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Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment Report

For The Proposed

Addition of a Pedestrian Walkway to the Wolfe Tone Bridge

Client: Galway City Council

Date: 13th January 2022

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Copies of this report have been presented by ACP to: Galway City Council

Acknowledgements: Architectural Conservation Professionals acknowledges any information supplied by the Client and information obtained from the Record of Protected Structures (RPS), the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) and record of Monuments and Places (RMP)

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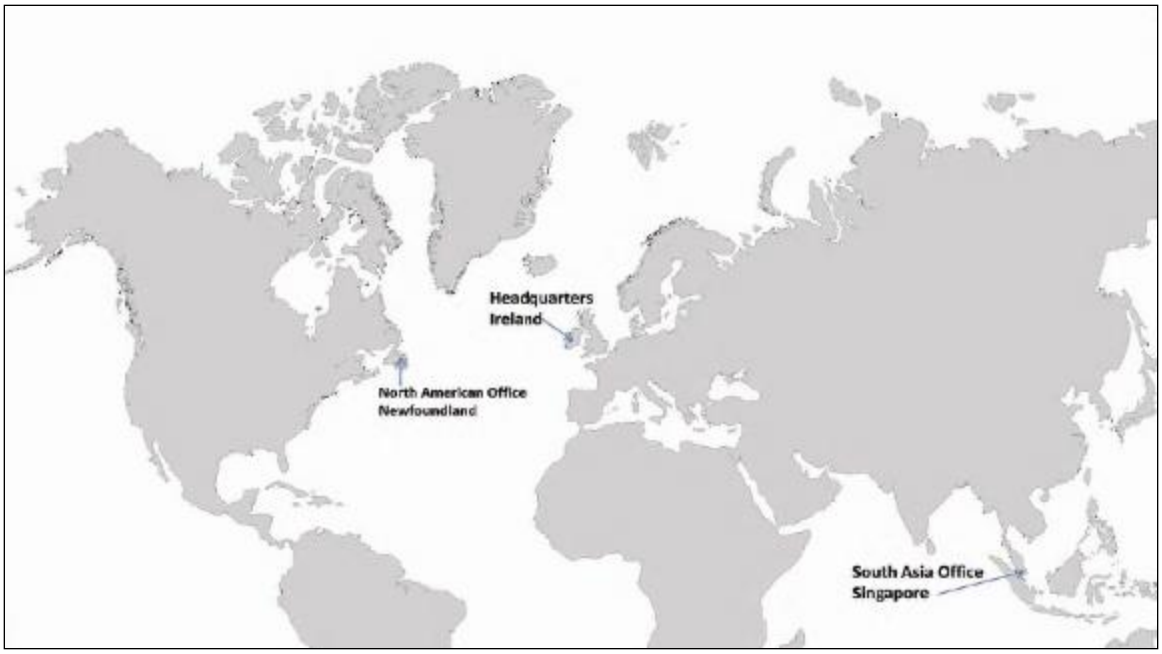
Report Design and Template: ACP Architectural Conservation Professionals 2022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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

1. ACA

An Architectural Conservation Area is a place, area, group of structures or townscape that is of special architectural, scientific, social or technical interest, or that contributes to the appreciation of a protected structure, whose character it is the objective of a development plan to preserve - Section 52 (1) (b) of the 2000 Act.

2. Area of Special Planning Control

Areas of Special Planning Control provide powers to planning authorities not alone to give protection to the character of certain qualifying areas, but also to enhance that character, that is, to restore it and to require owners and occupiers to conform to a planning scheme – Section 84, of the 2000 Act

3. NIAH

The **National Inventory of Architectural Heritage**. The purpose of the NIAH is to identify, record, and evaluate the post-1700 architectural heritage of Ireland, uniformly and consistently as an aid in the protection and conservation of the built heritage. NIAH surveys provide the basis for the recommendations of the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht to the planning authorities for the inclusion of particular structures in their Record of Protected Structures (RPS)

4. Protected Structure

A "protected structure" is defined as any structure or specified part of a structure, which is included in the Record of Protected Structures. The term "structure" is defined by Section 2 of the 2000 Act to mean 'any building, structure, excavation or other thing constructed, or made on, in or under any land, or any part of a structure so defined, and where the context so admits, includes the lands on, in, or under which the structure is situate'. – Section 2 (1) of the 2000 Act

5. Section 57 Declaration

Section 57 Declaration Owners or occupiers of a protected structure may request a 'declaration' under Section 57 of the 2000 Act. The purpose of which is for planning authorities to clarify in writing the kind of works that would or would not materially affect the character of that structure or any element of that structure which contributes to its special interest. Declarations guide the owner as to what works would and would not require planning permission in the context of the protection of the architectural heritage. This is because the character of a protected structure cannot be altered without first securing planning permission to do so.

6. RMP

Archaeological sites are legally protected by the provisions of the National Monuments Acts, the National Cultural Institutions Act 1997 and the Planning Acts. The **National Record of Monument & Places (RMP)** is a statutory list of all known archaeological monuments provided for in the National Monuments Acts. It includes known monuments and sites of archaeological importance dating to before 1700AD, and some sites which date from after 1700AD.

7. RPS

Record of Protected Structures. A Protected Structure is a structure which is considered to be of special interest from an architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical point of view. The Record of Protected Structures (RPS) is a list of the buildings held by a Local

Authority which contains buildings considered to be of special interest in its operational area. Section 51 (of the 2000 Act) requires that the development plan shall include a Record of Protected Structures and that the Record shall include every structure which is, in the opinion of the Planning Authority, of special interest.

Levels of significance – NIAH Definitions 2006

International Significance	Structures or sites of sufficient architectural heritage importance to be considered in an international context. Examples include St Fin Barre's Cathedral, Cork. These are exceptional structures that can be compared to and contrasted with the finest architectural heritage in other countries.
National Significance	Structures or sites that make a significant contribution to the architectural heritage of Ireland. These are structures and sites that are considered to be of great architectural heritage significance in an Irish context. Examples include Ardnacrusha Power Station, Co. Clare; the Ford Factory, Cork; Carroll's Factory, Dundalk; Lismore Castle, Co. Waterford; Sligo Courthouse, Sligo; and Emo Court, Co. Laois.
Regional Significance	Structures or sites that make a significant contribution to the architectural heritage within their region or area. They also stand in comparison with similar structures or sites in other regions or areas within Ireland. Examples would include many Georgian terraces; Nenagh Courthouse, Co. Tipperary; or the Bailey Lighthouse, Howth. Increasingly, structures that need to be protected include structures or sites that make a significant contribution to the architectural heritage within their own locality. Examples of these would include modest terraces and timber shopfronts.
Local Significance	These are structures or sites of some vintage that make a contribution to the architectural heritage but may not merit being placed in the RPS separately. Such structures may have lost much of their original fabric.
Record only	These are structures or sites that are not deemed to have sufficient presence or inherent architectural or other importance at the time of recording to warrant a higher rating. It is acknowledged, however, that they might be considered further at a future time

Penalties for Offences

Architectural Heritage Protection

A Protected Structure and built fabric within its curtilage is protected by law under Part IV of the Planning and Development Act 2000. The penalties for breaches of this Act are severe. Section 156 of the Act states:-

> (1) A person who is guilty of an offence under *sections 58(4), 63, 151, 154, 205, 230(3), 239* and *247* shall be liable—
>
> (*a*) on conviction on indictment, to a fine not exceeding £10,000,000, or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years, or to both, or
>
> (*b*) on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding £1,500, or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months, or to both.

