Westgate Consultation Survey Report

Westgate, Drogheda, Co. Louth

March 2022

Project Ireland 2040
Building Ireland's Future

Comhairle Contae Lú
Louth County Council

WGV

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Executive Summary

In May 2021 Louth County Council undertook preliminary engagement and consultation for the preparation of a vision for the regeneration of Westgate, Drogheda.

The study area covers Georges Street to Dominic Street and from Fair Street to Father Connolly Way.

The project seeks to recover the streetscape and provide high quality public spaces that will transform Westgate and act as a catalyst for positive regeneration of the area in the broader town centre.

It represents the next stage of the Westgate Vision, launched by Louth County Council in 2018, which is a targeted planning response aimed at channelling investment into this core area. A key objective of the project is to prepare an application for funding under the Urban Regeneration Development Fund. This current project stage is also funded under the same scheme.

This early consultation report provides a summary and analysis of the first phase of stakeholder and community consultation and the outputs from its stakeholder survey.

As part of this design development, stakeholders and members of the community have been engaged to understand their needs and wants in relation to the site and to gain feedback on proposed design principles and mixed-use ambition for the site.

The stakeholder engagement was carried out during the public health crisis and varying levels of restrictions applied at different stages of engagement which may have influenced both the volume and type of responses received. The survey was live during the circuit breaker lockdown during which time the public was advised to stay at home and limit their contact with people outside of their household 'bubble'. The public information webinars took place shortly after restrictions were eased and the general public could meet with other households outdoors.

To inform this work a consultation survey was carried out online. A total of 458 completed submissions were received from a diverse range of stakeholders with an interest in the Westgate area or connections within Drogheda in general.

The survey was hosted online at www.westgatevision.ie and was live for a fortnight between Monday 26 April and Monday 31 May 2021. The survey sought to gather participant feedback on specific potential uses (including economic, enterprise, and residential), existing key features of the site, and to road-test draft design principles.

Of the completed responses, 23% of respondents primarily use Drogheda for shopping, 22% use restaurants and cafes, 17% use public services such as a post office or GP, 16% use the town for leisure, 12% live in Drogheda, 8% work in Drogheda, and 2% own a business.

The feedback demonstrated clear demand and support for a safer and more secure town centre, more outdoor dining and gathering, more amenity space and a reduction in traffic in the area.

There was a strong preference for reducing traffic, with 45% of respondents strongly agreeing with creating a car-free zone within Westgate. There was also support for pedestrianisation and improved road safety in the area.

In addition to reducing traffic, respondents were supportive of cleaning and revealing the Drogheda town walls (44%), further developing a heritage trail (37%) and creating an arrival structure for the town (11%).

There were also strong levels of support for creating more community and civic spaces in Westgate, with the most popular responses being a market space (26%), an outdoor meeting and seating area (26%), and an outdoor performance and festival venue (23%).

Having considered the combined results of the qualitative and quantitative data generated from the survey, a number of very clear themes emerge about which the community feel strongly about (this was further evidenced in the breakout room discussions and additional stakeholder consultation meetings, noted later within this report). These are:

- Maximising the potential of and protecting historic assets
- Improving traffic congestion and flow, centralised parking and car-free zones
- Improving safety and the sense of arrival
- Developing a focus on culture
- Maximising tourism potential
- Creating structured outdoor space and amenities
- Addressing underutilisation of the River Boyne

"I imagine amazing, light-flooded studios at the top of Donaghy's Mill, with visiting lecturers Phillipe Starck and Pharrell Williams looking up river at Newgrange, marvelling at the history all around them and the talented kids that they have come to teach. And it's only twenty minutes from the airport.

Just think of the potential, kids steeped in internet life learning how to design and make real objects or new forms of music, designing the must-have sneakers or writing Oscar winning movies. Why shouldn't Ireland have a place like this, the type of dream factory that they have in MIT or Silicon Valley, and why shouldn't it happen in the old mills where our ancestors sweated blood to feed us?

Just imagine the Westgate area re-spun as a campus fully integrated into the area, shops, accommodation, performance spaces, restaurants, recreation/fitness, and nightlife."

Survey Respondent

1. Stakeholder Engagement Methodology

An early consultation process with Westgate stakeholders and members of the local community commenced in April 2021.

The consultation to date comprised a preliminary consultation survey (open from Monday 26 April-Monday 31 May 2021), an online consultation webinar and direct meetings with representative stakeholders.

Following requests to the consultation team, direct meetings took place with representatives from the Droichead Arts Centre, property owners and business owners. We also met Louth Age Friendly.

The digital information consultation webinar took place on Tuesday 20 July 2021 between 6pm and 8pm.

Early Consultation Survey

The primary purpose of the survey was to gather qualitative and quantitative feedback from across a variety of stakeholders with an interest in Westgate as well as members of the local community.

The survey (see Appendix 7) set out to gather participant feedback on specific potential uses (including traffic and parking, heritage and culture, and tourism and economy), existing key features within the site boundary, and road-test potential streetscape and public realm changes within the Westgate area.

A total of 40 questions (qualitative and quantitative) informed the survey. Respondents were asked to identify with one of eight respondent groups detailing their connection/relationship to the area.

The survey was split into six sections of enquiry - Your Priorities, Traffic and Car Parking, Heritage and Culture, Tourism and the Economy, New Amenities, Connectivity and The River Boyne - from which many of the key themes have emerged.

Survey recruitment

The research was promoted through a series of stakeholder letters which were issued electronically and by post from Turley Strategic Communications on behalf of Louth County Council to c. 800 stakeholders across community, political, economic and enterprise sectors, as well as members of the community living in close proximity to the site. A copy of this letter and the site map provided to stakeholders is available in Appendix 1.

A total of 4,100 Westgate Vision leaflets were distributed to homes and businesses within 1km of the site boundary to ensure those in the surrounding area were made aware of the early consultation process. A copy of this leaflet is available in Appendix 2.

The survey was hosted on a dedicated project webpage (www.westgatevision.ie) and promoted via social media.

During the consultation period, the project website hosted 1,906 users and experienced 2,414 sessions. The website experienced 3,345 page views overall.

The top traffic sources of the project website were Facebook (64.2%), followed by direct traffic (26.3%) and organic searches (1.9%).

A series of Facebook and LinkedIn advertisements ran to further promote the consultation to key stakeholders and members of relevant organisations in the local community reached 26,399 users in total.

Public Consultation event

A digital public information event took place on Tuesday 20 July 2021 to present the findings of the early consultation survey to key stakeholders and members of the local community.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the event was held via Zoom. Community groups, residents and local stakeholders were invited to take part in the session.

The aim of the webinar was to discuss the findings from the early consultation survey and provide information regarding the next steps of the design process.

A total of 127 people registered to attend the event, with 22 people attending. The low level of turnout was likely caused by the heatwave that occurred on the night of the event with many people around the country going outdoors to enjoy the weather.

A number of the project team were present on the webinar, including representatives from Louth County Council and members of Turley's Planning and Strategic Communications teams.

During the information event, the project team presented a summary of the process and an overview of the key findings from the early consultation survey, and facilitated a Q&A session with attendees.

As well as presenting an overview of the survey results, the webinar also included a number of live polls to engage the audience and to test the initial thematic findings that emerged from the consultation survey.

After the presentation, attendees were invited to join a breakout room to discuss details of the project with members of the project team. Ten people joined the breakout rooms, providing valuable insight into support for the scheme and potential development locations.

In the breakout rooms the main items discussed were the need for an outdoor performance space, traffic management, a dedicated car-free zone and centralised parking, as well as the tourism potential afforded by the heritage and history of the town.

Following the event, a number of emails were received requesting a recording of the webinar, and recordings were sent out to all those who requested one.

Stakeholder Meetings

As part of the consultation five meetings took place with key stakeholders from the culture sector, Louth Age Friendly Alliance and with property and business owners from the area.

Meetings were held via Zoom or Microsoft Teams between June and July 2021 and again in January 2022. Meetings were attended by members of the project team from Turley Planning, Turley Strategic Communications, and Louth County Council.

A summary of the discussions from these meetings can be found in the Findings and Design Response section of this document.

The Findings and Design Response section also includes a summary of the emerging themes and feedback relating specifically to the Westgate Vision development that we gathered during our survey.

In lieu of a dedicated meeting, Transport Infrastructure Ireland provided a written submission of their support and feedback on the early consultation for the vision.

This submission can be found in Appendix 3.

Additional consultation

Non-digital channels were also used during our consultation process. The early consultation project had a dedicated Freephone number and freepost services were also made available.

The project team could also be contacted via a dedicated email address, contact@westgatevision.ie, and a live chat function was made available via the dedicated website, Monday to Friday 9am-5pm during which time stakeholder queries were addressed in real time. In total seven emails were received and three live chats addressed.

Calls with various stakeholders were facilitated via Teams and Zoom, and copies of the notes from these sessions are available in Appendix 4.

Two press releases were issued, one encouraging stakeholders to participate in the survey and the second detailing the level of uptake in the survey and containing a reminder regarding the public information webinar. A public notice was also placed in local papers. A copy of each press release and the public notice is available in Appendix 5 and Appendix 6 respectively.

2. Survey Analysis – Respondent Profile

The survey was hosted online and received 458 completed responses from a total of 709 survey respondents. There were 251 incomplete responses.

The age profile of respondents was broadly representative of the town as shown in figure 2.1, with the largest group of respondents aged 51 – 60 (27%), followed by 41-50 (26%) and the third largest age group were aged between 31-40 (24%) based on the 2016 census data which is available here.

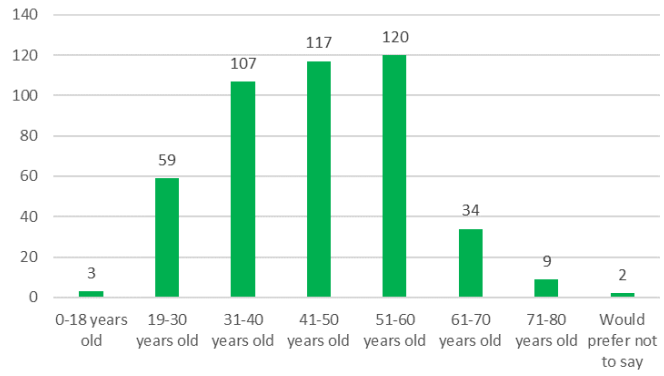


Figure 2.1: Age of Respondents

Figure 2.2 below shows the breakdown of how respondents identified their primary connection to the Westgate site in Drogheda.

At a glance we can see that 23% use Drogheda for shopping, 22% use the restaurants and cafes, 17% use public services such as the post office and GP, 16% use leisure facilities, 12% live in Drogheda, 8% work in Drogheda and 2% own a business in the area.

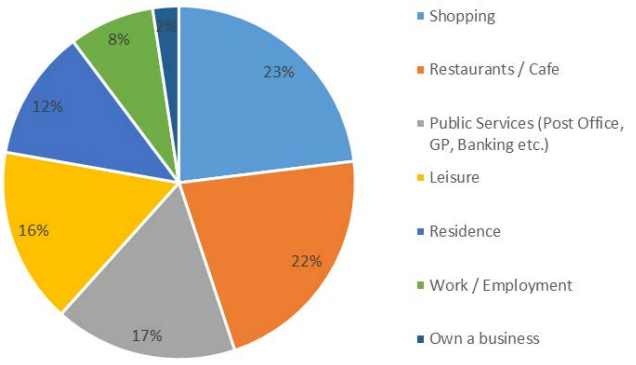


Figure 2.2: Responses to 'I primarily visit/use the town of Drogheda for the following (check all that apply)'

Priorities

Respondents were asked what two words they would use to describe the Westgate area to help establish some primary perceptions associated with the site.

Whilst responses were wide-ranging, words closely associated with the area's history (Historical, History, Medieval, Ancient, Historical, Old), the potential for regeneration (Potential, Opportunity, Improvement), and the current state of dereliction (Run-Down, Dilapidated, Neglect, Forgotten, Dirty, Waste) featured most prominently. See Figure 2.3.

Whilst the history and potential for regeneration are positive associations, it is clear that there is the perception of the area as neglected and rundown.

Figure 2.3: Word Cloud of response to question "What two words would you use to describe the Westgate area"

Respondents were then asked to rank 12 important key features of Westgate in order of preference. The results are set out below in order, using a weighted preference ranking. It is notable that the weighted preference for Medieval Town Walls was also supported by the highest 1st preferences (24.23%):

Key Feature	Weighted Average	% 1st Preferences
Medieval town walls	10.92291	24.2
Proximity to the river	10.79295	14.3
Links to the Abbey and museum	10.67841	12.3
Leisure facilities	9.858407	15.6
Pedestrian walkways/greenways	9.396476	6.2
Cleanliness	8.176211	5.3
Bridge of Peace	8.057269	4.4
Links with the green open park space	7.299559	3.3
Tourism	6.462555	4.8
Car parking provision	6.345815	1.3
Shopping	5.77533	5.5
Memorials by the bridge	5.067762	1.4
Public facilities (e.g. Courthouse)	4.460352	1.2
Other	1.740088	0.8
	454 respondents	

Figure 2.4: Responses to 'How do you currently rate these features of the Westgate area?'

Respondents were then asked to rank the importance (Very Important – Unimportant) and the quality (Poor – Excellent) of a set of key features under consideration by the project design team using an asymmetric Likert scale (see Figure 3.4).

The results illustrate the prioritisation of 'Safe, protected and accessible older buildings' (403 voted important or very important) and 'Sense of safety and security' (400 voted important or very important) among respondents.

These features were closely followed by 'A sense of arrival' (389), 'Reduction in traffic' (389), and 'Outdoor dining and gathering' (386).

As illustrated by Figure 2.4, the features of connectivity, access to historical assets, amenity space, traffic, community facilities, sense of safety and security, spaces for markets and outdoor dining and gathering were all rated as important but rated poorly in their current context in Figure 2.5 below.

