



Townhall Street and Farnham Street, Cavan
Public Realm Improvement Works

Stage 2A: Part 8 Planning Application
Architect's Report

May 2021

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Introduction



Introduction



Aerial photo of Cavan Town and surrounds

These proposals are a response to the Fáilte Ireland Destination Towns funding awarded to Cavan County Council and seek to improve the public realm at the intersection of Farnham Street and Townhall Street, a prominent intersection for visitors arriving to the town. These Part 8 proposals represent an ambitious new phase in the town's redevelopment which aims to combine good design quality and materials with the provision of support facilities such as parking and better access to the river. The project is seen as precursor to the wider Abbeylands redevelopment funded by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage's Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF). Design principles and details established in this phase of works will be further implemented in the masterplan redevelopment.



Photomontage of Townhall Street (south side).



Photomontage of Townhall Street (north side).

Origins, Evolution and Current State



A Brief History of the Town

Cavan Town is a Gaelic Medieval town located at a confluence of rivers between drumlins from whence it takes its name: An Cabhán, the Irish for The Hollow. It is the oldest inland town within the northern half of the state. The town was founded by Giolla Íosa Ruadh O'Reilly, a native clan leader and lord of Breifne c. 1300. The O'Reilly's were prominent in the region during this time and helped establish Cavan as a bustling market town of renown. They founded Tullymongan castle, their stronghold, overlooking the Town, as well as the Franciscan Abbey (c. 1300), within the area of the Abbeyland site. The town's urban origins are associated with the Castle, the Friary and its Abbey and the Bridge at Bridge Street. A market cross, now gone, marked the centre of the Town. Giolla Íosa O'Reilly, as well as Eoghan Ruadh O'Neill, the victor of Benburb along with many other prominent O'Reilly family members, are reputedly buried within the Abbey grounds.

Cavan Town grew up around the intersection of two ancient routes at the borders of pre-Norman kingdoms of great antiquity. It is one of only a few pre-plantation towns whose existence can be attested to with certainty and is even more atypical in the Gaelic context in that its origins were not purely ecclesiastical. The town shown in 1591 is a fascinating vignette of what was then the only recorded urban settlement in the whole county: Entitled 'The Cavan', it shows a collection of buildings along part of the current Main Street and the southern side of Bridge Street, under the watchful eye of a castle on the crest of a hill, the seat of the 'Aurellies' (O'Reilly). This was most likely Tullymongan castle (at the top of Bullock Lane) although no trace of this structure is to be found today.

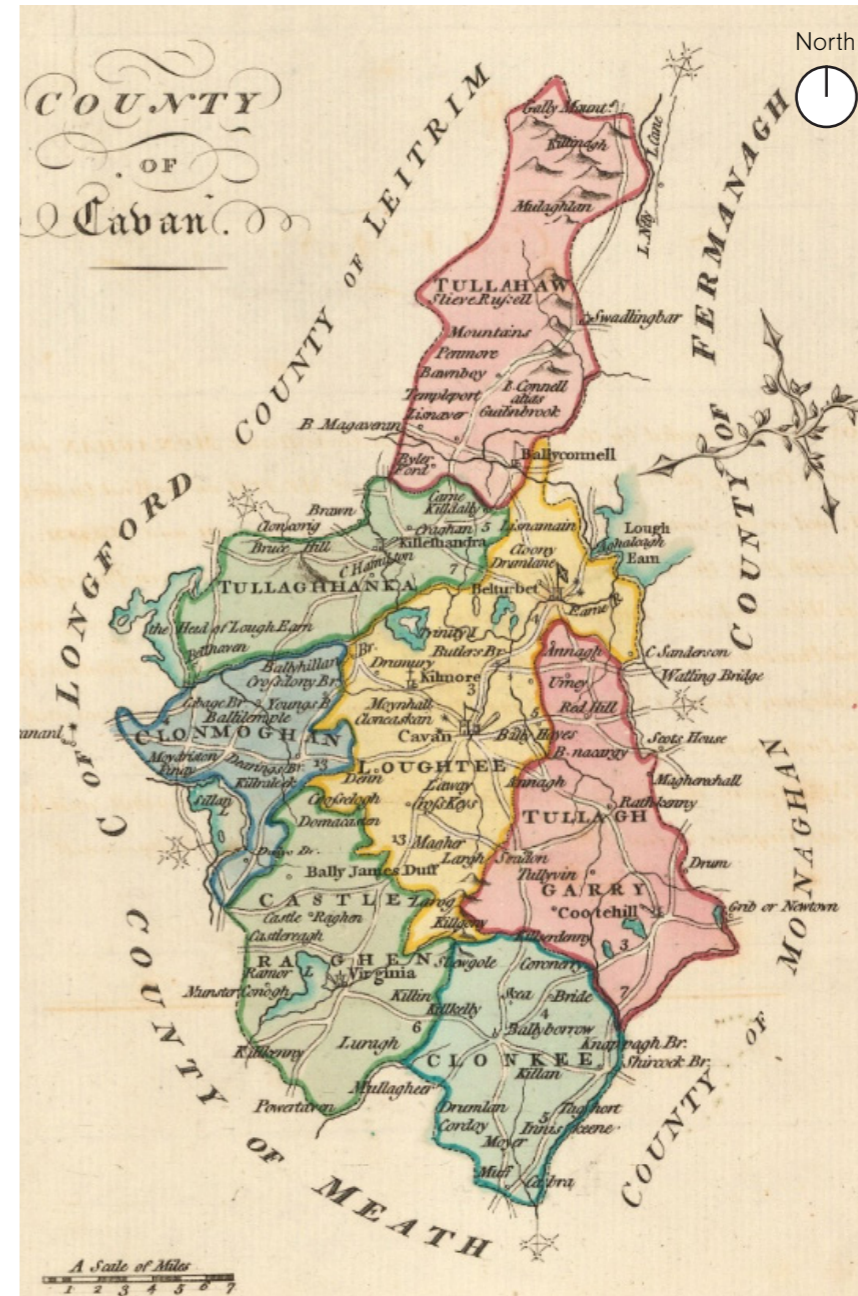
The historical records abound in accounts of the destruction of the Town and Abbey, through accidents and acts of war throughout the centuries. The last recorded razing of Cavan occurred in 1690

following a battle between Williamite forces and those of James II and around the Town. It is unlikely that any buildings of significance survived these onslaughts. The post-reformation history of Cavan therefore can be taken to begin from this period: The Farnham Papers record that the Maxwell family were busy acquiring land in and around the Town from the 1720s to the 1760s or so, including the Abbeyland in its entirety. Thus the foundations were laid for the Town of Cavan as we know it today.

Morphological Evolution of the Town of Cavan

The maps at our disposal consist of the First Edition Ordnance Survey, published in 1837, the Cavan 'Town map', surveyed in 1881 and the Revised Ordnance Survey from 1909. The 'Cassini' map, which was a further revision of the Ordnance Survey from the 1920s was also consulted. Along with these surveys is a late-Elizabethan view of the Town, dated 1591, which shows its pre-plantation layout consisting of two streets, Main Street and Bridge Street. This map is studied in more detail later on the following pages, and the numbers included in this section refers to features of this map. At the intersection of these streets is shown a market cross [3.] on a stepped base and behind a wall along the northern side of Bridge Street, a church and tower [1.], with an entrance through a gateway close to the current bridge. A street with houses on both sides is shown extending to the west beyond the bridge, along the line of the current Barrack Hill. Two castellated structures can be seen among the line of houses on the western side of Main Street, perhaps the 'Brady stone house' [2.] and the (other) 'O'Reilly Castle' [4.] referred to in early accounts of the town by O'Connell.

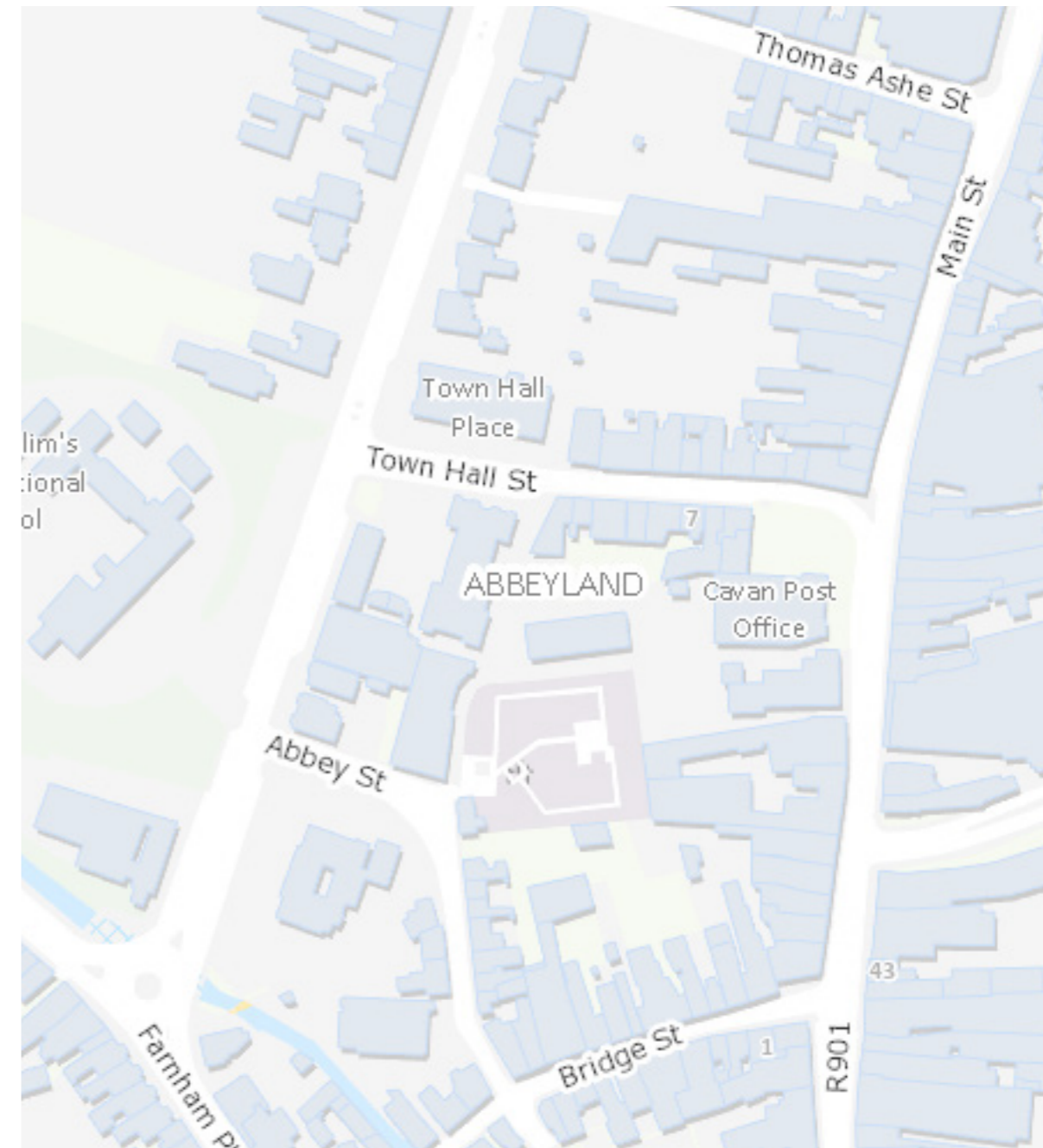
Another map which has recently come to light thanks to the work of the Historic Towns Atlas group is a 1780s Farnham Estate Map which includes the names of many of the property owners and brief descriptions of some of the buildings. This map is referred to but not shown, in this account.



