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CAHIR TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM

Part 8 Planning Report

Tipperary County Council

October 2021

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1. Executive Summary

Cahir is located to the south of the junction of the M8 Dublin to Cork motorway and the N24 Waterford to Limerick Road. The town has historically developed here because the River Suir was easily crossed at this point. This historic development of the town, the high concentration of heritage assets including Cahir Castle, Swiss Cottage, the River Suir and its amenity walks provides the town with an attractive setting.

Through public consolations and submissions carried out in 2017 and 2021 it was noticeable that there is a need for public realm improvements and traffic management measures for the Cahir town centre and surrounding area.

The aim of the proposed Cahir Town Centre Public Realm project is to enhance access and presentation of the Square and surrounding areas as a living, social and commercial place. An improved public realm that reinforces the streetscape character, and ensures that visitors feel welcome, will attract new business and tourism.

2. Introduction & Description

2.1 Introduction

The proposed development includes for public realm refurbishment and enhancement in Cahir's town centre comprising the upgrading of the existing Square and approach streets with new high quality paving, kerbing, public lighting, improved street furniture and utility diversions/works (including undergrounding of overhead ESB cables). Footpath space will be widened, traffic calming will be developed raised tables, reduced road carriageway widths and improved pedestrian crossings. Existing on-street parking to be reduced from the Square to a new Town Centre Car Park with a 90+ spaces just off the Square to the north east. This car park is the subject of a separate Part 8 Planning application.

The traffic flow through the Square will be changed from the current two way on both the east and west sides of the Square to two way flow on the east side only. Service and emergency vehicle access will be maintained to the west side of the Square. Pedestrian movement will be prioritised by the design.

The development also includes for public realm refurbishment and enhancement on Castle Street, Church Street, Old Church Street and the Square end of St Mary's Road. A raised table on Castle Street will link the Castle entrance with the river walkways to the north. A similar raised table will be provided on Church Street in front of the new Town Centre Car Park entrance.

2.2 Description of the Scheme

The proposed development includes for public realm refurbishment and enhancement in Cahir's Town Centre comprising the upgrading of the existing Square and approach streets with new high-quality paving, kerbing, landscaping, public lighting, improved street furniture and utility diversions/works.

Location: The proposed development will be carried out on Castle Street, Cahir Town Square, St Mary's Road, Old Church Street and Church Street in the townland of Townparks, Cahir, Co. Tipperary.

Nature and Extent of Proposed Development:

I. New raised table shared surface on Castle Street from Cahir Castle to the Castle Car Park entrance to the East and The Mall entrance to the North.

II. New kerb alignment and pavement surfaces from the Castle Street Car Park entrance to The Square junction, including upgrading of pedestrian crossing, installation of new public lighting and soft landscaping.

III. New streetscape layout for Cahir Square with new alignment design for footpaths, parking areas and trafficked areas incorporating a raised table shared surface from the junction with Castle Street, to the Junction with St Marys Road and to North of The Fountain, new kerb and pavement surfaces throughout The Square, new hard and soft landscaping, new street furniture, new bollards, new bicycle racks, installation of new and upgrade of existing public lighting.

IV. Alteration of on-street parking for Castle Street, The Square, Church Street, Old Church Street and The Square end of St Mary's Road.

V. New pavement surfaces on St. Mary's Road, Old Church Street and Church Street.

VI. New controlled pedestrian crossings and soft landscaping on Church Street and Old Church St.

VII. Undergrounding of overhead electrical cables, installation of new public lighting and upgrading of existing public lighting across the entire project area.

VIII. Development of associated drainage services and utilities across the entire project area.

IX. All associated site works.

The areas included in the Cahir Town Centre Public Realm plan:

- Castle Street
- Cahir Square
- St. Mary's Road
- Old Church Street
- Church Street

2.3 Scheme Objectives

The objective of the Cahir Town Centre Public Realm scheme is to:

- Revitalise Cahir Town Centre;
- Provide a focal point for activity/footfall;
- Reduce pedestrian/vehicle conflict and improving pedestrian safety;
- Reduce vehicle dominance on the Square and the main streets and improve junction capacity;
- Design the Cahir Square as a pleasant and safe place to be;
- Enhance the appearance of the town centre through careful design and selection of appropriate surfacing and street furniture;

- Safeguard the structure and appearance of heritage buildings by reducing the impact of vehicles;
- Development of enhanced pedestrian cyclist linkages throughout the town;
- Consider opportunities to enhance public realm at night.

2.4 Previous Planning Applications and Other Proposed Projects

Other proposed projects within Cahir include the Cahir Town Centre Car Park and the Cahir Market House Business Centre.

The Cahir Town Centre Car Park is a new 86 space off street car park immediately to the north east of the Square. It is envisaged that this work will be constructed in advance of the Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Plan.

The outline boundary for the proposed project as outlined above, is included in the Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Plan drawings for reference.

2.4.1 Cahir Town Centre Car Park

The proposed Cahir Town Centre Car Park is currently going through Part 8 Planning. This will provide 86 additional car, 2 coach and 3 mini-bus parking spaces immediately adjacent to the Square. The vehicle access will be from Church Street, while there will be a pedestrian access from Church Street and from the Square through the Market House property.

2.4.2 Cahir Market House Business Centre:

Planning granted in December 2020, the proposed development comprises the following elements:

2.4.2.1 25 Old Church Street

Alterations and refurbishment including restoration of the façade, demolition of rear section of building and construction of new two storey block and link to the Market House at the Square and Old Church Street, Cahir, Co. Tipperary to develop a new business centre.

2.4.2.2 Cahir Market House (Protected Structure)

The proposed works include the reforming of the original 3-arched façade with fully glazed infill screen, application of impost mouldings and new plinth as part of façade restoration, replacement of existing windows with timber sliding up-and-down sash windows, new panelled front door, re-levelling of arched entrance passage, removal of 3-storey rear extension, construction of new 2-storey extension at rear of existing offices, removal of screen in hall, installation of new partitions, insertion of new internal stairs with new fire exit door and steps at side elevation, removal of existing toilets and provision of new first-floor disabled toilet, installation of new lift, installation of photovoltaic solar panels on inner roof slope, and all associated internal and external alterations and link to 25 Old Church Street.

Cahir Public Realm Project, Cahir Town Centre Car Park and Cahir Market House Business Centre all form part of Cahir Town Regeneration Plan and all projects must obtain Planning Grant to proceed to RRDF Category 1 funding.

The Cahir Town Centre Public Realm, Cahir Town Centre Car Park and the Cahir Market House Business Centre all form part of Cahir Town Regeneration Plan and all projects must obtain Planning Grant to proceed to RRDF Category 1 funding.

3. Identification of Need

Cahir is a rural town with a population of around 3,500, however, it has not benefited from increases in revenue associated with the tourism economy in other parts of the country. The central area is cluttered with poor public realm quality. Currently Cahir's historic and very attractive Square and approach streets are traffic dominated and do not gain the full potential benefit residents, businesses and visitors to the town. Cahir Castle is one of the most impressive castles in the country, attracting significant numbers of visitors every year (90,000 in 2019). The Suir Blueway is a much more recent attraction, which will generate significant number of users over the next few years. An improved public realm that reinforces the streetscape character, and ensures that visitors feel welcome, would encourage these visitors to spend more time in Cahir and attract new business and tourism. This would give Cahir a role both as a visitor destination and as the service town for its hinterlands and communities.

Cahir is within easy reach of all the larger centers of population in Ireland. The location of Cahir just off the junction of the N24 and the M8 supports its significant potential as a major tourism and recreational destination associated with the Suir Blueway and with its heritage as promoted by Ireland's Ancient East.

Public realm improvements of the Square were prioritised in successive Local Area Plans (LAP). The LAP was produced through public consultations and submissions; further consultations were carried out in 2020 with a specific focus on the Square. These consultations further emphasised the need for public realm improvements and traffic management measures for the Square.

The Cahir Town Centre Public Realm proposal for Cahir actively addresses the issues identified in the LAP and subsequent public consultation. During the development of this Plan, there were extensive consultations with stakeholders and County Councilors.

4. Justification for the Project

The town Square and approach streets need to be redeveloped so that they adequately serve the needs of Cahir's residents, businesses and visitors as the country transitions into a low carbon economy. The inevitable reduction in the predominance of vehicles in our town centres offers significant opportunities to reimagine our public spaces so that they are more attractive and user friendly to pedestrians (particularly elderly) and cyclists. Cahir has a wealth of heritage and tourism resources which are ripe for further development including:

- Cahir's Historic Square is situated in the town's impressive Architectural Conservation Area, it is surrounded by a number of protected structures and bookmarked on either end by the historic Cahir House Hotel and the Market House. The Square was once an area dedicated to markets and gatherings and a busy intersection for passers-by.
- The River Suir with its Blueway
- Cahir Castle
- Swiss Cottage
- The 1876 fountain in the Square

- 18th Century Suir Bridge with its castle and river views
- Castle Street, where nearly every one of the buildings is listed
- The Mall, off Castle Street, which faces onto the river
- Church Street

The Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Plan will primarily deliver regeneration, design and enhancement of the central area and public realm

The Square and approach streets are the central spine of the town and form a direct link between Cahir Castle and the Blueway and the town centre. This is the commercial, social and cultural hub of the town. The town centre will be uplifted to become a pleasant place to be, through the development of pedestrian friendly 'zones/character areas' and enhanced way-finding i.e. through paving, interpretation, lighting, etc. A high-quality public realm and review of opportunity sites and synergies in terms of their regeneration will also be incorporated with solutions developed collaboratively.

This regeneration element shall include enhancement and amenity improvement of the central core of Chair. It is expected that significant investment in the core of the town, using its strongest assets, will further consolidate development by stimulating growth and employment, and reducing vacancy and dereliction.

This public realm plan is timely for Cahir as it will benefit from synergies with a range of recently developed and launched, regional and local tourism initiatives including Ireland's Ancient East, the Suir Blueway, the Butler Trail and Munster Vales. The tourism economy in the area has already benefited as can be seen by increased numbers coming from the Suir Blueway and will result in new businesses.

This plan will enhance the overall liveability and amenity of the central area, identify local buildings and features of specific character i.e. Market House in the town and in particular, enhance the setting of the existing built heritage of the town.

5. Environmental Impact Assessment Screening

Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Plan was subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment Screening in accordance with the EIA Directive (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU.

The Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report(EIA) is included in Appendix A and notes that it is not considered that the proposed Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Project works will result in a significant negative effect on population and human health, biodiversity, land and soil, water , air quality and climate; material assets, cultural heritage and landscape and visual resource either alone, or in combination with other projects. Overall, the project will have a long term positive effect on the town.

The EIA screening report concluded that an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required based on the following reasons;

- Having considered the proposed development in the context of the mandatory requirement for Annex I and II projects, there is no requirement for EIA as the project is below the mandatory threshold for EIA.
- Having regard to the characteristics of the development, the proposal is of a relatively small-scale, involving pavement and junction upgrade works which are not complex in nature, within a development site that

will be contained and controlled. Therefore, the development is not of a scale that would introduce significant or complex environmental effects.

- Having regard to the location of the development, within Cahir town and outside of any sensitive or protected Natura 2000 site, it would not introduce significant or complex environmental effects.
- Having regard to the potential for effects on the environment, it is considered that due to the relatively modest scale of the proposed development and the development site location, the potential for minor effects can be alleviated through standard good site practice. Mitigation measures are available, should they be required, including any archaeological monitoring which may be advised by the County Archaeologist.
- Having considered the proposal in cumulation with existing and approved projects and activities, significant effects on the environment are not likely.
- Therefore, it is concluded that there is no likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development.

Overall the EIA Screening advised that the considered impacts or effects are minor in nature and do not pose a significant threat. Site management and good practice will minimise and reduce potential impacts on site.

6. Appropriate Assessment Screening

The Appropriate Assessment Screening report is included in Appendix B and noted that the effect of the proposed Cahir Town Centre Public Realm project will be to improve the streetscape and infrastructure of the town. The proposed works will be carried out in the dry and there will be no significant impacts to water quality. There is no potential for significant impacts on the qualifying interests for which the Natura 2000 sites within the zone of potential influence are designated. As such, there would be no significant direct or indirect effects on qualifying habitat or species associated with Natura 2000 sites. Given the limited scale and scope of the proposed works, in-combination impacts to the identified Natura 2000 sites identified are not envisaged.

In accordance with Article 120(1B)(b)(i) of the Local Government Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, the Screening for Appropriate Assessment report concluded that there is no likelihood for significant impacts on the Lower River Suir SAC, or other Natura 2000 sites within the zone of potential influence of the project. Therefore, a Stage 2 Natura Impact Statement is not required.

7. Flood Risk Assessment

The Flood Risk Assessment, included in Appendix C, reviewed the proposed design and advised that the proposed alterations will not significantly change the existing ground levels across the scheme. The existing flood defence embankments and walls will not be compromised by the proposed scheme. Therefore, the proposal will not impact any important flow paths and will not affect floodplain storage or conveyance. The detailed design of the scheme will ensure that all levels and details are set on this basis.

The majority of the proposed works include cosmetic changes to the existing streetscape, replacing the existing surface finishes with upgraded finishes to footpaths and providing shared surfaces. The runoff characteristics of the proposed finishes will be consistent with the existing. Rain gardens and tree pits with reservoirs will be provided along Castle Street, the Square, Church Street and Old Church Street. The Flood Risk Assessment noted that once the scheme design is completed on this basis, the proposed scheme will not create additional surface water runoff that could otherwise increase flood risk elsewhere.

Mitigation measures as outlined above are considered sufficient to ensure that the flood risk is negligible. The Flood Risk Assessment demonstrated that the proposed development will not have an adverse impact on flooding elsewhere and that the risk to occupants of the site would be acceptable.

8. Public Services

Both Tipperary County Council Water Services staff and Irish Water were contacted about the proposed Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Plan and confirmed that they have no plans to upgrade the networks in Cahir. They are in favour of re-directing surface water from combined sewers to dedicated surface water sewer where possible.

While the locations of gullies will change no additional connections to Irish Water network will be required under the plan.

8.1 Water Supply

The proposed scheme does not include any new demands on the water supply.

8.2 Sewerage Facilities

The proposed scheme does not include any new demands on the sewerage facilities. It is proposed as part of the scheme to separate combined sewers where feasible, this will divert additional surface water into the surface water drainage system and reduce the load on the sewerage system.

8.3 Surface Water Drainage

A Surface Water Management Plan is in Appendix D. The proposed scheme is a refurbishment of the existing streetscape and therefore does not create any additional hardstandings which would contribute to the surface water drainage system. It is proposed as part of the scheme to separate the combined sewers where feasible, this will divert additional surface water into the surface water drainage system.

8.3.1 SuDS

Where suitable, rain gardens and tree pit soakaways will be provided, these will ease the flow of surface water into the drainage network. Tree pits and rain gardens are proposed along Castle Street, the Square, Church Street and Old Church Street to capture the surface water from the footpaths.

9. Traffic and Parking

9.1 Existing Environment

9.1.1 Road Network

The R670 Regional Road and the R640 Regional Road converge in Cahir Town Centre to form the Square. The R670 brings traffic in a north-south direction, while the R640 brings traffic east-west through Cahir. Both roads

are an important link in the regional road network. The Square is a two-way gyratory that allows all vehicle movements around it. The R640 (Castle Street) forms the western approach to the Square, turning left to continue north on the Square and then right to continue east (Old Church Street). It has a typical width of 7.3m to 8.0m through Cahir.

The R670 enters the Square from the south (St. Mary's Road) and continues north before turning left at the Square and then immediately right to continue north (Church Street). Church Street is typically 7.3m wide. St. Mary's Street has a narrow carriageway width, reducing to 5.5m at its narrowest.

The Square, on its west side, provides a link between the R913 Castle Street and R670 Church Street. Vehicles can also turn from the Square (west) onto the R640 Old Church Street.

On-street parking is provided on the north side of Castle Street, both sides of Church Street, and both sides of Old Church Street. On-street parking is also provided on the east side of St. Mary's Road. Parking is provided on all sides of the Square, on both sides of the carriageway. On-street parking is typically parallel, 2.4m in width, with perpendicular parking in the centre of the Square and on the north side of Old Church Street.

The M8 Motorway runs north-east of Cahir Town Centre. Vehicles can access it via Junction 11 south of Cahir, via the R639 or Junction 10 north of Cahir, via the R670 and N24 National Primary Road. The N24 between Limerick and Waterford runs north of Cahir and is accessed via the R640 and R639. The N24 links Cahir with Clonmel, Carrick-on-Suir and Tipperary Town.

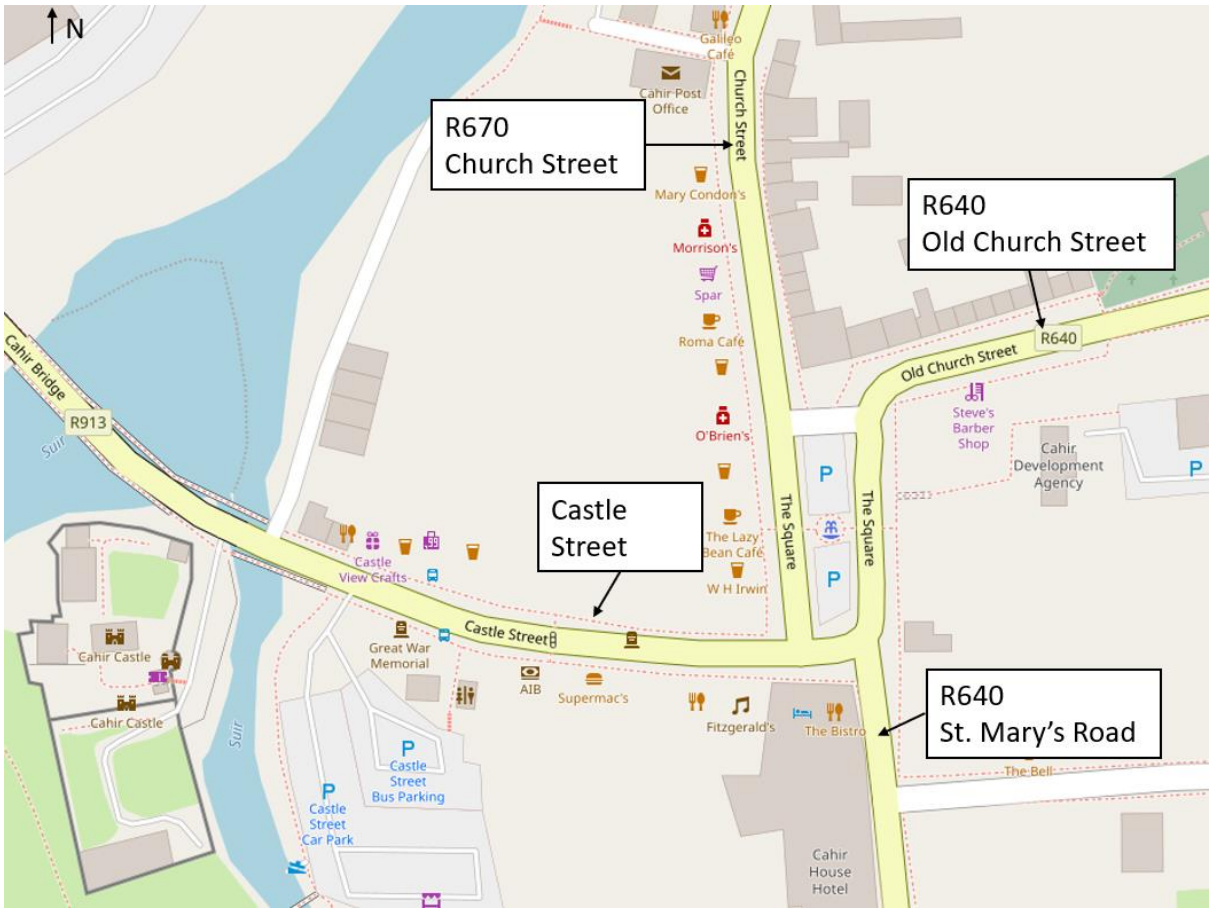

Figure 9.1: Local Road Network

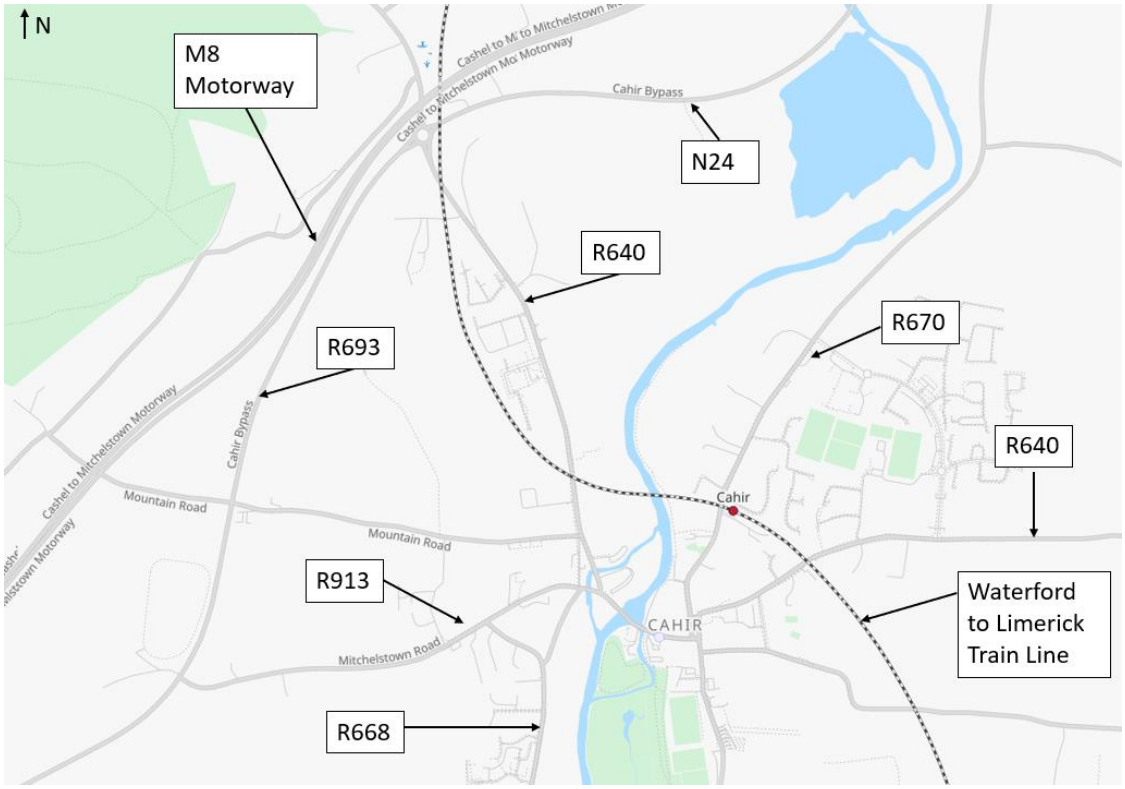

Figure 9.2: Regional Road Network

The proposed scheme is within the 50 km / hour urban speed limit.

There is an existing signal-controlled pedestrian crossing on Castle Street. There is a controlled zebra crossing on the Square, linking the east and west side.

9.1.2 Public Transport

Cahir Train Station, serving the Waterford – Limerick train line, is located approximately 500m north of Cahir Town Centre.

Two bus stops (one in each direction) are present on Castle Street. Local Link and Bus Éireann, along with other bus services, use this bus stop. This facilitates travel from Cahir to Cork, Dublin, Waterford, Clonmel and towns in Tipperary with the Local Link service.

9.1.3 Road Safety

The RSA Online Map of Collisions records nine collisions between 2005 and 2016 within the proposed scheme. Seven of these were related to pedestrian collisions.

- Three minor injury pedestrian collisions were recorded on the north-east of the Square, at its junction with Old Church Street.
- One minor injury pedestrian collision on the east side of the Square.
- One minor injury pedestrian collision on the south side of the Square.
- One minor injury pedestrian collision on the north-west side of the Square, crossing Church Street.
- One minor collision involving a right turning goods vehicle on Church Street.

- Two minor collisions on Castle Street, one involving a pedestrian and one involving a cyclist.

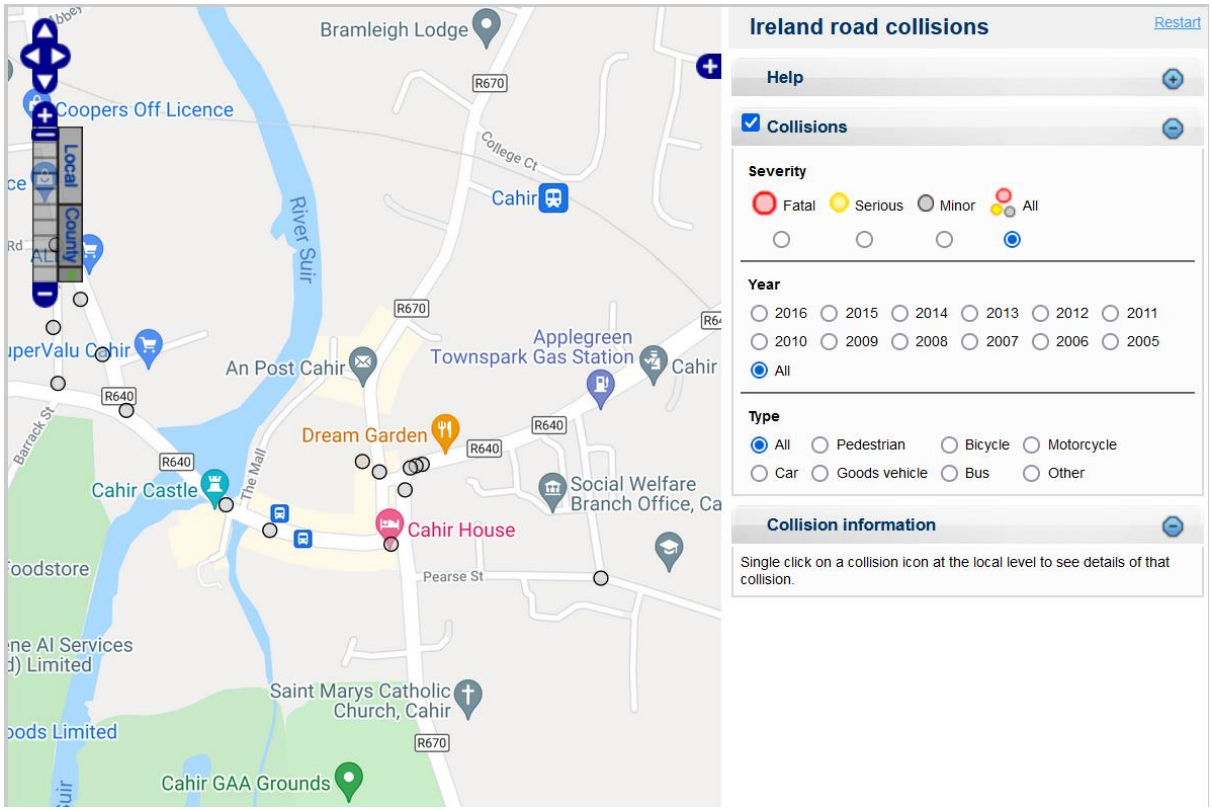

Figure 9.3: Road Safety Authority Online Map of Road Collisions - Cahir Town Centre

9.2 Policy Review

The Cahir Local Area Plan 2021 – 2027 (Tipperary County Council) contains Transport and Movement policies and objectives that the Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Project contributes towards. These include:

- TM1: Improve accessibility and movement within Cahir, reduce dependency on private car transport, increase permeability in the town and encourage the use of energy efficient forms of transport through the promotion of walking, cycling and public transport.
- TM2: Ensure that new developments are designed to comply with Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2019) including making provision for pedestrian and cycle infrastructure and enhancing connectivity and accessibility to the town.
- TM07.1: Continue the improvement of approach roads, including the provision of traffic calming measures and active transport modes, subject to the availability of resources.

9.3 Bus Infrastructure

There are two existing bus stops in Cahir Town Centre. Both are located on Castle Street, one eastbound and one westbound. There are no changes to the bus stop locations as part of the proposed scheme. Both bus stops remain as inset bus stops, meaning that traffic can pass by while the buses are stopped to alight passengers.

9.4 Pedestrian Crossings and Footpaths

It is an objective of the scheme to improve the public realm for pedestrians. As part of the proposed layout, two new controlled pedestrian crossings and three new uncontrolled pedestrian crossings are included. A controlled pedestrian crossing is one where the pedestrian has right of way on the crossing. These are provided as controlled zebra crossings, with belisha beacons, tactile paving, striped road markings and other associated road markings in accordance with the Traffic Signs Manual.

Controlled Zebra crossings are proposed on:

- Church Street
- Old Church Street
- Castle Street (to replace the existing traffic signal-controlled pedestrian crossing)

Four new uncontrolled crossings are proposed as part of the scheme. These crossings are where the vehicle has right of way and pedestrians can cross when there are gaps in the traffic. The traffic calmed road design will encourage lower vehicle speeds, with vehicles likely to stop to provide gaps for pedestrians crossing. The uncontrolled crossings will be highlighted with buff coloured tactile paving and a different paving pattern, indicating a change in surface for vehicle drivers.

New uncontrolled pedestrian crossings are proposed on:

- Castle Street, on the raised table at Cahir Castle
- Castle Street, opposite Cahir House Hotel
- The Square, opposite the fountain

The existing uncontrolled pedestrian crossing at the junction of the Square and St. Mary's Road will also be included in the public realm upgrade.

An uncontrolled pedestrian crossing layout, including buff tactile paving, has been provided at junctions and vehicle accesses within the scheme.

Throughout the proposed scheme, footpath widths have been widened to a typical minimum of 2.0m, up to a width of 3.0-3.5m. This increases the space available to pedestrians, allowing people to walk in groups and provide a comfortable walking experience, in line with the guidance in DMURS.

9.5 Junction Strategy

The junction strategy for the Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Project has been developed within the context of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) (May 2019) and Transport Infrastructure Ireland Publication DN-GEO-03060 (June 2017) Geometric Design of Junctions.

The principal of narrowing the carriageways to a 3.5m lane width (7.0m carriageway width) is in accordance with DMURS. This is intended to reduce vehicle speeds on entering the town centre. Raised tables have also been provided at key locations, which also contribute to the traffic calming effect. Buildouts, wider footpaths, landscaping and pedestrian crossings will further reduce traffic speeds along the routes.

The road layout in Cahir Town Centre has been rationalised as part of the project. The proposed layout reduces the current four priority junction layout around the Square to two priority junctions. This will optimise traffic flow through the town centre, ensuring priority for the main traffic flow, which travels between Castle Street and Old Church Street. The reduction in the number of junctions will also improve traffic flow as there will be less locations

at which traffic is stopped to let other vehicles turn. The relocation of on-street parking to off-street car parks, as well as the new car parking spaces within the Square, will also improve traffic flow around the Square.

Traffic junction counts were undertaken in May 2018 and provided by Tipperary County Council. The traffic counts included all arms of the junctions and have been conservatively summarised to provide average annual daily traffic counts (AADT). These are vehicle counts of two-way traffic on the road. The traffic counts have been factored to 2021, using the TII Project Appraisal Guidelines for National Roads Unit 5.3 – Travel Demand Projections May 2019. The guidelines envisage that car and light vehicle volumes on Tipperary national roads, will increase by an annual growth factor of 1.0119 during the period to 2030 and by a factor of 1.0306 for heavy vehicles, based on their central growth rates.

Table 9.1: Average Daily Traffic Counts for Cahir Town Centre

Road Name	Arm Description	Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) 2021
R640 Castle Street and Old Church Street	Major	6766
R670 St. Mary's Road	Minor	1003
R670 Church Street	Minor	2976

The traffic volumes at the two proposed junctions in Cahir Town Centre are within the TII traffic volume guidelines for priority junctions. The guidelines recommend that where a major road has an AADT of less than 10,000, the minor arm is recommended to have an AADT of between 450 and 3000.

9.6 Parking Strategy and Impacts

9.6.1 Existing Parking

Cahir Town Centre has a significant amount of on-street for use by residents, businesses and tourists. On-street parking in Cahir is free and has a two-hour limit. This is enforced by a traffic warden on site. There is no dedicated loading or set down spaces within the town centre.

On-street car park is present within the project extents on the following streets:

- Castle Street
- The Square
- St. Mary's Road
- Old Church Street
- Church Street

Cahir Town Centre also has, as existing, four off-street car parks:

- The Castle Car Park (paid for parking)
- Park Avenue Car Park (Behind Cahir House Hotel) (free parking)
- The Granary Car Park (free parking)
- The Viaduct Car Park (free parking)

9.6.2 Proposed Parking Strategy

As part of developing the public realm design and rationalisation of the traffic movements within the town centre, 33 on-street parking spaces are required to be removed from the street and relocated to the proposed Cahir Car Park, located north of the Square. Vehicles will access the car park from Church Street, with an additional pedestrian access linking the Square with the car park. The proposed car park will provide an additional 86 car parking spaces, along with two mini-bus spaces and 3 coach spaces. This is subject to a separate Part 8 Planning Application.

The centre of the proposed Cahir Car Park is approximately 150m from the centre of the Square using the pedestrian route. Parking is typically considered to be within close proximity to a site when it is within a 350m walk.

On-street parking in Cahir will remain free, with a two-hour time limit.

Dedicated loading / set down bays are also provided within the proposed layout. Signage will be provided to limit the time for loading activities to between 09.30 a.m. and 11.30 a.m.. Outside of this time, the spaces can be used as normal parking spaces.

The Square will have 10 permanent car parking spaces, 3 of which are disabled parking spaces. It will also have two loading / set down bays, which, when not used for loading, revert to car parking spaces. This provides overall 12 permanent parking spaces within the Square. During the winter months, an additional 12 spaces will be made available on the Square, in the pedestrian area. During these months, the total available spaces in the Square will be 24.

Castle Street will have 9 car parking spaces, with 1 loading / set down bay. This equates to a total of 11 parking spaces. The removal of parking on Castle Street will facilitate the introduction of a raised table and pedestrian crossing at the entrance to the Blueway and Cahir Castle.

Old Church Street will have 15 car parking spaces. This is a reduction from the existing 21 car parking spaces. This is due to the change from perpendicular parking to parallel parking due to road safety concerns.

Church Street will have 20 car parking spaces, with 1 loading / set down bay. This equates to a total of 22 car parking spaces.

St. Mary's Road will have 2 car parking spaces. The junction of St. Mary's Road and the Square were realigned as part of the proposed layout, bringing it into line with current guidance in DMURS and best practice for road safety design. This resulted in the loss of parking spaces. St. Mary's is a narrow road, with a carriageway width of 5.4m at its narrowest, which did not allow for additional car parking.

During the design process, a number of parking spaces were identified as being sub-standard. This was due to their proximity to pedestrian crossings and their impact on the visibility splay at the junction. In a Do-Nothing scenario, it would be recommended that 9 parking spaces were removed to improve road safety in Cahir Town Centre.

DMURS recommends that on Arterial and Link streets, on-street parking spaces should be provided in a series of bays that are parallel to the vehicular carriageway. Vehicles reversing onto roads with high volumes of traffic can

cause delays and have the potential to cause a collision. Altering the parking layout on Old Church Street from perpendicular to parallel results in the loss of 6 parking space. Altering the parking layout in the Square from perpendicular to parallel would result in the loss of 10.

9.6.3 Parking Impacts

Table 9.2and Table 9.3 summarises the proposed changes to parking in Cahir Town Centre.

Table 9.2: Existing Car Parking Spaces

Location	Existing Car Parking Spaces
Castle Street	15
The Square	41
Old Church Street	21
Church Street	26
St. Mary's Road	4
Total	**107**
Removed for Road Safety Reasons	
Removed for sightlines at junctions	9
Change from perpendicular to parallel parking - Square	10
Change from perpendicular to parallel parking - Old Church Street	6
Total Parking Removed for Road Safety	**25**
Total existing parking when taking into account spaces removed for Road Safety	**82**

Table 9.3: Proposed Parking in Cahir Town Centre and Impacts

Location	Proposed Car Parking Spaces	
	Winter	Summer
Castle Street	11	11
The Square	24	12
Old Church Street	15	15
Church Street	22	22
St. Mary's Road	2	2
Total	**74**	**62**
Difference between existing and proposed	**8**	**20**
Cahir Car Park Spaces	**86**	**86**
Total Parking Spaces for Cahir Town Centre	**160**	**148**
Parking Gain for Cahir Town Centre	**78**	**66**

9.7 Road Safety Audit

A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit has been undertaken on the proposed scheme by an independent Audit Team. The report is included in the Part 8 Planning Application. All items raised by the Audit Team have been addressed in the design. A Stage 2 Road Safety Audit will take place on completion of the detailed design of the scheme.

10. Archaeological Assessment

An Archaeological Assessment was undertaken for the proposed Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Project. A copy of the report is included in Appendix F. It is noted in the report that the majority of the proposed works are within

the Zone of Archaeological Notification/Potential (ZAP) for the historic town of Cahir. Within the historic town there are 59 known sites or monuments of archaeological significance, including the complex of medieval and post-medieval castle building at Cahir Castle.

An evaluation of the potential impacts of the proposed project on the archaeological resource was undertaken.

The report recognises that the proposed Cahir Town Centre Public Realm project will enhance access and presentation of the core of Cahir as a living, social and commercial place which will be supported by a plan that encourages pedestrian movements, and car-parking at locations outside of the medieval core.

It is noted that the ground disturbance required to undertake the works, has the potential, if unmitigated, to negatively impact on the archaeological resource of the town. The report recommends that all ground disturbances should be archaeologically monitored, by a suitably experienced archaeologist.

11. Architectural Assessment

An Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment (AHIA) was undertaken for the proposed Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Project. A copy of the report is included in Appendix G.

The AHIA assessed the physical and visual impacts of the proposed works and highlighted the materials which are to be retained. Overall, the AHIA concluded that the proposed public realm works will result in positive visual impacts on the setting of the historic buildings. The AHIA recommended the following mitigation measures:

- Historic architectural elements such as limestone doorsteps, doorcases, limestone steps, railings and plinth walls, carriage archways and doorways should be protected during the course of works from any physical damage which may occur during the installation of the new surfaces, lighting etc. and from damage caused by materials such as cement and grouting.
- Historic street furniture elements such as limestone kerbs and jostle stones should be retained and reused in their original locations rather than discarded and/or replaced.
- A number of the buildings in the centre of Cahir have stone shopfronts and/or stone pilasters, including Glengall House, the Bank of Ireland and the shops to the west side of the Square. These architectural features must be protected during resurfacing works and should not be altered or damaged by the laying of new surfacing material.
- Some of the works are proposed in locations which may be archaeologically sensitive and may require monitoring, for example in the vicinity of the north side of Castle Street and on the bridge.
- Some buildings along Castle Street have basements and others may be retained below street level. These are often vaulted structures with the top of the vault quite close to the surface of the street which should be considered where trees are proposed for planting.
- To the front of the Market House a plaque marks the location of the burial of a military horse in the mid-19th century. This will require further investigation before commencing works to install a new set of steps. The plaque should be relocated.

These recommendations will be considered in the detailed design phase and construction phase of the Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Plan.

12. Design Standards

The scheme was designed in accordance with the various publications as listed:

National Cycle Manual (NCM), 2007, National Transport Authority. https://www.cyclemanual.ie/

Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) Version 1.1, 2019, Government of Ireland. https://www.dmurs.ie/

Traffic Management Guidelines, 2003, Department of Transport, Government of Ireland.

Traffic Signs Manual, Chapter 7 Road Markings, 2019, Department of Transport, Government of Ireland.

Design Manual for Bicycle Traffic, 2016, CROW.

Cycle Infrastructure Design, Local Transport Note 1/20, July 2020, UK Department for Transport.

TII Publications (Standards), Transport Infrastructure Ireland. https://www.tiipublications.ie/

TII Publications (Technical), Transport Infrastructure Ireland. https://www.tiipublications.ie/

DN-PAV-03021 Pavement and Foundation Design.

DN-PAV-03024 Bituminous Mixtures, Surface Treatments, and Miscellaneous Products and Processes

DETR Guidance on the use of Tactile Paving surfaces

http://universaldesign.ie

Natural Stone Surfacing – Good Practice Guide

Guideline for Managing Openings in Public Roads

Basis of Design: IS EN 1990: Eurocode – Basis of structural design. (EC0)

General Actions: IS EN 1991: Eurocode 1: Actions on structures. (EC1)

Design of concrete: IS EN 1992: Eurocode 2: Design of concrete structures. (EC2)

Design of steel: IS EN 1993: Eurocode 3: Design of steel structure. (EC3)

Design of timber: IS EN 1995: Eurocode 5: Design of Timber structures. (EC5)

Design of masonry: IS EN 1996: Eurocode 6: Design of masonry structures. (EC6)

Geotechnical: IS EN 1997: Eurocode 7: Geotechnical design. (EC7)

Building Regulations of Republic of Ireland

Wastewater: IS EN 12056 Gravity drainage systems inside buildings

Sewer Foul and Storm: IS EN 752:2008 (Drain and sewer systems outside buildings) and the Sewers for adoption 7th Edition.

SUDS: Ciria (C753) SuDS manual

Rainfall data: Met Eireann

Code of Practice for Water Infrastructure Connections and Developer Services; Design and Construction Requirements for Self-Lay Developments; July 2020 (Revision 2) https://www.water.ie/

Water Infrastructure Standard Details Connections and Developer Services; Construction Requirements for Self-Lay Developments; July 2020 (Revision 4) https://www.water.ie/

Code of Practice for Wastewater Infrastructure Connections and Developer Services Design and Construction Requirements for Self-Lay Developments July 2020 (Revision 2) https://www.water.ie/

Wastewater Infrastructure Standard Details Connections and Developer Services Design and Construction Requirements for Self-Lay Developments July 2020 (Revision 4) https://www.water.ie/

The electrical installation shall be in accordance with the following:

Complying with Irish Standard I.S. 10101: 2020 'National Rules for Electrical Installations' Edition 5.0;

Complying with ET 206:2009, ET213:2007 and subsequent addendums;

Guidelines on Selection of Lighting Classes PD CEN/TR 13201-1:2014

Road Lighting Performance Requirements IS EN 13201-2: 2015

Code of practice for the design of road lighting. Lighting of roads and public amenity areas BS 5489-1:2020 and subsequent addenda

Current ESB Networks Regulations, Codes of Practice and Guidelines including the latest edition of the ESB National Code of Practice for Customer Interface and ESB requirements for Works on Public Lighting on ESB's Networks;

Current edition of ESB Requirements for Work on Public Lighting on ESB's Networks;

Complying with ESB Networks Ltd. Contractor Pack for Working Near Live Overhead or Underground Cables and subsequent addenda;

Complying with ILP Code of Practice for Electrical Safety in Highway Electrical Operations and subsequent addenda;

ESB Networks Procedure Public Lighting Work Activities (PLWA);

Tipperary County Council Public Lighting Policy

13. DMURS Statement

The objective of "The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets" (DMURS) is to achieve better street design in urban areas. This will encourage more people to choose to walk, cycle or use public transport by making the experience safer and more pleasant. The proposed layout for Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Plan promotes and prioritises walking and cycling.

Traffic calming has been included through the narrowing of carriageways and the introduction of a raised table across the Square. Pedestrian crossings have been included in the layout.

13.1 The Square

The traffic on the Square will be significantly calmed under the proposed scheme, with the removal of the road along the west side of the Square, tighter lane widths, a raised table in the southeast of the Square and controlled crossing points. This will make it much easier for pedestrians to cross the Square in between designated crossing points. A significant new plaza area will be created on the west side of the Square. Part of this area can revert to on street parking in the late autumn, winter and early spring, when visitor numbers are lower. The footpath widths on the east and south sides of the Square will be increased. The plaza area, on the north side of the Square will also be increased in size and enhanced.

13.2 Castle Street

A raised table is proposed between the castle entrance and the car park. This will calm traffic on the approach to the core of the town and allow easier movement of pedestrians from the river walkway and businesses, on the north side of Castle Street to the castle entrance and car park. The footpaths along Castle Street will be widened, while maintaining the bus stops and majority of on street parking. The pedestrian crossing will be enhanced.

High quality surface materials will be used to areas of new footpaths and the raised table to encourage the movement of pedestrians across the spaces. The raised table is intended to calm traffic movements, while reinforcing pedestrian activities and enhancing visual amenity, economic performance and perceptions of personal safety.

13.3 Church Street

A raised table is proposed opposite the entrance to the new Town Centre Car Park (separate Part 8 application). This will calm traffic on the approach to the core of the town and allow easier movement of pedestrians to and from the car park and connecting down to the river walkway. The footpaths along Church Street will be widened, while maintaining the majority of on street parking. Two new pedestrian crossing will be provided.

High quality surface materials will be used to areas of new footpaths and the raised table to encourage the movement of pedestrians across the spaces. The raised table is intended to calm traffic movements, while reinforcing pedestrian activities and enhancing visual amenity, economic performance and perceptions of personal safety.

13.4 Old Church Street and St Mary's Road

The footpaths on both streets will be widened. The underutilised and unsafe perpendicular parking, on Old Church Street, will be converted to parallel parking. The pedestrian crossing, on Old Church Street, will be moved closer to the Square to reflect pedestrian desire lines. This will be even more significant once the proposed Town Centre Car Park and pedestrian link is constructed.

14. Utilities Impacted by the Scheme

Services enquiries were issued to the utility providers requesting a copy of their records of services within the proposed project area. In addition to the services enquiries to the utility providers, a Topographical Survey was undertaken in October 2021 and a Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) survey was undertaken, again in October 2021. This information was used to assess the existing utilities in comparison with the proposed design and to identify any potential clashes which may require diversion of utilities.

14.1 ESB

The project brief requests for the undergrounding of all overhead electrical cables. All electrical cables in the Square currently run underground.

There are a limited number of overhead cables on Castle Street, but it is understood that these are for Christmas lights and need to be retained. There are some overhead cables on Church Street and Old Church Street. As part of the public realm upgrade works, it is proposed to liaise with ESB Networks and underground the existing overhead ESB cables.

Depending on the depth of the underground MV electrical cables running in the Square and along Castle Street, these cables may need to be lowered to accommodate a concrete slab underneath the raised table and shared surface areas.

