

Tullamore Draft Town Centre Regeneration Framework

Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Offaly County Council (OCC) has prepared a Tullamore Draft Town Centre Regeneration Framework which 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 within Tullamore.

The Tullamore Regeneration Framework 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. It also 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.

Brady Shipman Martin (BSM) has been appointed by Offaly County Council to undertake a screening exercise for Appropriate Assessment (AA). This will determine the effects, if any, on European sites, of the implementation of the Tullamore Draft Town Centre Regeneration Framework (hereafter either the 'Tullamore Framework' or the 'Framework').

This document constitutes an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report prepared for this purpose. European sites are also known as Natura 2000 Sites (Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA)), and are designated for nature conservation. The requirements for an Appropriate Assessment are set out under *Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)*, transposed into Irish law through the *European Union (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended)* and the *Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended)*.

A comprehensive study has been undertaken and the potential impacts on European sites, both as a result of the implementation of the Framework and in-combination with other plans and projects, are appraised in this report.

This AA Screening Report should be read in conjunction with the Tullamore Draft Town Centre Regeneration Framework and the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Report (prepared by Brady Shipman Martin, 2024).

1.2 Expertise and Qualifications

This report has been prepared by Namrata Kaile, Ecologist and Environmental Consultant at Brady Shipman Martin. She holds a Bachelor's Degree (BSc) in Life Sciences from University of Delhi and a Master's Degree (MSc) with distinction in Environmental Sciences from Trinity College Dublin. She is an associate member of Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (ACIEEM) and has been working professionally in the field of environmental consultancy for the last four years. Namrata is experienced in drafting and reviewing AA Screening Reports, Natura Impact Statements, EIA Screening Report as well as in coordination of EIARs. She is also experienced in undertaking baseline ecological surveys and preparing Ecological Impact Assessments Reports (EclA).

This report has been technically reviewed by Ecologist Matthew Hague BSc MSc Adv. Dip. Plan. & Env. Law CEnv MCIEEM. Matthew is an Associate with Brady Shipman Martin and is a highly experienced and qualified ecologist, with a master's degree in Ecosystem Conservation and Landscape Management. He has over 20 years of experience in ecological and environmental consultancy, across a wide range of sectors. He has prepared numerous reports for AA Screening as well as Natura Impact Statements, for projects of all scales, from small residential developments to nationally important infrastructure projects. Matthew is a Chartered

Environmentalist (CEnv) and a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (MCIEEM). Matthew has also completed an Advanced Diploma in Planning and Environmental Law, at King's Inns and is a member of the Irish Environmental Law Association (IELA).

1.3 Legal requirement for Appropriate Assessment

European sites make up a network of sites designated for nature conservation under Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the "Habitats Directive") and Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (the "Birds Directive"). The requirements for Appropriate Assessment are set out under *Article 6 of the Habitats Directive*, transposed into Irish law by the *European Union (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended)*¹ (the "Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations") and the *Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended)* (the "Planning Acts").

European sites are also known as Natura 2000 Sites (Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA)). As defined in section 177R of the Planning Acts "European site" means:

- (a) a candidate site of Community importance,
- (b) a site of Community importance,
- (ba) a candidate special area of conservation,
- (c) a special area of conservation,
- (d) a candidate special protection area and
- (e) a special protection area.

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive states that:

(3) Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to Appropriate Assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.

The first test is to establish whether, in relation to a particular plan or project, appropriate assessment is required. Sections 177U of the Planning Acts requires that the AA screening test must be applied to the Draft Plan, as follows:

- To assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if the development, individually or in combination with another plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on the European site;
- An appropriate assessment is required if it cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the development (plan or project), individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.

This AA Screening Report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Birds Directive, the Habitats Directive, the Planning Acts and the Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations.

¹ SI No. 477 of 2011, SI No. 293 of 2021

2 Methodology

2.1 Baseline data collection

This assessment focused on habitats and species that are listed as Qualifying Interests (QI) (in the case of SACs) and Special Conservation Interests (SCI) (in the case of SPAs) in the designations for European sites. During the assessment the potential for *ex-situ* effects on European sites was also appraised.

This report takes the following guidance documents into account:

- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2010 revision);
- Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities. Circular NPWS 1/10 & PSSP 2/10;
- Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites- Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (European Commission, 2021);
- Managing Natura 2000 sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. Guidance issued by the European Commission (21st November 2018);
- Guidance document on the strict protection of animal species of Community Interest under the Habitats Directive (Directorate – General for Environment (European Commission, 2021);
- Practice Note PN01 Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management (Office of the Planning Regulator, March 2021);
- Guidance for Public authorities on the Application of Articles 12 and 16 of the EU Habitats Directive to development/works undertaken by or on behalf of a Public authority (National Parks and Wildlife Services (NPWS) (2021)).

Information was collated from the organisations and websites listed below:

- Data on European sites and rare and protected plant and animal species contained in the following databases:
 - The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (www.NPWS.ie);
 - The National Biodiversity Data Centre (NDBC) (www.biodiversityireland.ie);
 - BirdWatch Ireland (www.birdwatchireland.ie);
 - Bat Conservation Ireland (www.batconservationireland.org).
- Information on land-use zoning from the online mapping of the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (<http://www.myplan.ie/en/index.html>);
- Recent and historical OSI mapping and aerial photography, including www.geohive.ie;
- Information on local watercourses from www.catchments.ie;
- Information on water quality in the area (www.epa.ie);
- Information on soils, geology and hydrogeology in the area (www.gsi.ie);
- Information on the Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland (Article 17 report) (NPWS, August 2019);
- Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030 (Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, 2024);
- Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027 and the accompanying reports.

The report has regard to the following legislative instruments:

- Planning and Development, Act 2000, as amended;

- Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended;
- European Commission (EC) Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC;
- European Commission (EC) Birds Directive 2009/147/EC;
- European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended).

The report takes full account of the details of the Framework and a detailed examination of all relevant elements was undertaken. The Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report (Brady Shipman Martin, 2024) was also reviewed in the preparation of this report.

3 Screening for Appropriate Assessment

3.1 Background

The first part of the Appropriate Assessment process is the Screening phase. Screening identifies the likely effects of the implementation of the Tullamore Framework on European sites that could arise, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, and considers whether these impacts are likely to have a significant effect on the European site in view of the site's conservation objectives.

In accordance with sections 177U and 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, the AA screening must be carried out:

- To assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if the Tullamore Framework, individually or in combination with another plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on the European site;
- An appropriate assessment is required if it cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the Tullamore Framework, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.

Screening must be undertaken without the inclusion of mitigation and it is in this context that this AA Screening Report is prepared.

Following screening therefore, if there is a possibility of there being a significant effect on a European site, this will generate the need for an appropriate assessment for the purposes of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. This means that if the conclusions at the end of the screening exercise are that significant effects on any European sites, as a result of the implementation of the Tullamore Framework, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, are likely, uncertain or unknown, then an Appropriate Assessment must be carried out. This is in accordance with established precedent and case law.

3.2 Potential zone of influence

This assessment is based on the source-pathway-receptor model, which dictates that, for an effect to occur, there must be a 'source' (such as a construction site); a 'receptor' (such as a designated site for nature conservation); and a 'pathway' between the two (such as a watercourse that links the construction site to the designated site). A construction site or completed development may also create a barrier to movement, for example, by preventing the migration of fauna along a river corridor, or by obstructing the migration of birds.

Identification of a potential effect means that there is a possibility of ecological or environmental damage occurring, with the level and significance of the impact depending upon the nature and exposure to the potential effect and the characteristics of the receptor. Although there may be a risk of an impact, it may not necessarily occur, and if it does occur, it may not be significant.

There are no set recommended distances for projects to consider European sites as being relevant for assessment. In 2010, DoEHLG stated that (pp. 31 – 32):

“The approach to screening is likely to differ somewhat for plans and projects, depending on scale and on the likely effects, but the following should be included:

- 1. Any Natura 2000 sites within or adjacent to the plan or project area*
- 2. Any Natura 2000 sites within the likely zone of impact of the plan or project. A distance of 15km is currently recommended in the case of plans, and derives from UK guidance (Scott Wilson et al., 2006). For projects, the distance could be much less than 15km, and in some cases less than 100m, but this must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis with reference to the nature, size and location of the project, and the sensitivities of the ecological receptors, and the potential for in combination effects*
- 3. Natura 2000 sites that are more than 15km from the plan or project area depending on the likely impacts of the plan or project, and the sensitivities of the ecological receptors, bearing in mind the precautionary principle. In the cases of sites with water dependent habitats or species, and a plan or project that could affect water quality or quantity, for example, it may be necessary to consider the full extent of the upstream and/or downstream catchment.”*

The 2021 Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) guidelines, *Practice Note PN01: Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management*, state that the Zone of Influence “*should be established on a case-by-case basis using the Source-Pathway-Receptor framework and not by arbitrary distances (such as 15 km)*” (p. 8).

Therefore, considering the nature of the Tullamore Framework and in accordance with the source-pathway-receptor model, the potential Zone of Influence (Zol) for the Plan has been defined as follows:

- Any site to which there is a pathway from the Tullamore Framework study area, regardless of distance, upon which significant effects could arise, resulting from the implementation of any element of the Draft Plan. See Section 4.2.

Throughout the preparation of the Plan the strategic objectives and actions were reviewed in the context of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive, in order to ensure that no elements of the Plan would have a significant impact on any European site.

4 Description of the Tullamore Draft Town Centre Regeneration Framework

4.1 Overview

The Framework follows the town’s current Regeneration Strategy that aims to provide a collective vision for the town centre, driving forward the continued success that has already been building and to guide investment across the town centre over the next 20 years. The ‘**Regeneration Themes**’ includes:

- **A thriving and broadened town centre (Opportunity Sites Include: Grand Canal Harbour, Texas, Lands Behind High Street/ O’Moore Street, Lands South of O’Connor Square, Railway Lands, Coen, Lands Behind the Court and Tanyard Lands)**
 - *Expand the perceived extent of the town centre*
 - *Activate key opportunity sites*
 - *Promote a diverse range of town centre uses*
 - *Promote investment in the town centre*
 - *Re-purpose vacant and underutilized buildings*
 - *Create employment opportunities*

- **A connected town centre (Central Spine, Town Quarters and Spaces, Internal Permeability & Public Spaces, Wayfinding and Improved Pedestrian Connectivity & Wayfinding)** (for potential improvement works (37no.) refer to Page 53 of the Framework)
 - *Enhance connectivity and reduce walking and cycling distances*
 - *Enhance the quality of the pedestrian and cycling environment in Tullamore*
 - *Prioritize the transition to active travel and eliminate traffic dominance in the Town Centre*
 - *Enhance services, facilities, and wayfinding signage*
 - *Create an accessible and inclusive streetscape*
- **A beautiful and characterful town centre (Public Realm Materials Palette, Zones and Spaces, Street Furniture, Street Lighting, Way Finding & Interpretation, Public Art Installations, Heritage Buildings Refurbishment, Shopfront Enhancement)**
 - *Regenerate the Town Centre Public Realm*
 - *Identify, adapt, restore, and re-purpose historic buildings*
 - *Address dereliction and enhance the appearance of buildings*
 - *Enhance and diversify public and green spaces*
 - *Create a timeless and cohesive public realm*
- **A greener & healthier town centre (Town Centre Greening Opportunities – refer to Page 64 for list of Potential Improvement works (26no.), Greening Recommendations, Climate Action Opportunities)**
 - *Introduce greening, planting, and sustainable drainage measures*
 - *Introduce town greening measures to support higher property values*
 - *Implement sustainable mobility measures*
 - *Incorporate high-quality energy systems*
- **Activated Grand Canal & Tullamore River (Blue Network Opportunities - for potential improvement works (25no.) refer to Page 68 of the Framework)**
 - *Integrate the Grand Canal and Tullamore River*
 - *Capitalize on the Tullamore River and Grand Canal as valuable assets*
 - *Create and improve walking and cycling routes along Tullamore River and Grand Canal*
 - *Introduce new spaces for Tullamore River and Grand Canal interaction*
- **A welcoming town centre (Town Centre Gateways Opportunities – town centre gateway improvement potential & pedestrian town centre gateway improvement potential)**
 - *Create legible and attractive entry points*
 - *Enhance the town centre “welcome” experience*
 - *Introduce interactive displays that provide information*
- **A vibrant town centre (Events and Community Interaction Opportunities (refer to Page 72 for Town Centre Event Spaces (11no.))**
 - *Enhance the town’s program of events and activities*
 - *Improve existing and create flexible spaces*
 - *Create a new range of more intimate spaces*
 - *Explore options for more frequent temporary street closures*
- **A sustainable and integrated movement (refer to Page 74 for Existing Network Potential Improvement works (40no.))**
 - *Promote the expanded provision of sustainable travel modes*

- *Achieve a better balance between public space and road space*
- *Find a middle ground between managing car parking and addressing other priorities for the town centre*
- *Enhance the existing transport services, facilities, and signage*

4.2 Public Consultation and Key Issues

Public consultation formed an integral part of the preparation of the Framework. The online public survey surveyed about the people of Tullamore, the Town Centre's strengths, what required improvement, the people's aspirations and desires for the town and received 182 responses. This survey was advertised through Offaly County Council's website, local news outlets, and local radio service. The findings of this survey have informed the Project Team's outlook and approach to regeneration within the town.

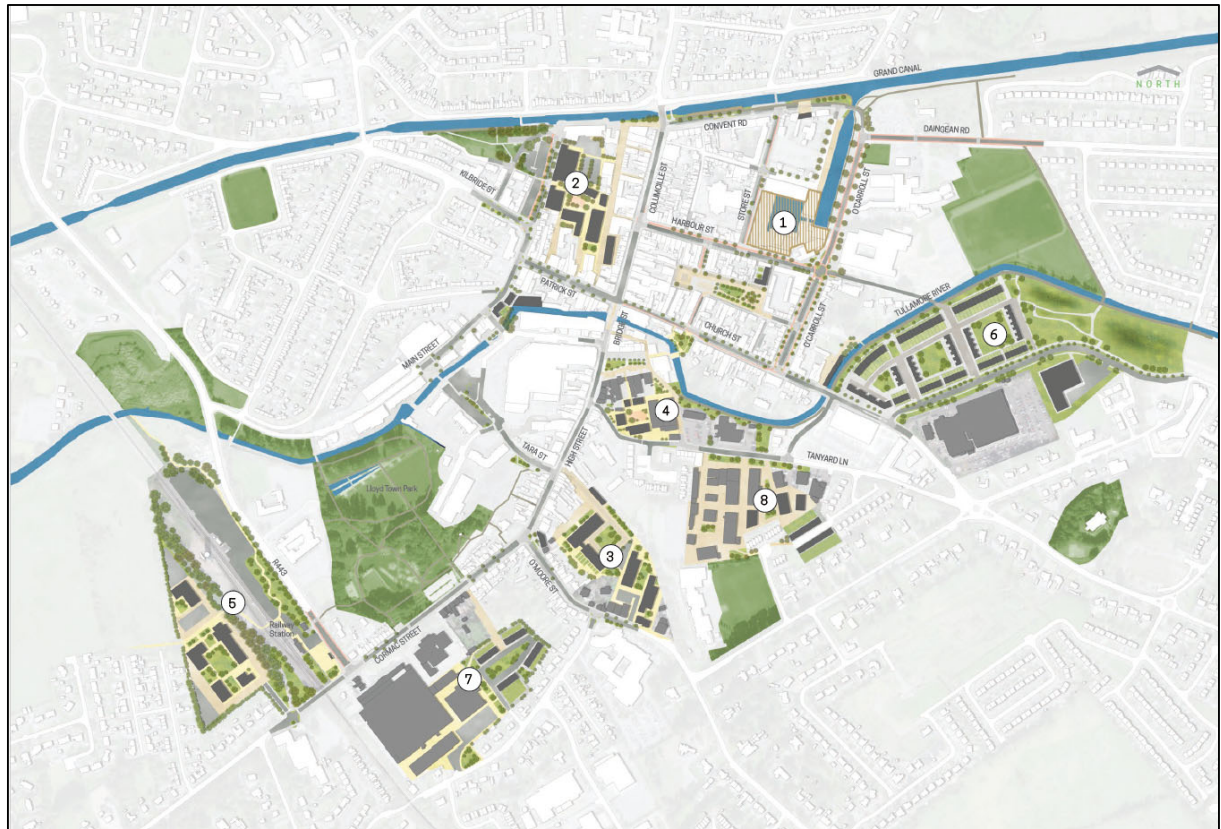
In summary, a number of issues were raised on a consistent basis during the public consultation process and these were carried forward to inform the preparation of this Framework. These **key issues** related to the need to:

- Town Centre Vacancy Rates & Dereliction;
- Lack of retail & shopping opportunities;
- Lack of availability of housing;
- Vehicular traffic congestion;
- Lack of variety and availability of employment in the Town;
- Issues regarding quality and safety for cyclists;
- Lack of hospitality & tourism sector;
- Lack of accessibility for pedestrians;
- Lack of recreation and leisure opportunities; and
- Quality of the public realm.