Monuments and Places included in the Record

Section 12 (3) of the Act provides for the protection of monuments and places included in the record stating that

> "When the owner or occupier (not being the Commissioners) of a monument or place which has been recorded under subsection (1) of this section or any person proposes to carry out, or to cause or permit the carrying out of, any work at or in relation to such monument or place, he shall give notice in writing of his proposal to carry out the work to the Commissioners and shall not, except in the case of urgent necessity and with the consent of the Commissioners, commence the work for a period of two months after having given the notice."

A person contravening this requirement for two months notification to the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland of proposed works at or in relation to a recorded monument or place shall (under Section 13 of the Act) be guilty of an offence and be liable on summary conviction to a maximum penalty of a £1000 fine and 12 months imprisonment and on conviction on indictment to a maximum penalty of a £50,000 fine and 5 years imprisonment.

It should also be noted that Section 16 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994 amended the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1987 (the Act of 1987) so that under Section 2 (1) (a) (iv) of that Act **the use or possession of a detection device**

> *"in, or at the site of, a monument recorded under section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994,"*

is prohibited otherwise than in accordance with a consent of the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland granted under the provisions of Section 2 of the Act of 1987.

A person contravening the above provisions relating to use or possession of detection devices shall (under Section 2 (5) of the Act of 1987) be guilty of an offence and be liable (under Section 23 (1) of the Act of 1987) on summary conviction to a maximum penalty of a £1000 fine and 6 months imprisonment or on conviction on indictment to a maximum penalty of a £50,000 fine and 12 months imprisonment.

It should be further noted that under Section 7 (1) (a) of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994 a member of the Garda Siochana may without warrant seize and detain:

> *"a detection device found in, at the site of, or in the vicinity or a monument recorded under Section 12 of the Act unless the person in possession of the device has a consent of the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland in accordance with the provisions of Section 2 of the Act of 1987.*

1.0 Scope of Study

This report has been prepared following a request by the client to undertake an Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment for the proposed works to add a pedestrian walkway to the southern side of the Wolfe Tone Bridge, Galway City. A cantilevered pedestrian walkway was installed to the northern side of the bridge in 2004. The new proposed walkway will be of similar style and scale to the existing cantilevered walkway. The existing south side footpath would be removed to allow for the provision of a cycle lane.

The proposal for the additional walkway comes as part of the Galway Transport Strategy which aims to remove non-essential motor traffic from the core city center area. The proposed works also aim to provide better access for wheelchairs and buggies etc.

This Impact Assessment aims to provide the following:

- A brief historical overview of Wolfe Tone Bridge and surrounding area.
- An assessment under Conservation Principles[1]
- A comprehensive understanding of the impact of the proposed works.
- Conclusion and mitigation of the proposed works.

2.0 Method of study

The following methods and resources were used in establishing the Conservation Impact Assessment of the proposed works.

- The subject site was studied, visited and inspected by a Building Conservation Accredited Surveyor.
- The subject site was studied, visited and inspected by a Chartered Building Engineer.
- The Record of Protected Structures constraint maps and lists (RPS) and the sites were studied.
- The proposals were studied and assessed for their impact.

This Plan was prepared in accordance with national practice deriving from Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities by the Department of the Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht 2011 and international practice from The Burra Charter 2013 (The Australia ICOMOS Charter for places of Cultural Significance)

[1] adapted from Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government 2004

3.0 Existing Environment

Wolfe Tone Bridge is located on Fr. Griffin Road in Galway City Centre. It is the last bridge on the River Corrib before it reaches Galway Bay with a view of the Spanish Arch and the Claddagh.

Wolfe Tone Bridge is one of three crossing points on the River Corrib in Galway City Centre and provides a vital link between the city centre and The West End, Salthill, and the Claddagh. The bridge is a well-used thoroughfare for pedestrians and tourists heading between the city centre and these popular areas.

The bridge is approximately 8m wide with a 2.5m cantilevered footway on the northern side which was installed in 2004. The vehicle carriageway of the existing bridge is 6m wide and the footpath on the southern side is 1.8m wide.

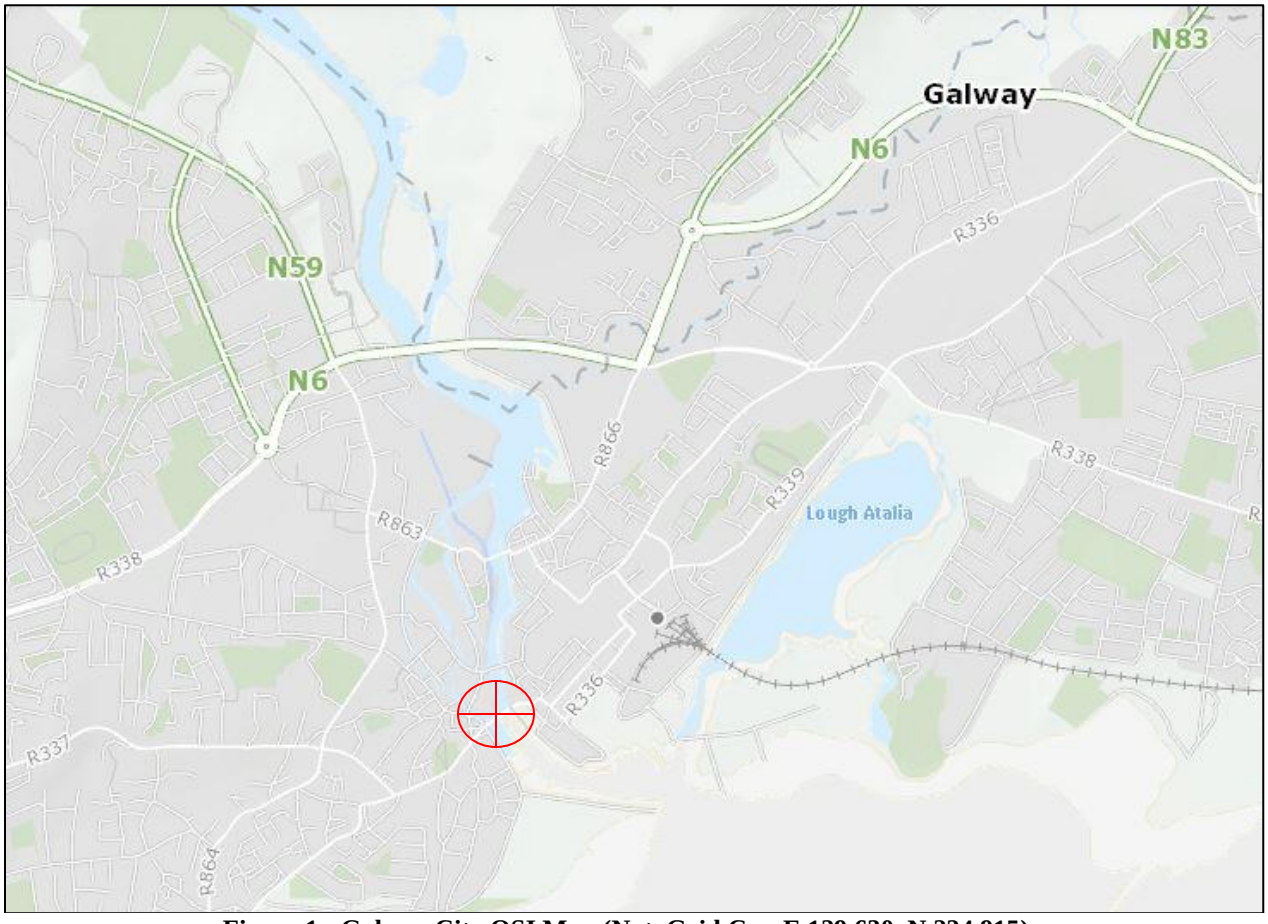

Figure 1 - Galway City OSI Map (Nat. Grid Co.: E 129 630, N 224 915)

