

GRAFTON STREET QUARTER



Public Realm Plan | May 2014

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Contents

Welcome by Lord Mayor 4
 Foreword by City Manager..... 4
 Executive Summary 5

1 **Role & Vision** **7**
 1.0 Introduction 8
 1.1 Grafton Street - A Street Under Pressure 8
 1.2 The Extended Retail Quarter - Positive Trends 8
 1.3 Reflections on the Role of Grafton Street..... 9
 1.4 Things That Really Matter..... 9
 1.5 A Framework for Co-operation 9
 1.6 The Grafton Street Quarter 10
 1.7 Generating the Focus at Street Level..... 10
 1.8 Economic Development..... 10
 1.9 Key Priorities 10

2 **Area & Policy Context**..... **11**
 2.0 Introduction 12
 2.1 Extent of Quarter 12
 2.2 History of Quarter 12
 2.3 The Planning Context 13
 2.4 The Planning Process 13
 2.5 Proposed Dublin Rail Transport Projects 13
 2.6 Key Priorities 14

3 **The Public Engagement Process**..... **15**
 3.0 Introduction 16
 3.1 Approach 16
 3.2a Stage 1 Project Team Workshops 16
 3.2b Stage 2 Street Conversations 16
 3.2c Stage 3 Grafton Street Quarter Traders,
 Stakeholders and Residents Workshops 20
 3.3 Key Findings 22

4 **Built Environment** **23**
 4.0 Introduction 24
 4.1 The Retail Core Framework Plan /
 Dublin City Development Plan 2011-2017 25
 4.2 Grafton Street 25
 4.3 Duke Street / South Anne Street 27
 4.4 Drury Street / Fade Street / Castle Market 27
 4.5 Clarendon Street / Clarendon Row 28
 4.6 South William Street 29
 4.7 Wicklow Street / Exchequer Street 30
 4.8 Dawson Street 31
 4.9 Molesworth Street 31
 4.10 South Great George’s Street 32

5 **Public Realm** **35**
 5.0 Introduction 36
 5.1 Elements of the Public Realm 36
 5.2 Character 37
 5.3 Principal Spaces and Links 37
 5.4 Traffic 38
 5.6 Public Realm Design Approach 40
 5.7 Public Realm Design Criteria 40
 5.8 Design Ambitions 41

6 **Greening the Grafton Street Quarter** **43**
 6.0 Introduction 44
 6.1 Challenges and Opportunities 44
 6.2 Greening the Grafton Street Quarter
 Design Approach 45
 6.3 Key Priorities 46

7 **Transport & Movement**..... **47**
 7.0 Introduction 48
 7.1 Current Situation..... 48
 7.2 Background and Context..... 49
 7.3 Impact of Luas Cross City Works 50
 7.4 Future Considerations..... 51
 7.5 Process 51
 7.6 Cycling in the Grafton Street Quarter 52
 7.7 Key Priorities 53

8 **Arts & Culture** **55**
 8.0 Introduction 56
 8.1 Key Priorities 58

9 **Proposed Principal Interventions** **59**
 9.0 Introduction 61
 9.1 Project groups 61

10 **Conclusion & Implementation** **82**
 10.0 Conclusion 83
 10.1 Implementation..... 83

Appendices **84**
 Appendix A..... 85
 The Seven Principles of Universal Design
 Appendix B 86
 Related Documents and Reading

Welcome

Dublin is a unique and vibrant city. It has a history to be proud of and a future to look forward to. It is a great place in which to live, to visit and to do business. On my election as Lord Mayor of Dublin I said that the role of Lord Mayor is to act as a driver for positive change in our city and, especially wanted to make our City Center more family friendly.

I hope that this draft Public Realm Plan for the Grafton Street Quarter provokes debate and ideas. This represents a great opportunity for Dubliners to influence how this critical part of our city develops over the next 10 years and more.

The Grafton Street Quarter has long been at the economic, cultural and social heart of Dublin. Its historic legacy and fascinating streetscapes lend it a very special character, which deserves to be celebrated and supported. However, we all know that in recent times trading conditions have become difficult. It is now more important than ever to invest in infrastructure and public spaces. An investment in the heart of Dublin becomes an investment in the entire city.

This draft Public Realm Plan sets out the details of proposed projects - such as paving, landscaping, public art and street furniture - which will improve everyone's experience of the area. We want to ensure that the streets are a reflection of the city's true identity and are accessible, safe and attractive spaces for us all to enjoy.

Our aim is to reinforce those special qualities that make the Grafton Street Quarter so unique, and will ensure that the area is revitalised and not diminished by change.

I would like to offer my thanks to everyone who has contributed so far to this Plan to improve this great part of our city.

Oisín Quinn
Lord Mayor of Dublin



Oisín Quinn
Lord Mayor of Dublin

Foreword

Dublin's public spaces are an important part of its identity. The city's streets, parks and squares are recognised at home and internationally as a rich and often unique landscape. In 2012, Dublin City Council formally defined its approach to these public spaces for the first time in the Public Realm Strategy entitled *Your City Your Space*. This Strategy explained why a good public realm matters, and how economically and socially beneficial it can be. It set out a series of actions in relation to its management and enhancement. *Your City Your Space* identified a major opportunity for the expansion and revitalisation of the public realm in the Grafton Street Quarter (the area between South Great George's Street and Kildare Street and between Saint Stephen's Green and College Green). Using a phased, user-centered approach, this *Grafton Street Quarter Public Realm Plan* sets out the context, vision and design principles for the strategic delivery of such a public realm.

The Grafton Street Quarter is at the heart of the economic, social and cultural life of the capital. In common with the rest of the country it has had its share of economic difficulties. This Plan allows us to respond to our current challenges and refocus on the area's unique proposition and character.

An important and exciting aspect of the Plan's preparation was the level of engagement we undertook with hundreds of people who live, work, shop, visit and conduct business in the Grafton Street Quarter. Our commitment to such collaboration is matched with an understanding of the relationship between the overall retail quarter and the strengths and character of individual streets.

It is our intention that this *Grafton Street Quarter Public Realm Plan* presents an informed, balanced and energetic set of proposals for revitalising the public spaces of the area. It is truly collaborative effort and I would like to offer my thanks to everyone for their advice and contributions.

Owen P Keegan
Dublin City Manager



Owen P Keegan
Dublin City Manager

Executive Summary

Good Streets Make Good Cities

Good streets are the lifeblood of great cities and Dublin's Grafton Street is no exception. Along with the surrounding area its public spaces are an important part of the city's national and international identity. *Your City Your Space*, Dublin City Council's 2012 Public Realm Strategy identified the **Grafton Street Quarter** as a key location for focus and development. Public realm refers to open areas within the city's built fabric: streets, squares and city spaces, irrespective of size. A good quality public realm is vital to an area's success because it generates pedestrian movement; it links places and events; creates activity; and it brings people into the area to shop, work and socialise.

Our Public Realm

Dublin City Council advocates public realms that are; easy for all to use regardless of age or ability; incorporate Universal Design principles; are welcoming and comfortable; celebrate unique spaces; create areas where people can get together and show the city to its best advantage. This *Grafton Street Quarter Public Realm Plan* sets out Dublin City Council's context, vision and design principles for the delivery of an enhanced public realm. The area is centred on Grafton Street and its supporting network: St. Stephen's Green to the south; Trinity College and College Green to the north; South Great George's Street to the west; and Dawson Street and Molesworth Street to the east. This Plan complements *Your City Your Space* Citywide Strategy. It also provides a strategic basis for environmental enhancement and sets out the individual measures necessary to transform the area's public realm.

Our Vision in Collaboration

This Plan takes a holistic approach to coordinating the strategies for the entire area. A key feature of its preparation was the high level of engagement with the area's users. A bespoke three-stage process which included workshops, street conversations, commercial collaborations and an online survey, targeted different user groups in order to gather a broad range of opinion.

In a new and significant collaboration, Dublin City Council has appointed an artist to work with the Grafton Street Quarter Project Implementation Team. Also on the team is Dublin City Council's Public Art Manager. This emphasises the value placed on an integrated and collaborative approach to the design of the public realm and a recognition of the civic value of public art.

Then And Now

The Grafton Street Quarter was shaped in the 18th century, a great classical era of urban planning and building. Laid out as a simple grid of streets, the fact that the area has survived so intact is a testament to the power of its original design. However, despite its appealing physical character and vibrant atmosphere, the Grafton Street Quarter today confronts many demanding challenges. In common with the rest of the city, it must cope with difficult trading conditions and compete with the major suburban shopping centres. Other local problems that threaten the area's long-term viability range from a growing imbalance in the mix of uses to the deteriorating quality in shop front design and a dated public realm. This Plan proposes a series of interventions and initiatives in response to these wide-ranging and challenging issues.



Grafton Street



Wicklow Street



Clarendon Street

Our consultation process revealed a real fondness and appreciation for the Grafton Street Quarter. There was a strong wish to reverse a perceived downgrade in the form of numerous fast-food outlets, mobile phone shops and generic multinational chain stores. The area's more intangible qualities were consistently identified as being unique and needing protection and support.

Tailoring Our Public Realm Response

A quality public realm is created by the cohesiveness of all of its elements - paving, street furniture, lighting, street planting and artwork - in the context of the buildings and the façades that enclose the space. This Plan identifies and analyses the needs of each street and space in the Grafton Street Quarter, and sets out an appropriate design response for each. Tailoring the response in this way will lead to a reduction in visual clutter, while the use of an integrated and co-ordinated range of elements provides the necessary coherence throughout the street network.

Also discussed in detail in this Plan are six key strategies arising out of The *Retail Core Framework Plan 2006*, which promotes the Grafton Street Quarter as a premier shopping, leisure and cultural destination. Grafton Street and environs are designated an *Architectural Conservation Area* and *Special Area of Planning Control*. Alongside the overall strategies incorporated into the *Dublin City Development Plan 2011-2017*, a list of key priorities is given in relation to both Grafton Street and the network of smaller streets providing a more diverse retail and cultural offering: Duke Street & South Anne Street; Clarendon Street & Clarendon Row; South William Street; Wicklow Street & Exchequer Street; and South Great George's Street.

Inspired by the open spaces of St. Stephen's Green, this Plan recognises that taking a strategic approach to improving green infrastructure in the Grafton Street Quarter will improve the visual and social quality of our streetscapes

and open spaces and increase biodiversity through habitat creation. In order to optimise effective green infrastructural interventions, both public and private spaces and stakeholders have an important role to play.

We're Getting There

Grafton Street is the central pedestrian spine of the area and an important link between St. Stephen's Green and O'Connell Street. The retailers and businesses in and around Grafton Street benefit from a street capacity in shopping conditions of between 14,000 and 15,000 people per hour. This Plan focuses on an attractive and clutter-free environment that puts such pedestrians first.

Transport issues are critical to the daily life of this area. Traffic management is considered in the context of a need to provide additional capacity to allow the existing levels of employment, visitors and business to increase. The Luas Cross City Green Line extension, scheduled to commence construction in 2015, will have significant and long-term benefits for the Grafton Street Quarter. The basic pattern will provide access to the overall area, and flexibility will be required to adapt to the needs of the area during construction of the Luas project. Traffic rebalancing provides the underlying setting for the improvement works. Maintaining vehicular access routes to the multi-storey car parks is essential to the economic life of the area. Vehicular access through the street network will remain largely unchanged in the short-term, though removing on-street car parking will reduce the dominance of vehicles.

Our Timetable

A multidisciplinary Project Implementation Team reporting to a newly-established Steering Group is responsible for the execution of the Plan. Implementation, subject to a process of public engagement and planning, commenced

in 2012 with pilot projects in Fade Street and Clarendon Street and continued in 2013 with the commencement of the Grafton Street Improvement Scheme. Improvement works to other streets will be undertaken as a rolling programme of discrete projects carried out over a number of years, with Grafton Street being the first and most significant project. The *Dublin City Development Plan 2011-2017*, the *Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2008-2016* and *Your City Your Space 2012* all describe hierarchies of streets that must be considered in determining the sequence.

Things That Really Matter

A thriving public realm must be user-centered. It has to celebrate an area's complex personality. The Grafton Street Quarter is such a diverse network, and the recognition that its public realm is so much more than a series of physical spaces is a driving force behind this Plan. Its distinctive character is not defined solely by the nature of the streets and their architecture, but is animated by different activities and a diverse cultural mix. The Grafton Street Quarter is at the heart of our city, which is why its public realm really matters to us all.

Grafton Street Quarter

Authenticity
Fine Urban Grain
Shopfronts
Planning
Vision
Historic
Public Realm
Pedestrian
Café Culture
Urban Design
Streetscape
Connectivity
Street Artists
Arts
Culture
Conservation
Charter
Collaboration
Markets
Public Engagement
Retail
Architecture
Townscape
Identity



ROLE
&
VISION

1 Role & Vision

1.0 Introduction

Good streets are the building blocks of great cities, and when it comes to hierarchy and importance, Grafton Street stands at the apex of the small number of streets that carry the identity of the Capital and represent Dublin. Its importance and iconic status as a quality retail street goes back to the 19th century. At 502 metres in length, it is organic with a discernible human scale and poetic quality. It is not a set piece in urban design terms but has a framework which contains a coherent and expressive architecture and an attractive rhythmic urban grain.

Its location of course is special too. The street runs from St. Stephen's Green, the earliest of Dublin's Georgian Squares to College Green, acknowledged as the city's most important hard landscaped urban space. The broader context of the **Grafton Street Quarter** is also special, experienced against a rich inner city landscape of learning, culture, politics and social history. Trinity College and Temple Bar sit on its northern flank. The centre of Irish Government, The Dáil, is immediately to its east. The South Georgian core exists to the east and south and Dublin Castle and the city's historic heart adjoins immediately to the west.

1.1 Grafton Street - A Street Under Pressure

Despite the undoubted strengths of its location, Grafton Street has been experiencing significant problems. A key issue is the balance of uses in the street, too many service-type outlets, phone shops, convenience and fast food outlets, combined with the presence of standardised chains with little sensitivity to the need for thoughtful design. The service outlets are able to justify the very high rents on the street on the basis of access to high pedestrian footfall. The upshot is that the quality independent retailers, which were always a part of the attractive mix, are being forced

out. The slide of Grafton Street towards a standardised service offering has implications for the strategic role of the retail economy in the inner city, which has been losing market share to the suburban shopping centres. The existing planning laws and instruments make it difficult to control unwanted and inappropriate uses.

1.2 The Extended Retail Quarter - Positive Trends

Strangely, at a time when Grafton Street is under pressure, the extended Grafton Street Quarter is able to provide some good stories and positive trends. Wicklow Street has a wonderfully coherent urban character and streetscape, with its subtle orange / red brick tones and exuberant Victorian detailing, complemented by a well scaled mix of interesting retail. South William Street is fast becoming the hidden high street of the Quarter, with niche and alternative retail uses, beginning to colonise the rich Georgian legacy of the street, and expand on the offer of Powerscourt Townhouse Centre. The ambience offered by the constantly evolving mix of traders in the set piece of the South Great George's Street Markets has also infused the surrounding network of streets. To the east Dawson Street continues to project an elegant commercial character with office, restaurant and retail balanced by civic and cultural uses.

Overall the different characters of these streets register strongly and there are many positive qualities and trends. It is also true that the legibility of the Quarter is already evident but needs to be strengthened. What is needed is a framework that facilitates interconnectedness and strategic tweaking but also allows the spotlight to be placed on each street in order to articulate their distinct roles, and set up a collaborative work agenda, drawing in occupiers / owners, users and the Local Authority. This framework, which can inspire and co-ordinate future action, is sketched out later in this chapter. Firstly however, it is necessary to address the challenge of Grafton Street itself.



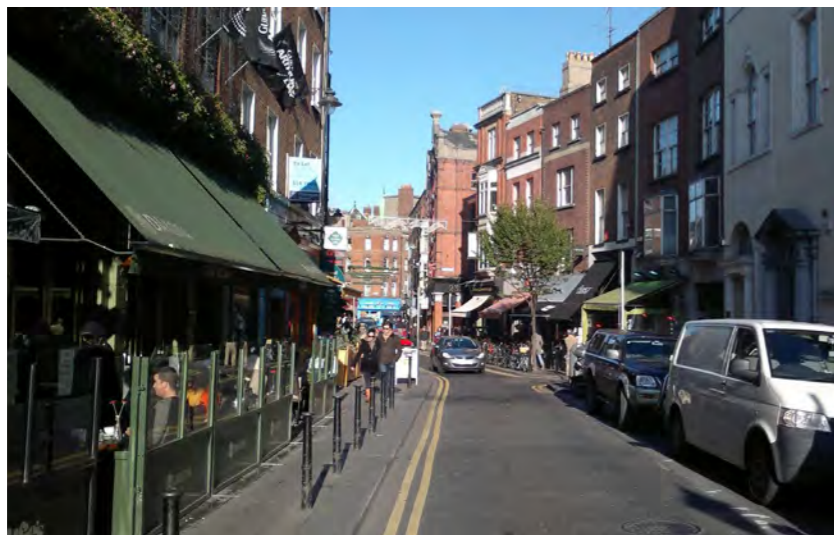
2011

Grafton Street



1956

Grafton Street



South William Street



South King Street



Grafton Street

1.3 Reflections on the Role of Grafton Street

There appears to be a big gap between what people might expect of a great Irish retail street with a proud tradition, and what the market has actually delivered over the last 10 / 15 years. Part of the problem is the limited powers and capacity of planning legislation in areas such as zoning, and more recently an Architectural Conservation Area and Scheme of Special Planning Control, to control the mix and quality of retail uses on the street. Planning legislation applied effectively is certainly part of the answer but needs to be complemented by a range of additional strategies.

The articulation of role and vision must drive other instruments of control and management and, critically, leverage collaboration and buy in from all stakeholders. Vision needs to start with value systems. We must understand what we want the street to be. Surely Grafton Street should aspire to present an integrity of place that reflects city identity, resonates with certain cultural values and offers a dimension of experience that is uniquely Dublin. Certain qualities are going to follow logically from this, a prevalence of good design, unique sense of place, distinctiveness, authenticity and character. A walk down Grafton Street today will immediately reveal that these qualities are being eroded by bland standardisation and a retail offering that is frequently no better than the average suburban shopping centre.

1.4 Things That Really Matter

In defining a great retail street of authenticity and character, that can represent Dublin and be counted regionally, nationally and internationally, it is important to stress some key areas of performance. Some of these areas are the responsibility of traders or landlords, some are the responsibility of the Local Authority, others will involve a partnership.

The “Things That Really Matter” include the following;

- Quality of the retail offering, balance and mixed scale of quality uses.
- Great shop front design.
- High quality public realm.
- Great walking experience.
- Optimising the contribution from historic fabric.
- Ensure design sensibility informs the overall environment.
- Day to day good management (a) in the public realm (b) inside the threshold of the shop door.
- Creating life at night.
- A framework for co-operation.

1.5 A Framework for Co-Operation

It is critical that all future action is driven by a commitment to collaboration and is inspired by a compelling framework which includes (a) the Grafton Street Quarter Public Realm Plan and (b) combining an awareness of the overall retail quarter with a focus on the strengths and challenges of individual streets.

There is a need to translate a high level vision and a set of desirable qualities into a framework that can drive action and performance at the scale of the macro retail quarter, but also at the scale of the individual street. The framework can be structured to address the following;

1. The Spatial; covering movement, street pattern, building fabric, public realm etc.
2. Content; covering the programme or content i.e. range of uses, events, culture etc.
3. Process; dealing with the challenge of how to draw all stakeholders into a collaborative and partnership process.

These three areas can apply at the higher scale of the Quarter, and also at the individual street scale. Existing area and street representations can feed into this process.

1.6 The Grafton Street Quarter

The framework at the Quarter level will allow role, value system and qualities to be copperfastened. The spatial extent of the public realm will, for example, be outlined both in terms of internal network, linkage and interface, but also interconnection of the Quarter to adjacent key character areas of the inner-city. The programme or content will emphasise a social and cultural experience through mixed use and scale as well as creating a vital retail economy. The opportunity needs to be grasped to commit to collaboration and to ensuring response and performance under key headings.

1.7 Generating Focus at the Street Level

The need to focus at street level and to respond to individual street contexts is critical. Part of the strength of the retail quarter is the very different characters of individual streets and, as outlined earlier, many positive trends are evident. However there are problems, under-performance and some worrying trends throughout the Quarter most notably in Grafton Street. The individual street focus can reflect on and articulate the role of each street, be specific about problems and opportunities, and develop an action plan and operational approach in partnership with stakeholders. Grafton Street will be somewhat different due to the strategic importance of the spine and also to difficulties and trends outlined above. On the spatial one can anticipate a high quality public realm, an agile floor of public infrastructure carrying large volumes of happy walkers, complemented by a well designed and maintained building fabric. On content the scale and mix of uses can be articulated and supported by zoning and the area of Special Planning Control. The area of process could provide leverage and traction. Here one could develop performance outputs on the list of "things that really matter". This could include, for example, praising and affirming those that are really doing the right thing and

stating why, encouraging those who are open to change and stepping up to the plate, and isolating and sinbining those offenders who are dragging down the street and who are refusing to co-operate. The initiatives at street level can relate to and strengthen existing representation arrangements and respond to any new initiatives.

1.8 Economic Development

Issues around the economic development of the Grafton Street Quarter are referenced in this document but would benefit from further exploration. This should include the City Council's Economic Development Unit, both as a key property owner (e.g. Drury Street Car Park, several retail units and public realm spaces) and as a promoter of development initiatives.

Whilst some of the proposed public realm improvements (such as removal of on-street parking and the installation of additional cycle parking at Drury Street Car Park) would result in a loss of revenue, some of the planned improvements have the potential to deliver economic and commercial opportunities across the Grafton Street Quarter and these opportunities need to be pursued. For example, consideration should be given to how the existing street market usage in the area could be consolidated and enhanced by the proposed public realm measures. The impact and potential of temporary markets, such as the Christmas Market around Dame Court, should also be assessed. Another area of new thinking is the possibility of covering over certain streets to improve visitor comfort / interaction, improve commerciality and significantly enhance key pedestrian routes. Possible locations for this include the Castle Market area (linking the South City Markets Arcade and the Powerscourt Townhouse Centre) and South King Street. The potential of these initiatives will be considered in tandem with the proposed public realm improvements.

1.9 Key Priorities

The area between Dawson Street and South Great George's Street now known as the Grafton Street Quarter is an incredibly diverse area full of interest, surprise and promise. Apart from its wider range of street character it contains three of Dublin's most important town houses; Powerscourt, the Mansion House and the Provost's House. In planning terms one could not wish for a more interesting canvas on which to build. The proposal to remake elements of the public realm provided the initial impetus to consider a wider approach. What is now proposed is a framework to include;

1. A Public Realm Plan focused on developing the Quarter's unique identity through nurturing qualities of character, diversity, authenticity and place.
2. Addressing a key list of "Things that Really Matter";
 - Quality of the retail offer, balance and mixed scale of quality uses.
 - Great shop front design.
 - High quality public realm.
 - Great walking experience.
 - Optimising the contribution from historic fabric.
 - Ensure design sensibility informs the overall environment.
 - Day to day good management;
 - (a) In the public realm
 - (b) Inside the threshold of the shop door.
 - Creating life at night.
 - A framework for co-operation.
3. Achieving collaboration and traction through an operational framework applied at;
 - (a) The scale of the Quarter as a whole.
 - (b) The scale of each street.

A 3D architectural rendering of a city block, showing a dense grid of buildings with varying heights and setbacks. The buildings are rendered in a light gray color, and the streets are shown as recessed channels. The right side of the image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green rectangle. The number '2' is displayed in a large, white, serif font within this green area. Below the number, the text 'AREA & POLICY CONTEXT' is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font, stacked vertically.

2

AREA
&
POLICY
CONTEXT

2 Area & Policy Context

2.0 Introduction

The **Grafton Street Quarter** is a thriving commercial area and major visitor destination. It is home to a wide range of shopping, cultural and leisure uses, including a lively mix of shops, cafés, bars and galleries and other businesses that trade off and support Grafton Street, the Quarter's main commercial spine. As one of the city's two main shopping areas, it draws in large numbers of visitors day and night. By day it is an ideal base to enjoy some shopping, the local café culture, street performances and the many galleries and museums. By night, extended evening shopping is complemented by a wide range of leisure activities provided by the local restaurants, pubs, clubs, theatres and music venues. Dublin City Council recognises that it is this great mix of uses, combined with an intensity of activity that makes the Grafton Street Quarter unique in the city centre. It also accepts that its continuing success and growth is essential to the city's economic, cultural and social life.

To underpin the delivery of a successful and competitive shopping, cultural and leisure quarter, Dublin City Council is now committed to the delivery of a high quality public realm of international standard across the Grafton Street Quarter. The purpose of this improved public realm is to provide a safe, comfortable, attractive environment where pedestrians can walk with ease and enjoy a range of planned and unplanned activities and where business can prosper. This document sets out the context, vision and design principles for the delivery of an enhanced public realm for the Grafton Street Quarter.

2.1 Extent of Quarter

The Grafton Street Quarter is centred on Grafton Street and

its supporting network of streets and spaces extending to one of the city's premier squares - St. Stephen's Green to the south, Trinity College and another major public space - College Green to the north, South Great George's Street to the west and over to Dawson Street and Molesworth Street to the east. It corresponds to the Grafton Street Character Area highlighted in the Dublin City Development Plan 2011-2017 and connects into the city's main civic thoroughfare linking the important retail, commercial and entertainment districts of Grafton Street, College Green and Temple Bar to O'Connell Street / Parnell Square, the Henry Street Area and the North Georgian City.

2.2 History of Quarter

This compact and vibrant urban Quarter was shaped during the great classical era of urban planning and building in 18th century Dublin. It was laid out as a simple grid of streets "forming careful junctions with existing streets, terminating classical axes where necessary"¹ and framing vistas to important institutions and buildings such as St. Ann's Church, Leinster House and Mercer's Hospital. Despite later interventions into the essentially Georgian fabric, the area has survived intact, a testament to the inherent coherence and to the practicality of the original layout and development. Indeed, even the significant Victorian interventions have contributed to the area's legibility and architectural character as well as its economic vibrancy.

