



KILKENNY

continuity, creativity, celebration

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Chapter 1. In Summary

At a Glance

KILKENNY - Continuity, Creativity and Celebration is a Strategic Tourism Development and Implementation Plan which sets out an agenda for creating a coherent and compelling experience for visitors to the City. The work was commissioned by Fáilte Ireland in collaboration with its partners in the destination.

Kilkenny's distinctive urban character – which reflects the history of a constantly evolving society – presents an enormous opportunity to serve as a driver for the social, economic and cultural development of the City. In a tourism environment increasingly characterised by intense competition, the capacity of Kilkenny, by virtue of its distinctive cultural heritage, to differentiate itself from comparable destinations is actively being exploited by many of the key players locally and regionally. Competitive historic cities have managed to develop and use their cultural heritage to strengthen – among other things – their urban identity. Identity built on cultural heritage is not only considered to be a critical “soft” location factor in the competition to engage and attract people and enterprises but it is also seen as a tool for branding and marketing where it functions in support of the business of tourism. For identity to be used as an asset it must be managed—anchored, nurtured, safeguarded and manipulated wisely—and it must include considerations beyond the physical environment. Within the context of the City's place making agenda and building on achievements to date, a key objective of the Plan is to bring coherence to the City's cultural heritage offer.

Understanding the historic fabric of the City— the real places, people and events that made history— provides the foundation for developing the Plan. It is premised on a belief that the heritage significance and contemporary relevance of Kilkenny can be understood as a series of stories, stories with all manner of sub-plots, drawn from the economic, political, cultural and social dimensions of the development of the City from the earliest times. A key feature of the Plan is the Interpretive Framework which helps us to understand not only what is distinctive about Kilkenny's history and heritage but also, importantly, what is appealing about its current disposition and contemporary outlook.

Taking its cue from the Framework's themes, sub themes and topics, the Plan goes on to identify opportunities for interpreting the City, makes suggestions for animating its spaces and places and provides advice on how its distinctive identity is best communicated and managed. Urban design interventions for transforming the experience of the City are developed and illustrated and finally, recommendations for realising the ambition of the Plan through key investments are scoped and appraised.

To interpret the layers of meaning overlaid on any place is a complex and challenging task but it is a fundamental prerequisite to intervention. It is a challenge which this project could not have embraced without the support of the very many people who gave their time, shared their wisdom and their passion for Kilkenny with us. The authors would like to thank the team at Fáilte Ireland, Kilkenny County and Borough Councils, Destination Kilkenny and all those who participated in the preparation of this Plan.

Chapter 2. The Ambition

Introduction

In commissioning the preparation of this Strategic Tourism Development and Implementation Plan for Kilkenny – the Plan for short-, Fáilte Ireland, in conjunction with its partners locally, was keen to ensure that the City maximises the opportunity presented by the growing heritage and culture market. The consultant team was asked to;

- o identify the over-arching vision for what the City stands for
- o identify the key themes which will bring this vision to life for visitors
- o develop a strategic framework for interpreting the City, its sites and its stories in an holistic way
- o consider how the emerging themes might best be incorporated into how the City develops, presents and communicates its offer of value to visitors
- o make recommendations for developing the public realm in line with the emerging thematic framework
- o develop a series of clear recommendations around how the entire development, presentation and promotion of the City should be managed on an on-going basis in the short, medium and long term

It is envisaged that the Plan will inform and support a programme of work over the next 5 years, to include both capital and non-capital activities, all of which will be required to deliver a more coherent and compelling visitor experience. Crucially, the Plan must seek to engage and benefit local people in its realisation - residents, business people and the custodians of the truly remarkable assets that grace the City of Kilkenny.

THE AMBITION OF THIS PROJECT

is to provide for;

Visitors: an interesting, engaging and enjoyable discovery of this City's historic significance and contemporary appeal

Citizens: an awareness, understanding and appreciation of the heritage of their City

Business community: opportunities to benefit from this initiative through participation and collaboration

Stakeholders: a shared agenda for achieving respective objectives

The opportunity

It could be argued that culture and heritage is the most important part of Ireland's tourism offer as, at some stage or other, it touches almost every visitor's experience of the destination. While few visitors might view themselves as 'cultural tourists', culture is the single most important motivation for City trips and research has shown that almost all visitors are interested in learning about and experiencing the culture of the destinations they visit. Ireland's culture and heritage offer is expansive and not only includes a rich built heritage of buildings and monuments, gardens and great house, churches and cathedrals, but also a cultural heritage of museums, customs, cultural expression and way of life as well as, importantly, a contemporary culture of art, music, literature and performance, and, of key significance for Kilkenny, craft, design, cuisine and sport.

DEFINING CULTURAL TOURISM

In its study of City Tourism and Culture within Europe, the European Travel Commission (ETC) suggests that cultural tourism in an international context is 'A movement of persons to specific cultural attractions, such as, heritage sites, artistic and cultural manifestations, arts and drama to cities outside their normal country of residence with the intention to gather new information and experiences to satisfy their cultural needs'.

Fáilte Ireland's Visitor Attitude Survey 2010 reveals the extent to which visitors are motivated by the appeal of aspects of Ireland's cultural heritage. An overwhelming majority allude to elements of the historic environment as being 'very important' in their consideration of Ireland for a holiday – including, most specifically 'interesting history / culture' (80% of respondents) and 'good range of historical / cultural attractions' (73%).

Preliminary Fáilte Ireland figures for 2011 indicate that some 3.4 million overseas visitors engaged in cultural activities while in Ireland, including visits to places of historical/cultural interest and gardens, attending festival/events and tracing roots/genealogy. Preliminary estimates suggest that they spent in the region of €2.7 billion during their stay. By far the biggest source (44%) of those visitors participating in historical/cultural activities was mainland Europe – France, Germany and Italy – followed by Great Britain (27%), North America (21%) with other long haul markets accounting for the remainder (7%).

Taking Ireland's historic environment as just one element of the cultural tourism experience, a recent study commissioned by the Heritage Council (Economic Value of Ireland's Historic Environment) estimates that the overall scale of economic impacts attributable to tourism-related expenditure amounts to a contribution of some €650m towards Ireland's GVA and supports some 17,000 full time employees.

Another key aspect of the opportunity presented by the cultural tourism offer is the growing importance of the relationship between cities and culture. Successful cities use their cultural heritage to strengthen, amongst other things, their urban identity. An identity built on cultural heritage is not only considered to be a key factor in attracting potential residents and enterprise but it is also seen as a tool for branding and marketing the city as a destination for visitors. Throughout Europe, cultural heritage is steadily gaining importance as a vital asset in developing and strengthening a distinctive identity to attract visitors, engage citizens and promote enterprise. Cultural heritage is more and more being regarded as the key to unlocking the potential of having a distinct urban identity.

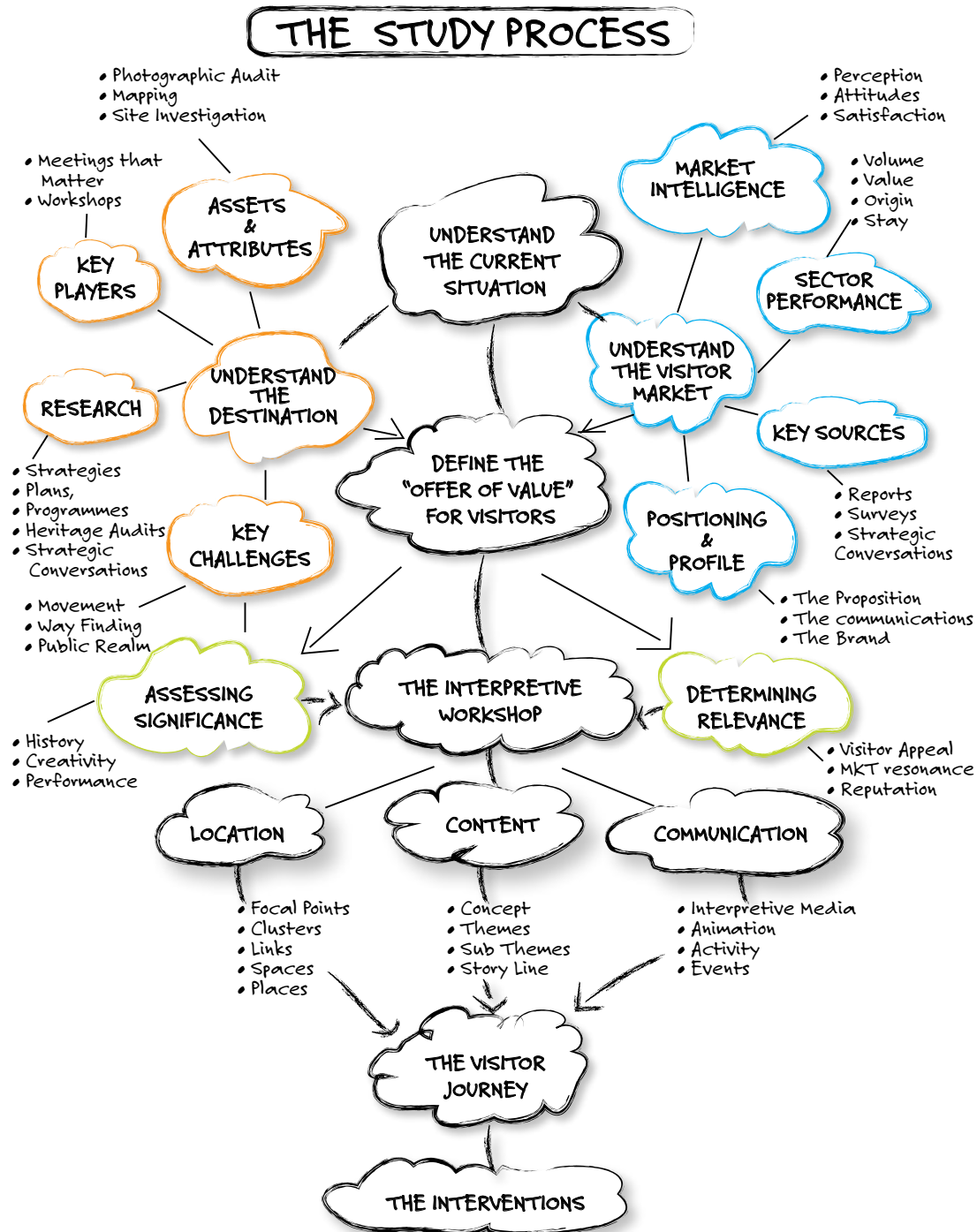
Our response

In recognition of the client team's collective remit for maximising the economic potential of Kilkenny through tourism, looking after its cultural attributes and assets and promoting their significance to a range of audiences, we have taken a very considered approach to this project. Working collaboratively with the client steering group throughout the course of the study we have been very keen to ensure that all those who needed to be involved were involved and that we took the process one step at a time.

The Steering Group

Joe Crockett, County Manager - Kilkenny County Council
 John Mulholland, Kilkenny County Council
 John Dempsey, Kilkenny County Council
 Denis Malone, Kilkenny County Council
 John Purcell, Purcell / Masterson Media, former President of Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce
 Liam Anthony Griffin, Destination Kilkenny
 Gary Breen, Fáilte Ireland
 Maeve McKeever, Fáilte Ireland

The process we followed in conducting the study is illustrated below



In developing the Plan we have sought to;

Work with people who understand this City, who are passionate about its future and who are committed to playing their part

Planning for change in the physical, social and economic fabric of places is now increasingly seen as a cohesive process, which can only be achieved through the input and efforts of many people. From the outset we have sought to engage the understanding, expertise, experience and creativity of a broad range of participants drawn from many different spheres – heritage, culture, the arts, tourism, business, academia, as well as those representing the interests of the locality and those with responsibility for its good governance. Through one to one conversations, small group discussions and participative workshops we have been able to harness the collective intelligence of very many people – people who care passionately about the future of Kilkenny

Build on all the good work that has been done – the existing strategies, plans, programmes and projects

We have been amazed by the number of studies – strategies, plans, programmes and projects – that have been undertaken that have relevance for the development of this Plan. We have profiled recommendations from those reports which have particular relevance for the Plan and retain an on-going validity in terms of helping to realise the ambition of this project. Conservation plans, public realm enhancements, heritage promotion and restoration projects, archaeological explorations, marketing initiatives, festival and event promotion are all being quietly progressed. In shining a light on these initiatives and suggesting some new interventions, the Plan seeks to harness the energy of all those associated with promoting and looking after the City and align the collective impact of their endeavours to create a visitor experience of exceptional appeal.

Be creative, yet realistic

This Plan provides a means of creating, characterising and coordinating the interventions needed to transform the experience for visitors to Kilkenny. It has also been developed as a means of influencing the stakeholders to contribute to a common ambition. It takes as its starting point a belief that it is possible, even in these constrained times, to apply creative solutions to the issues that present themselves within the destination. The recommendations are put forward on the basis that a few carefully considered strategic interventions now could act as the all important catalyst for the intervention of others who will take confidence in the collaborative approach that the Plan espouses.

This report is the outcome of the work undertaken. It draws together the various strands of activity and presents a Plan for how the experience for visitors to the City can be made more interesting, engaging and enjoyable. It sets an agenda for how the client team together with all those who care about Kilkenny, can promote a collective vision for its future development and a shared responsibility for its future management.

Chapter 3 . About Kilkenny

'Kilkenny is a compact, walled riverside City whose surviving castle and cathedral, abbeys and churches, Town Walls, townhouses and streets all shape the only example of an Irish medieval City to remain wholly intact'

The Kilkenny Archaeological Project

INSTAR 2008

Historic Place

The earliest sustained settlement in Kilkenny can be traced back to a pair of Early Medieval sites – **Domhnach Mór**, St. Patrick's Graveyard which may have its origins in the 5th century, and **Cill Chainingh**, the church of Canice which grew in influence in the north of the settlement to become the principal ecclesiastical power in Leinster outside Dublin. This influence resulted in the development of a substantial monastic town – later to become Irishtown. Four years after the 1169 Anglo-Norman invasion the focus of the settlement shifted to the south – later to become Hightown- where, on a hill overlooking the river Nore, an earth-and-timber structure was to mark the beginning of the development of Kilkenny Castle, the purchase of which in 1301 by James Butler, third Earl of Ormond was to have a profound impact on the fortunes of Kilkenny for the next half a millennium.

From the 13th to the mid 14th centuries Kilkenny flourished and prospered. Some 300 burgesses along with free-tenants, artisans and servants comprised a population of up to 4,000. Kilkenny, as seat of the lordship of Leinster, grew to become the chief market place for a wide hinterland, resulting in the development of a wealthy merchant class whose power and influence helped to shape the medieval town to such an extent that by the middle of the thirteenth century Kilkenny was the largest inland town in Ireland.

'It was a thriving, prosperous place with all the attributes of a typical European medieval urban settlement: a charter of rights, a castle, Town Walls, a parish church, a cathedral, religious houses, bridges, streets, mills, market places and burgage plots.'



A period of decline in the wake of the wars that followed the Bruce invasions (1315-1316), the Black Death, climatic deterioration and bad harvests was followed by a period of consolidation despite intermittent Gaelic assaults and feuding. The Late Medieval period saw the re-building of much of the city's building stock with churches, abbeys and townhouses added to and modified. By the time Kilkenny finally 'shook itself free of the Middle Ages' it had a population of some two thousand, a prosperous economy and a confident disposition relative to its role in leading the transformation of Ireland.



Described as 'a great lord who had also been a good lord', the influence of Thomas Butler the tenth Earl of Ormond on Renaissance Kilkenny was enormous. It was during his tenure that Kilkenny was elevated to the status of 'city'. While the aftermath of the Confederation of Kilkenny and the Cromwellian Campaign robbed the city of its position at the centre of both political and military power- a position it never regained – the cultural legacy of Renaissance Kilkenny endures to this day. With the Restoration in 1660 the city's fortunes greatly improved. The twelfth Earl, now elevated to Duke of Ormond was once more the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and *'Kilkenny castle and its gardens were transformed into a French-style chateau; the Parade was constructed;*

a new school was built – Kilkenny College; and Catholic priests and religious orders were brought back into the town.'



The 18th century saw Kilkenny propelled to the forefront of Ireland's industrial revolution with woollen milling, coal-mining, limestone quarrying, ironworking, brewing and tanning all providing significant sources of employment. Grand Georgian houses transformed the streets while more modest artisan dwellings colonised the medieval lanes. The now redundant city defences were pulled down, the Tholsel and Courthouse were restyled and impressive stone bridges were built. The gentry moved out of town and built themselves Classical and Neo – Palladian mansions in the countryside. The 19th century brought political and social change, rebellion, famine and land reform. Two thirds of the city's population lived in poverty, a promised canal was never delivered and Kilkenny became little more than a provincial backwater. New domestic architecture in the city accommodated a new middle class of shopkeepers.



“Against a background of civil unrest and fading dreams the concrete expression of political and cultural change was made tangible and quantifiable by the apparatus of State authority,”

“Ireland, Design and Visual Culture: Negotiating Modernity, 1922-1992

Contemporary space

With the achievement of independence came the need for a redefined identity. While the literary greats had a hand in this, post - colonial identity was shaped as much through imagery as it was through wordsmithery. Redefining the New Ireland included painting red post boxes green, creating the Great Seal with its Celtic design and harp logo, designing stamps, and designing the new Irish currency. Tourism was quickly identified as a vital source of income, second only to agriculture. Artists including Paul Henry were commissioned to create images for posters that showed a misty rural Ireland of rugged coastlines and soft days. Tourist imagery was particularly potent. For many, it provided the symbols of a place that had come to represent Ireland while also defining it. Irish identity emerged through, and was shaped by, design and visual culture. At the forefront of this movement was the brilliantly conceived Kilkenny Design Workshops project.

