NENAGH
TOWN CENTRE FIRST PLAN

Nenagh
Town Centre First Plan
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Any proposals described in the Town Centre First Plan are conceptual and high-level, maps and images of potential projects are illustrative, and each will require detailed study and collaboration by the relevant parties and stakeholders for further development. The project was prepared on behalf of Tipperary County Council in accordance with the client's brief and instructions, it is not proposed to address the circumstances of any particular individual or entity. This report will be updated by the Town Centre First Team as circumstances require.

Nicholas de Jong Associates
URBAN DESIGN

Prepared by:	Issue:	Date:
NdeJ	Draft Final	05.07.25

Message from the Town Champion

The vision to support the regeneration and development of rural towns and villages as outlined in Our Rural Future and enshrined in the Town Centre First Policy has challenged us to look at Nenagh and to put in place a plan which will set out a framework to chart the future for our town over the next fifteen years.

A Town Team was formed in April 2024 and tasked with the development of the Nenagh Town Centre First Plan. This is an integrated urban strategy aimed at revitalising the town and making it more attractive for residents, businesses and visitors alike. The team is made up of a diverse range of stakeholders representing the business, retail, sporting, community, voluntary, youth and education and local authority sector of the town. The Town Centre First Plan has a strong focus on four Strategic Objectives – Economic Development; Social & Community; Environmental & Public Realm; Cultural & Heritage.

Nenagh, in common with all towns, has its own unique strengths and these are highlighted in the plan. These include community spirit with a strong sense of local identity and pride; the unique and authentic heritage assets such as Nenagh Castle and the Gaol Complex; the wide range of independent local businesses; the strategic location as a gateway to Lough Derg and Ireland's Hidden Heartlands and the rich cultural and music heritage and tradition which is celebrated through an extensive programme of festivals and events.

Already, there are several positive initiatives taking place in Nenagh. The plan will build on these, while also seeking to address the various challenges that Nenagh faces, to ensure that the town can continue to develop appropriately and provide the services and infrastructure required for a multi-generational community while protecting the town's heritage and culture and ensuring the appropriate utilisation of its assets.

A series of actions and projects have been identified within the plan and the Town Team will now focus on progressing these over the plan's lifetime. Inevitably, over that time some priorities will change, and the plan will need to be flexible enough to adapt as required. Availability of resources will be one of the challenges facing us and we will need to be proactive in identifying and availing of opportunities.

The collaborative approach to the development of the plan has been critical to ensuring that the needs and aspirations of the local community are reflected. The Town Team is very conscious of the need for on-going communication with the community so that all can participate, engage and provide feedback.

I would like to thank all involved in the preparation of the plan – consultants Nicholas de Jong Associates, all the members of Nenagh Town Team, the members and staff of Nenagh Municipal District, the Town Regeneration Officer but most of all the people of Nenagh who participated in the consultation process. This is your plan and we look forward to working with you to make it a reality.

Rosemary Joyce, Town Champion

On behalf of the Nenagh Town Team

Glossary

ACA – *Architectural Conservation Area*
Designated area with special architectural or historical interest where development must preserve or enhance character.

AHB – *Approved Housing Body*
Non-profit organisations that provide and manage social housing.

Active Travel
Sustainable transport that involves physical activity such as walking or cycling.

Banba Square
The central civic and cultural space in Nenagh, focal point of the Historic & Cultural Quarter.

BHIS – *Built Heritage Investment Scheme*
Funding scheme supporting repair and conservation of protected structures.

CAP – *Climate Action Plan*
A national or local strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change.

CCIF – *Community Centres Investment Fund*
Grant scheme to improve community centre facilities.

CPO – *Compulsory Purchase Order*
Legal tool allowing a local authority to acquire private land for public use.

CTCHC – *Collaborative Town Centre Health Check*
Methodology to assess the social, economic and physical health of town centres.

DHLGH – *Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage*
Central government department overseeing planning, housing, and heritage.

DoT – *Department of Transport*
Government department responsible for national transport policy and funding.

FI – *Fáilte Ireland*
National tourism development authority supporting destination towns and tourism infrastructure.

Green Infrastructure
Natural and semi-natural features (trees, rivers, parks) integrated into the urban environment for biodiversity and amenity.

Historic & Cultural Quarter
Nenagh's heritage core encompassing the Castle, Gaol, Courthouse, and Banba Square, targeted for tourism and cultural development.

LAP – *Local Area Plan*
Statutory plan setting land use and development policies for a local area, e.g., Nenagh & Environs LAP 2024–2030.

LEADER
EU-funded programme supporting rural development and community-led projects.

LEO – *Local Enterprise Office*
Agency providing business supports for small and start-up businesses.

LTP – *Local Transport Plan*
Plan for improving sustainable mobility (walking, cycling, public transport) within the town.

NTA – *National Transport Authority*
Government agency responsible for public transport planning, active travel investment, and regional mobility plans.

NTDC – *North Tipperary Development Company*
Local development group supporting community, social inclusion and rural enterprise.

PPN – *Public Participation Network*
A structure that allows community and voluntary organisations to engage in local authority decision-making.

RRDF – *Rural Regeneration and Development Fund*
Government fund supporting rural town centre renewal, heritage reuse and community facilities.

SEAI – *Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland*
Agency promoting energy efficiency, renewables, and retrofit schemes.

SECOE – *Sustainable Energy Centre of Excellence*
Proposed low-carbon energy research and training facility in Martyr's Road Regeneration Quarter.

SICAP – *Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme*
National programme supporting disadvantaged individuals and communities.

SuDS – *Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems*
Drainage techniques that mimic natural systems to reduce flood risk and pollution.

TCF – *Town Centre First*
A national policy and planning framework to regenerate towns by prioritising compact, sustainable, community-led development.

TCDP – *Tipperary County Development Plan*
County-level statutory development framework, guiding planning and infrastructure investment.

TEA – *Tipperary Energy Agency*
Regional agency supporting energy efficiency, renewables, and climate action.

TFI – *Transport for Ireland*
Brand under which public transport services are delivered.

THRIVE – *Town Centre First Heritage Revival Scheme*
Funding programme supporting renovation and adaptive reuse of vacant or derelict heritage buildings.

TVRS – *Town and Village Renewal Scheme*
Supports rural town improvement projects including public realm and reuse of buildings.

URDF – *Urban Regeneration and Development Fund*
Major fund supporting public realm, infrastructure, and urban renewal in towns and cities.

WWTP – *Waste Water Treatment Plant*

Executive Summary

The Nenagh Town Centre First (TCF) Plan is an integrated urban strategy developed by the Nenagh Town Team, in partnership with Tipperary County Council, to revitalise Nenagh over the next 15 years. The plan aligns with the national Town Centre First policy, aiming to tackle vacancy and dereliction, enhance liveability, and support sustainable economic and community development.

Vision

Nenagh will evolve into a vibrant, inclusive market town with a thriving local economy, a living town centre community, restored and re-purposed heritage buildings, sustainable mobility, and a welcoming cultural-tourism identity. The plan reflects both statutory planning frameworks and the community's own aspirations.

Strategic Objectives

The plan is built around four interrelated strategic themes:
1. **Economic Development** – Strengthen enterprise, reduce vacancy, and support local businesses.
2. **Social and Community** – Provide inclusive community services and promote town centre living.
3. **Environmental and Public Realm** – Enhance public spaces, green infrastructure, and mobility.
4. **Cultural and Heritage** – Celebrate Nenagh's historic character and cultural vibrancy.

Strategic Regeneration Areas

The TCF Plan fully supports the main priority Regeneration Areas, aligned with the Nenagh Local Area Plan:
- **Historic & Cultural Quarter** (Nenagh Castle, Gaol, Banba Square)
- **Rialto Business & Enterprise Hub**
- **Martyr's Road Regeneration Quarter** (featuring SECOE – Sustainable Energy Centre)
- **Stereame Campus** (mixed-use innovation and housing)
- **Lisbunny Industrial Estate** (strategic employment zone)

Community Engagement

The Plan is community-led, underpinned by extensive consultation:
- 950+ survey responses (10% of the local population)
- Strong support for tackling vacancy, promoting events, enhancing public space, and delivering youth and community facilities.
- Priority projects identified include redevelopment of the Rialto Cinema, creation of a Community Hub, improvement of transport and mobility infrastructure, and greening initiatives.

Key Projects

The TCF Plan prioritises:
- A Vacant Buildings Scheme (adaptive reuse and restoration)
- A new Community Hub
- A 'Green Nenagh' campaign (biodiversity and greening projects)
- A Train Station Masterplan (intermodal transport hub)
- Continued delivery of existing strategic projects in Rialto, Martyr's Road, and the Historic Quarter

Implementation & Delivery

The Town Team, supported by the Town Regeneration Officer, will oversee delivery. Actions are phased into short-, medium- and long-term projects to 2040. The plan is designed to remain flexible and responsive to emerging needs and opportunities.

Funding Opportunities

Delivery will leverage multiple funding streams, including:
- Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF)
- Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF)
- Town & Village Renewal Scheme
- Croí Cónaithe (Towns) Fund
- Active Travel & Climate Action funds
- Heritage Council and Arts Council grants
- LEADER and EU programmes

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope

The objective of the project is to create an Integrated Urban Strategy (IUS) for Nenagh which sits within the framework of TCF Policy and will contribute to a comprehensive reimagining of the town and the way people use it, to capitalise on the significant potential offered by Rural Regeneration Development Funding (RRDF) and other potential funding sources.

From herein the IUS will be referred to as the Town Centre First (TCF) Plan for Nenagh.

The TCF Plan will:

- Set out a clear, visual and action-based strategy for the future development and revitalisation of Nenagh.
- Identify projects that promote the conservation and adaptive reuse of the built heritage while reducing vacancy and dereliction in the Town Centre.
- Address the prioritisation, development and specification of project proposals to create a pipeline of investment-ready public realm, built heritage refurbishment, renovation and adaptive reuse projects.

The focus of the Plan is the town centre and immediate surrounds. It will form the basis for future town centre development by integrating existing strategies with future plans into a single strategy document.

"*The TCF policy aims to create town centres that function as viable, vibrant and attractive locations for people to live, work and visit, while also functioning as the service, social, cultural and recreational hub for the local community*".

The Strategy will be the new blueprint for the town, action oriented, and will identify specific interventions required to meet the objectives of the TCF Policy. It will provide clarity and transparency so that retailers, businesses, community groups, local people, along with people who live within the town's hinterland, can get behind and clearly see the opportunities to deliver a town which has a vibrant and sustainable future as a place to live, work, visit and do business.

Key considerations of the TCF Plan for Nenagh are how to:

- Maximise the return on the Tourism and Heritage assets such as Lough Derg, Nenagh Gaol Complex, Nenagh Castle and Courthouse and other heritage buildings in the Historic & Cultural Quarter by demonstrating ways to unlock the potential of increasing visitor numbers and, in turn, increase job creation.
- Maximize Nenagh Castle and the associated historic environs as an asset for the town and re-imagine Nenagh as a desirable destination and a centre for historic exploration, walking, cycling, artistic endeavour and water sports etc.
- Position Nenagh's strategic location as a place to live, mid-way between Limerick, Galway, Athlone, Portlaoise and Kilkenny.
- Tackle vacancy, combat dereliction and breathe new life into the town centre.
- Bring the outdoor amenities and opportunities, the facilities and services in the town into focus to improve the quality of life of the citizens.
- Identify ways and means to support the existing retailers and attract more shoppers.
- Improve the use of festivals and events as attractions and identify locations where they could be held.
- Maximise the public transport connections e.g. bus and rail.

The Plan is broadly defined by an approximate 10-minute walking distance from the town centre (800m radius from Banba Square).
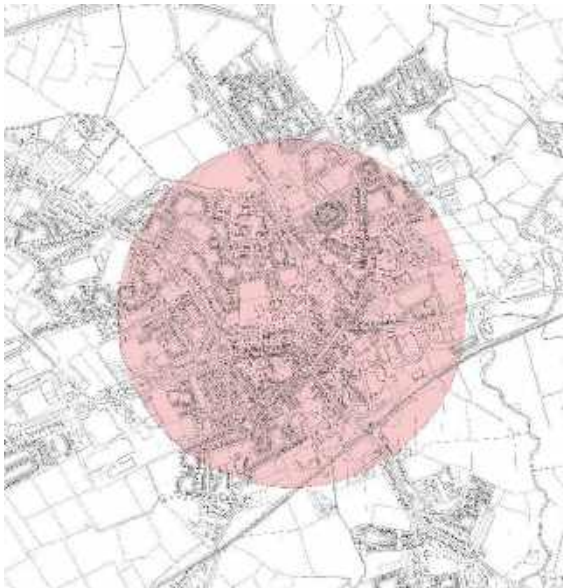
Plan extents (approximate)

The timeframe for delivery of the TCF Plan is approximately 15 years, or by the year 2040, phased in relation to existing funding commitments and according to the future requirements and priorities of the Town Team and local community (subject to availability of further funding and resources).

1.2 Town Centre First Policy

The Town Centre First (TCF) Policy is a major cross-government initiative that aims to tackle vacancy, combat dereliction, and breathe new life into our town centres. It highlights the importance of making town centres attractive, viable and vibrant places to live, work, visit and invest. It supports "Our Rural Future", Ireland's rural development policy which is integral to the national economic, social, cultural and environmental well-being. It advocates for a holistic, place-based approach to sustainable rural development.

The policy seeks to support towns of all sizes, recognising each town is unique and diverse and acknowledges that a "one size fits all" approach will not achieve sustainable and thriving communities.

The TCF approach recognises that successful places:
- Are characterised by an attractive public realm (streets, spaces and parks) that is designed to invite people to meet, mingle and dwell.
- Contain a variety of services/shops that provide employment opportunities, enable people to shop locally and meet the needs of the local community.
- Provide a range of cultural, recreational and community spaces (that includes scope for periodic events and festivals) that bring together community members and attract visitors.
- Contain a well-maintained building stock that creates visual interest and animates streets and spaces.
- Conserve, adapt and highlight historical buildings and streetscapes that provide the town with a unique identity.
- Are attractive vibrant places for enterprises to grow and develop.
- Are well connected and accessible to sustainable modes of transport, enabling a high proportion of journeys to be made by foot and/or

bicycle from the immediate hinterland (e.g. the '10-Minute town' concept).

- Manage traffic within central areas so that streets prioritise vulnerable users (pedestrians and cyclists), enabling them to move about safely and in comfort.
- Provide a mix of housing typologies and tenures to cater for diverse communities in terms of age, income and mobility.
- Utilise digital technology to enhance the experience of living and working in towns, enabling greater choices in terms of location and lifestyle.
- Provide opportunities for the amenity, health and well-being of residents, workers and visitors.

The TCF Plan outlines a collaborative framework (led by the Town Team) for implementation, an evidence-based understanding of Nenagh, and a clear vision with strategic priorities and projects. All information is grounded in current data and policy to support funding bids and effective delivery.

Key Elements of the Town Centre First approach

1.3 First Impressions

Based on initial meetings with the Town Team and responses to the community survey the main strengths and aspects people like most about Nenagh are:

Community Spirit

- Widely praised as a friendly, close-knit town with helpful, welcoming people. Many emphasized Nenagh's strong sense of local identity and pride.

Heritage & Character

- Residents deeply value Nenagh's historical assets – especially Nenagh Castle, the old Gaol, and traditional shopfronts – which create a unique and authentic character.

Independent Local Businesses

- The presence of artisan shops, cafés, restaurants, and services was seen as a key strength. People appreciate the variety and personal touch of local businesses.

Compact, Walkable Town Centre

- Generally recognized that Nenagh is easy to walk around, with essential amenities, shops, and public buildings all within a short distance. This walkability adds to the town's appeal.

Proximity to Lough Derg and Nature

- The town's location near Lough Derg, parks, and countryside was cited as a major lifestyle advantage, offering access to outdoor recreation and scenic beauty.

Central Location / Accessibility

- Nenagh's connectivity – via the M7 motorway and rail is acknowledged as a strength for both residents and visitors, making it a convenient regional hub.
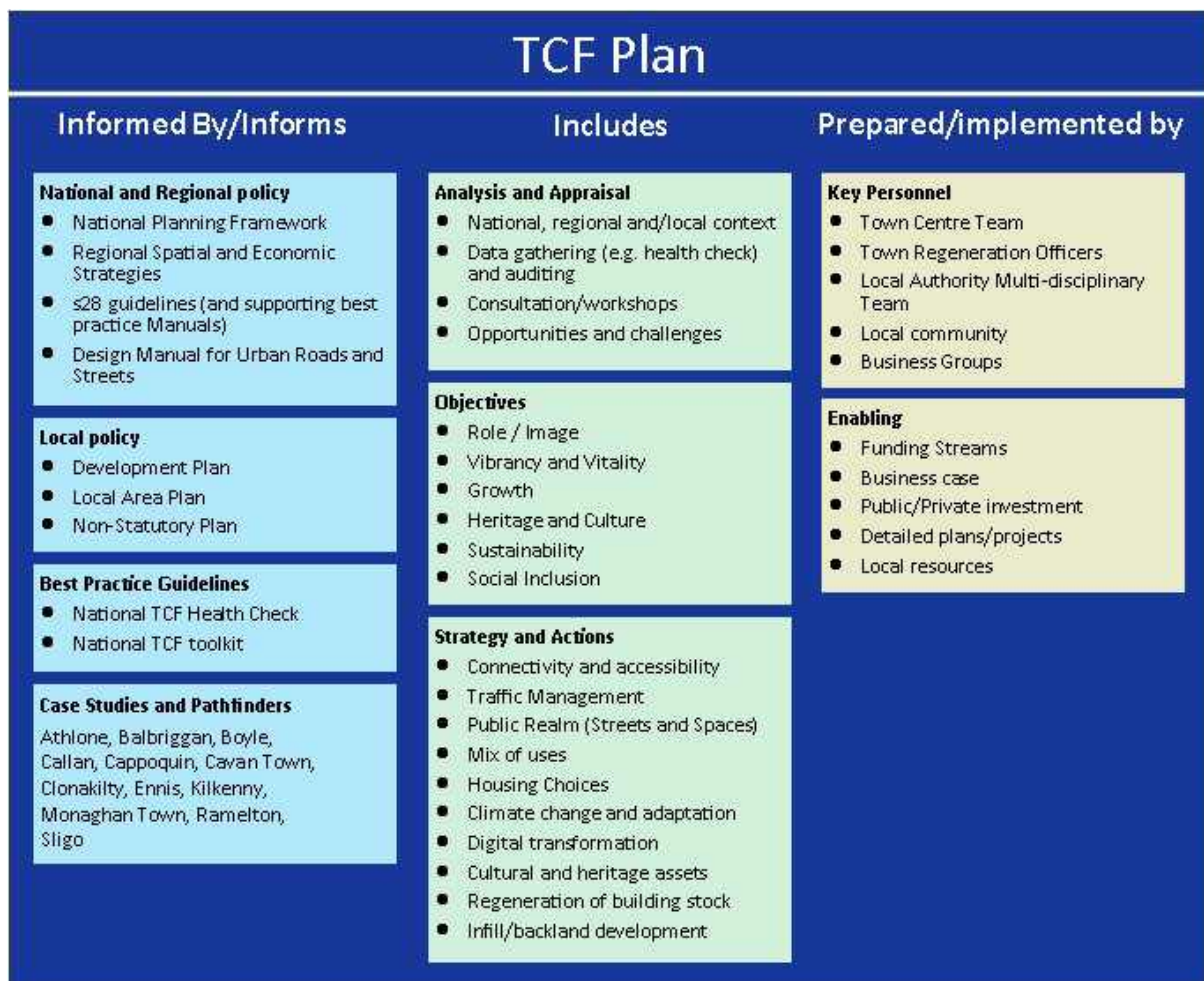
Cultural Amenities and Events

- Strong appreciation of existing cultural offerings (e.g. festivals, music, arts groups) and support for expanding them.

Family-Friendliness

- Nenagh's suitability for families, due to its schools, sports clubs, playgrounds, and community atmosphere.

Market Town Tradition

- Nenagh's role as a traditional market town resonates strongly, especially the Friday market, food heritage, and artisan producers.

TCF Plan

Informed By/Informs

National and Regional policy
- National Planning Framework
- Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies
- s28 guidelines (and supporting best practice Manuals)
- Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets

Local policy
- Development Plan
- Local Area Plan
- Non-Statutory Plan

Best Practice Guidelines
- National TCF Health Check
- National TCF toolkit

Case Studies and Pathfinders
Athlone, Balbriggan, Boyle, Callan, Cappoquin, Cavan Town, Clonakilty, Ennis, Kilkenny, Monaghan Town, Ramelton, Sligo

Includes

Analysis and Appraisal
- National, regional and/local context
- Data gathering (e.g. health check) and auditing
- Consultation/workshops
- Opportunities and challenges

Objectives
- Role / Image
- Vibrancy and Vitality
- Growth
- Heritage and Culture
- Sustainability
- Social Inclusion

Strategy and Actions
- Connectivity and accessibility
- Traffic Management
- Public Realm (Streets and Spaces)
- Mix of uses
- Housing Choices
- Climate change and adaptation
- Digital transformation
- Cultural and heritage assets
- Regeneration of building stock
- Infill/backland development

Prepared/implemented by

Key Personnel
- Town Centre Team
- Town Regeneration Officers
- Local Authority Multi-disciplinary Team
- Local community
- Business Groups

Enabling
- Funding Streams
- Business case
- Public/Private investment
- Detailed plans/projects
- Local resources

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- *The TCF Plan Process - Town Centre First | A Policy Approach for Irish Towns*

1.4 The Town Centre Team

The Town Centre Team was established in early 2024 and is made up of a diverse range of stakeholders representing the business, retail, sporting, community, voluntary, youth and education sector in the town. The Team will work in collaboration with Tipperary County Council (TCC) and local representatives to support delivery of the new Town TCF Plan for Nenagh.

The Team has nominated a new Town Champion to help guide the preparation and delivery of the Plan.

The Town Team will have a key role in delivering the interventions and projects of the TCF Plan, informed through community and stakeholder engagement and consultation with the Elected Members of Tipperary County Council.

Members of Nenagh's Town Centre First Team

1.5 A Community-led Plan

Engagement with the local community, key stakeholders and the Town Team has been integral to the Nenagh TCF Plan process. Extensive community involvement underpins the strategy, actions and projects emerging within the Plan.

The initial stage of engagement involved an information gathering exercise to gain the knowledge, views and aspirations of the local community. This entailed:

- A Community Questionnaire
- Meet the Town Team Event

Feedback from the engagement has informed the analysis and understanding of the town, the themes that underpin the strategy and the identification of potential projects for meeting the vision and objectives for the future development of Nenagh.

Further details on both events are provided in Appendix A 'Community Engagement Responses', and summarised as follows.

Community Questionnaire

The comprehensive Questionnaire undertaken in March/April 2025 provided a total of 880 responses submitted electronically and a further 77 hard copy surveys received, which equates to almost 10% of the Nenagh population (9,895 persons as recorded in 2022 Census), representing a very satisfactory engagement rate.
Key findings:

- Nearly half the respondents are in the 45-64-year-old age group. Only 10% of respondents are below 24 years of age.
- A large majority of respondents are residents of Nenagh.
- Around 90% of respondents are frequent visitors to the town with more than half visiting daily.
- Main reason for visiting the town is for shopping, followed by visiting family/ friends, walking/ strolling/ exercise, volunteering and attending community groups, children's extra-curricular activities, and Church.

1

- Most people currently drive, following by walking. Nearly a quarter responded with a combination of drive + walk.
- The top things liked about the town are 'Good shopping and local businesses and 'Friendly community'.
- Things of most concern are 'Vacant/derelict buildings' followed closely by 'Anti-social behaviour'. Other concerns include visual clutter, street lighting, and the need for a community space.
- 'Supporting local businesses' is considered most important for the future of Nenagh, followed by more jobs, improved streetscape with wheelchair accessibility, and addressing vacancy.
- 'Tackling vacancy and dereliction' is considered most important for making the town more attractive. Other suggestions include public amenities (toilets/ water refill stations), and outdoor recreation facilities with seating, water features, table tennis, chess tables etc.

5 things that concern you the most

- Vacant/ derelict buildings
- Anti-social behaviour
- Lack of youth facilities
- Traffic dominance & parking
- Lack of car parks

5 things to make town more attractive place to live, work and visit

1. Tackling vacancy & dereliction
2. Improved facilities for local community groups
3. Improved parks & open spaces
4. Increased variety of attractions & local products
5. Provision of better street furniture, lighting, signage & cycle facilities

Survey highlights

Nearly half the respondents are in the age group 45-64 years. Only 10% respondents were below 24 years of age. Large majority of respondents are residents of Nenagh.

90% respondents are frequent visitors to the Town Centre more than half of which visit every day.

Shopping & accessing specific services like hairdresser, bank, post office, solicitor etc are the main reasons for nearly 60% of respondents to visit Town Centre. A quarter of respondents visit for leisure.

Main mode of accessing the Town Centre is by cars, followed by walking. Cycling & public transport are only used by less than 5% of respondents.

5 things you like most about town

1. Good shopping & local businesses
2. Friendly community
3. Good schools & health facilities
4. Proximity to other places
4. Safe & attractive environment

5 most important things for future economy

Responses to key questions related to the future of Nenagh Town Centre

Q2.3 'Top Priorities for Improving Nenagh Town Centre'

Subject: Economic Vibrancy & Local Culture

1. Supporting local businesses (97%)
2. Hosting more festivals, events and markets (82%)
3. Promoting the assets of the town (82%)
4. Encouraging night-time activities (69%)
5. Attracting more visitors (67%)

Q2.4 'Physical and Community Enhancements'

Subject: Infrastructure, Amenities, and Public Realm

1. Tackling vacancy and dereliction (74%)
2. Improved facilities for local community groups (70%)
3. Increased variety of attractions and local activities (64%)
4. Improved parks and open spaces (62%)
5. Better street furniture, lighting, signage (51%)

Q2.5 'Aspirations for the Town Centre'

Free-text responses grouped according to key themes, based on recurring topics:

1. Community Hub & Use of Old Buildings

- Strong support for converting the old Rialto/Sheahan's building into a community centre.
- Suggestions include youth clubs, arts spaces, meeting rooms, food banks, and spaces for vulnerable groups (e.g. ASD, elderly).
- Related responses to reuse derelict or vacant buildings.

2. Transport and Accessibility

- Requests for a transport hub at the train station combining bus and rail services.
- Issues raised about the one-way system, unsafe pedestrian crossings, and lack of accessibility for elderly/disabled.
- Ideas include free town shuttle services and better cycling infrastructure.

3. Events and Cultural Activities

- Support for more festivals, live events, and seasonal celebrations (e.g. St. Patrick's Day, Fleadh Ceol).
- Suggestions to enhance local culture through permanent market spaces, street performances, and art exhibitions.

4. Urban Realm & Environment

- Suggestions for improved public spaces - more greenery, benches, and pedestrian-friendly layouts.
- Requests to make the town centre more walkable and welcoming.
- Concern about lighting, flooding, and dereliction.

5. Youth and Teen Facilities

- Specific demand for safe places for teens and children, including sports facilities and hangout areas.
- Concern about anti-social behavior making the town unsafe for young people.

6. Housing and Mixed-Use Development

- Proposals for new rental accommodation and multi-use developments (e.g., Martyr's Road example).
- Ideas to integrate housing, green space, and community facilities.

7. Local Economy and Shopfronts

- Interest in supporting local businesses and pop-up shops.
- Desire to improve shopfront aesthetics and attract independent retailers.

Themes in Free-text Responses to Q2.5
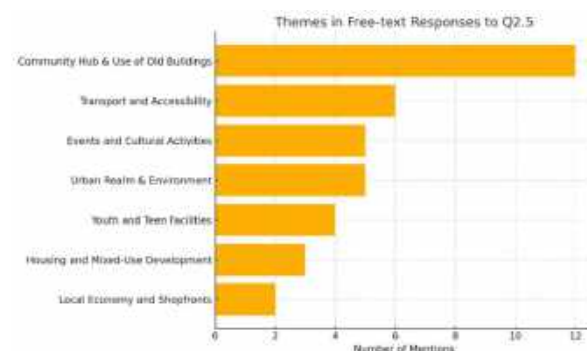
Other Ideas & Aspirations for the Town

Questionnaire responses grouped according to common themes, included:

Culture & Tourism

▪ Nenagh's past should be embraced. The story as a Norman and a market town should be told more. Timeliness historically should be expanded and displayed somewhere. The story of Nenagh.
▪ Suggest development of Historic Area (Court House, Gaol, Castle, Banba Square).
▪ Develop a museum in the old Presbyterian Church to add to this area.
▪ Sell Nenagh as a great base to stay for the mountains and lakes that surround us. Offer guided hikes in the Silvermines and Arra Mountains, and/or walk sections of the Lough Derg Way.

Community

▪ There is a need for places for people to socialise, e.g. mother toddler groups. Also, there are not many activities for youth, e.g. the boxing club has closed.
▪ There is a need for activity centres for youth such as makers lab, arcade, bowling alley etc.
▪ Co-working spaces in Nenagh would help residents who work from home to socialise.

The responses reveal a high demand for community space, accessible to a wide variety of groups in Nenagh. There were many suggestions for converting the Rialto building into a Community Centre.

Other recommendations included the location for a Community Centre at the former Military Barracks. It was also suggested to host a competition for best idea for Rialto building re-use.

Business & Economy

There is a need for pop-up markets, weekly farmers market, events and festivals to make the town lively and to attract more businesses. An indoor space, such as a market hall, could be made available to ensure markets open in bad weather.

The survey responses indicate that many people in Nenagh are involved with and appreciate art, and there were many suggestions to create a permanent location for visual art exhibitions.

Another recommendation called for more street art/murals in the town and to develop walking routes around them.

Open Spaces & Streets

Respondents expressed a significant desire for more green areas within the town centre. There were many suggestions from parents of young children to have access to play areas and general walking trails. Several dog owners also commented on the need for dog-friendly parks.

Meet the Town Team Event

Held on 3rd April 2025 between 6:00-9:00pm at the Tourist Office in Nenagh, this drop-in event was well-attended by around 50 people. The session was organised around five different themes hosted at separate tables by representatives from the Town Team. Participants were encouraged to discuss their topic of interest at the relevant table or to visit each table to discuss the various themes.

The themes help to organise the comments into clear, actionable items, all focused on improving Nenagh's infrastructure, community involvement, sustainability, and economic vitality.

The comments gathered on the night of the 'Meet the Town Team' event during in-person table discussion are summarised according to theme as follows:

1. Built Form

▪ **Community Spaces -** There's a need for shared spaces to accommodate various groups, such as the Order of Malta, Sub Aqua Club, and other volunteer organizations. Many suggestions for Rialto to be converted to a community space. Another recommendation was the former Military Barracks, offering both indoor and outdoor spaces for training and community activities.
▪ **Town Centre Development -** The town centre is in need of a facelift, with improvements in building facades, murals, and vacant properties. Enhancements to public facilities, such as

benches, public toilets, water filling stations, and promoting living above commercial premises, can help revitalize the area.

- **Painting -** Need a project for painting MacDonagh Street, Sarsfield Street.
- **Age-Friendly Housing -** Proposals for smaller, age-friendly housing units aimed at supporting people who wish to downsize as they grow older, recognising the need for more housing options in the town.

2. Natural Environment

- **Green Spaces & Parks -** There is a significant desire for more green areas within the town centre. Suggestions include transforming derelict sites and underutilised spaces into community gardens, green walkways, and parklets. Expanding public parks and creating green architecture with native plants would improve the town's aesthetics and environmental sustainability.
- **Sustainability -** Projects such as green rooftops, tree planting in public spaces, and creating eco-friendly spaces are recommended. Walkways and bike lanes should be expanded to connect key locations and reduce the town's carbon footprint.

3. Traffic & Movement

- **Pedestrianisation -** Key streets like Pearse Street and areas around the town centre should be pedestrianized to reduce pollution, and noise. A traffic system overhaul could facilitate smoother flow, with fewer intersections and clearer pedestrian crossings.
- **Cycling & Active Travel -** There is a call to expand cycling lanes, improve pedestrian safety, and make more spaces walkable. Additionally, there's a push for better infrastructure to support electric vehicles and charging stations.
- **Public Transport & Parking -** Improvements in public transport services, such as better links between the train station and the town, are crucial. There is also a need for additional
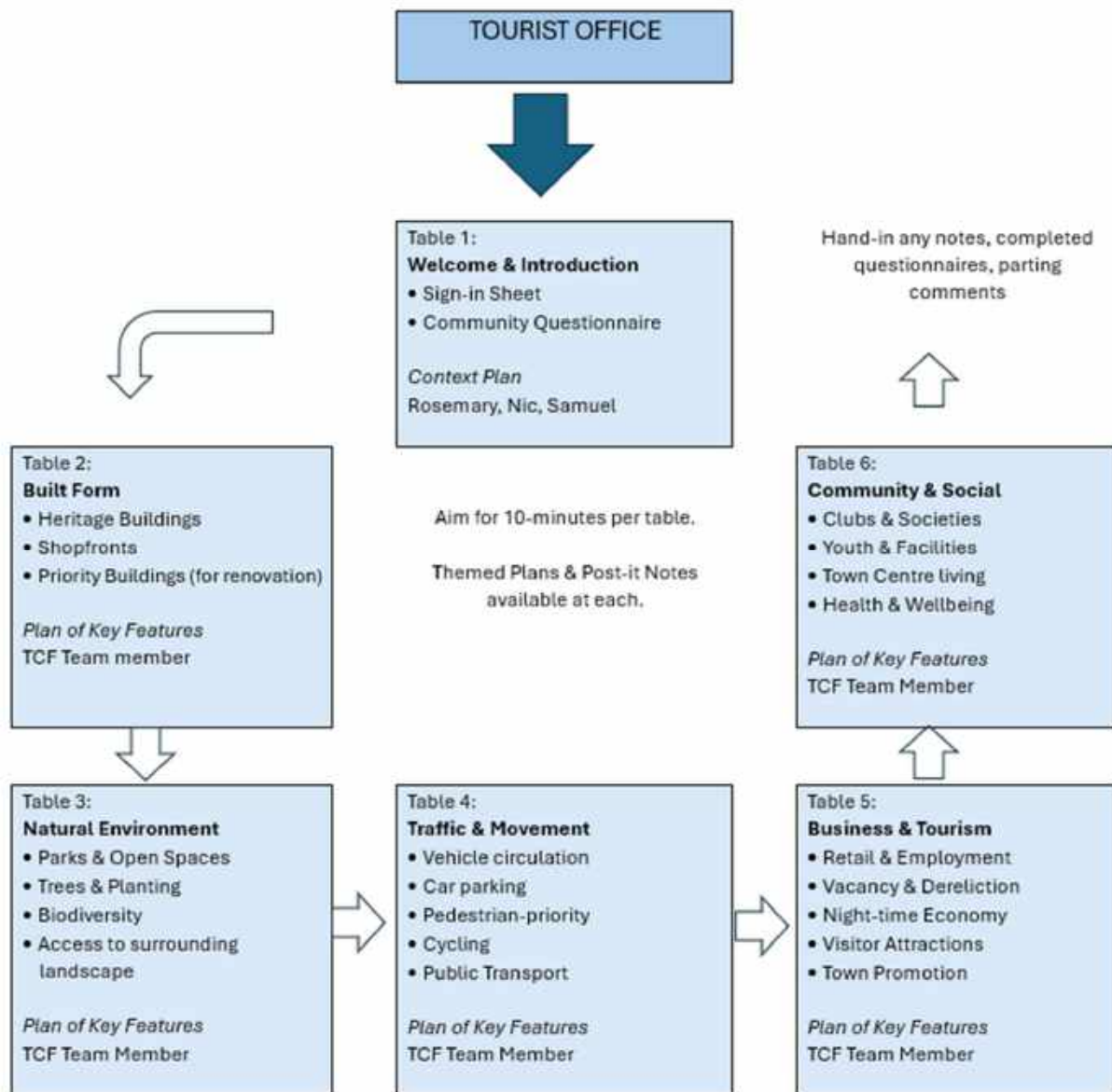
parking spaces and better use of existing ones. Multi-storey car parks with environmental features like solar panels and roof gardens are suggested for better traffic flow and revenue.

