

Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour

MASTERPLAN

10th June 2024

Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour

Clients:



Waterways Ireland

Offaly County Council



Funded by:



An Roinn Tithíochta,
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreachta
Department of Housing,
Local Government and Heritage



Rialtas
na hÉireann
Government
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Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040

Funded by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund 2020 (URDF), with co-funding by Offaly County Council and Waterways Ireland.

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TULLAMORE GRAND CANAL HARBOUR

INTRODUCTION

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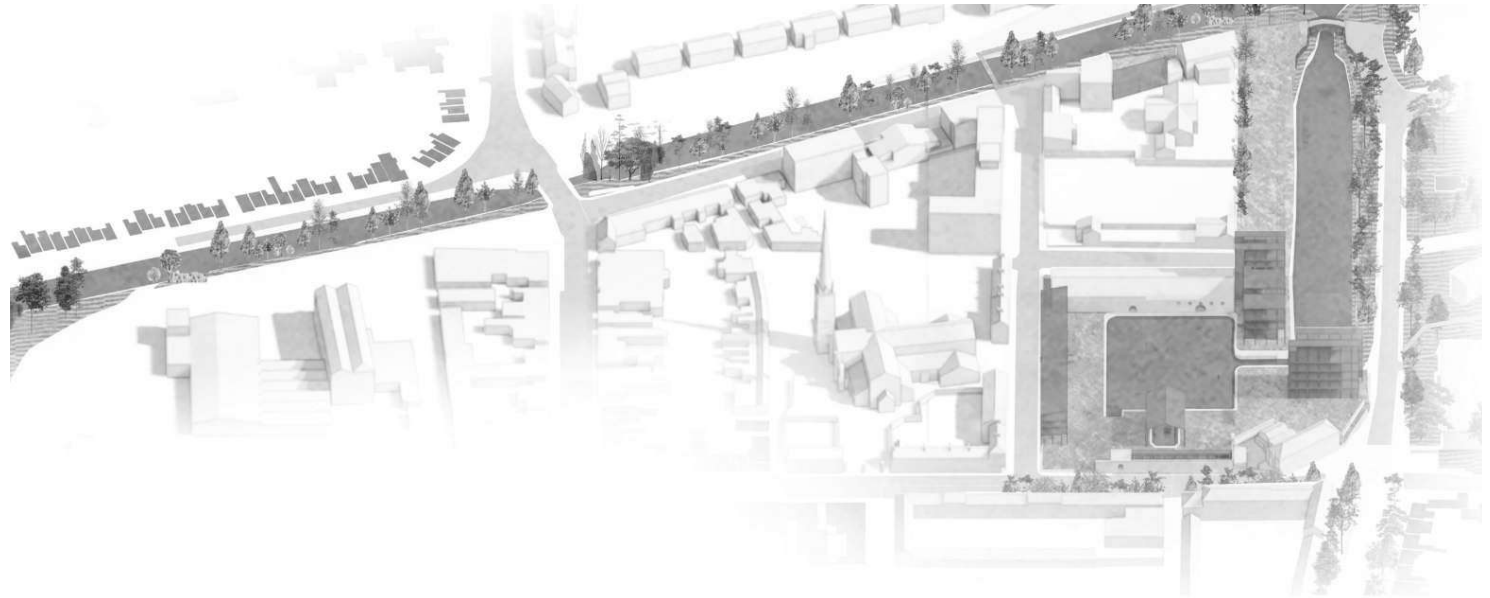
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INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT



The Golden Map: the is shown Harbour in focus with the new structures in red and the new surface in gold.

Tullamore - the capital of County Offaly - is a vibrant Midlands town. Right in its heart, it has a well-kept secret. Behind tall limestone walls within the town is an extraordinary piece of historic infrastructure - a water space measuring 54m by 46m containing approximately 5000 cubic metres of water – Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour.

The major waterway of the Grand Canal connects Dublin and the River Shannon. As the canal continues its east / west journey across the country past Tullamore, a linear ‘Spur’ branches southwards off the main canal, moving

under a beautifully crafted stone bridge, known locally as: Bury Bridge or Whitehall Bridge. This bridge marks the ‘*gateway*’ into the heart of Tullamore from the canal system.

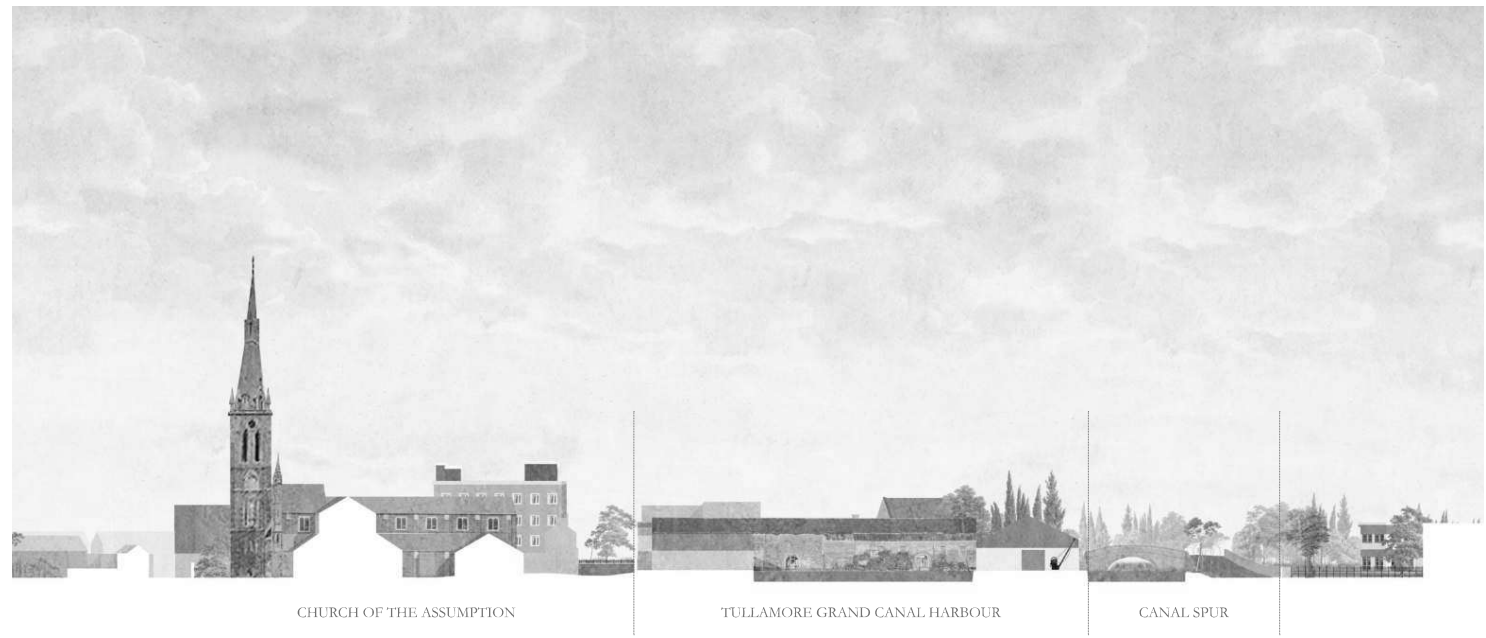
The Spur has a stone quay edge to its west bank and a soft mounded embankment to its eastern edge. The Spur acts like a ‘*water avenue,*’ welcoming canal users into the town. At the southern end of this Spur, the canal takes a westerly turn into the unique waterbody of Tullamore Harbour.

In the town, the streets that surround the Harbour - Harbour Street, Store Street, St. Brigids’s Place, O’Carroll’s Street - by virtue of tall stone walls, buildings, gates and embankments form enclosures that contribute to making the Harbour invisible within the town.

Offaly County Council (OCC) and Waterways Ireland (WI) recognise the intrinsic value of the Harbour, both as a unique piece of canal infrastructure and having civic heritage importance within the town and nationally. Together, they have commissioned this team to create a Masterplan for the future development of the Harbour.

EXECUTIVE

SUMMARY



Cross section through Tullamore Harbour looking North.

Redevelopment of the Harbour site unlocks the opportunity to reconnect the Harbour to the town and enable it to become a vibrant economic and social quarter for living, working and leisure. This aspiration is the focus of the deep research undertaken by this Design Team.

This document sets out discoveries and potentials, in the form of a 'menu' of possibilities, under the title: *Catalogue of Opportunities*, each of which can contribute to the re-vitalising of the Harbour and this part of Tullamore. This structure allows the possibility of choosing various combinations of a number of *Opportunities*, which have the ability of moving forward as soon as possible to achieve a vibrant and successful transformation.

We have prepared this new map of Tullamore – *the Golden Map* – to emphasise some of the major findings of our research. The focus of this Masterplan is to highlight the specific strengths of Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour and its surrounds. Together with O'Connor Square and Market Square, Grand Canal Harbour can become a new and unique space – *a Water Square* – a hub of activity, adding to the *Necklace of Squares* of Tullamore (see pg. 16).

The *Catalogue of Opportunities* includes modifications to the surrounding streets; suggested new entrance points into the Harbour; the restoration of the highly crafted, late 18th C. magnificent stonework of the Canal Harbour, the Dry Dock, the Canal Spur and Young's Store; as well as locations for possible development.

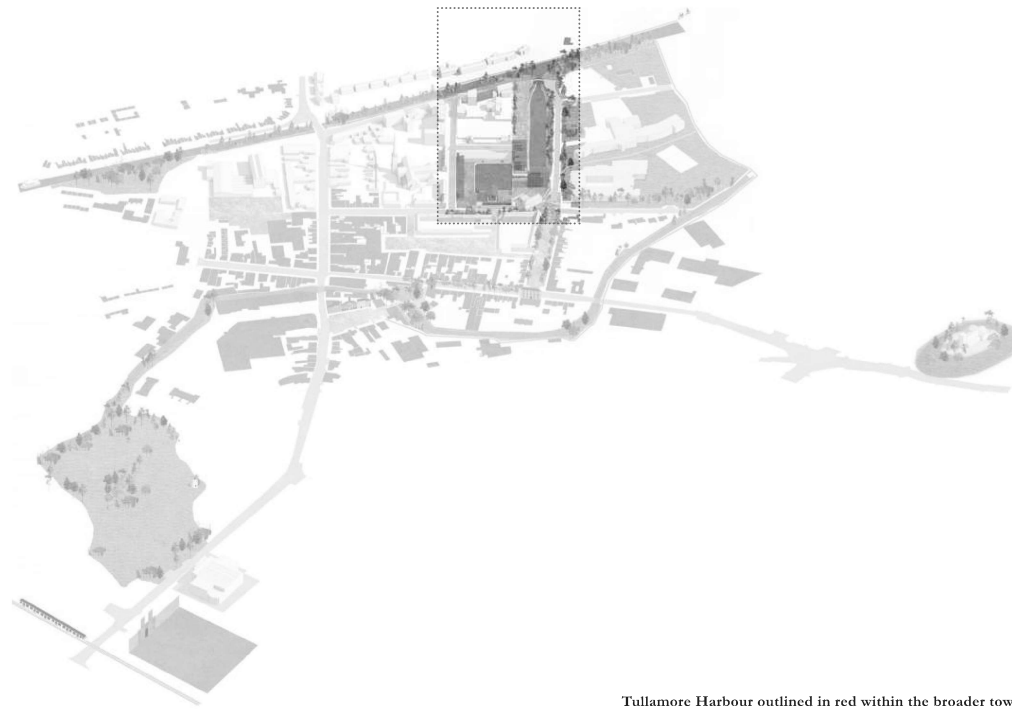
The raised embankment that encloses the Canal Spur on its eastern bank along O'Carroll Street separates the canal from the educational precinct to the east. By increasing planting along the boundaries of the two schools, that part of O'Carroll Street would be transformed as a landscaped entry point into the town.

By adjusting the junction of Harbour Street and O'Carroll Street and integrating traffic, parking, cycle paths, tree planting and generous footpaths, the wide streetscape of O'Carroll Street has the potential to become a pedestrian-friendly boulevard within the town.

The linear Canal Spur and the hump-backed bridge form a special entry point into the town from the wider national network of the Grand Canal Greenway. By also modifying the western quay of the Canal Spur to service visiting boats with contemporary facilities, St. Brigid's Place will become a significant, destination and welcoming space.

Four key locations within the Harbour are identified as strategic locations for development: one at the south of the Canal Spur, where a building would act as a type of welcoming marker on entering the town by the canal system and also mark the connection with O'Carroll Street within the town; another on the northeastern 'peninsula' of the Harbour, accessed from St. Brigid's Place; and at two other positions inside the existing limestone walls along the western and southern boundaries.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT



Tullamore Harbour outlined in red within the broader town with the principal public spaces shown in gold.

A decision by Waterways Ireland to relocate its Operational Depot from the Tullamore Harbour site in the centre of Tullamore to a new greenfield location 1km east of the town, has presented an exciting opportunity to envision future redevelopment of the harbour area. Use of the harbour site for operational management purposes from its origins in the 1800s has by consequence inhibited navigational, recreational, social, and wider economic use of the harbour area, and as such represented a high opportunity cost.

The prospect of owning a harbour in the very heart of an urban setting is a rare and much aspired natural asset for both public bodies and developers.

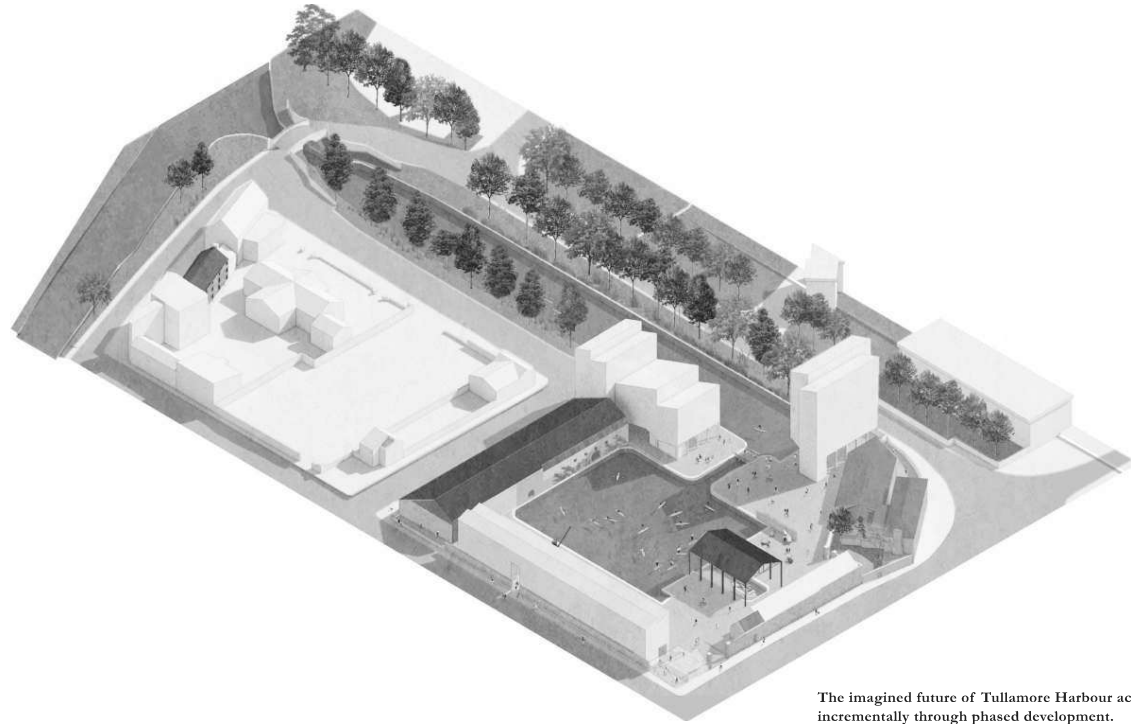
The aspirations of Waterways Ireland and Offaly County Council are for the harbour area to:

- *Be unveiled for public discovery and heritage appreciation from behind existing high walls;*
- *Be transformed to become an attractive waterfront space for residents, citizens, enterprises, and visitors;*
- *Become the catalyst that unlocks economic and social regeneration opportunities;*
- *Be accessible for walking and cycling with connectivity to a 131km Grand Canal Greenway;*
- *Provide on and off water recreational activities;*
- *Become a key destination for boaters journeying from throughout the inland waterways network on the island.*

These aspirations are aligned with various strategic priorities held by Waterways Ireland, Offaly County Council, Government Departments, and many sectoral partners and stakeholders (refer to the Appendices Section for detail).

The Masterplan also takes account of opportunities to contribute to delivery of UN Sustainable Development Goals across many areas and embeds a commitment that future redevelopment of the harbour site will balance social, economic, and environmental sustainability.

NEXT STEPS AND COMMITMENT TO THE FUTURE



The imagined future of Tullamore Harbour achieved incrementally through phased development.

The Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan catches hold of the first opportunity in over 70 years to unlock public access to the Harbour site and envisions its transformation as an immersive waterfront destination with multidimensional uses for citizens, residents, enterprises, and visitors.

As custodians of the site, Waterways Ireland and Offaly County Council are resolutely committed to ensuring this precious and sought after harbour asset is redeveloped. It is recognised that the nature and scale of economic, social and environmental benefits that can be realised from the site will firstly be contingent on the nature and

scale of Masterplan's ambition, and the prioritised development actions Waterways Ireland and Offaly County Council take following completion of the Masterplan.

It is incumbent on Waterways Ireland and Offaly County Council to once more facilitate development of the Harbour area as a centre of commerce, recreation, a place to live and visit. These aspirations are firmly rooted in the Masterplan through a catalogue of future development opportunities, each will be subject to detailed cost benefit assessment and contingent on achieving the right funding model at the appropriate time.

Waterways Ireland and Offaly County Council will continue working committedly and collaboratively with various sectoral partners to achieve phased redevelopment of the Harbour area, inclusive of the basin, adjoining Canal Spur Line, and Young's Store. The next planning phase will involve the establishment of a Working Group to prioritise Masterplan Opportunities for development, identify related funding pathways, and optimum development and operating models.

text for *Next Steps and Commitment to the Future* provided by Client.

APPENDIX 1: CONSULTEES

List of Stakeholder Consultees engaged during the Masterplan process.



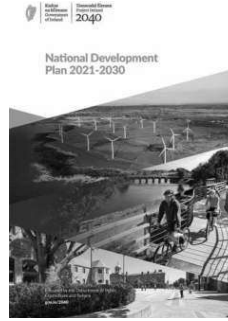
APPENDICES 2-19: POLICIES

Refer to the Appendices at the end of this report for the strategic objectives and policies of the documents shown.

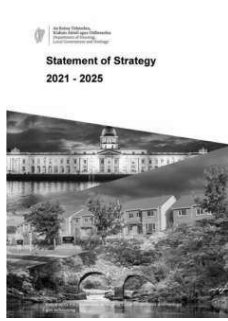
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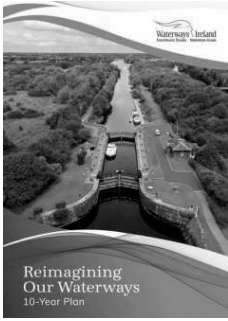
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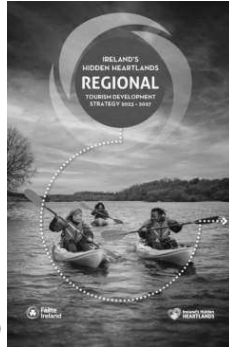
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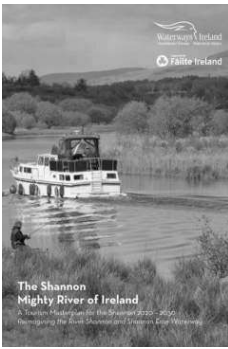
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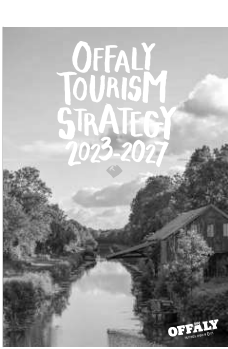
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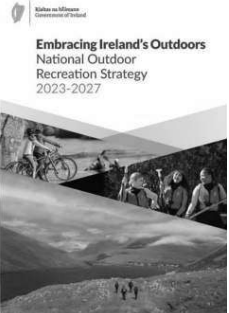
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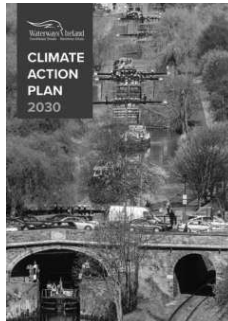
16.



17.



18.



19.



THE HARBOUR IN CONTEXT

The Harbour as it is found today is a complex of contemporary warehouses, workshops, dry docks and historic fragments accrued over time.

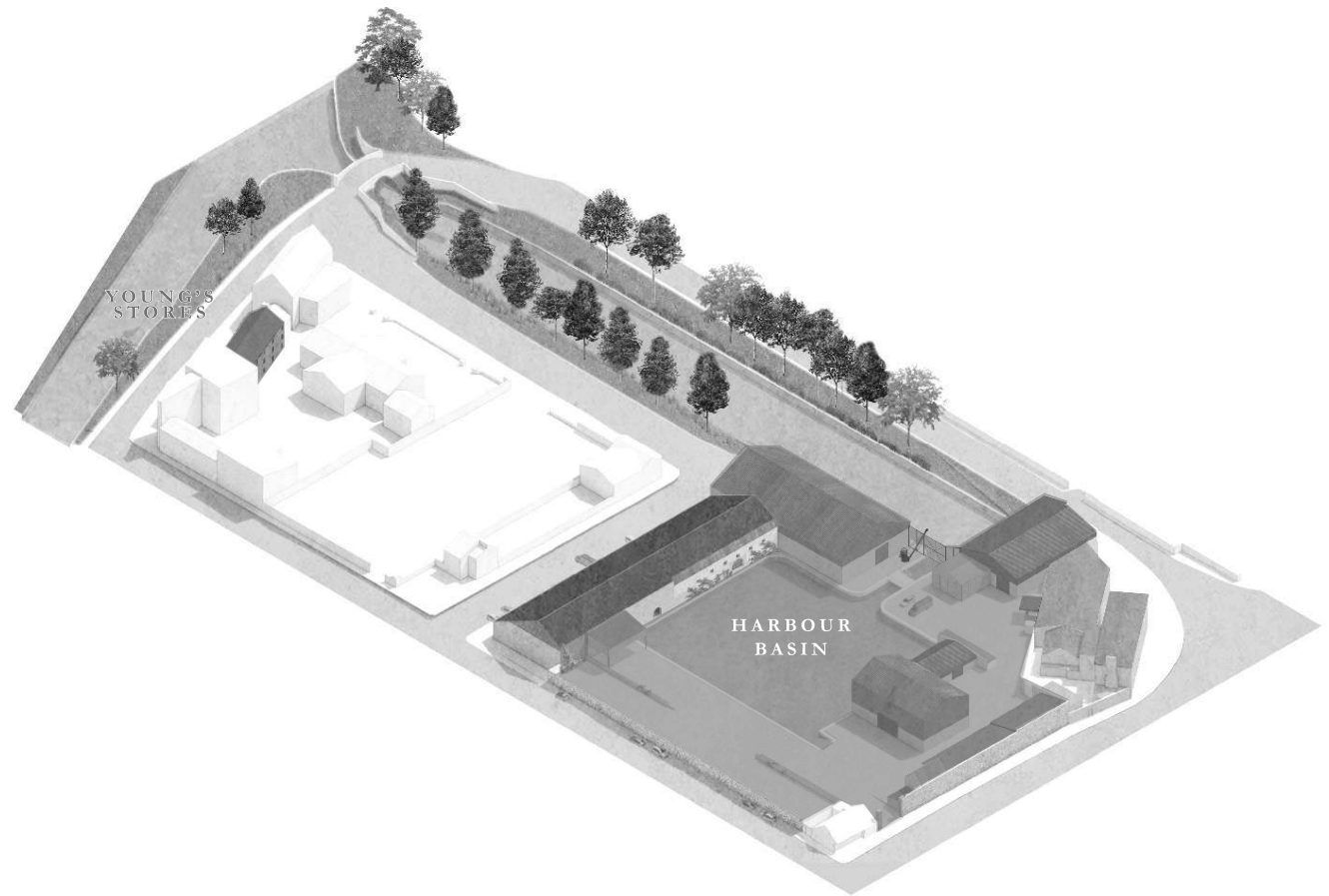
The harbour is now predominantly in the ownership of Waterways Ireland with a smaller portion within the Harbour's title boundary owned by Offaly County Council (along Store St.)

This Masterplan is focused on the area within the title boundary (highlighted in red on the map) whilst also identifying opportunities to achieve enhanced amenity and connectivity from the Canal Spur line.

Young's Stores (a late 18th C. building also within the ownership of Waterways Ireland) is also considered within the purposes of this Masterplan.

In order to understand the connectivity beyond the Harbour's own confines, the map here names the streets in its immediate vicinity that are most relevant to the Masterplan.





Aerial isometric view of the Harbour as it stands today with the area of research within the ownership of Offaly County Council and Waterways Ireland highlighted in red: the Harbour and Young's Stores



The Canal Spur from the Whitehall (Bury) Bridge



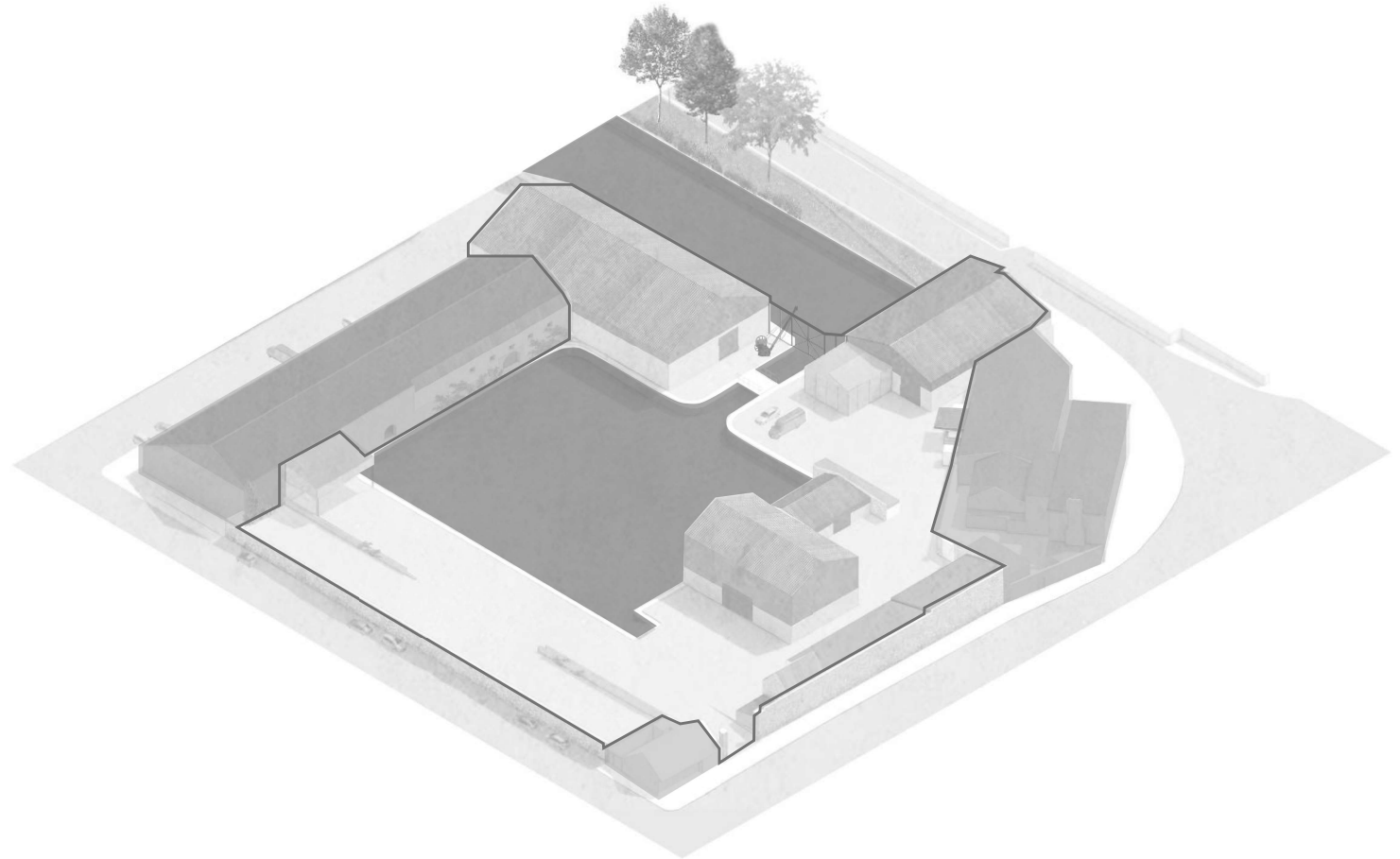
The Whitehall (Bury) Bridge viewed from the East embankment.

Naturally the Harbour is accessed by water as well as by land. The Harbour Basin was, for a short time, a terminus before the completion of the Grand Canal network. The Harbour was accessed via the Canal Spur. The Bridge on Convent Road forms the threshold of the Harbour as approached from the Grand Canal.

TULLAMORE HARBOUR TODAY

Very few of the Harbour's earliest structures remain today as complete structures. The built structures that occupy the Harbour now are from the 20thC. and are predominantly steel framed with sheet metal walls and roofing.

These structures were built to facilitate the processes and workings of the Harbour as an active depot for the canal network. Waterways Ireland is relocating the depot to a new site on the outskirts of Tullamore, a decision which unlocks the opportunity to redevelop the Harbour site and allow a new chapter in the Harbour's story.



The redline above shows the structures within the site title boundary. Excluded from this are neighbouring structures coloured in green that are contiguous to the Harbour complex. This includes: the retail terrace of shops along St. Brigid's Place, the bungalow on Store St./Harbour St and St. Mary's Youth Centre at the roundabout on O'Carroll St.