Although developed as a series of small but piecemeal set pieces by different landlords / developers, the individual streets reveal a strong sense of visual and architectural unity. This unity is attributable to the use of the "single plot as the unit of development"², as well as to standard leasing arrangements and a willingness to observe certain



Grafton Street



Section of Roque's Map of Dublin City 1756

¹ & ² McCullough, Niall (1989) - Dublin - An Urban History



South Anne Street



Grafton Street



1960's

Grafton Street

common urban design principles. It is important to note that these streets, including the remaining building stock are as significant a record of the great classical era of planning and development in Dublin as the more renowned Georgian squares.

The western and older section of the study area, located between South Great George's Street and Grafton Street and south of Dame Street, forms a tight grid of narrow streets originally surrounded by medieval lanes and bisected by the River Steine (Steyne). The principal streets here are South Great George's Street, Drury Street, South William Street and Clarendon Street, Fade Street which links South Great George's Street to Drury Street and Wicklow Street / Exchequer Street linking Grafton Street to South Great George's Street. Moving east, Grafton Street and Dawson Street together with Duke Street and South Anne Street were laid out as a single urban ensemble in the early 1800's.

Grafton Street is one of Dublin's best-known destinations, celebrated in song, verse, film and literature, with a long and rich history dating back to the early 17th century. Today the street is one of the city's two main shopping streets and forms the spine of the south city's retail core. The unique form of the street, combined with the architectural quality of many of its buildings, creates a distinctive physical character which enhances the commercial and social functions of the street. It's long-established reputation for high quality shopping, combined with a rich mix of recreational, cultural and civic uses in the surrounding area, has determined it's prominence in the economic and social life of the city.

2.3 The Planning Context

The importance of the Grafton Street Quarter, as one of the city's primary retail destinations in the state, is highlighted in a variety of plans and policy documents including the Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area, the Dublin City

Development Plan 2011-2017, The Retail Core Framework Plan, the Architectural Conservation Plans and the Area of Special Planning Control Scheme for Grafton Street. These documents have a shared ambition to promote this Quarter as one of the city and state's premier shopping, leisure and cultural destinations and, in the process, to create "a network of attractive streets and spaces where the pedestrian can walk with ease and enjoy a range of planned and unplanned activities, free from traffic conflict".³

2.4 The Planning Process

In a process paralleling the completion of the Grafton Street Quarter Public Realm Plan, work has been proceeding on the detailed design of the Public Realm Enhancement Scheme for Grafton Street including the upgrading of the existing paving and street furniture. This scheme is the subject of a Part 8 planning procedure as set out in the Planning and Development Act 2000-2010 and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2010. A Part 8 application was brought before City Council for consideration and approved in September 2012. The Grafton Street Part 8 is intended to be the first in a series of Part 8 applications in accordance with the Grafton Street Public Realm Plan. The Part 8 applications will be accompanied by an Environmental Report which will incorporate an assessment of the proposed scheme and its impact on the Grafton Street Quarter.

2.5 Proposed Dublin Rail Transport Projects

In 2005, the Government launched a multi-billion euro investment strategy for transport in Ireland aimed at delivering a world-class public transport system. The transport projects proposed for the Grafton Street Quarter were significant interventions with the probability of major construction disruption. These projects were **Metro North**

³ The Retail Core Framework Plan, Dublin City Council 2006

Grafton Street Quarter Public Realm Plan

- underground light rail, **DART Underground** - underground mainline rail and **Luas Cross City** - extension to the Luas Green Line tramway. These projects had the potential to deliver in excess of 30,000 people per hour into the Grafton Street Quarter.

With funding constrained and private finance reluctant to commit to investment in large infrastructural projects, the Government has announced a significantly scaled back version of the original public rail transport strategy. The intention currently is to proceed with the Luas Cross City project - which extends the Luas Green Line northward from St. Stephen's Green to intersect the Luas Red Line in O'Connell Street / Abbey Street and to continue through Broadstone, Grangegorman Dublin Institute of Technology to Broombridge. It is indicated that the main construction work will start on Luas Cross City in 2015, which will integrate the city tram systems for the first time, with completion scheduled for 2018. Both Metro North and DART Underground projects have been postponed and will be reviewed by the Government in 2015.

The extension of the Luas Green Line will involve the permanent change of street surfaces to a track environment at the top of Grafton Street, along Dawson Street and at College Green. In this context the Grafton Street Quarter Public Realm Plan will seek to integrate the Luas works in a coherent way into a legible and co-ordinated design framework.

2.6 Key Priorities

Despite its appealing physical character and lively atmosphere, the Grafton Street Quarter must confront many demanding challenges. In common with the rest of the city, it has to cope with difficult trading conditions, compete with the major suburban shopping centres and tackle other local problems that threaten the area's long-term viability. These

range from the growing imbalance in the mix of uses, to the deteriorating quality in shop front design and the tired and dated public realm which defines and colours every visitor's experience of the area. The following chapters propose a series of interventions and initiatives that are intended to respond to these wide-ranging and challenging issues.



Grafton Street



South William Street



Harry Street



3

THE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

3 The Public Engagement Process

3.0 Introduction

The Grafton Street Quarter Public Realm Enhancement Project offered the Project Team an unique opportunity to engage with people on how they would imagine and develop a vision for the **Grafton Street Quarter**.

Over the course of six months our public engagement team hosted 477 street conversations, 2 half day workshops, 4 businesses and resident workshops and collaborated with over 70 representatives of the commercial sector. 177 people responded to an online staff questionnaire used to collect and assess opinion on the project area.

The engagement process sought to capture and learn from the users' desires, personal perceptions, ideas and to challenge some embedded assumptions to ensure our proposal was appropriate, meaningful and would ultimately lead to a successful project. A three stage process was specifically designed to target different user groups and gather a broad range of opinion.

3.1 Approach

Underlying the approach to this process was the desire to make the engagement as inclusive as possible. We wanted to speak to a broad spectrum of people about the project and give participants an equal chance to express their own opinions. To enable this various engagement processes were designed to encourage open discussion, imagination, problem solving and conversations.

3.2a Stage 1 Project Team Workshops

The Project Team proposed to undertake the public engagement aspect of the project before final plans were produced. In the absence of a master plan the public consultation process was arranged around a series of interactions with users and interest groups that focused on their experience of the area.

Two facilitated workshops were initially held with the Grafton Street Quarter Project Team. The aim was to explore the multiple possibilities of the project and to discover additional engagement methods, working patterns and resources that could facilitate delivery.

The Project Team expressed a common desire to make the Grafton Street Quarter the 'number one destination in the country'. The central tenet of the agreed approach was to keep the Project Team focused while developing a proposal that caters for retail, culture, recreation and social needs. In this regard the Team agreed to encourage participation in the development of a vision through early public engagement and continuous collaboration.

3.2b Stage 2 Street Conversations

The second stage of the engagement process involved a series of 'user' focused street conversations and online surveys. The engagement process was devised to capture people's attention and used large cardboard boxes to create on-street stands at 11 locations throughout Dublin.

The Project Team wanted to find out what people thought was special about the Grafton Street Quarter and what people disliked. This process captured the positive and



Project Team Workshop



Street Conversation Stand

Powerscourt Centre



Locations of Street Conversation Stands (Number of People Spoken To)



Street Conversation Stand

Foster's Place

negative of both the existing and the future, giving each individual a chance to express their satisfaction and annoyance.

People we spoke to were in the area for a variety of reasons including recreation, socialising, employment, business, education and many 'point destinations' such as going to mass or visiting the playground in St. Stephen's Green.

In general people showed a real fondness for the Grafton Street Quarter. The area held special memories and stories for many people. An interesting observation was that many people have regular personal rituals or routines around their visit to the Quarter and there is a definite loyalty, connection and attraction; a visit being considered a special treat. There was widespread appreciation for the area's historical qualities, the character of the pubs and the general sense of tradition and ambiance.

Buskers, flower sellers, the red brick, historic buildings and the variety of buildings styles were all mentioned as specific contributors. There was a particular attachment to the flower sellers on Grafton Street and other street traders. It was generally felt that these traders epitomised the character of the Quarter. There was strong nostalgia with emphasis on character and ambiance and the preservation of this, with many people advocating no change at all, to avoid detracting or potentially losing the 'magic' of the place. The intimacy of the place was repeatedly mentioned with many people expressing their pleasure of the little alleyways and small streets. Many felt that the street layouts, patterns and connectivity worked, but that there needed to be more ease of movement from one street to another. People loved the different scale of the streets, the wide to narrow, long to short. They felt this increased the invitation to go and 'explore'.

There was an overwhelming call for pedestrianisation. People cherished the option of being able to 'amble' and 'ramble'

unperturbed in the already pedestrianised streets or the roads that had very little traffic. It was expressed that this was a key factor in the enjoyment of the area. Many people said that there was no need for cars to pass through the area at all, especially on quieter streets such as Wicklow Street and South William Street, and called for the removal of car parking in these areas. While some looked for better public transport, a minority of others offered a view of wanting better accessibility by car. They felt the accessibility of the area had been reduced substantially over the years with increasing pedestrianisation and with the introduction of the one-way system and didn't see the need for reducing it further.

Increased active street life was constantly mentioned with participants wishing to see more street entertainment and more outdoor cafés. A greater emphasis on using the streets themselves as social spaces was regularly expressed, with tables, chairs, areas on streets to socialise and to casually meet others, or even to hold events. People mentioned the wish to extend the street activity and street vibe into the night providing more to do after dark by encouraging a variety of street activities including flower sellers, late night cafés, culture markets, events and street artists. A better balance between the commercial retail offer in the area and the cultural offer was also a popular request.

There was a very strong call to reverse the 'downgrade' of Grafton Street and its environs. This 'downgrade', it was felt, manifested itself in the form of numerous fast-food outlets, mobile phone shops and generic multinational chain stores. People valued and wanted more independent, locally owned boutique shops such as jewellers, old bookshops, art galleries, local fashion retailers etc. It was felt that there has been a loss of 'class' on Grafton Street over the years. People felt that the Dublinesque / Irish character was being eroded through the increased homogenisation of the Quarter due to the influence of foreign owned franchises and generic shops resulting in the loss of personalised

customer service and the more traditional and service-type businesses. A strong negative opinion was expressed towards the loss of elegance and the uncleanliness of the streets including litter and poor maintenance of street façades with many references made to unkempt, drab, poor paving or poor quality 'plastic' street signage and shop fronts.

The negative effect of vacant shops was repeatedly mentioned. There was dissatisfaction about the level of rates and upward only rents. Many felt it was unsustainable and resulted in these vacant units. In this context some participants requested a better balance between the commercial and cultural aspect of the Quarter with a stronger emphasis on cultural offer and the potential for alternative uses of vacant shops in this regard.

Other common responses referred to the expense of the area. Cheaper coffee shops and cheaper parking were most frequently mentioned. Several people stated the need for more civic space or a public plaza and not just more street space, better quality street planting and greenery were also requested. Others felt that of the many beautiful buildings in the area there was little connection between the ground level and the upper floors. Businesses would like more freedom to be creative with their shop fronts and space outside while others felt there should be more control exerted over the quality and amplification of busking in the area at times. People mentioned the need for better legibility of the Quarter i.e. information, maps, signage or themed routes in the area while others called for the removal of unnecessary signage saying it made the space cluttered and gives the perception of untidiness.

Many people somewhat discreetly expressed their dissatisfaction with 'chuggers' (those requesting signups to charities) and beggars on the street. They felt a little embarrassed about saying it but they clearly expressed a negative opinion towards that activity in the area.

Dundrum and Blanchardstown Centres

Participants visited shopping centres specifically for retail reasons, while going to the Grafton Street Quarter was often considered a treat which involved more than a purely retail offer. This expression was strongest in Dundrum Shopping Centre where some people even said that they don't enjoy visiting Dundrum. Convenience, local proximity, and easy accessibility by public transport and particularly by car, were reasons given for visiting the centre. Shops and restaurants under one roof and being able to sit and rest with their shopping was something that was also appreciated. The experience in Dundrum was mentioned by one participant as being 'perfunctory and gourmand' while the experience in Grafton Street Quarter was 'gourmet'.

Contrary to the fondness expressed by adults towards the Grafton Street Quarter, many teenagers in Dundrum had no emotional connection to the area. They liked Dundrum because they 'could hang out all day and stay dry and warm', they didn't get moved on and they felt it was safer there than going into 'town'. In the city centre they felt constantly moved on and were not allowed to linger or hang around.

In Blanchardstown, while being positive about Grafton Street and its environs, participants had a stronger preference for the shopping centre for reasons of free parking, safety and the convenience of having everything under one roof. Transport into town and parking costs are a significant factor in their decision to stay away. Buses are not considered convenient for carrying baggage and other transport options don't exist.

Some people in Blanchardstown mentioned that they didn't like Grafton Street and its environs because it was too expensive or 'snobby'. They also mentioned the Northside / Southside divide and expressed dissatisfaction with crossing over the river.



Street Conversation Stand

Blanchardstown



Street Conversation Stand

Balally, Dundrum



3.2c Stage 3 Grafton Street Quarter Traders, Stakeholders and Residents Workshops

A series of scheduled workshops were held over two days for residents, businesses, traders and property owners of the area. 47 streets were represented by over 70 people. The objectives of the workshops were to develop a greater understanding of the residents and traders desires' for the area and to develop insights into potential pitfalls or conflicts as well as opportunities.

The engagement methodology was initially prototyped at a small scale as part of the Fade Street pilot project before being used in the wider area.

The workshop allowed the residents, traders and property owners to collaborate at an early stage on the development process. The approach would ensure that the project proposal was formed around their needs and that a vision for the Quarter incorporated their expressed ideas and wishes. In order to support this approach the workshop's used the following interactive process:

Ideation Process

The ideation process was used to generate a list of ideas and ambitions for improving the Quarter, and to identify common patterns or potential conflicts in participants' views. Participants were asked to describe and record their top ten ideas for improving the Quarter.

The main topics that emerged from the ideation process were identity, safety, variety, declining appeal, lack of enforcement of bye-laws and policies, homelessness and begging, amenities, access, lack of community, catering for a diverse audience, appearance and management.

The improvement of the area visually and improvement of what the area has to offer was the main focus of this process.

It was felt that the area is not marketed or sold well enough, either nationally or indeed internationally, and this needs to be addressed in order to increase general awareness. Mixed views were offered by some on more pedestrianisation. Fears were expressed over losing custom while at the same time they saw the advantages of pedestrianisation.

Speed Dating Process

The speed dating process used one to one quick questions and answers, to discover the participants' current perceptions and attitudes to the Quarter. Participants were asked a set of questions which revealed an array of interesting attitudes.

A similar pattern of themes and topics emerged again from this process. Activity on the street, the atmosphere, the 'buzz' and the people were mentioned as the best things about the Quarter. A negative aspect of the area was its perception as being expensive and impersonal, however some participants noted that this was a general perception and once people got to know the real area they were quite surprised to find that this was unfounded. The side streets, history and architectural qualities of the Quarter were the hidden gems of the city while the lack of consistency of enforcement, planning and management of the area being the main detractors.

A lack of communication between traders, the DCBA (Dublin City Business Association) and BID (Dublin City Business Improvement District) was also mentioned as a concern. Again, a reoccurring wish was for a self-contained, identifiably unique area with variety of offer and a wide mix of uses, making it the premier destination of choice in the city.

2020 Vision

The vision process asked the participants to imagine



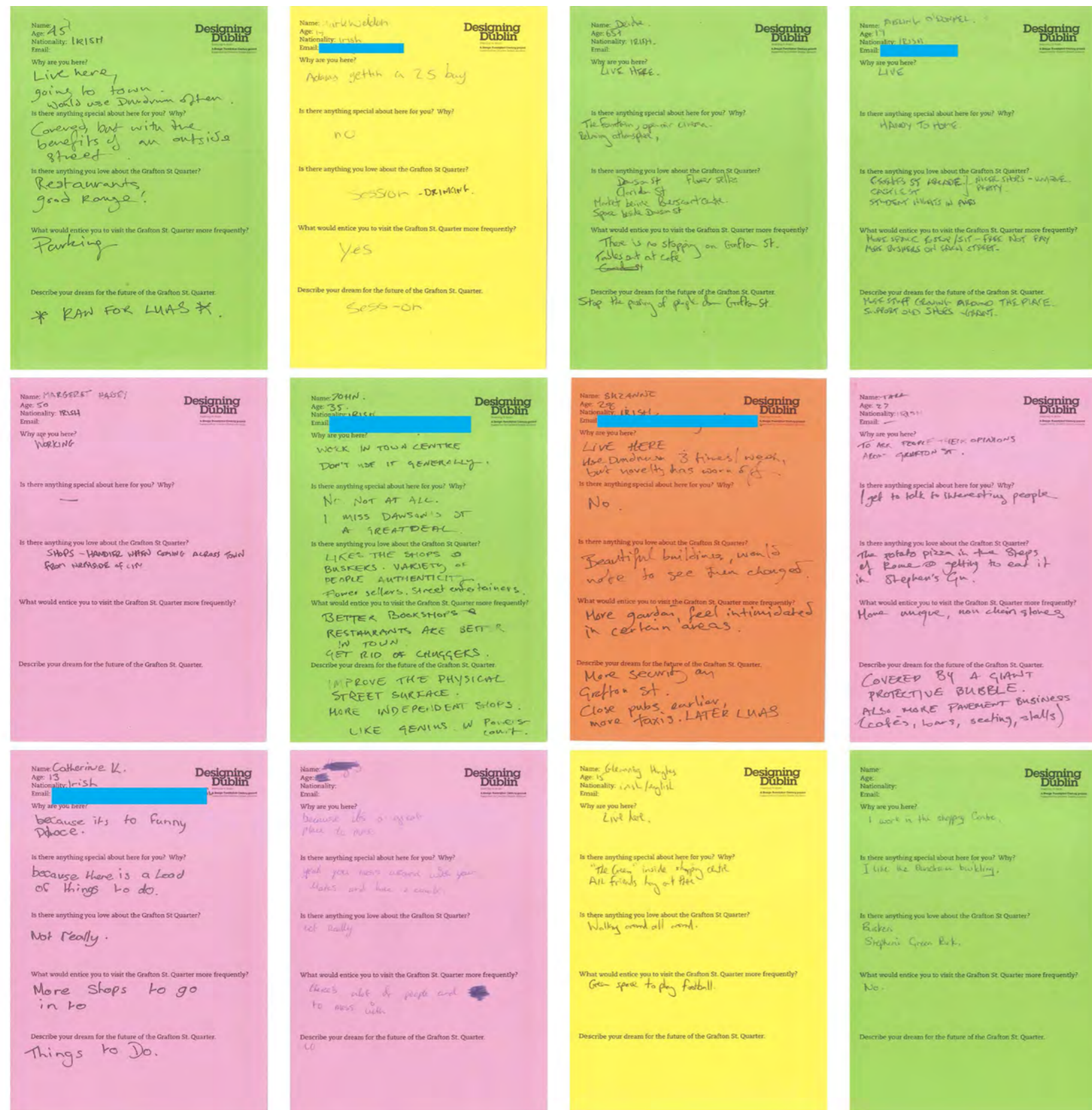
Traders, Stakeholders and Residents Workshop



Traders, Stakeholders and Residents Workshop



Traders, Stakeholders and Residents Workshop



Street Conversation Surveys

returning to the street after the year 2020. Participants described in a short story what they imagine they see and experience in the successfully redeveloped area.

People gave vivid accounts of a beautiful area, with a range of things to do on all levels. Preservation of heritage in the area came through very strongly, with emphasis on preserving architecture and creating new civic spaces. Creating more transport links and easier movement and flow was seen as essential to making this area work. There was a lot of reference made to outdoor use, sunny days and awnings. A call for a good mix of shops and in particular services was also notable; butchers, bakeries, family entertainment, restaurants and lots of cultural hotspots and activities. There was a focus on the importance of tradition, quality and valued customer experience for the Quarter. Again, there is a perception the Quarter has something special, indefinable and precious that should not be lost but actively improved and enhanced.

Nightmare Scenario

The nightmare scenario asked participants to imagine an outcome, however on this occasion the outcome was a nightmare where everything had gone wrong. The participants were asked to explain what and why things had gone wrong.

This scenario revealed a number of obstacles, issues and activities people would not like to see happening. There were obvious concerns over crime, anti-social behaviour, vandalism, safety, shop closures and empty streets, however there was also a big concern about 'over doing' the area; clutter, too many restrictions and regulations and 'over modernisation'. Linking into the history and Irish tradition was seen as important. Atmosphere and vibe are also seen as selling points and there were fears that this could be lost or again overdone. What was interesting about this process is that people identified that there needs to be

better communication and responsibility taken by everyone associated with the area, more joined up thinking, more ownership and more active partnerships. People expressed that there needs to be easier access and more established and constructive relationships with Dublin City Council and for more active input into how the area works by everyone, including more of these type of engagements.

3.3 Key Findings

The engagement process was undertaken to capture a snapshot of public opinion on Grafton Street and the surrounding area. The objective was to speak to a broad spectrum of people using different engagement exercises including undirected conversations and to use what was collected to aid and inform the Project Team in developing the public realm plan. The methods used generated hundreds of ideas and enabled the Project Team to gain an important insight into many tangible and intangible qualities. An analysis of the information from the three stages of public engagement reveals a tacit, collective vision that is derived from the multitude of personal visions that were recorded.

A review of all the ideas, visions, likes, dislikes, concerns, hopes and dreams begins to create a picture of what a successful project might look like. The more salient aspects of this collective picture are not necessarily those that can be solved through a physical refurbishment but are the more intangible qualities that users wish to protect and improve. Qualities like the uniqueness of the area, the Dublin charm and character, the buzz and ambiance and street activity are all aspects that make the Grafton Street Quarter special and unique and are qualities that are consistently identified as in need of protection and support.

Participants regularly called for street space to be more available for social and cultural animation and for more space to be provided for meeting, resting, stopping and

watching. In this regard a clear call for an improved pedestrian environment was identified; a clear majority of users cherished an ability to wander comfortably along pedestrian streets without having to have regard to vehicle traffic. This was one of the attributes identified as giving parts of the Grafton Street Quarter its unique and attractive character. In this regard improved and increased cultural and social activities were also consistently requested.

Local Irish retail offering was also consistently mentioned as contributing to the unique character and ambiance, particularly boutique or specialist stores. This was also seen as being under threat and its demise was closely associated to the loss of elegance and tradition that users had identified.

While in general terms the Quarter is perceived as safe, a great number of users expressed dissatisfaction at any form of hassle, most participants were referring to 'chuggers' (clip board charity collectors) and beggars.

This means of consulting and engaging encouraged and allowed people to suggest solutions, reforms, and propose ideas in a creative and engaging way to discover what really is needed for the Grafton Street Quarter. The purpose is to listen to, learn from, and incorporate the findings from these engagements into what is proposed for the city. The resulting visions and perceptions, gathered at the different stages, point in a common direction and therefore proves there is not as much disconnect as is generally assumed between the public, the local authorities, the businesses and traders, residents and property owners in the area. There is a clear ambition on behalf of all participants for a successful public realm plan that expresses the unique character of the Grafton Street Quarter that is safe, attractive and accessible with a diverse cultural, retail and social offering.





4

BUILT
ENVIRONMENT



4 Built Environment

4.0 Introduction

The principal focus of this document is the improvement of the public realm in the local network of streets and spaces that help to define and shape the **Grafton Street Quarter**. A good quality public realm is vital to the success of an area as it generates more pedestrian movement, links places and events, creates activity and brings people into the area to shop, work and socialise. However, the quality and success of an area does not derive solely from this one element, rather it comes from the interplay and relationship between the public realm, the buildings which visually contain and define the street and the uses which enliven the spaces and the buildings. This chapter focuses on these latter two elements – use of spaces / buildings and shop fronts.

Use is critical because it plays such an important role in sustaining life in the city. The city centre requires a dynamic mix of uses both day-time and night-time which interact with one another and help create a vibrant economy. Shop front design is also central to the image and enjoyment of the area because shop fronts make such an important contribution to a street's character, quality and ambience. This is especially the case in areas with a rich architectural heritage such as the Grafton Street Quarter, which has several outstanding examples of high quality shop fronts such as Brown Thomas, Weirs and Bewleys, which complement both the character of the buildings to which they relate and the street.



Based on the Retail Core Framework Plan

Ground Floor Retail Uses



Based on the Retail Core Framework Plan

Complimentary Uses



4.1 The Retail Core Framework Plan / Dublin City Development Plan 2011-2017

Development Strategy



Based on the Retail Core Framework Plan

Existing and Aspirational Pedestrian Streets



Based on the Retail Core Framework Plan

The Retail Core Framework Plan was prepared and adopted by Dublin City Council in 2006 to promote the Grafton Street Quarter as one of the city's premier shopping, leisure and cultural destinations in the state. The Plan sets out 6 key strategies to enhance the Grafton Street Quarter. These strategies have been incorporated into the Dublin City Development Plan 2011-2017 and provide the strategic or 'high level' vision for the Grafton Street Quarter.

Key Strategies

- The provision of significant additional retail floor space in the Grafton Street Quarter through the development of a number of strategically located sites with significant development potential to create new anchors or magnets which will reinforce and expand the Grafton Street Quarter and allow for the provision of the larger shop units sought by the bigger and more mainstream fashion outlets.
- The development of a network of pedestrian loops in conjunction with the delivery of the additional retail floor space to provide a more extensive and continuous shopping experience and develop new street frontages for both shopping and complementary leisure uses.
- The strengthening of the pedestrian routes linking the north and south retail core.
- The creation of a network of attractive streets and spaces where the pedestrian can walk with ease and enjoy a range of planned and unplanned activities, free from traffic conflict.
- The improvement of access to and within the shopping areas.
- The provision of an architectural expression which is complementary to Dublin's unique physical identity and distinctive urban form.

The City Council remains committed to the implementation and delivery of these key strategies, while also acknowledging the need for a level of intervention which responds at the local or street level. To help start this process and build on the public engagement process described in Chapter 3 - The Public Engagement Process, it is proposed to develop a more collaborative and inclusive approach with local stakeholders. The aim of the process would be to identify the essential character and role of each street and explore new ways of releasing their land use and design potential. The following pages suggest some key issues / priorities for streets in the Quarter.

