

# Ramelton Re-Imagined

A Restorative & Transformational Historic  
Town Centre Public Realm Scheme

**Design Report**

January 2022



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# 01 INTRODUCTION

- Introduction
- Proposed Boundary and Key Spaces
- Design Considerations

## Introduction

Donegal County Council, intend to implement a series of enhancements to the public realm of Ramelton's Historic Town Centre. These changes seek to improve the overall pedestrian experience and legibility of the space, enhancing the towns attractiveness as a local and regional destination. The proposed project is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development through the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund.

The proposals build upon the findings of the Ramelton Action Plan 2020. Care has been taken to ensure that the proposed designs respond to the rich and unique cultural and architectural heritage of the historic core.

Existing civic spaces have been identified as hubs of local activity, with the potential of improving pedestrian connections to adjoining streets and overall circulation around the town.

Overall these improvements seek to promote the economic and social renewal of the town and aid in Ramelton's transition to encourage healthy and low carbon lifestyles.

The proposed development aims to strengthen and enhance the physical, environmental, social and economic capacity of Ramelton in support of the designation of Ramelton as a Strategic Town with a special economic function for Built Heritage in the County Donegal Development Plan 2018-2024 and will act as a catalyst for increased activity within it.

The key areas are as follows and shown on the below plan:

**1. Gamble's Square:** The re-creation of flexible multi purpose civic space

**2. Shore Road:** Improving the pedestrian link and circulation around the town and along the River Lennon.

**3. Market Cross:** Re-instatement of the Market Cross as a meeting place including the installation of a new sculpture to replace the original Market Cross

**4. The Bing:** The formation of a pivotal central gathering space within the core of the town which provides a functioning multi-user space to include a public garden, a Children's Play Park and public events space

**5. Market Square:** Creation of a usable public space at Market Square including traffic management.

**6. The Quays:** Regeneration of the historic Quays



1. Gamble's Square
2. Shore Road
3. Market Cross
4. The Bing
5. Market Square
6. The Quays



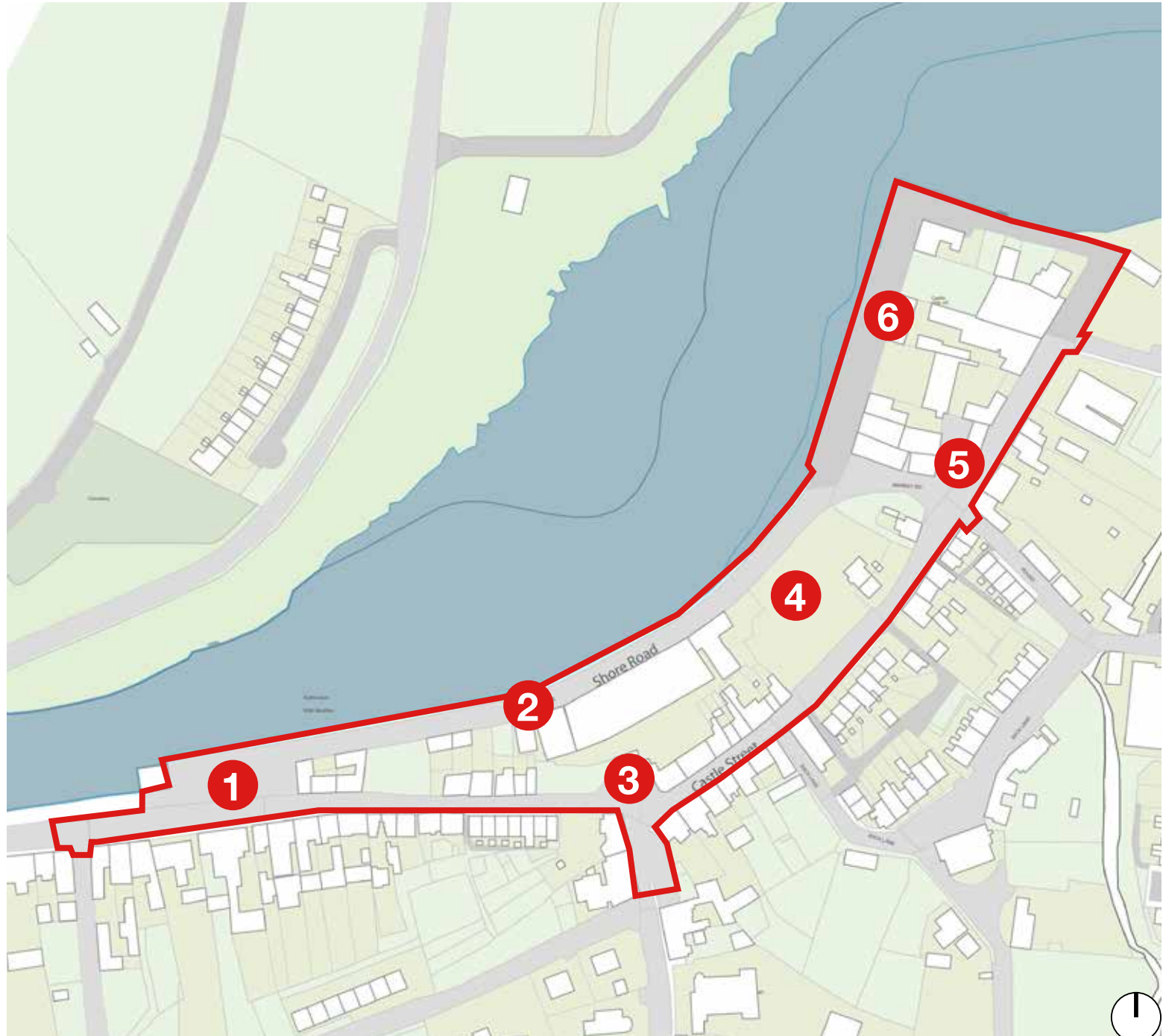
## BDP.