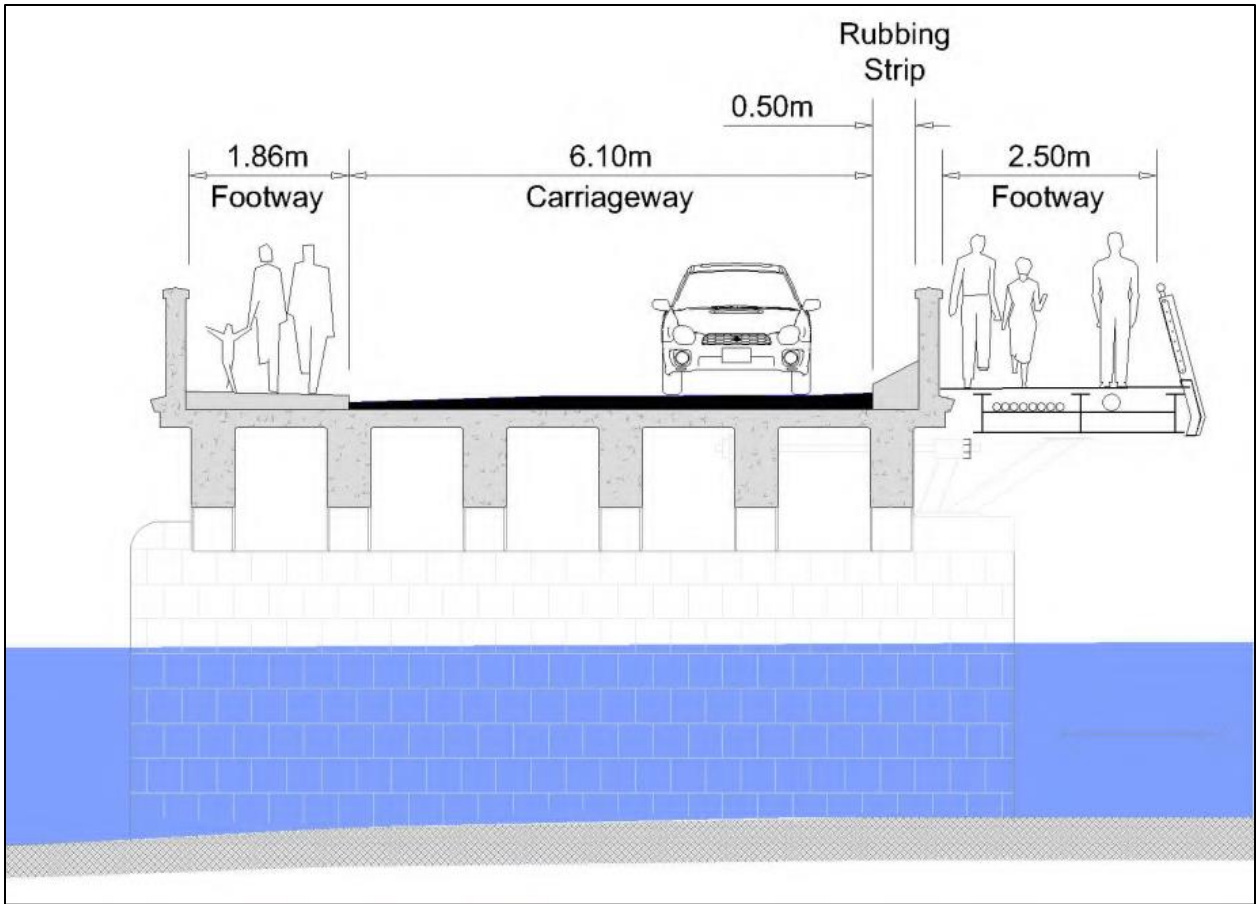

Figure 2 - Existing Cross Section of Wolfe Tone Bridge (Facing West)[2]

3.1 Proposed Development

The proposed development will see a new cantilevered walkway installed to the downstream (southern) side of the bridge in keeping with the style and size of the existing upstream walkway. The design will incorporate the existing abutments and the existing 20th c. concrete bridge structure which was installed on the original 19th c. stone piers and abutments.

The proposed walkway will increase the overall width of the bridge by approximately 2m to a total width of 13.5m.

The proposed new structure will consist of an aluminium deck, supported by three spans of steelwork beams, with a stainless steel parapet, and all supported on four steelwork support brackets. The steelwork support brackets will be bolted to the existing reinforced concrete structure of the bridge, close to or at the diaphragm beams that are present at each abutment and pier. The top stones of the cut stone abutment and piers are to be removed and replaced with a

[2] "Wolfe Tone Pedestrian Bridge II – Part 8 Planning Report" – Ryan Hanley Consulting Engineers (September 2021)

concrete pad to provide a flat surface to allow the proposed new steel brackets to sit flat and are to be fixed with bolts. Please see Photograph 2 below as an example which shows the detail of the brackets on the existing upstream cantilevered bridge.

Photograph 1 - Top Stone of Existing Piers and Abutments to be Removed

Photograph 2 - View of Existing Cantilevered Supports on the Upstream Side of the Bridge

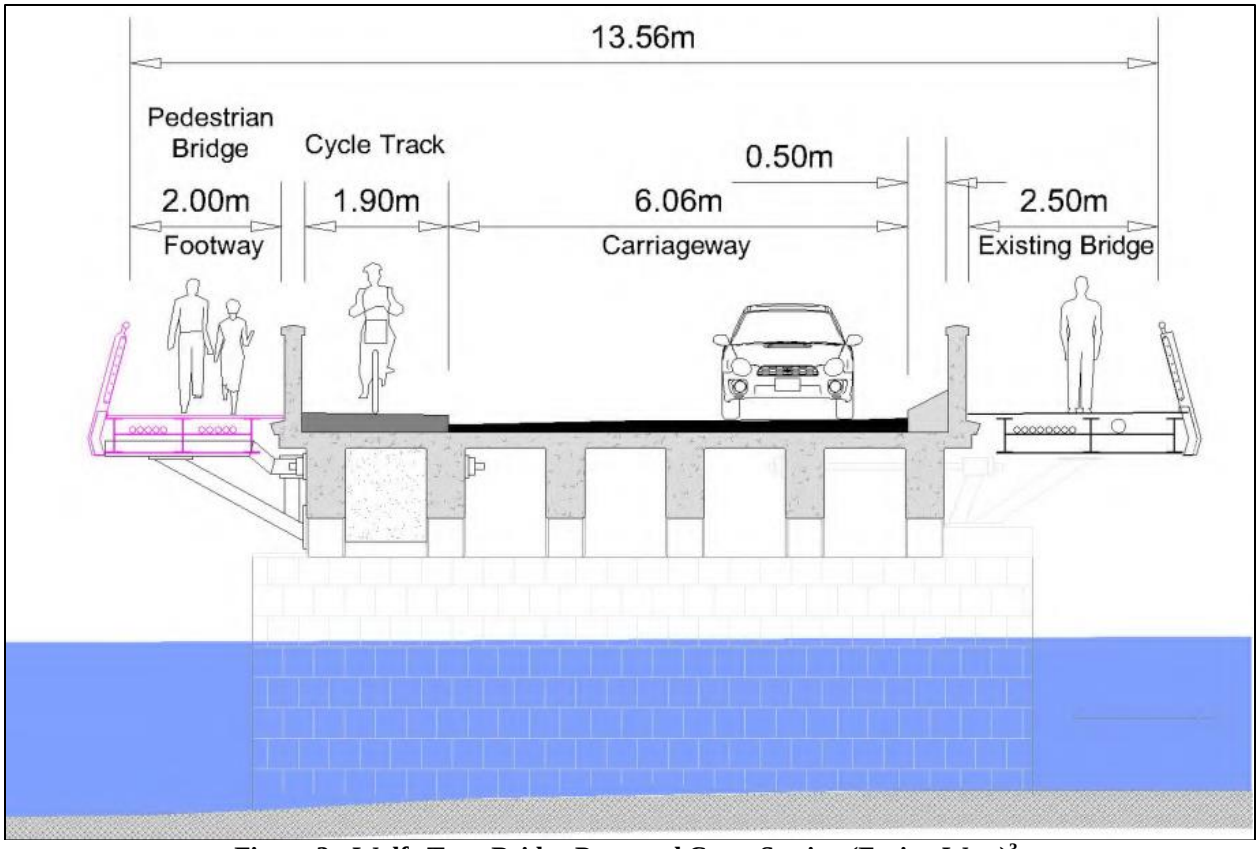

Figure 3 - Wolfe Tone Bridge Proposed Cross Section (Facing West)[3]

3.2 Site Inspection

The site was inspected on the 26th October, 2021 by David Humphreys Chartered Building Engineer and Building Conservation Accredited Surveyor (Director ACP). A visual and photographic study was undertaken at the site.

