



PLANNING STATEMENT

DOCKING STOOL JETTY

BELTURBET

CO. CAVAN

PLANNING STATEMENT

Tourism Development for lands at Ducking Stool
Public Amenity, The Lawn and associated lands at
Willow Avenue, Belturbet

ON BEHALF OF:

Cavan County Council



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01 | Introduction & Background

- 1.1 Overview
- 1.2 Site location & context
- 1.3 Planning history
- 1.4 Regional Context
- 1.5 Brief description of development
- 1.6 Existing site features

01 Introduction & Background

1.1 Overview

- 1.1.1 This Planning Statement accompanies an application by Cavan County Council to An Coimisiún Pleanála seeking approval for proposed amenity and tourism-related development at the Ducking Stool Jetty, The Lawn and associated lands at Willow Avenue, Belturbet, County Cavan.
- 1.1.2 The application is made pursuant to Section 177AE of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) has been prepared in respect of the proposed development and accompanies the application to An Coimisiún Pleanála.
- 1.1.2 For due consideration by the Coimisiun, this Planning Statement sets out the planning and development context for the proposed works and demonstrates how the development is consistent with the relevant Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines, the provisions of the Cavan County Development Plan 2022–2028 and the wider national, regional and local policy context supporting tourism, recreation and the enhancement of public amenities.
- 1.1.3 This report should be read in conjunction with the accompanying documentation as follows:
- Site notice & press notice
 - EIA Screening Statement by this practice
 - Architectural drawings prepared by Craftstudio Architects
 - Construction Environmental Management Plan
 - Derogation Licence
 - Ecological Impact Assessment
 - Flood Risk Assessment
 - Methodology Statement
 - Natura Impact Statement
 - Ortnithological Survey
 - Street Lighting Proposals
- 1.1.4 In terms of the project overview the proposed development comprises the upgrade and realignment of the existing jetty and slipway at the Ducking Stool Jetty, together with the creation of a new car park on lands at Willow Avenue.
- 1.1.5 The purpose of the proposed works is to upgrade the existing facilities at the Ducking Stool Jetty and enhance the amenity, recreational and tourism value of this important riverside location. The development will provide improved access to the River Erne while delivering an enhanced public realm and recreational environment for residents and visitors to Belturbet.
- 1.1.6 In terms of EIA Screening it has been that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development and that an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required.
- 1.1.7 For ease of reference this planning statement amalgamates both the planning and urban design statement into a single cohesive document which has been structured as follows:
- Introduction
 - Planning policy context
 - Design approach
 - Conclusion

Section 177AE of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended

- 1.1.8 The proposed development is being advanced by Cavan County Council pursuant to Section 177AE of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. Section 177AE provides for a local authority to make an application to An Coimisiún Pleanála for approval of development for which a Natura Impact Statement has been prepared.
- 1.1.9 A Natura Impact Statement accompanies the application and assesses the potential for the proposed development to adversely affect the integrity of relevant European Sites.
- 1.1.10 In determining the application it is noted An Coimisiún Pleanála will have regard to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, the likely effects on the environment and the likely significant effects of the proposed development on European Sites.



SUBJECT SITE

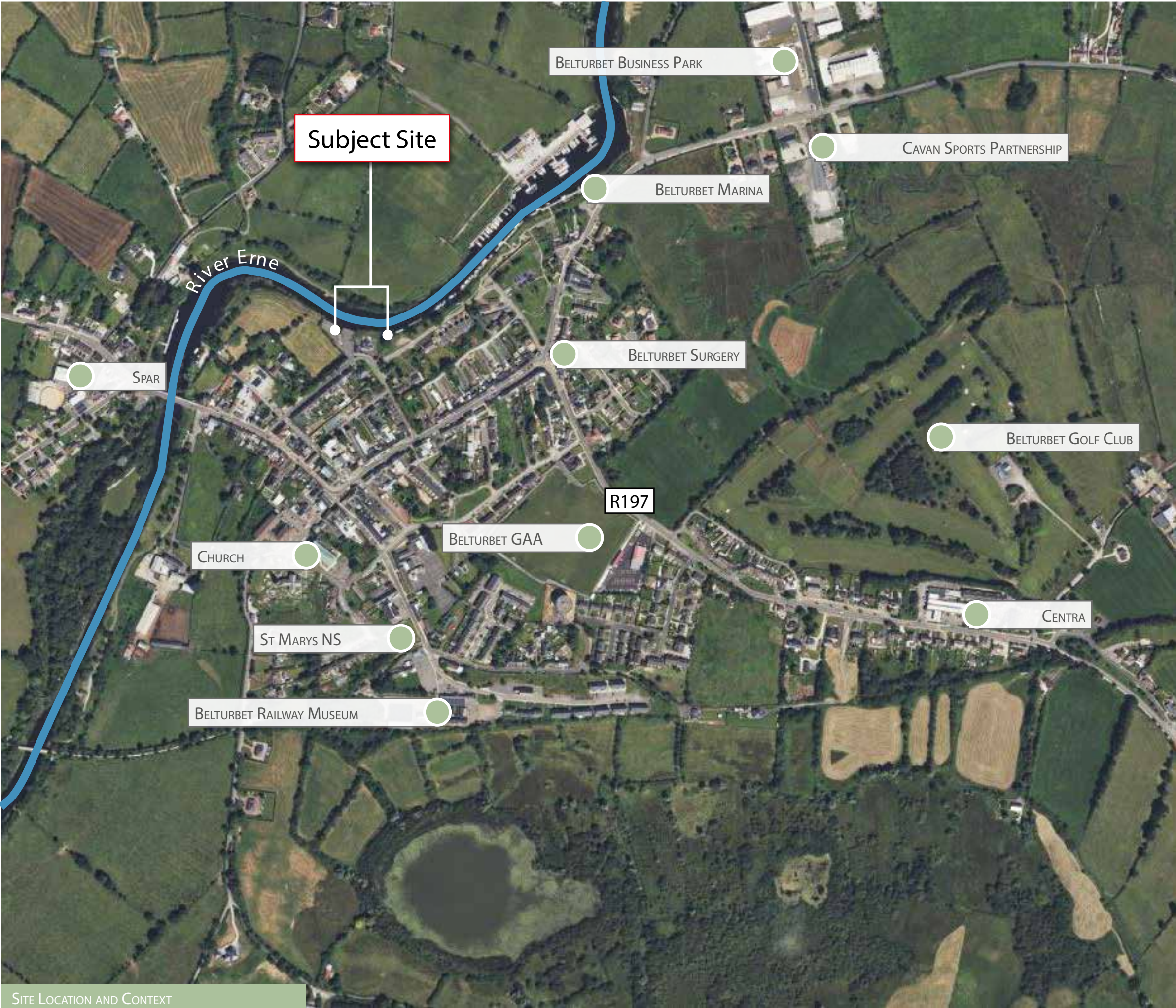
01 Introduction & Background

1.2 Site location & context

- 1.2.1 The overall site area comprises circa 0.43ha and is located in Belturbet, along the southern banks of the River Erne and at the existing Ducking Stool Jetty. The site will be accessed via local access roads known as The Lawn and Willow Avenue.
- 1.2.2 In terms of local context the site is located within walking distance of the Town Centre. The land-use immediately surrounding the site is predominantly urban and it consists of the residential and commercial areas of Belturbet town and suburbs.
- 1.2.3 In terms of existing features the site slopes gradually towards the River Erne to the north, with lower elevations recorded along the riverbank and higher ground located towards the southern and eastern extents of the site
- 1.2.4 A notable feature is the River Erne adjacent, which renders the site ideally positioned to provide a tourism scheme for water-based activities.

1.3 Planning history

- 1.3.1 We highlight the only relevant planning history on the site is the original boat jetty and office along with the car park under reference 642091.

