

Callan

Collaborative Town Centre Health Check (CTCHC) Report

2025



Rialtas
na hÉireann
Government
of Ireland

Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040



An Roinn Forbartha
Tuaithe agus Pobail
Department of Rural and
Community Development



Lár Bailte ar dTús
Town Centre First

Ár dTodhchaí
Tuaithe
Our Rural
Future



Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh
Kilkenny County Council

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1. Aims of the CTCHC Report

The 15 step Collaborative Town Centre Health Check (CTCHC) Programme was established by the Heritage Council in 2010 and is a critical component of the Town Centre First Plan. This report describes the findings that were gathered in Callan as part of the CTCHC process. The findings of the CTCHC Programme will inform plans and strategies in relation to the following:

- Arts, Heritage and Culture;
- Climate Change Adaptation;
- Community Health and Well-being;
- Public Realm, e.g. historic streetscapes, parks, greenways and public spaces;
- Cultural Tourism;
- Heritage-led regeneration;
- Living in the Town Centre; and
- Strategic Planning and Place-making.

This CTCHC report was completed in January 2025.



2. Survey Methodology

The CTCHC research and surveys for the Callan Collaborative Town Centre Health Check (CTCHC) were undertaken between November 2024 and January 2025 by the Town Regeneration Team of Kilkenny County Council in collaboration with the Callan Town Team and various departments of the Local Authority. A town user survey ran for a four week period, followed by a Business Owner survey which was sent directly to businesses in the Callan area. Details of surveys carried out in the process are set out below.

Land Use & Vacancy Survey

The Town Regeneration Office of Kilkenny County Council carried out a land use survey of the town centre in December 2024. Land uses were recorded using ArcGIS Online and the accompanying Field Maps app. Vacant property surveys have been previously carried out by the Town Regeneration Team which assisted in the collation of vacant units. The land use survey in December 2024 verified vacant units and recorded additional units.

The land use and vacancy survey noted the ground floor uses of the properties. Each building use was selected in accordance with the GOAD Classification of Land Use to ensure consistency with other CTCHC surveys.

Footfall/Pedestrian Survey

In December 2024, members of the Town Team and Kilkenny County Council carried out a footfall / pedestrian and cyclist count at five different locations in Callan. The count was carried out at three different times across two days. The data was inputted to a table showing the locations and times, in which pedestrian footfall and cyclist traffic was at its highest and lowest.

Business Owner Survey / Questionnaire

A number of Business Owners in Callan were contacted directly regarding a Business Owners survey to understand concerns and issues amongst the business community. Businesses with the town centre and the wider Callan urban area were contacted. Submissions were invited until 30th January 2025. 16 no. responses were received.

Car Parking

A Mobility Management Plan was previously prepared by Roadplan Consulting on behalf of Kilkenny County Council during the preparation of the Callan Local Area Plan 2021-2026. The Mobility Management Plan summarised car parking locations and approximate numbers. Throughout December 2024, car parking areas were surveyed for occupancy at various days and times.

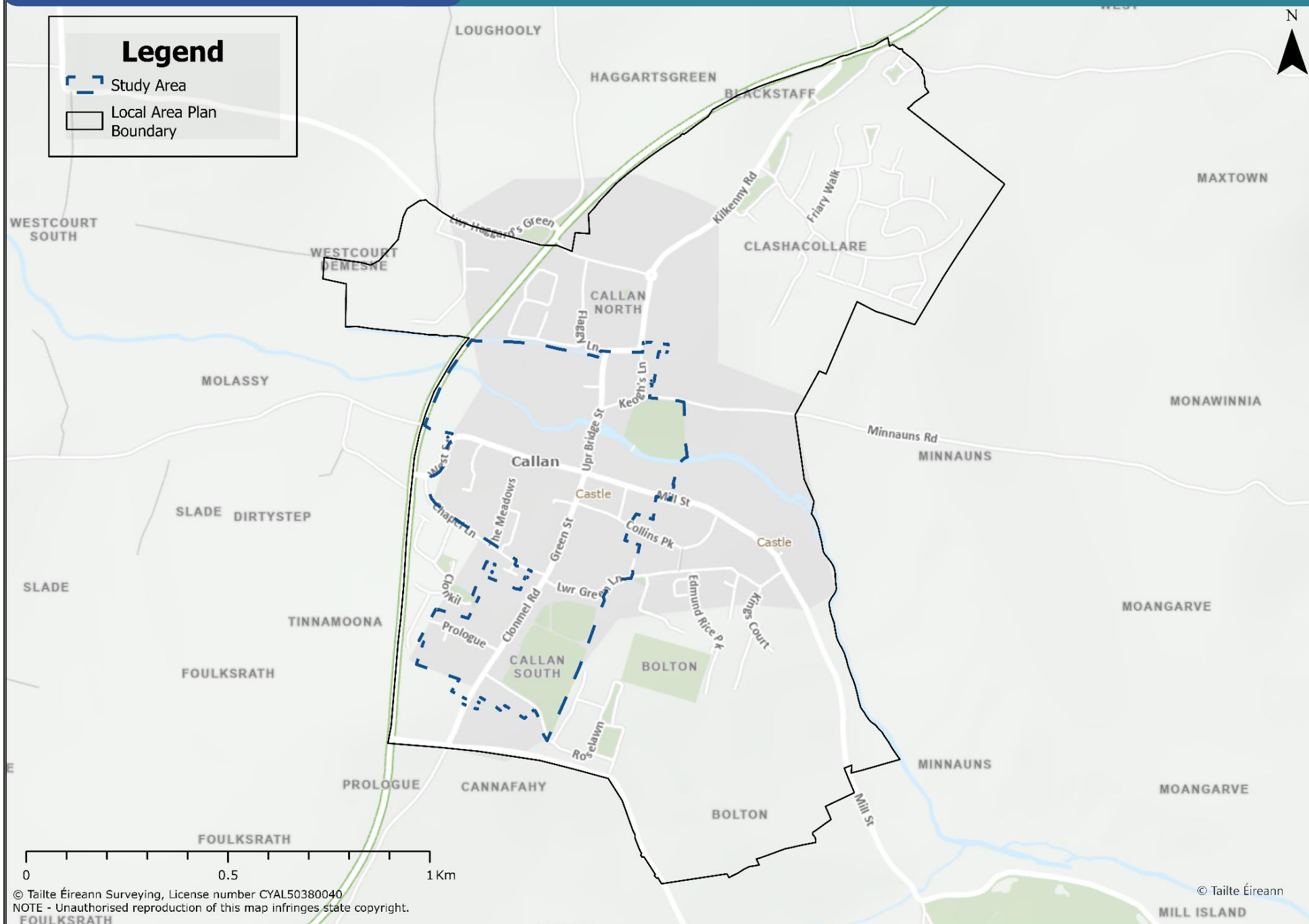
Natural Desire Lines

'Desire Lines' are informal paths / ways / crossings used by pedestrians to enable a direct route. Desire lines, i.e. areas where pedestrians attempted to cross the road, were observed in the Town Centre by the Town Regeneration Team.

Public Survey / Questionnaire

An online survey questionnaire based on best practice Town Centre Health Check research in Ireland and abroad was available for a 4-week period for town users (residents; business owners; employers; visitors and people passing through) to complete between 25th November 2024 to 20th December 2024. 178 no. respondents completed the survey. The survey questions were based on the environment and people's experience of Callan, public realm, transport, car parking and accessibility, activities and uses, and work and the local economy in Callan.

3. Study Area Map

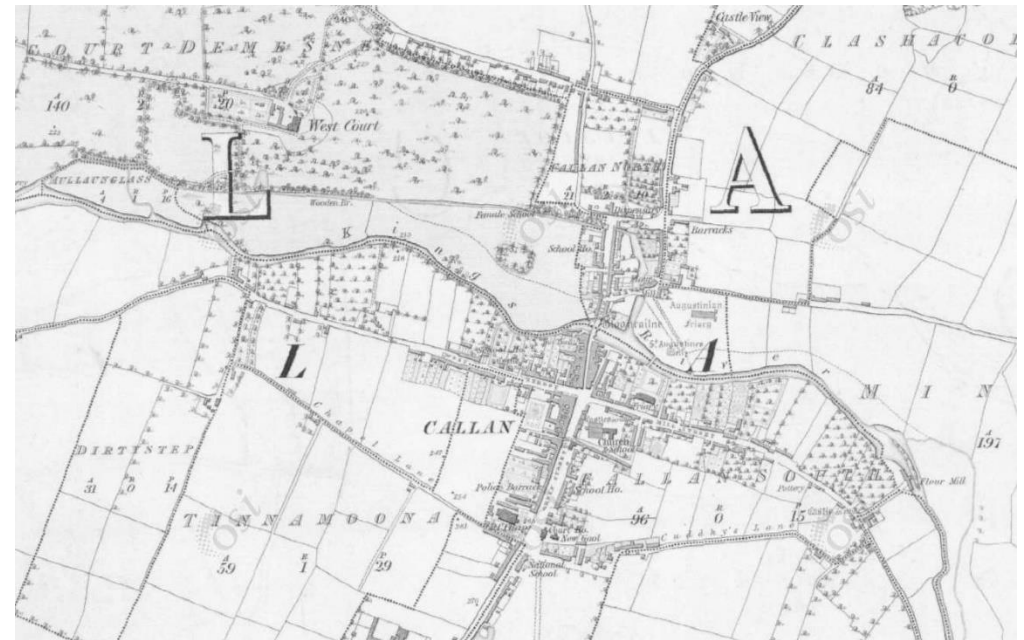


4. Introduction to Callan

Callan is a historic town and its characteristic medieval core developed during the beginning of 13th century. This historic core encompasses Mill Street, Upper and Lower Bridge Streets, Coyne Street, Mill and Clodine Lane and is designated as an Architectural Conservation Area. The streets are narrow and winding and centre primarily on Upper and Lower Bridge Street which contain a variety of traditional shop fronts. There is a distinct cross pattern to the street layout at the top of Bridge Street Upper, where the four most significant streets converge on one central point. This point is considered by many to be the centre of Callan. The King's River traverses the town from east-west and two key public spaces along the shore of this river showcase some particularly fine features of architectural and cultural heritage; an Anglo-Norman motte and the Augustine Abbey.

