

DUNLEER TOWN CENTRE FIRST PLAN



Comhairle Contae Lú
Louth County Council

BDP.

1

Following Louth County Council's success in securing secure funding from the Our Rural Future strategy, Dunleer is one of 26 towns in Ireland that is developing a Town Centre First Plan. It is envisaged that the Plan will cover the importance of "place-making", town centre living, the social and economic purpose of the town, and respond to emerging opportunities such as those linked to remote working, climate action and digitalisation.

A community-based masterplan.

The TCF Plan

The development of a Town Centre First Plan for Dunleer is a unique opportunity to explore the perceptions the local community has of its town, and to set a shared ambition of shaping its future growth.

The TCF Plan is a framework for revitalisation and adaptation. It has a multi-layered approach that brings together development strategies, town-wide proposals and actions, projects for buildings and open spaces, and community-led initiatives.

It will rely on a phased delivery in which each intervention will unlock the development of further projects. In this way it is not prescriptive, and will be able to adapt and change in response to future emerging issues. It will thus need to rely on a local long term stewardship (particularly by the Town Team) and the establishment of strong partnerships with both public agencies and bodies and private stakeholders.

A Plan For All and By All

This report sets out and explains the suite of strategies and proposals that conform the TCF Plan. As a headline summary, the plan will comprise:

Strategies - These will underpin the TCF Plan's proposals and set a framework for a holistic approach to revitalising the town centre.

Strategic Opportunities and Interventions - These identify town-wide interventions to, amongst others, improve accessibility and encourage active travel, enhance biodiversity, support new housing in the town centre, and establish frameworks for regeneration of different character areas.

Projects and Initiatives - Set out a suite of phased projects for buildings and open areas, scheduled across the TCF Plan's duration, and features progressive initiatives to enhance regeneration endeavours within the allocated time frame.

Illustrative Masterplan of the TCF Plan



CONSULTATION & STRATEGIES



Comhairle Contae Lú
Louth County Council

BDP.

2

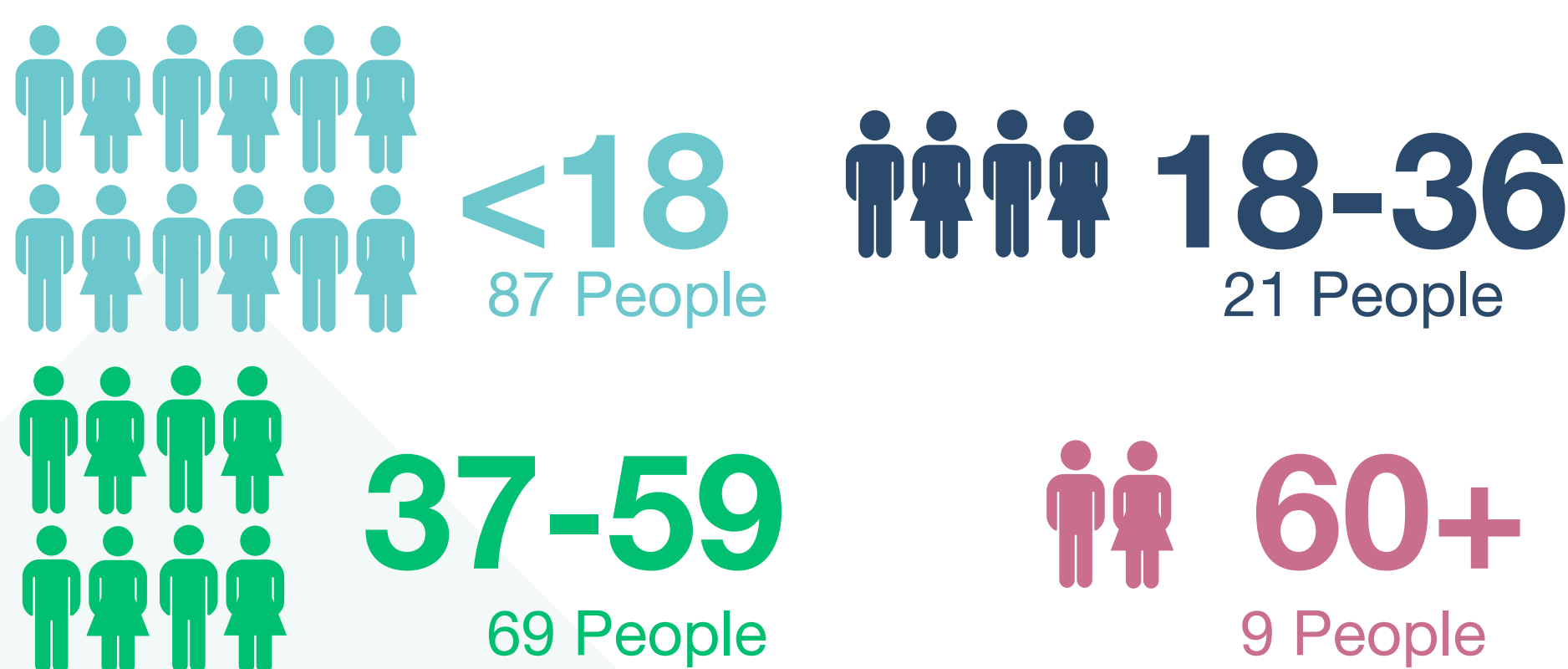
KEY SURVEY METRICS

The key statistics and metrics from the answers to the survey are illustrated in the following graphs, tables and diagrams:

describe yourself...

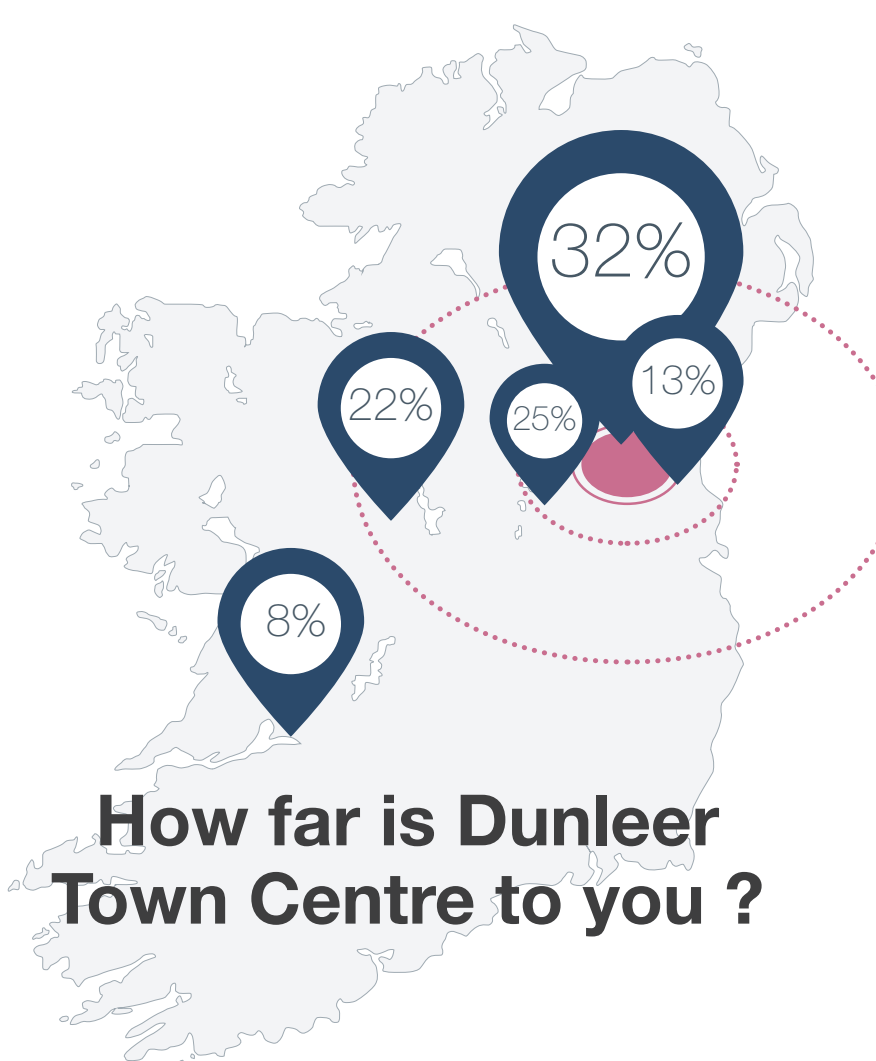
RESIDENT
STUDENT BUSINESS
LANDOWNER EMPLOYEE
TEACHER

What is your age?