4.3 Key Opportunity Sites Regeneration Projects

The key opportunity sites within the study area are represented below in **Figure 4.1** and are described in **Table 4.1** below:

Figure 4.1 Key Opportunity Sites Regeneration Projects (Extract from Tullamore Town Centre Regeneration Framework)



Tullamore Draft Town Centre Regeneration Framework

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Table 4.1 Key Opportunity Sites Regeneration Projects

Key Public Realm Regeneration Projects	Key Potential Features
<p>1. Grand Canal Harbour Site The Grand Canal Harbour Site is an ongoing project.</p>	-
<p>2. Texas Site The proposal aims to reactivate this site and to provide a mix of public and private uses and create inviting connections from the canal to the town centre. Opportunity Site 02 occupies the former Texas site within the town centre.</p>	<p>Key potential features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ New retail options ■ Day and night activity with work/live opportunities ■ Pedestrian priority zone ■ Strong laneway character ■ Intimate Public Space ■ Proximity to proposed bike-share location
<p>3. Lands behind High Street/ O’Moore This site includes proposals for diverse housing typologies close to town centre, senior living scheme located in town centre, new retail/commercial units fronting O’Moore Street with pedestrian friendly zone and increased green and planted areas.</p>	<p>Key potential features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Diverse housing typologies close to town centre ■ Senior Living scheme located in town centre ■ Pedestrian friendly zone ■ Increased green and planted areas ■ Activating a backlands site
<p>4. Lands South of O’Connor Square This site includes proposals for reusing of the protected Malthouse and providing new commercial and cultural uses for the west part of the site with two options (Option A and Option B) for the east part of the site, one including retention of existing buildings</p>	<p>Key potential features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Heritage Restoration and Re-use ■ Placemaking through heritage assets and public space ■ Improved pedestrian connection ■ Reduce car dominated roads ■ Pedestrian priority zone ■ High-density housing scheme for town centre living ■ Connections to O’Connor Square

Tullamore Draft Town Centre Regeneration Framework

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Key Public Realm Regeneration Projects	Key Potential Features
and a second one proposing new residential uses.	
<p>5. Railway Lands</p> <p>This site is a prime opportunity for high density and multi residential development with the potential for a mobility/ public transport hub at the station.</p>	<p>Key potential features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Proposed Multi-Modal Transport Hub ■ Introduction of Green links to surrounding areas ■ Proposed high density housing near transport hub
<p>6. Coen Site</p> <p>There is potential for this site to be developed as a town centre perimeter housing scheme with a large retail zone retained and additional retail opportunity added to the site.</p>	<p>Key potential features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Diverse housing typologies close to town centre ■ Proposed River Walk that connects the town centre to the wetlands zone and beyond ■ Large retail zone retained and additional retail opportunity added to the site ■ Increased permeability proposed through site along the north-south and east-west axes
<p>7. Lands Behind the Court</p> <p>Site strategy proposes retaining the majority of commercial uses on the site at Kilcruttin Business Park and re-inforcing this future use. To the north end of the site interior, a new residential infill development of terrace housing is proposed increasing the density of the block.</p>	<p>Key potential features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ New pedestrian link from Cormac street to Kilcruttin Business Park ■ Improved pedestrian friendly public realm ■ Increased greening and planting ■ Increased housing density close to public transport links
<p>8. Tanyard Lands</p> <p>It is proposed that this site retains its industrial use, extending new units to the back of the site to create a denser industrial park area. To the south of the site, the strategy proposes extending the existing</p>	<p>Key potential features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ New pedestrian link from Cormac street to Kilcruttin Business Park ■ Improved pedestrian friendly public realm ■ Increased greening and planting ■ Increased housing density close to public transport links

Tullamore Draft Town Centre Regeneration Framework


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Key Public Realm Regeneration Projects	Key Potential Features
street of terrace units with a similar scale and typology.	

4.4 Public Realm Regeneration Projects

The public realm regeneration projects proposed within the study area are presented and described below in **Table 4.2**:

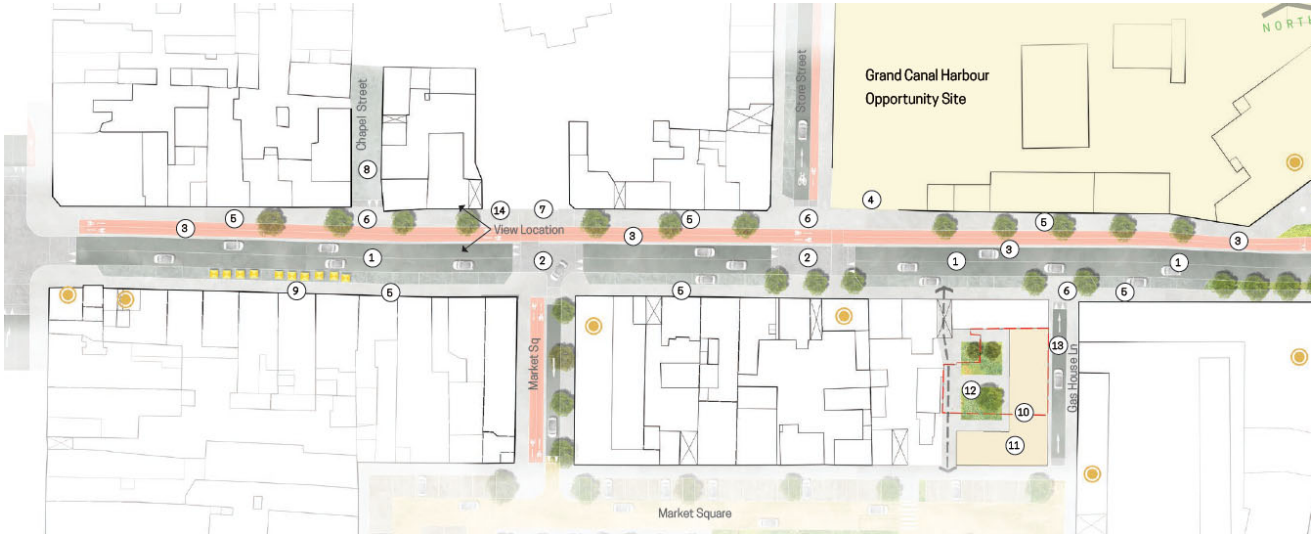
Table 4.2 Key Public Realm Regeneration Projects

Key Public Realm Regeneration Projects	Key Potential Features
<p>1. Market Square</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One way street with contraflow cycle lane 2. Ramp up/down (whole square area at one level) 3. Dedicated outdoor dining/seating area 4. Formal Square with water features, public art and seating 5. Bicycle parking 6. Existing parking/ loading retained with EV charging bays 7. Open lawn area for passive recreation 8. Sensory garden with seating 9. One way street 10. 2-way cycle track 11. One way street 12. Retained parking 13. 2-way street 14. Red outline of structure to be potentially demolished 15. Rationalised parking with EV charging bays 16. Potential pedestrian link from Church St 17. Potential for new development 18. Potential public space and link to Harbour St through redeveloped site

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Key Public Realm Regeneration Projects	Key Potential Features
	19. One way street with widened footpath on east side 20. Pedestrian priority vehicular access treatment
<p>2. O'Carroll Street</p>	1. Raised table treatment 2. Contra-flow cycle track at Church Street 3. 2-way street, width reduced to required minimum 4. Raised table treatment with uncontrolled crossings and rain gardens at the corners 5. Existing roundabout changed to signalised protected junction 6. Rain gardens to create green buffer around the junction 7. Special treatment space in front of St Mary's Centre with greening and public art 8. Widened footpaths and cycle facilities on the route to schools and to canal (CPO might be required on schools side) 9. Series of rain gardens and raised planters along the street with gallery of public art and occasional seating between 10. Dedicated outdoor dining/seating area 11. Perpendicular parking reorientated to parallel

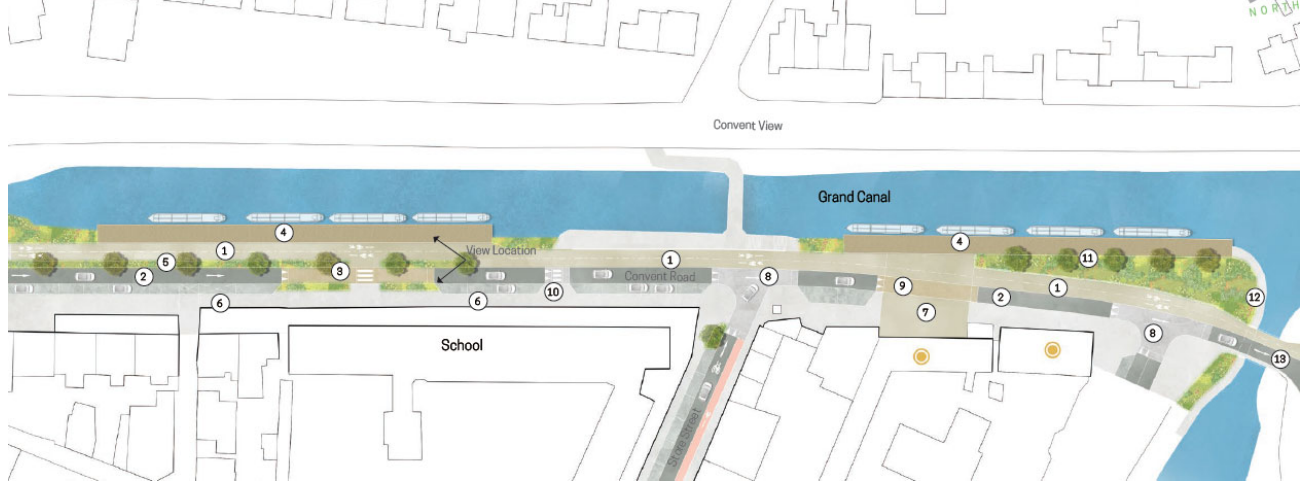
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Key Public Realm Regeneration Projects	Key Potential Features
	12. Protected cycle tracks on both sides of the road
<p>3. Harbour Street</p> 	1. 2-way street 2. Raised table treatment 3. 2-way cycle track 4. Main entry area to Grand Canal Harbour site 5. Widened footpaths with tree planting 6. Pedestrian priority junction treatment 7. Pedestrian priority vehicular access treatment 8. Shared street treatment to Chapel Street 9. Dedicated outdoor dining/seating area (parking) 10. Red outline of structure to be potentially demolished 11. Potential for new development 12. Potential public space and link to Harbour St through redeveloped site 13. One way traffic street with widened footpath on east side 14. High quality feature surface treatment to emphasize front of entrance area to the Church of the Assumption
<p>4. Church Street</p>	1. One way street with contra-flow cycle track, limited parking


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Key Public Realm Regeneration Projects	Key Potential Features
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Raised table treatment with uncontrolled crossings 3. One way street with parking reorientated to parallel to reduce risk of reversing into a cyclist or to another vehicle 4. Contra-flow protected cycle track 5. Widened footpaths with tree planting 6. Raised table treatment 7. Part 8 pedestrian link and public space connecting O'Connor Square to Church Street 8. Special treatment space as an extension of planned part 8 pedestrian link 9. Potential pedestrian link through disused laneway 10. Market Square Lane with wider footpaths and contraflow cycle lane 11. Potential upgrade of Market Lane to shared space 12. Pedestrian priority junction treatment
<p>5. Convent Road</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dedicated greenway/ shared way for pedestrians and cyclists 2. Carriageway reduced to one lane, 1 way street


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Key Public Realm Regeneration Projects	Key Potential Features
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Raised table treatment along school frontage with dedicated crossing 4. Potential water interaction space and boats moorings 5. Potential green buffer along shared way with tree planting 6. Widened footpaths 7. Plaza in front of re-purposed vacant former warehouse building 8. Raised table crossing with uncontrolled crossings 9. Raised table crossing as an extension of proposed new plaza 10. Retained raised table crossing 11. Additional tree planting along the moorings 12. New path passes under the bridge 13. Carriageway reduced to one lane of traffic to allow for footpath
<p>6. O'Connell Street/Kilbride Street</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public space upgrade potential 2. Raised table treatment with uncontrolled crossings 3. 2 way street 4. Raised street junction treatment with dedicated pedestrian crossing and pedestrian priority vehicular access 5. New pedestrian link through carpark to Kilbride Park

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Key Public Realm Regeneration Projects	Key Potential Features
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Existing carpark layout rearranged 7. Raised table treatment with uncontrolled crossings 8. Optimised road width with retained parking at Kilbride St 9. Potential rain gardens with seating 10. Dedicated outdoor dining/seating area 11. Widened footpaths with tree planting and occasional rain gardens 12. New footpath with tree planting 13. Raised table treatment with uncontrolled crossings and rain gardens at the corners 14. Potential Texas site vehicular access 15. Pedestrian link to Texas site through shared street 16. Potential 2-way cycle track
<p>7. Patrick Street</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Raised table signalised junction with traffic lights controlled crossings and rain gardens at the corners to replace existing roundabout 2. Widened footpaths at Water Lane 3. Dedicated loading bay/ parking


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Key Public Realm Regeneration Projects	Key Potential Features
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Cyclists/vehicles shared street with central textured strip in the road that prompts drivers to take extra care 5. Dedicated raised table zebra pedestrian crossing 6. Widened footpaths with tree planting 7. Signalised junction unchanged 8. Pedestrian link to Texas site through shared street 9. Potential pedestrian link to Texas site
<p>8. Store Street</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pedestrian priority junction treatment 2. New footpath 3. Widened footpath with occasional tree planting and retained parking 4. High quality feature surface treatment to emphasize front of entrance area to the Church of the Assumption with potential pedestrian link to Grand Canal Harbour site 5. Raised table treatment with uncontrolled crossings and rain gardens at the corners



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Key Public Realm Regeneration Projects	Key Potential Features
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6. 1 way street with contra-flow cycle track 7. Raised table treatment with uncontrolled crossings 8. Dedicated greenway / shared way for pedestrians and cyclists 9. Carriageway reduced to one lane, 1 way street 10. Widened footpath
<p>9. Water Lane</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Raised table treatment with uncontrolled crossings and rain gardens at the corners 2. Cyclists/vehicles shared street with central textured strip in the road that prompts drivers to take extra care 3. Dedicated loading bay/ parking 4. Dedicated outdoor dining/seating area 5. Widened footpaths with tree planting

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Key Public Realm Regeneration Projects	Key Potential Features
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Raised table signalised junction with traffic lights controlled crossings and rain gardens at the corners to replace existing roundabout 7. Pedestrian priority junction treatment 8. Cyclists/vehicles shared street with central textured strip in the road that prompts drivers to take extra care 9. Potential small public space with planting, public art and outdoor seating 10. Potential for new development (residential with food&bewerege at the ground floor) 11. Derelict historic structures to be refurbished and redeveloped 12. The restoration and redevelopment of the former grain mill distillery building into a mixed-use building (planning permission ref. 21/376)
<p>10. Cormac Street Roundabout</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Raised platform signalised t-junction 2. Dedicated pedestrian crossings 3. Introduced right turn lane 4. Widened footpaths 5. Retained parking / loading