4.2 Grafton Street



Grafton Street weaves sinuously between two striking landmarks – the evocative Fusiliers' Arch to the south and Trinity College at its northern end. The majority of the buildings are Victorian in style, dating from

the late 19th / early 20th century. The width of the individual plots is narrow by modern standards. This creates a fine-grained development pattern, which combined with the varied architectural detail and regular entrances of the buildings and shop fronts, creates a high level of activity and visual animation in the street. The height of the buildings is predominantly four storeys at the southern end, increasing to five storeys at the northern end. This consistency in building height creates a strong sense of visual coherence in the streetscape. The north-south orientation of the street means that the street enjoys sunshine for a lot of the day. On entering the street at its southernmost end, the street slopes and winds gently to the middle section of the street where the main vista of the street is revealed. This feature of the street creates a strong sense of enclosure, which is enhanced by the relative narrowness of the street and by

the consistency in form of the streetscapes on both sides.

Grafton Street is the premier shopping street on the south side of the city and is critical to the economic life of the city. Its draw for many years was the rich mix of retail outlets, including department stores, men and women's fashion shops and a range of complimentary upmarket fashion, furnishing, accessories, jewellery and specialist foods. Some of these uses remain key components of the character of the area. However, this use mix has been eroded with a shift away from independent high end uses to a mix of multinational chain stores and a small but significant number of high turnover / low value retail uses. As a result of this shift in focus, the street has lost its unique Irish identity with many of the independent Irish retailers being forced to close down or relocate to the side streets (which are increasingly presenting a more interesting mix of uses than Grafton Street). It is a move that has been part forced and part encouraged by the availability of lower rents and more flexible lease arrangements on the side streets.

Lower Grafton Street between Suffolk Street and College Green has been particularly blighted by this trend, and has witnessed a move towards lower end uses such as convenience stores and discount bookstores. The low end nature of these uses, combined with poor and in many cases excessive signage, has led to a deterioration in the overall character of this small section of the street which overlooks one of Dublin's great townhouses, the Provost's House.

There are also a number of other issues which are detracting from the attractiveness of Grafton Street as a shopping street and as a destination including problems with vacancy. While these levels are not at a critical stage, there are vacant units at some prominent locations on the street, including a corner unit at the junction with Nassau Street which has been vacant for a long period of time and is now run down and shabby in appearance. This gives a poor first impression of the street at a key arrival point into one of the city's premier streets.

There has also been a decline in the quality of shop fronts along the street over a sustained period of time. The street can boast of some well designed shop fronts e.g. Brown Thomas, River Island, Tommy Hilfiger and Fitzpatrick's. These shop fronts stand out because of the careful attention paid to important design elements including; a well defined framework, appropriate scale of components, good quality materials and use of colours which are complementary to the character of the building to which they relate. However, there is growing concern that the standard of shop fronts is declining as a result of poor design and the use of inappropriate materials and colours. This problem is compounded by some retailers using excessive advertising and signage which detracts from the interesting architectural detail on the buildings and from the character of the street.

There is also considerable pressure from many leading fashion outlets to create larger floorplates on Grafton Street. This demand is frequently at odds with Development Plan policy which seeks to retain and protect the fine grain of the established streetscape on Grafton Street. However, to meet this demand for additional floor space and allow for the expansion of retailing in the area, the Retail Core Framework Plan identified a number of development sites in close proximity to Grafton Street.

Key Priorities

- To maintain Grafton Street's position as the premier shopping street in the city by promoting higher order retail outlets, both multiple and independent stores, and ensuring a balance between them.
- To encourage traders to maximise the active use of upper floors of buildings on the street for retail and complimentary uses such as restaurants, cafés, art galleries and other specialist services.
- To retain and compliment the fine grain of the established streetscape and to promote the redevelopment of sites identified in the Retail Core



Grafton Street



Grafton Street



Grafton Street



Drury Street



Based on the Retail Core Framework Plan Aspirational Pedestrian Street



Castle Market

Framework Plan to accommodate the large floor plates necessary to broaden the retail base and expand the retail quarter.

- To work with local traders and business groups in order to highlight the importance of good quality shop front design and develop a signage strategy to enhance the overall character and quality of the street.

4.3 Duke Street / South Anne Street



Duke Street and South Anne Street run perpendicular to and connect the two principal thoroughfares of Grafton Street and Dawson Street. The western ends of both Duke Street and South Anne Street

are pedestrianised and have the same pavement treatment as Grafton Street. The height of the buildings is predominantly four storeys and the widths of the individual plots are narrow.

Duke Street and South Anne Street are important routes connecting Grafton Street to the South Georgian City and to some of the city's most important tourist destinations located in and around Kildare Street and Merrion Square. However, they lack significant levels of footfall and are currently suffering from relatively high levels of vacancy. The Dublin City Business Association Street Audit (December 2010) shows a vacancy rate of 29% on South Anne Street and an 18% vacancy rate on Duke Street. The mix of uses along South Anne Street is marginal with a mix of fast food outlets and lower order retail units. The eastern end of the street is currently blighted by a substantial number of vacant ground floor retail units which has led to a number of the buildings becoming run down. The northern side of Duke Street has an established mix of cafés, restaurants and bars with an abundance of outdoor seating which adds vibrancy to the street. However, the vacant Creation Arcade on the

opposite side of the street detracts from the ambiance.

There are some well designed shop fronts e.g. Hackett, Timberland and Davy Byrnes. However, much like Grafton Street the design standard of shop fronts on the streets appears to be slipping.

Key Priorities

- To redress the balance between lower and higher order retail outlets on Duke Street and on South Anne Street by controlling new uses and promoting higher order retail outlets to provide for an improved shopping experience.
- To address the problem of vacancy on South Anne Street and attract new uses that provide an attractive lively frontage to the street.
- To develop signage / shop front guidelines with particular reference to projecting signs.

4.4 Drury Street / Fade Street / Castle Market



Though dominated by the George's Street Market and with direct access to Castle Market, Drury Street has a quieter ambiance than other streets in the vicinity such as South William Street or Wicklow

Street. The area in and around the entrance to George's Street Markets is characterised by a growing number of small scale, quirky or specialist shops focusing on high fashion boutiques, vintage stores and food related products. This area also takes advantage of its proximity to Castle Market, an alternative and attractive pedestrian link to Grafton Street. However, the southern section is still struggling to attract new uses, in particular that section located between Castle Market and Stephen's Street Lower which has higher levels of vacancy along its eastern side.

Grafton Street Quarter Public Realm Plan

In this respect, Drury Street and Fade Street are ideally placed to take advantage of a proposed new street that would link Fade Street and the South Great George's Street area via South William Street and Clarendon Street and the Westbury Hotel to Harry Street and Grafton Street. This route has already been identified in the Retail Core Framework Plan and the City Development Plan. It has the potential to open up additional new street frontages and exploit underused backland sites to create a vibrant new pedestrian street which could accommodate a wide range of small scale and specialist retail outlets as well as cafés, bars and restaurants to serve the shoppers, visitors and tourists to the area.

Key Priorities

- To promote and facilitate the development of a vibrant new pedestrian street linking the South Great George's Street area to the Grafton Street area.
- To address the problem of vacancy / dead frontage to the street and attract new uses with potential to provide an attractive lively frontage to the street.

4.5 Clarendon Street / Clarendon Row



Clarendon Street presents a medley of buildings styles and uses. It has some fine buildings and strong uses such as the Powerscourt Townhouse Centre, Brown Thomas, the Clarendon Street Church and

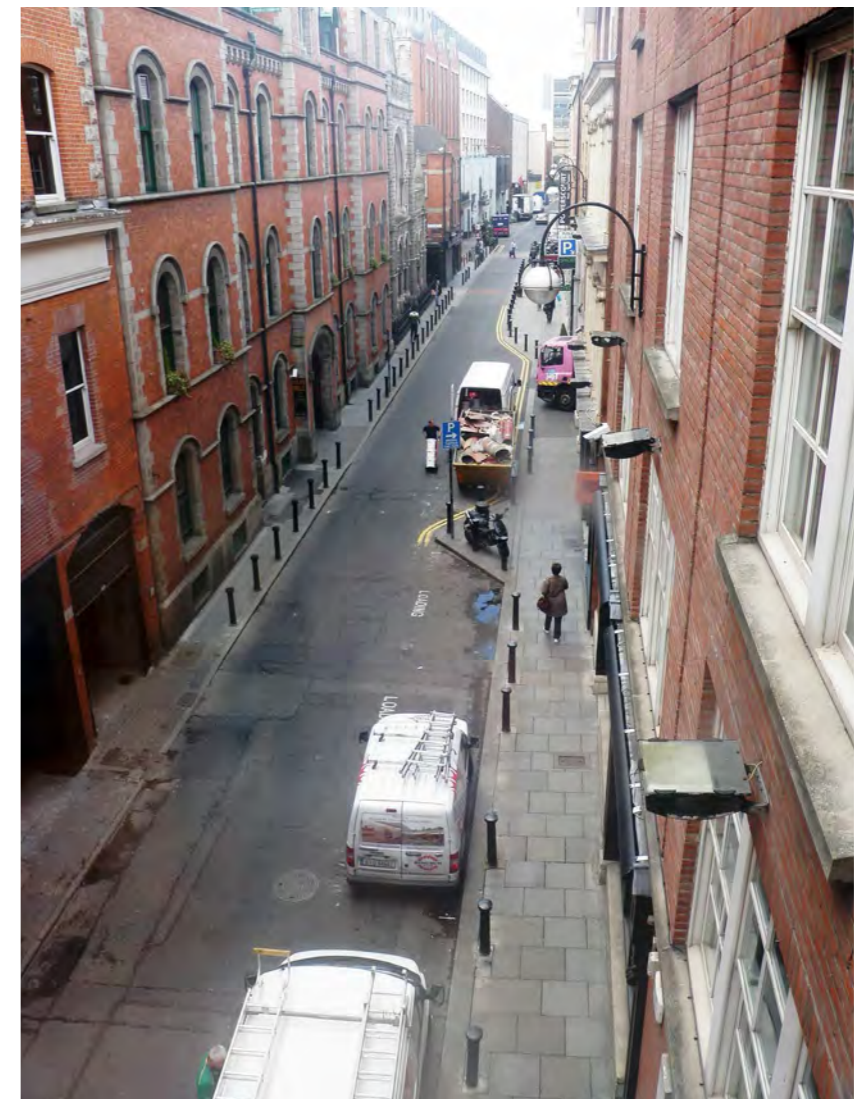
the Westbury Hotel, yet it neither registers as a destination street nor as a place to stroll and window shop. This is in large part due to the poor relationship between some of the larger buildings and the street. Gaps in the streetscape such as that created by the Brown Thomas Car Park, blank façades presented by Brown Thomas and the Clarendon Street Church and the raised ground levels and service entrances

of the Westbury Hotel create 'dead frontage' and a lack of activity and / or interaction with the street. These factors have served to diminish the attractiveness of the street as a retail destination or for lively night-time uses, resulting in the street's role being reduced to a significant extent to access, servicing and through route.

Given the limitations on changing some of these elements, it will be necessary to focus on the street's more positive attributes. One of the two main entrances to the Powerscourt Townhouse Centre is located on Clarendon Street close to the entrance to Johnson's Court, and enhancements to the access arrangements at this location could help generate additional pedestrian traffic. There is also an opportunity to promote the retail potential of the west side of the street. Critically, the development of the proposed Fade Street – Harry Street pedestrian street (see under Drury Street) provides a great opportunity to create new street frontage while also addressing existing issues such as the Westbury Hotel's relationship to Clarendon Street.

Key Priorities

- To facilitate improved access to the Powerscourt Townhouse Centre and generate increased east-west pedestrian movement.
- To encourage more active uses at ground floor level, in particular shops and retail services – cafés, restaurants, galleries and temporary exhibition uses.
- To promote and facilitate the development of a vibrant new pedestrian street linking the South Great George's Street area to the Grafton area (see Drury Street).



Clarendon Street



Clarendon Row



Powerscourt Townhouse Centre

South William Street



South William Street



South William Street

4.6 South William Street



South William is one of the city's most important intact Georgian streets. It is a narrow street which derives its character from the strong sense of enclosure provided by the 4 storey 18th century merchant buildings that line the two sides. It is dominated by two outstanding 18th century buildings, Powerscourt Townhouse and the City Assembly House. Powerscourt Townhouse provides the defining moment on the street with its strong granite façade and curved flight of steps to the main entrance.

While the street benefits from a most pleasing visual and architectural quality, it is still a street in transition. Once home to the city's rag trade, it is now struggling to establish a new purpose and identity, one that would allow the street to capitalise on its special architectural character. It is currently 'bookended' by two emerging and thriving clusters of cafés, restaurants and bars that bring a great sense of life to the street. In between, uses veer erratically from small and eclectic specialist shops, showrooms and exclusive hairdressers to the tawdry with some very unsatisfactory uses such as sex shops, redundant head shops and gaming / amusement centres. The transitional nature of the street is further reinforced by the relatively high levels of vacancy at both street and upper floor level and by a significant number of shoddy shop fronts and signs.

The architectural nature of the front façades of the Georgian townhouses has always presented a particular design challenge for the occupants of these buildings and for the integration of display areas and signage. It may also play a part in the relatively high vacancy levels by discouraging potential tenants. In some instances, the typical window arrangement at ground floor has been removed and replaced with large unsympathetic openings to the

detriment of the character of both building and street. In this respect, it is desirable that in the future a more holistic approach be taken to the future use of these buildings and to the design challenge of showcasing retailers' wares. Despite these challenges, these buildings with their bright, airy and spacious rooms are ideally suited to accommodate a variety of high value uses such as galleries and exclusive showrooms for high end fashion and other designer outlets including crafts and jewellery. The attraction of such uses would also facilitate the development of a "highly specialised high value shopping street"¹.

The pedestrian experience is also currently compromised by the exceptionally narrow footpaths, general lack of public space and the dominating presence of on-street car parking and loading facilities. While the street interacts well with Coppinger Row and Castle Market which provide valuable breathing space for pedestrians and spill over space for local cafés and bars, there is an overall impression of lack of space, especially in the vicinity of Johnson Place / Stephen's Street Lower and Wicklow Street. While there are limited opportunities for the provision of any additional space at the Wicklow Street junction, there is an opportunity at Johnson's Place / Stephen's Street Lower to reconfigure existing space (public and private) to provide more space for the pedestrian, an improved relationship between the buildings and the road and additional active street frontage.

It is obvious that South William Street has huge untapped potential and the Grafton Street Quarter Public Realm Plan opens up a wonderful opportunity to build on the street's considerable assets - the fine building stock, great sense of place, emerging new land use culture and vibrant café culture. However the success of any new initiative must be based on tackling the street's challenges in a holistic and integrated manner, giving equal weight to the interrelated issues of buildings, uses and public space.

¹ The Retail Core Framework Plan - Dublin City Council 2006

Key Priorities

- To develop and promote a land use culture that is based upon small, independent, niche and design oriented outlets that reflects the splendour of the street and capitalises on the high quality outlets in the Powerscourt Townhouse Centre.
- To work with local property owners to highlight the quality and indeed versatility of the floor spaces within the townhouses and demonstrate their potential for showcasing high fashion and other design products and providing a horizontal and vertical mixes of use throughout the buildings.
- To work with local traders to develop a special design strategy for shop fronts and signage in order to address the particular challenges relating to the provision of shop fronts and signage on Georgian townhouses without compromising their architectural character.
- To explore options for the creation of a new space at Johnson's Place / Stephen's Street Lower which can replicate a similar sense of space and activity to the likes of Coppinger Row and Castle Market.

4.7 Wicklow Street / Exchequer Street



Largely rebuilt in the late 19th century, Wicklow Street is characterised by narrow red brick fronted buildings, many distinguished by terracotta window mullions. The narrow plot widths have ensured the delivery of a fine urban grain reflected in the many narrow shop units at ground floor level. Wicklow Street manages to strike a good balance in uses, providing an interesting mix of small scale shops and retail services such as cafés, restaurants and bars. It is a lively street, although rates of vacancy rise as it moves into Exchequer Street. Outside of Grafton Street, it is probably the most flourishing shopping

street yet unlike that street it has managed to maintain a more distinctive character – with many independent and / or niche shops. Shop fronts and signs on Wicklow / Exchequer Street have a more individual flavour and are reasonably well controlled, but there is an encroaching problem with projecting signs.

The street is also dominated by traffic, with pedestrians restricted to the two narrow footpaths. Despite the restricted width of the footpaths, there is growing demand for the provision of street furniture licences for the street's cafés and bars. While, it is acknowledged that the provision of outdoor seating generates activity and buzz, some proposals are problematic due to the narrow width of the footpaths. This is an issue that can be tackled in the context of the more detailed design solution for the public realm.

It is also necessary to look at the role of Andrew Street in the context of Wicklow Street. Dominated by restaurants and bars, it is a busy little street which provides a vital pedestrian connection between the Temple Bar / Henry Street areas to the Grafton Street Quarter. It also offers an alternative pedestrian route from Trinity College to the Wicklow Street / South Great George's Street area. In addition, it is an important hub for tourists as the Dublin Tourism Information Office is located in the old St. Andrew's Church at the junction of Suffolk Street and Andrew Street and as such it acts as a gathering place for tourists. However, public space is restricted and both visitors and citizens alike would benefit from an re-organisation of the space in and around the church. This space also has the potential to support additional activity as adjoining buildings begin to address this space and support a potential new route through to Wicklow Street (see Chapter 9 – Proposed Principal Interventions).

Key Priorities

- To maintain the delicate but currently successful balance between retail outlets and retail services (bars, cafés and restaurants) and prevent an erosion of



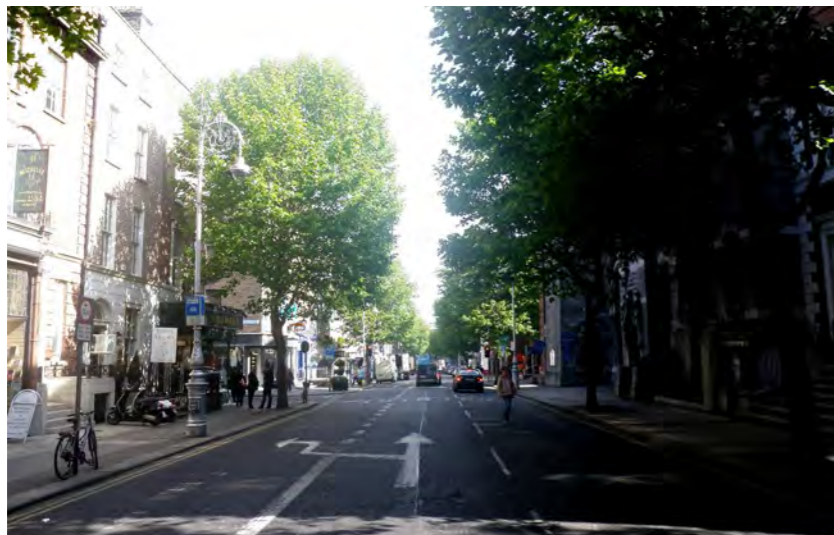
Exchequer Street



Wicklow Street



Wicklow Street



Dawson Street



St. Ann's Church

View from South Anne Street

the retail function.

- To create a more pedestrian friendly street with greater priority given to pedestrian movements and introduce better traffic management solutions at the various road junctions.
- To incorporate specific standards for the provision of outdoor street furniture into the public realm design solution.
- To develop shop fronts / signage guidelines for Wicklow / Exchequer Street with particular reference to signs for upper floor uses and for projecting signs.
- To support the re-organisation of public and private space at St. Andrew's Church and the possible creation of a new pedestrian route to Wicklow Street.

4.8 Dawson Street



Dawson Street is a generous street originally laid out as an aristocratic boulevard. Mr. Dawson laid out his own house on the upper-east side in 1710, which became the Mansion House in 1715. Following an Act of Parliament, St. Ann's Church (1720) was developed on the axis with South Anne Street to serve the new residents.

It is a wide straight street with a boulevard type feel to it, which is reinforced by the trees at the southern end of the street. However, the dominance of traffic, on-street parking and narrow footpaths (in parts) detract from the overall pedestrian experience. Like Grafton Street the north-south orientation means that the street can enjoy sunshine for a lot of the day.

The street enjoys a mix of both retail and non-retail uses although the balance has tipped towards a greater presence of non-retail uses. There are a number of bars and

cafés on the street many having outdoor seating which has created a lively social destination at night. Until recently, the northern end of Dawson Street was home to a cluster of book retailers which gave this section of the street its own distinctive identity. However, the closure of Easons and more recently Waterstone's has largely eroded this special character. However overall, there is a high occupancy rate on the street with very few vacant ground floor units.

There are a wide variety of traditional and contemporary shop fronts on Dawson Street. The majority of shop fronts on the street are well designed and relate well to the character of the buildings and the streetscape. Good examples include Milano's Restaurant and the National Bible Society of Ireland bookshop. However, the use of overly strident colour schemes in shop fronts and over-deep fascia panels on a number of chain coffee houses on the street is spoiling the shop fronts as well as the character of the building and streetscape.

Key Priorities

- To maintain the balance between retail outlets and retail services such as bars, restaurants and cafés on the street.
- To create a more pedestrian friendly environment with greater priority given to pedestrian movements particularly at busy junctions on the street.

4.9 Molesworth Street



Molesworth Street contains some of the oldest houses remaining in the area and the character changes subtly as the eye is drawn towards the axial placement of Leinster House. Until its removal in 1948 a statue of Queen Victoria closed the vista. One of the most

important buildings is the Freemasons' Hall, home of the Grand Lodge of Ireland designed by the architect Edward Holmes and completed in 1866.

In contrast to the eastern and more intact end of the street, two modern and substantial commercial brown brick buildings of no particular architectural merit denote both sides of the junction with Dawson Street. European Union house has an extensive inactive frontage onto the street while the ground floor uses on the other side of the street comprise a coffee shop and the Government Publications shop. Both sites have been identified in the Retail Core Plan as major sites with potential to be redeveloped to provide the larger floor plates required for mainstream fashion outlets. As one moves eastwards there is a consistent building form with predominantly 4 storey Georgian houses on both sides of the street. Molesworth Street is a relatively wide street and accommodates on-street parking on both sides of the street. As a result the street is dominated by traffic and the footpaths particularly on the southern side of the street are quite narrow. However, levels of pedestrian footfall are not particularly high.

The street is a transitional street between the retail dominated streets around Grafton Street and the more commercial and office orientated streets in the Georgian core area. There are a small number of retail units on the street however the predominant uses are professional and business services.

Key Priorities

- To promote the redevelopment of the two development sites on the junction of Molesworth Street / Dawson Street identified in the Retail Core Plan to accommodate the large floor plates necessary to broaden the retail base and expand the retail quarter.
- To create a more pedestrian friendly environment by reducing the amount of on-street parking.

4.10 South Great George's Street



South Great George's Street's character is derived from major rebuilding in a "modest Italianate idiom that took place between 1890 and 1930, creating a relatively consistent and pleasant streetscape"². It

is dominated by the South City Markets, a well known city landmark occupying an entire city block. Today the market accommodates a wide range of small specialist shops and stalls.

The nature of the street has changed over the years. It was once primarily a shopping street, home to a number of well known businesses – Pims Department Store, Dockrells Hardware Store, Bewleys, Woolworth's and Findlater's. Nowadays, after a long period of decline, it has begun to establish itself as a busy evening time destination with the opening of a significant number of cafés, restaurants and bars. While this is to be welcomed, it is putting the retail function of the street under pressure. This is in spite of the street being a designated Category 2 Shopping Street in the Dublin City Development Plan which aims to strengthen the street's retail character. However, this objective must be balanced with the need to provide a vibrant street frontage and to resolve the high levels of vacancy at the southern end of the street. The Dublin City Business Association Street Audit (December 2010) shows a vacancy rate of 19%.

The buildings on the west side of South Great George's Street back onto Dublin Castle although there is no direct access between the two. It has long been an objective to provide such as link, although efforts to date have not been successful. The value of such a route would be significant for the south city creating a direct pedestrian connection between one of the city's premier tourist attractions and principal shopping areas.

² Casey, Christine - (2005) The Buildings of Ireland – Dublin



Molesworth Street



Leinster House

View from Molesworth Street



South Great George's Street



Dame Lane



South Great George's Street



Dame Lane



Dame Lane



George's Court

Key Priorities

- To maintain an appropriate balance between the day time retail economy and the café culture of the night time economy.
- To address the high levels of vacancy particularly at its southern end of the street in the vicinity of the Stephen's Street junction.
- To attract uses at ground floor level that directly relate to and animate the adjoining street.
- To strive to reach agreement on the establishment of a direct pedestrian link between George's Street and Dublin Castle.





5

PUBLIC REALM



5 Public Realm

5.0 Introduction

The public realm comprises the range of streets, squares and city spaces, small and large, that are the open areas within the city's built fabric. The quality of that public realm is created by the cohesiveness of all of its elements - paving, street furniture, lighting, street planting and art work which are set in the context of the buildings and the façades that enclose it.

The quality of the public realm and the image that it projects for the city, is largely in the control of the local authority in whose care it rests and extends not just to the design and fabric of the streets and spaces and their elements but also to their maintenance, repair and cleanliness. The experience of this quality by the pedestrian is influenced by ease of movement through the city streets and the dominance, or otherwise, of traffic in each of these spaces.

The development of a plan for a visually coherent public realm will depend upon analysis and precise identification of the needs of each individual street and space in the **Grafton Street Quarter**, and the formulation of appropriate design responses in terms of each of the public realm elements set out above. By formulating this design precisely for each space and street, the appropriate arrangement of elements will lead to a reduction in visual clutter while using an integrated and co-ordinated range of elements will provide a coherence and a legibility throughout the street network.

