

TULLAMORE GRAND CANAL HARBOUR MASTERPLAN SEA Screening Report

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1 Introduction

Offaly County Council (OCC), in collaboration with Waterways Ireland (WI) has prepared the Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan. The Masterplan aims to serve as a model for restoration, creating healthy and appealing public spaces, enhancing urban resilience, improving pedestrian accessibility, fostering vibrancy, and promoting the recognition of the harbour as a key resource for Tullamore.

The Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan aims to reconnect the Harbour to the town and enable it to become a vibrant economic and social quarter for living, working and leisure.

Brady Shipman Martin (BSM) has been appointed by Offaly County Council to undertake a screening for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and a screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) in respect of the Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan (hereafter either the 'Harbour Masterplan or the 'Masterplan).

This report documents the screening exercise for SEA in respect of the Masterplan for the purposes of consultation, in accordance with Article 9(7) of S.I. 435 of 2004 (the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004), as amended by S.I. 200 of 2011.

This SEA Screening should be read in conjunction with the Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan and the Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report (BSM, 2024).

1.1 Study Area

The Masterplan addresses the existing Grand Canal Harbour area which is situated between the Grand Canal to the north and the Tullamore River c. 170m to the south / south-east, refer to **Figure 1.1** below. A linear spur connects the harbour basin with the Canal, and the harbour basin is positioned to the north-east of Tullamore town centre.

Figure 1.1 Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan study area (Extract from Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan, 2024)



2 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

2.1 Introduction

Directive 2001/42/EC¹ of the European Parliament and of the Council on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (the ‘SEA Directive’) requires EU Member States to assess the ‘likely significant environmental effects’ of plans and programmes prior to their adoption. This provides for the assessment of strategic environmental considerations at an early stage in the decision-making process.

Article 1 of the SEA Directive states that:

“The objective of this directive is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development, by ensuring that, in accordance with this directive, an environmental assessment is carried out of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.”

The SEA Directive was transposed into Irish law through:

- Statutory Instrument (S.I.) No. 435 of 2004 (the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004), as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011 (the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011); and
- S.I. No. 436 of 2004 (the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2004), as amended by S.I. No. 201 of 2011 (the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2011).

S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011, relates to SEA as it applies to plans or programmes prepared for *“agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism and town and country planning or land use”*².

S.I. No. 436 of 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 201 of 2011, relates to SEA as it applies to plans or programmes where the context requires, *“a development plan, a variation of a development plan, a local area plan (or an amendment thereto), regional planning guidelines or a planning scheme”*³.

As a non-statutory plan, the *Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan* is being screened for the requirement for SEA under the requirements of S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011.

2.2 SEA Screening

Article 3(4) of the SEA Directive requires that *“Member States shall determine whether plans and programmes, other than those referred to in paragraph 2, which set the framework for future development consent of projects, are likely to have significant environmental effects.”* This process for deciding whether a particular plan, other than those for which SEA is mandatory, would be likely to have significant environmental effects and, therefore, would require SEA, is known as ‘screening.’

The criteria for screening, *i.e.* determining whether a particular plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, are set out in Annex II of the SEA Directive. These criteria are reproduced in Schedule 1 of S.I. No. 435

¹ SEA Directive: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32001L0042&from=EN>

² See Section 9(1)(a)

³ Section 5(c)

of 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011. The criteria are set out under two principal headings, each of which have a number of sub-criteria (refer to [Section 6](#) of this report):

- Characteristics of a Plan / Programme; and
- Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected.

Article 9(1) of S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011, states that:

“Subject to sub-article (2), an environmental assessment shall be carried out for all plans and programmes:

- (a) *which are prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism and town and country planning or land use, and which set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive, or*
- (b) *which are not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site but, either individually or in combination with other plans, are likely to have a significant effect on any such site.”*

Article 9(2) of S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011, further states that:

“A plan or programme referred to in sub-article (1) which determines the use of a small area at local level or a minor modification to a plan or programme referred to in sub-article (1) shall require an environmental assessment only where the competent authority determines that it is likely to have significant effects on the environment and, for this purpose, the competent authority shall make any necessary determination.”

2.3 Requirement for SEA Screening

The *Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan* is a non-statutory land use plan and is being screened for the requirement for SEA in accordance with the requirements of:

- The SEA Directive, particularly Articles 3(3), 3(4) and 3(5) in relation to ‘screening’; and
- The European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 435 of 2004), as amended by the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 200 of 2011), particularly Schedule 1, which sets out the *“Criteria for determining whether a plan or programme is likely to have significant effects on the environment”*.

This report constitutes a screening of the Masterplan for the requirement for SEA in accordance with the above legislation.

2.4 Appropriate Assessment (AA)

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the ‘Habitats Directive’) require Appropriate Assessment (AA) to be carried out where a plan or project is likely to have a significant impact on a Natura 2000 site. Natura 2000 sites include:

- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSAC), designated for the conservation of Annex I habitats and Annex II species of the Habitats Directive; and
- Special Protection Areas (SPA), designated for the protection of Annex I birds of Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds (the ‘Birds Directive’) and other regularly occurring migratory birds and their habitats.

Stage 1 in the AA process is to establish whether AA is required for the particular plan or project. This stage is referred to as 'screening for the requirement for AA', and its purpose is to determine:

- Whether a plan or project is directly connected to or necessary for the management of the site; and
- Whether a plan or project, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, is likely to have significant effects on a Natura 2000 site in view of its conservation objectives.

As set out in Department Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08⁴ (15 February 2008), screening for AA is of relevance to SEA in that *"where following screening, it is found that the draft plan or amendment may have an impact on the conservation status of a Natura 2000 site or that such an impact cannot be ruled out, adopting the precautionary approach:*

- An AA of the plan must be carried out, and
- In any case where SEA would not otherwise be required, it must also be carried out."

Hence, if the Masterplan requires AA, it shall also require SEA.

The *Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan* has been screened for the requirement for AA. The AA Screening Report, (BSM, 2024: refer to standalone report under separate cover) has concluded that:

'Following review of the Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan against the Conservation Objectives of the relevant European sites, it is concluded that there is no possibility that the implementation of the Masterplan could result in any likely significant effects on European sites on its own or in combination with other plans and programmes. This conclusion was reached without considering or taking into account mitigation measures or measures intended to avoid or reduce any impact on European sites.

In view of best scientific knowledge therefore, this report concludes that the Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan, individually or in combination with another plan or project, is not likely to have a significant effect on European sites under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) in light of their conservation objectives. The Masterplan does not require an Appropriate Assessment and the preparation of a Natura Impact Report.'

⁴ NPWS SEA letter: <https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/general/circular-sea-01-08.pdf>

3 Description of the Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan

3.1 Overview

The Masterplan outlines Offaly County Council's (OCC) collaboration with Waterways Ireland (WI) to create a unified vision for the Grand Canal Harbour, focusing on preserving its historical integrity while reconnecting it to the town and transforming it into a vibrant hub for living, working, and leisure. It also incorporates opportunities to advance UN Sustainable Development Goals, ensuring that future redevelopment balances social, economic, and environmental sustainability.

The **aspirations** of Waterways Ireland and Offaly County Council are for the harbour area to:

- *Be unveiled for public discovery and heritage appreciation from behind existing high walls;*
- *Be transformed to become an attractive waterfront space for residents, citizens and visitors;*
- *Become the catalyst that unlocks economic and social regeneration opportunities;*
- *Be accessible for walking and cycling with connectivity to a 131km Grand Canal Greenway;*
- *Provide on and off water recreational activities;*
- *Become a key destination for boaters journeying from throughout the inland waterways network on the island.*

3.2 Public Consultation

Public consultation formed an integral part of the preparation of the Masterplan.

The public consultation commenced on the 13th of June 2024 and ran for four weeks to 11th July 2024, with two weeks for submissions (closing on 25th July 2024). The PC was advertised with a press release in the local newspaper and on social media.

The Masterplan was available for inspection online and in the offices of Offaly County Council, Áras an Chontae, Tullamore Municipal District, Tullamore Library and a presentation was given to the elected members of Offaly County Council and Stakeholders on 13th June 2024. An open day was held in Tullamore Library on 20th June from 12pm to 7pm and the public were invited to make submissions in writing by 26th July 2024.

3.3 Catalogue of Opportunities

The Masterplan is focussed on the Harbour Basin whilst also identifying opportunities to achieve enhanced amenity and connectivity from the Canal Spur line. The Masterplan describes possible sites of regeneration/development for the Harbour, which are referred to as the '*Catalogue of Opportunities*' and includes opportunities A to J. The opportunities are not interdependent and can be completed in any order.