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Key Public Realm Regeneration Projects	Key Potential Features
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Cyclists/vehicles shared street with central textured strip in the road that prompts drivers to take extra care 7. Proposed public space with planting, seating, public art etc. 8. Access retained
<p>11. High Street-Main Street Link</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proposed pedestrian crossings across Main Street 2. Retained Bridge Shopping Centre carpark 3. New dedicated pedestrian path through the carpark (minimal loss of parking spaces) 4. Proposed pedestrian crossings across Tara Street 5. Footpath upgrade and widening 6. Potential green space with seating and tree planting 7. Proposed bicycle parking 8. Loading bay 9. Raised table junction with dedicated pedestrian crossings


Key Public Realm Regeneration Projects	Key Potential Features
	<p>10. Access to High Street Opportunity Site</p> <p>11. Potential future pedestrian link to Lloyd Town Park and Railway Station through the backlands</p>
<p>12. Bridge Street</p> 	<p>Bus Gate Potential Features (on left):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Raised table, bus/cyclists access only / Bridge Lane local access / time plated deliveries access (no through traffic) 2. Pedestrian priority junction treatment 3. Traffic lights controlled public transport route only 4. Widened footpaths with additional outdoor seating/dining areas 5. Raised table, bus/cyclists traffic lights controlled access only (no through traffic) 6. Shared street treatment <p>Pedestrian Street Potential Features (on right):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Raised table, Bridge Lane local access only / time plated deliveries access

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Key Public Realm Regeneration Projects	Key Potential Features
	<p>2. Pedestrian priority junction treatment</p> <p>3. Pedestrianised street with additional outdoor seating/dining areas</p> <p>4. Raised table, no vehicular access</p> <p>5. Time plated deliveries access only (no through traffic)</p>
<p>13. Tullamore River Walk</p>	<p>Active travel and connectivity enhancement scheme. Potential proposals include habitats protection, walking, cycling routes along river with occasional water interaction spaces.</p>
<p>14. Cormac Street</p>	<p>Public realm and active travel enhancement scheme. Potential proposals include widened pavements and additional pedestrian crossing points at the Lloyd Town Park entrances.</p>
<p>15. Lloyd Town Park – Railway Station Link</p>	<p>Active travel and connectivity enhancement scheme. Potential proposals include new pedestrian / cycle route along eastern school boundary to connect Lloyd Town Park and railway station.</p>
<p>16. School Zones</p>	<p>General Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Footpaths outside schools should be wider if possible due to peak loading.

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Key Public Realm Regeneration Projects	Key Potential Features
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce street clutter. • If possible, create space for cycling by making the street one way or restricting vehicular traffic during school opening and closing times (e.g. create a school street). • Combine seating, landscaping, street lighting to reduce footprint. • Provide crossings at pedestrian desire lines. • Reduce carriageway width to restrict space for parking. • Use traffic management measures such as horizontal and vertical deflections. • Use Vertical elements, such as trees to narrow the perceived width of the road. • Introduce surface colour/texture changes. • Provide gateways at start of school zone to reduce speeds and highlight the presence of the school • Drop-off parking should be discouraged in School Zone.
<p>17. Town Centre Laneways</p>	<p>General Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-surfacing in variety of quality materials to create unique character for each lane.

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Key Public Realm Regeneration Projects	Key Potential Features
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accentuating laneway entrances, e.g. by decorative archways and/or inserts into the pavement. • Removal of graffiti, rubbish, clutter and eye-sores. • Enlivening with colour washing of buildings and structures, bunting and hanging baskets etc. as appropriate. • Improved directional signage. • Street furniture should be located on the edges of spaces to provide clear pedestrian access ways and allow for a wide range of outdoor activities to occur. • Art should be incorporated into the design of buildings, public spaces, street furniture and paving in a way that is reflective of lane characteristics or the theme of the lane. • To provide robust and durable street furniture that copes with intensive use. • Provide opportunities for passive amenity in public places throughout the lanes network. • To ensure lighting infrastructure is discrete and maintains the flexibility of the lane spaces.

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Key Public Realm Regeneration Projects	Key Potential Features
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feature lighting should be used in moderation, and could be developed in conjunction with artists and combined with other street furniture.
18. Lloyd Town Park – Tara Street Link	Active travel and connectivity enhancement scheme. Potential proposals include new pedestrian / cycle structure in form of steps and ramps opposite Etb, Further Education Centre to connect Lloyd Town Park and Tara Street.

4.5 Sustainable Access and Permeability Strategy

The Tullamore Town Centre Regeneration Framework comprises a diverse but complementary set of interventions to improve the quality of the public realm within the town. In tandem with the Tullamore Local Transport Plan (LTP) concurrently in preparation by DBFL Consulting Engineers, these interventions include provisions for reducing the dominance of motor vehicles, creating an environment more conducive to walking and cycling, and supporting more sustainable and lower-carbon transport modes.

4.5.1 Reducing Travel Demand

The demand for vehicular travel into Tullamore may be reduced in the long term by higher-density residential development within and close to the town centre. In this respect, the Opportunity Sites identified in the Tullamore Town Centre Regeneration Framework provide the greatest potential for increasing population density.

4.5.2 Promoting Sustainable Modes of Travel

Measures recommended to achieve this include:

- *High quality pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure within the town, to improve comfort, convenience, and safety for those walking and cycling.*
- *Reorganisation of car parking within the town, with a reallocation of parking space from on-street locations to off-street areas.*
- *Measures to reduce vehicle speeds and to control vehicle movements at key locations.*
- *Implementation of a town bus service, to provide reliable public transport connectivity between the town centre, outlying areas, and railway station.*
- *Park and Ride facilities at the town periphery, to allow car journeys into Tullamore to be completed as public transport, cycling, or walking trips.*

4.5.3 Supporting Infrastructure

Specific supporting infrastructure is required or recommended for promoting sustainable modes of travel. This includes:

- *Implementation of a dedicated Tullamore Cycle Network, to include cycle facilities within the town centre and to connect these to Tullamore's surrounding areas and neighbouring towns.*
- *Implementation of a transport hub at Tullamore railway station, which may take the form of a Mobility Hub. At minimum, this should provide for public transport interchange between bus and rail services.*
- *Provision of Mobility Points at suitable locations within the town. These may integrate car and bicycle sharing services (including cargo bikes), reducing the need for car ownership among residents.*
- *Good quality, sheltered and secure bicycle parking facilities within the town centre and at transport interchange points.*
- *EV charging facilities at suitable car parking locations.*

4.5.4 Access for All

At detailed design stage, all proposed changes to the public realm within Tullamore town centre are to be designed with regard to the principles of Universal Design, ensuring the public realm is as accessible as possible to all users. Key considerations in this regard include:

- *Providing sufficient footpath widths and avoiding street furniture clutter.*
- *Ensuring appropriate transitions (e.g. dropped kerbs) at changes of level.*

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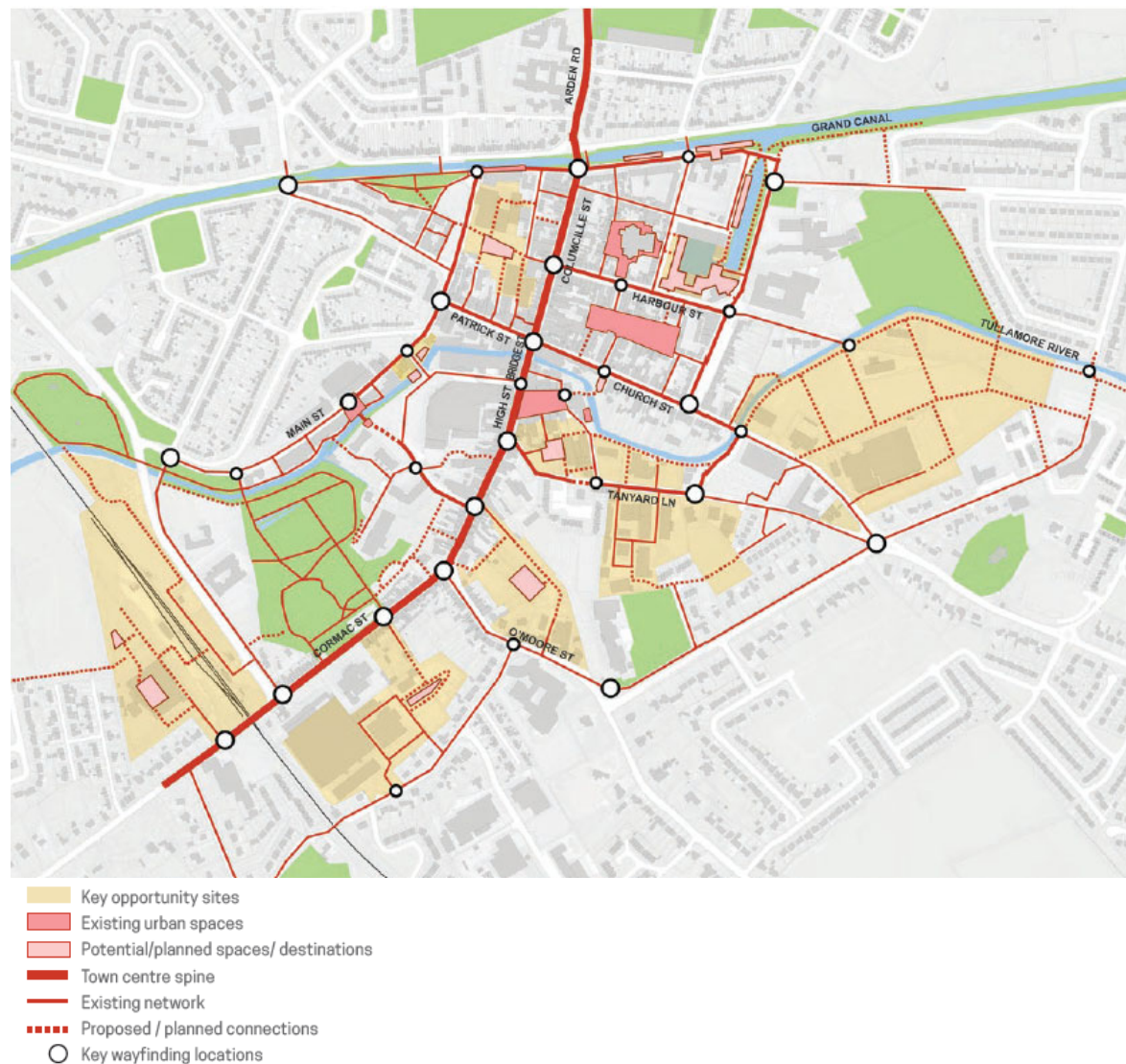
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- Providing tactile paving at crossing/hazard locations, and auditory signals at signal-controlled crossings.
- Avoiding excessive gradients on footpaths and cycle facilities.
- Ensuring that parking for adapted vehicles (including non-standard cycles) is catered for.
- Effectively using surface materials, signage, and other design aspects to ensure that pedestrian and cyclist routes are clear and legible.
- Providing comprehensive and good quality public lighting.

4.5.5 Improved Pedestrian Connectivity & Wayfinding

Tullamore Town Centre Regeneration Framework details proposed new pedestrian and cyclist connections to enhance permeability, as well as identifying locations at which wayfinding measures should be implemented to encourage and facilitate active travel modes, refer to **Figure 4.2** below.

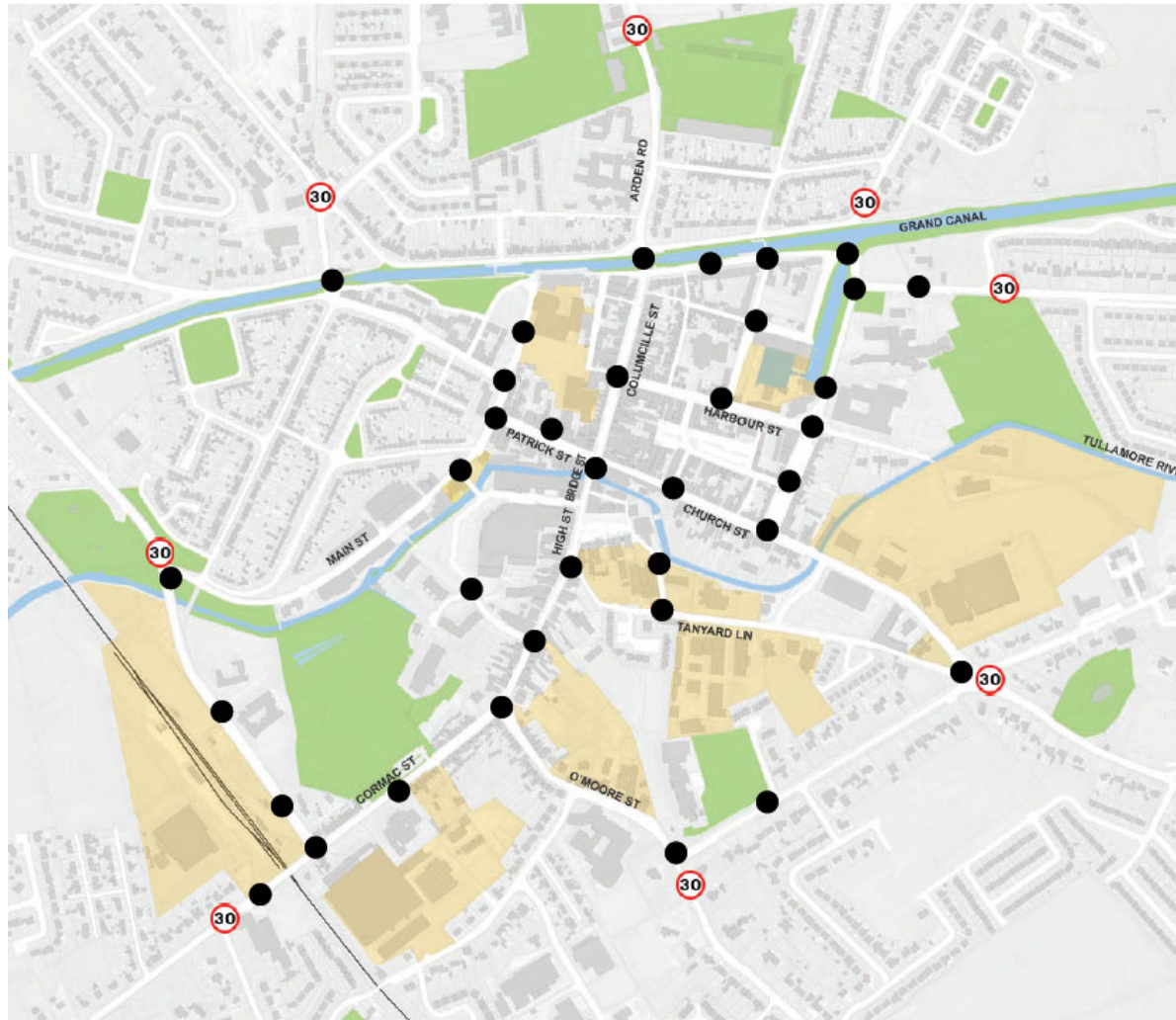
Figure 4.2 Potential New Connections and Wayfinding (Source: Figure 5 of the Tullamore Town Centre Regeneration Framework)






4.5.6 Vehicular Speed Restriction

The Tullamore Town Centre Regeneration Framework proposes to implement a 30km/h speed limit throughout the town centre (see **Figure 4.3** below), to reduce the negative effects of vehicular traffic and to create an environment that is safer for – and more conducive to – sustainable transport modes such as walking.