[3] "Wolfe Tone Pedestrian Bridge II – Part 8 Planning Report" – Ryan Hanley Consulting Engineers (September 2021)

Photograph 3 - Existing South Side of Bridge (Downstream)

Photograph 4 - Existing North Side of Bridge (Upstream)

Photograph 5 - View of the Existing Cantilevered Walkway (facing SW)

Photograph 6 - Eastern Abutment (Southern Side)

Photograph 7 - Western Abutment (Southern Side)

Photograph 8 - Eastern Abutment (Southern Side)

Photograph 9 - Cast Iron Plaque (RPS 13002)

4.0 History of the site and vicinity

4.1 Brief History of Wolfe Tone Bridge

Originally built prior to 1850 as a temporary structure to allow for easier transport of materials used in the development of the Claddagh Basin and the Eglington Canal. After the fish market was moved to the Spanish Arch it also became a very important link for people transporting their goods to and from the market. It was known as the Claddagh Bridge.

Originally a wooden structure, the bridge was replaced in 1887 with a steel bridge structure and eventually the existing Wolfe Tone Bridge was built and opened in 1934.

The bridge still maintains its original function and is as important as ever to the movement of people and vehicles around the city centre.

Figure 4 - The Claddagh Bridge circa 1900 (Photo by Robert French)

As can be seen in Fig. 5 below, the Historic 6" OSI map (circa 1840) does not show any bridge at the location of Wolfe Tone Bridge. The original wooden bridge structure was built here circa 1850.

Fig. 6 below, the Historic 25" map shows an existing bridge structure named "Claddagh Bridge". This was most likely the new steel bridge structure which was constructed circa 1887.

Figure 5 - Historic 6" Map OSI (1837 - 1842)

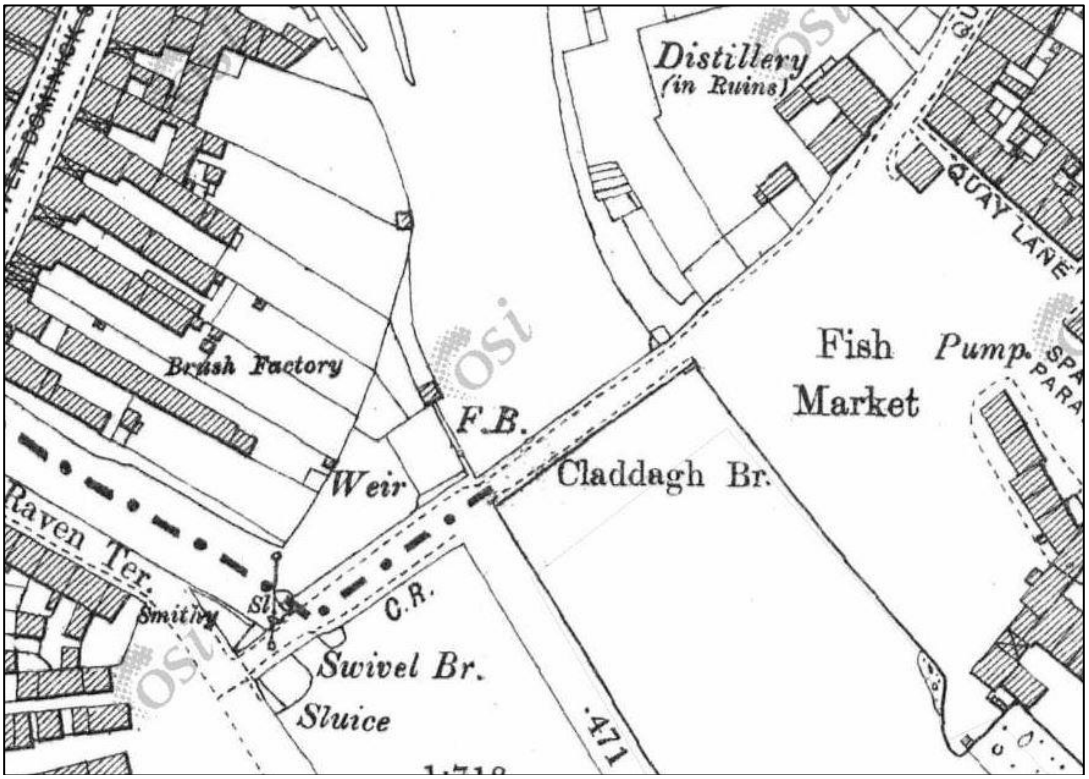

Figure 6 - Historic 25" OSI Map (1888 - 1913)

The Claddagh Bridge was eventually replaced by the existing Wolfe Tone Bridge in 1934. The new reinforced concrete structure was built upon the original cut stone piers.

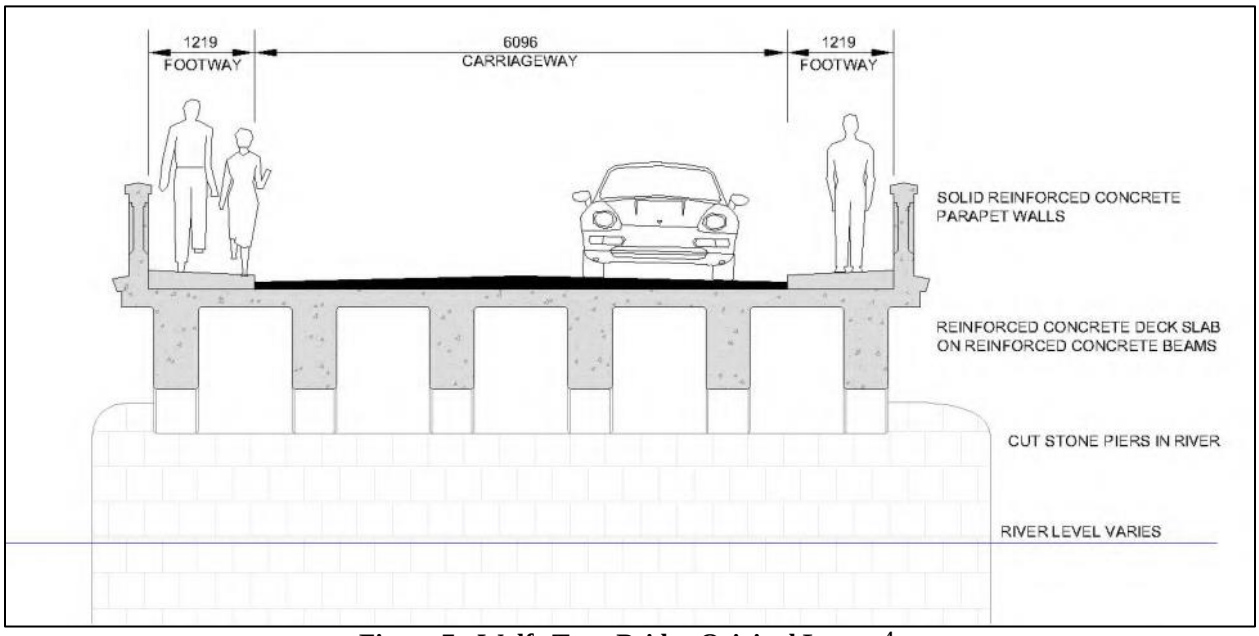

Figure 7 - Wolfe Tone Bridge Original Layout[4]

In 2004 a new cantilevered walkway was installed on the northern side of Wolfe Tone Bridge which greatly improved the safety and accessibility for its users on the northern side of the bridge.

