

2023

Athlone Public Realm



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Outline Traffic Management Plan

Document Control Sheet

Client:	Westmeath County Council
Document No:	210754-ORS-XX-XX-RP-TR-7d-001
Date:	13 th April 2022

Revision	Status	Author:	Reviewed by:	Approved By:	Issue Date
P00	D	MLen	DMC	AP	12/04/2022
P01	D	MLen	DMC	AP	09/09/2022
P02	D	JdK	DMC	AP	13/01/2023
P03	S02	MG	MG	MG	12/04/2023
P04	S02	MG	MG	MG	04/05/2023
P05	S02	MG	MG	MG	12/05/2023

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1 Introduction

The purpose of this Outline Traffic Management Plan is to address the requirements that shall be considered by the contractor and PSCS to facilitate the proposed works associated with Athlone Urban Design and Regeneration Framework Plan.

PART XI OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT, 2000 (as amended)

PART 8 OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS, 2001 (as amended)

Pursuant to the requirements of the above, Westmeath County Council proposes to undertake the following works:

Public Realm Enhancement and Associated Works within an area encompassing c.0.0425ha immediately to the north of Athlone Castle (a National Monument and protected structure – reference Number RPS 070) and within an Architectural Conservation Area (Athlone Town), Athlone, Co. Westmeath.

The proposed development will consist of works at the northwest and proximate to the main entrance to Athlone Castle and include the following:

1. Removal of existing ramps, steps, railings, and relocation of public lighting
2. Public Realm enhancement to include hard and soft landscaping, footpaths, ramps, steps and public lighting;
3. Signage
4. Accommodation works (including utility provision, drainage and services);
5. Other associated works

The site is bounded by Athlone Castle to the South, Athlone Town bridge, also known as Shannon Road Bridge (a regional Monument and protected structure - Reference Number RPS 004) to the North, The Shannon quays to the East and Market Place to the West.

The Proposed scheme has undergone **Appropriate Assessment Screening** under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and screening for **Environmental Impact Assessment** under the EIA Directive 2014/52/EU.

The full works requirements are fully scheduled in the supporting tender documentation accompanying this outline traffic management plan.

1.1 Objectives of this TMP

The objective of this report is to provide relevant information at the preliminary stage that will include detailed plans for the management of the traffic impact on the public road network, expected and associated during the construction of the proposed scheme in Athlone, Co Westmeath.

Therefore, this report will provide an overview of constraints presented within the area, consideration on workspace and access to and from the site, relevant aspects found within the site area, principles, and framework for further development of the detailed traffic management plans for the works.

1.2 Methodology

The contractor and PSCS shall comply with the requirements of the detailed traffic management plan are based on the following:

- “Traffic Signs Manual – Chapter 8 – Temporary Traffic Measures and Signs for Roadworks” Department of transport, August 2019.
- Guidance for the Control and Management of Traffic at Roadworks – Department of transport, third edition 2019.
- Westmeath County Council Road Closure Guidelines.
- The Safety, Health, and Welfare at Work Act 2005.
- The Safety, Health, and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007 (SI 299 of 2007).
- The Safety, Health, and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013, SI 291 of 2013.

2 Temporary Traffic Management Impacts

2.1 Development Site Location

Athlone Castle is located on the West side of Athlone town. The proposed works site is located on the west side of the town, formally known as the “old town” and the extent of the site is generally indicated in **Figure 1**.

