



Commons of Lloyd

Recreation and Amenity Plan

July 2026



comhairle chontae na mí
meath county council

Produced by

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose and Context of the Plan

1.2 Structure of the Plan

1.1 Purpose and Context of the Plan

The purpose of this draft Recreation and Amenity Plan is to provide a blueprint for the future use of the Commons of Lloyd, protecting its heritage and environmental qualities whilst making it a more attractive and sustainable destination for the enjoyment of all.

Meath County Council have been working with the Landscape, Design and Planning team at BDP to develop a clear strategy for the future of the Commons of Lloyd, as a desirable heritage, recreational and tourism amenity resource. This draft plan has been prepared following extensive research, analysis, site visits and consultation with the local community of Kells.

The draft Recreation and Amenity Plan provides a comprehensive layout for potential future recreational and amenity facilities at the Commons of Lloyd, whilst respecting its intrinsic landscape and historical character. The aim of the plan is to enable Meath County Council and the local community to realise their aspirations for the enhancement of the Commons of Lloyd. Ultimately, the plan will enable the council and local groups to leverage funding to implement the proposals identified within the plan.

Figure 1.1: Photograph of the Tower of Lloyd through trees | BDP



1.2 Structure of the Plan

The draft recreation and Amenity Plan is structured as follows:

Chapter Two is a summary of the analysis informed by site visits and a desktop study. These include a review of the current conditions, uses, access arrangements, connections and facilities.

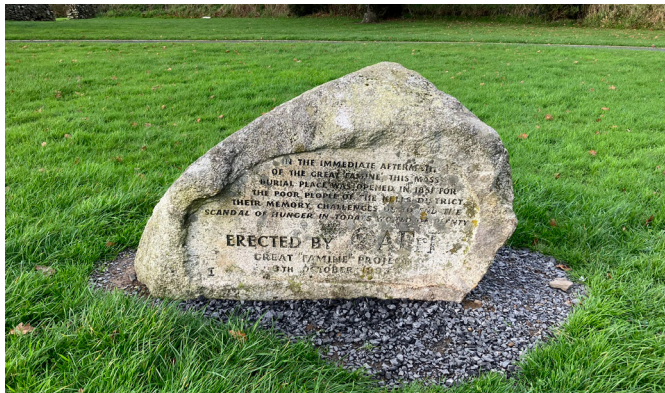
Chapter Three includes a review and summary of the relevant heritage, archaeology, environment and planning policy context.

Chapter Four contains the findings of the public consultation undertaken in relation to the plan.

Chapter Five provides an insight into the conceptual and design development process which led to the final draft plan.

Chapter Six sets out the vision, key principles, masterplan concepts and details how delivering may be phased.

Chapter Seven provides an implementation action plan for delivering the proposals including details of potential finding sources.



Figures 1.2 - 1.7: Photographs from across the site | BDP

2.0

Site Analysis

- 2.1** Location and Context
 - 2.2** Existing Amenities and Recreation
 - 2.3** Historical Overview
 - 2.4** Archaeological Context
 - 2.5** Environmental Context
 - 2.6** Topography
 - 2.7** Arrival and Connections
 - 2.8** Arriving and Leaving via Walking, Cycling and Car
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-

2.1 Location and Context

The Commons of Lloyd is circa 2 km west of Kells Town and is located off the R163 Oldcastle Road.

The site comprises circa 166.20 ha and is distinguished by a “freestanding tower, dated 1791, in the form of a giant Doric column, surmounted by glazed lantern. Dressed limestone walls with string courses, dentils, and dressings,” (*Source: NIAH*). The hill is a natural focal point in the landscape, being the highest elevation between Kells and Slieve na Calliagh which lie circa 12km further west. The Commons of Lloyd is an extremely valuable recreational amenity and an area of tranquillity close to Kells Town Centre, serving as both a local landmark and a protected structure.

Figure 2.1: Illustrative Site Plan | BDP



2.2 Existing Amenities and Recreation

The current amenity and recreation offer at the Commons of Lloyd comprises the following:

- Walking Routes
- Car Park
- Playground
- Community Allotments
- Picnic Facilities
- A Famine Memorial

The red walk route is a current 3km loop around the Commons, to the Tower and along the River Blackwater.

The yellow walk route is a shorter route from the Tower down to the R147. The site also accommodates a Famine Memorial and a number of archaeological sites.

The Tower of Lloyd is accessible to visitors; and bookings are essential. Further information is available at: www.discoverboynevalley.ie

Figure 2.2: Illustrative plan of existing amenities and recreation at the Commons | BDP



- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| — Commons of Lloyd Study Boundary |  Main Public Entrance |  Tower of Lloyd and memorial |
|  Car park |  Community Allotments |  3km Walking red route |
|  Playground |  Picnic spots |  Walking yellow route |

Figure 2.3- 2.10: Photos of existing amenities and recreational facilities at the Commons | BDP





2.3 Historical Overview

Located within the confines of the People's Park, 2.4km from the town of Kells, County Meath (R163), the Tower of Lloyd stands as Ireland's only inland lighthouse. Constructed in 1791, the Tower is an 18th-century lighthouse folly. It stands as a towering Doric column topped with a glazed lantern, dedicated to the memory of Thomas Taylor, 1st Earl of Bective, by his son (*Source: NIAH*).

Standing at a towering height of one hundred feet, 428 feet above sea level, and boasting a staircase of 164 steps to its summit, the limestone tower doubled was an observation point for horse racing and hunting pursuits throughout the nineteenth century. This magnificent landmark is visible from vast distances (As far as The Mourne Mountains, Co. Down on a clear day) and it also served as an emblem of Lord Headfort's affluence and authority. The Tower itself is situated upon a historic Iron Age ring fort, although speculation suggests that the site may be as old as the Bronze Age. (*Source: NIAH*)

The hill was originally called Mullach Aiti, evolving over time to Mulloyde and eventually to its present name, Lloyd. Positioned strategically, the Hillfort served as a defensive barrier against potential incursions from the Kingdom of Bréifne (Cavan) into the ancient Kingdom of Midhe (Meath)

The legendary Queen Maeve (Medbh) was said to camp here with her armies on her way to steal Ulster's prize stud bull in the story of Táin Bó Cúailnge ("The Cattle Raid of Cooley").

Edward Bruce, brother to King Robert Bruce of Scotland, also camped here following his victory at the Battle of Kells in 1314, as part of his abortive invasion of Ireland.

During the time of the Great Famine, destitute people lived on the hill. The community park (The People's Park) includes a Paupers Graveyard. The hilltop burial ground began as a cholera burial pit and later was used as a Pauper's Graveyard for the Kells Union Workhouse c. 1840s - 1920s.

A plaque displayed at the tower bears the inscription: 'This pillar was designed by Henry Aaron Baker Esq. architect was executed by Mr. Joseph Beck stone cutter Mr. Owen Mc Cabe head mason Mr. Bartle Reilly overseer Anno 1791'.

The east-facing plaque on the Tower showcases the Headfort Coat of Arms, complete with the family crest: The inscription on the plaque reads: "Consequitur quodquinque petit" which translates to 'He follows what he seeks' (Meath County Council, N.D).

Adjacent to the stunning tower, in stark juxtaposition, lies the 'Paupers Graveyard.' An indeterminate number of individuals were buried here during the famine of the 1840s (Hannon, 2013)

Figure 2.11: Aerial view of the Tower of Lloyd taken by RAF Bi-plane in 1918 | South Dublin Libraries, Dimmock Collection



2.4 Archaeological Context

The Commons of Lloyd holds significance in terms of archaeology due to its association with various historical events and periods. The Tower of Lloyd is located on the site of a ring fort from the Iron Age, however, there has been increasing evidence that the site may actually be older from the Bronze Age. A large hillfort made of circular ditches surrounds the hill's crest, according to recent geophysical scans of the area.

This context is crucial to the future plan for the Commons of Lloyd, given the significance of the archaeology present across the site. The archaeological context has been considered throughout the proposals, ensuring no negative impacts, and must continue to be reviewed and assessed as the proposals develop, and as / when any further archaeological remnants are discovered at the site.

This section draws upon the following references:

- Geophysical Survey Report, Hill of Lloyd, Kells, Co. Meath 2024 (Dowling, 2024);
- Geophysical Survey Reports of 2013 and May 2023;
- Meath Co Council Archaeologist Review in relation to the Draft Public Realm and Amenity Plan, September 2023 (Niall Roycroft);
- Landscape and Settlement in Late Iron Age Ireland: Some Emerging Trends (Dowling, 2014);
- Exploring the Hidden Depths of Tara' Hinterland: Geophysical Survey and Landscape Investigations in the Meath-North Dublin Region, Eastern Ireland (Dowling, 2015);
- Gathering Ground: Unearthing 3000 Years of Prehistory

at Faughan Hill, Eastern Ireland (Dowling, 2023);

- Historic Environment Viewer (National Monuments Service, archaeology.ie).

In archaeological terms, the Commons of Lloyd is recognised as a post-medieval landscape which likely derives from the previous commonage. The late prehistoric hillfort around the summit of the Tower of Lloyd, now partly occupied by the People's Park, was identified in the 2013 geophysical survey and is considered to be a National Monument (RMP ME016-054). The hillfort is around 150-250m in diameter and defined by two (or possibly three) banks with outer ditches. Within this, a smaller enclosure (c. 120m in diameter) was identified by geophysical investigations by the Discovery Programmes 'Late Iron Age' and 'Roman Ireland' Project in 2013. A number of possible ring-ditches and other potential archaeological features were also recorded in the immediate vicinity of the two hilltop enclosures. The only archaeological excavation of the site revealed a pit or 'ditch-type' feature containing burnt animal bone (mainly pig) dated to c.1000 BC. A number of excavations in the wider area have revealed four burnt spreads, a possible habitation site, a burnt mound and a ring ditch.

The Hilltop may have functioned as some form of Royal Site and the rounded hillside is dotted with early medieval ringforts. It is likely that the Commons of Lloyd would have been used for burial.

The site includes several hollows containing springs /

seasonal pools. Such locations were likely used for animal husbandry, overlooked by Ringforts.

The hill has also been used for quarrying and gravel pits, and it is likely that the quarry pit on the hilltop was used to source stone used for the Tower of Lloyd.

The proposals contained within this draft Recreation and Amenity Plan will have regard to the archaeological context, with consideration for the following:

- No proposed planting over known or suspected archaeological remains;
- New planting zones must comply with standard practices around sensitive sites, including the requirements for surveys and buffer zones to ensure any archaeological remains are not impacted by root planting, root action or drainage.
- Maintenance of existing hedgerows;
- Maintenance of earthen banks, herringbone stone facings and associated drainage ditches;
- Improved coordination of walking/public use in these areas alongside animal grazing, husbandry and silage cutting;
- Consideration for physical landscape features such as seasonal ponds which may have had connections with animal husbandry practices of the past;
- Consideration for field demarcations that have indicated characteristics of traditional 'louth banks' and the potential requirement for conditional assessments and remedial actions for these.

2.4 Archaeological Context

Record of Monuments and Places:

- ME016-054 Hillfort: Considered to be a National Monument; ME016-016: Ringfort;
- ME016-015: Ringfort; ME016-011: Ringfort; ME016-012: Ringfort;
- ME016-013: Barrow; ME016-014: Barrow.

2015 LIDAR Anomalies:

- A3.2: Ring-barrow, A3.5 Possible Enclosure; A4.2 Enclosure; B4.1 Enclosure;
- B4.2 Road; B5.2 Enclosure; A3.4: Road

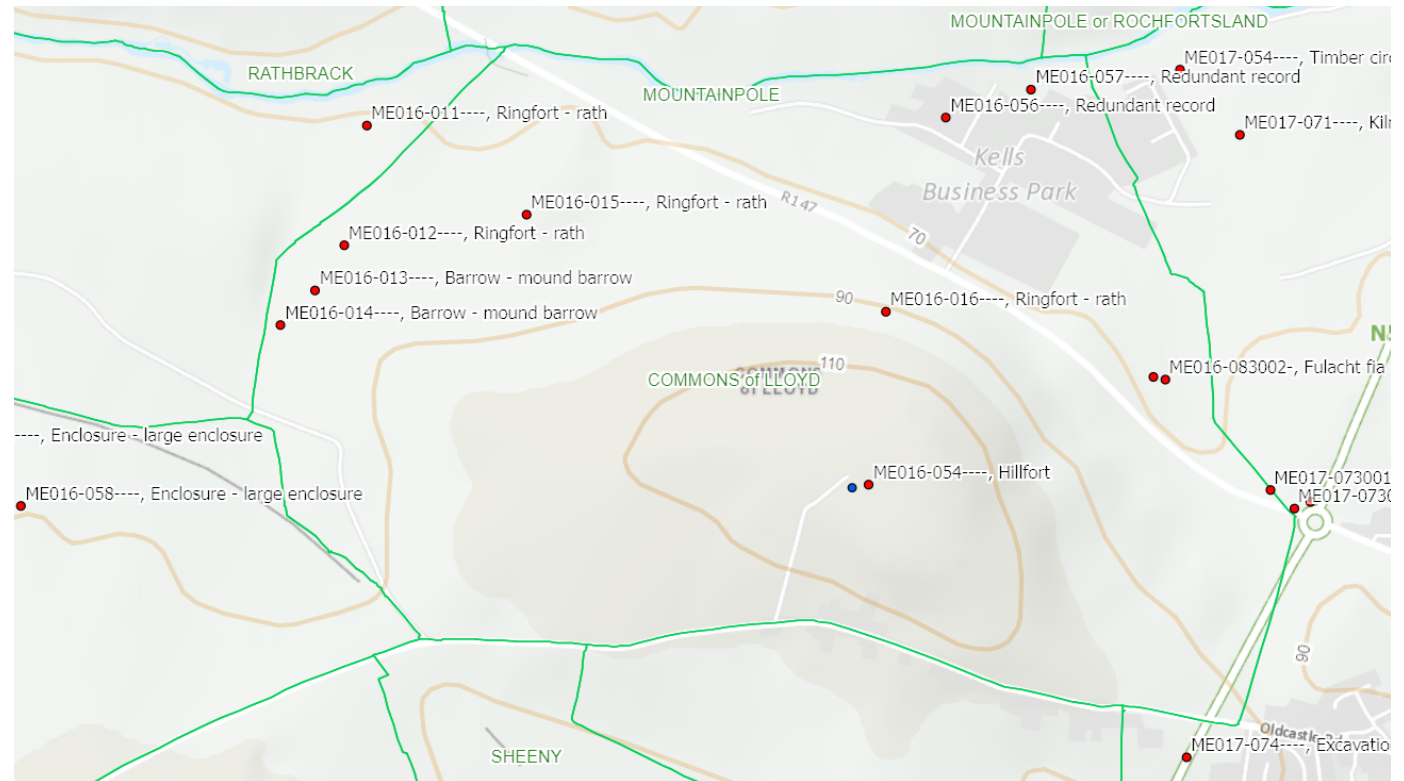
Record of Protected Structures:

- MH016-123 / NIAH 1441601 Tower of Lloyd set within extensive, curtilage field boundary survival.

