
Strokestown Public Realm

Design and Planning Statement

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Note:

This report should be read in conjunction with the BDP Drawings GENERAL ARRANGEMENT PLANS (90)LP200 SERIES including the transport consultant (CST) Documentation and other Part VIII documents.

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1. Design Statement

1.1 Introduction

BDP were appointed by Roscommon County Council (RCC) in 2022 as lead Landscape Architect consultant to deliver the Bawn Street public Realm. In 2023 The services have been extended to include Church Street. It has been deemed that the inclusion of Church Street in this public realm enhancement will strengthen the link between Bawn Street and Church Street and ultimately connect the town to Strokestown Park House. The ambition of the scheme is to reorganise the layout of Bawn St and Church St with a focus on pedestrian movements and spaces to offer a functional yet pleasant environment to move around, shop and interact. The below points are the key objectives extracted from the brief that will drive the regeneration.

“Creation of a reimagined public realm scheme developed for Bawn St which will provide a visual and physical link to Strokestown Park House recognising the traditional/period character of the house and sympathetic to this in terms of lighting, street furniture, materiality and style.

- *Space for events, festivals, markets and outdoor dining.*
- *Shared surface arrangements including redesigned formal off-street parking areas, recognising the need for safer vehicular and pedestrian movements.*
- *Clear and appropriately sited public information and way-finding signage*
- *Landscaping and street furniture*
- *Upgrading of all associated services and utilities*
- *Address the function and form of the existing roundabout, associated crossing points, infrastructure and signage.*
- *Creation of a “transition” between the new public realm on Bawn St and the existing Church St area. “*

The above principles have also been considered in the inclusion of Church Street in the public realm enhancement project.

1.2 The site and context

Strokestown is situated towards the east of County Roscommon, surrounded by rural landscapes of rolling hills. It is regarded as one of the few early ‘planned towns’ within the region. The central street of Strokestown is one of the widest streets in Europe, serving as the primary axis between the early town centre and Strokestown House. This unique feature is distinctive to the town’s identity and heritage.

Strokestown is physically defined by formal, axial plan arrangement. The wide Church Street/Bawn Street (east-west) is aligned with the principal façade of Strokestown House and extends to St Johns Church, which currently houses the County Roscommon Heritage and Genealogy Centre. Elphin Street and Bride Street create the north south cross axis.

Strokestown claim to having the second widest street in the country, after Dublin’s O’Connell Street.

The study area for the public realm enhancement comprises Bawn Street, Church Street and the junction on Elphin Street and Bridge Street. The extent of the study is indicated in figure 1.1



Figure 1.1 Site Plan

1.3 The scheme objectives

BDP have carried out several public consultation and stakeholder events throughout the development of the scheme. The design has been redefined to ensure the needs of the local community are met in addition to the needs of the Town Centre First (TCF).

The proposed Strokestown Public Realm Enhancement Scheme, which will include the following.

- Alteration to existing road carriageway widths & roundabout dimensions.
- Provision of footpaths, along with shared pedestrian & cycle routes.
- Provision of controlled & uncontrolled pedestrian crossing facilities.
- Relocation of Bus Stops provision from Bridge Street to Church Street.
- Alteration to existing parking provision to include the provision of disabled parking spaces.
- Soft Landscaping work to include provision of trees, shrubs & green space through the scheme.
- Provision of street furniture throughout the scheme to include, benches, seating, picnic tables, bollards, cycle stands, etc.
- Provision of new road & wayfinding signage, road marking & public lighting.
- All other ancillary site works.

1.4 Relation to Town Centre First

Under a separate commission, S3 Solutions, Venture International Ltd and BDP were appointed by Roscommon County Council in 2022 to prepare and deliver a Town Centre First (TCF) Masterplan for Strokestown.

This plan will form the basis of the future development of the town and of Bawn Street and Church Street.

BDP have been drawing upon the TCF Plan to ensure that the newly developed principles within it are adhered to in the design and a consistency of approach is maintained throughout the delivery of the public realm works.

The vision for Strokestown is to create a vibrant, sustainable and flourishing town, a unique place to visit and a great place to love and prosper. The Town Centre First plan has identified eight transformational projects that will achieve the principles set in the 2050 vision. One of these projects is the creation of a connected public realm improvement scheme.

RCC have identified the need to improve the public realm space on Bawn street and Church Street.

