

# Submission to the Donegal Town Local Area Plan

from the Donegal Town Business Focus Group

SEPTEMBER 2015



Marcus Flannery  
**LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS**

## Contents:

### Introduction

1.0 An analysis of the development of Donegal Town from its origins to date.

The purpose of this section is to learn appraise the past, to look at positives and negatives with a view to learning lessons and charting a course for the future of the town.

2.0 Sumerises the key issues that came out of the planning workshop.

3.0 Urban Design Principles and Vision for Donegal Town

This section sets out 3 guiding principles for the future development of Donegal Town and a proposal for 8 integrated framework plan areas to control and guide future development in the town.

### Appendix

Summary of proceedings from planning workshop held on Tuesday the 1st of September.

Marcus LANDSCAPE  
Flannery ARCHITECTS

garden + landscape + urban design

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## Introduction:

Marcus Flannery LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS has prepared this submission on behalf of the Donegal Town Business Focus Group and its 66 member businesses who employ in excess of 650 local residents. Marcus Flannery is a landscape architect and urban designer living and practising in Donegal Town.

Marcus Flannery previously worked as a senior urban designer for Murray O Laoire Architects from 2004 to 2009 where he worked on a number of Local Area Plans including the Loughmacask Local Area Plan which provided for the development of a new precinct in Kilkenny City, he also was responsible for the preparation of Urban Design Frameworks. In that regard this submission is approached from an urban and landscape design perspective.

With regard to the proposals in made in this document, it is an attempt to form a coherent vision for the futue of Donegal Town and as a visionary document it does not affect the rights in any way of land owners. The Focus Group and Marcus Flannery do not wish to cause offence to any group or landowner in this regard.

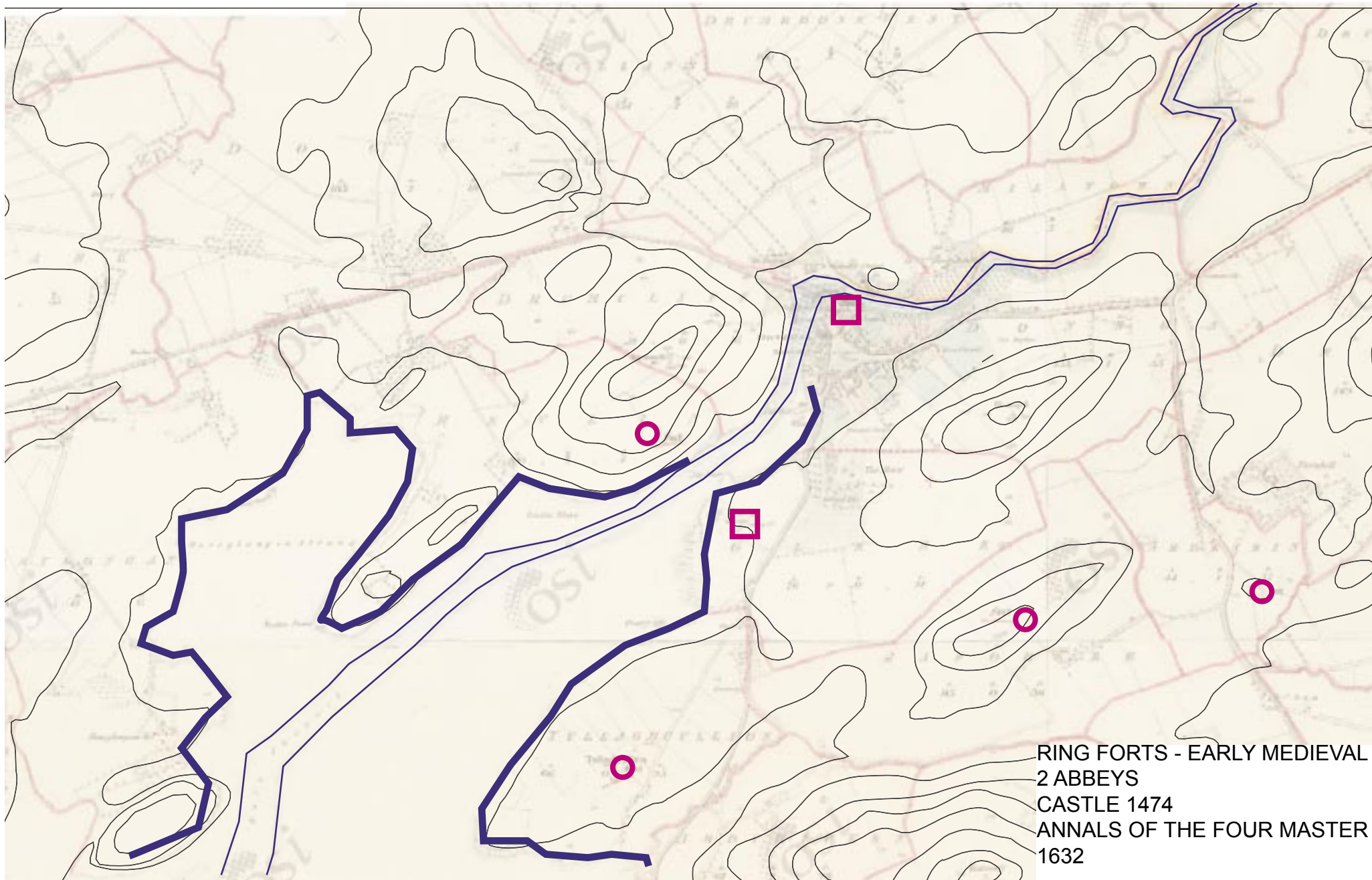
### *Process:*

The process began with a planning workshop held in the Abbey Hotel on the 1st of September where a lot of the main issues were discussed, an account of this workshop is provided at the end of the document. Marcus Flannery then prepared a draft vision for future development based on an analysis of how the town has developed to date and presented this to the Focus Group on Tuesday the 8th. After receiving feedback from this session the submission was finalised into this document.

### 1.0 ANALYSIS OF DEVELOPMENT TO DATE IN DONEGAL TOWN

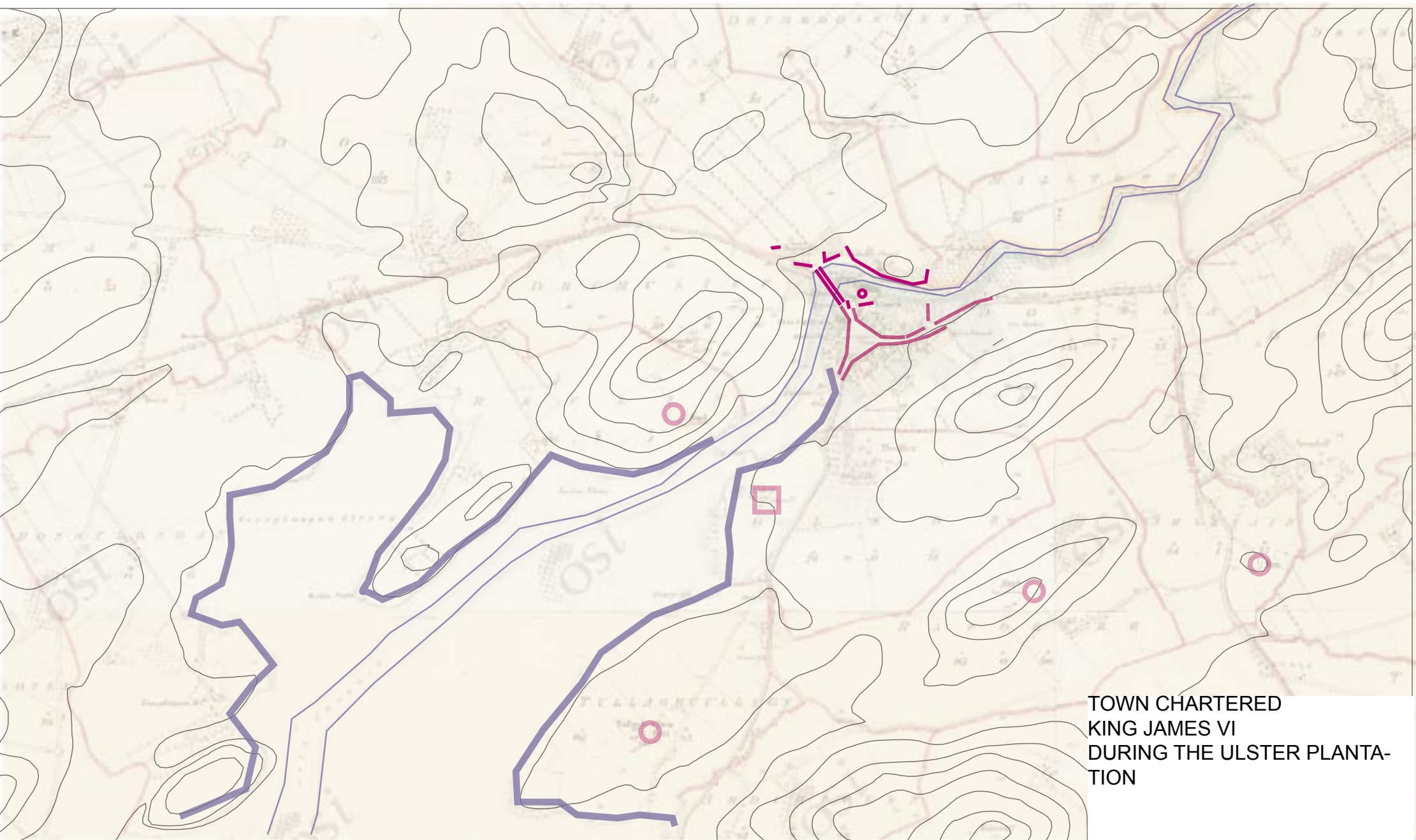
The map overleaf shows the drumlins, the bay and river and early development to include the Ring Forts or Raths located on top of the drumlins , the Castle at the river crossing and the Abbey at the mouth of the Bay.

Subsequent maps chart the development of the town illustrating key changes.



RING FORTS - EARLY MEDIEVAL  
2 ABBEYS  
CASTLE 1474  
ANNALS OF THE FOUR MASTER  
1632

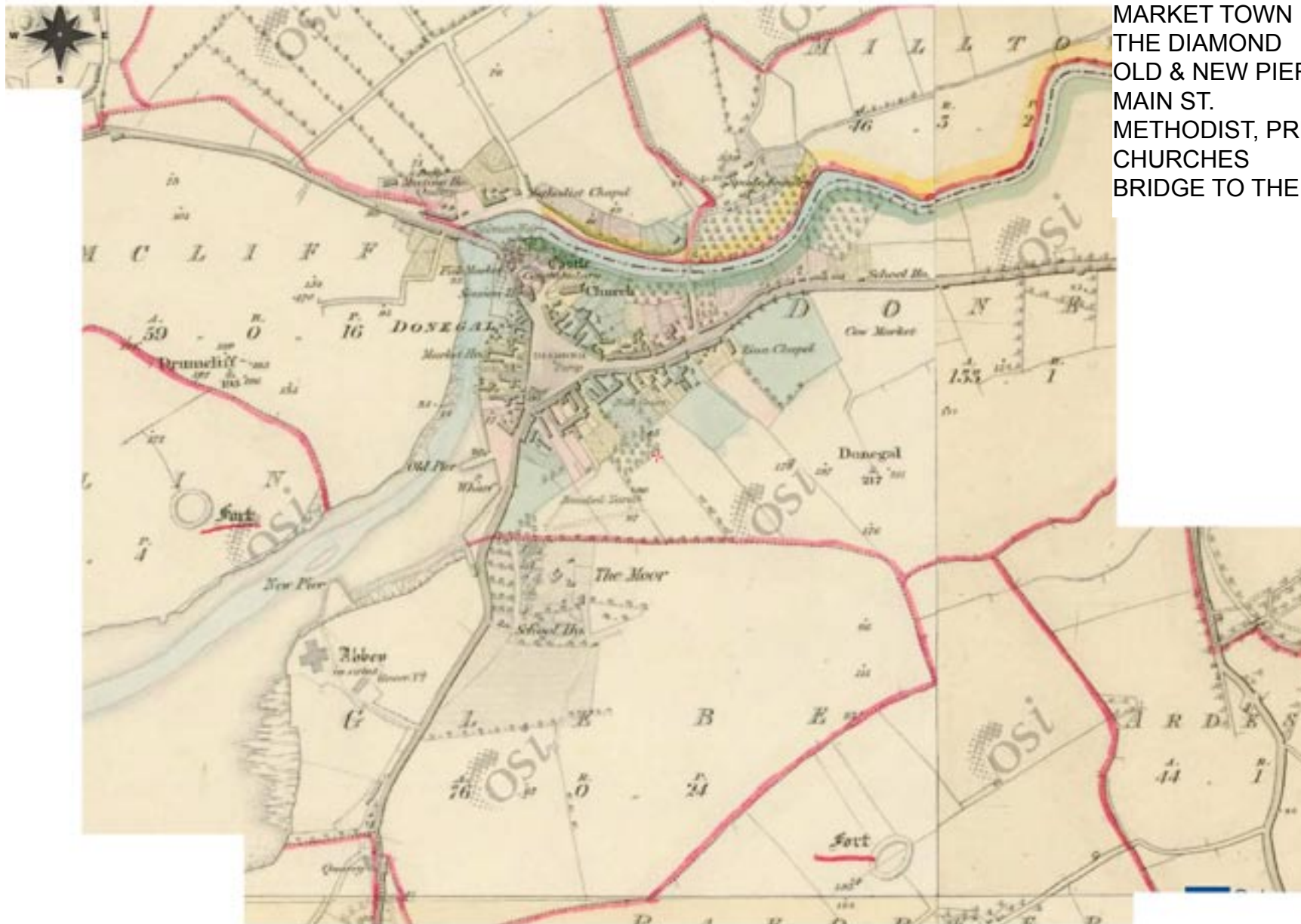




TOWN CHARTERED  
KING JAMES VI  
DURING THE ULSTER PLANTA-  
TION

1829 - 41 6" MAP

BRIDGE & FORD  
MARKET TOWN  
THE DIAMOND  
OLD & NEW PIER  
MAIN ST.  
METHODIST, PRESBYTERIAN & C of I  
CHURCHES  
BRIDGE TO THE KILLYBEGS ROAD



The town is now a very established market town and important district centre featuring industry based around tweed, financial services and hotels.

The photographs that follow are from the Lawerence Collection, dated to 1890 they illustrate the distinct character of the town and the high quality urban and landscape environment. (permission to use photographs kindly provided by Mark Wickham 'the Donegal Camera Centre'.

