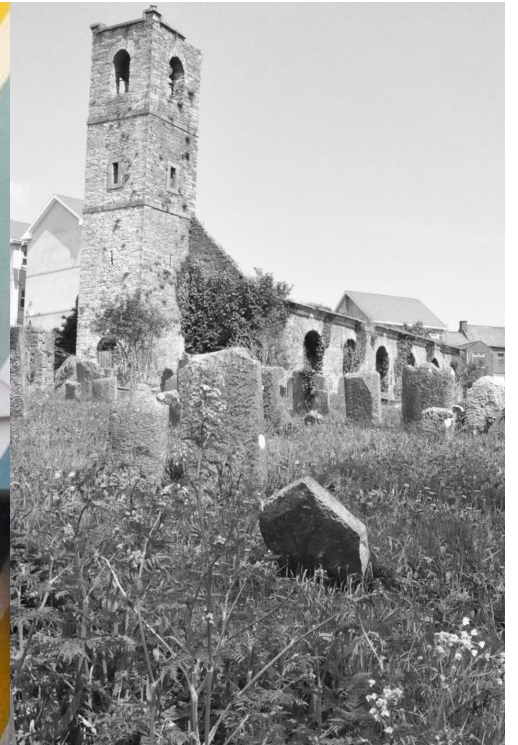


## Mallow Town Centre Public Realm Enhancement Plan



Cork  
County Council  
Comhairle Contae Chorcaí



**MALL@W**  
Development Partnership  
LIVE - WORK - DO BUSINESS



**Mallow  
CHAMBER**  
IN BUSINESS FOR BUSINESS

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The Mallow Town Centre Public Realm Enhancement Plan was funded by Mallow Development Partnership and Cork County Council and undertaken by Cathal O'Meara Landscape Architects

**Note:** This study is indicative only

## 1.0 Introduction

This document is the result of an Urban Design and Public Realm Study for Mallow Town Centre. This document represents the results of a series of initiatives including...

Desktop research and study walkabouts

Four community workshops undertaken during the summer of 2016 with members of Mallow Development Partnership, Cork County Council, Mallow Chamber and Avondhu Blackwater Partnership.

A questionnaire, completed as part of this process by 238 people members of the public.

Ongoing consultations with key stakeholders

A public open evening presenting the Draft Mallow Town Centre, Public Realm Enhancement Plan.

Review of the Plan based on submissions received.

Compilation of the Final Plan

This document is intended to provide extra focus on the Public Realm of Mallow and to be read in conjunction with the Kanturk Mallow Local Area Plan 2017 – 2022 currently being prepared.

Mallow town and its environs have a population of 19,533 (CSO 2011). Given current projections the population is projected to grow to 30,000 by 2030. Such growth will facilitate significant potential for the town's development. The timely preparation of this Study allows responsible authorities to take advantage of this projected growth and use this resource for delivering a higher quality public realm for the residents of



Above: Extract from Westport 2000

Mallow.

Similar work in Westport pre- Celtic Tiger (Westport 2000 Integrated Action Plan) provided the basis for its development during the subsequent construction boom, contributing to the town being awarded the “best place to live in Ireland”. (Irish Times 2012)



## 2.0 Context

Mallow town is located in the North of County Cork approximately 35 Kilometers from Cork City. The town is often called the crossroads of Munster owing to its location at the meeting point of the N20 (the Cork – Limerick Road) and the N72 (Waterford – Kerry Road). Mallow occupies a historical crossing point on the River Blackwater and its wider landscape is characterised principally by the Blackwater Valley. The town of Mallow contains a medieval settlement with later layers of Georgian and contemporary development.

## 2.1 Planning and development Context

The current Mallow Local Area Plan 2011 – 2016 is under review with a new LAP anticipated to be in place by August 2017. It is welcome that the current LAP Review considers removing lands west of the town centre from town centre zoning and aims to consolidate the core.

This Public Realm Plan aims to address several of the issues highlighted within the current LAP review,

- Providing a robust town center strategy, which seeks to consolidate and strengthen the core area,
- Encouraging a greater proportion of residential use within the town center to strengthen the vitality of the town center.
- Promoting the heritage and tourism assets of the town
- Identify opportunities to enhance pedestrian facilities with the town including additional pedestrian bridging points across the River Blackwater.

It is consistent with these objective that The “Mallow Town Centre, Public Realm Enhancement Plan” is being prepared.



Above: Recent works to Thomas Davis Plaza and current restoration of The Clock House and Below: Wrought Iron railings at West End

## 2.2 Recent works undertaken

Mallow has benefited from recent public realm works specifically the development of the Thomas Davis Plaza, the OPW Flood Relief scheme and the current works to Mallow Castle. Future projected developments include a pedestrian and cyclist cantilevered bridge adjoining the existing bridge, the development of a Linear cycle way along the Blackwater, The Northern Road and the proposed M20 (Cork Limerick) Motorway.

## 2.3 Historic Development of Town

In historic maps Mallow town appears to contain a medieval walled town (however no physical evidence has been found) – with Mallow Castle to the south-east and Short Castle to the north-west (no longer evident). Several layers or phases of development are evident in the street patterns and public spaces of the town, similar to many early towns. In the 1700's Mallow developed as a spa town, concurrent with this was the development of the characteristic upper floor bay windows allowing wide views of the street below, the development of Burgage plots (narrow approx. 5 meter wide building frontages to the street) and the sequential development of perpendicular access lanes. Mallow's physical form contains significant evidence of this historic development, notably the high proportion of winding lanes leading from Davis Street, and the extensive ironwork of the facades along West End.

## 2.4 Objective

This objective of this Study is to provide concrete proposals to enhance the town center of Mallow and to refocus its development towards public realm improvements to enhance the quality of life of its residents.



Above: Large traffic volumes at Bridge St/Thomas Davis Plaza  
Below: Monolithic buildings with poor relationship to town



### 3 Analysis

*“Building more roads to prevent congestion is like a fat man loosening his belt to prevent obesity”*

- Lewis Mumford

The 1831 census of Mallow records the town as having a population of 5,229 residents. Currently the town population stands at 8,578. However one of the nuances of recent developments is that only 39% of the current population in the electoral area is located within the town, with the remainder being suburban or rural development. This development is largely sustained through private vehicular transport for school and work trips leading to consequential traffic volumes in the streets of the town center.

Substantial traffic flows and limited bridge crossings combined with a pattern of medieval streets contribute to significant congestion within the town center, which directly affect the public realm of the town.

Developments in recent decades (Lidl, Dunne Stores, Tesco) are larger than the traditional pattern of development and are dominated by car parking spaces. These developments, while located close to the town center are accessed through lanes from Davis Street and at present have little or no relationship to the lanes or the surrounding building form, contributing to a neglected exterior environment.

