

Putting the Spokes back into the Wheel

Roscommon a 10-15 minute Town

NOLLAIG WHYTE

HEAD OF ECONOMIC REGENERATION UNIT



Comhairle Contae Ros Comáin
Roscommon County Council

Introducing County Roscommon

- Centre of Ireland
- 140km River Shannon Shoreline
- 64,544 living here
- 945,000 Global Rossies
- Largest towns: Roscommon, Monksland, Boyle, Casterea, Ballaghaderreen, Strokestown
- FIT People! Friendly, Informal, Talented



Introducing Roscommon Town

Population of 5,876

Strategically located re Galway MASP and Athlone Regional Growth Centre

Pre-Covid labour catchment of 7,235

Post covidboundless possibilities

Strong service and public sector employment

Very strong retail offering – wide hinterland draw

Strong agricultural influence with huge potential to increase its tourism market



3

Developing a Strategic Vision for a Vibrant, Liveable Town



Things to Do

- Strong Sports Focus
- History and Heritage
- Parks – Loughnaneane and Mote Park
- Community Events and Festivals



Accessibility & Employment

- Intersection of 2 national routes
- Rail link
- Centre of Ireland
- Compact
- Attractive to work in/invest in



Services & Living

- Shopping, Restaurants and cafes
- Healthcare
- Administrative Centre
- Affordable Housing
- Schools

4

Starting with the Centre – Why?

- ▶ Bring people, jobs and a diversity of urban functions together in town centre to
 - ▶ Reverse **hollowing out** of populations, footfall & private investment
 - ▶ Create a more **attractive alternative** to fringe areas
 - ▶ Increase urban densities to recreate **community and economic hub**
 - ▶ Reduce the need to travel and **improve people's quality of life**



5

What are we doing?

- ▶ Reimagining Main Street and Market Square to allow the following:
 - ▶ Seating areas which brings together people to **meet, eat and celebrate**
 - ▶ **Market area** with potential for use as an open air events and festival space
 - ▶ **Spill-out area** for coffee shops with outdoor ambiance to increase dwell time and spend
 - ▶ **Enhanced linkages** between existing car parks and the town centre
 - ▶ **Wayfinding Strategy** to improve the accessibility and visitor experience within the town



6

“PEOPLE COME WHERE PEOPLE ARE”

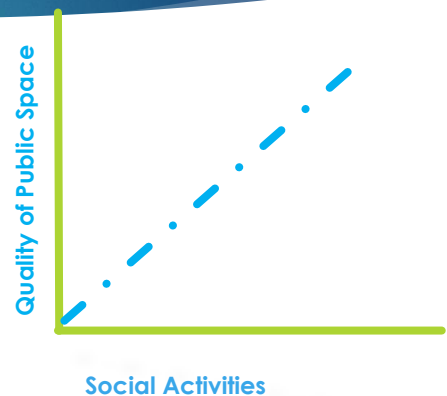
SCANDINAVIAN PROVERB

- ▶ Adults prefer to walk on lively streets rather than quiet streets
- ▶ Activities attract more activity e.g.
 - ▶ Artist drawing
 - ▶ Street painter/busker in action
 - ▶ People working on street excavations!

7

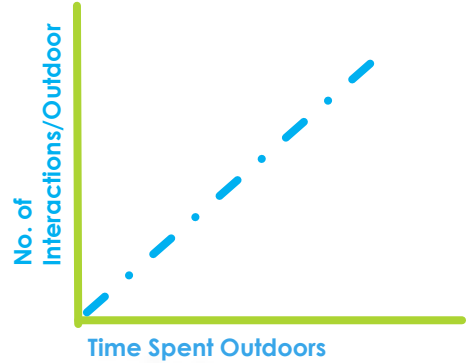
Outdoor Activities and Quality of Public Space

- ▶ 3 types of Outdoor Activities
 - ▶ Necessary
 - ▶ Optional e.g. a walk
 - ▶ Social Activities e.g. children at play, greetings, communal activities
- ▶ As Rural/Community Developers we can facilitate Town Teams/Community Groups to increase the quality of interactions



8

Outdoor Activities v Physical & Mental Health



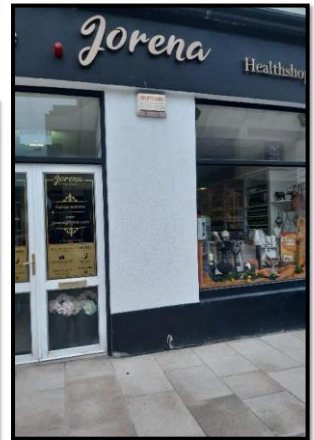
9

Getting the Centre Right

- ▶ Parking...
- ▶ Disruption



- ▶ Will be worth it



10

Roscommon's Impetus for a 10 – 15 minute Walkable Town

- ▶ An architect asked a local garage owner who had moved from Brazil do you like living in Roscommon?
 - ▶ I love Roscommon, it's a five minute town, 5 minutes to the shops, to the school, to the soccer pitch, to work – everything is only 5 minutes away