# Proposed Part 8 Boundary and Key Spaces

Within the Part 8 boundary there are a number of key spaces and adjoining streets. It is envisaged that the proposals will be delivered in phases and subject to funding availability.

Project Boundary ———

1. Gamble's Square
2. Shore Road
3. Market Cross
4. The Bing
5. Market Square
6. The Quays



## Design Considerations

### Materials

Ramelton is a riverside town with a unique cultural and industrial past, still visible in its layout and building vernacular today. It's architectural setting has changed little in the past 200 years however modern day street materials such as Tarmacadam have replaced the former pressed gravel. It is envisaged that the proposed material palette is sympathetic to the setting and also appropriate for today's needs, together they will bring back the towns former grandeur (See *Section 4 Materials*).

### Pedestrian Connections

Currently, there is a lack of continuity and quality in footpaths, which creates a disjointed and unreadable public realm for pedestrians. We aim to significantly improve the pedestrian comfort and circulation for all users of the town by creating consistent and connected pedestrian links. Where possible footpaths have been widened and new footpaths introduced to improve general circulation. The exception is along the northern side of Bridge Street and Castle Street where there currently are no footpaths and the introduction of a continuous footpath will result in the loss of considerable parking which we want to avoid. (See *Section 3 Projects*).

### Levels

Ramelton's natural topography presents challenges in terms of ease of accessibility with considerable slopes up Bridge Street, Castle Street and the Bing.

Along the river front the natural topography is relatively flat and the design proposals seek to re-profile footpaths where possible to provide uniformity and improved comfort for all users. There are many junctions which currently do not have drop crossings for pedestrian crossing the roads.

Along with improving localised levels throughout the town we will be working with the existing drainage system, adapting and improving where necessary the overall surface water drainage. Precise details shall be agreed with the Roads department.

The proposed plans seek to work with existing levels throughout, except at Gamble's Square (see *Section 3 Gamble's Square*) and the proposed ramped entrance to The Bing (see *Section 3 The Bing*). It is proposed that details will be confirmed at detailed design stage.

### Covid and Increased Use of the Outdoors

Footfall has increased within Ramelton's historic core due in part to locals and visitors wishing to explore the town during Covid restrictions, and part to the increase in healthier lifestyle aspirations, increasing walking, running and cycling.

It is intended that the proposed enhancements will transform the historic core to meet modern day lifestyles and promote use and activities.







## 02 OVERALL VISION

- Vision



**Recapturing the essence of the historic streets and spaces of Ramelton by enhancing the setting of the town and achieving a successful and sensitive design which provides function, flexibility and an enhanced user experience.**

- Re-imagine the public realm of Ramelton while respecting the historic setting.
- Improve pedestrian connectivity and flow throughout the town.
- Introduce a quality palette of materials to enhance and compliment the protected historic character.
- Ensure adequate parking for businesses using inclusive design principles.
- Create a walk-able public space by improving pedestrian connectivity to encourage healthy and low carbon lifestyles.
- Create flexibility for events and activities.
- Maximise the natural assets of the town and increase the social and ecological value of the 'Bing'.
- Transform how people engage with existing spaces in the historic core.
- Ensure the public realm acts as a catalyst to drive the local and regional economy.

## 03 PROJECTS

- Gamble's Square
- Shore Road
- Market Cross
- The Bing
- Market Square
- The Quays

## Gamble's Square

**Gamble's Square is the focal point of the Historic Town centre on entry to Ramelton.**

The design includes:

- Provide suitable footpaths and crossings for a better pedestrian experience and through routes to other parts in the town.
- Introduce high quality natural stone paving and street furniture that is sympathetic to the existing built heritage and architecture.
- Introduces a new Green Gateway to Gamble's Square with a pedestrian crossing and low level native shrubs.
- Retains parking for everyday access.
- Provides a new wide walkway linking the Mall to the Shore Road creating a smooth pedestrian flow.
- Improves levels by flattening out the area next to the river wall.
- Creates flexible space for markets and events that can be easily demarcated retaining vehicle flows.
- Provides spill out area for potential restaurants and bars and a pedestrian connection from commercial to riverside activities.