Four key locations within the Harbour are identified as strategic locations for development: one at the south of the Canal Spur, where a building would act as a type of welcoming marker on entering the town by the canal system and also mark the connection with O'Carroll Street within the town; another on the north-eastern 'peninsula' of the Harbour, accessed from St. Brigid's Place; and at two other positions inside the existing limestone walls along the western and southern boundaries. The harbour basin is represented below in **Figure 3.1** and the Catalogue of Opportunities is presented in **Figure 3.2** and described in **Table 3.1** below.

Figure 3.1 Harbour Basin and Young's Stores within the context of the Masterplan ((Extract from Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan, 2024)

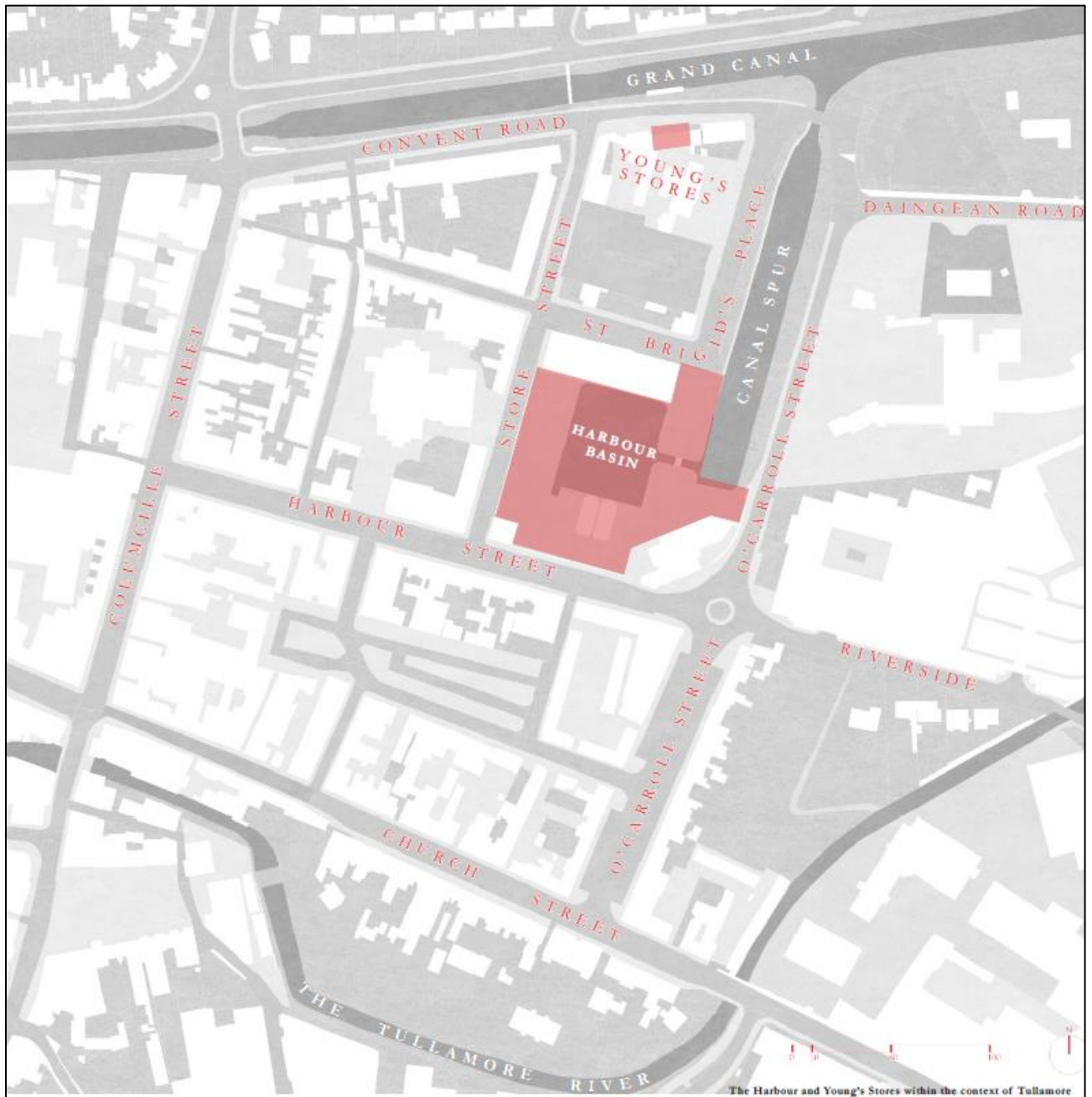


Figure 3.2 Key Opportunity Sites (A – J) for Regeneration Projects (Extract from Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan, 2024)

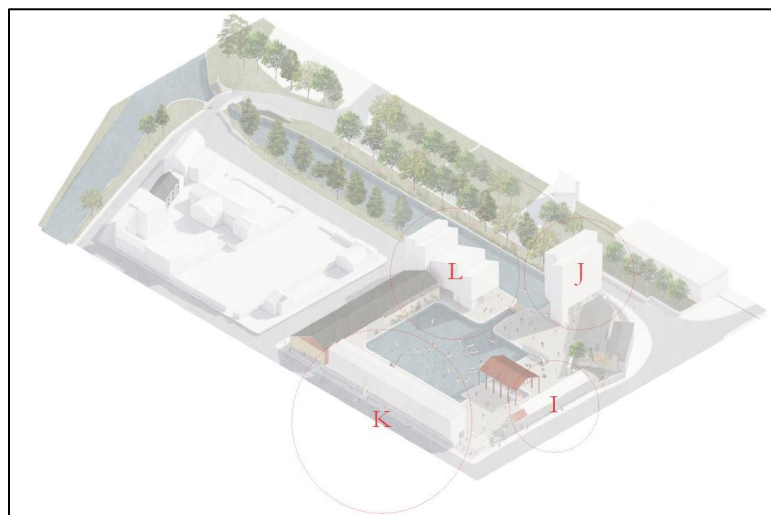
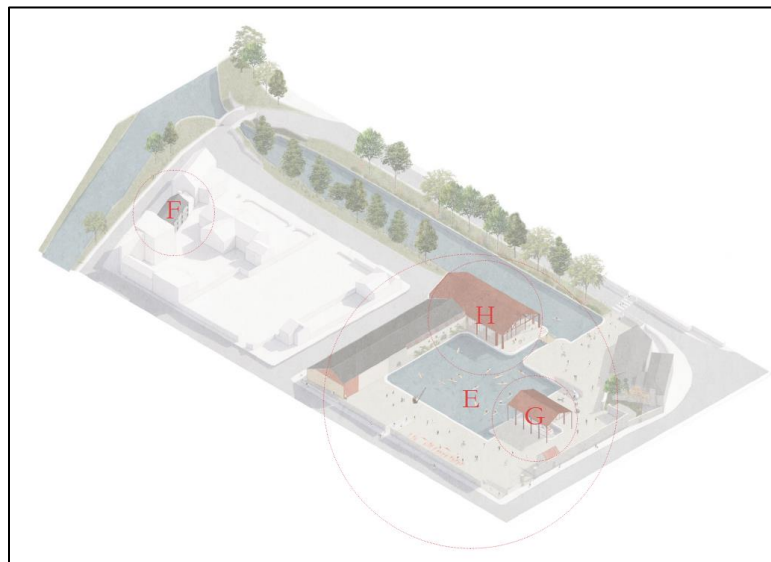


Table 3.1 Key Opportunity Sites Regeneration Projects

Catalogue of Opportunities	Key Potential Features
<p>A. Reconnecting the Harbour to the Town Currently, the Harbour is an enclosed site with one entrance for vehicles from Harbour St. and one entrance for boats from the Canal.</p> <p>This opportunity proposes to enhance Harbour’s accessibility, visibility and urban connectivity. It aims to revitalize the Harbour as an economic and social centre by improving the public spaces around it.</p>	<p>Key potential features include:</p> <p>Route to Transform -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Crossing to schools on opposite side of O’Carroll St.</i> ■ <i>Reinstate quay/embankment edge to original location behind sheet piling</i> ■ <i>Dredge Harbour Basin to reveal stone base</i> ■ <i>Restore quay walls around basin perimeter</i> ■ <i>Entrance established between North block and West boundary wall</i> ■ <i>Reinstated Entrance to crèche in St. Mary’s</i> ■ <i>Re-surface ground finish</i> ■ <i>New entrance along historic 19th C. axial vista</i> ■ <i>Refurbish remaining wall fragment from former Goods Store Building</i> ■ <i>Corner entrance as a possible future site (corner bungalow at present)</i> <p>Steps to Transform -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Parking bays reoriented</i> ■ <i>Parking bays reoriented and foot path added</i> ■ <i>Shared surface added as a forecourt to the harbour</i> ■ <i>Table crossing added between church and Harbour entrances</i> ■ <i>Carriageway reduced to one lane to maintain parking and footpath added</i> ■ <i>New pedestrian access to the Harbour from schools</i> ■ <i>New Ramped connection from O’Carroll St. to the Harbour</i> ■ <i>Table crossing added at Store St Harbour St junction</i> ■ <i>Carriageway narrowed to two lanes and 1 bike lane, footpath widened</i> ■ <i>Parking bays maintained to South only with new treeline</i> <p>Store Street - By reducing Store St. to a single lane of traffic, a new footpath can be integrated while maintaining parking to one side. The plan also shows a shared surface, creating a square between the church and the newly established entrance on the west boundary wall of the Harbour.</p>

