

7. FUTURE PRINCIPLES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BLOCK

7.1 Introduction

This framework plan has been prepared to suggest a performance basis for the redevelopment of the block, rather than mandate an explicit design solution. This introduces a degree of flexibility that is deemed to be necessary for the proper planning and renewal of the area. The key development principles are outlined on Map 27. Maps 28A and Map 28B show two conceptual interpretations of these principles drawn up schematically. These drawings are not to be taken as literal interpretations - a full and comprehensive examination would require three dimensional drawings or cross sections. These maps are indicative and for guidance purposes only.

The implementation of this framework plan will depend on the degree of understanding of the key principles for development. These principles relate both to important issues of conservation as well as renewal and redevelopment. In order to facilitate the implementation process the key principles have been categorized into Requirements, Presumptions or Considerations. Each guideline is followed by its own rationale.

Every development will be required to adhere to the 'requirements'.

The 'presumptions' shift the burden of proof. They are presumed by the planning authority to be necessary, however, if an applicant or architect can demonstrate and convince the planning authority of good design or planning reasons for overcoming a presumption, then he/she can escape its requirement.

Considerations, are there for every designer to review and consider in connection with each individual project.

7.2 Requirements

- R1** No future vehicular ingress or egress will be permitted into the block from Castle Street and Market Street (up to the junction with West Gardens), other than existing access that is there to serve existing developments.
Rationale: To protect the character of the streetscapes along Castle Street and Market Street and facilitate the implementation of Objective T10.1 of the Development Plan which seeks the pedestrianisation of these streets.
- R2** Plot amalgamation shall be subject to the following requirements (refer to Map 26):
 In Area A1 and A2, plot amalgamation shall be prohibited outright – this will include entire plots from street front to rear property boundary. This area comprises a significant area of residential use along Old Market Street in addition to those properties along Teeling Street.
 In Area B, plot amalgamation shall be permitted, but will be restricted to the rear of the plot, i.e., to that area behind the building on the street front. Where a building has already been significantly altered or redeveloped in recent years and there is no clear demarcation of the rear façade, a distance of 10 metres will apply from the front façade.
Rationale: To protect the urban grain of the streetscape and protect residential amenity. Plot depths are generally not as great on the east side of the block and this displays a higher incidence of residential uses, which should be protected from the adverse impact of large scale comprehensive redevelopment.
- R3** Any structure within 50 metres of the Courthouse tower should remain below 25 metres O.D in height. This includes all roof top mechanical rooms, etc.
Rationale: To safeguard the architectural setting and context of the Courthouse, particularly its important contribution to the skyline of Sligo.
- R4** The maximum height of any structure within the block should be maintained below the top of the architrave-cornice/ intermediate parapet of sandstone on the tower. This height is approximately 28 metres (refer to Photo 40).
Rationale: To safeguard the architectural setting and context of the Courthouse, particularly its important contribution to the skyline of Sligo.
- R5** Ensure the provision of an east-west pedestrian access through the block, through the former gateway of Teeling House (on Teeling Street) through Gurries Yard and the existing gateway entrance from High Street.
Rationale: Such access will provide an important and strategic connection midway through the urban block and will facilitate pedestrian access along a natural desire line from Chapel Street to Grattan Street. Pedestrian access at this location will generate the greatest level of pedestrian movement, through and around the block, and this increased footfall will be necessary for the regeneration of retail and commercial activity in and around the block.
- R6** Provide a central area of open civic space within the centre of the block and along the east west pedestrian axis, the dimension of should be approximately 20 by 20 metres. The actual shape, size and configuration are not critical, though some effort should be made to ensure daylight and sunlight penetration at most times of the year.
Rationale: To provide a focal point to the regeneration of the block, which will contribute to the amenity of the area.
- R7** Ensure the provision of active frontages along the east-west pedestrian route and civic space. This will require uses which generate pedestrian activity, such as retail units, commercial premises, offices, galleries, cafes, and public/commercial services. The length of the proposed route is approximately 100 metres long and this will require a minimum of 10 premises (approximately 10-15 altogether) and more than 15 doors and windows along its length.

Rationale: So as to enliven the new street, assist in maintaining the vitality and vibrancy of the area and ensure that adequate levels of footfall are maintained.