The proposals to improve Grafton Street Quarter public realm are framed in the context of a citywide public realm strategy contained in the document *Your City, Your Space Dublin City Public Realm Strategy* adopted by the City Council on 3rd September 2012. The vision proposed in this document for Dublin's public realm is that it:

- Is easy for all to use regardless of age or ability. Universal design principles will be used so that design and delivery create spaces that are safe, easy to navigate and easily facilitate daily life and business.
- Is welcoming and comfortable, because quality experiences make life more enjoyable.
- Celebrates the quality of Dublin's unique spaces and historic character, and creates areas where people can get together.
- Shows the city to its best advantage which in turn makes it more attractive to business and investors.¹

5.1 Elements of the Public Realm

The principal elements that dress public space are as follows:

- **Paving**
The paving provides the 'floor' of the space. The quality of materials, pattern colour and texture give indications of hierarchy of space, civic importance, use and type of traffic.
- **Street Planting**
Good quality, well-maintained street planting is an integral component for improving the quality and overall experience of the public realm while also providing improved microclimate, important environmental and social benefits and floral and seasonal variation.
- **Lighting**
The lighting of streets provides a totally different experience of spaces once darkness has fallen. The creation of a safe environment for traffic and pedestrian movement is the prime requirement but also enhancement, highlighting and enlivening of spaces and façades with a sense of theatre and drama.



South Anne Street



Clarendon Street

¹ Dublin City Council, 2012, *Your City Your Space - Dublin City Public Realm Strategy*



O'Connell Street Public Realm Improvements



O'Connell Street Public Realm Improvements



Provost's House



Grafton Street

South King Street

- **Street Furniture**

The design, form and location of other street furniture elements such as waste bins, seating, phone pedestals and bollards are integral to the quality of the streetscape as is the quality and location of street signage.

- **Artwork**

The appropriate placing of art and sculpture pieces can provide a focus for spaces and street nodes. In addition, temporary installations can enliven, enrich and add surprise to streetscapes.

5.2 Character

Visual focus within the Grafton Street Quarter is concentrated and foreshortened by the narrowness and short length of most of its streets, while the bends in Wicklow Street, Grafton Street, Andrew Street and South William Street create an expectation for what is hidden initially and is gradually revealed by progressing along the street. Jan Gehl, the Danish Architect, deals with scale, smallness, intimacy and interaction in small scale streets in his book 'Cities for People'.²

The potential to add to the Grafton Street Quarter experience by the upgrading of its laneways and small-scale linking streets is part of the overall strategy. Johnson's Court is the best example of a vibrant micro-scale shopping street but also of note is Dame Lane, refurbished in recent years and providing a busy walking route that has a feeling of safety and is visually pleasing. Other linking laneways, which would benefit from similar upgrading and new lighting, include Andrew's Lane and Dawson Lane.

5.3 Principal Spaces and Links

The principal important spaces linked by the Grafton Street Quarter's network of streets are College Green at one end of

² Gehl, Jan (2010) Cities for People

Grafton Street Quarter Public Realm Plan

Grafton Street, St. Stephen's Green corner at the other end and Johnson Place at one end of South William Street leading northwards to St. Andrew's Church. The network of parallel north-south linking streets are Kildare Street on the east side, Dawson Street, Grafton Street, Clarendon Street, South William Street, Drury Street and South Great George's Street on the west side.

The principal east-west linking streets are Molesworth Street leading to South Anne Street and Duke Street and west of Grafton Street, Wicklow Street, Exchequer Street at the north end, and Chatham Street and South King Street leading to Stephen Street at the south end. Cutting through the middle is the predominant east-west route linking Molesworth Street through the Royal Hibernian Way, Lemon Street, Johnson's Court, Coppinger Row, Castle Market and through the South City Market.

Nearly all of these streets have a character of their own due to their length, scale and the variety of building types and materials used. The City Development Plan identifies the potential for a new pedestrian link from Harry Street westward to Fade Street crossing Clarendon, South William and Drury Streets and this is indicated on the overall map (on page 76). Another potential link that could be explored is the opening of a connection from the grounds of St. Andrews Church through to Wicklow Street.

5.4 Traffic

The Grafton Street Quarter Public Realm Plan proposes to tilt the balance from the visual domination of cars in the area, both parked and moving, to a calmer more pedestrian centred streetscape. This will be achieved by limiting on-street parking and redistributing the available street space by widening footpaths and narrowing the traffic carriageway.

This plan acknowledges the commercial necessity of allowing



St. Ann's Church

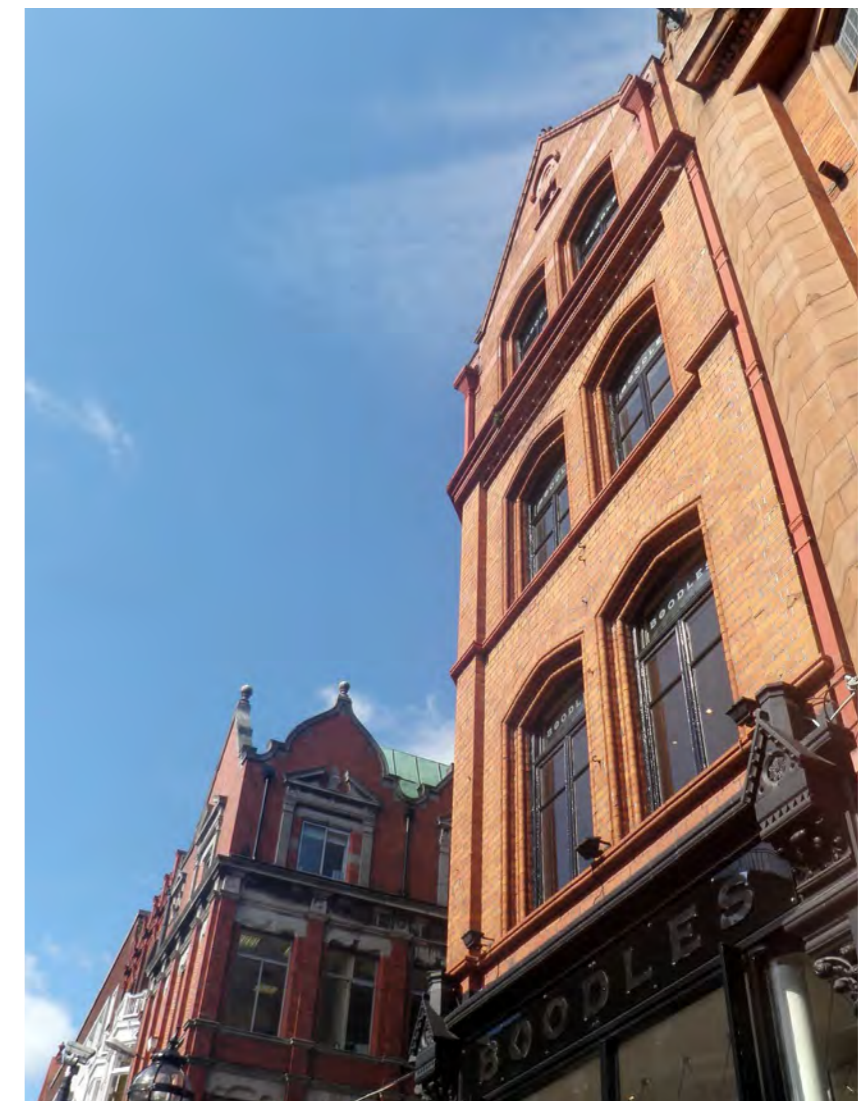
Dawson Street



Molesworth Street



Wicklow Street



Grafton Street



Castle Market



St. Andrew's Church



Grafton Street

shopping traffic to access the multi-storey car parks throughout the area and also the controlled access for delivery traffic. It seeks to build on the traffic calming schemes that were carried out in South William Street, Clarendon Street and Drury Street which highlighted the cross pedestrian movements from the South City Market eastward towards Grafton Street and beyond and which, by paving sections of carriageway in stone, promoted pedestrian presence at these parts of the streets. In conjunction with these proposals the plan will seek to integrate enhanced cycle parking facilities and ease of movement for cyclists.

5.5 Assessing Qualities of City Space

Jan Gehl, referred to above, in his book 'New City Spaces' suggests a set of criteria with which to judge the quality and performance of urban spaces. These criteria assess urban spaces under three broad headings, that of Protection, Comfort and Enjoyment, are a useful tool with which to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the streets and spaces of the Grafton Street Quarter and to identify opportunities and improvement proposals for the spaces. This is dealt with in more depth in Chapter 9 - Proposed Principal Interventions. The criteria are listed below:

PROTECTION:

- Protection against traffic and accidents – feeling safe (protection for pedestrians, eliminating fear of traffic)
- Protection against crime and violence – feeling secure (lively public realm, eyes on the street, overlapping functions day and night, good lighting)
- Protection against unpleasant sensory experiences (wind, rain / snow, cold / heat, pollution, dust noise glare)

COMFORT:

- Opportunities to walk (room for walking, interesting façades, no obstacles, good surfaces, accessibility for everyone)
- Opportunities to stand / stay

(edge effect / attractive zones for standing / staying, supports for standing, façades with good details that invite staying)

- Opportunities to sit (zones for sitting, utilizing advantages – view sun people, good places to sit, benches for resting)
- Opportunities to see (reasonable viewing distances, unhindered views, interesting views, lighting)
- Opportunities to talk and listen (low noise levels, street furniture that provides 'talk scapes')
- Opportunities for play and exercise (physical activity, exercise, play and street entertainment, by day and night, in summer and winter)

ENJOYMENT:

- Scale (buildings and spaces designed to human scale)
- Opportunities to enjoy the positive aspects of climate (sun / shade, heat / coolness, shelter from wind / breeze)
- Positive sensory experience (good design and detailing, good materials, fine views, trees, plants, water)³

5.6 Public Realm Design Approach

The maintenance of vehicular access routes to the multi-storey car parks is essential to the economic life of the area. To that end, while the dominance of vehicles will be reduced by removing on-street car parking, vehicular access through the street network will largely remain unchanged in the short-term. Increasing the width of footpaths will require new high quality paving and while there will be some paving of carriageways on vehicle access routes, carriageways will generally be asphalt finished. The pedestrian streets will be fully paved as at present and there will be some increase in the fully paved zones.

The most intense pedestrian movements are, as would be expected, on the busiest shopping streets i.e. Grafton Street and Wicklow Street / Exchequer Street and with wider footpaths this movement will be easier and more pleasant across the full network of streets. The current street layout, while it provides movement space, is not balanced by the provision of places for pedestrians to pause, stay or rest. It is proposed to identify pausing places off the main movement routes and to optimize in the design their potential for stopping, sitting and observing by the use of paving, planting and seating. These quieter places may be possible in such streets as Harry Street, Chatham Street, Clarendon Row, Dame Court, Johnson Place and around St. Andrew's Church.

European cities with large city centre residential populations generally have a much greater range of small urban space types such as green spaces, quiet areas and children's play spaces, the Grafton Street Quarter project can initiate the development of this more sophisticated type of city space. The Project Team has included an artist to help with this shift from the more conventional approach to street design and to explore the possibilities of temporary and performance installations.

5.7 Public Realm Design Criteria

Paving

The selection of paving is based on the use of a simple range of materials – that includes natural stone for pedestrian and shared spaces and asphalt for trafficked areas. It is the nature of the Grafton Street Quarter, because of the variety and number of building façade types, façade materials and shop front types, that the streetscapes are varied and visually complex. To avoid visual conflict and to complement these streetscapes, the design proposes that the street paving be visually calm, and articulated through changes in block sizes



Harry Street



Balfe Street



Clarendon Street



Grafton Street



Exchequer Street

and colour to suggest the hierarchy of spaces. With special areas of paving it will be possible to define street nodes, threshold entrances to side streets and laneways, and event or stopping places. Paving-stone colour and tone should be neutral generally with particular locations and elements highlighted with contrasting paving colour.

While it may be possible to use small quantities of sandstone and Irish limestone the preferred stone type for paving generally, because of its traditional use in Dublin, is granite with the preferred range of stone colours being silver grey, dark grey, pink and black.

Block sizes and coursing will reflect the engineering requirements for heavier vehicle movements for carriageways and larger units for pedestrian protected areas. In Grafton Street, under-street cellars in front of shops require the placement of street furniture to designate vehicle no-go areas over the cellar roofs.

In streets where there are areas of antique paving slabs and kerbs, there will be particular design proposals either to leave these elements in position, or to move the antique paving to an appropriate nearby location. In some locations it will be possible to augment the area of antique paving in a complimentary way using small amounts of new Leinster granite.

The overall programming of the Grafton Street Quarter improvement works may allow some pilot schemes to trial temporary pedestrian or traffic street-configurations and it may be appropriate in some cases to use basic materials such as concrete pavements or resin bonded aggregate on bitumen surfaces.

Street Planting

Street planting is an integral part of the public realm and provides both aesthetic qualities and important

environmental services to the city. While the dense urban nature of the Grafton Street Quarter limits opportunity for extensive soft landscape intervention, a partnership approach to expanding urban planting in the area could have a significant effect on the visual and environmental quality of the area.

Lighting

The effect of street lighting after dark is to provide visual emphasis to spaces and buildings once the bright sky is darkened. The lighting strategy requires that the minimum criteria of safety and security are first satisfied. The light design then performs the role of providing visual cohesion throughout the area enlivening spaces and streets, creating visual linkages between streets laneways and spaces, providing the possibility of festive and event lighting and providing highlighting to buildings, features and trees. During daylight the lighting components should be unobtrusive. The strategy is required to be sustainable and energy efficient, while visually enhancing the streetscape with the optimum light colour temperature.

Street Furniture Design

The street furniture should be simple, elegant and discreet. The range of waste bins, seating, bicycle parking, bollards, and street signage should be co-ordinated and of high quality design, using robust but unobtrusive materials.

5.8 Design Ambitions

While the traffic rebalancing provides the underlying setting for the improvement works in the Grafton Street Quarter, the principal ambitions informing the design proposals are as follows:

- To provide for a high quality pedestrian experience

Grafton Street Quarter Public Realm Plan

throughout the Quarter and to establish new pedestrian linkages while reinforcing existing ones;

- To use the principles of Universal Design to ensure a comfortable and understandable street environment for all users irrespective of their abilities. Dublin City Council, in partnership with business representative groups, will continue to engage with property owners to encourage them to upgrade their premises to provide universally accessible building entranceways;
- To achieve equivalent levels of quality in design and execution to the high levels achieved in the O'Connell Street improvement project;
- To use high quality materials for paving and a range of high quality street furniture;
- To ensure a sustainable level of quality into the future for maintenance, repair and replacement by factoring in whole life cost and by the use of standard rather than special materials and sizes;
- To use best practice principles in the provision, expansion and maintenance of green infrastructure and urban planting to improve the quality and experience of the public realm;
- To establish design parameters for the improvement works that will suggest continuity and reinforce identity throughout the Quarter.



Street Furniture Mood Board

An architectural rendering of a pedestrian-friendly street. The scene shows a wide, paved sidewalk with a central strip of grey cobblestones. On the left, there are large, mature trees and several rectangular planters filled with yellow flowers. People are walking along the sidewalk, including a man in a brown coat, a woman in a blue jacket, and a child. On the right, there is a brick building with a purple storefront for 'Monsoon'. The store windows display 'MONSOON SALE UP TO 70% OFF'. A woman is sitting on a planter in front of the store. The overall atmosphere is bright and green.

6

GREENING
THE
GRAFTON
STREET
QUARTER

6 Greening the Grafton Street Quarter

6.0 Introduction

The building blocks of our cities are our streets and open spaces whereas the green fabric of our streets and open spaces often provide the cohesiveness, scale and intimacy that make our city's places enjoyable and memorable. The natural environment within our cities which includes the flora and fauna, provides a spectacle in the urban environment that is always changing and often beautiful.

Taking a strategic approach to improving green infrastructure in the **Grafton Street Quarter** will improve the visual and social quality of our streetscapes and open spaces and increase biodiversity through habitat creation. Green Infrastructure recognises the importance and benefits of interaction between the man-made city, including parks and open spaces and the natural environment. It is an unifying theme that mimics natural processes to improve the urban environment through landscape lead interventions.

In particular there is an emphasis on the "life support" functions provided by a network of natural ecosystems. Examples include habitat creation and healthy soils, as well as the more human centred functions such as providing space for recreation and planting for shade and shelter.

6.1 Challenges and Opportunities

St. Stephen's Green is a great example of successful green infrastructure and the benefits it provides for the city are obvious. These benefits can also be seen at a smaller scale in localised tree planting, civic decoration and private green areas. The green infrastructural plan builds on and promotes the benefits of developing a green fabric through the Quarter that will provide increased biodiversity and also provide a test



Potential Areas For Street Tree Planting



Example of a Vertical Garden Avignon, France



Green Street Art Installation Champs Elysees, Paris, France



Green Infrastructure Portland, Oregon, USA

bed to pilot innovative approaches to planting, planning, ecology and drainage.

A challenge that faces development of a substantial green fabric is the competition for space in the public realm. The historic street pattern in the Quarter has developed over a number of centuries and, in more recent times, a lot of this space has been dominated by car parking and loading bays. Many buildings have basements which occupy the space beneath both pavement and carriageway and many of the larger pavement areas now host various forms of street furniture and utilities below the surface. Historically, excluding the park and some private grounds, this competition for space has meant that street planting has been scarce. However, with the removal of car parking spaces and the proposal to increase the width of footpaths, there is now an opportunity to re-imagine how an improved green fabric can be woven through these streets.

With wider footpaths, movement will be easier and more pleasant across the full network of streets; however areas of intense pedestrian movement will provide a challenge for street planting. The busiest shopping streets i.e. Grafton Street and Wicklow Street / Exchequer Street may not be suitable for traditional street planting however, while the current street layout provides movement space, a re-balanced streetscape will provide places for pedestrians to pause, stay or rest and interesting opportunities for additional street planting.

The public realm is enclosed by both public and private properties. Traditionally, some private spaces in the Quarter i.e. Trinity Provost House, St. Andrew's Church, contain significant planting, which have a significant positive impact on the streetscape. The outer vertical and horizontal surfaces of buildings also provide opportunity to transform the quality of the public realm, by using innovative and traditional techniques to create screens, define space and visually express seasonal change. While dense urban areas

are often considered to be comprised chiefly of artificial surfaces, they have the potential to contain a substantial portion of green space and a range of natural habitats. These spaces include public parks but can also include private gardens, roof gardens, green-roofs, green-walls, other forms of street planting, all of which contribute to the quality of our public space. In this regard the strategy recognises that, in order to optimise effective green infrastructural interventions, both public and private spaces have an important role to play.

6.2 Greening the Grafton Street Quarter Design Approach

Street planting is an integral part of the public realm and provides both aesthetic qualities and important environmental services to the city. Street planting can provide focus, define space, softening and suggesting formality or informality. Street planting is important as it often displays seasonal variation in the built environment; trees and other urban planting also bring important social benefits by improving the visual quality and sensory experience of the public realm particularly where open green spaces may be limited. Good quality planting and green infrastructure, when appropriately sited and maintained to a high standard, can transform the urban landscape. It is a cost effective way of improving the visual quality of the public realm while also increasing bio-diversity in the city. Street planting can take many forms and as part of a green infrastructural plan it can vary from tree and shrub planting to new and retrofitted swales, green-roofs, green-walls and other green structures. While the dense urban nature of the Grafton Street Quarter limits opportunity for extensive soft landscape intervention, a partnership approach to expanding urban planting in the area could have a significant effect on the visual and environmental quality of the area.

Trees play an important role in cities as they are often placed along busy streets, as such they provide shade, improve microclimate by providing shelter, scavenge air pollutants and manage noise at a street level. Street planting including shrub and other vegetation also provide valuable environmental services such as improving air quality and pollution control through carbon sequestration and providing and supporting natural habitats.

One of the most overlooked and underappreciated benefits of tree planting in urban areas is their ability to reduce the volume of storm water runoff. The leaves, bark and soil surrounding a tree retain a huge amount of water, allowing some of it to evaporate and some to more slowly reach the urban drainage system. 'Depending on size and species, a single tree may store 500 litres of water. It is estimated that the urban forest can reduce annual runoff by 2-7 percent.'¹ The benefit that this reduction can have on municipal budgets deserves greater appreciation.

Tree planting was one of the most frequent requests received during the public engagement process. A street planting strategy needs to balance the public desire for increased 'greening' of the city with the practicalities of appropriate siting, choice of material, location of utilities, maintenance regimes, planting methodology and the life cycle of the proposed plant material. In this regard the strategy recognises that, in order to optimise effective street tree planting in the area, a careful and considered site analysis needs to be undertaken for each location to ensure that proposed planting is appropriate. The approach to street planting will favour the location of trees in areas that provide sufficient space to allow a suitable species of tree to flourish and to reach its long-term growth potential. A number of potential sites have been identified with further investigation required (see map earlier in this chapter).

The character and uniqueness of an area can also be built upon and enhanced by an appropriate planting palette.

Street planting can often enhance and improve the identity of an area, particularly when well maintained. It is therefore necessary to both develop an appropriate palette but also to propose a planting regime that provides a sufficient and sustainable quality.

The urban setting has a significant role in protecting and enhancing habitats and, in recognition of this, the City Council published its Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2008-2012. The plan identifies a number of strategic directions that should guide planning and design decisions.

This strategic direction within the plan will contribute to a quality living environment and present us with an opportunity to help address Dublin's carbon footprint. The conservation of Biodiversity is intrinsic to our well being and taking this approach presents an opportunity to improve our own quality of life and create an easier life for wildlife.

The adoption of these biodiversity guides provide an opportunity for learning the processes that determine the quality of urban biodiversity and the means to incorporate more wildlife friendly elements into existing environments and into the process of urban planning.

Within the context of the overall strategy, a planting strategy that embodies these objectives will be developed for each of the principal intervention sites. These objectives seek to develop a formula that encourages the improvement and expansion of high quality soft landscaping interventions in conjunction with the hard landscape interventions, engineering works and the social and cultural programmes that will be required to rejuvenate the public realm.

Good quality, well maintained, street planting is an integral component for improving the quality and overall experience of the public realm while also providing improved microclimate, important environmental, social

and health benefits and floral and seasonal variation. In order to achieve these objectives a number of key priorities have been identified;

6.3 Key Priorities

- Develop strategic approach to tree planting and maintenance in the area with particular emphasis on increasing the number of significant trees in appropriate locations.
- Develop and maintain high quality and innovative horticultural regime in the Grafton Street Quarter.
- Encourage a partnership approach with property owners and users to increase green infrastructure in public realm.
- Use 5 strategic directions from the Biodiversity Action Plan to improve biodiversity by identifying and exploiting opportunities for creating habitats and improving green infrastructure.
- Investigate innovative possibilities for increasing urban planting by looking at all structural surfaces including; ground plain, vertical plain, roofs plain and, where appropriate, the introduction of new green structures.
- Investigate innovative possibilities to increase the role of urban planting in reducing storm water runoff.
- Build on and support character and uniqueness by developing an appropriate planting palette.



7

TRANSPORT
&
MOVEMENT

7 Transport & Movement

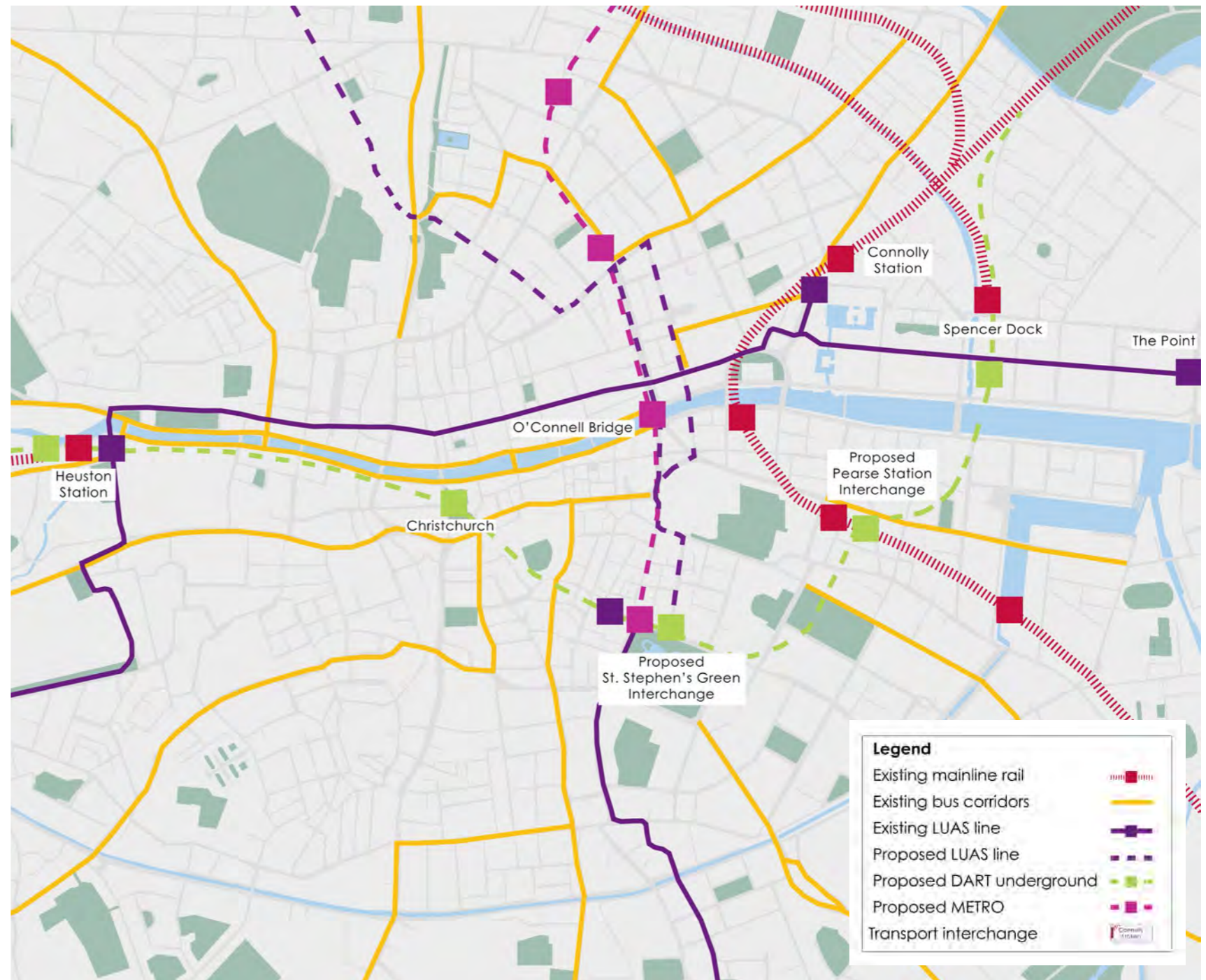
7.0 Introduction

St. Stephen's Green north-west corner was to become the best served location in the country, from a public transport point of view. Transport 21 envisaged the Metro North and the DART underground both having stations there. In addition, Luas Cross City was to link with the north-west of the city providing interchange with the Sligo I Maynooth and proposed Navan rail lines.