1776 Map of the county of Cavan, Map House of London, Sayer & Bennett.



First Edition Ordnance Survey, 1837



Current Ordnance Survey view

Regional Context

Located near the centre of the island of Ireland and within the province of Ulster, Cavan town is located 70 miles northwest of Dublin along two major national road connections; the N3 and the N55 respectively. The town is the largest in the County of Cavan and holds 'hub' status under the National Planning Framework. A market town from its origins, Cavan is the commercial centre of the region and a pivotal point on the east-west route between Dundalk and Sligo. It borders six counties, north and south of the border; Fermanagh, Leitrim, Longford, Meath, Monaghan and Westmeath. It is the administrative centre of the County and the Cavan County Council offices are located within the Town.

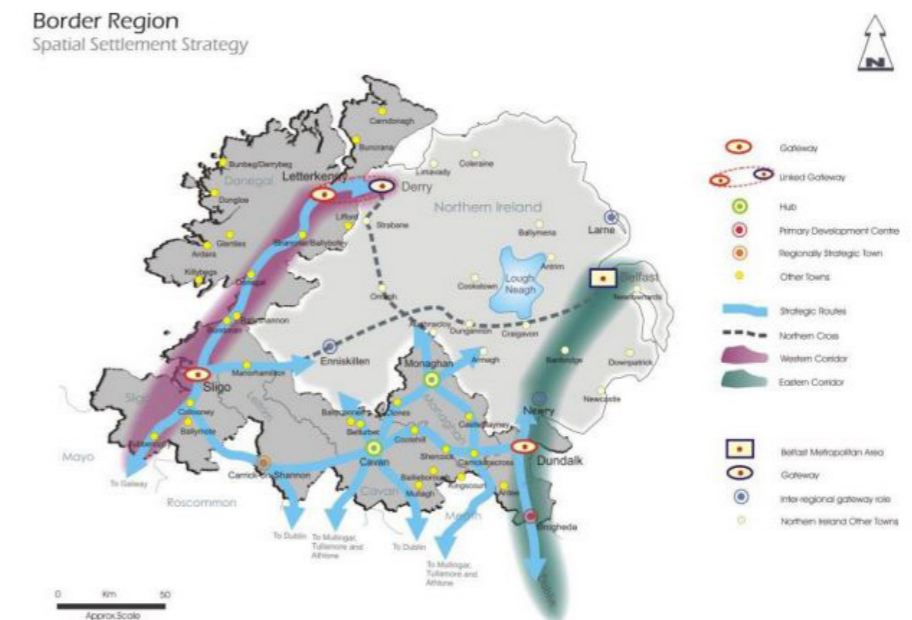
The county of Cavan has experienced an overall population increase of over 3,800 people to 76,176 inhabitants since 2016. The last recorded statistics from the 2016 census indicated that 10,914 of these lived in Cavan Town with this figure projected to increase to 12,800 by 2022. Although the county has experienced growth, the urban town core has entered a period of population decline. In 2011 the urban population of the town had fallen from 3,934 in 2006 to 3,649. These statistics show that the county is expanding outside of Cavan town. These statistics are not surprising for a county with the highest population living in rural communities. However, this decline is a cause of some concern for the Town's longer-term sustainability.

The Northern and Western Regional Assembly's Regional, Spatial and Economic Plan (2020-2032) identifies Cavan as a Key Town and in particular highlights the need to "Promote the development of the Abbeylands Cultural Quarter to regenerate this important town centre site with vibrant town centres uses, new pedestrian street and public spaces"

The Townhall Street Public Realm Improvement works will essentially act as the first phase of the Abbeylands redevelopment



Core Strategy Map, County Cavan route map. source: Cavan County Development Plan 2014-2020



Border Region Map Spatial Settlement Strategy Map. source: Cavan County Development Plan 2014-2020

Conservation of Fabric and Setting

Townhall Street

A Summary of its History

Town Hall Street is an extension of the former Market Square (now the Post Office plaza) towards its connection with Farnham Street. It post-dates the construction of the Town Hall in 1910, prior to that it was called Market Street and it ended in a set of gates to Farnham Park. The line of houses on its northern side as far as this former boundary were built between 1840 and 1880; the line of houses on the southern side are much later. They replaced a line of former market sheds during the 1930s. From the 1960s onwards the remaining area of Farnham Park was sold off as individual plots. The site facing the Town Hall became the Magnet Cinema which in turn was replaced with the current structures in the 1990s.

Links

Town Hall Street provides a direct connection from Main Street to Farnham Street. The Town Hall building sits on a permeable site with potential connections towards Abbey Street. An arched passageway through the line of frontage on the southern side gives access to what appears to be a communal garden space to the rear of these buildings.

Description

The Town Hall Street axis from Main Street provides a view towards Farnham Street and St Felim's School on its landscaped hill beyond. The scale of the frontages is a uniform two storeys in a simple urban vernacular. These contain a series of small shops and boutiques. On the northern side within the footprint of the former park is a line of two-storey, flat-roofed, commercial buildings opposite the Town Hall, set back from the street building-line. These front onto Farnham Street and are also set back from the building line.

Farnham Street

A Summary of its History

It is a wholly planned street, the fruit of a design intention that took most of the nineteenth century to realise. It appears on the first known map of the Town; the First Edition of the Ordnance Survey which was carried out in the Cavan area from the late 1820s. By its publication date in 1835 it shows a well-established axis linking the Jail and School at its southern end with the Catholic Chapel and Church to the North. The Courthouse too is already present. Its edges are still indicated as hedgerows and field walls rather than the harder, more developed edges shown in the 1888 Town map. It is tree-lined over most of its length, including the planted edge to Farnham Park in this later version. Farnham Park's eastern edge faithfully follows the boundary of Abbeyland shown on the earlier map. With the completion of Town Hall Street in the 1930s, pressure seems to have grown for the redevelopment of the Farnham Park area, and the Magnet Cinema opposite the Town Hall effectively provided a new public building for the Town. The later piecemeal development of the edge of Farnham Park as an eclectic series of low-density town houses was based on suburban planning ideas of the time. Any of the new commercial premises on this side of the street are of their time and place and show little deference to context. From the 1940s onwards it provided a processional route to the Catholic Cathedral which replaced the former Chapel at the same location.

Links

Farnham Street marks the western edge of the Town's core and provides a series of connections to the Main street via Thomas Ashe, Town Hall, Abbey and Church Streets, thus defining the northern edge of the Town Centre. To the South, it connects to College Street and Railway Road at their junction with the Kinnypottle river. It contains most of Cavan's public buildings as well as the important wayfinding elements of the church spires to the North.



Town Hall Street looking west towards Farnham St., October 2019.
source: dhb architects/Cooney Architects



Town Hall Street looking east towards Main St. during Corpus Cristi event, c. 1950s.
Source: Cavan Walking History website (www.cavanwalkinghistory.ie).



Town Hall Street looking west towards Farnham St., notice Farnham gardens; c. 1950s.
Source: Cavan Walking History website (www.cavanwalkinghistory.ie).

Farnham Street (con'd)

Description

A wide, straight street, in contrast with the narrow, meandering routes of Main, Bridge and Abbey Streets, this is Cavan's 'Renaissance quarter' in contrast with the medieval morphology of the historic town core. It has planted edges with mature trees, notably within the Garda Station and Church of Ireland sites and outside the Library, and is bordered on its western side by a succession of freestanding buildings. Farnham Street's eastern side consists of blocks of urban frontage from the Garda Station site opposite the Courthouse as far as the roundabout junction with College Street and Railway Road to the south. Initially consisting of terraces of three-storey late-Georgian town houses, the scale breaks down along the former Farnham Park site where the piecemeal 1960s development occurs. An interesting feature of this edge is the maintenance in-situ of lengths of the former park railings and the survival of an area of rose-garden along the Street edge opposite the Town Hall. The gardens to the rear of the 1960's houses are most likely subdivisions of the Park and some of the mature trees along their rear boundary were probably planted as part of the Park landscaping.