4. Business & Tourism

- **Supporting Local Business -** Making the town centre more pedestrian-friendly, adding outdoor seating, and encouraging the use of vacant buildings for business purposes are crucial for enhancing the local economy.
- **Cultural & Touristic Initiatives -** Establishing a statue trail to highlight historical figures, creating a Culture Fest, and promoting local events could help draw more visitors. The idea of a themed statue trail and enhancing public spaces to attract tourists is an important aspect of local tourism.
- **Night-Time Economy -** To boost the town's nightlife, it's suggested that more evening and night-time events, like comedy clubs, night cafés, and live performances, be encouraged. Also, seasonal shuttle services to nearby attractions, like Lough Derg, could enhance tourist experience.

5. Community & Social

- **Youth Services & Social Inclusion -** There is a noticeable gap in services and spaces for youth, particularly for disengaged teens and neuro-divergent individuals. Creating a youth club or a safe, inclusive environment for young people, such as the A-Team (Autism Team), would support the town's community.
- **Community Groups -** Various groups, such as the Nenagh Scouts, Women's Shed, Silver Arch and Search & Rescue, are looking for dedicated spaces to hold meetings, store equipment, and train. A shared space for multiple organizations to meet and collaborate would support these groups' ongoing efforts.
- **Sports infrastructure -** outdoor facilities like exercise stations, table tennis & chess.

TOURIST OFFICE

Table 1:
Welcome & Introduction
- Sign-in Sheet
- Community Questionnaire

Context Plan
Rosemary, Nic, Samuel

Hand-in any notes, completed questionnaires, parting comments

Table 2:
Built Form
- Heritage Buildings
- Shopfronts
- Priority Buildings (for renovation)

Plan of Key Features
TCF Team member

Aim for 10-minutes per table.

Themed Plans & Post-it Notes available at each.

Table 6:
Community & Social
- Clubs & Societies
- Youth & Facilities
- Town Centre living
- Health & Wellbeing

Plan of Key Features
TCF Team Member

Table 3:
Natural Environment
- Parks & Open Spaces
- Trees & Planting
- Biodiversity
- Access to surrounding landscape

Plan of Key Features
TCF Team Member

Table 4:
Traffic & Movement
- Vehicle circulation
- Car parking
- Pedestrian-priority
- Cycling
- Public Transport

Plan of Key Features
TCF Team Member

Table 5:
Business & Tourism
- Retail & Employment
- Vacancy & Dereliction
- Night-time Economy
- Visitor Attractions
- Town Promotion

Plan of Key Features
TCF Team Member

Meet the Town Team event structure

Summary

The Community Survey and Meet the Town Team event aimed to gather local perspectives on town centre improvements, priorities for investment, and ideas for future community-led projects and interventions.

The engagement exercises were conducted during March and April 2025, with responses received from a diverse cross-section of Nenagh residents, workers, and representatives. Survey questions included both multiple-choice and open-ended formats.

Key Priorities Identified

Most Valued Town Features (Q2.1)
Respondents highlighted the friendly community, local businesses, and cultural heritage as the top valued features of Nenagh Town Centre.

Priorities for Improvement (Q2.3 & Q2.4)
The top ranked priorities from multiple-choice responses were:

- Supporting local businesses
- Addressing vacancy and dereliction
- Hosting festivals, markets, and events
- Promoting cultural and heritage assets
- Enhancing parks, public spaces, and accessibility

Community Project Proposals

Open-ended responses to Question 2.5 revealed a number of consistent community proposals. The most frequently mentioned ideas have been grouped and prioritised below.

High Priority Projects:

- Re-purposing of Rialto/Sheahan's site
- Expansion of festivals and town events
- Cultural & Heritage Quarter development
- Reuse of vacant/derelict buildings

Medium Priority Projects:

- Town Centre greening and improved amenity
- Public realm improvements
- Transport hub at train station
- Teen-specific facilities and safe spaces

Lower Priority Projects:

- Pop-up retail and Made Local centres
- Accessibility and inclusive design upgrades
- Affordable rental and mixed-use housing
- Shuttle bus linking residential area

1.6 Preparing the Plan

The main objective is the preparation of a TCF Plan for Nenagh which aligns with the National Town Centre First Policy. The aim is to support the people of Nenagh to set out an overall vision for the future development and regeneration of the town and to identify key projects for delivery.

The process for preparing the TCF Plan for Nenagh is underpinned by the following key considerations:

Collaboration
- Involving all relevant stakeholders
- Agreed direction and Vision

Understanding the Place
- Analysis and appraisal
- Town Centre Health Check

Defining the Place
- Themes and Objectives
- Projects & Actions

Enabling the Place
- Action Plan
- Delivery & Funding

TCF Plan process

1.7 Planning Context

There are a broad range of national, regional and local policy documents which support and influence the TCF Plan including:

National Policy
- National Planning Framework - Ireland 2040 Our Plan (NPF) (2018)
- National Development Plan 2018-2027
- Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (SRA, 2020)
- Mid-West and South-East Action Plans for Jobs (DJEI, 2015) (and any review thereof)
- Powering the Regions, Regional Plan (Enterprise Ireland 2019)
- The Mid-West and South-East Regional Enterprise Plans (DETE, 2022)
- IDA Ireland 'Driving Recovery and Sustainable Growth 2021-2024'
- Southern Regional Assembly Regional Co-Working Analysis 2020
- Food Wise 2025 (DAFM, 2020)
- Enterprise 2025 Renewed (DBEI, 2018)
- Future Jobs Ireland 2019 (Government of Ireland, 2019)
- Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy (DRCD, 2021)

Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework

Southern Region Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020

County Development Plan 2022 – 2028

Local Area Plan

Hierarchy of National, Regional and Local Planning

Regional Policy

The Southern Region Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032 (RSES)

The RSES is a 12-year strategic development framework for the southern region prepared by the Southern Regional Assembly (SRA) and implements NPF policy for achieving balanced regional development. Its primary Objective is to implement Project Ireland 2040, the National Planning Framework, at a regional level, ensuring balanced and sustainable growth across the region. It ensures regional coordination between county development plans, and Local Enterprise and Community Plans (LECP). The RSES vision is to:

- *Nurture all our places to realise their full potential;*
- *Protect and enhance our environment;*
- *Successfully combat climate change;*
- *Achieve economic prosperity and improved quality of life for all our citizens;*
- *Accommodate expanded growth and development in suitable locations; and*
- *Make the southern region one of Europe's most creative, innovative, greenest and liveable regions.*

The RSES defines Nenagh as a Key Town with the following Attributes:

- *Connectivity - situated on the M7 motorway and the Limerick to Ballybrophy railway line.*
- *Situated within 40km of educational institutions of UL and LIT.*
- *High quality of life, strong retail offering, attractive town centre, vibrant cafe and restaurant offering and housing available at an affordable cost.*
- *Renowned centre for sporting tourism.*
- *Proximity to Lough Derg and the Silvermines Mountains and tourism-focused settlements, such as Ballina, Killaloe and Dromineer.*
- *48 hectares of Phase 1 serviced land, zoned for employment purposes, including serviced sites in the Lisbunny Industrial Park, the Streame site and the former COTY factory.*
- *Gas and high-speed broadband availability.*

- *Nenagh General Hospital, providing acute care and services including diagnostics, medicinal, surgical & critical care, and physiotherapy services.*

The key Infrastructural Requirements are identified as:

i. *Delivery of a Local Transport Plan, Nenagh traffic management plan and associated public realm works.*
ii. *Strengthen 'steady state' investment in rail infrastructure to ensure its continued renewal and maintenance to high level to provide quality levels of safety, service, accessibility and connectivity.*
iii. *Upgrade of R498 Nenagh to Thurles Road.*
iv. *Provision of a new link road between the N52 and the R445.*
v. *Provision of a new inner relief road from the R498 to the R445.*
vi. *Upgrade of the Limerick to Ballybrophy railway lines.*
vii. *Increased commuter rail service on the Nenagh to Limerick commuter line.*
viii. *Continued investment and development of the historic core of the town as a key tourism driver and the identification and development of Nenagh as the Gateway to Ireland's Hidden Heartlands.*
ix. *Completion of Nenagh Wastewater Treatment Upgrade.*

Tipperary County Development Plan 2022-2028 (TCDP)

The TCDP provides the framework for how the County Council will deliver for all communities, through protecting the environment, reducing energy demands, maintaining the viability of our towns, villages and rural communities and supporting job creation, within the structure of national and regional policies and guidelines.

1
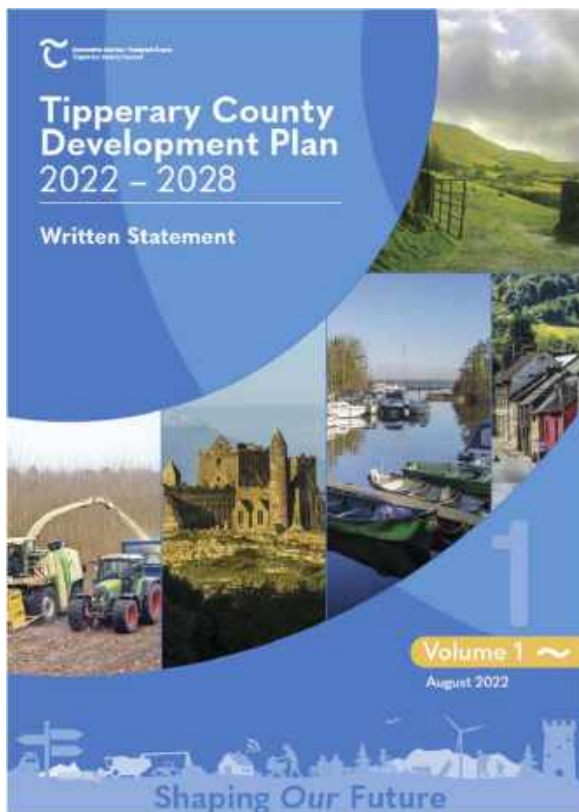
The TCDP designates Nenagh as one three 'Key Towns', together with Clonmel and Thurles. Nenagh and Thurles are identified as strategically located urban centres, with accessibility and significant influence in a sub-regional context. Each Key Town is targeted for over 30% growth by 2040.

Nenagh Strategy for Growth:

"Nenagh is identified as a 'Key Town' and a strategic employment location for a vibrant and diverse enterprise. It has major research and development functions, heritage and activity-based tourism and recreation and renewable energy and supports emerging sectors such as technology in agriculture, life sciences and is a centre of excellence for sustainable energy. In this role, it will grow by at least 30% in terms of population, and complement the development of Clonmel in the south of the county. The Council will work with the community to support more sustainable transport patterns, active travel and modal shift. The Core Strategy has outlined a population and housing projection, and a projected residential land zoning allocation. The Nenagh Town

and Environs Development Plan 201328 will remain applicable to its Plan area, until a detailed assessment and review of land zoning for residential development will be carried out in line with the NPF 'Methodology for a Tiered Approach to Land-zoning' to inform the preparation of a new Nenagh LAP."

The TCF Plan for Nenagh is entirely consistent with and contributes to objectives of the TCDP.

Tipperary County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 (CAP)

The plan sets out how the Council will deliver on climate action (Climate Mitigation and Climate Adaptation) in areas within its own remit, and how the Council through its actions, will seek to influence, facilitate and advocate for climate action across other sectors and communities.

It is a Core Ambition of the CAP is to enable a 'Climate Resilient, Sustainable and Low Carbon County' and to support a 51% reduction in greenhouse gases by 2030 in line with the National Climate Action Plan. The National Climate Action Plan, the Tipperary County Council Climate Action Plan and the TCDP set out an ambitious schedule of actions.

This TCF plan incorporates those actions as they relate to spatial planning locally in Nenagh, particularly in relation to compact growth and sustainable mobility, sustainable transport and active travel measures, town-centre first and adaptive re-use of buildings, nature-based solutions, and flood risk and water management.

Tipperary Transforming – Tourism Product Development Plan 2020-2030

The purpose of this plan is to assist the Local Authority to deliver on ambitions to significantly improve the visitor experience in the county developed through the three overarching themes of Heritage, Landscape and Water.

The Plan is underpinned by the principles of responsible sustainable tourism. Targets for the plan include:

- An increase of 50% in people employed (full-time or part-time) in the county tourism economy;

- An increase of 100% of overnighting visitors to the county;
- Growth of 75% in the number of international visitors; and
- €150 million investment in tourism and related offerings in the county over the next ten years.

Concept 10 of the Tourism Product Development Plan comprises - Nenagh Historic and Cultural Quarter (including Nenagh Gaol).

Other projects identified within the Plan include development of The Butler Trail connecting a number of towns and villages across the county, including Nenagh. It stressses that '*towns and villages need to be supported in building their infrastructure and facilities to encourage visitors to stay longer.*'

Local Level Plans

Nenagh & Environs Local Area Plan 2024 – 2030 (LAP)

The function of the LAP is to act as a framework for sustainable investment, to enable employment and homes, to protect the environment and heritage and to help deliver a good quality of life for everyone. It sits at the 'local' tier of planning policy and is consistent with the objectives of national and regional level planning policies, as well as the TCDP 2022-2028.

The vision of the LAP is to – "*support the town centre as a place to work, live, visit and do business, by delivering a co-ordinated regeneration strategy, promoting the re-development of underused sites, enhancing town centre services, enabling residential development and protecting and showcasing the historic core of the town.*"

The plan recognises that significant work has already been progressed in developing the Martyr's Road Masterplan. Also, funding has been secured for the Sustainable Energy Centre of Ireland (SECOE) and public realm works, as well as a heritage and tourism-led Historical and Cultural Quarter project for the town and redevelopment of the Rialto Cinema site (formerly Sheahan's Hardware) as an employment hub and housing.

Together with the LAP, it is intended that the TCF Plan for Nenagh will aid the delivery of the vision outlined above, as well as creating a pipeline of key projects. These projects/actions will be targeted for investment through appropriate funding streams, maximising state investment and opportunities for the delivery of a co-ordinated programme of investment.

In relation to underused and poorly consolidated sites, the LAP states that the TCF Plan will identify further key regeneration and consolidation opportunities in the central area and describe and animate key projects, their potential benefits, and pathways and actions for their immediate development.

In addition, the LAP indicates that the Council will seek to work with, and support the landowners of sites with potential for regeneration and development to enable their planning and delivery as part of the TCF programme and, in particular, to work with owners to support the occupation of upper floors and commercial vacancy.

LAP Objectives of particular relevance to the Nenagh TCF Plan include:

Objective 3A

Support the Town Regeneration Officer and any future Town Team in the preparation and implementation of a collaborative Town Centre First Plan for Nenagh

that will build on collaborate work and successful funding applications to date, and to provide a framework for which further funding will be sought.

Objective 3B

Support landowners with potential sites for regeneration and development through the Council's planning, housing and local enterprise services and offer regeneration schemes such as the Commercial Vacancy Incentive Scheme, the Croí Cónaithe Scheme, the Repair and Lease Scheme, Buy and Renew Scheme etc. as part of a Town Centre First program Objective 3C

Offer support to landowners and planning agents, to help overcome planning obstacles to the occupation and reuse of vacant upper floors and commercial units in the town centre; and develop best practice guidance in the re-use of upper floors.

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Objective 3D

Develop and improve areas in need of regeneration, renewal and redevelopment and to apply, where appropriate, the provisions of the Finance Act, Urban Regeneration and Housing Act, Derelict Sites Act, and use Compulsory Purchase Orders to enable regeneration, reduce vacancy, increase housing supply, employment opportunities and provide community facilities.

Objective 3E

Actively develop the Historical and Cultural Quarter, Rialto Cinema and Sustainable Energy Centre of Ireland (SECOE) projects, in consultation with the community and relevant stakeholders
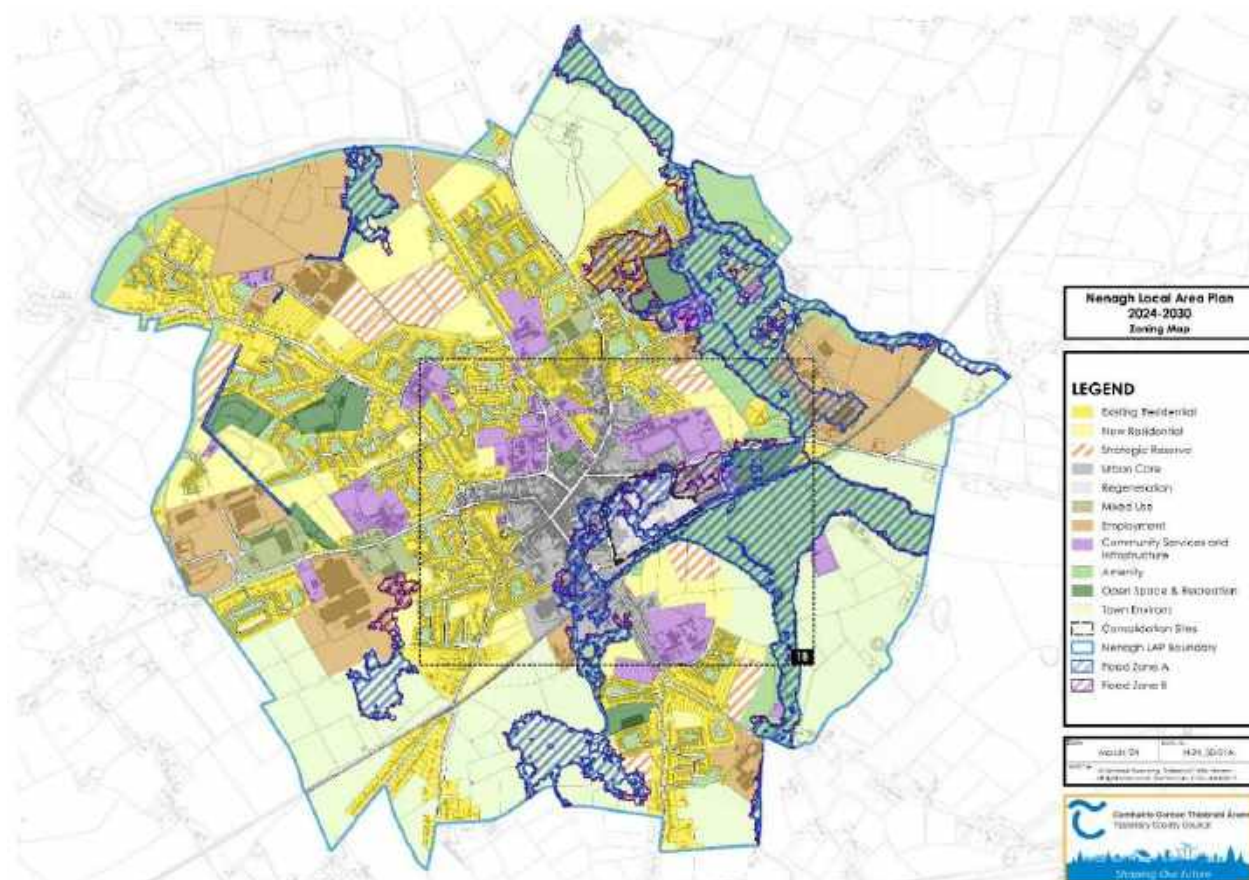
Nenagh LAP Zoning Plan

Lough Derg Visitor Experience Development Plan 2020-2024 (VEDP)

The VEDP continues the integrated approach to destination development forged by the 2014-2017 Lough Derg Road Map. The cross-agency approach to co-ordinated investment in the area has positioned the Lough Derg region to fulfil a key role in the new 'Ireland's Hidden Heartlands' national brand experience.

As recognised in the LAP, Nenagh is an important gateway town within the Fáilte Ireland brand and a critical part of the infrastructure for the VEDP. The existing tourism assets in Nenagh present a number of unique opportunities, such as:

- Development of the Historical and Cultural Quarter;
- Development of quieter and off-road cycling facilities and extending general facilities for 'slow travel';
- Creation of pedestrian friendly environment in Nenagh town centre; and
- Utilising the principles of a 'Destination Town' as set out in the Fáilte Ireland guidelines.

The VEDP identifies Nenagh as a Gateway Town:
"A bustling market town steeped in heritage, with a great reputation for food, compelling stories and a great welcome to the Lough Derg region at Nenagh's Historic Quarter."

Key Existing Visitor Attractions in the Ireland's Hidden Heartlands Lough Derg Region are identified as:

- Nenagh Heritage Centre
- Nenagh Genealogy Centre
- Nenagh Castle

Nenagh Traffic and Transportation Plan, Tipperary County Council, Roadplan, 2019

This study comprises of a review of the transportation network in and around the town and an assessment of the associated travel demands, with the objective of determining the transportation management improvements needed to cope with the continuing expansion of the town. The Plan identifies the actions to be taken to secure the optimal and sustainable movement of people, goods and vehicles and provides a set of traffic and transportation measures in respect of:

- Improved mobility for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles;
- Increased safety and accessibility for all modes of transport;
- Reduced traffic congestion through traffic management and junction improvements;
- Improvements to car parking facilities; and
- Additional road links.

Revitalising Nenagh's Historic & Cultural Quarter Revitalisation Strategy, Tipperary County Council

The strategy sets out the following four pillared approach to the physical and economic regeneration of the Historic and Cultural Quarter which will be a bustling centre for visitors, residents and workers of the town.

PILLAR ONE
Tourism Growth and Cultural Development
Nenagh as a Destination Town
PILLAR TWO
Public Realm and Placemaking
People Focussed Town Centre
PILLAR THREE
Economic Development
Rialto Business and Enterprise Centre
PILLAR FOUR
Residential Development
A Living Town Centre

The revitalisation strategy is in response to the development proposals for a number of individual town centre regeneration projects and the desire to have a coordinated approach to the future development of the Nenagh Historic and Cultural Quarter.

Nenagh Historic Core, A Conservation Plan, 2005, Prepared for North Tipperary County Council by Alastair Coey Architects, the purpose of the plan is to establish the significance of the historic core of Nenagh, identify the threats to its survival and to propose policies to enable its significance to be retained in its future use and development.

2.1 The Vision for Nenagh

The TCF Plan vision for Nenagh is **a vibrant market town with a thriving local economy, a living town centre community, restored and re-purposed heritage buildings, attractive and safe public spaces, sustainable mobility, and a friendly cultural-tourism destination.**

As highlighted in the Revitalising Nenagh's Historic & Cultural Quarter Revitalisation Strategy, the aim is for Nenagh is *'An Attractive and Bustling Town Centre for Visitors, Residents and Workers'*.

It is envisaged that residents of all ages will live comfortably in the town centre, supporting a strong local economy of shops, markets, and enterprises. Visitors will be attracted to Nenagh's unique cultural heritage, from Nenagh Castle and the Gaol to lively festivals and arts, experiencing a welcoming atmosphere and a vibrant public realm. During day and night, Nenagh's centre will be safe, inclusive, green and active, a hub of commerce, community life and creativity that reflects the pride and spirit of its people.

The vision complements the LAP's spatial strategy, to "*support the town centre as a place to work, live, visit and do business, by delivering a co-ordinated regeneration strategy, promoting the re-development of underused sites, enhancing town centre services, enabling residential development and protecting and showcasing the historic core of the town.*"

It also reflects the community's aspirations for a viable, vibrant, and attractive town centre where it is great to live, work and visit. It builds on Nenagh's strengths, its friendly community, rich heritage, and strategic location, while directly addressing the current challenges of vacancy, underutilised spaces and social needs.

The vision aligns with the Town Centre First principles of revitalising our towns by tackling dereliction, enhancing liveability, and enabling sustainable growth.

2.2 Strategic Objectives

To achieve the vision, the TCF Plan sets out strategic objectives across key themes of town centre regeneration. The objectives are interrelated and need to be pursued in an integrated way.

The objectives are underpinned by policies set out in the Nenagh LAP and the proposals outlined in the Local Transport Plan, including those promoting brownfield redevelopment, public realm upgrades, and enhanced pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. They ensure a holistic approach, as advocated by the TCF policy.

TCF Plan Themes & Objectives

For further details of the TCF Plan Themes and Objectives refer Section 4 Defining the Place.

2.3 Progress to Date

Nenagh Town has a population of almost 10,000 people and is one of the fastest growing towns in the Southern Region. It is strategically located within the catchment of Limerick/Shannon MASP and has excellent connectivity by road and/or rail, to Dublin, Limerick, Shannon Airport and the Foynes Port areas.

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) recognizes Nenagh's potential to contribute to regional economic growth through its designation as a key town.

In particular, Nenagh and its hinterland is identified in the RSES as a location for a vibrant and diverse enterprise mix, including major research and development functions, tourism, water-based and outdoor recreation, renewable energy and emerging sectors such as agritech, life sciences, financial services and engineering.

Spatial and Economic Framework 2018

To ensure that Nenagh thrives as a Key Town and regional economic driver, the Spatial and Economic Framework identified the following 4 Strategic Regeneration and Investment Opportunities, each with a different focus, to capitalise on Nenagh's physical attributes and socio-economic strengths and opportunities:

1. Historical and Cultural Quarter

2. Martyr's Road Regeneration Quarter

3. Streame Campus

4. Lisbunny Industrial Estate

As identified in the Nenagh Town & Environs Development Plan 2013-2019, the Rialto Digital & Enterprise Hub was added as a fifth major investment opportunity.

1. Historic & Cultural Quarter
2. Martyr's Road Regeneration Quarter
3. Streame Campus
4. Lisbunny Industrial Estate
5. Rialto Digital & Enterprise Hub
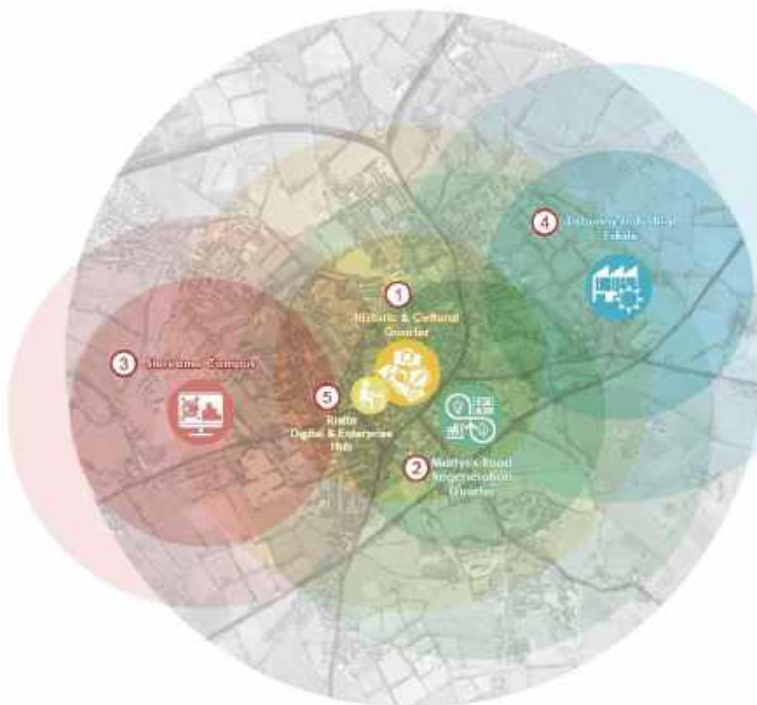
Nenagh Strategic Regeneration and Investment Opportunities

Ongoing Regeneration Investment and Delivery

The timeline of related actions that under-pins the Nenagh Regeneration Strategy development is as follows:

2013 – 2019

Nenagh Town and Environs Development Plan

- Appendix 2 Opportunity Sites
- Appendix 3 Masterplan Brief
- Appendix 4 Public Realm

2018

Spatial and Economic Framework Plan

This Plan seeks to harness strategic urban regeneration and economic development opportunities to ensure that Nenagh has a sustainable and diverse economic base for its growing population.

2020

Nenagh Regeneration Plan

Tipperary County Council awarded Category 2 RRDF funding for the planning and design of a tourism led regeneration plan for Nenagh which included the redevelopment and reimagining of Nenagh Gaol, Nenagh Castle and Banba Square.

Late 2020

Digital Hub in the Stereame Innovation Park

TCC applied for Category 2 RRDF funding for a Digital Hub but this was not granted as the Department deemed the site to be not in keeping with the emerging TCF Policy and that a town centre site would be a more appropriate location for the development.

2021

Rialto Business and Enterprise Centre

TCC successful in securing substantial funding through Category 2 RRDF for the design and planning of a business and enterprise centre in the former Rialto cinema.

Early 2024

- Part 8 planning approved for the Rialto Business and Enterprise Centre
- Part 8 planning approved for the Nenagh Historic and Cultural Quarter tourism, cultural and public realm projects
- Department funding approved for the Rialto Age-friendly housing scheme – next step apply for Part 8 Planning

2024

- Nenagh and Environs Local Area Plan 2024-2030
- Nenagh's Historic & Cultural Quarter Revitalisation Strategy, application for Category 1 RRDF funding submitted. Project not prioritised at national level due to budgetary resources and the need to ensure balanced regional development. Further funding applications to be submitted in 2025.

- 3-storey Gaol House – application for Strand 2 THRIVE funding. Unsuccessful mostly due to accessibility issues. Further funding applications to be submitted in 2025.

Early 2025

Town Centre First Plan

TCF Plan commissioned

2.4 Realising the Objectives

Based on the vision for Nenagh town centre and TCF Policy, together with the aims of the Nenagh LAP and Historic & Cultural Quarter Strategy, the main themes to deliver the strategic objectives are grouped as follows:

Economic Development Objectives
- Strengthen Local Enterprise and Retail
- Vacancy Reduction and Reuse Initiatives
- Boost Footfall and Town Centre Economy
- Create Jobs and a Diversified Economy

Social and Community Objectives
- Enhance Community Facilities and Services
- Promote Town Centre Living
- Improve Safety and Social Inclusion
- Strengthen Community Engagement and Pride

Environmental and Public Realm Objectives
- Revitalise the Public Realm
- Greening the Town
- Improve Accessibility and Mobility
- Sustainability and Climate Resilience

Cultural and Heritage Objectives
- Celebrate Local Heritage
- Promote Arts and Culture
- Promote Nenagh's Identity and Tourism

3

3.1 Regional Context

Nenagh is the main town in North Tipperary, with a population of almost 10,000 persons. The town is strategically located within the catchment of Limerick City, Shannon Airport and the Foynes Port areas.

It is located approximately:

- 35 km from Limerick City
- 45 km from Thurles
- 160 km from Dublin (via the M7 motorway)

Nenagh falls within the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area catchment as defined in the National Planning Framework (NPF), making it a Key Regional Town supporting urban-rural linkages.

The town benefits from direct access to the M7 motorway, a key national corridor connecting Dublin and Limerick. It is also served by the Limerick-Ballybrophy rail line, with connections to Limerick and Dublin (via transfer), and connected by Bus Éireann and Local Link services to surrounding towns and regional centres.

Shannon Airport is located within 45 minutes, enhancing the accessibility of Nenagh to global business and tourism.

Nenagh is designated as a Key Town under the Southern RSES, which identifies the town's role in:

- Driving rural economic growth
- Supporting the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area
- Providing housing, employment and services within a sustainable compact growth model

Nenagh is recognised as a growth enabler with the capacity for smart mobility, digital enterprise, and climate innovation. It has a diverse economic base with significant activity in:

- Agri-food and dairy (e.g., Arrabawn Tipperary Co-Operative Society and ABP Food Group)
- Public services and health (e.g. Tipperary County Council, Nenagh Hospital)
- Emerging tech and renewables (e.g. the Fiserv Technology Centre and proposed SECOE centre)

The town is developing a reputation as a regional centre for green energy, remote working, and entrepreneurship, aided by the Town Centre First and URDF investment.

The Strategic Priorities for Nenagh, aligned with both local and national spatial strategies, are:

- **Compact Urban Growth** - Promote infill, brownfield and heritage reuse (e.g. Rialto Cinema, Martyr's Road).
- **Sustainable Mobility** - Cycling, pedestrian infrastructure, and intermodal connections.
- **Climate Resilience** - Delivery of the SECOE and related smart energy initiatives.
- **Digital & Remote Working Infrastructure** - Enterprise hubs and improved broadband services.
- **Cultural & Community Renewal** - Town centre regeneration and public realm enhancements to improve liveability.

Nenagh's location in County Tipperary

3.2 Historic Development

Nenagh has a rich history reflected in its urban form and built heritage. Over eight centuries, the town evolved from a Norman fortified settlement into a Georgian market centre, a Victorian administrative hub, and a modern provincial centre.

Medieval Foundations (13th–17th centuries)

The area was originally part of the O'Kennedy clan's territory (the Ormond barony) until the Norman invasion around 1200. Theobald FitzWalter, ancestor of the Butler dynasty, established Nenagh as a Norman town in the early 13th century, building a castle c.1200–1220. It remained the Butlers' principal stronghold before they shifted to Gowran and later to Kilkenny in the 14th century. The circular castle keep formed part of the walled perimeter of the fortress, which no longer survives but remains the town's most iconic medieval structure.

Nenagh Castle Norman keep

In 1252 the Norman lords also founded a Franciscan Friary in Nenagh, which became one of medieval Ireland's wealthiest religious houses. The friary stood for 600 years until its last friar died in 1817, and the ruins, including a surviving east gable with lancet windows, are still prominent today.

Nenagh Franciscan Friary

Through the late medieval and early modern period, Nenagh remained a modest market town and often saw turmoil. In 1550 the town and friary were burned during inter-dynastic warfare, and in the 1640s–50s Nenagh changed hands repeatedly amid the Irish Confederate Wars. The castle was besieged in 1648 and again in 1650 during Cromwellian conquest, and the town was burned in 1688 during the Williamite War.

By the 17th century, the medieval town's footprint was limited as few medieval structures beyond the castle and friary endured into later times.

Nenagh's name derives from the *Irish Aonach Urmhumhan*, or "fair of Ormond," reflecting its longstanding role as a market centre. This medieval market function persisted through centuries of upheaval, ready to flourish under more peaceful conditions in the 18th century.

Georgian Era Expansion (18th Century)

Nenagh underwent its most significant expansion in the Georgian era of the 1700s. After centuries under Butler ownership, the Nenagh estate was sold off in the mid-18th century, enabling widespread granting of leases for development. The main growth of the town occurred during this period and, apart from the medieval castle and friary, most of the buildings date from this period onwards.

During the Georgian boom, a network of broad streets and market spaces was laid out or improved. Castle Street (Pearse Street), Silver Street, Queen Street (Mitchel Street), and Barrack Street (Kenyon Street) became the primary arteries of the town.

These streets, still central today, were lined with new houses and shops of the 18th century – typically two- or three-story Georgian townhouses with commercial ground floors.

The main street was unusually wide, to facilitate fairs and markets. The town's focal point for trade was an open area near the castle (later infilled and developed as Banba Square in the 19th century), reinforcing Nenagh's role as a market centre.

Nenagh town centre in 1837

Throughout the 18th-century Nenagh prospered from the fertile hinterlands in north Tipperary, and became a hub for grain, livestock, and artisanal products. The town hosted regular fairs and markets, and small industries (breweries, mills, and tanneries) began to appear towards the end of the century.

By 1800, Nenagh had firmly established itself as a thriving market town with an urban layout that remains recognisable today. Many Georgian structures from the 18th-century expansion survive as protected structures, contributing to Nenagh's distinctive historic streetscape.