Indicative artistic impression of Gamble's Square



**BDP.**  
**Gamble's Square**



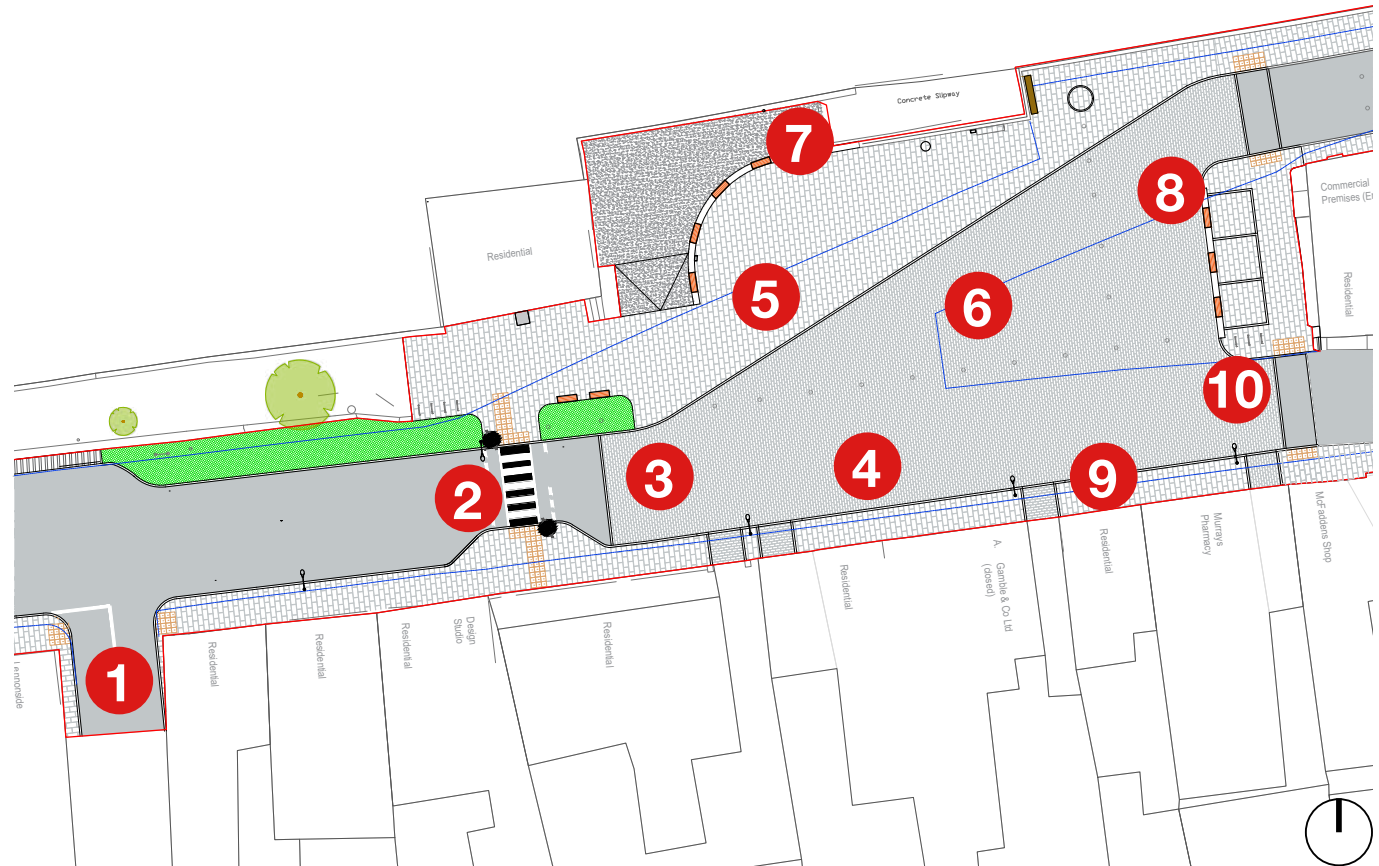
Indicative artistic impression of view on approach to Gamble's Square



# Gamble's Square

## Key enhancements:

1. Improved pedestrian crossing at the Tank.
2. Introduction of a new Green Gateway to Gamble's Square of low-level native shrubs.
3. Installation of high quality paving and street furniture throughout. (See Section 4 Materials).
4. Retention of parking for everyday access.
5. Inclusion of a new wide walkway linking the Mall to the Shore Road creating a smooth pedestrian flow.
6. Creation of a flexible market and events space, through telescopic bollards.
7. Electricity sockets along the new retaining wall with seating (See Section 3 Gamble's Square Levels) will provide weekly market vendors with a source of energy and the public with a levelled pitching area.
8. Addition of stepped levels with seating and planting at the improved spill out area for potential restaurants and bars.
9. Placement of a new sensitive lighting scheme to function practically for people and avoid environmental overspill protecting nature.
10. The provision of cycle stands (See Section 4 Street Furniture).

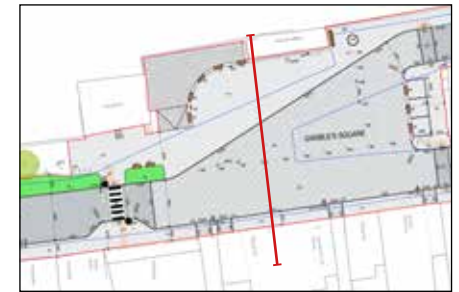
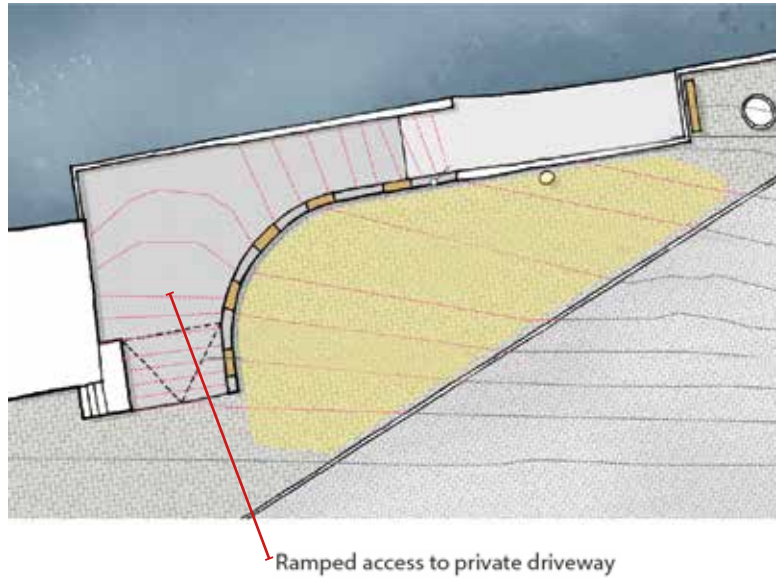


