

Vernon Avenue to Clontarf Road Active Travel Scheme

Preliminary Design Report

June 2026



Comhairle Cathrach
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council





Vision + Objectives

Vision

The proposed Vernon Avenue to Clontarf Road Active Travel scheme spans 600 meters in length. It extends from Seafield Road to the north where it connects with the planned Gracefield Road to Vernon Avenue Active Travel Scheme, and continues south as far as Clontarf Road where it connects with the existing East Coast Trail along the coast.

We want to improve Vernon Avenue for all users of the space. We aim to make it safer, easier and more pleasant for people to walk, wheel or cycle while enhancing the overall look and feel of Clontarf Village.

At the southern end of Vernon Avenue, our vision is to provide a scheme that enhances the placemaking potential for the centre of Clontarf by recalibrating this area as a village space for street animation, outdoor dining, etc. The space should function as a central gathering point that capitalises on the village's south-facing aspect addressing the sea and the iconic Poolbeg Chimneys beyond. The proposed scheme should enhance the development of Clontarf as an urban destination along the north coast of the Tolka Estuary.

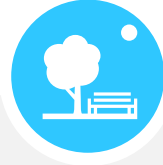
Objectives



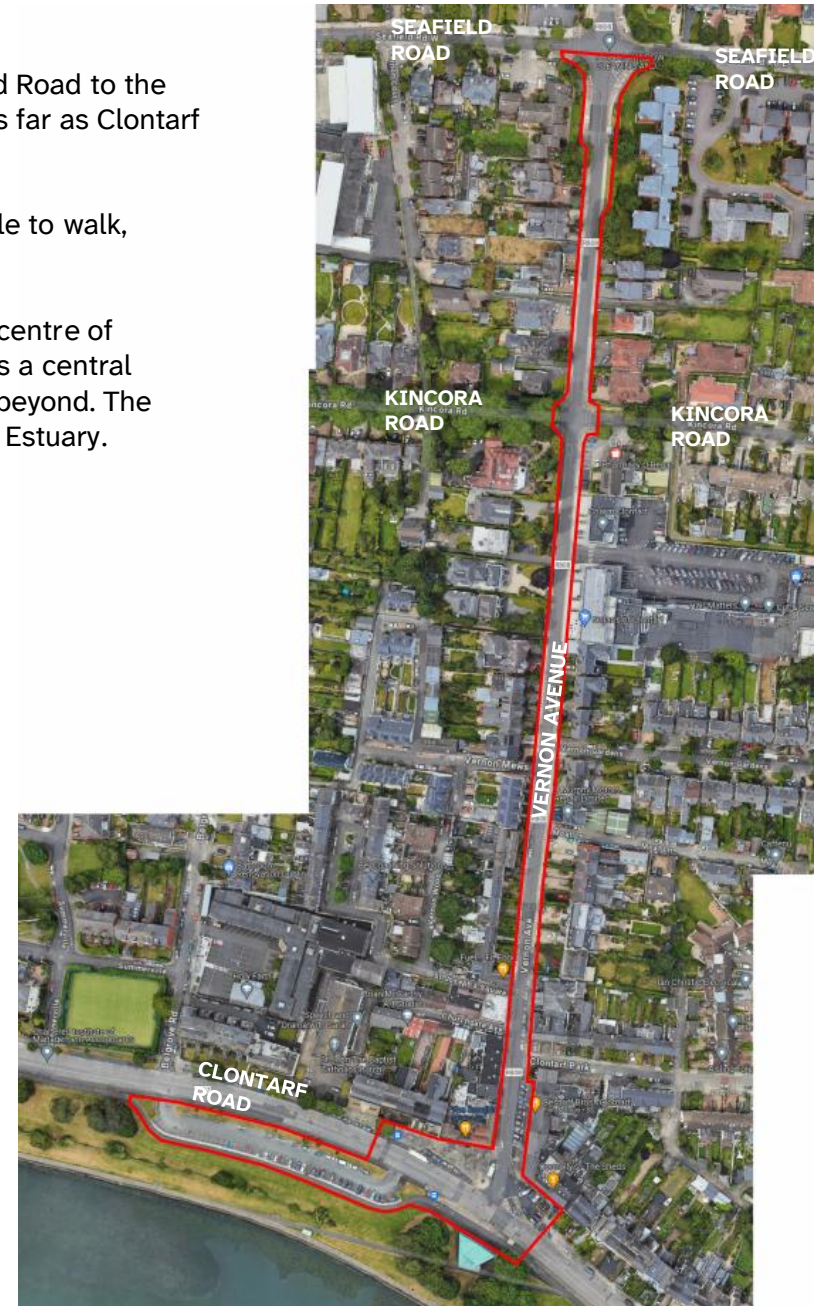
- Improved Pedestrian Infrastructure
- Improved Public Realm & Streetscape
- Improved Universal Access
- Safer Crossings
- New & Enlarged Civic Plazas
- New Resting Places