The historic core of Nenagh from the Castle Keep

Victorian Developments (19th Century)

In 1838, a pivotal administrative change accelerated the town's growth. County Tipperary was split into two ridings, and Nenagh was designated the capital of the North Riding. This made Nenagh the centre of governance for the region, accelerating the construction of public buildings and infrastructure.

The Nenagh Courthouse was built in 1843 on a newly laid out civic space (today Banba Square). Adjacent to it, a substantial county gaol was constructed in 1840–1842, featuring an octagonal Governor's House and a gated forecourt. The Gaol operated from 1842 until 1887. Although much of the prison was later demolished, the Governor's House and one cell block survived and now house the Nenagh Heritage & Genealogy Centre, preserving the imposing limestone architecture of this 19th-century penitentiary.

Nenagh Courthouse

Other improvements followed. Streets were extended and renamed to honour Irish nationalist figures (e.g. after Independence, Castle Street became Pearse Street), reflecting the changing political climate. By mid-century, Nenagh also gained better connectivity. The railway arrived in 1863, when Nenagh station opened on the branch line linking Limerick to the main Dublin–Limerick line. The rail service enhanced trade and travel, reinforcing Nenagh's role as a market and distribution centre. Industrial activity in the 1800s included brewing, corn milling, iron-working, coach-building, and various cottage industries (tailoring, shoemaking, carpentry) to serve local needs. Throughout the 19th century, Nenagh remained primarily a market town for its agricultural hinterland, holding fairs and hosting a busy marketplace.

Nenagh historic town centre, Ordnance Survey 1843

During the Great Famine (1845–1849) Nenagh's population, which was about 8,600 in 1841, fell by roughly 20% by 1851 (to around 6,800). Emigration and poverty persisted in subsequent decades, and the town's population continued to decline or stagnate for the rest of the 19th century (down to 4,700 by 1901). A Workhouse (Nenagh Poor Law Union Workhouse) was built in the 1840s on the town's outskirts at Tyone to house famine victims. The main body of the workhouse was burned during the Irish Civil War in 1923.

Nenagh Workhouse site, 1904

By the late 1800s, Nenagh emerged from the post-famine lull with renewed construction. The Town Hall (now the Nenagh Arts Centre) was erected in 1889–1895 at Banba Square. Another landmark was the Catholic Church of St. Mary of the Rosary, a grand neo-Gothic church dedicated in 1896. The smaller St. Mary's Church of Ireland (Anglican) was built in 1862 on Church Road, and includes a notable stained-glass window.

By the early 20th century, Nenagh's wide main street was lined with thriving shops and townhouses, reflecting its 18th–19th century growth as a market town.

The town's layout continued to evolve through the 19th century. By 1875–1900, Banba Square had been laid out as a formal square and public space, and structures such as the Town Hall and (later) the Rialto Cinema were added around it. The Nenagh Gaol was closed in 1887 and partly repurposed by the Sisters of Mercy for a school. By 1900 terraced houses extended along existing streets, expanding the town's residential footprint.

1950s photo of Pearse street showing architectural continuity of Victorian streetscape

20th Century and Modern Growth

At the beginning of the 20th century Nenagh was a small but well-established town of about 4,700 people (1911 census). During the Irish War of Independence (1919–1921), the Nenagh RIC barracks was attacked, but the town avoided heavy damage. After the establishment of the Irish Free State, Nenagh retained its importance as an administrative centre (county town of North Tipperary) and experienced some modest urban development.

In 1914 the Nenagh Co-operative Creamery was founded, providing jobs in dairy processing and beginning the shift towards agro-industrial enterprise in the town.

In the mid-20th century the town's population stayed at around 4,000–5,000 persons for decades and several important facilities were developed, including:

- A new general hospital (St. Joseph's), built on the Thurles Road around 1940 in a modern International Style.
- Local authority housing estates on the fringes of the old town during the 1940s-1970s, and new residential districts.
- A range of schools to meet the needs of a growing population, including those established by religious orders, such as the Christian Brothers and Presentation Sisters providing both education and moral instruction.

By the 1990s and 2000s, Nenagh's population began rising significantly (increasing from about 5,800 in 1991 to nearly 9,000 by 2016). The Celtic Tiger period enabled construction of new housing estates, retail parks, and industrial units on the town's periphery. The Gortlandroe area north of the centre was developed for industry and residential, and new housing spread west toward Ballygraigue and east toward Lisbunny.

Suburban development to west of town centre

Despite this suburban expansion, the historic town centre remained the focal point of civic life. Many heritage buildings were restored and given new uses -

the old Town Hall was renovated and reopened as the Nenagh Arts Centre, and the Governor's House of the gaol redeveloped as the Nenagh Heritage & Genealogy Centre.

Nenagh's town core was designated an Architectural Conservation Area, helping to protect its Georgian and Victorian streetscapes. Nenagh Castle, underwent extensive restoration from 2009 to 2013. Conservation works stabilized the keep and added a spiral staircase to allow public access, effectively converting the 13th-century fortress into a major visitor attraction.

Transport infrastructure also advanced in more recent years. The old N7 road that once ran through the town centre was bypassed by the new M7 motorway in 2010, relieving traffic congestion and connecting Nenagh more efficiently into the national road network. The Limerick–Nenagh–Ballybrophy railway still operates (now a limited service), and efforts are ongoing to improve it.

The improved transport links support Nenagh's growth as a commuter town (within reach of Limerick city) while also bolstering local commerce.

Notwithstanding the continued expansion of Nenagh, the historic centre around Pearse Street and Banba Square remains the heart of the town. Many surviving medieval landmarks, Georgian streets and houses, Victorian civic buildings and churches, and contemporary structures, all coexist to instil Nenagh with distinctive urban character, demonstrating how a town can expand and modernise while celebrating the architectural legacy of its past.

Banba Square

Traditional shopfront on Castle Street

3.3 Built & Natural Heritage

Built Heritage

Nenagh has a built form that reflects its medieval origins and subsequent urban development.

Key aspects include:

- Medieval and Historical Architecture – The town's layout retains many elements of its medieval past, with narrow streets and historic buildings and spaces.
- Market Town Layout – The development of Nenagh as a market town, is reflected in its traditional street pattern, with a central commercial core focused around Pearse Street and Kenyon Street, and a traditional town square and market area.
- Georgian and Victorian Influences – The town contains many fine 18th and 19th-century buildings, particularly around the town centre, with traditional features that include symmetrical facades, sash windows, slate-pitched roofs, and stuccoed or stone-faced exteriors.
- Modern Development – In the 20th and 21st centuries, Nenagh expanded rapidly with suburban housing estates on the periphery, industrial and business parks and retail developments, including supermarkets and shopping Centres.

Central to the historic fabric is Nenagh Castle, a striking 13th-century cylindrical structure symbolizing the town's feudal past and strategic importance, and one of Ireland's finest Norman keeps.

The Castle is afforded the highest level of protection as a National Monument of national significance, as defined under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994.

There are numerous sites and monuments found within the town's Zones of Archaeological Potential within and around Nenagh. The town centre entries to the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) include:

- TN020-037001 Nenagh Castle
- TN020-037002/13 Franciscan Abbey
- TN020-037007 Nenagh Church (at graveyard)
- TN020-037012 Nenagh Gaol

There are also around 130 Protected Structures in the town of Nenagh, as listed in Appendix 5: Record of Protected Structures, and two 'Proposed Additions' to the Record for the Tipperary County Development Plan 2022-2028.

Additionally, the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) provides detailed surveys of historic buildings in North Tipperary, including Nenagh. The NIAH survey includes records of buildings and other items within the county that were deemed worthy of recording, many of which have been recommended for protection.

Most of the historic town centre is encompassed by Nenagh's Architectural Conservation Area (ACA), including the Castle, Abbey, Courthouse, Gaol, Banba Square, and surrounding streetscapes. The ACA designation aims to protect and enhance the town's distinctive character, preserving architectural, historical, archaeological, social, and cultural value found in both protected monuments and buildings and the traditional street pattern.

The ACA is designated to ensure that new development or modifications respect the existing built environment and cultural identity of the town. It reflects Nenagh's evolution as a market and administrative centre, with a street pattern and building stock dating from the 18th to early 20th centuries.
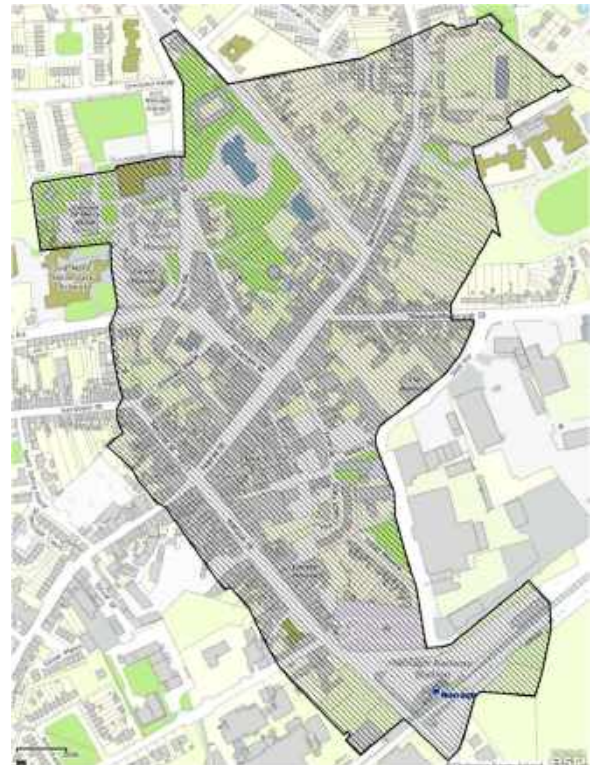
Nenagh's Architectural Conservation Area

The Key Characteristics of the ACA include:

- **Historic Urban Layout** - A compact and legible street network shaped by medieval origins and later Georgian and Victorian development.
- **Vernacular and Formal Architecture** - A mixture of modest 2-storey terraced buildings alongside grander civic, religious, and institutional structures.
- **Landmark Buildings** - Nenagh Castle, the Courthouse, the former Gaol, and various churches punctuate the streetscape and reinforce the town's civic identity.
- **Streetscape Features** - Traditional shopfronts, stone walls, iron railings, and original building materials are prominent.

The primary streets and spaces within the ACA include:

Banba Square - Principal civic space in the heart of the ACA, defined by wide proportions allowing clear views of historic landmarks.

Kenyon Street - Principal retail street with historic shopfronts and a mix of Georgian and later 19th-century buildings.

Pearse Street - Historic east–west corridor connecting to Summerhill, with a range of commercial and institutional uses.

Kickham Street - Connecting to Banba Square and key heritage landmarks, with a range of commercial and institutional uses.

Mitchell Street - Mix of smaller retail units with residential above, linking to Emmet Place.

Secondary streets and lanes that reinforce the historic character of the ACA and provide linking spaces include Abbey Street, Friar Street, Silver Street (part), Emmet Place, O'Rahilly Street (part), Church View and Thomas MacDonagh Street (part).- One of the main commercial streets, formerly part of the old Dublin road (R445), lined with retail, banks, and institutional buildings.

Together, these streets form a coherent architectural ensemble that showcases Nenagh's traditional market town layout and reinforces its identity as a regional town with deep historical roots.

The main built heritage assets include:

Nenagh Castle

Dating back to the 12th century, a prominent Norman fortification that has played a key role in the region's history. Its ruins serve as a tangible reminder of medieval military architecture and the town's strategic importance over the centuries.

The castle and its surrounding Castle Park and Castle Garden offer a unique setting for community and visitor events at the heart of the town.

Nenagh Castle

Historic Churches

Several Medieval and Post-Reformation Churches that serve as active places of worship as well as repositories of local history and art. Most feature architectural details from different eras, reflecting the evolution of religious practice and historic social fabric of Nenagh.

St. Mary's of the Rosary - striking neo-Gothic Catholic church built in the late 19th century. Features an impressive spire and intricate stained-glass windows, built in 1895 and noted for its fine use of local stone and imported details in its arches.

St. Mary's Church of Ireland - Gothic Revival, built c.1865, notable stained-glass windows. The cast-iron railings and the position of the church next to the Catholic church, contribute significantly to Nenagh's townscape.

St. Mary's Church of Ireland and Castle Gardens

Ruins of the Franciscan Friary - formerly an active religious community where the Annals of Nenagh were written, a reminder of Nenagh's medieval monastic past.

Franciscan Friary

Former Presbyterian Church – positioned at the corner of Banba Square and Kickham Street, a fine example of early 20th-century ecclesiastical architecture, forming a notable pair with the adjacent former Town Hall. Repurposed to serve the community (currently leased to Foróige).

Former Presbyterian Church

Notable Town Centre Heritage Buildings

Nenagh Courthouse - a classical-style courthouse built in the 19th century. Still in use today for legal proceedings.

Nenagh Gaol - a former 19th-century prison, now partially vacant. Some parts are used for administrative purposes, and the building remains a prominent feature in the town.

Nenagh Gaol block

The Governor's House - part of Nenagh Gaol, this building served as the residence for the prison governor.

Nenagh Arts Centre and Tourist Information and Visitor Centre – former Town Hall built 1889 in an Italianate style, later accommodated the town library and council offices. Co-located with Nenagh Arts Centre in 2021 and now serves as an information centre for tourists while also showcasing through its exhibits pride in Nenagh and the achievements of its community including sports, arts, culture and community service.

Nenagh Arts Centre

Rialto – former cinema in a prominent corner location on Banba Square. Striking example of mid-20th century architecture with strong Art Deco influences and a nostalgic reminder of Nenagh's mid-century cultural life.

Rialto former cinema

Former Barracks, Summerhill – substantial 3-storey derelict complex dating from the 18th and early 19th centuries. A rare surviving example of a purpose-built military compound of high architectural, social, and historical importance.


Former Military Barracks, Summerhill

Nenagh Railway Station

The station was opened in 1863 on the Great Southern & Western Railway line from Limerick to Ballybrophy. It comprises an interesting group of related structures including a railway bridge, railway station and goods shed. In 1989, the signal cabin was closed, and the loop serving the down platform and most of the sidings in the goods yard were lifted.

Early photo (c1910) of Nenagh Railway Station
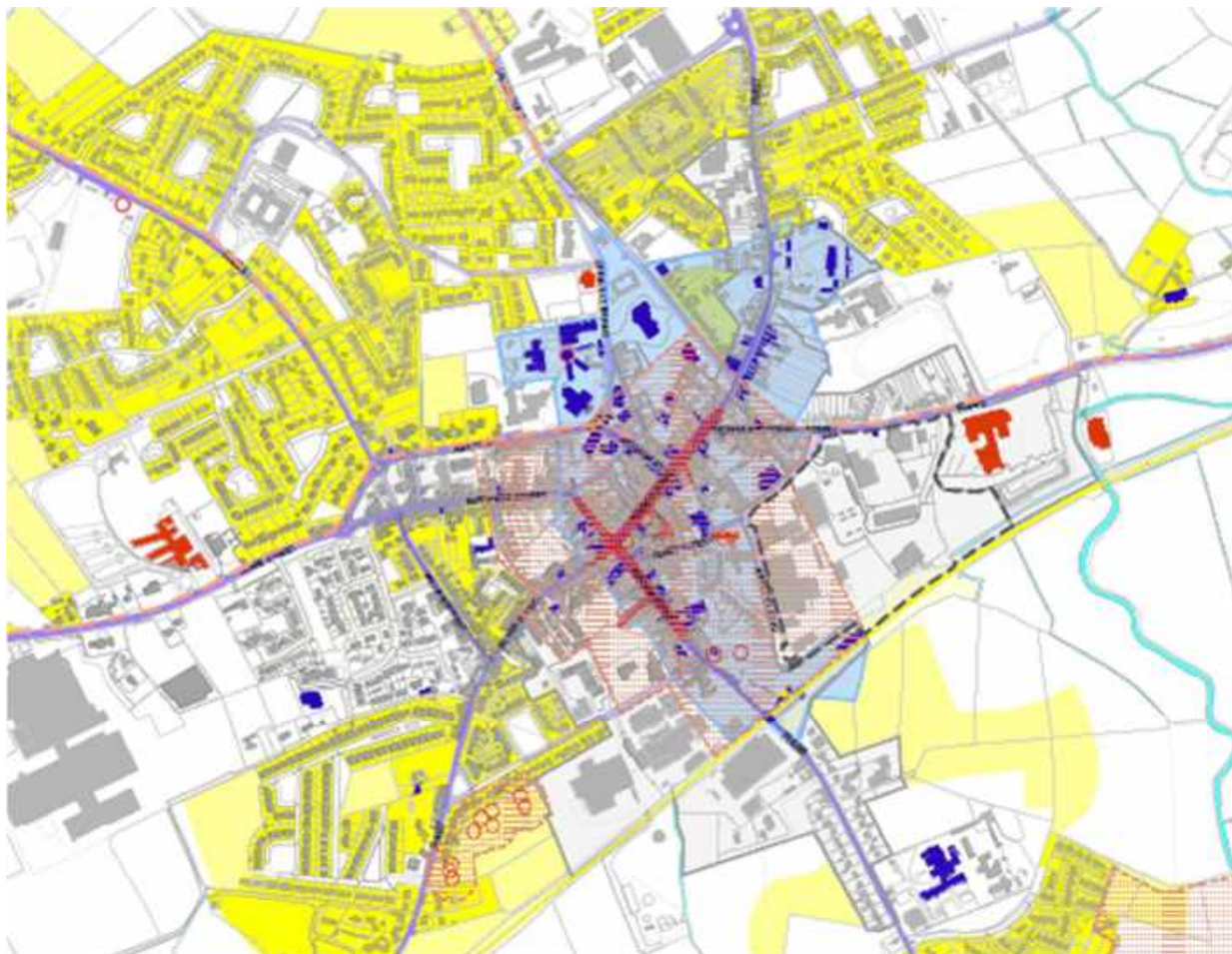
Nenagh Built Heritage

KEY

Architectural Conservation Area

Protected Structures

Other Key Buildings

Zone of Archaeological Potential

Recorded Monuments

Buildings (Urban Grain)

Urban Core (LAP)

Residential – Existing (LAP)

Residential – New (LAP)

Primary Roads

Secondary Roads

Natural Heritage

The natural heritage of Nenagh provides a blend of landscapes, waterways, and biodiversity that reflect its location in north County Tipperary at the heart of Ireland's Golden Vale. This natural environment has shaped the town's development, agriculture, and local identity for centuries.

The Nenagh River flows through the town, originating in the Silvermine Mountains and joining Lough Derg at Dromineer, forming part of the Lower Shannon River Catchment. The confluence of the Ollatrim and Nenagh rivers lies within the town boundary to the east of the Millers Brook estate. Smaller partly-culverted watercourses run through the town centre, into the Nenagh River and beyond to the Shannon water system. A number of other watercourses to the west of the town drain into the Shannon at Youghalarra.

The river is a key feature Nenagh's natural heritage. It was historically important for powering mills and shaping the town's layout. It supports a wide range of habitats and forms an important natural wildlife corridor through the urban area.

Within the town centre, the river is most evident adjacent to the Leisure Centre and Town Park. There are pathways along parts of the river, but overgrown in several places. The Slí Eala (Way of the Swan) once formed a 10 km waymarked trail following the banks of the river from Dromineer via Ballyartella to Scott's Bridge, on the N52 road north of Nenagh. Trailheads are located at Scott's Bridge and in Dromineer village, but the walk is no longer maintained and blocked in places by farmland.

The development of a Greenway along the river between Nenagh and Dromineer is identified in the Nenagh LAP as a key leisure and amenity long-term objective for the town, and supported by many responses to the community engagement exercises.

TCC intends to develop the Nenagh Urban Greenway that will improve an existing walking route and make it accessible to all users. The 2.4km long, 3.0m wide shared cycle and footpath route commences adjacent to the Lisbunny Industrial Estate and follows the route of the existing informal walkway along the

eastern bank of the river. The path crosses the Lower Birr Road at an existing masonry road bridge and continues north along the western bank of the River.

Grant funding has been secured from the National Transport Authority (NTA) to progress the proposed Greenway through the Planning Phase as part of a broader Local Transport and Urban Greenway strategy, enhancing Active Travel and local and visitor recreational opportunities.

The River Nenagh looking east from the Annaghbeg Bridge

Nenagh lies just east of Lough Derg, one of Ireland's largest freshwater lakes. The lake and surrounding Shannon Callows form part of a Special Protection Area (SPA), home to several species of overwintering birds and supporting varied aquatic biodiversity.

The Silvermine Mountains to the south of Nenagh, named after historical mining activity, offer panoramic views and contain a varied mosaic of heathland, moorland and grassland habitats, and are important for ground-nesting birds.

The fertile limestone-based soils of the Golden Vale surrounding Nenagh support intensive dairy and cattle farming, with rich grasslands and managed pastures. These farmed landscapes are often interspersed with wetland hollows and remnant bogs, as well as scattered native woodlands of oak, ash, holly and hazel, in local estates and along the riverbanks.

Combined with traditional hedgerow field boundaries, these natural features provide vital habitats for birds, insects and small mammals, and important for pollinators and carbon sequestration.

Within the town centre, trees are an important part of the heritage townscape, framing key streets and public spaces, offering contrast to hard surfaces, providing shade and shelter, serving as local landmarks, and adding seasonal interest through blossom and autumn colour.

Key trees in Nenagh Town Centre can be found at the Courthouse (Banba Square), in the grounds of the Castle, in Nenagh Town Park (along the river), on Kenyon Street, and within churchyards and graveyards.

These trees also support biodiversity, providing habitat for birds, insects (including pollinators), and fungi, and acting as stepping stones between larger green areas, linking urban gardens, parks, and the Nenagh River corridor, and integrate green infrastructure in the urban landscape.


Mature trees in the grounds of Nenagh Castle
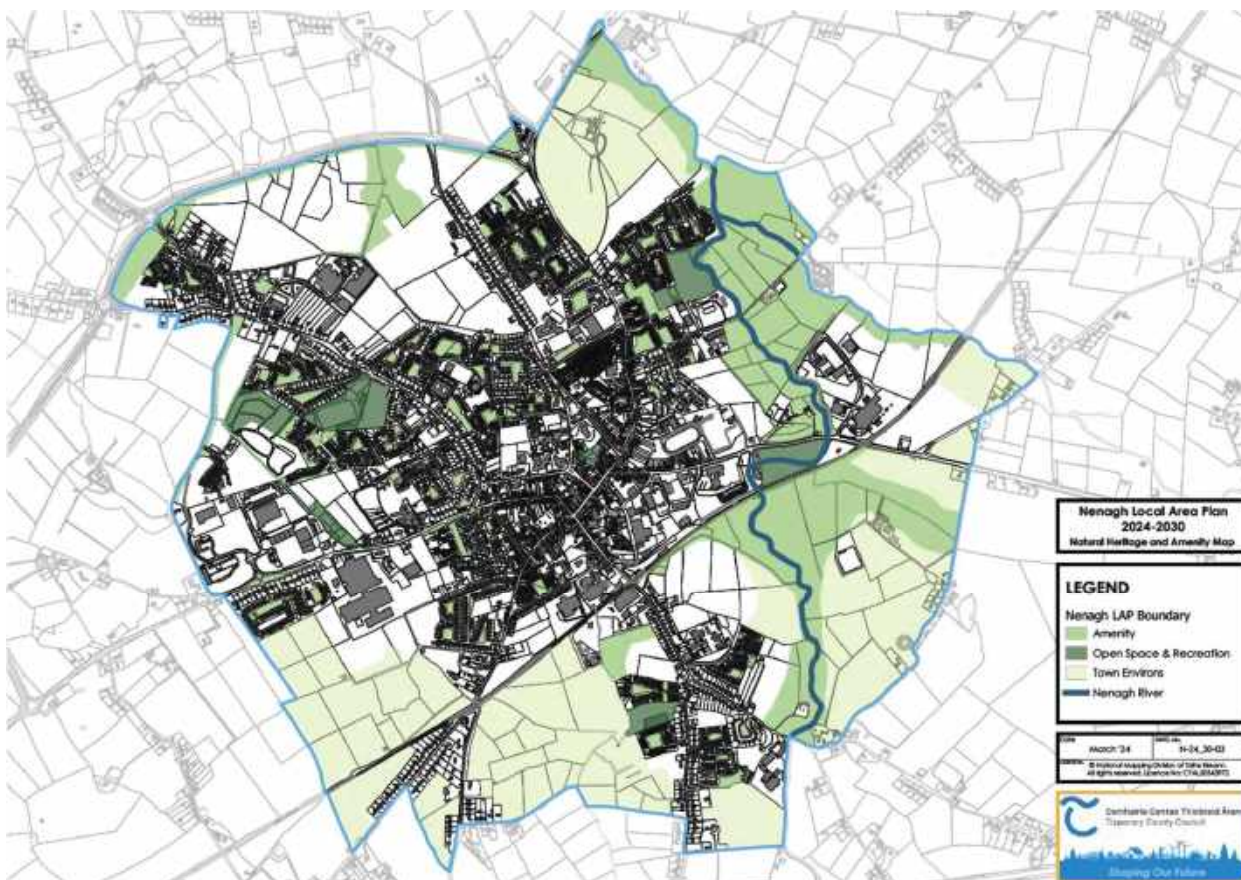
Natural Heritage and Amenity Areas, Nenagh Local Area Plan 2024-2030

3.4 Demographics

Based on the 2022 Census of Ireland, the demographic and socio-economic profile of Nenagh is summarised as follows.

Population by Age Group
Nenagh had a total population of 9,895 in 2022. The population is relatively balanced across age groups, with the 30–49 age cohorts making up the largest share.


Population by Age Group (Nenagh, 2022)
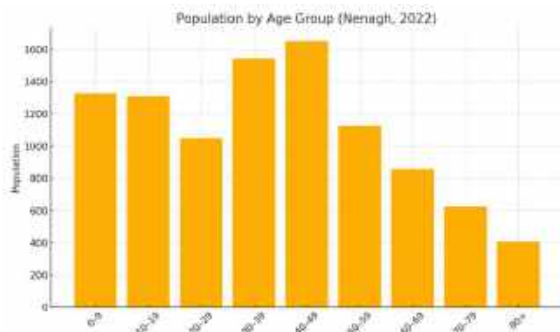
Household Structure & Living Arrangements
- Adults (18+) living with parents: 12.8% in Nenagh, compared to 13% nationally

Birthplace & Nationality
- Born in Ireland: Approx. 7,070
- Born abroad: Approx. 2,825 (28.6%)

Educational Attainment
Among residents aged 15 and over in Nenagh, 36% have attained a third-level qualification. This is slightly below the national average of 40%. The proportion with only primary education is 11%, compared to 9% nationally and 10% in Tipperary.

Educational Attainment (Nenagh, 2022)
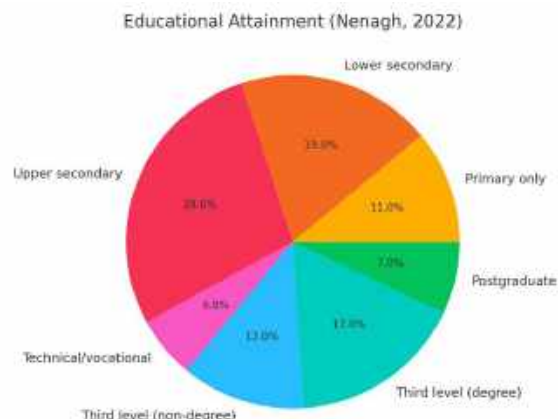
Occupational Breakdown
Employment in Nenagh is distributed across various sectors. Professional and managerial roles represent around 30%, with notable shares also in skilled trades and elementary occupations. This mirrors trends seen across County Tipperary.


Occupational Categories (Nenagh, 2022)
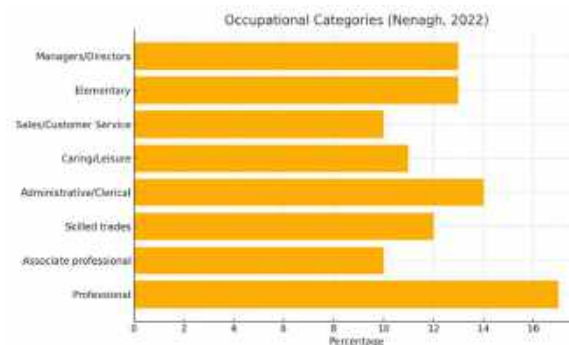
- Working from home: 24% of County Tipperary's workforce - lower than the 32% national level
- Tipperary average commute: 27 min (Nenagh similar), slightly under national average (29 min) .

Housing Tenure
- Home ownership remains strong in Nenagh, with 62% of residents owning their homes.
- This is slightly higher than the national average of 66% and the Tipperary average of 64%.
- Private rental accounts for 24% in Nenagh.

Housing Tenure (Nenagh, 2022)
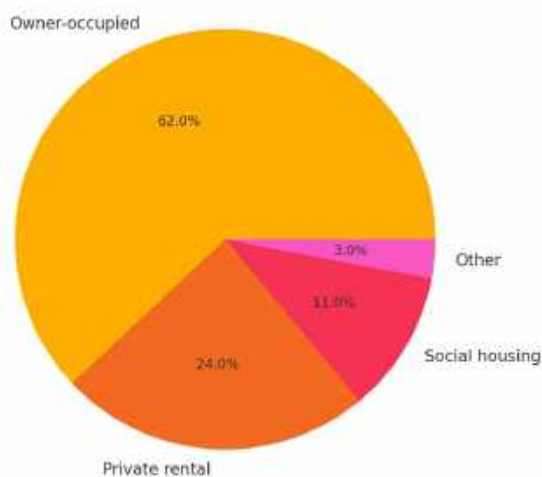

Car Ownership
- Car ownership in Nenagh is high, with approximately 83% of households owning at least one car.
- This reflects a strong reliance on private transport, similar to other towns in rural Ireland.
- Nationally, nearly 69% of trips were made by car in 2022, while rural areas like Tipperary recorded 80% car trip usage, showing Nenagh matches rural travel habits.

Car Ownership in Nenagh (2022 Census)
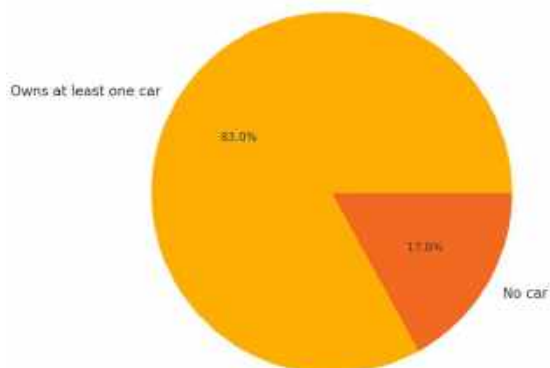
Travel Patterns
- The majority of working residents in Nenagh commute by car, with about 62% driving themselves.
- Walking accounts for around 9%, cycling 1%, and public transport use remains low at around 1.5%. About 24% of residents reported working from home, slightly below the national average of 32%.
- Walking/cycling: Tipperary County 9% walk,1% cycle
- Nenagh may slightly exceed walking average given local infrastructure emphasis
- Public transport: Bus use is very low in the county at 1%, train 0.5%
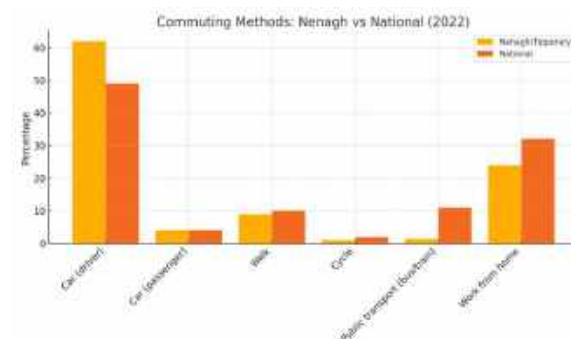
Summary
Nenagh exhibits demographic and socio-economic characteristics that align closely with both county and national averages. The town is characterized by a strong working-age population, solid educational outcomes, a diversified occupational base, and a stable housing market with high levels of home ownership.

Its strong car dependency, moderate levels of walking and remote work, and low public transport use suggest further opportunities for sustainable mobility planning and local infrastructure investment.

3.5 Tourism Attractions

Nenagh's location, heritage assets, cultural events, proximity to Lough Derg, and supportive regional and national strategies make it ideally positioned, yet still underexploited, as a tourism hub. The economic, social and environmental value of developing tourism initiatives in Nenagh is fully aligned with the strategic vision for tourism development as set out in the 'Tipperary Marketing, Experience & Destination Development Plan' (2016-2021) and the 'Tipperary Transforming – Tourism Product Development Plan' (2020–2030)'. Both these plans promote Tipperary as national leader in 'Responsible Tourism'. Nenagh is strategically positioned to become the leading cultural, heritage, and outdoor hub within the county.

Nenagh is an important gateway town within the Fáilte Ireland tourism programme 'Irelands Hidden Heartlands', and a critical part of the infrastructure for the 'Lough Derg Visitor Experience Development Plan 2020-2024' (VEDP). The VEDP recognises the existing tourism assets in Nenagh and sets out a number of opportunities, such as:

- Development of the Historical and Cultural Quarter;
- Development of quieter and off-road cycling facilities and extending general facilities for 'slow travel';
- Creation of pedestrian friendly environment in Nenagh town centre; and
- Utilising the principles of a 'Destination Town' as set out in the Fáilte Ireland guidelines.

Historical and Cultural Landmarks

- **Nenagh Castle** – The landmark 13th-century Norman keep built where visitors can climb the spiral staircase to the top for panoramic town and countryside views. A must-see for history enthusiasts, families, and photographers.
- **Nenagh Heritage Centre (Old Gaol)** – Now a museum and genealogy centre housed in the former Governor's House and Gatehouse of the19th-century Gaol. Guided tours can be arranged, and there is adjacent pay-and-display

parking for cars and coaches. The centre is part of Nenagh's Historic Quarter walking trail.
- **St. Mary's of the Rosary Church** – Nenagh's main Catholic church, a magnificent neo-Gothic structure consecrated in 1896. Adjacent to Nenagh, facing Banba Square and close to Nenagh Arts Centre.
- **Franciscan Friary Ruins** – Evocative ruins of a 13th-century Franciscan friary, with triple lancet window in the east gable, hidden just off the main street and often included on Nenagh's historical walking tours.
- **Nenagh Courthouse** – A grand Greek-revival courthouse on Banba Square dating to 1843, still in use for judicial sittings. The building has been refurbished, and its forecourt displays bronze statues of Nenagh's three Olympic gold medalists. Serves as an event space for community exhibitions and the Courthouse Market during festivals. National Heritage Week offers guided tours of the courthouse's interior and old cells.

Statues of three Olympic champions outside the Courthouse

Outdoor and Nature Attractions

- **Lough Derg at Dromineer** – Ireland's third-largest lake, around 9 km north-west of Nenagh, featuring a lakeside marina and beach. Lough Derg offers fishing, swimming, boating, and magnificent scenery. In summer, a range of water-based activities are available, including kayaks, pedal boats and stand-up paddleboards. Lake cruises and boat rentals are also available.

A new Facility for Water Based Sports is currently under development based on Fáilte Ireland's exemplar design. The project has secured funding from Fáilte Ireland through its Platforms for Growth Scheme, which specifically targets projects that have the greatest potential to grow tourism across Ireland and strategically enhance the Irish tourism offering to meet visitor needs. It will be developed in partnership with Tipperary County Council and aims to provide a best-in-class outdoor tourism amenity to enhance the visitor experience and serve as a central hub for outdoor activities in Dromineer.