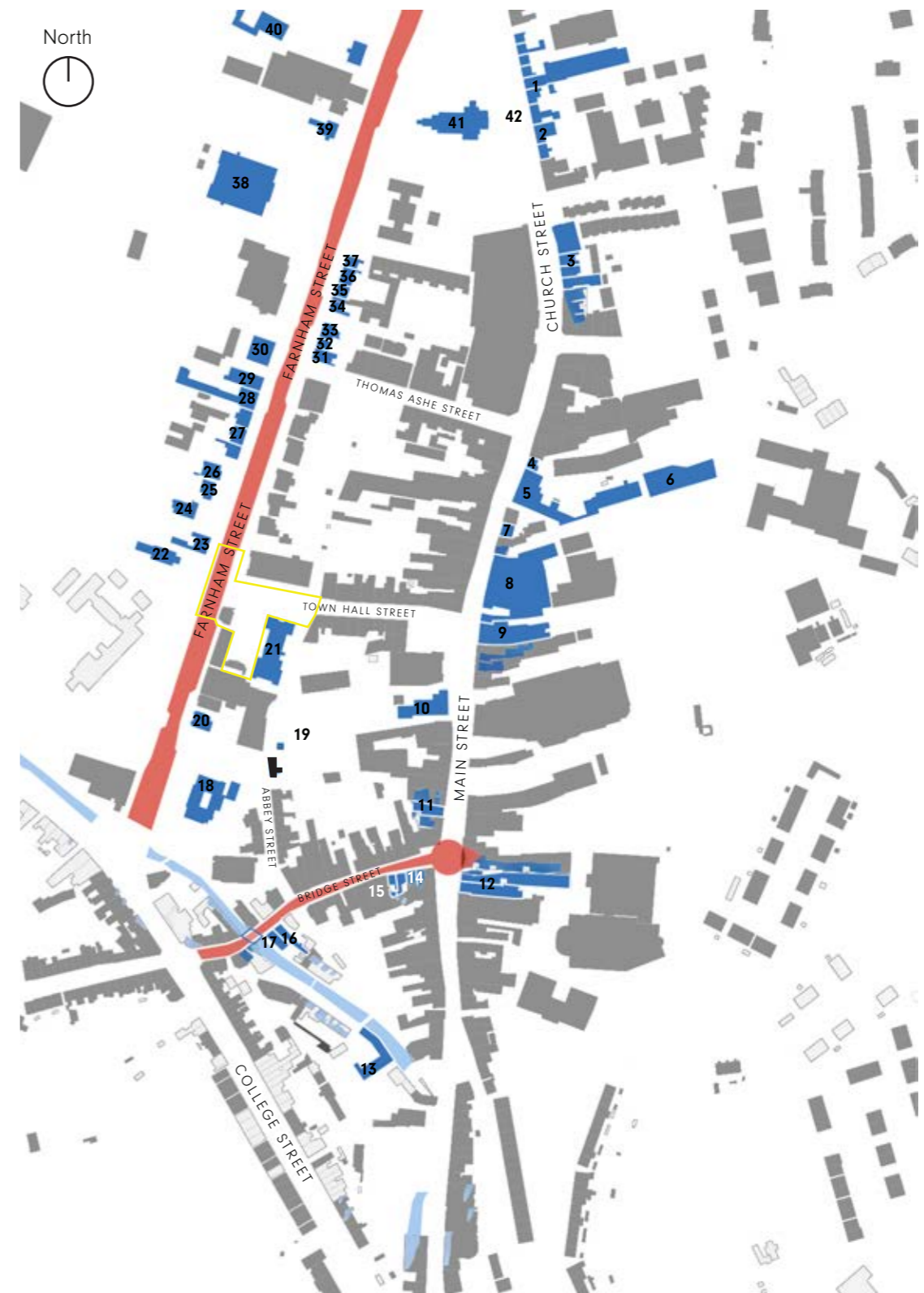
Protected Structures

Cavan contains many fine buildings spanning the period from the late 1700s to the late twentieth century. It has over 30 National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) survey entries. These sites are shown on the adjacent map.

All of these sites are also Protected Structures, in other words they are protected under the terms of the Planning and Development Act and figure on the Development Plans Record of Protected Structures (RPS); these sites are outlined in blue.

Cavan County Council is considering the creation of two Architectural Conservation Areas within the Town; the Farnham Street ACA and the Bridge Street ACA, which are denoted in red on the adjacent plan. These are areas within which development controls will apply, particularly relating to any external changes and quality of setting.

The light yellow line signifies the site boundary and is also visible on the plan.



Current Character

Townhall Street

Townhall Street is on a planned axis, and straight. It includes a public building, the Town Hall, as a prominent part of its streetscape. The glimpse of green at the Farnham Street end provides a visual contrast to the general hardscaping of the Town Centre. Looking back towards Main Street, the brick and stone façade of the Ulster Bank frontage provides a formal set-piece and a prominent wayfinding element. Its urban qualities are somewhat diminished towards the approach to Farnham Street by the poor quality of finishes and poor relationship to the street of the new structures forming the northern backdrop to Town Hall Place.

Farnham Street

Farnham Street is Cavan's planned axis containing most of its public buildings. It was intended as an extension of the Farnham Estate's presence within the Town. It provides a strong contrast therefore to the rest of the Town Centre which grew organically from the crossing of ancient routes and whose vocation is primarily commercial and (historically) residential. The aesthetic and indeed historic tension between these two types of urbanism are an essential element of Cavan's urban identity. Farnham Street's specific qualities lie in the contrast between its western and eastern sides, the former consisting of (mainly) freestanding buildings in leafy surroundings, the latter (from the Garda Station southwards) consisting of urban blocks connecting back to the town's morphology. The greenness of its edges and the quality of its public buildings are also important elements of this character.



Some views of Townhall Street

ORIGINS, EVOLUTION & CURRENT STATE



Fig.03 Key Map showing location of photographs



View 1 Cavan Town Hall from Townhall Street



View 2 Looking from Farnham Street towards Cavan Town Hall. The remainder of Farnham Gardens is visible in the foreground



View 3 Townhall Street looking west towards Main Street



View 4 Townhall Street looking West towards Farnham Street



View 5 Farnham Street looking north



View 6 Carpark adjacent Cavan Town Hall



View 7 Townhall Street looking west towards Cavan Presbyterian Church

Nature of the Proposals



Rationale for Intervention



Farnham Gardens within the context of Cavan Town in 1858



Farnham Gardens truncated by the construction of Town Hall in 1909



Little of Farnham Gardens remains in 2020
Source map shown below Credit: geohive.ie



Development sketch illustrating concept strategies

The extent and nature of this proposed Part 8 Public consultation proposal is intended to reflect the importance of a balanced approach to the town's further development. Cavan has many existing strengths such as a viable residential population and a strong commercial vocation, this proposal has been prepared to expand, enhance upon these features and unify disparate areas of the town.

Cavan is a commercial centre as well as a tourism gateway to surrounding towns and counties, as well as to the country as a whole.

The proposals are rooted in the fabric and rich history of the town. They include functions for strengthening the town's infrastructure as follows;

- Through the provision of quality public realm with pedestrian priority.
- Improvements to the accessibility of existing pavements and provision of stone paving
- Increasing footfall and facilitation of visitors through the provision of an outdoor events space.
- Encouraging the town's commercial development by improving visitor appeal.
- Celebrating the town's cultural strengths through a high-quality public realm addition, with reference to Farnham Gardens and deference to the Town Hall Arts Centre.

The proposals respect the scale and character of the town and are generally based on an adaptation of existing fabric and function rather than wholesale redevelopment. In this sense they are evolutionary rather than revolutionary, in keeping with an orderly and considered approach to the town's ongoing development. The proposals are intended as precursor to the Abbeylands redevelopment.

Nature and Extent of Proposals

The layout drawing opposite shows the extent and nature of the proposals. They are outlined here with a brief description of the nature of the interventions in each case, before being shown in more detail over the following pages.

A: Improving the setting of the Town Hall Arts Space

The realignment of the carriageway allows for the creation of a larger and more pedestrian friendly space to the main entrance of the Town Hall Arts Space. The removal of parking spaces immediately outside the entrance and the improvement of surfacing will reduce visual noise. Similarly, reconfiguration of the carpark to the side of the building will ensure that the elevation visible from Farnham Street will be better presented.

B: Re-greening the town and referencing Farnham Gardens

The gradual reduction of Farnham Gardens over a period of 100 or so years has been to the detriment of the town. The proposals are centered around the existing Rose Garden, said to be the only remnants of the park, and seek to expand with additional areas of rose bushes and other planting. Areas of greenery and treepits are also used to separate trafficked areas from pedestrian areas to reduce the need for barriers & bollards.

Seating is placed strategically to allow passers-by to sit and consider the rose garden and the Town Hall's facades.

The railings surrounding the existing rose garden are thought to be the original fittings used to enclose Farnham Gardens. The are recorded in the National Inventory of Achitectural Heritage (ref no. 40000401) The entry notes that they were salvaged when the park was built over in the 1960s and subsequently restored though resintalled in different positions according to the new

urban layout.

It is intended to remove these, repair where necessary and reposition them strategically throughout the scheme.

C: Outdoor Performance Space

The carpark adjacent the Town Hall will be reconfigured to allow for the use of a temporary mobile stage for outdoor music and theatre performances. a certain number of parking spaces will be retained, along with the provision of accessible parking and charging points for electric vehicles.

The surface of the carpark will be a gravel retaining grid which will improve the aesthetics of the space and also allow localised drainage in line with SUDS principles.

D: Shared Surface Public Space

The proposals will create a raised platform at the junction of Farnham Street. The ramps to the platform will slow traffic on this section of Farnham Street. This area will be a shared surface for pedestrians and vehicular traffic, designed with pedestrian priority in mind, and will continue along lower Townhall Street, . The presence of planting to the carriageway edges will serve as buffer zone between pedestrian only areas and will slow traffic as it moves along Townhall Street.

The vehicular areas will be predominantly finished in asphalt with the exception of the section immediately in front of the Town Hall Arts Space where the stone finish will continue a cross the carriageway



Concept Sketch Plan



Painting depicting Farnham Gardens in its original state - source: cavanwalkinghistory.ie.