R8 All rooftop equipment, antennae and external plant must be screened to the height of the tallest part of the roof and integrated into the building design (except where antennae or other structure is exempt under the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001).

Rationale: Such elements should not appear as an afterthought and should not detract or interfere with the future skyline, particularly having regard to buildings' proximity to the Courthouse.

7.3 Presumptions

P1 In relation to car parking within the block, the following presumptions are made:

- (i) Vehicular access shall not be permitted through any Record of Protected Structure (RPS) unless there is or has been an entrance or traditional gateway there in the past.
- (ii) In the event of a shared underground car parking facility being viable, access to such a facility will only be considered at existing or former gateway facilities into the block or through structures that have not been rated on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH).
- (iii) For strategic reasons and in the interests of the future circulation of traffic around the block and the town centre, ingress/egress will be permitted through the former Savoy building as it would permit a one way flow of traffic either from or to the block direct to West Gardens.
- (iv) Where vehicular ingress and egress is provided, the entrance shall be minimized to reduce the visual impact of the entrance on the streetscape.

Rationale: To protect the inherent character of the area.

P2 No building on the Record of Protected Structures shall be demolished.

Rationale: To protect the architectural and historic character of the area and conform with policies identified in Section 2.5.6 of the Development Plan.

P3 Ensure that all residential units that back onto the existing residences of Old Market Street and Teeling Street, are of a suitable scale, mass, set back and design (in terms of fenestration and balconies) and that a set-back of 15 metres is required from any opposing bedroom windows.

Rationale: So as not to cause an unacceptable loss of third party residential amenity.

P4 No building identified on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage of local status or above should be demolished.

Rationale: To maintain and respect the area's designation as an Architectural Conservation Area.

P5 For all new buildings variations in building heights are required up to the height caps – building heights of a uniform level are to be avoided on larger plots or where significant plot amalgamation has taken place.

Rationale: Variation in building heights throughout individual development schemes will provide visual interest and variety to the skyline of Sligo and should assist in reducing the overall scale and bulk of new developments.

P6 Retain and if necessary reinstate the sandstone flagstones and cobbled detailing that is found on many of the gateways leading to the backlands.

Rationale: To maintain and respect the area's designation as an Architectural Conservation Area.

P7 Ensure the full implementation of Development Plan policy 2.2.17 which restricts the conversion of residential dwellings to office and retail on John Street, Charles Street and Church Street

Rationale: The implementation of this policy is likely to redirect such potential commercial uses to nearby blocks such as the Courthouse Block, which is in need of regeneration.

P8 All electricity and telecommunications cables shall be run underground within the block.

Rationale: To maintain and respect the area's designation as an Architectural Conservation Area.

P9 New development proposals within the centre of the block should ensure that certain reasonable provisions are made to link into other developments from within the block so that the independent access to the upper floors is possible. This will not be feasible in each and every case, but applicants will be expected to demonstrate that this matter has been given adequate consideration (either through consultation with adjoining landowners) or through provisions in the design and layout of each scheme.

