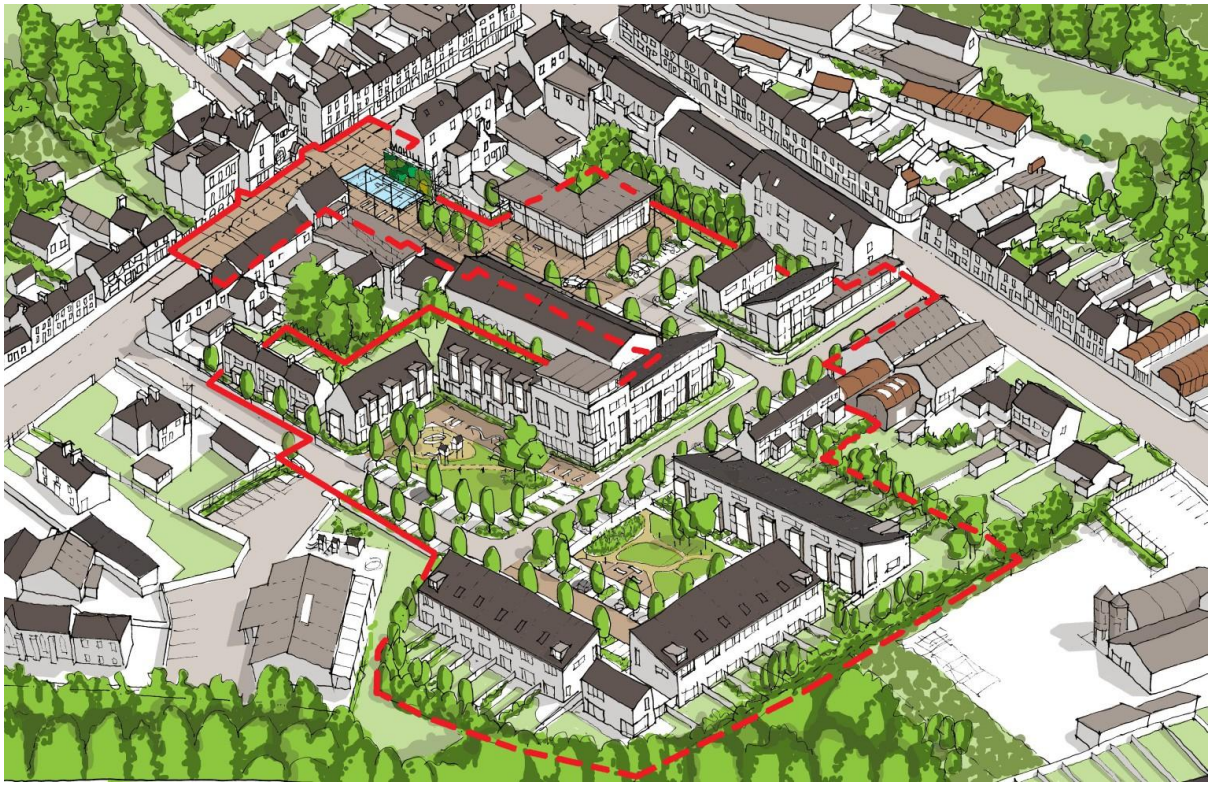


Figure 3: Development Concept – Eivers Lane, The Buttermarket & Hyde Street

The nature of land uses was not identified. The extent of design that was undertaken by Sheridan Woods was three-dimensional building blocks with some architectural considerations. It is considered that this is just a graphical representation of what could be delivered. It is considered unlikely that the quantum and nature of housing, which included a lot of apartment type developments, shown on these images would be required based on latent demand or indeed be considered feasible in Mohill. The Planning Authority would also question whether there is a demonstrable demand for additional convenience goods outlets (multiples) in Mohill with a population of just over 1,000 people in the last Census of Population.