This level of public transport could deliver up to 50,000 people per hour to the north-west corner of St. Stephen's Green. As well as having the highest commuter demand per square kilometre in Ireland, the Grafton Street Quarter is also a huge retail and tourist attractor. The total number of jobs and student places within a ten to fifteen minute walk of St. Stephen's Green is in the region of 100,000 to 120,000 people.

7.1 Current Situation

At the moment, approximately 100 buses per hour go past St. Stephen's Green in the morning and evening peaks. This provides a seat capacity of between 9,000 and 12,000 people. The Luas carries about 5,000 people per hour in the morning peak. Many of the job destinations are south-east of St. Stephen's Green and the dispersion of people reflects this. Many of the bus passengers alight before they reach St. Stephen's Green and there are desire lines for pedestrians towards Baggot Street, Kevin Street and Harcourt Street.



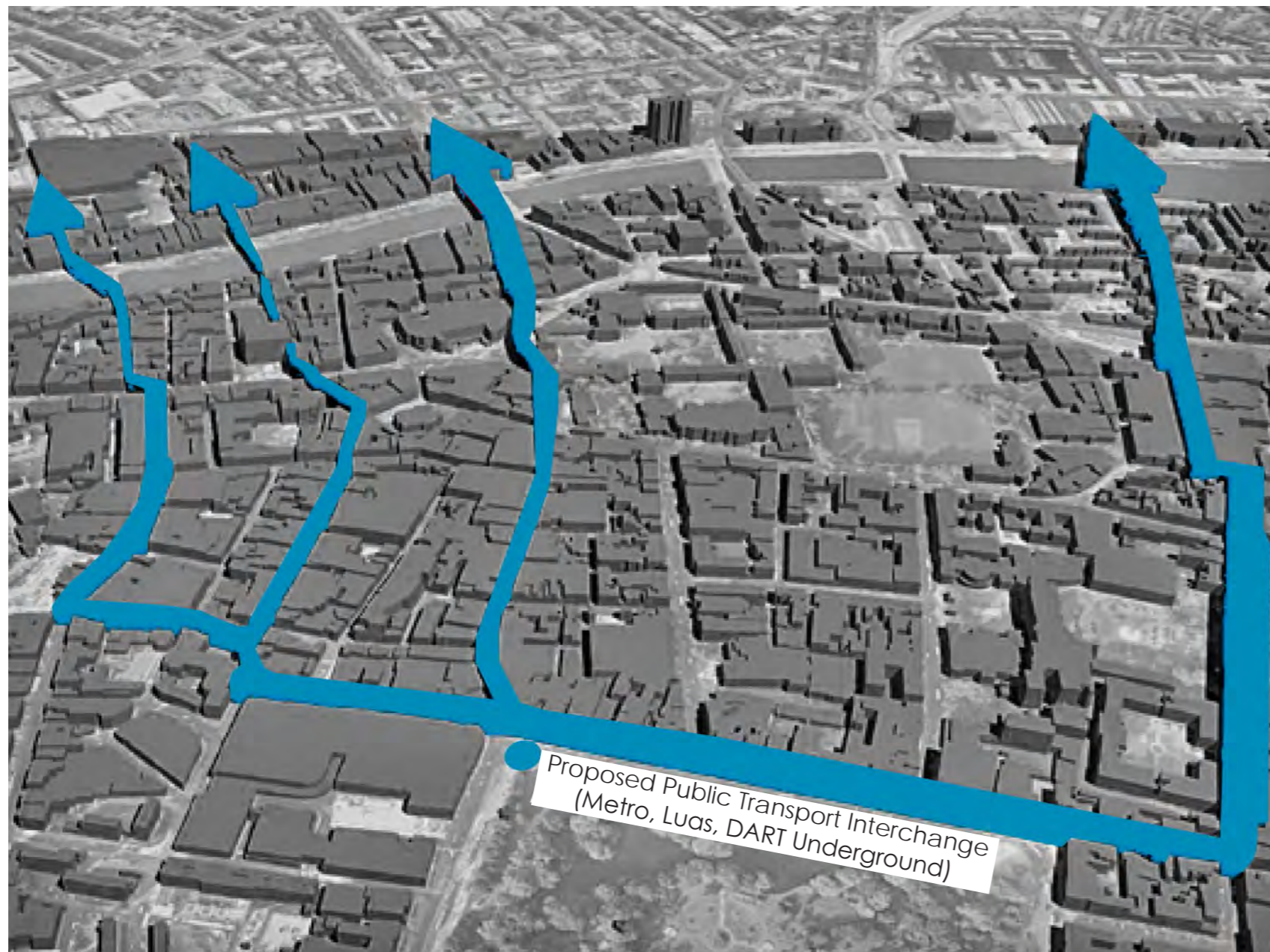
Proposed Dublin Rail Transport Projects

7.2 Background and Context

Grafton Street is the central pedestrian spine in the retail quarter between South Great George's Street and Kildare Street. It is internationally recognised, it also links St. Stephen's Green and O'Connell Street. The capacity of the street in shopping conditions, is 14,000 to 15,000 people per hour. This can sometimes reflect a congested and uncomfortable environment and accounts for varying pedestrian activity. Shoppers on Grafton Street travel at varying speeds, singly and in groups, window shop, have crossing movements away from junctions. In addition there are buskers and street performers, groups gathering to watch and listen, and informal gatherings. In short, there is not enough room on Grafton Street for all the activity that will be generated by the proposed Dublin rail transport projects, so a pedestrian dominated environment should encompass the entire street network between South Great George's Street and Kildare Street.

The Grafton Street Quarter is part of Dublin City Centre and the focus on development of pedestrian links that cross the Liffey is an enhancement of city centre legibility. This is in accord with the Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area, Wayfinding strategy, National Transport Authority strategy and the City Council's own transport strategy. The hierarchy of streets that have cross city linkage are shown on this page. This diagram shows pedestrian domination on South Great George's Street, South William Street and Grafton Street. Luas Cross City proposals mean that Dawson Street will also be pedestrian and public transport dominated, and so of limited use for servicing and deliveries. The main east-west street network is not shown here but, clearly Dame Street, and South King Street to the north and south of the Quarter are part of the pedestrian primary network.

The main north-south pedestrian desire lines are shown on the opposite page, the diagram draws from the Legible



Proposed Public Transport Interchange
(Metro, Luas, DART Underground)

Main Pedestrian Routes Linking to Cross City Bridges

Dublin study and the City Centre Transport Plan. The route along Johnson's Court, Coppinger Row and Castle Market through the centre of the Quarter has been developed to a pedestrian scale and presents opportunities to develop civic spaces throughout the Quarter as it intersects with the various streets.

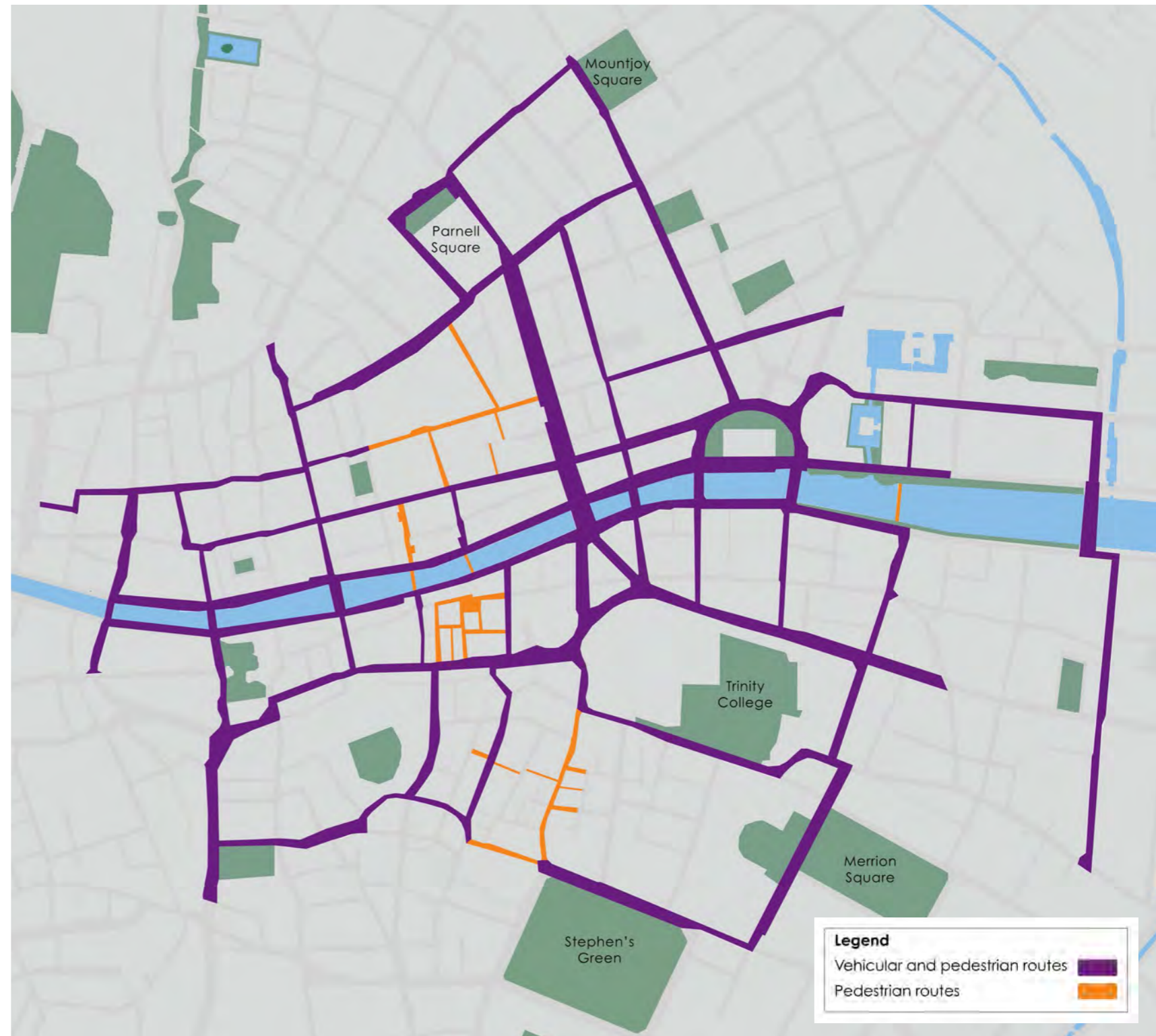
This does mean that in the future, vehicle access will need to be maintained on the remaining streets in the area, for loading and servicing, and for car park access and egress. Legally, at the moment, a delivery van is the same class of vehicle as a private car for traffic management purposes. So providing for servicing of the Quarter also provides access for private vehicles. This will allow for a measure of through traffic associated with city centre car travel, taxis and business trips in the street network.

The transport implications of the proposed Dublin rail transport projects are complex. There is as yet uncertainty relating to the timing of the proposed projects. Regardless of the uncertainty relating to the delivery of Metro North, or of the DART Underground scheme it is clear that, for Dublin to develop, public transport schemes of this capacity will have to be added to the city's transport network.

7.3 Impact of Luas Cross City Works

The commencement of Luas Cross City utility work in 2013 requires implementation of traffic management measures. They will have an effect across the city centre both north and south of the Liffey.

These measures will have to move as much through traffic as possible from the immediate St. Stephen's Green area. The measures will include Phase 2 of the St. Stephen's Green traffic plan which involves creation of a right turn from St. Stephen's Green East to Merrion Row. There are other measures being designed to provide car park access and



Main Pedestrian Desire Lines Linking North and South of the Liffey



St. Andrew's Street



Dublin Traffic Control Centre

servicing and deliveries during construction, as well as a long-term management plan for the area.

Other measures in the overall plan will affect traffic on Dawson Street, Nassau Street and College Green among other streets. These streets supply vehicular access to the Grafton Street Quarter and alternative access is being developed for the period of the works.

In general terms there is a principle of flexibility within a basic traffic pattern to be developed over the next twelve months. The basic pattern will provide access to the overall area and flexibility will be required to adapt to the needs of the area during construction of the Luas project.

The development of a traffic management plan for the Grafton Street Quarter will reflect the importance of;

- The public realm and the built environment, where the open space matches the needs of the city centre.
- The retail and business sustainability of the city, in logistical terms.
- The residential and visitor needs of Dublin city centre, for leisure and historic space.
- The effects of transport policy decisions.
- Provision for the future, the plan must be flexible enough to provide capacity across a changing vehicle usage pattern.

7.4 Future Considerations

The background against which traffic management should be considered is the need to provide additional capacity to allow current levels of employment, visitors and business to increase. Estimates from the City Centre Transport Plan and the National Transport Authority Draft Transport Strategy, indicate that current permitted levels of development (including zoning, heights, density, etc.)

allow for substantial intensification in the city centre. For instance, employment could be expected to increase by 50% in the area, residents could almost double and shopping could increase by at least 20%.

In actual terms this would mean an increase of 100,000 commuters crossing the canals. If the pattern of development that currently exists in the city centre continues into the future, it would mean an additional 50,000 commuters come to within a 15 minute walk of the proposed St. Stephen's Green Interchange.

The delay in the Transport 21 Projects for the DART underground and Metro North present a challenge. The street network is at or near capacity and the private car cannot deliver additional commuters on the scale needed. Additional public transport, cycling and walking is required. From the point of view of design of the street network this location will need to cater for large additional volumes of pedestrians. This requires a severe reduction in the level of on-street parking for pedestrian use.

Access to and from car parking for shoppers and business, however, must be maintained. There are now approximately 3,500 car parking spaces between multi-storey and on-street in the area. Traffic speeds are low. The streets will have to cater for heavy wheel loading for servicing and deliveries as well as heavy pedestrian activity. Use of large delivery vehicles has implications for the structural safety of older buildings, cellars, water mains, drains and other underground services. However, necessary levels of service and delivery must be maintained.

7.5 Process

From a transport perspective, there is a need to develop

a process as the project advances. Removal of all traffic is not desirable, as vehicles, as well as performing an economic function, also put “eyes on the street” and thus make it safer for pedestrian activity. This is particularly true in the evening and night time hours. The development of pedestrian domination should evolve from spaces that are clearly pedestrian, but allow vehicles through at “walking speed”. These can be set piece, almost formal squares, that lend themselves functionally to development in this way. This treatment can then be extended along the street as pedestrian activity and numbers grow to support it’s extension. The design of the public realm must continue to support function.

The extension of footpath widths at the expense of on-street parking has been agreed in principle by the Roads and Traffic Division. Looking at the area, a pattern of pedestrian streets adjoined by vehicular functional streets emerges. Vehicular based functional streets are required to provide necessary servicing, deliveries, access to car parks etc. needed to maintain a vibrant area. The overall volume of traffic is not high in capacity terms, traffic speed is generally low and there are over 3,500 parking spaces in multi-storey car parks in the area. Access to and from these spaces from all parts of the city is vital for retailers and businesses in the area.

The development of the area should firstly identify the needs of retailers and business and ensure that these are catered for. This will entail origin / destination studies on traffic to differentiate through traffic from that which generates an economic benefit. It also entails assessment of loading and servicing patterns and ensuring that these needs can be catered for. Pedestrian flows need to be established across the entire day. This should inform the debate about pedestrianisation, it should occur where pedestrian activity is sufficient to have people on the street all day. Pedestrian zones that

are empty and desolate after six or seven in the evening are not good for the city centre, others will populate them to the detriment of the area.

There is an economic necessity to provide for the private car in the city centre. Where the vehicle numbers are relatively low, and traffic speeds are low, then eye contact with drivers is possible and the effect of the car on the public realm is reduced. Indeed when pedestrian flows drop in the evening, the additional “eyes on the street” due to car traffic can improve safety.

7.6 Cycling in the Grafton Street Quarter

The Grafton Street Quarter is one of the busiest destinations for dublinbikes’ users within the city centre. The Chatham Street, Molesworth Street and Exchequer Street bike stations experience significant demand for the dublinbikes service both during the week and at the weekends. As part of the dublinbikes expansion plans it is intended to provide for additional dublinbikes stations in the Grafton Street Quarter in order to meet the ever-growing demand for this service. In designing additional dublinbikes stations in the Grafton Street Quarter emphasis will be placed on providing bike stations at appropriate locations, which integrate with the surrounding context and complement the other forms of movement in the area.

Traffic volumes and speeds within the Grafton Street Quarter are low and it is quite possible to move safely and comfortably through the area by bicycle. One problematic area is South King Street which it not accessible to any vehicles including bicycles outside certain hours. This necessitates a long detour for cyclists. The facility for cyclists to dismount and wheel the bike for the hundred metres or so does not answer the problem.



dublinbike Station



Cyclehoops for Bicycle Parking



dublinbikes User



On-Street Cycle Parking



Free Cycle Parking

Drury Street Multi-Storey Car Park

Cycle parking is an integral part of any cycle network. The availability of appropriate bicycle parking at either end of a trip will heavily influence the decision to travel by bicycle. Bicycle parking is different from car parking in the sense that it is more than simply a place to stop. Freestanding bicycles are easily stolen and need to be secured to something fixed. Also bicycles are not stable when static and need to be supported in an upright position if they are not to cause nuisance.

Commitment to the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport's Smarter Travel targets mean a cycle mode of 25% or more for Dublin. The car mode is currently around 35% and the area has over 3,500 car parking spaces. It is necessary to establish the legal amount of cycle parking that exists in the area at the moment. Future demand should be predominantly served by off-street, secure, high density cycle parks, rather than on streets and footpaths which can add to street clutter.

An advantage of cycling is the convenience of near 'door to door' travel and designers who wish to encourage cycling should strive to provide some on-street spaces. While cycle parking is much more space efficient than car parking, it does make significant demands on limited public space. This is a particular issue in pedestrian rich areas such as the Grafton Street Quarter. Dublin City Council operates a successful off-street bicycle parking facility in Drury Street Multi-Storey Car Park and it is recommended that this be upgraded, expanded and actively promoted to enhance off-street cycle parking facilities in the Grafton Street Quarter.

In addition, finance has recently been made available from the National Transport Authority to study the potential to develop high density cycle parking facilities in city laneways with swipe card access, and monitoring. This project is underway since early 2013.

However, there will remain a desire to meet the

demand for short-term stops on the street. International experience shows that failure to provide for short-term stops on the street leads to an improvised and disorderly response by cyclists. Well planned and designed street parking can enhance the street space for everyone. A balance is required.

7.7 Key Priorities

The area is heavily used and access is required for public transport, loading and servicing, car parks, pedestrians and cyclists. The future will bring an increased pressure from additional pedestrian activity as well as increased activity in loading and servicing.

The overall volume of private car traffic will need to be managed to provide for local business requirements at the expense of through traffic. On-street car parking is being removed to provide additional pedestrian space. This will also be used to provide for loading and servicing at individual street level.

There is limited space available so the competing needs of pedestrians, cyclists and car drivers will have to be balanced with the commercial needs of the area. There is also a need to provide sufficient cycle parking spaces in a balanced manner to accommodate current and future cyclist numbers.

From a City Council Roads and Traffic Division viewpoint the traffic plan development should be viewed as an organic process. This means that as each intervention takes place its effect on the performance of the Quarter is assessed and taken into account in the preparation of the plan for the next intervention;

- Providing access to car parks for shoppers in this prime retail area, through a comfortable and safe pedestrian dominated environment.

- Providing flexibility in loading and servicing for the entire area.
- Promoting the use of cargo bikes as an alternative to vehicular deliveries.
- Providing for the improvement of the Grafton Street Quarter by making a “by-pass” for through pedestrian traffic and allowing for a flexible, demand driven approach to dealing with loading and servicing during construction.
- Reflecting the heritage of the area street pattern in the pedestrian enhancement schemes using the removed parking spaces.
- Reducing the impact of traffic across the entire area by not focusing all movement onto one street.



Launch of Premium Cycle Route 2012

Grand Canal



Park(ing) Day Dublin 2012

Chatham Street



Dublin City Wayfinding Scheme



8

ARTS
&
CULTURE

8 Arts & Culture

8.0 Introduction

In a survey 'Your Dublin Your Voice' published in April 2011 by Delve Research on behalf of Dublin City Council, respondents stated that the second most important of Dublin's key strengths was its arts and culture (17%). This, yet again, demonstrates that art and culture are key assets to society and to our city. Grafton Street has made its way into song and literature in a way that no other street in Dublin has. Be it in James Joyce's *Dubliners*, Patrick Kavanagh's poem *Raglan Road* or popular songs of the past (e.g. Noel Purcell singing *Dublin Saunter*) or recently (e.g. Dido 'Grafton Street') the **Grafton Street Quarter** epitomises so much of what Dublin means to people.

The area has a vibrancy which is enhanced by the street performers and buskers who particularly perform on Grafton Street but have, over time, found alternative 'pitches' on other streets in the area. The most famous performer was 'The Diceman' Thom McGinty who, for many years, entertained and bemused the public. Famous musicians who have busked in the area include, the Hothouse Flowers, Rodrigo y Gabriela, Glen Hansard and Damien Rice. Public Art in the form of sculpture is also a feature of the area with statues of Molly Malone and Philip Lynott being particular favourites of the public.

The Grafton Street Quarter is one of the most important and vibrant hubs for arts and culture in Dublin. There is a greater density of galleries, bookshops and music stores than in any other area in Dublin. In many respects the nature and diversity of arts and cultural venues mirrors the configuration of the retail sector in the Quarter with a mix of major cultural institutions and many smaller arts and cultural facilities in the area.

Two of the most important national cultural institutions, the National Library of Ireland and the National Museum of Ireland on Kildare Street are on the periphery of the Quarter, with the National Gallery of Ireland, National Concert Hall and the Arts Council just outside the Quarter. The Gaiety Theatre on South King Street, just off Grafton Street with its beautiful 19th century interior and rich legacy of theatre, opera and pantomime continues to be a significant theatre for the city. Bewleys Café Theatre continues to thrive providing a more intimate venue for the enjoyment of drama.

Two significant public galleries for contemporary visual art, the Douglas Hyde Gallery and Royal Hibernian Academy, are located just outside the Grafton Street Quarter while the Quarter itself is the location of at least twelve commercial art galleries including many of the country's leading galleries with international reputations. This is, without doubt, the greatest concentration of art galleries in the city. Three of the most prestigious fine art auction rooms are also located within the area. Music is present in many ways with more than eleven retail outlets selling musical instruments, CDs, DVDs, sheet music, etc. These include well known 'brand names' in addition to smaller outlets. In addition, the DIT Conservatory of Music (the largest college of music in the country) is partly located at Chatham Row, teaching music to children and adults. Music also features within the area in formal and informal performances in music venues and in particular in music sessions in pubs. The presence of many bookshops reflects the city's love of literature with major stores and many smaller bookshops (including antiquarian and second-hand shops) dotted throughout the area.

The area has traditionally been associated with design and fashion and South William Street and the adjoining streets are once again becoming a burgeoning fashion district in the city. There is even a knitting club which meets weekly in the



Molly Malone Statue, Grafton Street



Car Free Day 2010

South William Street



Mobility Day 2011

Dame Court



Gaiety Theatre, South King Street



Sand Sculptor, Grafton Street

Powerscourt Townhouse. In terms of lifestyle culture, the area is dotted with pubs and coffee shops with distinctive character and little hubs of small restaurants are developing making it a vibrant social Quarter by day and by night.

Dublin City Council recognises the importance of arts and culture to the future development of the public realm in the Grafton Street Quarter and is intent on enhancing the reputation of the area as a culturally rich district. The recognition that the public realm is more than physical space is a key element of this plan. There is fundamental belief that the character of the Quarter is not only defined by the nature of the streets and their architecture but that the area is animated through the different activities and cultural mix which give the area its identity. The City Council will encourage the mix of arts and cultural venues and activities and will also work to enhance the public realm through design, public art and cultural events.

The inclusion of the City Council's Public Art Manager on the Grafton Street Quarter Project Implementation Team not only demonstrates the City Council's commitment to the arts but also its recognition of the value of public art. Dublin City Council embraces a contemporary understanding of public art. It recognises that public art is more than permanent and sculptural artwork (though these can be iconic) and that it embraces all artforms and can be understood as a process, ranging from a once off event or performance to projects that take place over time. Permanent public art can add to the identity of a place, and enhance the visual and aesthetic experience through sculpture, murals and integrated design as well as acting as 'way-finders' helping to orientate visitors within an area and in the city. In addition, temporary public art can add to the experience of an area (in different ways at different times) through other art events and artforms, including performance, be it musical, theatrical or dance and film screenings, readings, etc. Public art can also offer opportunities for a different level of engagement with the arts as opposed to more formal and traditional art venues. The

City Council believes that public art provision is not confined to the work of the City Council and that it can take place through the initiative of artists themselves, as well as through the stakeholders in the area, be it businesses, retailers or residents. Recognising that public art now embraces a wider spectrum of the arts, consideration will be given to how the public realm can be designed to offer opportunities for public art and cultural events which add to the enjoyment of the Quarter for businesses, retail outlets, visitors and residents.

In a new initiative for the city, Dublin City Council has appointed an artist to work with the Project Team, emphasising the value placed on an integrated and collaborative approach to the design of the public realm. The collaborative approach recognises that art and culture are not separate from society or an add-on to society and that artists can work closely with other professional disciplines bringing creative and original approaches to the design and enhancement of the public realm. The artist's practice includes interventions in the public realm and curating live art events. The artist has researched and presented examples of different and novel approaches to designing the public realm which artists and architects have worked on in locations in Ireland, Austria, Canada, Germany, Peru, Serbia, Spain, Switzerland, Peru, The Netherlands, UK, and the USA. This research demonstrated a range of approaches to enhancing the public realm through use of unusual materials, surfaces, street furniture, lighting, planting, temporary interventions, etc. In addition to research and offering potential models for consideration, the artist will continue to work as an integral part of the Project Team contributing to the pilot projects and the longer-term design solutions for the enhancement of the Quarter.