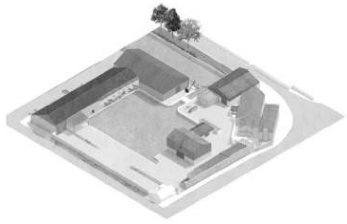
The retail terrace of shops along St. Brigid's Place



The bungalow on Store St. / Harbour St.

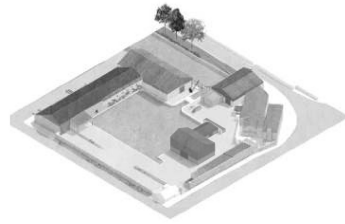


St. Mary's Youth Centre at the roundabout on O'Carroll St.



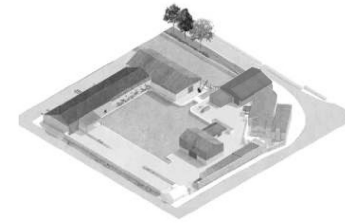
Lock Gate Workshop:

This 20 x 40 metre workshop is currently used by Waterways Ireland for construction and repair of lock gates on the canals.



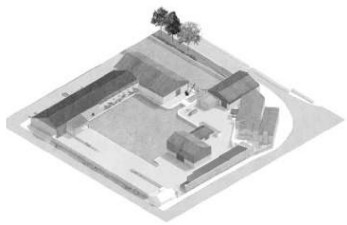
Dry Dock Shed:

This covering to the Dry Dock is a canopy to protect from rainfall but is open to the environment.



Office Shed:

This shed is used primarily as a store but also hosts office accommodation for Waterways Ireland.



Carpentry Workshops:

These are primarily lean-to sheds along the southern boundary wall of the site. At the western end of the row is the Battery Store, an older structure part of the historic fabric and deemed to be of higher heritage value.



St. Brigid's Place:

This is outside the site redline but is contiguous to the Harbour and historically was very much part of it. It currently hosts retail units accessed from St. Brigid's Place.



Young's Stores:

Young's Stores is a Protected Structure within the title boundary and part of this study.

Young's Stores on Convent Road along the Grand Canal





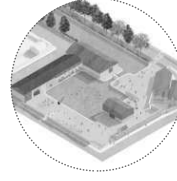
The Golden Map of with Tullamore high-lighted

CATALOGUE OF OPPORTUNITIES



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This index A-L is intended as a menu of Opportunities for connection, repair and transformation of Tullamore Harbour as an active part of the town.

OPPORTUNITIES

A-D



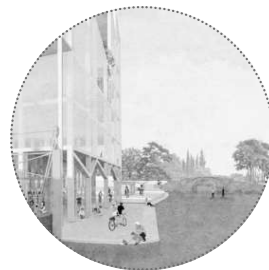
A

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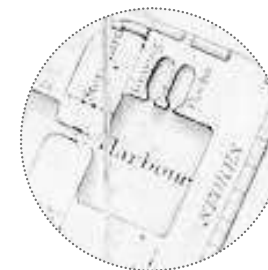
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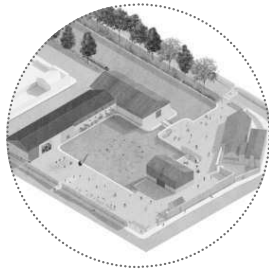
D

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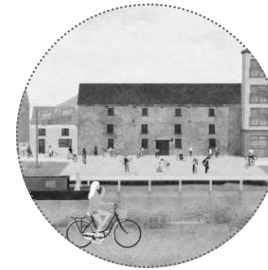
OPPORTUNITIES

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Young's Stores:
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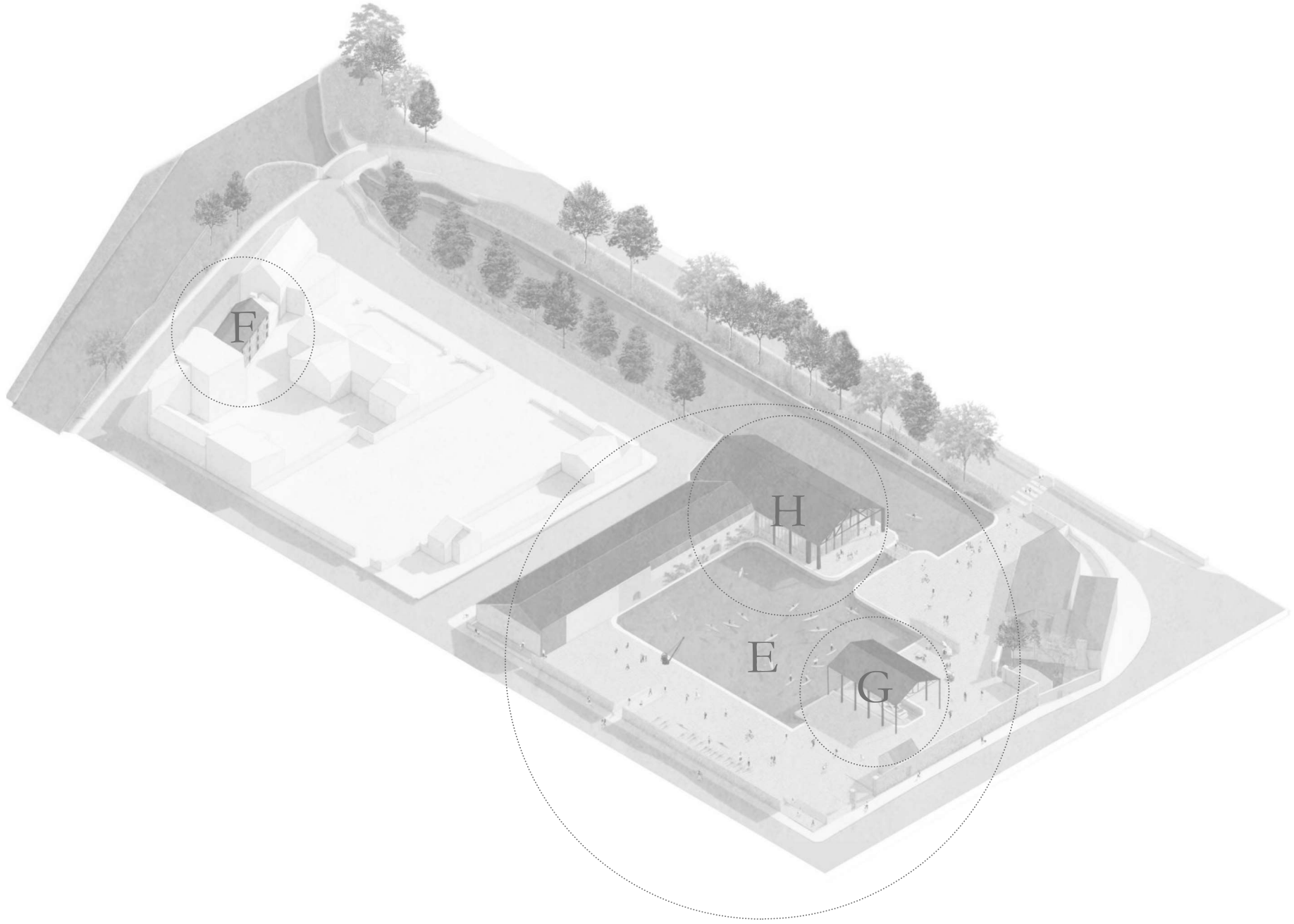
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OPPORTUNITIES

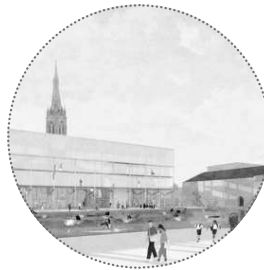
I-J



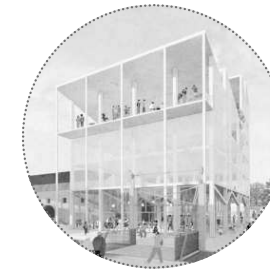
I
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the
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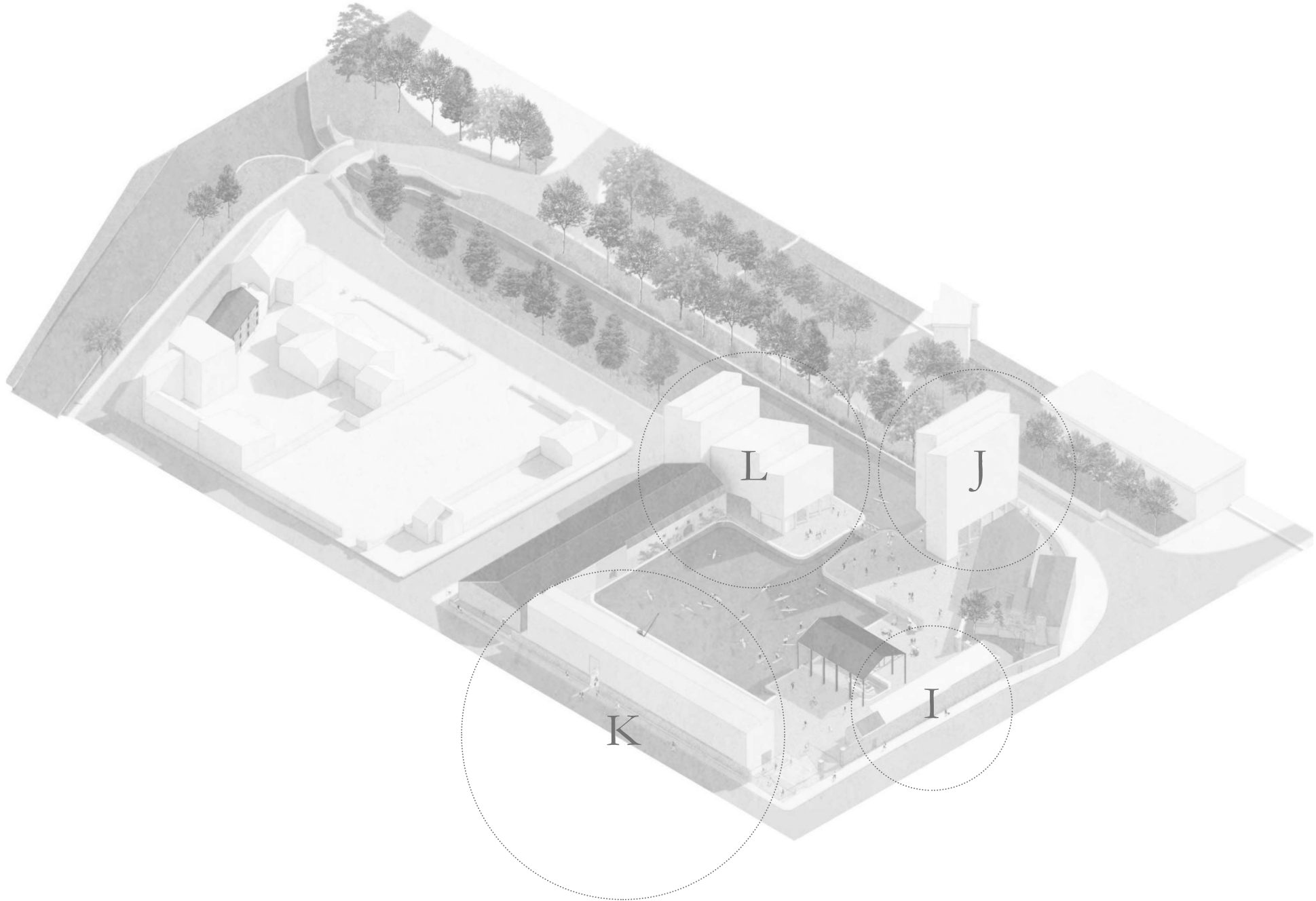
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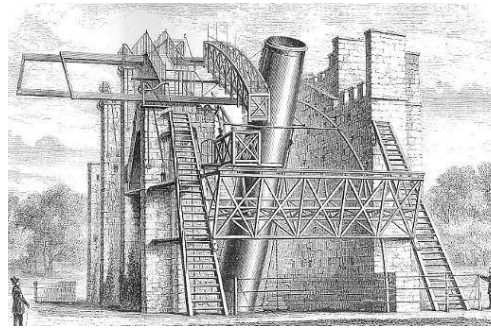
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THE TERRITORY AND LANDMARKS OF OFFALY

Much of the heritage of Offaly is related to its connections: the Shannon, the Grand Canal and the railways. Clonmacnoise, is a 6thC. monastery situated on the bank of the Shannon. The Grand Canal precipitated growth of towns along its length, such as Shannon Harbour.

Today, these industrial infrastructural arteries are being re-purposed for recreation and tourism. The former industrial peat bogs at Lough Boora have been recommissioned as a public sculpture park. The Grand Canal itself has become a Greenway for cycling and waterside active recreation. This aligns with the Hidden Heartland's policy of 'Active in Nature,' as a direction for tourism promotion in Offaly.



1 Birr Castle and Observatory



2 Leap Castle



3 Durrrow High Cross



4 Lough Boora Sculpture Park and Greenway Cycle Routes



5 Clonmacnoise Monastic Site



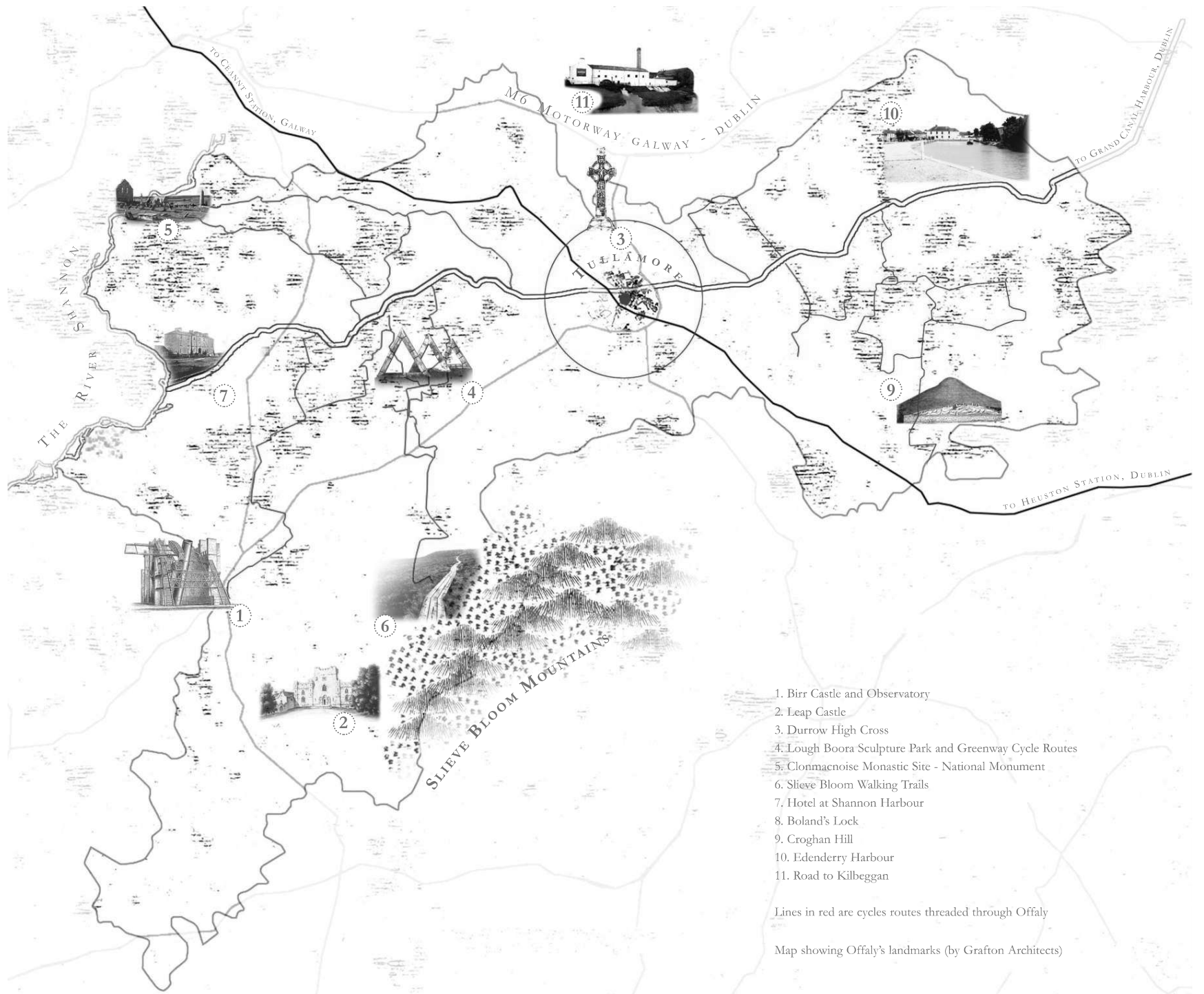
6 Slieve Bloom Walking Trails



7 Hotel at Shannon Harbour



8 Boland's Lock



1. Birr Castle and Observatory
2. Leap Castle
3. Durrow High Cross
4. Lough Boora Sculpture Park and Greenway Cycle Routes
5. Clonmacnoise Monastic Site - National Monument
6. Slieve Bloom Walking Trails
7. Hotel at Shannon Harbour
8. Boland's Lock
9. Croghan Hill
10. Edenderry Harbour
11. Road to Killbeggan

Lines in red are cycles routes threaded through Offaly

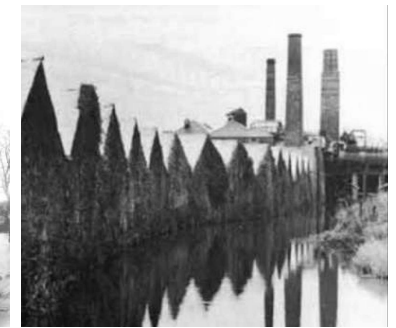
Map showing Offaly's landmarks (by Grafton Architects)

THE TOWN OF TULLAMORE

Tullamore is a planned town with a character that is both formal and industrial.

Towards the west: the planned setting of O'Connor Sq., the neoclassical district courthouse and the fine houses along High St. give a sense of this formal character.

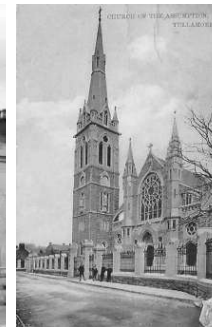
To the north and east, the character is more industrial in nature where industry developed along the Grand Canal and Tullamore River to serve the distilleries processes as well as providing connectivity for freight.



1 Former Distilleries of Tullamore



2 O'Connor Square



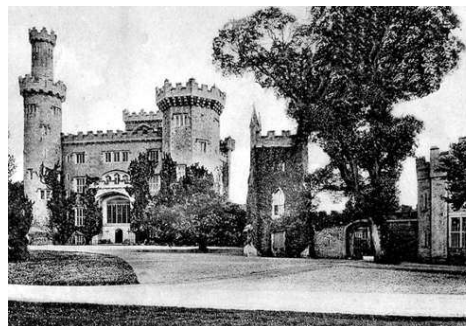
3 RC Church



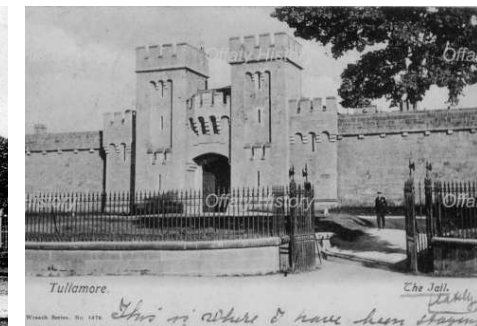
4 St. Catherine's Church on Hop Hill



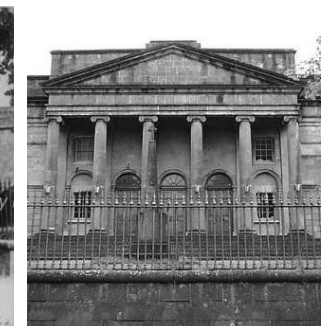
5 Former Cinema, Market Sq.



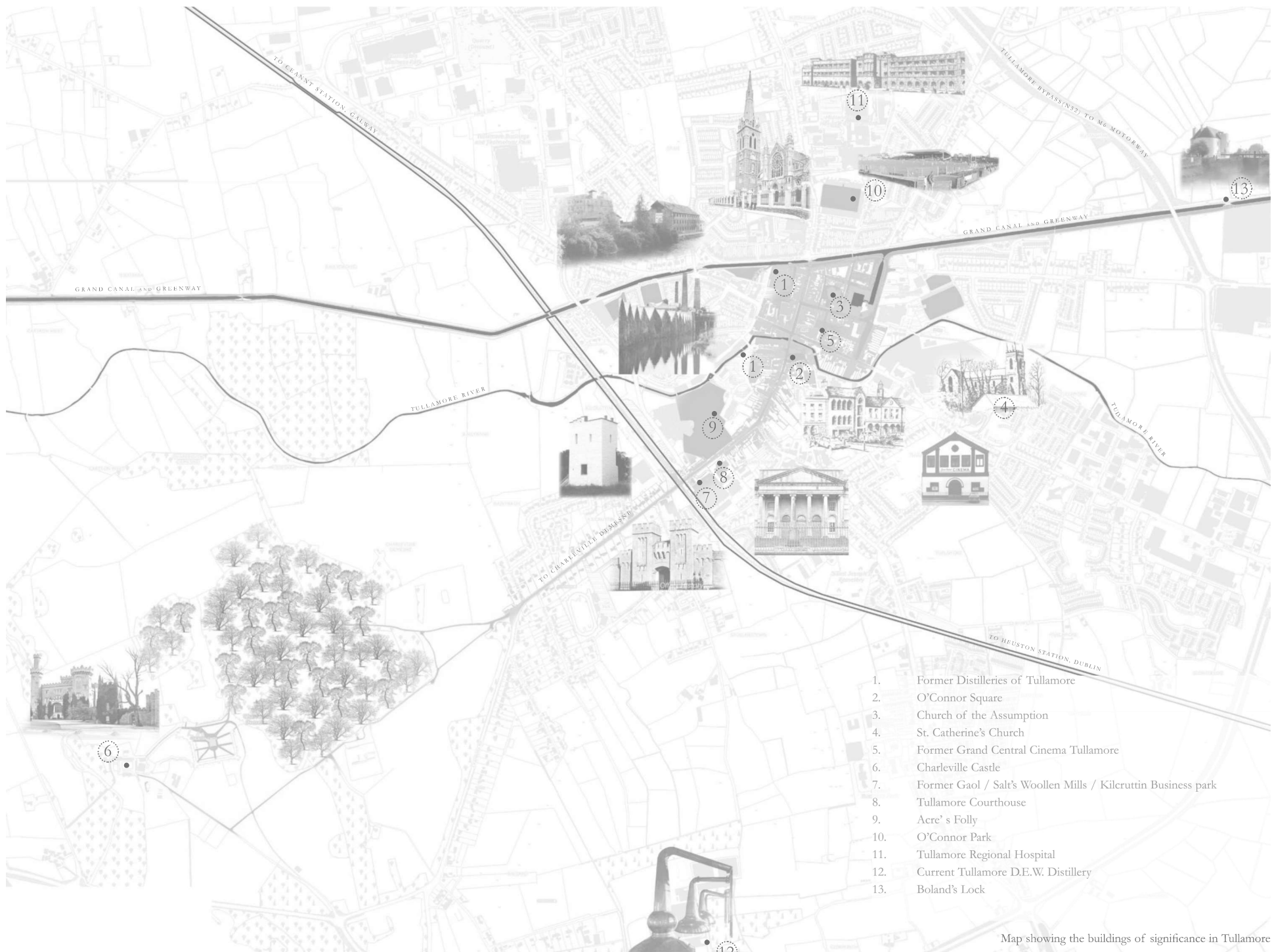
6 Charleville Castle



7 Former Gaol - now Kilcruitin Business Park



8 Tullamore Court House



1. Former Distilleries of Tullamore
2. O'Connor Square
3. Church of the Assumption
4. St. Catherine's Church
5. Former Grand Central Cinema Tullamore
6. Charleville Castle
7. Former Gaol / Salt's Woollen Mills / Kilcrottin Business park
8. Tullamore Courthouse
9. Acre's Folly
10. O'Connor Park
11. Tullamore Regional Hospital
12. Current Tullamore D.E.W. Distillery
13. Boland's Lock

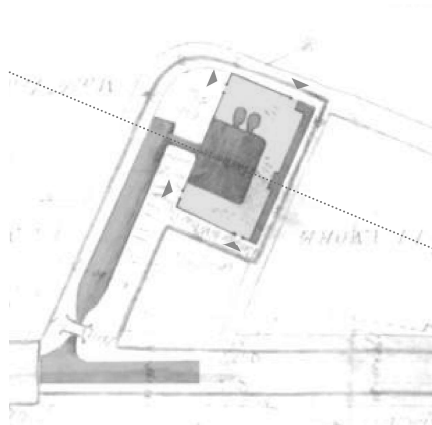
Map showing the buildings of significance in Tullamore

THE FORMATION OF THE HARBOUR

In order to understand the Harbour today, it is necessary to understand its formation. The Harbour was for a time a terminus on the Grand Canal, before full connectivity was achieved between Dublin and the Shannon.

Canals, unlike rivers, are engineered infrastructure. They do not drain naturally over a landscape to a low point as rivers do. They are organised in channels with set levels that step up and down between locks. As water levels are set, they may be higher or lower relative to the natural ground immediately surrounding them. In the case of Tullamore Harbour, the Canal's water level is higher and as a result it is an embanked body of water - a kind of *water plateau*.

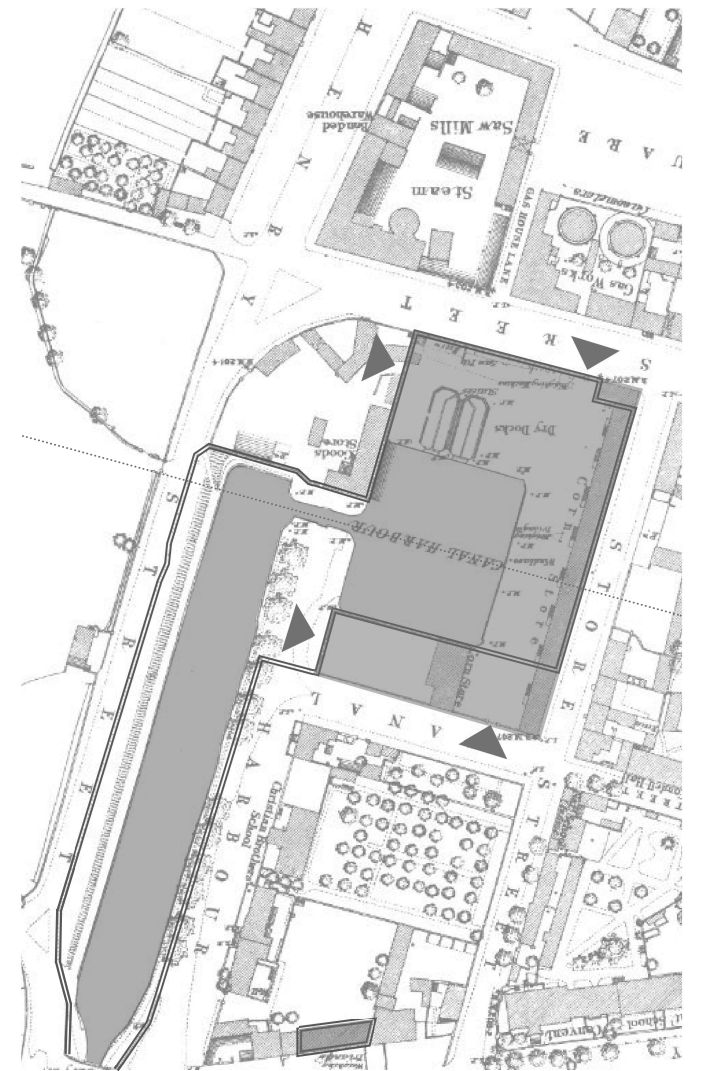
These historic drawings are clear diagrams of the Harbour's organisation at its earliest formation. We have coloured the areas in red to show the extent of the Harbour as a walled and enclosed complex. We have also drawn four red arrows on the plan to highlight the four original entry gates to the Harbour.



This historic drawing outlines the title transfer of the Harbour site from the Bury Family to the Grand Canal Company. This simple diagram reflects a clear symmetrical layout of 4 entrances into the rectilinear Harbour Complex.



A drawing by John Killaly, 1804. This outlines the principal streets of Tullamore, the Grand Canal, the Tullamore River and the most consequential public buildings within the town.



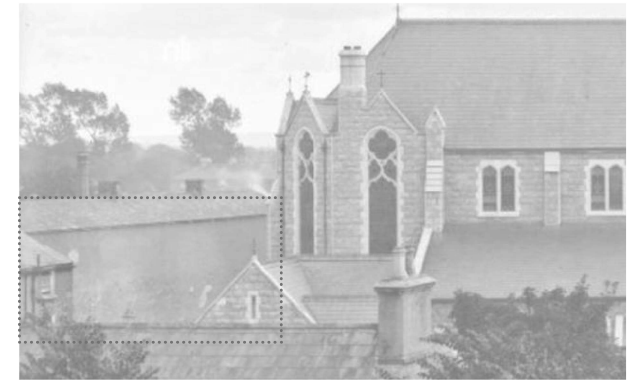
The red fill describes the Harbour with its original enclosing perimeter walls and four symmetrical entrances from the beginning of the 19th C. The red line indicates the redline boundary of the site of the Harbour as it is today. (1889 6-inch first edition map)

The limestone walls enclosing the Harbour had a retaining function to bring the ground inside the Harbour up to the level required to embank the Harbour Basin as well as to secure the Harbour's stock of goods. The water within the walled complex is contained within a cut stone Basin. This water is conveyed between the Grand Canal and Basin via the Canal Spur - the long linear water channel with a narrow inlet connection to the Grand Canal and Harbour basin. Unlike the Basin, the Spur is embanked with an earthen berm to the east.