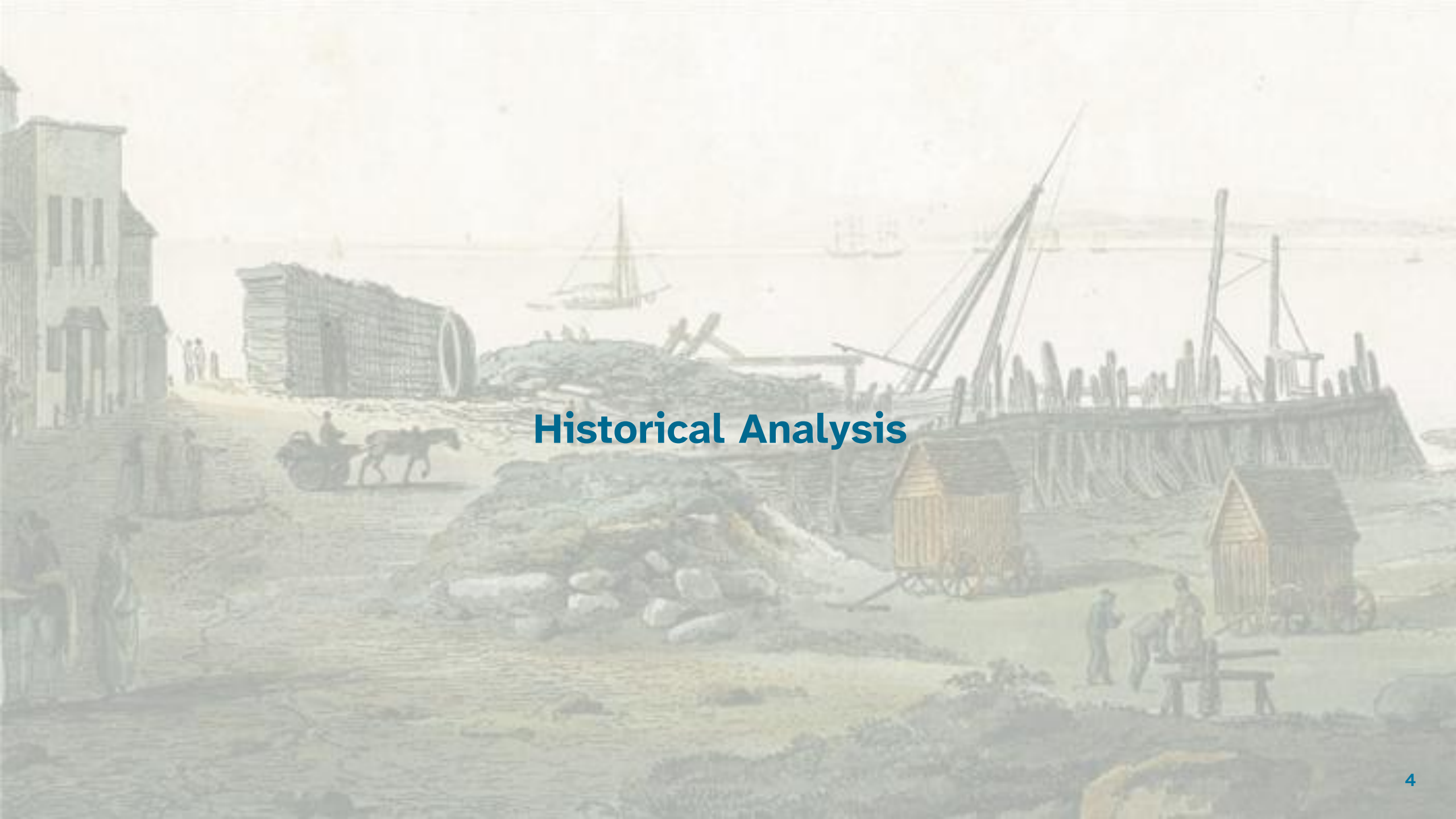


- Enhanced Connectivity to Cycling Network
- Dedicated Cycling Facilities
- Safe Junction Design
- More Cycle Parking