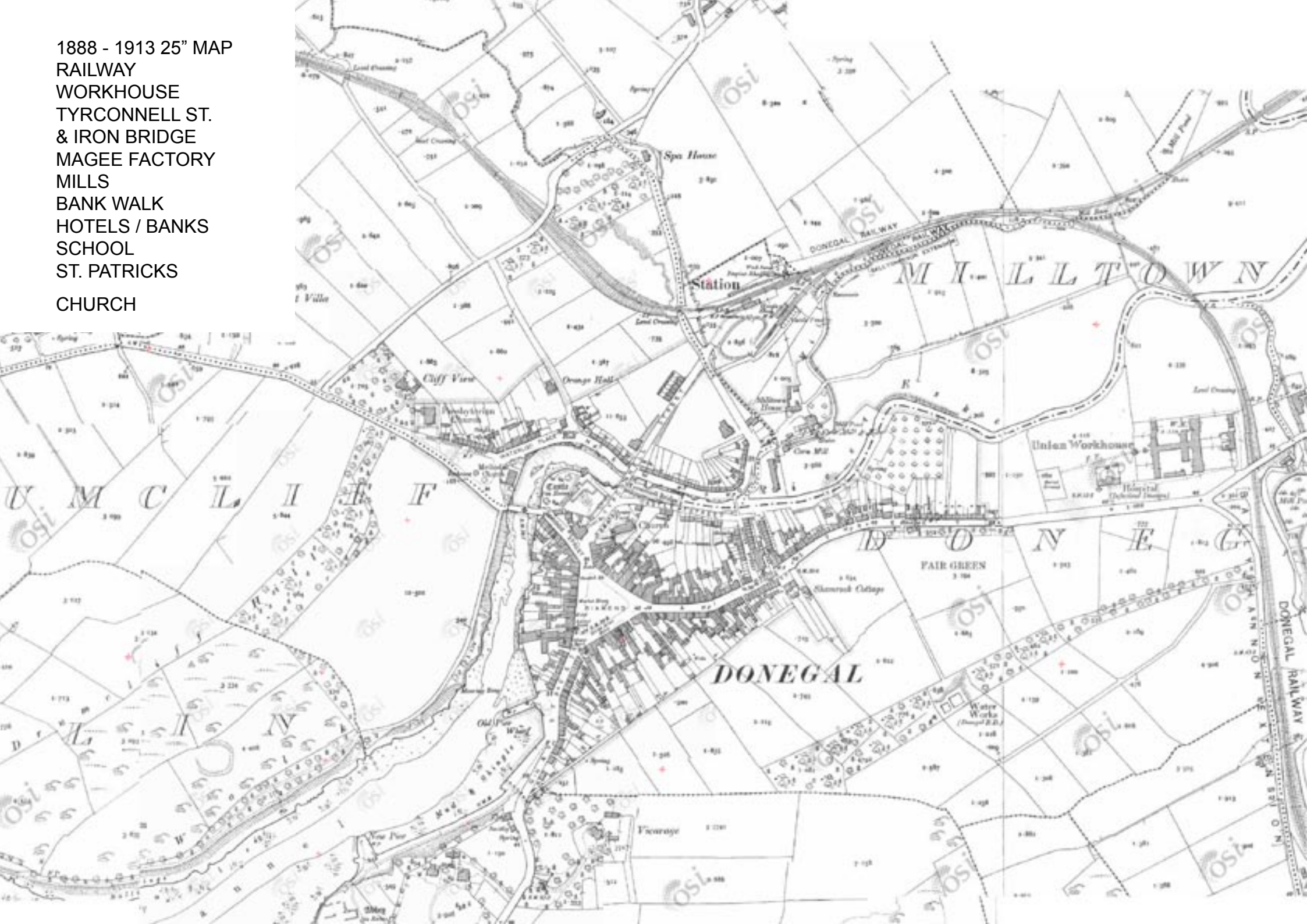
An analysis the urban and architectural quality is set out as follows:

#### WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM 19th C DONEGAL TOWN ?

- COHERENT ARCHITECTURAL LANGUAGE
- BUILDINGS FORM SPACES AND STREETS
- NO OVERHEAD WIRES / SIGNS / TRAFFIC / PARKING
- UNIFORM SCALE 2 - 3 STORIES
- BUILDINGS RELATE TO MAIN GEOGRAPHIC FEATURES - RIVER / BAY
- BEAUTIFUL STAND OUT BUILDINGS RELATE TO THEIR SPECIAL SOCIAL FUNCTION  
  
E.G. METHODIST CHURCH AND CHURCH OF IRELAND
- CRAFTSMANSHIP AND ELOQUENT USE OF LOCAL MATERIALS
- THE IMPORTANCE OF PLANTING LARGE TREES INTO THE TOWN SCAPE AND ON THE SURROUNDING DRUMLINS



1888 - 1913 25" MAP  
RAILWAY  
WORKHOUSE  
TYRCONNELL ST.  
& IRON BRIDGE  
MAGEE FACTORY  
MILLS  
BANK WALK  
HOTELS / BANKS  
SCHOOL  
ST. PATRICKS  
CHURCH

























The maps overleaf and following are taken from contemporary OS maps, they key changes are

- the demise of the railway line
- the loss of Magees factory (once the main employer in the town),
- the development of Abbots (Medical Devices now the major employer)
- the development of the hospitality sector (Harvey's Point, Solis, Mill Park, Abbey and Central)
- the By Pass
- the pedestrianisation of the Diamond
- ribbon development on the old Laghey Road
- commercial ribbon development on the Killybegs and Ballybofey approach roads
- the Council Offices
- the arrival of Aldi and Lidl
- the town sewerage scheme
- the new Credit Union offices



'The Mullins' smaller house types supporting the elderly



By pass 1999



Castle St. - walking distance to the town centre



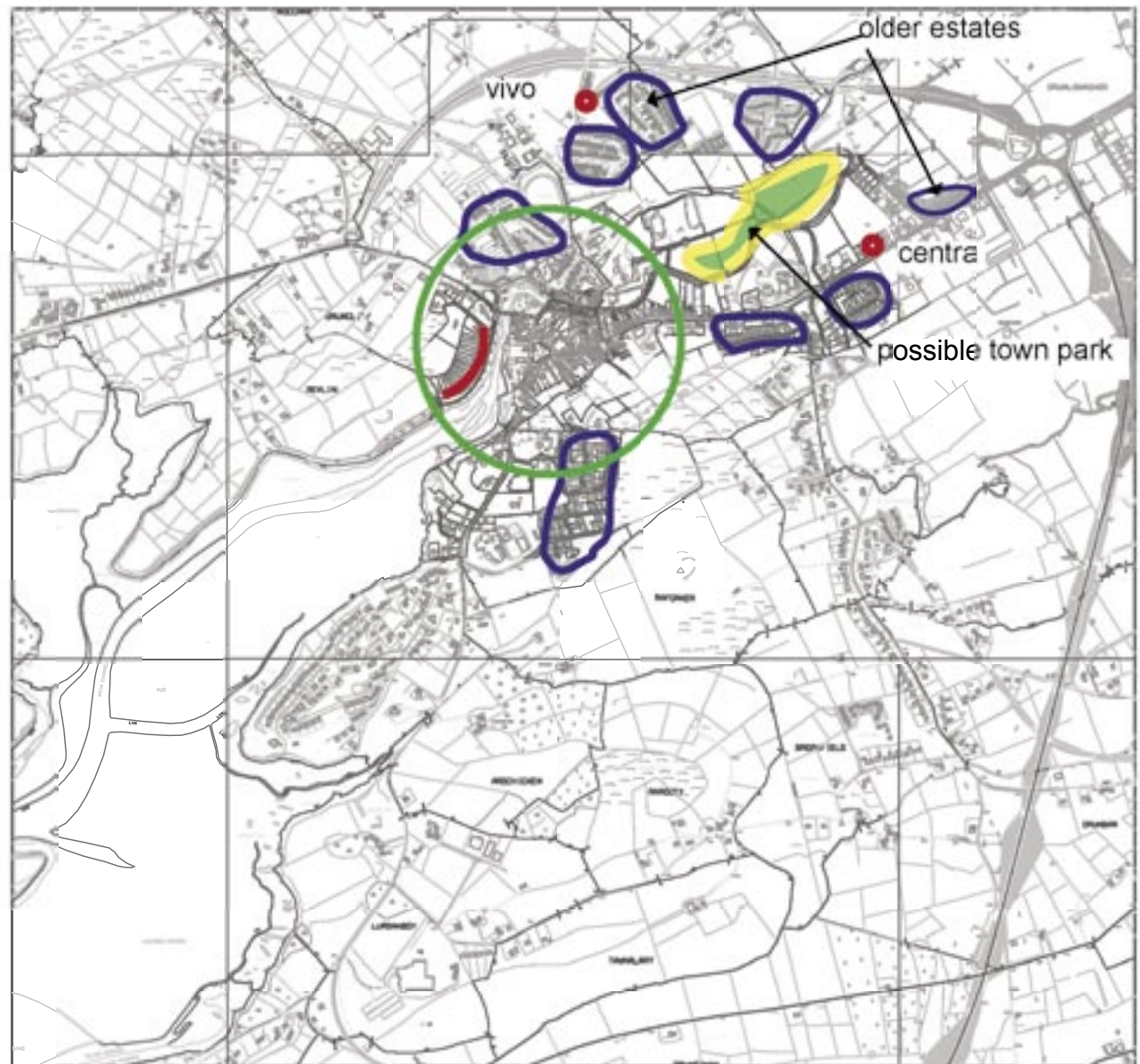
This map shows older estates built in the last century that are within walking distance of local services and the town centre such as Drumcliff, the Glebe and the Mullins (highlighted in red). The walking circle is a 400 m / 5 minute radius deemed to be the distance one will walk without resorting to a car.

These estates have a good mixture of housing types including smaller house types that support the elderly.

The estates outside the circle are too far to readily walk to the town centre. Local shops Vivo and Centra serve these outlying neighbourhoods.

#### Analysis / conclusions:

- The importance of locating new residential areas close to the town centre, particularly for older people.
- The need to provide cycle / pedestrian linkage from Mill race Crescent, Orchard Drive, Ardeskin and St. Josephs Ave and Claredon Drive.
- The proximity of these estates to the river and which has the potential to provide a town park and improved linkage to the town centre.
- The older residential areas such as Castle St form streets where the buildings align, traffic is calmed, pedestrian and neighbourly contact is facilitated.





This map poor development patterns:

- ribbon development / one off housing along the old Laghey Road
- old golf course road development of individual private housing sites
- Brookfield / gaelscoil / Ard Aoibheann - estates located 5 minutes by car from the town centre.

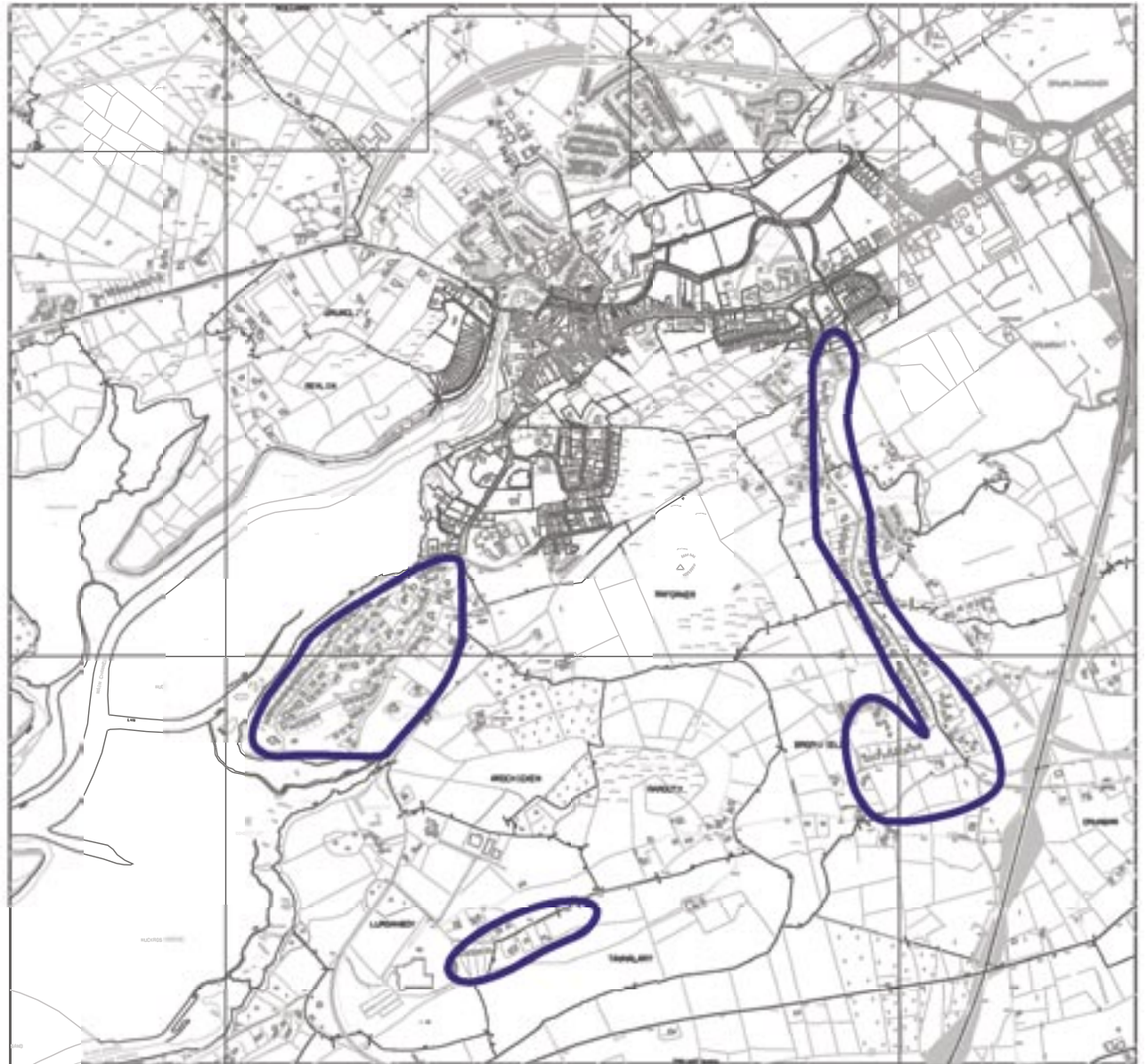
Analysis:

Golf course road development:

- no foot paths, amenities, open space
- no coastal path or woodland planting similar to the bank walk
- buildings do not form 'streets'
- poor mix of housing types

Gaelscoil / Brookfield

- Completely car dependant
- poor road footpath infrastructure





Old Golfcourse Road



Ribbon development Old laghey Road



Gaelscoil / Brookfield



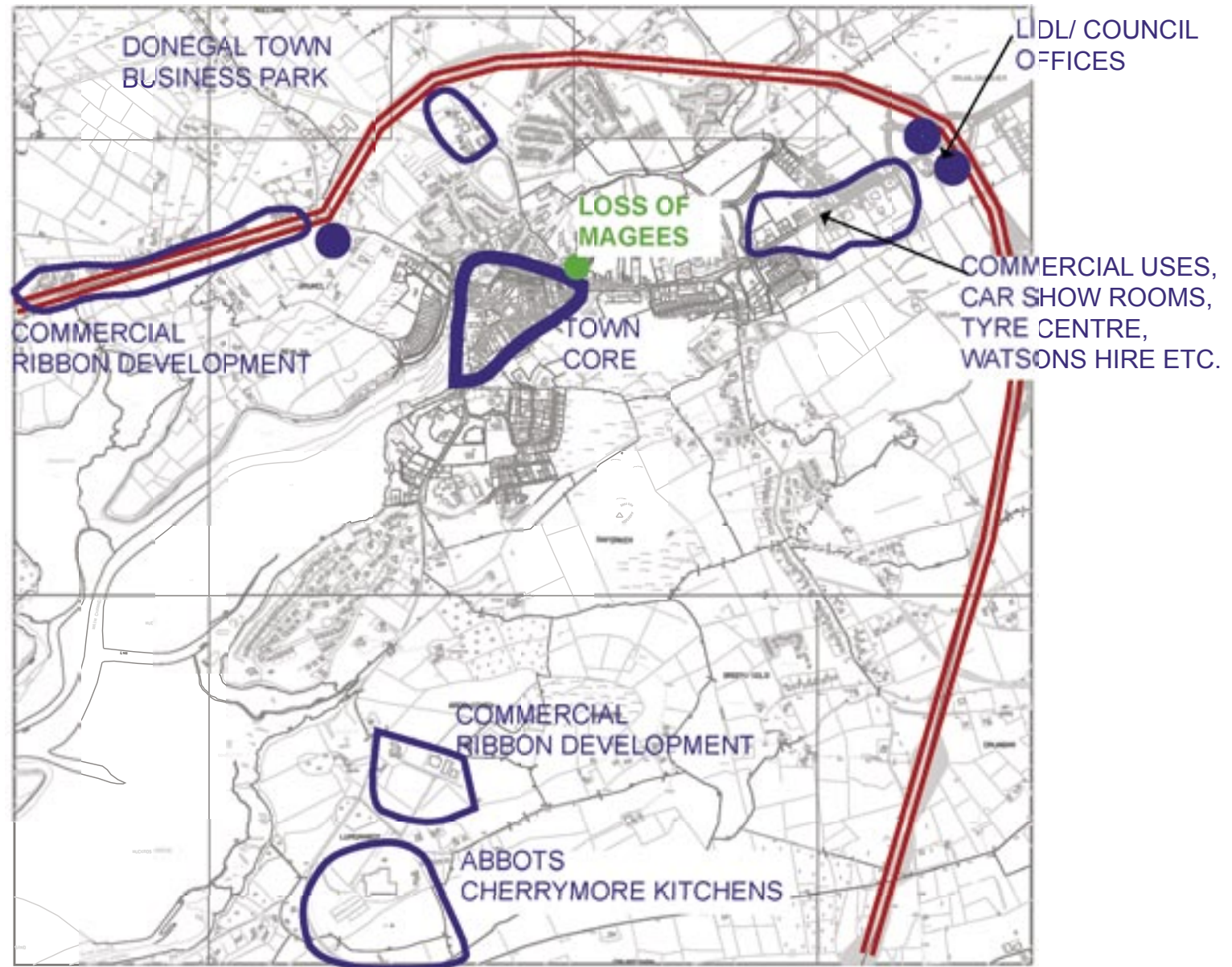
This map shows industrial / business / commercial development patterns:

Analysis:

- Development along Killybegs road, Ballybofey roads are visually incoherent, they do not form attractive approaches into the town which is seeking to make itself more attractive to tourism.
- Donegal town business park has been developed in an ad hoc manner and is poorly served by road and footpaths.
- Town core is the economic driver of the local hospitality and tourism services, centred around the hotels and incoming buses.
- Abbots is sensitively located into its landscape setting.
- Cherrymore showrooms are a large footprint use located on the Ballyshannon Rd., but is this the beginning of further commercial ribbon development on one of the important approach roads.