How often do you visit Dunleer's Town Centre?

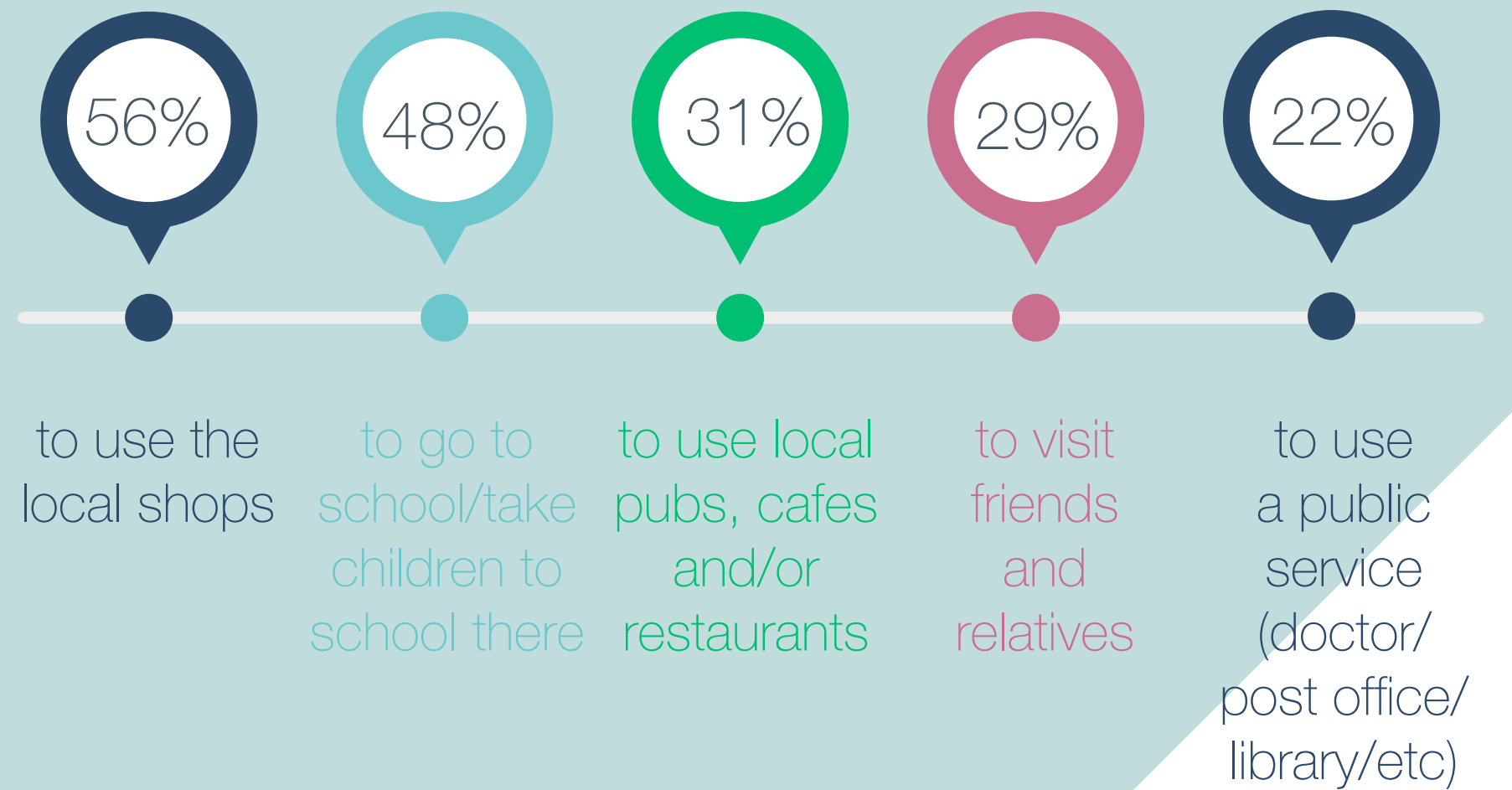
60% visit the town centre daily
27% visit once/twice a week
4% visit once/twice in a month
9% visit occasionally



32% live within the radius of Dunleer's Town Centre
25% live on the outskirts of Dunleer
22% do not live in the town but visit it often
13% live in one of the surrounding residential areas
8% Not specify

Reasons for visiting Dunleer

(multiple reasons per response allowed)



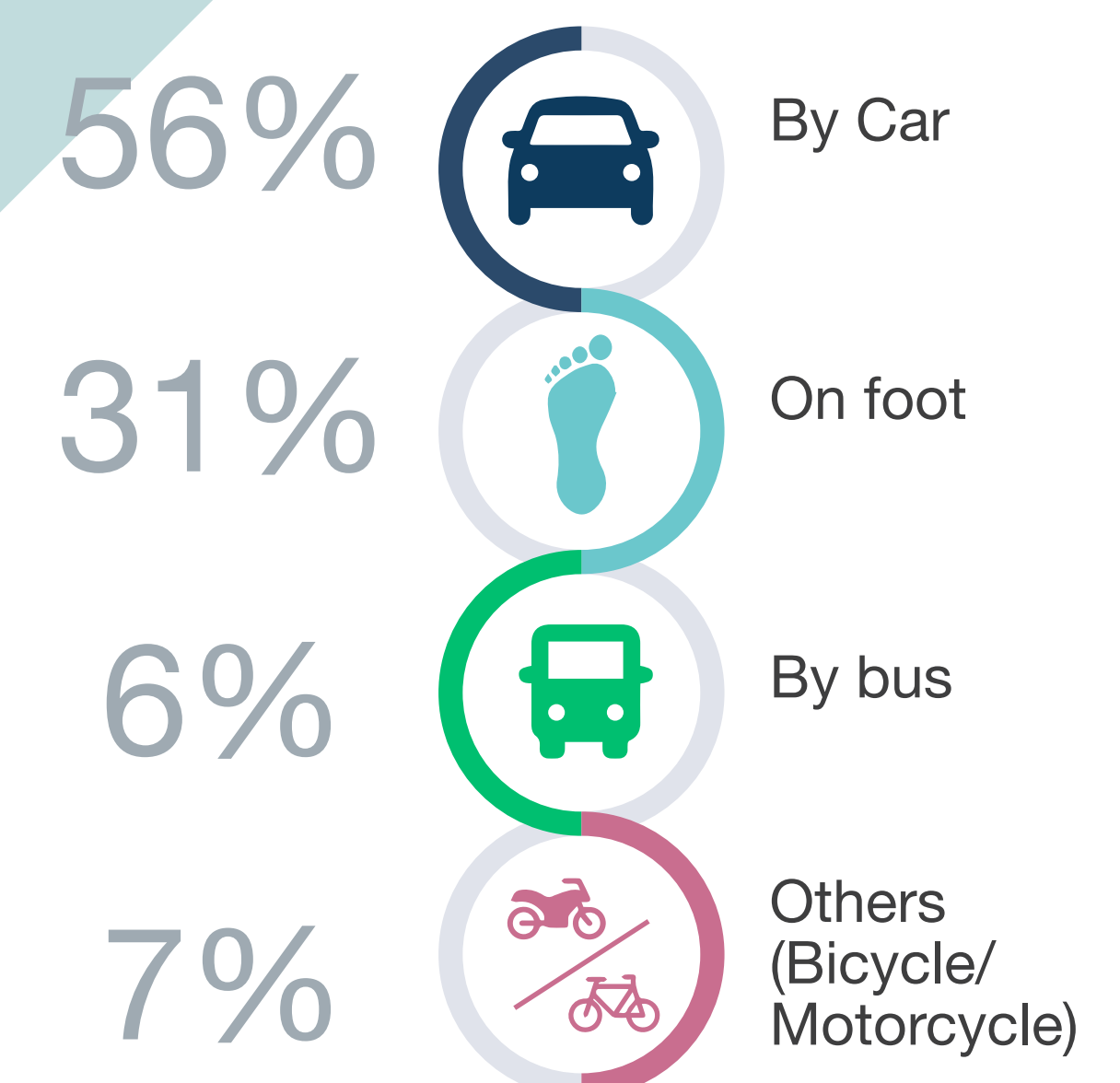
Main Strengths

(multiple strengths per response allowed)

(Below are the top 5 strengths ranked in order)