14.2 Gas

While Board Gais have plans to extend their network to Cahir, there is no town supply at present.

14.3 Irish Water

Tipperary County Council Water Services staff were contacted and confirmed that they have no plans to upgrade the networks in Cahir but they are in favour of re-directing surface water from combined sewers to dedicated surface water sewer where possible.

14.3.1 Water Supply

The proposed public realm project does not require any additional water supply requirements.

It may be required to undertake minor alterations to the positioning of Water Hydrant points or Water Meters in conjunction with proposed landscaping and pedestrian crossings. Where this is required, any alteration to the positioning of a water supply hydrant or meter point will only be undertaken with the agreement of Irish Water.

14.3.2 Wastewater Network

The proposed public realm project does not require any additional wastewater treatment.

It is proposed to re-direct surface water from combined sewers to dedicated surface water sewer where possible. Re-direction of surface water away from the foul network will reduce the load on the wastewater network and treatment facilities.

It will be necessary to locally reposition wastewater manholes to coordinate access points with the proposed landscaping works. Where manhole cover locations need to be repositioned to suit new line and level of the proposed streetscape design, this will be coordinated with Irish Water at detailed design.

14.3.3 Surface Water Network

The proposed public realm project is a refurbishment of the existing streetscape and is a replacement of the existing hardstanding areas within the town. The area of hardstanding within the town centre will not be noticeably altered by the proposed design. SuDS techniques are incorporated into the design to provide sustainable surface water management. Where new trees have been introduced a localised reservoir beneath the

trees is included as a SuDS design measure. Where manhole cover locations need to be repositioned to suit new line and level of the proposed streetscape design, this will be coordinated with Irish Water at detailed design.

14.4 Public Lighting

The Public Lighting scheme proposed uses single and double tear drop type LED lanterns mounted on 8m heritage columns together with localised uplighters in the Square and recessed wall lights to steps. All lighting schemes shall be in accordance with Tipperary County Councils Public Lighting Policy and IS EN 13201.

These lights shall be controlled via individual dusk to dawn photocells.

14.5 Telecoms

It is not proposed to alter any Telecoms services, where manhole covers need to be repositioned to suit new line and level of the proposed streetscape design, this will be coordinated with the Service providers at detailed design.

14.6 Data

It is not proposed to alter any data services, where manholes covers need to be repositioned to suit new line and level of the proposed streetscape design, this will be coordinated with the service providers at detailed design stage.

14.7 Traffic Lights

It is not proposed to alter any traffic lights under the plan. However, new or upgraded pedestrian crossing will be provided in a number of locations.

15. Demolitions

As part of the proposed Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Plan existing footpaths and carriageway surfaces, street furniture, signage, some light standards, some ESB poles and traffic lights will be removed.

All demolition works will be undertaken safely, the public will be kept informed of upcoming works as the project progresses. All waste will be disposed of by an appropriately licensed haulier and disposed in an appropriately licensed facility.

16. Drawings

Refer to Appendix H for List of Drawings.

17. Public Consultation

As an integral part of the Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Enhancement, a comprehensive public consultation exercise was undertaken during August and September 2021, to understand and benefit from the views of the local community and their vision for the future of Cahir Town Centre. The consultation process comprised on-line workshops with key stakeholders and local councilors; the display of concept options in the windows of Cahir Market House (current library), with feedback forms available; a meeting with the Student Council of Coláiste Dún Iascaigh; and the inclusion of material and response forms on the Tipperary County Council Consultation portal. Three initial Public Realm Concept Options were prepared in order to promote dialogue on the scheme and to gauge the level of intervention considered appropriate by the consultees.

The workshops held on 16th and 17th August 20210 were well-attended by representatives of the Cahir Development Association, the Cahir Social and Historical Society, the OPW and local businesses, and a wide range of issues were discussed. Most were very supportive of the intention to up-grade the public realm of the town centre and considered this to be essential for continuing to strengthen the vitality of a Cahir as a place to visit and spend time in. The presence of the Castle, the River Suir and Cahir Park Gardens were highlighted as being especially important assets of the town, and improving pedestrian linkages between these and the town Square a major consideration for the public realm plan. Parking was raised as a recurrent issue, for local traders in particular, and it was stressed that existing provision on Castle Street and Church Street should not be significantly reduced. Whereas it was accepted that the proposed new car park to the north of the Market House would provide a large number of additional spaces, it was noted that many traders were dependent on passing trade from the R640. Traffic circulation around The Square was also considered to be a major issue, providing convenient access for some but with vehicle movements and parking tending to dominate the character of the historic space. It was agreed that the traffic circulation needs to be rationalized while maintaining the requirements of through traffic, delivery and emergency vehicles, and the safety of pedestrians. Similarly, on-street parking within The Square needs to take account of local trader's preferences while enhancing the quality of the space for pedestrian use and enjoyment. Provision for disabled persons parking was also considered essential.

These and related issues were discussed at workshops with Local Councilors on 20th and 24th September 2021.

Similar considerations were also raised by way of response forms from the public display and the on-line Consultation portal of the County Council (the deadline for which was extended to 3rd September 2021).

At the meeting with the local Student Council on 6th September 2021, many interesting ideas were explored, especially for The Square in particular, as included in the summary responses below.

A total of 79 responses were received from the residents, business owners and students. Although there was no clear consensus from the submissions, in summary, the main issues arising included:

- Loss of parking at The Square
- Traffic circulation around The Square, and consideration of a one-way system
- Proposed new car park and its pedestrian link to The Square
- Re-alignment of street junctions to streamline traffic flow and with adequate space for turning
- Improved pedestrian crossings
- Speed and weight restrictions on town entry including bridge, to reduce HGV traffic passing through the centre

- Charging points for electric cars, CCTV and power points for events
- Retention of trees around the fountain
- Refurbishment of the fountain
- The need for free and short-term parking within the town centre
- Retention of recessed bus bays on Castle Street
- Possible filter lane in front of the Cahir House Hotel for turning right onto the Ardfinnan/St Marys Road
- The two lane exit from the Castle Carpark
- Space needed for young people to hang out with canopy for shelter and coloured seating to liven up the place.
- Improved cycle facilities
- High quality paving, street furniture, lighting, bins and signage essential
- A canopy structure and spaces for seasonal events and festivals
- Flexible use of The Square, with closure during summer months while allowing some vehicle access for rest of the year
- Animating the space outside the tourist office to help draw visitors up into the town centre
- Seating areas with smart tech and a covered canopy
- More litter bins
- Public toilets not needed in The Square
- Improved signage and a heritage wall/interactive screen show-casing the town story
- Undergrounding of overhead cables
- Rain gardens and focus on biodiversity

The public consultation material is given in Appendix H.

18. Conclusions and Recommendations

18.1 Conclusions

The proposed design for the Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Plan promotes pedestrian movement and reduces vehicle dominance within the town centre by providing a new central plaza within the Square and wider footpaths around the Square and on the approaches to it. The redesign of the Square and approach streets provides a pleasant environment, providing space for the enjoyment of outdoor dining and will enhance the presentation of the historic buildings. The new surfaces to Castle Street, linking Cahir Castle to the Square invites visitors enjoying the Suir Blueway and the castle to continue their journey into the historic town centre of Cahir.

The proposed scheme was well received by the public and the feedback received during the public consultation informed the design development of the scheme. There was strong support for the core elements of the scheme which include widening of footpaths to facilitate outdoor dining, traffic calming and improved linkages for pedestrians and cyclists.

The proposed scheme addresses the desired objectives of the scheme and will assist the economic and social regeneration of Cahir.

18.2 Recommendations

The following summarises the recommendations and conclusions as set out in the assessment reports:

- An Environmental Assessment Screening report advised that the considered impacts or effects of the proposed works are minor in nature and do not pose a significant threat. Site management and good practice will minimise and reduce potential impacts on site.

- The Appropriate Assessment Screening report noted that the effect of the proposed Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Plan will be to improve the streetscape and infrastructure of the town. Given the limited scale and scope of the proposed works, in-combination impacts to the identified Natura 2000 sites identified are not envisaged.

- It was concluded in the EIA Screening report that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development and that an EIA is not required in this instance.

- A Flood Risk Assessment was undertaken to assess the potential impact of the proposed scheme on flooding, it demonstrated that the proposed development will not have an adverse impact on flooding elsewhere and that the risk to occupants of the site would be acceptable. Mitigation measures have been provided in the Flood Risk Assessment which will be sufficient to ensure that the flood risk is acceptable.

- The proposed Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Plan does not pose any additional demands on the water services within the town.

- Detailed traffic and parking analysis was undertaken to ensure that proposed scheme did not adversely affect the available parking within the town and that every opportunity to improve traffic flows, while supporting cycle and pedestrian movements was included in the proposed design.

- The Archaeological Assessment recognised that the proposed Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Plan will enhance access and presentation of the core of Cahir as a living, social and commercial place which will be supported by a plan that encourages pedestrian movements, and car-parking at locations outside of the core. The report recommends that all ground disturbances should be archaeologically monitored, by a suitably experienced archaeologist.

- An Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment (AHIA) concluded that the proposed public realm works will result in positive visual impacts on the setting of the historic buildings. The AHIA included recommendations to protect and retain identified existing features noting that the works at sensitive locations the such as Castle Street adjacent to Cahir Castle may require monitoring.

- The scheme will only affect existing services where there is a need to carry out works to align with the proposed streetscape design for the Public Realm project. However where appropriate, the opportunity to redirect surface water from combined sewers to dedicated surface water sewer will be considered, this will reduce the load on waste water treatment facilities. Proposals to underground overhead electrical cables will declutter the streetscape.

Appendix A

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

MWP

EIA Screening Report

Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Plan

Tipperary County Council

October 2021

Contents

Project No.	Doc. No.	Rev.	Date	Prepared By	Checked By	Approved By	Status
22396	6002	A	26/10/2021	KB	AR	PO'D	Issue
22396	6002	B	04/11/2021	KB	AR	POD	Part 8
22396	6002	C	04/11/2021	KB	AR	POD	Part 8

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QUALITY I.S. EN ISO 9001:2015 NSAI Certified
HEALTH & SAFETY I.S. ISO 45001:2018 NSAI Certified
ENVIRONMENT I.S. EN ISO 14001:2015 NSAI Certified
ENGINEERS IRELAND CPD ACCREDITED EMPLOYER

1. Introduction

Tipperary County Council is preparing a Part 8 application for a Public Realm Enhancement located in Cahir Town Centre, Co. Tipperary (hereafter referred to as the 'proposed development site'). It is proposed to construct a new streetscape layout for Town Square, Castle Street, Church Street, Old Church Street and St Mary's Road with new alignment design for footpaths and trafficked areas incorporating new paving, kerbing, hard and soft landscaping and street furniture.

MWP has been engaged by Tipperary County Council to undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening of the proposed development to accompany the application. MWP has also carried out an Appropriate Assessment (AA) screening to determine whether the proposal is likely to have a significant effect on any European site (i.e., Natura 2000 Sites), in view of the site's conservation objectives; this will also accompany the planning application.

1.1 Scope

Under EU and Irish legislation (detailed in Section 3), an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required for certain prescribed projects and is required for others which are likely to have significant effects on the environment, by reason of their nature, extent or location.

The purpose of this EIA screening report is to determine whether EIA is required for the proposed development. It presents the findings of an assessment to determine whether EIA is required under the mandatory or sub-threshold categories or whether it is likely to have any significant effects on the environment, which would also trigger the requirement to complete EIA.

2. Description of the Proposed Development

2.1 Site Location and Description

The subject site is located in Cahir town centre. The town of Cahir is located on the River Suir in Co. Tipperary and lies approximately 13km west of Clonmel and approximately 65 km northeast of Cork. The town is serviced by the R640 Regional Road and by a rail connection to Limerick Junction and to Waterford. The town is located approximately 2km south east of the M8 Cork to Dublin motorway and the junction with the N24 Waterford to Limerick road.

Cahir is located within the Electoral Division of 'Caher'. CSO data indicates that, in 2016, this ED had a total population of 1,134 person's resident. The dominant land-use surrounding the town is agricultural.

The site location is provided in Figure 2.1.

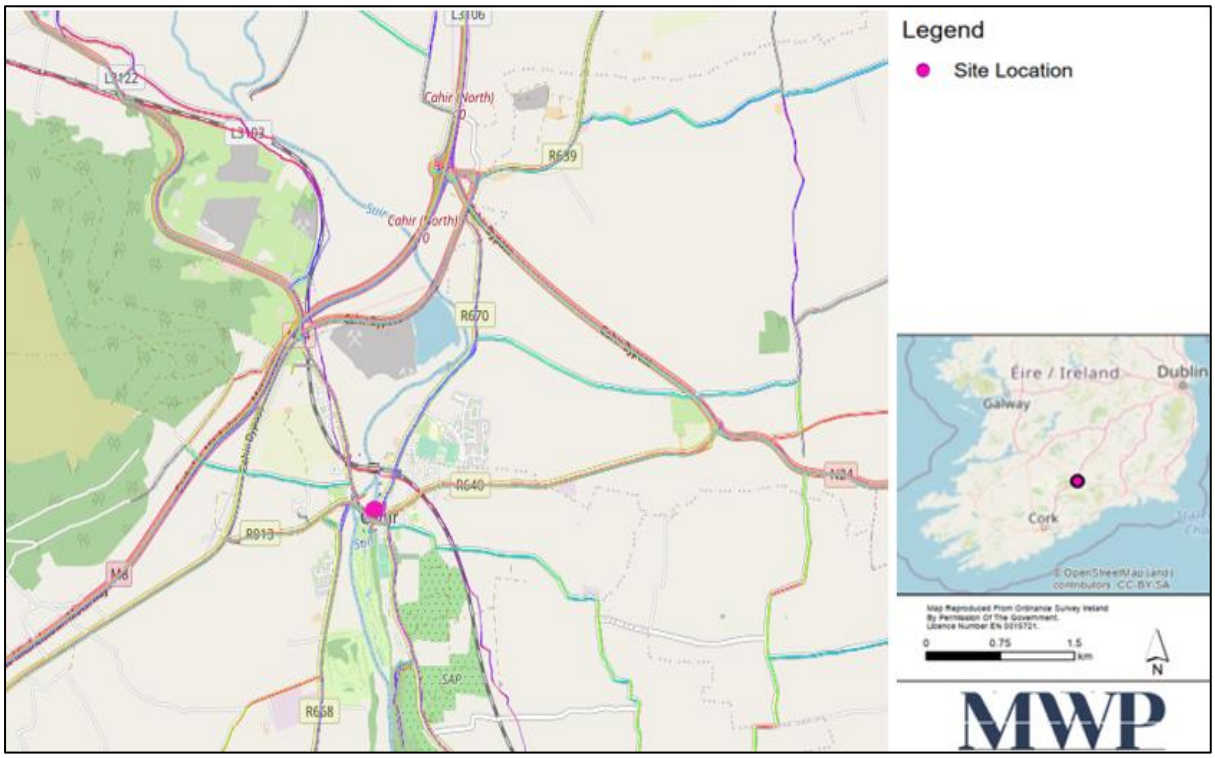

Figure 2.1 Site Location

2.2 Proposed Development

The proposed development includes for public realm refurbishment and enhancement in Cahir's Town Centre comprising the upgrading of existing Square and approach streets with new high quality paving, kerbing, landscaping, public lighting, improved street furniture and utility diversions/works.

The proposed development will be carried out on Castle Street, Cahir Town Square, St Mary's Road, Old Church Street and Church Street in the townland of Townparks, Cahir, Co. Tipperary.

Nature and Extent of Proposed Development:

- New raised table shared surface on Castle Street from Cahir Castle to the Castle Car Park entrance to the East and The Mall entrance to the North.
- New kerb alignment and pavement surfaces from the Castle Street Car Park entrance to The Square junction, including upgrading of pedestrian crossing, installation of new public lighting and soft landscaping.
- New streetscape layout for Cahir Square with new alignment design for footpaths, parking areas and trafficked areas incorporating a raised table shared surface from the junction with Castle Street, to the Junction with St Marys Road and to North of The Fountain, new kerb and pavement surfaces throughout The Square, new hard and soft landscaping, new street furniture, new bollards, new bicycle racks, installation of new and upgrade of existing public lighting.
- Alteration of on-street parking for Castle Street, The Square, Church Street, Old Church Street and The Square end of St Mary's Road.
- New pavement surfaces on St. Mary's Road, Old Church Street and Church Street.
- New controlled pedestrian crossings and soft landscaping on Church Street and Old Church St.
- Undergrounding of overhead electrical cables, installation of new public lighting and upgrading of existing public lighting across the entire project area. The Public Lighting scheme proposed uses single and double tear drop type LED lanterns mounted on 8m heritage columns together with localised uplighters in the Square and recessed wall lights to steps. All lighting schemes shall be in accordance with Tipperary County Councils Public Lighting Policy and IS EN 13201. These lights shall be controlled via individual dusk to dawn photocells.
- Development of associated drainage services and utilities across the entire project area. The proposed public realm project is a refurbishment of the existing streetscape and is a replacement of the existing hardstanding areas within the town square and approach roads. The area of hardstanding within the town centre will not be altered by the proposed design. SuDS techniques are incorporated into the design to provide sustainable surface water management. Where new trees have been introduced a localised reservoir beneath the trees is included as a SuDS design measure. Where manhole cover locations need to be repositioned to suit new line and level of the proposed streetscape design, this will be coordinated with Irish Water at detailed design. The proposed scheme does not include any new demands on the sewerage facilities.
- All associated works.

Footpath space will be widened, traffic calming will be developed through build out, reduced road carriageway widths and improved pedestrian crossings. Existing on-street parking to be reduced from the Square to a new Town Centre Car Park with a 86 spaces just off the Square to the north east. This car park is the subject of a separate Part 8 Planning application.

The traffic flow through the Square will be changed from the current two way on both the east and west sides of the Square to two way flow on the east side only. Service and emergency vehicle access will be maintained to the west side of the Square. Pedestrian movement will be prioritised by the design.

The development also includes for public realm refurbishment and enhancement on Castle Street, Church Street, Old Church Street and the Square end of St Mary's Road. A raised table on Castle Street will link the Castle entrance with the river walkways to the north.

The proposed development will comprise a total works area of 8,500m^2 and will predominantly involve the regeneration of Cahir Town Centre. The land area of the proposed development is limited to and contained within the area of Cahir Square and its four approach Roads (Castle Street to the west, Church Street to the north, Old

Church Street to the east and St Mary's Road to the south). The proposed development is therefore relatively small in scale and will be enclosed within the existing urban area.

2.2.1 Operational Phase

The proposed regeneration plan focuses on the promotion of cycling and walking while minimising the impact of vehicles within the town center. Currently the Square has a two-way roads around each side with parking on both of the roads on the east and west side of the Square. The result is a Square that is dominated by traffic with very little space given over to pedestrians and public realm. The four approach roads to the Square have parking on one or both sides with the footpaths being quite tight in places.

The proposed scheme removes the two-lane road and parking from the west side of the Square to create a significant public realm space. The footpaths on the other sides of the Square and on the approach roads are widened to improve facilities for pedestrians. There will be a reduction in the number of parking spaces within the Square and on the four approach roads. However, this loss will be more than offset by the construction of a new 86 space public car park to the northeast of the Square, with a pedestrian link directly to the Square. This is a separate scheme that has already been submitted for Part 8.

2.2.2 Construction phase

The renewal and reconfiguration of the square and street layouts will necessitate the excavation of the existing footpaths and pavements, formation of suitable subbase and levels, relocation of existing utilities, installation of new street surface paving, street furniture and lighting. Footpaths will be broken by mechanical hammer and roadway surfaces planed, the resultant materials will be loaded onto a dump truck by machine bucket for removal to an appropriately licensed waste facility. The majority of ESB cables within Cahir currently run underground. Where localised sections of overground cabling exist, new trenches will be required to underground these cables. Additional trenches will only be required where relocation of services is necessary. This will be advised during detailed design. The new finishes to the streets will be a mixture of high-quality limestone paving slabs, limestone or granite setts and asphalt.

The works will be undertaken on a phased basis with Construction due to commence in late 2022. It is anticipated that construction work will be completed within 12 months. Working hours will be 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 2pm on Saturday. No work will be undertaken on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

The phasing of the construction works shall be outlined in the Construction & Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). The CEMP will be prepared by the appointed contractor and issued to TCC for agreement prior to works commencing and will be implemented for the duration of the works.

Access to the Square, approach roads and properties within Cahir will be maintained at all times during the construction phase. This may require limited night works for final surfacing and utility installation etc. Scheduling of these activities will be addressed in the CEMP.

The construction works will always allow one lane of traffic on any section of road being worked on.

Bus routes will be maintained through the town.

The number of construction staff on site will vary throughout the works. The nature of the Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Plan enables multiple crews to work simultaneously in different areas. A typical crew will have 4-5 members plus a machine operator for excavation works. Where street paving resurfacing works are being undertaken, the crew will increase to 12-15 members plus associated plant, and delivery trucks. It is expected that the peak number of staff working on the Public Realm project will be no more than 20-25 staff at any one time.

A detailed Construction and Traffic Management Plan will be prepared by the Main Contractor carrying out the works and issued to TCC for agreement prior to any works starting on site.

The Construction and Traffic Management Plan will include details of the location of construction site offices, staff parking, access routes and set down areas for construction vehicles for the delivery and removal of materials, this will be agreed with TCC.

Over the duration of the Plan, it is estimated that approximately 400 truck journeys would be required for the project based on estimated quantities of materials at the preliminary design stage. This equates to approximately 8 truck per week over the duration of the project.

The Contractor will ensure that the proposed works are carried out in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013 (S.I. No. 291 of 2013). As construction works are standard in nature and well understood, there is a low probability that accidents will occur. Normal good construction practices are to be employed and will ensure that the risk of accidents will be low. Having regard to substances or technologies used, it is envisaged that the risk of accidents, is very low and therefore will not result in significant environmental effects.

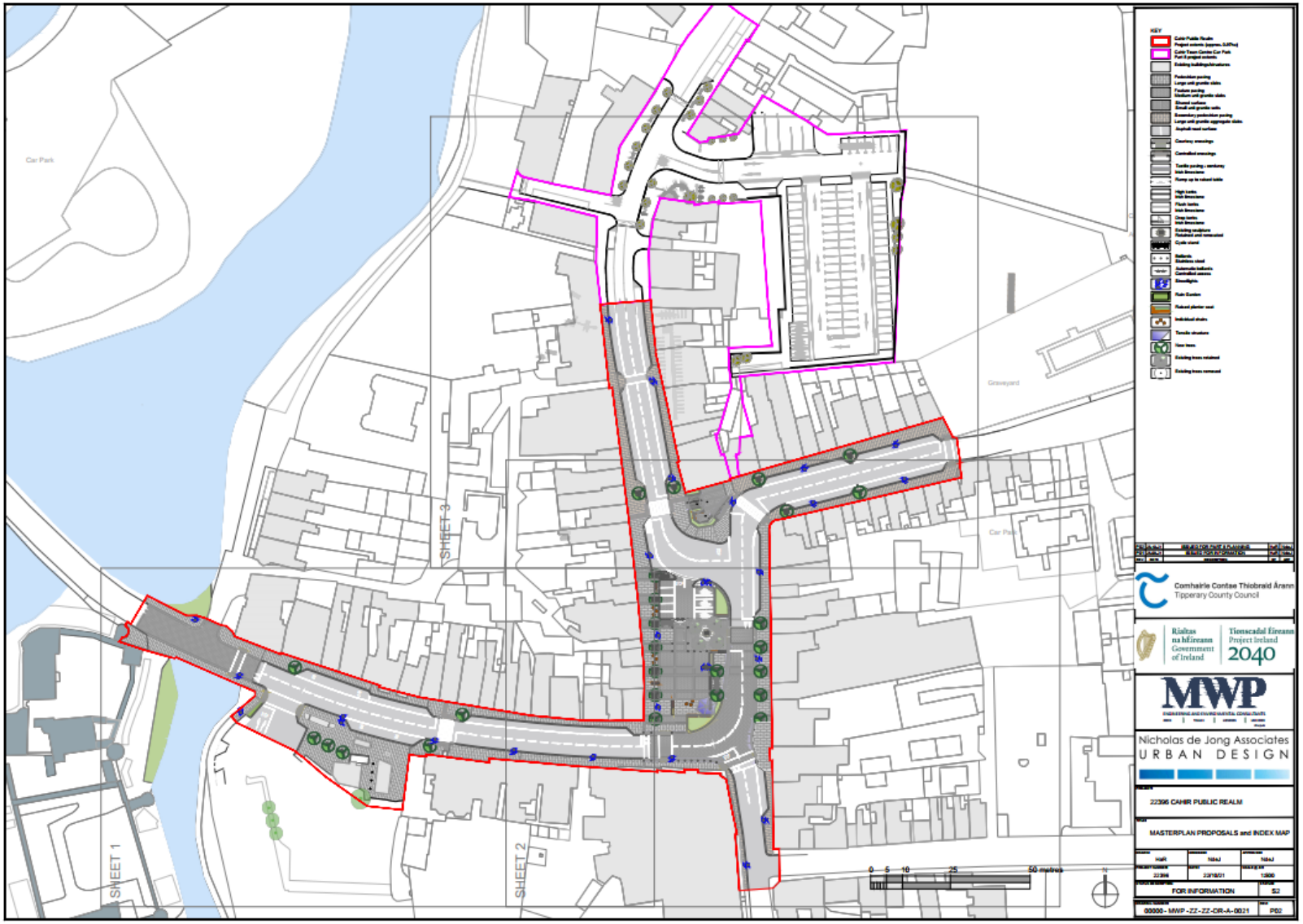

Figure 2.2 Site Layout/Project Plan

2.3 Environmental Setting

The proposed development is located within the Electoral Division (ED) of 'Caher'. CSO data indicates that, in 2016, this ED had a total population of 1,134 residents.

The Corine 2018[1] land cover is categorised as Artificial Surfaces, Urban Fabric and Discontinuous Urban Fabric.

The proposed development is located in the town of Cahir. The surrounding townlands in the region are Townlands, Carrigeen, Caherabbey Upper, Caherabbey Lower, Barnora, Monaraha, Ballyhenebery, Killemly, Farranlahassry, Killeigh, Lissava Grange Beg and Ballymacadam West.

The underlying soil cover consists of a mixture Made Ground, Sandstone till and Alluviam. The underlying bedrock consists of Limestone.

The River Suir flows in a northwest to southeast direction adjacent to the western extent of the proposed development.

There are several EPA surface-water quality monitoring stations in the vicinity of the town centre. The EPA assessment of water quality is based on the macro-invertebrate community and physio-chemical characteristics of the waterbody at these locations. The Water Framework Directive (WFD) status of the River Suir for the 2013-2018 period was Moderate, based on Biological Status (Poor) and Dissolved Oxygen Saturation (Fail). The EPA has classified the River Suir as being 'At Risk' of failing to meet its Water Framework Directive (WFD) objectives.

The AA Screening identified 2 No. Natura 2000 sites comprising 2 No. Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) occurring within 15km of the proposed development, as well as 7 No. proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs).

In terms of zoning, Public Realm Improvements have been identified for the square in the town centre in the Local Area Plan (LAP). The Cahir LAP 2011 states the following in relation to redevelopment of the square:

> *'The Square is the focal point of the town but is currently dominated by car parking rather than retailing and recreational uses. The relocation of car parking from the centre of The Square to the Castle Street Car Park and the redevelopment of the Square as a landscaped plaza, essentially making the town centre a pedestrian priority area will greatly enhance the Town Centre. The use of landscaping and street furniture will encourage residents and tourists alike to use this space and in turn improve the vitality and vibrancy of the area, blurring the barrier between buildings and the street and encouraging uses to spill out from the shops and cafés into the public realm. The development of a central plaza in the town would also enable the relocation of the Farmers Market from its existing location at the car park adjacent to the Craft Granary to The Square and could also be used as an entertainment space for street performance when and if the need arose. It is intended to restore the Memorial Fountain to its former condition and to reinstate the water supply to this feature. Planting will also be enhanced on either end of the proposed plaza. Ultimately the improvement works set out above will assist in developing the retail function, café culture and vitality and vibrancy of the town centre.'*

The Proposed Cahir Local Area Plan 2021-2027 has now been published and further emphasises the need for Public Realm Improvements at the Square. The proposed plan sets out the following objectives in relation to the town centre development:

Objective TCO4.1

'Continue to develop and implement the Town Centre Regeneration Strategy in partnership with the Rural Regeneration Development Fund and other funding sources as may be available'

[1] https://data.gov.ie/dataset/corine-landcover-2018

Objective TCO4.2

'Prepare a plan for the improvement of the public realm in Cahir, including proposals for redesign of the square, improving the pedestrian environment for residents and visitors, and traffic management in the town'.

3. EIA Screening Process

This section of the report outlines the legislative basis for EIA Screening in order to determine if the proposed development requires the preparation of an EIA.

3.1 Legislation

3.1.1 EIA Directive

EIA requirements derive from Council Directive 85/337/EEC (as amended by Directives 97/11/EC, 2003/35/EC and 2009/31/EC) and as codified and replaced by Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and the Council on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment. EIA Directive 2014/52/EU, amends Directive 2011/92/EU (hereafter referred to as the 'EIA Directive').

The EIA Directive requires an environmental assessment to be carried out prior to development consent being granted for projects considered likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

The EIA Directive lists those projects that require a mandatory EIA (Annex I), and those projects for which an assessment must be undertaken to determine if they are probable to result in likely significant effects (Annex II). For Annex II projects, individual Member States can choose to institute specific thresholds or project specific considerations, or a combination of both approaches to arrive at a decision regarding the requirement to undertake an EIA.

Annex II developments that do not exceed the thresholds for the mandatory requirement to prepare an EIA are categorised as sub-threshold and must be assessed on a case-by-case basis to determine whether or not they are likely to have significant effects on the existing environment. The likelihood of a significant environmental effect is the principle matter around which consideration of the requirement for an EIA is based. Annex III, of the EIA Directive, sets out the criteria to be examined when carrying out a sub-threshold assessment. These criteria include the characteristics of projects, location of projects, and type and characteristics of the potential impact.

Therefore, in order for a project to be subjected to an assessment of its environmental effects, in accordance with the procedural requirements of the EIA Directive it must be:

1. A project of a type listed in Annex I; or
2. A project of a type listed in Annex II which either meets thresholds or criteria set by the Member State; or
3. A project of a type listed in Annex II which is under the threshold, but following case by case examination, is likely to have significant effects on the environment.

3.1.2 Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations

The 2014 EIA Directive had direct effect in Ireland from 16 May 2017 and was transposed into Irish planning law on 1 September 2018 in the form of the European Union (EU) (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018.

In Ireland, generally the process of ascertaining whether a development requires an EIA is determined by the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) which takes into consideration the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) have been amended by the European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 (S.I. No. 296 of 2018) to take account of the requirements of the EIA Directive.

3.1.2.1 Mandatory and Sub-threshold EIA- Schedule 5/Annex I & II

EIA is mandatory for development of a class set out in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), which exceeds a limit, quantity or threshold set for that class of development. Schedule 5 transposes Annex I and Annex II of the 2011 EU EIA Directive into Irish law under Parts 1 and 2 of the Schedule, respectively. There have been no changes to Annex I introduced by the 2014 EIA Directive or the 2018 Regulations. A new Annex IIA has been inserted requiring certain additional information be provided for Annex II projects, as follows:

> "*1. A description of the project, including in particular:*
>
> *(a) a description of the physical characteristics of the whole project and, where relevant, of demolition works;*
>
> *(b) a description of the location of the project, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected.*
>
> *2. A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the project.*
>
> *3. A description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such effects, of the project on the environment resulting from:*
>
> *(a) the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant;*
>
> *(b) the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity.*
>
> *4. The criteria of Annex III shall be taken into account, where relevant, when compiling the information in accordance with points 1 to 3*."

Sub-threshold development is defined in Part 10 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) as "*development of a type set out in Schedule 5 which does not exceed a quantity, area or other limit specified in that Schedule in respect of the relevant class of development*"; however, the planning authority may consider that the development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment and therefore would require EIA. As such, the possibility that the proposed development might fall within this definition is considered.

3.1.2.2 Likely Significant Effects- Schedule 7/Annex III

Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), sets out the criteria for assessing whether or not a development would or would not be likely to have 'significant' effects on the environment. Schedule 7 transposes Annex III of the EIA Directive.

The criteria are grouped under three headings and are used to help in the screening process to determine whether a development is likely to have a significant effect on the environment. See section 3.5 below.

3.2 Relevant Guidance

The EIA Screening was undertaken in accordance with the relevant guidelines including:

- EPA's draft 'Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports' (2017) (hereafter referred to as the 'EPA draft guidelines');
- European Commission (EC), 'Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects, Guidance on the preparation of Environmental Impact Assessment Reports' (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU) (2017);
- EC's 'Interpretation of definitions of project categories of annex I and II of the EIA Directive' (2015);
- EC's 'Guidance on EIA Screening' (2001);
- Government of Ireland's 'Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Board Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment, (2018);
- Department of Housing Planning and Local Government's (DHPLG) 'Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment' (2018); and
- Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR)'s 'Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Practice Note' (2021).

3.3 Appropriate Assessment

Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, which is more commonly known as 'the Habitats Directive', requires Member States of the European Union (EU) to take measures to maintain or restore, at favourable conservation status, natural habitats and wild species of fauna and flora of Community interest. The provisions of the Habitats Directive require that Member States designate Special Areas of Conservation for habitats listed on Annex I and for species listed on Annex II. Similarly, Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds (more commonly known as 'the Birds Directive') provides a framework for the conservation and management of wild birds. It also requires Member States to identify and classify SPAs for rare or vulnerable species listed on Annex I of the Directive, as well as for all regularly occurring migratory species. The complete network of European sites is referred to as 'Natura 2000'.

Under article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive, any plan or project which is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site but would be likely to have a significant effect on such a site, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, must be subject to an 'Appropriate Assessment' (AA) of its implications for the SAC / SPA and its nature conservation objectives.

In Ireland, the requirements of Article 6(3) are transposed into national law by Part 5 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations) 2011 (S.I. No. 477 of 2011)) (more commonly referred to as the 'Habitats Regulations') and Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

As set out in the NPWS guidance (DoEHLG, 2009), the task of establishing whether a plan or project is likely to have an effect on a Natura 2000 Site is based on a preliminary impact assessment using available information and data, including that outlined above, and other available environmental information, supplemented as necessary by local site information and ecological surveys. This is followed by a determination of whether there is a risk that the effects identified could be significant.

The purpose of the AA screening assessment is to record in a transparent and reasoned manner the likely effects, on relevant Natura 2000 Sites, of the proposed works. The AA screening assessment, which was undertaken for the proposed development, has concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt, based on objective information, and considering the conservation objectives of the relevant European sites, that significant impacts from the project, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, on the Natura 2000 sites examined, can be excluded:

The assessment results were used to inform this EIA Screening that no evidence of protected species or qualifying interest species or habitats were recorded during the site walkover. A number of bird species were recorded, primarily in the vicinity of the bridge. No invasive alien species were recorded during the survey. Habitats within the footprint of the project site were classified according to Fossitt (2000). A total of five habitats were identified within the study area comprising of habitats primarily of low ecological value, with buildings and artificial surfaces being the most prominent habitat.

3.4 Methodology

Ascertaining whether this proposed development requires an EIA is determined by reference to mandatory and discretionary provisions set out in the Roads Act 1993 (as amended)/Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

EIA screening was undertaken in line with Section 3.2 of the EPA's draft 'Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Report' (EPA, 2017). The assessment also takes into consideration the DHPLG's 'Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment' (DHPLG, 2018)

An overview of these legislative requirements and their applicability to the proposed development are outlined in the following sections.

3.4.1 Mandatory EIA- Annex I and II/Schedule 5

Developments which require an EIA for the purposes of Part 10 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) are outlined under two separate sections, Part 1 and Part 2. The schedule of projects listed in Part 1 and Part 2 of Schedule 5 was consulted to determine whether the new development required an EIA.

The proposed development does not fall under any class of development listed in Part 1 of Schedule 5.

Consideration was given to the following projects listed in Part 2:

Table 3-1 – Summary of the Mandatory Legislative Requirements for Environmental Impact Assessment Impact Screening

Mandatory	Mandatory Criteria Met?
Part 2 (10) (b) (iv) Urban development which would involve an area greater than 2 hectares in the case of a business district, 10 hectares in the case of other parts of a built-up area and 20 hectares elsewhere.	No

It can be concluded that the proposed development does not fall under any class of development or project type listed in Schedule 5.

Therefore, the proposed development is not a mandatory project for EIA under Schedule 5, neither does it fall under any of the thresholds specified, therefore mandatory EIA does not apply.

3.4.2 Sub-threshold Assessment

Where the proposed development does not meet, or exceed, the applicable threshold (Table 3-1), the likelihood of the proposed development having significant effects on the environment may need to be considered. The discretionary (or sub-threshold) requirements are based on an assessment of the likely significant environmental effects of the proposed development.

The Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) under Schedule 5 Part 2 Category 15 therefore also includes a requirement for EIA for:

"*Any project listed in this Part which does not exceed a quantity, area or other limit specified in this Part in respect of the relevant class of development but which would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7.*"

Given the nature and type of proposed development, albeit below the threshold, it is considered prudent to undertake an EIA screening assessment, to determine if a full EIA is required. This is outlined in the following sections.

3.5 Methodology for Schedule 7 Criteria Assessment

The EIA Screening was completed by reviewing the proposed development against the criteria included in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations (as amended) (Table 3-3). The criteria are grouped under three headings and are used to help in the screening process to determine whether a development is likely to have a significant effect on the environment:

1. Characteristics of project/proposed development;
2. Location of project/proposed development; and
3. Type and Characteristics of Potential Impacts.

Authorities must have regard to the criteria under these headings when forming an opinion as to whether or not a sub-threshold development is likely to have significant effects on the environment. As per the EPA's draft guidance, a significant effect can be defined as "*An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment*" (EPA, 2017).

The proposed development was further appraised using the EIA Screening Checklist taken from the European Commission's Guidance on EIA Screening (EC, 2017). This Screening Checklist provides a list of questions about the project and its environment which can be used to help answer the question whether the project likely to have a significant effect on the environment (Table 3-4).

Table 3-1 Schedule 7 Criteria Assessment

Characteristics of Proposed Development		Appraisal
(a)	the size and design of the whole proposed;	Small scale project, with a total works area of approximately 8,500m^2. The renewal and reconfiguration of the square and street layouts will necessitate the excavation of the existing footpaths and pavements, formation of suitable subbase and levels, relocation of existing utilities, installation of new street surface paving, street furniture and lighting. Footpaths will be broken by mechanical hammer and roadway surfaces planed; the resultant materials will be loaded onto a dump truck by machine bucket for removal to an appropriately licensed waste facility. The majority of ESB cables within Cahir currently run underground. Where localised sections of overground cabling exist, new trenches will be required to underground these cables. Additional trenches will only be required where relocation of services is necessary. This will be advised during detailed design. The new finishes to the streets will be a mixture of high-quality granite paving slabs, limestone or granite setts and asphalt. The size, scale and design of the proposed development is not considered significant.
(b)	cumulation with other existing development and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment;	A desktop search of proposed and existing planning applications was undertaken on the 06/09/21. The search flagged planning applications within a period dating back to 2016; any refused, invalid or withdrawn applications were omitted. Furthermore, any small-scale residential type developments, such as extensions and modifications, minor amendments to existing dwellings and changes of use developments were omitted from the search. The most recent (<5 years) grants of planning for the townlands adjacent to the proposed development have been reviewed. The findings show small, medium to large-scale developments within the 5 km radius scope that have been approved or on-going. The majority of planning applications within 5km of the proposed development are related to development of and alterations to residential properties and are considered to be small in scale. Current grants of permission include works such as demolition, remediation and extensions to existing private dwellings and commercial buildings in Cahir town (Tipperary County Council on-line planning enquiry system). Tipperary County Council has a separate Part 8 application to undertake the development of a 86 space public car park off Church Street to the northeast of the Square. An existing derelict building will be demolished to form the access to the car park. There will also be a direct pedestrian link to the north east of the Square. No significant additional environmental impacts are anticipated due to the concurrent construction of these proposals. Given the size, scale and location of the proposed works, it is not expected that the proposal will act in combination with the above projects to cause significant cumulative or in-combination impacts. It is concluded that significant cumulative and or in-combination impacts, between these activities and the proposal, are not reasonably foreseeable. An AA Screening has been prepared for this project and concluded that there would be no significant cumulative impacts on the adjacent Natura 2000 sites.
(c)	the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;	The proposed works will be within an urban environment, which has been significantly modified by human activity. Soil cover is absent within the town centre, and the soil underlying the town centre site constitutes Made Ground. The Suir River forms part of the Lower River Suir SAC. A Screening for Appropriate Assessment has also been carried out. There will be no requirement for water abstraction for the proposed development as water requirements will be met by the public water supply. Construction activity will include shallow and localised excavations up to an approximate maximum depth of 200mm bgl. It is anticipated that most of the material excavated will be existing road surfacing, concrete footpaths and signage, and it is unlikely that any in-situ rock breaking will be required. It is proposed to use high quality natural stone material in the upgrade works. Overall, it can be concluded that there is no evidence to suggest the project will be detrimental to natural resources. The natural resources required including land, soil and geo-resources are typical for a project of this scale. A desktop study and ecological site walkover did not indicate loss of any protected plant or animal species. The following materials and approximate volumes are required for the works: • Concrete – 1,600m^3 • Precast/Granite setts/Tarmac/Resin Bound path – 1,000m^3

Characteristics of Proposed Development	Appraisal
	• Topsoil – Small quantities for tree pits and rain gardens within the urban space -Neutral • Ducting – 2,200m.
(d) the production of waste;	Given the scale and type of development, there is unlikely to be any significant volumes of waste generated during the construction phase. Waste is expected to consist of concrete from existing footpaths and surface planing from the existing roadways. Small quantities of incidental waste materials such as pallets and packaging will also be generated. No hazardous waste material will be generated. All waste will be managed in accordance with a Construction Waste Management Plan. The plan will be prepared by the main contractor carrying out the works and issued to TCC for agreement prior to any works commencing on site waste will be transferred from the site by a licensed haulier and recovered or disposed of at a suitably authorised waste facility. Volumes are estimated as follows: • Concrete/Blacktop/Precast concrete (average 250mm thickness) – 2,010m^3 In addition, any excess construction materials will be returned to the supplier. All construction waste will be managed in accordance with a Construction Waste Management Plan which will be prepared by the main contractor carrying out the works and issued to TCC for agreement prior to any works commencing on site. The proposed scheme does not include any new demands on the sewerage facilities. It is considered that the production of any waste associated with the construction of the development, as described above, would not cause unusual, significant or adverse effects of a type that would require an EIA.
(e) pollution and nuisances;	The proposed works may cause a temporary disturbance or nuisance to occupants of the immediate and surrounding environs of the town centre. Works will be very localised to minimize any disturbance. The extents of excavated surface will be less than 500m^2 at all times. Runoff will be directed to the existing drainage system after passing through silt traps located in existing gullies. The discharge will be to the town main drainage system. Potential pollution pathways and nuisances for consideration include increases in exhaust emissions to air as a result of construction machinery; noise and vibration from equipment use; social effects as a result of temporary traffic diversions; leaks and spills of hydrocarbon containing materials used, and runoff of material to nearby watercourses. Good construction management practices and standard environmental management during the construction works will be employed for the duration of construction and will serve to minimise the risk of pollution and nuisances. The proposed development would not cause unusual or significant levels of pollution or nuisance of a type that would require an EIA.
(f) the risk of major accidents, and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge;	Important considerations are the potential risks of the proposed development causing a major accident[2] and/or disaster during the construction and operational phases, and the vulnerability of the proposed development to potential man-made and natural disasters. Given the temporary to short-term nature of the proposal and the small scale of the project, the risk of disasters (typically considered to be natural catastrophes e.g. very severe weather event) or accidents (e.g. fuel spill, traffic accident) is considered low. In the case of the occurrence of a severe weather event such as flooding, work will be curtailed. A Stage 1 and 2 Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) was undertaken for the project which concludes that the site is in Flood Zone C (low risk), coastal flooding does not occur, and the risk of pluvial, groundwater flooding and flooding from artificial drainage systems is considered low. The proposed scheme will not adversely impact flooding within the town or in areas upstream/downstream of the site.

[2] A major accident, in the context of this assessment is defined as: "*Events that threaten immediate or delayed serious environmental effects to human health, welfare and/or the environment and the use of resources beyond those of the client or its appointed representatives to manage. Whilst malicious intent is not accidental, the outcome (e.g. train derailment) may be the same and therefore many mitigation measures will apply to both deliberate and accidental events*." (IEMA, 2020).

Characteristics of Proposed Development		Appraisal
		The size of the proposed development is not of a sufficient size or scale to cause a major accident or disaster during the construction phase as normal construction measures (such as the contractors Health and Safety plan, an approved Contractor's Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and approved methods of work) will be adhered to on site. The implementation of appropriate control measures (including an emergency spill response plan) and best management practices will reduce the risk of accidents from polluting substances entering soil and groundwater. During the operational phase, the proposed pathway design will ensure that surface water drains quickly from the pathway via over-the-edge drainage; thereby reducing the risk of flooding in the area.
(g)	the risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution).	There will be minor temporary nuisances associated with the project. The proposal will include noise from machinery on site (short duration, temporary). The project is a relatively small in scale, which will not involve significant risks to human health. With the implementation of appropriate best practice measures during the construction phase (including an emergency spill response plan), in addition to the scale of the development, the risk to human health is considered low. There will be no emissions to air during the operational phase as the proposed development is non-vehicular; therefore, no risks to human health are anticipated.
Location of Proposed Development		**Appraisal**
(a)	the existing and approved land use	The proposed development site is located in the town centre area, currently used for retail and recreational activities. Public Realm Improvements have been identified for the square at the town centre in the Cahir Local Area Plan 2021. The Corine 2018 land cover is categorised as Artificial Surfaces, Urban Fabric and Discontinuous Urban Fabric. The proposed development will enhance the centre of Cahir by providing socio-economic, cultural and environmental benefits for residents, businesses and visitors. There will be no change in existing land-use. The works will be carried out in an existing urban area and the modifications will be to existing surfaces and street furniture in the square and streets, and their replacement with materials including high quality natural stone material and proposals which will enhance the aesthetics of the area. According to the Cahir Local Area Plan 2011 the area of proposed works is zoned as Town Centre. There will be no change in land-use.
(b)	the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground;	The proposed development does not involve use or destruction of natural resources, such that there would be a significant threat to their regenerative capacity. The proposed works are within the confines of the town centre and confined to particular streets and junctions and do not traverse any designated conservation areas. A Screening for Appropriate Assessment was undertaken, and this concluded there will be no significant impact on any Natura 2000 sites within the zone of potential influence. At no point will water be abstracted from the river Suir during the construction works. Construction materials, including macadam and concrete will be imported from outside the area during the construction phase. All imported materials will be sourced from licensed suppliers.
(c)	the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:	
	(i) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;	The proposed development site is located within an urban area, adjacent to the River Suir. The works are in Cahir town centre, on the east bank of the Suir river, which forms part of the Lower River Suir SAC. Under existing conditions within the town, surface water enters the drainage system including existing silt traps and gullies. This water ultimately discharges to the Suir river. The development will not create additional run off and will continue to function within the capacity of the natural environment. During construction daily inspections of water courses will be undertaken as part of the Construction and Environmental Management Plan to be implemented by the Contractor.
	(ii) coastal zones and the marine environment;	The proposed development is not located within a coastal zone but is adjacent to the River Suir. The River Suir enters the Celtic Sea at Waterford some 67km to the southeast.