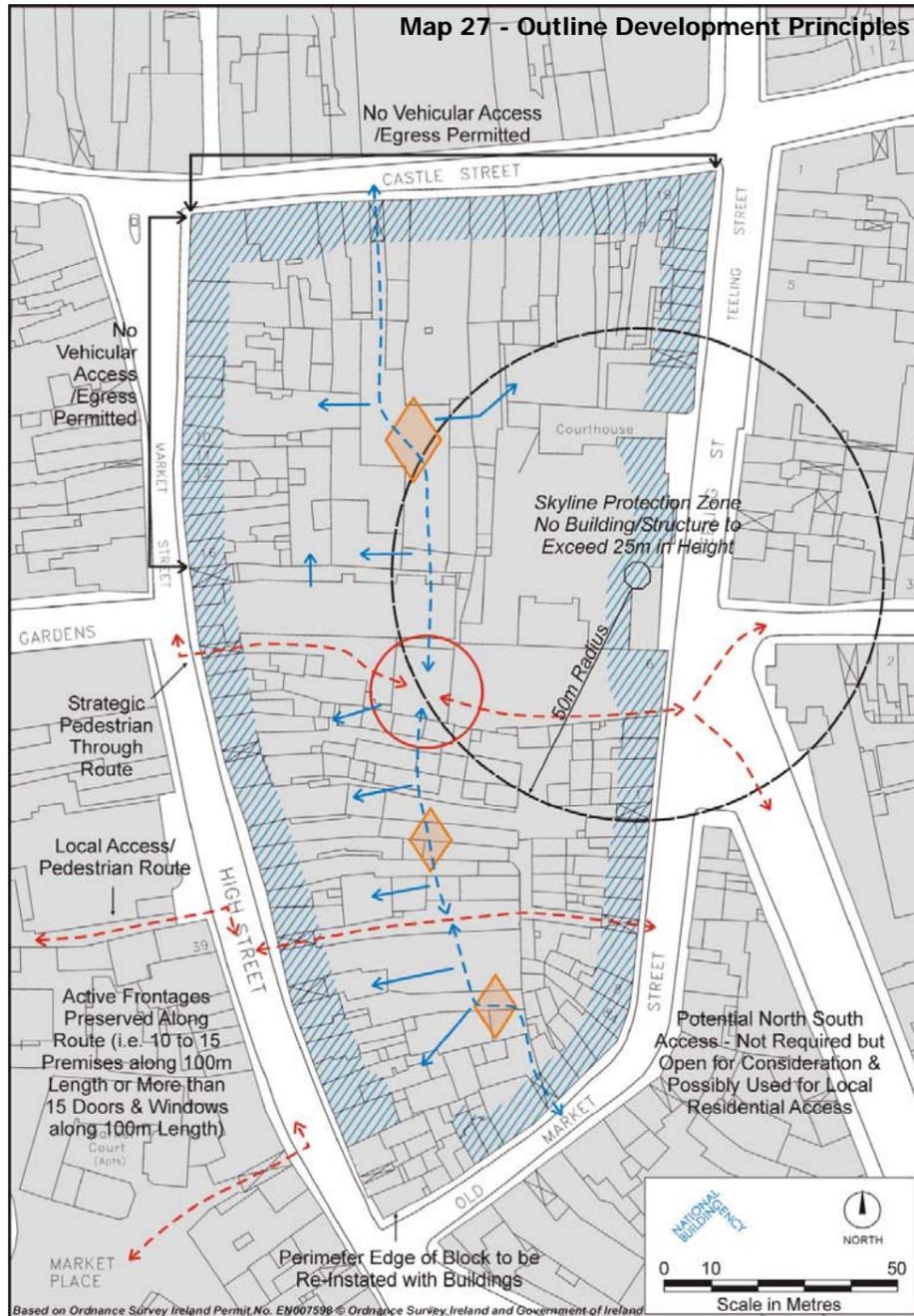
Rationale: To optimize the development potential of the block and facilitate independent access to the upper floors of perimeter buildings.

P10 In possible cases where dead-end pedestrian passages are provided, applicants will be expected to provide some form of security, such as railings and gates operated by electronic swipe cards, which can be closed in the evenings or at end of business. In such cases, it might be appropriate to consider solely residential use with the use of that space for those residents living there.

Rationale: In the interests of security, safety and so as to avoid anti-social behaviour and protect existing residential amenity.

P11 A series of small courtyards of varying shapes and sizes – for public and/or private use – are to be provided within the block. These courtyards could be provided with hard landscaping or soft (natural) landscaping and could be raised above a first, second or third floor level (for example) with other uses beneath.

Rationale: To provide local people, shoppers and residents with pockets of amenity open space within the block.



-  Encourage Upper Floor Access from within the Block (Shown Indicatively)
-  Courtyards (Public and/or Private) of Varying Shapes and Sizes
-  Retention of Block Edge

