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# An executive summary



Milford is a long established, small Market Town located within the Mulroy Bay area in North Donegal. Although it's historical agricultural market functions have now moved to the outskirts of the town, the centre of the settlement still functions as a service centre for the resident's located within the wider town boundary and adjoining rural hinterland, with retailing, administrative, community, health and education uses. Much of the town centre's attractive historical settlement pattern is still evident and many simple attractive buildings from the past remain along it's north/south running Main Street. A clear roadmap for the regeneration and future development of Milford is required to ensure the town is strengthened in terms of its role, image, vibrancy, vitality and resilience.

GM Design Associates welcome the opportunity to present this Town Centre First Plan for Milford, which was commissioned by Donegal County Council. The Plan sets out the strategic vision for Milford and identifies themes and objectives which respond to the issues, challenges, needs and opportunities which have emerged from the process. This document summarizes the analysis of the existing town centre, proposes an outline design intention, documents the consultation process, discusses a range of potential projects and suggests the methodology for implementation of the Masterplan.

The Milford Town Centre First Plan is funded through the Town and Village Renewal Fund programme and the 1st Phase of the Town Centre First Masterplan Initiative implemented by the Department of Rural and Community Development as a part of Our Rural Future. This document has been produced having regard to all relevant strategic policy documents, including the County Donegal Development Plan, to ensure the Plan forms part of a coherent framework for the future development of Milford.

A baseline analysis of the existing town centre has highlighted key areas for improvement relating to quality of life, economic productivity and the built environment.

Milford town centre has suffered significant decline in recent years with levels of dereliction and vacancy increasing and a number of "key" properties falling into a poor condition and requiring considerable improvement and repair. The town centre has a predominantly linear form, running along a north/south axis along Main Street, the historic core of the town. A one-way system allows for a flow of vehicles along Main Street in a southerly direction. Northern bound traffic largely bypasses Main Street and tails off and around the town centre. Despite this, there exists issues around movement/connections to, from and within the town centre. Furthermore there is a lack of good quality central/shared public realm/space. Cumulatively this all potentially contributes to what is now a real lack of vibrancy, vitality and attractiveness.

The Town Centre First Plan is based on a clear analysis and evaluation and includes proposals which provide a sound basis to enhance the public realm offering and improve vehicular and pedestrian movement to, from and within the town.

In similar respects, the quantity, quality and public access to green spaces in Milford is currently poor. This is something that must be rectified in the near future as provision of high quality public open spaces is of great benefit not only to the environmental credentials and economic prospects of a place, but also to the health and social well being of the community.

An ongoing concern is the preservation and enhancement of the existing built heritage, particularly those that could be at risk. Many of the original buildings from the town centre's compact historical street pattern remain and this is reflected in the fact that it contains a number of buildings on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage and a further significant number which are vernacular and could be considered to be of particular heritage value. Appropriate intervention is required in order to safeguard this built heritage.

The vision and aspiration is that the Milford Town Centre First Plan will help deliver a vibrant, liveable and fully functioning service town centre with a flourishing population, that has a strong employment and housing choice, community and social amenities, high quality of life and positive public/civic spaces.

In order to successfully achieve this vision, the Plan sets out a number of guiding aims and objectives which will require significant progress. The Plan also identifies five areas of focus, encapsulating a number of potential actions/projects aimed at regenerating and renewing Milford town centre. It is acknowledged that not all of the identified proposed actions/projects will be progressed beyond this Plan process and subsequently implemented. As such, the Plan indicates how needed each potential action/project is in terms of its level of priority (indicated as higher, medium or lower priority). Potential timescales for delivery, indicative completion costs and the central stakeholders that would need to be involved are also indicated.

A sustainable future for Milford will require the development of the tourism product and offering of the town centre, including natural and built heritage assets, nurturing both existing initiatives and new. Improvements to existing and the creation of new infrastructure will be a key component of this, allowing the tourism and recreation potential of the area to be realised – as a result boosting the local economy, enhancing retail and commercial opportunities for residents and providing a thriving hub for the community.

Through the identification of gaps in the economic development offering of the town centre and by exploring opportunities for new long term sustainable public, social and/or private sector enterprises or business opportunities, the Plan puts in place mechanisms to create an environment where there is sufficient confidence to generate investment on a significant yet appropriate scale for a town of this size.

An increase in town centre living could have a significantly positive impact on the

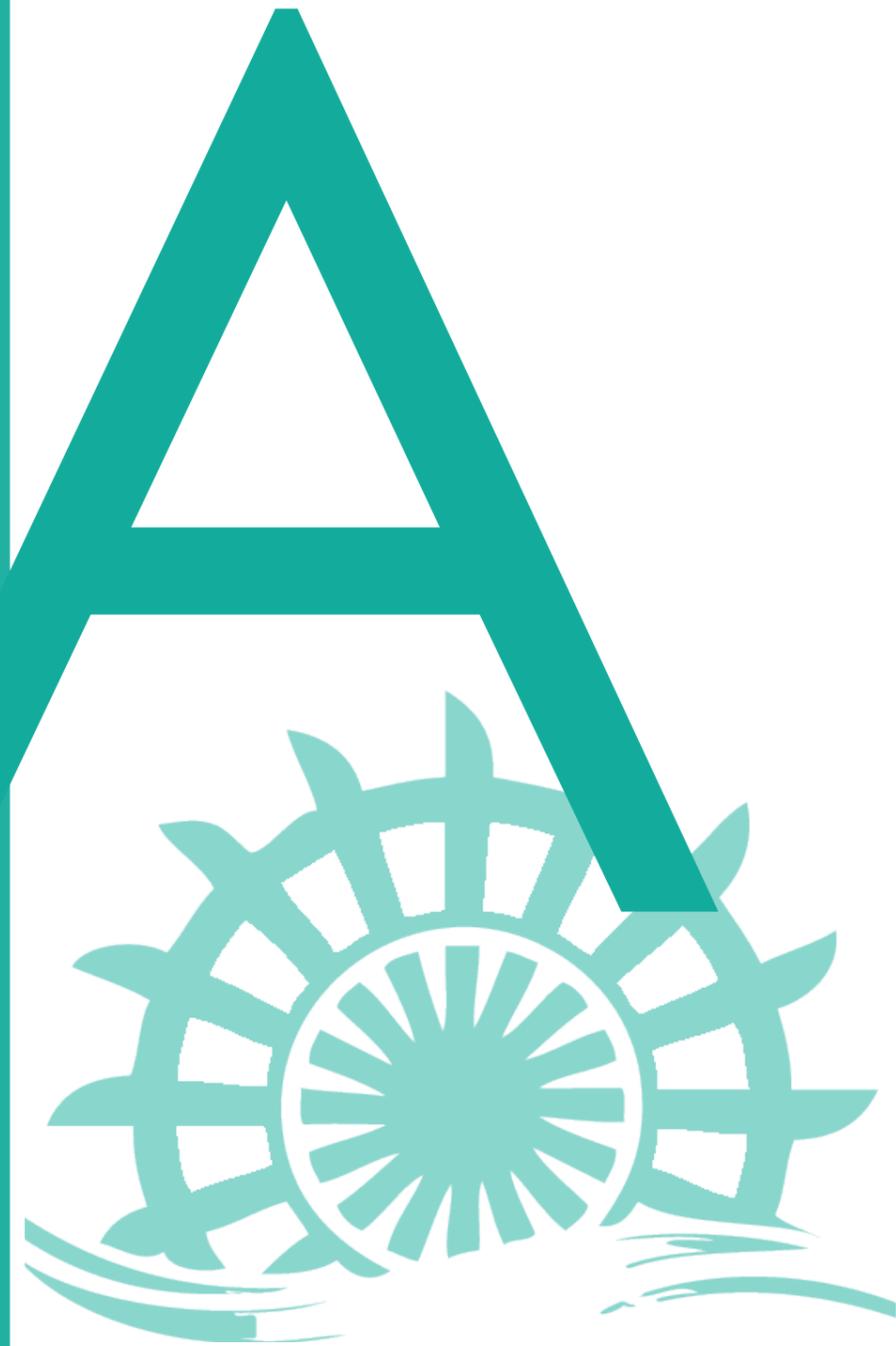
vitality and vibrancy of Milford town centre. A robust range of public and private options for town centre housing solutions has been explored, which includes brownfield site re-development, re-purposing of vacant and derelict properties, development of back lands, redundant lands and opportunity sites. The delivery of the identified town centre housing opportunities will be key for the successful implementation of the Town Centre First Plan.

Donegal County Council will have an important role in facilitating investment for a range of the potential actions/projects contained within the Plan, by using all the skills and resources available to it. There are many direct actions which the relevant government departments and agencies listed in this report can take to aid the implementation of the Plan, though none will be more vital than promoting private investment.

A significant level of potential redevelopment land within the town is in private ownership. Hence the emphasis will be on progressing new development where possible in a co-ordinated and integrated manner; gradually improving the infrastructure of the town until development of private land appears more attractive and viable to landowners and potential investors.

While the challenges are significant, the opportunities for Milford are great. This joint work and the completion of the Town Centre First Plan provides a sound basis for development in the town centre and beyond. It is expected that the Plan will become a catalyst for regeneration in the town centre over the next number of years and help achieve the visions and aspirations of the local community.

# Section



An introduction



# The background, purpose & process

## The background

This Town Centre First Plan (thereafter referred to as the "Milford TCF Plan" or "the/this TCF Plan") develops a range of emerging regeneration priorities which have been identified in the prior Stage 1 Baseline Profile for Milford Town Centre. These emerging priorities are a result of a thorough analysis, including a review of the state and functioning of the town centre; its physical, demographic, social, economic and policy/legislative context. A targeted and robust consultation process carried out as part of Stage 1 also informed the emerging priorities.

The town is strategically well placed, located approx. 20km north of Letterkenny and the wide range of services, employment and amenities this large centre has to offer. It is also in close proximity to a number of regional tourist amenities such as Glenveagh National Park, Fanad Head and Lighthouse located on the highly popular tourist route, the "Wild Atlantic Way", as well as more local attractions such as The Colmcille Trail, Mulroy Bay and the associated attractive landscape.

Despite the town's many attractive qualities, good strategic location and considerable input/efforts of many committed sections of the local community, the town centre (similar to many smaller Irish rural towns) has suffered significant decline in recent years. There are high levels of dereliction/vacancy and a number of "key" properties are in poor condition requiring considerable improvement and repair. Furthermore there is a lack of good quality central/shared public realm/space and issues exist around movement/connections to, from and within the town centre. Cumulatively this all potentially contributes to what is now a real lack of vibrancy, vitality and attractiveness within the town centre.

There remains however significant opportunities to avail of, in order to regenerate and reinvigorate the town centre. The purpose of The Milford TCF Plan, which is prepared in line with the new National Policy 'Town Centre First – A Policy Approach for Irish Towns', is to assist in this process.

The geographical extent of the area to be covered by the plan is identified on the adjacent map and focuses upon the town centre area but also includes the wider town area (both as defined by the settlement framework in the County Development Plan, 2018-2024 (as varied). Furthermore a significant out of town brownfield site (the former Milford Bakery) is included within the study area. This site has a significant local employment past and it is considered to be strategic to the renewal, regeneration and future development of Milford.



The study area (scale 1:12,500)

**The purpose of the Town Centre First Plan**

The Milford TCF Plan will be regeneration and renewal focused with a view to strengthening the role, image, vibrancy, vitality and resilience of Milford town centre. It will put place-making at the centre of the value proposition for the town as a means of enabling and attracting investment and regeneration.

It will consider key thematic areas including: dereliction and vacancy, housing, regeneration and opportunity sites, an Gaeltacht, natural and built heritage, tourism, festivals and events, commercial/economic development opportunities, community provision, walking, sport and recreation, public realm, the physical environment, biodiversity, climate change & sustainability, parking, access and infrastructure.

Furthermore the Plan will provide for the convergence of community vision, business interests, local knowledge and key Sectoral Stakeholder and Local Authority multi-disciplinary expertise in co-designing a roadmap for the regeneration and future development of Milford together with the more detailed design of actions in respect of key sites.

This project is funded through the Town and Village Renewal Fund programme and the 1st Phase of the Town Centre First Masterplan Initiative implemented by the Department of Rural and Community Development as a part of Our Rural Future.

Our Rural Future outlines a vision to support the regeneration and development of rural towns and villages to contribute to local and national economic recovery, and to enable people to live and work in a vibrant environment. The Town Centre First policy (TCFAPA) is central to this vision. It represents a new approach to the development of our towns where local communities and local businesses are central to re-imagining their own towns and planning their own futures. The Policy sets out a framework to facilitate and resource each town to chart their own future through a tailored plan, developed collaboratively and supported by their Local Authority. The policy aims to create town centres that function as viable, vibrant and attractive places for people to live, work and visit, while also functioning as the service, social, cultural and recreational hub of the local community. This will be achieved through a tailored TCF Plan which is underpinned by a clear diagnosis of local strengths and challenges and driven by the local community and businesses supported by the Local Authority.

The Plan presents a vital opportunity to establish a vision for the regeneration and future development of Milford. It identifies an agreed strategic vision, themes and objectives which respond to the issues, challenges, needs and opportunities which emerge from the process. A Masterplan has been established, along with practical and achievable actions and a viable pipeline of future and site specific projects and interventions.



The purpose of the Milford Town Centre First Plan.

**The process of the Town Centre First Plan**

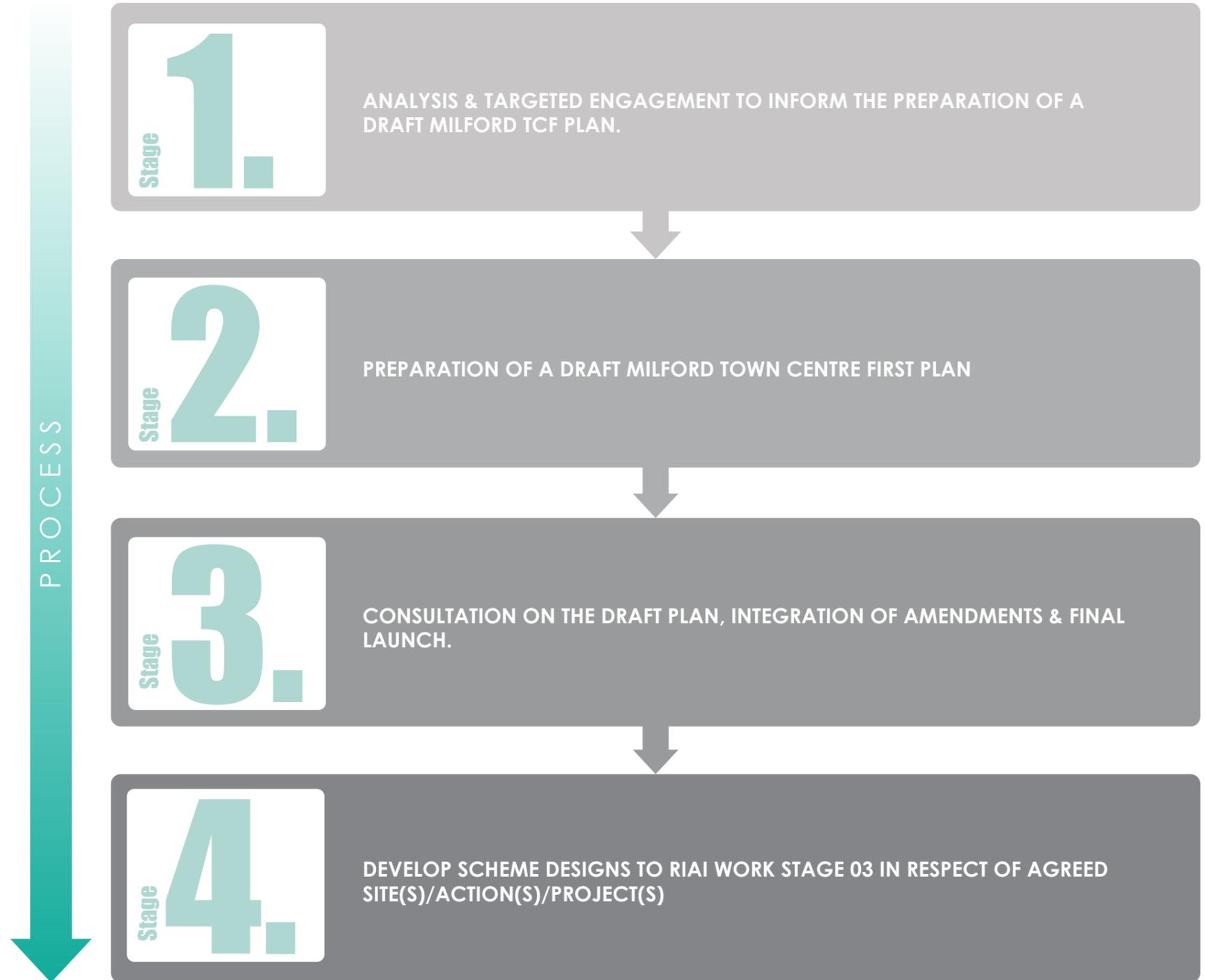
The Milford Town Centre First Plan is the outcome of 3 work stages (additional to the production of the Plan a further stage 4 is proposed to develop an agreed site(s)/ action(s) to RIAI Work Stage 03), which are identified in the adjacent diagram. These work stages represent a series of integrated and iterative analysis, appraisal, masterplanning and design outputs that ultimately leads to and provides a viable pipeline of regeneration actions, interventions and projects.

Stage 1 of the process involved the completion of a baseline audit/analysis of the current functioning of Milford town centre alongside a review of previous studies and continuous engagement with public authorities, service providers, private companies and other key stakeholders, including the local community. The analysis of Milford was supplemented by a range of physical assessments and surveys of the demographic, social, economic, and physical aspects of the town, covering all aspects of relevance to the project. The findings were collated and factored into the development of an Emerging Plan which formed the basis for the completion of work stage 2.

Work stage 2 comprised of the preparation of a Draft TCF Plan which provided an overall regeneration and future development framework for Milford. It provides a Masterplan and goes on to identify key actions for the town centre to support the sustainable regeneration of the town over the next 10 years and beyond. Using the "traffic light" method, indicative priority, timeframe and cost bands have been identified for each action. As appropriate some of the actions were developed to identify a possible concept design option (or options), demonstrating the key design principles required, such as appropriate access, movement, layout, building form and massing etc. The Draft TCF Plan suggested a vision, themes, and high level objectives which aimed to make the most of the assets and to address the issues arising from the Stage 1 analysis and consultation process.

Consultation on the Draft Plan took place at work stage 3, and subsequently appropriate amendments were integrated into this final Milford TCF Plan.

Following completion and publication of the Town Centre First Plan, work on Stage 4 will commence. This will comprise of a Developed Scheme Design (planning) to RIAI Work Stage 03 in respect of one (or more) agreed site(s)/project(s). It will include the development of, consultation on, and publication of a statutory planning scheme for the agreed project(s) and will be informed by the Town Centre First Plan.



*The process of the Milford Town Centre First Plan.*



# A summary of the Stage 1 Baseline Analysis & it's consultation process

The Town Centre First Plan was informed by the completion of a **baseline analysis** and **targeted consultation**, which took place during Stage One of the plan process. This section provides a **summary of the key findings** from these, as follows:

## HEALTH

The health picture within the town appears to be **quite positive** with over 80% of residents being in good health generally.

## SOCIAL CONTEXT

Given its close proximity to Letterkenny, the county's largest service centre, Milford is considered to be **relatively well catered for** with community services and facilities including **educational, ecclesiastical, indoor and outdoor recreational and medical facilities**. The town also includes emergency services including a **Garda Station and Fire Station**.

Services within the town centre include the typical retail facilities such as **convenience shopping and pharmacy and service retail facilities including a credit union and post office**. Other community based facilities include a **community play group, medical centre and St Peter's Church**. The Council's **Public Service Centre** is also located within the town centre and provides a range of public services including vehicle tax, adjoining library and nearby recycling centre. At the top of Main Street is **Milford and District Resource Centre** which offers a wide range of valuable community services and support across multiple areas and for all ages and abilities. The town provides a mix of other community and recreational and sporting facilities including the **community hub and some sports facilities with associated pitches** etc.

## HISTORY

The town was **founded in the 18th century** by the Clements family. The town was constructed along a north/south axis at a water source and a **key gateway to the two peninsulas of Fanad at the north east and Rosguill to the north west**. It was named after a mill that was located on **Maggie's Burn** at the foot of the town.

## ECCLESIASTICAL

**6%** of the population are noted as being of 'another' religion

**80%** of the population are Roman Catholic

**11%** stated they had no religion

## EDUCATION

The education profile of the town identifies that the **majority of residents (over 70%) have a primary, secondary education or technical/ vocational qualification**. The town benefits from the presence of **two large secondary schools**, which are attended by over 1,400 pupils, and a **Further Education and Training Centre**, which is attended by c.110 students. A further c.260 pupils attend **Scoil Mhurie National School**.

"There are two large Secondary Schools with in the town ...

... **"818** pupils attend Loreto Community School,

**& 601** pupils attend Mulroy College" ....

..... furthermore **"110** students & **11** staff attend the Further Education & Training Centre"

## POPULATION

The **2016 Census** recorded the total population of the Milford area at **1,037 people**, an **increase of approximately 7% from the 2011 census**. Of these 1,037 people, a total of **307 live within the town centre** with **136 individual households**.

## HOUSING NEED

There is a **significant demand for social housing** throughout Donegal. In Milford there is a current total gross need of **31 units**, with the greatest demand being for 2 bed and 3 bed dwellings.

## ECONOMIC STATUS & ACTIVITY

Of the members of the population who have economic status **35% are at work**, **24% are unemployed** having lost or given up previous job and **20% are retired**.

**35%** of the population aged 15 and over are at work

**24%** of the over 15 population are unemployed having lost or given up previous job

**16%** of those employed are in elementary occupations

**20%** are retired

## A summary of the Stage 1 Baseline Analysis & it's consultation process...continued

### VACANCY



**c. 24 no. vacant sites / properties in total**

The town centre contains multiple vacant and derelict properties of varying condition, notable examples are the former Hotel on Main Street and the former Diamonds pub and adjoining buildings at Market Square, which are in a particular state of dereliction and given its prominent location is detrimental to the quality of the streetscape on the north western approach to the town centre. Dereliction and ground floor vacancy accounts for circa. 20% of all buildings within the town centre.

### MAJOR LANDHOLDINGS

As expected, and normal, the majority of properties and associated curtilages located within the town centre area are in the control/ownership of private individuals and groups. There is a small amount of land within the control/ownership of the Local Authority, most notably lands at Mount Marian in the west of the town and those lands associated with the Public Service Centre.



### CHARACTER AREAS

- **Node 1 - Market Square** - A key node where three routes converge. It is also the historic market place/public space, adjacent to the former Cattle and Pig Yards. Important vernacular/heritage buildings front onto the space to form a "square" at this most elevated part of the town centre.
- **Character Area 1 - "Upper" Main Street** - Stepping terraces of mostly two storey buildings with frontages directly abutting the pavements of Main Street. The uses are primarily residential, possibly as these were the historical uses, and also due to the steeper topography.
- **Character Area 2 - "Lower" Main Street** - This part of Main Street is flatter with the street again flanked by terraces of mainly two storey buildings. The buildings generally have direct frontages abutting the pavement. It is primarily of a commercial character/uses.
- **Character Area 3 - "The bottom of the town"** - This area contains a number of larger detached buildings which relate to the places character as a location of administrative and community facilities, which includes Donegal County Council's Public Service Centre, Amenity/Recycling Site, The Health Centre, The Chapel, Community playgroup and GAA/Soccer Pitches just beyond.
- **Node 2 - Southern node at Ramelton/Moyle Road junction** - This convergence of routes is defined by some of the aforementioned larger buildings and sites, but also some attractive vernacular terrace groupings of buildings located in and around Maggie's Burn which transverses the space. The space also feels a little more "green" than other spaces within the town centre.