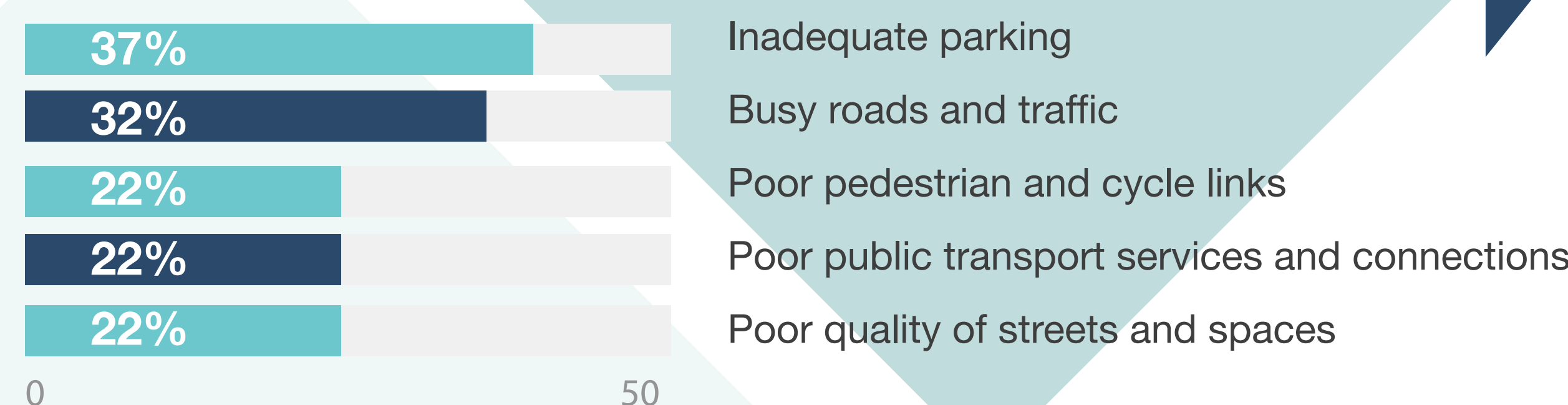
How do you travel to Dunleer Town Centre?



Main Challenges

(multiple challenges per response allowed)

(Below are the top 5 challenges ranked in order)



STRATEGIES

S1

A TOWN CENTRE FOR ALL, BY ALL

S2

RETHINK AND REFRESH THE MAIN STREET

S3

DUNLEERIFY THE TOWN CENTRE

S4

LINK, CONNECT, MOVE, TRAVEL

S5

BEYOND THE TOWN CENTRE: A NEW DESTINATION IN MID-LOUTH

STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES

A Dunleer Loops and Links

A1 Loops

A1.1 Central Loop
A1.2 Northern Loop
A1.3 School and River Loop
A1.4 Rural Loop

A2 Biodiverse Links

A3 Park Link

A4 Station Links

B Dunleer Urban Blocks

B1 Blocks

B1.1 Ardee Road Yards
B1.2 River Backlands
B1.3 Ardee Road Gardens
B1.4 Main Street Backlands
B1.5 Station Approach
B1.6 Barn Road
B1.7 Dunleer North
B1.8 The Forge

B2 Housing

B2.1 Ardee Road Yards
B2.2 River Backlands
B2.3 Ardee Road Gardens
B2.4 Main Street Backlands
B2.5 Station Approach

INTERVENTIONS

C Main Street and White River

C1 Main Street Works

C2 White River Park

D Revitalisation Projects

D1 Dunleer Library

D1.1 Dunleer Library and Library Square
D1.2 White River Pocket Park
D1.3 Learning Hub

D2 Dunleer Station

D2.1 Train Station
D2.2 Visitors' and Mobility Hub

D3 Corner House Pub

E Enhancement Initiatives

E1 Town Loops, Wayfinding & Healthy Travel Signage
E2 Green Gateway Project
E3 Street Decluttering, Street Furniture Strategy & Lighting Street
E4 Streetscape Enhancement Strategy
E5 Green Area Biodiversity, Landscaping Improvements & Tree Planting strategy
E6 Built Heritage Scheme
E7 Building Façade Improvement Scheme
E8 Digital High Street
E9 Community Festival & Street Party
E10 Upgrade to the Existing Playground
E11 Deep Clean Initiative of the Town Centre
E12 Local Transport Link Service

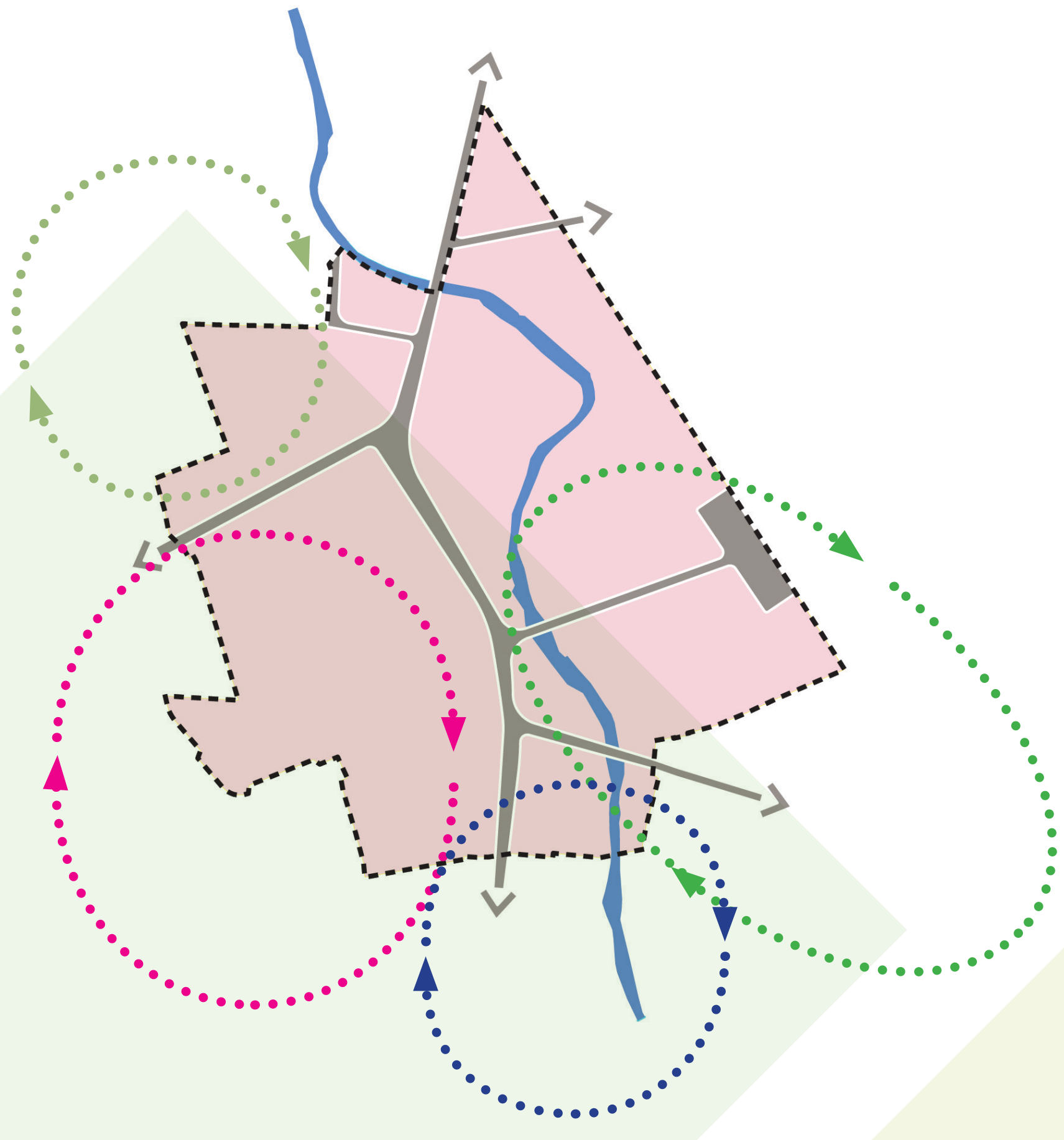
DUNLEER LOOPS & LINKS

3

The loops are pedestrian and cycling circuits that create safe routes and encourage active travel. They reflect the importance and value, highlighted during the Covid Pandemic, of enabling everyone to exercise (walking, running or cycling) and encouraging social interaction. They also help Dunleer's residents and visitors to enjoy the town's surrounding rich natural environment and built heritage. The proposed loops are mostly along existing paths or routes and thus require relatively little investment (wayfinding, lighting, seating areas and exercise posts)