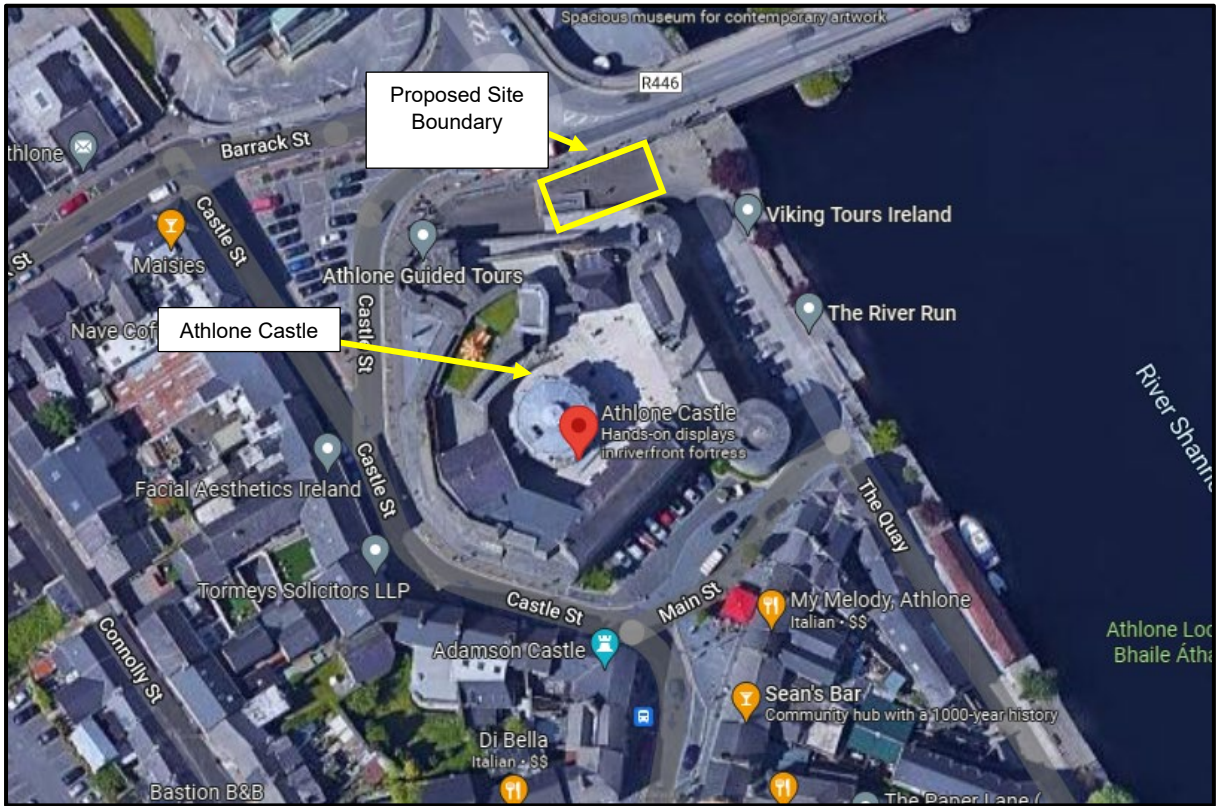


Figure 1 - Site Location (Source: Google Maps)

The site is located beside Custume bridge leading to a pedestrianised area adjacent to the river and to the Castle entrance. The lower level and currently utilised as the Castle carpark which are both linked via steps. The site is bounded by the R446 to the North of the site, Quay Street to the South with Athlone Castle to the West of the site and the River Shannon to the East of the proposed works area.

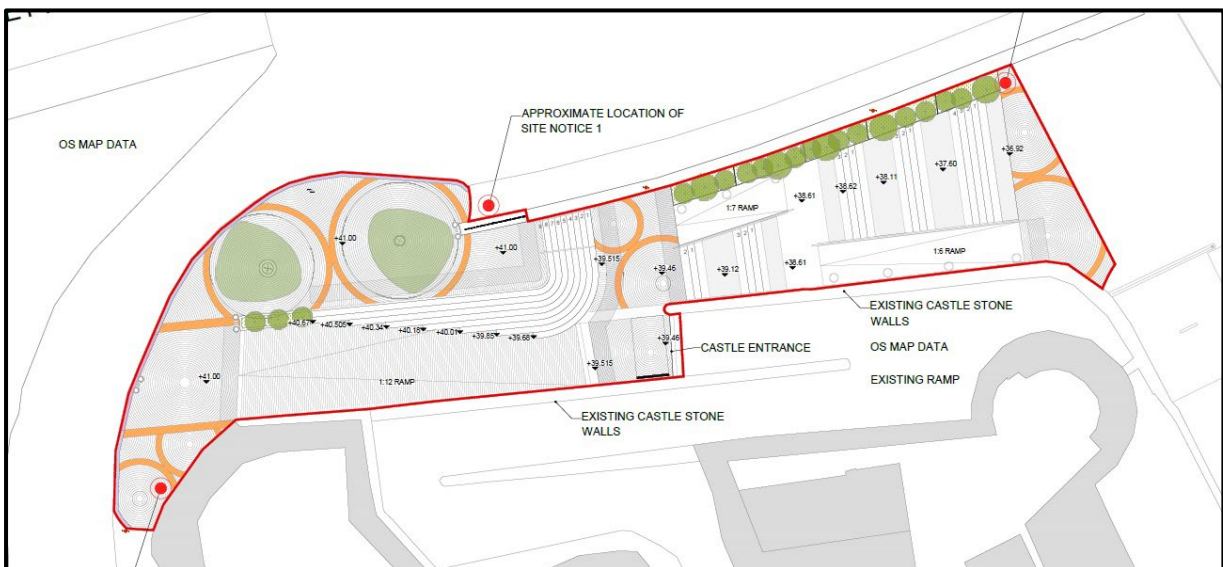


Figure 2 - Proposed Castle Public Realm Plan (Source: Urban Agency)