The existence of a National Route the N72 along Park Road also contributes to a high volume of passing traffic and is particularly noticeable along Bridge Street, where high volumes of traffic and narrow footpaths contribute to the highest proportion of vacancy within the town core. (see attached Vacancy count graphic - May 2016)



Above: Vacancy/dereliction on principal streets - lowest concentration in town centre  
Below: Utilitarian approach to historic elements

### 3.1 Vacancy

One of the consequences of recent developments is the increase in local and commuter traffic through the town. As more residents live distant from the core, private vehicles are used as a primary means of transport. This increase in vehicles and associated car parking has dominated the public realm and contributed to increased dereliction and a utilitarian appearance when compared to its historical aspect.

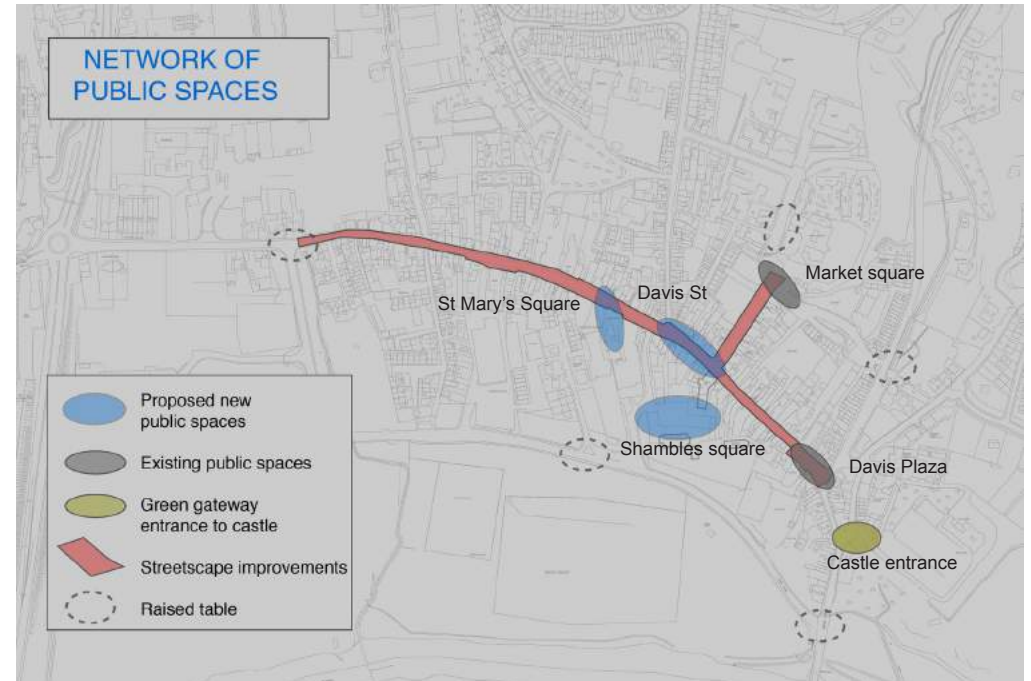
This utilitarian appearance has allowed other service providers (Telecoms, advertising, ESB) to follow suit and provide low quality materials in the public realm. Consequent with this approach is the dereliction within the town core, most notably on the streets with a high quantity of traffic and/or outside the heart of the town.

Dereliction within the town core damages the social fabric of the town and needs to be addressed through existing legislation, with buildings put on a publicly accessible register of derelict sites and required levies collected.

### 3.2 Network of public spaces

The dominance of private vehicles in the public realm creates a visual barrier between the buildings and their associated public spaces. This division prevents activities spilling out onto the public areas and directly impacts the social life of the town. The associated graphic identifies the existing and potential public spaces within the town center, based on observation, historical data and traffic/pedestrian conflicts. The public spaces of Mallow are an important component of its function and its ability to attract people to live within the town core.

Respondents to the survey\* undertaken as part of this study indicated that “lack of outdoor spaces” was the primary reason that 74% of respondents cited that they would not live in Mallow town center.



Above: Location of existing and proposed public spaces, Below: Wolf Tone Park, Jervis Street, Dublin, removal of railings and opening up of park.



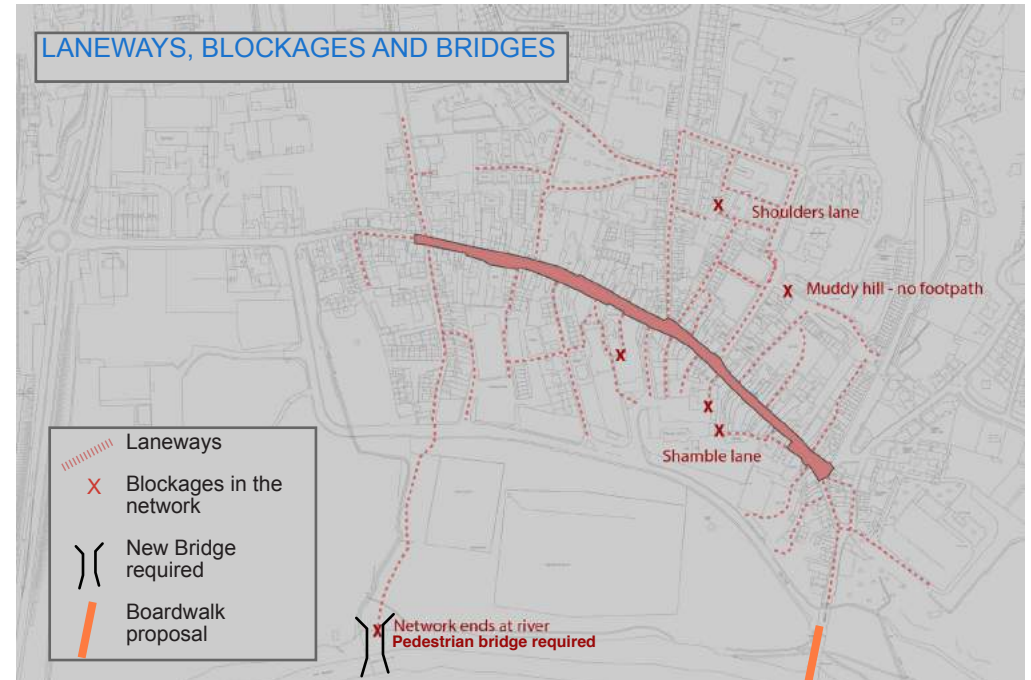
Complimentary with the network of public spaces is the development of a high quality linear park on the banks of the Blackwater, although outside of the identified study area it is recognised that links with the wider landscape are an important element of this study. A central component of such a development should be the provision of high quality off road cycle tracks as well as pedestrian footpaths. The provision of alternative transport facilities would in turn decrease the use of motorized transport within the town core.

Results from a survey of residents and people working in Mallow Town Center indicate that currently only 11.6% of children walk or cycle to school. Respondents to the survey carried out as part of this study indicated that the majority (54% of respondents) indicated “opportunities for walking and cycling safely in Mallow are the most important improvement”.

