



Lucan Tourism Product & Proposition Plan

Final Report for South Dublin County Council

by CHL Consulting

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CHL

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Executive Summary

- A significant urban centre within South Dublin County, Lucan has been awarded funding under Fáilte Ireland's Tourism Destination Towns Initiative. This project forms part of its approach to the development of the town and the area around it as a destination for tourists.
- Located within the Greater Dublin Area, Lucan has access to a large market of potential tourists that includes 6.7 million overseas tourists in the city, 1.8 million domestic tourists and almost 2 million in the wider catchment population.
- However, it is situated at some distance from the main flow of tourism in the city centre and therefore it will need considerable effort to encourage tourists to make the extra journey as far as Lucan.
- As a village with an interesting history and a good supply of natural resources, Lucan has strengths in the areas of built and natural heritage that it can hope to exploit in order to develop a sustainable tourism business. While none of these are of a destination-level in their own right, the combination of heritage character, and green and blue spaces provides a basis for further development that is attractive to a wide variety of consumers. Heritage on its own, however, is unlikely to be sufficient to draw any significant level of tourism, given the abundance of heritage assets across Dublin.
- The recommended marketing proposition for Lucan as a tourism destination harnesses these strengths and can be articulated as follows:

“An historic village that is the gateway to a natural playground - within easy reach of the city, where Dubliners and tourists alike come to be active, renew and reconnect”
- This proposition is supported by two key themes around which tourism experiences and marketing can be developed: the ‘Village Green’ and ‘Gateway to a Natural Playground.’
- In order to develop Lucan more fully as a tourism destination and in order to bring the proposed marketing proposition to life, a number of interventions are required, primarily in the areas of:
 - Co-ordination of approach
 - Expansion of available product
 - Animation
 - Orientation and information
 - Built heritage
 - Natural heritage
- In addition, key constraints are identified that need to be addressed, although they are outside the scope of this project. Some of these are currently underway, while others require further action. They include:
 - Traffic management
 - Public realm

- Wayfinding and interpretation
 - Water quality
- A gradual approach to development is recommended and simple actions can get the ball rolling. These are identified in a separate Roadmap provided in the Appendices.

1. CONTEXT AND METHODOLOGY

1.1 Background & Context

A significant urban centre in South Dublin County and within easy distance of Dublin city centre, Lucan was historically a destination for leisure as well as an industrial hub. Its village core and the nearby Demesne retains much of this heritage character and this, combined with the attractive riverside and parkland areas, has resulted in South Dublin County Council (SDCC) recognising its potential to become the County's flagship Tourism Destination Town. Following a successful application to Fáilte Ireland for funding under the Destination Towns initiative, SDCC is now in the process of addressing a number of areas that will strengthen Lucan's appeal, including public realm development and interpretation. In this context, CHL Consulting was appointed in spring 2021 to develop a tourism product and proposition plan that would:

- review the Lucan area tourism product to identify gaps and opportunities to enhance the offering;
- devise a simple and practical roadmap of interventions by relevant stakeholders with a view to creating possible and/or enhanced saleable experiences, sustainable tourism collaborations and connections;
- develop themes for Lucan and a proposition that can be given to the Council for inclusion in marketing and communications strategy.

This Plan presents the findings, conclusions and recommendations from the work. Sections 2-4 of the Plan present the review of the area, the

opportunities, and the gap between the two, while Section 6 onwards presents our recommendations with regard to direction, promotion and interventions. Detailed Appendices are provided separately.

1.2 Methodology & Approach

The approach adopted by the project team is summarised in Fig. 1 and included a variety of methods including:

- desk research, including a thorough review of relevant strategies and plans (see Appendix 7)
- audit of existing tourism and related products/experiences (see Appendix 3)
- mystery shop and study visits, including a tourism commentary of the developing Greenway (see Appendix 2)
- comparator study
- consultations with key stakeholders and members of the local community

- online public survey
- in-depth discussion/workshopping to test direction
- professional analysis and gap analysis

The existence of Covid restrictions during the study period meant that it was not possible to hold public meetings and it also impacted on the result of the product audit as many services and experiences were closed either entirely or for key periods of the work. However, we do not consider that these restrictions have had material implications for the results of the study, and we are grateful to all those in the local community who shared their opinions with us, and provided information and insight.

FIG. 1: APPROACH TO PROJECT



2. AREA REVIEW

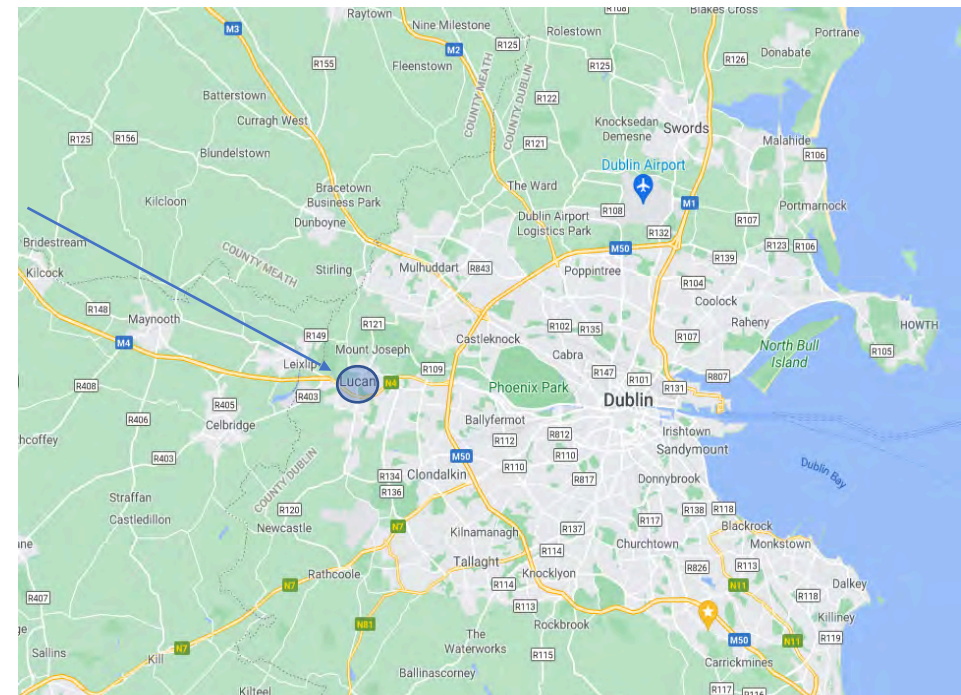
2.1 Location & Access

Lucan is located at the rural/urban threshold between Kildare and Dublin. Although under a half hour's drive from Dublin city centre, its location has a number of challenges from a tourism perspective.

- It is remote from the city's main tourism flow and outside M50 'cordon' - as illustrated in Fig. 2.
- Lucan itself is intersected by the N4, creating a disconnect between the Village ('old' Lucan) and the housing estates where a significant proportion of the population lives ('new' Lucan).
- There is no direct rail link.
- Domestic associations with modern Lucan are suburban housing, shopping and family leisure.

On the otherhand, there are regular buses and the long-term possibility of a Luas link has been mooted¹. In addition, there is easy access to Lucan for domestic tourists from outside Dublin via the main road network and the M50.

FIG. 2: LOCATION OF LUCAN



¹ The *Greater Dublin Area Draft Transport Strategy 2022-2042* mentions a light rail link to Lucan, with work commencing during the period 2031-2042, funding permitting.

2.2 The Lucan Experience

From a tourism perspective, the ‘Lucan experience’ comprises a variety of factors, including its character, the range of products, services, amenities and experiences available, and the local community.

The **character of an area** is an amalgam of many factors, of tangible and intangible attributes, including the way in which people work, live and play. It plays an important role in establishing an attractive sense of place for tourists. For Lucan Village - as for many areas of Dublin - the physical heritage is a particularly strong aspect of its character, with much of the original character of the streets still evident. A striking feature is how the shape of the wall enclosing the Demesne has created the shape of the Village as it is today. Nature is also much evident in the character of the Village and surrounding area: the natural planting, mature trees, two rivers and Demesne, and associated flora and fauna.

However, there are elements of the experience that are immediately obvious in terms of requiring improvement for tourists - some of which are illustrated in Fig. 3.

- Traffic dominates the area, creating an unwelcoming environment for pedestrians and cyclists. Car parking can also be difficult to find.
- There is a need to open out the core of the Village to provide a sense of arrival.
- Key areas where tourists would congregate in the Village are either closed off (the Green) or difficult to find from the village (the Weir Park and other parks, including the Demesne).

- Many heritage assets are invisible and there is a need to draw attention to them and to improve access.
- Although not within South Dublin County, St. Catherine’s Park is better signed from the wider area, and is used more than the Demesne by locals due to easier parking and more amenities.

FIG. 3: ILLUSTRATIONS OF AREAS REQUIRING IMPROVEMENT



2.3 Summary of Product Audit

A detailed product audit was undertaken as part of the study, looking at relevant products, services and experiences in the wider Lucan area. While it identifies over 80 items, the majority of those that are tourism-specific are outside of Lucan itself - highlighting the need to develop more tourism product within Lucan. However, it is also clear that the wider area has a number of specific strengths, including outdoor activities, family fun and food.

Below is a summary overview by category and Appendix 2 provides a full listing.

- **Food:** There is a good selection of high-quality daytime cafés, although the evening offer is limited.
- **Activities:** The wider area has a strength in outdoor activities that is not usually associated with an urban area. There is a selection of water-based activities (kayaking, rafting) on the Liffey, although access to the water is an issue. There are also several walks and trails (most unsigned), attractive parks and golf courses. But there is a need for more water-based activities for independent and casual users, as well as for a variety of park-based and village-based leisure activities.
- **Family fun:** There are two established destinations for families in the wider Lucan area - Fort Lucan and Jump Zone. These are supplemented by other leisure experiences at Liffey Valley shopping centre.
- **Accommodation:** There is no accommodation that would bring tourists directly into Lucan Village, although the Spa Hotel is close by and there is plenty of accommodation in the wider area.
- **Retail:** There is little that would be relevant to tourists but there is some high-quality retail suitable for the local/domestic market (e.g. bakery, interior shop, sale of local artwork).
- There is an annual **festival** in September.
- **Heritage and nature:** See the following pages for more discussion.

2.3.1 Natural Assets

Lucan has two rivers - the Griffeen and the Liffey - flowing through it and these give definition to the village. They also give definition to the three parks that intersect the area, stretching from Griffeen Valley Park through Vesey Park and the Village, and on to Lucan Demesne (with its connection to St. Catherine's Park) - as can be seen in Fig. 4.

Each park has a good variety of basic community amenities. In addition, the Demesne, which is an historic parkland, still maintains some of its historic assets as well as a highly-attractive riverside area.

2.3.2 Heritage Assets

Lucan has a number of identified heritage trails that can guide a tourist around the area, although there is no evidence of the trails on the ground. They include a number of interesting sites, as can be seen in Fig. 5. However, many of the more interesting sites and assets are invisible or inaccessible e.g., the medieval graveyard just off the Green, Lucan House and a variety of smaller interesting heritage features.

FIG. 4: GREEN SPACES AROUND LUCAN

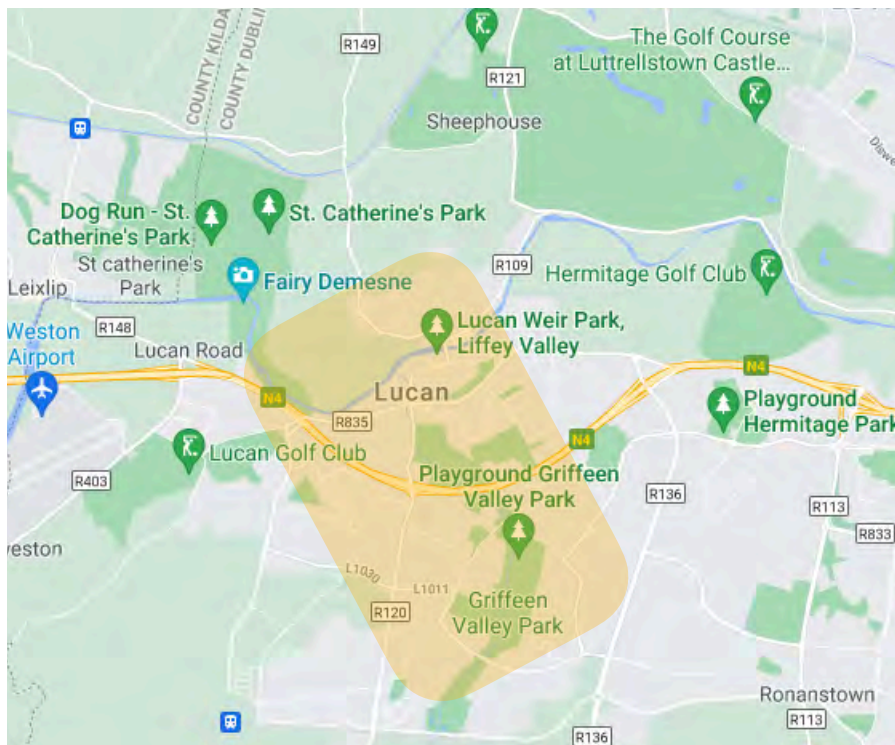


FIG. 5: HERITAGE TOUR OF LUCAN

Lucan Walking Tour

Taking in the Griffioen River, Around Lucan Demesne and the Liffey, Lucan Village and its Neighbourhood.
Please use pedestrian crossings and apply the Safe Cross Code when crossing roads.
Distance: Approximately 2 km. The walk will take 30 to 40 minutes at a leisurely pace.

Getting There
Dublin Bus - 75 from Mullingar Quay (Dublin City Centre), 66 & 62A from Mullingar Quay (Dublin City Centre),
17 & 17A from Mullingar Quay (Dublin City Centre), 28 from Manchester Street (Dublin 4 - on Sunday Service)
By Car: Lucan Village is approximately 2 km from the town centre. It is a 10 minute drive from the town centre and 10 minutes from the town centre.

1 Alight from the bus (after descending Lucan Hill) outside the Tipasa petrol station. Proceed towards Courtney's thatched pub. On the left you will see a single storey house with a porch. It was originally built by the Lucan Tramway company. Later it was the residence of headmaster of the local boys' school. Cross. Take an immediate left. Walk for approx 200 metres to **Most Hill House 1**. This guesthouse's grounds contain the remains of a 7th to 12th Century ring fort. The area is private property and is inaccessible to the public.

2 50 metres further on, past the entrance to the apartment block car park, you will see the remains of an old circular wall 2. These are the remains of an 18th century water mill which used a tributary of the Griffioen river as its power source. Make your way back towards Courtney's pub. To your left and immediately below, you will see the Griffioen River. The river rises in Saggart and enters the Liffey on the outskirts of Lucan Village.

3 Looking ahead, and slightly left behind a rubble wall as you walk towards the village, you will see a house with castellated parapets. This is **Griffioen Lodge 3**. Built around 1812, it was once the home of architect James Gandon.

4 You can see a related outbuilding in the same style (with cruciform windows) just behind Courtney's thatched pub. This was the last working forge in Lucan and was operational until the 1950s.

5 Head towards the pedestrian lights outside Courtney's and cross the road immediately ahead towards **Lucan Town Park (the Village Green) 4**. The entrance to this small park is at the corner. Go down the semi-circular set of stone steps.