Characteristics of Proposed Development			Appraisal
	(iii)	mountain and forest areas;	The site is located within the town centre of Cahir. There are forestry and mountains in the greater region, but none will be affected by the project.
	(iv)	nature reserves and parks;	There are no nature reserves or parks in the area that will be directly affected by the project. Cahir Park is located to the south of the proposed development and will not be impacted by the construction works or the operational phase.
	(v)	areas classified or protected under legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive;	The proposed development is adjacent to the Lower River Suir SAC (00137) and approximately 8.3 km east of the Galtee Mountains SAC (001952). As identified in the AA screening there are no other Natura 2000 sites within 15km of the development. A Screening for Appropriate Assessment was undertaken, and this concluded there will be no significant impact on any Natura 2000 sites within the zone of potential influence.
	(vi)	areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards, laid down in Union legislation and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure;	The section of the River Suir adjacent to the project development is presently classified as having a 'Moderate' status for surface water, based on the EPA Catchments database. The EPA has classed the risk of the River Suir of failing to meet its WFD objectives as 'At risk'. The proposed project will not impact negatively on water quality in the River Suir. Surface water will continue to drain into the existing drainage network and no additional pollutants or no additional discharges will enter the water as a result of the project. Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs) will be incorporated into the design where appropriate.
	(vii)	densely populated areas;	The proposed development site is located in the town of Cahir which has a population of 3,593 according to the 2016 census. The proposed development site is located within the Electoral Division of 'Caher'. Other settlements in the wider vicinity are Clonmel located 13km south east of the proposed development and Tipperary Town 18 km north west of the site. Smaller settlements include Ardfinnan to the south, Bansha to the north west and Ballyclerahan to the north east.
	(viii)	landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.	As outlined in the NMS 'Historic Environment Viewer[3]', there are a number of assets recorded on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) in Cahir Town center. There are several listed buildings and cultural heritage assets within the proposed development site. There will be no negative physical impacts on the architectural heritage of the town. The proposed new paving, traffic calming, reduction in car parking spaces and tree planting will result in positive long term visual impacts on the street, streetscape and individual buildings. Overall, the project aims to improve the aesthetics of the town and the improved quality will benefit the cultural features and buildings of the town and any protected structures. If required, the works can be supervised by an Archaeologist.

Type and Characteristics of the potential impacts		Appraisal
(a)	the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);	The proposed development comprises a works area of approximately 8,500m^2 within Cahir town centre. The town has a population of 3,593 people (Census 2016). During the construction phase, the proposed project will affect the local population including those working, visiting and passing through the town. During the operational phase, the magnitude and spatial extent of the project will be confined to the footprint of the project and the local and visiting population.
(b)	the nature of the impact;	**Population and Human Health** It is likely that there will be potential temporary negative impacts such as noise and dust arising from construction activities, workers and traffic during construction phase. However, it is not anticipated that there will be any significant, negative effects from the proposed development to human health during the construction phase. Best practice measures, which will be outlined in the Contractor's CEMP, will be implemented during the construction phase, including dust suppression measures.

[3] https://maps.archaeology.ie/HistoricEnvironment/ Accessed August 2021

Type and Characteristics of the potential impacts	Appraisal
	A detailed Construction and Traffic Management Plan will be prepared by the Main Contractor carrying out the works and issued to TCC for agreement prior to any works starting on site. The Construction and Traffic Management Plan will include details of the location of construction site offices, staff parking, access routes and set down areas for construction vehicles for the delivery and removal of materials, this will be agreed with TCC. Over the duration of the project, it is estimated that approximately 400 truck journeys would be required for the project based on estimated quantities of materials at the preliminary design stage. This equates to approximately 8 truck per week over the duration of the project. A slight negative temporary effect on the immediate population is predicted during the construction phase. When complete, the planned upgrade of Cahir town centre will have a long term positive impact on both the local population and visitors. Effects will be temporary. Construction will take place over a 12 month period with most disruption taking place in the first number of months e.g. earthworks, excavations, concrete deliveries. Impacts are not complex. A Construction and Environmental Management Plan will be put in place, as will a Traffic Management Plan, both of which will outline best practice measures to reduce impacts during the construction stage. It is not considered that the proposal will result in a significant negative effect on population and human health, either alone, or in combination with other projects, including the proposed car park at Church Street. Overall, the project will have a long term positive effect on the town. **Biodiversity** An ecological field survey was carried out by MWP on the 8th September 2021. The proposed site is comprised primarily of buildings and artificial surfaces and has no intrinsic ecological value. No evidence of protected species or qualifying interest species or habitats were recorded during the site walkover. A number of bird species were recorded, primarily in the vicinity of the bridge including the following: - Wren (Troglodytes troglodytes) - Blackbird (Tardus merula) - Grey Heron (Ardea cinera) - Pied Wagtail (Motacilla alba yarrellii) - Chaffinch (Fringilla coelebs) - Robin (Erithacus rubecula) - Jackdaw (Corvus monedula) - Dipper (Cinclus cinclus) - Mallard (Anas platyrhynchos) No invasive alien species were recorded during the survey. A total of five habitats were identified within the study area as follows: - **Buildings and Artificial Surfaces BL3** – Project site which primarily comprises of roads, paths and walls of negligible ecological value. 4 no. of heavily modified horse-chestnut (Aesculus hippocastanum) trees located within town centre, in the middle of the project site. - **Scattered Trees and Parkland WD5** – Three mature lime Tilia species. Trees flanking the east bank of the River Suir within a small area of amenity grassland, adjacent to an access road and outdoor seating area for a local café. **These trees have some limited roosting potential for bats and act as a commuting corridor, connecting to a treeline north of the project site.**

Type and Characteristics of the potential impacts	Appraisal

- **Stone Walls and Other Stonework BL1** – This habitat is primarily associated with the old stone walls bounding the bridge to the west, and rising from the east bank of the River Suir. This habitat was noted to support species such as Ivy Leaved Toadflax (Cymbalaria muralis), Bindweed (Calystegia sepium), Sowthistle (Sonchus spp.) Maiden Hair Spleenwort (Aspelnium trichomanes), Polypody (Polypodium spp.) and Red Valerian (Centranthus ruber). Along the east bank wall, recorded vegetation also included Hogweed (Heracleum sphondylium), and Alder (Alnus glutinosa). There is an old stone wall in the east area of the project site bounding the town's graveyard. This wall was relatively free of vegetation at the time of the survey, apart from Ivy (Hedera helix) and Maiden Hair spleenwort.
- **Ornamental/Non-Native Shrub WS3 and Flower Beds and Borders BC4** – There are small pockets of ornamental shrubbery in formal beds and flower boxes throughout the project site.
- **Exposed Calcareous Rock ER2 and Recolonising Bare Ground ED3** - There is a section of exposed calcareous rock at the base of Cahir Castle, separated from the bridge by an area of recolonising bare ground habitat. Both habitats were noted to support species as Herb **Robert** (Geranium robertianum), Willow (Salix spp.), Ragwort (Jacobaea vulgaris), Nettle (Urtica), and Willowherb (Epilobium spp.) as well as Valarian and Alder.

The proposed development is located adjacent to the River Suir (Lower River Suir SAC (00137) and approximately 8.3 km east of the Galtee Mountains SAC (001952).

As concluded in the AA screening, the proposed works will not have an impact on water quality. Therefore, it is considered there will be no disturbance and/or displacement of the species for which the Lower River Suir SAC is designated by virtue of habitat loss and/or alteration.

A Construction and Environmental Management Plan will be put in place for the duration of the works. This plan will include measures for monitoring and managing surface water drainage.

There will be an imperceptible- to-not significant impact on biodiversity from the proposed works. Construction impacts will temporary and last for approximately 12 months resulting in temporary to short-term effects.

It is not considered that the proposal will result in a significant effect on the biodiversity, either alone, or in combination with other projects.

Water

The proposed development site is localised to Cahir town centre and lies adjacent to the River Suir (Lower River Suir SAC). There is potential for water run-off from the site reaching the River Suir. However, there will be no direct discharges to surface water during the construction phase of the project.

The area of hardstanding within the town centre will not be altered by the proposed design. SuDS techniques have been incorporated into the design to provide sustainable surface water management. Where new trees have been introduced a localised reservoir beneath the trees is included as a SuDS design measure. Where manhole cover locations need to be repositioned to suit new line and level of the proposed streetscape design, this will be coordinated with Irish Water at detailed design.

With regards to runoff, works will be localised, and the extents of localised excavated surface will be less than 500m^2 at all times. Runoff will be directed to the existing drainage system after passing through existing silt traps in existing gullies. This will ensure no silt and runoff will enter the drainage network below thus will not impact the Lower River Suir SAC.

Type and Characteristics of the potential impacts	Appraisal
	There is a low probability of significant effects to water as a result of the project. Construction will take place over a 12 period with most disruption taking place in the first number of months e.g. earthworks, excavations, concrete deliveries, therefore impacts will be temporary in nature. No instream works will take place and impacts are not anticipated to be complex. Significant impacts are not envisaged due to scale of development, and the contained nature of site and works. As such, the construction phase of the project is not predicted to result in a significant negative effect on hydrology or surface water quality. Significant cumulative impacts with other projects including the proposed car park off Church Street are unlikely to occur with regards to water. A Construction and Environmental Management Plan will be implemented by the Contractor which will include best practice measures to protect water quality. With regards to use of fuels/oils, all fuels will be stored within secure and impermeable storage areas. Re-fuelling of plant and equipment will only take place within designated areas. The temporary site compound will be located at least 25 metres from any drains or other water features. **Land and Soils** The extent of land and soil affected will mainly localised to the footprint of the project. The town of Cahir is underlain by Limestone (occasionally cherty) of the Kilsheelan Formation. The underlying soil cover consists mainly of Made Ground with sections of Sandstone till (Devonian) and Alluviam Undifferentiated. Modifications will be to existing surfaces and street furniture, and their replacement with materials that are broadly similar. Existing road surfacing, concrete footpaths, street furniture and signage will be removed from the work site. Excavation required will be to a maximum approximate depth of 200mm bgl. Geological resources required are typical for this type of development. There will be a balance between waste material and soil generated and imported stone and fill for the new development. The likely impact on land is neutral. Changes to land and soils as a result of the project will result in effects which are imperceptible given that there is no land loss and pavements and footpaths will be replaced with upgraded natural materials. There is a low probability of significant effects to land as a result of the project. Significant cumulative impacts are unlikely to occur. Construction will take place over a 12 month period with most disruption taking place in the first number of months e.g. earthworks, excavations, concrete deliveries. Impacts are not complex. A Construction and Environmental Management Plan will be put in place for the duration of the works. This plan will include measures for dealing with soils and other excavated materials. **Air and Climate** The main air quality impacts will be associated with dust generation during site preparation and construction works. The implementation of best management practices as part of the CEMP, will minimise the generation of dust during the construction phase. With the adoption of these measures, it is anticipated that the dust produced would not cause a significant effect on the environment. Effects are predicted to be slight negative in the short term during the construction phase and neutral during the operation phase. Significant cumulative impacts on air quality are not predicted as a result of this project in combination with other projects incldluing the proposed car park at Church Street.

Type and Characteristics of the potential impacts	Appraisal
	Climatic impacts are expected to be minor given the scale of the project. Emissions of greenhouse gases to the atmosphere will result from truck movements and the operation of site construction equipment, however, a significant effect is not considered likely given the scale and size of the proposed development. The effects on climate will be temporary and imperceptible. During the operational phase, the effects associated with exhaust emissions from vehicles will be neutral when compared to current levels of emissions.. **Noise and Vibration** The construction phase of the proposed development has the potential to increase noise levels at noise sensitive locations surrounding the site. Impacts from the construction phase will depend on the number and type of equipment employed during the works. Noise and vibration limits will be outlined within the noise and vibration management section of the CEMP that will be produced by the contractor for the proposed development and agreed with Tipperary County Council prior to the commencement of construction. These limits will be adhered to at all times during the construction phase of the proposed development. With these measures in place, it is expected that effects associated with noise will be slight and temporary in nature. During the operational phase, there will be no additional significant noise and vibration effects from the proposed development. **Landscape and Visual** Temporary landscape and visual effects on a small number of sensitive receptors; for example, retail and residential properties within the footprint of the works will arise as a result of construction work; however, given the scale and duration of the proposed development, these impacts will be slight and temporary in nature. During the operational phase, while changes to the local environment will be clearly recognisable, the overall extent and scale of the proposed development will be confined to the Town Centre. The existing landscape character will remain largely unaltered, and the proposed development will fit into the existing setting resulting in no change to the landscape character. Overall, the project will improve the aesthetics of the town and the public realm. The visual effects of the project during the operational phase will be positive, slight and long-term in nature. **Cultural Heritage** There are a number of cultural heritage assets within the 1 km of the proposed development site. While these assets will not be physically impacted by the proposed development, there is the possibility of adverse effects to the setting of the designated assets by noise, dust and vibration from construction related traffic which could diminish the importance of these assets; however, effects will be temporary and with the implementation of best practice measures outlined in the CEMP, significant effects are not anticipated. **Material Assets** During the construction phase there will be additional traffic on the existing road network. Possible effects include additional traffic volumes on the local road network; introduction of construction traffic movements on the local and national road network, impacts on residential amenity by both construction traffic vehicles and future residents. Access to existing roads will be maintained and a Traffic Management Plan will be implemented for the duration of the works.

Type and Characteristics of the potential impacts		Appraisal
		The majority of ESB cables within Cahir currently run underground. Where localised sections of overground cabling exist, new trenches will be required to underground these cables. Additional trenches will only be required where relocation of services is necessary. This will be advised during detailed design. The new finishes to the streets will be a mixture of high-quality limestone paving slabs, limestone or granite setts and asphalt. Due to the duration of the works and their temporary nature, significant effects are not anticipated.
(c)	the transboundary nature of the impact;	Not applicable.
(d)	the intensity and complexity of the impact;	The majority of the impacts are associated with the construction phase of the proposed development are temporary (i.e., 12 months). Therefore, given the duration of the works and scale of the proposed development, in addition to the implementation of appropriate best practice measures, it is not anticipated that proposed development will result in intense or complex impacts either alone or in combination with other proposed projects. Intense and complex impacts are unlikely to occur during the operational phase.
(e)	the probability of the impact;	Owing to the relatively straight forward nature of the proposed development, coupled with the potential impacts stated and the sensitive receptors located close to the proposed development site, there is a high degree of certainty in the magnitude, intensity, duration or consequences of any impact identified; however, as discussed, the likelihood of significant negative effects on the receiving environment is extremely low due to the planned implementation of such best practice construction measures. No long-term negative, significant effects are predicted as likely.
(f)	the expected onset, duration, frequency, reversibility of the impact;	With the appropriate control measures, potential impacts, including noise, traffic and dust impacts, will be temporary (12 months) in nature during the construction phase and will be reversible over time. Positive effects during the operational phase would likely be permanent.
(g)	the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment; and	As discussed, the proposed development is unlikely to result in significant effects on the environment. Should the construction of a number of developments, as identified within the planning search, occur at the same time, then there is potential for negative effects on the existing environment. Other development projects are mostly located at an adequate distance from the proposed development, therefore not expected to cause cumulative effects. The nearest potential development is a car park at Church Street which bounds the north-eastern side of the proposed development site boundary. In-combination effects associated with the regeneration project and the proposed carpark are not predicted to be complex or significant. These projects would likely be temporary in duration, occurring primarily during the construction phase only; therefore, no significant cumulative effects are anticipated. In the operational phase, there is likely to be a positive, long term, slight to moderate cumulative effect from the proposed development in the area.
(h)	the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.	The proposed development is not anticipated to result in any significant effects on the existing environment. However, where temporary, negative and transient impacts are likely to occur, the implementation of appropriate best practice measures will reduce the duration and intensity of the impact. This includes implementation of the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and the Traffic Management Plan (TMP).

Table 3-2 EU Guidance EIA Screening Checklist

Questions to be considered	Yes/No/? Briefly Describe	Is this likely to result in a significant effect? Yes/No/? – Why?
1. Will construction, operation, decommissioning or demolition works of the Project involve actions that will cause physical changes in the locality (topography, land use, changes in waterbodies, etc.	Yes- There will some local minor physical changes to topography which involve the excavation and upgrade of footpaths and carriageway surfaces, with street furniture, seating, planting, bicycle parking and lighting. The proposed development is relatively small in scale and will be enclosed within the existing urban area. There will be no change to any water bodies.	No- given the scale and type of the works, significant effects to topography and landuse are not anticipated due to the minor physical changes proposed. No changes to water bodies are proposed.
2. Will construction or the operation of the Project use natural resources such as land, water, materials or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or are in short supply?	No - Construction of the project will entail the use of soil, stone and water, all of which are typical and readily available construction materials.	No- all imported materials are readily available and will be sourced from licensed suppliers. Excavation requirements at the development are not extensive. There will be no requirement for water abstraction for the proposed works. None of the above resources have been identified as being in short supply in the area.
3. Will the Project involve the use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials which could be harmful to human health, to the environment or raise concerns about actual or perceived risks to human health?	Yes- During construction only. Minor amounts of fuel and oils will be used in construction plant and machinery on site.	No – A Health and Safety Plan will be in place and all site staff will be briefed on the Health and Safety Plan prior to commencing works. A CEMP will also be implemented.
4. Will the Project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Yes- During construction only. Minor quantities of organic (green waste) and inert materials will be generated from site clearance and excavations. There will be some minor excavations of made ground. Minor quantities of waste will be generated at the construction site compound.	No- Materials will be ordered on an as needed basis using the Just-In-Time (JIT) philosophy. Any excess construction materials will be returned to supplier. Small quantities of waste generated will be sent to an authorised waste recovery/disposal facility. Waste management shall form part of the overall CEMP for the construction phase and contain a number of control measures for the management of waste generated on the proposed development site.
5. Will the Project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air or lead to exceeding Ambient Air Quality standards in Directives 2008/50/EC and 2004/107/EC)?	No -There are no elements of the proposed development that will result in the generation or release of noxious, hazardous or toxic substances to air.	No
6. Will the Project cause noise and vibration or the releasing of light, heat energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Yes- The construction phase of the proposed development has the potential to increase noise levels.	No – During the construction phase any potential noise, vibration and traffic effects will be temporary in nature. During operation noise levels will revert to typical baseline levels.

Questions to be considered	Yes/No/? Briefly Describe	Is this likely to result in a significant effect? Yes/No/? – Why?
7. Will the Project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal wasters or the sea?	Yes- During construction phase for example, there is potential for minor leaks and spills of hydrocarbons from construction plant and machinery used on site to leak to ground.	No - Adverse water quality effects could potentially arise due to the accidental release of pollutants such as fuels, oils and other such substances to the aquatic environment. All storage areas and compounds will be located at least 25m away from any water courses and all such materials will be stored in bunded storage containers.
8. Will there be any risk of accidents during construction or operation of the Project that could affect human health or the environment?	No, the proposed development is not of a sufficient nature, size or scale likely to cause a major accident or disaster.	No
9. Will the Project result in environmentally related social changes, for example, in demography, traditional lifestyles, employment?	Yes- It is anticipated that the proposed development will improve the town centre of Cahir by improving access, reducing congestion, improving open space thus providing socio-economic, cultural and environmental benefits for residents, businesses and visitors.	No. Whilst effects on population will be positive in the long terms no significant effects on demography, traditional lifestyles, employment are anticipated.
10. Are there any other factors that should be considered such as consequential development which could lead to environmental impacts or the potential for cumulative impacts with other existing or planned activities in the locality?	Yes- There will be temporary and transient impacts from noise, traffic and dust associated with construction of the proposed development in combination with other developments such as the proposed future car park at Church Street.	No - significant positive long terms effects are not predicted due to the temporary nature of the works alone or in combination with other projects.
11. Is the project located within or close to any areas which are protected under international, EU, or national or local legislation for their ecological, landscape, cultural or other value, which could be affected by the Project?	Yes- There are two (2) Nature 2000 sites within 15km of the proposed development.	No- The AA Screening determined that there will be no significant adverse effects on these two Natura sites.
12. Are there any other areas on or around the location that are important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology e.g. wetlands, watercourses or other waterbodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or woodlands, that could be affected by the Project?	See above. The proposed development site is located adjacent to the River Suir. Development works by their nature have the potential to impact watercourses and groundwater by way of pollution. There is a potential for discharges associated with the construction phase of the proposed development that may impact the receiving watercourses. Cahir Park is located to the south but no effects on this park are predicted.	No- The AA Screening determined that there will be no significant adverse effects are anticipated. Good practices and daily inspections during construction will ensure impacts on watercourses are minimised.
13. Are there any areas on or around the location that are used by protected, important or sensitive species of fauna or flora e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, overwintering, migration, which could be affected by the Project?	Yes- There are two (2) Nature 2000 sites within 15km of the proposed development.	No- The AA Screening determined that there will be no significant adverse effects on these Natura sites.

Questions to be considered	Yes/No/? Briefly Describe	Is this likely to result in a significant effect? Yes/No/? – Why?
14. Are there any inland, coastal, marine or underground waters (or features of the marine environment) on or around the location that could be affected by the Project?	Yes- The proposed development is located adjacent to the River Suir.	No- There is no direct hydrological connection between the proposed development and this water course. Existing silt traps and gullies on the drainage system will continue to operate during construction and operational phases.
15. Are there any areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected by the Project?	No – Due to the scale of the development, landscape and visual effects are considered unlikely.	No
16. Are there any routes or facilities on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the Project?	Yes- During the construction phase, access to the town centre, church, bridge, Cahir GAA Ground, Cahir Park, Cahir Castle car park, and to retail and commercial activities may be temporarily effected.	No- Given the scale of the proposed development, significant effects are unlikely to occur. A Traffic Management Plan will also be put in place for the duration of the works which will manage the movement of traffic and pedestrians during the construction phase.
17. Are there any transport routes on or around the location that are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the Project?	Yes, during the construction phase, there will be impacts on traffic congestion within the area.	No - A detailed Construction and Traffic Management Plan will be prepared by the Main Contractor carrying out the works and issued to TCC for agreement prior to any works starting on site. The Construction and Traffic Management Plan will include details of the location of construction site offices, staff parking, access routes and set down areas for construction vehicles for the delivery and removal of materials, this will be agreed with TCC. Effects on traffic will be temporary in nature during the construction phase. Effects on traffic in the operational phase are predicted to be positive longterm.
18. Is the Project in a location in which it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	Yes- the proposed development is located in the town of Cahir and will be particularly visible during the construction phase. Once operational the project will result in an improvement to the visual resource in the town.	No. Visual impacts will be temporary during construction. Post constriction the visual effects will be positive in the long term.
19. Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location that could be affected by the Project?	Yes- There are cultural heritage assets within the 500 m of the proposed development site. These include - Cahir Castle which bounds the site western side of the proposed development - Stone sculpture within the Cahir Castle grounds c. 35m south of the site boundary	No – Historical or cultural assets will not be physically impacted by the proposed development.

Questions to be considered	Yes/No/? Briefly Describe	Is this likely to result in a significant effect? Yes/No/? – Why?
	- 18th/19th Century House within Cahir Castle grounds c.90m south of the site boundary - Memorial Stone along Castle Street - Cahir Bridge	
20. Is the Project located in a previously undeveloped area where there will be loss of greenfield land?	No- The proposed development will be constructed in an urban area with artificial surfaces on made ground.	No
21. Are there existing land uses within or around the location e.g. homes, gardens, other private property, industry, commerce, recreation, public open space, community facilities, agriculture, forestry, tourism, mining or quarrying that could be affected by the Project?	Yes- Public open spaces within the Town Centre will be increased as a result of the proposed development. There will be temporary impacts on retail in the vicinity of works, however the completed development is expected to have a long term positive effect on the Town Centre.	No – The proposed development is located in an existing urban area with infrastructure of a similar footprint. The completed regeneration development is expected to have a long term positive effect on the Town Centre.
22. Are there any plans for future land uses within or around the location that could be affected by the Project?	No- The planning applications within close proximity to the proposed development are predominantly small-scale extensions and development.	NA
23. Are there areas within or around the location which are densely populated or built-up, that could be affected by the Project?	Yes - The project is located in Cahir town centre. There may be a localised impact on residential and commercial properties in the vicinity of the works.	No- During the construction phase, it is anticipated that there may be potential noise, vibration and traffic impacts; however, effects will be temporary and therefore are not likely to cause significant effects to sensitive receptors in the area. Once completed, the proposed development is expected to have a long term positive impact for the surrounding population, by improving the aesthetics and experience within the existing urban area.
24. Are there any areas within or around the location which are occupied by sensitive land uses e.g. hospitals, schools, places of worship, community facilities, that could be affected by the Project?	There are areas occupied with sensitive land uses which could be affected temporarily including: St Mary's church, GAA grounds, Our Lady of Mercy primary School, Tipperary ETB on Church St and Montessori Naionra on Church St., Cahir Business & Enterprise Centre. There may be a short-term impact during the construction.	During the construction phase, it is anticipated that there may be potential noise, vibration and traffic impacts to sensitive receptors in the area; however, these impacts will be temporary. It is anticipated that the proposed development will likely result in a positive and long-term impact to communities in the area.
25. Are there any areas within or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources e.g.	Yes- The proposed development is located adjacent to the River Suir. The Water Framework Directive (WFD) status of the River Suir for the 2013-2018 period was	No- Significant effects are not anticipated as concluded in the AA Screening report.

Questions to be considered	Yes/No/? Briefly Describe	Is this likely to result in a significant effect? Yes/No/? – Why?
groundwater, surface waters, forestry, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, minerals, that could be affected by the Project?	Moderate, based on Biological Status (Poor) and Dissolved Oxygen Saturation (Fail). The EPA has classified the River Suir as being 'At Risk' of failing to meet its Water Framework Directive (WFD) objectives.	
26. Are there any areas within or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, that could be affected by the Project?	Yes- The proposed development is located adjacent to the River Suir. The Water Framework Directive (WFD) status of the River Suir for the 2013-2018 period was Moderate, based on Biological Status (Poor) and Dissolved Oxygen Saturation (Fail). The EPA has classified the River Suir as being 'At Risk' of failing to meet its Water Framework Directive (WFD) objectives.	No- Significant effects are not anticipated as concluded in the AA Screening report. There will be no direct discharges to any water course from the construction phase of the project and all discharges will continue to drain to existing gullies which are fitted with silt traps.
27. Is the Project location susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme or adverse climatic conditions e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the Project to present environmental problems?	No – the proposed development is not at risk for the flooding as it is not located close to any flooding area as per the OPW flood maps. A Stage 1 and 2 Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) was undertaken for the project which concludes that the site is in Flood Zone C (low risk), coastal flooding does not occur, and the risk of pluvial, groundwater flooding and flooding from artificial drainage systems is considered low. The proposed scheme will not adversely impact flooding within the town or in areas upstream/downstream of the site.	No

Summary of features of Project and of its location indicating the need for EIA:

The need for EIA is not indicated by the proposal. Significant impacts on the environment are unlikely by virtue of:

- This is a small-scale project, the construction phase for which is temporary, and which provides for the provision of a Public Realm Enhancement in an urban area.
- The proposed development would not cause unusual or significant levels of pollution or nuisance of a type that would require an EIA.
- The possibility of effectively reducing negative impacts through best practices and control systems.

4. Conclusion

Having considered the proposed development in the context of mandatory EIA under the regulations, there is no requirement for an EIA. The proposal was also further assessed in accordance with the regulated criteria for determining whether or not a development would or would not be Likely to have Significant Effects on the Environment as specified in Annex III of the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU (as amended by 2014/52/EU).

Having regard to the characteristics of the proposal in consideration of the size, nature, location and characteristic of the potential impacts, it is considered that the proposed development would not introduce any new or additional effects of a significant or adverse nature such as to have a significant effect on the environment or warrant an EIA.

References

- DoEHLG. (2009). Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland Guidance for Planning Authorities, Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government.
- DHPLG. (2018). *Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment*, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.
- EC. (2017). *Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects: Guidance on Screening*, European Commission
- EPA. (2017). *Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Report*, Environmental Protection Agency, Ireland.

Appendix B

Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

MWP

APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING REPORT

Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Plan

Tipperary County Council

October 2021

Contents

Tables

Figures

Project No.	Doc. No.	Rev.	Date	Prepared By	Reviewed By	Approved By	Status
22396	6003	A	22/10/2021	KB	SC	AR	Issue
22396	6003	B	04/11/2021	KB	SPOD	AR	Part 8

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1. Summary of Findings

1.1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment

Project Title	Screening for Appropriate Assessment Report
Project Proponent	Tipperary County Council
Project Location	Cahir, Co. Tipperary.
Screening for Appropriate Assessment	The Screening for Appropriate Assessment is undertaken to determine the potential for likely significant effects of the proposed project, individually, or in combination with other plans or projects, in view of the conservation objectives of the site on a Natura 2000 Site.
Conclusion	It has been objectively concluded during the screening process that the Natura 2000 sites within the zone of influence of the proposed works will not be significantly impacted by the proposed project at Cahir, Co. Tipperary. These sites are: • Lower River Suir SAC - 0km • Galtee Mountains SAC - 8.3km

2. Introduction

A Part 8 Planning Application is being lodged by Tipperary County Council (TCC) for Cahir Public Realm Plan.

The proposed development includes for public realm refurbishment and enhancement in Cahir's town centre comprising of the works involve the upgrade of footpaths and carriageway surfaces, with street furniture, seating, planting, bicycle parking and lighting. The proposed development is therefore relatively small in scale and will be enclosed within the existing urban area. New streetscape layout for Town Square, Castle Street, Church Street, Old Church Street and St Mary's Road with new alignment design for footpaths and trafficked areas incorporating new paving, kerbing, hard and soft landscaping and street furniture.

This screening for Appropriate Assessment has been undertaken to determine whether the proposal is likely to have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site (i.e. Natura 2000 Sites), in view of the sites' conservation objectives.

This screening for Appropriate Assessment has been undertaken by a staff environmental scientist from Malachy Walsh and Partners, Engineering and Environmental consultants (MWP).

2.1 Legislative Context

The Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) seeks to conserve natural habitats and wild fauna and flora by the designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)[1] seeks to protect birds of special importance by the designation of Special Protected Areas (SPAs). It is the responsibility of each member state to designate SPAs and SACs, both of which form part of Natura 2000, a network of protected sites throughout the European Community. Further information is available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/habitatsdirective/

http://www.npws.ie/planning/appropriateassessment/

The current assessment was conducted within this legislative framework and also the DoEHLG (2009) guidelines. As outlined in these, it is the responsibility of the proponent of the project, in this case Tipperary County Council, to provide a comprehensive and objective screening for Appropriate Assessment, which can then be used by the competent authority, in order to conduct the Appropriate Assessment (DoEHLG, 2009).

2.2 Stages of Appropriate Assessment

The Appropriate Assessment process is a four-stage process with issues and tests at each stage. The purpose of the screening assessment is to record in a transparent and reasoned manner the likely effects on Natura 2000 sites of a proposed development. An important aspect of the process is that the outcome at each successive stage determines whether a further stage in the process is required. The stages are set out in Appendix 1.

3. Assessment Methodology

3.1 Appropriate Assessment Guidance

This screening for Appropriate Assessment, or Stage 1, has been undertaken in accordance with the European Commission Methodological Guidance on the provision of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC

[1] This is the codified version of Directive 79/409/EEC as amended (see http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/birdsdirective/index_en.htm)

(EC, 2001), the European Commission Guidance '*Managing Natura 2000 Sites*' Brussels, 21.11.2018 C (2018) 7621 final (EC, 2000), and *Appropriate Assessment of Plans & Projects - Guidance for Planning Authorities* prepared by the NPWS (DoEHLG, 2009 (rev. 2010) and the *Planning Regulator: - Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management , OPR Practice Note PN01* Office of the Planning Regulator, 2021.

3.2 Desk Study

In order to complete the screening for Appropriate Assessment certain information on the existing environment is required. A desk study was carried out to collate available information on the subject site's natural environment. This comprised a review of the following publications, data and datasets:

- OSI Aerial photography and 1:50000 mapping
- National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS)
- National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) (on-line map-viewer)
- BirdWatch Ireland
- Teagasc soil area maps (NBDC website)
- Geological Survey Ireland (GSI) area maps
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) water quality data
- South Eastern River Basin District (SWRBD) datasets (Water Framework Directive)
- Other information sources and reports footnoted in the course of the report

3.3 Site Visit

An ecological field survey was conducted by a staff ecologist with MWP on 8th September 2021. The aim of this survey was to characterise the site and environs and establish the ecological features and resources at the site, particularly in relation to the features of interest of the Lower River Suir SAC which is situated adjacent to the proposed footprint of works.

Aerial photography was used together with GPS to accurately enable field navigation. Notes were made on all habitats encountered, including notes on dominant and indicative vegetation. An assessment was also made of the topography and drainage, disturbance, and management of the area. The presence of any invasive plant species was also noted.

4. Screening for Appropriate Assessment

As set out in the NPWS guidance (DoEHLG, 2009), the task of establishing whether a plan or project is likely to have an effect on a Natura 2000 Site is based on a preliminary impact assessment using available information and data, including that outlined above, and other available environmental information, supplemented as necessary by local site information and ecological surveys. This is followed by a determination of whether there is a risk that the effects identified could be significant. The precautionary principle approach is required.

Once the potential impacts that may arise from the proposal are identified the significance of these is assessed through the use of key indicators:

- Habitat loss

- Habitat alteration
- Habitat or species fragmentation
- Disturbance and/or displacement of species
- Water quality and resource.

Screening for Appropriate Assessment (Stage 1) determines the need for a full Appropriate Assessment (Stage 2) and consists of a number of steps, each of which is addressed in the following sections of this report:

4.1 Establish whether the proposed remediation works are necessary for the management of a Natura 2000 Site

4.2 Description of the proposed remediation works

4.3 Identification of Natura 2000 Sites potentially affected

4.4 Identification and description of potential individual and cumulative impacts of the works

4.5 Assessment of the significance of the impacts on the integrity of Natura 2000 Sites

4.6 Conclusion of screening stage

The purpose of the screening assessment is to record in a transparent and reasoned manner the likely effects, on relevant Natura 2000 Sites, of the proposed remediation works.

4.1 Management of Natura 2000 Sites

The proposal is not connected with or necessary to the conservation management of a Natura 2000 Site.

4.2 Description of the Scheme

The proposed development includes for public realm refurbishment and enhancement in Cahir's Town Centre comprising the upgrading of the existing Square and approach streets with new high-quality paving, kerbing, landscaping, public lighting, improved street furniture and utility diversions/works.

The proposed development will be carried out on Castle Street, Cahir Town Square, St Mary's Road, Old Church Street and Church Street in the townland of Townparks, Cahir, Co. Tipperary.

The nature and extent of proposed development is as follows:

- New raised table shared surface on Castle Street from Cahir Castle to the Castle Car Park entrance to the East and The Mall entrance to the North.
- New kerb alignment and pavement surfaces from the Castle Street Car Park entrance to The Square junction, including upgrading of pedestrian crossing, installation of new public lighting and soft landscaping.
- New streetscape layout for Cahir Square with new alignment design for footpaths, parking areas and trafficked areas incorporating a raised table shared surface from the junction with Castle Street, to the Junction with St Marys Road and to North of The Fountain, new kerb and pavement surfaces throughout The Square, new hard and soft landscaping, new street furniture, new bollards, new bicycle racks, installation of new and upgrade of existing public lighting.

- Alteration of on-street parking for Castle Street, The Square, Church Street, Old Church Street and The Square end of St Mary's Road.
- New pavement surfaces on St. Mary's Road, Old Church Street and Church Street.
- New controlled pedestrian crossings and soft landscaping on Church Street and Old Church St.
- Undergrounding of overhead electrical cables, installation of new public lighting and upgrading of existing public lighting across the entire project area. The Public Lighting scheme proposed uses single and double tear drop type LED lanterns mounted on 8m heritage columns together with localised uplighters in the Square and recessed wall lights to steps. All lighting schemes shall be in accordance with Tipperary County Councils Public Lighting Policy and IS EN 13201. These lights shall be controlled via individual dusk to dawn photocells.
- Development of associated drainage services and utilities across the entire project area. The proposed public realm project is a refurbishment of the existing streetscape and is a replacement of the existing hardstanding areas within the town square and approach roads. The area of hardstanding within the town centre will not be altered by the proposed design. SuDS techniques are incorporated into the design to provide sustainable surface water management. Where new trees have been introduced a localised reservoir beneath the trees is included as a SuDS design measure. Where manhole cover locations need to be repositioned to suit new line and level of the proposed streetscape design, this will be coordinated with Irish Water at detailed design. The proposed scheme does not include any new demands on the sewerage facilities.
- All associated site works

Footpath space will be widened, traffic calming will be developed through build out, reduced road carriageway widths and improved pedestrian crossings. Existing on-street parking to be reduced from the Square to a new Town Centre Car Park with a 86 car, 2 coach and 3 mini-bus spaces just off the Square to the north east. This car park is the subject of a separate Part 8 Planning application.

The traffic flow through the Square will be changed from the current two way on both the east and west sides of the Square to two way flow on the east side only. Service and emergency vehicle access will be maintained to the west side of the Square. Pedestrian movement will be prioritised by the design.

The development also includes for public realm refurbishment and enhancement on Castle Street, Church Street, Old Church Street and the Square end of St Mary's Road. A raised table on Castle Street will link the Castle entrance with the river walkways to the north.

The proposed development will comprise a total works area of 8,500m^2 and will predominantly involve the regeneration of Town Centre. The land area of the proposed development is limited to and contained within the area of Cahir Square and its four approach Roads (Castle Street to the west, Church Street to the north, Old Church Street to the east and St Mary's Road to the south). The proposed development is therefore relatively small in scale and will be enclosed within the existing urban area.

4.2.1 Operational Phase

The proposed public realm plan focuses on the promotion of cycling and walking while minimising the impact of vehicles within the town center. Currently the Square has a two-way roads around each side with parking on both of the roads on the east and west side of the Square. The result is a Square that is dominated by traffic with very little space given over to pedestrians and public realm. The four approach roads to the Square have parking on one or both sides with the footpaths being quite tight in places.

The proposed scheme removes the two-lane road and parking from the west side of the Square to create a significant public realm space. The footpaths on the other sides of the Square and on the approach roads are widened to improve facilities for pedestrians. There will be a reduction in the number of parking spaces within the Square and on the four approach roads. However, this loss will be more than offset by the construction of a new 100+ space public car park to the northeast of the Square, with a pedestrian link directly to the Square. This is a separate scheme that has already been submitted for Part 8.

4.2.2 Construction phase

The renewal and reconfiguration of the square and street layouts will necessitate the excavation of the existing footpaths and pavements, formation of suitable subbase and levels, relocation of existing utilities, installation of new street surface paving, street furniture and lighting. Footpaths will be broken by mechanical hammer and roadway surfaces planed, the resultant materials will be loaded onto a dump truck by machine bucket for removal to an appropriately licensed waste facility.

The Public Lighting scheme proposed will use a combination of bollards, wall lights and lanterns mounted on 5m, 6m and 8m columns. All lighting schemes shall be in accordance with Tipperary County Councils Public Lighting Policy and IS EN 13201. The existing heritage columns will be retained and the existing heritage lantern will be upgraded to an LED heritage lantern. These lights shall be controlled via dusk to dawn photocells. The Square and approach roads. will be lit using LED Lanterns mounted on 8m columns and will be controlled using individual dusk to dawn photocells. As part of the public realm upgrade works, it is proposed to liaise with ESB Networks and underground the existing overhead ESB cables. The majority of ESB cables within Cahir currently run underground. Where localised sections of overground cabling exist, new trenches will be required to underground these cables. Additional trenches will only be required where relocation of services is necessary. This will be advised during detailed design. The new finishes to the streets will be a mixture of high-quality limestone paving slabs, limestone or granite setts and asphalt.

The proposed public realm project is a refurbishment of the existing streetscape and is a replacement of the existing hardstanding areas within the town square and approach roads. The area of hardstanding within the town centre will not be altered by the proposed design. SuDS techniques are incorporated into the design to provide sustainable surface water management. Where new trees have been introduced a localised reservoir beneath the trees is included as a SuDS design measure. Where manhole cover locations need to be repositioned to suit new line and level of the proposed streetscape design, this will be coordinated with Irish Water at detailed design.

The works will be undertaken on a phased basis with Construction due to commence in mid-2022. It is anticipated that construction work will be completed within 12 months. Working hours will be 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday, and 8am to 2pm on Saturday. No work will be undertaken on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

The phasing of the construction works shall be outlined in the Construction & Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). The CEMP will be prepared by the appointed contractor and issued to TCC for agreement prior to works commencing and will be implemented for the duration of the works.

Access to the Square, approach roads and properties within Cahir will be maintained at all times during the construction phase. This may require limited night works for final surfacing and utility installation etc. Scheduling of these activities will be addressed in the CEMP.

The construction works will always allow one lane of traffic on any section of road being worked on.

Bus routes will be maintained through the town.

The number of construction staff on site will vary throughout the works. The nature of the Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Plan enables multiple crews to work simultaneously in different areas. A typical crew will have 4-5 members plus a machine operator for excavation works. Where street paving resurfacing works are being

undertaken, the crew will increase to 12-15 members plus associated plant, and delivery trucks. It is expected that the peak number of staff working on the Public Realm project will be no more than 20-25 staff at any one time.

A detailed Construction and Traffic Management Plan will be prepared by the Main Contractor carrying out the works and issued to TCC for agreement prior to any works starting on site.

The Construction and Traffic Management Plan will include details of the location of construction site offices, staff parking, access routes and set down areas for construction vehicles for the delivery and removal of materials, this will be agreed with TCC.

Over the duration of the Plan, it is estimated that approximately 400 truck journeys would be required for the project based on estimated quantities of materials at the preliminary design stage. This equates to approximately 8 truck per week over the duration of the project.

The Contractor will ensure that the proposed works are carried out in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013 (S.I. No. 291 of 2013). As construction works are standard in nature and well understood, there is a low probability that accidents will occur. Normal good construction practices are to be employed and will ensure that the risk of accidents will be low. Having regard to substances or technologies used, it is envisaged that the risk of accidents, is very low.

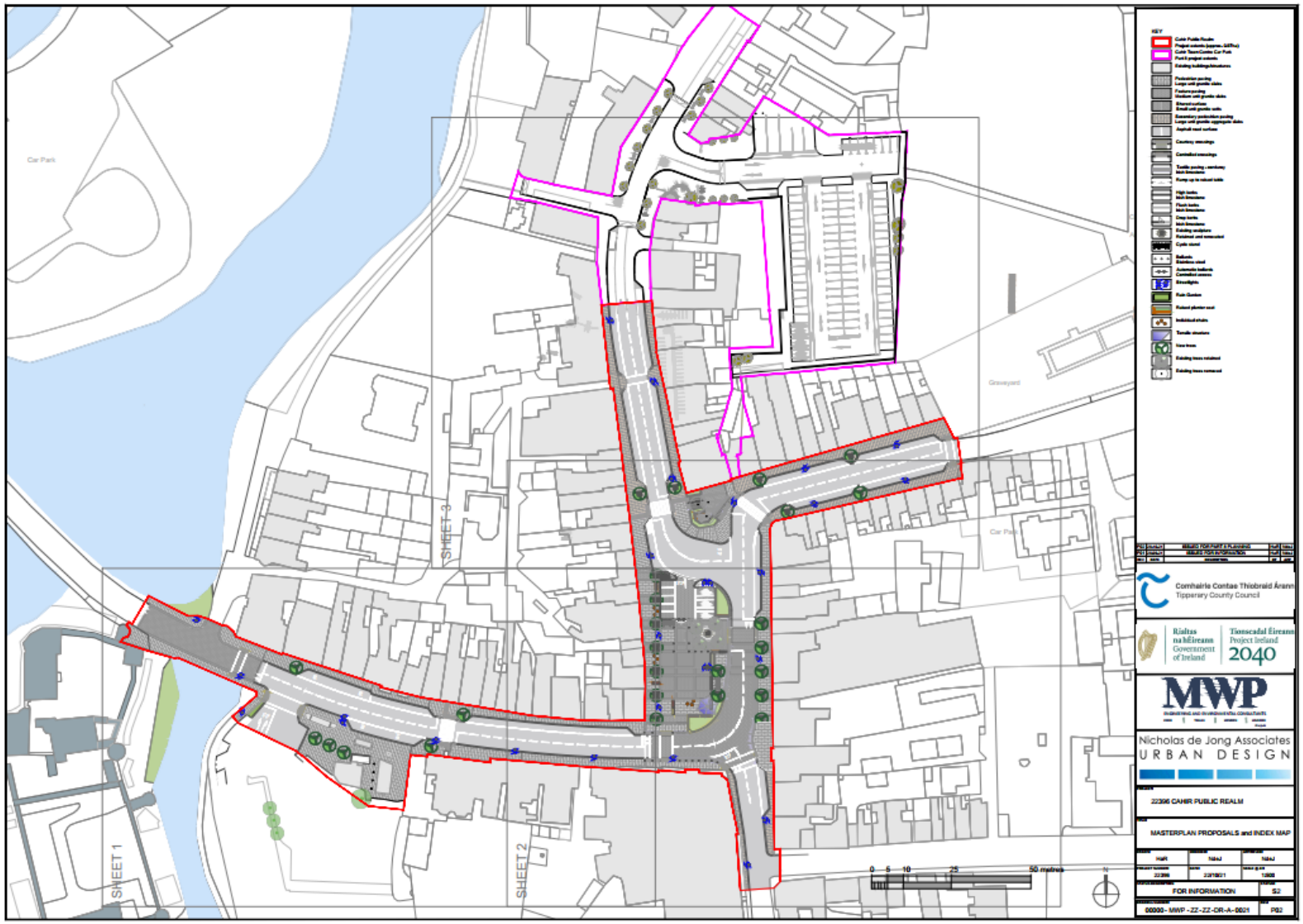

Figure 4.2 Site Layout/Project Plan

4.3 Purpose of the Project

To improve the environment for the public to enjoy, boost economic activity, encourage cycling and tourism within Cahir.