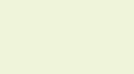









STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES

Diagram of Loops Framework



Network of Loops, Pedestrian and Green Links



-  River and green network
-  Potential green route
-  Urban route
-  Potential urban route
-  Crossing
-  Safe priority route
-  Green space
-  Landmark
-  Proposed landmark
-  Community service
-  Proposed community service
-  Nodes

Artist's illustration of proposed biodiverse link between Dunleer's Park and the Main Street

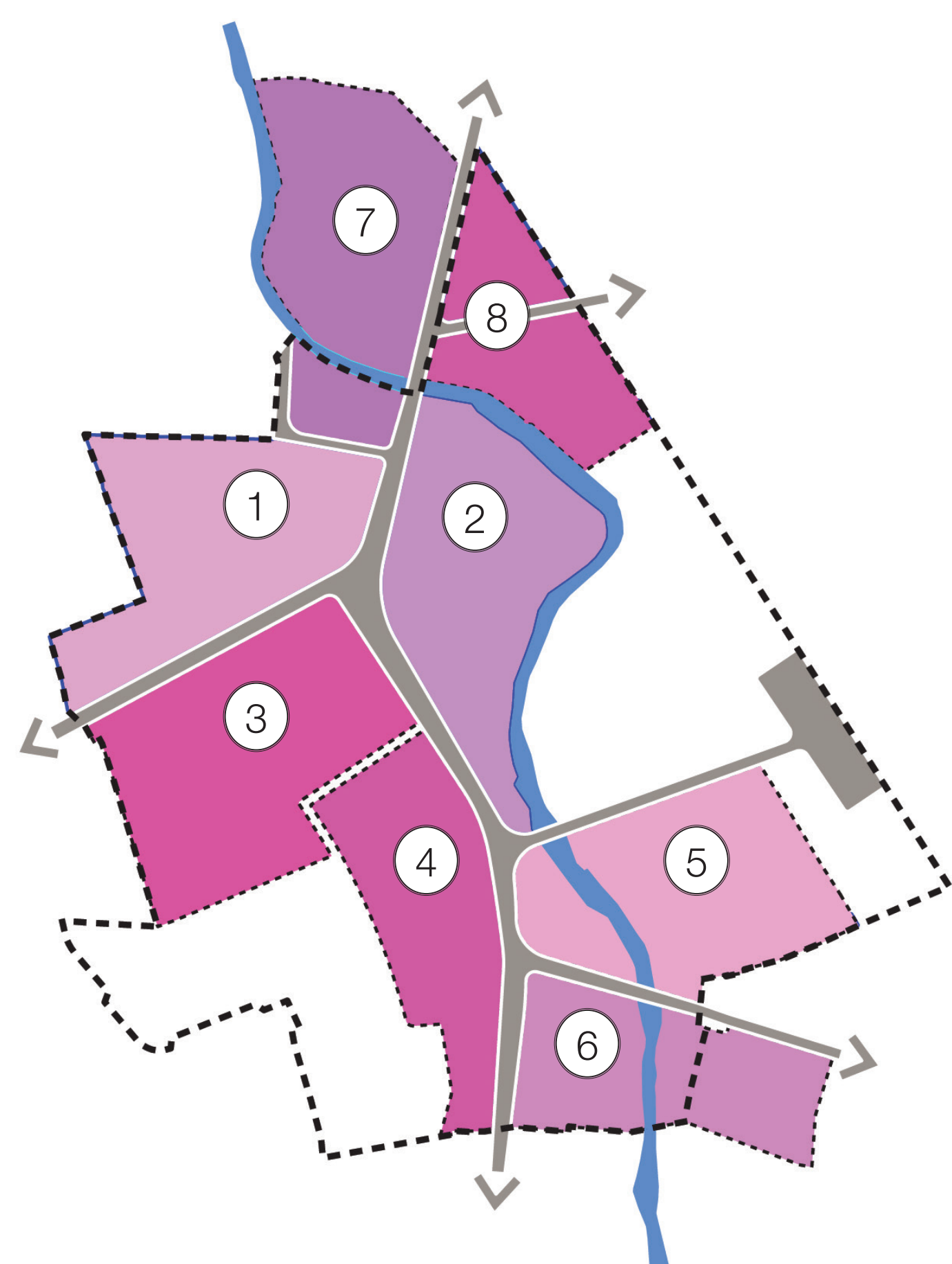


DUNLEER URBAN BLOCKS

The town centre has a variety of character areas with distinct buildings, open spaces, frontages and edges. Dividing it into blocks helps to tease out local characteristics and identify specific opportunities for a variety of projects and interventions. These can complement town centre-wide proposals, whilst developing longer term strategies for focus areas that take into account particular conditions in relation to ownership, current uses of buildings, accessibility and linkages, and character of open or green spaces.

STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES

Diagram of Urban Block Framework



1 - Ardee Road Yards



2 - River Backlands



3 - Ardee Road Gardens



4 - Main Street Backlands



5 - Station Approach



6 - Barn Road

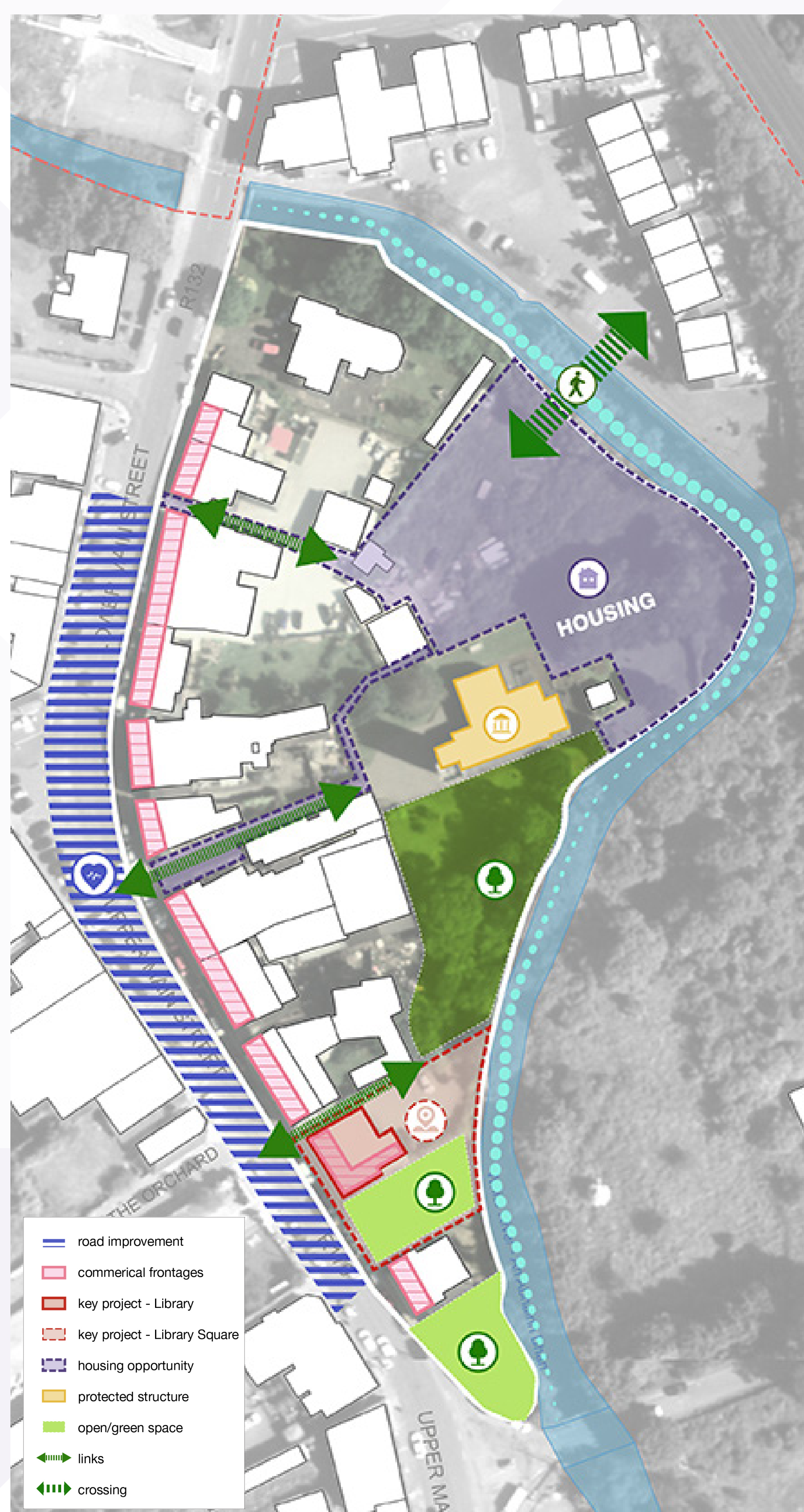


7 - Dunleer North



8 - The Forge

Opportunities in Urban Block - River Backlands



Housing Opportunities



Infill and Backland Housing

The TCF Policy encourages (and prioritises) the redevelopment of underutilised areas of town centres to provide a choice of housing types in response to Ireland's changing demography. The 'urban blocks approach' has allowed to identify potential plots for residential developments. The plan opposite and reference images below highlight the potential to introduce a wide variety of housing models to cater for varying household types.