Lough Derg at Dromineer

While Dromineer is the closest settlement on the Lough to Nenagh, there are several other nearby towns and villages offering visitor attractions, such as Ballina, Terryglass, Garrykennedy, Castlelough, Skehanagh, Mota and Coolbawn.

Other notable visitor attractions in County Tipperary include:

- **Slí Eala** – Tranquil nature trail 10 km one-way along the Nenagh River to Lough Derg, known as 'The Way of the Swan', with trailheads at Scotts Bridge in Nenagh and at Dromineer, but the walk is no longer maintained and blocked in places by farmland.
- **North Tipperary Cycle Loops** – Nenagh is the hub of several scenic cycling routes ranging from 11 km short spins to a 67 km figure-eight tour of North Tipperary's countryside. All routes start and end in Nenagh town, with signposted loops heading north toward Lough Derg and south toward the Silvermines hills.
- **Silvermines Mountains & Keeper Hill** - Silvermines village (15 km south of Nenagh via the R500) is a gateway to the Silvermine

Mountains, and the trailhead for Keeper Hill (the region's highest peak) is around a 30-minute drive south. The Slieve Felim Way, a long-distance trail, passes through the area from Toor to Silvermines. A shorter marked loop from Silvermines village leads to the Old Mining Heritage Trail.
- **Millennium Cross**
Located on top of Cloneybrien (or Tountinna) Hill near Portroe, between Ballina and Portroe village, and approximately 60-minute drive from Nenagh. Features a prominent 20m high stainless-steel cross commemorating the Millennium. Multiple waymarked hiking loops connect the summit, from where there are spectacular panoramic views of Lough Derg, the Shannon, and on clear days the distant Galway mountains
- **Graves of the Leinstermen**
Situated on the western slopes of Tountinna Mountain, with a trailhead near the car park linked to minor access roads. A megalithic site comprising several standing stones/menhirs of a probable Bronze Age tomb or court cairn.

Graves of the Leinstermen

The Nenagh Arts Centre and Tourist Information and Visitor Centre provides details and advice on all visitor activities and events within the locality.

Events and Festivals

Nenagh hosts a vibrant selection of events and festivals, blending culture, community and creativity for the enjoyment of locals and visitors to the town, including:

- **Spleodar Halloween Arts Festival** – Community festival that 'lights up' Nenagh during Halloween. Includes a diverse programme of theatre, music, street performances, and creative workshops, culminating in a spectacular firework display.

Spleodar Halloween Arts Festival

- **North Tipperary Agricultural Show** – Classic country show and fair held annually, showcasing the agricultural heritage of the region. Known locally as the 'Nenagh Show' and held annually on August Bank Holiday Monday (early August).

- **Dromineer Nenagh Literary Festival** – Acclaimed annual festival celebrating local literature, arts and culture, over several days in early autumn. Includes author readings, poetry recitals, film screenings, workshops and exhibitions in venues around Nenagh, such as the Castle and local cafés, and Dromineer.

- **St. Patrick's Day Parade and Celebration** – A range of festivities provided including a colourful Parade with community groups, sports clubs and other organisations marching and performing. Representatives from the Indian Kairali and Ukranian communities display their country's traditional costumes. The Parade is followed by a music festival with live performances of song and dance, childrens' activities, vintage tractors, market stalls showcasing local crafts, culture

and cuisine and the opportunity to get a bird's eye view of Nenagh courtesy of the Fire Service.

St. Patrick's Day Celebration, Nenagh

- **Christmas in Nenagh** – A range of festive events including the Christmas Tractors of Nenagh, the turning on of the Christmas Lights with live entertainment on the streets, Santa at the Castle, Lighting Extravaganza at Nenagh Castle and the Castle Garden and Christmas Markets.
- **Nenagh Arts Centre** - The cornerstone of the town's cultural calendar, offering a rich programme of film, music, theatre, opera, poetry, creative workshops, and community gatherings.

Other Family-Friendly Activities and Destinations

- **Abbey Court Leisure Centre** - Located within the Abbey Court Hotel complex on the Dublin Road, offering a blend of fitness, relaxation, and family amenities.
- **Nenagh Town Park & Playground** – Adjacent to the Leisure Centre and a 10-minute walk east from the town centre.

Nenagh Leisure Centre and Town Park

- **St**. Paul's Playground - Located opposite St. Joseph's Park, and includes children playground equipment and basketball. The Tipperary Artists' Collective are currently providing murals on the walls and funding has been received through the Participation Nation Outdoor Fund for a 3 x3 basketball court and biodiversity area.
- **Jump 'n' Gyms Nenagh** – Indoor play centre at Springfort Retail Park on the Limerick Road, 2 km southwest of Nenagh town Centre.
- **Nenagh Omniplex** – Located on Summerhill and offering the latest film releases.
- **Nenagh Arts Centre** - Frequently hosts children's theatre (including Nenagh Youth Theatre), magic shows, and workshops, especially during school holiday periods.

Local Food, Pubs, and Craft Experiences

- **Nenagh Farmer's Market** – Based at Teach an Léinn, Kenyon Street, a weekly Saturday market showcasing local farmers, artisan producers, and crafters.
- **Nenagh Country Market** - Held weekly on Friday mornings in the New Institute, Friar Street, with a wide range of flowers, plants, fresh produce and homebaking.
- **North Tipperary Online Farmers Market** - New branch recently opened, offering a wide range of local produce and with a collection point in Springfort Light Industrial Park, Stereame.
- **Pubs and Restaurants** – Nenagh is home to many characterful pubs and restaurants with a wide choice of cuisines, offering a distinctive cultural experience grounded in music, locality and community.
- **John Hanly Woollen Mills** – Genuine Irish wool products, located at Ballyartella, about 5 km north of Nenagh.

Tipperary Food Experience

Visitor Accommodation

Nenagh offers a modest but diverse mix of accommodation, ranging from a full-service hotel (Abbey Court), to several well-rated B&Bs, guesthouses and self-catering cottages, serving different visitor profiles.

The Tipperary Tourism Product Development Plan (2020–2030) specifically aims to expand bed nights in the County, build capacity and foster longer stays by enhancing visitor experiences and accommodation.

The Tourism Plan objectives seek to position Nenagh as a hub in a wider county network, based on the town's strong food culture, existing accommodation, cycle network and walking links, combined with proximity to Lough Derg and the significant plans for the Historic Quarter.

To fully develop as a regional visitor destination with enhanced heritage/cultural attractions, implies the need for supporting the development of a variety of unique accommodation options in Nenagh to meet the growing visitor needs.

3.6 Arts & Cultural Activities

Nenagh benefits from a strong foundation in arts provision and cultural engagement, anchored by a vibrant Arts Centre and supported by many public art and cultural events.

Nenagh Arts Centre contains a 194-seat multi-disciplinary theatre and cultural hub operated by Nenagh Arts Centre CLG in Banba Square. It is also the location of the town's Tourist Information Office & Visitors Centre since 2020.

Nenagh Arts Centre

The Centre functions as both a performance venue and community arts incubator, offering workshops, exhibitions, cinema, youth events, and outreach programming, including:

- **Live Music Nights**
- **Film & Documentary Screenings**
- **Comedy evenings**
- **Workshops & Talks**
- **Theatre Productions**
- **Exhibitions**
- **Community Meetings**
- **Seasonal Programming** - Heritage Week workshops, Culture Night, and children's film festivals.
- **Multi-disciplinary Engagement** - Supporting local drama groups, schools, seniors, and children with arts opportunities.
- **Creative Workshops** – 'Craft Share & Repair' sessions and drawing workshops.

Other cultural offerings in Nenagh Town

Nenagh's cultural offerings extend beyond the main arts venue into an evolving collection of public art and grassroots creativity. Artworks can be experienced throughout town, on walls, in workshops, and cultural trails, supporting the tourism positioning of Nenagh as a creative town and enhancing local placemaking.

The North Tipperary Artists' Collective support and promote artists in the North Tipperary area, providing a platform to showcase their work and connect with their audience. They have collaborated in curating a number of exhibitions and also successfully used pop-up shops as a mechanism to display the work of local artists and provide a market for them.

Statues and Monuments

'Architects of the Land', Limestone Bull & Ploughman (Nenagh Bypass) - A striking roadside Per Cent for Art–funded sculpture featuring a massive bull on one side and a ploughman on the other, carved from local limestone. It symbolizes North Tipperary's agricultural heritage and the transformation from hunter-gatherers to farming communities.

'Architects of the Land' by Colin Grehan

Olympic Heroes Statues - Three bronze statues of Nenagh-linked Olympic gold medalists Johnny Hayes, Matt McGrath, and Bob Tisdall stand outside Nenagh Courthouse in Banba Square. They were unveiled in 2002–2003 to honour the town's sporting legacy.

Olympic Heroes by Jeanne Rynhart

Banba Square War Memorial & Christ the King Figure - At the centre of Banba Square stands a carved limestone base with granite pedestal, surmounted by a life-size statue of Christ added in the 1950s. Originally unveiled c.1930, the monument honors local participants in the 1916 Easter Rising, the War of Independence, and the 1981 Hunger Strikes.

Banba Square War Memorial & Christ the King Figure

Mural Art & Public Art Installations

▪ **Shane MacGowan Mural** - A vibrant mural by Neil O'Dwyer celebrating Pogues frontman Shane MacGowan (whose mother hailed from Nenagh), unveiled in 2024 on Emmet Place. Provides a contemporary landmark for music fans, public art enthusiasts, and social media sharing.

Shane MacGowan Mural

▪ **Rex Ingram Mural** - A colorful portrayal of silent film director Rex Ingram on Wolfe Tone Terrace, who lived in Nenagh at the turn of the 19th century. The mural offers cultural storytelling and photo opportunities, forming part of a wider gable-painting initiative to reinforce Nenagh's heritage quarter atmosphere.

Rex Ingram Mural

- **Historic 2015 Mural by 'DMC'** - Previously created urban mural on Pound Road by renowned Irish artist Dermot McConaghy, inspired by 'Lannan's farewell to Nenagh' and contributing to Nenagh's emerging outdoor art trail.

Historic 2015 Mural by 'DMC'

Elsewhere in Nenagh town, local artists have transformed playground and school walls with vibrant murals to enliven streetscapes and encourage community cohesion.

The cultural vibrancy of Nenagh is further reinforced through the wide range of festivals and events, as well as markets, local food, traditional pubs, and craft experiences – refer 3.5 Tourism Attractions.

Strategic Opportunities

To further establish itself as a cultural destination, Nenagh should focus on programming diversification, collaborative partnerships, town-wide cultural placemaking, and strategic marketing to elevate visitor experience and local pride.

Related actions include:

- **Programme Diversification** - Expand film, visual arts, and contemporary culture events (e.g. festivals, residencies, pop-up galleries) to attract broader visitor demographics.
- **Collaborative Events** - Partner with literary festivals, heritage sites (castle, gaol), and outdoor attractions to create cross-sector experiences (e.g., castle-based performances or heritage walks).
- **Public Realm Cultural Animation** - Integrate local murals, storytelling plaques, and outdoor performances into town centre spaces to build an immersive cultural environment.
- **Audience Development Initiatives** - Offer tourism-focused 'arts passes' combining performances, workshops, and meals; use digital ticketing and cross-promotion.
- **Marketing Amplification** - Highlight Nenagh's arts calendar on county and national platforms (e.g. Failte Ireland's Hidden Heartlands) and promote creative meetups like photography groups and LGBTQ+ events to niche cultural audiences.

3.7 Accessibility

Nenagh is a Key Town in Tipperary and the Southern Region, strategically located on regional and national routes R445, R498/500/497, and the N52 bypass, while also served by an M7 motorway spur and a rail line to Limerick–Ballybrophy. This positions Nenagh as a regional transport hub connecting to the major cities of Limerick, Dublin and Cork, and accessible to rural area towns and villages such as Dromineer, Portumna, Clonmel and Roscrea, via improved public transport corridors.

Although Nenagh is well-connected in terms of physical access to local, regional and national road networks and to limited national rail services, the over reliance on the private car for both short local journeys and longer journeys in the region is apparent.

The aim of the Transport & Connectivity policies of the Nenagh LAP is that:

"By 2030, Nenagh will have initiated a model shift change in transport modes, with greater numbers of residents, workers and visitors utilising active and public travel modes, providing more sustainable transport patterns. This will be achieved by investing in sustainable transport infrastructure, providing a high-quality public realm and facilitating new development close to the core services provided in the town".

The Local Transport Plan (LTP) places strong emphasis on upgrading walking and cycling infrastructure, including safe routes to schools, traffic-calmed streets, and segregated cycle lanes on key corridors such as Martyr's Road and Friar Street.
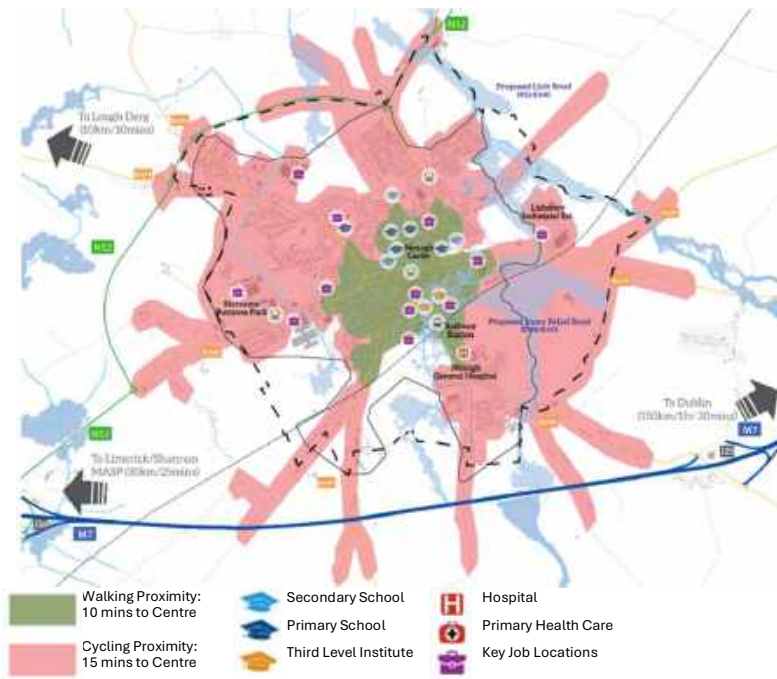
The LAP commits to integrating LTP measures into land use planning and adopts guidelines supporting safe active zones especially near the rail station.

Due to its compact, accessible layout that allows residents and visitors to reach essential services and amenities within a short walk or cycle, Nenagh is ideally positioned to become a vibrant '10-minute' town.

The Key Features of Nenagh as a 10-Minute Town are:

- **Walkable Urban Core** - The town centre is small and pedestrian-friendly, making it easy to access shops, cafés, restaurants, banks, and local businesses on foot within 10 minutes from most residential areas.
- **Proximity of Services** - Schools, healthcare facilities (including Nenagh Hospital), supermarkets, pharmacies, and sports clubs are all located close together, reducing the need for car travel.
- **Connected Public Spaces** - Nenagh features several public parks and open spaces, such as the Town Park, St. Paul's Playground and the Castle grounds, that are within easy reach from residential zones, encouraging community interaction and outdoor recreation.
- **Sustainable Transport Options** - The town supports active travel modes, such as walking and cycling, through footpaths, cycle lanes, and safe pedestrian crossings. Recent initiatives also focus on improving public transport links and reducing car dependency.
- **Community Infrastructure** - Facilities such as Nenagh Arts Centre, leisure centres and libraries are centrally located, ensuring that cultural and recreational services are accessible without long commutes.
- **Compact Urban Form** - Nenagh's development pattern supports higher density living in the core and avoids urban sprawl, making the '10-minute' concept viable and efficient.

Nenagh responds to the principles of a 10-minute town through its layout, community planning, and ongoing investment in sustainable infrastructure. The approach contributes to a higher quality of life and a more resilient, people-focused urban environment.

10-minute Town Benefits:

- **Environmental** - Reduced car usage lowers emissions and traffic congestion.
- **Health** - Promotes walking and cycling, contributing to physical well-being.
- **Community** - Enhances social interaction and local engagement.
- **Economic** - Supports local businesses through easy access and footfall.

Nenagh as a '10-minute' Town
Adapted from Tipperary County Development Plan 2022–2028, Figure 4.4 Nenagh Town Profile Plan

Traffic Management Scheme

A one-way system around the town centre has been in operation since April 2024, based on findings from the Nenagh Traffic and Transportation Plan 2019, aimed at easing congestion and making the town centre more pedestrian-friendly.

Pearse Street, Mitchel Street, Emmet Place, and Kickham Street were converted into two-lane one-way streets in a clockwise loop around the town centre, and the flow on Silver Street was reversed to feed traffic back into the loop.

Traffic lights at the Market Cross and the mini-roundabout outside the AIB Pearse Street branch were removed, together with pedestrian barriers at the Summerhill–Kickham Street junction.

New well-lit zebra crossings and raised tables were installed on key pedestrian routes to slow traffic and improve safety. Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) over 3.5t are now prohibited from turning left from Mitchel Street onto Sarsfield Street and must instead turn right into Emmet Place.

There have been calls to relocate the bus stops in town from Banba Square and Kickham Street to a dedicated transport hub at the train station. This remains under consideration. Consequently, bus stops remain on-street with the Kickham Street stop on the west side relocated to Pearse Street, while the east-side stop remains close to Rocky's Bar. The bus stops have limited surrounding space and lack covers.

Early feedback indicates that the system has reduced congestion and eased vehicular flow, while benefiting pedestrians. Some concerns have been raised on loss of parking spaces and inadequate loading bays, insufficient road space for cyclists, and difficulties with switching lanes.

Nenagh Traffic Management Scheme

Other Local Transport Plan Objectives:

- Support active travel integration with traffic management.
- Propose inner relief roads (R498–R445, Dublin Road–Borrisokane Road, Thurles Road–Limerick Road) to divert through traffic and improve town-centre permeability.

Multiple responses to the Community Survey favoured the creation of a Transport Hub and moving the town's bus stops to the train station, combining bus and rail services to improve accessibility and reduce traffic congestion in the town centre.

Bus Connectivity

Nenagh is served by a good network of rural bus connections, including Routes 322 and 854 on the TFI Local Link network, together with Bus Éireann and private operators to larger towns and airports. The March 2025 enhancement of Route 854 has boosted service considerably. Upcoming plans promise further expansion with a frequent Nenagh–Clonmel route and improved infrastructure, including further consideration of a dedicated bus–rail transport hub.

TFI Local Link Services:

- Route 322 (Portumna ⇄ Nenagh) - Provides peak, evening, and weekend connectivity, linking residents to Nenagh's rail and regional bus services. Four return services Monday–Saturday, with one extra weekday return between Puckaun and Nenagh, and three Sunday services. Covers

villages such as Ballycommon, Dromineer, Coolbawn, Ballinderry, Terryglass, Carrigahorig, Lorrha, and Portumna.
- Route 854 (Roscrea ⇄ Nenagh) - Services run three times daily in each direction, seven days a week, with intermediate stops that include Toomevara, Moneygall (Barack Obama Plaza), Cloughjordan, and Shinrone.
- Route 854 – Supports peak-time and evening travel and improves access to both Nenagh and Ballybrophy rail stations. Services enhanced (from March 2025) under the Connecting Ireland plan, providing 8 daily returns Mon–Sat (with 2 extending to Ballybrophy and 6 to Silvermines), 4 returns on Sundays/Public Holidays (2 to Ballybrophy, 4 to Silvermines).
- Route 72 - Athlone

Bus Éireann & JJ Kavanagh & Sons:

- Provide interurban coach services connecting Nenagh to Limerick, Dublin and other major routes.
- Also services to Portlaoise and Kildare Village.

Bus stop facilities are basic and absorbed into the town centre activities. Town centre bus stops currently remain centralised (Banba Square/Pearse Street).

Proposed & Planned Improvements

- Nenagh–Clonmel Corridor - NTA is consulting on a proposal to introduce a 7-day service with an every-2-hour frequency (approx. 8 buses per day) between Nenagh and Clonmel, calling at Borrisoleigh, Templemore, Thurles, Holycross, Boherlahan, Cashel, and Ballyclerahan. Will fully integrate with the 'TFI Go app' and 'Leap Card', using modern accessible buses and upgraded stops.
- Local Transport Plan – Bus Hub – Nenagh's LAP supports a future bus–rail transport hub at the railway station, ensuring improved bus–rail integration and bus-stop infrastructure, and active travel links to the station.

Rail Access

The rail station is within easy walking distance of the town centre, at the south end of Kenyon Street. Train services connect to Limerick and Ballybrophy, with limited frequency (2–3 trains per day) and with linkage to the mainline network via Ballybrophy–Thurles.

The rail links are greatly underutilised and requiring investment. The need for infrastructural improvements to increase the commuter rail service on the Nenagh to Limerick line is recognised in the Southern RSES.

It is also a policy of the Nenagh LAP (Policy 6.8) to support the development of a multi-modal public transport hub at the Train Station.

Responses to the Community Survey strongly supported upgrading of the station to make it:

- Disability-accessible
- Welcoming to commuters
- Equipped with basic amenities like a coffee shop or small retail unit

There were several suggestions for animating the station hub with cultural and creative uses, such as installing a public piano and creating a welcoming venue that supports arts, youth engagement, and informal gathering. Other proposals included providing camper van facilities within the station car park to meet the growing demand from mobile visitors and help support local businesses.

Nenagh Train Station

Related Accessibility Actions

Active Travel infrastructure:

- Support development of a transport hub at the train station, with enhanced facilities and improved pedestrian/cycle access.
- Pursue relocation of town centre bus stops to create a multi-modal public transport hub.
- Explore opportunities for introducing suitable facilities for over-night camper vans at the train station or elsewhere if necessary.
- Prioritise safe cycling routes – roundabout at Kenyon/Martyrs/Friar streets, rail station access.
- Monitor and refine Traffic Management Scheme.
- Pursue delivery of local Relief Road Schemes - advance funding and planning for new link roads to divert HGVs and relieve congestion.
- Support enhanced rural bus routes and pursue rail frequency improvements.
- Better integrate rail/bus connections via improved wayfinding and timetabling.
- Rationalise town centre parking provision, prioritise short-term on-street parking and Age-friendly spaces, promote car-pooling, EV infrastructure, and smart mobility hubs.

Active Travel greener practice

3.8 Community & Sports Facilities

Nenagh is well-provided with a diverse range of community and sports facilities, from modern leisure centres to historic cultural hubs and strong local sports clubs. The town offers opportunities for all age groups and interests, supporting health, learning, sport, and social life.

The existing main facilities include:

- **Nenagh Leisure Centre & Swimming Pool** - Nenagh Town Council's Leisure Centre, Solann an Aonaigh, situated on Dublin Road next to the Town Park and Abbey Court Hotel, featuring a six-lane 25 m pool, children's pool, fully equipped gym, saunas and steam room. Offers a range of activities, including adult and children's swimming, aqua-fitness, boxercise, and intensive lessons, on a pay-as-you-go basis.

Nenagh Leisure Centre, ABK Architects

- **Nenagh Town Park** – opened in 2015 beside the Leisure Centre on Dublin Road. A multi-functional community green space formed by the River Nenagh and its overflow channel and combining recreation, fitness, children's play, and natural ecology. In late 2024, the council purchased adjoining land across the river, planning future expansion, including a walking loop, native planting, and possibly a new pedestrian bridge.

Nenagh Town Park

- **Abbey Court Leisure Centre** - Located within the Abbey Court Hotel complex, with 20m heated indoor pool and a children's pool, Spa suite including hot tub (jacuzzi), sauna, and steam room, and state-of-the-art fitness centre.
- **Nenagh Community Training Centre** - Located in St John's Place (formerly CBS), supports 16–21 year-olds with QQI and VTCT-accredited programmes, such as catering, ICT, hair & beauty, woodcraft, art, and life skills.
- **Nenagh Community Allotments** – located off the Portroe roundabout outside the town centre, with more than 60 plots.

Outdoor Sports Grounds

- MacDonagh Park - Nenagh Éire Óg GAA's stadium, hosts hurling and football, and inter-county matches. Currently developing 2.5km amenity walkway around the grounds.
- Nenagh Éire Óg GAA - Strong local GAA club with many titles across age groups.
- Nenagh Ormond RFC - Rugby union club established in 1884, competing in All-Ireland League, with modern pitches and a women's section.
- Nenagh A.F.C. & Nenagh Celtic F.C. - Local soccer clubs with community-level participation.
- Nenagh Olympic Athletic Club - Features Ireland's only indoor athletics track, hosting Munster and national events, renowned for local Olympic champions.
- Nenagh Golf Club - An 18-hole course originally designed by Alister McKenzie & Eddie Hackett, affiliated since 1929.
- Nenagh Lawn Tennis Club – Based at Limerick Road, affiliated with Munster Tennis and Tennis

Ireland, and with strong family and community tradition.

- Riverdale Pitch & Putt Club – Located on the Old Birr Road, with championship 18-hole course, established in 1973.
- Other sports - Home to triathlon club, cycling network, taekwondo headquarters, darts and cricket clubs.

There are also a number of informal walking and cycle routes around the town which provide facilities for the health and well-being of local residents.

However, as noted during the Community Engagement exercises, there is a requirement for additional parks and public open spaces in Nenagh, particularly the provision of incidental dwell and rest space. Respondents expressed a significant desire for more green areas within the town centre. There were many suggestions from parents of young children to have access to play areas and general walking trails.

Other initiatives as expressed through public engagement included integrating more green infrastructure throughout the town centre, including street trees, rain gardens and native flower displays, reinstating the Community Garden, exploring opportunities for edible planting, and pocket parks on underused sites. Several dog owners also commented on the need for dog-friendly parks.

The redevelopment of public spaces and opportunity sites will be required to provide well-designed public spaces that are safe and accessible to all. The expansion of existing public amenity space and the provision of dedicated playground spaces will be supported as well as the provision of allotment space.

Typical green street

Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP)

The Nenagh WWTP on the Old Birr Road is already near capacity and presents a major restriction on future residential and employment growth in the town and hinterlands.

The existing plant can handle a Population Equivalent (PE) of about 12,000, but is presently operating above that level and no additional treatment capacity is available until upgrades come online.

An application for upgrade to the plant was submitted by Uisce Éireann in November 2024, proposing expansion of capacity from 12,000 PE to 22,000 PE, sufficient to meet 30 years' growth. Under the plans the water would be treated and then discharged via an upgraded outfall pipe into the Nenagh River.

The final investment timeframe depends on the 2025–2029 Capital Investment Plan, and current expectations are that the new plant will be operational by around 2030.

3.9 Town Centre Health Check

Summary of Findings (at time of survey) – Nenagh Town Centre Health Check (May 2023)

Ground Floor Use

Category	Count
Bulky Goods	5
Car Park Surface	1
Comparison	41
Convenience	24
Derelict/Vacant Sites	18
Financial & Business services	36
Health & Medical Services	19
Large office/Enterprise	1
Leisure Services	45
Light Industry	4
Other Buildings	7
Other Retail	26
Public Services	39
Religious Services	1
Retail Services	48
Storage/Warehousing	3
Vacant Commercial	65
Residential	345
Vacant Residential	37

Most common uses:

- Residential (345 units)
- Retail Services (48 units)
- Leisure Services (45 units)
- Financial & Business Services (36 units)

Vacancy

- 65 ground floor commercial units are vacant, leading to an 18% commercial vacancy rate.
- 37 ground floor residential units are vacant, a 10% residential vacancy rate.
- First Floor - Commercial vacancy at 16%, residential at 13%.
- Second Floor - Commercial vacancy at 17%, residential at 18%.
- Third Floor - Highest vacancy, commercial at 43%, residential at 25%.

The Lecture Hall, Pearse Street, former Nenagh Young Men's Literary Association Lecture Hall (dated 1869)

Overall Vacant Properties

92 total buildings are vacant:

- 41 are fully commercial
- 37 are fully residential
- 14 are mixed-use (commercial ground, residential above)

The data suggests a relatively healthy ground-floor retail and residential mix, but highlights significant vacancy, especially on upper floors, where reactivation could be targeted in regeneration or housing strategies.

Ground floor residential vacancy rate in Nenagh is low at 10%, rising modestly on upper floors (13–25%), which suggests less pressure compared to commercial.

Vacant residential property Summerhill

Based on the GeoDirectory Q2 2024 Buildings Report:

Nenagh's Residential Vacancy Rate: 6.1%

- This is above the national average (4.0%) but below the county average (9.7%).
- Suggests a relatively stable housing stock with moderate underuse.

Nenagh's Commercial Vacancy Rate: 14.5%

- This is slightly higher than the national average (14.3%) and also above the Tipperary average (13.6%).
- Suggests under-utilisation of retail and business properties, reflecting changing retail patterns or oversupply in certain areas.

Location	Residential Vacancy Rate (%)	Commercial Vacancy Rate (%)
Nenagh	6.1%	14.5%
Clonmel	5.2%	15.8%
Thurles	7.4%	13.2%
Co. Tipperary	9.7%	13.6%
National Average	4.0%	14.3%

Source: GeoDirectory Buildings Report Q2 2024

- Nenagh's residential vacancy rate is slightly above Clonmel but lower than Thurles and the county average.
- County Tipperary overall has a notably higher residential vacancy rate compared to the national average.
- Nenagh has a commercial vacancy rate slightly above the national average.

Nenagh Town Centre Health Check: Ground Floor Uses May 2023

3.10 Challenges & Opportunities

Nenagh has significant regeneration opportunities and strong tourism potential but faces vacancy issues, employment challenges, and competition from other towns.

Main Focus Areas for TCF Plan growth:

- Build on tourism assets (local heritage and connectivity) and Arts and Culture activities.
- Attract investment for commerce and small businesses (SMEs, remote working, artisan industries) based on heritage, culture and tourism assets.

- Capitalise on secured funding and delivery of the Historical and Cultural Quarter Strategy.
- Maximize use of renovation grants to tackle vacancy and dereliction.
- Pursue delivery of major Regeneration projects.
- Continue to promote 'Nenagh' branding.
- Support youth employment and training to retain the local population within the town.
- Enhance transport infrastructure (Active Travel, improved rail services and multi-modal hub).

This SCOT Analysis (Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, and Threats) reflects insights from the Town Centre First Plan, community engagement feedback, and local and national development strategies. It is intended to guide planning, investment, and stakeholder collaboration toward Nenagh's long-term regeneration Objectives.

SCOT Analysis

Strengths	Challenges	Opportunities	Threats
Features of the town that are successful and set it apart from others	*Aspects of the town that put it a disadvantage and could be improved*	*What can be changed and how the strengths of the town can be built upon*	*What external factors impede the success of the town*
- Strategic location between major cities (Limerick, Galway, etc.) - Rich heritage assets (Castle, Gaol, Courthouse, etc.) - Strong community engagement and civic pride - Compact, walkable town centre - Supportive national and local policy alignment (NPF, RSES, TCDP) - Vibrant local economy with artisan and independent businesses - Proximity to Lough Derg and natural outdoor amenities - Active and diverse Town Team with cross-sector collaboration	- High levels of vacancy and dereliction in the town centre - Fragmented and dated public realm (footpaths, lighting, signage) - Lack of affordable town centre housing - Lack of dedicated youth facilities and inclusive spaces - Accessibility limitations for disabled and elderly - Disconnected public transport infrastructure - Limited evening/night-time economy options - Underutilised heritage buildings - WWTP infrastructure constraints - Shortage of affordable, multi-purpose community venues	- Adaptive reuse of vacant and heritage buildings (e.g. Rialto) - Tourism expansion through branding as Gateway to Lough Derg - Development and expansion of festivals, events, and markets - Investment in active travel and inclusive mobility infrastructure - Pop-up shops and incubators for local crafts and start-ups - Public realm upgrades (e.g. Banba Square redevelopment) - Access to funding streams (RRDF, URDF, TCF, LEADER, CAP) - Integration with climate action and sustainability policies	- Dependency on public funding and delayed allocation cycles - Population imbalance and youth disengagement - Regulatory and planning constraints on heritage site reuse - Persistent commercial vacancy despite incentives - Impacts of climate change, including localised flooding - Community resistance to pedestrianisation and reduced car access - E-commerce and retail decline challenging local businesses - Conflicting priorities between stakeholders (e.g. parking vs. public space) - Delays in upgrade of the WWTP

4.1   TCF Plan Themes & Objectives
4.2   Supporting Projects

4.1 Town Centre First Themes & Objectives

TCF policy outlines a comprehensive vision for achieving successful towns, shaped around high-level themes and objectives. The process provides the steps for identifying possible projects that are necessary to fulfil the objectives. This may include how the objective can be achieved, how it will be further developed (e.g. supplementary plans and studies) and how it will be implemented.
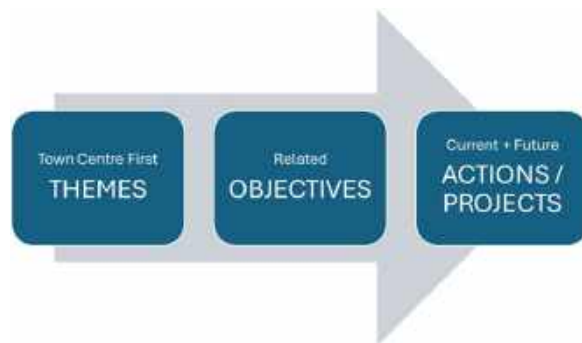
Meeting the overall vision for Nenagh as **'a vibrant market town with a thriving local economy, a living town centre community, restored and re-purposed heritage buildings, attractive and safe public spaces, sustainable mobility, and a friendly cultural-tourism destination'**, requires clear and 'easy to understand' strategic themes and related objectives. The four TCF Strategic Objectives set out in Section 2.1 have been instrumental in guiding the development of this TCF Plan.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Support businesses, revitalise buildings and town centre living.

SOCIAL & COMMUNITY

- Enhance services, facilities and community engagement

ENVIRONMENTAL & PUBLIC REALM

- Improve public spaces, greenery and sustainable transport

CULTURAL & HERITAGE

- Preserve historic sites and promote arts and culture

TCF Plan Themes & Objectives

Economic Development Objectives

Strengthen Local Enterprise and Retail

Support existing local businesses and attract new enterprises to the town centre. Encourage full use of vacant commercial units and nurture start-ups, artisan producers, and retailers that add to Nenagh's unique shopping experience. The community overwhelmingly prioritised supporting local businesses and maintaining a good mix of shops as critical for the town's future.

Continue to support the viability of the town centre, in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines for Local Authorities (DECLG, 2012), including applying a 'Town Centre First approach' and 'sequential test' for development.

This objective includes focussing enterprise and retail opportunities within the 'Primary Retail Area' of the town, i.e. Kenyon Street, Pearse Street, Silver Street, Mitchell Street, Cecil's Walk, Quentin's Way and Friar Street.

Initiatives include business mentoring, 'shop local' campaigns, 'pop-up' and temporary uses of under-used buildings, refurbishing traditional shopfronts, and actively promoting the heritage assets of the town centre.

Boost Footfall and Town Centre Economy

Increase the number of people living, working, and spending time in Nenagh's town centre. This requires attracting more residents to live in the town centre (e.g. by developing new housing or converting vacant upper floors) and encouraging more visitors and shoppers through tourism and events.

The plan aims for a lively daytime and evening economy, offering café culture, family activities, and a safe nightlife. Extending shop and hospitality opening hours and developing the night-time economy will help keep the town centre active into the evenings.

Similarly, marketing Nenagh's assets (heritage sites, food, culture and events) and improving general amenities will position the town as a regional visitor destination.

Create Jobs and a Diversified Economy

Capitalise on Nenagh's strengths and location to create new employment opportunities in the town centre. This includes supporting existing businesses to diversify and expand, promoting and enabling tourism development, and improving the town centre experience through the delivery of new infrastructure and a TCF approach.

