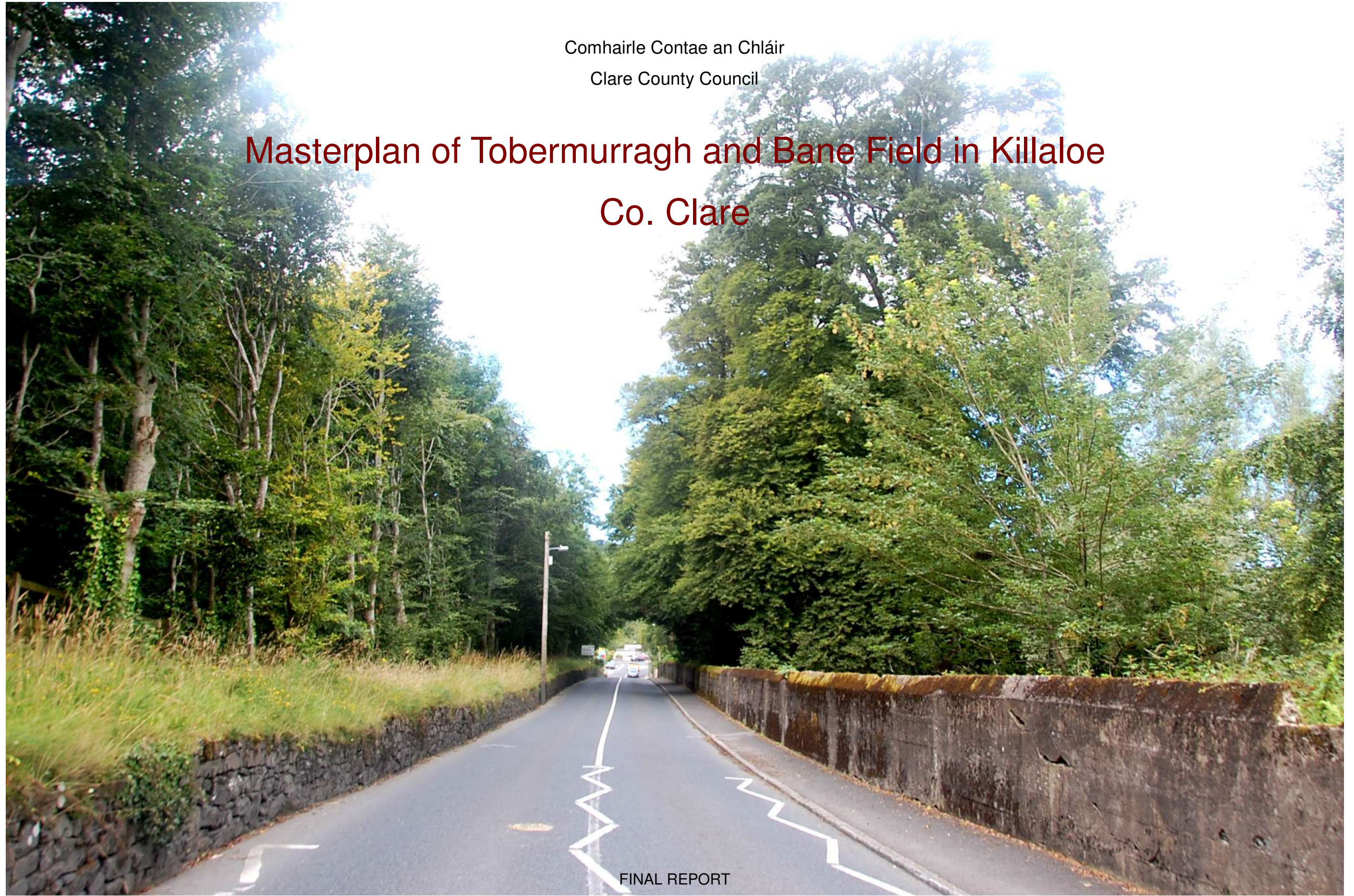


Comhairle Contae an Chláir
Clare County Council

Masterplan of Tobermurragh and Bane Field in Killaloe Co. Clare

FINAL REPORT





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FINAL REPORT

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1. Introduction

1.1 The Project Brief

The main purpose of the study is the design of a Masterplan of Tobermurragh and Bane Field in Killaloe, County Clare, in order to realise the opportunity to potentially create a new urban park environment, informed by its industrial, cultural and natural heritage, while enhancing its gateway location at the edge of Killaloe, and exploiting its elevated position overlooking and adjacent to Lough Derg.

1.2 Design Aspirations

Clare County Council is committed to achieving good design and excellence in quality. Good design means that it is fit for purpose, sustainable, efficient, coherent, flexible, responsive to context, good looking, and a clear expression of the requirements of the brief.

It is intended that imagination, flair and experience will be required to set this project apart and achieve the ambitions of Clare County Council. All design, materials, and the like will be expected to meet the highest quality and performance standards. The design must be easy to service and economic to maintain.

The site and structures should be designed so as to create a high quality urban space with a strong sense of place and an ability to accommodate a wide range of activities. It is envisaged that this mix will bring appropriate activity and new visitors to Killaloe.

1.3 Vision

- To compliment the designation of Killaloe & Ballina as a Heritage Town. The historic importance of the settlements, their surviving features, and their attractive location are a major visitor attraction.
- To investigate and analyse the potential of Bane Field & Tobermurragh with regard to the existing crèche, existing playground, and the existing tennis club, and its proposals to expand.
- For Tobermurragh Park and Bane Field to be re-designed as complimentary halves of the one place.
- To incorporate the road that lies between Tobermurragh Park and Bane Field into the public realm design and to make it a more equitable place for all users.
- To maximise linkages and permeability routes to/from the waterfront walkway, Aillebhaun and the town centre via New Street.
- For Tobermurragh Park and Bane Field to act as a strongly identifiable 'gateway' into Killaloe.
- The park should lend itself to accommodating a diverse range of recreational pursuits for children, teenagers and adults of all ages and abilities.



Aerial view of the site and its surroundings

2. Site Appraisal

2.1 Location

The site of Tobermurragh and Bane Field is located at the western entrance to Killaloe on the R463 Lough Derg Regional Road from Scarriff/Tuamgraney, less than 400m from the historic centre of the town (The Green). The total area of the two parts is around 3.2ha (7.90 acres).

Tobermurragh and Bane Field are owned by Clare County Council. The Killaloe & Ballina Tennis Club, located to the south-east of Bane Field, lease the land from the County Council. The Community Garden to the north-west of Bane Field is operated under licence from the County Council (until September 2015). Other major uses include a children's play area and a car park, both accessed from New Street to the south of Bane Field.

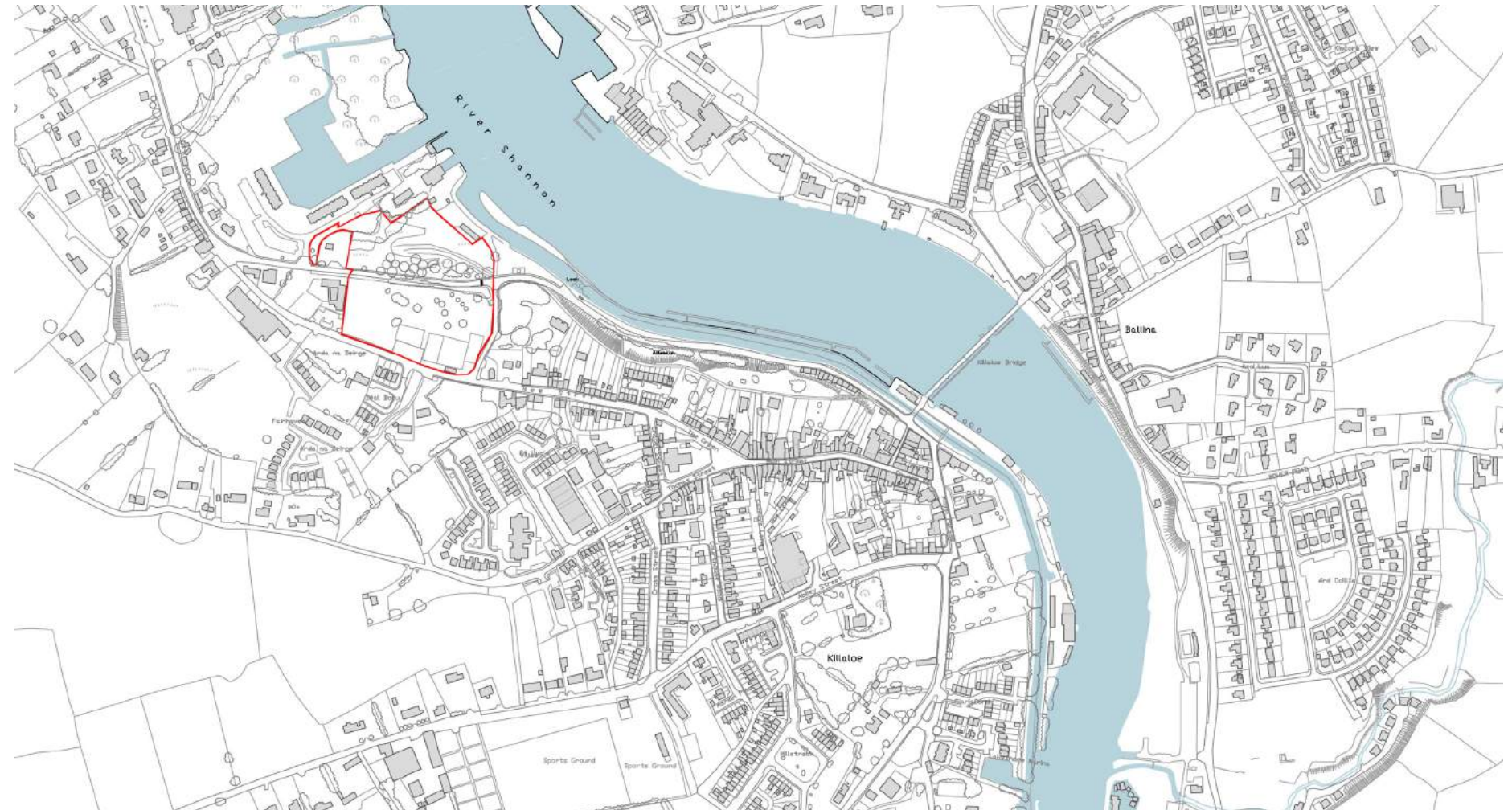
Key adjacent uses include:

- A Treatment Plant (Irish Water), at the western end of Tobermurragh and accessed from the R463;
- A Creche (Kincora Kids), adjoining the western edge of Bane Field and accessed from New Street; and
- The Dry Dock area between Tobermurragh and the Shannon River, accessed via a narrow laneway extending from the junction with the R463, and comprising the Dock itself (leased by the Killaloe Coast Guard Unit, and owned by the ESB), Pier Head (owned by Waterways Ireland), and former Steamboat Quay offices (Protected Structure, owned by the ESB).

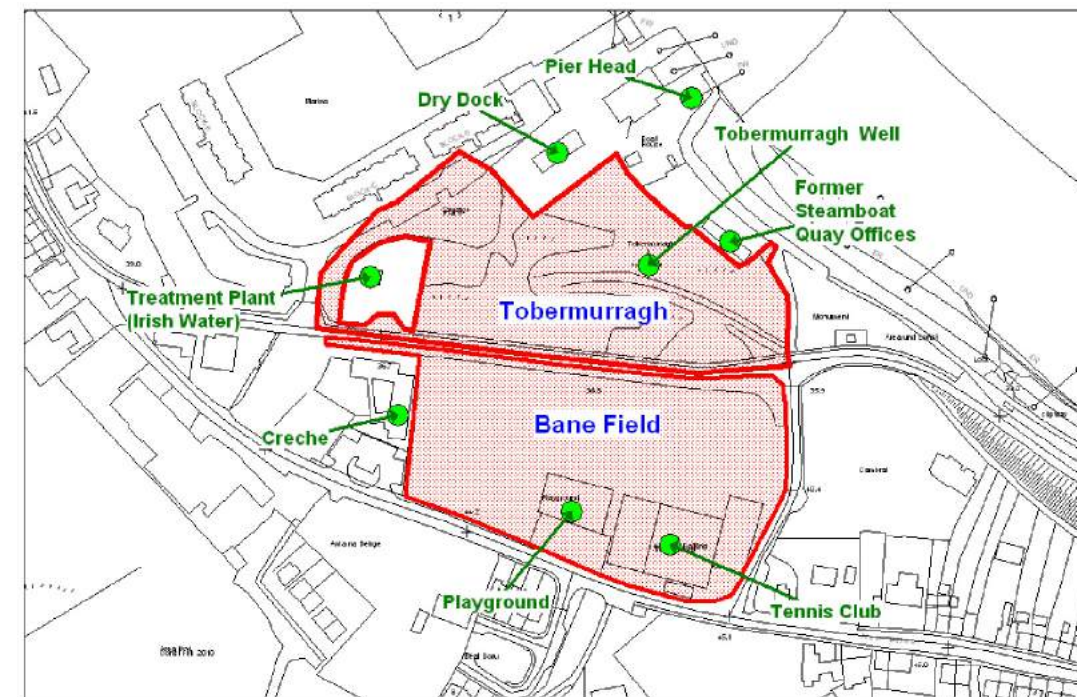
To the west of Tobermurragh is a triangular open space sloping from the R463 towards the Shannon canal, and containing a memorial, a recently constructed (Waterways Ireland) toilet block, and a waterfront walkway extending along the quay to Killaloe Bridge and linking to Aillebhaun and the town centre via New Street.