Mohill is also a designated Sustainable Energy Community (SEC) with community buy-in to develop a sustainable energy system within the town cultivating a culture of more efficient energy practices, use of renewable energy where feasible and developing more decentralised energy supply networks. This community approach has manifested itself in Mohill with the town marketing itself as '*Smart, Green Mohill*' to showcase the technological facilities available in the town to enable '*smarter*' living and working practices and the move towards more sustainable energy use within the town. This is seen as a key marketing point for Mohill in attracting new businesses and enterprises which share similar values in relation to sustainable energy practices and smarter living concepts.

Mohill has also been designated as an '*Age Friendly Town*', where older people are actively involved in social, economic and cultural life and in creating a better local environment, to everybody's benefit. The town has also seen a number of projects funded through the Town and Village Renewal Scheme

An Economic Development Plan has also been developed that proposes actions ranging from job creation and economic development, tourism, energy, community development, cohesion and collaboration, events and festivals, retailing, transport and active age.

County Development Plan 2023-2029

The *Mohill Urban Framework for Living* is incorporated into 2 specific objectives in the Mohill Written Statement which forms part of Volume II of the Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029:

MHL 3 Assist in the implementation of the actions contained in the Mohill Urban Framework for Living

MHL 4 Prepare Framework Plans for the three identified Mixed Use backland sites to the north of Main Street/Glebe Street, south of Main Street/east of Hyde Street and south of Main Street/west of Hyde Street, as depicted in the accompanying Development Objectives Map for Mohill. The Framework Plans shall have regard to the accessing, permeability and connectivity network contained in the Mohill - Urban Framework for Living (2020) for these areas and shall seek to maximise connectivity beyond their respective site areas. The Framework Plans shall identify the location of car parking, building lines/heights, uses and amenities/recreational spaces in conjunction with landowners and other stakeholders.

The Framework Plans will set out guiding principles for development to secure high standards in quality and urban design for the future development of lands and to generally create well connected living environments. The Framework Plans will set out indicative development proposals for the lands in question.

MHL 17 Advance the implementation of the pedestrian and cyclist routes identified in the Mohill - Urban Framework for Living (2020) connecting the housing areas of the town to the town centre, to educational and sporting/recreational uses and to centres of employment. The overall strategy seeks to integrate these routes to a proposed walking loop and new riverside walks.

The geographical extent of the lands was not determined at the time of preparing the County Development Plan 2023-2029.

Project Objectives and Key Requirements

Set within this context, Leitrim County Council seeks to develop an overall Master Plan for the regeneration and redevelopment of this backlands area based on definitive land uses. Whilst it is considered that the existing *Mohill Urban Framework for Living* contains elements in relation to connectivity and linkages which remain valid and could be incorporated into the Plan, there are certain land uses which this Master Plan would be required to provide for. They include a public car park, a Family Resource Centre and a Scouts Den. In addition, the access road from Hyde Street must also provide access for the lands identified with a *Mixed Use* land use zoning objective (0.6 hectares) behind the now closed McIntyre's garage. They are presently land locked.

The Masterplan shall give consideration to the adaptation and reuse of vacant buildings or alternatively their demolition and replacement.

The existing Clarkes Hotel and associated buildings on Main Street. The hotel currently provides accommodation to persons seeking international protection and has not operated as a conventional hotel for some time. The Master Plan and Feasibility Study should consider the future potential use of this hotel building to include the demolition and redevelopment of the former night club building and outbuildings.

The Masterplan must deliver a coherent spatial framework for the area and promote placemaking and high-quality urban design to create a strong sense of identity rooted in the local context. It should also identify opportunities for mixed-use development, residential development as well as town centre expansion and activation opportunities.

A key facet to any Masterplan will be the improvement of pedestrian and vehicular permeability while integrating green infrastructure, biodiversity, and climate resilience attributes.

The Masterplan should address delivery mechanisms, including phasing and implementation strategies and consider constraints such as flooding and drainage, access and connectivity, land ownership and the overall heritage and character of the area.