### 3.3 Laneways, blockages and bridges

The Medieval origins of Mallow town are still evident in the form and quantity of laneways within the town core. The associated graphic identifies several blockages in the network and proposes to remove these obstacles to increase permeability. Consistent with this approach is the need to provide a second pedestrian/cyclist bridge at the location as identified in the drawing opposite. This is in addition to existing plans to provide a separate pedestrian/cyclist boardwalk at the existing bridge see impression opposite. Both proposals are required to increase the likelihood of residents from the Ballydahin/Gouldshill area walking or cycling into the town. (These proposals would likely require an EIA due to the Special Area of Conservation designation of the River Blackwater).

The numerous laneways of Mallow offer an unusual characteristic to the town, and should be preserved as part of Mallow’s unique character, and as a means of allowing greater pedestrian permeability



Above: Image of blockages in laneways

Below: Proposal to create a pedestrian boardwalk to existing bridge



throughout the core. A project to celebrate the laneways of Mallow has been identified as part of this study. This would focus on enlivening the laneways by incorporating the materials used in the streetscape with individual signage.

### 3.4 Gateways and signage

Gateways are an important component of any streetscape environment as they announce a change in driving conditions ahead, by introducing important place-making elements. Consistent with this approach is the inclusion of signage that incorporates important local features to reinforce this sense of place. It is important in such circumstances



Above: Proposed location of Gateway treatments



Above: Worked example of signage concept for Derry City (includes tourist amenities, gateways, industrial sites, way finding etc)

to introduce a change of materials in the carriageway as well as incorporating pinch points in the street/road network.

The gateway project identified above should not be treated as an isolated project. Gateway signage should be designed in a consistent manner with laneway signage. Other elements should also be brought together as part of an overall signage concept for Mallow such as industrial estate signage, local landmark signage, etc.

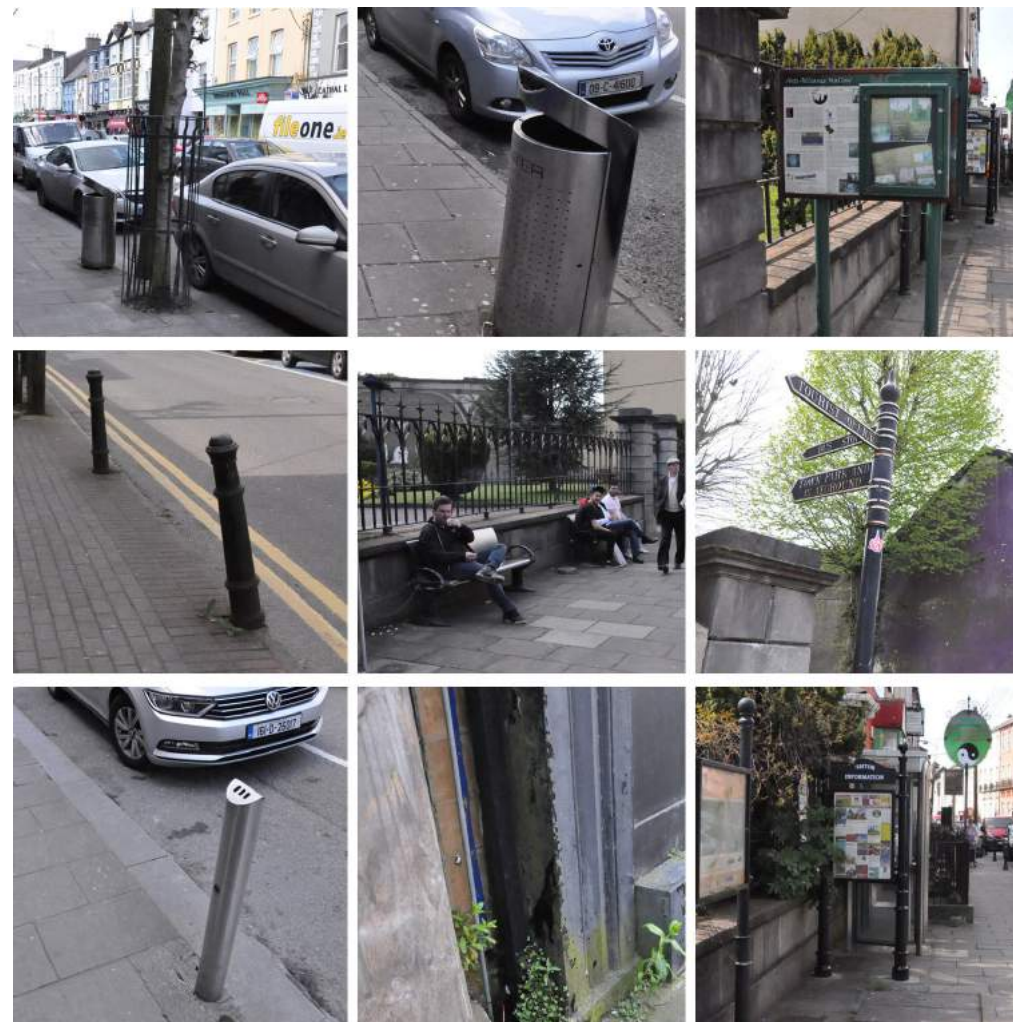
### 3.5 Design Code

It is unlikely that the development proposals contained herein will be undertaken simultaneously. It is therefore important that guidance exists for these phased developments.

In the medieval era the design of our environments was restricted to the availability of materials, which due to transport difficulties were largely local in origin. Similarly in the Georgian era restricted material palettes, governed the design of the external environments. These restrictions gave our environments a cohesive aesthetic.

In the absence of such codes it is likely that each phase of development will propose different materials, of varying scale allowing the recent pattern of mixed materials and lack of continuity to persist. Such guidance would address issues such as:

- Public Realm lighting
- Soft Landscape Planting Palette (street trees, perennial planting etc)
- Hard Landscape palette (paving, seating, tree grilles, bollards etc)
- CCTV provision
- Under grounding Utilities



Above: Recent elements in the public space/streets of Mallow - materials are inconsistent and lack any cohesion

It is proposed that a Design Code is created so that future developments and road/street improvements works are all consistent with the palette of materials and objectives of the Design Code.



## 4 Proposals

The following proposals are included as indicative concepts only and are not to be considered as final designs. Any final or detailed designs would be subject to a full public consultation process, landowner consent (where relevant) and the planning process.