By redeveloping key sites, such as the former Rialto cinema as a high-quality facility for new employment and enterprise, Nenagh can provide modern workspace and attract professionals, helping to sustain daytime footfall and the town centre economy.

A more diverse economic base, from traditional retail to tech start-ups and hospitality, will make the town centre more resilient. These economic objectives all aim to make Nenagh a vibrant commercial centre where businesses thrive and jobs are created locally.

Social and Community Objectives

Enhance Community Facilities and Services

Develop amenities that support community life and social inclusion in the town centre. As repeatedly expressed through stakeholder consultation, a top priority is to establish a multi-purpose community centre or hub where groups can meet and hold activities. This could involve repurposing an existing underused building to house resources that include youth space, arts and crafts rooms, meeting areas for seniors, and services such as a food bank. The Objective is to make the town centre a social hub that caters to all ages, from teens to older adults, strengthening Nenagh's renowned community spirit.

Promote Town Centre Living

Increase residential occupancy in the town centre to bring life and an added sense of security to the area. This includes the TCF principle for promoting housing 'above the shop' and reusing vacant properties for living.

This will require incentivising the refurbishment of vacant properties and upper floors into apartments, promoting affordable and mixed-income housing options, and making it attractive for people (especially young adults and older people) to live in town. By providing more town centre homes, Nenagh will gain a resident population that supports local businesses, adds vibrancy, and improves safety through activity and passive surveillance.

Improve Safety and Social Inclusion

Make Nenagh's centre a safe, welcoming place for everyone. This entails tackling anti-social behaviour through measures such as improved street lighting, CCTV where appropriate, and increased Garda foot patrols.

The TCF Plan also seeks to create a more family-friendly and age-friendly town centre, through initiatives that include providing amenities for teenagers (so they have alternatives to just 'hanging around') and ensuring public spaces are accessible to people with disabilities and older adults. An inclusive town centre requires safe footpaths, adequate seating, public toilets, and a welcoming atmosphere for all.

Strengthen Community Engagement and Pride

Continue to involve local stakeholders in town centre revitalisation and foster a sense of pride and ownership. The Town Team will guide project development and implementation, bringing together residents, businesses, and community groups.

The objective emphasises ongoing collaboration, volunteerism (e.g. Tidy Towns efforts for cleanliness and planting), and communication about the plan's progress, to ensure that the town centre evolves in response to local needs and aspirations.

Environmental and Public Realm Objectives

Revitalise the Public Realm

Transform Nenagh's streetscapes and public spaces to be more attractive, green, and people-friendly, by addressing the concerns expressed through community engagement on narrow and uneven footpaths, lack of pedestrian priority areas, street lighting and planting.

Initiatives include widening and resurfacing of footpaths wherever possible, introducing pedestrian-priority streets and traffic calming in the Primary Retail Area, and adding street furniture, planting, lighting and wayfinding signage.

In particular, the TCF Plan supports the extensive public realm upgrades planned around Banba Square, thereby creating an inviting focal point for gatherings, markets and outdoor events, and other key streets under the Historic & Cultural Quarter project.

Greening the Town

Integrate more green infrastructure throughout the town centre, including street trees, rain gardens, edible planting and native flower displays. Other initiatives as expressed through public engagement should also be pursued, such as reinstating the Community Garden, exploring opportunities for edible planting, and pocket parks on underused sites.

A greener town centre will not only be more attractive but also provide shade, support biodiversity, and improve environmental quality. The objective also supports broader sustainability aims related to promoting nature-based solutions (e.g. rain gardens for surface water drainage as proposed in the Banba Square upgrade) and ensuring that any new developments meet green building standards.

Improve Accessibility and Mobility

Make it easy for pedestrians and cyclists to move around and access the town centre. This includes continuing to manage traffic and parking so that cars do not dominate the streets.

The one-way traffic system recently introduced has helped to ease congestion and aid accessibility, and this plan supports further measures for improving the walking and cycling infrastructure, including safer pedestrian crossings, widened footpaths, clearly marked parking spaces (with prescribed parking times), improved off-street parking, and added cycle lanes and cycle parking where feasible.

Accessibility for those with disabilities is a priority and issues such as pedestrian crossing ramps, tactile paving, and elimination of obstacles on footpaths will be addressed so that everyone can navigate the town centre safely and conveniently.

All new development in Nenagh, especially that related to the public realm, amenities, housing and commercial development, will be required to be designed in accordance with the principles of 'Universal Design' and 'Age Friendly' development, and the development of Nenagh as an Autism Friendly Town.

Overall, this objective aims to a achieve a balanced, pedestrian-first mobility system, where people of all abilities can choose to walk, cycle, or park once and comfortably reach all central amenities.

Sustainability and Climate Resilience

This TCF Plan incorporates sustainable approaches to town centre development in response to the actions set out in the TCC Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 in relation to spatial planning locally in Nenagh.

This involves promoting compact growth and low-carbon transport (walking, cycling, EV charging in car parks), town-centre first and adaptive re-use of buildings, energy-efficient building retrofits (especially when refurbishing old buildings), nature-based solutions, flood risk and water management (e.g. managing rainwater with sustainable drainage in redesigned streets and open spaces), and generally safeguarding Nenagh's environment.

The North Tipperary Development Company and Energy Communities Tipperary Co-operative are Nenagh based organisations and both are active in facilitating and supporting local communities in development of sustainable energy, home retrofits and supporting district heating feasibility studies.

While not a major focus of community engagement, adopting a sustainable approach to development is a forward-looking objective for Nenagh to become a model eco-friendly town that is prepared to adapt for future changes.

Cultural and Heritage Objectives

Celebrate Local Heritage

Protect Nenagh's unique heritage and capitalise on it as the basis for regeneration. The town's historic assets, including Nenagh Castle, the old Gaol and Governor's House (Heritage & Genealogy Centre), the Courthouse, and many heritage shopfronts, are essential to its character and identity. This plan aims to conserve these assets and to promote vibrant new uses where needed.

A key initiative is to implement the Nenagh Historic and Cultural Quarter project, which will upgrade the Castle and Gaol visitor experience and restore surrounding areas. By investing in these sites, Nenagh will strengthen its appeal as a heritage destination while safeguarding the heritage of the town for future generations.

Adaptive reuse of protected structures is also prioritised, particularly finding sustainable new functions for maximising the potential of underused heritage buildings in the town centre.

Promote Arts and Culture

Make Nenagh a lively centre of arts, music, and cultural activity based on existing cultural talents and strengths. This entails animating the town with a range of activities, from live traditional music in pubs and public spaces, to art trails and historical tours.

Place particular emphasis on the rich local music traditions, celebrating the lives of renowned Nenagh musicians.

Initiatives include providing venues and spaces for performances, exhibitions and workshops, and arranging a programme of year-round events, such as an annual Nenagh Heritage Festival, outdoor

concerts, or a Christmas market, that bring people together and support local retailers.

This will energise the town, foster community pride and attract more visitors, while reinforcing Nenagh as a significant cultural hub in the region.

Kickham Barracks performance space, Clonmel

Promote Nenagh's Identity and Tourism

Develop a coherent 'story' and brand for Nenagh that can be used to promote the town. This involves marketing Nenagh's unique attributes, in particular the Norman castle, the traditional market-town character, proximity to Lough Derg for outdoor recreation, and the vibrant local food and crafts.

Related initiatives involve developing heritage trails, improving tourist information, and enhanced signage that guides visitors through the Historic Quarter and shopping areas.

By packaging and promoting these offerings, tourist footfall and spending in the town centre can be increased, and Nenagh becomes known as a must-visit destination in Ireland's Hidden Heartlands.

4.2 Supporting Projects

Nenagh has prepared a comprehensive Revitalisation Strategy to guide physical and economic regeneration focusing on the Historic & Cultural Quarter at Banba Square, supported by the Rural Regeneration Development Fund (RRDF).

A landmark sustainable regeneration initiative centred on a state-of-the-art Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Energy (SECOE) has also been developed for the Martyr's Road Regeneration Quarter.

In addition, comprehensive masterplans have been prepared for the Stereame Business and Residential Campus and the Lisbunny Industrial estate, each contributing significantly to Nenagh's regeneration strategy.

An impressive range of transformative actions and projects have been identified, closely reflecting the Nenagh LAP aims and objectives and TCF policy.

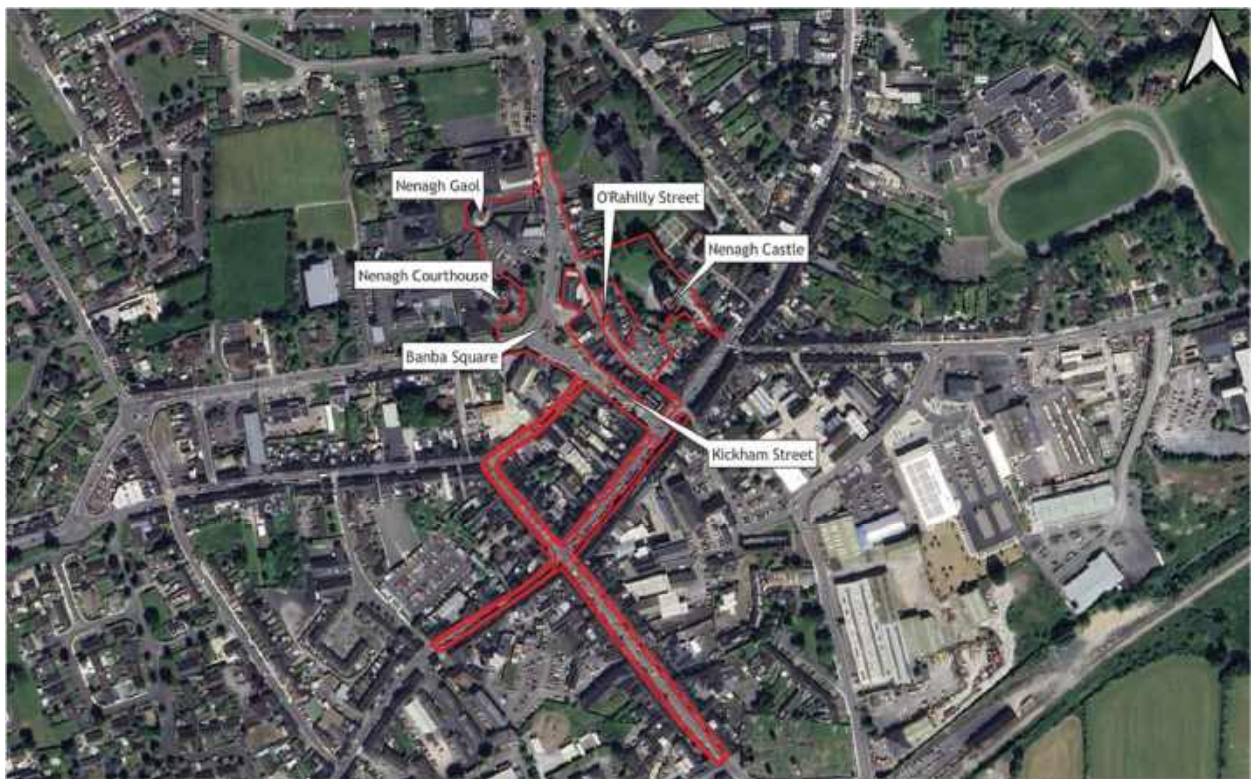### Historical and Cultural Quarter Strategy

The Revitalisation Strategy is the result of development proposals for several individual town centre regeneration projects and the desire to have a coordinated approach to the future development of Nenagh town centre. The Nenagh Historic and Cultural Quarter covers a large quadrant in the heart of the town centre, signified by a cluster of historic landmark buildings and civic spaces, including Nenagh Gaol, Nenagh Castle and Banba Square.

The strategy comprises investment in arts, artisan retailing, history, heritage and culture (including a Genealogy Centre, Arts Centre and Tourist Office).

The project is supported by Failte Ireland amongst others, and incorporates:

- A Visitor Experience Plan for Nenagh Historic & Cultural Quarter;
- A new and bespoke visitor experience for Nenagh Gaol;

- High quality new public realm for Banba Square, O'Rahilly Street, and the areas around the Courthouse, the Castle and the Castle Field;
- Re-purposing of the former Rialto Cinema for bespoke office, meeting and collaborative working space uses; and
- Sympathetic interventions to the Castle and Gaol to enhance the appreciation, use and quality of these heritage assets.

Nenagh's Historic and Cultural Quarter Location

Key Elements of the Strategy

The Historical and Cultural Quarter Strategy proposes the following key strategic architectural, landscape and urban design interventions:

1. Public Realm upgrade works to Banba Square, O'Rahilly Street and Carpark, Courthouse Carpark and Courthouse frontage, Castle Field, Castle Barbican entrance.
2. Reinstate historic Courthouse gateways.
3. Reinstate the formal arrival sequence into Nenagh Castle through the remains of the Barbican.
4. Refurbish the former Governor's house, Gatehouse and the single storey and 3-storey Gaol Cell Blocks of Nenagh Gaol.
5. Reinstate an elevated footbridge connecting the Governor's House to the 3-storey Cell Block.
6. Demolish the former Civil Defence building and adjacent lean-to store in the courthouse public carpark.
7. Demolish modern single storey lean-to structure adjacent to the Barbican Nenagh Castle entrance.
8. Accessible public realm to the O'Rahilly Street carpark.
9. Install public realm lighting to Banba Square, Courthouse carpark, O'Rahilly Street carpark and subtle facade lighting to Nenagh Castle and Nenagh Gaol buildings and the former Gaol exercise yards.
10. Install natural stone paving and improvement works to the footpaths of the main business streets.

The Revitalisation Strategy includes a four-pillar approach for the delivery of physical and economic regeneration in the Historic and Cultural Quarter.

Presenting the Revitalisation Strategy

PILLAR ONE
Tourism Growth and Cultural Development

PILLAR TWO
Public Realm and Placemaking

PILLAR THREE
Economic Development

PILLAR FOUR
Residential Development

PILLAR ONE AND TWO (PHASE TWO)
Public Realm and Tourism Measures

PILLAR ONE
Tourism Growth and Cultural Development

The strategy seeks to establish Nenagh as a vibrant visitor attraction, fully capturing the potential established tourism associated with Lough Derg and its surrounding natural assets and ensuring that visitors to the wider area see Nenagh as an enticing day and overnight destination.

This pillar seeks also to build on the cultural offering in the town and ensure that the Quarter has a strong community focus.

PILLAR TWO
Public Realm and Placemaking

Focused on Banba Square, this pillar aims to ensure that this important civic space undergoes a complete revitalisation to achieve its full potential as a public gathering area with the people of Nenagh at its core.

It will also ensure that the Quarter has its own unique identity, responding to and physically linking Nenagh's most significant buildings in a compelling and interactive manner.

PILLAR THREE
Economic Development

This pillar is aimed at developing a vibrant business and enterprise centre in the iconic building of the former Rialto cinema, a Council owned protected structure at the heart of the Historic and Cultural Quarter.

The focus of the project is on artificial intelligence, cyber security and data analytics to enhance the employment opportunities in the town and to serve the needs of the wider regions.

PILLAR FOUR
Residential Development

The aim of this Pillar is linked to the town centre age-friendly housing initiative currently being pursued by TCC. A pilot project funded by the DoHLGH is located within the Historic and Cultural Quarter adjacent to the proposed Rialto Business and Enterprise Centre.

The development is intended to be a model in high-quality town centre living, in line with TCF Policy and TCDP objectives for compact growth and the promotion of 10-minute towns.

Key Components of the Historic and Cultural Quarter Strategy

The overall strategy for the Historical and Cultural Quarter envisages:
- Revitalising the Castle and Gaol via access improvements, heritage restoration, lighting, and adaptive reuse.
- Elevating the overall visitor experience with cohesive, high-quality streetscapes and public spaces.
- Celebrating heritage through reinstated historic elements (gates, footbridge, entrance, lighting).
- Improving accessibility, ensuring universal access and safer pedestrian routes throughout the Quarter.

Based on the four-pillar approach to the physical and economic regeneration of the Historical and Cultural Quarter, detailed design concepts have been developed for the following key projects:

4

Pillar 1: Tourism Growth and Cultural Development

Nenagh Castle

This iconic landmark building, built by Theobald Walter (the first of the Butlers of Ormond) around 1200 and a former seat of the Butlers of Ormond, is a National Monument under the ownership of the DLGH and managed by the Office of Public Works.

The castle is open free-of-charge to the public, attracting over 16,500 visitors annually.

The Revitalisation Strategy aims to further enhance the visitor experience through the installation of an interpretative audio-visual system, under the theme of 'Enhancing the Visitor Medieval Experience', to guide the visitor through the castle from the ground floor to the rooftop, from where there are expansive views over Nenagh and the surrounding countryside.

The related physical improvements comprise:

- Reinstated original pedestrian entrance via a restored bridge over the historic Barbican from O'Rahilly Street.
- External improvements, including demolition of incongruous modern lean-to structures near the Barbican to open-up views of the castle and restore historic clarity.
- Façade lighting to enhance the castle's nighttime presence and ambiance.
- Universal-access upgrade, featuring an elevated pedestrian bridge, ramps, and walkways from the O'Rahilly Street carpark directly to the castle forecourt.

Nenagh Castle Forecourt, Barbican and O'Rahilly Street proposals, Bernard Seymour Landscape Architects

Nenagh Gaol (including Governor's House / Heritage & Genealogy Centre)

The Gaol was built in 1838 and originally contained seven cell blocks radiating from and connected by a gantry to the central octagonal Governor's House. The surviving 3-storey South Cell Block, the Gatehouse, the Governor's House and a truncated cell block form an impressive collection of heritage buildings at the heart of Nenagh.

The North Tipperary Genealogy and Heritage Centre is located in the Governor's House and contains an exhibition space showcasing the history of the Gaol together with other exhibits on Nenagh's history.

The Revitalisation Strategy envisages greatly improved visitor and cultural experience centred on the Governor's House, Gate House, 3-storey Cell Block and truncated Cell Block, developed on the theme of 'Crime, Punishment & Repentance'.

The Governor's House will be upgraded to provide an enhanced exhibition space dedicated to the heritage of the town and surrounding areas.

Nenagh Gaol Gate House

The truncated Cell Block, 3-storey Cell Block and Gate House will provide the focus for local story telling, related to the history of the former Gaol and the prisoners that were incarcerated there. The Cell Block will also include a small retail function, a public consultation booth for the further phases of the Strategy, accessible toilet facilities, and an enhanced landscape setting to the buildings.

The main interventions are:

- Adaptive reuse of protected structures: conservation works to the Governor's House, Gatehouse, and Cell Blocks, integrating accessible toilets and rationalised interior layouts.
- Reinstatement of heritage footbridge ('gantry') linking the Gaol cell block to the first floor of the Governor's House, re-establishing historic circulation routes used by inmates.
- Rationalising vehicular access, removing the Civil Defence building in the courthouse car park, reorganising parking, reinstating historic gates with lighting, and installing controlled access bollards at the Gaol gatehouse.
- Façade lighting and public realm improvements around the Gaol and Courthouse areas.

Pillar 2: Public Realm and Placemaking

The Public Realm and Placemaking strategy is focused on Banba Square and key adjoining streets. The Square is the historic heart of Nenagh, serving as a cultural, civic, and social focal point for the town.

The main attributes of this important public space, which is an Architectural Conservation Area, include:

- Defined by prominent civic buildings – the Courthouse, a neoclassical landmark built in 1843; the Town Hall / Arts Centre, also oerating as the Tourist Information Office and Visitor Centre, providing both a cultural venue and a visitor focal point; the Gaol and cell blocks, the old Rialto cinema, the former Presbyterian Church and the Garda Station.
- A limestone and granite memorial commemorating local participants in Ireland's major historical struggles - the 1916 Rising, War of Independence, and 1981 hunger strikes.
- Public Events Space - hosting market days, parades, and festivals.
- Prominently displayed bronze statues commemorating the sporting legacy of Nenagh's Olympic champions - Matt McGrath, Johnny Hayes, and Bob Tisdall.

- Key transit node, with bus routes to Dublin, Limerick, and Shannon Airport converging within the space, the nearby train station providing a gateway to and from the town.

The public realm of Banba Square is currently car-dominated and presents an uninviting space for pedestrians to spend time in and appreciate the historic surroundings.

The Revitalisation Strategy aims to enhance the pedestrian experience and balance the vehicular requirements by re-aligning and narrowing the road and rationalising car-parking spaces, in order to create a new and appealing people-focused civic space from where the town's rich heritage can be fully appreciated.

Banba Square public realm proposals, Bernard Seymour Landscape Architects

The main components of the wider public realm proposals are:

- Comprehensive public realm upgrade across Banba Square, O'Rahilly Street and its car park, the courthouse frontage, Castle Field, and Barbican entrance/bridge.
- Restored heritage elements - reinstatement of access gates, lighted posts at the courthouse, removal of street clutter and ornamental railings around monuments.
- High quality footpath resurfacing in natural stone on Kenyon, Mitchel, Pearse, Silver, Kickham, and Emmet streets, to unify the historic district.
- Lighting strategy featuring both high-level and low-level lighting to enhance safety and atmosphere in Banba Square, car parks, and walkways.
- Soft landscaping and surface drainage solutions, integrating green edging, stone paving, asphalt surfaces, and nature-based water management.

Banba Square public realm proposals Plan, Bernard Seymour Landscape Architects

Pillar 3: Economic Development

Rialto Cinema

The Rialto Cinema is an iconic town centre building in an Art Deco style and a fine example of mid-20th century architecture in Ireland. Its simple yet decorative style, with distinctive elements such as the canopy, curved bay and stepped gable, combine with its corner-sited position on the town square to form an interesting contribution to the streetscape. It is also an important reminder of the importance of cinema to the town and wider area, from the mid-20th century to 1976 when the building was repurposed as a retail unit (Sheahan's hardware shop).

The site was purchased by TCC in 2020 to avoid the building falling into dereliction.

The Revitalisation Strategy seeks to ensure protection of the Rialto cinema as a landmark town centre building while re-purposing it into a more functional town centre use.

The current approved Part 8 proposals envisage the development of an enterprise/incubation centre providing a flexible mix of accommodation such as open plan and flexible workspaces for up to 100

people, high speed broadband, conference room, meeting rooms, canteen, and multimedia suite.

The aim is to enhance the economic viability of Nenagh, making it an attractive place to establish and grow businesses with a particular focus on artificial intelligence, cyber security and data analytics.

This is intended to bring more people into the town centre to work, meet, network and socialise, thereby stimulating the local economy and animating the civic space of Banba Square.

In addition, the backlands to the south and west of the Cinema building are proposed to be developed for residential use with improved public realm and car parking (Pillar 4, A Living Town Centre).

Whereas Part 8 planning for the Rialto Business & Enterprise development is now in place and the designs for an enterprise/incubation hub are fully developed, the concept is being re-evaluated in the context of current needs and the function of the building to maximize public value.

The optimum role of the building needs to be considered in relation to the feedback from community engagement and the objective for promoting continued economic development with associated benefits for local employment and town centre vitality (refer Section 5.1 TCF Plan Projects & Interventions for further details).

Illustrative view of the re-purposed Rialto Cinema by Robin Lee Architecture

Pillar 4: Residential Development

The objective of this pillar is to provide high-quality housing on the storage area previously used by Sheahan's hardware to the rear of the proposed Rialto Business and Enterprise Centre and facing Emmet Place.

A total of 13 medium density homes are planned, suitable for age-friendly living within the centre of the town and providing 24-hour use to this neglected brownfield site.

The area is ideally located to allow ease of pedestrian access to all of the services and amenities within the town and is within a short walking distance of the train station and bus stops. Limited car parking is included in the proposals.

The plans align with TCDP objectives for 10-minute towns and compact growth, and with the Department's 'Housing for All' Guidance document which seeks to 'Expand the Housing Options for Older Persons'.

Illustrative view of the re-purposed Rialto residential development by Robin Lee Architecture

Current status of the Historic & Cultural Quarter Strategy

- The Part 8 proposal was officially launched in November 2023, and the consultation period closed January 2024.
- The Consultation documents included AA and EIA screening, ecological, archaeological, and design reports.
- At a special meeting held in January 2024, Nenagh municipal councillors formally accepted the Chief Executive's report and the Part 8 proposal. A total of 16 public submissions were considered and incorporated into revisions.
- One submission from the Sisters of Mercy highlighted matters relating to land access and structural works affecting properties leased to the Sisters of Mercy (gatehouse gantry and entrance barriers).
- In June 2020 funding under RRDF Category 2 was approved to progress the project development stage, primarily focused on turning the Historic and Cultural Quarter strategy into shovel-ready proposals.
- Other funding opportunities such as the Historic Structures Fund have been availed of to progress conservation works at the Governor's House and the 3-storey Cell Block.
- An application is in course of preparation for submission under the Town & Village Renewal Scheme 2025 for the 3-storey South Cell Block.
- The Council is actively preparing a submission for the next round of Category 1 RRDF to deliver on selected elements of the Revitalisation Strategy.

Martyr's Road Regeneration Quarter

This is a landmark sustainable regeneration initiative centred on a state-of-the-art Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Energy (SECOE).

The vision is for green jobs, low-carbon housing, education, enhanced public realm, and a mobility-friendly neighbourhood. It is a major, multi-phase brownfield redevelopment led by TCC with URDF support. The development will transform 10 hectares of underused land along Martyr's Road into a sustainable, mixed-use urban neighbourhood.

The plan will be delivered over 20 years under a partnership and collective leadership of the council working with Tipperary Energy Agency, North Tipperary Development Company, the community electricity generating firm, Community Power and the Technological University of the Shannon (TUS):

- Phase 1: SECOE building, and upgrade roads, cycleways, pedestrian links, and civic public spaces like parks and plazas.
- Phase 2: Low-carbon housing (2–3 storey), alongside an educational/training campus integrated with SECOE.
- Phase 3: Expanded commercial, retail, and additional residential units to complete the new community.

Martyr's Road Low Carbon Neighbourhood

The TCDP building extends to around 1,565m^2 and is planned to be Ireland's first carbon-neutral and energy-positive structure, with net exports of electricity to the grid. As part of the URDF Call 2 initiative, the development is seen as a key route to achieving low-carbon targets under Project Ireland 2040 and Climate Action Plan.

The facility is envisaged as a collaborative hub for public agencies, researchers, and industry experts focused on sustainable energy and climate solutions. It will be capable of accommodating more than 130 skilled professionals, driving innovation in active and smart grid technologies.

The development is projected to create around 350 jobs over the first decade and inject more than €17 million into the local economy. It will serve as the catalyst for Martyrs Road regeneration, including new public realm and civic amenity enhancements.

Site acquisition of the former Abbey Machinery site is close to completion, and Part 8 Planning (Part 8) is scheduled for late 2025/early 2026 with a target for on-site construction by end-2026.

The SECOE is planned as a cutting-edge, carbon-positive research and innovation hub. It aligns strongly with national climate policy, supports urban regeneration Objectives, and promises major economic benefits to both Nenagh and the wider Mid-West region. The Centre represents a significant milestone toward a low-carbon future and town centre revitalisation.

Artist's impression of the Proposed Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Energy

Stereame Campus

This Business and Residential Parkland extends to around 38 hectares. It is situated along Limerick Road close to the TCC Civic Offices.

The landholding was acquired by TCC in 2010 and a Masterplan prepared to deliver a live-work campus focusing on the development of financial technology, new enterprise and start-ups, together with housing units.

The site has excellent connectivity with Nenagh town centre (2km distance), M7 Junction 26 (3km distance), and with bus routes (735, 854, 323, 322) serving the area via nearby stops.

The Campus has been identified as a key employment site for the town in addition to providing opportunities for development of a residential neighbourhood and will also enable the delivery of sporting and recreational facilities.

The key benefits of the Campus for Nenagh are:

- Offers significant economic potential, hosting established employers and viable expansion lands.
- Strategic opportunity to add residential (private and social), commercial, and community amenities, in one planned area.
- Council ownership ensures coordinated delivery, supporting long-term town growth Objectives, reducing commuting, and fostering integrated community development.

Stereame Campus is Nenagh's largest strategic growth zone, anchored by existing employment assets, Council-driven mixed-use development aims, and future residential and commercial prospects. With strong infrastructure links and a cohesive masterplan, the campus has the potential to contribute significantly to Nenagh's regeneration strategy.

Stereame Campus

Lisbunny Industrial Estate

The Lisbunny Industrial Estate, also known as Lisbunny Business Park, is located approximately 1.8 km east of Nenagh's town centre and around 2.5 km west of Junction 24 on the M7 motorway.

The estate extends to over 21 hectares and comprises industrially-zoned, serviced land ready for development. It was acquired by TCC in 2020 with the aim to secure serviced industrial lands, attract businesses, and enable the possibility of a relief road through the site. The adjoining R445 Lisbunny Nenagh Active Travel Scheme is currently at construction stage.

There are several active businesses established on the estate, including Quigley's Bakery, the local NCT vehicle test centre, Brenwood Products Ltd, Moneygall Glazing Accessories, LM Garage, HKPB Scientific, The Lunch Bag, Cleo Bridal, PWG Ireland, and DFDS Logistics.

The Council has actively invited expressions of interest in the site to spur immediate private-sector development and job creation. In mid-2025, two new companies (Banaghan & Co Stationery Ltd. and Apex Aviation) were approved to set up operations on the estate's outskirts, with infrastructure upgrades already underway.

The estate is of importance to the continued economic growth of Nenagh as it:

- Serves as Nenagh's principal planned industrial zone, fulfilling a critical need for land available to new and expanding businesses.

- Allows for strategic, long-term growth, balancing industrial uses with infrastructure improvements.
- Acts as a magnet for inward investment, supporting local employment and economic diversification.
- Presents potential for tourism road improvements, including a relief route connecting Dublin Road with Borrisokane Road.
- The Nenagh and Environs Local Area Plan 2024-2030 has a stated objective to promote and support the development and use of the Stereame Business and Innovation Park and Lisbunny Industrial Estate, as well as the Gortlandroe Industrial Park, and to maintain these Strategic Employment locations as high-quality settings for employment uses with active travel linkages with the central area.
- The Business Enterprise Centre, Stafford Street, Nenagh is a further location where economic development is promoted.

Lisbunny Industrial Estate
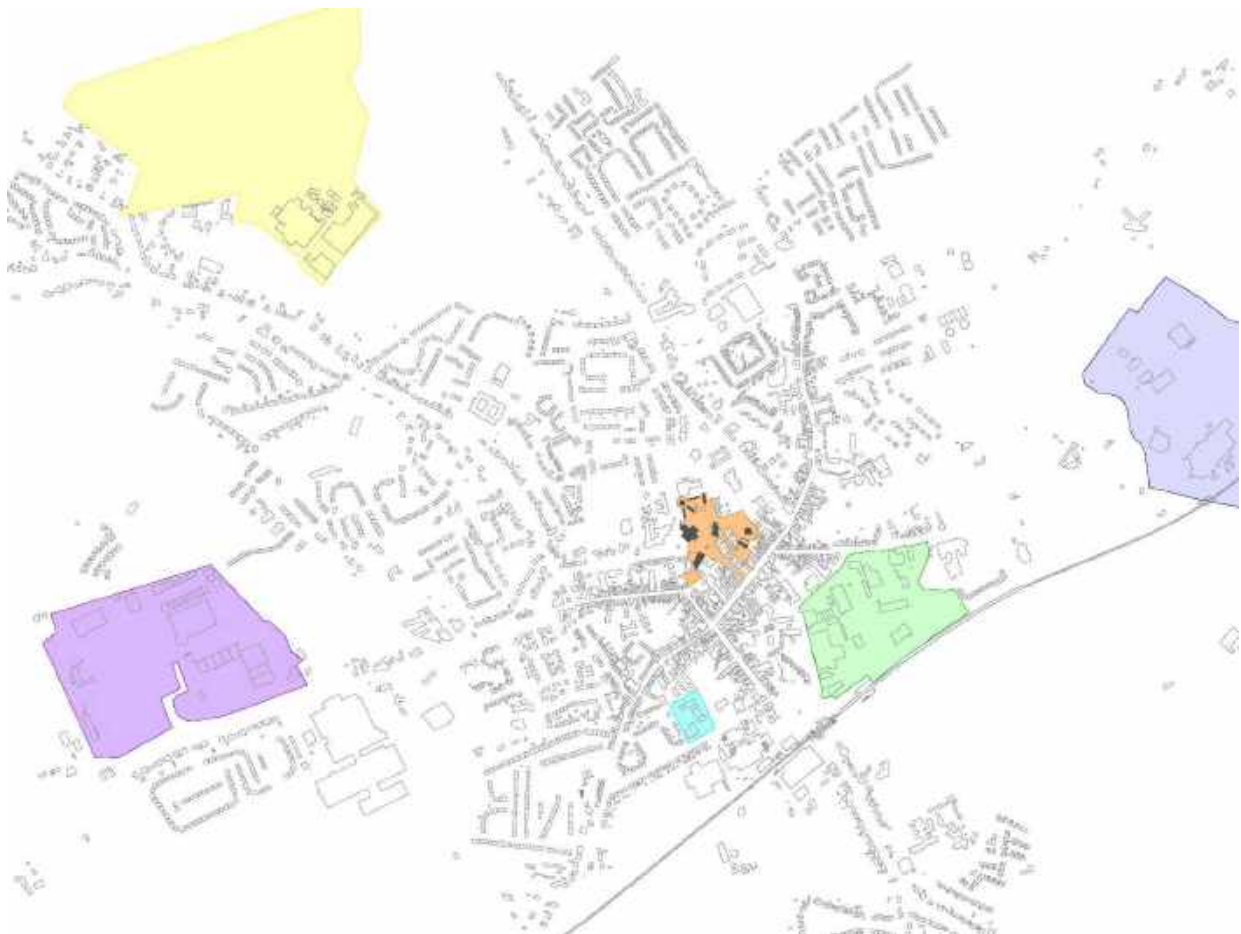
Plan of Key Supporting Projects

KEY

Historic and Cultural Quarter (HCQ) including the Rialto

Key Buildings of the HCQ

Martyr's Road Regeneration Qaurter

Stereame Campus

Lisbunny Industrial Estate

Gortlandroe Industrial Park

Business Enterprise Centre, Stafford Street

5.1 TCF Plan Actions

This TCF Plan is a strategic framework to revitalise the town centre in line with national and local policies. The national TCF Policy aims to tackle vacancy and dereliction and breathe new life into town centres and is underpinned by funding streams such as Urban & Rural Regeneration Development Funds (URDF/RRDF), the Croí Cónaithe Towns Fund, and the Town & Village Renewal scheme.

Nenagh is designated as a *Key Town* in the regional and county planning hierarchy, indicating that it is targeted for compact growth and investment as a driver of economic development in County Tipperary. The recently adopted Nenagh & Environs Local Area Plan 2024–2030 embraces this approach, with specific objectives to support the Town Regeneration Officer and Nenagh Town Team in preparing and implementing a collaborative TCF Plan.

Nenagh already has momentum from ongoing transformative regeneration initiatives, as described in Section 4.2 Supporting Projects. This TCF Plan builds on those successes. The Plan's vision is a Nenagh 2040 that is a vibrant market town with a thriving local economy, a living town centre community, preserved heritage buildings, attractive public spaces, sustainable mobility, and a friendly cultural-tourism destination.

All actions and projects have been developed to align with TCF Plan policies and other statutory plans, ensuring coherence and integration with the town's long-term planning framework. They could be realised over the next 20 years (short, medium and long-term phases), through partners such as Nenagh Town Team, Tipperary County Council, local business and community groups, and through various funding opportunities.

The actions complement and support the wide range of proposals set out in the Town Regeneration Strategy and are aimed at achieving the community's needs as expressed through consultation.