“KDW was established because our design professions had not grown organically and was a government-sponsored intervention to stimulate design activity that brought in design expertise from Europe and Britain to work collaboratively with Irish manufacturers and craft-based companies,”



The State-funded Kilkenny Design Workshops (KDW), established in 1963 by William H. Walsh, served as a centre of excellence in design, proving goods in prototype before going on to be manufactured by Irish industry. Until their closure in 1988, the Kilkenny Design Workshops provided training for young Irish designers, raised the profile of Irish design abroad and increased awareness of the importance of good design in Irish industry and in everyday lives. KDW's influence on the craft sector was enormous. It revitalized often dying craft based industries, attracting non- Irish craftspeople and, through its shops, contributing to the selling of craft in Ireland and therefore making the craft sector economically viable. The Crafts Council of Ireland, headquartered in Kilkenny, has often acknowledged a debt to KDW for the advancement and promotion of crafts in Ireland and in playing a role in its founding. The Crafts Council of Ireland was itself founded in 1971 following a visit by the World Crafts Council (WCC) the previous year. The opening of the National Craft Gallery in 2000 in the Castle Yard, the former stables of Kilkenny Castle, marked a new era for the Crafts Council of Ireland, providing a new and permanent exhibition space for craft in Ireland. This space along with many other cultural and commercial venues throughout the City and the exhibitions, events and festivals that are staged therein have combined with the legacy of the City's medieval heritage to firmly establish Kilkenny's credentials as a destination of exceptional appeal. The challenge going forward is to ensure that the significance of where Kilkenny has come from and the relevance of what it now stands for can be marshalled to the City's economic, social, cultural and environmental benefit.



Chapter 4. The Keys to Kilkenny

The Interpretive Workshop which was held on the 15th May 2012 in the Ormonde Hotel encouraged everyone involved to start thinking about the nature of the experience for visitors to Kilkenny, the opportunities for enhancing that experience and the challenges faced by the City.

A thematic framework

The Workshop Outcomes Report, which is available at Appendix 1, identified several key concepts for which there was a broad general consensus;

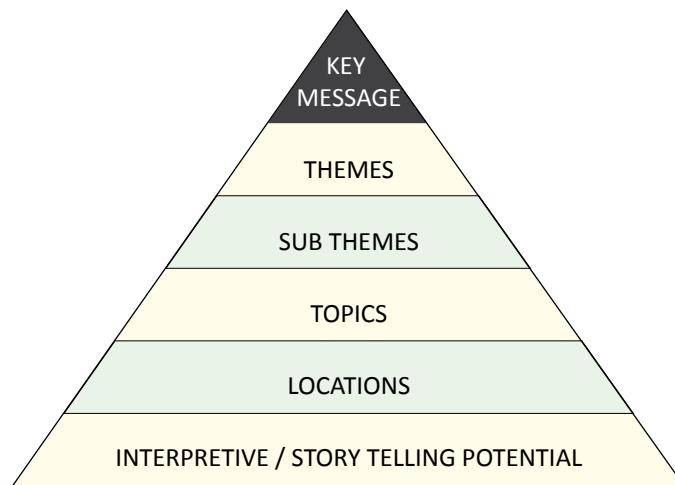
- historical significance
- craft community
- compact City
- medieval city
- the river
- always something happening
- pub culture
- people in Kilkenny

Each concept was discussed in detail by all those who attended the workshop, who then began to explore associated topics and map relevant locations. Following the Workshop these concepts were further researched, validated and assembled in the form of an Interpretive Framework, as described below and illustrated overleaf.

The simple premise behind the Interpretive Framework is that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. The Framework helps us to understand not only what is distinctive about Kilkenny's history and heritage but also, importantly, what is appealing about its current disposition and contemporary outlook. The four key themes and twelve sub themes that have been identified offer insights into the complex cultural layering and connections that give Kilkenny a sense of historical continuity, as well as its distinctive character.

Using these themes within the context of a coherent and integrating framework encourages a holistic and strategic approach to the understanding, management, presentation, interpretation and animation of the City. The theme titles encapsulate the distinctive character of Kilkenny and show the interaction between historical influences and present day circumstances. The themes are designed to be inclusive – that is, to represent all that is significant about the destination and the many different experiences and cultural perspectives represented in the City's history and more recent development.

The use of themes can play a key role in broadening the identification and protection of heritage places and features to ensure an accurate reflection of the history of the City. The themes can also be used to ensure that there is a comprehensive representation of the significance of the place in the messages that are communicated about the destination. Equally, these themes can be used as a sieve to select stories and associated places and characters that are significant and distinctive to the City, the wider region, and beyond whether nationally or internationally. The interpretive structure, illustrated below, assembles the key elements of the Interpretive Framework into a hierarchy of information.



Key Message

It will be important to identify one over-arching message that summarises Kilkenny and can be used as the baseline for interpretation, marketing and other communication and animation techniques. While it may never actually be seen printed word for word it should nevertheless infuse all communication with people locally and with visitors – providing a quality bench-mark and identifying Kilkenny as somewhere unique, vibrant and interesting.

Themes

Underneath the over-arching message are several themes – the keys to Kilkenny- which summarise the key attributes of the City and unlock the different dimensions of its potential appeal to visitors. Themes, then, are the central ideas behind the Interpretive Framework. They should be readily understood by the visitor and should be reiterated in various forms (and in various ways) across different media and locations to emphasise their point. This thematic consistency provides clarity of purpose and an organisational structure to the City's identity.

Sub themes and topics

In turn, themes can be illustrated and substantiated by sub themes – the supportive information across the environment, which delves into the detail of particular stories, places and people. By providing a set of clear themes and sub themes for the City, to be adopted across the whole communication mix, interpretation can deliver a coherent identity. Themes and sub themes are what will define Kilkenny's unique sense of place as a place unlike any other.

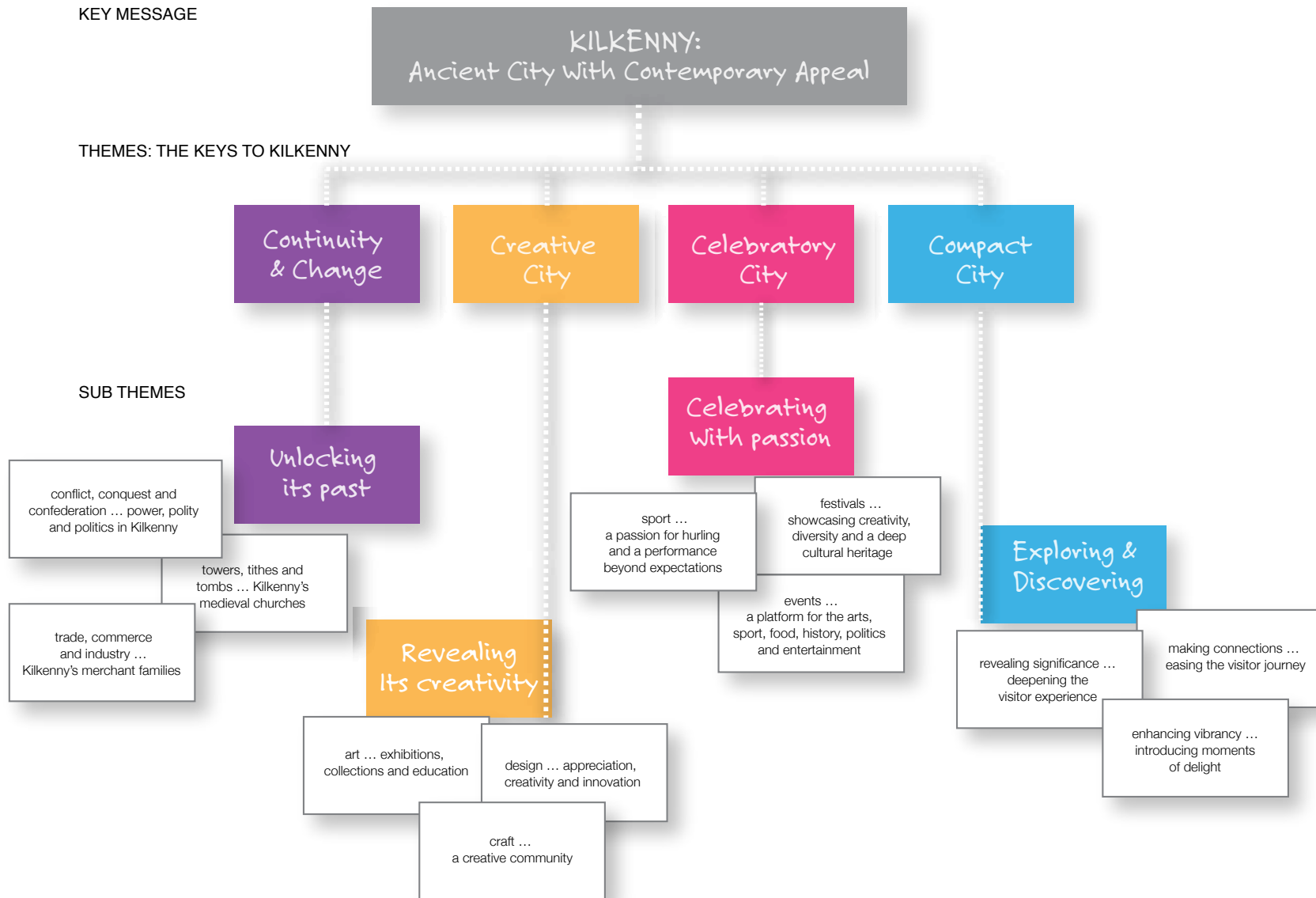
Topics and interpretive opportunities put the flesh on the bones of each sub theme. Topics and opportunities need not be exhaustive, merely an indication of the wealth and breadth of story-telling possibilities on offer and should be seen as a springboard for ideas rather than a prescriptive list. The best stories always come from those who know the City and its people the best – the community – and it is the texture and depth that these hidden stories offer that will make Kilkenny's interpretive response stand out.

Applying the framework

The Interpretive Framework helps us to understand what is distinctive about Kilkenny's history, heritage and contemporary appeal. The four themes, twelve sub themes and numerous associated topics detailed in the following charts highlight places, characters and associations that express important processes and activities in the City's historical development, culture and identity. Some of these historical processes relate to a much bigger picture and to events being played out on a European and, indeed, World stage. The Framework is intended to allow for the multi-layering of several themes in one place and enables local themes to be linked to national, and (where relevant) international contexts. It is also a tool to assist in identifying, assessing, interpreting, managing, presenting and animating the significance of the City's heritage places and contemporary spaces.



INTERPRETIVE FRAMEWORK



THEME: CONTINUITY & CHANGE

<p>towers, tithes and tombs ... Kilkenny's medieval churches</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the role of the cathedral within the City's life and history – worship, learning, art, architecture, ... archaeology (comb making workshop), music; craft (stone carving), garden architecture; ecclesiastical v secular authority – Bishop as lord - taxes & tithes; witchcraft as heresy; abbeys, friaries, priories & graveyards- monastic life - 'a life in the day of' ...a mendicant friar pestilence, plague and punishment – the unpleasant underworld of the Medieval town- leprosy, the Black Death, crime & retribution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the earlier cathedral & palace; St. Canice's Cathedral & surrounding close and wider precinct – Canice's Tower, the Bishop's Palace, the Robing Room, the Deanery, St. Canice's Library; ... College of Vicars' Choral the walled town and gates-Irishtown Black Abbey, St. Francis Abbey, St. John's Priory, St. Mary's Church, graveyard & monuments room; St. Stephen's graveyard the Maudlin Castle (garden & orchard) - leper hospital, 1327; the pillory, the dipping stool (Green's Gate), rogue's post (corner of Irishtown), stocks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> St. Canice (516-600), Hugh de Rous (1202), Richard de Ledrede (Alice Kyteler) Richard Marshall, the Grey Friars, the Black Friars Friar John Clyn (St. Francis Abbey); William Marshal (Maudlin Castle); John Banim, writer (St. Stephen's graveyard) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effigies & tombs – the Butlers (Piers Butler & his wife Margaret FitzGerald -1539), the Graces, the Shortalls, the Savages, the Kytelers: St. Ciaran's Chair; Cardinal Rinuccini- the east window; Oisín Kelly - the baptismal font; the Annals of Ireland (Friar John Clyn) - the Sorcery Trial of Alice Kyteler; the Black Death Robert Rothe's Register 1523 ... detailed descriptions of – armour & weaponry; sickness & pestilence; fire
<p>conflict, conquest and confederation ... power, polity and politics in Kilkenny</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1170, the Norman Invasion; the two townships - Irishtown (charter from the bishops of Ossory), Englishtown (under Norman control); 1366 the Statutes of Kilkenny (English settlers & Irish customs) 1609 the Tudor period; King James 1st Charter - becoming a City, its Golden Age; 1641 the Catholic Confederation of Kilkenny – Provisional Capital of Ireland – monies minted, taxes and armies raised; 1645 – disunity & rebellion 1650, Oliver Cromwell, the City - siege, defeat, surrender; 200 leading citizens expelled; 1704 the Penal Laws – protest, insurrection, revolution; 1798 – Kilkenny under martial law. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the wooden tower, Kilkenny Castle; life in the castle; successive owners and their architectural and social legacy; Grace's Castle (1210), used as a goal (1566), courthouse added (1792)' the Confederation Hall (the meeting in Robert Shee's house of the General Assembly (1642) – the election of members to the Supreme Council, the seat of the Confederate Parliament 1759 – 1761 The Tholsel (City Hall) in High Street is built; 1763 a great flood sweeps away both bridges in the City; 1771 The Market Cross, built in 1335 is removed; 1842 – Kilkenny Workhouse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Domhnall Mac Giolla Phádraig, Richard de Clare (Strongbow) & the Norman Knights, Isabella de Clare (daughter of Strongbow & Aoife) & wife of William Marshall, the Earl of Pembroke. King James 1 (the Charter), Nicholas Langton; Dr. David Rothe, Catholic Bishop of Ossory – the General Assembly, the Confederation Hall; James Butler, First Duke of Ormonde (1650) Oliver Cromwell, Daniel Axtel, Military Governor, Charles II, James II, William III, Daniel O'Connell. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liber Primus Kilkennensis- the civic records; William Marshall's Charter 1208; 1394 King Richard II in Kilkenny; 1536, Henry VIII – declared King of Ireland; Cardinal Rinuccini, the Papal Nuncio – £20,000 + 6,000 men in support of the Confederation 1676 the Duke of Ormonde - a silver mace to the City of Kilkenny; King James II - a new charter, stays at Kilkenny Castle; the Penal laws – evictions; Daniel O'Connell - Monster Meeting at Robert's Hill
<p>trade, commerce and industry ... Kilkenny's merchant families</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the woollen trade in the 16th & 17th centuries – spinning, fulling, dyeing, tailoring; imports & exports – fine cloth and wine /wool, linen and animal hides; land ownership – in and beyond the City wealth, power and inter-marriage – the notable families, sovereigns & council members, the relationship with the church – St. Mary's Church, the local church of the merchants (tombs and graves) burgage plots, mansions and gardens – the City's remarkable stock of Renaissance (1560-1650) townhouses and garden archaeology; formal pleasure gardens, summer-houses;the City's backlands, the archaeology of everyday life – workshops, stores, animal- pens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1325 -1375 - the artisan's quarter of medieval Kilkenny (St. John's Green) – bakers & potters (10,000 artifacts recovered); Irishtown, 1604 - seven guilds;-shoemakers, glovers, weavers, cotners, carpenters, smiths and tailors; the monuments room, St. Mary's Church; 1538 Piers Butler, founded a school to the west of the Cathedral, where the library now stands. the Hole in the Wall - a supper house of renown; John Rothe FitzPiers house on Parliament Street; Sir Richard Shee's house on High Street; Langton House; 20 other houses surviving beneath modern facades; the first Duke of Ormonde's summer banqueting house (Kilkenny Castle) Butler House & Garden 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Archdeakin, Archer, Cowley, Langton, Lee, Knaresborough, Lawless, Ragget, Rothe, Shee, Walsh, Sherlock, Savage, Cleere, Cantwell, Comerford, Shorthall, Murphy, Ryan the elite middle class of Catholic merchants – became Magistrates, Sovereigns, Mayors and Sheriffs; Rotheres - sovereign on eighteen occasions; Archers sovereign sixteen times; Shees - sovereigns on seven occasions' the Hole in the Wall – debates & duels, frequented by the Duke of Ormonde, Henry Grattan, Sir Jonah Barrington among others' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kilkenny College, founded (1666) by James, 1st Duke of Ormonde- past pupils - Jonathan Swift, George Berkeley, William Congreve & George Farquhar (Restoration playwrights), John Banim, Thomas Prior (RDS), David Beatty (Battle of Jutland) the dissolution of the monasteries in the 1530s provided the controlling merchant families with a golden opportunity to increase their holdings connections with the continent, Kilkenny's merchant class became increasingly exposed to the Renaissance which was sweeping Europe - some of its ideas may have filtered through to this 'enlightened' community

THEME: CREATIVE CITY

<p>art ... exhibitions, collections and education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Butler Gallery- platform for presenting the best of Irish art today; high quality exhibition programming with local, national and international artists; touring and dissemination of work; education outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to Kilkenny Castle basement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Society for the Encouragement of the Arts in Kilkenny – the Kilkenny Art Gallery Society; George Pennefeather 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Evan’s Home, a former almshouse - founded in 1818, designed by William Robertson (1770-1850); built on the site of a military barracks by the Evans Trust - philanthropist Joseph Evans contributed to many charities; it is enclosed within a medieval walled garden; forms part of the lands of the historic site of St John’s Priory
<p>design ... appreciation, creativity and innovation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kilkenny Design Workshops- a unique & inspired concept- contribution to Irish modernity; promoting good design by producing it; a focus on craft based design and design for craft based industries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the stables at Kilkenny Castle; the Butler House scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> William H Walsh, Jim King, Niall Montgomery (architect) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Scandinavian influence; ‘Design in Ireland’ report
<p>craft ... a creative community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Crafts Council of Ireland – a focus on ‘handicrafts’; the World Crafts Council conference (1971); Showcase – the first Craft Fair; the professionalisation of craft through training & awards; the National Craft Gallery; touring exhibitions – Europe & USA; developing craft enterprises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kilkenny Castle Yard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blanaid Reddin – founder member of the Crafts Council; Veronica Rowe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The World Crafts Council conference in Dublin ((1971)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> fostering excellence in crafts – ‘MADE in Kilkenny’, combining the drive and passion of 27 craft members, promoting a platform for a compelling retail offer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A creative community - Kilkenny, Castlewarren, Bennetsbridge, Thomastown, Burnchurch, Castlecomer, Stoneyford, Goslingstown, Graignamanagh 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 27 craft members – basket weaving; candle making; ceramics; furniture; glass; jewellery; leather; millinery; stone carving; textiles others’ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Royal Dublin Society (1731) – promoting arts, agriculture, science & industry including small craft based industry; the Arts & Crafts Society of Ireland (1893) - the Celtic Revival; the Irish Countrywomen’s Association (1910); Bord Fáilte – souvenir officers;

