



# Athlone Pedestrian and Cycleway Bridge

## Environmental Impact Statement

Volume 1 : Non Technical Summary | May 2017



smartertravel >>>



# Athlone Pedestrian and Cycleway Bridge

## Volume 1

### Non Technical Summary of the Environmental Impact Statement

#### Table of Contents

<b>1.0</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>BACKGROUND TO THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>OUTLINE OF ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>TRAFFIC, CYCLIST AND PEDESTRIAN INTEGRATION</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>6.0</b>	<b>FLORA AND FAUNA</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>7.0</b>	<b>SOILS, GEOLOGY AND HYDROGEOLOGY</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>8.0</b>	<b>HYDROLOGY AND DRAINAGE</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>9.0</b>	<b>LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ANALYSIS</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>10.0</b>	<b>NOISE AND VIBRATION</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>11.0</b>	<b>AIR QUALITY AND CLIMATE</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>12.0</b>	<b>ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>13.0</b>	<b>ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>14.0</b>	<b>HUMAN BEINGS AND MATERIAL ASSETS</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>15.0</b>	<b>INTERRELATIONSHIPS</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>16.0</b>	<b>FURTHER INFORMATION &amp; WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?</b> .....	<b>14</b>

## 1.0 Introduction

This Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is for the proposed Athlone Pedestrian and Cycleway Bridge.

The proposed bridge will provide a new link for pedestrians and cyclists across the river Shannon in the heart of Athlone town centre.

The EIS has been prepared by Roughan & O'Donovan – AECOM Alliance Consulting Engineers and a team of specialist sub consultants on behalf of Westmeath County Council and the National Roads Authority (NRA) (now known for operational purposes as Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII)).

This EIS is presented in four Volumes; this Non-Technical Summary is Volume 1, Volume 2 contains the Main Text and detailed assessment of the environment and any impacts associated with the proposed development, Volume 3 contains the associated Figures at A3 size and Volume 4 contains the Appendices. Figure 1.1 of Appendix A of this NTS shows the location of the proposed development.

## 2.0 Background to the Proposed Development

The Irish Government is committed to developing cycling as one of the most desirable modes of travel. The National Cycle Policy Framework (NCPF) (2009-2020) sets out objectives to the year 2020 to achieve a vision of creating a strong cycling culture in Ireland. In 2009, the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport approved the commissioning of the NRA to undertake a Scoping Study on a National Cycle Network (NCN). The NRA worked with the National Trails Advisory Committee, comprising a number of agencies and bodies including Fáilte Ireland, Waterways Ireland and Coillte, and the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport's National Sustainable Travel Office to publish the Scoping Study in August 2010.

The study identified thirteen potential route corridors between urban centres of a population of 10,000 and upwards that could make up a National Cycle Network. One of the corridors identified was the NCN02: Dublin to Clifden corridor. According to the Study, the Mullingar-Oranmore section of the NCN02 corridor includes the towns of Mullingar, Athlone, Ballinasloe and Oranmore. NCN02 also features in the European Cycle Route Network (EuroVelo) as EV2 '*The Capitals Route*' from Moscow to Galway.





The Scoping Study concluded by stating that the next step for the National Cycle Network project will be to carry out a detailed 'Route Feasibility and Delivery' study on a selected corridor. Consequently, in 2012, the Minister for Transport, Tourism & Sport instructed the NRA to identify route options available for the development of a segment of the NCN02: Dublin to Clifden corridor comprising an off road cycle route between Galway and Maynooth. The Athlone Pedestrian and Cycleway Bridge over the River Shannon is a key component of this route as it ensures a segregated cycleway crossing that provides easy passage and, critically, safe access to the town

of Athlone which is seen as a halfway point along the proposed Galway to Dublin Cycleway.

### 3.0 Outline of Alternatives Considered

Alternative crossing locations and bridge designs were considered and were subject to the selection process.

#### *Bridge Location*

The development of the bridge location was undertaken in the constraints study, the route selection study and during the design development. The alternatives considered as part of this project include the 'do-nothing' scenario and a number of alternative crossing points.

Nine potential bridge locations were examined during the assessment of alternative locations. They are illustrated in Figure 3.3. of Appendix A of this NTS.

All potential bridge locations would require an assessment of potential ecological impacts due to their proximity to European designated sites.

Assessment criteria were established to inform the selection of the preferred route through the town, based on the assessment criteria outlined in the NRA's Project Management Guidelines (2010) and taking into account the desirable attributes for a cycle facility that are described in the National Cycle Manual (2010).

An independent bridge at the Luan Gallery scored highest in the matrix and was brought forward for the proposed development. This route is compliant with the objectives and policies outlined in the Athlone Town Development Plan 2014-2020 and rates highly in terms of safety.

#### *Bridge Design*

Four alternative bridge design options were considered. The evaluation comprised an assessment matrix which assessed the bridge options under the headings Health and Safety, Environmental, Conservation, Technical, Economics and Aesthetics. A two span beam option emerged from this assessment matrix as the most attractive option. This is illustrated in Figure 4.2 of Appendix A of this NTS. Merits of this design option include:

- The steel beam configuration sits well in a heritage context with both upstream and downstream bridges. The choice of a simple clean form avoids competition with heritage forms while providing contemporary elements in clean, smooth finishes and engineered slenderness consistent with themes in the Luan Gallery;
- The choice of painted steel maximises the potential for slenderness in the finalised design;
- The form is sufficiently contemporary and unique to provide a landmark structure for those arriving in Athlone;
- The provision of elevated landings at both ends of the bridge and multiple access configurations maximise the amenity potential for the bridge;
- The provision of a widened ramp to the east and soft gradients accommodate the amenity of both cyclists and pedestrians;

- Provision of access under the eastern landing offers enhanced promenade facilities along the river in the vicinity of the bridge;
- The provision of the eastern ramp tight against the Radisson carpark wall serves to minimise the visual impact of the design on the location; and
- The embedded ramp incorporating an extension of the existing Luan configuration to the west significantly mitigates the impact of the bridge on the Luan Gallery, the church and the river bank.