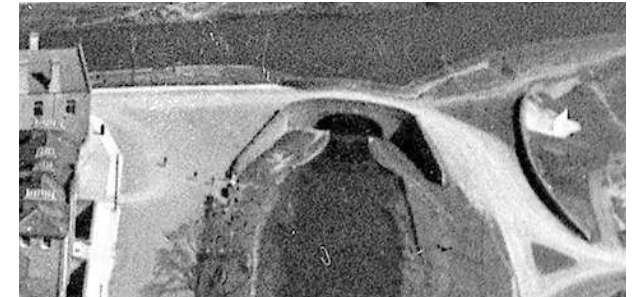
In contrast to how it appears today, the Harbour was planned symmetrically about an axis centred on the Harbour Basin and Inlet (shown with dotted red lines on plan/photograph). The Harbour enclosure had four symmetrically organised entrances with a linear store building on the western edge. The centre bay of this linear store building is forward of the rest of the façade with a pediment and round plaque centred on the axis, demonstrating how this was a planned formal frontage to be viewed from the Inlet approach.



The break-front centre bay of the linear store building on the west of the Harbour complex (a redline highlighting the centre axis of the pediment and round plaque).



The linear store building on Store St. had a black façade, unlike the interior.



Aerial view of the Whitehall (Bury) Bridge as it joins the Grand Canal Network.



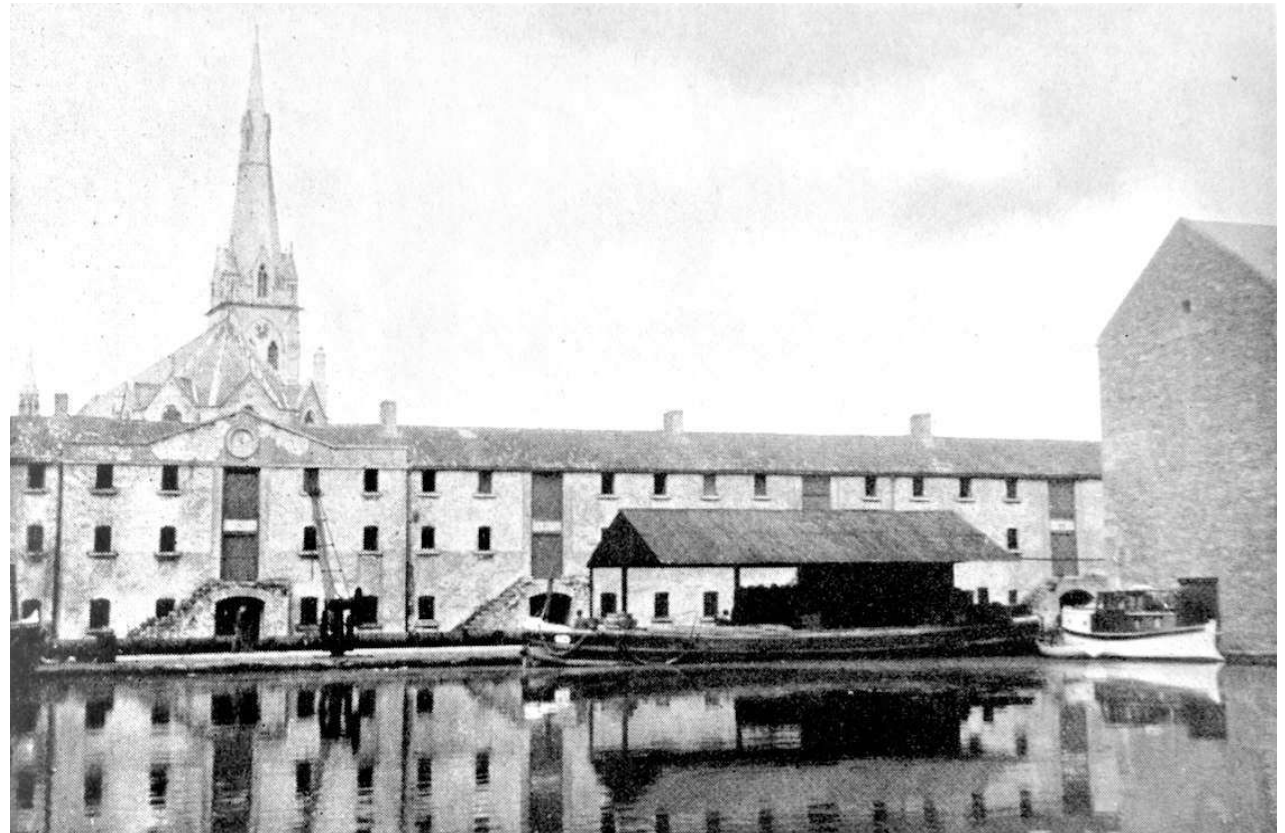
The Whitehall (Bury) Bridge where the Grand Canal meets the Canal Spur

THE 19TH CENTURY HARBOUR

The original Harbour was a walled compound with tall buildings on small footprints to maximise the open ground for freight and activity.

The Harbour Basin was accessed via a Spur off the main run of the Grand Canal. This was embanked with berms with a narrow neck of water connecting the Harbour Basin to the Spur. This embankment was lined with trees to the West along the spur to the Harbour inlet.

The Harbour compound also includes two working dry docks to the South of the Basin, one of which remains visible and in active use today.



A photograph of the Harbour taken by Angela Rolt in 1946

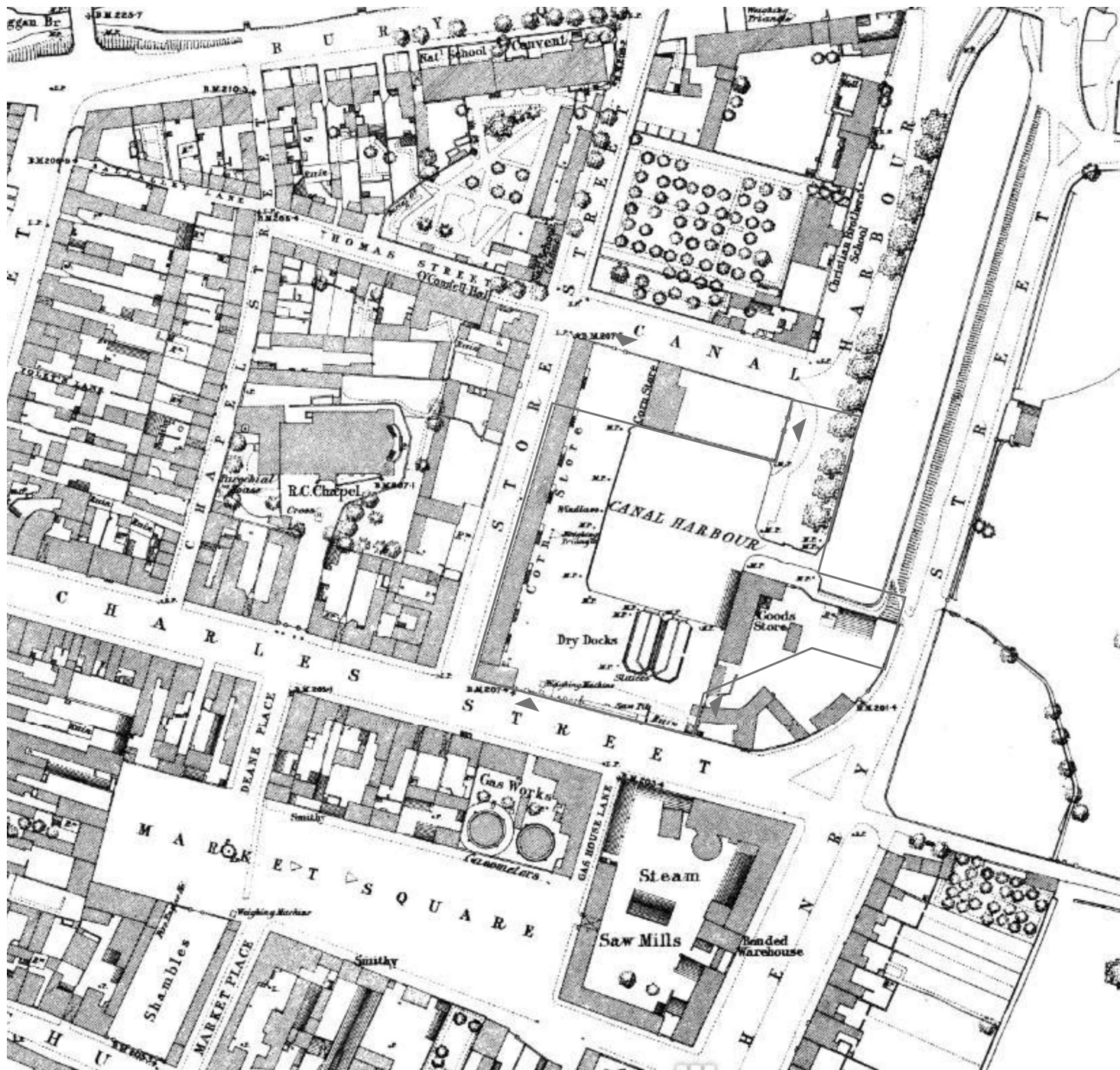
THE 20TH CENTURY HARBOUR

Over the 20th Century, the site became increasingly in-filled with more construction added to the earlier buildings from the 19th C.

The building material fabric of the site changed from one of exclusively stone and lime harling, to brick and later to more contemporary materials such as concrete and sheet metals. The image to the right shows the Harbour in the 1970s after the removal of the linear store building on Store St and the infilling of the Harbour's north and east. By the 1970's, the Canal Hotel on St. Brigid's Place was demolished, however Scoil Bhríde beside it, is still in place.



An aerial photograph from 1978 from Michael Byrne's 'Tullamore Catholic Parish - A Historical Survey'



Scoil Bhrde and the Grand Canal Hotel on the west bank of the Canal Spur.

This 1889 6-inch first edition map shows the Harbour Basin and its vicinity. The two areas outlined in red superimpose the research area on the historic maps. The red arrows highlight the historic entry gates.



Aerial Photograph of the Harbour taken by Alexander Campbell Morgan in 1952 - This was prior to the demolition of the 19th C. buildings within the Harbour as well as Scoil Bhríde and the Grand Canal Hotel on St. Brigid's Place.

PHYSICAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

The Harbour historically has a character that is at once industrial (as it is a working harbour) but also a place of leisure.

The fabric of this place shows physical examples of 19th C. craftsmanship, the details of which are of public heritage interest. Anecdotally, the Harbour basin, which holds ca. 5000m³ of water, is stone lined at its base as well as on its four enclosing sides. This is an extraordinary and rare example of cultural built heritage; a 200-year old stone 'vessel' at the centre of a county town in the Midlands.

It does however, also have an intangible character. Historically, the character of the Harbour was solely industrial. Over time, it became a place of leisure associated with boats. The harbour basin continues to operate as a working harbour with leisure boating along the Canal Spur West quay line.



A photograph of the Harbour taken by Angela Rolt in 1946



Photographs from the late 1970's during a boat rally in Tullamore on the Canal Spur. Photographs by Ruth Delany from the Waterways Ireland Delany Photographic Collection



A Photograph of the Harbour in the 1970's looking North. Photograph from the Offaly History Blog



A Photograph of the Harbour in the 1970's looking South. Photograph by Kevin Donaghy

TULLAMORE GRAND CANAL HARBOUR

THE HARBOUR REIMAGINED

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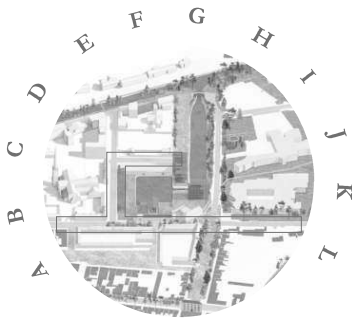
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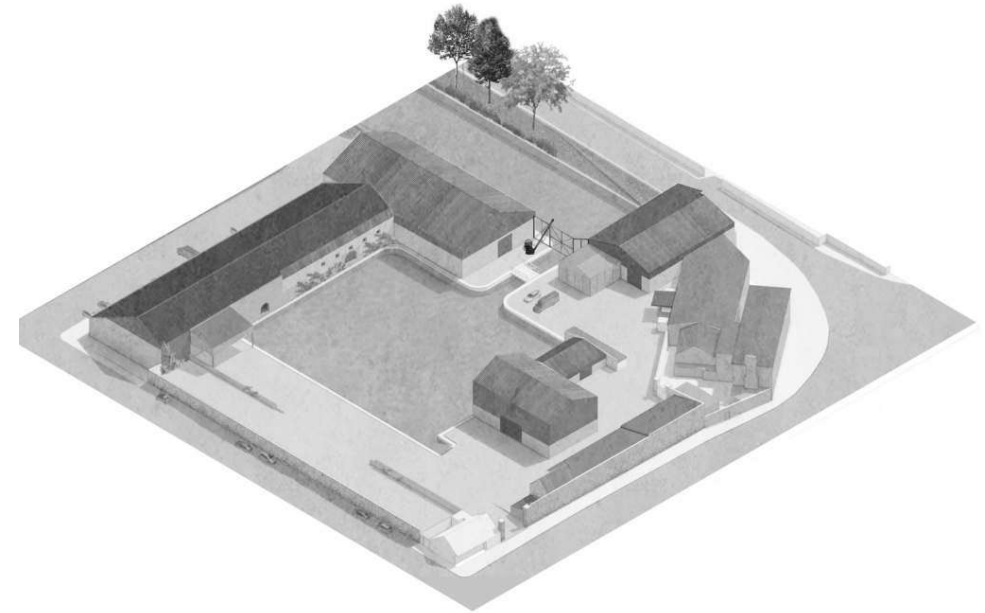


A

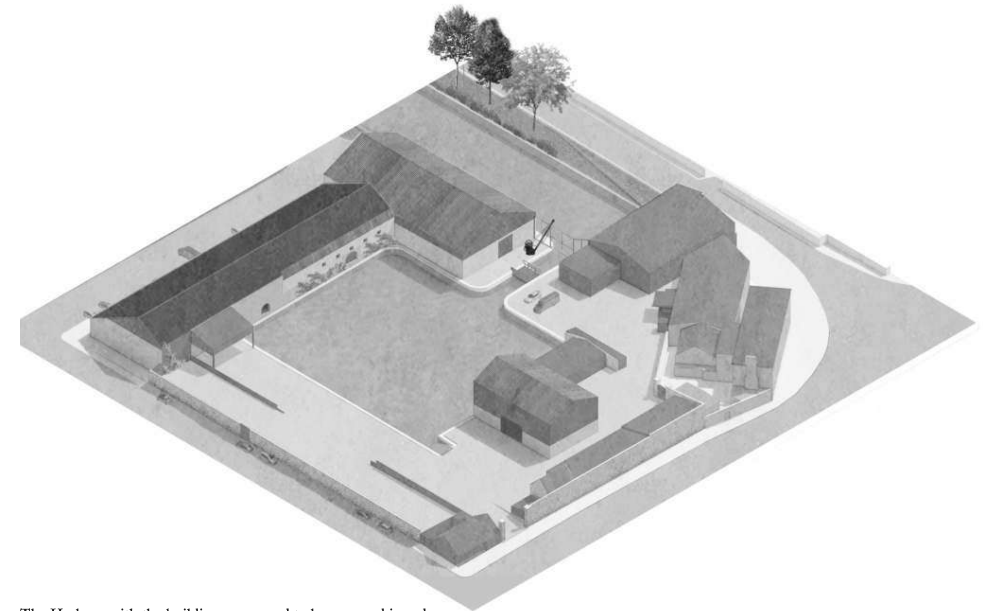
RECONNECTING THE HARBOUR TO THE TOWN

Tullamore Harbour is currently an enclosed site with one entrance for vehicles from Harbour St and one entrance for boats from the Canal. The first step to establish the reimagined *Tullamore Harbour* is to enhance its accessibility and visibility.

The perimeter walls of the Harbour are valuable in two ways; firstly, they retain the Harbour ground embanking the *Water Plateau* and secondly they are the significant vestiges of the Harbour's earliest buildings of the early 19th C. It is important to keep these walls to retain the Harbour's character. Making specific openings to enable access would form a type of urban acupuncture - to reveal the hidden harbour and also create urban connectivity.



The Harbour as it today



The Harbour with the buildings proposed to be removed in red.

ROUTE TO TRANSFORM

Crossing to schools on opposite side of O'Carroll St.

Reinstate quay/embankment edge to original location behind sheet piling

Dredge Harbour Basin to reveal stone base

Restore quay walls around basin perimeter

Entrance established between North block and West boundary wall

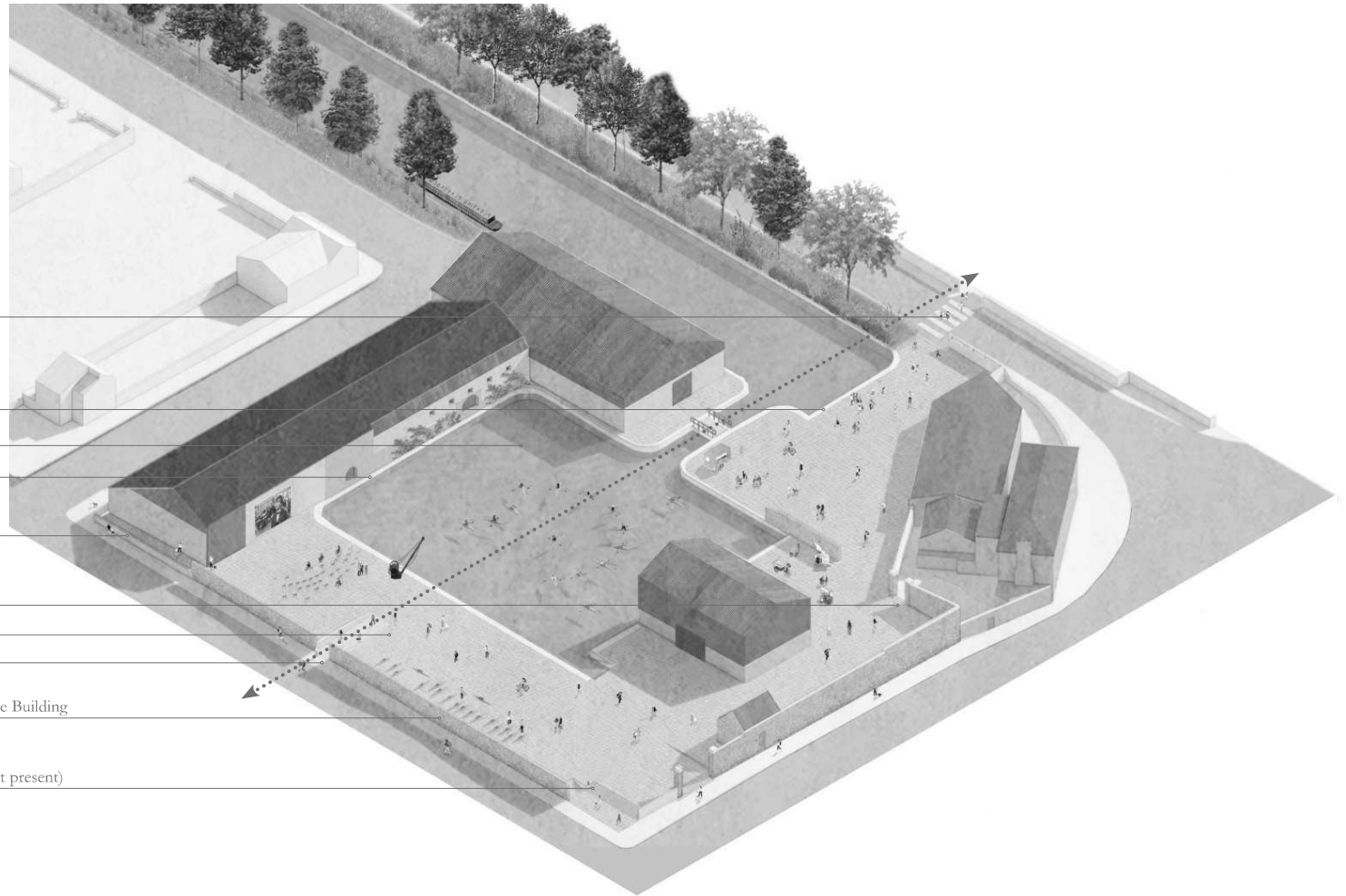
Reinstated Entrance to crèche in St. Mary's

Re-surface ground finish

New entrance along historic 19th C. axial vista

Refurbish remaining wall fragment from former Goods Store Building

Corner entrance as a possible future site (corner bungalow at present)



The Harbour reconnected to the town.



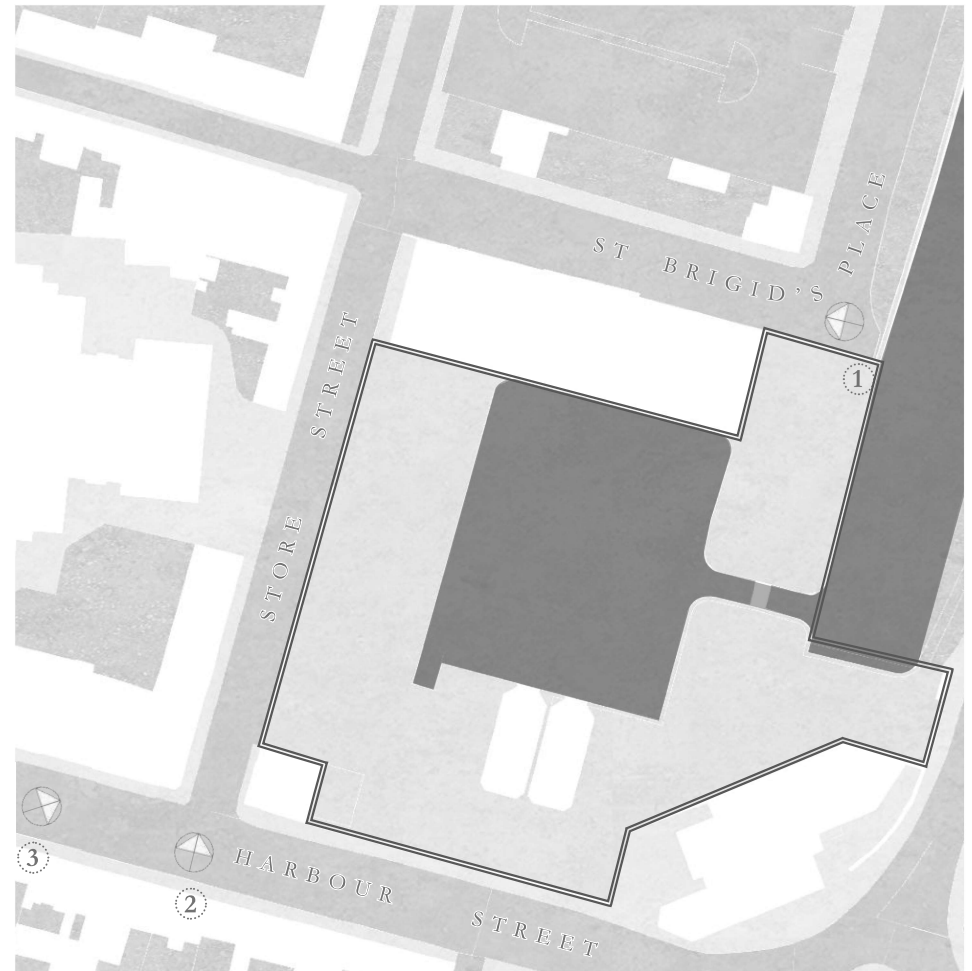
1. St Brigid's Place
St Brigid's Place currently has a footpath on one side only, with parking on both sides.



2. Store Street
Similarly to St. Brigid's Place, Store Street currently provides no footpath on the perimeter of the Harbour's western edge.



3. Harbour Street
Currently the carriageway is very wide with parking on both side. The proportion of the carriageway to the overall width of the street is disproportionately large.



The plan of the Harbour currently.

At present, the Harbour feels as though it is in the quieter side of Tullamore. Historically the harbour was the industrial centre of the town, counterbalancing the commercial centre to the West around O'Connor Square and other areas of Tullamore.

There is an opportunity to re-establish the Harbour as an economic and social centre by enhancing the public realm around its perimeter.

STEPS TO TRANSFORM

Parking bays reoriented

Parking bays reoriented and foot path added

Shared surface added as a forecourt to the harbour

Table crossing added between church and Harbour entrances

Carriageway reduced to one lane to maintain parking and footpath added

New pedestrian access to the Harbour from schools

New Ramped connection from O'Carroll St. to the Harbour

Table crossing added at Store St Harbour St junction

Carriageway narrowed to two lanes and 1 bike lane, footpath widened

Parking bays maintained to South only with new treeline



The plan of the Harbour with alterations made to the streets around its perimeter to enhance connectivity and porosity into the site.

Store Street Reimagined

By reducing Store St. to a single lane of traffic, a new footpath can be integrated while maintaining parking to one side. The plan also shows a shared surface, creating a square between the church and the newly established entrance on the West boundary wall of the Harbour.

Harbour Street Reimagined

There is an opportunity to change Harbour St. by narrowing traffic lanes, confining parking to the shaded side of the street, widen foot paths on the South-facing side, add trees and table crossings for a better pedestrian experience accessible to all.

St Brigid's Place Reimagined

Adding a footpath on both sides of the street would improve accessibility and connectivity to the terrace of shops along the length of St Brigid's Place on the Harbour side.

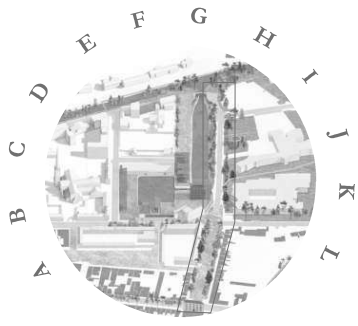
A shared surface at the bend in the road creating a small square in front of the corner building on to the canal spur.



The Harbour viewed from the intersection of Harbour St. and Store St.



The reimagined Harbour viewed from the intersection of Harbour St. and Store St.



B

TRANSFORMING O'CARROLL STREET

The junction of Harbour Street, O'Carroll Street and Riverside presently has a large roundabout, which divides O'Carroll Street into two parts; one to the North, towards the hump-backed Whitehall (Bury) Bridge; the other towards the South, into the town. By removing the roundabout and by installing traffic lights to form the road junction, a more substantial footpath area provides a more people-friendly crossing, especially for the Sacred Heart School and Tullamore College.

This allows O'Carroll Street to become a significant eastern space within the town. To the north, the raised embankment that encloses the canal Spur along O'Carroll Street visually separates the canal from the educational precinct to the east. By increasing planting along the boundaries of the schools, which together with the existing planting on the canal Spur embankment, that part of O'Carroll Street would be transformed into a landscaped entry point into the town.



Aerial Photograph of O'Carroll St. Alexander Campbell Morgan, 1952



View of O'Carroll St. with the roundabout removed and a level shared surface with traffic lights.



①

O'Carroll Street - North

The North prong of O'Carroll St. is a key route into Tullamore from the East. It is less urban in nature.



②

O'Carroll Street - Roundabout

The curved corner at St. Mary's arose as a consequence of the historic embankment berm that was built to negotiate the significant change in level between the Harbour Basin and the surrounding streets. This curve has endured over time and appears to have given rise to the formation of the roundabout over time. Its scale and broadness increases traffic speed and prioritises motor traffic over pedestrians.

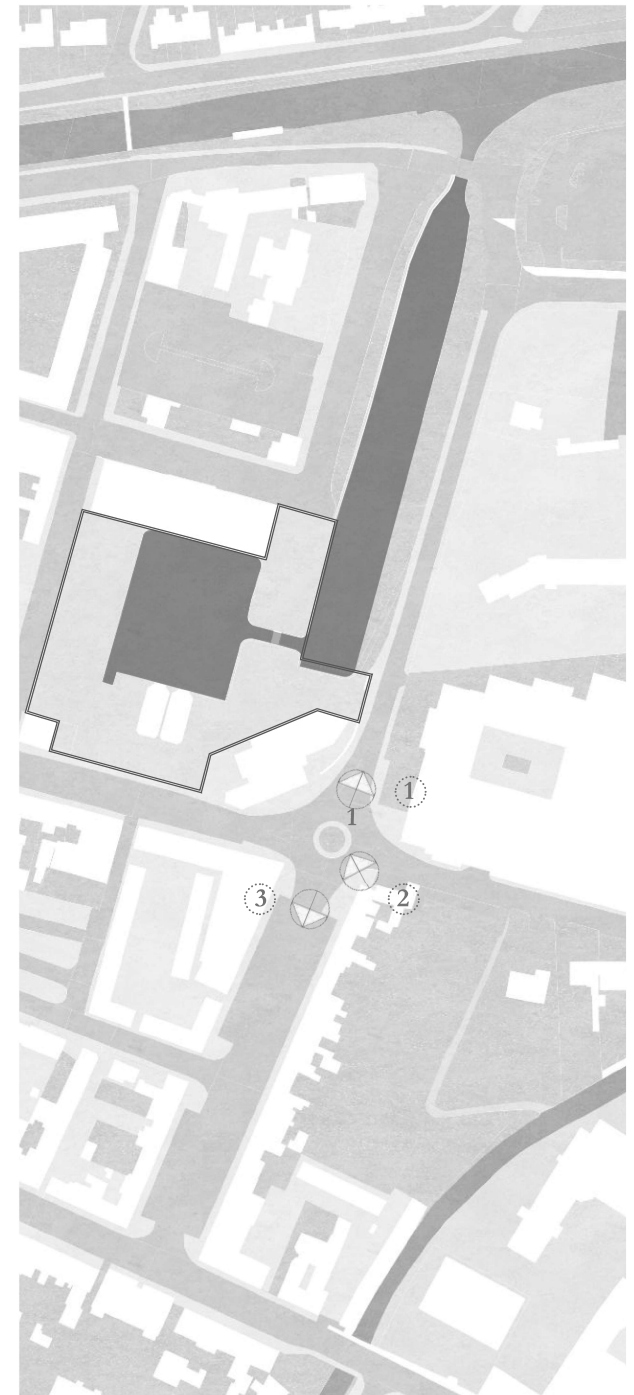


③

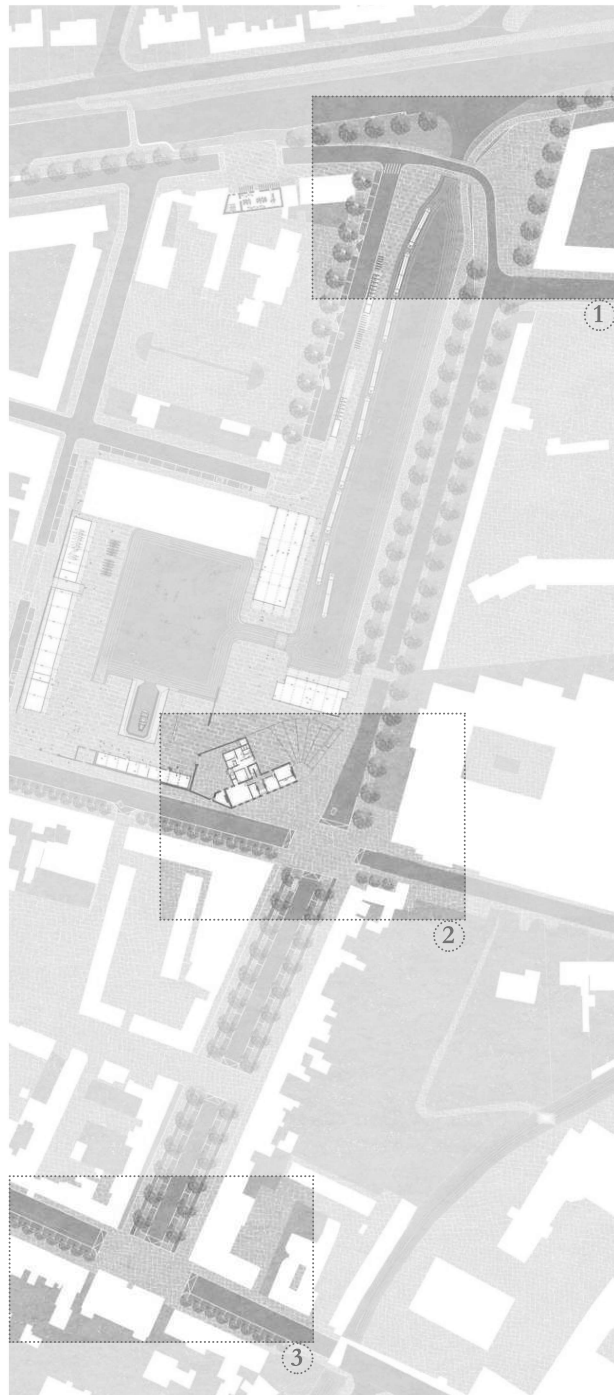
O'Carroll Street - South

The South prong of O'Carroll St. is civic in character with its linear perspective to the former County Infirmary.