Catalogue of Opportunities	Key Potential Features
	<p>Harbour Street - There is an opportunity to change Harbour St. by narrowing traffic lanes, confining parking to the shaded side of the street, widen foot paths on the south-facing side, add trees and table crossings for a better pedestrian experience accessible to all.</p> <p>St. Brigid's Place - Adding a footpath on both sides of the street would improve accessibility and connectivity to the terrace of shops along the length of St Brigid's Place on the Harbour side. A shared surface at the bend in the road creating a small square in front of the corner building on to the canal spur.</p>
<p>B. Transforming O'Carroll Street The junction of Harbour Street, O'Carroll Street, and Riverside currently has a roundabout dividing O'Carroll Street into two parts. Replacing the roundabout with traffic lights would create a larger, pedestrian-friendly area, improving crossings and enhancing O'Carroll Street as an important eastern space in the town.</p>	<p>Key potential features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Tree line to be continued to the bank of the Grand Canal</i> ■ <i>Carriageway reduced to one lane of traffic to allow for footpath</i> ■ <i>Quayline hardscape widened to create linear park</i> ■ <i>Kiosks added along linear park to accommodate facilities</i> ■ <i>Tree line added to give enclosure to O'Carroll Street</i> ■ <i>Space in front of St Mary's expanded with potential for use by St. Mary's</i> ■ <i>Shared surface table crossing added in lieu of roundabout</i> ■ <i>Footpath added to South side of street</i> ■ <i>Defensible space allowed for inboard of 3m footpath for use by retailers</i> ■ <i>Carriageway narrowed; parking bays reorientated to be parallel to kerb</i> ■ <i>Footpath widened</i> ■ <i>Cycle lane added inboard of parking with verge for tree grates beside (yellow)</i> ■ <i>Shared surface table crossing added in front of the former infirmary</i> ■ <i>Carriageway narrowed and treeline added on south side of Church St.</i>
<p>C. The Canal Spur Quayline: A Linear Park The Canal Spur links the Grand Canal with the Harbour Basin, featuring a formal, urban character on the quay-lined west side and a more natural, pastoral feel on the east. There is an opportunity to enhance this by creating a linear park on the west bank,</p>	<p>Key potential features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Creation of a linear park on the west side of the Spur</i> ■ <i>Add additional moorings and service amenities for boat-users</i> ■ <i>Planting a tree line on the western side of the street</i> ■ <i>Narrowing the carriageway and parking allocation</i> ■ <i>Deepening the area of hard paving from the quayline back</i>

Catalogue of Opportunities	Key Potential Features
<p>adding moorings and amenities for boat users, while fostering a promenade around the water that connects to the Harbour and the Grand Canal Greenway.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Lifting bridge will continue to accommodate boating traffic and enable increased pedestrian connectivity throughout the Harbour area</i>
<p>D. Custodianship of the Stone Basin Crafted from finely cut limestone over 200 years ago, the Basin's longevity reflects the skill of its construction. The Harbour Basin is at a raised level relative to its context. It is a kind of water plateau, made with embankments, retaining walls and quays.</p>	<p>Key potential features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Preserving the Basin and its heritage structures, including the Dry Dock, is an ongoing responsibility</i> ■ <i>Careful repair will be essential in transforming the Harbour into a functional civic space</i>
<p>E. Unlocking the Secret Water Square The ground surface of the Harbour surrounding the Basin was historically made of loose fill rather than stone, unlike the cut-stone Basin itself. It is now covered with concrete hardstanding which is cracked and undulating. There is an opportunity to redesign the Harbour's ground surface for improved public realm.</p>	<p>Key potential features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Transform the Harbour surface with different materials and textures into a tapestry reflective of the Harbour's past.</i> ■ <i>Reconnect the Harbour to Tullamore.</i> ■ <i>Initial investment into the Harbour and Basin's landscape and quays would provide an opportunity to realise a new 'Water Square'.</i> ■ <i>Provision of good quality public realm around the Harbour.</i> ■ <i>Potential for a 'barge project' as a means of early activation in collaboration with local schools.</i> ■ <i>Utilise the educational value of the water network as it is in close proximity to numerous schools.</i> ■ <i>A potential floating classroom along the Canal Spur would deeply enrich the learning experience of the Tullamore and Offaly student population.</i> ■ <i>Re-develop the Harbour site as a home for water culture and education in addition to other uses.</i> ■ <i>Proposed use of the site for water leisure and recreational activities, this may include stand-up paddle, canal kayaking and canoeing.</i>
<p>F. Young's Stores: A Greenway Gatelodge Young's Stores is ideally located between the Harbour and the emerging Grand Canal Greenway. Its prime position makes it a</p>	<p>Key potential features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Adaptive reuse of Young's Stores could provide visitor facilities, information and accommodation, supporting sustainable tourism development.</i>

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Catalogue of Opportunities	Key Potential Features
<p>perfect pit stop on the Greenway a welcome point for Grand Canal boat users. Young's Stores offers the potential to become a kind of embassy for Tullamore where visitors are received, hosted and oriented to the Harbour site and visitor attractions as part of a visit to Tullamore. The location of Young's Stores is ideal for this as it is at the bridge where the Grand Canal Greenway cycle route transfers from the North bank to the South.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>The north facing forecourt space in front of Young's Stores, adjacent to the canal, could be designated as an outdoor seating area and become a new public amenity/gathering space.</i>
<p>G. The Dry Dock: Cherishing the Industrial Past</p> <p>The Dry Dock is likely the most significant piece of industrial heritage at the Harbour site, with only one of the two historic docks still open.</p>	<p>Key potential features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Careful design of site development works is required to secure the integrity of this precious built heritage and continue its operation, serving both public and Waterways Ireland owned vessels.</i> ■ <i>Create a heritage experience for visitors and schools to discover.</i>
<p>H. Transforming the Lock-Gate Workshop</p> <p>The Harbour currently has a number of structures, principally the covering to the Dry Dock, Office Accommodation and a large workshop where lock gates are built. The Lock Gate Shed is a robust 20m x 40m space.</p>	<p>Key potential features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>The scale of the Lock-Gate offers opportunities for large scale events, which would suit its distinctive character and setting.</i> ■ <i>Adaptation of this workshop would allow for early activation of the Harbour with modest financial commitment, and without precluding future development.</i>
<p>I. Inhabiting the Harbour Walls</p> <p>The Basin is at the heart of the Harbour. All recommendations for future construction are appropriately distanced away from the</p>	<p>Key potential features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Along Harbour Street inside harbour wall between a historic, small building, Battery Store and St. Mary's is a site, which could be inhabited as a newly-built building which would house small shops, studios or workshops.</i>

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Catalogue of Opportunities	Key Potential Features
<p>Basin and its quays, in order to retain its unique character.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>These attractive and active uses would open towards the Harbour on one side and have high-level windows towards Harbour St. to catch the sun and to enliven Harbour St. at night.</i> ■ <i>Tullamore Harbour could be a locus for the craft and design collectives in the Midlands and perform as a complementary offering to the new Esker Arts Centre.</i> ■ <i>The long slender portion of the site would be ideal for creating small studio spaces as a terrace to the Harbour. A simple elegant structure along the Harbour’s southern perimeter wall would be an economic way to achieve activation and transformation of the Harbour.</i>
<p>J. Marking a Point of Welcome</p> <p>The Canal Spur by its nature is a long vista on the approach to the Harbour Basin.</p>	<p>Key potential features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>A tall building at the end of the Canal Spur would be an opportunity to restore the character of the Harbour and will mark the end of the Canal Spur and as a fulcrum at the centre of O’Carroll St.</i> ■ <i>Creating a crossing on O’Carroll St. and route along the eastern grassy canal embankment will make the Harbour more accessible and more visible from the schools, Whitehall and O’Carroll St.</i> ■ <i>Connect O’Carroll St. by ramp up to the Harbour level beside St. Mary’s to provide a new connection to the town.</i>
<p>K. Re-Creating a Streetscape in the Harbour</p> <p>Restoring a development at the western edge of the Harbour, where a long perimeter building once provided a backdrop to the Basin, would recreate the historic sense of enclosure and enhance the aesthetics of the site.</p>	<p>Key potential features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>A new building on the western edge of the Harbour, along the length of Store Street with an active ground floor with the possibilities of waterside eateries, coupled with accommodation for recreational pursuits.</i> ■ <i>The new double height entrance to the Harbour from Store St. made through the existing limestone wall. The new opening would connect the Harbour Spur entrance with the Church of the Assumption’s eastern gates.</i> ■ <i>Potential quayside structures as a resource to the clubs for rowing/canoeing already in existence in Tullamore.</i>
<p>L. Where the Canal Spur Enters the Harbour</p> <p>The relationship between the Harbour Basin and Canal Spur creates a peninsula of land between them. The characteristics of this make it an ideal place for a large footprint building that could have a variety of</p>	<p>Key potential features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>A new structure, occupying the peninsula between the Harbour Basin and the Canal Spur, with potential uses such as residential, commercial, food and/or retail establishments.</i> ■ <i>A new eastern entrance from O’Carroll St.</i>

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Catalogue of Opportunities	Key Potential Features
potential uses, including residential, commercial, food and/or retail.	