THEME: CELEBRATORY CITY

<p>'festivals ... showcasing creativity, diversity and a deep cultural heritage' ...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kilkenny Arts Festival – showcasing theatre & dance, classical music, wired, street, literature, visual art and craft; over 40 years old; dedicated to commissioning and producing new work from Ireland & abroad; Rhythm & Roots Festival- now in its fifteenth year, presenting all forms of Americana from local and international artists; Kilkenny Fleadh Ceoil; Choral Music; Street Music - busking • the Cat Laughs Comedy Festival- founded in 1994 it has grown from a small event to an internationally acclaimed festival showcasing Irish and international comedy acts; Kilkenomics – Europe's first economics festival – moderated by comedians, it puts economists, financial analysts, journalists and other specialists through their paces • Savour Kilkenny Food Festival– a festival about growing, making, cooking, sharing and eating food, in celebration of Kilkenny's vibrant & creative food culture; Kilkenny River Festival; Celtic Festival 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barnstorm Theatre Company, Devious Theatre, Watergate Theatre, Ballykeeffe Amphitheatre; Music in Kilkenny, Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann, Rhythm Riot Music, Kilkenny Academy of Music, Ryan's Music Club, Marble City Pipe Band; all around the City (busking) • The Fair Green, Langton's Set Theatre, Cleere's Theatre Bar, the Hole in the Wall, St. Canice's Cathedral, Hotel Kilkenny, Kilkenny Ormonde Hotel, Kilkenny River Court Hotel, the Kilkenny Pembroke Hotel, • Kilkenny Castle, Castle Yard, Parade Plaza, Canal Square, Rothe House, MacDonagh Junction, Meubles Café, Zuni Restaurant, Café Sol, Billy Byrne's Pub, Royal Spice Restaurant, Desert Hall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • local and international artists in the performing and visual arts • comedians, economists, financial analysts, journalists and other specialists • the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce, OPW, Kilkenny Borough Council, Kilkenny County Council, Fáilte Ireland, Business2Arts, British Council, Kilkenny Civic Trust, Kilkenny Design Centre, Crafts Council of Ireland, Kilkenny Tourism, Rothe House, St Canice's Cathedral, Arts Council
<p>events ... a platform for the arts, sport, food, history, politics and entertainment ...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage events • Music events • Sporting events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage events • Music events • Sporting events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage events • Music events • Sporting events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage events • Music events • Sporting events
<p>sport ... a passion for hurling and a performance beyond expectations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hurling – a unique cultural sporting experience; 1884 – the revival of hurling; Kilkenny - the 'Hurling Capital of Ireland', one of the oldest and fastest outdoor field games, played for 2,000 years; the earliest written references to this sport are in Brehon Law dating from the 5th century; increasing popular – 40 clubs in the county; huge appeal for children & young people • Kilkenny – 'Home of Hurling Champions', the Kilkenny Cats - the All Blacks of hurling; the Hall of Fame; the Record of Success; the dominance of the county- longest unbeaten hurling championship run, most All-Ireland Senior (33), Under-21 (11), Minor (20) Hurling Championship Titles • From ash to clash - the art & craft of hurley making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nowlan Park • Croke Park • GAA – a global phenomenon - Asia, Australasia, Europe and North America 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • James Nowlan, first President of the GAA • Eddie Keher - all-time top scorer in All-Ireland Senior Hurling Championship; Hurler of the Year awards: - Seamus Cleere ('63), Ollie Walsh ('67), Ted Carroll ('69), Pat Henderson ('74), Liam O'Brien ('75), Ger Henderson('79), Noel Skehan ('82), Frank Cummins, ('83), DJ Carey ('93), Henry Shefflin ('02 & '06) JJ Delaney ('03), Eoin Larkin ('08), Tommy Walsh ('09), Michael Fennelly ('11) • The Irish Guild of Ash Hurley Makers; Raymie Dowling, Michael Neary, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GAA Museum, Croke Park; temporary exhibitions – GAA: a global phenomenon; Dermot Earley - Leader & Legend; Celebrating 30 years of Irish Sport

THEME: COMPACT CITY

<p>making connections ... easing the visitor journey</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> accessing the City – Kilkenny ... easy to get to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> an appealing, easily accessed and convenient proposition - marketing material available off and online, promotional activity; imaginative collaborations 	N/A	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> approaching the City: Kilkenny ... welcoming and reassuring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> advance direction signing, gateway signing, approach route treatment, arrival points in the City – railway station, bus station, car parks 	N/A	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> exploring the City: Kilkenny ... easy to get to know 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> visitor information, visitor orientation, visitor movement – at points of arrival, at the TIC, at visitor attractions, at visitor facilities, at key locations – the Tholsel, the Parade Kiosks, 	N/A	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> experiencing the City: Kilkenny ... easy to get around 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> visual cues to ease the visitor journey, pedestrian priority, permeability & legibility - paving, lighting, street furniture, street art & sculpture – Castle Connect – Castle Stables & Yard, Butler House; Parade Connect, Junction Place, Rothe House Connect, High Street, Canice’s Connect 	N/A	N/A
<p>revealing significance ... deepening the visitor experience .</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> discovering the city - visitors also need to find their own Kilkenny - the significant and at times quirky character of Kilkenny’s townscape, its street pattern – lanes, slips & arches, its fine buildings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> streets, slips & lanes, the remaining & lost walls – Bregagh, Mill Race, Abbey St., Evans Lane, Chapel Lane, Garden Row, Pennyfeather Lane, Butler House Gardens, Castle Stables, St. Canice’s Churchyard, Deanery Gardens, Maudlin Street, Grace’s Castle 	N/A	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the world behind the facades & beneath your feet and– the archaeology of the medieval City, its walled defences – town walls, gates & towers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the gates & towers - Green’s Gate, Troy’s Gate, Dean’s Gate, Irishtown / Hightown Gate, Watergate, Black Friar’s Gate, St. James’s Gate, St. Patrick’s Gate, Walkin’s Gate, St. John’s Inner / Outer Gates, Castle Gate, Maudlin Gate; Talbot Tower, Evans Tower, Tilbury Tower, Collier’s Lane Tower, Myles Tower, Corner Tower 	N/A	N/A
<p>enhancing vibrancy ... introducing moments of delight</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embracing the river – as waterway, visual amenity, recreational resource, movement corridor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> River Gardens - a linear park along Bateman’s Quay to incorporate the proposed new pedestrian bridge, linking to John’s Quay on the east bank. 	N/A	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discovering, uncovering & creating gardens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rothe House & Garden, Butler House Gardens, the Deanery Gardens, Bishop’s Palace Garden & Robing Room, the Kilkenny Castle Gardens & Parkland, Watergate Place - a green tower, Castle Stables & Yard 	N/A	N/A

Bringing the stories to life

The Interpretive Framework provides a structure for the interpretation of the significance of Kilkenny which in turn supports the further development of the City as a heritage destination. The themes identified in the Framework are designed to capture the essential significance – the DNA - of what Kilkenny stands for and what makes it stand out. They are intended to be applied and interlinked depending on the particular communication need. This approach suggests a dynamic, living history, giving a sense of enduring activity and continual rediscovery rather than a past that is frozen in time. There are many ways in which to bring the themes and their associated stories to life. The key challenge is to ensure that the process of converting the significance of what Kilkenny stands for into relevance for all its visitors – the interpretive response – is grounded in the Interpretive Framework and takes its cue from the multiplicity of interpretive possibilities identified therein.

One particular way in which to bring the themes to life is through ‘animation’ – the process by which a character, a situation or a story is brought to life so that visitors have a ‘vigorous and lively experience’. The desirability of hands-on experiences for visitors, particularly children, is now regarded as being a key feature in the range of interpretive responses available to those in the business of developing, managing and promoting vibrant destinations. Animation work provides an opportunity for an historic, contemporary or charming character to be brought to life to create an experiential situation for the visitor within which an important story or important information can be conveyed or told.

The skills required to bring a character to life are those of an actor. The skills required to occupy and manipulate a fictional scenario with non-costumed participants are many; – charm, so that the character is approachable rather than off-putting; a quick intellect, so that offers from the spectator can be incorporated and built upon; an ability to be spontaneous and creative so that the possibilities of the live moment can be utilised and an ability to control events so that the original point of the scene is not lost in the live moment. Animated characters can function within a number of contexts:

- A complete performance structure such as a tour
- An individual scene placed within a tourist attraction
- Costumed characters functioning as tour guides
- Costumed characters on the street to attract attention

The benefits of animation work are the benefits of theatre. For the audience member, in this case the tourist – the tourist who buys a ticket for an animated tour, the tourist who stumbles upon a scene in an historic attraction, the tourist who is informed by an “in role” guide or the tourist who interacts with a “costumed” character on the street, the benefits are:

- Entertainment
- Effective transfer of information – information is more meaningful to a receiver if it is conveyed in an active context
- Engagement – theatre engages the intellect, emotions and aesthetic senses in the transfer of information/story resulting in a rich experience for spectators



There are two main ways in which theatre style animation can be developed in Kilkenny.

Option 1: Implementation of a comprehensive animation strategy across existing visitor attractions. Such a strategy would introduce stakeholders to the benefits of high quality animation as a visitor engagement tool, provide sector wide training for stakeholders new to animation, provide an up-skilling programme for stakeholders and staff who are already engaged in own site animation and provide targeted consultancy to individual stakeholders to develop scenarios and scripts.

Option 2: Development of a high-end animation product to lead the field in attracting new visitors to Kilkenny. Such a product would enhance rather than duplicate existing services and act as a gateway to all that Kilkenny has to offer. Option 2 is wholly compatible with Option 1.

To develop Option 1 a workshop, attended by a professional animation specialist, could be held to assess:

- The standard of existing animation in Kilkenny
- Stakeholders' interest in animation as a visitor engagement tool
- Suitability of sites
- The skills of the staff
- The ambition of individual attractions
- The resources available
- The physical layout of the site
- The desired themes and stories

Following this workshop the professional animation specialist would prepare a detailed proposal and methodology for how the ambition could be achieved and the resources required to deliver the agreed animation in a sustainable, dynamic manner secured.

Developing Option 2 would involve establishing an independent performance structure featuring high quality animation for visitors, such as a tour. In order to secure the necessary high aesthetic and production values a four-point plan of action is recommended as follows:

- Commission a Performance Script- informed by the emerging Interpretive Framework, the script, in keeping with the stated qualities of excellence and contemporaneity, innovation and imagination, would be of a high artistic standard.
- Identify Producing Partners and Performance Sites
- Budget and Pre-Production Development
- Production



A case study in animation – the Keys to Kilkenny

By way of illustration the following sample animation programme is presented. In delivering on the objectives of both Option 1 and Option 2, it also provides, through the addition of a community arts programme, for the effective communication of the core values of the emerging Interpretive Framework. This piece, entitled the 'Keys to Kilkenny', demonstrates how the objective of delivering memorable, inspiring and compelling interpretation through animation could be achieved. The sample programme could be sequenced as follows;

- Summer 2012: develop the 'Keys to Kilkenny' - a professional animated, 'theatrical' tour of Kilkenny City that draws attention and provides access to all that Kilkenny has to offer.
- Spring 2013: inventory the use of animated, 'in costume/in role' characters in existing tourist sites. Devise and implement a training programme to up-skill relevant staff members and develop agreed scenes/scenarios/scripts.
- Summer 2013: go live with the 'Keys to Kilkenny' in association with a local producer, local performers and with the support of visitor industry stakeholders in the City.
- Summer 2013: run a community wide arts programme during which participants learn an extended version of the 'Keys to Kilkenny' hurling dance. Community programme culminates in a 100 strong flash mob, with hurls, during and in association with Kilkenny Arts Festival.

Such a programme could provide a coherent and comprehensive approach to visitor orientated 'in costume/in role' animation resulting in a high quality standard throughout the tourism sector. As one of several possible strands of animation work, it has the capacity to reflect and resonate with the ethos of the emerging Interpretive Framework and the key objectives of the wider Strategic Tourism Plan for the City. In implementing the programme over two seasons there is an opportunity to achieve success in the form of sector wide understanding of and support for the animation response, its artistic excellence and its long term business viability.

The Keys to Kilkenny Tour

Description

An animated walking tour of Kilkenny comprising a series of site specific theatrical happenings with each site/happening acting as a 'key' or access point to a trail of thematically linked places and/or activities. The tour functions as a complete and enjoyable experience in its own right. It also functions as a springboard encouraging visitors to avail of more of what Kilkenny has to offer. The Keys to Kilkenny will not duplicate the visitor experience of any existing tourist event/location.

Flow

The tour will flow from the Parade along High Street, Parliament Street, Irishtown and across Dean Street to finish at St. Canice's Cathedral. There is scope for reasonable deviation, zigzagging into smaller side streets from the central line.

Possible Tour Points (a maximum of six locations)

Craft, design, cultural quarter
Butler Gallery
Butler House
Kilkenny Castle and Park
Laneway
A pub
Grace's Castle, Courthouse, Kilkenny Gaol
Rothe House and Garden
Museum of Hurling
St. Canice's Cathedral and Round Tower



Lens

Kilkenny is an ancient City with a contemporary outlook. It has a long history of continuity and change. A compact City with creative appeal, it knows how to celebrate with passion. It is also a verdant, vibrant and contemporary place. Kilkenny Design is an interesting brand that straddles the new and the old in standing for high quality contemporary art, craft and design. Its presence sets Kilkenny apart. This unique feature can offer a lens through which all the other strands of Kilkenny’s character can be viewed. The decision to have the characters in The Keys to Kilkenny tour - artistic, craft or design people - will make the product stand out. Such characters might include;-

- Historic Kilkenny glimpsed through the eyes of a 17th century painter observing his muse in the garden of Rothe House.
- Medieval Kilkenny recounted through the ripe ranting of a silversmith in Kilkenny Castle.
- The hostelrys of Kilkenny shared with a brewery cooper.
- The joys of contemporary hurling explained by a member of the Irish Guild of ash hurley makers.

Timeline

The tour will start in the present day. The first character will be a 21st century man/ woman. As the tour moves from the Parade to St. Canice’s Cathedral the narrative will slip forwards and backwards through time

Personality

Each scene or happening will have a distinct personality, e.g. funny, moving, exciting or sobering. The overall personality of the piece will be inspired by archetypal Kilkenny characteristics.



Highlights

- Tourists and brewery cooper engage in a singsong over a glass of Kilkenny beer in a local pub.
- A group of hurlers urgently gathers in a public space to clash the ash in an exciting and athletic dance piece inspired by dynamic images of hurling in action.
- A plaintive song sung in St. Canice’s Cathedral lamenting the passing of someone beloved.

Communication media

A comprehensive mix will include publicity images, flyers, posters, advertisements and simple merchandise. The centrepiece item is a set of information keys to the City of Kilkenny - a key ring on which hang themed keys providing succinct information on available activities/attractions in Kilkenny. Listed activities/attractions are inclusive and feature a range of admission prices from high end to free.

Personnel

- Writer/Director
- Choreographer – hurling dance
- Costume Designer
- Graphic Designer
- Production Manager
- Performers x 3 or 5



Support Personnel

Local operator

Tourist office - ticket sales, general focal point

Local attractions/locations as tour points

Local attractions/locations integrated ticket offers

Animation Training

A series of group workshops to focus on;

- Body language
- Play
- Improvisation

These will be designed to equip non-professional performers with the skills to work in an “in costume/in role” capacity. The workshops are designed to be enjoyable, non-threatening and positive.



Hurling Flash Mob

'It is August. The City of Kilkenny is buzzing with the excitement of the Arts Festival. At an agreed time hurlers begin to move through the City streets. At first one or two are noticeable, men, women and children in Kilkenny jerseys, hurls in their hands. They move with purpose. They move towards a central point. Passers-by start to notice more and more migrating hurlers. There are ten, twenty, fifty - there must be at least one hundred. People start to follow them. Something must be about to happen. On the Parade ... a flash mob occurs using a simplified version of the choreography of the Keys to Kilkenny hurling dance. Three hundred hurlers gather. Three hundred hurlers dance. The sound of hurl on stone, the sound of hurl on hurl, the sound of victory and defeat fill the air of Kilkenny City. The dance reaches a crescendo. Three hundred hurlers stand. They breathe. They smile. They cheer.'

The flash mob is filmed from various starting points recording the building migration. The final performance is also filmed. An edited version is then uploaded onto YouTube. The flash mob also functions as a photo opportunity for the press. It also has the capacity to attract national radio and television news attention. The flash mob is a community arts event. The three hundred hurlers will be residents of Kilkenny City – members of the youth theatre; members of Barnstorm's adult drama group; every student in a selected secondary school; members of a local scout troupe; members of an active retired group; members of a mother and child play group, etc. The flash mob is a high profile event achieved through a comprehensive community workshop programme. It provides an opportunity for members of the community of Kilkenny to be actively involved in the interpretive animation of the City. It provides an exciting public event to draw attention to, specifically, the Keys to Kilkenny tour and, more generally, to the ways in which the significance of the destination is being converted into relevance for local people and visitors alike.



Communicating the message

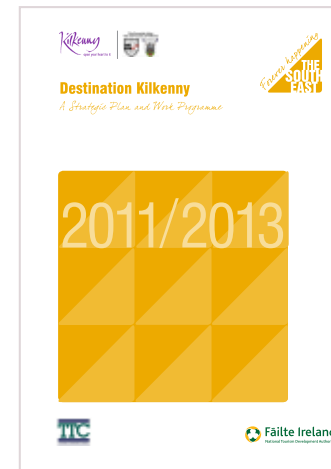


If the South East is to be the first choice destination for local and international visitors, there is a need to make the region stand out and communicate a relevant and engaging message that motivates the target audience. While other counties and destinations offer a singular experience, whether landscape or urban culture, the South East offers a quality experience of accessibility, discovery, excitement, surprise and stimulation in heritage and culture. This proposition is brought to life through the wealth of built heritage, happening cultural events, warmth of the people, variety of attractions and vibrant urban centres, all of which sets the region apart from other destinations in Ireland. It is these experiences which distinguishes the region.

The new positioning for the South East is that of Ireland's prime heritage destination, offering an expanded cultural and event programme as reasons to visit to the target audiences.'

Destination South East, Strategic Plan and Work Programme 2011-2013

Fáilte Ireland is setting new directions to reclaim growth in tourism to the South East. Key to this recovery will be the role played by the region's historic cities and towns – principally Kilkenny, Waterford and Wexford – in delivering a distinctive yet coherent cultural heritage offer. Within this context the primary strategic shift for Kilkenny is to focus more meaningfully on high-value international markets – principally mainland Europe, USA and Great Britain whilst consolidating and growing the domestic market.