NATURE OF PROPOSALS



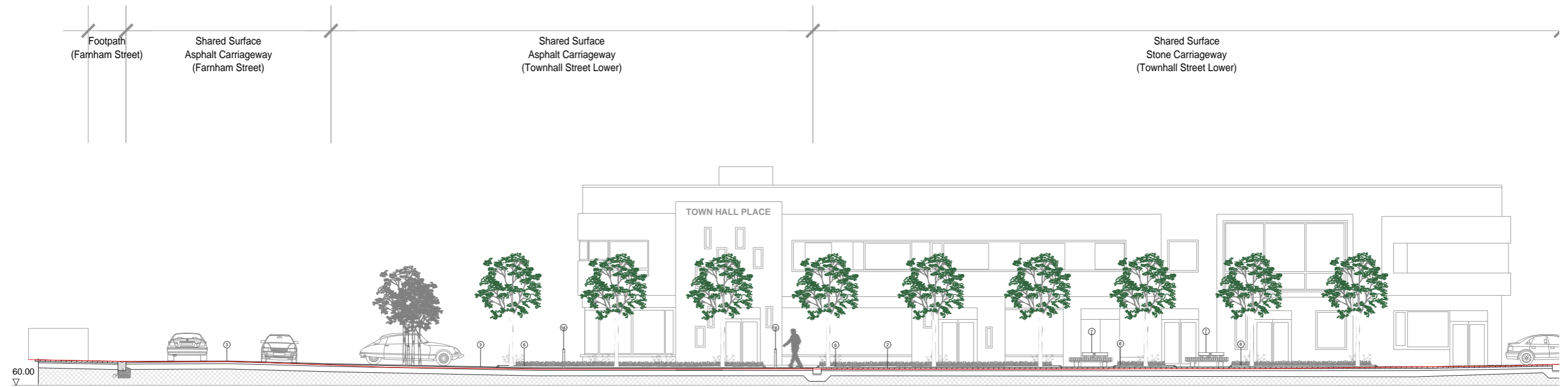
Extract from Planning Application Drawings showing proposed site area. Please refer to Drawing PP8.002



Development perspective sketch showing shared surface treatment at Town Hall Arts Space



Development section/elevation drawing showing interventions in the context of the primary facade of Town Hall Arts Space



Proposed Longitudinal Section through Townhall Street

Sustainability

The RIAI Guide Sustainable Design pathways sets out a framework in which a project can be assessed and appraised over the course of its design and construction.

The document sets out 8 metrics by which the design can be assessed at the various stages. The metrics and the design responses to them are summarised below;

2.1 Net Zero Operational Carbon Dioxide Emissions

The schemes sole operational energy use will be lighting, which will be designed to exceed current energy standards and be as energy efficient as the technology allows. The proposal in itself is designed to facilitate pedestrian movement thereby contributing to walking as viable alternative to urban car journeys.

2.2 Net Zero Embodied Carbon Dioxide

Every effort will be made during the course of detailed design to procure materials from the island of Ireland, thereby eliminating the embodied energy associated with shipping materials from overseas. The Crystalpave material proposed for the green paving setts are produced using recycled broken glass. The proposals also incorporate the reuse of the existing railings on site.

2.3 Sustainable Water Cycle

The proposals to introduce planted areas, gravel pathways and gravel retaining grids to the carpark will aid natural drainage, in line with Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) principles. These permeable surface finishes will allow rainwater to drain into the ground immediately below them, thereby reducing pressure on the existing drainage system and reducing or negating the need for additional infrastructure.

2.4 Sustainable Connectivity and Transport

The proposal in itself is designed to allow better pedestrian movement thereby facilitating walking as viable alternative to

urban car journeys. Its proximity to the bus station will create a better link to the town centre. Cycle parking has been provided within the scheme along with provision for the charging of electric vehicles.

2.5 Sustainable Land Use and Biodiversity

The proposals are a direct contribution to the public realm of the town and serve to reinforce connections between the Farnham Street axis and Main Street. The scheme introduces planted areas and trees in reference to the former Farnham Gardens park. The greening of this area will increase the biodiversity of this area of the town.

2.6 Good Health and Wellbeing

This metric largely relates to indoor health metrics in buildings. While this scheme does not propose any built structures, it will serve as a visual amenity for any surrounding buildings, existing and proposed.

2.7 Sustainable Communities and Social Value

As part of the design process a public consultation exercise was undertaken and submissions were invited from the community in response to early design proposals. Their aspirations and suggestions were incorporated into the final design submission. The proposals will serve to reinforce the sense of place in this area of the town by referencing the former Farnham Gardens, improving the setting of a prominent public building, the Town Hall Arts Centre and providing an outdoor space for the community to gather for events and celebrations.

2.8 Sustainable Life Cycle Costs

This metric pertains more so to the running costs of a building, however the chosen materials and detailing will offer a robust and long lasting public space, ensuring that the scheme will represent a good value investment.



extract from the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in Practice document

Pathway	Context	Design Choices	Design Performance Objectives	Procurement	Construction, Validation and Handover	Post Occupancy Evaluation
Principles	Connectivity and Compact Growth Site Planning Future Change and Adaptation	Use of Site Building Form and Orientation Use of Materials	Functionality and Resilience Occupant Comfort Energy Use and Operational Carbon Material Specification and Whole Life Embodied Carbon Water Waste	Tender Documentation Life Cycle Costing	Education and Skills Material Sourcing and Waste Minimisation Quality Control and Commissioning	Defining Scale and Scope Metrics and Monitoring
Primary Associated Metrics	2.3: Sustainable Water Cycle 2.4: Sustainable Connectivity and Transport 2.5: Sustainable Land Use and Biodiversity 2.7: Sustainable Communities and Social Value 2.8: Sustainable Life Cycle cost	2.1: Net Zero Operational Carbon Emissions 2.2: Net Zero Embodied Carbon Dioxide 2.3: Sustainable Water Cycle 2.6: Good Health and Wellbeing 2.8: Sustainable Life Cycle cost	2.1: Net Zero Operational Carbon Emissions 2.2: Net Zero Embodied Carbon Dioxide 2.3: Sustainable Water Cycle 2.6: Good Health and Wellbeing 2.8: Sustainable Life Cycle Cost	2.2: Net Zero Embodied Carbon Dioxide 2.8: Sustainable Life Cycle Cost	2.1: Net Zero Operational Carbon Emissions 2.2: Net Zero Embodied Carbon Dioxide 2.3: Sustainable Water Cycle 2.4: Sustainable Connectivity and Transport 2.5: Sustainable Land Use and Biodiversity 2.6: Good Health and Wellbeing 2.7: Sustainable Communities and Social Value 2.8: Sustainable Life Cycle Cost	2.1: Net Zero Operational Carbon Emissions 2.2: Net Zero Embodied Carbon Dioxide 2.8: Sustainable Life Cycle Cost
RIAI stage of work	1. Inception and General Services 2. Outline Proposals	3. Scheme Design	4. Detail Design/ Building Regulations	5. Production Information 6. Tender Action 7. Project Planning	8. Operations on-site and Completion	8. Operations on-site and Completion

extract from RIAI Guide: Sustainable Design Pathways pg27

Public Consultation

Cavan County Council held a public consultation on the proposals for Townhall Street between 26th of April and 10th of May 2021. Due to the Covid 19 restrictions a public forum could not be held in the usual fashion. Instead, the proposals were printed on boards and displayed on the railings of the Courthouse, a highly trafficked public area. The public were then asked to fill out forms (shown on the right) to share their views on the proposals. The information was also available online. The design team collated the feedback and carefully reviewed it.

There were calls to ensure the proposals were friendly to the aged and those with mobility issues. The proposals have been designed to illuminate kerbs or steps and provide level access where possible, ensuring it is accessible to all ages and abilities.

There were suggestions of removable bollards in strategic locations to be able to close lower Townhall Street to traffic but still allow access to the carpark and also to be able to close the street to traffic entirely.

There were many calls to fully pedestrianise Townhall Street and this is something the Council may consider in the future. Crucially, the works described in this application will facilitate that transition, should it take place.



Public Consultation Boards on display outside Cavan Courthouse

PUBLIC CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

DESTINATION TOWNS PROJECT - PUBLIC REALM AT THE INTERSECTION OF TOWN HALL STREET AND FARNHAM STREET

Please complete the following and return through any of the following options by 10/05/2021

1. By email to destinationtowns@cavancoco.ie
2. By post address submissions to: Destination Towns, Cavan Co. Council, Farnham Street, Cavan OR Via the Library Letterbox.

Name:

Contact Details:

A number of alterations have been proposed for the Public realm at the junction of Town Hall Street and Farnham Street, please include any additional suggestions below:

In the below section we ask that you please number each proposal from 1-8 from most favorable to least favorable:

- Proposed new outdoor performance area
- Proposed new trees, landscaping and urban furniture
- Proposed new lighting of Town Hall and improved entrance plaza
- Proposal for a new public mural
- Proposal to remove some parking spaces to create wider footpaths and a more pedestrian friendly area
- Proposed removal of existing public toilet block
- Proposal to introduce more disabled parking spaces in available parking area
- Other (Please elaborate below)



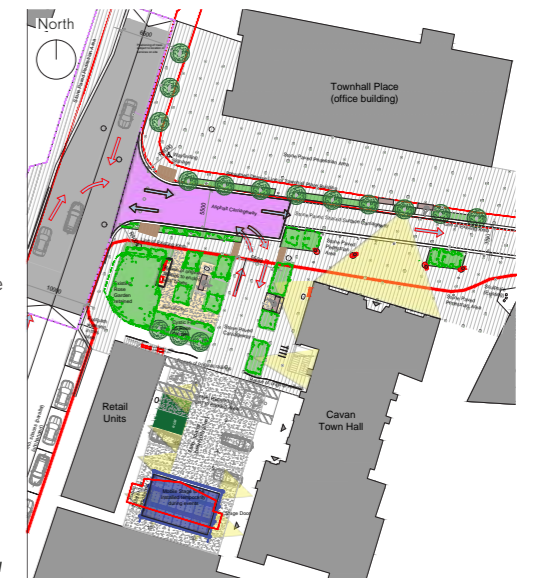
PUBLIC CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

DESTINATION TOWNS PROJECT - PUBLIC REALM AT THE INTERSECTION OF TOWN HALL STREET AND FARNHAM STREET

1. What new opportunities do you see for you, your community and the area?
2. What do you like/dislike about the potential project?
3. Please feel free to highlight any opportunities or concerns that you may have on the map.
4. Please outline any further suggestions you may have below.