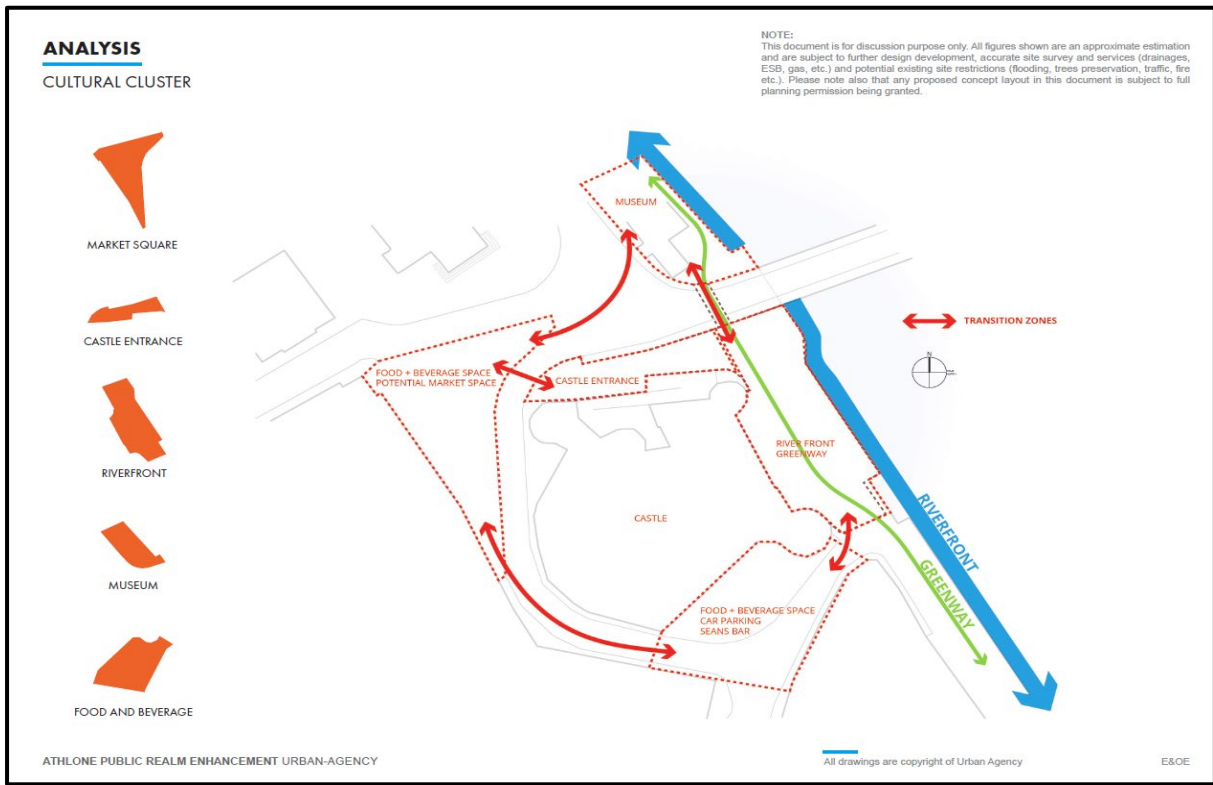


Figure 3 - Athlone Public Realm Sketch Options (Source: Urban Agency)

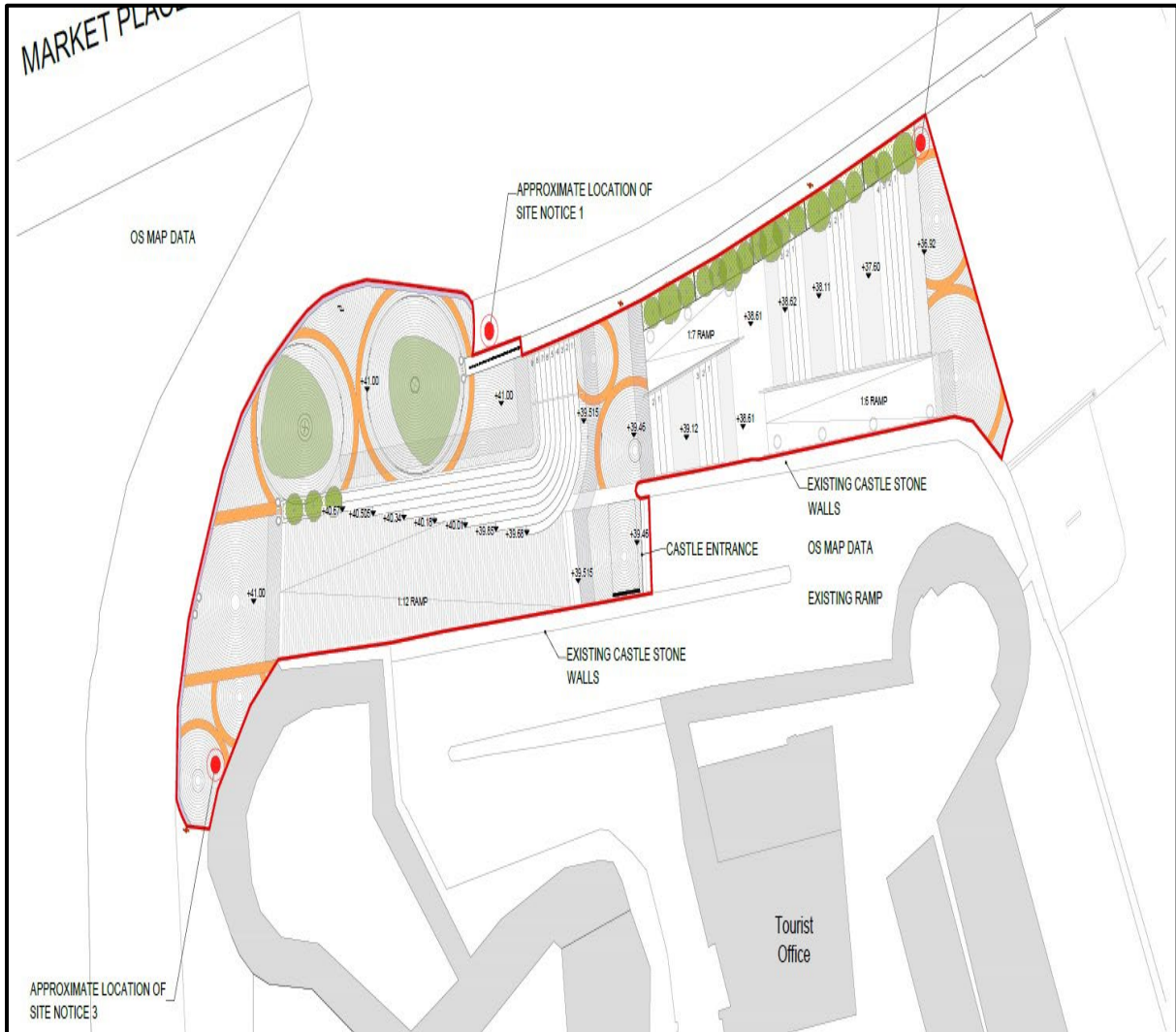


Figure 4 - Worksite (Source: Urban Agency)

2.2 Existing Road Network Description

Athlone Medieval Castle is located the West of the work site area. The development is located within an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA). Castle Street surrounds the castle with the carpark (proposed worksite area) of the castle parallel to the River Shannon.

