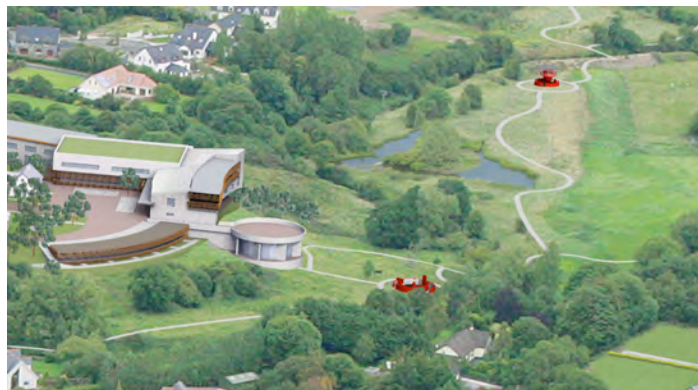


### 2.31 Footpath and cycleway along the River: Centre

From the community centre area the footpath / cycleway passes through an area of dense vegetation, **G**, and steep incline to emerge into an area below the proposed elderly care centre. A small observation post at the level of the care centre, **H**, which might be sheltered with a light roof would be attractive for daytime use by the residents. Down by the river a water related installation (red dot, **J**, on the plan above) is suggested which adults and children could use as a treadmill to raise water from the river and cascade it back down in a series of pivoted channels heading towards the pond... A project for artistic interpretation...



### 2.31 Footpath and cycleway along the River: Centre and East

From the treadmill installation, **J**, a footbridge (for cycles too), **K**, crosses back to the southern bank where a retention pond and amenity lake, **L** is suggested which is likely to attract water loving birds such as ducks and heron and maybe swans nesting. The open ground in this area might be suitable for locating a picnic area, **M**, accessed also from the main road. The red dot, **N**, might indicate a performance platform for impromptu dance, music or drama...The footpath around the lake may need to be raised slightly above ground level as a boardwalk to overcome possible marshy conditions or flooding.

A second footbridge, **P**, is suggested to cross back to the northern side along a very attractive stretch of river with small weirs creating still water and, presumably, a good environment for fish stock improvement. Unfortunately, the mud and stones taken from the river bed have been left beside the river, making a mini lunar landscape which is unattractive. Consideration may be given to landscaping these heaps in a more suitable way to return the river banks to a more natural appearance. The red dot located in this part, **R**, may be a suitable location for bird watching as the river is patrolled by herons. For the time being the footpath and cycleway proposal reaches its destination at Lispopple bridge, although the long term purpose may be to create a regional linear park as far as the Broadmeadow Estuary.

Image, left: an idea of how the riverside park might look: red in the foreground indicates one of the pavilions - the footpath passes the proposed lake and continues to another pavilion, suggested for birdwatching.

Whilst the proposal overall is ambitious, and its detailed implementation provisional, its achievement over time is quite feasible. It offers amenity for the area, extending to the county, if accepted as part of a strategic route. It also allows for walking and cycling connections from designated development sites around the village; a quality network for walking and cycling throughout the village and beyond.

## 2.4 Conservation and new use for old buildings and buildings at risk

The **Architectural Conservation Area Statement of Character** has an inclusive policy for conservation of all architecturally significant buildings. The concern in this document is to emphasise the key role they play in characterising the village and its heritage. There are three buildings of significance in prominent locations that have already been referred to, yet they should be considered to be at risk as they are unused, and deteriorating at present:

**2.41 The Old School** is undoubtedly a resource for the village and hinterland. Two distinct uses are suggested - as a local enterprise centre, and as a component in a healthy village programme. These are suggestions which would have a strong community potential, but there may be others.

**2.42 The Old Mill** is a traditional building of regional, even national, significance. It needs to be addressed with great care, using conservation principles to transform it into a facility for use today. Its previous uses, post milling, have been as a shop, parlour and bar, and there is a strong local memory of this. Handled with sensitivity it could become a cultural icon for more than the village, as a regional attraction with equivalent following to the Seamus Ennis Cultural Centre in The Naul.

**2.43 Rowlestown House** is a beautiful and unusual late eighteenth century country house with dependencies behind. At the time of writing the building is unoccupied and for sale, making it vulnerable to damage and deterioration. It is part of the identity of the village and as a Protected Structure, has more than a local significance.

**2.44 The church** is a nineteenth century gothic style building in good condition and likely to remain so. The vernacular **buildings** surviving in the village are of major importance to the sense of rural background which they evoke, and should be carefully conserved, and their reuse encouraged.