Currently however, the broadness of the space is primarily dedicated to vehicular traffic and parking. The widths of footpaths for pedestrians is disproportionately low relative to the cross sectional width of the street.



STEPS TO TRANSFORM



Tree line to be continued to the bank of the Grand Canal

Carriageway reduced to one lane of traffic to allow for footpath.

Quayline hardscape widened to create linear park

Kiosks added along linear park to accommodate facilities



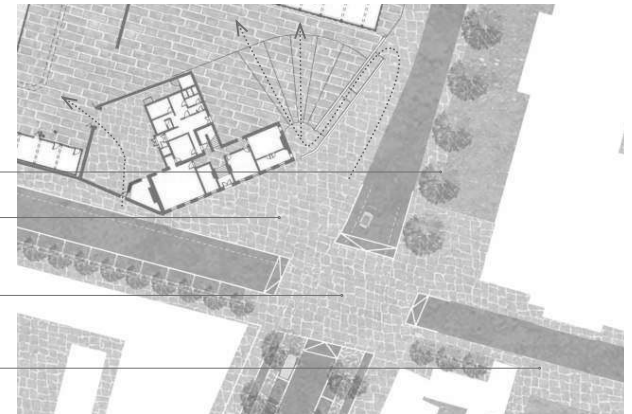
Whitehall Bridge (Bury Bridge)

Tree line added to give enclosure to O'Carroll Street.

Space in front of St Mary's expanded with potential for use by St. Mary's

Shared surface table crossing added in lieu of roundabout

Footpath added to South side of street.



O'Carroll St. and Harbour St. Junction

Defensible space allowed for inboard of 3m footpath for use by retailers

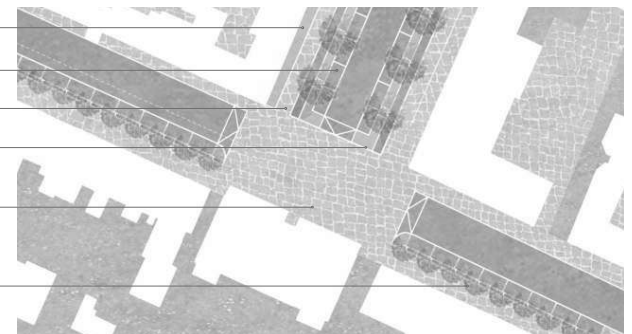
Carriageway narrowed, parking bays reorientated to be parallel to kerb

Footpath widened

Cycle lane added inboard of parking with verge for tree grates beside (yellow)

Shared surface table crossing added in front of the former infirmary

Carriageway narrowed and treeline added on south side of Church St.



Old Infirmary Building

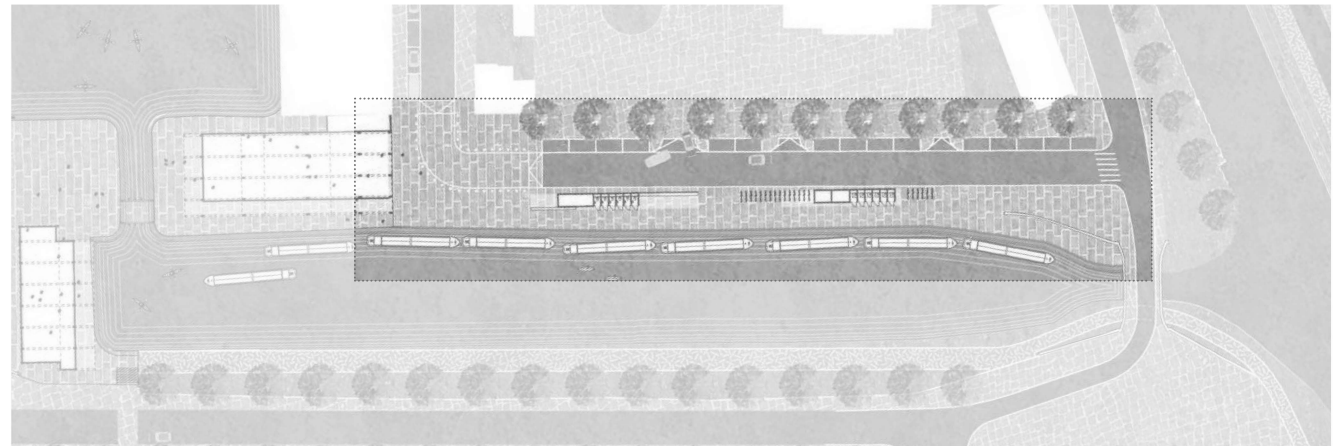


C

THE CANAL SPUR QUAYLINE: A LINEAR PARK

The Canal Spur connects the Grand Canal and the Harbour Basin. Its character is formal and urban on the quay-lined west side and more natural and pastoral on the earthen embankment to the east.

There is an opportunity to intensify this character by integrating a linear park on the west bank that can also add facilities including additional moorings and service amenities for boat users. The arrangement along the spur intends to foster the sense of a promenade around the water's edge that can integrate into the Harbour and connect to the Grand Canal Greenway route along the canal.



Linear park along Canal Spur with kiosks and cycle parking.



Bathing Pavilion in Olot, Spain by RCR Architects:

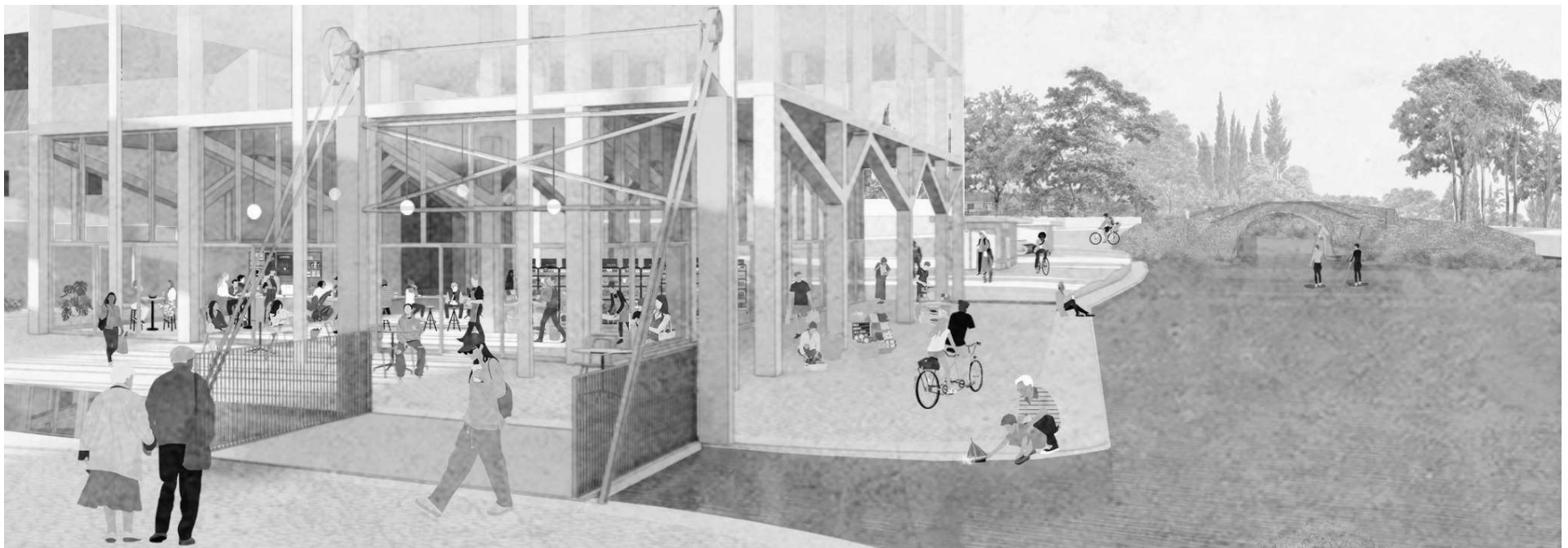
This is a simple structure where the roof is supported by small banks which accommodate bathrooms and facilities for bathers. The roof spanning between them provides an external covered space. This is an example for the types of structures / welfare facilities that could be provided along the canal linear park for boat users.



View looking southwards along the Canal Spur.



Historic photos of the former hotel and school on the West bank of the Spur (both now demolished). These provided a formal frontage onto the Canal Spur. Their demolition and replacement with buildings set back from the street edge have dissipated the sense of the Spur's West bank as an urban space with distinct buildings.



Visualisation of along the Canal Spur quayline and linear park towards the Whitehall (Bury) Bridge.



Skirting the Perimeter

There is an opportunity to create a civic urban linear space along the western edge of the Spur. By narrowing the carriageway and parking allocation, deepening the area of hard paving from the quayline back and planting a tree line on the western side of the street, a new defined urban space can be created.

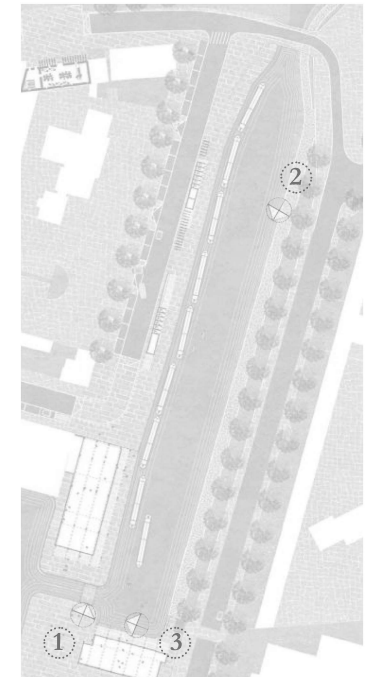
This space would connect the routes that skirt both sides of the Spur, completing a new enjoyable circuit. A lifting bridge will continue to accommodate boating traffic into the Harbour basin and also enable increased pedestrian connectivity throughout the Harbour area.



Canal Saint Martin, Paris - reference for the western bank.

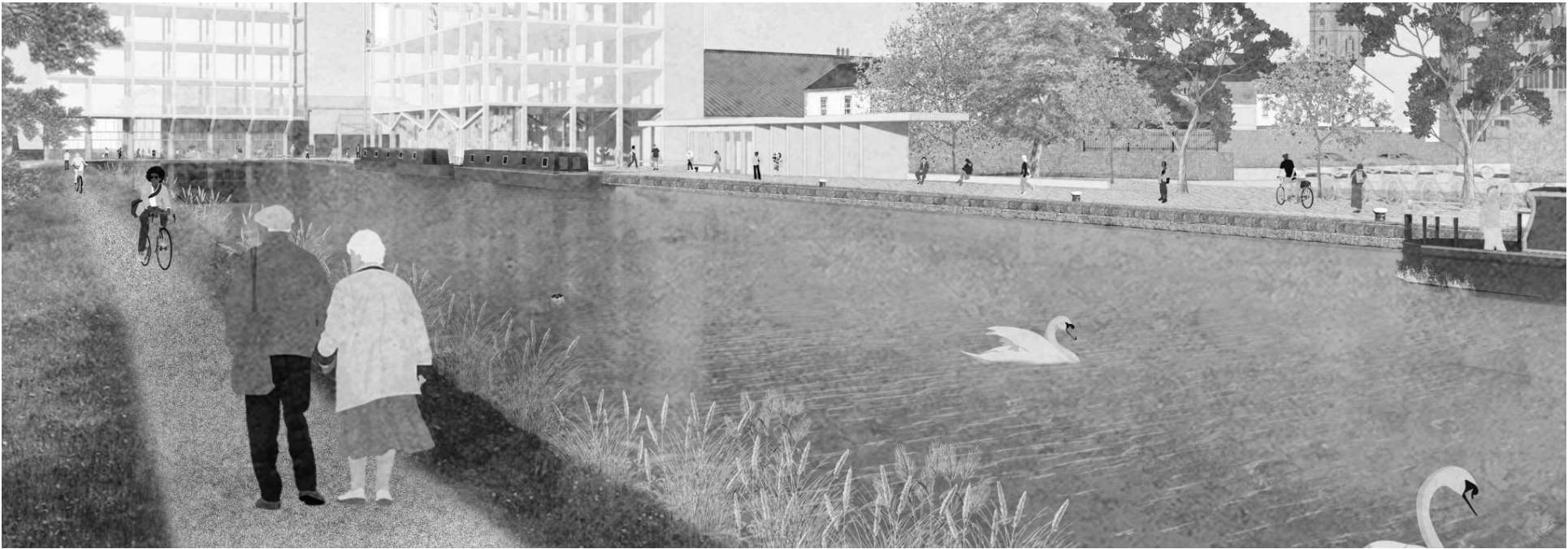


Canal du Midi, Toulouse - reference for the eastern bank.



Keyplan of perspective locations

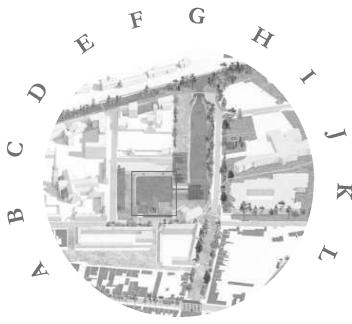




2 Visualisation along the Canal Spur from the eastern bank.



3 Visualisation towards the Harbour Basin entering from the East



D

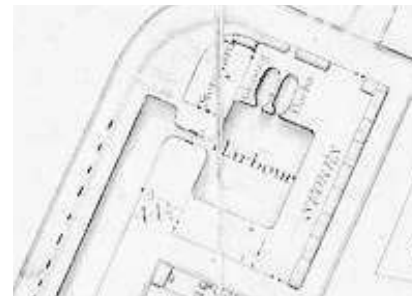
CUSTODIANSHIP OF THE STONE BASIN

Key to the understanding of the Harbour is that it is a man-made piece of infrastructural engineering. Unlike a natural water body, the Harbour Basin is at a raised level relative to its context. It is a kind of *water plateau*, made with embankments, retaining walls and quays.

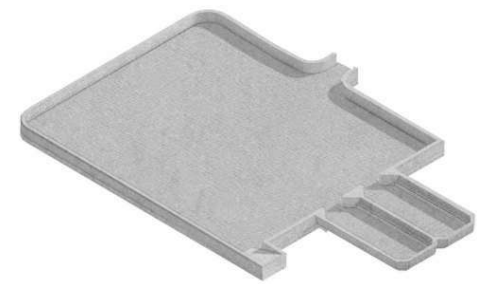
The Basin is like a vessel of finely cut limestone, that holds the canal water. It is over 200 years old. Its longevity is testament to the skill and craft of its construction. Preservation of the Basin and its associated Heritage Structures including the Dry Dock is an ongoing project of custodianship. Part of bringing the Harbour into use as a civic space will be its careful repair.



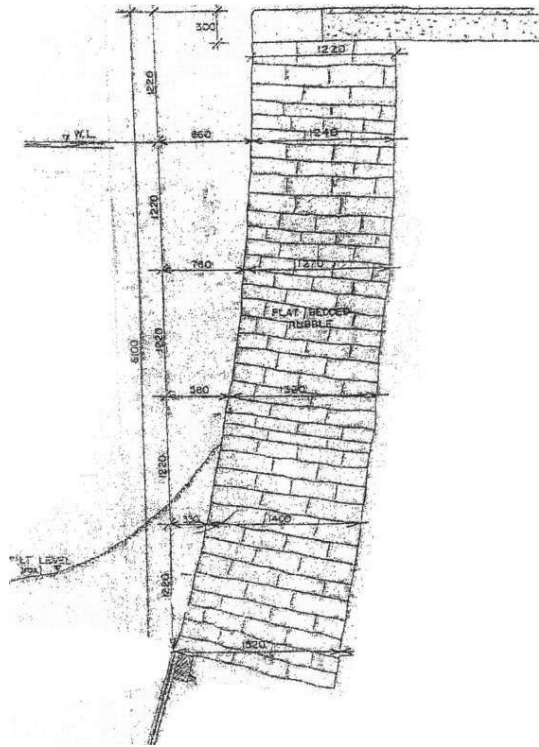
A section of the current condition showing the Basin, Canal Spur and Embankment.



John Killaly drawing of the Canal Harbour, 1804.



Visualisation of how the Harbour Basin may appear when drained.



A drawing of a typical quay wall from elsewhere on the canal.



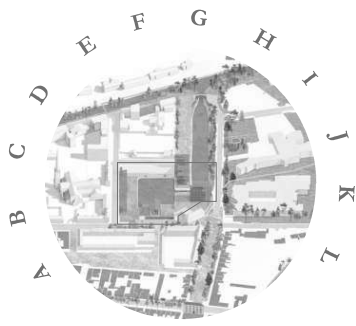
Photos of careful repair and replacement of eroded limestone blocks within a canal lock chamber at Mespil Rd, Dublin.



Kinugi / Kintsukuroi is an ancient Japanese technique, where repairs are highlighted and celebrated. Through repair, the original ceramic piece is enhanced, transforming a problem into a feature of beauty.



A photograph of the existing pier walls in Dún Laoghaire. The approach to restitching historic fabric to a new contemporary surface material that is cohesive, yet distinct.

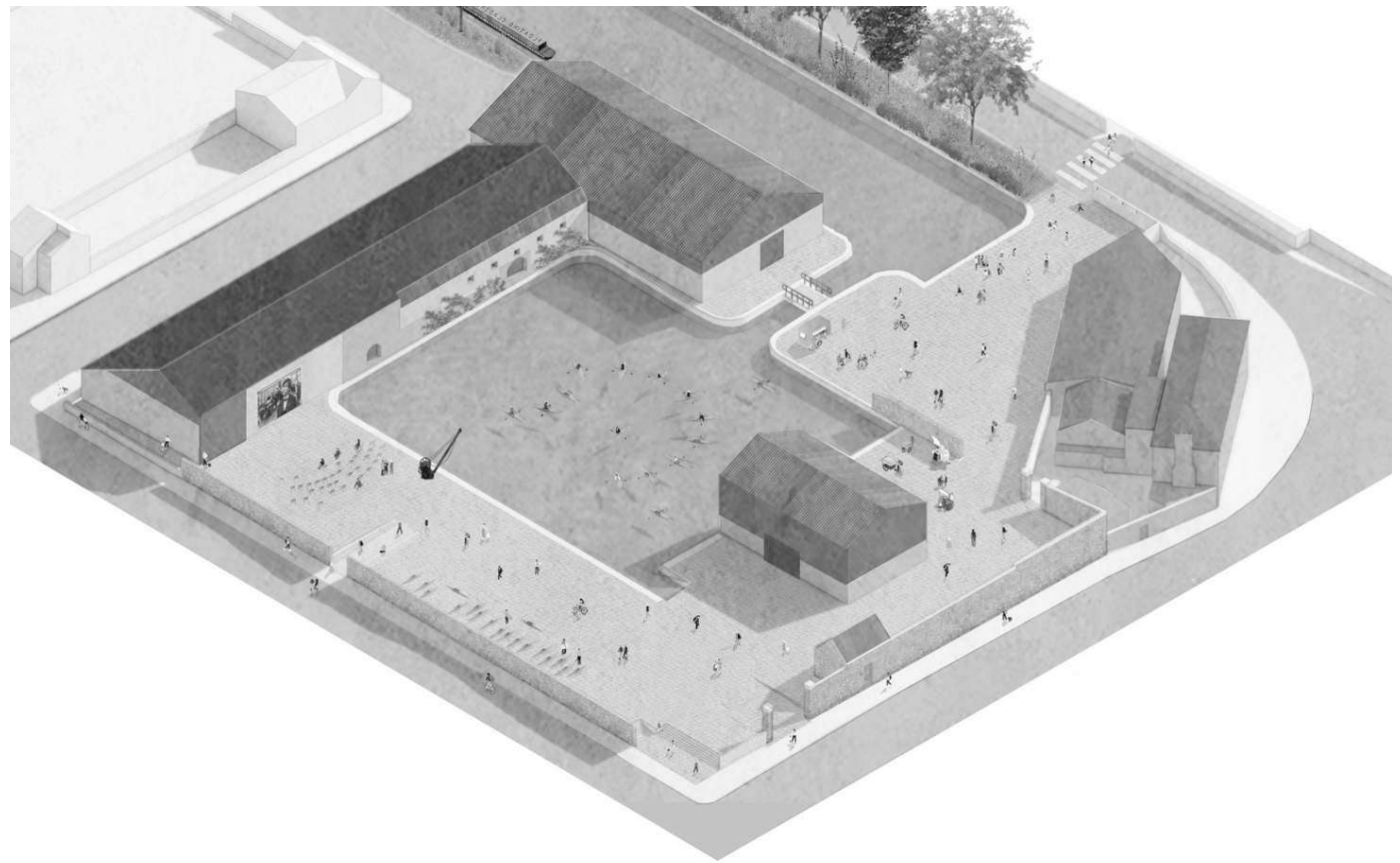


E

UNLOCKING THE SECRET WATER SQUARE

The ground surface of the Harbour surrounding the Basin itself, was not made of stone. Unlike the Basin, formed in cut stone, the surface of the Harbour is estimated to have been composed of looser fill and historically was not hard-paved. Currently, it is covered with concrete hard standings, cracked considerably in places and undulating, potentially due to the quality of the substrata beneath.

The opportunity now is for a new approach to the design of the Harbour's ground surface to provide a firm, rich and textured public realm.



Isometric visualisation of the Harbour displaying a repaired ground surface to facilitate greater access and use.



Kalmar Sq, Sweden - Caruso St. John Architects



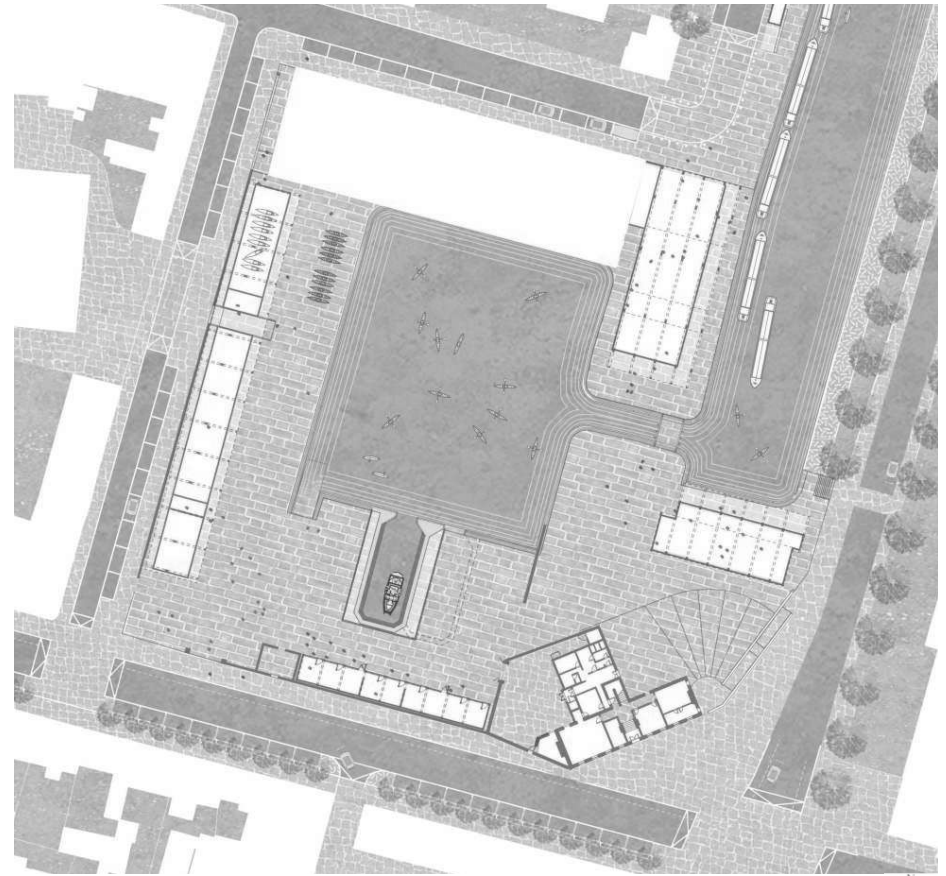
Kalmar Sq, Sweden - Caruso St. John Architects



Acropolis paving, Athens - Dimitris Pikionis



Kilkenny Castle paving - GKMP Architects



Plan of the Harbour - the yellow colour represents the surface to be transformed with different materials and textures into a tapestry reflective of the Harbour's past.



EARLY ACTIVATION OF THE HARBOUR

Currently the Harbour is like a secret garden concealed behind high walls. After its unlocking, the next step is to reveal its potential and reconnect it to Tullamore.

An initial investment into the Harbour and Basin's landscape and quays would provide an opportunity to realise a new *Water Square*.

A good quality public realm would provide a new amenity to Tullamore while providing a platform for interim uses to emerge.



Pink Floyd in Venice



Cinema in the Venetian Lagoon



Cinema in the Venetian Lagoon



Examples of different performances and screenings in waterside locations in Venice and in Paris and also possibly in Tullamore Harbour.



The Harbour could be a home for a barge project (similar to that featured below) as a means of early activation in collaboration with local schools.



The Furor Scribendi was a barge re-purposed as a living research vessel, housing a floating library of short stories and a retreat for writers and readers by Heather Peak and Ivan Morison - funded in part by the Canal and River Trust.



The schools of Tullamore indicated on an aerial photo of the town - a number of which are directly adjacent to the Harbour & Canal Spur.

The close proximity of numerous schools to the Harbour Basin and Canal Spur highlights the unique position to form connections that exploit the educational value of this water network.

A floating classroom along the Canal Spur would deeply enrich the actual and exciting learning experience of the Tullamore and Offaly student population with a precious resource, literally to the 'doorstep.'

The Dept. of Education is based in Tullamore. With the town's increasing population and the unique connection of the town to the canal network, particularly with the Canal Harbour and Spur, focused educational possibilities could be spear-headed; specifically involving environmental studies under SESE (Social, Environmental and Scientific Education).

A wonderful example of a floating classroom is a converted barge; 'Small Bells Ring,' co-commissioned by Super Slow Way, Coventry City of Culture Trust and the Canal River Trust. The modified boat operates as a living research vessel, housing a floating library and a retreat for writers and readers.

A HOME FOR WATER-CULTURE AND EDUCATION

The Harbour is located strategically on both the Grand Canal network as well as an educational cluster in Tullamore. There is an opportunity to redevelop the site as a home for water culture and education in addition to other uses. There is already a well established culture of water sports and recreation in Tullamore and the Midlands.

This adds another layer of activity and public use to the Harbour, enhancing its vitality and vibrancy, changing perceptions of the Harbour from being something currently not in the public's consciousness, to a focal point in Tullamore. This enhances its attractiveness and value.



'Float to the Fleadh' - outside Young's Stores 2009



Midlands Adventure: Banagher - Stand up Paddle



'Float to the Fleadh' - on the Canal Spur 2008



Tullamore Canoe Club at their club house at Lock 27



Water polo in Mullingar Harbour



Offaly Rowing Club (at Lock 24) out on the Grand Canal



Water Recreation Clubs in Tullamore:
Tullamore Triathlon Club, Tullamore Canoe Club, Inland Waterways Association of Ireland, Heritage Boat Association, Offaly Rowing Club



Proposed use of the site for water leisure and recreational activities. This may include stand-up paddle, canal kayaking and canoeing.