The R446 (Custume PL) located to the north of the site is a regional road. Custume PL facilitates a two-way road system. Approaching Athlone from the R446 Custume Road to a roundabout junction. Intersection options off the roundabout include:

- left for Costume Bridge which leads to the center of Athlone town.
- the second exit is Castle Street; and
- the third being Barrack Street to the West.

The Church of Saints Peter and Paul, Athlone is a Roman Catholic parish church situated in the town of Athlone between the intersection of Barrack Street, Custume PL and Castle Street. The urban speed limit applies to all roads in the vicinity of the works area.

Castle Street is characterised as a narrow street with a one-way traffic flow system. Traffic flows in a north to south direction. Castle Street it provides access to a number of commercial premises, a public car park, residential properties, and public parking spaces.

At castle street entrance, a car park is located to the right surrounded by retail facilities such as The Square House and Nave Coffee Shop. As you progress down the one-way flow system, Athlone Castle is located on the right with single carparking to the left.

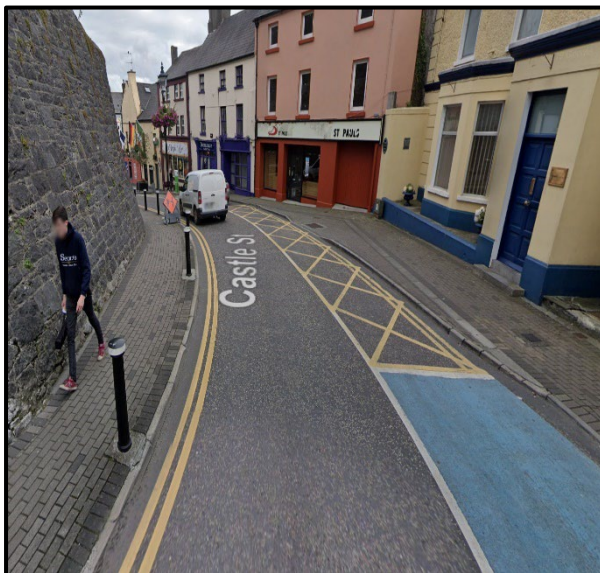


Figure 5 - Castle Street – No Parking Zones

As castle street wraps around the West side of the Castle, vehicles are prohibited to park on the side on this curved section of the road. This is to enable wide loads or larger vehicles to pass easily. Refer to image 5.

Retailers such as Truthful Joy and Downtown Hairstyles are located towards the upper end of Castle Street. Two electric car charging areas are provided on the left-hand side of Castle Street approaching the junction of Castle Street and Main Street. This area of the old town attracts many visitors due to its historic roots and pedestrian footfall would be considered heavy during certain peak times throughout the year. As you approach the upper side of castle street, outdoor eating facilities are in place outside of the Melody Restaurant.

Following the one-way system around this area of the old town, Castle Street leads onto High Street where roadside parking is facilitated to the right. As road widens, parking facilities are

also allocated on the left side of the street. High Street facilitates amenities such as an Italian Restaurant “Di Bella” on the left while Motor Factors store is located on the right side.

Mainstreet, leads onto Bastion Street, which is one-way flow system, a narrow street with town houses lining the left of the street and craft shops and restaurants to the right. Footpaths are in pace on both sides of the road. This then flows onto O’Connell Street, which is also a narrow street which facilitates pedestrians both sides. O’Connell Street is a one way only vehicular street. Traffic flows in a west to east direction. At the top of O Connell Street, there is an intersection. To the right of this intersection is Pearse Street. This is also a one-way street accommodating Naval Pharmacy, beauty salons and insurance brokers. This follows onto Barrack Street which leaves back at the round about having completed the full one-way system.

Quay Street is a one-way street along the River Shannon heading southwards from the site. Quay Street provides access to the River Shannon Viking Boat Tours. Safe access to this recreational facility shall be maintained throughout the works. This tourist attraction must be facilitated for the duration of the upgrade works.