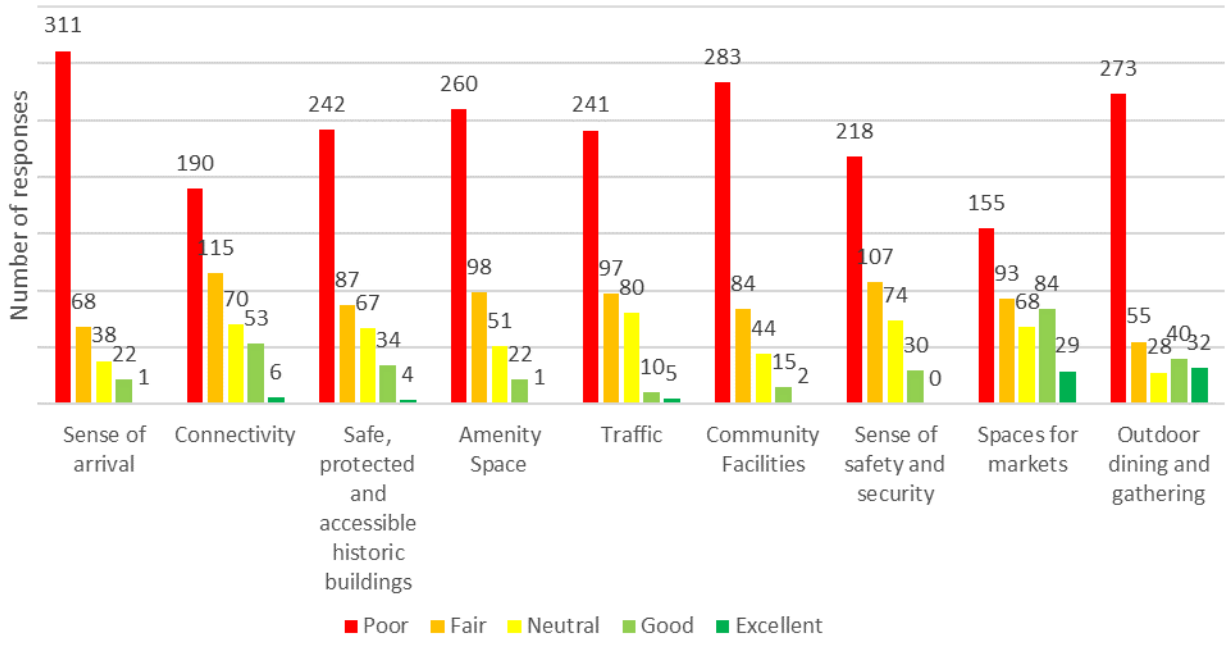


Figure 2.5: Responses to 'How do you currently rate these features of the Westgate area?'

When asked to rate the current condition of all key features respondents felt, by a sizable margin, that the majority of the existing key features were 'Poor', see Figure 2.5, and the features rate poorly largely parallel the areas of importance.

A 'Sense of safety and security' and a feature of 'Safe, protected, accessible historic buildings' were considered 'Poor' or 'Fair' by the largest volume of respondents (403 and 400 respectively).

'Sense of arrival' (389), 'Amenity Space' (389) and 'Outdoor dining and gathering' (386) also scored poorly in the area's current context. However, 'Sense of arrival' also swayed the largest cohort of respondents (311) who rated it as 'poor'.

Together this initial analysis suggests three additional areas of priority and improvement: 'protecting and maximising historic assets', which is further explored and corroborated by further analysis below, 'improving physical safety and security', and 'improving a sense of arrival'. All of these have been identified as action areas by the design team.

Traffic and Carparking

Linked to improving the 'sense of safety' and 'sense of arrival', the Project Design team sought to explore public and stakeholder attitudes towards traffic, parking and car use in the area, based on a hypothesis that these factors had negatively impacted the area.

While not deemed the highest priority to the regeneration of Westgate by respondents, 77% of respondents felt that reducing traffic congestion was 'Very important' (51%) or 'Important' (26%). Traffic in the area was described as 'Poor' (55%) or 'Fair' (22%), again by 77% of respondents.

Exploring the potential to introduce congestion and parking constraints, a series of perception questions were asked on an asymmetric (Agree – Disagree) Likert scale.

Respondents were first asked about their support for the concept of a car-free zone in Westgate. 78% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with this proposal. Figure 2.6 illustrates the full results for this question. A total of 405 responses were received for this question.

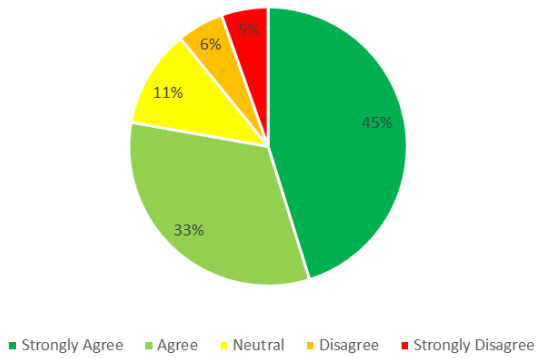


Figure 2.6: Responses to 'I would support the concept of a car-free zone within Westgate'

When asked about reducing traffic and creating a communal space, 84% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with reducing traffic. Figure 2.7 outlines the responses to this question in more detail. A total of 402 responses were received for this question.

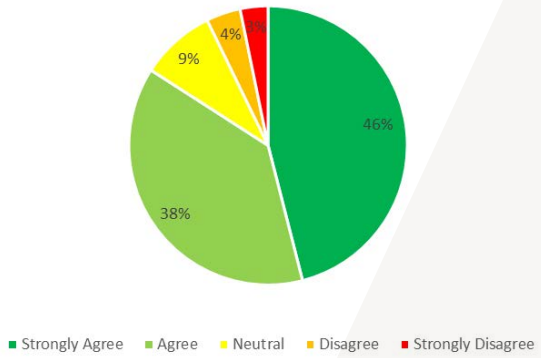


Figure 2.7: Responses to 'A reduction in traffic at the Westgate crossroads could create safer and more attractive communal space'

Respondents were also asked whether Westgate would benefit from a centralised car parking location. A majority of 61% of

The largest proportion (37%) agreed with this statement, with a further 24% respondents strongly agreeing with centralised parking. Figure 2.8 illustrates the overall responses for this question. A total of 400 responses were received for this question.

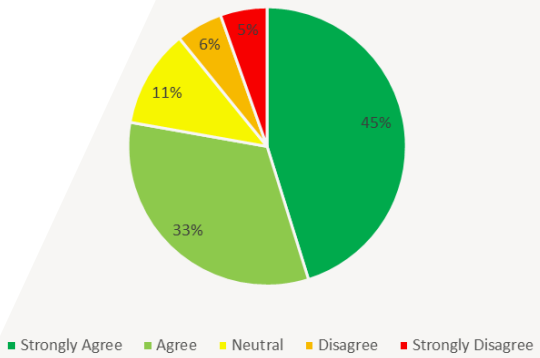


Figure 2.8: Responses to 'Westgate would benefit from a centralised car parking location'

Respondents were asked about their support for repurposing car parking spaces, with the majority (72%) of respondents agreeing with repurposing car parking spaces for development or another use. Figure 2.9 below outlines the responses to this question in more detail. A total of 390 responses were received for this question.

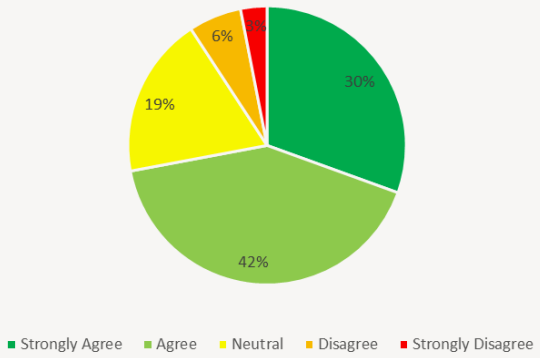


Figure 2.9: Responses to 'If a centralised parking location was provided I would support the repurposing of some car parking spaces for development/other use'

Other suggestions included space for food and beverage sales, open space and outdoor facilities. Only nine respondents maintained that the current level of parking was sufficient.

Respondents were also asked to comment on the current parking and traffic flow. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the majority of respondents provided negative feedback, with the most common complaints being poor traffic flow and congestion, as well as a lack of parking.

Representative Comments:

"Awful. I think Drogheda would really benefit from a car park outside town with bus to town centre, with disabled access"

"Congested quite often and poor accessibility for emergency services."

"A little chaotic... Bottleneck at narrow West Street"

"A mess"

"A nightmare"

"A way must be found to balance traffic flow through West Street with other priorities. Parking should be provided on the same level... it's not feasible to ask people to walk up or down steep hills to access West Street"

"I don't like cars in the centre or near medieval buildings"

"I tried to avoid going through the town where possible due to traffic"

"Narrow West Street should have no traffic at all. It is unsafe for pedestrians with no clear footpaths. Bottleneck and Murdocks carpark should be public again"

"Traffic should be as limited as possible, tapering off to pedestrianisation wherever possible. The Abbey shopping centre would make an excellent site for underground/ overground multi-storey parking with exteriors covered in plants."

While a relatively large cohort (25 respondents) described a lack of available parking, the same number (25 respondents) referenced the need for further pedestrianisation and reduction of car use and/or parking in the Westgate area.

Figure 2.10 outlines the themes within the responses to this question in more detail.

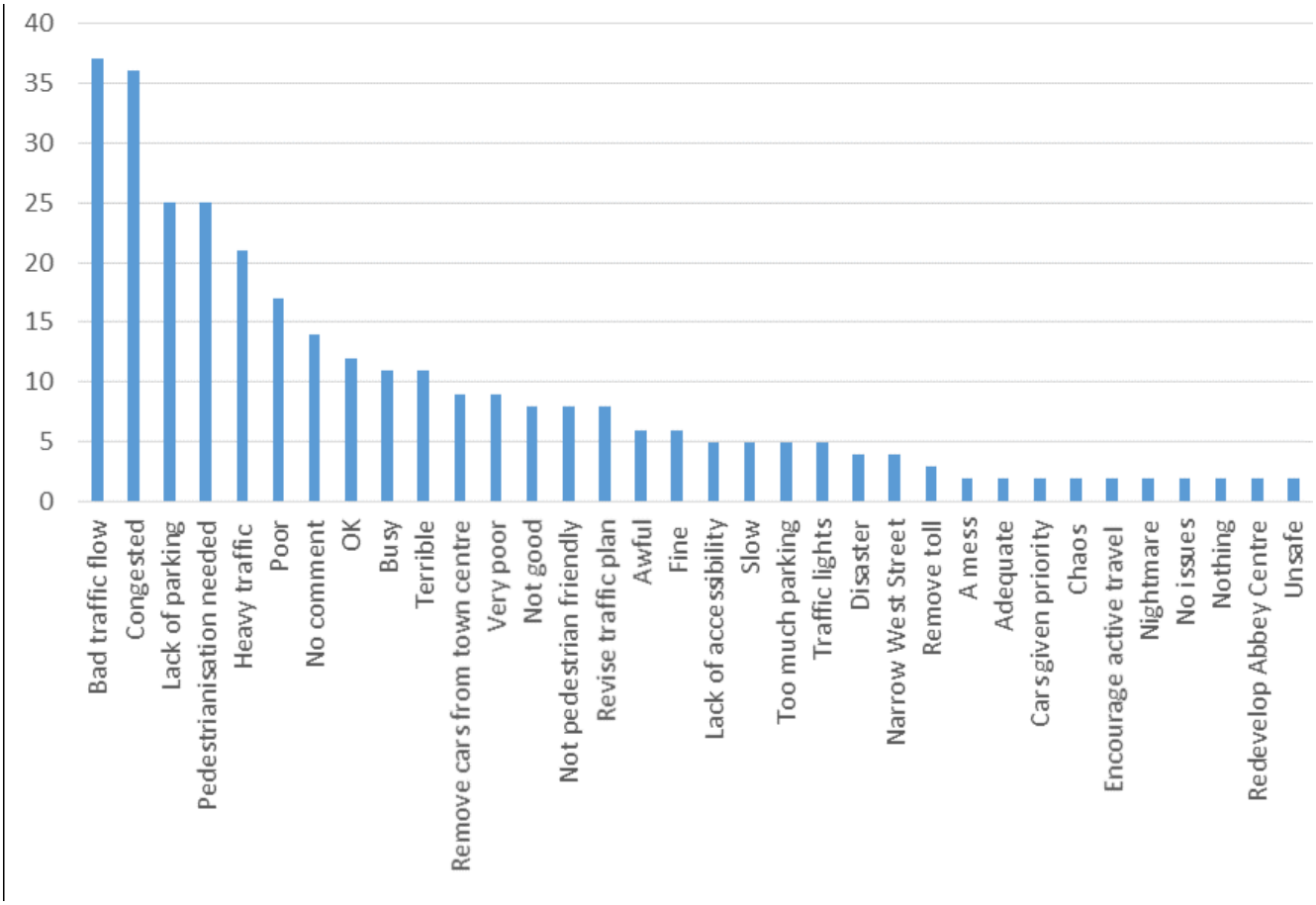


Figure 2.10: Responses to 'Please give your comments on the current parking and traffic flow in Westgate.'

Traffic appears to be a significant issue for most respondents. Congestion, flow, parking and pedestrianisation all feature as key themes.

Many qualitative responses note traffic as "awful" and there is need for a car park outside the area with suitable access for all due to the area currently being congested and suffering from accessibility problems.

Some respondents also felt visitors to Westgate used the area as a car park for use while accessing other parts of the town, and there was a strong indication that while many drivers park in Westgate, the area does not benefit commercially from this footfall.

Heritage and Culture

As already been outlined, the public and stakeholders have placed a heavy emphasis on the importance of maximising the potential of and protecting historic assets in the Westgate area.

Within the survey, respondents were asked questions about their ideas to enhance both the heritage and cultural expression in the Westgate area of Drogheda.

When asked to prioritise one of four specific proposed interventions, the ranking was as follows:

Feature	Weighted Average	% 1st Preferences
Further development of a heritage trail	3.651596	36.7 (from 558 responses)
Cleaning and revealing the Drogheda Historic Town Walls	3.468085	64.9 (from 376 responses)
An arrival structure, such as an archway, connected to the history of the Drogheda Historic Town Walls	2.420213	16.2 (from 376 responses)
Physical links such as protected walkways between the places of historical significance	1.614695	12.8 (from 376 responses)

Respondents were also asked two further open-ended questions related to the walls including, "How would you enhance the heritage features of the Drogheda Historic Town Walls?' and do you have 'any further comments on Heritage and Culture in Westgate'.

Two notable observations can be made. Firstly, cleaning and revealing the walls ranked second highest but had the largest number of first preferences (64.89%). It was also one of the most common themes when asked about enhancements. However, it trailed behind other prominent suggestions (in order of frequency):

i. 'Improve the lighting',

ii. 'Signage, boards, plaques or interpretation panels'

iii. 'Heritage walk, tour or trail'

iv. 'Cleaning, repairing, preservation and restoration of the walls'

v. 'Create a teature of them', and

vi. 'Develop a map, app or guide'

The public placing an emphasis on the need to improve lighting on the wall highlights the importance of improving the sense of security and safety in the area.