Figure 4.3 Existing network potential improvements (Source: Figure 6 of the Tullamore Town Centre Regeneration Framework)



-  30kph speed limit in entire town centre to improve pedestrian & cyclists safety
-  Potential junction and crossing improvements
-  Key opportunity sites

4.5.7 Junction and Crossing Improvements

The Tullamore Town Centre Regeneration Framework includes proposals for improving junctions and pedestrian crossings, to further reduce the dominance of motor vehicle traffic. The locations of these proposals are shown in **Figure 4.2** above. They include:

- Tightening junctions by reducing kerb radii, to lower vehicle speeds, improve intervisibility, and give more space to pedestrians.
- Providing new controlled and uncontrolled pedestrian crossings to cater for pedestrian desire lines.
- Providing raised tables at junctions and at crossings, to reduce vehicle speeds and to emphasize pedestrian priority.
- Implementing Cycle Design Manual guidance at junctions to better segregate bicycle and motor vehicle traffic.

4.5.8 Civic Spaces and Street Link Improvements

Tullamore Town Centre Regeneration Framework identifies specific principal streets along which comprehensive public realm improvement measures may be implemented to deliver an environment much more conducive to sustainable transport modes. The measures proposed include:

- Widened footpaths.
- Rationalised car parking.
- Restrictions on certain vehicle movements (including one-way street sections).
- Dedicated cycle tracks and cycle lanes (both with-flow and contraflow).

At key locations, Tullamore Town Centre Regeneration Framework proposes implementing some of these measures to create civic spaces that allow for economic, leisure, and cultural activities as well as the movement of people and vehicles. These locations include, in particular: Market Square, O'Carroll Street, Convent Road, Church Street, Harbour Street, Patrick Street, Store Street and Kilbride Street, Cormac Street Roundabout and Bridge Street.

4.5.9 Laneway Improvements

The Tullamore Town Centre Regeneration Framework report also recognises that laneways within the town centre provide a vital pedestrian permeability function but that these are often in poor condition or feel unsafe to use. Measures are proposed to encourage their use through improvements to surface materials, public lighting, and signage, as also described in **Table 4.2**.

4.5.10 School Zones

School zones represent discrete sections of the street network at which it is particularly beneficial to introduce traffic calming and pedestrian-priority Centre Regeneration Framework report identifies several recommended locations for such treatment, as also described in **Table 4.2**.

4.5.11 Cycle Network

The DBFL Draft Tullamore Local Transport Plan notes that existing cycling facilities in and around Tullamore are extremely limited, and that proposals exist to develop a dedicated Tullamore Cycle Network by 2040. Elements of this cycle network are to be delivered under the following initiatives:

- Draft CycleConnects Network
- Draft National Cycle Network (NCN)
- Draft Tullamore Cycle Network (Phase 1)
- Tullamore Urban Greenway Project

4.5.12 Town Bus Service

The DBFL Draft Tullamore Local Transport Plan notes that:

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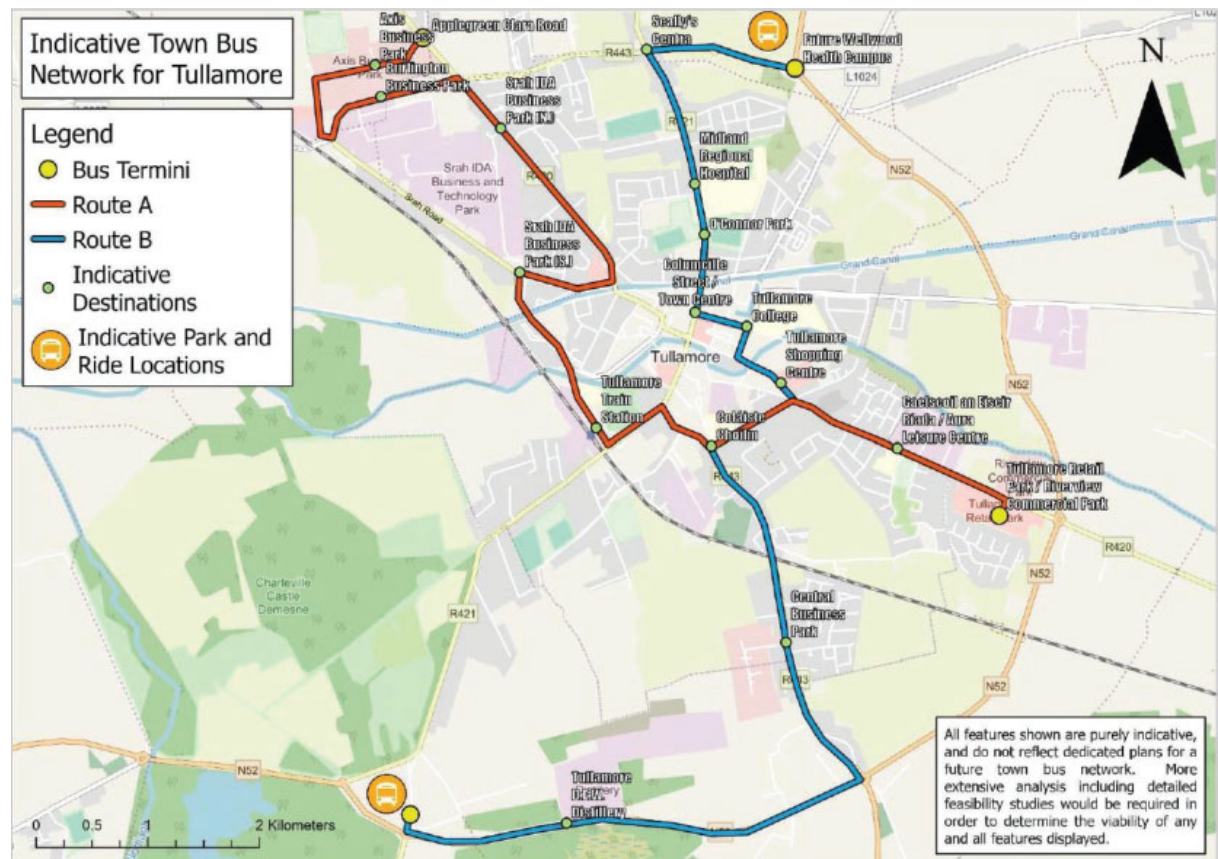
- An ideal town bus service for Tullamore would see a high-frequency timetable operating throughout the town daily, both on weekdays and at weekends.
- Locations chosen for bus depots could additionally serve as termini for a Park and Ride service, should one be deemed feasible for Tullamore.

4.5.13 Park and Ride

The DBFL Draft Tullamore Local Transport Plan notes that, to encourage the use of a Park and Ride, it needs to be convenient and offer some advantages over parking in Tullamore Town Centre or closer to their destination, such as:

- Direct and high-quality connections to the Town Centre, including a frequent public transport service and a sustainable bike and/or e-bike share scheme.
- Cheaper parking charges, particularly for long stay parking, compared to the Town Centre
- Electric vehicle charging points.
- Co-locating a Park and Ride with other services and amenities such as parcel collection, public toilets, etc. can make them more attractive.
- Proposed Park and Ride facility locations include (Refer to **Figure 4.4**):
 - Adjacent to the Arden Road Roundabout, outside of the N52.
 - Adjacent to the Charleville Road Roundabout, outside of the N52.

Figure 4.4 Indicative potential Tullamore town bus network structure and indicative park and ride locations (Source: Figure 12 of the Tullamore Town Centre Regeneration Framework)



4.5.14 Mobility Hubs and Mobility Points

In the context of Tullamore, the DBFL Draft Tullamore Local Transport Plan notes that Mobility Hubs may be appropriate for:

- Tullamore's Opportunity Sites
- Retrofitting an existing car parks
- Tullamore Railway Station (Offaly County Development Plan SMAP-17 objective aims to establish the Station and adjoining lands as a transport node)
- Midland Regional Hospital

Mobility Points differ from Mobility Hubs in that they are “smaller scale, typically on-street interventions entailing the co-location of sustainable transport measures near public transport stops”. At a minimum, Mobility Points include bus stops, cycle parking and car club spaces but can be expanded to include E.V. Charge Points, shared bike schemes and seating.

4.5.15 Potential changes to Car Parking

The Tullamore Town Centre Regeneration Framework report details potential changes to the public realm (all proposals are subject to further investigation prior to detailed design, traffic studies, technical consideration, engagement with private landowners/ stakeholders and planning consent etc.) that include the reorganisation of car parking in several on-street locations and several public use car parks.

The projected future demand has been established on the assumption of a 10% overall reduction in car use for journeys into Tullamore, which is within the modal shift projection given in the DBFL Draft Tullamore Local Transport Plan. This shows that the proposed future provision of car parking within the town centre core is sufficient to meet the overall projected future demand, allowing for some relocation of parking activity from on-street locations to off-street car parks.

4.6 Implementation and Monitoring

The **Tables 4.3 and 4.4** outlines implementation plan for the Framework where each of the key identified projects is assigned a short, medium, or longer-term time-scale. Additionally, projects are evaluated based on their respective priority, and potential stakeholders are identified.

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Table 4.3 Implementation of Key Opportunity Sites Regeneration Projects (Extract from Page 190 of Draft Framework)

ID	Project/ Description	Timeframe	Priority	Stakeholders
1	Grand Canal Harbour Site Description: Opportunity site. Ongoing Project.	S / M / L	★★☆	WI, OCC
2	Texas Site Description: Opportunity site. The proposal aims to reactivate this site and to provide a mix of public and private uses and create inviting connections from the canal to the town centre.	S / M / L	★★☆	Private Landowner(s), OCC
3	Lands behind High Street/ O'Moore Street Description: Opportunity site regeneration. Proposals include diverse housing typologies close to town centre, senior living scheme located in town centre, new retail/commercial units fronting O'Moore Street with pedestrian friendly zone and increased green and planted areas.	S / M / L	★☆☆	Private Landowner(s), OCC
4	Lands South of O'Connor Square Description: Opportunity site. Proposals include re-using of protected Malthouse and providing new commercial and cultural uses for the west part of the site with 2 no options for east part of the site considered, one including retention of existing buildings and a second one proposing new residential uses.	S / M / L	★☆☆	Private Landowner(s), OCC
5	Railway Lands Description: Opportunity site. This site is a prime opportunity for high density and multi residential development with the potential for a mobility/ public transport hub at the station.	S / M / L	★★☆	Private Landowner(s), OCC, Department of Transport, CIÉ
6	Coen Site Description: Opportunity site. Potential for the site to be developed as a town centre perimeter housing scheme with large retail zone retained and additional retail opportunity added to the site.	S / M / L	★☆☆	Private Landowner(s), OCC
7	Lands Behind the Court Description: Opportunity site. Site strategy proposes retaining the majority of commercial uses on the site at Kilcruttin Business Park and re-inforcing this future use. To the north end of the site interior, a new residential infill development of terrace housing is proposed increasing the density of the block.	S / M / L	★☆☆	Private Landowner(s), OCC
8	Tanyard Lands Description: Opportunity site. It is proposed that this site retains its industrial use, extending new units to the back of the site to create a denser industrial park area. To the south of the site, the strategy proposes extending the existing street of terrace units with a similar scale and typology.	S / M / L	★☆☆	Private Landowner(s), OCC

- S Short term: 0 - 2 years
M Medium term: 2 - 5 years
L Long term: 5+ years
- ★ Lower priority desirable but not critical
★★ Medium priority - an important local project for Tullamore
★★★ High priority - a project of strategic importance to the town

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Table 4.4 Implementation of Public Realm Regeneration Projects (Extract from Page 191-192 of Draft Framework)

ID	Project/ Description	Timeframe	Priority	Stakeholders
1	Market Square Description: Public realm enhancement scheme. Opportunity for new identity to Market Square as an attractive flexible public space (multi functional park, town market location, bicycle hub with some elements of carparking retained) with loads of greenery, 'canvas' for public art and the creative, sociable and playful opportunities of town life, new functional space for people.	S / M / L	★★★	OCC, Department of Transport
2	O'Carroll Street Description: Public realm and active travel enhancement scheme. Potential proposals include widened and upgraded pavements, re-arranged parking, upgraded junctions and crossings, cycle facilities on both sides of the road with potential new tree and low level planting and street furniture.	S / M / L	★★☆	OCC, Department of Transport
3	Harbour Street Description: Public realm and active travel enhancement scheme. Potential proposals include widened and upgraded pavements, 2-way cycle track, upgraded junctions and crossings, parking rationalisation with potential tree planting and street furniture.	S / M / L	★★☆	OCC, Department of Transport
4	Church Street Description: Public realm and active travel enhancement scheme. Potential proposals include widened pavements, contra flow cycle track, parking re-arrangement with potential tree planting and street furniture.	S / M / L	★★☆	OCC, Department of Transport
5	Convent Road Description: Public realm and active travel enhancement scheme. Potential proposals include widened and upgraded pavements, urban greenway on the canal side, carriageway narrowing to 1 lane, optional boats moorings, tree planting, street furniture and upgraded junctions and crossings.	S / M / L	★★☆	OCC, Department of Transport, WI
6	O'Connell Street / Kilbride St Description: Public realm and active travel enhancement scheme. Potential proposals include new footpath and 2-way cycle track along O'Connell St to connect Kilbride St to Grand Canal Greenway, existing pavements upgrade, new tree planting, street furniture and upgraded junctions and crossings with new links to surrounding areas including Texas Site.	S / M / L	★☆☆	OCC, Department of Transport
7	Patrick Street Description: Public realm and active travel enhancement scheme. Potential proposals include widened and upgraded pavements, upgraded junctions and crossings, optional cycle facilities on both sides of the road with potential new tree and low level planting and street furniture.	S / M / L	★☆☆	OCC, Department of Transport
8	Store Street Description: Public realm and active travel enhancement scheme. Potential proposals include widened pavements, contra flow cycle track, new footpath along Grand Canal Harbour Site, upgraded junctions and crossings, potential tree planting and street furniture.	S / M / L	★☆☆	OCC, Department of Transport

- S Short term: 0 - 2 years
M Medium term: 2 - 5 years
L Long term: 5+ years
- ★ Lower priority desirable but not critical
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ID	Project/Description	Timeframe	Priority	Stakeholders
9	Water Lane Description: Public realm and active travel enhancement scheme. Potential proposals include widened and upgraded pavements, junctions and crossings improvements with potential tree planting and street furniture.	S / M / L	★☆☆	OCC, Department of Transport
10	Cormac Street Roundabout Description: Public realm and active travel enhancement scheme. Potential proposals include rearranged roundabout to signalised raised table T-junction with pedestrian crossings on all arms, widened footpaths, greening, tree planting and street furniture.	S / M / L	★★★	OCC, Department of Transport
11	High Street - Main Street Link Description: Public realm and active travel enhancement scheme. Potential proposals include new dedicated pedestrian connection through private carpark between High Street and Main Street, improved streetscape, upgraded junctions and new pedestrian crossings, with potential green space and bicycle parking at the top of Tara Street.	S / M / L	★★★	Private Landowner(s), OCC
12	Bridge Street Description: Public realm and movement enhancement scheme. Potential proposals include introduction of 'bus gate' or pedestrian only zone at Bridge Street to reduce congestion and improve safety in the heart of the town centre and to create a space that pedestrians and cyclists can enjoy and use safely.	S / M / L	★☆☆	OCC
13	Tullamore River Walk Description: Active travel and connectivity enhancement scheme. Potential proposals include habitats protection, walking, cycling routes along river with occasional water interaction spaces.	S / M / L	★★☆	Private Landowner(s), OCC
14	Cormac Street Description: Public realm and active travel enhancement scheme. Potential proposals include widened pavements and additional pedestrian crossing points at the Lloyd Town Park entrances.	S / M / L	★☆☆	OCC, Department of Transport
15	Lloyd Town Park - Railway Station Link Description: Active travel and connectivity enhancement scheme. Potential proposals include new pedestrian / cycle route along eastern school boundary to connect Lloyd Town Park and railway station.	S / M / L	★★☆	OCC, Department of Education
16	School Zones Description: Active travel and safety enhancement scheme. Potential proposals include Safe Routes to School design treatments ie. new crossings, pencil bollards, greening opportunities and street furniture.	S / M / L	★☆☆	OCC, Department of Transport
17	Town Centre Laneways Description: Public realm and active travel enhancement scheme. Potential to reinforce the pedestrian linkages and opportunity to enhance laneways by creating unique visual experience through quality materials, furniture and lighting.	S / M / L	★☆☆	OCC
18	Lloyd Town Park - Tara Street Link Description: Active travel and connectivity enhancement scheme. Potential proposals include new pedestrian / cycle structure in form of steps and ramps opposite Etb to connect Lloyd Town Park and Tara Street.	S / M / L	★★☆	OCC