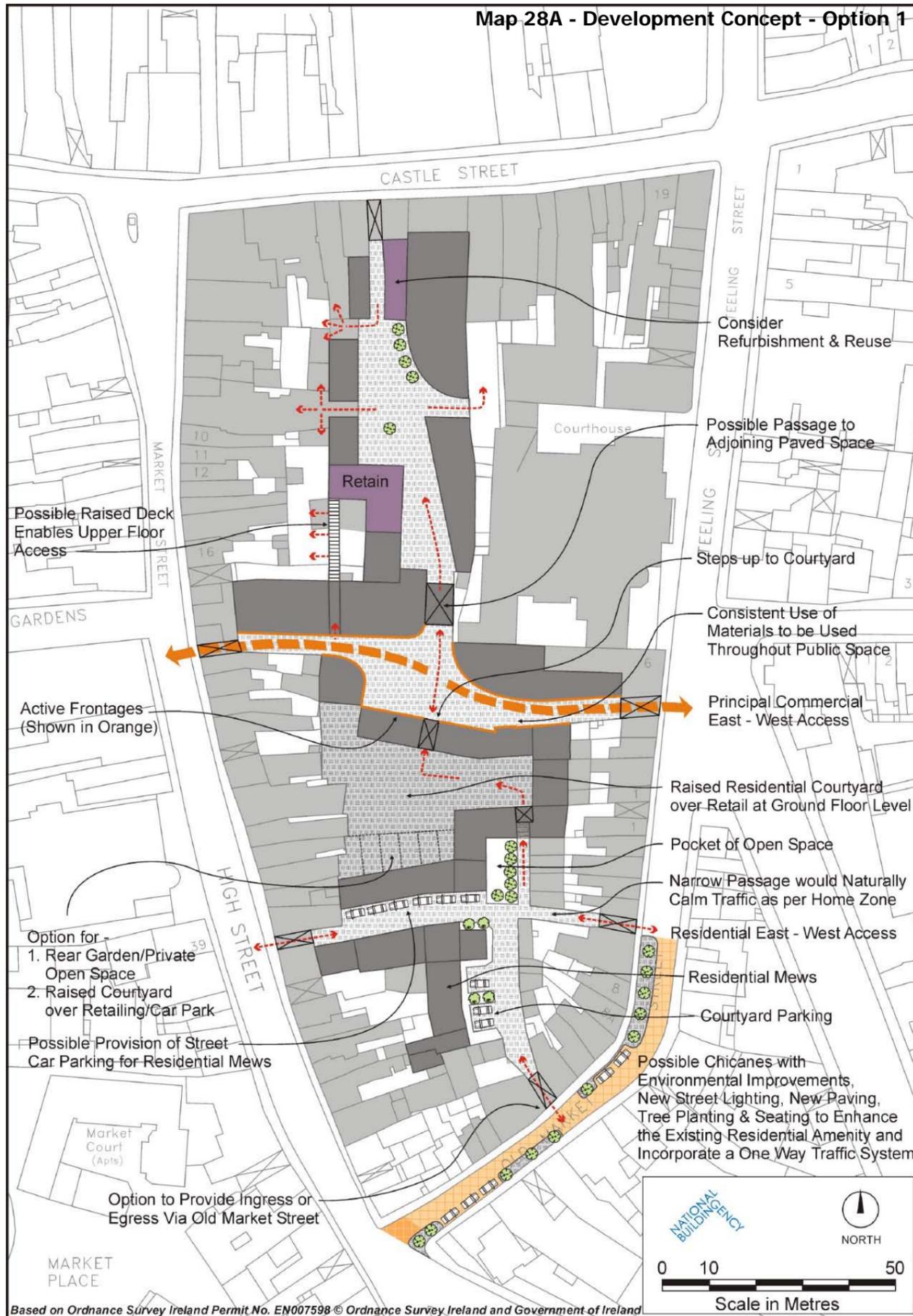
7.4 Considerations

- C1** Consideration should be given to the provision of ingress to any proposed underground car park(s) at just one location along the streetscape and similarly consideration should be given to just one point of egress from any proposed underground car park(s).
Rationale: So as to limit the potential impact on the streetscape.
- C2** An audit of the existing building fabric should be carried out, to include rear extensions and outbuildings. All proposed developments should carefully consider the utilization and/or conversion of these buildings for new uses.
Rationale: So as to retain existing elements of the building fabric that provides a link with the past in this historical area and respects the context either within or adjoining an Architectural Conservation Area.
- C3** A unified approach to the design of surface materials, street lighting and the choice of street furniture (such as seating, litter bins, etc.) should be considered within the block.
Rationale: So as to provide a unified and integrated approach to the design of the area.
- C4** Prior to any development being carried out, each applicant shall employ a suitably qualified archaeologist and/or architectural historian to prepare a written and photographic record of the existing plot dimensions and building fabric, including outbuildings and stone walls. This report is to be submitted to the Planning Authority.
Rationale: To provide a suitable record of the current state of the block as a historical reference point.
- C5** Floor to ceiling heights of all new buildings are to be adequate to allow for the adaptability of units from one use to another. It is recommended that floor to floor dimensions for ground to first floor are 4m and a minimum of 3m on all other floors.
Rationale: To permit the sustainable adaptation and reuse of buildings over time.



