

BALLAGHADERREEN

The Plots Masterplan

November 2026

Comhairle Contae Ros Comáin
Roscommon County Council

dwg.

reddy a+u

Document Control

Document Title	Ballaghaderreen I The Plots Masterplan
Company	dwg.
Revision & Date Issued	1st Issue - 20.10.2026
Written by	JA/MG
Reviewed by	MK

Table of Contents

dwg.

01 Introduction 04

1.1 Purpose of the Masterplan

02 Understanding the Site 06

2.1 Location and Town Context
2.2 Connections to the Town Centre and Neighbourhoods
2.3 Historic Development and Heritage
2.4 Planning and Regeneration Context
2.5 Existing Site Uses and Adjoining Development
2.6 Existing and Committed Projects
2.7 Landownership
2.8 Topography, Drainage and Water Features
2.9 Trees and Vegetation
2.10 Ecological Baseline
2.11 Townscape, Frontages and Building Heights
2.12 Existing Movement, Parking and Servicing

03 Engagement 26

3.1 Fact-Finding Engagement
3.2 Testing Ideas and the Draft Masterplan

04 Masterplan 32

4.1 Framework Diagram
4.2 Illustrative Plan and 3D Visualisation
4.3 Historic and Cultural Interpretation
4.4 Trees, Planting and Biodiversity
4.5 Access, Connections and Movement
4.6 Recreation and Play
4.7 Gathering, Events and Activities
4.8 Community and Growing Spaces
4.9 Development Opportunities
4.10 Boundaries, Safety and Management
4.11 Materials and Character

05 Delivery and Phasing 54

5.1 Delivery Approach
5.2 Landowner Engagement
5.3 Enabling Infrastructure and Phasing
5.4 Funding and Delivery Partnerships
5.5 Management and Stewardship

01

Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Masterplan

Ballaghaderreen is a market and cathedral town in north-west County Roscommon, providing employment, education, retail and community services for its surrounding rural area. Its historic streets, local businesses and strong community networks provide a foundation for regeneration. However, vacancy, dereliction and reduced footfall have weakened the town centre, while development and activity have increasingly shifted towards its periphery.

The Building a Better Ballaghaderreen Community & Economic Plan 2020–2025 identified the need to strengthen the local economy, improve the town's appearance and encourage more people to use its centre. It highlighted opening up the Plots as an opportunity to provide recreation space connected to the town.

The subsequent Urban Design Analysis & Appraisal, which drew on the Town Centre Health Check, reinforces these priorities. It identified underused backlands, inactive frontages, barriers to accessing the Plots and limited recreational space within the town core. It recommended improvements to the Plots and surrounding laneways to create a more welcoming, accessible destination.

Alongside these challenges, Ballaghaderreen has experienced substantial population growth and has become an increasingly diverse community, including people who have settled from overseas. This strengthens the need for inclusive public spaces and facilities that support recreation, wellbeing and opportunities for people to meet. The town centre public realm enhancement works, now nearing completion, represent an important step in regeneration. The Plots masterplan builds on this investment, extending improvements into the backlands and connecting new amenities with the town's streets, businesses and surrounding neighbourhoods.

1.1 Introduction
Purpose of the Masterplan

Roscommon County Council commissioned this masterplan to establish a coordinated framework for the long-term development of the Plots. The approximately 9.5-acre site lies behind Market Square, Main Street and Pound Street and includes mature trees, historic laneways and a spring well. Its central location offers opportunities for recreation, community activity and complementary development.

The masterplan aims to make Ballaghaderreen a better place to live, work and visit by:

- Creating safe, welcoming and accessible spaces for all ages and abilities.
- Protecting and enhancing landscape, ecological and heritage assets.
- Improving walking and cycling connections to the town centre and adjoining neighbourhoods.
- Identifying an appropriate mix of uses that supports community needs, local businesses and town centre activity.
- Coordinating existing projects, future development and enabling infrastructure.
- Establishing a phased approach that responds to landownership and delivery opportunities.

The masterplan provides a framework to guide public and private investment and inform the subsequent planning and detailed design of individual projects.



02

Understanding the Site

2.1 Location and Town Context

2.2 Connections to the Town Centre and Neighbourhoods

2.3 Historic Development and Heritage

2.4 Planning and Regeneration Context

2.5 Existing Site Uses and Adjoining Development

2.6 Existing and Committed Projects

2.7 Landownership

2.8 Topography, Drainage and Water Features

2.9 Trees and Vegetation

2.10 Ecological Baseline

2.11 Townscape, Frontages and Building Heights

2.12 Existing Movement, Parking and Servicing

2.1 Understanding the Site
Location and Town Context

The Plots occupy approximately 9.5 acres of backland within the historic core of Ballaghaderreen, north-west County Roscommon. The site lies immediately behind the properties fronting Market Square, Main Street and Pound Street, with Gleann Ard housing estate adjoining its southern boundary.

Market Square forms the principal focus of the town centre, where Main Street, Pound Street and Barrack Street meet. Shops, businesses, homes and community services line these streets, placing the Plots close to the town's everyday activities. Dillon House, accommodating the public library, overlooks Market Square, while St Nathy's Cathedral and College form prominent landmarks within the wider town centre.

Despite this central position, the Plots are largely concealed behind the surrounding street frontages. They form a substantial area of predominantly undeveloped land within the established urban fabric, contrasting with the closely arranged buildings of the adjoining streets.

This location gives the Plots an important role in town centre regeneration. Their improvement can introduce green space, recreation and community activity close to existing services, complement the town centre public realm works and support the reuse and development of adjoining properties.



2.2 Understanding the Site
Connections to the Town Centre and Neighbourhoods

The Plots are connected to the surrounding streets by a network of historic laneways passing between and behind the town centre properties. These routes provide links from Market Square and the adjoining Main Street, Pound Street and Barrack Street area into the backlands. Within the Plots, the distinctive radial pathways converge on the spring well.

The laneways are an important part of the town's character and provide short routes between the main streets and the site. However, their entrances are not always readily apparent. Enclosing walls, overgrown vegetation, parked vehicles and limited signage reduce visibility and ease of access. The Town Centre First urban design appraisal also identifies concerns about the attractiveness and perceived safety of these routes.

Gleann Ard adjoins the southern boundary, creating an opportunity for a more direct connection between the neighbourhood, the Plots and the town centre. The alignment and delivery of this link will need to be coordinated with the estate's future regeneration and relevant landownership arrangements.

The connections diagram distinguishes existing entrances and routes from potential future links. It provides the basis for identifying where access, visibility and continuity can be improved while retaining the historic laneway network.



2.3 Understanding the Site
Historic Development and Heritage

The Garden Quarter

The Plots form a distinctive historic garden quarter behind Ballaghaderreen's principal streets. The land was used for growing vegetables in individual gardens associated with town centre houses. These gardens were physically separate from the houses they served, with access provided through the surrounding laneways.

The Town Centre First urban design appraisal identifies the radial layout of the Plots on mapping surveyed in 1837, with its continued presence on mapping dated 1900. The land was arranged in triangular plots separated by pathways converging on a central well. This surviving pattern is an important part of the town's historic layout and records the relationship between its street-front properties and productive backlands.

The Spring Well

The spring well was formerly a water supply for local residents and is the focal point of the pathway network. The urban design appraisal records that Mrs Anne Deane, a member of the locally prominent Dillon–Duff family, donated the well for the benefit of the townspeople.
The well's significance extends beyond its physical structure. Together with the converging paths, it represents a shared resource around which everyday journeys and encounters took place. Its setting and relationship with the surrounding routes are therefore central to understanding the site's heritage.

Community Use and Living Memory

Oral histories gathered through The Well Gathering community project in June 2026 describe the Plots as an extension of town life. Residents recalled families growing vegetables in individually fenced gardens with their own gates. These accounts provide evidence of how the landscape was used and valued within living memory.

The site has also accommodated cultural activity, including the Secret Village music and arts festival, recorded in the urban design appraisal. Its history encompasses food growing, water collection, movement and community gathering.