6 Go back out of the park the same way you entered and immediately right along the wall of the park. At the telephone box look across the road towards an imposing grey limestone building with telecommunications masts to the rear. This is **Lucan Garda Station 5** built in 1810, it served as an RIC barracks until 1922 when the then armed Royal Irish Constabulary were replaced by the unarmed Garda Síochána. The building has been heavily refurbished over the years, most recently in the 1980s, but the façade remains relatively unscathed.

7 Continue walking along the wall over which can again be seen the Griffioen River. The river has great biodiversity. Look carefully in summer and you are likely to see trout, eels, herons and of course ducks which are resident all year round.

8 The **Vesey Arms pub 6**, across the road, is a fine example of Edwardian architecture. Named after a local nobleman the Rt. Hon. Agmondisham Vesey who allowed an inn on the site to bear his family crest. The inn provided food and refreshments for travellers en route to Galway, Sligo and the West.

9 Cross again to the wall alongside the Griffioen River and near the bridge the weir 8 will be revealed. The weir is a favourite haunt of the local heron.

10 To the side of the Vesey Arms is a laneway at the end of which is a locked gate. Through this gate are visible some of the oldest buildings in the village - **Sarsfield's Castle and ruin of the Church of the Blessed Virgin 7**.

11 Cross now to the far wall of the bridge. At the top of the leftmost part of the bridge will be seen a carved stone block carrying the inscription:
This bridge built by Agm Vesey for ye public in ye ye's 1773
Continue along the path veering left and you will see, as you walk, a circular bricked-up hole in the limestone rubble wall.

12 Continue onwards for 40m as far as a pair of large gates (built c.1775) in the wall on the left. This is the principal entrance to **Lucan Demesne 9**. There has been a church on this site since 1832. The one you see here dates from 1877.

13 Looking up from the weir you will see Lucan's redbrick **Methodist Church 9**. There has been a church on this site since 1832. The one you see here dates from 1877.

14 Behind these gates is **Lucan House 10**, the residence of the Italian Ambassador. It was built by Agmondisham Vesey who started the building in 1772. The house replaced **Lucan Castle (13th Century)** which once stood here.

15 Local lore has this as being a so-called "Famine Hole", used during the 1840s as a means for the residents of Lucan House to distribute alms to the local famine victims. However there is no historical evidence of it ever having been used for this purpose.

16 The Hill family built a row of houses at Mill Bank. These houses are still to be seen when approaching the village from the Strawberry Beds. Next to Hill's mills is the Shackleton mill. In 1860 Joseph Shackleton bought the corn mill and it milled flour right up to 1999. The Shackletons established a **Coffee House 15** which formerly closed off the vista at the end of the bridge on which you are standing where the new road to Laraghogue is now. Its purpose was to give the employees a means of refreshment which didn't involve them having to visit the pubs and taverns in the village. The coffee house was demolished in 1984. Head back towards the village (towards the Ulster Bank and mini-roundabout). Lucan's locally much-loved "Grove Cinema" (previously the "Premier Cinema") stood on the site of the Ulster Bank and apartment complex.

17 Instead of heading right towards the village, go left heading out of the village. 50 metres on, looking across the street in front of **Conrad's Coffee Shop**, you will see a cast iron water hydrant, c.1880, 16 with raised lion's head motif and acorn finial. This would have been an important piece of street furniture in its day as a meeting-place for locals to gather and discuss the news of the day.

18 Looking downstream you will see the **Chimney of Hill's Mills 14**. In 1863, Mr. William Strangman Hill bought the iron mill and set up a textile mill in its place. This factory continued making tweeds and other fabrics until 1988. At one time there were over 170 people working in the factory producing high quality cloth.

19 Continue along the newly-completed walkway along the Liffey's bank towards the Liffey Bridge. This bridge is the widest single-span stone arch in the country. Proceed up the metal stairs at the end and head across to the centre of the bridge. This bridge was built in 1814. Look upstream from here and at the left you will see a car park with silver metal railings at the end. This car park is situated on an old road which ran through Lucan centuries ago. If you look carefully below the railings you can make out a small portion of an archway. This is all that remains of the former **Coldslow bridge** dating back to 1765.

20 Twelve paces along the road from the school there is an alleyway which leads to the **Liffey Weir 13**. Head down the alleyway.

21 Over the weir can be seen a terrace of redbrick houses aptly called **Weir View cottages**. These were built for employees of Hill's Mills which is covered later in this walk.

22 Continue along the newly completed walkway along the Liffey's bank towards the Liffey Bridge.

23 **St. Andrew's Church 12**. Built in 1823 in the Gothic Revival style, the church is reputed to have been based on a design by James Gandon who owned the land on which it is built.

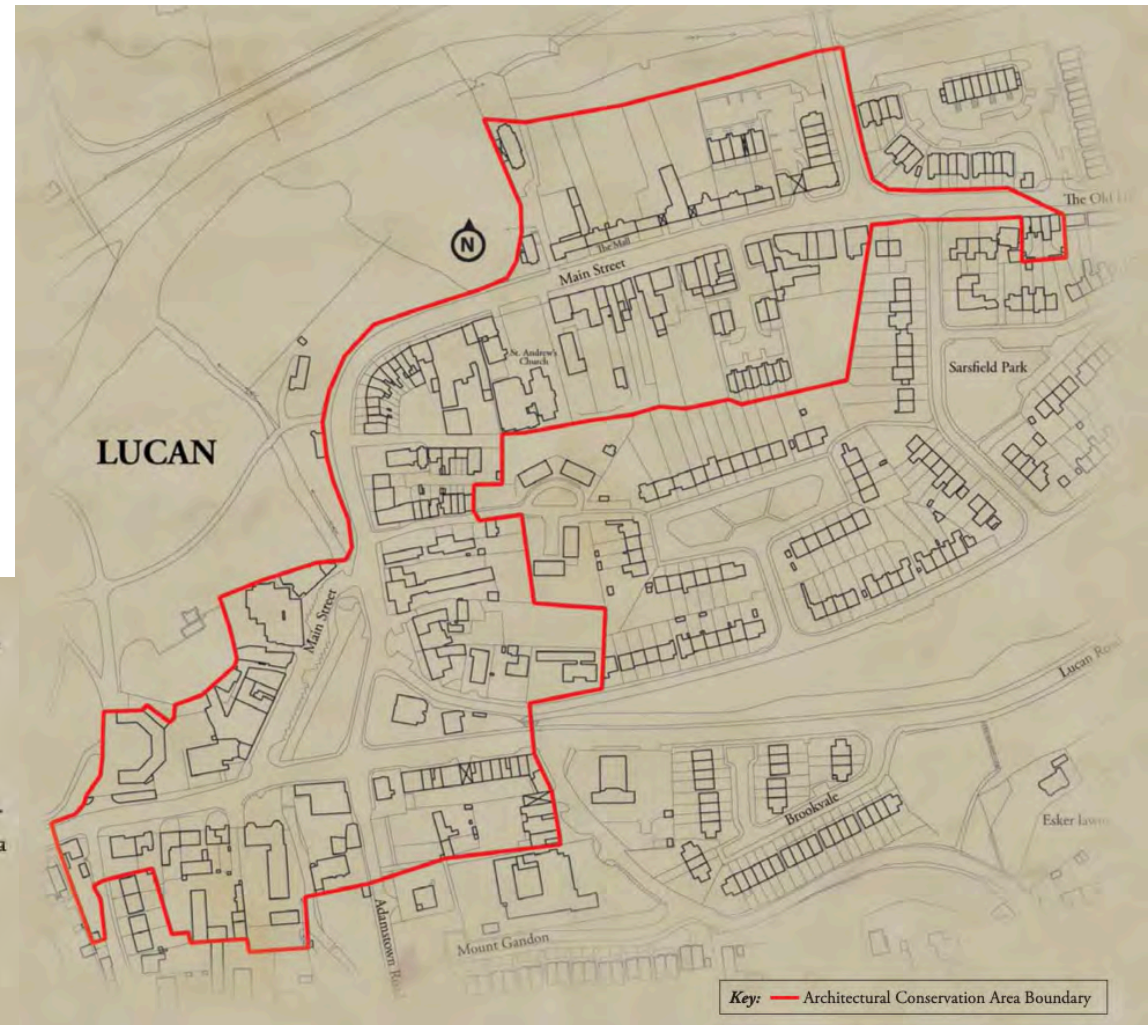
24 Continue walking in this direction and two interesting buildings present themselves. One, on the left, is **St Andrew's Lodge and Hall 11**. A circular plaque on the façade alludes to its original use "Lucan Parish School". It was built in 1827.

Camogie Centre
Allan Green Trees
South Dublin County Council

FIG. 6: THE ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA OF LUCAN

Finally, in reviewing Lucan’s built heritage it must also be mentioned that the architecture of the area is particularly important in establishing a sense of place for tourists and much of the Village is within an Architectural Conservation Area - as detailed in Fig. 6.

- Features which contribute to the character of an ACA include*
- A shared palette of materials including natural slate, limestone kerbing, rubble stone boundary walls, red and polychrome brick, render, terracotta, slate, timber sash windows, and cast-iron post boxes.
 - Volume or massing, plot size, boundary alignments and street-frontage alignment.
 - Repetitive patterns including chimneys, windows or door openings.
 - Streetscape, roofscape, views, and setting; for example the curve of a street, the pattern of roofs including shapes and heights, views towards public buildings and open spaces.
 - The layout and details of the village such as the village green, limestone paving, mature trees lining the streets, stone buildings and walls, and public buildings



2.4 Community and Stakeholder Feedback

In order to further inform the study and to provide the community with an opportunity to contribute to the evolving Plan, a consultation programme took place that included more than fifteen direct interviews with key stakeholders and an online survey for local businesses and the community. Anonymised notes and findings are provided in Appendix 4 and a summary of key points is presented below.

2.4.1 Stakeholder Feedback

- There is a general welcome for the development of Lucan for tourists, although there is some skepticism about the ability of agencies to address key barriers, especially those relating to traffic in the village and the water quality of the River Liffey.
- There is also a general realism about the task at hand, with acceptance that Lucan is not an 'easy sell' as a tourism destination.
- The business community is positively inclined towards opportunities to develop new and expanded experiences, with an openness towards being involved.
- The unique 'village green' nature of the core is regarded by many as Lucan's key asset.
- The public realm work at the three locations of the Weir, the Green and the Demesne is very welcome, although not everyone we spoke to understood what is involved.

- Many mentioned the Ambassador's Residence as a potential asset, along with the desire that an arrangement might be reached that would allow access.

2.4.2 Stakeholder Feedback

Due to the inability to hold public meetings in Lucan, an online survey was offered as a mechanism to promote awareness of the study and to invite feedback from local businesses and the community. The survey was actively promoted by SDCC and almost 500 respondents completed the survey - a significantly high number when compared to other studies of this nature and an indication of the level of interest in the project. Key points from the survey include the following.

- The vast majority of respondents (95%) are supportive of the proposal to develop Lucan for tourists. The few that say they aren't are primarily concerned that key constraints, such as traffic and the limited capacity of the village core, need to be addressed first before the town can begin to consider attracting tourists.
- In terms of community usage of assets, the parks are clearly the most popular. Over three-quarters of respondents visit St. Catherine's Park (77%) regularly, with a slightly lower - although still high - proportion (68%) visiting the Demesne. The difference in terms of popularity between the two appears to be attributable to the greater parking capacity and range of amenities in St. Catherine's.

- Despite the proximity to the river and the existence of regular water-based activities, three-quarters of respondents have never participated in a Liffey activity.
- Similarly, three-quarters of respondents have never been on or taken part in a guided heritage trail of the area.

The community had plenty to say, and more detailed and anonymised results are presented in Appendix 4.

3. SOURCE MARKETS

Lucan has the opportunity to draw tourists from a number of source markets - provided that the experience of the destination fits with their needs and it can differentiate itself in the marketplace.

The scale of this opportunity is broadly as follows.

- There is a total tourism market in Dublin of approximately 8.7m tourists, with a value of €2,601m (see Table 1). Of these, the overseas tourism markets offer the largest opportunity - although there is increasing evidence that it will take a number of years for these markets to recover following the impact of Covid19 and associated restrictions².
- Lucan has a local population of approx. 50,000, which is a valuable source of business for local operators and experiences, and there is a population of almost 2m in the Greater Dublin Area that has easy access to Lucan.
- Niche markets, such as activity and heritage enthusiasts, are difficult to quantify but can provide regular (domestic) and off-peak (domestic and overseas) business for experiences in Lucan that cater to their needs.

However, there are a number of challenges for Lucan in being able to realise these opportunities, not least of all the pattern of overseas tourism

TABLE 1: TOURISM MARKETS IN DUBLIN

Dublin		
Market	Numbers (000's)	Revenue (€m)
Britain	1,922	349
Mainland Europe	2,638	811
North America	1,554	696
Other Areas	531	355
All Overseas	6,644	2,210
Northern Ireland	283	95
Domestic	1,763	296

in Dublin - which favours the city centre due to the concentration there of services and experiences.

Table 2 overleaf gives a sense of where tourist flow is in Dublin currently, as gauged by attendance at visitor attractions. It shows the perennial popularity of heritage attractions for overseas tourists and the clustering of attractions in the city centre. More remote destinations - such as Howth and Dalkey - find it difficult to attract significant tourist numbers despite

² Recovery scenarios are presented in ITIC's 2022 Pre-Budget Submission, <https://www.itic.ie/RECOVERY/budget2022/#recoveryscenarios>

their attractive heritage assets and seaside locations. For example, Dalkey Heritage Centre attracts <34,000 tourists per annum.

TABLE 2: TOP VISITOR ATTRACTIONS IN DUBLIN

Selection of Relevant Visitor Attractions	Visitor Numbers 2019
Guinness Storehouse	1,700,000
Dublin Zoo	1,283,424
Book of Kells	1,144,410
National Gallery	761,469
St. Patrick’s Cathedral	628,000
IMMA	503,904
Dublin Castle	430,692
Farmleigh Estate	428,925
Kilmainham Gaol	404,824
Chester Beatty Library	371,384
Jameson Bow St. Distillery	360,000
EPIC	272,000
Christchurch Cathedral	260,000
National Museum – Collins Barracks	230,729
Phoenix Park Visitor Centre	209,024
Dublinia	188,546
Teelings Distillery	130,000
Little Museum of Dublin	118,000

In terms of the domestic and local markets, family attractions and parklands are always popular, providing opportunities for shared leisure and entertainment. Many historic houses in the Greater Dublin Area are popular due to the green spaces that surround them (e.g., Castletown House, Powerscourt) and the family destination of Fort Lucan attracts approx. 50,000 children per annum.

These factors point to a number of considerations in the development of destination Lucan:

- Lucan does not have a destination-level attractor that would put it ‘on the map’ for tourists;
- heritage alone is insufficient to draw overseas tourists away from the city centre;
- the proximity of a popular family attraction in the area may provide an opportunity to tap into the domestic family market;
- the green spaces around Lucan may also provide an opportunity to attract domestic tourists, and families in particular.

Given Lucan’s location outside the core city centre area, a further consideration is the extent to which tourists are willing to use public transport or have access to their own car. The following data from Fáilte Ireland shows that the majority of tourists do not use public transport - which means that Lucan will need to address this barrier through promotional and practical means.

- Most overseas tourists in Dublin walk as a means of getting around
- 22% of overseas tourists use a city bus

- 8% of overseas tourists use the Luas
- Domestic tourists, especially the family market, will use their own car

Finally, we also need to be aware of changing dynamics resulting from the Covid pandemic. There is evidence that many of the significant changes that have been seen in tourism over 2020/21 will cause longer shifts in consumer behaviour. The main changes that are relevant to Lucan are as follows:

- an increased focus on the outdoors for leisure, active pursuits and dining;
- an Increased short term dependency on the domestic market – which means a need to encourage fresh perspectives in a market that thinks it knows it all;
- an increased importance of day-long itineraries that will suit domestic families in Dublin or within driving distance of Dublin.