General Arrangement Plan (Drawing not to scale)

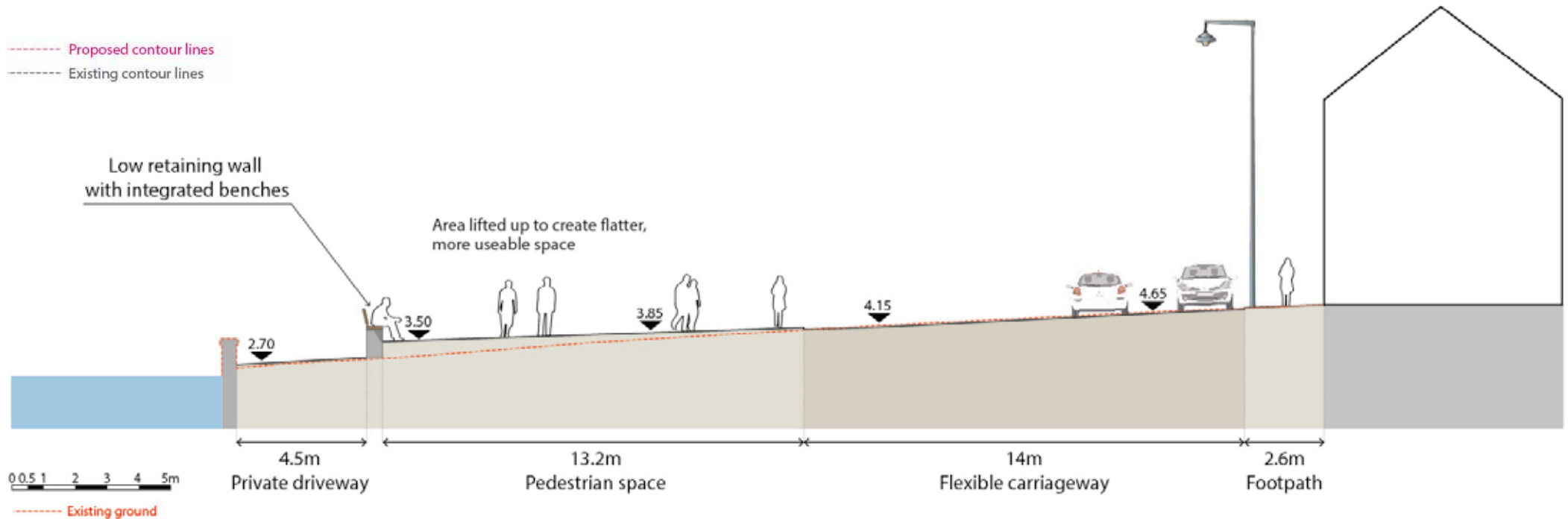
## Gamble Square - Improved Levels

The proposals for the space outside Fish House introduce a low retaining wall to allow the levels to be improved. Key improvements that would be achieved by these interventions include:

- The creation of a usable, flat space within Gambles Square, suitable for temporary market stalls/ other.
- The creation of a designated driveway and access to slipway for Fish House with improved surfacing.
- The resolution of drainage/ flooding issues outside Fish House currently caused by the levels issues.
- A level of separation/ privacy from the main square for the newly created driveway.



----- Proposed contour lines  
----- Existing contour lines



## Shore Road

Shore Road will become a vital route linking pedestrians to The Bing, The Quays and beyond. A wider footpath along the riverside and an improved lighting scheme will encourage more footfall along the Lennon to local businesses.

The design includes:

- Widening of footpath on the northern edge and addition of a demarcated footpath on the southern edge.
- Reduction in road width to 6.2m to facilitate two way traffic and uncontrolled parking along one side of the carriageway.

### Key enhancements:

1. New paving to enhance the historic riverside promenade character (See Section 4 Materials).
2. Introduction of pedestrian crossing points to provide access to the park.
3. Creation of a seamless pedestrian access across the lower historic centre.
4. Upgrade lighting to enable safe evening use.
5. Resurfacing of carriageway improving existing levels.
6. Retention of existing parking along the road.



Indicative artistic impression of view on approach to Shore Road



General Arrangement Plan (Drawing not to scale)



## **Market Cross**

**It is proposed to revive the historic significance of the Market Cross and reinstate it as the symbolic centre of Ramelton's Historic Core.**

The design includes:

- Re-instatement of the road and new kerb-lines to provide defined pedestrian space.
- The creation of a civic space for use by local and regional visitors with a paved surface and street furniture.
- A new seating area to encourage dwell time.
- The design and installation of a new sculpture / feature element.
- Introduce high quality natural stone paving.
- Provision of new crossings to facilitate pedestrian movement.