In recent years Dublin City Council has undertaken initiatives with local businesses, traders and residents to enliven the public realm through temporary projects, road closures, and festivities. As part of Mobility Week, the Living Streets Festival took place in Dame Court in September 2011 and on South William Street, Drury Street, Fade Street, Castle Market and Coppinger Row

in 2010. Roads were closed to motorised vehicles and there was free live music and comedy, an exhibition of cargo bikes and an outdoor evening film screening (with the projection being pedal powered by volunteers).

The Grafton Street Quarter is the subject of the Elective Module for NCAD MA Fine Art students and UCD 4th Year Architecture students. As part of this course, students were invited to undertake public interventions in the area. The work explored, challenged and questioned the way the city is designed and populated and how a temporary intervention can contribute to the discussion on the built public realm in Dublin city.

It is proposed that some spaces and streets in the Quarter will offer opportunities for pilot projects for arts organisations, education colleges, traders and businesses to work in collaboration with the City Council in building on previous projects in the area and embracing new approaches to the public realm: enabling short-term research projects to explore the potential for a new treatment of the public realm in the future. The Dublin Institute of Technology Conservatory of Music and Drama has expressed interest in ideas to animate the streets in its vicinity through performances by students.

In the long-term the intention is that the Grafton Street Quarter will continue to thrive as a district which is associated with the arts, culture and design. This will be manifested through the continued mix of arts and cultural venues and outlets in the area and the design of the public realm which will be conducive to activities and events, ongoing, temporary or impromptu, which add to the cultural experience of the area.

8.1 Key Priorities

- To maintain and develop the mix of arts and cultural activity in the Grafton Street Quarter.
- To create an aesthetic and design which is conducive to

arts and cultural activity.

- Where appropriate to support the commissioning of public art both temporary and permanent.
- To encourage street performance and entertainment in appropriate locations throughout the area.
- To provide opportunities for street events initiated by traders and residents.



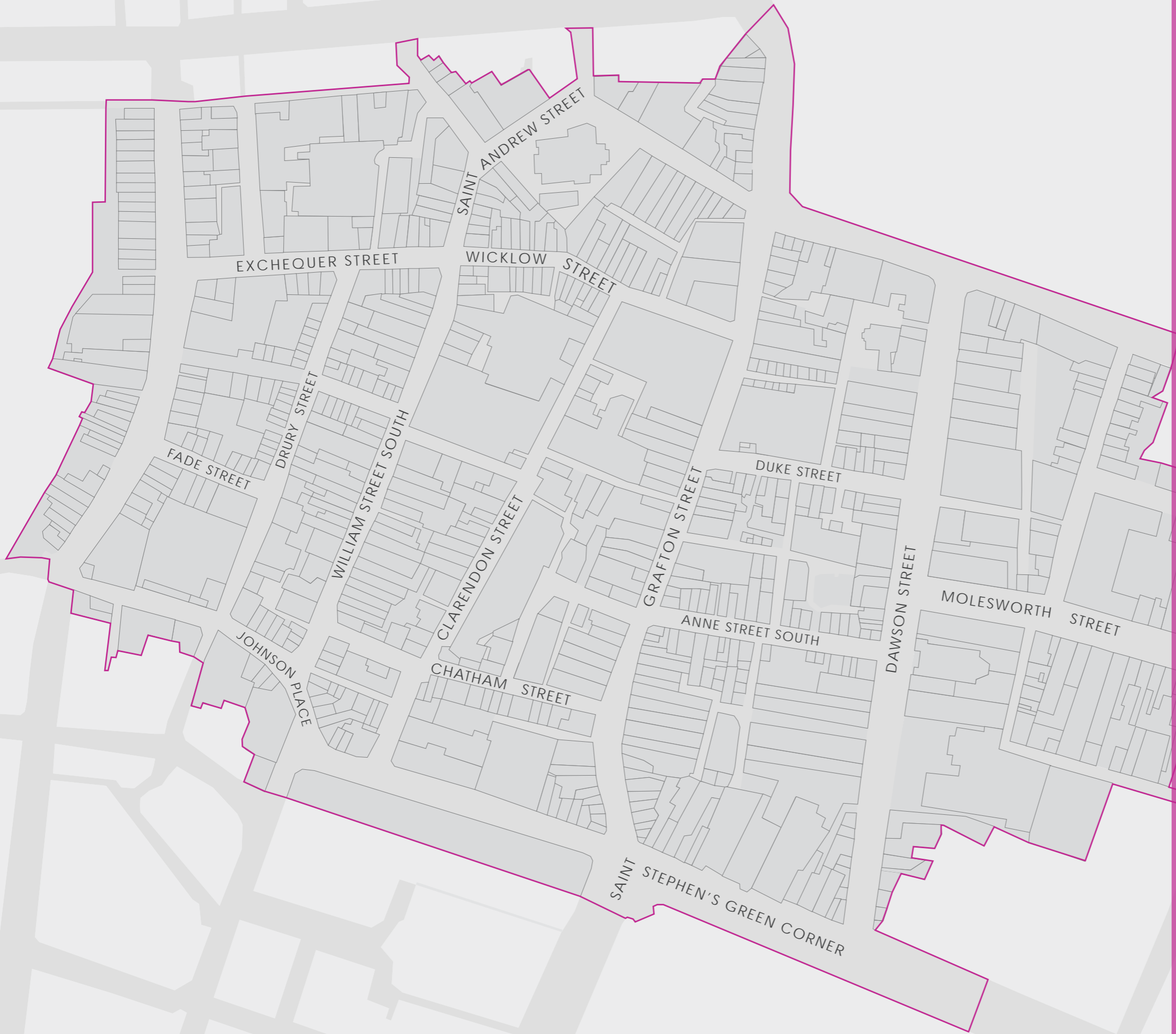
Artist Designed Utility Box, Fade Street



Street Performer, Grafton Street











9

PROPOSED
PRINCIPAL
INTERVENTIONS





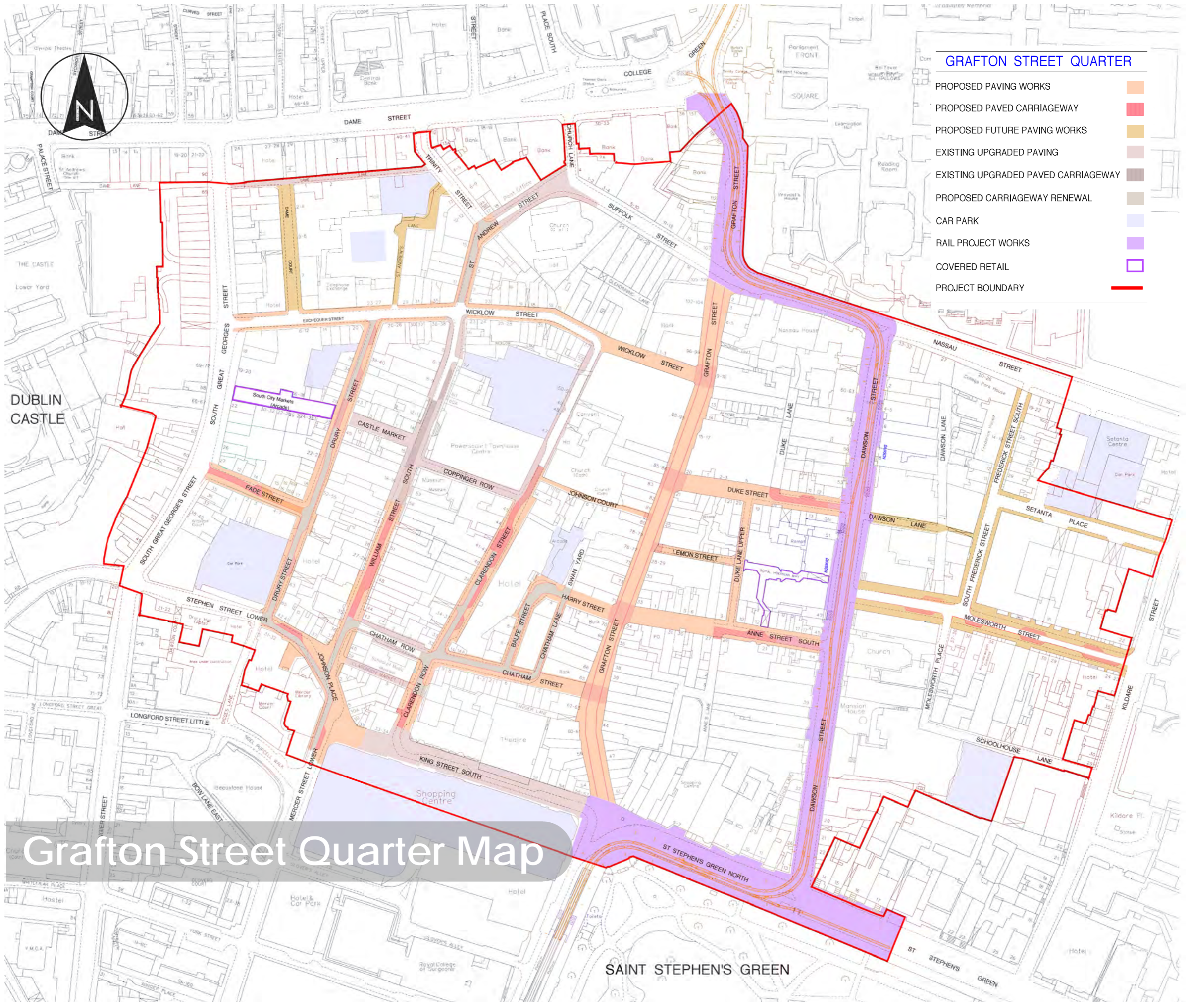
GRAFTON STREET QUARTER

- PROPOSED PAVING WORKS 
- PROPOSED PAVED CARRIAGEWAY 
- PROPOSED FUTURE PAVING WORKS 
- EXISTING UPGRADED PAVING 
- EXISTING UPGRADED PAVED CARRIAGEWAY 
- PROPOSED CARRIAGEWAY RENEWAL 
- CAR PARK 
- RAIL PROJECT WORKS 
- COVERED RETAIL 
- PROJECT BOUNDARY 

DUBLIN CASTLE

Grafton Street Quarter Map

SAINT STEPHEN'S GREEN



9 Proposed Principal Interventions

9.0 Introduction

Street improvement public realm works will, by the nature and size of the street network in the Grafton Street Quarter, be undertaken as a rolling programme of discrete projects carried out over a number of years. The first, most significant of the projects, is Grafton Street itself.

The programme subsequent to Grafton Street will be determined by a number of factors. The Dublin City Development Plan 2011-2017, the Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2008-2016 and the Dublin City Public Realm Strategy all describe hierarchies of streets that must be considered in the determination of programme sequence. Other factors such as existing condition, extent of disruption, traffic management impacts and pedestrian safety will also have a bearing on the order in which the projects are carried out.

9.1 Project Groups

The coloured map opposite shows the areas where public realm works are planned for the Quarter, with the colours in the legend indicating the nature of the work. The street improvement works have been grouped together as follows;

- **Group 1** Dublin City Council Projects
- **Group 2** Potential Partnership Projects between Dublin City Council and private property owners.
- **Group 3** Projects related to the proposed Dublin rail transport projects which will be delivered by the Rail Procurement Agency.

The principal **Group 1 Projects** are listed below and some of these are illustrated separately on individual map sheets in this chapter;

- Fade Street
- Clarendon Street / Clarendon Row
- Grafton Street
- South Anne Street
- Duke Street
- Wicklow Street
- South William Street
- Drury Street
- Exchequer Street
- Johnson Court
- Suffolk Street
- Chatham Street / Harry Street / Balfe Street
- Molesworth Street
- Dame Court
- Andrew Street
- Andrew's Lane
- South Frederick Street
- Dawson Lane
- Trinity Street

Note: Works may be undertaken in parallel whereby works are occurring in more than one street at a given time. Works to an individual street may occur in distinct segments separated through the overall programme.

Group 2 Projects which will be addressed in partnership with private property owners and are illustrated separately on individual map sheets in this chapter;

- Johnson Place
- St. Andrew's Church Area

Group 3 Projects to be delivered by the Rail Procurement Agency;

- Dawson Street
- Nassau Street
- Lower Grafton Street
- St. Stephen's Green Corner - this project will be addressed in partnership with Dublin City Council and is illustrated on an individual map sheet in this chapter.

Luas Cross City Extension

The Luas Cross City extension, scheduled to commence construction in 2015, will have significant and long-term implications for the Grafton Street Quarter. The Luas Green line currently terminates at the south end of Grafton Street at St. Stephen's Green. The project proposes to extend the tracks to St. Stephen's Green North along Dawson Street, Nassau Street and around College Green to link with the Luas Red Line in O'Connell Street and from there northbound to Broombridge.

In addition to the probability of major construction disruption, the extension to the Luas Green Line will involve the permanent change of street surfaces to a track environment along the proposed route. However, once the project is complete the residual on-street structures in the Quarter will be minimal, principally a Luas stop on Dawson Street near its junction with Molesworth Street. It is estimated that the Luas Cross City project has the potential to deliver in excess of 5,000 people per hour into the Quarter. In physical space terms this possibility points to the need to relieve some of the increased pressure for space in Grafton Street, Dawson Street and College Green through improving the environment for pedestrians by enhancing the network of supporting streets; this in turn will promote desirable pedestrian movement through the full network of streets and lanes in the entire Quarter.

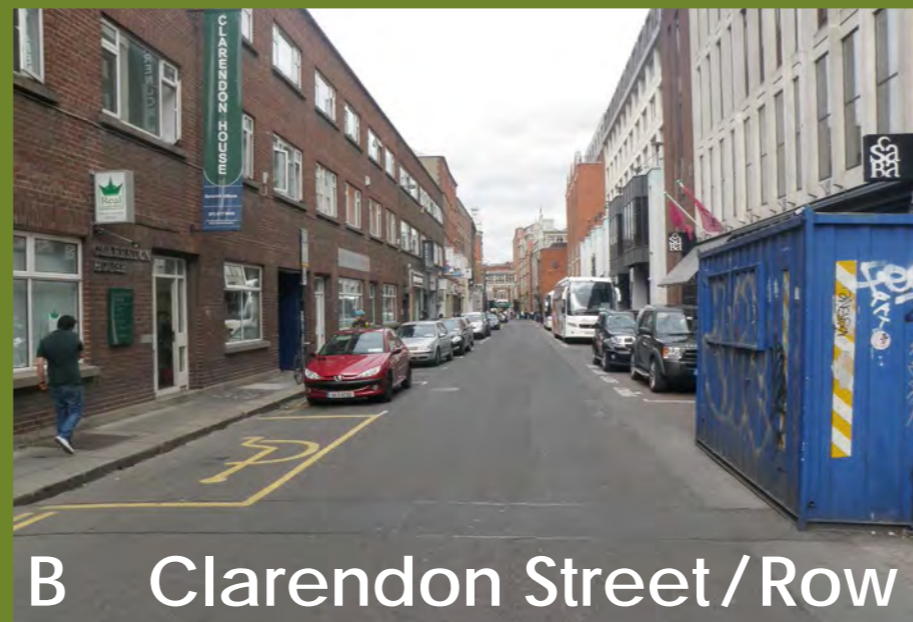
It is with all of the above in mind that the Grafton Street Quarter Draft Public Realm Plan, in consultation with the Rail Procurement Agency, will seek to ensure that both of these public realm projects merge in an unified and visually coherent way.

Public Realm Intervention Projects - Key Map

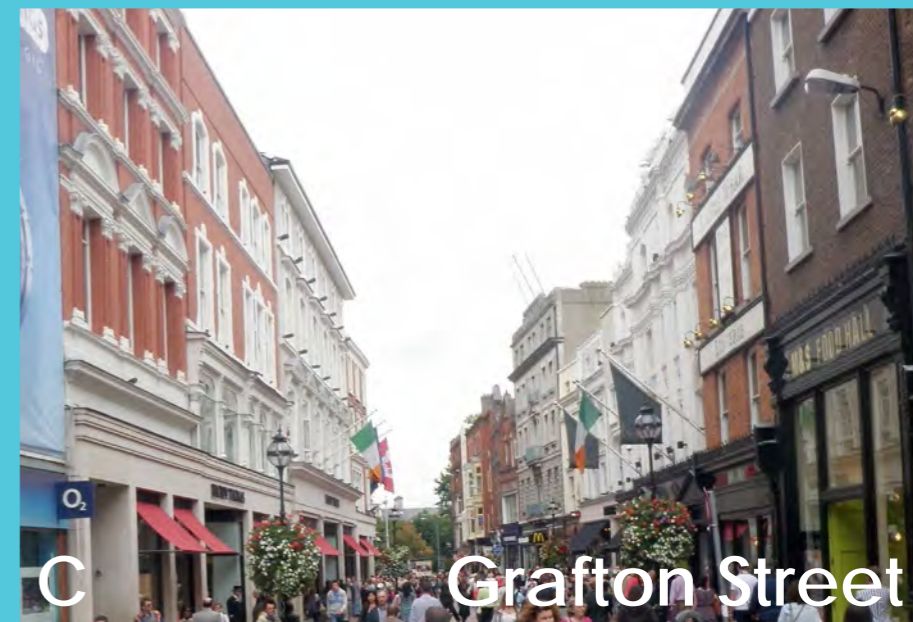




A Fade Street



B Clarendon Street / Row



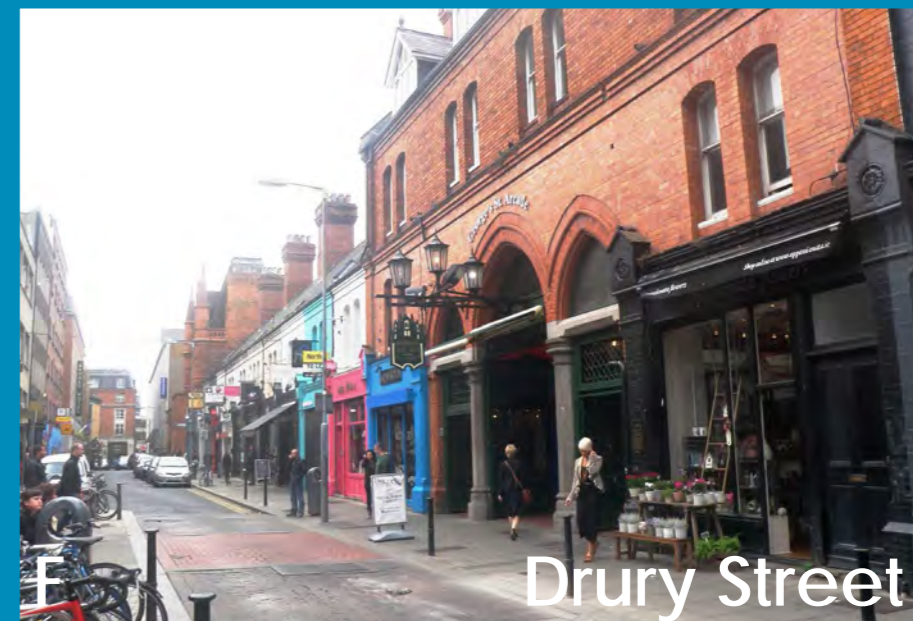
C Grafton Street



D Duke Street



E South William Street



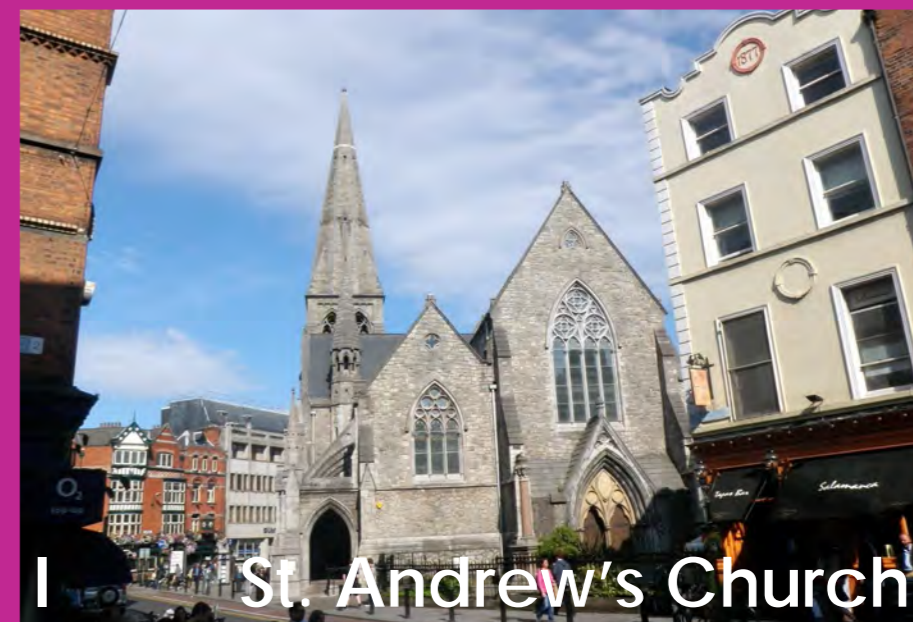
F Drury Street



G St. Stephen's Green



H Johnson Place



I St. Andrew's Church

A. FADE STREET

Qualities

- High activity street both by day and night
- High quality architectural frontages in particular the set-piece façade of the South City Market
- Visually lively brickwork, building façades, shop-fronts and business uses

Issues

- Visual over-dominance of parked cars
- Existing footpaths very narrow
- Existing footpaths and roadway in poor repair
- Cluttered appearance of street furniture and street signage
- Busy traffic street – primary exit route from Drury Street multi storey car-park

Opportunity

- Pilot scheme to trial improved pedestrian environment and develop street activity with inexpensive surfacing materials, temporary containerised tree planting and festive type street lighting

Pilot Scheme

Elements of Street Intervention

Pilot scheme completed in Spring 2012;

- Improved streetscape by removing on-street parking
- Widened both footpaths using coloured asphalt finish
- Reconstructed reduced-width carriageway using coloured asphalt
- Facilitated loading
- Installed containerised tree planting
- Provided lighting installations
- Conserved antique granite kerbs

Long-Term Scheme

Elements of Street Intervention

- Improve streetscape by removing on-street parking
- Widen both footpaths using natural stone and reduce carriageway width
- Facilitate loading
- Conserve antique granite paving
- Upgrade street lighting
- Minimise street signage and footpath clutter
- Improve streetscape by integrating high quality street planting where appropriate



Before Pilot Scheme

Fade Street



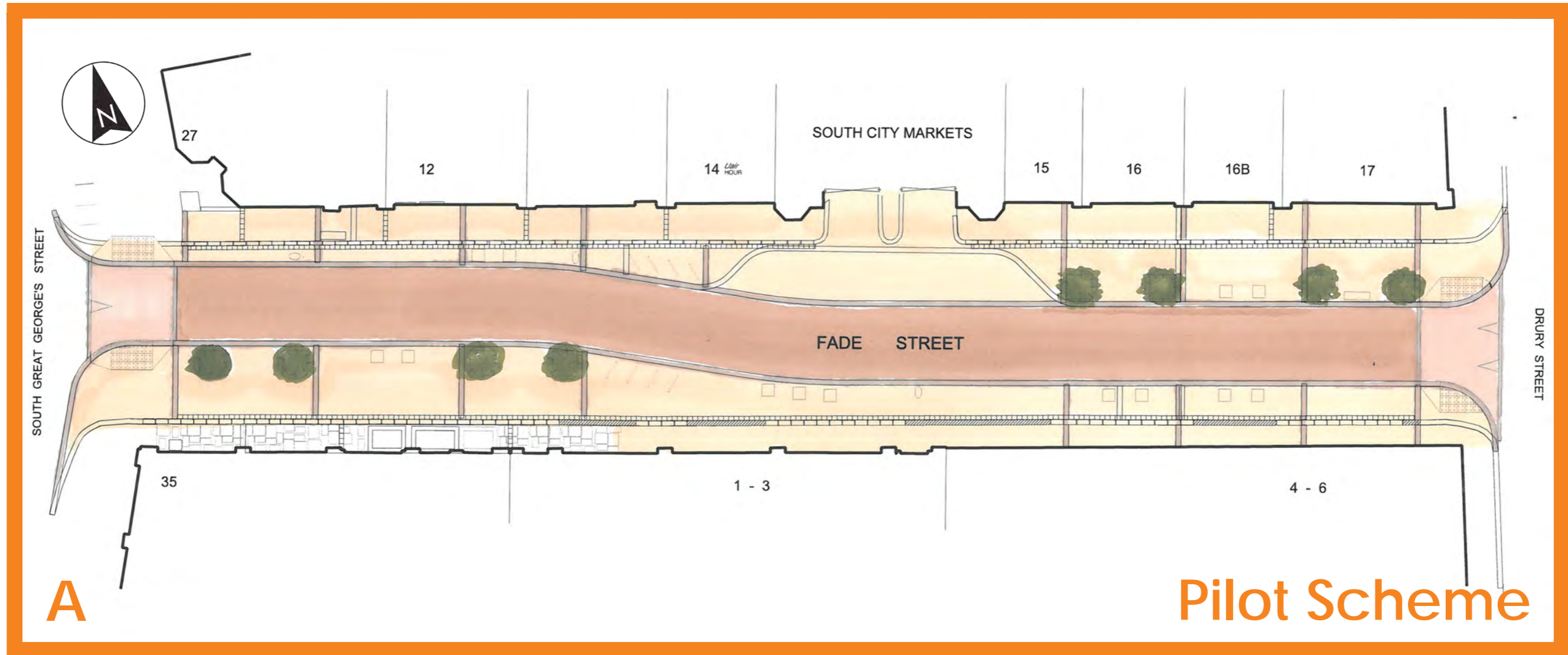
Pilot Scheme

Fade Street



Pilot Scheme

Fade Street



FADE STREET

PAVING WORKS



PAVED CARRIAGEWAY



BOLLARD SEATS



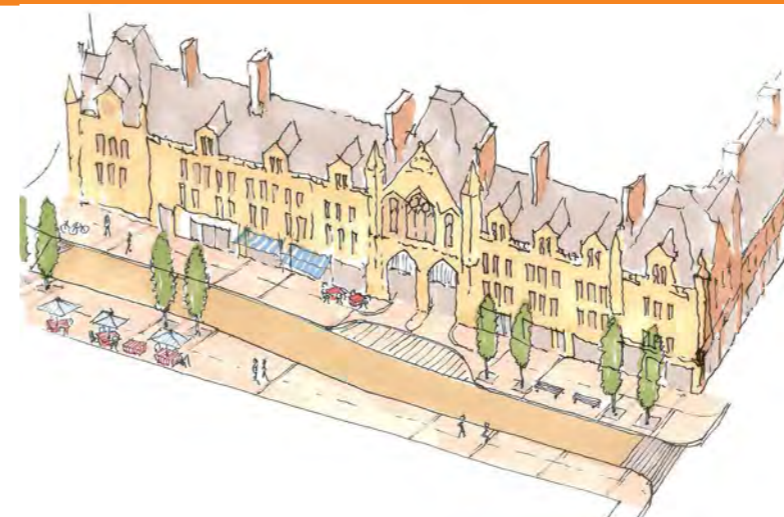
BIKE RACKS



TREE PLANTERS



Artist's Impressions



Fade Street Pilot Scheme

FADE STREET

B. CLARENDON STREET / CLARENDON ROW

Qualities

- Spacious and legible link between South King Street and Wicklow Street providing parallel pedestrian route to Grafton Street
- Varied range of building uses and activities including hotel, retail and restaurants and in particular at Clarendon Row the presence of the DIT School of Music and the residential apartment complex
- Potential for good quality animated frontages from hotel and other restaurants
- Busy activity nodes at Coppinger Row / Johnson Court and at Chatham Street / Chatham Row