Physical Features and Implications for the Masterplan

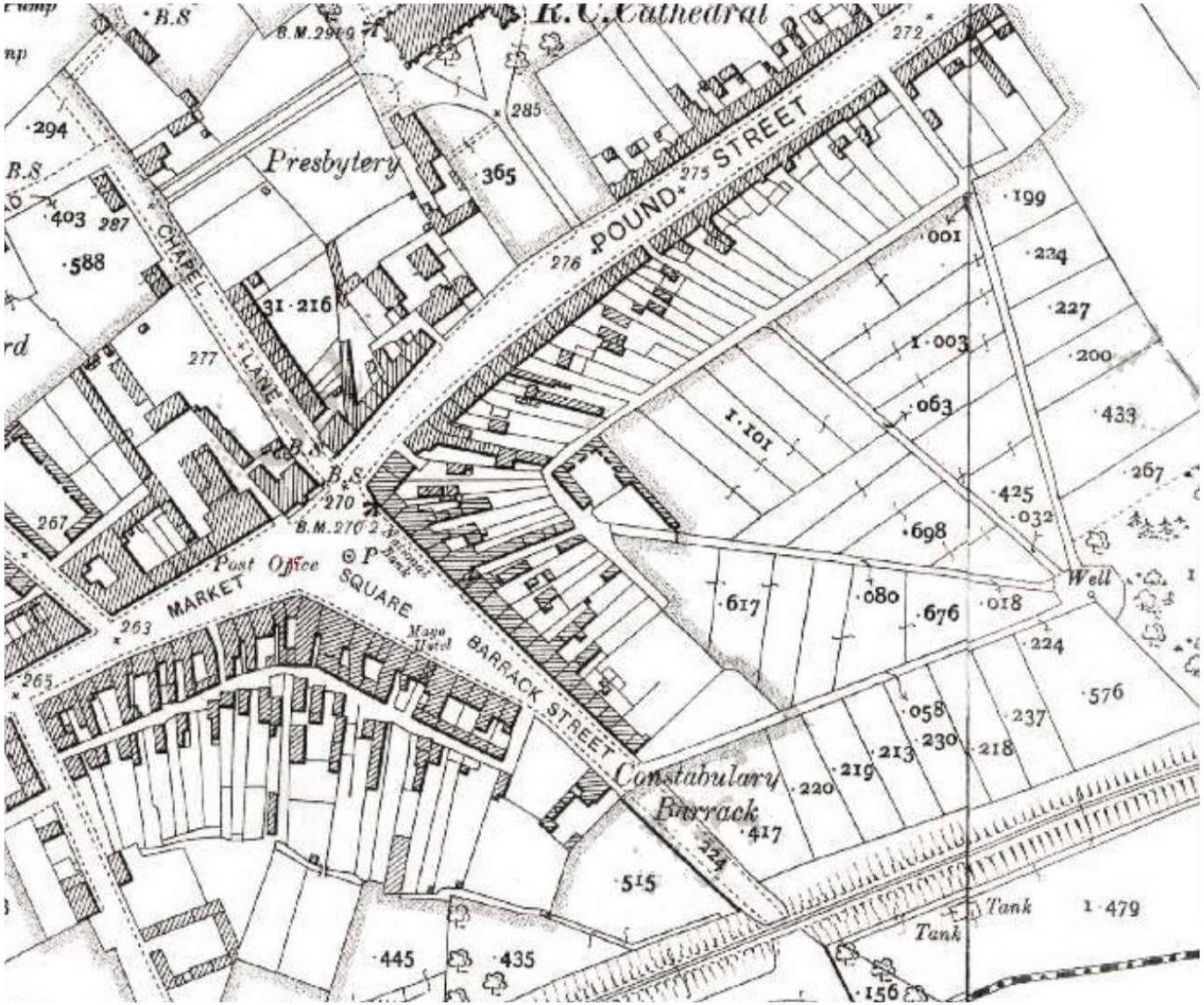
The principal heritage features are the spring well, radial pathways, historic laneways and surviving boundary walls. Together, they retain evidence of the former garden layout and its connections to the town. Mature trees and vegetation contribute to the present landscape character, although their age and relationship with the historic gardens require separate assessment.

The masterplan should retain and reinforce this distinctive structure. Historic routes should guide the path network, the well should remain a recognisable focal point, and surviving walls should be assessed for retention and repair. Community growing and interpretation offer opportunities to express the site's former use. New interventions should maintain the legibility of the garden quarter while enabling accessible, everyday use.

2.3 Understanding the Site
Historic Development and Heritage



Historical map of Ballaghaderreen, published 1839



Ballaghaderreen historical map, c.1900

2.4 Understanding the Site
Planning and Regeneration Context

Development Plan and Town Core Zoning

The Ballaghaderreen Settlement Plan, contained within Volume II of the *Roscommon County Development Plan 2022–2028*, provides the planning framework for the site. Its strategy promotes a compact town centre, making better use of vacant buildings, infill sites and underused backlands to support regeneration.

The Plots lie within the Town Core zone. Policy BN 4 supports a high-quality, well-landscaped and accessible environment accommodating an appropriate mix of residential, commercial, service, tourism, enterprise, public and community uses. This provides a basis for combining public open space and community amenities with complementary development, subject to the zoning provisions and assessment of individual proposals.

Policies BN 2 and BN 7 support the renewal of vacant and derelict sites and appropriate mixed-use infill development. General Policy Objectives GPO 8 and GPO 9 support improved permeability and multifunctional public spaces, while GPO 16–19 address the protection and enhancement of green infrastructure, biodiversity and walking and cycling networks.

Adjoining Conservation and Residential Areas

The Plots sit immediately east of the Architectural Conservation Area centred on Market Square. Their western approaches connect with this historic streetscape. Improvements to entrances, laneways and adjoining development should respect its character, scale, materials and setting.

Land zoned New Residential lies to the east, while existing housing, including Gleann Ard, adjoins the site to the south. The eastern designation identifies land for potential residential development; it does not establish that development has been approved or delivered. These relationships create opportunities to connect existing and future neighbourhoods with the town centre, while requiring careful consideration of boundaries, privacy, overlooking and residential amenity.

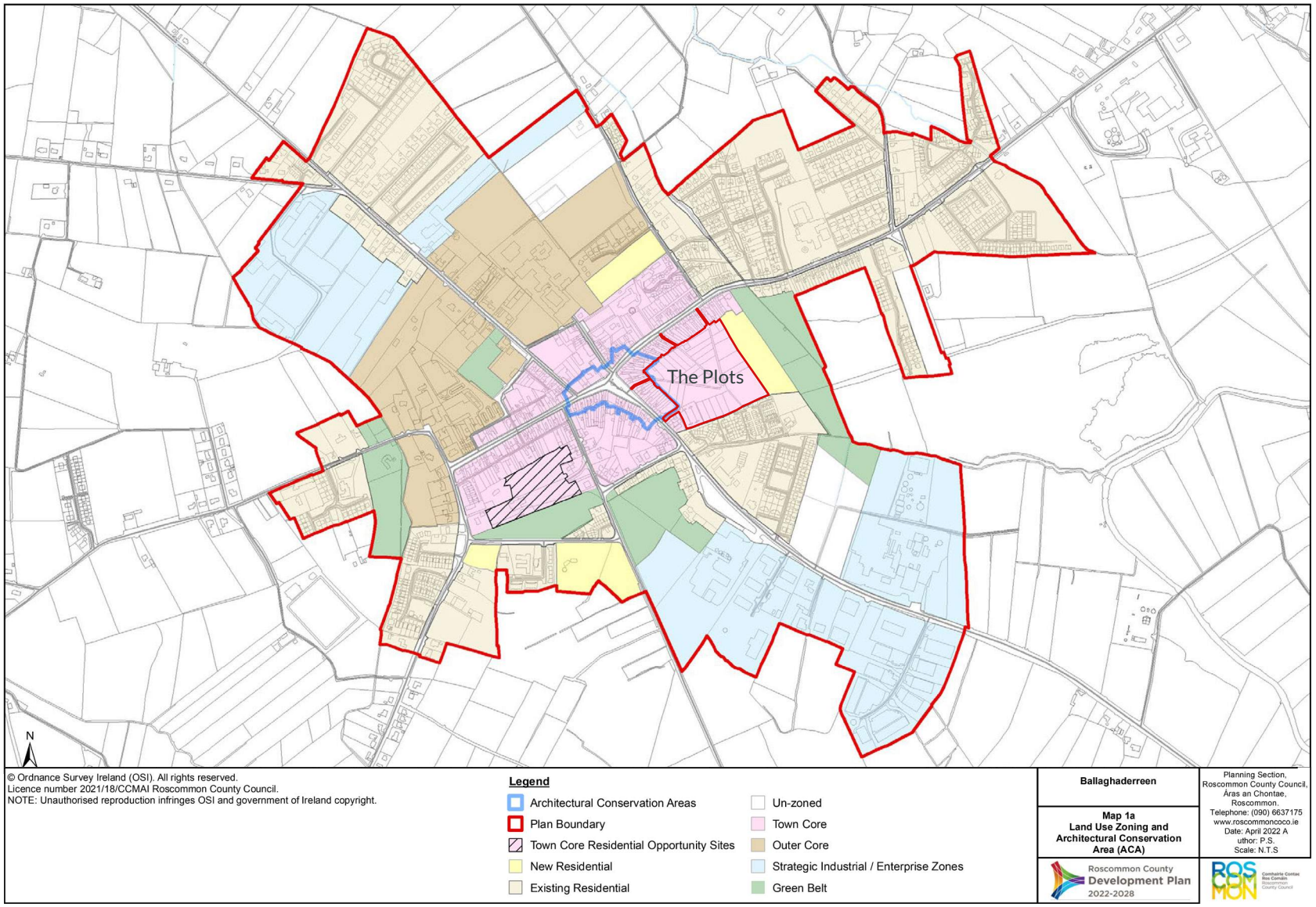
Map BN4 identifies the Plots within the wider area of regeneration lands. The masterplan therefore needs to address both the site itself and its role in coordinating improvements across adjoining land.

Regeneration Priorities

The Community & Economic Plan and subsequent Town Centre First urban design appraisal identify the Plots and surrounding laneways as opportunities to strengthen town centre activity, improve access to green space and celebrate local heritage. The masterplan brings these priorities together with the Town Park, parking and town centre public realm projects.