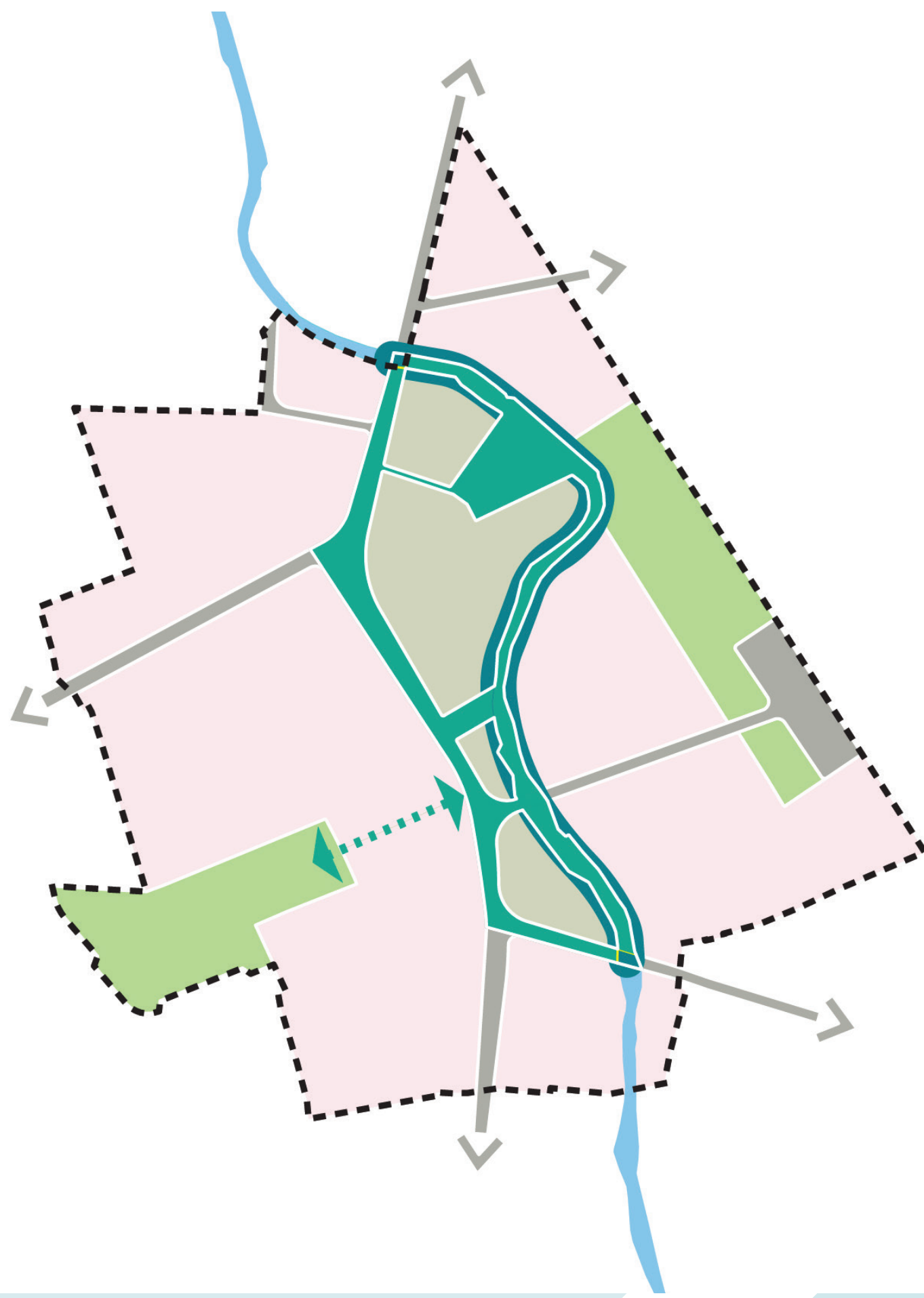
MAIN STREET & WHITE RIVER

5

The Main Street and White River are, despite being in close proximity to each other, two very different (almost opposite) spaces. The hardness and vibrancy of the street contrasts with the calmness and lush greenery of the river corridor. The proposed strategic approach envisages looking at these, and the spaces between them, as one project area or urban entity. A future 'soft core' for the town centre where the street opens up to the river, and the river becomes part of the public realm framework.