Archaeological Overlay

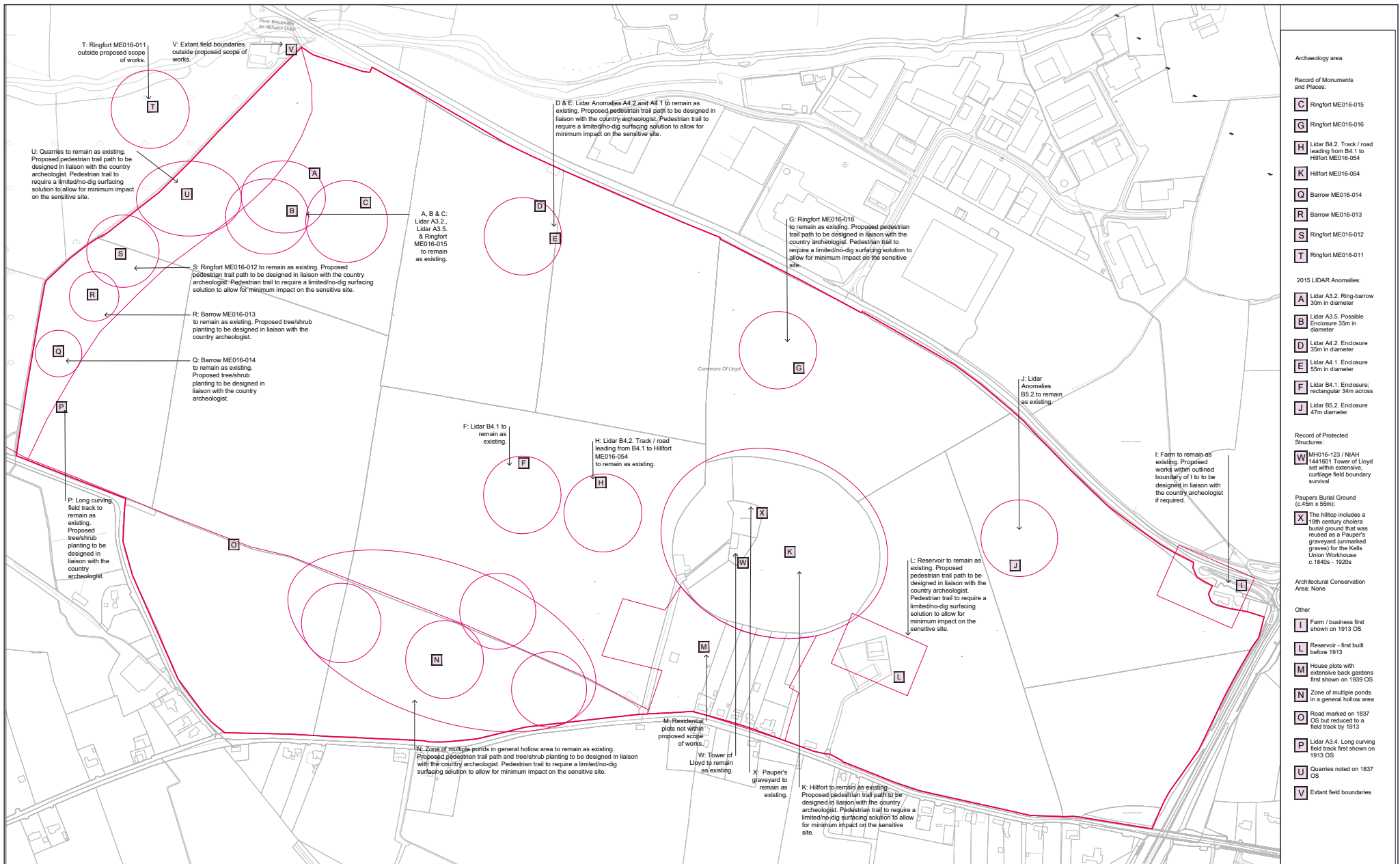
To contribute to the refinement of ideas and the location of interventions across the Commons of Lloyd, the design team worked with the Archaeological Officer at Meath County Council to identify any potential archaeological assets across the site (displayed in Figure 2.12). The Recreation and Amenity Plan seeks to adhere to the good practice principles regarding archaeological presence (as set out in Section 3), such as not proposing any planting over known or suspected archaeological remains. Therefore, drawing up Figure 2.12 helped to identify any potential proposals which would need to be relocated or amended to respect the archaeological context.

Figure 2.12: Commons of Lloyd | Historic Environment



There are national monuments on Commons of Lloyd protected under National Monuments Legislation (1930-2014) (as amended) and all proposed interventions will be assessed in the context of their impact on surface and subsurface archaeology. Any potential adverse physical and visual impacts identified will require amendments to future proposals.

Figure 2.13: Archaeological Overlay| BDP



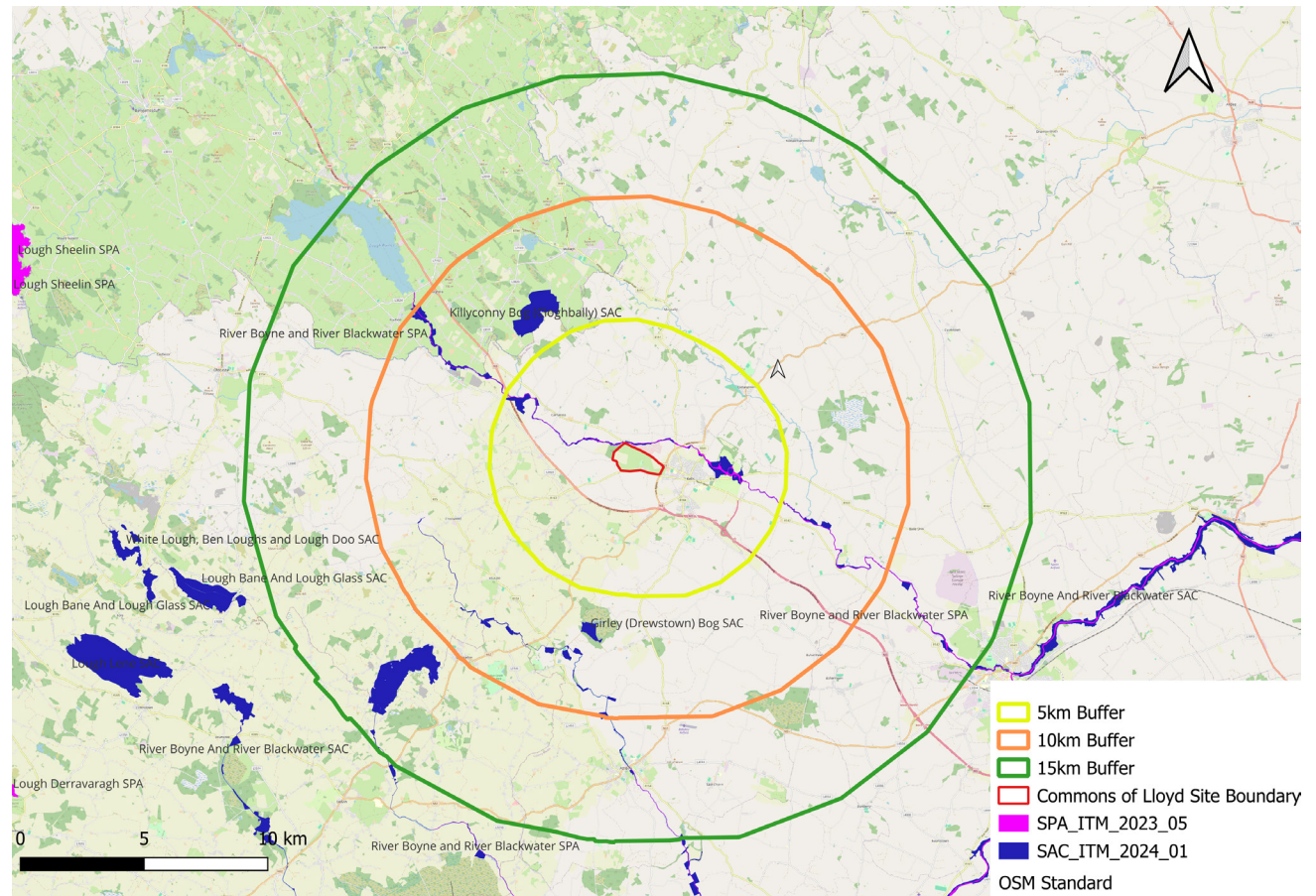
2.5 Environmental Context

Environmental Assessments

AA and SEA Screenings have been carried out in conjunction with the preparation of the plan and in accordance with the Habitats Directive and relevant legislation. As part of this screening process, potential proposals were assessed for their impact on protected habitats. The close proximity to the protected River Boyne and Blackwater (SPA and SAC) is a major consideration for any proposals at the Commons of Lloyd, particularly at the north-west edge where it is at its closest. Therefore, the initial idea of introducing wetland areas to the northern edge of the Commons would not be very appropriate as it would introduce drainage implications which may effect the river. Therefore, this idea was not taken forward in the final design.

Following detailed review and assessment it is considered that the proposed Recreation and Amenity Plan will not result in significant adverse environmental effects and therefore, does not require further assessment of the likely effect on the environment of the implementation of the Recreation and Amenity Plan through SEA. The stage one screening for AA of the Commons of Lloyd Recreation and Amenity Plan demonstrates that the plan is not likely to have any significant effects on any European site. It is concluded that the Commons of Lloyd Recreation and Amenity Plan is not foreseen to give rise to any significant adverse effects on any designated European sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects. This evaluation is made in view of the conservation objectives of the habitats or species for which these sites have been designated. Consequently, a Stage Two AA (NIS) is not required.

Figure 2.14: European Protected Sites within 15km of Commons of Lloyd | BDP



2.6 Topography

The Commons of Lloyd landscape has a distinct topography which is undoubtedly a factor in the historic use of the site and is key to the character of the site. However, it is also a challenge when considering accessibility and improving the amenity value of the site.

Figure 2.15 illustrates the topography at the Commons, showing that the highest point converges around the Tower of Lloyd. The steepest ascents towards the Tower are from the immediate north and immediate south. The ascents towards the Tower from the west and the east have a more gentle incline across a longer distance.

Figure 2.15: Illustrative Plan of Topography | BDP



2.7 Entrance Points

The current main public entrance to the Commons of Lloyd is accessed off the Oldcastle Road (R163). This arrival point is a steep, straight road, passing the community allotments to the left and reaching the current car park, which is close to both the playground and the Tower of Lloyd. The nature and gradient of this entrance are more suited to cars than pedestrians.

There are a number of pedestrian gates and cattle gates around the perimeter of the Commons of Lloyd which can be used by pedestrians.

The numbers on Figure 2.27 correspond with site photographs on the next page.

Figure 2.27: Illustrative plan of entrance points to the Commons | BDP



Figure 2.28 - 2.35: Photos of entrance points corresponding with Figure 2.27 | BDP



2.8 Arrival and Connections

The Commons of Lloyd can be accessed from Kells town centre by either driving, walking, cycling or by bus, although the former is currently the easiest and most commonly used mode of transport for accessing the Commons.

The Commons of Lloyd is a circa 5-minute car journey from Kells, an 8 minute cycle or a 34 minute walk to the current main public entrance. The main public entrance is close to the Tower of Lloyd and most of the current facilities, however the access is a very steep incline.

Alternatively, bus routes 187, 109, 109X stop on the R147 from which the Commons could be reached by walking further along the road and through a pedestrian gate. This would require walking on the road as there are no defined footpaths at this point. Also, there are no signposts, nor a defined entrance to welcome pedestrians through the pedestrian gate.

The R163 (Oldcastle Road) has a footpath on the north side and has a speed limit of 80km by the Commons, reducing to 50km closer to Kells Town. The R147 (Cavan Road) has a 80km stretch towards the west, reducing to 60km limit and then a 50km limit closer to Kells Town. There is a footpath only at the southern side of the road for some of the route, but there is no defined footpath for the majority of this stretch alongside the Commons.

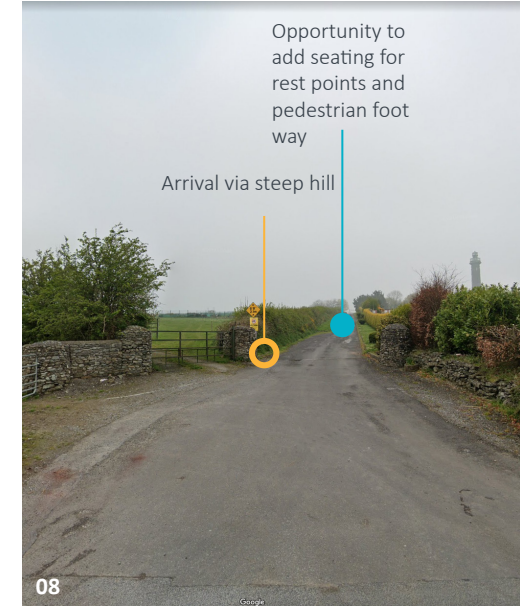
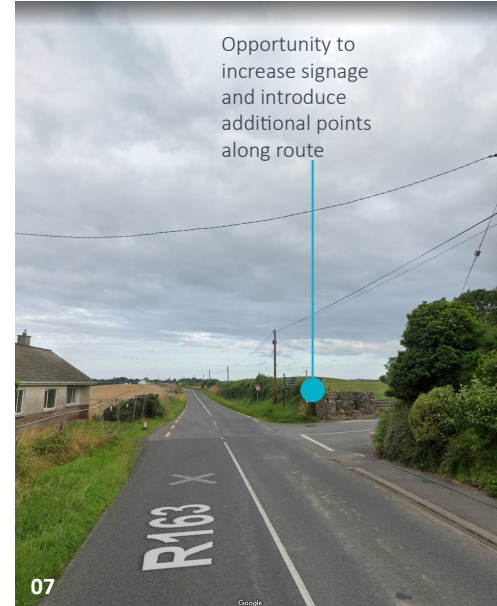
Photos on the next page show the various viewpoints from the plan.

