

Tullamore

Draft Town Centre Regeneration Framework

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Foreword

The initiation of the Tullamore Regeneration Framework provides immense opportunity to Tullamore and County Offaly to reimagine and reinvigorate this important County Town in its celebration of 400 years.

It strives to reveal the spirit of the town through an integrated design, planning, heritage, mobility and sustainability approach.

The implementation of the Government Town Centre First policy, and the URDF programme, creates opportunities to catalyse change, and this initiative for Tullamore can realise this change.



The first Stone of this Prison was laid
BY CHARLES WILLIAM BARON TULLAMORE,
on the 12. day of September in the year of our Lord 1826 and in the 7. year of the Reign of
His Most Gracious Majesty George the Fourth.
COMMISSIONERS
Lord Baron Tullamore MP, Colonel Thomas Bernard MP,
William Hauch, John Lead, Drough, Valentine Bennett, and Francis Berry, Esquires.

Introduction



Introduction

Tullamore Town Centre Regeneration Framework

In August 2021 Offaly County Council received approval for the preparation of Tullamore Town Centre Regeneration Framework under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund from the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.

The core objective of the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) is to support the revitalization and renewal of urban areas throughout Ireland.

The overarching goal of the Tullamore Regeneration Framework is to position Tullamore Town Centre at the forefront of the town's future development. It aims to serve as a model for regeneration, promoting compact growth, creating healthy and appealing public spaces, enhancing urban resilience, improving permeability, fostering vibrancy, and encouraging sustainable mobility.

The Tullamore Regeneration Framework integrates the principles of Town Centre First, a Policy Approach for Irish Towns introduced by the Minister for the Department of Rural and Community Development on 4th February 2022. This policy aims to revitalise town centres, making them vibrant hubs where people can live, work, and explore. Moreover, it highlights the significance of town centres as central hubs for vital services, social connections, cultural events, and recreational activities within the local community.



The Tullamore Regeneration Framework acts as a main driver for compact mixed-use urban development within the town centre of Tullamore. It aims to revitalise vacant, derelict, and underutilised sites in the town centre, actively encouraging the reuse of vacant buildings in a coordinated and integrated manner. Aligned with the National Planning Framework's National Strategic Outcomes and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) section on the regeneration of Tullamore, the Framework seeks to establish a vision for the development of several key opportunity sites. These sites may be initiated by the public sector but are primarily to be developed by the private sector. A cohesive set of regeneration sites, designed to complement each other, will contribute to a vibrant town centre and serve as a cornerstone for a thriving key town.

Tullamore Regeneration Framework also presents a forward-looking vision for the town, public realm and sustainable access & permeability strategies and incorporates a number of tailored public realm projects which have emerged from opportunities identified through the public consultation process and detailed analysis by the design team. These projects focus on making the most of natural and heritage assets, improving sustainable mobility opportunities and enhancing streets and spaces, so that Tullamore is an attractive place to live, work and do business.

The overall Framework is carried out having cognisance of the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027, the new Tullamore Local Area Plan which is being drafted and should also be read in conjunction with Draft Tullamore Local Transport Plan (LTP) and Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) that are concurrently in preparation.

Together, the Framework Plan and the Local Area Plan will co-ordinate policy, objectives and actions to create integrated urban development for Tullamore. The overall Framework involved collaboration with both public bodies and private owners in its development and implementation.

Acknowledgments:

Offaly County Council and the project design team would like to thank all those who have contributed their time, knowledge and ideas to this plan and plan making process.

The Structure

The Tullamore Regeneration Framework is forward thinking, ambitious, and showcases creative designs for regeneration of Tullamore Town Centre. Utilising a multidisciplinary integrated approach, it encompasses the development of opportunity sites, public spaces and streets, traffic management, urban design and landscape design to formulate the Plan strategy. Key to the success of the plan has been the local community and stakeholders who have come together to help shape and implement the plan.

The plan has been led by Offaly County Council supported by a multi-specialist team of consultants which have been employed to assist in the plan making process including:

Brady Shipman Martin, Faulkner Browns Architects, CS Consulting Group, The Destination Developers, Colliers, Historic Buildings Consultants and Tony O'Regan Associates.

Framework Structure

Introduction

The introductory chapter provides an overview of the framework's aims, its alignment with government policies, details about the team involved, the framework's structure, and the extent of the regeneration study area.

Understanding Tullamore

The Understanding Tullamore chapter provides an overview of the foundational analysis conducted for the plan, including Tullamore's Town Role, Location & Access, Socio-Demographic Profile, Planning & Historic Context, Town Centre Assets, Key Attractors & Destinations, Vacancy & Opportunity Sites, and SCOT Analysis, which highlights strengths, challenges, opportunities, and threats for the town centre regeneration.

Public Engagement

Public Engagement chapter provides a summary of public engagement, during which the Tullamore community actively participated in the plan preparation process. They offered valuable feedback on the town's greatest assets, biggest challenges, what is missing in their opinions, and their ideas for the Town Centre. These results have informed the plan, allowing it to address community concerns and priorities effectively.

Building on the Success

Building on the Success chapter provides information on recently completed and ongoing projects in the town. It consolidates all the analysis and public engagement work conducted, enabling a vision for Tullamore that could be realized through various regeneration themes presented.

Looking Towards 2040

Looking Towards 2040 chapter sets out a unified vision for the regeneration of Tullamore town centre, enhancing its character and paving a path forward to the revitalisation of the town as a desirable place to live, work and do business. This vision has been informed by community engagement, Town Centre First Policy, and the guiding principles of our regeneration themes as set out in previous chapter with introduction of key regeneration projects.

Opportunity Sites

Opportunity Sites chapter provides number of concepts, potential uses, key linkages, key public spaces imperatives and other guidance for a large co-ordinated network of regeneration sites in Tullamore; Opportunity sites examined as part of the framework are set out in Figure 7.4 of Volume 1 of the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027.

Tullamore Public Realm

The Tullamore Public Realm chapter focuses on potential public realm projects that, upon implementation, could enhance community well-being by creating attractive, accessible spaces that foster social interaction and promote physical activity and active travel modes.

These projects are conceptual only and are subject to appropriate planning and environmental consents and further investigation and consultation processes prior to detail design stage, but have been crafted in direct response to community feedback.

Access & Permeability Strategy

The Sustainable Access & Permeability Strategy offers an overview of the current transport landscape, proposes broader transport enhancements for Tullamore, outlines a strategy for managing car parking, and suggests actions to improve connectivity and accessibility while promoting eco-friendly transportation methods within the town. It should be considered alongside the Draft Tullamore Local Transport Plan (LTP) and the Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA), both of which are being developed concurrently.

Implementation

The Implementation chapter outlines a Delivery Action Plan that categorises key projects into short, medium, or longer-term timeframes. Furthermore, it assesses projects based on priority and identifies potential stakeholders, along with offering a matrix of potential funding streams.

The Regeneration Study Area

Tullamore Town serves as the primary hub of economic activity within County Offaly and holds significant importance as a County Town within the Midlands Region.

As shown opposite, the Regeneration Framework addresses the existing Town Centre area which is situated between the Grand Canal to the north and the Dublin/Galway railway line to the south with the most busy part of the town along Columcille St / High St and Patrick St / Church St with O'Connor Square located in the centre.

