Barriers & Opportunities for adaptive re-use of vacant space in towns:

Ballina Case Study

Town Centre Health Check Workshop 2 | 16.03.2107

Orla Murphy

An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council

UCD DUBLIN

or....

BALLINA | January 2017 | VACANT

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or……

or……

why are these buildings empty?

or……

why are these buildings empty?

&

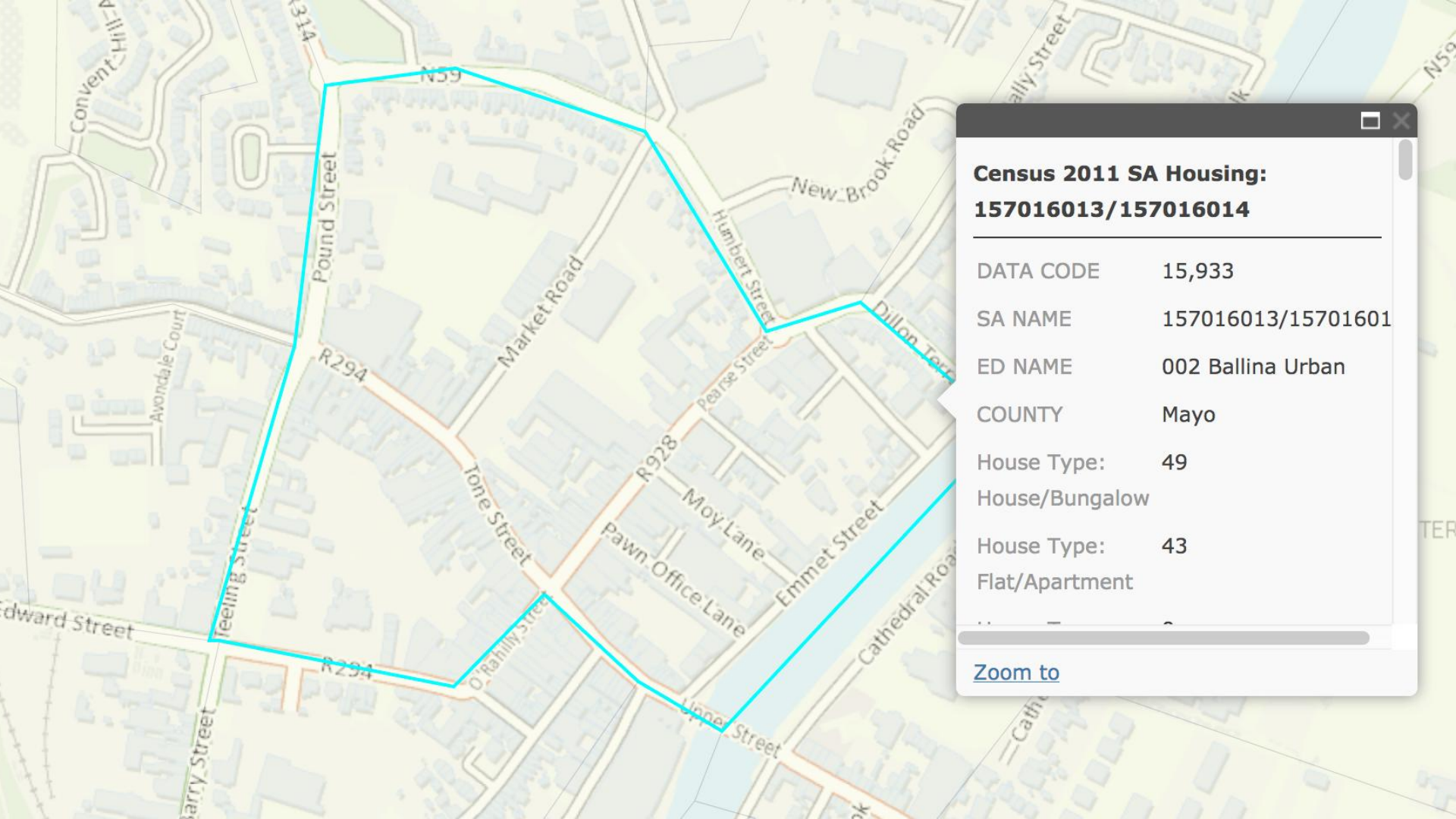
what are we going to do about it?