4.4 Site Location

The subject site is located in the Cahir town center which is located on the river Suir in Co. Tipperary and lies approximately 13km west of Clonmel and 65km northwest of Cork. The town is serviced by the R640 Regional Road and by a rail connection to Limerick Junction and to Waterford. The town is located approximately 2km east of the M8 Cork to Dublin motorway.

Cahir is located within the Electoral Division of 'Caher'. CSO data indicates that, in 2016, this ED had a total population of 1,134 person's resident. The dominant land-use surrounding the town is agricultural.

The site location is presented in **Figure 4.1**, below.

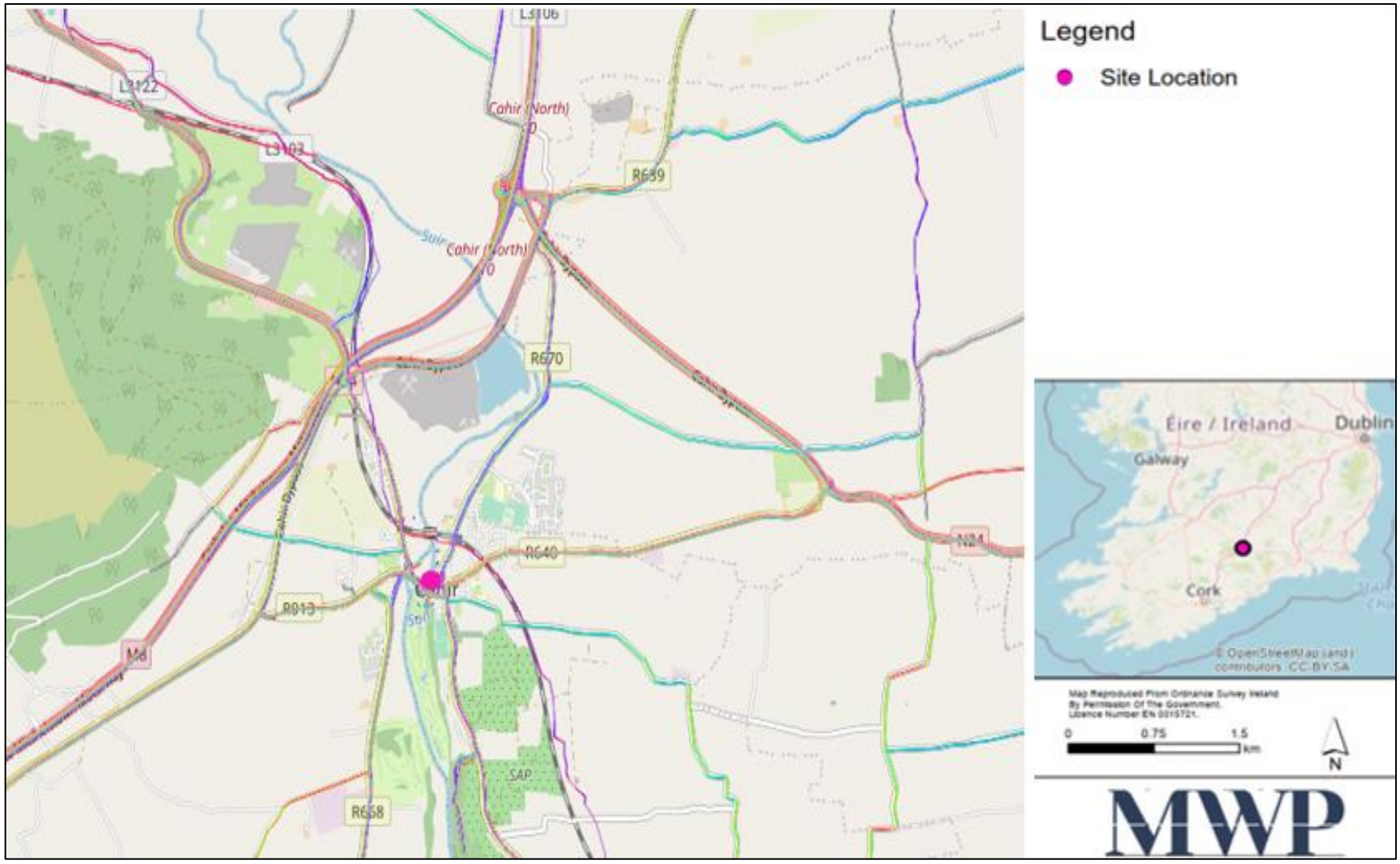

Figure 4.1 Site location

4.5 Site Description

Cahir is located within the Electoral Division of 'Caher'. CSO data indicates that, in 2016, this ED had a total population of 1,134 residing in the town. The dominant land-use surrounding the town is agricultural.

The Corine 2018 land cover is categorised as Artificial Surfaces, Urban Fabric and Discontinuous Urban Fabric.

The proposed development is located in the town of Cahir. The surrounding townlands in the region are Townlands, Carrigeen, Caherabbey Upper, Caherabbey Lower, Barnora, Monaraha, Ballyhenebery, Killemly, Farranlahassry, Killeigh, Lissava Grange Beg and Ballymacadam West.

The underlying soil cover consists of a mixture Made ground, Sandstone till and Alluviam. The underlying bedrock consists of Limestone.

The River Suir flows in a northwest to southeast direction adjacent the western extent of the proposed development.

There are several EPA surface-water quality monitoring stations in the vicinity of the town centre. The EPA assessment of water quality is based on the macro-invertebrate community and physio-chemical characteristics of the waterbody at these locations. The Water Framework Directive (WFD) status of the River Suir for the 2013-2018 period was Moderate, based on Biological Status (Poor) and Dissolved Oxygen Saturation (Fail). The EPA has classified the River Suir as being 'At Risk' of failing to meet it's Water Framework Directive (WFD) objectives.

In terms of zoning, Public Realm Improvements have been identified in for the square in the Local Area Plan (LAP). The current Cahir LAP 2011 states the following in relation to redevelopment of the square:

'The Square is the focal point of the town but is currently dominated by car parking rather than retailing and recreational uses. The relocation of car parking from the centre of The Square to the Castle Street Car Park and the redevelopment of the Square as a landscaped plaza, essentially making the town centre a pedestrian priority area will greatly enhance the Town Centre. The use of landscaping and street furniture will encourage residents and tourists alike to use this space and in turn improve the vitality and vibrancy of the area, blurring the barrier between buildings and the street and encouraging uses to spill out from the shops and cafés into the public realm. The development of a central plaza in the town would also enable the relocation of the Farmers Market from its existing location at the car park adjacent to the Craft Granary to The Square and could also be used as an entertainment space for street performance when and if the need arose. It is intended to restore the Memorial Fountain to its former condition and to reinstate the water supply to this feature. Planting will also be enhanced on either end of the proposed plaza. Ultimately the improvement works set out above will assist in developing the retail function, café culture and vitality and vibrancy of the town centre.'

The Proposed Cahir Local Area Plan 2021-2027 has now been published and further emphasise the need for Public Realm Improvements at the Square. The proposed plans set out the following objectives in relation to the town centre development:

Objective TCO4.1

'Continue to develop and implement the Town Centre Regeneration Strategy in partnership with the Rural Regeneration Development Fund and other funding sources as may be available'

Objective TCO4.2

'Prepare a plan for the improvement of the public realm in Cahir, including proposals for redesign of the square, improving the pedestrian environment for residents and visitors, and traffic management in the town'

4.6 Ecology Survey

An ecological field survey was conducted by a staff ecologist with MWP on the 8th of September 2021. The objective of the site walkover was to document the baseline ecology of the site, carried out with regard to 'A Guide to Habitats in Ireland' (Fossitt, 2000) and following the guidelines contained in 'Best Practice Guidance for Habitat Survey and Mapping' (Smith *et. al*, 2011). As part of the site walkover, the presence of protected species or species and/or habitats listed as qualifying features of the relevant Natura 2000 sites. Particular focus was given to invasive plant species listed on the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI 477 of 2011, as amended).

4.7 Ecology Survey Results

No evidence of habitats or species of qualifying interest for Natura 2000 sites, were recorded during the site walkover. A number of bird species were recorded, primarily in the vicinity of the bridge (see **Table 4.1** below). No invasive alien species were recorded during the survey. Habitats within the footprint of the project site were classified according to Fossitt (2000) and are outlined below. A total of five habitats were identified within the study area (See **Table 4.1)**, comprising of habitats primarily of low ecological value, with buildings and artificial surfaces being the most prominent habitat.

Table 4.1: Bird species recorded during ecological survey

Species	
Wren	*Troglodytes troglodytes*
Blackbird	*Turdus merula*
Grey Heron	*Ardea cinerea*
Pied Wagtail	*Motacilla alba yarrellii*
Chaffinch	*Fringilla coelebs*
Robin	*Erithacus rubecula*
Jackdaw	*Corvus monedula*
Dipper	*Cinclus cinclus*
Mallard	*Anas platyrhynchos*

4.7.1 Habitats

4.7.1.1 Buildings and Artificial Surfaces BL3

The project site primarily comprises of roads, paths and walls of negligible ecological value. There are 4 no. heavily modified horse-chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) trees located within the town centre, in the middle of the project site. See Plate 1 below.

Plate 1: Buildings and Artificial Surfaces (BL3) within the town centre (Left) and along the bridge (top right). Horse-chestnut trees in the town centre (bottom right).

4.7.1.2 Scattered Trees and Parkland WD5

There are three mature lime *Tilia* spp. trees flanking the east bank of the River Suir within a small area of amenity grassland, adjacent to an access road and outdoor seating area for a local café. These trees may have some limited roosting potential for bats and act as a commuting corridor, connecting to a treeline north of the project site. See Plate 2 below.

Plate 2: Area of Scattered Trees and Parkland WD5

4.7.1.3 Stone Walls and Other Stonework BL1

This habitat is primarily associated with the old stone walls bounding the bridge to the west, and rising from the east bank of the River Suir. This habitat was noted to support species such as Ivy leaved Toadflax (Cymbalaria muralis), Bindweed (Calystegia sepium), Sowthistle (Sonchus spp.) Maiden Hair Spleenwort (Aspelnium trichomanes), Polypody (Polypodium spp.) and Red Valerian (Centranthus ruber). Along the east bank wall, recorded vegetation also included Hogweed (Heracleum sphondylium), and Alder (Alnus glutinosa). There is an old stone wall in the east area of the project site bounding the town's graveyard. This wall was relatively free of vegetation at the time of the survey, apart from Ivy (Hedera helix) and Maiden Hair spleenwort. See Plate 3 below.

Plate 3: Stone Walls and Other Stonework (BL1) along the bridge crossing the River Suir (Left) and bounding the town's graveyard (Right).

4.7.1.4 Ornamental/Non-Native Shrub WS3 and Flower Beds and Borders BC4

There are small pockets of ornamental shrubbery in formal beds and flower boxes throughout the project site. See **Plate 4** below.

Plate 4: Ornamental/non-native shrub WS3 and Flower Beds and Borders (BC4) throughout the project site.

4.7.1.5 Exposed Calcareous Rock ER2 and Recolonising Bare Ground ED3

There is a section of exposed calcareous rock at the base of Cahir Castle, separated from the bridge by an area of recolonising bare ground habitat. Both habitats were noted to support species such as Herb Robert (*Geranium robertianum*), Willow (*Salix spp.*), Ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*), Nettle (*Urtica dioica*), and Willowherb (*Epilobium spp*.) as well as Valarian and Alder. See **Plate 5** below.

Plate 5: Exposed calcareous rock ER2 and Recolonising Bare Ground ED3

4.8 Characteristics of the Project

The proposal is described below and has been confirmed with the project engineer.

Table 4.2 Project Proposal

Size, scale, area, land-take	Small scale project, with a total works area of approximately 8,500m^2. The land area of the proposed development is limited to and contained within the area of Cahir Square and its four approach Roads(Castle Street to the west, Church Street to the north, Old Church Street to the east and St Mary's Road to the south). The proposed development is therefore relatively small in scale and will be enclosed within the existing urban area.
Details of physical changes that will take place during the various stages of implementing the proposal	The proposed development includes for public realm refurbishment and enhancement in Cahir's town centre comprising the upgrading of existing Square and approach streets with new high quality paving, kerbing, public lighting, improved street furniture and utility diversions/works (including undergrounding of overhead ESB cables).Footpath space will be widened, traffic calming will be developed through build out, reduced road carriageway widths and improved pedestrian crossings. Existing on-street parking to be reduced from the Square to a new Town Centre Car Park with 86 additional car, 2 coach and 3 mini-bus parking spaces immediately adjacent to the Square to the north east. This car park is the subject of a separate Part 8 Planning application. The traffic flow through the Square will be changed from the current two way on both the east and west sides of the Square to two way flow on the east side only. Service and emergency vehicle access will be maintained to the west side of the Square. Pedestrian movement will be prioritised by the design. The development also includes for public realm refurbishment and enhancement on Castle Street, Church Street, Old Church Street and the Square end of St Mary's Road. A raised table on Castle Street will link the Castle entrance with the river walkways to the north. A similar raised table will be provided on Church Street in front of the new Town Centre Car Park entrance. The renewal and reconfiguration of the square and street layouts will necessitate the excavation of the existing footpaths and pavements, formation of suitable subbase and levels, utility diversions/works, installation of new street surface paving, street furniture and lighting. Footpaths will be broken by mechanical hammer and roadway surfaces planed, the resultant materials will be loaded onto a dump truck by machine bucket for removal to an appropriately licensed waste facility. The majority of ESB cables within Cahir currently run underground. Where localised sections of overground cabling exist, new trenches will be required to underground these cables. Additional trenches will only be required where relocation of services is necessary. This will be advised during detailed design.

	The new finishes to the streets will be a mixture of high-quality limestone paving slabs, limestone or granite setts and asphalt.
Description of resource requirements for the construction/operation and decommissioning of the proposal (water resources, construction material, human presence etc)	The proposed works will be within an urban environment, which has been significantly modified by human activity. Soil cover is absent within the town centre, and the soil underlying the town centre site constitutes Made Ground. There will be no requirement for water abstraction for the proposed development as water requirements will be met by the public water supply. Construction activity will include shallow and localised excavations up to an approximate maximum depth of 200mm bgl. It is anticipated that most of the material excavated will be existing road surfacing, concrete footpaths and signage, and it is unlikely that any in-situ rock breaking will be required. It is proposed to use high quality natural stone material in the upgrade works. Overall, it can be concluded that there is no evidence to suggest the project will be detrimental to natural resources. The natural resources required including land, soil and geo-resources are typical for a project of this scale. A desktop study and ecological site walkover do not indicate loss of any protected plant or animal species. The following materials and approximate volumes are required for the works: • Concrete – 1,600m^3 • Precast/Granite setts/Tarmac/Resin Bound path – 1,000m^3 • Topsoil – Small quantities for tree pits and rain gardens within the urban space • Ducting – 2,200m. Over the duration of the project, it is estimated that approximately 400 truck journeys would be required for the project based on estimated quantities of materials at the preliminary design stage. This equates to approximately 8 truck per week over the duration of the project. The Contractor will ensure that the proposed works are carried out in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013 (S.I. No. 291 of 2013). As construction works are standard in nature and well understood, there is a low probability that accidents will occur. Normal good construction practices are to be employed and will ensure that the risk of accidents will be low. Having regard to substances or technologies used, it is envisaged that the risk of accidents, is very low and therefore will not result in significant environmental effects.
Description of timescale for the various activities that will take place as a result of implementation (including likely start and finish date)	The works will be undertaken on a phased basis with Construction due to commence in late 2022. It is anticipated that construction work will be completed within 12 months. Working hours will be 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 2pm on Saturday. No work will be undertaken on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

Description of wastes arising and other residues (including quantities) and their disposal	Waste is expected to consist of concrete from existing footpaths and surface planing from the existing roadways. Small quantities of incidental waste materials such as pallets and packaging will also be generated. No hazardous waste material will be generated. Volumes are estimated as follows: • Concrete/Blacktop/Precast concrete (average 250mm thickness) – 2,010m^3 Waste materials from the construction site compounds will be disposed of/recycled at an authorised waste facility. In addition, any excess construction materials will be returned to the supplier. All construction waste will be managed in accordance with a Construction Waste Management Plan. The plan will be prepared by the main contractor carrying out the works and issued to TCC for agreement prior to any works commencing on site It is considered that the production of any waste associated with the construction of the development, as described above, will not cause unusual, significant or adverse effects. There will be no hazardous waste generated by the proposed works.
Identification of wastes arising and other residues (including quantities) that may be of particular concern in the context of the Natura 2000 network	No other waste and/or residues will arise that may be of particular concern in the context of the Natura 2000 network. There is potential for minor leaks and spills of hydrocarbons from construction plant and machinery used on site to leak to ground.
Description of any additional services required to implement the project or plan, their location and means of construction	No additional services are required to implement the project.

4.9 Identification of Other Projects or Plans or Activities

The proposed development is within Cahir Town Centre, which is subject to ongoing retail, commercial and residential development. Current grants of permission include works such as demolition, remediation and extensions to existing private dwellings and commercial buildings in Cahir town (Tipperary County Council on-line planning enquiry system).

A desktop search of proposed and existing planning applications was undertaken on the 06/09/21. The search flagged planning applications within a period dating back to 2016; any refused, invalid or withdrawn applications were omitted. Furthermore, any small-scale residential type developments, such as extensions and modifications, minor amendments to existing dwellings and changes of use developments were omitted from the search.

The most recent (<5 years) grants of planning for the townlands adjacent to the proposed development include development, include predominantly include small scale single and two storey dwellings.

The findings show small, medium to large-scale developments within the 5 km radius scope that have been approved or on-going. The majority of planning applications within 5km of the proposed development are related to development of and alterations to residential properties and are considered to be small in scale. A summary of relevant developments considered in the cumulative assessment are given below:

- Ref No. 20952 (Granted 2020) Extension to Dolans Supervalu in 2 separate phases which is 150m north west of the proposed development closest point on red line boundary. Phase 1 – retail extension to the north side of the existing facility and Phase 2 – to extend the north entrance to the south and all associated site works
- Ref no. 19600845 (Granted 2021) construct 8 no. new dwellings including all associated site development works such as entrance, roadways, footpaths, new boundary treatments and connection to underground services as well as the closing up of an existing entrance to an existing neighbouring dwelling and opening a new entrance to the proposed estate roadway as well as providing a foul connection to the same existing dwelling and the decommissioning of the existing septic tank currently serving the existing dwelling. It is approximately 550m north east of the proposed development closest point on red line boundary.
- Ref No. 21402 (Granted 2021) the proposed development, which is approximately 740m south west of the proposed development closest point on red line boundary, will consist of the upgrade of the existing wastewater treatment plant to increase the treatment capacity, comprising of: the construction of 1 no. partially below ground screened storm overflow chamber; the decommissioning of the existing inlet works and the construction of a new above ground inlet screening works area; the construction of 1 no. partially below ground storm overflow weir chamber and 1 no. partially below ground stormwater overflow flume; 1 no. partially below ground splitter chamber and 1 no partially below ground clarifier tank; and ancillary development including associated underground chambers, cabling and piping and all associated site development works. A Natura Impact Statement has been prepared in respect of this planning application.
- Ref no 2046 (Granted 2021) amend previously approved planning consent 16/600565 for a grant of a ten-year planning permission for a solar farm, the development is approximately 1.5km east of the proposed development closest point on red line boundary, will consist of an increase in the previously approved mega wattage output; amendments to the previously approved site layout including a reduced number of overall panel modules; additional and revised battery storage units; additional and revised designs for inverters and field transformers; the inclusion of switchgear substations; revisions to the panel elevations to include bi-facial panels; revisions to the panel dimensions to include an increased panel (and leg) max height of no more than 2.5m; revisions to the individual panel width and length; and

a reduction in the spacing between the panel rows. Permission is also sought to extend the operational lifespan of the solar farm from 30 years to 35 years from commissioning to the grid.

- Ref no 17600911 (Granted 2017) development which is approximately 330m east of the proposed development closest point on red line boundary, will comprise the demolition on the existing single storey our Lady of Mercy Girls Primary School, General Purpose Room and Classroom Annex building, together with the demolition of 3 no. X. existing single storey prefabricated buildings and the construction of a new part single storey, part two storey 16 no. X classroom primary school, incorporating an integrated 2 no. X classroom special needs unit, a general purpose room and all associated support accommodation, together with all associated site development, including new pedestrian and vehicle access gates at Convent Road, together with new on-site car parking and set down, including coach and minibus parking, external paths, pavements, play areas, 2 no. X hardcourts, a new overground gas storage tank and enclosure, the diversion and undergrounding of existing overhead electrical cables, new underground rain water harvesting and rain water attenuation tanks and a new underground sewerage pumping station, new site and boundary fencing and gates, together with all associated new over ground and underground site works and services, the entire development to facilitate the amalgamation of the existing Girls Primary School and Cahir Boys National School
- Proposed new Town Centre Car Park- There is a proposed car park which potentially bounds the north east side of the proposed development red line boundary. This is subject to a separate Part 8 planning application.

4.10 Identification of Natura 2000 Sites

4.10.1 Zone of Impact Influence

The screening stage of AA involves compiling a 'long list' of Natura 2000 sites within a zone of potential impact influence for later analysis which may or may not be significantly impacted upon by the proposal.

The "zone of influence" for a project is the area over which ecological features may be subject to significant effects as a result of the proposed project and associated activities (CIEEM, 2018). This is likely to extend beyond the site where there are ecological or hydrological connection(s) beyond the site boundaries.

The subject site and a distance of 15km is recommended as a potential zone of influence (Scott Wilson et al., 2006). However, National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) guidance (NPWS, 2009) advises that this zone of influence be assessed on a case-by-case basis with consideration of the nature, size, and location of the project, the sensitivities of the ecological receptors and the potential for cumulative effects. As such, Natura 2000 sites beyond 15km may also be considered based on the potential for an ecological and/or hydrological to the project site, bearing in mind the precautionary principle and using the Source-Pathway-Receptor framework.

Following this, the potential impacts associated with the proposal will be identified before an assessment is made of the likely significance of these impacts.

As described above, the test for the screening for Appropriate Assessment is to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if the development, individually or in combination with other plans/project is likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site. If there are any significant, potentially significant, or uncertain effects, it will be necessary to proceed to Appropriate Assessment and submit an NIS.

The locations of Natura 2000 sites within the zone of potential significant impact influence of the proposal site, bearing in mind the precautionary principle, are shown on a map in **Figure 4.3**. Natura 2000 sites within the zone of potential significant impact influence of the proposal site, including their proximity are shown in below. Site synopses for these sites are included in **Appendix 2**.

Table 4.3 Natura 2000 Sites within zone of potential impact influence of the proposal site

Designated Site	Site Code	Proximity of Site to Nearest Point of Designated Site	Hydrological/Ecological Connection? (Yes/No)
Lower River Suir SAC	002137	0km	Yes. This SAC is situated adjacent to the footprint of the proposed project. Existing road drainage within the footprint of works drains to the River Suir which comprises part of this SAC. As such, there is a hydrological link between the proposed works and the site.
Galtee Mountains SAC	000646	8.3km	No. There is a lack of hydrological and ecological connection between the proposed works and this SAC.

4.10.2 Characteristics of Natura 2000 Sites

Table 4.4 lists the qualifying features of Special Conservation Interest for the Natura 2000 sites that lie within the zone of potential impact influence of the subject site. Information pertaining to the Natura 2000 sites is from site synopses, conservation objectives and other information available on www.npws.ie.

Table 4.4 Natura 2000 sites with qualifying features of Special Conservation Interest.

Natura 2000 Site	Qualifying features of Special Conservation Interest
Lower River Suir SAC	• Atlantic salt meadows (*Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae*) [1330] • Mediterranean salt meadows (*Juncetalia maritimi*) [1410] • Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculion fluitantis* and *Callitricho-Batrachion* vegetation [3260] • Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels [6430] • Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles [91A0] • Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and Fraxinus excelsior (*Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae*) [91E0] • *Taxus baccata* woods of the British Isles [91J0] • *Margaritifera margaritifera* (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029] • *Austropotamobius pallipes* (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092] • *Petromyzon marinus* (Sea Lamprey) [1095] • *Lampetra planeri* (Brook Lamprey) [1096] • *Lampetra fluviatilis* (River Lamprey) [1099] • *Alosa fallax fallax* (Twaite Shad) [1103] • *Salmo salar* (Salmon) [1106] • *Lutra lutra* (Otter) [1355]

Natura 2000 Site	Qualifying features of Special Conservation Interest
Galtee Mountains SAC	• *Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix [4010]* • *European dry heaths [4030]* • *Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060]* • *Species-rich Nardus grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe) [6230]* • *Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130]* • *Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (Androsacetalia alpinae and Galeopsietalia ladani) [8110]* • *Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210]* • *Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220]*

4.10.3 Conservation Objectives

According to the Habitats Directive, the *conservation status of a natural habitat* will be taken as 'favourable' within its biogeographic range when:

- its natural range and areas it covers within that range are stable or increasing, and
- the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and
- the conservation status of its typical species is favourable as defined below.

According to the Habitats Directive, the conservation status of a species means the sum of the influences acting on the species concerned that may affect the long-term distribution and abundance of its populations. The conservation status will be taken as 'favourable' within its biogeographic range when:

- population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats, and
- the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and
- there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

Site-specific conservation objectives are available for the following sites:

- Lower River Suir SAC (002137) (Version 1.0, produced March 2017)
- Galtee Mountains SAC (000646) (Version 1.0, produced July 2016)

These have been accessed on the 3rd September 2021.

No management plan is not available for this site.

All conservation objectives together with other designated site information are available on http://www.npws.ie/protectedsites/.

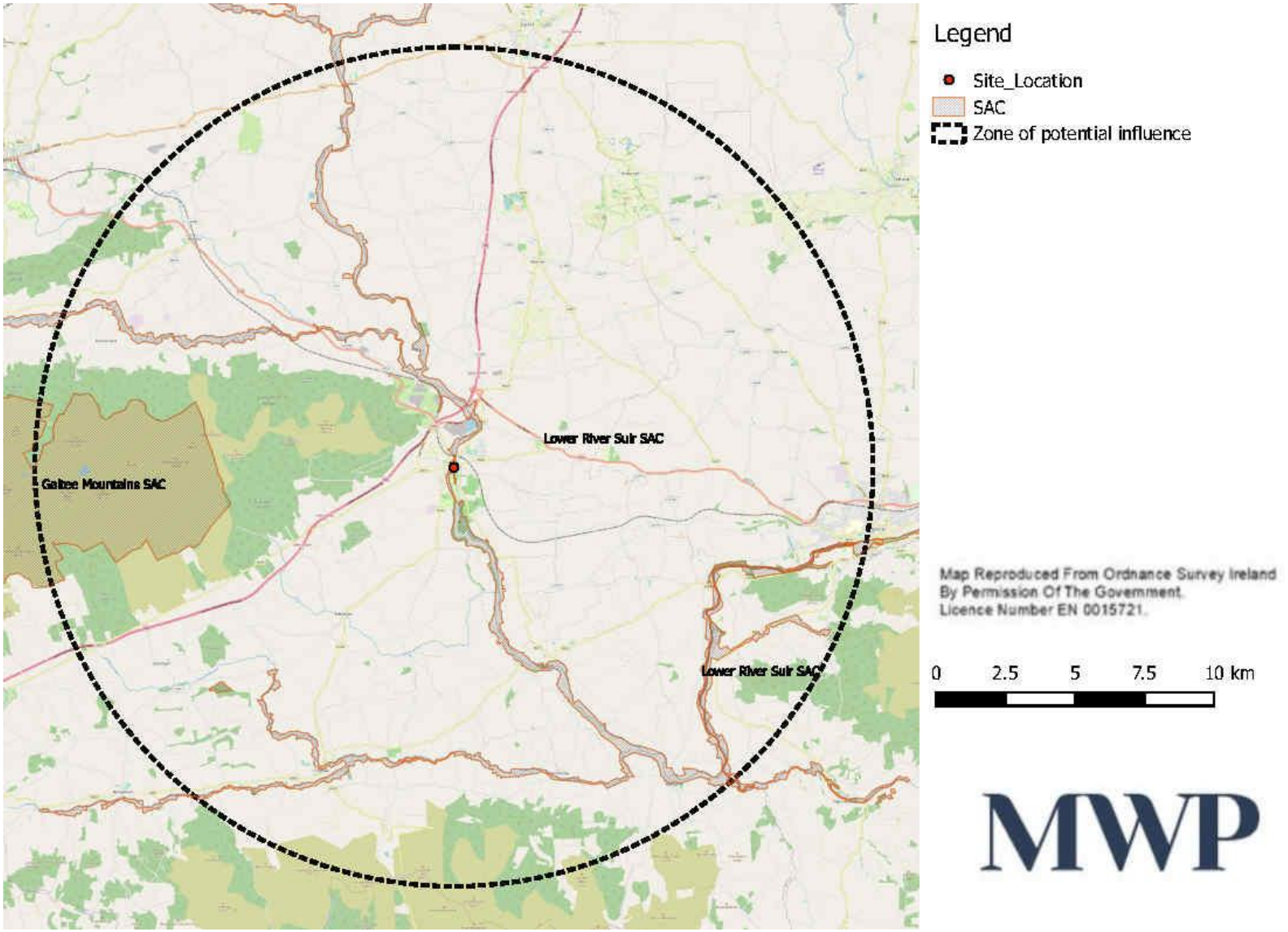

Figure 4.2 Natura 2000 sites within the zone of potential influence

4.11 Identification of Potential Impacts

Potential likely ecological impacts arising from the project are identified in this section.

Table 4.5 Potential likely ecological impacts

Description of elements of the project likely to give rise to potential ecological impacts.	The proposed works are for the regeneration of Cahir Town Centre primarily, Town Square, Castle Street, Church Street, Old Church Street and St Mary's Road The works will be undertaken entirely within an existing built-up area. There will be no direct discharge from the project to the River Suir, however there may be potential for indirect surface water run-off entering the River Suir during the proposed construction phase.
Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary ecological impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) by virtue of: *Size and scale;* *Land-take;* *Distance from Natura 2000 Site or key features of the Site;* *Resource requirements;* *Emissions;* *Excavation requirements;* *Transportation requirements;* *Duration of construction, operation etc.; and* *Other.*	The proposed overall works area is 8,500m^2 The proposed works will be within an urban environment, which has been significantly modified by human activity. The proposed works are not located within any Natura 2000 site; as such there will be no land-take from any Natura 2000 site. There are two Natura 2000 sites within the zone of potential influence of the proposed works: • Lower River Suir SAC (002137) - 0km • Galtee Mountains SAC (000646) – 8.3km There is no hydrological or ecological connection between the site of the proposed works and Galtee Mountains SAC (000646). Due to the proximity of the proposed works to Lower River Suir SAC (002137) (0km), there is a potential for impacts on this site. Water abstraction will not be required as part of the proposed project. Construction activity will include shallow and localised excavations up to an approximate maximum depth of 200mm bgl. There is potential for surface water run-off during the proposed construction phase. The proposed project will be in an urban area already subject to regular traffic noise. There will be no requirement to traverse through any Natura 2000 site. Construction works will be temporary and relatively short-term in nature. They are anticipated to begin in late 2022 and take approximately 12 months to complete. The operational phase of the project will continue indefinitely. No impact is envisaged as a result of the duration of this project.

	There are no other potential sources of impacts associated with the proposed public realm works.

4.12 Assessment of Significance of Potential Impacts

This section considers the list of sites identified in Table 4.3, together with the potential ecological impacts identified in the previous section and determines whether the project is likely to have significant effects on a Natura 2000 site. When assessing impact, Natura 2000 sites are only considered relevant where a credible or tangible source-pathway-receptor link exists between the proposed development and a protected species or habitat type. In order for an impact to occur there must be a risk initiated by having a 'source' (e.g. excavation), and an impact pathway between the source and the receptor (e.g. a waterbody which connects the proposal site to the protected species or habitats). An evaluation based on these factors to determine which Natura 2000 sites are the plausible ecological receptors for potential impacts of the proposed remediation works will be conducted in sections below. The evaluation takes cognisance of the scope, scale, nature and size of the project, its location relative to the Natura 2000 sites listed in

Table 4.3, and the degree of connectedness that exists between the project and each Natura 2000 site's potential ecological receptors.

4.12.1 Natura 2000 sites outside the zone of potential impact influence

With regards to the proposed public realm plan at Cahir, it is considered that the works do not include any element that has the potential to significantly alter the conservation objectives for which certain Natura 2000 sites are designated. It is considered that the Natura 2000 site listed in Table 4.6 is outside the zone of potential impact influence of the proposal due to the absence of plausible impact pathways and/or the attenuating effect of the distance intervening. Therefore, it is objectively concluded that significant impacts on this site are not reasonably foreseeable as a result of the programme of works described at Section 4.2. This site, which is listed in Table 4.6, along with its distance and the rationale for exclusion, will not be considered further in this document. A Finding of No Significant Effects report (FONSE) is presented in Appendix 3.

Table 4.6 Natura 2000 Sites excluded from further assessment

Natura 2000 Site	Proximity of subject site to nearest point of designated site (km)	Rationale for exclusion from assessment
Galtee Mountains SAC	8.3km	No source-pathway receptor present. Intervening distance of 8.3km

4.12.2 Natura 2000 sites within the zone of potential impact influence

Of the Natura 2000 sites listed in Table 4.3, one is considered to have the potential to be impacted as a result of the proposal. Construction projects generally pose potential threats to Natura 2000 sites through habitat alteration, species disturbance/displacement and/or water quality impacts. Given the proximity of the proposed development works, there is potential for these impacts to occur within this Natura 2000 site. Therefore, the assessment of significance of potential impacts that follows focuses on the following Natura 2000 sites:

Table 4.7 Natura 2000 sites within the zone of potential impact influence

Natura 2000 Site	Proximity of subject site to nearest point of designated site (km)	Rationale for inclusion in assessment
Lower River Suir SAC	0km	Proximity of site to proposed development works

The likelihood of significant effects to a Natura 2000 site from the project was determined based on several indicators including:

- Water quality and resource
- Habitat loss
- Habitat alteration
- Habitat or species fragmentation
- Disturbance and/or displacement of species

The likelihood of significant cumulative/in-combination effects is assessed in Section 4.13.

4.12.2.1 Water Quality

The River Suir runs adjacent to Cahir town, which forms part of the Lower River Suir SAC (Site Code 002137).

There are some elements of the proposed works which could potentially result in impairment of water quality. In general, where works are conducted within proximity to water bodies, impairment of water quality may potentially occur as a result of run-off of sediment/fines or accidental fuel/oil spills from machinery/equipment. These elements of the proposal could therefore potentially result in pollution of the aquatic environment. All fuels will be stored within secure and impermeable storage areas. Re-fuelling areas and the temporary site compound will be located at least 25 metres from any drains or other water features.

There is no direct hydrological connection between the proposed works site and the Lower River Suir SAC (Site Code 002137). However, surface water does enter the river through the town drainage system, creating an indirect linkage between the proposed works and the river. With regards to runoff, works will be localised, and the extents of excavated surface will be less than 500m^2 at all times. When an area of pavement is removed or stripped, most rainfall, including any sediment will percolate into the ground rather than making its way to a gully. Where runoff does enter the existing drainage system it will pass through silt traps which are part of existing gullies.

Considering this and the short duration of works, no significant impacts to the Lower River Suir SAC from reduced water quality, will ensue as a result of the proposal.

4.12.2.2 Habitat Loss and Alteration

The proposed works are not located within any Natura 2000 sites. There is a potential hydrological link via drainage between the proposed works site and the Lower River Suir SAC. The habitats within the site of the

proposed works are artificial in nature and not representative of those for which the Lower River Suir SAC is designated (Table 4.3). As outlined in Section 4.12.2.1, above, the proposed works will not result in a significant impact on water quality.

There will be no significant impacts to the Lower River Suir SAC by virtue of habitat loss and/or alteration.

4.12.2.3 Disturbance and/or Displacement of Species

The proposed works are not located within any Natura 2000 sites. There is a potential hydrological connection between the proposed works site and the Lower River Suir SAC, however as outlined in Section 4.12.2.1, the proposed works will not have a significant impact on water quality. Therefore, it is considered there will be no disturbance and/or displacement of the species for which the Lower River Suir SAC is designated by virtue of habitat loss and/or alteration.

Freshwater Pearl Mussel (*M. margaritifera*)

Current distribution mapping for this species indicates that the known range and distribution does not encompass the 10km grid square, S02[2], in which the proposal is located. There will be no in-stream works associated with the proposed works, and as outlined in Section 4.12.2.1, the proposed works will not have an impact on water quality. Thus, no significant impact is envisaged on this species as a result of the proposed works.

Sea lamprey (*P. marinus*), River lamprey (*L. fluviatilis*), Brook lamprey (*L.planeri*),

A review of the most recent species assessments determined that range and distribution mapping for river lamprey does not encompass the 10km grid square S02, within which the proposed works are located, for the species' current known distribution. Nor is this grid square included within the current range and distribution for brook lamprey and sea lamprey (NPWS, 2019). There will be no in-stream works associated with the proposed works, and as outlined in Section 4.12.2.1, the proposed works will not have a significant impact on water quality. Thus, no significant impact is envisaged on this species as a result of the proposed works.

Salmon (*S. salar*)

The current known range and distribution of the species does not include S02, the 10km grid square that encompasses the location of the proposed works. There will be no in-stream works associated with the proposed works, and as outlined in Section 4.12.2.1, the proposed works will not have a significant impact on water quality. Thus, no significant impact is envisaged on this species as a result of the proposed works.

Otter (*L. lutra*)

The most recent assessment for this species determined that the 10km grid square, S02, within which the proposal is located, is included within the current known range and distribution for this species (NPWS, 2019). No signs of otter, including breeding signs were recorded during the site survey on 8th September 2021.

A review of on-line records held by the NBDC determined that the nearest on-line record for this species within the SAC relates to the otter spraint at the western end of the bridge. Water-quality impacts (as outlined in Section 4.12.2.1) can result in a reduction of aquatic species which comprise prey for otter. However, there will be no in-stream works associated with the proposed works, and as outlined in Section 4.12.2.1, the proposed works will not have a significant impact on water quality.

While the works will result in increased human activity/noise levels this will be a temporary event only (expected duration of 12 months), are within an urban area already subject to regular noise, and will be restricted to daylight hours.

[2] https://maps.biodiversityireland.ie/Map

While otters may occasionally occur in the vicinity of the bridge (the part of the Lower River Suir closest to the proposed works), it is expected that these are most likely transient individuals moving through the area. Therefore, while the proposed works could potentially result in avoidance of the area by otters this is likely to occur only during such times as when construction activities at the bridge are taking place. As such, any potential avoidance of the site by otter are expected to be temporary and short-term and are not envisaged to result in any significant impacts to otters in the area. Therefore, with regard to potential disturbance/displacement of otter as a result of fugitive noise emissions and/or increased human activity associated with the works, the proposal is not considered to pose any risk of significant impacts over the course of the project.

In summary, bearing in mind the limited scope, scale and temporary duration of the proposal, and the availability of habitat of similar or ecologically higher value within the SAC site boundary, it is objectively concluded that significant disturbance/displacement impacts to otter, which would adversely impact on the conservation objectives of the species are not considered likely to occur.

White-Clawed Crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*)

The most recent assessment for this species determined that the 10km grid square, S02, within which the proposal is located, is included within the current known range and distribution for this species (NPWS, 2019). However, there will be no in-stream works associated with the proposed works, and as outlined in Section 4.12.2.1 the proposed works will not have a significant impact on water quality. Thus, no significant impact is envisaged on this species as a result of the proposed remediation works.

Twaite Shad *Alosa fallax fallax*

The most recent assessment for this species determined that the 10km grid square, S02, within which the proposal is located, is not included within the current known range or distribution for this species (NPWS, 2019). There will be no in-stream works associated with the proposed works, and as outlined in Section 4.12.2.1, the proposed works will not have a significant impact on water quality. Thus, no significant impact is envisaged on this species as a result of the proposed remediation works.

4.12.2.4 Habitat or Species Fragmentation

As outlined in Section 4.12.2.1, the proposed public realm plan works will not have an impact on water quality. The works will not result in any barrier to the movement of species upstream or downstream. Therefore, considering this, there will be no fragmentation of the habitats or species for which the Lower River Suir SAC is designated. Thus, no significant impact will occur on the Lower River Suir SAC by virtue of habitat or species fragmentation.

4.12.2.5 Cumulative/In-combination Impacts

As well as singular effects, the potential for in-combination or cumulative impacts also need to be considered. A cumulative impact arises from incremental changes caused by past, present and proposed projects together with the proposed development considered in this document.

Relevant plans and projects have been identified in Section 4.9 above. These include an upgrade of the municipal waste water treatment plant, a solar farm 1.5km to the east, an upgrade to the Lady of Mercy primary school and an extension to the local Supervalu. A separate Part 8 application will be made for the proposed new Town Car park. In terms of cumulative impacts, there may be some overlap between the construction of the new Town Car Park and the public realm project. Cumulative impacts may occur in terms of noise and disruption to traffic, which will not result in negative effects on the Lower River Suir SAC. Neither project will involve direct discharges to the river Suir. No significant in combination effects are foreseen in relation to the aforementioned proposals in combination with the public realm plan.

The effect of the current proposal will be to improve the streetscape and infrastructure of the town. Any additional impact would be temporary, occurring only during the construction phase. Given the limited scale and scope of the proposed works, in-combination impacts to the identified Natura 2000 sites within this report as a result of the proposed works are not envisaged.

4.13 Conclusion of Screening Stage

This screening for Appropriate Assessment was undertaken to determine the potential for likely significant effects of the proposed works, individually, or in combination with other plans or projects, in view of the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 site. The proposed works described, are within the zone of potential influence of two Natura 2000 sites. It has been objectively concluded that the following sites are not likely to be significantly affected by the proposed works, and can therefore be screened out for Appropriate Assessment:

- Lower River Suir SAC
- Galtee Mountains SAC

Reasons for Conclusion:

- The proposed works will be carried out in the dry; there will be no in-stream work and there will be no *significant* impacts to water quality;
- There is no potential for impacts on the qualifying interests for which Natura 2000 sites are designated. As such, there will be no significant direct or indirect impact on qualifying habitats or species associated with any Natura 2000 sites;
- The lack of significant in-combination effects arising from other proposed and permitted developments in the vicinity.

Measures intended to avoid or reduce negative effects on the Natura 2000 sites have not been relied upon in reaching this conclusion.

A Finding of No Significant Effects Report (FONSE) has been prepared and is presented in Appendix 3.

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NPWS (2017) Conservation Objectives: Lower River Suir SAC 002137. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

Appendix 1

Stages of Appropriate Assessment

Stage 1 - Screening

This is the first stage of the Appropriate Assessment process and that undertaken to determine the likelihood of significant impacts as a result of a proposed project or plan. It determines need for a full Appropriate Assessment.

If it can be concluded that no significant impacts to Natura 2000 Sites are likely then the assessment can stop here. If not, it must proceed to Stage 2 for furthermore detailed assessment.

Stage 2 - Natura Impact Statement (NIS)

The second stage of the Appropriate Assessment process assesses the impact of the proposal (either alone or in combination with other projects or plans) on the integrity of the Natura 2000 Site with respect to the conservation objectives of the site and its ecological structure and function. This is a much more detailed assessment that Stage 1. A Natura Impact Statement containing a professional scientific examination of the proposal is required and includes any mitigation measure to avoid, reduce or offset negative impacts.

If the outcome of Stage 2 is negative i.e. adverse impacts to the sites cannot be scientifically ruled out, despite mitigation, the plan or project should proceed to Stage 3 or be abandoned.

Stage 3 - Assessment of alternative solutions

A detailed assessment must be undertaken to determine whether alternative ways of achieving the objective of the project/plan exists.

Where no alternatives exist the project/plan must proceed to Stage 4.

Stage 4 - Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain

The final stage is the main derogation process examining whether there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) for allowing a plan or project to adversely affect a Natura 2000 Site where no less damaging solution exists.

Appendix 2

Site Synopses

An Roinn
Ealaíon, Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta
Department of
Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

SITE SYNOPSIS

Site Name: Galtee Mountains SAC

Site Code: 000646

Situated in east Limerick and south Tipperary, the Galtee Mountains are Ireland's highest range of inland mountains. Galtymore has an elevation of 920 m and the main ridge, mostly above 700 m, extends approximately 10 km from east to west. The mountains are derived from folding of Old Red Sandstone and Silurian rocks. Heath is the main vegetation type within the site, with significant amounts of humid grassland and blanket bog occurring also. There is a series of small corrie lakes on the northern side of the mountain range, and the site encompasses the headstreams of numerous tributaries of the river Suir. The cliffs above the corries support arctic-alpine vegetation and the site as a whole supports several notable Irish rarities.