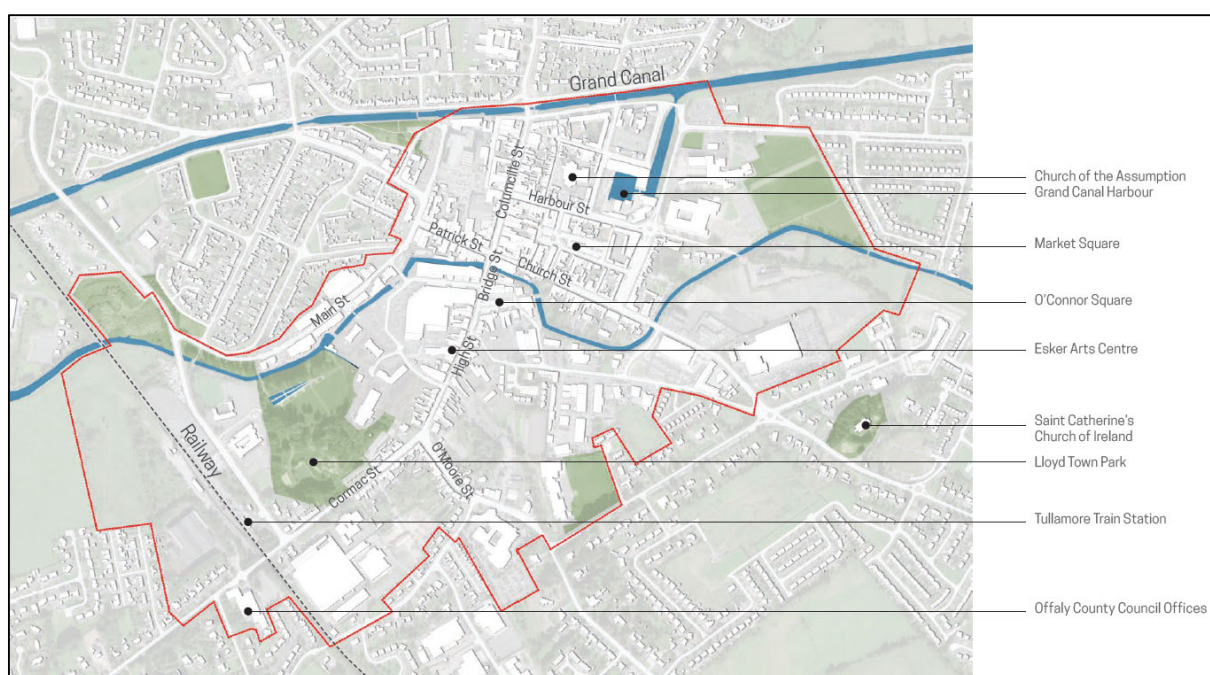
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- ★ Lower priority desirable but not critical
 ★★ Medium priority - an important local project for Tullamore
 ★★★ High priority - a project of strategic importance to the town

4.7 Description of the receiving environment

The 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 busiest part of the town along Columcille St / High St and Patrick St / Church St with O'Connor Square located in the centre. Refer to **Figure 4.5** below.

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.

Figure 4.5 Tullamore Town Centre Regeneration Framework Study area (Source: Tullamore Draft Town Centre Regeneration Framework)



Tullamore in County Offaly is located on the Grand Canal, in the middle of the County. Tullamore 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 hosts various cultural and social events and festivals, contributing to the cultural vibrancy of the region. It has a variety of assets ranging from the Mesolithic period to quality 18th and 19th century houses. These sites include but are not limited to Lough Boora, Clara Bog, Birr Castle, Charleville Castle, Tullamore Distillery, Cathole Falls, etc.

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.

As per the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027, the lands within the study area are zoned as 'Town Centre/Mixed Use' which seeks to: *'Provide for, protect and strengthen the vitality and viability of town/village*

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centres, through consolidating development, encouraging a mix of uses and maximising the use of land, to ensure the efficient use of infrastructure and services.'

Tullamore town centre includes a historic town core with Grand Canal and Tullamore River flowing through the centre of town.

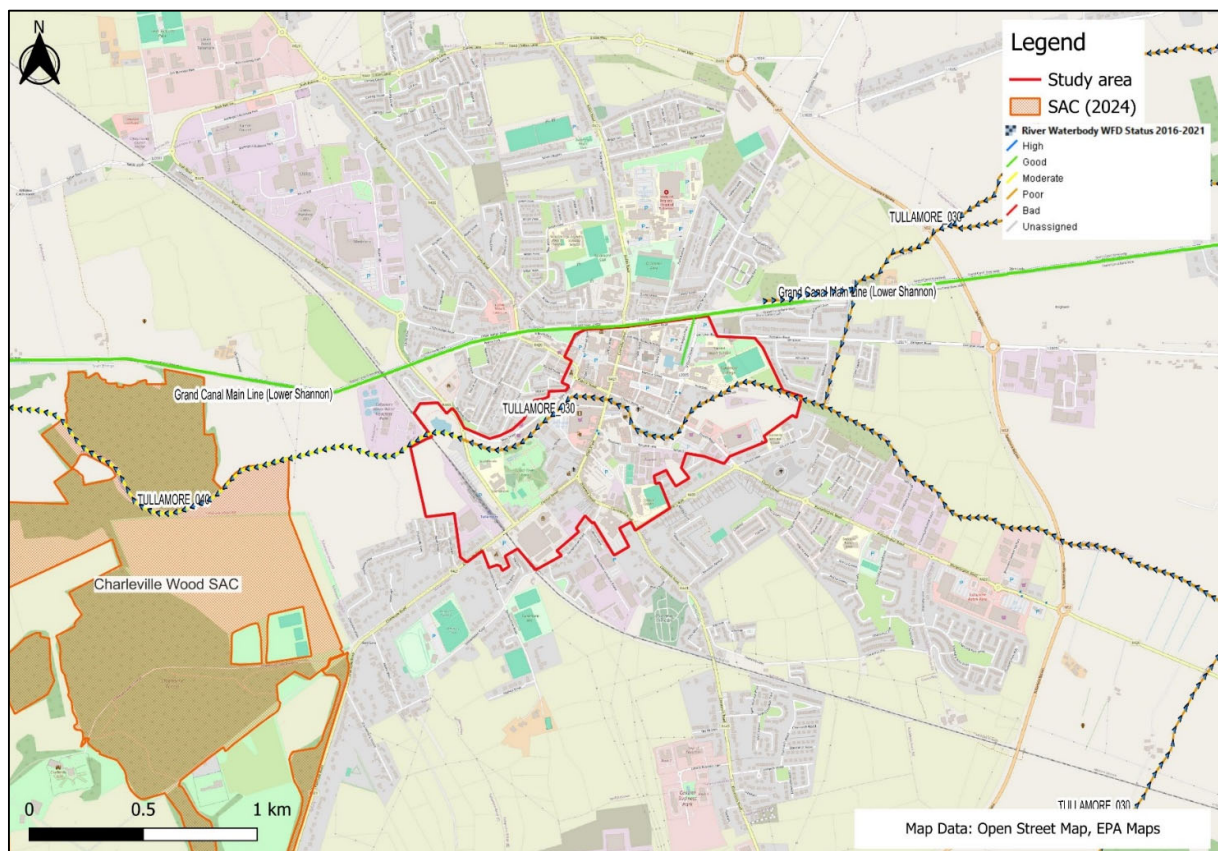
As per the Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) database the study area is underlain by dark limestone and shale of the Lucan Formation and Visean Limestones. The groundwater vulnerability within the study area ranges between Extreme, High and Moderate.

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 rivers, transitional & coastal waterbodies in the vicinity of the study area ranges from 'poor' to 'good' during the 2016-2021 monitoring period. The waterbodies are (refer to **Figure 4.6**):

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

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

Figure 4.6 WFD waterbody status within the Tullamore Framework



4.7.1 European sites

There are no European (Natura 2000) sites within the framework plan area. The nearest sites are listed below (and shown in **Figure 4.7**):

■ Special Areas of Conservation (SAC):

- Charleville Wood SAC (site code 000571), c. 600m to the west;
- Clara Bog SAC (site code 000572), c. 7.68km to the north-west;
- River Barrow and River Nore SAC (site code 002162), c. 10.08km to the south;
- Raheenmore Bog SAC (site code 000582), c. 10.55km to the north-east;
- Split Hills and Long Hill Esker SAC (site code 001831), c. 10.75km to the north-east;
- Clonaslee Eskers and Derry Bog SAC (site code 000859), c. 12.84km to the south-west;
- Slieve Bloom SAC (site code 000412), c. 13.11km to the south;
- Lough Ennell SAC (site code 000685), c. 17.54km to the north;
- Ferbane Bog SAC (site code 000575), c. 21.42km to the west;
- Mountmellick SAC (site code 002141), c. 21.82km to the south-east.

■ Special Protection Areas (SPA):

- Slieve Bloom Mountains SPA (site code 004160), c. 13.11km to the south;
- Lough Ennell SPA (site code 004044), c. 17.54km to the north.

4.7.2 Other designated areas (other than European sites)

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 (and shown in [Figure 4.8](#)):

■ Natural Heritage Area (NHA):

- Hawkswood Bog NHA (site code 002355), c. 4.79km to the south;
- Screggan Bog NHA (site code 000921), c. 5.04km to the south-west;
- Daingean Bog NHA (site code 002033), c. 10.01km to the east;
- Cloncrow Bog (New Forest) NHA (site code 000677), c. 13.50km to the north-east;
- Nure Bog NHA (site code 001725), c. 18.40km to the north;
- Ballynagrenia and Ballinderry Bog NHA (site code 000674), c. 20.42km to the north-west;
- Clonydonnin Bog NHA (site code 000565), c. 21.80 Km to the north-west;
- Clonreher Bog NHA (site code 002357), c. 23.61km 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. 600m to the south-west;
- Ballyduff Wood pNHA (site code 001777), c. 3.18 Km to the north;
- Ballyduff Esker pNHA (site code 000885), c. 4.03 Km to the north-west;
- Clonad Wood pNHA (site code 000574), c. 4.78km to the south;
- Derrygolan Esker pNHA (site code 000896), c. 6.04 Km to the north;
- Murphys Bridge Esker pNHA (site code 001775), c. 6.11 Km to the north-east;
- Kilcormac Esker pNHA (site code 000906), c. 6.52km to the south-west;
- Pallas Lough pNHA (site code 000916), c. 7.26km to the south-west;
- Rahugh Ridge (Kiltober Esker) pNHA (site code 000918), c. 7.70 Km to the north-east;
- Clara Bog pNHA (site code 000572), c. 7.72 Km to the north-west;
- Annaghmore Lough Fen pNHA (Offaly) (site code 000413,) c. 9.1km to the south-west;
- Ardan Wood pNHA (site code 001711), c. 9.4km to the north-east;

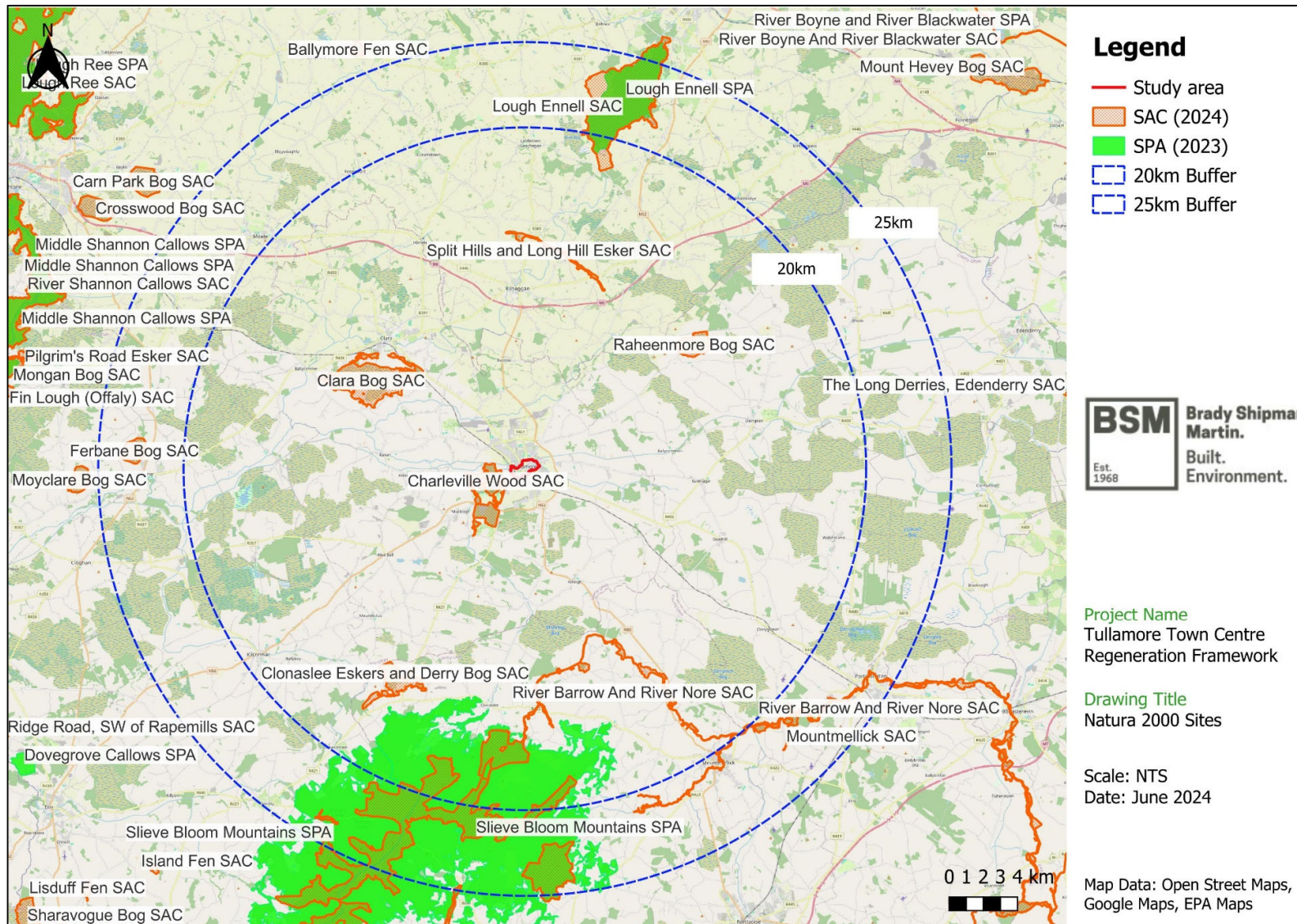
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- Raheenmore Bog pNHA (site code 000582), c. 10.82 km to the north-east;
- Woodfield Bog pNHA (site code 000586), c. 11.33 Km to the north;
- Split Hills and Long Hill Esker pNHA (site code 001831), c. 13.01 Km to the north;
- Clonaslee Eskers and Derry Bog PNHA (site code 000859), c. 13.11km to the south;
- Raheen Lough pNHA (site code 000917), c. 13.43 Km to the south-east
- Slieve Bloom mountains pNHA (site code 000412), c. 15.19km to the south;
- Lough Ennell pNHA (site code 000685), c.17.58km to the north
- Lough Boora pNHA (site code 001365), c. 18.13km to the west;
- Ballynagarby pNHA (site code 001713), c. 21.05 Km to the north-west;
- Ferbane Bog pNHA (site code 000575), c. 21.7km to the west;
- Camcor Wood pNHA (site code 000889), c. 23km to the south-west;
- Lough Coura pNHA (site code 000909), c. 23.94km to the south-west;
- Doon Esker pNHA (site code 001830), c. 24km to the north-west.