The inclusion of signage and interpretive panels/boards/plaques to tell the stories, history and heritage of the area was closely followed or directly associated with the development of heritage walk, tour or trail.

This latter suggestion is relevant as 'development of a heritage trail' ranked 1st overall in response to our question relating to specific interventions.

The public also emphasised making a greater feature of the walls or adding an artist-designed feature or new structure (such as an archway).

A final key theme included the development of tourist and visitor information in the form of a guide, map or downloadable app to aid with navigation and interpretation of the area.

Figure 2.11: Word Cloud of response to question 'How would you enhance the heritage features of the Drogheda Historic Town Walls'

Specifically when asked about enhancements to the heritage features of the Drogheda Historic Town Walls, a majority of respondents wished to see the walls cleaned and more maps and signage introduced.

Representative Comments:

"Clean up around them. Signage about their history, lighting, walking tours around them with painted lines on the ground to follow"

"Any further developments should tell and display the stories and historeis of our town and featured monuments etc, in an imaginative way. Let creative people be part of the process."

"Designated advertised safe walkways. Colourful clean and well used. Regular tours. Photo points. Walk along the tops of walls."

"The old abbey gates and walls badly need to be repaired. All elements of the old Drogheda town wall need to be repaired. Then they need to be well lit up at night. Half-hearted effort in lighting looks cheap. Lastly, the need to be

Reviewing the responses in a wider sense, it is clear that all of the proposed developments are welcomed. Given the importance and pride local people have in the Drogheda Town Walls there is a clear appetite for them to be both preserved and promoted as a key feature of the town and a distinctive attraction of the Westgate area.

A further hypothesis of the design team was that the area presented an opportunity to celebrate, interpret and promote both the history and heritage of the area and contemporary art and culture. This could be achieved through enhancements or interventions that would present opportunities for cultural expression, public art, performance and entertainment.

Again, this was strongly affirmed through a series of direct queries on an asymmetric Likert scale. Respondents were first asked about creating an outdoor performance area, with 85% either strongly agreeing or agreeing with this potential project.

Figure 2.12 outlines the responses to this question in more detail. A total of 368 responses were received for this question.

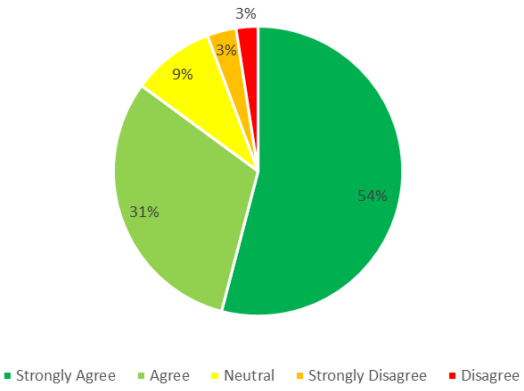


Figure 2.12: Responses to 'An outdoor performance area would benefit the Westgate area.'

A large majority, 58%, of respondents strongly agreed, and a further 31% agreed with creating more space for cultural events.

Figure 2.13 below outlines the full responses to this question. A total of 368 responses were received for this question.

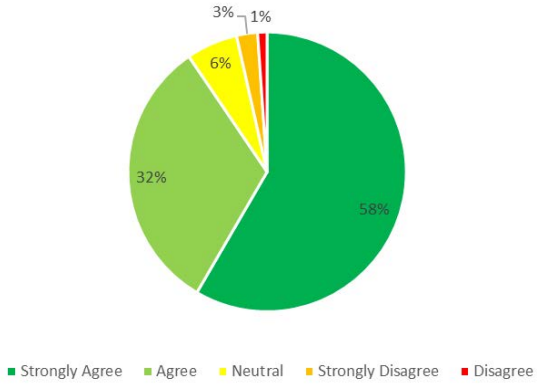


Figure 2.13: Responses to 'Westgate would benefit from more space that allows for cultural events and activities.'

Respondents were also asked about the need for a dedicated space for street art in Westgate, both as a measure against anti-social graffiti, and as a contributing art form in the Westgate area.

A large majority, 66% of respondents, either strongly agreed or agreed with implementing a dedicated place for 'Street Art' in Westgate, albeit 15% werer neutral / undecided and 15% were against the proposal.

Figure 2.14 outlines the responses in more detail. A total of 369 responses were received for this question.

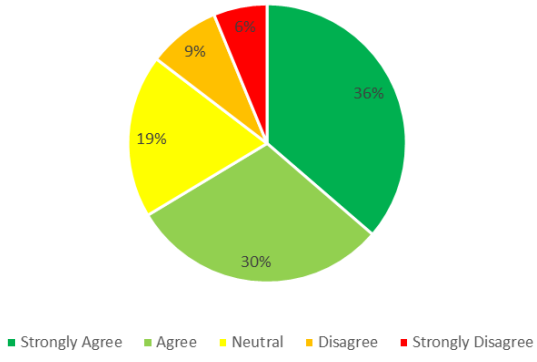


Figure 2.14: Responses to 'There is a need for a dedicated place for street art in Westgate, to discourage anti-social graffiti'

To conclude, respondents were asked for any further comments on Heritage or Culture:

Figure 2.15: Word Cloud of response to question 'any further comments on Heritage and Culture in Westgate'

Once again, the promotion of the heritage of the area, particularly the Walls and Abbey featured most prominently.

Respondents noted the benefits of Droichead Arts Centre as an amenity in Westgate with strong support for an outdoor performance area. Many respondents strongly endorsed the idea of using culture-led regeneration to improve the vibrancy of the area.

There was widespread support for development of dedicated arts, cultural or public space, and suggestions included:

- a multi-use semi-covered outdoor performance and cultural event space
- regeneration of the Abbey as a cultural, performance or public space
- a large public open space for entertainment
- outdoor dining area
- studio and exhibition space for artists and musicians
- a cultural hub
- designation of the area as a cultural quarter for Drogheda

Whilst a space for 'Street Art' was endorsed by some as a means of addressing elements of anti-social behaviour associated with graffiti, a number of respondents challenged the assertion that the graffiti itself was anti-social and emphasised its role in the development of 'Street Art'.

The importance of public, performance and visual arts in place-making was strongly endorsed, and a desire for further meaningful and involved engagement with the arts and as well as a desire for a heritage community in Drogheda to further develop this potential aspect of the vision.

Representative Comments:

"This is one of the most important strands of the whole project in my eyes. There has to be a significant link with arts and the redevelopment Regeneration of the area. A cultural epicentre for the town is so badly needed. This was shown during the recent successful fleadhm. A Legacy Arts and Cultural hub will provide much needed identify to the town."

"Westgate has all the potential to be a state of the art cultural quarter for the north east region. Heritage, culture and location to the Boyne are key attributes that should drive any proposal. Drogheda is rich in the arts and Westgate has the potential to contribute to this scene."

"Westgate has an opportunity to become a Cultural & Heritage Hub as the home to the Droichead Arts Centre, the library, and Barlow House. Abbey Lanes is of significiant value and has the opportunity to become a visitor attraction through t he provision of protected Saturday Farmers market area... with the opportunity to host live performances and acts."

"A flagship arts centre in teh Barlow area, flanked by artists studios, accessible, and engaging with the wider vision."

"There's already plenty of street art space in Drogheda, performance space should be multi functional aso that it is not standing idle when performances are not happening"

"Street Art is art, this includes graffiti art. Drogheda is naturally a host to a bohemian lifestyle - traditionally rich in arts, music and heritage. Droghea could be Galway city if funded appropriately and supported. Any Creative-Centric town historically attracts tourism, business, a rich nightlife, community and heritage."

"The area would benefit from dedicated artists studios/ space/ community hub that links with Barlow House. This would provide facilities for the excellent artistic talent in the town."

"Cultural events that showcase Drogheda's history & heritage to be held all year round, not just on specific event days (eg arts festival/ culture night etc.). This would appeal to visitors, for example guided walking tours, music performances or something similar to the short film screening that runs continuously for visitors to the AV room in the County Museum, Dundalk."

Tourism

The link between promoting, enhancing and interpreting the heritage assets in the Westgate area was again reiterated by respondents across all qualitative and quantitative responses related to the development of tourism.

It is strongly apparent that respondents believe that the heritage of Westgate and access to the historic buildings are the main attractions for visitors to the area. 'Heritage of the town' ranked as the top attraction for people visiting Westgate (196 responses), closely followed by the area's 'historic buildings' (179 responses) as outlined in Figure 2.16 below.

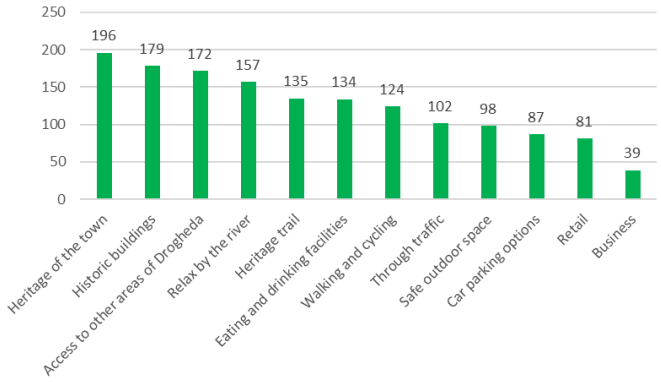


Figure 2.16: Responses to 'What do you think attracts visitors to Westgate? Please select all that apply.'

Respondents were able to choose multiple responses to this question, resulting in a larger number of responses than the total number of individual respondents that answered the question (147 respondents in total).

When asked to describe why people did not currently visit Westgate, once again the negative perception of Westgate was highlighted by responses that referenced the run-down nature of the area (104 from 325 responses), with others describing the area as "derelict", "dirty", "neglected" and "unsafe", with "nothing to visit" and "few shops".

Figure 2.17: Responses to 'Why do people not visit Westgate.'

The potential for regeneration of the Abbey, however, was acknowledged as a prime opportunity for a tourist site/attraction.

A very large majority of respondents (91%) either agreed or strongly agreed that the Abbey has the potential to become a strong tourist attraction.

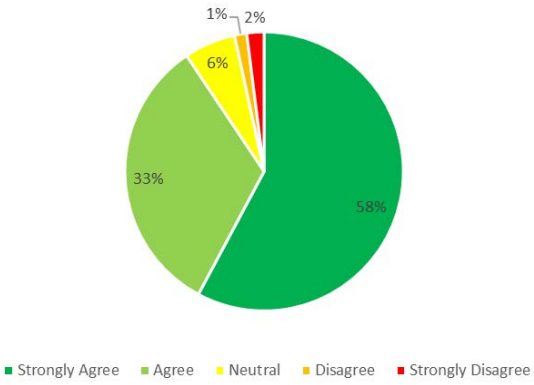


Figure 2.18: Responses to 'The Abbey has the potential to be a strong tourist attraction'

Figure 2.18 outlines the responses in more detail. A total of 351 responses were received for this question. Support for the Abbey as a tourist attraction also came across strongly when respondents were then asked to outline the reasoning behind their response.

Representative Comments:

"Any other European city would push tourism on a site like that. We all gone and visited places when on holiday nowhere as nice as it"

"A site of historic beauty beside a river with public spaces. What's not to like?!"

"As a former Tour Guide based out of Drogheda Museum, the Westgate area was often an area we would skip due to the shabby run down nature of the area - it would be a fantastic additional resource to have in the town and would absolutely attract visitors from inside and outside the town"

"Drogheda has an abundance of historical structures. Together it is the best examples, yet most poorly maintained, in one area probably in the country. This has been said many times before. The Abbey is no exception. Because they are historical buildings however does not mean they can't be multi-purpose. There exists architectural drawings of the Abbey as multi-purpose space."

"Even without a roof it has excellent acoustics. It's quirky, unusual and, potentially, charming"

"If you ever visited Boyle Abbey with its perspex roof, something similar could be achieved here by which the Abbey could become an historical centre piece for the town, culture, arts, safe street life must return to Drogheda, we need to re inhabit our town centre to make it safer."

"The Old Abbey is a hidden gem which should be promoted as a gateway to culture and not a gateway for unseen crime."

"Its architectural, archaeological and cultural significance make it a unique setting of national importance. The existing archways of the Abbey structure provide a rich setting for a public realm and provides the framework for an exceptional outdoor public open space for a variety of creative, cultural and entertainment uses that could be used all year round. It provides a rich architectural backdrop for temporary art installations, outdoor performances and events which contribute to community spirit, identity and well-being. It is strategically located at the west end of the town close to West Gate, between many of the arts and creative landmarks in the town. An improved and enhanced public open space at this location will result in a collective benefit and positive impact for the creative and cultural arts in the town, both during the day and at night-time, supporting the night-time economy."

This was not, however, a universal position. Others questioned the emphasis on culture and tourism at the site of the Abbey, given the area was still perceived to be negatively impacted by the Abbey Shopping Centre:

Representative Comments:

"I think the emphasis placed on this area in planning and tourism terms is completely overstated, if anything it has become a break on development in the area because of issues around planning and access points. If the Abbey Shopping Centre was demolished there might be some logic to this emphasis"

'7he Abbey shopping centre is an eyesore that would be better off knocked and turned into a green area looking into the river Boyne. Old Abbey lane has huge potential as does the Abbey care park and surrounds."

When respondents were asked about increasing footfall in the Westgate area during the day-time and night-time, there was a clear demand for increased cafés, a market and more retail and artisan shops.

Figure 2.19: Responses to 'What do you believe would help to generate more footfall in Westgate during the day'

Footfall at night was also believed to be driven by additional food and beverage outlets, with a desire to see more restaurants, bars and late night cafés, in addition to outdoor dining, music and performance venues.

Figure 2.20: Responses to 'What do you believe would help to generate more footfall in Westgate during the Night-time,

When asked what development they would like to see in the Westgate area (e.g. office space, cultural space, public art, performance space, remote working facilities, retail etc.) respondents underlined the importance of public art and cultural space, performance space and improved public spaces. This was often linked with improving visitor experience and therefore contributing to the local tourism economy.

Figure 2.21: Responses to "What development you would like to see in the Westgate area?"

Business uses such as office and remote working spaces were cited, but much less frequently.

When asked directly about remote working spaces, the largest group of respondents (40%) were neutral. However, those who agreed or strongly agreed came in second (44% combined), substantially ahead of those disagreed or strongly disagreed (16% combined).

