

Boyle

Community and Economic Plan
2024-2028



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Introduction and Purpose of the Boyle Community and Economic Plan

This document sets out the Boyle Community and Economic Plan for the period 2024-2028. It has been developed by people and organisations from Boyle representing business and community interests. The plan has been developed through a series of facilitated workshops resourced by Roscommon County Council (the Council) and independently facilitated by Venture International Limited (Venture). The rationale for any Community and Economic Plan that a sustainable settlement performs better and meets the aspirations of its citizens and visitors to it when it has a strong economy working in partnership with an effective and energised community and voluntary sector and with all these stakeholders working to a common vision for that place.

This 2024-2028 Community and Economic Plan for Boyle has been developed by over 75 stakeholders in Boyle from the business, community and voluntary and arts and culture sectors.

The Community and Economic Plan for Boyle recognises and references that other significant strategic and planning processes also contribute to shaping the future for Boyle and how it develops as a sustainable settlement. These include the Roscommon County Development Plan, the Local Community and Economic Plan for the County, the Boyle 2040 Masterplan and the Masterplan for Lough Key.

The Community and Economic Plan recognises that significant strategic investment has already been undertaken or is underway in Boyle led by the Council. These strategic investment projects will help create the conditions for the town to develop and grow and therefore set the context for the implementation of this Community and Economic Plan developed and led by the people of Boyle. The strategic investment projects delivered or being delivered in Boyle include:

- Pleasure Grounds
- An Ríoga (formerly The Royal Hotel)
- Boyle Open Library
- King House

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It also recognises the significant natural and heritage assets in and adjacent to the town which meet the needs of its citizens and create reasons to visit Boyle and its hinterland. These include:

- Boyle Abbey
- King House
- Lough Key Forest and Activity Park
- Doon Shore and Boyle Harbour

Any plan, and in this case the Community and Economic Plan builds on the existing work and seeks to answer three core questions:

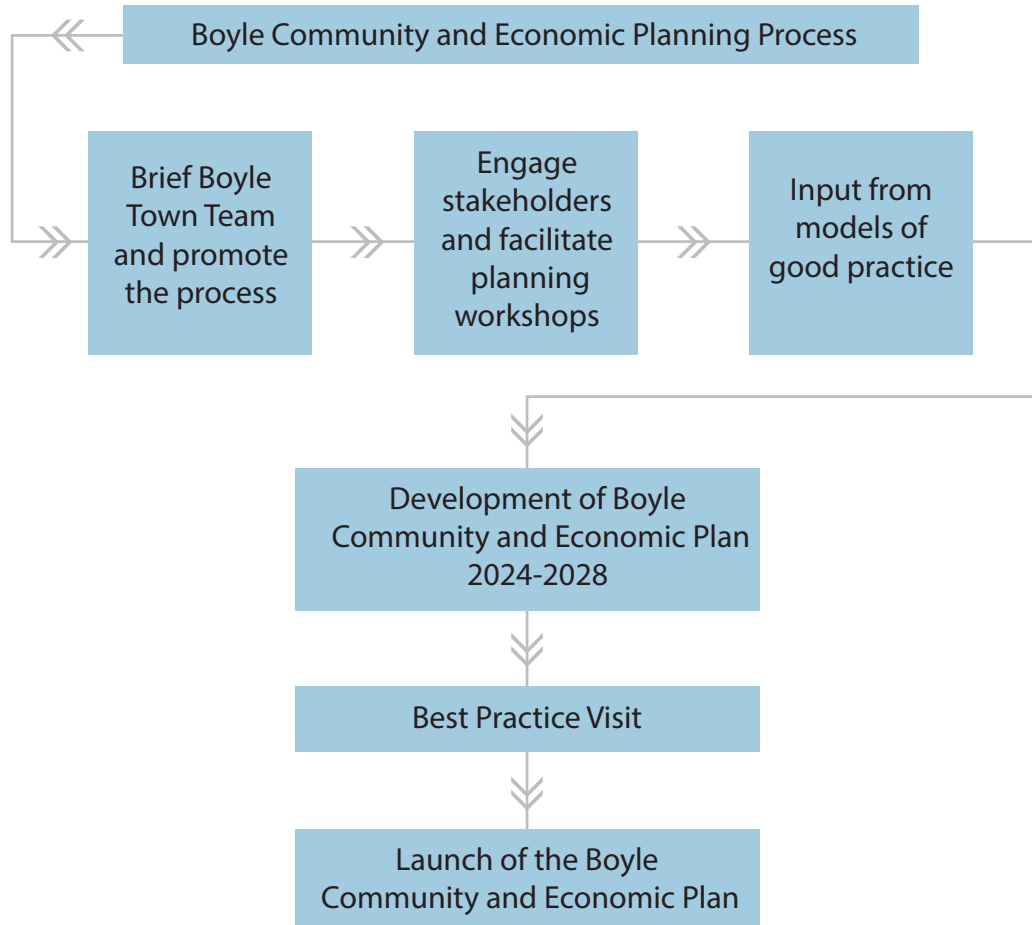
- Where are we now?... the current to baseline position
- Where do we want to be?... our shared vision for Boyle up to 2028
- How will we get there? ... the actions and activities that we will deliver on our shared vision and outcomes