### HOUSING STOCK

Primarily terraced units focused along Upper Main Street, with some on Lower Main Street. There are also a small number of detached properties located within "the backlands" of Main Street. There are a small number of early 21st century properties, most notably at Church Road, with some semi-detached at Moyle Road and a terrace at Lough Road. The residential pattern along Main Street is mixed with properties interspersed with other town centre uses. There are a modest number of flats/apartments and the greatest percentage of tenure is Local Authority rental, followed by owned outright.



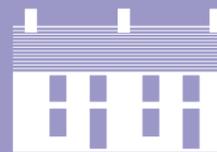
### BUILT HERITAGE



**14no. buildings on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage**



**5no. buildings / groupings of heritage value considered to be "at risk"**

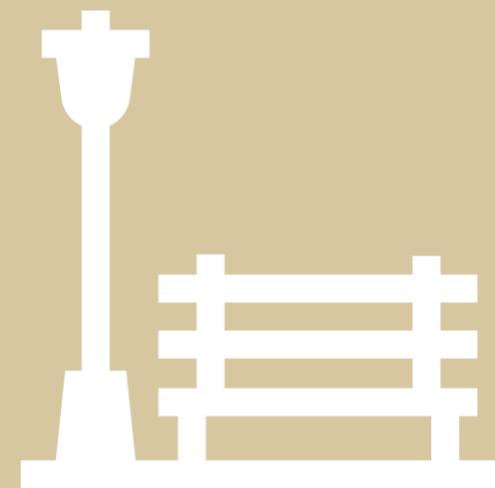


**c.63% of all buildings contribute very positively/positively to the streetscape**

### PUBLIC REALM

Main Street is the primary thoroughfare of the town and the overall impression is that this public space is in particular need of revitalisation as many of the features, including footpaths, are dated, tired and in poor upkeep. The roadway at Main Street tends to dominate the space and vehicular movement appears to take precedent. Due to the positioning, form and scale of it's adjoining buildings and historic functions, Market Square should be a key urban public space, however it's current use does not reflect this. The adjoining vacant buildings create inactivity, lack of vibrancy, poor appearance and detract from what could be a very pleasant public space. Again the area/node at the bottom of Main Street in the vicinity of the Health Centre, St Peter's, the Council Building and Maggie's Burn should be another key urban public space. It is more intensively used and in areas is attractively landscaped and more "green", however it is dominated by the roadway that transverses it and the subsequent junctions.

There is a small parklet located to the south of the Milford PSC and just immediately north west of the town centre there is a sizable green space with small play park at Mount Marian. GAA and Soccer grounds are located a short distance from the town centre (c.0.35km) to the south west along Moyle Road. This sizable green space is open to the public at various times for recreational uses including walking etc.



# A summary of the Stage 1 Baseline Analysis & it's consultation process...continued

## PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT

Pedestrian numbers in Milford town centre are relatively low, as exemplified by a pedestrian/footfall count completed as part of the baseline analysis. Any notable movement is largely found along Lower Main Street where the majority of local services are located and in proximity to a large proportion of the town's residential population. The upper section of Main Street experiences much lower levels of pedestrian movement. A Walkability Audit, completed as part of the baseline analysis, identified that the town's general walkability is hindered by footpaths which have poor visibility, are defective, cluttered, and/or obstructed by street furniture and other objects, and therefore highly unsuitable for those who are disabled or elderly. In addition, the walkability of Milford is particularly affected by an absence of footpaths, particularly along some of the secondary routes which connect the town centre to wider services and residential areas. It is therefore apparent that significant scope exists for improvements to the public footpath network.

The absence of safe crossing points at certain locations is a key consideration with potential conflicts between vehicular traffic and pedestrian movement. The junction between the Moyle Road and the Public Service Centre (PSC) entrance makes for a particularly difficult experience for pedestrians. Crossing is also an issue at the junction of Main Street and Lough Road and Main Street and Church Road, with visibility constrained by buildings, parked vehicles, and the narrow nature of these junctions. General issues with dropped kerb alignments and damaged tactile paving is a problem throughout the town. It is noted that Milford could soon benefit from potentially three separate Active Travel schemes (Kilmacrennan Road, Coopers Road and Drumbern Road) which could, if successfully approved, funded and implemented, provide significant infrastructural benefits to the town in terms of increased walkability, connectivity and green infrastructure potential.



## PUBLIC TRANSPORT

There are minimal public transport options and facilities serving Milford. There is only 1 route that passes through the town and no defined bus stop. Pick ups/drops offs currently take place at a undesignated point along Main Street, adjacent to the former townhall.



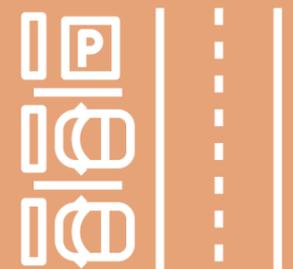
## VEHICULAR MOVEMENT

When travelling through the town centre along the R245, northward bound vehicles bypass Main Street traffic via a one-way system with a new road linking Kilmacrennan Road and Church Road. This takes away a significant level of through traffic from the town centre area. In this system, south bound traffic is directed along the entire length of Main Street. It has in some ways been quite successful at relieving congestion but there are some views that it has also had other more negative impacts upon Main St., such as possibly the reduction in passing trade, particularly at Upper Main St. and possibly the increasing of vehicle speeds along the one-way routes. The condition of Main Street has subsequently deteriorated over time and is in need of significant upgrading to make it "feel" and function as a shared urban space.



## CARPARKING

The main area of public car parking in the town centre is provided to the western backlands of Main Street where 28no. parking spaces, including 2no. disabled spaces, are available. The other public car park is located at Upper Main Street and to the west of Market Square with 14no. spaces available, including 1no. disabled space, however this area feels remote and poorly linked to any uses that would require it. It is evident from the parking audit exercise, completed as part of this stage 1 analysis, that the main public car park is well utilised throughout the entire week. It is also evident that the Upper Main Street car park is particularly under-used, possibly a result of its location and proximity to the dereliction at Market Square. The remainder of parking in the town centre is provided via on street accommodation. On the basis of the baseline analysis, the town centre appears to be fairly well served in terms of car-parking.



# A summary of the Stage 1 Baseline Analysis & it's consultation process...continued

## ENGAGEMENT

Consultation with and the participation of a range of stakeholders is a critical component of the Town Centre First Plan process. The Plan will provide for the convergence of community visions, business interests, local knowledge and key Sectoral Stakeholder and Local Authority multi-disciplinary expertise. The outcomes of the engagement and consultation undertaken has informed the preparation and development of the Plan.

## ELECTED MEMBERS

Agreement and input from Elected Members of the Letterkenny-Milford Municipal District is hugely important throughout the Town Centre First process with their unique experience and local knowledge an invaluable asset.

## GENERAL PUBLIC

Community consultation, arguably the most important element of engagement, has **taken place at key intervals** throughout the Town Centre First Plan process. The first (Stage 1) **Public Consultation Event was held** on the 22nd February 2023 and was very well attended with approx. 120 people dropping in throughout the session, which lasted from 3:00pm to 8:00pm. In addition to this, a 3 week period of public consultation was facilitated, with all information available on the **dedicated website**, running from Thursday 16th February to Thursday 9th March 2023. In total, **223 survey forms and 16 comments sheets were completed and returned**. 3 letters and 2 email responses were also submitted. This was in addition to feedback received via face to face discussion during the drop-in event. In terms of the key findings and outcomes of the various consultations, the following highlights were of particular relevance.

## DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL DEPARTMENTS

A number of topics were discussed with DCC Departments, most notably regarding parking, access and movement; wastewater; housing; dereliction, vacancy and built form; active travel and recreation space; conservation and heritage and economic development.

## YOUTH & KIDS

Engagement with the younger members of the community via the secondary schools & primary school.

- "... improve the footpaths between school + the town"
- "... a new town park to play in"
- "... we need a 'hang-out' space or facility for teens and younger people"
- "... a hall for sports"
- "... skate park"
- "... a cinema so I can see the latest movies"
- "... somewhere to ride my bike"

## COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER GROUP

A 'Key Stakeholder Group' was established, which comprises of a number of representatives of local interest groups. Key areas discussed included Market Square; the Former Milford Hotel; lands to the east of Main Street at Lough Napucklan; Main Street and lands at Mount Marian. General dereliction/vacancy; walkability and available funding streams were also discussed.

### MOST LIKED ABOUT MILFORD

- Location - central for access to North West Donegal and its proximity to sea and beauty spots such as Mulroy Bay.
- Community spirit and friendly nature of residents/people
- Healthy level of public service offer such as the three Schools, Post Office, the Public Service Centre, Library and Health Centre
- Sports 'Hub' at the GAA / Athletics grounds and other associated sports facilities in the town

### LEAST LIKED ABOUT MILFORD

- Derelict & vacant buildings detract from the visual appearance of the town - Milford Hotel, Market Square, Former Courthouse
- Limited facilities and services for young people - lack of play areas especially
- Condition and lack of public footpaths at certain locations - Kilmacrennan Road, Lough Road, Coopers Road, Grey Rocks, the Lagg filling station and Mulroy Woods
- No central or focal point in the town - limited places and spaces to relax and meet friends or family

### POSSIBLE 'PRIORITY' PROJECTS

- The former **Milford Hotel** and **Market Square** were identified by a high number of respondents as being a priority for the town
- A **new town park** was also viewed as being a high priority, with many singling out the lands at **Lower Mount Marian** as their preferred destination for such a facility
- Provision of **new and improved footpaths** throughout the town was a common listed priority - Kilmacrennan Rd, Lough Rd, Coopers Rd and Grey Rocks
- Increased provision of **public recreation / green spaces** in the town was noted as being a priority

### AREAS/FEATURES WHICH REQUIRE PARTICULAR ATTENTION

- Former Milford Hotel, former courthouse and Market Square were the three areas which respondents believe require particular attention.
- Lands at Lower Mount Marian received a lot of attention - in relation to a play park/Dome
- General condition of buildings, roads & footpaths noted by many



## A summary of the Stage 2 consultation process...continued

The Draft Milford Town Centre First Plan was subject to a **comprehensive phase of consultation** with all the identified stakeholders, representing the range of statutory, community, and political interests in the area. This consultation took place between **July and August 2023**. All information and feedback received has been recorded and collated by the consultant team and **fully considered through a process of analysis and appraisal**. This section provides a **summary of the key findings** from these, as follows:

### DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL DEPARTMENTS

A Cross-Directorate workshop was arranged and took place on the 20th July 2023 in order to engage with relevant Council departments to gain their thoughts on the Draft Town Centre First Plan for Milford. The following is a summary of the key discussion/thought points:

#### Milford Hotel Site

- The proposal would change the morphology of the town and so any intervention to this hotel property would need to be considered carefully to ensure the proposals would work successfully.
- Need to ensure and demonstrate that any proposed road widening can be sufficiently accommodated.

#### Market Square & Public Realm Improvements

- Market Square re-development 'Option 1' is regarded as the best approach from a roads perspective.
- There was support for the concept of re-surfacing the space to present as consistent throughout.
- Widely agreed that the best location for a bus stop would be in front of the Health Centre. The provision of a suitable pedestrian crossing to the Health Centre would also be extremely important within this space.
- Use of high spec materials would be desirable to ensure a quality enhancement of the public realm. This must however be weighed against the maintenance and public liability implications.

#### The former Cattle Market Yard

- It was confirmed that the northwestern portion of this site is within the registered ownership of DCC.
- The location, layout and mix of housing within the proposed residential development is suitable and appropriate.

#### Lands at Mt. Marian

- The design concept was complemented, with the needs of all interest groups catered for within the scheme.
- Consideration should be given to repositioning the playground and MUGA pitch further away from Lower Mt. Marian, to ensure that these do not become solely associated with this residential development.
- From a Roads perspective, the proposed entrance arrangements to the site appeared generally acceptable. It was stressed that the specific needs of the schools, needs to be considered further if this scheme progresses.

### ELECTED MEMBERS

Elected Members of the Letterkenny-Milford Municipal District were invited to provide feedback and comment on the Draft Town Centre First Plan. Members attended a targeted consultation workshop on the 6th July 2023 at the Milford Public Service Centre, allowing constructive review and discussion. The following is a summary of the key discussion/thought points:

#### Former Milford Hotel & Town Hall

- Wide agreement that the Former Hotel site should be the number one priority.
- Members were also keenly interested in the future plans for the Former Town Hall building and the potential for commercial/community uses was discussed.

#### Former Pig & Cow Markets

- The design concepts presented received a positive response from Members. Land ownership and the impact on the development potential of these sites was discussed and reviewed.

#### Lands at Lower Mount Marian

- The design concept layout for the lands at Lower Mount Marian was welcomed and complemented.
- There were some queries regarding the size of the potential 'dome' and whether it is too small. It was confirmed that the size was consistent with that assessed and proposed by the various local sports groups/associations.
- It was also suggested that the provision of a MUGA within the site could take away from the existing MUGA, located at the GAA grounds.
- Bus parking for the local schools was discussed with Members and it was noted that bus parking space numbers may have to be increased to meet the needs of the schools and this should be reflected if the project moves forward.

#### Former Milford Bakery

- Main point of concern regarding the Bakery site is public safety and the general condition of the buildings. The site is regarded by many as a blot on the landscape/Mulroy Bay.
- In terms of its future development, a public-private partnership is regarded as the most realistic mechanism for delivery. The ability of the Council to purchase the site was discussed and the potential cost implications etc.
- The layout presented in the Draft Plan was broadly viewed positively.

#### Public Realm

- Members appeared content with the draft public realm proposals, although it was noted that electric vehicle charging points are needed in the town and that this should be mentioned within the public realm section of the Plan.

#### Delivery timescales

- It was suggested that the potential delivery timescales could be amended, particularly in relation to the shorter timeframe period which some Members thought should be reduced to 0-3 years, as opposed to 0-5 years.

# A summary of the Stage 2 consultation process...continued

## COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER GROUP

As part of the Stage 2 consultation process, further targeted consultation took place with the 'Community Stakeholder Group', which included a workshop on 20th July 2023 at the Milford Public Service Centre. The following is a summary of the key discussion/thought points:

### Former Milford Hotel & Town Hall

- Overall consensus that this should be taken forward as the no. 1 priority project arising from the Milford TCF Plan.
- Design Concept was on the whole received favourably with some queries around the safety of the junction from Lough Road onto Main Street, the provision of footpaths and lighting as well as parking.
- Proposed housing units at the rear of the site may need to be omitted and replaced with car parking.



### Market Square & Public Realm Proposals

- Consensus that Market Square is a priority space within the town centre area and that it requires change.
- The general ethos of the Design Concept to open up and de-clutter the space was considered favourably and it was felt overall that Option 1, to retain the existing road alignment as is, is the best option for this space.
- It was also remarked that the proposed improvements to the public realm at the foot of the town (Key Area 2) would also be extremely important.



### Footpaths & pedestrian infrastructure

- Many comments made regarding the poor quality of existing footpaths within the town centre area and the absence of essential footpath infrastructure linking to schools, housing estates and other locations outside of the town centre.
- It was specifically requested that the language around the provision of a new footpath, inclusive of lighting, within the Plan should be strengthened to support future funding opportunities.



### Lands at Mt. Marian

- The broad opinion was that the Design Concept Plan was excellent and provided for a high-quality recreational space with a range of uses that would greatly benefit the community.
- The suitability and appropriateness of the 'air dome' structure was queried and discussed.
- It was also commented that provision should be made for parking adjacent to the playground.
- Discussion also focused on the future management and maintenance of this space including any buildings provided and representatives from Milford Tidy Towns highlighted the limited capacity of the group to maintain areas like this.

### Traffic Calming

- A number of general comments were made regarding the need to provide for traffic calming measures at various locations including Main Street, on Church Road, within housing estates such as Lower Mt. Marian and at the entrances to the schools.
- The exit from Church Road onto Main Street was also identified as a particular problem arising from existing parking spaces to the upper side and the existing building to the lower side. It was suggested that there may be an option to acquire buildings/land to provide for a much improved junction arrangement.



### Former Bakery Site

- Limited discussion on this as it was considered that the Plan should be town centre focused. The potential of this site was acknowledged however it was felt that this should be a private led initiative.



# A summary of the Stage 2 consultation process...continued

## GENERAL PUBLIC

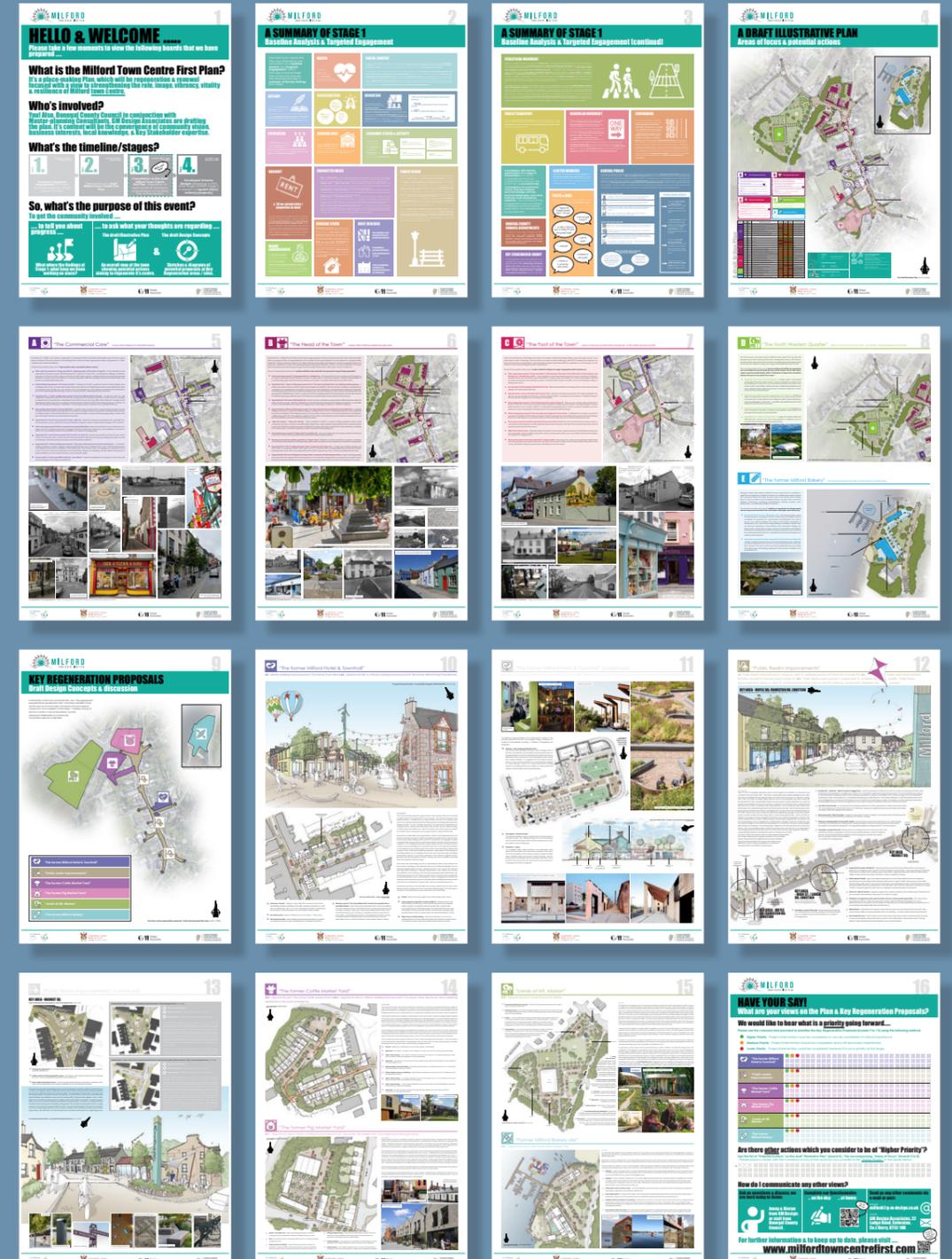
The second public engagement event of the Milford Town Centre First Plan took place on the 26th July 2023. The drop-in event was held at the Milford Public Service Centre and provided an opportunity for residents and any other stakeholders to share their thoughts on the Draft Plan for Milford. The event was healthily attended with approx. 60-70 people dropping in throughout the session, which lasted from 3:00pm to 8:00pm. In addition to the drop-in consultation event, a 4 week ongoing period of public consultation was facilitated, running from Monday 10th July to Friday 4th August 2023. The period of public consultation was supplemented by a feedback survey form, published on the project website. The draft document itself was also available for viewing online, with physical copies available on request and on display at the following Donegal County Council premises:

- Milford Public Service Centre
- Letterkenny Public Service Centre
- Three Rivers Centre, Lifford

In total, 38 survey forms and 3 comments sheets were completed and returned during the consultation period. 1 email response was also submitted. This was in addition to the feedback received during the drop-in event. The drop-in event was supplemented by summary boards and presentation material, which included a 'project priority' board, allowing attendees to rank the key regeneration proposals based on their considered level of importance.



The event.



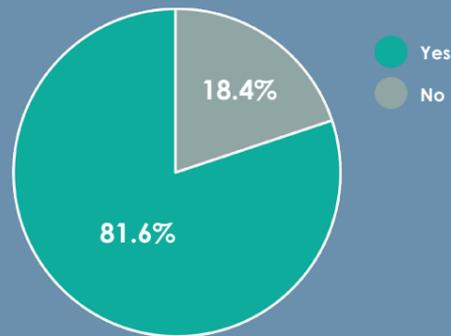
The "Presentation Boards" used for the public event

# A summary of the Stage 2 consultation process...continued

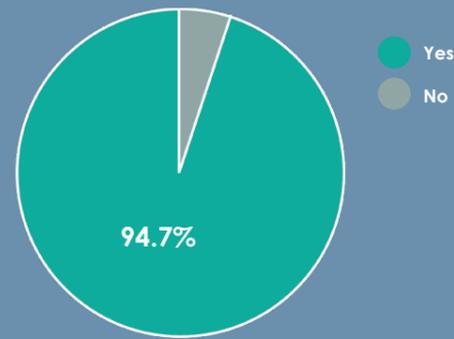
## SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

### SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE DATA

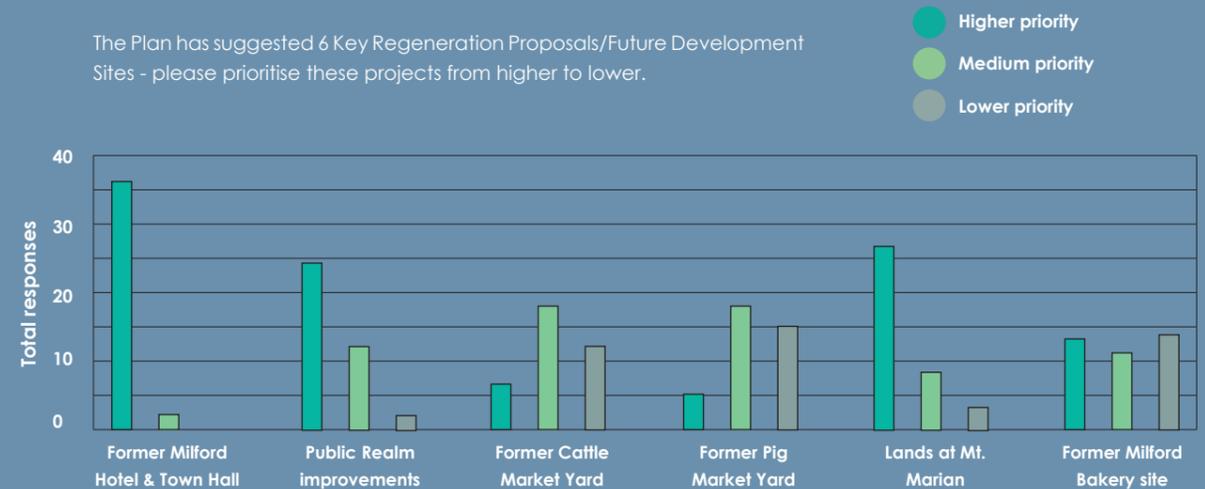
The Plan sets out a number of aims and objectives - do you agree with the content of these?