Issues

- Domination of unanimated building frontage with poor street relationship
- Domination of closed or blank façades
- Raised carriageway shared surface at Johnson Court, part of previous paving improvement scheme in poor repair
- Long lengths of narrow footpath

Opportunities

- Pilot scheme to trial improved pedestrian environment and develop street activity with inexpensive surfacing materials, temporary containerised tree planting and festive type street lighting. The provision of a desirable pedestrian route parallel to Grafton Street will allow space to carry out improvement works in Grafton Street while also exploring with businesses the potential for improved street activity
- Extend the pedestrian environment of South King Street into Clarendon Row
- Possibility of developing a daytime street performance programme with the School of Music

- Possibility of reconfiguring the Clarendon Street / Chatham Street junction to be visually interesting and pedestrian friendly

Pilot Scheme

Elements of Street Interventions

Pilot scheme carried out during 2012;

- Improved streetscape by removing on-street parking
- Provided colour designated pedestrian walking area on existing carriageway surface
- Reduced carriageway width
- Facilitated loading and disabled parking bays
- Installed containerised tree planting
- Conserved antique granite paving

Long-Term Scheme

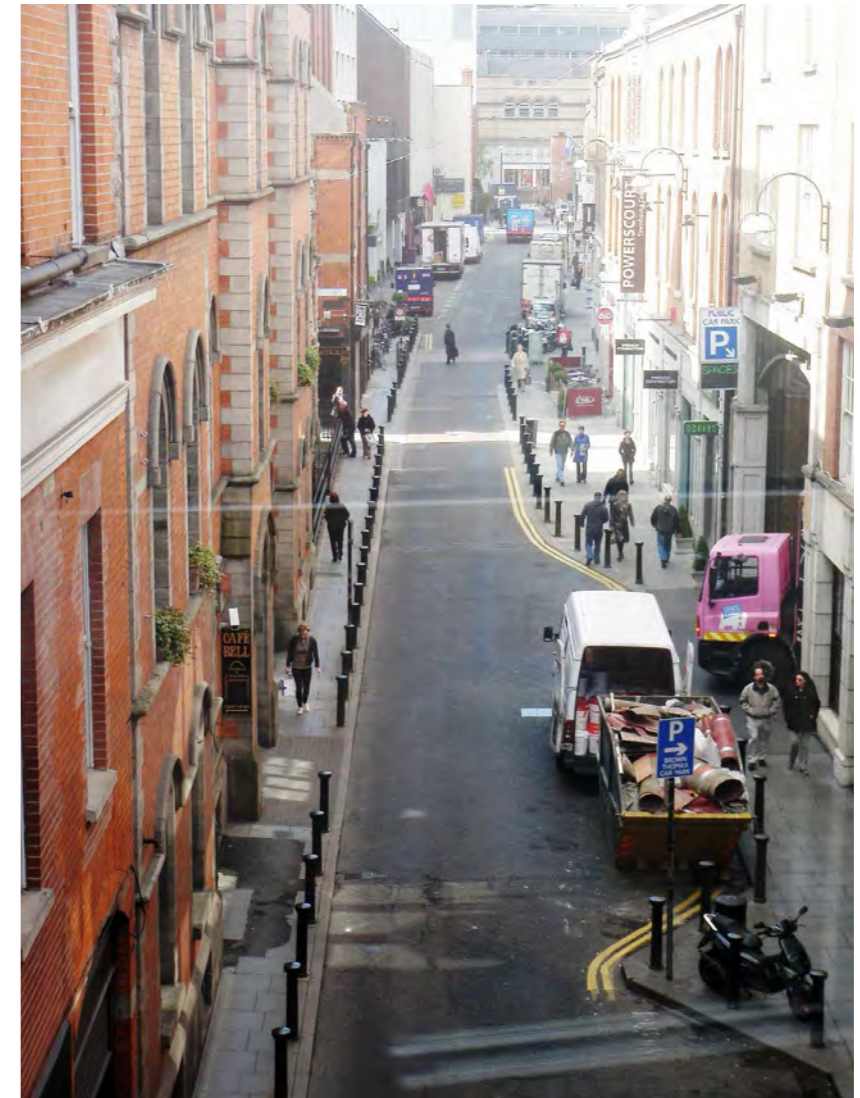
Elements of Street Interventions

- Improve streetscape by removing on-street parking
- Widen both footpaths
- Reduce carriageway width
- Facilitate loading and disabled parking bays
- Extend raised carriageway shared surface south of Coppinger Row to overlap Westbury Mall
- Install containerised tree planting
- Install new street lighting
- Conserve antique granite paving
- Improve streetscape by integrating high quality street planting where appropriate



Junction with Chatham Street

Clarendon Row



View to South

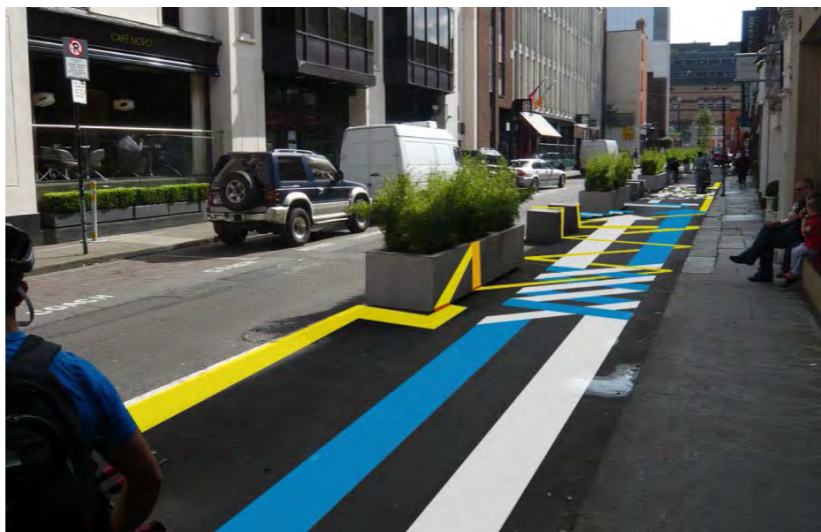
Clarendon Street



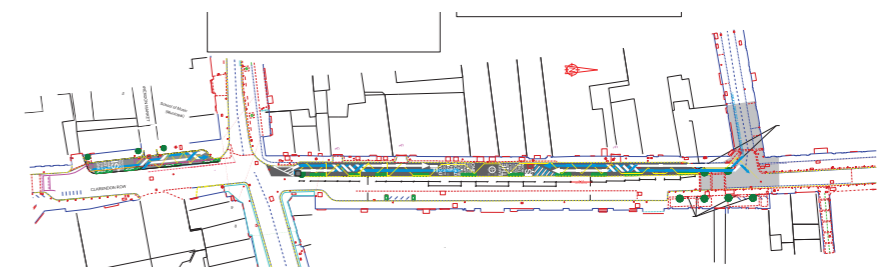
B

CLARENDON STREET / CLARENDON ROW

- PROPOSED PAVEMENT WORKS
- PROPOSED PAVED CARRIAGEWAY
- PROPOSED CARRIAGEWAY RENEWAL
- EXISTING UPGRADED PAVING
- CAR PARK



Clarendon Street Pilot Scheme



Plan Set Out View of Graphic

Clarendon Street Pilot Scheme

CLARENDON STREET / CLARENDON ROW

C. GRAFTON STREET

Qualities

- Premier quality shopping street
- Iconic meeting place and focus of the city quarter
- Gravitational centre for other street destinations, bars and restaurants
- Visually complex and varied street façades principally of brick and painted render but with a largely consistent parapet level at four stories
- Pedestrian friendly traffic free area
- Good mix of quality retail types and sizes

Issues

- Street paving in poor condition
- Very busy pedestrian thoroughfare with no pausing or resting places for elderly or disabled people
- Street endings at St. Stephen's Green and at Suffolk St. junction lack focus and are confusing visually for pedestrian and traffic movement with visual disconnection into Lower Grafton Street
- Concentration of daytime business means street lacks evening and night destinations and activity

Opportunity

- To improve the legibility and connectivity of the street by an integrated design for high quality paving, lighting and street furniture and identify it as part of the main north-south route from Parnell Square to St. Stephen's Green

Elements of Street Interventions

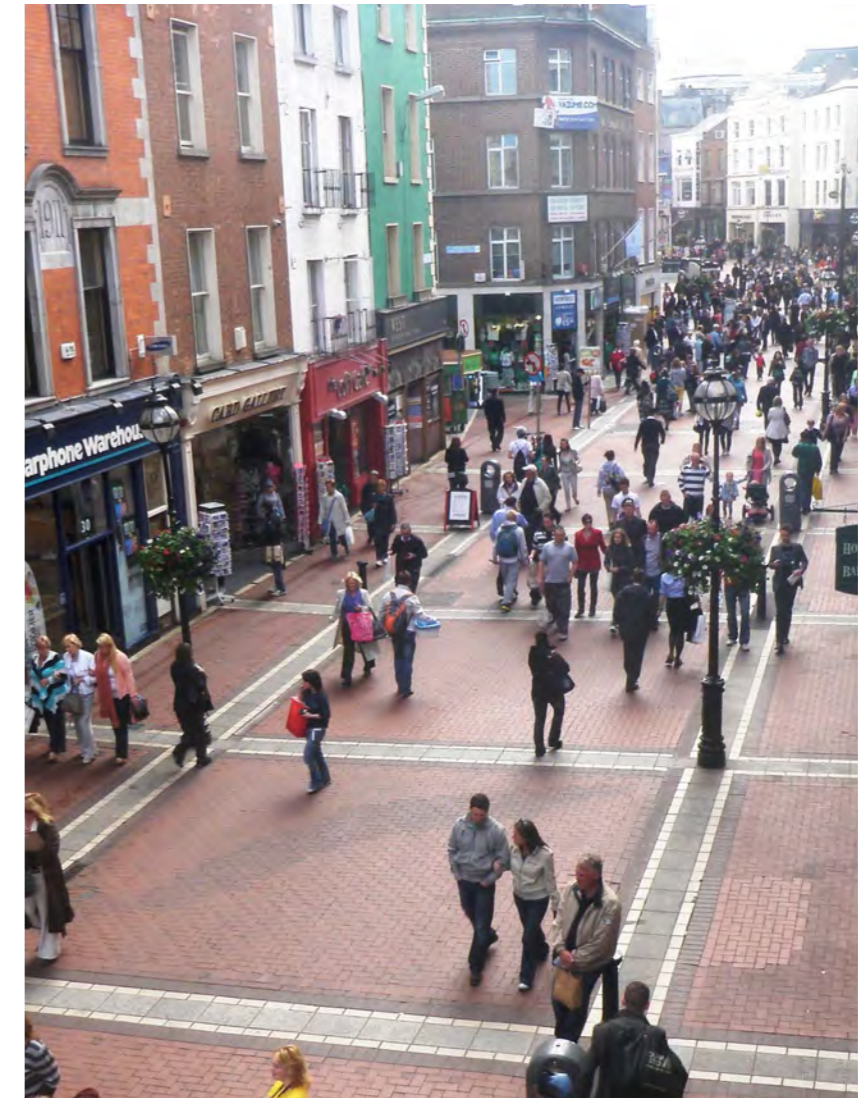
- New high quality natural stone paving
- New street design to protect 'soft' cellar under-street zones
- Paving materials colour and texture to respect warm and visually complex building façades
- Paving design for carriageway to conform to engineering requirements for delivery vehicle loading
- Upgrade street lighting

- Nodes and events along the street to be legible in final street design
- Universal Design principles to direct final design
- Street furniture, bollards and waste bins to be of high quality design and materials, unobtrusive, and should establish an identifiable street furniture language for the city quarter
- Establish street improvement zones to allow seamless continuation of new paving works into Wicklow Street, Harry Street, Chatham Street, South Anne Street and Duke Street
- Improve streetscape by integrating high quality seasonal floral display



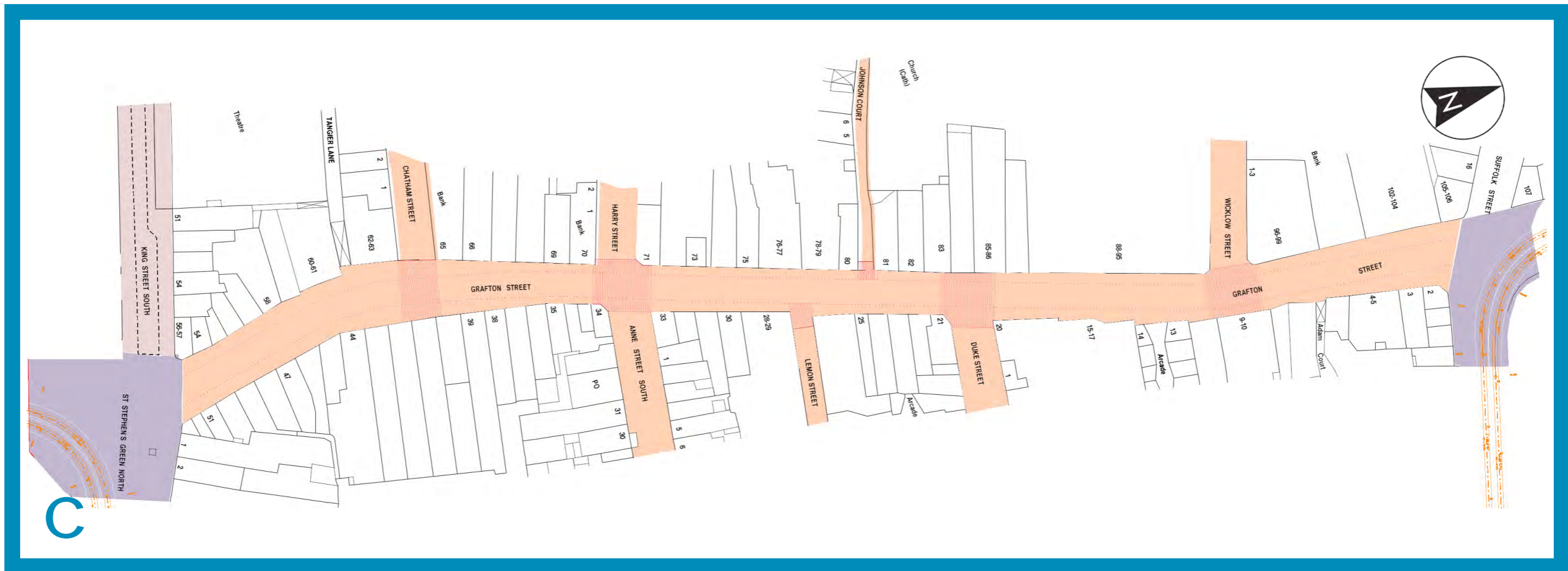
Delivery Time

Grafton Street



View to South

Grafton Street



GRAFTON STREET

PROPOSED PAVEMENT WORKS



EXISTING UPGRADED PAVING



LUAS PROJECT WORKS



Photomontage of Improved Public Realm



Grafton Street

GRAFTON STREET

D. DUKE STREET / SOUTH ANNE STREET

Qualities

- Short streets connecting Dawson Street and Grafton Street, narrow building frontages with façades mainly of brick and painted render and with varied and interesting shop fronts
- Lively range of uses including retail, restaurant, bar and fashion
- Well framed vista to St. Ann's Church
- Busy and vibrant junctions between Duke Street, South Anne Street and Lemon Street with Grafton Street

Issues

- Street paving and asphalt carriageways in poor condition
- Pedestrian paved area extending for just half the length of South Anne Street and Duke Street creates a visual and character disconnection between opposite ends of the streets
- On street parking in South Anne Street
- Size of delivery vehicles
- Monotony of finishes to Duke Lane Upper and Lemon Street
- Poor visual and physical connection from Duke Street to Dawson Lane

Opportunities

- Paving and lighting design to unify pedestrian environment to full extent of Duke Street and South Anne Street
- Upgrade visual connection to Dawson Lane in tandem with Luas project
- Redesign and enliven paving and lighting to narrower streets – Duke Lane Upper and Lemon Street
- Design to visually mark thresholds to Grafton Street junctions

Elements of Street Interventions

- New high quality natural stone paving
- New street design to protect 'soft' cellar under-street zones

- Paving materials colour and texture to respect warm and visually complex building façades
- Paving design for carriageway to conform to engineering requirements for delivery vehicle loading
- Upgrade street lighting
- Nodes and events along the street to be legible in final street design
- Universal Design principles to direct final design
- Street furniture, lighting poles bollards and waste bins to be high quality design and materials and unobtrusive
- Improve streetscape by integrating high quality street planting where appropriate



Duke Street



South Anne Street



Existing Public Realm

South Anne Street



Photomontage of Improved Public Realm

South Anne Street

DUKE STREET - ANNE STREET AREA

PROPOSED PAVEMENT WORKS



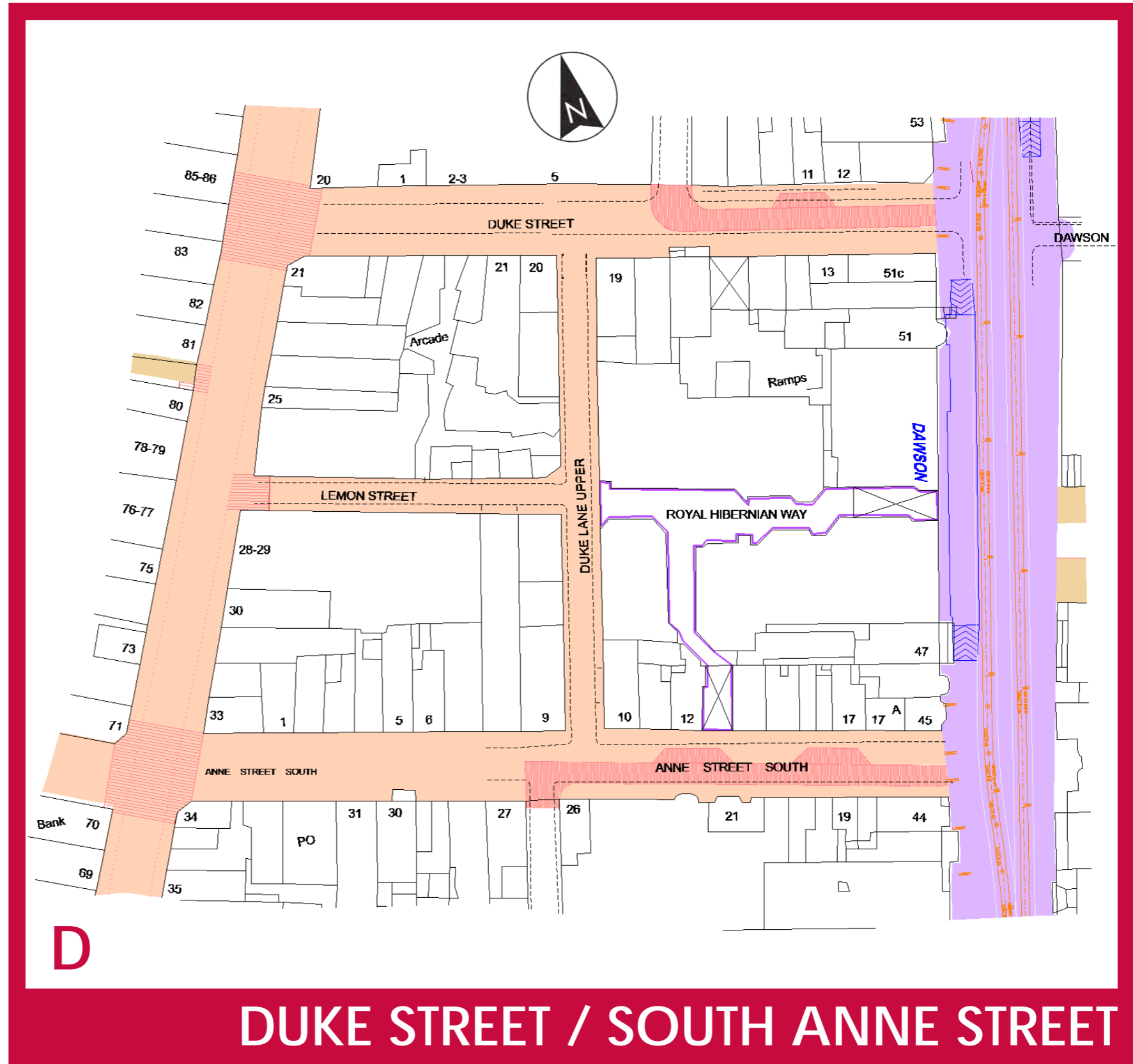
PROPOSED PAVED CARRIAGEWAY



COVERED RETAIL



LUAS PROJECT WORKS



E. SOUTH WILLIAM STREET

Qualities

- Well proportioned street with good quality street façades largely intact and of architectural and heritage significance.
- The street contains two architecturally significant buildings namely Powerscourt House and the Assembly Rooms building later the Civic Museum.
- Lively range of building uses including bars, restaurants, retail, gallery and hairdressing
- Pedestrian-friendly shared surface centre section of the street with stone paved raised carriageway
- Important pedestrian route crossing at Coppinger Row and Castle Market with vistas to South City Market and former Mercer's Hospital.

