

# **Moll Goggins and Lighthouse Road Viewing Platforms Refurbishment in Youghal”**



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Comhairle Contae Chorcaí  
Cork County Council

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This project has been designed by Cork County Council CPIU Architects Team (CCC) in collaboration with the Road Department and external structural engineers at Malachy Walsh & Partners (MWP). Cork County Council has been successful in delivering numerous quality public realm projects that have generated increased pedestrian footfall and socio-economic activity in Cork county towns and villages.

Youghal is located in East County Cork overlooking the estuary of the River Blackwater. This seaside town, adjacent the border of County Cork and Waterford, stretches along the coastline to form a long and narrow footprint. The regional road R634 (Lighthouse Road) connects the town centre to the Front Strand Beach. The historic town of Youghal started out as a Viking stronghold, where it became a commercial seaport. During the 12th Century, it was raided and conquered to become a Norman walled town. By 1223, Youghal became known as an integral commercial port. In the early medieval period, the main defence quay wall was fortified with towers. Much of the historic walls and fortifications that remain date back to the 16th Century, where the town regained its prosperity and the walls were repaired under Richard Boyle's patronage. The Clock Gate Tower, built in 1777, where the original gate was, remains as a prominent feature of the town today. The surviving fortifications suggest the strategic significance of the port and town throughout its history.

As a result of such historic and cultural heritage value and the beautiful coastal landscape, Youghal was and continues to be a prosperous, well-known resort town for holiday makers.

However, as the town has developed, it currently suffers from a disconnection from the once heavily populated Front Strand. Additionally, landmarks of great importance to Youghal's heritage and community, such as Moll Goggins platform, are eroding and in need of repair. Moll Goggins platform in particular has been damaged by coastal erosion, becoming structurally unsafe and has been fenced off since 2008.

This proposal seeks to deliver the structural repair and sensitive design to the two platforms along Lighthouse Road. This will be a first step in enhancing and creating an attractive and safe link between the town and beach, through a people-centred design approach, shifting the focus from vehicles towards pedestrians and cyclists. The aim is to enhance Youghal's historic, cultural and natural heritage value, as outlined in the new county development plan.

The refurbishment of the platforms, will once again facilitate for areas off the main thoroughfare for pedestrians to enjoy the coastal views and encouraging them to linger longer along the waterfront.



## 2.0 SITE ANALYSIS

The historical heritage and natural beauty of the harbour is what gives Youghal its authenticity, with iconic views out to the open sea, Capel island, and Waterford.

The town evolved as a commercial port. The preserved architectural heritage enables a local and visitor alike to form a timeline of the town's development. This, coupled with the Youghal's strong sense of community and culture, makes it an attractive area to invest in and develop.

The natural heritage of the harbour with extensive coastal scenery and sandy beaches has allowed Youghal to operate as a resort for decades. The rugged shorelines exposing a mixture of monumental outcrops of siltstone, sandstone and mudstone envelop Youghal bay.

The two platforms in the scheme, adjoining the Lighthouse Road, have the opportunity to provide resting areas and lookout points, creating a more attractive connection between the town and beach promoting active mobility in the area.

The platforms benefit greatly from the surrounding heritage. The area offers views of the architectural conservation areas and protected structures to one side and the harbour along with nature conservation areas to the other. Moll Goggins viewing platform holds great historical and cultural heritage within the area since approximately 1842.

*"Sadly, the days of her watch stretched to months and then years with no news of the ship."*

The platform holds the name after the legend of Moll Goggin. The legend speaks of a young woman who fell deeply in love with a seafarer who had promised to marry her on his ship's return. She scanned the horizon from this spot and awaited a ship that never returned. It was Moll Goggins longing and agonizing vigil that named the corner after her.

Many Youghal citizens, remember the platform in its hayday with fondness and nostalgia. Given the cultural significance of the site, it is imperative that the site is repaired and restored to its former glory.

Despite sitting on a layer of stable bedrock, the layer directly beneath the platform consists of boulder clay and is easily eroded. As a result, the platform is crumbling away due to coastal conditions causing it to be structurally unsafe and therefore closed off to the public.

The second platform sits close to the Youghal Lighthouse and once operated as a filling station. This platform is also in disrepair due to geological conditions and coastal erosion. From the beach looking up, the concrete slab behind the stone walls at the roadside is sitting on an unstable, rusty steel beam. Similar to Moll Goggins Corner, this platform has also been cut off from the public due to safety concerns.

Both platforms are in a state of significant disrepair and in major need of restoration.