The secondary shift is operational and is all about delivering a fit for purpose structure that engages the key players at County level – through Kilkenny Tourism - and across the City – through Destination Kilkenny. A key requirement of the local structure is to harness the City's collective voice and work closely with the tourism industry, the local authority, the cultural sector, the heritage community and others to communicate the advantage of a strong, consistent and compelling message for the City destination. This message needs to do two things; - first of all it needs to convey a strong sense of the distinctive nature of the Kilkenny City proposition – a proposition that takes its cue from the emerging Interpretive Framework – and secondly it needs to inform and be informed by the suite of branding communications that cascades from the international market place all the way through to closer to home markets. The challenge in this will be to ensure that the City's distinctive message doesn't get diminished in the necessary brand alignment but that it remains relevant, simple and compelling.



Building on achievements to date

'Effective marketing is key to success in attracting visitors. The challenges include targeting the best prospects, choosing the appeals and motivations which are most likely to work and using the best mix of channels and marketing tools, within the limitations of available resources, to reach those visitors that South East is trying to attract. Positioning the region as 'The South East – Forever Happening' provides both a valuable platform and re-enforces the key messages in the mind of the consumer.'

Destination South East, Strategic Plan and Work Programme 2011-2013

This Strategic Tourism Development Plan for the City, the associated Interpretive Framework and proposed interventions offer an opportunity to build on communications initiatives to date. The recently developed Kilkenny brand – 'Kilkenny - Living History, Loving Culture' for example, is perhaps best understood as a sub brand of the 'The South East - Forever Happening' destination positioning and branding. The subsequent emergence of the concept of the 'Medieval Mile' is an attempt not only to connect and profile the particular cultural heritage of the City but also to develop a support brand for the City's historic core. This approach is not dissimilar to the concept of Dublin's 'Temple Bar' or Waterford City's 'Viking Triangle'. The opportunity now exists to further develop this concept and validate its efficacy in light of the emerging Interpretive Framework. While the option exists to focus the brand on a single route e.g. – the 'Medieval Mile' - similar to the recent 'Dubline' concept and branding developed for the route between College Green and Kilmainham in the Capital, consideration could be given to the possibility of developing visitor journeys through a wider 'Medieval City'.

The Destination Kilkenny group provides the ideal forum for leading the discussion on developing such a support brand concept. Comprising the key City stakeholders, this group is perhaps best placed to assume ownership of such a brand and control its management and usage. We recommend that the development of this proposition is tendered as part of the implementation stages of the Strategic Tourism Development Plan and a suitably qualified destination branding company appointed to complete the assignment.

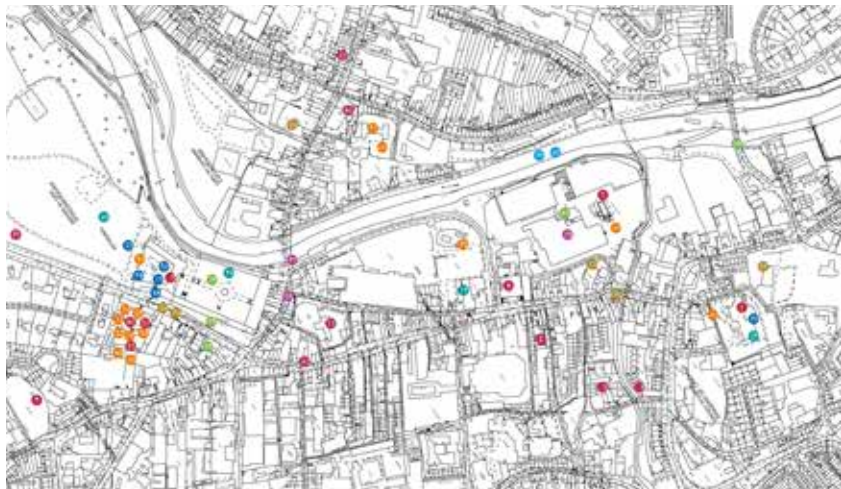


Chapter 5. Transforming the Experience

The Interpretive Workshop confirmed the perception of Kilkenny as a ‘Compact City’ in the sense that most of its attractions and amenities are situated close to each other and that this core area overlaps the commercial heart of the City. This concentration of assets helps to re-enforce their impact and to establish the City’s credentials as an outstanding heritage destination.

The Compact City

Whilst ‘compact’ was the perception of the workshop we need to understand what this means in practice. The compact nature of Kilkenny’s historic heart has an important bearing on the quality of the visitor experience. It might be useful to analyse the visitor experience in terms of its being a visitor journey which begins with how visitors access the City, how they are orientated on arrival through to how they explore what all there is to see and do.



This chapter considers the concept of the ‘Compact City’ from the perspective of the visitor journey through Kilkenny; analyses some of the challenges this presents and makes suggestions as to how;

- the journey might be made easier - by **making connections** at key junctures
- the exploration more meaningful – by **revealing the significance** of places encountered and
- the experience more enjoyable – by **introducing moments of vibrancy and delight**

1. MAKING CONNECTIONS ... EASING THE VISITOR JOURNEY

Visitor movement is not always a reflection of the most direct route between places. It is the outcome of a variety of decisions about where other people are; things of interest, noise levels, presence of vehicles, what can be seen ahead and so forth. Understanding and supporting people's natural

wayfinding is more than an issue of signage. It is how the layout of streets and spaces affect what people see when exploring the street network, as well as the buildings and spaces that they see during their journey and which attract them along specific routes.

2. REVEALING SIGNIFICANCE ... DEEPENING THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

The journey through Kilkenny aims to immerse the visitor in the story of the City. It aims to develop an appreciation and understanding of the unfamiliar as well as the familiar aspects of that story and reveal the layers of history that have been fermenting for thousands of years. Rather than seek simply to provide factual information, it aims to challenge the way in which the City is viewed. This concept allows us to take way finding to a new level. It allows us to consider not only the hardware of the journey– the physicality

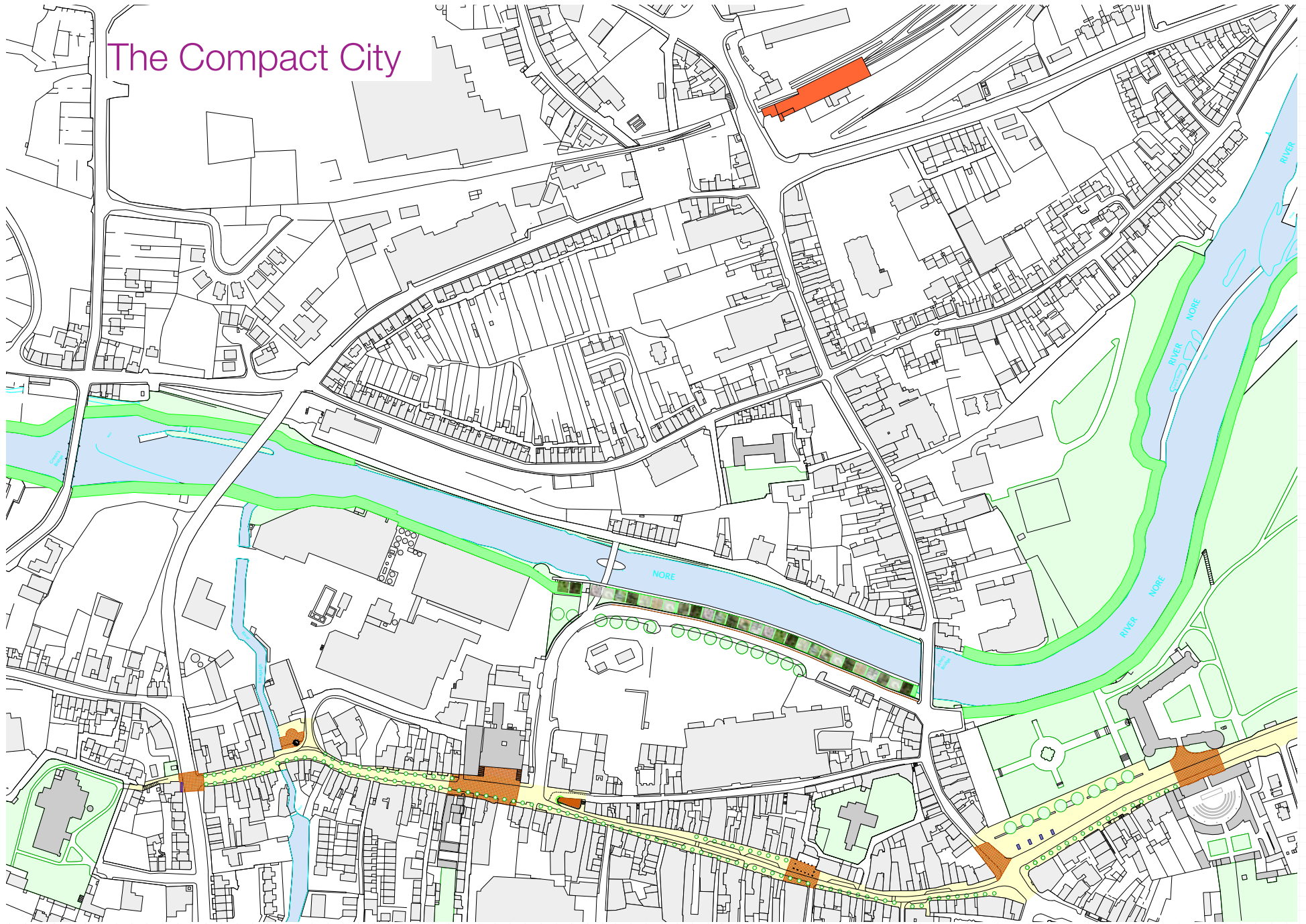
of the experience in terms of the streets, the crossings, the footpaths, the signposts, the traffic – but also the software of the journey – the layers and layers of history, significance and meaning that give this City its sense of place. To interpret the layers of meaning overlaid on any place is a complex and challenging task but it is nevertheless a challenge which this Plan seeks to embrace.

3. ENHANCING VIBRANCY ... INTRODUCING MOMENTS OF DELIGHT

In addition to the creation of new features, the plan also advocates the strengthening of the City's historical jigsaw of attributes through a rediscovery and renewed appreciation of the City's less obvious, but hugely significant, green spaces and verdant places. The Gardens and Parkland at Kilkenny Castle, the Garden at Rothe House, the Butler House Gardens, the Deanery Gardens at St. Canice's Cathedral, the Bishop's Palace Garden and Robing Room all provide moments of delight and discovery. Yet these precious places are only one part of the rich tapestry of green spaces woven into the urban fabric of the City. Riverside walks, graveyards, courtyards, sanctuary

spaces and ancient meeting places are also part of this rich matrix which is such a vital component of the public realm. These hidden gems create ideal conditions for exploration, diversion, meandering and discovery, providing a sense of timelessness. Allied to this is an appreciation that playfulness is becoming a key ingredient of contemporary urban life. The idea of integrating play into the presentation and interpretation of these places not only signals a commitment to cultural democracy and popular accessibility, it could also provide an unexpected yet key ingredient in providing memorable experiences for the City's younger visitors.

The Compact City



Castle Connect

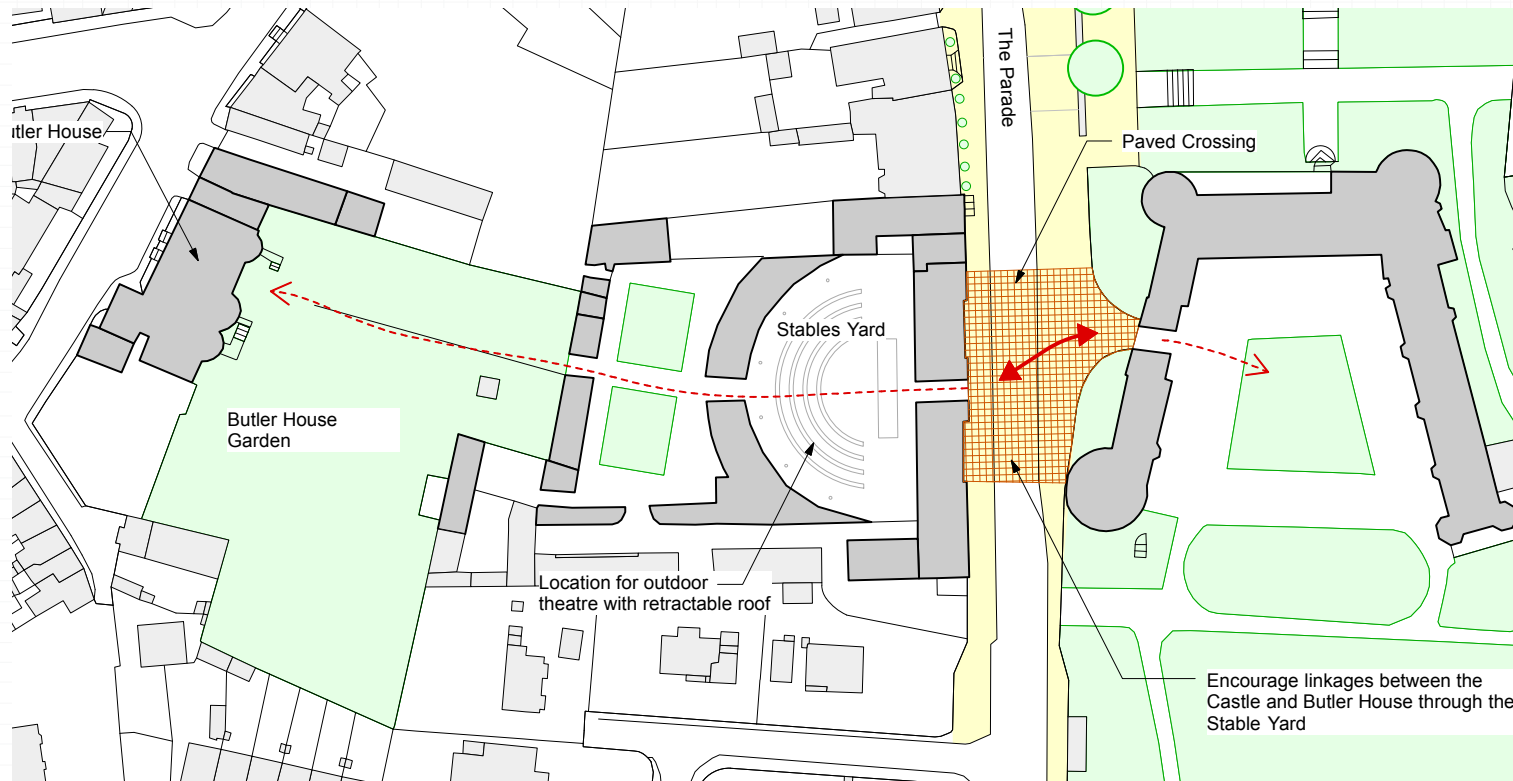
The dominant building and the main tourist attraction in Kilkenny is the Castle. It sits in a commanding position overlooking the River Nore and opens out to its demesne parkland to the south east. To the north are the magnificent formal walled gardens, and to the south west, the stable yard with its complex of buildings that once served the Castle.

These buildings, set around two courtyards, contain a craft shop, café, the National Craft Gallery and some ancillary supporting accommodation. From here, one is led through two archways to the magnificent gardens of Butler House – the Dower House of Kilkenny Castle. This axis of Castle, Stables and Butler House forms a significant cluster of attractions at the southern end of the City.

WE PROPOSE that the visitor's understanding of this cluster is strengthened by reinforcing the physical connection across Castle Street, between the Castle and the Stables. To do this, we propose continuing the stone paving across from the Castle/the Parade to the Stables and carefully designing associated street lighting, street furniture and the remaining bollards.

As visitors leave the Castle from the main gate, this will encourage them across the road and into the Stables and Butler House complex. Once across the road, the interior of the entrance arch to the first stables courtyard should be sensitively redesigned, perhaps with a linear hanging sculpture to lead and encourage the visitor in.



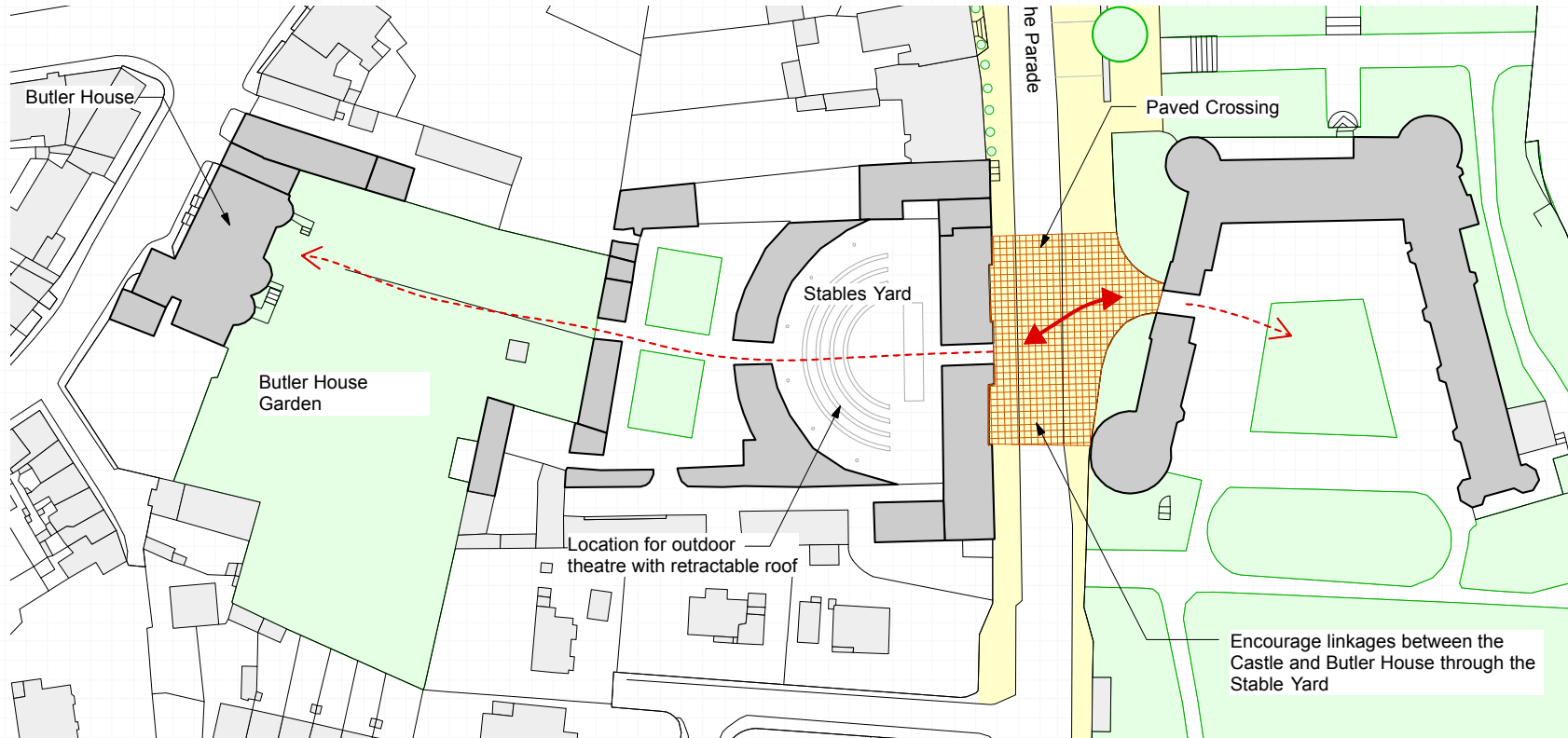


Castle Yard

Castle Yard currently does not fulfill its potential. The first half-circle yard is a magnificent and memorable space. Having encouraged visitors to cross the road from the Castle, footfall can be increased by then drawing people through to the inner courtyard, and then on through to Butler House and Gardens. To achieve this, active uses at ground floor level in all the surrounding buildings, as well as in the outdoor spaces, should be encouraged. Currently, most of the buildings are in a single ownership and encouragement should be given to change some of the current 'storage' uses to other visitor attractions or commercial space.