Lands to the west and south of Bane Field are mostly residential, and include the large private property of Cambal which has a fine collection of mature trees within its grounds. A petrol filling station is located at the junction of New Street and the R463, and housing continues northwards along the main road as far as the Settlement Boundary at Bally Valley and Kincora. Between the creche and the petrol filling station is an undeveloped field

To the north of Tobermurragh are more recent tourism developments constructed around small marinas, including Kincora Harourview Apartments and Trident Holiday Homes.



General Location Plan



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Not To Scale

Site area and key uses

2. Site Appraisal

2.2 Landscape Character

The site of Tobermurragh and Bane Field is located on the urban edge of Killaloe, immediately adjacent to Lough Derg and easily accessible on foot from the town centre (around 400m to the east) and from established residential areas to the south.

Tobermurragh is located up-stream of the Lower Shannon River candidate Special Area of Conservation, as well as adjoining the Lough Derg Proposed Natural Heritage Area, and the site is important for its natural heritage that includes broadleaf woodland, wetland, grassland and marsh. This has mostly developed naturally and is not regularly maintained, presenting an attractive mosaic of vegetation types within a relatively small area, but with an un-kept and in places, neglected appearance.

The significance of the site is reinforced by the cultural and industrial heritage associated with the waterfront and the presence of the Holy Well at Tobermurragh. The collection of waterfront buildings (4no. Protected Structures), collectively comprising the 'Dry Dock' area, present a fascinating insight into the use of the river from the late 18th century through to the present day. The Holy Well (a Recorded Monument) and its associations with the legendary Brian Boru, is a focal point that adds further interest to the area.

Bane Field slopes steadily upwards to New Street in the south, and although less-endowed with natural features, comprises a good collection of mature trees as well as several community facilities set within un-managed grassland.

The most impressive landscape features are the groups of mature Beech trees lining the R463 road that passes between, and currently severs the two parts of the site. The trees provide a unique western gateway to the town centre and contribute significantly to the general character of the area.

Views towards Bane Field and Tobermurragh are possible from the opposite bank of the River Shannon, in the vicinity of Lakeside Hotel and Leisure Centre, and when approaching along the R463. There are views outwards towards the river from the higher parts of Bane Field during the winter months (after trees have shed their leaves) and from the small circular viewing area close to the Tobermurragh Holy Well.



R463 avenue



Tobermurragh woodland walk



Bane Field grassland and trees



Shannon waterfront

2. Site Appraisal

2.3 Planning Policy Context

The site is made up of zoned Open Space and Recreation in the East Clare Local Area Plan 2011-2017. Tobermurragh comprises Open Space, which generally includes for the use of land for afforestation, playgrounds, housing estate open space, landscaped areas and parks; while Bane Field comprises Recreation, which generally includes for sports centres, playing pitches and associated facilities, outdoor recreation centres and other facilities that contribute to meeting the leisure, recreation and amenity needs of the immediate community and/or the wider area.

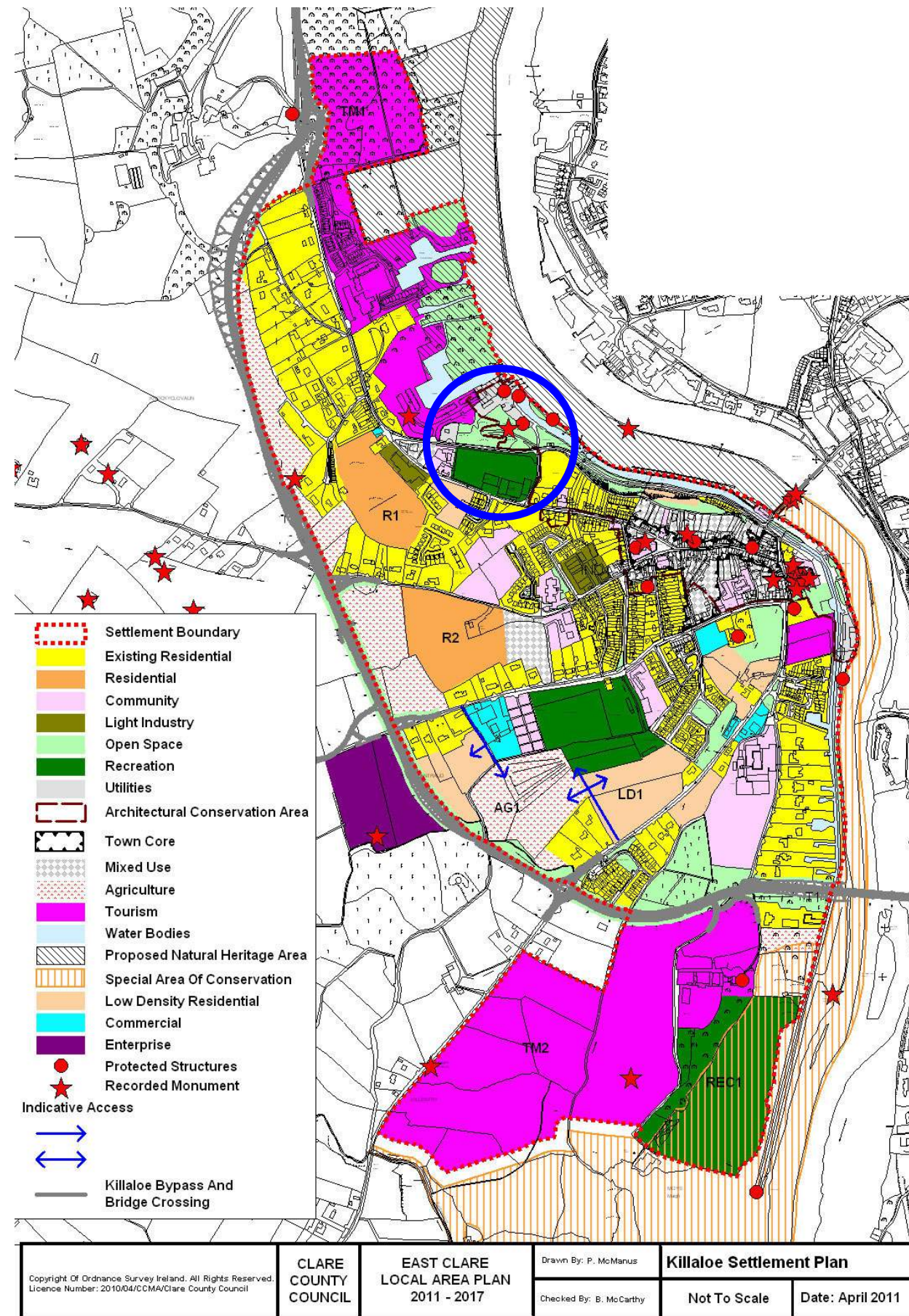
The north-eastern edge of the site borders the Lough Derg proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA 000011).

There are four Protected Structures adjoining the site, within the Dry Dock area (refer Section 2.7), and a Recorded Monument (Tobermurragh Holy Well) within the site.

Other planning policies of relevance to the development of Tobermurragh and Bane Field as a potential new park include:

- Objective CDP3.4 of the Clare County Development Plan 2011-2017 (as amended) which relates the development of Small Towns;
- Objective CDP5.5 of the Clare County Development Plan 2011-2017 (as amended) which relates to supporting communities in the delivery of Community, Social and Cultural Facilities;
- Objective CDP5.3 of the Clare County Development Plan 2011-2017 (as amended) which promotes and supports the concepts of universal accessibility and design; and
- The Limerick and Clare Sports and Physical Recreation Strategy 2013, relating to social and physical access to recreational facilities.

As Killaloe is a major visitor destination, development at Tobermurragh and Bane Field also needs to be considered in the context of complementing and reinforcing the tourism attraction of the town.



Killaloe Settlement Plan, East Clare Local Area Plan 2011-2017

2. Site Appraisal

2.4 Other Planning Studies

Nine Towns Improvement Strategies (May 2013)

Improvement strategies were undertaken in nine towns in County Clare in order to aid local groups to improve their places. The towns were selected for inclusion following a competitive application to Clare Local Development Company, with input from Clare County Council (Planning, Tourism & Environment). Killaloe was one of the towns selected.

Opportunities were identified to improve and enhance the urban and natural environments, and these were translated into a local level strategic plan which identify a number of potential projects or actions - which local groups may initiate immediately or plan towards undertaking in the future.

In relation to Tobermurragh and Bane Field, the Killaloe Improvement Strategy identified that although strategically positioned at the end of the riverside walkway, the park is currently dysfunctional due to a combination of factors including lack of maintenance and users. It is in decline and beginning to attract anti-social behavior/actions as a consequence. Overgrown vegetation, high enclosing walls, graffiti, vandalism and few if any people using the facility were identified as combining to create a perception of insecurity for potential users. Proposals included:

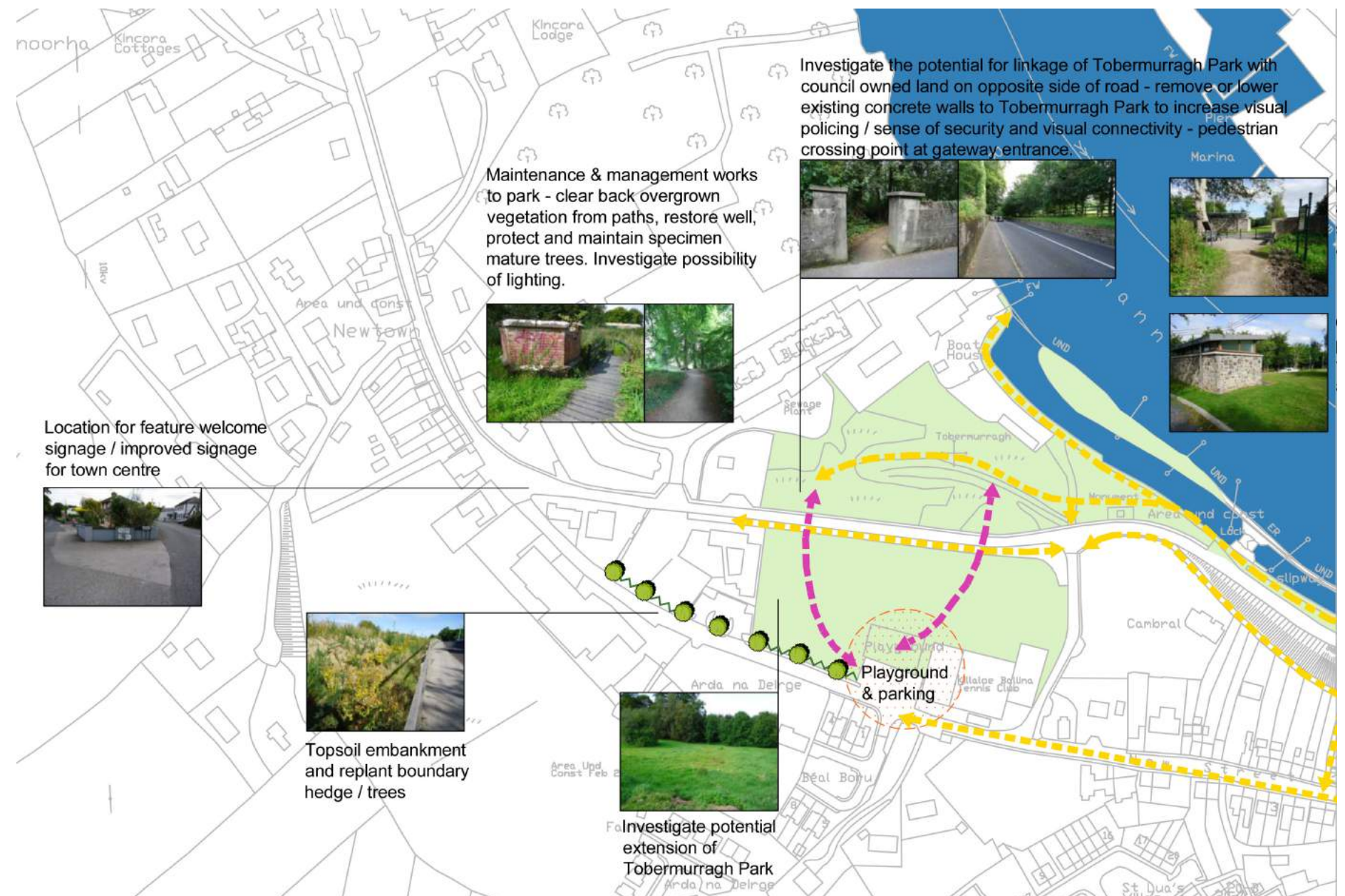
- Lowering the parks roadside wall, dramatically increasing visibility;
- Widening entrance gates;
- Cutting down excessive high scrub vegetation to further increase visibility;
- Creating a new pathway meandering down through the underused open grass area surrounding the existing Childrens Playground; and
- Designated pedestrian crossing points across the road, linking Tobermurragh Park with the Childrens Playground.