Figure 2.22 outlines the responses in more detail. A total of 334 responses were received for this question

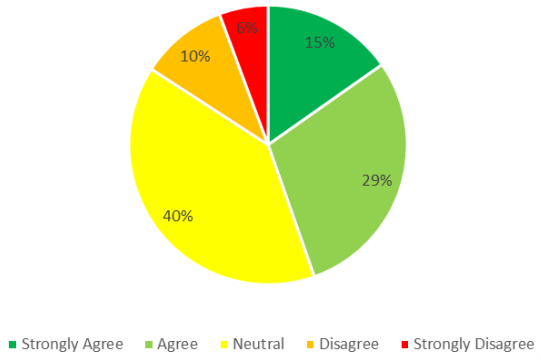


Figure 2.22: Responses to 'I would like to see more options for remote working spaces in Westgate'

Conversely, developing the tourism offer, promoting and maintaining the history of the area, and developing new cultural space were together the most frequently cited drivers for the future of Westgate, and Drogheda as a whole.

Representative Comments:

"Cultural space/public art/outdoor dining; all similar to German or Spanish outdoor markets; to bring a sense of life & use to the area again"

"Cultural heritage, historical, Arts, performance areas but also work spaces too to bring more people into the area and the development of apartments-housing in the stories above many of the businesses, all will help with making it busier and safer."

"Cultural Space and Public Art. A sculpture or area dedicated to Nano Reid would also be a great addition."

"Cultural space, historical and tourist attractions, public and live art. The days of the town centre as a shopping centre have passed, the retail parks are where people go for that.

"ft is time to make the history, art, architecture and rulture of our great town its centre to attract tourists to the area, create local jobs, build pride within the town."

"Drogheda has a huge potential that is not being met. Town walls and historical areas need more funding and development."

"Tourism should keep a focus on history and community. Don't over commercialise it or you will destroy its spirit and its ability to draw people in."

"Drogheda has huge untapped tourism potential and the current state of Westgate is definitely a serious setback for tourism. Almost everyone arriving into Drogheda comes through this area which is very off putting for new visitors. A revitalised and refurbished Westgate will give a much better first impression and have a hugely positive impact of how others view Drogheda. With the right development we can massively improve the tourism offering."

"Drogheda has the potential to be a great town both for tourists and locals alike but seems to have lost it's identity and buzz. When redesigning or investing a long term planning approach-needs to be implemented."

"Tourism is the way forward for Drogheda, and it is dreadful that our attractions are not protected and utilised to their full potential to bring our town back to life, and create opportunities for our young people."

"Tourism needs to be recognised as a major interest for our wonderful town we need a dedicated tourism officer based in Drogheda who works closely with Boyne Valley brand."

"Our history cannot be matched, I want to share it with visitors to the town. Best wishes for the task and every success"

"Taking a leaf out of Kilkenny and Derry's book would be good to make more of a feature out of the town medieval walled history."

River Boyne, Outdoor Amenity and Green Space

The River

The final area of analysis was the River Boyne. In particular, this focused on the area's potential in relation to structured outdoor space and providing connectivity to the river.

Respondents, throughout the quantitative and qualitative responses, demonstrated a perception that the river was of the underutilised as a

The survey sought investigate this further, with a number of specific questions designed to gather insights to inform the design team.

A majority of respondents (93%), strongly agreed (60%) or agreed (33%) that the development of the river should be a priority.

Figure 2.23 outlines the responses in more detail. A total of 323 responses were received for this question.

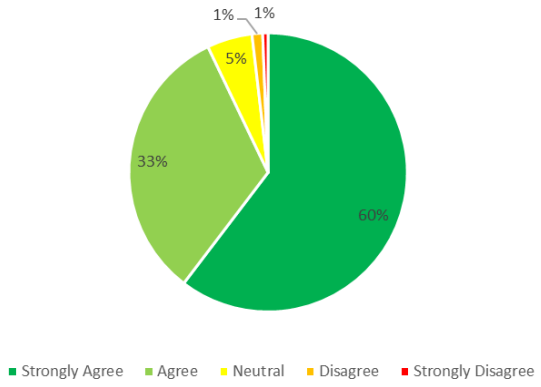


Figure 2.23: Responses to 'In regenerating Westgate, development of the river and surrounding space should be a priority'

Likewise a majority of respondents (90%) also indicated they would spend more time by the river if there were more seating areas.

Figure 2.24 outlines the responses in more detail. A total of 325 responses were received for this question.

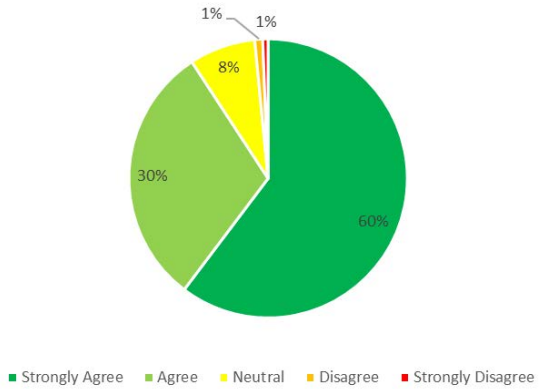


Figure 2.24: Responses to 'I would spend more time by the river if there were places to sit'

This was supported by general comments made across the survey responses, drawing out the need for street furniture or outdoor dining by the river, creating access to green space and utilising a boardwalk or trail along the river as part of the visitor activation.

Representative Comments:

"There are no facilities or seats by the river" "Open up the whole area down to the river" "Encourage people to stop and visit by providing seating and coffee and connect to river with walkway."

"Nice river boardwalk with seats and artwork. More flowers and trees . More artisan-art / craft shops. Seated areas!'

"A walking bridge to the park, car parking and a boutique hotel. This could be the "arrival structure" welcoming tourists and locals into the town."

"Connect walkways on both sides of river from Mell under the Bridge of peace and down to Oomincs bridge"

"The river frontage is under utilised as a recreational area, cars are given precedence over people."

"The Abbey and the River Boyne are two perfect examples where we could utilise both within a new cultural/communal area/square"

"The Boyne river is beautiful and not appreciated. Running through the town and practically ignored!'

There were, however, a small number of comments that suggested restraint with respect to further development, suggesting instead that the area retain a focus on nature:

- "We must show more respect for the River Boyne, I have watched otters hunting from the Bridge of Peace, what if the river was cleaner, if people in the town took care of it like we all know we should. It would be great to see more than the annual Boyne swim for instance-maybe this would happen if the perception of the river was better."
- "Biodiversity areas and quiet zones to escape and hustle and bustle of town centre and a viewing area over river."

Others want to expand water-based facilities:

- "Just a thought, probably too dangerous, but can there be boat trips on the boyne? Similar to the Seine or the Thames? Floating restaurants with views of the town and sail out to the Mary Mc Aleese Bridge? "
- "Boating / river activities. Links to the river, this could be opened up to boat tours or anything to utilize the fantastic Boyne
- "The addition of a small jetty or mooring could facilitate boat trips from Dominics bridge area to points further up the river such as Oldbridge and further if navigation of the river/canal allows"
- "Increase number of Boyne river tours (on various craft types) would add to tourist offering in Drogheda."

One respondent had a very specific, if somewhat esoteric suggestion, about how to capitalise on the rivers history:

- "The iron barge lying in the river mud below the Ronan Halpin sculpture is possibly 'Boyne', a commercial barge formerly owned by Spicers of Navan and used on the Boyne Navigation canal up to the c.1920s. This could be recovered and displayed as a static exhibition on the riverbank."

When asked directly about the water facilities, the majority of respondents would welcome a boat docking area in Westgate. Figure 2.25 outlines the responses in more detail. A total of 321 responses were received for this question.

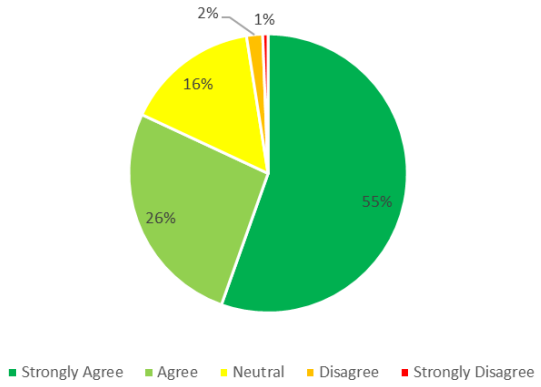


Figure 2.25: Responses to 'I would welcome a boat docking area along the river in Westgate'

Respondents were also asked about the memorial along the old town walls. The majority of respondents (73%) think that the memorial should be formalised and retained. Figure 2.26 outlines the responses in more detail. A total of 294 responses were received for this question.

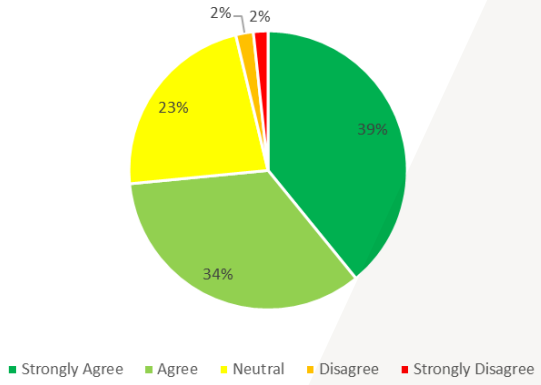


Figure 2.26: Responses to 'The memorial under the bridge along the old town walls should be formalised and retained'

The final question of this section asked if people agreed with a stronger connection between Westgate and the park on the other side of the river. The majority of respondents (90%) agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. Figure 2.27 outlines the responses in more detail. A total of 296 responses were received for this question.

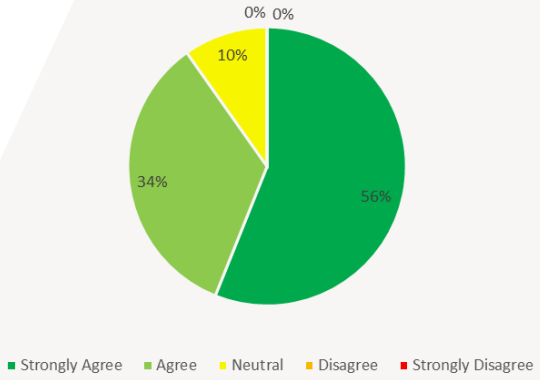


Figure 2.27: Responses to 'I welcome a stronger connection between Westgate and the park on the other side of the river'

New Amenities

Respondents were also asked about structured outdoor space, and an overwhelming majority (93%) believed more structured outdoor space would attract more people to the area. Figure 2.28 outlines the responses in more detail. A total of 332 responses were received for this question.

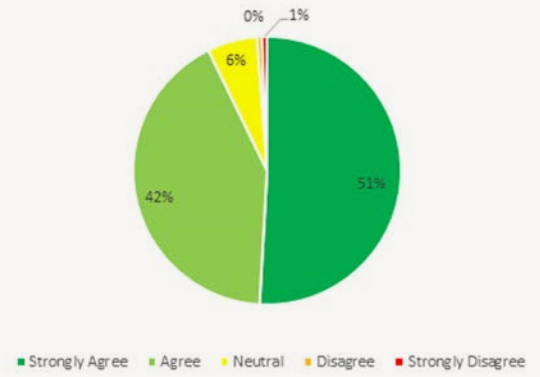


Figure 2.28: Responses to 'More structured outdoor space by the river leading up to the pedestrian bridge would attract more people to work or visit the area'

The link between green space and new amenities was further explored when respondents were first asked if green spaces would encourage them to use the Westgate area more often.

Again, a large majority (92%) noted that they would be likely or very likely to use the area if there was more green space. Figure 2.29 outlines the responses in more detail. A total of 329 responses were received for this question.

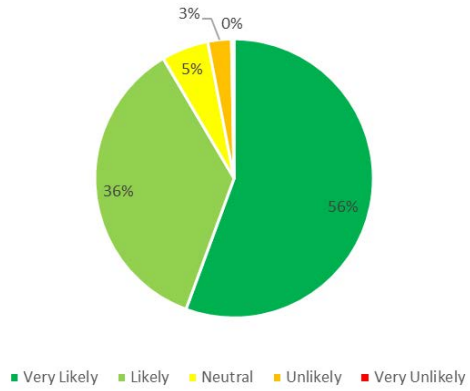


Figure 2.29: Responses to 'Would more open and green spaces encourage you to spend more time in Westgate?'

Access to open and green space was also ranked second highest from a list of twelve potential enhancements from which respondents were asked to rank in order of preference, followed closely by 'family space and play area' and 'outdoor seating' (see Figure 2.30). It was only narrowly beaten into first place behind the development of a 'new market' area.

Notably a family space with play area garnered the largest number of 1st Preference votes, which came in third on a similar weighted average as the open space and market proposals. A weighted preference ranking of these responses is as follows:

Feature	Weighted Average (out of 12)	% 1st Preferences
Markets	8.913173653	13.2
Open, green space	8.853293413	11.4
Families space with play area	8.724550898	28.7
Outdoor seating	7.973053892	7.2
Civic Square	7.703592814	12.3
Outdoor Performance Areas	7.431137725	6.9
More trees and shrubbery	7.22754491	5.7
Community garden	7.065868263	2.9
Parklets	6.326347305	0.9
Dedicated Car-Free areas	6.02994012	5.4
Segregated cycle lanes	5.853293413	0.9
Improved civic square	4.898203593	4.5
		334 responses

When presented with a series of visual cues (see Figure 2.30) representing various amenity typologies, there was equal support among respondents for a market space (187 responses) and an outdoor meeting and seating area (187 responses). This was closely followed by an outdoor performance and festival space (166 responses).

