

KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL
Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh



Abbey Quarter
Temporary Coach & Car Park
for a period of up to 5 years

May 2018

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the provisions of Part 8, Article 81 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 – 2017, Kilkenny Co. Co. hereby gives notice of its intention to construct a temporary coach and car park on the Abbey Quarter site in the townland of Gardens, Kilkenny City.

The site of the proposed parking is located on the former Smithwicks Brewery site, now known as the Abbey Quarter. The site of the proposed development measures approx. 5,825 m².

The site is bounded to the south by the River Breagagh, to the north by St Francis Bridge and to the east by the River Nore. The proposed development will provide for 7 no. coach parking spaces and 132 car spaces and will be accessed from St Francis Bridge.

The proposed temporary development will be for a fixed duration of up to 5 years, pending the future development of this area of the Abbey Quarter Site in accordance with the provisions of the Abbey Quarter Masterplan.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND REASONS FOR THE SCHEME

The former Smithwicks Brewery, located in Kilkenny City, was closed by DIAGEO in 2014 following a decision to centralise production at the St James's Gate Brewery in Dublin.

In 2012, the elected members of Kilkenny Local Authorities (Kilkenny Borough Council and Kilkenny County Council) made a decision to purchase the site of the brewery from DIAGEO. The brewery site, which measures approx. 10.9 acres, was purchased with a view to job creation and the development of public amenity areas on the site.

In addition to the 10.9 acres of the brewery site, Kilkenny Co. Co. previously purchased a further 1.8 acres immediately adjoining the Brewery site, bringing the total landholding in the ownership of Kilkenny Co. Co. in the area to approx. 12.7 acres.

2.1 ABBEY QUARTER MASTERPLAN

Objective 3C of the Kilkenny City & Environs Development Plan 2014-2020 stated an objective *"To prepare a masterplan and urban design framework for the Smithwicks site and Bateman Quay during the lifetime of the Development Plan"*

Following extensive public consultations, a Masterplan and Urban Design Framework for the redevelopment of the former Brewery site and adjoining lands was approved by the elected members of Kilkenny Co. Co. on 31st July 2015.

In addition, some of the high level objectives of the Masterplan were also adopted by Kilkenny Co. Co. as a variation to the Kilkenny City & Environs Development Plan 2014 – 2020 (also adopted in July 2015) Objectives relevant to the current proposal are as outlined below.

2.2 VARIATION NO. 1 TO KILKENNY CITY & ENVIRONS DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2014 -2020

2.2.1 OBJECTIVE 3N

Objective 3N of the Kilkenny City & Environs Development Plan outlines an objective *"To provide for park and walk facilities for car and bus/coach parking at a site or sites in close proximity to the Abbey Creative Quarter Masterplan area to service both the Masterplan area and the city centre generally taking into account the mobility management plan for the city"*

A Parking Options Report was prepared by Roadplan Consulting on behalf of Kilkenny Co. Co. and this report was published in December 2017. Details of this report can be found at <https://www.kilkennycoco.ie/eng/Services/Planning/Abbey-Quarter-Brewery-site/Parking-Options-Study-December-2017.pdf>

This Parking Options Report has stated that *"...It is clear from the parking surveys that the provision of temporary parking within the Abbey Quarter site on undeveloped plotswould be viable because there is a demand for parking at those locations. ..."* It further states that *"Overall, the intention should be to utilise the undeveloped plots on the Abbey Quarter site to temporarily fulfil the parking needs of the developing Abbey Quarter, the Medieval Mile and the needs of the city centre."*

2.2.2 OBJECTIVE 3K

Objective 3K of the Kilkenny City & Environs Development Plan 2014 – 2020 outlines an objective *"....To prepare urban design criteria and recommendations for the implementation of the Abbey Creative Quarter Masterplan."* These Urban Design Criteria have been prepared and they were adopted by Kilkenny Co. Co. in January 2018.