Survey of Trees in Towns and Villages of County Clare (2015)

The overall aim of this study was to survey and record the existing trees in chosen settlements of County Clare, in order to:

- Categorise trees suitable (or otherwise) for retention and assess their quality and value;
- Analyse the contribution that the trees make to the place; and
- Make recommendations to Clare County Council for tree management and enhancement.

The Survey included the town of Killaloe and the trees at Tobermurragh and Bane Field (refer Section 2.9, Existing Vegetation, for further details).



Extract from Killaloe Strategic Improvements Plan (of relevance to Tobermurragh and Bane Field), Cunnane Stratton Reynolds (May 2013)

2. Site Appraisal

2.5 Vehicle Access

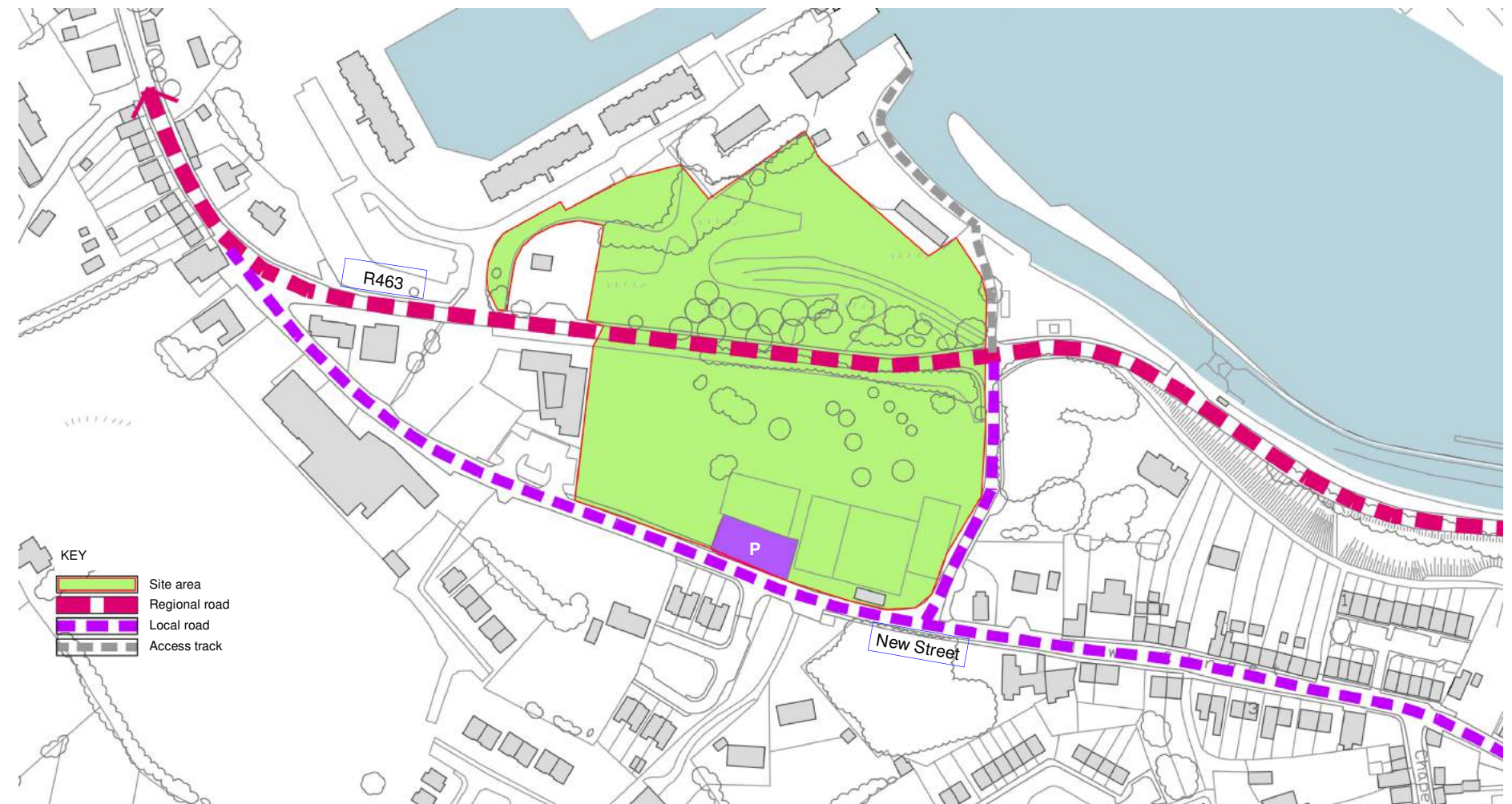
The R463 passes between, and currently severs, the two parts of the site. Given the proximity of the town centre, the road could serve as a distinctive gateway into Killaloe. However, it is currently a busy route for traffic accessing the town centre from the north, and onwards to Tipperary via the Killaloe Bridge.

The townscape of Killaloe is unsuited to the high volumes of traffic that is presently experienced, resulting in the continued deterioration of the fabric and environment of both the historic town centre and the bridge. The situation should be considerably improved with the implementation of the proposed Killaloe Western Bypass, which will include a new bridge crossing of the River Shannon and an upgrade of the existing R494 regional road from Ballina.

A significant amount of north/south through traffic should be removed, greatly improving the environment of Killaloe and Ballina. Extensive landscape planting of the route is intended to compensate for trees and hedgerows that will be removed. As the western end of the route connects onto the R463 in the vicinity of Ballyvally, the bypass will also assist in the provision of traffic calming measures along the section of road that lies between Tobermurragh and Bane Field to make it a more equitable place for all users.

New Street to the south of the site provides access to adjoining properties and the heart of the town, and to the creche and Bane Field car park. It is connected to the R463 via a local access road along the eastern boundary of Bane Field.

The Dry Dock area is accessed from a narrow track extending from the same R463 junction.



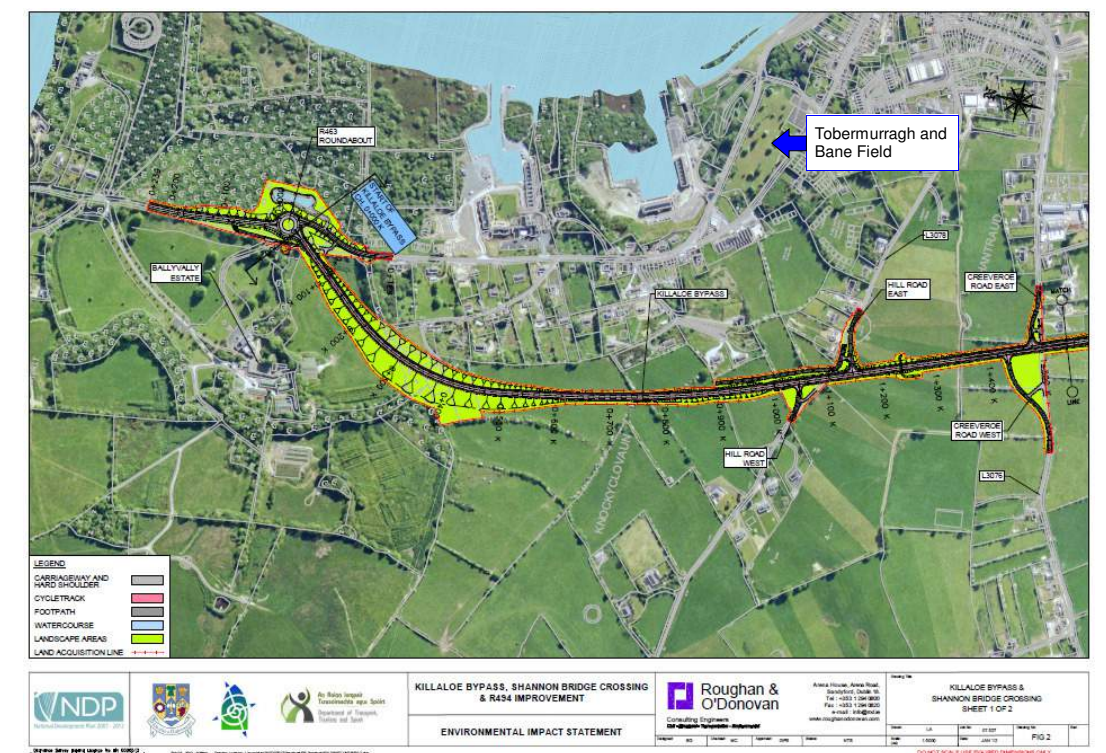
Vehicle routes



New Street



R463 on northern approach



Killaloe Bypass, western route alignment

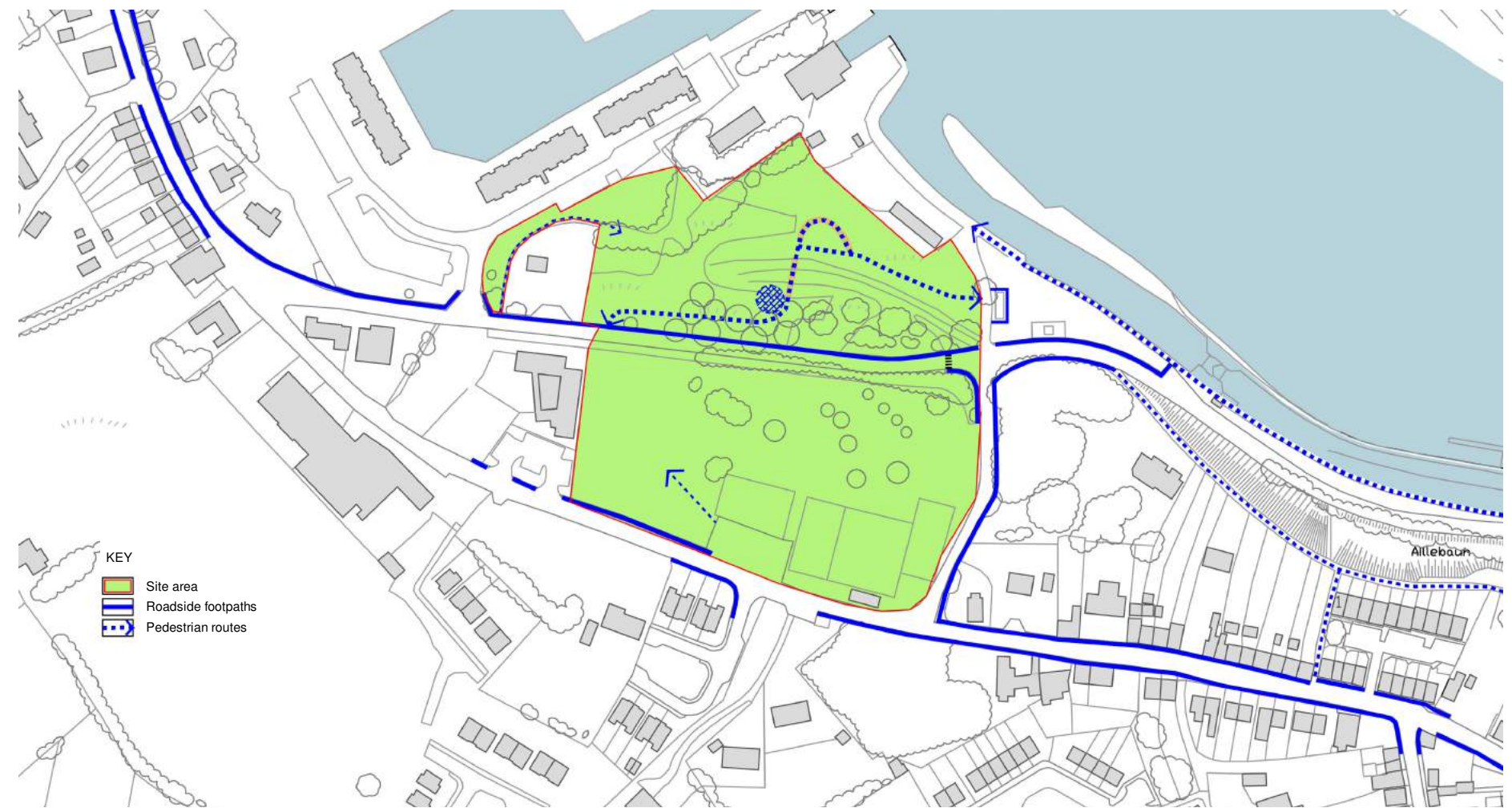
2. Site Appraisal

2.6 Pedestrian Access

Pedestrian access to the site is generally good, with footpaths either side of New Street and a continuous walkway along the waterfront. A further walkway (Aillebhaun) links the Dry Dock area to the town centre via New Street. There is a footpath along the north side of the R463 as it passes through the site, and a pedestrian crossing close to the junction.

There are no footpath routes in Bane Field, apart from an un-made track leading from the car park to the community garden.

Within Tobermurragh, a footpath has been created through the space from the Dry Dock access track in the south to the Treatment Plant in the north, and including a boardwalk loop and lookout area in the vicinity of the Holy Well. A narrow pedestrian access corridor has been reserved around the western and northern edges of the Treatment Plant.