The below is an extract from the TCF documents which states of the main aspirations to achieve the town vision.

This vision means that Strokestown will be:

1. **An Enriched Heritage Town** that realises and optimises its existing cultural and heritage assets
2. **A Vibrant Town Economy** that develops experience led retail and hospitality and embraces digital transformation and new ways of working
3. **A Sustainable Town Centre** that prioritises climate change and adaptation, the regeneration of public spaces and town centre living
4. **A Socially Connected Town** that supports empowered and engaged communities through inclusive places and spaces
5. **A Safe, Welcoming and Accessible Town Centre** that values sustainable mobility, age friendly initiatives and universal design principles

This Town Centre First Plan brings our 2050 vision to life by identifying 8 transformational projects and a five year roadmap to achieve them. Our Transformational Projects include:



A Connected Public Realm Improvement Scheme



An Integrated Strokestown Park House & Gardens



Strokestown Identity and Marketing



A Social, Community and Wellbeing Hub



An environmental walkways and river access initiative



Unlocking the Backlands



Delivery of the N5 Strokestown/Tulsk Bypass



Tackling Vacant Buildings and Dereliction

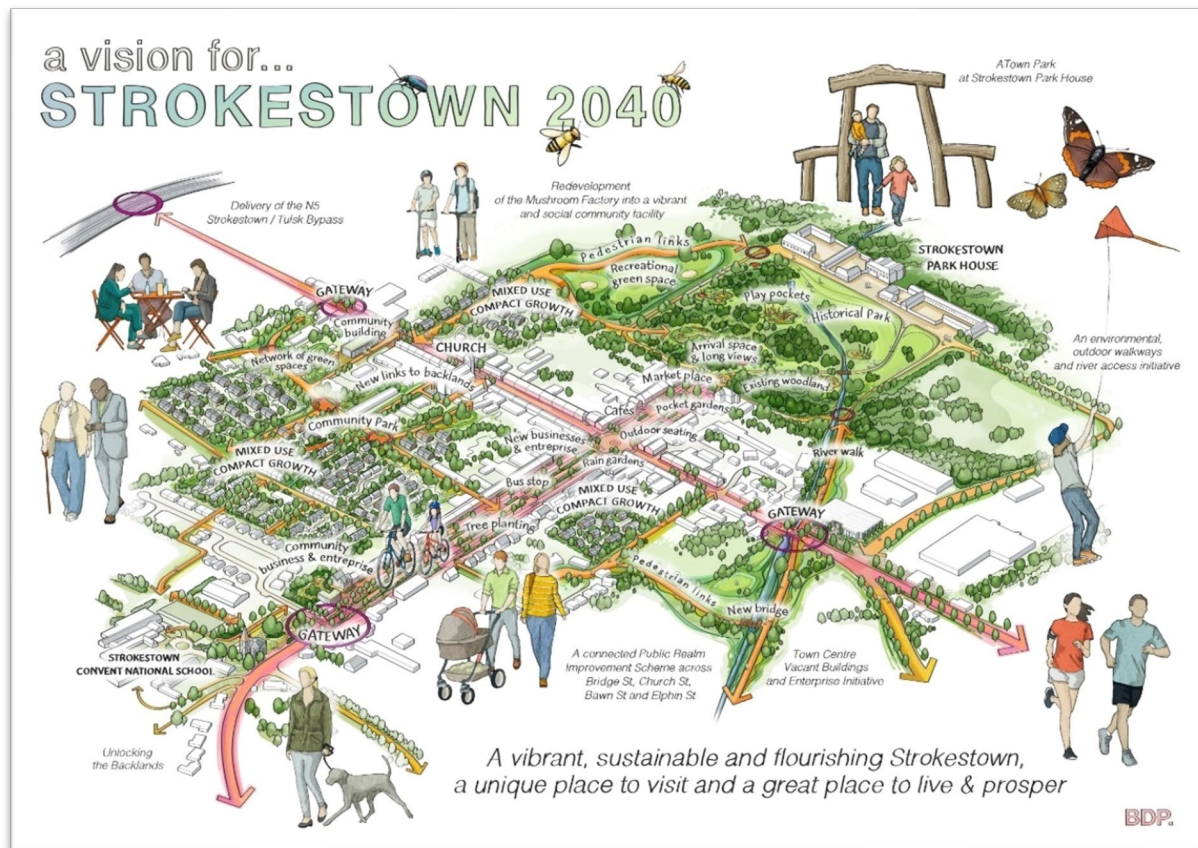


Figure 1.2 Artistic impression of Strokestown Vision for the TCF

1.5 Exiting Town Centre issues

Throughout our study which has included site visits, public consultations, and desktop studies, we have identified issues with the existing public realm and streetscape.