Entrance to the Harbour



Rocky Shoreline of the Harbour



Moll Goggins Platform - Existing Condition



Lighthouse Road Platform - Existing Condition



### 3.0 STRUCTURAL WORKS

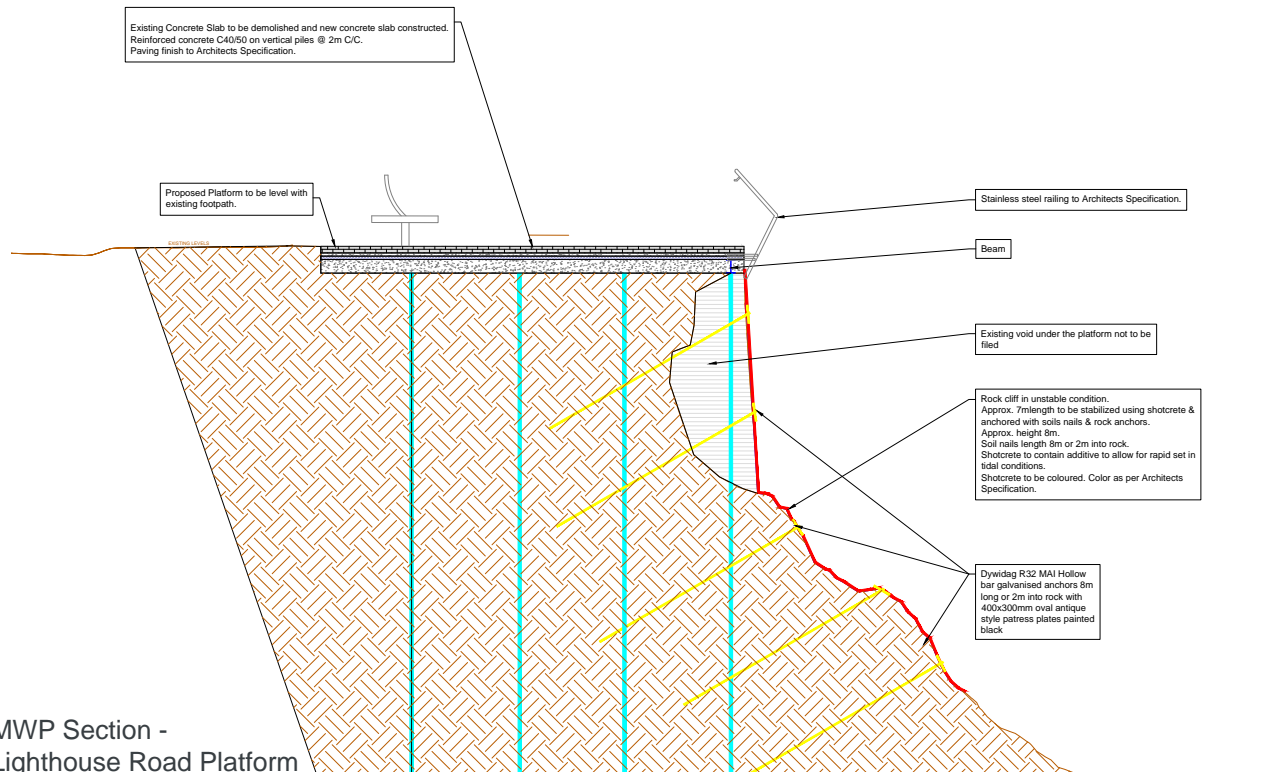
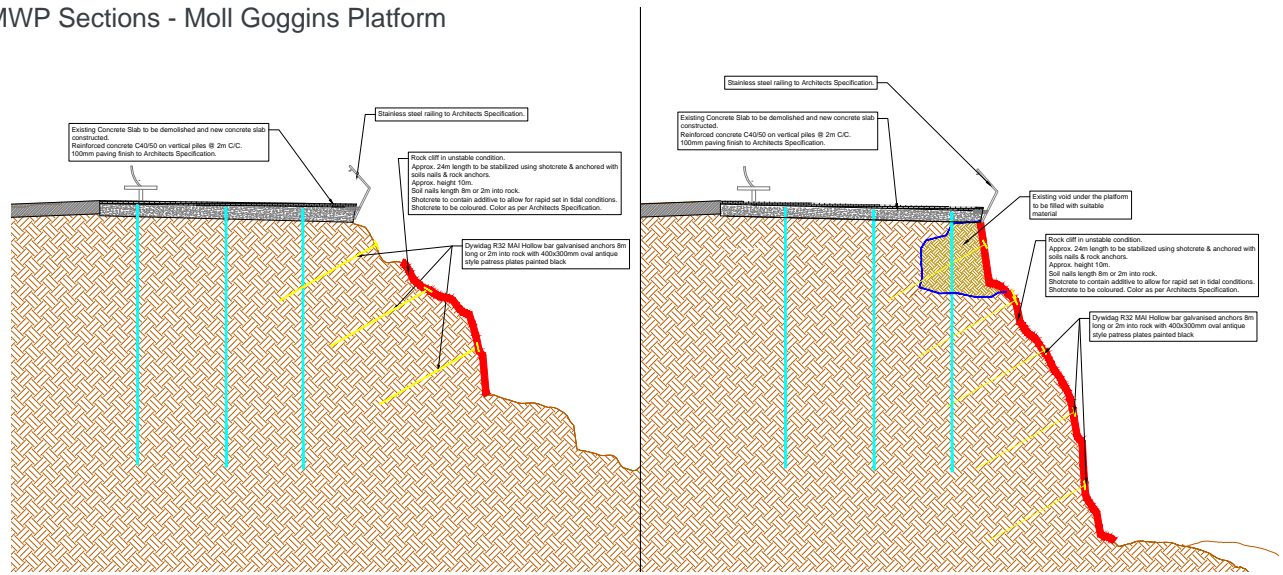
Before any refurbishments of the platforms takes place, the engineers at Malachy Walsh and Partners must undertake the stabilisation of the rock face.