**Clockwise from top left:** The Church seen from the R 125 at a distance: The Old Mill, interior workings still in place: The Old School, a good building for retrofitting and reuse: Rowlestown House, a beautiful garden setting: One of the vernacular houses of the village, with corrugated iron over the thatch, an important component of the legacy of old Rowlestown.



## 2.5 Landscaping and New Housing

### 2.51 Protecting the Rural Countryside and Broadmeadow River

The rural countryside has a different structure to that of an urban area, where building dominates and landscape is a secondary amenity. The rural countryside, even at proximity to urban landscapes, maintains a different balance, with field patterns, county lanes, woodland areas, riverside corridors and the traditional disposition of buildings and settlement. Rowlestown is a village at risk of dissolving or being submerged by the nearby growth of Swords and the Northern metropolitan suburbs. Within the designated village boundary, a diversity of natural traditional rural patterns give it local distinctiveness and a rural identity. It includes the structure of an emergent village yet to be completed. These policies and guidelines seek to ensure that nothing of quality should be lost in the making of a more dense, lively village centre, intended to act as a symbolic as well as a service centre, reinforcing the existing facilities. Thus, the deliberate emphasis of a village centre character along Church Road and the protection of riverside, field structures and boundaries is intended to improve the amenity to the benefit of the existing and expanding community. This embodies the spirit of the green infrastructure promoted in the County Development Plan.



Village scale housing solutions at Headfort House, Co. Meath, **Left and above**, Enniskerry Co. Wicklow, **below**, and Garristown, Co.Fingal **bottom**



## 2.5 Landscaping and New Housing

### 2.52 New Landscape, integral with New Housing

The new housing proposed seeks to exemplify the policies towards quality housing in the County development Plan, including:

- Sustainable house layouts which provide effective orientation for sunlight and daylight, a pattern of a more commonly used rural plan with relatively wide frontage and a modest scale.
- Gardens, front and rear with parking on the plot, with exceptions for mews-like houses, and generous enough to accommodate clothes drying and limited vegetable growing space.
- Orientation of the house to allow for sunlight penetration into living zones.
- High standard insulation and solar gain.

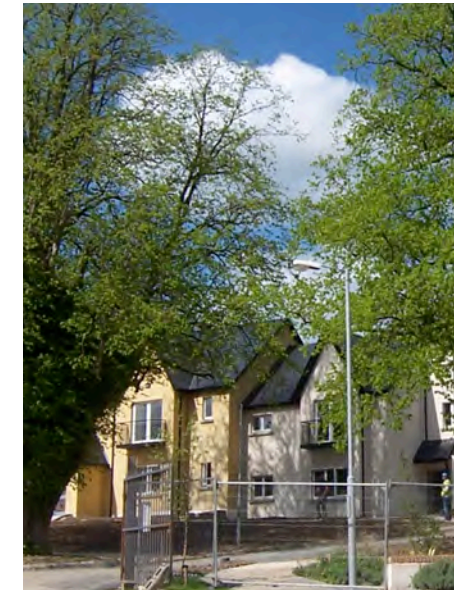
The new house and its garden are set in a landscape which allows:

- The old divisions of field and hedgerow to be retained where possible.
- The design of space close to the home which is safe for supervised children's play and neighbourly sociability and diffused throughout housing areas.
- Development of pedestrian / cycle routes mainly separated from vehicular roads and connecting with a network of paths in the village to provide comfortable and enjoyable greenways. The level of traffic within clusters is such that shared surfaces can be used.
- The more localised landscape around housing clusters can be treated as 'wild' landscape, subject to limited annual or biennial cutting and maintenance, possibly as a shared community responsibility. A modest payment per household administered locally could finance this.



**Left**, recently completed village housing fronting onto the street with on-street parking at Kilbeggan, Co Westmeath. The absence of existing landscape structure on site shows up in the hard urban feel of the outside street.

**Below, left and right:** Housing in a mature landscape outside Cavan Town, where trees have been retained, providing an attractive landscape setting.



## 2.6 Village Entrances Improvement

### 2.61 Entrance from Swords and M1

The R125, as a regional road is not helpful to a 'village' environment as most traffic is passing through and intent on keeping moving. The entrance from Swords is slowed down by the sharp turn just after The Kettles Country House Hotel. Outside the hotel may be the best place to locate a village sign, although the traffic plan suggests that there might be road realignment on this stretch to smooth out the curves.