The co-operation of the individual landowners would be required and engagement with them individually and collectively will be required in conjunction with the Local Authority. The Planning Authority will provide the successful consultants with information gathered from Landdirect.ie, planning applications and local knowledge regarding identified property. Not all of the lands are registered on Landdirect.ie which should not be confused with the lands not been registered.

Whilst the Master Plan can include consideration of different options before a preferred option is agreed upon, the brief would also require the preparation of a Feasibility Report outlining how the

preferred Master Plan would be realised and confirming that the nature of uses proposed therein are realistic and deliverable in the context of bringing forward an application ultimately for RRDF Category 1 funding.

The Master Plan would need to outline the nature of the physical infrastructure that would be required to be delivered as part of a Category 1 application and whether the acquisition of any lands would also be required to deliver same. The nature of planning consent (planning permission application or Part 8 consent by, on behalf or in conjunction with the Local Authority) which would best achieve the delivery of the main access roads within the Master Plan must also be considered. The feasibility element would need to give detailed consideration to how the development of these lands would occur. The hope would be that the Category 1 application in due course would include the development of the roads, footpaths, public lighting and services required to open up the selected backlands. This would have to consider the potential to have to acquire lands by agreement or compulsorily if required or alternatively a partnership approach. In the event that the application was unsuccessful, alternative methods of delivery need to be considered and assessed for their inherent risk. For instance, there is the option of developing a Supplemental Contribution Scheme (Section 49 of the Planning & Development Act 2000, as amended) whereby as developments proceed, we seek to recoup the cost of providing the infrastructure. This would require the Local Authority to develop the main infrastructure to open up the backlands e.g. roads and associated infrastructure. The Local Authority would not favour this option as it would place a barrier (disincentive) to these lands being developed. The Local Authority is also mindful that in progressing the identified lands over the other areas identified for similar Framework Plans in the County Development Plan, that we would be conferring a significant advantage to these landowners of the infrastructure to open up these lands possibly being provided for them. There is an option that needs to be carefully considered whereby the landowners (or potential developers) would develop a Framework Agreement - this would be a sharing of certain costs between them. This would involve agreeing and developing a viable land use strategy, agreeing land values and devising an equalisation plan between the landowners / developers. It would ensure that the landowners / developers who would have a lower use (open space, car park or community type use) assigned to their lands or part of their lands or whose lands would be required for access roads would not be disproportionately affected. It involves a sharing of the profits of the more lucrative areas such as housing or commercial uses, should they prove viable.

Scope of Services

The Master Plan will be required to include, but not limited, to:

- **Site and Context Analysis**

The background to this Plan must be established to include the existing statutory policy framework within which it is being prepared. This section should include the existing land use and urban form and the historical development of the area together with a character appraisal. Movement and accessibility analysis of the lands should be undertaken together with the assessment of existing infrastructure and servicing. Environmental and ecological matters should also be taken into consideration at this stage. These assessments should identify constraints to the future development options to be pursued and measures to address such constraints.

- **Stakeholder and Public Engagement**

This element of the Masterplan should include a strategy for effective engagement with stakeholders and the local community, encouraging a sense of ownership and an element of co-design over the project. The involvement of the affected landowners cannot be over emphasised.

The development of a stakeholder engagement plan should also incorporate the preparation of a '*Consultation Briefing Pack*' for pre-issue to local businesses, residents and other stakeholders. Public consultation workshops and/or public events should be facilitated and engagement with key stakeholders (landowners, community groups, statutory bodies, etc.) should be undertaken with the feedback incorporated into the Masterplan.

- **Infrastructure and Access**

A movement framework assessment should be carried out to inform the selection of the suitable options. This should examine feasible options for routing to, connectivity and access within the general study area. This should include access strategies, varieties of modal use and related routing, parking options, carrying capacity of roads network, evaluate implications of additional movement on existing access infrastructure, etc.