For Moll Goggins Platform, an approximate length of 24m on the rock face below the platform is to be sprayed with shotcrete. This will be anchored with soil nails and rock anchors to reduce the risk of further erosion or damage to the rockface. The shotcrete will be 10m in height and anchored with soil nails varying in length from 2m to 8m depending on the cliff conditions. Due to tidal surrounding and fauna nearby, the shotcrete will contain an additive for rapid set. A new concrete plinth will then be fitted into the position of the existing. This will consist of reinforced concrete with a 100mm paving finish, anchored into the rock with vertical piles. The existing void beneath the platform that has been created due to coastal erosion will be filled with suitable material to provide a stable support for the new plinth.

The aim of the architectural design is to provide a shotcrete finish that sensitively responds to its site context in colour and texture.

The Lighthouse Road platform will need a similar approach to Moll Goggins platform. Approximately 7m length of the rock face will be stabilised using shotcrete and will be anchored with soil nails and rock anchors. This will be approximately 8m in height and the soil nails will again vary from 2m to 8m in length. Just like in Moll Goggins platform, there will be an additive to ensure rapid setting time. However, the existing void under platform will not be filled. Instead, the existing unstable beam will be replaced with a new one to support the load of the new concrete plinth. The new plinth will consist of reinforced concrete, level with the existing footpath, and anchored with vertical piles. The new concrete plinth will span above the location of existing steps to allow for uncomplicated reversibility in the future.