Figure 2.16: Illustrative plan of arrival points and connections to Kells | BDP



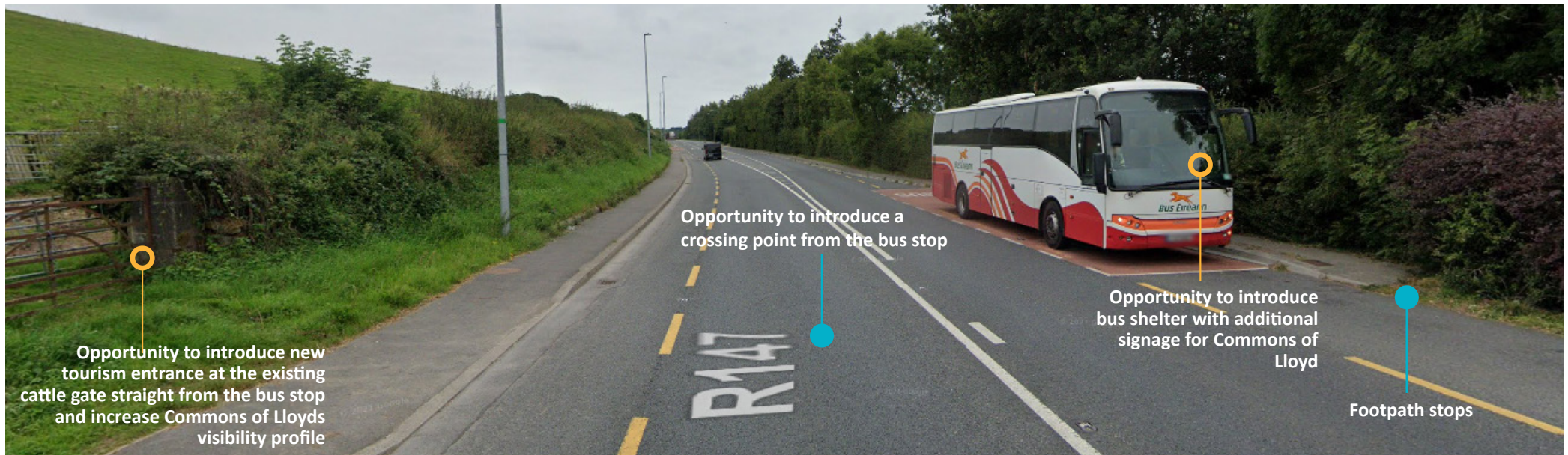
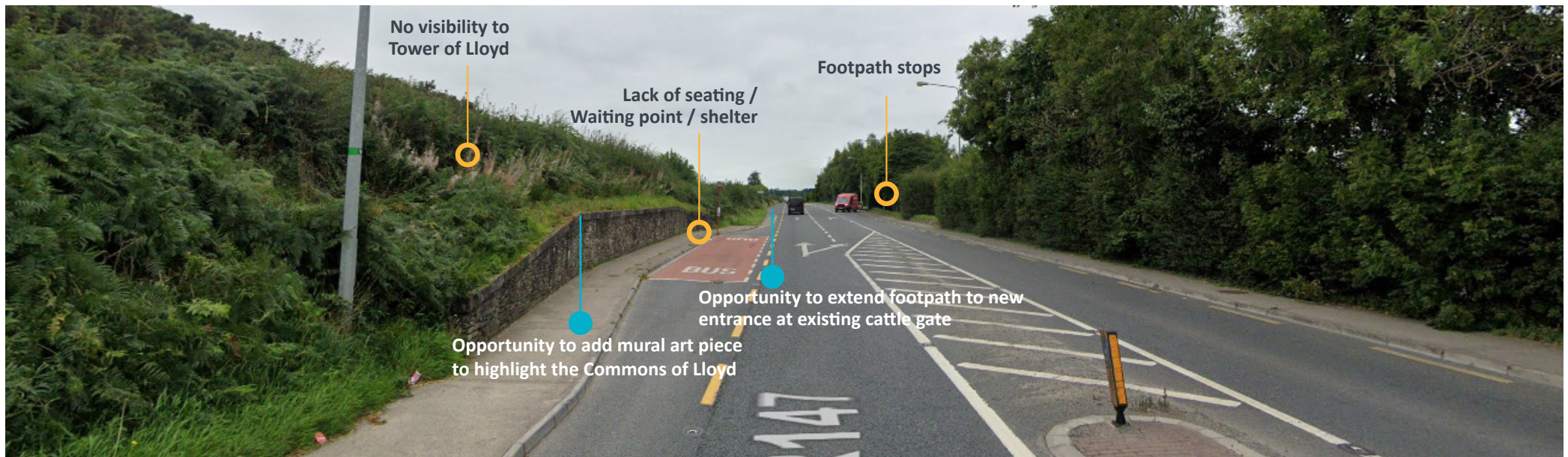
2.9 Arrival and Leaving via Walking, Cycling and Car

Figures 2.17 - 2.24: Photos of various viewpoints corresponding with Figure 2.16 | BDP



2.10 Arriving and Leaving via Bus

Figures 2.25 - 2.26: Photos of arriving and leaving via bus | BDP



2.11 SCOT Analysis

STRENGTHS



- Council-owned lands;
- Green open space;
- Archaeological heritage;
- Tower of Lloyd, an important historic asset;
- Strong heritage;
- Existing playground for families and children;
- Close proximity to Kells Town Centre;
- Already a place of amenity and recreation for local people;
- Attractive views;
- A unique place to visit.

CHALLENGES



- Lack of amenities and facilities to attract people to visit;
- Lack of recreation opportunities;
- Poor experience at some existing facilities, such as the picnic benches situated next to the road;
- Poor pedestrian and cycle connectivity to town centre;
- Strong car dependency due to the car-orientated main entrance;
- Limited arrival points;
- Challenging topography across the site;
- Archaeology present;
- Protected habitats in close proximity to the site (River Blackwater).

OPPORTUNITIES



- Increase cycling opportunities with cycle parking and better cycle links;
- Tourism potential;
- Recreation;
- Celebrate the history/archaeology of the site;
- Enhance the arrival experience;
- Increased opportunity for habitat creation and increased biodiversity;
- Enhance entrance points;
- Improve pedestrian links to Kells Town Centre;
- Improve experience at the bus stop, connectivity and visibility;
- Facilities for community use;
- Introduce Active Recreational Facilities;
- Provide a community building.

THREATS



- Lack of funding opportunities;
- Lack of coordinated leadership to ensure the delivery and implementation of proposals;
- Poor public transport connections;
- Reluctance to accept change.

3.0 Planning Policy Context

3.1 Planning Policy Context

3.2 Heritage, Environment and Biodiversity Policy Context

3.3 Previous Site Masterplan

3.1 Planning Policy Context

This section provides a review of the policy context which has informed the development of this plan, from the national to the local level.

National Context

Project Ireland 2040

Project Ireland 2040 provides overarching strategic objectives for planning for the social, cultural, and economic development of Ireland. It is underpinned by the National Planning Framework (NPF), which provides the vision and strategy for development across Ireland, and the National Development Plan (NDP) which enables the investment and capital funding to implement the strategy.

National Planning Framework (1st Revision 2025)

The overarching policy and planning framework for Ireland. The NPF has a strong focus on the National Strategic

Outcomes including: strengthened rural economies and communities, sustainable mobility, and enhanced amenity and heritage. With regard to the latter, there is recognition that this requires investment into amenities in rural areas which is linked to and must integrate with our built, cultural and natural heritage.

National Development Plan 2021-2030

The NDP mirrors the national strategic objectives of the NPF and provides specific funding measures to support National Heritage, tourism, and sports.

Our Rural Future 2021-2025

A framework for the development of rural Ireland over the next five years. The policy is forward looking and ambitious and addresses both the challenges facing rural areas and the opportunities which rural economies and communities

can benefit from in the coming years.

Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan

The Plan sets out actions through which a range of government, civil and private sectors will undertake to achieve Ireland's 'Vision for Biodiversity', and follows on from the work of the first and second National Biodiversity Action Plans. It has been developed in line with the EU and International Biodiversity strategies and policies.

Climate Action Plan

Sets out a road map for taking decisive action to halve Ireland's emissions by 2030 and reach net zero no later than 2050. It sets out how Ireland can accelerate the actions that are required to respond to the climate crisis, putting climate solutions at the centre of Ireland's social and economic development.



Figures 3.1-3.5: National Policy Documents

3.1 Planning Policy Context

Eastern and Midland Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy is a strategic plan and investment framework to shape the future development of the Region to 2031 and beyond. The vision is: “To create a sustainable and competitive Region that supports the health and well-being of our people and places, from urban to rural, with access to quality housing, travel and employment opportunities for all”

County Meath is within the Eastern Region, and is described as having potential to leverage the high quality natural environment and heritage to promote the tourism and leisure offer.

Figure 3.6: RSES



Meath County Development Plan

The Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 was adopted on 22 September 2021. The plan sets out a vision and strategy for the sustainable development and planning of the county, through guiding policies and objectives.

The Kells Land Use Zoning Map within the County Development Plan, Figure 3.8, shows the Commons of Lloyd categorised as F1/D1 Open Space/Tourism use zoning objective.

Figure 3.7: MCDP



The **Policy F1 Open Space** aims “*To provide for and improve open spaces for active and passive recreational amenities.*”

Guidance

The Planning Authority will consider development proposals for utility development and transportation infrastructure on F1 Open Space zoned land on a case by case basis subject to the works being ancillary to and necessary for the appropriate development of adjacent lands. In all instances the integrity of the open space land as an amenity area shall not be significantly reduced.

Permitted Uses

Car Park for Recreational Purposes, Craft Centre / Craft Shop, Community Facility / Centre, Cultural Facility, Cycleways / Greenways / Trail Development, Leisure / Recreation / Sports Facilities, Playing Pitches, Playgrounds, Utilities.

Open for Consideration Uses

Community Allotments, Bring Banks, Childcare Facility, Place of Public Worship, vehicular/cyclist/pedestrian access to zoned lands where appropriate.

3.1 Planning Policy Context

The **D1 Tourism** land use zoning objective states: *“To provide for appropriate and sustainable visitor and tourist facilities and associated uses”.*

Guidance

D1 zones have been identified to provide for tourism type uses such as accommodation, and entertainment.

Permitted Uses

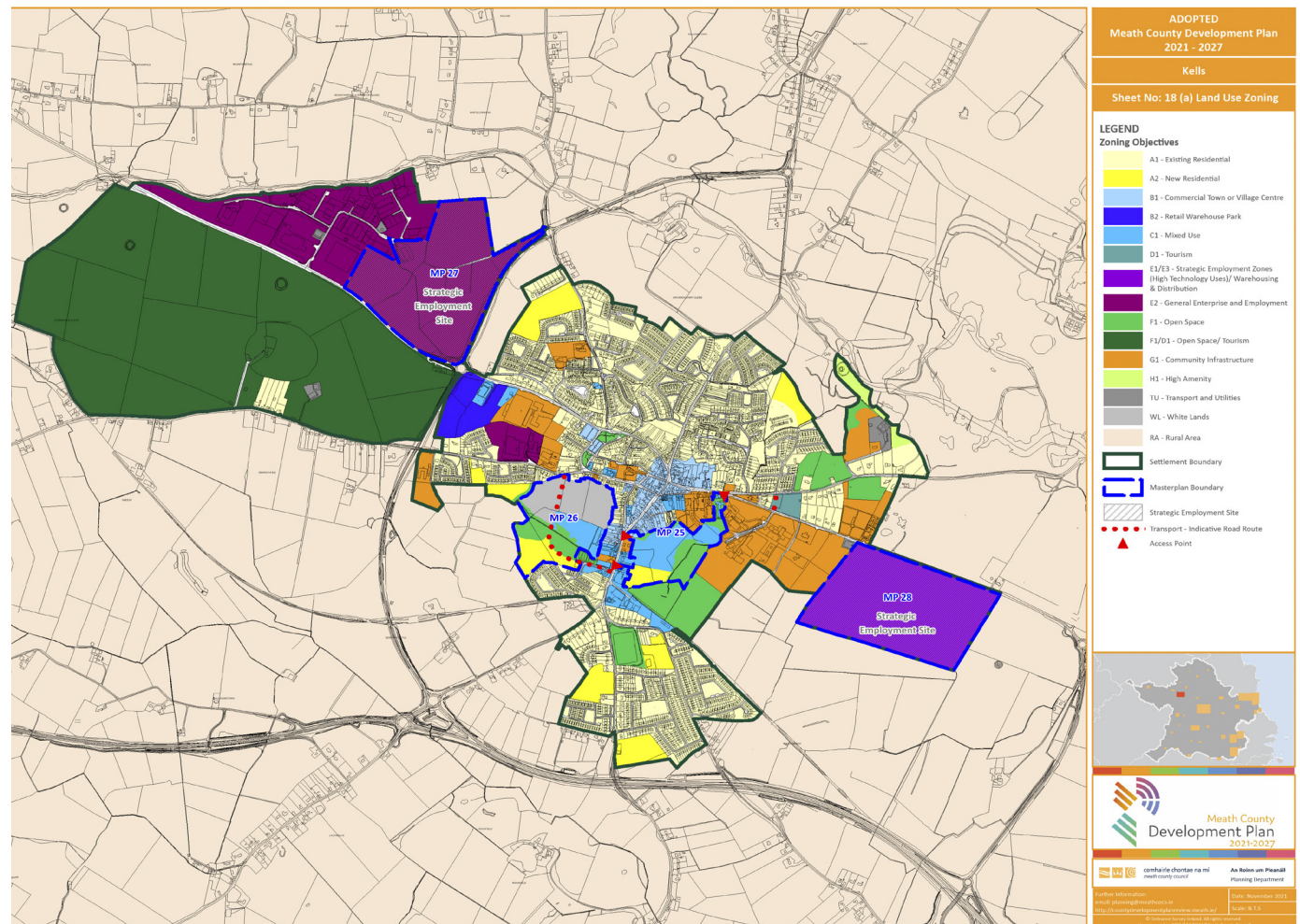
B & B / Guest House, Caravan Park, Children Play / Adventure Centre, Community Facility / Centre, Conference/Event Centre, Medical & related uses, Craft Centre / Craft Shop, Cultural Facility, Hotel / Motel / Hostel, Leisure / Recreation / Sports Facilities, Restaurant / Café, Water Services / Public Services.