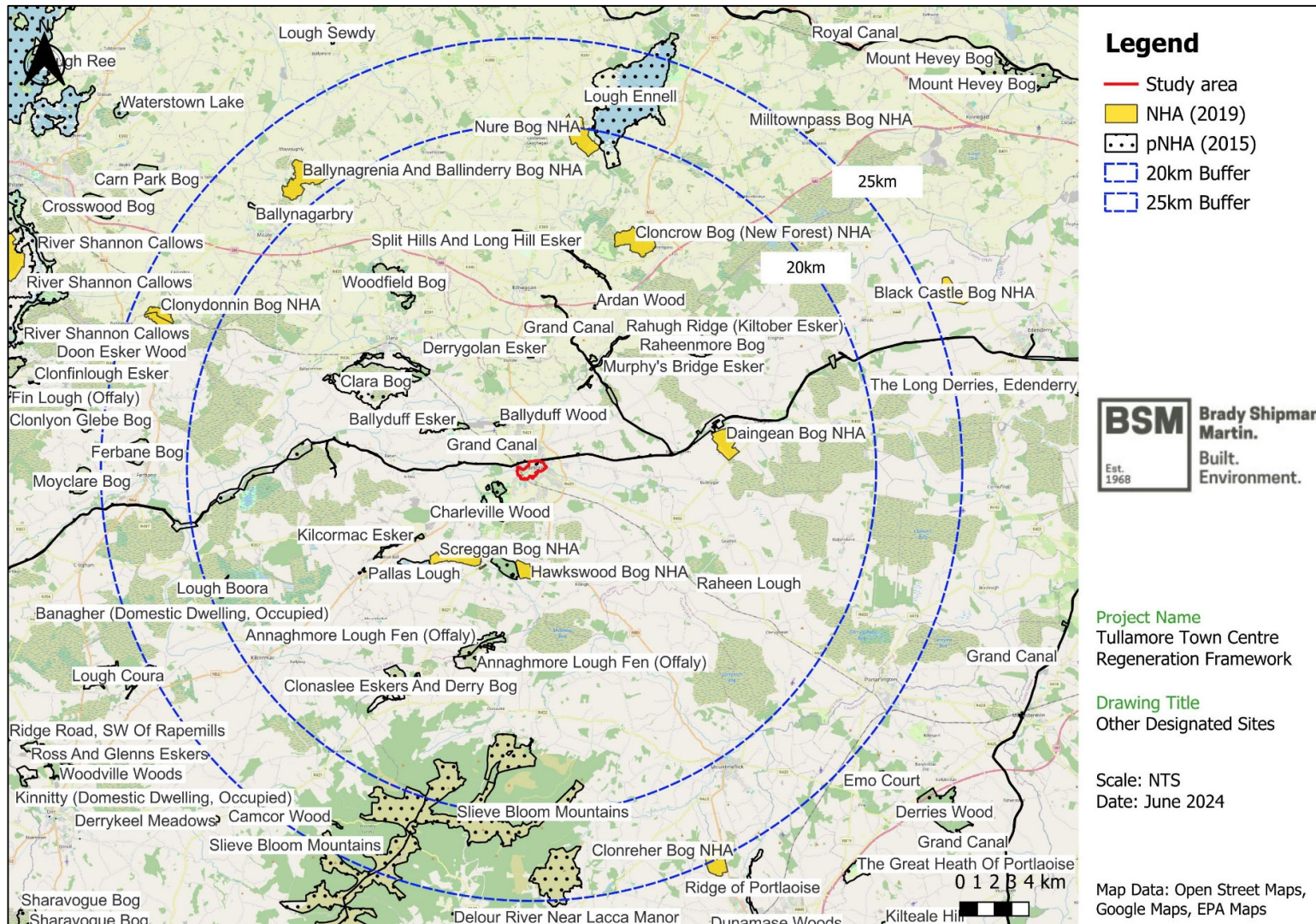
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Figure 4.7 European sites within zone of influence of the Tullamore Framework. A 20km and 25km radius is shown for scale.



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Figure 4.8 NHA and pNHA sites within zone of influence of the Tullamore Framework. A 20km and 25km radius is shown for scale.



5 Potential impacts from the Tullamore Draft Town Centre Regeneration Framework, including in-combination effects

5.1 Description of any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the Framework on European sites by virtue of:

5.1.1 Size and Scale

The 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 busiest part of the town along Columcille St / High St and Patrick St / Church St with O'Connor Square located in the centre, as shown in **Figure 4.5** in the previous Section. Development in Tullamore town centre is set against the policies and objectives of the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027 (**Figure 5.1**).

It is not a statutory land use plan and does not set a framework for future development consents. It is a Local Authority Plan. The Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027 sets policies and objective for the preparation and implementation of the Framework and states-

SSP-06: It is Council policy to strategically prioritise the development of Tullamore to underpin its role as a designated Key Town and driver of economic development for the county.

SSP-07: It is Council policy to require sustainable, compact, sequential growth and urban regeneration in Tullamore by consolidating the built-up footprint through a focus on regeneration and development of town centre infill and brownfield sites, and encouraging regeneration of underutilised, vacant and derelict lands for residential development and mixed use to facilitate population growth.

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 [...].

The structure of the Framework focuses on the following core elements:

- Building on the town's regeneration themes
- Opportunity Sites;
- Tullamore Public Realm; &
- Access & Permeability Strategy.

The Framework document provides the basis for a design brief for each of the elements listed above. The Framework outlines a series of projects for each theme, and the priorities were identified in consultation with

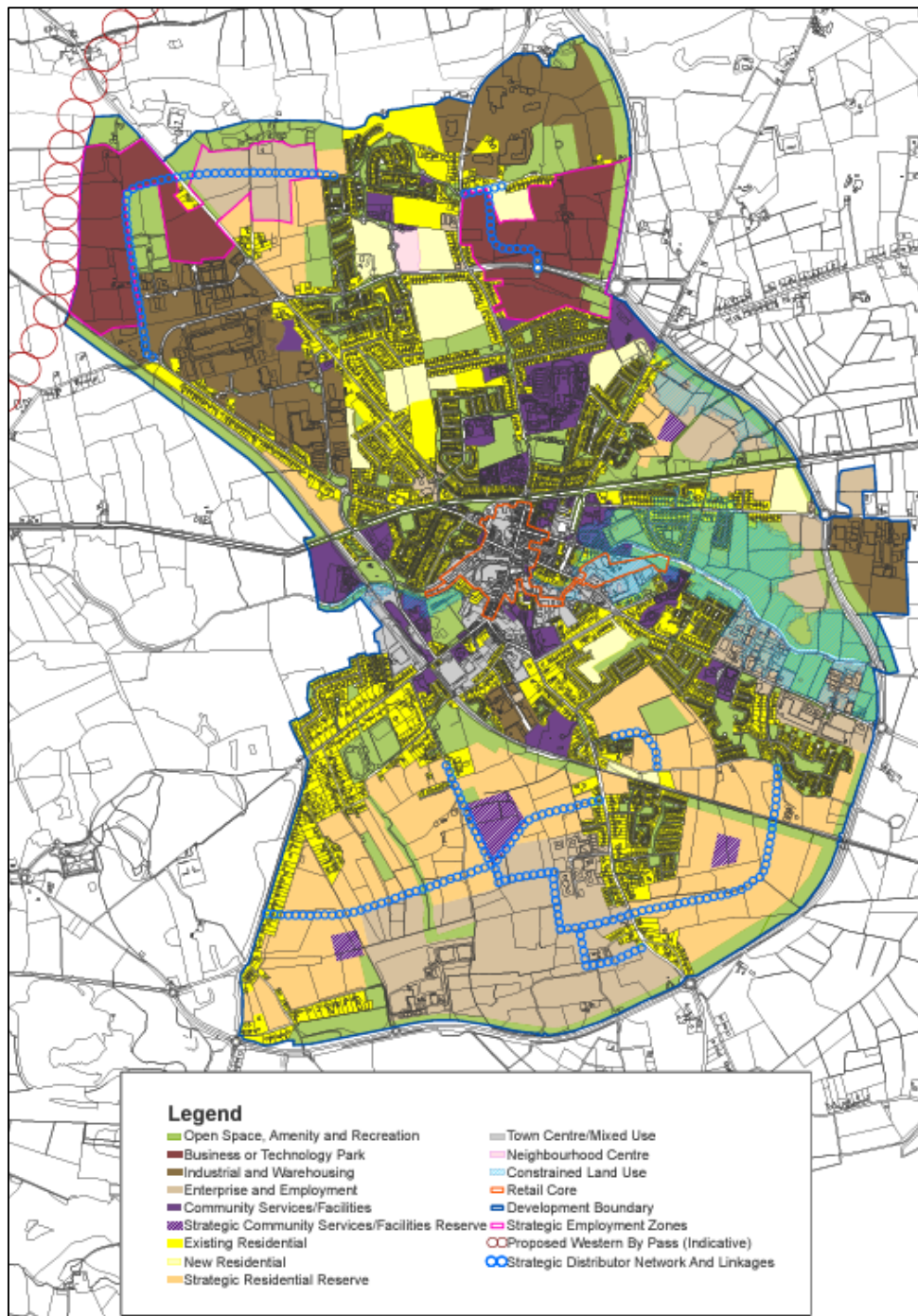
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the community and stakeholders across the local government, state, and non-governmental sectors. The Framework aims to serve as a model for regeneration, promoting compact growth, creating healthy and appealing public spaces, enhancing urban resilience, improving permeability, fostering vibrancy, and encouraging sustainable mobility.

The size and scale of the Framework will not result in any impacts that have the potential, alone or in combination with other plans or projects, to result in likely significant effects to European Sites.

Figure 5.1 Extract from the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027 (Volume II Settlement Plans)



5.1.2 Land take

There is no requirement for land take from any European site under any of the actions stated in the Framework.

5.1.3 Distance from European Site

There are no European (Natura 2000) sites within the framework plan area. The nearest sites (all sites within the potential zone of influence) are described in Section 4.7. A total of 10no. SACs and 2no. SPAs are located within 25km of the Draft Plan area. The closest Natura 2000 sites to the study area is the Charleville Wood SAC (site code 000571), c. 600m to the west.

It is the guiding principle of the Framework to promote environmental setting pedestrian priority zones, public spaces, increased green and planted areas, heritage restoration, reduction in car dominated roads, high-density housing scheme for town centre, multi-modal transport hubs, etc. The Framework also aims to enhance walkability and promote sustainable transport modes, encouraging people to take a trip into the town centre either by walking or cycling.

Given this intention, it is expected that any potential impacts on European sites would be avoided in the first instance.

5.1.4 Resource requirement

There are no resource requirements from any European site as a result of any of the projects and strategies contained within the Framework.

5.1.5 Emissions (to land, water or air)

There are no emissions of any kind that would result in significant effects on any European site as a result of any of the projects and strategies contained within the Framework.

5.1.6 Excavation requirements

There are no excavation requirements from any European site as a result of any of the projects and strategies contained within the Framework.

5.1.7 Transport requirements

There are no transport requirements related to any European site as a result of any of the projects and strategies contained within the Framework.

5.2 Description of any likely changes arising as a result of:

5.2.1 Reduction in habitat area

The Framework proposes no reductions in habitat area in any European site.

5.2.2 Disturbance to key species

The projects and strategies described within the Framework will not result in any disturbance to key species, in designated sites and elsewhere. No habitat or species disturbance will arise.

5.2.3 Habitat or species fragmentation

The projects and strategies within the Framework will not result in habitat or species fragmentation.

There will be no loss, fragmentation, disruption, disturbance or other change to any element of any European site as a result of the implementation of the Framework, and no interference with the key relationships that define the structure or function of any European site.

5.2.4 Reduction in species density

The Framework will not result in any effects that have the potential to result in reduction in the extent of the qualifying habitats of European Sites, disturb qualifying species of European Sites in the wider surrounding area or affect species population.

5.2.5 Changes in key indicators of conservation value

The projects and strategies within the Framework will not result in any changes to key indicators of conservation value. The Framework will not result in any interference with the key relationships that define the structure or function of any European site.

5.2.6 Climate change

The projects and strategies contained in the Framework all align with the National Climate Action Plan 2023, 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023–2030, the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027 and the Offaly Climate Action Plan 2024 – 2029. It is core strategy of the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027 to continue to build mixed use communities at approximate locations across the County that can sustain and grow a low carbon society.

5.3 Description of any likely impacts on European sites in terms of:

5.3.1 Interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site

The Framework will result in no interference with the key relationships that define the structure of any European site.

5.3.2 Interference with the key relationships that define the function of the site

The Framework will result in no interference with the key relationships that define the function of any European site.

Potential pathways for impacts to European sites are presented in [Table 5.1](#) and [Table 5.2](#).

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Table 5.1 Potential impacts on designated sites in the potential Zone of Influence

Site	Reasons for designation (information correct as of June 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link	Likely Significant Effect?
<p>Charleville Wood SAC (site code 000571) c. 600m to the west</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1016 Desmoulin's Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>) ■ 91E0 Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae)* <p>According to this SAC's site Conservation Objectives document (Version 1, dated 11 Nov 2021), for each of the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.</p>	<p>There is a hydrological pathway between the Tullamore Framework study area and this SAC, and there is the potential for habitat loss or degradation.</p> <p>However, there will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the qualifying interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the strategies or projects proposed in the Framework.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Clara Bog SAC (site code 000572) c. 7.68Km to the north west</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 6210 Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites) ■ 7110 Active raised bogs ■ 7120 Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration ■ 7150 Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion ■ 91D0 Bog woodland <p>According to this SAC's site Conservation Objectives document (Version 1, dated 03 Aug 2016), for each of the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or</p>	<p>There is no hydrological pathway between the Tullamore Framework study area and this SAC, and there is no potential for habitat loss or degradation.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the qualifying interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the strategies or actions proposed in the Framework.</p>	<p>No</p>

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Site	Reasons for designation (information correct as of June 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link	Likely Significant Effect?
	the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.		
River Barrow and River Nore SAC (site code 002162), c. 10.08km to the south	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1016 Desmoulin's whorl snail <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> ■ 1029 Freshwater pearl mussel <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> ■ 1092 White-clawed crayfish <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> ■ 1095 Sea lamprey <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> ■ 1096 Brook lamprey <i>Lampetra planeri</i> ■ 1099 River lamprey <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> ■ 1103 Twaite shad <i>Alosa fallax</i> ■ 1106 Atlantic salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) (only in fresh water) ■ 1130 Estuaries ■ 1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide ■ 1310 <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonizing mud and sand ■ 1330 Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glaucopuccinellietalia maritima</i>) ■ 1355 Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i> ■ 1410 Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) ■ 1421 Killarney fern <i>Trichomanes speciosum</i> ■ 1990 Nore freshwater pearl mussel <i>Margaritifera durrovensis</i> 	<p>There is no hydrological pathway between the Tullamore Framework study area and this SAC, and there is no potential for habitat loss or degradation.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the qualifying interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the strategies or actions proposed in the Framework.</p>	No

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Site	Reasons for designation (information correct as of June 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link	Likely Significant Effect?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 3260 Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation ■ 4030 European dry heaths ■ 6430 Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels ■ 7220 * Petrifying springs with tufa formation (<i>Cratoneurion</i>) ■ 91A0 Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles ■ 91E0 * Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>) <p>According to this SAC's site Conservation Objectives document (Version 1, dated 19 July 2011) for each of the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.</p>		
<p>Raheenmore Bog SAC (site code 000582) c. 10.55 Km to the north east</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 7110 Active raised bogs ■ 7120 Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration ■ 7150 Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion 	<p>There is no hydrological pathway between the Tullamore Framework study area and this SAC, and there is no potential for habitat loss or degradation.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the qualifying interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the strategies or actions proposed in the Framework.</p>	<p>No</p>