The aim is to address these issues and take them into consideration when drawing up the proposals for the public realm enhancement.

The Existing Town Centre issues that have been identified are as follow:

- Lack of pedestrian crossings.
- Space between buildings dominated by cars.
- Uneven and poor-quality paving surfaces.
- Lack of defined carriageway edge.
- Excessive speed of vehicles.
- Large roundabout making the space feel further dominated by cars.
- Lack of greening and planting.
- Tall lighting columns and non-LED lighting that are not proportionate to the space.
- Bus stops not located on the main street, therefore, not easily accessible.
- Lack of a wayfinding strategy suitable for a heritage town.
- Few trees that form the axis of the street.
- Street furniture lacks a coherent approach.
- The heritage, in places, is lost due to the abundance of vehicles.



Figure 1.3 Existing site images of hard surfacing



Figure 1.4 Existing site images of street trees

1.6 Specialist Consultant's reports

BDP have engaged specialist consultants to provide their advice and expertise on the public realm proposals for the Part VIII.

One of these consultants is CST Group, Who are Chartered Consulting Engineers. They have been working alongside BDP to assist and review the proposals related to transport such as the reduction of the carriageway, relocation of bus stops, types of crossings and others.

To ensure these are designed to current standards we have also worked in consultation with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII).

The following Part VIII documents prepared by specialist consultants includes:

- Preliminary Design Report by CST
- Quality Audit by CST
- Road Safety Audit by CST
- Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) by McCloy Consulting
- Archaeology Impact Assessment Report by IAC Archaeology
- Appropriate Assessment (AA) by BDP
- Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report (EIAR) by BDP
- Conservation Report by Dedalus Architecture

The Part VIII reports of the respective consultants are not included in this document but are available for the Part VIII application.

BDP will review the mitigation measures and recommendations provided in these reports during the Detail Design Stage.

2. Approach

2.1 Pedestrian movement

The intention of the scheme is to significantly improve pedestrian connectivity both along and across the street. The reduction of size of the roundabout allows us to introduce four controlled crossings which align with new footpaths between Bawn Street and Church Street, and between Bridge Street and Elphin Street.

Two new 4 meters wide controlled crossing points along Church Street have been introduced at 120 meters intervals to provide safer conditions to cross the road. In addition, two uncontrolled crossings on French Ct. and Caslin Way have been provided.

Further to the new crossings, the design has prioritised the safety of the school children walking along the northern footpath to access the town centre by providing a new widened, safer walking environment with clear sightlines.



Figure 1.5 Existing Plan



Figure 1.6 Proposed Plan showing the proposed pedestrian crossings in Bawn Street.

The proposal aims to increase the width of the existing footpath from 2.4 meters to 3 meters wide to the north of Church Street and Bawn street. The Intention is to create a shared space that will be used by pedestrians and cyclists.

The footpath will receive new surfacing to ensure a safe and clear commute for both pedestrians and cyclists.

The widened footpath to the north will strengthen further the pedestrian connection along the street.

Allowance for a forecourt to private properties and businesses has been made by providing a distinction in surface material between public and private.

The width of the footpath to the south of Bawn street and Church Street remains as per the current situation.

2.2 Cycle movement

The aim of the proposal is to promote sustainable movement and encourage cycling.

For this reason, cyclists will benefit from using the shared footpath to the North of the street. The 3 meters wide path will be able to accommodate cyclists and pedestrians together.

A buffer zone with planting and access points will delineate the route for cyclists from the parking area to ensure a safe cycling environment and segregation from traffic.