The Plan contains a Draft Action Plan with a range of potential actions identified - do you agree with the content of the Action Plan table?



The Plan has suggested 6 Key Regeneration Proposals/Future Development Sites - please prioritise these projects from higher to lower.



## SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

### WHAT WAS SAID



The "Feedback" board with priority stickers.

### Key Regeneration Proposals / Future Development Sites

- 1 Former Milford Hotel & Town Hall**  
 Viewed as being of the highest priority to the public. Concept proposal was largely supported and welcomed, however with some reservations regarding the provision of housing. Alternative uses suggested, such as increased parking, open space etc.
- 2 Lands at Lower Mount Marian**  
 Ranks as the second highest priority amongst those who participated in the consultation process. The regeneration proposal for this site was largely supported and welcomed however it is accepted that there is scope for flexibility in terms of the layout of the scheme.
- 3 Public Realm Improvements**  
 Identified as the third highest priority for the town, with improvements/intervention at Market Square being of most importance. Feedback has been consistent with regards to the need for improved and extended footpaths throughout the town.
- 4 Former Milford Bakery site**  
 The Former Milford Bakery site received a mixed response. A large proportion of respondents made it clear that this site should not be a priority and that the Plan should concentrate on the town centre area. There are however some who see the site as being a priority to the town, not least due to its historical importance and its unique setting and potential.
- 5 Former Cattle Market Yard**  
 Concept design complemented and supported, however regarded as being of medium to lower importance to the public.
- 6 Former Pig Market Yard**  
 Concept design complemented and supported, however regarded as being of medium to lower importance to the public. Land ownership is regarded as a major barrier to progressing development at these sites.

PRIORITY



# Section

# B



A vision, guiding high-level aims & objectives

A Strategic Vision

*“To **engage, mobilise & empower** the local community & business stakeholders to deliver a **vibrant, liveable & fully functioning service town centre**, with a **flourishing population**, that has a **strong employment & housing choice, community & social amenities, high quality of life & positive public/civic spaces.**”*

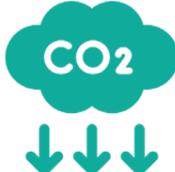
The strategic vision has evolved from research, analysis and consultation and establishes the core objectives for the Plan to deliver.

Guiding High-level Aims

 <p><b>General:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To secure the sustainable physical, social and economic regeneration of Milford town centre.</li> <li>To strengthen the capacity of Milford town centre as a desirable and viable location for homes, jobs, public life and day-to-day activity.</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Housing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To identify a robust range of public and private options for town centre housing solutions, which includes: brownfield site re-development, re-purposing vacant and derelict properties, development of back lands, redundant lands and opportunity sites with more opportunities for right sizing for different needs over time;</li> </ul>
 <p><b>The local economy &amp; employment:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To identify gaps in the economic development offering of the town centre and opportunities for new long term sustainable public, private, and/or social enterprises or businesses;</li> <li>To encourage a complementary mix of uses generating activity within the town, with further regard to both the day time and night time economies and digital transformation;</li> <li>Develop the tourism product and offering of the town centre including the natural and built heritage, nurturing both existing initiatives and new.</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Community:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To transform existing, and develop new, public amenities for the benefit of people of all ages with flexible multi-user capacity for social purposes and improved commercial function.</li> <li>Provide opportunities for excellence in active recreation, important for physical and mental well being through for example the enhancement and extension of a connected network of walkways, trails, paths, cycleways or play facilities.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Roads, Transportation &amp; Mobility:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To optimise connectivity and accessibility and to encourage sustainable mobility.</li> <li>To implement efficient traffic management so as to reduce the impact of private vehicles on the public realm and living environment;</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Placemaking, Culture &amp; Heritage:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To enhance the public realm and create more attractive streets and spaces, and meet the needs of persons with disability or reduced mobility.</li> <li>Protect and develop existing heritage assets within the town centre.</li> <li>Create and capitalise on opportunities to celebrate local heritage and culture to maximise its use, income potential and appreciation for all, including local residents and welcoming visitors.</li> </ul>

Guiding Objectives

The delivery of the strategic vision will require significant progress on the following regeneration objectives:

 <p>To plan for a greater proportion of residential &amp; commercial development to be realised in the town centre.</p>	 <p>To be regeneration &amp; renewal focussed.</p>	 <p>To provide for strong housing &amp; employment choice.</p>	 <p>To enhance environmental assets &amp; address environmental challenges.</p>	 <p>To plan for &amp; enable enhanced accessibility and mobility choice.</p>
 <p>To plan for a vibrant, SMART, liveable town centre with animated streets &amp; capacity for social purpose/ commercial function.</p>	 <p>To address social &amp; community challenges through positive urban design &amp; physical interventions.</p>	 <p>To establish &amp; prioritise a pipeline of future viable regeneration projects.</p>	 <p>To consider flood risk &amp; the inter-relationship with potential regeneration projects.</p>	 <p>To incorporate carbon neutral principles where practicable in all aspects of proposed actions, interventions or development.</p>

# Section



An Illustrative Plan

# A



## "The Commercial Core"

- 1 Public realm improvements A: Along Lower Main St., adjoining section of Church Rd. & Lough Rd.
- 2 Historic building improvements A: The former Town Hall
- 3 Opportunity Site A / Historic building improvements B: The former Milford Hotel/Tara Bar/site
- 4 Shop frontage improvements A: At Lower Main Street
- 5 Opportunity site B: Land to the rear (west) of "Dustys" public bar
- 6 Public realm improvements B: Public car-park to the rear (west) of Main Street
- 7 Opportunity site C: Land to the rear (west) of "The Traveller's Inn" public bar
- 8 Opportunity Site D / Historic building improvements C: Three storey, three bay house and site at Church Road
- 9 Bus stop Option A: At the former Milford Hotel site / Lower Main St.

# B



## "The Head of the Town"

- 10 Public realm improvements C: Along Upper Main St., and Market Sq.
- 11 Opportunity Site E / Historic building improvements D & E: The former Pig Market/Yard, and adjoining building grouping
- 12 Opportunity site F: The former Cattle Market/Yard
- 13 Opportunity Site G / Historic building improvements F: Two storey, three bay house and site at the south of Market Sq.
- 14 "Right Size Housing" / "Bring Back Housing"
- 15 Shop frontage improvements B: At Upper Main St. and Market Sq.
- 16 Enhanced movement/connections opportunity A: Cooper's Road
- 17 Opportunity Site H: Site of existing takeaway outlet, commercial and storage units
- 18 Opportunity Site I: Site of an existing terrace of ground floor commercial units with apartments above

# C



## "The Foot of the Town"

- 19 Public realm improvements D: Along Lower Main St. at Kilmacrennan Rd junction to the Public Service Centre entrance, and the Moyle Rd. / Ramelton Rd. junction
- 20 Bus stop Option B: At the Ramelton Rd./Moyle Rd. junction
- 21 Opportunity site J: Land to north of the Public Service Centre
- 22 Shop frontage improvements C: At Kilmacrennan Rd. / Moyle Rd.
- 23 Historic building improvements G: The former Reformed Presbyterian Church and site
- 24 Enhanced movement/connections opportunity B: Kilmacrennan Road
- 25 Milford Public Service Centre
- 26 Enhanced movement/connections opportunity C: to Mulroy Woods

# D



## "The NW Quarter"

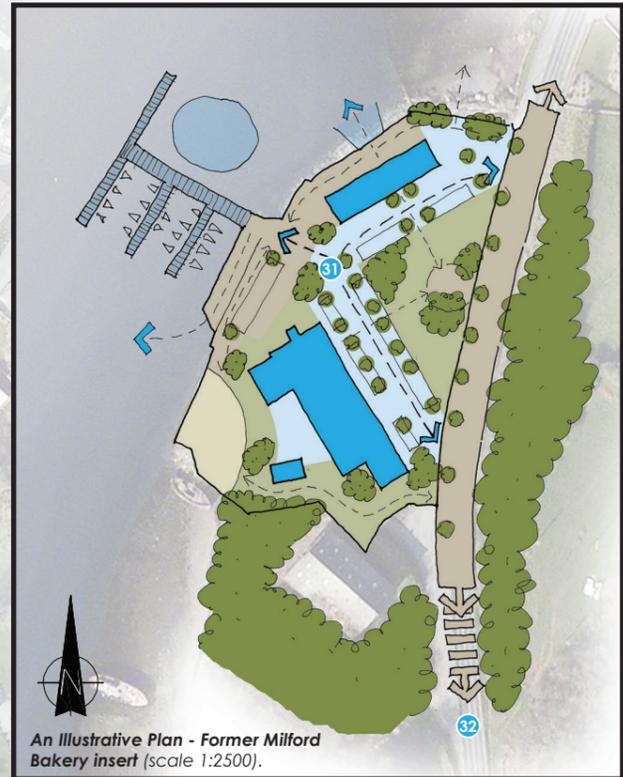
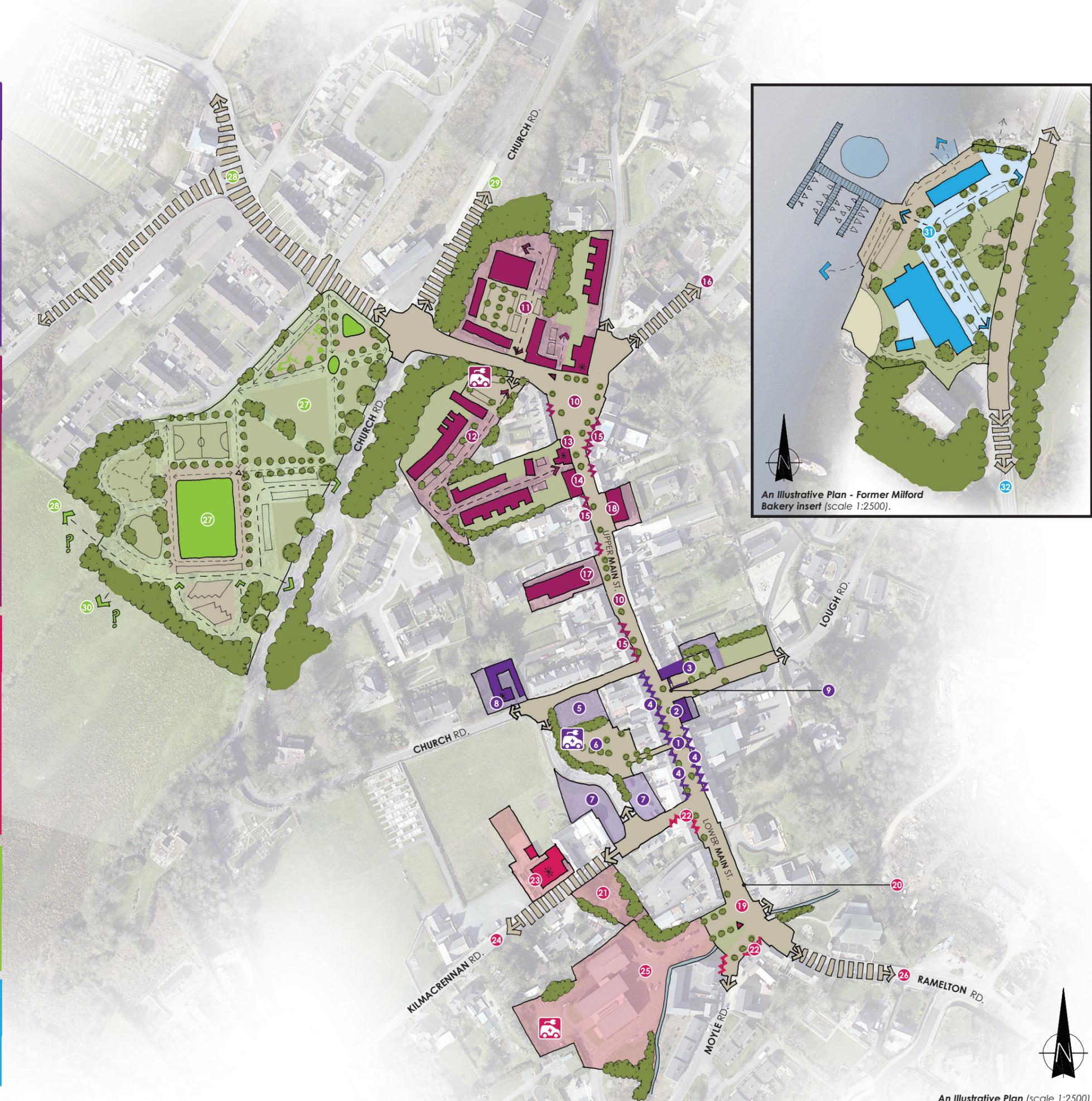
- 27 Opportunity site K: Lands at Lower Mt Marian
- 28 Enhanced movement/connections opportunity D: to the Schools
- 29 Enhanced movement/connections opportunity E: Drumbern Road
- 30 Opportunity site L: Lands at Convent Road

# E



## "The former Bakery"

- 31 Opportunity site M: The former Milford Bakery Site
- 32 Enhanced movement/connections opportunity G: to/from the former Bakery Site



# A

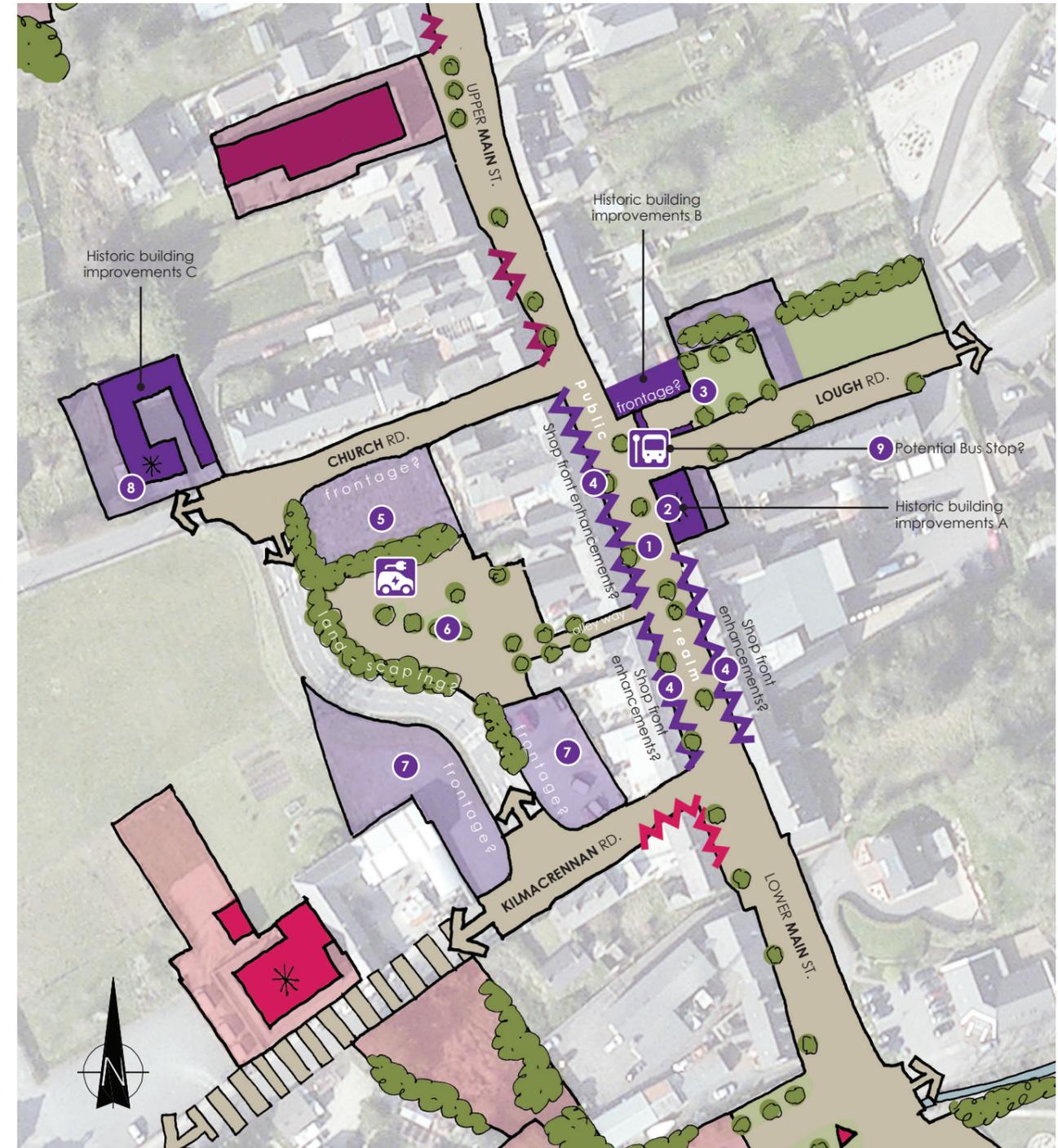
## “The Commercial Core” - Lower Main Street & it's backland areas



Lower Main St. is “Flutter” and contains a larger portion of commercial activity. The historical street pattern gives the street a good sense of enclosure & structure. However some buildings/public realm have been inappropriately altered, are generally in a “fired” condition and in need of revitalisation.

The aim of the potential actions are to “improve public realm, movement & address vacancy”.

- 1 **Public realm improvements A: Along Lower Main St., adjoining section of Church Rd. & Lough Rd.** - Could potentially include improvement of junction layouts with Kilmacrennan Rd., Lough Rd. & Church Rd.; connecting and widening of footpaths, particularly at Church Rd. (Max's cafe) and at the Town Hall along Lough Rd.; carriage and foot way resurfacing; improved pedestrian crossings; review and definition of on-street parking areas; street tree and green infrastructure enhancements; and provision of updated street furniture etc.
- 2 **Historic building improvements A: The former Town Hall** - A building on the NIAH, of particular built and cultural heritage value considered to be “at risk”, at a prominent location at the centre of the town. Potential improvements could address the structure and aesthetics of the building (e.g. roof, windows, doors, and signage etc.), in the short term preventing further deterioration and in the medium/longer term securing it's place as a key focal point contributing positively to the town.
- 3 **Opportunity Site A / Historic building improvements B: The former Milford Hotel/Tara Bar/site** - A prominent central site, with a significant curtilage that extends to the east with frontage onto the adjoining Lough Road. The site could be considered an opportunity for comprehensive re-development and options for new uses (e.g. public realm) and the addressing of existing issues (such as parking) could be explored. The front portion of the building grouping on the site is of particular heritage value and although not “protected” could be appropriately incorporated into any potential new uses.
- 4 **Shop frontage improvements A: At Lower Main Street** - Along both sides of the street, bar a couple of better examples, the shop frontages include poor quality and inappropriate interventions and designs. Explore the potential for traditional enhancements, including re-design to achieve better proportions, use of natural materials, and appropriate signage/signwriting, in order to help return the historic character and charm back into the street.
- 5 **Opportunity site B: Land to the rear (west) of “Dustys” public bar** - Explore the development potential of this “greenfield” site, with appropriate uses (e.g. residential/commercial/additional parking) in order to create suitable frontage to Church Rd. etc.
- 6 **Public realm improvements B: Public car-park to the rear (west) of Main Street** - Explore the potential for enhancing this area, incl. review of layout to achieve more spaces, its frontage to the link road (boundary treatments), and its pedestrian connections to Main St. Also, as a possible location for the installation of a number of E-charging points.
- 7 **Opportunity site C: Land to the rear (west) of “The Traveller's Inn” public bar** - Explore the potential to enhance this area, (which is split by the newer link road), in order to provide more appropriate frontage (e.g. landscaping or buildings) along this busy road and intercept unattractive existing views of the rears of the east side of Main St.
- 8 **Opportunity Site D / Historic building improvements C: Three storey, three bay house and site at Church Road** - A “heritage/ vernacular” building, located on a sizable curtilage, of particular built heritage value considered to be “at risk”. Potential improvements could address the structure and aesthetics of the building (e.g. roof, windows, doors, and signage etc.), securing it's use as a multi unit home. It could also be explored how the remaining curtilage and outbuildings could be utilised in the provision of further residential units at this attractive location close to the town centre.
- 9 **Bus stop Option A: At the former Milford Hotel site / Lower Main St.** - Explore the potential for bus stopping at this location with enhanced signage, and waiting areas/shelter etc.



The “Commercial Core” area and potential actions map (scale 1:1250).



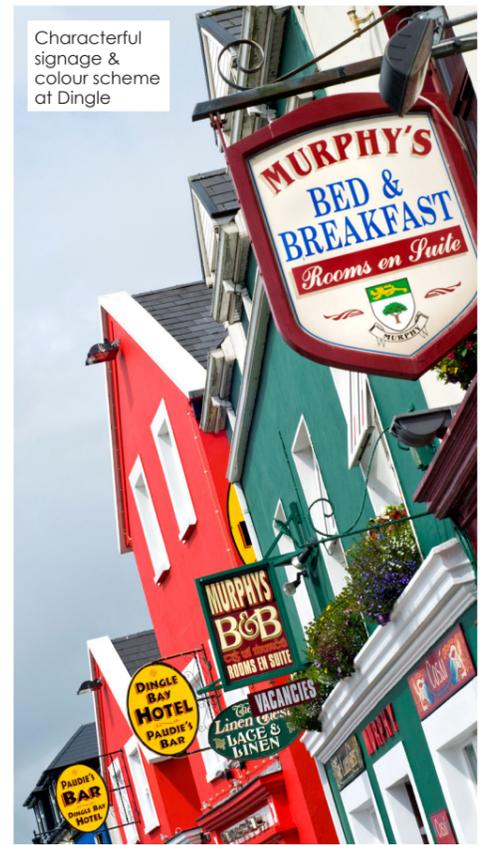
Footpath widening, attractive finishes & street furniture at Clonakilty



Innovative movement solutions at Poynton



Underused and unattractive backlands



Characterful signage & colour scheme at Dingle



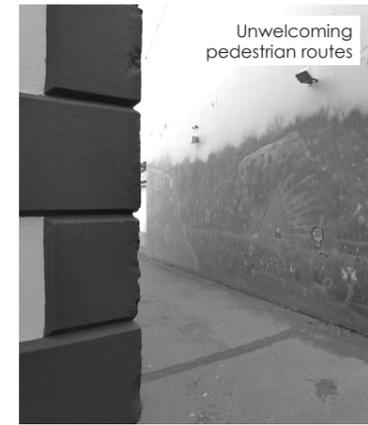
Main St. is fairly unattractive & dominated by vehicles/street clutter



Characterless shop fronts



Attractive alley way at Youghal, with accesses, overlooking & lighting



Unwelcoming pedestrian routes



Charming wayfinding at Dromore



Vacant buildings at the heart of the town centre



Attractive traditional Irish shop frontages in Cork & Kilkenny



Street trees & planting/greenery on buildings at Clonakilty

A mood board for "The Commercial Core" - images of the existing situation and other "best practice" examples demonstrating the ambition.