Section 1.7 of the Urban Design Code refers to the issue of Temporary Uses and notes that *"...there is an extensive area for development, which will take in the region of 10 years to complete. In this context, it is considered appropriate and beneficial for the City to allow for temporary and meanwhile uses within the Masterplan which can fulfil short term needs, while longer term solutions are being formalised. The potential uses can include, but are not limited to fairs, concerts, markets, festival events, temporary car parking, pop up shops etc"*

In the case of large regeneration of urban areas of this scale, it is widely recognised that the utilisation of areas of site for “*meanwhile*” uses represents best practice allowing the site to be used in the short term for uses that are of benefit to the local community and the local economy. A meanwhile use refers to the short term use of an empty or underutilised building or land before they are brought back into a more permanent use.

The proposed temporary car park is considered to be an appropriate “Meanwhile” use for the site, pending the progression of development proposals for the site in accordance with the provisions of the Abbey Quarter Masterplan.

2.3 VARIATION NO. 5 TO KILKENNY CITY & ENVIRONS DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2014 – 2020

In order to allow for the potential for temporary parking uses on the Abbey Quarter Site a further Variation to the Kilkenny City & Environs development Plan was required to ensure that any potential conflicts between the Abbey Quarter Masterplan (Section 4.1.6) and the recommendations of the Urban Design Criteria and the Parking Options Report are clearly resolved and dealt with in a manner that gives certainty in the City and Environs Development Plan.

This variation outlined an objective “To provide for temporary car parking (meanwhile uses) as outlined in the Urban Design Code (completed on foot of Objective 3K) and the Parking Options Report (completed on foot of objective 3N) within the Masterplan area.” This variation to the Kilkenny City & Environs development Plan was adopted by Kilkenny County Council in March 2018 following a period of public consultation.

2.4 LOCATION OF PROPOSED TEMPORARY PARKING

Development works on the Abbey Quarter site will focus in the first instance on the redevelopment of the two retained buildings on the Brewery site, the Brewhouse and the Mayfair Building. Following this, the development will focus on the three riverside blocks in the Brewery site and the proposed building adjoining the Brewhouse. These six development plots are outlined below :

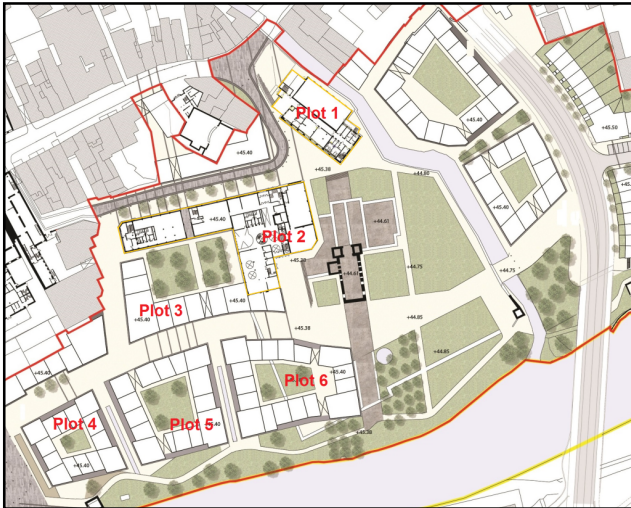


Figure 1 – Abbey Quarter Masterplan site layout

As a result, the plot located immediately to the north of the River Breagh and immediately to the south of St Francis Bridge has been identified as the preferred location for a temporary car and coach park.



Figure 2 Location of Proposed Development in the Abbey Quarter

The site of the proposed temporary car park has been selected for a number of reasons including :

- It is easily accessible from St Francis Bridge.
- The site is visible to visitors as they enter the city via St Francis Bridge.
- The site is located in close proximity to both the Brewhouse and Mayfair Buildings, which will be the first buildings to be developed on the former Brewery site.

- The site is currently covered in a concrete slab and thus does not require significant work to make it useable as a temporary car park.
- The site is located independent of the overall former brewery site and thus the provision of a temporary car park will not adversely affect development proposals for other development plots in the short term.
- The site is likely to remain vacant for a number of years and the proposed "*Meanwhile*" use as a temporary car park is considered to be of benefit to both the local community and the local economy.
- The site is located in close proximity to the area of tourist demand at St Canices Cathedral, Rothe House and the Smithwicks Visitor Experience.

2.5 PARKING DEMAND

As outlined in the Parking Options Study, there is a need in the short term for the provision of both car and coach parking in the city, in particular in the Irishtown area of the city.