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Site	Reasons for designation (information correct as of June 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link	Likely Significant Effect?
	<p>According to this SAC's site Conservation Objectives document (Version 1, dated 02 Nov 2015), for each of the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.</p>		
<p>Split Hills and Long Hill Esker SAC (site code 001831) c. 10.75 Km to the north west</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 6210 Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites) <p>According to this SAC's site Conservation Objectives document (Version 1, dated 20 Jun 2018), for each of the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.</p>	<p>There is no hydrological pathway between the Tullamore Framework study area and this SAC, and there is no potential for habitat loss or degradation.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the qualifying interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the strategies or actions proposed in the Framework.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Clonaslee Eskers and Derry Bog SAC (site code 000859), c. 12.84km to the south-west</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1013 Geyer's Whorl Snail Vertigo geyeri ■ 7230 Alkaline fens <p>According to this SAC's site Conservation Objectives document (Version 1, dated 07 Feb 2019) for each of the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II</p>	<p>There is no hydrological pathway between the Tullamore Framework study area and this SAC, and there is no potential for habitat loss or degradation.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the qualifying interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the strategies or actions proposed in the Framework.</p>	<p>No</p>

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Site	Reasons for designation (information correct as of June 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link	Likely Significant Effect?
	species for which the SAC has been selected.		
Slieve Bloom SAC (site code 000412) c. 13.11Km to the south	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 4010 Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica Tetralix</i> ■ 7130 Blanket bogs (* if active bog) ■ 91E0 Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) <p>According to this SAC's site Conservation Objectives document (Version 1, dated 06 Sep 2016) for each of the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.</p>	<p>There is no hydrological pathway between the Tullamore Framework study area and this SAC, and there is no potential for habitat loss or degradation.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the qualifying interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the strategies or actions proposed in the Framework.</p>	No

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Site	Reasons for designation (information correct as of June 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link	Likely Significant Effect?
Lough Ennell SAC (site cecode 000685) c. 17.54 Km to the north	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 7230 Alkaline fens <p>According to this SAC's site Conservation Objectives document (Version 1, dated 12 Jan 2018) for each of the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.</p>	<p>There is no hydrological pathway between the Tullamore Framework study area and this SAC, and there is no potential for habitat loss or degradation.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the qualifying interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the strategies or actions proposed in the Framework.</p>	No
Lough Ennell SPA (site code 004044) c. 17.54 km to the north	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A059 Pochard (<i>Aythya farina</i>) ■ A061 Tufted Duck (<i>Aythya fuligula</i>) ■ A125 Coot (<i>Fulica atra</i>) ■ A999 Wetlands <p>According to this SPA's site Conservation Objectives document (Version 1, dated 28 May 2024), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to restore the favourable conservation condition of the species and wetland habitat for which the SPA has been selected.</p>	<p>There is no hydrological pathway between the Tullamore Framework study area and this SPA, and there is no potential for habitat loss or degradation.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the strategies or actions proposed in the Framework.</p>	No
Slieve Bloom Mountains SPA (site code 004160) c.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A082 Hen Harrier (<i>Circus cyaneus</i>) 	<p>There is no hydrological pathway between the Tullamore Framework study area and this SPA, and there is no potential for habitat loss or degradation.</p>	No

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Site	Reasons for designation (information correct as of June 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link	Likely Significant Effect?
13.11Km to the south	According to this SPA's site Conservation Objectives document (Version 1, dated 23 Sep 2022), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to restore the favourable conservation condition of the species and wetland habitat for which the SPA has been selected.	There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the special conservation interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the strategies or actions proposed in the Framework.	
Ferbane Bog SAC (site code 000575) c. 21.42 Km to the west	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 7110 Active raised bogs ■ 7120 Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration ■ 7150 Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion <p>According to this SAC's site Conservation Objectives document (Version 1, dated 02 Nov 2015) for each of the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.</p>	<p>There is no hydrological pathway between the Tullamore Framework study area and this SAC, and there is no potential for habitat loss or degradation.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the qualifying interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the strategies or actions proposed in the Framework.</p>	No
Mountmellick SAC (site code 002141) c. 21.85 Km to the South East	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1016 Desmoulin's Whorl Snail <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> <p>According to this SAC's site Conservation Objectives document (Version 1, dated 05 Mar 2021) for each of the listed QIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable</p>	<p>There is no hydrological pathway between the Tullamore Framework study area and this SAC, and there is no potential for habitat loss or degradation.</p> <p>There will be no impacts on water quality or any other emissions and no loss of habitat or species, fragmentation or disturbance to the qualifying interests of this site as a result of the implementation of the strategies or actions proposed in the Framework.</p>	No

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Site	Reasons for designation (information correct as of June 2024) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link	Likely Significant Effect?
	conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.		

Table 5.2 Assessment of potential impact of the Tullamore Draft Town Centre Regeneration Framework on the European sites within the potential Zone of Influence

Project	Potential Features	Potential to impact Natura 2000 sites	Mitigation Required?
Key Opportunity Sites Regeneration Projects			
2. Texas Site	Key potential features include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ New retail options ■ Day and night activity with work/live opportunities ■ Pedestrian priority zone ■ Strong laneway character ■ Intimate Public Space ■ Proximity to proposed bike-share location 	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No
3. Lands behind High Street/ O'Moore	Key potential features include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Diverse housing typologies close to town centre ■ Senior Living scheme located in town centre ■ Pedestrian friendly zone ■ Increased green and planted areas ■ Activating a backlands site 	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No
4. Lands South of O'Connor Square	Key potential features include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Heritage Restoration and Re-use ■ Placemaking through heritage assets and public space ■ Improved pedestrian connection ■ Reduce car dominated roads ■ Pedestrian priority zone 	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No

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Project	Potential Features	Potential to impact Natura 2000 sites	Mitigation Required?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-density housing scheme for town centre living Connections to O'Connor Square 		
5. Railway Lands	<p>Key potential features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed Multi-Modal Transport Hub Introduction of Green links to surrounding areas Proposed high density housing near transport hub 	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No
6. Coen Site	<p>Key potential features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diverse housing typologies close to town centre Proposed River Walk that connects the town centre to the wetlands zone and beyond Large retail zone retained and additional retail opportunity added to the site Increased permeability proposed through site along the north-south and east-west axes 	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No
7. Lands Behind the Court	<p>Key potential features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New pedestrian link from Cormac street to Kilcrudden Business Park Improved pedestrian friendly public realm Increased greening and planting Increased housing density close to public transport links 	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No
8. Tanyard Lands	<p>Key potential features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New pedestrian link from Cormac street to Kilcrudden Business Park Improved pedestrian friendly public realm Increased greening and planting Increased housing density close to public transport links 	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No

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Project	Potential Features	Potential to impact Natura 2000 sites	Mitigation Required?
Public Regeneration Projects			
1. Market Square	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One way street with contraflow cycle lane 2. Ramp up/down (whole square area at one level) 3. Dedicated outdoor dining/seating area 4. Formal Square with water features, public art and seating 5. Bicycle parking 6. Existing parking/ loading retained with EV charging bays 7. Open lawn area for passive recreation 8. Sensory garden with seating 9. One way street 10. 2-way cycle track 11. One way street 12. Retained parking 13. 2-way street 14. Red outline of structure to be potentially demolished 15. Rationalised parking with EV charging bays 16. Potential pedestrian link from Church St 17. Potential for new development 18. Potential public space and link to Harbour St through redeveloped site 19. One way street with widened footpath on east side 20. Pedestrian priority vehicular access treatment 	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No
2. O'Carroll Street	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Raised table treatment 2. Contra-flow cycle track at Church Street 3. 2-way street, width reduced to required minimum 4. Raised table treatment with uncontrolled crossings and rain gardens at the corners 5. Existing roundabout changed to signalised protected junction 6. Rain gardens to create green buffer around the junction 7. Special treatment space in front of St Mary's Centre with greening and public art 	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No

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Project	Potential Features	Potential to impact Natura 2000 sites	Mitigation Required?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Widened footpaths and cycle facilities on the route to schools and to canal (CPO might be required on schools side) 9. Series of rain gardens and raised planters along the street with gallery of public art and occasional seating between 10. Dedicated outdoor dining/seating area 11. Perpendicular parking reorientated to parallel 12. Protected cycle tracks on both sides of the road 		
<p>3. Harbour Street</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2-way street 2. Raised table treatment 3. 2-way cycle track 4. Main entry area to Grand Canal Harbour site 5. Widened footpaths with tree planting 6. Pedestrian priority junction treatment 7. Pedestrian priority vehicular access treatment 8. Shared street treatment to Chapel Street 9. Dedicated outdoor dining/seating area (parking) 10. Red outline of structure to be potentially demolished 11. Potential for new development 12. Potential public space and link to Harbour St through redeveloped site 13. One way traffic street with widened footpath on east side 14. High quality feature surface treatment to emphasize front of entrance area to the Church of the Assumption 	<p>No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>4. Church Street</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One way street with contra-flow cycle track, limited parking 2. Raised table treatment with uncontrolled crossings 3. One way street with parking reorientated to parallel to reduce risk of reversing into a cyclist or to another vehicle 4. Contra-flow protected cycle track 5. Widened footpaths with tree planting 6. Raised table treatment 7. Part 8 pedestrian link and public space connecting O'Connor Square to Church Street 8. Special treatment space as an extension of planned part 8 pedestrian link 	<p>No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.</p>	<p>No</p>

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Project	Potential Features	Potential to impact Natura 2000 sites	Mitigation Required?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Potential pedestrian link through disused laneway 10. Market Square Lane with wider footpaths and contraflow cycle lane 11. Potential upgrade of Market Lane to shared space 12. Pedestrian priority junction treatment 		
<p>5. Convent Road</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dedicated greenway / shared way for pedestrians and cyclists 2. Carriageway reduced to one lane, 1 way street 3. Raised table treatment along school frontage with dedicated crossing 4. Potential water interaction space and boats moorings 5. Potential green buffer along shared way with tree planting 6. Widened footpaths 7. Plaza in front of re-purposed vacant former warehouse building 8. Raised table crossing with uncontrolled crossings 9. Raised table crossing as an extension of proposed new plaza 10. Retained raised table crossing 11. Additional tree planting along the moorings 12. New path passes under the bridge 13. Carriageway reduced to one lane of traffic to allow for footpath 	<p>No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>6. O'Connell Street/Kilbride Street</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public space upgrade potential 2. Raised table treatment with uncontrolled crossings 3. 2 way street 4. Raised street junction treatment with dedicated pedestrian crossing and pedestrian priority vehicular access 5. New pedestrian link through carpark to Kilbride Park 6. Existing carpark layout rearranged 7. Raised table treatment with uncontrolled crossings 8. Optimised road width with retained parking at Kilbride St 9. Potential rain gardens with seating 10. Dedicated outdoor dining/seating area 11. Widened footpaths with tree planting and occasional rain gardens 12. New footpath with tree planting 13. Raised table treatment with uncontrolled crossings and rain gardens at the corners 14. Potential Texas site vehicular access 	<p>No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.</p>	<p>No</p>

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Project	Potential Features	Potential to impact Natura 2000 sites	Mitigation Required?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15. Pedestrian link to Texas site through shared street 16. Potential 2-way cycle track 		
7. Patrick Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Raised table signalised junction with traffic lights controlled crossings and rain gardens at the corners to replace existing roundabout 2. Widened footpaths at Water Lane 3. Dedicated loading bay/ parking 4. Cyclists/vehicles shared street with central textured strip in the road that prompts drivers to take extra care 5. Dedicated raised table zebra pedestrian crossing 6. Widened footpaths with tree planting 7. Signalised junction unchanged 8. Pedestrian link to Texas site through shared street 9. Potential pedestrian link to Texas site 	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No
8. Store Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pedestrian priority junction treatment 2. New footpath 3. Widened footpath with occasional tree planting and retained parking 4. High quality feature surface treatment to emphasize front of entrance area to the Church of the Assumption with potential pedestrian link to Grand Canal Harbour site 5. Raised table treatment with uncontrolled crossings and rain gardens at the corners 6. 1 way street with contra-flow cycle track 7. Raised table treatment with uncontrolled crossings 8. Dedicated greenway / shared way for pedestrians and cyclists 9. Carriageway reduced to one lane, 1 way street 10. Widened footpath 	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No
9. Water Lane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Raised table treatment with uncontrolled crossings and rain gardens at the corners 2. Cyclists/vehicles shared street with central textured strip in the road that prompts drivers to take extra care 3. Dedicated loading bay/ parking 4. Dedicated outdoor dining/seating area 	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No

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Project	Potential Features	Potential to impact Natura 2000 sites	Mitigation Required?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Widened footpaths with tree planting 6. Raised table signalised junction with traffic lights controlled crossings and rain gardens at the corners to replace existing roundabout 7. Pedestrian priority junction treatment 8. Cyclists/vehicles shared street with central textured strip in the road that prompts drivers to take extra care 9. Potential small public space with planting, public art and outdoor seating 10. Potential for new development (residential with food&bewerege at the ground floor) 11. Derelict historic structures to be refurbished and redeveloped 12. The restoration and redevelopment of the former grain mill distillery building into a mixed-use building (planning permission ref. 21/376) 		
<p>10. Cormac Street Roundabout</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Raised platform signalised t-junction 2. Dedicated pedestrian crossings 3. Introduced right turn lane 4. Widened footpaths 5. Retained parking / loading 6. Cyclists/vehicles shared street with central textured strip in the road that prompts drivers to take extra care 7. Proposed public space with planting, seating, public art etc. 8. Access retained 	<p>No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>11. High Street-Main Street Link</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proposed pedestrian crossings across Main Street 2. Retained Bridge Shopping Centre carpark 3. New dedicated pedestrian path through the carpark (minimal loss of parking spaces) 4. Proposed pedestrian crossings across Tara Street 5. Footpath upgrade and widening 6. Potential green space with seating and tree planting 7. Proposed bicycle parking 8. Loading bay 9. Raised table junction with dedicated pedestrian crossings 10. Access to High Street Opportunity Site 	<p>No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.</p>	<p>No</p>

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Project	Potential Features	Potential to impact Natura 2000 sites	Mitigation Required?
	11. Potential future pedestrian link to Lloyd Town Park and Railway Station through the backlands.		
12. Bridge Street	<p>Bus Gate Potential Features (on left):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Raised table, bus/cyclists access only / Bridge Lane local access / time plated deliveries access (no through traffic) 2. Pedestrian priority junction treatment 3. Traffic lights controlled public transport route only 4. Widened footpaths with additional outdoor seating/dining areas 5. Raised table, bus/cyclists traffic lights controlled access only (no through traffic) 6. Shared street treatment <p>Pedestrian Street Potential Features (on right):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Raised table, Bridge Lane local access only / time plated deliveries access 2. Pedestrian priority junction treatment 3. Pedestrianised street with additional outdoor seating/dining areas 4. Raised table, no vehicular access 5. Time plated deliveries access only (no through traffic) 	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No

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13. Tullamore River Walk	Active travel and connectivity enhancement scheme. Potential proposals include habitats protection, walking, cycling routes along river with occasional water interaction spaces.	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No
14. Cormac Street	Public realm and active travel enhancement scheme. Potential proposals include widened pavements and additional pedestrian crossing points at the Lloyd Town Park entrances.	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No
15. Lloyd Town Park – Railway Station Link	Active travel and connectivity enhancement scheme. Potential proposals include new pedestrian / cycle route along eastern school boundary to connect Lloyd Town Park and railway station.	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No
16. School Zones	<p>General Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Footpaths outside schools should be wider if possible due to peak loading. • Reduce street clutter. • If possible, create space for cycling by making the street one way or restricting vehicular traffic during school opening and closing times (e.g. create a school street). • Combine seating, landscaping, street lighting to reduce footprint. • Provide crossings at pedestrian desire lines. • Reduce carriageway width to restrict space for parking. • Use traffic management measures such as horizontal and vertical deflections. • Use Vertical elements, such as trees to narrow the perceived width of the road. • Introduce surface colour/texture changes. • Provide gateways at start of school zone to reduce speeds and highlight the presence of the school • Drop-off parking should be discouraged in School Zone. 	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No