Indicative artistic impression of view on approach to Market Cross

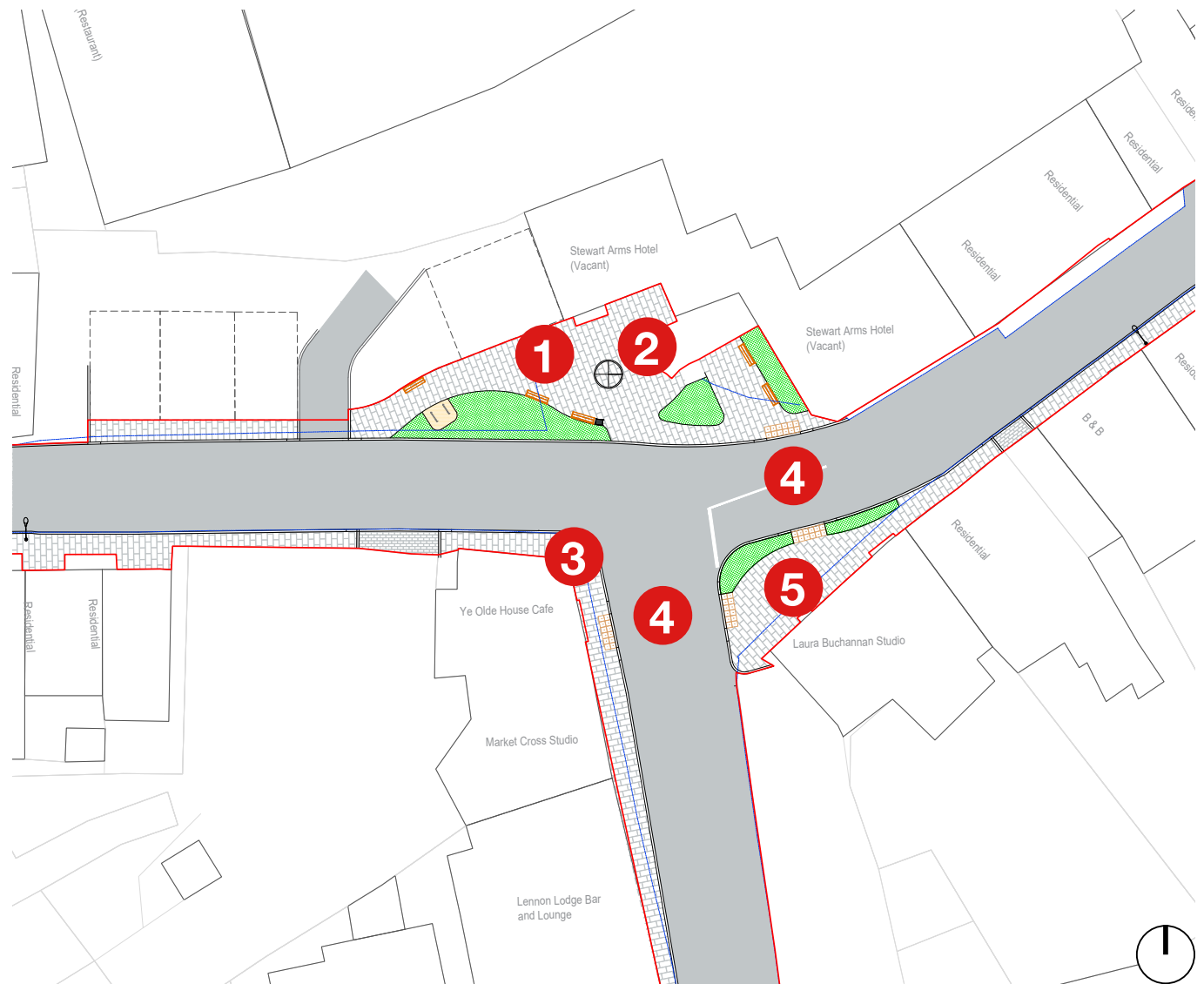


# BDP.

## Market Cross

Key enhancements:

1. Creation of a new public plaza with stone paving, planting, cycle stands and seating outside The Stewart Arms Hotel.
2. Addition of a sculpture referencing the original Market Cross on a local stone cut plinth.
3. Footpath improvement works.
4. Introduction of two new pedestrian crossing points, improving access for pedestrians.
5. Widened southern path with planting enhances pedestrian movement and circulation.



General Arrangement Plan (Drawing not to scale)

## **The Bing**

**The Bing will be an exemplar park and garden within Donegal showcasing native and biodiverse planting and will have interest for all age groups and users.**

The design includes:

- Improvement of its ecological and social value.
- A key green space within the core historic centre.
- Provide a local amphitheatre for social, cultural and educational events.
- Ensure sensitivity to neighbouring uses and houses through additional planting.
- Provides an accessible walkway.
- Provides an integrated inclusive play area and the ability to explore and interact with the landscape.



Indicative artistic impression of The Bing aerial view



# BDP.

## The Bing

### Key enhancements:

1. Pedestrian entrances and level access at both Shore Road and Castle Street. These will have information boards and cycle parking.
2. Ramped access at the lower park entrance improves the accessibility of the park for all users. (See next page).
3. Introduction of event space for social, cultural and educational enrichment.
4. Series of community growing gardens.
5. A new footpath carved into the slope of the Bing with seating opportunities, incorporating low retaining walls as necessary to utilise the exiting levels and topography.
6. Bio-diverse planting buffer and natural shelter from the elements. Existing trees retained with additional tree and hedge planting.
7. A series of garden spaces, both visual and sensory, which will vary in planting palette and/or theme from garden to garden and level to level (See approach to planting).
8. A new playground with safety surfacing and themed play elements at a maximum height of 4m. (See Bing Heritage Play) Natural play elements running throughout the park.