2.5.1 CAR PARKING

The Parking Options study, prepared by Roadplan Consulting on behalf of Kilkenny Co. Co., has considered the need for additional car parking to service the proposed development of the Abbey Quarter, increased visitor numbers to the Medieval Mile and the general increase in growth of the population of Kilkenny City.

- Abbey Quarter – the development of the proposed buildings within the core of the former Brewery site (Plots 1 -6 as outlined below) could result in the need for up to 750 car parking spaces (this will be dependent on the particular uses for the buildings, which have yet to be determined)

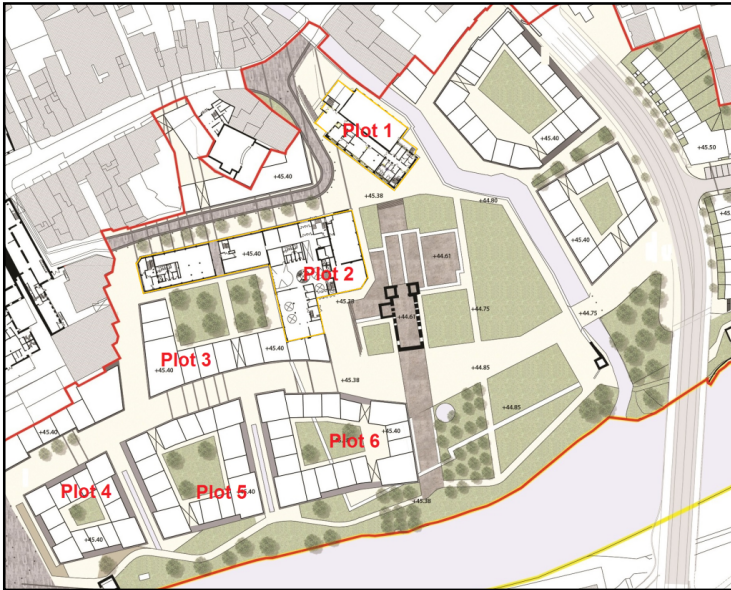


Figure 3 – Site layout for Abbey Quarter Development Plots

- An allowance of up to 60 spaces has been recommended for a general increase in population in Kilkenny.
- An allowance of up to 80 spaces has been recommended for increased visitor numbers to the Medieval Mile.

The total car parking requirement as outlined above is 890 spaces.

Car parking surveys undertaken in 2016 indicate that there could be up to 500 spaces available in existing car parks in the city, thus leaving a shortfall of 390 spaces.

The proposed temporary car park will provide approx. 130 of these spaces in the short term, pending a permanent parking solution. It is noted that the development of the former brewery site between the River Breagagh and Bateman Quay will take some time to complete and the uses for the development plots in this area have yet to be confirmed. The proposed temporary car park is an interim solution – once details of the uses for the proposed buildings are better defined, a more accurate estimate on the parking requirements can be determined.

2.5.2 COACH PARKING

Existing coach parking in the city is concentrated in the area of Kilkenny Castle, with overflow parking provided at Larchfield. As a result, many visitors to the city do not visit the full extent of the Medieval mile, with there being a very significant

difference in visitor numbers between the Castle at the southern end of the medieval mile and St Canices Cathedral at the northern end.

The Kilkenny City & Environs development Plan 2014-2020 states that "*The Council will encourage and assist development and tourist bodies in the provision of adequate recreational and tourism infrastructure and to further develop tourist orientated facilities in the City & Environs such as signage, public realm upgrading, **coach parking facilities** and traffic management*"

In order to provide a balance to the tourism infrastructure in the city, there has been a long held objective to provide for coach parking in the general Irishtown area of the city, at the northern end of the Medieval Mile. The development of the proposed parking facility on the Abbey Quarter site provides that opportunity.

The layout of the proposed parking will provide 7 no. coach parking spaces on the site.