POPULATION	2002	2006	2011	2016	CHANGE FROM '02-'16
BALLINA	4627	4280	4021	4136	-11%
CASTLEBAR	6585	6185	6049	6162	-6%
WESTPORT	5314	5163	5543	5894	+11%
CLAREMORRIS	2685	3170	3987	4487	+67%
BALLYHAUNIS	2149	2598	2994	3056	+42%

*Data from AIRO Census Mapping Module Northern and Western Regional District Data

	HOUSING STOCK 2011	HOUSING STOCK 2016	VACANT HOUSING 2011	VACANT HOUSING 2016	VACANCY RATE
BALLINA	2278	2315	524	509	22%
CASTLEBAR	3244	3291	572	600	19%
WESTPORT	2773	2890	625	578	20%
CLAREMORRIS	2047	2014	518	365	18%
BALLYHAUNIS	1496	1512	378	355	23%

*Data from AIRO Census Mapping Module Northern and Western Regional District Data
** Note National Vacancy Rate is 9.8% according to the Housing Agency
Normal vacancy rate considered to be around 4-7%


Convent Hill
N59
Pound Street
Market Road
New Brook Road
Humbert Street
Avondale Court
R294
Pearse Street
R928
Tone Street
Moy Lane
Pawn Office Lane
Emmet Street
Teeling Street
Edward Street
O'Rahilly Street
Cathedral Road
Harry Street
Dillon Terr
Census 2011 SA Housing:
157016013/157016014
DATA CODE 15,933
SA NAME 157016013/15701601
ED NAME 002 Ballina Urban
COUNTY Mayo
House Type: House/Bungalow 49
House Type: Flat/Apartment 43
Zoom to