3.1 The Needs of Tourists

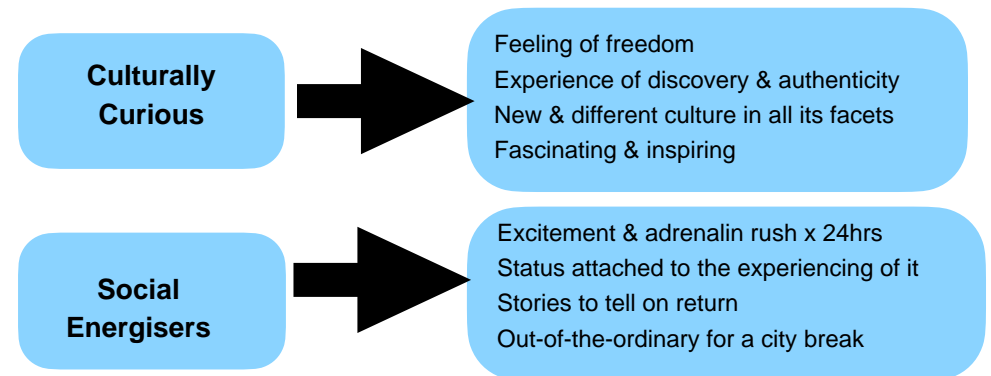
In order to develop an attractive tourism destination, the wider needs of tourists have to be addressed. The work of assessing these needs has already been undertaken by SDCC as part of its application to Fáilte Ireland for funding under the Tourism Destination Towns Initiative, but we consider it worth reiterating some key points.

3.1.1 Overseas Tourists

Three key consumer segments have been identified by tourism agencies in the overseas target markets of UK, France, Germany and USA. Two of these have relevance for Lucan as an urban destination: the older Culturally Curious segment which is motivated to travel primarily by heritage and culture, and the younger Social Energiser segment which has a particular interest in city breaks as they provide the focus for shared, fun-filled experiences.

The needs and motivations of these two segments are summarised in Fig. 7 overleaf and have to be taken into account in developing propositions and marketing communications for Lucan.

FIG. 7: KEY OVERSEAS TOURISM SEGMENTS FOR DUBLIN



Recent research into city break holidays³ also helps to inform the types of experiences that Lucan should offer by assisting us in better understanding what tourists want and expect. Figures 8 and 9⁴ illustrate what city breaks are about for tourists and what they expect from them in the future.

Clearly, while Lucan cannot deliver on all expectations, it has the potential to deliver on many, e.g. unstructured discovery, authenticity, contrasts, supporting local. It can also be guided by the insights in relation to the future to ensure it develops in a sustainable, technologically-relevant and pedestrian-friendly way.

FIG. 8: WHAT TOURISTS WANT FROM A CITY BREAK

Visiting urban spaces are about packing in experiences - the relaxation usually derives from the sheer volume of content rather than a slower pace.

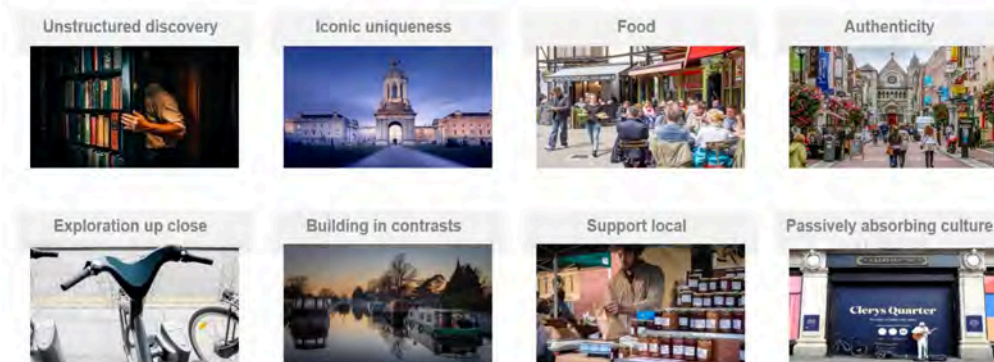
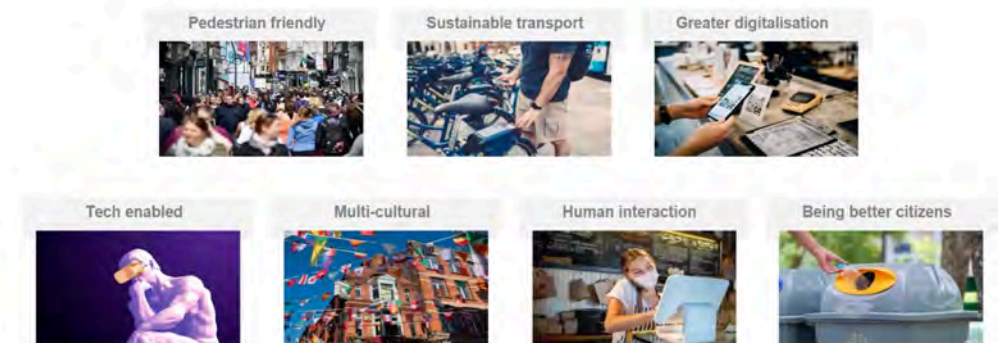


FIG. 9: WHAT TOURISTS THINK THEY WILL WANT FROM A CITY BREAK IN THE FUTURE



³ Fáilte Ireland

⁴ ibid.

3.1.2 Domestic Tourists

No formal segmentation analysis has been carried out by the tourism agencies in the domestic tourism market in recent years but the following segments are those we have identified within Ireland as offering the most opportunity for Lucan.

- Domestic families: primarily motivated by opportunities for shared experiences and focussed on products and services that cater specifically for children, both younger and teenage cohorts; they have a particular interest in outdoor and all-weather activities.
- Younger outdoor adventurers: this segment includes those that have a passion for a particular activity (e.g. kayaking) but also those with a more general interest in interesting and challenging outdoor activities; they are interested in pushing their limits and will be early adopters of new experiences.
- Older outdoor adventurers: this segment includes those that have a passion for a particular activity (e.g. kayaking) but also those with a more general interest in being active outdoor, e.g. walking, cycling, golf.
- Dublin weekend break tourists: couples and groups of friends who are looking for pleasant experiences that represent the best of what the city has to offer, including good food, evening entertainment, cultural experiences, leisure and retail.

As with the overseas tourism markets, there are specific challenges associated with realising the potential of the domestic market⁵, primarily that:

⁵ Fáilte Ireland

- the city is not front of mind as a tourism destination and requires specific promotion and 'bundling' in order to encourage the domestic market to consider it as such;
- there are narrow perceptions of what the city is and what it can offer, resulting in only a relatively small area of the city being used by domestic tourists;
- there is a perception that overseas tourists are being prioritised in the city, leading to an unwillingness to be a tourist in their own capital.

Lucan will need to challenge perceptions of what it is about - not only as a suburb of Dublin but as a town in its own right - if it is to attract domestic tourists.

4. GAP ANALYSIS AND KEY CONSTRAINTS

Having considered what is available in Lucan and what the market wants and needs, we now assess the destination's ability to deliver on the needs of the target audiences. Table 3 presents the conclusions of this assessment.

There are clearly gaps - most fundamentally in the range and number of activities and attractions in the area that would keep tourists occupied for a day or more. If Lucan is to develop as a tourism destination, it needs to be able to keep tourists occupied for a longer period of time than it currently can. These gaps are identified in Table 3 overleaf and will form the basis of the recommendations in the later sections of this Plan.

TABLE 3: LUCAN TOURISM GAP ANALYSIS

Primary audiences	What are their interests and needs?	How well does Lucan deliver currently?	Where are the gaps?
Overseas Culturally Curious	Unique culture & heritage; independent discovery; high quality dining and retail; soft adventure & walking	Interesting heritage sites although there is much competition in the wider Dublin area and much of the heritage that exists is not readily visible. Some good quality dining but limited evening offer and no other evening entertainment other than pubs. Good walking in the wider area but not always easy to connect with from the village centre. Retail offer is weak. Events/festivals programme is weak and there is no animation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wayfinding and interpretation strategy that will highlight and integrate the heritage and walks in the area. Improved evening offer. Improved retail offer. Animation and events strategy.
Overseas Social Energiser	City living; lots of experiences in a small area; faster paced activities; instagrammable experiences; shared fun	Lucan has little to offer this segment other than rafting. Events/festivals programme is weak and no animation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More fast-paced outdoor activities. Share-worthy experiences/sites Animation and events strategy.
Outdoor adventurers	Weekend breaks with activities; events; dining & retail; shared entertainment with friends/partner	Golf, walking and proximity of several popular hotels is a good fit for domestic weekend breaks, supported by Liffey Valley shopping centre. Evening offer is weak and lack of tram/rail link to city centre also weakens the opportunity to promote for domestic city breaks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved evening offer. Connectivity between key points such as hotels, city centre and shopping centre e.g. shuttle bus More outdoor and interesting activities in parks and on water, that are easily booked and suitable for casual users
Domestic Families	Shared fun with mixed ages; outdoor spaces; child-friendly dining; all-weather options	Good family indoor products and outdoor spaces in the wider area along with nearby hotels are a good fit for domestic family breaks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasise child-friendly dining More outdoor activities/activity infrastructure for families Transport between key points such as hotels, city centre and family experiences e.g. shuttle

In addition to the identified gaps, there are also constraints that would prevent Lucan from developing as a tourism destination which can meet the needs and expectations of tourists. While these are outside of the scope of this study, whose objective is to make recommendations with regard to tourism product development and marketing propositions, we have identified them as they are critical to the success of the project. These are identified in Table 4.

TABLE 4: CONSTRAINTS TO THE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT OF LUCAN

Constraints	Opportunities/Solutions
Traffic congestion	The ongoing wider projects to address public realm and traffic flow in the area
Carrying capacity of village green area	The Weir and parks provide a good opportunity to distribute tourists
Current associations with Lucan in the wider catchment area, e.g. housing estates, Liffey Valley Shopping Centre	The repositioning and redevelopment of Lucan as a tourism destination
Remote from Dublin’s main tourism hub and bus is the only public transport option; limited parking	Clearly communicate transport options for overseas tourists; provide dedicated visitor car park
Water quality	Considerable opportunity for casual and activity-based water use in the Village and Demesne if a combined Agency solution can be found to ensuring water quality is consistently of a sufficient standard to support increased marketing and utilisation

5. COMPARATOR REVIEW

A wide selection of comparators were identified during our study to help inform the direction of the project and to provide examples of good practice where they exist. Some of those that were reviewed⁶ provided useful references for specific aspects of destination development, such as examples of new experiences or innovative approaches to infrastructure and experience development. Others provided more general examples of how a suburban area can develop as a tourism destination in its own right.

Of this latter group, two were selected for more in-depth analysis - **Østerbro** in Copenhagen and **Enfield and Lee Valley Park** in the UK. This final selection was based on a number of key criteria, including:

- their proximity to a significant city destination, in order to review how they managed to differentiate themselves;
- comparable population sizes;
- similarity of basic assets, to establish how these assets have been used;
- sustainable development, that ensures the needs of residents is respected and that tourism does not over-power the destination.

In the following pages of this section, we present an overview of key learnings from these two comparators. Additional relevant and interesting examples of innovation and good practice from other comparators that

⁶ Please note that due to travel restrictions and budget constraints, the comparator review was undertaken based on previous knowledge and desk research only.

were part of the review are presented in Appendix 5 and also integrated into the presentation of proposed themes in Section 7.

5.1 Østerbro: Key Learnings for Lucan

Østerbro in Copenhagen, Denmark, is a family-friendly haven with many green and waterside spaces and it sets a useful precedent for how Lucan might develop in a number of relevant ways. The key learnings are summarised below, and further illustrated in the following pages.

- (i) Østerbro is promoted as a neighbourhood within the wider city offering. The Copenhagen tourism agency (Wonderful Copenhagen) - as is the case with many larger cities now - promotes distinct areas of the city as tourism experiences in their own right. Each is promoted as having a different personality, although still having similarities to the other neighbourhoods. Østerbro is one of three Copenhagen 'bro' neighbourhoods and it still retains much of Copenhagen's classic architecture. However, it is differentiated on the basis of its green spaces and family-friendly vibe.
 - **With the possibility of Dublin also developing distinct neighbourhoods as tourism 'offerings', Lucan has the potential to develop as an area that can be differentiated on the basis of its greenness and ability to cater for families.**
- (ii) There has been a focus on integrating resident and tourism needs. It was selected as the first city neighbourhood where the tourism agency worked with local players to ensure that tourism supports residents'

needs/wishes in creating an area that is more attractive for both locals and tourists.

- **Given that Lucan is at the early stages of tourism development, it has the opportunity to integrate the local population from the start, building towards the delivery of a tourism 'experience' that is embedded within the fabric of the community.**

(iii) There is a focus on outdoor experiences in an urban setting. Østerbro is considered the greenest of the city's neighbourhoods, with plenty of green spaces and direct access to water. There has been ongoing focus and investment by the city council on creating attractive green and blue spaces that are differentiated from each other and have infrastructure and amenities that can be used by a variety of audiences.

- **By anchoring the longterm vision of creating a destination that is differentiated by its natural spaces (water and land), Lucan can gradually build towards a similar ambition of creating diverse and attractive green and blue spaces for use by all.**

(iv) There is a focus on catering for families. Østerbro is quieter than other neighbourhoods and is highly family-friendly, with amenities, activities and dining that cater for families (in addition to other tourists).

- **While city neighbourhoods are often based on 'buzz', there is still scope for the development of an urban destination that is less frenetic, catering to tourists that have other needs and interests.**

(v) It is an established 'climate district'. The area has been adopted by the city council to ground a vision of blue green climate adaptation in a city that already emphasises 'nature on the doorstep'. In addition to the usual amenities and biodiversity, some of Østerbro's public spaces feature rainwater management systems, and urban farms are encouraged.

- **Although the possibility of Lucan developing as a full climate district might be a step too far at this stage, it still has an opportunity to pilot or showcase a number of climate adaptation approaches as it plans its development.**

The following pages (Fig. 10) provide some sample illustrations from our review of Østerbro.

FIG. 10: EXAMPLES OF SPACES AND EXPERIENCES IN ØSTERBRO (SEE ALSO FOLLOWING PAGE)

Differentiated green spaces with a wide variety of amenities and a focus on climate adaptation.



This large park offers a good variety of infrastructure: sportsgrounds, skate park, dance pavilion, outdoor chess park, playgrounds, etc. It is much used by residents and tourists alike.



This smaller park is part of the climate district project and has a rainwater harvesting and filtration system. It takes wild elements from nature and incorporates them into city living.

Development of waterside areas for leisure and recreation.



Lakes stretch for three kilometres from Østerbro to other neighbourhoods, and are surrounded by walks, grassy areas and bike trails. There are cafés, and boats can be hired.