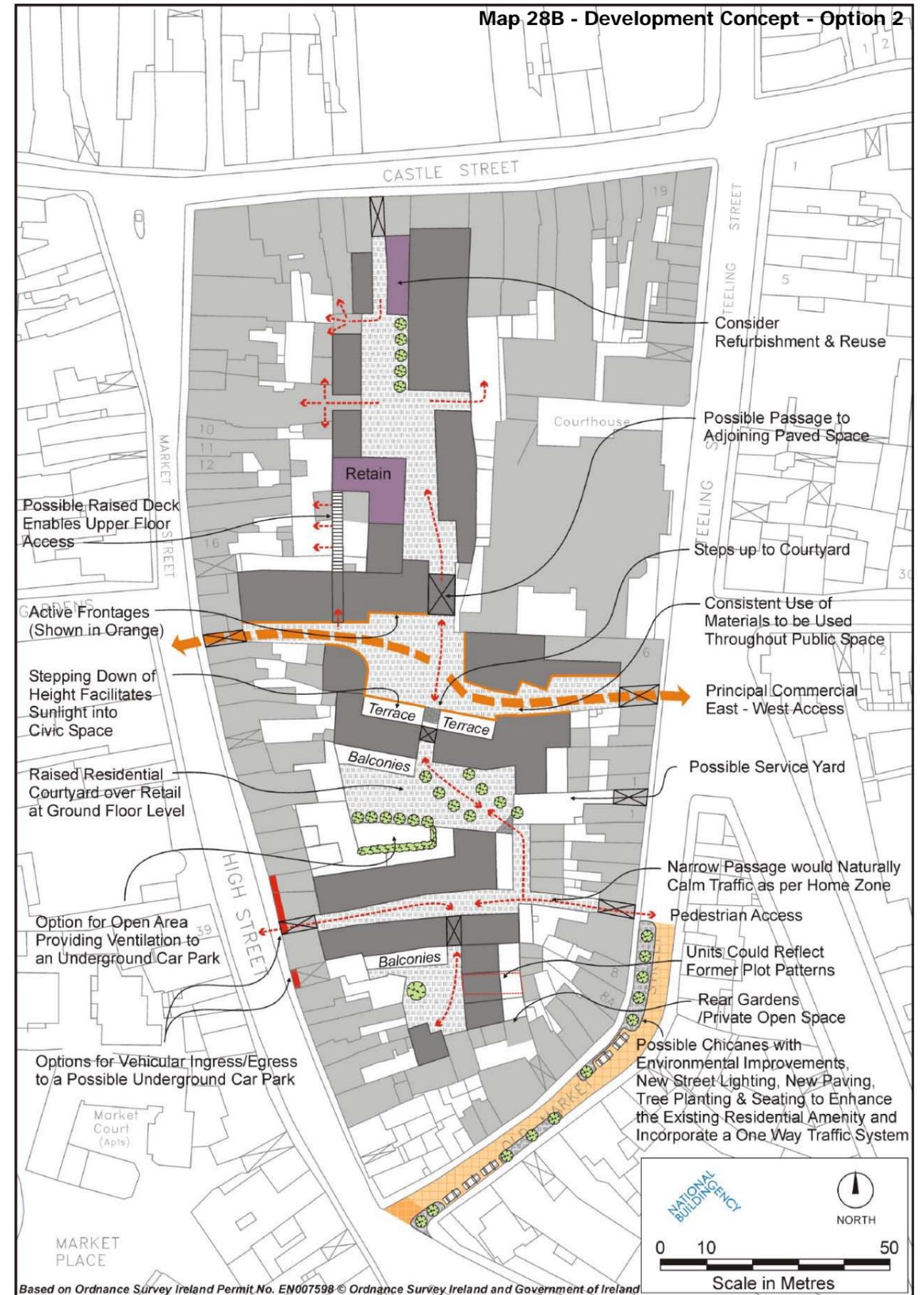
50. Example of courtyard development with planting

Map 28A - Development Concept - Option 1



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Map 28B - Development Concept - Option 2



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