3.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The site of the proposed car/coach park was most recently used by Diageo as a Garage area and a car park for employees. (see aerial photo below)

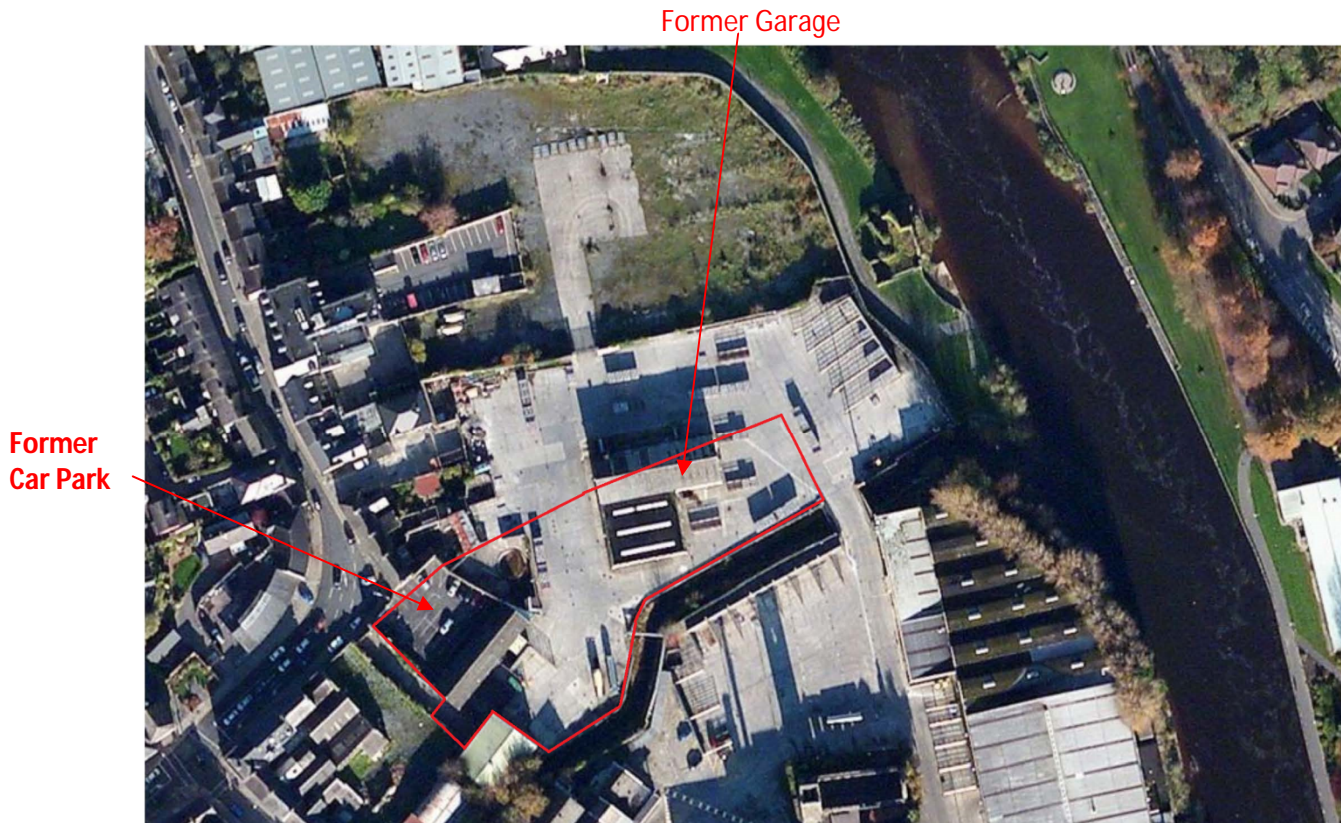


Figure 4 Aerial photo of the site of the proposed development prior to demolition of former Brewery structures

Following the demolition of the Brewery structures, the site is clear of all buildings and is covered, in the main, by a concrete slab.

The site is bounded

- to the north by St Francis Bridge and the recently constructed Central Access Scheme
- to the south by the River Breagagh
- to the East by the River Nore
- To the West by the masonry remains of the Bull Inn.



Figure 5 Current Aerial View of the site of the proposed development



Figure 6 View of site of proposed development looking west from St Francis Bridge

The site is currently surfaced with a concrete slab, with the exception of the area which was previously used for parking – that area is currently covered with a macadam surface.



Figure 7 View of site looking west from the River Breaghagh towards St Canices Cathedral



Figure 8 View of former car park area looking north towards St Canices Cathedral

There is currently a green palisade fence and a timber fence along the boundary of the site with St Francis Bridge and the Central Access Scheme. There is a low level concrete block wall along the boundary with the River Breaghagh.