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Project	Potential Features	Potential to impact Natura 2000 sites	Mitigation Required?
17. Town Centre Laneways	<p>General Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-surfacing in variety of quality materials to create unique character for each lane. • Accentuating laneway entrances, e.g. by decorative archways and/or inserts into the pavement. • Removal of graffiti, rubbish, clutter and eye-sores. • Enlivening with colour washing of buildings and structures, bunting and hanging baskets etc. as appropriate. • Improved directional signage. • Street furniture should be located on the edges of spaces to provide clear pedestrian access ways and allow for a wide range of outdoor activities to occur. • Art should be incorporated into the design of buildings, public spaces, street furniture and paving in a way that is reflective of lane characteristics or the theme of the lane. • To provide robust and durable street furniture that copes with intensive use. • Provide opportunities for passive amenity in public places throughout the lanes network. • To ensure lighting infrastructure is discrete and maintains the flexibility of the lane spaces. • Feature lighting should be used in moderation, and could be developed in conjunction with artists and combined with other street furniture. 	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No
18. Lloyd Town Park – Tara Street Link	Active travel and connectivity enhancement scheme. Potential proposals include new pedestrian / cycle structure in form of steps and ramps opposite Etb, Further Education Centre to connect Lloyd Town Park and Tara Street.	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No
Sustainable Access and Permeability Strategy			

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Project	Potential Features	Potential to impact Natura 2000 sites	Mitigation Required?
1.Reducing Travel Demand	The demand for vehicular travel into Tullamore may be reduced in the long term by higher-density residential development within and close to the town centre.	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No
2. Promoting Sustainable Modes of Travel	<p>Measures recommended to achieve this include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>High quality pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure within the town, to improve comfort, convenience, and safety for those walking and cycling.</i> ■ <i>Reorganisation of car parking within the town, with a reallocation of parking space from on-street locations to off-street areas.</i> ■ <i>Measures to reduce vehicle speeds and to control vehicle movements at key locations.</i> ■ <i>Implementation of a town bus service, to provide reliable public transport connectivity between the town centre, outlying areas, and railway station.</i> ■ <i>Park and Ride facilities at the town periphery, to allow car journeys into Tullamore to be completed as public transport, cycling, or walking trips.</i> 	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No

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Project	Potential Features	Potential to impact Natura 2000 sites	Mitigation Required?
<p>3. Supporting Infrastructure</p>	<p>Specific supporting infrastructure is required or recommended for promoting sustainable modes of travel. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Implementation of a dedicated Tullamore Cycle Network, to include cycle facilities within the town centre and to connect these to Tullamore’s surrounding areas and neighbouring towns.</i> ■ <i>Implementation of a transport hub at Tullamore railway station, which may take the form of a Mobility Hub. At minimum, this should provide for public transport interchange between bus and rail services.</i> ■ <i>Provision of Mobility Points at suitable locations within the town. These may integrate car and bicycle sharing services (including cargo bikes), reducing the need for car ownership among residents.</i> ■ <i>Good quality, sheltered and secure bicycle parking facilities within the town centre and at transport interchange points.</i> ■ <i>EV charging facilities at suitable car parking locations.</i> 	<p>No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>4. Access for All</p>	<p>Key considerations in this regard include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Providing sufficient footpath widths and avoiding street furniture clutter.</i> ■ <i>Ensuring appropriate transitions (e.g. dropped kerbs) at changes of level.</i> ■ <i>Providing tactile paving at crossing/hazard locations, and auditory signals at signal-controlled crossings.</i> ■ <i>Avoiding excessive gradients on footpaths and cycle facilities.</i> ■ <i>Ensuring that parking for adapted vehicles (including non-standard cycles) is catered for.</i> ■ <i>Effectively using surface materials, signage, and other design aspects to ensure that pedestrian and cyclist routes are clear and legible.</i> ■ <i>Providing comprehensive and good quality public lighting.</i> 	<p>No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.</p>	<p>No</p>

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Project	Potential Features	Potential to impact Natura 2000 sites	Mitigation Required?
5. Improved Pedestrian Connectivity & Wayfinding	Tullamore Town Centre Regeneration Framework details proposed new pedestrian and cyclist connections to enhance permeability, as well as identifying locations at which wayfinding measures should be implemented to encourage and facilitate active travel modes.	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No
6. Vehicular Speed Restrictions	The Tullamore Town Centre Regeneration Framework proposes to implement a 30km/h speed limit throughout the town centre, to reduce the negative effects of vehicular traffic and to create an environment that is safer for – and more conducive to – sustainable transport modes such as walking	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No
7. Junction and Crossing Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Tightening junctions by reducing kerb radii, to lower vehicle speeds, improve intervisibility, and give more space to pedestrians. ■ Providing new controlled and uncontrolled pedestrian crossings to cater for pedestrian desire lines. ■ Providing raised tables at junctions and at crossings, to reduce vehicle speeds and to emphasize pedestrian priority. ■ Implementing Cycle Design Manual guidance at junctions to better segregate bicycle and motor vehicle traffic. 	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No
8. Civic Spaces and Street Link Improvements	<p>The measures proposed include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Widened footpaths. ■ Rationalised car parking. ■ Restrictions on certain vehicle movements (including one-way street sections). ■ Dedicated cycle tracks and cycle lanes (both with-flow and contraflow). 	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No
9. Laneway Improvements	Measures are proposed to encourage their use through improvements to surface materials, public lighting, and signage.	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No
10. School Zones	School zones represent discrete sections of the street network at which it is particularly beneficial to introduce traffic calming and pedestrian-priority. Centre Regeneration Framework report identifies several recommended locations for such treatment.	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No

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Project	Potential Features	Potential to impact Natura 2000 sites	Mitigation Required?
11. Cycle Network	<p>Elements of this cycle network are to be delivered under the following initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Draft CycleConnects Network ■ Draft National Cycle Network (NCN) ■ Draft Tullamore Cycle Network (Phase 1) ■ Tullamore Urban Greenway Project 	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No
12. Town Bus Service	<p>The DBFL Draft Tullamore Local Transport Plan notes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>An ideal town bus service for Tullamore would see a high-frequency timetable operating throughout the town daily, both on weekdays and at weekends.</i> ■ <i>Locations chosen for bus depots could additionally serve as termini for a Park and Ride service, should one be deemed feasible for Tullamore.</i> 	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No
13. Park and Ride	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Direct and high-quality connections to the Town Centre, including a frequent public transport service and a sustainable bike and/or e-bike share scheme. ■ Cheaper parking charges, particularly for long stay parking, compared to the Town Centre ■ Electric vehicle charging points. ■ Co-locating a Park and Ride with other services and amenities such as parcel collection, public toilets, etc. can make them more attractive. ■ Proposed Park and Ride facility locations include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Adjacent to the Arden Road Roundabout, outside of the N52. □ Adjacent to the Charleville Road Roundabout, outside of the N52. 	No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.	No

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Project	Potential Features	Potential to impact Natura 2000 sites	Mitigation Required?
<p>14. Mobility Hubs and Mobility Points</p>	<p>Mobility Hubs may be appropriate for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Tullamore’s Opportunity Sites ■ Retrofitting an existing car parks ■ Tullamore Railway Station (Offaly County Development Plan SMAP-17 objective aims to establish the Station and adjoining lands as a transport node) ■ Midland Regional Hospital <p>Mobility Points include bus stops, cycle parking and car club spaces but can be expanded to include E.V. Charge Points, shared bike schemes and seating.</p>	<p>No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>15. Potential changes to Car Parking</p>	<p>The Tullamore Town Centre Regeneration Framework report details potential changes to the public realm (all proposals are subject to further investigation prior to detailed design, traffic studies, technical consideration, engagement with private landowners/ stakeholders and planning consent etc.) that include the reorganisation of car parking in several on-street locations and several public use car parks.</p>	<p>No significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged.</p>	<p>No</p>

5.4 Summary of potential impacts of the implementation of the Tullamore Draft Town Centre Regeneration Framework

There will be no loss of any habitat or species listed as a QI or SCI of any designated site as a consequence of the implementation of the Framework. There is, therefore, no potential for the effects of habitat loss or fragmentation to occur.

There will also be no significant effects on any European sites as a result of:

- Habitat loss and/or fragmentation;
- Land-take;
- Resource requirements such as water abstraction;
- Impacts to habitat structure;
- Mortality to species (such as roadkill);
- Noise pollution / vibration impacts;
- Light pollution;
- Emissions to air (including dust);
- Emissions to water.

Additionally, for the reasons outlined in this report for the European sites, no impacts on any other designated sites including proposed Natural Heritage Areas, will occur.

6 Mitigation specific to European sites

This screening assessment is consistent with the judgment of the European Court in Case C-323/17, *People Over Wind & Sweetman v Coillte* (Judgment of the Court (Seventh Chamber) of 12 April 2018) and the recent case-law of the High Court, including *Heather Hill Management Company CLG v An Bord Pleanála* [2019] IEHC 450 and *Sweetman v An Bord Pleanála* [2020] IEHC 39.

It is also consistent with the judgment in *Eco Advocacy CLG v An Bord Pleanála* [2021] IEHC 265. In that case, Humphreys J confirmed the core legal principle, being that regard should not be had to mitigation measures at AA screening stage. Humphreys J decided in that case that clarification was required from the CJEU on the matter (as it related to the consideration of SUDs and whether these represented mitigation measures).

The CJEU, in its ruling on this case dated 15 June 2023 clarified issues defining mitigation in the context of European sites². It confirmed that Article 6(3) of Directive 92/43 *must be interpreted as meaning that, in order to determine whether it is necessary to carry out an appropriate assessment of the implications of a plan or project for a site, account may be taken of the features of that plan or project which involve the removal of contaminants and which therefore may have the effect of reducing the harmful effects of the plan or project on that site, where those features have been incorporated into that plan or project as standard features, inherent in such a plan or project, irrespective of any effect on the site.*

In relation to European sites, there will be no impacts capable of giving rise to any likely significant effects as a result of the Framework.

No mitigation is necessary or proposed for the protection of European sites.

²<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:62021CC0721>

7 In-combination effects

It is a requirement of Section 177U of the Planning Acts that, when considering whether a plan or project will have a significant effect on a European site, the assessment must take into account in-combination effects with other plans and projects. The assessment should consider plans and projects that are completed, approved but uncompleted, or proposed (but not yet approved)³. If there are identified effects arising from the plan or project, even if they are perceived as minor and not likely to have a significant effect on the integrity of a European site alone, then these effects must be considered in combination with the effects arising from other plans and projects.

Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027 sets out the Council's policies and objectives for the development of the County over the Plan period and has been subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and AA. It seeks to develop and improve, in a sustainable manner the social, economic, environmental and cultural assets of the County. The Framework has had due regard to all relevant policies and objectives set out in the Development Plan.

On the basis of objective information it can be excluded that the implementation of the Plan, individually or in-combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.

A number of other plans were considered when assessing in-combination effects, but it was determined that there would be no in-combination effects with these:

- 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 (2023);
- 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023–2030.
- Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027;
- Offaly Climate Action Plan 2024 – 2029;
- Draft Offaly Biodiversity Plan 2024 – 2030;
- Draft Tullamore Transport Plan 2024.

8 Screening conclusion

Following review of the Tullamore Draft Town Centre Regeneration Framework against the Conservation Objectives of the relevant European sites, it is concluded that there is no possibility that the implementation of the Framework 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 Draft Town Centre Regeneration Framework, 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

³ Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting European sites: Methodological Guidance on the Provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (European Commission Environment Directorate-General, 2001)

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conservation objectives. The Framework does not require an Appropriate Assessment and the preparation of a Natura Impact Report.

9 References

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⁴ Now Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII).

Appendix I: Background

The European⁵ network is a Europe-wide network of ecologically important sites (SPAs and cSACs – also known as ‘European Sites’ or ‘Natura 2000 sites’) that have been designated for protection under either the EU Birds Directive (Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds) or the EU Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Flora and Fauna).

The main aim of the Habitats Directive is “to contribute towards ensuring biodiversity through the conservation of natural habitats of wild fauna and flora in the European territory of the Member States to which the treaty applies”. Any actions taken must be designed to “maintain or restore, at a favourable conservation status, natural habitats and species of wild fauna and flora of Community interest”. Under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive, an assessment is required where a plan or project may give rise to significant effects upon a European site.

In addition, it is a matter of law that candidate SACs (cSACs) and Sites of Community Importance (SCI) are considered in this process;

Article 6 (paragraphs (3) and (4)) of the Habitats Directive states that:

(3) Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to Appropriate Assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives. In the light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.

(4) If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the site and in the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of social or economic nature, the Member State shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted.

Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species, the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest”

The requirements of the Habitats Directive are transposed into Irish law by means of the *European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended)* (hereafter referred to as the *Birds and Habitats Regulations*) and by the *Planning and Development Act 2000*, as amended.

In Ireland, the statutory agency responsible for the designated areas is NPWS.

Stages in the assessment

European Commission guidance (2001)⁶ sets out the principles on how to undertake decision making in applying the Habitats Directive. The requirements of the Habitats Directive comprise four distinct stages:

Stage 1: Screening is the process which initially identifies the likely significant effects upon a European site of a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, and considers whether these impacts may be significant. It is important to note that the burden of evidence is to show, on the basis of objective information, that there will be no significant effect; if the effect may be significant, or is not known, that would trigger the need for an Appropriate Assessment. There is European Court of Justice case law to the effect that

⁵ The EU Habitats Directive, Article 3.1, states “A Coherent European ecological network of Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas pursuant to Directive 79/409/EEC shall be set up under the title European”

⁶ European Commission (2001) *Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting European Sites: Methodological Guidance on the Provisions of Article 6 (3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*

unless the likelihood of a significant effect can be ruled out on the basis of objective information, then an Appropriate Assessment must be made.

Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment is the detailed consideration of the impact on the integrity of the European site of the project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, with respect to the site's conservation objectives and its structure and function. This is to determine with scientific certainty whether or not there will be adverse effects on the integrity of the site in light of its conservation objectives. This stage also includes the development of mitigation measures to avoid or reduce any possible impacts.

Stage 3: Assessment of alternative solutions is the process which examines alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the project or plan that would avoid impacts on the integrity of the European site, should avoidance or mitigation measures be unable to cancel out adverse effects.

Stage 4: Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain. At Stage 4 an assessment is made with regard to whether or not the development is necessary for imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) and, if so, of the compensatory measures needed to maintain the overall coherence of the European network.

Conservation Objectives of European sites

The conservation objectives for a European Site are intended to represent the aims of the Habitats and Birds Directives in relation to that site. To this end, habitats and species of European Community importance should be maintained or restored to 'favourable conservation status' (FCS), as defined in Article 1 of the Habitats Directive below:

The conservation status of a natural habitat will be taken as 'favourable' when:

- Its natural range and the area it covers within that range are stable or increasing;
- The specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future;
- Conservation status of typical species is favourable as defined in Article 1(i).

The conservation status of a species will be taken as favourable when:

- Population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats;
- The natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future;
- There is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

Guidance from the European Commission⁷ indicates that the Habitats Directive intends FCS to be applied at the level of an individual site, as well as to habitats and species across their European range. Therefore, in order to properly express the aims of the Habitats Directive for an individual site, the conservation objectives for a site are essentially to maintain (or restore) the habitats and species of the site at (or to) FCS.

The European Commission guidance recommends that screening should fulfil the following steps:

1. Determine whether the plan (or policy) is directly connected with or necessary for the management of European sites;
2. Describe the plan and describe and characterise any other plans or projects which, in combination, have the potential for having significant effects on European sites;
3. Identify the potential effects on European sites;

Assess the likely significance of any effects on European sites.

⁷ Managing European sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. (European Commission 2000)

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