Indicative Photomontage of the proposed bridge

## 4.0 Description of the Proposed Development

### *Location*

The location of the proposed bridge for the pedestrian and cycleway in Athlone Town is approximately 75 metres (measured at mid-channel) north of the existing Custume Bridge. The setting is urban with the site of the proposed development surrounded by a mix of historic buildings and structures, tourism sites and commercial properties. The Church of St Peter and St Paul and the Luan Gallery are located immediately to the west. The Radisson Hotel and Marina are located to the east. Athlone Castle is located immediately southwest of Custume Bridge and will be connected to the new bridge via a new cycleway and ramp structure at the Luan Gallery service area on the western bank of the River Shannon. The castle will mark a midway point for cyclists using the Galway to Dublin Cycleway and will be a main focal point for touring cyclists arriving in Athlone town.

### *Proposed Scheme*

The proposed bridge structure comprises a two span bridge with a pier in the middle of the river and end supports on the river banks. The overall length of the main bridge is approximately 104m.

The main crossing spans are straight on plan and are aligned approximately perpendicular to the existing eastern river wall. This is in steel construction. The soffits of the spans are primarily flat, with gradients implemented at the ends of the bridge where geometric constraints dictate.



**Wide Angle Photomontage of the Proposed Development**

The main crossing spans are proposed to be supported on a reinforced concrete pier located approximately in the centre of the river. Its position is selected to accommodate navigation and the protection of the existing mooring facilities to the maximum degree.

## **5.0 Traffic, Cyclist and Pedestrian Integration**

A review of the existing transport network, including the use of that network by pedestrians and cyclists in the vicinity of the proposed bridge crossing area, was completed as part of this assessment. The potential for impact on traffic and transport was considered at all stages of the proposed project's implementation: site preparation, construction, and maintenance. Some potential impacts were identified including temporary inconvenience to road users when machinery is delivered or where road traffic restrictions, closures and diversions are required, however it is concluded that with the proposed mitigation measures implemented and the relevant public road traffic management issues are fully considered over the lifespan of the proposed development implementation, traffic and transport will not be significantly impacted upon as a result of this project.

It is noted that details of public road traffic management, closures and diversions at the time of the River Shannon Crossing construction will need to be discussed further at the appropriate time between Westmeath County Council and the Roads Department of Westmeath County Council.

## **6.0 Flora and Fauna**

The flora and habitats of the site were assessed by means of a desk study and by a field survey of the site. The site of the proposed development was surveyed extensively and surrounding habitats were assessed by a suitably qualified ecologist.

The designated sites that are closest to the site and have the potential for habitat or surface water connectivity are the River Shannon Callows SAC/pNHA (Site Code: 000216) which is located approximately 670m south of the proposed development and the Middle Shannon Callows SPA (Site Code: 004096), which is located approximately 670m south of the proposed development. The locations of the designated sites are illustrated in Figure 6.1 of Appendix A of this NTS.

None of the faunal species recorded on site are protected under Annex II of the Habitats Directive or Annex I of the Birds Directive. Given the urban nature of the site



and its habitats, the associated fauna would be expected to be of low ecological significance.

Records of birds taken during the field visit were not significant. Red listed Black-headed Gull and Amber listed Swallow, Swift and Lesser Black-backed Gull were recorded during this time. However, it is considered highly unlikely that these species are dependent on the site for breeding or feeding due to the unsuitable habitat.

Evidence of Otter was not recorded at the site, but is considered likely to be present within the catchment. Although the habitat on site is considered suitable foraging area for several bat species, a high level of activity was not observed and no roosts were identified.

Whilst Salmonids, such as Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*), were not recorded in the most recent surveys undertaken by the IFI, they are QI of the Shannon System. Similarly, European Eel (*Anguilla anguilla*) has been recorded in the River Shannon during Inland Fisheries Ireland surveillance monitoring undertaken approximately 2km downstream of the site. However, the European Eel requires salt water to spawn and only breeds in the Sargasso Sea. Given the habitat available within the site, it does not provide ideal habitat for these species.

The potential cumulative impacts of the proposed development were considered following research of known and likely plans and projects in the area and on the basis that the proposed development has been designed to avoid significant adverse impacts on the ecology of the area.

It is concluded that there will be no significant cumulative impact on the ecology of the area as a result of the proposed development on the basis that none of the plans or projects researched were of a nature and scale likely to exacerbate any of the negligible residual impacts identified.

With mitigation in place, there will be no net loss of habitat with the exception of the physical space associated with the central pier and its pile supports in the river. Any loss of trees or treeline habitat is considered to be a permanent negligible negative impact.

The proposed development, in view of best scientific knowledge and on the basis of objective information, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, is not likely to have significant or any adverse effects on the ecology of the any European sites or of the ecology of the general area.

## 7.0 Soils, Geology and Hydrogeology

The underlying bedrock is identified by the Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) as being Lower Carboniferous Limestones of the Waulsortian Formation. These rocks are overlain by thick deposits of glaciofluvial sands and gravels. The proposed new bridge and associated works transects an urban area and, as such, much of the underlying soils are described as made ground.

The bedrock is classified by the GSI as a Locally Important Aquifer which is moderately productive only in local zones (LI). The underlying glaciofluvial gravels are classified as Locally Important Gravel Aquifer (Lg). The proposed development is located within the 'Athlone Urban East' and 'Athlone Urban West' groundwater

bodies. These Groundwater Bodies (GWBs) are classified as having good status and are potentially at risk.

Groundwater vulnerability is classified as high over much of the study area due to the presence of sands and gravels. Groundwater recharge is through a diffuse nature, with rainfall percolating through the subsoil. Groundwater movement tends to be restricted to the upper horizons of the bedrock within the weathered zone. Permeability of the bedrock tends to be low limiting the movement of groundwater. Permeability of the sand and gravel aquifer is higher.

No significant residual impacts on the underlying soils, geology and hydrogeology along the cycleway route were identified during the construction and operational phases of the proposed development.

## 8.0 Hydrology and Drainage

The Hydrology and Drainage assessment assesses the potential impacts of the proposed development on the existing hydrological and drainage environment in the study area. The assessment was based on a desk study of available information and site visits carried out within the study area.

The scope of the assessment included:

- Identifying, describing and evaluating sites of known or potential hydrological interest;
- Assessing the significance of the likely impacts of the proposed development on the existing hydrology and drainage including residual impact;
- Assessing if there is an increased risk of flooding as a result of the project; and
- Proposing mitigation measures to minimise likely impacts.

As part of the assessment, the existing environment was examined. This included an investigation into the existing bedrock and presence of groundwater in the project area. It was determined that groundwater vulnerability is likely to be relatively high in the project area and therefore due diligence will be required to ensure that these areas remain free from pollution as they will be especially susceptible to contamination.