Open for Consideration Uses

Amusement Arcade, Cinema, Convenience Outlet, Childcare Facility, Cultural Facility, Dance Hall / Night Club, Offices

The Recreation Amenity Plan is a non-statutory plan and will therefore conform with the policies and objectives set out in the County Development Plan.

Figure 3.8: Land Use Zoning Plan | Meath County Development Plan



3.1 Planning Policy Context

The Meath County Development Plan includes a **Written Statement of Kells**.

A list of opportunities are identified for Kells, including some relevant to this Recreation and Amenity Plan:

- There is a vibrant arts and cultural sector in Kells that has helped support a number of high-profile international film and literary festivals. Tapping into this resource will provide an opportunity for Kells to develop as a cultural hub that would generate employment opportunities and strengthen community identity in the town.
- There are opportunities to continue to develop and promote Kells as a tourist destination in the Boyne Valley Tourism Region by supporting enhancements to the public realm and investment in tourist related activities.

The Commons of Lloyd, or the 'Peoples Park' as it is called within the Written Statement, is recognised as a main area of public open space in Kells and an important piece of green infrastructure in the town.

The Kells Written Statement includes several relevant policies including:

KEL POL 1

To continue to support the sustainable growth of Kells by encouraging high quality development in appropriate locations that enhances the built environment, meets the needs of all sections of the community, respects the heritage status of the town, and allows the town to fulfil its designation as an important employment and service centre in the north of the County.

KEL OBJ 21

To require that new development proposals have regard to the history, heritage and architectural importance of the town in order to protect and enhance these qualities.

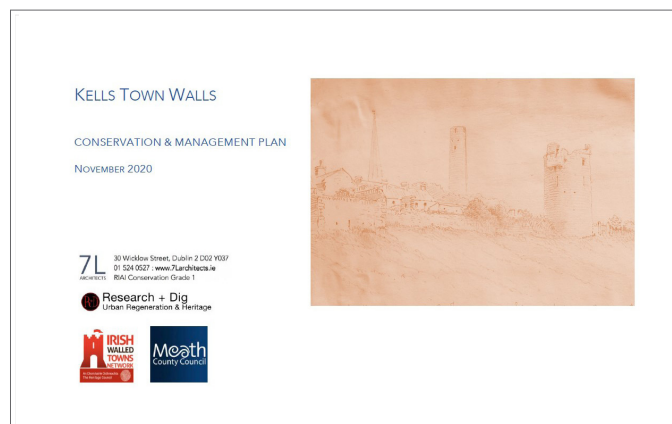
3.2 Heritage, Environment and Biodiversity Policy Context

Kells Town Walls Conservation Management Plan 2020

The Kells Town Walls Conservation Management Plan was commissioned by Meath County Council to assess the historical and cultural significance of the current condition of the walled town. This plan focusses on the walled town but includes some general conservation policies which may relate to the historical and archaeological heritage at the Commons of Lloyd.

The plan sets policies to protect archaeological heritage as much as possible, by avoiding disturbing any potential archaeology and using non-intrusive methods of investigation where necessary. The plan promotes ongoing maintenance to preserve historic structures and landscapes, and that conservation should follow an overall strategy for the maintenance of the built and natural heritage. There are also policies relating to protecting and enhancing the settings of built heritage, including monuments.

Figure 3.9: Kells Town Walls CMP



Kells Community Biodiversity Action Plan 2016-2020

This plan was formed through a collaboration between Meath County Council and members of the Kells community. A series of workshops were held addressing key concepts in biodiversity and possible actions. Projects which reflect the community interests and expertise as well as the natural resources of the area were selected, leading to the creation of this plan. This community biodiversity plan outlines a list of biodiversity projects to be fulfilled by the community over the coming years.

The Commons of Lloyd features as a project within this plan with the following actions:

- Hedgerow management to maintain wildlife value of hedges (hedge laying or planting gaps with quicks)
- Manage field margins as wildflower meadows/rough grassland.
- Guided walks of the history, archaeology and biodiversity of the area include and highlighting some of the projects in this biodiversity plan along the trail.

It was intended for these actions to be undertaken with 1-5 years, with support from:

- Kells Heritage Park Ltd.
- Meath County Council
- Kells Tourism Forum
- Kells Archaeological & Historical Society

This plan includes a detailed assessment of the biodiversity at the Commons of Lloyd, stating that the hedgerows surrounding the fields are of high local biodiversity value being dense hedgerows on earthen banks with a range of plant species. However, some of the hedgerow could benefit from hedge laying or supplementation.

The biodiversity of the agricultural fields could be substantially increased by maintaining the field margins as wildflower meadows or rough grassland. Other opportunities to increase biodiversity are erecting bird and bat boxes and a barn owl nest box.

Finally, it is stated that a series of guided walks on the history, archaeology and biodiversity of the area will be held to highlight the rich heritage and some of the actions of this biodiversity plan.

Figure 3.10: Kells BAP



3.2 Heritage, Environment and Biodiversity Policy Context

Tower of Lloyd Grasslands Management Plan and Comparative Study 2022

Commons of Lloyd Biodiversity and Conservation Agriculture Project

This project commenced in 2022 and its initial aim was to conduct a trial on 14 acres of the Commons of Lloyd to find the most ecologically advantageous management strategy for local authority owned grassland habitat but also consider the multiple functions and uses of the hill, including public amenity and site management constraints such as labour, time, budget, health and safety and future agricultural lease arrangements.

Between 2022 (baseline year) and 2024 (year 2 of grazing management trial which involved strict grazing windows, a no-graze summer period, and no fertilizer application) the following observations have been reported:

- Significant increase in grassland biodiversity (no. of species of herbs, grasses & invertebrates) | *Biodiversity benefits*
- Significant increase in soil health (soils sampled across the Commons) | *Climate benefits*
- Healthier sward – healthier livestock (greater access to soil properties and diverse plant properties) | *Agricultural benefits*
- Access to summer meadow walking trails | *Community benefits*

Figure 3.11: Grassland Management Areas | Flynn Furney 2022



Looking ahead to 2025 and beyond, the main aims of the project are to continue traditional meadow and grazing management of the hill-top 14 acres, seek opportunities to expand this form of sensitive grassland management and engage both the public and local schools with the project,

tapping into the site's potential as an educational and demonstration asset.

4.0

Consultation

- 4.1** Consultation Overview
 - 4.2** Access and Mobility Responses
 - 4.3** Current uses of the Commons of Lloyd
 - 4.4** Likes and Dislikes
 - 4.5** Opportunities for Improvement
 - 4.6** Summary of Responses
-

4.1 Consultation Overview

The pre-draft consultation on this Recreation and Amenity Plan took place in summer of 2023. This was at an early phase in the project to inform the local community about the Recreation and Amenity Plan and to try to gain insights into what the plan should include and deliver.

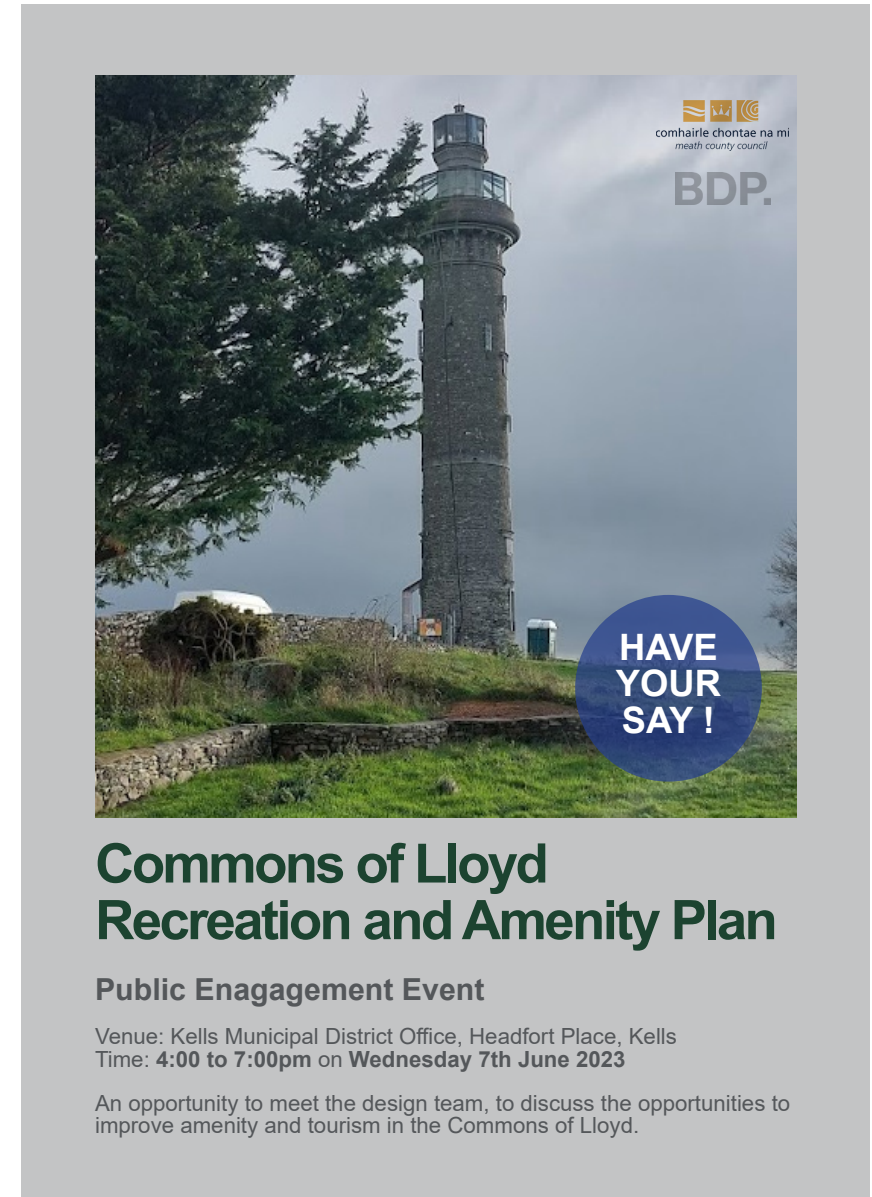
The consultation consisted of a public engagement event and an online survey.

The public engagement event was held in the evening of 7th June at Kells Municipal District Office, Headfort Place, Kells. The event was advertised by a flyer (see Figure 4.1) distributed across the town. The event was an opportunity for any interested members of the public to meet the design team from BDP and the project team from Meath County Council to discuss opportunities to improve recreation, amenity and tourism at the Commons of Lloyd.

An online survey was open to the public from 1st April to 9th May to record responses across a range of specific topics relating to the access, use and features at the Commons. The survey received 240 responses.

The following pages present the results to the consultation which have influenced the development of the plan.

Figure 4.1: Flyer for Engagement Event | BDP



4.2 Access and Mobility Responses

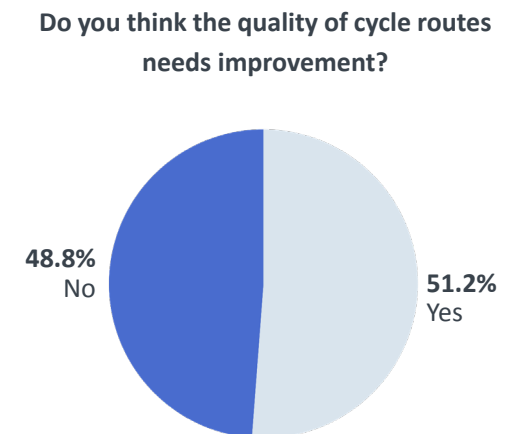
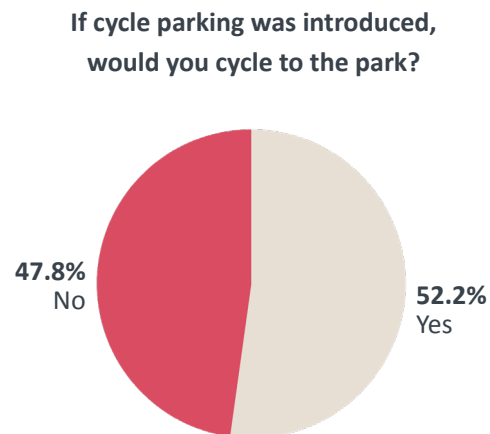
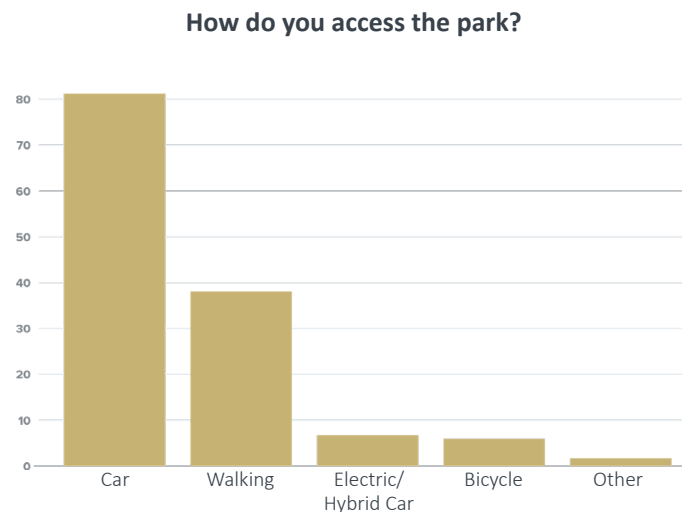
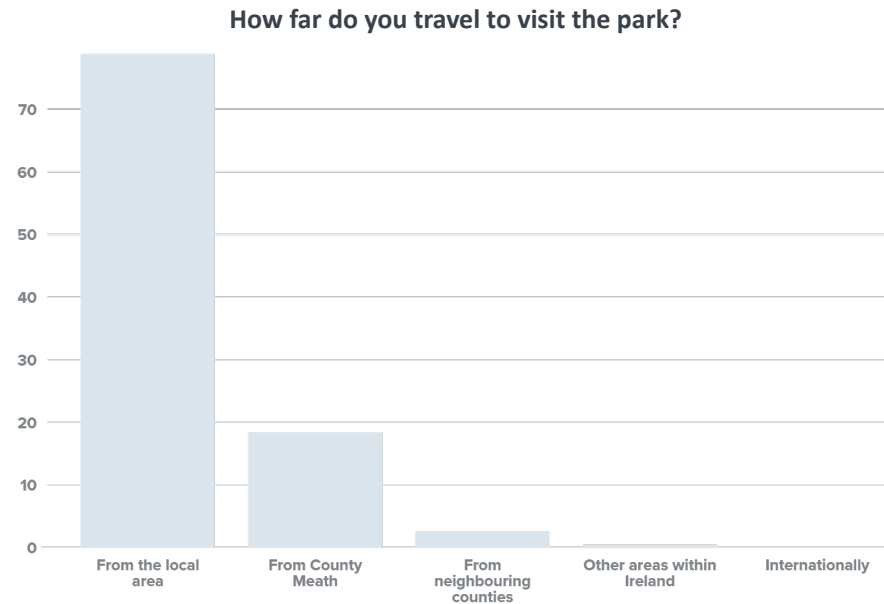
The survey results revealed that the majority of visitors to the Commons are from the local area and by far the most mode of transport to the Commons is by car.