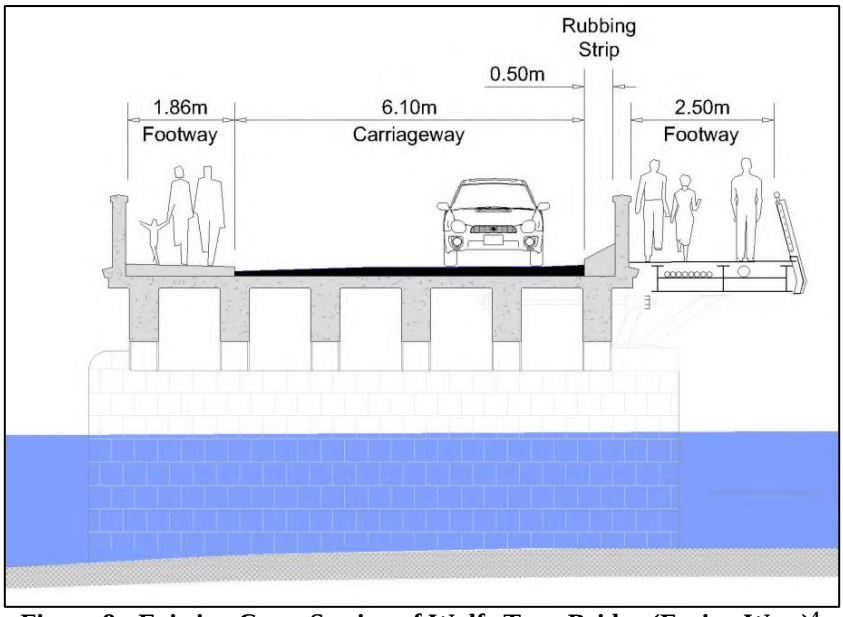

Figure 8 - Existing Cross Section of Wolfe Tone Bridge (Facing West)[4]

[4] "Wolfe Tone Pedestrian Bridge II – Part 8 Planning Report" – Ryan Hanley Consulting Engineers (September 2021)

4.2 Brief History of Galway City

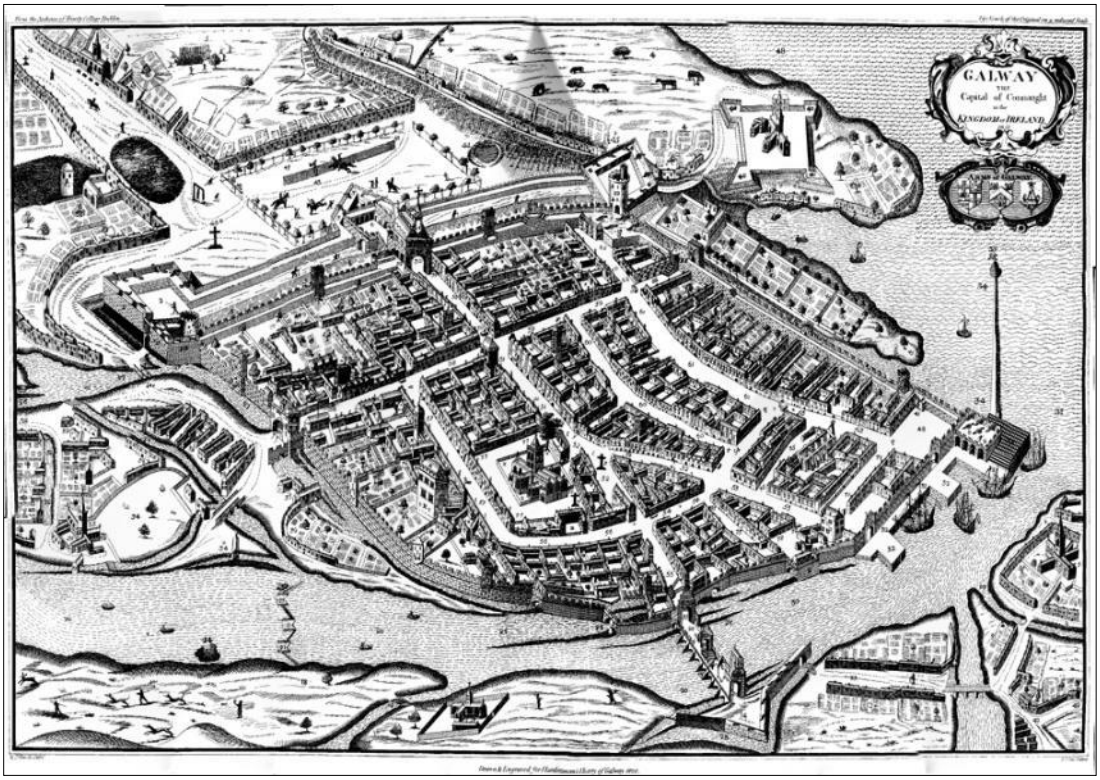

Figure 9 - 1651 Historic Map of Galway[5]

The city of Galway is located on the mouth of the river Corrib were it meets the bay. Originally, a small fishing town, Galway has developed into a culturally and historically rich city that is a tourism hotspot on the west coast of Ireland. The city developed from a small fishing town to a walled city around the 1230's and it had prospered from the lucrative trading routes and ideal location well into the 17th century. While the city walls may have only enclosed around eleven hectares, it was very densely populated. Fires in the 15th century have destroyed many of the original medieval features but many late medieval structures can still be seen around the city core. The city wall was in part taken down in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, to allow for the expansion of the city but much of the cities original medieval pattern can still be seen. Many parts of the wall still make up a lot of the city core. Many boundary walls of buildings and structures make up the wall and in part there are many long sections still visible to the public, the most famous been that of the Spanish Arch.

The Spanish Arch is located on the banks of the river Corrib. Originally, the Spanish Arch was built as an extension of the city wall, in order to protect the quays of the city. The area enclosed by the Spanish arch was often a location for a fish market, which supplied the city for many centuries. The area directly across from the Spanish Arch is known as the Claddagh and was home to a small village of fishermen.

[5] Image referenced from Royal Irish Academy.