### 4.1 Guiding principles for the development of Mallow town center

- Expansion of the existing Public Realm
- Identification of the laneways as an important element to the fabric of the town
- Re-examination of the parking along Davis/William O'Brien St
- Identification of a new public space at Shambles Square
- Introduction of a town square adjacent to St. Mary's Church
- Redesign of Park Road as an urban boulevard
- Development of a local identity through the introduction locally relevant signage and gateway designs

### 4.2 Specific proposals

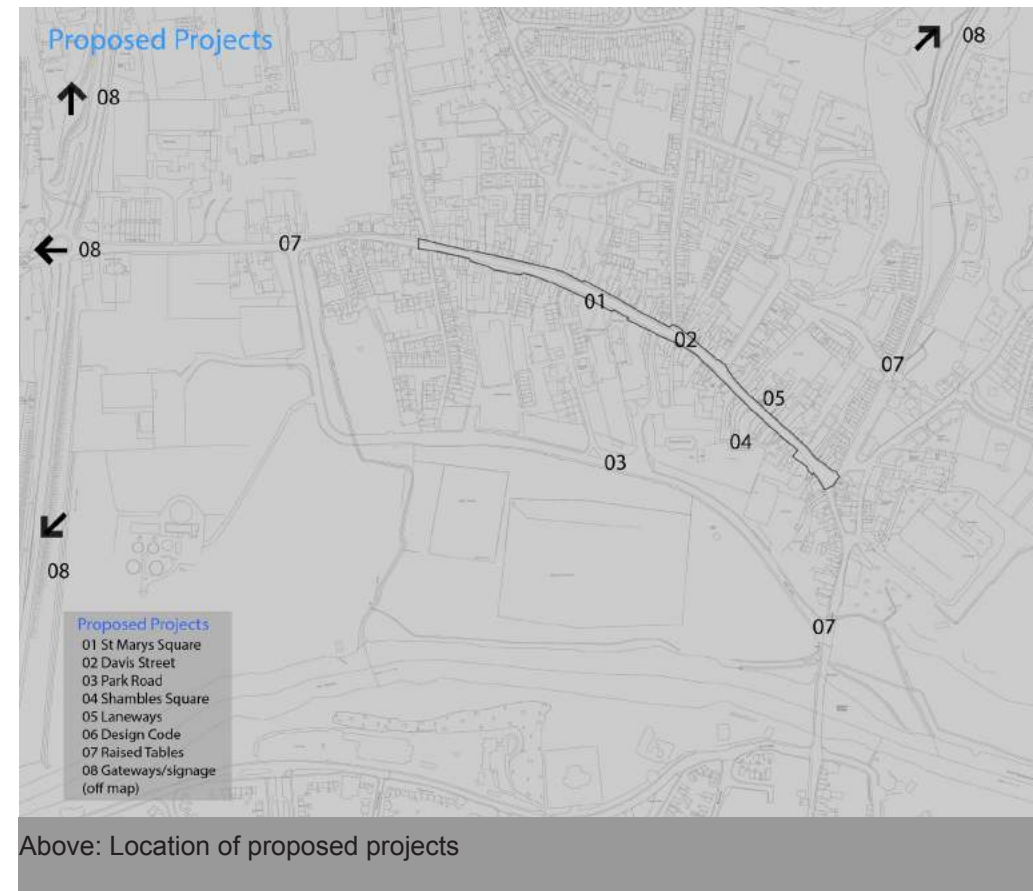
The location of specific proposals are indicated in the drawing opposite.

#### 4.2.1 Mallow town square at St. Mary's Church

The inclusion of a new public space adjacent to St. Mary's Church aims to acknowledge the history of this site and its gradual inclusion into the townscape of Mallow. Originally when the church was built in 1818, it was hidden behind buildings to "soften the wrath of the Ascendency." Williams (1994). However with Catholic emancipation in 1829 public worship became commonplace, and in Mallow the concealing buildings were removed, opening up the site. It is proposed to continue this process and to reveal the Church as a backdrop to a new public space. It is however noted that such works would require in-depth consultation with the Church (landowner) and planning permission owing to the current planning protection on the site and its curtilage.

Such works should include

- Creation of a pedestrian priority area with introduction of traffic calming/shared space on a raised table on Davis Street
- Change in carriageway materials to reflect footpath materials
- New planting of appropriate tree species
- Provision of public seating