The proposed actions of the TCF Plan are defined according to the following themes and Strategic Objectives:

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Support Businesses, Revitalise Buildings and Town Centre Living

SOCIAL & COMMUNITY

Enhance services, facilities and community engagement

ENVIRONMENTAL & PUBLIC REALM

Improve public spaces, greenery and sustainable transport

CULTURAL & HERITAGE

Preserve historic sites and promote arts and culture

Specific actions for delivery by the Town Team are set out in Section 5.3 Key TCF Plan Projects.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Support Businesses, Revitalise Buildings and Town Centre Living

Objective: Strengthen Nenagh's commercial heart by creating new jobs, supporting local businesses, reducing vacant units, and enhancing the town's market town character. A viable retail centre will increase footfall and employment, aligning with the TCF aim to make town centres attractive places to live, work, visit, and run a business.

Create Jobs and a Diversified Economy

The key actions for developing the local economy are structured across the various strategic themes. They reflect both community priorities and planning policy and aim to revitalise the town centre by building on Nenagh's historic, cultural and locational strengths.

This entails supporting new employment opportunities that include digital innovation, fostering creative industries, and capitalising on sectors such as tourism, food, and professional services.

Key actions include:

- Reviving buildings and enabling town centre living to create a vibrant, populated core that supports footfall for local businesses, and reduces dereliction.
- Developing the Historic & Cultural Quarter that reinforces Nenagh's identity as a heritage destination and attracts cultural and eco-tourism.
- Supporting the development of a variety of unique accommodation options in Nenagh to meet the growing visitor needs as a regional hub and visitor destination.
- Promoting the development of a Business and Enterprise Hub that supports innovation, local entrepreneurship, and employment diversification.

- Supporting the continued development of the Martyr's Road Regeneration Quarter and other strategic employment locations such as Stereame Business and Innovation Park, Lisbunny Industrial Estate, Gortlandroe Industrial Park, and the Business Enterprise Centre on Stafford Street.
- Boosting festivals, events and the market tradition, to drive footfall, to promote local products, and to support the hospitality sector.
- Coordinating with local traders and creatives to develop a central artisan market.
- Planning and activating events such as 'Taste of Nenagh' and seasonal markets to drive footfall.
- Develop a 'Nenagh Food Trail' connecting the Farmers' Market, Country Market, cafés, delis, gastro-pubs and bakeries.
- Developing the night-time economy to help keep the town centre active into the evenings.
- Enhancing accessibility and the public realm to make the town more attractive for shoppers, workers, and tourists while reducing car dependency.
- Promoting Nenagh through strategic marketing that will increase visibility and position the town as a tourism and investment destination.

Support Local Businesses

The community prioritised supporting local businesses for the future viability of the town and the importance of maintaining a good mix of shops and attracting new enterprises to the town centre. This will entail encouraging full use of vacant commercial units and nurturing start-ups, artisan producers and retailers that add to Nenagh's unique shopping experience. The objective also includes initiatives such as business mentoring, a 'shop local' campaigns and promoting footfall by increasing the number of people living, working, and spending time in Nenagh's town centre,

Key actions include:

- Ongoing liaison with existing local businesses to better understand their business support and training needs.
- Partnering with the Local Enterprise Office (LEO) to provide mentoring, digital marketing training, and small grants to town centre businesses.

- Undertaking a review and raising awareness of other business support and training programmes available across the County.
- Promoting and encouraging retailers to sign up to the 'Love Tipperary Gift Card' scheme to boost spending locally.
- Creating local food trails and brand Nenagh as a destination for artisan food and craft.
- Working with local hospitality businesses to expand evening offerings (cafés opening late, cultural events, etc.) to encourage a more animated evening economy that will support retailers (people stay longer and return to the town).

Vacancy Reduction and Reuse Initiatives

The renovation and conservation of heritage buildings is supported by several incentives and funding mechanisms at both national and local levels. These are designed to assist owners in maintaining, repairing, and restoring heritage buildings that contribute to the streetscape – for further details refer Section 5.5 Funding Opportunities.

Typical early-mid 20th century vacant property, Summerhill

Key actions include:

Vacant Heritage Buildings

- Conducting a town centre audit of vacant and derelict heritage buildings.
- Completion of a Collaborative Town Centre Health Check (CTCHC) for Nenagh town centre.
- Prioritising potential buildings for renovation according to ownership, viable use, conversion requirements, costs, and long-term management.
- Identifying potential funding sources.
- Advising owners of heritage properties on grants and supports to enable their upkeep and adaptive reuse (e.g. through a Town Team workshop).
- Actively marketing suitable vacant properties to investors or community groups.
- Pursuing other mechanisms with the local authority where necessary to support the adaptive reuse of identified vacant and derelict properties.
- Identifying a pilot project that will have a positive and transformative impact on town centre vacancy and dereliction, e.g. the Military Barracks as a community or cultural housing hub.

Vacant Shops

- Conducting a town centre audit of vacant commercial units and maintain a Vacant Premises Register with use-matching tools.
- Exploring incentives for pop-up and meanwhile uses to reduce vacancy and re-invigorate streets.
- Coordinating a Tidy Towns volunteer effort to enhance vacant shopfronts (e.g. display artwork in windows) pending reuse.
- Promoting residential, remote-working spaces, or arts-incubation to utilise underused upper levels, mirroring national CTCHC guidance.
- Establishing a 'Meanwhile Nenagh' Coordination Group (e.g. Tipperary CoCo, LEO, Nenagh Arts Centre, Chamber).
- Developing Design Guidance - Shopfront design guidelines in collaboration with the Architectural Conservation Officer, ensuring alignment with Nenagh's architectural character and national best practice.

- Engaging owners to bring vacant properties back into use (e.g. organising a Town Team workshop to advise on grants and supports).
- Exploring eligible uses that allow local artisans or startups to temporarily occupy empty units at low cost, especially on the core shopping streets.
- Creating a pre-approved legal templates for lease/licence agreements.
- Promoting calls for expressions of interest from creatives, social enterprises, and entrepreneurs.
- Accessing RRDF, URDF, Town & Village Renewal Scheme, Arts Council temporary use grants.
- Exploring corporate sponsorship or philanthropy for cultural activation.

Meanwhile Use

A Meanwhile-Use Activation Strategy is also proposed, encouraging temporary, creative, and low-cost use for suitable vacant and derelict commercial properties.

Proven initiatives from Ireland and elsewhere include:

- Town Centre First - National policy encouraging local authorities to identify under-used buildings and activate them with temporary or pop-up uses. Includes supports for public realm upgrades and reuse of upper floors for housing or co-working.
- Ennistymon, Co. Clare – hosted temporary art installations and food pop-ups in a vacant retail block, improving footfall.
- Meanwhile Space – Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown CoCo - Turned vacant high-street units into pop-up galleries, co-working hubs, and digital skills labs. Included short-term licences with flexible lease models to enable community or start-up occupation.

- Meanwhile Space CIC (London) - Pioneer in the UK for turning vacant shops into test spaces for retail, workshops, and art shows. Offers "easy-in, easy-out" leases, supported by borough councils and Business Improvement Districts.
- Empty Shops Network (UK-wide) - A toolkit and advocacy group that helps towns host pop-up shops, repair cafés, community kitchens. Emphasises low-cost, short-term leasing and community-led management of spaces.
- Use-It! Project (Birmingham) - Matched social enterprises with vacant properties and unused upper floors to deliver local services. Outcomes included community sewing rooms, cafes, legal clinics, and creative studios.

Refer Section 5.3 Key TCF Plan Projects for further details.

Start up and retail incubation in Willesden Green, London

Town Centre Living Initiative

The aim is to revitalise Nenagh's historic centre through the adaptive reuse of vacant and under-utilised buildings (as above), increase residential population, and improve urban liveability in the town centre.

This is in line with the national Town Centre Living initiative which provides a layered policy framework empowering local authorities, community partnerships and private owners to jointly revive residential life in historic urban cores.

The Pilot Recommendations, which directly shaped the national TCF Policy, comprise:

- Adopt a holistic 'town-wide' vision or Master Plan to tackle vacancy and dereliction strategically, rather than piecemeal property-by-property interventions.
- Empower local authorities to coordinate delivery, backed by both financial and non-financial supports, including direct outreach to property owners.
- Engage and support private owners, negotiating purchases or repair and lease, guiding them through design and funding options.
- Provide technical and design assistance, such as engaging design consultants and developing exemplar conversion projects (e.g., model heritage homes).
- Implement data-driven baseline assessments, such as CTCHC-style audits, to quantify vacancy, building condition, footfall, and opportunities.
- Strengthen planning tools, including extending planning-use exemptions and promoting change-of-use rhetoric to encourage residential conversion.
- Facilitate adaptive reuse of protected structures, with tailored guidance to integrate conservation and residential retrofit.
- Pilot repair-and-lease and CPO tools as flexible acquisition or leasing mechanisms for derelict properties.
- Build capacity through Town Teams, supported by Town Regeneration Officers, multi-disciplinary alignment, and community collaboration.
- Support public engagement to co-design outcomes, boost local buy-in, and align projects with community needs.
- Promote exemplar projects to change perceptions and stimulate behavioural uptake among residents and investors.
- Incentivise brownfield and infill residential development, including serviced sites and accessible retrofit grants.
- Track impact and outcomes, developing a national monitoring system and key performance metrics for town living initiatives.
- Ensure cross-government coordination, forming interdepartmental groups to align housing, heritage, mobility, and climate objectives.

- Embed regular reviews, with 2–3-year evaluations to refine learning and scale approaches incrementally .

A major objective of this plan is to enable new town centre housing units, bringing a significant increase in the resident population. The initiative particularly aims to deliver housing for groups who benefit from central living, such as older people (close to services), younger workers, and those who want to downsize.

By 2040, Nenagh's centre should have a stronger living community, helping to sustain local businesses and street life.

However, as noted in Section 3.10 Challenges and Opportunities, the capacity of Nenagh's WWTP is presently a key limiting factor in further residential and employment development. Until the upgrade is fully approved and operational (expected in the latter half of this decade), no significant expansion can reliably proceed.

In the meantime, actions to promote the Town Centre Living Initiative include offering grants or tax breaks to refurbish vacant upper floors into apartments, streamlining planning permission for change-of-use to residential, and partnering with agencies (such as housing associations or private developers) to create new housing on underused sites (e.g. above shops or on backlands).

Key actions include:

- Completing a CTCHC audit - Building uses, vacancy, upper-floor potential, dereliction, footfall.
- Preparing a Town Centre Living Strategy - Key opportunity sites, housing types, and priority interventions.
- Identifying key vacant/derelict buildings - Prioritising 5–10 properties for intervention (e.g. on Kenyon Street, Silver Street, Pearse Street and Mitchel Street).
- Updating the Derelict Sites Register - Levies and repair notices where appropriate.
- Supporting the development of the Rialto housing scheme.
- Initiating CPO - On strategic properties where market failure persists.

- Promoting Croí Cónaithe grants - Owners of vacant upper floors.
- Activating Repair & Lease Scheme - Supports to bring residential units back.
- Developing a demonstration project - Vacant over-shop premises to 2–3 small flats.
- Organising 'Living Over the Shop' workshops - Residential reuse models and share funding options.
- Launching a 'Reimagine Nenagh' campaign - Public engagement to share vision and attract interest.
- Exploring partnerships with agencies (housing associations or private developers) to create new housing on underused sites (e.g. above shops or on backlands).

Living over the shop in Leap, west Cork

Rialto Redevelopment

The aim of the project is to transform the former Rialto Cinema / Sheahan's Hardware building at Banba Square into a new flagship facility for Nenagh.

The Council has identified this large historic building as a 'key structure' for rejuvenating the town's historic core.

The re-purposed building would stimulate daytime economic activity and anchor the west side of Banba Square, complementing the Nenagh Castle and Cultural Quarter developments.

Before finalising further funding applications for the Rialto, the various options to be considered include:

- Business & Enterprise – flexible office space with an emphasis on IT, cyber-security, data analysis, etc. (as Part 8 approved proposals).

- Community Hub – accommodation for community groups, youth clubs, meeting rooms, food banks, indoor market stalls, spaces for vulnerable groups (e.g., ASD, elderly).
- Cultural Venue - centre for arts and culture, including live performances, cinema screenings, music and theatre, art incubation and exhibitions.

The advantages and disadvantages of each option in relation TCF Policy, the Nenagh Revitalisation Strategy and Nenagh LAP frameworks, are as follows:

Business & Enterprise Hub

Advantages
- Fully aligns with TCF policy which prioritises high-quality employment in core urban areas, and as supported by national and local policy.
- Enterprise hubs can attract remote workers, startups and footfall, aiding revitalisation and boosting local trade.
- Already backed by RRDF Category 2 (design/planning phase) with potential to secure construction funds.
- Part 8 planning is in place and the development is 'shovel ready'.
- Renovation is viable and preserves a protected Art-Deco building, contributing to placemaking.
- Associated public realm improvements are deliverable and enhance the use of Banba Square.

Disadvantages
- Hot-desks are no longer in high demand and occupancy rates in regional hubs are varied.
- Post-COVID and improved home-broadband may reduce demand for on-site workspace.
- Competition with existing facilities and risk of conflict with local businesses or community groups needing space.

Community Hub

Advantages
- Broad community support for an inclusive amenity space.
- Reflects the participatory planning process.
- Active programming and inclusive access support town centre vibrancy.

Disadvantages

- Economic infrastructure funds would not support pure community use, restricting grant eligibility.
- Difficult to generate income without business or cultural outputs.
- No current proposals for coordinated community programme or management.
- Community groups have different needs (e.g. storage) which may not suit the building.
- Suitable building renovations would not be possible without substantial funding.

Cultural Venue
Advantages

- A cinema, theatre, or performance venue aligns with Nenagh Arts Centre nearby, enhancing Banba Square's cultural cluster.
- Additional live events could attract visitors and drive local spending.
- Activating unused historic buildings meets TCF dereliction and usage criteria.

Disadvantages

- Could duplicate offerings of the Nenagh Arts Centre, which already includes theatre and gallery space.
- The proposed up-grade of the Governor's House will provide an enhanced exhibition space dedicated to the heritage of the town.
- Required retrofit facilities (acoustics, seating, technical equipment) are cost-intensive, beyond current RRDF funding.
- Requires specialist management, programming, and sustainable audience base.

In summary:

Enterprise Hub best fits current funding and policy but confirmation of end user requirements and a clear plan for sustainability needs to be established.

Community Hub has great public appeal but lacks economic viability given the condition and layout of the building.

Cultural Venue enriches the town's identity but requires more investment and management and competes with existing and proposed facilities.

TCF Plan Recommendations

In consideration of the economic benefits and positive impacts on the town centre, the policy alignment with existing development frameworks, the considerable expenditure already incurred, the advanced stage of design development, and the potential for attracting further funding, this TCF Plan supports pursuing the re-purposing of the Rialto building as a Business & Enterprise Hub.

The approach should be grounded in further community/business input, and a robust Business Plan prepared to assess demand, capacity, and revenue models tuned to local need.

The TCF Plan recognises the need for finding suitable accommodation for the growing numbers of community groups, either collectively or in separate locations, preferably through adaptive reuse of other buildings in need of renovation.

This will require ongoing inclusive consultation with local community groups to determine the facilities that are actually needed and the management structure that can be put in place to secure the long-term viability of the investment.

The TCF Plan also recognizes the attractions of a new Cultural Venue, but as this could undermine established and proposed facilities, a collaborative approach needs to be taken through strategic partnerships with Nenagh Arts Centre, Chamber of Commerce, community groups, and education providers to co-programme events and avoid duplication.

As stressed in Town Centre First | A Policy Approach for Irish Towns:

6.2 The Town Economy

"Successful towns are underpinned by a strong local economy and the creation of sustainable employment. Supporting businesses of all sizes, both indigenous enterprise and foreign investments, can act as a catalyst for town regeneration, strengthen local markets for the supply of goods and services and increase overall footfall and activity within the town centre. These economic impacts can create spin-offs for other businesses, particularly in the retail, hospitality, professional services and sub-

supply sectors of the local economy. Providing a range of job opportunities in town centres can also support wider social inclusion programmes and enhance the attractiveness of town centres as places for people to live".

Enterprise and connected working hubs, such as proposed for the Rialto, are recognised as having a strong role to play in both providing important workspace for local employment while also bringing people into the town for work purposes with consequent impacts on economic and social activity.

The re-purposing of the Rialto as a Business & Enterprise Hub is pivotal to Nenagh's regeneration vision, and its delivery aligns with multiple strategic objectives, helping to drive employment and economic growth, digital innovation and placemaking for this important strategic site.

Key actions include:

- Driving the vision of the Rialto Digital & Enterprise Hub as a catalyst for entrepreneurship, remote working, and local job creation.
- Ensuring that the primary function of the building as a Business Innovation Centre, supporting start-ups, SMEs, remote workers, and creatives, with flexible office space and an emphasis on IT, cyber-security, and data analysis.
- Working with TCC and enterprise agencies (e.g. LEO, EI) to align objectives and tenancy models.
- Engaging with local and regional businesses to identify workspace and skills needs, support services (e.g. mentoring, networking, incubation) and promote collaboration between enterprises.
- Hosting business forums and feedback sessions to ensure relevance and uptake of enterprise facilities.
- Co-developing robust enterprise support events, such as start-up bootcamps, digital marketing workshops, women-in-business events, and regional entrepreneur showcases.
- Helping to establish a sustainable operating model to ensure long-term viability, focused on affordable desk/office rental for small businesses and freelancers, event space hire for commercial networking or product launches, and fee-based training or consultancy services hosted within the hub.

- Collaborating on funding applications that prioritise enterprise infrastructure, including Smart Regions Enterprise Innovation Fund, RRDF (Category 1), and LEADER enterprise grants.
- Ensuring the Rialto Hub is integrated with the Martyrs Road Regeneration Quarter, SECOE, and other local skills and employment strategies.

Historic & Cultural Quarter Project (HCQ)

The key aim of the TCF Plan is to support and help deliver the planned Nenagh HCQ redevelopment, which has already been designed and approved (Part 8 planning).

The purpose of this significant regeneration project is to develop an over-arching tourism proposition for the prominent historic area, and a new and vibrant place built around the cultural and social heritage of Nenagh, thereby stimulating the local economy.

Key elements of the scheme are described in Section 4.2 Supporting Projects.

The TCF Plan fully supports the project as it will significantly enhance the public realm and heritage attractions in the historic town centre while helping to revitalise the local economy.

General Plan of Key HCQ Projects

SOCIAL & COMMUNITY

Enhance services, facilities and community engagement

Objective: Meeting community objectives to revitalise Nenagh as a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable town centre that reflects local values, needs, and aspirations.

The top response from the questionnaire and engagement exercises to Physical and Community Enhancements was tackling vacancy and dereliction, followed by improved facilities for local community groups. Other priorities included increasing the variety of attractions and local activities, improved parks and open spaces, and better street furniture, lighting and signage.

The key community initiatives arising from consultation include:

- Empower Community Participation - Ensure local voices help guide decisions.
- Combat Vacancy and Dereliction – Support the redevelopment of empty buildings to active residential, community or commercial use, with a focus on upper floor conversions, pop-up enterprise, and heritage reuse.
- Deliver Inclusive Community Infrastructure - Create spaces for youth, older people, vulnerable groups, and voluntary organisations.
- Improve Public Realm and Accessibility - Make Nenagh walkable, green, and safe, and upgrade streetscapes to be age-friendly and universally accessible.
- Celebrate and Activate Nenagh's Culture & Heritage - Promote Nenagh's story through trails, festivals, and adaptive reuse of historic sites, and enable Sustainable and Active Travel.
- Support Local Businesses and Jobs - Provide space and incentives for independent shops, pop-ups, and start-ups, and develop a strong shop-local culture and vibrant markets.

- Enhance Tourism and Nenagh's Regional Role - Position Nenagh as a prime visitor destination in the region.

Delivering a Community Hub in Nenagh (separate from the Rialto site) requires a series of coordinated planning, engagement, and delivery actions, aligned with the TCF Plan's Objectives for inclusive community infrastructure – refer Project B.

Youth Engagement & Recreation Programme

The TCF Plan promotes a programme of activities and supports for Nenagh's youth in the town centre. Although there are dedicated youth spaces, these mostly operate during working hours. The objective is to make Nenagh's centre more appealing to teenagers so they feel included and have positive outlets, thereby also reducing the perception of anti-social behavior.

A starting point would be to hold an open-day workshop hosted by existing clubs, youth groups, Foróige, and the Arts Centre and library, presenting to school children what is currently available in Nenagh, and linking this to a dedicated page for youth on Nenagh.ie.

Foróige is active in Nenagh delivering youth work interventions through the Nenagh Youth Project, targeting young people aged 10–24. These focus on personal, social, educational, and employment development, fostering leadership through hands-on community-led projects.

Key related actions include:

- Establishing a Youth Council or youth sub-committee in the Town Team to give young people a voice in the town.
- Hosting a Youth Activities Workshop to raise awareness of what is already available in Nenagh.
- Extending existing youth facilities to operate out of hours.
- Organising regular youth events (such as teen nights or outdoor movie nights in summer).
- Setting-up a small skatepark or multi-use games area (MUGA) within a disused town centre site.

- Encouraging youth-led art (including murals on blank walls) to enliven the town.
- Working with schools, sports clubs, and youth organisations to create a calendar of youth-centric happenings in the town centre.

Community Safety Initiative

This involves a partnership approach to improve safety and reduce anti-social incidents in the town centre as required to help address concerns raised during consultation. A safer town centre will encourage more people to visit and linger, boosting the night-time economy and overall vitality.

Key actions include:

- Lobbying for increased Garda foot patrols especially during evenings and weekends.
- Ongoing liaison with the Garda Community Group.
- Expanding CCTV coverage in key public areas (while balancing privacy concerns).
- Launching a public-awareness campaigns on respecting the town (e.g. anti-littering, alcohol-free zones, and responsible socialising).
- Exploring a late-night transport service (e.g. shuttle or taxi rank improvements) to help people get home safely after evening events.
- Promoting a taxi rank/additional local hackney licenses.
- Other simple fixes such as installing better lighting in dimly lit laneways and car parks should be fast-tracked.

Health and Wellbeing

Aimed at promoting the town centre as a place for healthy lifestyles and building on the friendly atmosphere were common themes of community engagement.

Key related actions include:

- Actively promoting existing initiatives, including the Tipperary Sports Programme, Silver Arch and community groups.
- Expanding activities such as outdoor exercise classes in the park or square.

- Working with the Health Service Executive (HSE) or local health initiatives to establish a Wellness Cafe or drop-in advice centre in the town (possibly integrated into the proposed Community Hub) for mental health and general well-being support.
- Improving amenities in the town centre such as Age Friendly seating, an information point for elderly services, and dedicated on-street parking spaces.
- Upgrading the Town Park.
- Pursuing public health initiatives (such as vaccination drives or health screenings) in visible and accessible locations.

Nenagh Castle Garden with St. Mary of the Rosary Church in the background

ENVIRONMENTAL & PUBLIC REALM

Improve public spaces, greenery and sustainable transport

Objective: To create a greener, safer, and more people-friendly town centre by enhancing public spaces, promoting active travel, and embedding sustainability into the built environment, making Nenagh a more attractive, accessible, and climate-resilient place to live, work, and visit.

The proposed actions to deliver the objective directly support national and county-level policies on climate action, compact growth, and sustainable placemaking.

Public Realm Improvements

The local community recognise that high-quality public realm, that is easy and safe to navigate, is important to the character and future of the town. To support active travel and places where people can dwell and enjoy in the town, TCC is initiating the Nenagh Traffic Management Plan, as well as 'giving-back' road space in the town to the public through the development of the Historical and Cultural Quarter proposals.

The key actions identified to deliver the objectives for an enhanced public realm are:

- Coordinating local input on existing public realm upgrades (e.g. greening, seating, accessibility).
- Supporting the upgrade of pavements, lighting, and public seating (particularly in Banba Square and Historic Quarter).
- Identifying other public realm improvements.
- Using high-quality, durable, and locally appropriate materials (e.g. natural stone paving).
- Implementing inclusive design, including wider paths, accessible toilets, elder-friendly seating, drop kerbs.

Footpaths and Pedestrian-priority Improvements

The objective is to actively pursue the delivery of measures set out in the Nenagh Local Travel Plan (LTP), including traffic calming, improving footpaths, new cycle and segregated cycleways, improved permeability links and new greenways and quiet ways. The LTP measures will provide for a comprehensive, enhanced and integrated active travel network for the town that will significantly increase mobility choices.

These measures are intended to encourage walking, reduce conflicts with vehicles, and make the town centre feel more welcoming. Combined with the Historic Quarter project (which will enhance accessibility to the Castle area), Nenagh will become significantly easier to walk around for all ages and abilities.

Key actions include:

- Promoting a coordinated set of works to improve footpaths, crossings and pedestrian areas throughout the town centre.
- Widening narrow pavements on busy streets (where physically possible).
- Upgrading surfaces for smooth, non-slip walking (especially important for elderly and disabled access), and installing new pedestrian crossings at key points.
- Exploring partial pedestrianisation or extended pedestrian hours on some central streets to create a safer strolling and shopping experience.

High quality public realm, Dordrecht, Holland

Banba Square Activation

The aim is to transform Banba Square into a vibrant, accessible, and multi-functional public space that links key heritage sites, supports community use and events, and contributes to a more walkable, green, and attractive town centre.

While physical upgrades are part of the Historic Quarter plan, this intervention focuses on activating the square's use. It includes provisioning for a weekly or monthly outdoor market (with stalls, power supply, and permits for farmers/artisan markets or food trucks).

Additionally, flexible seating should be included in the square (movable tables/chairs or benches) and possibly a bandstand or covered performance area to facilitate concerts or gatherings.

Banba Square, once improved, can become Nenagh's 'living room', a central public space regularly programmed with activities from summer fairs to Christmas festivities. This will greatly boost footfall and give Nenagh a competitive edge as a market town that celebrates local produce and culture.

In support of the current HCQS public realm proposals for Banba Square, related actions include:

- Integrating interpretive panels, public art, or a heritage trail node to tell the story of the square and its surrounding buildings.
- Designing the square for flexible civic events, such as markets, performances, exhibitions, outdoor meetings.
- Introducing pop-up infrastructure (e.g. power points, lighting hooks, bollards).
- Trialing youth-focused activations such as street performance spaces, art displays, or cultural showcases.
- Improving connections between Banba Square and Pearse Street and Market Cross, Town Park and Train Station, including safe pedestrian crossings, wayfinding signage, and cycle parking facilities.
- Commissioning local artists or designers for public art or creative signage.

- Highlighting Banba Square's potential as a 'Town Living Room', a central meeting, resting, and gathering space.

Greening and Amenity Spaces

The aim is to create a network of green, accessible, and multi-functional spaces across Nenagh's town centre that promote biodiversity, wellbeing, play, rest, and social interaction, while contributing to a healthier, more climate-resilient urban environment.

A river walkway has been established along the Nenagh River between Tyone Bridge and Scotts Bridge, providing a linear recreational amenity for the town and river front access to a natural wildlife corridor.

TCC also intends to develop the Nenagh Urban Greenway, commencing adjacent to the Lisbunny Industrial Estate and following the route of an existing informal walkway along the eastern bank of the river.

For related Greening actions refer Section 5.3 Key TCF Plan Projects.

Approach Roads

A potential Nenagh approach road enhancement scheme could aim to improve the visual, functional, and environmental quality of the key entry routes into the town. The scheme would contribute to placemaking, enhance the sense of arrival through traffic calming, support active travel, and align with Nenagh's broader Objectives of town centre revitalisation and sustainable transport.

For related Approach Roads actions refer Section 5.3 Key TCF Plan Projects.

Active Travel

To support a more sustainable and people-friendly Nenagh, Active Travel initiatives should be fully integrated into both the Environmental and Public Realm objectives of the Town Centre First (TCF) Plan to support the 10-minute Town concept.

Key actions include:

- Expanding Walking and Cycling Networks - Safe, well-lit, and continuous footpaths and cycle lanes connecting key destinations such as

schools, parks, town centre, and public transport.

- Promote Low-Carbon Transport – Provision of cycle shelters, repair stations, and EV charging hubs near the town centre and along commuter paths.
- School Travel Initiatives - Car-free zones and safe school travel routes to reduce emissions and increase daily walking/cycling, and including safety talks and demonstrations.
- Universal Accessibility Improvements - Upgrade of footpaths, crossings, and wayfinding to suit all mobility levels, including wheelchairs, buggies, and those with visual impairments.

Nenagh Train Station

As expressed repeatedly during community engagement, developing the Train Station as an Integrated Transport Hub is essential for achieving Active Travel objectives and economic revitalisation.

The TCF Plan recommends a masterplan be prepared to future-proof the Train Station site to maximise its potential and better integrate with the town centre.

For related Train Station actions refer Section 5.3 Key TCF Plan Projects.

Traffic & Parking Management Plan (TPMP)

Implement the recommendations of the LTP traffic and parking review to balance the needs of drivers with pedestrians. This includes continuing the one-way traffic system introduced in the town (which many regard as a success so far, reducing congestion) and evaluating if further traffic calming is needed.

Other measures of the LTP to complement the active travel and public transport proposals include:

- Town car club/car sharing scheme
- Dockless town bicycle sharing scheme
- Safer Routes to School
- School and Workplace Mobility Management Plans (MMPs)
- Park & Stride initiatives, related to new car parks on the town centre periphery
- Weight limit in town centre
- 30km/hr speed limit

The TCFP Plan supports the concept of a loop traffic flow around the centre with clearly directed routes to parking areas. The Council may investigate acquiring land or reconfiguring spaces to add more parking if needed, addressing the concern about lack of car parks.

However, the emphasis will be on directing long-stay parking to peripheral locations and freeing up on-street spaces for short-term shoppers, to reduce traffic cruising.

Another key action is improving the capacity of existing car parks, such as the Kenyon Street and Courthouse car parks (which is being reorganized as part of the Cultural Quarter works).

The TCF Plan also advocates improved cycling infrastructure, including adding cycle lanes where space permits (or shared lanes and clear markings where streets are narrow), as well as secure cycle stands in multiple locations.

The Objective is a well-managed system where people can access the town centre conveniently, but where pedestrians have priority in the core and traffic flows smoothly at the periphery.

Related actions include:

- Developing a parking management plan that increases short-term (high-turnover) spaces for shoppers and visitors, and reduces long-stay parking by workers in premium town centre bays.
- Exploring multi-storey car park feasibility with green design (e.g. rooftop planting, solar panels).
- Rationalising the proliferation of non-road traffic signage on and adjacent to main roads.
- Trialing semi-pedestrianisation of key streets (e.g. Pearse Street, Market Cross) during certain hours/days.
- Expanding cycle lanes and walking routes linking town centre to schools, residential areas, and natural amenities.
- Implementing 30km/h speed zones in central areas (subject to National Speed Limit Review) and increasing Garda enforcement of speed and illegal parking in pedestrian-priority areas.

Accessibility Upgrades

The feedback from community engagement highlighted inadequate provision for people with disabilities as a concern.

In partnership with disability advocacy groups, such as Independent Living Movement Ireland (ILMI), an audit needs to be conducted of all streets and public buildings for accessibility issues. A Disabled Persons Organisation (DPO) should also be established in Nenagh to engage people with disabilities and promote capacity building (e.g. through workshops).

The initiative should seek to apply a 'whole journey approach' to make public transport fully accessible to people with disabilities. This included all elements that constitute a journey from the starting point to destination - footpaths, tactile paving, cycle paths, roads, pedestrian crossing points, town greenways and bus stops/shelters.

Additionally, proposals should be pursued for making elder-friendly improvements, such as providing more seating along main pedestrian routes (so seniors can rest while walking) and ensuring public toilets are accessible and well-signposted. Obstacles to ease of movement along footpaths should also be considered, particularly street furniture and household bins.

All new development within Nenagh, and particularly in relation to the public realm, amenities, housing and commercial development will be required to be designed in accordance with the principles of 'Universal Design' and 'Age Friendly' development, and the realisation of Nenagh as an Autism Friendly Town.

Nenagh town centre

Key actions include:

- Undertaking an accessibility audit of town centre streets, buildings and public spaces.
- Establishing a Disabled Persons Organisation (DPO) in Nenagh.
- Installing drop kerbs and tactile paving for the vision-impaired at crossings, ensuring ramps or lifts are available at public facilities, and creating reserved disabled parking bays at optimal locations.
- Widening narrow footpaths and removing obstacles to improve mobility for wheelchair users, buggies, and older people.

Sustainability and Climate Action

The aim is to embed sustainability and climate resilience into every aspect of Nenagh's town centre development, by promoting Active Travel, nature-based solutions, energy efficiency, and environmental awareness in public spaces, buildings, and infrastructure.

Key actions include:

- Expanding green infrastructure throughout the town, including pollinator planting, native trees, vertical greening in public space and street upgrades.
- Linking green interventions with Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) to manage surface water and reduce flood risk.
- Developing safe, attractive cycling and walking infrastructure to reduce car dependency, including cycle parking and wayfinding linked to Active Travel routes.
- Installing public water refill stations and waste/recycling facilities.
- Partnering with local schools, Tidy Towns, and youth groups on climate action projects (e.g. tree planting, composting, local biodiversity mapping), and public awareness campaigns (e.g. 'Green Nenagh', Leave No Trace).

CULTURAL & HERITAGE

Preserve historic sites and promote arts and culture

Objective: To celebrate, preserve, and activate Nenagh's cultural and historical assets, creating a distinctive, engaging, and inclusive town centre that supports tourism, creativity, and community life.

Nenagh has significant tourism potential, based on its rich heritage, strategic location, and natural surroundings. The TCF Plan supports key opportunities to enhance its profile as a heritage destination, cultural hub, and gateway to outdoor experiences.

Key actions include:

Developing the Tourism Potential

- Establishing a Nenagh Tourism Partnership Forum (or Chamber of Culture) involving stakeholders from the Council, TCF Team, Tourist Office and Arts Centre, Fáilte Ireland, business, and heritage groups.
- Developing a visitor branding strategy, including print, signage, and digital platforms.
- Collaborating with Tipperary Tourism, Fáilte Ireland, Creative Ireland, and local artists and historians to amplify impact.
- Promoting Nenagh as a Heritage Gateway to the Lough Derg region and the Silvermines via guided tours and themed experiences.
- Developing a 'Destination Town' aligned with Fáilte Ireland's Hidden Heartlands initiative.
- Supporting local businesses to package heritage, craft, and water-based tours.
- Incorporating Nenagh providers into platforms such as Discover Ireland and Airbnb Experiences.

Public Realm and Placemaking

- Historic and Cultural Quarter Development – Supporting the implementation of public realm enhancements in Banba Square, Castle Gardens, and adjacent laneways to enhance the visitor experience.
- Activating outdoor spaces for live music, open-air cinema, or street theatre.
- Creating a Heritage Cluster linking Nenagh Castle, Courthouse, Gaol, and Franciscan Friary through walkable routes and cohesive branding.
- Restoring and repurposing other heritage sites, such as the Old Presbyterian Church as a town museum or exhibition centre, and the Train Station as a visitor gateway.
- Installing visitor signage, storytelling plaques, and interpretation panels.
- Encouraging Over-the-Shop Living to revitalise historic streetscapes and support evening vibrancy.
- Developing Blue-Greenway infrastructure and links from the Historic and Cultural Quarter.

Festivals and Events

Building on the existing vibrant programme Launch a coordinated series of festivals and events to draw visitors and animate the town centre throughout the year. Such events should utilise upgraded public spaces such as Banba Square and the Arts Centre auditorium. A vibrant events programme will not only attract visitors (benefiting local businesses) but also give residents more reasons to enjoy their own town centre.