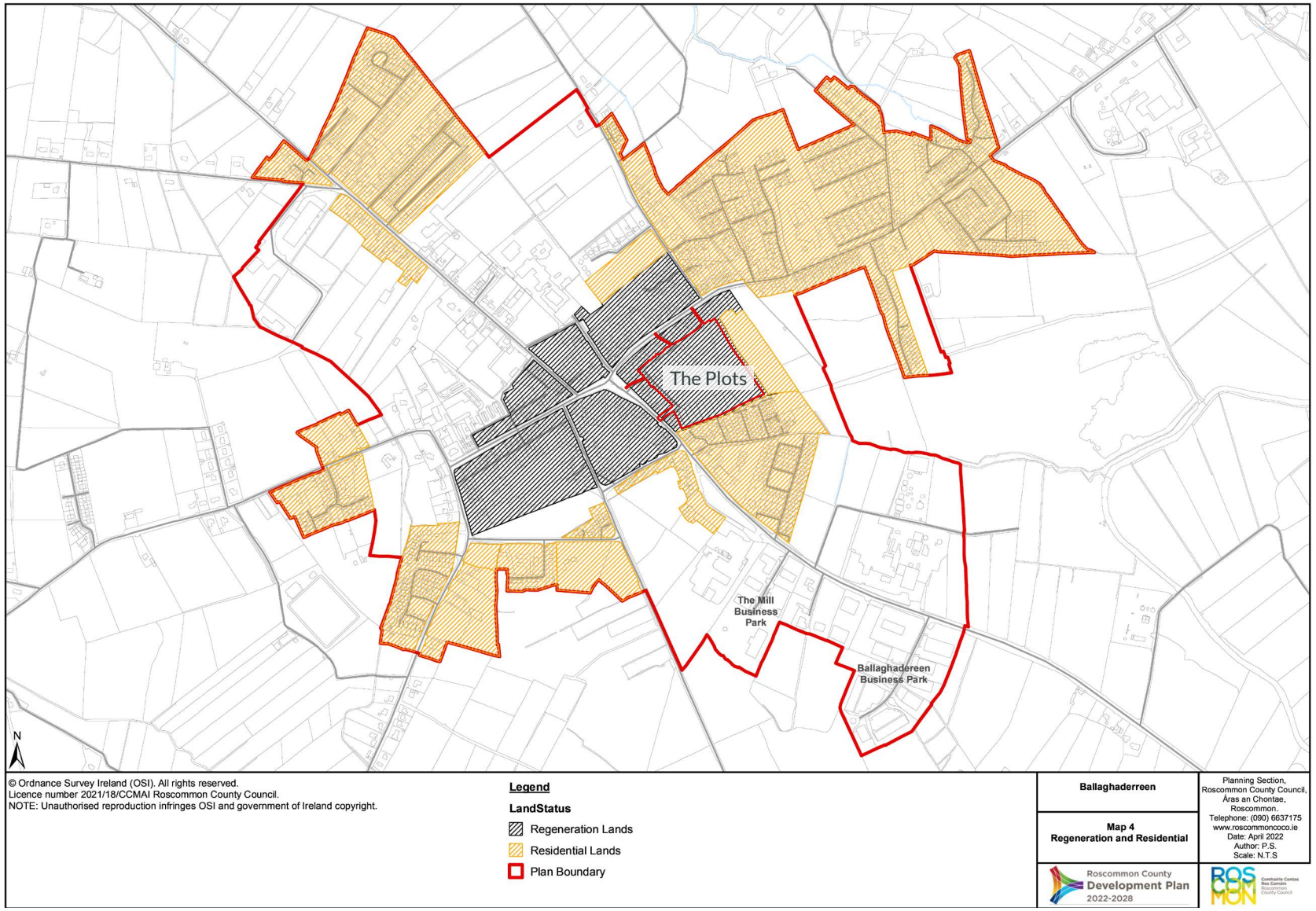
Its role is to guide coordinated investment and phased delivery within the planning framework. Individual projects will require the relevant planning assessment and consents, informed by their effects on heritage, ecology, drainage, access and neighbouring properties.

2.4 Understanding the Site
Planning and Regeneration Context



Source: Roscommon Development Plan 2022-2028

2.4 Understanding the Site
Planning and Regeneration Context



Source: Roscommon Development Plan 2022-2028

2.5 Understanding the Site
Existing Site Uses and Adjoining Development

Existing Uses and Condition

Most of the Plots are currently unused and unmanaged, with only a small number of individual gardens remaining in use or receiving maintenance. Remnant fences and plot boundaries fragment the site and restrict movement between areas.

The historic radial pathways are largely impassable because of overgrown vegetation, fallen trees and accumulated obstructions. Although their underlying pattern remains identifiable, they no longer provide a usable network through the site. The spring well can still be located, but its structure and setting are neglected and require assessment and restoration.

A small industrial building within the northern edge of the Plots is used for storage. Parking occupies the western corner. Beyond these uses, there is limited regular activity within the site.









2.5 Understanding the Site
Existing Site Uses and Adjoining Development

Adjoining Buildings and Boundaries

The northern and western edges are predominantly formed by the backs of town centre buildings, rear gardens, yards and service entrances. High walls, large gates, poorly maintained boundaries and some apparently disused buildings create an enclosed and unwelcoming environment along the adjoining laneways. These edges provide limited overlooking and few active frontages facing the Plots.

Existing housing at Gleann Ard adjoins the southern boundary. Future improvements will need to respond to neighbouring homes, protect residential amenity and allow for coordinated connections with the estate.









2.5 Understanding the Site
Existing Site Uses and Adjoining Development



2.5 Understanding the Site
Existing Site Uses and Adjoining Development

Ecology

The Plots contain a mosaic of mature trees, woodland, scrub and grassland, reflecting the gradual natural regeneration of former gardens. The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal identifies mixed broadleaved woodland dominated by hawthorn and sycamore, with mature horse chestnut and ash, alongside hedgerows and treelines. Wet grassland and a vegetated drainage channel add further habitat variety in the south-eastern area.

Dense vegetation makes parts of the site difficult to access. The historic radial pathways remain identifiable, but many are obstructed by overgrowth, fallen trees and fly-tipping. The spring well is currently an understated feature within this landscape, with potential to become a restored focal point.

Trees, stone walls and vegetation provide potential bat roosting, foraging and commuting habitat, while a range of birds was recorded during the ecological walkover. Japanese knotweed was also identified. These features require a sensitive approach to reopening the site, balancing improved access and visibility with protection of its ecological character.









2.6 Understanding the Site
Existing and Committed Projects

Town Park — Under Construction

The Town Park is currently under construction on a triangular portion of the Plots. It will introduce a maintained public space and recreational activity, providing an initial focus for regeneration.

The park represents a starting point for the wider improvement of the Plots. The masterplan will connect it with the surrounding landscape, historic pathways and future amenities to create a coherent public space.





2.6 Understanding the Site
Existing and Committed Projects

Car Park and Access Improvements

The masterplan incorporates a new car park in the western corner of the site and widening of the western access laneway, both of which have received statutory approval. The widened laneway will connect the existing southern car park with the proposed western car park, improving vehicle access.

These works form an integral part of the masterplan's access strategy, alongside coordinated pedestrian routes, landscape improvements and connections to adjoining uses.



2.7 Understanding the Site
Landownership

The Plots are divided into numerous separately owned parcels, reflecting the historic arrangement of individual gardens associated with town centre properties. This fragmented ownership is a significant consideration for the coordinated improvement of the site.

Roscommon County Council owns the triangular land accommodating the Town Park and the existing car park in the southern corner. Most of the remaining land is held by private owners. The ownership drawing identifies individual folios alongside areas marked for reference to the Registry of Deeds, where ownership information requires further clarification.

The masterplan provides an overall framework across these parcels. Delivery will depend on engagement with landowners and acquisition of the lands required for paths, landscape improvements, infrastructure and other proposed uses.



2.8 Understanding the Site
Topography, Drainage and Water Features

Topography

The site falls broadly from the northern and north-western edges towards the south and south-east. The topographical survey records local changes in level, including banks, ditches and uneven ground within the former plots. The site therefore comprises a varied landform rather than a single, uniform slope.

These level changes influence the alignment of paths and connections between the surrounding laneways, Town Park and adjoining neighbourhoods. Accessible routes will need to respond to the existing contours, with particular attention to entrance levels and steeper sections. Working with the landform will help minimise excavation and disturbance to trees and historic features.

Drainage and Wet Ground

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal records a drainage ditch in the southern part of the site, with water flowing south towards Gleann Ard during the April 2026 survey. The channel was heavily vegetated, limiting inspection. Wet grassland and waterlogged areas were also recorded to its east in the south-eastern part of the site.

These findings indicate that local drainage and ground conditions are important considerations for the layout. The channel's alignment, outfall, seasonal flows and relationship with surrounding drainage require further investigation.

Spring Well and Design Implications

The historic spring well is a distinct water feature and the focal point of the radial pathway network. Its restoration will require assessment of the surviving structure, water source and surrounding ground conditions.

The masterplan should retain the drainage channel and respond to wet areas when locating paths, recreation spaces and development. Changes to levels and new surfacing should avoid obstructing existing drainage or increasing runoff towards neighbouring properties.



2.9 Understanding the Site
Trees and Vegetation

Trees and vegetation give the Plots much of their landscape character. The site contains mature specimen trees, groups of trees, self-seeded growth and extensive scrub that has developed as the former gardens have fallen out of use.

