

Abbeyfeale Traffic Management Plan

Part 8 Planning Report



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1 INTRODUCTION

Limerick City and County Council (LCCC) is preparing a Planning Application for a Traffic Management Plan/Scheme, including modification and creation of traffic lanes, parking with associated sundry works.

The scheme is subject to Part VIII of the Planning and Development Regulation, 2001 as amended.

This Planning Report sets out the context of the project in terms of planning policy and describes the components of the scheme.

2 PROJECT LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

Abbeyfeale is essentially a linear town having developed along the N21 Limerick to Killarney national road. The Square, the River Feale and the town centre with its traditional streetscapes are important elements in the make-up of the town's physical appearance. Abbeyfeale is typical of an urban settlement located in a predominantly rural area. The town performs an important civic and service function with a concentration of civic amenities including schools, a library and a church. These provide services not only for the resident population but also for a much wider rural based population. Abbeyfeale town centre stretches along the N21 and consists mainly of retail, commercial, public/institutional buildings and some residential dwellings.

The Market Square forms the focal point of the town containing the statue of Fr. William Casey. A more loosely knit pattern of development, consisting mainly of housing, spreads further east and southwest. The majority of the town's building stock is of nineteenth and early twentieth century origin. The town displays a number of notable buildings, including the public secondary school Coláiste Íde agus Iosef, the AIB bank building, Leen's Hotel and the old cinema building.

Abbeyfeale is located in west County Limerick next to the River Feale. The River Feale lies within the Lower River Shannon SAC.