# B

## “The Head of the Town” - Upper Main Street & Market Square area



Upper Main St. is a “steeper” part of the town & contains a larger proportion of homes. However many of this stock is older and smaller terrace housing and often not appropriately laid out for modern day living and therefore not overly attractive to younger families. Market Sq. is the town’s historical outdoor “civic space” with the former market yards adjacent. The area is impacted by the loss of these uses, contributing to some of the adjoining heritage building groups falling into a state of vacancy & dereliction. The square itself is impacted by the roads that pass through it & the associated vehicle priority. Public realm is “tired” & “defensive”.

The aim of the potential actions are to “create an attractive urban area with civic space and a range of living opportunities”.

- 10 Public realm improvements C: Along Upper Main St., and Market Sq.** - Could potentially include re-imagining of the Market Sq. to create an enhanced multi-functional civic space. At Upper Main St, resurfacing; improved crossings; review/definition of on-street parking; green infrastructure enhancements; and provision of updated street furniture and public art etc.
- 11 Opportunity Site E / Historic building improvements D & E: The former Pig Market/Yard, and adjoining building grouping** - A sizable site located at the top of Main St, with a key frontage onto Market Sq. The site could be considered an opportunity for comprehensive re-development and options for new uses could be explored (e.g. business/enterprise/“right size” residential). The building grouping on the site is of particular heritage value, with one building on the NIAH. Some of the buildings within the grouping are considered to be “at risk”. In conjunction with the re-development of the wider site there could be improvements to address the groupings aesthetics, layout, structural issues and relationship with the wider site and the Square.
- 12 Opportunity site F: The former Cattle Market/Yard** - The site could be considered an opportunity for additional development with options for new uses (e.g. “right size” residential) on part of the site, improvements to the existing car-park (incl. as a possible location for the installation of a number of E-charging points), and linkages to Market Sq. and Main St. explored.
- 13 Opportunity Site G / Historic building improvements F: Two storey, three bay house and site at the south of Market Sq.** - A heritage building on the NIAH, located on a sizable curtilage, considered to be “at risk”. Potential improvements could address the structure and aesthetics of the building, securing it’s use as possibly a family home. It could also be explored how the extensive curtilage along with that of the adjacent properties (to the south) could potentially provide additional residential units and improve pedestrian connections in this part of the town centre.
- 14 “Right Size Housing” / “Bring Back Housing”** - There is potential to identify a number of existing properties and/or vacant commercial units which could accommodate family living but are maybe currently inappropriate for what is expected for the modern day. Potential to provide proposals for adaptation in order to make these more attractive to the market (e.g. combining units, internal layout, connection to gardens, provision of private off street parking etc.)
- 15 Shop frontage improvements B: At Upper Main St. and Market Sq.** - There are a significantly less number of retail units at this part of the town. For those that are present there is potential for traditional enhancements.
- 16 Enhanced movement/connections opportunity A: Cooper’s Road** - Realisation of Active Travel Plans to provide a continuous and sufficiently wide footpath and other geometry improvements along the road from Market Sq to Foxes Glen Housing Estate.
- 17 Opportunity Site H: Site of existing takeaway outlet, commercial and storage units** - A single storey building grouping and layout which is incongruent with the urban grain and out of character with the existing streetscape. Explore the potential re-development options with a more appropriate scheme with a range of uses, which would be more fitting with the street.
- 18 Opportunity Site I: Site of an existing terrace of ground floor commercial units with apartments above** - Again a building grouping and layout which is incongruent with the urban grain and out of character and ground floor commercial use is currently vacant. Explore the potential re-development options for a more appropriate scheme which re-instates the building line of the street.



The “Head of the Town” area and potential actions map (scale 1:1500).



Successful public space creating a heart to the settlement & a place where people want to spend time in at Clonakilty



A derelict building grouping at a prominent location



Poor pedestrian connections



Setts / cobbles.



Underused carpark & backlands



Etching in the paving.



A "gap" in the building line



Unique cycling stand in Westport



Exemplary sheltered housing at Gorey



Derelict historic property



Vernacular housing with original/appropriate features, such as sliding sash windows, slate roofs etc. at Eyeries

A mood board for "The Head of the Town" - images of the existing situation and other "best practice" examples demonstrating the ambition.



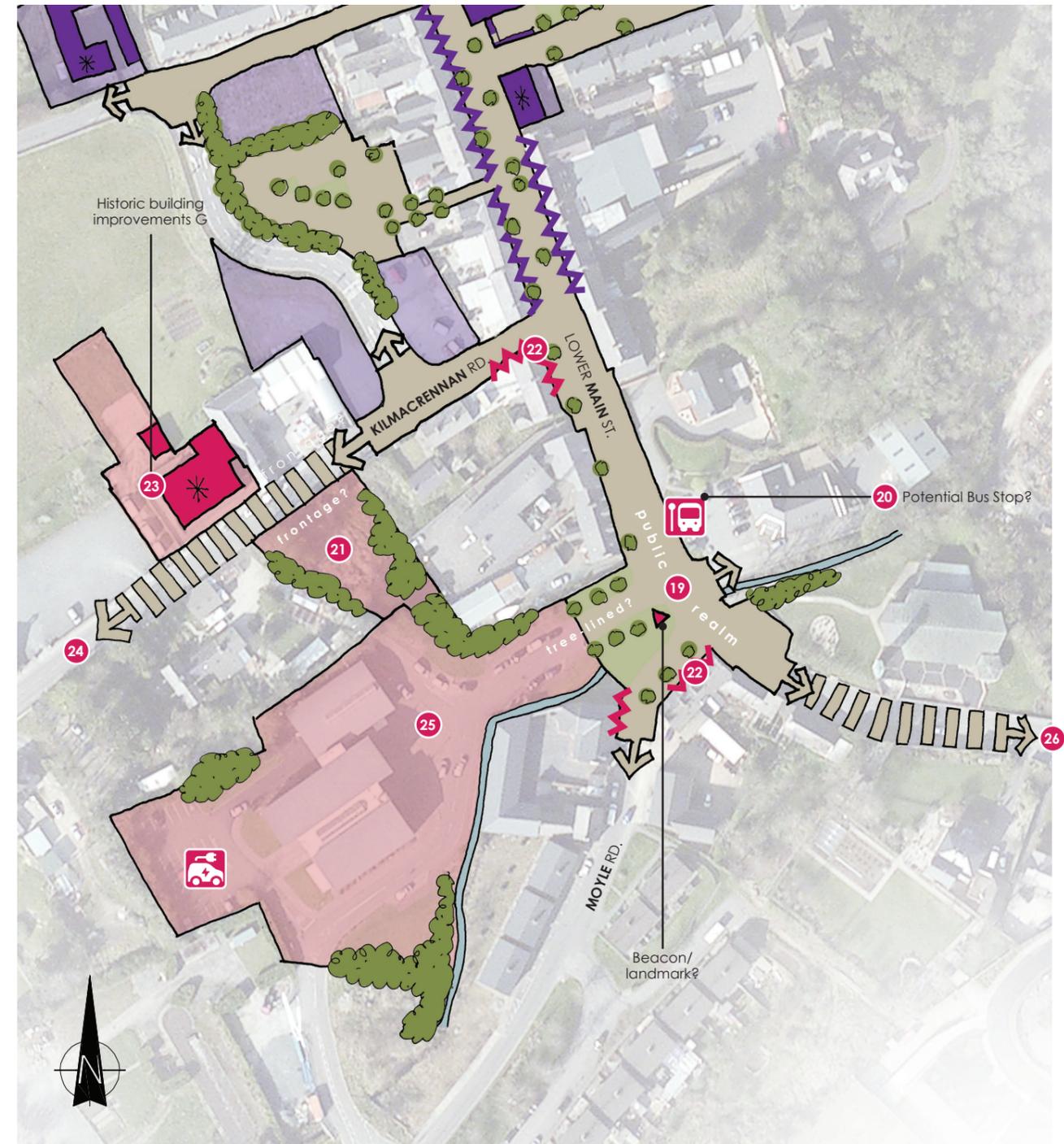
# “The Foot of the Town” - Area in and around Ramelton/Moyle Rd., & the Public Service Centre



Area in & around the river & the bridge is the location of a number of attractive heritage buildings, some small “green spaces”, some public realm, & public art/heritage. Also the location of a number of public facilities (e.g. Milford PSC) & leading to recreational uses beyond. The spaces are dominated by roads & junctions making it particularly difficult for pedestrians to move through, & it also detracts from the spaces heritage and public realm features.

The aim of the potential actions are to “create an attractive setting, for a range of appropriate public & private uses”.

- 19 **Public realm improvements D: Along Lower Main St. at Kilmacrennan Rd junction to the Public Service Centre entrance, and the Moyle Rd. / Ramelton Rd. junction** - Could potentially include improvement of junction layouts; connecting of footpaths; carriage and foot way resurfacing; improved pedestrian crossings; review and definition of on-street parking areas; street tree and green infrastructure enhancements; provision of updated street furniture and public art, and enhancing the setting of existing public art etc.
- 20 **Bus stop Option B: At the Ramelton Rd./Moyle Rd. junction** - Explore the potential for bus stopping at this location with enhanced signage, and waiting areas/shelter etc.
- 21 **Opportunity site J: Land to north of the Public Service Centre** - Explore the development potential of this smaller “greenfield” site, with new uses, for example over 55’s units, or possibly additional public car-parking and the creation of a suitable frontage to Kilmacrennan Rd. through the use of buildings or landscaping.
- 22 **Shop frontage improvements C: At The Kilmacrennan Rd. junction & Moyle Rd.** - There are only a small number of retail units at this part of the town. For those that are present there is potential for traditional enhancements, including re-design to achieve better proportions, use of natural materials, and appropriate signage/signwriting, in order to achieve consistency across the entire town centre and help inject character back into this important node/arrival point.
- 23 **Historic building improvements G: The former Reformed Presbyterian Church and site** - A building that has recently come into the ownership of the Milford & District Resource Centre. Potential improvements could address the new role/use that this building is likely to be undertaking (as a community facility) and other outstanding issues such as vehicle parking provision etc.
- 24 **Enhanced movement/connections opportunity B: Kilmacrennan Road** - Realisation of Active Travel Plans to provide a continuous and sufficiently wide footpath and other geometry improvements along the north side of the road from the junction with the newer link road to the GAA Grounds etc.
- 25 **Milford Public Service Centre** - Potential to review its function in terms of new / improved services it could facilitate as well as the use and aesthetics of the immediate areas/public realm in and around the centre. Also, as a possible location for the installation of a number of E-charging points.
- 26 **Enhanced movement/connections opportunity C: to Mulroy Woods** - The provision of a continuous and sufficiently wide footpath and other geometry improvements along the west side of the road from Mulroy Court to Mulroy Woods Hotel, which would connect pedestrians using this popular tourism asset directly to the town centre.



The “Foot of the Town” area and potential actions map (scale 1:1500).



Characterful gable mural at Blarney



Commercial unit which a "dead frontage" and missing footpath



Footpath missing at the frontage of what could be attractive vernacular buildings



"Green" area at the heart of the town with unique public art at Charlestown



Improving the town's sustainability credentials



Pedestrian connection issues



Shop front which is "dual frontage" in Kilkenny

A mood board for "The Foot of the Town" - images of the existing situation and other "best practice" examples demonstrating the ambition.

# D

## “The North Western Quarter” - Area in and around Church Rd., Mt. Marian, and Kerrykeel/Convent Rd.



The built up area to the north west just outside the town centre. This is an area with important uses to the functioning of the town, including three schools, a FET Campus, and sub-urban housing. This is also the location of an existing play park/“green” space (associated with adjacent housing), and a large undeveloped site/land to the SW.

The aim of the potential actions are to **“improve existing and facilitate new appropriate uses and facilities that would benefit the town centre, however due to their nature, maybe cannot be located directly within it. Furthermore to improve the connections between this area, its uses and the Town centre”**.

- 27 Opportunity site K: Lands at Lower Mt Marian** - A sizable “green” area located on the edge of the town centre. The site could be considered an opportunity for the development of options for new community recreational uses, which could include, public park facilities, paths/cycle ways, toddlers/older kids/teens play areas, seating, planting, performance spaces, community sports facilities and associated parking etc.
- 28 Enhanced movement/connections opportunity D: to the Schools** - Review of options to improve the connections between the town centre and the schools at the north west. To help address issues in relation to traffic at these facilities (e.g. improving existing/new connections - a possible new pedestrian/vehicle route between Church Rd. and Convent Rd.)
- 29 Enhanced movement/connections opportunity E: Drumbern Road** - Realisation of Active Travel plans to provide a continuous and sufficiently wide footpath and other geometry towards the Grey Rock Estate.
- 30 Opportunity site L: Lands at Convent Road** - A large site located outside the settlement limit, however may have some potential as additional lands for recreational/community/educational/residential uses.



The “North Western Quarter” and potential actions map (scale 1:2000).



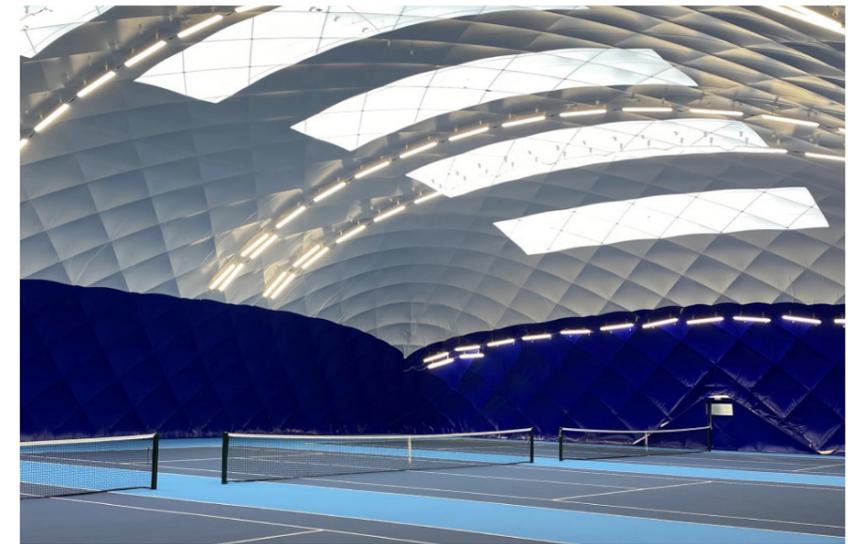
Play facilities, using natural materials, attractively finished



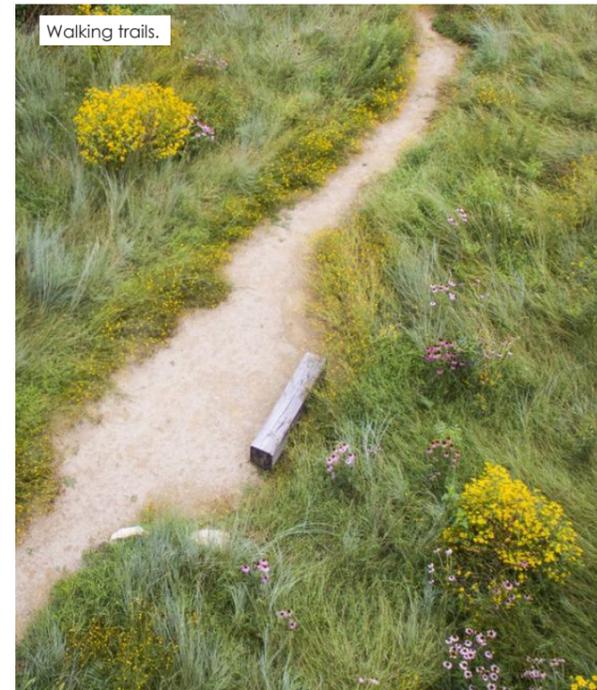
Contemporary "bandstand"/ performance space



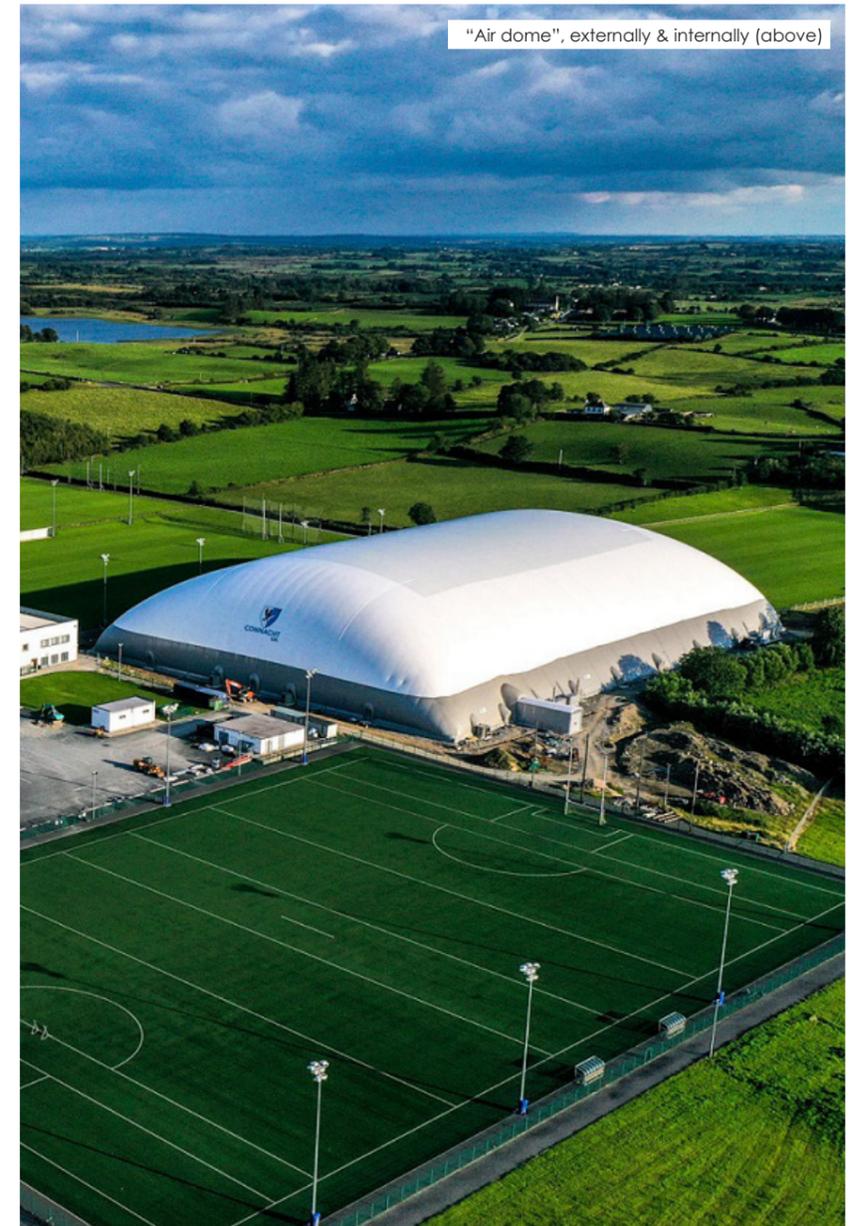
Fairly decent play equipment but the setting is poorly finished



Attractive "pavilion" cafe set within parkland.



Walking trails.



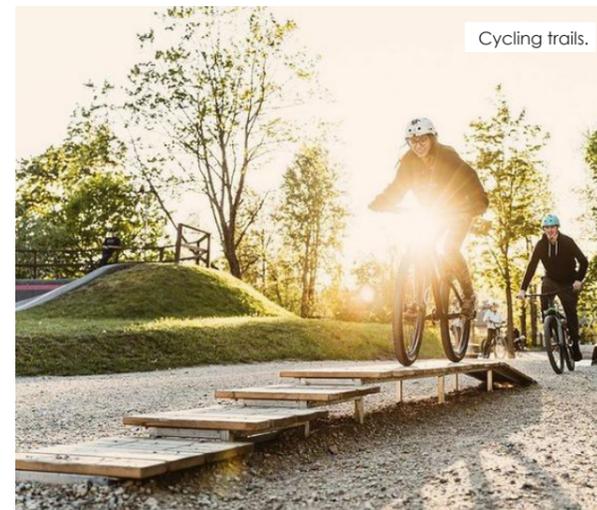
"Air dome", externally & internally (above)



Community allotments.



Existing informal entrance at Church Rd. Note the impressive Horse Chestnuts.



Cycling trails.

A mood board for "The Lands at Mt. Marian" - images of the existing situation and other "best practice" examples demonstrating the ambition.



# “The former Milford Bakery” - The former employment site on the banks of Mulroy Bay



Although located some distance outside the town centre this site is considered a significant issue/opportunity in relation to the town. It is a sizable former bakery complex at a particularly attractive location of scenic value on the eastern shore of Mulroy Bay. It contains a number of vacant buildings & spaces, including, offices, production buildings, warehousing, outbuildings, silos/shafts/tanks, retaining structures, yards, parking areas, a wooded area, pier/jetty & foreshore.

The aim of the potential actions are to **“identify as an opportunity site with appropriate uses at a long vacant and derelict site on the banks of the highly scenic Mulroy Bay”**.

**31 Opportunity site M: The former Milford Bakery Site** - The site having been vacant for some time and continuing to fall into a further state of dis-repair could be considered an opportunity for comprehensive re-development and options for new uses could be explored. The options could include consideration of refurbishment of all / some of the existing buildings or demolition and site clean up, then the construction of new attractive and characterful buildings and spaces which could include a range of uses such as recreation associated to the adjacent water (Blueway) infrastructure (Mulroy Bay) (e.g. pontoon/marina/jetty, water sports infrastructure etc.), hospitality/tourism, business/enterprise, and possibly some commercial.

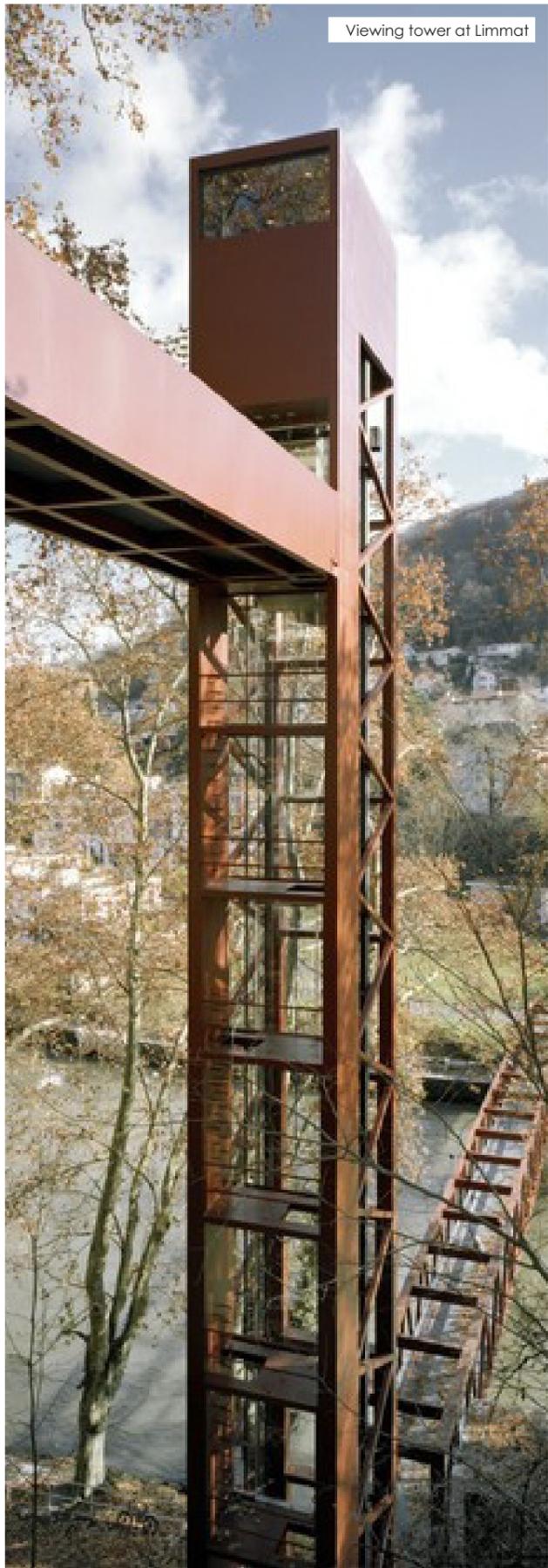
**32 Enhanced movement/connections opportunity G: to/from the former Bakery Site** - Review of options to improve the connections between the town centre and the potential destination that could be a re-developed Bakery Site and Mulroy Bay in general. This could include improving the pedestrian/cycle route along the roadways (e.g. paths, lighting, signage etc.) also provision of facilities at any re-developed site.