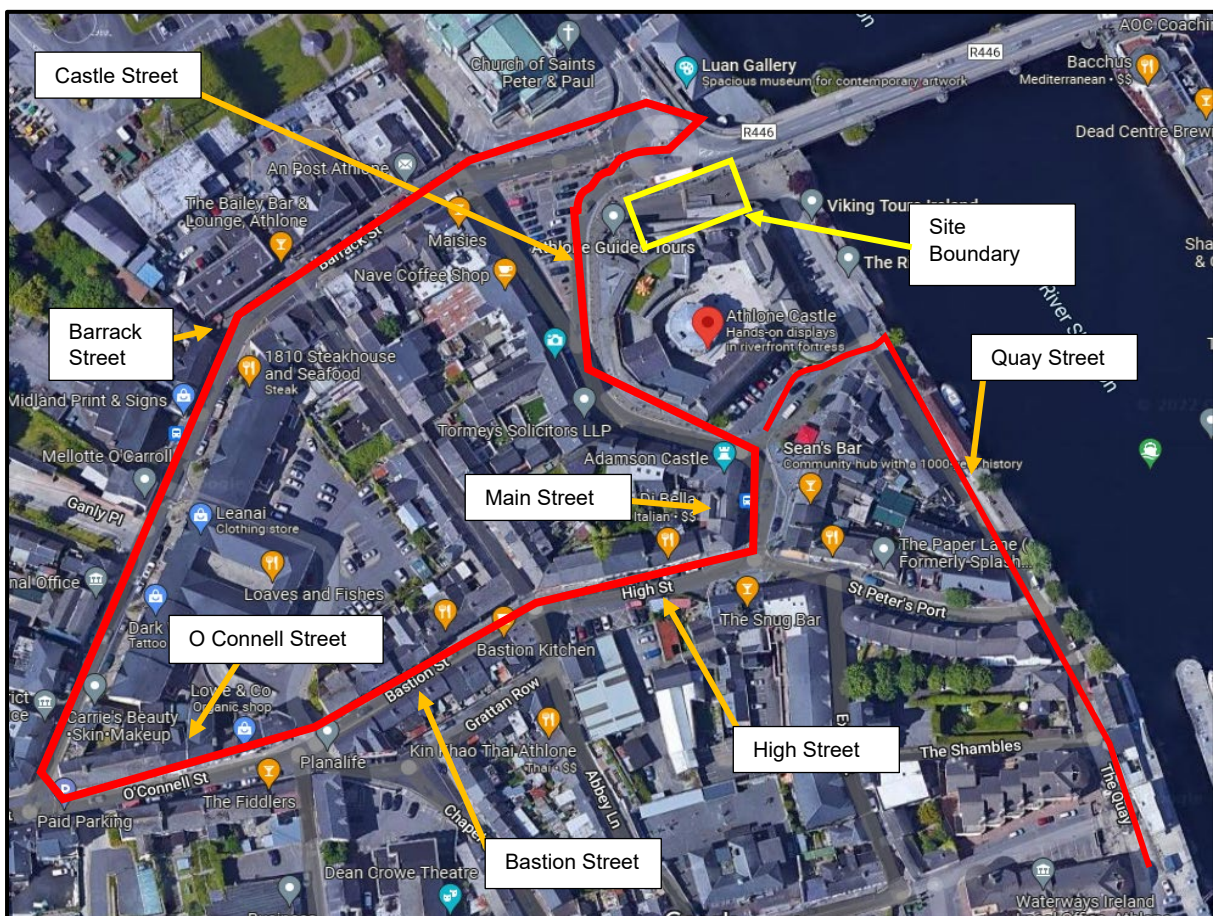


Figure 6- Athlone Streets and One-way System (Source: Google Maps)

2.3 Site Existing Constraints

The roads in the vicinity of the works are classified as Level 1 Roads – Urban and Low Speed Roads by the Temporary Traffic Management Design Guidelines. The primary constraints identified in this outline traffic management plan that will have to be fully considered in the detailed construction stage traffic management plan are outlined as follows:

On **Castle Street**:

- One-way system in operation, narrow road.
- Vehicular and pedestrian entrances to Athlone Castle and restaurants opposite the site location access road.
- Vehicular entrance to a public car parking area is at the entrance to Castle Street.
- Existing on-street parking along the street length.
- Access to existing businesses and private residential accesses along the extent of Castle Street.

On **Quay Street**:

- Existing residential access points along the street.
- Public walkway along the River Shannon is located to the east of Quay Street.
- Commercial premises with access points, loading, and parking areas along the length of the street.
- Access to boats along the river.

Within the site constraints the proposed works shall take into account:

- The site location is on the River Shannon edge.
- The access roads are narrow.

Please note that this area of Athlone town attracts high number of visitors and tourists especially during the summer period. A tourist boat is located in this area. The construction stage traffic management plan shall ensure that they facilitate the intensification of traffic and pedestrians during this period and ensure planned works stages have minimal impact on the operational capacity required to accommodate the traffic. It is essential that the contractor liaises with the Local Authority representatives and retail representatives prior to any works that will affect the routes to retail outlets with detailed information for staff about planned diversions or other temporary traffic measures if applicable.

Consideration should be given regarding the overall site location. The site lies on the West side of Athlone Town Centre on the grounds of Athlone Castle. A one-way traffic system flow is in place on the perimeter roads around the site location. Roads in the “Old Town” tend to be narrow with parking allocated to one side of the street predominantly and pedestrians are facilitated on both sides of the street. The contractor shall take this into consideration when drafting the traffic management plan in regard to large plant and machinery, deliveries, and emergency services access.

2.4 Athlone Castle

Athlone Medieval Castle lies immediately adjacent to the site in the castle carpark. The Castle currently has vehicular and pedestrian access to the castle via the castle carpark. The proposed upgrade works will eliminate the Castle carpark. The proposed upgrade works may have a slight knock-on effect on the one-way system traffic flow when machinery and materials are being delivered to site. Other than that, it is not envisaged that these upgrade works will affect the traffic flow. The PSCS shall ensure adequate parking is available for plant and machinery onsite. Deliveries of materials shall be scheduled during out of peak hours as to not hinder retail units and business on the street. Castle Street currently provides on street parking as per figure 8.