Figure 10 - OSI Map Historic 6" B&W (1837-1842)

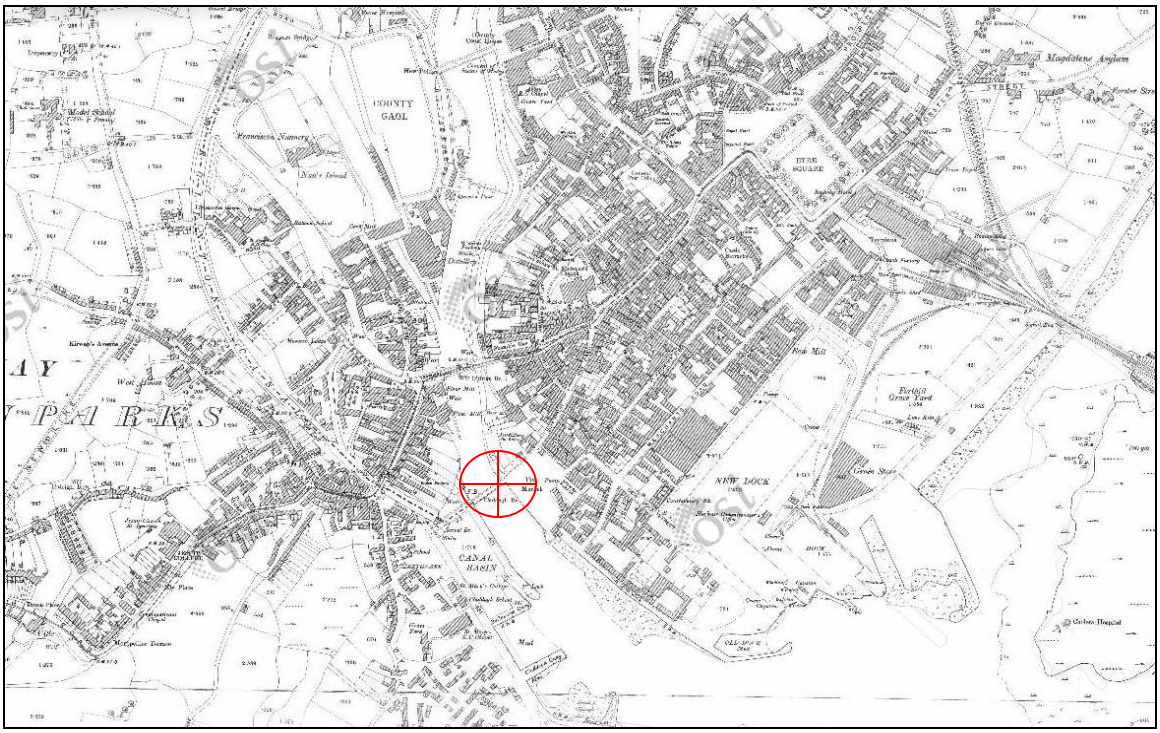

Figure 11 - OSI Map Historic 25" B&W (1888-1913)

4.3 Conservation of the site and vicinity

We are currently not aware of any ongoing or recent conservation works to the site.

4.4 Protected Structures

The bridge structure is not itself a protected structure however a cast iron name plate is listed on the Record of Protected Structures for Galway City (RPS Ref No. 13002). This will not be affected by the proposed works.

The bridge falls under RPS Ref. No. 8501 Rivers/Waterways Including Bridges, Weirs, Walls, Embankment, Piers & Other Associated Infrastructure.

The bridge structure is located on the boundary of the Galway City Core ACA. Works to the eastern abutment and quay walls fall within the ACA.

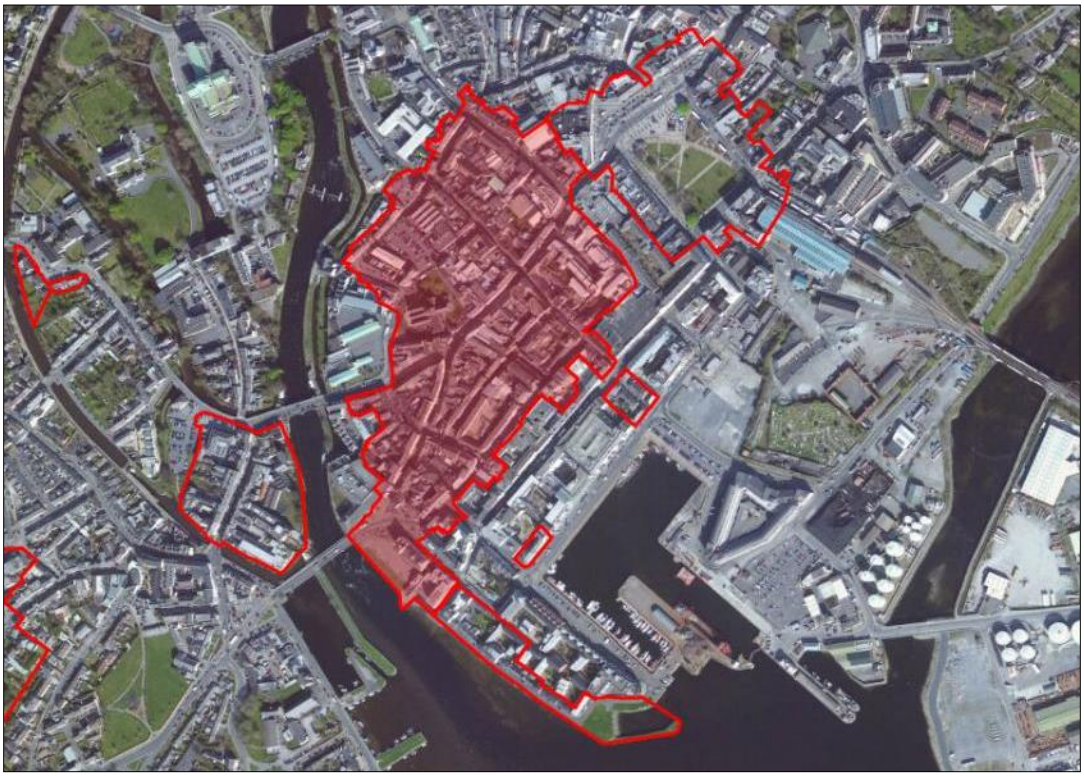

Figure 12 - Galway City Core ACA[6]

[6] Galway City Council

4.5 Archaeology

Wolfe Tone Bridge lies within the Zone for Archaeological Potential for Galway City and involves works to the historic quay wall (RMP No. GA094-100058-). As such all works will require permission by the National Monument Service and will need to be carried out under archaeological supervision.