The “Former Milford Bakery” site and potential actions map (scale 1:1250).



Small Loughside marina/jetty facilities in an attractive natural setting at Carybridge



Viewing tower at Limmat



Watersports at Assaroe Lake, Ballyshannon



Waterside activities



Waterside architecture at Lochgilphead



Stunning setting but dilapidated buildings are an eyesore

A mood board for "The former Milford Bakery" - images of the existing situation and other "best practice" examples demonstrating the ambition.

# Section



An Action Plan



# The “Actions”

## A summary table

The adjacent table summarises the identified potential actions, relating to the development themes. This table indicates how needed the action is (priority); challenging but realistic potential timescales for delivery, the indicative cost to complete and the central stakeholders that would need to be involved.

**Priority**

1 = Higher  
2 = Medium  
3 = Lower

Higher: Highly desirable to deliver ASAP  
Medium: Lower need to deliver ASAP  
Lower: Least need to deliver ASAP

**Potential Timescale**

Shorter: within 3 years  
Medium: 3 to 10 years  
Longer: beyond 10 years

**Potential Indicative Cost**

Lower: < €0.5m  
Medium: between €0.5m to €3m  
Higher: > €3m

**Central Stakeholders**

**Donegal County Council**  
Regeneration & Development Team - DCC Regen  
Roads Department - DCC Roads  
Housing Department - DCC Housing  
Cultural Services (including Heritage Officer) - DCC Cultural  
Community Development & Planning Directorate (including Conservation Office) - DCC Planning  
Economic Development Unit - DCC Economic

**Department of Rural and Community Development - DRCD**

**Education & Training Board - ETB**

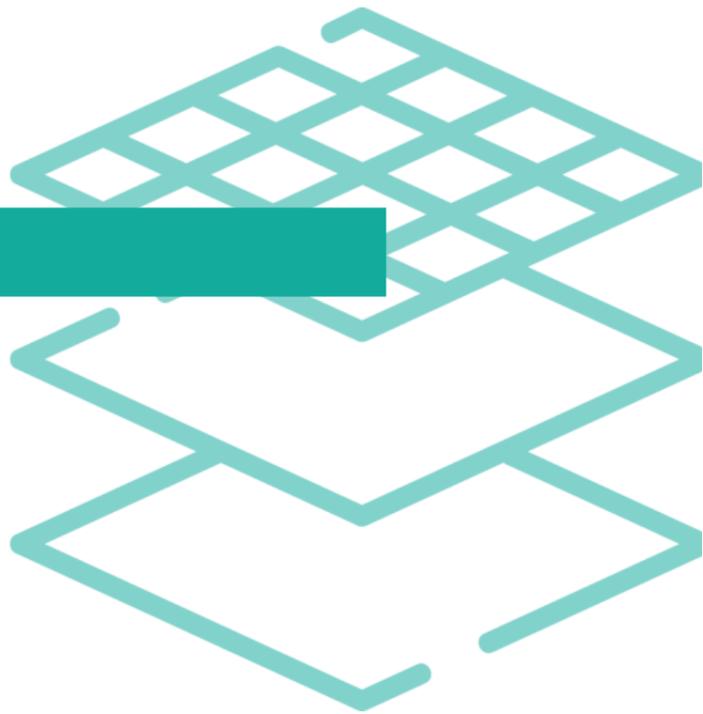
**Community/voluntary groups**

**Milford & District Resource Centre - MDRC**

**Private** - including landowners / developers / and individuals

Focus Area	Project Number	Key Project	Potential Project Description	Priority Level	Potential Timescale	Indicative Cost	Central Stakeholders
A - The Commercial Core	1	*	Public realm improvements A: Along Lower Main St., adjoining section of Church Rd. & Lough Rd.	Medium	Medium	Medium	DCC Roads, DCC Regen, DCC Planning, DRCD, Private
	2	*	Historic building improvements A: The former Town Hall.	Higher	Medium	Medium	DCC Regen, DCC Cultural, DCC Planning, Private
	3	*	Opportunity Site A / Historic building improvements B: The former Milford Hotel/Tara Bar/site.	Higher	Medium	Medium	DCC Regen, DCC Cultural, DCC Planning, Private
	4		Shop frontage improvements A: At Lower Main Street.	Medium	Shorter	Lower	DCC Regen, DCC Cultural, DCC Planning
	5		Opportunity site B: Land to the rear (west) of "Dustys" public bar.	Lower	Medium	Medium	DCC Regen, DCC Planning, Private
	6	*	Public realm improvements B: Public car-park to the rear (west) of Main Street.	Medium	Medium	Medium	DCC Roads, DCC Regen, DRCD, Private
	7		Opportunity site C: Land to the rear (west) of "The Traveller's Inn" public bar.	Medium	Longer	Medium	DCC Regen, DCC Planning, Private
	8		Opportunity Site D / Historic building improvements C: Three storey, three bay house and site at Church Road	Lower	Medium	Lower	DCC Regen, DCC Cultural, DCC Planning, Private
	9		Bus stop Option A: At the former Milford Hotel site / Lower Main St.	Medium	Shorter	Lower	DCC Roads, DCC Planning, DCC Regen
B - The Head of the Town	10	*	Public realm improvements C: Along Upper Main St., and Market Sq.	Higher	Medium	Medium	DCC Roads, DCC Regen, DRCD, Private
	11	*	Opportunity Site E / Historic building improvements D & E: The former Pig Market/Yard, and adjoining building grouping.	Medium	Longer	Higher	DCC Regen, DCC Planning, DCC Housing, DCC Economic, DCC Cultural, Private
	12	*	Opportunity site F: The former Cattle Market/Yard.	Medium	Medium	Medium	DCC Regen, DCC Planning, DCC Housing, Private
	13	*	Opportunity Site G / Historic building improvements F: Two storey, three bay house and site at the south of Market Sq.	Medium	Medium	Medium	DCC Regen, DCC Planning, DCC Cultural, Private
	14		"Right Size Housing" / "Bring Back Housing".	Lower	Medium	Lower	DCC Housing, DCC Planning
	15		Shop frontage improvements B: At Upper Main St. and Market Sq.	Medium	Shorter	Lower	DCC Regen, DCC Cultural, DCC Planning
	16		Enhanced movement/connections opportunity A: Copper's Road.	Medium	Medium	Medium	DCC Roads, DCC Planning, DRCD, Private
	17		Opportunity Site H: Site of existing takeaway outlet, commercial and storage units.	Medium	Medium	Medium	DCC Regen, DCC Planning, Private
	18		Opportunity Site I: Site of an existing terrace of ground floor commercial units with apartments above.	Medium	Medium	Medium	DCC Regen, DCC Planning, DCC Housing, Private
C - The Foot of the Town	19	*	Public realm improvements D: Along Lower Main St. at Kilmacrennan Rd junction to the Public Service Centre entrance, and the Moyle Rd. / Ramelton Rd. junction.	Medium	Medium	Medium	DCC Roads, DCC Regen, DRCD, Private
	20		Bus stop Option B: At the Ramelton Rd./Moyle Rd. junction	Medium	Shorter	Lower	DCC Roads, DCC Planning, DCC Regen
	21		Opportunity site J: Land to north of the Public Service Centre.	Medium	Medium	Lower	DCC Regen, DCC Planning, DCC Housing, DCC Roads, Private
	22		Shop frontage improvements C: At Lower Main Street and Moyle Road.	Lower	Shorter	Lower	DCC Regen, DCC Cultural, DCC Planning
	23		Historic building improvements G: The former Reformed Presbyterian Church and site.	Medium	Medium	Medium	DCC Cultural, DCC Planning, Private
	24		Enhanced movement/connections opportunity B: Kilmacrennan Road.	Medium	Medium	Medium	DCC Roads, DCC Planning, DRCD, Private
	25		Milford Public Service Centre.	Lower	Longer	Higher	DCC Regen, DCC Planning, DRCD
	26		Enhanced movement/connections opportunity C: to Mulroy Woods.	Medium	Medium	Medium	DCC Roads, DCC Planning, DRCD, Private
	27	*	Opportunity site K: Lands at Lower Mt Marian.	Higher	Medium	Higher	DCC Regen, DCC Planning, DCC Roads, DRCD, Private
D - The North Western Quarter	28		Enhanced movement/connections opportunity D: to the Schools.	Medium	Medium	Medium	DCC Roads, DCC Planning, DRCD, ETB, Private
	29		Enhanced movement/connections opportunity E: Drumbern Road.	Medium	Medium	Medium	DCC Roads, DCC Planning, DRCD, Private
	30		Opportunity site L: Lands at Convent Road.	Medium	Medium	Medium	DCC Regen, DCC Planning, DCC Housing, DCC Roads, Private
E - The Former Milford Bakery	31	*	Opportunity site M: The former Milford Bakery Site.	Medium	Longer	Higher	DCC Regen, DCC Planning, DCC Roads, DRCD, Private
	32		Enhanced movement/connections opportunity G: to/from the former Bakery Site.	Medium	Medium	Medium	DCC Roads, DCC Planning, DRCD, Private

# Section



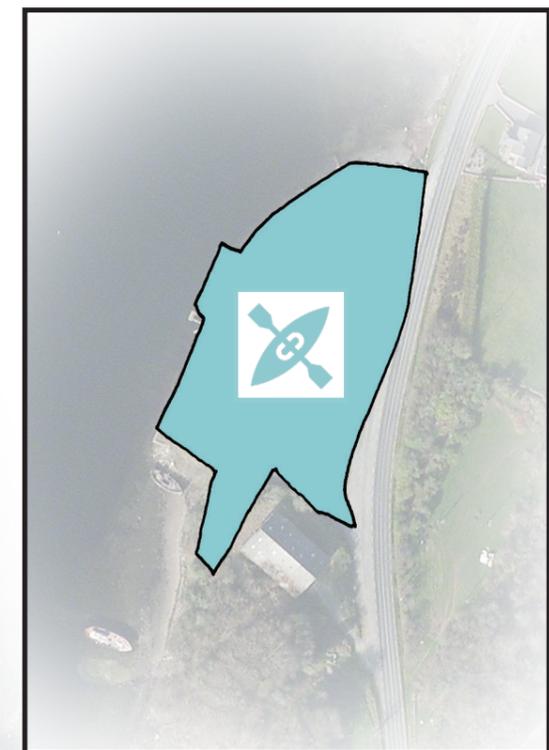
Key town centre  
regeneration proposals/  
future development sites



# Key regeneration proposals

In this section of *The Town Centre First Plan*, 6no. "Key regeneration proposals/future development sites" have been identified. These are the result of and have been informed by the prior research carried out in the completion of the Stage 1 - Baseline Analysis of the Town Centre, it's recommendations, and the subsequent Stakeholder and Community Consultation exercises undertaken.

The following proposals have been developed to a RIAI/RIBA Work Stage 2 Conceptual level and include identification of each of the actions from the Masterplan which the proposal aligns to; an outline planning assessment; site analysis; a discussion in relation to the potential; and a concept diagram/sketch.



The former Milford Bakery insert (scale 1:5000).

	"The former Milford Hotel & Townhall"
	"Public realm improvements"
	"The former Cattle Market Yard"
	"The former Pig Market Yard"
	"Lands at Mt. Marian"
	"The former Milford Bakery"





# “The former Milford Hotel & Townhall”

**A2 - Historic building improvements A: The former Town Hall; & A3 - Opportunity Site A / Historic building improvements B: The former Milford Hotel/Tara Bar/site.**

**Strategic / Policy Context**

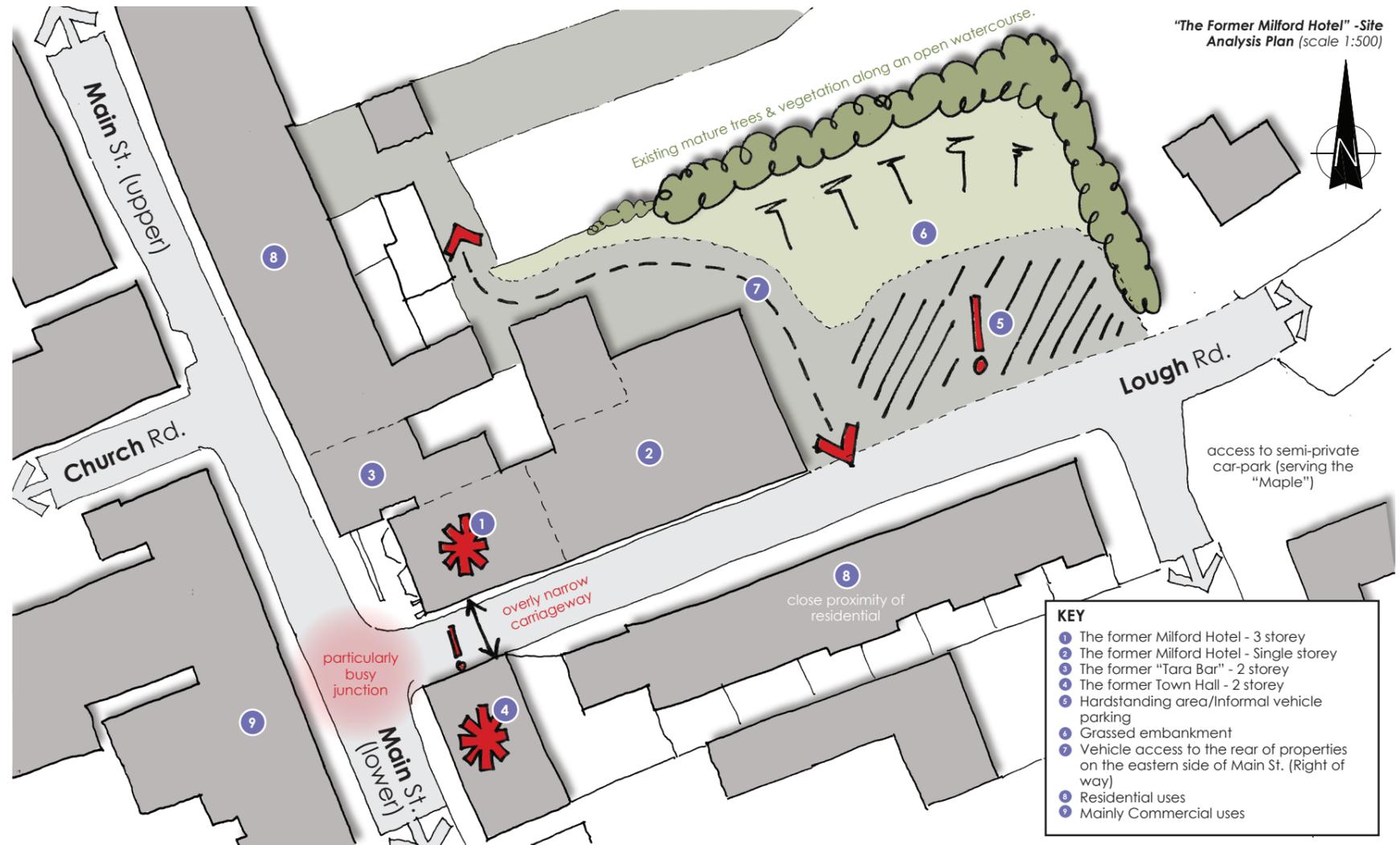
This site is located inside the settlement limit and town centre boundary of Milford as identified in the County Donegal Development Plan 2018-2024 (as varied). The plan contains a number of Objectives & Policies specific to Towns & Villages. Objectives of particular relevance to this site are TV-O-4 “To support initiatives to strengthen and improve the physical environment of towns and villages and encourage positive place-making”; and TV-O-5 “To support collaboration across the public, private and community and voluntary sectors in order to progress the regeneration and renewal of towns and villages”. In terms of the buildings at the site, the Council’s Conservation and Heritage Department have advised that the Former Hotel building is of local architectural and/or historical importance and therefore the preference would be to at least partially retain (particular elements of) the structure and incorporate them into any future re-development proposals for the site. The former Town Hall is a building on the NIAH, and considered by this study to be “at risk”, and therefore should be retained/incorporated as part of any future scheme designs/proposals.

**Physical Context**

The site is approximately 0.2 hectare (0.5 acres) in area, and comprises of both the former Town Hall building and the Former Milford Hotel building with associated lands to its rear. The R246 Lough Road dissects the two buildings, with the Hotel to the north and Town Hall to the south. An informal gravelled car parking area is contained within the rear of the Hotel site, with areas of scrub. It is bounded at the north by a residential property; at the east by a residential property; at the south by a commercial/residential property; and at the west by Main St. The surrounding area is characterized predominantly by residential and commercial uses. The surrounding area is characterized by a mix of uses associated with this town centre location. A right of way runs through the site, leading from Lough Rd. and towards the rear of properties which front Main Street to the north. This will need to be maintained and kept clear within any future proposals.

**Community Aspirations**

The local community has identified the Former Milford Hotel site/building as a priority project which requires particular attention. There is significant support for appropriate intervention and re-development in order to regenerate the site. Although there is no clear community preference for its end use, there is an appetite amongst some for the building to be cleared from site. There is a belief that the benefits of this would include the widening and improvement of the Main Street / Lough Road junction and the ability to provide public spaces at this location.



“The Former Milford Hotel” - Existing photographs of the building(s) and site.



**The Potential**

The Former Hotel site represents a great location at the centre of the town to provide a public space for the enjoyment of the community. The south facing aspect and central location is a positive and can help transform this area into a vibrant social space. This could be achieved whilst also retaining and incorporating parts of the hotel buildings historic facade. It is also a possible location for an improved bus stop/shelter and cycling provisions, seating and landscaping. There are also very few outdoor seating or dining options for residents and visitors to socialise and so there could be potential to provide a semi-covered area to encourage "al fresco" dining within the site.

The junction of Main Street and Lough Road is a difficult and restricted junction that places a constraint on the flow of traffic and pedestrians at this location. Partial removal of the Former Hotel building could provide an opportunity to marginally re-adjust Lough Road with the potential to provide improved/new footpaths through the former "footprint" of the building (new public square) rather than the narrow path that is currently around the building at its southern facade. This could subsequently facilitate a new footpath at the northern gable of the Former Town Hall building, where there currently is none. Furthermore these improvements could extend to the frontage of the existing terrace row of dwellings at the south, and some new layby car-parking (where there currently is no provision). Adjustment of the Main St./Lough Rd. junction geometry and the introduction of traffic calming may also be possible to provide improved pedestrian priority/crossings.

The Former Town Hall building also sits at a prominent location at the centre of the town, and it is a building on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. This is an important building within the town's streetscape and as such should be protected and significantly refurbished. Potential improvements could address the structure and aesthetics of the building in the short term preventing further deterioration and facilitating potential new uses. Options could include a commercial unit or possibly with a community element, e.g. as a "banking hub" and/or "changing places" facility. The adjoining public realm improvements would elevate the buildings prominence and it would be a Town Hall (all be it "former") with a new town square adjacent to it.

Towards the west (rear) of the site there may be some opportunity to improve the aesthetics of an existing area of "informal" vehicle parking. This would not only benefit the appearance of the space but would also provide convenient visitor parking to serve the potential new uses at the former Tara Bar/former Town Hall.

- 1 **The former "Tara Bar"** - Existing 2 storey Public Bar connected to the Former Hotel Building retained, refurbished & possibly extended (potential as a cafe/tea rooms/restaurant, with c.1 no./2no. apartments above for overlooking etc.
- 2 **Vehicle parking** - c.10-20 spaces (dependent upon identification of ownership boundaries), to serve existing and new potential uses at the site.
- 3 **The Former Town Hall** - Historic Building retained and refurbished for potential commercial/community uses (e.g. Banking Hub / Changing Places? etc.).

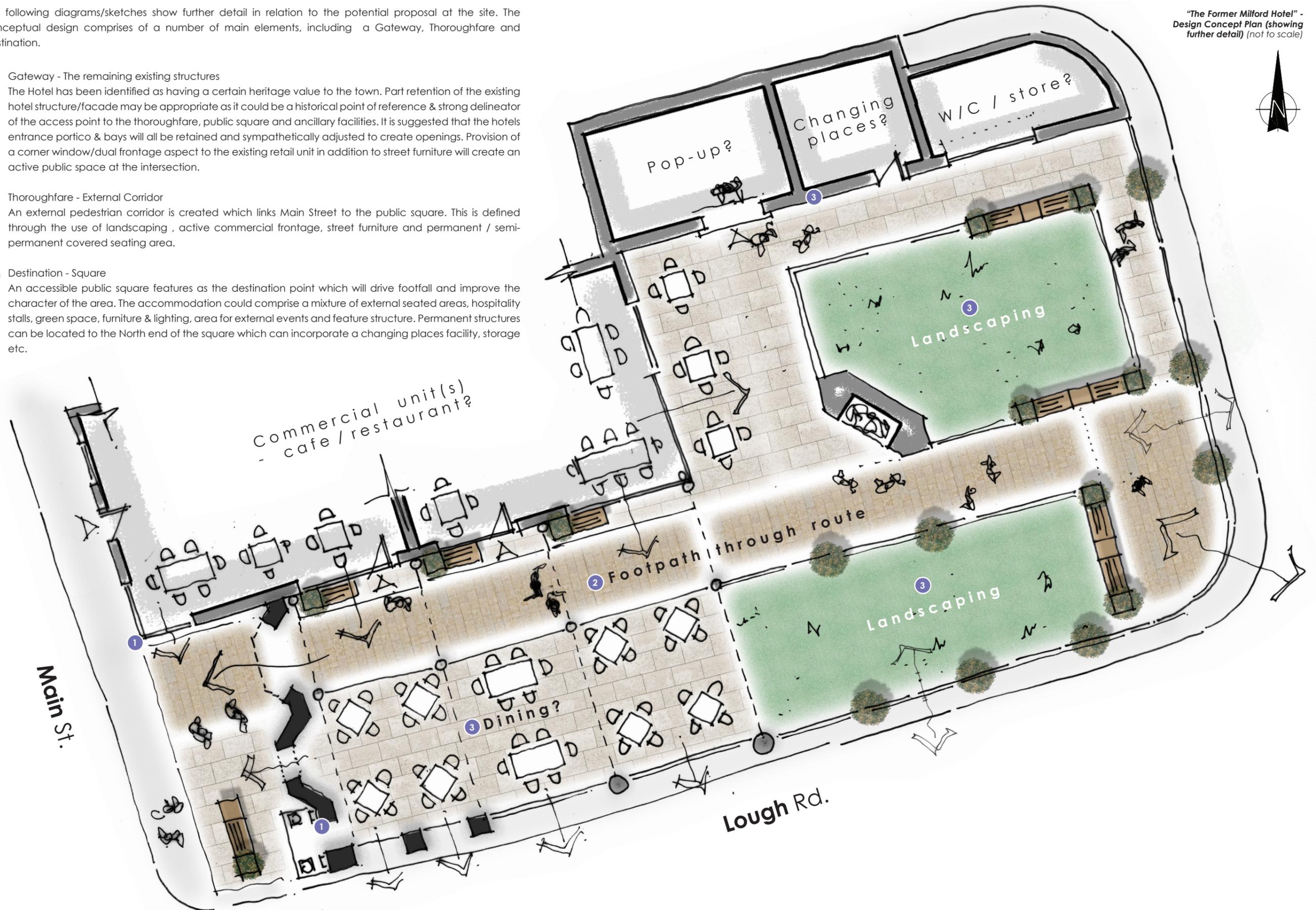
- 4 **Retention of part of "The Former Milford Hotel" facade & incorporation into a new Public Square** - South facing hard landscaped public space, bounded by the partly retained facade of the hotel with new contemporary steel structures & canopy, creating a "semi-open" space which references the history of the site whilst providing a new civic place. A possible location for improved bus stop/shelter, cycle parking/repair station, visitor/heritage information, seating and street trees/landscaping planters. Also potential to semi cover with retractable canopy, on the new structure, to encourage "al fresco" dining.