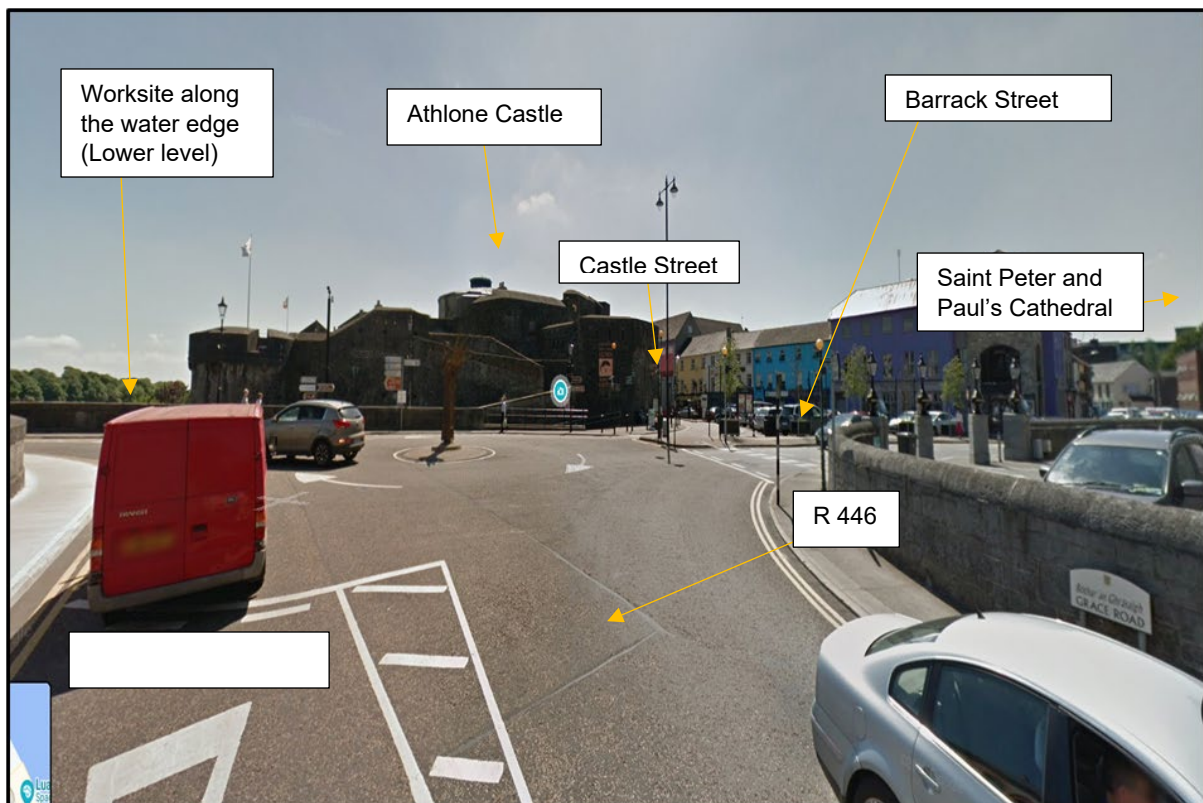


Figure 7 - Junction at Athlone Town Approaching from R446 (Source: Google Maps)

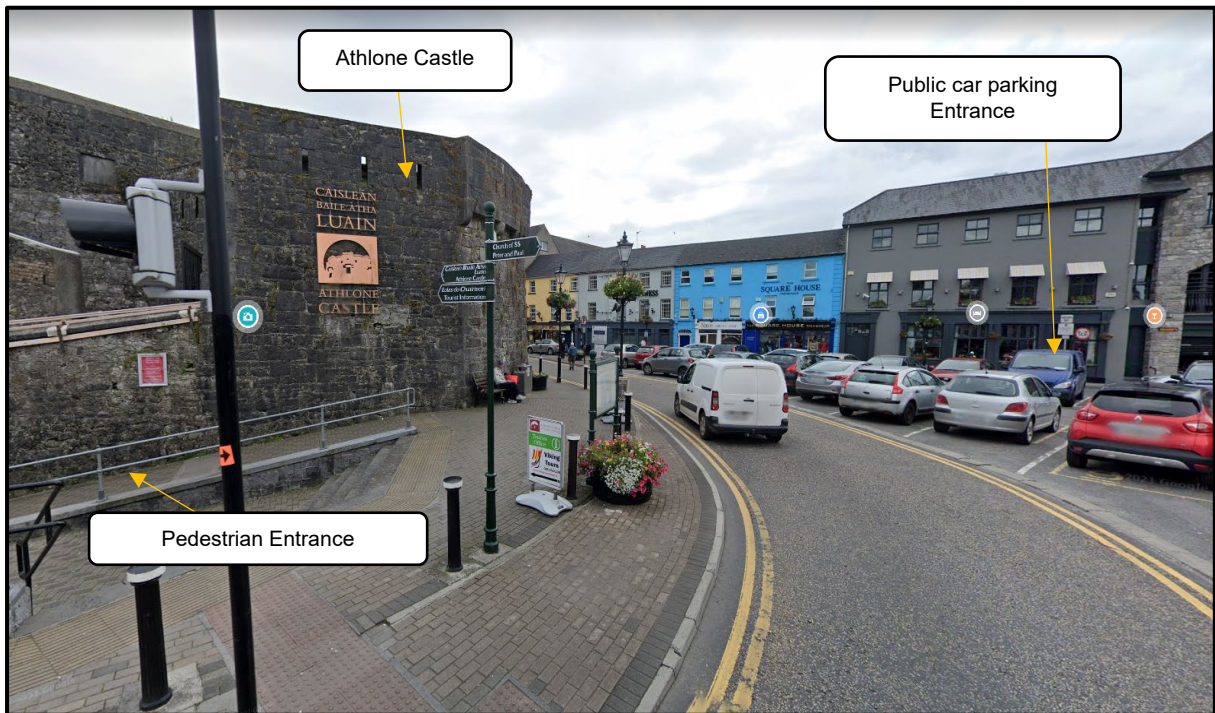


Figure 8 - Castle Street (Sources: Google Maps)

Proposed temporary traffic management measures to be considered for Castle Street include:

- Ensure the work site area is cordoned off from the public to prevent unauthorised access.
- Deliveries of materials to be in smaller vehicles and not HGVs allowing the delivery vehicles to pass easily.
- Localised access, street closing to facilitate works during off-peak times if deemed applicable.
- Suitable temporary pedestrian walkway implemented with clear directional signage posted.