F

YOUNG'S STORES:

A GREENWAY

GATELODGE

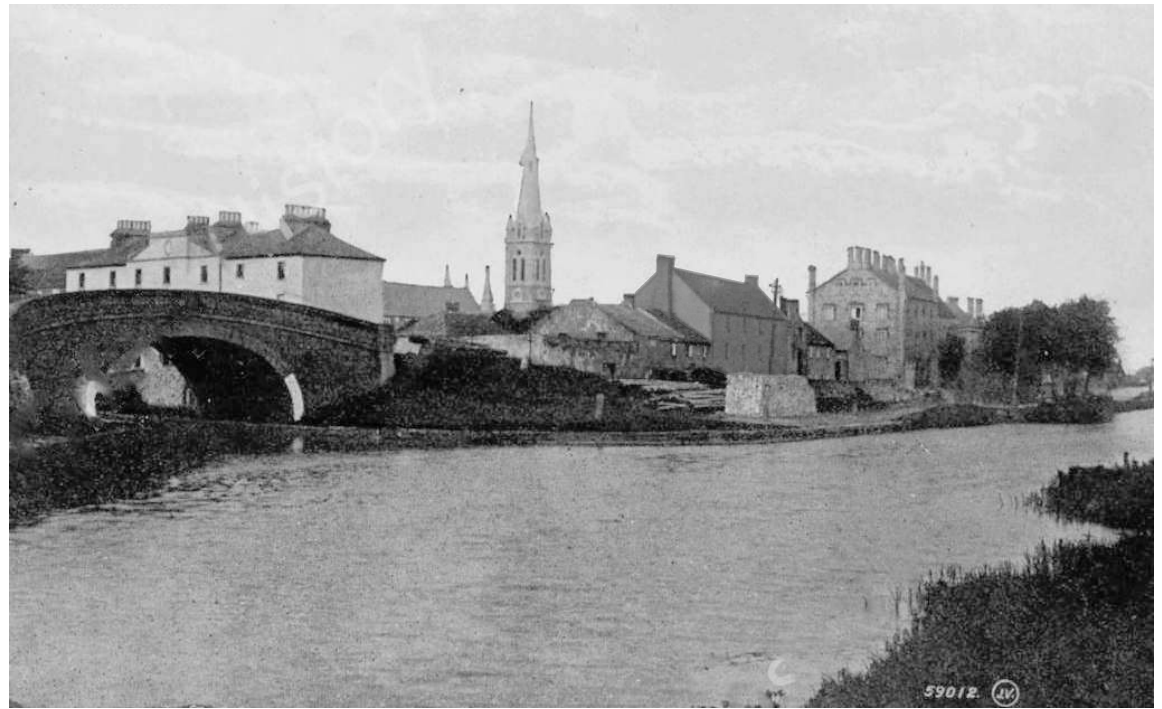
Young's Stores is a significant piece of the industrial history of this part of Tullamore. It is a former store building and a rare example of its kind, of which there are few remaining. It is also located at a pivotal point between the Harbour and emerging Grand Canal Greenway.

This opportune location makes it an ideal pit stop on the Greenway and also a welcome disembarkation point for Grand Canal boat users. Young's Stores offers the potential to become a kind of embassy for Tullamore where visitors are received, hosted and oriented to the Harbour site

and visitor attractions as part of a visit to Tullamore.

While remaining sensitive to the existing fabric and character of this protected structure, adaptive reuse of Young's Stores could provide visitor facilities, information

and accommodation; supporting sustainable tourism development. The north facing forecourt space in front of Young's Stores, adjacent to the canal, could be designated as an outdoor seating area and become a new public amenity/gathering space.



Historic Photograph looking towards the Church of the Assumption with the Bury bridge and former Grand Canal Hotel to the left and Young's Stores on the Grand Canal highlighted in red.



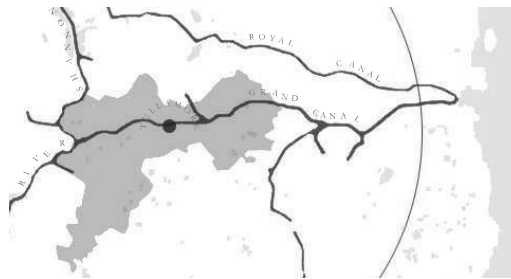
Ground, first and second floors (from left to right) at present in Young's Stores. Note the flagstone floors, timber central beam and columns and thick structural floorboards.



Young's Stores in the Context of the Grand Canal as it passes through Tullamore



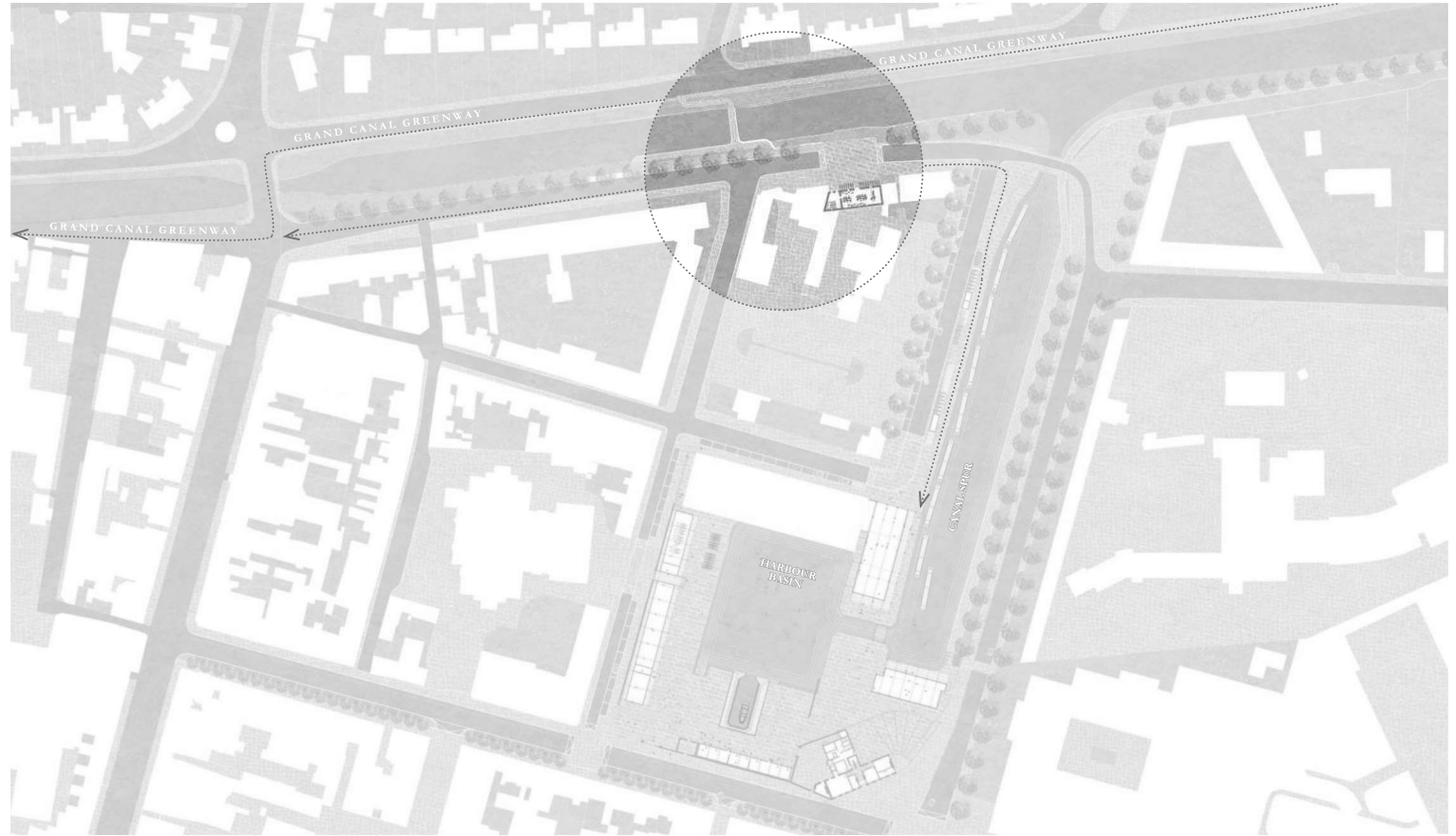
The network of Waterways on the island of Ireland.



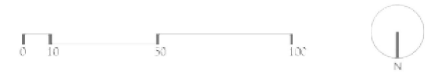
The Grand Canal and Greenway from Dublin Bay to the Shannon as it passes through Offaly (Tullamore shown in red).



Young's Stores and the Bury Bridge at the junction of the Grand Canal and the Canal Spur.

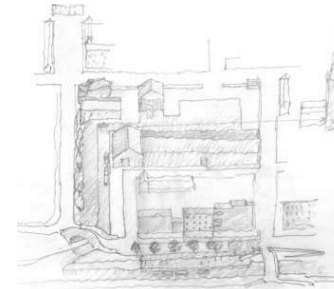


Young's Stores and the existing ramped pedestrian bridge on the Grand Canal. The proximity of Young's Stores to the bridge makes it an ideal pit stop for travellers where they need to cross the canal to continue on the greenway while also serving as a disembarkation point for Grand Canal boaters.



The Coach House in Kilmacthomas is a former famine workhouse building on the Waterford Greenway, adapted for reuse as a pit stop for tourists on the route. Its offering includes a speciality coffee café, a venue available for hire / events as well as a hub for cycle hire on the greenway.

This is a good example of how an existing structure (such as Young's Stores) could be adapted for use by tourists and local people from Tullamore alike. The location of Young's Stores is ideal for this as it is at the bridge where the Grand Canal Greenway cycle route transfers from the North bank to the South.





Re-imagined Young's Stores as seen from the opposite bank of the Grand Canal

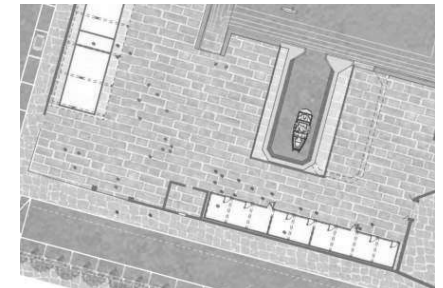
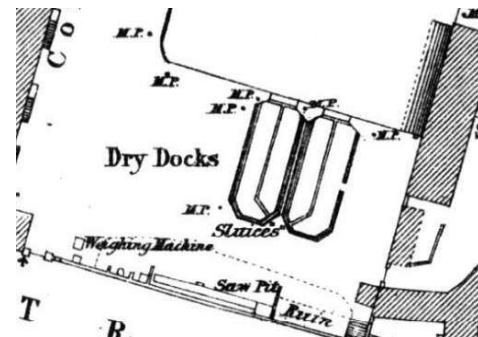
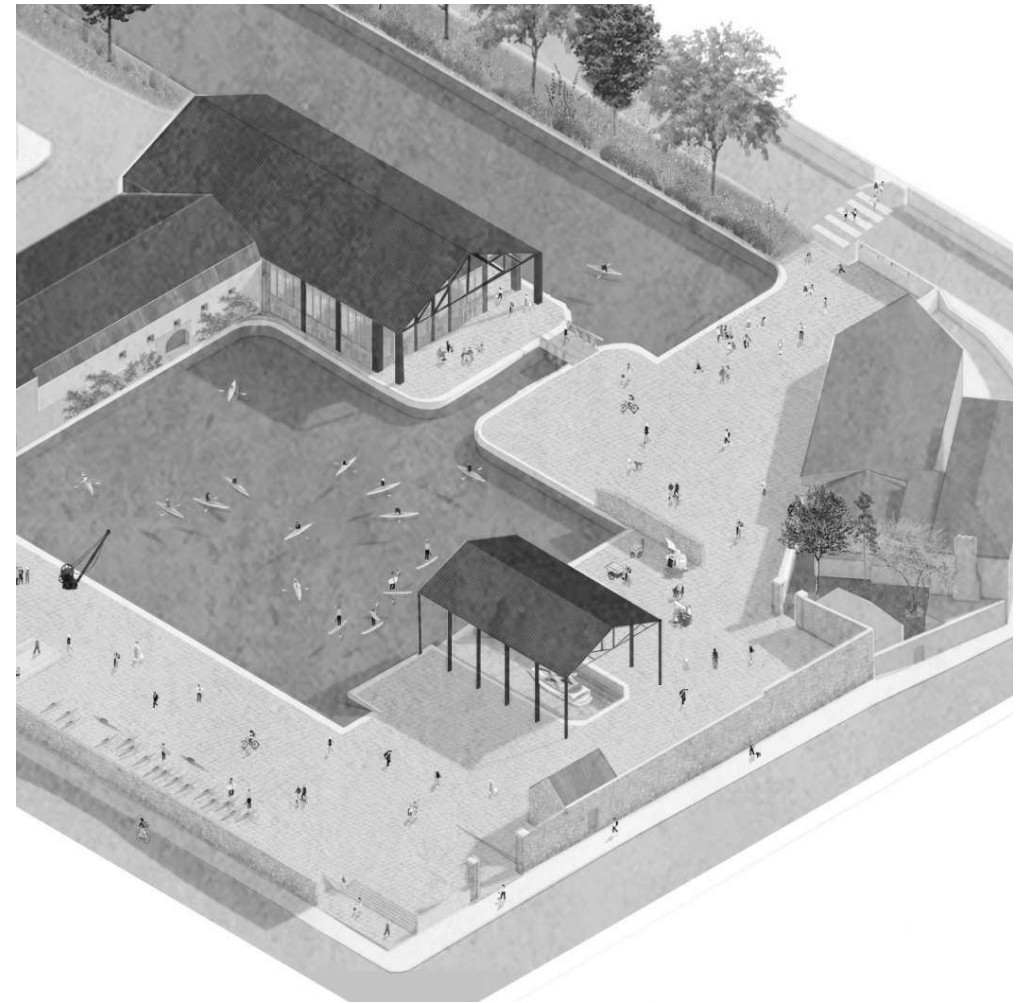


G

THE DRY DOCK: CHERISHING THE INDUSTRIAL PAST

The Dry Dock is potentially the most significant piece of industrial heritage on the Harbour site. The historic maps feature 2 docks, though only one is now open.

The Dry Dock is an invaluable piece of infrastructure for boating stakeholders; for example Heritage Boat Association and Inland Waterways Association of Ireland. Careful design of site development works is required to secure the integrity of this precious built heritage and continue its operation, serving both public and Waterways Ireland owned vessels. Its operation offers the opportunity to create a heritage experience for visitors and schools to discover.



The only visible Dock is that to the West. The other is currently covered by concrete hard standings. There is a sluice serving both at the South of the septum between them. This will need to be decommissioned for ecological and flooding risk reasons.

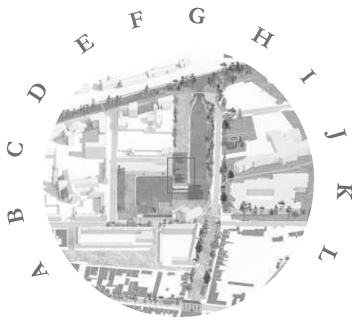


View within the Tullamore Dry Dock (looking away from the Basin) and A similar Dry Dock at Clondra, Co Longford to give a sense of an unoccupied dry dock.



Meitheal Mara, Cork City.

Meitheal Mara is an organisation based in Cork city promoting community development, education and leisure through maritime pursuits. This is through 5 key areas: community (working and training), boat building (woodwork), seamanship (rowing and sailing), maritime (culture and activities) and events (on land and water). Tullamore Harbour could host a similar organisation that would bring activity and connection to the town.

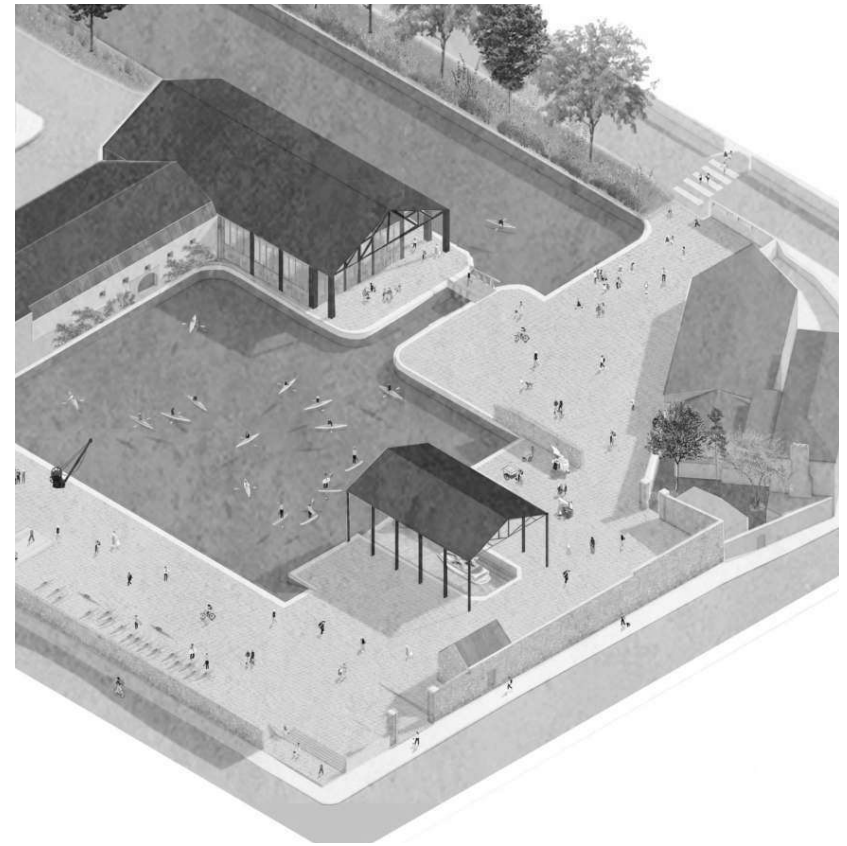


H

TRANSFORMING THE LOCK-GATE WORKSHOP

The Harbour currently has a number of structures, principally the covering to the Dry Dock, Office Accommodation and a large workshop where lock gates are built.

The Lock Gate Shed is a robust 20m x 40m space. This space could possibly be transformed. Its scale offers opportunities for large scale events, which would suit its distinctive character and setting. Adaptation of this workshop would allow for early activation of the Harbour with modest financial commitment, and without precluding future development.

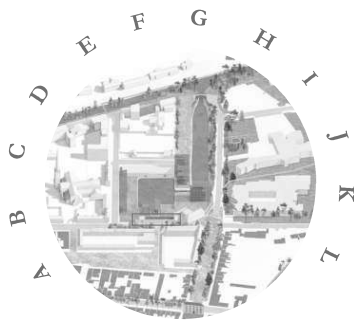


An event at Lough Boora for Culture night conveying how a simple structure can be adapted to create a compelling atmosphere.



Tullamore Fayre, located close to Áras an Chontae in Tullamore. A use such as this could be accommodated at the Harbour.

Spitalfield Markets, London where a market is contained in a semi-outdoor space in a former industrial building.



I

INHABITING THE HARBOUR WALL

The Basin occupies the heart of the Harbour. All recommendations for future construction are appropriately distanced away from the Basin and its quays, in order to retain its unique character.

One edge of the Harbour enclosing walls is along Harbour St. Inside this harbour wall, between a historic, small building called: the Battery Store and St. Mary's is a site, which could be inhabited as a newly-built building which would house small shops, studios or workshops. These attractive and active uses would open towards the Harbour on one side and have high-level windows towards Harbour St. to catch the sun and act as a beacon to enliven Harbour St. at night.



Looking down Harbour St. with a new structure's rooflights peaking over the wall - a beacon of activity and animating the street.



Existing condition with the carpentry workshops on the right and the Dry Dock to the left. The dimension between the carpentry workshop and Dry Dock is currently constricted. The new structure would alleviate this with its shallower depth.



(Opportunity 1) Looking towards the gate to St Mary's (Youth Centre and Crèche) within the Harbour with the terrace of shops / studios to the right and the Dry Dock to the left.

OPPORTUNITY I: CHARACTER AND CULTURE

Ireland has a number of craft and design collectives where artisans group together forming a creative colony. Tullamore Harbour could be a locus for this in the Midlands and perform as a complementary offering to the new Esker Arts Centre.

This long slender portion of the site is ideal for creating small studio spaces as a terrace to the Harbour. A simple elegant structure along the Harbour's southern perimeter wall would be an economic way to achieve activation and transformation of the Harbour.



Sands End Community Centre. Mae Architects, UK. A reference of what the character might be. This is a project largely constructed of recycled and low carbon materials, elegantly designed.



Arran St. East, Dublin 1

Arran St. is an example of an enterprise where there is a combination of retail, café and also an educational offering where people can attend and learn the craft of ceramics.



Ceardlann An Spidéal, co Galway:

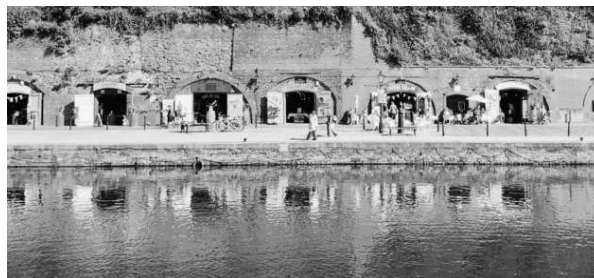
This is an Irish handcrafts hub where ten in-house artisans design, create and sell their unique wares. This could be something that may happen in the Harbour where there is a synergy between a culture of making with commercial activities.



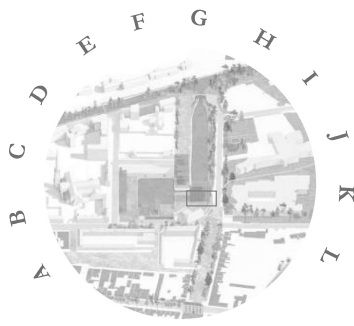


Donegal Craft Village, co. Donegal:

This is a showcase for contemporary arts and crafts in the county where a creative collective of six craft studios are clustered. Visitors can enjoy browsing in the artists' shops while watching them work.



Exeter Quayside where a vaulted retaining wall hosts small 'locales' for different craft retailers along the quayside.

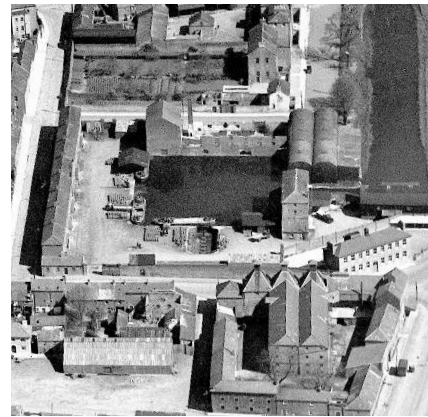


J

MARKING A POINT OF WELCOME

The Canal Spur by its nature is a long vista on the approach to the Harbour Basin. A focal point that 'book-ends' this vista would be an opportunity to announce the Harbour. It would have the effect of terminating the vista from either end of O'Carroll St. at its centre point.

The Harbour of the 19th C. maximised height to liberate ground area. This created a skyline of taller buildings that were set-pieces that registered in the town. A tall building at the end of the Canal Spur would be an opportunity to restore the character of tall buildings in the Harbour.



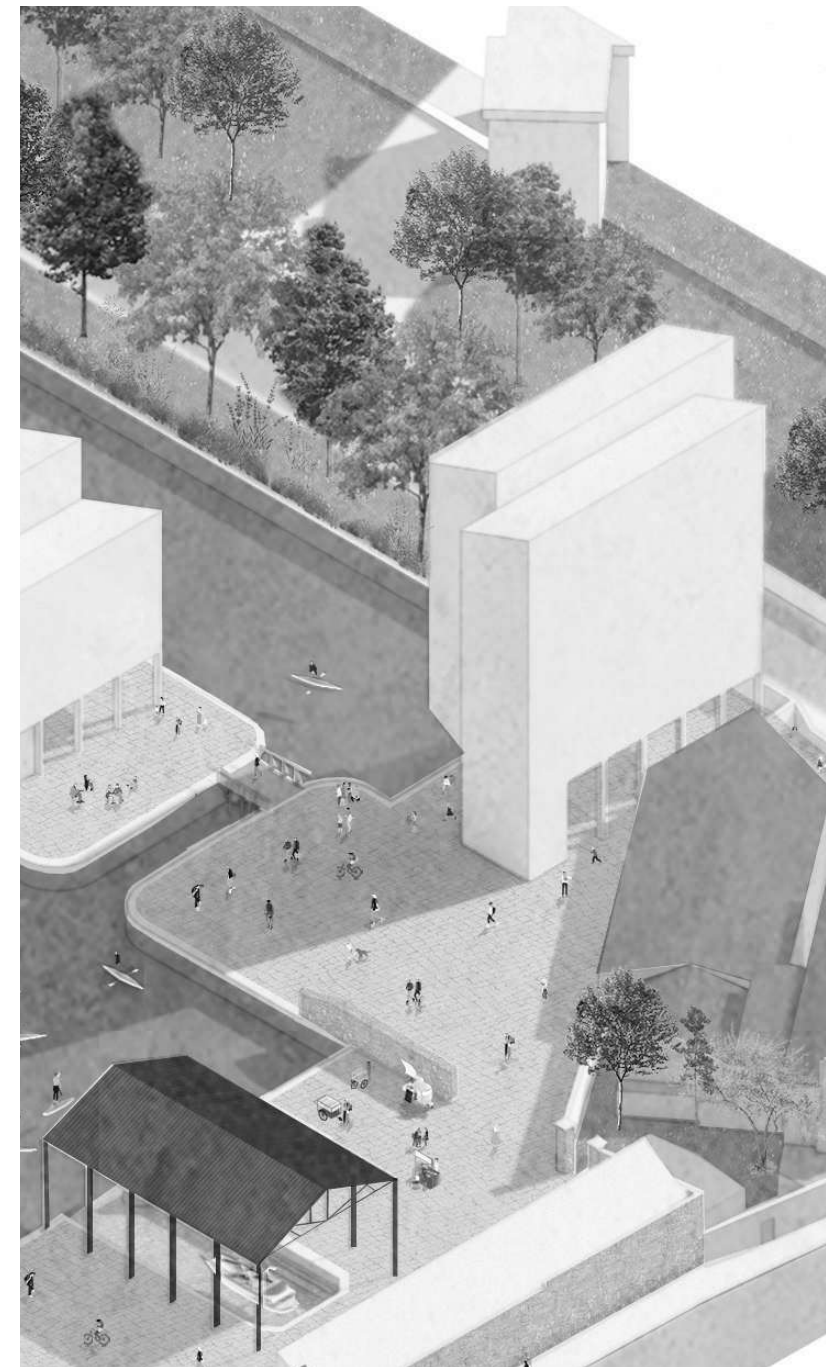
Photograph of the Harbour from 1956 with the original 19th C. buildings still in existence.
Photograph by Alexander Campbell Morgan



Photograph from within the harbour of the cowls in Egan's Maltsters (now demolished) on Harbour St.
Photograph by Kevin Donaghy.



Photograph from the Canal Spur from the 1970s with the lost industrial skyline.
Photograph from Waterways Ireland's Delany Collection.
Photograph by Ruth Delany



(Opportunity J) Indicative idea of placement of a new structure to mark the end of the Canal Spur and as a fulcrum at the centre of O'Carroll St.



(Opportunity J) Indicative scale of a new structure as viewed from Harbour St.



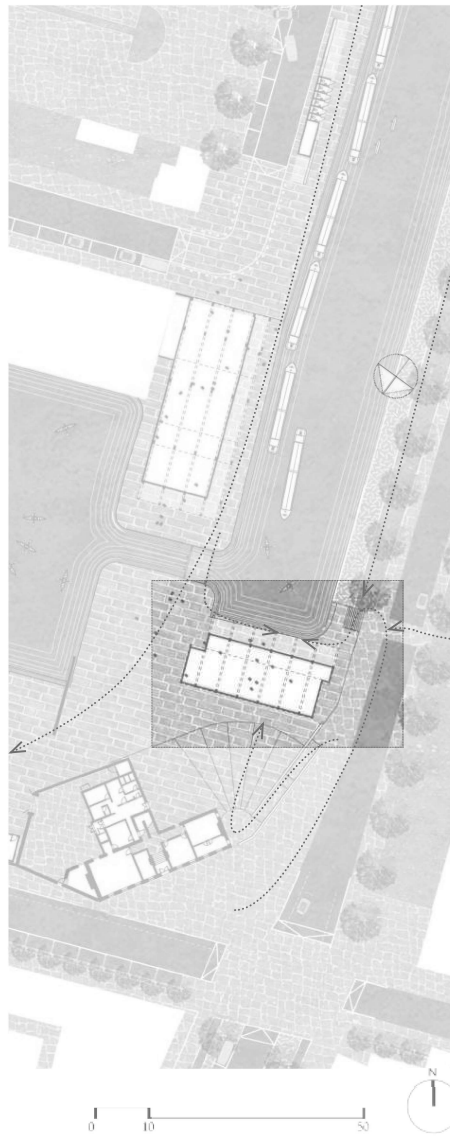
(Opportunity J) Indicative scale of a new structure as viewed from O'Carroll St.