The site is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) selected for the following habitats and/or species listed on Annex I / II of the E.U. Habitats Directive (* = priority; numbers in brackets are Natura 2000 codes):

[4010] Wet Heath
[4030] Dry Heath
[4060] Alpine and Subalpine Heaths
[6230] Species-rich *Nardus* Grassland*
[7130] Blanket Bogs (Active)*
[8110] Siliceous Scree
[8210] Calcareous Rocky Slopes
[8220] Siliceous Rocky Slopes

In areas of dry heath Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) dominates the vegetation, with Bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*) also common. This habitat type often grades into wet heath and alpine/subalpine heath. It is probably best developed on the steeper slopes. Additional species recorded from the areas of alpine/subalpine heath include Dwarf Willow (*Salix herbacea*), Heath Bedstraw (*Galium saxatile*), Hare's-tail Cottongrass (*Eriophorum vaginatum*), Great Wood-rush (*Luzula sylvatica*) and Starry Saxifrage (*Saxifraga stellaris*), amongst others.

Species-rich upland grassland occurs on steep slopes, particularly in the west of the site, and often in mosaic with humid grassland and heath. The rare species Small-white Orchid (*Pseudorchis albida*) has been recorded from within this habitat. The main grass species present include Common Bent (*Agrostis capillaris*), Mat-grass (*Nardus stricta*), Sweet Vernal-grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*) and Sheep's-fescue (*Festuca ovina*), while the main sedges are Green-ribbed Sedge (*Carex binervis*), Carnation Sedge (*C. panicea*) and Pill Sedge (*C. pilulifera*). Herb species include Heath

Bedstraw, Tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*), Lousewort (*Pedicularis sylvatica*), Heath Milkwort (*Polygala serpyllifolia*) and Common Milkwort (*P. vulgaris*). Heath species such as Heather and Heath-grass (*Danthonia decumbens*) are also found.

Blanket bog is localised at the site and occurs mainly at high altitudes, largely confined to flatter areas along and beside ridge tops. There is often good cover of bog mosses (*Sphagnum* spp.), along with Common Cottongrass (*E. angustifolium*) and Heather. Erosion is severe on many ridges and cols where deep peat deposits (up to 2 m) have accumulated. The uncommon species Stiff Sedge (*Carex bigelowii*) is found in this habitat at the site.

The north-facing cliffs within the site are of botanical importance as they support arctic-alpine communities with some rare plant species. These areas are linked to the habitats 'calcareous rocky slopes', 'siliceous rocky slopes' and 'siliceous scree'. Uncommon species include Northern Rock-cress (*Cardaminopsis petraea*), Mountain Sorrel (*Oxyria digyna*), Roseroot (*Rhodiola rosea*), Alpine Saw-wort (*Saussurea alpina*), Irish Saxifrage (*Saxifraga rosacea*) and the Red Listed bryophytes *Bartramia ithyphylla* and *Pohlia elongata* var. *greenii*. Other specialised mountain plants found on the site include Viviparous Fescue (*Festuca vivipara*), Fir Clubmoss (*Huperzia selago*) and Crowberry (*Empetrum nigrum*). The cliffs also support patches of Great Wood-rush, Bilberry, birch (*Betula* sp.), Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*) and Eared Willow (*Salix aurita*). There are several fern species recorded, most notably Brittle Bladder-fern (*Cystopteris fragilis*), Wilson's Filmy-fern (*Hymenophyllum wilsonii*), Tonbridge Filmy-fern (*H. tunbrigense*) and Green Spleenwort (*Asplenium viride*).

The rare species Small-white Orchid, Northern Rock-cress and Alpine Saw-wort have been recorded from the site. These species are included in the Red Data Book and the first two are legally protected under the Flora (Protection) Order, 2015.

The site supports breeding Peregrine, a species listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive.

Over-grazing by sheep and frequent burning are causing potentially serious damage to some areas of heath and grassland. Afforestation threatens the lower slopes and valleys. Hill walking takes place at the site and may result in trampling damage in places.

This site is of high conservation value due to the fact that it contains a range of important upland habitats in a relatively isolated inland mountain site. Eight of these habitats are listed in Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive, and two of those have priority status. The presence of a number of rare, scarce and uncommon plant species adds greatly to the significance of the SAC.

An Roinn
Ealaíon, Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta
Department of
Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

SITE SYNOPSIS

Site Name: Lower River Suir SAC

Site Code: 002137

Lower River Suir SAC consists of the freshwater stretches of the River Suir immediately south of Thurles, the tidal stretches as far as the confluence with the Barrow/Nore immediately east of Cheekpoint in Co. Waterford, and many tributaries including the Clodiagh in Co. Waterford, the Lingaun, Anner, Nier, Tar, Aherlow, Multeen and Clodiagh in Co. Tipperary. The Suir and its tributaries flow through the counties of Tipperary, Kilkenny and Waterford.

Upstream of Waterford city, the swinging meanders of the Suir criss-cross the Devonian sandstone rim of hard rocks no less than three times as they leave the limestone-floored downfold below Carrick-on-Suir. In the vicinity of Carrick-on-Suir the river follows the limestone floor of the Carrick Syncline. Upstream of Clonmel the river and its tributaries traverse Upper Palaeozoic Rocks, mainly the Lower Carboniferous Visean and Tournaisian. The freshwater stretches of the Clodiagh River in Co. Waterford traverse Silurian rocks, through narrow bands of Old Red Sandstone and Lower Avonian Shales, before reaching the carboniferous limestone close to its confluence with the Suir. The Aherlow River flows through a Carboniferous limestone valley, with outcrops of Old Red Sandstone forming the Galtee Mountains to the south and the Slievenamuck range to the north. Glacial deposits of sands and gravels are common along the valley bottom, flanking the present-day river course.

The site is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) selected for the following habitats and/or species listed on Annex I / II of the E.U. Habitats Directive (* = priority; numbers in brackets are Natura 2000 codes):

[1330] Atlantic Salt Meadows
[1410] Mediterranean Salt Meadows
[3260] Floating River Vegetation
[6430] Hydrophilous Tall Herb Communities
[91A0] Old Oak Woodlands
[91E0] Alluvial Forests*
[91J0] Yew Woodlands*

[1029] Freshwater Pearl Mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*)
[1092] White-clawed Crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*)
[1095] Sea Lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*)
[1096] Brook Lamprey (*Lampetra planeri*)
[1099] River Lamprey (*Lampetra fluviatilis*)

[1103] Twaite Shad (*Alosa fallax*)
[1106] Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*)
[1355] Otter (*Lutra lutra*)

Alluvial wet woodland is a declining habitat type in Europe as a result of drainage and reclamation. The best examples of this type of woodland in the site are found on the islands just below Carrick-on-Suir and at Fiddown Island. Species occurring here include Almond Willow (*Salix triandra*), White Willow (*S. alba*), Rusty Willow (*S. cinerea* subsp. *oleifolia*), Osier (*S. viminalis*), with Yellow Iris (*Iris pseudacorus*), Hemlock Water-dropwort (*Oenanthe crocata*), Wild Angelica (*Angelica sylvestris*), Pendulous Sedge (*Carex pendula*), Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*) and Common Valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*). The terrain is littered with dead trunks and branches and intersected with small channels which carry small streams to the river. The bryophyte and lichen floras appear to be rich. A small plot is currently being coppiced and managed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service. In the drier areas species such as Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) occur.

Eutrophic tall herb vegetation occurs in association with the various areas of alluvial forest and elsewhere where the floodplain of the river is intact. Characteristic species of the habitat include Meadowsweet, Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), Marsh Ragwort (*Senecio aquaticus*), Ground Ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*) and Hedge Bindweed (*Calystegia sepium*).

Old oak woodlands are also of importance at the site. The best examples are seen in Portlaw Wood which lies on both sides of the Clodiagh River. On the south-facing side the stand is more open and the oaks (mainly Pedunculate Oak, *Quercus robur*) are well grown and spreading. Ivy (*Hedera helix*) and Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) are common on the ground, indicating relatively high light conditions. Oak regeneration is dense, varying in age from 0-40 years and Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) is fairly common but mostly quite young. Across the valley, by contrast, the trees are much more closely spaced and though taller, are poorly grown on average. There are no clearings; large oaks extend to the boundary wall. In the darker conditions, Ivy is much rarer and Holly much more frequent, forming a closed canopy in places. Oak regeneration is uncommon since there are as yet few natural clearings. The shallowness of the soil on the north-facing slope probably contributes to the poor tree growth there. The acid nature of the substrate has induced a 'mountain' type oakwood community to develop. The site is quite species-rich throughout, including an abundance of mosses, liverworts and lichens. The rare lichen *Lobaria pulmonaria*, an indicator of ancient woodlands, is found here.

Inchinsquillib Wood consists of three small separate sloping blocks of woodland in a valley cut by the young Multeen River and its tributaries through acidic Old Red Sandstone and Silurian rocks. Two blocks, both with an eastern aspect, located to the north of the road, are predominantly of Sessile Oak (*Quercus petraea*) and Hazel, with Downy Birch (*Betula pubescens*), Ash and Holly. The ground flora is quite mixed with,

for example, Wood-sedge (*Carex sylvatica*), Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), Primrose (*Primula vulgaris*), Wood-sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*), Pignut (*Conopodium majus*) and Hard Fern (*Blechnum spicant*). The base poor nature of the underlying rock is to some extent masked by the overlying drift. The third block, to the south of the road, and with a northern aspect, is a similar although less mature mixture of Sessile Oak, Birch and Holly. Here the influence of the drift is more marked, with the occurrence of Wood Anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*) amongst the ground flora.

Two stands of Yew (*Taxus baccata*) woods, a rare habitat in Ireland and the E.U., occur within the site. These are on limestone ridges at Shanbally and Cahir Park. Both are in woods planted with non-native species, including conifers. However, the area at Cahir Park is fairly substantial in size and includes some relatively undisturbed patches of wood and some very old trees. Regeneration of the Yew trees is mostly poor, due to competition from species such as Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) and, at Shanbally, due to heavy grazing by goats. Other native species which occur with the Yew trees include Ash, Pedunculate Oak, Hazel and Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*). Future prospects for these Yew woods are good as the sites are proposed for restoration under a Coillte E.U. LIFE programme.

Floating river vegetation is evident in the freshwater stretches of the River Suir and along many of its tributaries. Typical species found include Canadian Pondweed (*Elodea canadensis*), water-milfoils (*Myriophyllum* spp.), Fennel Pondweed (*Potamogeton pectinatus*), Curled Pondweed (*P. crispus*), Perfoliate Pondweed (*P. perfoliatus*), Pond Water-crowfoot (*Ranunculus peltatus*), other crowfoots (*Ranunculus* spp.) and the moss *Fontinalis antipyretica*. At a couple of locations along the river Opposite-leaved Pondweed (*Groenlandia densa*) occurs. This species is protected under the Flora (Protection) Order, 1999.

The Aherlow River is fast flowing and mostly follows a natural unmodified river channel. Submerged vegetation includes the aquatic moss *Fontinalis antipyretica* and Stream Water-crowfoot (*R. pencillatus*), while shallow areas support species such as Reed Canary-grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*), Brooklime (*Veronica beccabunga*) and Water Mint (*Mentha aquatica*). The river bank is fringed in places with Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) and willows (*Salix* spp.).

The Multeen River is fast flowing, mostly gravel-bottomed and appears to follow a natural unmodified river channel. Water-crowfoots occur in abundance and the aquatic moss *Fontinalis antipyretica* is also common. In sheltered shallows, species such as Water-cress (*Nasturtium officinale*) and water-starworts (*Callitriche* spp.) occur. The river channel is fringed for most of its length with Alder, Willow and a narrow strip of marshy vegetation.

Salt meadows occur below Waterford City in old meadows where the embankment is absent, or has been breached, and along the tidal stretches of some of the in-flowing rivers below Little Island. There are very narrow, non-continuous bands of this habitat along both banks. More extensive areas are also seen along the south bank at Ballynakill, the east side of Little Island, and in three large salt meadows

between Ballynakill and Cheekpoint. The Atlantic and Mediterranean sub-types are generally intermixed. The species list is extensive and includes Red Fescue (*Festuca rubra*), oraches (*Atriplex* spp.), Sea Aster (*Aster tripolium*), Sea Couch (*Elymus pycnanthus*), frequent Sea Milkwort (*Glaux maritima*), occasional Wild Celery (*Apium graveolens*), Parsley Water-dropwort (*Oenanthe lachenalii*), English Scurvygrass (*Cochlearia anglica*) and Sea Arrowgrass (*Triglochin maritima*). These species are more representative of the Atlantic sub-type of the habitat. Common Cord-grass (*Spartina anglica*), is rather frequent along the main channel edge and up the internal channels. The legally protected (Flora (Protection) Order, 1999) Meadow Barley (*Hordeum secalinum*) grows at the landward transition of the saltmarsh. Sea Rush (*Juncus maritimus*), an indicator of the Mediterranean salt meadows, also occurs.

Other habitats at the site include wet and dry grassland, marsh, reedswamp, improved grassland, coniferous plantations, deciduous woodland, scrub, tidal river, stony shore and mudflats. The most dominant habitat adjoining the river is improved grassland, although there are wet fields with species such as Yellow Iris, Meadowsweet, rushes (*Juncus* spp.), Meadow Buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*) and Cuckooflower (*Cardamine pratensis*).

Cabragh marshes, just below Thurles, lie in a low-lying tributary valley into which the main river floods in winter. Here there is an extensive area of Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) with associated marshland and peaty fen. The transition between vegetation types is often well displayed. A number of wetland plants of interest occur, in particular the Narrow-leaved Bulrush (*Typha angustifolia*), Bottle Sedge (*Carex rostrata*) and Blunt-flowered Rush (*Juncus subnodulosus*). The marsh is naturally eutrophic but it has also the nutritional legacy of the former sugar factory which discharged into it through a number of holding lagoons, now removed. Production is high, which is seen in the size of such species as Celery-leaved Buttercup (*Ranunculus sceleratus*), as well as in the reeds themselves.

Throughout the Lower River Suir site are small areas of woodland other than those described above. These tend to be a mixture of native and non-native species, although there are some areas of semi-natural wet woodland with species such as Ash and willow. Cahir Park Woodlands is a narrow tract of mixed deciduous woodland lying on the flat-lying floodplain of the River Suir. This estate woodland was planted over one hundred years ago and it contains a large component of exotic tree species. However, due to original planting and natural regeneration there is now a good mix of native and exotic species. About 5 km north-west of Cashel, Ardmayle pond is a long, possibly artificial water body running parallel to the River Suir. It is partly shaded by planted Lime (*Tilia* hybrids), Sycamore and the native Alder. Growing beneath the trees are shade tolerant species such as Remote sedge (*Carex remota*).

The site is of particular conservation interest for the presence of a number of Annex II animal species, including Freshwater Pearl Mussel (both *Margaritifera margaritifera* and *M. margaritifera* subsp. *durrovensis* occur), White-clawed Crayfish, Salmon, Twaite Shad (*Alosa fallax fallax*), three species of Lampreys - Sea Lamprey, Brook

Lamprey and River Lamprey, and Otter. This is one of only three known spawning grounds in the country for Twaite Shad.

The site also supports populations of several other animal species. Those which are listed in the Irish Red Data Book include Daubenton's Bat. Natterer's Bat, Pipistrelle Bat, Pine Marten, Badger, Irish Hare, Smelt and Common Frog. Breeding stocks of Carp are found in Kilsheelan Lake. This is one of only two lakes in the country which is known to have supported breeding Carp. Carp require unusually high summer water temperatures to breed in Ireland. As the site is therefore unusual in this regard, it may also support interesting invertebrate populations.

Parts of the site have also been identified as of ornithological importance for a number of Annex I (E.U. Birds Directive) bird species, including Greenland White-fronted Goose (10), Golden Plover (1,490), Whooper Swan (7) and Kingfisher. Figures given in brackets are the average maximum counts from four count areas within the site for the three winters 1994-1997. Wintering populations of migratory birds use the site. Flocks are seen in Coolfinn Marsh and also along the reedbeds and saltmarsh areas of the Suir. Coolfinn supports nationally important numbers of Greylag Goose on a regular basis, with numbers between 600 and 700 recorded. Other species occurring include Mallard (21), Teal (159), Wigeon (26), Tufted Duck (60), Pintail (4), Pochard (2), Little Grebe (2), Black-tailed Godwit (20), Oystercatcher (16), Lapwing (993), Dunlin (101), Curlew (195), Redshank (28), Greenshank (4) and Green Sandpiper (1). Nationally important numbers of Lapwing (2,750) were recorded at Faithlegg in the winter of 1996/97. In Cabragh marshes there is abundant food for surface feeding wildfowl which total approximately 1,000 in winter. Widgeon, Teal and Mallard are numerous, and the latter has a large breeding population, with up to 400 in summer. In addition, less frequent species like Shoveler and Pintail occur and there are records for both Whooper and Bewick's swans. Kingfisher, a species that is listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive, occurs along some of the many tributaries throughout the site.

Land use at the site consists mainly of agricultural activities including grazing, silage production, fertilising and land reclamation. The grassland is intensively managed and the rivers are therefore vulnerable to pollution from run-off of fertilisers and slurry. Arable crops are also grown. Fishing is a main tourist attraction on stretches of the Suir and some of its tributaries, and there are a number of Angler Associations, some with a number of beats. Fishing stands and styles have been erected in places. Both commercial and leisure fishing takes place on the rivers. The Aherlow River is a designated Salmonid Water under the E.U. Freshwater Fish Directive. Other recreational activities such as boating, golfing and walking are also popular. Several industrial developments, which discharge into the river, border the site including three dairy related operations and a tannery.

The Lower River Suir contains excellent examples of a number of Annex I habitats, including the priority habitats alluvial forest and Yew woodland. The site also supports populations of several important animals species, some listed on Annex II of the Habitats Directive or listed in the Irish Red Data Book. The presence of two

legally protected plants (Flora (Protection) Order, 1999) and the ornithological importance of the site adds further to the ecological interest and importance.

Appendix 3

Finding of No Significant Effects Report

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS REPORT	
Natura 2000 Site	Proximity of subject site to nearest point of designated site (km)
Name of project or plan	Cahir Public Realm Plan
Name and location of Natura 2000 site	Galtee Mountains SAC – 8.3km
Description of the project	The proposed development includes for public realm refurbishment and enhancement in Cahir's town centre comprising the upgrading of existing Square and approach streets with new high quality paving, kerbing, public lighting, improved street furniture and utility diversions/works (including undergrounding of overhead ESB cables). Footpath space will be widened, traffic calming will be developed through build out, reduced road carriageway widths and improved pedestrian crossings. Existing on-street parking to be reduced from the Square to a new Town Centre Car Park with a 86 spaces just off the Square to the north east. This car park is the subject of a separate Part 8 Planning application. The proposed works area for the entire scheme is circ 8,500m^2.
Is the project or plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site?	No
Are there other projects or plans that together with the project or plan being assessed could affect the site	No
THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS	
Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 site(s).	No impact is envisaged as a result of the proposed works. There is no hydrological or ecological connection between the site of the proposed works and Galtee Mountains SAC (000646).
List of agencies consulted: provide contact name and telephone or e- mail address.	N/A
Response to consultation.	N/A
DATA COLLECTED TO CARRY OUT THE ASSESSMENT	
Who carried out the assessment?	• Kieran Barry, Environmental Scientist with MWP • Zeba Haseeb, Environmental Scientist with MWP • Marie Kearns, Ecologist, MWP
Sources of data	Refer to references.
Level of assessment completed	Desktop study and Field Study

Appendix C

Flood Risk Assessment Report

MWP

Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann
Tipperary County Council

Nicholas de Jong Associates
URBAN DESIGN

Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040

CAHIR TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM

Flood Risk Assessment Report

Tipperary County Council

October 2021

Contents

Project No.	Doc. No.	Rev.	Date	Prepared By	Checked By	Approved By	Status
22396	22396-MWP-ZZ-ZZ-RP-Z-6007	P01	22/10/2021	M. Fenton	P O'Donnell	P O'Donnell	Approval
22396	22396-MWP-ZZ-ZZ-RP-Z-6007	P02	04/11/2021	M. Fenton	P O'Donnell	P O'Donnell	Part 8 Application
22396	22396-MWP-ZZ-ZZ-RP-Z-6007	P03	04/11/2021	M. Fenton	P O'Donnell	P O'Donnell	Part 8 Application

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QUALITY I.S. EN ISO 9001:2015 NSAI Certified
HEALTH & SAFETY I.S. ISO 45001:2018 NSAI Certified
ENVIRONMENT I.S. EN ISO 14001:2015 NSAI Certified

1. Introduction

This Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) report has been prepared on behalf of Tipperary County Council in support of a Part VIII planning application for the Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Plan, County Tipperary.

Cahir is located to the south of the junction of the M8 Dublin to Cork motorway and the N24 Waterford to Limerick Road. Cahir has a high concentration of heritage assets such as the River Suir and its amenity walks, Cahir Castle and Swiss Cottage.

Through public consolations and submissions carried out in 2020 it was noticeable that there is a need for public realm improvements and traffic management measures for the Cahir Square and surrounding area.

The aim of the proposed Public Realm project is to enhance access and presentation of the Square as a living, social and commercial place. An improved public realm that reinforces the streetscape character, and ensures that visitors feel welcome, would attract new business and tourism.

2. Overview of the Proposed Scheme

2.1 Introduction

The proposed development includes for public realm refurbishment and enhancement in Cahir's town centre comprising the upgrading of existing Square and approach streets with new high quality paving, kerbing, public lighting, improved street furniture and utility diversions/works (including undergrounding of overhead ESB cables). Footpath space will be widened, traffic calming will be developed through build out, reduced road carriageway widths and improved pedestrian crossings. Existing on-street parking to be reduced from the Square to a new Town Centre Car Park with a 86 car, 2 coach and 3 mini-bus spaces just off the Square to the north east. This car park is the subject of a separate Part 8 Planning application.

The traffic flow through the Square will be changed from the current two way on both the east and west sides of the Square to two way flow on the east side only. Service and emergency vehicle access will be maintained to the west side of the Square. Pedestrian movement will be prioritised by the design.

The development also includes for public realm refurbishment and enhancement on Castle Street, Church Street, Old Church Street and the Square end of St Mary's Road. A raised table on Castle Street will link the Castle entrance with the river walkways to the north. A similar raised table will be provided on Church Street in front of the new Town Centre Car Park entrance.

2.2 Description of the Scheme

The proposed development includes for public realm refurbishment and enhancement in Cahir's Town Centre comprising the upgrading of the existing Square and approach streets with new high-quality paving, kerbing, landscaping, public lighting, improved street furniture and utility diversions/works.

The proposed development will be carried out on Castle Street, Cahir Town Square, St Mary's Road, Old Church Street and Church Street in the townland of Townparks, Cahir, Co. Tipperary.

Nature and Extent of Proposed Development:

- New raised table shared surface on Castle Street from Cahir Castle to the Castle Car Park entrance to the East and The Mall entrance to the North.
- New kerb alignment and pavement surfaces from the Castle Street Car Park entrance to The Square junction, including upgrading of pedestrian crossing, installation of new public lighting and soft landscaping.
- New streetscape layout for Cahir Square with new alignment design for footpaths, parking areas and trafficked areas incorporating a raised table shared surface from the junction with Castle Street, to the Junction with St Marys Road and to North of The Fountain, new kerb and pavement surfaces throughout The Square, new hard and soft landscaping, new street furniture, new bollards, new bicycle racks, installation of new and upgrade of existing public lighting.
- Alteration of on-street parking for Castle Street, The Square, Church Street, Old Church Street and The Square end of St Mary's Road.
- New pavement surfaces on St. Mary's Road, Old Church Street and Church Street.
- New controlled pedestrian crossings and soft landscaping on Church Street and Old Church St.
- Undergrounding of overhead electrical cables, installation of new public lighting and upgrading of existing public lighting across the entire project area.
- Development of associated drainage services and utilities across the entire project area.
- All associated site works.

The development masterplan is indicated on Figure 2.1 below and further details are provided in the design drawings. The areas included in the Cahir Town Centee Public Realm plan are:

- Castle Street
- Cahir Town Square
- St. Mary's Road
- Church Street
- Old Church Street

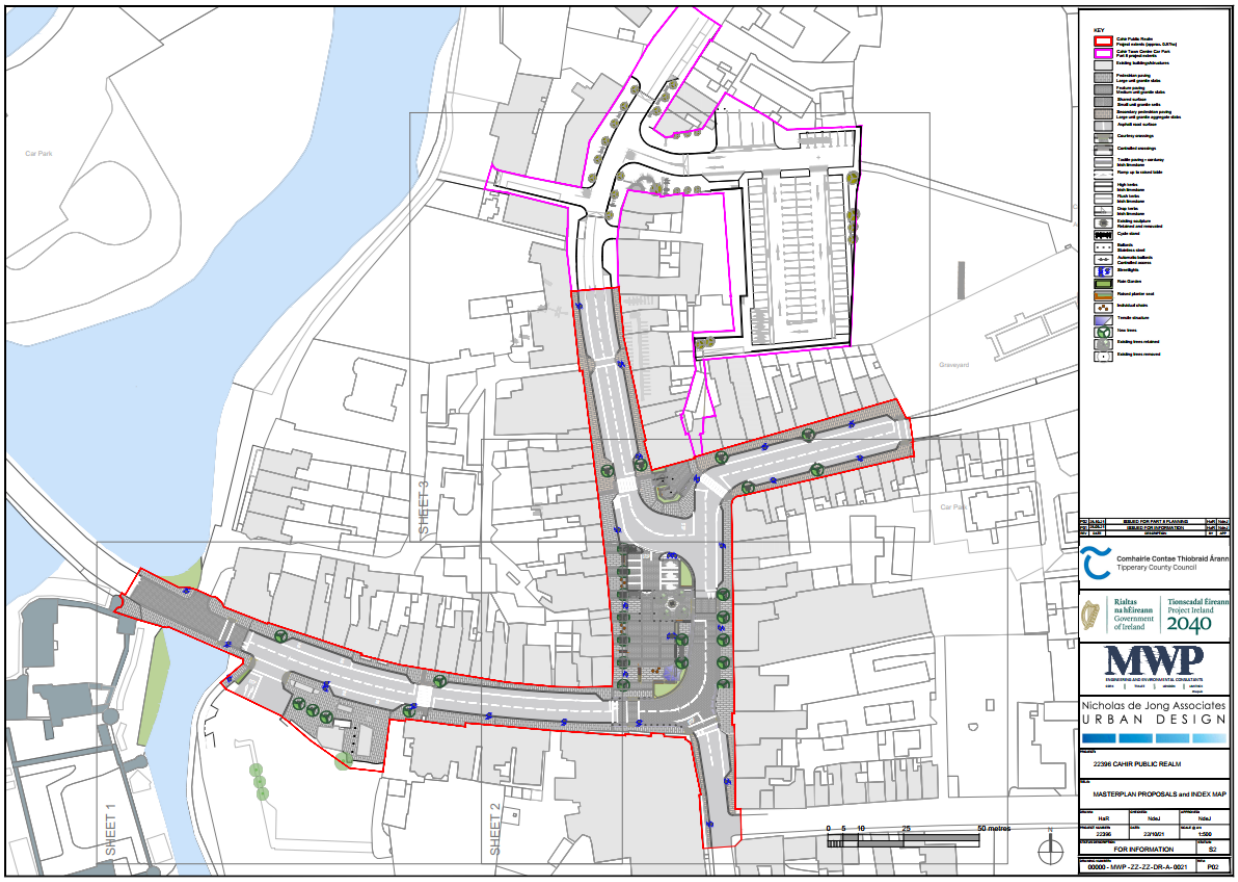

Figure 2.1: Proposed Regeration Scheme Masterplan

2.3 Scheme Objectives

The objective of the Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Plan is to:

- Provide a focal point for activity/footfall;
- Reduce pedestrian/vehicle conflict and improving pedestrian safety;
- Reduce vehicle dominance on the Square and the main streets and improve junction capacity;
- Design the Cahir Square as a pleasant and safe place to be;
- Enhance the appearance of the town centre through careful design and selection of appropriate surfacing and street furniture;
- Safeguard the structure and appearance of heritage buildings by reducing the impact of vehicles;
- Development of enhanced pedestrian cyclist linkages throughout the town;
- Consider opportunities to enhance public realm at night;

2.4 Flood Risk Assessment Objectives

The purpose of this report is to establish the flood risk associated with the proposed development and, if appropriate, to recommend mitigation measures to prevent an increase in flood risk within or outside the site.

The report has been prepared in the context of *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, November 2009 (PSFRM)*, published by the Office of Public Works and the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government. Flood Risk Assessments are carried out at different scales by different organisations. The hierarchy of assessment types are Regional (RFRA), Strategic (SFRA) and Site-specific (FRA). This report is site-specific.

2.5 Methodology

The Flood Risk Management Guidelines document outlines three stages in the assessment of flood risk as follows:

- *Stage 1 Flood Risk Identification – to identify whether there may be any flooding or surface water management issues related to a plan area or proposed development site that may warrant further investigation;*
- *Stage 2 Initial Flood Risk Assessment – to confirm sources of flooding that may affect a plan area or proposed development site, to appraise the adequacy of existing information and to determine what surveys and modelling approach is appropriate to match the spatial resolution required and complexity of the flood risk issues. The extent of the risk of flooding should be assessed which may involve preparing indicative flood zone maps. Where existing river or coastal models exist, these should be used broadly to assess the extent of the risk of flooding and potential impact of a development on flooding elsewhere and of the scope of possible mitigation measures; and*
- *Stage 3 Detailed Risk Assessment – to assess flood risk issues in sufficient detail and to provide a quantitative appraisal of potential flood risk to a proposed or existing development, of its potential impact on flood risk elsewhere and of the effectiveness of any proposed mitigation measures. This will typically involve use of an existing or construction of a hydraulic model or a river or coastal cell across a wide enough area to appreciate the catchment wide impacts and hydrological processes involved.*

2.6 Flood Risk in the Context of Minor Proposals

The Flood Risk Management Guidelines acknowledge that minor developments are unlikely to raise significant flooding issues unless they obstruct important flow paths or introduce a significant number of people to an area. The sequential approach cannot be used and a justification test does not apply. In such circumstances the Guidelines indicate that a Flood Risk Assessment should demonstrate that "the development would not have adverse impacts or impede access to a watercourse, floodplain or flood protection and management facilities".

3. Flood Risk Identification (Stage 1)

Possible sources of flood risk were identified by;

- Walkover Survey of the Site
- Topographical Survey Information
- Flood History

3.1 Walkover Survey & Topography Review

The site and surrounding lands were inspected by MWP on a number of occasions throughout the design development.

Parts of the regeneration scheme extend eastwards to the bridge crossing the River Suir which is a possible source of flooding. Castle Street slope upwards moderately from this point to the town square where the street elevations are approximately 6m above the bridge surface level. The remaining areas included in the regeneration scheme are at a similar elevation indicating that the flood risk from the River Suir is unlikely to be significant.

3.2 Flood History - OPW Local Area Reports

The Past Flood Event Local Area Summary Report which was obtained from the Office of Public Works (OPW) floodinfo.ie website is included on Figure 3.1 below. This report summarises all recorded past flood events within 2.5km of the town centre. There are two records of flooding in the area.

The first relates to recurring flooding downstream of the town however this is not relevant to flood risk within the town. The second record includes a map for the extents of flooding from the River Suir in January 2008 and it is notable that the areas included in the regeneration scheme do not appear to have been flooded in this event.

Therefore, there is no history of flooding in the areas of the regeneration scheme.

3.3 Summary of Stage 1 FRA

There is no record of flooding within the proposed regeneration scheme boundary. However, certain areas of the scheme are in close proximity to the River Suir therefore a Stage 2 FRA has been undertaken as a precautionary approach.

Past Flood Event Local Area Summary Report

OPW Oifig na nOibreacha Poibli Office of Public Works

Report Produced: 22/10/2021 14:46

This Past Flood Event Summary Report summarises all past flood events within 2.5 kilometres of the map centre.

This report has been downloaded from www.floodinfo.ie (the "Website"). The users should take account of the restrictions and limitations relating to the content and use of the Website that are explained in the Terms and Conditions. It is a condition of use of the Website that you agree to be bound by the disclaimer and other terms and conditions set out on the Website and to the privacy policy on the Website.

Map Legend

- Single Flood Event
- Recurring Flood Event
- Past Flood Event Extents
- Drainage Districts Benefited Lands*
- Land Commission Benefited Lands*
- Arterial Drainage Schemes Benefited Lands*

* Important: These maps do not indicate flood hazard or flood extent. Their purpose and scope is explained on Floodinfo.ie

2 Results

	Name (Flood_ID)	Start Date	Event Location
1.	Cahir (near GC) Recurring (ID-4409)	n/a	Approximate Point
	Additional Information: Reports (3) Press Archive (14)		
2.	Suir Flood Jan 2008 (ID-10571)	10/01/2008	Area
	Additional Information: Reports (1) Press Archive (0)		

Figure 3.1: Local Area Summary Report (www.floodinfo.ie)

4. Initial Flood Risk Assessment (Stage 2)

The purpose of the Initial Flood Risk Assessment is primarily to ensure that the relevant flood risk sources are identified so that they can be addressed appropriately in any necessary Detailed Flood Risk Assessment.

4.1 Flooding Sources

The potential sources of flooding and their relevance to the flood risk at the site are outlined in the following sub-sections.

4.1.1 Fluvial Flooding

Fluvial flooding occurs when the capacity of a river channel is exceeded and water flows onto the adjacent land or flood plain. The nearest source of fluvial flooding to the site is the River Suir which is located to the east of the development area.

The Suir CFRAM Study flood extent maps have been examined and an extract from same is included in Figure 4.1 for the Current Scenario. This indicates that the town is predominantly in Flood Zone C corresponding to low risk. Although some localised areas of the town are within Flood Zones A and B, these are not within the scheme boundary.

This was further validated by comparing the predicted flood levels with the topographicaly survey. The predicted 1% and 0.1% AEP flood levels at node MSUIR093441 are 40.969mOD and 41.293mOD respectively. By comparison, the ground levels within the scheme boundary are generally in excess of 42mOD and up to 47 to 48mOD at the western end of Castle Street, in the Square, Church Street and Old Church Street. The exception to this is at the bridge on Castle Street near the eastern boundary of the scheme where flooding could be experienced if the water level exceeds around 41.2mOD. The predicted flood levels are node 2SUI2000316 are 40.232mOD and 40.432mOD for the 1% and 0.1% AEP events respectively. On this basis it would appear unlikely that any overtopping of the bridge would occur for the 0.1% AEP event however even it it were to occur it would result in a shallow depth of flooding which would not pose a significant hazard to the public. Notwithstanding this, surface levels in this area should remain unchanged to ensure that there are no changes to potential flow paths.

Fluvial flood risk within the scheme boundary is considered to be low and does not require further assessment.

4.1.2 Estuarial or Tidal Flooding

Estuarial or tidal flooding is caused by higher than normal sea levels which occur primarily due to extreme high tides, storm surges, wave action or due to high river flows combining with high tides. The elevations within the scheme boundary are in excess of 40mOD therefore estuarial or tidal flooding are not relevant to the area.

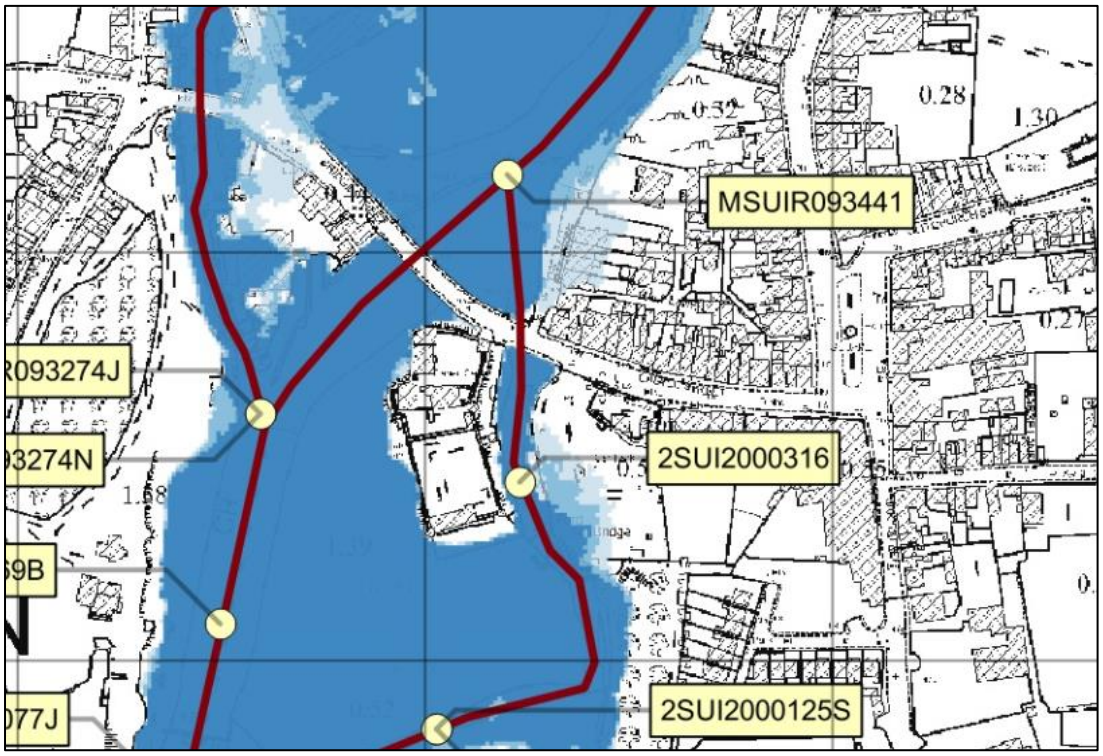

Figure 4.1: Suir CFRAM Study Flood Extent Map (Current Scenario)

4.1.3 Pluvial Flooding & Overland Flow

Pluvial flooding or overland flow occurs when rainfall intensity exceeds the infiltration capacity of the ground. The excess water flows overland to the nearest watercourse or piped drainage system. Intense rainfall events can result in ponding in low areas or upstream of physical obstructions. Overland flow is most likely to occur following periods of sustained and intense rainfall when the ground surface becomes saturated. Overland flow can also occur due to river flooding where the overbank flow from a point upstream runs across an area before returning to the river channel further downstream. This type of flooding is not uncommon and can occur where there is no direct risk from an adjacent or nearby river channel.

The GSI mapped surface water flooding extents from Winter 2015/2016 were examined and there is no indication of flooding. Furthermore, no other records or local knowledge were obtained which might suggest such flooding could occur.

Whilst this flood risk cannot be ruled out within an existing urban area such as Cahir, it is considered that any such risk is low and would not be exacerbated by the proposed development.

4.1.4 Groundwater flooding

Groundwater flooding occurs when the water table rises to the level of the ground surface. This typically occurs in areas with karst bedrock. The GSI Groundwater Flooding data viewer was examined and it was found that there is no record of any such flooding and the predictive maps do not include flooding in this area. Groundwater flooding also occurs relatively slowly and poses a low hazard to people. For these reasons this source of flooding is not considered to be a risk to the scheme.

4.1.5 Flooding from Artificial Drainage Systems

Surface Water Management is outside the scope of this FRA however a Surface Water Management Plan has been prepared which is provided in MWP Document Number 22393-6005. The key findings from this area:

1. There are currently no known problems with the existing storm or foul drainage in this area.
2. A full CCTV survey will be undertaken as part of the works, and this will highlight any failings/defects within the existing system, and these will also be addressed as part of the project.
3. The proposed drainage is designed to avail as much as possible of the existing system present. This is to avoid extensive excavation works. Secondly, given the constrained nature of the site, it was important to, insofar as practicable, maintain the existing surface levels. The proposed drainage mimics the existing falls present in the area, with some minor re-profiling introduced. The thresholds of the surrounding buildings have to be retained in any case, so any level changes that can be made are minimal.

It is concluded that the risk of flooding from artificial drainage systems is low and that the proposed surface water management system will ensure that surface water runoff volumes and flow rates will not exceed the existing situation.

5. Summary & Conclusions

A summary of the main findings of this FRA is as follows;

1. This report has been prepared in the context of The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, November 2009 (PSFRM), published by the Office of Public Works and the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government.
2. A Stage 1 and 2 Flood Risk Assessment was undertaken.
3. There is no record of previous flooding occurring within the proposed development area.
4. All possible sources of flooding were examined in the Stage 2 FRA, summarised as follows:
    a. The predictive flood maps from the Suir CFRAM Study indicated that the the proposed scheme is located in Flood Zone C where the risk of fluvial flooding is low.
    b. Coastal flooding is not relevant to this area.
    c. The risk of pluvial, groundwater flooding and flooding from artificial drainage systems was assessed and is considered to be low.
5. The proposed development will maintain existing surface levels insofar as possible therefore any possible exceedance flow paths or residual risks will not be adversely affected by the scheme.
6. The works will not be carried out within the floodplain, the area of impermeable surfaces is similar to the existing situation and the surface water flow paths will be maintained. Therefore, the proposed scheme will not adversely impact flooding within the town or in areas upstream/downstream of the site.

Appendix D

Surface Water Management Plan

MWP

Surface Water Management Plan

Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Plan

Tipperary County Council

October 2021

Contents

Appendices

Project No.	Doc. No.	Rev.	Date	Prepared By	Checked By	Approved By	Status
22396	22396-6005	A	27/10/2021	IK	PO'D	PO'D	Approval
22396	22396-6005	B	03/11/2021	IK	PO'D	PO'D	Part 8 Planning
22396	22396-6005	C	05/11/2021	IK	PO'D	PO'D	Part 8 Planning

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HEALTH & SAFETY I.S. ISO 45001:2018 NSAI Certified
ENVIRONMENT I.S. EN ISO 14001:2015 NSAI Certified

1. General

1.1 Introduction

MWP have developed, on behalf of Nicholas de Jong Associates, a Surface Water Management Plan for public realm works intended for Castle Street, the Square, St. Mary's Road, Old Church Street and Church Street, Cahir, Co. Tipperary.

This report's purpose is to:

- Define the existing storm water drainage system within Castle Street, the Square, St. Mary's Road, Old Church Street and Church Street
- Detail any existing issues within the storm drainage system
- To ascertain if there will be an increase in capacity following the proposed resurfacing works
- Define the proposed storm drainage layout

1.2 Scope of Works

The proposed development includes for public realm refurbishment and enhancement in Cahir's Town Centre comprising the upgrading of the existing Square and approach streets with new high-quality paving, kerbing, landscaping, public lighting, improved street furniture and utility diversions/works.

The proposed development will be carried out on Castle Street, Cahir Town Square, St Mary's Road, Old Church Street and Church Street in the townland of Townparks, Cahir, Co. Tipperary.

Nature and Extent of Proposed Development:

- New raised table shared surface on Castle Street from Cahir Castle to the Castle Car Park entrance to the East and The Mall entrance to the North.
- New kerb alignment and pavement surfaces from the Castle Street Car Park entrance to The Square junction, including upgrading of pedestrian crossing, installation of new public lighting and soft landscaping.
- New streetscape layout for Cahir Square with new alignment design for footpaths, parking areas and trafficked areas incorporating a raised table shared surface from the junction with Castle Street, to the Junction with St Marys Road and to North of The Fountain, new kerb and pavement surfaces throughout The Square, new hard and soft landscaping, new street furniture, new bollards, new bicycle racks, installation of new and upgrade of existing public lighting.
- Alteration of on-street parking for Castle Street, The Square, Church Street, Old Church Street and The Square end of St Mary's Road.
- New pavement surfaces on St. Mary's Road, Old Church Street and Church Street.
- New controlled pedestrian crossings and soft landscaping on Church Street and Old Church St.
- Undergrounding of overhead electrical cables, installation of new public lighting and upgrading of existing public lighting across the entire project area.

- Development of associated drainage services and utilities across the entire project area.
- All associated site works.

1.3 Existing Surface Drainage Castle Street

Castle Street is within Cahir, linking Bridge Street in the West to the Square in the East. The overall storm water surface system discharges to road-side gullies subsequently discharging to surface water drainage system.

There are a large number of both residential and commercial properties within Castle Street. These properties convey surface water from their respected roofs to the underground drainage network. Castle Street consists of a dual-lane carriageway together with on street parking and footpaths on both sides of the street. The Mall Street provides a link with Church Street.

Road gullies are located at various intervals on both sides of the road carriageway. The topographical survey illustrates that there is a generous longitudinal fall along Castle Street. The low point along the street surface approximately coincides with entrance to the Cahir Castle.

The existing drainage infrastructure is currently being further investigated using a GPR survey and in obtaining service record drawings from the service providers.

1.4 Proposed Drainage Castle Street

It is proposed to resurface the bridge by the Cahir Castle and junction with the Mall. This includes a slight re-profiling of the surface to convey surface water to a brick-slot channel located on one side of the road carriageway as well as an introduction of the raised table. It is further proposed to re-pave and realign the footpaths from The Mall junction towards the junction with the Square. As no additional hard surfacing is being introduced, the discharge into the existing storm drainage outlets will remain the same. Whilst there is a slight revision of the gradients within the street, the principles referenced in section 1.3 will remain.

The Square will remain to act as a high point, with storm water draining towards the low point at The Mall junction. Minimum crossfalls of approximately 1:80 for the carriageway and 1:60 for the footpath will be adhered to facilitate the free draining of surface water to nearby gullies and brick-slot drains. This philosophy will ensure that the distribution of the storm water run-off is consistent with the existing situation.

Additional sub-surface drainage outlets are being introduced where required. The proposed drainage layout is appended to this document. In summary:

- The bridge by Cahir Castle: The existing gulley arrangement is being replaced with a brick-slot drain on the northern side of the carriageway. Additional gully to be added on the western side at the base of the raised table when entering/exiting the Bridge. This will minimize the risk of ponding at this location. This gully will be connected to sub-surface drainage.
- Section between the junction with the Mall and junction with the Square: The existing gulley arrangement is being adjusted for the proposed layout of the new footpaths. Additional roadside gullies will be included at the base of the raised table when entering/exiting the Bridge to the west and the Square to the east. This will minimize the risk of ponding at this location. These gullies will be connected to sub-surface drainage.

1.5 Existing Surface Drainage The Square

The overall storm water surface system discharges to road-side gullies subsequently discharging to surface water drainage system.

There are a large number of both residential and commercial properties within the Square. These properties convey surface water from their respected roofs to the underground drainage network. The Square consists of two dual-lane carriageways, travelling north/south, with the western carriageway connecting Castle Street with Church Street, and eastern carriageway connecting St. Mary's Road with Old Church Street.