A significant extension to the town was constructed in the 19th Century south of the historic core with more generous dimensions, a contrast to the narrow streets close to the river. This houses a group of landmark public administration buildings and represents the civic quarter of Callan, with larger plots and classical style facades.

At present, Callan is one of the four district towns in Co. Kilkenny, located 16km from Kilkenny City, 24km from Carrick on Suir, 27km from Clonmel and 56km from Waterford City. Callan is well connected by road, with the N76 traversing on the west side of the town centre making it accessible to Kilkenny City, and by extension with the M9 to Dublin. The town had a population of 2,678 according to the 2022 Census.



ORDNANCE SURVEY. 6 INCH MAPPING 1839-1840

5. The Built Heritage of Callan

The town centre of Callan is designated as an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA). The collection of buildings and spaces within the ACA represent a unique assemblage of Callan's built heritage and contribute to its identity, character and attractiveness. The designated area of approximately 10 hectares is located in the historic medieval core of Callan and includes portions of Mill Street, Green Street, Market Lane, West Street and Upper Bridge Street. The boundary of the ACA includes 21 structures on the Record of Protected Structures, a significant percentage of the total entries within the town boundary. In addition, the NIAH identifies 62 structures of interest within the ACA, which acts as further evidence of the architectural merit within the town.

The National Monuments Service has designated a large portion of the town of Callan as a zone of archaeological potential, extending over a wider area totalling 54.34 hectares. Two character areas have been identified within the ACA due to their contrasting characteristics.



ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

The Medieval Core

The characteristics of the medieval core accurately reflect the genesis of the town over the past 800 hundred years with dominant features comprising narrow street dimensions and narrow building plots. The second area consists of the 19th century extension to the town which contrasts with the medieval core and encompasses more generous street dimensions, classically styled civic buildings and a market street. Callan was established circa 800 years ago with the first town charter being signed in 1207. The core of the town developed during this time encompasses Mill Street, Upper and Lower Bridge Streets, Coyne Street, Mill and Clodine Lane. The streets are narrow and winding and centre primarily on Upper and Lower Bridge Street. The town at this time was also concentrated around three focal points, the Augustinian Friary north of the King's River, the Motte and St. Mary's Church, see below, on the south bank, which reinforced

the strong north south emphasis of the early town layout. There are no predetermined grids or angles, but rather an organic layout with layout and building lines responding to natural and historic features and contours. Informal crossing points or fords at the King's River, connecting the north and south of the town are visible at the junction of Clodine Lane and the King's River. The interaction between the built environment and river is limited with structures, as is usual in most towns from this era, turning their back on the river. Callan's medieval morphology is expressed by the dense arrangement of long narrow plots along its meandering linear street line and narrow laneways. Due to the diminutive street dimensions building heights have been restricted to two to three storeys and limited private open space has been provided to the rear of the buildings that front onto the main thoroughfares. Although the dereliction of historic properties has become a problem in recent decades, the character of the buildings here continues to have significant architectural merit and group value. The majority of the buildings within this area were built in the 19th century, with the associated characteristics of narrow building plots (5 – 7.5 metres), vertical emphasis fenestration, smooth render building finishes and traditional shop fronts evident.

There is a distinct cross pattern to the street layout in the centre of Callan, with the four most significant streets converging on one central point offering a focal point for the urban form. Several ancillary streets / laneways adjoin the four primary thoroughfares offering access to private space; such laneways significantly contribute to the character of the space. A contrast between the narrow built environment of the medieval core is offered by the bridging point over King's River affording views of King's River and associated flood plain. The elegantly designed bridge

represents an attractive feature of civil engineering heritage, and has historical significance as the central arch was destroyed during the troubles in the early 20th Century.

19th Century Extension

A significant extension to the town was constructed in the 19th Century primarily consisting of Green Street south of the medieval core. The extension offers a contrast to the narrow streets of the central area, with the street dimensions in some places exceeding twenty metres. The resulting streetscape and its generous dimensions have a formal thoroughfare character that has been augmented by the buildings that front onto it. A neat group of landmark public administration buildings offers the street a formal setting, with larger plots and classical style facades. The resulting assemblage represents the civic quarter of Callan and the area has been the commercial centre for the town and its environs since its construction.

At the turn of the 19th century, the town again extended, with the construction of single storey dwellings on Green Lane Lower and Clonmel Road, these contained small rear yards that backed on to the Fair Green. These building are different from the mixed use two storey Georgian buildings of the town core, and represent small scale residential expansion of the town. The architectural and social importance of these single storey terraced houses in the wider urban context is understated by their subtlety of form and urban finish.

6. Archaeological Heritage of Callan

Callan is a medieval town and its earliest surviving developments including an Anglo-Norman motte and the Augustine Abbey are key landmarks, located north of the King's River. The majority of the town's physical fabric is evidence of its early development and this is recognised by its designation as a zone of potential archaeological interest. Callan is a former medieval walled town and in accordance with the National Policy on Walled Towns, these walls are also deemed to be a National Monument. Town defences are therefore considered to be monuments for the purposes of the National Monuments Acts, 1930-2004.

Historic map sequences for the years 1848, 1903 and 1948 show how little Callan has changed over a period of 100 years. This continuity in the built fabric in Callan has meant that some elements of the town's early history including landmark buildings as well as narrow lanes and building plots have survived.

Monuments, specifically structures pre-dating 1700 AD, are protected under the National Monuments Acts 1930 – 2004 and are protected in a number of ways: - national monuments in the ownership or guardianship of the Minister or a local authority; - national monuments which are subject to a preservation order; - historic monuments or archaeological areas recorded in the Register of Historic Monuments; - monuments recorded in the Record of Monuments and Places. The town has four National Monuments:

- St. Mary's Church;
- Augustinian Friary;
- Motte; and
- Callan town walls.

The Archaeological Survey of Ireland holds the inventory of archaeological monuments which contains records of all known or possible monuments pre-dating 1700 AD that have been brought to its attention and also includes a selection of monuments from the post-1700 AD period. These are referred to as Sites and Monuments Records (SMRs) which formed the basis for the establishment of the statutory Record of Monuments and Places pursuant to Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994. The Record of Monuments and Places consists of lists of monuments and places for each county in the State. The survey also produced reports on all historic towns dating to before 1700 AD with a view to delineating zones of archaeological potential within which archaeological deposits may exist. Callan was subject to this survey and is considered a zone of archaeological potential.



7. Land Use and Vacancy

Study Area Context

A survey of the land uses and vacancy rates of buildings within the Callan Town Centre area was carried out in December 2024. The survey was limited to the Study Area as previously outlined and included the core areas of Green Street; Clonmel Road; Mill Street; Upper and Lower Bridge Street; and West Street.

A total of 380no. buildings within the town centre were surveyed with 64% comprising residential buildings and the remainder comprising services, commercial activities, or open space. Retail services (i.e. hairdressers, post offices, salons) and leisure services (i.e. bars, restaurants, take-aways) were the most prominent commercial land uses, comprising a combined 24% of the commercial mix in the study area.

Comparison and convenience retail land uses comprise c. 14% of the commercial mix in the town centre.

The town centre study area contains a variety of other land uses across financial and business services, public services and education, and health and medical activities. The land use survey also indicated a number of land uses in the non-profit and volunteering sectors.



Callan Town Centre Land Uses

64%	Residential [242]
5%	Vacant Residential [21]
8%	Vacant Non-Residential [29]
4%	Health and Medical Services [15]
3%	Leisure Services [13]
3%	Retail Services [13]
3%	Public Service [13]
2%	Financial and Business Services [8]
2%	Comparison [8]
2%	Convenience [8]
1%	Storage and Warehousing [2]
1%	Other Retail [2]
1%	Religious Service [4]
1%	Open Space [3]