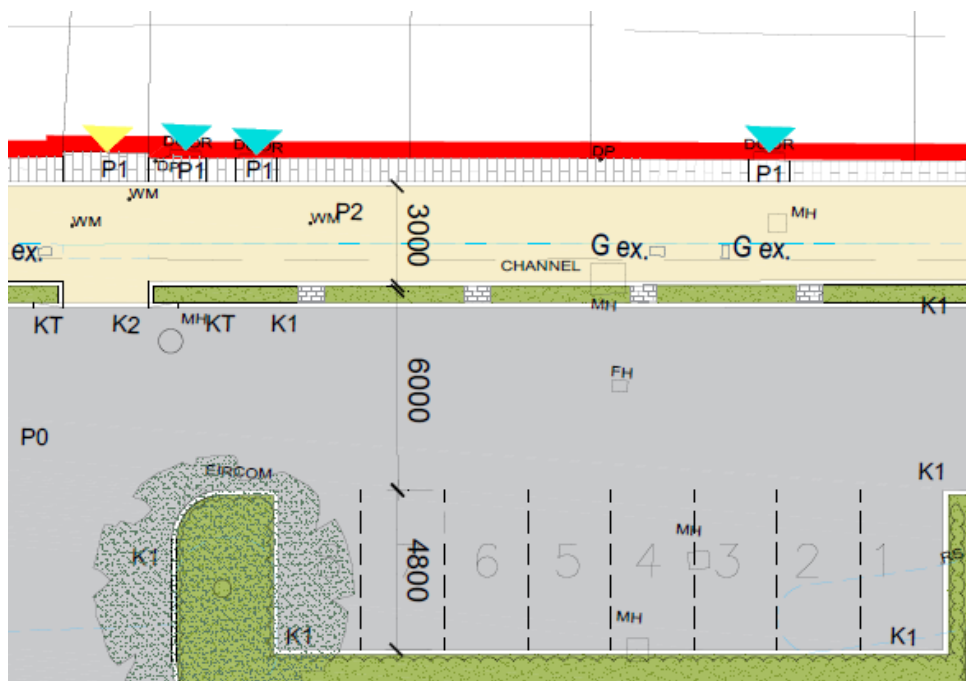


Figure 1.7 Proposed Plan showing the footpath provision from the building edge to the new parking space to the North of Church Street.

2.3 Bus stops

Bus Stops will be relocated from Bridge Street to the North and South of Church Street.

The location of the bus stops has been carefully positioned to allow ease of movement and pedestrian flow without interrupting access to the parking spaces.

Each bus stop will be segregated from the main traffic by a layby and a proposed bus shelter to each bus stop.

Bus stops will be developed in the detail design phase to ensure they are easily accessible by all users.

2.4 Road layout

The carriageway width has been reduced to 6.5 meters wide on N5 to reduce speed and promote road safety.

The new layout keeps the symmetrical alignment of the street. In addition, the roundabout has been redesigned to comply with TII (Transport Infrastructure Ireland) standard to a 28 meters inscribed circle diameter (ICD)

By reducing the carriageway width, more space will be reclaimed for pedestrians and cyclists and the operations of the road will remain as per the current usage.

2.5 Loading and servicing

Vehicular access to current residential properties and businesses has been maintained and the design has been adjusted to accommodate these.

Drop off spaces are located outside the health centre on Church Street for ease of access.

Services and loading to businesses has been considered and parking yards have been designed to suit these and allow turning movement, especially on Church Street.

2.6 Hardsurfacing

A new cohesive paving palette is proposed to support the enhancement of the public realm.

The new footpath will be made of a simple yet robust surface that is able to accommodate all users. A consistent material of exposed concrete is proposed, with exposed aggregate selected to ensure continuity, with bands of natural stone to add an interesting aesthetic while keeping it functional.

The main carriageway and parking spaces will have asphalt surfacing which is durable and easily maintained.

Natural stone paving slabs are considered in some locations such as the informal footpath and forecourts on the northern side of the street and garden spaces; these will add a different look and feel to the space.

An appropriate colour palette will be selected that complements the existing character and heritage of Strokestown this will be developed at Detail Design Stage

2.7 Vegetation

The scheme aspiration is to introduce more greenery to increase biodiversity and to create visual and environmental interest.

The existing street trees contribute to the visual character of Strokestown and the linear geometry for the street. However, it has been noted that these trees have not successfully reached their full potential.

For this reason, the scheme will aim at retaining most of the trees and supplementing those with new tree planting. The location of the new trees has been carefully considered to avoid obstructing views and shopfronts. The scheme has been designed to ensure the existing trees are retained, except where removals are necessary to enable parking arrangement and road layout around the roundabout.

