

# Salmon Weir Bridge

# Pedestrian Crossing

**SECTION 38 REPORT**

**March 2025**



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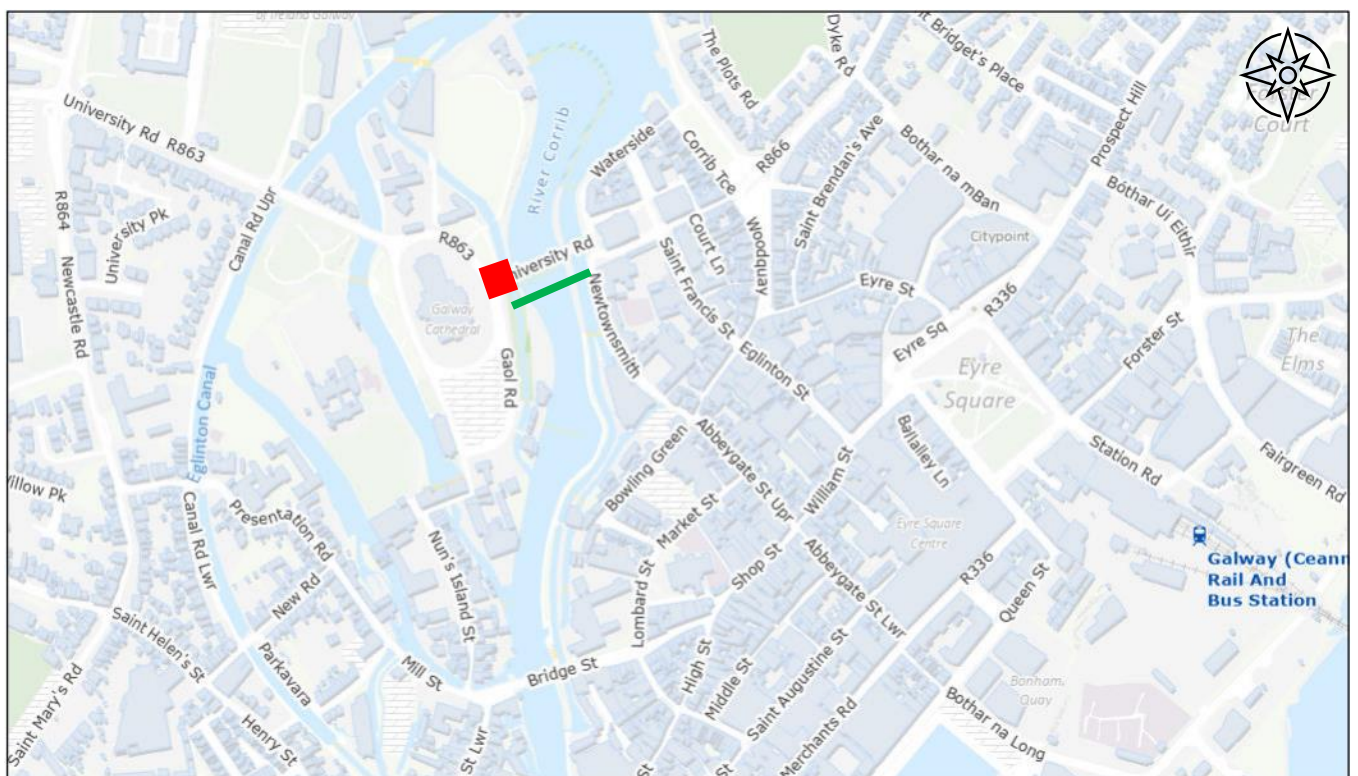
## Document Control

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# 1 Introduction & Background

DBFL Consulting Engineers were commissioned by Galway City Council (GCC) to carry out consultancy services and PSDP role for Salmon Weir Bridge Pedestrian Crossing project. This project will be funded by the National Transport Authority (NTA).

The temporary pedestrian crossing will be a toucan crossing (i.e. signal controlled crossing for pedestrians and cyclists use), herefore referred to as *Pedestrian Crossing* in this document. The Salmon Weir Bridge Pedestrian Crossing is in Galway City Centre and will be located on the western side of the Salmon Weir Bridge, as shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1** Site Location Map

The purpose of this report is to outline the Salmon Weir Bridge Pedestrian Crossing, which is to be progressed in accordance with Section 38 of the Road Traffic Act 1994. The Salmon Weir Bridge Pedestrian Crossing project has been developed in consideration of the current Galway City Council (GCC) policies including the Galway Transport Strategy (GTS) (August 2016).