The 'Little Beach' is a man-made beach created near the harbour in 2010 to make better use of the water side as an amenity area



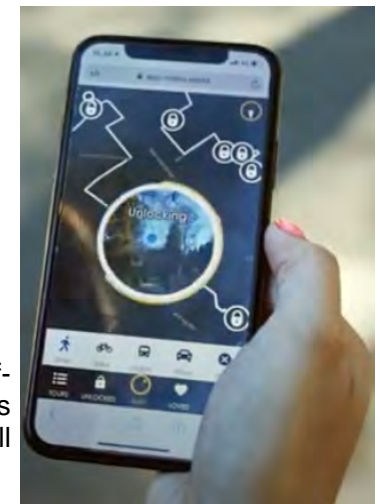
There are many indoor and outdoor markets in Copenhagen, each with their own focus. The Østerbro flea market takes place outdoors from May to September in an easily-accessible location near public transport.



There is ongoing investment in product, one example of which is the new ice rink shown above.



The variety of outdoor spaces are used continually for a wide variety of purposes, such as the dance class shown here.



The 'Know your bro' self-guided walking tour is suitable for locals as well as tourists

5.2 Enfield & Lee Valley Park: Key Learnings for Lucan

One of thirty-five major centres in the Greater London Area, Enfield was originally a market town and a tram terminus, and it retains much of its heritage character and many fine buildings today. However, it is probably better known due to its proximity to the large Lee Valley Regional Park (LVRP) and the range of infrastructure available there. Together, Enfield town and LVRP provide useful examples of how green spaces and a nearby town can work together as well as a salutary lesson in how one can over-shadow the other.

(i) In tourism terms, Enfield is promoted as the 'greenest borough in London', with 40% of the borough designated as green belt. It is known for its proximity to a variety of activities and natural amenity areas - 120 parks and opens spaces in all, including part of the LVRP.

➤ **Given the proximity of a variety of green spaces surrounding and cutting through it, Lucan has the opportunity to promote itself as the 'greenest' neighbourhood in Dublin - particularly if it takes steps to further green the Village.**

(ii) LVRP⁷ itself is a mosaic of diverse spaces, including: heritage sites, country parks, farms, golf courses, trails, campsites, marinas, angling and boating locations. It is a linear park of about 26 miles that attracts

approx. 8 million tourists a year and is continuing to develop new experiences and lands.

➤ **Although without anything of the scale of LVRP, the model it offers of a variety of spaces differentiated on the basis of geography, character, infrastructure and amenities is one that Lucan could adapt for its parks and greens spaces if it takes an holistic perspective.**

(iii) Given the significant scale of Lee Valley Park, and the variety of activities and amenities there, there is little reason for tourists to go to Enfield town itself.

➤ **The experience of Enfield - an attractive heritage market town with a good variety of tourism-relevant product - provides a caution for Lucan, illustrating the need for it to ensure the village itself is firmly integrated into future development of the parks surrounding it as well as into the wider Dublin area.**

(iv) As Enfield itself does not have a major tourism market, it focusses on developing experiences that appeal as much to the community as to tourists and also attracts the wider catchment population and daytrippers. The town has an attractive, year-round, programme of events and a vibrant cultural scene. As a market town, it also

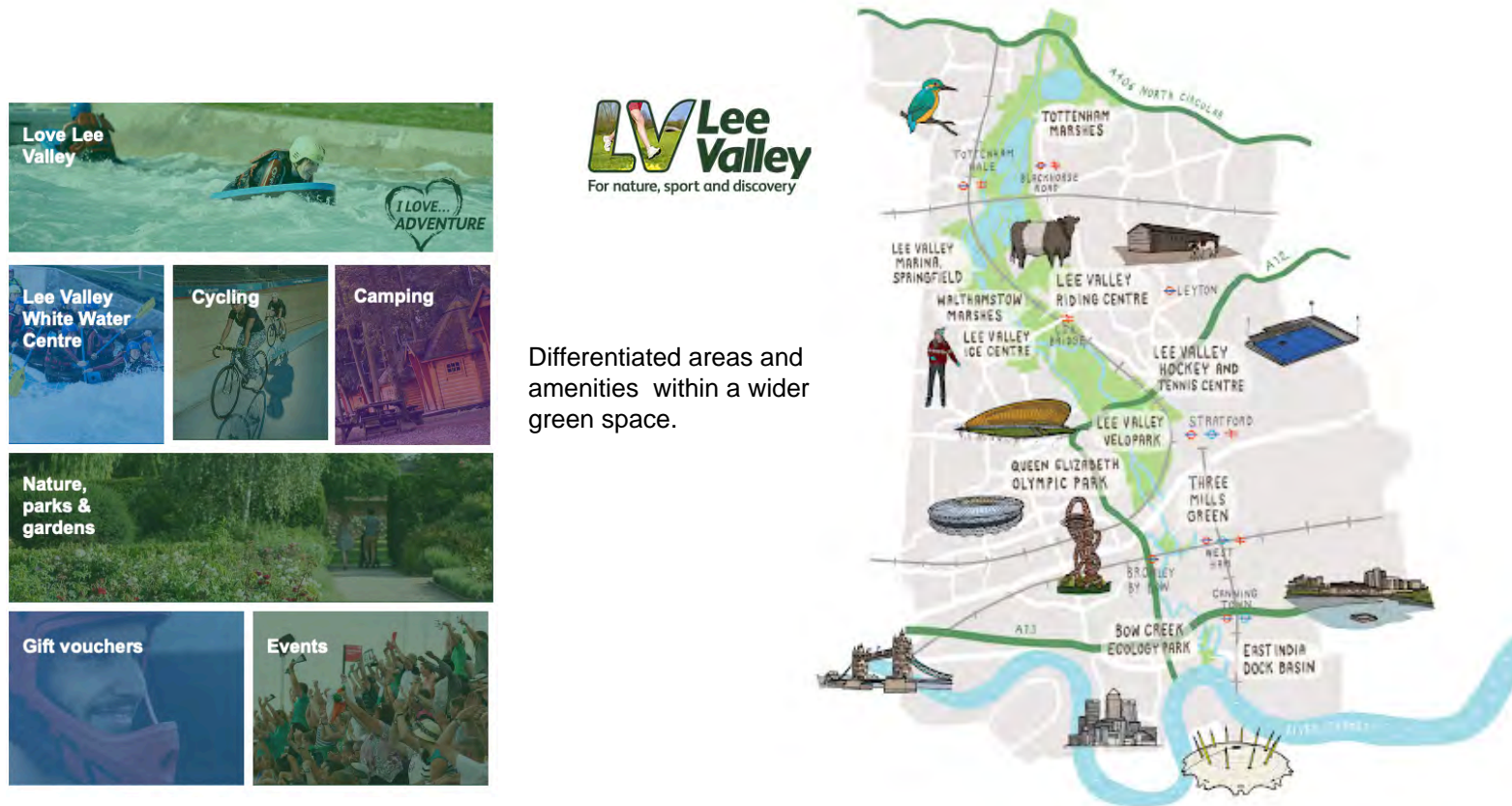
⁷ Over the last half century, Lee Valley Regional Park Authority, with partners, has transformed rubbish dumps, industrial sites, gravel pits and scrap yards into a significant natural area. Its approach is to "be community focused and commercially driven, to work with partners to provide a unique combination of activities, sights and experiences." Some of the regeneration took place in the context of infrastructure provision for the 2012 Olympics.

continues to host a market several days a week, which draws people into the centre of the town and creates a vibrant atmosphere.

- **In order to develop as a sustainable tourism destination, this approach - which addresses the needs of both locals and visitors simultaneously - would also serve Lucan well.**

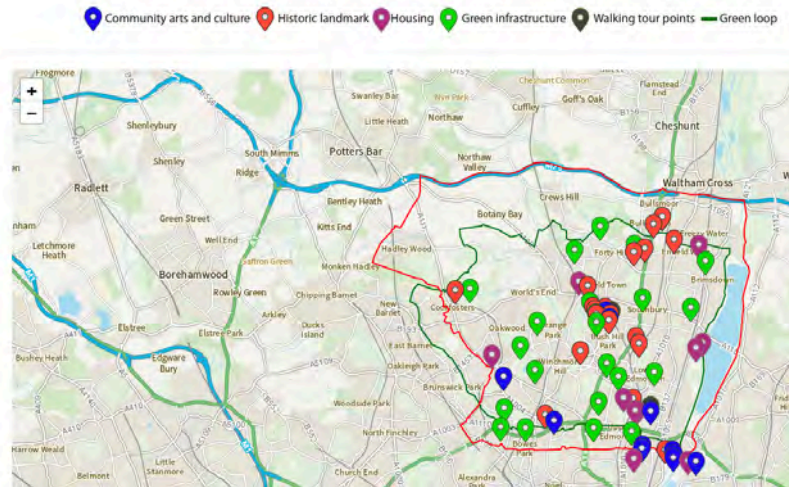
Fig. 11 provides some sample illustrations from Enfield and Lee Valley Regional Park.

FIG. 11: EXAMPLES OF SPACES AND EXPERIENCES IN LEE VALLEY PARK AND ENFIELD
(See also following pages)



Differentiated areas and amenities within a wider green space.

Experiences in Enfield that appeal to both locals and tourists.



The London Festival of Architecture by Enfield Council developed an interactive self-guided tour of placemaking projects by the Council and partners. The tour highlighted stories, history, heritage as well as future plans for sites.

The thrice-weekly outdoor market builds on the history of the town as a market (dating back to 1303). The co-ordinated approach taken to the market creates a visually appealing event.



A regular programme of outdoor and indoor events in Enfield that appeals to locals and tourists.

	<p>Broomfield Bowl Blues Sun, 01 Aug Broomfiel...</p>	<p>Nightingale Birthday... Sat, 21 Aug Anywhere</p>	<p>Palmers Green Food Festival Sat, 21 Aug Broomfield...</p>	<p>Elrow Town London 2021 Sat, 21 Aug Trent Park</p>	<p>Romeo and Juliet</p>
	<p>Music On The Lawn Sun, 22 Aug Forty Hall...</p>	<p>The Great Gatsby Tue, 24 Aug Forty Hall</p>	<p>Grange Park Horticultur... Sat, 04 Sep St Paul's C...</p>	<p>Mr Stink Sat, 04 Sep Broomfiel...</p>	<p>The Fancy Fair 2021</p>

6. STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND PROPOSITION

Based on our review as well as on stakeholder and community feedback, it is evident that Lucan's strengths lie with nature (landscape, water, biodiversity) and heritage. In addition, these elements also appeal to some of Ireland's main tourism segments - particularly the overseas Culturally Curious segment, and the domestic family and outdoor adventure markets. The challenge, however, is to harness these assets in a way that provides a USP for Lucan.

The majority of Dublin's neighbourhoods are steeped in heritage assets and, notwithstanding some of Lucan's unique stories, tourists have no need to venture beyond the city centre in order to experience heritage and interesting historical stories. Furthermore, if tourists are seeking green spaces and natural surroundings, these are better discovered beyond the city - and even the city itself provides an attractive selection, e.g. the Phoenix Park, the Dublin coastline.

However, there is potential to redevelop the symbiotic relationship of nature, built heritage and people that has been historically fundamental to Lucan. As a village, it developed as a pleasure ground and an industrial hub based on its location on the outskirts of a city and on the banks of a river. As a spa, its reputation was founded on it being a place for city dwellers to take the waters and in which the weary (but rich) could unwind in the healing and invigorating presence of nature. As an industrial hub, it derived its importance from the Liffey waters that powered the mills and the greens that provided ample space for bleaching linen.

In this context, we propose that there is potential to re-establish Lucan's historic reputation as:

“an historic village that is the gateway to a natural playground - within easy reach of the city, where Dubliners and tourists alike come to be active, renew and reconnect”

This is the recommended proposition for Lucan as a tourism destination.

However, Lucan is starting from a base of having barely any level of tourism in the town itself and therefore a gradual approach will serve it best. It will need to address key constraints and develop a coordinated approach with local businesses and the community as well as increase the availability of products and experiences. It is not in a position yet to promote itself as a tourism destination.

From a strategic perspective, the recommended interventions that form the outcome of this Plan - from Section 7 onwards - can be considered as part of a broader journey in the development of Destination Lucan. This journey is illustrated in Fig. 12, with each step building on the previous one.



While some progress can be made by partially addressing each stage of the strategic journey, the full potential of the destination will only be achieved by fully resolving the challenges at each step. For example, a failure to address the dominance of traffic in the town and to create a welcoming environment will deter tourists from visiting.

7. MARKETING THEMES AND BRANDS

7.1 Introduction to the Supporting Marketing Themes

An historic village that is gateway to a natural playground, within easy reach of the city, where Dubliners and tourists alike come to be active, to renew and to reconnect.

This overarching proposition for Lucan carries within it several promises for tourists and several challenges for those developing and marketing the destination, as well as those delivering experiences. These can be summarised as follows.

- The promise of an historic village carries the expectation of an attractive village environment with heritage assets - a place that is compact and photo-worthy, a place for a pleasant stroll but perhaps somewhere you might not spend much time in unless there is something going on.
- The term 'Gateway' implies that you can step easily through it into another world - a world that is somehow symbiotically connected with the village. There is an expectation that the village is a transient place through which a visitor would pass in order to get somewhere different.
- The promise of a 'natural playground' suggests there is plenty to do, that the area carries a sense of fun but also an element of wild nature. It suggests the freedom of childhood, of tree and rock climbing, of seasonal changes and fresh discoveries.

- 'Within easy reach of the city' implies that Lucan is both easy to get to but also outside of the city - it suggests good transport links (whether road/rail/trail) and easy parking as well as a sense of escaping the city limits.
- 'Be active, renew and reconnect' suggests that there is plenty to do, but also that there are spaces to relax, kick-back, slow down - alone and in company.

The proposition and its implicit promises can be supported through two marketing themes. These themes have emerged from research and consultation as having the best potential⁸ to create standout in the marketplace while also providing authentic opportunities for existing and future trade partnerships.

- Lucan: **Gateway to Dublin's Natural Playground.** A gateway is, by definition, a threshold one crosses. Lucan Village, due to its size, is unsuited to development as a major hub but has the potential to be an arrival/departure point for tourists, where they can orient themselves and avail of a range of services as a support to their hours of 'play' in the surrounding natural environment.
- Lucan: **Dublin's Village Green.** This gives a more differentiated expression to the 'historic village' of the proposition by building on local pride in Lucan's village atmosphere and the presence of a 'green' around which the heart of the village has developed. It is a theme that the local community and businesses can connect with. It

⁸ A number of other themes were initially considered but were not progressed further as they had various disadvantages, including lack of uniqueness and likelihood of not being sufficiently motivating for tourists.

is also a theme that is readily understood and appreciated by overseas tourists, with its association with history, heritage and authenticity.