Conclusions:

There is a great need to accommodate commercial / industrial development within defined precincts that provide for growth, are attractively landscaped and sited, have good road and other infrastructure, such as where the new enterprise centre is located beside the Craft Village. The significance of the Magee site to provide a new development opportunity







Ballyshannon approach road showing Cherrymore Kitchens



Recycling centre situated at the entrance to the Council Offices



Commercial ribbon development on the Killybegs Road



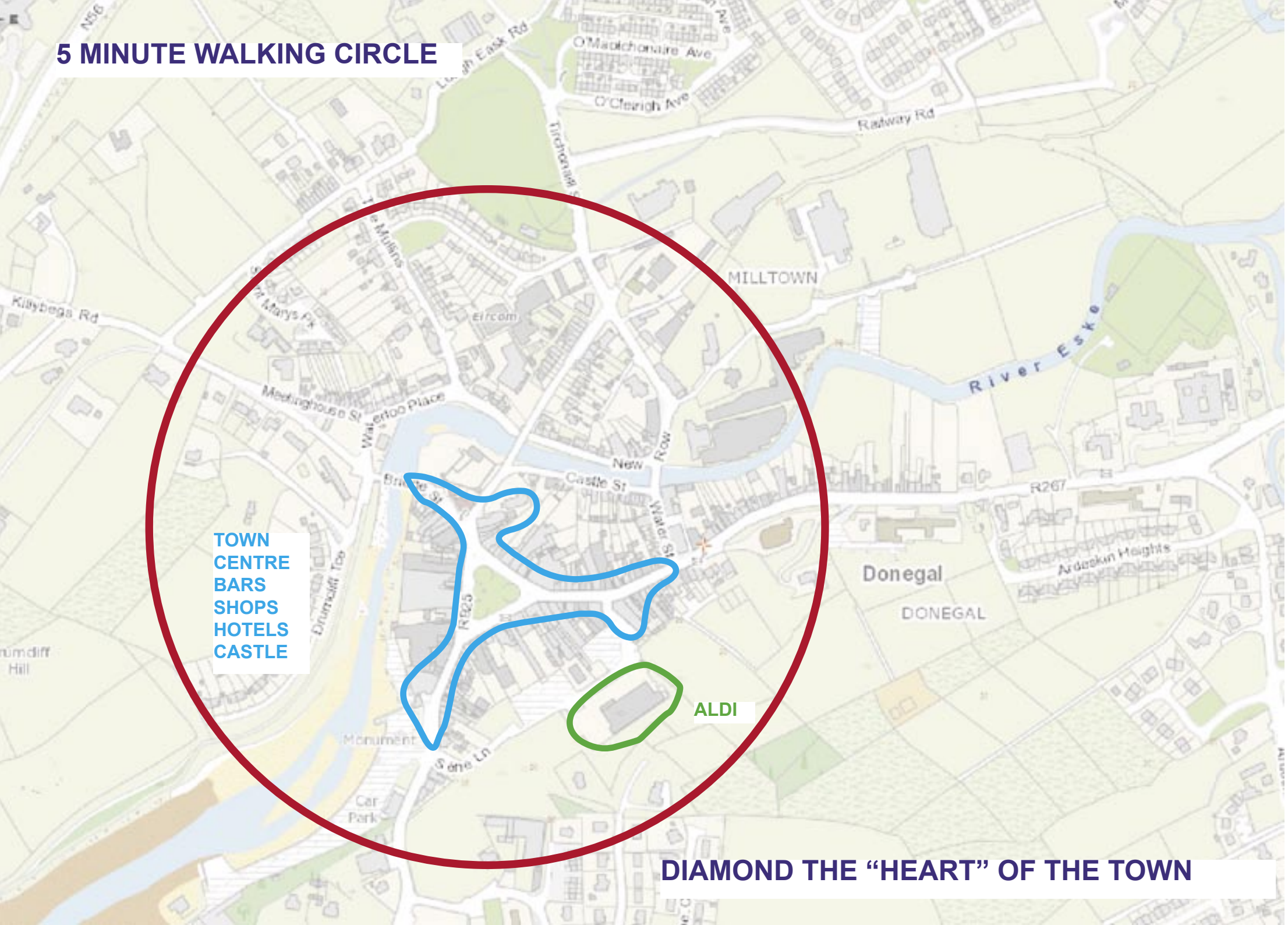
Substation / commercial uses on the Ballybofey approach road

## 5 MINUTE WALKING CIRCLE

TOWN  
CENTRE  
BARS  
SHOPS  
HOTELS  
CASTLE

ALDI

DIAMOND THE "HEART" OF THE TOWN





## Town Centre

The town centre is a tourist hub and important local services centre comprising a mix of hotels, bars, restaurants, family businesses, shops (Magee & Aldi), tourist attractions (Castle, Abbey), car parking and the Diamond.

### Town Core - positives:

The pedestrianisation and development of the civic space in the centre of the old market place is a very important development. It supports a great range of planned events (summer festival, St. Patrick's day) as well as providing an important space for sitting, meeting and social conviviality.

Described at the planning workshop as the 'heart' of the town and a 'homely'; it is cherished by the local community and a very important tourist asset.



Diamond before pedestrianisation



Diamond - civic / public space



Summer festival





Nathan Carter



An important space for socialising / meeting / talking / resting



Cycling event



Farmers market



## Town core - analysis:

Main problems / issues are highlighted on the map overleaf:

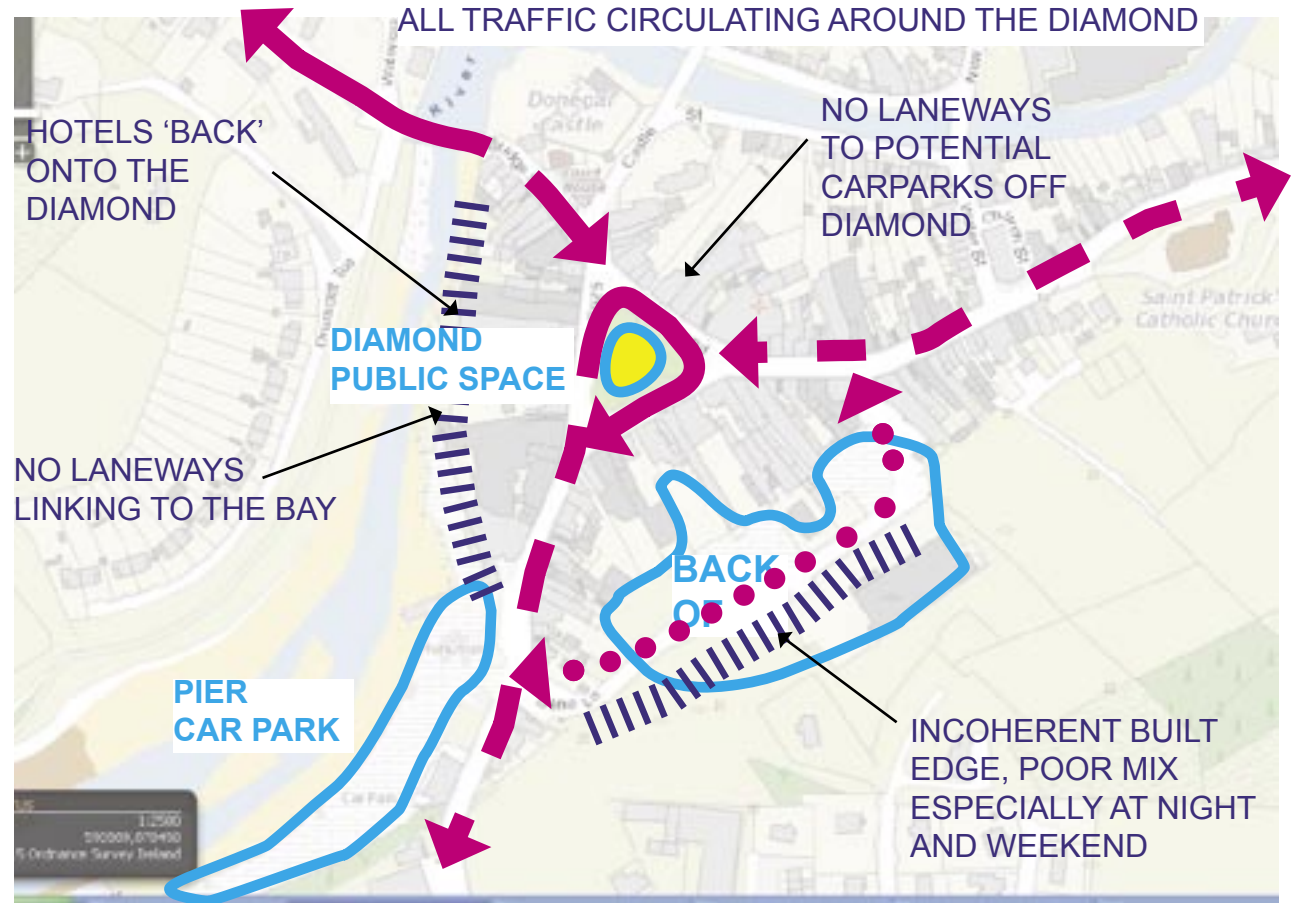
The principle issue is traffic management and parking; all through traffic circulates through and around the Diamond; There are a large number of tour buses that drop off / pick up in front of the hotels in addition to the CIE intercity buses which stop in front of the Abbey Hotel. Frequently the Buses can't get pulling in due to parking in this zone, causing double parking on the west side; double parking is an accepted norm on the east side, in addition there is a lack of loading spaces. These traffic management issues periodically impact on traffic flow causing tail backs on the approach roads into the Diamond.

A new dedicated bus stop opposite All Sports is proposed to improve traffic flow on the Diamond and to relocate both CIE and Tour Buses.

For a more detailed account of how carparking impacts on local business along with solutions proposed see the attached presentation made to the County Councillors by the Focus Group.

Footpaths are too narrow for the pedestrian traffic volumes, averaging 1.4 m, with space allocated for signage, bins it means that pedestrians are frequently using the road as well.

Pedestrian crossings are poorly defined, and the wide carriage width (10 - 12m) negatively impacts on pedestrian accessibility to the Diamond civic



space.

Car parking is an issue; there is a shortage particularly at peak hours and during the summer months, there is a lack of enforcement and the problem is exacerbated by employees parking in the town centre car parks for long periods.

Access to the car parks particularly the back of the Diamond carpark is not convenient, junctions and road access needs to be looked at to improve access / egress.

From an urban design / architectural perspective there are a number of issues:

- new development Aldi / Credit union is not forming a coherent edge to the back of

the car park, also the use mix to the back of the Diamond does not facilitate weekend or evening activities making this a 'dead area' outside of normal business hours. Carparking in this area is visually unattractive and affects pedestrian mobility through the space. Back street carparks located on the Magee side of the Diamond need to be opened up.

### *Permeability*

There is good permeability to the south west carpark, but poor linkage on the east side to potential car parks spaces off the Diamond. On the west side there is no linkage through to the Bay / river, indeed buildings on this edge 'back' onto river and there is huge scope on this side for providing laneways that link through to the river / bay, providing pedestrian access linkage along the river at the back of the Hotels.