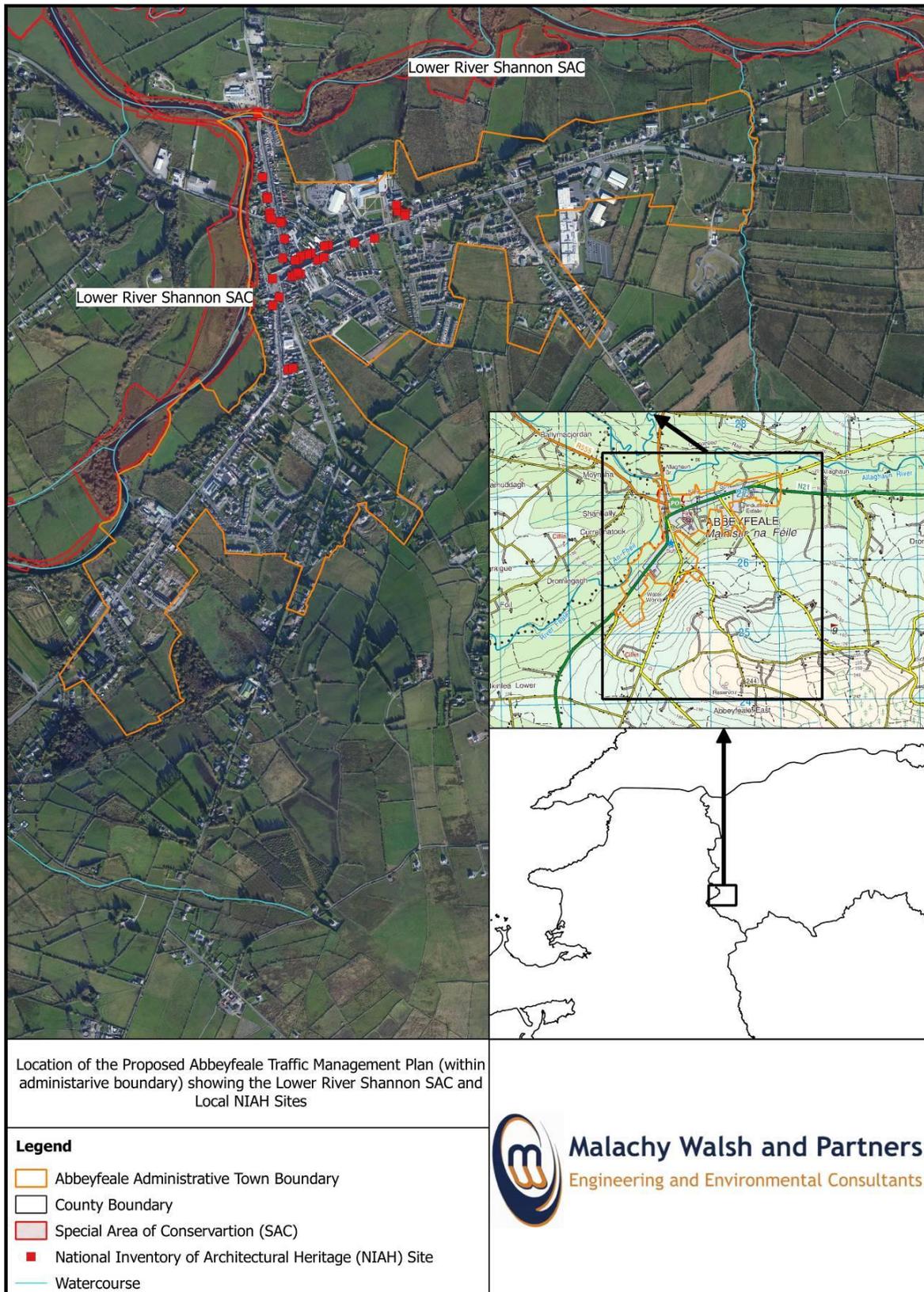


Figure 1. Site location map

3 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

In order to address the traffic management in Abbeyfeale town centre, LCCC have developed a proposed traffic management plan on Main Street to promote use of the council owned car park to the south of Main Street via provision of a pedestrian link. Traffic and car parking management LCCC objectives of the Abbeyfeale LAP are listed as follows:

- to work with the local community to address traffic management issues within the town;
- to seek the provision of a vehicular link road between Pound Lane/Hill road and the N21 in order to reduce traffic congestion on the Market Square;
- to encourage the provision of off-street public parking areas as part of any application for development.

3.2 BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed development consists of a Traffic Management Plan for Abbeyfeale. It includes the following works:

- Modified traffic lane widths along the N21 within Abbeyfeale town centre with revised parking layout;
- New traffic signals junction controls and associated layouts will be installed at the Main Street/Church Street and Main Street/Colbert Terrace junctions with controlled pedestrian crossings on all arms of the proposed traffic signal junctions;
- Realignment of the junction at Main Street/St. Ita's Road;
- Upgrade of mini roundabout junction at Colbert Terrace/Tesco access;
- Development of a pedestrian link between Main Street and Grove Crescent public car park requiring the modification of an existing building on Main Street;
- New coach parking set downs on Main Street;
- Provision of road widening at junction of Colbert Terrace and New Street, which involves demolition of one property;
- Provision of a one way traffic lane between the Grove Crescent public car park and Cedarville housing estate with a short section of two way traffic lane at the east end to facilitate local access. Provision of vehicular entrances into lands to north and south along the section of two way traffic lane; and
- Provision of coach parking to rear of Main Street and modifications to Grove Crescent public car park.

4 PART 8 PROCEDURE

Where a project is being progressed by the Local Authority, planning permission is applied for under Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2015, and the procedure is set out in Part 11, Section 179 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.

Articles 80 (1) and (2) sets out the categories of development for the purposes of section 179 of the Act.

Article 81 sets out the requirements of what is to be included in public notices for a proposed development by a Local Authority.

The proposed traffic management plan is considered under Part VIII of the Planning and Development Regulation, 2001 as amended. This Planning Report has been prepared by Malachy Walsh & Partners as part of the Planning Procedure under Part VIII of the Planning and Development Regulation, 2001. As well as the Planning Report, the planning application is accompanied by the following documents:

- AA Screening Report
- EIA Screening Report
- Application drawings showing the proposed scheme
- Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)
- Public Notices and planning documentation

All documentation will go on display in the following locations:

- Planning and Environmental Services Department, Limerick City and County Council, Dooradoyle Road, Limerick
- Newcastle West Area Office, Newcastle West.
- Plans and particulars of the proposed works will also be available for inspection at the Abbeyfeale Public Library.

5 PLANNING CONTEXT

5.1 NATIONAL & REGIONAL PLANNING POLICY

The Programme for Government commits the Department of Transport (DOT) to:

- Reduce travel times
- Improving safety
- Reducing congestion
- Providing real commuting choices to people
- Protecting the environment

There are a number of National Policy documents that set out and guide local authorities in the areas of improved traffic management and aspects such as smarter travel in our towns, cities and urban areas.