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal identifies mixed broadleaved woodland dominated by hawthorn and sycamore, with mature horse chestnut and ash also present. Treelines occur along the eastern boundary and within the site. Scrub includes bramble, hawthorn, willow and blackthorn, while grassland and more open areas provide a varied vegetation structure.

Several mature trees are visually prominent and offer opportunities to establish the character of future public spaces. However, dense undergrowth and self-seeded trees obscure the historic plot pattern, restrict movement and reduce visibility along former pathways. Fallen trees also obstruct some routes.

The masterplan should retain valuable mature trees and establish a balanced approach to vegetation management. Selective clearance can reopen routes and improve visibility while retaining habitat areas and the site's green character. Scrub and self-seeded growth should be assessed for their ecological and landscape contribution before removal.



2.10 Understanding the Site
Ecological Baseline

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) was completed by Enviroplan Consulting Ltd. in April 2026, comprising a desk study and site walkover on 22 April. Its principal findings are:

- **Habitats**: Mixed broadleaved woodland, scrub, hedgerows, treelines, amenity grassland, wet grassland, a drainage ditch, stone walls and built surfaces form a varied habitat mosaic.
- **Bats**: Vegetation provides suitable commuting and foraging habitat. Some trees have moderate roost potential, and stone walls contain potentially suitable roosting crevices.
- **Birds**: Seventeen species were recorded, including amber-listed house sparrow and willow warbler. No breeding activity was observed during the walkover.
- **Other fauna**: No evidence of other mammals, amphibians or common lizard was recorded. The drainage ditch may nevertheless provide habitat for amphibians.
- **Invasive species**: Japanese knotweed was recorded within the site, together with abundant sycamore regeneration.
- **Designated sites**: Tullaghanrock Bog SAC lies approximately 2.2 km east of the site. Potential effects on European sites require consideration through AA screening.

The PEA recommends further bat and tree-roost assessment, an invasive species survey and management plan, and aquatic ecological assessment of the drainage channel. These findings should inform vegetation management, lighting, drainage and the location of proposed works.



Source: Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report

2.11 Understanding the Site
Townscape, Frontages and Building Heights

Built Form and Frontages

The surrounding town centre streets are predominantly lined by two- and three-storey buildings, with lower rear extensions, sheds and outbuildings facing the Plots. Housing at Gleann Ard forms a generally two-storey residential edge to the south.

The Plots are largely bordered by the backs of properties. Rear yards, blank walls, gates, fences and storage buildings create extensive inactive edges along the northern and western laneways. Few entrances or occupied rooms address these routes directly, limiting activity and natural surveillance.

Overlooking and Privacy

Although some rear windows face towards the site, intervening buildings, boundaries and dense vegetation limit overlooking. Improving the relationship between adjoining properties and public routes will be important to creating a safer, more welcoming environment.

These improvements must also respect the privacy of existing homes and gardens. Boundary treatments should provide clear separation between public and private areas while avoiding unnecessarily enclosed or visually hostile routes.

Enclosure and Visibility

Trees and vegetation provide much of the enclosure within the Plots. The principal issue is restricted visibility: dense growth conceals paths, obscures entrances and makes it difficult to understand where routes lead or see other users.

Selective vegetation management and clearer entrances can improve sightlines while retaining the site's green character and habitat value. Future development should help define and overlook public spaces, with building heights responding to neighbouring properties and the historic townscape.





2.12 Understanding the Site
Existing Movement, Parking and Servicing

Walking and Cycling

Pedestrian access is available from Barrack Street and Pound Street via the existing entrances and perimeter laneway. Movement through the interior is restricted by dense vegetation, fallen trees and remnant fences, leaving much of the historic pathway network inaccessible.

There is limited cycling activity and no dedicated cycling provision within the Plots. Improved routes and cycle parking could encourage access by bicycle as the site becomes more actively used.

Accessibility and Servicing

Overgrown routes, uneven ground, changes in level and constrained entrances limit accessibility through the site. A continuous accessible pedestrian network is required to connect entrances, parking and public spaces.

The perimeter laneway also serves rear yards and the storage building. Future improvements should accommodate necessary vehicle and servicing access while providing clear, safe routes for pedestrians and cyclists.

Vehicle Access and Parking

The existing southern car park has a two-way vehicular entrance from Barrack Street. A further vehicular access is located at the northern corner, incorporating a single-width section. The other two entrances are pedestrian-only.

Project team observations indicate that the existing car park generally operates below capacity, with spaces available for much of the time. This provides an opportunity to support increased use of the Plots, although parking demand will need to be considered as new activities are introduced.



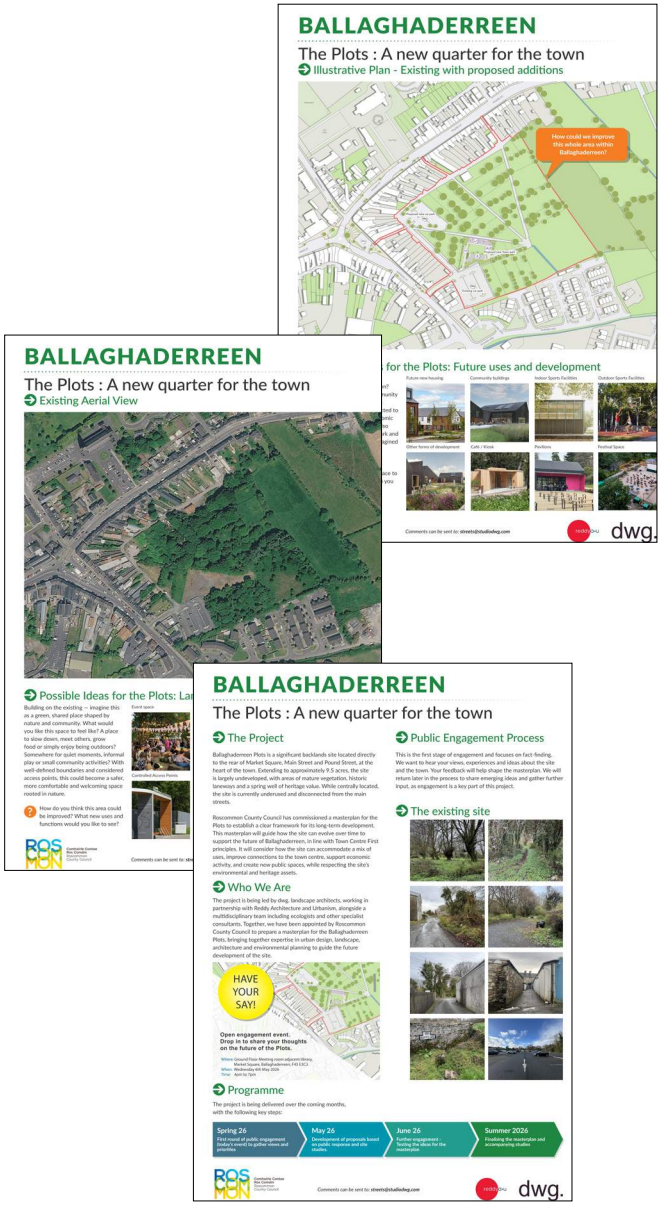


03

Engagement

3.1 Fact-Finding Engagement

3.2 Testing Ideas and the Draft Masterplan



3.1 Engagement
Fact-Finding Engagement

Community and stakeholder engagement has informed the masterplan through two stages: initial fact-finding, followed by testing the emerging ideas and draft masterplan.

Individual meetings with stakeholders supplemented the public sessions, providing further insight into local needs, existing activities and opportunities for the site. Community members contributed information and documents and showed a strong interest in shaping the future of the Plots. The engagement summaries record these contributions and the feedback received.

The first session gathered local knowledge, experiences and aspirations before the masterplan proposals were developed. Participants were invited to describe how they use and perceive the Plots, identify concerns and valued features, and suggest activities and improvements.

The findings helped establish the project objectives and informed the emerging design. The accompanying engagement boards and summary present the principal themes raised.