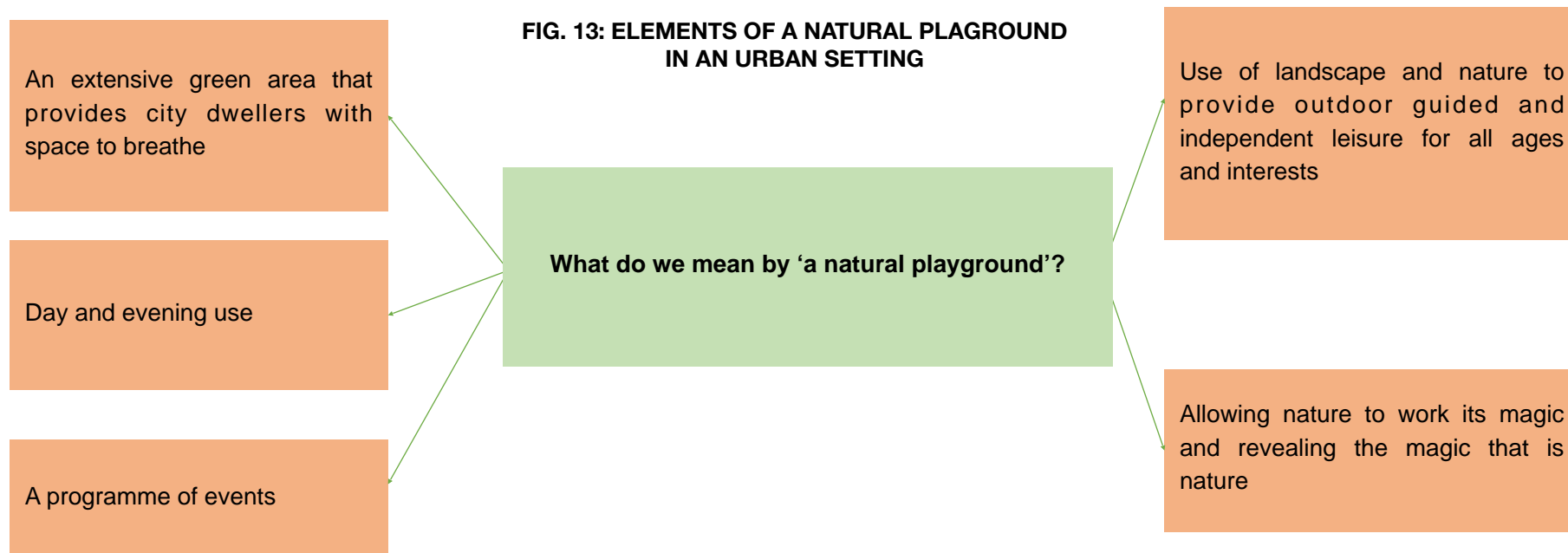
Over the following pages of Section 7.1, we will take a closer look at what is required to bring these themes to life in Lucan in a way that will make them suitable for marketing. Associated sample promotional text is provided in Appendix 6.

7.2 Gateway to a Natural Playground

7.2.1 A Closer Look

The theme of Lucan as the Gateway to a Natural Playground builds on its strengths in natural heritage, green spaces and rivers. It uses as its foundation the history of the area as the playground of wealthy city-dwellers and creates an integrated and inter-connected variety of attractive green and blue spaces that have Lucan village as their core - see Fig. 13.

Crucial to the full expression of the theme is the development of an activity strategy for the wider area that has the participation of activity providers, as well as the provision of amenities and infrastructure - see examples in Fig. 15. Essential, too, is attention to the sustainability and preservation of the natural environment. The current public realm plan provides an opportunity to review the development of the space by the Weir in the context of providing additional waterside spaces and on-water experiences, and to consider what is required at the entrance to the Demesne.



Under this theme, Lucan Village plays a supporting role to the wider destination through which the majority of tourism experiences are delivered. As the ‘gateway’, the Village provides a wide range of services and facilities that enable tourists to engage fully with the natural amenities in the surrounding green and blue spaces.

These include services/facilities that relate directly to the activities on offer in the natural environment, as well as those that would encourage greater dwell time and spend, such as dining, retail and a pleasant village environment. The most important of these are identified in Fig. 14 below.

FIG. 14: ELEMENTS OF A GATEWAY EXPERIENCE

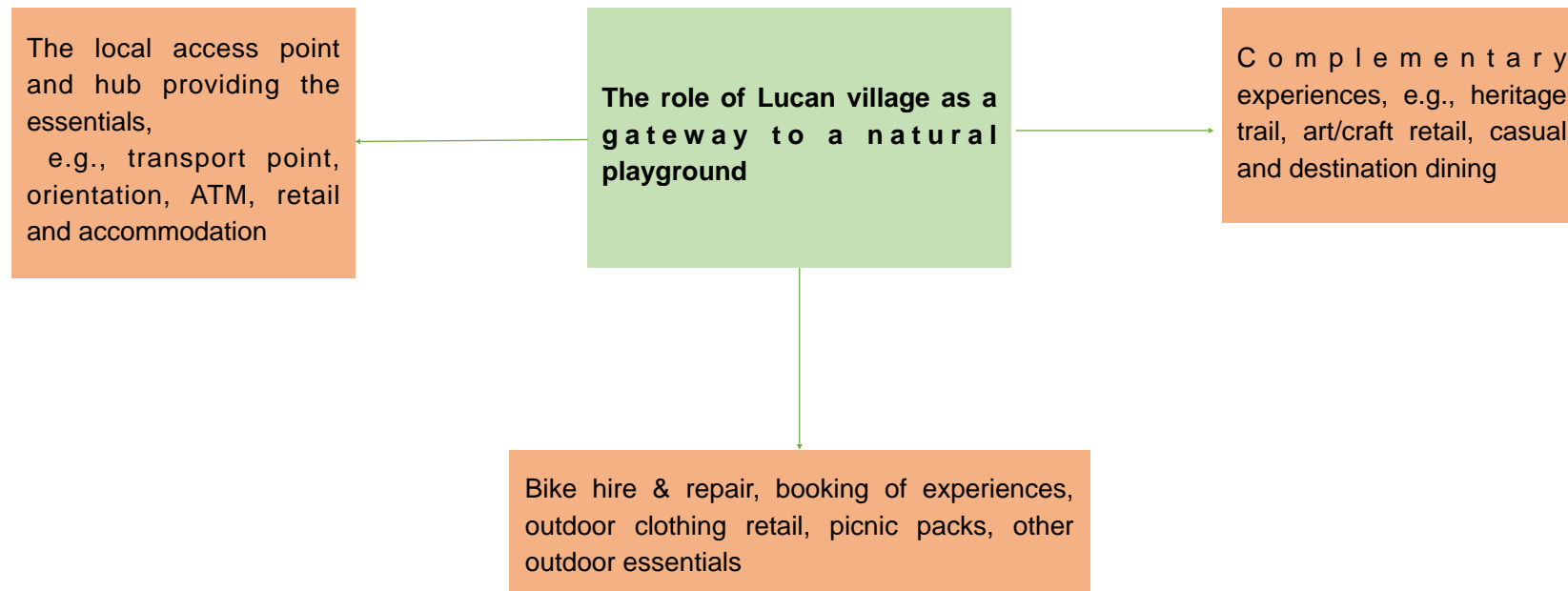


FIG. 15: A NATURAL PLAYGROUND IN AN URBAN AREA



A city playground offers plenty to do and a sense of fun and discovery for all ages, stages and interests - by day and night



7.2.2 What is Required

Giving expression to this theme requires attention to a number of factors, including :

- the integrated development of Lucan's parks and water as locations for a wide range of outdoor experiences;
- the provision of additional activities and experiences through private operators;
- the availability of supporting services, facilities and experiences in Lucan village;
- development of the relationship between urban living and nature in order to further integrate the natural features of the destination into the town.

In the short term, this can be brought to life through:

- an outdoor activity and animation strategy for the area that includes the Demesne and other parks;
- adequate access to, and infrastructure near, the parks and water;
- public realm and wayfinding to link the village to the Weir and the Demesne;
- improved interpretation of heritage assets to provide context and support orientation;
- support for activity, food & beverage, and cultural events operators to provided products and experiences within the parks.

7.2.3 The Business Opportunity

Business opportunities and opportunities for saleable experiences associated with this theme include the following.

- Provision of a variety of water-based activities on the Liffey, both independent and led e.g. kayak and eco-boat hire, lessons, rafting trips
- Ticketed events, including markets, pop-up retail and food experiences, and educational and leisure experiences - day and night
- Family activities
- Leisure and activity equipment hire, e.g. bikes, scooters, kayaks, sun loungers
- Provision of food & beverage experiences - casual and evening/high-end pop-up

7.3 The Village Green

7.3.1 A Closer Look

The 'village green' theme builds on Lucan's strength as an historic village with authentic character. It takes as its foundation the core elements of an attractive village green (ref. Fig. 16) and develops them in a number of directions to provide a public space that provides a year-round programme of events for a wide variety of interests and ages.

Crucial to the expression of this theme is the basic infrastructure of a flexible community space in the heart of the village that can act as the 'village green' and become the heart of a year-round animation programme - see examples in Fig. 17 and Fig. 18. However, the 'village green' theme does not relate purely to the physical space at the centre of the village. It also relates to the development of the area as a whole through the integration of a variety of other community and heritage spaces in order not to overwhelm the small village core. The current public realm programme, part of which is redevelopment the village green, provides an opportunity for the grounding of this theme.

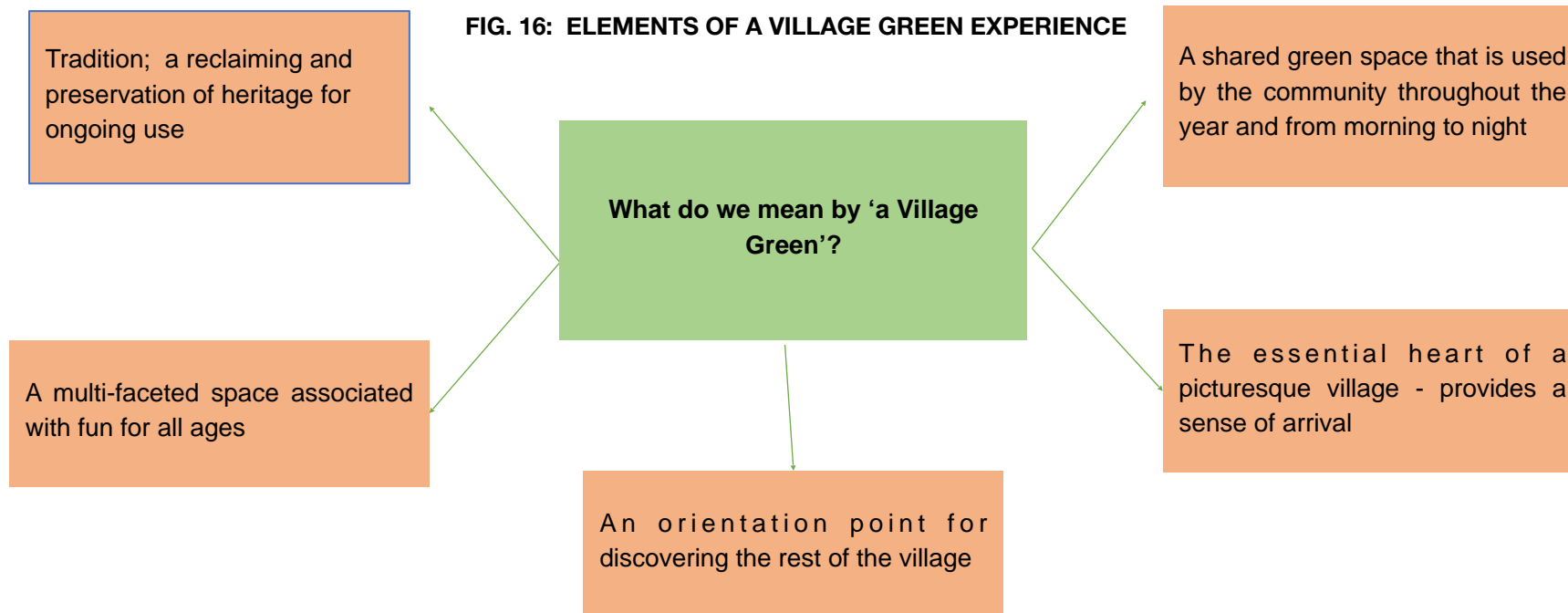


FIG. 17: THE VILLAGE GREEN - A TRADITIONAL APPROACH



Expansion of annual festival into an annual programme of events



Tap into history: a tram in the Green as a summer orientation point or take-away café

Develop a reputation for the Village Green as a place where things happen



Attention to village presentation



Simple, 'pop-up' approach to events/ retail

FIG. 18: THE VILLAGE GREEN - A MODERN APPROACH



Pop-up park



Green by name and green by nature: Integration of eco-friendly approaches, e.g. shelter used for solar energy collection, planting and drainage for rainwater harvesting

Permanent infrastructure that facilitates pop-up and transient experiences



Shelter - permanent or temporary - to provide for all weather



Day-into-night & year round use



7.3.2 What is Required

Giving expression to this theme requires two key drivers:

- the development of the central green area in the village as a space that is suitable for animated year-round Village Green experiences,
- supported by dining, retail, heritage and activities in the immediate and wider area including the parks.

In the short term, it can be brought to life through:

- an animation/events strategy that hinges on the village core but spreads to the parks;
- partnerships with operators who will provide events, animation, guided walks and other experiences with a 'village green' community feel;
- a coordinated approach to the presentation of the village, with Tidy Towns and local businesses;
- the integration of the concept and its requirements with existing public realm development;
- improved access to, and interpretation of, the local heritage (representing particularly the medieval, Victorian and industrial periods of Lucan's history).

7.3.3 The Business Opportunity

Business opportunities and opportunities for saleable experiences associated with this theme include the following.

- Ticketed events on the Green, at the Weir and in the parks, including markets, pop-up retail, and food, educational and leisure experiences

- Tours and activities beginning in the village e.g. various themed guided walking and cycling tours, kayaking and rafting from the Weir Park
- Bike hire
- Increased food, beverage and retail around the Village Green
- Delivery of integrated transport to/from city centre, hotels and train station
- Provision of small-scale accommodation in the village, e.g. repurposing/redevelopment of derelict and underutilised heritage buildings as Airbnb-style accommodation.

7.4 Tourism Brand Dublin

The tourism brand for Dublin, *Surprising by Nature*, promotes the city as a “vibrant capital city bursting with a variety of surprising experiences – where city living thrives side by side with the natural outdoors”. Lucan has the potential to be a good fit with the essence of this brand: vibrant urban living and the natural outdoors. Table 5 details specific areas of ‘fit’ and ways in which the two themes can be brought to life.



TABLE 5: ALIGNMENT OF PROPOSED LUCAN PROPOSITION WITH DUBLIN TOURISM BRAND

Key Points for Dublin Experiences*	Examples* (*text from Fáilte Ireland guidance on developing Dublin experiences)	Alignment between Dublin Brand and Proposed Lucan Proposition and Themes
Local, authentic experiences	Artisan shops, pop-up food/coffee trucks in untapped neighbourhoods	Fits well with village green ability to deliver community-led and pop-up experiences; also ability to deliver pop-up experiences in the parks
Leverage Dublin’s uniqueness	Urban space married with coastal towns and mountain trails	Urban living alongside natural riverside areas and parks fits well here
Hero the water and parks	Bay cruises, sea safari, kayaking, waterway walks, dining by the water, overnight boat trips, park yoga	Excellent fit with the overarching proposition and the ‘natural playground’ theme
Moments of magic	Street theatre, live music, buskers, outdoor gigs, theatre by the waterfront, movies on rooftops	Fits with the creation of a strategic approach to animation in the village and parks
Luxury experiences	Treat stays, spa visits, rooftop/viewing observations, fine dining	Limited fit; best opportunities lie with development of high-end evening dining and with high-quality accommodation in the wider area

7.5 South Dublin Tourism Brand

South Dublin's brand - *Let the adventure begin: Dublin's Outdoors* - identifies the outdoors as the County's primary USP and celebrates its rivers, mountains and parks. Lucan, with a geographical position along the historic River Liffey and at the threshold of the urban and rural divide, is a perfect fit to give expression to the brand - as outlined in Table 6. Furthermore, there are a few opportunities that it can exploit in order to differentiate itself from other towns and villages in South Dublin.