4 Description of the Receiving Environment

The Masterplan addresses the existing Grand Canal Harbour area which is situated between the Grand Canal to the north and the Tullamore River c. 170m to the south / south-east. A linear spur connects the Harbour Basin with the Canal, and the Harbour Basin is positioned to the north-east of Tullamore town centre as shown in **Figure 3.1** in the previous section. Development in the Grand Canal Harbour is set against the policies and objectives of the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027. The Masterplan is not a statutory land use plan and does not set a framework for future development consents. The Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027 sets policies and objective for the Grand Canal and states-

BLP-16 : It is Council policy to support the provision of outdoor pursuits, walking and cycling routes through the county's peatlands and network of industrial railways linking the River Shannon Blueway, Royal Canal, Grand Canal and Barrow Blueway across the midlands as outlined in the 'Major Cycling Destination in the Midlands of Ireland –Feasibility Study 2016', which is a priority of the 'Outdoor Recreation Plan State Lands and Waters' (2017).

BLP-23: It is Council policy to consider the Waterways Corridor Study 2002 and protect the recreational, educational and amenity potential of navigational and non-navigational waterways within the county, such as the Grand Canal Corridor, towpaths and adjacent wetland landscapes, taking into account more recent heritage and environmental legislation (including the SEA Directive) and environmental policy commitments.

The Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027 further includes the following development policies for Tullamore:

ENTP-11: It is Council policy to strengthen and channel development into Tullamore the primary driver for economic development within the county, which is designated as a Key Town in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy.

ENTP-12: It is Council policy to promote Tullamore as a key location for economic development supporting the provision of increased employment through the expansion of the existing enterprise ecosystem in the town and smart specialisation and support the provision of physical infrastructure and zoned lands to realise the delivery of strategic employment lands in central accessible locations.

ENTP-13: It is Council policy to support infrastructural development in Tullamore to facilitate the development of Strategic Employment Zones.

RP-12: It is Council policy to consider the development of taller buildings on the 'Harbour site' and 'Texas site' in Tullamore as identified in Figure 7.8 of the County Development Plan [...].

Tullamore in County Offaly is located on the Grand Canal, in the middle of the County. The town is located between Kilbeggan and Portlaoise on the N52 and is strategically located as inter-regional portal to the Northern, Western and Southern regions. Tullamore's neighbouring settlements include Athlone, Newbridge, Mullingar and Portlaoise.

Tullamore is served by the rail network and provides access to rail destinations such as Dublin Heuston, Galway, Westport, Ballina and Limerick. The main road access from the north is provided by the M6 via N52 or R420 and access from the south is provided by the M7 via N80 or N52 with local access via R421. The public bus routes provide access from locations such as Kinnegad, Portlaoise, Banagher and Dublin City Centre.

The Offaly section of the Grand Canal comprises of some 70 kilometres from Edenderry to Shannon Harbour. It passes through the towns of Daingean and Tullamore and the village of Pollagh. The Grand Canal is a focus for a wide range of uses, especially for recreation and tourism purposes.

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) data from the 2016 and 2022 census illustrates that Tullamore is divided between two Electoral Divisions – Tullamore Urban and Tullamore Rural. The rate of population changes between 2016 and 2022 in Offaly was 6.7%. Between 2016 and 2022, urban Tullamore’s Population grew by 4.5% compared to rural Tullamore’s population growth of 11.1%. The population distribution of Tullamore is well aligned with both the National and county-level distribution of ages.

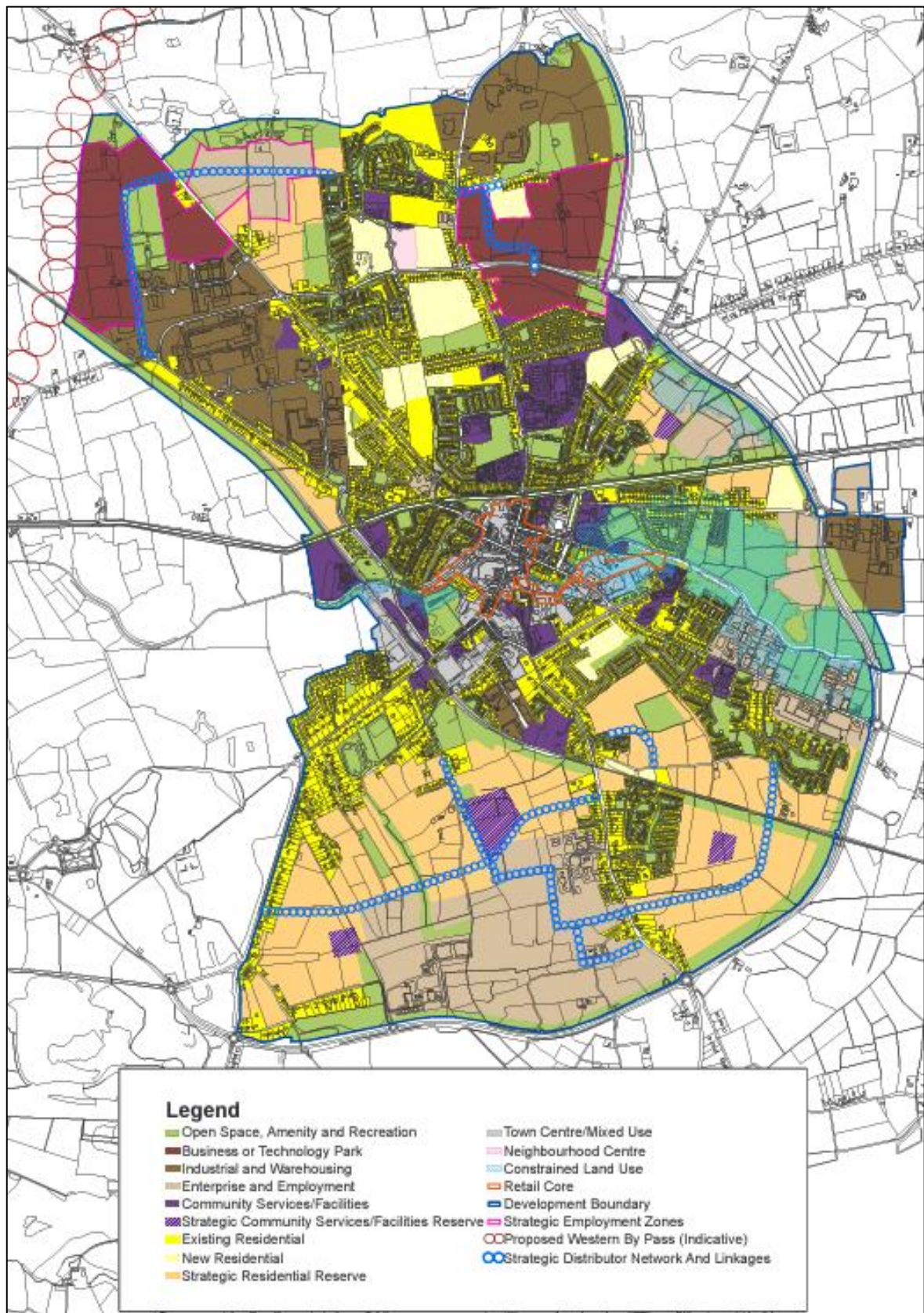
As per the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027, the lands within the study area are zoned as (**Figure 4.1**):

- a. Open Space, Amenity and Recreation: *Protect and improve the provision, attractiveness, accessibility and amenity value of public open space, amenity and recreation.*
- b. Town Centre/ Mixed Use: *Provide for, protect and strengthen the vitality and viability of town/village centres, through consolidating development, encouraging a mix of uses and maximising the use of land, to ensure the efficient use of infrastructure and services.*
- c. Existing Residential: *Protect and enhance the amenity and character of developed residential communities.*
- d. Community Services/Facilities: *Provide necessary community, social, health, public administration and educational services and facilities.*

Tullamore has been designated the Decarbonising Zone (DZ) for Offaly which will act as a test-bed of new technology, innovation and ambitious approaches to climate mitigation, adaptation, and biodiversity enhancement at a local community level, which may be scaled up across the county and further afield⁵.