Pedestrian routes



Start of Tobermurragh footpath



Waterfront walkway



Roadside footpaths and start of pedestrian link to Aillebhaun

2. Site Appraisal

2.7 Existing Facilities

Bane Field comprises the tennis club, car park, community playground, community gardens, and the intervening open space. The facilities have developed on an ad-hoc basis and collectively appear un-coordinated and disconnected.

The Tennis Club is a well-used facility occupying much of the eastern part of Bane Field (see Section 2.6 for expansion plans).

The Community Children's Playground contains a wide range of equipment for the under-12s, and includes safety surfacing and seating, but does not presently cater for children with disabilities. It was supported by funding from Clare County Council, and from the people and businesses of Killaloe and Ballina, and is well-maintained.

The Killaloe/Ballina Community Garden was established in 2011 as a non-profit run organisation in conjunction with local residents. It has since transformed the space in the north-east corner of Bane Field into a productive fruit and vegetable growing area, and proven to be a success in 'active citizenship'.

The remaining open space areas comprises un-managed grassland sloping towards the R463, interspersed with a mix of mature deciduous trees and sporadic ornamental conifers. Scrub and invasive species occur in small stands throughout the area, including Japanese Knotweed.

Tobermurragh is far more natural in appearance and contains a fine collection of mature Beech trees, together with other mixed deciduous woodland trees, scrub and marshland. An informal footpath threads through the area, linking to the Holy Well and an adjacent viewing area and short section of boardwalk (re-cycled plastic in deteriorating condition). The Holy Well is a recorded monument of National Importance, associated with the legend of Brian Boru and a former source of water supply to the town of Killaloe. Although some improvement works have been carried out to the surrounds of the well in the recent past, its presentation is poor and in need of maintenance.

Bane Field and Tobermurragh are physically separated by the main road, which is bounded by an unsightly concrete wall (partly retaining) to the north side and by a raised grass bank retained by a rubble stone wall to the south. Mature roadside trees contribute significantly to the character of the area.



Bane Field car park



Community Playground



Community Gardens



Bane Field open space



Adjacent waterways Ireland toilets/changing block



Tobermurragh Holy Well and boardwalk

2. Site Appraisal

2.8 Tennis Club Proposals

Killaloe Lawn Tennis Club currently consists of four fully flood-lit all weather courts over-looked by a club house with changing and shower facilities. Membership of the club is open to all members of the public. The adjoining car park has recently been re-surfaced, and can cater for up to 25 vehicles. Given its growing popularity, the club is actively pursuing further expansion of facilities on the Bane Field site.

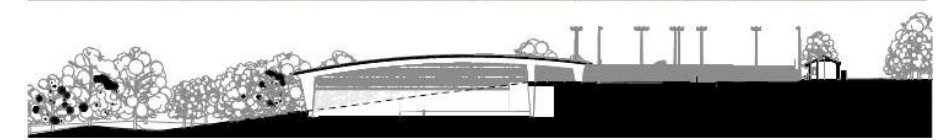
As shown by the adjoining images, the outline proposals for expansion of the Club (Killaloe LTC - Concept Design Stage, 10th November 2014) envisage an ambitious plan comprising the following main elements:

- Retaining existing Courts 1-4
- Re-assigning use of existing club house
- Provision of new club house
- Two indoor tennis courts
- Gated pedestrian access from R463
- Practice wall
- Terraced landscaped area
- Mini practice court with practice wall
- Extending the existing car park
- Retaining the existing playground
- Provision of new playground
- Landscaped area with pedestrian pathways
- Amphitheatre style seating
- Retaining existing vehicular entrance

The suitability of any such expansion plans need to be carefully considered in relation to the topography, the existing vegetation pattern, the visual impact on adjoining properties and the park itself, and the subsequent loss of accessible public open space arising from the proposals.



Existing views of the tennis club and its surroundings



Illustrative proposals for expansion of the tennis club
Cummins & Voortman Ltd. (November 2014)

2. Site Appraisal

2.9 The Dry Dock Area

This interesting yet little known waterfront heritage area is accessed via a narrow laneway extending from the junction with the R463, and comprises the Dock itself (leased by the Killaloe Coast Guard Unit, and owned by the ESB), Pier Head (owned by Waterways Ireland), and former Steamboat Quay offices (Protected Structure, owned by the ESB).

The construction of Pier Head dates to c. 1790 and forms the northern entrance to the Killaloe Canal which was built under the direction of the Shannon Steam Navigation Company to allow the safe passage of boats through Killaloe. The canal remained in constant use from around 1799 to 1929. The dry dock is also where the steamer 'Lady Lansdowne' was assembled in 1833-34, from sections pre-fabricated in Liverpool.

The Steam Boat Offices, also referred to as Johnson's House, were the headquarters of the Shannon Steam Navigation Company and form part of a complex of interesting waterfront structures. Based on the first edition Ordnance Survey map, there was once a second building of a similar size to the north-west of the surviving building which was probably removed following the construction of the dry dock.

The historical and architectural character of the office building remains largely intact. The 7-bay single storey structure is finely constructed and displays a high level of craftsmanship and use of local materials. Many original fittings and features survive, including the heavy slate roof with over-hanging stone eaves, timber doors, small pane timber sash windows and internal elements such as flag stone floors and a decorative fire surround. The building is currently used by the ESB for storing stone core samples (in timber boxes), which occupy much of the internal space (apart from the garage/workshop area to the north).

The former office building assumes particular significance due to its association with the Steam Navigation Company and to the presence the canal, Pier Head, pier walls and dry dock, which are also constructed to a high standard and are integral to the history of Killaloe, but these areas are currently not accessible to the public. The building complex represents a good example of the history of steamboat travel and communications on Lough Derg and the Shannon, which could be further explored and developed in the context of other related sites and structures which survive along the shores of the lake.



Former Steamboat Quay offices

Conservation and Future Protection of the Site

- Immediate conservation works are required in order to prevent further decay to the former steamboat offices building, particularly to the interior. Due to the high architectural significance, and the historically intact nature of the building, these works should be specified by a conservation architect.
- Works to repair the roof and to weatherproof the structure and protect it from the elements should be prioritised.
- Although of a simple nature, the interior of the building should be considered of significance and all elements retained internally, including joinery items such as fireplaces, doors, architraves, skirting boards and shutters should be protected and retained. In addition, original finishes such as the flag stone floors, lath and plaster ceilings and lime based wall plasters and paints all contribute to the historic character of this building. Any proposed conservation works should also consider these elements for retention and repair.
- Any works to the structure or within the historic curtilage should only be undertaken in consultation with the Local Authority.
- As a protected structure, this building would benefit from Local Authority conservation grants which could be utilised to carry out emergency repairs to the building.
- The stone wall boundary and gate piers to the south and east of the steamboat offices building yard are in integral part of this complex and should be retained and maintained.
- Development within the immediate curtilage and in the wider historic area around the Killaloe canal should be very carefully considered. The conservation of the former steamboat offices building should be undertaken in the context of this historic environment.
- The former steamboat offices building was originally included in an area which incorporated the dry docks and pier head to the north. These areas are currently not accessible to the public. The possibility of re-opening this area of the historic canal complex should be considered in the future.

Former Steamboat Offices, Pier Head, Killaloe, Co. Clare

Lough Derg Heritage Audit – Case Study (November 2011)

Jack Coughlan Associates

Architects and Conservation Consultants



The Dry Dock area as viewed from across the river



Extract from the first edition Ordnance Survey (1840-42) showing the complex of waterfront structures in relation to Tobermurragh

2. Site Appraisal

2.10 Existing Vegetation

Designated sites of ecological importance in the locality of Bane Field and Tobermurragh comprise the Lough Derg Proposed Natural Heritage Area (000011), Lower River Shannon candidate Special Area of Conservation (002165) and Lough Derg (Shannon) Special Protection Area (004058), located approximately 170m, 550m and 1050m from the site respectively.

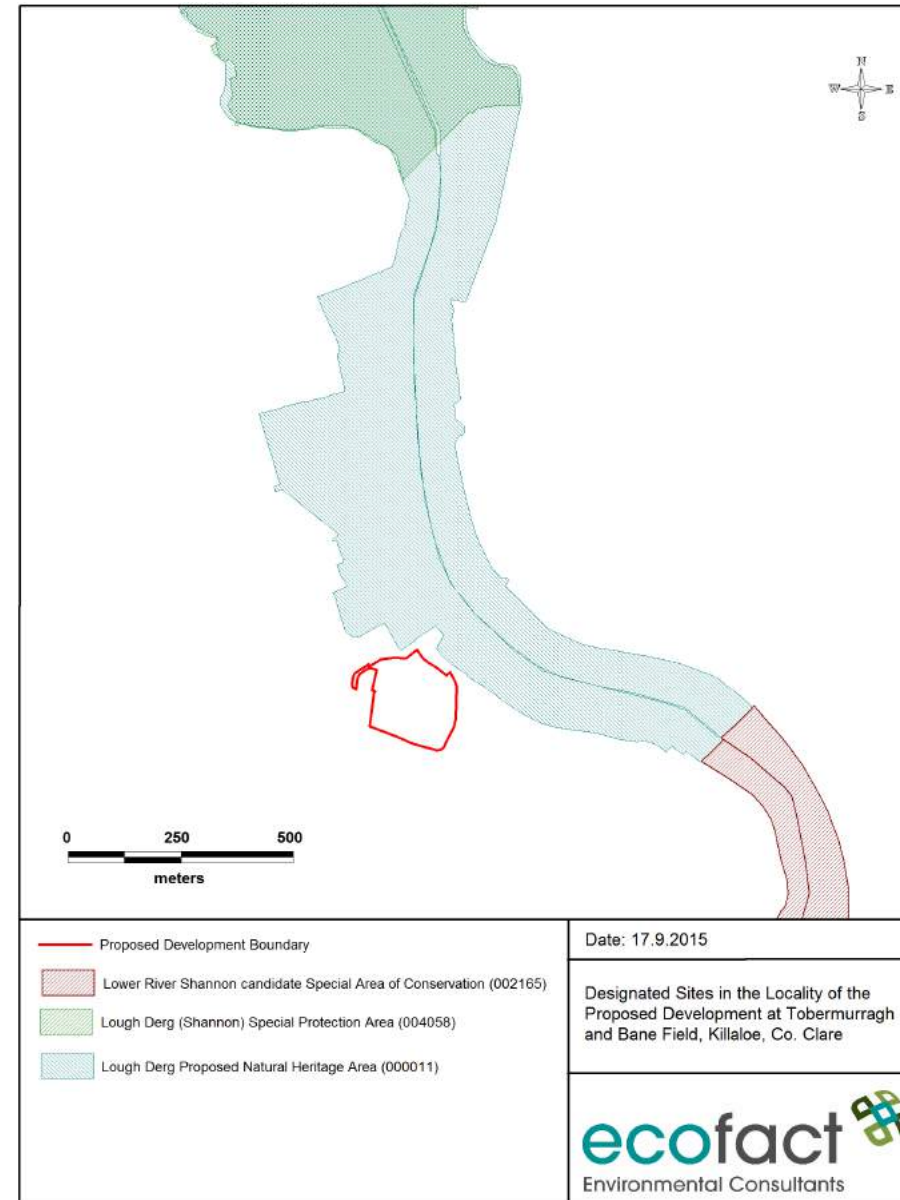
A Phase 1 Habitat Survey of the site was undertaken during early September 2015 and the primary habitats were recorded according to the Heritage Council publication 'Best Practice Guidance for Habitat Surveying and Mapping' (Smith *et al.*, 2011). Habitat mapping was aided by aerial photography and habitats recorded were classified according to Fossitt 'A Guide to Habitats in Ireland' (2000).

The habitats recorded were Mixed Broadleaved Woodland (WD1), Scattered Trees & Parkland (WD5), Treelines (WL2), Scrub (WS1), Drainage Ditch (FW4), Marsh (GM1) Buildings & Artificial Surfaces (BL3), Stone walls & Other Stonework (BL1), Dry Meadows & Grassy Verges (GS2), Amenity Grassland (GA2). Marsh habitat occurred in the part of the site to the north of the R463 and formed a mosaic with scrub to the north of an artificial elevated recycled plastic walkway. This was the only habitat evaluated as being of Local Importance (higher value), the remainder evaluated as being of Local Importance (lower value).