GREETING THE CANAL AND TULLAMORE

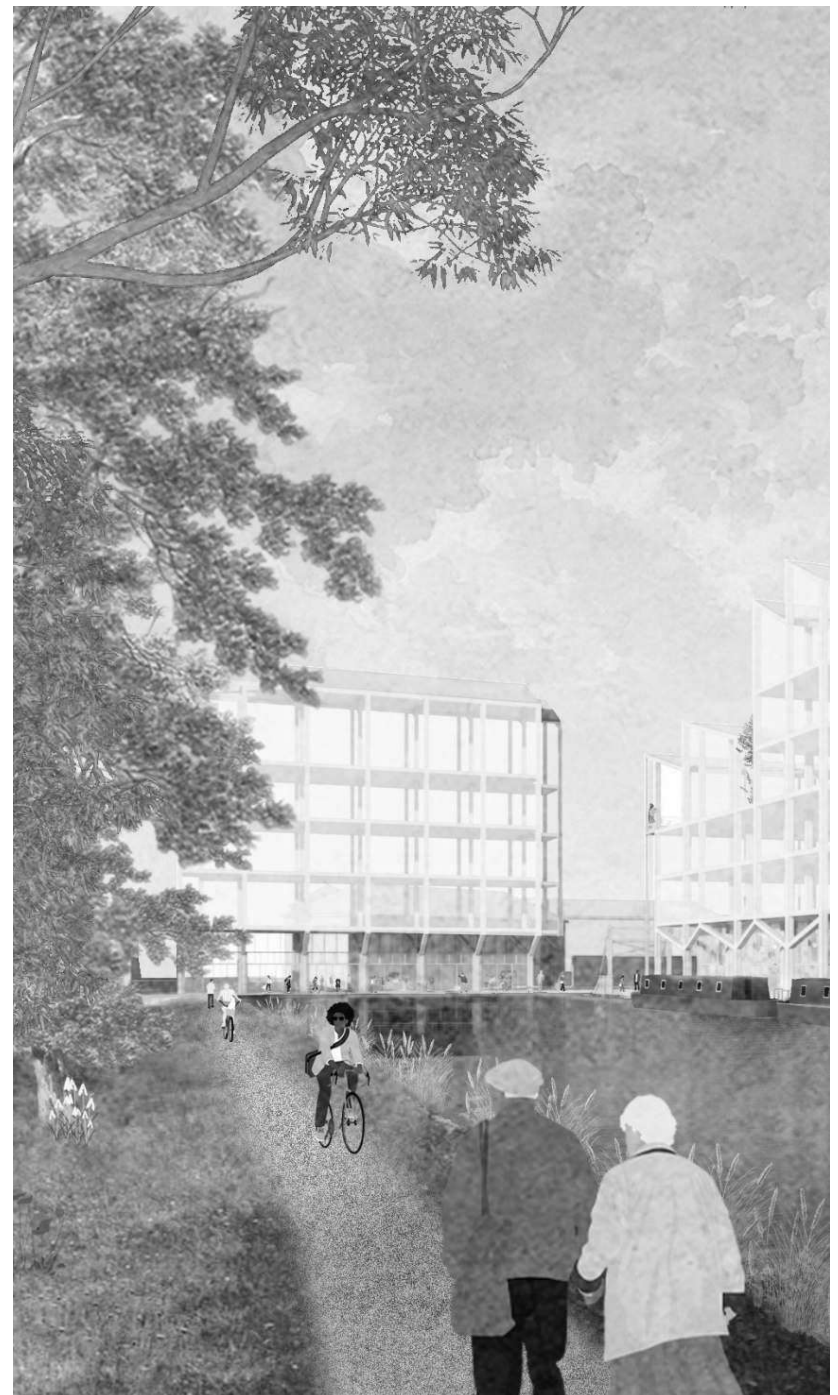
The waterfront setting and vistas afforded into the Harbour Basin, up the Canal Spur line and surrounding streetscape effectively encapsulate the attractiveness of a new building at this location. It offers all the hallmarks of appeal to prospective residents, as a place to work, and enjoy a variety of social, cultural and recreational experiences.

Positioning a 'marker building' at the end of the Canal Spur presents a challenge to complete the walkway around the Spur. This can be achieved by reducing the ground floor footprint of a new building, creating an overhang that allows for access on the waters edge. Currently, there is no connection into the Harbour from the East. Creating a crossing on O'Carroll St. and route along the eastern grassy canal embankment will make the Harbour more accessible and more visible from the schools, Whitehall and O'Carroll St.

There is also an opportunity to connect O'Carroll St. by ramp up to the Harbour level beside St. Mary's, making a completely new connection to the town.



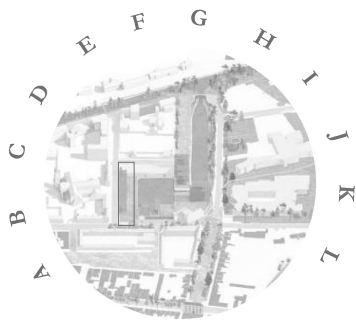
Keyplan showing the location of the visualisation



(Opportunity J) Visualisation of the imagined structure viewed from along the Canal Spur.



(Opportunity J) Visualisation beneath the structure viewed from the new eastern entrance to the Harbour, from O'Carroll St.



K

RE-CREATING A STREETSCAPE IN THE HARBOUR

From the Harbour's earliest incarnation, it included a long perimeter building to the West. This had the practical function of a store but also acted as a designed backdrop to the Harbour Basin as viewed from the inlet approached from the Canal Spur. This is evident with its façade complete with pediment in its central portion.

A development location at the western edge would restore the backdrop and scenography to the water. It would have the effect of restoring a sense of enclosure to the long space running parallel to the Harbour Basin quay line.



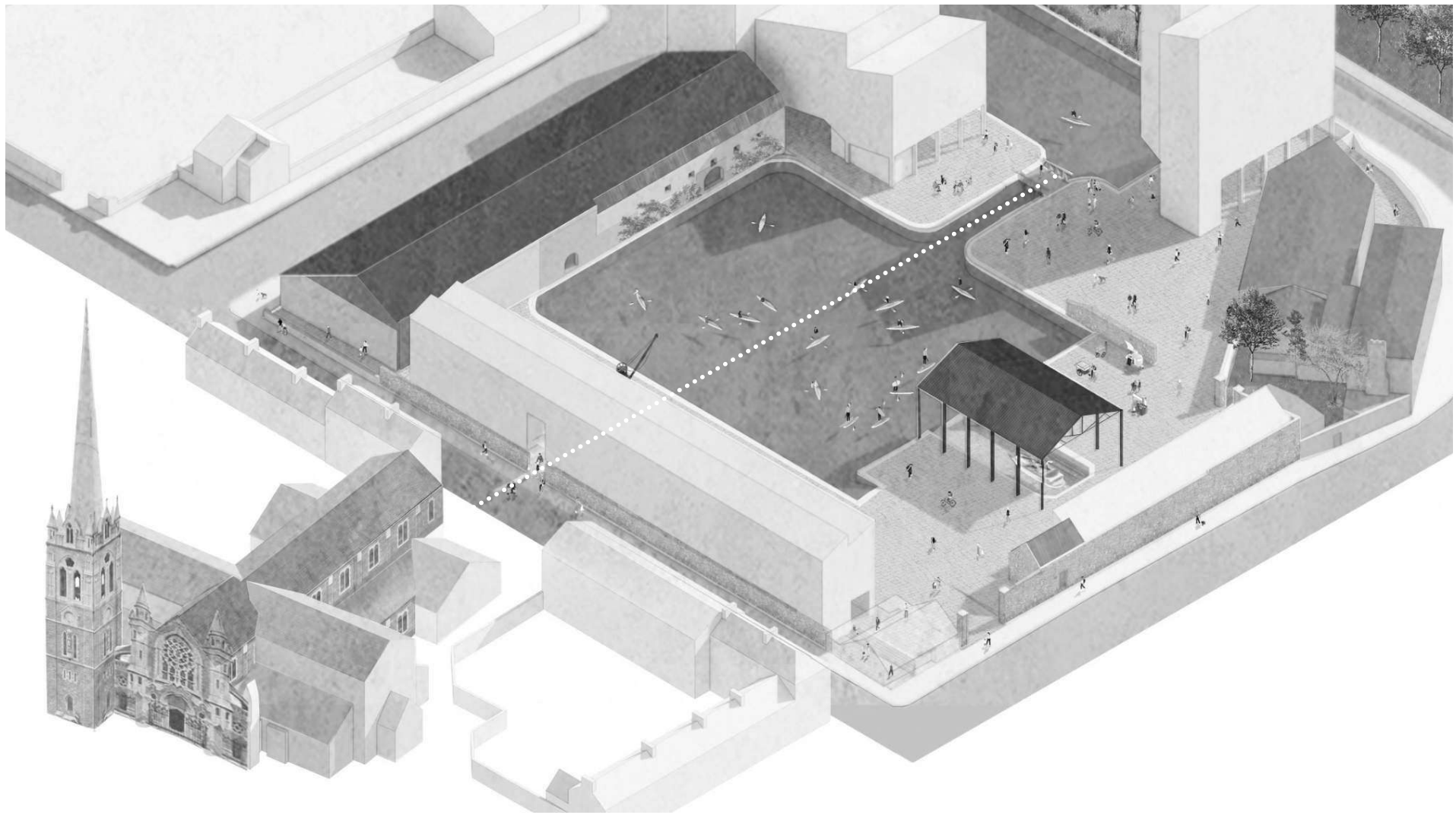
The store building along the West edge of the site with the pediment with a plaque at its centre. This was clearly axially organised with the Harbour inlet as a composed design. Angela Rolt 1946



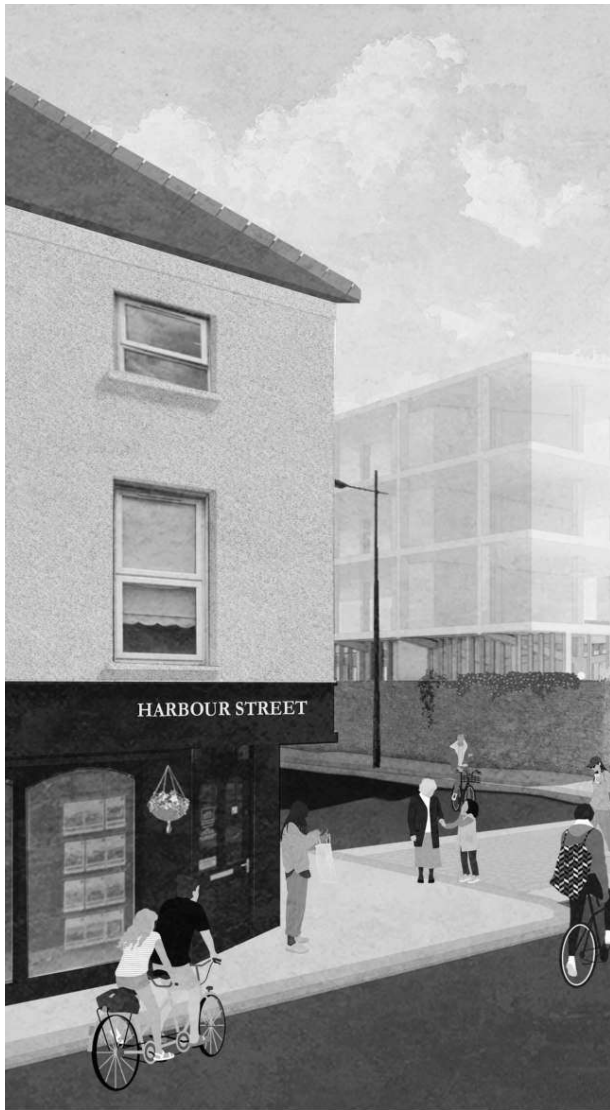
Aerial view of Harbour taken by RAF biplane, 1918



The Building along Store St. from the Harbour inlet taken by Jane W. Shakleton, 1894



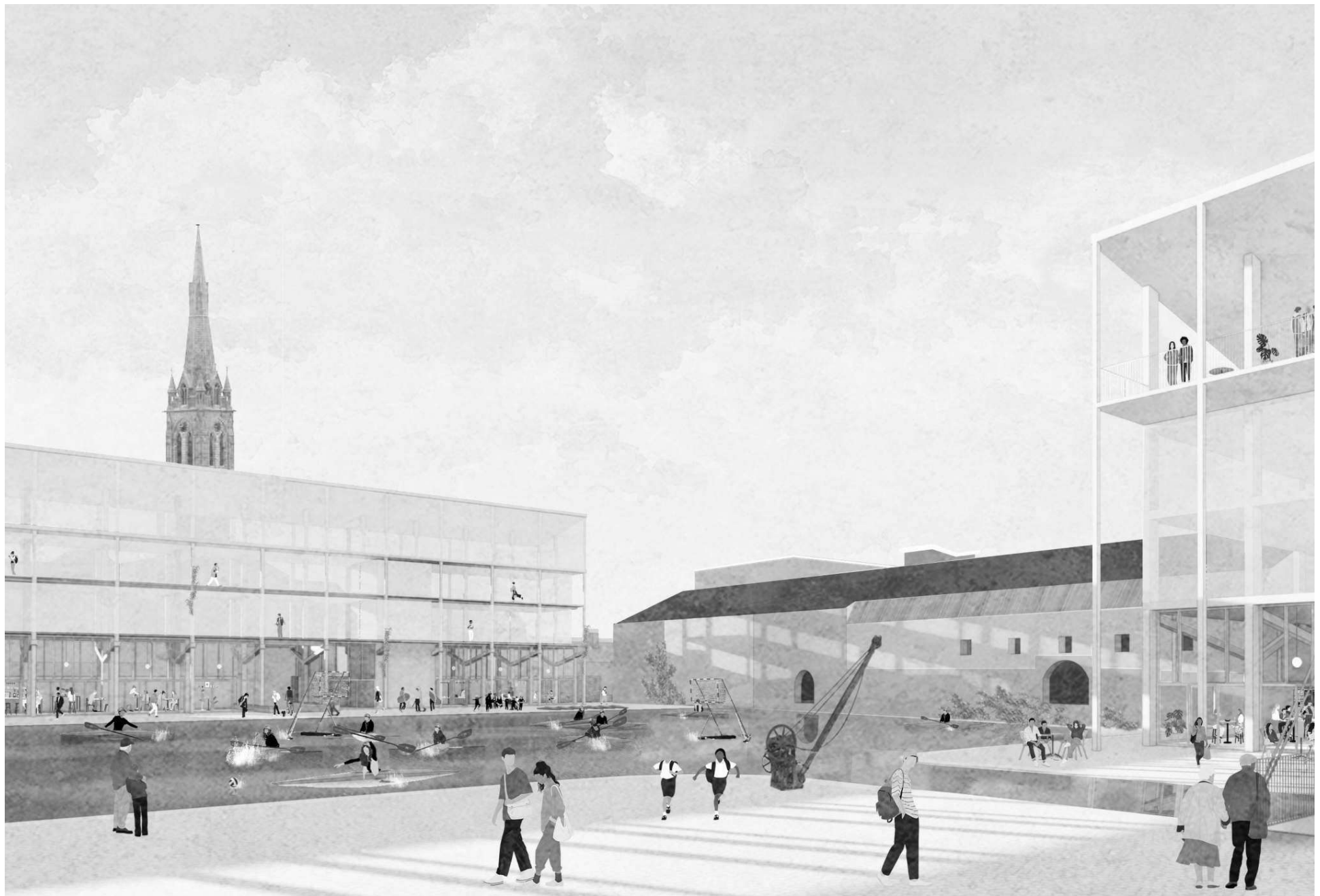
An isometric view showing the new double height entrance to the Harbour from Store St. made through the existing limestone wall. The new opening connects the Harbour Spur entrance with the Church of the Assumption's eastern gates.



The image above shows how a new perimeter structure along Store St. could integrate with the wall fragment along its length - the last remnant of the 19th C. linear store building on Store St.



(Opportunity K) The ground floor of a new structure along the western perimeter of the Harbour gives an opportunity for a new street within the Harbour for public uses. External decks on the upper levels on the waterside offers an animated backdrop to the Harbour Basin.



(Opportunity K) Visualisation across the Harbour Basin featuring the linear block along Store Street re-establishing a backdrop frontage to the water to that of the historic block (now demolished).

OPPORTUNITY K: CHARACTER AND OCCUPATION

Opportunity K, a new structure along the length of Store St. offers the opportunity to make a very direct connection to the town. An active ground floor with the possibilities of waterside eateries coupled with accommodation for active recreational pursuits could bring vitality to the Harbour and be a destination within the town as well as from further afield.

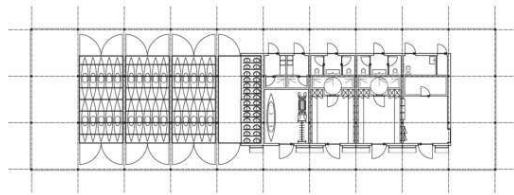
Having an active presence at the ground level of the block on the corner of Store St./Harbour St. has the effect of introducing people to the Harbour and inviting them in. This makes the Harbour accessible and allows people to come inside and discover what else the Harbour has to offer.



Housing by Herzog and de Meuron in Basel, Switzerland showing the possibilities for quality deck access approach to homes, applicable to the imagined *Opportunity K* along the length of Store St.



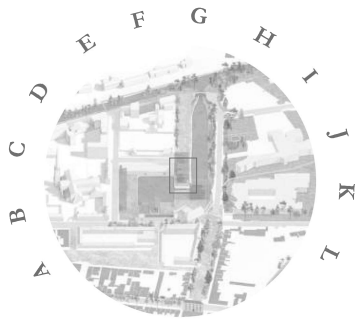
Airfield, (Dundrum co. Dublin) is a farm in the Dublin suburbs that hosts farmers markets, events, weddings and has a café that stretches the length of a wetland habitat. The ground level of *Opportunity K*'s new structure could host a similar offering.



A canoe/kayak club in Caen by Inessa Hansch Architect. This is a simple quay side structure that provides precedent for what could be included at Tullamore Harbour as a resource to the clubs for rowing/canoeing already in existence in Tullamore.



A pavilion and launching dock for canoes to enter the Hudson River in New York. This project, designed by Architecture Research Office, shows how an elegant facility for boats can be provided with economic materials through careful design.



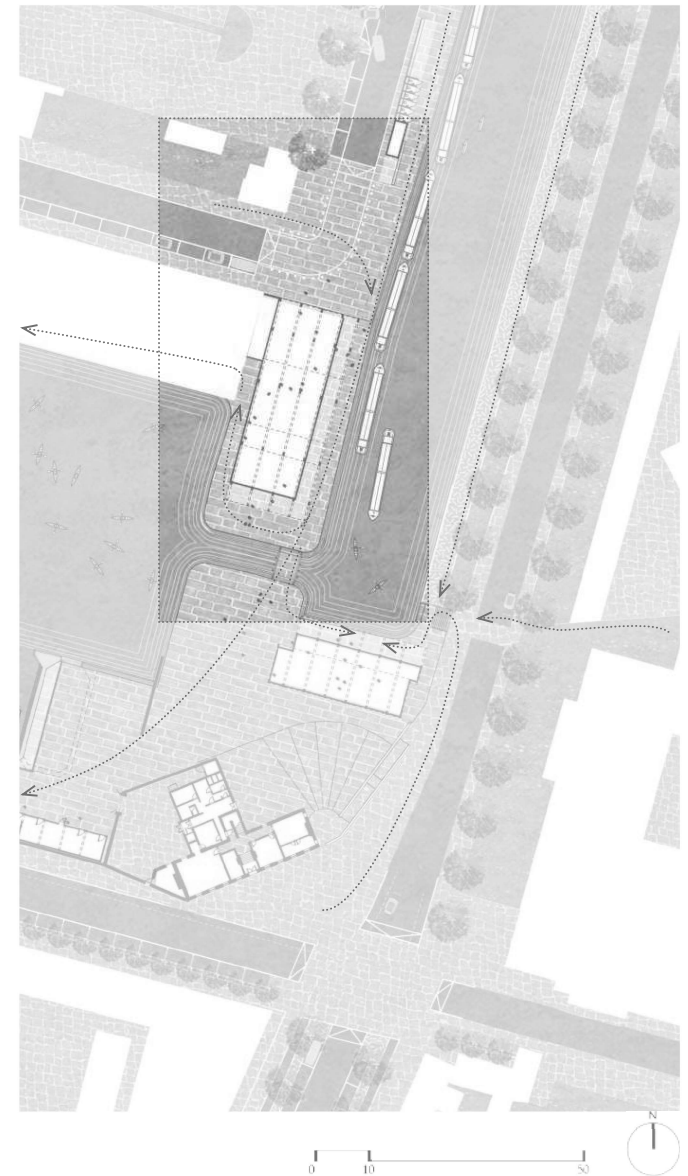
L

WHERE THE CANAL SPUR ENTERS THE HARBOUR

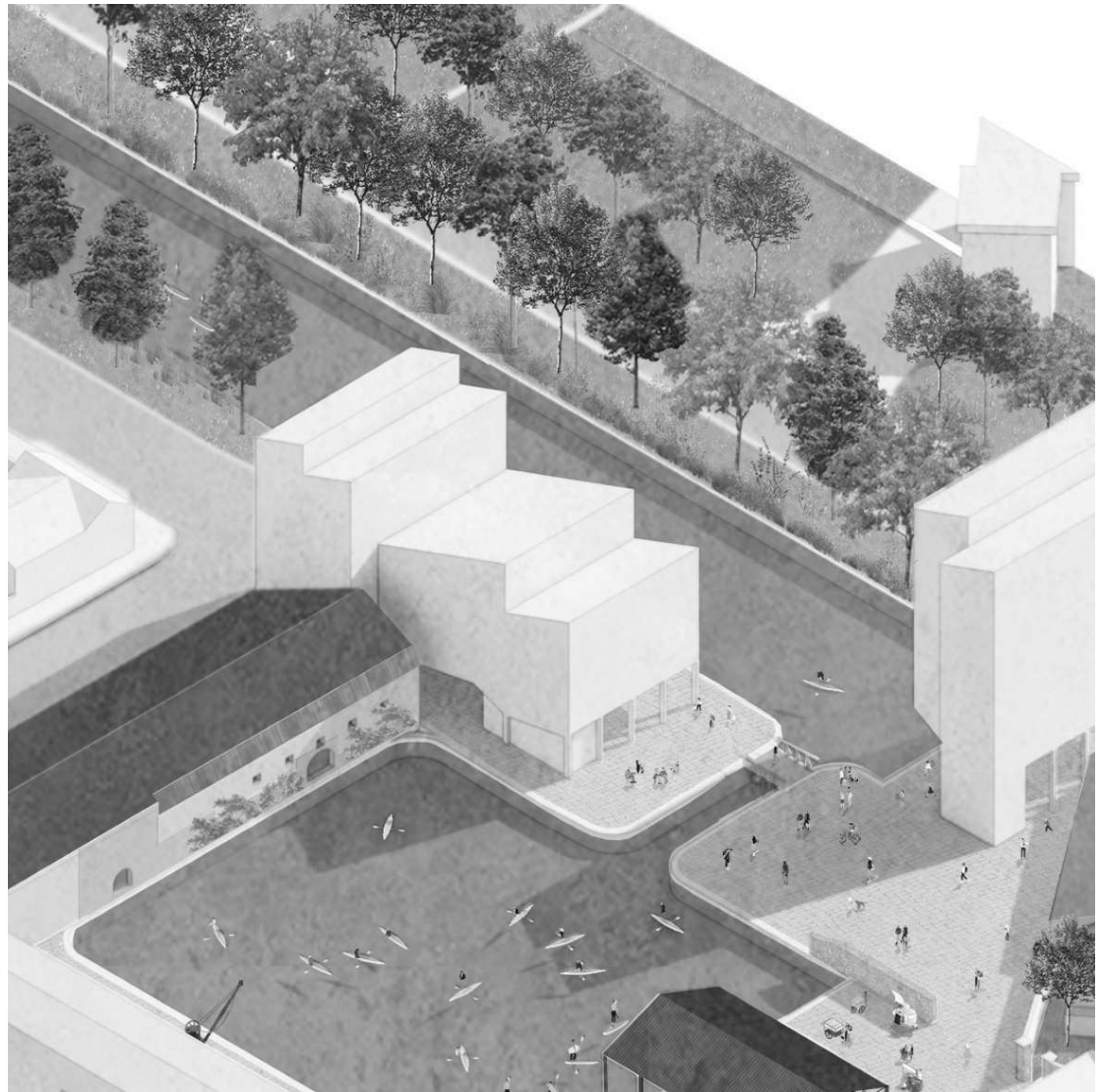
The relationship between the Harbour Basin and Canal Spur creates a peninsula of land between them. This peninsular space has the unique characteristic of having water on three sides as well as three aspects to the South, East and West.

In the historic layout of the Harbour, this peninsula was outside the perimeter walls. Over time however, this parcel became occupied due to it being a large well-proportioned plan area, readily accessible from St. Brigid's Place.

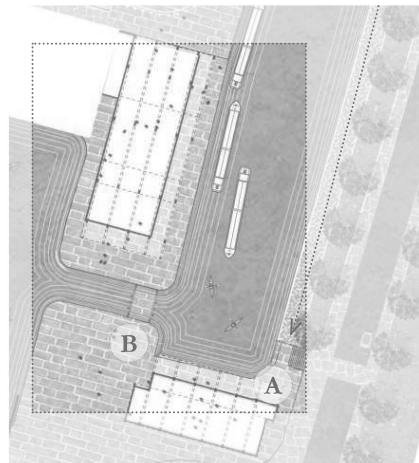
The characteristics of this location providing a vista to the Canal Spur and into the Harbour Basin make it an ideal place for a large footprint building that could have a variety of potential uses, including residential, commercial, food and/or retail establishments.



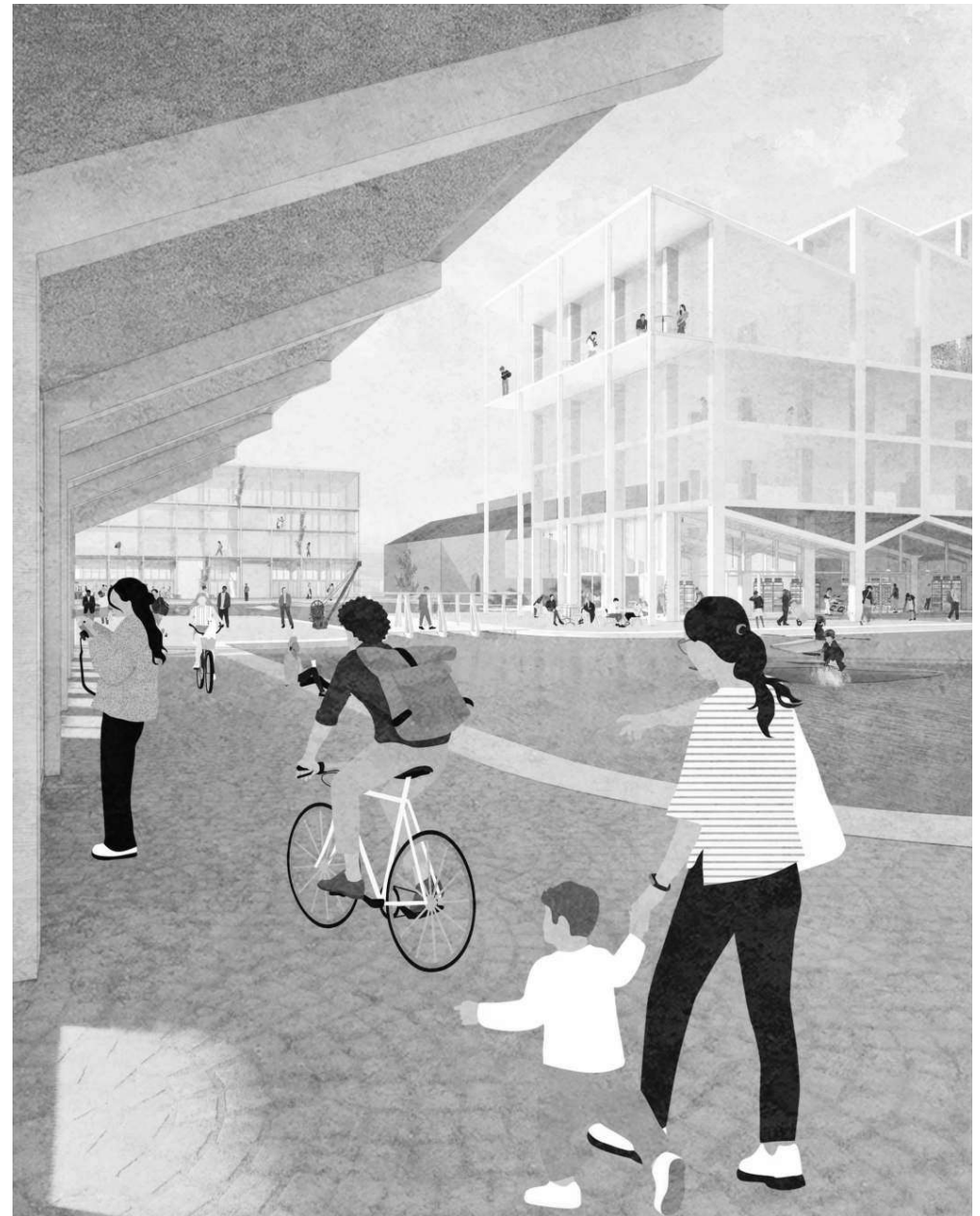
The reimagined Harbour, envisages a condition between the contemporary and historic. A new structure occupies the peninsula (where the lockgate shed is currently) however, a margin is left along the quay line to allow the esplanade continue the whole length from the Humpback Bridge to the Basin inlet. This provides passage across the site between the centre of Tullamore and the East side of the town, including the two schools directly adjacent to the Harbour.