TABLE 6: 'FIT' WITH SOUTH DUBLIN TOURISM BRAND AND POINTS OF DIFFERENTIATION

Key Points of Fit	Opportunities for Differentiation
Focus on the outdoors	The integration of nature within the village; delivery of an activity and animation strategy for the parks; co-ordinated approach with operators
Celebrates rivers, mountains and parks	Integrated approach to the use of the two rivers, the spaces around them and the three parks within the area
Nature at your fingertips	Facilitating a wide variety of nature-based activities and leisure experiences within an urban area
Discovery: stories, places and treasures	Revealing hidden Lucan heritage assets, large and small; unique village green heritage

8. RECOMMENDED INTERVENTIONS

Fundamental to the development of Destination Lucan and its ability to successfully promote itself is the need to address a number of critical areas. Some of these are already in progress, while others are beyond the scope of this Plan but nevertheless need to be mentioned.

In summary, these areas are as follows.

- **Coordination of approach:** tourism development and delivery requires local cooperation between agencies, businesses and community
- **An emphasis on the built heritage** of the area as a foundation: there should be attention given to the revealing and interpreting of the many elements of heritage and history, large and small, that run through the area
- **The protection and integration of natural heritage**
- **Further attention to presentation of the Village**
- Support for development of the **evening economy**
- **Integration of the Village with the riverside and parks** through public realm and wayfinding
- **Creation of a more pedestrian/cyclist friendly environment**, including addressing traffic issues and provision of adequate visitor parking
- **Ensuring water quality⁹ is consistently suitable** for watersports and, in the longer term, for bathing.

Table 7 presents more detail on the areas where intervention is required along with associated recommendations. Priority actions are outlined separately in a Roadmap in Appendix 1.

⁹ In addition to concerns raised through the consultation process in relation to poor water quality in the Liffey, there is also evidence elsewhere that the water may not be of sufficient quality to support an expansion of water-based activities, e.g. the EPA's *Water Quality 2020* report identifies the Liffey has having elevated nitrate and phosphate concentrations, although as the river is not considered bathing water it is not monitored for bathing quality. Media and other various bodies have also picked up the issue at various times e.g. <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/environment/liffey-s-poor-water-quality-raises-concerns-over-blueway-plans-1.3193506> , <https://dcuwater.ie/2019/08/13/liffey-swim-run-despite-poor-water-quality/>

TABLE 7: RECOMMENDED INTERVENTIONS

Key Areas for Intervention	Commentary	Specific Recommendations
Co-ordination of approach	To develop the area as a destination town requires a co-ordinated approach between tourism providers, the Chamber of Commerce, businesses and community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a cross-sector group that will work with South Dublin Co. Co. in developing and delivering the ambitions of this study and the wider Destination Towns plan. This could follow the model of the broadly-focussed Liberties Business Area Improvement Initiative or the tourism-focussed Kilkenny Welcome Team. • A co-ordinated approach is also required to the overall presentation of the town, including derelict sites and unused buildings, and to the development of the evening economy.
Expansion of available product	There is currently not enough to do in and around Lucan village itself to keep tourists there for any length of time nor is there a focus for tourism activity - which are essential components of a tourism destination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with activity providers and park management to develop an activity strategy that encompasses all three parks (esp. the Demesne) as well as the village (as a hub). Ensure blocks to activity provision are identified and addressed as part of the process. Strategy should maximise the parks as leisure, activity and entertainment zones year round and day/evening. Ensure integration with animation strategy below. • Provide facilities for water activities in the Demesne, possibly at the weir or close by, and secure parking for cyclists at key points. Review opportunities for casual water use, i.e. activity not associated with groups or clubs. • Opportunity for private redevelopment of derelict/under-used heritage buildings as commercial Airbnb-type accommodation.
Animation	Animation encourages first time and repeat visits, creates vibrant destinations, integrates community with tourists and provides more to do/see	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with arts/culture/soft activity organisations, space owners/managers (e.g. historic and public sites), market operators, f&b providers, etc., to develop a year-round animation strategy that will encompass the Village Green, Weir and parks. Review procedures for licensing outdoor events with a view to simplifying the process and removing barriers. Ensure integration with activity strategy above.

Key Areas for Intervention (cont.)	Commentary	Specific Recommendations
Orientation and information	As a tourist destination and hub, there needs to be a point of orientation and information for tourists arriving in the village.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review options and identify best solution for seasonal and year-round provision of tourist information, including detailed walking trails. The long-term solution will act as a hub for booking activities, a starting point for guided tours, offer public toilets and possibly act as a 'shop window' for local artists and creatives.
Built heritage	Lucan has a strong built heritage character which contributes to its attractiveness - but much of it is either invisible to the uneducated eye, inaccessible or in need of interpretation. There should be a strong emphasis on revealing and interpreting the many elements of heritage and history, large and small, that run through the area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with local historical groups, Tidy Towns and other key stakeholders to devise a plan for the regular opening, care and interpretation of community heritage assets and their presentation. Ensure proposed interpretation plan identifies small as well as large heritage assets (see overleaf), with appropriate showcasing and interpretation of each type. Seek solution to gaining regular public access to Lucan House, possibly by guided tours at key times of the year that can be pre-booked. See also Public Realm.
Natural heritage	The integration of urban and rural has historically defined Lucan and is still a USP for the area. But the area has not, as yet, made the most of these assets and there is a need to more fully integrate the rivers and nature into the village experience. There needs to be support for the integration, support for and showcasing of natural heritage throughout the village, including the village green and at the weir	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a 'nature on the doorstep' initiative with the Tidy Towns and local community that encompasses creative planting, 'wilding' and greening initiatives through private, public and derelict sites. Ensure the proposed interpretation plan identifies key natural assets See also Public Realm.

8.1 Other Required Interventions

In addition to the recommendations in Table 7, there are other areas where intervention is required but that are beyond the scope of this Product and Proposition Plan. Some of these are underway, through the Public Realm work and the interpretation planning. However, it cannot be stressed strongly enough that without due attention to the areas outlined in Table 8, Lucan will not be in a position to develop as a tourism destination town, i.e. a town that can provide a full range of activities, experiences and amenities to keep tourists occupied for several days, and its ambitions will need to be scaled back.

TABLE 8: OTHER REQUIRED INTERVENTIONS

Key Areas for Intervention	Commentary	Specific Recommendations
Traffic management	Although outside the scope of this study, without the prioritisation of pedestrians and cyclists in the village core it is unlikely that the village could ever attain its desire to become a tourism destination. In addition, adequate parking is required to cater for an increase in tourists - current proposals are not sufficient.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harness existing momentum on outdoor dining, etc., to find solution to prioritising pedestrian traffic in the village. Use evidence to support case-making*. • Create adequate visitor parking within walking distance of the village and the Demesne. • Ensure attractive pedestrian and cycle routes connect the village to the Weir, Demesne, Vesey and Griffeen Parks • Explore shuttle bus option to connect Adamstown station with village green, Demesne, key hotels and other offerings locally/nearby.
Public realm	There are key public realm weaknesses, as already recognised and being addressed. In particular there is a need to ensure the recommendations in this study in relation to the Weir, Green and Demesne are considered in the final public realm solutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create flexible areas at the village green and weir area that can cater for a variety of events • Identify (or create) a solution to provide shelter over the green • Ensure water access for kayaks/rafts is part of the solution at the weir • Integrate nature and local built heritage into public realm development
Wayfinding and interpretation	These are currently almost non-existent in the village although there are proposals to address them. They are essential in helping tourists to slow down and appreciate the village while also facilitating their exploration of the surrounding area. A modern approach to wayfinding and interpretation should include community as well as visitor needs and focus on more than heritage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate local motifs in the final solution in order to enhance sense of place and to reveal hidden heritage • Ensure solutions are sufficiently flexible to allow for future expansion, day/night use and a variety of users • Develop self-guided trails, using good practice examples from comparators, to facilitate independent exploration. • Ensure the integration of the Village with the riverside and parks.
Water Quality	With several areas of potential and existing access to the Liffey both around the weir and in the Demesne, there exists a real opportunity for Lucan to increase both casual and more committed use of the water - for activities, leisure and pleasure. It should be an aim of SDCC to work with Kildare Co. Council, the EPA, Irish Water and others to ensure the water quality of the rivers is supportive of increased leisure utilisation of the rivers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a suitable mechanism to ensure that the water quality in the River Liffey is suitable for increased water-sports, in the first instance, and bathing in the longer term.



Simple steps can get the ball rolling: Explore the ownership of local heritage assets and ensure invisible assets are visible and accessible, e.g. re-open and present the medieval graveyard off the Village Green (*right top and bottom*), reinstate and/or replicate the 'oculus' in the wall (*top left*) to re-instate an original view of Lucan House & Grounds, integrate heritage details in interpretation (*bottom left and top right*).



APPENDICES

(included separately)

Appendix 1: Detailed 3 Year Roadmap

Appendix 2: Detailed Product Audit

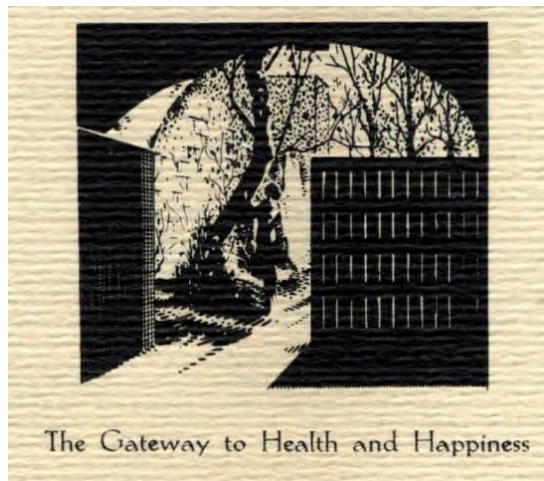
Appendix 3: Greenway Experience Feedback

Appendix 4: Consultation & Community Survey Results

Appendix 5: Additional Comparators and 'Wild Cards'

Appendix 6: Sample Promotional Text

Appendix 7: Key Sources Reviewed





Lucan Tourism Product & Proposition Plan

- APPENDICES -

November 2021

CHL

Appendix 3: Greenway Experience Feedback

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Three Year Roadmap

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Appendix 1: Roadmap 2022-2025

Three Year Roadmap

Area of Intervention	Action	Lead Party	Key Dependencies	KPIs	Delivery Prioritisation
1. Co-ordination of approach	1.1 Integrate the findings of this report with the public realm plans and adjust actions accordingly	SDCC	-	Review complete and adjustments made	Priority 1
	1.2 Consider whether a business area improvement group or tourism-specific group is the best approach for Destination Lucan. This could follow the model of the broadly-focussed Liberties Business Area Improvement Initiative or the tourism-focussed Kilkenny Welcome Team.	SDCC	-	Decision made	Priority 3
	1.3 Establish cross-sector working group (WG) to develop and assist in delivering the actions within this Plan	SDCC	Chamber of Commerce; local businesses; community groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of group - Workplan agreed - Progress review every 6 months 	Priority 4
2. Expansion of available product	2.1 Develop or commission an activity strategy that will focus on the Demesne but also include the other public parks. Ensure blocks to activity provision are identified and addressed as part of the process, including requirements for infrastructure and facilities. Strategy should maximise the parks as leisure, activity and entertainment zones, year round and day/evening. Ensure integration with animation strategy (3 below). Review opportunities for casual water use, i.e. activity not associated with groups or clubs.	SDCC, including park management	WG; activity providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of sub-group to oversee development of activity strategy - Completion of strategy, including identification of key infrastructural/facility requirements 	Priority 5

Area of Intervention	Action	Lead Party	Key Dependencies	KPIs	Delivery Timeframe
	2.2 Develop activity infrastructure and facilities as identified from 2.1 above.	SDCC	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workplan for developments agreed - Specific KPIs to be agreed as part of workplan 	Priority 11
	2.3 Review opportunities for private redevelopment of key derelict/ under-used heritage buildings in the village as Airbnb-style self-catering accommodation	WG	Property owners; SDCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussions commenced - Review complete 	Priority 10
3. Animation	3.1 Develop or commission an animation strategy to encompass the Village Green, other heritage sites in the village, the weir and the parks. Review procedures for licensing outdoor events with a view to simplifying the process and removing barriers. Ensure integration with activity strategy (2.1above).	SDCC	WG; arts/culture/soft activity organisations, space owners/ managers (e.g. historic and public sites), market operators, f&b providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of sub-group to oversee development of animation strategy - Completion of strategy, including identification of key infrastructural/facility requirements 	Priority 6
4. Orientation and information	4.1 Identify suitable location in the village for use as a visitor hub. The hub will provide for: a heritage centre, information point the booking of activities, a starting point for guided tours, public toilets and possibly a 'shop window' for local artists and creatives.	SDCC	WG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Suitable location identified - Agreement re. operational approach - Hub in place 	Priority 9
5. Built Heritage	5.1 Devise an approach and workplan to ensure the regular opening, care and interpretation of community heritage assets. Consider mechanisms to gain regular public access to Lucan House, possibly by pre-booked guided tours on specific dates during peak-season	WG	SDCC; community groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workplan agreed - Implementation underway 	Priority 7
	5.2 Ensure Lucan's Interpretation Plan identifies a wide range of built and natural heritage assets (small as well as large), with appropriate showcasing and interpretation of each.	SDCC	-	Review complete and any recommendations integrated	Priority 2

Area of Intervention	Action	Lead Party	Key Dependencies	KPIs	Delivery Timeframe
6. Natural Heritage	6.1 Create a 'nature on the doorstep' initiative that encompasses creative planting, 'wilding' and greening initiatives through private, public and derelict sites.	WG	SDCC; community groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of sub-group - Workplan agreed - Work programme commenced 	Priority 8

Appendix 2: Product Audit

(provided separately)

Key Tourism Observations

NOTE: Direct experience of the proposed 40km was a requirement of the Brief, on the understanding that the route is not as yet complete. These observations are provided from the perspective of tourism only and are offered with the expectation that they will be considered in the wider context of community usage and the final route selection/development.

- Connections to/from Dublin 8 are unclear and pathway improvement is needed.
- The route appears confusing, which could be helped by signage but not entirely (obviously this will be addressed when the final route is decided).
- Access between sections is awkward and interrupts the experience – gates designed for security demand frequent interruption to cycling (getting off and on to pass through) .
- There is potential for a site at top of Hayden’s Lane to create a bike hire / amenity cluster.
- Traffic in Lucan itself is a major obstacle to a wider leisure market unless dedicated cycle routes are developed.

Tourism Experience Summary

While there are unique urban aspects to the route to the Greenway from Dublin 8, the quality of the paths are very poor.

Additionally, there are no enroute amenities once leaving Inchicore until you reach Lucan (13.5K).

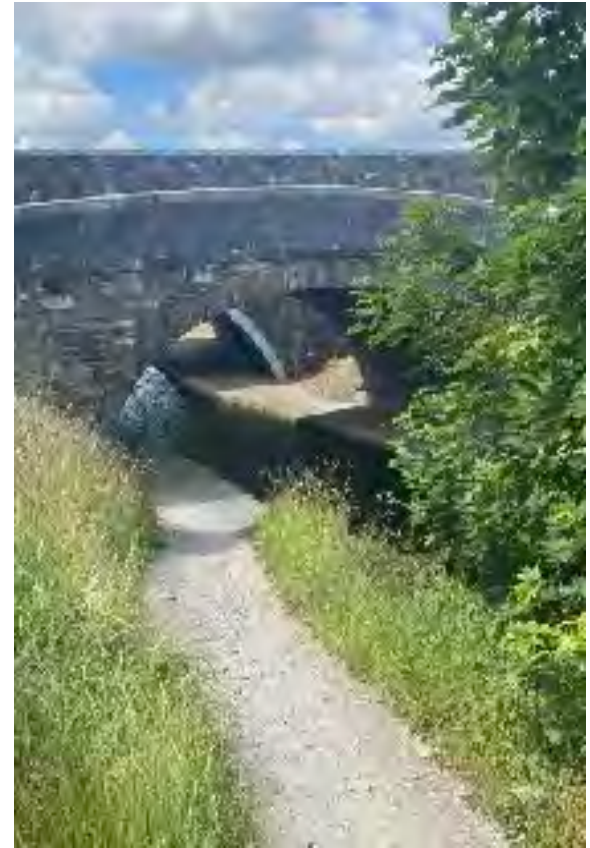
Much investment will be needed in cycle hire providers, refreshment stops and signage & landscape improvements to make this a cohesive, leisure experience.