The design and presentation of the village sign deserves more than the name. Ideally, it should be purpose designed to act as a symbol, a logo for the village.

### 2.62 Entrance from Swords

Measures proposed for the R125 are covered comprehensively in the traffic plan. A village sign for this entrance may be suitably located where the (redundant) schoolchildren-warning sign is positioned, before the curve and tree lined edge. (illustrated on this page, **far right.**) In time the old school, with renewed use, will again represent visually the entrance to the village.

**Below:** Straight stretch of the R125 within the village boundary, passing the now disused petrol station and shop. Use of the road by pedestrians and cyclists is perceived as dangerous, as many vehicles travel at speed.



Rowlestown Village Development Framework Plan | iCON Architecture | Urban Design | Conservation, with Cummins and Voortman

### 2.63 Local Road Entrances from North

This local lane is of a width and character to be ideal as a 'green lane' as suggested. A green lane needs to be defined and signed, and would have an advisory vehicle speed limit of, say 20 km per hour and priority given to pedestrians and cyclists. (ref. Jersey Channel Islands 'Green Lane' network since 1987).

### 2.64 Local Road Entrances from East

The entrance from Lispopple end is a relatively straight road, mainly used by local traffic, although speed appears to be a problem on the road. Provision is made in this Village Development Framework Plan for a parallel alternative route for pedestrians and cyclists in Development Area 4, which would alleviate some of the potential conflict between cars and pedestrians / cyclists along Church Road. The road between the church and Lispopple Bridge is attractive for walking and cycling, looped to the riverside walk, and might also be considered for designation as a 'green lane'.

**Below:** Local Lane entrance from North shown heading northwards and passing Rowlestown House on the right; an opportunity to designate a 'green lane' with appropriate speed limit and priority for cyclists and pedestrians.



**Below:** Church Road, between the church and Lispopple Bridge is another country lane of great character where designation as a 'green lane' could help to keep more moderate traffic speeds and a safer lane for pedestrians and cyclists.



## 2.7 Spaces and Places

The diverse range of small, usable open spaces distributed around the village is a potential for making the village more attractive. The improvements to the spaces are unlikely to happen all at once. They should be undertaken in cooperation with a local tidy towns or similar committee.

### 2.71 Spaces and Places

#### ① Outside the graveyard at Killossery

This is a small area of land which deserves more careful consideration to create an attractive (and wheelchair accessible if possible) entrance to the graveyard. The road comes close to the old entrance and some adjustment to the carriageway may be necessary to improve safety.

#### ② The bus stop

The bus stop provides a vital link to Swords and the airport. An improved area could provide new paving, a definite kerb between bus and pavement, attractive, well maintained landscaping and shelter from rain and wind.

#### ③ The bridge, and small green, north of the bridge.

The green might provide space for example, for a seat and perhaps a modest landmark sculpture, with small path to the river's edge.

#### ④ The Lawn Gates under the canopy of trees, and the nearby woodland glade under the tree

The small woodland area, illustrated on [this page](#), appears to allow public access already. With minimal intervention and maintenance, it could be a preferred footpath, offering a short trail amongst the trees and back to the footpath.