The Traffic Management Guidelines (2012) sets out the following objective;

“to provide guidance on a variety of issues including traffic planning, traffic calming and management, incorporation of speed restraint measures in new residential designs and the provision of suitably designed facilities for public transport users and for vulnerable road users such as cyclists, motorcyclists and pedestrians (including those with mobility/sensory impairments). It also focuses on how these issues must be examined and implemented in the context of overall transportation and land use policies”.

The guidelines have a direct influence into how we make improvements in our urban areas to improve traffic management, parking, pedestrian access and generally improve the situation for the general public.

5.2 COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 is the current adopted version that is in place.

In September 2015, in accordance with Section 28 of the Electoral, Local Government and Planning and Development Act 2013, the Planning Authority proposed not to commence the review of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 - 2016 and the Limerick City Development Plan 2010 - 2016. Therefore the County Development Plan will continue to have effect until a new Development Plan for Limerick City and County is prepared.

Chapter 8 Transport and Infrastructure of the County Development Plan sets out the objectives for Transport and Infrastructure across the county. The objectives contained in the development plan include measures to improve the following areas:

- Improved public transport
- Inclusive access for all
- Smarter travel
- Improved quality bus services and facilities
- Provision of park and ride facilities
- Protection of rail infrastructure
- Improved rural transport
- Improved road safety
- Improvement of sub standard roads

The above list gives a flavour of the many aspects that are contained as objectives in the County Development Plan. Objectives are developed further into improvement schemes and the Abbeyfeale Traffic Management Plan is a good example of development plan objectives and proposals being converted into real projects on the ground that benefit the community.

5.3 LOCAL AREA PLAN

The current proposal is an objective of the Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan (LAP) 2014 -2020, which came into effect on the 18th of July 2014 after the inception of Limerick City and County Council.

The Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan (LAP) is a legal document consisting of a public statement of Limerick City and County Council's planning policies for the town of Abbeyfeale. This plan, when adopted will replace the Abbeyfeale LAP 2008 - 2014. The aim of the LAP is to establish a framework for the planned, coordinated and sustainable development of the town of Abbeyfeale, including the conservation and enhancement of its natural and built environment over the next six years and beyond.

6 LAND AQUISITION

In order to implement the proposed traffic management scheme there are three areas where the acquisition of property is required as follows:

- Colbert Terrace (Danagher Property)
- Lands to provide a pedestrian link and associated covered access walkway to the Grove Crescent public carpark from the main street
- Lands on the east of the Grove Crescent car park to facilitate a vehicular link to the Cedarville Housing estate road

The acquisition of lands is under the control of Limerick and City Council and is currently in progress.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.1 APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING

An Appropriate Assessment Screening (AA) report has been completed and it has been objectively concluded during the screening process, that the proposed works associated with the Abbeyfeale Town Centre Traffic Management Plan, either alone or in-combination with other plans/projects, will not have significant effects on the below European Sites.

- Lower River Shannon SAC (002165)
- Stack's to Mullaghareirk Mountains, West Limerick Hills and Mount Eagle SPA (004161)
- Moanveanlagh Bog SAC (002351)

Accordingly, there are no risks to any Natura 2000 sites as a consequence of delivery of the proposed Traffic Management Scheme in Abbeyfeale County Limerick.

A copy of the Appropriate Assessment Screening (AA) is included with the documentation that will be put on public display.

7.2 EIA SCREENING

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening report has been completed to identify any potential risks associated with the proposed Traffic Management Scheme.

The purpose of this EIA Screening Report is to detail findings from a desktop assessment of the proposed Abbeyfeale Traffic Management Plan to establish the likely effects on the environment and advise if an EIA would be appropriate for the proposal. Under legislation, EIA is required for certain prescribed projects and is required for others which are likely to have significant impacts on the environment, by reason of their nature, extent or location.

The methodology applied for this assessment was twofold. Firstly, the assessment was completed by reviewing the proposed development against the criteria included in Annex III (Section 2) of the EIA Directive (85/337/EEC). 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. Secondly, the EIA Screening Checklist was completed. This checklist is taken from the European Commission's Guidance on EIA Screening (June 2001).