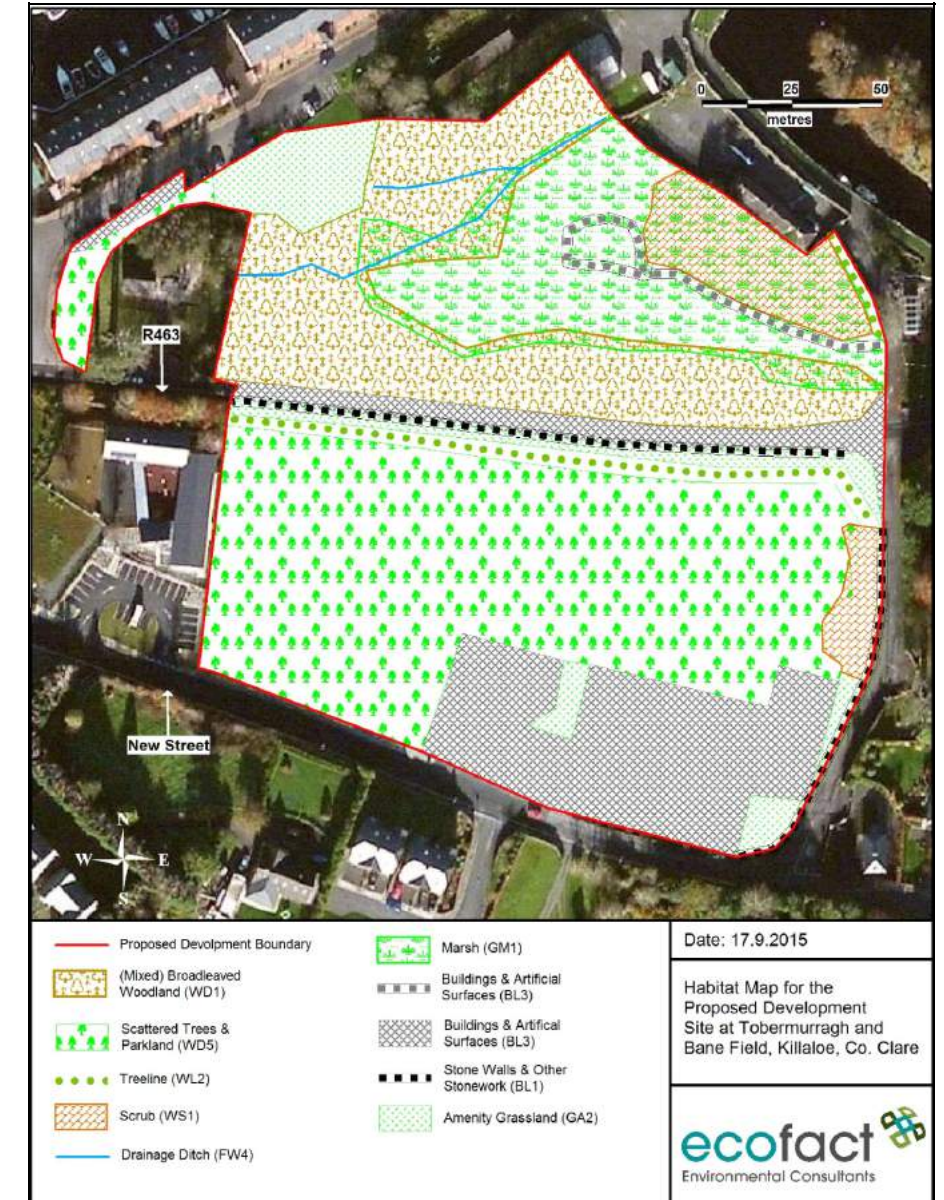
The Survey also noted that there are three non-native invasive species established on the site - Japanese knotweed, Himalayan knotweed and Giant rhubarb.

The Survey of Trees in Towns and Villages of County Clare (2015) identified Bane Field and Tobermurragh as being important for its natural heritage, consisting of broadleaf woodland, wetland, grassland and marsh, which has largely been allowed to grow naturally. The site is especially characterised by large mature specimens of Beech along the road, and a mature Scots Pine, which are all assessed as Category A trees due to the contribution made to enhancing the western approach to the town centre.

Other notable trees within Bane Field include Norway Spruce in Fair condition; a row of 50 roadside semi-mature Beech in Good condition and high amenity value; clusters of semi-mature Chestnut, Birch and Whitebeam in the Community Garden; a fine mature Red Oak (Category A) to the rear of the tennis courts; and a semi-mature Lime on the south-east corner of the tennis courts.



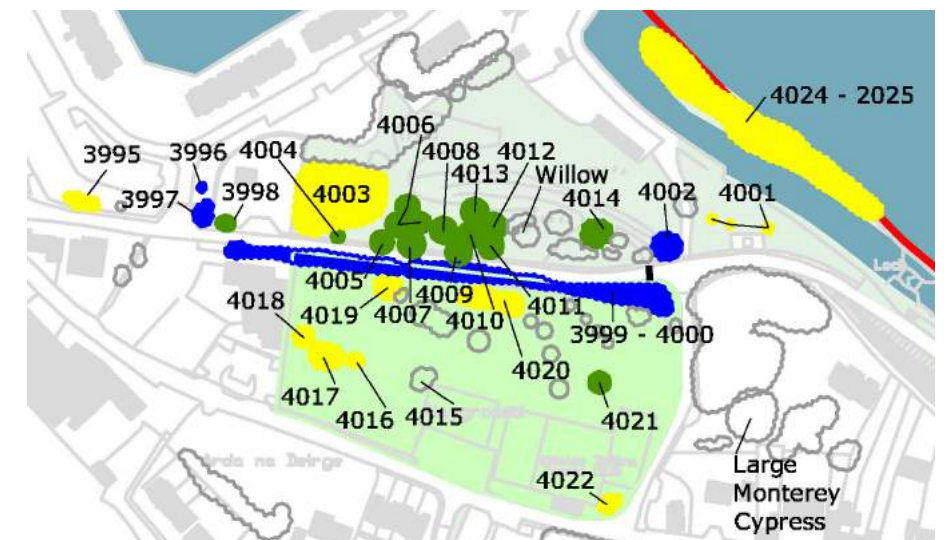
Designated sites in the locality of Bane Field and Tobermurragh



Phase 1 Habitat Survey Plan



Dominant Red Oak Category A (Ref. 4021) to rear of existing tennis courts



Extract from Survey of Trees and Villages in County Clare - Killaloe

3. Strategy Proposals

3.1 Strategy Development

The overall aim of the project is to identify and design the optimum development proposition for Tobermurragh and Bane Field as a potential new urban park, informed by its industrial, cultural and natural heritage, while enhancing its gateway location at the edge of Killaloe. The main physical influences on realising this potential are ensuring that the two parts of the site are re-configured as complimentary halves of the one place, while also accommodating the existing and future requirements of the crèche, the playground, the community garden and the tennis club, taking due account of the topography and natural features.

It is proposed that successfully linking the two parts can be achieved by creating a continuous north-south pedestrian spine, combined with traffic calming measures on the R463.

The role of the existing playground needs to be considered in relation to the need to accommodate a wider range of recreational pursuits for children, teenagers and adults of all ages and abilities.

As the Community Garden is a well-used facility that sits comfortably within its setting on Bane Field, it is proposed that this is retained and possibly developed further as an informal recreational and educational resource.

For the creche, any future expansion plans could be concentrated within the existing creche site boundary and, if necessary, by extending into the adjoining vacant field to the west of the site between the R463 and New Street (zoned for Mixed Use in the East Clare Local Area Plan 2011-2017), and including a possible pedestrian link to the northern part of Bane Field.

Expansion of the tennis club will result in a major influence on Bane Field, and needs to be considered in relation to the existing topography, vegetation, views from neighbouring properties and the effects of reducing the amount of publicly accessible open space.

Tobermurragh is important for its woodland and wetlands, and as the location of the Holy Well, and there is considerable potential for enhancing the natural qualities of the area through vegetation management to compliment the more municipal/urban setting of Bane Field, combined with the repair and maintenance of existing facilities and vegetation management.

The considerable opportunities presented by the Shannon Waterfront are mostly dictated by land ownerships but, through appropriate mechanisms, exploiting the maritime history of the area, together with maximising linkages to/from the waterfront walkway, Aillebhaun and the town centre, could become a key element in enhancing the local sense of place and the overall visitor experience.



Main Site Features

- Key
- Site boundary
 - ★ Recorded Monument
 - Protected Structure
 - Significant feature trees
 - Other feature trees
 - - - - -> Existing links within site
 - 1 Tennis courts
 - 2 Children's play area
 - 3 Community Garden
 - 4 Car Park
 - 5 Possible location for crèche expansion
 - 6 Holy Well and boardwalk
 - 7 Dry Dock

3. Strategy Proposals

3.2 Traffic Circulation and Parking Options

The existing traffic influence is a major consideration for ensuring that Tobermurragh and Bane Field can be viewed as complimentary halves of the one place. The R463 road that lies between the two parts needs to be incorporated into the overall park so that its current severance effect is reduced and to make it a more equitable place for all users. The road also needs to serve as a strongly identifiable 'gateway' into Killaloe.

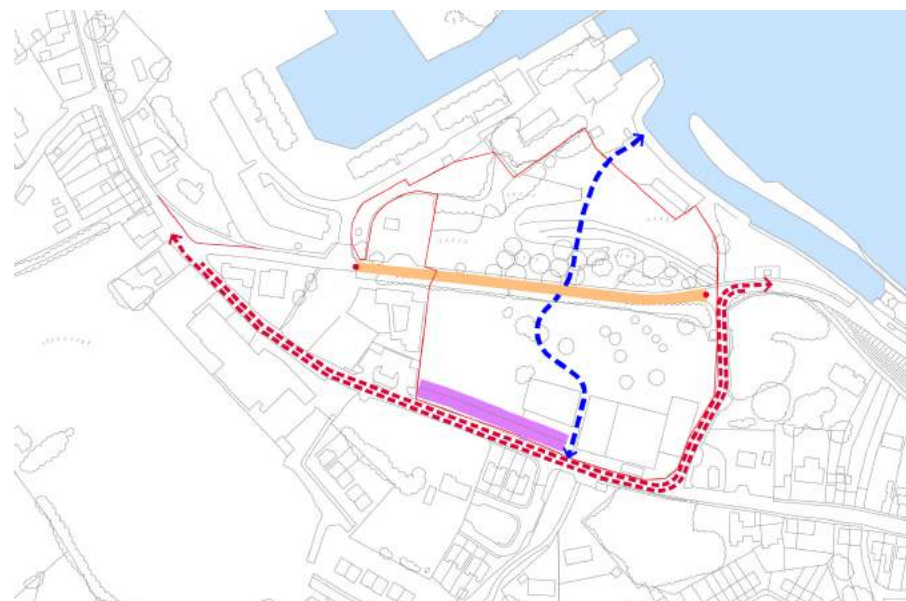
The adjoining diagrams explore three options for reducing the currently dominant impacts of traffic on the site of the proposed park. The proposals are indicative only, and should also be considered in the context of the proposed Killaloe Western Bypass, which is expected to provide a significant amount of north/south through traffic being removed from this approach to Killaloe.

Option 1, which removes traffic entirely from the R463 through the park, achieves the greatest benefits in terms of minimising traffic impacts, but the proposed diversion via New Street would result in longer journey times, while the geometry of the link to the east of Bane Field between New Street and the R463 is mostly unsuitable for accommodating the displaced traffic.

Option 2 shows a possible one-way vehicle flow around Bane Field, reducing the volume of traffic on the R463 through the park. Although this would free-up road space for other uses (such as on-street parking and/or pedestrian and cycle facilities), the one-way system would be inconvenient to local residents/businesses and require major junction modifications and associated signage.

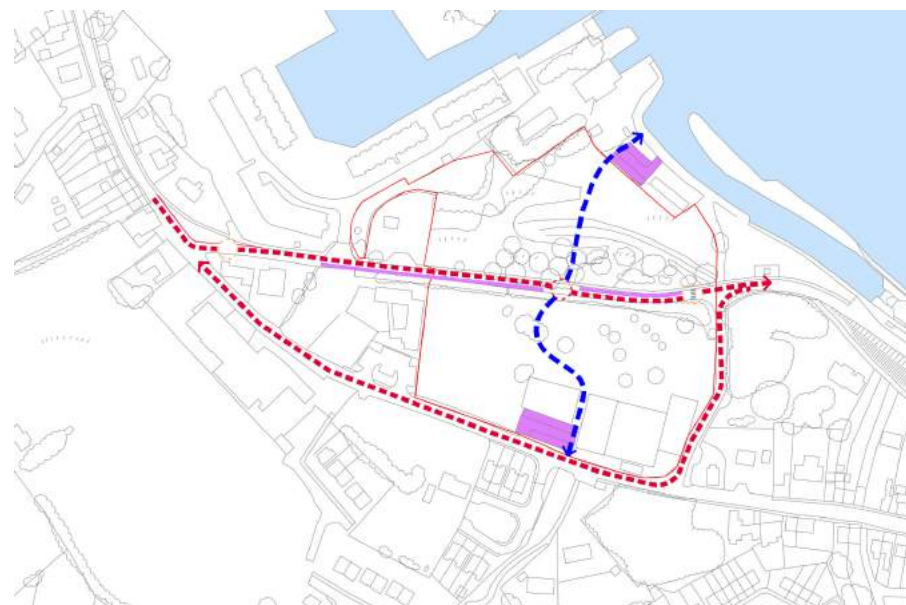
Option 3 retains the current vehicle circulation and incorporates traffic calming measures at entry points through the park either end of the R463 and at the crossing point of the proposed Pedestrian Spine route. As this would result in least disruption to existing vehicle flows, while providing suitable measures for raising awareness of the park to passing motorists, as well as contributing towards achieving a strongly identifiable gateway into Killaloe, it is the preferred option to be incorporated in the strategy development for the park.