Figure 9 Low level boundary wall along the River Breaghagh



Figure 10 Existing Palisade fence, with timber fence in the background, along boundary with the Central Access Scheme / St Francis Bridge

Currently, access to the site is via the former Brewery site and specifically via the security gate on Horse Barrack Lane, off Parliament Street.

4.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT.

The proposed development will provide parking for 7 no. coaches and 132 car parking spaces. The proposed layout of the car and coach parking is as outlined below :

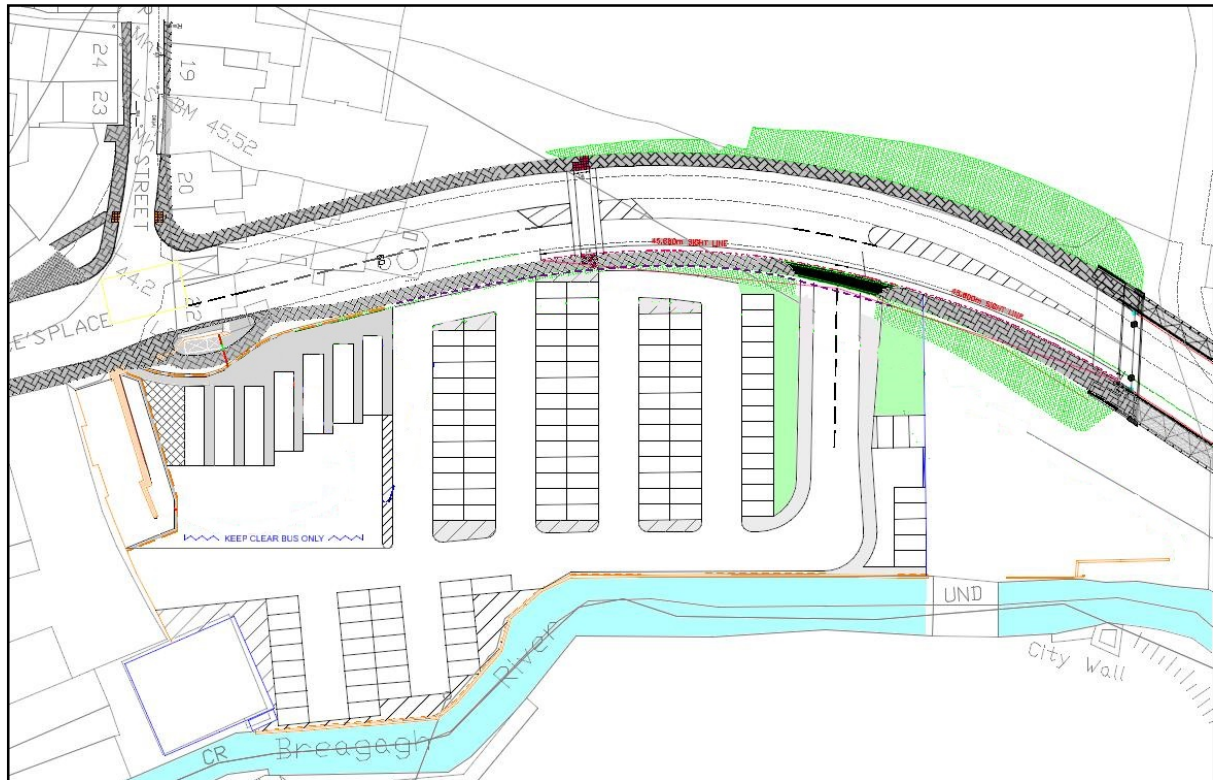


FIGURE 11 LAYOUT OF PROPOSED CAR/COACH PARK

The car/coach park will be accessed from St Francis Bridge and the Central Access Scheme. A right turning lane will be provided from the Central Access Scheme into the car park.

The existing roadside boundary either side of the proposed entrance will be modified to provide sightlines of 45m in each direction. These sightlines will be in accordance with the requirements of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS)

4.1.1 PAVEMENT

The proposed car and coach park will be constructed on top of the existing concrete slab, with the slab to be overlaid with a bituminous layer to provide a level surface.