Above: Location of proposed projects

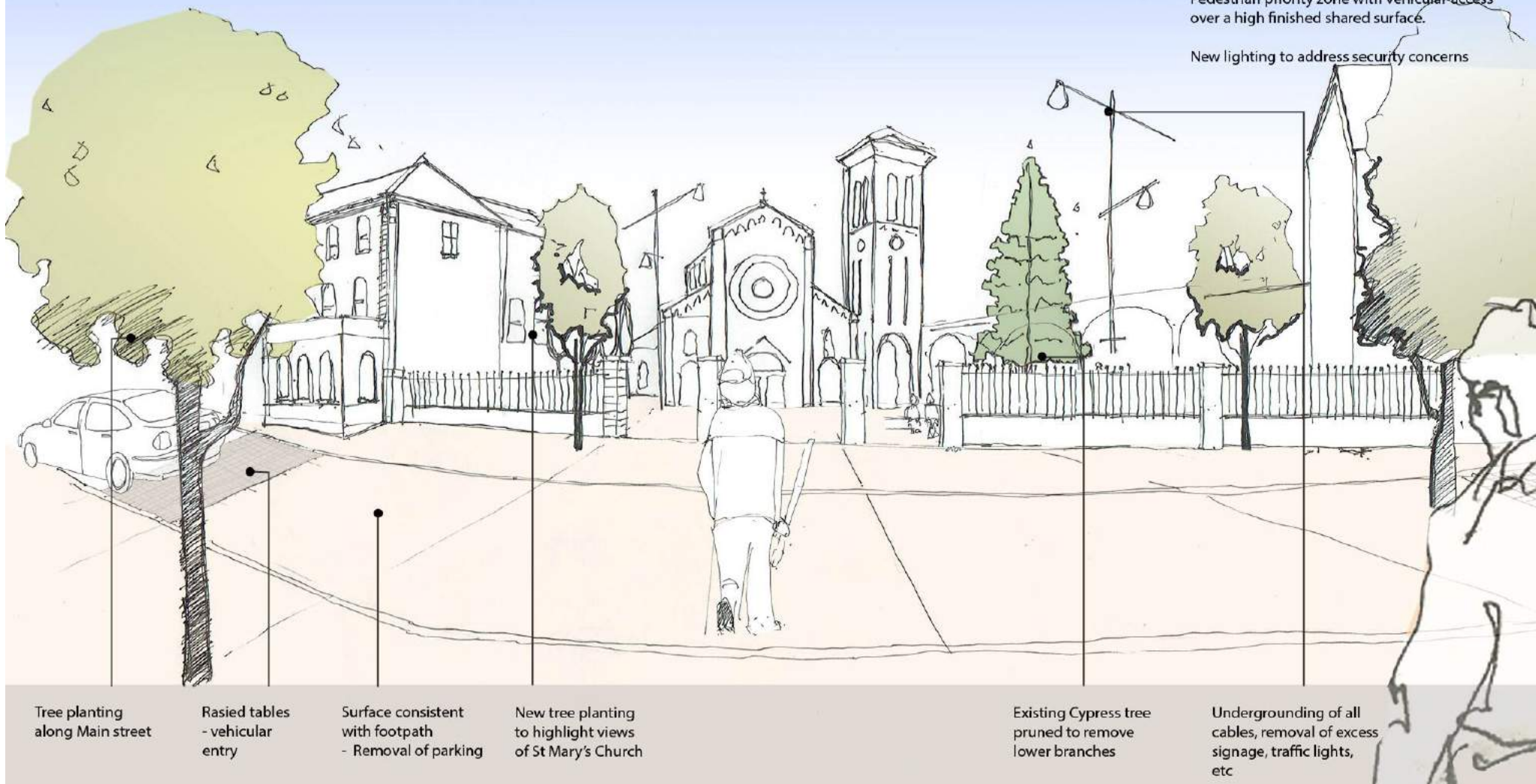
## Town Square

Traffic calming and Public Realm Improvements

cathal meara landscape architects

Pedestrian priority zone with vehicular access over a high finished shared surface.

New lighting to address security concerns



Tree planting along Main street

Raised tables - vehicular entry

Surface consistent with footpath - Removal of parking

New tree planting to highlight views of St Mary's Church

Existing Cypress tree pruned to remove lower branches

Undergrounding of all cables, removal of excess signage, traffic lights, etc



#### 4.2.2 Davis Street/William O'Brien Street

The highest concentration of pedestrian activity in Mallow and the lowest quantity of vacant premisses is along Davis street. (Vacancy survey page 6). It is therefore proposed to renovate the streetscape at this central location between the junction of St. James Avenue until William O' Brien Street. As such this proposal would entail the re-examination of on-street parking at this location. This is based on observed higher pedestrian activity to justify this re-examination. The paving would be replaced with a higher specification material and would continue across the full width of the street creating a sense of pedestrian dominance. It is further proposed that this paving material be continued along the footpaths and parking bays of the entire street. As pedestrian activity increases the ongoing policy objective will oversee the sequential construction of buildouts into the parking bays (containing tree planting and seating) and the re-examination of on street parking. It is proposed that this streetscape improvement is continued on William O'Brien Street, as it adjoins Market Place.

Such works would include

- Construction of a central public space to Davis Street
- Continuation of paving materials across full width of street as illustrated
- Construction of contra flow cycle lane along full length of Davis Street (Mallow Transport and Traffic Study, WSP, 2011)
- Re-examination of on street parking
- Continuation of paving materials into parking bays to both Davis street and William O'Brien Street
- Delineation of carriageway from footpath through introduction of different coloured kerbs
- Under grounding of all wires/utilities along both streets
- Inclusion of tree planting along full length of both streets\*
- Creation of a raised table between Market Place and Landscape Terrace/Courthouse.

\* A street tree planting scheme could utilise the seasonal requirements of Christmas lighting by including seasonal/festive aspects in a decorative tree grille. This may require the siting of electrical points along the street in the tree grilles.

The entrance to Mallow Castle as it adjoins Bridge Street should be included with a raised table, for traffic calming purposes. This would continue across the full width of the carriageway and alert visitors to this important historic element which is currently not visible within the streetscape of Mallow.

The existing paving at Thomas Davis Plaza should be continued across the full width of the carriageway reducing the visible impact of the roadway, from interrupting this historic space.

Below: High concentration of pedestrian activity at St Mary's Church/Davis St



## Mallow - Davis/W O'Brien Street - Indicative detail





#### 4.2.3 Park Road

The design intention with Park Road aims to reconcile the current vehicular necessity of the road with its proximity to the town core. This route is a National Route (N72) and should be redesigned in a manner consistent with the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets.

This proposal therefore seeks to limit the severance between the N72 and the Park by.

- Redesigning the road as a boulevard
- Including a double tree planted margin on the north of the road (to compliment that on the south of the road)
- Widening the existing footpaths (where possible)
- Reorganising the Bus parking
- Inclusion of robust paving material at crossing points to increase sense of place and pedestrian safety
- Creation of a significant new entry point to the park at the junction of St. James Avenue and Park Road.
- Creation of a raised table at the junction between Bridge Street and Park Road and West End/Park Road.

Given the current status of this road as a National Route close consultation with the NRA will be required



Above: Boulevard style conversion of Dorset Street, Dublin  
Below: High visibility park entrance - Potters Fields Park London