The adjoining diagrams also show the proposed location of the main Pedestrian Spine (refer Section 3.5), and include different parking arrangements, which are further considered as part of the site layout options (Section 3.9).



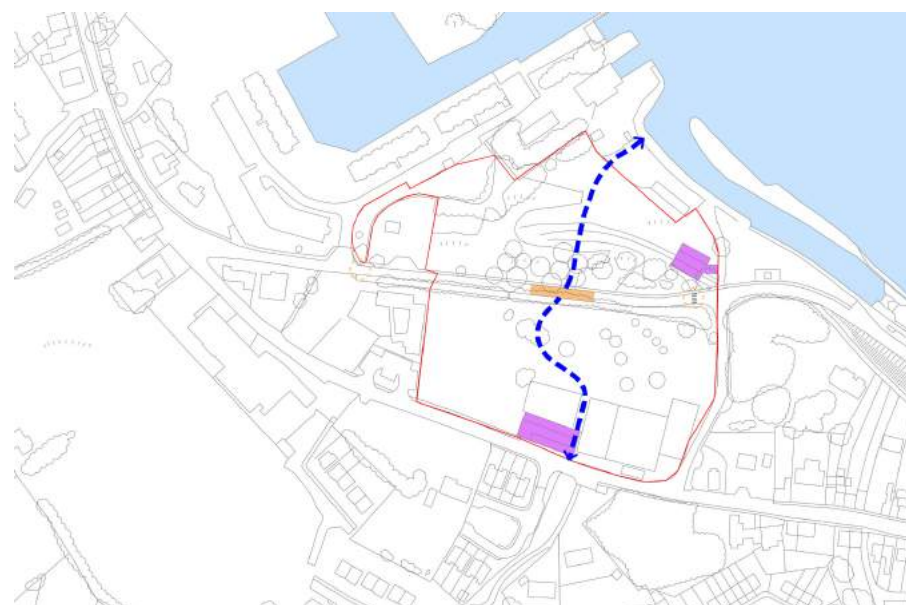
OPTION 1

- Remove through traffic from the R463, and replace with two-way route along New Street and the local access road to east of Tennis Club.
- Create walkway/cycle route along traffic-free section of road.
- Re-configure existing car park (reduced width) and extend westwards along New Street (total 40 spaces).
- Create linking pedestrian spine route between New Street and the Shannon waterfront.



OPTION 2

- Provide one-way traffic circulation around Bane Field - R463 inbound traffic and New Street outbound traffic (New Street could remain two-way to cater for local access traffic).
- Introduce traffic calming at entry points either end of R463 - e.g. road narrowing (priority flow), pedestrian crossings and signage.
- Create traffic-calmed route along R463, with improved pedestrian/cycle facilities and possible on-street parking (staggered as a further traffic calming measure).
- Retain existing car park (approx. 20 spaces) and create new car park on waterfront next to former Steamboat Quay offices (20 spaces).
- Create linking pedestrian spine route between New Street and Shannon waterfront.



OPTION 3

- Retain existing traffic circulation around Bane Field.
- Introduce traffic calming at entry points either end of R463 - e.g. road narrowing (priority flow), pedestrian crossings and signage.
- Provide further traffic calming at crossing point of pedestrian spine route, e.g. textured surface and road narrowing.
- Retain existing car park (approx. 20 spaces) and create new car park (approx. 16 spaces) off entry road to waterfront, close to junction with R463.
- Create linking pedestrian spine route between New Street and Shannon waterfront.

3. Strategy Proposals

3.3 Traffic Calming Options

In order to reduce the dominance of traffic along the R463, and to help raise driver's awareness that they are passing through a recreational area where more vulnerable road users are likely to be present, it is proposed to introduce traffic calming measures at the entry/end points of the road between Bane Field and Tobermurragh and at the central crossing point of the proposed Pedestrian Spine route. Centre line road markings could also be removed to help raise driver awareness of the change in priority.

The entry/end treatments could comprise pinch-points forming priority chicanes requiring 'Give way to oncoming traffic', combined with the introduction of a 30km/h zone through the park to reduce vehicle speeds. The pinch points would also serve as pedestrian crossing points for the secondary footpaths linking both sides of the road.

The central section of the road could be signified by carriageway narrowing and a change in surface texture either side of the approaches to the proposed Pedestrian Spine route crossing.

Option 1:

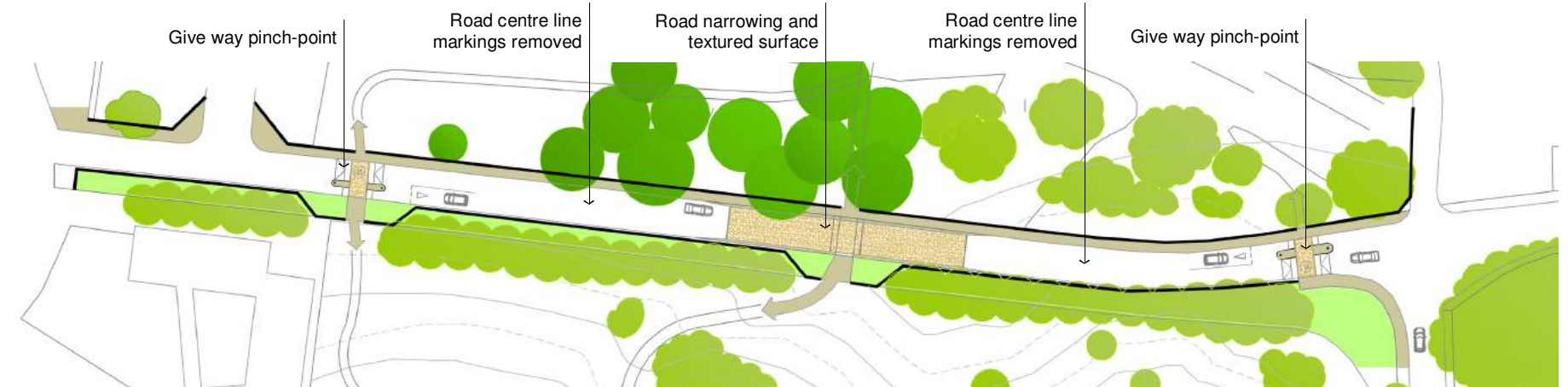
- Gateway pinch points at each end, signifying start of 30km/h zone
- Road narrowing and textured surface at Spine Route crossing
- Removal of road centre line markings

Option 2:

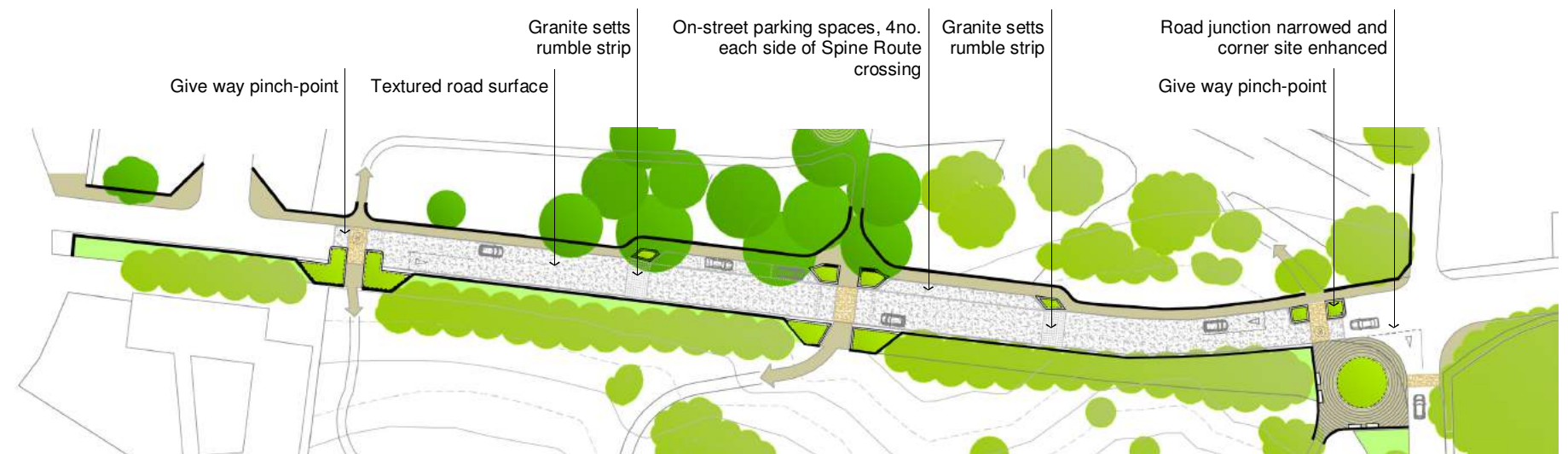
- Gateway pinch points defined by low planting areas at each end, signifying start of 30km/h zone
- Granite setts rumble strips, textured road surface between Gateways (tar-and-chip), and removal of centre line markings
- Provision of on-street parking bays, 4no. spaces each side of Spine Route crossing, defined by low planting areas
- Junction narrowing and improved corner site as secondary park entrance

Option 3:

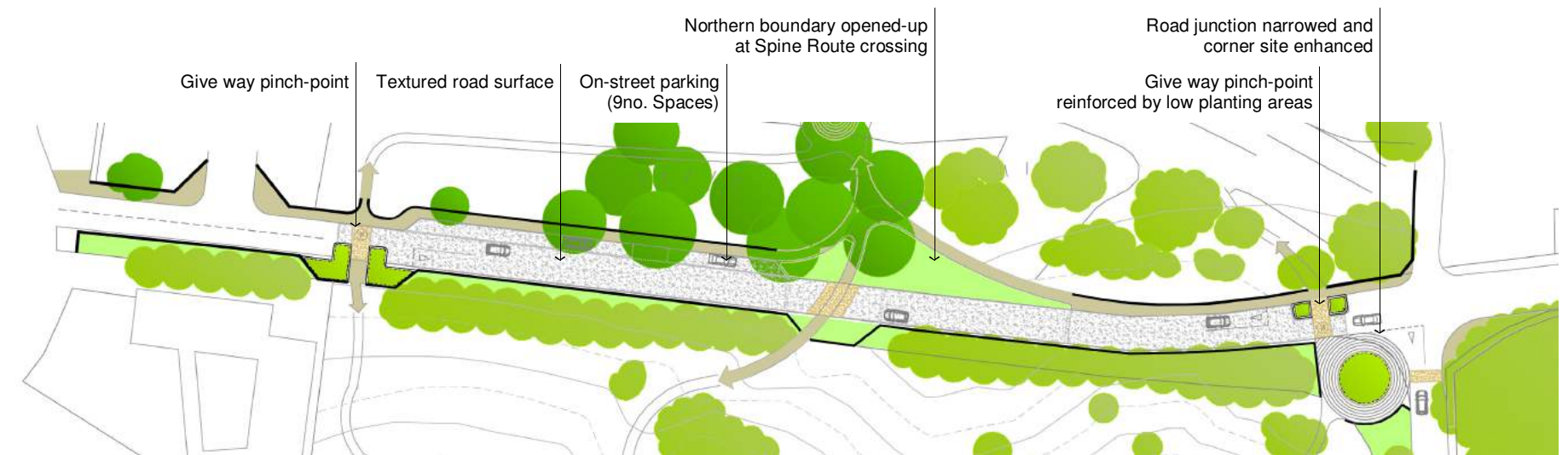
- Gateway pinch points defined by low planting areas at each end, signifying start of 30km/h zone
- Granite setts rumble strips, textured road surface between Gateways (tar-and-chip), and removal of centre line markings
- On-street parking, 9no. spaces to west of Spine Route crossing
- Northern boundary of Tobermurragh opened-up at Spine Route crossing by removal of wall and footpath arrangements
- Junction narrowing and improved corner site as secondary park entrance



Option 1



Option 2



Option 3

3. Strategy Proposals

3.4 Traffic Calming Proposals

The existing rubble stone wall and raised grass embankment to the south of the road would need to be set back at the crossing points to ensure adequate visibility between pedestrians and vehicles. The concrete wall along the northern edge is unsightly and in places in poor condition, as well as visually separating the two parts of the park, and it is proposed that this is removed in its entirety (apart from where it performs a retaining function) and replaced with a low stone rubble wall (with or without decorative railings) to improve the permeability of the park when viewed from the road.

It will be necessary to ensure that the specific legal and consultative procedures relating to the provision of the traffic calming features are fully complied with prior to their introduction.