11

The 15 Minute City – International Meaning

- ▶ Professor Moreno model whereby we live in a world in which residents could meet all their daily needs on foot within a 15-minute radius of their homes.
- ▶ Roscommon already has it – but need to make it obvious and attractive

12

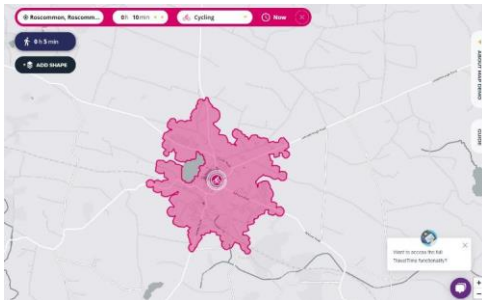
Roscommon – the 5 minute town?



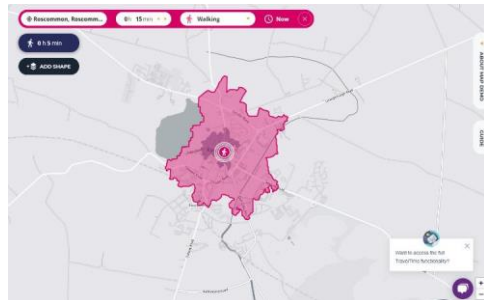
13

5 - 15 Minute Walk

10 Minute Walk



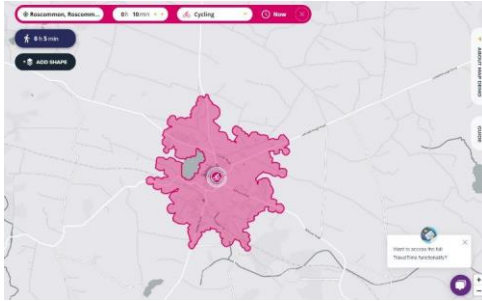
15 Minute Walk



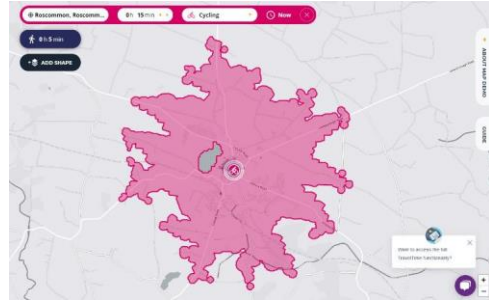
14

5 - 15 Minute Cycling

10 Minute Cycle



15 Minute Cycle

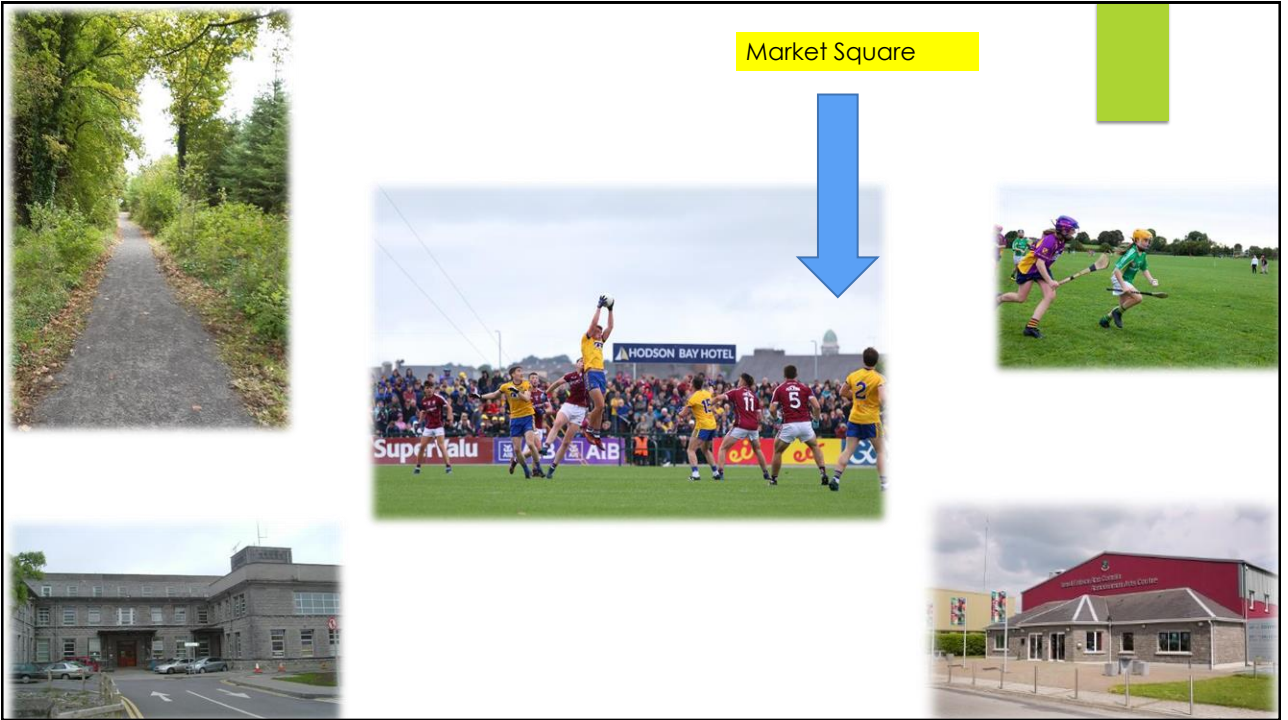


15

Ireland Project 2040 Impetus

- ▶ Unsustainable, peripheral sprawl → **Compact and Sustainable Growth**
- ▶ Place Making by building on the town's attributes to create **Strengthened Economies and Communities**
- ▶ Deliver highly connected town centres, where permeability and legibility encourages, entices and invites higher levels of pedestrian interaction with the town centre through **Sustainable Mobility**
- ▶ Offer an attractive urban environment which respects the existing built heritage and embraces new well designed, compact urban town centre spaces **Enhanced Amenity and Heritage**
- ▶ Create a more pedestrian and cycle friendly town centre to reduce car dependency on short journeys within the urban environs **Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society**

16



17

People Like to Join In

- ▶ Distance
- ▶ Perceived distance
- ▶ Route quality
- ▶ How you travel

18

Perception of Distance



Harrison Hall in Market Square

19

Would you want to Explore?



20

What You Are Missing