- Improved Landscape
- Improved Biodiversity
- Urban Greening
- Urban Habitat





Historical Analysis

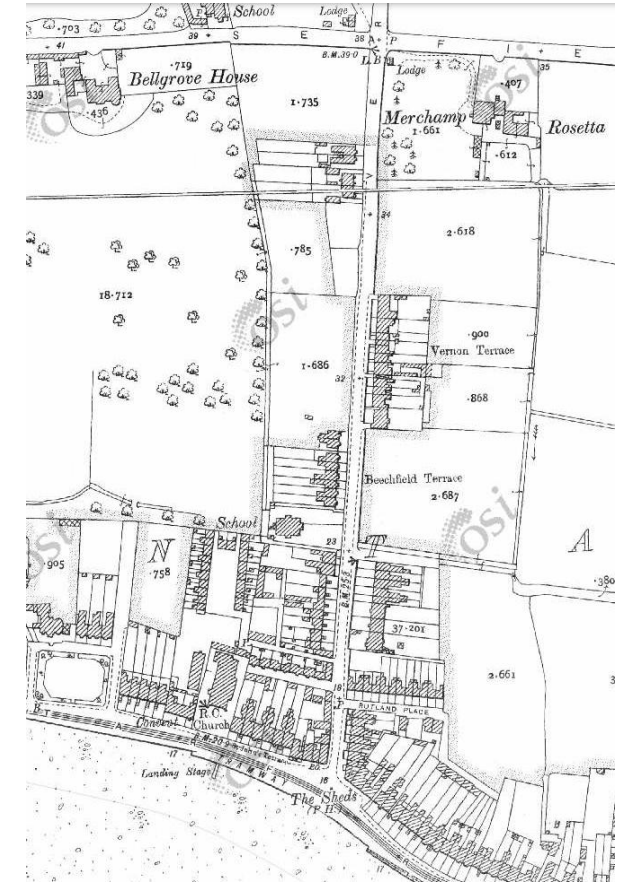
Historical Mapping



John Rocque Map 1757



Historical OSI Map 6 inch - 1829-1841



Historical OSI Map 25 inch - 1897-1913

The early origins of Clontarf is illustrated on Rocque's map of 1757. Vernon Avenue is one of the oldest thoroughfares in Clontarf and had been established at the time extending northward from a cluster of herring sheds fronting the Coast Road to where it turned westwards to join Castle Avenue north of the junction with Mount Prospect Avenue. Over time, the early development at the southern end of Vernon Avenue extends north, with density increasing at the southern end of the street as can be seen in the later OSI maps.

Historical Images



Morgan Collection, 1955, showing an Aerial view of Clontarf looking east

Historic Photographs show Clontarf Village's attractive urban environment prior to the dominance of modern traffic. The village appears calm and largely free of vehicles, allowing the architectural quality of the village to stand out. The setting is attractive with fine buildings creating a seaside village feel. An open space can be seen spanning the entire southern end of Clontarf Village fronting onto the sea, forming a natural focal point and reinforcing the connection between the village and the sea



View looking south towards coast on Vernon Avenue, 1900's



View looking north towards Vernon Avenue from Clontarf Road, 1900's



Artists view looking north towards Vernon Avenue from Clontarf Road, 1900's

Existing Context



Strengths



Attractive shopfronts, buildings and streetscape retain village atmosphere. South facing aspect addressing the sea



Views of local landmarks



Clontarf Promenade



Community pride



Culture + Heritage

Challenges



Poor parking arrangements



Street clutter reduces footway width



Poor pedestrian linkage to Promenade



Traffic dominance



Lack of greening, few resting spots

The images of the existing context show a very attractive village with fine buildings running along Clontarf Road and up Vernon Avenue. There is an attractive vista to the southern end of Vernon Avenue, with a southern facing plaza overlooking the sea, Clontarf Promenade, Clontarf Pumphouse and Poolbeg Chimneys. However, the village suffers from traffic dominance similar to other towns and villages in Dublin. There are poorly defined pedestrian zones and poor pedestrian linkages to the Promenade at the southern end of Vernon Avenue. Pedestrian and cycling links between the two main commercial/retail centres along Vernon Avenue at Clontarf Village to the south and Nolan's of Clontarf to the north require improvement. Parked cars and delivery vehicles along the shops at the southern end of Vernon Avenue often overhang the footpaths, and block views of the attractive buildings and shopfronts along this street. Bollards reduce footpath widths and make the area difficult to manoeuvre for wheelchair users and people with buggies accessing the shops



Early Engagement

Early Engagement Consultations

Early stakeholder engagement has been central to the project, ensuring that community feedback is integrated into the design from the outset.

A non-statutory, early consultation process included 3 workshops with local stakeholder groups: Disabled Persons Organisations (DPOs/DPROs), Clontarf Business' Association, and Clontarf Residents' Association. The workshops aimed to provide an opportunity for focused discussions and feedback from the respective groups on the key considerations of the groups they represented.

These sessions were facilitated by independent engagement consultant M-CO.

- Councillor online briefing 5th Nov 2024
- DPO online workshop 6th Nov 2024
- Clontarf Business Association in-person workshop 6th Nov 2024
- Clontarf Residents Association in-person workshop 13th Nov 2024



Early Engagement Summary of Feedback

Sketches of different street layouts were developed by Dublin City Council and presented to stakeholders during the workshops to spark discussion and gather feedback for developing and refining the proposals.