INTERVENTION

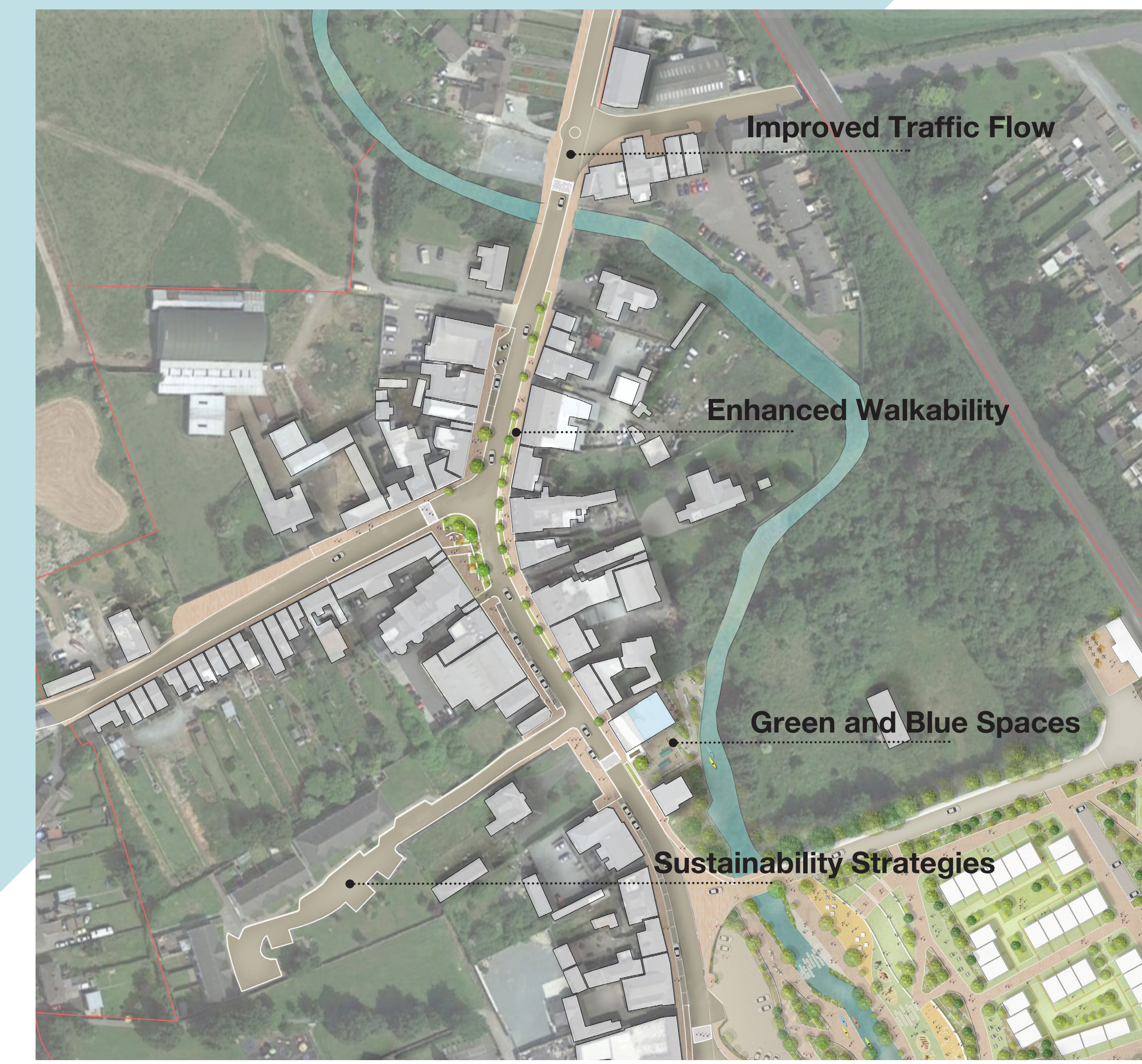
New Green and Blue Call for Dunleer



Strategies of Green and Blue Infrastructure Network



Proposed Main Street and White River



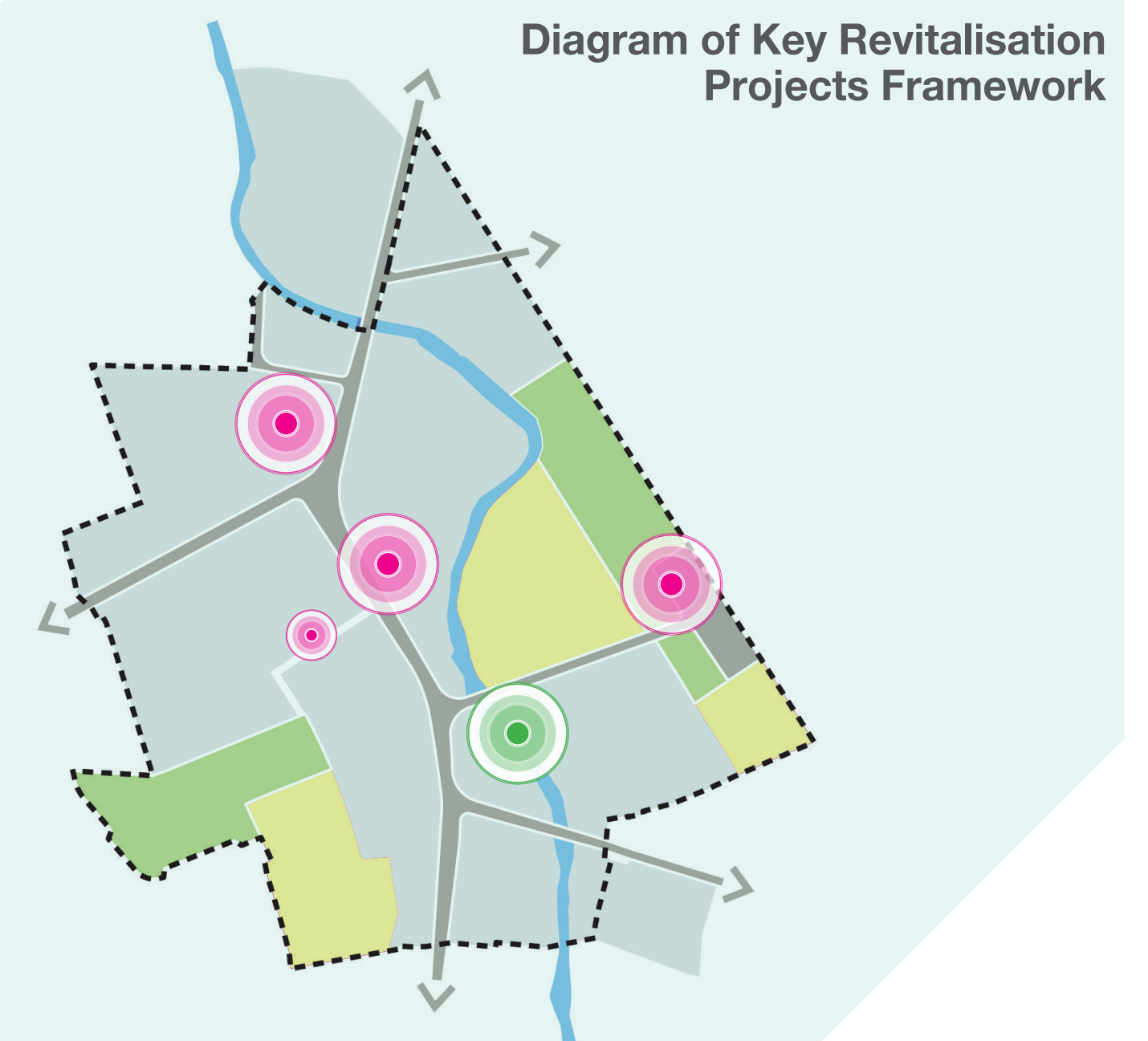
Artist's illustration of the proposed transformation of the Main Street



REVITALISATION PROJECTS

6

These are key projects that will underpin the revitalisation of the town centre. They are all interventions in existing buildings and adjacent open spaces, together with a landscape project. They all have different ownerships and will require specific delivery, funding and management strategies. The Revitalisation Projects include the reuse of the railway station building and current Public Library, transformation of the old Bank of Ireland Building, adaptive reuse of the Corner House pub, and a new riverside park at the southern end of the town centre.