3.1 Engagement
Fact-Finding Engagement

01 Safe & Welcoming Public Space
The Plots should become a safe, accessible and welcoming part of the town centre that people feel comfortable using throughout the day and evening. Improving visibility, lighting, accessibility and activity within the site will be critical to addressing concerns around antisocial behaviour, dumping and safety.
This theme includes:
- Lighting and Active Surveillance
- Accessible routes and entrances
- Improved sightlines and opened-up spaces
- Safer laneways and connections
- Passive surveillance and active uses
- Management and maintenance considerations

02 A green Park for Ballaghaderreen
There is strong support for the Plots to remain predominantly green and become a central public open space for the town. The site's mature trees, biodiversity, informal character and historic growing landscape are seen as unique and valuable assets that should shape the future vision.
This theme includes:
- Retention of mature trees and green character
- Biodiversity and habitat enhancement
- Informal lawns and parkland spaces
- Planting and landscape structure
- Allotments and growing spaces
- Nature-based and low-maintenance design

03 Walking, Running & Active Travel Connections
The site should become the focus of a wider walking and cycling network connecting the town centre, surrounding neighbourhoods and wider landscapes. There is strong support for looped walks, greenway connections and safe traffic-free routes for all ages.
This theme includes:
- Looped walking routes
- Greenway and railway walk connections
- Parkrun and running trails
- Improved pedestrian and cycle access
- Links to the Lung River and wider landscape
- Stronger town centre connectivity

04 Space for All Ages & Abilities
The Plots should provide inclusive spaces that support children, teenagers, older people and people with disabilities. The site should cater for both active and passive recreation and provide opportunities for people to meet, play, rest and enjoy nature.
This theme includes:
- Children's play
- Teen and youth spaces
- Age-friendly seating and rest areas
- Wheelchair-accessible routes
- Sensory and quiet gardens
- Intergenerational spaces and activities

05 Recreation, Health & Wellbeing
The Plots should support healthier lifestyles and community wellbeing through opportunities for exercise, recreation and informal activity. Both physical and mental wellbeing were recurring themes throughout the engagement process.
This theme includes:
- Outdoor recreation and fitness
- Informal sports and "kick around" spaces
- Trim trails and exercise routes
- Walking and running circuits
- Quiet reflection areas
- Sheltered seating and wellbeing spaces

06 Community Hub, Arts & Recreation
There is strong and recurring support for a multifunctional community building that could support sports, arts, culture, youth activities and wider community use. Many respondents identified a lack of indoor community, sports and cultural facilities within Ballaghaderreen and saw the Plots as a potential location for a facility that could anchor activity throughout the year.
This theme includes:
- Multipurpose community building
- Indoor sports and recreation facilities
- Boxing club and sports hall accommodation
- Arts, exhibition and creative spaces
- Youth and community facilities
- Café and social spaces
- Flexible community/event rooms

3.1 Engagement
Fact-Finding Engagement

07 Community Events & Cultural Life

The Plots should become an active civic space capable of hosting festivals, markets, performances and community gatherings. There is strong interest in creating a vibrant destination that supports local culture, creativity and year-round activity.

This theme includes:

- Amphitheatre or performance space
- Markets and food events
- Festivals and community gatherings
- Covered event and seating spaces
- Outdoor stages and performance areas
- Craft vendors and cultural programming

08 Heritage, Identity & Storytelling

The Plots has significant historic and cultural value for Ballaghaderreen and should celebrate its identity, history and landscape character. The well, historic pathways and former growing plots are seen as defining features that should inform the masterplan.

This theme includes:

- Protection and celebration of the well
- Retention of historic pathways and structure
- Interpretation of local history and heritage
- Public art and storytelling opportunities
- Materials and design reflecting local identity
- Celebrating the “secret garden” character of the site

09 Town Centre Regeneration & Connectivity

The Plots should help reconnect and revitalise the wider town centre by improving movement, activity and connections between backlands, laneways and the main streets. The site has the potential to become a major catalyst for wider regeneration.

This theme includes:

- Stronger links to Market Square and Main Street
- Improved laneways and gateways
- Activation of backlands and edges
- Integration with existing businesses and facilities
- Improved parking and access strategy
- Supporting town centre vitality and footfall

10 Deliverable, Managed & Phased Growth

The masterplan should be realistic, deliverable and capable of evolving over time. Long-term management, maintenance, landownership and phased delivery will be critical to ensuring the success of the project.

This theme includes:

- Phased implementation strategy
- Management and stewardship
- Maintenance considerations
- Respect for existing landownership
- Partnership and funding opportunities
- Short-term and long-term delivery projects

3.2 Engagement
Testing Ideas and the Draft Masterplan

The second session presented the emerging ideas and draft masterplan for feedback. Participants were invited to consider the proposed uses, landscape improvements, connections and approach to delivery, and identify any changes or omissions.

The proposals were well received, with positive feedback on the overall direction. Comments from this session, together with stakeholder discussions and written submissions, informed the refinement of the masterplan. The accompanying boards and engagement summary record the proposals presented and responses received.



3.2 Engagement
Testing Ideas and the Draft Masterplan

Key Feedback and Design Responses:

01 Protect The Green Character
Retain valuable mature trees and woodland habitat, including understorey and natural regeneration where appropriate. Use arboricultural and ecological assessments to guide selective clearance, path alignment and protection of soils and roots.

02 Provide Varied Walking Experiences
Restore the historic radial paths and provide a looped walk with opportunities for shorter and longer routes. Explore wider connections that could support running and future organised activities.

03 Celebrate Heritage
Restore the well and interpret the individual plots, food growing and local memories. Show the Town Park sculpture on the masterplan and explore complementary public art and an artist-led trail.

04 Strengthen Planting and Biodiversity
Use predominantly native and wildlife-supporting planting, with opportunities for seasonal bulbs and a bluebell walk where conditions are suitable. Adopt a pesticide-free maintenance approach wherever practicable, with any specialist invasive species treatment considered separately.

05 Develop Community Growing Opportunities
Coordinate proposals with the existing community garden and explore an orchard, shared growing and educational activities that reflect the site's history.

06 Provide Inclusive Recreation and Play
Complement the Town Park with informal recreation, natural play and provision for children aged 6–12. Review opportunities for swings and outdoor fitness equipment without overwhelming the landscape.

07 Support Everyday Comfort
Provide varied seating, accessible benches and sheltered gathering places throughout the park. Explore a community book cupboard and provision for refreshments through a coffee dock or serviced coffee-van space.

08 Enable Community Events
Provide a flexible gathering space around the well, with power connections to support performances, storytelling, art and small events. Investigate drinking-water provision, including the feasibility and water quality implications of using the well.

09 Balance development with public enjoyment
Locate potential buildings around the southern and eastern edges, creating frontages that address the park. Refine their uses, scale and setbacks to protect the green core, neighbouring privacy and the park's identity as a shared community space.

10 Clarify Access and Ownership
Engage directly with plot owners, confirm existing vehicle access and reported rights of way, and explain proposed land agreements. Clarify how improvements to rear property edges could introduce overlooking and activity.

11 Coordinate Movement and Parking
Improve constrained entrances and integrate the approved parking works with safe pedestrian and cycle routes. Keep general vehicle movement outside the park interior while accommodating necessary servicing, emergency and accessible access.

12 Establish Safety and Stewardship
Develop estate railing, gates, lighting and active surveillance at entrances alongside ecological considerations. Agree maintenance responsibilities, resources and access management, and involve the community in choosing a name for the park, including consideration of "Way of the Little Oak".

04

Masterplan

4.1 Framework Diagram

4.2 Illustrative Plan and 3D Visualisation

4.3 Historic and Cultural Interpretation

4.4 Trees, Planting and Biodiversity

4.5 Access, Connections and Movement

4.6 Recreation and Play

4.7 Gathering, Events and Activities

4.8 Community and Growing Spaces

4.9 Development Opportunities

4.10 Boundaries, Safety and Management

4.11 Materials and Character

4.1 Masterplan Framework Diagram

The framework establishes a long-term vision for the Plots as a connected park and development quarter within the town centre. It retains the predominantly green core, restores the historic pathway network and locates future development around the edges to support activity and overlooking.



1. The Plots Living Park: a dynamic green space that offers a range of recreational uses and celebrates the site's heritaghe and identity
2. Looped walk through the park
3. Kickabout area linked to the Town Park
4. Potential additional play pocket areas
5. Traffic calmed streets providing access to the site and car parks
6. Turning circle / Turning area
7. Enhanced lane to create an attractive homezone or mews
8. Estate railing with gated accesses to prevent vehicular access, fly tipping and antisocial behaviour in the parkland
9. Enhanced pedestrian access into the site
10. Retained mature trees
11. Retained historic lanes, enhanced to create pathways
12. Gathering / Event space and focal point at the Well
13. Bridge over retained watercourse
14. Active travel connection to the Gleann Ard estate after regeneration
15. Community gardens and spaces at the heart of the Plots
16. Indicative parking bays

4.1 Masterplan Framework Diagram

A Living Park

The central landscape will be sensitively managed to retain valuable mature trees and habitats while reopening the site for public use. The three radial pathways will be restored as accessible routes converging on the spring well. A looped walk will connect recreation and play spaces, community growing areas, quieter gardens and a gathering and event space.

The Town Park under construction forms an initial focus for activity. Its integration with the wider landscape will create a complementary range of spaces for recreation, wellbeing and community use.

Connected Access and Infrastructure

The framework incorporates the existing southern car park and approved western car park. The western laneway will be upgraded to improve access to the proposed parking area.

A new road is proposed from the existing southern car park eastwards across the site, then northwards along the eastern edge. This will provide access to currently constrained land, accommodate indicative parking bays and enable future development. Turning areas are proposed to avoid creating a continuous vehicle circuit around the park.

The northern laneway will be enhanced as a quieter, pedestrian-friendly route with a home zone or mews character. Existing connections to the town centre will be improved, with provision for future links to Gleann Ard and residential land to the east.

Active Edges and Future Development

Development opportunities along the southern edge will accommodate uses compatible with Town Core zoning, potentially including economic, community and sports uses. New buildings should address and overlook the park while relating positively to Gleann Ard.

Land zoned New Residential to the east offers a further opportunity for development by others to create an active park edge. Along the north and west, improvements to adjoining properties could introduce entrances, overlooking and activity facing the Plots. Together, these opportunities aim to establish more active frontages around the green core.