We understand that the main courtyard is used on occasion as an outdoor temporary theatre space. This is a use both appropriate to the size and shape of the courtyard and the location next to the Castle, and should be encouraged. Similar to the outdoor performance space of Meeting House Square in Temple Bar, Dublin, it may be worth exploring the feasibility of a retractable rain screen roof, to make a 'weather-proof' venue without permanently (and expensively!) roofing over the yard. The key objective will be to enliven – with performances, children's interactive sculpture, new uses in buildings - and link the two courtyards and garden so that the overall impact becomes greater than the sum of the parts.





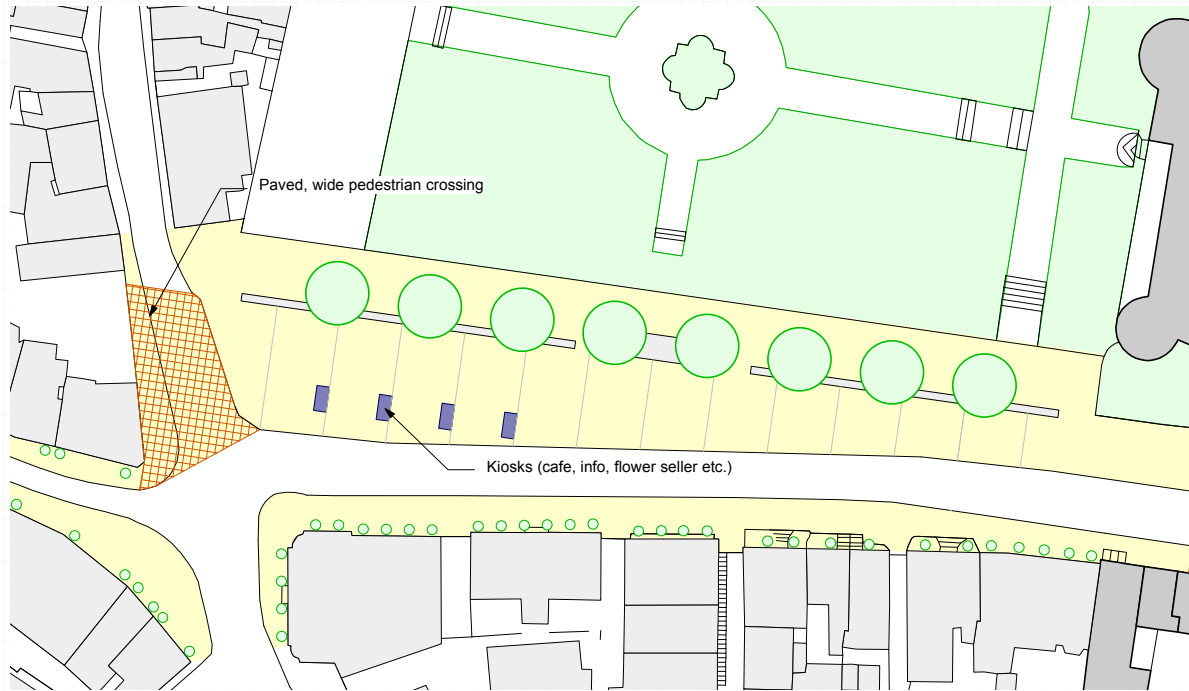
The Parade Kiosks

The recent public realm works on the Parade are a welcome addition. However, there is a relatively long walk between the Castle/Stables and John Street and the entrance to High Street, where little normally happens.

The Parade is wide and long. We would like to introduce some activity or 'street life' to enliven the Parade and help link the High Street to the Castle.

We propose 4 – 5 small, carefully designed kiosks, located along the kerb edge of the Parade. When closed, they would be secure, beautiful yet robust sculptural objects. When open, they would transform into a hub of activity and life. Uses could include a flower-seller, newsagent/street stall/tourist merchandise and satellite servicing facilities for the cafes across the road on the Parade. These would then serve pavement cafes (tables, chairs, umbrellas) on the Parade. At all times, whether open or closed, the kiosks would be a source of information about Kilkenny, using posters, signs and maps, mounted in framed glass cabinets. By locating the kiosks along the kerb edge of the Parade, this will not prevent concerts, markets and other events taking place in the space.





KILKENNY PARADE | WATERCOLOUR IMPRESSION OF TEMPORARY SEATING AT BOTTOM PARADE

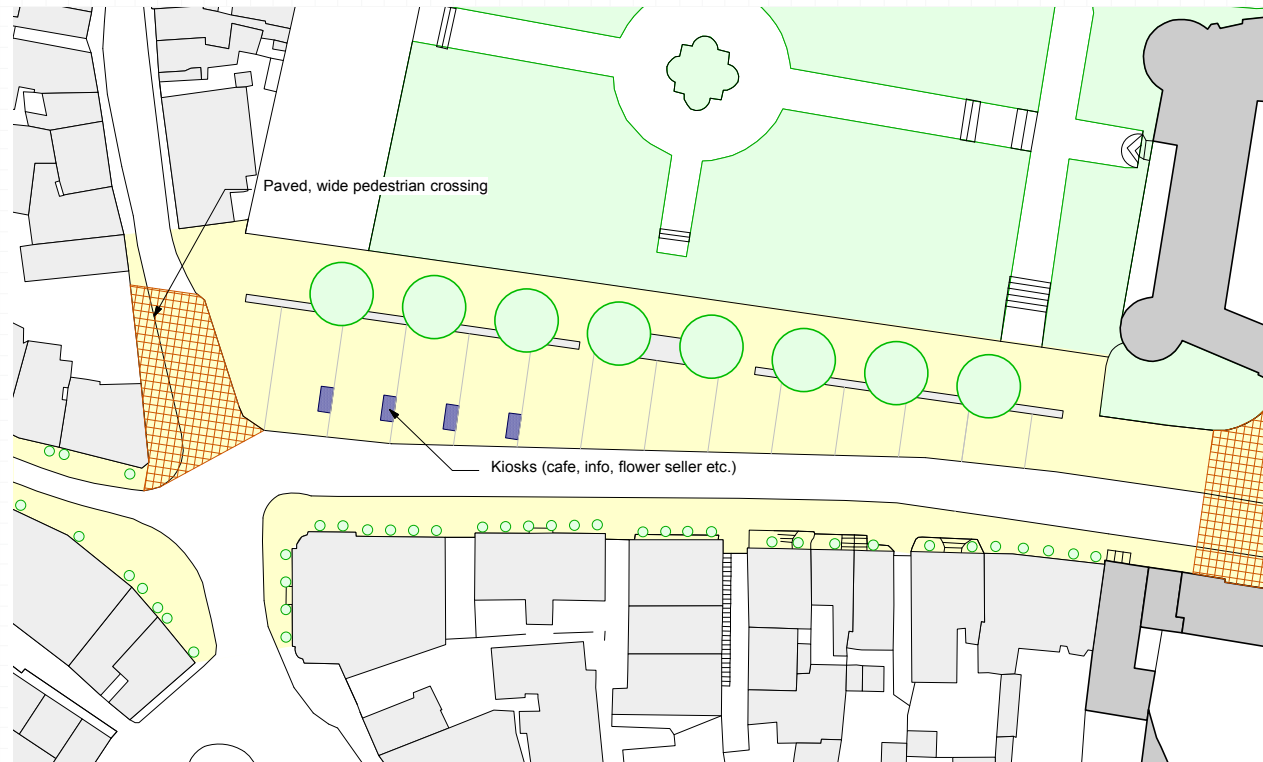
GKMP ARCHITECTS
APRIL 2010

Parade Connect

Currently the wide expanse of the Parade terminates with the heavily trafficked John Street, with a narrow pedestrian crossing eventually linking to High Street. Whilst it is not the intention to disrupt traffic on John Street, it is important to visually link the Parade with the rest of the City centre in a clear and unambiguous manner. This will give pedestrians (visitors and local people alike) the feeling of priority over the traffic, without traffic flow being reduced. In turn this will aid pedestrian flow between John Street/High Street and the Castle/Parade and improve the visitor experience.

We propose to extend the paving on the Parade to the full width, across John Street to the opposite pavement (which will be widened). The paving crossing will be flush with the existing road surface and traffic lights will be located at either end, effectively widening the existing pedestrian crossing.

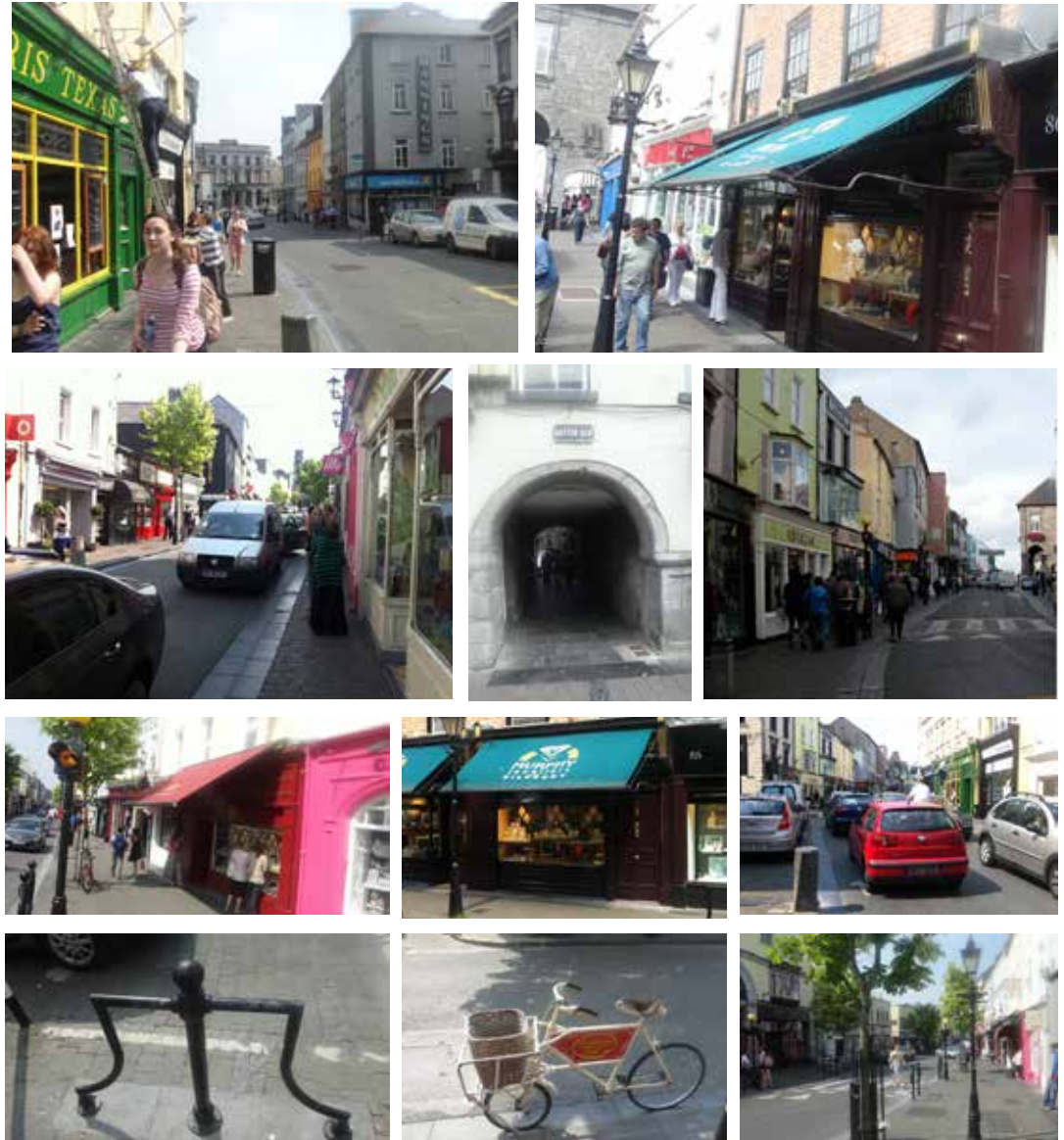


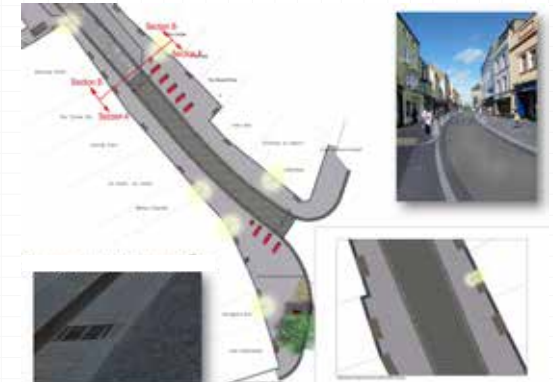
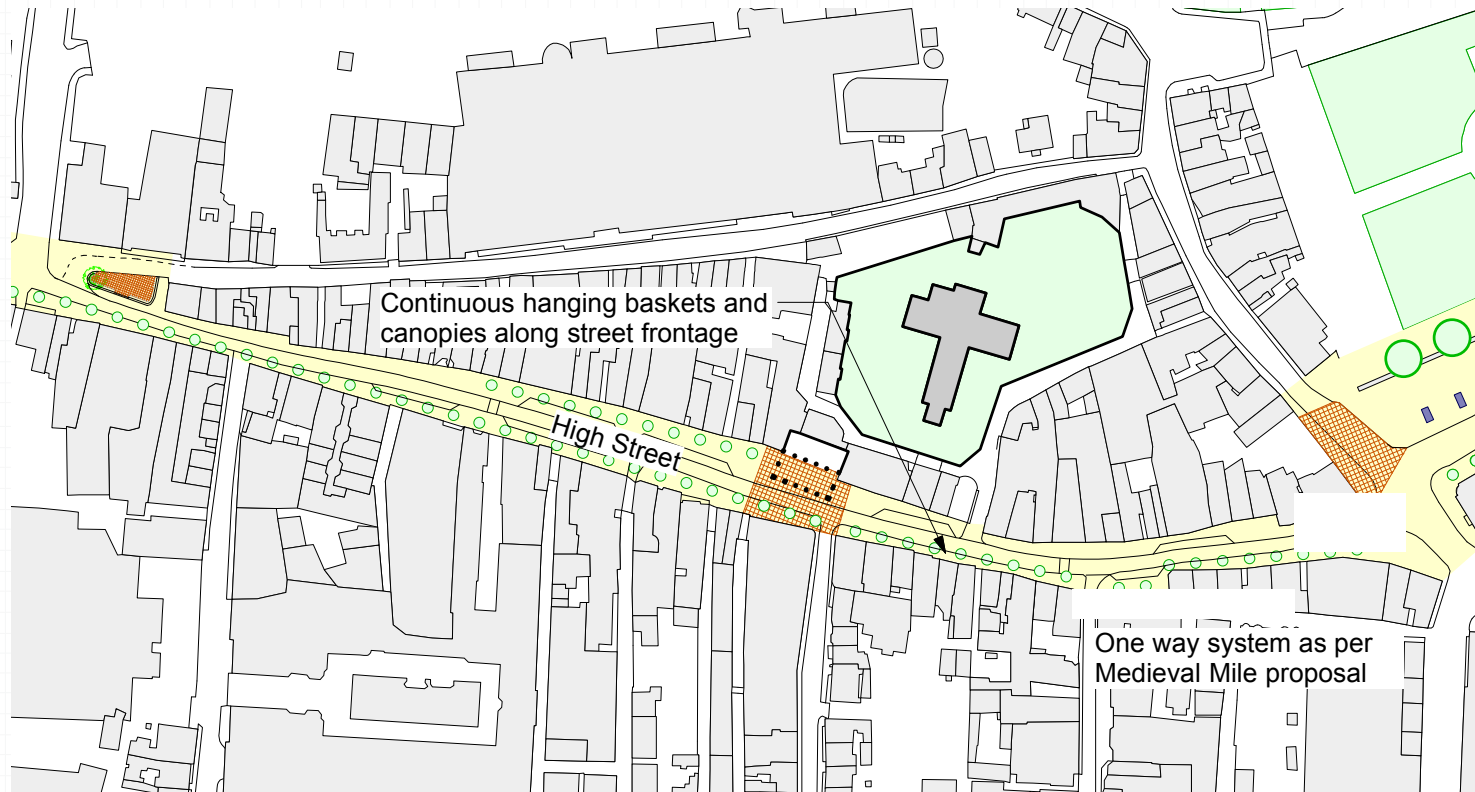


High Street

The single biggest physical impediment to the development of the City as an attractive, usable and safe tourist destination is the current dominance of vehicular traffic along the central spine of High Street. It is our understanding that once the new road bridge is built as part of the Central Access Scheme, this will facilitate a new one-way system along High Street which is to be strongly welcomed.

We understand that a proposal to improve the streetscape (in the context of the proposed new one-way system) has been developed and we would wish to see this strategy augmented where necessary to include matters such as street lighting. Priority needs to be given to the use of good, high quality clear design that is contemporary and timeless in style. We also propose that incentives are given to all shops, pubs and other businesses to encourage every premises to fit their own pull-down canvas awning (thereby creating a continuous pedestrian cover from rain) and hanging multi-seasonal flowers and plants, to create a “green lung” stretching the whole length of High Street, Parliament Street and Irishtown.