Over half of the respondents agreed that the quality of cycle routes need improvement, likewise, over half indicated that they would cycle to the park, if cycle parking was introduced.

This suggests that locals could be persuaded to use more active modes of transport, such as cycling, rather than driving to the Commons, if the facilities were introduced to enable them to do so.

Just under 10% of the survey respondents stated that they had mobility issues.

Figures 4.2-4.5: Survey Response Charts | BDP

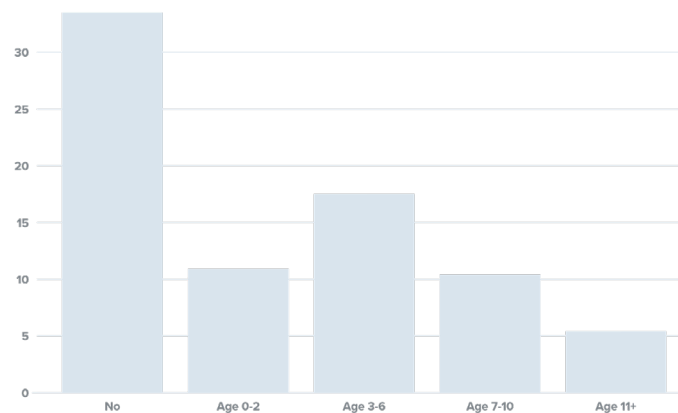


4.3 Current uses of the Commons of Lloyd

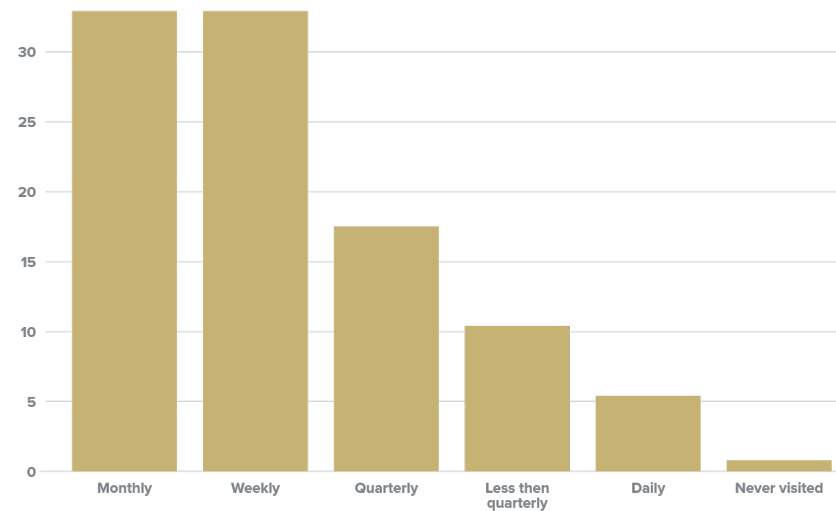
Around a third of respondents recorded that they visited the Commons on a weekly basis, with another third recording that they visit the Commons on a monthly basis. Just under one fifth of respondents indicated that they visited the Commons on a quarterly basis.

The results suggest that most visitors to the Commons are local people, visiting the Commons regularly for leisure, exercise, relaxation and access to nature. Visitors to the Commons also cite their reason for visiting as for social visits and history/architecture.

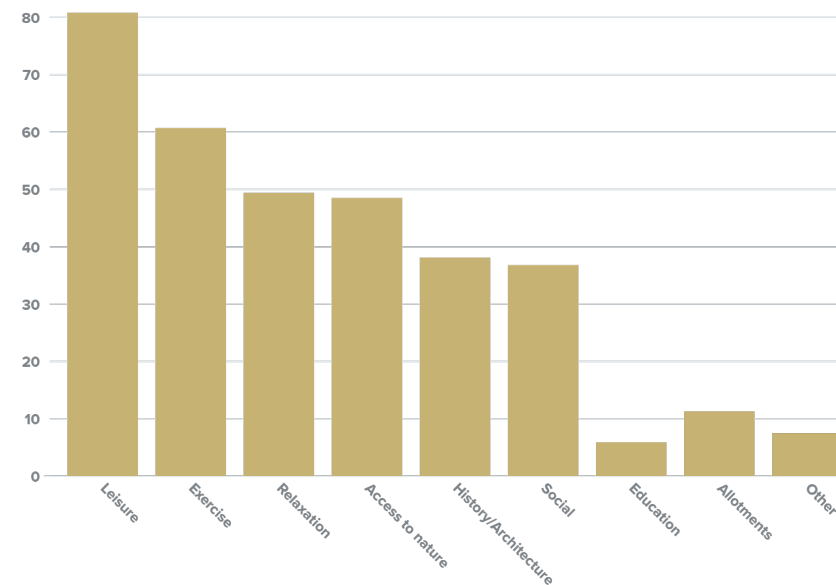
Do you visit with children?



How often do you use the park?

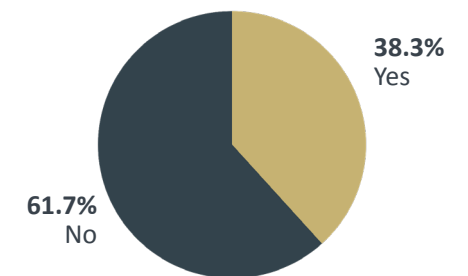


Why do you visit the park?



Figures 4.6-4.9: Survey Response Charts | BDP

Do you bring dogs to the park?



4.4 Likes and Dislikes

In additional written responses, respondents indicated that the scenery and views at the Commons were one of the most liked characteristics, particularly at sunset and sunrise and at times when they can see Loughcrew in the distance. Respondents also liked the peace and sanctuary at the Commons and that they felt safe there.

The Pauper's Graveyard/Burial Ground was mentioned. Submissions noted that the Tower is often closed and it is poorly communicated when it is open.

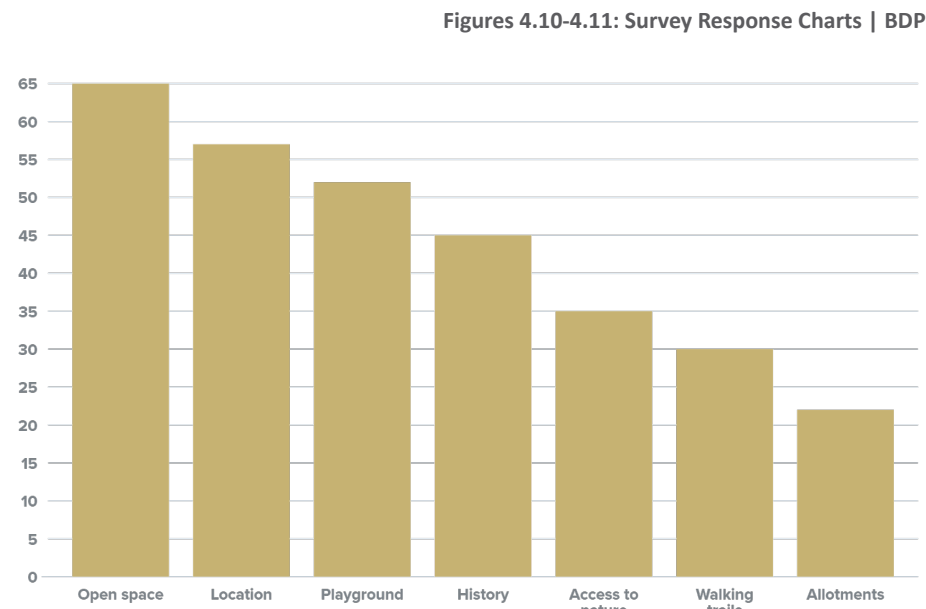
Many of the comments received with regards to what they did not like about the park were focussed on the current walking routes which are too steep, poorly maintained, suffering from erosion and do not offer enough options to walk around the Commons. Additionally, walking access from Kells town centre was criticised.

Many comments also related to the lack of toilets and the lack of bins for rubbish and animal waste, which can result in an unattractive area.

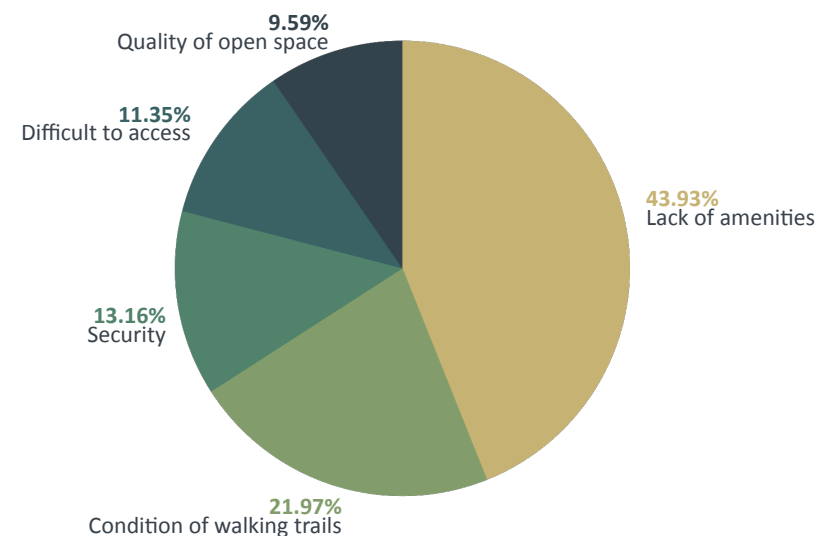
The playground was seen as an important facility, but was described as a dated and often overcrowded.

The respondents indicated that facilities for disabled people were lacking, particularly with wheelchair access and facilities at the playground.

What do you like most about the park?



What do you not like about the park?



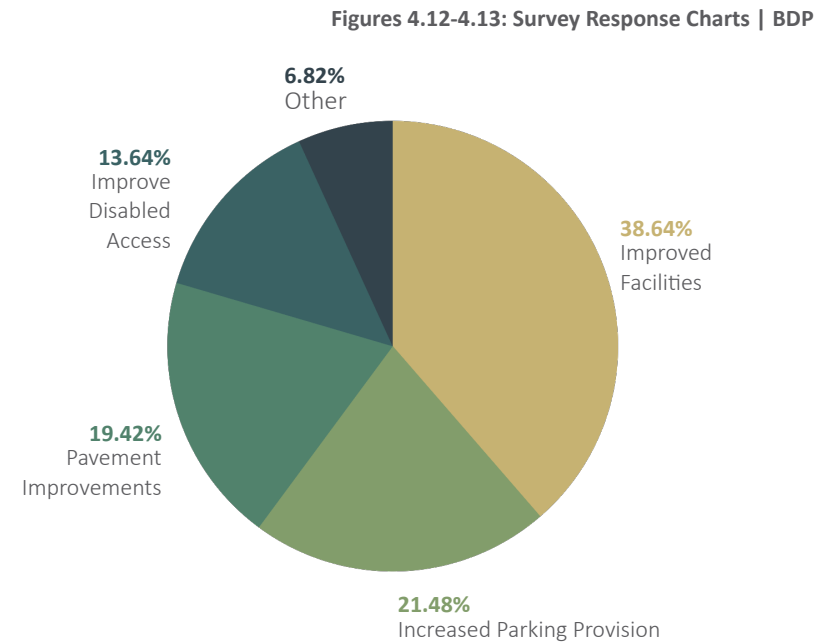
4.5 Opportunities for improvement

The respondents were asked about how the Commons could be improved generally, and in terms of accessibility to the Commons. These responses have been important in the development of the proposals for the Recreation and Amenity Plan.

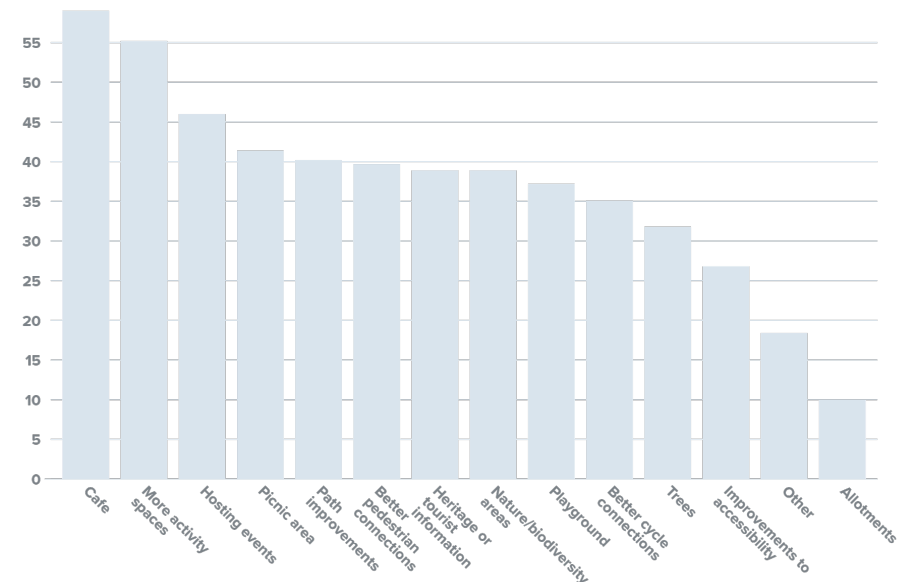
Most respondents (at almost 80%) voted that they think improved facilities would best improve the accessibility to the park. Just over 40% indicated that improved parking provision would improve accessibility. Just under 40% indicated that pavement improvements would improve the accessibility to the Commons.

In terms of improving the area at the Commons, introducing a cafe got the most votes, followed by more activity spaces, hosting events, introducing a picnic area, path improvements and better pedestrian connections. Other responses also got high numbers of votes, suggesting that respondents feel that there are multiple ways that the Commons can be improved across many fronts, including heritage or tourist information, nature and biodiversity areas, the playground and better cycle connections.

How would you improve the accessibility to the park?



How do you think the area could be improved?