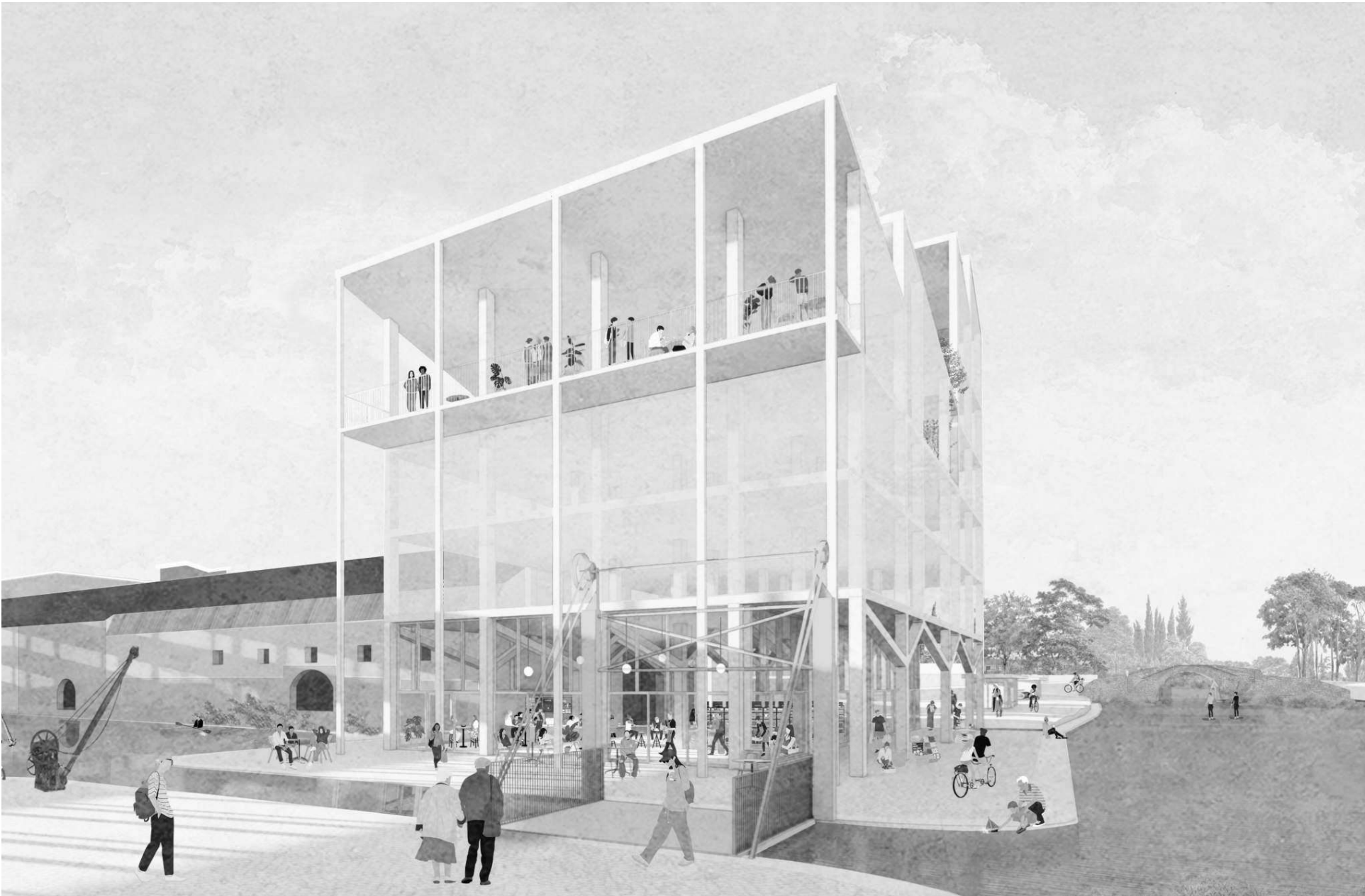
Aerial view representing *Opportunity L* occupying the peninsula between the Harbour Basin and the Canal Spur



A keyplan showing the location of the two visualisations



(Opportunities L.) A visualisation of how new structure on the peninsula might appear from the new eastern entrance from O'Carroll St.

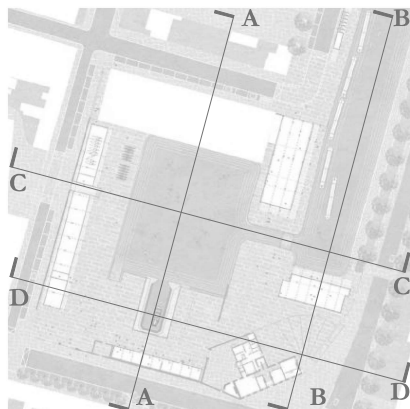


(Opportunities L.) A visualisation of how the new structure on the peninsula might appear from within the Harbour.

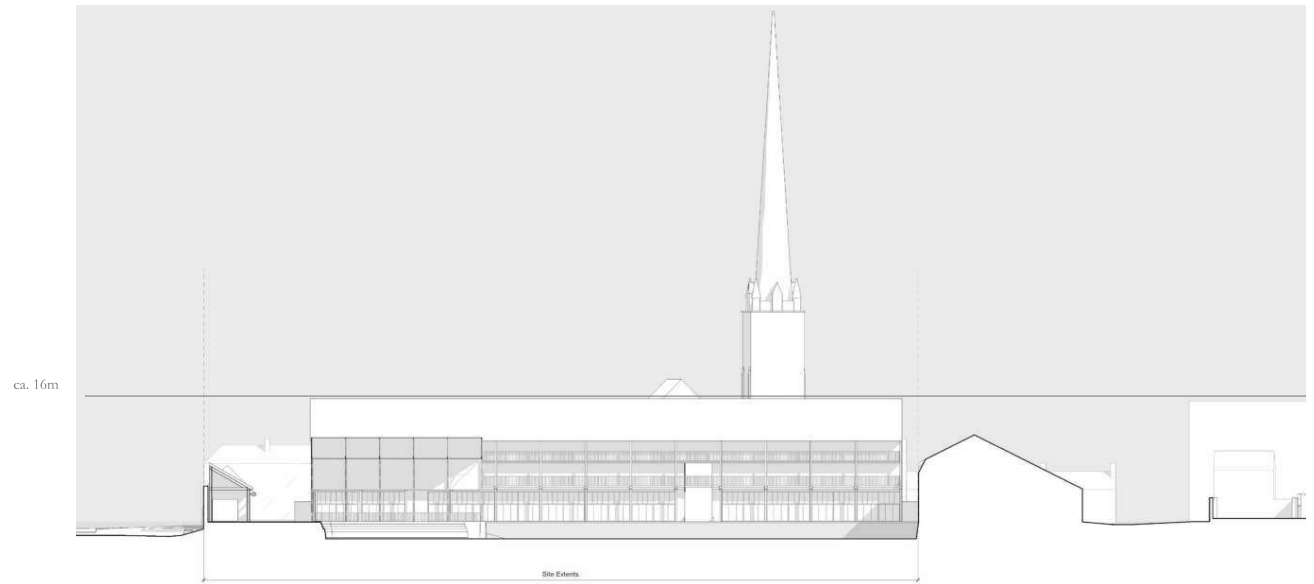
ESTABLISHING SCALE AND HEIGHT

These four sections (drawings: section AA, BB, CC and DD) summarise the outcome of research in terms of character, scale and massing recommended for possible development on Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour.

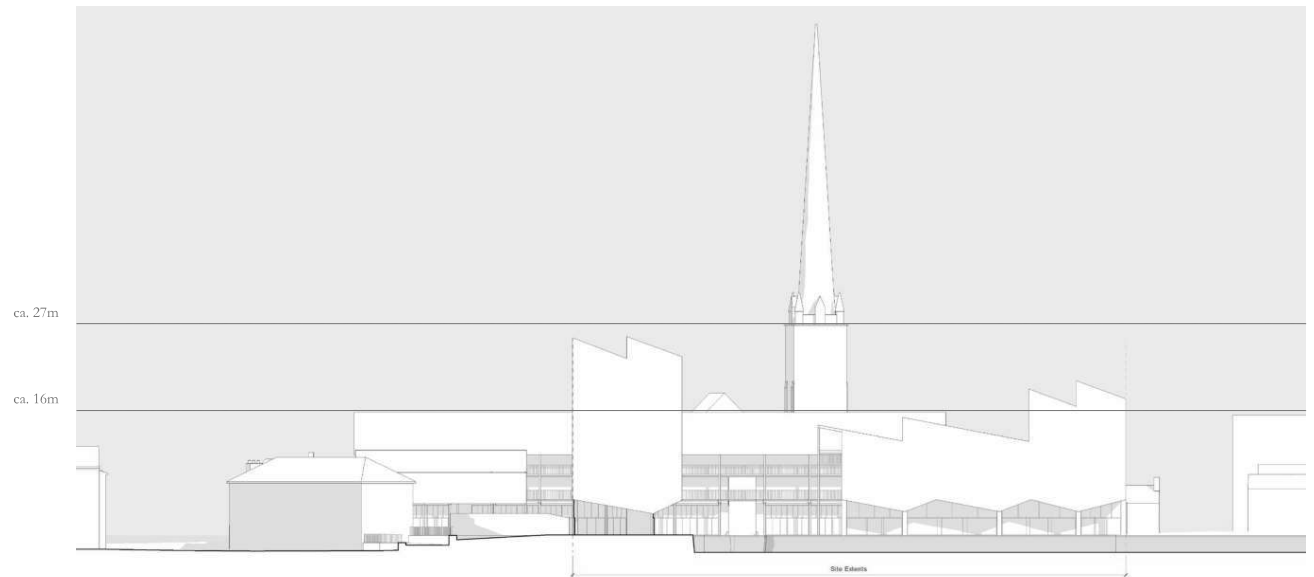
The redlines show two significant datums which relate to the scale and height of potential development. The lower line in red reflects the apex of the roof of the church on Store St. approximately 16m from the Harbour Basin level. The upper red line reflects the base of the spire of the church which is approximately 27m from the Harbour Basin level.



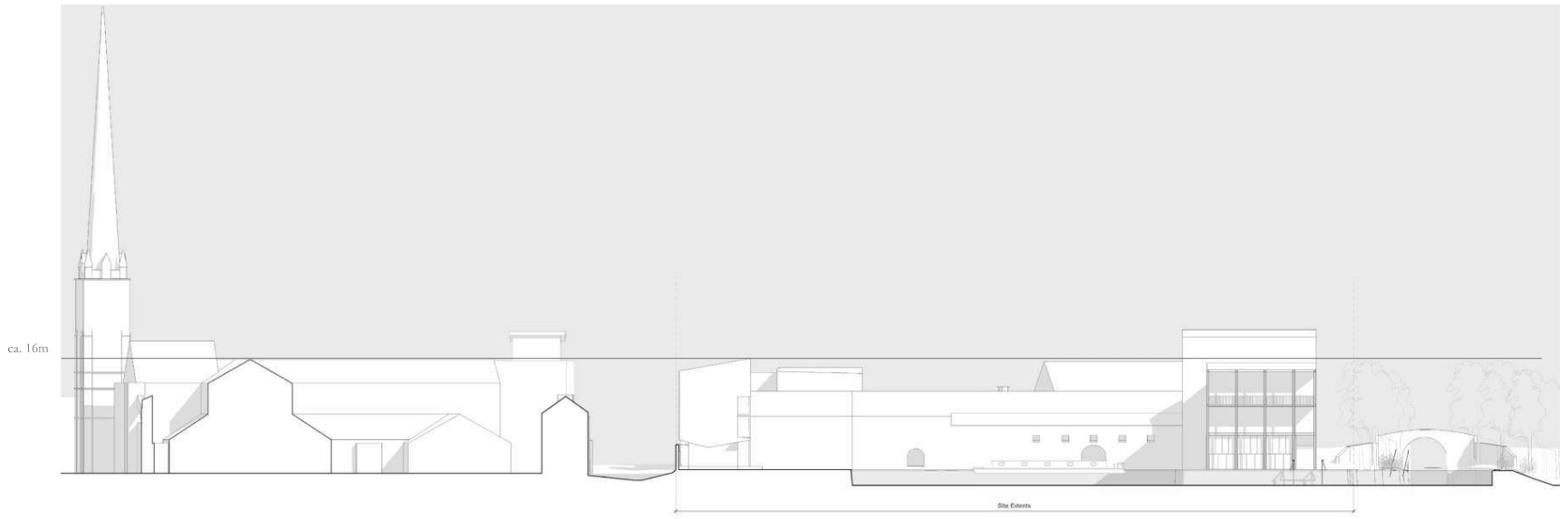
section line locations



section AA



section BB



section CC



section DD

SUMMARY

PERSPECTIVES

The Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan catches hold of the first opportunity in the over 70 years to unlock public access to the harbour site and envision its transformation as a compelling waterfront destination with multidimensional uses for citizens, residents, enterprises and visitors.

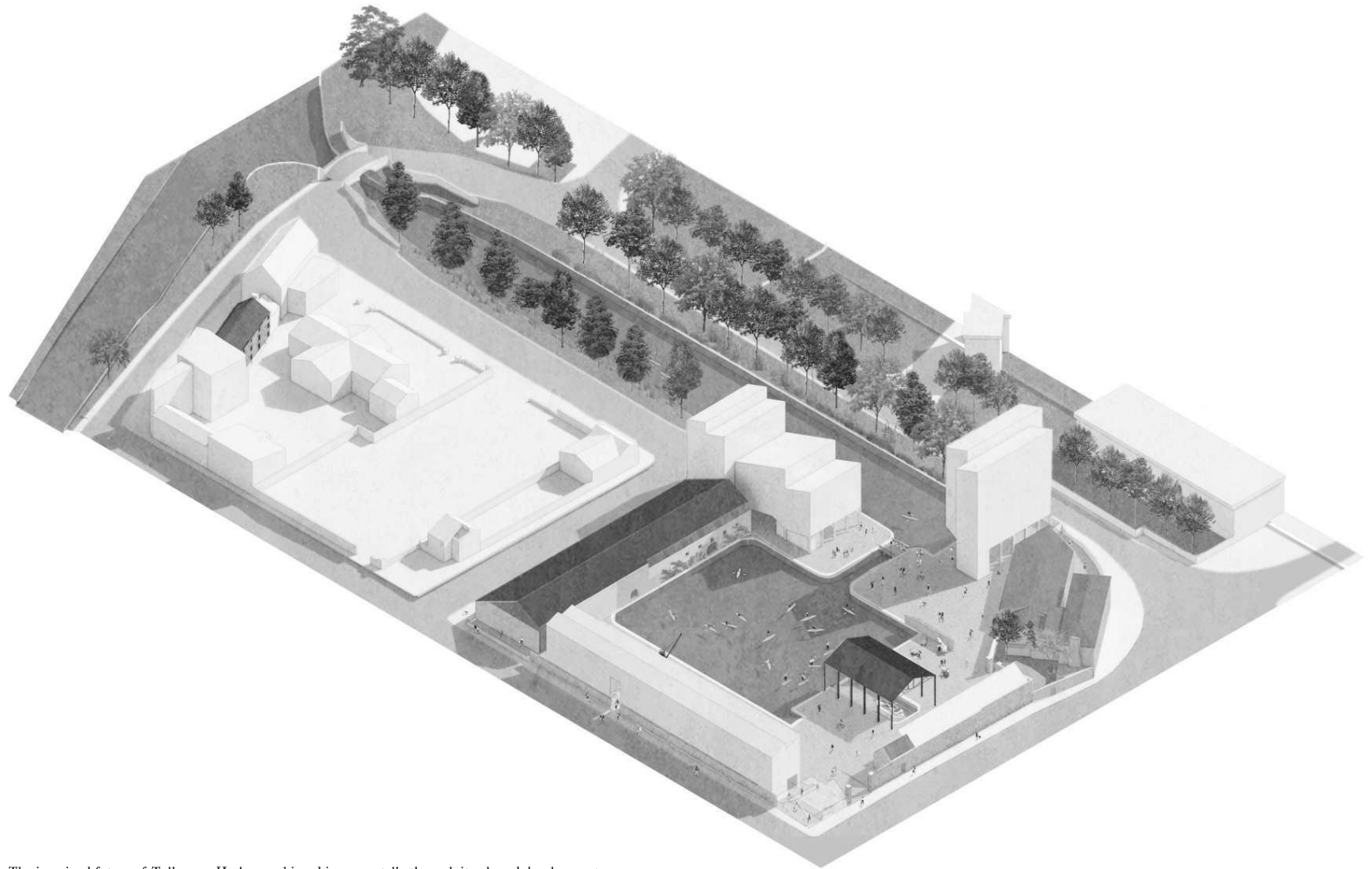
As custodians of the site, Waterways Ireland and Offaly County Council are resolutely committed to ensuring this precious and sought after Harbour asset is redeveloped. It is recognised that the nature and scale of economic, social and environmental benefits that can be realised from the site will firstly be contingent on the nature and scale of Masterplan ambition, and the prioritised development actions Waterways Ireland and Offaly County Council take following completion

of the Masterplan. Infused within this realism is a steadfast obligation that both organisations must take inspiration from the magnanimous vision, capital investment and tireless work of citizens and authorities that enabled construction of The Grand Canal and Harbour Basin in Tullamore, and nearby Canal Stores in 1799. Their toil and sacrifices created much needed transformational economic and social opportunities for Tullamore town. While the nature of future economic, social and environmental opportunities afforded by the Grand Canal Harbour will be somewhat different from those required 200 years ago, transformation of the Harbour area is the constant single catalyst that can stimulate the economic and social vibrancy of the town and increase boat traffic into Tullamore from Dublin and the wider waterways network.

It is incumbent on Waterways Ireland and Offaly County Council to once more facilitate development of the Harbour area as a centre of commerce, recreation, a place to live and visit. These aspirations are firmly rooted in the Masterplan through a catalogue of future development opportunities, each of which will be subject to detailed cost benefit assessment and contingent on achieving the right funding model at the appropriate time. The 12 opportunities catalogued are not sequential nor are they largely interdependent.

Waterways Ireland and Offaly County Council will continue working committedly and collaboratively with various sectoral partners to achieve phased redevelopment of the Harbour area, inclusive of the Basin, adjoining Canal Spur Line, and Young's Store. The next planning phase will involve the establishment of a Working Group to prioritise Masterplan opportunities for development, identify related funding pathways, and optimum development and operating models.

text for *Next Steps and Commitment to the Future* provided by Client.



The imagined future of Tullamore Harbour achieved incrementally through its phased development.

TULLAMORE GRAND CANAL HARBOUR

APPENDICES

APPENDICES

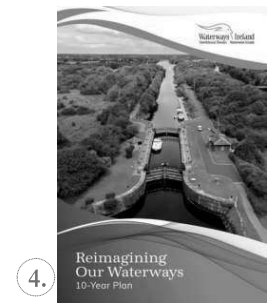
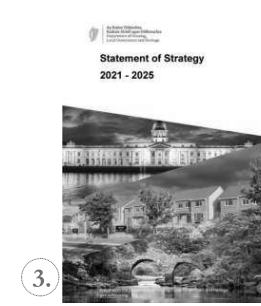
96. APPENDIX 1: CONSULTEES

NATIONAL POLICY:

98. APPENDIX 2:

100. APPENDIX 3:

102. APPENDIX 4:

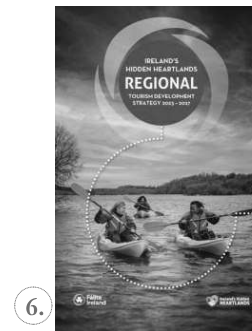
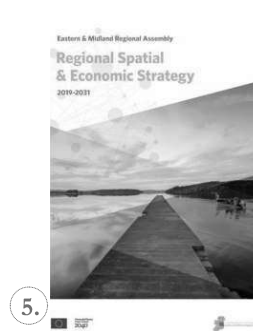


REGIONAL POLICY:

104. APPENDIX 5:

106. APPENDIX 6:

107. APPENDIX 7:



LOCAL POLICY:

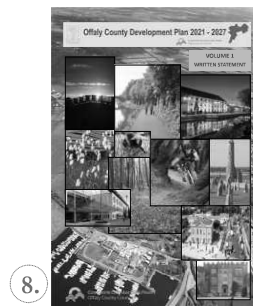
108. APPENDIX 8:

109. APPENDIX 9:

110. APPENDIX 10:

111. APPENDIX 11:

111. APPENDIX 12:



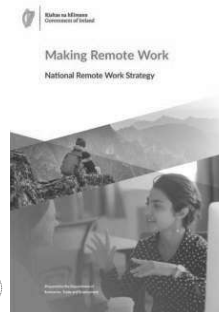
ENTERPRISE POLICY:

112. APPENDIX 13:



13.

113. APPENDIX 14:



14.

RECREATION POLICY:

114. APPENDIX 15:



15.

115. APPENDIX 16:



16.

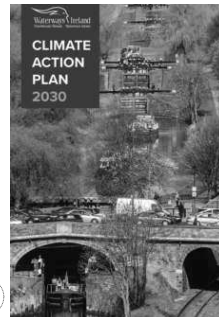
CLIMATE POLICY:

116. APPENDIX 17:



17.

117. APPENDIX 18:



18.

118. APPENDIX 19:



19.

APPENDIX 1:

List of Consultee Stakeholders
engaged during the Masterplan
process.



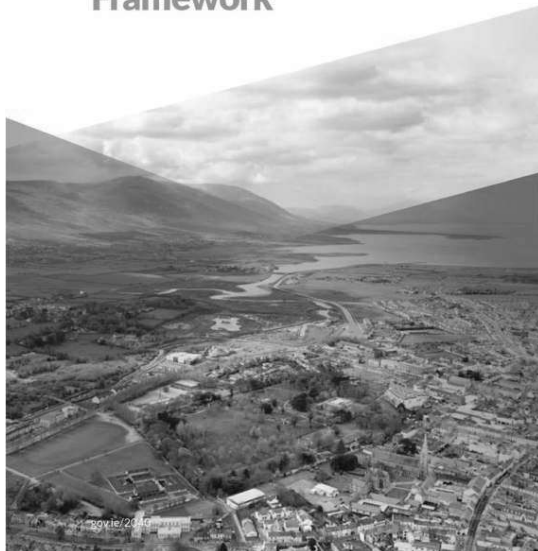


APPENDIX 2:



Project Ireland 2040

National Planning Framework



Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040

National Development Plan 2021-2030



Project 2040

“the government’s long-term overarching strategy to make Ireland a better country for all and to build a more resilient and sustainable future.”

It is comprised of both the National Planning Framework (NPF) and National Development Plan (NDP).

The NPF defines the vision and strategy which will inform Ireland’s development through to 2040, divided into several key policy themes. The Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan can support delivery of the following National Strategic Outcomes.

NATIONAL STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

NSO 1

COMPACT GROWTH

Provide for redevelopment and transformation of an underused brownfield harbour site within the centre of Tullamore, allowing more compact and sustainable urban development.

NSO 5

A STRONG ECONOMY SUPPORTED BY ENTERPRISE, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

Open the harbour to the public to develop a mixed-use vibrant canal quarter, with increased live-ability and quality of life enhancements, including access to Blue and Green space and other public amenities.

Provide increased opportunities for businesses to locate within this Town Centre site, expand economic activity and create multiplier effects for the town and county.

NSO 7

Enhanced Amenity and Heritage

Draw from the unique natural, cultural, and built heritage of the harbour and town to create an innovative and integrated regeneration solution, and a much sought after place for people to invest in, live, work, and spend their leisure time.

NSO 8

Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society

Increased opportunities for working and living in the same neighbourhood by facilitating mixed use development will reduce car journeys and encourage modal shift to walking and cycling. This will contribute to the transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate resilient and sustainable economy.

APPENDIX 3



Statement of Strategy 2021 - 2025



The strategy sets out strategic goals and objectives for Housing, Water, Local Government, Planning, Met Éireann and Heritage. Contained within the strategy is a recognition of the value of the inland waterways, associated natural, built, and cultural assets, and a commitment to their sustainable development. Waterways Ireland is sponsored by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and as such, its plans, budgets, performance targets and Annual Report are provided to the Department for approval.

Strategic goals, objectives and actions within the Statement of Strategy 2021-2025 that can be supported through redevelopment of the Tullamore Harbour site include:

Strategic Goal D:

‘To ensure that planning and building in our regions, communities and maritime area contributes to deliver sustainable and balanced development.’

- Action 1.8 The development of proposals for urban land activation, including land value capture.
- Action 1.10 Leading, in conjunction with colleagues in Department of Rural and Community Development, on the development and implementation of the ‘Town Centres First’ policy.

Strategic Goal F:

‘To conserve, protect, manage, and present our built, natural, archaeological heritage, and our biodiversity, for its intrinsic value, including to the environment as well as a support to local communities, regional economic development, and sustainable employment.’

- Action 1.2 Facilitate, support, and assist in advancing the strategies and goals of Waterways Ireland.

URBAN REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT FUND

Objective 3:

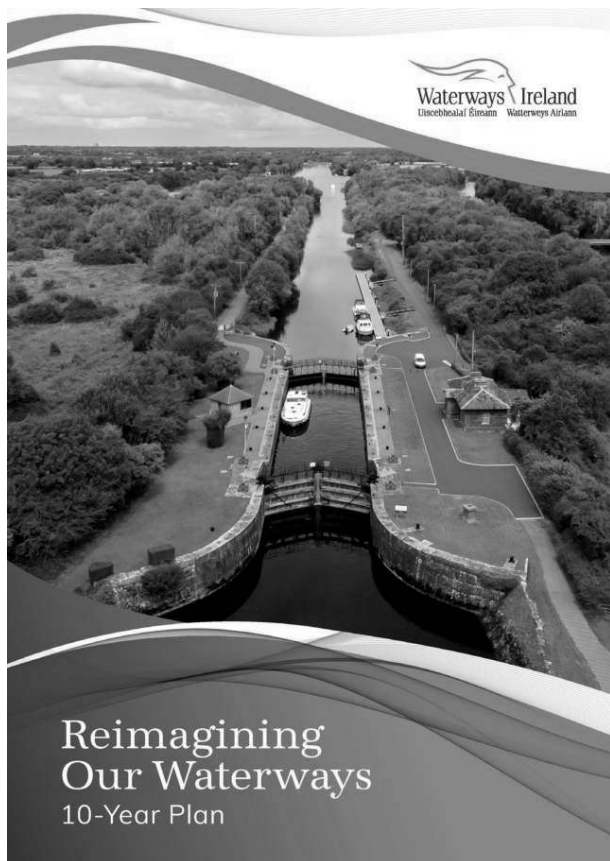
'To ensure greater awareness, appreciation and understanding of Ireland's rich heritage for its intrinsic value and as a cultural, educational, and recreational amenity and also as a valuable resource for business and Ireland's green image.'

- Action 3.2 Promote greater awareness of Ireland's rich natural heritage.
- Action 3.3 Promote cultural, educational, and recreational amenities for individuals and communities.

The Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) is a flagship element of Project Ireland 2040 under the stewardship of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. The Fund was established to support more compact and sustainable development, through the regeneration and rejuvenation of Ireland's five cities and other large towns, in line with the objectives of the National Planning Framework (NPF) and National Development Plan (NDP). The Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan has been enabled with URDF pre-development funding; match funding was provided by Waterways Ireland and Offaly County Council. Implementation of proposals within the Masterplan are firmly in alignment with the following URDF objective, pending a further Departmental call for capital development proposals:

'Enable a greater proportion of housing and commercial development to be delivered within the existing built-up footprints of our cities and towns and to ensure that more parts of our urban areas can become attractive and vibrant places where people choose to live and work, as well as to invest and to visit.'

APPENDIX 4



The launch of Waterways Ireland’s 10-year plan in November 2023 ignites a vision to create inspirational inland navigations and waterway experiences, making them more sustainable and accessible through conservation and sustainable development. Participation and engagement of all in society is at the heart of policy and decision-making, ensuring delivery of infrastructure and services that are accessible and inclusive for citizens and visitors. Integral to delivery of the 10-year plan will be continued successful collaborative working with a multitude of stakeholders including local authorities and importantly, communities throughout the 1,100km waterways network. Pathways to achieving delivery of the 10-year plan include implementation of the Tullamore Harbour Masterplan. In this context, the following 10-year strategic priorities and key outputs are particularly relevant.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5: Sustainable Development

Waterways Ireland will engage with all its stakeholders on the planning and delivery of a Sustainable Development Strategy that unlocks the social, economic, and environmental well-being value potential of the waterways, through transformative programmes which balance value creation for local communities with attracting domestic and international visitors and fulfilling our role as custodians of the waterways.

Key Outputs:

- Formulation and delivery of a long term coherent Sustainable Development Strategy, delivering the right amenities and services in the right places across the navigational network, transforming them for the longer term.
- Formulation and delivery of a Sustainable Development Plan, informed and supported by Strategic Environmental Assessment, for Greater Dublin and for each navigation, recognising that each navigation has its uniqueness, to build a pipeline of future projects, with a focus on iconic / transformative projects which ‘make a difference’ at scale nationally and internationally.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3: Asset Portfolio Management

Waterways Ireland's portfolio of assets will be sustainably managed, maintained, enhanced, and restored to maximise the future-proof navigability, accessibility, and value of the network for users, local communities, and visitors.

Key Outputs:

- Long term capital and maintenance planning and deployment.
- Securing our property portfolio.
- Development of an Estate Management Strategy.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4: Participation and Reputation

Waterways Ireland will make the waterways more desirable, significantly increasing participation on and alongside the waterways and in all recreational, tourism and volunteering activity categories, by the public and local communities, in a sustainable and accessible manner.

Key Outputs:

- Implement a Marketing Strategy to deliver increased participation on and alongside the waterways in all activity categories and to improve the reputation and awareness of the Waterways Ireland brand.
- Implementation of an Insights and Innovation Strategy to meet and exceed the needs and expectations of the public we serve, deliver best-in-class, future-proofed programmes and measure progress against key participation and perception metrics.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2: Achieve a Sustainable Funding model

Waterways Ireland will be appropriately funded with both the investment and working capital required to effectively execute the strategy.

Key Outputs:

- Sustainable income streams developed through active management of our existing asset portfolio and identification and/ or creation of new opportunities to grow income for further investment.
- A robust framework to measure the social, economic, and environmental capital delivered by the organisation.

APPENDIX 5



Tullamore, the County Town of Offaly is denoted as a Key Town in the RSES. The Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan will support effective regional development and in this regard delivery of various policy commitments within the RSES.

Effective Regional Development

The RSES sets an objective for Key Towns as economic drivers for growth. RPO 4.27 of the RSES states: *Key Towns shall act as economic drivers and provide for strategic employment locations to improve their economic base by increasing the ratio of jobs to workers.*

With specific regard to Tullamore, the RSES states: *The development of Tullamore as a successful settlement and a County wide driver of growth is a requirement of the Eastern and Midlands Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy.*

Integrated Urban Development

The Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan will focus on a designated opportunity site (Offaly County Council Development Plan, (OCDP, 2021-2027, Chapter 7). Such regeneration in Tullamore is supported by the RSES: place making and regeneration are key priorities for the settlement. The harbour site is currently not accessible for public use beyond boat repair by prior booking, as the site is used as a Waterways Ireland operational depot for lock-gate manufacture and mechanical works.

Plans to build a new depot on a green field site on the outskirts of Tullamore unlock a long-awaited opportunity to redevelop the harbour site and its connectivity to the Grand Canal.

Strategic Integrated Urban Renewal

The proposals for funding will have a focus on Strategic Integrated Urban Renewal schemes of scale. The focus on opportunity sites and other relevant sites being developed in a holistic integrated and phased manner as strategic development areas in Tullamore, and in compliance with the policy of the RSES for Tullamore states: *Continued employment and population growth coupled with place making and regeneration are key priorities for the settlement.* The redevelopment of the Town's opportunity sites involves an area of 33.4 hectares of town centre land.