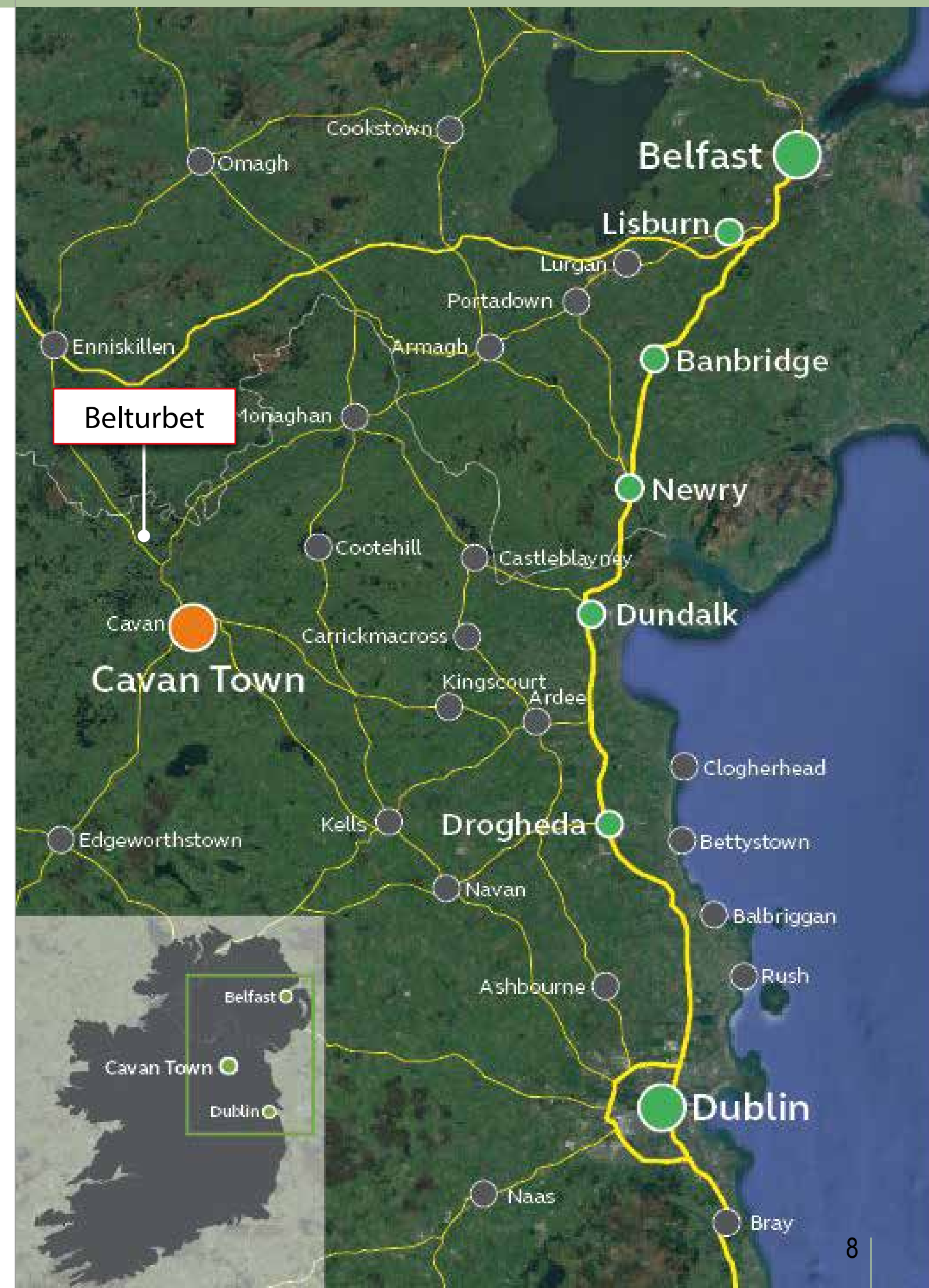


SITE LOCATION AND CONTEXT

01 Introduction & Background

1.4 Regional Context

- 1.4.1 Belturbet is recognised as a medium town in the county with a population of 1610 as per Census 2022.
- 1.4.2 Belturbet has a well developed urban structure. The retail and service function of the town is mainly confined to the town core.
- 1.4.3 As set out in section 2.9.3 of the Cavan CDP future priorities include:
- Support the sustainable growth of Belturbet as a designated Medium Town, including the expansion of housing, services, community facilities, and employment opportunities to serve both the town and its wider rural hinterland.
 - Promote regeneration and economic development, working with the community and stakeholders to deliver key regeneration projects and secure funding opportunities such as the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund.
 - Encourage the creation of sustainable and inclusive communities, including mixed-use development, a diverse mix of housing types and tenures, and the enhancement of tourism and local amenities in line with universal design and Age Friendly principles.



01 Introduction & Background

1.5 Brief description of development

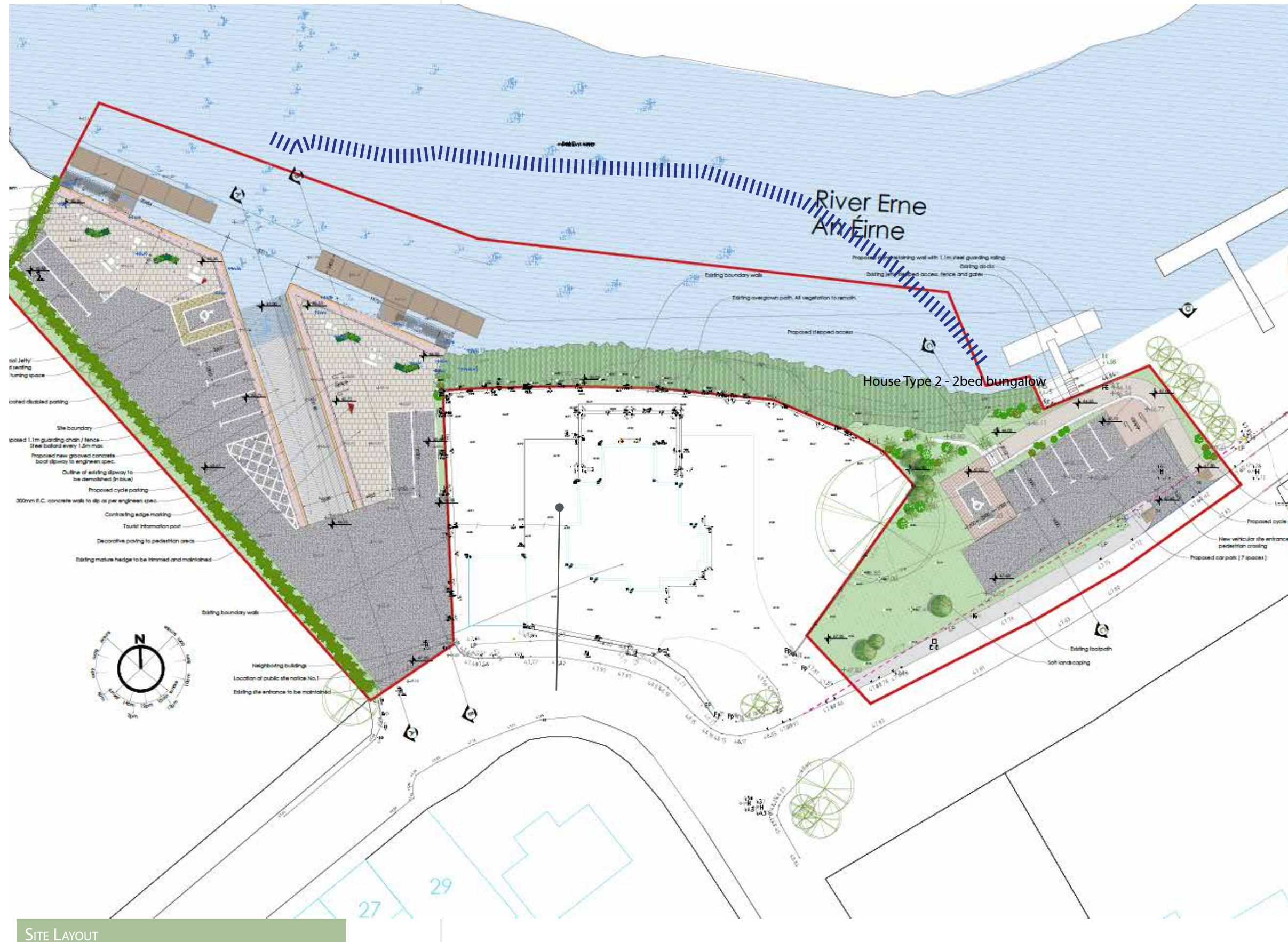
1.5.1 The proposed development comprises the regeneration and enhancement of the existing Ducking Stool public amenity through upgrades to the jetty, slipway, public realm and associated visitor infrastructure.

1.5.2 The proposal seeks to enhance Belturbet's waterfront by improving access to the River Erne and creating a high-quality recreational and tourism destination for residents and visitors.

1.5.3 The overall design rationale is based on:

- Upgrade the existing jetty and slipway facilities;
- Improve access to the River Erne;
- Support tourism and water-based recreation;
- Enhance the public realm and waterfront setting;
- Improve parking, accessibility and visitor facilities; and
- Respond appropriately to environmental constraints.

1.5.4 The proposal capitalises on the site's strategic location by providing modern marine infrastructure and enhanced public spaces that will benefit residents, visitors and waterway users, whilst significantly improving the overall appearance, accessibility and functionality of the existing marina facilities.



SITE LAYOUT

1.6 Existing Site Features



View of site



View of roadside



View of site



View of roadside





02 | Policy Context

- 2.1 Overview
- 2.2 National Planning Framework
- 2.3 Regional Spatial Economic Strategy
- 2.4 A New Era for Irish Tourism
- 2.5 Embracing Irelands Outdoors
- 2.6 Ireland's Hidden Heartlands Tourism
- 2.7 Habitats Directive: Appropriate Assessment Guidelines for Planning Authorities
- 2.8 Ecology
- 2.9 The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines
- 2.10 Water Framework Directive
- 2.11 Cavan CDP 2022-2028
- 2.12 Justification

02 National & Regional Policy

2.1 Overview

2.1.1 The key planning policy, section 28 guidelines and regional planning policy relative to the proposal are as follows:

- National Planning Framework 2040
- Regional Spatial Economic Strategy
- Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport 'People, Place and Policy Growing Tourism to 2025'
- A New Era for Irish Tourism
- Embracing Ireland's Outdoors - National Outdoor Recreation Strategy 2023-2027
- Ireland's Hidden Heartlands Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023-2027
- The Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities
- Habitats Directive- Appropriate Assessment
- Water Framework Directive

2.2 National Planning Framework 2040 (revised)

2.2.1 The NPF sets out the importance of development sites across the country by 'making better use of under-utilised land including infill and brownfield and publicly owned sites together with higher housing and job densities, better services by existing facilities and public transport.'