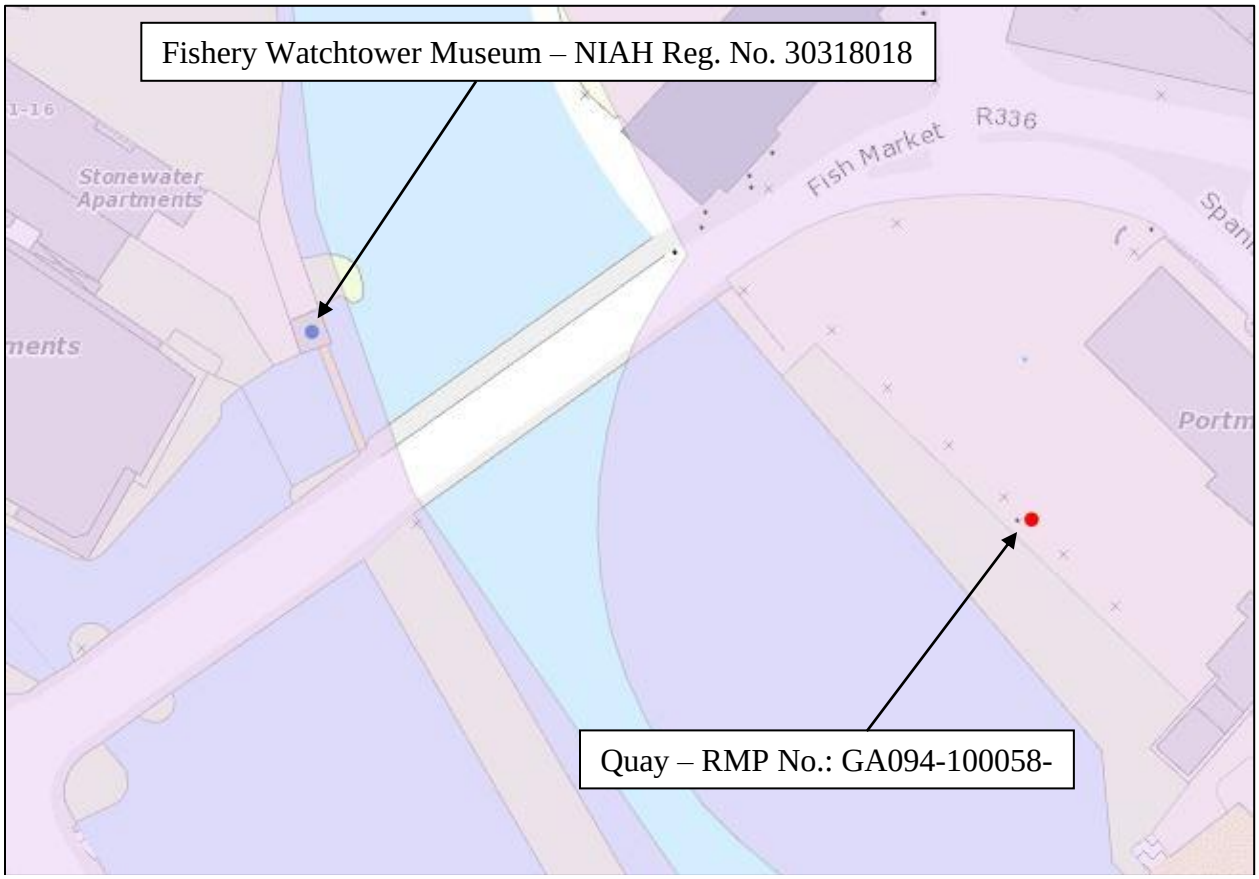

Figure 13 – NIAH Building Entries (Blue) and Recorded Monuments (Red) in the Vicinity of Wolfe Tone Bridge. Zones of Archaeological Potential (Purple).[7]

[7] National Monument Viewer

5.0 Impact of Proposed Development

This section is only a prediction of proposed impacts as no impact has actually occurred as of yet.

5.1 The 'do nothing' impact

If no works are carried out in this instance, then the bridge will continue to operate as it is currently. The proposed works aim to increase safe passage for pedestrian and cyclist traffic across the bridge and also to increase the safety of the bridge by removing the footpath adjacent to the vehicular thoroughfare.

The proposals are part of the city's plan to remove non-essential vehicular access to the city centre and increase amenities and access for pedestrian and cyclists between the city centre and the West End area.

A *'do-nothing'* approach in relation to this project would mean that necessary improvements and upgrades to the existing bridge are not undertaken and current traffic issues and issues with accessibility for wheelchairs and buggies will continue.

5.2 The Predicted Impacts

It is predicted that the proposed works will have a positive impact on the structure and surrounding vicinity by improving vehicular and pedestrian access across the bridge and increasing the amount of amenities available to the city's residents and tourists. The proposed works will have a minimal impact on the existing historic fabric.

Works	Predicted Impact
Cantilevered walkway to southern side of the bridge.	Positive impact – • by improving access for pedestrians and cyclists to cross the bridge. Current facilities are not adequate to cater for mobility impaired, wheelchair users or buggies. The proposed works would provide safe access and crossing for all users. • Provides an additional amenity for the city and will further enhance the public realm development at the Fish market and Galway Museum. • It will improve the movement of pedestrians and vehicles from the city centre area to business, social, educational, residential and cultural centres west of the river. • The new walkway is to be cantilevered from the existing modern concrete

	structure of the bridge. We have been advised by the structural engineer that the bas of the cantilevered structure will need to be supported on the stone piers as per photo 2 above. Alternatives were considered such as fixing into the concrete structure only, but these were not suitable from a structural engineering point of view. • This will have an impact on the existing original cut stone piers but it can be minimized as per section below.
Removal of the top domed cut stones from the abutment and piers to allow for installation of a flat concrete pad for installation and fixing of the proposed new steel brackets	Minimal impact – • The removal of these domed stones on the top of the piers and abutments is necessary to allow for adequate fixing of the proposed steel brackets as was done on the upstream side of the bridge previously. • To reduce the impact of the removal of these original cut stone elements, the top stones are to be recorded prior to removal and all works associated with the removal of the stones are to be supervised on site by the Building Conservation Accredited Surveyor. • The removed masonry elements are to be safely stored by the client for potential reuse in the future.
Removal of the existing southern footpath to be developed as a cycle track	Positive impact – • These works will provide safer, segregated facilities for cyclists on the bridge. Currently no cyclist facilities exist on the bridge and cyclists are required to share the narrow traffic lanes of the bridge.

Necessary masonry works to the east and west abutment walls including the historic quay wall on the eastern side of the bridge	Minimal Impact – • Any masonry works required to the east and west abutment walls will be carried out according to best building conservation guidelines and the works undertaken by a contractor experienced in the removal and repair of historic masonry. • These works will also be done under archaeological supervision. Any masonry removed to allow for the new cantilevered walkway is to be recorded and stored for potential reuse.
Relocation of existing services – West Bank (Pole with street light, mini pillars, micro pillars and bins.) East Bank (Poles and streetlight, micro pillars, bin)	Minimal impact – • Existing services at the east and west abutment on the southern side will need to be removed/relocated in order to allow access to the new walkway. These are necessary works that will not have any negative impact on the historic fabric.

5.3 The 'Worst Case' Scenario

The 'worst case' scenario in this case, would be if the proposed works are not undertaken. The proposed works are part of a larger plan to remove non-essential traffic from the city centre area by improving the flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic. If these improvements are not made to the existing bridge infrastructure, existing delays and traffic issues will persist and potentially worsen as the area is further developed.

5.4 Assessment under Conservation Principles

The following Conservation Principles have been identified and are described in detail in the following sections.

- Principle 1 – Keeping a building in use
- Principle 2 – Researching and Analyzing
- Principle 3 – Using expert Conservation advice
- Principle 4 – Protecting the special interest
- Principle 5 – Promoting minimum intervention
- Principle 6 – Respecting earlier alterations of interest
- Principle 7 – Repairing rather than replacing
- Principle 8 – Promoting honesty of repairs and alterations
- Principle 9 – Using appropriate materials and methods

- Principle 10 – Ensuring reversibility of alterations
- Principle 11 – Avoiding incremental damage
- Principle 12 – Discouraging the use of Architectural salvage from other buildings
- Principle 13 – Complying with building regulations

5.4.1 Principle 1 – Keeping a building in use

It is generally recognised that the best method of conserving a historic building is to keep it in active use. Where a structure is of great rarity or quality, every effort should be made to find a solution which will allow it to be adapted to a new use without unacceptable damage to its character and special interest

The proposed works adhere to this principle by keeping the bridge in use and providing upgrades to improve the functionality and accessibility of the bridge for all users.

5.4.2 Principle 2 – Researching and Analyzing

Before formulating proposals for works to a protected structure, the developer should research its historical development and understand thoroughly the present condition of the structure. The research should encompass not only the main structure and its interior but also its curtilage and attendant grounds, where relevant and any structures or features within them which contribute to the special interest of the protected structure/site.

The research should include an analysis of the physical fabric of the site and any available documentary or other evidence. The work should only be undertaken by those with the appropriate knowledge and skill.

In this case detailed research into the fabric and history of the site has been undertaken.

5.4.3 Principle 3 – Using expert Conservation advice

Building conservation is a specialised discipline and the method of work needs to be specified by experts with a knowledge and experience of historic buildings.

The Client has engaged a highly qualified and experienced design team to undertake this project including ACP Architectural Conservation Professionals to address all the conservation elements.

5.4.4 Principle 4 – Protecting the special interest

The character and special interest of a protected structure can be damaged by inappropriate works. The most obvious being demolishing or partly demolishing a structure. It can also be stripped of its value and distinctiveness by neglect and decay, unsuitable alteration, uninformed repair or over restoration.