The Grand Canal Harbour is a strategic site in Tullamore providing an opportunity for large scale Town Centre retail/commercial/office use and integrating a prominent water feature, the harbour, into the Town's civic space. The project will support Tullamore in increasing its critical mass and scale to support its role as a regional *Key Town*.

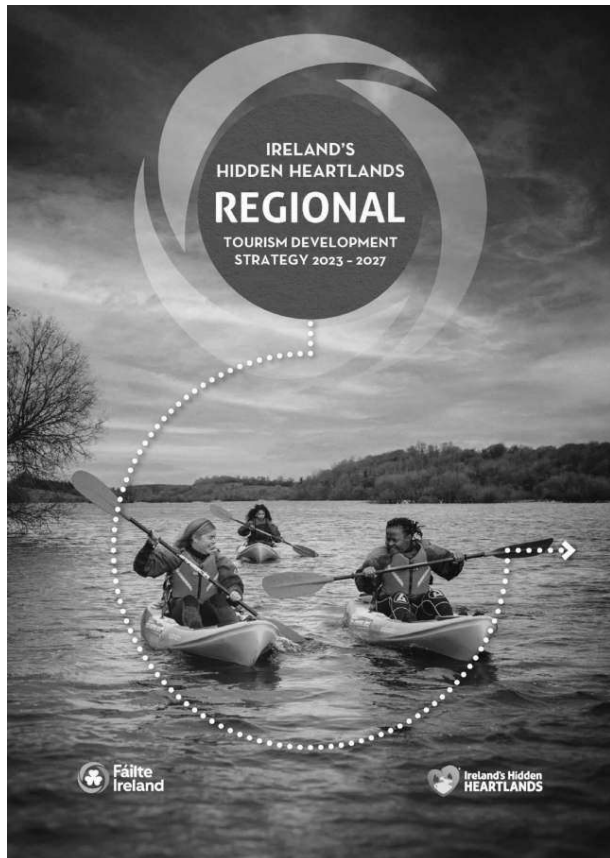
A Strategic Approach to Enabling Towns

The RSES states that *'Tullamore has a number of opportunity sites supporting regeneration and redevelopment, focusing on compact growth, place making and transition to a low-carbon society/economy. Key sites include the Grand Canal Harbour, the former 'Texas' site, Tanyard and former 'Carroll's' site, former 'Coen's' site, and the railway node.'* The Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan will complement this approach with particular emphasis on employment aspects in the Grand Canal opportunity site.

Compatibility of the Proposal with National Policy on Climate Action

The Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan will further evidence the achievement of compact urban growth through the redevelopment potential of a brownfield harbour site within the town centre into a mixed-use redevelopment option.

APPENDIX 6



The Ireland's Hidden Heartlands Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023 – 2027 is a roadmap for the recovery and sustainable development of tourism following the Covid-19 pandemic, for the tourism industry and all stakeholders involved in tourism in the region. It sets out a strategic approach to unlocking the commercial potential of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands. It will ensure focus on tourism development is sustainable and regenerative and that the benefits accrue to local communities and to nature. The strategy has been prepared during a time of unprecedented uncertainty. The Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023 – 2027 is primarily informed by the Government's Tourism Strategy People, Place and Policy: Growing Tourism to 2025, by Fáilte Ireland's Corporate Strategy 2021–2023 and by the report of the Sustainable Tourism Working Group Actions to Promote Sustainable Tourism Practices 2021–2023. This strategy sits alongside and complements the Shannon and Shannon-Erne Tourism Masterplan 2020-2030.

Towards the end of 2024, Fáilte Ireland will commence the preparation of a Destination and Experience Development Plan (DEDP) for the Mid-Shannon and Midlands destination, which will include County Offaly. This is a more detailed destination-based action plan for sustainable tourism. This DEDP will further strengthen the strategic framework within which the Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan will sit.

THE 5 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

Strategic Objective 1: AWARENESS AND RECOGNITION

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: Visitor Experiences

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: Economic Impact

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.

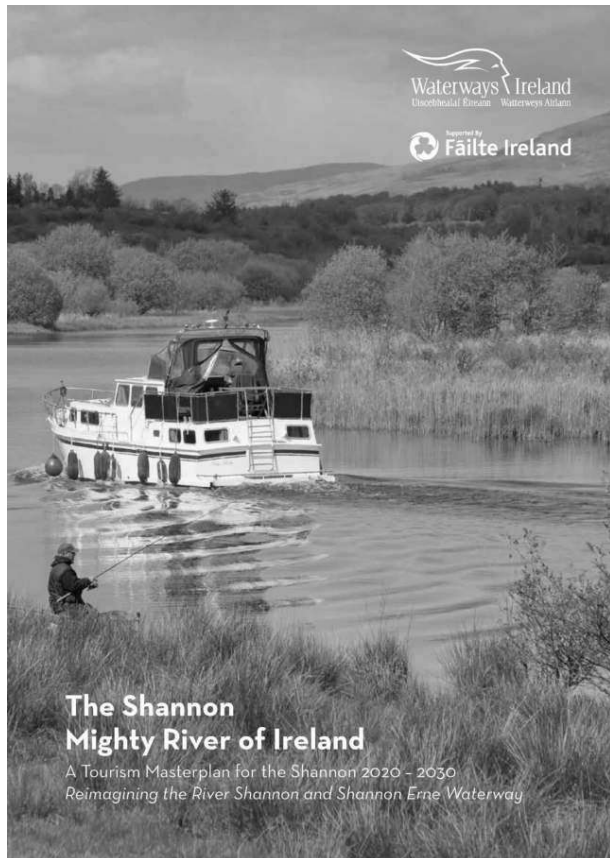
Strategic Objective 4: Regenerative Tourism

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: Industry and Stakeholders

Build a committed industry and stakeholder coalition to guide and co-ordinate the sustainable development of destinations across the region.

APPENDIX 7



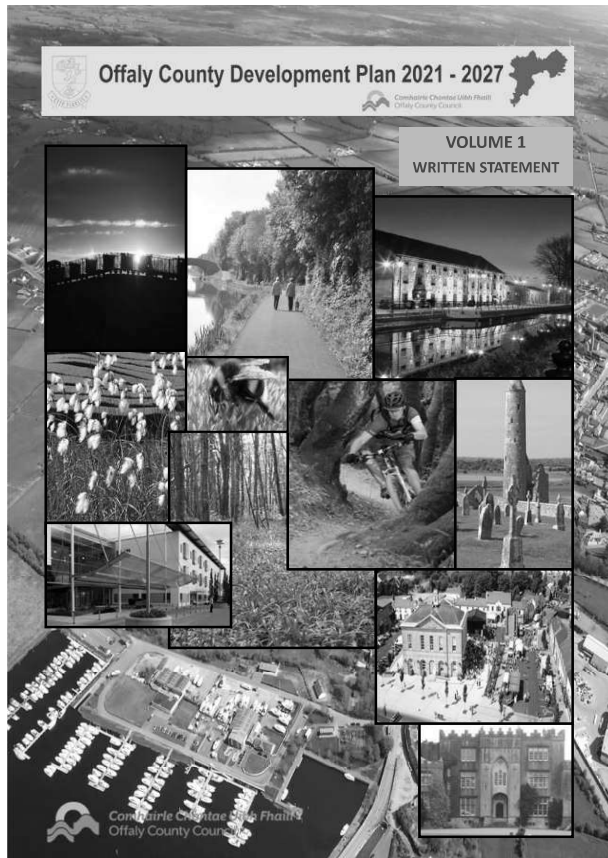
The formulation of the Shannon Tourism Masterplan is the first single, holistic, and dedicated plan of any type that has been undertaken for the Shannon Region. It was commissioned by Waterways Ireland in partnership with Fáilte Ireland and is supported by ten local authorities which border the Shannon from Cavan to Limerick; Offaly County Council is one of the partners.

The Masterplan sets out a bold and integrated framework for sustainable tourism development along the Shannon and Shannon-Erne Waterway, repositioning the region as a key tourism destination within Ireland's Hidden Heartlands, with world class visitor experiences based on the region's natural and cultural assets. Using a thematic and experiential framework, the distinctive qualities of the Shannon were identified and in turn those qualities set the context for the types of experience that the visitor could expect to find in the region. Seven strategic signature initiatives are currently being delivered which will position the Shannon Region as a distinctive and sustainable tourist destination.

1. *COMMUNICATING A CLEAR AND CONSISTENT MESSAGE;*
2. *ENHANCING THE ON-WATER EXPERIENCE;*
3. *ENHANCING THE WATERSIDE EXPERIENCE;*
4. *ANIMATING AND ENHANCING THE SHANNON TOWNS AND VILLAGES;*
5. *PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE SHANNON ENVIRONMENT;*
6. *IMPROVING CONNECTIVITY; AND*
7. *BUILDING NETWORKS.*

With Tullamore located circa 35 km from Shannon Harbour, where the Grand Canal joins the Shannon Navigation, the closeness of this navigational confluence offers a potential opportunity to attract increased boating traffic to the Tullamore Harbour area. Implementation of the Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan will stimulate and harness opportunities and learnings arising from the Shannon Tourism Masterplan. Delivery of both Masterplans and coexistence of related partnership working with 12 local authorities will propel opportunity realisation and effective management of delivery challenges. A redeveloped Tullamore Harbour with compelling visitor experiences and services is essential to attracting Shannon Navigation boaters to the town of Tullamore.

APPENDIX 8



Offaly County Development Plan 2021 – 2027

The Offaly County Development Plan is a land use plan and overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the functional area of County Offaly over the 6-year period 2021- 2027. The Tullamore Harbour site is cited as Opportunity Site No. 1 in the current Tullamore Development Plan. The Harbour site has been identified as a site for consideration for taller buildings (OCDP 2021-2027 - 7.2.5 Taller Buildings). It has potential as a transformational urban development site for Tullamore, encompassing a multiplicity of possible business, innovation, residential and amenity uses.

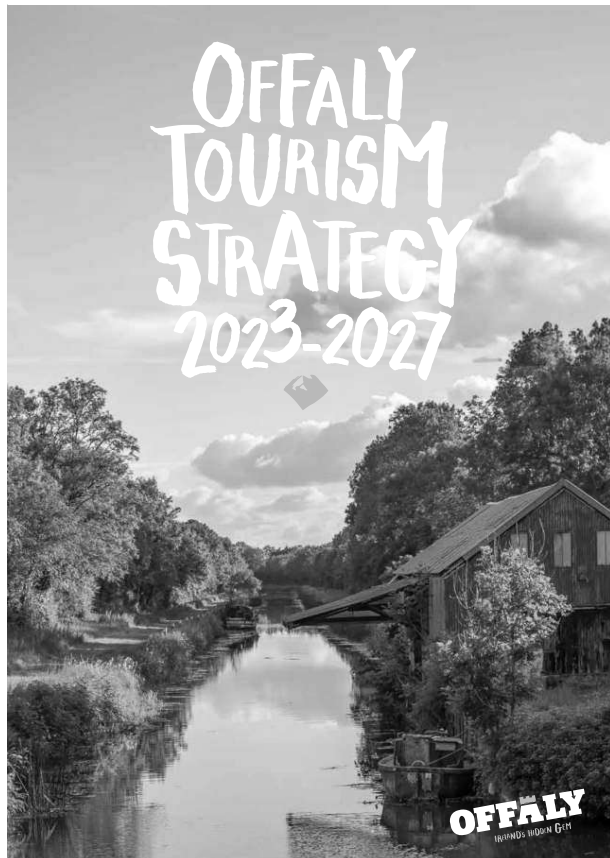
Tullamore Local Area Plan 2024 - 2030

The Tullamore Local Area Plan (LAP), currently under development, will be set within a framework of National, Regional and County policy, as is a requirement of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 – 2009, and will replace the Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (extended). This plan relates to the functional area of Tullamore Municipal District. The Tullamore LAP will incorporate the Tullamore Regeneration Framework, Area Based Transport Assessment and Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan.

Tullamore Regeneration Framework

The Tullamore Regeneration Framework focuses strongly on the public realm and urban fabric of the town, and seeks to address with equal importance the Social, Economic, Cultural and Environmental opportunities and challenges within Tullamore, and incorporate them into a comprehensive, integrated Regeneration Plan. An overall coherent plan is critical to ensuring synergies are captured and can be delivered on in a sustainable manner. Key objectives include a Public Realm Plan, Town Centre revitalisation and regeneration and the potential of the opportunity sites and vacant / derelict sites in the town. The Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour site is identified as Opportunity Site No. 1 in the Tullamore Regeneration Framework.

APPENDIX 9



The Offaly Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan, 2022-2027

A history in science, energy and connection to industry means that from the legacy of old, comes the inspiration of the new – more global and more connected but still local.

This Plan provides an opportunity to re-evaluate and build resilience for a more diversified, vibrant and sustainable economy in Co. Offaly, with a connected and engaged local business base and focused regional leadership.

Six identified areas of focus are:

- Construction and Engineering (the Built Environment)
- Rural Green (Energy Generation and Storage)
- MedTech and Wellbeing
- ICT Sector
- Food & Nutrition (and the technologies that support them)
- EcoTourism and the Creative Arts

Actions within the 6 areas are aligned to 3 Strategic Pillars

- a. Attain National & International Leadership Recognition
- b. Take Full Advantage of National Connections & Assets
- c. Create Stronger Conditions for Business Growth

APPENDIX 10



Offaly Tourism Strategy 2023-2027

The focus for this Offaly Tourism Strategy 2023-2027 is on establishing a strong base for future growth. This will be done through maximising recent and ongoing investment, creating new opportunities, harnessing technology where appropriate, supporting industry growth, and marketing. It is evident from the context analysis that a core strength of Offaly lies in its natural environment. Outdoor recreation appeals to most of the key segments and there are opportunities to maximise and integrate ongoing investment and development in this area through the following priorities.

1. Ensuring full delivery of **planned recreation infrastructure and tourism initiatives**
2. **Enhancing connectivity** between trails, trail towns/villages, gateway hubs/towns and attractions/sites
3. **Activating infrastructure**
4. **Enhancing existing destination attractors**
5. **Progressing opportunities for new destination attractors**
6. **Developing key hub/gateway towns**
7. **Developing clusters allied to the hubs/ gateways**
8. **Delivering small-scale interventions at key locations to ‘open up’ heritage stories**
9. **Collaborating with strategic partners to deliver new products**

APPENDIX 11



APPENDIX 12

Offaly Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2016-2021

The purpose of the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) is to set out the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic, local and community development of Offaly, for a six-year period. The overarching vision for the LECP is based around Offaly's finest attributes in terms of People (skills, work ethic and community spirit), Business (key sectors, diversity and innovation strengths) and Place (environment, communities and quality of life). These three assets through this plan, will be encouraged further to function more effectively together.

To deliver the actions set out in both the economic and community streams of this plan, Offaly County Council continues to work closely with local business, community organisations, educational facilities, public sector agencies and the voluntary sector.

Work will also be undertaken in partnership where possible at regional and national level to attract inward investment and funding for infrastructure, enhancement of local communities and individual projects.



EU Just Transition Fund

The EU and the Government of Ireland have established the Just Transition Fund (JTF) to facilitate a just transition towards a low-carbon economy across the Midlands. Key

Priorities of the EU JTF are:

- PRIORITY 1 - Generating employment for former peat communities by investing in the diversification of the local economy*
- PRIORITY 2 - Supporting the restoration and rehabilitation of degraded peatlands and regeneration and repurposing of industrial heritage assets*
- PRIORITY 3 - Providing former peat communities with smart and sustainable mobility options to enable them to benefit directly from the green transition*

The full county of Offaly is included under the Fund. This will offer opportunities for funding in the JTF area across a range of policy areas.

APPENDIX 13



The Strategy sets out Enterprise Ireland’s 2030 vision for *‘Irish enterprises creating solutions for global challenges, delivering sustainable prosperity throughout Ireland’*. The prospect of these solutions emerging from sectoral ideation within in a redeveloped Tullamore Harbour setting could be an attractive high value opportunity for both Irish companies and international companies seeking an office presence in Ireland. Sector clusters with high growth trajectories include *Digital* and the *Low Carbon Economy*; the latter is particularly relevant to County Offaly and the Council’s work thus far since the Midlands is the focus of Ireland’s EU Just Transition Programme. Entrepreneurs and existing companies operating in these sector clusters, both in Ireland and throughout Europe, seek opportunities and locations through which they can create and grow innovative partnerships and technology commercialisation in dynamic markets, including energy, transport, green buildings, water, smart cities, and hydrogen.

The Tullamore Grand Canal Masterplan’s potential to support delivery of these sector opportunities is in alignment with Enterprise Ireland’s stated strategic ambitions.

Ambition 3

- Irish enterprises achieving competitive advantage through ***customer-led innovation and digitalisation***.
- Digitally enable, connect, and transform ***internationally focused Irish enterprise***.
- Accelerate the development of ***innovation capability in Irish enterprise***.
- Deliver a step change in the effectiveness and impact of the ***research and innovation system for enterprise development***

Ambition 4

- Irish enterprises leading globally on ***sustainability and achieving climate action targets***.
- Transform the sustainability performance of Irish enterprises to ***drive competitiveness and achieve climate action targets***.
- Strengthen Irish enterprise to capitalise on ***climate opportunities and green value creation***.

APPENDIX 14



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Making Remote Work

National Remote Work Strategy



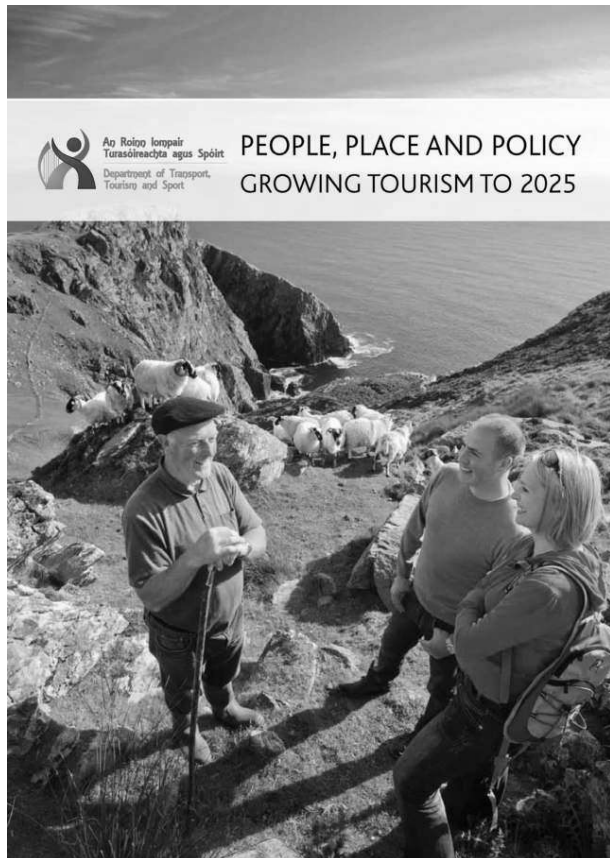
Prepared by the Department of
Enterprise, Trade and Employment

‘Making Remote Work’, Ireland’s National Remote Work Strategy underpins the government’s objective of ensuring that remote working is a permanent feature in the Irish workplace in a way that maximises economic, social, and environmental benefits. The accelerated move to greater levels of hybrid working since Covid-19 has stimulated demand for remote working hubs from both businesses and individuals. The effect has been a significant reduction in the high levels of outward commuting to the Greater Dublin Area from the Midlands. In parallel, increasing numbers of people have and are continuing to relocate from Dublin and other cities to the Midlands, attracted by more affordable housing and the many quality of life benefits that can be realised. Remote working is also enabling employers improve labour market participation amongst cohorts with lower participation rates, such as people with caring responsibilities, with disabilities, and older workers.

A redeveloped Tullamore Harbour site providing attractive office and remote working space within an immersive harbour front setting, surrounded by artisan cafés/ restaurants, independent retailers, visitor experiences, and crafters and artists at work, exhibiting, selling and thriving is a compelling proposition.

It also supports both employers and employees in complying with hybrid working policy requirements and importantly, provides co-working space for connectivity, ideation, and opportunity realisation.

APPENDIX 15



Department of Transport, Tourism and Sports Policy statement highlights the importance of sustainable tourism development and recognises the contribution of facilities for activity-based holidays to Ireland, and the positive image this brings to a tourist destination. It supports the development and improvement of physical attractions, infrastructure, and facilities for visitor activities, including Greenways and Blueways.

The Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan will support the Government's vision for tourism that:

'Ireland will have a vibrant and attractive tourism sector that makes a significant contribution to employment across the country.'

APPENDIX 16



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

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



The strategy seeks to enable inclusive, safe, and accessible opportunities for all in society to experience outdoor recreation in order to realise increased social, health and economic benefits. The strategic focus on increasing public access and participation levels is underpinned with ensuring sustainable development of recreation opportunities at existing sites and new sites, and an acknowledgement of the essential role landowners play in facilitating access to their lands. Implementation of the Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan can support realisation of these objectives since it will involve re-purposing of public land/property and its transformation into an eclectic mixed-use harbour development to include provision of both on water and off water recreational infrastructure. It will also provide an historic return to public access of the Harbour site, creating connectivity through the harbour to town centre walking trails and the Grand Canal Greenway. Integral to delivering these redevelopment works is a commitment that they will be inherently permeable, sustainable, and respectful of the surrounding built heritage, cultural heritage, streetscape, and natural environment.

Waterways Ireland is uniquely placed to support delivery of the 'Embracing Ireland's Outdoors Strategy' at many levels and is identified as a key delivery stakeholder. Associated actions to be delivered of relevance to the Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan include:

Action 1.2.1

- Explore and agree greater focus and resources for public land management organisations (e.g., Coillte, Bord na Móna, Waterways Ireland) on **outdoor recreation**, at both national and county level, including the **creation of dedicated outdoor recreation units**, if needed.

Action 1.3

- Review current and **potential arrangements for key partnerships** to deliver on this strategy, e.g., Coillte, Fáilte Ireland, Waterways Ireland and Bord na Móna.

Action 2.7

- **Devise new visitor management approaches** and carry out a pilot, or pilots, to test and monitor its effectiveness at key sites, and disseminate best practice approaches.

APPENDIX 17



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN 2023 CAP23

Changing Ireland for the Better



The Climate Action Plan 2023 (CAP23) is the second annual update to Ireland's Climate Action Plan 2019. This plan is the first to be prepared under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, and following the introduction in 2022 of economy-wide carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings. The importance of Ireland's inland waterway assets in facilitating delivery of the Climate Action Plan 2023 is called out in the following actions.

JM/23/1

Coordinate regional and local strategic partnerships in the Midlands region to support the ***transition to a low-carbon economy.***

JM/23/6

Support regeneration, re-purposing and sustainable ***development of walking and cycling tracks and trails, and waterways.***

JM/23/10

Support the installation of publicly available fast and high-powered charge point Infrastructure.

TR/23/22

Promote the ***development and uptake of Remote/Blended Working Policies*** through climate action and other communication strategies, wherever these can directly reduce car commuting journeys Transport.

TR/23/23

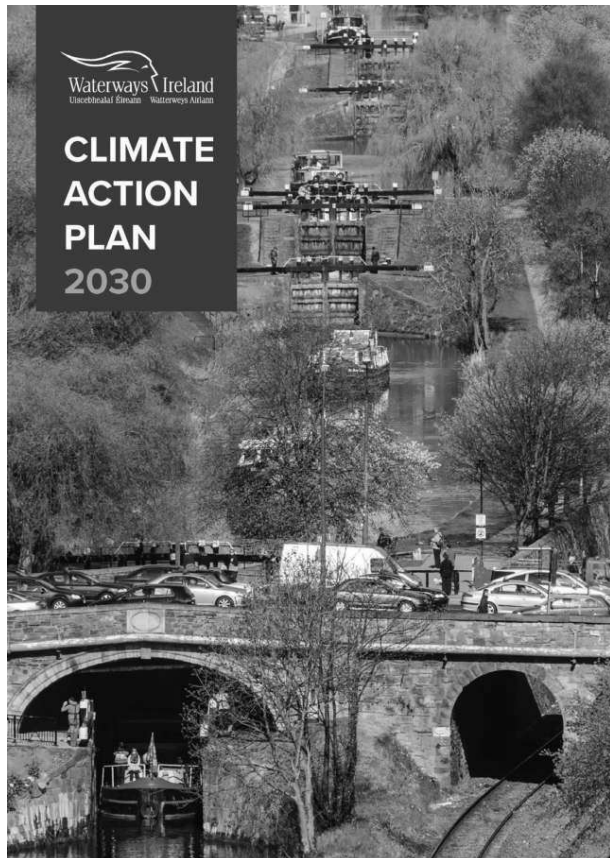
Promote sustainable travel practices in Remote Working Hubs.

Ireland's EU Just Transition Programme will contribute to economic diversification in the Midlands and, through three complementary priorities, enhance the regional economy, address existing deprivation and depopulation, and placing it on a path to a more diverse and resilient economy based on climate neutrality. This will be achieved by:

- Generating employment for former peat communities by investing in the diversification of the local economy;
- Supporting the rehabilitation and restoration of degraded peatlands and regeneration and re-purposing of industrial heritage assets;
- Providing former peat communities with smart and sustainable mobility options to enable them to benefit directly from the green transition.

Redevelopment of Tullamore Harbour supports delivery of all the above identified actions. It provides a unique opportunity in time to re-purpose and transform a state-owned industrial harbour asset in the Midlands, into economic and social regeneration opportunities. Inherently, redevelopment of the Tullamore Harbour site unlocks public access, it will stimulate increased recreation and leisure activities in the harbour area, create a sustainable and compelling visitor destination in the centre of Tullamore, and support delivery of the Climate Action Plan's commitment to enabling active travel and connected greenway infrastructure in Co Offaly.

APPENDIX 18



Waterways Ireland is at the forefront of climate action, embracing its responsibilities and creating new opportunities. The Climate Action Plan 2030 sets out pioneering commitments and a steadfast collective momentum to achieve delivery is in place. Commitments include adapting the waterways network to address climate change risks, carbon proofing major investment decisions, developing programmes and projects on a systematic basis and moving over time to a near zero carbon investment strategy, with transport and energy also being key target areas for action. Implementation of the Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan can support delivery of the following commitments within the Climate Action Plan:

Objective 2:

Embed climate action processes and investment through effective integration with asset and resource management systems.

KR 2.2:

Life cycle value (whole life costing of assets or systems of assets) tools to support the ***climate-proofing of asset and resource management processes*** are implemented.

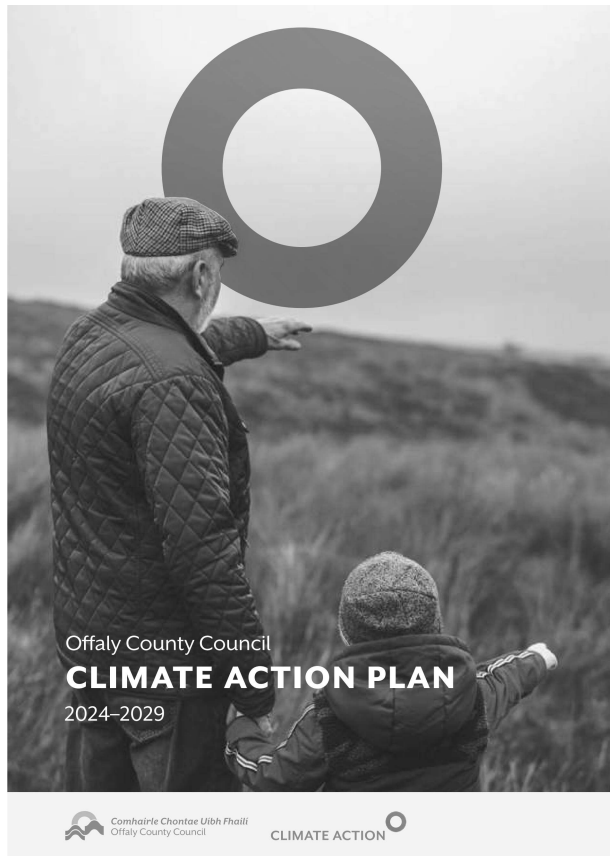
Objective 3:

Achieve emission reductions and be a ***net zero organisation by 2050*** at the latest.

KR 3.1:

Energy demand and carbon emissions reduced annually in line with the glide-path required to meet 2030 and 2050 targets.

APPENDIX 19



Offaly County Council Climate Action Plan 2024 –2029

Offaly County Council are preparing their Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 to align with Government’s national climate objectives, which seeks to transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity rich, environmentally sustainable and climate neutral economy by 2050. The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 frames Ireland’s legally binding climate ambition to deliver a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of 51% by 2030.

Tullamore has been designated the Decarbonising Zone (DZ) for Offaly which will act as a test-bed of new technology, innovation and ambitious approaches to climate mitigation, adaptation, and biodiversity enhancement at a local community level, which may be scaled up across the county and further afield. An initial Register of Opportunities has been identified within the plan, from which detailed implementation plans and stakeholder mapping/engagement will help deliver on emission and energy targets within the DZ.

APPENDIX 20

A Catalytic Opportunity

Implementation of the Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan will have a catalytic effect in that it can support delivery of wide-ranging transformational national and regional policies, strategies and action plans, as evidenced above. Several other policies, strategies and plans can also find delivery pathways through redevelopment of the Tullamore Harbour site. These include:

- National Land Use review (under development)
- Ireland's National Recovery and Resilience Plan 2021
- Ireland's Territorial Just Transition Plan and associated Programme for 2021-2027 (The Midlands)
- Midlands Regional Enterprise Plan to 2024 (MREP)
- SEAI's Excellence in Energy Efficient Design (EXEED) programme
- National Physical Activity Plan for Ireland, 2016
- Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan 2021–2025
- Return to Sport and Physical Activity for People with Disabilities (Sport Ireland)
- Sport Ireland Policy on Sport and Physical Activity in the Outdoors, 2020
- Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways, 2018
- Draft National Biodiversity Action Plan 2022-2026

Phased implementation of the Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan additionally provides the opportunity to support delivery of emerging government policies and plans, and reflect the shared aspirations of an extraordinary collaborative stakeholder region.