A Section 50 Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study was carried out for the project to examine the possible impacts of the project on the flooding regime in Athlone Town. Hydraulic modelling was undertaken to quantify the effects that the proposed bridge structure may have on the River Shannon. The assessment determined that the proposed bridge will result in an increase in flood levels of 9mm directly upstream of the bridge which will dissipate down to 4mm approximately 350m upstream of the bridge.

The main flood risk in the area is from the resultant rise in water levels on the River Shannon during heavy rainfall. During flood events in Athlone, the areas affected are the low lying areas to the north and south of the town centre. The Section 50 Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study concluded that no negative impacts will result on the hydraulic properties of the River Shannon and the project will not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere in the catchment.

In conclusion, the temporary and permanent impacts on hydrology and drainage are considered minimal and will be managed by adhering to best practice guidelines as

outlined in Control of Water Pollution from Construction Sites (CIRIA, 2001); and the Environmental Handbook for Building and Civil Engineering Projects (CIRIA, 2000) during the construction and operational stages. The assessment concludes that the proposed development will not pose any additional flooding risk in the area upstream or downstream of the study area. The proposed works will therefore not have residual impacts on the existing hydrological regime of the Shannon River catchment.

## 9.0 Landscape and Visual Analysis

In landscape terms the proposed development does impact on the open nature of the River Shannon in Athlone Town and long views north and south and east and west along the central river corridor, however this is minimal reflecting its slender form and design. The creation of a new crossing remains a positive aspect, and the location and urban design rationale creates positive new urban events and experiences – the new axis with the side entrance of the Church of SS Peter and Paul, the creation of a new urban and riverside context for the Radisson Hotel and increased animation of the marina area help integrate these large and relatively recent developments into the town centre. In addition it could be argued that the current visual characteristics of the open river are reflective of an undeveloped town centre, where more crossings over the river will be a natural result of the organic development of the town, creating a different, more animated bustling waterfront. Local policy contains an overall objective of enlivening and further enhancing the waterfront and accommodating a pedestrian crossing.

The significance of the proposed new bridge is Medium and, on balance, Neutral – Beneficial in terms of landscape impact as the proposed development complements the existing scale, landform and pattern of the landscape.

The visual impact study reflects the landscape assessment findings also. Whilst in the context of views some attractive features are lost, on balance the bridge and crossing is complementary to the qualities in the view. Characteristics lost e.g. the views, will be recreated in the experience crossing the bridge itself. Opportunities arising from the bridge project will need further consideration as the design develops particularly of the interface between the bridge landing on the eastern bank, the reconstructed riverside banks and ramps, and the retention of the marina at this location. In incorporating significant new engineering works in this area, there is an opportunity for new riverside trees to add to the tree lined river character and experience, and the interaction between the marina and the crossing.

On balance the proposed development represents significant but considered and complementary change to the urban riverside in Athlone.

## 10.0 Noise and Vibration

The proposed study area is within Athlone town centre. The study area has existing noise levels typical of urban areas with traffic the main source of noise. A desktop noise assessment was conducted in order to assess the impacts of the proposed development on the existing noise environment. The aim of the desktop assessment was to determine the potential impacts of noise generated on the noise sensitive receptors, taking the relevant standards and guidelines into account. A 50m corridor at either side of the route was selected based on the nature of the development (non-traffic cycleway) and the existing noise environment along the route (urban area with existing noise sources, i.e. traffic).

Once operational, the cycleway will not generate high levels of noise as this is a non-traffic route. During the construction phase of the development, it is considered that there will be moderate impact on noise levels generated on nearby sensitive receptors. The nature of the construction generated noise will be intermittent and temporary during the construction phase. It is expected that construction plant will include pile driving equipment, ground breaking and excavation plant and paving plant. Noise generating activities will also include the transportation of materials and general works.

A series of mitigation measures adopted during the construction phase will ensure that the impact of noise on the sensitive receptors is kept to a minimum. These mitigation measures include:

- Selection of plant equipment taking into account predicted acoustics;
- Establishing noise limits during the construction phase in line with NRA guidelines;
- Development of noise control measures for plant items likely to be used e.g. erection of barriers as necessary around noisy processes and items such as generators, heavy mechanical plant etc.;
- Limiting of hours for which noise generation is expected to be high;
- Establish procedures for dealing with specific activities with the potential to generate significant levels of noise;
- Establish procedures for dealing with emergency work; and,
- Establishing communication with the general public.

On completion the operation will have the potential to reduce the amount of traffic noise in the town centre resulting in a positive impact.

## 11.0 Air Quality and Climate

It is considered that the construction and operation of the proposed development will have limited impact on the air quality and climate. To this end, the proposal does not warrant a full air quality assessment. A desktop air quality assessment was carried out using existing background air quality data to assess the likely air quality and climate impact associated with the construction and operation of the proposed development. This assessment included a review of the existing air quality and was carried out having regard to relevant EPA and NRA documents.

Although some increase in air pollution may occur at the identified receptors due to the construction of the proposed development, no significant increase in pollutant levels will occur. The impact to air quality during the construction phase due to the movement of full trucks on paved public roads, the unloading of material, the movement of empty trucks on paved public roads and the use of generators will be limited through the application of measures outlined in the dust minimisation plan.

Due to the size and nature of the construction activities, any emissions during construction will have a negligible impact on climate. During operation, it is anticipated that the number of local car journeys in the area will be reduced as a result of the proposed development and thus air quality in the area will improve.

There will be no negative residual impacts on air quality as a result of the proposed development. Any air pollution created during the construction phase will be short term in nature and minor in magnitude. The operation of the development will



provide positive impacts to the local air quality due to the reduction in local vehicular traffic. Furthermore, there will not be any impact on air quality due to cumulative impacts as a result of the proposed development project.

## 12.0 Archaeological Heritage

Of the thirty-nine sites identified within 50m of the proposed development, 5 will be impacted directly, 2 will be impacted indirectly and 32 will have no predicted impact. Therefore, the potential impact of the proposed development is considered significant for 3 sites, slight for 2 sites and 32 sites will have no predicted impacts.

Watercourses are considered to be of high archaeological potential, containing features such as fulachta fiadh or burnt mounds, fords, ancient bridging sites, mills, and longphorts (Viking harbours) and producing archaeological artefacts such as log boats, organic material and votive offerings of axeheads and metalwork.