Issues

- Visual over domination of parked cars
- Existing footpaths very narrow
- Busy traffic street

Opportunities

- Improve pedestrian experience by extending existing traffic calmed paved carriageway southward
- Remove on street parking
- Reduce carriageway width
- Widen footpaths
- The Dublin City Development Plan identifies a new pedestrian link from Harry Street westwards to Fade Street. It is an objective of the Grafton Street Quarter Public Realm Plan to examine in detail the feasibility of this link and to undertake a study, in consultation with local property owners, to identify a line for such a link. Such a link would only be developed with the full consent and support of the relevant property owners on the affected streets

Elements of Street Interventions

- Improve streetscape by removing on street parking

- Widen both footpaths using natural stone and reduce carriageway width
- Extend existing paved carriageway scheme south to Chatham Row
- Facilitate loading and disabled parking bays
- Conserve antique granite paving
- Allow for future east-west pedestrian route to Drury Street and Clarendon Street
- Upgrade street lighting
- Minimise street signage and footpath clutter
- Improve streetscape by integrating high quality street planting where appropriate



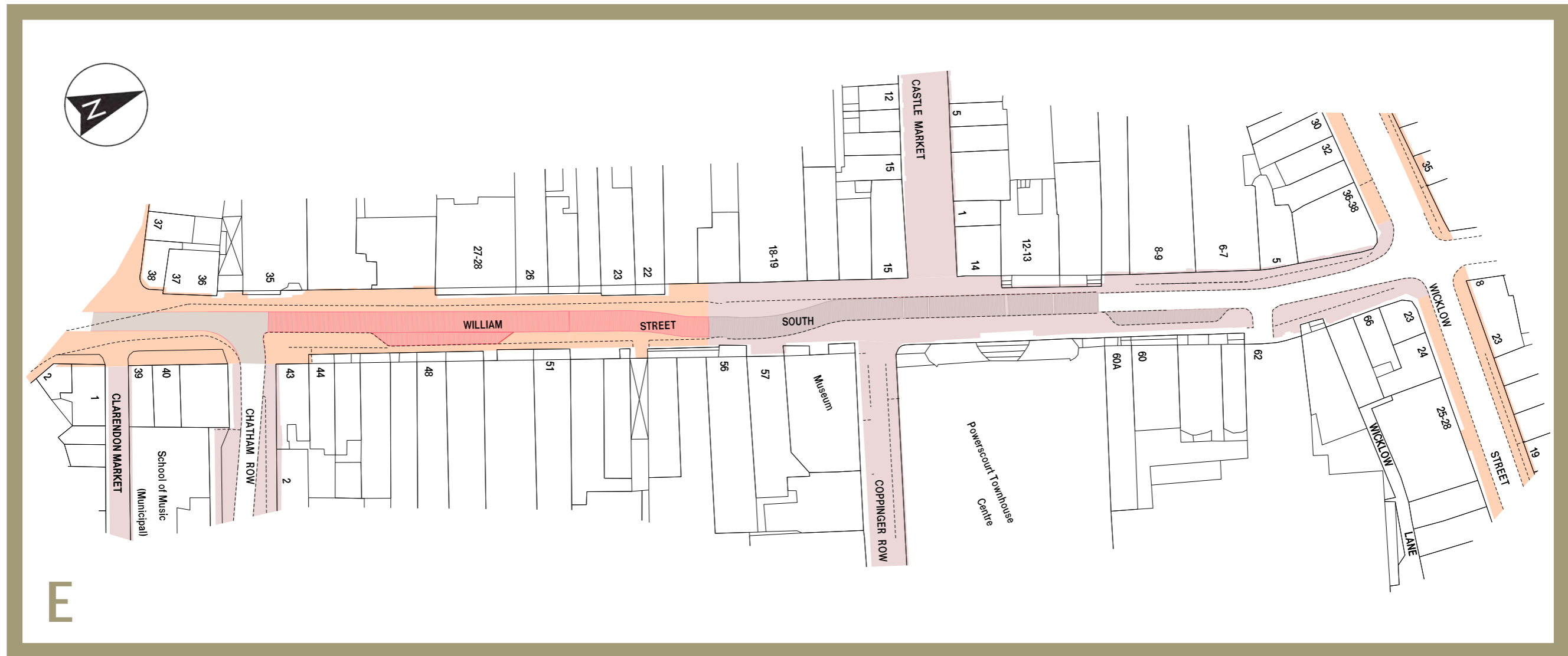
Existing Paved Carriageway

South William Street



Powerscourt Townhouse

South William Street



WILLIAM STREET SOUTH

- PROPOSED PAVEMENT WORKS
- PROPOSED PAVED CARRIAGEWAY
- PROPOSED CARRIAGEWAY RENEWAL
- EXISTING UPGRADED PAVED CARRIAGEWAY
- EXISTING UPGRADED PAVING



Photomontage of Improved Public Realm

South William Street

SOUTH WILLIAM STREET

F. DRURY STREET

Qualities

- High quality architectural “set-piece” frontage to South City Market block and formal gateway buildings to Castle Market opposite
- Small scale retail units and lively shop fronts
- Good quality building uses including hotel, clothing and jewellery retail
- Lively street focus at market entranceway and Castle Market junction

Issues

- Visual over-dominance of parked cars
- Some closed poorly animated sections of frontage including the multi-storey car park
- Shared surface at raised crossing area opposite Castle Market in poor repair

Opportunity

- The Dublin City Development Plan identifies a new pedestrian link from Harry Street westwards to Fade Street. It is an objective of the Grafton Street Quarter Public Realm Plan to examine in detail the feasibility of this link and to undertake a study, in consultation with local property owners, to identify a line for such a link. Such a link would only be developed with the full consent and support of the relevant property owners on the affected streets

Elements of Street Interventions

- Improve streetscape by removing on street parking
- Widen both footpaths using natural stone and reduce carriageway width
- Reconstruct paved carriageway crossing at City Market
- Facilitate loading and disabled parking bays
- Conserve antique granite paving
- Allow for future east-west pedestrian route opposite Fade Street
- Upgrade street lighting
- Minimise street signage and footpath clutter
- Improve streetscape by integrating high quality street planting where appropriate



Existing Public Realm



Drury Street

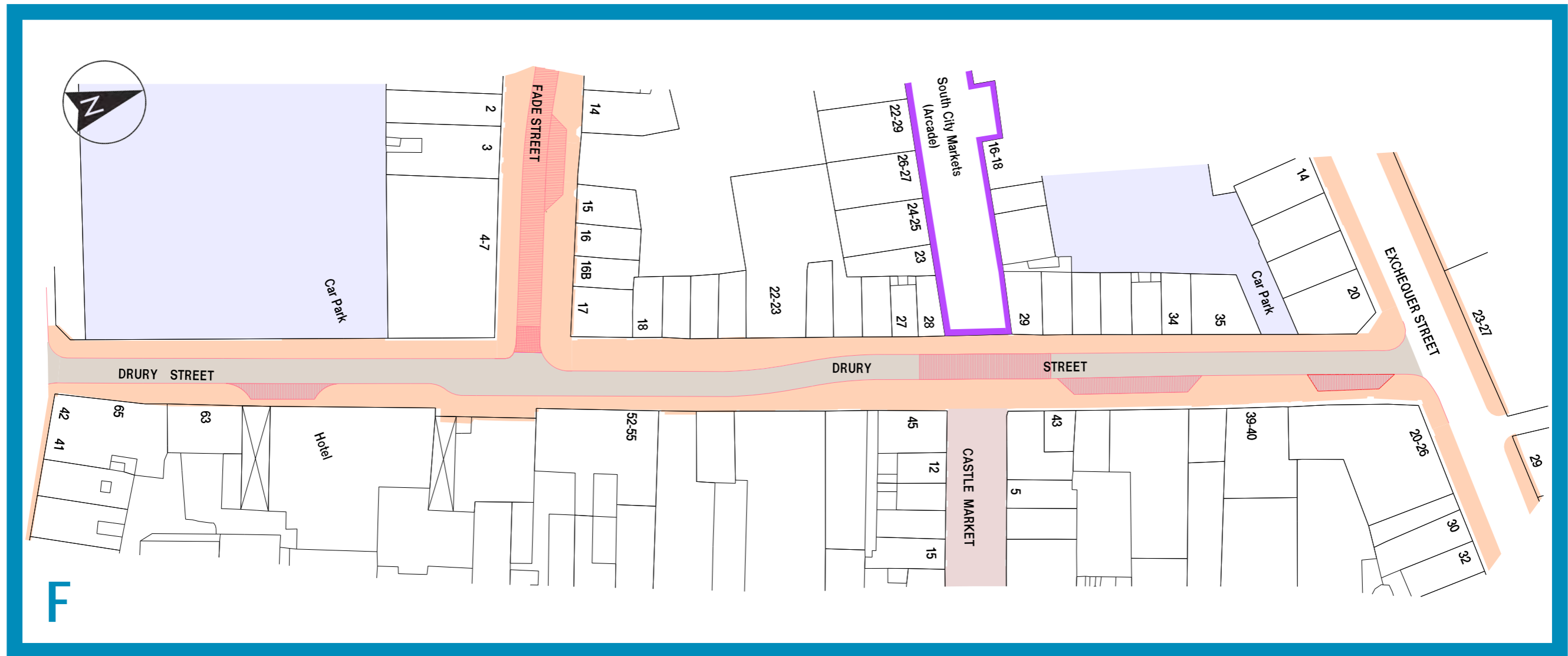
Photomontage of Improved Public Realm

Drury Street



Aerial View of Improved Public Realm

Drury Street



DRURY STREET

- PROPOSED PAVEMENT WORKS
- PROPOSED PAVED CARRIAGEWAY
- PROPOSED CARRIAGEWAY RENEWAL
- CAR PARK
- EXISTING UPGRADED PAVING
- COVERED RETAIL

DRURY STREET

G. ST. STEPHEN'S GREEN

Qualities

- Busiest corner of one of the city's most important squares
- Iconic and identifiable civic node and meeting place
- Gateway to Grafton Street Quarter
- Potential to be the most significant public transport interchange in the city
- Significant landmark in the Fusiliers' Arch to St. Stephen's Green

Issues

- Visually confusing streetscape with lack of unifying focus
- Confusing pedestrian / traffic environment
- Limited expression of visually important link to Fusiliers' Arch
- Design extent given Transport projects uncertainty

Civic Space Opportunity

- To create a traffic free civic space of importance at the termination of the Parnell Square to St. Stephen's Green Luas city route that both denotes the gateway to the Grafton Street Quarter and visually links Grafton Street to St. Stephen's Green and also has the qualities of a social meeting place

The extensive excavations required for the Metro North project provided the opportunity to re-imagine the top of Grafton Street area at St. Stephen's Green corner as a pedestrian focused space accommodating the escalators to the underground station and on the surface, the tracks for the Luas Green Line extension towards Dawson Street. The programming uncertainty for the rail projects will allow the design possibilities for a car free space to be trialled extending from Grafton Street to Dawson Street and including the Luas Cross City extension (the most likely of the rail projects in the short-term).

In tandem with the Rail Procurement Agency and in consultation with the adjoining premises owners, it is proposed to develop a design for the space that will provide the civic focus for the emergence from Grafton Street into the square of St. Stephens Green, that will reinforce the visual axis from Grafton Street to the Fusiliers Arch, that will invite pausing and meeting and will also extend an enlivened traffic free streetscape to Dawson Street without compromising the future rail project programmes.



View to North

Top of Grafton Street 1930's

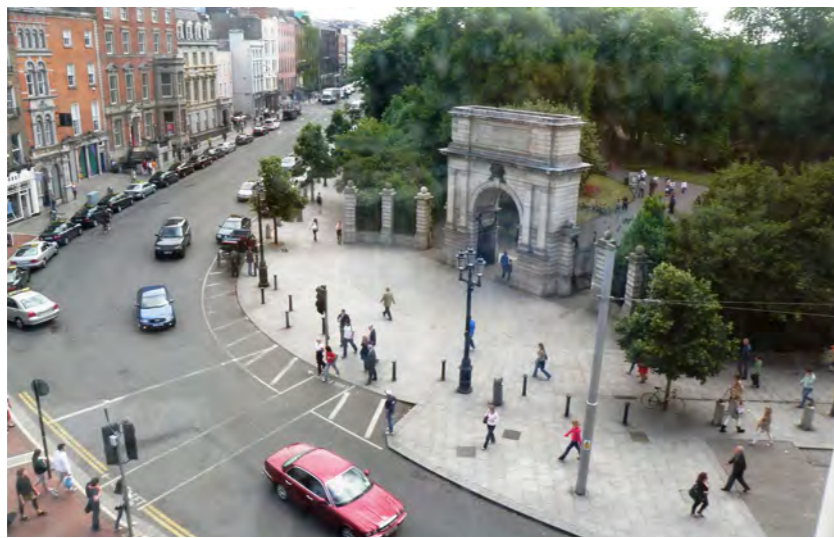


Top of Grafton Street



Artist's Impression - Civic Space

Top of Grafton Street



Fusiliers' Arch

St. Stephen's Green



Artist's Impression - Civic Space

St. Stephen's Green North



Existing Aerial View

St. Stephen's Green North



Artist's Impression Aerial View - Civic Space

St. Stephen's Green North

ST. STEPHEN'S GREEN CORNER

H. JOHNSON PLACE

Qualities

- Well defined and legible urban space with good scale and good enclosure
- Animated building and shop frontages with a varied range of uses including hotel, medical clinic, bars, cafés and shops

Issues

- Over dominance of traffic movement and road space
- Poor articulation of spatial elements resulting in visual confusion and lack of focus
- Haphazard street furniture layout and distribution
- Ambiguous definition of space in public and private ownership

Civic Space Opportunity

- Engage with the premises owners to maximise the potential to redefine the space and movement through it and to explore the possibilities for tree planting, seating, paving and lighting

Johnson Place offers the possibility to maximise the civic and architectural potential of this well defined urban space. A process of engagement with the business owners will be required to identify the elements restricting the legibility, clarity and usability of the space and in particular the areas in private ownership on the west and south sides. These elements include haphazard street furniture, planting, cycle parking and signage, railings, incongruous ATM structure, poor pedestrian environment and traffic domination.

A redesign should aim to de-clutter, unify visually and enhance the space through new paving, upgraded pedestrian environment and crossings, calmed traffic movements and redesigned planting, seating and public lighting.



Aerial View of Improved Civic Space

Johnson Place



Existing Public Realm

Johnson Place



Photomontage of Improved Public Realm

Johnson Place



Public Realm Improvements

Lyon, France



Public Realm Improvements

Lyon, France

JOHNSON PLACE

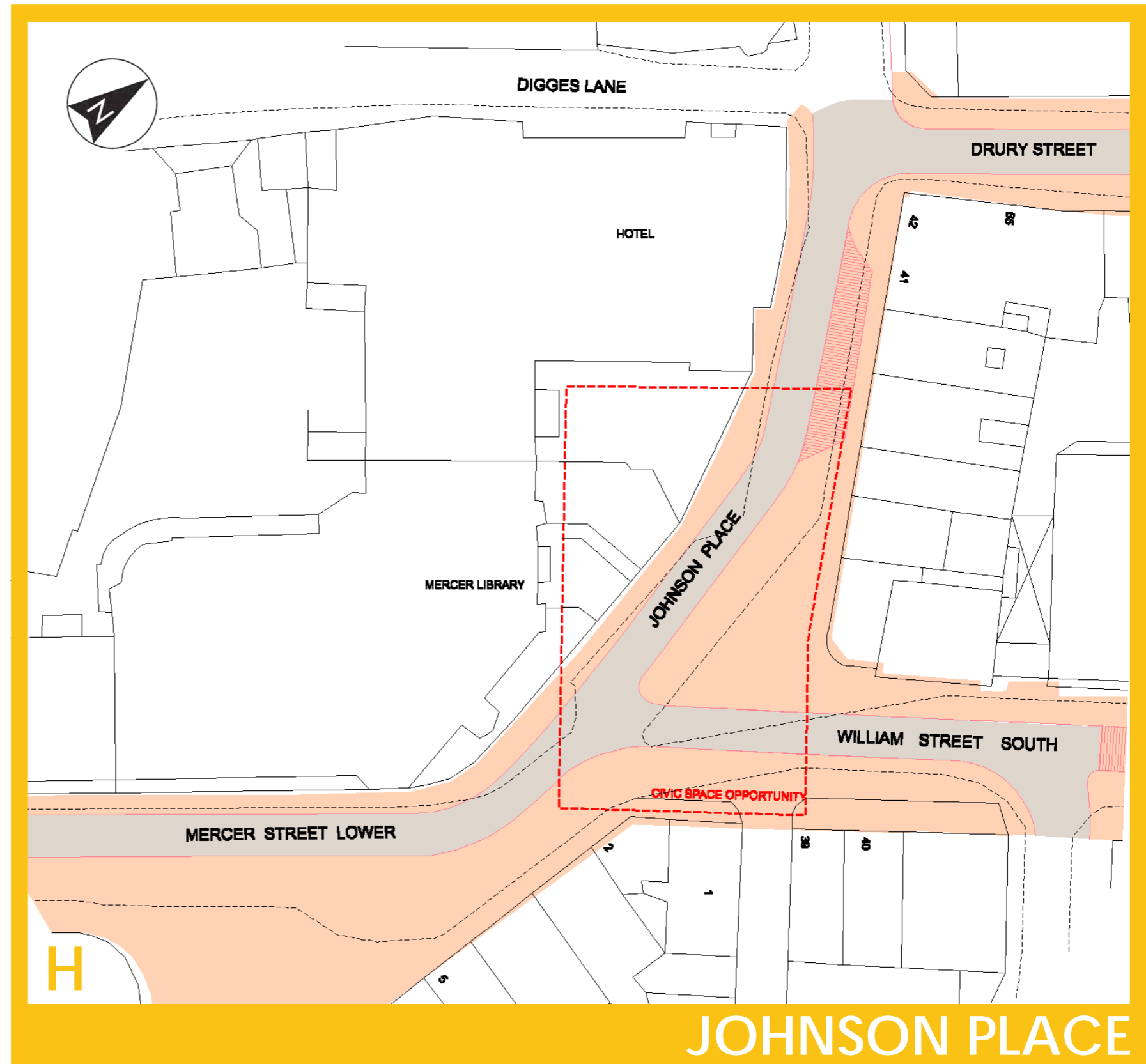
PROPOSED PAVING WORKS



PROPOSED PAVED CARRIAGEWAY



PROPOSED CARRIAGEWAY RENEWAL



I. ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH AREA

Qualities

- Significant landmark building located at busy street node
- The arrangement of buildings and façades facing the church provide enclosure for a well formed urban space
- Important pedestrian and tourist focus because of the current use of the church as tourist office

Issues

- Poor use of important urban space around the church building for car parking
- The car parking and boundary railings give a closed aspect to the space surrounding the church

Civic Space Opportunities

- Possibility to create pedestrian route through rear of church grounds to Wicklow Street
- Open up area around church as urban park space with possibility of some outdoor restaurant use
- Restrict traffic movements in front of Post Office and pave carriageway in natural stone
- Improve streetscape by integrating high quality street planting where appropriate

The possibility of opening a pedestrian connection to the rear of St. Andrew's Church through to Wicklow Street would be a significant element in the creation of a city space with the church building at its centre. No longer in use as a church, the railings, plinth gates and the current car park use give a closed aspect to St. Andrew's Street. In consultation with the church owners it may be possible to remove the railings and car parking and create the connection to Wicklow Street. A link to Glendinning Lane could also be examined.

A reduction in vehicle movement along the post office leg of the street, if combined with a redesigned paving, street planting, seating and lighting scheme, could significantly improve the environment for pedestrians. It may also be possible to enliven the area around the church building by encouraging the opening up of the flanking buildings to the church grounds and also the possibility of associated outdoor restaurant furniture.



Existing Public Realm



St. Andrew's Church Area

Photomontage of Improved Civic Space

St. Andrew's Church Area

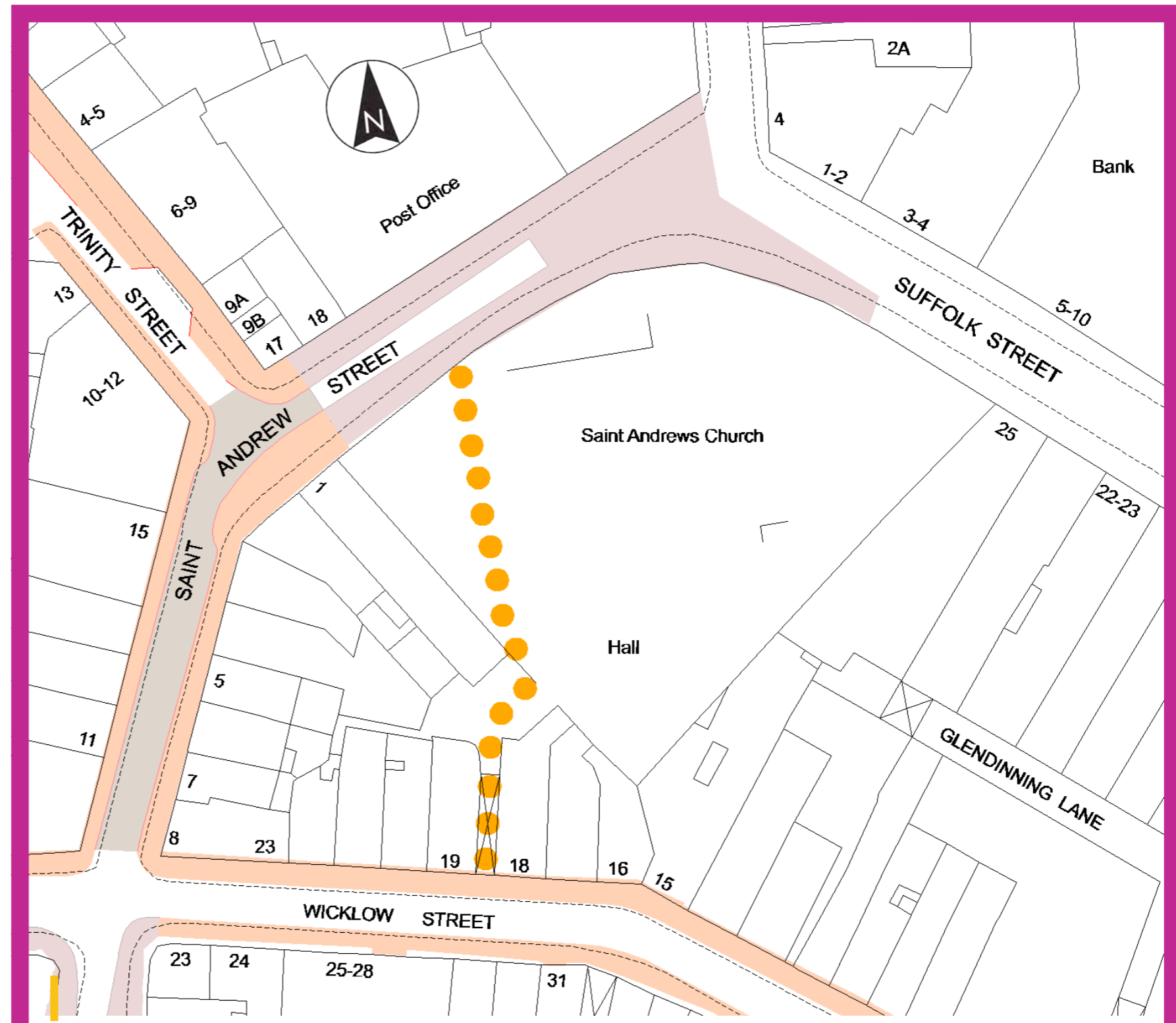


Aerial View of Improved Civic Space

St. Andrew's Church Area

SAINT ANDREWS CHURCH AREA

- PROPOSED PAVING WORKS
- PROPOSED CARRIAGEWAY RENEWAL
- EXISTING UPGRADED PAVING
- POSSIBLE FUTURE PEDESTRIAN LINK



ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH AREA

10

CONCLUSION & IMPLEMENTATION



10 Conclusion & Implementation



Photomontage of Improved Public Realm Chatham Street



Photomontage of Improved Public Realm Harry Street

10.0 Conclusion

The area between South Great George's Street and Kildare Street and between Saint Stephen's Green and College Green, referred to as the Grafton Street Quarter is an incredibly diverse area full of interest, surprise and promise. Despite its appealing physical character and lively atmosphere, the Grafton Street Quarter must confront many demanding challenges. In common with the rest of the city, it has to cope with difficult trading conditions, compete with the major suburban shopping centres and tackle more local problems that threaten the area's long-term viability. These problems range from the growing imbalance in the mix of uses to the deteriorating quality in shop front design and the tired and dated public realm which defines and colours every visitor's experience of the area. This Public Realm Plan proposes a series of interventions and initiatives that are primarily intended to respond to the challenges and difficulties presented by the current public realm offering.

In developing the proposals to remake elements of the public realm, the opportunity was also taken to again consider the wider issues and this Plan provides a framework to include;

- A vision focused on developing the area's unique identity through nurturing qualities of character, diversity, authenticity and place
- Addressing a key list of "Things that Really Matter"
- Quality of the retail offering, balance and mixed scale of quality uses
- Great shop front design
- High quality public realm
- Great walking experience
- Optimising the contribution from historic fabric
- Ensure design sensibility informs the overall environment

- Creating life at night
- Day to day good management;
 - (a) In the public realm
 - (b) Inside the threshold of the shop door
- A framework for co-operation, achieving collaboration and traction through an agreed set of guiding principles applied at;
 - (a) The scale of the Quarter as a whole.
 - (b) The scale of each street.

10.1 Implementation

Implementation of the proposals contained within the document will of necessity take place over a period of time and will be subject to a process of public engagement and planning. It is envisaged that the works will be phased over a multi-year timeframe.

To assist the implementation process a Steering Group has been established and will oversee progress. A multi-disciplinary Project Implementation Team has also been established which will be responsible for implementation of the programme of works and will report to the Steering Group over the lifetime of the project.

APPENDICES



Appendices

Appendix A - The Seven Principles of Universal Design

The 7 Principles of Universal Design were developed in 1997 by a working group of architects, product designers, engineers and environmental design researchers, led by the late Ronald Mace in the North Carolina State University. The purpose of the Principles is to guide the design of environments, products and communications. According to the Center for Universal Design in NCSU, the Principles “may be applied to evaluate existing designs, guide the design process and educate both designers and consumers about the characteristics of more usable products and environments.”

Principle 1: Equitable Use

The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.

Guidelines:

- Provide the same means of use for all users, identical whenever possible, equivalent when not.
- Avoid segregating or stigmatizing any users.
- Provisions for privacy, security, and safety should be equally available to all users.
- Make the design appealing to all users.

Principle 2: Flexibility in Use

The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.

Guidelines:

- Provide choice in methods of use.
- Accommodate right- or left-handed access and use.
- Facilitate the users accuracy and precision.
- Provide adaptability to the users pace.

Principle 3: Simple and Intuitive Use

Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the users experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level.

Guidelines:

- Eliminate unnecessary complexity.
- Be consistent with user expectations and intuition.
- Accommodate a wide range of literacy and language skills.
- Arrange information consistent with its importance.
- Provide effective prompting and feedback during and after task completion.

Principle 4: Perceptible Information

The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the users sensory abilities.

Guidelines:

- Use different modes (pictorial, verbal, tactile for redundant presentation of essential information.
- Provide adequate contrast between essential information and its surroundings.
- Maximize legibility of essential information.
- Differentiate elements in ways that can be described (i.e., make it easy to give instructions or directions).
- Provide compatibility with a variety of techniques or devices used by people with sensory limitations.

Principle 5: Tolerance for Error

The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.

Guidelines:

- Arrange elements to minimize hazards and errors: most used elements, most accessible; hazardous elements eliminated, isolated, or shielded.
- Provide warnings of hazards and errors.
- Provide fail safe features.
- Discourage unconscious action in tasks that require vigilance.

Principle 6: Low Physical Effort

The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.

Guidelines:

- Allow user to maintain a neutral body position.
- Use reasonable operating forces.
- Minimize repetitive actions.
- Minimize sustained physical effort.

Principle 7: Size and Space for Approach and Use

Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of users body size, posture, or mobility.

Guidelines:

- Provide a clear line of sight to important elements for any seated or standing user.
- Make reach to all components comfortable for any seated or standing user.
- Accommodate variations in hand and grip size.
- Provide adequate space for the use of assistive devices or personal assistance.

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Appendix B - Related Documents and Reading

Dublin City Development Plan, 2011-2017
Dublin City Council, 2010

Your City Your Space - Dublin City Public Realm Strategy
Dublin City Council, 2012

Dublin City Centre Action Plan
Dublin City Council, 2011

Scheme of Special Planning Control for Grafton Street and Environs
Dublin City Council, 2013

The Georgian Squares of Dublin
Dublin City Council, 2006

Grafton Street and Environs Architectural Conservation Area
Dublin City Council, 2006

Dublin - An Urban History
Niall McCullough, Associated Editions, 1989

Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2008-2016
Dublin and Mid-East Regional Authorities, 2008

The Retail Core Framework Plan,
Dublin City Council, 2006

The Buildings of Ireland - Dublin
Christine Casey, Yale University Press, 2005

New City Spaces
Jan Gehl and Lars Gemzøe
The Danish Architectural Press, 2000

Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2008 - 2012
Dublin City Council, 2008 (under review 2014)



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