New trees species and sizes will be selected from a list of appropriate native and naturalised species. This will be developed in the Detail Design Stage.

In addition to new trees, the proposal looks at introducing new planting throughout the scheme this consists of low vegetation with a mix of herbaceous and evergreen planting for year-round interest and structure. The planting beds and garden will act as rain gardens and provide a sustainable urban drainage system. Consideration will be given to the type of planting and species with low maintenance requirements.

2.8 Street Furniture

The material palette for the scheme will be based on functionality and the selection of quality and robust elements is key. Different types of furniture such as benches, seating and picnic tables are provided in the scheme to allow the users of the town to rest and pause.

The selection of the street furniture will be developed at the Detail Design Stage. Careful consideration will be given to high quality and simple modern elements which will not detract from the historic fabric of the public realm.

Elements of informal play have been added as well to contribute to the functionality and aesthetic of the place.

2.9 Signage and interpretation

Considerations will be given to new signage and interpretation boards. These will be carefully located in the scheme, and they will complete the existing signage. We consider these as added features to the public realm to provide information on location but also contribute to the aesthetics of the public realm as artistic features.

Wayfinding signs are proposed around the four corners of the roundabout garden spaces and easily visible to pedestrians.

The artistic interpretations are located around the four corners of the roundabout and the garden spaces on Bawn Street. We view these as way of narrating a story and building upon the history and heritage of the town.

These elements will be developed further in the Detail Design Stage.

2.10 Lighting

New lighting provision has been allowed on Church Street and Bawn street. This will replace the existing lighting columns and will suit the new proposed layout.

Lighting columns are proposed to be 8 meters high columns, the luminaire will be suitable and of an LED type.

In addition to the street lighting proposed, bollard lighting is included to complement the main lighting. The unified lighting palette will contribute to a safe night environment for all the users of the Streets.

The proposed columns will allow for the support and powering the Christmas lights.

3. Design components

The design components provide a description on the look and feel of the proposal, further detail and development will be required at the next stage.

The table below indicates the main design elements and is to be read in conjunction with the following BDP plans:

STR(90)LP100- LOCATION MAP & SITE NOTICE LOCATIONS

STR(90)LP200 - LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN

STR(90)LP201 - GENERAL ARRANGEMENT SHEET 1 OF 5

STR(90)LP202 - GENERAL ARRANGEMENT SHEET 2 OF 5

STR(90)LP203 - GENERAL ARRANGEMENT SHEET 3 OF 5

STR(90)LP204 - GENERAL ARRANGEMENT SHEET 4 OF 5

STR(90)LP205 - GENERAL ARRANGEMENT SHEET 5 OF 5

3.1 Hard Landscape and edging

Key	Description
P0	Asphalt to carriageway Surface course with binder course suitable for vehicular building up. Base and subbase retained where possible subject site investigations and testing at detail design stage.
P1	Forecourts Granite slabs to forecourt areas on Bawn street as indicated on the plan. 300 x Random length x 60mm with mortar joint.
P2	Exposed aggregate concrete. Exposed aggregate concrete with 20 mm chipping. To new footpaths and shared surfaces. Surface to have integrated granite bands of 100mmx100mm units at approximately 6m intervals.
P3	Granite stone Granite paving to garden spaces on Bawn street Paving with a mix of three colours 150x300x60mm with bedding suitable for pedestrian traffic.
K1	Raised Granite kerb 60-80 mm upstand kerb to DMURS standards 125mm wide with 20 mm bullnose edge with concrete haunching.
K2	Flush Granite kerb 125 mm wide with square edge with concrete haunching.
K3	Bus Granite kerb Raised kerb suitable for bus stop areas
KT	Transition Granite kerb As necessary specials to adjoin flush and raised kerbs
TC1	Red tactile paving Blister tactile flag paving. Red colour to controlled pedestrian crossings. 400x400x60 mm with concrete base to match adjacent paving detail with 6mm mortar joints
TC2	Buff tactile paving Blister tactile flag paving, buff colour to uncontrolled pedestrian crossings. 400x400x60 mm with concrete base to match adjacent paving detail with 6mm mortar joints

3.2 Street furniture

01 / 01b	Timber Bench with and without backrest Timber seat surface in natural and sustainable wood. Bench to have powder coated galvanized steel frame with extended tubes for root fixing. Indicative dimensions - Length 1800mm, width 617mm, height 500mm Fixing into 410x410x340mm concrete
02	Picnic table and benches Picnic set bench with table and two benches. Seats and table top to be made of timber slats. Frames to have powder coated galvanized steel for surface mounting, Standard dimensions.
03	Cube stools Timber cubes at 500 mm height. Seats to have informal arrangements and surface fixed.
04	Outdoor dining table and chairs Set of robust outdoor dining table and chairs located outside the bed and breakfast. Details of colour and fixing to be determined in the detail design.