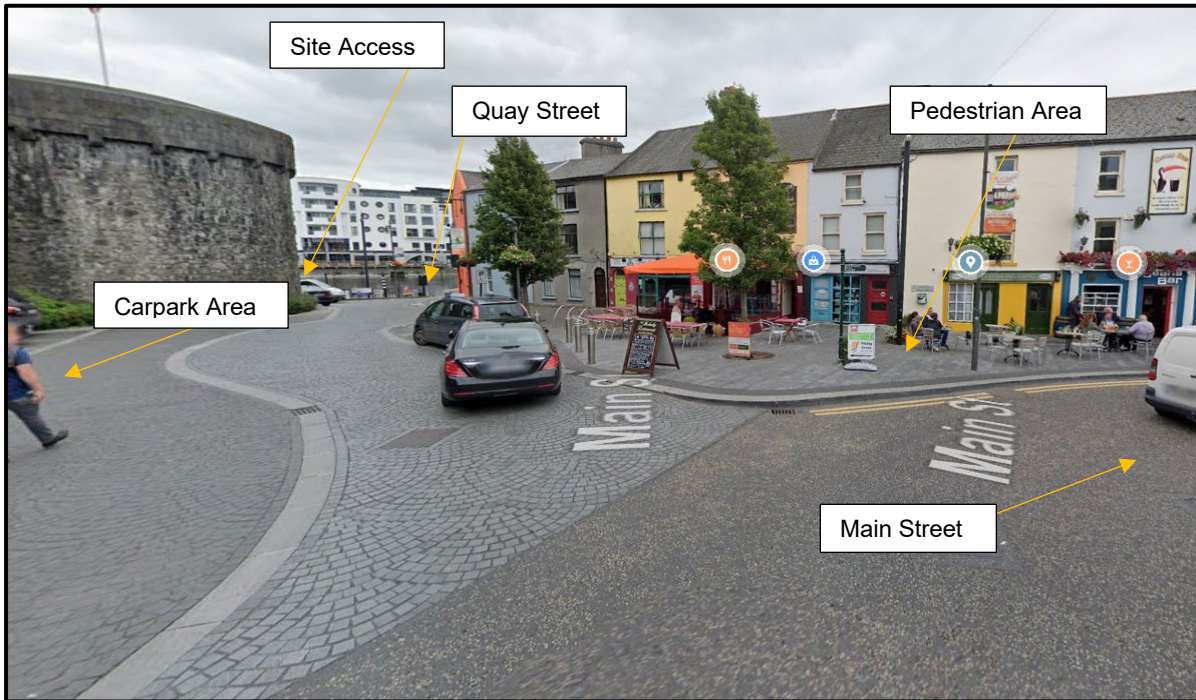


Figure 9 - Access Road off Castle Street Leading to the Proposed Work Site (Source: Google Maps)



Figure 10 - Quay Street (Source: Google Maps)



Figure 9 - Site Location for Upgrade Works (Source - Google Maps)

2.5 Working Hours

Typically working hours during construction is expected to be:

- Weekdays 7am to 7 pm
- Weekends and Bank Holidays 7am to 2 pm

The Contractor is responsible for the operational stages of the upgrade works. All proposed working hours by the contractors shall be agreed in advance with the employer's representative.

2.6 Design and Construction Traffic Management Plan

A construction stage Traffic Management Plan will be prepared by the contractor and PSCS and agreed with nominated representatives of Athlone Municipal District to provide detailed measures to address construction traffic associated with the project and to provide information as to the type, scale and duration of any proposed road closures, diversions, or controlled measures to manage traffic flows around the works areas.

A further development of the Temporary Traffic Management Plan at the construction stage shall address the following issues:

- Site access and egress.
- Traffic Management Signage.
- Routing of construction traffic/road closures.
- Timings of material deliveries to site.
- Traffic management speed limits.
- Road cleaning.
- Road condition.
- Road closures.
- Implementation of traffic management plan.
- Details of workings hours and days.
- Details of emergency plan.
- Communication.
- Construction methodologies.
- Particular construction impacts.

A detailed construction programme should be developed by the contractor taking into account traffic patterns, peak traffic flows in the area to ensure that traffic management measures used during the works have a minimal impact on the operational traffic flows in this area of Athlone.

In order to minimise any disruption to residents and businesses in the area, advance notification and details of traffic management measures related to the works shall be given to all relevant stakeholders before construction starts. Off-site materials storage and deliveries scheduled outside of peak flow hours should be implemented. Necessary measures shall be implemented to reduce dust and noise impact. A road sweeper shall be used to remove debris from construction activities when required.

3 Parameters and Elements of Temporary Traffic Management Plan

3.1 Traffic Management Plan

In construction, work measures should be taken into account in order to minimise any hazard to the workers and any other person. Traffic Control are measures taken when related to work on public roads, also comprising access and egress of the construction site, with the aim to maximise the safety of the workforce and the road users and keep traffic flowing as freely as possible.

Temporary safety barriers should be placed around the working area such as temporary road markings, signage and coning following specifications of the Traffic Signs Manual. A Project Supervisor for the Construction Stage must develop the Construction Stage Safety and Health Plan and carry out a Risk Assessment prior to commencing any work on-site, to determine if the measures put in place to mitigate and control those risks are suitable for the work.