2.2.2 In terms of specific objectives contained within the NPF we highlight the following:

- Objective 23 states to 'Protect and promote the sense of place and culture and the quality, character and distinctiveness of the Irish rural landscape including island communities that make Ireland's rural areas authentic and attractive as places to live, work and visit.'
- Objective 30 'Facilitate the development of the rural economy, in a manner consistent with the national climate objective, through supporting a sustainable and economically efficient agricultural and food sector, together with forestry, fishing and aquaculture, energy and extractive industries, the bio-economy and diversification into alternative on-farm and offfarm activities, while at the same time noting the importance of maintaining and protecting biodiversity and the natural landscape and built heritage which are vital to rural tourism.'
- Objective 90 'Enhance, integrate and protect the special physical, environmental, economic and cultural value of built heritage assets, including streetscapes, vernacular dwellings and other historic buildings and monuments, through appropriate and sensitive investment and conservation...'
- Objective 63 'Support the coordination and promotion of all-island tourism initiatives through continued co-operation between the relevant tourism agencies and Tourism Ireland, pursue the further development of sport, and invest in the diverse heritage, arts and cultural and linguistic traditions of the island.'

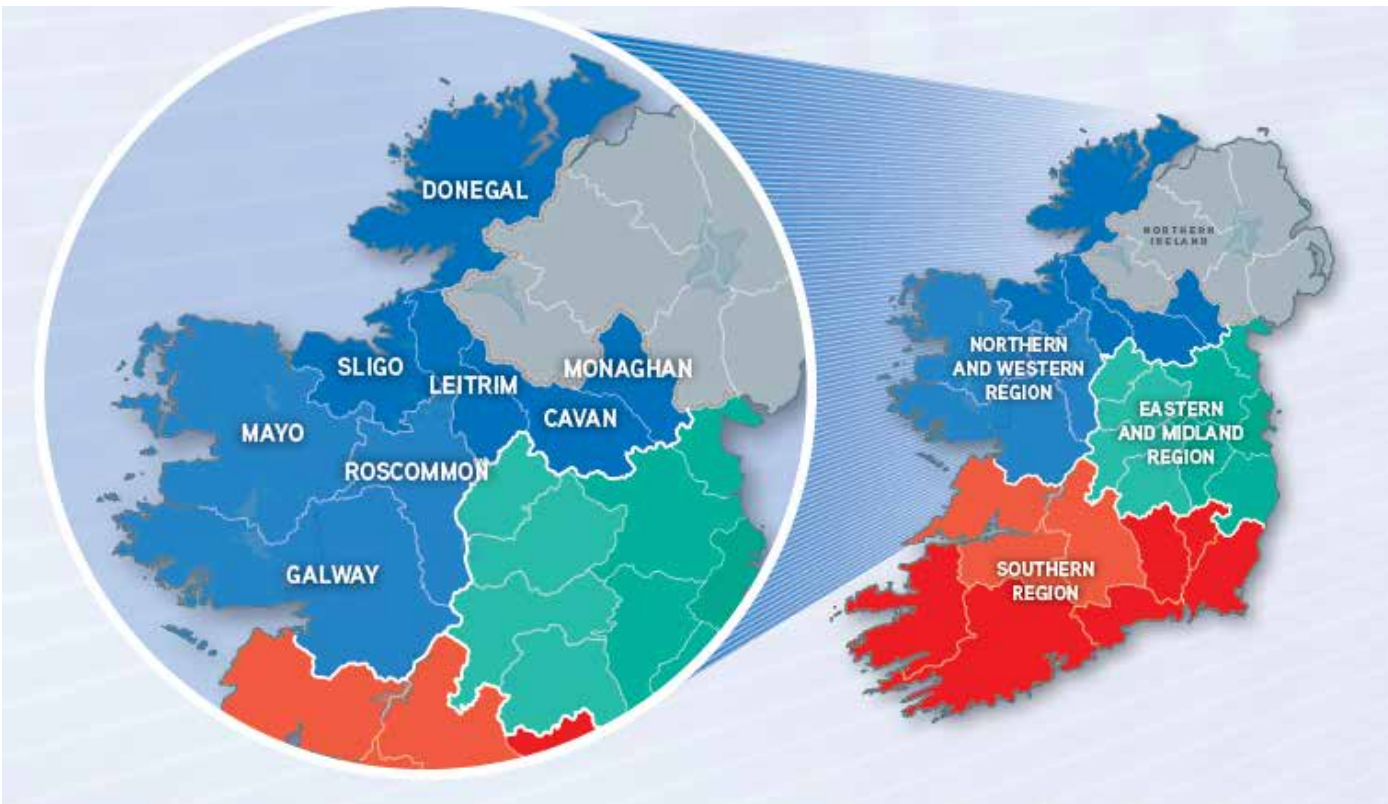
2.2.3 Of note the NPF states:

'Ireland's natural resources are some of our greatest assets and through the development of the agriculture, food, forestry, tourism, bioeconomy and renewable energy sectors, this will not only sustain rural employment, but will also contribute to playing a key role in supporting the national economy.'

2.2.4 In response it is considered that the proposed development is consistent with the aforementioned objectives of the NPF given the overarching national policy to increase rural tourism development, particularly so given the subject lands are brownfield.

2.3 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES)

2.3.1 The RSES sets out the spatial growth strategy for the border region and sets out a broad range of policies and objectives to encourage sustainable and economic growth of the region.



RSES EXTRACT

2.3.2 As set out in the RSES regarding smaller towns, villages and rural areas are home to almost 80% of the region's population and as such represent a sizeable cohort of the population and land area.

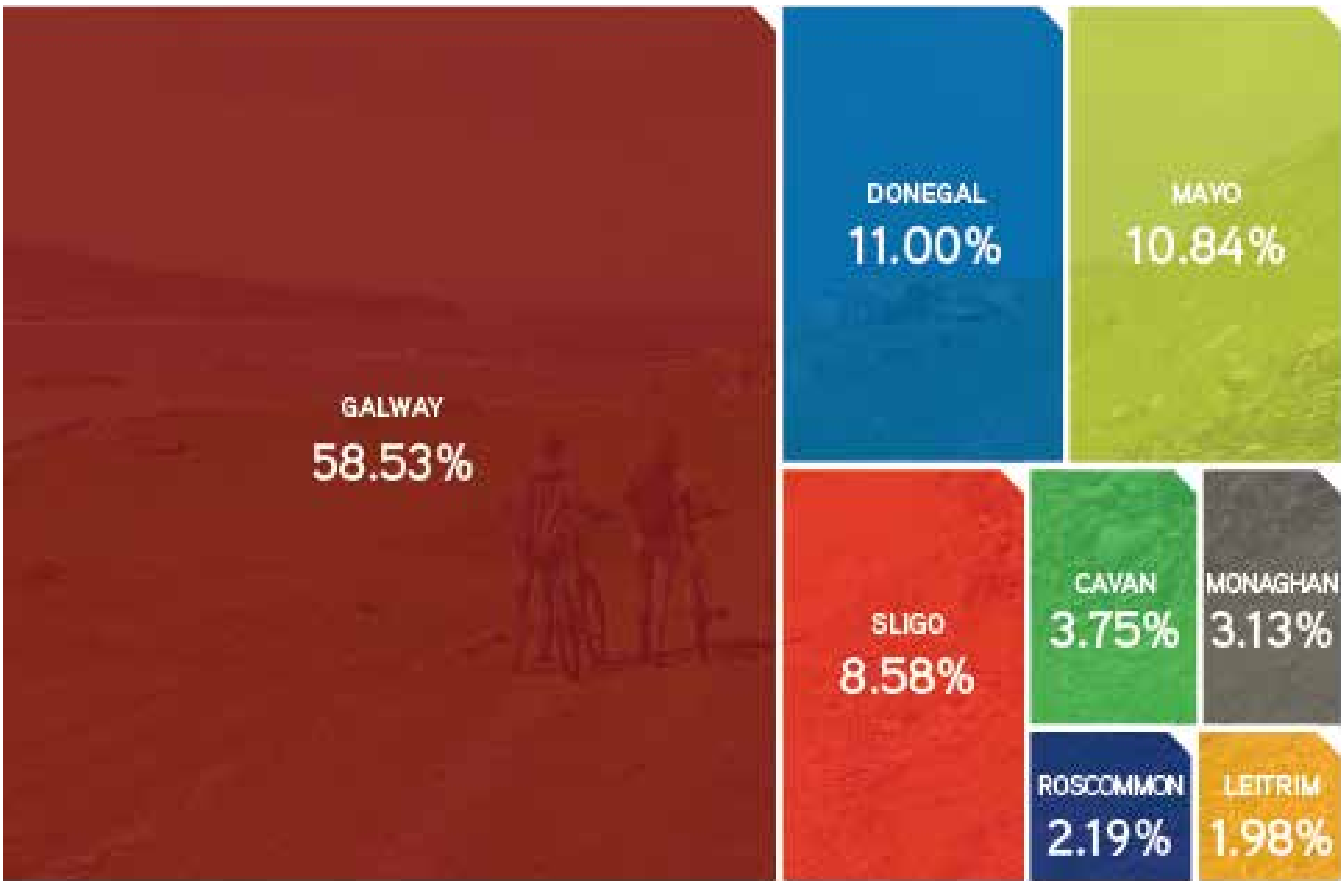
2.3.3 Of particular relevance is Growth Ambition 1: Economy and Employment- Vibrant Region. The RSES states:

'The sustainable development and promotion of a successful well managed tourism industry is critical to the economy of this region. This strategy takes note of the overall Government policy, as set out in People, Place and Policy: Growing Tourism to 2025. In particular, it takes note of the policy proposal that consideration be given to the contribution that sustainable tourism can make to the protection of heritage assets.'

'Underpinning the new tourism agenda is the concept of Sustainable Tourism, which provides a high-quality product, based on, and in harmony with, a high-quality natural environment. Providing a sustainable framework to tourism development will ensure adverse impacts upon local communities, archaeology, built heritage, landscapes and habitats are minimised while at the same time ensuring economic benefits accruing to local economies are maximised.'