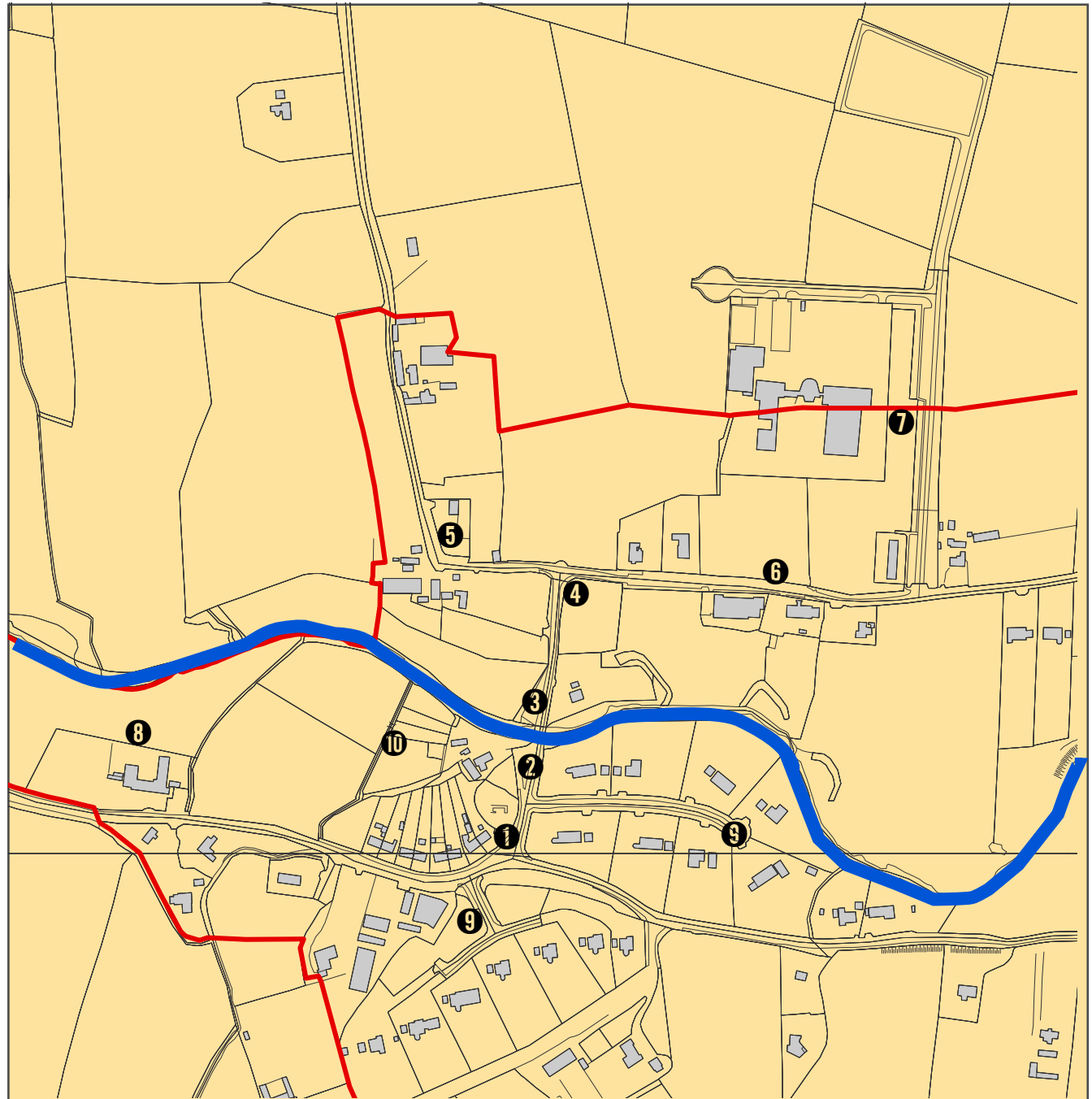


Key to numbers on map as reference to text for 2.7, Spaces and Places

- ❶ Outside the graveyard at Killossery
- ❷ The bus stop
- ❸ The bridge, and small green, north of the bridge.
- ❹ The Lawn Gates under the canopy of trees, and the woodland glade under the trees.
- ❺ The green on the corner of Church Road (West),
- ❻ Church Road, outside the church and community centre
- ❼ The open area on West side of Rowlestown Drive and alongside the new school grounds
- ❽ The Old School (if reused for village activities)
- ❾ Housing groups (semi-private, 2 shown)



**Above:** Outside the graveyard at Killossery. There is a small area available for a simple improvement to the surface, using a permeable topping such as gravel. The use of cement in the repair of the step should be replaced with natural stone. This is a beautiful place, deserving further gentle care towards its entrance treatment, albeit so close to the road.





## 2.7 Spaces and Places

- 5 The green on the corner of Church Road (West),** illustrated on this page.  
Little needs to be done here; the absence of a kerb is appropriate in a rural situation and softens the demarcation. The T junction sign should be removed or relocated, and the pole also relocated to be less intrusive. This mini-space might be a suitable place for a seat if the owners were agreeable.
- 6 Church Road, outside the church and community centre**  
This area has been described as ‘making a village square’ and proposals made in subsection 2.21.
- 7 The open area on West side of Rowlestown Drive and alongside the new school grounds**  
This area is proposed as a school linked Community Garden.
- 8 The old school (if reused for village activities)**  
The immediate landscaping around the school is mature and attractive and is a good starting point for an overall landscape strategy as described in subsection 2.41.
- 9 Housing groups (semi private, two shown on map)**
  - Green area in front of houses at Oakhill across road R125 from the graveyard.
  - Culs de sac at the end of Killossery estate.As areas in private ownership, these areas have been well maintained and contribute to the green quality of the village.