Some of the key concerns and hopes that were raised across all stakeholder meetings are outlined below:

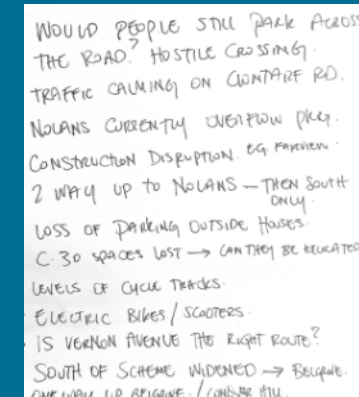
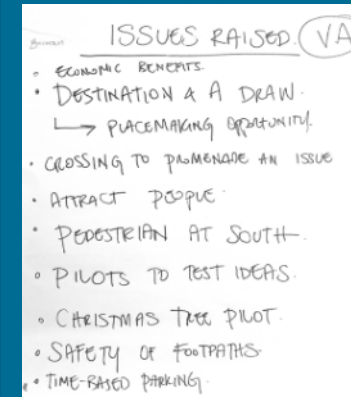
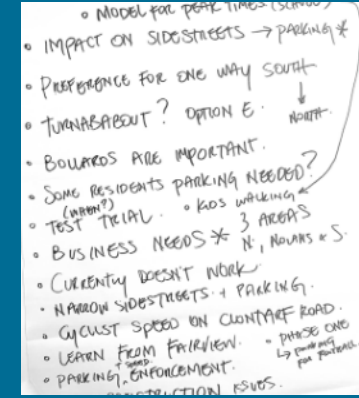
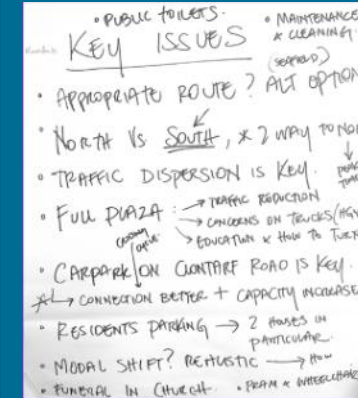
Concerns

- Parking availability for residents and businesses
- Potential disruptions during the construction phase
- Safety considerations related to e-bikes and scooters on shared or pedestrian paths
- Risk of increased traffic congestion in the area
- Impact of traffic displacement on surrounding streets
- Striking a balance between making Clontarf more pedestrian- and cyclist-friendly while also supporting businesses and maintaining residents' quality of life.
- Ensuring any changes don't discourage visitors and customers due to perceived inconvenience
- Inadequate connection between Vernon Avenue and the Clontarf Road car park

Hopes

- Improved mobility and accessibility for all users
- Enhanced safety for all users
- Outdoor dining opportunities
- Upgrades to the public realm
- Economic benefits for local businesses through better access and placemaking.
- Reduction of street clutter
- Foster a shift towards greener modes of transport
- Community-oriented design

© M.CO





Proposal

A People-Focused Clontarf



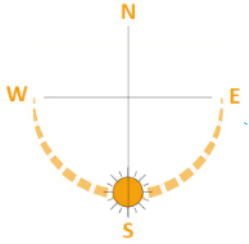
Morgan Collection, 1955, showing an Aerial view of Clontarf with an open space spanning the entire southern end of the village, overlooking the Tolka Estuary

Traffic Management is a key challenge in Clontarf Village. Solutions to address this have evolved over time and currently include interventions such as double yellow lines along most of the length of the Vernon Avenue (except for some limited on-street parking), one-way traffic along Clontarf Park, the removal of parking to the southern end of Vernon Avenue to provide a public space in 2007, the introduction of temporary bollards on the footpaths to Vernon Avenue, pay and display parking in Clontarf Village and in the car park to the south of Clontarf Road.

Current traffic volumes have begun to detract from the quality and amenity of Clontarf Village hence, a new and updated approach to traffic management is now required. This project tries to recalibrate the village in favour of pedestrians and cyclists, while still maintaining vehicular access and loading for deliveries, services and the provision of accessible parking.

By creating a new civic space at the southern end of Clontarf Village addressing the sea and improving the connection to Clontarf Promenade, it hopes to create a new destination for Dubliners along Dublin Bay.