There will also be a need to integrate the Greenway with Lucan Village itself if visitors are to be encouraged to stop there. Cycle hire in the village and a loop through the Demesne to the Greenway route in St. Catherine's could encourage visitors to hire bikes locally . Many visitors will not be interested in a 40km cycle.



Tourism Feedback on Proposed Greenway Experience

The grand canal – Lucan stretch of the proposed Greenway has some very nice natural features which largely distract from the clusters of housing along the way.



Interpretation is in place intermittently.

Even when travelling through industrial development areas, efforts have been made to create interesting features such as public art



Some structural engineering features are of quality and provide an attractive contrast to the natural environment. Paths up to the crossing of red bridge are of quality.



However, there are also a number of areas which are inhospitable, and unattractive which would need radical improvement to make visitor friendly - especially the transition to Hayden's Lane...



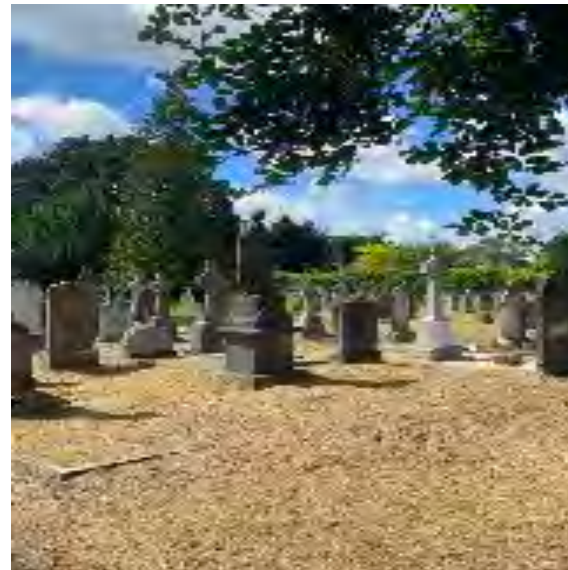


...areas where both environment and location need significant landscaping and overall improvement.

And the route through Griffeen Valley Park needs to be improved to make clear it is part of the Greenway experience.



There are some very nice features on the route across to Lucan Village, and of course there is a spectacular view of the weir itself from the bridge.



As is already known, however, endless traffic without a cycle path makes that Liffey crossing unattractive to anyone who is not a regular cyclist and confident in busy traffic.



Personal comments from the experience of the team.

Signage is a major issue. Once the team turned off the Grand Canal Greenway (which isn't sign-posted from earlier along the canal in Dublin 8 so it would challenge a visitor to find it), the route is incredible circuitous. We understand that works have not been undertaken yet but even the signage that is in place for basic orientation is really poor. There is NO sign for Lucan village on this approach at all and the signs through Griffeen Valley Park are chaotic. In addition, having to stop to go through the various security gates and ask people for directions increases journey time significantly.

We met a couple who looked like regular users and asked them about the idea of making a loop. They regularly cycle with their kid on both the Grand Canal and Royal Canal Greenways. When asked if they thought visitors would enjoy a looped Greenway if they were connected, they said they didn't see the point and only for serious cyclists. To their point, for this to work, the city bike scheme wouldn't be suitable as the bikes are too heavy. Bike hire would need to be in place at fairly regular intervals around the route (as in Westport - Achill) with the option to pick up and drop off at various points.

There are also some areas which would lead a visitor to be concerned about security due to the presence of security cameras and flood lighting.

With improvement, this could be a fun thing for locals to do and certainly has potential to bring visitors into Lucan village from the wider regions of Kildare and Dublin but it is a struggle to visualise the incoming visitor choosing this experience - although they might hire a bike and do shorter loops.

Appendix 4: Consultation & Community Survey Results

Stakeholder Consultations

- Fifteen one-to-one consultations undertaken, by phone, video and in-person
- There is a general welcome for the development of Lucan for visitors, though skepticism about ability to address key barriers, especially traffic and water quality.
- There is also a general acceptance that Lucan is not an 'easy sell' as a tourism destination.
- The business community is positively inclined towards opportunities to develop new/expanded experiences.
- The unique 'village green' nature of the core is seen as the key asset.
- The public realm work at the three locations of the Weir, the Green and the Demesne are very welcome, although not all understand what is involved.
- Most mentioned the Ambassador's Residence and the desire that an arrangement might be reached that would allow access.
- Anonymised detailed feedback is provided in the following pages

Lucan Stakeholder Consultations – Summary Notes

- Lucan village is a small area surrounded by a lot of housing. It is difficult to get people to identify with the village.
- The village has a real country feel, with its village green, and is very family friendly.
- It has a huge and interesting history, with many protected structures.
- There is a medieval 12th Century graveyard and ruins of a church hidden away behind the shops, connected to the grounds of the Italian Ambassador's residence. The Council has the keys.
- The Ambassador's residence is open once a year, usually during the Lucan Festival in September.
- There are four denominations of Churches.
- Signage is poor to non-existent.
- Traffic is the major issue but no obvious solution.
- There is a closed pub on the N4 entrance that might serve as a coach park - the Fox Hunter.
- A shortage of accommodation. The hotel is outside the village and the few B&Bs that exist are mainly catering for Intel staff.
- There is no information point in the village
- The dilapidated School Master's House offers potential, perhaps as an information point or hub of some kind.
- Similarly, there are four old phone boxes on the main street that could be an opportunity for tourist information.
- The Muintir na Tíre building has some space available too that could be used.
- Currently there are barely any visitors in the village, apart from the odd stray one that wanders down from the hotel but has difficulty navigating the area.
- Angling and golf offer opportunities (angling in the Demesne, golf at Lucan and the Hermitage golf clubs).
- The locals are a great resource for stories and history.
- If more tourists are to be encouraged to the area, there needs to be more resources and facilities, e.g. public toilets, belly bins.
- There used to be a tourism group in Lucan but not any longer.
- The local businesses are very keen and would be open to discussing tourism opportunities, but need to be careful to manage expectations.
- Two main things the village really needs: a signed heritage trail and the opening up of the Ambassador's Residence and grounds.
- There are two Lucans - the area of the village and the area with most of the housing estates on the other side of the N4.
- The village's strength is definitely its authentic character but much of what is interesting about it is hidden.
- It has two great pubs full of character, Kenny's and Courtney's, and a number of good restaurants.
- Pedestrianisation is essential in order to get people to stay in the village.
- The Demesne is wonderful but a bit away from the main village - it doesn't spring easily to mind, even for families who will readily travel to Malahide Castle for a weekend outing.

- There has been much discussion about the Ambassador's Residence and the grounds. The current Ambassador is not as willing to open the property and grounds as previous ones were but there have been some discussions about allowing access to the area where the spa well is - not a major structure, and wouldn't attract much tourism, but a good asset to add to the overall heritage appeal of the village.
- There has been a push at local level to bring the Luas to Lucan.
- The Demesne lacks entrance visibility; car park is awful; can't see over the walls into the Demesne
- Plan to create a new entrance. This will move carpark across the road to currently unused land – in doing so, will lose 16 spaces and gain 17 – a net increase of, which means parking will continue to be a problem.
- The proposed plan for the Demesne includes platform with coffee shop (incl. toilets), better access to water for kayaks and a boathouse below the café. (Kayak club have been seeking to have a boathouse in the Demesne.) A raised walkway through the trees, as at Avondale and Lough Key, would be a good asset.
- A second entrance near Leixlip would be useful as a service entrance and, possibly, for public as well.
- Shame that Greenway is not going through the Demesne.
- Commercial kayaking trips along the Liffey attract mostly tourists (80%) as Dubliners are negative about the Liffey
- Kayaks can enter the river at the weir on opposite side of river to Italian ambassador's residence. The Demesne would be preferable but there is no access for vans/trailers to car park due to high bar across entrance. And it is impossible to turn a van and trailer in the car park.
- An access point through the wall to bring kayaks down to the river below the car park is needed. There is a relatively little used dead-end road running along there.
- In the past, there has been much anti-social behaviour at the Demesne, but this has improved. Greater visibility into the Demesne would be a good thing.
- Water quality deteriorated badly in 90s and 00s, and then improved. But has deteriorated again in last 2-3 years. Biggest issue is Leixlip treatment plant. EPA has also issued discharge licences to industry covering untreated waste. Irish Water unresponsive.
- Rainwater is also plumbed into the sewage system which causes overflows in heavy rain.
- There used to be a tunnel through to Demesne from Spa Hotel. Could the Hotel site be brought into greater play by reopening tunnel and using very large car park at the Hotel & the Lucan County Bar for Demesne users?
- There is also an unused piece of land on the far side of the motorway, under the bridge adjacent to the existing car park entrance. This could potentially provide a lot of spaces.
- Lucan used to have a thriving nightlife, based around its pubs.
- Works with the D15 Tourism Group who have set up a Liffey Valley trail taking in Dunsink, Farmleigh, Luttrellstown etc. – north side only at the moment but this could be extended to include sites south of the river.

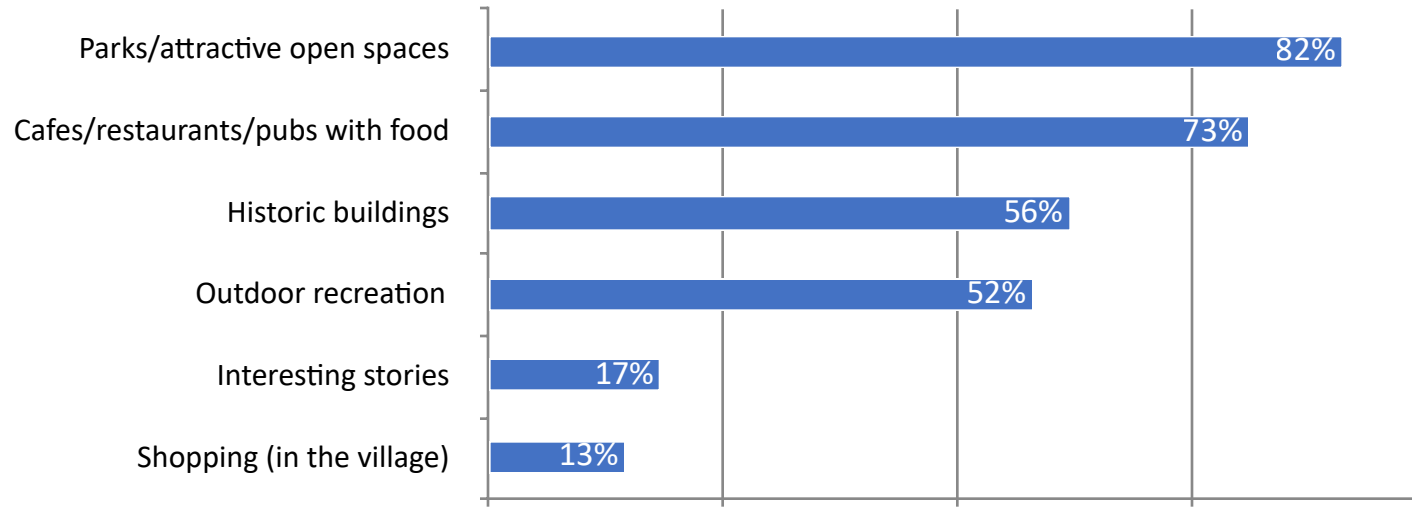
- There is money in FCC's budget for Shackleton Mill, and a development there could use Lucan as a hub.
- The key to success in any town or village is having an active local tourism group. Engage with local businesses as they may know the unique stories of the area.
- Introduce a sustainability charter for businesses.
- The historical character of Lucan has been overlooked and the town has been prioritized for housing.
- Overall, there are about 30 sites of interest in terms of heritage/history/folklore.
- Key sites in Lucan include the remains of King John's Bridge and St. Finian's Old Esker Church, Garda Station (former RIC barracks), the ruins of the medieval Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Vesey's Bridge and the stone bridge across the Liffey, and Lucan House. However, many sites are inaccessible and/or invisible, and not all are located in the village.
- Guided tours are really valuable to enable people to appreciate the heritage.
- Good interpretive signage is required.
- Demesne was a big draw over 100 years ago. Had its spa and it was open to the public for fetes, open days, picnics etc. A tram service enabled Dubliners to get out to Lucan.
- Is the spa revivable? The Council installed a tap for the water in 1977.
- The weir area could be adapted to take more people- a viewing deck and coffee dock would be good.
- Overall, the river is underused – could it be made more accessible and fun?
- Old Lucan walks have a mix of participants – many are local, generally adults. They are trying a tour for newcomers to Lucan to familiarize =new residents with the town.
- The Society's events are attended by locals and catchment population; appeal to families.
- Will publicize the survey, and will send further material on Lucan's heritage.
- The market operators see the potential for growth at Corkagh Park and at the Pfizer Campus (both within DCC) but no other site in Lucan. They would be delighted if St. Catherine's Park was in SDCC rather than in Fingal, who are behind in their strategic approach to outdoor animation and amenity in general.

Online Survey

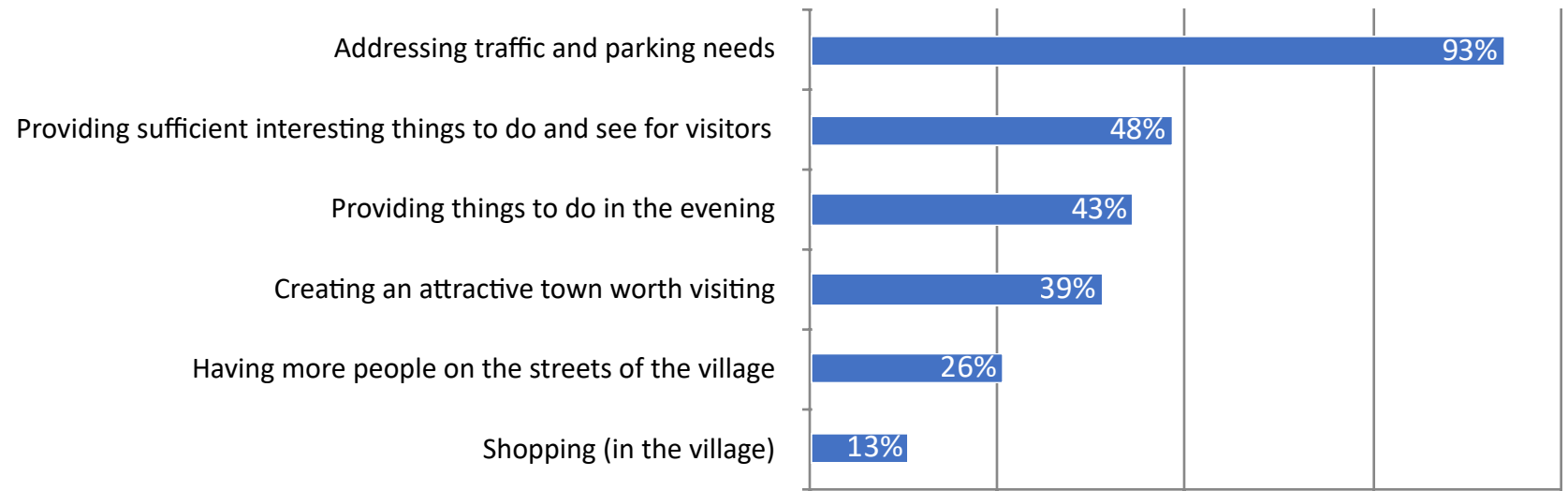
- The survey ran via an online platform that was promoted through Council channels as well as by the Chamber of Commerce and local contacts.
- The community is clearly interested in the topic, with 494 respondents to the survey - the highest we have experienced on similar projects.
- 95% of respondents are supportive of the proposal to develop Lucan for tourists - the few that aren't are primarily concerned about traffic and capacity.
- In terms of community usage of assets, the parks are clearly popular with 77% visiting St. Catherine's Park and 68% visiting the Demesne once a month or more.
- However, most (74%) have never participated in a Liffey activity or taken part in a guided heritage trail (73%).