Mallow Town Centre - Public Realm Enhancement Plan

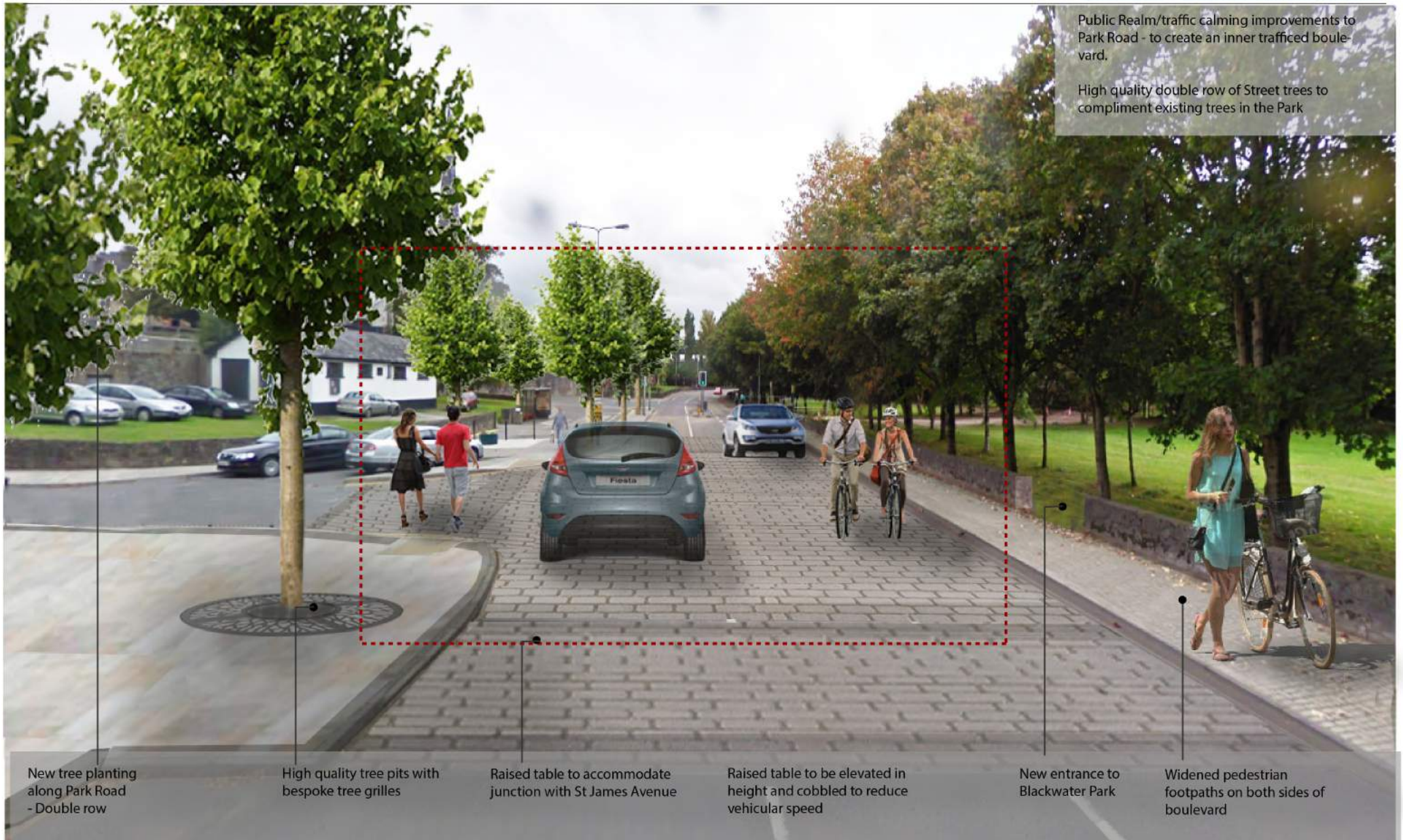


## Park Boulevard

**cathal meara** landscape architects

Public Realm/traffic calming improvements to Park Road - to create an inner trafficed boulevard.

High quality double row of Street trees to compliment existing trees in the Park



Mallow Town Centre - Public Realm Enhancement Plan



#### 4.2.4 Shambles square

Historically Shambles Lane terminated at St. Anne's Church with access from both Shambles Lane and St. James avenue. In recent decades the access from Shambles lane has been restricted with the construction of a shed at this location. This blockage in the network of laneways should be removed and accessibility permitted again.

The identification of Shambles Square as part of the public realm would allow for a variety of uses and activities. Currently this site accommodates only car parking, but its location in close proximity to three of Mallow's churches gives this space an important historic backdrop.

Furthermore the conversion of the former Town Hall into an Arts Centre indicates potential spill over activities. It is also noted that two food markets take place in Mallow. Both are at the same time, in different locations (Dairygold car park and St. James Church hall). Neither of these locations are conducive to sufficient passing trade and consideration should be given to their relocation within the town centre. A redesign of this space should make provision for the following.

- Flexible activities (market stalls, events etc)
- Design of the Arts Centre to have a southern/rear facade to address Shambles Square.
- Redefined building edge so that the back facades of existing plots address this new Square.
- New tree planting
- Restoration of historic connection with Shambles Lane
- Reopening of St. Anne's Church as a heritage attraction



Above: Existing markets in Mallow - limited visibility, above in St James Hall, below at Dairygold Car Park

## Shambles Square

**cathal meara** landscape architects

Shambles lane to be reconnected to new public space (Shambles Square)

Space to accommodate - new buildings along existing plot lines

Space also to allow for parking with demountable markets - for market days

New lighting plan and consideration for CCTV - to address security concerns

Arts centre to address Shambles Square with rear facade to building



New tree planting throughout square

New building line to address square

Central area to be used for demountable markets and/or parking

Shambles lane to be reconnected to public space (shambles square)

Stone face existing concrete block wall



#### 4.2.5 Laneways and blockages

##### Watts Lane – (Specific example)

The consideration of Watts Lane has been illustrated to represent a concept for the redevelopment of the laneways. As such the specific proposals should not be restricted to this laneway but applied to all laneways, noting their individual character. This individuality may be expressed with respect to specific character traits (history, usage, destination etc) of each laneway.

Given the current “hidden” nature of many of the laneways, a Wayfinding project should be considered in tandem with any streetscape approach to the laneways. This Wayfinding project may include businesses located on the laneway, as well as short cuts within the town network.

A consistent approach to the treatment of the laneways and their junctions with Davis street would assist with the visibility of the laneways.

This approach would consider the following...

- Material change in the footpath at the junction of the laneway and Davis Street
- Introduction of an appropriate material for each location
- Development of specific laneway signage that is consistent for all laneways with a provision for individual elements
- Introduction of a specific character element/theme for each location
- Encourage (through the planning process) the development of themed laneways, entertainment laneway, nightlife laneway, Artisan laneway etc.



Above: Illustration showing laneway concept - with resurfacing of laneway and footpath as it adjoins Davis St.

#### 4.2.6 Gateways and signage

The Gateway concept would focus on specific aspects of Mallow's history and seek to re purpose this heritage to strengthen the identity of the town. This concept could explore The River Blackwater, The Spa heritage of Mallow, or the White Deer herd at Mallow Castle with the intention of identifying one of these items as an iconic image for the town. This image could then be represented in graphic form at the locations as identified.

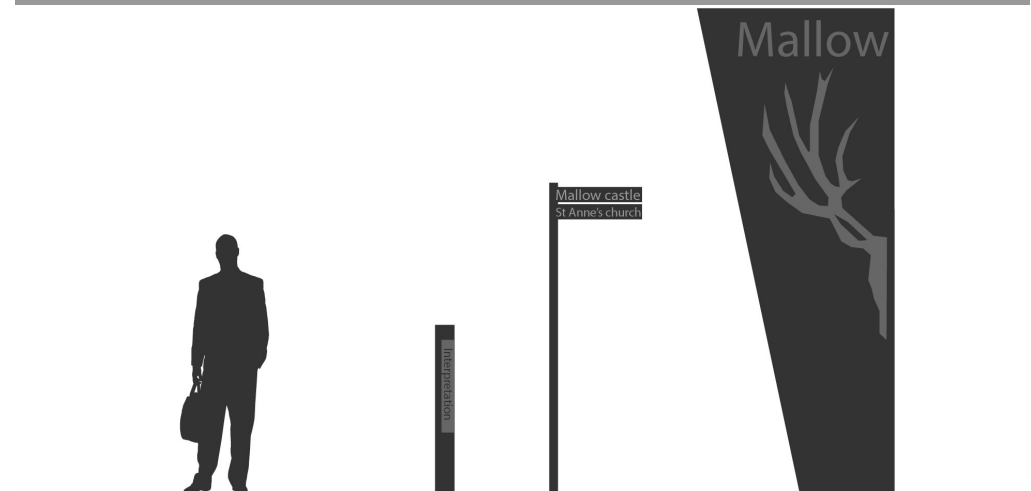
The introduction of place making markers are a significant element in the creation of Town Gateways. A change of materials in the carriageway and the introduction of pinch points (narrowing of the carriageway) also help indicate drivers to the approach of the town.