- **Development of Masterplan Options**

A Masterplan for this area should provide a realistic framework for the development of this block into a vibrant addition to the existing town centre. It should involve the preparation of concept options exploring alternative development approaches which tests land use mixes and built form typologies. The feasibility and delivery of each options must be considered.

- **Preparation of a detailed and illustrated Masterplan**

This component of the Masterplan should set out a viable and deliverable strategy for its implementation. The Plan should also include an agreed layout and civic design option supported by an economic appraisal. The Masterplan should include (but not limited to) the following:

  - Land use
  - Movement networks
  - Public realm strategy
  - Urban form and design principles
  - Landscape and green infrastructure framework
  - Sustainable Urban Drainage proposals
  - Environmental Considerations (Ecology and Habitats)

- **Implementation Strategy**

The Masterplan shall include a Delivery Strategy, which will demonstrate proposed development phases aligned with potential external funding streams to facilitate delivery or other as outlined above.

- **Supporting Documentation**

It would be expected that the final Masterplan should include the following:

- Introduction and Overview
- Executive Summary of the Masterplan
- Overview/Commentary on the Masterplan Development Process: consultations undertaken and overview of how the Vision for the Town Centre was developed.
- Assessment of need in the Study Area
- Description of the Vision outlining physical social and economic strategies for positive change, and the vision/interventions for the physical regeneration of the area together with relevant drawings, site plans and 3D images.
- Concept Drawings for the proposed interventions.
- A mapping of all public and private parking available.
- The elements needed to deliver the Vision (Social, Economic and Physical) addressing issues such as the urban environment, potential for development, housing, improved connectivity, movement and traffic, energy, and social and economic issues such as education, health, sports and recreation, training, employment, and enterprise issues.
- The final Plan will identify key projects to be progressed.
- Strategic environmental considerations.

The Feasibility Study shall comprise

- Market Research: Is there real demand for the proposed land uses and to what scale should they be? This should contain an assessment which defines the rational for the project as well as recommendations/options for the future diversification of uses in the area based on emerging market trends to achieve maximum sustainable economic returns.
- Financial Planning: What will the estimated cost be to deliver the key infrastructure required to open up the backlands and acquire sites for public and community use (car parking, Family Resource Centre and Scouts Den) and will they be sustainable?
- Technical Requirements: What infrastructure will be required?
- Land ownership: How do we overcome multiple land ownership?
- Community Impact: How will of proposal benefit the local area?
- Delivery: How will the Masterplan be implemented and realised?

Economic Analysis: This should contain an assessment which defines the rational for the project as well as recommendations/options for the future diversification of uses in the area based on emerging market trends to achieve maximum sustainable economic returns.

Required Expertise

The project must be delivered by a multi-disciplinary team, which shall include, at a minimum:

- Lead Urban Designer
- Urban / Town Planner
- Architect / Urban Design Specialist
- Landscape Architect
- Civil / Transportation Engineer
- Environmental Consultant (including ecology)
- Community Engagement Specialist

Prospective tenderers will be required to demonstrate that they have had appropriate experience and a relevant track record in producing effective and successful regeneration focused Masterplans for Local Authorities. The team shall have sufficient knowledge and experience of all relevant legislation and will dedicate suitably qualified senior, experienced staff members with the required availability to meaningfully participate in the project. In this regard the Core Project Team should be identified, the specific persons, their role, and their area of expertise. The ability to create high-quality visuals, graphic design, 3D images as well as GIS and mapping capabilities are all required.

Conclusion

This project represents a significant opportunity to shape the future development of Mohill by unlocking underutilised backlands and creating a vibrant, well-integrated urban environment. Leitrim County Council seeks an experienced team capable of delivering a practical, deliverable, and high-quality masterplan that reflects the aspirations of the local community and objectives contained within the Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029.