Community Space – Concept Sketch



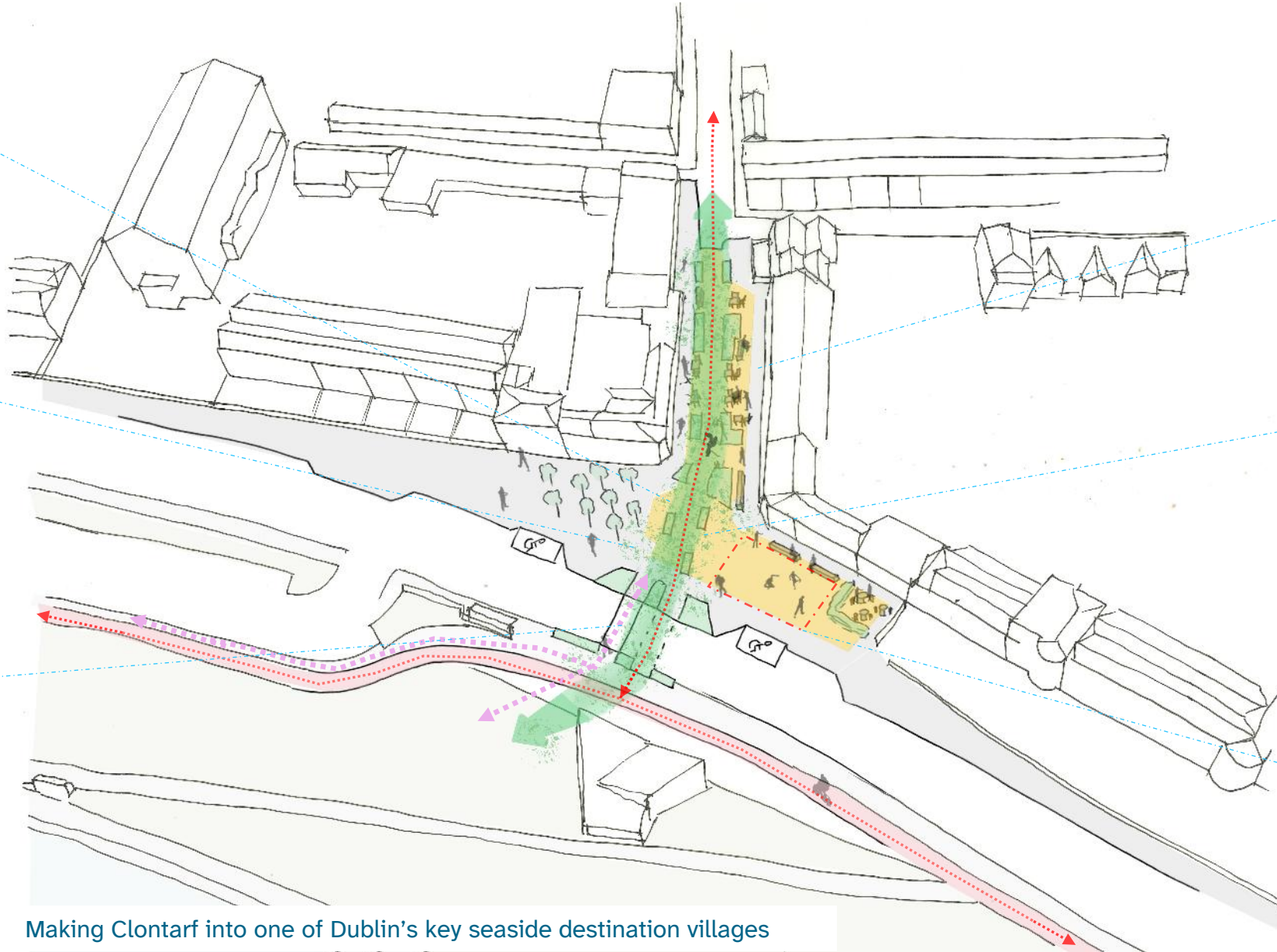
South facing public space overlooking the sea



Views of key Dublin landmark



Improved connection to Clontarf Promenade and carpark



Activated street with outdoor dining



Green corridor linking Vernon Avenue to Promenade



New community space/plaza and flexible events space

Making Clontarf into one of Dublin's key seaside destination villages

What improvements will this scheme make?



Aerial view of proposal looking north towards Vernon Avenue

This scheme aims to deliver a safer, vibrant, more people-focused street by making the following changes:

- A **'mixed traffic' street** on Vernon Avenue from Seafield Road to Clontarf Park, where cyclists share the carriageway with vehicular traffic
- A **'filtered permeability' arrangement** from Clontarf Park to Clontarf Road. Filtered permeability refers to a street design approach that allows pedestrians and cyclists to move freely through an area, while removing through-access for motor vehicles
- **Localised community space enhancements** with resting places, greening measures and opportunities for outdoor dining
- **Improved pedestrian facilities** including a new zebra crossing at Nolan's and a step-free 'continuous footpath' at the southern end of Vernon Avenue
- **Improved connection to Clontarf Promenade and the carpark** south of Clontarf Road with a full junction upgrade at Clontarf Road
- **Enhanced connectivity** to the existing East Coast Trail to the south and the planned Gracefield Road to Vernon Avenue Active Travel Scheme to the north

Some parking spaces will be removed to enable these enhancements.