Having considered the proposed Abbeyfeale Traffic Management Plan in the context of mandatory EIA there is no requirement for EIA. Having regard to the characteristics of the proposal, the location within the Abbeyfeale administrative area, and the scale of the proposed development, significant impacts on the environment are not anticipated.

8 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

8.1 PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

The purpose of implementing the scheme is to improve the operation of the urban space within the town centre in terms of improved traffic management, better access to carparking, improved pedestrian links and the provision of dedicated bus parking and additional parking spaces.

Malachy Walsh & Partners completed a report entitled Abbeyfeale Traffic Management Plan and this included a series of recommendations which were adopted by Limerick City and County Council. The recommendations of that report were the driver for the implementation of the scheme as presented today.

8.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The existing land-use is mainly for pedestrian and vehicular access to/from parking areas to various other areas within the town and beyond. There are a small number of buildings that would be demolished/modified under the current proposal. There is a portion of a field that would be covered by a new short stretch of road (ca. 80m) and a land drain within this field that would require new alignment. Corine (2012) land cover at the site of the proposed Abbeyfeale Traffic Management Plan is classified as 'Continuous urban fabric'.

8.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROJECT

The following table summarises the characteristics of the project. Drawings for the project have been presented in **Appendix 1**.

<i>Size, scale, area, land-take</i>	— All works situated within the 'Urban' area Abbeyfeale, less than 1ha
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	<p>affected</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — No land-take required within any Natura 2000 site — Works include upgrade/widening of road — Works include upgrade/installation of car parks
<p><i>Details of physical changes that will take place during the various stages of implementing the proposal</i></p>	<p>The major elements of work includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widening of existing N21 Road • Upgrading and installation of new car park areas • Demolition of existing building • Modification of existing building • Installation of new traffic signals • Existing road/roundabout realignment • Laying of pavement • Laying of kerbing
<p><i>Description of resource requirements for the construction/operation and decommissioning of the proposal (water resources, construction material, human presence etc)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Construction materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concrete • Bituminous materials • Surface dressing • Road studs • Road markings • Hardcore • Drainage — Equipment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excavators • Dumpers • Road Paver • Road Rollers • Tack coat sprayer • Water bowsers • Rigid lorries (possibly articulated lorries) • Double contained fuel bowsers • Line marking truck • Dump truck • Work vans — Workforce Approximately 10 personnel
<p><i>Description of timescale for the various activities that will take place as a result of implementation (including likely start and finish date)</i></p>	<p>The project start and finish dates are subject to grant of planning permission and finance. However the proposed project should be constructed within approximately 4 months.</p>
<p><i>Description of wastes arising and other residues (including quantities) and their disposal</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Construction waste to be taken off site to a suitably licensed facility. Inert material to be reused within the site where possible – Services waste to be taken off site to a suitably licensed facility – Fuels and oils waste to be taken off site to a suitably licensed facility
<p><i>Identification of wastes arising and other residues (including quantities) that may be of particular concern in the context of the Natura 2000 network</i></p>	<p>The main potential impact the proposal poses are poor water quality impacts to River Feale.</p> <p>A Preliminary Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been prepared for the traffic management plan, and will be updated prior to any construction activities. The management plan includes, but is not limited to the following Water quality controls:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Sediment and Erosion Control — Construction and Demolition Waste Management Plan

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Management of Concrete/ Bituminous Materials – Fuel and Oils Management <p>The CEMP will ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Construction waste to be taken off site to a suitably licensed facility – Services waste to be taken off site to a suitably licensed facility – Fuels and oils waste to be taken off site to a suitably licensed facility
<i>Description of any additional services required to implement the project or plan, their location and means of construction</i>	None, as containment and disposal of oils and wastewater will be carried out in a safe manner by an approved contractor (Construction and Environmental Management Plan prepared which includes Waste Management Plan)

9 BENEFITS OF THE SCHEME

The implementation of the scheme has a number of benefits to the town including:

- Improved traffic management for the through flow of traffic in the town
- Improved car parking arrangements
- Improved access to the Grove Crescent car park
- Increased number of dedicated bus parking in the centre of the town.
- Improved vehicular traffic movement along Colbert Terrace following the demolition of buildings and road widening

The scheme once implemented will have a positive effect in the town and enhance the experience for both local people, residents and visitors coming to the town.

Appendix 1

Project Drawing