The Gateways should feature as one component of an overall family of signage for Mallow. This family approach to signage would include variations on the chosen theme for the different types of signage proposed.

This family of signs could include the following

- Historic and cultural signage/interpretation
- Gateway Signage
- Wayfinding - Lanes and Alleyways
- Industrial estate signage
- Hotel. Restaurants etc

Below: Proposed family of signage elements: note specific details to be designed



Below: Proposed signage locations





## ● Gateways

### - Gateway Signage



Above: Proposed gateway locations, N72 East, N72 West, N20 North, N20 South

## ● Historic and Cultural Interpretation

### -Interpretive Information Panels



## ● Lanes and Alleyways

### -Lane Signage



### -Alleyway Sign/Cobbled Entrance



Mallow Town Centre - Public Realm Enhancement Plan



#### 4.2.7 Design Code

The creation of a set of Design Codes for Mallow, would start with an appraisal of the local context. This would identify the existing variance in character within the town, recognising the specific identity of the medieval areas (laneways), the Georgian (West End), and aspects of its Military and Rebel identity as well as the local vernacular heritage of the townscape.

A guidance document would then be produced setting specific parameters that could include the following headings

- Settlement pattern
- Urban form
- Urban space
- Built form

The purpose of the design code is not to be prescriptive in terms of architectural style. It aims however to act as a guide to place making by challenging designers to develop creative solutions that respect the fabric and identity of each specific area.



Above: Development of Java Island in Amsterdam was governed by a set of design codes, that allowed for specific expression while maintaining a cohesive aesthetic



Above: Public space details from West End Mallow.



## 5.0 Conclusion

Given the current predictions for population increases in Mallow to 2030 there is an urgency to direct this growth towards the town center. This is consistent with growth patterns throughout the western world where high quality urban environments act to concentrate development around urban cores. Consistent with the survey undertaken as part of this study - one of the main determinants in preventing the revitalisation of the town core is the limited investment in public space and facilities for non motorised development.

One off development and development outside the core of the town puts pressure on budgets for infrastructure and maintenance. It is therefore critical that a high quality urban environment and public space is developed to counter this trend of peripheral development.

## Appendix 1 Outline Costings

The outline Costings listed below are indicative budgets only, in advance of finalised designs. These indications may be of benefit to determine appropriate parameters only. They are not to be understood as detailed Costings based on finalised design.

<b>Davis/WOB St (from Park Rd Jct to Castle entrance on Bridge St, and from Monument to Market Sq)*</b>	
Preliminaries inc demolitions and alterations	350,000
Earthworks	35,000
Pavement construction	900,000
Footpaths, kerbs	1,110,000
Landscaping	91,000
Road markings, bicycle lane	276,000
Drainage and Services	65,000
Street lighting, seating and misc furniture	194,000
Total as above	3,021,000
Design fees project management etc	362,520
Sub total	3,383,520
Contingencies	338,352
<b>Total (EX VAT)</b>	<b>3,721,872</b>

\*Excluding St Mary's Sq

<b>St Mary's Square</b>	<b>€</b>
Preliminaries inc demolitions and alterations	35,000
Earthworks	45,000
Raised table construction	180,000
Footpaths, kerbs	310,000
Landscaping	27,000
Drainage and Services	12,000
Street lighting, seating and misc furniture	22,000
Total as above	631,000
Design fees project management etc	75,720
Sub total	706,720
Contingencies	70,672
<b>Total (EX VAT)</b>	<b>777,392</b>

<b>Park Boulevard</b>	<b>€</b>
Preliminaries inc demolitions and alterations	23,000
Earthworks	38,000
2No Raised tables construction	360,000
Footpaths, kerbs	226,000
Tree planting (inc moving wall)	160,000
Park entrance	48,000
Drainage and Services	22,000
Total as above	877,000
Design fees project management etc	105,240
Sub total	982,240
Contingencies	98,224
<b>Total (EX VAT)</b>	<b>1,080,464</b>



Shambles Square**	€
Preliminaries inc demolitions and alterations	22,000
Earthworks	27,000
Drainage and services	24,000
Tree Planting	32,000
Bespoke lighting	46,000
Resurfacing square	60,000
New bands of bespoke paving	52,000
New steps to church	52,000
Public art sculpture	60,000
Total as above	353,000
Design fees project management etc	42360
Sub total	395,360
Contingencies	39536
<b>Total (EX VAT)</b>	<b>434,896</b>

\*\*does nto include costings for reopening Shambles lane

Laneways (already included in cost of Davis St project)	€
Option A (Entry thresholds only - not inc signage or repaving of laneway)	
Repaving of full width of footpath, inc drainage (based on repaving 50m2)	7,500
Option B	
Price of repaving per m2 to inc drainage, site preparation etc	150

Gateways (Cost per gateway construction, does not include gateway signage)	€
Gateways (restructure of the paving into pedestrian priority area)	
Cost of raised table/pedestrian priority crossing	102,000
Total as above	102,150
Design fees project management etc	12258
Sub total	114,408
Contingencies	11440.8
<b>Total (EX VAT)</b>	<b>125,849</b>

Signage (design only)	€
Design of a family of signage elements for Mallow - To include Interpretative signage, gateway feature and laneways/wayfinding.^	7,500

^ other elements can also be included as requested (hotels, industrial estates etc)

Signage cost per element (constructed and sited - desgin fees not included)	
Gateways	15,000
Interpretative signage	1500
Wayfinding	1500

<b>Design code (drafting of a design code for Mallow town center)</b>	<b>6,900</b>
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## Appendix 2

### Mallow Development Partnership Analysis of Survey Data

#### Mallow Urban Design Issues and Priorities

##### Survey Background

This report provides the outcome of a survey monkey carried out about the urban design and landscape architectural plan in order to assist in the preparation of the Mallow Local Plan 2015 – 2021. The survey was designed by Mallow Development Partnership in association with Kanturk/Mallow Municipal Authority and Mallow Chamber, in order to prepare and implement a detailed Town Improvement Scheme.

##### Question 1. Which of these statements best describes your connection to Mallow?

In total, 238 people were interviewed, with a majority of 72.69% living in Mallow, while the remaining 27.31% either have business, work or go to school in Mallow.

##### Question 2. What do you enjoy most about Mallow? Select your top five reasons from the list or leave a comment describing why you choose to live, work or play in Mallow.

It would seem that several reasons influenced people's choice to live in Mallow: creative energy, cultural activities, live entertainment venues and a diverse community are listed but these come second to the availability

of parks, open spaces, safety and the opportunity to pursue an active lifestyle.

##### Question 3. What are your top five priorities for improving Mallow?

Besides the above-mentioned reasons that make Mallow an attractive place to live, the top five priorities for improving the town were also named: preserving the historic character of Mallow and more flexible and work-friendly opening and closing hours of retail outlets. A willingness to accommodate those who use Mallow as a dormitory town was highlighted and the regeneration of Mallow Centre as a family/lived-in environment was also given priority. Finally, creative use of public spaces/parks and better and safer streets that balance the needs of cyclists, pedestrians, cars and freight was mentioned.