## 1.1 Project Background

Galway City Council is working to build Active Travel into everyday life as part of normal daily routines. Active Travel has the potential to transform our communities and positively impact our

climate. We will achieve behavioural change by providing best in class infrastructure, policies and amenities that prioritise walking, wheeling and cycling for the people of Galway City. Active Travel is defined as ‘travelling with a purpose using your own energy’ and is most commonly observed as walking and cycling.

The purpose of this project is to design and construct a temporary pedestrian crossing on University Road (R863) that will encourage the public to use active travel modes, such as walking, cycling or wheeling, for short term journeys and access to public transport for medium term journeys. This project is an interim pedestrian crossing until the construction of the Cross City Link.

## **1.2 Description of the Project**

The Salmon Weir Bridge Pedestrian Crossing project has been proposed by Active Travel to facilitate the safe movement of both pedestrians and cyclists from the north side of University Road (R863) to the newly constructed Droichead an Dóchais (pedestrian and cyclist bridge).

## **2 Need for the Project & Existing Condition**

### **2.1 Need for the Project**

The pedestrian crossing is to facilitate a safe crossing point of the R863 (University Road) until such time as the construction of the BusConnects Cross City Link project is complete. The Cross City Link Project received consent on the 27 September 2024 but is currently the subject of a Judicial Review.

Traffic and pedestrian surveys at this location indicate high demand for this crossing.

Pedestrian counts at peak time (13:00hrs) indicate that approximately 360 pedestrians cross the R863 at this location (i.e. almost 6 pedestrians per minute). Throughout a typical day, approximately 2,000 people (i.e. one every 22 seconds) cross the road at this point. All of these pedestrians could potentially use the temporary crossing.

Of the total number of pedestrians crossing the River Corrib at this location, 76% use Droichead an Dóchais, while 24% use the Salmon Weir Bridge which also carries thousands of vehicles each day. The proposed temporary pedestrian crossing will encourage more people to choose to cross the road at this safe point and avail of the new pedestrian and cycle bridge, Droichead an Dóchais.



### 3 Project Objectives

Galway City Council aims to develop, design, and install pedestrian and cycle infrastructure or enhance existing infrastructure for Galway City. The provision of infrastructure, such as this pedestrian crossing, can encourage physical activity, and improve the general health of the population, in terms of both physical and mental well-being, and supports this vision in an equitable and sustainable context. In essence this p facility should cater for, and appeal to, commuting, leisure, amenity, and users of all abilities.

The proposed scheme must not only increase accessibility and permeability within the immediate study area, but also provide enhanced and safer connectivity with other areas and routes.

#### 3.1 Project Aims & Objectives

The Salmon Weir Bridge Pedestrian Crossing Project entails the construction of a temporary pedestrian crossing across the R863 University Road at Galway Cathedral. It will facilitate safe movements for walkers, wheelers and cyclists, including vulnerable road users. The crossing will connect the footway on University Road near Fisheries Field to Droichead an Dóchais (formerly the Salmon Weir Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge).

The objectives of the proposed temporary pedestrian crossing are outlined in this section. The objectives are assessed based on multi-criteria analysis as outlined by the Department of Transport's 'Transport Appraisal Framework, Appraisal Guidelines for Capital Investments in Transport' (July 2024). The multi-criteria headings are as follows:

- **Transport User Benefits and Other Economic Impacts:** To improve travel time, transport costs, journey reliability and journey quality benefits to those for whom non-motorised means are the predominate form of transit (i.e. walking, cycling and wheeling).
- **Accessibility Impact:** To improve accessibility for all road users to those for whom non-motorised means are the predominate form of transit. Benefit to vulnerable road users including visually ad mobility impairs, elderly, young children.
- **Social Impact:** To improve accessibility for all, including disadvantaged geographic areas and bring social inclusion benefits to those for whom non-

motorised means are the predominate form of transit. Provide improved opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists thereby promoting physical activity

- **Land Use Impacts:** All works within the existing roadway, so no impact on the current land use. However, added benefit of allowing for connectivity to other land uses in the area via a more active / physical activities via a safe crossing location.
- **Safety Impacts:** To reduce the potential for conflict between all road users through the provision of a facility which is in line with the current standards. The project will seek to:
  - Reduce the frequency of conflict between all road users by providing a safer location for all users to cross the road.
  - Allow priority for pedestrians and cyclists at junctions.
  - Improve safety for vulnerable road users and provide a better environment for vulnerable road users within the area.
- **Climate Change Impacts:** Provide reduction on carbon and improved air and noise quality, through modal shift to alternative to the moto vehicle.
- **Local Environment Impacts:** A modal shift to walking and cycling will benefit the local infrastructure and buildings though a reduction in harmful pollutants, generation of noise and vibrations by motorised vehicles.