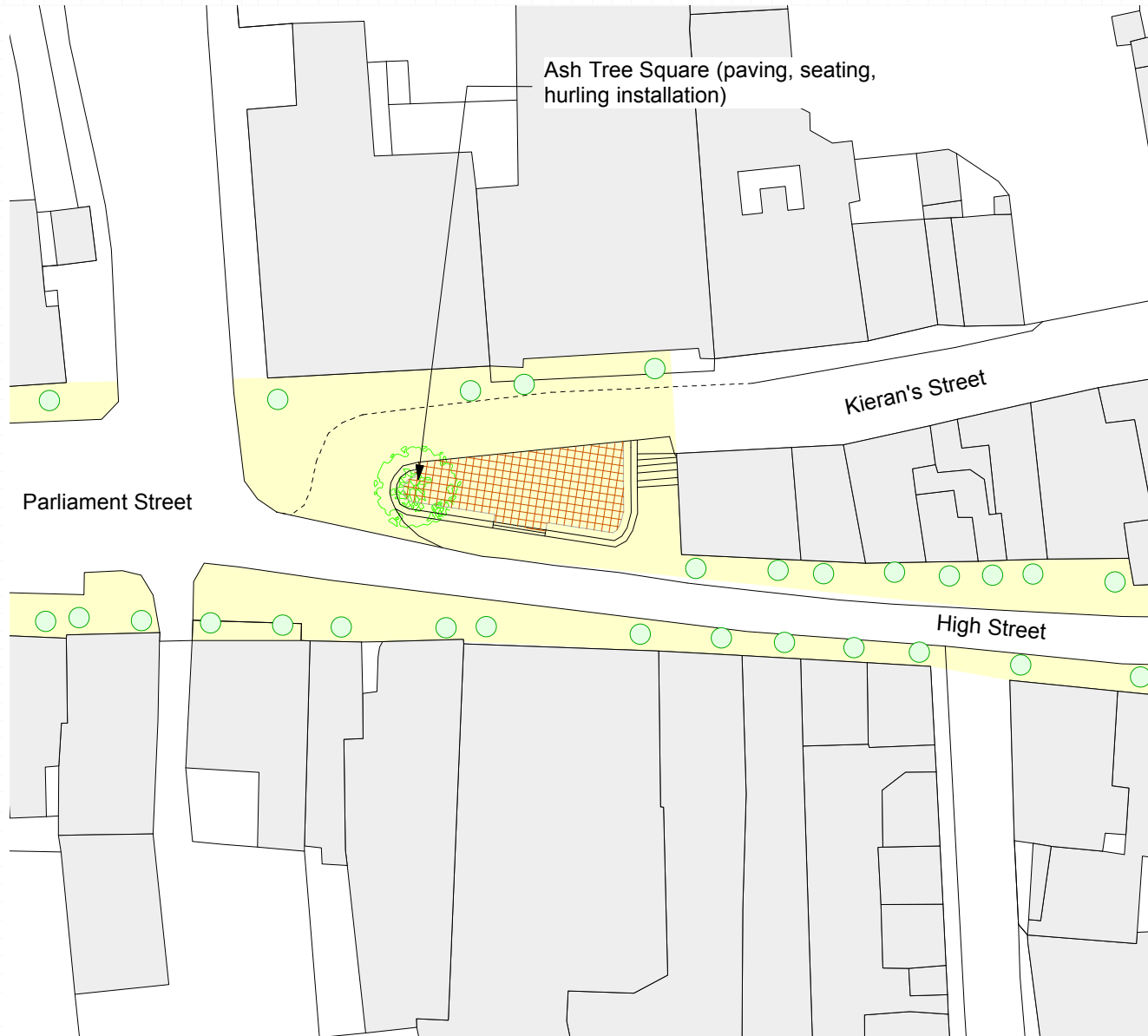


Junction Place

The pivotal urban space in Kilkenny City is the junction of High Street, St Kieran's Street, Parliament Street and Bateman's Quay. It is located almost exactly half way along the main walking route between St Canice's Cathedral and Kilkenny Castle. Here, Parliament Street splits, with St Kieran's Street taking the lower path to John's Bridge and High Street taking the upper one to the Castle. The resulting space is triangular on plan, sloping down towards the river. Currently the space is cluttered with parking bays, excessive, uncoordinated and badly designed street furniture and signage, some public sculpture and bicycle racks. Its pivotal position and civic importance need to be recognised by a complete redesign, in a meaningful manner that is both appropriate to the space and resonant of the distinctiveness of Kilkenny.

We propose to make a small town square. The current footprint of the pedestrian area will be extended by rationalising the roadways as part of the proposed new one-way system. At the northern point of the new space a large ash tree will be planted, symbolic of the hurling tradition in Kilkenny, This will be surrounded by a new paved plaza, with seats on 3 sides. Set in the ground will be an inscribed artwork, like a Liam McCarthy Cup "roll of honour", recording Kilkenny's success in the championship and designed to be added to over the coming years!





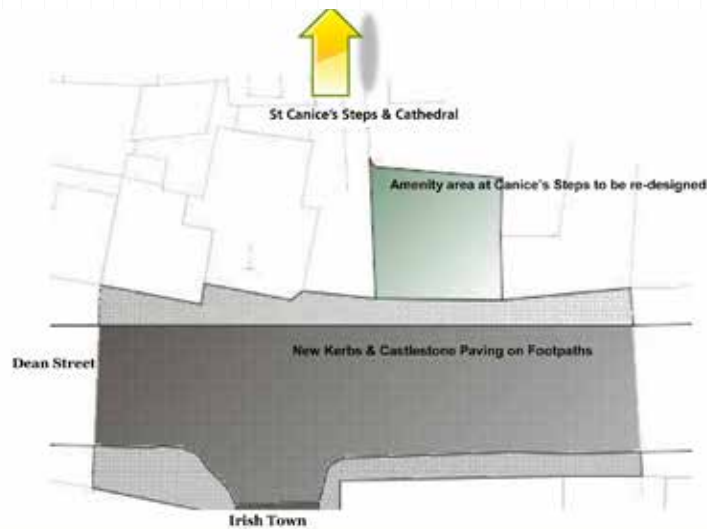
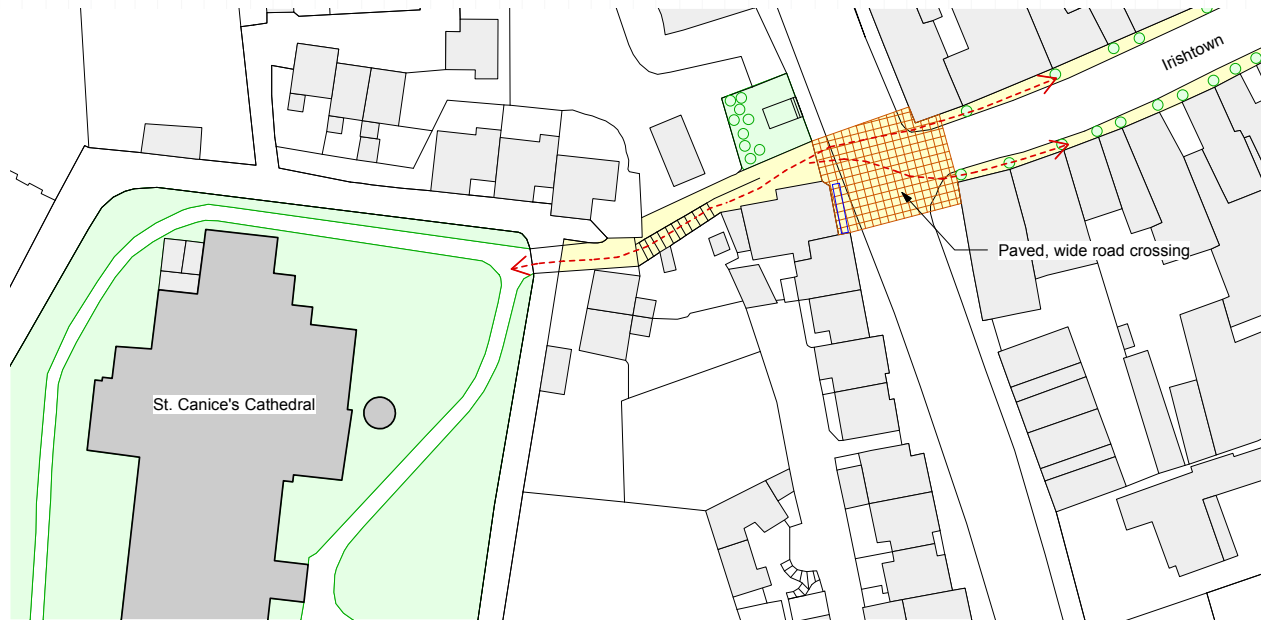
Canice Connect

'The Castle and St Canice's Cathedral are the opposing poles of the central area. The enclaves of these two buildings and the spaces, which link them – Irishtown, Parliament Street and High Street form the spine of the central area'.

On its journey to St. Canice's Cathedral, High Street winds upwards to the Tholsel which acts as an orientation landmark along the length of the main street as far as Watergate Bridge, the boundary with Irishtown. The ecclesiastical precinct surrounding St. Canice's Cathedral is accessed on foot by a flight of steps (known as Velvet Lane) with an arched stone gateway at the top. Access to Velvet Lane is across Dean Street which was widened and re-developed in the 1990s to accommodate higher traffic volumes, which are funneled into the comparatively narrow Vicar Street (northbound) and Irishtown Street (southbound). The curving alignment of Dean Street, St Canice's Place, Vicar Street and Thomas Street are important reminders of the early ecclesiastical enclosure around the Cathedral.

The Historic Cathedral Precinct, which is an important 'historic zone', is of enormous tourist, amenity and emerging functional value and significance and should be linked, as closely as possible, to the historic urban core. As noted above, the City and Environs Development Plan recognises the importance of this area in the overall urban form. Measures to minimise the inevitable barrier which will be created by the introduction of the Central Access Scheme at this location by introducing and strengthening walkable connections to the Cathedral Precinct will be vitally important if this aspect of the visitor journey is to succeed.





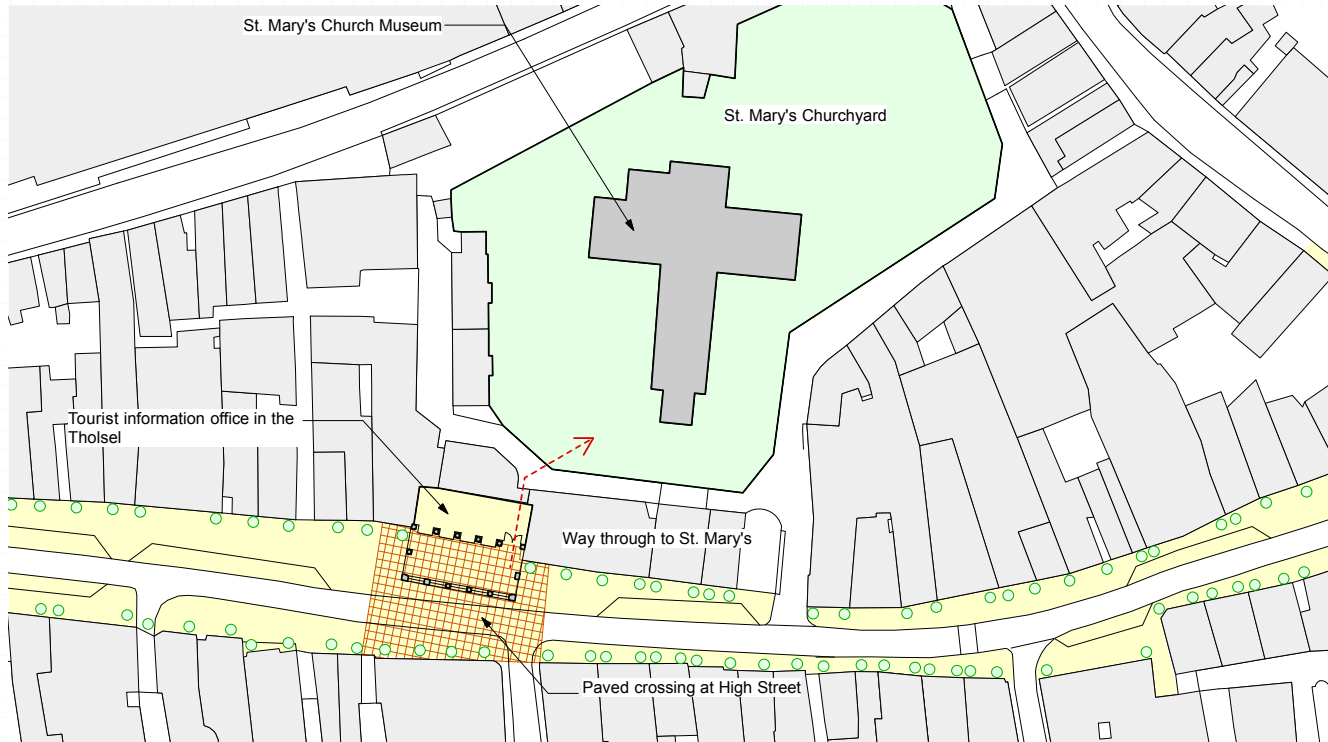
The Tholsel – State of the Art Visitor Information

Currently, the Kilkenny Tourist Information Office is located on the first floor of premises on John Street. It struggles to fulfill its potential in this location. The frontage and visibility is poor, the pavement narrow and next to a busy, trafficked street. On entering, there is little to see at ground floor level and access to the first floor visitor information area is contorted and difficult for elderly people, the very young and less able bodied visitors. Upstairs, members of staff are friendly and helpful, but there is little to see, information is sparse and merchandising opportunities have not been embraced. Our conclusion is that the Tourist Information Office should relocate to a more prominent location and be more accessible and inviting thereby engaging better with the visitor.

We propose to relocate the Kilkenny Tourist Information Office to the ground floor of the Tholsel, the most prominent and one of the most important buildings along the High Street. The Tholsel was originally built in 1579/82 and then extended in 1761. It was built as a place for collecting tolls, but has also been used as a customhouse, courthouse, guildhall, meeting place for merchants and covered market place. Used today as the City Hall, it houses the offices of Kilkenny Borough Council. There is an open arcade 2 bays deep at ground level, the outer bay of which straddles the pavement and is a traditional meeting point, like a covered 'piazza'. This space is used for art exhibitions with street theatre companies and buskers regularly performing here. The inner bay is currently unused and cut off from the street by a metalwork grille. The Council offices are accessed through a gate in the grille, as is a rear door that leads through to St. Mary's Church and Graveyard.

Our proposal is to replace the existing metalwork grille with a frameless glazing wall and locate the new Tourist Information Office in the currently unused rear bay of the Tholsel. The glazing wall will fit in well with the historical surroundings and will create an inviting atmosphere. Inside, the welcome for visitors will be high-quality and high-tech possibly showcasing a centrally located multimedia data table which visitors can use to access and assemble information through innovative touch technology. From the new Tourist Information Office, visitors will also be encouraged to walk through to St. Mary's Church and Graveyard.





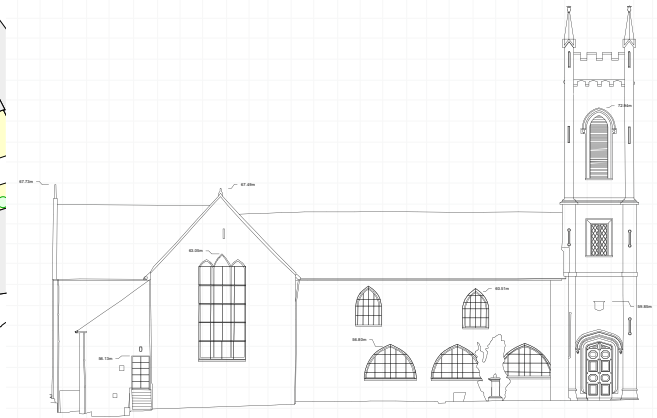
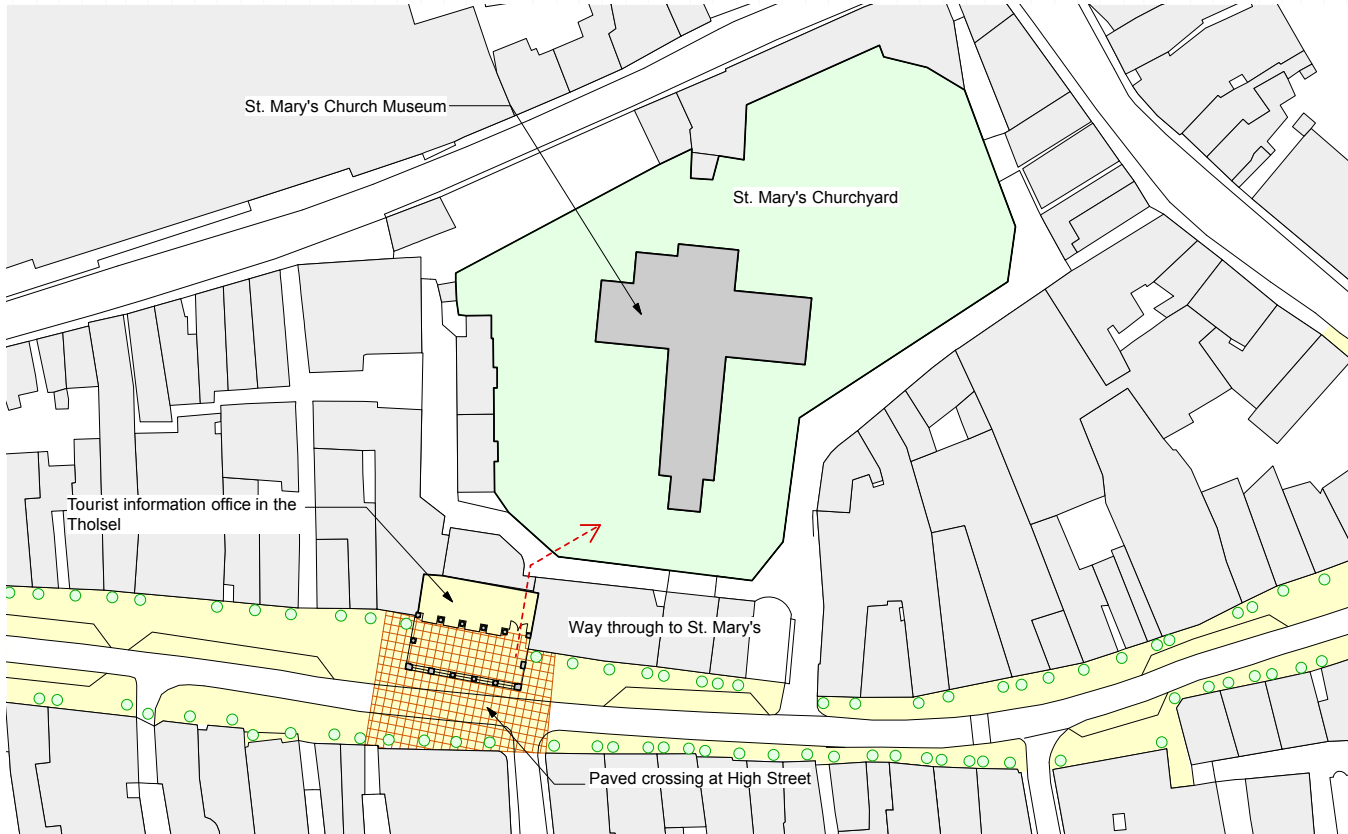
St. Mary's Church & Graveyard – A Civic Museum

St. Mary's Church and Graveyard is an important medieval ecclesiastical site. Located in the heart of the City it is bounded on three sides by St Mary's Lane. It was once the parish church and cemetery of Kilkenny's medieval Hightown. It possesses some of the most important Renaissance tombs in Ireland. The significance of the Church and Graveyard is due to its central position off the High Street, its pivotal role in the history of the City and the presence of the monuments of many notable historic figures of Kilkenny. It is one of the earliest of the ecclesiastical buildings to be erected in Kilkenny and was built some time before 1205. As a consequence of continued use, particularly by a number of old Kilkenny families during the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries, the graveyard possesses a rare and significant collection of tombs, some of which are unusually and beautifully carved. Prominent Kilkenny families like the Shees and the Rothes are well represented within the church and graveyard at St Mary's. The gravestones and memorials are of immense historical, social and artistic interest. They provide an important record of local historically important families, as well as particular changes in stylistic and religious art at the beginning of the 17th century in Ireland.