The River Shannon at Athlone is considered to be an area of high archaeological potential due to its long history of use as a transport corridor, a boundary and as a defence. The river channel has been altered in the past by the construction of various weirs, bridges and the navigation lock. The proposed development involves the installation of a single bridge pier in the centre of the current channel. While the dimension and footprint of this pier may be relatively small, the potential construction impacts will be significant on what is considered a fragile environment. Construction of the bridge will require the use of 3 no. Jack Up barges. The barges are supported on legs, approximately 300mm in diameter, which will cause localised disturbance of the river bed.

Proposed landscaping works to the east of the castle will open up views to it from the east bank of the river and the east end of Custume Bridge. The visual impact of the proposed landscaping works is considered to be positive.

The construction of the in-channel pier of the proposed bridge may cause scouring of the river bed downstream of the proposed bridge. The pier, which is elliptical in plan oriented with the long dimension oriented parallel to the flow of the river, has been designed to minimise turbulence and associated scour effects and the area has been subject to an Underwater Archaeological Impact Assessment.

Due to the archaeological potential of the site the following archaeological mitigation measures are proposed:

- All archaeological works on this scheme will be subject to Ministerial Directions issued by the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.
- All works in the vicinity of Athlone Castle will require the prior written consent of the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.
- All in-channel works including the excavation of deposits within the area enclosed by the coffer dam and the emplacement of the Jack Up barges will be archaeologically monitored and the deposits removed to the works compound for archaeological processing in accordance with statutory requirements. Following processing, the residue spoil will be managed in accordance with the Waste Management Acts 1996-2013.

- Archaeological test excavation will be undertaken in advance of construction, where sub-surface development works are to be undertaken. Targeted testing allows an assessment to be made on the extent of any surviving archaeology before any further mitigation is decided upon.
- Should the results of the mitigations outlined above indicate the requirement for archaeological excavation and/or preservation *in situ*; this will be undertaken as per best practice and in consultation with the National Monuments Service of the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

### 13.0 Architectural Heritage

The architectural heritage assessment assessed fifteen structures and areas of built heritage significance; one of these areas is a street that includes a total of eleven protected structures. The western extremity of the proposed river crossing is located at the edge of the Town Centre Architectural Conservation Area, while the cycling hub is within the Town Centre Architectural Conservation Area.

Of the sites examined, two will be affected to a greater or lesser extent by the proposed river crossing to the extent that mitigation will be required, while a third will need to be safeguarded during construction works. Four of the sites will be affected positively.

One site requiring mitigation is the bust of Count John McCormack. This mitigation will include the erection of a new plinth further to the north along the river bank, mirroring the nature of the present plinth, and relocating the bust, with its pedestal and bronze plaque, to the new location. Following mitigation the impact will be slight.

The other site requiring mitigation is the Luan Gallery. Mitigation will include the provision of the required bridge landing, stairs and ramps in architectural harmony with the design and finish of the gallery and its adjacent service building. The residual impact will be slight.

Following examination of the various structures adjacent to the proposed river crossing, the cycling hub and in the immediate vicinity, it is concluded that the proposed river crossing and cycling hub will not have any significant effects on built heritage other than the bust of Count John McCormick and the Luan Gallery. Care will also need to be taken to safeguard the bollard on the quayside.

In many of the cases cited – amounting to four of the sites described – the works will have a positive effect on the setting.

It is envisaged that following the recommended mitigation the proposed river crossing will have no significant negative effect on architectural heritage.

### 14.0 Human Beings and Material Assets

This assessment focused on demography and employment, economic activity, housing and land-use, community facilities, traffic and public transport and material

assets. The assessment of impacts to human beings and material assets was undertaken in line with EPA guidelines and UK DMRB guidelines. Potential impacts to human beings and material assets arising from the proposed development include traffic impacts, visual impacts and noise and air pollution.

It is predicted that the development will attract approximately 35,600 users annually once in operation. It is considered that the proposal will have limited negative impacts during the construction phase of the development which is, by its nature, temporary. The removal of 13 car parking spaces to the eastern side of the castle is the most significant permanent impact associated with the project. In contrast, the operation of the development will provide many significant positive impacts to the town and wider area.

Some of these positive impacts include:

- Providing sustainable transport options of cycling or walking along a safe and secure route which is separated from vehicular traffic;
- Providing indirect health benefits through the provision of a safer facilities for recreational users which will increase and encourage the opportunity for physical exercise;
- Providing new amenity for the town of Athlone, enhancing the attractiveness of the town to tourism;
- Aiding integration within the town due to the positioning of the proposed development close to the town centre;
- Introducing a new type of tourism to the town as the cycle route is part of the National Cycle route from Dublin to Galway;
- Corresponding with the Destination Athlone website, [www.athlone.ie](http://www.athlone.ie), which is a website dedicated to promoting activities offered in Athlone and cycling is strongly promoted by the site;
- Developing Athlone as a cycle tour hub town, which will positively impact on the economic activity of the town; and
- Providing positive impacts on material assets due to enhanced accessibility and attractiveness of the area which in turn will maintain commercial and residential rents and property values.

There will be no negative residual impacts on human beings as a result of the proposed development through Athlone town. During the construction phase the temporary removal of berths from the marina will cause some disruption. Any disruption during the construction phase will be temporary in nature and minor in magnitude. The proposed development will provide an additional amenity to the area with positive impacts for the local community with regard to increased tourism (economic impact) and the potential health improvements.

Furthermore, it is not expected that there will be any negative cumulative impacts on human beings as a result of the proposed development.

## 15.0 Interrelationships

The identification of possible impacts was facilitated through the iterative design process that included the holding of meetings between the engineering design team and the environmental team on a regular basis. This allowed for dynamic interaction

between all parties/ topics. Where a potential exists for interaction between two or more environmental topics, the relevant specialists have taken these potential interactions into account when making their assessment. Mitigation measures have been identified where impacts on each of the individual environmental factors were identified.

Following an examination of the interactions, it was determined that no additional impacts will occur as a result of interactions between two or more topics. Therefore no additional mitigation was required.