Narrow footpaths



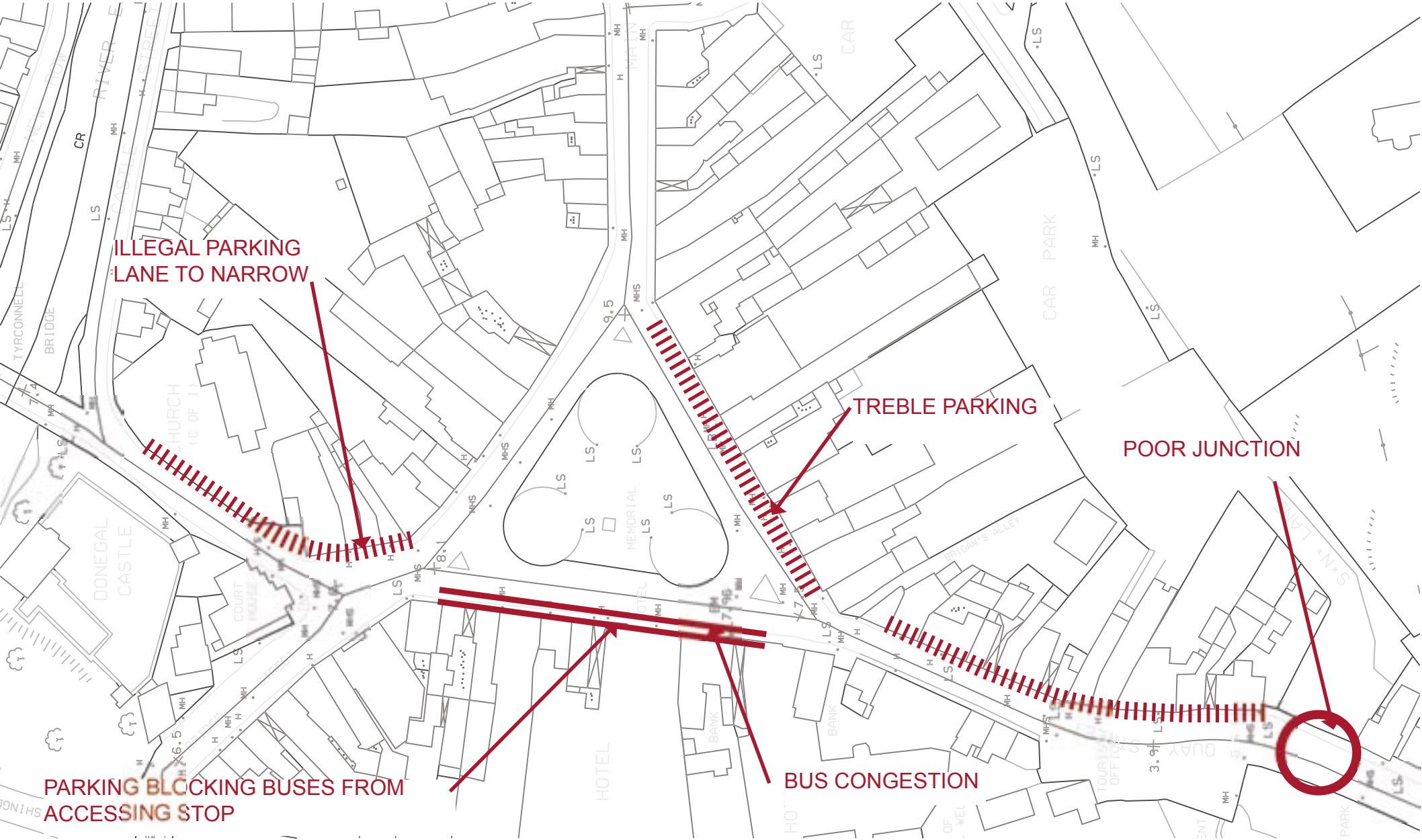
Bus parking / narrow footpaths



Double parking

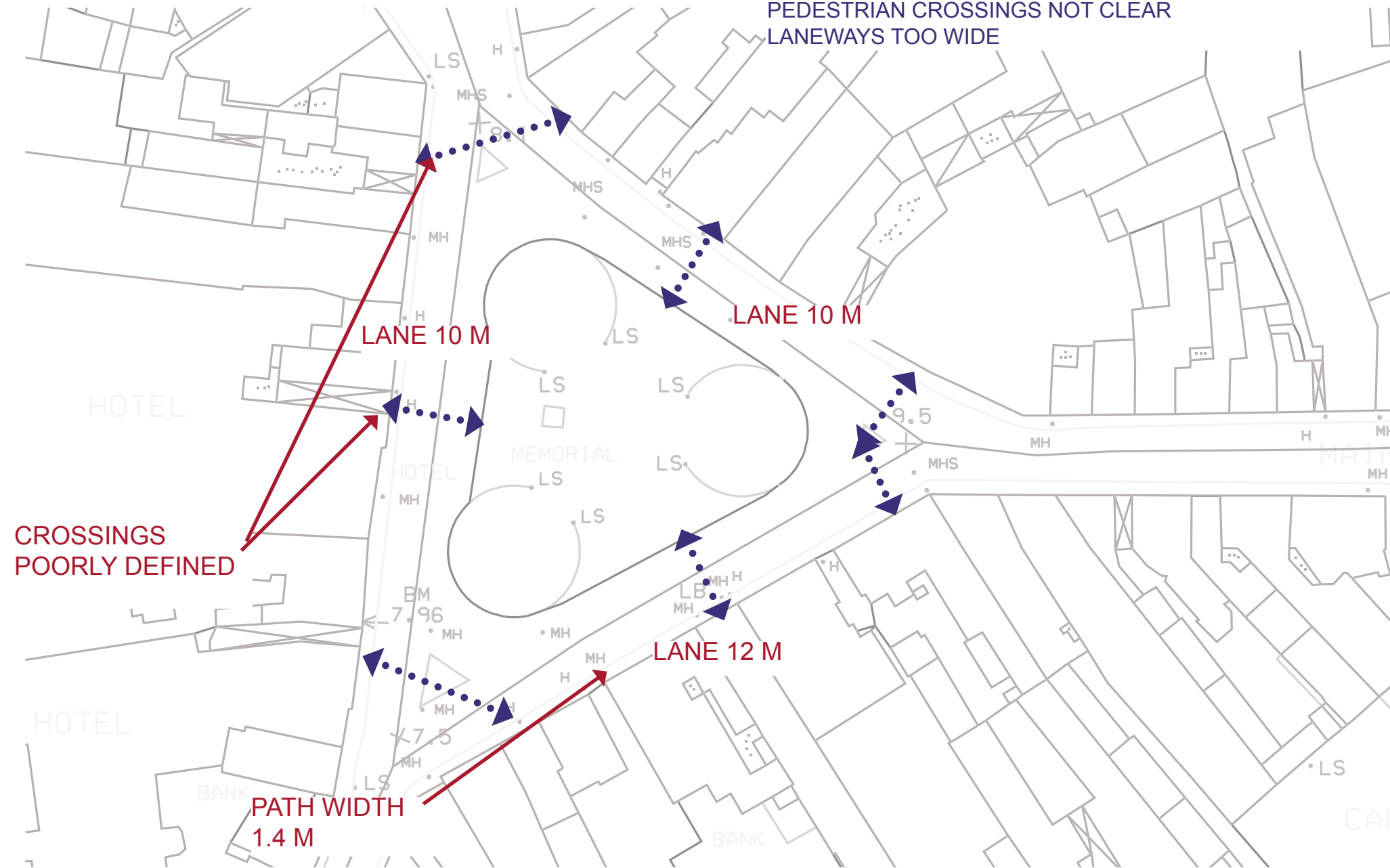


DIAMOND PARKING TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ISSUES



DIAMOND PARKING TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ISSUES

FOOTPATHS TOO NARROW  
PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS NOT CLEAR  
LANEWAYS TOO WIDE

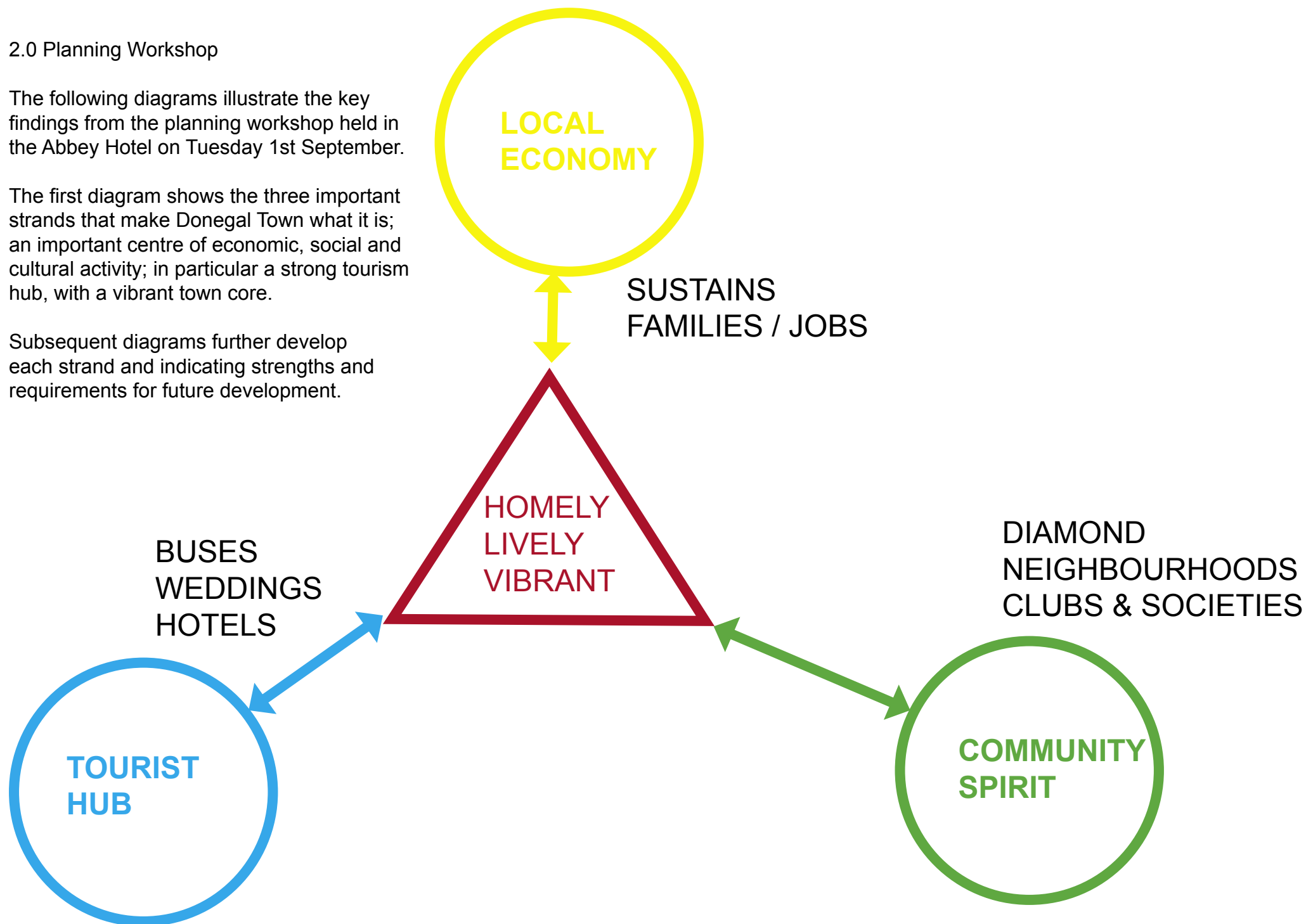


## 2.0 Planning Workshop

The following diagrams illustrate the key findings from the planning workshop held in the Abbey Hotel on Tuesday 1st September.

The first diagram shows the three important strands that make Donegal Town what it is; an important centre of economic, social and cultural activity; in particular a strong tourism hub, with a vibrant town core.

Subsequent diagrams further develop each strand and indicating strengths and requirements for future development.





CASTLE UNDER  
UTILISED

TRAIL  
DEVELOPMENT  
REQUIRED  
(HERITAGE AND  
GREEN WAYS)

WALKING

MORE FACILITIES  
FOR TOURIST  
ACCOMMODATION :  
CAMPING  
GLAMPING  
BOUTIQUE HOSTEL

SIGNAGE

BUS CONGESTION  
ON DIAMOND

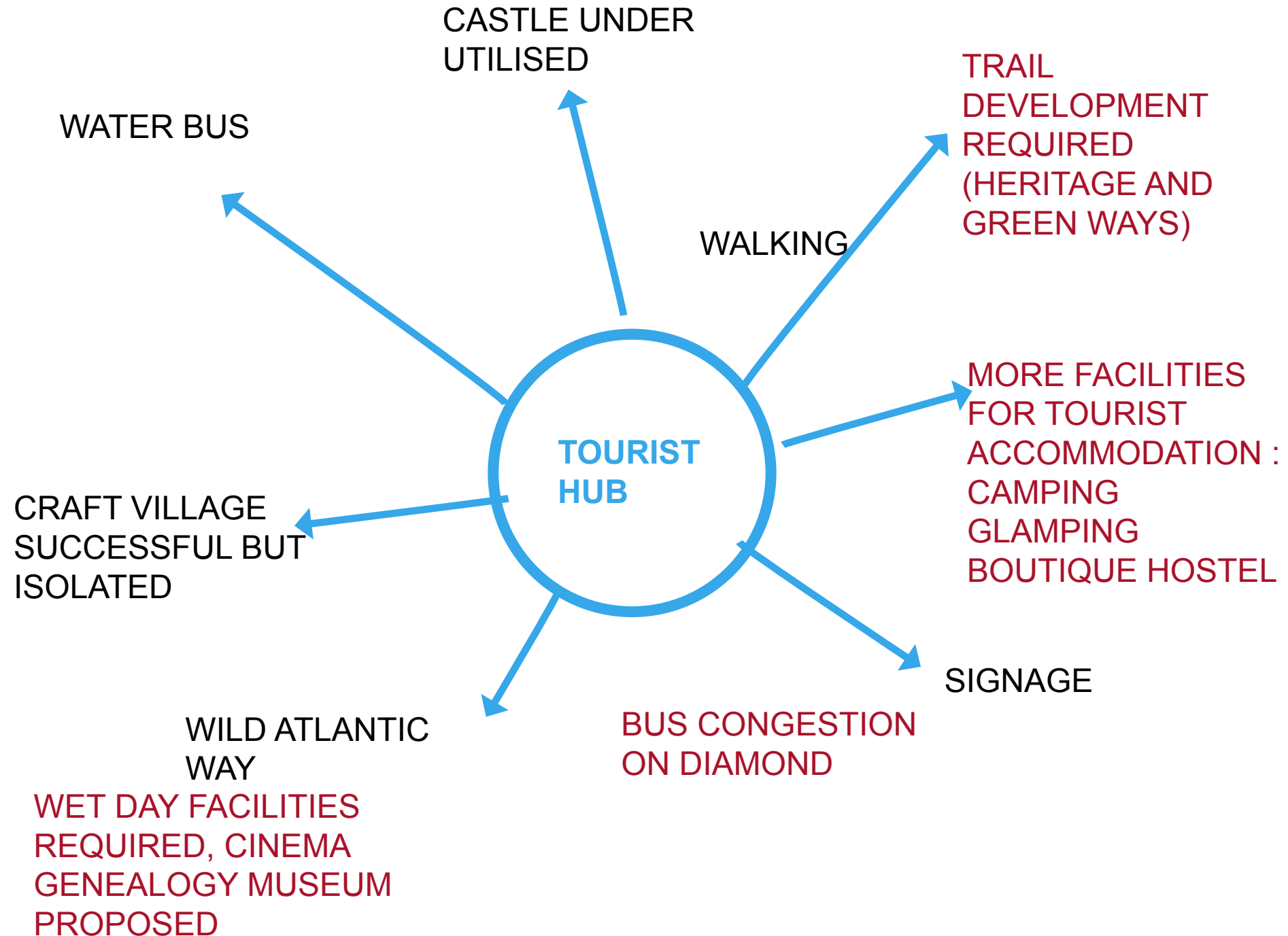
TOURIST  
HUB

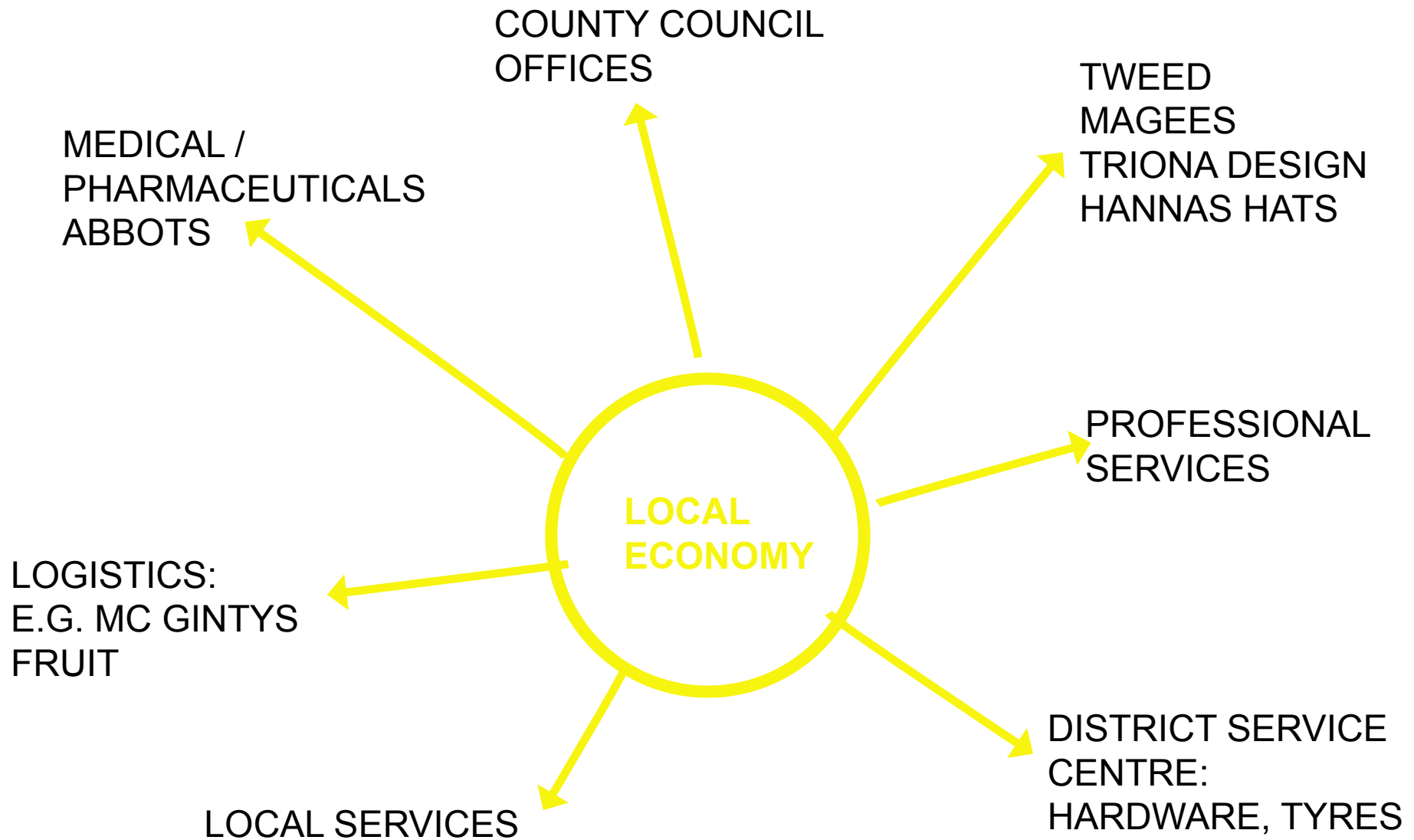
CRAFT VILLAGE  
SUCCESSFUL BUT  
ISOLATED

WILD ATLANTIC  
WAY

WET DAY FACILITIES  
REQUIRED, CINEMA  
GENEALOGY MUSEUM  
PROPOSED

WATER BUS





**GROWTH NEEDED:**  
DIGITAL IT HUB, RETAIL PARK  
FOOD RELATED ENTERPRISES  
PHARMACEUTICALS



**WHAT IS NEEDED:**

ACCOMMODATION SUPPORT FOR ELDERLY AND DISADVANTAGED PEOPLE  
THEATRE / ARTS CENTRE, LEISURE CENTRE, SPORTS CENTRE, TOWN PARK,  
YOUTH FACILITIES (ARENA 7)  
NEW RESIDENTIAL AREAS THAT SUPPORT A POSITIVE SOCIAL MIX



### **3.0 URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT**

Three urban design principles are set out for future development as follows:

1. THE HISTORIC TOWNSCAPE IS THE BENCHMARK AND GUIDE FOR ALL DEVELOPMENT NEW AND REGENERATION:
2. DEVELOP LOCATIONAL STRENGTHS
3. THAT FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE 8 KEY AREAS IN THE TOWN IS CONTROLLED BY AN INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK PLAN THAT INCLUDES PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION AS PART OF THE PROCESS OF MAKING THE INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK PLAN

#### **URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLE 1: HERITAGE TOWNSCAPE IS THE ARCHITECTURAL AND URBAN BENCHMARK FOR ALL FUTURE DEVELOPMENT**