A Defined and Managed Park

Estate railing with controlled gates is proposed around the park perimeter to prevent unauthorised vehicle entry while maintaining pedestrian access and visibility. Combined with clearer routes, regular activity and maintenance, this will help discourage dumping and antisocial behaviour.

The framework guides phased improvement over time. Development areas and connections remain indicative and depend on land agreements, further assessment and the relevant consents.

4.2 Masterplan
Illustrative Plan & 3D Visualisation

Illustrative Masterplan

The illustrative masterplan translates the framework into a coordinated layout of paths, landscape spaces, recreation areas and development opportunities. It shows how the Town Park and parking projects can be integrated with the wider improvement of the Plots.



1. An enhanced green space that offers a range of recreational uses
2. Retained historic lanes, enhanced to create pathways
3. Retained mature trees
4. Looped walk through the park
5. Kickabout area linked to the Town Park
6. Potential additional play pockets
7. Gathering / Event space
8. Focal point at the Well
9. Sensory Garden
10. Community Garden
11. Orchard
12. Enhanced pedestrian access to the site
13. Enhanced lane to create an attractive home zone or mews
14. Estate railing with gated access
15. Traffic calmed streets
16. Bridge over retained watercourse
17. Active travel connection to the Gleann Ard estate after regeneration
18. Indicative parking bays
19. Car park
20. Town park
21. Future development in line with town core zoning, may include sports / community / other amenity facilities
22. Zoned residential

The annotations identify the principal components, described in the following sections. Proposed layouts and building footprints are indicative.

4.2 Masterplan
Illustrative Plan & 3D Visualisation

Illustrative Aerial View

The aerial visualisation shows the intended relationship between the retained tree canopy, connected park spaces and potential development around the edges. Buildings, planting and landscape details illustrate the overall character and remain subject to further design.



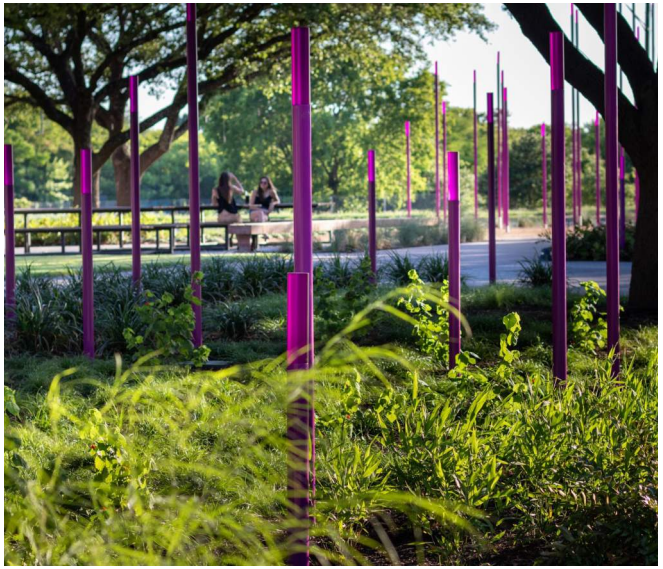
4.3 Masterplan
Historic and Cultural Interpretation

The masterplan uses the historic structure of the Plots to shape the park. The three radial pathways are retained and restored as accessible routes converging on the spring well, preserving the distinctive layout of the former gardens. Restoration of the well and its setting will re-establish it as a focal point, while community growing spaces and the orchard reflect the site's productive history. Interpretation will tell the story of the individual plots and the people who used them, drawing on local memories and community contributions.

A gathering and event space beside the well provides a setting for storytelling, performances, exhibitions and community celebrations, while remaining available for everyday use. The Town Park sculpture will form part of the wider cultural landscape, with opportunities for further public art and an artist-led trail developed with local creative groups. Together, these elements make the site's heritage visible and accessible while supporting continued cultural activity within the Plots.









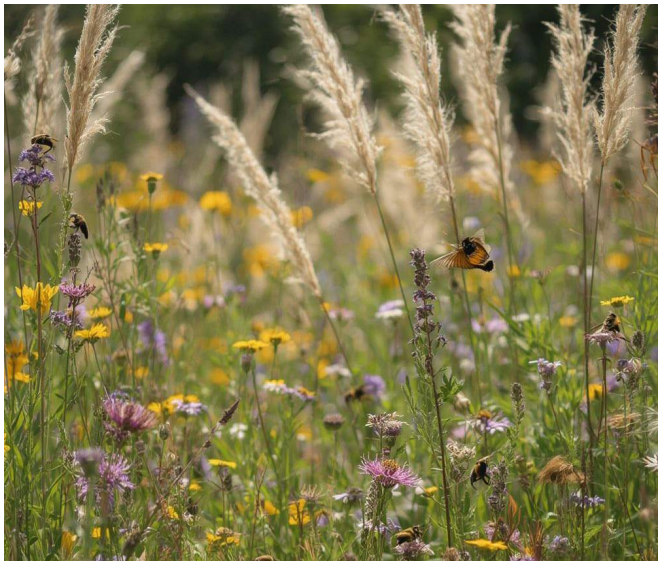
4.4 Masterplan
Trees, Planting and Biodiversity

The masterplan retains the wooded character of the Plots while introducing a more varied and managed landscape. Initial work will focus on removing rubbish and selectively clearing vegetation to reveal historic routes and allow closer inspection of trees and ground conditions. This work will be guided by ecological advice and an initial arboricultural inspection, retaining valuable understorey and natural regeneration. A detailed tree survey will then inform retention, management and removal proposals. Fallen, damaged or dead trees will be assessed individually, with deadwood retained for habitat where safe and appropriate.

Succession planting will establish the next generation of trees, using native species suited to the site. Lower-level planting in lighter areas and woodland margins will provide seasonal interest and food and shelter for wildlife. The community growing spaces and orchard are located principally within existing clearings, limiting disturbance to established woodland. Together with retained wet habitats and sensitive management of the drainage channel, these measures will create a richer habitat mosaic while accommodating recreation and community use.

The masterplan retains the spring well and existing watercourse as key features within the landscape and seeks to work with the site's natural drainage.

New roads, paths and development areas will incorporate swales, rain gardens and permeable surfaces where suitable, managing rainfall close to where it falls and reducing reliance on piped drainage and discharge to sewers. Infiltration will be considered where ground conditions allow, with provision for attenuation and safe overflow where needed. Drainage features will be coordinated with tree root protection areas, existing habitats and site levels to avoid damaging roots or adversely changing ground conditions around retained trees.





4.5 Masterplan
Access, Connections and Movement

Watercourse Crossing

The proposed southern road will cross the existing watercourse on a bridge structure / wide culvert, retaining the channel beneath as an open landscape feature. Restoration of the well, its setting and the watercourse will reinforce their role as natural and heritage assets, allowing visitors to appreciate them from adjoining paths and gathering spaces.

The crossing will be sensitively designed to maintain water flow, protect habitat and minimise disturbance to the channel and its banks. Its alignment, levels and construction will require coordination with ecological, drainage and structural assessments.

Parking

Small groups of parking bays will be accommodated along the proposed roads, providing convenient access to park activities and future buildings. Their arrangement will contribute to the street character around the park while retaining a low-speed environment.

Bays will be integrated with planting and pedestrian crossing points, maintaining clear sightlines and avoiding obstruction of entrances. Accessible spaces will be positioned close to suitable park access points. This provision will complement the existing and approved car parks, with quantities and servicing arrangements refined through detailed design.





4.5 Masterplan
Access, Connections and Movement

Pedestrian Access and Routes

Improved wayfinding from the town centre will establish the Plots as a destination and make its entrances easier to find. Estate railing will define the park boundary, with unlocked, self-closing pedestrian gates at key entrances. Gates will accommodate wheelchair users, mobility aids and pushchairs.

The three historic radial pathways will be cleared and restored as the principal routes through the park, providing direct connections to the well and adjoining spaces. A looped walk will offer a complementary recreational route, connecting play, growing, seating and gathering spaces. Surfaces, gradients and resting points will support accessible use.

These paths will connect with existing laneways, proposed streets and town centre destinations. Future links to Gleann Ard and residential land to the east will extend the network as adjoining regeneration progresses. Cycle parking will be considered at entrances, with cycling within the park managed to maintain pedestrian comfort.

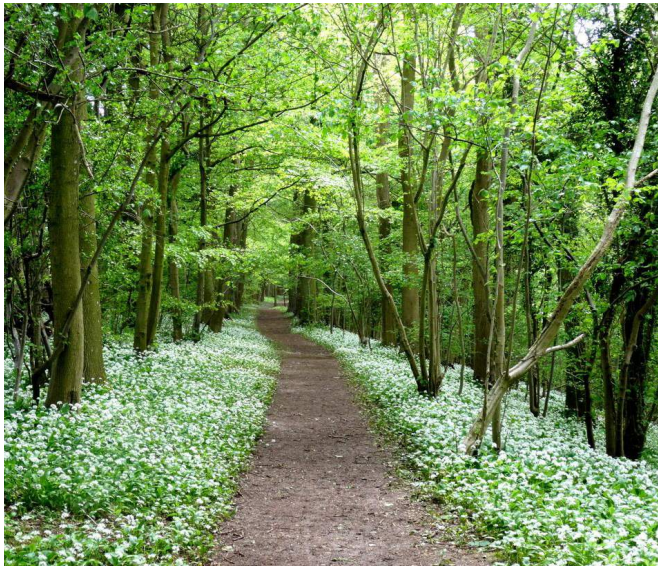
Vehicular Access and Streets

The principal vehicular entrance will remain at Barrack Street, serving the existing southern car park. From this entrance, the approved widening of the western laneway will provide improved access northwards to the proposed western car park.