## 16.0 Further Information & What Happens Next?

The EIS will be available for inspection at the following location, as detailed in the published newspaper notices:

Westmeath County Council  
National Roads Design Office  
Cullen Beg  
Mullingar  
Co. Westmeath

Alternatively, a copy of the EIS can be accessed free of charge at the Westmeath County Council's website at: <http://www.westmeathcoco.ie/>

Written submissions may be made in writing to:

An Bord Pleanála  
Strategic Infrastructure Division  
64 Marlborough Street  
Dublin 1  
D01 V902

prior to the dates specified in the published newspaper notices, in relation to:

- The likely effects on the environment of the proposed development;
- The implications of the proposed development for proper planning and sustainable development in the area in which it is proposed; and
- The likely significant effects of the proposed development on any European Site

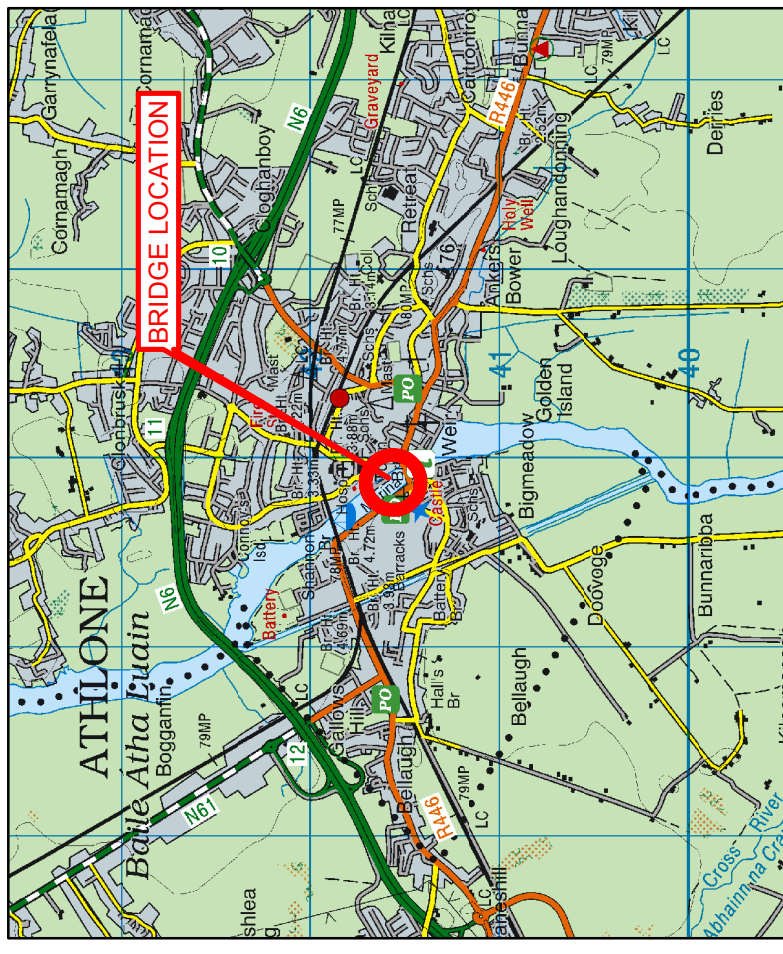
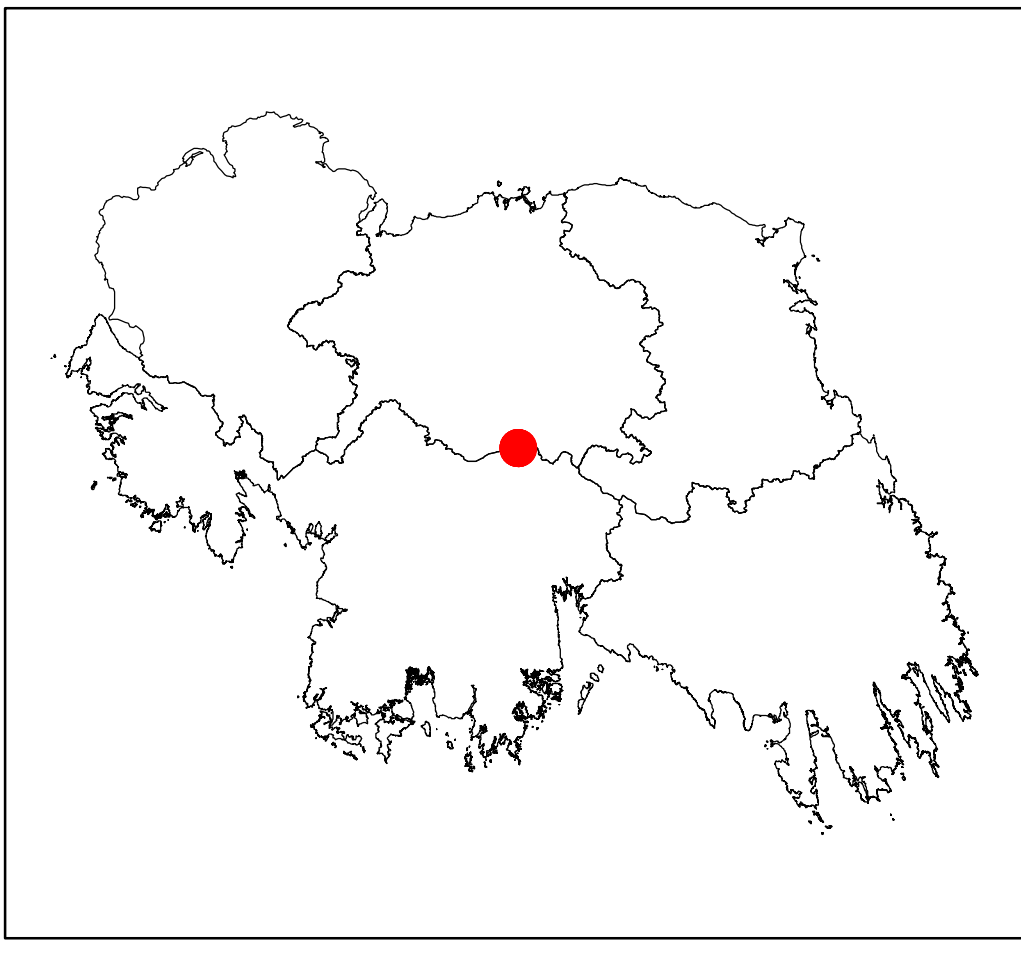
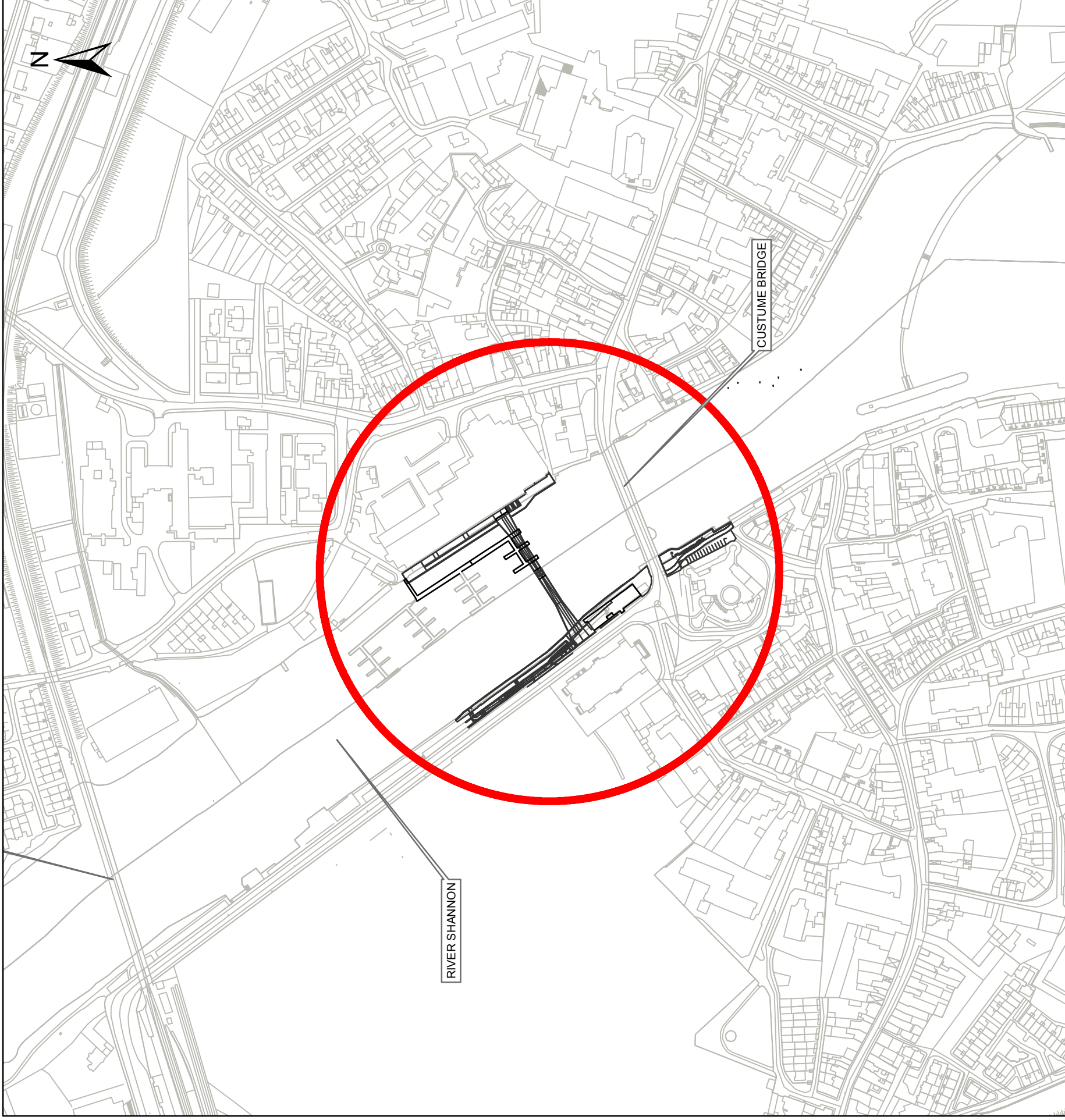
An Oral Hearing may be held at the discretion of An Bord Pleanála. Written submissions, together with any representations made at any oral hearing, will be considered by the Board in making its decision on whether or not to approve the proposed development, with or without modifications or conditions. The Board's decision will be published in one or more newspapers circulating in the area, including, where appropriate, particulars of any modifications or conditions to the proposed development.