In tandem with the above objectives, the aim of the Galway Transport Strategy (GTS) is to address the current and future transport needs of the city. A shift is required towards sustainable travel, reducing the dependence on the private car. The bus and cycle network proposed in the GTS are intended to maximise the provision of high-quality dedicated bus and cycling facilities and to improve measures giving priority to pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport, encouraging uptake in modal shift both for commuting and as a leisure activity in the city and surrounding areas.



## 4 Policy & Design Guidance

The relevant policy documents have been reviewed with respect to all road users however the highest level of consideration was given to the provision of a safe and accessible pedestrian network. The following local, regional and national policy documents and relevant national design guidelines have been reviewed.

### 4.1 National Guidelines and Policies

There are various policies and plans relevant to the project and / or which the project aligns with. Such policies and plans include, but are not limited to the following:

National Guidelines and Policies	
National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (NIFTI)	Section 2.4 of the NIFTI Framework states that one of its main purposes is to “ <i>Deliver Clean, Low-Carbon and Environmentally Sustainable Mobility</i> ”. Furthermore, the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions is a foremost priority. It is a national objective to achieve a low carbon, economically competitive and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050. NIFTI will support investment in public transport, walking and cycling within cities and large towns to encourage modal shift away from the private car.
National Planning Framework	The following objectives, relevant to the design of cities and sustainability, are listed within the NPF: <i>National Objective 4 - Ensure the creation of attractive, liveable, well designed, high quality urban places that are home to diverse and integrated communities that enjoy a high quality of life and well-being</i> <i>National Objective 27 - Ensure the integration of safe and convenient alternatives to the car into the design of our communities, by prioritising walking and cycling accessibility to both existing and proposed developments and integrating physical activity facilities for all ages.</i>
Project Ireland 2040	This document was published by the Irish Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in July 2018 with the purpose to provide a high-level strategic plan to improve transport, tourism, and sport infrastructure by 2040. Project Ireland 2040 aims to achieve several strategic outcomes, building around the overarching themes of wellbeing, equality, and opportunity. Sustainable Mobility is included within ten shared priorities of this Plan. The Sustainable Mobility priority focuses on the provision of safe alternative active travel options to alleviate congestion and help to meet climate action objectives.
Climate Action Plan 2023	Climate Action Plan 2023 action measures related to active travel include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action No. TR/23/29: Advance roll out of 1,000km walking / cycling infrastructure.</li> <li>• Action No. TR/23/31: Advance widespread and consistent implementation of National Cycle Manual guidance and the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH).</li> <li>• Action No. TR/23/34: Identify and implement mechanisms for improved multiple Local Authority delivery of strategic, network-based Active Travel projects (e.g., NTA-led projects, Section 85 agreements under the Local Government Act 2001) in line with the objective of Cycle Connects pathfinder project</li> </ul>

National Guidelines and Policies	
Town Centre First	<p>The actions in the Climate Action Plan align and support the regeneration and revitalisation of Ireland's towns through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing demand for travel by car, travel distances, and journey times</li> <li>• Increasing travel choices, reducing car dependency, and mitigating traffic congestion</li> <li>• Reducing air pollution and promoting cleaner and more active modes of transport</li> <li>• Sustaining economic and social activity at street level creating vibrant communities</li> <li>• Increasing access to shops, employment, transport services and local amenities by sustainable modes</li> </ul>