1

Boyle's Community and Economic Planning Process

The Community and Economic Plan was developed through the following processes:



This process included:

- A review of the wider strategic context for the sub-region and for the local authority to establish how Boyle and this Community and Economic Plan fits with and complements this position
- Facilitated workshops with representatives of Boyle's private and community voluntary sectors
- Engagement with the Council's Departments/divisions to identify existing and planned projects for Boyle
- Development of a draft Community and Economic Plan which was presented to acknowledged community and economic leaders from other towns to seek their input and to add value to it

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Boyle: The Place and its People

Boyle is identified as a Self-Sustaining Growth Town with a population of 2,915. This means that it is a town which provides a moderate level of jobs and services with good transport links and the potential for sustainable growth.

The Pobal Deprivation Index identifies the Boyle Urban Area as an area experiencing disadvantage.

Boyle is one of the key destination towns/areas of the County. It has a strong outdoor, heritage, culture and arts offer. The following attractions and events bring almost 200,000 visitors to Boyle and its hinterland annually (2022 figures listed below):

- King House 20,000
- Lough Key Forest Park 150,000
- Boyle Abbey 6,425
- Boyle Arts Festival 11,000
- Night & Day Festival



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Placing the Boyle Community and Economic Plan in Context

The people of Boyle and its business and community organisations recognise that it does not operate in isolation. The context for the Boyle 2024-2028 Community and Economic Plan is informed by a number of other national, County wide and local strategies as follows:

Boyle 2040 Town Enhancement Framework

Boyle 2040 presents a framework for the comprehensive social and economic regeneration of Boyle town centre to support it to attract investment, support job creation and improve the quality of life for citizens in the town and the experience for visitors to the town and the wider hinterland.

It sets out a range of town centre focused capital projects designed to enhance the functionality of the town, respect its heritage character and create the conditions to grow the settlement and its economy.

Lough Key Forest and Activity Park Masterplan 2020-2030

Lough Key Forest and Activity Park is a joint venture between Roscommon County Council and Coillte. It is an outdoor recreational attraction located 3 km from Boyle adjacent to the River Shannon. The 2020-2030 Masterplan was developed to:

- Have a clear vision for the park, building on its current activity and recreational identity
- Develop and resource a suite of new and enhanced product offerings
- Assess the feasibility of further development of existing assets, facilities and activities

It identifies the mission statement for Lough Key Forest and Activity Park as follows:

Lough Key Forest and Activity Park will evolve to become a world class, sustainable, family orientated, outdoors adventure experience, harnessing the splendor of the mature woodland, the navigable Shannon system and the promise of Boyle becoming a unmatched destination in Ireland's hidden parklands.

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Within its identified key strategic objectives are:

- Integrate with Boyle to create a new destination of scale on the northern part of the Shannon system within Ireland's hidden heartlands
- Embed Lough Key in the local community through increased participation and networking

The Boyle 2024-2028 Community and Economic Plan can help to build the connection between Lough Key Forest and Activity Park and the heritage town helping to deliver the mission and key strategic objectives from the Lough Key Masterplan.

Roscommon County Development Plan

The County Development Plan identifies the following strategic objectives for the future growth and development of Boyle:

- Promote the development of Boyle as a driver of economic growth for the North Roscommon region and fulfil its role as a designated self-sustaining growth town
- Support the expansion of a range of services and facilities available to residents and a wider rural hinterland
- Implement the objectives of the 'Boyle 2040' Town Enhancement Plan to deliver the regeneration and development of the town centre
- Maximise the potential of developing Boyle as a tourist destination by facilitating the expansion of tourist attractions and developing a co-ordinated tourism product based on existing amenities within the town and its rural environment

Roscommon Local Economic and Community Plan 2023-2029:

The Roscommon Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2023-2029 for the County sets the context for and guides economic and community development across the County for the lifetime of the plan. This 2024-2028 Community and Economic Plan for Boyle will, in part, help to deliver the direction of the County wide plan in Boyle.