# **APPENDIX A**


# **FIGURES**






**Bonneagar Iompair Éireann**  
 Transport Infrastructure Ireland


**Ap Roinn Iompair Turasóireachta agus Spóirt**  
 Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport



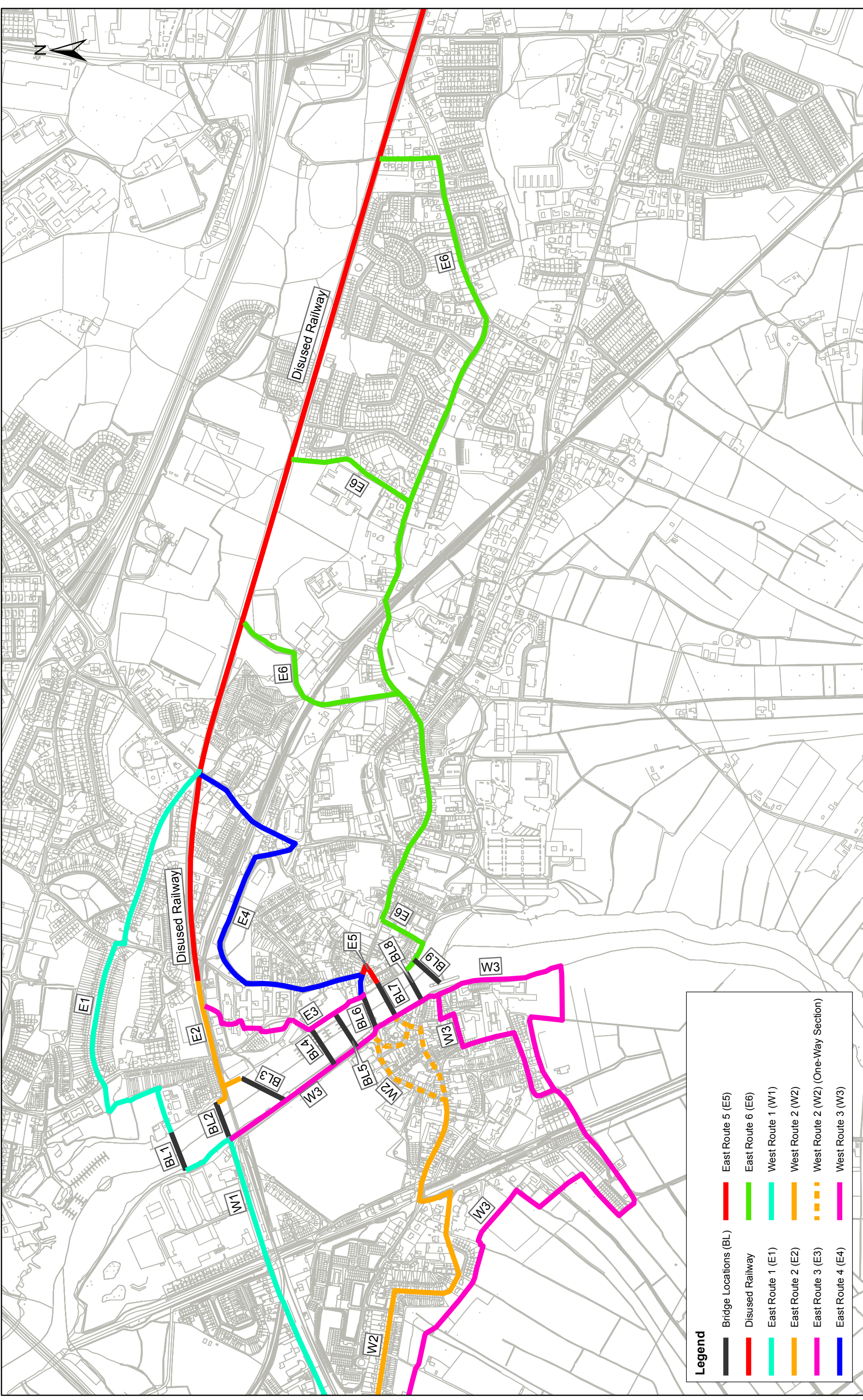
**Roughan & O'Donovan-AECOM Alliance**  


Aecoma House, Aecoma Road,  
 Sandycove, Dublin 18.  
 Tel : +353 (1) 294 0800  
 Fax : +353 (1) 294 0820  
 e-mail : info@rodie  
 Website : www.rodie.com  
 www.aecom.com

<b>ATHLONE PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLEWAY BRIDGE</b> <b>ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT</b>		<b>LOCATION PLAN</b>	
Project	Designated	File	Status
ATHLONE PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLEWAY BRIDGE	LA	12.221	E.I.S.
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT	HOS	N.T.S.	
	Approved	Date	Revised
		May 2017	FIGURE 1.1







**Legend**

	Bridge Locations (BL)		East Route 5 (E5)
	Disused Railway		East Route 6 (E6)
	East Route 1 (E1)		West Route 1 (W1)
	East Route 2 (E2)		West Route 2 (W2)
	East Route 3 (E3)		West Route 2 (W2) (One-Way Section)
	East Route 4 (E4)		West Route 3 (W3)



Roughan & O'Donovan-AECOM Alliance  
 Arena House, Arena Road, Sandycove, Dublin 18.  
 Tel: +353 (1) 294 0800  
 Fax: +353 (1) 294 0820  
 e-mail: info@rod.ie  
 Website: www.rod.ie  
 www.aecom.com

**ATHLONE PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLEWAY BRIDGE**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

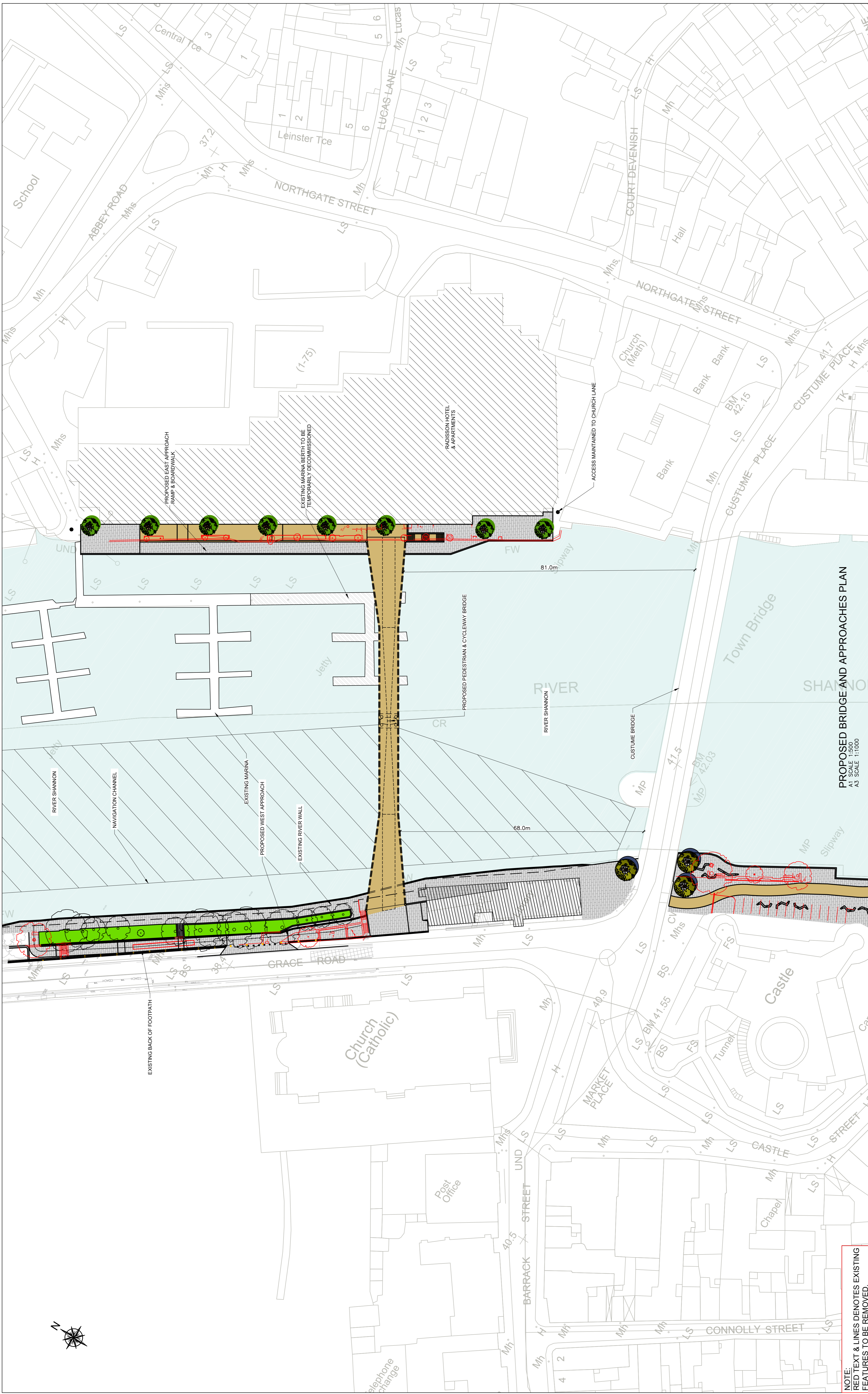
**ROUTE OPTIONS**

Designed: MD	File: 12.221	Status: E.I.S.
Drawn: LA	Job No: 1:10,000(A3)	Drawing No: 3.3
Checked: HOS	Scale: 1:10,000(A3)	Rev:
Approved: HOS	Date: May 2017	FIGURE 3.3









NOTE:  
 RED TEXT & LINES DENOTES EXISTING  
 FEATURES TO BE REMOVED.