## 4.2 Regional & Local Guidelines & Policies

National Guidelines and Policies	
Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (2020 – 2032) (RSES)	<p>The RSES provides a roadmap for effective regional development identifying key strategic assets, opportunities and challenges and sets out policy responses to ensure the people's needs are met. The document delivers a combination of response, design and innovation; in how the Northern &amp; Western Region does business, delivers homes, builds communities and values land-use – creating healthy places and promoting sustainable communities. The RSES introduces the concept of a Growth Framework to achieve this integration as it is considered that regional growth cannot be achieved in linear steps.</p>
Galway City Development Plan (2023-2029)	<p>The Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029 sets out to promote and facilitate movement within and to the City through integrated land use and transport planning to maximise opportunities for active travel and public transport usage and enable key transport projects included in the Galway Transport Strategy which will deliver multi modal usage, smart mobility and accessibility for all.</p> <p><b>Sustainable Mobility:</b></p> <p>The policy is centred on three overarching principles. The first of these is Safe and Green Mobility, which will set out an ambitious and comprehensive set of actions for the decarbonisation of public transport. The second is People Focused Mobility, which focuses on how to make sustainable mobility options accessible to everyone, particularly people with reduced mobility. The third principle is Better Integrated Mobility, which looks at better integrated sustainable transport and land-use planning as well as examining smart transport solutions.</p> <p><b>Galway Transport Strategy</b></p> <p>The approach of the GTS is to deliver significant improvements to active travel and to deliver a high-quality public transport network for Galway to support the city's growth by encouraging the use of other sustainable modes of transport and facilitate the efficient movement of private vehicles and freight. Continue to encourage an increase in the use of sustainable transport modes including public transport through targeted promotion. The GTS also includes for traffic management measures, giving priority to walking, cycling and bus movements, modifications to the traffic network, management of parking activities and heavy goods vehicles, improvements to the public realm and use of 'smarter mobility'.</p>
Galway Transport Strategy (GTS)	<p>The GTS notes that the City and its suburbs enjoy a high walking mode share (approximately 23%) which "a prominent and sustainable walking culture can be fostered". Whilst most of the pedestrian network in the city and suburbs is noted by the</p>

## National Guidelines and Policies

	<p>GTS of being “of reasonably good quality”, there are locations where the offering is “limited, with sub-standard footpaths, a lack of crossing facilities and low priority provided for pedestrians”.</p> <p>The GTS sets out the following aims (as per GTS Table 7.4):</p> <p>To provide improvements for pedestrians along city centre public transport corridors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To increase priority given to pedestrians over road traffic.</li> <li>• To increase legibility and wayfinding.</li> <li>• To increase the quality, comfort and safety of the pedestrian facilities.</li> </ul> <p>The GTS sets out that it will ensure that “the needs of pedestrians, including the mobility impaired and disabled, are fully considered in the design of all new facilities and upgrades of existing facilities.”</p>
Galway MASP	<p>The Galway MASP recommends the integration of land use and transport planning and performs a critical role in enabling the requirements of an expanded Metropolitan Area to be met in a sustainable manner. This plan endorses the implementation of the measures contained in the Galway Transport Strategy (GTS) with the key transportation components for the MASP considered central to addressing the traffic congestion and Green House Gas (GHG) emissions to achieve change. Other significant transportation components include the development of public bus transport, cycle networks and walking improvements for pedestrians, focusing on connectivity and permeability.</p>
BusConnects Galway – Cross City Link	<p>The Cross City Link is a City Centre Core Bus Corridor Scheme, part of the BusConnects Initiatives, it is proposed to run along University Road.</p> <p>The core of the GTS is built around a ‘Cross-City Link,’ which provides a safe, coherent and attractive route through the city centre restricted to public transport, pedestrians, cyclists, and some local access. The strategy also supports a defined ‘City Centre Access Network’ for private car journeys and HGVs that require access to the city centre to reduce congestion, and the proposed N6 Galway City Ring Road (N6 GCCR) which will re-route journeys, removing non-essential motorised traffic from the city centre. The planned N6 Galway City Ring Road (N6 GCRR) is a strategic project that is also identified in the NPF, NDP, RSES and MASP. This orbital route is a key project in the transport strategy for the city that will support journeys that are not always convenient by non-car modes. Other transport measures will also be progressed that will enable an efficient and reliable public transport service to provide access into and through the city centre creating an enhanced environment for walking and cycling.</p>

## 4.3 Design Standards & Guidelines

The scheme was designed to the highest feasible quality by adhering to but not limited to the following design guidance documents and standards:

- Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets
- Cycle Design Manual
- Traffic Signs Manual
- Traffic Management Guidelines and Accessibility Guidance
- Geometric Design of Junctions (TT DN-GEO-03060)
- The Treatment of Transition Zones to Towns and Villages on National Roads (DN-GEO-03084)
- Building for Everybody: A Universal Design Approach (National Disability Authority, 2012).