The proposal is to refurbish and renovate the building (and the graveyard) and to develop to museum standard an exhibition facility to house heritage and historic collections of national significance as well as incorporating local historic material of national importance. The National Museum is fully supportive of the renovation of St. Mary's and of its use as a museum standard exhibitions/collections facility. It is also proposed that the facility will house particular pieces which tell the history of Kilkenny for example the Liber Primus Kilkenniensis - the First Book of Kilkenny, dating from 1231, the 1608 Charter of James 1,

the 1609 Charter which gave Kilkenny City status, and Civic Regalia – the Sword dates from 1609 and Mace from 1677. It is also proposed to develop the graveyard as an urban amenity creating pedestrian links and restoring the graveyard to create an attractive setting for the church. It will be an important component of the green infrastructure in the City as well as housing reliquaries of national significance

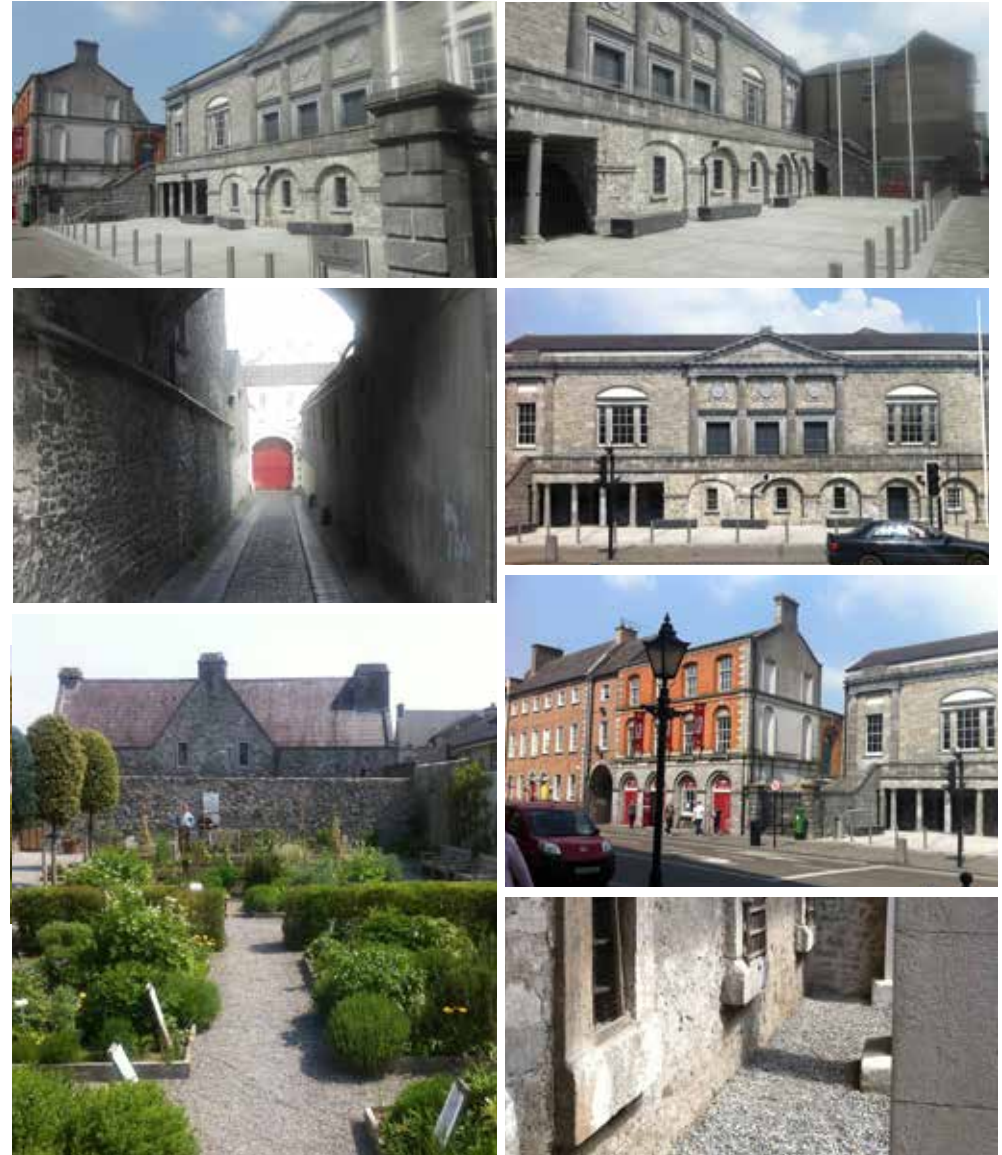


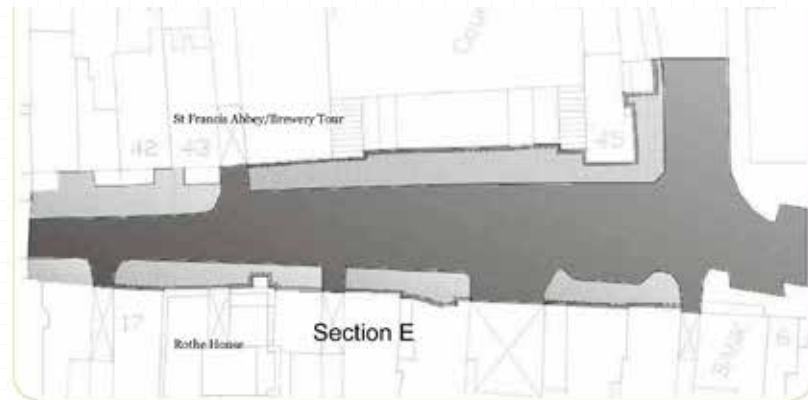
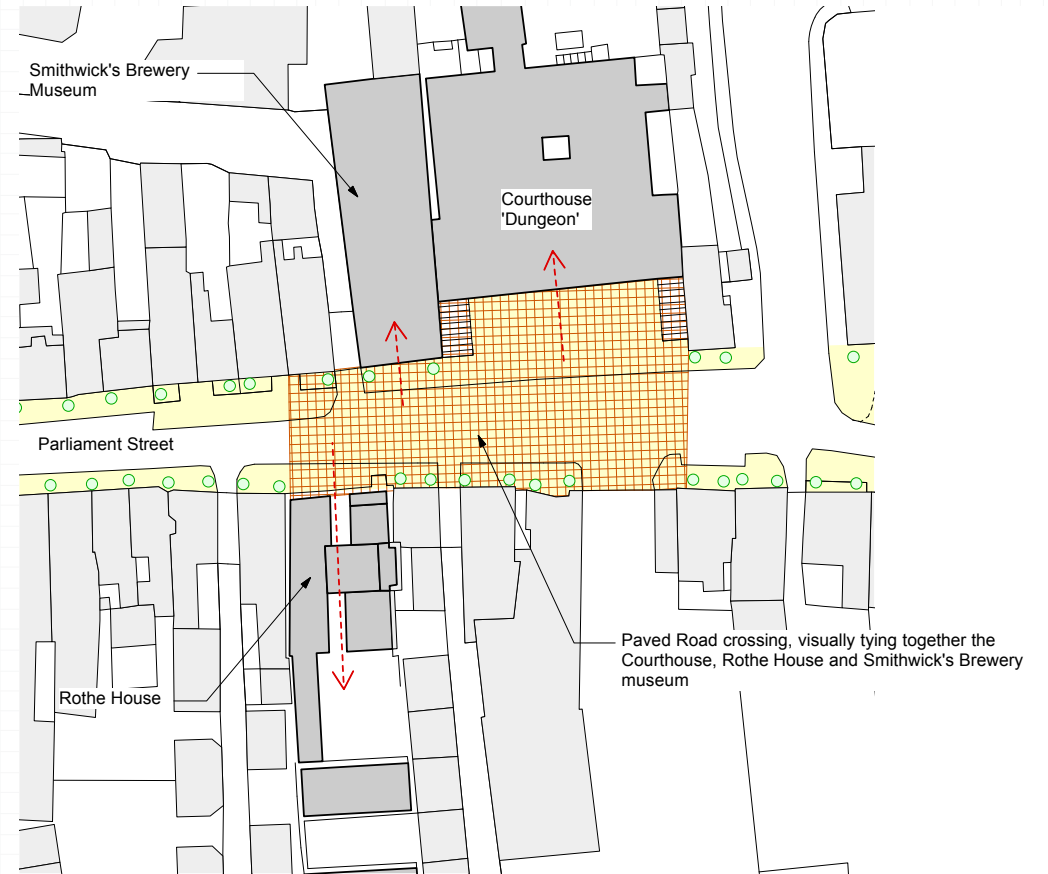
Grace's Castle

Built in 1792, Kilkenny Courthouse is a magnificent, imposing classical building, incorporating an earlier medieval castle (Grace's castle), which was used as a gaol from 1566. The front of the building still retains some of the original features of the gaol, which are visible from street level. It is set back from the road with a landscaped forecourt enclosed by a pair of stone flanking steps (leading to the entrance level). The upper levels of the building have recently been refurbished and a new extension added and the whole building is now entered from Bateman's Quay, which has taken the life away from the former frontage on Parliament Street. It is also our understanding that the recent works did not focus on the ground level (as entered from Parliament Street) of the historic building or the basement level that contains a dungeon.

The Courthouse is located at a strategic location along the route from the Castle to the Cathedral and marks the threshold to Parliament Street – arguably a less attractive street than High Street. The building is also diagonally opposite Rothe House and together with the adjacent 'Smithwick's Experience at St. Francis Abbey' visitor centre, this location has the potential to be a significant tourist "hub".

We propose that the 'Dungeons' be developed as a tourist attraction, entered from the existing front courtyard of the Courthouse along Parliament Street. The courtyard could then be actively "curated" with Living History events associated with the Dungeon and Rothe House opposite. We propose to extend the stone paving in front of the Courthouse across the road to Rothe House, in a similar manner to that proposed connecting the Castle with the Castle Yard and Stables.





Section 3:

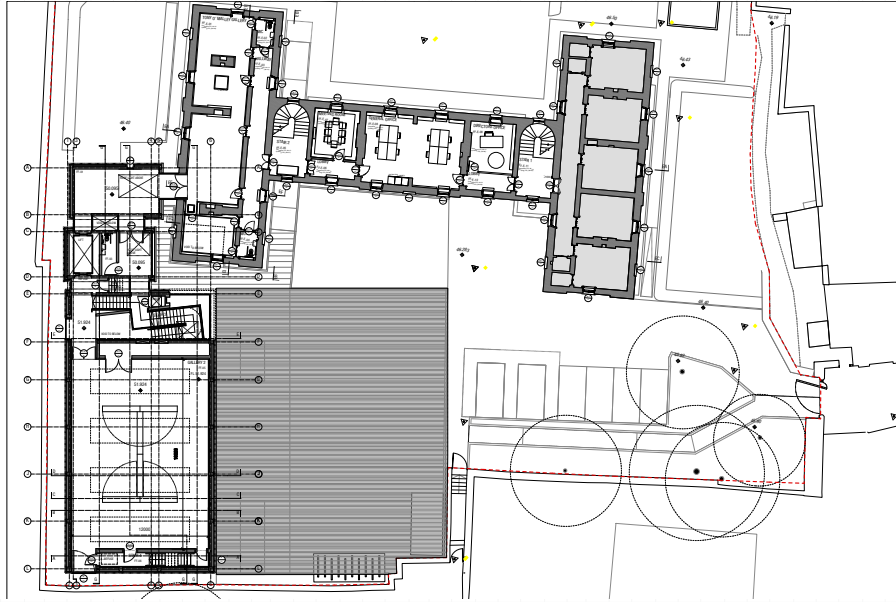
Re-use footpaths to a similar quality as High Street in the area incorporating the Old Courthouse and Rothe House. (Phase 1)

Butler Gallery / Evans Home

Currently housed in the basement of Kilkenny Castle, the Butler Gallery, which recently secured museum accreditation from the Heritage Council, attracts a broad and diverse audience of local, national and international visitors, with current audience numbers in excess of 90,000 per annum. The Gallery offers visitors access to contemporary exhibitions by internationally renowned artists, which reflect the constantly changing nature of visual art practice and the range of media used in the making of contemporary work. Kilkenny's population is rich with artists and craft makers who live and work in the City and county creating a thriving cultural base that attracts international tourism to the destination. The Evans Home, a former almshouse, was founded in 1818 and designed by the Kilkenny Architect William Robertson (1770-1850). It was set up under the will of philanthropist Joseph Evans, who contributed to many charities in Kilkenny for the improvement of conditions of the poor. The building is enclosed within a medieval walled garden, which forms part of the lands of the historic site of St John's Priory, off John Street.

The relocation of the Butler Gallery to the Evan's Home site will embody the character of Kilkenny respecting the old and embracing the new, creating a living cultural experience. The new Butler Gallery, steeped in the creative spirit of Kilkenny and situated in a medieval walled garden, will offer historical and contemporary exhibitions to view and a sculpture garden to enjoy quiet contemplation. A new home for the Butler Gallery will provide Kilkenny with a purpose built arts venue that will also have the ability to schedule evening events. This new venue will also facilitate a more purposeful link with the Kilkenny Arts Festival to programme significant international exhibitions. It will also provide a dedicated space to house the Butler Gallery's important Permanent Collection of (primarily) Irish art dating from the mid 1800's.





Medieval Kilkenny – a more meaningful experience

'Kilkenny is well-known throughout Ireland for its archaeological heritage and today its castle, cathedral, abbeys, churches, townhouses, streets and slips form the only example of an Irish medieval city to remain largely intact.'

The Kilkenny Archaeological Project

The historic core of Kilkenny retains much of its medieval fabric. Of particular note are its secular - Shee Almshouse, Rothe House, the Tholsel and Kilkenny Castle – as well as its ecclesiastical buildings – St. Canice's Cathedral, the Dominican Black Abbey, St. Francis's Abbey and St. Mary's Church and Graveyard. Kilkenny's historic pattern of streets, footpaths, lanes, slips, arches and steps developed within the context of a 'defensive circuit of stone walls', punctuated by gates, gatehouses, towers, castles and riverside defences. These walls defined the extent, layout and status of the Medieval City.

'By the year 1300 Kilkenny had reached the zenith of its medieval development and was Ireland's most important inland town. To defend the Anglo-Norman burgesses and protect their market-place walls were built around the town.'

This walled circuit included the boroughs of Irishtown and Hightown and the suburb of St. John's, and at over two miles in length it was the largest walled town in Ireland, larger than Dublin and comparable in size with York and Chester. A continuous stone wall 2m thick and 8m high encircled the town, seven gatehouses controlled the entry routes and nine look-out towers guarded over the hinterland.'

Irish Walled Towns Day 22nd August 2010



Many conservation management plans have been prepared for the significant aspects of Kilkenny's cultural heritage - Kilkenny City Walls, Rothe House, St. Mary's Church and Graveyard, St. Canice's Cathedral. In addition much important work in terms of raising awareness of this valuable asset has been undertaken by the Kilkenny Archaeological Project. Within this context, part of the ambition of this Plan to ensure that the significance of the City's medieval morphology – its visible legacy, its hidden remnants and its lost fragments – can be converted into relevance for visitors. While this ambition is already starting to be realised through, for example, the way finding system being delivered by Kilkenny Borough Council at strategic locations across the city; the work of Kilkenny Archaeological Society, Kilkenny Civic Trust, the Heritage Council and others in raising awareness of this rich legacy, a coherent, integrated, carefully considered and creative interpretation and animation of the City's layers of 'continuity and change' will ensure that the visitor experience is both insightful and memorable.