02 National & Regional Policy

2.3.4 Also of particular relevance to Cavan it is noted the low percentage share of tourists attracted as per table 45 of the RSES with only 3.75% attracted to the County. This is clearly a low visitor percentage which needs addressed within the County.

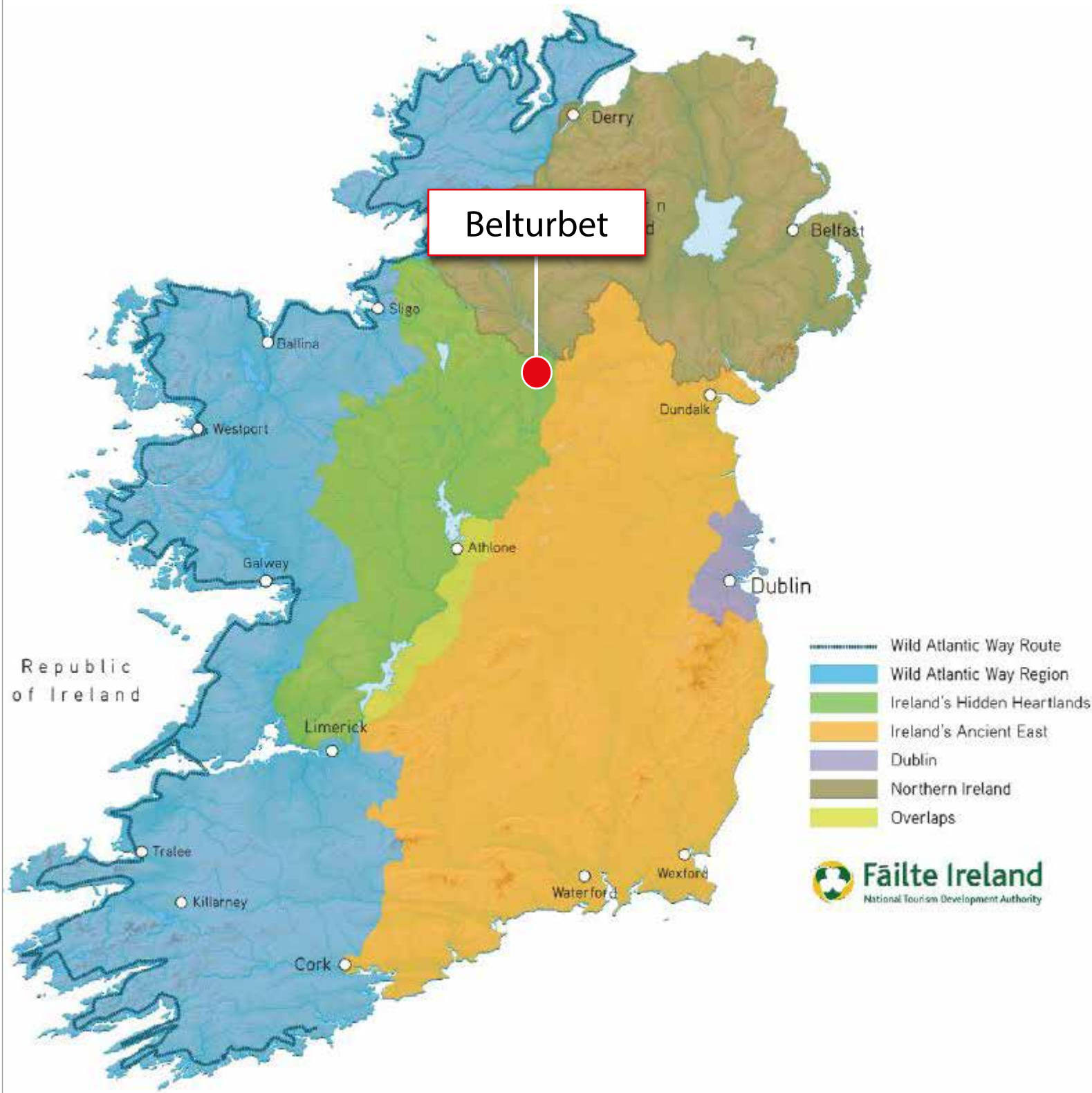


Extract from the RSES and tourists attracted to Cavan

2.3.5 In summary key objectives are highlighted as set out in the RSES:

- RPO 4.1 'To support working with relevant landholders and recreational/tourism agencies to increase access to the countryside and our coastal areas, and to ensure maintenance and access to the existing network of trails, paths, ways etc.'
- RPO 4.7 'To establish potential tourist and amenity attractions of scale in the Monaghan/Cavan region, in partnership with Fáilte Ireland and the relevant local authorities.'
- RPO 4.8 'Ensure that 'Discovery Points' targeting Ireland's Ancient East are included for Monaghan/Cavan as enablers for increasing bed nights and visitor numbers.'
- Our Key Tourist Assets: 'There are numerous key assets, which will continue to drive visitor numbers upwards over the coming decades. It is vital that these assets are protected, and where necessary enhanced. The Wild Atlantic Way Touring Route has developed into a Key Strategic National Asset, delivering benefits to the entire western seaboard. The Hidden Heartlands and the Ancient East brands can realise the potential for other parts of the region over the coming years. Along this route, and beyond, there are numerous key strategic assets which will continue to act as tourism magnets and drive substantial visitor numbers across a wider area.'

2.3.6 In this context the proposed development is consistent with the policy objectives of the RSES; in particular it's emphasis on the promotion of tourism in a rural location.



EXTRACT FROM FAILTE IRELAND AND REGIONAL MAPPING FOR TOURISM WITH THE SITE LOCATED IN IRELAND'S ANCIENT EAST

2.4 A New Era for Irish Tourism

- 2.4.1 A New Era for Irish Tourism - National Tourism Policy Statement was published by the Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment in December 2025.
- 2.4.2 The vision of the Policy is to create a sustainable, competitive and resilient tourism sector that supports balanced regional development while enhancing Ireland’s tourism offering and ensuring that local communities benefit from tourism growth. The Policy recognises tourism as a key contributor to regional economies and places a strong emphasis on investment in high-quality visitor infrastructure and outdoor recreation.
- 2.4.3 The Policy contains a range of proposals that are directly relevant to the proposed development, including:
- Supporting balanced regional tourism development and ensuring all regions benefit from tourism growth.
 - Investing in sustainable tourism infrastructure that enhances the visitor experience.
 - Developing high-quality outdoor recreation and activity-based tourism experiences.
 - Supporting local tourism enterprises and strengthening regional economies.
 - Improving accessibility and inclusivity within the tourism sector.
 - Delivering tourism development in a manner that supports climate action, environmental protection and long-term sustainability.
- 2.4.4 The proposed regeneration of the Ducking Stool Public Amenity directly supports the objectives through the provision of enhanced marina facilities, improved public access to the River Erne and the creation of a high-quality waterfront destination.
- 2.4.5 The proposal will strengthen Belturbet’s tourism offering, support recreational and water-based tourism, improve visitor infrastructure and contribute towards the sustainable economic development of the town and wider region.



PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT



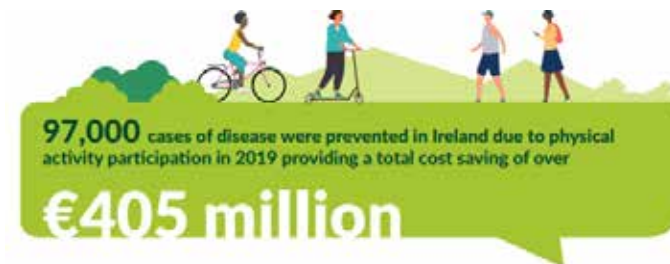
REFERENCE IMAGERY

2.5 Embracing Ireland's Outdoors - National Outdoor Recreation Strategy 2023-2027

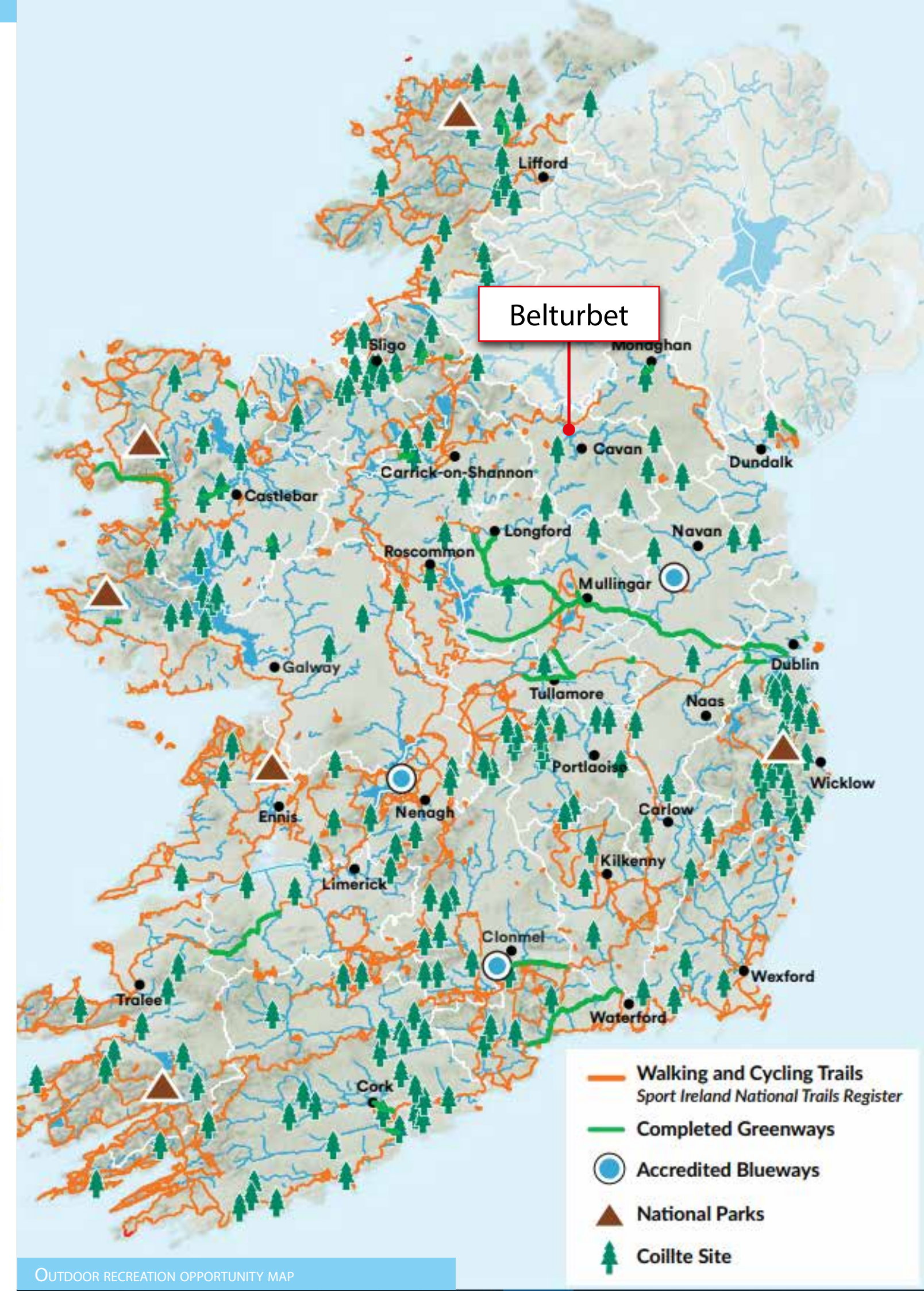
- 2.5.1 Embracing Ireland's Outdoors - National Outdoor Recreation Strategy 2023-2027 was published by the Department of Rural and Community Development. The Strategy provides the national framework for the sustainable development and management of outdoor recreation, promoting increased participation while protecting Ireland's natural environment.
- 2.5.2 The vision of the Strategy is "Ireland's outdoors, a world of activities for all." The Strategy seeks to support investment in outdoor recreation infrastructure, improve public access to natural amenities and encourage sustainable recreational opportunities that deliver social, health, environmental and economic benefits.
- 2.5.3 Key socio economic benefits of the plan are summarised below.



Extract from the Outdoor Recreational Plan



- 2.5.4 In response, the proposed development directly supports the objectives of the National Outdoor Recreation Strategy by improving public access to the River Erne, enhancing infrastructure for boating and water-based recreation, providing high-quality public realm and creating an accessible waterfront destination for residents and visitors.
- 2.5.5 The proposal promotes sustainable outdoor recreation while respecting the environmental sensitivities of the river corridor and is therefore fully consistent with the aims of the Strategy.



2.6 Ireland's Hidden Heartlands Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023-2027

- 2.6.1 Ireland's Hidden Heartlands Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023-2027 was prepared by Fáilte Ireland and provides the strategic framework for the sustainable development of tourism throughout the Ireland's Hidden Heartlands region. The Strategy establishes a long-term vision for tourism development together with a five-year implementation framework to enhance visitor experiences, support local communities and unlock the tourism potential of the region.
- 2.6.2 The Strategy recognises that attractive destinations are first and foremost high-quality places to live, work and visit. It seeks to enhance tourism through investment in visitor infrastructure, improved accessibility, sustainable destination development and the protection of the region's unique natural and cultural assets.
- 2.6.3 The Strategy sets out the following Strategic Objectives:
- STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: Raise awareness and recognition of the region and brand among domestic and international visitors and increase the duration of visitor stays, particularly within the domestic market.
 - STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: Enhance the range and quality of our visitor experiences to underpin the Hidden Heartlands brand proposition, leveraging the natural and cultural assets of the region in a sustainable way with a focus on eco-tourism.
 - STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: Grow the economic impact of tourism and create jobs in local tourism by supporting the tourism industry (private, public and community sectors) to develop its capacity and capability while reducing its carbon footprint.
 - STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4: Establish the region as one of the leading regenerative tourism destinations in Europe in which tourism results in net positive outcomes for communities and nature.
 - STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5: Build a committed industry and stakeholder coalition to guide and co-ordinate the sustainable development of destinations across the region.
- 2.6.4 The proposed regeneration of the Ducking Stool Public Amenity directly supports the objectives of the Strategy through the enhancement of marina infrastructure, improved public access to the River Erne and the creation of a high-quality waterfront destination within Ireland's Hidden Heartlands.
- 2.6.5 The proposal will also strengthen Belturbet's tourism offering, improve the visitor experience and support sustainable water-based recreation while protecting the environmental quality of the River Erne.
- 2.6.6 Accordingly the proposed development is considered to be fully consistent with the vision and strategic objectives of the Ireland's Hidden Heartlands Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023-2027.



2.7 Habitats Directive: Appropriate Assessment Guidelines for Planning Authorities

- 2.7.1 Being located adjacent to the River Erne, we note that the following Natura 2000 site occurs in close proximity to the subject site:
- Lough Oughter and Associated Loughs SAC (Site Code: 000007).
- 2.7.2 We refer to the Natura Impact Statement (NIS) prepared by Whitehill Environmental and submitted as part of this application. The report has been prepared in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and provides a comprehensive assessment of the potential impacts of the proposed development on the conservation objectives and qualifying interests of the relevant Natura 2000 sites.
- 2.7.3 In summary the report establishes that:
- ‘It is considered that following mitigation, the proposed project does not have the potential to significantly affect the conservation objectives of these aforementioned Natura 2000 sites and the integrity of these sites as a whole will not be adversely impacted. With implementation of the mitigation measures there will be no deterioration in water quality, no impacts upon natural eutrophic lakes, no loss or disturbance to habitat used by the otter and no direct or indirect impacts upon the bird species that use the lake. In light of the above, it is considered that the proposed works do not have the potential to significantly affect the conservation objectives or qualifying interests of Lough Oughter and Associated Loughs SAC. The integrity of the site will not be adversely affected.’
- 2.7.4 In light of the comprehensive Natura Impact Statement prepared by Whitehill Environmental, we submit that the proposed development will not adversely affect the integrity of the Lough Oughter and Associated Loughs SAC, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, and is therefore consistent with the requirements of the Habitats Directive.
- 2.7.5 Also we refer to the Derogation Licence enclosed which has been consented in relation to Otters, given the potential for disturbance to Otters, which are a Protected Species. Their protection has also been assessed in the NIS.
- 2.7.6 Finally the Derogation Licence has been included with project particulars to comply with the legal principles as set out in Annex IV of the EU Habitats Directive and also to comply with the legal principles test set out in the Judgement of the Court of Justice of the European Union under Case reference C-166/22; specifically paragraph 36 therein.

2.8 Ecology

- 2.8.1 We refer to the accompanying Ecological Impact Assessment prepared by Whitehill Environmental which demonstrates that the development:
- “will have a minor residual negative impact upon the local ecology and biodiversity of the area. The creation of new habitats on the site through landscaping will be a positive benefit to local ecology and with proper management of the site and its green areas, then local areas of biodiversity will be allowed to develop.”

2.9 The Planning System and Flood Risk Assessment (2009)

- 2.9.1 As set out under the Guidelines, the stages involved in the assessment of flood risk are:
- Stage 1: Flood Risk Identification
 - Stage 2: Initial Flood Risk Assessment
 - Stage 3: Detailed Flood Risk Assessment.
- 2.9.2 In this regard we refer to the attached Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment prepared by Traynor Environmental, which has been undertaken in accordance with The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009).
- 2.9.3 In summary the Flood Risk Assessment demonstrates that the proposed development comprises water-compatible development within Flood Zones A and B and is therefore an appropriate land use under the Guidelines. The assessment concludes that the proposal will not increase flood risk elsewhere, incorporates appropriate mitigation measures, and has been designed having regard to the site’s flood characteristics and the potential effects of climate change.
- 2.9.4 The Flood Risk Assessment concludes that the proposed development is compliant with the requirements of The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines (2009).
- 2.9.5 Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the proposal is appropriate from a flood risk perspective and will not adversely impact the conveyance or storage of flood waters or increase flood risk on adjoining lands.

2.10 Water Framework Directive

- 2.10.1 For conciseness we refer to the Water Framework Directive Assessment as prepared by Traynor Environmental; enclosed under separate cover. Key findings are summarised:
- No significant pollutant linkages exist that would give rise to deterioration in surface water or groundwater status;
 - The proposed development will not prevent the achievement of good status or compromise the objectives of the Water Framework Directive;
 - The proposed development will not introduce new pressures or contribute to existing pressures identified under the Water Action Plan;
 - The proposed development will not adversely affect any protected areas, including the Lough Oughter and Associated Loughs SAC.
 - No new pressures of a scale that would affect WFD status.
 - Surface water runoff from the proposed development will be managed through appropriate drainage measures to ensure no adverse impact on the receiving waters of the River Erne.
 - On the basis of this assessment, and subject to the implementation of the mitigation measures outlined, the proposed development is considered to comply with the objectives of the Water Framework Directive and is not predicted to result in deterioration of waterbody status or prevent the achievement of good status.