MWP Sections - Moll Goggins Platform



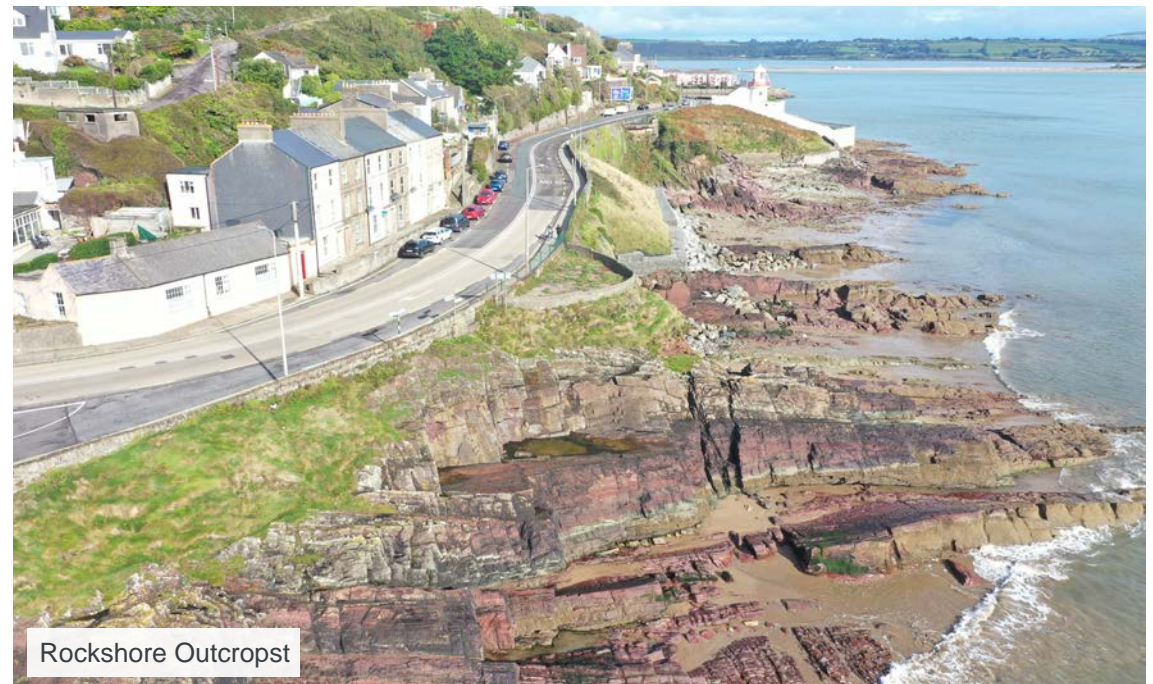
MWP Section - Lighthouse Road Platform

## 4.0 DESIGN STRATEGY

Through the enhancement of safe, public saunter areas with views out to the harbour, the scheme aims to promote active mobility to and from the town. The sensitive design and restoration of the existing platforms reinforce the cultural and heritage value these platforms have on the locality. This will create an attractive asset for locals and visitors alike. The design seeks to establish a strong connection between the platforms and their history, surrounding context and the natural beauty of the jagged shoreline.

Design Focal Features include:

- Ensuring the new structural additions fit into the context of the existing rock face, an architectural finish of varying colour and profile is desired. The approach is one that takes inspiration from the existing monumental outcrop shoreline.
- The platforms not only offer extensive views out to the open sea but the new intervention will guide a user towards directed views of significant landmarks such as Capel Island, Waterford and the Youghal Lighthouse.
- The natural material palette that has been selected, such as timber and stone, enhances the beauty of the site. Irish stone matches the outcrops both in colour and texture. Polished exposed aggregate concrete finish will contrast with the stone tiles. The tiles, running along the perimeter of the platform will incorporate a quote from the existing plaque, nodding to the platform's heritage of Moll Goggin stating: *"Sadly, the days of her watch stretched to months and then years with no news of the ship."* The pavers also invite the users to look out to significant landmarks such as Capel Island and Waterford.
- The geometry and form of the new railings will take inspiration from those already existing in Youghal. The warmth of the natural timber finish on the railing acts as a contrast to the concrete and stone. The timber will conceal the concrete plinth and structural infill. Ambient architectural lighting will be incorporated into the railing handrail and along the perimeter of the concrete plinth. This lighting will enhance the features of the scheme and create a safe, gender sensitive, and ambient space after dark.
- Green areas will be incorporated into the scheme acting as rain gardens. These will collect and clean run off water and better promote biodiversity, as well as contributing to vertical calming measures to slow down traffic adjacent to these public areas.
- Street furniture throughout the scheme will take cognisance of all users. The use of the standard and smart furniture that caters for all ages and abilities will help to enhance the surrounding area. The addition of street furniture will allow for the enjoyment of views and allow for resting, gathering and lingering areas for the people.