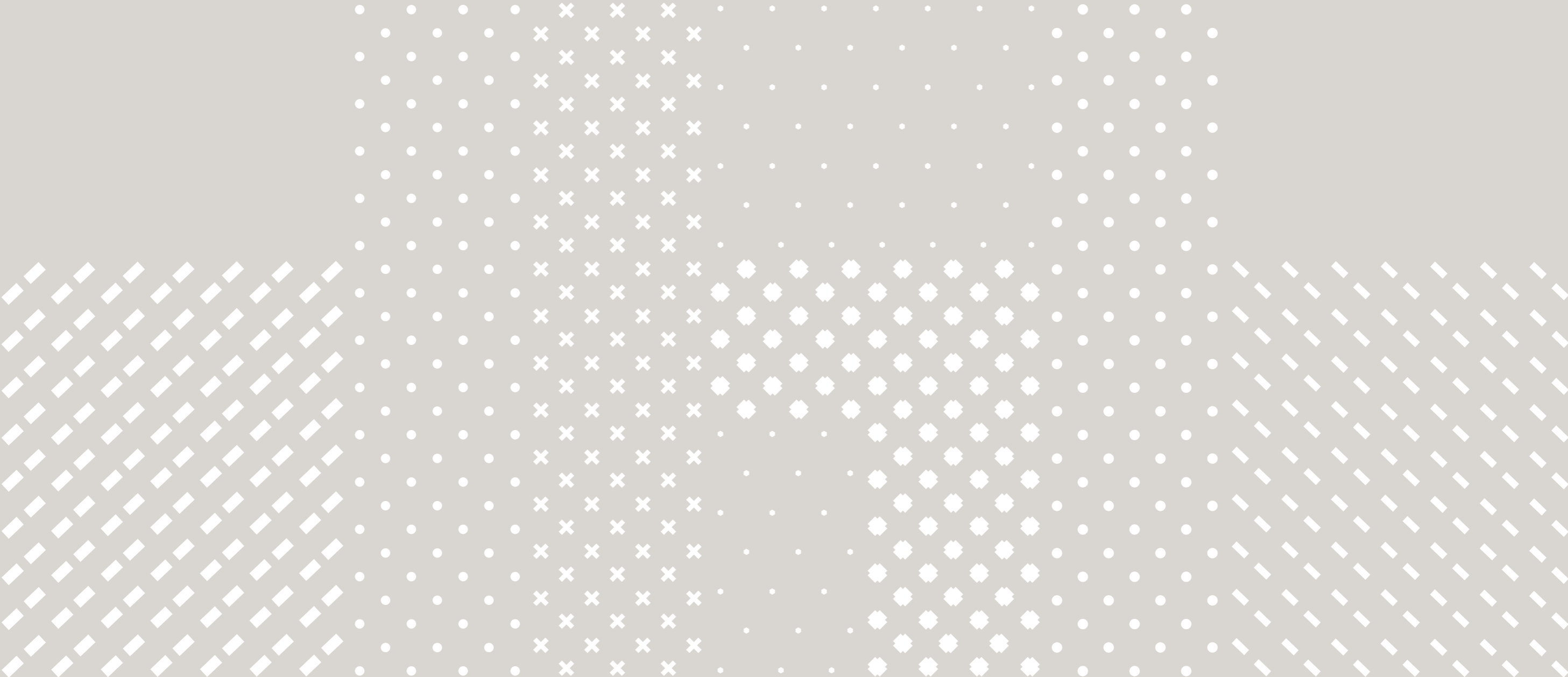
We welcome your feedback and observations to further progress and produce a successful strategy for the public realm at the intersection of Town Hall Street and Farnham Street.

Thank you for your time.



Feedback Sheets made available for the public to comment on the proposals

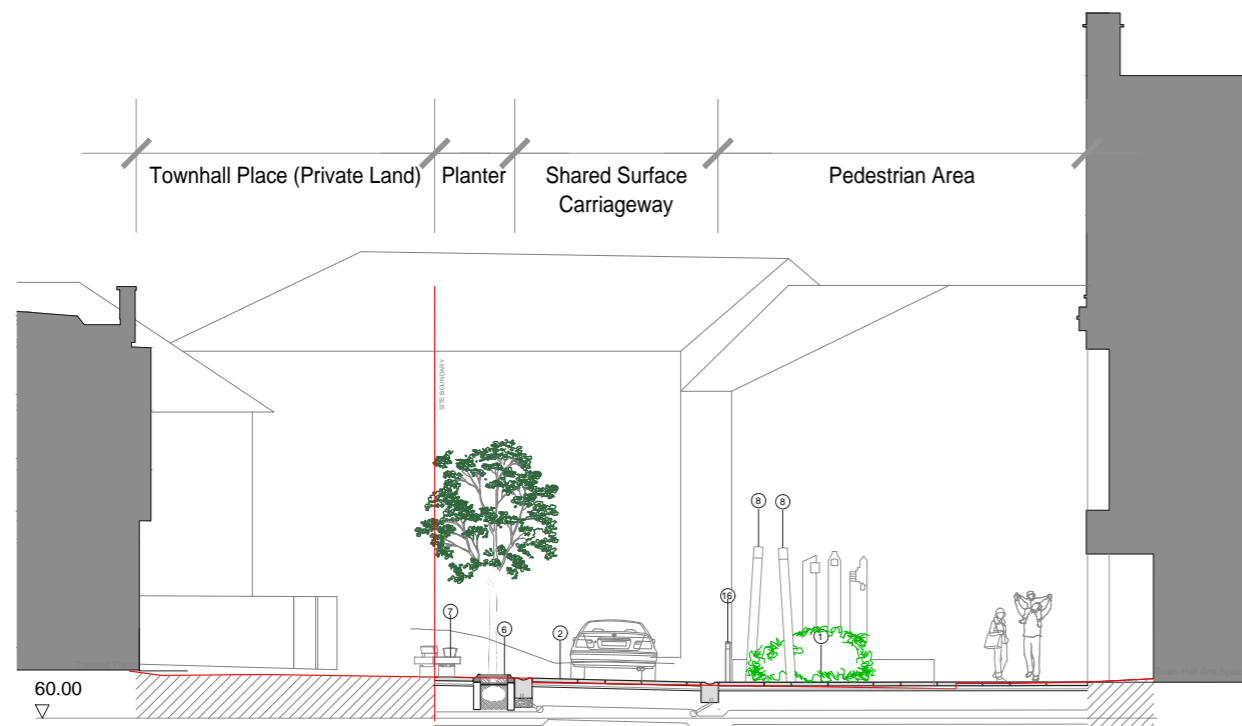
Design Details



Material Selection

The selection of surface treatments seeks to replicate the linear nature of the former Farnham Gardens. Bands of limestone of varying textures run in the direction of the former park, set out rectilinearly from the primary facade of the Town Hall. The limestone is interspersed with sandstone pavements as a way of referencing the colour and texture of the Town Hall.

The choice of materials can contribute to the project's sustainable credentials and be a strong element of its identity. Choosing a local stone, if it is available economically, is an obvious starting point, but several types of surface will generally be required, including asphalted carriageways for vehicles. The extent and nature of the finishes will need to be carefully balanced against budgetary limits.



Extract from Planning Application Drawings showing proposed section on Townhall Street. Please refer to Drawing PL-203.



Aerial sketch showing paving concept



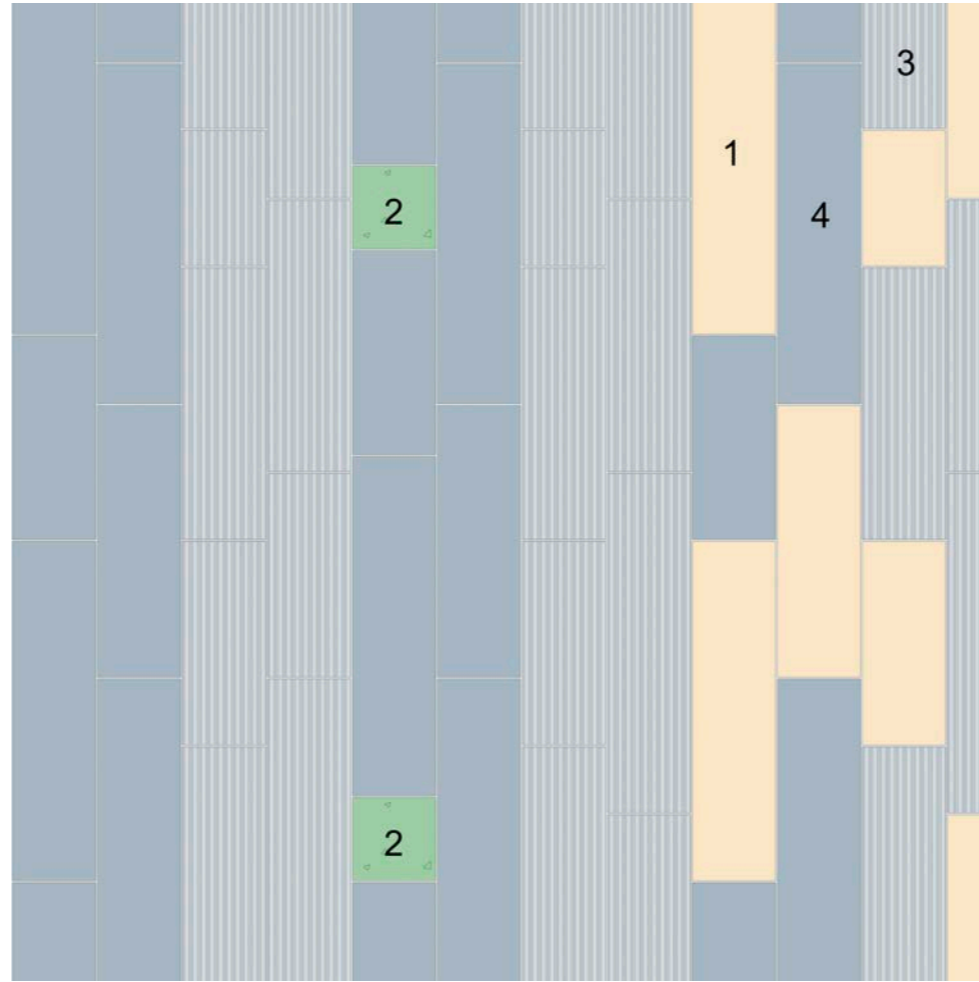
Town Hall Cavan Arts Space following refurbishment