Community Space - Proposed Plan



Freestanding planters



Benches



Buff coloured asphalt

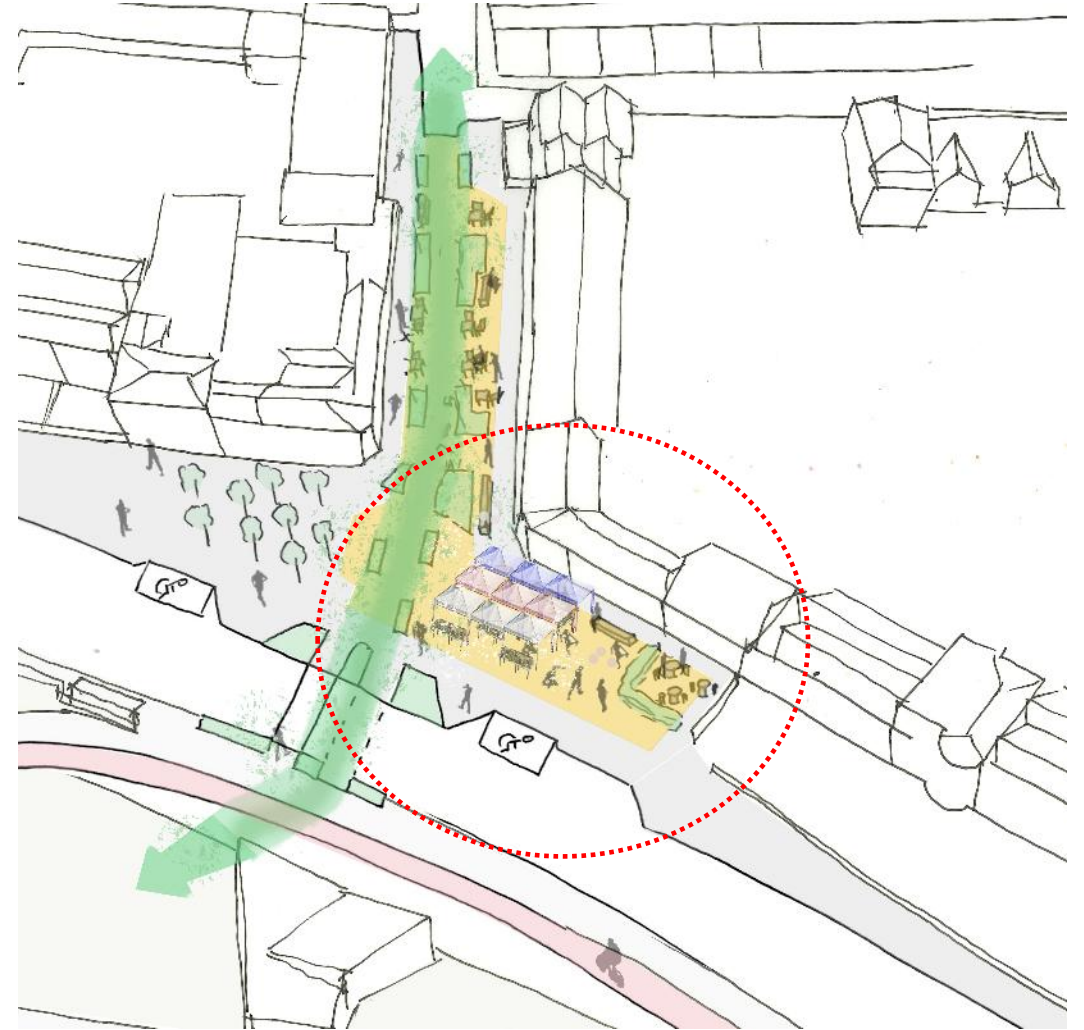
1. Mixed Traffic Street
2. Filtered Permeability Area/Community Space
3. Footpath Buildouts/Potential Outdoor Dining
4. Flexible event space
5. Potential outdoor dining
6. Cyclist crossing
7. Pedestrian crossing
8. Accessible Parking Space
9. Loading Spaces
10. Improved connection to carpark
11. Cycle Stands