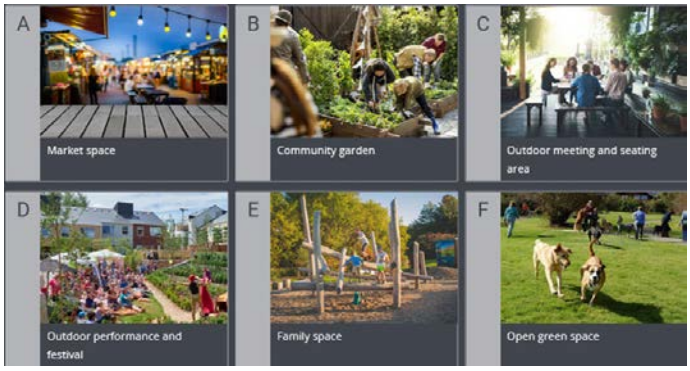


Figure 2.30: Illustrative images used as part of the 'Please select the community facility that appeals to you most' survey question

Figure 2.31 outlines the responses in more detail. A total of 315 responses were received for this question. Including a number of other suggestions (see 'other proposals' table, below)

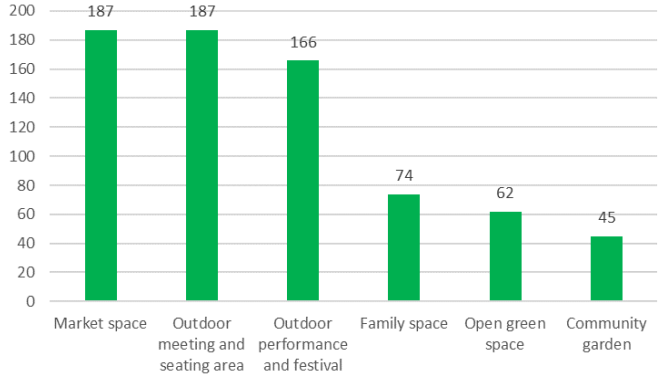


Figure 2.31: Responses to 'Please select the community facility that appeals to you most'

Other Proposals	Tally
Historical architecture	3
Improved Accessibility to River Boyne	2
Event space	2
Cultural events	1
Dog park	1
Food and drink	1
Footpath connectivity	1
In keeping with the surrounding area	1
Multi-use spaces	1
Museum	1
Open green spaces	1
Park/play area	1
Water facilities	1
Waterfront location	1

Finally, respondents were asked for any further comments on amenities in the Westgate area they would like to see. While a number of suggestions repeated themes evident across the survey (cultural events, workspace, marketspace, enhancing heritage and link to the river), a number of novel suggestions were made. The most frequent of these was the introduction of new public toilet facilities (9 respondents).

Connectivity

The final section of the survey asked respondents about connectivity in Westgate and the River Boyne. When asked about active travel options, the majority of respondents (79%) stated that it was either important or very important. Figure 2.32 outlines these results in more detail. A total of 325 responses were recorded for this question.

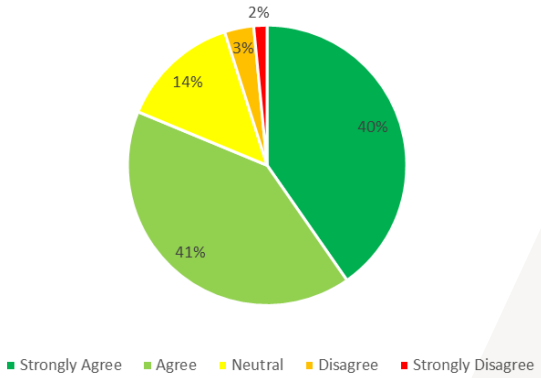


Figure 2.32: Responses to 'How important would you rate active travel (walking, cycling, etc.) options in Westgate?'

When asked more specifically about cycle lanes, most respondents (81%) either strongly agreed or agreed with creating segregated cycle lanes. Figure 2.23 outlines these results in more detail. A total of 325 responses were received for this question.

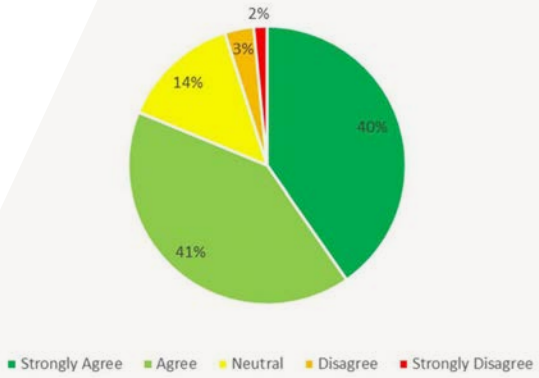


Figure 2.33: Responses to 'I support segregated cycle lanes providing a link between areas of significance such as the Abbey, the Bridge of Peace and the Museum'

Following on from cycle lanes, most respondents (81%) either agreed or strongly agreed with creating segregated pedestrian and cycle lanes on the Bridge of Peace. Figure 2.34 outlines these results in more detail. A total of 325 responses were received for this question.

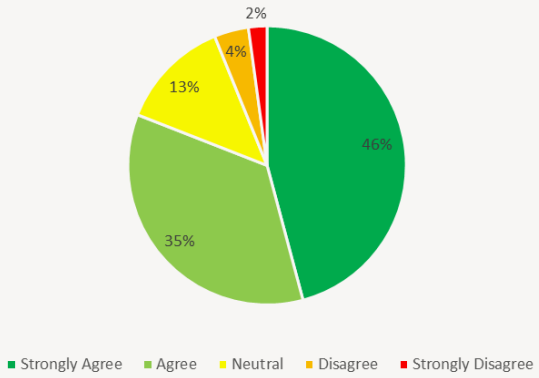


Figure 2.34: Responses to 'I support pedestrian and segregated cycle lanes on the Bridge of Peace'

3. Findings & Design Response

In this chapter we outline how the input and insights gleaned from the various forms of consultation have helped to shape the design proposals being brought forward. The consultation exercise offers a unique insight into what the community and users of Westgate would like to see in this area.

The insights have been grouped into themes with the findings outlined in more detail and the subsequent elements of the design proposals to address the issues are then explored. The themes identified are:

Dereliction

Heritage

Culture

Amenities

Connectivity

Theme	Finding	Design Response
Dereliction	**Rundown** When discussing dereliction in the Westgate area, the phrase 'run-down' appeared in numerous responses, particularly in response to the question 'What two words would you use to describe Westgate?' This negative perception was strongly represented when respondents were asked why people do not visit Westgate, with some of the following responses providing insight into how people currently view Westgate: • "The area is run down and in ruin. The Old Abbey is used by anti socials and drug addicts" • "The shops in the area are in serious disrepair.... The buildings owners should be made to maintain and help regenerate the area.... It could be amazing" • "Run down and derelict with next to zero modern facilities" Similar comments were noted by property owners in the area who felt with some improvements in the public space their properties could benefit. Representatives from the Arts Centre noted a perceived lack of engagement by local properties / businesses to improve shop frontage. In a number of meetings it was acknowledged that issues with dereliction of properties and poor public realm on the banks of the River Boyne were perhaps more noticeable when compared with the large, well-maintained open park across the river.	The development will include modernising areas, such as the new public square, which will complement the medieval ruins that sit in its surroundings. The area will become a focal point for activity, attracting people for hospitality, tourism and leisure. The project will also act as a catalyst for positive regeneration and supporting development in the town centre. With respect to dereliction the vision aims to act as a catalyst that will incentivise landowners to invest in their buildings and explore new development opportunities to address the issue of dereliction in the area.
	Neglect Neglect was another key theme mentioned throughout the survey response. The responses to this theme demonstrated how the area has deteriorated over time from a busy and well-used commercial area. It is clear that a lack of investment over several years, the passing of time and lack of suitable new facilities have caused the area to become neglected, further compounding the area's vacancy rate and dereliction. These comments were found across a number of questions that focused on why people do not visit Westgate, and what issues prevent Westgate from being a thriving community space. Many stakeholders within the community and respondents to the survey reflected on the impact of online retail. This, they believed, had resulted in reduced shops within the area and commercial property vacancies that have never been filled. It was noted that the Westgate Vision and the consultation were a very welcome step in addressing this perceived neglect, with an openness to radical new interventions to capitalise on the area's heritage assets and proximity to the river.	The inclusion of lights and exhibition space amenities will liven the area to become more than just the ruins, including the art gallery using the square as an outdoor extension for exhibiting art. Introducing new business, such as cafes and restaurants with an emphasis on outdoor seating will bring new vibrancy and colour.
	Cleanliness Cleanliness, or lack thereof, was another key indicator of low visitor numbers to the area, as well as a notable contribution to the aforementioned neglect of Westgate. Cleanliness was one of the key features people would like to see in the future of Westgate. Cleanliness was also an important feature for improving the historical assets of the town. It is apparent that in terms of cleanliness, the feedback we have received does not just refer to litter. Instead, most comments related to the general state of cleanliness and neglect of both buildings and public spaces.	The graffiti on the town walls will be cleaned, sensitive to their heritage. Bins will be provided in the square which will reduce the littering of the site.

	Anti-social Behaviour Anti-social behaviour was noted by some to be a significant issue around the river and park areas of Westgate. Many respondents noted that addressing this would be key to ensuring the preservation and regeneration of the wider Westgate area. Subsequent stakeholder meetings discussed that groups of young people gathering did not necessary constitute anti-social behaviour, and that active areas for young people would enhance and support the area's regeneration. Dedicated spaces for young people, alongside passive and natural surveillance as part of the overall design, was seen a as a more positive intervention and better deterrent for anti-social behaviour.	New, high-quality street-lighting will be incorporated into the design, deterring crime. The opening up of the square into a public realm space with businesses will make this a thriving space for leisure and hospitality. In combination with other projects and by adopting best practice design principles, the aim is to reduce opportunities for anti-social behavior.
	Public Safety Coupled with the need to reduce anti-social behaviour was a desire to promote public safety in Westgate, particularly in open spaces such as parks and along the River Boyne. Particular focus was given to increasing a police presence in areas known for anti-social behaviour, as well as introducing CCTV.	There are plans to light up the area with high quality lighting. By introducing businesses and life to the area people would be deterred from using the area to undertake anti-social behaviour. The provision of CCTV is beyond the scope of this project.
Heritage	**Preservation and Promotion of the Medieval Town Walls** Given that heritage preservation was ranked as one of the key features of Westgate, the promotion of the 'Medieval Town Walls' as a historic asset is fundamental to the regeneration of Westgate and the preservation of the heritage of Westgate. Survey respondents saw the restoration of walls as a unique opportunity to provide a tangible focal point and a guide to the history of Westgate and Drogheda as a whole. In the breakout rooms it was noted that while the walls present a significant tourist opportunity, the focus within this project should be to ensure their presentation reflected and benefitted the local community, rather than solely seeking to create a tourist attraction for visitors.	The surviving sections of the town's medieval walls will be conserved and rejuvenated, revitalising a missed opportunity to showcase Drogheda's history. Graffiti will be carefully removed from the outer section of the walls, and later insertions into the masonry will be removed where possible and hidden where required. The internal face of the wall, currently facing into the Garda car park, will receive much needed repairs and conservation works. All work on the walls will follow the requirements of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. High quality site lighting will be an integral part of the landscaping improvements on the west side of the town wall.

	Development of the Abbey The development of the Abbey was seen as another key restoration focus in Westgate. Many respondents noted that the Abbey needed better promotion to make more people aware of the history of the area. Respondents also noted linking the development of the Abbey to other historical sites.	There are several options to rejuvenate the Abbey. One option for the Abbey ruins includes constructing a glass roof, protecting the historic masonry. This would enhance the experience of the users of the space and help protect important elements of the ruins that should be preserved. Options for a viewing platform are also being considered, either within the tower itself, or via a contemporary structure nearby. An exciting programme of works are planned for the currently roofless abbey. Public access will be greatly improved through improvements to the lane, including the opening up of a new entrance to the area through existing wall on the west side of the site. Options for the roofless Abbey ruin include introducing a glass roof to provide protection to the historic masonry and enhance the experience of the users of the space. Options for a viewing platform through the walls are also being considered, either within the tower itself, or via a contemporary steel tower added to the site. All proposals will be carefully considered and subject to approval from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.
	Links to the Abbey and Museum Looking further into the preservation of heritage, many respondents highlighted the need for a dedicated museum to create a focal point for the history of Westgate. The apparent disconnect between the number of historical assets and wider offering within the town was noted in the consultation responses, with many proposing an information or interpretive centre or focal point. Here the key factor goes beyond preserving key heritage assets to create an area that is welcoming and attractive to both tourists and local people. Again, this comes back to stakeholders placing an importance of not forgetting the needs of the people who live in and visit Westgate on a weekly basis while promoting tourism assets.	As part of the opening up to public realm space, the southern, lower portion of the new square is proposed featuring creative digital displays and occasional exhibitions. It is also envisaged to be connected to Barlow House and to serve as an outdoor extension to the gallery, better incorporating another local cultural asset. The creation of a new structure at the approximate location of the demolished Westgate is a key objective of our development proposals. The final form of that structure will be fleshed out over the next few months and is intended to be a strong marker of the point where one of Drogheda's primary medieval entrance gates led into West Street. A well-defined public space will be created at that location, providing a space for exhibits, performances, and other outdoor activities.

Culture	**Cultural Space** In order to promote the culture of Westgate and the wider Drogheda area, a number of respondents suggested creating a communal cultural space as part of the wider regeneration of the area. Given the location of the existing Arts Centre, within the site boundary, this is perhaps not unexpected. However, there is an opportunity to regenerate Westgate through more arts and culture offerings, workspace for the arts and creative sector, and cultural spaces could be used for a variety of activities, such as live music, market, exhibitions, studio spaces or even a theatre.	See below.
	Performance Space Indoor or outdoor performance spaces were also a common theme when people were asked what they would like to see, particularly at night-time where there was a desire to see more live music in particular. Much like cultural spaces, these performance spaces would be used for a variety of public performances, including music, art and theatre.	With the medieval walls and roofless abbey ruins there is a strong focus on utilising outdoor space. The new two-tier square utilises the change in levels by incorporating the area into an outdoor exhibition with links to the Barlow House gallery. This would be accessible as a performance space.
Amenities	**Market** Markets were the most popular amenity people would like to see in the Westgate area. It was also noted the potential for dual use of such space with a day-time market and a night-time performance space. The markets that there is potential for could be held in the cultural and performance spaces (referred to above), providing food and art events on a regular basis. The focus on food and beverage also gave rise to the proposal of a "food hall" or "food truck park" as an alternative or complementary offer to a market space. Given the rise in outdoor-led activities, a regular market space would prove popular for the community.	The inclusion of a new square and open access will allow the option of markets being hosted in the area. The public realm will include cafes and restaurants which will have a wide food offering to visitors, with a focus on outdoor seating to bring in the walls and abbey features.
	Café, Bars, Restaurants (Food & Beverage) In addition to a formal market, improving food and beverage options was a popular suggestion, particularly more outdoor dining options. Given the increase in outdoor activities as a result of the pandemic, it would be crucial to include a range of dining options that would be accessible to all. These amenities were particularly popular when people were asked what daytime and night-time facilities they would like to see in Westgate.	On the new square, at the northern raised side, visitors would be able to enjoy day-to-day outdoor dining in a variety of cafes and restaurants at a south and west facing view, sheltered by tree planting from traffic. Possible events such as light shows, street performances and markets could also be catered for in this location.
	Street Furniture Following on from an increased demand for outdoor facilities, many respondents noted that the Westgate area could be improved with the provision of better street furniture. This includes seating, lighting and planting, among many others. However, further discussions with Louth Age Friendly Alliance noted the importance of delivering new street furniture without compromising accessibility for those with mobility issues.	Any proposed surfacing and furniture would build on the character of West Street and the furniture strategy to be developed as part of the stage 2 of the project. It is also an aim to develop a distinct character for the Westgate area, complementing its surroundings. A range of seating will be provided, from movable incidental street furniture in the square to a more standard furniture such as benches, bins, bollards, bicycle stands and lighting columns. A number of integrated steps and seating walls are also proposed throughout the public realm areas that will take advantage of change in level across the site. Seating elements are proposed within these walls to encourage rest, gatherings, events and performances.