2.11 Cavan County Development Plan 2022-2028

Overview

- 2.11.1 The Cavan CDP sets out the strategic land use objectives and policies for the overall development of the County up to the year 20228, acting as a guide for those interested in pursuing development and to inform the general public as to how development proposals are likely to be assessed.
- 2.11.2 Section seven of the Development Plan recognises tourism as a key economic driver for County Cavan and highlights the County's significant natural assets, waterways and recreational opportunities. The Plan seeks to strengthen Cavan's tourism offering through investment in visitor infrastructure, outdoor recreation and the enhancement of the County's lakes, rivers and waterways.

Policy context

- 2.11.3 In terms of relevant policies we highlight:

- Vision: Ensure County Cavan is a quality place to visit and stay with a wide variety of high quality tourist attractions, infrastructure and facilities.
- Tourism Policy TO1 Promote the development and strengthening of the overall value of Cavan as a tourist destination by encouraging the enhancement and development of sustainable and high-quality visitor attractions, activities and infrastructure, enabling an increase in the overall capacity and long-term development of the county's tourism industry, subject to appropriate siting and design criteria and the protection of environmentally sensitive areas
- Tourism Policy TO3 Support the implementation of the County's Tourism Strategy in line with national and regional policy, tourism trends and identified challenges, in collaboration with Fáilte Ireland, Waterways Ireland, tourism businesses and communities and other supporting agencies.
- Tourism Policy TO5 Utilise the county's natural and heritage resources to foster the development of tourism as a viable sector of the economy in a sustainable manner which complements the scale, quality and unique features of the location and county
- Tourism Policy TO7 Support actions to increase access to state and semi-state lands such as National Parks, Forest Parks, Waterways, together with Monuments and Historic Properties, for recreation and tourism purposes, subject to the requirements of the Habitats Directive, National Monuments Act and other provisions and policies to protect and safeguard these resources and subject to the ability of local infrastructure to support the resulting increased tourism.
- LW 05 Support the provision of infrastructure to enable increased tourism activity associated with Cavan's waterways, including boating, marina/berthing, kayaking, angling, blueways and harbour amenities while ensuring that such provision does not negatively impact on sensitive environments and subject to the requirements of the Birds and Habitats Directives
- IW1 protect and enhance the natural heritage and landscape character of the County's Waterways and maintain them free from inappropriate development and provide for public access, where feasible, acknowledging the existence of contiguous Natura 2000 sites.
- IW5 Ensure that the County's watercourses are retained for their biodiversity and flood protection values and conserve and enhance, where possible, the wildlife habitats of the county's rivers and riparian zones, lakes, canals and streams which occur outside of designated areas to provide for a network of habitats and biodiversity corridors throughout the county.

- Belturbet General Development Objective BTG 03 Engage with the community and relevant stakeholders to promote and support the regeneration of Belturbet, through identification of significant regeneration projects along with associated funding streams including Rural Regeneration and Development Fund
- Belturbet Objective BTG 04 Provide for the creation of sustainable communities in Belturbet, by identifying sufficient land for new development, in particular housing, enterprise and employment, community, recreational and tourism use
- Belturbet Objective BTG 05 Continue to promote the tourism potential of Belturbet by supporting tourist related development and enhancement of existing amenities
- Belturbet Objective BTI 01 Support the investment in water and wastewater infrastructure facilities serving Belturbet in order to ensure the continued sustainable development of the Town
- Belturbet Objective BTD 02 Encourage sustainable and suitable tourism related development.
- Belturbet Objective BTD 08 Harness the potential of the River Erne and Turbet Island.

- 2.11.4 Considering the above we submit the the proposal is wholly consistent with the strategic objectives for such a Tourism project as set out under the CCDP, particularly given the site characteristics and the tourism offering that will be achieved.

- 2.11.5 Further for conciseness site specific planning matters are addressed separately below under section 3 'Design Summary' along with the accompanying reports by Traynor Environmental and Whitehill Environmental which addresse matters relating to:

- Design and layout;
- Effluent Treatment;
- Landscaping;
- Road Access Standards;
- Flood Risk;
- Services and ancillary matters;
- Ecology;
- Other matters to include precedent.

- 2.11.6 Having regard to the above we say the proposed regeneration of the Ducking Stool Public Amenity directly supports the strategic aims of the Development Plan. The proposal will enhance the existing marina facilities, improve public access to the River Erne, strengthen Belturbet's tourism and recreational offer, deliver high-quality public realm improvements and reinforce the town's role as a key destination along the Shannon-Erne Waterway.

- 2.11.7 Accordingly, the proposed development is considered to be fully consistent with the tourism, regeneration and settlement objectives of the Cavan County Development Plan 2022-2028.

2.12 Justification

2.12.1 The subject site occupies a prominent waterfront location immediately north of Belturbet Town Centre on the southern banks of the River Erne. The site forms part of the existing Ducking Stool Public Amenity and has long been associated with recreational boating and public access to the river.



- 2.12.2 Belturbet is recognised as one of County Cavan’s principal waterside towns and occupies a strategic location on the internationally recognised Shannon-Erne Waterway. The town is a popular destination for boating, angling, walking and other outdoor recreation, attracting both domestic and international visitors throughout the year.
- 2.12.3 The River Erne is one of the County’s most significant natural and tourism assets. The enhancement of the existing marina facilities, public realm and waterfront infrastructure will encourage greater use of the river, improve accessibility and provide an attractive destination for residents, visitors and waterway users alike.
- 2.12.4 As the Coimisiun will be aware, tourism and outdoor recreation continue to represent important sectors of the local economy. Investment in high-quality public infrastructure that enhances visitor experiences and encourages longer visitor dwell times is recognised within both national and local planning policy as an important component of sustainable regional development.
- 2.12.5 The proposed regeneration of the Ducking Stool Public Amenity will significantly enhance the quality of Belturbet’s waterfront through the provision of improved marina facilities, upgraded public realm, enhanced landscaping and visitor infrastructure. The proposal will strengthen the town’s tourism offering, improve public access to the River Erne and reinforce Belturbet’s role as a key gateway to the Shannon-Erne Waterway.



PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT CGIs

2.12 Justification (contd.)

- 2.12.6 Also of relevance to the project justification at site-specific level is the amenity and tourism facilities which the Erne River can support for angling and water sports.
- 2.12.7 The location of the site directly alongside the Erne River provides an ideal location for these sports to be carried out. Provision of associated accommodation and facilities is also justified to ensure a high-quality destination is provided. In summary policy TOUP 1 is considered to be met as there is a clear opportunity for a site specific tourism need and opportunity within the site.



REFERENCE IMAGERY

2.12 Justification (contd.)

- 2.12.8 The proposed development has been designed to provide a high-quality, universally accessible waterfront environment that can be enjoyed by people of all ages and abilities. Through the provision of accessible routes, improved public realm, floating pontoons and enhanced river access, the proposal will remove many of the physical barriers that currently limit access to the River Erne.
- 2.12.9 Embracing Ireland's Outdoors - National Outdoor Recreation Strategy 2023-2027 highlights the Watersports Inclusion Games as a national case study of best practice. The case study demonstrates how investment in accessible watersports infrastructure enables people of all abilities to participate in sailing, canoeing, paddleboarding and other recreational activities. It also highlights the wider social benefits of creating inclusive public spaces that encourage participation, improve wellbeing and strengthen communities.
- 2.12.10 The proposed regeneration of the Ducking Stool Public Amenity directly reflects these national objectives. The provision of accessible pontoons, improved slipway facilities, accessible public realm, seating areas and barrier-free pedestrian routes will significantly improve opportunities for inclusive recreation along the River Erne.
- 2.12.11 Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the proposed development represents an exemplar of inclusive public infrastructure, consistent with the objectives of the National Outdoor Recreation Strategy.
- 2.12.11 By improving accessibility to one of County Cavan's principal natural assets, the proposal will promote participation in outdoor recreation, enhance social inclusion and ensure that the benefits of the River Erne can be enjoyed by all members of the community.



INCLUSION GAMES IMAGERY

An aerial architectural rendering of a waterfront development. The scene shows a paved area with a parking lot containing a white van and a blue car. Adjacent to the parking is a paved plaza with outdoor seating, including white tables and chairs, and a red bench. A small wooden dock extends into the water, with a small boat moored nearby. The water is dark, and a line of green trees borders the bottom left of the paved area. The overall design is modern and integrates with the natural environment.