Total Buildings Surveyed **380**

Residential Use **69%**

Non-Residential Use **31%**

Land Uses within the Study Area

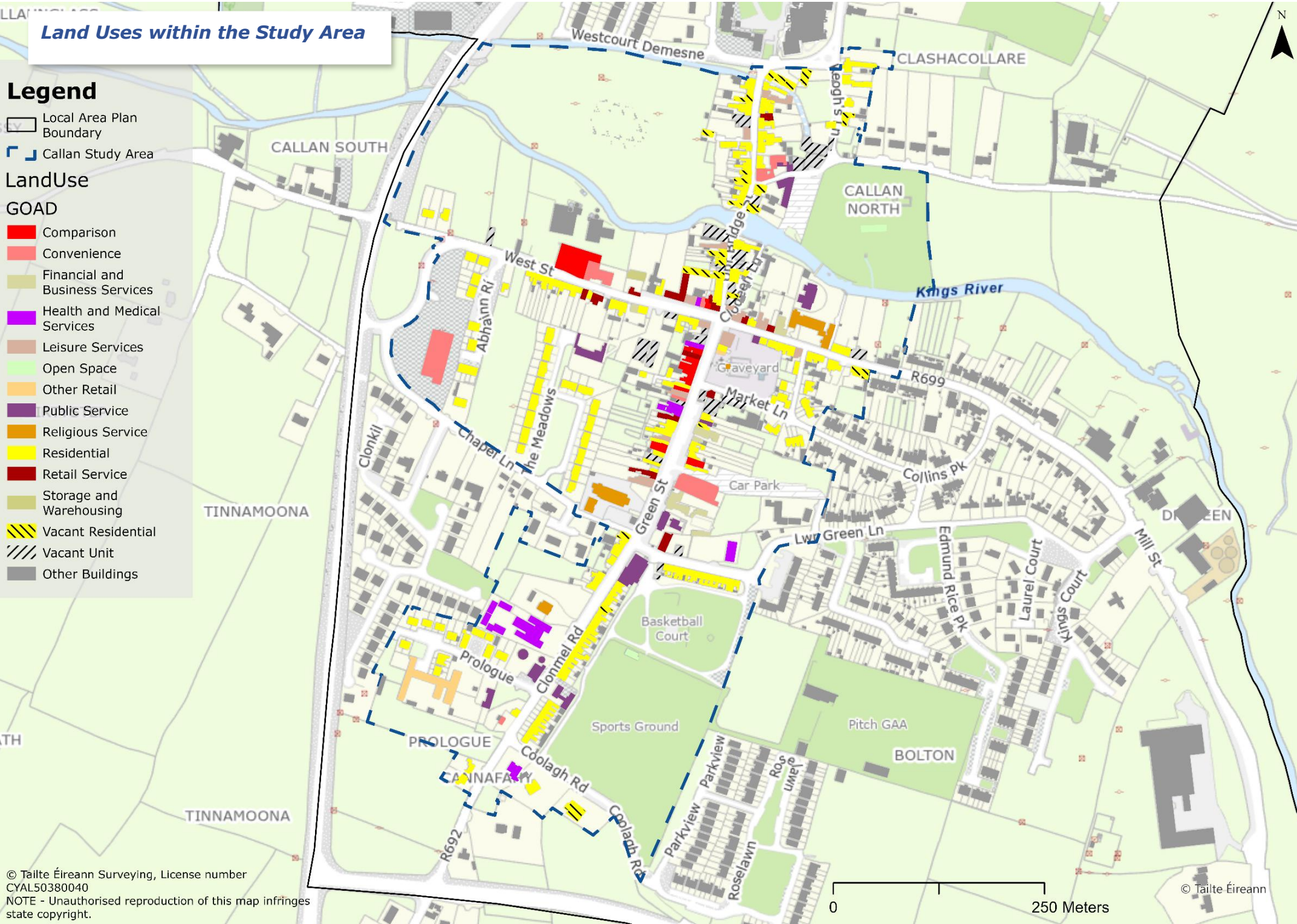
Legend

- Local Area Plan Boundary
- Callan Study Area

LandUse

GOAD

- Comparison
- Convenience
- Financial and Business Services
- Health and Medical Services
- Leisure Services
- Open Space
- Other Retail
- Public Service
- Religious Service
- Residential
- Retail Service
- Storage and Warehousing
- Vacant Residential
- Vacant Unit
- Other Buildings



Vacancy within the Study Area

The survey indicates that at time of surveying, i.e. December 2024, vacancy was an issue in Callan Town Centre.

There is a concentration of vacant commercial and residential units along Bridge Street. Vacancy is also present on the main streets within the study area.

Key Findings

Residential Vacancy (21 no.) **8%**

(Calculated using 'residential' and 'vacant residential' values)

Vacancy Non-Residential (29 no.) **25%**

(Calculated using all GOAD land uses surveyed excluding 'residential' and 'vacant residential')

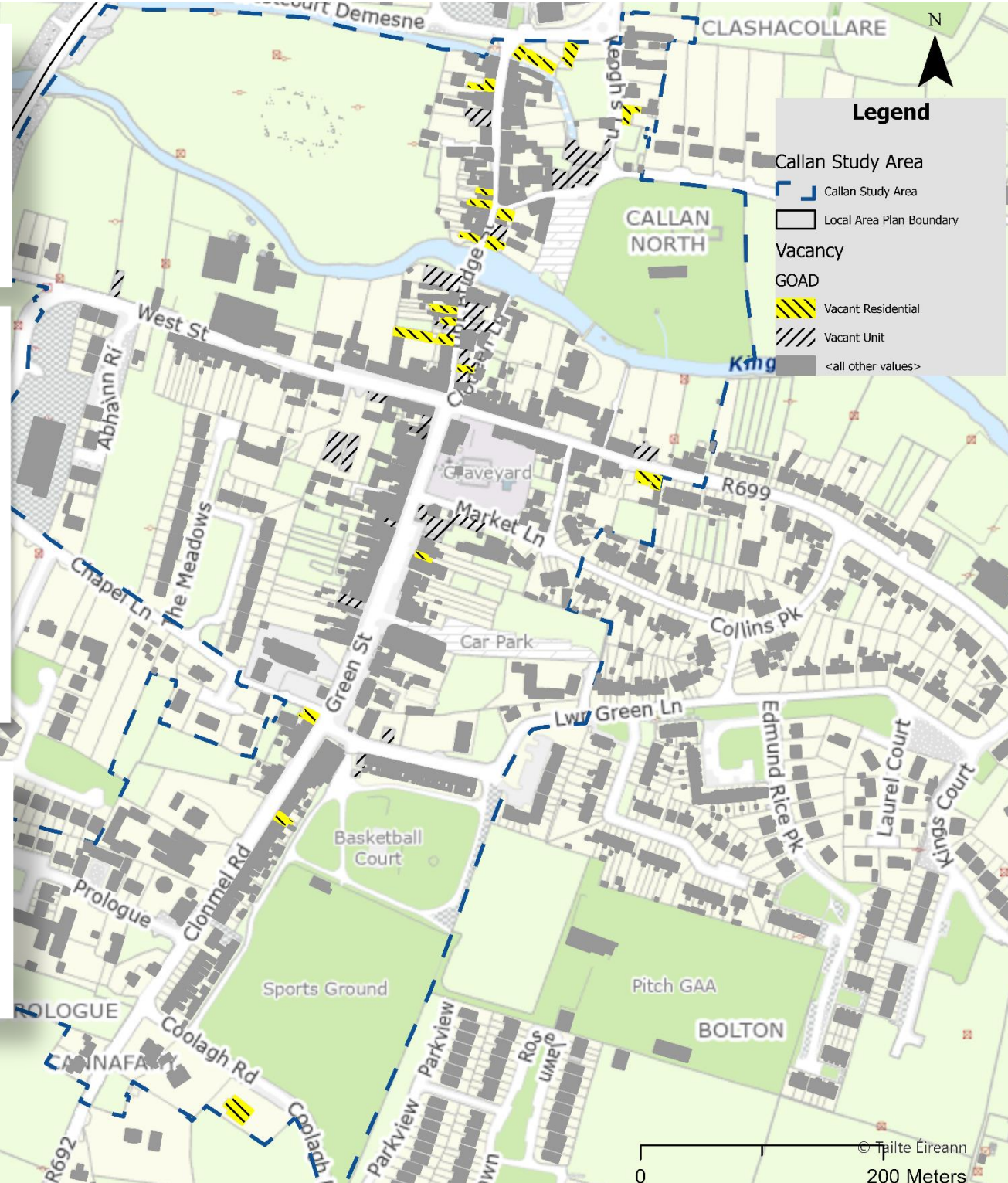
Total Vacancy (50no.) **13%**

(Calculated using all GOAD land uses surveyed in town)

Dereliction within the Study Area

Properties listed on Kilkenny County Council's Derelict Sites Register (at time of writing):

- Structures within study area: **5**
- Structures within the wider settlement area: **0**



8. Public Survey / Questionnaire

Overview

An online survey questionnaire based on best practice Town Centre Health Check research in Ireland and abroad was available for a 4-week period for town users (residents; business owners; employers; visitors and people passing through) to complete between 25th November 2024 and 20th December 2024. 178 no. respondents completed the survey. The survey questions were based on the environment and people's experience of Callan, public realm, transport, car parking and accessibility, activities and uses, and work and the local economy in Callan.

The results of the public survey were analysed using the Place Standard Tool, focussing on 14 no. topics: Moving Around; Public Transport; Traffic and Parking; Streets and Spaces; Natural Space; Play and Recreation; Facilities and Services; Work and Local Economy; Housing and Community; Social Interaction; Identity and Belonging; Feeling Safe; Care and Maintenance; and Influence and Sense of Control.

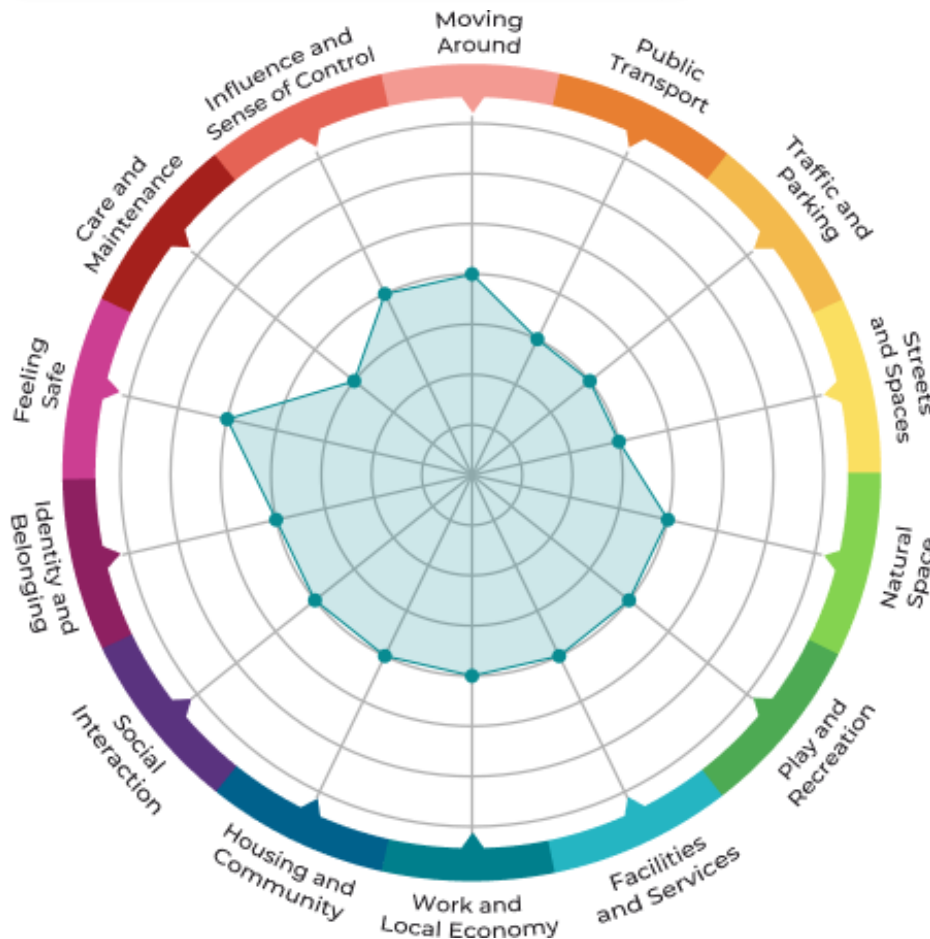
The topic which scored the highest was Feeling Safe (4.4) and the topic that scored the lowest was Care and Maintenance (3.1).

