

BRIDGETOWN

Training in 'Village Renewal'
(sponsored by Wexford Local Development)

OBSERVATIONS

1) *Community Park* – Large open space with the potential for public use. Has the ability to transform the vibrancy, community pride and impression of the village. Items to consider when designing the space:

- (a) Caters to a wide range of ages and interests.
- (b) Traffic relief for vocational school.
- (c) Ability to host both large and small community events.
- (d) Visual transparency from roads.
- (e) Diversity in planting.
- (f) Areas for passive use.
- (g) Links to shop and school.

2) *South Entry* – The extensive tarmac areas to the vocational school and lack of village identity hamper a positive first impression. In an effort to reduce scale, define the south entry and improve safety, an amenity island is proposed to separate car parking areas.

- (a) Remove tarmac and subbase to a depth of 700mm.
- (b) Install kerbs and topsoil.
- (c) 2 no. large canopy broadleaf trees with autumn colour.
- (d) Hardy evergreen shrubs to bed.
- (e) Large boulder or other significant signage promoting both the school and Bridgetown.

3) *Seating* - The popularity of the picnic tables at Centra are a good indication of the need for seating in the village.

4) *River and Bridge Amenity* – A small green space adjacent to the bridge may be available for public use. The village lacks both a decent viewing point for the bridge and river access. Access improves appreciation. Highly visible, this spot is ideal as an area for historical interpretation and for passive seating.

- (a) Retain existing planting to eastern edge.
- (b) Introduce interpretive signage and perhaps a local historical/cultural artefact.
- (c) Prevent river access for toddlers, but allow accessibility for responsible use.

5) *Bridge* - The bridge is a fabulous asset. Non-aggressive plants growing out of the stonework should not be sprayed or removed.

6) *Railway Amenity Walk* – An amenity walk was considered along the green strip between the railway line and R736, but was deemed unsuitable due to space restrictions.

Site Visit by Landscape Architect
May 2012

REFERENCE IMAGES



1
level ground with good road frontage



2
proposed south entry treatment at vocational school



4
green space adjacent to bridge



7
paint entire facade or paint only frames and doors

7) *Village Facelift* - There are a number of structures to the older part of the village with good scale, character and architectural features. But, their facades require either cleaning or painting. Doing so would benefit the community immensely.

8) *Bridgetown Social Centre* – This is a great asset, but would benefit from a more inviting and useful forecourt (currently, the entire area is laid to concrete). Seating should be incorporated as well as a detailed planting scheme that includes scent and colour. Making this an inviting space will enliven the street scene.

9) *St. David's Church* – There is no indication that this fabulous amenity (along with Glebe Nursery) exists just north of the village. Include reference to it in signage. Long term, aim to develop a pedestrian link.

10) *Recycling Bins* – These are currently located at roadside. Although kept tidy as can be, they still detract from the village scene. Find a suitable site to relocate. Perhaps developing a bring site associated with any future allotment development.

11) *Historic Mill (Mulrankin)* – Disused and derelict, it is fairly intact and has the potential to be a historic focal point of the village. Improvements could be extensive and are probably best carried out in phases.

(a) 1st Phase - Develop interpretive signage to east end.

(b) 2nd Phase – Bring people along the mill race and into the wheel room area (outside, as there is no roof).

(c) 3rd Phase – Develop an interpretive facility, perhaps community run.

12) *Mill Artefacts* – A number of industrial artefacts are still on site. This includes steel frames of machinery and paving. These should be documented by a specialist and protected from vandalism or theft.

13) *River Walk* – This should be a village priority. A loop walk is preferable. There is fabulous potential to increase appreciation and use of the river. The old stone bridge southeast of the Mill should serve as a key crossing point.

(a) The river could function as a community bonding element and source of fundraising. A community river float to Duncormick was suggested. Support for enterprise along the river should be sought.

14) *Unfinished Estates* – This is a noticeable element to the village fringes. Continue dialogue with landowners/banks ensuring a maintenance regime is in place, or permission is obtained for local reps to enter and tidy.

15) *Allotment Gardens* – Two location options are identified on the map, but it all boils down to landowner permission and length of lease. Because of the school adjacency and more organic appearance of allotment gardens, it is not recommended that they be included in the proposed park.
(a) A successful location in other communities has been on Garda lands. It reduces Garda maintenance costs and anti-social aspects are almost non-existent.



8

Social Centre forecourt, remove 50% of concrete



10

find a suitable relocation area for recycling



12

part of the archaeological Mill remnants

(b) Refer the booklet “The Dublin City Guide to Community Gardening” (download PDF online at www.dublin.ie) as useful community led approach.

Summary Note – Perhaps the village with the most potential. Maximise the opportunities of the parkland, as this offer really only occurs once in a lifetime. The village appeared very tidy during my visit, but some private landholdings detracted from the overall scene. It is imperative that consultation (as a voice of the community association) with private landowners continue, to the benefit of the entire populace.

LEGEND

- Existing Entry Signage Location
- Potential Entry Signage Location
- Potential Amenity Signage Location
- Existing Amenity Path Route
- Potential Amenity Path Route

OPPORTUNITIES

- 1 **Community Park**
Large open space with opportunity for public use. Incorporate a loop path, tree planting, adult and children play areas, young adult environments, and a functional space for both large and small public gatherings, festivals, concerts.
- 2 **Vocational School Traffic Mitigation**
Provide safe setdown and waiting areas, incorporate safe pedestrian path into community park.
- 3 **Riverside Amenity**
Provide a space to experience the river and the bridge, seating and planting in a natural environment, opportunity for historical / cultural interpretation.
- 4 **Village Face/Lift**
Engage with private landowners in an effort to obtain permission to paint structures, priority to those at corner locations.
- 5 **Bridgetown Social Centre**
Animate the front garden with planting pockets, art features and seating, as an area of respite and as an inviting space to new users.
- 6 **St. David's Church**
A detached, but attractive part of the village fabric. Provide signage alluding to it or incorporate as part of a larger Heritage Walk endeavour.
- 7 **Old Mill**
An important architectural, industrial and cultural link to the past. Create interest, interpret history and draw visitors. A long-term project. Steps to include information, visual accessibility, then physical accessibility.
- 8 **River Walk East**
Incorporate the existing stone bridge as a footpath crossing. Engage with Iarnród Éireann and other landowners to facilitate access. Keep path close to river, interpret former railway station.
- 9 **River Walk West**
Continue existing path at new development. Engage with landowners, provide a river launching point at bridge crossing.
- 10 **Allotments**
A plot of land adjacent to the village centre and suitable parking at the butchers. Engage with local landowner. Alternative location at Station Road, but is less visible.