⁵ [Offaly County Council Climate Action Plan 2024 –2029](#)

Figure 4.1 Extract from the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027 (Volume II Settlement Plans – Tullamore Town Plan)



As per the Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) database the study area is underlain by Undifferentiated limestone of the Visean Limestones. The groundwater vulnerability within the study area ranges between Extreme and High.

The study area is located within the Lower Shannon catchment (25A), the Tullamore_SC_010 sub-catchment (25A_4) and the Tullamore_030 river sub basin. The Water Framework Directive (WFD) status of the Grand Canal and Tullamore River in the vicinity of the study area were recorded during the 2016-2021 WFD monitoring period (refer to **Figure 4.2**) as below:

- Grand Canal Main Line (Lower Shannon) (IE_25A_AWB_GCMLW) (Good and 'not at risk');
- Tullamore River (IE_SH_25T030300) (Poor and 'at risk of not achieving good status').

Tullamore River (IERI_SH_1994_0006) c. 170m to the south of study area is identified as a nutrient sensitive river under the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive Sensitive Area.

There are no European (Natura 2000) sites within the Masterplan study area. The nearest sites are listed below (and shown in **Figure 4.3**):

- **Special Areas of Conservation (SAC):**
 - Charleville Wood SAC (site code 000571), c. 1.7km to the west;
 - Clara Bog SAC (site code 000572), c. 8.5km to the north-west;
 - River Barrow and River Nore SAC (site code 002162), c. 10.8km to the south;
 - Raheenmore Bog SAC (site code 000582), c. 10.9km to the north-east;
 - Split Hills and Long Hill Esker SAC (site code 001831), c. 11km to the north-east;
 - Clonaslee Eskers and Derry Bog SAC (site code 000859), c. 13.9km to the south-west;
 - Slieve Bloom Mountains SAC (site code 000412), c. 15.8km to the south;
 - Lough Ennell SAC (site code 000685), c. 17.6km to the north;
 - Mountmellick SAC (site code 002141), c. 22.3km to the south-east;
 - Ferbane Bog SAC (site code 000575), c. 22.5km to the west.
- **Special Protection Areas (SPA):**
 - Slieve Bloom Mountains SPA (site code 004160), c. 14.1km to the south;
 - Lough Ennell SPA (site code 004044), c. 18.6km to the north.

Designated sites (i.e. proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA) and designated Natural Heritage Areas (NHA)) within the potential Zone of Influence have been included in this assessment in order to address their potential to act as supporting sites for European sites. The nearest sites are listed below:

- **Natural Heritage Area (NHA):**
 - Hawkswood Bog NHA (site code 002355), c. 5.7km to the south;
 - Screggan Bog NHA (site code 000921), c. 6.2km to the south-west;
 - Daingean Bog NHA (site code 002033), c. 10.3km to the east;
 - Cloncrow Bog (New Forest) NHA (site code 000677), c. 13.4km to the north-east;
 - Nure Bog NHA (site code 001725), c. 18.0km to the north;
 - Ballynagrenia and Ballinderry Bog NHA (site code 000674), c. 20.7km to the north-west;
 - Clonydonnin Bog NHA (site code 000565), c. 22.6km to the north-west;
 - Clonreher Bog NHA (site code 002357), c. 24.2km to the south-east.
- **Proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA):**
 - Grand Canal pNHA (site code 002104), within the site;
 - Charleville Wood pNHA (site code 000571), c. 2.3km to the south-west;

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- Ballyduff Wood pNHA (site code 001777), c. 2.9km to the north;
- Ballyduff Esker pNHA (site code 000885), c. 4.4km to the north-west;
- Murphys Bridge Esker pNHA (site code 001775), c. 4.9km to the north-east;
- Clonad Wood pNHA (site code 000574), c. 5.6km to the south;
- Derrygolan Esker pNHA (site code 000896), c. 6.1km to the north;
- Kilcormac Esker pNHA (site code 000906), c. 7.8km to the south-west;
- Rahugh Ridge (Kiltober Esker) pNHA (site code 000918), c. 7.8km to the north-east;
- Pallas Lough pNHA (site code 000916), c. 8.4km to the south-west;
- Clara Bog pNHA (site code 000572), c. 8.5km to the north-west;
- Ardan Wood pNHA (site code 001711), c. 9.6km to the north-east;
- Annaghmore Lough Fen pNHA (Offaly) (site code 000413,) c. 10.0km to the south-west;
- Raheenmore Bog pNHA (site code 000582), c. 10.9km to the north-east;
- Split Hills and Long Hill Esker pNHA (site code 001831), c. 11km to the north;
- Woodfield Bog pNHA (site code 000586), c. 11.6km to the north-west;
- Raheen Lough pNHA (site code 000917), c. 13.8km to the south-east
- Clonaslee Eskers and Derry Bog PNHA (site code 000859), c. 14.0km to the south-west;
- Slieve Bloom mountains pNHA (site code 000412), c. 15.8km to the south;
- Lough s pNHA (site code 000685), c. 17.6km to the north
- Lough Boora pNHA (site code 001365), c. 19.0km to the west;
- Ballynagarby pNHA (site code 001713), c. 21.5km to the north-west;
- Ferbane Bog pNHA (site code 000575), c. 22.4km to the west;
- Camcor Wood pNHA (site code 000889), c. 23.7km to the south-west;
- Doon Esker Wood pNHA (site code 001830), c. 24.7km to the north-west;
- Lough Coura pNHA (site code 000909), c. 25.0km to the south-west.

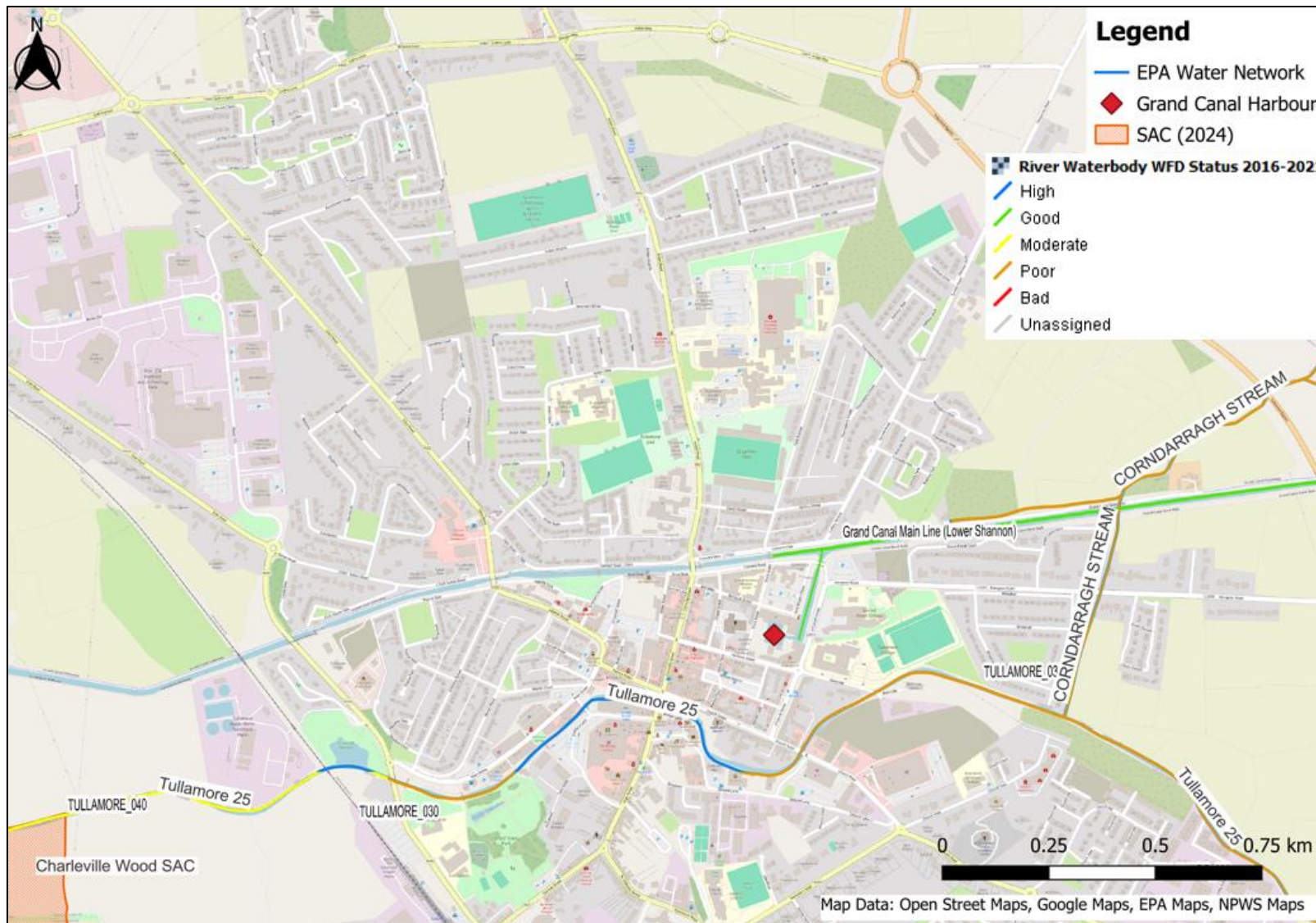
The following National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) sites were recorded within the study area:

- Reg No. 14807078 - Foresters' Hall, Harbour Street, O'Carroll Street, Tullamore;
- Reg No. 14807092 - Grand Canal House, Saint Brigid's Place, Tullamore;
- Reg No. 14807091 – Convent Road, Puttaghan, Tullamore;
- Reg No. 14807090 - Saint Columba's Classical School, Convent Road, Saint Brigid's Place, Puttaghan, Tullamore;
- Reg No. 14807089 – Bury Bridge, Convent Road , O'Carroll Street, Puttaghan, Tullamore.

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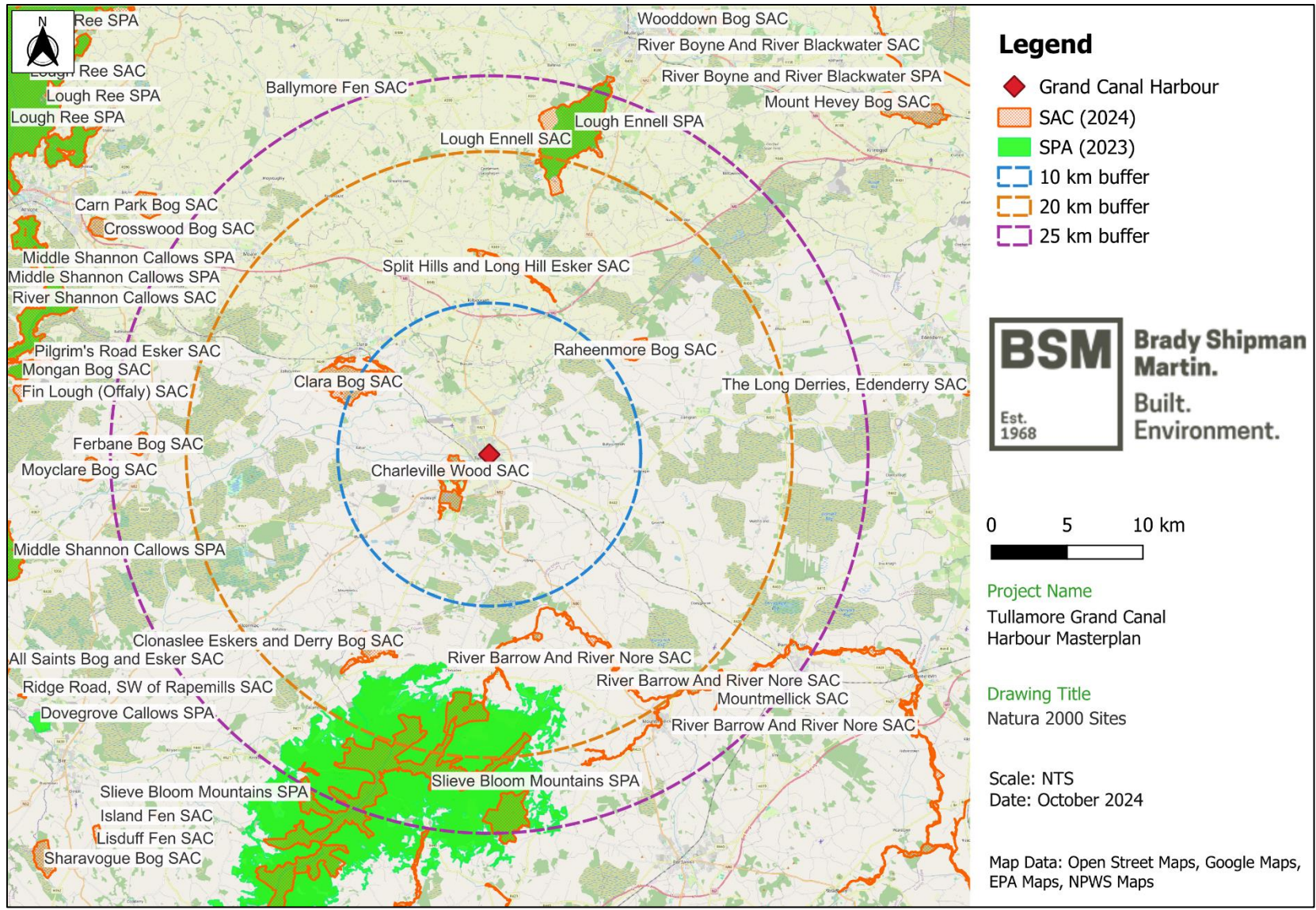
Figure 4.2 WFD waterbody status within the Harbour Masterplan.



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Figure 4.3 European sites within zone of influence of the Harbour Masterplan. 10km, 20km and 25km radii are shown for scale.



5 Planning Context

Implementation of the Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan will be informed and contextualised by a range of policies and plans at international, national, and local level.

5.1 International

- ‘United Nations’ Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs) as set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Transforming our World.
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD);
- UN (1992) The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD);
- Council of Europe (1996) The Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy;
- Council of Europe (1996) The European Landscape Convention 2000;
- EU Water Framework Directive (WFD);
- Birds (2009/147/EC) and Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC);
- EU Floods Directive;
- EU Green Infrastructure Strategy.

5.2 National

- Project Ireland 2040, The National Planning Framework (NPF) is the Government’s high-level strategic vision for shaping future growth and development in the entire country over a 20-year period, which identifies heritage as a strategic investment priority, recognising ‘Enhanced Amenities and Heritage’ as a National Strategic Outcome;
- Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSES) for the East and Midlands Area;
- Our Rural Future (2021-2025);
- Town Centre First (2022);
- National Smart Specialisation Strategy (2022-2027);
- Climate Action Plan 2024;
- 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023–2030.

5.3 County

The Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027 sets out the spatial framework to guide future development within the County acknowledges, supports, and reinforces the integral role heritage, culture and the arts play in sustaining and creating attractive, vibrant, and engaging places to live, work and enjoy.

- Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027;
- Offaly Climate Action Plan 2024 – 2029;
- Draft Offaly Biodiversity Plan 2024 – 2030;
- Draft Tullamore Transport Plan 2024;
- Local Area Plan 2024 – 2030 (under development);
- Tullamore Regeneration Framework 2024.

6 Screening for Requirement for SEA

The screening for the requirement for SEA has been conducted in accordance with the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011.

The criteria are set out under two principal headings:

- Characteristics of a Plan / Programme; and
- Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected.

The corresponding sub-criteria are addressed in **Tables 6.1** and **6.2**, below, respectively.

A screening for SEA of opportunities presented in the Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan is also provided in **Table A1** in **Appendix 1**.

Table 6.1: Characteristics of the Plan / Programme, having regard, in particular, to:

The degree to which the plan sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions, or by allocating resources

The non-statutory Masterplan document will guide future development within the Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour area to reconnect the Harbour to the town and enable it to become a vibrant economic and social quarter for living, working and leisure. The Masterplan lists aspirations of Waterways Ireland and Offaly County Council, which are for the harbour area to:

- *Be unveiled for public discovery and heritage appreciation from behind existing high walls;*
- *Be transformed to become an attractive waterfront space for residents, citizens and visitors;*
- *Become the catalyst that unlocks economic and social regeneration opportunities;*
- *Be accessible for walking and cycling with connectivity to a 131km Grand Canal Greenway;*
- *Provide on and off water recreational activities;*
- *Become a key destination for boaters journeying from throughout the inland waterways network on the island.*

The Masterplan outlines a series of opportunities, based on the aspirations listed above, to unlock public access to the harbour site and envision its transformation as a compelling waterfront destination with multidimensional uses for citizens, residents, enterprises and visitors.

The *Catalogue of Opportunities* presented within the Masterplan includes modifications to the surrounding streets; suggested new entrance points into the Harbour; the restoration of the highly crafted, late 18th Century stonework of the Canal Harbour, the Dry Dock, the Canal Spur and Young’s Store; as well as locations for possible development. Four key locations within the Harbour are identified as strategic locations for development: one at the south of the Canal Spur, where a building would act as a type of welcoming marker on entering the town by the canal system and also mark the connection with O’Carroll Street within the town; another on the north-eastern ‘peninsula’ of the Harbour, accessed from St. Brigid’s Place; and at two other positions inside the existing limestone walls along the western and southern boundaries.