4.6 Summary of Responses

Overall, the consultation revealed that the Commons of Lloyd is most frequently visited by people from the local area, on a weekly / monthly basis. Visitors mostly come by car, but there is appetite to visit via walking and cycling if the accessibility and facilities were improved, for example, improved pedestrian routes and cycle parking. Whilst the area currently functions as an important recreational asset for local people, there are many ways in which it can be improved, for local people, and also to try to encourage tourism. The most common themes for improving the Commons included:

- Increasing opportunities to access the Tower of Lloyd;
- Improving walking routes around the Commons of Lloyd;
- Connecting the Commons of Lloyd to Kells town via improved walking and cycling routes;
- Enhancing walking routes to make them wheelchair / buggy friendly;
- Opportunity to host events at the Commons of Lloyd;
- Improved signposts / tourist and heritage information
- More openly accessible space (less fences/walls);
- Provision for toilets;
- Improved play facilities;
- Facilities for older children / teenagers, spaces to hang out, sports facilities such as skating or biking;
- Provision for a cafe, picnic facilities and more seating areas;
- Enhancing the biodiversity, e.g., wild flowers.



Figure 4.14: Commons of Lloyd | BDP

5.0 Concept and Design Development

5.1 Process and Conceptual Development

5.2 Initial Ideas- Arrival Experience

5.3 Initial Ideas- Walking Circulation

5.4 Initial Ideas- Amenity Enhancement

5.5 Initial Ideas- Habitat Creation

5.6 Summary of initial thoughts

5.1 Process and Conceptual Development

Following the site analysis and consultation in summer 2023, the design team worked on initial concepts and ideas for the Recreation and Amenity Plan.

The initial concept development focussed on four facets which are integral to the experience at the Commons of Lloyd, and have significant potential for improvements from their current status. These four areas of focus included:

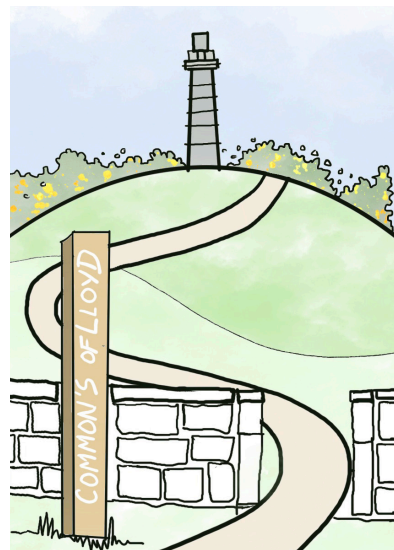
1. Arrival experience;
2. Walking circulation
3. Amenity enhancement;
4. Habitat creation.

The design team sketched a range of initial ideas to enhance the Commons of Lloyd across these four areas.

These initial ideas were presented to the project team at Meath County Council in October 2023 for feedback and input. The initial ideas were further developed through specific studies as requested by the project team at Meath County Council, including overlaying archaeological information on top of the initial ideas and looking into the path lengths. This process helped to refine and shape the final proposals and plan which are detailed in Chapter Six.

Figures 5.1 - 5.4: Concept sketches | BDP

Arrival experience



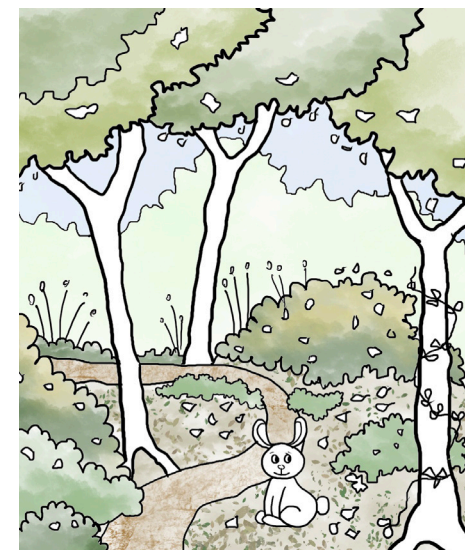
Walking circulation



Amenity enhancement



Habitat creation



5.2 Initial Ideas- Arrival Experience

The early site analysis and consultation revealed that whilst there are currently multiple entrances to the Commons, most of these are not very well used, aside from the main entrance. The main entrance is designed around vehicular access with it's steep incline leading to a car park by the playground and the Tower of Lloyd.

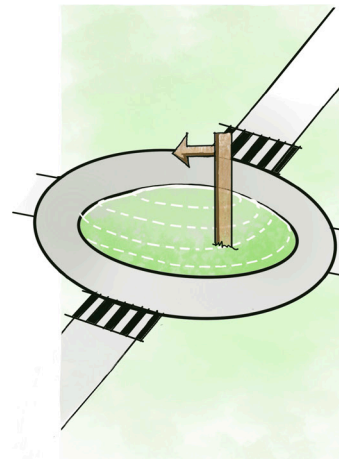
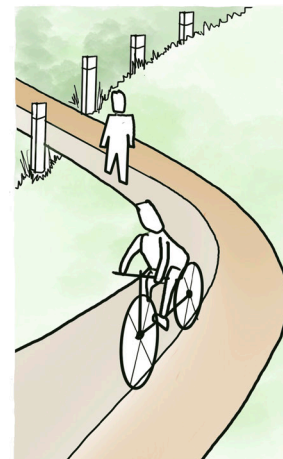
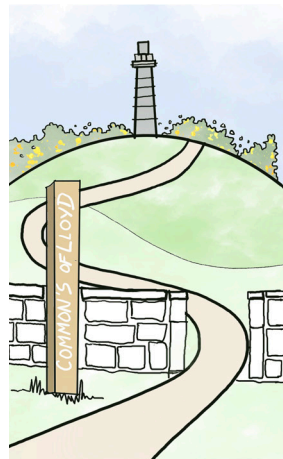
Therefore, there is an opportunity to enhance the arrival experience to the Commons of Lloyd, for example with:

- Enhanced entrances for walking, cycling and bus accessibility;
- New signage which is clear and inviting, such as finger posts or wooden totems;
- Range of entrance points to suit visitor preferences i.e. for walking, for visiting the Tower, for visiting the amenities.

This would have the following benefits:

- Inviting more locals and visitors to visit the Commons of Lloyd;
- Make passers-by aware of the Commons and the access to it;
- Encourage pedestrian and cycle linkages to the Commons, rather than relying mostly on cars
- Improve the experience of visiting the Commons;
- Enhance the amenity aspect by providing additional interest and clear signage across the Commons.

Figures 5.5 - 5.9: Plan of potential arrival enhancements and concept sketches| BDP



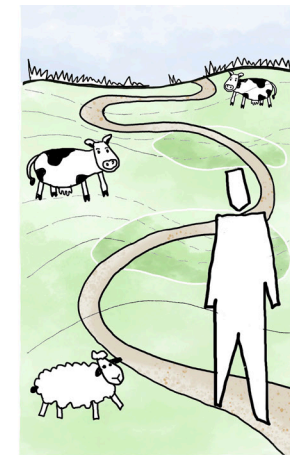
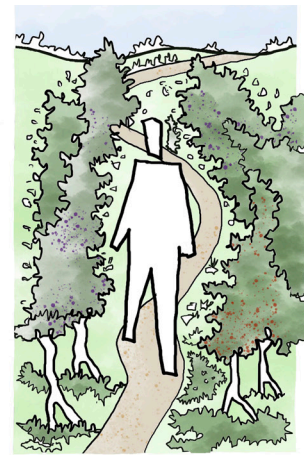
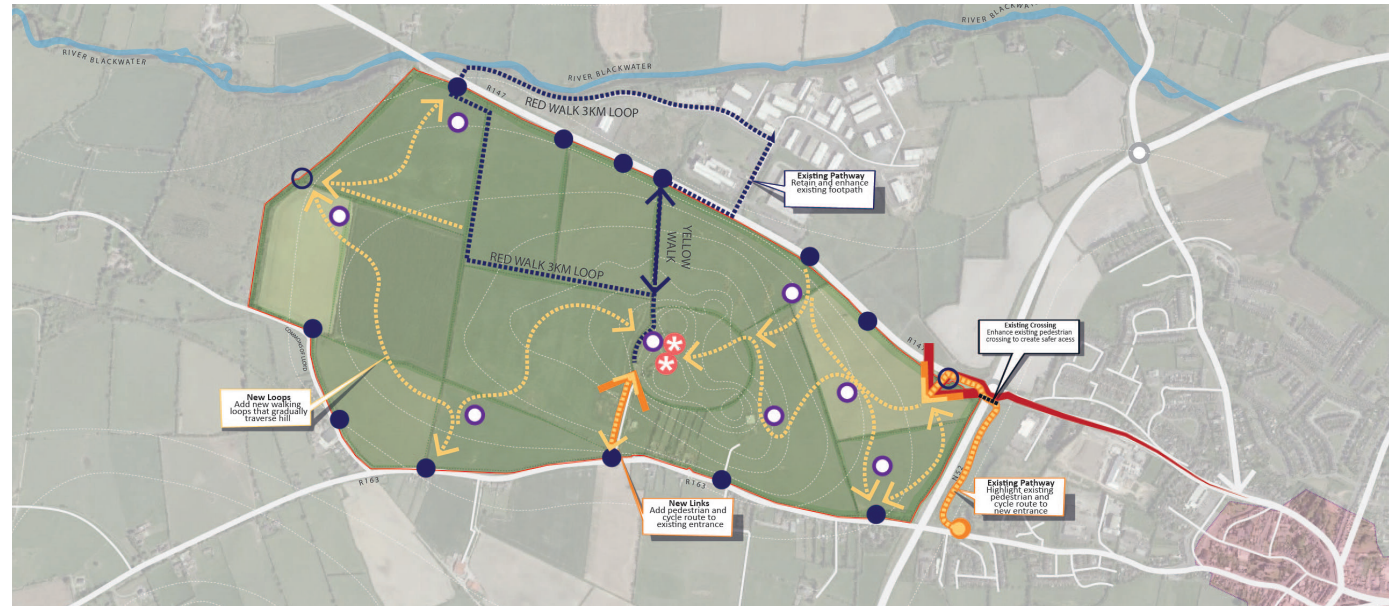
5.3 Initial Ideas - Walking Circulation

The initial research suggested there was one main walking route which is currently being used by locals, which is the red walk loop. Given the attractiveness of the landscape and the size of the Commons of Lloyd, it was felt like a missed opportunity that there isn't currently a range of options to walk around the Commons.

Therefore, the initial ideas were to improve the walking circulation around the Commons with:

- More safe and accessible footpaths;
- A range of walking options to suit different abilities and needs;
- New and interesting routes to add variety for regular local users of the Commons.

Figures 5.10 - 5.15: Plan of potential walking enhancements and concept sketches | BDP



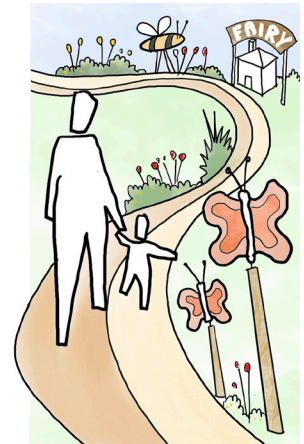
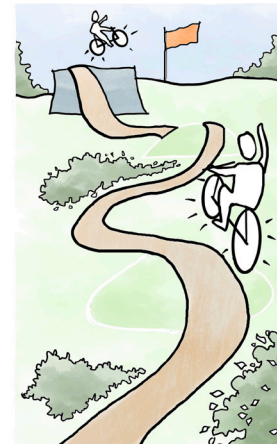
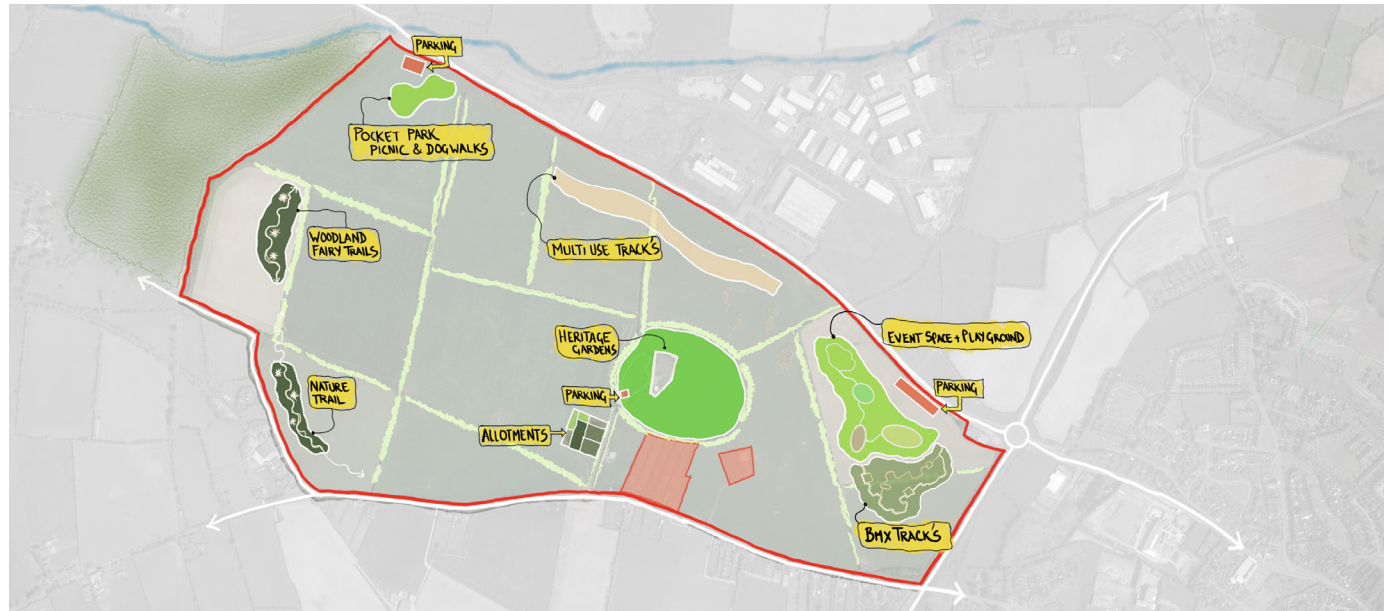
5.4 Initial Ideas - Amenity Enhancement

A key ambition for the Recreation and Amenity plan is to enhance the amenity offer available at the Commons of Lloyd. The consultation also received multiple comments regarding the play area, which was valued as an amenity asset but was described as tired, dated and in need of improvement. The consultation comments also highlighted a lack of facilities for older children and teenagers around Kells, where there could be an opportunity to provide something at the Commons.