Illustrative view of eastern gateway (Options 2 + 3)



Illustrative view of eastern gateway as proposed (Option 1)



Typical 'Give way to oncoming traffic' and pinch-point measure as used in Britain



Illustrative view of Pedestrian Spine crossing as proposed (Option 2)

3. Strategy Proposals

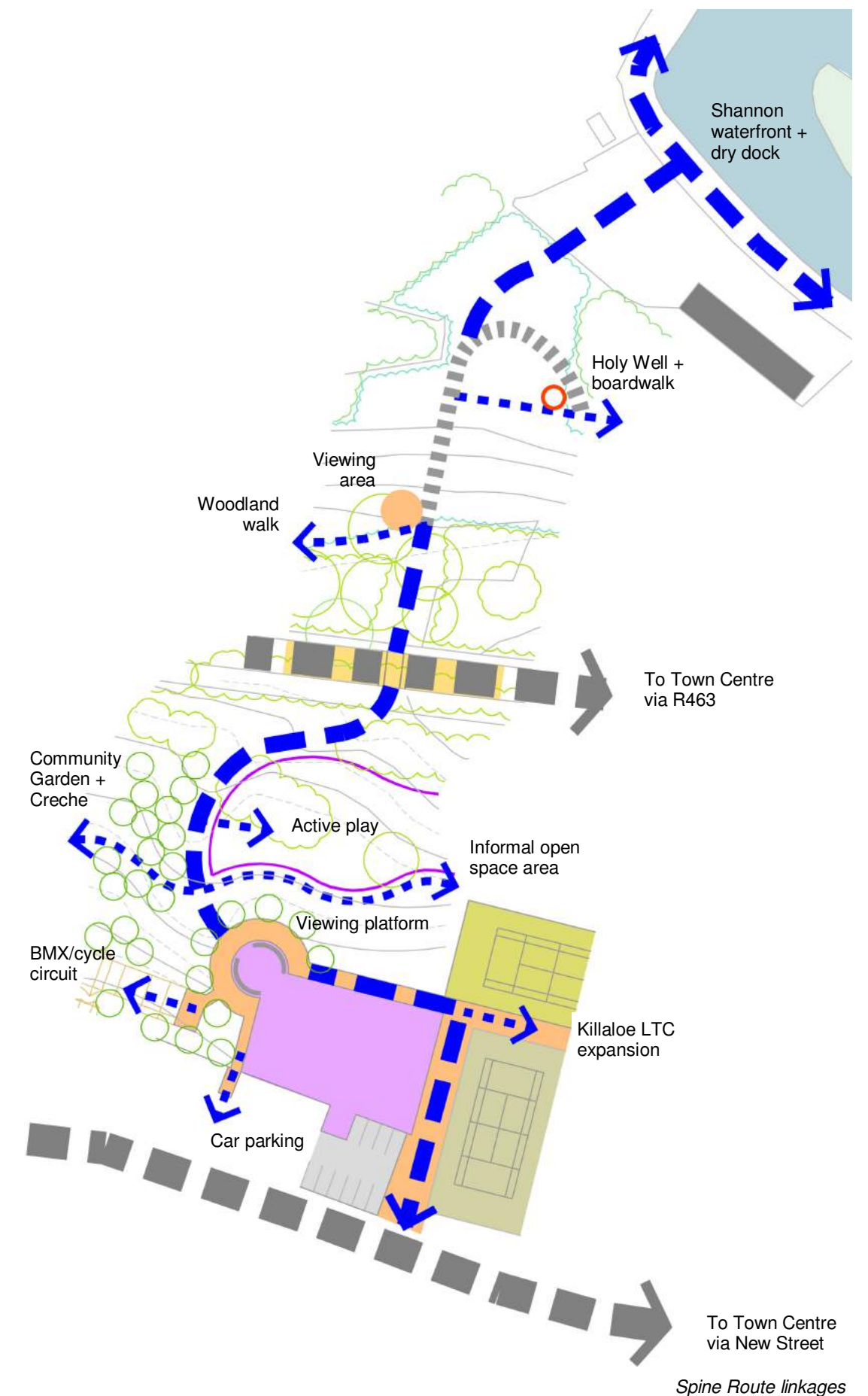
3.5 Pedestrian Spine Route

To maximise linkages and permeability through the two parts of the site, a central Pedestrian Spine route is proposed, extending from New Street in the south to the waterfront in the north. This would be the primary circulation route of the new park, linking the key facilities (car parking, playground, tennis courts, Community Garden, creche, active play areas, woodland walks and the Holy Well), and providing a strong connection between Bane Field and Tobermurragh and onwards to the existing routes to/from the waterfront walkway, Aillebhaun and the town centre via New Street.

The Spine Route would be constructed to a consistent gradient (1:20 wherever possible), and surfaced in robust materials, in order to maximise accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists and wheelchair users. Consideration could also be given to lighting the route so as to increase the sense of security and to optimise its use. A major, traffic calmed crossing would be required at the R463 (as proposed in Section 3.3). The existing boardwalk by the Holy Well would be refurbished and extended to provide a link northwards (across marshy ground) to the waterfront.



Illustrative view of Pedestrian Spine route as proposed



Spine Route linkages

3. Strategy Proposals

3.6 Shannon Waterfront

As described in Section 2.9, the historic canal complex represents an important aspect of the Shannon Waterfront in Killaloe and the possibility of re-opening this area to the public should be actively pursued in the context of the proposed new park.

The former Steamboat Quay offices (Protected Structure) would be central to enhancing the area for the greater benefit of visitors. The building should preferably be acquired from the ESB and, following refurbishment as recommended in the Lough Derg Heritage Audit (refer Section 2.7), could be used for community-based activities such as workshops and heritage interpretation (incorporating the history of related sites and structures). The adjoining land, within the boundary wall, could be utilised as an outdoor exhibition area of boating memorabilia associated with the dry dock and steamboat travel on Lough Derg and the Shannon. The area could be directly linked to the proposed Spine Footpath extending through the park, and to a new proposed car park off the access track close to its junction with the R463.

Subject to the longer term requirements of the Killaloe Coast Guard Unit, and to potential acquisition from ESB, the Dry Dock could be ideally utilised as a community boat building/repair initiative, associated with the visitor uses promoted for the Steamboat Quay building. A similar project has been successfully undertaken in Limerick by the Ilen School and Network for Wooden Boat Building, a charitable organisation formed in 2000 that provides work-base learning and therapy for students with a range of backgrounds, abilities and needs. A wide range of traditional Irish boats have been constructed by students of the school, such as the Gandelow, Currach and Dory, as well as re-building of the AK Ilen.

The surrounding area of Pier Head (owned by Waterways Ireland), should be made more accessible to the public, subject to health and safety considerations and preferably under the management of a new organisation tasked with developing the community, educational and visitor potential of the heritage complex.



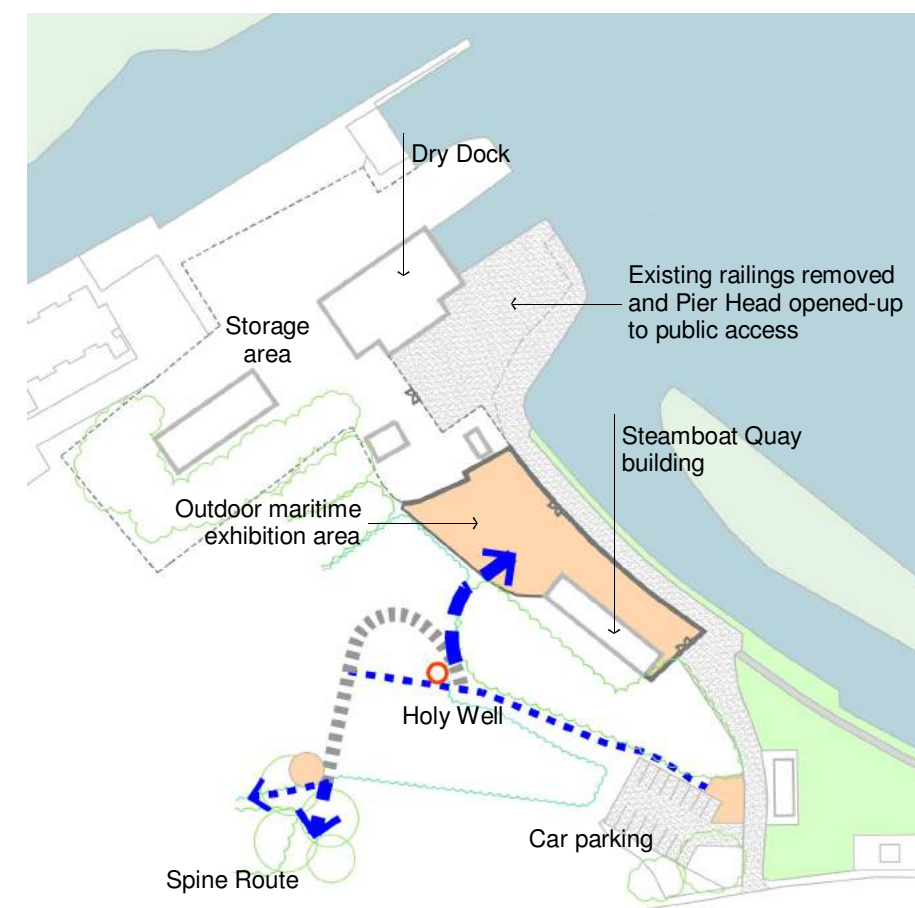
View towards Pier Head



Existing entry to Steamboat Quay building



Inside the Dry Dock structure



Waterfront Proposals Plan



The Ilen School and Network for Wooden Boat Building, Limerick

3. Strategy Proposals

3.7 The Holy Well and Boardwalk

Tobermurragh Holy Well forms the central focal point for the northern part of the park. Although not a 'Holy Well' it is known to have historic associations with Brian Boru. As described on the existing interpretation sign:

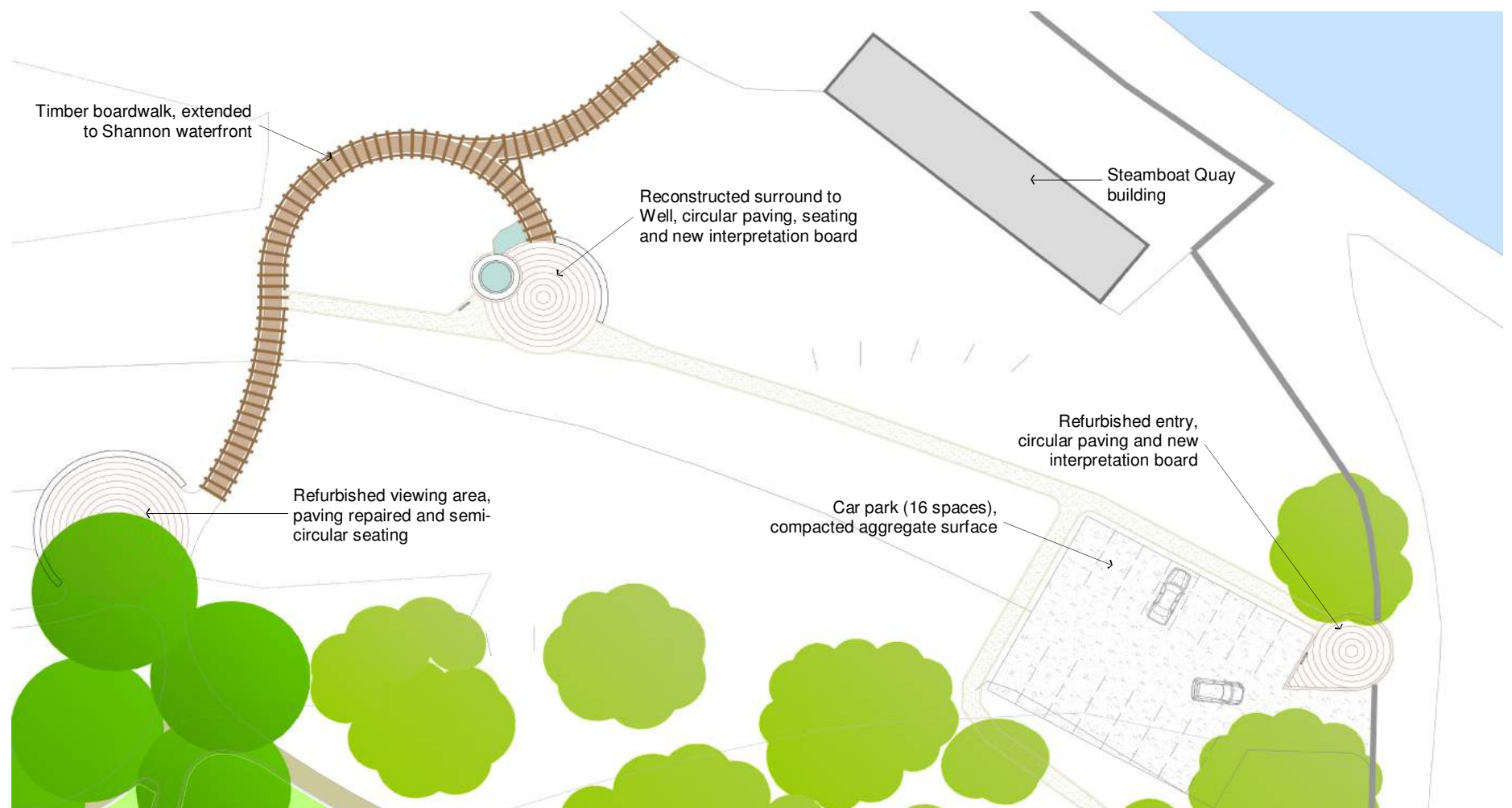
Tobermurragh (Murrough's Well) is named after Murrough, Brian Boru's eldest son and commander-in-chief at the battle of Clontarf, 1014. Tradition states that he was baptised with water from this well. For many years it supplied Killaloe with drinking water. The red brick enclosure was erected by Major Ingham, the owner in 1899.