- THE LAP WILL CONTAIN A LOCAL DESIGN STATEMENT WHICH WILL SET OUT STRICT GUIDELINES FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT IN THE TOWN.
- THAT THE HISTORIC TOWNSCAPE BE DESIGNATED AN ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA (ACA):
  - THIS WILL ENSURE A HERITAGE LED APPROACH
  - PROVIDE STRICT GUIDELINES TO PROTECT THE SPECIAL CHARACTER OF THE HISTORIC CORE
  - ACA'S PROVIDE FOR CHANGE WHILE PROTECTING CHARACTER
  - FUTURE DEVELOPMENT IS SYMPATHETIC TO THE SPECIAL CHARACTER OF THE TOWN
  - THAT ALL NEW DEVELOPMENT WILL FOLLOW THE PRINCIPLES ENGRAINED IN THE LOCAL DESIGN STATEMENT AND OUTLINED AS FOLLOWS:
    - ALL BUILDINGS MUST MAKE STREETS OR PUBLIC SPACE
    - BUILDINGS TO ADDRESS THE RIVER BAY
    - SCALE OF BUILDINGS TO ADHERE TO EXISTING SCALE / MASS
    - ARCHITECTURAL LANGUAGE TO ACHIEVE COHERENCE / HARMONY WITH HISTORIC TOWNSCAPE, "BUILDINGS MUST BELONG"
    - NEW CIVIC BUILDINGS TO BE CAREFULLY LOCATED TO FORM ELOQUENT STATEMENTS, FRAME VIEWS, ADDRESS THE RIVER AS DID THE SITING OF PREVIOUS BUILDINGS OF SOCIAL IMPORTANCE E.G. THE METHODIST CHURCH
    - STRICT MATERIAL / COLOUR PALETTE
    - REDUCE SIGNAGE
    - REDUCE CARPARK SIZES
    - PLANT LARGE TREES
    - PUT THE PEDESTRIAN AHEAD OF THE CAR, STREETS INSTEAD OF ROADS
    - REDUCE CLUTTER; MINIMISE ROAD SIGNAGE, WIRES UNDERGROUND



MARK DONALD

km St. Dunstan's  
16 DUNDEE  
km St. Mary's  
27 KILBRIDE  
km St. John's  
1 POUNTCHARLES

The Olde Castle



**PROPOSED ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA  
FOR DONEGAL TOWN:**

- taking in the Bank Walk, Drumcliff (historic landscape)
- Presbyterian, Methodist, Orange Hall, Masons Hall  
Waterloo St
- Railway Station, Magees Factory, Workhouse and famine  
graveyard
- Main St, Town core, Old Abbey and the Glebe

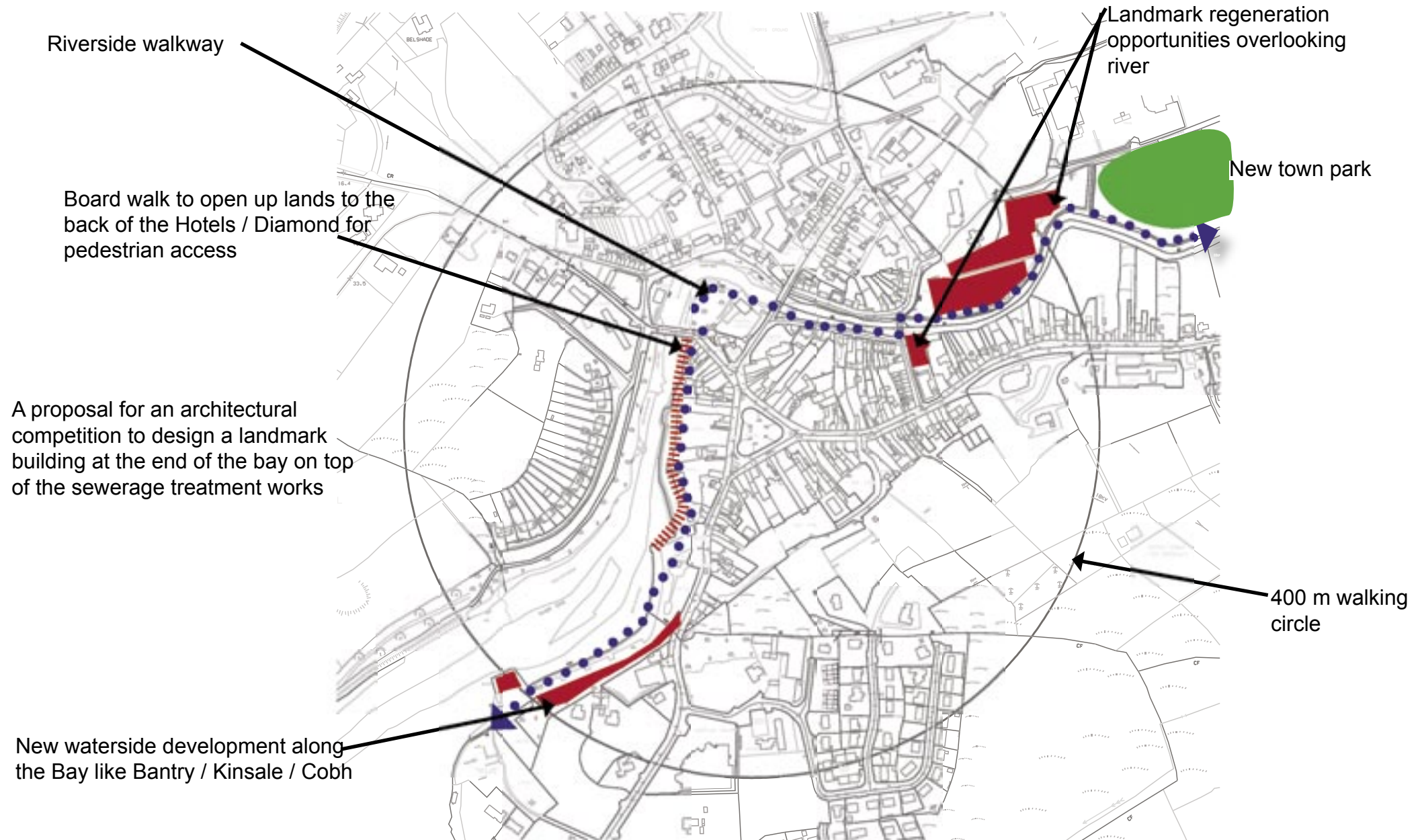




**QUIRKES PHARMACY CLONMEL** an example of a sensitive insertion into a historic townscape, incorporating residential use above the shop below

## URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLE 2: DEVELOP LOCATIONAL STRENGTHS

- GROWTH AND REGENERATION STRATEGY MUST ENSURE THE TOWN ADDRESSES THE BAY AND RIVER







Landmark redevelopment opportunity for the former Magees factory to provide a new use / mix that will contribute to the vibrancy of the town and open up a riverside walk to the east.





The LAP should provide an objective to provide pedestrian access to the west of the Diamond along the river opening up this area and connecting the Pier to the Bridge

## Bantry



## Cobh



Waterside development facing onto the Bay would bring life to the pier area and extend the town centre to embrace the Bay

## Bantry





Bayside development and Marina - Kinsale

#### WIDER LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

- Extending the Bank Walk to Rossylongan estate
- Protecting the Bay fringes from encroachment of development by designating generous buffer zones
- Establishing woodland on the edges of the Bay and providing for walking / cycling
- Protecting the tops of the Drumlins from development and encouraging the establishment of woodland on top of them
- Providing an new road link in the valley between the two drumlins to the south of the town to link the Old Laghey Road to the Ballyshannon Road
- Providing a town park along the river with a green way integrated into the park



# LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

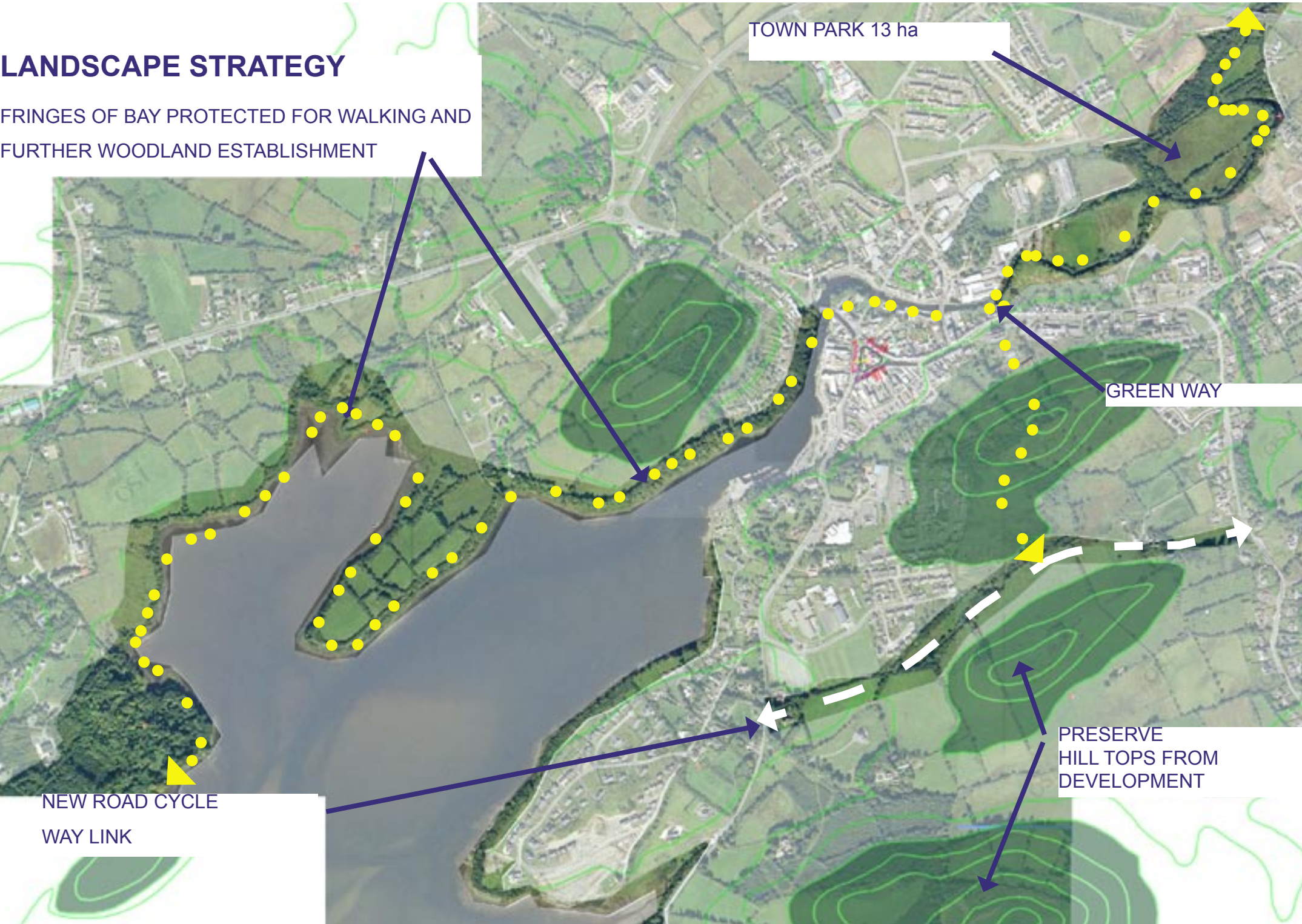
FRINGES OF BAY PROTECTED FOR WALKING AND  
FURTHER WOODLAND ESTABLISHMENT

TOWN PARK 13 ha

GREEN WAY

PRESERVE  
HILL TOPS FROM  
DEVELOPMENT

NEW ROAD CYCLE  
WAY LINK





## GREEN WAY / TRAIL LINKING LOUGH ESKE TO MOUNTCHARLES

- An off road trail linking the very popular walk between the Piers at Mountcharles to potentially Hall Demense Estate if it ever became open to the public, to Rossylongan, to Donegal Town, to the grounds of Solis hotel, to Harvey's Point to Ardnamona.
- Addressing waymarking along the route, particularly at Ardnamona which is poorly signposted and difficult for walkers to find although the walk has been developed to a high quality by Coillte.
- Both Harvey's Point and Solis are very supportive of this proposal and are actively developing walks around the hotels.
- Waymarking / signposting, facilities for walkers, cyclers, buggies, wheelchairs, parking are important aspects to making the trails successful.

## GREEN WAY / TRAIL LINKING DONEGAL TOWN TO THE BLUESTACK WAY

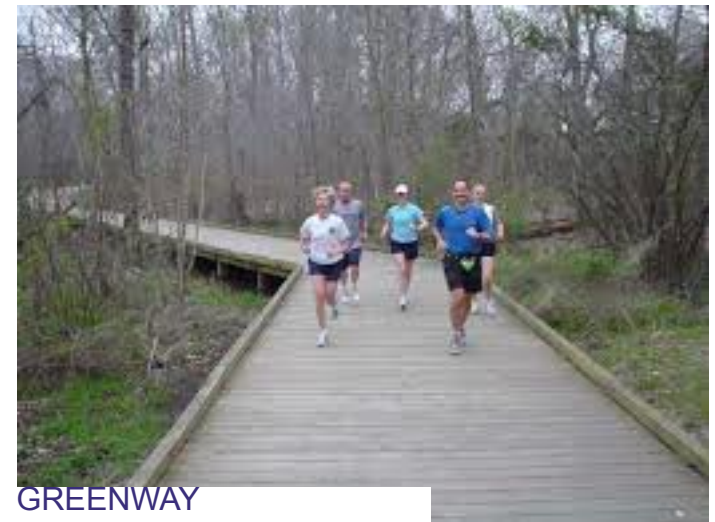
- Waymarking / signposting to provide a connection from Donegal Town to the Bluestack way.



GREENWAY



GREAT WESTERN  
GREENWAY



GREENWAY



# MOUNTCHARLES TO LOUGH ESKE TRAIL

ARD NA MONA

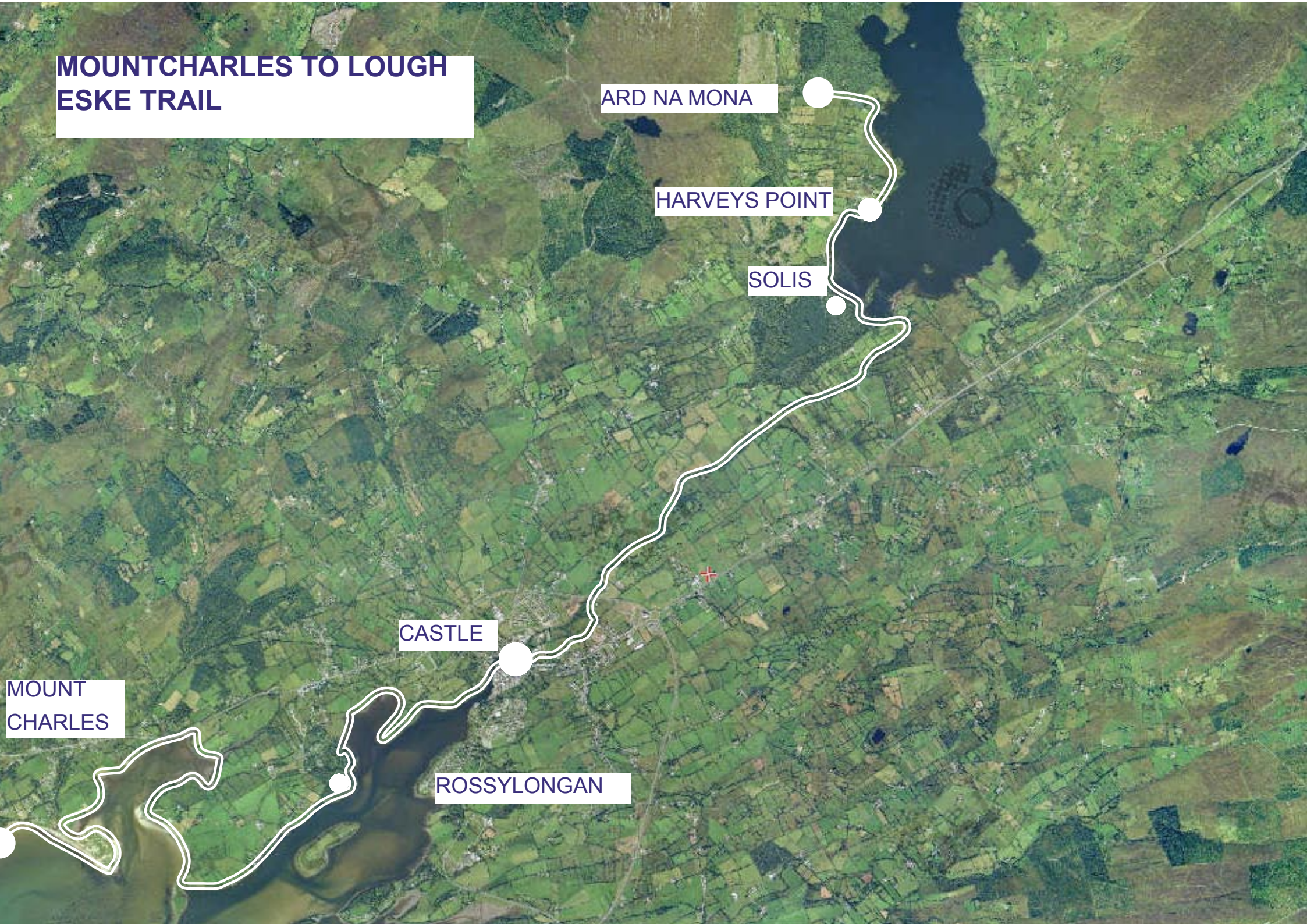
HARVEYS POINT

SOLIS

CASTLE

MOUNT  
CHARLES

ROSSYLONGAN







WAY MARKING



WAY MARKING



WAY MARKING



GREENWAY



GREENWAY



## THE BLUESTACK WAY NEEDS MORE SIGNAGE PARTICULARLY AT THE START OF THE WAY IN THE TOWN CENTRE



**DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLE 3:**  
**8 FRAMEWORK PLANS FOR KEY DEVELOPMENT AREAS WITH-**  
**IN THE TOWN CENTRE**