## **5 Existing Transport Network**

### **5.1 Road Network**

The University Road (R863) is a regional road with two-way single carriageways. Immediately to the east of the proposed works is the Salmon Weir Bridge. Immediately west of the proposed works, is the priority junction of Gaol Road, located on the inside of the bend on University Road.

Footways are provided on all roads of variable widths. The footways on University Road are typically over 2m wide. The footways on the Salmon Weir Bridge are narrow, while fronting the Cathedral at Droichead an Dóchais, a wide shared space is provided.

The road is serviced by existing public lighting and a piped drainage system via gullies.

### **5.2 Public Transport / Pedestrian & Cycle Facilities**

University Road is a bus route for various public transport providers, with bus stops on University Road and bus parking located adjacent to the Cathedral Car Park. University Road is a key road in the BusConnects Cross City Link.

Existing pedestrian facilities include footways on all roads in the vicinity of the design. An existing signal controlled pedestrian crossing is located on Gaol Road, linking the Droichead an Dóchais to the Cathedral.

There are currently no designated cycling facilities on University Road. However, a shared surface (i.e. pedestrians and cyclists) is provided at Droichead an Dóchais.

## 6 Options Assessment Process

### 6.1 Option Assessment

The options assessment considered 3 options in the determination of the appropriate option to progress. The following options were considered:

- **Do – Nothing Scenario**  
The existing conditions are taken into account where this scenario that's the assumption that no improvement measure is implemented. This option is also the comparative baseline with the other options.
- **Do – Minimum Scenario**  
This option is based on the design of an uncontrolled crossing, with the provision of drop kerbs and tactile paving only. No traffic control is associated with this option.
- **Do - Something Scenario**  
This option is based on the design of a controlled crossing, with the provision of either a signal controlled or zebra crossing controlled pedestrian crossing.

A preferred option was determined based on the Multi Criteria Analysis (MCU).

### 6.2 Methodology for Options Assessment

A summary of the MCU is provided in the Table below.

**Table 1 Option Assessment with Multi Criteria Analysis**

Scenario	Impact					
	Accessibility	Social	Land Use	Safety	Climate Change	Local Environment
<b>Do Nothing</b>	high negative	slightly negative	neutral	high negative	neutral	neutral
<b>Do Minimum</b>	slightly positive	neutral	slightly positive	neutral	neutral	slightly positive
<b>Do Something</b>	high positive	positive	positive	high positive	slightly positive	positive

As evident in the table the preferred option is “Do Something”, a controlled crossing, which will have the most positive impact.

### 6.3 Preferred Option

The preferred option is a controlled crossing. An initial pedestrian crossing design, a Zebra Crossing, was original investigated. Refer to Section 7.2 Pedestrian Crossing for more details.

## **7 Preliminary Design**

The initial preliminary design was subject to a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA). The following sections summarise the Preliminary Design features which account for the recommendations in the RSA. The Preliminary Design Drawings are contained in Appendix A.

### **7.1 Link Design**

There are no changes to the existing road link design. Minor modifications to the southern corner radius at the junction of University Road and Gaol Road are proposed as a result of swept path analysis. The width of the lanes on approach to the proposed crossing have been assessed using swept path analysis for larger vehicle (i.e. buses / coaches), with minor amendments to the road markings.

### **7.2 Pedestrian Crossings**

An initial pedestrian crossing design, a Zebra Crossing, was originally investigated. However, due to the volume of pedestrian movements and traffic volumes, at peak times the crossing would be active almost continuously by pedestrians. This would have a significant disruption to the traffic flows in the city resulting in traffic congestion.

The zebra crossing design also would require a raised crossing. Based on the desire line for the pedestrian crossing, at the road bend, the placement of a ramp would result in vehicles mounting the ramp at an angle with a poor rideability for passengers.

The design developed into the proposed pedestrian crossing, a signal controlled Toucan Crossing. A toucan crossing facilitates crossing for both cyclists and pedestrians. The proposed pedestrian crossing signals will be linked with the adjacent signal controlled crossing on Gaol Road to the Cathedral from Droichead an Dóchais, to minimise the traffic impact. The proposed project will also benefit cyclists by providing a safe access to the crossing.

All crossings will be designed as per the minimum required within DMURS (Section 4.3.2) and the Traffic Signs Manual (Section 7.16) and Chapter 9 Traffic Signals.