Whereas the brick enclosure has some historic merit, it is in poor condition and unsightly at present. It is proposed that this could be replaced with a low stone wall, improving views of the well itself and increasing the awareness of the water source. Other proposals for the area include:

- Creating a circular paving area (concrete blocks), with seating and a new interpretation board, to enhance the setting and appreciation of the Well.
- Replacing the existing recycled plastic boardwalk with more substantial timber structure, and extending this to the Steamboat Quay building as part of the Pedestrian Spine Route.
- Refurbishing the existing viewing area around base of Beech tree, and providing seating.
- Introducing a small car park on the eastern edge of Tobermurragh, and refurbishing the entrance area with circular paving (concrete blocks) and a new interpretation board.



Holy Well access as proposed



Proposed layout plan



Existing interpretation sign

3. Strategy Proposals

3.8 Vegetation Management

(Mixed) Broadleaved woodland (WD1) / Drainage Ditch (FW4)

This habitat occurs as a mosaic at the north-western side of the site and comprises a mixture of deep ditches and stands of young mixed deciduous trees. There are also a number of individual mature Alder and willow trees dispersed randomly throughout the habitat. The understorey communities include heavily of bramble (which could be removed), Winter Heliotrope, stinging nettle, ferns and sedges. Yellow Flag and dense stands of wet ground associated herbs such as greater willow herb are also present. Ivy is evident on areas of exposed dead wood and frequently on young and mature trees (and should be removed). A number of ornamental non-native plants such as Buddleia and Himalayan knotweed growing in sporadic stands should also be removed.

Treelines (WL2)

A significant treeline of beech and alder occurs adjacent to the south side of the R463 through the centre of the site, which are currently in Good condition but need to be monitored regularly.

Marsh (GM1)

This habitat occurs towards the northern edge of the site and is dominated by Common reed and with some Watercress along the margins. A number of individual alder trees present (which could be removed) growing alongside brambles. There are also patches of Compact Rush and Soft Rush along with Carex species. The Reed stands are interlaced by bindweed in the drier areas, which together with Brambles should be removed through ongoing maintenance.

Scrub (WS1)

A thick sward of brambles occurs along the south-eastern edge of the site, and also containing large amounts of bindweed and the non-native invasive *Gunnera* spp. The vegetation should be eradicated through cultivation and appropriate herbicide treatment.

Scattered trees and parkland (WD5)

This is the dominant vegetation type in Bane Field. It is unmanaged and overgrown with invasive species occurring in small stands throughout. Grass layers are overgrown with undesirable plant species such as greater and lesser plantain, along with marsh thistle and occasional stands of Gorse, which should be eradicated by regular cutting. A small stand of Japanese knotweed needs to be controlled through the application of appropriate herbicides by a competent person, and in accordance with Regulations 49 and 50 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011. The trees within this habitat are mainly Alder and Ash, with sporadic ornamental conifer trees (which should be removed) and Cherry blossom, Hazel, Pendunculate Oak and Willow, all in generally Good condition.



Existing Vegetation Plan

3. Strategy Proposals

3.9 General Layout Options

Three broad layout options and their relative features are explored on the adjoining panel, and the advantages/disadvantages of each further considered in the following Sections. The elements that are common to each option are:

- Traffic calming measures (as proposed in Section 3.3);
- Main Pedestrian Spine (as proposed in Section 3.5);
- Possible future expansion of the creche (as proposed in Section 3.1);
- Retaining the existing Community Garden (as proposed in Section 3.1);
- Shannon Waterfront proposals (as proposed in Section 3.6);
- The Holy Well and Boardwalk structure (as proposed in Section 3.7); and
- Vegetation management (as proposed in Section 3.8).

OPTION A

Bane Field:

- Community playground and parking area relocated to western end of New Street.
- Community garden retained.
- New tennis courts located to west of existing courts (on current site of playground and car park).
- Existing tennis courts partially covered.
- New activity play area.
- Central viewing area and new tree planting.

Tobermurragh:

- New car park on waterfront (next to former Steamboat office building).
- Refurbished Holy Well and entry area.
- Vegetation management.



OPTION B

Bane Field:

- Community playground and garden retained as existing.
- Existing car park extended westwards along New Street.
- New tennis courts (covered) and Club House, Practice Wall and Mini-practice Court.
- New activity play area and BMX/cycle circuit.
- Central viewing area and new tree planting.

Tobermurragh:

- New car parks close to entry from R463 and on waterfront next to former Steamboat office building.
- On-street parking either side of Spine Route crossing.
- Refurbished Holy Well and entry area.
- Vegetation management.



OPTION C

Bane Field:

- Community playground and garden retained as existing.
- Existing car park extended westwards along New Street.
- New tennis courts arranged around existing Category 'A' tree.
- Existing tennis courts partially covered.
- New activity play area and BMX/cycle circuit.
- Central viewing area and new tree planting.

Tobermurragh:

- New car park close to entry from R463.
- On-street parking to west of Spine Route crossing.
- Refurbished Holy Well and entry area.
- New footpath link around pumping station.
- Outdoor exhibition area by waterfront.
- Vegetation management.



3. Strategy Proposals

3.10 General Layout Option A

Advantages

- Maximum extent of publicly accessible open space can be retained in Bane Field.
- Two new tennis courts can be accommodated in association with existing courts, while maintaining the 'built line' form along New Street.
- Either existing or new courts could possibly be covered (indoor).
- Provision of new and expanded children's play equipment that can be fully inclusive.
- Prominent viewing terrace to enhance natural surveillance.
- Retention of Red Oak Category 'A' tree to south of existing courts.
- Additional car parking provision next to Steamboat Quay office.

Disadvantages:

- Loss of existing playground and car park - wasted recent investment, and costs of providing replacement facilities in less favourable locations.
- Access to relocated car park would be constrained by topography.
- New tennis courts may present unacceptable visual impact (e.g. floodlighting) for over-looking properties on New Street.
- Restricted space for new tennis club house.
- New car park at waterfront may detract from heritage character of Steamboat Quay building.

| KEY | |
|---|------------------------------------|
|  | EXISTING Site extents (approx.) |
|  | General Open Space |
|  | General Recreation |
|  | Tree groups |
|  | Category 'A' trees |
|  | Scrub vegetation |
|  | Marshland |
|  | Contours (at 0.50m interval) |
|  | Car park |
|  | Community playground |
|  | Community gardens |
|  | Tennis courts |
|  | Holy Well and boardwalk |
| PROPOSED | |
|  | Car parking |
|  | Active play facilities |
|  | Tennis courts |
|  | Tennis courts covered |
|  | Spine pedestrian route |
|  | Footpath links |
|  | Traffic calming |
|  | Special hard landscape areas |
|  | Tree planting |



3. Strategy Proposals

3.11 General Layout Option B

Advantages

- Playground and car park retained in current location.
- Car park extended westwards to provide 17 additional spaces.
- Tennis Club expansion plans partially accommodated as proposed.
- Wide range of active recreation facilities provided in Bane Field.
- Prominent viewing terrace to enhance natural surveillance.
- Additional car parking provision next to Steamboat Quay office and off access track by junction with the R463.
- R463 on-street parking to reinforce presence and accessibility of the park.

Disadvantages:

- Covered tennis court structure as proposed would have high visual impact, dominating views to/from Bane Field, and not continuing the 'built line' form along New Street.
- Substantial excavation would be required to achieve the single tennis court structure.
- Loss of publicly accessible open space .
- Loss of Red Oak Category 'A' tree to south of existing courts.
- New car park at waterfront may detract from heritage character of Steamboat Quay building.

| KEY | |
|-----------------|------------------------------|
| EXISTING | |
| | Site extents (approx.) |
| | General Open Space |
| | General Recreation |
| | Tree groups |
| | Category 'A' trees |
| | Scrub vegetation |
| | Marshland |
| | Contours (at 0.50m interval) |
| | Car park |
| | Community playground |
| | Community gardens |
| | Tennis courts |
| | Holy Well and boardwalk |
| PROPOSED | |
| | Car parking |
| | Active play facilities |
| | Tennis courts |
| | Tennis courts covered |
| | Spine pedestrian route |
| | Footpath links |
| | Traffic calming |
| | Special hard landscape areas |
| | Tree planting |



3. Strategy Proposals

3.12 General Layout Option C

Advantages

- Playground and car park retained in current location.
- Car park extended westwards to provide 17 additional spaces.
- Tennis Club expansion accommodated in compact form and possibly terraced in response to the contours.
- Retention of Red Oak Category 'A' tree to south of existing courts.
- Wide range of active recreation facilities provided in Bane Field.
- Prominent viewing terrace to enhance natural surveillance.
- Additional car parking provision off access track by junction with the R463 (up to 16 spaces).
- R463 on-street parking to reinforce presence and accessibility of the park.
- Exhibition space to side of Steamboat Quay offices to enhance waterfront heritage.
- Additional pedestrian link around water treatment plant.

Disadvantages:

- Covered tennis court structure and reduced size of new Club House may not be achievable/acceptable.
- Substantial excavation required to form the terraced arrangement.
- Loss of publicly accessible open space.
- Footpath link around water treatment plant may not be well used.

| KEY | |
|----------|------------------------------|
| EXISTING | |
| | Site extents (approx.) |
| | General Open Space |
| | General Recreation |
| | Tree groups |
| | Category 'A' trees |
| | Scrub vegetation |
| | Marshland |
| | Contours (at 0.50m interval) |
| | Car park |
| | Community playground |
| | Community gardens |
| | Tennis courts |
| | Holy Well and boardwalk |
| PROPOSED | |
| | Car parking |
| | Active play facilities |
| | Tennis courts |
| | Tennis courts covered |
| | Spine pedestrian route |
| | Footpath links |
| | Traffic calming |
| | Special hard landscape areas |
| | Tree planting |



4. Preferred Masterplan

4.1 Features of Preferred Option

1. Existing children's playground retained
2. Circular viewing area added to north-west corner of playground
3. Existing car park extended westwards to provide additional 17 spaces
4. BMX track, single direction riding with start and finish
5. Community Gardens retained, and more clearly defined by new hedge
6. Spine Route
7. Pedestrian access from crèche
8. Possible future expansion for crèche
9. BBQ pits and picnic area
10. Active play facilities within naturalised environment
11. Existing tennis courts retained with addition of possible covering (tensile fabric or similar)
12. Two new tennis courts and junior practice court, arranged around existing Category 'A' tree to be retained
13. Corner entry feature with circular paving, information board and seating
14. Road junction re-modelled to reduce carriageway width and with new pedestrian crossing to facilitate pedestrian link with Aillebhaun
15. Gateway pinch points defined by low planting areas, signifying start of special 30km/h zone
16. Textured road surface between gateways (tar-and-chip) and removal of centre line road markings
17. Existing Tobermurragh boundary wall removed, and replaced with low stone rubble wall
18. On-street parking (9no. Spaces) west of Spine Route crossing
19. Northern boundary of Tobermurragh opened up at Spine route crossing (refer Section 3.3, Option 3)
20. Informal car park (up to 15 spaces) of compacted aggregate surface and improved entrance area with new interpretation board
21. Improvements to Holy Well, including replacement of existing brick surround and new circular paving with seating and interpretation board (refer Section 3.7)
22. Timber boardwalk to replace existing recycled plastic, with extension to former Steamboat Quay office building
23. Existing viewing area refurbished, and with addition of circular seating
24. Outdoor maritime exhibition area to side of Steamboat Quay building
25. Existing railings removed and Pier Head opened-up to public access
26. Existing informal footpaths re-surfaced as required
27. Vegetation management to control undesirable species



Preferred Masterplan

4. Preferred Masterplan

4.2 Main Components

The main components of the Preferred Masterplan Strategy have been selected to reinforce the natural qualities of the site, with an emphasis on being fit for purpose, sustainable, efficient, coherent, flexible and good looking. A simple palette of robust surface materials are proposed, according to the intended function and that are easy to service and economic to maintain. Predominantly natural materials are preferred for the site fittings (timber and stone) so as to create a high quality space with a strong sense of place.

4.3 Budget Cost Estimate

Based on the arrangement of the Preferred Masterplan Strategy, and the proposed range of components, the estimated implementation costs for budget purposes are:

| Item | Costs € |
|------------------------------|-------------------|
| Site Clearance/preparation | 6,000.00 |
| Drainage and Ducting | 7,500.00 |
| Earthworks/ground modelling | 42,500.00 |
| Pavement make-up, surfaces | 60,000.00 |
| Kerbs, Fittings | 253,000.00 |
| Structural Concrete | 6,800.00 |
| Stonework | 29,000.00 |
| | 404,800.00 |
| Add Preliminaries 5% | 20,240.00 |
| Add Contingencies 10% | 40,480.00 |
| Total Budget Estimate | 465,520.00 |

Exclusive of Site Investigations, connection charges, professional fees and VAT.



Bound surface Spine Footpath



Limestone dust footpath

Main components plan



Accessible interpretation



Adventure play equipment



BMX circuit



Timber boardwalk