The results indicate that Callan is doing reasonably well, however, there are some areas that need attention.

- 7 **Doing very well**
- 6 **Doing quite well – a few things to be worked on**
- 5 **Doing well – but some actions needed**
- 4 **Doing ok – but it could slip back without attention**
- 3 **Weak - but can improve if worked on**
- 2 **Quite weak – many actions needed**
- 1 **Very weak – a lot of improvements needed**

Topic	Average Rating
Moving Around	3.7
Public Transport	3.3
Traffic and Parking	3.5
Streets and Spaces	3.3
Natural Space	4.4
Play and Recreation	4.3
Facilities and Services	3.8
Work and Local Economy	3.6
Housing and Community	3.9
Social Interaction	3.5
Identity and Belonging	4.1
Feeling Safe	4.7
Care and Maintenance	3.1
Influence and Sense of Control	3.7

Place Standard Tool



Moving Around Score: 3.66

This question was answered by 176 respondents who suggested a number of improvements including cycle ways; bus connectivity; improved footpaths / walkways. The results indicate an interest in improving active travel and public transportation within the town centre. Improved bus connections to Kilkenny and Clonmel and town centre and environs bus service were suggested. Respondents also suggested improved connections to tourist spots and the town.

Public Transport Score: 3.31

This question was answered by 178 respondents. 22% of respondents rated Public Transport as '1'. Suggested connections include increased bus connectivity to Kilkenny City Centre and Clonmel and a town bus service which connects Callan to the surrounding villages. Respondents expressed interest in more regular bus services for working professionals and students to commute and a late bus service to Kilkenny.

Traffic and Parking Score: 3.46

This question was answered by 178 respondents. 20% of respondents rated Traffic and Parking as '1'. The predominant concern raised by respondents is traffic management, particularly on the bypass and Bridge Street. Management of road safety within the town centre was also an issue raised. Suggested improvements include car parking provision (e.g. EV / age-friendly etc.); traffic lighting system and the cross junction.

Streets and Spaces Score: 3.28

This question was answered by 177 respondents. 21% of respondents rated Streets and Spaces as '2'. Suggested improvements include improving street furniture on the main streets; creation public spaces; building signage; additional planting; and ongoing maintenance.

Natural Space Score: 4.43

This question was answered by 175 respondents with the most popular responses being '5' (24%). The cleaning of King's River was a prevailing issue raised by respondents. Additional suggestions include recreational spaces and walkways along the river.

Play and Recreation Score: 4.33

This question was answered by 177 respondents with the most popular responses being '5' (25%). Improvements included additional/improved recreational areas for both adults and younger people including upgrading of the existing playground; additional

community initiatives for all members to get involved; and seating areas for picnics.

Facilities and Services Score: 3.76

This question was answered by 175 respondents with the most popular response being '4' (26%). The most common suggested additional eateries in the town centre; a community centre; additional retailers.

Work and Local Economy Score: 3.63

This question was answered by 175 respondents with the most popular responses being '4' (29%). The creation of job opportunities was a common suggestion by the respondents.

Housing and Community Score: 3.94

This question was answered by 175 respondents with the most popular response being '4' (29%). Respondents suggested provision of new housing and reusing vacant upper floor levels. Reusing derelict houses as housing was also suggested.

Social Interaction Score: 3.51

This question was answered by 176 respondents with the most popular response being '4' (21%). Respondents raised concerns of limited opportunities to become involved in activities outside of GAA. Additional opportunities for all age cohorts were also suggested.

Identity and Belonging Score: 4.11

This question was answered by 173 respondents with the most popular responses being '5' (24%). Suggested improvements include additional events and groups for all members of the community to become involved.

Feeling Safe Score: 4.66

This topic was the highest rated by the respondents and was answered by 173 respondents with the most popular response being '5' (24%). The respondents feel safe within their community,

however, increased garda presence and tackling anti-social behaviour was suggested.

Care and Maintenance Score: 3.15

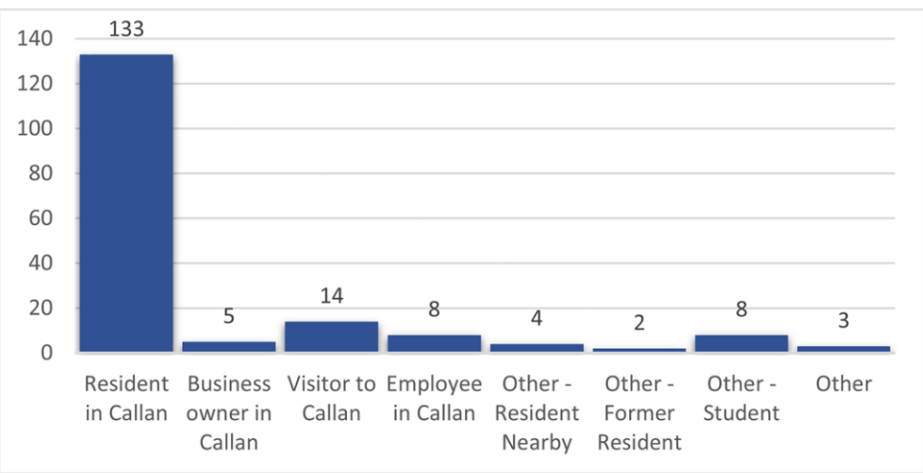
This question was the lowest rated topic by the respondents and was answered by 175 respondents. The most popular response being '3' (26%). The community highlighted the lack of care and maintenance of footpaths and public toilets. Maintenance of derelict buildings was also suggested.

Influence and Sense of Control Score: 3.64

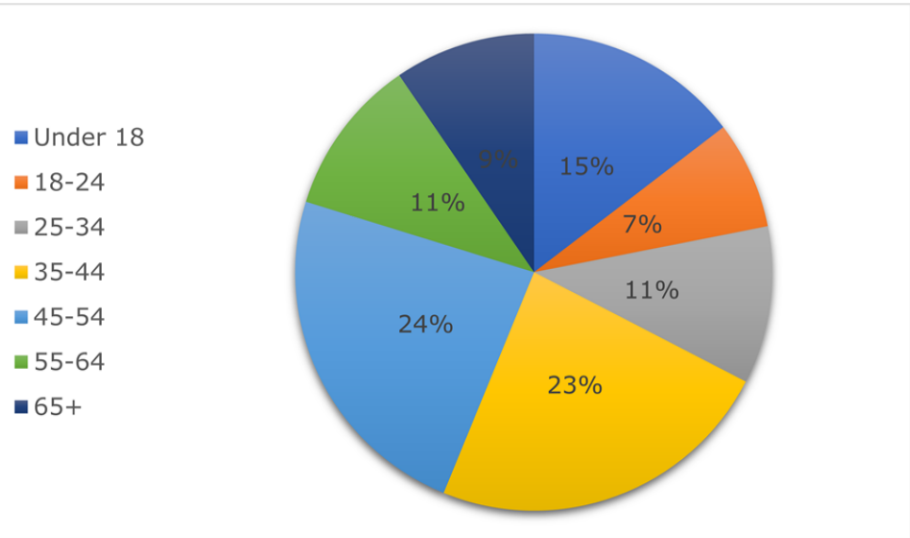
This question was answered by 174 respondents. The most answer was '4' (23%), indicates that the respondents consider to have an average level of influence in the decision-making process.