21

Would you cross here walking/cycling?



22

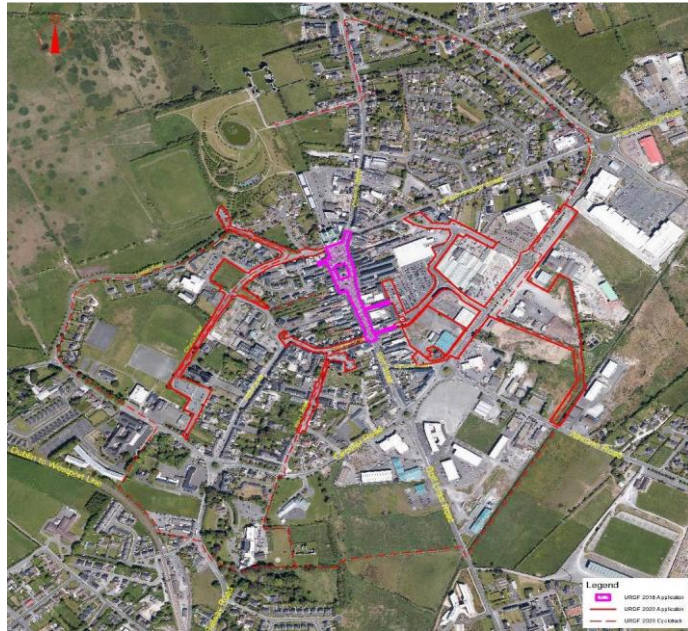
Create a town, where everything will be done to invite and entice people to walk and cycle as much as possible as they go about their daily business

23

We have the **Hub**

We know it we need to support it with **spokes**

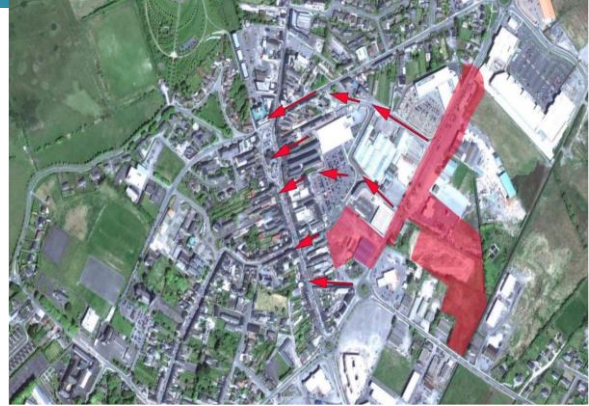
Spokes need a **rim**



24

Spoke 1

- Transform **grey** parking area into a **green** recreational route linking the civic buildings to the town centre
- Create opportunities for high quality **housing** and **remote working** options & ground floor retail on brownfield sites
- Entice the passer-by into the town through **enhanced pedestrian** routes
- **Upgrade existing car park** as an enhanced public space linking into Main Street



25

Spoke 2

- ▶ **Activating backlands** of Main Street by creating safe cycling and pedestrian access from:
 - the main tourist attractions
 - recreational facilities
 - schools and churches to the town centre



26

Spoke 3

- New housing and community infrastructure in **brownfield sites**
- Pedestrian and cycle **links**
- **Pocket Park** enhancements



27

Wheel Rim



- ▶ Complete **circular route** around the town
- ▶ Linking the town's key **tourism** assets
- ▶ Linking **local** housing, schools, churches, recreation and civic buildings
- ▶ 10 – 15 minute town

28



29

 **Rialtas na hÉireann**
Government of Ireland

Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040



Thank You
www.roscommonbound.ie
www.roscommoncoco.ie Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn or Instagram



Comhairle Contae
Ros Comáin
Roscommon
County Council

30