Therefore, as initial ideas, the design team explored a range of options that could be incorporated in the Recreation and Amenity Plan including:

- BMX / Wheeled sports / Multi-use tracks;
- New and improved play facilities for children;
- New Football and Basketball courts;
- Potential events lawn;
- Woodland fairy trails at the west of the site;
- Pocket parks;
- Improved parking facilities;
- Cycle parking facilities;
- Nature trails / improved biodiversity areas;
- Heritage gardens.

Figures 5.16 - 5.20: Plan of potential amenity enhancements and concept sketches | BDP



5.5 Initial Ideas - Habitat Creation

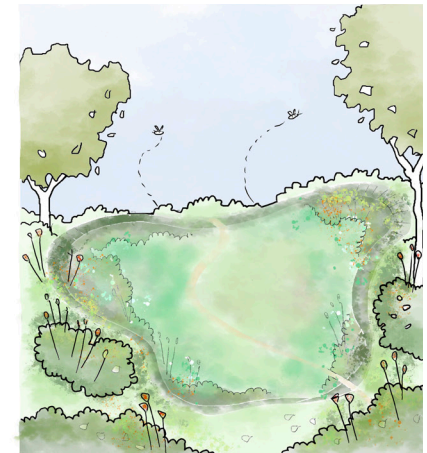
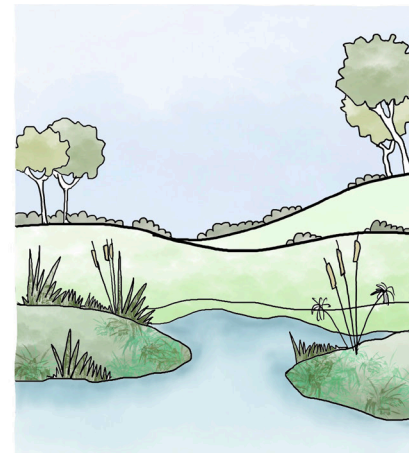
The final area of focus for the initial ideas was habitat creation, as the early site analysis revealed a lack of a range of biodiversity habitats at the Commons of Lloyd, with most of the site being grassland and grazing land.

The design team suggested a range of initial ideas to improve the biodiversity and habitats at the Commons, including:

- Extending the existing woodland at the west further into the Commons of Lloyd;
- Managing the grazing elements at contained areas across the Commons, leaving other spaces for additional habitat creation.
- Potential for meadow gardens, to add interest to what currently exists there.
- Parkland area.
- Wildflower areas;
- Wetland grasses.

These ideas were refined as part of the design development and environmental assessments but provided a starting point of suggestions for improving biodiversity at the Commons.

Figures 5.21 - 5.24: Plan of potential habitat enhancements and concept sketches | BDP



5.6 Summary of Initial Thoughts

Figure 5.25 shows a sketch diagram of the initial thoughts that emerged following the early site analysis and community consultation.

The early ideas went through significant design development, informed by:

- Archaeological assessments and advice provided by the Meath County Council Archaeological Officer;
- Environmental Assessments (Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screenings);
- Consultation with Meath County Council.

The following pages provide a summary of this.

Figure 5.25: Sketch plan of initial thoughts | BDP



6.0

Proposed Plan

6.1 Vision and Key Principles

6.2 Illustrative Vision

6.3 Overall Plan

6.4 Character Zones

6.5 Path Hierarchy

6.6 Proposed Plan Details

6.7 Outline Specification

6.8 Phasing Plan

6.1 Vision and Key Principles

The site analysis, public engagement, and initial concept development helped to establish the key priorities and potential opportunities for the Commons of Lloyd Recreation and Amenity Plan. The next step was to move towards a set of final proposals for the recreation and amenity plan. To help refine and shape the final proposals, an overarching vision and a set of key principles were developed.

The key principles are five distinct components which are crucial to the plan, each representing a different facet: historic landscape character; accessibility; recreational opportunities; natural environment and biodiversity; and community involvement.

The vision and key principles helped to focus the plan proposals to ensure they were contributing to the shared goal. Therefore, each component of the Recreation and Amenity Plan proposals aligns with at least one of the key principles and contributes to realising the overarching vision.

The following pages detail the Recreation and Amenity Plan proposals.

Vision

“The Commons of Lloyd will be a treasured landscape at the heart of the community — where the past is honoured, nature is celebrated, and people of all ages come together to play, connect and thrive outdoors. It will stand as a lasting legacy: a place that strengthens community bonds and enriches lives for generations to come.”

01

Protect and conserve the historic landscape character and archaeology of the Commons for future generations

02

Enhance the natural environment and promote climate action and biodiversity

03

Facilitate ease of access and parking from the town centre for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles

04

Maximise opportunities of the park with an appropriate mix of recreational use and natural areas

05

Increase community involvement to foster a sense of ownership and belonging

6.2 Illustrative Vision



Figure 6.1: Illustrative Sketch Plan of the Recreation and Amenity Plan | BDP

6.3 Overall Plan

Figure 6.2 presents the plan layout of the proposed Recreation and Amenity Plan.

The area around the Tower of Lloyd will be retained as a memorial garden, and the existing access point and car park will remain. The community allotments will also remain in their current location.

A series of new walking paths will provide options for pedestrians to take different routes around the site, varying in length and gradient.

The northern edge of the Commons is proposed to be enhanced as a biodiversity and natural area, introducing new planting (except for in areas with archaeological remains and subject to the correct measures) and habitats to make this route more interesting and enjoyable and improve the biodiversity.

The existing woodland to the west will be extended into the Commons of Lloyd, creating a new woodland area with a woodland park and picnic zone.

Another new entrance at the north-west of the site is proposed to be introduced to improve the connections into the site. This will introduce a small amount of new parking provision along with improved picnic areas to provide an attractive amenity space for visitors.

 Site boundary

HARD SURFACING

-  Asphalt road surfacing (car park)
-  Primary pedestrian asphalt path 3m width
-  Secondary pedestrian self-binding gravel path 1.5m width
-  Playground pedestrian circulation (width varies)
-  Play surfacing (children play)
-  Bike trails
-  Existing pedestrian paths

SITE FURNITURE

-  Benches
-  Informal stepped wetland path

SOFT LANDSCAPE

-  Existing grassland retained
-  Existing contours
-  Ornamental planting mound
-  Wetland ponds
-  Existing hedgerows retained
-  Woodland and buffer tree groups

RECREATION & AMENITY

- 1 Tower of Lloyd
- 2 Vehicular entrance
- 3 Field gates
- 4 Pedestrian entrance
- 5 Car park
- 6 Future car park / event parking spill over/coach parking
- 7 Community Centre with lobby, meeting room, kitchen and toilets. Community Centre to have vehicular drop-off route, disabled and age friendly parking, covered bicycle parking area
- 8 Event space
- 9 Activity bike trail
- 10 Play and recreation
- 11 Woodland park and picnic zone
- 12 Existing memorial garden
- 13 Biodiversity and nature area
- 14 Existing grazing lands
- 15 Existing community allotments
- 16 Basketball court
- 17 Flexible informal kick about Area/5 aside pitch/pitches
- 18 Wetlands
- 19 Sensory Garden

6.3 Overall Plan



Figure 6.2: Recreation and Amenity Plan Details | BDP

6.4 Character Zones

The Recreation and Amenity plan for the Commons of Lloyd can be understood through the Character Zones it proposes to create, as illustrated by Figure 6.3. The purpose of providing a range of different spaces and characters across the Commons is to improve the amenity benefits and make it a more interesting place to visit.

Play and Recreation

A new space for children’s play and recreation will be introduced in the eastern corner, by the new main entrance to the Commons. A Community centre will be provided here as a focal point.

Picnic

The current picnic space at the north-west corner of the Commons will be recreated to provide an attractive amenity space for visitors.

Biodiversity and Natural Areas

The relatively flat northern edge of the Commons will be a biodiverse area, providing opportunity to engage with nature and observe new and flourishing habitats.

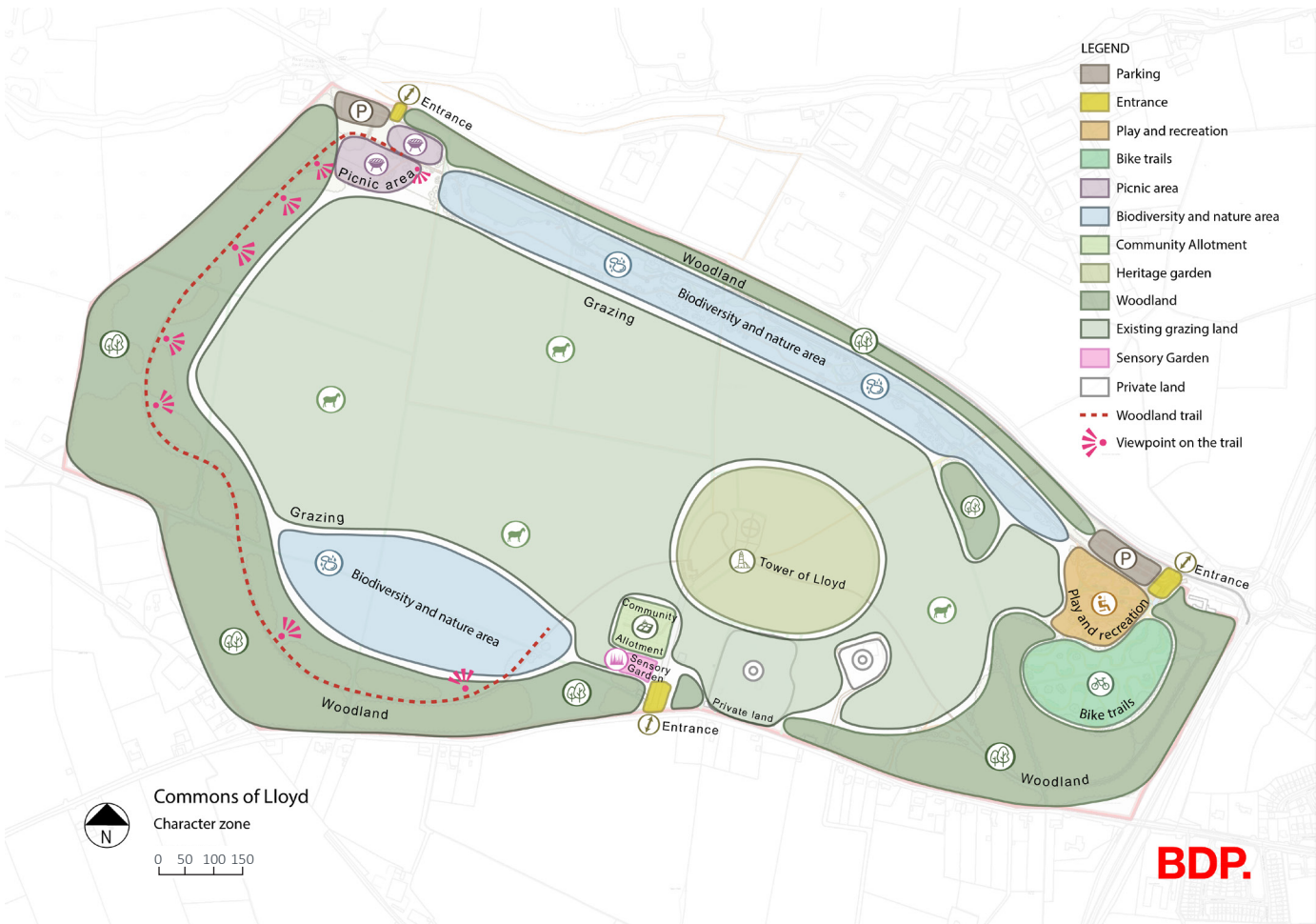
Woodland

The plan aims to expand on existing wider woodland areas and bring this into the Commons, to provide a more biodiverse and interesting landscape than what is currently there.

Grazing

Animal grazing will be managed and contained in the proposed zones.

Figure 6.3: Proposed Character Zones| BDP



6.5 Path Hierarchy

The proposed Recreation and Amenity Plan introduces a range of new paths to improve the walking and cycling circulation around the site. Figure 6.4 illustrates the proposed hierarchy for these new paths.

Loop A is the existing route, known as the 'Red Walk', which partially includes a walk along the River Blackwater. It is just over 2.5km.

Loop B is an approximately 5km Circular route around the perimeter of the Commons.

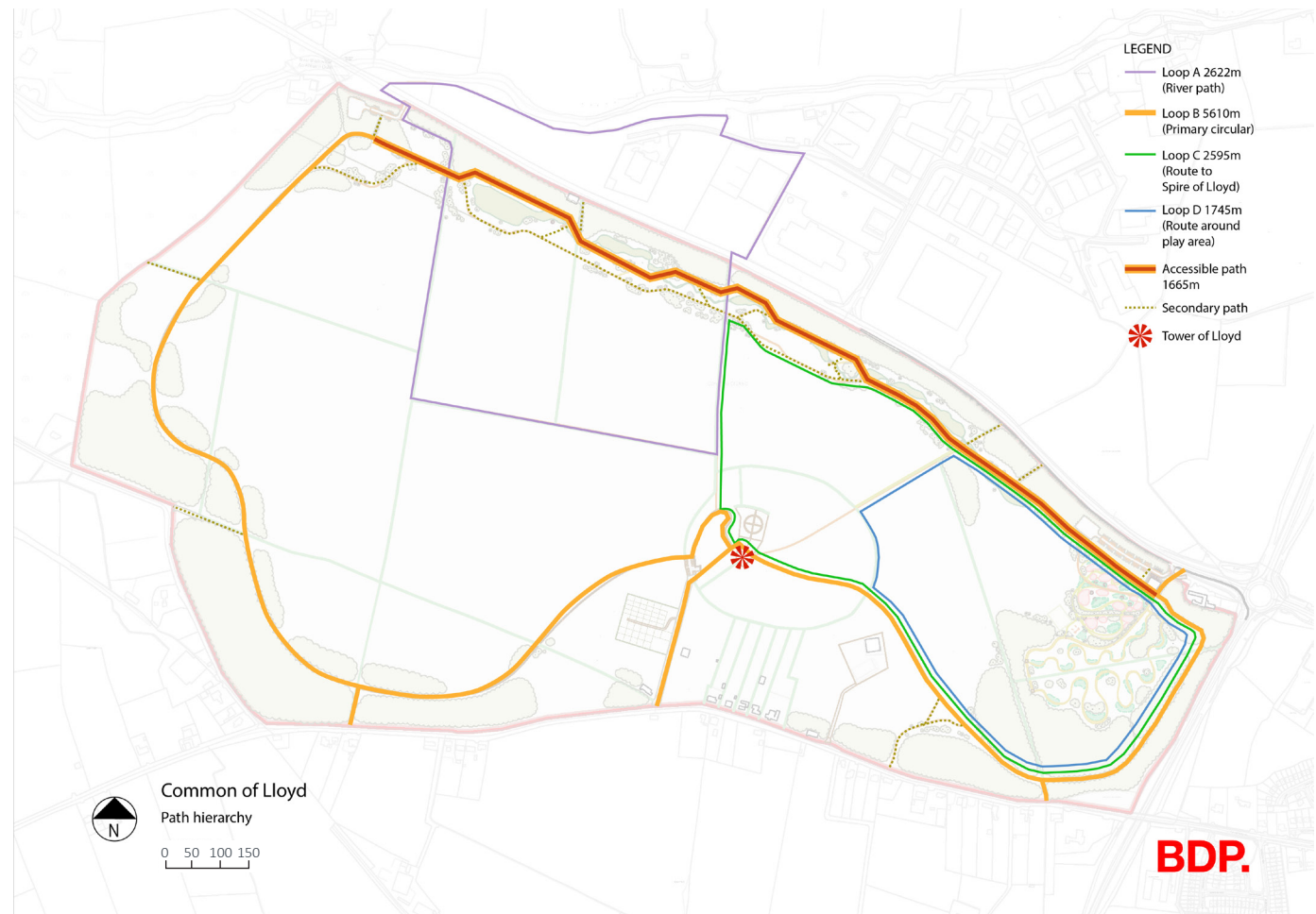
Loop C is a circular route from the new main entrance to the Tower and back. This is around 2.5km.