Community Space - Flexible Event Space



Potential Christmas Tree location

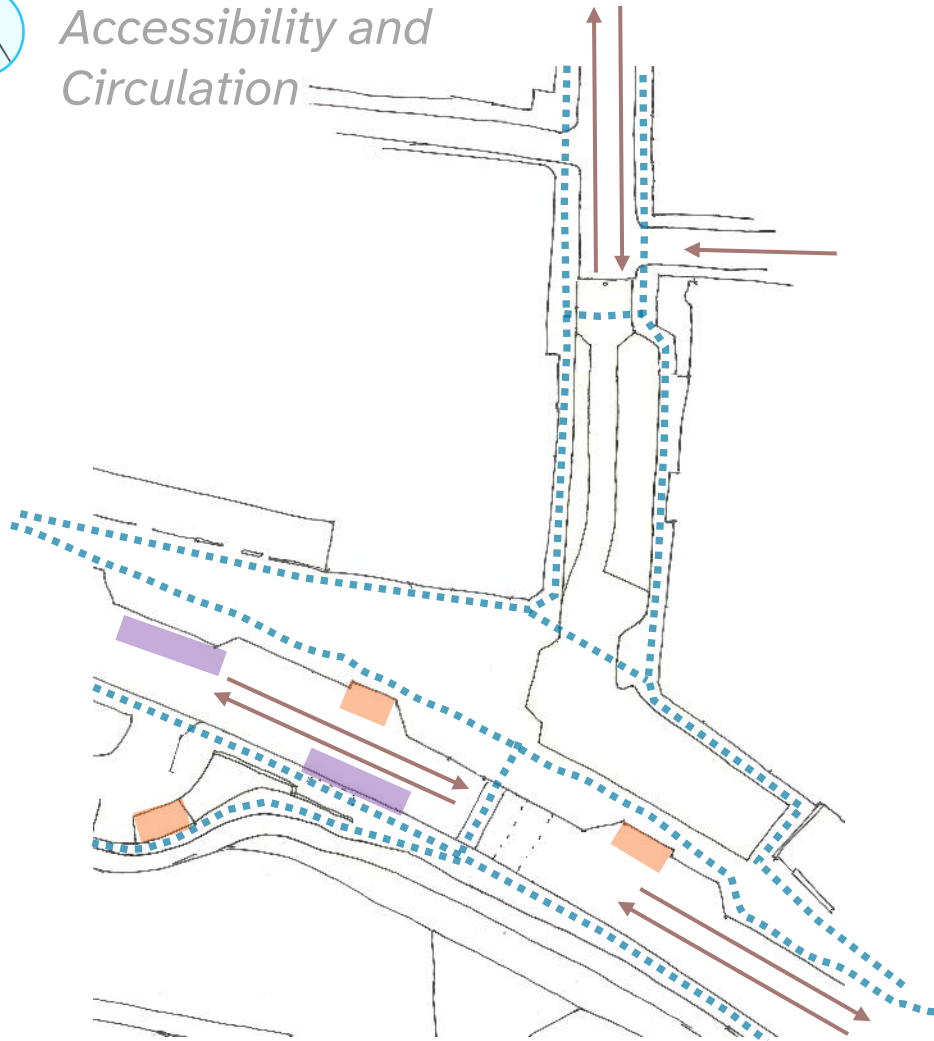






Potential Markets Stalls location

Accessibility/Loading Arrangements



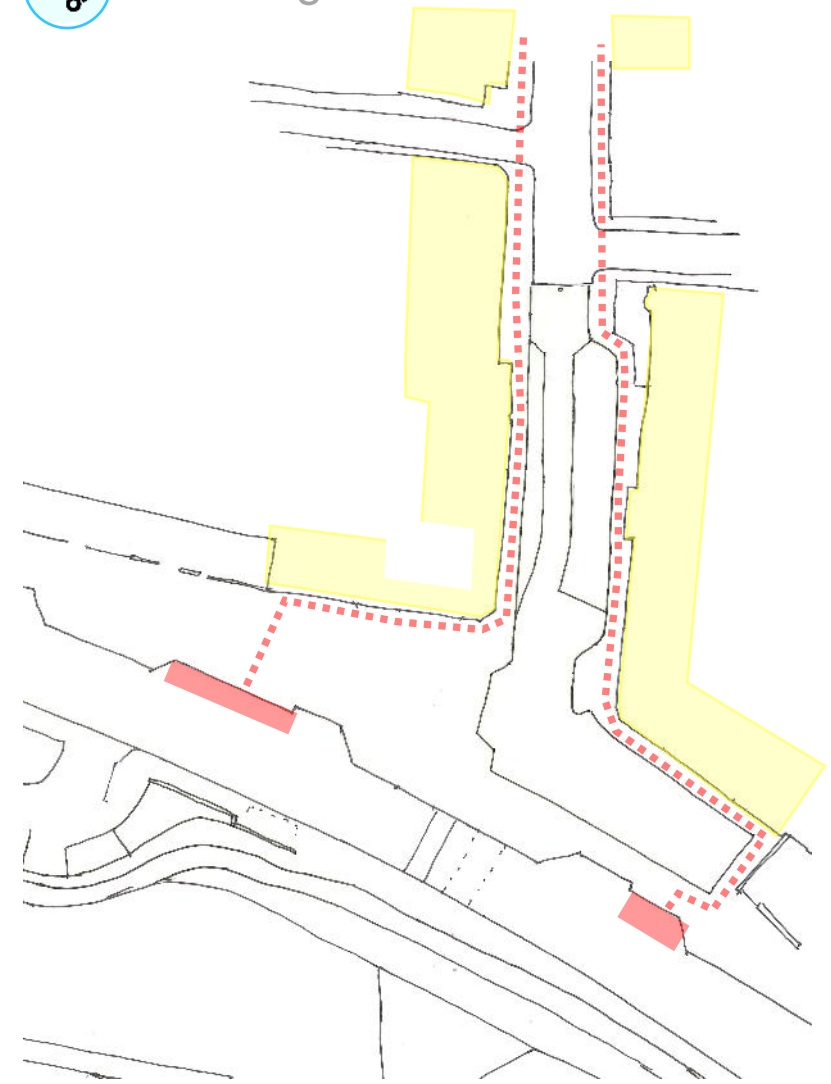
Accessibility and Circulation






-  Bus stop
-  Accessible parking space
-  Vehicular access
-  Main pedestrian circulation route