1. SWEENEY LANDS
2. DONEGAL BUSINESS PARK
3. TOWN CORE
4. MAGEE / BOSCO / TIMONEY
5. MAIN ST.
6. RAFORKER / ARDESKIN
7. TOWN PARK
8. ENTERPRISE PARK

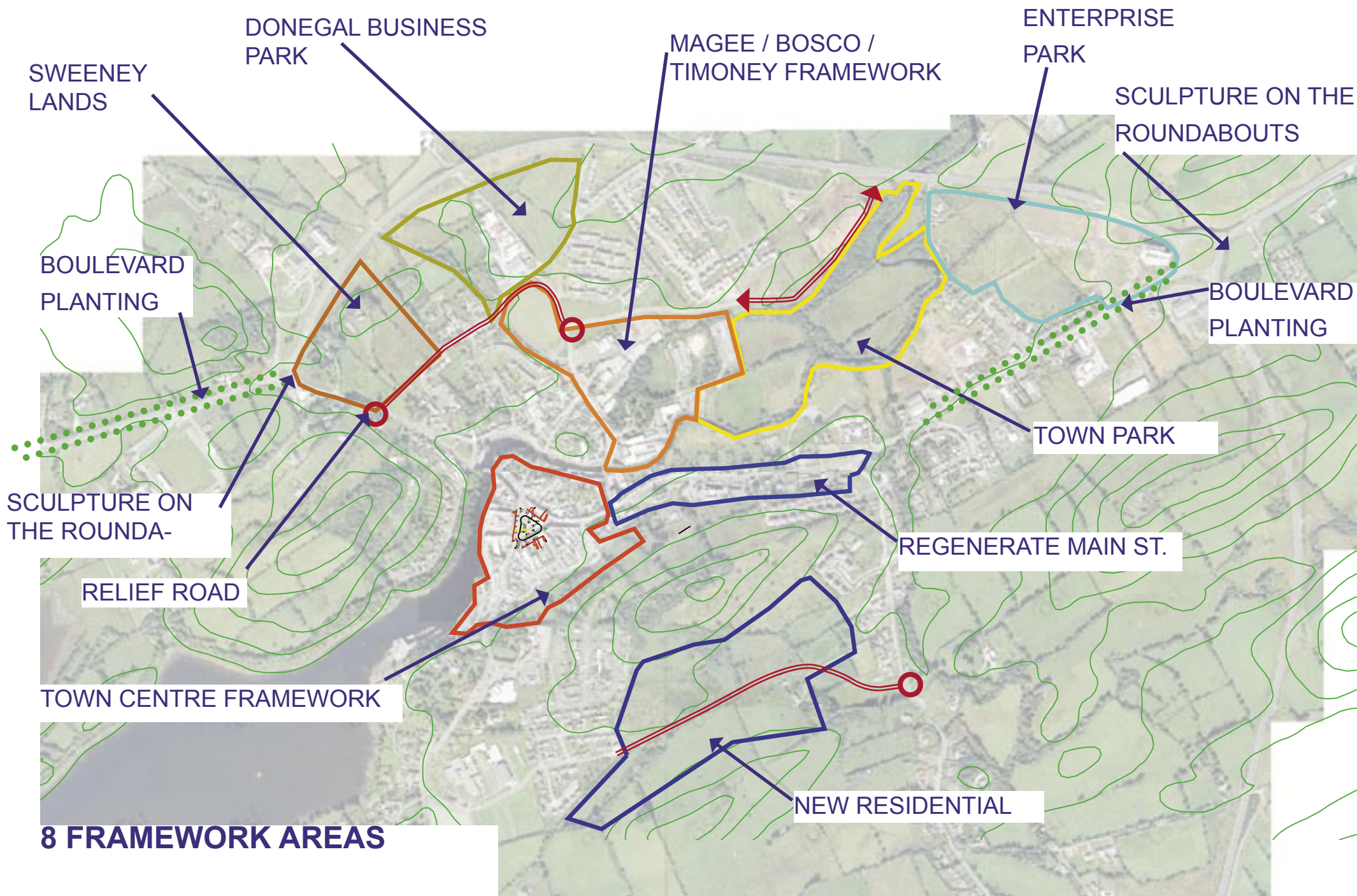
EACH FRAMEWORK PLAN SHOULD HAVE:

- HAVE A PLANNING PROCESS THAT INCLUDES PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND CONSULTATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS
- CONTROL THE USE / MIX IN THE AREAS
- BE PREPARED BY A MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM (ARCHITECTURE, URBAN DESIGN, TRANSPORT ENGINEERS, PLANNERS, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS)
- BE ADOPTED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OBJECTIVES OF THE LOCAL AREA PLAN

The purpose of the integrated framework plans is to ensure an 'integrated - joined up approach' to these areas is adopted; that traffic considerations, public open space, amenity requirements, the views of land owners and the public, architecture, land use mix, carparking are all appraised and an overall masterplan proposed for the area. If a masterplan for each area can be set out, it will ensure development of sites within each area is forming part of a coherent overall picture, and avoiding an ad-hoc fragmented approach.

The issues that need to be examined in each area are flagged in the following sections.







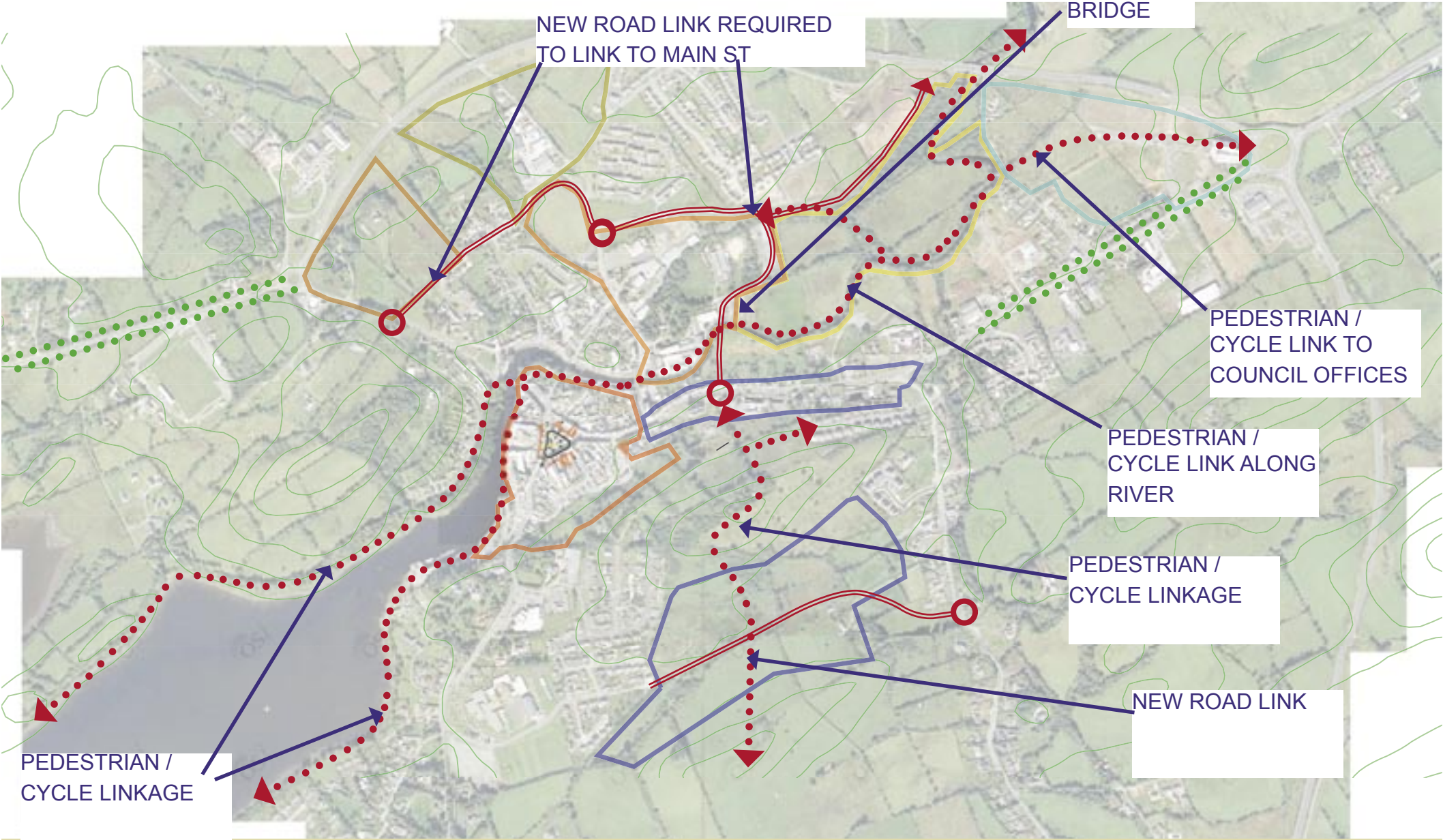
## IMPROVED ROAD ACCESS / PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE WAYS

In addition infrastructural improvements must be considered to include improved road access around the town centre offering an alternative to all traffic coming through the Diamond; upgrading the road access from the Killymard junction along the Killybegs Road to link to the Bosco Centre to Magees to Main St would improve the development potential of this side of town and help the Donegal Business Park. A previous plan for the Magee lands demonstrated the feasibility of road access at the former Schooners Pub on Main St with a bridge link across the river.

Similarly good pedestrian / cycle infrastructure is required as shown on the map overleaf.

Boulevard planting is shown on all approach roads to the town, the roundabouts at each entry point represent an opportunity to create sculpture that advertises the towns heritage.

# PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS AND POTENTIAL ROAD LINKS



## LOCATING KEY FACILITIES / CIVIC AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS:

The map shows the principle with regard to locating the key civic and public buildings required for future development. The need for these facilities was presented at the planning workshop. The principle is to spread these key facilities around the town, with at least one proposed for each of the integrated framework development areas. The purpose of this is outlined as follows:

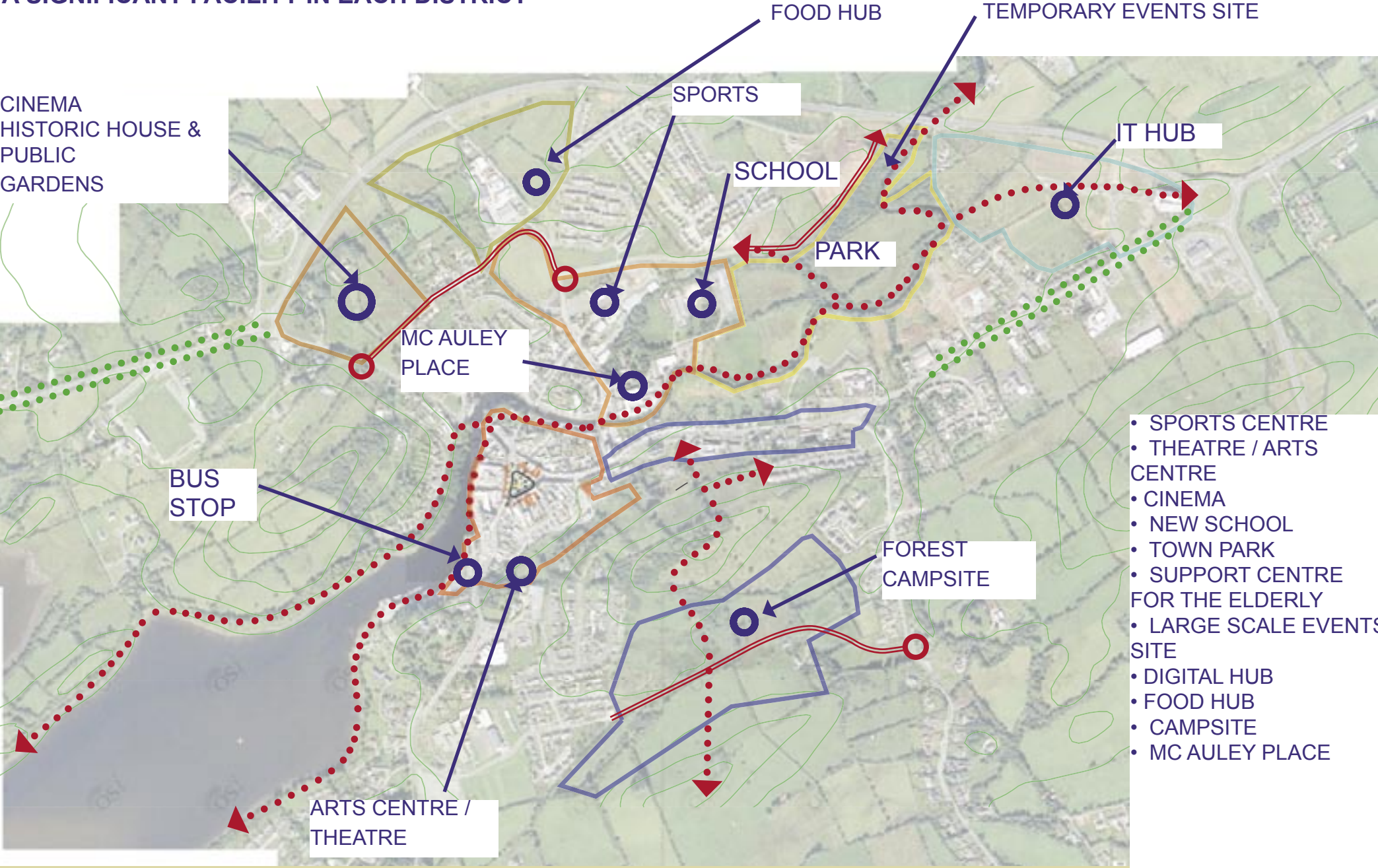
- avoid a concentration of these facilities within for example a new retail park which can have a soulless presence lacking any sense of place.
- that these buildings respond to important sites / locations within the town similar to how the churches responded to their locations in the previous centuries
- to stimulate regeneration in each area
- to spread traffic impact

Suggested locations are proposed on the map opposite.