Road gullies are located at various intervals on both sides of the road carriageways. The topographical survey illustrates that there is a generous longitudinal fall along the Square.

The existing drainage infrastructure is currently being further investigated using a GPR survey and in obtaining service record drawings from the service providers.

1.6 Proposed Drainage The Square

It is proposed to resurface the Square from junctions with Castle Street and St. Mary's Road up to The Galtee Inn. This includes a slight re-profiling of the surface to convey surface water to the brick-slot channels located on sides of the proposed parking and the proposed plaza. It is further proposed to re-pave and realign the footpaths from The Galtee Inn towards the junction with Church Street and the Old Church Street.

Minimum crossfalls of approximately 1:80 for the carriageway and 1:60 for the footpath will be adhered to facilitate the free draining of surface water to nearby gullies and brick-slot drains. This philosophy will ensure that the distribution of the storm water run-off is consistent with the existing situation.

Additional sub-surface drainage outlets are being introduced where required. The proposed drainage layout is appended to this document. In summary:

- The existing gulley and land drain arrangement to be replaced with an arrangement of slot drains. The outlet for these slot drains will avail the nearby storm/combined line.
- The proposed tree pits to be connected with perforated pipe with an overflow pipe that connects into the nearby storm/combined line.
- The existing gulley arrangement is being adjusted for the proposed layout of the new footpaths. Additional roadside gullies will be included at the base of the raised table when entering/exiting the Square from the Church Street. This will minimize the risk of ponding at this location. These gullies will be connected to sub-surface drainage.
- An additional aco drain is proposed to be installed at The Heritage Shop on the South West corner of the square. It is known that this shop sufferers flooding in times of excessive rain which will be mitigated by this proposed aco drain as well as various collection points in the proposed scheme.

1.7 Existing Surface Drainage Church Street

The overall storm water surface system discharges to road-side gullies subsequently discharging to surface water drainage system.

There are a large number of both residential and commercial properties within the Church Street. These properties convey surface water from their respected roofs to the underground drainage network. The street consists of a dual-lane carriageway, travelling north/south connecting the Square to the south and Cashel Road to the north.

Road gullies are located at various intervals on western side of the road carriageway. The topographical survey illustrates that there is a generous longitudinal fall along the Church Street.

The existing drainage infrastructure is currently being further investigated using a GPR survey and in obtaining service record drawings from the service providers.

1.8 Proposed Drainage Church Street

It is proposed to resurface the footpaths from junctions with the Square to the junction with the entryway to the proposed parking to the east. Minimum crossfalls of approximately 1:60 for the footpath will be adhered to facilitate the free draining of surface water to nearby gullies.

It is proposed to resurface the area of the junction with the proposed entryway to the car park. This includes a slight re-profiling of the surface to convey surface water to the brick-slot channels located on the side of the proposed road.

Additional sub-surface drainage outlets are being introduced where required. The proposed drainage layout is appended to this document. In summary:

- The existing gulley arrangement is being adjusted for the proposed layout of the new footpaths. Additional roadside gullies will be included at the base of the raised table next to the proposed entryway into the proposed parking. This will minimize the risk of ponding at this location. These gullies will be connected to sub-surface drainage.
- The existing gulley arrangement to be replaced with an arrangement of slot drains. The outlet for these slot drains will avail the nearby storm/combined line.

1.9 Existing Surface Drainage Old Church Street and St. Mary's Road

The overall storm water surface system discharges to road-side gullies subsequently discharging to surface water drainage system.

Road gullies are located at various intervals on both sides of the road carriageways. The topographical survey illustrates that there is a generous longitudinal fall along the both roads.

The existing drainage infrastructure is currently being further investigated using a GPR survey and in obtaining service record drawings from the service providers.

1.10 Proposed Drainage Old Church Street and St. Mary's Road

It is proposed to re-pave and realign the footpaths on St. Marys' Road from the Square up to the junction with Pearse Street. It is further proposed to re-pave and realign the footpaths from the Square up to the St. Mary's Church. Minimum crossfalls of approximately 1:60 for the footpath will be adhered to facilitate the free draining of surface water to nearby gullies.

Additional sub-surface drainage outlets are being introduced where required. The proposed drainage layout is appended to this document. In summary:

- The existing gulley arrangement is being adjusted for the proposed layout of the new footpaths. Additional roadside gullies will be included at the base of the raised table when entering/exiting the

Square from the St. Mary's Road. This will minimize the risk of ponding at this location. These gullies will be connected to sub-surface drainage.

1.11 Conclusion

The proposed drainage is designed to avail as much as possible of the existing system present. This is to avoid extensive excavation works. Secondly, given the constrained nature of the site, it was important to, insofar as practicable, maintain the existing surface levels. The proposed drainage mimics the existing falls present in the area, with some minor re-profiling introduced. The thresholds of the surrounding buildings have to be retained in any case, so any level changes that can be made are minimal.

There are currently no known problems with the existing storm or foul drainage in this area. A full CCTV survey will be undertaken as part of the works, and this will highlight any failings/defects within the existing system, and these will also be addressed as part of the project.

Appendix 1

Drainage Drawings

Refer to Proposed Surface Water Drainage Drawings

Proposed Surface Water Drainage Sheet 1: 22396-MWP-ZZ-ZZ-DR-C-2110 P02

Proposed Surface Water Drainage Sheet 2: 22396-MWP-ZZ-ZZ-DR-C-2111 P02

Proposed Surface Water Drainage Sheet 3: 22396-MWP-ZZ-ZZ-DR-C-2112 P02

Appendix E

Stage 1 Road Safety Audit

MWP

PROPOSED CAHIR PUBLIC REALM REGENERATION SCHEME

Stage 1 Road Safety Audit

Tipperary County Council

October 2021

Contents

Appendices

Project No.	Doc. No.	Rev.	Date	Prepared By	Checked By	Approved By	Status
22396	6006	A	19/10/2021	S Quigley	S Doyle	S Quigley	DRAFT

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1. Introduction

This report details the findings of a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit carried out on the proposed Cahir Public Realm Regeneration Scheme, on behalf of Tipperary County Council.

Audit Team

MWP's Road Safety Auditors carried out the Audit. The Audit Team members were as follows:

Sean Doyle, BE CEng MIEI	MWP
Seamus Quigley, BE CEng MIEI MCIHT	MWP

MWP inspected the site on the 19th October 2021, between 9.45 a.m. and 10.30 a.m., on foot and in a car, during damp weather conditions. Record photographs were taken.

Location

The proposed Cahir Public Realm Regeneration Scheme is located in Cahir Town Centre, within its 50 km/hour urban speed limit zone. The extent of the scheme includes the following:

- Castle Street;
- The Square;
- St. Mary's Road;
- Old Church Road;
- Church Street;
- Laneway off Church Street towards the Suir River bank (between Cahir Post Office and Galileo Café); and
- Property on the west side of Church Street.

The existing Cahir town centre road and street network includes two-way traffic routes, on-street parking (two hours free) and priority controlled junctions. There is a Pelican controlled pedestrian crossing on Castle Street, with Bus Éireann bus stops on both sides. Cahir Castle is located at the west end of Castle Street. Castle Street includes a car, motorcycle and bus/coach park on its south side, immediately east of Cahir Castle. Two Zebra crossings are provided east-west on The Square, linking both sides via a central pedestrian island area, with permitted parking on all sides.

Castle Street, The Square and Old Church Road are part of the R640 Regional Road that links the N24 National Primary Road east of Cahir, with the N24 north west of Cahir. St. Mary's Road, The Square and Church Street are part of the R640 Regional Road that links Ardfinnan in the south, with the N24 north east of Cahir. Cahir is bypassed on its northern side by the N24/R639 Cahir Bypass Road and by the M8 Motorway.

Proposed Scheme

The proposed Cahir Public Realm Regeneration Scheme includes the refurbishment and enhancement of the public realm, comprising the upgrading of existing streets and lanes with new high quality paving, kerbing, public lighting, improved street furniture and utility diversions/works (including undergrounding of overhead ESB cables). The scheme includes widened pedestrian areas, footway build outs, reduced road carriageway widths and pedestrian crossings. Pedestrian crossings include controlled, courtesy and uncontrolled crossings.

Existing on-street parking would be reduced at The Square. A new car park and bus/coach park are proposed on the east side of Church Street, with an associated proposed pedestrian link with Old Church Road, as part of a separate scheme not subject to this audit. The proposed new access junction, on the east side of Church Street for the proposed separate new car/coach park, is part of the subject proposed scheme for audit.

Entry/exit ramps are proposed for vehicles at scheme raised surfaces. Automatic bollards for controlled access are proposed on the west section of The Square. Cycle stand parking is proposed at The Square and on Church Street.

Audit Information

There were no Road Safety Authority (RSA) recorded fatal, or serious, accident collisions on the proposed scheme existing road network, during the available years 2005 to 2016. The following minor collisions were recorded:

- Three minor collisions on Old Church Road, all involving a pedestrian;
- Three minor collisions at The Square, all involving a pedestrian;
- One minor collision on Church Street, involving a right turning goods vehicle; and
- Two minor collisions on Castle Street, one involving a pedestrian and one involving a cyclist.

The drawings and other documents provided to carry out the Audit are listed in Appendix A.

This Audit has been carried out in the context of the relevant sections of the TII Road Safety Audit GE-STY-01024 December 2017 and TII Road Safety Audit Guidelines GE-STY-01027 December 2017, and in accordance with the Government's Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (Version 1.1) May 2019 (DMURS). The Auditors have examined and reported only on those features of the design considered to have road safety implications and have not examined or verified the compliance of the scheme to any other criteria.

Section 2 of this report presents the findings of the Stage 1 Road Safety Audit of proposed Cahir Public Realm Regeneration Scheme. The Designer's Feedback is provided in Appendix B.

2. Findings of the Stage 1 Road Safety Audit

Vulnerable Users

2.1 Problem – Off Square Crossing Horizontal Alignment

The horizontal alignment of the proposed controlled crossing on the north side of The Square, at Church Street, is off square, not at 90 degrees, with its footway tie-ins. This could require pedestrians crossing from the north east side to look right through in excess of 90 degrees, potentially reducing their awareness of oncoming southbound vehicles on Church Street, increasing their risk of potential collisions and injuries.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that an appropriate horizontal alignment should be provided, with appropriate visibilities.

2.2 Problem – Incomplete Buffer Zones at Disabled Persons' Parking Bays

Three disabled persons' parking bays are proposed at The Square. The proposed parking does not include buffer zones at its north and south ends. This could restrict access for users, increasing the risk of conflicts and injuries.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that appropriate disabled persons' parking bays should be provided, with reference to the DoT Traffic Signs Manual Chapter 7, as appropriate.

2.3 Problem – No Details of Treatments at Steps

Three are no details of treatments proposed at steps, including warning measures, containment and handrail facilities. Inadequate facilities for users could result in trips, falls and injuries.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that appropriate treatments should be provided at steps.

Layout and Visibility

2.4 Problem – No Details of Levels

No details of vertical levels have been provided for audit. Levels that are too flat could result in ponding, and ice during cold weather, with potential slipping injuries for pedestrians and skidding for vehicles, resulting in impacts and injuries, particularly for two-wheel vehicles. Inappropriate tie-in levels with adjacent street footways and lanes could result in trip hazards for pedestrians, putting them at risk of falls and injuries. Inappropriate ramp levels at The Square could restrict access for impaired users using the adjacent disabled persons' parking bays.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that appropriate levels and tie-ins should be provided.

2.5 Problem – Potential Restricted Visibilities at Crossing

A Drop Off parking bay is proposed on the west side of Church Street, immediately adjacent to the proposed controlled crossing on the north side of The Square, at Church Street. Vehicles using the Drop Off bay, and in particular high sided vehicles, could restrict visibilities for, and to, pedestrians crossing from the south west side, increasing their risk of potential collisions with southbound vehicles on Church Street, and consequent injuries.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that an appropriate layout should be provided, with clear visibilities. Refer also to item 2.1 above.

2.6 Problem – Possible Inadequate Facilities at Stripe Markings' Crossings on The Square

Stripe markings crossings are proposed on the east side of The Square, in the vicinity of the existing Zebra controlled crossing, and on the south side of The Square at Castle Street. Buff coloured tactile paving at the crossing points is proposed, rather than L-shaped red tactile paving for controlled crossings. This could result in inadequate facilities at the crossings for visually impaired users, and potentially increase the risk of conflicts for impaired users.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that appropriate facilities should be provided for all users, including visually impaired users.

2.7 Problem – Potential Restricted Visibilities at Crossings by Trees

The proposed scheme includes new trees. These include at locations on all sides of the controlled crossing on Castle Street; the south east side of the controlled crossing on Old Church Road; on the north east side of the east side crossing on The Square; on the north east side of the controlled crossing on Church Street/The Square; and on three sides of the crossing on Church Street, immediately south of the proposed new car park access junction. The Main Components drawing provided for audit indicates that street trees are to be provided. The risk is that visibilities for vehicle drivers to pedestrians, and for pedestrians to vehicles on the approaches to crossings could be restricted by tree vegetation, including future growth. This could increase the risk of collisions and injuries for pedestrians.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that appropriate visibilities should be provided to, and for, all users.

2.8 Problem – Potential Restricted Visibilities at New Access Junction by Trees

The proposed scheme includes a new access junction on the east side of Church Street for the proposed new car/coach park that is part of a separate scheme not subject to this audit. The proposed junction is located on the inside of the existing horizontal curve on Church Street, with proposed trees along the east side of Church Street, potentially located within the proposed junction visibility splays. The Main Components drawing provided for audit indicates that street trees are to be provided. The risk is that visibilities for vehicle drivers exiting the junction and southbound vehicle drivers on Church Street approaching the junction could be restricted by tree vegetation, including future growth. This could increase the risk of exiting drivers pulling out into the path of vehicles on Church Street, resulting in side impact collisions and injuries for vehicle occupants. Southbound vehicle drivers on Church Street could cross the centre of the road carriageway to avoid exiting vehicles, into the path of opposing vehicles, resulting in potential head-on collisions and injuries.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that appropriate visibilities should be provided to, and for, all scheme users.

2.9 Problem – No Details of Belisha Beacons at Stripe Markings' Controlled Crossings

There are no details of Belisha beacons at proposed Stripe markings' controlled crossings. Inadequate facilities at controlled crossings could reduce awareness for vehicle drivers, increasing the risk of collisions for pedestrian users and consequent injuries.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that appropriate facilities should be provided at controlled crossings.

2.10 Problem – Potential Inappropriate Corduroy Tactile Paving Adjacent to Ramps

The extent of proposed corduroy Irish limestone tactile paving at footway interfaces with shared surfaces include alongside adjacent road carriageway entry/exit ramps on Church Street, The Square and St. Mary's Road. If blister tactile paving is proposed, this could result in visually impaired users stepping onto the ramps, resulting in potential trips, falls and injuries.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that an appropriate tactile paving type and layout extent should be provided.

2.11 Problem – Potential Restricted Access For Existing Vehicle Accesses

There are a number of existing vehicle accesses on Church Street. A footway buildout is proposed at the access adjacent to Morrison's Pharmacy, and on-street parking is proposed at the access located farther north adjacent to Top Cut Hair Salon. Inadequate access at existing accesses could result in material damage and conflicts with other street users.

Photograph: View West of Access on Church Street Adjacent to Morrison's Pharmacy

Photograph: View West of Access on Church Street Adjacent to Top Cut Hair Salon

Recommendation:

It is recommended that appropriate access should be provided for existing accesses.

2.12 Comment – No Details of Litter Bins

The existing layout includes a series of litter bins. There are no details of proposed litter bin locations provided for audit. Inappropriate litter bin locations could reduce clear widths for users and could result in impact hazards. It is recommended that appropriate litter bins and locations should be provided, in developing the detailed design, prior to construction.

Photograph: View North of Litter Bin on Castle Street

Drainage

2.13 Comment – No Details of Proposed Drainage

No details of proposed drainage have been provided for audit. Inappropriate drainage could result in ponding, ice during cold weather and potential skidding hazards for users. This could result in potential skids, falls and consequent injuries, including for pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists. It is recommended that appropriate drainage should be provided, in developing the design prior to construction.

Ironmongery

2.14 Comment – No Details of Ironmongery Covers

No details of proposed ironmongery covers have been provided for audit. Inappropriate ironmongery cover levels and types could result in potential hazards for users, including trips, falls and skids, with consequent injuries. It is recommended that appropriate anti-skid ironmongery covers and levels should be provided, in developing the detailed design, prior to construction.

Surface Treatments

Refer to items 2.2, 2.6, 2.10, 2.11 and 2.14. No further issues.

3. Audit Team Statement

We certify that we have inspected the site and examined the drawings and other information listed in Appendix A of this report. The inspection and examination have been carried out for the sole purpose of identifying any features of the design that could be removed or modified in order to improve the safety of the scheme. The problems we have identified are noted in the report, together with suggestions for improvement, which we recommend should be studied for implementation.

Signed: _____ **Date:** 22/10/2021

Sean Doyle BE CEng MIEI
Audit Team Member
For and on behalf of MWP
Engineering and Environmental Consultants
Reen Point
Blennerville
Tralee
County Kerry

Signed: _____ **Date:** 22/10/2021

Seamus Quigley, BE CEng MIEI MCIHT
Audit Team Member
For and on behalf of MWP
Engineering and Environmental Consultants
Park House
Mahon Technology Park
Blackrock
Cork

Appendix A

List of Documents Provided for Audit

Drawings:

Nicholas de Jong Associates/MWP
Masterplan Development Option
Drawing Number: CP-L-020 *Date: Sept 2021*

Nicholas de Jong Associates/MWP
Castle Street – Developed Option
Drawing Number: CP-L-021 *Date: Sept 2021*

Nicholas de Jong Associates/MWP
The Square – Developed Option
Drawing Number: CP-L-022 *Date: Sept 2021*

Nicholas de Jong Associates/MWP
Church Street – Developed Option
Drawing Number: CP-L-023 *Date: Sept 2021*

Nicholas de Jong Associates/MWP
Main Components
Drawing Number: CP-L-024 *Date: Sept 2021*

Other Documents:

Appendix B

Designer's Feedback

ROAD SAFETY AUDIT FEEDBACK FORM

MWP

SCHEME: PROPOSED CAHIR PUBLIC REALM REGENERATION SCHEME

ROUTE(S): CASTLE STREET, THE SQUARE AND CHURCH STREET

AUDIT STAGE: STAGE 1 **DATE AUDIT COMPLETED:** OCTOBER 2021

Paragraph No. in Safety Audit	To Be Completed By Designer			To Be Completed by Audit Team Leader
	Problem Accepted (Yes/ No)	Recommended Measure Accepted (Yes/ No)	Describe Alternative Measure(s). Give Reasons for Not Accepting Recommended Measure	Alternative Measures Accepted by Auditors (Yes/ No)
2.1	Y	Y	Plan since amended to provide a horizontal alignment.	
2.2	Y	Y/N	Buffer zone (1.2m wide) will be added to north side of disabled parking bays at the Square. Buffer zone to south side not considered necessary as the parking bay adjoins a pedestrian area and can be provided with a dropped kerb.	Y
2.3	Y	Y	Current Plan (L-022-R1) includes tactile paving to top and bottom of steps, and a central handrail. Appropriate measures will be further developed as part of detailed design.	
2.4	Y	Y	Full details of levels and tie-ins will be developed as part of the detailed design.	
2.5	Y	Y	This has been partly addressed through realignment of pedestrian crossing as included on L-022-R1). Further consideration to visibility will be given at detailed design stage.	
2.6	Y	Y	The proposed crossings are uncontrolled. Surface finish patterns have been updated so that stripe markings are not shown.	
2.7	Y	Y	The proposed trees are set back from the edge of the roadway to allow visibility for pedestrians and vehicles at the crossings. Trees will also be clear stem to a min. 2m height allowing visibility beneath the canopy. Visibility will be further checked at detailed design stage.	
2.8	Y	N	The trees at this location are shown in the separate Part 8 details for the Car Park, which included consideration of the proposed junction visibility splays (refer attached Car Park drg. 21690-1-101.	Y
2.9	Y	Y	Belisha Beacons will be provided at controlled crossings.	
2.10	Y	Y	Corduroy tactile paving will be amended to tie into the shared surface only.	

ROAD SAFETY AUDIT FEEDBACK FORM

MWP

Paragraph No. in Safety Audit	To Be Completed By Designer			To Be Completed by Audit Team Leader
	Problem Accepted (Yes/ No)	Recommended Measure Accepted (Yes/ No)	Describe Alternative Measure(s). Give Reasons for Not Accepting Recommended Measure	Alternative Measures Accepted by Auditors (Yes/ No)
2.11	Y	Y	Yellow boxes will be added where necessary at existing accesses.	

SIGNED: ..... **DESIGNER** **DATE:** 22/10/2021

SIGNED: ..... **DESIGNER** **DATE:** 22/10/2021

SIGNED: ..... **AUDIT TEAM LEADER** **DATE:** 22/10/2021

SIGNED: Frank Cussen **EMPLOYER** **DATE:** 27/10/2021

Appendix F

Archaeological Assessment Report

DANIEL NOONAN
ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY

Ringwood House, Summerfield,
Youghal, Co. Cork
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info@dnac.ie
+353 24 25922

Archaeological Impact Assessment

Cahir Town Centre Public Realm

In Support of a Part 8 Planning Application

Developer: **Tipperary County Council**
Tipperary-Cahir-Cashel Municipal District
Civic Offices,
Rosanna Road,
Tipperary Town.

Prepared By: Daniel Noonan

Date: 8th November 2021

Rialtas na hÉireann Government of Ireland | Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann
Tipperary County Council

SUMMARY

An Archaeological Impact Assessment of the proposed Cahir Town Centre Public Realm works was prepared, to accompany a Part 8 Planning Application by Tipperary County Council.

All of the proposed works are within the Zone of Archaeological Notification/Potential (ZAP) for the historic town of Cahir, reference TS075-048----. There are fifteen known sites or monuments of archaeological significance within the ZAP for Cahir; and seven of these are inside or adjoining the red line of the public realms works area. Two are National Monuments - Cahir Castle TS075-048----/Nat. Mon. No. 507 and Cahir Castle Cottage TS075-048016-/Nat. Mon. No. 577 within the Castle's curtilage.

There is no known evidence for Cahir having a town wall or defined town defences in the medieval period, and there is difficulty in establishing the actual location of the Anglo-Norman settlement location in Cahir.

The presence of Cahir Castle to the west, on the River Suir, the medieval parish church of St. Mary's on high ground 300m away on the east bank, and the location of the Augustinian Priory 500m north of the castle on the west bank, suggests the presence of a significant medieval settlement at Cahir. Its written history also supports this. However, the actual location of the medieval settlement is not known. The initial Anglo-Norman settlement focus would have been on the Castle, but the other monuments attest to growth in this settlement in the medieval period. The conventional thinking is that the earliest Anglo-Norman settlement was between the Castle and the Priory, on the west bank of the Suir. The distances between the monuments straddling the Suir, and the uncertainty of its location has given rise to the large Zone of Archaeological Notification/Potential (ZAP) for the historic town - covering the entire town centre and a substantial portion of the west bank of the Suir.

Thus far, no substantial archaeological features or material has been encountered that could suggest its location. This conclusion is drawn from the appraisal of previous archaeological investigations and attendances to infrastructural works in Cahir. The appraisals suggest that any archaeological material in the town, beneath the streetscapes, is ephemeral in nature; and any present on the east bank of the Suir may have been substantially removed during the 19th Century remodelling of the town centre Square and its environs.

However, the potential for archaeological material, no matter how fleeting, within the public realm works area of the town centre cannot be absolutely ruled out.

Overall, a successful implementation of a high-quality improved public realm within Cahir town centre will achieve the aim of developing the town centre as a destination, and create enhanced linkages with Cahir Castle, and the River Suir Blueway. The works will enhance access and presentation of the historic core of town centre, focusing on the Square and its environs as a living, social and commercial place, with a plan that encourages pedestrian movements, and better address the issue of car-parking.

The ground disturbance works to achieve this has potential, if unmitigated, to negatively impact on the archaeological resource of the town.

It is recommended that all ground disturbances should be archaeologically monitored, by a suitably experienced archaeologist.

CONTENTS

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1. Introduction

Daniel Noonan Archaeological Consultancy (DNAC) has prepared this Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) of the proposed Cahir Town Centre Public Realm scheme, to accompany a Part 8 Planning Application by Tipperary County Council (see **Figure 1-3**; **Drawing 01**).

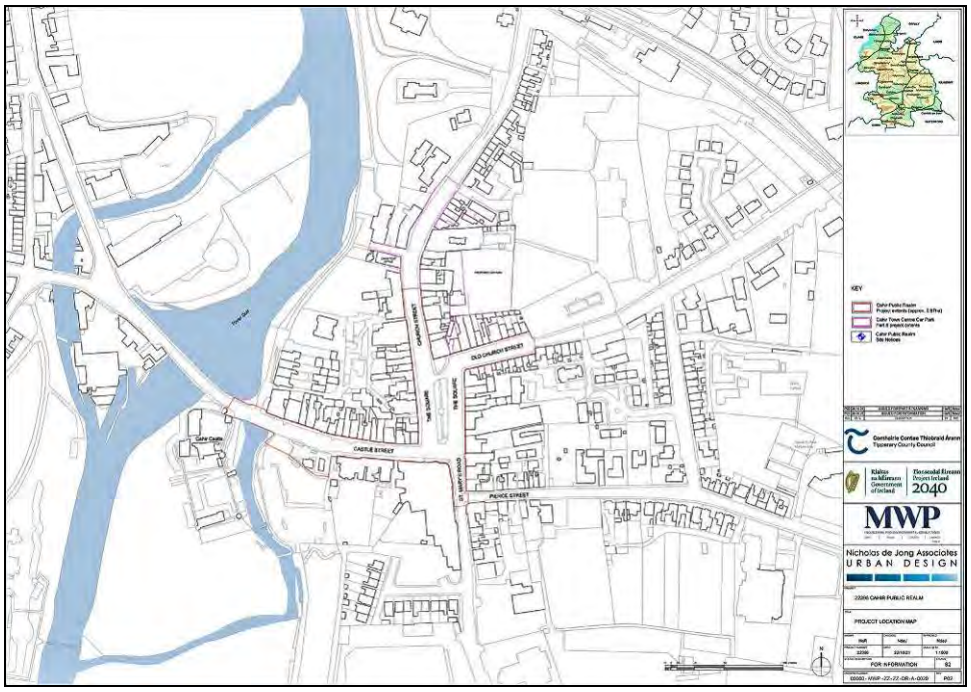

Figure 1: Extent of the Cahir Town Centre Public Realm works. A larger view can be found in **Drawing 01**.

All of the proposed works are within the Zone of Archaeological Notification/Potential (ZAP) for the historic town of Cahir, reference TS075-048----, as entered in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) for County Tipperary (S.R.) 1998 – see **Figures 4-5**. Including the historic town, and within 2km of its immediate environs, there are 43 known sites or monuments of archaeological significance. Of these, fifteen are within the ZAP for Cahir (see **Table A** below); and seven are inside or adjoining the red line of the public realms works area (see **Drawing 03**). In addition, of the seven Recorded Monuments, on the western periphery of the works area two of them are registered as National Monuments - Cahir Castle TS075-048----/Nat. Mon. No. 507 and Cahir Castle Cottage TS075-048016-/Nat. Mon. No. 577 within the Castle's curtilage. On the western periphery the medieval parish church of St. Mary's, TS075-048003-, and its associated graveyard TS075-048011-, can be regarded as being de facto National Monuments as they are in Tipperary County Council ownership.

There is no known evidence for Cahir having a town wall or defined town defences in the medieval period, and there is difficulty in establishing the actual location of the Anglo-Norman settlement location in Cahir. Current thinking is that it may have been on the west bank of the Suir, between the Castle (Townspark townland) and the Augustinian Priory to the north (Caherabbey Upper townland).

This non-intrusive assessment, based on background research and site inspection, was prepared to evaluate the potential for impacts on the archaeological resource, so as to inform the planning process for the proposed development.

The improvement works were developed by a multidisciplinary design team, led by Malachy Walsh and Partners (MWP) & Nicholas de Jong Associates; within the context of delivering the Cahir Town Centre Public Realm scheme envisioned by Tipperary County Council.

The architectural and built heritage impact potential is being assessed by others.

Figure 2: Layout of the proposed works. A larger view can be found in **Drawing 02**.

2. Assessment Methodology

This non-intrusive assessment of the Cahir Town Centre Public Realm scheme was carried out through background research into the study area, known archaeological monuments in the locality, historical resources, and mapping. The research is supported by a detailed site inspection and appraisal of the works. The combined aim of this method is to develop an understanding of the archaeological nature of the site, and the potential for impact on the archaeological resource, and how to de-risk this through appropriate mitigation.

The sources consulted include the listings of National Monuments, Preservation Orders, Register of Historic Monuments, the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP), and Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) for County Tipperary (S.R.). Historical and Ordnance Survey mapping, and aerial imagery was sourced. The online databases of the National Monuments Service (NMS), the unpublished *Urban Archaeological Survey of County Tipperary South Riding* (Farrelly and Fitzpatrick 1993), and other documentary sources such as local histories and antiquarian journals were consulted.

The appraisal incorporates the results of the review of the background research, and site inspection, to form the basis of the impact assessment, and guidance for the recommended mitigation measures.

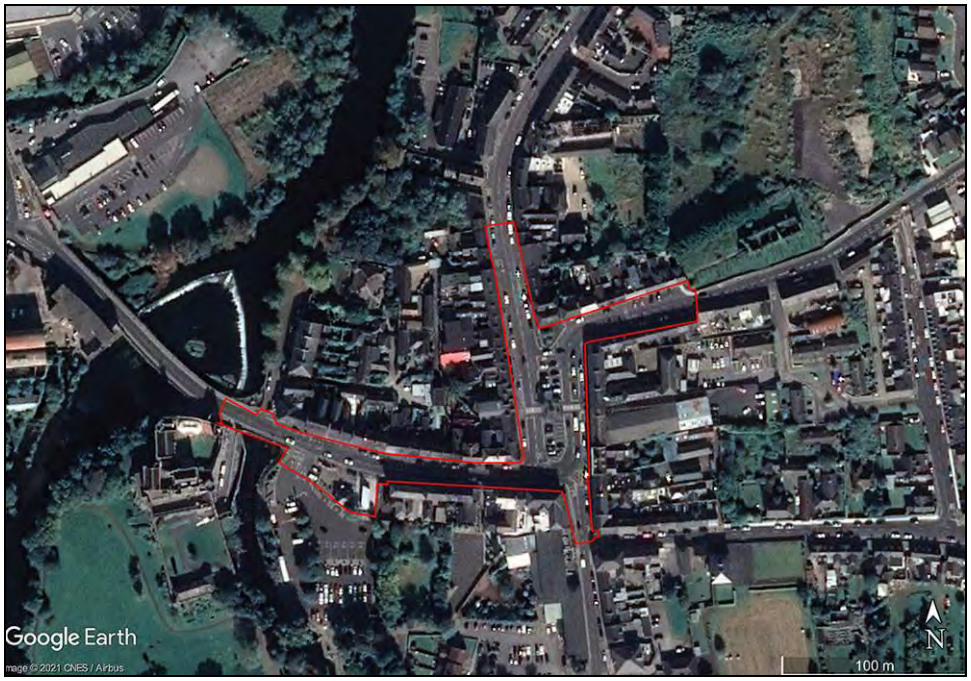

Figure 3: Extents of proposed works shown on aerial view of Cahir. Source: Google Earth, March 2020.

3. Proposed Improvement Works

Pursuant to the requirements of Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, Tipperary County Council proposes to carry out the following development in accordance with Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, for the following works in Cahir, Co Tipperary.

The following description of the proposed works is taken from the documentation prepared for the Part 8 Planning Application. Full details of the works are contained in the documentation and drawings package prepared for the works to the public realm. The general plan of the works can be found in **Figure 2** above, and in **Drawing 02** at the rear of this assessment report.

> *The proposed development includes for public realm refurbishment and enhancement in Cahir's Town Centre comprising the upgrading of the existing Square and approach streets with new high-quality paving, kerbing, landscaping, public lighting, improved street furniture and utility diversions/works.*
>
> *The proposed development will be carried out on Castle Street, Cahir Town Square, St Mary's Road, Old Church Street and Church Street in the townland of Townparks, Cahir, Co. Tipperary.*
>
> *The Nature and Extent of the proposed development is:*
>
> *I. New raised table shared surface on Castle Street from Cahir Castle to the Castle Car Park entrance to the East and The Mall entrance to the North.*

II. *New kerb alignment and pavement surfaces from the Castle Street Car Park entrance to The Square junction, including upgrading of pedestrian crossing, installation of new public lighting and soft landscaping.*

III. *New streetscape layout for Cahir Square with new alignment design for footpaths, parking areas and trafficked areas incorporating a raised table shared surface from the junction with Castle Street, to the Junction with St Marys Road and to North of The Fountain, new kerb and pavement surfaces throughout The Square, new hard and soft landscaping, new street furniture, new bollards, new bicycle racks, installation of new and upgrade of existing public lighting.*

IV. *Alteration of on-street parking for Castle Street, The Square, Church Street, Old Church Street and The Square end of St Mary's Road.*

V. *New pavement surfaces on St. Mary's Road, Old Church Street and Church Street.*

VI. *New controlled pedestrian crossings and soft landscaping on Church Street and Old Church St.*

VII. *Undergrounding of overhead electrical cables, installation of new public lighting and upgrading of existing public lighting across the entire project area.*

VIII. *Development of associated drainage services and utilities across the entire project area.*

IX. *All associated site works.*

The proposed development is located within Cahir Town Architectural Conservation Area and is located adjacent to over 40 Protected Structures.

The development has been the subject of an Appropriate Assessment screening in accordance with Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) and article 250(1) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended. The Appropriate Assessment screening concluded that the proposed development would not be likely to give rise to significant or indeterminate impacts on any Natura 2000 site.

These proposed works will involve ground disturbance, with the installation of new surface treatments for shared and pedestrian dominated pavements throughout the historic core of Cahir, within the Zone of Archaeological Notification/Potential (ZAP). These works will require archaeological mitigation measures to alleviate potential impact on the archaeological resource.

4. Context, Setting & Archaeological Environment

Brief History of Cahir

The town and civil parish of Cahir lies in the Barony of Iffa and Offa West, Co. Tipperary. The town is located at the east foot of the Galtee Mountains and is situated on the River Suir.

The toponymic study of the origin of the placename of Cahir (or Caher) has a basis in the physical setting and origin of Cahir Castle, and its setting on an island in the channel of the River Suir (https://www.logainm.ie/1165655.aspx - accessed 19/10/2021). Deriving from the Irish *Cathair Dun Lascaigh*, the place is first recorded as *Dún lascaig* or fort of the fishery around 850AD (ibid.); in reference to a stone fort or Caher sited on an island in the Suir in this vicinity. Over time variations in the name, from *Cathair Dun Lascaigh* to *Cathair Dhuna Íasca*, reinforce the association of a strategic defended location, on an island, which was a successful fishery; leading to the modern interpretation of the placename as the *'stone fortress of the fish'* (Butler 1999).

The town of Cahir is essentially Anglo-Norman in origin. The Barony of Cahir was first granted to William de Braose in 1169, and by 1215 had come into the ownership of Philip of Worcester. It is the likely the large motte and bailey fort (RMP No. TS075-074) at Knockgraffon about 6km to the north of Cahir, was Philip's first fortification in this area and not the Castle (Sweetman 2005). This fortification was established during an Anglo-Norman drive against Donal Mor O' Brien's Kingdom of Limerick. However, the oldest known structure in the town of Cahir is the ruins of Cahir Abbey (RMP No. TS075-048,). The Abbey of Our Lady was founded in the 13th Century during the reign of King John by Geoffrey de Camville, a Norman Knight (Lewis 1837). This was an Augustinian foundation of the Order of Canons Regular. It has a high central tower, which was converted into a dwelling house after the Reformation. Part of another tower remains on site and the outbuildings reached as far as the River Suir (O'Neill 2002). Cahir Abbey flourished until 1540 when it was surrendered to the Crown.

The town grew in prominence around the Castle (RMP No. TS075-048), which is situated on a rock island in the middle of the River Suir. This was a strategic location as natural defences were provided by the river. Cahir Castle was possibly built by William de Braose in the 12th Century, to whom King John had granted lands hereabouts that had been in O'Brien hands before the Normans had arrived in Ireland. In 1375 the Castle was granted to the Butler Earls of Ormond (O'Brien and Harbison 1996). The castle contains a large outer ward at the south with circular angle towers at the southeast and southwest but no internal structures. An inner ward with a gatehouse is sited in the middle of its south wall, with square towers at the northeast and northwest angles and a small circular tower at the southeast. Between the inner and outer wards there is a rectangular walled area of open ground which is termed the middle ward (Sweetman 2005). Each ward is defended by stout curtain walls. Recent

works to the castle has established that the core of the inner ward including the portcullis gateway and also parts of the keep, are among the survivors of the earliest Norman castle on the site dating to the 13th Century. The remainder of the castle is a progressive development dating from the 15th to 17th Century. In the reign of Elizabeth I the Castle was considered "the bulwark for Munster, and a safe retreat for all the agents of Spain and Rome." Elizabeth's Lord Lieutenant, Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, attacked the castle in May 1599. After a short siege in which the walls were breached the Earl took the castle for the crown. In 1647 the castle was surrendered after an even briefer period to Lord Inchiquin by George Mathews, the Guardian of Lord Cahir. In 1650, the Castle was surrendered to Oliver Cromwell without firing a shot; and two years later the Eleven Years War of Irish Confederate Wars were ended with the signing of articles in the castle. The Butler family regained control of Cahir castle, which remained in their care until the mid-1964 when it was signed over to the state. Today, though somewhat incorrectly restored during the 1840s, Cahir Castle remains one of the best preserved castles in the country.

Apart from the historic events associated with the Castle, little is known about the town itself until 1839 when Richard Butler, second and last Earl of Glengall, who then owned the greater part of it, instructed his architect, William Tinsley to redesign the town. The location of the medieval town that developed in association with Cahir Castle is not known. Other than the two medieval churches located at either end of the town, no other suggestive evidence is known for a town that definitely existed. Current thinking (Bradley 1985, 36) is that it may have been on the west bank of the Suir, between the Castle (Townspark townland) and the Augustinian Priory to the north (Caherabbey Upper townland).

The modern Georgian town was planned as a single, harmonious unit – with the Square as a centre piece, with three storey buildings grouped around it, and on the streets radiating out from it. The 18th Century Town Hall is located at the north end of the Square, with architectural balance on the north-south axis provided by the late 18th Century Cahir House, one-time residence of the Butlers. Tinsley redesigned the east and west sides, with a complementary architectural language of typical three-storey mixed-use commercial properties with residences over shops, and provided them with similar details and devices, such as decorative hood-moulded window heads.

This plan-form was commenced in 1839 and completed about 1847. The designs were provided by Tinsley, on behalf of the Earl, who then accommodated the residents who paid for the new buildings or modifications to existing, with long leases. This plan-form still exists in Cahir town today and in the interest of preservation this area is designated an Architectural Conservation Area. Other buildings of note in the locality include the Swiss Cottage on the Cahir Park Estate which has been recently restored and the Protestant Church designed by the Prince Regent's architect John Nash in the early 19th Century.

In the 19th Century there was an expansion in industrial endeavours such as flax spinning, linen making and weaving. By the mid-1800s there were five large flour mills in operation, most of these sited on the River Suir. According to Lewis (1837), diapers and fine linens were the principal articles manufactured but coarser fabrics were later produced. A market primarily for agricultural produce was held on Friday's, while fairs were held once a month. Unfortunately, the industrial expansion not only in Cahir but throughout the remainder of the country was devastated by the Famine and subsequent economic decline. Richard Butler, 2nd Earl of Glengall (1794-1858), had more ambitious plans for further town improvements for Cahir, but in 1853 he became bankrupt and was forced to sell the Cahir estate.

Archaeological Protections & Designations

The proposed works are within the Zone of Archaeological Notification/Potential (ZAP) for the historic town of Cahir, reference TS075-048---- (see **Figures 4-5**), as entered in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) for County Tipperary (S.R.). Within the historic town there are fifteen known sites or monuments of archaeological significance (see **Table A** below), seven of which the proposed Cahir Town Centre Public Realm works have potential to interact with. Included in this it the complex of medieval and post-medieval castle buildings at Cahir Castle – a National Monument, reference number 507.

The creation of the Record of Monuments and Places forms part of Section 12 of the National Monuments Act, as amended in 1994; and inclusion in it is the primary mechanism for protection of archaeological sites and monument in the State. Any works to, or close by (i.e. within the ZAP), a site or monument entered in the RMP requires notification to the National Monuments Service (NMS) at least two months in advance. In the instance of ground disturbances, the minimum requirement of the NMS is for archaeological monitoring attendance to such works; further assessment, avoidance of archaeological features to ensure preservation in situ, or preservation by record though excavation, are other potential scenarios.

Site or monuments that are determined to be National Monuments are those that under Section 2 of the National Monuments Act 1930 are a monument *'the preservation of which is a matter of national importance by reason of the historical, architectural, traditional, artistic or archaeological interest attaching thereto'*. Any works to, or close by (i.e. within the ZAP), of a National Monument requires the written consent of the relevant Minister; currently this is the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage. Streetscape ground disturbances within the ZAP for Cahir have potential to impact on subsurface archaeological features.

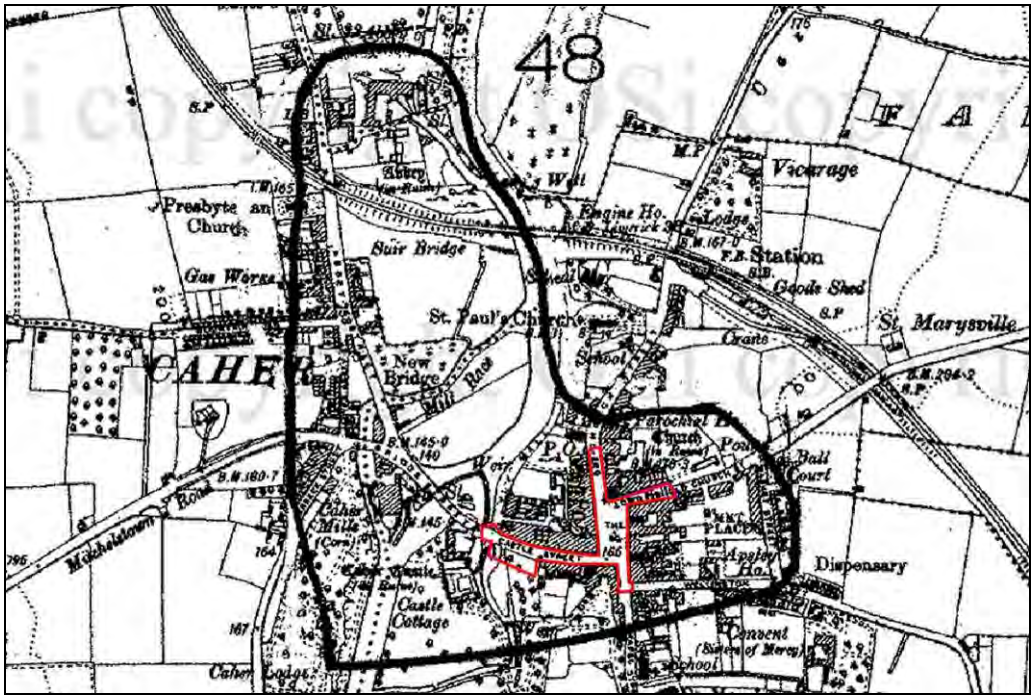

Figure 4: Extract from Tipperary (S.R.) Record of Monuments & Places, 1998, Sheet 075, showing Cahir's Zone of Archaeological Notification/Potential (ZAP), with the works area extent indicated. NTS.

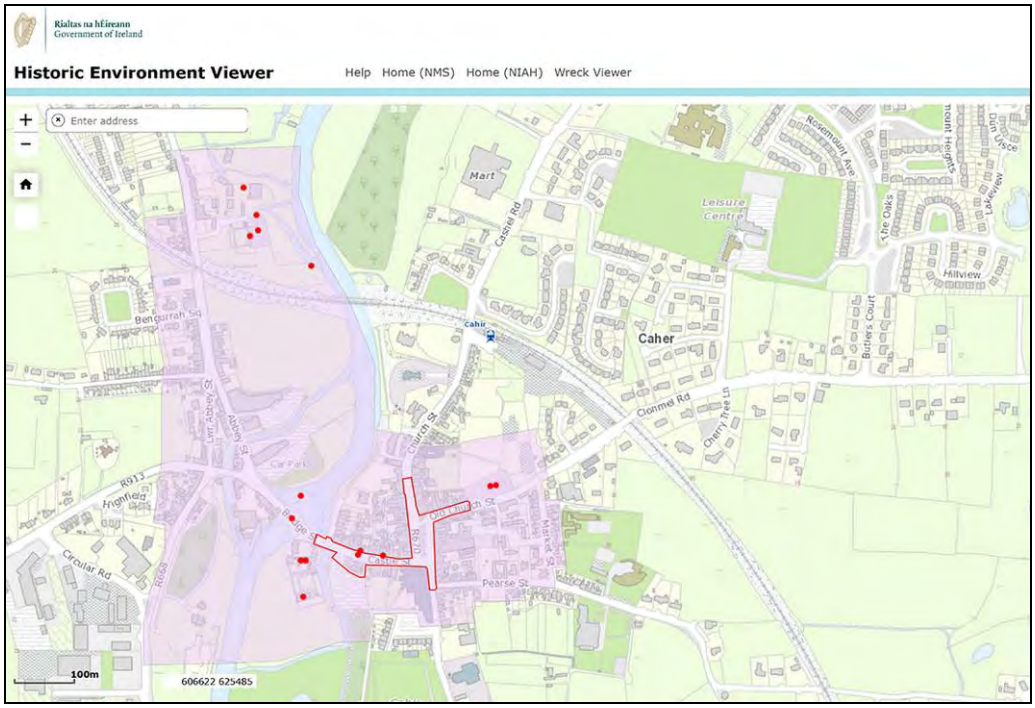

Figure 5: Screengrab of the National Monuments Service's online *Historic Environment Viewer*, showing the ZAP for Cahir, with red dots representing recorded sites and monuments. Further information can be found in **Drawing 03.**

All works that have potential to interact with National Monuments generally require Ministerial Consent. However, given that the works only come to the periphery of Cahir Castle, and the medieval church and graveyard, clarification on the type of archaeological permission required, be that Consent or archaeological Licence, should be sought from the National Monuments Service.