Public Survey Questionnaire – Summary of Responses

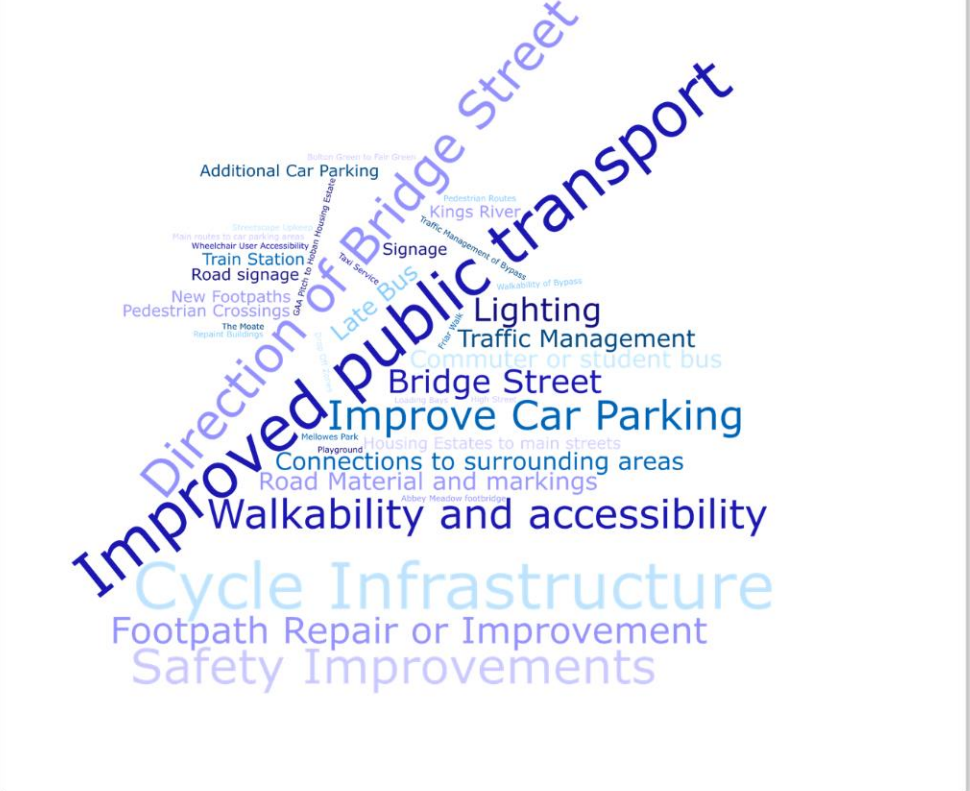
Respondent Profiles



Respondent Age Profile



Are there any linkages that could be improved? / Have you any specific suggestions for improvements?



Housing and Accommodation

Outdoor Spaces

Recreational Facilities

Swimming Pool

Library

Community Centre

Cinema

Sports Pitch

Seating

Social Spaces

Classes

More shops

Reuse of Vacant Buildings

Childcare

Street Planting

Social Clubs

Water Fountain

Improved Play Areas

Youth / Teenager Facilities

Artistic Spaces

Gym

Cycling

Hotel

Doctor

Festivals and Activities

Communal Garden

Tennis / Badminton Court

Historic Monuments

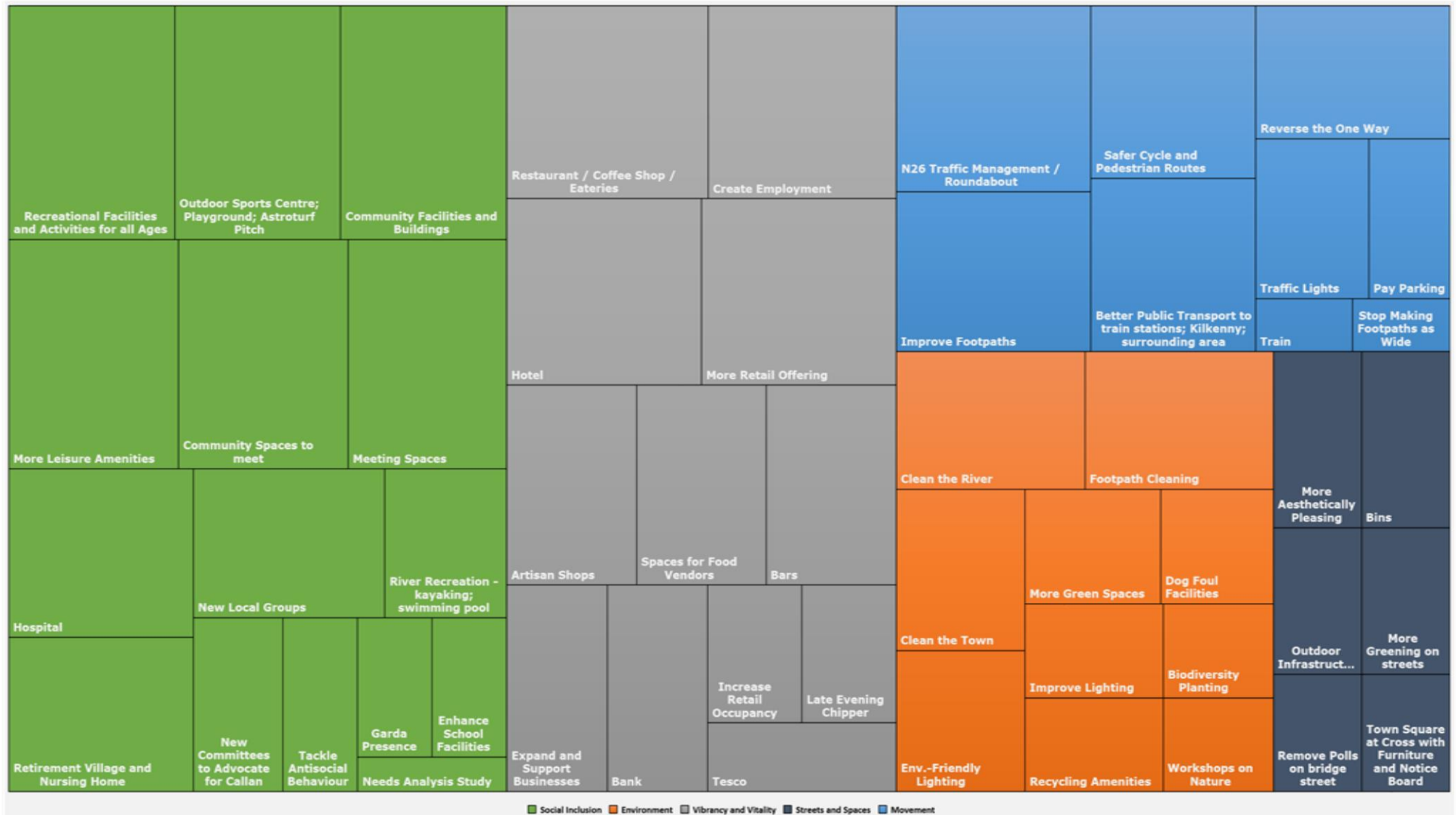
Buses

Elderly Home / Accommodation

Eateries

[illegible]

Can you list your top 3 priorities for Callan here?



What actions could be taken to deal with these?

Respondents provided over 100 suggested actions. The most prevalent suggestions include:



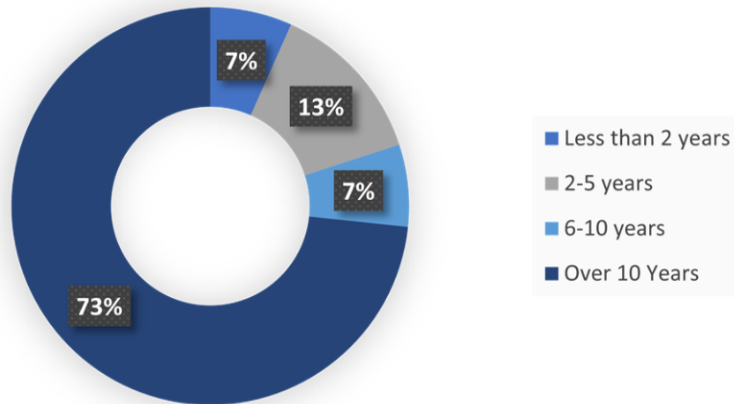
Of the above actions, the following topics were the most suggested 'Priority Actions' were:



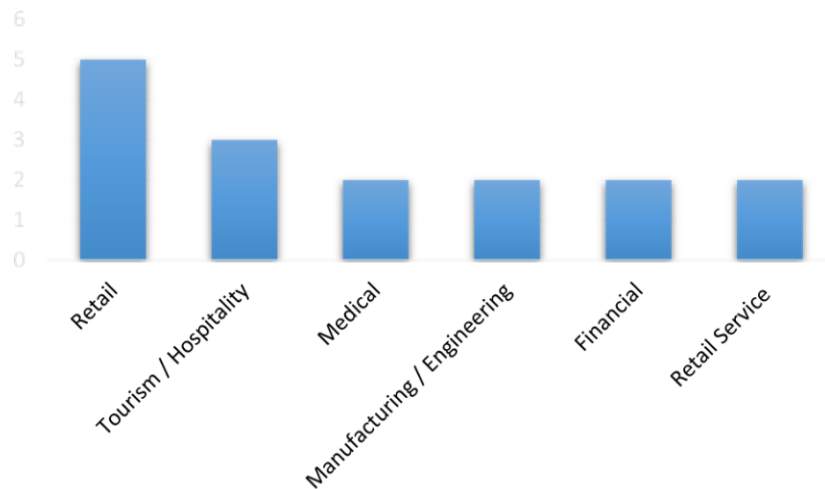
9. Business Owner Survey

Respondent Profiles

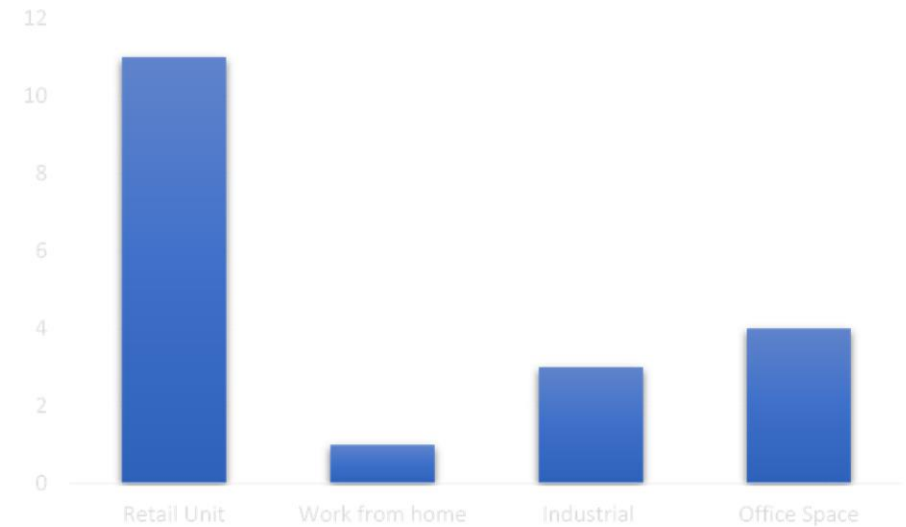
How many years have you been operating at your current location?