Key initiatives include:

- Expanding the town's festival calendar, building on existing and past events such as Castlefest, Fleadh Cheoil, and Taste of Nenagh, and introduce new seasonal or thematic festivals.
- Strengthening collaboration between existing event organisers, including Nenagh Castle, Nenagh Arts Centre, Nenagh Tourist Office and Heritage & Genealogy Centre.

- Promoting pop-up performances, encouraging music, theatre, and art exhibitions in public spaces such as Market Cross and Banba Square.
- Supporting youth and inclusive arts programming through Nenagh Arts Centre and community groups.

Nenagh Cultural Trail and Interpretation

Developing a walking trail and interpretive signage linking Nenagh's historic and cultural sites would greatly benefit the appreciation of what the town has to offer.

This would entail creating a self-guided Nenagh Historic & Cultural Quarter Trail covering the Castle, Gaol (Heritage & Genealogy Centre), Courthouse, St. Mary of the Rosary Catholic Church and St. Mary's Church of Ireland, and other points of interest in the town centre, such as mural installations and public artworks. It should include attractive information panels or digital QR-code based guides at each site, telling stories of Nenagh's history.

The trail can extend through the town's streets, encouraging tourists to explore the retail areas, and could be augmented by guided tours in peak season (perhaps by volunteer guides or through a heritage app or map/brochure available at the Tourist Office).

The Cultural Trail will make heritage more visible and engaging, driving footfall to less visited areas, and supporting the objective of Nenagh as a successful and sustainable visitor destination.

Local Arts Initiative

Building on existing initiatives that encourage local artistic expression in the town centre through murals, sculptures, and installations. As part of the public realm improvements, blank walls and gable ends can be canvases for community murals depicting Nenagh's history or local themes.

Further suitable locations should be identified and the initiative pursued with artists (potentially through the Arts Council or local art groups). Similarly, small public art installations, such as a sculpture in Banba Square or sculptural street furniture, can add further artistic expression and local distinctiveness.

Art & Craft shops or co-op markets could also be established in vacant premises, allowing artisans to sell handmade goods and visitors to purchase unique local products.

The North Tipperary Artists Collective have recently run a number of successful pop-up shops, the latest being held in Nenagh over the Christmas period 2024.

North Tipperary Artists Collective Nenagh pop-up shop

Permanent exhibition space is required to showcase the work of local, national and international visual and other artists, as well as the work of the local community.

Local Food and Products Promotion

Capitalise on Nenagh's role as a market town by actively marketing its food and craft sector through web sites and social media platforms. This would support initiatives such as a Nenagh Food Trail, where local cafes, restaurants, and pubs collaborate to highlight Tipperary produce, and highlight the local artisan products that are unique to the town.

A co-op style craft and art shop would allow artists and craft makers a place to display their work, and temporary markets could be established in vacant premises as meanwhile uses.

This could be complemented with the introduction of an annual food festival or join the Hidden Heartlands tourism campaigns to feature Nenagh's entertainment options for the attraction of visitors and supporting small producers.

5.2 Delivery Actions

The delivery of the TCF Plan will be facilitated by the Town Team in collaboration with the Local Authority and others as required.

The Town Team will have a continuous role in developing and overseeing the projects and actions, communicating with stakeholders and reviewing the Plan over time so that they retain ownership of the overall process.

The ongoing work of the Town Team will be supported by the Town Regeneration Officer (TRO), ensuring development and delivery of the Plan alongside the Town Champion. The TRO will guide the Town Team in delivering the TCF Policy and identifying and accessing potential sources of funding. The TRO will also support the Town Team through capacity building and the development and delivery of the TCF Plan.

Delivery of the TCF Plan will be supported through substantial funding made available to support TCF implementation, particularly via funds such as the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund and the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund, Town & Village Renewal Scheme and the new Croí Cónaithe (Towns) Fund – refer Section 5.5 Funding Opportunities.

The proposed Actions of the TCF Plan for each strategic objective are summarised as follows.

Local Authority and Town Regeneration Officer
Supporting and enabling the Town Team and local TCF delivery

Multi-stakeholder Town Team
Driving TCF delivery through a team of local business and community representatives and other stakeholders

Town Health Check
Providing detailed analysis to help understand the town

Town Centre First Plan
Outlining a comprehensive vision for the town, covering key themes and identifying specific interventions

Investment Programme
Accessing funding and supports in place to support TCF

Delivery and Impact
Delivering on the vision outlined in the TCF Plan

The Town Centre First Delivery Process

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Create Jobs and a Diversified Economy
- Promote Tourism and Cultural Economy Links
- Support initiatives that enable Town Centre Living
- Support delivery of the Historic & Cultural Quarter
- Support the development of a variety of unique accommodation options in Nenagh to meet the growing visitor needs
- Promote delivery of the Rialto as a business and enterprise hub
- Support continued delivery of the Martyr's Road Regeneration Quarter and other strategic employment locations
- Contribute to Nenagh's place identity and marketing strategy (Nenagh.ie)

Support Local Businesses
- Facilitate partnering and liaison with interested groups
- Reactivate a 'Taste of Nenagh' trail
- Plan and activate regular events and seasonal markets to drive footfall
- Expand on evening offerings

Vacancy Reduction and Reuse Initiatives
- Audit of vacant heritage buildings and shopfronts
- Prioritise potential buildings for adaptive re-use
- Establish a 'Meanwhile Nenagh' co-ordination group
- Access available funding and identify a pilot project(s)
- Engage with owners and explore eligible uses
- Prepare a Shopfront Design Guide
- Access available funding and incentives

Town Centre Living Initiative
- Promote a 'Town Centre Living' strategy
- Support delivery of the Rialto housing scheme
- Identify and prioritise other potential sites and properties
- Access available funding and incentives.

Rialto Redevelopment
- Support re-purposing of the building as a Business and Enterprise Hub
- Develop a Business Plan to assess demand, capacity and revenue models
- Work with stakeholders on end-user requirements
- Collaborate on funding applications

Historic & Cultural Quarter
- Help co-ordinate and facilitate delivery of the Plan
- Identify priorities through engagement with stakeholders
- Endorse funding applications

SOCIAL & COMMUNITY

Community Hub Development
- Community and stakeholder engagement
- Site(s) identification and feasibility
- Design and planning
- Funding and operating model

Youth Engagement & Recreation Programme
- Establish a Youth Council
- Host a Youth Activities Workshop to raise awareness of what is already available in Nenagh, and include on social media
- Promote the creation of youth spaces, creative spaces, and drop-in facilities
- Extend existing youth facilities to operate out of hours
- Organise regular events
- Set-up small outdoor facility
- Promote youth-led art and activities
- Work with other community associations

Community Safety Initiative
- Lobby for increased Garda presence
- Review CCTV coverage in key public areas
- Launch Public Awareness campaigns

Health & Wellbeing
- Undertake community needs assessment
- Promote existing initiatives by established town centre groups
- Work with health service providers
- Improve amenities in the town centre

ENVIRONMENTAL & PUBLIC REALM

Public Realm Improvements
- Coordinate local input on existing public realm upgrades (e.g. greening, seating, accessibility)
- Identify other public realm improvements
- Incorporate inclusive design principles

Footpaths & Pedestrian Priority Improvements
- Pursue and prioritise measures set out in the Nenagh LTP
- Promote a co-ordinated set of footpath improvement works throughout the town centre
- Explore partial or extended pedestrianization on key streets

Banba Square Activation
- Support physical upgrade of the square as a priority public realm project
- Ensure provision for regular festivals and civic events
- Promote pop-up uses, public artworks and heritage interpretation
- Improve pedestrian connections to Pearse Street, Market Cross, the Town Park and Train Station

Amenity & Green Spaces
- Launch a 'Green Nenagh' campaign.
- Promote development of the Nenagh River to Dromineer Greenway.
- Identify locations for Community Gardens and pursue delivery through consultation.
- Scope small scale pilot 'quick-win' projects for tree planting, planters, rain gardens, green roofs, edible and façade planting.
- Promote the 'Planting Your Own Ark' re-wilding movement.

Greenways
- Support the continued development of the Nenagh Urban Greenway.
- Explore opportunities for expanding Green Corridors and Biodiversity Routes as Active Travel routes and ecological corridors.
- Promote the Greenway to Dromineer as a long-term objective.

Approach Roads
- Appraise and upgrade where necessary existing gateway locations
- Identify locations and suitable treatment of gateways from other directions
- Develop proposals for the main roundabouts that signify arrival into Nenagh

3.7 Active Travel
- Expand walking and cycling networks
- Support school travel initiatives (e.g. Safer Routes to Schools)
- Develop green corridors and biodiversity routes
- Promote low-carbon transport through local campaigns

Nenagh Train Station
- Support development of the Train Station as an Integrated Transport Hub
- Initiate a masterplan to future-proof the potential of the site
- Lobby for enhanced train services
- Explore opportunities for incorporating over-night camper van facilities
- Upgrade pedestrian links to the town centre
- Improve signage, way-finding, station accessibility and heritage interpretation
- Promote community activation of the station space

Traffic & Parking Management Plan (TPMP)
- Develop a parking management strategy
- Explore feasibility of a multi-storey car park
- Expand cycle lanes and walking routes between key destinations

Accessibility Upgrades
- Undertake an Accessibility Audit of town centre streets, spaces and buildings
- Liaise with disability advocacy groups
- Promote improved accessibility measures throughout the town centre

Sustainability & Climate Action
- Explore opportunities for expanding Green Infrastructure throughout the town
- Link green interventions with SuDS
- Develop cycling and walking infrastructure.
- Install EV charging, water refill stations and waste/recycling facilities at key locations
- Partner with local groups to promote sustainability actions

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CULTURAL & HERITAGE

Developing the Tourism Potential
- Establish a Nenagh Tourism Partnership (Chamber of Culture)
- Support a digital marketing and branding campaign through Nenagh.ie
- Encourage community groups to be accessible to all and to share initiatives
- Support local businesses to package visitor experiences

Public Realm and Placemaking
- Support enhancements of the Historic and Cultural Quarter strategy
- Identify and re-purpose other related heritage sites
- Activate outdoor public spaces
- Incorporate visitor signage and interpretation
- Promote Town Centre Living initiatives
- Develop Blue-Greenway infrastructure

Festivals and Events
- Develop an annual calendar of attractions
- Expand live music, film and contemporary arts programmimg
- Strengthen collaboration between existing event organisers
- Build-on existing festivals and events to reinforce local pride and visitor experience
- Expand on artisan and local food markets

Culture Trails and Interpretation
- Develop walking trails linking Heritage & Cultural sites to other attractions
- Facilitate self-guided tours and inter-active interpretative techniques
- Develop a 'Nenagh Food' trail and annual food festival
- Link to other visitor destinations in the locality

Local Arts Initiative
- Promote local artistic expression throughout the town centre
- Work with the Arts Council, local art groups and community groups to diversify the offering
- Incorporate opportunities for pop-up and incidental small scale art installations
- Promote art and craft meanwhile uses in suitable vacant properties

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5.3 Key TCF Plan Projects

Based on the feedback from the community consultation exercises and the ongoing input from the Nenagh Town Centre First Team, the Key Projects arising from the Objectives of the TCF Plan are:

PROJECT A: **VACANT BUILDINGS SCHEME**

PROJECT B: **COMMUNITY HUB DEVELOPMENT**

PROJECT C: **'GREEN NENAGH'**

PROJECT D: **TRAIN STATION MASTERPLAN**

PROJECT E: **SUPPORTING EXISTING REGENERATION INITIATIVES**

- Historical and Cultural Quarter
- The Rialto
- Martyr's Road Regeneration Quarter
- Nenagh Local Transport Plan
- Stereame Campus
- Lisbunny Industrial Estate

All the proposed projects and actions are intended to be illustrative and each will require detailed study and collaboration by the relevant parties and stakeholders before taking forward for funding applications and implementation. They are not fixed or static and need to be regularly monitored and reviewed by the Town Team and Local Authority to reassess their suitability under changing circumstances. The Plan needs to remain flexible enough to adapt as required.

PROJECT A

VACANT BUILDINGS SCHEME

A proactive programme is required to tackle vacancy and dereliction in the town centre - one of the greatest concerns raised in the community engagement.

The aim of the proposal is to enhance the visual appeal, heritage value, and commercial vitality of Nenagh town centre through the conservation and improvement of heritage buildings and traditional shopfronts.

Delivering an effective Vacant Buildings Programme is also inter-related with two other major issues – Developing a Community Hub and Town Centre Living.

Nenagh's Town Centre Health Check (May 2023) revealed an 18% ground-floor commercial vacancy rate, significantly higher than the county (14.6%) and national (14.5%) averages. Vacancy rates on upper floors reach as high as 43%.

The TCF plan aims to promote adaptive reuse of vacant and derelict structures, encouraging their re-purposing for commercial, residential, cultural or community use, while respecting their architectural character.

Traditional building facades and high-quality shopfronts contribute significantly to the attractiveness, identity, and economic health of the town centre. Many existing shopfronts in Nenagh possess historical character but require restoration or visual improvement. A targeted scheme will support property owners and businesses to carry out sensitive, design-led enhancements, promoting a consistent and inviting retail environment.

This involves identifying all vacant or derelict buildings in the town centre and working with owners (using incentives and enforcement as needed) to bring these properties back into active use.

Actions are aimed at actively marketing vacant sites to potential investors or community groups and pursuing reuse and facade improvement schemes. Success will result in formerly derelict buildings becoming homes, shops, cafés, community or

cultural spaces, eliminating eyesores and restoring the town's historic fabric.

Potential Funding

The THRIVE (Town Centre First Heritage Revival Scheme) funding programme is designed to support town centre regeneration and the revitalization of heritage buildings under two strands:

Strand 1: Integrated urban strategies and project pipeline development –

- Development and enhancement of integrated urban strategies using a TCF Framework.
- Identification of projects that promote the conservation and adaptive reuse of built heritage.
- Prioritisation, development and specification of project proposals to create a pipeline of investment-ready built heritage refurbishment, renovation and adaptive reuse projects.

Strand 2: Renovation and adaptive reuse of vacant or derelict heritage buildings –

- Delivery of selected pilot and pathfinder projects that will have a positive and transformative impact on town centre vacancy and dereliction.

The proposed Vacant Buildings Scheme will entail Strand 1 for the prioritisation, development and specification of project proposals, and Strand 2 for delivery of selected pilot and pathfinder projects.

Key requirement for eligibility under Strand 2 of the THRIVE scheme is that the heritage buildings involved must be in local authority ownership or control.

Additionally, while it's not mandatory for the heritage buildings to be on the list of protected structures, they should either be proposed protected structures or contribute significantly to the character of an Architectural Conservation Area.

Buildings within Nenagh town centre that could be considered for this scheme and other potential funding sources, excluding those already subject of RRDF Cat 1 Application Nenagh Historic & Cultural Quarter and Part 8, and RRDF Cat 1 Application Rialto, include:

Former Presbyterian Church, Banba Square - leased to Foróige, Protected Structure.

Pearse Street, No. 35 & 36 – Vacant, Protected Structure.

Kenyon Street , Teach an Léinn - (formerly Nenagh Market House). Protected Structure. Community education and learning centre operated by Tipperary Education and Training Board (ETB) and restaurant.

Railway Station, Tobar Mhuire - Some vacant and under-utilised buildings. Protected Structure.

Former Military Barracks, Summerhill - Built c.1750, part of complex with surrounding buildings, owned by Dept. of Defence. Protected Structure.

Former CBS, John's Lane – Formerly Christian Brothers School, Bridge Centre and Young Nenagh Project, now rented to Nenagh Community Training Centre. Protected Structure.

For the Military Barracks, an inter-agency group would need to be established to include bodies such as OPW, Department of Defence, Land Development Agency and TCC in preparing a feasibility plan for the site, exploring suitable uses and potential funding sources.

Other existing Heritage Incentives are given in Section 5.5 Funding Opportunities.

In addition, local authorities have several key mechanisms to support the adaptive reuse of vacant and derelict properties, such as:

- Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs) - To acquire vacant, abandoned, or derelict buildings where private ownership blocks regeneration.
- Vacant and Derelict Sites Registers - Encourage owners to restore or sell properties for reuse.
- Repair and Lease Scheme (RLS) - Managed by: Local authorities or Approved Housing Bodies, targeted at privately-owned vacant properties to repair properties in exchange for a lease to the local authority for social housing. Commonly used for former commercial or over-shop residential units in town centres.
- Buy and Renew Scheme - Local authorities buy and refurbish vacant or derelict homes through funding from the Department of Housing and increasingly applied to heritage or mixed-use buildings for residential conversion.
- Town Centre First Plans - Includes identifying buildings for reuse, and co-financing opportunities (e.g. THRIVE, URDF), aligning reuse efforts with public realm, mobility, and enterprise development.
- Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) and Community Partnerships - Local authorities may co-develop projects with community groups, housing charities, or local enterprises, through long leases with regeneration conditions.
- CTCHC (Collaborative Town Centre Health Check) - Heritage Council–led framework, adopted under the TCF Policy, designed to help local authorities, communities, and stakeholders assess and revitalise historic town centres.

Meanwhile-Use

For vacant and derelict commercial properties, a Meanwhile-Use Activation Strategy is also proposed, encouraging temporary, creative, and low-cost use of suitable properties to:

- Support economic, cultural, and social revitalisation.
- Reduce the visual and functional impact of vacant buildings.
- Support local enterprise, artists, community groups, and start-ups.
- Reactivate under-utilised spaces, especially on key retail streets.
- Pilot long-term commercial use by testing temporary occupancy models.
- Enhance footfall, animation, and public perception of the town centre.

The Arts Council of Ireland provides support and potential funding for the temporary use of vacant shops or spaces, particularly when aligned with artistic or community engagement purposes.

The common success factors are:

- Short-term leases with minimal red tape
- Local authority support (rates relief, promotion)
- Insurance and legal toolkits
- Strong visual identity and branding
- Community engagement for curation and use ideas

Eligible Uses include:

- Pop-up retail (local craft, books, food)
- Art installations, exhibitions, and workshops
- Community services (advice clinics, support groups)
- Training, skills labs, youth spaces
- Testing ground for new businesses

Key Operator Requirements include:

- Public liability insurance
- Compliance with fire, health and accessibility standards
- Fit-out costs borne by temporary user unless otherwise agreed

Nenagh Painting & Enhancement Scheme

This grant initiative run by TCC aims to encourage property owners or tenants to maintain and improve the visual quality of the public realm. It typically covers up to 50% of costs for painting, shopfront improvements, or minor external works that enhance the town's streetscape.

In 2020 a pilot initiative involving properties along Wolfe Tone Terrace in Nenagh was successfully completed with repainting to a cohesive colour scheme designed by a professional colour consultant as part of a wider streetscape and shopfront enhancement initiative.

Repainted properties on Wolfe Tone Street to a uniform and vibrant colour palette

Shopfront Design Guidelines

The preparation of Shopfront Design Guidelines would complement the existing enhancement initiatives and support businesses in applying for future funding or grants.

The Guidelines would promote cohesive and visually appealing streetscapes in Nenagh, reducing visual clutter and enhancing the overall look of the town for the benefit of local businesses and the identity of the heritage area. They would include:

- Guidance of appropriate materials, security screens, colours and signage, ensuring that enhancements contribute positively to the overall streetscape.
- Recommendations for accessible entrances, improving inclusivity for customers.
- Advice on energy-efficient lighting and design, reducing environmental impact and operational costs.

The Key Actions of the Town Centre Team in delivering the Vacant Buildings Scheme project include:

- Audit of vacant heritage buildings and shopfronts
- Prioritise potential buildings for adaptive re-use
- Establish a 'Meanwhile Nenagh' co-ordination group
- Identify a pilot project(s)
- Engage with owners and explore eligible uses
- Initiate a Shopfront Design Guide
- Access available funding and incentives

Traditional shopfront on Mitchel Street

PROJECT B

COMMUNITY HUB DEVELOPMENT

One of the main community aspirations for the town centre as expressed through the consultation exercises focused on the provision of a Community Hub to house existing groups that included Youth Clubs, Mens/Womens Sheds, Silver Arch Family Resource Centre (FRC), Food Bank, Arts & Crafts Groups, Tipperary Search and Rescue, Order of Malta, Irish Red Cross, and other local voluntary and social groups.

All groups expressed the urgent need of dedicated premises for training, equipment storage, and operational coordination.

The creation of a multi-purpose Community Hub, preferably in a restored town centre building (as Project A), should address provision of facilities for the various needs of different groups, voluntary group space, social inclusion services, and inter-generational engagement.

The Community Hub proposal would initially involve the Town Team in scoping the feasibility of a suitable venue that meets the various requirements of the different groups and exploring a management structure for the facility.

Delivery of a Community Hub would require a series of coordinated planning, engagement, and delivery actions, aligned with the TCF Plan's Objectives for inclusive community infrastructure.

Patrickswell Community Centre, developed on a vacant site at the centre of the village in 2021 – a multi-purpose hub serving the needs of local community groups and businesses

This would require:

Site Identification and Feasibility

- An audit of potential buildings and sites - Identify suitable alternatives for underused buildings).
- Advocate for multi-use, affordable, and inclusive spaces, with meeting rooms, creative zones, kitchenettes, sensory-friendly rooms, etc.
- Encourage combined facilities and collaboration between community groups (e.g. Men's Shed and youth clubs sharing a space).
- Assessment of building condition, ownership, access, and zoning.
- Determining spatial needs - size, rooms, accessibility, parking, outdoor areas.
- Undertaking a feasibility study - Technical, planning, and cost implications.

Community and Stakeholder Engagement

- Consulting with local groups - Youth clubs, older people's organisations, voluntary bodies, mental health services, Men's/Women's Sheds, etc.
- Establishing a Community Hub Working Group - Drawn from the Town Team and user groups.
- Hosting design workshops - Ensure the hub reflects real needs (e.g. youth drop-in, training rooms, accessible facilities).

Design and Planning

- Developing a concept plan based on consultation – multi-purpose rooms, kitchen, event space, offices, storage, etc.
- Ensuring universal design - Age-friendly, accessible, inclusive design standards.
- Securing planning permission - Use Part 8 process if applicable.
- Incorporating green and sustainable design principles.

Funding and Operating Model

- Securing capital funding – e.g. RRDF, Town Centre First Fund, Town & Village Renewal, LEADER, sponsorship.
- Exploring operational funding options – Including Pobal, SICAP, HSE grants, rent from user groups.

- Developing a governance model – e.g.
    a. Community-run (via a co-op or CLG)
    b. Public-Community partnership
    c. Council-operated with community programming
- Developing a 3–5 year business plan for operations, staffing, and programming.

Operating Actions

- Coordinating a programme of activities with different groups - (e.g. youth, arts, training, mental health supports).
- Establishing a booking system for rooms.
- Hosting launch events, open days, trial activities to build awareness and ownership.
- Reviewing and adapting operations annually with community feedback.
- Applying for relevant support schemes (e.g. Community Centres Investment Fund, Community Services Programme).
- Advocating at County Council level for multi-annual funding.

The Key Actions of the Town Centre Team in delivering the Community Hub would involve:

- Community and stakeholder engagement
- Site identification and feasibility
- Facilitating design and planning
- Identifying funding and operating model

Newport Community Centre

PROJECT C

'GREEN NENAGH'

The responses to the Community Questionnaire indicated a strong desire for additional planting across the town centre, together with improved parks and recreational spaces, projects that would attract wildlife and support eco-diversity, turning underused or derelict locations into parks or open community green space, increased walking routes, public seating, and general aspiration to green the public realm with soft landscaping, planters, and native species.

Community Spaces

Creating a new Community Garden was of particular interest to many respondents. Since the closure last year of the Nenagh Community Wellness Garden at Cudville opposite Centra, there is a need to identify an alternative location for a similar facility. The main parties involved with the previous garden included Nenagh Tidy Towns, Silver Arch FRC, and TCC, with local community volunteers forming part of the committee that managed day-to-day operations.

Nenagh Community Wellness Garden

Similar small green spaces are required within the urban area to support the well-being of the local community while also providing amenity and biodiversity benefits.

Other local greening actions include the 'Planting Your Own Ark' initiative which involves the rewilding of private gardens or small plots of under-used public land as sanctuaries for nature. The approach is to let areas rewild naturally, avoiding mowing or weeding to encourage self-seeded native plants. Participants can then map their Arks globally on the movement's site, promoting a network of connected habitat patches.

Nenagh Tidy Towns and local biodiversity groups promote regular wildlife-friendly planting, pollinator corridors, and river clean-up events.

Typical rain garden

Greenways

The 'Green Nenagh' initiative is also associated with developing Greenways and biodiversity links within the town.

A river walkway has been established along the Nenagh River between Tyone Bridge and Scotts Bridge, providing a linear recreational amenity for the town and river front access to a natural wildlife corridor.

TCC intends to develop the Nenagh Urban Greenway, commencing adjacent to the Lisbunny Industrial Estate and following the route of an existing informal walkway along the eastern bank of the river. The route crosses the Lower Birr Road at the existing masonry road bridge and continues northwards along the western bank of the river.

The aim is to improve the existing walking route and make it accessible for all users. It will comprise a 2.4km long, 3.0m wide shared cycle and footpath, enhancing Active Travel and local and visitor recreational opportunities. NTA grant funding has been secured to progress the proposed Greenway through the Planning Phase of the project.

The current walkway along the Nenagh River to be developed into a Greenway

Tree Planting

Planting trees can deliver a wide range of amenity, social, economic, and health benefits, especially in the context of urban revitalisation, climate resilience, and community well-being.

The environmental benefits include:

- Improved Air Quality - Trees filter pollutants like nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide, and fine dust, improving urban air quality.
- Carbon Sequestration - Trees absorb CO_2, helping to offset emissions and support climate action goals at local and national levels.
- Urban Cooling & Shade - Trees reduce the urban heat island effect by shading streets, pavements, and buildings.
- Stormwater Management - Tree canopies intercept rainfall, reducing surface runoff and easing pressure on Nenagh's drainage infrastructure.
- Biodiversity - Native tree species support birds, insects, and pollinators, contributing to urban ecological networks.

Community-led planting projects (e.g. through schools, Tidy Towns, or Men's/Women's Sheds) also build civic pride and strengthen local connections.

During National Tree Week (March 9–16th), local groups including schools, community associations, Tidy Towns, and clubs can apply for free saplings supplied by Coillte via the County Council. Submissions for community plantings are taken annually ahead of the planting season.

Crann – Trees for Ireland, a national voluntary non-profit organisation, also supports community tree-planting, hedgerow projects, and school workshops, and have worked with towns across Ireland.

A mini urban forest comprising over 1,100 native Irish trees was planted at Nenagh College in March 2025, as part of the '100 Million Trees Project'. The initiative uses the Miyawaki method, crowding native species (like oak, birch, rowan, hazel) for rapid, dense woodland growth.

The '100 Million Trees Project' is a National Not-for-Profit initiative aimed at increasing the native Irish tree population over the next decade, adding to the biodiversity throughout the country and helping to mitigate carbon dioxide output.

Wherever possible, opportunities for street tree planting should be pursued in Nenagh, particularly as part of its regeneration goals and broader sustainability objectives aligned with enhancing pedestrian experience, climate adaptation, placemaking, and public health.

Tree planting initiatives should focus on key streets as part of footpath widening, seating areas, or rain gardens; along Active Travel corridors and school routes; within car parks and incidental open spaces; along commercial and retail frontages; and as an integral part of new development areas. There is the opportunity to combine street trees with rain gardens, bioswales or linked tree pits to manage stormwater and for pollution filtration.

Newly planted street trees

Town Approaches

The 'Green Nenagh' project should also incorporate an approach road enhancement scheme aimed at improving the visual, functional, and environmental quality of the key entry routes into the town. The scheme would contribute to placemaking, enhance the sense of arrival through traffic calming, support active travel, and align with Nenagh's broader objectives of town centre revitalisation and sustainable transport.

This would entail:

- Appraising and upgrading where necessary existing gateway locations at Limerick Road, Borrisokane Road and Dublin Road.
- Identifying locations and suitable treatment of gateways from other directions, such as the R497 from Silvermines and R494 from Ballina and Portroe.
- Developing placemaking opportunities for the main roundabouts on Nenagh's approach roads, such as public art, welcome signage, planting and lighting, including roundabouts at Lisbunny, Tullaheady and Knockalton.

The general requirements for the greening of the town include:

- Targeting key locations for greening, such as Market Cross and Pearse Street junctions (resting spaces and trees).
- Identifying small derelict or vacant sites for conversion into community gardens, sensory or therapeutic gardens, parklets or pop-up green spaces.
- Exploring opportunities for green roofs and façade planting on key buildings.
- Promoting the 'Planting Your Own Ark' re-wilding movement.
- Installing large planters with seasonal flowers or rain gardens at strategic locations (entrances to the town centre, pedestrian streets).
- Partnering with local schools, youth groups, Tidy Towns and Men's/Women's Sheds to plant trees and small woodlands, and to build planters or insect hotels in green areas.
- Organising seasonal greening events such as tree planting days and clean-ups.
- Planting street trees on wider sections of streets.
- Promoting the development of a Greenway along the Nenagh River to Dromineer as a key leisure and amenity long-term objective, as well as linking in Active Travel initiatives for the town.
- Supporting the continued development of the Nenagh Urban Greenway.
- Exploring opportunities for expanding Green Corridors and Biodiversity Routes as Active Travel routes and ecological corridors.
- Using sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), such as rain gardens and permeable paving, to reduce flooding and increase biodiversity.
- Incorporating low-maintenance planting and drought-tolerant landscaping.
- Replacing chemical dependent maintenance with organic alternatives.
- Improving the visual quality of approach roads and town gateways through signature tree planting of native species and wildflower planting in under-utilised verges.
- Initiating proposals for the main roundabouts that signify arrival into Nenagh, and promoting the 'Sponsor a Roundabout' scheme.

The Key Actions of the Town Centre Team in delivering the 'Green Nenagh' project would involve:

- Launch a 'Green Nenagh' campaign to coordinate tree planting, pocket parks, and green corridors.
- Identify locations for Community Gardens and pursue delivery through consultation.
- Scope small scale pilot 'quick-win' projects for tree planting, planters, rain gardens, green roofs, edible and façade planting.
- Promote the 'Planting Your Own Ark' re-wilding movement.
- Support the development of Greenways and Approach Road planting schemes.

Nenagh community allotments

PROJECT D

TRAIN STATION MASTERPLAN

Responses to the Community Questionnaire indicated clear and consistent proposals for enhancing Nenagh's train station, reflecting a desire to better integrate it into the town's transport and community fabric.

There were also numerous suggestions for animating the station hub with cultural and creative uses, providing a welcoming venue that supports arts, youth engagement, and informal gathering. Other proposals included provision of camper van facilities within the station car park to meet the growing demand from mobile visitors and help support local businesses.

The main views expressed were:

- Revitalising the station, making it accessible, modern, and useful.
- Proposals for a combined transport hub, relocating bus services to the station.
- Suggestions for coffee shops, youth spaces, and community uses at the station.
- Desire to reactivate train services for regional commuting.

The train station is located at the southern corner of the Martyr's Road master plan site, but due to poor frequency of services is not well used.

As outlined in the LTP, it is intended to utilise the extensive space currently used in part for car parking to create a transport hub with inter-urban bus services and cycle storage facilities. It is an objective of the Council to continue working with the NTA and Irish Rail to increase the modal share of active travel modes and the use of public transport by securing the provision of a transport hub and providing an improved rail service to meet the needs of the community.

The TCF Plan recommends a masterplan be prepared to future-proof the Train Station site to maximise its potential and better integrate with the town centre.

This could include:

- Creating a combined bus-rail interchange.

- Providing secure bike parking, EV charging points, and park-and-ride options.
- Adding digital real-time travel info displays and integrated ticketing systems for rail, bus, and bike-share.
- Incorporating over-night camper van facilities.
- Improving signage and wayfinding between the station, town centre, and key destinations (Banba Square, Market, Castle).
- Upgrading station accessibility, lighting, surfaces, and waiting areas for safety and comfort.
- Community activation of the station space, including a small café or kiosk, potentially run by a social enterprise or youth group, and public seating and greenery to make the station a welcoming arrival point.
- Using the station as an entry point to the Nenagh Cultural Trail, with interpretive panels about the town's rail history and nearby heritage attractions.
- Collaborating with local artists and schools to decorate the station with murals or historical photography.

The Key Actions of the Town Centre Team in delivering the Train Station Masterplan would involve:

- Support development of the Train Station as an Integrated Transport Hub.
- Prepare a masterplan to future-proof the potential of the site and better integrate it with the town centre.
- Lobby for enhanced train services.
- Improve bus stops with shelters, real-time information, and accessibility features.
- Explore opportunities for incorporating over-night camper van facilities.
- Upgrade pedestrian links to the town centre.
- Improve signage, way-finding, station accessibility and heritage interpretation.
- Promote community activation of the station space.

PROJECT E

SUPPORTING EXISTING REGENERATION INITIATIVES

The Nenagh Town Team will play a key role in coordinating and facilitating the delivery of existing regeneration initiatives through actions that support project planning, delivery and long-term activation across building re-use, public realm, tourism and cultural interventions.

Historical and Cultural Quarter (HCQ)

Key actions will include:

- Collaborating with TCC to ensure that redevelopment aligns with the vision of a people-focused, vibrant historic centre, enhancing visitor experience, supporting cultural storytelling and local identity, and linking the Castle, Gaol, Banba Square, Courthouse and Friary sites as a coherent experience.
- Acting as a conduit between the community and the Council/consultants during project design and delivery by facilitating workshops to shape detailed design and implementation strategies.
- Helping to plan and deliver events that animate the Quarter, including music and arts festivals, pop-up performances, artisan markets, exhibitions, and seasonal celebrations, by coordinating with arts groups, tourism bodies, and community groups.
- Partnering with agencies such as Fáilte Ireland, Creative Ireland, and local businesses to support co-funding and marketing.
- Endorsing applications and providing evidence of local support for RRDF applications, Fáilte Ireland's Destination Town and interpretation schemes, and Arts Council or other heritage grant programmes.
- Supporting the Council during delivery to ensure minimal disruption to businesses and to maximize the benefits (e.g. coordinating events or marketing to re-launch the upgraded quarter).

The Rialto Redevelopment

The Nenagh Town Team will play a pivotal role in driving the Rialto Business & Enterprise Hub component of the larger Historic & Cultural Quarter redevelopment, ensuring that the scheme integrates residential homes, enterprise space, and new public realm links to boost footfall and cultural vitality

The main responsibilities are aimed at ensuring the former Rialto Cinema becomes a vibrant, sustainable, and locally anchored facility, and will involve:

- Strategic oversight and place-making leadership
- Community engagement
- Funding support

Rialto Cinema

Nenagh Local Transport Plan (LTP)

The Nenagh Town Team will be involved in supporting the implementation of the LTP, which is a key strategic document guiding sustainable mobility in the town over the decade ahead.

The key responsibilities will include:

- Coordinating and raising awareness of the LTP's proposals for bus, car, walking, and cycling journeys.
- Supporting the rollout of active travel infrastructure (cycle lanes, footway upgrades) and public transport interventions.
- Helping to develop initiatives to manage private car usage, such as parking policy reforms, traffic calming schemes and pedestrian priority.

- Collaborating with the National Transport Authority (NTA), Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), Bus Éireann/Local Link, and other agencies to support LTP implementation.

Example of Active Travel Scheme on Limerick Road close to the TCC Offices - Nenagh Local Transport Plan

Martyr's Road Regeneration Quarter

The Town Team will play a central role in supporting the Martyr's Road Regeneration Quarter, working in partnership with TCC and other stakeholders to ensure the site delivers on its multi-phase, mixed-use vision.