	Walkways & Trails Walkways and trails were also seen as a key amenity for Westgate, both as a means of public exercise, but also to promote the historic area, explore culture and art and engage with wider groups of people, both locals and tourists. The Accessibility and Mobility Audit noted a desire for improved walkways	The openness to the public square will allow for the Barlow House gallery to utilise the public realm as an outdoor exhibition space and to cater for occasional performances. This would provide an extra pull factor for customers at new local businesses in the square. The public realm would allow for people to utilise the space for their own creative purposes, such as music or exercise.
	Leisure facilities An increased variety of leisure facilities was also noted among some respondents, with a particular focus on facilities that are suitable for families and children. The area currently has one playground, and many parents would like to see a greater variety of leisure facilities that are suitable for all the family.	Leisure opportunities are an intrinsic part of the experience of the scheme and are subtly woven into the design proposals. Gentle slopes offer incidental and creative play and are accessible to all users. The different spaces offer slightly different experiences and present opportunities for passive and active play for both residents and visitors in this gateway setting. 'Moments' within the design are created to be restful and allow the user to enjoy the river and the built heritage.
 Connectivity	**Congestion** Congestion was one of the primary issues affecting connectivity in Westgate. Respondents noted that the roads were poorly designed with inadequate connection via pedestrian routes, meaning active travel in most instances is not only impractical but often leads to increased traffic. The Accessibility and Mobility Audit along with survey responses indicates that for those with reduced mobility a lack of 'as the crow flies' pedestrian options means journeys by foot are too long, meaning more car use for short journeys. Respondents have noted that the poor traffic flow is caused by the one-way system, slow traffic lights and the inappropriate positioning of pedestrian crossings.	The proposed transport strategy seeks to move towards a more sustainable form of development for the Westgate Area. The proposed strategy will provide greater accessibility for all users by improving the choice and quality of sustainable transport options. The vision will propose a more streamlined approach to traffic management and will focus on the delivery of pedestrian and cycle-friendly infrastructure to enhance mobility and accessibility to the area whilst catering for the current traffic demands. The provision of direct pedestrian crossing facilities shall enhance and improve the road user's experience. The current traffic congestion in the area will be addressed, where possible, through a series of better designed road layouts for all users with an aim of creating a better environment for all. In line with best practice, the design of the streets will strike the right balance between the different functions of the street, including a sense of place.

Car Parking As mentioned earlier in the report, there is support for transforming car parking in the Westgate area, through a car-free zone, a centralised car park, and repurposing of existing car park space. Likewise car parking was a much lower priority for survey respondents than other regeneration proposals. However, a more nuanced position was presented in further stakeholder engagement and break out room sessions. While there was support for wider regeneration proposals, it was clearly articulated that was on the proviso that the current level of parking is not significantly impacted. This was a very emotive discussion in all stakeholder meetings and breakout areas with people either strongly in favour of more parking or strongly in favour of reducing parking and as such, proposals should bear considerate to this minority position despite the strong response from survey respondents in actively reducing car parking. In addition, particular emphasis was placed on the need to create more accessible parking.	The vision proposes to review the need for parking facilities in the area and enhance the quality of any car and cycle parking facilities which are provided. The provision of parking for cars and bicycles will be done in a sensitive way and be incorporated in the overall design in order to meet the demand for the area without undue traffic movements being generated. The vision will incorporate measures to ensure satisfactory standards of personal safety and traffic safety are maintained. The pedestrian connectivity to the area will enhance the public realm and reduce the demand for parking within the area itself.
Pedestrianisation Pedestrianisation is strongly supported in principle by most respondents. Issues regarding pedestrian safety are of concern, with respondents noting the need to better manage traffic in the area.	A primary aim of the vision is to enhance the sustainable transport connectivity across the area, with particular focus on pedestrian and cycle movements. A detailed traffic management plan will be incorporated within the vision in order to ensure that the best possible connectivity is achieved both within and around the area in terms of pedestrian crossings facilities and safe / user-friendly surface treatments. Through the prioritisation of pedestrian zones and streets within the site area, reduced car dominance and speeds will be experienced for the betterment of the area. The proposals incorporated will include frequent crossing points and junctions, horizontal deflections, narrow carriageways, minimised signage and road markings, reduced visibility splays, tighter corner radii large hard and soft street scape.
Active Travel Coupled with pedestrianisation, respondents had some noteworthy opinions with regards to implementing active travel in Westgate. There was a particular emphasis on improving cycle infrastructure, both in terms of paths and bike parking, as well as more efficient and reliable public transport. Some respondents also noted the need to promote active travel alongside restricting vehicular access to key areas in order to be the most effective.	Central to the vision is the potential for users of the area to achieve high levels of modal shift away from the private car in favour of more sustainable modes of transport. This will be achieved by high standards of access for all and the provision of facilities which will add to the quality of life for users of the area. The plan will enhance the area through the inclusion of new and improved pedestrian and cycle facilities along the main access routes and the riverside, provision of safe and secure cycle parking and bike hire facilities and enhanced public transport facilities around the area in order to support of the use of sustainable modes of travel. The area will also be designed to cater for the most vulnerable users and be access friendly. Active Travel for all will be a key component to ensure the primary role of the public realm, as a network of streets and open spaces, will create a successful and vibrant public life in and around the area.

4. Next Steps

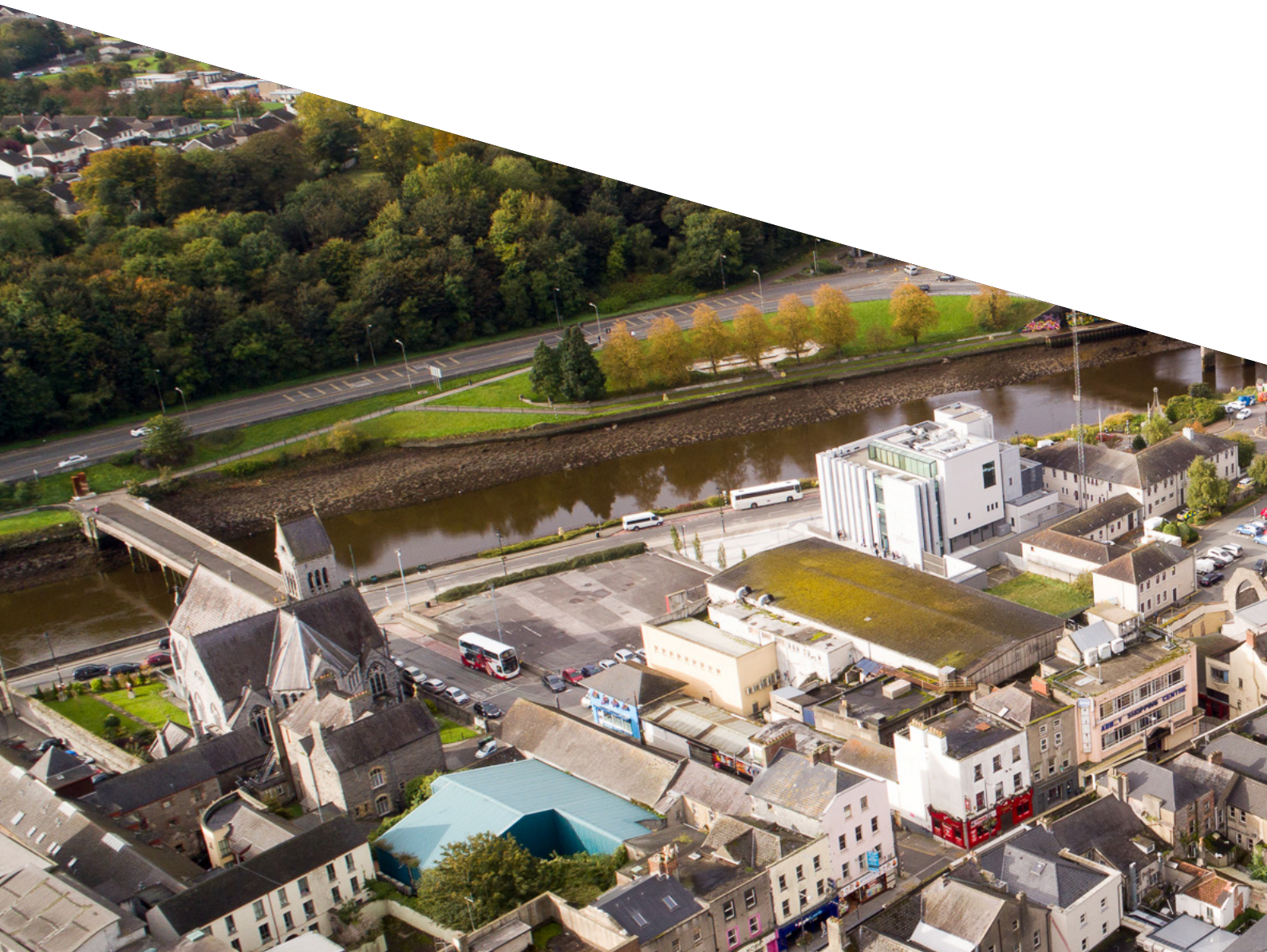
Design proposals are currently being developed taking into consideration the insights and feedback gathered from the consultation process.

These proposals will be brought forward as part of a validation exercise. This will involve another round of consultation during which we will be inviting public feedback on our proposals to validate the designs.

Following this supplementary engagement and consultation, our consultation report will be updated to reflect this additional activity and collate the feedback and responses to our proposals. At this point we will be working closely with our design team to address any gaps in our proposals.

As part of the supplementary consultation we will be carrying out a public awareness campaign to drive participation in the process. This will include activities such as: a local leaflet drop; a social media campaign; public notices in local newspapers; website updates; a public information webinar; stakeholder meetings; and letters to elected representatives and stakeholders etc.

During the period from submission to determination, we will continue to monitor responses to the consultation both on and offline, alerting the project team and engaging where necessary.



5. Conclusion

The ambition for the Westgate Vision project is far-reaching with support across all levels of the Council and the local community to ensure appropriate and successful regeneration of this key area within Drogheda town.

Our engagement has shown there is a strong appetite for this work and a strong desire for public engagement and interaction on the overall project. This is vital for the success of the project, as the strong political and community support and buy-in will be key for the delivery of the work. The stakeholders and community within Westgate are very active and politically engaged in relation to any and all development in the area and are keen to see the regeneration of the area through to fruition.

Key issues identified for the design team included improving connectivity, enhancing the heritage aspects, creating space for culture to thrive, addressing safety and dereliction.

The project team acknowledges the important role that the stakeholders and community play in ensuring the success of this project and look forward to continuing to work closely with all these groups and representatives to deliver the vision for Westgate.

Appendix 1: Stakeholder Letter

29 April 2021
Delivered by post

Dear

HELP MAKE THE WESTGATE VISION OUR REALITY

I am writing to you on behalf of Louth County Council to inform you of the launch of an early consultation regarding the proposed regeneration of lands at Westgate, Drogheda. A site location map of the proposed site is enclosed.

Westgate Vision is a targeted planning response aimed at channelling investment into this core area, as an alternative to building on green field sites at the edge of Drogheda. The first stage of this extensive project is proposed to focus on improving the visual amenity and public facilities in the areas of The Barlow, Old Abbey and Donnaghy's Mill.

Louth County Council is now undertaking early engagement with key stakeholders to inform the development of the project and allow you to contribute to the key design principles of the site.

Baseline Research and Emerging Masterplan

The appointed multi-disciplinary team is working to establish a set of strategic and considerate design principles cognisant of the needs and aspirations of the local community to ensure the development of a masterplan for the regeneration of the Westgate area.

We are keen to engage with you to assess the needs and aspirations the local community surrounding the site. To inform this work I would kindly ask you to complete the following baseline survey online, available at www.westgatevision.ie. The survey will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete.

Information Sessions

Louth County Council will shortly begin engagement with residents and local stakeholders through a series of web-based meetings to assess their requirements and discuss the proposed future use of the site.

A dedicated meeting will take place via Zoom with representatives from residential and community groups directly associated with the lands at The Barlow, Old Abbey, and Donaghy's Mill. This meeting will take place on TBC (14 June – 24 June)

If you are interested in taking part in this meeting please email us at turley@westgatevision.ie.

As part of our consultation, we will also be distributing leaflets to the local area outlining the key consultation dates, as well as how you can access the survey online. We will also be publishing a number

of social media posts, which will let you know more about the online survey and public consultation webinar.

What's next?