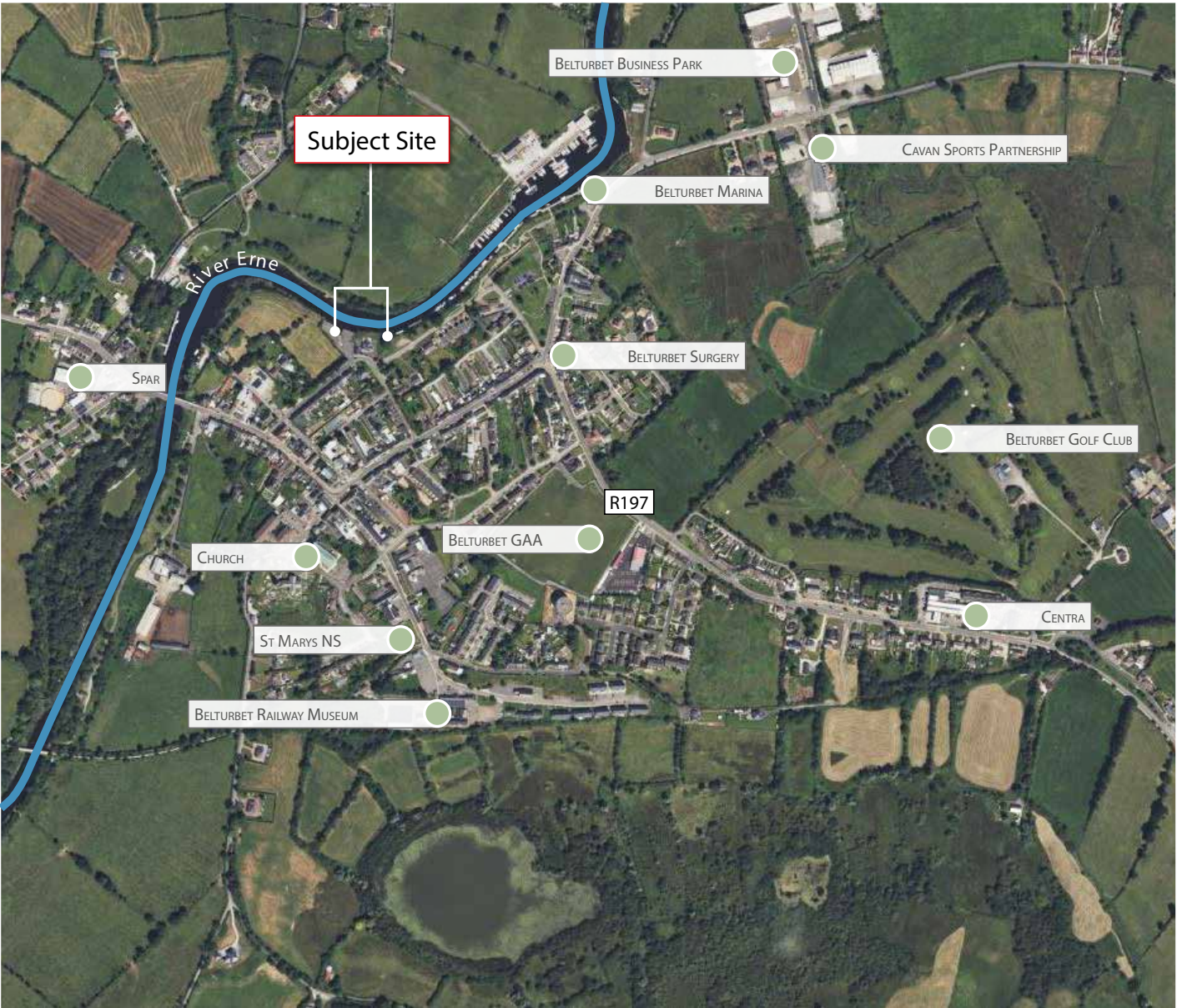
03 | Design Approach

- 3.1 Site Context & Design Approach
- 3.2 Building Design & Site Layout
- 3.3 Vehicular Access
- 3.4 Parking
- 3.5 Surface Water & Drainage Policies
- 3.6 Construction & Environmental Plan
- 3.7 Landscaping & Site Layout
- 3.8 River Erne & IFI Best Practice
- 3.9 CGIs
- 3.10 Other Matters: Comparable Precedent

03 Design Approach

3.1 Site context & Design Approach

- 3.1.1 The subject site comprises the existing Ducking Stool Public Amenity, incorporating the existing slipway, jetty facilities and surrounding public realm on the southern banks of the River Erne.
- 3.1.2 The proposal presents a significant opportunity to regenerate this prominent waterfront location and enhance one of Belturbet’s key recreational and tourism assets.
- 3.1.3 The overall design approach has been informed by the site’s strategic riverside setting and seeks to maximise public access to the River Erne while significantly improving the quality of the existing marina facilities and surrounding public realm. The layout has been carefully developed to respond to the existing site characteristics, topography and operational requirements of the marina.
- 3.1.4 The proposal adopts contemporary placemaking principles through the creation of an attractive, accessible and functional waterfront environment.
- 3.1.5 The design integrates hard and soft landscaping, public seating, lighting, wayfinding, cycle parking and enhanced marina infrastructure to create an inviting civic space for both residents and visitors.
- 3.1.6 Particular emphasis has been placed on improving accessibility and connectivity throughout the site. The proposal incorporates universally accessible pedestrian routes, improved access to the floating pontoons and enhanced public spaces that encourage interaction with the waterfront whilst supporting a range of recreational and water-based activities.
- 3.1.7 In summary, the proposed development represents a high-quality design response that will regenerate the existing Ducking Stool Public Amenity, enhance Belturbet’s waterfront setting and deliver a landmark public space that complements the character of the River Erne while supporting the Town’s tourism and recreational function.



LOCAL SITE CONTEXT AND VIEWS



3.1 Site context & Design Approach (cont.)

Current Context

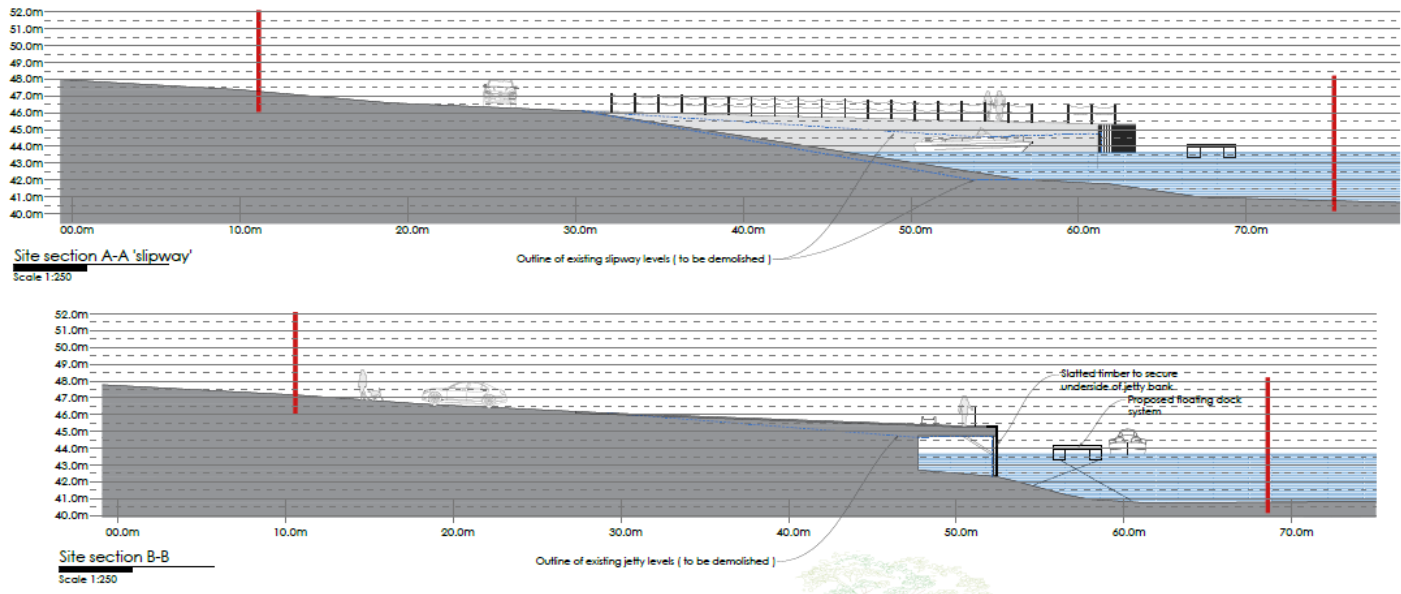


Proposed Design



3.2 Project Design & Site Layout

- 3.2.1 The proposed site layout has been carefully developed in response to the existing waterfront setting, utilising the current marina location while significantly enhancing the quality of the public realm. The arrangement of the slipway, floating pontoons, public spaces and parking creates a cohesive and functional waterfront destination that integrates with the surrounding townscape.
- 3.2.2 The design adopts a contemporary yet understated architectural language, with a palette of high-quality materials including natural stone, concrete, timber, steel and native planting. This approach complements the existing character of the River Erne whilst establishing a distinctive civic waterfront that is both robust and visually attractive.
- 3.2.3 The proposed layout responds positively to the site's opportunities and constraints by:
- providing an enhanced marina with new floating pontoons and an upgraded slipway;
 - creating generous public spaces that encourage recreation, relaxation and interaction with the waterfront;
 - improving pedestrian permeability and universal accessibility throughout the site;
 - incorporating high-quality landscaping, seating, lighting, cycle parking and wayfinding to strengthen the overall visitor experience;
 - providing an efficient parking layout that supports marina users whilst maintaining a safe separation between vehicles and pedestrians;
 - and reinforcing Belturbet's identity as a waterfront town through the creation of a high-quality public amenity overlooking the River Erne.



PROPOSED SECTIONS

3.3 Vehicular Access

- 3.3.1 The proposed development utilises the existing access arrangements serving the Ducking Stool Public Amenity, with internal reconfiguration to improve vehicle circulation, parking and access to the marina facilities. The layout has been designed to safely accommodate marina users, boat launching activities and general visitor traffic whilst maintaining clear segregation between vehicular and pedestrian movements.
- 3.3.2 The proposed slipway and associated manoeuvring areas have been designed to facilitate the safe launching and retrieval of boats, with sufficient turning space provided for vehicles and trailers. The arrangement improves the functionality of the existing facility whilst maintaining safe and efficient operation throughout the site.

3.4 Parking

- 3.4.1 The proposal includes the reconfiguration of the existing parking area to provide a safe and efficient layout serving the marina and public amenity. The car park incorporates additional parking spaces, including 1 no. universally accessible parking space. The parking provision is considered appropriate having regard to the scale and nature of the proposed development.
- 3.4.2 The proposal has been designed to encourage sustainable modes of transport through the provision of dedicated cycle parking and improved pedestrian connectivity throughout the site. This approach is consistent with the sustainable transport objectives of the Cavan County Development Plan.
- 3.4.3 Cycle parking is provided within the development in a convenient and accessible location to encourage cycling as an alternative mode of transport for both visitors and recreational users of the marina facilities.