Proposed Moll Goggins Platform

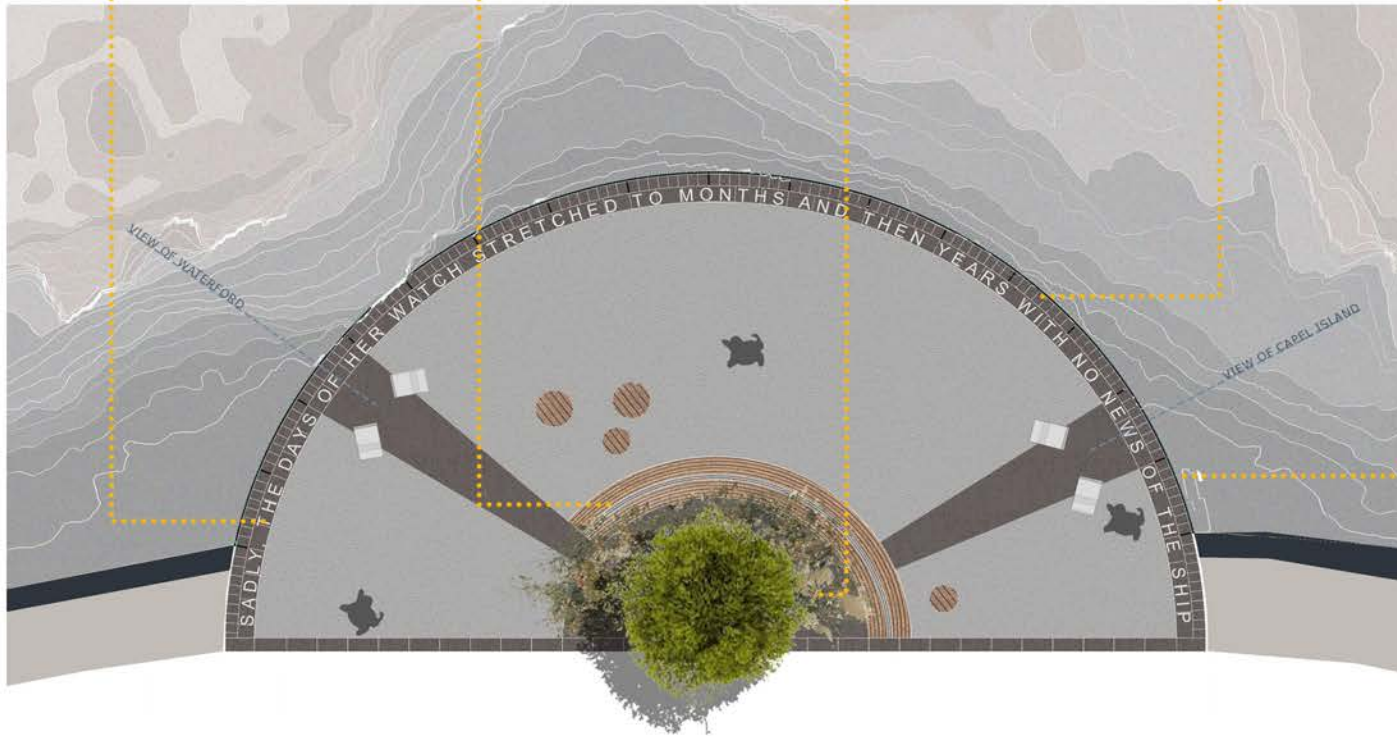
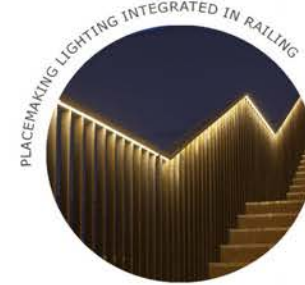




Proposed Lighthouse Road Platform

# FURNITURE, LIGHTING & MATERIAL PALETTE

YOUGHAL VIEWING PLATFORMS - MOLL GOGGINS PLATFORM



# FURNITURE, LIGHTING & MATERIAL PALETTE

YOUGHAL VIEWING PLATFORMS



NATURE BASED SOLUTION  
BIODIVERSITY RAIN GARDEN

IRISH STONE PAVING WITH  
SPECKLED CONCRETE



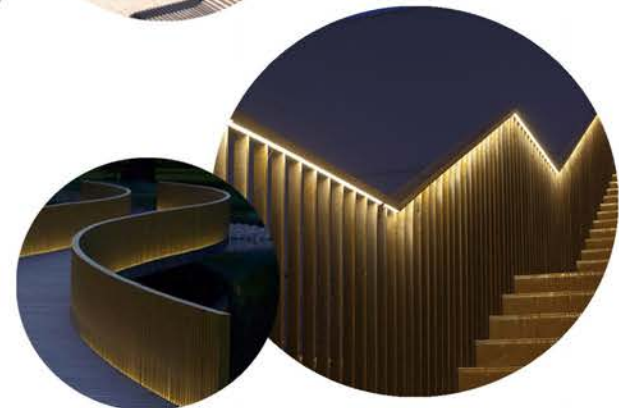
PROPOSED RAILING DESIGN INSPIRED  
BY EXISTING RAILING IN YOUGHAL



INNOVATIVE STREET FURNITURE  
TO ATTRACT PEOPLE TO ENJOY THE  
VIEWS



INTEGRATED PLACEMAKING  
LIGHTING IN PLATFORMS  
STRIP LIGHTS AND UPLIGHTS



## 5.0 THE VISION

The overall aspiration of the project is to enhance the surrounding area and community through sensitive quality design, while conserving and reinstating the historical and heritage value of the platforms. Thus, in turn reviving the connection from the beach to the town, to increase footfall and allow for public saunter areas. Through the establishment of a strong connection between the platforms and their history, surrounding context and local people the authenticity of the place is exposed, strengthening the sense of place, heritage and community.



Proposed Moll Goggins Platform - Elevation



Proposed Moll Goggins Platform - Section



Proposed Moll Goggins Platform



Proposed Lighthouse Road Platform