

O'Connell Street Enhancement Project, Sligo

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INTRODUCTION

The O'Connell Street Enhancement Project is really beginning to take shape this month, with almost 50% of all kerbing, paving and ancillary works now complete. The work is being undertaken by main contractors ShareRidge Limited and work is steadily progressing week-on-week.

Already, locals are noticing a major improvement in the vicinity of Sligo's main commercial zone and, with close to half of the new paving now in place, they are really starting to get a feel for their new and improved city centre.

The Project includes works along O'Connell Street itself, as well as at its junctions with Grattan Street / John Street and with Wine Street / Fish Quay / Lower Knox Street. It also includes works along Lower Knox Street to Hyde Bridge.

The O'Connell Street Enhancement Project is the initial step in the provision of the Global Public Realm Strategy for Sligo City and, as such, is considered the flagship project.

As well as delivering an attractive urban space, the Project will incorporate the construction of a new surface water drainage network and new ducting infrastructure for utility services.

The Project is being funded by the European Regional Development Fund, through the North West Regional Assembly; the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government; and with grant aid from the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund.

PARKING, PEDESTRIANS AND TRANSPORTATION

The key objectives of the O'Connell Street Enhancement Project are to enhance the quality and experience for pedestrians; to retain and develop public transport amenities; and to regularise and strengthen the road and associated facilities. The Project will see a notable transition to pedestrian priority and this, combined with the public transport strategy, will contribute to reduced air pollution and lower noise levels, as well as promoting a multi-modal transport model.

Eight pedestrian crossings will be provided and the crossing points will be strategically located to accommodate pedestrian flow onto O'Connell Street and to linkages to Tobergal Lane, Stephen Street and Wine Street. The crossings will be wheelchair friendly and will incorporate appropriate tactile paving to assist the visually impaired.

“Strict enforcement of the parking bylaws will be implemented on O'Connell Street to ensure the full potential of the Enhancement Scheme is realised and to protect the safety of pedestrians.”

Historically, there were two dedicated disabled parking spaces at the southern end of the Street and two spaces will continue to be provided here. In addition, the parking bays have been upgraded and will incorporate a drop kerb to facilitate mobility impaired users. These two spaces are the *only* parking spaces for private motor vehicles on O'Connell Street, with dedicated loading bay facilities being installed at both the south-eastern and north-western sides of O'Connell Street for commercial deliveries.

The bus stop on the northern side of the street has been regulated. This is a dedicated pick-up and drop-off point and is *strictly reserved* for the provision of public transport – and in particular for Bus Éireann. Dedicated bus parking areas are provided on Connaughton Road.

In order to realise the full potential of the Enhancement Scheme, ad-hoc parking will be closely monitored. Vehicles – no matter what type or size – are not permitted to park on the pedestrian footpath and strict enforcement of the parking bylaws will be implemented. This type of parking not only detracts from the streetscape, but also endangers pedestrians.



Private vehicles parked on the footpath on O'Connell Street detract from the streetscape setting, reduce the available footpath space and pose risks to the health and safety of pedestrians.

PROJECT UPDATE

- The O'Connell Street closure came into effect on Monday, September 30th, at the junction of Grattan Street. It will remain closed for the month of October.
- Traffic on the diversionary route is flowing well, with no congestion being experienced to date. Deliveries are still entering O'Connell Street via Wine Street.
- Areas of works include:
 - Junction of O'Connell Street and John Street:
 - Paving works have been completed as far as John Street;
 - Paving now underway on John Street, going west (Phase 1B).
 - O'Connell Street southern end pedestrian crossing:
 - Paving works underway.
 - Tobergal Lane pedestrian crossing:
 - Kerbing has been laid as far as former A-Wear store;
 - Ducting and drainage underway.
 - Mullaney's to Penneys:
 - Portion of footpath has been excavated, with further excavation works commencing Monday, October 14th;
 - Ducting/ drainage /paving in progress;
 - Section of footpath from FIXlgo to Tesco will be closed to facilitate commencement of excavation works.
- Full Traffic Management will remain in operation with designated crossing points at:
 - H Samuel / Bridge Foot
 - Tesco
 - Four Lanterns