General Arrangement Plan (Drawing not to scale)

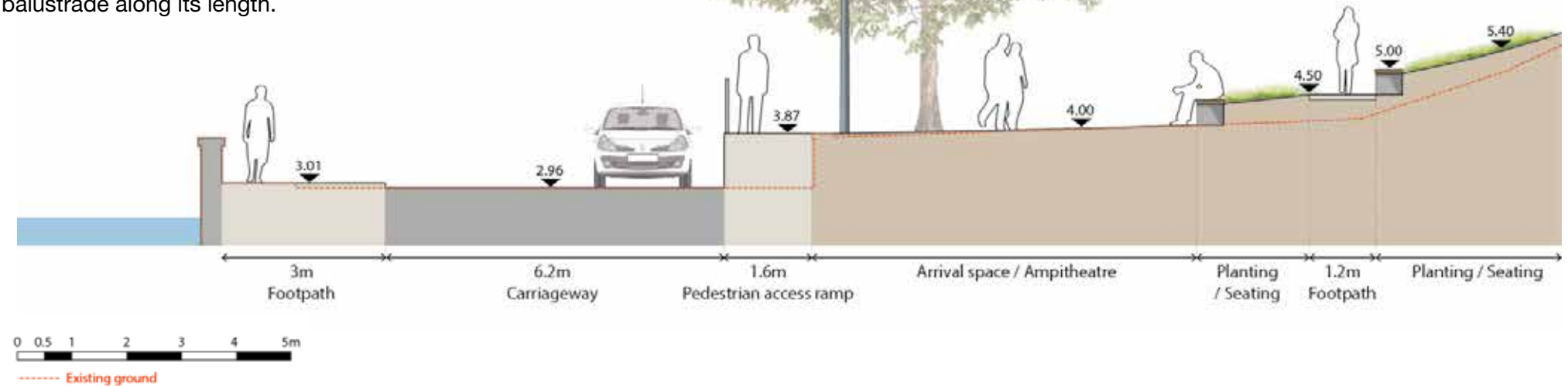
# The Bing - New Ramp Access



We propose a ramp from the existing carriageway level to the top of the existing wall level to achieve universal access to the park. This will create a low rising wall in front of the existing wall with a balustrade along its length.



Within the park the existing topography will be used to form seating which overlooks the arrival space, Shore Road and the River.





## The Bing - Approach to Planting

Maximizing display throughout the year is possible through the correct selection of plants that suit the conditions. An interesting composition can be reached by the use of the harmonious or contrasting visual effects based on form, colour and texture.

The planting schemes will be built upon using the ecological principles of having 3 vertical layers including low-growing plants (heathers/perennials), the middle layer (ornamental grasses/shrubs) along with a taller layer of large shrubs/medium sized trees.

Only plants with a good source of nectar, pollen, seed and berry will be included. For less maintenance, planting will be dense so as not to allow bare soil to permit weed invasion. Plants will shelter one another as well for quicker establishment. The Naturalistic Style of planting will create a garden with amplitude to feed the soul and nurture local biodiversity by the use of native and non-native plants.

When biodiversity is encouraged you begin a process that enriches people's lives.



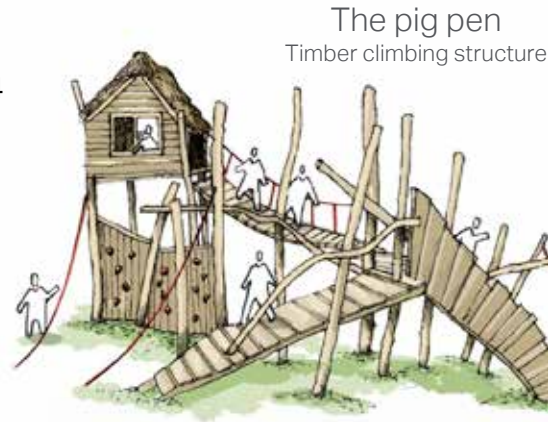
## The Bing - Heritage Play

Re-wilding - Inspired by The Bing's former life as the location of a pig market, we want to celebrate wild boars through children's play and adventure.

All play equipment will cater for a range of age groups and have a maximum height of 4m with safety surfacing. (See Section 4 Materials)



Entrance totem



The pig pen  
Timber climbing structure



The pig trail  
Sand pit, sensory trails, small piglets climbing sculptures



Wild boar family  
Timber climbing sculptures



The market stalls  
Cut out timber structures



The mud barrow  
Timber climbing structure



## Market Square

**Market Square is a well defined town square adjacent to the Historic market place and Guild Hall and is home to a popular bar where people spill out during year round.**

The design includes:

- Visual enhancement of the enclosed setting of the Square.
- Re-instatement of the road and footpath at the same level to provide a shared surface and more pedestrian priority.
- Retention of some parking and the addition of a feature tree to create a sense of place.
- The creation of a civic space for use by local and regional visitors with a high quality natural stone paved surface and street furniture that is sympathetic to the existing built heritage and architecture.
- Provision of pedestrian linkages to nearby public spaces.
- Prepare the Square for any future developments of the adjoining courtyards to the public and retain a clear visual route to facilitate potential future public access to courtyards.



Indicative artistic Impression of view on approach to Market Square



# BDP.

## Market Square

### Key enhancements:

1. A new path linking Shore Road and The Quays directly to Market Square.
2. Appropriate paving and sensitive lighting will enhance the setting of the Square and create a destination for locals and visitors (See *Section 4 Material, Lighting*).
3. Stone trim re-instated at edge of buildings recreating the former setting.
4. The provision of cycle stands (See *Section 4 Street Furniture*).
5. Addition of a feature tree strategically positioned in the space to complement the setting.
6. Retention of the ability to park within the space as currently operates.
7. The provision crossings point to connect pedestrians to the square and improve general circulation around the town.
8. Creation of new footpath along Castle Street.



General Arrangement Plan (Drawing not to scale)

## The Quays

The Quays, where once stood Ramelton Castle, is one of the towns most ambient spaces flanked by the River Lennon to the North and East and historic industrial buildings to the South.

