Clonakilty 400
Urban Design Masterplan

Phase 1 Total Area: 2995m² | Phase 2 Total Area: 3454m²
Phase 1 Contract Value: £830,000

The project crafts a contemporary public realm, representing the town center of Clonakilty. West Cork Ireland. Anna Square, a former carpark and Emmett Square, a neglected public park are reimagined by a new urban design envelope structured by pocket squares (Phase 2 - currently under construction). Although delivered with a limited budget, a high quality result was achieved through the selection and retention of local materials and craftsmanship.

At Anna Square, a paved plaza, crafted from local limestone, birds the existing environment with a strong grandstand statement establishing a shared surface. Its geometry is preserved by two existing heritage floral plants Anna Monument and the House Chemist tree. Contemporary lighting bollards in Corten steel are used to symbolize the battle formation of Pikes adjacent to the entrance of Battle of Anna from the uprising of 1798.

Further up the street, adorning the Emmett Square, a unique example of Georgian Architecture in rural Ireland, creates access to everyone with a new wide main entrance reaching across the street, drawing in patrons, as a welcoming threshold to enjoy the re-developed park, water feature and newly commissioned bronze sculpture, GODFATHER O'GROAT, by sculptor Michael Warrens. A paved central area provides additional gathering spaces ideal for children's activities, traditional music sessions etc. This new connecting visually and physically links the existing statue of Michael Collins to the new Michael Collins House museum behind.

The project has been successful in making people re-engage with their existing town heritage by enhancing the space for people as a priority. Roads have been re-aligned as streets for pedestrian friendly movement and its accommodate social activities in public spaces.

Clonakilty represents a template for typical Irish towns where, generally, townscapes have been undertaken since the introduction of the motor-vehicle, and out of towns rural aspirations. This shows how the People's sense of ownership of public space is crucial for delivering strong communities, place making and promoting of visual awareness through quality urban design intervention.