Lucan's strengths and weaknesses

What do you see as Lucan's strengths in attracting visitors? Select any that are relevant from the following list or add your own. (494 out of 494 answered)

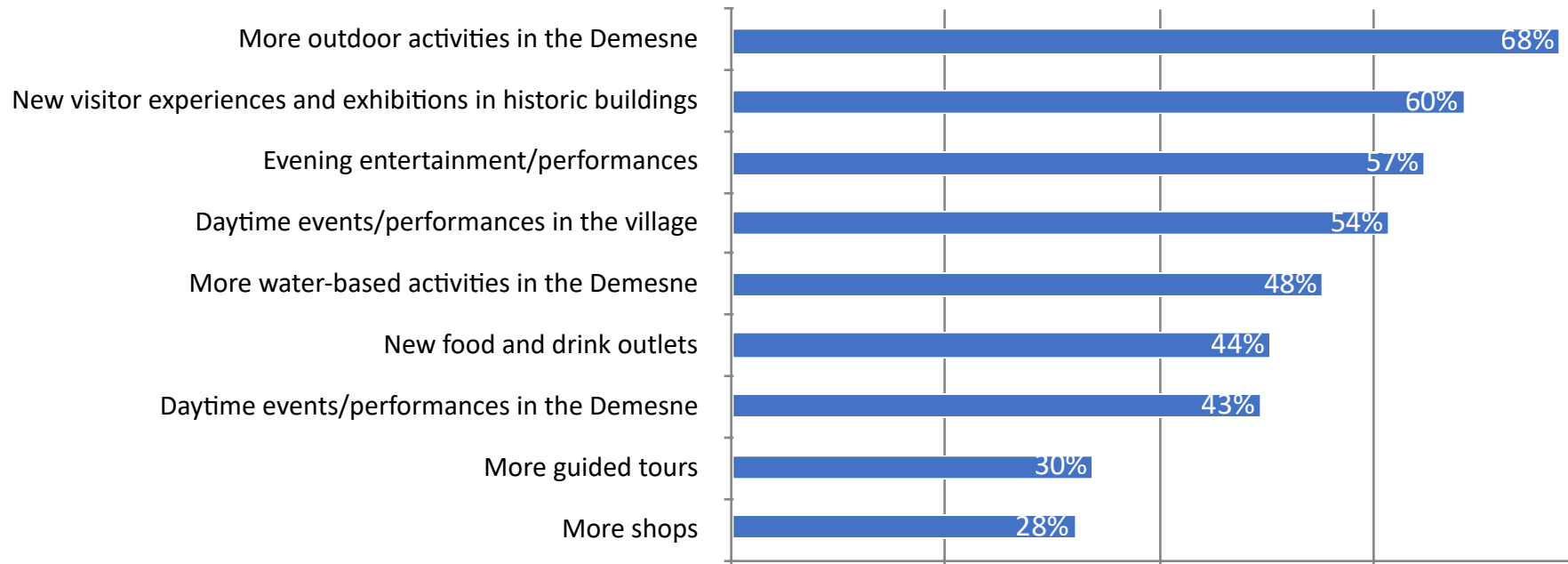


What do you see as the challenges of developing Lucan as a destination for visitors? Select any that are relevant from the following list or add your own. (494 out of 494 answered)



What would the community like to see in Lucan?

In developing the village, which of the following would you like to see considered? (494 out of 494 answered)



The community has plenty to say

Crisis of parking hinders businesses as does paid parking competing with free parking in Liffey Valley. Traffic avoiding M50 tolls and causing congestion to Laraghcon is at a crisis point. Lack of vision of Lucan businesses to promote and invest in their USP. DESPERATE need to conserve existing derelict historic buildings around the village. Currently there are no public toilets???

Businesses need a development plan coordinator and online presence. Weir and Green would both be great venues for more events. Please invest in heritage innovation and promotion.

Lucan is the home of kayaking in Dublin. Allowing the ongoing use and development of water sports activities is essential.

Evening entertainment with cultural events e.g. jazz festival, traditional events, choirs and bands based in Lucan giving performances

Outdoor activities with parking linked to local businesses. Buy a parking ticket get a reduction in a local pub

Lucan is a beautiful village with lots of great attractions of different types, historical, scenic, recreational. I believe one of the biggest issues is sufficient parking (preferably free) within walking distance of amenities. Access to activities such as water sports is also an issue, ie you've to be a member of a club as well as having to have your own equipment. It would be great to have a small theatre or at least an annual organised cultural programme of plays, concerts, recitals, etc.

Improve safety on strawberry beds for cyclists and pedestrians to Phoenix park

More select accommodation, boutique hotel?

Sunday markets. Close off the road beside Carrols to cars and make it a pedestrian zone for cafes and stalls

Swimming...horse riding trail...ball wall, dog agility equipment in dog area...adventure skills area...foraging lessons...in the demesne

Responses to Open-Ended Questions

- Detailed responses were provided by many respondents and have been provided in anonymised format separately to the client. Most of the feedback fell into the following categories, arranged below in order of importance as determined by the number of responses.
 1. Traffic and parking. The existing volume and congestion needs to be addressed and adequate parking provided for before additional traffic is invited into the area.
 2. Pedestrianisation. This connects with the first area of feedback above, with suggestions ranging from total pedestrianisation of the village to scheduled hours or specific areas.
 3. Reclaiming the history/heritage of the area. Respondents provided a wide variety of specific suggestions relating to heritage sites that need protection, conservation, interpretation and presentation for visitors. The need for heritage trails was suggested, both as an app and with physical signage.
 4. Improved public realm and public facilities. Feedback in this area identified the need for an improved presentation of the village, improved pavements and lighting, and provision of public toilets and attention to litter management.
 5. Events and festivals. A desire for more events year round was identified, especially in the green and at the weir.

Responses to Open-Ended Questions

6. Improvements for cyclists, including investment in cycleways and facilities for cyclists.
7. Improvements to the parks, including the Demesne and Griffeen Valley Park (as well as St. Catherine's). Suggestions included the development of a pedestrian bridge over the Liffey to facilitate looped walking, the provision of a café or similar and additional activities/entertainment.
8. Markets & support for artisan/crafts producers - there were many who advocated for a regular market along with opportunities for the sale of local artisan produce and crafts.
9. Transport. Improved public transport is seen as essential to facilitate tourists, with many suggesting the development of the mooted Luas line to Lucan.
10. More use of the water - including additional water activities, especially for casual users and summertime, and waterside trails.
11. Improvements for walkers, including additional trails and sustainable transport options.
12. Dining. There were recommendations for more outdoor dining, and more dining in general.
13. Outdoor (land-based) activities were also suggested, including more promotion of golf clubs, availability of adventure activities and provision of free facilities (e.g. tennis courts).
14. The need for a tourist information point.
15. Finally, the need for improved safety and for better family experiences were also mentioned.

Appendix 5: Additional Comparators and 'Wild Cards'

Radical infrastructure can act as an attraction in its own right.



Could a sunken cycle path, such as this one in Denmark, be an alternative and tourist-friendly way of allowing the the Greenway to cross the Liffey in Lucan Village?



Could artificially-created river surfing be created on the Liffey? (This is from the English Garden in Munich)





What about installing a public sauna as a replacement for the old spa? (This one is in Helsinki)

The Village Green:

Comparator – Logan City, Australia

Logan Village Green - Placemaking and Event Strategy

In 2020, Logan City Council ran a Logan Village Green Ideation Workshop to help determine and facilitate the Green's future event calendar. Nine key events were identified and circulated to the community by way of a questionnaire through the Council consultation portal.

Logan Village Green is not directly comparable to Lucan but the same approach to animating Lucan's Village Green could be adopted on a smaller scale.



Comparator - Logan City cont.

Event Concept


Theatre on the Green



Logan Village Green's 'Theatre on the Green' is a place where children and adults can be filled with a sense of fun and wonder. Encourage creativity and imagination throughout the holidays with a kids puppet theatre and storytelling. Walk, play, sing, dance and interact with fast paced puppet fun before sitting back into the evening on a comfortable deck to enjoy seasonal local productions and night market stalls.

Event Concept

Eco-lectic (Eco Market)



Logan Village Eco Market is an interactive outdoor pop-up market for artistically minded people. Furniture, fashion, home design, and inventions. Shop sustainably and watch eco-friendly artists create works of art from discarded items. Support locally-sourced foods and organic drinks for a good cause and play with the interactive art installations across the Village Green.

Event Concept

Logan Village Revival Drive-In



Whether you're a Hollywood movie buff or a fan of classic, indie or foreign films, Logan Village Revival Drive-In aims to screen films that get the whole family in addition to showcasing a wide range of both classic and contemporary movies. Logan Revival's retro-style programming will feature pre-1960s jukebox music and a fun American diner-style concession stand to attract local and regional family-friendly crowds.

Event Concept

Sproat: Youth Innovation Hackathon



Take part in Logan's upcoming Hackathon for youth innovation makers. The Logan Youth Innovation Summit brings together young people to the forefront of sustainable development. Learn design thinking, remote work practices, mentorship and more over two days in Alton North. Get involved, challenge yourself and join our Sproat Hackathon across the city. Places to be filled so register early. Team up to participate in the pitchfest with your best solution to solve real-world issues!

Event Concept

Gin & Swing



Get together for a festive, fun-filled event with plenty of gin in honor. Kick the heels back through the decades to a live swing band with dance workshops, mixologists & friends. Sample a wide selection of local and regional gins and immerse yourself in one of our gift markets. Expect fancy dress, social media and fun prizes as we provide a variety of yourself, you may come home with a great afternoon of value for your money to be shared!

A selection of events chosen by the community

Lucan, Gateway to Liffey Playground: Comparator - The English Garden, Munich

Munich's largest public park - and one of the largest in the world - The English Garden represents a good exemplar of a shared green space that is used by both residents and visitors.

The park was originally created in the late 18th Century and, in addition to its historic landscaping, it still contains many historic buildings that are used for a variety of purposes, including dining.

The park is divided in two by a road, with each section having a somewhat different character.



Lucan, Gateway to Liffey Playground: Comparator - The English Garden cont.

The park is much used for a variety of purposes from day to evening, including sunbathing, walking, cycling and outdoor leisure activities.

There are a number of beer gardens and dining options.

The park also has a man-made river surfing experience and visitors use the river for paddling and swimming as well. There is also an outdoor theatre.



Appendix 6: Sample Promotional Text

Sample Promotional Messaging

In developing promotional messages, Lucan will need to be aware of the promise it is making and the stage of development the destination is at. Initially, marketing efforts should focus on simple messages that don't over promise but that build awareness of a destination in development and connect directly to specific events.

A simple tag line such as:

'Lucan - come and play'

is one that can be adapted for use from the beginning for both the 'Gateway' and 'Village Green' themes. It is relevant to one-day festivals, open-air concerts, weekend park entertainment and a variety of other transient experiences. It is also relevant in the longer-term to ongoing activities and experiences that require that infrastructure and amenities being put in place.

Sample promotional text is provided below and can be tailored to suit different occasions, operators and stages of destination development.

Sample Promotional Text 1:

"From Lucan's historic Village Green, it's a short stroll or drive to Lucan Demesne - a city park unlike any other. Winding its way along the River Liffey beneath historic trees, it's the perfect place to rent a kayak, join a Liffey rafting trip, take part in a fitness challenge or simply find your favourite secret spot."

(Suitable from early stages of development when tied into a programme of activities)

Sample Promotional Text 2:

"Autumn and winter evenings at Lucan Demesne are filled with magic. Illuminations transform the park into a wonderland, setting the scene for riverside theatre for all ages, after-dark yoga, a lamp-lit pop-up Chef's Table overlooking the water and guided night trails that bring to life the park's historic stories."

(Suitable from early stages of development when tied into a seasonal offer and supported by temporary experiences)

Sample Promotional Text 3:

“Autumn evenings at the Village Green have a touch of magic. Under the shelter of the canopy, snuggle down to watch a pop-up movie with a mug of hot chocolate from the nearby café, join a bodhrán or tin whistle lesson, or shop for early crafts at Wednesdays evenings’ craft market.”

(Suitable from early stages of development when tied into a seasonal programme and supported by temporary experiences)

Sample Promotional Text 4:

“There’s always something going on at the Village Green. Whether it’s the vintage and craft market on Sundays, the Friday drop-in dance class, Thursday’s cycle-in cinema or Monday’s ‘kids get mucky’ event, you’ll never be stuck for something to do. Follow it up with a coffee and treat at the Riverside Café or pizza at Numero 6.”

(Suitable for later stages of development)

The subtext associated with ‘gateway to a natural playground’ promotions for the domestic market is: “here, there is space to breathe, to let off steam, to get active and have fun”. For the overseas tourists, the subtext is: “a quick hop from the city are Lucan’s magical green spaces where Dubliners go to play”.

The subtext associated with ‘village green’ promotions for the domestic market is: “never be stuck for something to do, there’s always something going on in Lucan”. For the overseas tourists, the subtext is: “there’s always plenty of community activity in Lucan where you are welcome to join in.”

Appendix 7: Key Sources Reviewed

South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2016-2022

Lucan Village Design Statement

Tourism Strategy for South Dublin County

Lucan Destination Towns Proposal

Best Practice Guidelines - Outdoor Dining and Urban Animation, Fáilte Ireland

Dublin Canals Greenway Feasibility Study, Blue Sail, 2020

Reimagining the Urban Space, Fáilte Ireland, 2020

Towards a Liffey Valley Park, OPW

DRAFT Stage 1A & 1B Report on Public Realm, DHB Architects, 2021

Resident Sentiment Index (Copenhagen), Wonderful Copenhagen, 2020

Competitive Index, All Visitors (Copenhagen), Wonderful Copenhagen, 2018

'The First Climate District', Tredje Natur

Lee Valley Regional Park Development Framework

London Festival of Architecture Walking Tour of Projects, Enfield Council

Annual Survey of Visits to Visitor Attractions Survey 2019, Visit England

Enfield Heritage Strategy 2019-2024, Enfield Council

Water Quality in 2020, EPA

Austrian Bathing Water Quality in 2020, European Environment Agency

Irish Tourism: From Survival to Revival, ITIC's pre-budget submission, September 2021

Draft Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2022-2042, National Transport Authority

Other sources used included various toolkits and published statistical data by the CSO, SDCC, Fáilte Ireland and the Heritage Council, as well as numerous local and historical documents.

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