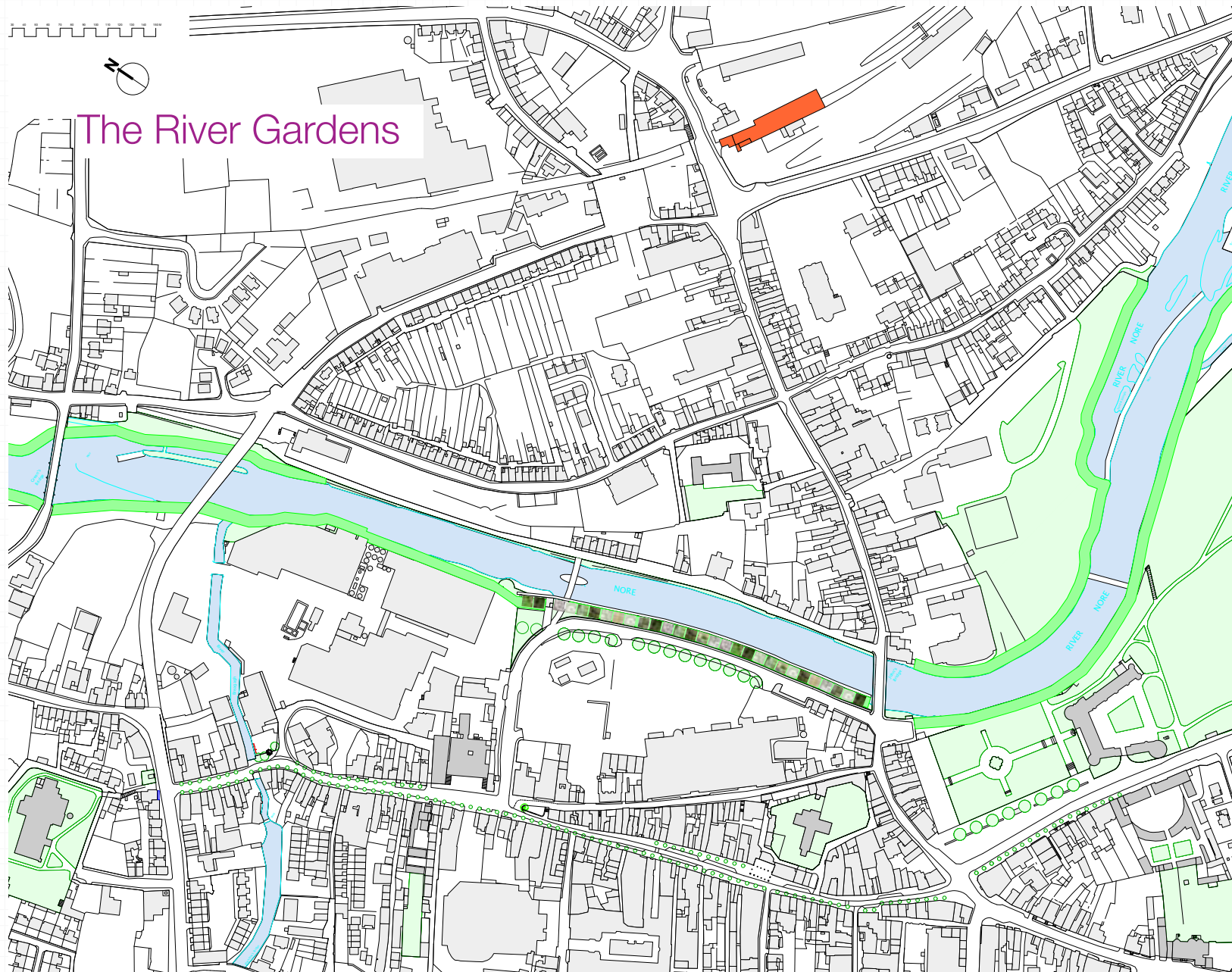
The River Gardens

Probably the biggest ‘opportunity’ in the centre of Kilkenny City is to address and enjoy the River Nore, on the west bank from John’s Bridge in the south, all the way to Green’s Bridge in the north. The river could be, but is not currently, the heart of Kilkenny and this wonderful potential can be appreciated when walking along the leftover grassy bank parallel to Bateman’s Quay, looking along the river to the Castle on the hill in the distance. The primary reason for this inactive river edge is the land usage behind the quays in the zone between the river and the High Street/Parliament Street/Irishtown axis. Located to the south, behind Kieran’s Street is Dunnes Stores and a huge car park stretching down to Bateman’s Quay. Although inner City shopping is to be welcomed, the scale of this development has completely obliterated the historic medieval grain of lanes leading from the High Street to the Quays.

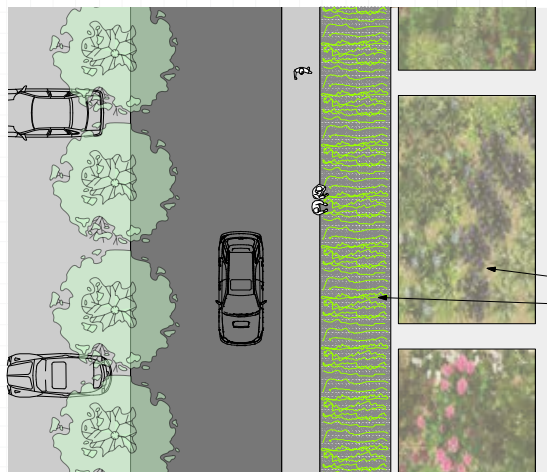
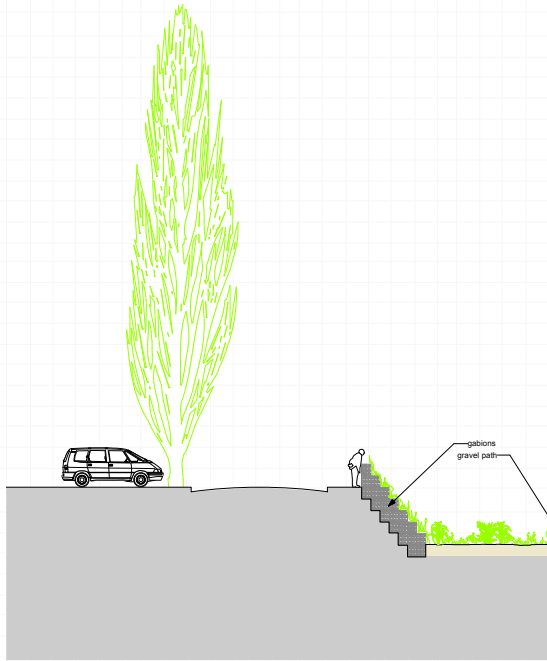
North of the Courthouse, the site occupied by the Smithwick’s St. Francis Abbey Brewery and recently acquired by the Council offers a great opportunity. Now that the west bank of the river from Green’s Bridge to John’s Bridge and beyond to the weir and canal walk is completely in public ownership, a coordinated riverbank plan for a continuous amenity space or linear park is now possible. Eventually it is hoped that all these lands between the High Street axis and the river will be sensitively and appropriately developed. In the interim, we propose a manageable, cost effective and achievable proposal which is consistent with the overall master plan for this part of the city. This new central city linear park will link to the Castle grounds, the newly refurbished canal walk to the south. On the opposite bank, the County Council gardens will be developed, to link with the wonderful riverside walks by the weir. To the north, the west bank gardens will extend up to Aylesbury Park, and a new pedestrian “green” bridge will link across from Bateman’s Quay to John’s Quay and the public library. Together, this coordinated continuous ensemble of riverbank gardens, parks, walkways, bridges and the castle will develop into one of the Great Gardens of Ireland, a unique riverside park in the centre of a city.

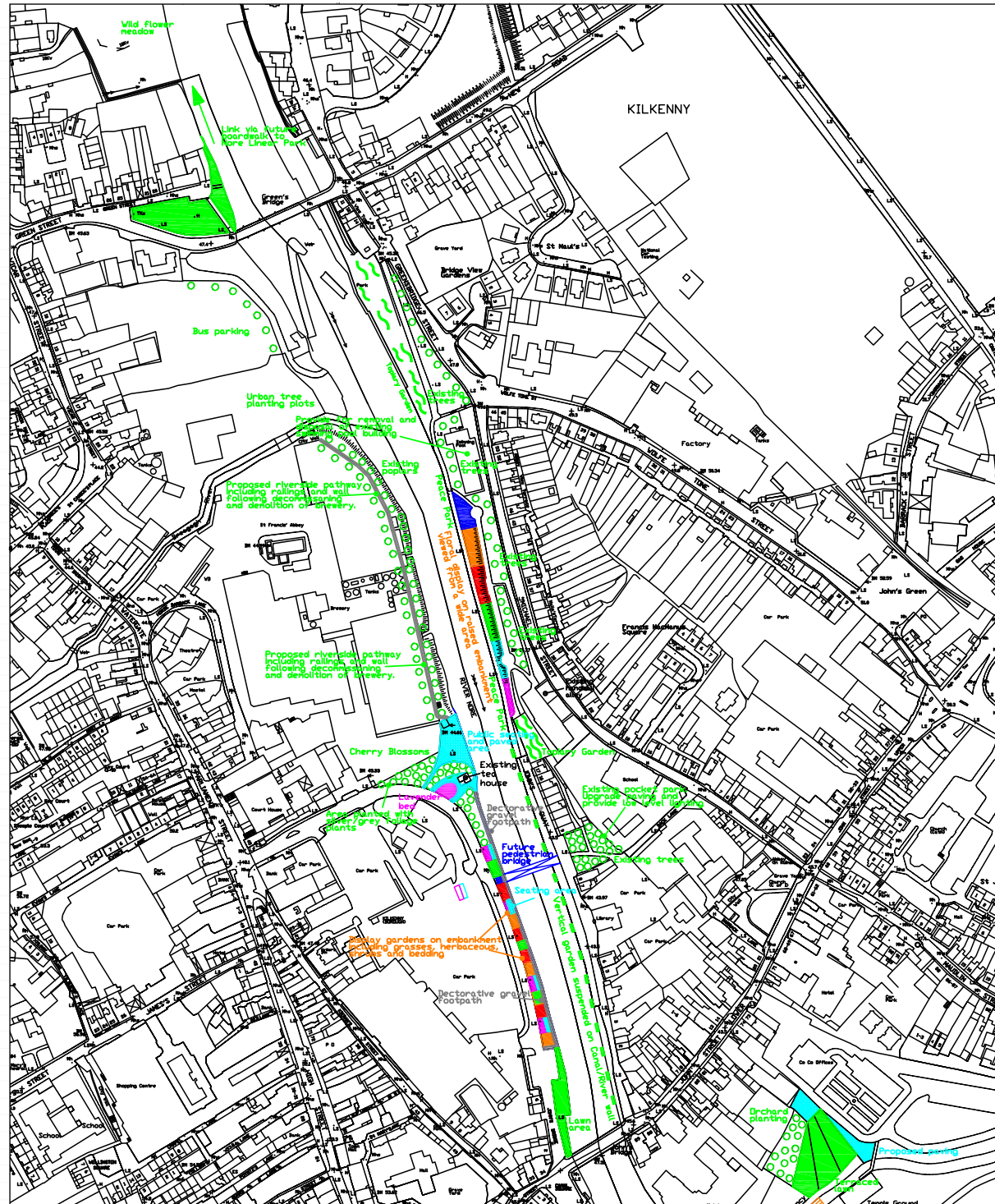
As part of this overall idea, we propose a linear park along Bateman’s Quay to incorporate the proposed new pedestrian bridge, linking to John’s Quay on the east bank. This linear park would be created at riverbank level, incorporating a riverside walkway. The park would be divided into distinct plots, as a home for show gardens (from Bloom etc.) and could be developed gradually over the years. They might echo the ‘gardens’ of the Medieval City – the long narrow burgage plots characteristic of Medieval towns throughout western Europe where the owner – the burghess – built a house for his family, usually with a shop on the street frontage, and behind it space for outhouses, sheds, yards, gardens and orchards. We would propose an upper level walkway along Bateman’s Quay as well so that you can look down on the gardens and the river. On the west side of Bateman’s Quay, we propose planting a row of semi mature poplar trees, to help screen the car park (at Dunnes Stores) from view and give the river an appropriately scaled enclosure on this bank, as a precedent for the future development of the car park site.

Walking south along the riverbank, the gardens, walkway and poplar trees lead the eye to, and frame, the picturesque castle in the distance. This will become THE view of Kilkenny city. It is hoped that eventually the linear park will extend northwards along the edge of the Brewery site, past the new bridge and Green’s Bridge to the existing parklands beyond. To the south, it will seamlessly link with the existing, wonderful canal walk and possibly to a new pedestrian bridge linking to the gardens at the Offices of the County Council. This proposal not only offers the prospect of creating a visual amenity and a recreational resource but it also provides scope for extending the dwell time of visitors by creating an alternative, traffic-free –movement corridor.









The Green Tower

Along the main route from the Castle to the Cathedral, there is one sharp bend as Parliament Street reaches the bridge over the Breaghagh River before crossing and turning into Irishtown. At this turn a small open space with a few trees to the south-east of the bridge is used as a car park. It is in public ownership. Not only does it offer a poor vista at the end of Parliament Street but visitors on their way north perceive the space to be a dead-end. In addition the sharp bend in the road completely obscures the Cathedral from view when approaching from the south.

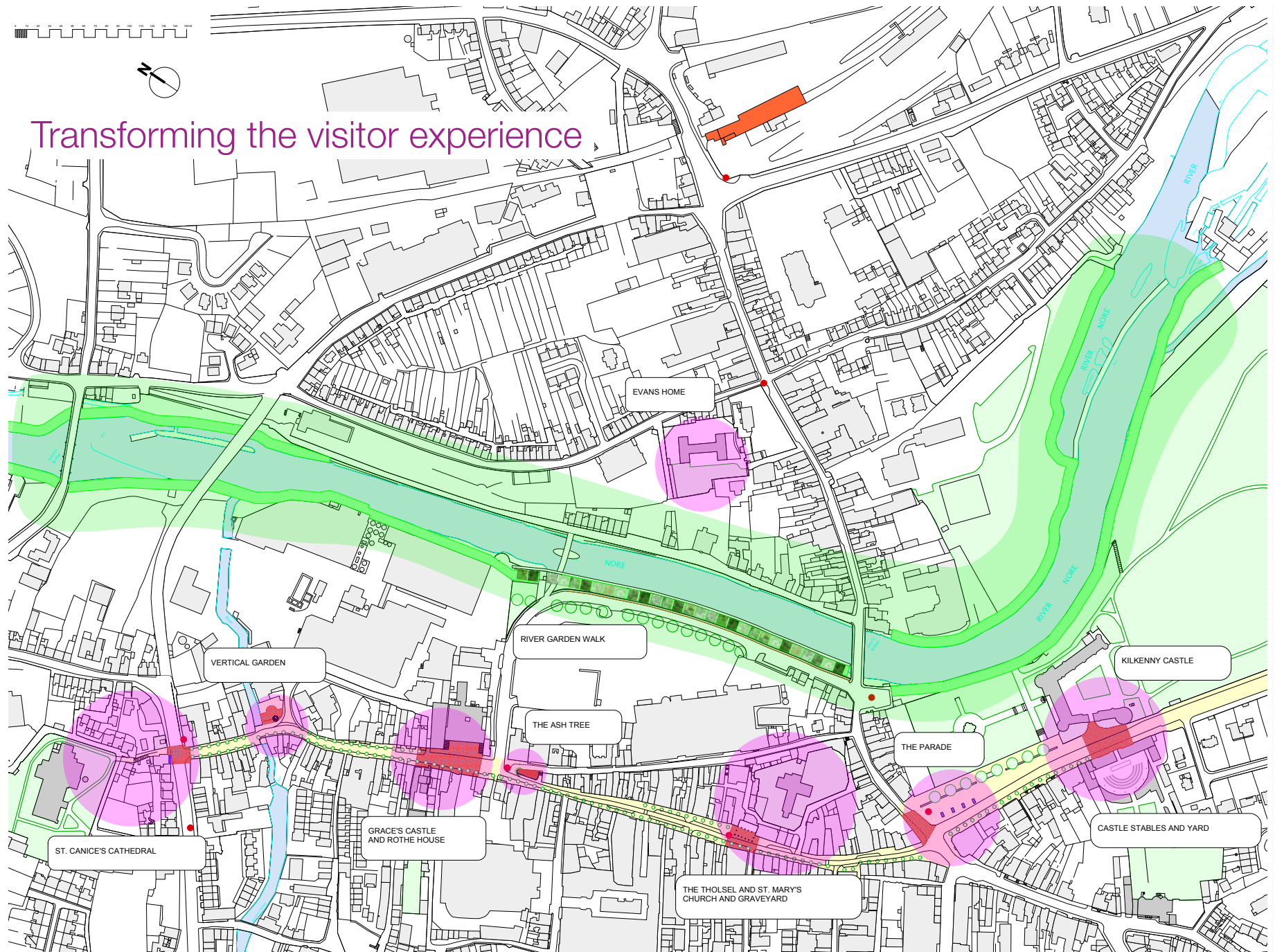
We believe there is a great opportunity to build an eye catching structure on this site that will close the vista from Parliament Street, draw people to the place with an interesting attraction and encourage them to continue their journey of discovery to the Cathedral. We propose a five-storey planted tower. The core of the tower comprises a galvanized steel spiral staircase, used for maintenance access for the planting. The stair is then surrounded with a spiralling steel framework giving it structural support and bracing and providing a lattice for the planting. An electricCity generating water-wheel in the Breaghagh River will pump river water to a small holding tank at the top of the tower for irrigation. The green tower acts as a subliminal introduction to, or hint for, the upcoming round tower at St. Canice's Cathedral further along the journey and is a notable and interesting addition to the 'enhancing vibrancy' sub theme.







Transforming the visitor experience



Chapter 6. Making it Happen

Kilkenny's identity is very much shaped by its physical cultural heritage – its townscape, street pattern, historic buildings and features and public spaces as well as its main visual axes - forming a unique and distinctive place to be. In particular, key buildings act as irreplaceable focal points stimulating the process of forming and preserving the City's overall identity.

A Shared Agenda

The challenge is to recognise the importance of this aspect of the City's cultural heritage as a driver in a municipal strategy to maintain and improve Kilkenny's urban identity. Just as other European cities have demonstrated, in order to support its urban identity, Kilkenny needs to;

- Directly invest in its physical cultural heritage to safeguard it in order to strengthen the destination's distinctive character and identity
- Assign appropriate functions and, where appropriate, new uses to the physical cultural heritage
- Invest in the enhancement of the public realm as a key aspect of the fabric of the cultural heritage environment
- Market the distinctiveness and quality of the cultural heritage to the outside world of visitors and investors and, importantly, to the inside world of residents and the business community
- Communicate the particular cultural value of the City to residents and tourists by;
 - Making the cultural heritage visible and perceptible through creative interpretation and animation
 - Organise creative cultural events in the historic setting, enlivening public spaces, offering specialised tours and themed trails

Building on the foundation of the Interpretive Framework illustrated in Chapter 4, a series of projects is outlined in Chapter 5 - projects that, in combination, have the capacity to transform the visitor experience within Kilkenny. As a first step in the delivery of the Plan, this chapter sets out a collectively agreed prioritisation of the projects; estimated associated cost budgets for each one; their long term management requirements and the immediate next steps towards their realisation. Detailed project profiles have been prepared for each of the capital projects identified. These are available at Appendices 2,3,4 to this report.

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