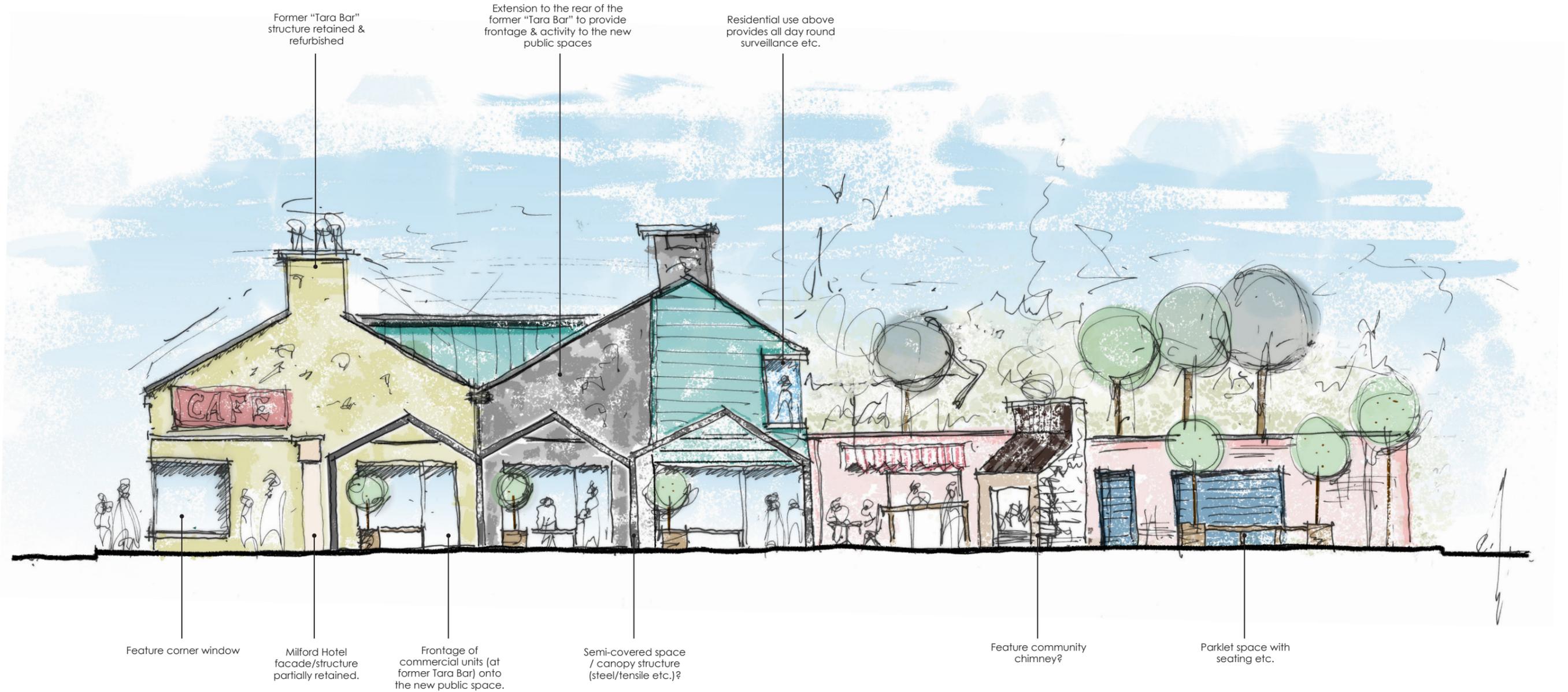
- 5 **Parklet** - Small south facing "green" space with seating, public art etc.
- 6 **Improvements to Lough Rd & Junction at Main St.** - Partial removal of the Former Milford Hotel building could create the opportunity to marginally widen Lough Rd., provide foot paths along both sides, provide some layby parking in front of existing housing, & provide street trees improving bio-diversity. At the junction with Main St., provide vehicle calming, adjust geometry/radii to allow for easier vehicle movements/pedestrian crossing.
- 7 **Right of way & vehicle parking** - Vehicular & pedestrian access way to dwellings/land to the north retained & enhanced (widened, resurfaced etc.), & communal spaces to serve the potential new uses at the site.

The following diagrams/sketches show further detail in relation to the potential proposal at the site. The conceptual design comprises of a number of main elements, including a Gateway, Thoroughfare and Destination.

- 1 Gateway - The remaining existing structures  
The Hotel has been identified as having a certain heritage value to the town. Part retention of the existing hotel structure/facade may be appropriate as it could be a historical point of reference & strong delineator of the access point to the thoroughfare, public square and ancillary facilities. It is suggested that the hotels entrance portico & bays will all be retained and sympathetically adjusted to create openings. Provision of a corner window/dual frontage aspect to the existing retail unit in addition to street furniture will create an active public space at the intersection.
- 2 Thoroughfare - External Corridor  
An external pedestrian corridor is created which links Main Street to the public square. This is defined through the use of landscaping, active commercial frontage, street furniture and permanent / semi-permanent covered seating area.
- 3 Destination - Square  
An accessible public square features as the destination point which will drive footfall and improve the character of the area. The accommodation could comprise a mixture of external seated areas, hospitality stalls, green space, furniture & lighting, area for external events and feature structure. Permanent structures can be located to the North end of the square which can incorporate a changing places facility, storage etc.

"The Former Milford Hotel" - Design Concept Plan (showing further detail) (not to scale)





"The Former Milford Hotel" - Design Concept Elevation from Lough Road  
(not to scale)



Conceptual Perspective Sketch - of a potentially re-imagined "Milford Hotel Site" (not to scale)



New public space created out of a derelict building at Palma (& below images).



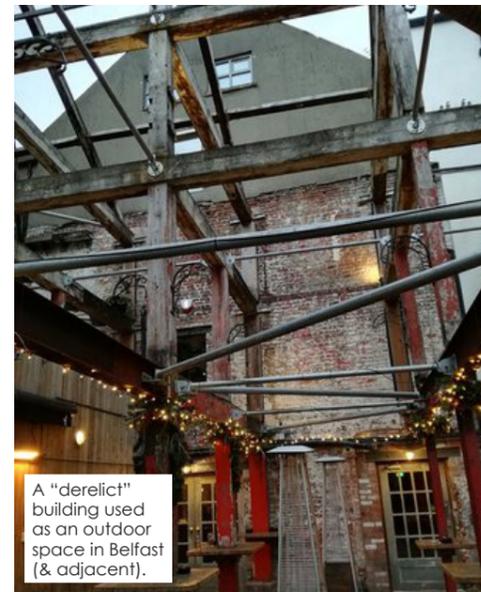
Small outdoor cinema, Shoreditch.



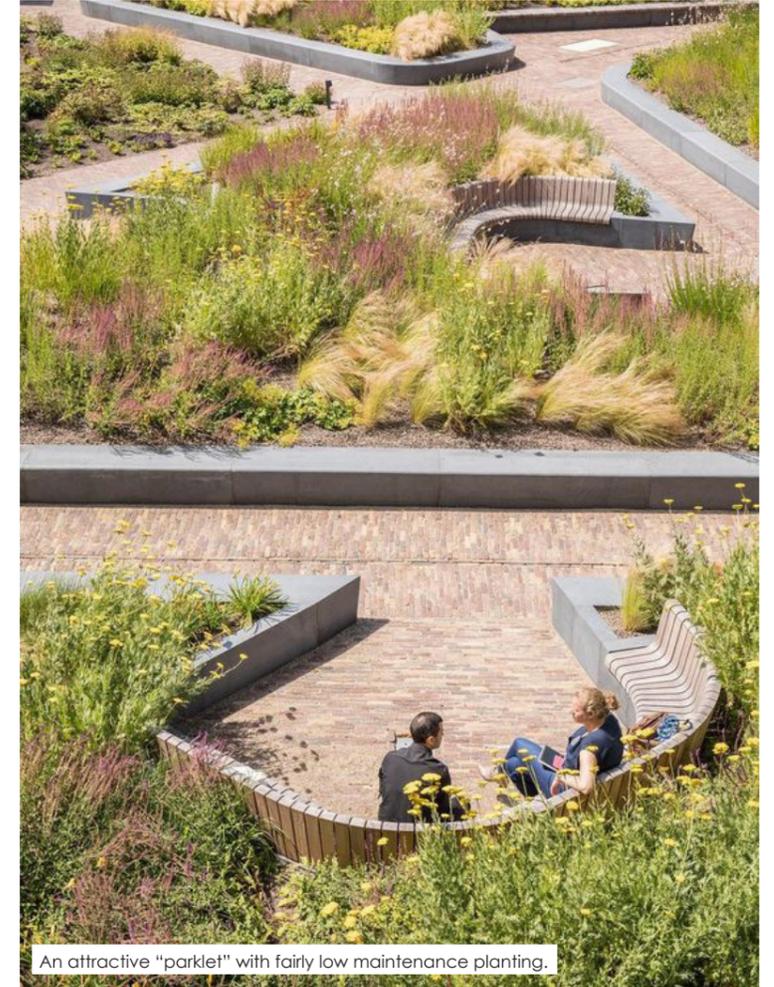
Contemporary seating.



"Industrial" type features.



A "derelict" building used as an outdoor space in Belfast (& adjacent).



An attractive "parklet" with fairly low maintenance planting.



A mood board for "The former Milford Hotel & Site" - images of "best practice" examples demonstrating the ambition.



# “Public Realm improvements”

**A1** - Public Realm improvements A: Along Lower Main St., adjoining section of Church Rd. & Lough Rd; **A6** - Public realm improvements B: Public car-park to the rear (west) of Main St.; **B10** - Public Realm improvements C: Along Upper Main St., & Market Sq.; & **C19** - Public Realm improvements D: Along Lower Main St. at Kilmacrennan Rd junction to the PSC entrance, & Moyle Rd. / Ramelton Rd. junction.

### Strategic / Policy Context

The extent of the public realm scope is located entirely within the town centre boundary of Milford as identified in the County Donegal Development Plan 2018-2024 (as varied). The plan contains a number of Objectives & Policies specific to Towns & Villages. Objectives of particular relevance to this site are TV-O-4 “To support initiatives to strengthen and improve the physical environment of towns and villages and encourage positive place-making”; and TV-O-5 “To support collaboration across the public, private and community and voluntary sectors in order to progress the regeneration and renewal of towns and villages”. Any public realm design will require careful consideration where works are proposed in proximity to buildings on the NIAH and other heritage structures/features.

### Physical Context & Aspects

The street is c.0.95 hectare (2.35 acres) in area and is the main thoroughfare of the town. The immediate connecting section of roads such as Moyle Rd., Kilmacrennan Rd., Church Rd., Lough Rd. and Coopers Rd. are also contained within the public realm scope. Public spaces and footpaths throughout this area are dated, tired and in poor upkeep and the streetscape is cluttered with street furniture and dominated by the roadways. The same applies to the public realm and public space located on Church, Lough and Kilmacrennan Rds.

On-street car-parking at the PSC

On-street car-parking on the west side of Main St. (Lower)

Carpark (c.28no. spaces) area is poorly defined & unattractive

On-street car-parking on the east side of Main St. (Lower)

Max's Cafe junction

Milford Hotel junction

Moyle Rd. / Ramelton Rd. junction

Area where the building line is broken creating a “weak” streetscape & subsequent public realm.

Again an area where the building line is broken creating a “weaker” streetscape.

Roadway separates the public space making it less functional for larger events etc.

Market Square

### Physical Context & Aspects (contd)

Market Square is in need of particular improvement. Interventions had been previously made, some time ago now, to enhance the layout, aesthetics, street furniture provision and improve vehicle/pedestrian movement within the space, however the current design can be quite high maintenance, and appears cluttered. Furthermore the adjoining vacant buildings create inactivity, lack of vibrancy, poor appearance and detract from what could be a very pleasant public space.

Again the area/node at the bottom of Main St. in the vicinity of the Health Centre, St Peter's, the Council Building and Maggie's Burn should be another key urban public space. It is more intensively used and in areas is attractively landscaped and more “green”, however it is dominated by the roadway that transverses it and the junctions.

Some key junctions along Main Street are restrained and could be considered dangerous. Max's (Church St.) and the Milford Hotel junctions have particular issues where both pedestrian and vehicular movements can be difficult.

### Community Aspirations

The improvement of pedestrian accessibility and permeability through the town is seen as a priority by many people within the community. Issues identified in the site analysis, such as footpath defects, the domination of vehicles and general cluttering of the street, is further supported within the results of the walkability audit, which identified a number of barriers, obstacles and constraints to the walkability of the town centre. Many members of the community see the safe movement of vehicles through the space as a priority, and there appears to be a general consensus that the current level and convenience of car-parking should be retained, with some people feeling that it needs to be added to. There is therefore both significant scope and support for public realm improvements within the town centre.

“Public realm at Main Street & adjoining streets” - Site Analysis Plan (scale 1:1000)

### The Potential

Main St. and its immediate adjoining junctions has the highest concentration of commercial and community uses and should "feel" more like a central urban place where pedestrians and cyclists are more comfortable and have higher priority. The route should have less of a vehicular "through way" "feel" and whilst occasional larger vehicles can be accommodated, the space should not be dominated by them. Opportunities where the enhancement of public street/land can assist the businesses and residents located here should be considered. For example the area could be defined with the use of a suite of consistent public realm elements, such as surfacing, street furniture and landscaping. Also, marking the gateways to this central area would help, which could be done at two existing spaces at either ends of Main St. the Ramelton Rd. junction (at the south) & Market Square (at the north). These spaces could include inter-visible beacons/gateway signage. A third public space/square could be created mid-way along Main St. at the Former Milford Hotel, which could be an addition to the series of spaces throughout the built up Town Centre for businesses to spill out onto and for residents/visitors to enjoy. Vehicle parking could be better integrated into the street by the use of landscaping, and as in general the current provision appears to serve the centre fairly well, only minimal changes would probably be appropriate (i.e. no overall loss of spaces, possibly marginal gain through re-configuring of the existing public carparks at the west and the north of the town centre, and accommodating better connections between them and Main St). Any re-alignment of the carriageways should also be fairly minimal, as the current one-way system appears to serve the centre probably better than the alternative option of having two-way traffic on Main St. (which would result in the loss of the majority of opportunities for on-street carparking and a greater proportion of non-vehicular space). The purpose of any adjustments should be to facilitate improving of the aesthetics of the space and making it more attractive, so that it is easier for pedestrians to manoeuvre through and feel comfortable to spend longer in.

- 1 Ramelton Rd. / Moyle Rd. / Main St. junction & Maggie's Burn** - Adjust the geometry to redefine this junction to create an environment of better order & hierarchy where pedestrians can safely use & vehicles can conveniently maneuver though at lower speeds. This could potentially be achieved by the tightening of carriageway widths & radii, widening of pavements, creating a "raised table" with "courtesy crossings", the use of alternative surfacing (e.g. setts, bound gravel etc.), re-imagined landscaping (e.g. street trees etc.). The creation/redesign of a soft landscaped space in and around Maggie's Burn would enhance this feature and could make it more welcoming to people. New seating, canopies, lighting and information board(s)/gateway beacon could encourage them to stay longer and enjoy this important arrival space for the town centre.
- 2 The Public Service Centre** - As an important Civic Building/Landmark, it would be appropriate if its setting matched this status. This could potentially be aided by the creation of a "tree lined" avenue on its approach from the town centre, with possibly new pillars, walling and signage at this entrance.
- 3 Kilmacrennan Rd. / Main St. junction** - Marginal re-alignment to create a footpath on the southern side of Kilmacrennan Rd. & to accommodate safer pedestrian movement via "courtesy" crossings.
- 4 Alleyway connecting Main St. & the public carpark** - Enhancements could include measures such as "cable" lighting, resurfacing, & landscaping with climbing plants, creating frontage to the ally by locating windows into the ground floor gables of the adjacent buildings etc. Also aligning the pedestrian crossing at Main St. with the alleyway.
- 5 The public car-park at the west** - Enhancements to the setting & function of the space. This could potentially include re-configuration of the spaces (potentially creating a number of additional spaces), use of alternative surface treatments, & landscaping (e.g. to screen the carpark). Also as a possible location for the installation of a number of E-charging points.



- 7 Lough Rd & its junction with Main St.** - Potential partial removal of the Former Milford Hotel could create the opportunity to marginally widen Lough Rd., provide footpaths along both sides, some layby parking, & street trees. At the junction provide vehicle calming using a "raised table", adjust geometry/radii to allow for better vehicle visibility & easier vehicle movements, & provide "courtesy" pedestrian crossings.
- 8 Public Square & Parklet** - Again, the potential partial removal of the Former Milford Hotel could create the opportunity for a south facing hard landscaped public space & "green" parklet. These spaces could possibly include seating, public art etc. improved bus stop/shelter, cycle parking/repair station, visitor/heritage information, seating and street trees/landscaping planters. Also potential to semi cover with retractable canopy to encourage "al fresco" dining throughout the year which any adjacent commercial premises could avail of.
- 9 Church St. / Main St. junction** - Marginal re-alignment to create a footpath on the northern side of Church Rd. & to accommodate safer pedestrian movement, & also improve visibility for safer vehicle egress from Church Rd.
- 10 Potential to re-imagine the public realm in tandem with any re-development opportunities** - This could include new buildings which tie in better with the existing "strong" defined building line along Main St. or as an alternative, improve the spaces at the frontage of the buildings (e.g. re-surfacing/defining any parking spaces, & incorporating landscaping (street trees, shrub beds etc.)).
- 11 Market Square** - Potential enhancements to improve this key space and arrival point from/to the north. These could include creation of a larger pedestrian area, "de-cluttering", and new modern street furniture/features.
- 12 Uses towards the west** - Continue public realm enhancements westwards in order to better physically & visually connect the (potentially enhanced) public car-park at "The Cattle Market", potential new uses at "The Pig Market", & also potential enhanced recreational uses at Lower Mt Marian.

## KEY AREA 1 - MARKET SQ.



This conceptual option basically retains the existing road layout (which appears to work fairly well from a vehicular point of view) but marginally adjusts it's geometry with the aim of further slowing vehicles passing through the space and to make the pedestrian environment better.

One of the most significant interventions is the removal of the existing planters. There are some merit in the planters, or a form of them, as they do provide defensible space between the pedestrian areas and the passing traffic, however there appears to be a desire within the community for their removal/replacement to create a more "open" feel to the square.

The main disadvantage of this option is that it does not create a single large pedestrian space, however a benefit of the de-cluttering of the square and "opening it up" more, is that for larger events, vehicular traffic could be restricted and it would look and function as a single large space. Also to make the space feel more as one and to increase pedestrian priority there may be potential to continue a consistent surfacing material over the whole area including the carriageways. This would give the perception that it is a larger square but also maintain it's essential traffic functions.

- 1 Carriageway & footpath adjustments** - For example tightening of radii, narrowing carriageways, consistent surfacing materials, introduction of pedestrian courtesy crossings etc.
- 2 South & east facing pedestrian spaces** - De-cluttered, with refreshed street furniture & signage (e.g. canopy, seating, lighting, gateway feature/ beacon), street trees framing the space, providing shade and shelter, and adding interest to the facades of adjacent buildings.
- 3 Space adjacent to Mulroy Terrace** - Vehicle parking retained/defined, decluttered, pedestrian path improved and defensible areas created immediately in front of residential properties, in the form of small sitting out/garden/planted spaces.

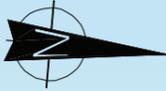


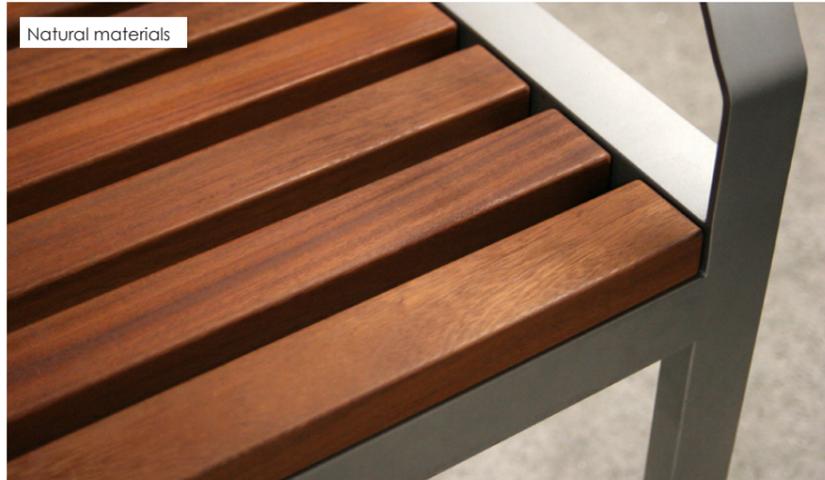
Conceptual Perspective Sketch - of a potential re imagined Market Sq. (not to scale)



# KEY AREA 2 - MOYLE RD./RAMELTON RD. JUNCTION

Conceptual Perspective Sketch - of a potentially re-imagined "Foot of the Town" (not to scale)





Natural materials



Contemporary bins.



Street trees.



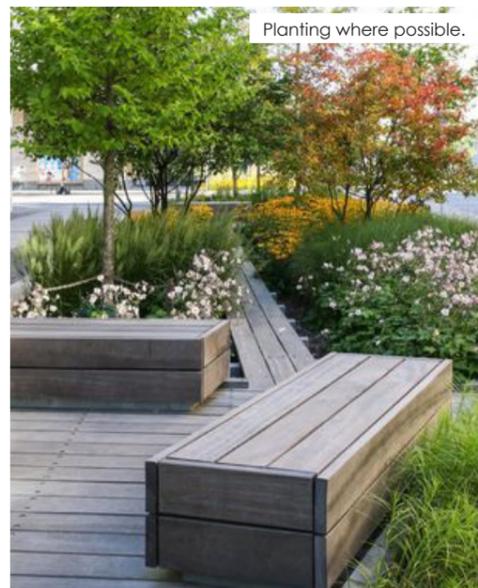
Attractive wayfinding.