3.5 Surface Water Drainage

- 3.5.1 In response we refer to accompanying details prepared by Traynor Consulting Engineers which set out in detail how drainage works have been incorporated into the proposal.

03 Design Approach

3.6 Construction and Environmental Management Plan

- 3.6.1 To ensure the protection of the River Erne and the surrounding environment during the construction phase, a comprehensive CEMP has been prepared by Traynor Environmental Ltd. and accompanies this application.
- 3.6.2 The CEMP has been prepared in accordance with current environmental best practice and will ensure that all construction activities are undertaken in a manner that safeguards the River Erne and the surrounding environment, thereby minimising the potential for adverse environmental impacts throughout the construction period.

3.7 Landscaping and Site Layout

- 3.7.1 The design approach to open landscaping has been to utilize existing soft and hard landscape works both within and surrounding the site.

3.8 River Erne & IFI best practice

- 3.8.1 The proposed development has been carefully designed to minimise impacts on the River Erne.
- 3.8.2 The proposed works have been developed in accordance with Inland Fisheries Ireland best practice, with mitigation measures incorporated through the accompanying Construction Environmental Management Plan and Natura Impact Statement.
- 3.8.3 Existing riparian vegetation will be retained wherever practicable, while appropriate pollution prevention and sediment control measures will be implemented throughout the construction phase to safeguard water quality and aquatic habitats.
- 3.8.4 Accordingly, it is submitted that the proposed development represents a sensitive and sustainable enhancement of the existing waterfront while ensuring the continued protection of the River Erne and its ecological value.



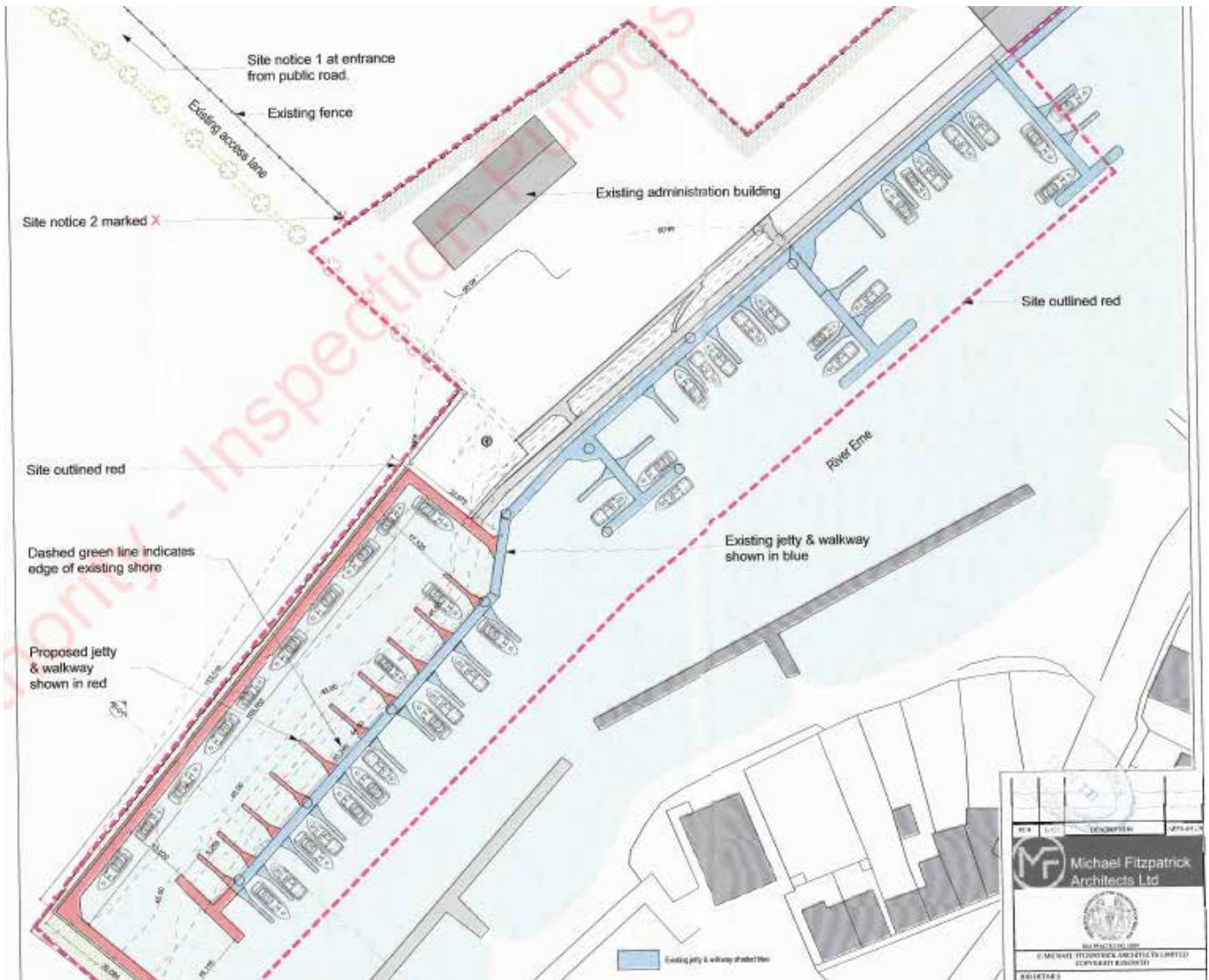
SITE LAYOUT AND PROPOSED CGIs

3.9 CGIs



3.10 Other matters: Comparable precedents

- 3.10.1 For ease of reference by the Coimisiun we highlight a directly comparable planning permission granted on the opposite side of the River Erne for the extension and enhancement of an existing marina facility.
- Cavan County Council Reg. Ref. 20/446 - Permission granted for the extension of the existing marina together with all associated ancillary site works, including additional marina infrastructure, parking and associated development.
- 3.10.2 The approved development is directly comparable to the current proposal in that it relates to the enhancement of marina infrastructure on the River Erne, together with associated public realm and ancillary works.
- 3.10.3 Furthermore both developments required detailed environmental assessment, including Appropriate Assessment, having regard to their location adjacent to the River Erne and the Natura 2000 network.
- 3.10.4 To summarise the project particulars the Planning Authority accepted the principle of enhancing marina infrastructure and supporting recreational and tourism development on the River Erne, subject to appropriate environmental assessment and mitigation.
- 3.10.5 Accordingly we say that the approved development under Reg. Ref. 20/446 represents a material planning precedent. The current proposal is comparable in terms of land use, planning policy context and environmental assessment, while similarly seeking to enhance the recreational, tourism and amenity value of the River Erne. The proposal is therefore considered to be entirely consistent with the Planning Authority's established approach to marina and waterfront development within Belturbet.



SITE LAYOUT OF REF 20/446 APPROVED



04 | Conclusion

4.1 | Summary & Conclusion

04 Summary & Conclusion

4.1 Summary & Conclusion

- 4.1.1 This statement demonstrates that the proposal is consistent with the national, regional and local planning policy framework and that the proposal will provide for an appropriate and efficient use of the site which is highly accessible.
- 4.1.2 As part of the objectives of the CCDP we note the plan states
- Tourism Policy TO1 Promote the development and strengthening of the overall value of Cavan as a tourist destination by encouraging the enhancement and development of sustainable and high-quality visitor attractions, activities and infrastructure, enabling an increase in the overall capacity and long-term development of the county's tourism industry"
 - LW 05 Support the provision of infrastructure to enable increased tourism activity associated with Cavan's waterways, including boating, marina/berthing, kayaking, angling, blueways and harbour amenities while ensuring that such provision does not negatively impact on sensitive environments and subject to the requirements of the Birds and Habitats Directives
- 4.1.3 As detailed in this statement the the proposal is wholly consistent with the strategic objectives for such a Tourism project as set out under the CCDP, particularly given the site characteristics and the tourism offering that can be achieved.
- 4.1.4 In terms of justification The site occupies a strategic waterfront location within Belturbet, providing an ideal opportunity to strengthen the town's tourism, recreation and leisure offering. The proposal will significantly improve the existing marina facilities, public realm, accessibility and visitor experience, reinforcing Belturbet's role as a key destination along the Shannon-erne Waterway.
- 4.1.5 The proposed development has been carefully designed having regard to the site's opportunities and environmental sensitivities. In particular, the scheme:
- Regenerates the existing Ducking Stool Public Amenity and marina.
 - Enhances public access to the River Erne through new floating pontoons, an upgraded slipway and accessible infrastructure.
 - Delivers high-quality public realm, landscaping, seating, lighting and wayfinding.
 - Improves parking, pedestrian connectivity and cycle facilities.
 - Protects the ecological, hydrological and environmental integrity of the River Erne through the implementation of the accompanying Natura Impact Statement, Flood Risk Assessment and Construction Environmental Management Plan.
- 4.1.6 The proposal represents betterment for Belturbet's waterfront and directly supports the tourism, recreation and regeneration objectives of the Cavan County Development Plan. The accompanying technical reports demonstrate that the development can be delivered without adverse impacts on the surrounding environment and in accordance with best practice.

- 4.1.7 Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the proposed development represents sustainable development in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. Having regard to the planning merits of the proposal, the supporting technical assessments and the applicable policy framework, we respectfully request that the planning authority grant planning permission for the proposed development.
- 4.1.8 In light of the demonstrated compliance with the relevant planning policy framework and the comprehensive technical assessments accompanying the application, it is respectfully submitted that the proposed development will make a significant positive contribution to Belturbet's tourism offering and recreational infrastructure. Accordingly, we trust that the application will receive favourable consideration.



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