WATERFORD PUBLIC REALM
dhb ARCHITECTS



WATERFORD PUBLIC REALM
dhb ARCHITECTS



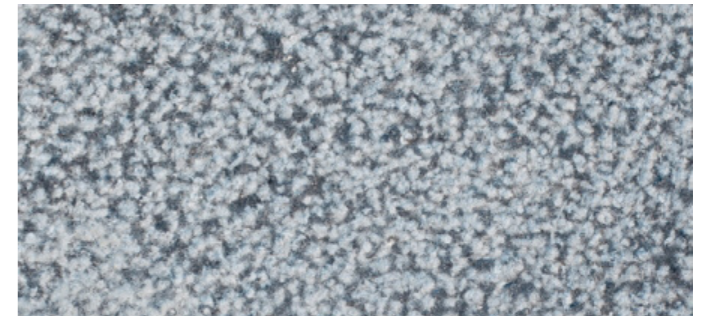
PROPOSED STONE PATTERN LAYOUT



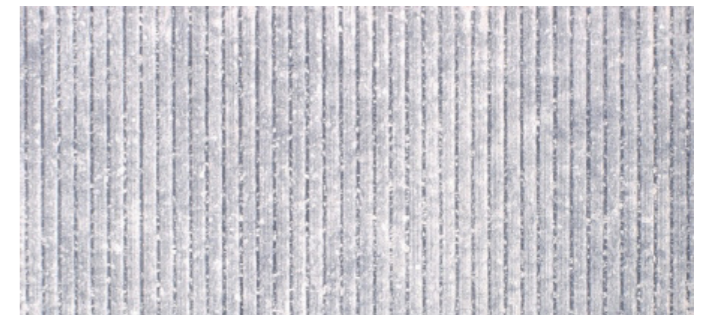
1. SANDSTONE WITH FLAMED FINISH



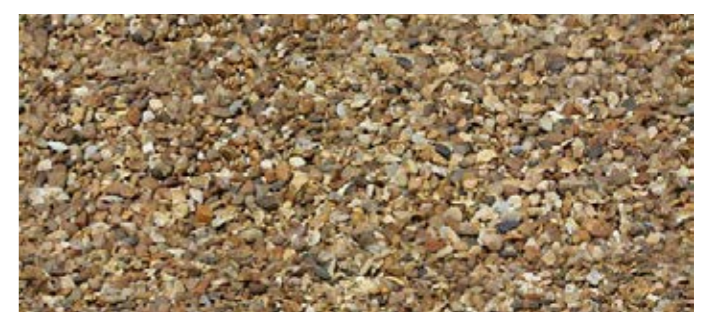
2. RECYCLED GLASS PAVING



3. LIMESTONE WITH BUSH HAMMERED FINISH



4. LIMESTONE WITH CHISELED FINISH



5. GRAVEL

PROPOSED URBAN FURNITURE AND ANCILLARY ITEMS EXAMPLES



PROPOSED BINS



PROPOSED TREE GRILLS



PROPOSED BENCHES



PROPOSED BOLLARDS

Railings

The railings surrounding the existing Rose Garden are thought to be the original railings that enclosed Farnham Gardens. It is proposed to carefully remove these railings from their positions to allow the expansion of the garden. The sections of railing will be restored (where required) and repositioned strategically throughout the scheme. Sections L & M will be used in separating the carpark from the garden area.

The railings are listed within the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, the full text of which is below. It is important to note that none of the railings are currently in their original positions. The sections mentioned in the NIAH listing below adjacent the Town Hall are the sections currently stored at the council depot.

NATIONAL INVENTORY of ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE
Identifying, recording and evaluating the past 1700 architectural heritage of Ireland.

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Farnham Gardens, Farnham Street, Town Hall Street, KEADEW (CAVAN RL AND URBAN), Cavan, CAVAN

Survey Data

Reg No	4000401
Rating	Regional
Categories of Special Interest	Artistic, Technical
Previous Name	Farnham Gardens
Original Use	Gate/railings/walls
In Use As	Gate/railings/walls
Date	1870 - 1890
Coordinates	241945, 309908
Date Recorded	15/06/2012
Date Updated	-/-/-

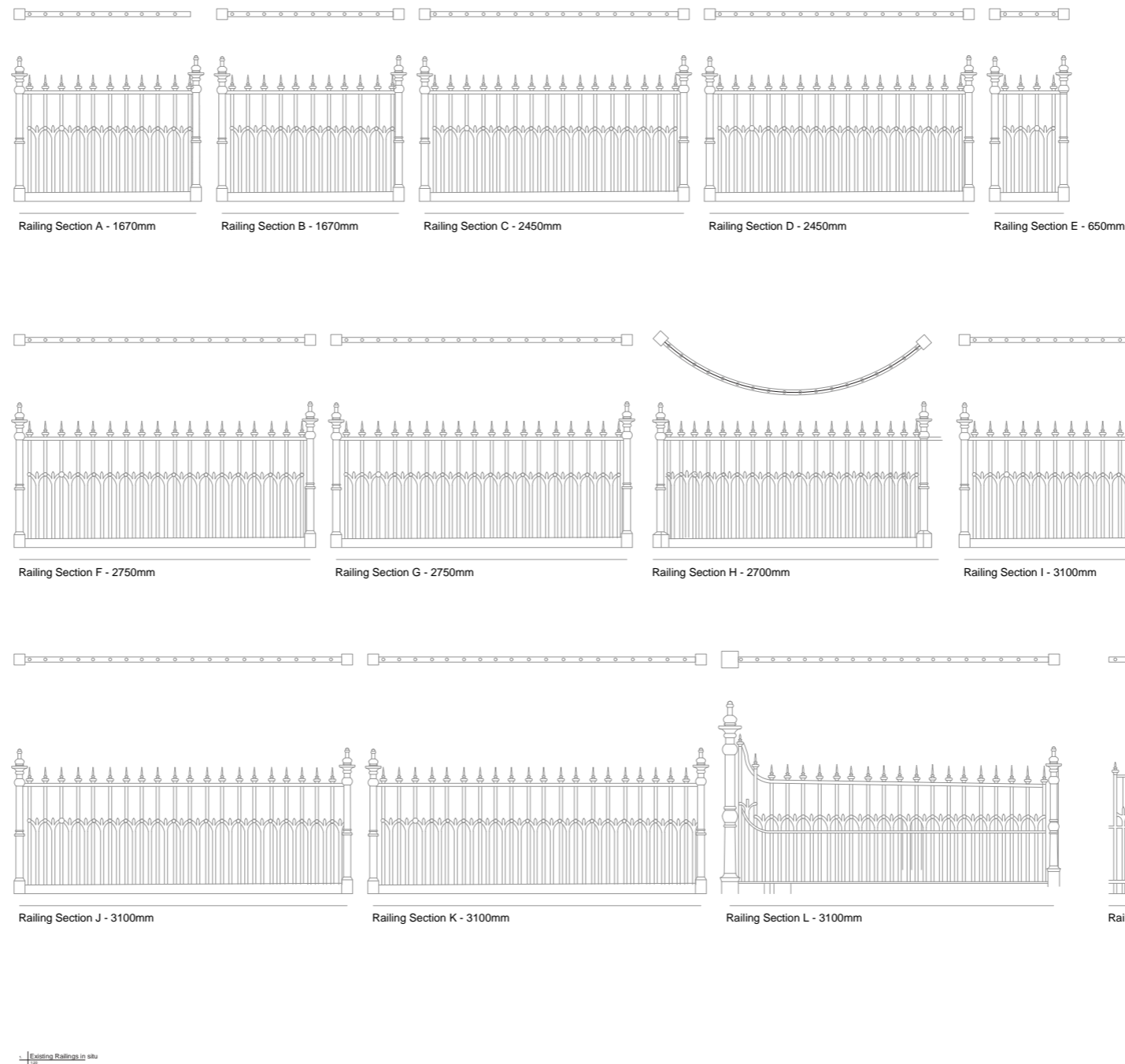
Description

Sections of cast-iron railings from former Farnham Gardens, installed c. 1880, salvaged and re-erected to boundaries of Townhall, Thomas Ashe and Farnham Street. Comprising upper and lower level vertical spike-headed elements, lower elements terminating in foliated section resting on horizontal rail, upper section terminating in pair of stepped circular scrolls resting on upper horizontal rail. Square profile intermediate posts with square based bases and perpendicular scrolled bracket supports. Square profile gate posts with bevelled panels, bead mouldings and shafts with finials to the top.

Appraisal

The railings form a notable element of high aesthetic value on Farnham Street, the main civic street of Cavan town. The railings formerly enclosed the Farnham Gardens, a linear park which was built over in the 1950s. The form of the railings is a good example of late nineteenth-century ironwork design, the elegant posts and brackets being decorative features of particular note. Despite the loss of their original context, the reuse of the railings to form the front boundaries to houses on Farnham Street enriches the streetscape, and sections in their historic position adjoining the town hall add significantly to the setting of this important civic building.