Loading and Deliveries



-  Commercial use
-  Loading bay
-  Loading access route

Community Space



View of proposal from Clontarf Road looking north towards Vernon Avenue

The introduction of a filtered permeability area at the southern end of Vernon Avenue will remove vehicles from this area unlocking the potential to create an enhanced village centre for Clontarf. A new footpath along Clontarf Road will provide a continuous east-west pedestrian link, while upgraded and segregated pedestrian and cyclist crossings strengthen connections to the promenade, reinforcing the relationship between the village and the seafront.

New freestanding planters, benches and enhanced opportunities for outdoor dining will delineate and activate the community space allowing space for people to sit, meet and gather. The use of freestanding planters and benches provides flexibility for community use of the space, allowing elements to be reconfigured for local events as required.

The existing two accessible parking bays will be retained on Clontarf Road, located close to the new crossing and will provide convenient access for people with disabilities to Vernon Avenue, nearby shops and the promenade. Adjacent loading bays will support servicing and deliveries to businesses along Clontarf Road and Vernon Avenue.

Community Space



View of proposal looking south along Vernon Avenue showing start of 'filtered permeability' arrangement

The filtered permeability area, shown to the left, begins just south of Clontarf Road and is accessible only to pedestrians and cyclists. Buff-coloured asphalt will highlight this transition to a more pedestrian focused environment.

Footpath build-outs are proposed along both sides of the street in front of the shops, providing additional space for freestanding planters, seating and outdoor dining. These interventions will help to animate and activate the street, creating a more attractive and sociable environment where people can meet, pause and spend time, particularly along the route to and from Clontarf Promenade.

To prevent through-traffic, bollards are proposed at both the northern and southern ends of the filtered permeability section. One bollard will be located at the entrance just south of Clontarf Road, and another near the new footpath along Clontarf Road. These measures will restrict vehicle access while still allowing emergency vehicles to pass through when necessary.

Mixed Traffic Street



View of proposal looking south along Vernon Avenue showing 'mixed traffic' street

A 'mixed traffic' street is proposed along Vernon Avenue between Seafield Road to the north and Clontarf Park to the south, where cyclists will share the carriageway with general traffic. Footpaths will be maintained on both the east and west sides of Vernon Avenue, providing continuous pedestrian route.

Twelve parking spaces will be retained between Nolan's of Clontarf and St. Joseph's Square, creating a chicane that helps reduce speeds. Vehicles and cyclists will yield to oncoming traffic where required, with pull-in areas provided at intervals.

In addition, localised footpath build-outs with freestanding planters, will guide vehicles and cyclists past parked cars and enhance the streetscape. Seating will be provided where space permits to improve pedestrian infrastructure.



View of proposal at Nolan's looking south along Vernon Avenue showing traffic calming measures

As Nolan's of Clontarf is a key destination that draws people to the area, some traffic calming measures are proposed along Vernon Avenue between Kincora Road junction and Nolan's of Clontarf car park entrance. Along this section, the carriageway will be narrowed to 5 metres to help reduce vehicle speeds. Buff-coloured asphalt surfacing will also be applied, visually signalling to all road users that increased caution is required within this shared environment.

In addition, a new raised zebra crossing is proposed near the car park entrance, providing a safer and more convenient point for pedestrians to cross Vernon Avenue.

A vibrant city street scene featuring a mix of architectural styles. On the left, there are traditional multi-story brick buildings with white window frames. On the right, more modern brick buildings house businesses, including one with a sign for 'BRAZILIAN STYLE COXINHA MINI SNACKS CAKES KIT FESTA'. The street is paved with a light-colored, textured material. In the foreground, a woman in a dark jacket walks towards the camera. To the right, a man in a blue jacket and a woman in a pink jacket are seated at a small outdoor table with wooden chairs. In the center, a large, reddish-brown planter box contains a young tree and some greenery. Several other pedestrians are visible in the background, some walking and some sitting on a bench. The sky is blue with light clouds, and the overall atmosphere is bright and lively.

Reference Projects

Reference Projects



Parliament Street, Dublin



Capel Street, Dublin



Blackrock Village, Dublin



Kildare Town Market Square, Kildare



New Street, Malahide Village, Dublin

These examples highlight similar upgrades in both city centre and village settings, where traffic management has helped create more people-focused spaces. The addition of planting, seating and outdoor dining has transformed these areas into more vibrant, active places for people to meet, sit and spend time.