The key responsibilities will include:

- Coordinating stakeholder engagement in line with the plan's objectives for stronger links to the town centre and improved urban fabric.
- Advocating for joined-up delivery of streetscape enhancements, cycle/pedestrian links, tree-lined public spaces, and connectivity to Friar Street Civic Plaza and Railway Road network.
- Supporting early-phase infrastructure works, including road improvements and the creation of civic space next to the Franciscan Friary.
- Encouraging interim uses for existing brownfield sites pending full delivery.

Martyr's Road Masterplan proposals for establishing strong links with the Franciscan Friary - Healy Partners Architects

Stereame Campus & Lisbunny Industrial Estate

The Town Team can enhance these flagship regeneration sites, and other strategic enterprise developments, by:

- Championing the master planned mixed-use visions.
- Ensuring community and enterprise voices inform delivery.
- Advocating for funding and infrastructure investment.
- Promoting delivery, connectivity, and interim site activation.

Stereame Campus Draft Masterplan

5.4 Delivery Action Plan (Key Projects)

Each of the key actions and projects are summarised in the following Delivery Action Plan, according to short-, medium- or longer-term timescales. The anticipated lead and key partner stakeholders are identified together with potential funding sources.

The action items should be reviewed and updated by the Town Team on an annual basis according to availability of resources and funding opportunities, as well as the ongoing preferences of the local community. Delivery of the TCF Plan therefore needs to remain flexible in response to changing circumstances.

KEY:

Term	
S	Short 1-5 Years
M	Medium 5-10 Years
L	Long +10 years
Priority	
***	High
**	Medium
*	Low
Partners	
TCC	Tipperary County Council
NTT	Nenagh Town Team
ETB	Enterprise & Training Board
FI	Failte Ireland
HSE	Health Services Executive
HC	Heritage Council
AC	Arts Council
LEO	Local Enterprise Office
CoC	Chamber of Commerce
EI	Enterprise Ireland
NTDC	North Tipperary Development Co.
PPN	Tipp. Public Participation Network
TEA	Tipperary Energy Agency
Potential Funding	
	Refer Section 5.5

Ref.	Action/Project	Term	Priority	Partners	Potential Funding
A	**Vacant Buildings Scheme** ■ Audit of vacant heritage buildings and shopfronts ■ Prioritise potential buildings for adaptive re-use ■ Establish a 'Meanwhile Nenagh' co-ordination group ■ Access available funding and identify a pilot project(s) ■ Engage with owners and explore eligible uses ■ Prepare a Shopfront Design Guide ■ Access available funding and incentives	S	***	TCC, NTC, DoHLGH, NTDC, CoC, HC, AC property owners	URDF, RRDF, CC, TVRS, HGS
B	**Community Hub Development** ■ Community and stakeholder engagement ■ Site identification and feasibility ■ Design and planning ■ Funding and operating model	S	***	TCC, NTC, local community + voluntary groups, HSE/Tusla, ETB, PPN, CoC	LEADER, TVRS, CCIF, SICAP
C	**'Green Nenagh'** ■ Launch a 'Green Nenagh' campaign ■ Identify locations for Community Gardens and pursue delivery through consultation ■ Scope small scale pilot 'quick-win' projects for tree planting, planters, rain gardens, green roofs, edible and façade planting ■ Promote the 'Planting Your Own Ark' re-wilding movement	S-M	**	TCC, NTT, Tidy Towns, community groups, landowners, schools, NTDC, CoC, PPN	Active Travel, ORIS, TCC

Ref.	Action/Project	Term	Priority	Partners	Potential Funding
	▪ Develop proposals for the main roundabouts that signify arrival into Nenagh ('sponsor a roundabout')				
D	**Train Station Masterplan** ▪ Support development as an Integrated Transport Hub ▪ Prepare a masterplan to future-proof the potential of the site and better integrate it with the town centre ▪ Lobby for enhanced train services ▪ Improve bus stops with shelters, real-time information, and accessibility features ▪ Explore opportunities for incorporating over-night camper van facilities ▪ Upgrade pedestrian links to the town centre. ▪ Improve signage, way-finding, station accessibility and heritage interpretation ▪ Promote community activation of the station space	M	**	TCC, NTT, Iarnród Éireann, CIE, Bus Éireann, private bus operators, TFI, North Tipp Rail Partnership, NTA, NTT, CoC, HC	NTA, TCC URDF, Active Travel, DoT, Iarnród Éireann Capital Programme, TVRS, LEADER, HC
E	**Supporting Existing Regeneration Initiatives** ▪ Historic and Cultural Quarter	S-M	***	TCC, NTT, FI, OPW, NMS, Nenagh Arts Centre CLG, North Tipp Genealogy & Heritage Service CLG, community groups, CoC	URDF, TVRS, Heritage Council, BHIS, HSF, LEADER, Creative Ireland, AC
	▪ Martyr's Road Regeneration Quarter (SECOE)	S-M	***	TCC, NTT, TEA, NTDC, Siga-Hydro, Community Power, TUS	URDF, CC, SHCIP, LEADER, TVRS
	▪ The Rialto Redevelopment	S	***	TCC, NTT, NTDC, TUS, CoC, Nenagh Arts Centre CLG, HC, FI, community groups, CoC	URDF, BHS, FI, SREIS, LEADER, TVRS
	▪ Nenagh Local Transport Plan	S-M	**	TCC, NTT, TII, Bus Éireann, schools, community groups, RSA, CoC	NTA, URDF, CAF, Active Travel, Safe Routes to Schools, LEADER, ERDF, BusConnects URDF, EI, IDA
	▪ Stereame Campus & Lisbunny Industrial Estate	M-L	**	TCC, NTT, IDA, LEO, ETB, utility providers, CoC	

5.5 Funding Opportunities

To support the implementation of TCF Plans, several funding initiatives are available as summarized below.

All funding is subject to specific terms and conditions and according to an open call being in place to allow applications to be made.

Town Centre First Suite of Supports (2024) - providing Town Team Support Fund; Town Centre First Plan development; Project Development Measure.

Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF)

Funding programme that is investing €1 billion in rural Ireland up to 2027. This fund is aimed at:

- Supporting job creation in rural areas
- Addressing de-population of rural communities
- Supporting improvements in towns and villages.

RRDF funding is available for towns and villages with a population of less than 10,000, and is awarded through a competitive bid process, proposals are invited from Local Authorities and other locally/regionally based organisations such as Local Development Companies.

Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF)

URDF is a major government initiative aimed at revitalising cities and large towns (Nenagh qualifies), support compact growth, and deliver on the National Planning Framework (NPF) and Project Ireland 2040.

Eligible Projects:

- Re-use of derelict or vacant buildings, especially for housing or community use.
- Town centre renewal - streetscapes, public squares, transport hubs.
- Public realm improvements that support compact growth and walkability.
- Infrastructure - access roads, utilities, green infrastructure.
- Strategic masterplans or site assembly.

- Large-scale urban regeneration, e.g. reuse of key town centre buildings as part of an integrated urban strategy.

THRIVE – Town Centre First Heritage Revival Scheme

- This €120 million fund, launched in 2024, supports local authorities in renovating and repurposing vacant or derelict heritage buildings in town centres, promoting heritage-led regeneration. It is currently targeted at larger urban settlements – cities, regional growth centres and key towns – and is designed to complement other national funds targeting smaller urban settlements.

Croí Cónaithe (CC)

A grant of up to a maximum of €50,000 for:

- Refurbishment of vacant properties for occupation as a principal private residence; and
- Properties which will be made available for rent.

This includes the conversion of properties which have not previously been used as residential, subject to appropriate planning permission. This is also subject to upper limits for the types of work, having regard to a reasonable cost assessment by the local authority.

Historic Towns Initiative 2025 (HTI)

In support of TCF, the Historic Towns Initiative (HTI) is a joint undertaking by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the Heritage Council which aims to promote the heritage-led regeneration of Ireland's historic towns. It offers:

- Stream 1: Grants between €150,000 and €350,000 for capital works to repair and enhance the heritage of towns through conservation-led projects.
- Stream 2: Up to €50,000 per town for developing heritage-led regeneration plans, requiring a 20% match funding from local authorities.

Town and Village Renewal Scheme (TVRS)

TVRS provides significant capital funding for projects aimed at revitalising rural towns and villages. It is managed by the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) and delivered through Local Authorities.

In 2021, the scheme was refocused to emphasize tackling vacancy, promoting Town Centre Living, and supporting remote working hubs.

Funding Levels (as of recent rounds):

- Standard Projects - Up to €500,000 per project. Usually requires 10–20% match from the local authority or other sources.
- Major Projects (2023–2024 pilot category) - Up to €1m for large-scale regeneration projects.

Eligible Uses:

- Re-use of vacant or derelict buildings.
- Public realm improvements (e.g., paving, lighting, landscaping).
- Creation of co-working spaces, community centres, or cultural facilities.
- Support for remote working infrastructure.
- Temporary or pilot initiatives that demonstrate long-term value (like pop-up shops or meanwhile use).

LEADER Community Led Local Development (CCLD)

The LEADER Programme is funded by both the EU and Irish Government and provides grants, advice and training to support business start-up, expand or develop new products; communities projects to be planned and carried out and assist projects that help the rural environment. The programme accepts applications based on projects which improve:

- Rural Tourism
- Enterprise development
- Broadband

Local authorities cannot apply for LEADER funding.

NTA Active Travel Investment Grants (NTA)

This investment will fund approximately 800 Active Travel projects, contributing to the development of 1,000km of new and improved walking and cycling infrastructure across the country between 2020 and 2025, including the development of segregated cycle lanes and widened footpaths, new walking and cycling bridges, and new pedestrian crossings.

Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS)

This scheme provides funding for the development of new outdoor recreational infrastructure. It also provides support for the necessary repair, maintenance, enhancement or promotion of existing outdoor recreational infrastructure in rural areas across Ireland.

The scheme provides funding for:

- Development, extensions and repair of trails, walkways, cycleways and blueways.
- Improved access to outdoor leisure or recreational facilities development of outdoor recreational infrastructure.

THRIVE – Town Centre First Heritage Revival Scheme

This scheme enables local authorities to transform publicly-owned vacant or derelict heritage buildings into vibrant community, cultural, residential, or mixed-use assets, aligned with TCF Policy and New European Bauhaus principles of sustainability, aesthetics, and inclusion).

Key features:

- Strand 1 (Feasibility & Planning) - Grants of €40k–€200k for integrated urban strategies and project pipeline development. Supports developing shovel-ready projects.
- Strand 2 (Capital Works) - Grants of €2m–€7m for renovation and adaptive reuse of vacant/derelict buildings under local authority control.
- Projects must be municipally owned or controlled heritage buildings within designated towns.
- Community-led design and justification for adaptive reuse are key criteria.

In addition, other grant schemes which could support the regeneration of Nenagh include:

- Arts Grant Funding (AGF), Arts Council
- Housing for All Initiative (HfI) – such as Repair and Lease, Buy and Renew, etc.
- Creative Ireland Grant Scheme (CIGS)
- Heritage Council Community Heritage Fund (HCCHF)

- Dept. of Housing, Local Government and Heritage Community Monuments Fund (CMF)
- SEAI Community and Business Grants (SEAI)
- Local Authority Community Grants (CG)
- Fáilte Ireland Small Grants Scheme (SGS)
- Fáilte Ireland 'Destination Towns' Initiative (DT)
- Sustainable Mobility Investment Programme (SMIP)
- Historic Structures Fund (HSF)
- Built Heritage Capital Grant (BHCG)
- Built Heritage Investment Scheme 2025 (BHIS)
- Funding under the Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways (SFDNRG)
- Local Enterprise Office Financial Supports (LEO)
- Local Live Performance Support Scheme 2022

Government-supported frameworks that provide funding and supports for community development, social inclusion, and local capacity-building, especially in disadvantaged or underserved areas, include:

– **Pobal** - a not-for-profit company that works on behalf of the Irish Government and the EU to administer funding programmes aimed at social inclusion, equality, and community development. Acts as an intermediary between government departments and local communities, and manages a variety of funding programmes that support early learning, youth services, community centres, employment supports, and disadvantaged groups, such as Community Services Programme (CSP) – helps community-based organisations to provide services and employment in disadvantaged areas.

– Community Centres Investment Fund (CCIF), supports the development, refurbishment, and sustainability of community centres.

– Dormant Accounts Fund – supports disadvantaged individuals and communities (e.g. people with disabilities, youth at risk, Traveller groups).

– **SICAP** – Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme - a government-funded initiative managed by Pobal and delivered locally by Local Development Companies (LDCs), such

as North Tipperary Development Company (NTDC). The main purpose is to reduce poverty and promote social inclusion by empowering disadvantaged individuals and communities. Supports include:

– Education, training, and employment support

– Community group capacity-building

– Support for youth, lone parents, long-term unemployed, people with disabilities, new communities, Travellers, etc.

– Assistance with grant applications and organisational development for community groups

There are several shopfront and building façade enhancement schemes are currently available for businesses and property owners in Nenagh, including:

- **Painting & Enhancement Scheme** - local grant initiative managed by TCC, aimed at improving the appearance of buildings and shopfronts within Nenagh town centre. It forms part of broader town centre regeneration and vacancy reduction efforts.
- **Shop-Front & Building Facade Enhancement Grant**, TCC - Covers up to 50% of eligible costs, capped at €500 per property, and open to commercial and residential property owners or tenants within designated town and villages.

These main funding avenues provide substantial support for local authorities and communities to develop and implement TCF Plans, fostering the regeneration and sustainable development of town centres across the country.

In addition, local authorities have several other key mechanisms to support the adaptive reuse of vacant and derelict properties, particularly in town centres and regeneration zones, such as:

- **Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs)** - To acquire vacant, abandoned, or derelict buildings where private ownership blocks regeneration.
- **Vacant and Derelict Sites Registers** - Encourage owners to restore or sell properties for reuse.

- **Repair and Lease Scheme (RLS**) - Managed by: Local authorities or Approved Housing Bodies, targeted at privately-owned vacant properties to repair properties in exchange for a lease to the local authority for social housing. Commonly used for former commercial or over-shop residential units in town centres.
- **Buy and Renew Scheme** - Local authorities buy and refurbish vacant or derelict homes through funding from the Department of Housing and increasingly applied to heritage or mixed-use buildings for residential conversion.
- **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs**) and Community Partnerships - Local authorities may co-develop projects with community groups, housing charities, or local enterprises, through long leases with regeneration conditions.
- **CTCHC** (Collaborative Town Centre Health Check) - Heritage Council–led framework, adopted under the TCF Policy, designed to help local authorities, communities, and stakeholders assess and revitalise historic town centres.

5.6 Environmental Assessments

The implementation of the TCF Plan will be required to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards, in combination with other users and bodies and their plans or policies, the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

Community Engagement Responses
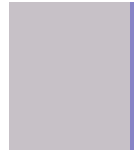
Key Proposals

The key proposals identified from the engagement exercises, prioritised by level of community interest and with representative comments for each, are summarised as follows:

High Priority Proposals (Broad and Repeated Support)

➤ **Creation of a Community Hub** – multi-functional centre for youth groups, arts and crafts, choirs, food banks, men's/women's sheds, and mental health supports.
  "Turn the old Rialto into a community space for Nenagh groups – food bank, youth clubs, men's/women's sheds."
  "The former Sheahan's hardware shop should become a community hub, not a business hub – with a public yard."
  "Use the old Rialto cinema for a community Centre that can cater for all groups and all ages."

➤ **Expansion of Festivals and Events in the Town Centre** – support for events like Castlefest, Fleadh Cheoil, Taste of Nenagh, and St. Patrick's Day Parade.
  "Nenagh needs more festivals – great to see the St. Patrick's Day parade coming back."
  "Bring back events like Munster Fleadh Cheoil, Castlefest, and Taste of Nenagh."
  "Good quality markets, street performers, and musicians bring life to the town."

➤ **Development of a Cultural & Heritage Quarter** – enhancement of historic assets with better signage, trails, and reuse of heritage buildings.
  "Need to maximise potential of heritage buildings and the historic & cultural quarter."
  "The council should progress key cultural projects and secure funding."
  "There is a need to further build and enhance the cultural and heritage aspects of Nenagh."

➤ **Tackling Vacancy and Dereliction** – incentives to reactivate empty buildings through pop-ups, galleries, or community uses.
  "So many assets of the town could be exploited more – too many empty units."
  "Derelict and empty shops/bars should be given assistance in reopening."
  "Utilise vacant stores to allow local businesses and artists to hold pop-up shops."

Medium Priority Proposals (Strong Interest, Moderate Frequency)

➤ **Improved Public Spaces and Urban Realm Enhancements** – including greenery, benches, better lighting, and pedestrian zones.
  "Make the town greener – benches, rubbish bins, and good lighting are needed."
  "The town needs to be more walkable with improved infrastructure and public seating."
  "Adopt a stronger approach to antisocial behaviour – especially in public areas."

➤ **Central Transport Hub at Nenagh Train** Station – relocation of bus stops with integrated travel services and supporting amenities.
  "Bus stop should be moved to the train station – create a transport hub."
  "A bus and rail hub with a café and youth activities would be ideal."
  "Having to cross town for different transport modes is inconvenient."

➤ **Safe Spaces and Facilities for Teenagers** – drop-in centres, workshops, and teen-specific activities.
  "There is nothing in the town for teens – we need safe places for them."
  "A space for youth groups would be a huge asset to the town."
  "More free events and workshops for teenagers, ideally in Nenagh Arts Centre."

➤ **Development of a Shared Community Pitch or Sports Facility** – multi-sport astro pitch inspired by Fethard Town Park.
  "Nenagh needs a community pitch – an astro 11-a-side pitch for all clubs."
  "A shared sports facility like Fethard Town Park would benefit all groups."
  "Include sports like cricket, GAA, and soccer to support diversity."
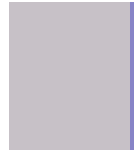
Lower Priority Proposals (Valued by Niche Groups or Mentioned Less Frequently)

➢ **Pop-Up Retail and 'Made Local' Centres –** promoting local crafts and rotating small businesses in vacant units.
"Create a permanent 'Made Local' store for Tipperary art, craft, and food."
"Utilise vacant units for rotating pop-up shops by local businesses."
"Include a gallery and café space for local creatives."

➢ **Town Shuttle Bus System** – free loop bus connecting residential zones to the town centre.
"A free shuttle going around town from residential areas would ease traffic."
"Town shuttle should connect Sallygrove, Tyone, and other outer areas."
"Make public transport easy, especially for older people and those without cars."

➢ **Housing and Mixed-Use Development** – rental-focused schemes with green and public space.
"The town needs more rental accommodation – look at Castletroy LDA model."
"New residential areas should include plazas, parks, and community space."
"Martyrs Road could be ideal for a low-cost rental housing project."

➢ **Accessible Infrastructure Improvements** – safer crossings, step-free access, and inclusive design for all.
"Make all shops wheelchair accessible and friendly to people with additional needs."
"Improve zebra crossings – current ones are dangerous."
"Improve access near schools and key junctions with better crossings."

Specific Responses with representative quotes related to Priority Proposals

1. **Reuse of The Rialto**
Survey responses included multiple suggestions for the future of the Old Rialto Cinema. It is widely seen as a valuable heritage asset with strong potential for community, cultural, and creative uses.
There is clear community interest in saving and repurposing the Rialto, with an emphasis on non-commercial, inclusive, and creative functions. It's viewed not only as a historic building, but as a future heart of Nenagh's civic and cultural life.

Transform into a Community Hub
Many respondents proposed converting the Rialto into a multi-use community facility, especially for:
▪ Youth groups
▪ Inter-generational activities
▪ Social inclusion programmes
▪ Workshops and support services

Re-establish it as a Cultural Venue
Others envision the Rialto as a centre for arts and culture, including:
▪ Live performances
▪ Cinema screenings
▪ Music and theatre
▪ Art exhibitions

Combine with Markets and Creativity
A few responses suggest blending culture with enterprise by adding:
▪ Art galleries
▪ Craft spaces
▪ Indoor market stalls

Inclusion and Belonging
The Rialto is also seen as a place to:
▪ Support marginalised or new communities
▪ Provide affordable, welcoming space for voluntary and grassroots groups
▪ Host community-led programming to foster social cohesion

o *"Need to identify optimum use for The Rialto. Agencies, Council and individual facilities should work together."*

o *Turn the old Rialto into a community space for Nenagh groups e.g, Food bank, Mens/Womens sheds, choirs, Arts& crafts, youth clubs."*

o *"The former Sheehans Hardware Shop should become a community hub, not a business hub, and the yard to the back of the old shop should be used for public space such as the public realm in Kickham Barracks in Clonmel. The hub can be used for youth clubs, boxing, martial arts, women groups like Women Shed etc."*

o *"For the size of the town and its population I think Rialto would be very useful for youths there's nothing in the town for them and also for meeting rooms/arts and small concerts. The art centre is quite small."*

o *"There is a woman group in Nenagh, and like many others have no space to call their own everything is too expensive to rent but there are building like the Rialto that could be used to house these groups and create a community hub with access to computers and rooms to lease and a community space and drop in centres for younger and old people".*

o *"I would like to see the Rialto site being used as a community space for local community groups. The old cinema could also be turned into a theatre that could transform the cultural offerings in Nenagh. The site has the ability and capacity to be a successful arts centre."*

o *"Please convert the Rialto or Military Barracks into a community centre for the voluntary groups."*

o *Make the old Sheenan building into a community centre for community groups so they don't have to worry about having to close due to rent increases/rates increases/lack of places to meet."*

2. **Active Travel**
Survey responses show a clear desire to improve Active Travel in Nenagh, with walking and cycling as everyday transport options.
Respondents see Active Travel not just as transport, but as a way to improve:
▪ Health and safety
▪ Environmental quality
▪ Town vibrancy and economy

Safer, Wider, More Walkable Streets
Many respondents want wider, smoother footpaths, especially in the town centre, to support:
▪ Walking to shops, school, and work
▪ Older adults and wheelchair users
▪ Safer, more comfortable daily movement

Requests for pedestrianised or traffic-calmed zones (e.g. Kickham Street to Market Cross) were common.

Better Cycling Infrastructure
Respondents suggested:
▪ Dedicated cycle lanes
▪ Cycling trails around the town and to surrounding areas
▪ Secure bike parking
▪ Wayfinding signage for cyclists

Children & School Travel
Specific ideas focused on encouraging walking and cycling to school:
▪ Safe routes for children
▪ Car restrictions near schools at peak hours
▪ Introduce walking/cycling promotion and car bans at school opening/closing times.

Active Travel as a Public Realm Feature

Many people want walking and cycling to be integrated with plaza-style streets, better lighting, and landscaping.

Some envisioned a Grafton Street / Galway-style experience, vibrant, pedestrian-friendly, and accessible.

Suggestions for:

▪ Smoother paving

- Safer crossings
- Removing physical barriers (poor signage, cobbles, narrow paths)
  - *"A plan is needed to get more kids to walk/cycle to school. There should be a car ban outside primary schools at the opening & closing times."*
  - *"Make it easier to cycle across town safely."*
  - *"Traffic speeds on main roads into town need to be enforced by the Gardaí to improve environment. More encouragement for people to cycle and walk including to school."*
  - *"Coordinated transport programme for children/teens in surrounding villages to access activities in Nenagh—currently relying on parents to drive due to lack of evening services."*

3. **Town Centre Accessibility**
   Survey responses included numerous practical suggestions to improve accessibility and movement in Nenagh's town centre, aiming to create a safer, more inclusive, and more enjoyable public realm for all users.

   Safer Footpaths and Surfaces
   Widespread concerns about uneven paving, especially for:
   - Older people
   - Wheelchair users
   - Those with visual impairments
   Cobbled surfaces in particular were flagged as hazardous and uncomfortable.

   Improved Pedestrian and Cycle Infrastructure
   Strong support for:
   - Widened footpaths
   - Pedestrianisation of key streets (e.g. Kickham St., Pearce St., Market Cross)
   - Dedicated cycle lanes

   Relocate Bus Stops and Reorganise Traffic

   Many respondents supported moving bus stops away from crowded pedestrian crossings and into the train station area to:

   - Reduce traffic conflicts

- Improve pedestrian safety
- Free up space in the centre

Parking Adjustments

Mixed views:

- Some called for more parking spaces near the centre
- Others supported reduced car use through pedestrian zones and better public transport
- Town centre staff occupying prime public parking all day, limiting availability for visitors, shoppers, and elderly or less mobile people
- Perception that short-term or high-turnover parking spaces are being used inefficiently.

Accessibility for All

Calls to ensure all improvements benefit:

- People with disabilities
- Parents with buggies
- Older residents

Ideas included ramps, smoother paving, and accessible crossings.

- *"Definitely make the town more walkable by improving infrastructure, having more public seating, an extra pedestrian crossing near the car park entrance on Kenyon Street, have an extra pedestrian crossing near Andy Burke corner/top of St Joseph Park."*
- *"Traffic management for the safety of both the pedestrian and driver needs to be addressed as it is not promoting an age friendly town."*
- *"Definitely pedestrianise Pearse Street Kickham Street and Kenyon Street encouraging all through traffic to circumvent the town."*
- *"Illegal parking is also tolerated by parking wardens/ Garda."*
- *"Pedestrianised streets, more car parks surrounding the centre to encourage less traffic in centre."*
- *"The Town needs to be more pedestrian and cyclists friendly there should b no parking on narrow lanes and roads, e.g. Mitchell St, especially)."*

o *"Something needs to be done about Sarsfield St it's mostly residential properties the traffic is very heavy n fast n the pathways are very narrow."*

4. **Train Station**
   Survey respondents offered several clear and consistent proposals for enhancing Nenagh's train station, reflecting a desire to better integrate it into the town's transport and community fabric.

   Create a Transport Hub
   - Multiple respondents suggested moving the town's bus stop to the train station, turning it into a central transport interchange.
   - The idea includes combining bus and rail services to improve accessibility and reduce traffic congestion in the town centre.

   Upgrade the Station
   Strong support for upgrading the station to make it:
   - Disability-accessible
   - Welcoming to commuters
   - Equipped with basic amenities like a coffee shop or small retail unit

   Animate with Arts and Community

   A few respondents proposed cultural and creative uses of the space, inspired by examples in other towns:

   - Installing a public piano, as seen in Limerick's station
   - Creating a welcoming venue that supports arts, youth engagement, and informal gathering
   o *"Bus stop should be moved to the train station and create a Transport Hub with coffee shop/restaurant and space for youth activities at the railway station."*
   o *"Move bus stops to train station and not have buses stopping at a junction with 3 pedestrian crossings."*
   o *"Firstly the train station needs to [be] opened and updated, as well as made disability friendly, a coffee shop could slot in there*

   nicely, and buses need to arrive and leave from there."
   o *"Limerick City have an amazing public piano in their train station, it's such a good piece to have available to the public for playing and showing we invest in the arts."*
   o *"Lack of public transport, particularly train facilities. We have a train station that is purely decorative."*
   o *"Let's get that train station into action so we can leave our cars at home. Would be so attractive if it was possible to commute to Dublin/Limerick with Public transport."*

5. **Heritage and Culture**
   Survey responses show a deep and widespread desire to celebrate, preserve, and activate Nenagh's heritage and culture. This sentiment was echoed across multiple submissions, with specific calls for both protection and creative use of the town's historic assets.
   Respondents highlighted local culture and heritage as one of the town's key strengths and a reason for visiting.

   Heritage as a Core Identity
   - Many respondents identified local culture and heritage as one of the top things they value about Nenagh.
   - There is strong appreciation for sites like Nenagh Castle, the Franciscan Friary, the Heritage Centre, and the Old Rialto Cinema, often seen as symbolic of the town's unique identity.

   Preservation, Restoration, and Reuse

   - Numerous calls were made to restore and repurpose historic buildings, especially the Rialto Cinema (suggested as a cultural centre or community hub).
   - Respondents want to see derelict or underused heritage buildings turned into living parts of the town, used for exhibitions, workshops, or youth spaces.
   - Suggestions also included grants and supports for owners of heritage properties to enable their upkeep and adaptive reuse.
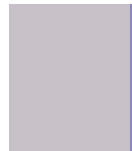
Improved Storytelling and Visibility

Several respondents advocated for:

- Heritage signage and interpretation boards (e.g., at the Franciscan Friary).
- Statue trails and visual markers to tell Nenagh's story.
- The development of a museum or cultural walking route linking key historic sites.
- People want Nenagh's Norman and market-town history made more visible and accessible to both residents and visitors.

Cultural Programming & Inclusion

- Beyond buildings, many respondents emphasized the importance of cultural events, arts, and festivals to animate heritage.
- Some called for a more inclusive and representative cultural offering, ensuring new and long-standing communities can engage with Nenagh's cultural life.
- *"The Old Rialto Cinema is the perfect location to create a community hub... It would become a living vibrant town centre, a focal point in the historic quarter."*
- *"Continue good work on the heritage side of town. Open walkway to the Castle from Pearse Street, create a gathering public space on Banba Square."*
- *"The historic quarter should be widened to incorporate the Franciscan Friary... maybe something about the town walls which could lead you from Nenagh Castle to the Friary."*
- *"Lack of tourists when Nenagh has so much cultural and historical areas."*
- *"Restoration and redevelopment of Nenagh Heritage Centre... local musicians [performing] during the summer... new town market, art gallery and community spaces."*
- *"Development of Historic Area (Court House, Jail, Castle, Banba Sq)... museum in the old Presbyterian Church... lots of opportunity for new visitors."*
- *"Support owners of large old heritage buildings to get grants... renovate and get accommodation over shop units liveable... heritage signage and wayfinding."*

- *"Statues to represent some historical figures (statue trail)... Daniel O'Connell... a feature."*

6. **Expanded Events**
   Survey responses show a strong community desire for more events, festivals, and markets in Nenagh.

Festivals & Events: A Cultural Priority
- High appreciation for existing events like St. Patrick's Day, Halloween Festival, and Christmas Markets, which were frequently praised.
- Many respondents want to expand the event calendar, especially during the summer months, to attract locals and visitors, support families, and build town pride.

Suggested formats include:
- Music festivals, live bands, and open-air concerts.
- Street-based events, art exhibitions, and night-time entertainment.
- Busker-friendly spaces and cultural nights modelled after Galway's city vibe.

Markets: Call for a Central, Vibrant Space

- Several people requested a revitalised market area, describing the current market as marginalised or poorly located.
- Calls for a food-focused market, more artisan and craft stalls, and better integration with public spaces like Banba Square or near the Rialto Cinema.

Community Spaces & Support

- Events and markets are linked to a broader vision of community hubs, centres that host activities for all ages and promote local identity.
- Respondents emphasised the need for inclusive spaces that encourage inter-generational interaction and celebrate Nenagh's heritage through storytelling and events.
- A market was seen as both an economic opportunity and a community gathering point.

o *"The town needs more festivals. It's great to see the St. Patrick's Day parade coming back, it would be great to see other events like the Munster Fleadh Ceol, Castlefest, A Taste of Nenagh and more coming back."*

o *"A proper market in the town not one shoved in the bottom corner on a Saturday morning."*

o *"A food festival/picnic with not just businesses in the town but mobile/catering/food trucks etc and live music."*

o *"Promoting the arts, festival feel, night entertainment like Galway vibe... art exhibitions."*

o *"Enahncing business and attractiveness... will attract buskers and be more like Grafton St., Dublin and Patrick St., Cork."*

o *"Nenagh's past should be embraced. Its story as a Norman town and a market town should be told more."*

o *"More musical events, and Arts Events for entertainment for everyone."*

o *"More street-based events. Better events in the Arts Centre."*

o *"A community centre... to hold events for the town, maybe offering some 24-hour services..."*

7. **Retail Offer**
   - Implement policies to limit takeaways and encourage healthier retail mix.
   o *"Nenagh town centre after 6pm is dead most days , it needs a boost for facilities and entertainment, i.e more bars restaurants and also space for local community projects, the Old Rialto would make a perfect community hub for many groups. Also derelict and empty shops/bars should be given some assistance in reopening to attract visitors and locals out into the community and create an atmospheric town like we had years ago".*
   o *"There should be a limit the number of take away premises permitted in Town Centre. We need to promote healthy eating and tackle littering."*
   o *Nenagh is a market town how about a street market maybe once a month on a Saturday/*

Sunday on Pearse St to draw people in. Close the street and encourage traders to come in. No point having markets hidden away in carparks where there is nobody."

8. **Former Barracks**
   - Possible adaption and re-use.
   o *"No community centre for community groups to be housed for all the old shenhans would be ideal. The old barracks could be turned into a community for elderly and disabilities to live independently with shop and carers going in with facilities like pool and gym and places for resident family to come visited."*
   o *"Please convert the Rialto or Military Barracks into a community centre for the voluntary groups."*
   o *"Either knock the military barracks and put in a car park or else build a community building big enough for all the volunteer organisations and youth organisations. It's an eye sore at this stage."*
   o *"Please convert the Rialto or Military Barracks into a community centre for the voluntary groups."*
   o *"Please do not waste money on the derelict military barracks, focus on restoring the gaol as a tourist destination.We have a great town."*

9. **Active Recreation**
   - Establish an all-weather pitch for shared community and sports use.
   o *"Nenagh also needs a community pitch for clubs within Nenagh and outside Nenagh, to share. Example is an astro 11 a side pitch for soccer clubs and for other sports including cricket, GAA etc. Example is the Fethard Town Park."*
   o *"There needs to be a safe free indoor area for young people to spend their free time such as a Recreation Centre. This would decrease the anti social behaviour which has risen since COVID."*
   o *There is a serious lack of places for youth to go particularly if they don't have an interest in sport. A place similar to Arena 5 in Limerick*

where people can access games, bowling, crazy golf etc would be of benefit. People give out every generation about teenagers but yet there is still nothing for them."

Other Recurrent Suggestions

In addition to the main themes identified above, 'other' suggestions are summarized as follows:

Community and Youth Facilities

Strong calls for more non-alcoholic social spaces and activities, especially for:

- Teenagers
- Young adults (20–29 age group)

Ideas included:

- Youth hubs
- Sports and recreation spaces (e.g. astro pitches, boxing/martial arts rooms)
- Clubs and meetup spaces for older residents
- *"More clubs on and meetup opportunities for older cohorts that don't revolve around alcohol."*
- *"Town needs a community pitch shared by clubs including cricket, soccer, GAA."*

Better Use of Public Realm

Several respondents want more plazas, public spaces, and gathering areas, with:

- Seating
- Sheltered areas for events
- Landscaping and lighting
- *"Create a gathering public space on Banba Square... using the courthouse as a stage area."*

More Housing in the Town Centre

Several comments advocate for:

- Renovating vacant and derelict buildings
- Creating cost-rental or affordable apartments
- Over-the-shop housing to bring life back into the centre
- *"Support owners of heritage buildings to get grants to renovate and make accommodation over shop units liveable."*

Support for Local Business

Suggestions included:

- Promoting independent shops and local markets
- Improving shopfronts and signage
- Creating a shop-local identity
- *"Keep up the fight to have a strong core of local businesses."*

Health, Sustainability, and Cleanliness

Recurring topics:

- Limit takeaway outlets to improve health and reduce litter
- Provide public toilets and drinking water
- Improve recycling and waste management
- *"There should be a limit on the number of takeaway premises in the town centre."*

Tourism and Visibility

Several respondents called for:

- Better promotion of Nenagh's assets (heritage, lake, trails)
- Improved signage and interpretation
- Use of the Irish language and stronger identity
- *"Nenagh's story as a Norman and market town should be told more."*

Night-Time Economy

A desire for:

- Non-pub nightlife (e.g. late cafes, night markets, performances)
- Better lighting for safety and atmosphere
- Visible Garda presence for reassurance
- *"Very little open and very little to do out of hours in the town other than pub scene."*