- Sweeney lands: cinema, historic house and gardens
- Donegal Business park: a food enterprise hub similar to Drumshanbo, County Leitrim focusing on the development of artisan foods.
- Magee site: a development like Mc Auley Place in Naas that puts the elderly at the heart of the community
- Railway buildings: Genealogy museum and railway centre
- Bosco centre: New sports centre and public space
- Timoney / Mart lands: New school
- Enterprise Park: Digital IT Hub
- Back of Diamond: Arts centre / Theatre
- Glebe / Raforker residential area - Forest park with campsite
- Town park: large temporary events site provided



LOCATION OF KEY FACILITIES : PRINCIPLE 3 TO LOCATE  
A SIGNIFICANT FACILITY IN EACH DISTRICT



- SPORTS CENTRE
- THEATRE / ARTS CENTRE
- CINEMA
- NEW SCHOOL
- TOWN PARK
- SUPPORT CENTRE FOR THE ELDERLY
- LARGE SCALE EVENTS SITE
- DIGITAL HUB
- FOOD HUB
- CAMPSITE
- MC AULEY PLACE

# MC AULEY PLACE NAAS

“OLDER PEOPLE AT  
THE HEART OF THE  
COMMUNITY”

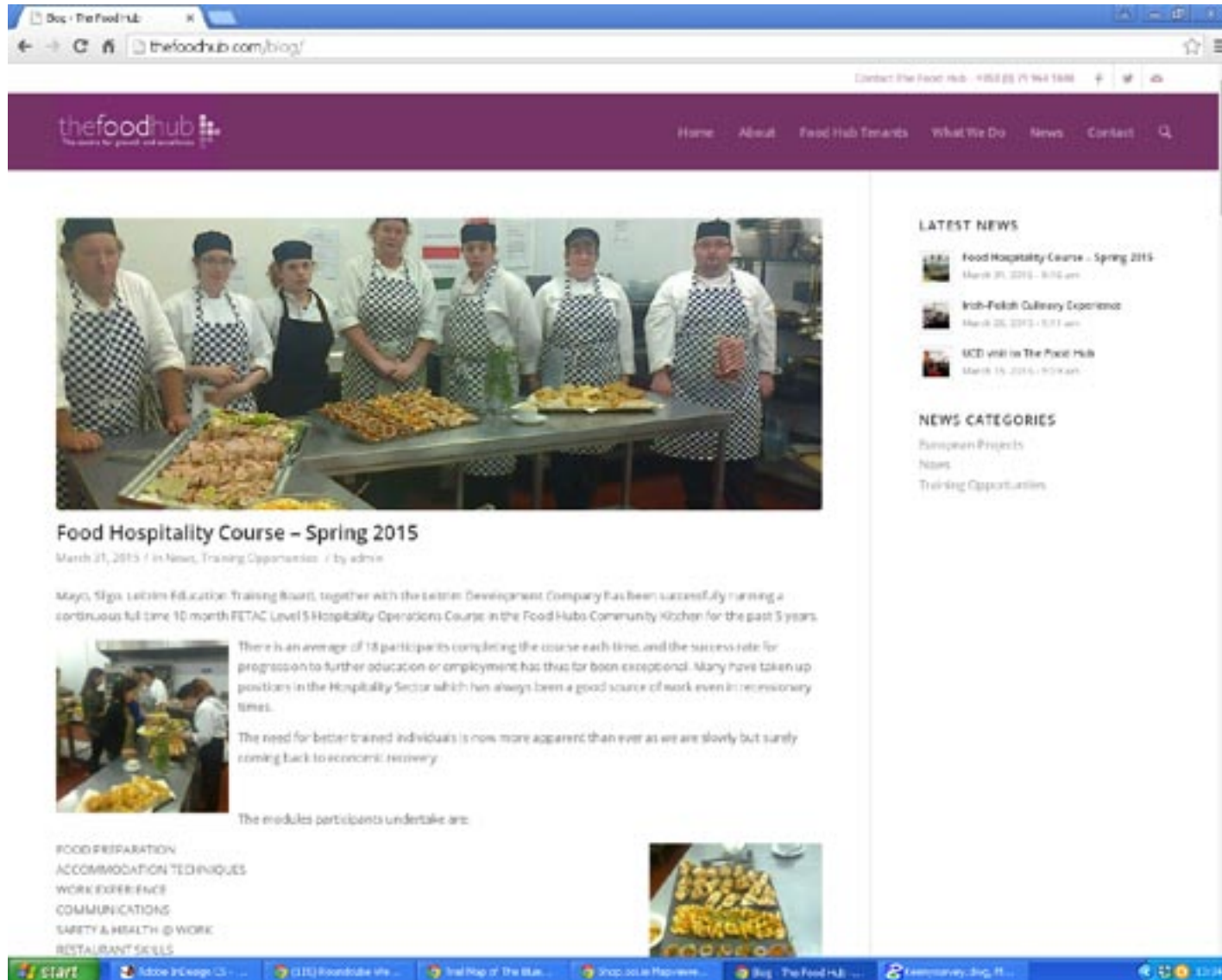


53 self-contained one-bedroomed apartments  
Convent Tea Rooms  
Arts and Culture Centre  
Community Centre  
Volunteer Centre and a Health through Learning Centre with an  
associated garden is being planned.



## ABOUT THE FOOD HUB, DRUMSHANBO

The Food Hub is a best practice food production and education facility based in Drumshanbo, Co. Leitrim. Since its establishment in 2004, it has emerged as Ireland's premier artisan multi tenant food production enterprise centre, established by a social enterprise.



The screenshot shows the website of The Food Hub. The header is purple with the logo and navigation links: Home, About, Food Hub Tenants, What We Do, News, and Contact. The main content area features a large photo of seven people in chef uniforms standing behind a counter with food. Below this is the article title "Food Hospitality Course – Spring 2015" and a sub-header "March 21, 2015 / In News, Training Opportunities / by admin". The article text describes a FETAC Level 5 Hospitality Operations Course run by Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim Education Training Board and Leitrim Development Company. It mentions that there is an average of 18 participants completing the course each time, with a success rate for progression to further education or employment. The need for better trained individuals is highlighted as the economy slowly recovers. The modules participants undertake are listed: FOOD PREPARATION, ACCOMMODATION TECHNIQUES, WORK EXPERIENCE, COMMUNICATIONS, SAFETY & HEALTH @ WORK, and RESTAURANT SKILLS. A small photo of food is shown next to the list. The right sidebar contains "LATEST NEWS" with three items: "Food Hospitality Course – Spring 2015", "Irish-Polish Culinary Experience", and "UCD visit to The Food Hub". Below this is "NEWS CATEGORIES" with links to "European Projects", "News", and "Training Opportunities". The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the Start button and several open applications including Adobe Creative Cloud, (110) Roundtable, and The Food Hub.

the food hub  
The centre for growth and innovation

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**Food Hospitality Course – Spring 2015**  
March 21, 2015 / In News, Training Opportunities / by admin

Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim Education Training Board, together with the Leitrim Development Company has been successfully running a continuous full time 10 month FETAC Level 5 Hospitality Operations Course in the Food Hub's Community Kitchen for the past 5 years.

There is an average of 18 participants completing the course each time, and the success rate for progression to further education or employment has thus far been exceptional. Many have taken up positions in the Hospitality Sector which has always been a good source of work even in recessionary times.

The need for better trained individuals is now more apparent than ever as we slowly but surely coming back to economic recovery.

The modules participants undertake are:

- FOOD PREPARATION
- ACCOMMODATION TECHNIQUES
- WORK EXPERIENCE
- COMMUNICATIONS
- SAFETY & HEALTH @ WORK
- RESTAURANT SKILLS

**LATEST NEWS**

- Food Hospitality Course – Spring 2015**  
March 21, 2015 / 5:15 am
- Irish-Polish Culinary Experience**  
March 20, 2015 / 5:11 am
- UCD visit to The Food Hub**  
March 19, 2015 / 10:44 am

**NEWS CATEGORIES**

- European Projects
- News
- Training Opportunities

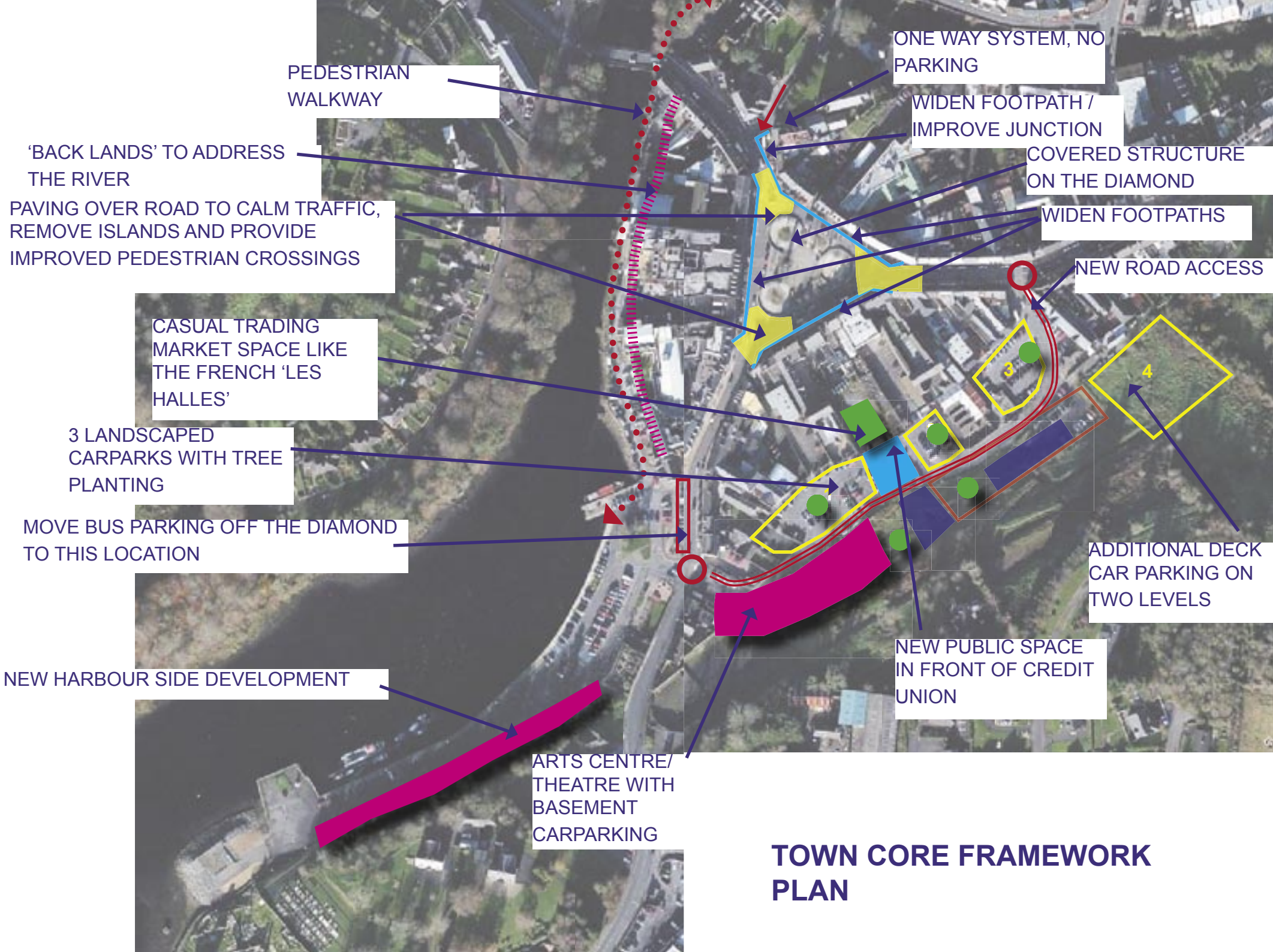
## **FRAMEWORK AREA NO. 1; DIAMOND / TOWN CORE**

The following diagrams look to form a sketch masterplan to address some of the issues arising in the Diamond / Town core area.

Key to the solving the issues pertaining to the Diamond is traffic management and a framework plan is required that must address this in consultation with stakeholders to include:

- looking to move bus / taxi carparking off the Diamond, to opposite All Sports, bus carparking could be provided on each side to cater for buses coming from two directions
- increasing footpath width
- improving pedestrian crossing
- calming traffic on the corners / improving pedestrian crossing by paving across the road
- providing a new alternative road to the back of the diamond allowing lane widths to be narrowed around the Diamond
- traffic enforcement to stop double parking
- one way system on Tirchonail St with coach park outside the Castle
- providing a covered structure in the Diamond similar to the Milkmarket in Limerick for outdoor events and live music
- providing deck parking to the back of the Diamond that increases parking and allows for landscaping of the carpark, the creation of a public space in front of the new credit union building and space for a covered casual trading area to the back of Bank of Ireland similar to the English Market in Cork or the 'Les Halles' found in many French towns. While this would be a worthy addition to the town and a tourist attraction other locations for casual trading are proposed to include the Old Fire Station and the Pier.
- a Theatre / Arts centre with basement carparking to the back of the Diamond to improve the use mix in this zone and provide an evening / weekend facility
- provide new waterside development in the pier fronting onto the Bay
- planting more trees to the back of the Diamond
- creating pedestrian linkage along the bay to the back of the hotels
- encouraging the backs of buildings on the Diamond to address the Bay





PEDESTRIAN  
WALKWAY

ONE WAY SYSTEM, NO  
PARKING

WIDEN FOOTPATH /  
IMPROVE JUNCTION

COVERED STRUCTURE  
ON THE DIAMOND

WIDEN FOOTPATHS

NEW ROAD ACCESS

'BACK LANDS' TO ADDRESS  
THE RIVER

PAVING OVER ROAD TO CALM TRAFFIC,  
REMOVE ISLANDS AND PROVIDE  
IMPROVED PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

CASUAL TRADING  
MARKET SPACE LIKE  
THE FRENCH 'LES  
HALLES'

3 LANDSCAPED  
CARPARKS WITH TREE  
PLANTING

MOVE BUS PARKING OFF THE DIAMOND  
TO THIS LOCATION

ADDITIONAL DECK  
CAR PARKING ON  
TWO LEVELS

NEW PUBLIC SPACE  
IN FRONT OF CREDIT  
UNION

NEW HARBOUR SIDE DEVELOPMENT

ARTS CENTRE/  
THEATRE WITH  
BASEMENT  
CARPARKING

## TOWN CORE FRAMEWORK PLAN

**ADDRESSING THE VISUAL INCOHERENCE OF DEVELOPMENT TO  
THE BACK OF THE DIAMOND AND INTRODUCING A NEW CIVIC USE  
THAT WILL IMPROVE THE USE MIX IN THIS ARE TO ENCOURAGE  
EVENING / WEEKEND USE**



**BASEMENT CAR PARKING**





**A COVERED CASUAL TRADING AREA  
LIKE THE ENGLISH MARKET THAT WOULD  
SUPPORT COUNTRY MARKETS / FARMERS  
MARKETS / FLEA MARKETS / BOOK FAIRS /**





## **FRAMEWORK AREA NO. 2; MAGEE / TIMONEY / BOSCO AREA**

There are a number of challenges pertaining to this area:

- The Bosco Centre has plans for a new sports centre, public space, development site and carparking.
- Timoneys is an opportunity site for development
- Magees presents an important future development opportunity
- The lands lead towards the river and a potential town park
- Improved road access is required
- The need to open up linkage to the river
- Relocating the mart could be a positive for the town in that it would alleviate traffic on Mart days which currently cause tail backs around this area.
- The area could be a good location for a new school site as the current town schools have problems with regard to access / drop off, causing congestion on the main approach road making it difficult for parents to safely drop off and pick up children going to school. The sites are tight for expansion and play space. Providing a good site for a new school is a requirement for the future, locating the school beside a new town park would be an attractive proposition, in that the school is centred close to surrounding residential areas and children / teachers could use the park.

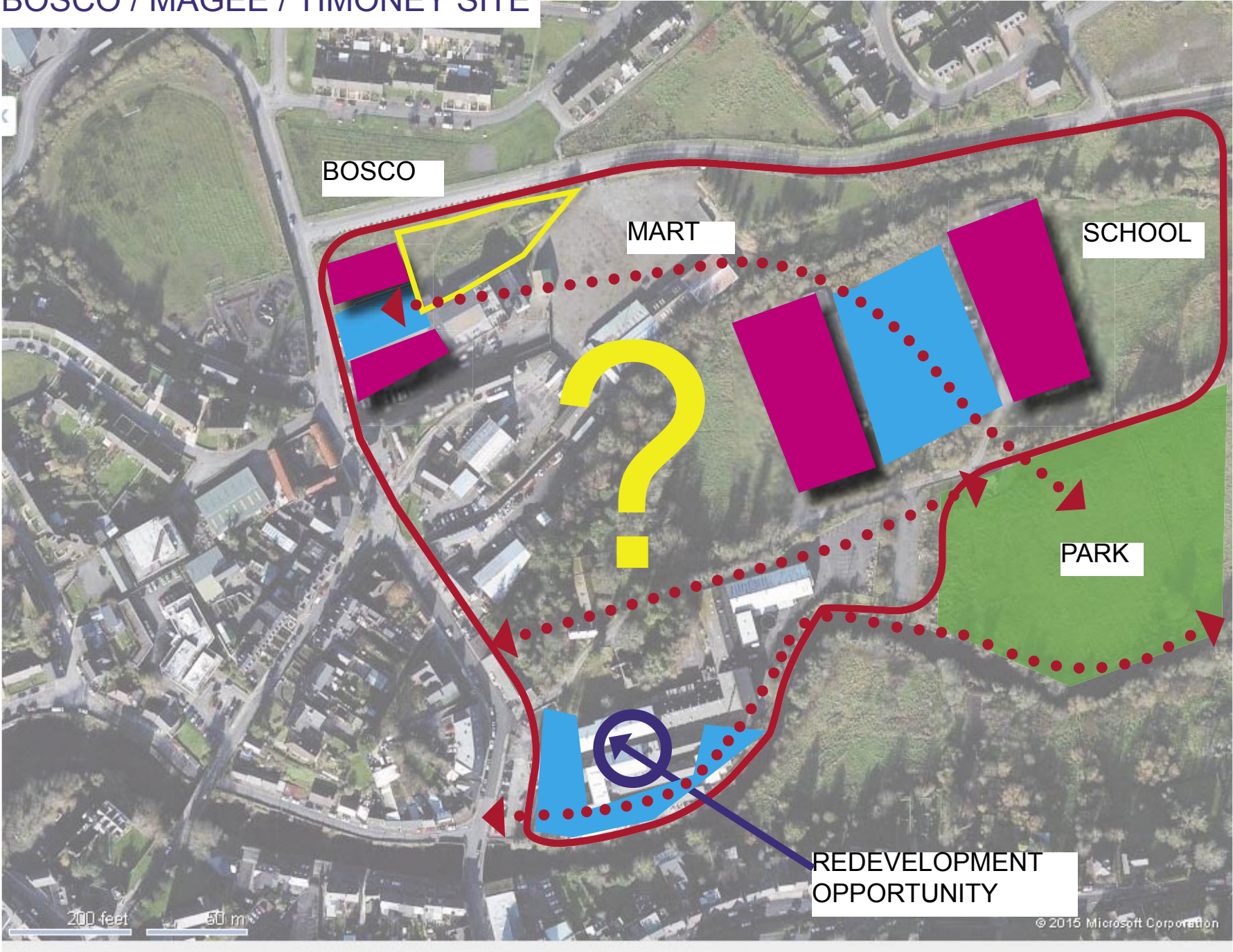
## **FRAMEWORK AREA NO. 3; TOWN PARK**

Providing for a high quality town park centrally located is an urgent requirement for the town. The river lands represent a great opportunity to achieve this goal. The lands highlighted in the maps overleaf are ideal for a park in that they have already the natural amenity of the river, woodlands and wetlands. They are flood plains and not suitable for development. Development of a town park would open up the river and provide for linkage to further along the river Eske and to the Council Offices. The park could be inexpensive to develop in that there is already tree planting / a river etc. The main requirement would be to form a bridge over the river where the old railway bridge crossed the Eske.