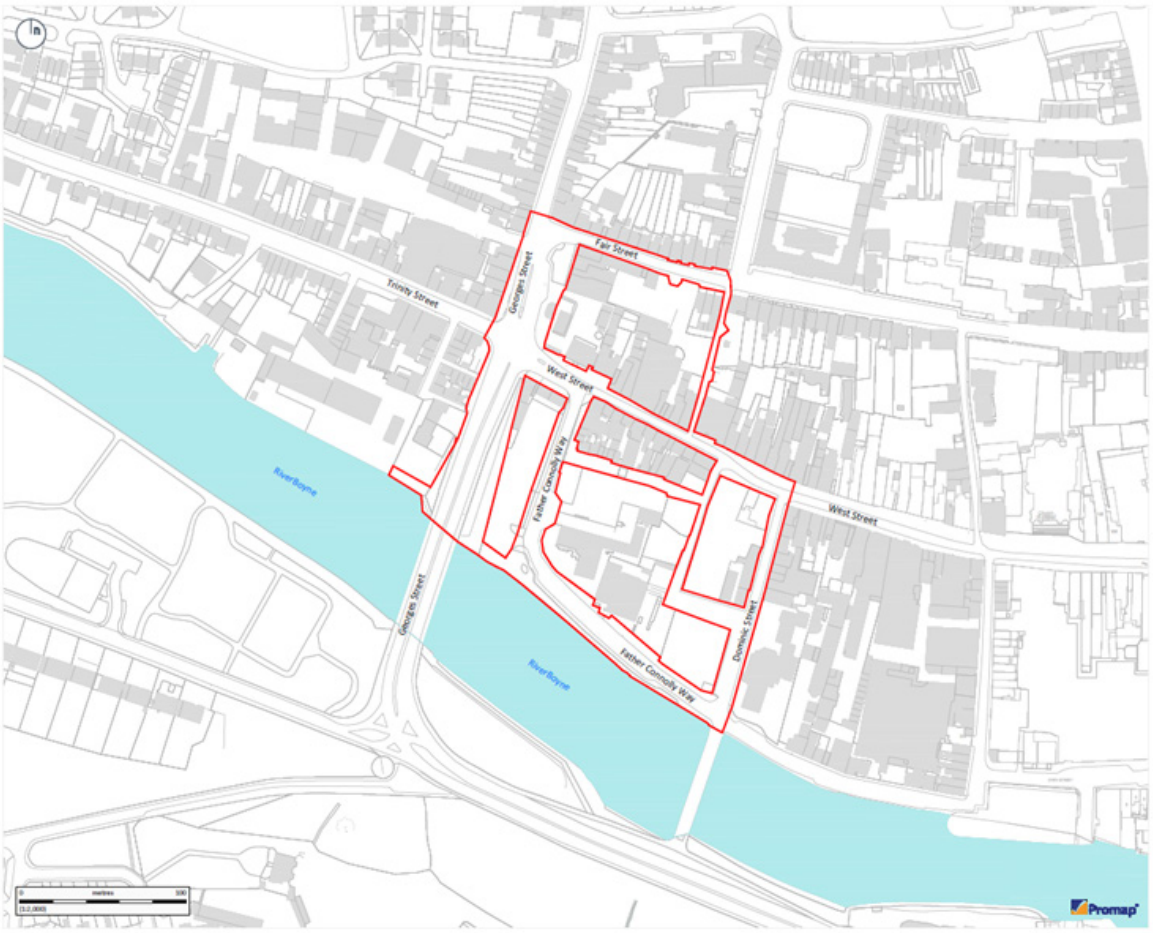
We will seek to capture a wide variety of feedback during the first phase of consultation, using the aforementioned survey and meetings, to help shape our proposals.

Following this feedback, and further development of the masterplan by the project team, we will contact you with further design considerations which may have been made.

Yours sincerely

Karen Power
Associate Director, Strategic Communications

karen.power@turleyplanning.ie



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Redline Boundary

CLIENT:
Louth County Council

PROJECT:
Westgate, Drogheda

DRAWING:
Redline Plan

PROJECT NUMBER:
LOUB3004

DRAWING NUMBER: 1001
CHECKED BY: MR

REVISION: B
STATUS: DRAFT

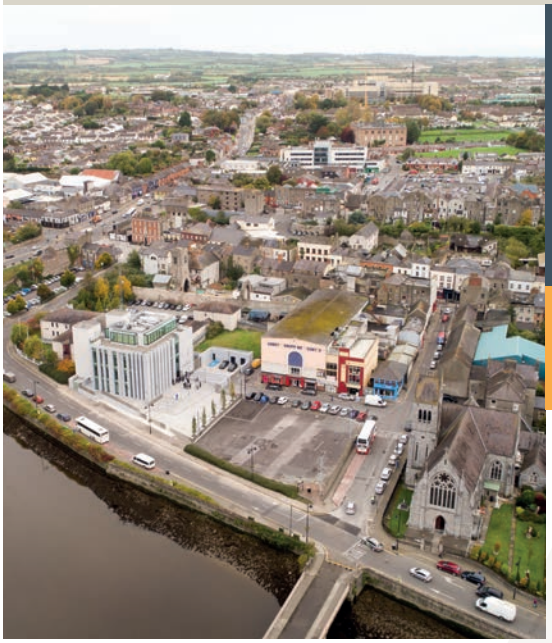
DATE: April 2021
SCALE: 1:2000 @ A3

Turley

Appendix 2: Consultation Leaflet

The Regeneration of Westgate

Take part in our survey



Westgate, Drogheda

Westgate Vision is a targeted planning response aimed at channelling investment into this core area. The first stage of this extensive project is proposed to focus on improving street scape and public space, and developing new facilities in the Westgate area.

Louth County Council are seeking your invaluable contributions to help the Westgate Vision become a reality.

Have your say at
www.westgatevision.ie

Email: contact@westgatevision.ie

Freephone hotline: 1800-010101

Turley, 4 Pembroke Street Upper, Dublin D02 VN24

FSC-Certified
Recycle me

Have your say

Louth County Council is inviting members of the local community and businesses to take part in an early consultation by completing a short online survey at **www.westgatevision.ie.** The survey seeks to explore the needs and aspirations of the local community, and opportunities for enhancement in the Westgate area.

The survey will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete and the deadline for submissions is **5pm, Friday 4 June.**

If you would like to receive a posted version of this survey please

Email contact@westgatevision.ie

Freephone consultation hotline: **1800-010101**.

Complete the freepost form overleaf and a member of the team will contact you to arrange a postal survey.

Louth County Council will host a digital information event via Zoom on **Tuesday 20 July**. To register for this event please visit **www.westgatevision.ie**

Turley
4 Upper Pembroke Street
Freepost FDN7433
Dublin 2
DO2 VN24

Name:

Email:

Address:

Comment:

Should you wish to be contacted about the project, please tick here ☐

Thank you for your comments. A member of the team will be in touch in relation to your feedback. Personal details will not be shared with a third party and we will not contact you in relation to any other project or for marketing purposes. The information you provide will be stored securely until project completion. Following the end of this project, this information will be deleted. Unless you have indicated otherwise on the feedback form, we will not contact you about this project.

Appendix 3: Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Bonneagar Iompair Éireann
Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Karen Power
Associate Director, Strategic Communications
Turley
4 Pembroke Street Upper
Dublin 2 D02 VN24

by e.mail; contact@westgateavenue.ie

Dáta | Date	Ár dTag | Our Ref.
2 June, 2021	Ref. TII21-113429

Re. Louth County Council - Westgate Vision, Drogheda

Dear Ms. Power,

Thank you for your e.mail of 25 May, 2021, relating to the above consultation.

TII notes the Westgate Vision relates to an area in the urban centre of Drogheda.

However, TII considers it important that the Council consider implications for potential incident emergency measures for the M1 i.e. diversions potentially via the R132. The R132 represents a potential alternative strategic crossing of the River Boyne in the event of emergency diversion measures required on the M1.

The Authority requests that this issue is addressed in the development of the Westgate Vision in the interests of road user and traffic safety.

Yours sincerely,

Michael McCormack
Senior Land Use Planner

Próiseálann BIÉ sonraí pearsanta a sholáthraítear dó i gcomhréir lena Fhógra ar Chosaint Sonraí atá ar fáil ag www.tii.ie.
TII processes personal data in accordance with its Data Protection Notice available at www.tii.ie.

Bonneagar Iompair Éireann
Ionad Gnó Gheata na Páirce
Sráid Gheata na Páirce
Baile Átha Cliath 8
Éire, D08 DK10

Transport Infrastructure Ireland
Parkgate Business Centre
Parkgate Street
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Ireland, D08 DK10

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Appendix 4: Stakeholder Meeting Notes

Meeting details	Summary	Emerging themes
Droichead Arts Centre **Friday 4 June 2021**	LCC noted the contribution that DAC has been to the Westgate area and communities. DAC detailed plans to develop the yard at the back of Barlow House (not O'Reillys Yard, this is owned by LCC). DAC have applied for a grant to carry out a feasibility study for the development of a flagship cultural centre at Barlow House. LCC asked to be kept updated as the study progresses. DAC are 31 years in operation and own two buildings within the study area. As part of their strategic plan they purchased Barlow House and believe Westgate has the potential to become a cultural destination. They work with young and old and provide free supports to arts and artists. DAC made the point that access from Westgate is key to the arts centre. DAC highlighted the support within their organisation and the cultural sector as a whole for outdoor performance space. Vacant buildings in Westgate need to be addressed perhaps 10 artists in vacant buildings They are keen to explore the concept of digital art. Discussions focused around how art can spill onto the street.	• Potential for Westgate to become a cultural hub with a variety of arts and culture uses • Design team to consider a seamless flow of footfall between the Westgate area and Barlow House • DAC keen to have Karen and Seamus visit • Large group with members supporting outdoor performances as we move on after Covid • For art to spill onto the street there needs to be a safer public realm, traffic issues addressed and outdoor seating
Property owner Thursday 1 July 2021	**Property owner of nine buildings in the study area, mainly Narrow West Street. Unsure of all the specific addresses but indicated 48 – 52, 67, 69, 70 – 71. Property numbers 48 – 52 are derelict** **Jumping Jacks was to occupy one building but Covid has delayed and possibly scuppered this.** **A nail salon occupies number 69.** **Upper floors in all properties are vacant.** **He noted that St Patricks Well is located in the back garden of one of his properties (St Patricks Well Lane).** **He is very supportive of the project and keen for a more in-depth meeting with representatives from the design team, either in advance of, or following, the webinar.** **Noted he will register for the webinar.** **Noted his appreciation to LCC for the commitment shown in bringing life back into Westgate.**	• Issues with traffic parking outside his properties in Westgate but going to other areas of Drogheda • Improved streetscape • Improve vacant building frontage, engagement between LCC and property owners • Potential to develop St Patricks Well as an interest for tourists • Dedicated car parking

Business owner **Thursday 1 July 2021**	Opening a business on West St The property was lying idle for a number of years. He will be taking of a section from which to run his security business, in particular he will be operating out of the front part of the building. He references previous plans for the building which included a retail / restaurant space with the removal of the wall at Father Connolly Way opening that entire part of Westgate. There was a previous planning application for the back of the property he will be operating from, drawings done up, steps down off a pedestrian into Old Abbey Lane. Extract from the Drogheda Independent in 2004: John & Tracey Murtagh, No 2 The Close, Millmount Abbey, Drogheda Planning permission is sought for the construction of 'studio for performing arts', changing rooms, offices, storage and cafe/restaurant. The application shall also include the protection of existing listed medieval archway and refurbishment of existing front wall with ancillary site works at Old Abbey Lane, Drogheda, County Louth for John and Tracey Murtagh, Old Abbey Lane, Drogheda. He also noted that planning permission has been sought for a multi – storey apartment complex in the vicinity. The application states: Permission for development on a site comprising of numbers 26, 28, 29, 30 and 31 Georges Street, including lands known as Swan Yard to consist of the demolition and clearance of all buildings and structures on site including demolition of 5 houses and a domestic garage and outbuildings. The site is bounded to the east by George's Street, to the south by Trinity Street, to the west by the rear gardens of dwellings within Trinity Gardens and to the north by a property fronting George's Street and its rear garden. The development consists of construction of a 'Build to Rent' residential development which varies in height from 1-2 storeys along the western and northern boundaries and from 3-7 storeys on Georges Street, comprising 57 no. apartments (6 no. studio, 34 no. 1 bed and 17 no. 2 bed) and communal residents support services and amenities with a central courtyard and car parking area to contain 17 no. car parking spaces. It also includes the creation of a new vehicular entrance off the local access road to Trinity Gardens to the south of the site including a new footpath and public lighting along the southern site boundary and the creation of a public open space onto Georges Street including footpath widening. This application also provides for an ESB Substation, undergrounding of overhead lines where required, landscaping, bin storage, bicycle parking/storage and all associated site development works and boundary treatments. He has registered for the webinar and would be interested in speaking with a member of the design team once the preferred option is brought forward. Noted his support of the proposals to regenerate Westgate.	• Enhancing the streetscape and public realm will encourage building and business owners to do the same • Issues with state of vacant buildings and anti-social graffiti • Opportunities for remote working with relaxing space by the river for lunch breaks • Potential for enhancing historic assets

Appendix 5: Press Releases

Press release

Westgate Vision, Drogheda

May 2021

LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL ANNOUNCES WESTGATE REGENERATION CONSULTATION

Louth County Council has [today] announced the start of an early consultation process regarding the regeneration of the Westgate area in Drogheda.

The project represents the first stage of the Westgate Vision, launched by Louth County Council in 2018, which is a targeted planning response aimed at channelling investment into this core area. A key objective of the project is to prepare an application for funding under the Urban Regeneration Development Fund. This current project stage is also funded under the same scheme.

As part of this process, Louth County Council is inviting all stakeholders and interested parties, including residents, retailers, institutions, and businesses as well as community and sporting groups, to get involved in the process and express their views and aspirations for the area to help shape and inform design proposals. To facilitate this engagement, Louth County Council is launching an online survey at www.westgatevision.ie on Friday, 21st May 2021. The survey will close at 5pm on Friday, 4th June 2021.

This initial consultation is part of the brief in place for Turley who are working on preparation of proposals which the Council will use as part of their application for funding under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund which is provided to support sustainable development, as set out in Project Ireland 2040.

Louth County Council are delighted to launch this community consultation, which provides an opportunity for Drogheda community to have their say on what will contribute to an urban regeneration in Westgate that balances protection of heritage assets with townscape recovery leading to the creation of a vibrant, liveable urban heritage district in the town.

A dedicated information event will be held at 6pm on Tuesday, 20th July 2021 to discuss the project. Considering current public health restrictions, due to COVID -19, this session will take place digitally, via Zoom.

To complete the survey, find out more information and sign up to the online event, please visit www.westgatevision.ie. Members of the public can also contact the project team by emailing contact@westgatevision.ie or by calling the Freephone consultation hotline: 1800-010101.

ENDS

Press release

Westgate Vision, Drogheda

June 2021

EXCEPTIONAL NUMBERS TAKE PART IN SURVEY LAUNCHED BY LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL

Record numbers of citizens have taken part in an early public consultation on the regeneration of the Westgate area in Drogheda, according to Louth County Council.

More than 700 people completed the online survey, contributing their ideas and detailing their aspirations for Westgate and this will help shape the design proposals which will be out for public consultation later this year.

The project represents the first stage of the Westgate Vision, launched by Louth County Council in 2018, which is a targeted planning response aimed at channelling investment into this core area.