Development Control Policies

Tipperary County Council's development policies' regarding archaeological heritage, upstanding, subsurface and the underwater zone in South Tipperary are contained in the still in force *South Tipperary Development Plan 2008-2015*. The current policy regarding archaeology is:

> ***Policy LH16: Archaeology and Cultural Heritage***
>
> *It is the policy of the Council to safeguard sites, features and objects of archaeological interest, including monuments on the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), the Record of Monuments and Places (as established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994) and archaeological remains found within Zones of Archaeological Potential (ZAPs) located in historic towns and other urban and rural areas. In safeguarding such features of archaeological interest, the Council will seek to secure the preservation (i.e. preservation in situ or in exceptional circumstances preservation by record) and will have regard to the advice and recommendation of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.*
>
> *Where developments, due to their location, size or nature, may have implications for archaeological heritage, the Council may require archaeological assessment to be carried out. This may include for a requirement for a detailed Visual Impact Assessment of the proposal and how it will impact on the character or setting of adjoining archaeological features. Such developments include those that are located at or close to an archaeological monument or site, those that are extensive in terms of area (1/2 ha or more) or length (1 kilometre or more), those that may impact the underwater environment and developments that require an Environmental Impact Statement.*

Cahir Historic Town – TS075-048----

The following description of the historic town of Cahir, in the townlands of Caherabbey Lower, Caherabbey Upper, Carrigeen (Caher Par.),Townparks (Caher Par.) is from the National Monuments Service's online Historic Monuments Viewer (https://maps.archaeology.ie/HistoricEnvironment/ - accessed 19/10/2021):

> *On the E bank of the River Suir. In the 3rd century AD there is a reference in the Book of Lecan to the destruction of Cahir fort (Burke 1909, 272) and there are other references to the fort in Brehon law texts (ibid.). In c. 1169 Cahir was granted to William de Braos and in 1215 the ownership of Cahir was granted to Philip Worcester and eventually passed, by his grand-daughters marriage, to the Birminghams, who possessed it until 1332 (ibid.). In 1375 the manor of Cahir was bestowed on James Butler, Earl of Ormond, in whose family it remained almost continuously up to the 19th century (ibid.). Cahir Castle was attacked in 1599 and captured by Elizabethan forces under the Lord Lieutenant Robert Devereux, the Earl of Essex (Killanin and Duignan 1967, 132-3). In 1647 Murrough "the Burner" O'Brien, Parliamentarian Lord President of Munster (Inchiquin), captured the castle which in 1650 was surrendered to Cromwell (ibid.). Upstanding monuments in the town include the castle (TS075-048001-); the abbey (TS075-048002-); the church (TS075-048003-); a holy well (TS075-048004-); a bridge ((TS075-048005-); a stone head (TS075-048006-); a stone plaque ((TS075-048008-); mills (TS075-048009-); weirs (TS075-048010-) and a graveyard (TS075-*

048011-). The precise location and extent of the medieval and early modern town of Caher is unknown.

Known Archaeological Monuments

The following **Table A** contains a listing of the fifteen known monuments and sites that are within the ZAP for the historic town of Cahir; as garnered from the online *Historic Environment Viewer* of the National Monument Service's database, accessed 19/10/2021, - https://maps.archaeology.ie/HistoricEnvironment/.

Table A: Recorded Monuments in proximity to the proposed town centre improvement works.

SMR/RMP No.	Classification	Comment
TS075-048----	Historic town	The medieval town of Cahir.
TS075-048001- **Nat. Mon. No. 507**	Castle - Anglo-Norman masonry castle	Cahir Castle, sited on a rock outcrop in the River Suir, and built either by Philip Worcester (died c. 1218) or his nephew and heir William around 1225 AD. Within the turreted curtain wall, there are a great hall, a square keep and three courts. The standing castle is largely 15th and 16th Century rebuilt fabric, and more recent 19th and 20th Century restoration. Taken into State care in 1964, and given National Monument status. The Castle marks the western extent of the proposed public realm works.
TS075-048002-	Religious house - Augustinian Canons	Augustinian Priory of St. Mary, of the Canons Regular, founded circa. 1220 by Geoffrey de Camvile. This monument is located outside the works extent area of the proposed public realm scheme. This monastic site may mark the northern extent of the possible site of the Anglo-Norman settlement of Cahir on the west bank of the Suir. Mendicant monastic sites such as these tended to be on the periphery of medieval towns; often in the case of walled towns, immediately outside the wall.
TS075-048003-	Church	This is St. Mary's, the medieval parish church of Cahir, located at the east end of on Old Church Street. St. Mary's stands within a rectangular, walled graveyard. This rectangular church building has the proportions of an Anglo-Norman church of the 13th Century; and has later additions and window features of 15th / 16th Century date. Post-Reformation, the church was internally divided by a wall, demarking parts of the church for Catholic and Protestant worship. It was in active use until 1820. The church and graveyard mark the eastern extent of the proposed public realm works.
TS075-048004-	Ritual site - holy well	Known as Lady's Well, this holy well is located close to the western bank of the Suir, to the immediate southeast of the Augustinian Priory; and is outside the extent of the proposed public realm works.
TS075-048005-	Mill - unclassified	Two 19th Century floor mills, located to the immediate north of the Augustinian Priory, these may be on the site of mill recorded in the 17th Century Civil Survey that may have been associated with the Priory. The mills lie outside the extent of the proposed public realm works.
TS075-048006-	Bridge	The three-stage stone bridge over the Suir links the Castle to the town centre to the east, and the island and western bank of the river. The fabric of the current bridge is mainly 18th Century, but earlier fabric may be hidden in its core. A bridge is recorded here in the Civil Survey of 1654-56. The proposed public realm works will install new pavements and road surfaces on the first

		section of the bridge, for a stretch of 50m, connecting Castle Street to the castle island.
TS075-048007-	Architectural fragment	A sculpted male head, of 15th Century date, reset high in the elevation of a Georgian terraced townhouse, 7 Castle Street. Similar to such heads in the Augustinian Priory, it may originally have come from there.
TS075-048008-	Memorial stone	A limestone plaque, carved in relief over three rows with, a capital M, W and I in the middle and the year 1717 on the bottom. On the wide margins to the left is the capital I and the right capital E. It is set high in the elevation of a Georgian terraced townhouse, 13 Castle Street.
TS075-048010-	Weir - fish	A weir recorded in the Civil Survey, on the of the present V-shaped weir up river to the north of the bridge; outside the extent of the proposed public realm works.
TS075-048011-	Graveyard	The east/west orientated, rectangular graveyard on Old Church Street that contains St. Mary's medieval parish church TS075-048003-. Elevated on sloping ground on the north side of the street, and retained by an approximately 4m high, roughly coursed, random-rubble wall, it is accessed via a flight of seven limestone steps to a single, wide gate with surviving 19th Century cast-iron gate. The gate is formed by two ashlar-laid, cut limestone piers, which break the wall height is a narrow string-course and single course above.
TS075-048012-	Bullaun stone	Fragmentary, ritual bullaun stone inside the gate to the Augustinian Priory, and outside the extent of the proposed public realm works.
TS075-048015-	Graveyard	Located to the west of the upstanding surviving building of the Augustinian Priory, this post-medieval graveyard is on the monastic buildings; and is outside the extent of the proposed public realm works.
TS075-048016- **Nat. Mon. No. 577**	House - 18th/19th century	A mid-19th Century located within the bawn of the castle, and known as the Cahir Castle Cottage. It is a National Monument, reference number 577.
TS075-048017-	Stone sculpture	Incised carving on a limestone block of three interlacing heads, it is located within the Castle, and is outside the extent of the proposed public realm works.

Of these fifteen monuments, the proposed public realm works have potential to interact with seven of them: the Historic Town, St. Mary's Church and Graveyard, the Castle complex, the Bridge, and the Plaque and Decorative Head set in the buildings on Castle Street.

Archaeological Excavations

There have been multiple archaeological investigations within the ZAP for Cahir in recent years. In preparing this appraisal, the online excavations database resource (https://excavations.ie/mapsnew/ - accessed 19/10/2021) was consulted, and the following, selection of four attendances to works focused on ground disturbances on the streets and roadways of the town are presented in **Table B**. The results of the investigations given a useful

profile of the nature of the sediments beneath the present throughfares of the town, and the potential for the survival of subsurface archaeological material.

Table B: Project relevant archaeological investigations results for Cahir, from 1997 - 2020.

Licence/Reference	Location	Findings & Appraisal Comment
96E0347/1997:485	Multiple	*Summary – Monitoring of Cahir Sewerage Scheme, Stage 2, began in December 1996 and was completed in April 1997. The work was undertaken to upgrade and replace existing sewerage pipework within the medieval town and connect more recently built houses in the suburbs to the system. Extensions to the original licence were granted in April and October–December 1997 to monitor works which were extra to the Stage 2 contract.* *The areas monitored included Mountain Road, Lower Abbey Street, The Square, Chapel Street, Ardfinnan Road, Mitchelstown Road, Abbey Street, Bridge Street, The Mall and Mall Lane.* *The remains of two adjoining mortared stone walls were located below the hotel carpark adjacent to Chapel Street. A further four parallel mortared masonry walls were found at the junction of Bridge Street and Abbey Street, while in the Square, The Mall and Mall Lane sewerage pipes were installed to replace existing stone culverts, some of which were still in use. Natural water-rolled stones and gravel made up the undisturbed profile below the road surface in all areas except for the Mitchelstown Road and Mountain Road, where orange/brown sandy subsoil formed the profile to a maximum depth of approx. 3m.* *But for the walls and culverts, which were of post-medieval date, nothing of archaeological interest was recorded.* **Comment – relevant to this AIA, ground works in the Square, while confirming the present of historic but modern culverts, did not uncover any features of archaeological interest that were of use in identifying the location of the medieval town.**
04E1372/2006:1827	Multiple	*Summary text – Monitoring of pipelaying was undertaken as part of works on the Cahir sewerage scheme. Works were confined to the south, south-east and south-west of Cahir Castle, close to both banks of the River Suir.* *Two features of possible archaeological potential were revealed in a field on the east bank of the River Suir and to the south of Cahir Castle (locally known as Inch Field). One of the features was manifest as an area of burnt clay. Although some charcoal was present, not enough could be retrieved to produce an adequate sample. In fact, due to the small quantity of charcoal within the burning, it is considered the focus of the burning was not associated with anything constructed of wood. No definite interpretation is offered for this anomaly, although it is possible it may be the residue of crop burning or a turf structure. Even so, local information has stated that Inch Field was not created until at least the 17th century, which is confirmed by the Pacata Hibernia map of 1599. This map shows the western side of the castle at the river edge on a slight rocky pinnacle. Regarding the second feature – the exposed timbers adjacent to the burning – there was no opportunity to excavate*

		this feature as the contractor readjusted his levels to avoid impacting upon this discovery and accordingly it was preserved in situ beneath terram, sand and gravel. *Findings from the monitoring revealed two distinct phases of land reclamation within Inch Field. The first comprised the importing of topsoil and clay to extend westwards from the immediate environs of the castle. Stratigraphy within this part of the scheme consists of the deposition of c. 1.6m of orangey-brown clay topped with a slightly clay loamy topsoil. It is considered this work was commissioned within the latter years of the 18th century. At this time well-manicured parkland became the vogue with the landed classes in their attempt to show control over nature. This is the period that saw the introduction of exotic flora and fauna, such as rhododendrons and sycamores, etc. The second phase occurred in the 20th century, which saw Inch Field extended even further westwards to its present riverside boundary. This phase comprised importing large amounts of rubble within a heavy clay to a similar thickness of the earlier works. All the above works were consolidated in the latter half of the 20th century with the sinking of a subterranean sewer pipe under the riverbed, the construction of a concrete chamber and the slight extension of the field. At this time the new riverbank was strengthened to withstand flood damage.* *Works were also carried out in the castle carpark. The 1599 Pacata Hibernia map also shows this area as being under water. There were no medieval (or earlier) structures at this location. It is known that this vicinity was infilled by the post-medieval period and utilised for industrial activity, especially brewing and milling. No evidence for this was revealed during the works.* *Pipelaying was undertaken along Barrack Street, a street leading south out of the town and parallel to the river. As the name implies, this street has strong associations with the military. Unusually for a provincial town, Cahir housed a complete regiment, which would have required good communication routes. This is reflected in the stratigraphy revealed during the works, which consisted of a compact layer of redeposited small, smooth, washed pebbles bonded with a mid-brown, high silicate, slightly sandy clay beneath concrete, with the modern road surface above. Due to the fact that a cavalry regiment was based in the town, it is believed that the top dressing of the road during this period would have consisted of clay overlying the tamped pebbles and clay.* *The only feature discovered at this location was the extant lower courses of a wall at the entrance to Wheelers' Estate, which is situated at the north end of Barrack Street. Its bonding agent is of a Portland cement type of no earlier than the mid- to late 19th century. Therefore it is considered that this wall was part of an earlier entranceway into the property and may have been remodelled to facilitate vehicular transport in the early years of the 20th century.* **Comment – relevant to this AIA, ground works in the Castle Car Park, a lower-lying area immediately to the south of Castle Street, confirmed that this area was part of the River Suir's flood**

		plain, and did not contain archaeological material.
07E0664/2007:1593	Multiple	*Summary text – Groundworks were monitored as part of laying ducting for a broadband scheme in Cahir town. In total eight streets within the zone of archaeological potential for Cahir were opened as part of this scheme. However, the results of monitoring proved negative regarding the presence of artefacts and deposits relating to the early habitation and settlement of the town. In fact, absolutely nothing was discovered pertaining to any period earlier than the late 19th century. What was apparent was the considerable shallowness of the bedrock in a number of locations. These include Mountain Road, Church Street, Bridge Street and the Square. If any archaeological evidence was present in these areas, it would be in the form of ephemeral lenses rather than distinct layers. This is also the case regarding the square, which was comprehensively developed (redeveloped?) in the early years of the 19th century* **Comment – relevant to this AIA, the attendance did not encounter any features or material of archaeological interest across a wide-ranging area of the town centre; and material present would be very fleeting, intermittent, and potentially without substance, with areas such as the Square generally devoid of subsurface archaeology.**
07E0148/2007:1594	Old Church Street	*Summary – Limited groundworks were monitored at Old Church Street, Cahir, as part of laying an ESB cable. In the course of laying the cable the building contractors encountered a small quantity of disarticulated bones. By the time of the discovery of the bones almost all of the groundworks had been completed. The site was of potential archaeological interest due to it being located immediately beside the east boundary wall of St Mary's parish medieval church and graveyard.* *The area of groundworks monitored measured 1.2m by 0.35m, which was undertaken manually. No trace of human remains was uncovered. However, the semi-articulated remains of a dog were uncovered. This find was not surprising, as the area had previously been used as a dog pound.* **Comment – relevant to this AIA, while the monitoring attendance appears to have been limited, the subsurface conditions for the survival of bone (human or animal) are present.**

Historic Mapping Sources

An early pictorial view, from the Stafford's *Pacata Hibernia* view of the siege of Cahir Castle by the Earl of Essex in 1599, shows the Castle and the three-stage bridge over the islands in the Suir. It lacks clear details on the nature of the settlement at Cahir (see **Figure 6**).

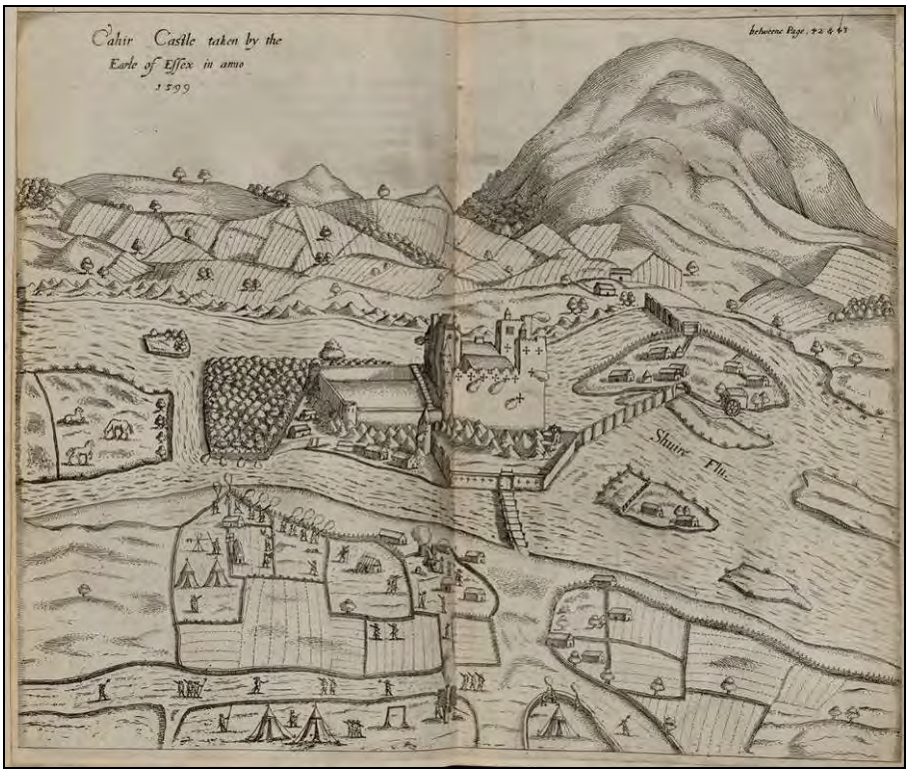

Figure 6: The Siege of Cahir Castle by Elizabethan forces during the Nine Years War, by Lord Lieutenant Robert Devereux, the Earl of Essex. From Thomas Stafford's history of the conflict, *Pacata* Hibernia, published in 1633.

The Tipperary County map for the Down Survey of 1656-58 indicates the town, with the medieval parish church and parallel line of structures shown on the east side of the Suir (**Figure 7**). The letters "Ca" for the Castle, and a bridge symbol over the river are to the southwest; while to the northwest Cahir Abbey is named.

Figure 7: Cahir as depicted on the Tipperary County map of the Down Survey, 1656-58.

Sheet 114 of Taylor and Skinner's Road Atlas published in 1778 (**Figure 8**) shows a developed layout to Cahir, on either side of the River Suir, and on the Tipperary and Clonmel Roads. The medieval St. Mary's Church shown, with an intact church symbol.

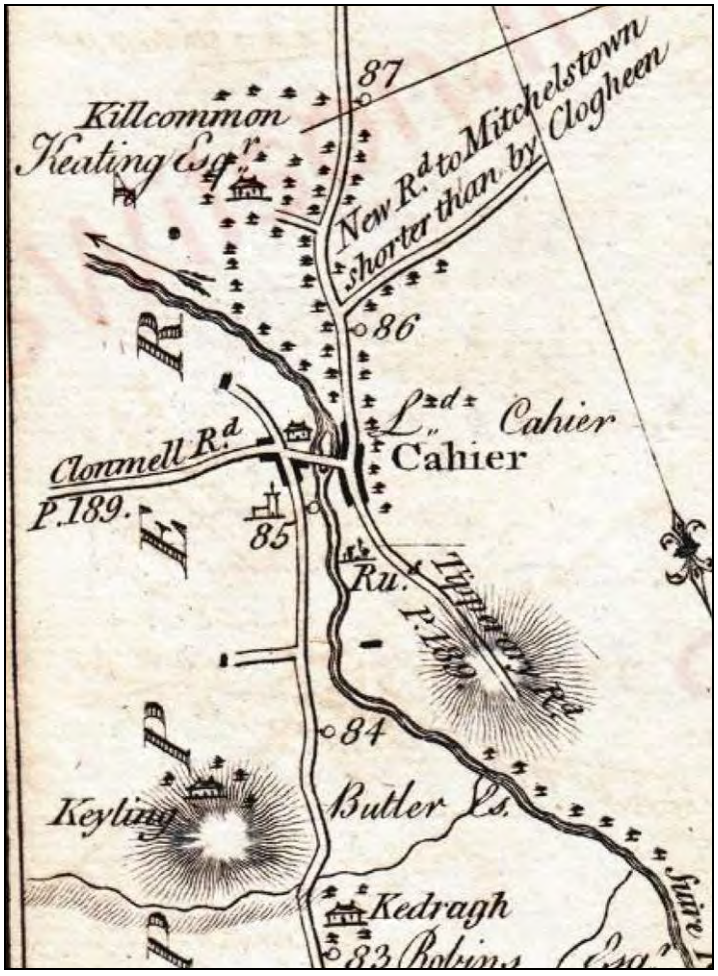

Figure 8: Extract from Sheet 114, of *Taylor & Skinner's: Maps of the Roads of Ireland Surveyed 1777*.

By the time of the Ordnance Survey, from the late 1820's onwards, Cahir had developed a layout recognisable as today's town, as shown in the 1840 Manuscript Town Plan (**Figure 9**). The later 1:1,056 Town Plan of 1905 (**Figure 10**) shows additional buildings, changes in the names of streets, and significant changes to the building line of Castle Street on the south side.

Figure 9: Extract from the historic Ordnance Survey Manuscript Town Plan of 1840. Note the Square was alternatively called Main Street; while Castle Street is called Bridge Street, and Old Church Street is the Clonmel Road. There is a significant body of water beneath what is now the Castle car park.

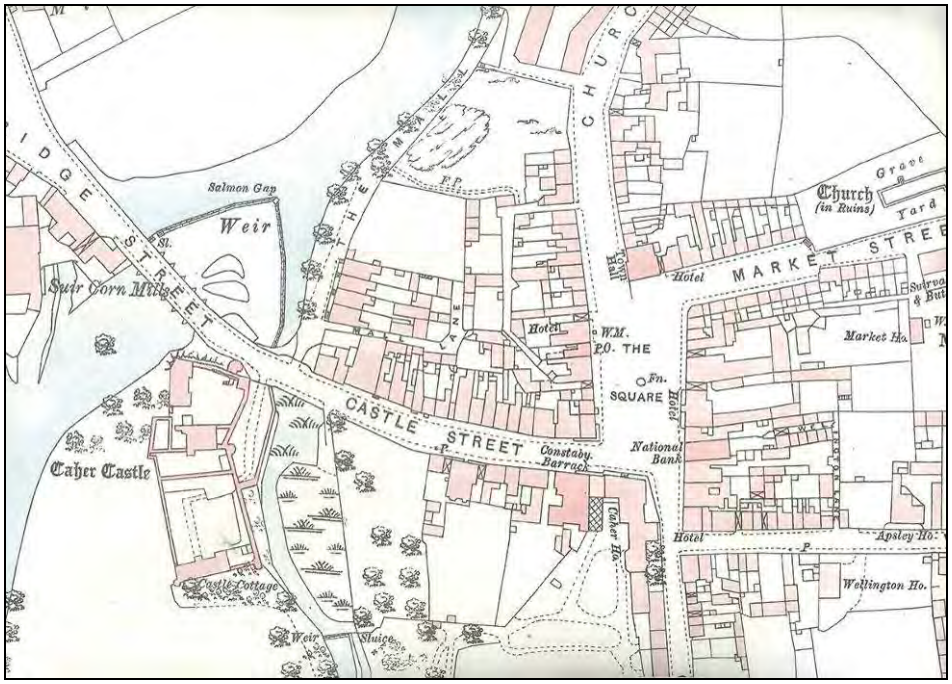

Figure 10: Extract from the historic Ordnance Survey 1:1,056 Town Plan of 1905. Old Church Street is Market Street, the fountain is shown in the middle of the Square, and Castle Street has acquired its modern name. The changes on the south side of Castle Street has seen significant removal buildings, new builds, and a more curved realignment of the building line.

Historic Photographs

The online digital catalogue of the National Library of Ireland (http://catalogue.nli.ie/ - accessed 19/10/2021) was consulted. The following photographic images, from the late 19th Century Lawrence Photograph Collection, the Eblana Photograph Collection, and an aerial view of the town in 1955 from the Morgan Aerial Photographic Collection are of use in understanding the historical nature and extent of Cahir.

Figure 10: Lawrence Collection Photograph L-ROY-06912, The Square, looking north; circa 1900.

Note the fall of the square from the northeast to the southwest, the compacted gravel/metaled road surface, historic pavement and kerbing, and the 1876 Richard Charteris Memorial Fountain.

The Market House in the northeast corner, topped with a cupola and weather vane, dominates the north end of the Square.

Figure 11: Lawrence Collection Photograph L-ROY-06913 The Square, looking south; circa 1900. .

The surface features of note are the same as the previous image.

Note Cahir House, now the Hotel, which brings architectural balance to the Market House on the north of the Square.

Figure 12: Lawrence Collection Photograph L_ROY_08626, Church Street, looking north; circa 1900.

Note the surface features of compacted gravel/metaled road surface, historic pavement, and kerbing.

Figure 13: Lawrence Collection Photograph L_CAB_07649 Castle Street, looking east; circa 1900.

The features of note are the same as the previous images, and the two guard stones, protecting the stone-lined drain on the corner of today's Cahir House Hotel; formerly the residence of the Butler's once they left the Castle in the late 18th Century.

Figure 14: Eblana Photograph Collection Photograph EB_2412 Cahir Castle, from the middle of Castle Street looking west; circa 1900.

Note the metaled road surface, with wheel ruts on the silts formed on top. Also, the stone pavements, and the stone-lined "French-drain".

Figure 15: Morgan Aerial Photographic Collection NPA_MOR 1873 , view of Cahir from the south, October 1955.

Note the fall of ground from the east to the Suir.

Synopsis of Background Analysis

The presence of Cahir Castle to the west, on the River Suir, the medieval parish church of St. Mary's on high ground 300m away on the east bank, and the location of the Augustinian Priory 500m north of the castle on the west bank, suggests the presence of a significant medieval settlement at Cahir. Its written history also supports this. However, the actual location of the medieval settlement is not known. The initial Anglo-Norman settlement focus would have been on the Castle, but the other monuments attest to growth in this settlement in the medieval period. The conventional thinking is that the earliest Anglo-Norman settlement was between the Castle and the Priory, on the west bank of the Suir. The distances between the monuments straddling the Suir, and the uncertainty of its location has given rise to the large Zone of Archaeological Notification/Potential (ZAP) for the historic town - covering the entire town centre and a substantial portion of the west bank of the Suir.

Thus far, no substantial archaeological features or material has been encountered that could suggest its location. This conclusion is drawn from the appraisal of previous archaeological investigations and attendances to infrastructural works in Cahir. The appraisals suggest that any archaeological material in the town, beneath the streetscapes, is ephemeral in nature; and any present on the east bank may have been substantially removed during the 19th Century remodelling of the town centre Square and its environs.

However, the potential for archaeological material, no matter how fleeting, within the public realm works area of the town centre cannot be absolutely ruled out.

5. Site Inspection & Appraisal

As part of this assessment, a walkover of all areas of proposed public realm scheme was carried out, and is presented as a photographic essay.

Photograph 1: St. Mary's Church and Graveyard, the medieval parish church of Cahir, at the start of the works at the east end of Old Church Street. The double bellcote that tops the west gable of the church can be seen breaking the top of the wall.

Note the unfortunate positioning of the road signage next to the stepped entrance to the monument.

Photograph 2: Old Church Street, looking west as the ground level falls towards the Square, from the start point of the public realm improvement works.

Photograph 3: The Square, viewed from the bottom of Old Church Street, looking southwest across the approximately 0.4 hectare open urban space that is the centre of modern Cahir. The location of the 1876 Richard Charteris Memorial Fountain is indicated by the stand of four trees in the large linear paved island that runs north to south on the long axis of the Square. Note the dominate building line mass of the Cahir House Hotel, the former house of that the Butler's occupied from the late 18th Century until 1853.

Photograph 4: The junction of the Square, Old Church Street to the right, and Church Street to the left, viewed looking northeast. The corner is dominated by the late 18th Century, five-bay, two storey former Market House; which now houses Cahir Library. This building adds balance to the mass of the Cahir House Hotel that sits on the south side of the Square.

Photograph 5: The Square, viewed from the southeast, at the north end of St. Mary's Road.

Photograph 6: The Square, viewed from south.

Photograph 7: The 1876 Richard Charteris Memorial Fountain, with modern limestone surround and granite pavers.

Photograph 8: View of the improvement works area on Church Street, looking back towards the Square to the south.

Photograph 9: View north towards adjoining Part 8 Car Parking project on Church Street.

Photograph 10: View of works area on St. Mary's Road, looking north to the Square.

Photograph 11: View west from the Square to Castle Street, which falls to the Suir and the Castle.

Photograph 12: Midway on Castle Street, looking east to the Square.

Photograph 13: Midway on Castle Street, looking west to the Castle, with WWI memorial in between.

Photograph 14: Cahir Castle.

Photograph 15: View looking east to Castle Street, from western termination of the works.

Photograph 16: The final 50m of Castle Street that runs on the first stage of the Bridge

Photograph 17: 18th Century Plaque inserted in the elevation 13 Castle Street.

Photograph 18: 15th Century carved stone head inserted in the elevation of 7 Castle Street.

Photograph 19: The World War I memorial on the south side of Castle Street.

6. Impact Assessment

Overall, a successful implementation of a high-quality improved public realm within Cahir town centre will achieve the aim of developing the town centre as a destination, and create enhanced linkages with Cahir Castle, and the River Suir Blueway. The works will enhance access and presentation of the historic core of town centre, focusing on the Square and its environs as a living, social and commercial place, with a plan that encourages pedestrian movements, and better address the issue of car-parking.

The ground disturbance works to achieve this has potential, if unmitigated, to negatively impact on the subsurface archaeological resource of the town.

Physical Impact

A comprehensive, non-intrusive archaeological evaluation of the proposed public realm improvement works to Cahir town centre was carried out. Appraisal of the work locations found that ground disturbance to the streetscape throughout the historic core is proposed. The disturbance works consist of new utility service ducting for undergrounding of existing and new services, new and enhanced drainage, new footpath and roadway pavements and surfaces, new hard and soft landscaping, street furniture, bollards, bicycle racks, etc. If unmitigated, such works have potential to negatively impact on any unknown subsurface archaeological material in the historic core.

A conclusion can be drawn from the appraisal of previous archaeological investigations and attendances to infrastructural works in Cahir. Any archaeological material in the town, beneath the streetscapes, is ephemeral in nature; and to-date no archaeologically significant features or material associated with the medieval town have been uncovered. Therefore, while there is potential for subsurface archaeology to be encountered during the public realm improvement works, it may be limited.

However, the works will interact directly with the Bridge, a Recorded Monument, as works to the surface here have potential to expose bridge fabric (of the present and potentially the earlier 17th Century bridge), beneath the road at the end of Castle Street. Similarly, the works will approach the northeast corner of the Castle complex (a National Monument), with potential to expose fabric or features associated with it.

Visual Impact

Overall, the proposed works for Cahir public realm works, when carried out to the designs and specifications contained in the application, and taking cognisance of the mitigation measures put forward below, will be a positive impact on the amenity and public realm of the townscape. The works will enhance the setting of the town centre with a new and modern palette of landscaping treatments.

7. Mitigation Recommendations[1]

It is recommended that the proposed public realm improvement works for Cahir proceed as proposed, with the following mitigation measures.

Archaeological Monitoring of Ground Disturbance Works

It is recommended that, given the proposed works will occur in the Zone of Archaeological Notification/Potential (ZAP) for the historic town of Cahir, TS075-048----, all ground disturbances should be archaeologically monitored, by a suitably experienced archaeologist.

The monitoring attendance must be provided in accordance with archaeological best practice and taking cognisance of the *Policy and Guidelines on Archaeological Excavation* document (Dept. Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht 1999) and the *IAI Code of Conduct for Archaeological Monitoring* (Institute of Archaeologist of Ireland 2006).

Written, photographic and drawn records, as required, will be made of the attendance, so as to create an archive of the monitoring activity.

Given the scale of the works proposed, full cognisance should be taken of the requirements of the National Monuments Service with regard to the monitoring. Dialogue should be entered into with the National Monuments Service to establish what type of permission/attendance control is required for the works, i.e. should they be carried out under Ministerial Consent conditions - issued under Section 14 of the National Monuments Act, or archaeological licence conditions – issued under Section 26 of the Act.

Should archaeological material be encountered during monitoring, works will cease at that location, pending hand investigation to assess its nature and extent; and for notification to Tipperary County Council, the relevant prescribed bodies, the National Monuments Service of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, and the National Museum of Ireland, for instruction.

Tipperary County Council, as promoters of the works, should be prepared to fund and support any archaeological investigation, resolution, excavations, and post-excavation analysis and reporting works that are required, should significant archaeological features or material be uncovered.

[1] **Note on Recommendations**

All mitigation measures are recommendations only and the decision on implementation, amendments, etc. rests ultimately with the Planning Authority – Tipperary County Council, and the Development Applications Unit of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

8. Sources & References Consulted

- National Monuments Database - www.archaeology.ie;
- *Record of Monuments and Places for County Tipperary S.R.*, 1998;
- Database of Irish Excavation Reports – www.excavations.ie;
- Ordnance Survey Historic Mapping – Geohive - https://geohive.ie/index.html;
- Down Survey Mapping – www.downsurvey.tcd.ie;
- Placenames database - https://www.logainm.ie;
- *South Tipperary County Development Plan 2009-2015*(as varied);
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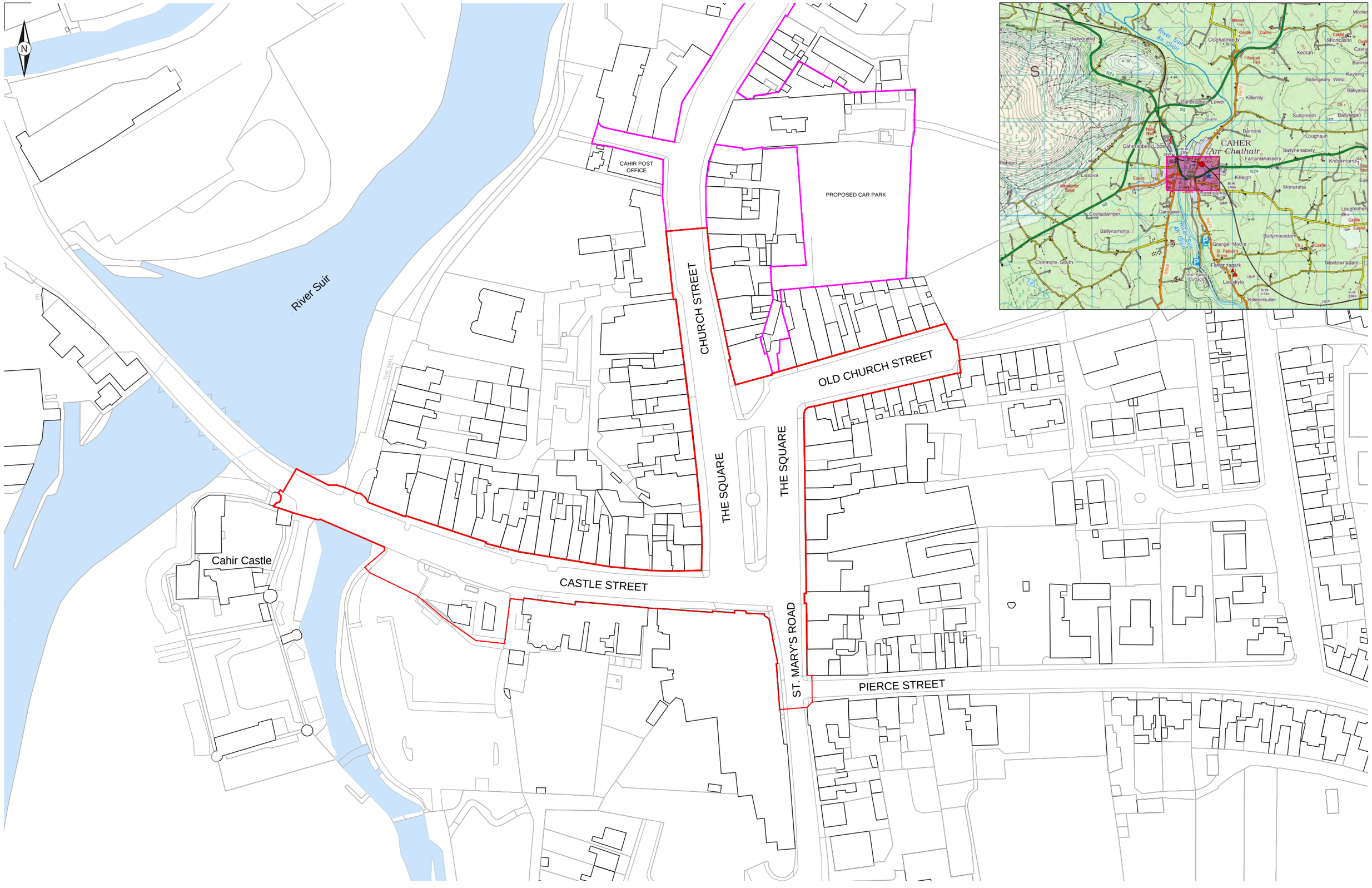
ASSESSMENT DRAWINGS



DRAWING
01 Site Location

LEGEND
Public Realm Works Area
Carpark Part VIII

PROJECT	CLIENT	DRAWN	CHECKED	DATE	SCALE	SCALEBAR
Cahir Town Centre Public Realm - Part VIII Assessment	MWP on behalf of Tipperary County Council	RT	DN	5-11-21	Scalebar	50m

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DRAWING

02 Masterplan Layout (courtesy MWP)

PROJECT	CLIENT	DRAWN	CHECKED	DATE	SCALE
Cahir Town Centre Public Realm - Part VIII Assessment	MWP on behalf of Tipperary County Council	RT	DN	5-11-21	See above

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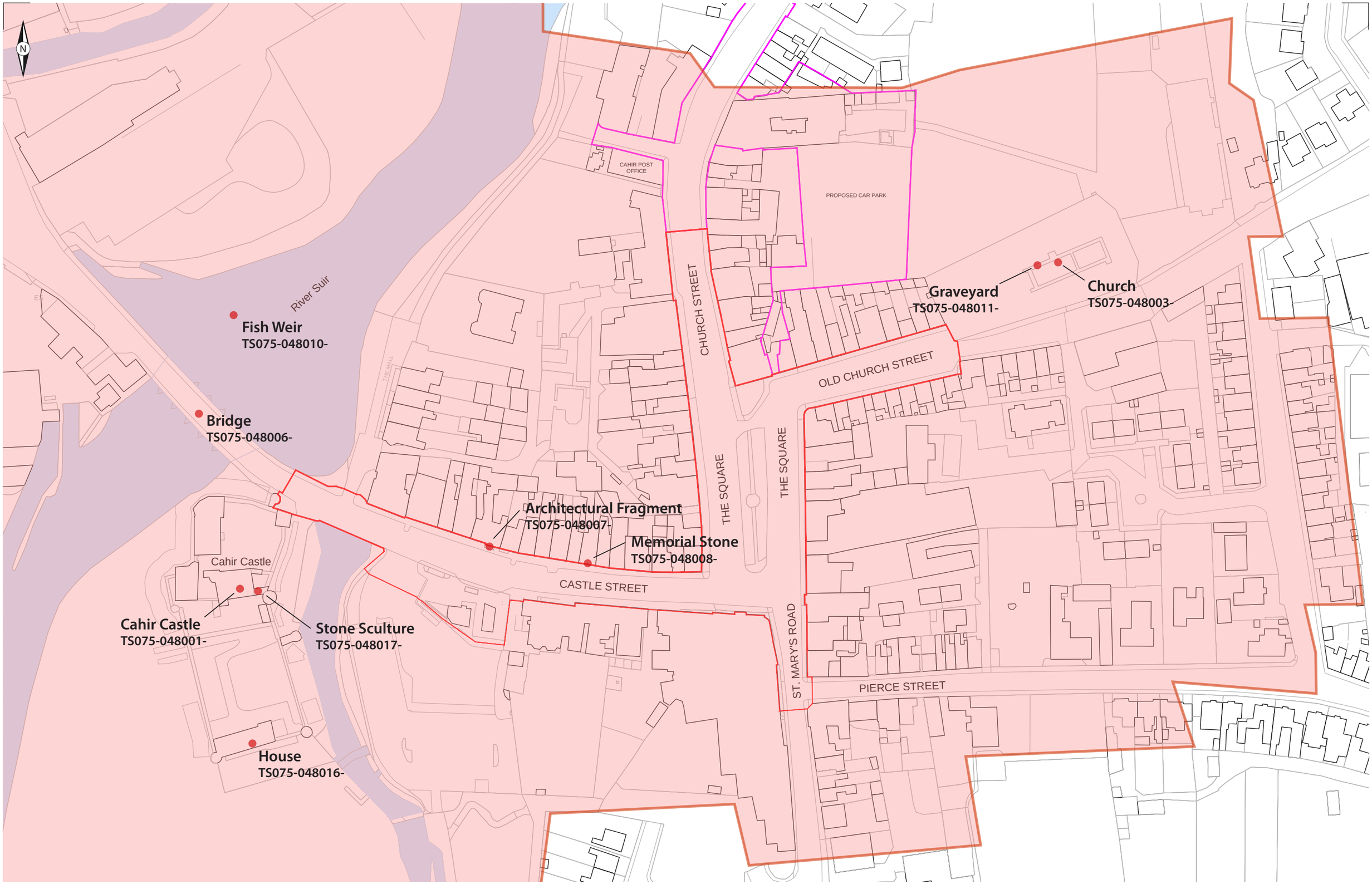

DRAWING

03 Extent of Public Realm Works Within Zone of Archaeological Potential

LEGEND

Zone of Archaeology Potential

RMP Site

PROJECT	CLIENT	DRAWN	CHECKED	DATE	SCALE	SCALEBAR
Cahir Town Centre Public Realm - Part VIII Assessment	MWP on behalf of Tipperary County Council	RT	DN	5-11-21	Scalebar	50m

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Appendix G

Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment Report

JCA Architects

Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Enhancement

Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment

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Rialtas na hÉireann Government of Ireland | Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

CONTENTS

Introduction

The following report has been prepared by JCA Architects and provides an Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment for the current proposed regeneration scheme of the central area of Cahir. The following report has been provided to accompany the Part VIII application prepared for this scheme.
The client's brief states that '*..the regeneration of the Square will be conservation led and respectful of the Square's position in an ACA while catering to the needs of a modern and multi-functional town centre.'*
The project objectives are outlined in the brief as follows:

- To re-establish the historic square as an economic quarter and civic space which respects its position in an Architectural Conservation Area (Conservation Led Regeneration).
- To reduce on-street parking from the Square to a new 86 car park just off the square and allow for public realm enhancements and traffic re-configuration with an emphasis on shared spaces and universal design.
- To curtail traffic within the town centre and provide a pedestrian focussed plaza within the Square that attracts people to meet and spend time.
- To provide an active travel hub within the town square, including bike stands and rest areas.

JCA provided a briefing document to Malachy Walsh Partners in September 2021 which identified both the protected structures and the NIAH (National Inventory of Architectural Heritage) structures located within the development area. The briefing document allowed the design team to prepare proposals for the redevelopment in the context of the architectural heritage identified within the study area. Information from this initial study has been updated and incorporated into this report. The site was visited by JCA Architects on 23rd of August 2021 and all areas of the town which are to be included in the Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Enhancement were inspected and photographed.

The following report includes summary information on all of the Protected Structures within the study area. A statement of significance for the relevant streets and areas of the town is also provided. The proposed development area is discussed on a street by street basis, as each street has a distinctive character or quality. The Square is discussed as one area.

Part 1: Architectural Heritage Context of the Proposed Development Area

Conservation Area

The full extent of the proposed development area is located within Cahir's Architectural Conservation Area (ACA).

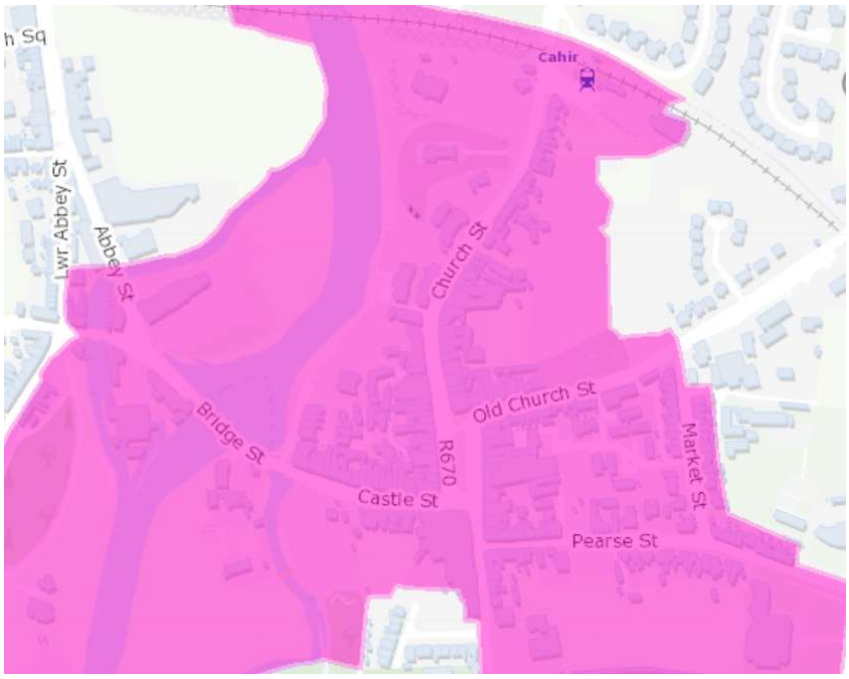


Fig. 1: The proposed development area as it falls within the Cahir ACA

An ACA is a place, area, group of structures or townscape that is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or that contributes to the appreciation of a protected structure of structures (whose character it is an objective of the development plan to conserve).

By designating an area as an ACA, the planning authority recognises that the protection of the architectural and special historic heritage of this area would best be achieved by controlling and guiding change on a wider scale than just an individual building. It also recognises that building lines and heights, fenestration, shopfronts, materials (including street paving), street furniture, railings and other surviving historic and architectural elements all contribute to the character of the ACA.