PROPOSED BRIDGE AND APPROACHES PLAN  
 A1 SCALE 1:500  
 A3 SCALE 1:1000



Roughan & O'Donovan-AECOM Alliance  
 Arena House, Arena Road,  
 Sandyford, Dublin 18.  
 Tel: +353 (1) 2940800  
 Fax: +353 (1) 2940820  
 e-mail: info@rod.ie  
 Website: www.rod.ie  
 www.aecom.com

Project  
**ATHLONE PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLEWAY BRIDGE**

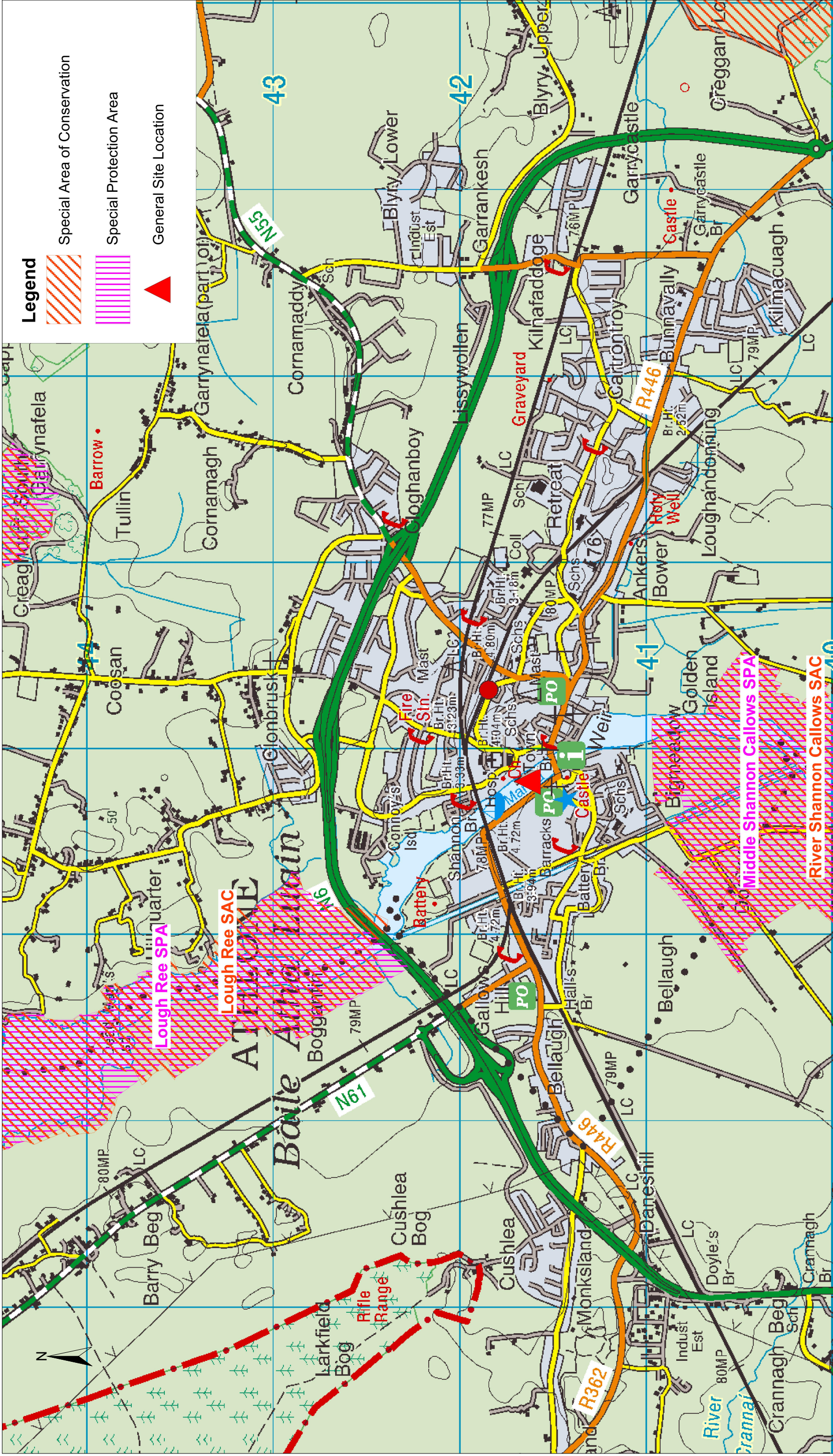
Environmental Impact Statement

Title		SITING CLEARANCE EXISTING NAVIGATION AND MOORING	
Designed:	MKHOS	File:	Stabus
Drawn:	JOD	Job No:	12221
Checked:	HOS	Scale:	AS SHOWN
Approved:	MK	Date:	APRIL 2016
		Drawn No:	E.I.S.
		Drawing No:	FIGURE 4.2
		Rev:	-









Title		SITE LOCATION	
Designed: Pat Roberts	File:	Job No: 12221	Scale: E.U.S.
Drawn: Pat Roberts	Scale: N.T.S.	Checked:	Drawn No: Figure 6.1
Approved:	Date: April 2017		

**ATHLONE PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLWAY BRIDGE**

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

Roughan & O'Donovan-AECOM Alliance

**PRODAECOM**

Arena House, Arena Road, Sandycroft, Dublin 18.  
Tel: +353 (1) 2840800  
Fax: +353 (1) 2840820  
Email: info@rod.ie  
Web: www.rod.com



**Ap Roinn Iompair Turasoireachta agus Spóirt**  
Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport

**TII**  
Bonneagar Iompair Éireann  
Transport Infrastructure Ireland







Prepared by  
Roughan & O'Donovan AECOM  
Arena House, Arena Road, Sandyford, Dublin 18  
Tel: +353 1 2940800 Fax: +353 1 2940820  
Email: [info@rod.ie](mailto:info@rod.ie) [www.rod.ie](http://www.rod.ie)