The traffic management plan shall be prepared based on the individuality of each project, taking into account any impact for the road users the construction may affect. The contractor must cooperate with the PSCS to ensure works are coordinated. The installation, modification and removal of the temporary traffic management plan are normally carried out by the contractor.

3.2 Enforcement of Traffic Management Plan

To order to achieve an accurate and suitable implementation of the temporary traffic management plan, the plan shall require the liaison and agreement of measures proposed with the following stakeholders:

- Athlone Municipal District,
- Westmeath County Council Road Department,
- An Garda Síochána, Ambulance and Fire Services,
- Local Business Representatives as required,
- Irish Water and Other Relevant Statutory Bodies.

All relevant stakeholders listed above shall be consulted taking into account the impact expected on traffic that construction work will generate and to work on any imposed specific requirements that may arise from these consultations.

Business owners, local residents, and public services within the affected area due to upgrade works shall receive advanced notice related to upcoming works.

When any non-compliance or problems arise with the traffic management, the PSCS shall consult the Project Supervisor Design Process, the Employers Representative and Athlone Municipal District, and appropriate revisions and modifications shall be done where necessary.

3.3 Traffic Signage

Appropriate signage shall be posted in and around the site boundary to inform pedestrians of the ongoing works. Signage on the surrounding streets shall be posted to communicate that the works are ongoing in the vicinity and care must be taken.

All Traffic signage for works on public roads (warning, regulatory and information) must comply with Traffic Signs Manual Chapter 8 – Temporary Traffic Measures and Signs for Roadworks.

3.4 Variable Message Signs (VMS)

Use of Variable Message Signs should be in accordance with Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Manual. The VMS is used in addition to normal signs or devices used for TTM, must not be used to replace them. The VMS should be placed on the approach of roads affected by traffic management measures, restrictions, or road closure.

The VMS should be put in place in advance of commencing works with an aim to inform motorists and the public of the upcoming works. Once works are ongoing the VMS should inform road users of new routes, road closure, any restriction and special speed limits that may apply. VMS locations are to be discussed and agreed with Athlone Municipal District as part of the construction stage temporary traffic management plan.

3.5 Traffic Signals

When proposed on the construction stage traffic management plans, temporary traffic signals should be discussed and agreed with the relevant stakeholders and subsequently deployed. They must comply with the Temporary Traffic Management Design Guidance and Traffic Signs Manual Chapter 8.

3.6 Speed Limit

Where appropriate, roadworks speed limit should be applied with an aim to reduce unexpected outcome and suitable travel speed deployed within the construction area. If the roadworks speed limit is deployed, it should be discussed and agreed with the relevant authorities and follow the required procedures.

3.7 Road Cleaning

The contractor should remove the temporary traffic management measures once the work has been completed. Reverse order of installation should be applied, in which temporary signs are removed, and existing signs are reinstalled, in order to avoid confusion for road users.

Roadways are to be kept clean of debris and muck. A road sweeping should be used to ensure the roads immediate around the site are clean. Footpaths should be kept clean and free work equipment. The immediate working area should be kept clean. The contractor shall ensure that regular checks to the surrounding areas are carried out to ensure construction-related dirt, dust and debris are cleaned and do not impact the public.

3.8 Emergency Requirements

A temporary traffic management designer must take into account that access for emergency vehicles through the roadworks should be maintained at all times whenever practicable. The emergency services should be consulted in the early stages of the construction stage traffic management plan in order to discuss and agreed on emergency access. The emergency services need to be aware of roadworks along their preferred routes.

In case of any modification in the layout of the temporary traffic management plan, relevant authorities should be informed as appropriate.

3.9 Road Closure

The requirement for a road closure shall be made to Westmeath County Council as per the normal road closure application procedures. The date for the closure must be agreed with the Area Engineer and/or the Senior Engineer. The Gardaí must also be informed of proposed road closures.

It is recommended that the road closure application be completed as soon as the identification of closure is deemed necessary, avoiding any constraints and provide a suitable time for advertisement. The contractor is fully responsible for this application. If necessary, local road users should be given a written authorization to use the road during the closure.

3.10 Road Opening

The applications to a road opening in Westmeath County should be done via the National Online Road Licensing system called Maproad Roadworks Licensing (MRL) which is managed and supported by the Roads Management Office (RMO). Road opening must follow the Guidelines for Managing Opening in Public Roads.

A road opening allows the applicant to excavate a section on a public road. All road closure should be notified to relevant bodies. The contractor is fully responsible for this application.

3.11 Public Notices

The contractor shall liaise with relevant authorities regarding work on roads in which required lane or road closure. Where necessary road closure is required, a notice must be published on the local press, the radio or in form of a leaflet to make the road users, local residents and local business aware of upcoming works and new proposed routes and constraints.

3.12 Lighting

Where works are carried out in unlit areas or during the hours of darkness appropriated lighting should be specified in the temporary traffic management plan. Consideration on lighting positioning should be given regarding the drivers on public roads. It must comply with the Temporary Traffic Management Design Guidance and Traffic Signs Manual Chapter 8.

3.13 Abnormal Loads

If the proposed is likely to present carrying of load in which exceed the legal limits or dimensions, a permit is required. The contraction must apply for the Abnormal Load Permit alongside Athlone Municipal District.

3.14 Construction Operatives Parking

The site has very limited capacity to facilitate staff parking of the existing castle and for the construction workers during the works. The contractor shall provide suitable arrangements for their staff and sub-contractors to travel safely to and from the site in a coordinated manner that will not impact the use of existing on-street parking capacity for public use in the vicinity of the site.