The ACA in Cahir comprises a very intact urban streetscape with terraced buildings lining the streets and dating from the latter half of the 18th century (Cahir House) but mainly containing buildings from the 1830s and 1840s, with some later additions. In his Topographical Dictionary of Ireland, Samuel Lewis described the town as follows:

> *The present town owes its rise to the late Earl of Glengall, and has been enlarged and greatly improved by the present Earl [the Second Earl of Glengall], whose seat is within its limits; it is pleasantly situated on the river Suir and is well built and of handsome appearance.*

The buildings are generally very well constructed and architecturally proportioned and were described by Henry Bassett in 1889 as follows[1]:

> *The houses of Cahir devoted to business as well as residential purposes, are superior to those found in most country towns in Ireland, of like population.*

Protected Structures

There are many protected structures within the proposed development area. The image below is taken from www.heritagemaps.ie with each yellow square on the map of Cahir indicating a protected structure. All of the buildings to Castle Street and almost all to the Mall are protected structures, with many more located around the Square.[2]

Fig. 2: Map of Cahir from www.heritagemaps.ie showing the protected structures in the proposed development area.

As well as buildings, the structures listed on the Record of Protected Structures include the water fountain in the square and the war memorial on Castle Street. Details of all the protected structures are given below, arranged by the streets on which they are located.

[1] Bassett, Henry, The Book of Tipperary, 1889

[2] Cahir Castle is a National Monument, while three additional recorded archaeological monuments are located along Castle Street.

Structures included National Inventory of Architectural Heritage

Many of the protected structures in Cahir are also included on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. The majority of these buildings have been included on the inventory as they are deemed to be of Architectural interest and therefore make a positive contribution to their setting, in this case to the streetscape or to the group of structures in which they are located in the town of Cahir.

Elements of the individual buildings which contribute to their significance include their external materials, decorative façade elements, historic shopfronts and display windows, fenestration patterns and windows, doors and fanlights, roof profiles, chimneys and boundary treatments such as railings. Other buildings are also rated of being of Artistic (for specific architectural details and craftsmanship), Social or Historic significance.

Fig. 3: Structures included on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage within the proposed development area.

The Square/Individual Streets

A description of the structures is provided below, with information from both the NIAH and the details given on the Record of Protected Structures compiled by the local authority. The information is arranged on a street by street basis due to the number of structures included on the RPS. The significance of the structures (or pairs or groups of structures) is also provided to illustrate their special character and the reasons why they were chosen for inclusion on the NIAH and RPS.

The Square (including St Mary's Street)

The Square – West Side

Description:

This side of the Square was developed in the first half of the 19th century by Michael Burke using a long lease for the property granted by Lord Glengall on the condition that his plans for the improvement of the town were carried out.[3]

Significance:

Architectural, Technical, Archaeological

Notes:

A memorial fountain, dated 1876, is located to the central area of the Square and is a protected structure. The east side of the Square includes buildings by the architect William Tinsley. This range of buildings is very intact and although alterations have been carried out to the shopfronts and fenestration, all of the 19th century buildings survive.

RPS	Yes	S243 – the fountain S244 - 1 The Square S244a - 2-3 The Square S244b - 4-5 The Square S244c – Galtee Inn (3 bay) S244d – O Brien's Pharmacy S244e – Opticians S244f – Roma Café
NIAH	Yes	Reg. 22111050 – fountain

[3] http://www.cahirhistoricalsociety.com/articles/cahirhistory.html

		Reg. 22111074 – Irwin's (two houses, integral carriage arch. NIAH images of 2211173) Reg. 22111073 – Lazy bean, two-bay three-storey building, one of three designed as group by Tinsley (images are of 2211174) Reg. 22111072 – Kennedy's, two-bay three-storey, one of three by Tinsley (wrong NIAH image)
RMP	Yes	—

The Square – East Side

Description:

The majority of the buildings on this side of the Square are protected structures and include notable examples such as Glengall House and the Bank of Ireland. Only three of these are included on the NIAH (the Corner House, Glengall House and the Bank of Ireland).

Significance:

Architectural, Artistic, Social

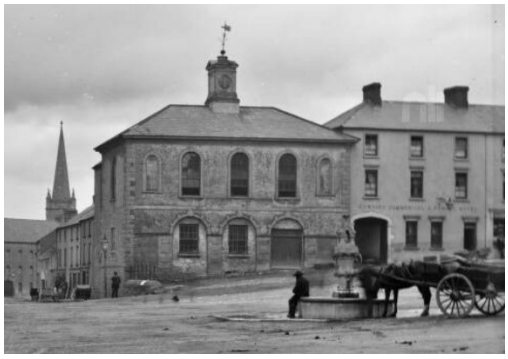
Notes:

The Corner House has distinctive curved elevation following the line of the street. Unclear if shopfronts as described in NIAH have been fully retained. Glengall House has very distinctive former Carriage Arch.

RPS	Yes	S245 – The Corner House S245a – The Corner House (Chair Communication) S245c – B. Ross Pharmacy S245d – Glengall House S245e – Antiques Showroom

		S245f – Bank of Ireland S245h – 31 The Square S245j - Auburn House
NIAH	Yes	Reg. 22111049 – Corner sited, originally two houses. Reg. 22111051 – Glengall House Reg. 22111052 - Bank
RMP	No	—

The Square – North Side



Description:

The northern side of the Square is primarily made up of the former Market House, Court House and Town Hall, now in use as a library. Built in the latter half of the 18th century, at approximately the same time as Cahir House to the Southern side of the Square, it is a significant building, both architecturally and historically.

Significance:

Architectural, Historical, Social

Notes:

A plaque to the retaining wall of the area in front of the Market House reads,' *11th Hussars – underneath lies Crimean Bob a veteran troophorse who after passing unharmed through the memorable Crimean campaign died at Cahir Barracks on the 9th November 1862 aged 34 years.*

RPS	Yes	S241 - Library
NIAH	Yes	Reg. No.22111047 – Market House/Library
RMP	Yes	—

St. Mary's Street

Description:

Two protected structures (245h and 245j) are listed with the eastern side of The Square, above, as their addresses are The Square rather than St. Mary's St. No NIAH buildings.

Significance/Notes:

Development area on this street is dominated by Cahir House Hotel and two PS. Architectural.

Castle Street – South Side

Description:

There are three protected structures to this side of the street, while several more are included on the NIAH. One of the protected structures is the war memorial. Partly built by John Egan with a long lease from Lord Glengall.[4] The hotel is the former Cahir House, built by James, 9th Lord Cahir in the 1770s.

Significance:

Architectural, Historical, Social, Artistic

Notes:

Railings to front of Cahir House and adjacent building (Lava Rock restaurant)

RPS	Yes	S273 – War Memorial S1007 – House and Railings

[4] http://www.cahirhistoricalsociety.com/articles/cahirhistory.html

		S242 – Cahir House and Railings
NIAH	Yes	Reg. No.22111053 (memorial) Reg. No.22111054 (AIB) Reg. No. 22111055 (Castle St Stores) Reg. No. 22111056 (two-bay house) Reg. No. 22111057 (three-bay house) Reg. No. 22111058 (18th century Cahir House, now hotel)
RMP	No	—

Castle Street – North Side

Description:

All of the buildings to this side of Castle Street (Nos. 1-18) are protected structures, and several are also included on the NIAH.

Significance:

Architectural, Technical, Archaeological

Notes:

In general area of Castle St, east bank of River Suir, location of historic town, noted in SMR

Railings to No. 1 Castle St.

RPS	Yes	S254a-s Note: 254s and 254s are both listed as No. 17 Castle St. on the RPS. 254s should be No. 18

NIAH	Yes	Reg. Nos. No. 4 – 22111041 No. 6 – 22111042 No. 7 – 22111043 No. 14 – 22111044* (*NIAH incorrectly notes as No. 13)) No. 15 – 22111045* No. 16 – 22111046
SMR	Yes	TS02772 – carved head on No.7 TS075-048---- Site of historic town, east banks of Suir

Bridge over River Suir, Bridge Street

Description:

Road bridge spanning two branches of River Suir, built c.1750 on site of medieval bridge, consisting of two separate sections, six arches to north-west and three-arches to south-east, northern side of latter having one visible arch.

Significance:

Architectural, Technical, Archaeological

Notes:

Recorded archaeological monument. National Monuments Act applies.

Stone parapet walls, modern paving to footpath. Adjoins Cahir Castle at northwestern end.

RPS	Yes	S1003
NIAH	Yes	Reg. No.22111032
SMR	Yes	TS075-048006-

The Mall

Description:

Terrace of four two-bay three-storey over basement house, built c. 1830, with the house to the southern end of the terrace having a full height bowed bay. Rendered plinth with limestone coping and spearhead wrought-iron railings to basement area to front and limestone entrance steps to all houses.

Significance:

Architectural and Artistic.

Notes:

Stone gate piers retained at entrance to The Mall. Houses are well maintained, of high architectural merit and retain external features and historic fabric such as limestone steps and railings to basement. Paving is modern.

RPS	Yes	S255a-d
NIAH	Yes	Reg. No. 22111037 - 40
SMR	No	—

Church Street

Description:

The west side of the street is a continuation of the Square with the same three-storey building type. There is more variation of building on the eastern side of the street and the facades are a little less formal.

Significance:

Architectural, Technical, Archaeological

Notes:

Some sections of historic limestone kerb stones are retained to the pavement on this street. Only the southern end of the street is within the proposed development area.

RPS	Yes	S244h – Morrison's Pharmacy S246c – McCarthy's/Looby's S246f – Sampson's
NIAH	Yes	Reg. No.22111035 – McCarthy's/Looby's
RMP	No	___

Old Church Street

Description:

This street begins in the northeast corner of the Square and extends east past the graveyard and former market place.

Significance:

No NIAH buildings are include on this section of the street. A pair of three storey buildings adjoin the library building (former Courthouse and Market House) and the remaining buildings are smaller, two-storey houses. The building immediately adjoining the former Courthouse was historically used as Dwyer's Hotel.

Notes:

There are no buildings to the area of the street within the proposed development area on the NIAH or RPS.

RPS	No	—
NIAH	No	—
RMP	No	—

Architectural Heritage, Character and Statement of Significance

The town of Cahir, and particularly the areas of the Square, Castle Street, and the Mall, retains a very strong and distinctive architectural character. With the terraced buildings lining the streets mainly constructed during the mid-19th century, the architecture has a cohesive quality and a distinctive character. Interspersed among these (largely three-storey terraced) buildings are a number of significant earlier buildings, notably Cahir House and the former Market House which have very clear Georgian proportions and qualities.

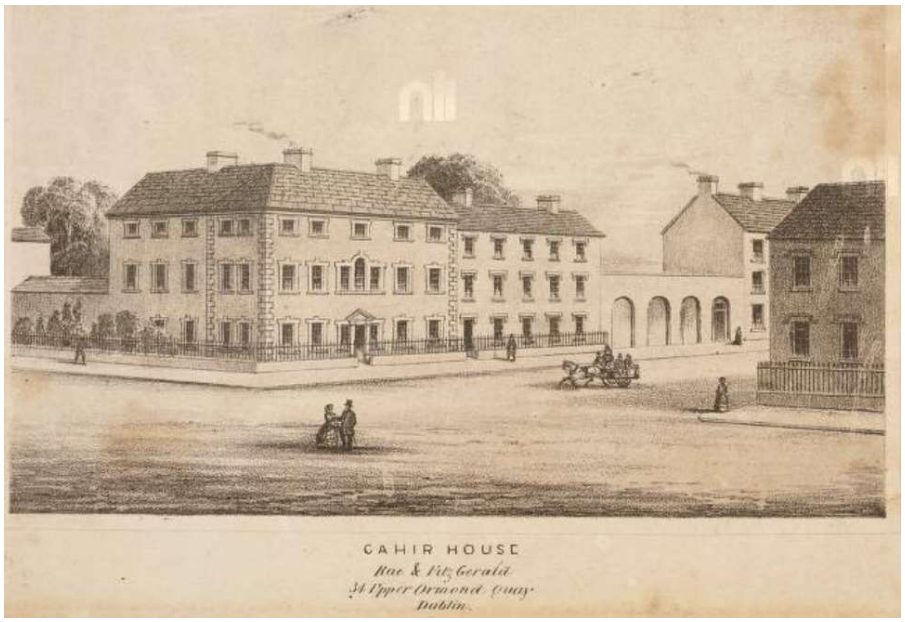


Fig. 5: Cahir House, created 1850-1860, Rae and Firtzgerald, 34 Upper Ormond Quay, Dublin (NGI)

The designation of the area as an Architectural Conservation Area, in addition to the multiple inclusions on the Record of Protected Structures, recognises the architectural and historical significance of the architecture of the town centre. In addition is the social significance associated with the historical uses of

many of the buildings, with the individuals who funded or designed the buildings, and in structures such as the water fountain to the Square and the war memorial on Castle Street.

Unfortunately, the protective measures afforded by these designations has not always protected the special character of these structures, and inappropriate development and alterations to the buildings have occurred most notably in the form of replacement of historic windows and the insertion of badly designed and/or oversized shopfronts. There are a number of distinctive stone-fronted ground floors to buildings on Bridge Street and to the eastern side of the Square, and some of these are hidden or impacted by the recent shopfronts. These interventions have affected the overall character of some individual buildings and of the streetscape more generally.

Very little in the form of historic street finishes appears to have survived. An area of limestone kerbing was noted to Church Street along the edge of the pavement and there are a small number of historic limestone jostle stones in carriage archways. Elsewhere there has been widescale re-surfacing with concrete sets.

A number of buildings retain wrought or cast iron railings to the front and these are generally noted in the building records on the RPS. Set in to cut stone or rendered rubble stone plinths, these railings should always be recognised as part of the building's historic curtilage. Many limestone thresholds, doorsteps and entrance steps also survive to buildings around the town, and likewise must be considered an integral part of the historic fabric of the building.

The Square itself appears historically to have had no particular landscaping or planted features. The small number of trees which now stand to the centre around the fountain are a welcome addition and the use of this space should be encouraged for seating and gathering of people. A reduction in the amount of car parking to the Square would be of benefit to the town users and residents and would have a positive impact on the setting of the historic buildings which overlook this space.

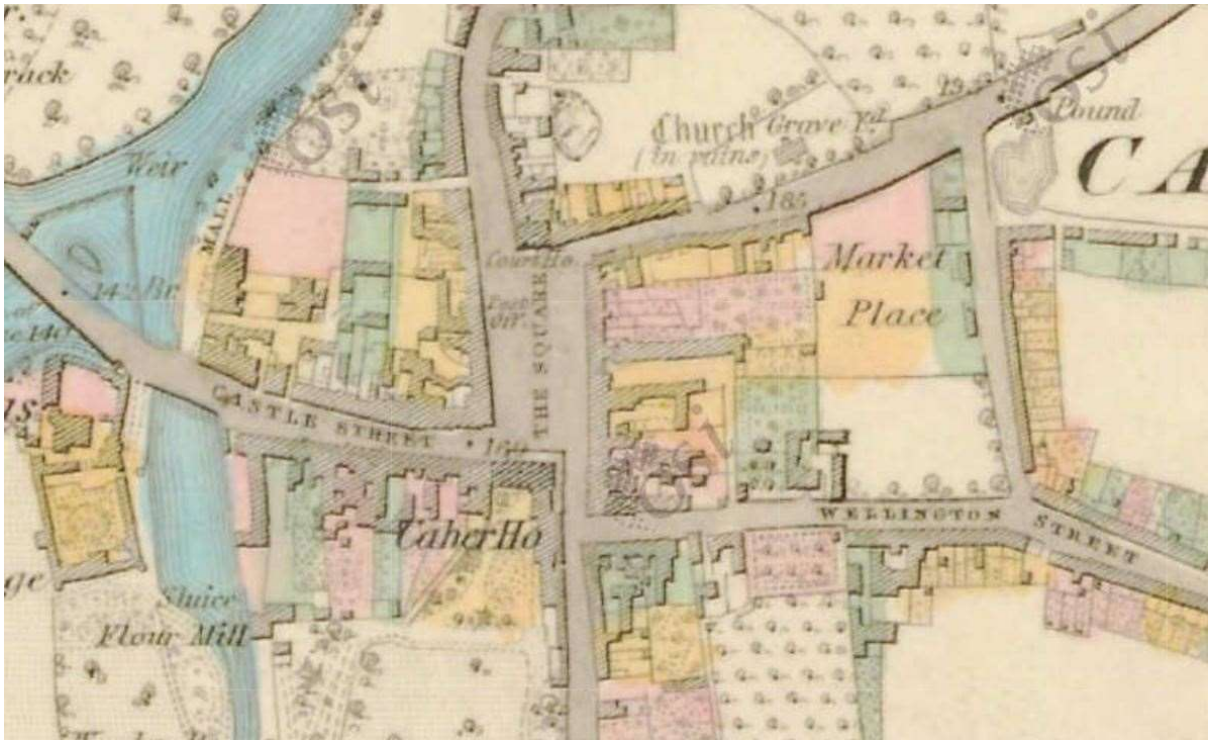


Fig. 6: Extract from the first edition Ordnance Survey map of the town, c.1840.

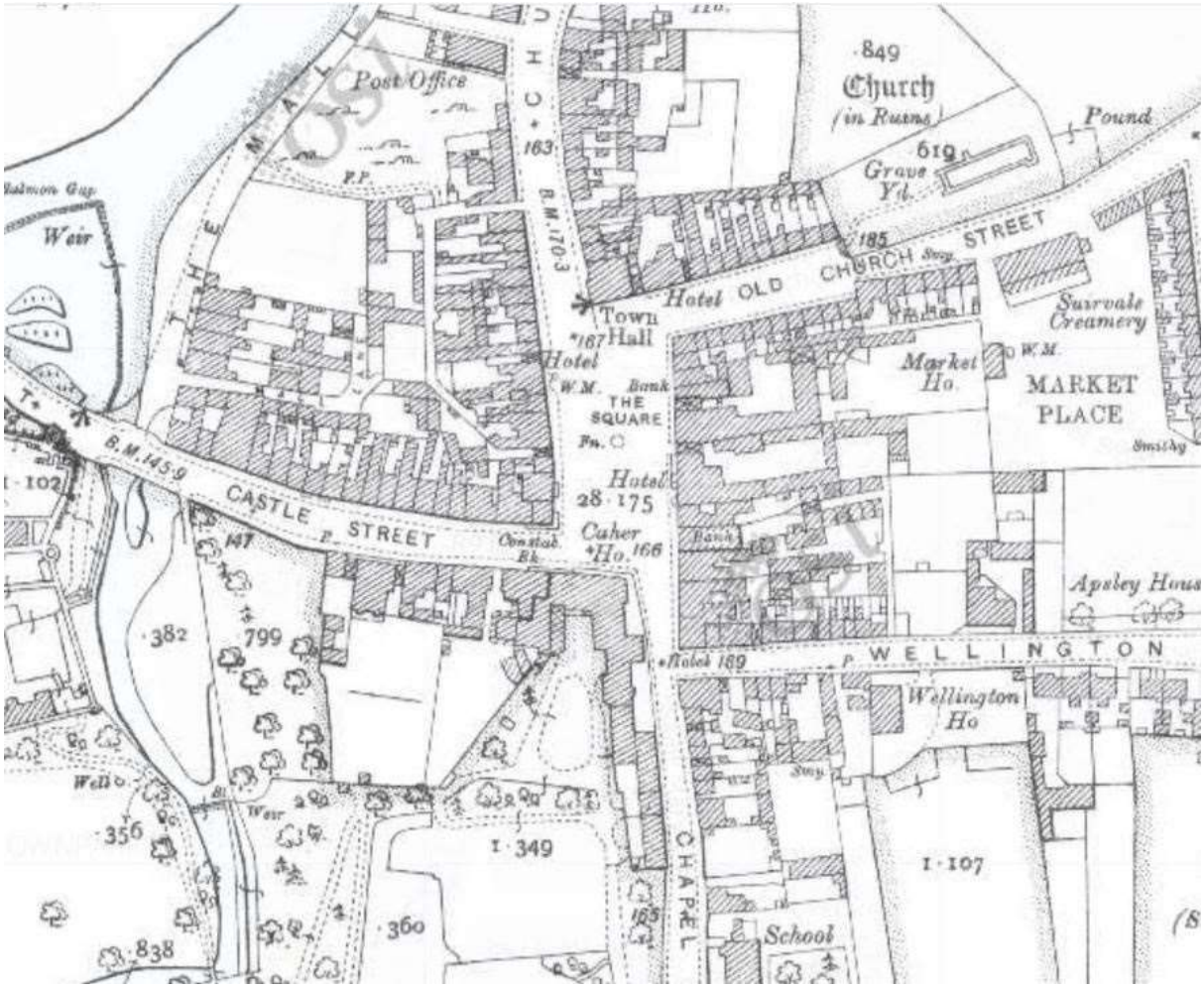


Fig. 7: Ordnance Survey map, c.1900. The individual buildings are clearly identifiable on this map, as are the locations of railings to the fronts of buildings and carriage arches. The fountain has been installed to the Square by this date, and larger buildings such as hotels, banks and the constabulary barracks are indicated. The extents of the pedestrian paths are also clearly marked on the map with a broken line.

Part 2: Impact Assessment of Development Proposals

Description of Proposed Development

The proposed development includes for public realm refurbishment and enhancement in Cahir's Town Centre comprising the upgrading of the existing Square and approach streets with new high-quality paving, kerbing, landscaping, public lighting, improved street furniture and utility diversions/works.

The proposed development will be carried out on Castle Street, Cahir Town Square, St Mary's Road, Old Church Street and Church Street in the townland of Townparks, Cahir, Co. Tipperary.

The following describes the nature and extent of the proposed development:

- New raised table shared surface on Castle Street from Cahir Castle to the Castle Car Park entrance to the East and The Mall entrance to the North.

- New kerb alignment and pavement surfaces from the Castle Street Car Park entrance to The Square junction, including upgrading of pedestrian crossing, installation of new public lighting and soft landscaping.

- New streetscape layout for Cahir Square with new alignment design for footpaths, parking areas and trafficked areas incorporating a raised table shared surface from the junction with Castle Street, to the Junction with St Marys Road and to North of The Fountain, new kerb and pavement surfaces throughout The Square, new hard and soft landscaping, new street furniture, new bollards, new bicycle racks, installation of new and upgrade of existing public lighting.

- Alteration of on-street parking for Castle Street, The Square, Church Street, Old Church Street and The Square end of St Mary's Road.

- New pavement surfaces on St. Mary's Road, Old Church Street and Church Street.

- New controlled pedestrian crossings and soft landscaping on Church Street and Old Church St.

- Undergrounding of overhead electrical cables, installation of new public lighting and upgrading of existing public lighting across the entire project area.

- Development of associated drainage services and utilities across the entire project area.

- All associated site works.

Likely Impacts of the Proposed Works

The proposed works will provide a more favourable pedestrian environment within the town centre, while the use of uniform surfacing materials throughout the proposed project area will improve the visual setting of the Architectural Conservation Area and the historic streetscapes. The assessment of the potential impacts on the architectural heritage of the town, as discussed below, is based on MWP and Nicholas de Jong Associates proposed scheme as illustrated in the Masterplan Proposals drawing dated 22nd October 2021 (Drawing No. 00000-MWP-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-0021).

The proposed works are assessed below on a street by street basis.

Proposed Works: The Square

It is proposed to alter the road layout of the Square, to resurface the entire area, and to provide areas of seating and planting to pedestrianised zones (Drawing No. 00000-MWP-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-0023). Parking is to remain within the square, but some of the existing capacity is to be relocated to a new car park entered off Church St.

Physical Impacts:

The layout of the square currently includes for facilitating routes for traffic on all sides, with parking located to the central area and only a small area around the fountain for pedestrians with seating. The proposals will involve the provision of one route of traffic to the eastern side of the square and a large pedestrian area to the centre and west. The existing paving and surface finishes will be replaced with granite slabs of varying sizes. The existing surface materials are not of historic significance, and with the exception of the fountain, there is no historic fabric extant in this area. The fountain is to be retained, as are the four existing mature trees which surround it.

Adjustments to the area immediately to the south of the Market House are proposed, including the provision of a set of steps from Church Street up to the level outside the building. A plaque which states that there is a burial of a horse to this area outside the Market House is located in the wall where the new steps are proposed, and therefore will require relocation. No further known fabric of architectural or historical significance will be affected by these proposed works.

Visual Impacts:

The proposed granite surfacing will be of varying sizes with the larger slabs used to pavements adjacent to the buildings and around the fountain. This stone and paving slab size is to be continued on the pavements along the surrounding streets which will result in an improved and unified setting to the buildings within the ACA. The

removal of traffic flow from the western side of the square will have a positive visual impact on the streetscape along this side, where seating and tree planting is also proposed. The proposed works to the Square will improve the visual setting of the buildings in this area of the ACA.

The proposed new steps and provision of planters and new paving to the area immediately south of the Market House will not impact negatively on this protected structure. The replacement of the various bollards and individual planters with one larger planter and seating will improve the setting of this building and remove the visual clutter from the area to the front of the main elevation.[5]

Proposed Works: Castle Street and Bridge Street

The works proposed to these areas comprise resurfacing of the pavements, the provision of a pedestrian crossing and planting of a small number of trees.

Physical Impacts: The existing pavement surfacing to these areas comprises modern materials and no surviving historic finishes were noted. Therefore, the proposed works will not result in the damage or removal of any elements of historical or architectural significance. Features of significance in this area which lie adjacent to the pavements include the railings to the basement lightwells of two houses on the north side of Castle Street, the war memorial, the stone gate piers at the entrance to the Mall, and the parapet walls of the bridge. These elements should be protected from damage during the course of the works.

Visual Impacts: The proposed resurfacing works will have a positive visual impact on the streetscape and the individual historic buildings by replacing the concrete sets with granite paving slabs of varying sizes.

Proposed Works: The Mall

Physical Impacts: New shared pavement resurfacing is proposed for the entranceway to the Mall, with granite slabs to the pavement. This entrance off Castle Street is marked with historic stone gate piers with limestone jostle

[5] As part of the Cahir Revitalisation Plan (but outside the scope of this Part VIII application) it is proposed to restore the façade of the Market House and to provide a business centre/digital hub use within the building. The proposed public realm design works to be carried out as part of this Part VIII application will enhance the building's prominent position in the Square and provide a more suitable arrangement to the front of the proposed new digital hub.

stones to the central piers which should be retained. No works are proposed to the area inside the entrance gates.

Visual Impacts: There will be no visual impacts on the buildings of the Mall terrace with works confined to the entranceway. The existing gate piers and jostle stones should be retained and protected during the works in order to preserve the historic character of the entrance to the Mall.

Proposed Works: Old Church Street

Physical Impacts: The proposed works here comprise resurfacing of the pavements with granite slabs. If carriage archways and any surviving historic stone steps and jostle stones are retained in situ, the proposed works will not result in the loss of any historic fabric.

Visual Impacts: The resurfacing works will provide an improved visual setting for the terraces of modest houses which line each side of this street, and will tie the area in with the Square and the remaining streets of the ACA.

Proposed Works: Church Street

Physical Impacts: Resurfacing works, using the materials proposed to the other areas of the scheme, will provide new finishes to both the street and pavements. With the exception of one area of historic limestone kerbing located to the southern end of Church Street, the existing finishes here are all modern.

Further north along this street, the demolition of a number of buildings is proposed in order to allow access off Church Street to a new car park. It is understood that this intervention does not form part of the application for this scheme, but was the subject of a separate Part VIII application.

Visual Impacts: In addition to the resurfacing, trees and planted areas are proposed to the street, particularly in the location of the entrance to the new car park. The proposed works will improve the streetscape in this area.

Mitigation Measures and Recommendations

- Historic architectural elements such as limestone doorsteps, doorcases, limestone steps, railings and plinth walls, carriage archways and doorways should be protected during the course of works from any physical damage which may occur during the installation of the new surfaces, lighting etc. and from damage caused by materials such as cement and grouting.
- Historic street furniture elements such as limestone kerbs and jostle stones should be retained and reused in their original locations rather than discarded and/or replaced.
- A number of the buildings in the centre of Cahir have stone shopfronts and/or stone pilasters, including Glengall House, the Bank of Ireland and the shops to the west side of the Square. These architectural features must be protected during resurfacing works and should not be altered or damaged by the laying of new surfacing material.
- Some of the works are proposed in locations which may be archaeologically sensitive and may require monitoring, for example in the vicinity of the north side of Castle Street and on the bridge.
- Some buildings along Castle Street have visible basements and others may be retained below street level. These are often vaulted structures with the top of the vault quite close to the surface of the street which should be considered where trees are proposed for planting.
- To the front of the Market House a plaque marks the location of the burial of a military horse in the mid-19th century. This will require further investigation before commencing works to install a new set of steps. The plaque should be relocated.
- Works to the bridge on Castle Street may require monitoring by an archaeologist as both the bridge itself and the castle are recorded archaeological monuments.

Appendix I – Photographic Record

The Mall

Castle Street

Castle Street (Cont.)

The Square – West Side

Fountain at Centre of the Square

The Square – East Side

The Square – North Side

Church Street

Old Church Street

St. Mary's Street

Appendix II - Historic Photographs (NLI Collection)

Early W. Lawrence photograph of Bridge Street.

The Square (west side) with view to north showing former Market House (now the library) and Church Street

View to south of the Square, showing Cahir House and the eastern side of the square.

View to northeast corner of the Square

Spear head railings, cobbled drain, flagged pavement, limestone kerb stones and jostle stones to corner – details from c.1900 photograph of Bridge Street (NLI)

Details of paving and railings to the Square - flagged pavement, cobble stone drains, spearhead railings set in limestone, limestone kerb stones.

Appendix H

Drawings

Refer to Drawing Pack accompanying this report.

Appendix I

Public Consultation Material

Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Enhancement

Background

Tipperary County Council has received funding through Project Ireland 2040, Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF), to develop a Public Realm Enhancement Scheme for Cahir Town Centre. This funding is for planning and detailed design to be completed by early December 2021.

This exciting initiative for Cahir Town Centre encompasses The Square, Castle Street and part of Old Church Street. The public realm enhancements are intended to transform the town centre by providing socio-economic, cultural and environmental benefits for residents, businesses and visitors. The project will include:

- The 'Shared Spaces' and 'Universal Design' approach to public realm design;
- The reduction and relocation of on-street car-parking to a newly developed car park;
- The rationalisation of traffic flow with an emphasis on pedestrians and cyclists;
- The creation of an active travel hub;
- The inclusion of smart technologies for lighting and street furniture;
- A focus on biodiversity through planting; and
- The provision of an open plan, community-friendly space ideal for festivals, markets and community events.

Public realm improvements at the Square were prioritised in successive Local Area Plans (LAP). The current LAP was produced through public consultations and submissions which further emphasised the need for public realm improvements and traffic management measures for the Square.

The County Council have appointed Nicholas de Jong Associates (Urban Design) and Malachy Walsh and Partners (Engineers) to undertake the design development of the Public Realm Enhancement Scheme.

Please let us know what you think are the most important aspects in developing design proposals for the public realm of Cahir Town Centre.

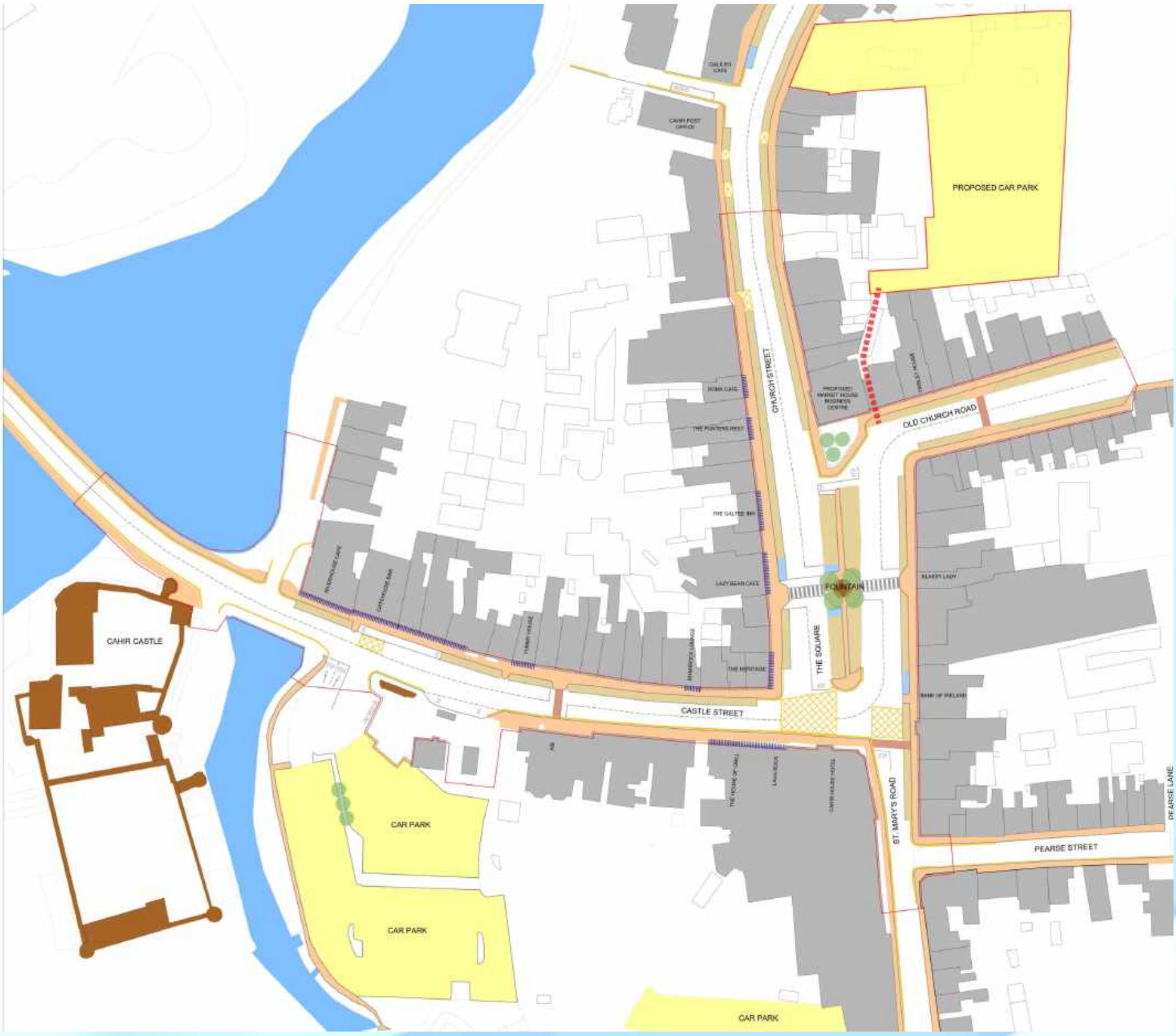
MWP Nicholas de Jong Associates URBAN DESIGN

Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann Tipperary County Council

Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Enhancement

Existing Situation



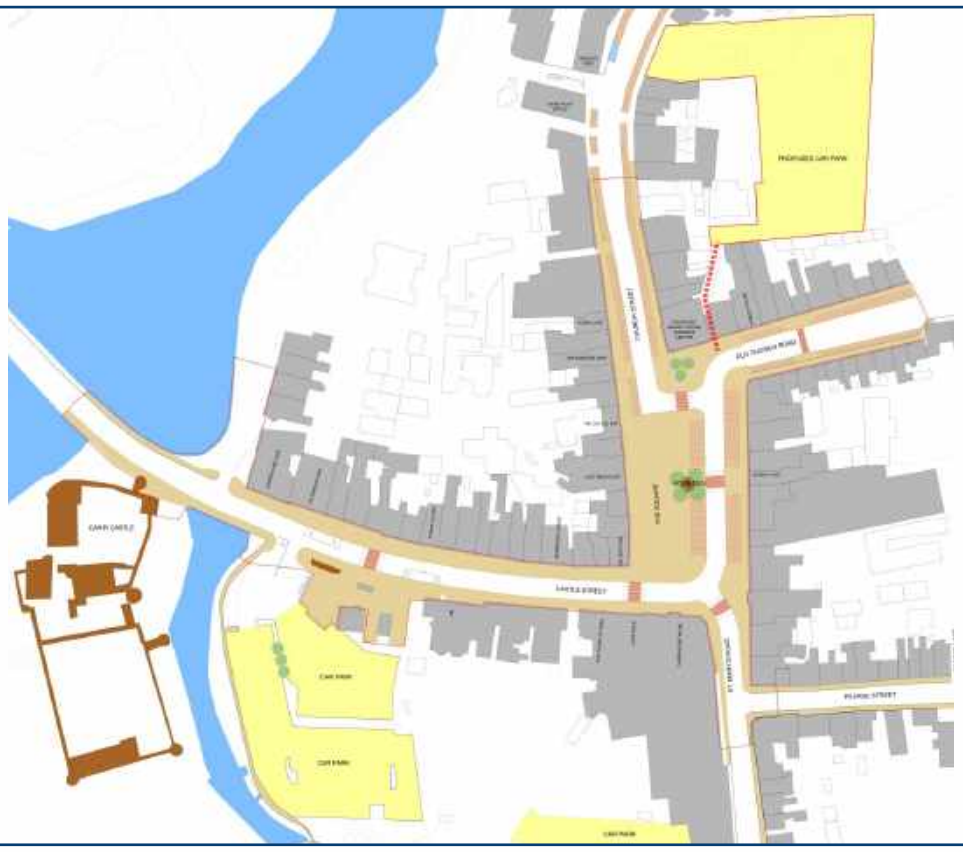
- Existing buildings
- Cahir Castle
- Active frontages: restaurants/pubs/cafes
- Pedestrian areas
- On-street parking
- Pedestrian crossing
- Disabled parking
- Existing car park
- Proposed car park
- Proposed pedestrian link

The key objectives are:

- To re-establish the historic Square as an economic quarter and civic space which respects its position in an Architectural Conservation Area.
- To reduce on-street parking from the Square to a new 100+ car park just off the square and allow for public realm enhancements and traffic re-configuration with an emphasis on Shared Spaces and Universal Design.
- To provide for increased visitor movement between the Castle and the Square
- To encourage year-round use of the Square for markets and events.
- To curtail traffic within the town centre and provide a pedestrian focussed plaza within the Square that attracts people to meet and spend time.
- To provide an active travel hub within the Square, including bike stands and rest areas.

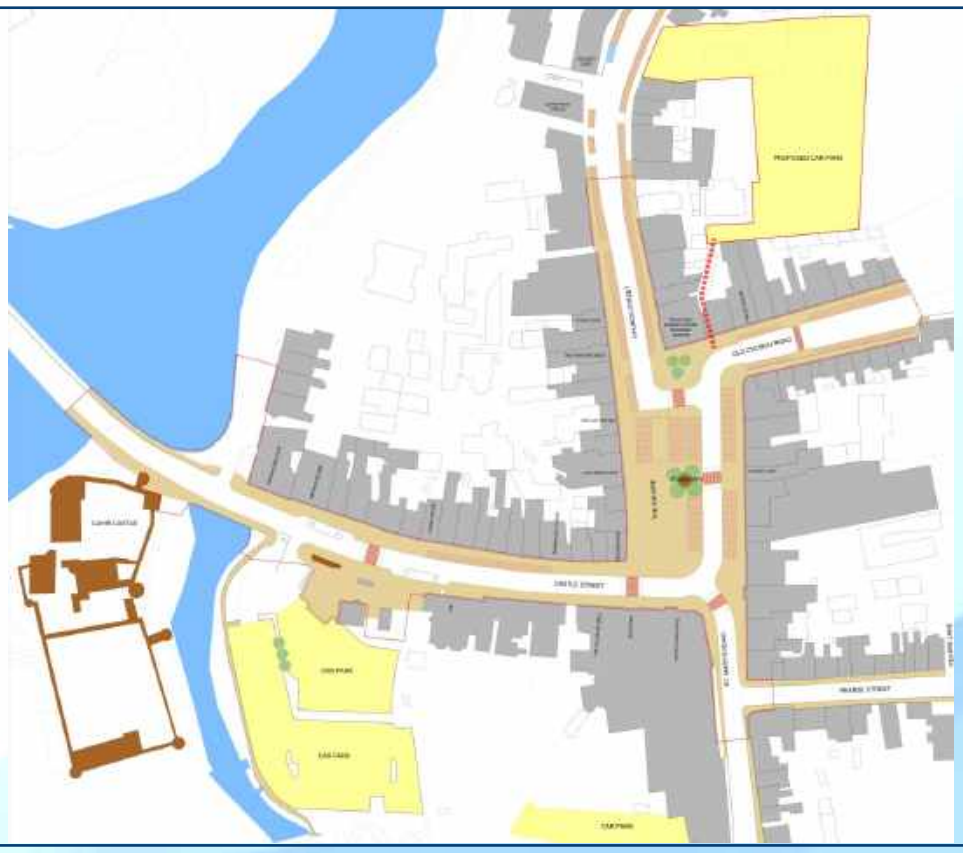
Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Enhancement

Concept Options



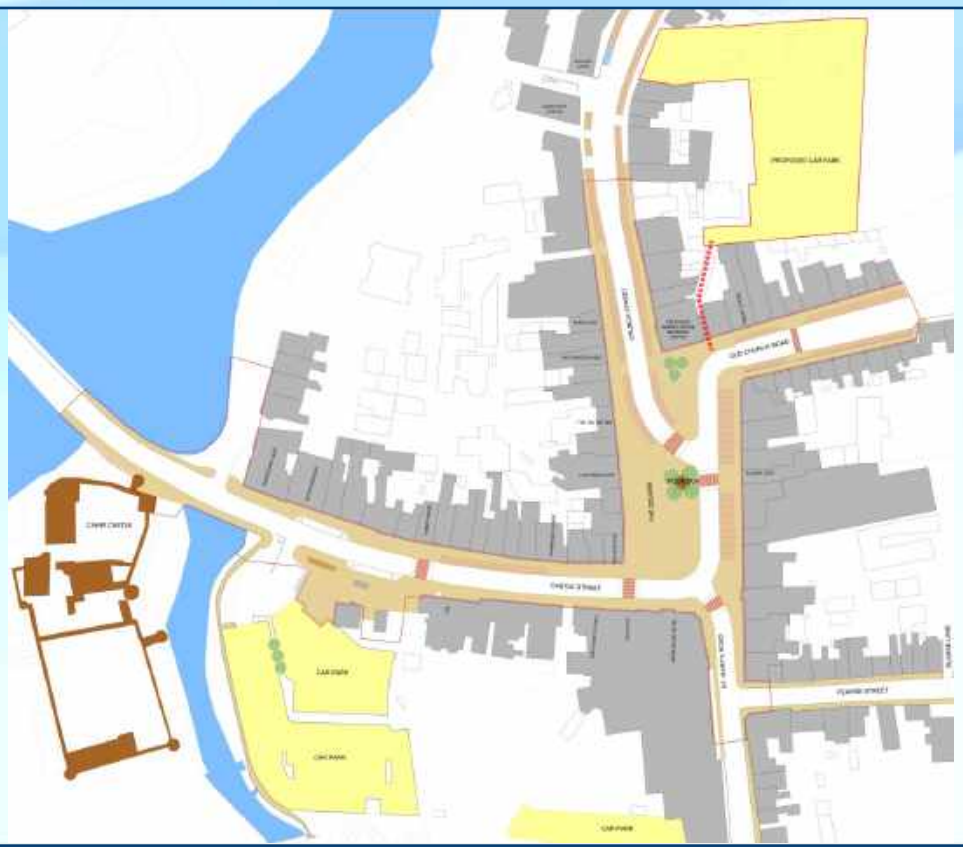
CONCEPT A: MAIN FEATURES

1. Entry improvements to Cahir Castle car park
2. Bus stops relocated on-street
3. Wider footpaths along Castle Street with displaced parking
4. Additional and wider pedestrian crossings
5. Pedestrian treatment across western part of The Square
6. Convenient pedestrian link to new car park
7. Fountain retained in existing position
8. Right angle parking retained to eastern edge of Square
9. Improved footpaths along Church Street and Old Church Road, with on-street parking retained



CONCEPT B: MAIN FEATURES

1. Entry improvements to Cahir Castle car park
2. Bus stops relocated partly on-street
3. Wider footpaths along Castle Street with some parking retained
4. Additional and wider pedestrian crossings
5. Pedestrian treatment across southern part of The Square with provision for occasional parking to northern part
6. Convenient pedestrian link to new car park
7. Fountain retained in existing position
8. Right angle parking retained to eastern edge of Square
9. Improved footpaths along Church Street and Old Church Road, with on-street parking retained



CONCEPT C: MAIN FEATURES

1. Entry improvements to Cahir Castle car park
2. Bus stops retained off-street
3. Wider footpaths along Castle Street with some parking retained
4. Additional and wider pedestrian crossings
5. Pedestrian treatment across southern part of The Square
6. Church Street realigned for improved vehicle access and enlarged public space to Market House Business Centre
7. Convenient pedestrian link to new car park
8. Fountain retained in existing position
9. Right angle parking retained to eastern edge of Square
10. Improved footpaths along Church Street and Old Church Road, with on-street parking retained

Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Enhancement

The Square

Traditionally the Town Square was a place to meet and socialise, to do business, and hold markets and fairs - the heart of Cahir

Today the Town Square is dominated by vehicles and the needs of traffic with little opportunity for social interaction

Typical components that could be considered…

Wider footpaths for activities

Canopy structures for all-weather events

Public toilets

Seating opportunities

Space for markets and events

Improved fountain setting

High quality paving

Street trees

Rain gardens

Children’s play and/or exercise equipment

Cahir Town Centre Public Realm Enhancement

Response Sheet

Your initial views are welcomed before 27th August 2021, either via the Council web site

(https://consultations.tipperarycoco.ie/consultations),

or by hard copy of Response Sheet (left at the Library).

There will also be further opportunity to comment on the proposals in advance of the formal Part 8 process.

If you would like to be involved with the on-going development of the project, please add your details below. This will ensure you are kept up to date with the results of the initial consultation and any future engagement activities. The information you provide will only be used by Malachy Walsh and Partners and Nicholas de Jong Associates in relation to this project. Data will be securely stored in accordance with the General Data Protection Act 2018 and will not be passed on to or sold to any organisation.

Name: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone Number: _____