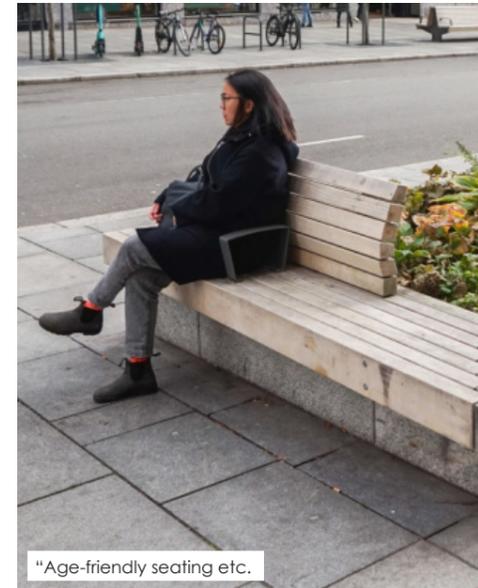
Inventive lighting solutions.



Storeytelling in the public realm.



Planting where possible.



"Age-friendly seating etc."



Unique cycle stands.

A mood board for "The public realm" - images of "best practice" examples demonstrating the ambition.



# “The former Cattle Market Yard”

**B12 - Opportunity site F: The former Cattle Market / Yard; & B13 - Opportunity Site G / Historic building improvements F: Two storey, three bay house, site & adjoining backlands at the south of Market Sq.**

### Strategic / Policy Context

This site is located inside the settlement limit and town centre boundary of Milford as identified in the County Donegal Development Plan 2018-2024 (as varied). The plan contains a number of Objectives & Policies specific to Towns & Villages. Objectives of particular relevance to this site are TV-O-4 “To support initiatives to strengthen and improve the physical environment of towns and villages and encourage positive place-making”; and TV-O-5 “To support collaboration across the public, private and community and voluntary sectors in order to progress the regeneration and renewal of towns and villages”. The plan also “... encourages ... small scale residential development ... that will contribute to revitalisation and renewal...” (TV-P-2), therefore residential use at this the site would appear to be acceptable and compatible with the surrounding uses, provided the design is appropriate to the site specific characteristics and settings.

A detached two-storey house is located within the site, with frontage to Main Street. This building is listed on the NIAH and therefore should be retained and incorporated within any proposed scheme development.

### Physical Context

The site is approximately 0.73 ha. (1.8 acres) in area and can be identified as two/three parcels of land. The first, which is in the northern section of the site, comprises an existing public car park, areas of scrub & mature woodland. This land formerly comprised of the town’s cattle market. There is an embankment at the western boundary with a gentle fall towards Main St. at the northern boundary. The second/third parcels of land, which are to the south of the site, are narrow and rectangular “gardens/backlands” related to the previously mentioned two-storey house/outbuilding (on the NIAH), and two further terraced properties to the south, which all front onto Main St. at the eastern boundary. The surrounding area contains a number of uses (e.g. the odd shop/pub/office) but mainly residential.

Existing vehicular and pedestrian access to the site is gained via the public car park adjacent to Main Street at the north. A gap in the frontage between the properties fronting Main St. provides informal access to the second/third parcels of land however this would require improvement as part of any future development options.

### Community Aspirations

There is a general opinion throughout the community that the town requires more affordable housing. Although this site was not specifically identified the community have highlighted how high quality, well designed units at the upper end of Main St. could contribute to more vibrant town centre where families would chose to live.



“The Cattle Market” Site Analysis Plan (scale 1:500)

"The Cattle Market" Design Concept Plan (scale 1:500)



**The Potential**

The Former Cattle Market site could be considered an opportunity to provide some residential development, helping to meet local housing need. Existing access to the site at the north will require enhancement and the existing public car park could be retained, with upgrades to potentially include resurfacing, definition of spaces and complementary landscaping. Improved linkages between the site, (incl. car park) and any new development, and Main St./the town centre could also be explored.

There may be an opportunity to develop a southern parcel of land, which currently contains a heritage building considered to be "at risk" and its accompanying garden/outbuilding, and two adjoining properties to the south. Additional residential units could be provided within the extensive "backland" curtilage of the properties and improve pedestrian connections in this part of the town centre. Sensitive improvements to the heritage building itself could address the structure and aesthetics of the building, securing it's use as possibly a family home. A "through" route from the north of the site, at the existing public car park, to the southern end, at the heritage buildings frontage to Main St. could significantly improve access and the use of these backlands.

The re-imagining of existing buildings, accompanied by the better use of inner urban land for new town centre family housing, could bring much needed life and vibrancy back into this part of the town centre. Any proposals should have all of the appropriate amenities required for successful family housing including easy access, spacious and adoptable internal layouts, decent sized and orientated garden spaces, and a mix of convenient private and shared vehicle parking. The successful delivery of such a scheme could be used as an exemplar for other parts of the town centre and towns & villages throughout Donegal.

The accompanying concept design illustrates how the site could be comprehensively developed. It may be necessary to split and phase the implementation of development across the lands, given the scale and varying types of potential development works (e.g. public realm, new-build housing, heritage works etc.).

- Potential Phase 1**
- 1 **Carpark** - Upgraded incl. defining spaces, resurfacing, lighting, & landscaping.
- 2 **Apartments** - 3no. 2person 1 bedroom units (c.55sqm), single/two storey, own front door, private amenity space, & communal parking.
- 3 **"Mews" family housing** - c.6no. 3person 2 bedroom homes over two storey, & c. 3no. 5person 3bedroom homes over two storeys, all with private gardens, & communal parking.
- 4 **"Mews lane"** - provides access to potential housing, sympathetically surfaced & landscaped, & follows alignment of the existing right of way.
- 5 **Existing heritage/vernacular dwelling** - Sympathetically refurbished as a sizable family home (c. 3 to 4 bedrooms) with private garden & parking to the rear.
- Potential Phase 2**
- 6 **Existing heritage/vernacular outbuilding** - Sympathetically refurbished as a family home (c.2 to 3 bedrooms) with private garden & parking.
- 7 **"Mews" family housing** - c. 1no. 3person 2bedroom house over a single storey, & c. 1no. 1bedroom house over a single storey, both with private gardens & private parking.
- 8 **"Mews" family housing** - c. 7/8no. 5person 3bedroom homes over two storeys, with private gardens & some with private parking (integral carport/garage).
- 9 **"Mews lane"** - provides access to potential housing & potential walking route, improving connectivity, sympathetically surfaced & landscaped.



# “The former Pig Market Yard”

## B11 - Opportunity Site E / Historic building improvements D & E: The former Pig Market/Yard, and adjoining building grouping.

### Strategic / Policy Context

The site is located within the settlement limit and partially within the town centre boundary of Milfordas identified in the County Donegal Development Plan 2018-2024 (as varied). The plan contains a number of Objectives & Policies specific to Towns & Villages. There are no particular land use zonings attributed to the site and therefore no particular end uses are specified.

A vernacular building (on the NIAH) is located in the south east corner, fronting onto Market Square / Foxes Glen. This end of terrace two & a half storey building is particularly characterful and of heritage value, therefore should be retained within any proposed scheme development. There are a number of other vernacular buildings at the site, and although not on the NIAH, they do complete the composition of this building grouping adding significant character to the streetscape.

### Physical Context

The site is approximately 0.8 hectare (2 acres) in area and is situated on the lands of the former pig market, at the top of the town. Today, the site comprises of a large unused yard and a number of derelict buildings. There are also a small number of occupied dwellings located along the eastern boundary of the site, fronting Foxes Glen Rd.. The site is bounded at the north by residential properties; at the east by Coopers Rd./Foxes Glen Rd.; at the south by Main St. and at the west by the Kerrykeel Rd. The surrounding area is characterized predominantly by residential and other town centre uses.

### Community Aspirations

The regeneration of Market Square, which includes these adjoining buildings/site appears to be regarded as a priority project by the local community, and requires attention within the Town Centre First Plan. The scale of dereliction at this part of the town is a clear disappointment and the need for intervention has been demonstrated.



2 & 3 Existing heritage buildings.





- 1 **Business / Innovation units** - Single storey buildings arranged to create a courtyard, can be sub-divided & combined, c.680sqm GF space in total.
- 2 **Plaza** - Semi-public space to complement adjacent units, e.g sitting out/dining, markets/events etc.
- 3 **Existing vernacular buildings** - Sympathetically refurbished for mixed uses, possibly incl. some ground floor commercial fronting the plaza, & residential above. Potential to remove inappropriate returns to create a parking court.

- 4 **Existing heritage building** - Sympathetically refurbished, & possibly a new rear extension to accommodate potential ground floor commercial due to its prominent south facing location on Market Square.
- 5 **Existing residential** - To be retained. Could benefit from better defined on street parking at their frontage if delivered as part of any public realm upgrades.
- 6 **Family housing** - c. 4no. 5person 3bedroom units, two storey, split level (due to topography of the site, private gardens, & integral car-port/garage for parking).

### The Potential

Redevelopment of the site could reflect its historical market use and provide business / enterprise units within its western portion accommodating uses such as artisan food production / manufacturing / innovation with a spill out courtyard / food market. Alternative commercial / business uses (e.g.. office space / start ups etc.) could also be explored. Appropriate parking for staff and customer / visitors should be facilitated in line with parking standards, but which reflect the town centre location and proximity to adjacent existing public car parking within the former cattle market lands.

The remainder of the site could largely focus on the provision of town centre living / housing provision through the restoration and improvement of the existing group of buildings within the site, which is considered to be of particular heritage value. Apart from the occupied dwellings to the north east, the buildings within the grouping are considered to be "at risk". In conjunction with the re-development of the wider site there could be improvements to address the groupings aesthetics, layout, structural issues and relationship with the wider site and the Square. Flexible options should be considered for their end use, possibly including the provision of ground floor commercial uses with upper floor living, or as traditional housing units. There exists further opportunity for additional residential buildings to the north west of the site, fronting Foxes Glen Rd.

The sites relationship and connection with Market Square is of particular importance given its prominence at the head of the town and the detrimental impact dereliction here has had on the town centre outlook.

The accompanying concept design illustrates how the site could be comprehensively re-developed to provide a mix of housing and business uses which reflect its historic market activities. Given the scale and varying types/uses, it may be necessary to split and phase the implementation of development.





# “Lands at Mt. Marian”

## D27- Opportunity site K: Lands at Lower Mt. Marian

### Strategic / Policy Context

The site is located inside the settlement limit but outside of the town centre boundary of Milford, as per the County Donegal Development Plan 2018-2024 (as varied). The northern section of the site is zoned as a Settlement Framework Amenity Area. The Amenity Area land use zoning objective is to reserve and enhance land for formal and informal amenity and open space purposes, and to make provision for new recreation, leisure and community facilities.

### Physical Context

The site is approximately 2.35 hectare (5.8 acres) in area, it is bounded at the east by Church Rd with a low stone wall, and an attractive row of mature Horse Chestnut trees; at the south by agricultural lands; at the west by housing at Lower Mt. Marian; and to the north by the R245 Road. The surrounding area is predominantly residential with some significant educational uses (a primary school, 2no. secondary schools and a Further Training & Education Centre).

There is an existing “informal” vehicular access to the southern part of the site at Church Rd. Pedestrian access can be obtained via Church Rd. and also from Lower Mt. Marian to the north and a pedestrian footpath runs through the centre of the site connecting these roads. An existing playpark is situated in the northern section of the site and the remainder of the area is generally mown grass. The southern portion of the site rises towards the south west and largely comprises of areas of scrub.

### Community Aspirations

It is widely recognized within the local community that the town centre is lacking in an attractive and modernly equipped play space and other associated recreational / outdoor facilities, which can serve the younger and older members of the community in particular. The Mt. Marian site has been identified as a preferred site by a number of members of the local community and sports groups for these type of uses.



Playpark etc. at the northern portion of the site



Southern portion of the site



- KEY**
- 1 Publicly accessible open “parkland” (northern portion of the site).
  - 2 “Scrub” land (southern portion of the site).
  - 3 Play park (nine pieces, fairly decent condition).
  - 4 Pedestrian footpath.
  - 5 Utilities (sub-station/pumping station).
  - 6 Lower Mt Marian housing.
  - 7 Further Training & Education centre.
  - 8 Primary School.



“Lands at Mt Marian” Site Analysis Plan (scale 1:1250)

- 1 **Enhanced/refurbished kids play park** - Facility could include play elements for the range of ages including accessible items (alternative locations within the site may be appropriate).
- 2 **Performance space** - Semi-covered stage/bandstand at the centre of the "park" with larger and smaller areas adjacent which can accommodate groupings of people affording good views of this central feature.
- 3 **Pavilion** - A semi-covered, dual frontage space/building of high design quality which could accommodate a cafe or commercial use, & visitor information. It's location is purposefully close to the play park and also adjacent to the road to avail of potential custom from users of the facility & those passing by, as well as being a gateway to the "park" and a connecting uses to the town centre/ Main St.
- 4 **Visitor parking** - On and off street spaces provided at a number of locations throughout the scheme option, with the aim of ensuring that parking does not dominate the space and that access is convenient to various aspects/potential facilities of the space (possible capacity for more parking than is shown).



**Potential**

This sizable site in close proximity to the town centre has significant potential and could be developed in a sensitive manner to address the communities desire for enhanced town centre recreational / play / open space facilities. A range of recreational uses could be explored including public park facilities such as walking trails/paths, seating, lighting, signage/information, toddlers/kids/teens play areas, sensory spaces, allotment spaces (planting/growing), performance spaces/stage, pavilion/cafe/commercial opportunity and community sports/games facilities (outdoor and possibly indoor, such as a "Dome"), and associated parking provision/maintenance access. Suitable pedestrian linkages should be provided throughout the site connecting it with the town centre and other adjacent places. There is also potential for the provision for a new bus parking and drop / off hub serving the adjacent educational facilities and the unique transport issues that they generate (2no. secondary, 1no. primary & the FTE Centre), possibly alleviating current issues. However this should only be considered further once a detailed Transport Assessment in relation to such a proposal, and consideration of it's recommendations has been undertaken, as this is beyond the scope of this study.

Vehicular access in general will require careful consideration in terms of the sites relationship with Church Rd., which operates a one-way system up to the junction with Radharc na Cille (south to north). Church Rd. appears to be sufficiently wide enough to accommodate two lanes for a large extent of the sites frontage with it, and so an extension of two way traffic movement on this road may be possible, and necessary, in order to achieve satisfactory vehicular access to any potential facilities at the site.

In addition to the provision of a range of recreational uses within the site, there may be land and space available for other development if deemed appropriate. For example some housing given the predominantly residential nature of the immediate surrounding area and its compatibility with recreational uses.

An appropriate overall scheme could be achieved through a number of different and alternative design layouts and configurations. The adjacent concept design illustrates one of these options and how the site could be developed to provide a range of recreational uses. The 'town park' element could be located in the northern section of the site with a proposed dome facility located towards the southern end. This is a significantly sized site and it's full development for recreational uses may be beyond the capacity of what is achievable in terms of funding, other facilities/opportunities and considering population of the settlement etc. Therefore this option has a purposeful layout of various sized "zones" separated by footpaths/roads which lends itself well to flexibility of delivery, interchangeability, phasing and management. For example each "zone" could be developed or not and generally not have a significant impact upon the other "zones" (bar a couple of examples). They could have a different theme, use, be delivered at different times during the course of the overall scheme, and be managed by different interests, under an umbrella Management Committee.

**5 Areas of "open space"**  
- Low maintenance "soft landscaped" and/or "hard landscaped" spaces which could facilitate a range of uses, such as space for events, dog parklet, outdoor gym or simply as attractive "green areas" improving bio-diversity and the aesthetics of the place.

**6 Multi Use Games Area (MUGA)**  
- A small outdoor pitch/space to accommodate a range of informal & arranged games of various activities.

**7 "Dome"** - Larger space for indoor activities, inc games, events, conferences, community etc. which could be accommodated all year round.

**8 Biking track** - Availing of the topography.

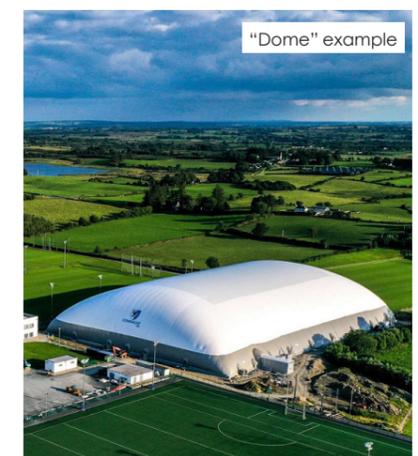
**9 Allotment spaces** - Potential for a "Town Larder", sensory gardens etc.

**10 Bus set down/pick up & parking hub** - Purposefully located in a less prominent location on the overall site, and in close proximity to the road, & any potential dome facility (possible capacity for more parking than is shown).

**11 Future access** - A route retained for potential future pedestrian /possibly vehicle links to the adjacent lands/Convent Rd. at the north west. This would be required in tandem with any potential provision of a bus set down/pick up hub.



Wildflower planting.



"Dome" example



# “Former Milford Bakery site”

## E31 - Opportunity site N: The former Milford Bakery Site.

### Strategic / Policy Context

The site is located outside of the settlement limit and town centre boundary of Milford, as per the County Donegal Development Plan 2018-2024 (as varied) and is therefore considered to be within the countryside. The site is not specifically referred to within the current Development Plan and there is no recent or relevant planning history related to the lands. Mulroy Bay, adjacent to which the site is located, is designated as a Special Area of Conservation. These are prime wildlife conservation areas in the country, considered to be important on a European as well as regional level. As a consequence, any development or changes at the site will be subjected to specific and detailed evaluation (e.g. Protected Species), and rigorous mitigation measures. In addition to the adjacent SAC designation, the site falls within the Development Plans ‘Stronger Rural Area’ zoning and within an Area of High Scenic Amenity. A small portion of the site is also classified as falling within an ‘Area Under Strong Urban Influence’. These areas have the capacity to absorb sensitively located development of scale, design and use which does not detract from the quality of the landscape. It is therefore important that any proposed structures or features would be designed with consideration to this designation.

### Physical Context

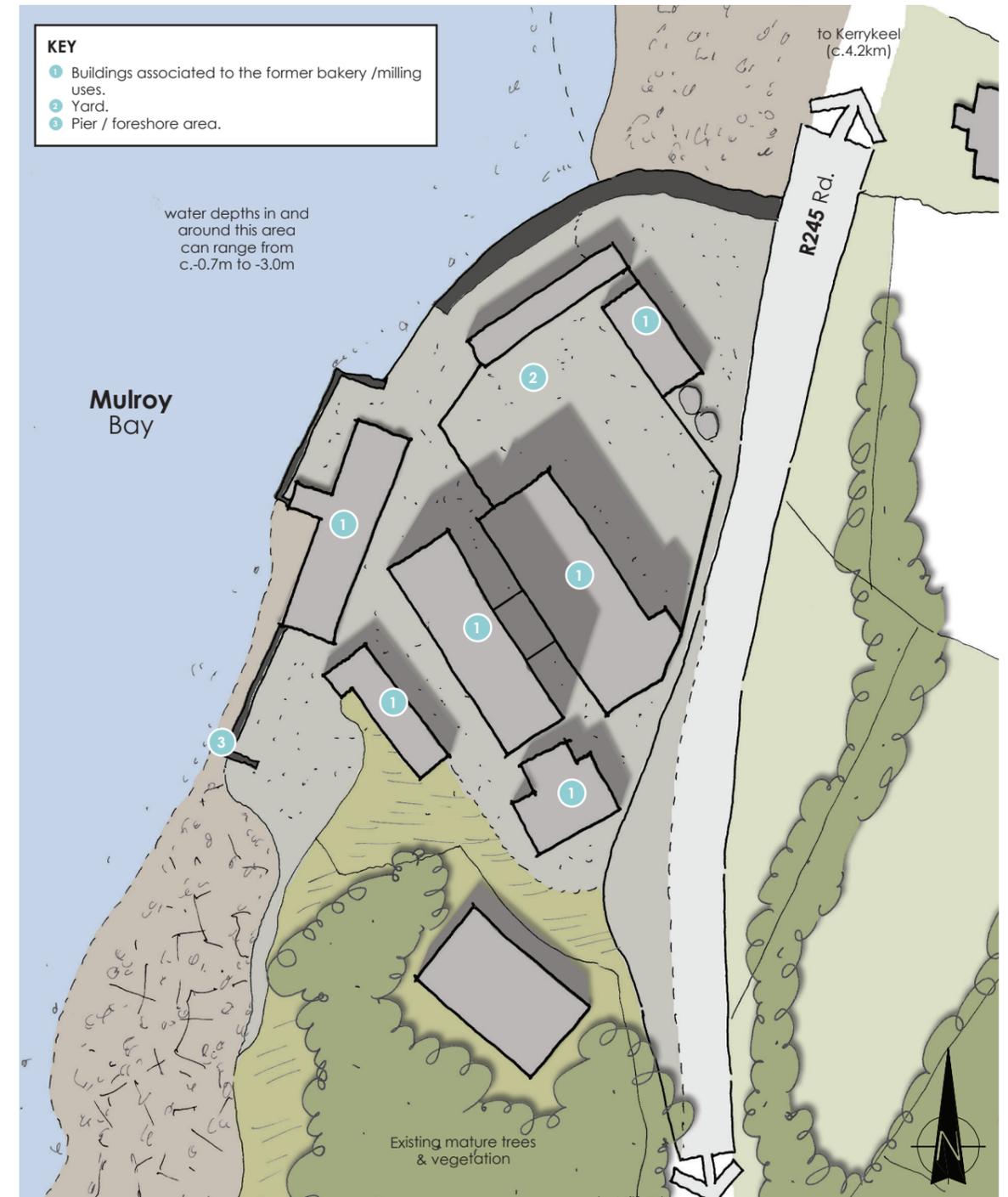
The site is roughly rectangular in shape and is approximately 0.66 hectare (1.64 acres) in area, it is bounded at the west by Mulroy Bay; at the east by the R246 Regional Road; and at the south by mature woodland. The buildings surrounding the site are mainly residential, being single detached two storey houses and bungalows.

Existing vehicular access is via the R246 (Lough) Road, at the south east of the site. Due to the bend in the adjacent road, away from the site, there does not appear to be any particular issues with existing visibility from the site. There is no dedicated route for pedestrian or cyclists from the neighbouring town of Milford i.e. there is no cycle lanes or footpaths. Within the grounds of the site are a number of buildings (7 in total) and large steel tanks associated with the former Bakery/Milling operations. The remainder of the site is either generally overgrown with scrub or is tarmacked. To the South beyond the curtilage of the buildings is a small deciduous woodland.

There are a number of potential physical constraints/challenges significant to any potential future regeneration of this site, including the need to clarify possible site contamination and satisfactorily mitigate any risk (due to past industrial uses and also potential presence of asbestos); national flood maps indicate that the site is not impacted by current or future flooding however due to its loughside location this would require clarification; it is assumed that some form of utility infrastructure is in place due to the previous use of the site, however it is highly likely that all utilities will have to be updated in some way or form, and clarification of the impacts of this are key (e.g. costs/feasibility, environmental impact etc.), and clarification and consideration of ground conditions as there is a possibility that they could be quite challenging at this site (possible raised beach and/or high bedrock) in terms of redevelopment.

### Community Aspirations

There is a general feeling within the community that the existing buildings on site should be demolished and the site should be cleared. This is largely due to concerns regarding the stability of the buildings and it is thought that demolition would improve these safety concerns, first and foremost. In relation to future uses of the site, a tourism use such as a “blueway” “headquarters” / water sports / outdoor recreation / marina etc. appear to be popular aspirations. The development of a hotel has also been suggested as well as a café/restaurant. Some within the community are of the opinion that minor works such as a car park or picnic areas would be best suited to this waterside site. It should be noted that there are also some members of the community who feel that it should not be a part of this particular Town Centre First Plan.



The “Former Milford Bakery” site - Site Analysis plan (scale 1:1000).

## Potential

As a previously developed site at an attractive location this long vacant site has particular potential for new uses/regeneration, however it is apparent that there are also considerable physical and policy constraints that will have an influence in relation to this potential and the feasibility of regenerating the site.