Loop D is a shorter version of Loop C which does not go as far as the Tower, but loops around the play area. This is approximately 1.7km.

The creation of these new paths and routes around the Commons of Lloyd will provide more variety and choice for regular local visitors to the Commons, and appeal to a wider range of abilities and preferences.

The routes have been sensitively designed around any existing identified archaeological remains, but where a proposed route is close to potential archaeology, it is proposed that a roll-out path is implemented, with a no-dig method to ensure no disruption.

Figure 6.4: Proposed Path Hierarchy| BDP



6.6 Proposed Plan Details

The Plan proposes a new entrance at the eastern corner of the site. This location was chosen for a range of reasons, including its proximity to Kells Town Centre. This corner has more favourable topography than the current main entrance. The new entrance will be more attractive for pedestrians and cyclists. It is close to the existing bus stop, providing more sustainable transport links to the Commons.

The new main entrance will serve car parking, cycle parking, disabled and age-friendly parking.

The Community Centre will provide a focal point potentially. This building will also house a café for the local community and tourists.



KEY

- ① New vehicular entrance
- ② Car park
- ③ Spill out car park for events/ Coach Parking
- ④ Community Building
- ⑤ Bicycle parking
- ⑥ Primary asphalt paths
- ⑦ Secondary paths
- ⑧ Play area
- ⑨ Planted mounds
- ⑩ New tree planting
- ⑪ Vegetation / biodiversity areas
- ⑫ Bike trail
- ⑬ Existing Hedgerow
- ⑭ Basketball Court
- ⑮ Flexible Informal Kick about Area

6.6 Proposed Plan Details



A new play and recreation facility at this eastern corner will accompany an activity cycle trail, catering for all ages of children. The play facilities are proposed to be nature-inspired. The activity cycle trail will be designed with the topography of the landscape and provide winding routes for bikers.

Close to this area, there will be provision for an Events Lawn, where this space could be used as part of community events or festivals.

The community building will be sensitively designed to reflect the landscape character and capitalise on key views to the Tower and across the new play facilities and events lawn.

6.7 Outline Specification

It is intended that all the proposed materials and component specifications are sympathetic to the setting of the Commons and respect the environment and archaeology. Below is an outline specification for the components within the scheme.

Primary Pedestrian Asphalt path:

This path is formed of a bitumen wearing course and binder course over a granular fill sub base. It should be edged with either timber or steel. It is 3m wide to allow ample space for all users and maintenance access.

Secondary pedestrian self binding path:

This path is formed using self binding crushed aggregate surface layer over a granular fill sub base. It should be edged with either timber or steel. It is 1.5m wide to allow sufficient space for two wheelchairs / prams to pass. Where these paths are on gradients of more than 1 in 30 a mechanically bound equivalent surface course should be used.

Paths over archaeology / sensitive ground / within root protection zones:

A no dig alternative should be used as necessary to avoid all excavation. The surface grass should be carefully removed prior to laying a cellular confinement system specifically designed for this application. The voids in the cell web should be filled with the appropriate path material.

Play surfaces:

All play surfaces are to be natural in colour and designed to fulfil the requirements of the selected play.

Bike trails:

These tracks must be designed by a trail expert and will have a self binding gravel finish placed over the existing ground with a variation in gradient to create interest using the natural fall of the site.

Furniture:

All furniture is to be constructed from sustainably sourced certified timber and securely set in place.

Signage and interpretation:

A family of forms will be necessary to be designed for the Commons. These should be timber with an attached sign plate / map / text to provide the necessary information.

Planting generally:

Planting is to be carefully chosen to create a natural woodland environment with predominantly deciduous species with interspersed evergreens for contrast. All trees to be planted as forestry whips and protected as necessary from grass and livestock to ensure their success. Existing hedgerows should be strengthened as necessary with additional planting and opportunities created for new hedgerows using native species.

Figure 6.7-6.9 Precedent images | BDP



6.8 Phasing Plan

Description of indicative Phasing Plan

The plan for the Commons has been developed with a consideration for a phased development. The adjacent diagram shows an initial phase which forms the new entrance point in the north eastern corner and provides a linking circular path to the Tower. As necessary this can be accompanying by planting, initial pieces of play, signage and interpretation along with improvements to existing paths and the area around the Tower of Lloyd.

The remaining areas could be then added based on available funds and priorities- this includes more paths, play, bike trails, car parking and the future community centre building.

The intention is that an initial phase will form the entrance and structure and other components can be added over a period of years as funding becomes available.

Figure 6.10 Phasing plan (indicative only) | BDP



7.0

Action Plan

7.1 Introduction and Existing Enhancements and Maintenance

7.2 Table of Projects and Actions

7.3 Potential Funding Sources

7.4 Heritage, Environment and Biodiversity Policy Context

7.1 Introduction and Existing Enhancements and Maintenance

This section presents an action plan which has been developed to set out the range of activities, studies and further work to implement the Recreation and Amenity Plan for the Commons of Lloyd.

The actions have been grouped into ‘projects’ which serve to reflect a common theme or specific purpose of the action, for example Project 1 Archaeology contains the actions related to progressing the archaeological studies around the site which are necessary in advance of a planning application.

The action plan must be flexible to adapt to the availability of funding and any opportunities or challenges which may arise, resulting in a re-prioritisation of actions. The following action plan is intended to commence following the formal adoption of this Recreation and Amenity Plan by Meath County Council.

Figures 7.1-7.3: Photos of paths across Commons of Lloyd | BDP



7.2 Table of Projects and Actions

Project	Actions
1. Archaeology It is vital that the Recreation and Amenity Plan aligns with the archaeological conservation of the Commons of Lloyd, working around the existing remains and avoiding disturbance. Therefore, the key actions relate to: • Further studies to ensure the archaeological conservation; • Action around interpretation; • How the archaeological context can be communicated and better celebrated at the Commons.	Geophysical study • Commission a geophysical study to assess the impacts of the Recreation and Amenity Plan on the archaeological remains at the Commons, particularly areas of proposed planting and the introduction of new uses. Hedgerow and Earthworks Conservation and Management Plan • Develop a plan to address the ongoing maintenance, conservation, and management of the hedgerows and earthworks. The hedgerows are currently all overgrown and require attention. Similarly, the earthen banks, herringbone stone facings and associated drainage ditches require maintenance.
2. Forestry and Land Management The forestry and land management actions largely revolve around the change from the current land use management at the Commons and the proposals contained within this plan – introducing more woodland planting, introducing more biodiversity, and the consideration of reverting to traditional farming methods. Whilst this Recreation and Amenity Plan sets out the benefits of this approach, it is important that these changes are assessed thoroughly before implementation.	Forestry study • Undertake a forestry study for the Commons to assess: • The feasibility of woodland planting across the Commons; • Identification of areas of early woodland planting as part of the future plan aspirations.
3. Land Management and Biodiversity	Continue and expand biodiversity-friendly grassland management practices which benefit biodiversity on the Commons of Lloyd and maintain monitoring activities to measure the benefits.

Project	Actions
3. Active Travel and Transportation The proposed Recreation and Amenity Plan will change movement patterns around the Commons of Lloyd, including moving the main entrance and car park, introducing new pedestrian routes, and providing cycle facilities. The Transport Officers at Meath County Council have been involved throughout the development of the proposals – however, there are further necessary assessments prior to progressing to a planning application and development.	Road Safety Audit - Undertake a Road Safety Audit for the proposed car parks, entrances, pedestrian crossings, and general movement patterns prior to Part VIII. DMURS Quality Audit - Undertake a DMURS Quality Audit to examine and test the proposals contained within the Recreation and Amenity Plan prior to Part VIII.
4. Tourism A central ambition of the Recreation and Amenity Plan is to increase the opportunities for tourism at the Commons of Lloyd, capitalising on the natural heritage, walking trails, and the close proximity to Kells. The consultation results suggested that visitors to the Commons are mostly local people. The research has also shown that the access to the Commons is currently quite limited and the main attraction is the Tower of Lloyd. The actions regarding tourism relate to studies and further review of the current use at the Commons of Lloyd, and crucially the identification of opportunities to harness the tourism potential. These studies will also help to add weight to the proposals contained within this Recreation and Amenity Plan and should support the leveraging of funding to realise these proposals.	Explore Tourism Opportunities - An exercise to explore how the Commons of Lloyd could maximise tourism opportunities currently, and in the future. This includes reviewing how the Tower of Lloyd is marketed and managed. Potential for events - A review into the Commons of Lloyd’s potential as a venue to be linked to other current events/festivals in Kells and identifying potential new opportunities. Also identify new visitor groups who may not be using the Commons and explore opportunities to expand visitor appeal. This is linked to the proposed events lawn as part of the overall proposals. Commercial Opportunities - Identify which commercial activities and opportunities would be appropriate and desirable at the Commons of Lloyd, such as a café / coffee kiosk, cycle hire, group events.

Project	Actions
5. Community Building A significant aspect of this Recreation and Amenity Plan is the introduction of a mixed-use building with community space, a café, visitor facilities such as toilets etc. The plan sets out the principle for the introduction of such a building at the Commons. There is significant further design work and feasibility studies required to reach an appropriate stage for Part VIII planning and delivery.	Feasibility study - Commission a feasibility study to assess the costs and benefits of the building. Building Schedule - Develop a building schedule which sets out the areas apportioned to the various uses within the building, for example the amount of community space required. This includes consulting with community groups to understand the requirements and reaching an appropriate solution for the site. Detailed design - Progress to a detailed design of the building, ensuring that the exterior is sensitive to the setting of the Commons of Lloyd and maximises visitor and community appeal.

7.3 Potential Funding and Partners

Projects	Partners	Potential Funding
Active Travel & Transportation	MCC Active Travel NTA Govt Depts	Active Travel Funds, Community Heritage Grant Scheme, Community Enhancement Programme (CEP), Connected Hubs Fund, Outdoor Public Spaces Scheme, Outdoor Recreation & Infrastructure Scheme, Amenity Grant Scheme,
Tourism	MCC Boyne Valley Tourism Failte Ireland LEADER	Shared Island Civic Society Fund, LEADER Programme, Active Travel Funds, Amenity Grant Scheme,
Climate Action	MCC Climate Team LEADER Govt Depts LEADER	Community Climate Action Fund, Waterways Ireland - Community Heritage and Biodiversity Grant Scheme,
Community Building	MCC Community Dept Govt Depts Community Groups	Connected Hubs Fund, LEADER Programme, Rural Regeneration and Development Fund, Community Enhancement Programme (CEP), Outdoor Public Spaces Scheme, UBU – Your place, your space,
Car Parks	MCC Transport MCC Community Dept Govt Depts	Connected Hubs Fund, LEADER Programme, Active Travel Funds, Community Enhancement Programme (CEP), Community Heritage Grant Scheme, Outdoor Public Spaces Scheme,
Existing Amenity Enhancement, & Proposed Amenities (to include the existing playground, & new amenities)	MCC Community Dept MCC Rural Regeneration Dept Govt Depts LEADER Community Groups	Community Enhancement Programme (CEP), Outdoor Public Spaces Scheme, UBU your place, your space, Active Travel Funds, LEADER Programme, Outdoor Recreation and Infrastructure Scheme, Rural Regeneration and Development Fund, Irish Georgian Society, Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB), Outdoor Public Spaces Scheme, Amenity Grant Scheme, Community Heritage Grant Scheme, Waterways Ireland - Community Heritage and Biodiversity Grant Scheme,
Biodiversity, Forestry, Land Management	MCC Biodiversity Officer MCC Climate Action LEADER Govt Depts Community Groups Local stakeholders	LEADER Programme, Historic Structures Fund, Climate Action Fund, Community Heritage Scheme, Community Foundation Ireland - Support for Biodiversity Action Grants, Waterways Ireland - Community Heritage and Biodiversity Grant Scheme,
Creation of Woodland on Public Lands Scheme	Govt Depts	• This Scheme aims to encourage Public Bodies to establish new native woodlands on suitable bare land. • Public bodies are eligible for all Forest Types under the Forestry Programme, including NeighbourWoods and Agroforestry (i.e. lands where trees are planted but can be still conventionally grazed, cut for silage or farmed for cereals). • As little as 0.1ha (10m x 10m) of land can be planted under the Forestry Programme. • Under the Afforestation scheme, all establishment costs are 100% grant aided. Plus, guaranteed premiums of €1,103/ha (e.g. Forest Type 3: Forests on Public Lands) for 15 years.

Figure 7.4| BDP

This Recreation and Amenity Plan has been designed to respond to the ambitions of the local community and Meath County Council. The action plan includes a range of further studies and assessments required to seek to progress to the delivery of this plan. It is recognised that the further assessments may result in the need to alter the design or parameters of aspects of the plan. This is a natural course of design development. Therefore, it is important that the necessary studies and assessments are undertaken and the results of these contribute to the further development of the plans. The overall vision and key principles within this Recreation and Amenity Plan should remain central to the progression and detailed design development of the plans going forward.