These opportunities are described in detail in **Section 3.3** of this report. The Masterplan explains that the developments within the Catalogue of Opportunities are not interdependent and can be completed in any order.

It should be noted that the opportunities identified as part of this Masterplan are likely to be subject to additional detailed design and permitting and environmental assessments.

The degree to which the plan influences other plans, including those in a hierarchy

In the context of global, European, national, regional and local plans; the Harbour Masterplan is at a low level in the hierarchy of plans. The key related plans and policy documents are highlighted in [Section 5](#) above. The adoption and implementation of the final version of the Masterplan will support the implementation / objectives of various plans and policies at higher levels in the planning hierarchy, including the *Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027*.

The relevance of the plan for the integration of environmental considerations, in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development

The Masterplan aims to regenerate, revitalize, create healthy and appealing public spaces, enhance urban resilience, restore historic structures, and encourage sustainable mobility and recreation. The Masterplan lists aspirations of Waterways Ireland and Offaly County Council, which are for the harbour area to:

- *Be unveiled for public discovery and heritage appreciation from behind existing high walls;*
- *Be transformed to become an attractive waterfront space for residents, citizens and visitors;*
- *Become the catalyst that unlocks economic and social regeneration opportunities;*
- *Be accessible for walking and cycling with connectivity to a 131km Grand Canal Greenway;*
- *Provide on and off water recreational activities;*
- *Become a key destination for boaters journeying from throughout the inland waterways network on the island.*

The Masterplan identifies specific public realm works, identifies potential opportunity sites for new commercial or community development and addresses accessibility and connectivity throughout the Masterplan study area. The Masterplan includes a *Catalogue of Opportunities*, each of which can contribute to the re-vitalising of the Harbour and this part of Tullamore.

The raised embankment that encloses the Canal Spur on its eastern bank along O'Carroll Street separates the canal from the educational precinct to the east. By increasing planting along the boundaries of the two schools, that part of O'Carroll Street would be transformed as a landscaped entry point into the town. By adjusting the junction of Harbour Street and O'Carroll Street and integrating traffic, parking, cycle paths, tree planting and generous footpaths, the wide streetscape of O'Carroll Street has the potential to become a pedestrian-friendly boulevard within the town.

The linear Canal Spur and the hump-backed bridge form a special entry point into the town from the wider national network of the Grand Canal Greenway. By also modifying the western quay of the Canal Spur to service visiting boats with contemporary facilities, St. Brigid's Place will become a significant, destination and welcoming space.

The guiding principle of the Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan is to reconnect the harbour with the town through the creation of vibrant public spaces, enhancing accessibility and visibility. The development aims to balance economic revitalization with heritage preservation by restoring historic canal infrastructure and introducing modern facilities for social and recreational use. The plan prioritizes pedestrian-friendly zones, redesigned streetscapes, and increased green spaces, promoting a sustainable urban environment.

Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme

Environmental problems of greatest relevance to the Masterplan are as follows:

- Impact on the protected sites (Natura 2000 sites) and species;
- Impact on water quality;

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on air quality and noise; • Sustainable urban drainage solutions; • Impacts of climate change in form of coastal erosion and flooding; • Shortfalls in the current provision of pedestrian facilities / shared surfaces as well as any existing road safety issues. <p>The above issues, including any strategic planning issues have been addressed within the Masterplan document to provide for structured and balanced development in Tullamore.</p>
<p><i>The relevance of the plan for the implementation of European Union legislation on the environment (e.g. plans linked to waste management or water protection)</i></p>
<p>The Harbour Masterplan is of relevance to the implementation of International / European Union legislation, particularly the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘United Nations’ Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs) as set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Transforming our World; • United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD); • UN (1992) The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); • Council of Europe (1996) The Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy; • Council of Europe (1996) The European Landscape Convention 2000; • EU Water Framework Directive (WFD); • Birds (2009/147/EC) and Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC); • EU Floods Directive; • EU Green Infrastructure Strategy.

Table 6.2: Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:

<p><i>The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects</i></p>
<p>The projects of the Harbour Masterplan have been reviewed with regard to the potential for unintended negative environment effects and it is considered that there is no real likelihood of significant negative environmental effects occurring as result of the implementation of the Masterplan.</p> <p>The significance, duration, frequency and reversibility of effects will vary between the different opportunities presented and the aspects of the receiving environment affected.</p>
<p><i>The cumulative nature of the effects</i></p>
<p>The implementation of the Harbour Masterplan will result in the execution of projects and strategies (refer to Appendix 1) potentially set out in the Masterplan all of which are likely to result in positive or neutral environmental effects. On the basis of information presented in previous sections it can be excluded that the implementation of the Masterplan, individually or in-combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on the environment.</p>
<p><i>The trans-boundary nature of the effects</i></p>

<p>The area of relevance for the Harbour Masterplan is localised to the north-east of Tullamore town centre. It is not located on or near any international boundary. No transboundary effects are predicted to occur.</p>
<p><i>The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)</i></p>
<p>There are no potential features presented within the ‘<i>Catalogue of Opportunities</i>’ in the Masterplan whose implementation would significantly increase the risk to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents) relative to the baseline. On the contrary, the opportunities presented within the Masterplan will provide for public access to the Harbour site and envisions its transformation as an immersive waterfront destination with multidimensional uses for citizens, residents, enterprises, and visitors. Opportunities around improving accessibility and permeability within the area– may be expected to have positive effects for human health.</p> <p>The opportunities also aim to enhance climate resilience of the receiving environment in the Local Authority area, thereby reducing vulnerability to accidents and extreme events such as flooding, drought, storms and accidental pollution events.</p>
<p><i>The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)</i></p>
<p>The adoption and implementation of the Harbour Masterplan are expected to contribute to the future development within the Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour area. The extent of the geographical area is shown in Figure 1.1.</p> <p>In 2022, the Small Area Population Statistics (SAP) for Tullamore Urban Electoral Division noted a population of 11,957, which was an increase from the 2016 population of 11,437 (CSO, 2024).</p>
<p><i>The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:</i></p>
<p><i>(a) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage</i></p>
<p>The natural environment and cultural heritage assets within and in close proximity to the Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour are described in detail in Section 4.</p>
<p><i>(b) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values</i></p>
<p>The implementation of the Masterplan is likely to result in sustainable future development within the Grand Canal Harbour. No likely significant negative effects are predicted to occur in relation to any aspects of the environmental standards or limit values.</p>
<p><i>(c) intensive land-use</i></p>
<p>The implementation of the Masterplan is likely to result in provision of high-quality architecture and urban design, encourage sustainable movement, improve accessibility and permeability within the area. The Masterplan is not likely to give rise to any significant negative impacts in this regard, but rather will serve to address the existing pressures negatively affecting development in the area.</p>
<p><i>The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, European Union or international protection status</i></p>

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It is considered that the adoption and implementation of the Masterplan is likely to result in neutral or positive effects on such areas or landscapes.

An AA Screening Report is being prepared in respect of the Masterplan and it has concluded that there will be no impact on the integrity of any European sites as a result of implementing the Masterplan.

7 Recommendation on Requirement for SEA

The *Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan* is a non-statutory land use plan. The Masterplan aims to reconnect the Harbour to the town and enable it to become a vibrant economic and social quarter for living, working and leisure. It presents a "*Catalogue of Opportunities*," each of which can contribute to revitalizing the Harbour and Tullamore, allowing for various combinations of opportunities to be selected and implemented promptly for a vibrant, successful transformation.

As a non-statutory land use plan, the Masterplan document has been screened for the requirement for SEA under the requirements of S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011. The Masterplan has been considered in respect of the SEA screening criteria set out in Schedule 1 of S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011, and the findings are set out in [Section 6](#) of this report. It is considered, on the basis of this exercise, that the implementation of the Masterplan has no real likelihood of having likely significant negative effects on the environment.

On the contrary, the implementation of the Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan will guide future development within the surrounding area to create a vibrant and sustainable town quarter which will support and encourage economic, social and cultural development and provide an attractive, high-quality environment for living, working and leisure.