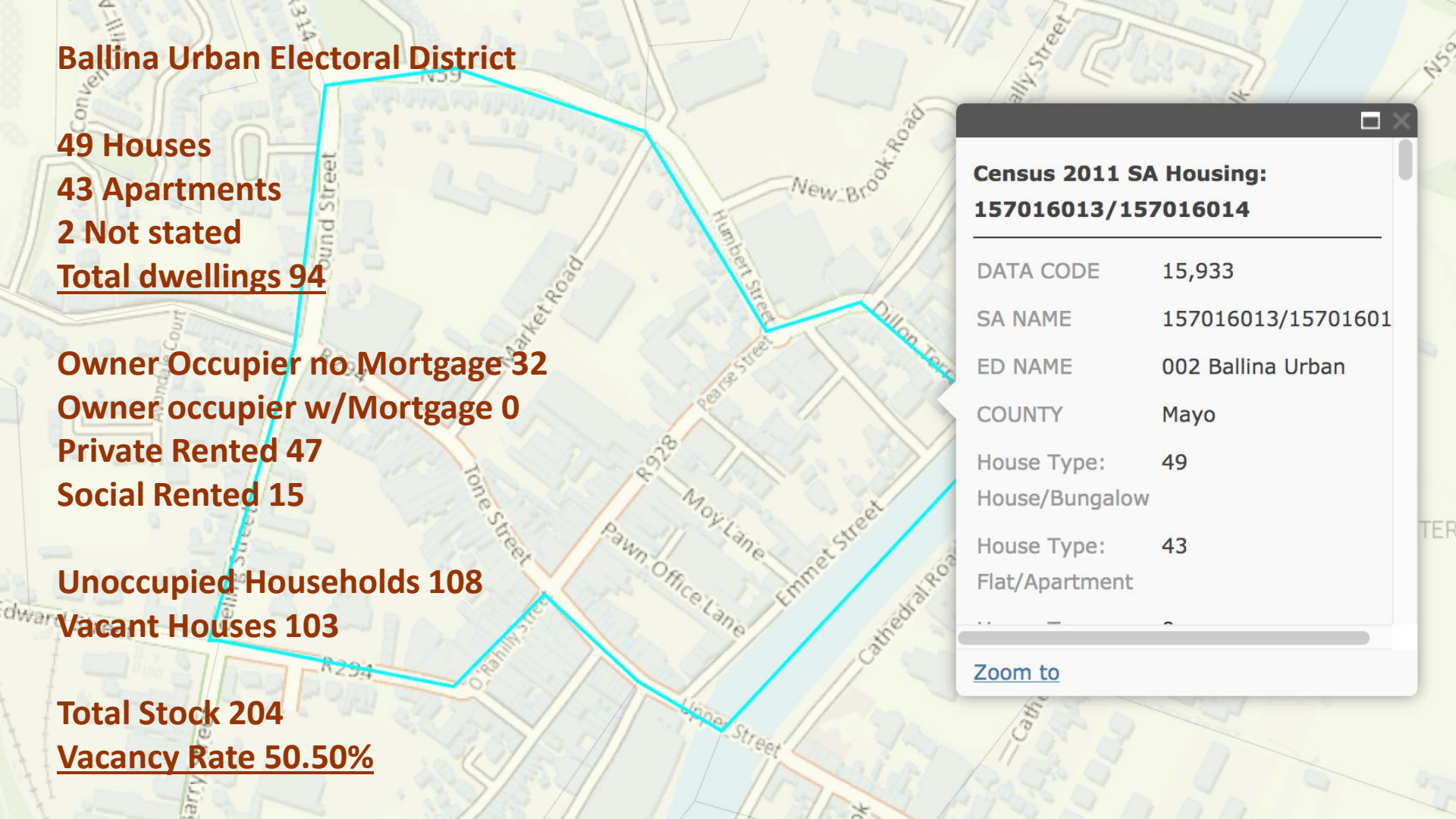
Ballina Urban Electoral District

49 Houses
43 Apartments
2 Not stated
Total dwellings 94

Owner Occupier no Mortgage 32
Owner occupier w/Mortgage 0
Private Rented 47
Social Rented 15

Unoccupied Households 108
Vacant Houses 103

Total Stock 204
Vacancy Rate 50.50%



Town Centre Health Check Vacancy Rates for Ballina

Single Use Residential

143 Occupied; 54 Vacant

Multiple Use Residential

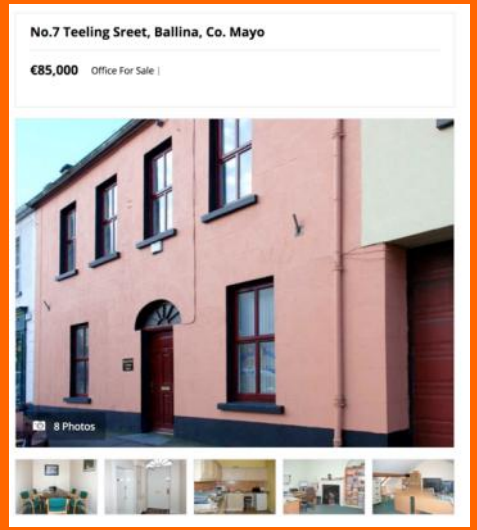
200 Occupied; 74 Vacant

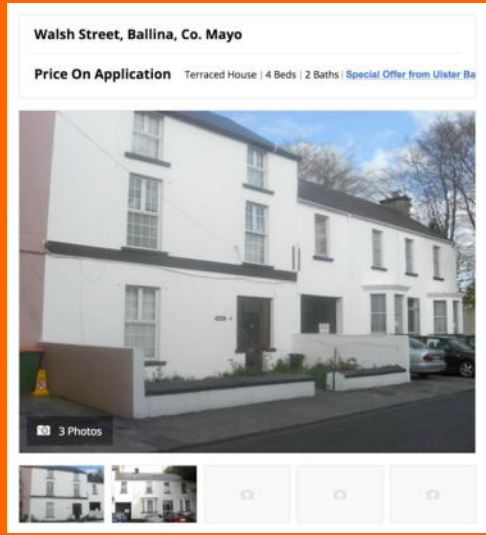
Residential Vacancy Rate January 2017: **37%**

Barriers

BARRIER #1:

Supply is not being released to the market





These four properties are the only ones available for sale within the Ballina Urban ED in March 2017 (daft.ie)

w h y ?

1. Retaining the property for occasional use
2. Owner has moved into a nursing home
3. Owner has died, and the estate is awaiting legal action
4. Owners are not aware of the options, such as Repair & Leasing Scheme
5. Real or perceived problems with renting the property
6. Owner awaiting upturn in the market or drip feeding properties onto the market.
7. Owner lacks access to finance to upgrade property
8. Difficulty in obtaining planning or other regulatory consents
9. Lack of motivation by the owners.
10. Difficulty finding a suitable design professional to carry out refurbishment works.
11. Would not make financial sense to sell or let out.

* Source: Housing Agency Consultation to inform National Vacant Housing Reuse Strategy under Pillar 5 of Rebuilding Ireland