There have been detailed discussions between the Project design team and client to ensure that the proposed works protect the character, historic fabric of the property and special interest where possible within the constraints of the client's requirements.

The proposed works are in keeping with modern upgrades to the bridge which namely include the installation of a cantilevered walkway to the northern side of the bridge in 2004. The proposed works have been designed to be in keeping with these recent upgrades.

5.4.5 Principle 5 – Promoting minimum intervention

The principle of promoting minimum intervention in a protected structure can be summed up by the maxim 'Do as much as necessary and as little as possible'. Dramatic interventions in a protected structure are rarely appropriate. The best work in conservation terms is often that which is low key, involves the least work and can be inexpensive

This principle will be adhered to during the proposed works. Any works to the existing historic fabric will be carried out under the supervision of a Building Conservation Accredited Surveyor and the project archaeologist to ensure that no unnecessary impact to the historic fabric occurs.

5.4.6 Principle 6 – Respecting earlier alterations of interest

Alterations and additions to a structure can themselves be an irreplaceable part of a unique history. Different periods of alteration can inform the social and architectural history of the build heritage.

In order to appreciate the integrity of a structure, it is important to respect the contribution of different stages of its historical development.

This principle will be respected during the proposed works by designing the new walkway in a similar style and size to the modern walkway installed on the northern side of the bridge in 2004.

5.4.7 Principle 7 – Repairing rather than replacing

It should be the aim of good conservation practice to preserve the authentic fabric which contributes to the special interest of the structure. Good repair will arrest the process of the decay of the structure and prolong its life without damaging its character and special interest.

This principle is being respected throughout the project where it is feasible. The use of traditional materials and methods enhances this approach.

5.4.8 Principle 8 – Promoting honesty of repairs and alterations

To promote good conservation practice in line with the recommendations of international charters, repairs to a protected building or structure should generally be carried out without attempt at disguise or artificial ageing. This does not mean that the repair should be obtrusive or that inappropriate materials should be used in order to contrast with the historic fabric. A good repair, carried out with skill, leaves an interesting record of works done. Deliberately obscuring alterations confuses the historical record that is the building. New repairs should not detract from the visual integrity of the structure but should be discernible on closer inspection.

This principle will be respected as part of the project. The proposed works to the existing historic fabric are to be carried out in accordance with best practice guidelines.

5.4.9 Principle 9 – Using appropriate materials and methods

Only appropriate material and methods should be used in works to a protected structure. The use of modern materials and techniques should only be permitted where their appropriateness is supported by firm scientific evidence or where they have proved themselves over a sufficient period and where traditional alternatives cannot be sourced.

The use of traditional materials and techniques is planned in this project where necessary. Modern materials and methods including services will be used where necessary, but due care and attention will be used to ensure that they have a minimal impact on the historic fabric

5.4.10 Principle 10 – Ensuring reversibility of alterations

The use of processes which are reversible or substantially reversible, when understanding works to a protected structure is always preferable as this allows for the future correction of unforeseen problems, should the need arise, without lasting damage being caused to the architectural heritage.

Detailed records and archival quality photographs will be taken and further recording will continue during the build to ensure the reversibility of the works. The proposed works are to be reversible where practical. On site discussions will be undertaken by the Design Team to discuss and agree all interventions and to ensure that this principle is respected.

5.4.11 Principle 11 – Avoiding incremental damage

Thought must be given by the planning authority to the potential cumulative impact of minor works to the character of protected structures and of ACA's. The quality and character of both can be damaged by incremental alterations. In the case of protected structures this applies to both internal and external works.

This principle will be respected during the proposed works.

5.4.12 Principle 12 – Discouraging the use of Architectural salvage from other buildings

The use of architectural salvage from other buildings should not be encouraged for two reasons. Firstly, the re-use of architectural features from elsewhere can confuse the understanding and appreciation of a building, casting doubt on the authenticity of even the untouched part of the fabric. Secondly, creating a market for salvaged building materials promotes the dismantling of other older buildings, for example the removal slates or cut-stone elements from a building for reuse elsewhere.

This principle will be respected during the proposed works.

5.4.13 Principle 13 – Complying with building regulations

The building regulations are designed to secure the health and safety of people in and around buildings.

The proposed works have been designed in accordance with modern building regulations.

6.0 Statement of Justification for Works

Wolfe Tone Bridge is a vital link for pedestrian and motor traffic within Galway City and serves as an important link between the city centre and popular areas including the West End, the Claddagh and Salthill. The bridge is an important link for tourists travelling to and from the West End and City Centre.

The provision of a cantilevered walkway on the southern side of Wolfe Tone Bridge is one of a number of proposed intervention schemes which have been identified under the Galway City Centre Transport Management Plan. This is part of the Galway Transport Strategy and aims to remove non-essential motor traffic from the core city centre area.

Currently there are safety concerns for pedestrians using the footpath on the southern side of the bridge next to the carriageway as it is narrow, and accessibility is inadequate on the southern footpath for wheelchair users and buggies etc. A high volume of traffic is seen on the bridge daily, both vehicular and pedestrian. Designated cycle lanes or facilities for cyclists do not exist. Cyclists currently are required to share the traffic lanes.

The installation of the northern walkway in 2004 greatly improved the safety and experience of the bridge providing a safer crossing point away from the carriageway. The proposed addition of a new walkway on the southern side of the bridge will further enhance the safety of the bridge and at the same time provide much needed facilities for cyclists using the bridge. The proposed works will have a minimum impact on the historic fabric and will have an overall positive impact on the area and the city as a whole.

7.0 Conclusions and Suggested Mitigation

In conclusion the proposal as set out in this report refers to, will ensure that the bridge will continue to serve the public for years to come and help improve access and safety on this important bridge within the city centre.

The following mitigation measures are proposed and they will ensure that the impact of the individual and overall impacts are mitigated and any loss of fabric will be retained by record to an internationally accepted standard.

The following mitigation measures are proposed:

1. Black and White Archival Photographic Record- to be carried out before, during and after the works.
2. High resolution digital photographs are to be taken on a regular and ongoing basis for the duration of the works and a detailed description of the works undertaken be kept and complied.
3. Any protected fabric scheduled for removal shall be 'Retained by Record ' to ICOMOS standard.
4. Works to the historic fabric of the bridge and adjacent 19th century stone structures should be specified by the Building Conservation Accredited Surveyor and included in the procurement package for the proposed works
5. All works on site that impact on the remaining parts of the 19th century bridge and adjacent 19th century stone structures are to be supervised on an ongoing basis by the Project Building Conservation Accredited Surveyor (Accredited by the RICS and SCSI). A detailed record of works is to be kept and complied for submission to the building record after proposed works have been completed.
6. Archaeological monitoring by a licensed archaeologist as deemed necessary by the National Monuments should be adhered to.
7. All specialist conservation works are to be undertaken by appropriately qualified and experienced tradesmen.
8. All works associated with the removal of the top stones from the existing piers and abutments is to be carried out under the supervision of the Conservation Building Engineer/Building Conservation Accredited Surveyor. The stones are to be tagged and recorded prior to removal and safely stored off site by the client for potential future use.
9. The cast iron plaque is to be protected during the works and a program of restoration and repair should form part of the project as this is an intrinsic part of the bridge and is on the RPS.

8.0 Signing Off Statement

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Client: Galway City Council

Signed: _____
For ACP Archcon Professionals Limited.

Date: 13th Jan 2022

9.0 Project References

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Community Groups	

Architects & Conservation Architects

Chartered Building Surveyors

Building Conservation Accredited Surveyors (SCSI/RICS)

Conservation Building Engineers

Historic and Ecological Landscape Consultants

Project Managers, Quantity Surveyors and Building Economists

Historic Metalwork Consultants

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