The north west corner of the site, which is currently lower than the surrounding concrete slab will be raised by approx. 500mm to match the level of the concrete

slab. The raised area will be stopped approx. 3 m away from the upstanding wall of the Bull Inn.

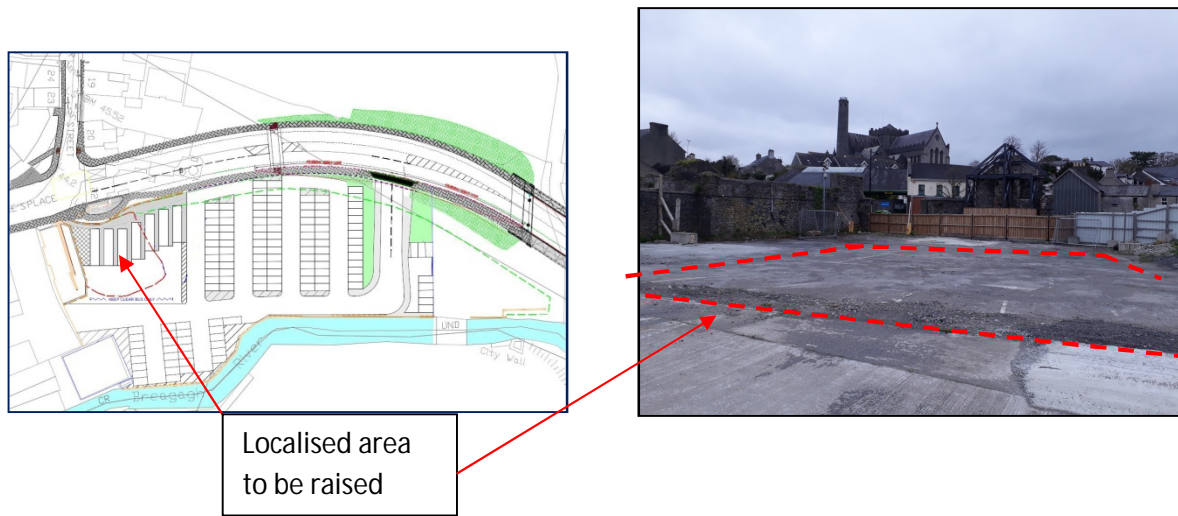


Figure 12 Localised area of the site to be raised

The level of a localised raised area will also be reduced (concrete slab removed) to provide a consistent level to the site, prior to resurfacing with macadam. This area is outlined below.