##### Question 4 and 5. Children and Families in Mallow

Regarding safety, 78.57% of respondents claimed they feel comfortable as pedestrians. However, when asked about the way their children or grandchildren go to work/school, only 11.61% said they cycle or walk. Among the remaining, some of the remaining respondents, there was mention of the difficult access to public transport (distance to cover), coupled with poor facilities (footpath/cycle paths).

##### Question 6. What do you consider the biggest challenge facing Mallow?

This section of the questionnaire required respondents to give information on what they consider to be the biggest challenge facing Mallow. Of the 224 participants who responded to this question, 134 choose traffic congestion. In second position, the participants said



that parking costs are also a big challenge. A minority of participants indicated that out-of-town retail, parking availability and opening and closing hours of retail outlets in town centre, call for a special effort. Some participants expressed the belief that the town needs a revitalization of the buildings, especially on the Main Street, as the derelict sites give a sense of insecurity.

#### **Questions 7 *How can we make Mallow more children-friendly?***

When the participants were asked “How can we make Mallow more Child-friendly? the majority commented that opportunities for walking and biking safely in Mallow are the most important desirable improvement. More opportunities for contact with nature and more playground space shared second position, and in the last position participants agreed that more day-care facilities were needed.

#### **Question 8. How can we make Mallow’s streets safer for children and the elderly**

Participants said wheelchair/buggy friendly streetscape needs to be improved and more pedestrian crossings should be provided. Next in order they decide on pedestrian crossings. CCTV should be more widespread and greater pedestrianisation of the core area of town was mentioned as desirable. Cycle lanes, and the installation of defibrillator came last on the list of possible improvements.

#### **Questions 9 and 10 . Improvement for Mallow Town Centre (Core)**

In response to the question “Would you live in Mallow town centre?”, of 219 participants who completed the questionnaire, 74.43% indicated that they wouldn’t like to live in Mallow town centre, and 25.57% said that they would. People who said ‘No’ were asked why and the main reason given was the unavailability of outdoor space and parking to the rear of the buildings. Too noisy and not enough green/ public space are in the second and third position with almost the same percentage (35.88% and 34.12% respectively) while 24,12% of participants

indicated that the town centre is too dirty. A small number of those interviewed suggested other reasons. In short, traffic congestion, lack of security and poor aesthetics make living in town unattractive. One participant commented: ‘I live within 10 minutes walking of the town centre in a 4 bed, detached house on 1/2 acre. I enjoy space, privacy, parking and neighbours. None of this is available in the town centre.’

When the participants were asked if they would like to see more trees (planting/landscaping) in the streets of Mallow, 89.95% of those who answered said yes. Only 10.05% of participants believed that improvements are not necessary.

#### **Questions 11. How can the visual appearance of the Main Street in Mallow be improved?**

Respondents were asked to indicate how the visual appearance of the Main Street in Mallow can be improved. There were 433 responses to this question, 127 of them mentioned painting, and 123 of them cited landscaping as the best ways to improve the locality. Pedestrianisation and signage had 72 and 63 answers, respectively. Some participants answered that attention to derelict buildings could be also effective

#### **Questions 12. What sort of enhancement is appropriate for the Town Park and Riverside Walk?**

Participants were asked to suggest what sort of enhancement is appropriate for the Town Park and Riverside Walk. There were 219 responses to this question. Improvement of path infrastructure was the main improvement mentioned. (21.86%). They suggested not only better pathways, but also a running/walking track, that could be linked up with the castle, as a heritage trail, for example. In second position (18.28%), people mentioned the maintenance of green areas, especially around the river. 11.11% of respondents also indicated that lighting could be improved in these areas. Security was mentioned by 9.32% of participants. They suggested installation of a CCTV system

in the area. Some interviewees argued that the place needed better access for wheelchairs as well as better signage. Other problems mentioned were the lack of children's activity areas, picnic tables, seating and rubbish bins.

**Question 13. What kind of transportation do you use most often**

When asked about what kind of transportation the participants use most often, the majority of participants (86.43%) answered that they drive, with only 9.05% saying they walk. Just four people cited the use of a bicycle and nobody mentioned a bus.

**Question 14. Do you most often walk / cycle in Mallow**

Respondents were asked "Do you most often walk/cycle to Mallow to..." There were 199 answers: 35.68% walk and cycle for exercise or recreation. However 14.57% answered that they used to walk/cycle to work in the past.

**Questions 15 and 16. What can be done to improve the interaction between pedestrians, cyclists, cars and trucks in Mallow?**

The following question was about what can be done to improve the interaction between pedestrians, cyclists, cars and trucks. This was an open question and was answered by 199 respondents. Many improvements were suggested: more pedestrian areas and the provision of cycle lanes; safety-crossing for pedestrians; better signage; a town bypass to improve traffic flow and exclusion of trucks on the streets; Participants were also asked to suggest what improvements should be considered between Mallow South and Mallow North to allow for the safe interaction between pedestrians, cyclists, trucks and cars. Most suggested a new bridge should be built for pedestrians and cyclists and they also suggested an improvement in the traffic lights.

**Question 17. Where is your favourite recreational place in Mallow**

**(Walk, run, socialise)?**

In response to the question "Where is your favourite recreational place in Mallow (to walk, run or socialise)?" the answers were almost the same with 25.63% for the Town Park, 24.12% for the Castle and 22.61% for the Town Centre. In the section "other" the respondents (22.11%) specified the GAA complex and Mallow Golf Club.

**Question 18. What is your favourite recreational activity in Mallow?**

The last question in this survey was "what is your favourite recreational activity in Mallow?" 197 answered and 42.64% said walking, 16.24% said athletics, 11.17% said GAA, 10.66% Rugby, 9.64% golf and 8.63% cycling.

**Conclusions.**

1. The survey represents 2.5% of the population of Mallow
2. Overall, people are happy to live in Mallow but are conscious of the need for improvements to enhance the quality of life.
3. There is an appreciation of the green areas and sports facilities in the town. However, access to green areas could be improved through the development of pathways and wheelchair accessibility.
4. Living in the town centre, while attractive in principle, is rendered impossible by lack of space and parking facilities as well as the depressing presence of derelict premises.
5. Connectivity between the north and south sides of town needs to be improved. A pedestrian bridge with a cycle lane is suggested by many.



6. Traffic congestion is a major problem and the only solution would seem to be a town-centre by-pass.
7. For those working outside the town it was considered that a more flexible and work-friendly opening and closing hours of retail outlets would be desirable.
8. Security and a sense of safety is seen by many to be a problem, which could be helped by the installation of more CCTV cameras.
9. Aesthetically, improvement of the Main Street is a priority.