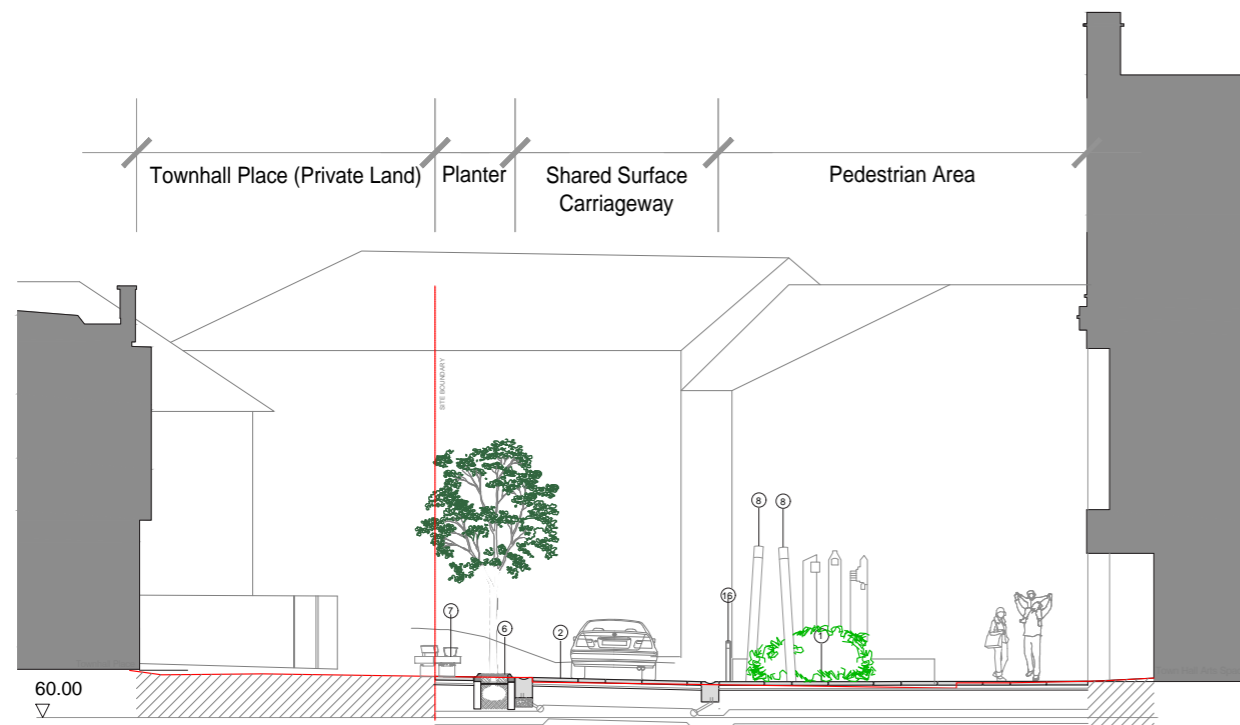
Extract from NIAH website showing text and images associated with Reg No. 4000401



Accessibility

Our proposals conform with Universal Access Guidelines. The shared surface and raised platform approach in some areas with integrated guidance strip for the visually impaired eliminating where possible kerbs and steps facilitating universal access.

The provision of a new plaza in front of the primary entrance of the Town Hall Arts Centre will improve the accessibility and setting of the building.



Extract from Planning Application Drawings showing shared surface at entrance to Town Hall Arts Centre on Townhall Street. Please refer to Drawing PL-203.



Use of large slabs to provide level, accessible pavements. Setts used to delineate road edge and building line.



Use of blister paving at uncontrolled crossings, & tactile guidance strip



Lady Lane, Waterford by dhb Architects. Example of shared surface to street.




Holbein Place, London. Example of raised traffic platforms & shared surface to street.

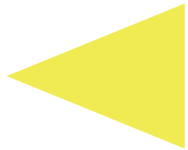
Lighting

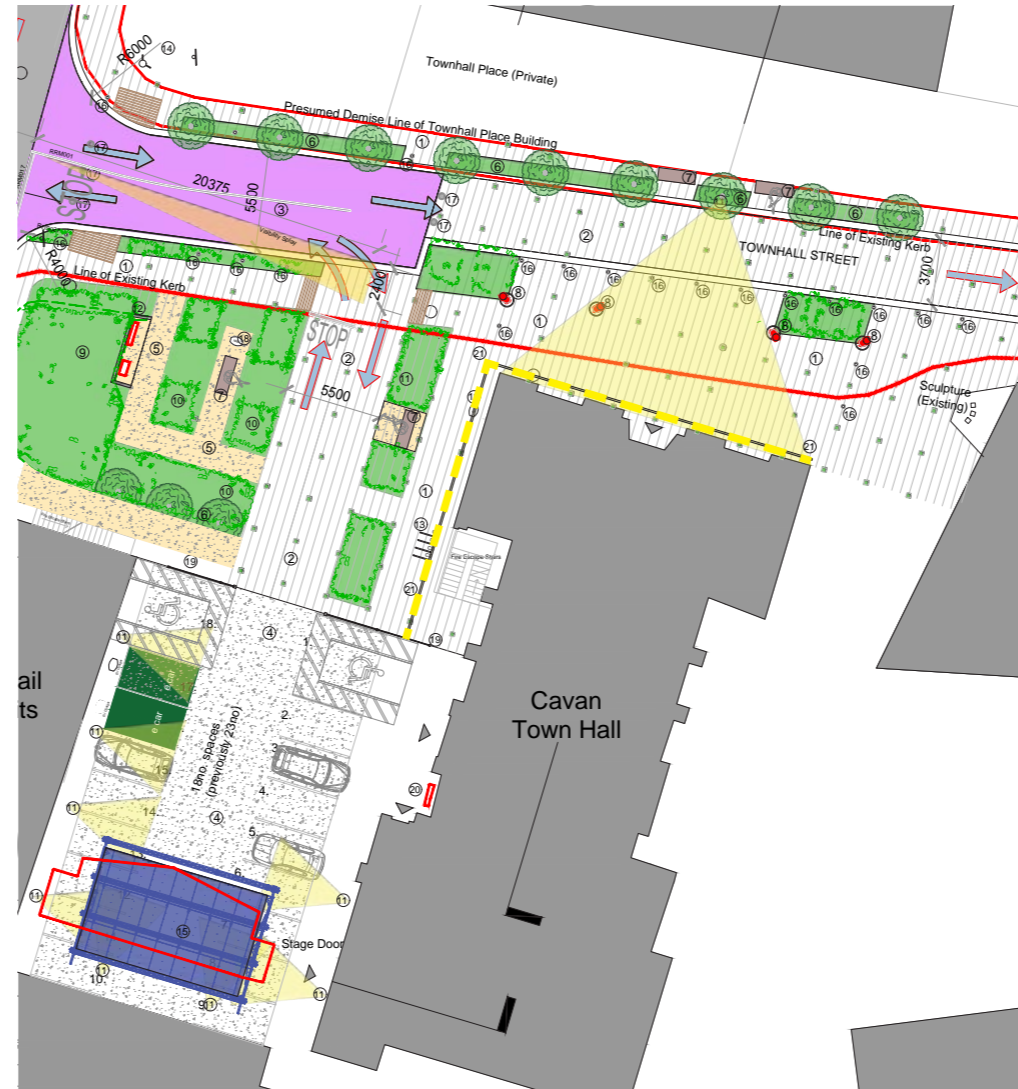
It is proposed to light the facade of the Town Hall Arts Centre with in-ground strip LED lighting. This will set flush with the finished surface, allowing pedestrians to walk over it, and will illuminate prominent facades and features of this historic structure.

There will also be provision for projector lighting in the treepit opposite the Town Hall in order to project images on to the primary facade for events or celebrations.

The carpark and performance area will also have building mounted lighting in order to improve safety and reduce the risk of anti-social behaviour.

In-ground LED facade lighting 

Projector/Building Lighting 



Extract from site plan showing lighting layout



Typical in-ground lighting fixtures

Parking Provision

The provision of existing parking and proposed parking are clearly illustrated on planning drawings. Please refer to drawings for locations and extent of parking provision.

The figures below have been provided as a guide to the overall changes to the provision of parking.

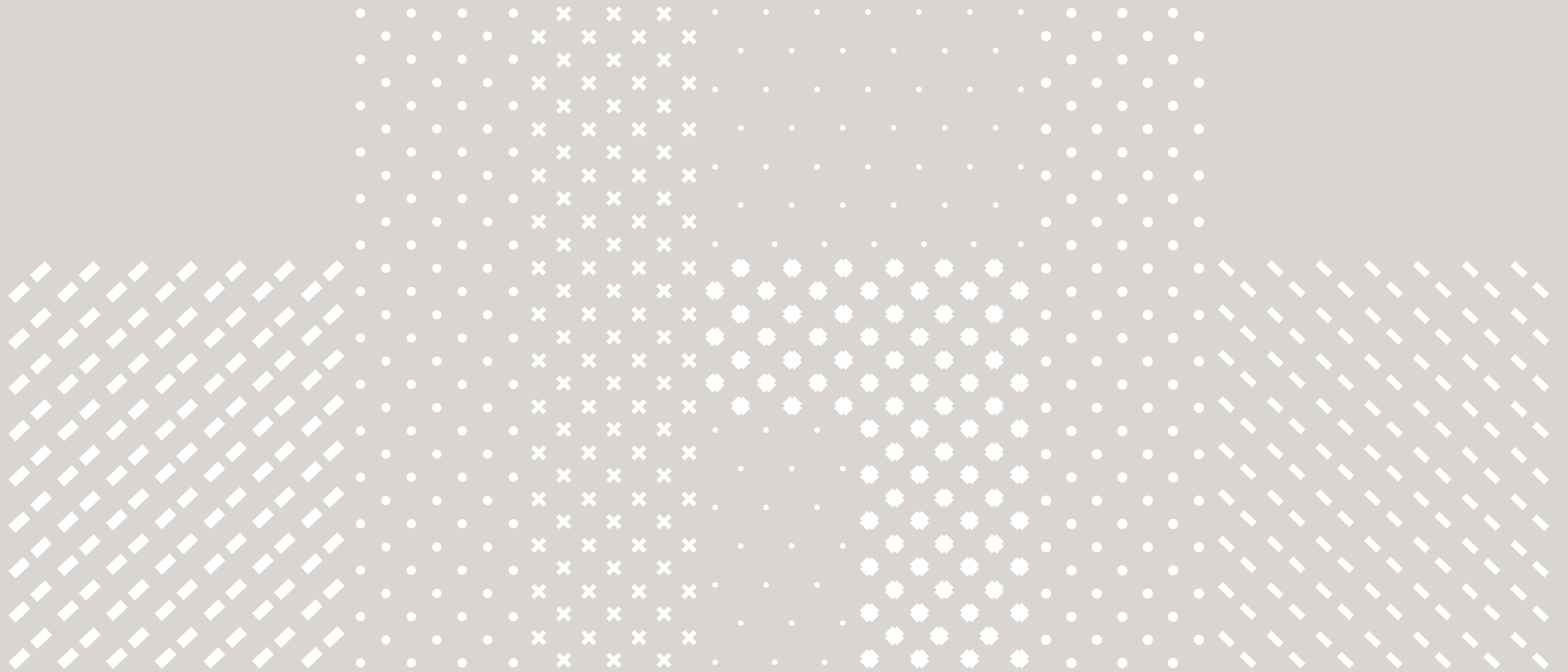
Location	Existing no. of spaces	Proposed no. of spaces	Net (+ / -)
Lower Townhall Street	9 (1)	0	-9
Townhall Arts Space Car Park	23 (1)	18 (2)	-5
Totals	32 (6)	18 (2)	-15

* () brackets indicate no. of spaces of which are disabled spaces
 Lost spaces will be accommodated on Farnham St (2), Town Hall St (1) and the Multi-Storey Car Park (11).