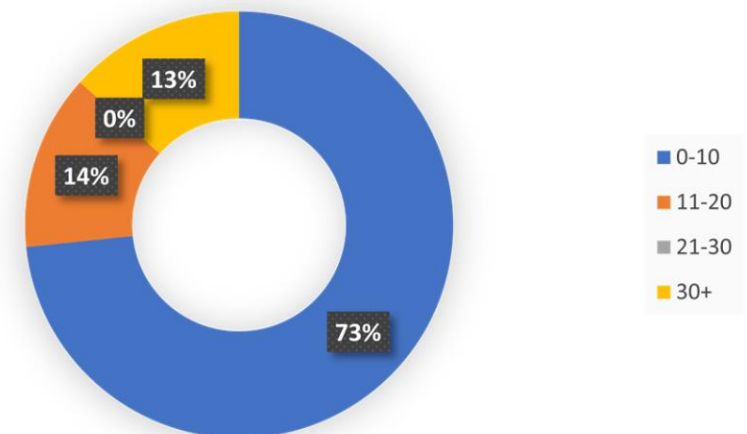
In which sector does your business /organisation operate?



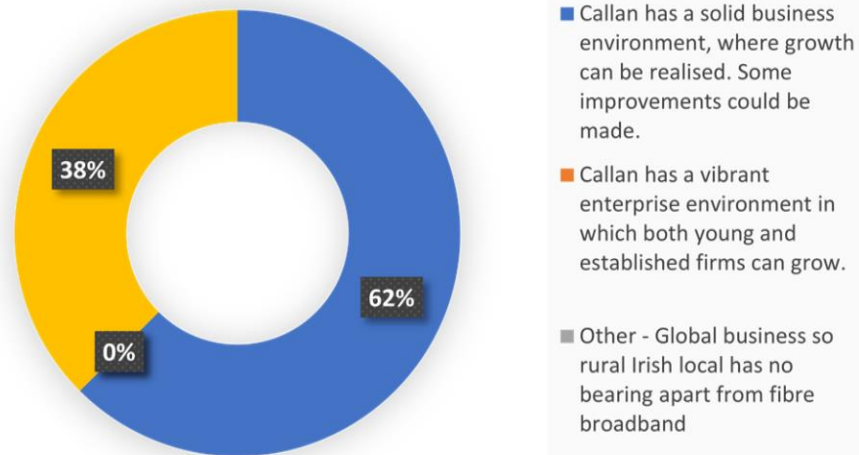
What type of facility does your business/organisation primarily use?



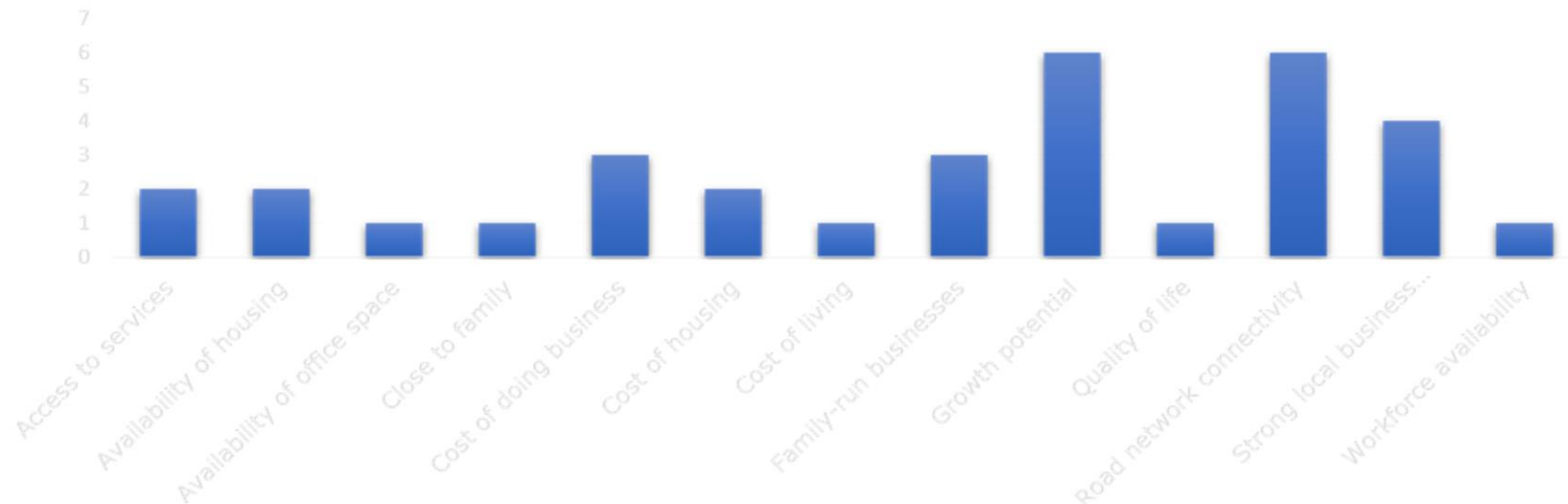
Approximately how many people does your business /organisation directly employ?



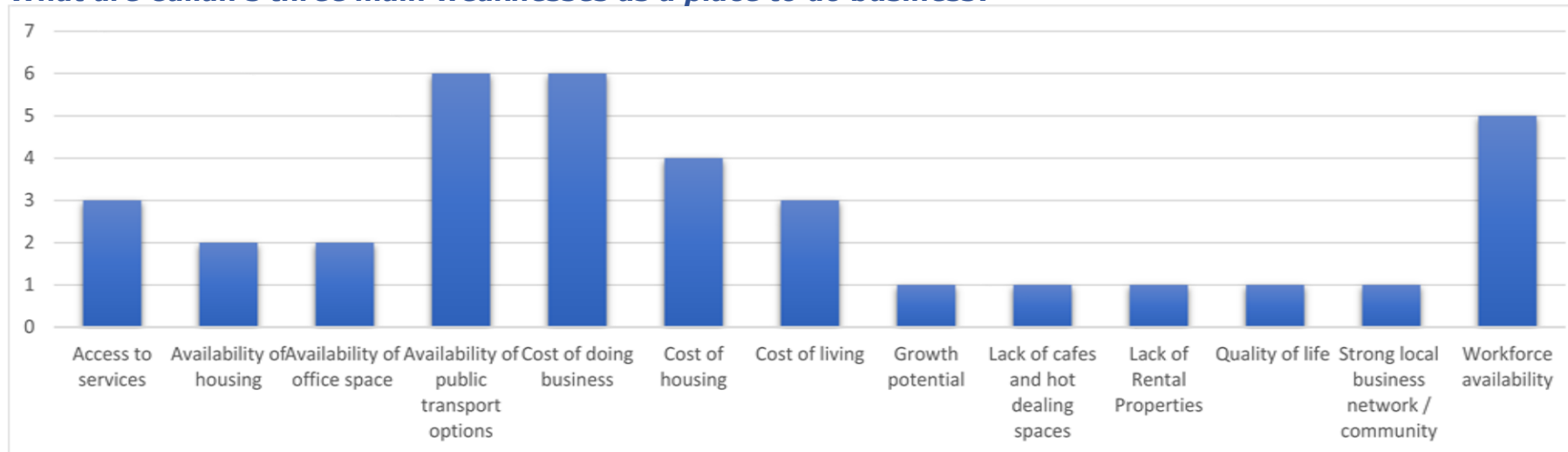
Which of the following best describes your response to the question "Do you consider Callan an attractive place to do business?"



What are Callan's three main strengths as a place to do business?



What are Callan's three main weaknesses as a place to do business?



What would you regard as Callan's unique selling point, or a factor that makes Callan stand out from other towns of its size?

The most common responses are indicated below:

- Accessibility and Road Network
- Direct Bus to Dublin
- Community
- Choice of Amenities
- Free Car Parking
- People support local businesses
- High standard of schools
- Sports organisations

Have you tried to source space in Callan area in the past 3 years?

Four of the business owners have sought additional space, two of which were office / hot-desk spaces; one retail and one a dwelling. Just one respondent sourced space.

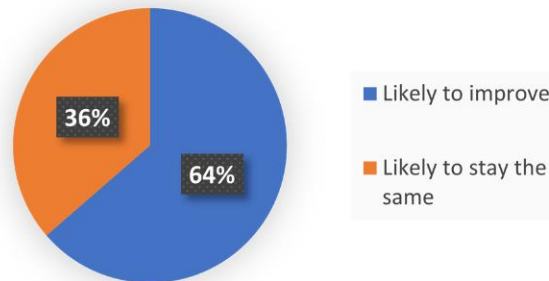
Considering your own firm if currently located in Callan, what is your own position on scaling-up, expanding or relocating your operations in the future?

Seven of the businesses foresee scaling up or expanding.

Please outline the ways in which you plan to scale-up or expand

Business owners intend to upscale through additional marketing; new products / services; additional hiring and increasing sales. Two businesses intend to carry out a renovation or relocation.

What are your expectations for trading over the next two years



What changes or improvements would you suggest as part of the Callan plan to help boost business in Callan town centre?



Are there other important issues or goals that should be given priority in the Callan Plan?

The business owner respondents noted the following important issues and goals:



What types of events or festivals would do well in Callan?

Summer Festival

Music Festival

Food Festival

Event similar to the Abhainn Festival

Arts Festival

What is your vision for Callan moving forward?