Mainly due to the site's setting/location, and natural features, potential tourism use at the site may be a particularly attractive/logical option for regeneration. The type of tourism use would most likely be associated to the Mulroy Bay and the provision of "blue infrastructure" associated with it.

There are variations in relation to what it may be possible to deliver however the adjacent concept demonstrates one potential version of the comprehensive re-development of the site as a tourism hub, with possible facilities such as accommodation and "water based" attractions.

- 1 Building A** - A taller ("mill" like) block of c.4-6 storeys (replicating similar forms of the existing bakery buildings) which could include (some or all of the following), ground/basement level parking; tourism accommodation (for example a combination of hotel / self catering units; events rooms; bar and restaurant; spa; terrace; viewing gallery/tower).
- 2 Building B** - A lower ("industrial" styled) block of c.2-3 storeys (again replicating similar forms of the existing bakery outbuilding that is located in this area) which could include (some or all of the following), water activities centre; cafe; small shop related to the tourism offer (water activities); ground or upper floor "blue way" visitor centre / administration accommodation; and reception/offices/storage/maintenance facility related to any potential marina/boating uses.
- 3 Small/medium marina / pontoon / jettys** - Particularly depending upon achievement of the specific conditions required (e.g. appropriate water depths / engineering requirements / environmental matters / feasibility etc.).
- 4 Open/outdoor spaces** - including central "green" arrival space/square; waterside promenade/terrace; and more private outdoor spaces associated to the provision of any potential tourism accommodation/buildings (hotel/self catering units/offices etc.).
- 5 Pedestrian/vehicle circulation and car-parking** - potential in/out route with two accesses to serve the site; and provision of adequate vehicle parking space numbers (some of which could be waterside, for day trippers/tourers to enjoy the fantastic views), cycle parking/storage/repair and set down/pick up / loading areas. There may also be an opportunity to provide a small number of managed campervan pitches with appropriate facilities.
- 6 Improvements to the access road** - such a proposal may require upgrades to the adjacent transport network such as a right hand turning lane; and some provision of pedestrian and cycle connections between the nearby Milford Town Centre would be of significant benefit.
- 7 Wastewater Treatment Plant** - Due to the location it is highly unlikely that the site can be connected to the existing drainage network, therefore a proposal of such a scale will require dedicated plant and facilities to treat the waste water generated by it. This will need to be placed away from the existing sensitive water body, and easily accessible for maintenance etc.

The "Former Milford Bakery" site - Design Concept Option plan (scale 1:500).



Small Loughside marina/jetty facilities



Waterside activities

# Section



An Implementation  
Strategy



# Funding & enabling delivery

The delivery of the Plan will require a flexible, co-ordinated and committed approach by all stakeholders responsible for its implementation. The scale of individual development proposals will dictate the level of resources required for their delivery, either solely by the public sector, or solely by the private sector or as some form of joint venture.

It will be important to bring together the resources for the delivery of certain proposals at an early stage, to "kick start" the Plan, bringing visible short term benefits and creating confidence. Shop frontage improvements throughout the Milford, for example, would be a catalyst for the future regeneration of the town.

For all the Plan's various proposals, it will be important to ensure that all necessary mechanisms, including funding, responsibilities, co-ordination and co-operation, are in place to ensure timely and robust delivery.

The local community and local businesses, working with the Local Authority, are central to the delivery of the Town Centre First Plan for Milford. A multi-layered governance structure will support the successful implementation of this Town Centre First Plan with the support and engagement of the community, ensuring the convergence of key community stakeholders, local interest groups and business interests. Public sector Intervention, particularly leadership by Donegal County Council and their various internal departments, will be essential in ensuring the delivery of many components of this Plan.

The Plan seeks to regenerate and renew Milford Town Centre, by responding to the economic, social and environmental challenges facing Milford. It also seeks to respond to the town's many attractive qualities, good strategic location and considerable community support network to inspire and provide positive change.

The sources / tools of potential funding and delivery are included in the table opposite:

<p><b>A</b></p>	<p><b>The Private and Community Based Sector</b>                  It is expected that the private sector will play a major part in fulfilling the regeneration objectives, given that a large portion of the town comprises of private businesses and lands that are in private ownership. It will be important for the Council to work closely with the Private and Community Sectors to facilitate co-ordinated delivery and therefore creating the conditions where the private sector can confidently contribute to the regeneration of the town.</p>
<p><b>B</b></p>	<p><b>The Public Sector and Local Authority</b>                  It is an ambition that Public Sector funding for particular proposals could be facilitated by Donegal County Council, however in the current economic climate there can be no certainties. Other Public Sector funding sources may include for example opportunities under the Department of Rural and Community Development's Rural Development Investment Programme, as a part of Project Ireland 2040. This includes the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) and the Town and Village Renewal scheme, LEADER, Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS), and the CLÁR Programme.</p>
<p><b>C</b></p>	<p><b>Development Briefs</b>                  In the circumstances where there are sites which require particular regeneration, Development Briefs could be used as a mechanism to achieve regeneration goals by informing potential developers and other interested parties of the opportunities of each site.</p>
<p><b>D</b></p>	<p><b>Local Asset Backed Vehicles</b>                  This potential delivery mechanism involves a joint venture between the Public and Private/Community based Sectors and it could be a successful approach to delivering mixed use regeneration, particularly at some of the Plan's more complex proposals.</p>
<p><b>E</b></p>	<p><b>The Heritage Council</b>                  Heritage Council funding (e.g. Historic Structures Fund, Built Heritage Capital Grant and Historic Towns Initiative (HTI)) should be considered as a means for funding. This could be an avenue particularly explored in relation to any historic / protected building improvements within the town.</p>
<p>Other funding avenues that could be explored include the Outdoor Public Space Scheme, Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme, the Irish National Lottery Funding, the Strategic Funding Unit, Historic Structures Fund, Built Heritage Investment Scheme, Fáilte Ireland funding, Housing for All Crói Cónaithe Fund, ERDF Programme for Towns, Active Travel Fund, Climate Adaptation and Retrofitting, Destination Towns Initiative, Sustainable Mobility Investment Programme etc.</p>	



## Funding Sources

Potential Funding Source	Type of Support	Notes
<b>Rural Regeneration Development Fund (RRDF)</b>	Mainly Capital (min €500k) with minor revenue (max 3yrs)	Annual call, €m available but highly competitive and requires match funding and 'shovel ready' projects (e.g. planning permission in place). Funds supports rural renewal and regeneration in towns with less than 10,000 people. Initial funding of €315 million has been allocated to the fund on a phased basis over the period 2019 to 2022, however the RRDF is a commitment of €1 billion by government to be invested in rural Ireland over the period 2019 to 2027.
<b>National Development Programme</b>	Mainly Capital	Climate Action Fund will support up to 50% of project costs that meet Ireland's climate and energy objectives. Open to non-departmental public bodies, private organisations, academia and NGOs. Other funds such as Build Digital Grant and the Disruptive Technologies Innovation Funds are aimed at multi-partner consortia and large projects. Smaller grants may be available directly or indirectly relating to climate change (e.g. retrofitting homes, electric charge points and smaller scale environmental/energy efficiency projects).
<b>Community Enhancement Programme</b>	Capital	The Community Enhancement Programme (CEP) provides capital funding to community groups in disadvantaged areas across Ireland. Projects covered by the CEP include minor improvements to buildings, minor renovation of community centres, developing community amenities and improvements to town parks, common areas and energy-saving projects.
<b>Leader 2023-2027</b>	Capital	Leader is a rural development programme co-funded by the EU which aims to meet the needs of rural communities and businesses. The programme supports private enterprises and community groups in rural areas. Fresh funding of €180 million available to support rural communities and enterprises between 2023 - 2027.
<b>Town and Village Renewal Scheme</b>	Capital	The Town and Village Renewal Scheme is managed on behalf of the Department by the local authorities, and the programme is funded under Project Ireland 2040. The Scheme provides funding of up to €200,000 (increased to €500,000 max.) to support the economic and social recovery of rural towns with a population of less than 10,000, focused on place-making and town centre regeneration.
<b>Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme</b>	Capital	The Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme provides funding for the development of new outdoor recreational infrastructure. It provides funding for the development, extension and repair of trails, walkways, cycleways and blueways; improved access to outdoor leisure or recreational facilities; and development of outdoor recreational infrastructure.
<b>CLÁR Programme 2023</b>	Capital	The CLÁR programme (Ceantair Laga Árd-Riachtanais) provides funding for small-scale infrastructural projects in rural areas. The funding works in conjunction with local funding and on the basis of locally identified priorities and the scheme is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development.  Almost €8 million in fresh funding has been allocated to community and sports facilities nationwide under the 2023 CLÁR (Ceantair Laga Árd-Riachtanais) programme .  Under Measure 1 of the 2023 initiative, grants from €5,000 to €50,000 are being provided to support the development of community and sports facilities, youth clubs, playgrounds, sensory gardens, walking tracks and much more.
<b>Housing</b>	Mainly Capital	A variety of housing assistance programmes are available (e.g. for renovations, adaptations, energy efficiency, older people etc) excluding incentive schemes (e.g. help to buy). These may change over time. Funding sources includes the Housing for All (Towns) Crói Cónaithe Fund.
<b>IDA, Enterprise Ireland and the Western Development Commission</b>	Capital and Revenue	IDA can support FDI on a case by case basis. Enterprise Ireland can provide a spectrum of grants and support (e.g. Business Financial Planning Grant; Sustainable Enterprise Fund (small €25k-50k; and large up to €800k), Brexit Ready for Customers, Capital Investment Schemes, Online Retail and Lean Business Continuity Voucher). The WDC can assist projects (e.g. developing hubs) as part of its Atlantic Economic Corridor initiative; and via equity finance and loans.
<b>North West Regional Assembly</b>	Capital and Revenue (at least indirectly)	Being located in the border area enables access to a wider range of EU funds than counties in the Greater Dublin Area.
<b>ERDF Programme for Towns</b>	Capital	The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Programme for Towns - 2021-2027 programme, puts an emphasis on tackling vacancy and dereliction in towns in support of the Town Centre First approach. The ERDF is co-financed by the European Union and the Government of Ireland and is managed by the Regional Assemblies,
<b>Destination Towns Initiative</b>	Capital	Fáilte Ireland's Destination Towns scheme is funded under the Government's Project Ireland 2040 strategy and seeks to develop the tourism potential of towns and create a sense of place in towns to support growth in the tourism sector.
<b>Active Travel Fund &amp; Sustainable Mobility Investment Programme</b>	Capital	These potential funding sources support the rapid roll out of new and improved active travel infrastructure in towns.

Table: Potential sources of funding to enable implementation (suggested sources require further investigation to determine suitability)



# Responsibility for delivery

The following key stakeholders will have respective responsibilities for implementation, with a continuing commitment to providing the resources required for the delivery of the proposals contained within the Town Centre First Plan:

## Community Groups



Participation and leadership from the local community is vital in helping to implement and deliver the objectives of the Plan. The Community Stakeholder Group, which is made up of local residents, local community groups, voluntary organisations, the business community and other key stakeholders, have been actively involved throughout the preparation of the Town Centre First Plan and so will be a particularly important contributor moving forward with its implementation.

## Private Developers, Business Owners and Landowners



Private developers, business owners and landowners will play an important role in the delivery of proposals for the identified Key Opportunity Sites. The key Stakeholders will aim to work closely and co-ordinate with all interested private developers and landowners to ensure effective implementation and delivery of proposals.

## Donegal County Council



Donegal County Council will play a key role in the implementation and delivery of the Plan. The Council's internal teams and departments, including Community Development, Roads, Housing, Heritage & Conservation, Regeneration & Development, Economic Development, and Planning Department, will take the lead on relevant aspects of the Plan as and where required.

## Department of Rural and Community Development



DRCD is the Government Department with responsibility for supporting the rural sector throughout the country and will therefore play a key role in the implementation and delivery of this Plan.



# Potential Timescales

## Potential project timescales

The Action Plan set out within this document identifies the actions for delivery of the Plan's proposals and a timetable for their delivery. Regular monitoring and evaluation is recommended. Successful delivery will require a collaborative approach between all stakeholders. Some actions identified will be ideal contenders for "Quick Wins", bringing short term visible benefits to the town. Delivery of other actions will be longer term. "Quick Wins" are generally identified as actions which fall into the brackets of having a shorter potential timescale (<5years) and will be of low indicative cost (<€0.5m). They are generally projects which occur at sites where ownerships are relatively clear (normally public) and they can act as catalysts for longer term actions. Potential Quick Win projects within the Milford Town Centre First Plan include:

- Shop frontage improvements A: At Lower Main Street.
- Bus stop Option A: At the former Milford Hotel site / Lower Main St.
- Shop frontage improvements C: At Lower Main Street and Moyle Road.

Each individual project will have its unique requirements and timescales for delivery depending on its scale, ownership context, costing etc, however each of the identified 'Key Projects' within the Action Plan has the potential to be implemented through RIBA/RIAI Stages 1-7 i.e. from initial brief and concept design through to construction and handover on site.

Shorter term projects comprise of those that potentially could be largely achieved within a 5 year period; medium term projects are those that potentially could be largely achieved between 5 and 10 years and longer terms projects are those that could potentially be largely delivered after a period of 10 years. The below phasing plan is indicative only and subject to a number of factors including land ownership and buy-in, feasibility development, planning, funding and other statutory approvals, technical design consideration and construction delivery.

Those projects which are considered as having potential to be achieved within the shorter timeframe (< 5 years) are those that are generally within Donegal County Council's land ownership and where demand and buy-in from the community and other relevant stakeholders has been demonstrated through the Town Centre First Plan process. Projects which are not currently within Council's land ownership, but are identified as being achievable in the shorter term, are those where there is general willingness from the landowner to support the future regeneration of the site through delivery of the potential project / site objectives.

## Potential Phasing Plan

The phasing plan on the next page illustrates how the identified 'key projects' could potentially be implemented and delivered, through the RIBA/RIAI Stages, over the short, medium and long term. The identified 'key projects' within the Milford Town Centre First Plan are:

- Public realm improvements A: Along Lower Main St., adjoining section of Church Rd. & Lough Rd.
- Historic building improvements A: The former Town Hall.
- Opportunity Site A / Historic building improvements B: The former Milford Hotel/ Tara Bar/site.
- Public realm improvements B: Public car-park to the rear (west) of Main Street.
- Public realm improvements C: Along Upper Main St., and Market Sq.
- Opportunity Site E / Historic building improvements D & E: The former Pig Market/ Yard, and adjoining building grouping.
- Opportunity site F: The former Cattle Market/Yard.
- Opportunity Site G / Historic building improvements F: Two storey, three bay house and site at the south of Market Sq.
- Public realm improvements D: Along Lower Main St. at Kilmacrennan Rd junction to the Public Service Centre entrance, and the Moyle Rd. / Ramelton Rd. junction.
- Opportunity site K: Lands at Lower Mt Marian.
- Opportunity site M: The former Milford Bakery Site.

The phasing plan identifies how three of the 'key projects' (or elements of key projects i.e. phases of public realm improvements) could be achieved within the shorter term timeframe (<5 years). These projects are Opportunity Site A - The Former Cattle Market / Yard; Public realm improvements A; and Public Realm Improvements B. A fourth project, in the form of Opportunity Site K - Lands at Lower Mount Marian, could be largely progressed in the shorter term, but concluded within a medium timeframe. Initial ownership/acquisition work could be commenced on the Former Milford Hotel site within a five year period, however the medium term is a more realistic timeframe for progress on the design of the scheme, obtainance of statutory approvals and construction of works on site etc. Three further potential projects, in the form of Public realm improvements C; Public realm improvements D and the Former Town Hall, could also potentially be progressed in the medium term.

The Former Pig Market/yard and the Former Milford Bakery site are acknowledged as being potentially more complex and therefore identified as being longer term projects. Initial investigations and exploration works could commence on these within the medium or shorter term however the longer term is viewed as a more realistic timeframe for implementation and completion of these projects.

Please refer to the phasing plan on the next page for illustration of the potential indicative timeframes and sequencing of the identified 'key projects'.



# Potential Phasing Plan

Key Project number & description	Shorter Term (<5 years)					Medium Term (5-10 years)						Longer Term (>10 years)							
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039	2040	
<b>B12</b> Opportunity site F: The former Cattle Market/Yard.		Design & funding	Construction																
<b>A1</b> Public realm improvements A: Along Lower Main St., adjoining section of Church Rd. & Lough Rd.		Design & funding	Construction																
<b>A6</b> Public realm improvements B: Public car-park to the rear (west) of Main Street.		Design & funding	Construction																
<b>D26</b> Opportunity site K: Lands at Lower Mt Marian.			Design & funding	Construction															
<b>B13</b> Opportunity Site G / Historic building improvements F: Two storey, three bay house and site at the south of Market Sq.			Design & fund/invest	Construction															
<b>A3</b> Opportunity Site A / Historic building improvements B: The former Milford Hotel/Tara Bar/site.				Ownership	Design & funding	Construction													
<b>B10</b> Public realm improvements C: Along Upper Main St., and Market Sq.						Design & funding	Construction												
<b>C19</b> Public realm improvements D: Along Lower Main St. at Kilmacrennan Rd junction to the PSC / Moyle Rd. junction.						Design & funding	Construction												
<b>A2</b> Historic building improvements A: The former Town Hall.							Ownership	Design & funding	Construction										
<b>B11</b> Opportunity Site E / Historic building improvements D & E: The former Pig Market/Yard, and adjoining building grouping.									Ownership	Design & fund/invest	Construction								
<b>E31</b> Opportunity site N: The former Milford Bakery Site.											Ownership	Design & fund/invest	Construction						

Potential Project Phasing Plan - Identifying potential timeline for implementation of the Masterplans 'Key Projects'



# Mechanisms for delivery & managing progress

## Monitoring and evaluation

A series of measurable key performance indicators to quantify progress will be established on implementation of projects to enable the monitoring and evaluation of the Plan on a regular basis. The measured change over time will give an indication of the progress towards full achievement of the vision, the delivery of specific objectives and the overall vitality and viability of the town centre.

Typical measures could include an annual review of the baseline information contained within this report - such as comparing the number of vacant buildings year on year to ensure the Plan proposal is increasing occupancy in the town.

To give a balanced and comprehensive picture, the statistical measures need to be complemented by qualitative assessments, which could include regular forums with the community. Some of the data may be collected on an annual basis, some on a biannual basis, some every 5 years, and Census related data every 10 years.

This review should be used to ensure the Plan continues to be sufficiently flexible and capable of appropriate adaption to changes in the physical, social, economic and environmental context, rather than being a rigid and quickly outdated document of little benefit to the community.

## Land ownership

Given the mixture of public and private land ownerships throughout the town centre, the Plan will require a number of different delivery mechanisms to suit the requirements of each project and their respective stakeholders. The participation of and ongoing engagement with and between landowners will form an important element of the implementation of the Plan, particularly the delivery of the proposed 'key projects'. In some cases the delivery of proposals advocated by the masterplan will require the simultaneous redevelopment of land that is under more than one land ownership. The following table outlines the land ownership status of the key sites and the potential delivery mechanisms for any future development proposals on these lands:

Key Site /Action	Ownership status & potential delivery mechanism
A1) Public realm improvements A: Along Lower Main St., adjoining section of Church Rd. & Lough Rd.	Majority of the area is under public ownership i.e. Council Roads. Some elements of work may impact upon private lands and so co-ordination between various parties will be required.
A2) Historic building improvements A: The former Town Hall.	Lands are entirely under private ownership. Development could be facilitated by the private owner or in a joint venture with the public sector. Development briefs could be utilised.
A3) Opportunity Site A / Historic building improvements B: The former Milford Hotel/ Tara Bar/site.	Lands are entirely under private ownership. Development could be facilitated by the private owner or in a joint venture with the public sector. Development briefs could be utilised.
A6) Public realm improvements B: Public car-park to the rear (west) of Main Street.	Majority of the area is under public ownership i.e. Council Roads. Some elements of work may impact upon private lands and so co-ordination between various parties will be required.
B10) Public realm improvements C: Along Upper Main St., and Market Sq.	Majority of the area is under public ownership i.e. Council Roads. Some elements of work may impact upon private lands and so co-ordination between various parties will be required.
B11) Opportunity Site E / Historic building improvements D & E: The former Pig Market/ Yard, and adjoining building grouping.	Lands are entirely under private ownership. Development could be facilitated by the private owner or in a joint venture with the public sector. Development briefs could be utilised.
B12) Opportunity site F: The former Cattle Market/Yard.	Lands are under public ownership. Development could be implemented as a first phase of works in combination with Opportunity Site G / Historic building improvements F. Development briefs could be utilised.
B13) Opportunity Site G / Historic building improvements F: Two storey, three bay house and site at the south of Market Sq.	Lands are under private ownership. Development could be implemented as a second phase of works in combination with Opportunity Site F. Development briefs could be utilised.
C19) Public realm improvements D: Along Lower Main St. at Kilmacrennan Rd junction to the Public Service Centre entrance, and the Moyle Rd. / Ramelton Rd. junction.	Majority of the area is under public ownership i.e. Council Roads. Some elements of work may impact upon private lands and so co-ordination between various parties will be required.
D26) Opportunity site K: Lands at Lower Mt Marian.	Lands are under public ownership. Development briefs could be utilised.
E31) Opportunity site N: The former Milford Bakery Site.	Lands are under private ownership, with potentially several parties owning separate sections of the site. Development briefs could be utilised.

**The Central Stakeholders** - identifying the ownership status and potential delivery mechanisms for each key site / action

# Acknowledgements

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Donegal County Council and the project consultant team would like to acknowledge and thank all those who have contributed their time, knowledge and ideas to this plan and plan making process. The Milford Town Centre First Plan was prepared under the direction of Donegal County Council's Regeneration and Development Team, and in collaboration with:

- Community Stakeholder Group;
- Letterkenny-Milford Municipal District Elected Members; and
- Donegal County Council Departments;

A particular mention must also be made to members of the local community, community organisations and pupils and staff from Loreto Community School, Mulroy College and Scoil Mhuire, who participated, supported and contributed to the Plan throughout the process.

*GM Design Associates Limited is not responsible for nor shall be liable for the consequences of any use made of this Report other than that for which it was prepared by GM Design Associates Limited for the Client unless GM Design Associates Limited provides prior written authorisation for such other use and confirms in writing that the Report is suitable for it. It is acknowledged by the parties that this Report has been produced solely in accordance with the Client's brief and instructions and without any knowledge of or reference to any other parties' potential interests in or proposals for the Project.*

*GM Design Associates Limited accepts no responsibility for comments made by members of the community which have been reflected in this report.*

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The Irish Government's Town Centre First policy aims to 'create town centres that function as viable, vibrant and attractive locations for people to live, work and visit, while also functioning as the service, social, cultural and recreational hub for the local community.

This Town Centre First Plan was commissioned and overseen by Donegal County Council's Regeneration & Development Team, with the aim of providing a tailored community level plan that sets out a range of potential improvements, actions, opportunities, and new developments to support the future regeneration of Milford town centre. GM Design Associates, an Architectural, Master-Planning and Landscape practice, have assisted the Council with this project and the production of the Plan.

When implemented, the actions contained within this Plan can result in economic, social and environmental benefits and help to deliver a vibrant, liveable and fully functioning service town centre with a flourishing population, that has a strong employment and housing choice, community and social amenities, high quality of life and positive public/civic spaces. The Town Centre First Plan will establish a clear roadmap for the regeneration and future development of Milford ensuring the town takes advantage and builds on its existing physical and community assets, including its landscape and natural setting, its tourism offer, heritage and strong community spirit.