This initial consultation is part of the brief in place for planning and regeneration consultants Turley who are working on preparation of proposals which the Council will use as part of an application for funding under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund. This current stage of Westgate Vision streetscape vision has been funded under the same URDF scheme, which is provided to support and encourage proposals for sustainable urban development or regeneration, as set out in Project Ireland 2040.

Aoife Lawler from Louth County Council said:

"Louth County Council are delighted that so many members of community in Drogheda have engaged with this project and took the opportunity to have their say on what improving the streetscape and supporting recovery in this area of the town. The feedback is helping proposals to shape a high quality plan for the Westgate area, focusing on improving public spaces and acting as a catalyst for positive regeneration and supporting development in the town centre."

Turley are a full service planning and development company working with an experienced project team, and the council on this regeneration project.

Seamus Donohoe, Director at Turley said:

"We are delighted to bring our co-design services and expertise to bear on this project. This project has people and place at its heart, and the insights gathered through public engagement by our strategic communications team will help shape proposals and discussion within out multi-disciplinary design team. We are delighted with the huge response from the town, and look forward to delivering proposals that we hope will secure further funding to deliver improved public space and wider regeneration for the Westgate area of the town."

A dedicated information event will be held at 6pm on Tuesday, 20th July 2021 to discuss the project and the survey results. Considering current public health restrictions, due to COVID -19, this session will take place digitally, via Zoom.

To sign up to the online event, please visit www.westgatevision.ie. Members of the public can also contact the project team by emailing contact@westgatevision.ie or by calling the Freephone consultation hotline: 1800-010101.

Appendix 6: Public Notice

SHAPE THE REGENERATION OF WESTGATE, DROGHEDA

Louth County Council has launched an exciting project for the regeneration and development of the Westgate area.

The project represents the first stage of the Westgate Vision, launched by Louth County Council in 2018. A key objective of the project is to prepare proposals which the Council can use as part of an application for funding under the Urban Regeneration Development Fund. This current project stage is also funded under the same scheme.

Louth County Council is inviting stakeholders and members of the community to take part in an early consultation to understand the needs and aspirations of the local community and to explore opportunities for enhancement of the Westgate area.

Survey: To take part in the survey, please visit www.westgatevision.ie

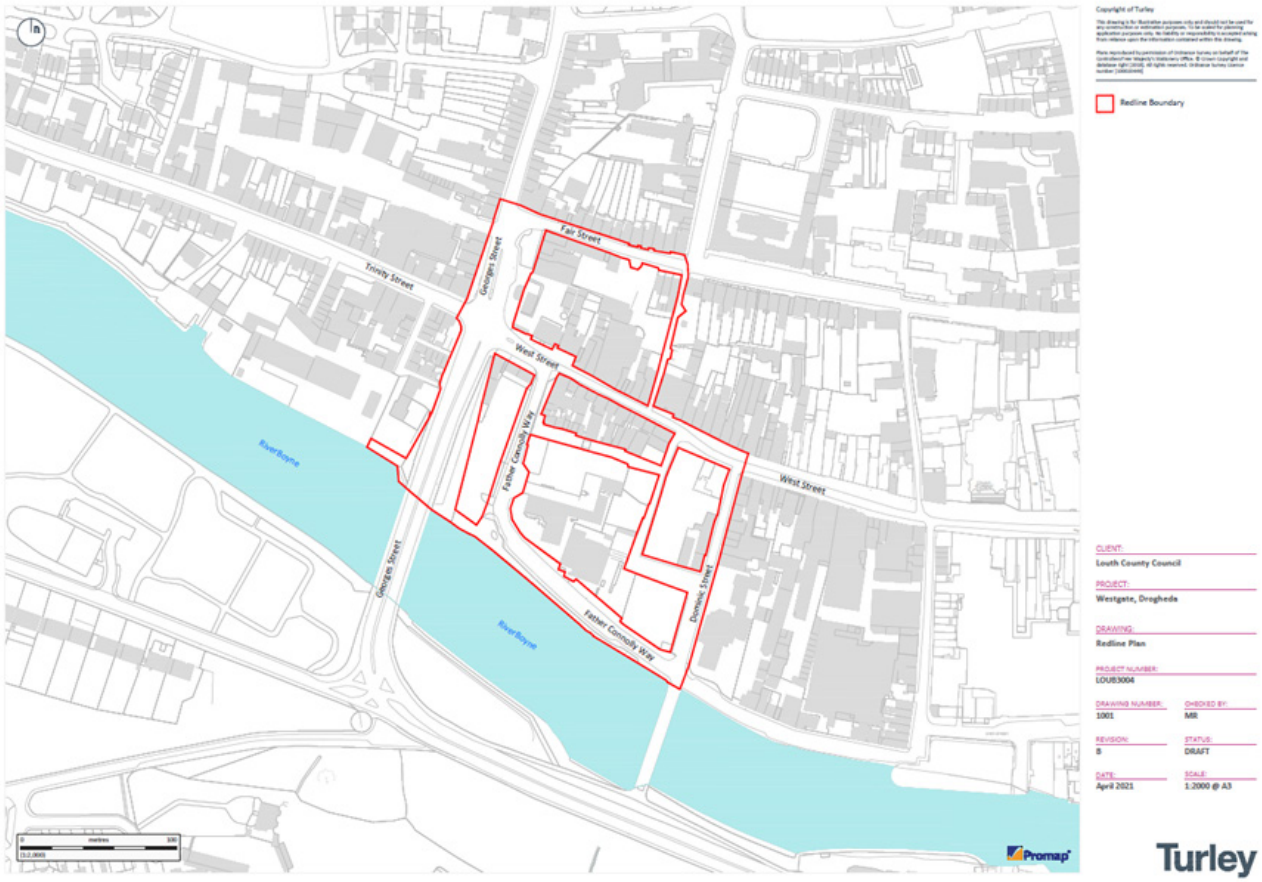
Please note the survey will close at 5pm on Friday, 4 June 2021.

Further information relating to the Westgate project and consultation can be obtained by visiting www.westgatevision.ie, by calling 1800-010101 or by emailing contact@westgatevision.ie

If you wish to engage, you may do so by completing the online survey (above), by contacting our Freephone consultation hotline; by contacting us by email (contact@westgatevision.ie) and/or in writing to: Turley, 4 Pembroke Street Upper, Dublin D02 VN24 no later than Friday, 4 June 2021.

Site Location Map

(includes Fair Street, Georges Street, West Street, Father Connolly Way and Dominic Street)



Appendix 7: Consultation Survey

The consultation survey is available online at www.westgatevision.ie

Welcome

Louth County Council has launched and exciting project for the regeneration and development of the Westgate area, Drogheda. A next step in the Westgage Vision, this project seeks to recover the streetscape and provide high quality public spaces that will transform Westgate and act as a catalyst for positive regeneration of the area in the broader town centre.

Louth County Council is inviting stakeholders and members of the community to take part in an early consultation to understand the needs and aspirations of the local community and to explore opportunities for enhancement of the Westgate area.

We are inviting you to take part in the below to help inform the early design plans for this regeneration project. The survey will take approximately **15 minutes** to complete.

The survey will close at 5pm on Friday, 4 June 2021.

1 I primarily visit/use the town of Drogheda for the following (check all that apply)

- ☐ Shopping
- ☐ Own a business
- ☐ Work / Employment
- ☐ Leisure
- ☐ Residence
- ☐ Public Services (Post Office, GP, Banking etc.)
- ☐ Restaurants / Cafe

Other (Please Specify)

2 What age group are you in?

- ☐ 0-18 years old
- ☐ 19-30 years old
- ☐ 31-40 years old
- ☐ 41-50 years old
- ☐ 51-60 years old
- ☐ 61-70 years old
- ☐ 71-80 years old
- ☐ 80+
- ☐ Would prefer not to say

3 If you would like to know more about the project, and the upcoming public information webinar(s), please complete the contact form below:

Name

Address

Telephone number

Email address

Do not want to be contacted in relation to this project

Your Priorities

4 In your opinion, what are the most important features of Westgate at present (please use arrows to rank in order of importance)

- [ ] Leisure facilities
- [ ] Proximity to the river
- [ ] Links to the Abbey and museum
- [ ] Bridge of Peace
- [ ] Medieval town walls
- [ ] Car parking provision
- [ ] Cleanliness
- [ ] Pedestrian walkways/greenways
- [ ] Memorials by the bridge
- [ ] Links with the green open park space
- [ ] Shopping
- [ ] Public facilities (e.g. Courthouse)
- [ ] Tourism
- [ ] Other

6 How do you currently rate these features in the Westgate area?

	Poor	Fair	Neutral	Good	Excellent
Sense of arrival	1	2	3	4	5
Connectivity	1	2	3	4	5
Safe, protected and accessible historic buildings	1	2	3	4	5
Amenity Space	1	2	3	4	5
Traffic	1	2	3	4	5
Community Facilities	1	2	3	4	5
Sense of safety and security	1	2	3	4	5
Spaces for markets	1	2	3	4	5
Outdoor dining and gathering	1	2	3	4	5

7 How important are the following to Westgate's successful regeneration?

	Very important	Important	Dont know	Less important	Unimportant
Sense of arrival	1	2	3	4	5
Connectivity	1	2	3	4	5
Safe, protected and accessible historic buildings	1	2	3	4	5
Amenity space	1	2	3	4	5
Reduction in traffic	1	2	3	4	5
Community facilities	1	2	3	4	5
A sense of safety and security	1	2	3	4	5
Spaces for markets	1	2	3	4	5
Outdoor dining and gathering	1	2	3	4	5

Traffic and car parking

The Project Design team is exploring increasing connections between areas in Westgate. To what extent do you agree with the following statements, related to proposed traffic and car parking proposals:

8 I would support the concept of a car-free zone within Westgate

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

9 A reduction in traffic at the Westgate crossroads could create safer and more attractive communal space

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

10 Westgate would benefit from a centralised car parking location

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

11 If a centralised parking location was provided I would support the repurposing of some car parking spaces for development / other use

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

12 If car parking spaces were repurposed what would you like to see in their place?

13 Please give your comments on the current parking and traffic flow in Westgate

Heritage and culture

14 How would you enhance the heritage features of the Drogheda Historic Town Walls?

15 Please rate in order of preference the actions you would like to see happening in the Westgate area

- [ ] Cleaning and revealing the Drogheda Historic Town Walls
- [ ] An arrival structure, such as an archway, connected to the history of the Drogheda Historic Town Walls
- [ ] Physical links such as protected walkways between the places of historical significance
- [ ] Further development of a heritage trail

16 A outdoor performance area would benefit the Westgate area

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

17 Westgate would benefit from more space that allows for cultural events and activities

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

18 There is a need for a dedicated place for street art in Westgate, to discourage anti-social graffiti

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

19 Any further comments on Heritage and Culture in Westgate?

Tourism & Economy

Tourism

20 What do you think attracts visitors to Westgate? (Please check all that apply)

- [ ] Retail
- [ ] Business
- [ ] Relax by the river
- [ ] Heritage of the town
- [ ] Through traffic
- [ ] Historic buildings
- [ ] Heritage trail
- [ ] Safe outdoor space
- [ ] Walking and cycling
- [ ] Access to other areas of Drogheda
- [ ] Car parking options
- [ ] Eating and drinking facilities

Other (Please Specify)

21 Why do people not visit Westgate

To what extent do you agree with the following statement:

22 The Abbey has the potential to be a strong tourist attraction

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

23 Please provide reasoning for your answer

Economic Development

Economic Development

To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

24 I would like to see more options for remote working spaces in Westgate

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

25 More structured outdoor space by the river leading up to the pedestrian bridge would attract more people to work or visit the area

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

26 What do you believe would help to generate more footfall in Westgate during:

Daytime

Night time

27 What development you would like to see in the Westgate area? (e.g. office space, cultural space, public art, performance space, remote working facilities, retail etc.) and why?

28 Any further comments or thoughts on Tourism, either present or future, in Westgate

New amenities in the Westgate area

29 Would more open and greens spaces encourage you to spending more time in Westgate?

Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Neutral	Likely	Very Likely
1	2	3	4	5

30 Please rank in order of preference, these potential enhancements to Westgate

- [ ] Families space with play area
- [ ] Open, green space
- [ ] Markets
- [ ] Civic Square
- [ ] Community garden
- [ ] More trees and shrubbery
- [ ] Outdoor seating
- [ ] Outdoor Performance Areas
- [ ] Dedicated Car Free areas
- [ ] Segregated cycle lanes
- [ ] Parklets
- [ ] Improved civic square

31 Please select the community facility that appeals to you most (visuals)

Market space

Community garden

Outdoor meeting and seating area

Outdoor performance and festival

Family space

Open green space

Other (Please Specify)

32 Any further comments on thoughts on amenities in the Westgage area?

Connectivity & The River Boyne

Connectivity

33 How important would you rate active travel (walking, cycling, etc.) options in Westgate?

34 I support segregated cycle lanes providing a link between areas of significance such as the Abbey, the Bridge of Peace and the Museum

35 I support Pedestrian and segregated cycle lanes on the Bridge of Peace

Riverside Development

36 In regenerating Westgate development of the river and surrounding space should be a priority

37 I would spend more time by the river if there were places to sit

38 I would welcome a boat docking area along the river in Westgate

39 The memorial under the bridge along the old town walls should be formalised and retained

40 I would welcome a stronger connection between Westgate and the park on the other side of the river

Next steps

An online public information session is due to take place on Tuesday 20 July at 6pm. If you would like to attend this event please
click https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_QfUU4uqDT0K2SQSFcg7G6w

Privacy notice:
Louth County Council is the Data Controller under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) for the personal data it gathers for the purposes of preparation a proposal for the regeneration of Westgate, Drogheda .The Council accepts that you are providing your personal data on the basis of consent and are positively agreeing for the Council to hold and further use it. The personal data may be shared internally within the Council with staff who are involved in providing this service and where necessary, between internal departments with the purpose of supporting an effective delivery of service. It may also be processed by and shared with Turley Associates Ltd for the purposes of progressing the study. By completing this survey your data will be collected and processed by FreeOnlineSurveys.com (Shout.com group).Your personal data will not be shared or disclosed to any other organisations without your consent, unless the law permits or places an obligation on the Council to do so. The personal data is held and stored by the Council in a safe and secure manner and in compliance with Data Protection legislation and in line with the Council's Records Retention and Disposal Schedule. If you have any queries regarding the processing of your personal data or wish to withdraw your consent to the processing of it, please contact turley@westgatevision.ie. Further information on the Council 's data protection statement can be found at: https://www.louthcoco.ie/en/pr...

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