- STANDARD PARKING BAY
- DISABLED ACCESS PARKING BAY
- REMOVED PARKING BAY
- PROPOSED DEMOLITIONS
- PROPOSED LINE OF BOLLARDS/RAILINGS

Architectural Heritage Impact Statement



Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment

This Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared in response to the Part 8 design proposals for improvements to the public realm at Townhall Street.

Place's Qualities of Interest

Townhall Street and the adjacent areas which lie within the boundary of this Part 8 proposal are important to the town of Cavan for the historic fabric they contain and for their historic and urban setting.

The primary element of this setting is the Town Hall building itself. Designed by William A. Scott in a pronounced Arts & Crafts style in the first decade of the last century, its architecture shows overt Mackintoshian influences and a high level of crafted detail. It has been given a rating of national importance by the National Inventory for Architectural Heritage. Its creamy brown masonry composed of a local sandstone is a defining element of its character. When it was built in 1910 at the end of what was at that time a cul-de-sac off Market Place, it broke with Cavan's tradition established under the lords Farnham to face its public and civic buildings onto Farnham Street. This most public of Cavan's public buildings was built to face onto Farnham Park, thus physically and symbolically reappropriating its presence for the Town. With the advent of independence in 1922 a process of redevelopment of the park itself began, starting with the construction of the (former) Magnet cinema site c. 1930 opposite the Town hall and culminating in the sale of most of the rest of the Park for private housing in the nineteen-sixties and seventies. Since the late eighties, the Magnet

cinema has given way to the current two storey retail development now occupying the site.

Proposals summary

The architectural proposals for the redesign of this piece of the Town's public realm consist of

- Traffic control measures to make the areas around the Town Hall safer for pedestrians and cyclists,
- The greening of the Town Hall environs to include the planting of trees on the former park side and the expansion of the rose garden on the Farnham Street side,
- The removal of clutter, both visual and physical to facilitate universal access and urban quality and the provision of some public seating within the relandscaped areas,
- The redesign of the current carpark to the side of the Town Hall and the replacement of the current asphalt surface here with a self-draining stabilized gravel finish,
- The finishing of the redesigned surfaces with high-quality, durable materials and the reuse of any historic material present such as the cast-iron railings,
- Improvements to services both above and below ground and the provision of better public lighting to the area,
- Better visual and physical connections to Farnham Street and Main Street via an improved Town Hall Street axis,
- A safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists through the introduction of a raised platform and speed reduction measures at the crossing point between cars and pedestrians,

- The reuse of the existing historic railings, part of the boundary to the former Farnham Gardens, to enclose the expanded planted areas.

Elements Impacted

These proposals will not involve the addition of any structures such as walls or buildings and are primarily focused on reorganizing the spaces to the front and side of the Town Hall to improve urban circulation and amenity value. They are compatible with the works currently being prepared for the rest of the Abbey Quarter and will compliment these when complete. The Town Hall is the most important element of this project. Other important elements are Town Hall Street and its urban character and Farnham Street and its urban character. The Art work 'Town Hall Memorial' by Fiona Duffy at the gable of O'Rourke's on Town Hall Street facing the Town Hall also lies within the project area and will be given the same deference in the proposals as other significant cultural and historic fabric.

Impacts on Fabric

The likely impacts of these proposals on the physical fabric of the Place is almost entirely confined to the removal of existing surfaces and the reorganization of the ground plane through the addition of limited planting areas and masonry finishes. These can be seen on the existing and proposed drawings. Where new paving and substrate works arrive at the foot of the Town Hall building in particular they will be physically separated from existing masonry finishes and foundations. Part of the proposals involves extending planting and naturally-draining areas as a way of greening the

urban environment and improving natural water-capture and drainage.

Impacts on Settings

The design approach to the setting of the place is primarily 'restorative', in other words, it seeks to restore as much of the former setting as is practical under these proposals by removing 'accretions' such as poor quality finishes, obstructive additions such as signage etc. and barriers to universal access such as kerbs and levels. The 'known earlier state' that is targeted in this conservation act of restoration is that period just after the construction of the Town Hall and before the destruction of Farnham Gardens. This implies reintroducing a sense of 'park' and 'garden' to the place through supplementary planting, as well as screening out some of the more disruptive additions that have occurred since the heyday of the gardens, such as the retail premises on the former cinema site, through the addition of trees. The addition of more natural finishes, such as the compacted gravel to the new parking areas, is also in this spirit. The planting of roses to the expanded rose garden area from the footpath along Farnham Street is a way of strengthening some of the current character of the site.

Quality of Materials

The materials required on the ground to take the various forms of traffic; pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular, are chosen for their resistance and durability. In the heavily-trafficked areas (as distinct from the self-draining parking area) these finishes are laid on a sub-surface slab so that the paving can be solidly grouted into place, thus increasing its bearing capacity and longevity. Tree pits are generally lined so the roots are encouraged to grow straight down rather than under footpaths, and trees are not being located in direct proximity to buildings. The stone being proposed for use must meet high standards of compressive and tensile resistance as well as non-slip finishing. Local sources of supply will be used for the stone where these are viable and slip resistance and safety will be primary design concerns.

Mitigation Measures

The measures being taken to reduce or eliminate the impacts of these changes on the place's fabric and setting are listed below.

Improvements to the setting of the Town hall and the views from Farnham Street. As described above, these are restorative, i.e. primarily concerned with removing rather than adding elements and consist primarily of the re-greening of the area around the Town hall and the matching of material colours such as the gravel and paving to compliment the stone of the Town hall.

Reuse of Farnham Park railings.

Farnham Gardens used to extend from Abbey Street to Wesley (now Wolfe Tone) Street and along Farnham Street between these two ends. The railings around the current rose garden as well as some surviving lengths of railing outside the recent houses along Farnham Street as well as some lengths on Wolfe Tone Street are most probably the remnants of the railings that formed this enclosure. This is based on a study of the consistency of their material and detail (showing that they were part of the same set), on their surviving locations which generally correspond to the park boundary and on a comparison with the (rather poor) detail available from some of the historic photos. Their decorative detail and ironwork containing both cast and wrought elements are clearly historic. The railings have been noted on the NIAH survey (see extract below) and have been given a rating of regional importance which automatically entitles them for consideration for inclusion on the Record of Protected Structures. If they are indeed the Farnham Park railings as the evidence would suggest then they may date from the origins of the park in the 1820s, making them valuable examples of cast iron from the early industrial revolution period. They also represent a material link to the former park and its setting and, as historic ironwork, are a finite and non-renewable resource. In keeping with the restorative

approach to the setting of the Town Hall that the design proposes, it is proposed to reuse all available lengths of railing in the ownership of Cavan County Council to screen the newly-landscaped areas. An inventory of the lengths of railing currently available has been added to this report and these are in excess of the lengths required under the new layout. A method statement will be prepared at detailed design stage for the temporary disassembly, requisite conservation works and reassembly of these railings for inclusion in the works requirements under the construction programme.

Matching material colours and textures.

The new work; the paving in particular, will be designed to compliment the textures and materials of the historic elements of the current setting, most notably the Town Hall, with its mixture of stone surface treatments and dressings, and its distinctive colour. While the quarries used for the stonework of the building are no longer open, a similar stone type based on colour and consistency will be proposed, along with a palette of complimentary materials for the asphalted areas and the compacted, stabilized gravel surfaces. Tree species will be chosen for their seasonal variety of form and colour. Other planting such as the roses and understory shrubs will add colour and variety to the setting.

Decluttering of the public realm.

The design measures will reduce to a minimum the prevalence of obstacles to free movement such as signage poles, lamp posts, kerbs etc. and will ensure universally accessible and safe movement for all. The physical and visual 'tidying up' of the space is another way to ensure an improved setting for the important historical fabric. Improved lighting. A new lighting design for this area is being proposed. This lighting will meet current technical and safety standards while respecting wildlife such as bats etc. if present on the site (an ecologist's report on the Abbeyland area is currently underway).

Construction mitigation measures.

All existing fabric, whether historic or not, such as existing buildings and the art work etc. will be fully protected at the start of the works against any contact, inadvertent or otherwise during the course of the construction. Any immediately adjacent buildings will be surveyed prior to the works so that their pre-works state is recorded. Furthermore, in order to avoid contact with historic and existing fabric at the interface with the new works (such as the paving around the base of the Town Hall for example), an unbuilt gap of at least 25mm will be left at all times between existing structures and new work. The last joint of the paving where it abuts existing structures will be filled with sand rather than grouted. At substrate level, this gap will have a compressible separation element such as a piece of treated timber or a layer of polystyrene where, for example, a concrete base is being poured. If a closer inspection deems it necessary when the works are underway, a ground drain may be inserted at the base of adjoining walls so as to reduce any impacts of the works on existing soil hydrology at foundation level.

Archaeological mitigation.

An archaeologist's report accompanies these Part 8 proposals and it is expected that archaeological monitoring will be required during the works given the site's proximity to the former Franciscan abbey and burial ground. An Archaeological Heritage Impact Assessment will also be carried out on the proposals.

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- The Ordnance Survey of Ireland www.osi.ie
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- RIAI Guide: Sustainable Design Pathways www.riai.ie
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