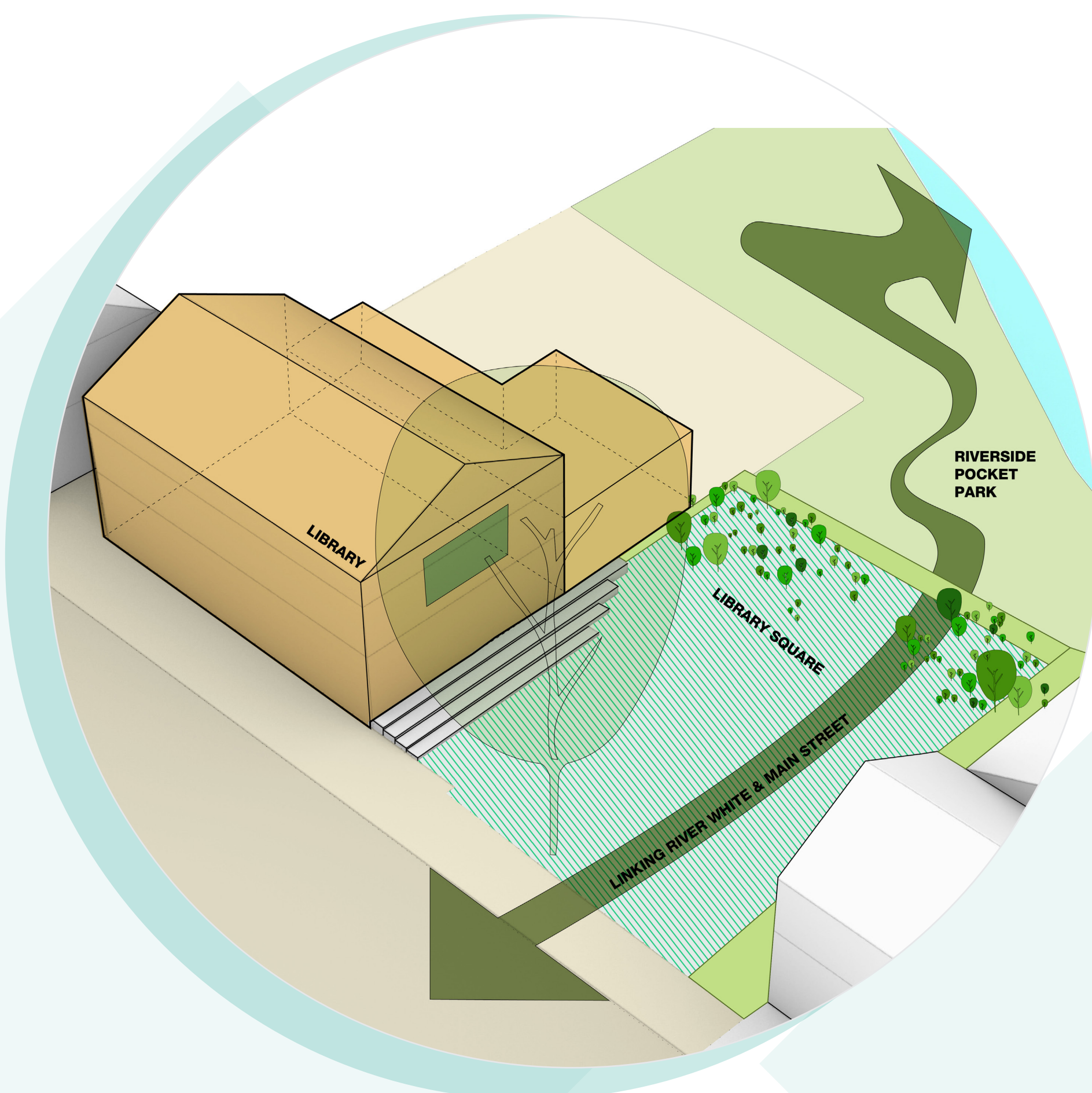


INTERVENTION

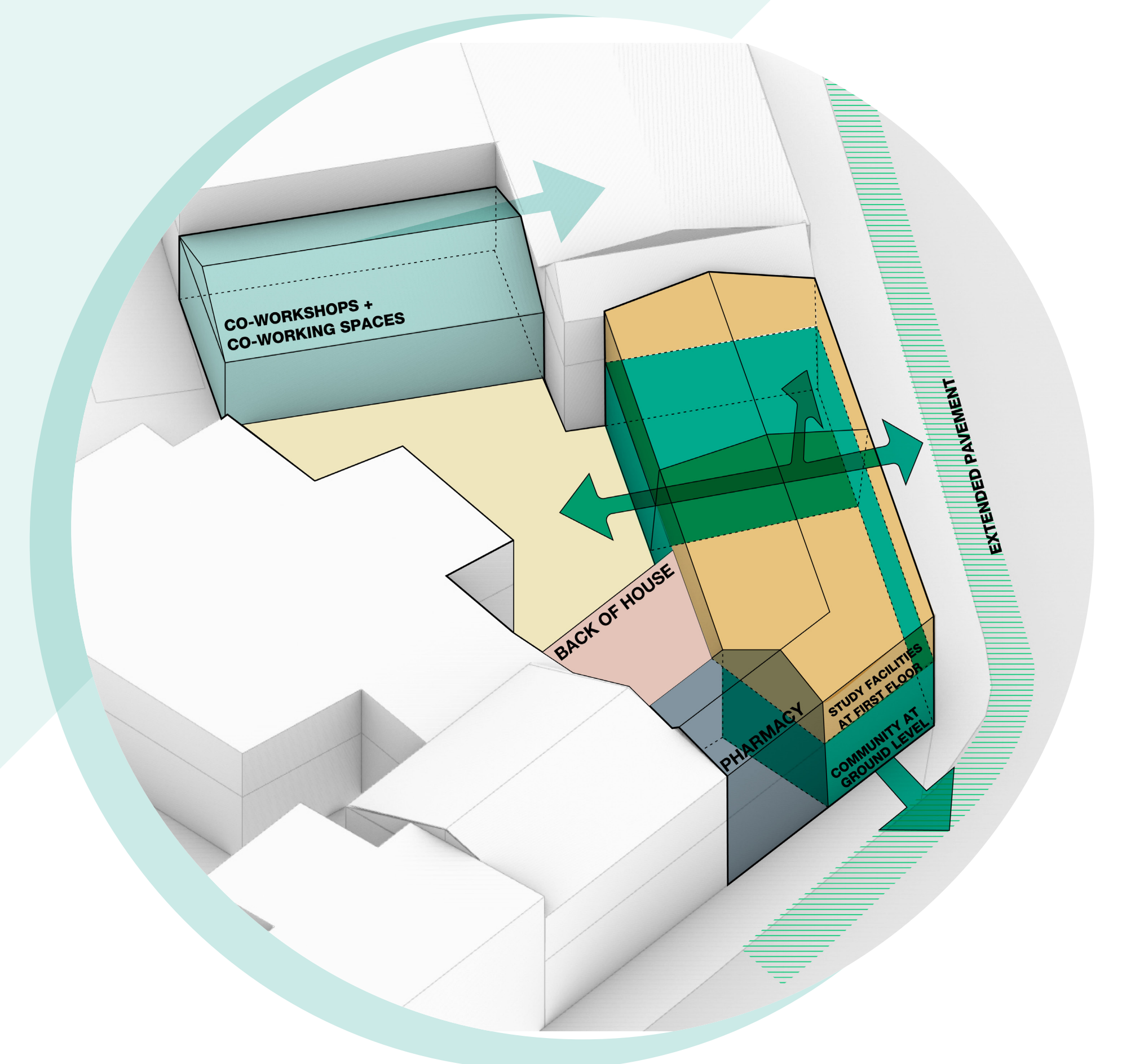
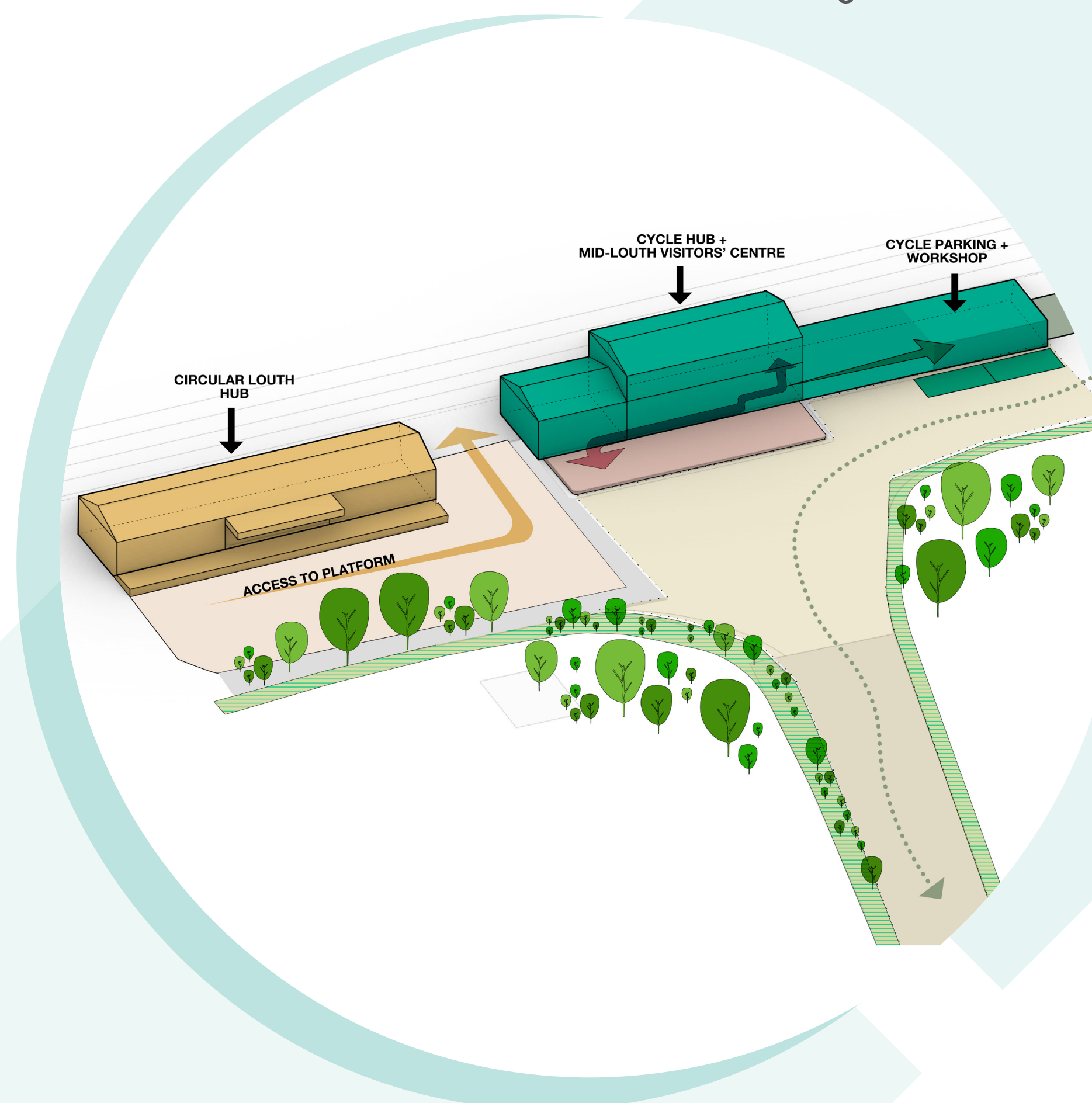
A new public square for Dunleer. A space for community events and celebrations that connects the Main Street with the White River to create a unique place that merges urban vibrancy with the tranquillity of a riverside

An adaptive reuse of the station buildings to create a circular hub to market and promote local produce in a sustainable way, and showcase what Mid-Louth farmers, artisans and makers can offer. An information point for tourists and visitors to Dunleer and the wider region.

A multi-use enterprise centre with spaces to work, study, meet and interchange ideas and initiatives.