The northern laneway will be enhanced as a home zone or mews-style street, encouraging low speeds, discouraging through traffic and supporting improvements to adjoining properties. Necessary rear access and servicing will be retained, informed by landowner engagement and confirmation of existing access rights.

New road infrastructure along the southern and eastern edges will provide access to future development plots and currently inaccessible parts of the park perimeter. Delivery may be phased alongside development. Local narrowing, pedestrian crossing points and a coordinated materials palette will create a calm street environment, with layouts and sections developed in accordance with DMURS principles. The design will use restrained carriageway widths, short crossing distances and planting to reinforce low vehicle speeds and prioritise pedestrian movement.

The three existing northern connections will be retained in their appropriate pedestrian or vehicular roles. Longer-term opportunities to widen a suitable northern access or provide an alternative connection through adjoining residential land will be explored, subject to engagement with landowners and further assessment.



4.5 Masterplan
Access, Connections and Movement



Illustrative visualisation of the Northern Laneway

4.6 Masterplan
Recreation and Play

The masterplan builds on the play and recreation provision within the Town Park, adding opportunities for younger children and informal play throughout the wider landscape. Natural play pockets will create a playful environment, using timber elements, logs, boulders and changes in level to encourage climbing, balancing and imaginative exploration.

An open kickabout area on the western side will provide space for informal ball games and free play alongside the Town Park. Trees and planting will frame these spaces, with seating for parents, carers and other users. Accessible connections and a range of play experiences will support children of different ages and abilities.

The approach will favour natural materials and landscape features, with play integrated sensitively around retained trees. Equipment, surfacing and locations will be developed through detailed design, informed by tree protection requirements and the need for clear visibility.

The play and recreation areas will include:

- Natural timber play elements and informal landscape features.
- Play opportunities for younger children.
- An open grass kickabout area.
- Seating for parents, carers and other park users.
- Appropriate safety surfacing with a natural appearance.
- Integration with retained trees, planting and the walking network.







4.6 Masterplan
Recreation and Play



Illustrative visualisation of the Play Area

4.7 Masterplan
Gathering, Events and Activities

The masterplan creates a variety of opportunities for social interaction, from informal meetings and quiet conversation to performances and community celebrations. The principal gathering space sits where the three radial paths converge, showcasing the restored well. A canopy feature provides shelter and defines a focal point, with a small performance area and flexible seating supporting storytelling, music, art and seasonal events.

Outside organised events, this space remains available for everyday gathering, rest and recreation. Power connections will support occasional activities, including outdoor cinema, with evening use managed to respect neighbouring homes and wildlife.

Seating throughout the park will offer different ways to spend time together. Shared seating and picnic spaces near the orchard and community garden will support group activities, while smaller seating areas along woodland paths will provide quieter places to pause. Accessible seating, including benches with backs and arms and space alongside for wheelchair users, will be integrated with the path network.

The gathering and activity spaces will include:

- A canopy and flexible gathering space beside the well.
- A small performance area with supporting power connections.
- Seating for individuals, small groups and community activities.
- Opportunities for seasonal events, storytelling and outdoor cinema.
- Integration with surrounding trees, planting and walking routes.







4.7 Masterplan
Gathering, Events and Activities



Illustrative visualisation of the Events Area

4.8 Masterplan
Community and Growing Spaces

The community garden, orchard and sensory garden create distinct places within the park for growing, learning, gathering and quiet enjoyment. Located principally within existing clearings, they reconnect the Plots with their history of productive gardens while adding seasonal interest and opportunities for community participation.

Community Garden

The community garden provides shared growing space for vegetables, herbs and flowers. Raised beds and accessible paths will support participation by people of different ages and abilities, with seating and gathering space for gardening activities and informal learning. Its role will be developed with local groups to complement the town's existing community garden.

Orchard

The orchard introduces fruit trees, spring blossom and seasonal produce, reflecting the site's productive heritage. Paths and seating will allow visitors to enjoy the space throughout the year, with opportunities for community harvesting and educational activities. Tree varieties and management will be selected to support successful growing and provide food and habitat for wildlife.

Sensory Garden

The sensory garden offers a quieter setting where planting, texture, colour, scent and sound encourage discovery and interaction with nature. Fragrant and tactile plants, seasonal flowers and small nature-based features will sit alongside accessible paths and informal seating. The garden will provide a place for rest and reflection while supporting pollinators and other wildlife.

Together, these spaces broaden the park's character and everyday use. Their detailed design will consider sunlight, soil conditions, water provision and maintenance, with community involvement helping to establish how the growing areas are used and cared for.







4.8 Masterplan
Community and Growing Spaces



Illustrative visualisation of the Community Garden

4.9 Masterplan
Development Opportunities

Opportunities Within the Masterplan Boundary

The southern edge provides a suitable location for future development, with good visibility on arrival, proximity to the existing car park and Town Park, and access from the proposed road. Buildings here will define and overlook the park, introducing activity and natural surveillance.

A focal building near the Town Park and car park could accommodate sports, community, cultural, learning or other amenity uses, subject to need and viability. Further plots extending eastwards could support complementary uses, including residential development, with entrances and occupied frontages addressing the park and street.

The watercourse will form a retained green corridor, shaping the layout and providing an opportunity for a future pedestrian link to Gleann Ard. Buildings are generally envisaged at two to three storeys, respecting the town centre and neighbouring housing. Additional height at the focal building could mark the entrance, subject to assessment of views, privacy and overshadowing. Development should complement the future regeneration of Gleann Ard, enabling connections between the two areas.



4.9 Masterplan Development Opportunities

Opportunities Beyond the Masterplan Boundary

Land zoned New Residential to the east presents a potential development opportunity outside the masterplan boundary. Access is currently constrained; the proposed eastern road could help enable its development by third parties. Any proposed residential scheme. Any scheme should establish a positive frontage towards the park and provide connections into its walking network.

The rear properties and garden plots along the northern and western edges offer opportunities for coordinated improvement, adaptation and appropriate infill development. Existing rear buildings and piecemeal changes often provide limited activity facing the Plots. A coordinated approach should establish suitable uses, scale, access and boundary treatments, encouraging entrances and overlooking towards the park while protecting existing residential privacy and servicing.

All development areas are indicative. Their delivery will depend on further assessment, the relevant planning /statutory consents, and land acquisition.



4.9 Masterplan
Development Opportunities

Precedent images of potential development character aligning with their intended use













4.10 Masterplan
Boundaries, Safety and Management

Boundaries and Entrances

Community feedback identified concerns about safety, antisocial behaviour and fly-tipping. The masterplan addresses these through defined boundaries, clearer entrances, improved visibility and increased everyday use.

Open estate railing will separate the park from adjoining vehicular areas, preventing vehicles from reversing into the Plots to deposit waste. It will follow the existing western and northern laneways and extend alongside the proposed southern and eastern roads as these are delivered. Its open character will maintain views into the landscape.

Unlocked, self-closing pedestrian gates will define entrances at key connections from the town centre and car parks. Gates will accommodate wheelchair users, mobility aids and pushchairs, with separate controlled access for essential maintenance and emergency vehicles.



Illustrative visualisation of the Orchard

4.10 Masterplan
Boundaries, Safety and Management

Visibility and Everyday Use

Selective clearance of dense scrub will reopen sightlines along paths, between activity spaces and into the park from its entrances. Valuable mature trees, understorey and habitat areas will be retained, creating a more open and welcoming woodland landscape without removing its natural character.

Restored paths, seating and varied activities will encourage regular use. Together with improved overlooking from adjoining development, this will support natural surveillance and help strengthen confidence in using the space.

Lighting

Lighting will be concentrated on the principal access streets, connections to car parks and the gathering and event space. The woodland and recreational paths are intended primarily for daylight use and will generally remain unlit, retaining dark areas for wildlife.

Where lighting is required, it will use warm-coloured, low-intensity sources with controlled direction and operating times to limit spill into trees, habitats and neighbouring properties. Detailed proposals will be informed by bat surveys and ecological advice, balancing safe access with the site's environmental value.

Management and Maintenance

The Town Park provides the starting point for coordinated management of the wider Plots. As improvements are delivered, maintenance arrangements will extend to paths, gates, planting, trees and activity spaces, with clear responsibilities and resources agreed for each phase.

Regular litter removal, vegetation management, repairs and inspection will be essential to maintaining a welcoming environment. Community involvement can support stewardship, growing and events alongside an established maintenance programme.





4.11 Masterplan
Materials and Character

The materials palette will build on the Plots' existing wooded and parkland character. New elements will use natural textures, warm tones and simple forms that sit comfortably alongside trees, planting and historic features. Timber will be favoured for play elements, seating and shelters, with durable finishes selected for outdoor use and ease of maintenance.

Furniture will have a park-like character, creating a coordinated family of benches, picnic tables, signs and other amenities. Natural stone will be considered where appropriate around the well and retained walls, reinforcing the site's heritage.