The design includes:

- Celebration of the industrial heritage through the design, materials and components.
- Retention of the openness in character allowing existing usage to continue.
- Subtle demarcation to allow a better pedestrian experience and ease of movement, defined by a line of bespoke and weather resilient street furniture inspired by maritime and cultural heritage, including seating, cycle stands and light columns.
- Act as a catalyst to development, where the remaining buildings and courtyards will become more desirable investments and may be opened up to the public in future.
- Introduce an appropriate palette of materials which align with the heritage and contrast with others areas within the town centre.
- Formal forecourt areas to encourage trade and outdoor dining.



Indicative artistic impression of aerial view of The Quays



# BDP.

## The Quays

### Key enhancements:

1. Industrial heritage is celebrated using natural stone paving with grass joints (See Section 4 Materials).
2. Installation of formal forecourt areas to encourage trade and outdoor dining (See Section 4 Materials).
3. Bespoke and weather resistant street furniture inspired by maritime and cultural heritage. This includes seating and cycle stands. (See Section 4 Quays Street Furniture).
4. A new sensitive lighting scheme to both improve light levels and avoid light pollution (See Section 4 Lighting).
5. The re-provision of necessary vehicle protection integrated into the new furniture.



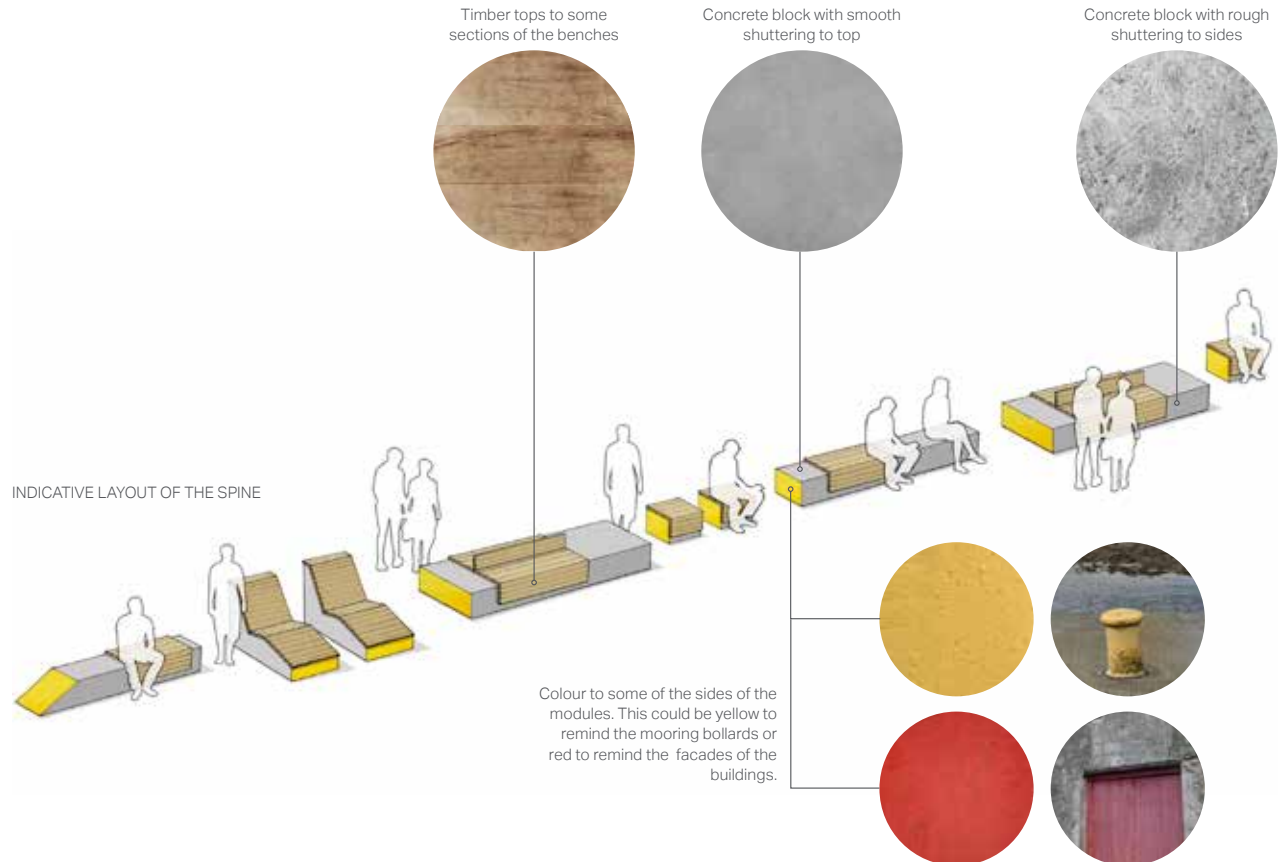
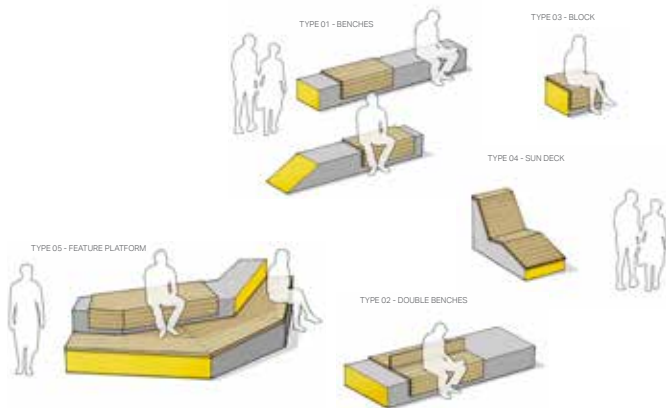
General Arrangement Plan Drawing not to scale



# The Quays - Street Furniture

**A rhythmic line of robust street furniture inspired by the industrial heritage of the quays will create different seating and dwell opportunities.**

The modules will have varying length and some will be double width with a back rest to allow people to sit on both sides. The gap between the seating modules will be irregular to give a rhythm to the space and define a clear pedestrian walkway and space adjacent to the quay wall.