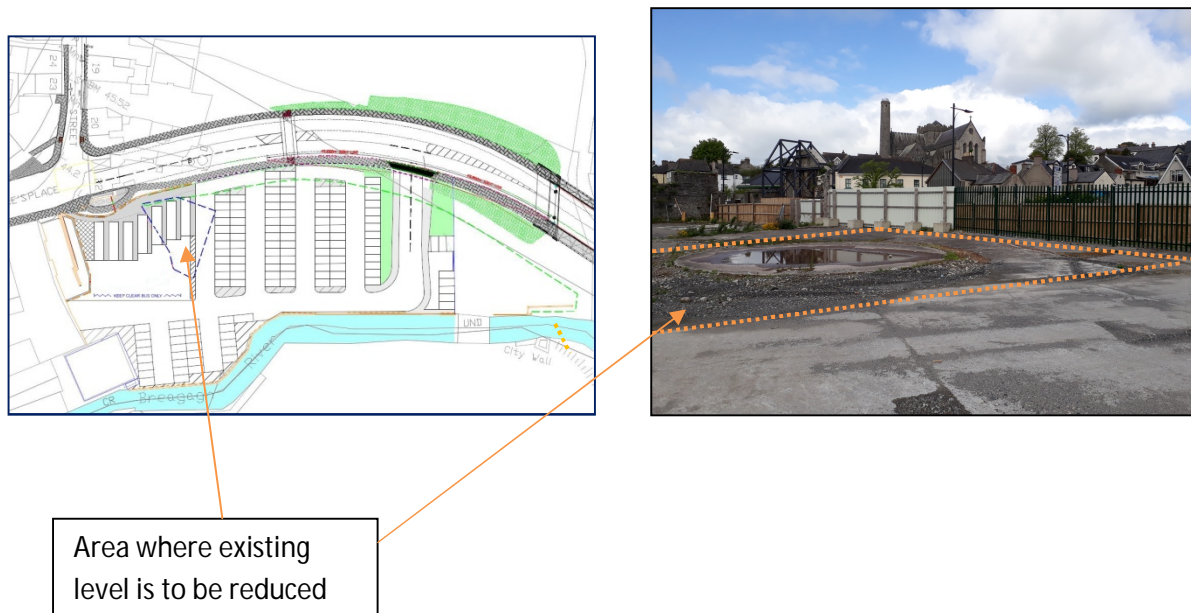


Figure 13 Localised area of the site to be lowered

4.1.2 DRAINAGE

The proposed parking area will use the existing drainage system in the concrete yard. There are currently two surface water outfalls to the River Breagagh from this concrete yard, both of which incorporate petrol interceptors. These outfalls will be used to discharge surface water run off from the car/coach park to the River Breagagh. It is not intended to construct any new outfall as part of the proposed development.

As the existing site is covered in a hard standing (Concrete slab), there will be no increased run off of surface water from the site as a result of the proposed development.

4.1.3 PROPOSED BOUNDARY TREATMENT.

SOUTHERN BOUNDARY ALONG THE RIVER BREAGAGH

The existing boundary wall along the River Breagagh is lower than the required 1.2m high boundary along the river. Accordingly, it is proposed to provide a 1.2m high timber fence along this boundary with the fence posts to be bolted to the concrete slab to avoid unnecessary excavations in this area. This timber fence will be similar to the existing timber fencing that has been used on the Central Access Scheme leading to St Francis Bridge.



Figure 14

Existing timber fence
adjoining St Francis
Bridge

WESTERN BOUNDARY AT BULL INN

In order to provide protection to the walls of the Bull Inn (on the western boundary of the car park) it is proposed to provide a buffer zone, approx. 3 m wide. This boundary will be formed using 2.0m high timber fencing. In order to avoid excavation in this area, it is proposed that the supports for the required fencing will be provided by way of concrete blocks that will be placed on top of the existing surface. These concrete blocks will also retain the material that is to be used to raise the existing ground levels in this area.



Figure 15

Example of concrete blocks to be used for fence foundations at Bull Inn

An information panel will be provided on this fencing that will provide visitors to the parking with details of the history of the Bull Inn.



Figure 16

Bull Inn, Kilkenny by Rev. James Graves, 1841 (reproduced from JRSAI, 1862-63)

EASTERN BOUNDARY (RIVER NORE)

A green powder coated palisade or paladin type fence will be provided on the eastern boundary of the site, immediately adjoining the existing bridge crossing of the River Breagagh. This will allow for views from the site to the River and to the City Wall including Evans Turret. This fence will be bolted to the concrete slab. A gate will be incorporated into the fencing to allow for occasional access for construction traffic to the balance of the Abbey Quarter site.

NORTHERN BOUNDARY (ST FRANCIS BRIDGE)

The existing timber fence will be retained from St Francis Bridge to the entrance to the proposed car park. A section of the existing hedging in this area will need to be removed to provide for the required sightlines from the proposed entrance.

To the west of the proposed entrance the existing timber fence will be modified as necessary to open the car park site up to pedestrian traffic and to allow visibility from the street into the parking area.

The existing palisade fence will be removed from this boundary.

4.1.4 FLOODING

The site of the proposed parking is protected by the Kilkenny Flood Relief Scheme against a 1 in 100 year flood event. This is the same level of protection as provided to the city centre area generally.

The proposed development does not result in the provision of any additional hard standing on the site and thus, surface water run off from the site will be similar to the existing.

4.1.5 PUBLIC LIGHTING

Public lighting will be provided in the car park to provide a satisfactory level of lighting at night time.

The existing public lighting heads on the Central Access Scheme leading to St Francis Bridge will be modified by way of installing a second lighting head that will be directed into the car/coach park site.

Additional lighting will be provided along the eastern and southern boundaries of the site. The area of the required concrete foundations for the poles along these boundaries will be excavated and monitored by an archaeologist. The cabling between the lighting poles will be located above ground and will be fixed to the fencing along these boundaries.

The locations of the proposed public lighting columns are as outlined in the site layout drawing.