### **7.3 Drainage**

The existing storm drainage is via a piped network to the Mutton Island Wastewater Treatment Plant. The proposed works will not change the impermeable surface area on the existing roadway. The proposed works will require the relocation of 2 no. gullies as part of this project and they will be connected to the existing storm sewer.

## **7.4 Pavements**

No resurfacing works are proposed as part of this project, with the exception of the trench reinstatements in the carriageway for laying ducts.

The pavement finishes on the footways will be similar to the recently completed Droichead an Dóchais.

In accordance with Access for All, tactile paving will be provided with contrasting colours in accordance with the design guidance.

The specification of the road pavement and footway pavement for the construction will be subject to detailed design.

## **7.5 Road Marking and Signage**

Minor modifications to the existing road markings are proposed as part of the works to facilitate the crossing and to account for recommendations in the Stage 3 Road Safety Audit from Droichead an Dóchais.

Additional road signage to advise of the crossing and the shared surface areas at the crossing are proposed as part of this design. Bollards are proposed to prevent pedestrian accessing to the signal crossing on Goal Road in advance of the crossing.

## **7.6 Services**

As built service for the Droichead an Dóchais have been made available. The former works future proofed for the proposed pedestrian crossing. GPR and topographical surveys were completed at the site, with surveys by providers for spare capacity. Existing ducting and chambers are available for the supply of power and connection to the existing traffic controller. A new traffic controller will be required as part of these works.

Further to the Stage 1 Road Safety Audit, a new public lighting column is required on the north side of the crossing. The details of the public lighting will be confirmed at detailed design.

## **7.7 Land Take**

All works are proposed within the existing roadway. There are no proposals for acquiring private lands as part of the proposed project.

## **7.8 Landscaping**

Limited landscaping works are proposed as part of the project. Minor works on the northside of the crossing, for the installation of the public lighting will be required.



## **7.9 Road Safety Audit**

A Road Safety Audit Stage 1 was completed on the initial design, the Zebra Crossing. The recommendations from this report have been adopted into the proposed crossing. A Stage 2 Road Safety Audit will be undertaken at Detailed Design.

The recommendation of the Stage 3 RSA for the Salmon Weir Pedestrian and Cyclist Bridge have been adopted into this design and will be completed during the construction of the pedestrian crossing.

## **7.10 Environmental Impacts**

As part of the Preliminary Design Phase, environmental impact screening was carried out on the project. Two screening were conducted:

- Environmental Impact Assessment Screening
- Appropriate Assessment Screening.

### **7.10.1 Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Note**

The outcome of the EIA screening stated, *“Proposed Development would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment and a mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) is not required for the Proposed Development”*

### **7.10.2 Appropriate Assessment Screening Report**

The outcome of the AA screening stated, *“there is no requirement to proceed to Stage 2 of the Appropriate Assessment process; and the preparation of a NIS is not required”*.

## **7.11 Programme**

The project programme is currently envisaged to be as follows:

- Planning March -May
- Detailed Design & Tender June-July
- Construction August - September

## **8 Summary & Conclusion**

### **8.1 Summary**

The proposed project, a Toucan Crossing, is a controlled crossing for both pedestrians and cyclists. The proposed crossing will facilitate safer access to / from University Road to / from the Droichead an Dóchais. The crossing will also facilitate accessible crossings by all road users.

### **8.2 Conclusion**

From an accessibility, social, land use, safety, climate change and local environment perspective, the proposed works are important to Galway City centre to promote and encourage Active Travel. Further to review of the constraints, options, and environmental impacts, the preferred option from the options assessment is shown on the drawings in Appendix A.

This project is an opportunity to connect, by means of a safe crossing point, the existing walking and cycling culture by delivering a safe pedestrian crossing at this location. The crossing will not only increase accessibility and permeability but will also provide enhanced and safer connectivity with other areas (i.e. Droichead and Dóchais, Fisheries Field, Eglinton Canal). The purpose of the project is to deliver improved safety, reduced journey times, and contribute towards increased numbers of trips being made by active travel modes in the local area.

This project provides improved safety by delivering infrastructure to current design standards and best practice and will provide high quality infrastructure for all active transport users including the mobility impaired and those with other disabilities.

The proposed scheme will provide increased opportunity for the residents and commuters to engage in physical activity through the provision of high-quality safe pedestrian facilities. This will assist in encouraging modal shift from vehicular traffic to healthier and sustainable modes of travel such as walking and cycling.

## **Appendix A Preliminary Design Drawings**

Note - The preliminary design drawings are available by [clicking on this link](#).