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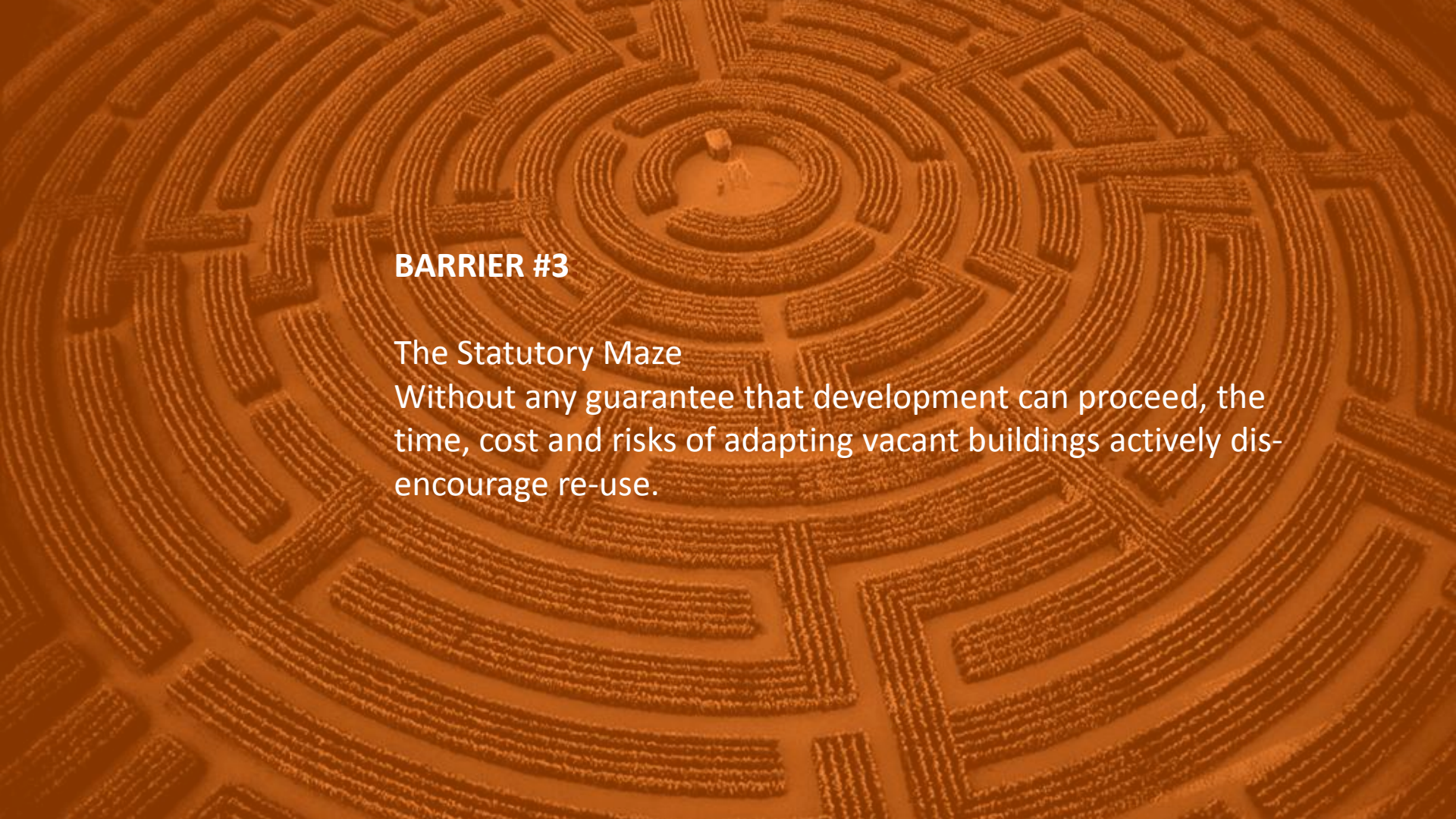
BARRIER #2:

Lack of coordinated management of vacancy

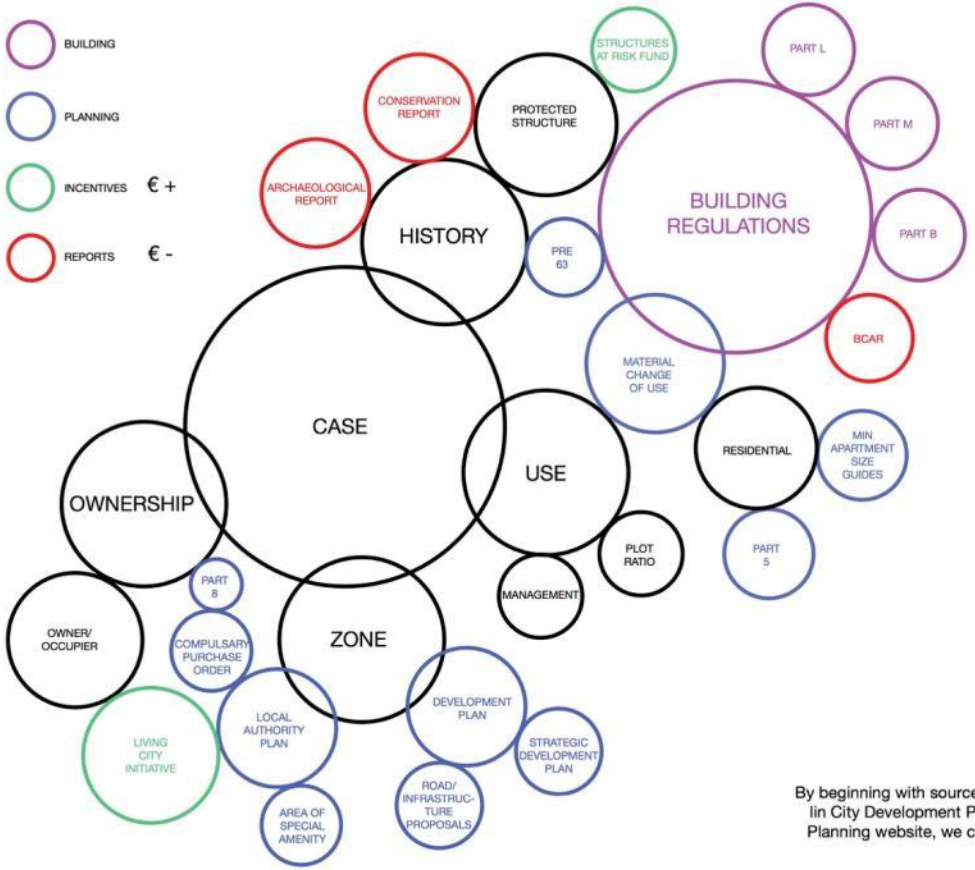
Existing Options

- Repair to Lease Scheme
- Compulsory Purchase Orders
- Buy and Renew Initiative
- Urban Renewal Initiative
- Rural Action Plan
- Living City Initiative
- Acquisitions of Vacant Homes by Housing Agency



BARRIER #3

The Statutory Maze
Without any guarantee that development can proceed, the time, cost and risks of adapting vacant buildings actively dis-encourage re-use.



PLANNING APPLICATION GUIDE

-Newspaper Notice	Week 1
-Site Notice	Week 1
-Application Form -Application Form -Documents and Drawings -Technical Checklist	Week 3
-Decision	Week 8-11

(where additional information is requested a decision is made within four weeks of providing the information requested)

FEES

Provision of dwelling House or Apartment	€65 per uit
Other Buildings (i.e offices, commercial etc.)	€3.60 per m2
Use of land (parking)	€50 per 0.1 hectare

Maximum planning fee is €38000
Minimum planning fee €34

A condition will be attached to all planning permission granted requiring the payment of a development contribution under section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (As amended).
The rates of contributions for permissions granted in 2014 - 2015 are as follows:
€70.06 per square metre of industrial/commercial development,
€86.40 per square metre of domestic development.

SOURCES

By beginning with sources covering broad swathes of data such as the Dublin City Development Plan, the Local Area Plan and the Dublin City Council Planning website, we can gather information to gradually work towards the more niche aspects of every planning application.

3 Statutory Processes that anyone embarking on adaptive re-use encounters:

1. PLANNING:	Change of Use. Min 3 months. **Cost. Time. Risk**
	Conservation: Conservation Report. **Time. Cost. Risk**
2. BUILDING REGS	Fire Certificate Application. **Time. Cost. Risk**
	Disability Access Certificate Application. **Time. Cost. Risk**
	BCAR Design Certifier. **Cost**
	BCAR Assigned Certifier. **Cost**
3 HEALTH & SAFETY REGS:	PSDP appointment. **Time. Cost**

Ireland:

Time:	5.5-13 months depending on requests for further info/appeals
Cost:	€8500-12500 professional fees for change of use alone*

UK:	£696 and one stop shop process.

* Source: Mel Reynolds

Opportunities

A streamlined, managed, & integrated approach to re-use of vacant space is needed which includes:

- a Local Authority one-stop shop that *helps* people to re-use vacant buildings
- a wider range of change of use exemptions
- full implementation of annual TCHCs & town management
- fewer but more user-friendly incentives
- pilot urban design informed approach to a model town

…and which dis-incentivises long term vacancy through a mix of:

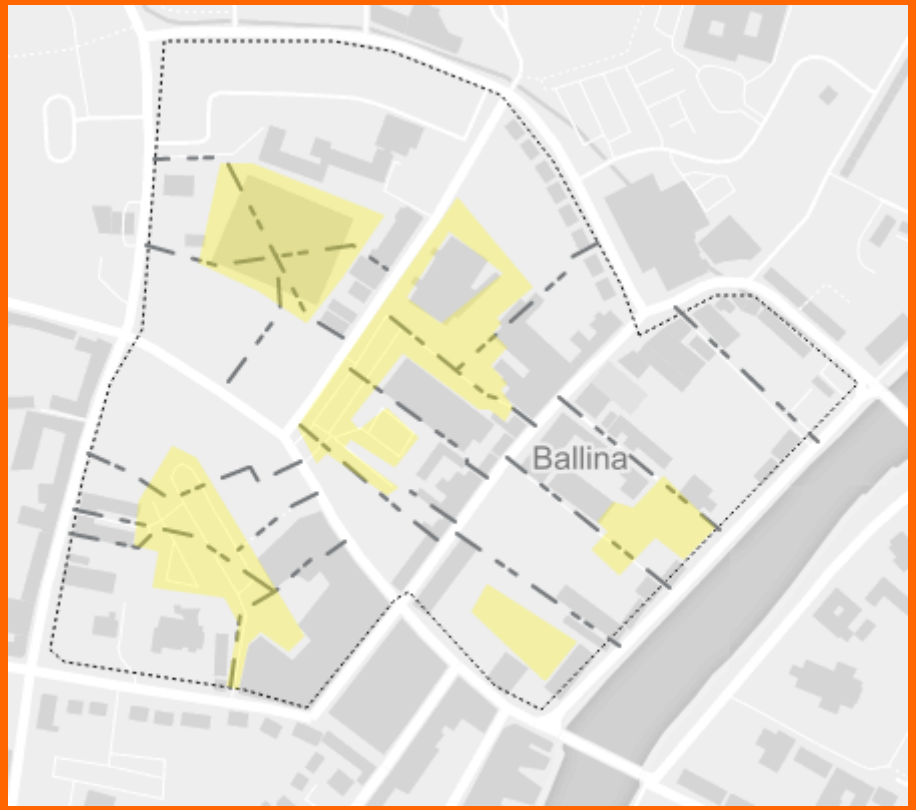
- removal of discounted rates for vacant space
- vacant building levy* **
- property tax on 2nd homes
- serious action on sequential development – use it or lose it.

* Paris is introducing tax of 60% market rent on vacant properties
** PMV Trust poll shows that majority are in favour of a vacant building levy

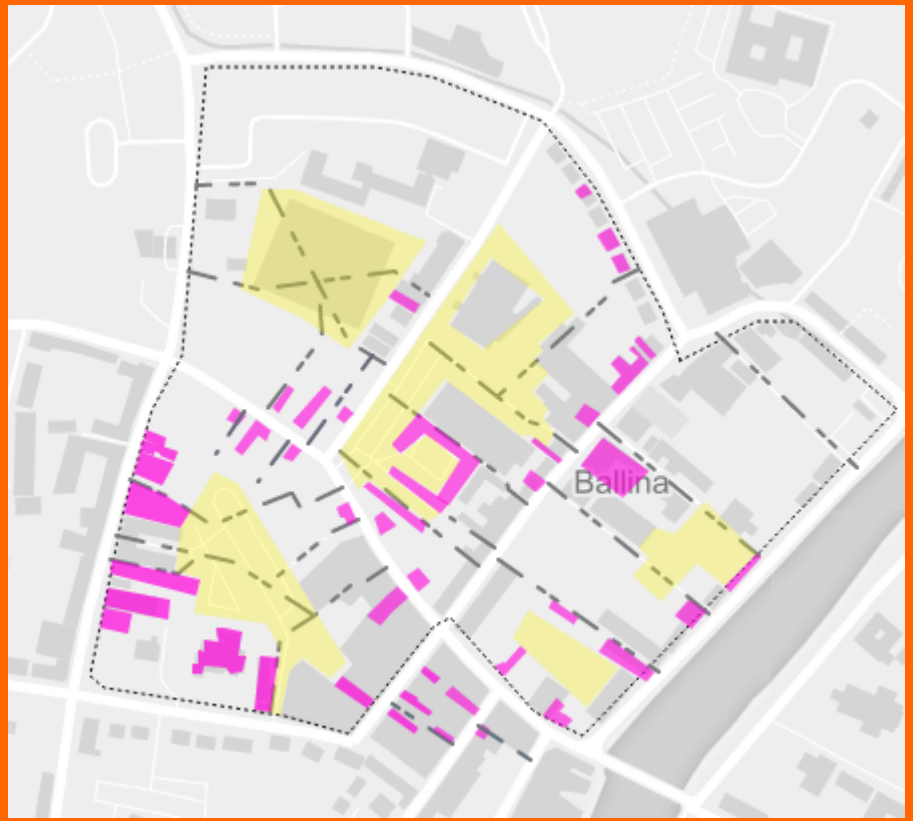
The opportunity would then exist to engage local owners, tenants and community stakeholders to co-operatively re-design town cores to become desireable and affordable places to live.