05	Art installations Heritage markers art installation, with engraved poems or facts from the legacy of the great famine. Location and details to be developed in the detail design. Height 1200m, width 300 mm thin metal sheets fixed into the ground.
06	Wayfinding signs To match art installations (05) Location and details to be developed in the detail design. Height 1800m, width 300/600 mm thin metal sheet fixed into the ground.
Litter bin	Litter bins Provide litter bins, that are of a bespoke style and complement the proposed street furniture. Location and number to be developed in the detail design. Suggest that these bins are root fixed with concrete foundations.
07	Bike stands Tubular standard Sheffield bike stands. Powder coated galvanized steel. Each bike stand allows for 2 cycles parking with recommended spacing of 800 mm. Bike stands to be fixed into the ground.
08	Stepping logs Playful and natural feature timber logs within grass area. Logs to have varied height between 600mm to 300 mm from ground level. Diameter of logs to be between 200mm and 400 mm. Logs to be made of natural reclaimed wood and pressure treated with no loose finish. Logs to be securely fixed into the ground.
09	Feature bench Bespoke timber bench. Double width timber seat, for multipurpose use. Bench to be fixed with powder coated galvanized steel brackets into the ground.
Boulders	Landscape boulders Glacial stones boulders, locally sourced. Sizes from 300mm dia. to 900mm dia. located in the garden roundabout spaces. Boulders set into concrete.
Bollards	Removable bollards 900 mm above ground. Finish to be confirmed at detail design stages. Cover to be flush with the surrounding ground level when closed. Bollards to be placed no further than 1.5m apart.
Tree Grill	Tree grills for new trees in hard surfacing Galvanised tree grills made of highly durable 10 mm solid sheet or iron grill. Square shape 1500x1500mm. Grill design to be confirmed at detail design stage.
Electric charging	Electric vehicle charging points (EV) Allow for active and passive EV cables. EV charging to be compliant with RCC standard.
3.3 Soft Landscape	
P4	Planting beds. Mix of native and evergreen herbaceous planting to ensure year-round interest. Planting to have a 50 mm mulch layer. Suggested density to be 5-7 plants/m2 with 2L pots. Planting beds to act as sustainable urban drainage system, allow interconnecting underground pipe.

Garden trees	<p>Proposed garden trees</p> <p>Multi stem trees, 2.5 - 3m high.</p> <p>Trees to have foliage or flower interest. Tree species will be selected from a list of appropriate native and naturalised species and will increase local biodiversity.</p> <p>Allow for 50 mm thick of mulch and 1500 mm diameter around trees.</p> <p>Allow for tree backfilling materials including topsoil.</p> <p>Trees to have underground anchors and guying.</p>
Street trees	<p>Proposed street trees</p> <p>Semi mature trees, to have a minimum of 25-30 cm girth with 2 m clear stem.</p> <p>Tree species will be selected from a list of appropriate native and naturalised species and will increase local biodiversity.</p> <p>Trees to have underground anchors and guying.</p> <p>Allow for 50 mm thick of mulch and 1500 mm diameter around trees.</p> <p>Allow for tree backfilling materials including topsoil.</p> <p>Trees in hard landscape to have tree grills.</p>
3.4 Lighting	
L1	<p>Proposed lighting to Bawn Street</p> <p>New 8m units in Bawn Street with two lanterns at different heights - the lantern facing the road is 8m, the lantern facing the footpath to be set at 6 m high.</p>
L2	<p>Proposed lighting to Church Street</p> <p>New 8m high columns with double facing lights at 8m height are proposed to Church Street on both sides of the street.</p>
L3	<p>Timber bollard feature lighting</p> <p>LED lighting bollards set at 1100 mm high and 94 mm wide.</p> <p>Surface mounted.</p>