Boyle Local Area Plan

The Council's Planning Unit is currently developing the new Local Area Plan for Boyle. The Community and Economic Plan for Boyle can feed into the new Local Area Plan for Boyle.

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Town Centre First: A Policy Approach for Irish Towns

Led by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the Department of Rural and Community Development, Town Centre First represents a new approach to the development of our towns where local communities and local businesses will be central to the reimagining of their towns and planning their own futures. Town Centre First Policy recognises that each town is different and diverse and acknowledges that a 'one size fits all' approach will not deliver appropriate outcomes for all towns.

The Policy Framework seeks to facilitate and resource each town to plan their own future developed by a collaborative Town Team supported by the local authority.

The Boyle 2024-2028 Community and Economic Plan is part of the process of the people of Boyle developing a vision and implementing actions which shapes a town that meets their requirements and acknowledges the importance of visitors to Boyle.



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Boyle's 2024 Baseline Position... Where Are We Starting From?

This section of the Boyle Community and Economic Plan sets out the baseline position for Boyle in 2024. It confirms:

- What works well?
- What could work better?
- Opportunities to develop and enhance Boyle

The Boyle baseline position in 2024 is summarised in the table below and has been developed based on the outputs of the four facilitated workshops and therefore by stakeholders in and from Boyle.

What works well in Boyle ...

- Historical look of town, its heritage character and archaeological significance
- Significant heritage buildings which add character and a reason to visit Boyle including King House and Boyle Abbey
- Boyle TT ... things they can have most impact on actioning or lobbying, etc
- Boyle River, canal and bridges which define the town
- Strong arts, culture and activity offer which attracts visitors including Boyle Arts Festival, St Patrick's Day Parade, Boyle Musical Society, Summer Show and the Pike Angling Competition
- Lough Key Forest Park which attracts circa 150,000 visitors to the area (3 km from Boyle Town)
- Access to heritage and the natural environment via walking trails/the Miners' Way, Greenways, cycle lane from the town to Lough Key
- Wide range of shops with a strong independent retail offer
- Supportive environment for enterprise development and growth including provision of time limited incubator units
- 300 people plus employed in technology and manufacturing firms starting and growing in the town
- Public WiFi system and fibre available across most of the town
- Quality health and social/personal care and development provision including the Family Resource Centre, Primary Care Centre, the Nursing Home and Roscommon Youth Service
- New youth café project
- Pollinator programme led by RCC Heritage Office
- Boyle Today and Real Boyle/blogs connect people with the Town

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What could work better ...

- Derelict and vacant buildings ... need to find productive uses for them
- More ownership/pride of place streetscape & neighbourhoods needs increased levels of community pride
- Bus stops – needs to be a bus set down area at Boyle Abbey
- Bus Stops - additional stop for local link at top of town
- Local signposting (needs updating/improved)
- Cycle tracks to increase access places of interest, shops and services. Also potential for children to use cycle paths to access school
- Open space (performance) needs to be covered to create the opportunity for year round events
- Need for a town CCTV system
- Need investment to enhance the tourism and evening offer e.g. more accommodation, restaurants, Courthouse use, theatre, live music venue, classic movie nights, artisan food vendors
- Ensure town centre first approach is promotional and adhered to
- Create opportunities for visitors to Kilronan Castle hotel to connect with Boyle
- Weekend food festival
- Bring back old artefacts (that are in the National Museum) and display them in Boyle (King House or Library)
- Marina – better link up with town
- Signage needed for historical sites
- Local promotional bodies collaborate with Boyle TT on possibilities for joint marketing
- Support digital marketing in small enterprises in Boyle (strengthening link to Local Enterprise Office)
- More rental opportunities for start-ups
- Parking removed from some areas, need to ensure an inclusive approach for people with additional needs
- Sign postage for what transport is available and from where
- A centralised package/spreadsheets of all available classes, events, sports available in Boyle and when they are (Boyle digital information hub)
- You Tube Channel for Boyle Town – updated weekly – events, festivals, people, food, etc
- Link to Knock Airport, need to encourage Knock airport to sell/ promote Boyle
- Promote Boyle as a business/commercial location