Ballina Urban ED boundary

Laneways and pedestiran links



Potential space for parking and shared gardens



Vacant space with potential for re-use as dwelling space

Housetown Study:

An informed Urban Design approach to adaptive re-use and placemaking as the first step towards provision of new homes.

1 existing block

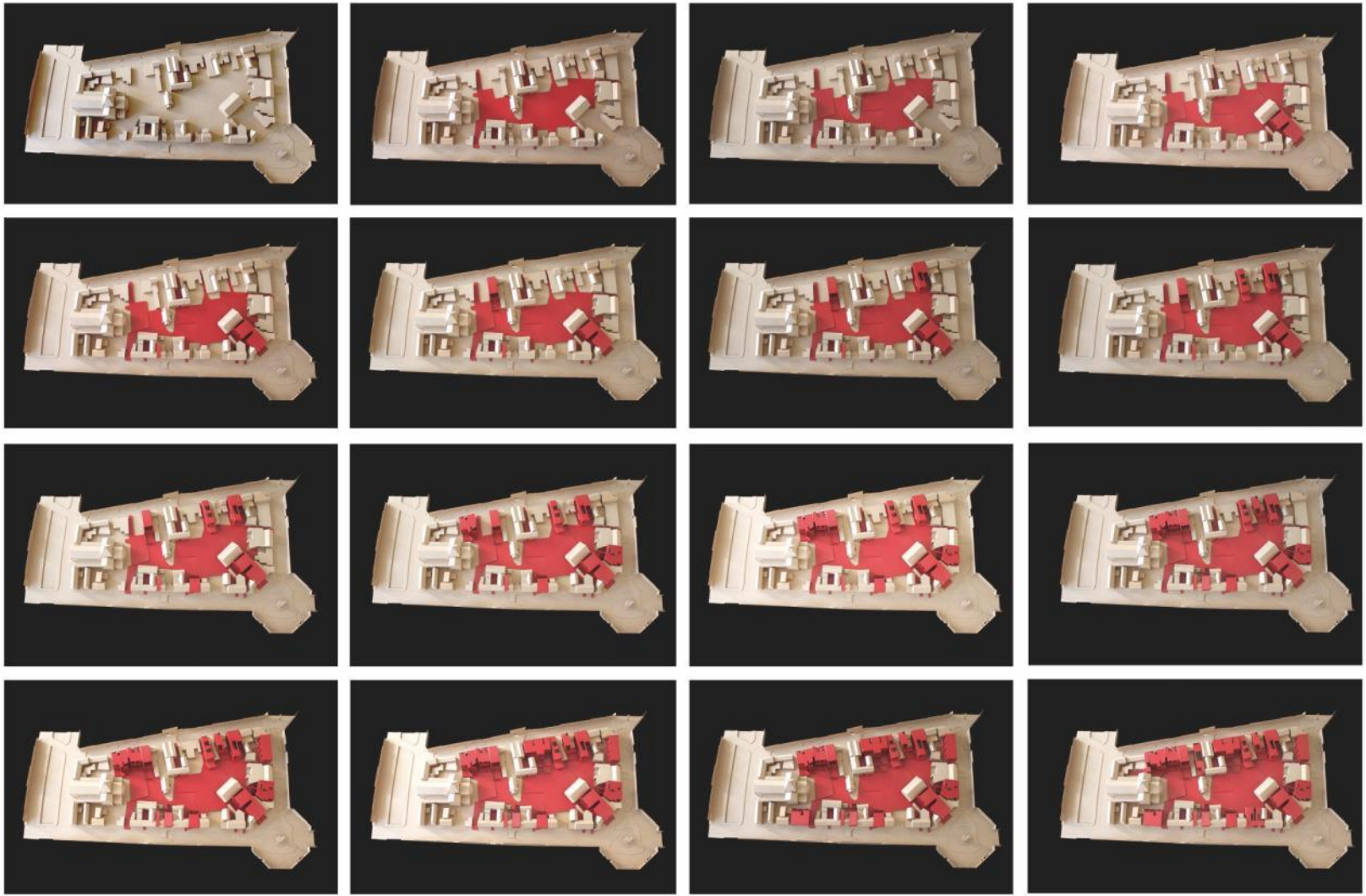
2 identify & remove unoccupied space

3 establish new plots

4 accommodate the car

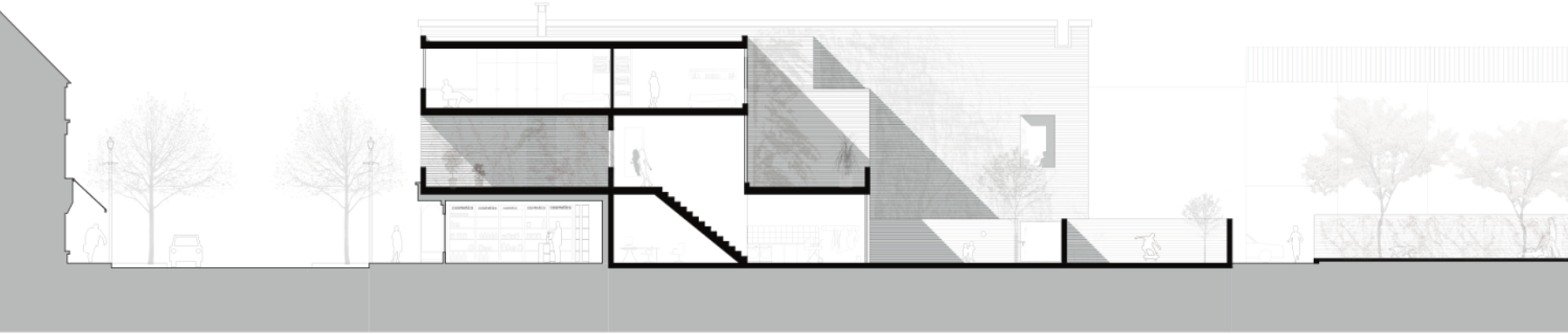
5 link pedestrian connections

6 create shared garden

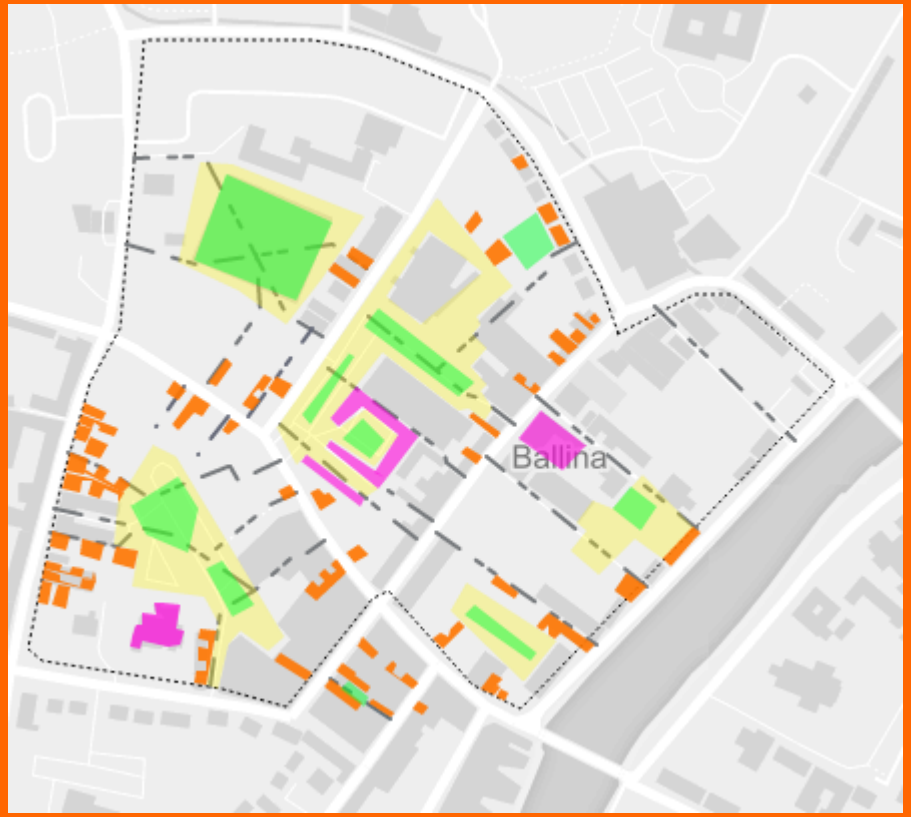


MATT MOLLOY'S
BAR THE PORTHOUSE BAR
FASHIONS
FOX FORD
GOLDEN'S PHARMACY
Gavin's Cafe

Housetown Section



street shop dwelling private garden/entrance shared garden/parking



150+ new homes, new public space and gardens, shared amenties, a walkable lived-in, vibrant town

Conclusions:

Good management of towns must tackle long term vacancy.

Regular land use & vacancy mapping is essential as part of this.

The TCHC methodology can provide a coherent, evidence-based methodology for both of the above

An informed Urban Design approach that includes the local community has the opportunity to create efficient, vibrant, urban placemaking, high quality attractive homes, & integrated walkable communities.

Adaptive re-use of vacant space must design for contemporary dwelling needs, including private open space, car ownership and ground floor footprint

Source: Bridge Street |Abhainn Rí Festival, Callan, Co. Kilkenny