# 04

## MATERIALS

- Paving
- Street Furniture
- Lighting

## Paving and Materials

**The proposed material palette will complement the rich architectural and cultural heritage of Ramelton. Robust materials will provide ease of maintenance and provide longevity for the enhancement works.**

The holistic approach to paving sets out to enhance the whole of the town while addressing the specific requirements of each area technically and visually. All materials will be chosen to ensure they are durable, provide universal access and have the appropriate slip resistance.

Materials per area:

### Gamble's Square

- Natural stone small unit slabs to footpaths
- Natural stone setts to central carriageway and driveways
- Granite Kerbs
- Asphalt carriageway resurfacing on approach

### The Shore Road, Market Cross, Market Square

- Natural stone small unit slabs to footpaths
- Granite kerbs
- Asphalt carriageway resurfacing as required

### The Quays

- Retention and supplement to existing stone coping to Quay edge
- Grass jointed paving units
- Exposed aggregate concrete
- Porphyry stone setts to forecourts

### The Bing

- Resin Bound Gravel to paths
- Safety surfacing to play area
- Timber retaining features along path
- Boulders and stepping stones along slope

### Castle Street and Bridge Street

- Concrete paving to footpaths
- Granite kerbs
- Asphalt carriageway resurfacing as required

Natural Stone Footpaths



Stone Setts to Driveways



Asphalt Surfacing / Granite Kerbs



Concrete Surfacing



Porphyry Stone Setts



Resin Bound Gravel



Soft Joints



Rubber Crumb (Play)





## Street Furniture

It is intended that street furniture is designed and chosen to enhance and blend into the established setting of Ramelton.

### Seating

A neutral bench design with suitable arm rests and back rest and a comfortable timber top will be proposed. Opportunity for feature seats will be identified and developed as part of the public art strategy.

### Cycle Stands

Simple "Sheffield" stands will be located in groups throughout the town centre.

### Bins

Minimal use of bins and recycling opportunities at necessary locations in the town centre.

### Wayfinding / Interpretation

At strategic points a linked series of signs will be incorporated providing both wayfinding and local information.

### Art

A number of opportunities have been identified and creative site sensitive solutions will be developed.

### Bollards

Minimal use throughout the town.

### Overhead Cables

All overhead cables are to be re-diverted under ground where feasible.

### Utility Boxes

All above ground necessary units will be coordinated within the design and with other street furniture.

Typical Bench



Wall Seating



Cycle Stands



Public Art



Wayfinding Signage & Interpretation



Bins



Bollards



# BDP. Lighting

## A setting-sensitive and environmentally friendly lighting scheme will illuminate the historic town core.

It is proposed to address lighting infrastructure in all of the key spaces and along the adjoining streets. Existing light levels for the town do not meet current standards, it is therefore proposed to enhance and improve light levels in a way that is sympathetic to the character of the town. Appropriate columns and luminaires have been selected that are simple in design and do not detract or compete with the existing built heritage.

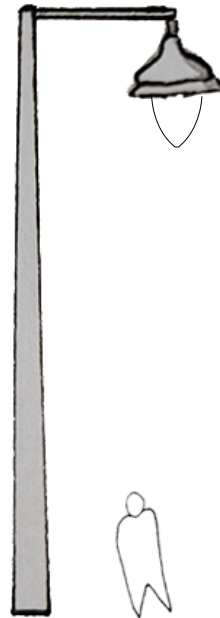
The new lighting scheme will provide an appropriate level of uniformity throughout the town that makes the streets and spaces safe and legible at night. Each specific space has been considered with appropriate heights for each luminaire devised. This redesign of the overall lighting strategy will ensure that residential buildings and local wildlife will not be negatively impacted by light overspill.

All lighting to have a 2700K warm light source to fit in with the historic environment and minimise disruption to wildlife.

The lighting level will be designed to P2 class for the roads with an enhanced minimum uniformity of 0.2 and C4 class at the junctions.

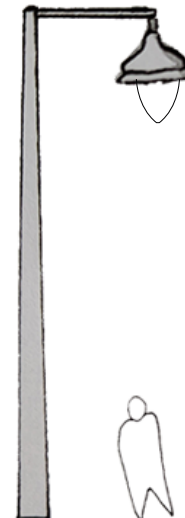


Typical character of luminaires to be used



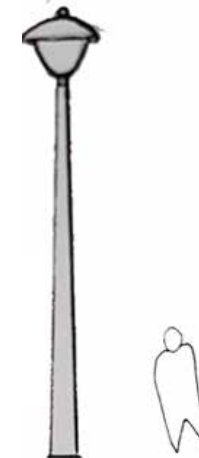
10 m

Gamble Square to have 10m tapered columns with a 90 degree arm and LED luminaries



8m

All town streets to have 8m tapered columns with a 90 degree arm and LED luminaries



6m

The Quays and The Bing to have 6m tapered columns with top mounted LED luminaries



**Comhairle Contae**  
**Dhún na nGall**  
Donegal County Council

# BDP.

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