Light spillage onto the adjoining River Breaghagh will be limited to less than 1.0 Lux to avoid impact on the River Breaghagh.

4.2 DURATION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

It is intended that the proposed car and coach park will be used for a period of up to 5 years. Kilkenny County Council is currently looking at development proposals for this site. Should any of these development proposals be progressed within a shorter timeframe than the proposed 5 year period, the car and coach park may operate for a shorter period.

5.0 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS.

5.1 APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING

An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report and Statement for the proposed development has been prepared by Moore Group – Environmental Services. This Screening Statement has concluded the following :

1. *“ The project is not directly connected with, or necessary to the conservation management of the European sites considered in this assessment.*
2. *The proposed development is unlikely to indirectly, significantly affect the Qualifying interests or Conservation Objectives of the European sites considered in this assessment.*
3. *The project, alone or in combination with other projects, is not likely to have significant effects on the European sites considered in this assessment in view of their conservation objectives.*
4. *It is possible to rule out likely significant impacts on any European sites considered in the assessment.*
5. *It is possible to conclude that there would be no significant effects, no potentially significant effects and no uncertain effects if the project were to proceed.”*

Accordingly, it is the view of Moore Group Environmental Services that it is not necessary to undertake any further stage of the Appropriate Assessment process.

A finding of no significant effects is presented in Appendix A of the AA Screening Report in accordance with the EU Commissions methodological guidance

The Appropriate Assessment Screening undertaken by the Planning Authority has also concluded that *“ Significant Impacts cane be ruled out”*

5.2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

An Archaeological Impact Assessment for the proposed development has been prepared by Archaeological Management Solutions on behalf of Kilkenny County Council.

This Archaeological Impact Assessment has concluded that ".....the archaeological impacts of the proposed development are not significant. The development has been designed to protect the upstanding archaeological remains on site, the Bull Inn and Evans Turret, behind fencing. Subsurface archaeology is at least 0.5m below ground. The majority of the works will involve building up the level of the ground up to create a level surface for the car park, and new service trenches are avoided by renovating existing services or laying cables for lighting on the surface. In the one area that will be reduced, the ground reduction will consist of just the removal of the modern surface layer of concrete c.0.3m. Emplacement of the protective fencing, ground reduction and the excavation of bases for new lighting poles will be monitored by a licence eligible archaeologist. In the unlikely event that archaeology is impacted or previously unidentified archaeologically significant features are encountered during construction works for the proposed car and coach parks these works will be stopped, Kilkenny County Council and the National Monuments Service will be informed, and a suitable measure will be agreed to mitigate the archaeological impacts. "

5.3 CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT PLAN

A Construction Management Plan will be prepared by the contractor for the proposed development, which will outline the best practice construction management measures that will be employed during the construction works to prevent local impacts on the local environment during the construction of the proposed development.

An Draft Outline Construction Management Plan has been prepared for the proposed development and this will be completed by the contractor when appointed.

6.0 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

6.1 PUBLIC DISPLAY

In accordance with the requirements of Part 8, Article 81 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 – 2017, details of the proposed development will be on public display from Wednesday 16th May 2018 to Wednesday 13th June 2018.

Plans and particulars of the proposed development will be available for inspection or purchase for a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy during office hours from Wednesday 16th May 2018 to Wednesday 13th June 2018 inclusive, at the following Kilkenny County Council offices:

- Planning Dept., Kilkenny County Council, County Buildings, John St., Kilkenny City from 9am to 1pm & 2pm to 4.00pm Monday to Friday (Except Public Holidays)
- Carnegie Library, Johns Quay, Kilkenny from 10am to 8pm Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 10am to 5pm Thursdays and Fridays, and 10am to 1:30pm Saturdays (except Bank Holiday weekends).

6.2 SUBMISSIONS

Submissions or observations with respect to the proposed development, dealing with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area in which the development will be carried out, may be made online at <https://consult.kilkenny.ie/>, in writing to the Planning Section, Kilkenny County Council, County Hall, John Street, Kilkenny or sent to the following e-mail address abbeyquarterparking@kilkennycoco.ie . The latest date for receipt of submissions on the development is Wednesday 27th June, 2018. Submissions should be clearly marked "*Abbey Quarter Temporary Parking – Planning Submission*"