Paths will follow a hierarchy reflecting their use. Self-binding gravel will be considered for park routes where it can provide a firm, stable and accessible surface, subject to gradients, drainage and maintenance requirements. Entrances, heavily used routes and event areas may require more robust surfacing, using complementary colours and textures.

Material selection will prioritise accessibility, durability, responsible sourcing and repair. The overall approach is to enhance the existing landscape character through carefully integrated additions that support everyday use.









05

Delivery and Phasing

5.1 Delivery Approach

5.2 Landowner Engagement and Agreements

5.3 Enabling Infrastructure and Phasing

5.4 Funding and Delivery Partnerships

5.5 Management and Stewardship

5.1 Delivery and Phasing
Delivery Approach

The regeneration of The Plots should be approached as a long-term, coordinated programme, delivered through manageable projects that contribute to a shared vision. The Town Park currently under construction and the approved car park and associated link street works provide a foundation for this transformation, demonstrating progress and supporting confidence in future investment.

Delivery will require continued collaboration between the Council, landowners, the community and potential development partners. The masterplan provides a common framework for aligning their interests, guiding investment and ensuring that individual projects contribute to the quality and coherence of the wider site.

The approach should remain flexible, allowing projects to progress as funding, land acquisition and development opportunities occur. Each project should deliver a meaningful benefit in its own right while supporting future improvements. Maintaining an overview of the whole site will be essential to coordinate decisions, sustain momentum and safeguard the long-term vision.



Illustrative visualisation of the Sensory Garden

5.2 Delivery and Phasing
Landowner Engagement and Agreements

Engagement with landowners, adjoining owners and other interested parties has been ongoing throughout the masterplanning process, helping to establish ownership, understand individual aspirations and explore opportunities for coordinated improvements. The successful regeneration of The Plots will depend on continued collaboration, bringing land and interests together to achieve a shared vision for the benefit of the town.

This approach need not erase the historic pattern of individual plots. Existing boundaries can be expressed through landscape design, materials or subtle markers, retaining the identity and history of the site while allowing new public access and a connected network of spaces. Coordinated arrangements for upkeep and maintenance will be equally important to ensure that The Plots functions as a coherent and welcoming place.

Landowner and community engagement should continue as proposals develop.



Masterplan outline with landownership plot boundaries

5.3 Delivery and Phasing
Enabling Infrastructure and Phasing

The next stage of delivery should focus on the enabling infrastructure and public spaces that will support the regeneration of The Plots. The Council's tender competition for the infrastructure project will provide the opportunity to develop these proposals as a coordinated package, building on the Town Park currently under construction and the approved car park and access road works.

An initial enabling stage should include the removal of fly-tipped waste and selective, ecologically sensitive scrub clearance to allow access for further surveys. The extent and timing of clearance should be informed by ecological advice, retaining valuable vegetation and habitats. Topographic, tree and other necessary investigations will improve understanding of existing conditions and inform the detailed design.

The masterplan proposals should then be developed into a detailed, coordinated park and infrastructure masterplan. This should bring together roads, paths, drainage, utilities, lighting, event servicing and the event and social spaces within the parkland. It should also establish how infrastructure can support future buildings and connections around the site's edges, allowing for their servicing and access requirements without compromising the park's character or use.

These elements should be designed together and progressed through Part 8 or the appropriate planning process, supported by the necessary technical assessments and consultation. Subsequent detailed design, specifications and cost planning should establish a deliverable package, with clearly defined phases that can be implemented as funding and land agreements allow.

Phasing should prioritise works that make the site accessible, usable and capable of supporting subsequent improvements. Early phases should establish the principal infrastructure, routes and public spaces, with later phases accommodating further park features, additional connections and development around the edges. Each phase should provide a coherent, usable improvement in its own right, while accounting for dependencies and avoiding unnecessary disruption or repeated works. The detailed sequence should be confirmed through design development, informed by survey findings, ecological and other assessments, estimated costs and funding.

5.3 Delivery and Phasing
Enabling Infrastructure and Phasing

Phase 1:

- Parkland: Clearance, enhancement and soft landscaping.
- Looped walk: Walking route through the parkland.
- Kickabout area: Informal recreation area linked to the Town Park.
- Road network: Roads, associated civil works, services, ducting and traffic calming, including footpaths, cycle routes, laybys, turning heads, junctions and roundabouts where required.
- Approved car park and widened access road: Detailed design of the approved proposals.
- Existing south-western car park: Modifications where necessary to accommodate the extended road network.
- Parking: Parking areas, bays and laybys, considering sustainable solutions and lower-carbon construction.
- EV charging: Provision within the two main car parks.
- Public lighting: Low-energy, environmentally sensitive lighting, including investigation of solar-powered options.
- Boundaries: Boundary walls, fencing and railings.
- Civic amenity site: Relocation of recycling banks within the site, including investigation of underground provision.
- Land servicing and utilities: Coordination with utility providers and provision of services, drainage, surface water and foul sewers, incorporating nature-based solutions.
- Future development servicing: Access, services, ducting and provision for future development on the southern plots and adjoining eastern residential lands.
- Watercourse crossing: Culvert/crossing design for the proposed road.
- Historic paths: Enhancement of the three historic lanes radiating from the spring well.
- Events space and spring well: Events space and enhancement of the well area, including hard landscaping and civil works.
- Northern homezone: Improvement of the roadway along the northern boundary.
- Town-centre connections: Enhancement of three laneways linking the site to the town streets.
- Sensory garden: Provision within the parkland.
- Community garden: Provision within the parkland.
- Additional play pockets: Smaller play areas within the wider landscape.
- Waste storage and site management facilities: Associated facilities, potentially including a small storage depot.
- Public art: Identification of an outdoor location and coordination of artwork integration; artwork procured by the Council.



5.3 Delivery and Phasing
Enabling Infrastructure and Phasing

Phase 2:

In the medium term, a key development building at the junction between the existing car park and the Town Park would introduce further activity and strengthen the identity and presence of The Plots. Its use and design should complement the park, provide a positive frontage and help establish this junction as a recognisable destination.

Phase 3:

In the longer term, development aligned with Town Core zoning, which facilitates several land uses, could continue along the southern strip, alongside the potential delivery of housing on third-party residential lands at the eastern end of the site. These projects would utilise the road infrastructure established through the earlier phases, supporting the gradual completion of the wider masterplan. The timing of development will depend on proposals emerging, planning approvals, market conditions, the availability of public-sector funding and private investment, with each development contributing to the overall quality and coherence of The Plots.





Green area
Footpath / Amenities
Roads

5.4 Delivery and Phasing
Funding and Delivery Partnerships

Delivery of the enabling infrastructure and public spaces should be Council-led, with an appointed consultant team developing the coordinated designs, cost estimates and supporting information needed for an application to the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) or a comparable funding programme. This will provide a clear basis for seeking investment, supported by an agreed scope, delivery programme and land arrangements.

Complementary funding opportunities should be explored as programmes become available. These may support green space restoration, biodiversity enhancement and improvements to natural watercourses, alongside arts initiatives and cultural programming that bring activity and identity to The Plots. Potential funding sources should be distinguished from secured commitments, with projects developed to respond to the requirements of individual programmes while remaining aligned with the wider masterplan.

The Council should coordinate delivery partnerships with landowners, community organisations and relevant agencies, drawing on their knowledge, resources and involvement. Private investment will also have a role in bringing forward development around the site's edges. A coordinated approach will help ensure that public investment, community initiatives and future development reinforce one another and contribute to the long-term regeneration of The Plots.

5.5 Delivery and Phasing
Management and Stewardship

The long-term success of The Plots will depend on how it is managed, maintained and used. As each phase develops, clear responsibilities and appropriate resources should be established for the care of the landscape, public spaces and infrastructure. A coordinated management and maintenance plan should build on the design principles in Chapter 4, addressing routine upkeep, habitat management, inspections, repairs and the organisation of events and activities.

There is a significant opportunity to bring together the different groups within Ballaghaderreen to help shape the continuing life of the site. The involvement of artists in the Town Park and the contributions made through the masterplan engagement process demonstrate a strong foundation of local interest. The aspirations of community groups and local forums should continue to inform how spaces are used, allowing The Plots to accommodate a range of activities and evolve with the town.

Potential partners include Ballaghaderreen Tidy Towns, the Town Team, those involved in the Community Garden, Creative Places Ballaghaderreen and local arts, youth and community organisations. Subject to their interest and capacity, their involvement could include community planting, organised clean-ups, biodiversity monitoring, heritage interpretation, creative projects and seasonal events. Existing initiatives, including The Lazy Wall project, provide opportunities to strengthen connections between the site's heritage, its public spaces and the people who use them.

A Council-supported stewardship group or regular community forum could help coordinate this involvement, providing a continuing link between those responsible for the site and its users. Community participation should be supported through agreed activities, practical assistance and clear responsibilities, alongside adequately resourced core maintenance. This would enable volunteers to make a meaningful and sustainable contribution to the site's care.

Stewardship should be considered from the outset and reviewed as The Plots develops. Combining reliable maintenance with active community involvement will help protect its landscape and heritage, encourage positive use and foster a lasting sense of shared pride and responsibility.