It is, therefore, recommended that the competent authority reach a determination that the **Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan is not likely to have significant negative effects on the environment and, therefore, that SEA is not required.**

8 References

- *Council Directive Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.*
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- Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.
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- *Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. 436/2004).*
- University College Dublin, AIRO, EPA, OSi, OPR & Geohive (2024). *ESM Webtool.*

Appendix 1: Screening of Projects within the Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan

Table A1 Assessment of potential impact of the Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan

Project	Potential Features	Potential Environmental Effects	Mitigation Required?
Catalogue of Opportunities			
A. Reconnecting the Harbour to the Town	<p>Key potential features include:</p> <p>Route to Transform -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Crossing to schools on opposite side of O'Carroll St.</i> ■ <i>Reinstate quay/embankment edge to original location behind sheet piling</i> ■ <i>Dredge Harbour Basin to reveal stone base</i> ■ <i>Restore quay walls around basin perimeter</i> ■ <i>Entrance established between North block and West boundary wall</i> ■ <i>Reinstated Entrance to crèche in St. Mary's</i> ■ <i>Re-surface ground finish</i> ■ <i>New entrance along historic 19th C. axial vista</i> ■ <i>Refurbish remaining wall fragment from former Goods Store Building</i> ■ <i>Corner entrance as a possible future site (corner bungalow at present)</i> <p>Steps to Transform -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Parking bays reoriented</i> ■ <i>Parking bays reoriented and foot path added</i> ■ <i>Shared surface added as a forecourt to the harbour</i> ■ <i>Table crossing added between church and Harbour entrances</i> 	<p>No likely significant negative environmental effects or positive effects.</p>	<p>No</p>

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Project	Potential Features	Potential Environmental Effects	Mitigation Required?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Carriageway reduced to one lane to maintain parking and footpath added</i> ■ <i>New pedestrian access to the Harbour from schools</i> ■ <i>New Ramped connection from O'Carroll St. to the Harbour</i> ■ <i>Table crossing added at Store St Harbour St junction</i> ■ <i>Carriageway narrowed to two lanes and 1 bike lane; footpath widened</i> ■ <i>Parking bays maintained to South only with new treeline</i> <p>Store Street - By reducing Store St. to a single lane of traffic, a new footpath can be integrated while maintaining parking to one side. The plan also shows a shared surface, creating a square between the church and the newly established entrance on the west boundary wall of the Harbour.</p> <p>Harbour Street - There is an opportunity to change Harbour St. by narrowing traffic lanes, confining parking to the shaded side of the street, widen foot paths on the south-facing side, add trees and table crossings for a better pedestrian experience accessible to all.</p> <p>St. Brigid's Place - Adding a footpath on both sides of the street would improve accessibility and connectivity to the terrace of shops along the length of St Brigid's Place on the Harbour side. A shared surface at the bend in the road creating a small square in front of the corner building on to the canal spur.</p>		
<p>B. Transforming O'Carroll Street</p>	<p>Key potential features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Tree line to be continued to the bank of the Grand Canal</i> ■ <i>Carriageway reduced to one lane of traffic to allow for footpath</i> 	<p>No likely significant negative environmental effects or positive effects.</p>	<p>No</p>

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Project	Potential Features	Potential Environmental Effects	Mitigation Required?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Quayline hardscape widened to create linear park ■ Kiosks added along linear park to accommodate facilities ■ Tree line added to give enclosure to O'Carroll Street ■ Space in front of St Mary's expanded with potential for use by St. Mary's ■ Shared surface table crossing added in lieu of roundabout ■ Footpath added to South side of street ■ Defensible space allowed for inboard of 3m footpath for use by retailers ■ Carriageway narrowed; parking bays reorientated to be parallel to kerb ■ Footpath widened ■ Cycle lane added inboard of parking with verge for tree grates beside (yellow) ■ Shared surface table crossing added in front of the former infirmary ■ Carriageway narrowed and treeline added on south side of Church St. 		
C. The Canal Spur Quayline: A Linear Park	<p>Key potential features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Creation of a linear park on the west side of the Spur ■ Add additional moorings and service amenities for boat-users ■ Planting a tree line on the western side of the street ■ Narrowing the carriageway and parking allocation ■ Deepening the area of hard paving from the quayline back ■ Lifting bridge will continue to accommodate boating traffic and enable increased pedestrian connectivity throughout the Harbour area 	<p>No likely significant negative environmental effects or positive effects.</p>	<p>No</p>

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Project	Potential Features	Potential Environmental Effects	Mitigation Required?
D. Custodianship of the Stone Basin	Key potential features include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Preserving the Basin and its heritage structures, including the Dry Dock, is an ongoing responsibility.</i> ■ <i>Careful repair will be essential in transforming the Harbour into a functional civic space.</i> 	No likely significant negative environmental effects or positive effects.	No
E. Unlocking the Secret Water Square	Key potential features include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Transform the Harbour surface with different materials and textures into a tapestry reflective of the Harbour's past.</i> ■ <i>Reconnect the Harbour to Tullamore.</i> ■ <i>Initial investment into the Harbour and Basin's landscape and quays would provide an opportunity to realise a new 'Water Square'.</i> ■ <i>Provision of good quality public realm around the Harbour</i> ■ <i>Potential for a 'barge project' as a means of early activation in collaboration with local schools.</i> ■ <i>Utilise the educational value of the water network as it is in close proximity to numerous schools.</i> ■ <i>A potential floating classroom along the Canal Spur would deeply enrich the learning experience of the Tullamore and Offaly student population.</i> ■ <i>Re-develop the Harbour site as a home for water culture and education in addition to other uses.</i> ■ <i>Proposed use of the site for water leisure and recreational activities, this may include stand-up paddle, canal kayaking and canoeing.</i> 	No likely significant negative environmental effects or positive effects.	No
F. Young's Stores: A Greenway Gatelodge	Key potential features include:	No likely significant negative environmental effects or positive effects.	No

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Adaptive reuse of Young’s Stores could provide visitor facilities, information and accommodation, supporting sustainable tourism development.</i> ■ <i>The north facing forecourt space in front of Young’s Stores, adjacent to the canal, could be designated as an outdoor seating area and become a new public amenity/gathering space.</i> 		
G. The Dry Dock: Cherishing the Industrial Past	Key potential features include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Careful design of site development works is required to secure the integrity of this precious built heritage and continue its operation, serving both public and Waterways Ireland owned vessels.</i> ■ <i>Create a heritage experience for visitors and schools to discover.</i> 	No likely significant negative environmental effects or positive effects.	No
H. Transforming the Lock-Gate Workshop	Key potential features include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>The scale of the Lock-Gate offers opportunities for large scale events, which would suit its distinctive character and setting.</i> ■ <i>Adaptation of this workshop would allow for early activation of the Harbour with modest financial commitment, and without precluding future development.</i> 	No likely significant negative environmental effects or positive effects.	No
I. Inhabiting the Harbour Walls	Key potential features include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Along Harbour Street inside harbour wall between a historic, small building, Battery Store and St. Mary’s is a site, which could be inhabited as a newly-built building which would house small shops, studios or workshops.</i> ■ <i>These attractive and active uses would open towards the Harbour on one side and have high-level windows towards</i> 	No likely significant negative environmental effects or positive effects.	No

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	<p><i>Harbour St. to catch the sun and to enliven Harbour St. at night.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Tullamore Harbour could be a locus for the craft and design collectives in the Midlands and perform as a complementary offering to the new Esker Arts Centre.</i> ■ <i>The long slender portion of the site would be ideal for creating small studio spaces as a terrace to the Harbour. A simple elegant structure along the Harbour's southern perimeter wall would be an economic way to achieve activation and transformation of the Harbour.</i> 		
<p>J. Marking a Point of Welcome</p>	<p>Key potential features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>A tall building at the end of the Canal Spur would be an opportunity to restore the character of the Harbour and will mark the end of the Canal Spur and as a fulcrum at the centre of O'Carroll St.</i> ■ <i>Creating a crossing on O'Carroll St. and route along the eastern grassy canal embankment will make the Harbour more accessible and more visible from the schools, Whitehall and O'Carroll St.</i> ■ <i>Connect O'Carroll St. by ramp up to the Harbour level beside St. Mary's to provide a new connection to the town.</i> 	<p>No likely significant negative environmental effects or positive effects.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>K. Re-Creating a Streetscape in the Harbour</p>	<p>Key potential features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>A new building on the western edge of the Harbour, along the length of Store Street with an active ground floor with the possibilities of waterside eateries, coupled with accommodation for recreational pursuits.</i> ■ <i>The new double height entrance to the Harbour from Store St. made through the existing limestone wall. The new opening</i> 	<p>No likely significant negative environmental effects or positive effects.</p>	<p>No</p>

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Project	Potential Features	Potential Environmental Effects	Mitigation Required?
	<p>would connect the Harbour Spur entrance with the Church of the Assumption's eastern gates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Potential quayside structures as a resource to the clubs for rowing/canoeing already in existence in Tullamore. 		
<p>L. Where the Canal Spur Enters the Harbour</p>	<p>Key potential features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A new structure, occupying the peninsula between the Harbour Basin and the Canal Spur, with potential uses such as residential, commercial, food and/or retail establishments. ■ A new eastern entrance from O'Carroll St. 	<p>No likely significant negative environmental effects or positive effects.</p>	<p>No</p>

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