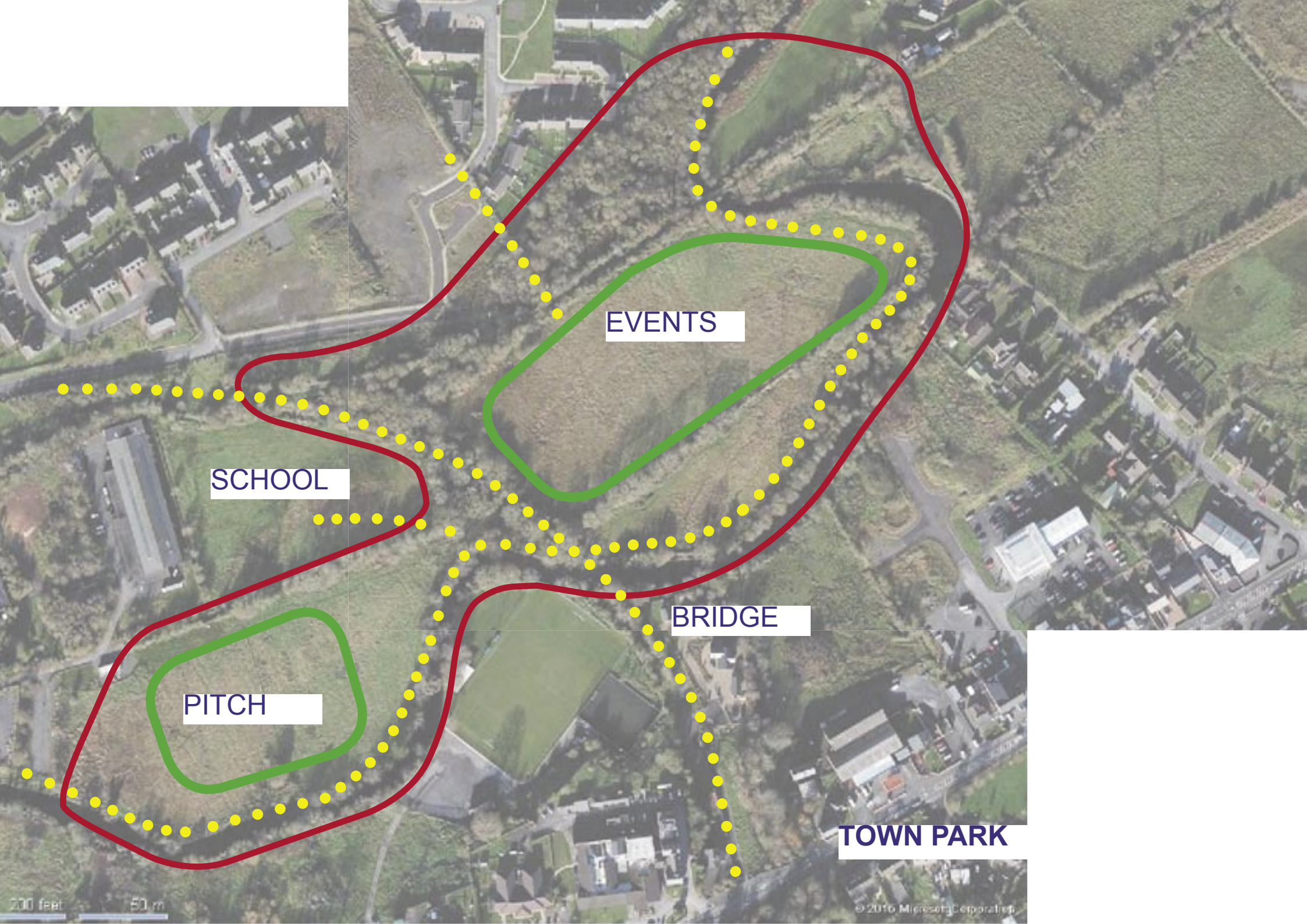
An example of a similar park in Issoudun in France is shown, where a low impact park has been created using grass paths, meadow areas and allotment garden area.

The Donegal Town Park could be used for temporary events such as music / sports / cultural festivals.

BOSCO / MAGEE / TIMONEY SITE







SCHOOL

EVENTS

PITCH

BRIDGE

TOWN PARK



# ISSOUDDUN PARK FRANCE





## **Planning Workshop hosted by DTBFG:**

**Venue: Abbey Hotel, Tuesday 1st September, 8 – 10 pm**

### **Attendees:**

Caroline Timony – Forget Me Not Craft Shop  
Justin and Hilary Irwin – George Irwin Hardware  
Mark Craze – The Craze Menswear  
Ann Sharkey – Forget Me Not  
Amanda Jane Hanna – Hanna Hats  
John Hanna – Hanna Hats  
Garreth Britton – All Sports and Uniform Shop  
Caithriona Mc Crudden  
Martin Mc Gowan – Donegal Town Hardware  
Paul Doherty – Paul Doherty Architects  
Catherine Doyle – Abbey and Central Hotels  
Deirdre Mc Glone – Harvey's Point  
Aine Enright – Inspirations Beauty and Holistic Sales  
Nikola Britton – Britton Insurance  
Maurice Timony - Spar  
David Henderson – Hendersons Hardware  
Ray Rooney – Peters Manshop  
Kevin Martin – Donegal Heating and Plumbing  
Madeline Begley – Begleys Pharmacy  
Danny – Abbey Hotel  
Sean Carney, Lough Eske Castle  
Evan Wilkin – Central Hotel  
Tania Britton - DTBFG

### **Main points in feedback session:**

- "Parking is a major problem and has been neglected"
- "Need to regenerate Tirchonail St"
- "Milltown / Magees area has potential for a mixed use service centre to augment or extend services in the Diamond"
- "Residential population must grow and compliment existing residential areas"
- "Development should not fragment the town"
- "The river must be opened up for visitors"
- "A boardwalk along the river using the raised man holes as support"
- "Donegal Craft Village is not marketed properly and is impossible for pedestrian access from the Diamond or main bus stop area"

- "Donegal Town is the main tourism hub in the North West"
- "Signage is very important to facilitate visitor orientation"
- "A casual trading site is required"
- "Cherrymore located Donegal Town because of the commercial zoning provided"
- "Employment generation for the young graduates is important"
- "Tourism is important, in that sense it is a strength that Donegal is perceived as a friendly Town"
- "Main tourist hub in the North West"
- "A hop on / off tourism local bus linking Bundoran / Donegal Town / Glencolumbkille"
- "Need to develop heritage trails and colour code them"
- "Why can't Donegal Town be an attractive destination to live for people working in Sligo or Letterkenny?"
- "Donegal Town is attractive, has good community spirit, beaches and has a lot to offer"
- "Fishing has potential for further development there are good fishing rivers in the area, this has the potential to lengthen the tourism season"
- "Facilities e.g. places to stay and training are needed to promote fishing, this aspect of the local economy's tourism and hospitality sector needs marketing"
- "Hospitality and humour are amongst our greatest assets"
- "A trail to link the Donegal Bay, River Eske to Lough Eske; taking in Ros-sylongan and Revlin."
- "The town must face and address the River"
- "Service locations must be carefully planned and located"
- "Traffic management around the Diamond must be planned and provided"
- "Town centre uses must have the right mix to provide a lively and vibrant atmosphere during the evenings and at weekends"
- "Donegal Castle is under utilised, under marketed and not open enough"
- "Schools have a negative impact on town centre traffic"
- "A Retail Park is inevitable, when it comes it must support / compliment the Town Centre"

### **What is "important" to you about Donegal Town:**

- "it is a destination town with a vibrant local community and a strong tourism sector"
- "friendliness, cleanliness, safety, local spirit, competitive"
- "vibrancy; people, visitors, natural amenities"

“people, work, heritage”  
 “Diamond is a hub”  
 “home and family are important”  
 “Lough Eske and the Blue Stack Mountains are huge assets”  
 “the water bus is important”  
 ‘lively’, ‘friendly’, ‘traditional’, ‘attractions’, ‘shops’, ‘entertainment, bars, restaurants’,  
 “children’s activities; the band, sports, bosco, schools’, ‘communication, location / broadband’, professional service location’, ‘river / castle / town landscape’, “  
 “community and warmth of the town – could be better with more fun / family amenities”  
 “Donegal Bay and River – again development of these would be fantastic”  
 “Town Developments in a strategic matter”  
 “Clubs and social groups are plentiful and great part of Donegal Town”  
 “Vibrant community”  
 “Weaving in Donegal for over 100 years”  
 “Some business in the town over a 100 years”  
 “Family, small community, friendly, beaches, mountains, space, green, history, cooperation, beauty, rivers, walking, preservation “  
 “community, safety, closeness, space”  
 “people, close to the sea”  
 “sea, fishing, angling, snooker”  
 “community spirit, natural family activities, close to beaches, open play areas for kids”  
 “walking; social life afterwards, Bluestack Ramblers, trails, holidays”  
 “pubs – craic”  
 “Friendly people”  
 “heritage, history, people”  
 “friendly people, clean town”  
 “heritage, culture”

What needs to change ?

“Amenities for the town; a cinema, a swimming pool, a music hall”  
 “Need to consider a multi storey car park to the back of the town as a public private partnership”  
 “Out door eating places looking onto the Diamond”  
 “More individual quirky shops”  
 “Develop points of historical interest, to attract more people in years to come, a Museum, an Arts Centre”

“Cohesive town centre”  
 “develop town centre with ‘boulevard’ feel, buildings signage and lighting, diamond as a centre for social activity and community occasions, develop a traffic plan to allow access / egress as easily as possible, sustainable commercial development towards less developed streets, i.e. Main St., maintain and develop sports / social activities for children / teenagers, town park, develop Bosco Centre, develop the arts “  
 “relocate the buses off the Diamond”  
 “there is great potential for growth of tourism”  
 “develop the bank walk”  
 “work is important if there is none – I will be emigrating”  
 “we need better social facilities”  
 “we need an off road walkway”  
 “Bus park required”  
 “Parking enforcement needed”  
 “facilities for children – like Arena 7”  
 “incentives to develop derelict buildings”  
 “tourism season extended to 12 months”  
 “more festivals”  
 “walkways and cycleways on hinterland routes”  
 “outdoor park / gym equipment”  
 “extending footpath to provide for outside trading / street cafes”  
 “entrances into the town and roundabouts need to be improved visually”  
 “town signage needed on the outskirts”  
 “planned approach needed to improve streetscapes”  
 “vibrant town centre with good amenities catering for locals and tourists alike e.g. Marina, cycle and walkways”  
 “12 month tourist season”  
 “more use of the castle”  
 “the plan must address the potential of the Bosco Centre”  
 “amenities – there is a lack of things to do on wet days”  
 “need to develop amenities for children / youth”  
 “need a digital enterprise”  
 “need a cinema, library, IT Hub “  
 “need to use the Bay / River more to develop water based facilities”  
 “ a proper plan is required”

Proposals made:

“ Tourism trail taking in Magees Tweeds, Hannas Hats, Craft Village”  
 “Need more activities, snooker rooms, tennis courts, parks, more green



areas, crazy golf, bike trails, wet day activities”

“Fishing holidays, 1st of April to September, with Char fishing in November, night fishing on the River wall”

“Heritage trail encompassing the Castle, Trains, Abbey, Bank Walk, Lough Eske”

“Anglers Trail”

“Old Railway Track”

“Colour coded trails”

“Improve local transport; hop on/ off bus, linking Killybegs, Slieve League, Craft Village”

“Walking, golf, fishing”

“Foody town with good restaurants”

“Widen footpaths”

“Marine; more use of the bay, fly fishing classes, develop fishing, Gillys, board walk along the river, dingy sailing, improve signage, golfing is good value”

“proper pedestrian crossings”

“ one way traffic systems”

“heritage trails, museums, bicycle area”

“develop all areas, tourism, industry, population, we must improve our offering”

“busier town, more footfall, more population, more jobs”

“stone mines in Drumkeelin are an attraction”

#### Proposals noted on Town Maps

“ connecting the town to Lough Eske, the Bluestacks, fishing”

“footpaths, trails colour coded”

“widen footpaths around Diamond, one lane traffic, plant trees, remove buses to Railway centre”

“Heritage information / genealogy office, trail information”

Traffic management to include traffic lights to aid movement in/out of car-park”

“new school site needed”

“Revlins lands; opportunity for water/ tourism activities”

“Develop the Bank walk”

“Sweeney lands; leisure, cinema, children’s needs”

“In the future extending the town core to the south, opportunity site between the Old Abbey, Supervalu, Glebe, Mc Ginley Motors”

“Future industrial development; Abbots / Cherrymore area”

“Towncentre employment generation at Magees / Bosco / Timoneys”

“ Residential growth sites; along the river (mixed), Drumcliff, Belshade / Sweeneys site, Drummark / Old Laghey Road, Brookfield, Glebe”

“existing amenity sites; Bosco / playground / old running track, Donegal Soccer grounds, Four Masters”

“Expansion of town centre carparking behind St. Patrick’s Church and towards Aldi on the Hill area, parking site identified at Drumcliff, on Diamond backlands, behind Bosco Centre”

#### Strengths noted on Town Maps

“Blas, camper van sites”

“Pedestrian movement around Diamond”

“Playground”

“Diamond / town core / hospitality / retail / tourism”

#### Weaknesses noted on Town Maps

“ Library not in a good location”

“signage weak over the town”

“not enough parking”

“car parking, bus drop off / pick up “

“town schools are on restricted sites, causing traffic congestion on Upper Main St.”

#### SWOT Analysis:

##### Strengths

“Food / tourism”

“Diamond location”

“Tweed”

“Industrial development sites”

“Heritage / culture”

“E-Fibre”

“Bay”

“Currency”

“Town centre”

“Location – scenic”

“Castle – people”

“Buses”

“Variety of shops”

“Restaurants”

“Water bus”

“Bank walk”

Opportunities:

“Move Buses / Taxis”

“Lobby politicians to make the council take responsibility”

“Zone industrial areas to encourage industry”

“Develop the Bay / Bank Walk “

“Develop existing online exposure and positive Trip Advisor ratings”

“Unlock land locked areas”

“Good stock of residential areas around the town”

“Wild Atlantic Way”

“Our People”

“River / landscapes”

“Old Railway”

“Heritage”

“Develop the Castle / gardens”

“Cycleways”

“Swimming pool / cinema”

“Double footpath width in Town Centre”

“Bank walk extension to Rossylongan”

“Develop recreational amenities, cycle / walking paths along waters edge / river”

Threats

“ Small town politics”

“Sunday opening”

“Signage”

“No political representation”

“Parking”

“Recession”

“Town access”

“No public transport service”

“Currency”

“Location”

“Traffic management on Diamond”

“Community cohesion”

“Variety of shops – retail”

“Service locations”

Weaknesses:

“Short season”

“No youth facilities”

“Dog Fouling”

“No big retail store”

“No cinema”

“No indoor facilities”

“No local representation”

“Vacant buildings”

“Location”

“Parking”

“Old Railway”

“Castle”

“Buses”

“Youth activities / facilities”

“IT”

“Art / Craft / Museum”