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- Temporary accommodation to allow employers to house new prospective employees – rent a room
- Themed shopping i.e. 'Mother of Bride' (attract from Carrick on Shannon)
- Lack of taxis and hackney services
- Biggest draw back to town development on all fronts - overnight accommodation and wider choice of restaurants
- Better tax breaks/incentives - finance to refurbish over shop properties in Boyle
- Could be more collaboration between organisations and between the business and community sectors
- More awareness/education about drugs
- Introduction resources for new residents



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Opportunities ... to develop Boyle

- Crescent for people to meet and sit/increase dwell time- re draw traffic and parking plan
- More pedestrianised areas and enhanced cycling and walking links to national and heritage site/facilities and attractions
- Complete regeneration riverscape in town – should be focal point in town
- Wooden bridge fishing promenade examining opportunities to develop
- Develop an event/venue centre for weddings, family events and mini conferences
- Train service that would get you to Sligo for 8:30 am (for work, colleges, hospital and consultants appointments).
- Promote town centre living to address vacancy and dereliction
- Development of army barracks into hotel/accommodation
- Opening of Termon Lands Development (including the lawn)
- Better understanding and building on the success of Family Resource Centre
- Celebrating/accepting all cultures and diversity in Boyle
- Good digital marketing of Boyle
- More choice of night-time food venues (especially in summer) for people to get out and meet up
- Age friendly town access – bank and post office
- To reinstate and promote the model railway
- Develop a high quality sculpture trail linking strategic locations and sites across the town
- Enhancing the river from town centre to Abbeytown Bridge and develop a water-based activity offer
- Making Boyle a technology/SMART town e.g. places to charge devices and solar powered bins
- Productive networking to further partnership (sustain the Community and Economic Planning process/connections)

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Our 2028 Vision and Outcomes. . . Where Do We Want to Be?

Vision is a central element of the Community and Economic Plan... a collective, shared and agreed vision means that all sectors in Boyle and all people with an interest in the sustainability, regeneration, and development of Boyle are working to the same end goal.

The vision for Boyle has been developed as a vision to 2028.

The agreed vision is:

Boyle and its hinterland: a place which promotes and protects its built heritage and natural environment and is a quality place to live, learn, play, earn, create and innovate.

Outcome Statements for Boyle and its hinterland by 2028

Focus	Outcome Statements
Town Appearance and Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boyle is a well maintained and presented town Boyle's natural, built and heritage assets are protected
Tourism, Arts, Culture and Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boyle provides a range of accommodation for visitors, independent travellers, families and groups Boyle offers rich cultural opportunities where people create, perform and innovate Boyle is recognised as a centre/location for medium and large scale events Boyle is recognised as a place to sing, dance, play and celebrate
Economic Development and Business Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boyle has a range of industry that attracts diverse talent creating employment opportunities for everyone Boyle is an excellent place to start and grow a business Boyle provides spaces, services and support for creative, digital and technology enterprises Boyle has a strong independent retail offer complemented by its food, hospitality and evening economy experiences

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Health, Wellbeing and Inclusion

- Boyle has a quality multi-activity sports facility which supports lifelong involvement in physical activity
- People are supported and empowered to be active citizens in their community
- People are respected and treated as equal members of the community
- Boyle welcomes people from all places and backgrounds and respects their identity and cultures



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Our Community and Economic Themes and Actions: How Will We Get There?

This section of the Boyle 2024-2028 Community and Economic Plan sets out the range of potential actions discussed by stakeholders in Boyle. The delivery of these actions are the means of delivery on the agreed vision and outcomes set out in section 5.

The Community and Economic Plan themes and actions must be set in the context of an existing range of investment in strategic regeneration projects which have or are being developed to contribute to the Boyle 2040 Masterplan and create the context and conditions for the implementation of the locally led Community and Economic Plan. The following table sets out a summary of the RCC led strategic investment projects in Boyle since 2018 to the current day:

Project	Investment	Status
The Shambles, Public Realm enhancement, main Street Footpaths and seating for plaza at riverside	€117,042.00	Complete
Boyle T&V 2018 – initial works on old royal hotel Building	€250,000.00	Complete
Boyle Cycle Corridor linking town to Lough Key	€ 638,000.00	Complete
Town & Village Covid Measure – Marketing, materials for Christmas event in king House, Christmas lighting in town	€ 28,000.00	Complete
Historic Towns Initiative on Main Street	€188,777.00	Complete
Boyle Pedestrian Huts and Furniture	€22,500.00	Complete
The Royal Hotel refurbishment	€3,000,000.00	Complete
Energising King House and Public Realm – energy efficiency works in King House, Upgrades to King House exhibitions and streetscape improvements	€2,416,111.00	Complete
Doon Shore Amenity enhancements	€166,500.00	Complete
ORIS M1 Doon Shore Toilet Block	€ 34,000.00	Complete
Destination Towns (Sculpture Trail and Pleasure Grounds as well as streetscape improvements and installation of new lighting)	€ 627,620.00	Ongoing
Boyle Open Library	€ 6,581,578.00	Ongoing
Boyle Active Travel	€ 395,000.00	Complete
ORIS M2 Lawns Area Refurbishment	€ 199,100.00	Planned
Total Investment	€ 14,664,228.00	

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The Community and Economic Plan is structured around four themes which emerged via the analysis and planning processes led by stakeholders in Boyle. They are:

- Theme 1: Town Appearance and Presentation
- Theme 2: Tourism, Arts, Culture and Events
- Theme 3: Economic Development and Business Support
- Theme 4: Health, Wellbeing and Inclusion

An action plan has been developed for each of the four Boyle Community and Economic Plan themes. Each action plan sets out the actions (projects and programmes) which have been identified as having the potential to deliver on the agreed vision and outcome statements for Boyle:

Theme 1: Town Appearance and Presentation

Actions (Projects or Programmes)	Led by	Indicative timeframe
Engage with owners of buildings to confirm the potential for a second phase Historic Town Initiative as the funding becomes available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boyle Town Team 	MT
Engage with property owners and provide a definitive list of vacant/derelict properties and examine ways to encourage them to develop them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RCC Vacant Homes Officers supported by Boyle BTT 	ST
Develop additional housing stock in Boyle where need is identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RCC 	MT
Revisit the Crescent Plan and rework in line with strategic (delivered and planned) projects in Boyle with Roscommon County Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boyle Town Team & RCC 	MT -LT
Undertake initiatives which help improve the presentation of Boyle including planting schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boyle Tidy Towns Group supported by Boyle Town Team 	ST and ongoing
Maintain trees and hedges in the town centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RCC 	ST and ongoing

Theme 2: Tourism, Arts, Culture and Events

Actions (Projects or Programmes)	Led by	Indicative timeframe
Develop a brand and promotional campaign for Boyle consistent with the Vision in this Community and Economic Plan and RCC protocols for the County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boyle Town Team 	ST & Ongoing
Develop way finding signage in Boyle consistent the Destination Towns specifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RCC 	ST - MT
Develop promotional linkages between existing/planned destinations and events and Boyle Town: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lough Key Forest & Activity Park John McGahern Barracks Douglas Hyde Centre Other Tourist Attractions in the County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boyle Town Team 	ST - LT
Review the current events and festival offer and develop those with significant potential and examine options for new events where gaps exist. This should link to food, heritage and water based activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boyle Town Team supported by culture, heritage and arts groups 	MT



Theme 3: Economic Development and Business Support

Actions (Projects or Programmes)	Led by	Indicative timeframe
Liaise with the LEO to link existing businesses with the range of grant and training support programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Boyle Town Team/LEO	ST
Collaborate with the Global Rossie Diaspora Strategy and activities to promote Boyle as an ideal location to start a business, invest or establish a second site location	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Boyle Town Team/RCC	MT



**BUSINESS
INNOVATION**

Theme 4: Health, Wellbeing and Inclusion

Actions (Projects or Programmes)	Led by	Indicative timeframe
Development of a multi-sport/ activity centre to provide opportunities for inclusive physical activity including wet weather option	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boyle Community & Sports Leisure Development CLG 	MT to LT
Develop a network of walks and cycle paths within the town and linked to existing and planned routes (e.g. the Lawn)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boyle Town Team 	MT
Seek approaches to provide bike hire in Boyle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boyle Town Team 	ST
Revisit previous accessibility assessment for town centre users with additional needs to identify areas for improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boyle Town Team & RCC 	MT
Lobby to improve access to and capacity of GP and dental services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Resource Centre 	MT
Promote the opportunity to provide accessible childcare provision in Boyle (creche through to after schools)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boyle Family Resource Centre and the Roscommon County Childcare Committee 	ST



Notes / Progress

Notes / Progress

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