Busy, Safe and Buzzing Business

A One-Stop Town

Tackling Dereliction

More Businesses and Employment

A Good Place to Live and Work

More Tourists

Provisions made for Car Parking

More Amenities

Is there a particular building (or buildings) which you would consider vacant or underutilised buildings in Callan which could be repurposed to a use which supports the town's vibrancy?

Crystal's – Upmarket Restaurant

Bridge Street

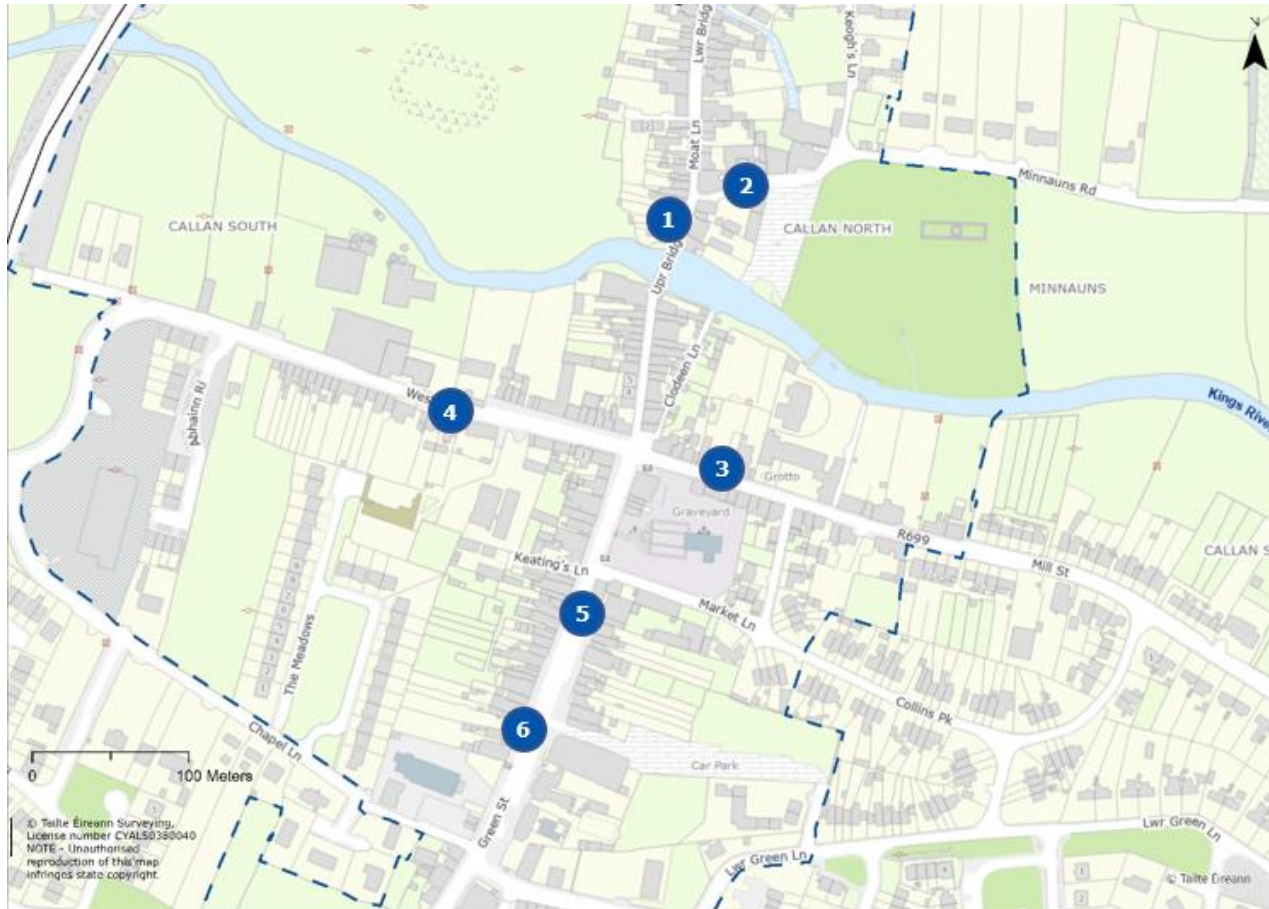
Old Creamery

Reopen Town Hall as a Café

Larch

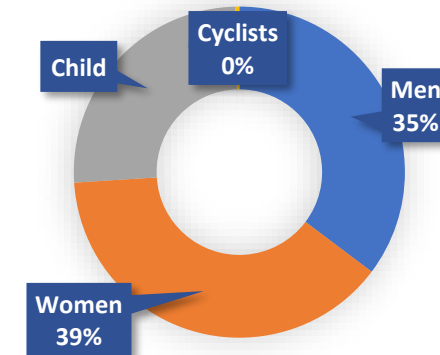
10. Town Centre Footfall Survey

A CTCHC footfall survey was undertaken by the Callan Town Team and Kilkenny County Council on Friday 13th December and Saturday 14th December 2024 as per the CTCHC methodology. The footfall counts recorded pedestrians and cyclists using Bridge St; Keogh's Lane; West St; Mill St; and Green St. Pedestrians were recorded at both sides of the road at each survey point



Day	Time	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total Per Time
Friday 13/12/2024	10.45am-11.00am	20	7	10	10	41	66	154
	1:15pm-1:30pm	96	13	16	13	63	74	275
	4:15pm-4:30pm	17	11	18	51	59	92	248
	10.15am-10.30am	17	4	4	21	74	39	159
Saturday 14/12/2024	12:15pm-12:30pm	20	4	9	24	67	79	203
	4:15pm-4:30pm	69	4	9	18	49	47	196
Total Per Location		239	43	66	137	353	397	

Profile of Pedestrians



11. Car Parking Survey

A survey of car parking spaces within the study area was carried out as part of the Collaborative Town Centre Health Check process. The survey included both formal and informal (including unmarked and/or unauthorised) parking spaces within the town centre and was carried out periodically throughout December 2024. The off-street parking spaces relate to locations available to the general public and do not include further off-street parking spaces within the study area that are exclusively for private use. Car parks within the town centre include the Fair Green; Chapel Lane; Supervalu and KCATS Arts Centre. On-street car parking is found along each of the main streets.

The survey found that there are over 200 no. formal off-street car parking spaces within the town centre and c. 150 no. formal on-street car parking spaces with additional off-street car parking provided within business premises at the edge of town e.g. Aldi. Usage of the spaces varied in duration from short to long-term.

Informal car parking spaces in the town centre in regular use equates to c. 40 no. spaces and a large number appeared to be associated with residences, particularly Green Lane. During the times of observation, car parking occurred on main streets in set-down areas, bus stops and on double yellow lines.

All parking is free with no pay and display parking system in operation.

Location	Type	Total Spaces	Occupancy
KCAT Arts Centre	off-street	36	22%
Fair Green	off-street	60	10%
Rear of SuperValu	off-street	88	88%
Chapel Lane (Church)	off-street	24	41%
Londis	off-street	10	70%
Aldi	off-street	96	42%
Co-op	off-street	30	33%
Rear of P. Molloy	off-street, private	24	29%
Front of SuperValu	on-street, perpendicular	32	84%
Lower Bridge St	on-street, parallel	15	67%
West Street (end)	on-street, parallel	4	100%
West St centre	on-street, parallel	13	92%
Green St	on-street, parallel	27	74%
Clonmel Road (on-street)	on-street, parallel	53	77%
Green St	on-street, perpendicular	36	86%

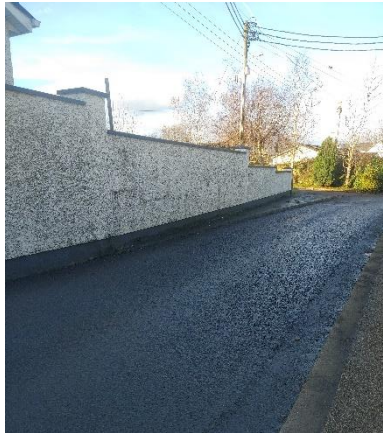
Table 1 – Formal Parking Spaces

Location	Type	Total Spaces	Occupancy
West St	On-street, unmarked	12	66%
Market Lane	On-street, unmarked	16	100%
Green Lane	On-street, unmarked	15	47%

Table 2 – Informal Parking Spaces

12. Desire Lines

Along Green St., Clonmel Road and the cross, pedestrians regularly crossed roads at pedestrian crossings. However, several instances of crossing at unmarked crossings were observed. On West St. and Mill St., pedestrians were observed crossing at unmarked locations. In the town centre, vehicles take priority over pedestrians. The survey also indicated a number of areas where the footpath ended or became narrow abruptly requiring pedestrians to walk on the road. Minor streets also lacked formal crossings. Some examples of the desire lines include:



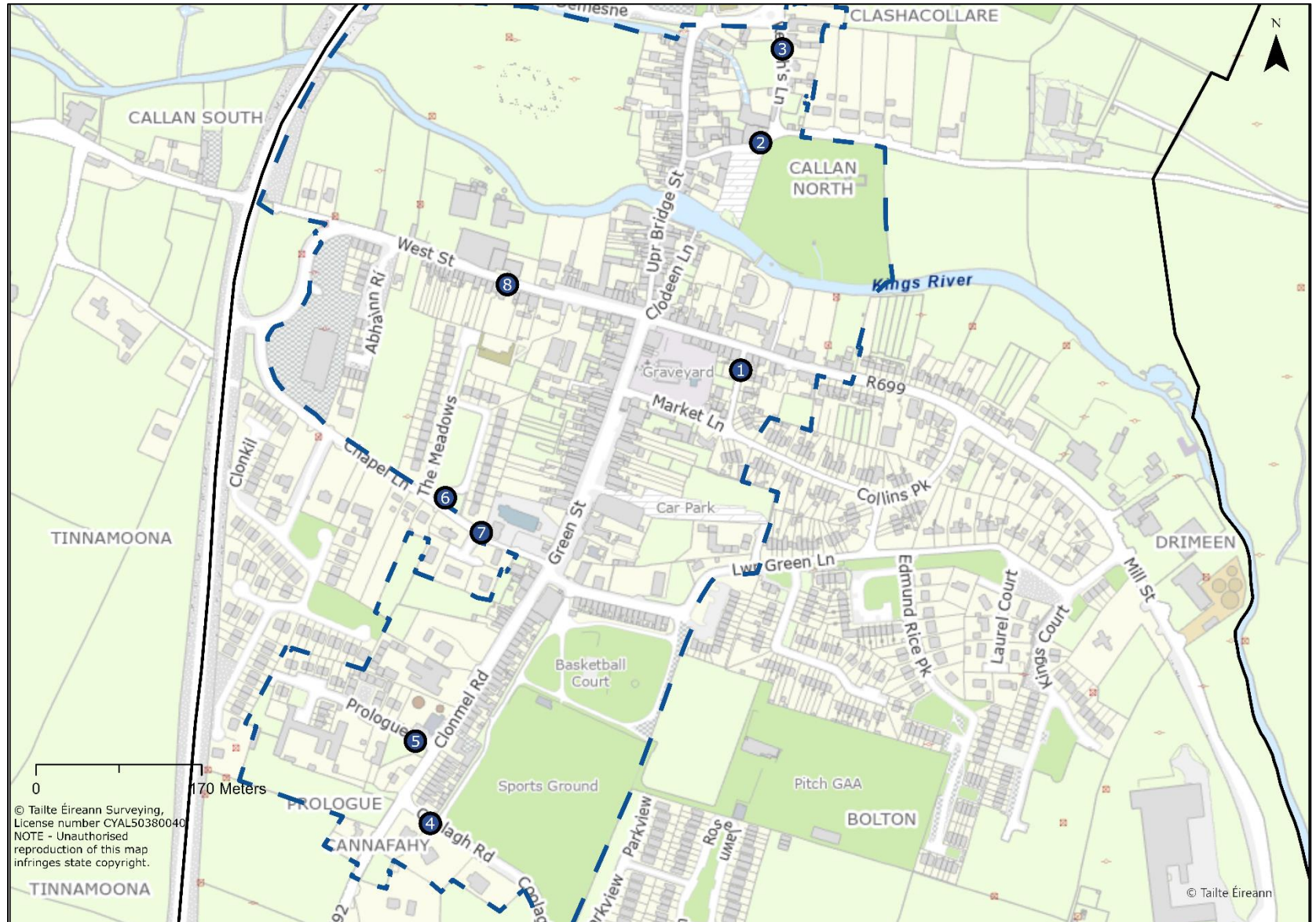
7 – Chapel Lane



8 – West Street



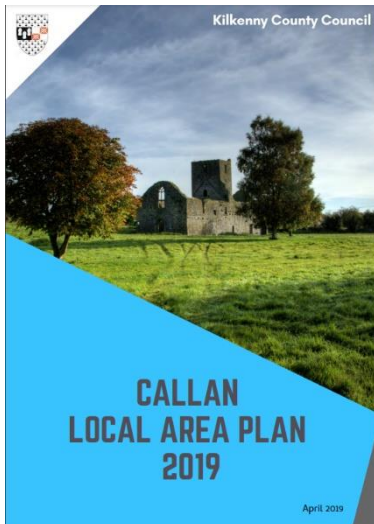
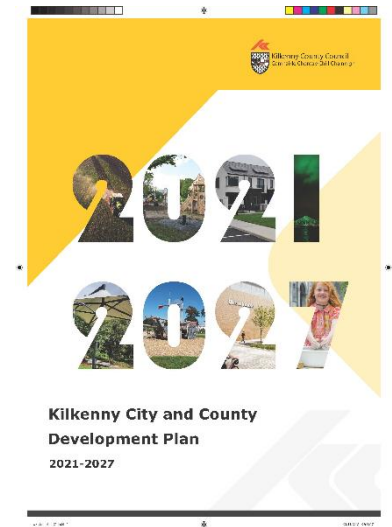
2 – Keogh's Lane



13. Planning Policy Context

Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021-2027

The Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021-2027 sets out policies and objectives for development until 2027. Callan is identified as one of 4 'District Towns' within the settlement hierarchy of the Development Plan, along with Callan, Graiguenamanagh and Thomastown. The population of Callan in 2022 was 2,678.



Callan Local Area Plan

A Local Area Plan (LAP) for Callan was prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended and was adopted in 2019. The LAP has been extended to 2028. The LAP sets out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the town. The LAP comprises the statutory land use plan for the town in the promotion and regulation of development and provides a clear vision for Callan. It provides a development framework for Callan by setting out policy and objectives for the proper planning and sustainable development of the town, having regard to the needs of the town. The LAP plays a key role in translating overarching County Development Plan policies and objectives at the local level.

14. Social Infrastructure Audit

The Planning Department of Kilkenny County Council carried out a review of existing social infrastructure as part of this Collaborative Town Centre Health Check. The study area for the audit was the Callan Local Area Plan boundary.

This audit comprised an examination of the existing situation with regards to social infrastructure provision, and highlighted any gaps. In 2022, two schools became amalgamated and Coláiste Abhainn Ri became operational. One deficiency identified through the audit process was the lack of housing facilities for the elderly. There are numerous sporting and community organisations providing a range of activities and services, in various locations such as the Hall, the various sports grounds, the KCAT Arts Centre and the school. Additional social and community services are offered by multiple charitable / non-profit organisations in the town centre further increasing facilities for town users.

The heritage sites and the river also offer a major walking route for residents and town users. In general, the town is well served by a strong community, recreational and social infrastructural base.

In general, the town is well served by a strong community, recreational and social infrastructural base.

The open space and recreational features of the central area are shown on adjacent figure.



15. SCOT Analysis

Following completion of the above research and surveys, an assessment of the Strengths, Constraints, Opportunities, and Threats (SCOT) of Callan has been carried out. The SCOT can be defined as follows:

- Strengths – i.e. existing positives and advantages of Callan town centre.
- Constraints – i.e. existing challenges facing Callan town centre.
- Opportunities – i.e. areas that have been identified as being potential future strengths for Callan town centre.
- Threats – i.e. potential future challenges facing Callan town centre.

STRENGTHS	CONSTRAINTS	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
- Vibrant Arts & Crafts community. - Built & Cultural Heritage and Heritage Trail. - Strong network of community and non-profit organisation in the town. - Accessible location. - Service providers within the town centre catering to immediate needs of population. - Sports and recreational opportunities. - Family-run and independent businesses. - Large catchment area. - Active footfall within the town centre. - Attractive streetscape and public realm. - Sense of community.	- A number of vacant and derelict units in the town centre. - Limited visitor accommodation (hotel / hostels). - No cycling infrastructure within the town centre. - Limited comparison retail opportunities. - Priority of cars over pedestrians and domination of public spaces by car parking. - Lack of evening and weekend restaurants. - Limited recreational activities for various age groups. - Night-time economy.	- Refurbishment and reuse of vacant or underutilised buildings. - Use of heritage sites as community assets. - Realising the tourism potential of the town. - Public Investment and funding to enable development, including projects to increase water supply. - Walkability Audit of the streets and footpaths. - Car Parking and Traffic Control measures. - Reduction of car-dependency via public transport and cycle infrastructure provision. - Public realm as a usable space. - Community building.	- External factors, including economic and legislative. - Reluctance to change - Littering. - Anti-social behaviour. - Impact of increased population on existing services. - Impact of further vacancy and dereliction on streetscape. - Loss of commercial units in the town centre. - Climate change and resilience. - Flooding and drainage.

16. Considerations and Opportunities

- **Vacant and Derelict Properties:** Rates of vacancy and dereliction within the town centre are high, particularly along Bridge Street and Green Street. Many shopfronts are in poor condition and contribute to a reduced streetscape. Tackling existing vacant and derelict buildings and preventing further vacancy and dereliction is a priority for the study area.
- **Arts and Crafts:** Callan has a vibrant art and crafting community. Opportunities to support and develop these groups may be considered.
- **Recreation:** 'Hangout' spaces and non-sports related activities for specific age-cohorts including the elderly, children and teenagers are limited. This contributes to quality of living and may impact on mental health. Opportunities for additional recreational activities e.g. a greenway / walkway / outdoor swimming pool, may be considered.
- **Public Events and Spaces:** The surveys indicated that public areas have limited usability for public events. Opportunities to enhance the public areas for public uses may be considered including enhanced lighting, seating, covered areas.
- **Built Heritage:** There is a strong sense of pride of place amongst the community with residents having interest in and knowledge of the local history. A Heritage Trail has been established in the town to showcase the rich history of Callan and provides 10 points of interest, each with signage and an information board. Opportunities arise to build on the town's built heritage.
- **Car-Dependency:** There is a high rate of private car usage by town users. There is an opportunity to enhance active travel and public transport opportunities. Residents have noted footpaths require improvement works.
- **Traffic Management:** Opportunities to enhance traffic management and car parking may be developed, including provision of safer pedestrian crossings and traffic calming measures.
- **Underutilised Buildings:** Whilst vacancy is a concern raised by the community, there are occupied properties which have been stated by town users to be underutilised. Opportunities may arise to review the uses of these buildings to meet the needs of the community. Possible uses raised by the community include shared working spaces, a functional community hall, recreational spaces, arts / cultural uses.
- **Population Growth:** Callan experienced a population growth between the 2016 Census and the 2022 Census of 203 people. Opportunities to maintain the sustainable growth of the town should be considered to ensure that growth is consistent with the provision of community services and recreational opportunities.