Artist Illustration of Proposed Dunleer Library and Library Square

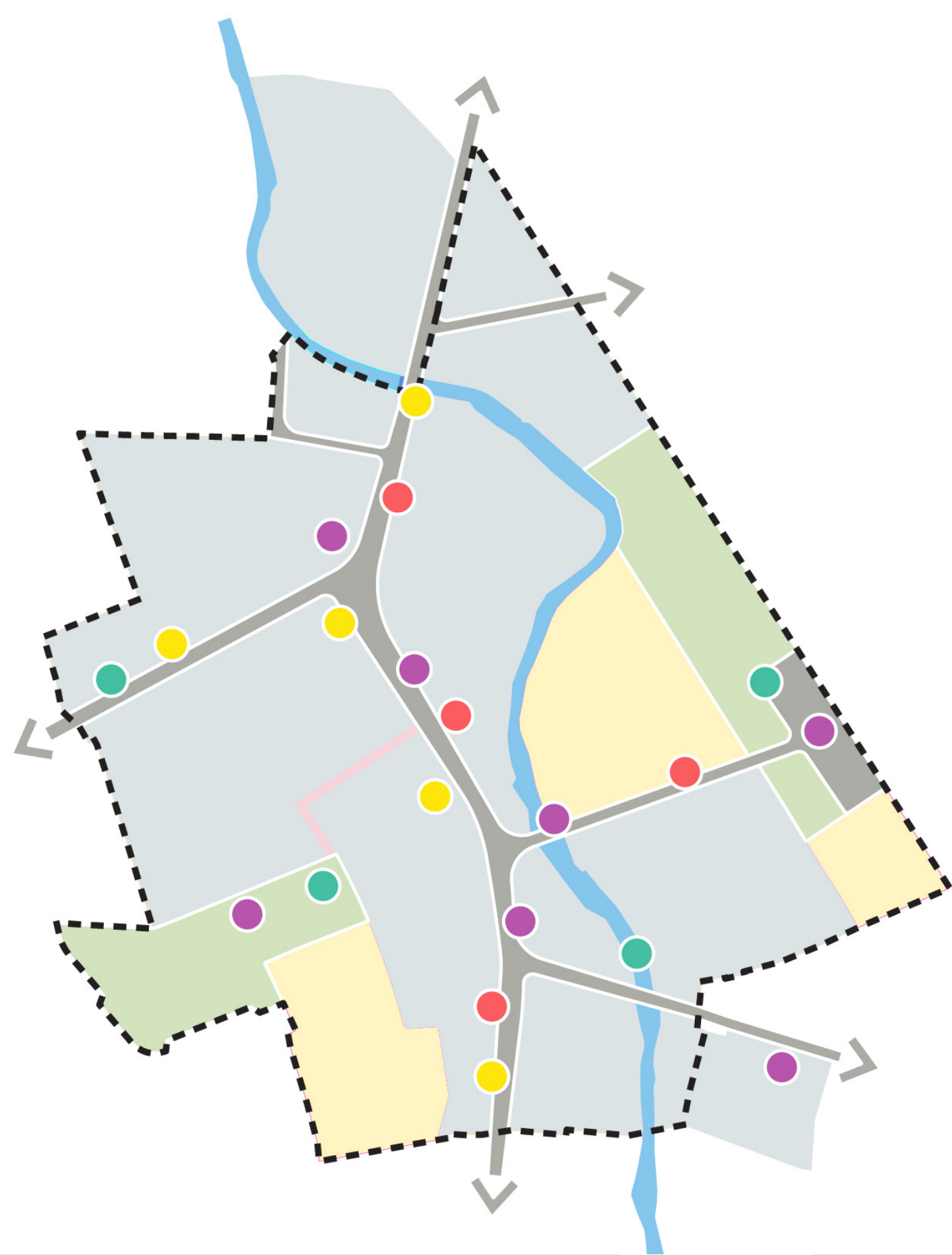


ENHANCEMENT INITIATIVES

A suite of potential interventions, often community-led, as early wins to complement and support projects that will be delivered over a longer period of time. These can be delivered by Town Team and local community groups such as the Tidy Towns Team, and respond to increasingly relevant themes such as the need to enhance biodiversity, support wellbeing, or promote the integration of Dunleer's different social and demographic groups.

INTERVENTION

Diagram of Enhancement Initiatives Framework



Enhancement, Improvement & Collaborative Actions

- E1 Town Loops, Wayfinding & Healthy Travel Signage
- E2 Green Gateway Project
- E3 Street Decluttering, Street Furniture Strategy & Lighting Street
- E4 Streetscape Enhancement Strategy
- E5 Green Area Biodiversity, Landscaping Improvements & Tree Planting strategy
- E6 Built Heritage Scheme
- E7 Shopfront Improvement Scheme
- E8 Digital High Street
- E9 Community Festival & Street Party
- E10 Upgrade to the Existing Playground
- E11 Deep Clean Initiative of the Town Centre
- E12 Local Transport Link Service

The Grace Gifford Plunkett Garden of Remembrance



Initiative delivered by Tidy Town Team

Community Festival & Street Party



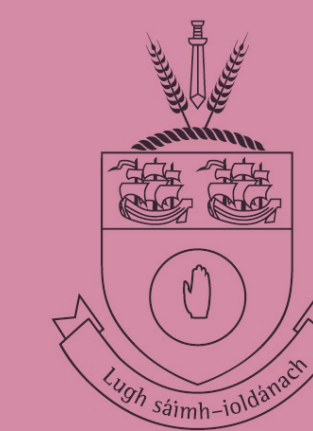
Community Festival & Street Party



Artist Illustration of Proposed Dunleer Town Centre



WHAT'S NEXT



Comhairle Contae Lú
Louth County Council

BDP.

8

The TCF Plan establishes a framework to support Dunleer's transformation and positive growth. The strategic opportunities and interventions that have been identified and explored in the development of the plan set up a clear vision of how the town can prosper in a sustainable way over the next 15 years. The delivery process will involve a further refinement of the proposals in liaison with relevant stakeholders. Monitoring the delivery of the TCF Plan will be in coordination with the National Oversight and Advisory Group (NOAG) as defined in the TCF Policy.

WORKING WITH THE TCF PLAN

Short Term
2023-2028

Medium Term
2029-2034

Long Term
2035+

INTERVENTIONS AND PROJECTS

- A1_1 Rewilding public open spaces - no mow approach
- A1_3 Active travel scheme for Scoil Uí Mhuiri
- C1 Traffic calming
- C2 Phase 1 of River Park and River Walk
- D1_D2 Refurbishment of Library
- D4 Cycling Hub
- E1 to E11 Initiatives in collaboration with local community groups

OUTCOMES

- Establishment of Biodiverse Gardens along Central Loop
- Safer walking and cycling routes to school
- Slow traffic down throughout the core of the Main Street and enhance benefits for cyclists
- New open space and public path
- New community hub at the heart of the town centre
- Re-use of current library
- Enhancement of town centre's streetscape and townscape.
- Improvement of facilities in open spaces and support of wellbeing for all ages. Safer and more accessible streets.

INTERVENTIONS AND PROJECTS

- A1_1 Open link between Lannleire Pavilion and Rivervale Park
- A1 Open link between Main Street and Dunleer Park via the Orchard
- B2 Step-down housing
- C1 Main Street Parking and Greening - Phase 1
- D2 Riverside pocket park
- D3 Adaptive reuse of train station
- D4 Mobility hub and Dunleer visitors' centre
- D5 - Corner House Pub public realm enhancement
- E1 to E12 Initiatives in collaboration with local community groups

OUTCOMES

- Completion of central Dunleer Loop
- Accessible route between housing areas and the Main Street
- Accessible and supervised town centre housing
- Accessible to all pedestrians and urban greening
- Public realm connection between Main Street and White River
- New flexible space to promote and market local products
- Implement sustainable mobility strategy for Dunleer and promote local tourism
- Value uplift of pub environment to attract investment
- Enhancement of town centre's streetscape and townscape. Improvement of facilities in open spaces and support of wellbeing for all ages. Safer and more accessible streets.

INTERVENTIONS AND PROJECTS

- A1 Open access to rural routes around Dunleer
- B2 Infill housing in backlands and allocated sites
- B2 Step-down housing
- C1 Main Street Parking and Greening - Phase 2
- C2 Riverside park
- D2 Extension of library and new community spaces

OUTCOMES

- Completion of network of pedestrian and cycle loops
- Densification and compact growth in the town centre. Housing focused on elderly population and first time buyers/renters
- Accessible and supervised town centre housing
- Accessible to all pedestrians and urban greening
- Delivery of riverside park with facilities for local residents and visitors
- New flexible space to promote and market local products

' The TCF Plan is the first step of a community-driven transformation and revitalisation of Dunleer's town centre '

