

Blackrock to Merrion

Core Bus Corridor Preferred Route

Public Consultation
March 2020

15



Project Ireland 2040
Building Ireland's Future

**BUS
CONNECTS**
MORE PEOPLE, TO MORE PLACES, MORE OFTEN.



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1. Introduction

1.1 What has happened so far?

Between November 2018 and May 2019 the National Transport Authority (NTA) carried out the first round of public consultation on initial proposals for the Emerging Preferred Routes of sixteen Core Bus Corridors across the Greater Dublin Area (GDA). During this consultation phase thirteen thousand submissions were received in total. A Consultation Submissions Report for each corridor is available to view and download on our website www.busconnects.ie.

All of the submissions were reviewed and considered as part of the design preparation for the Preferred Route for each corridor. We have amended our initial proposals to address some of the issues raised in submissions, including incorporating suggestions and recommendations from local residents, community groups and stakeholders. We are now publishing the Preferred Routes for sixteen Core Bus Corridors and commencing a second round of public consultation.

This document is one of a series of sixteen, each dedicated to a single Core Bus Corridor. The document provides a written description of the Preferred Route from start to finish with supporting maps and includes information on revisions made, if any, from the initial emerging preferred route.

The original brochures detailing each Emerging Preferred Route, published last year, are available to view and download on our website www.busconnects.ie. These brochures contain information on the process for impacted property owners, the project timelines and steps required for statutory planning application.

1.2 What is BusConnects?

BusConnects is the National Transport Authority's programme to greatly improve bus services. It is a key part of the Government's policies to improve public transport and address climate change in Dublin and other cities. It is included within the following Government policy strategies:

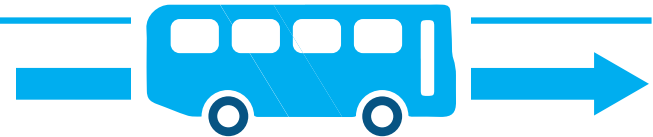
- ▶ The National Development Plan 2018 - 2027;
- ▶ Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2016 - 2035; and
- ▶ The Climate Action Plan 2019.



Dublin is growing and needs a bus network that works for a developing city. The aim of BusConnects is to deliver an enhanced bus system that is better for the city, its people and the environment. BusConnects is designed to provide a better, more reliable and more efficient bus service for everyone.

BusConnects: The facts at a glance

230km of bus priority making journeys faster and more reliable



200km of cycle lanes/tracks



Transitioning to a new
low emissions bus fleet



State of the art
ticketing system

Cashless payment system



Simpler fare structure



New Park & Ride
sites in key locations

New bus livery

providing a common style
across all operators



New bus stops and shelters

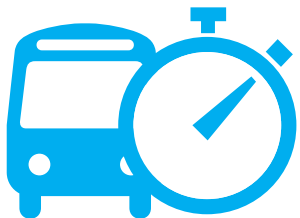
with better signage and information



Dublin area bus network redesign

creating a more efficient network with high frequency
spines, new orbital routes and increased bus services

1.3 What are the benefits of this project?



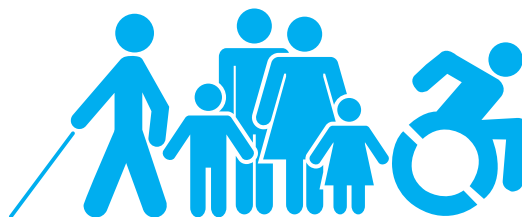
Journey Time Savings -

This project will deliver journey time savings of up to 40-50% on corridors. Dedicated bus and cycle lanes can significantly increase bus travel speeds and reliability.



Building a sustainable city and addressing climate change -

Tackling the challenges of climate change is a priority for Ireland and moving more people to public transport is a key component of the solution.



Accessibility for all -

More bus shelters, with seating where possible, new footpaths and better information at bus stops, will make using the fully accessible bus fleet easier for all, including the elderly and mobility impaired.



Better cycling facilities -

This project will see the provision of much needed cycling facilities around the city region with over 200kms of high quality cycle routes provided.



Pedestrians and Urban Realms -

Along each route, improvements and enhancements will be made to footpaths, walkways and pedestrian crossings. Funding and investment for local urban realms with additional landscaping and outdoor amenities will be provided.

1.4 Understanding the terminology

1. Core Bus Corridor (CBC):

Part of the overall BusConnects Programme is to create 16 radial Core Bus Corridors (CBC). A CBC is an existing road with bus priority so that buses can operate efficiently, reliably and punctually. This generally means full length dedicated bus lanes on both sides of the road from start to finish of each corridor or other measures to ensure that buses are not delayed in general traffic congestion. The bus lanes will be alongside general traffic and segregated cycle lanes/tracks where feasible.

2. Segregated Cycle Tracks:

A segregated cycle track is a separate section of the road dedicated for cycling only. This space will generally be isolated from other vehicular traffic by a physical kerb. Where it is not physically possible to have segregated cycle tracks there will be the option of quiet roads and shared cycling on reduced speed roads for cyclists.

3. Emerging Preferred Route (EPR):

The NTA published outline plans for each of the 16 CBCs in a non-statutory public consultation process in 2018/2019. The options were called Emerging Preferred Routes (EPR), in some cases with multiple sub-options, to inform the public of the likely layout of the roadway with the necessary CBC infrastructure in place. They included possible impacts on front gardens, and likely changes to how traffic will operate to facilitate bus priority.

4. Preferred Route Option (PRO):

Following consideration of the public submissions about the 16 EPR's, the Core Bus Corridor proposals have been reviewed and amended. They are now being presented as the Preferred Route Option (PRO) and are subject to a second round of non-statutory public consultation.

They are not final proposals as they are subject to further consideration from the second round of public consultation and also subsequent examination in the context of Environmental Impact Assessment.

5. Bus Gate



A Bus Gate is a sign-posted short length of stand-alone bus lane. This short length of road is restricted exclusively to buses, taxis and cyclists plus emergency vehicles. It facilitates bus priority by removing general through traffic along the overall road where the bus gate is located. General traffic will be directed by signage to divert away to other roads before they arrive at the Bus Gate.

6. Signal Controlled Priority:

Signal Control Priority uses traffic signals to enable buses to get priority ahead of other traffic on single lane road sections, but it is only effective for short distances. This typically arises where the bus lane cannot continue due to obstructions on the roadway. An example might be where a road has pinch-points where it narrows due to existing buildings or structures that cannot be demolished to widen the road to make space for a bus lane. It works through the use of traffic signal controls (typically at junctions) where the bus lane and general traffic lane must merge ahead and share the road space for a short distance until the bus lane recommences downstream. The general traffic will be stopped at the signal to allow the bus pass through the narrow section first and

when the bus has passed the general traffic will then be allowed through the lights.

7. Toucan Crossing:

A Toucan Crossing is a roadway crossing designed to enable both pedestrians and cyclists to cross the road with purposefully designed signal controls.

8. Quiet Street Treatment:

Where CBC roadway widths cannot facilitate cyclists without significant impact on bus priority, alternative cycle routes are explored for short distances away from the CBC bus route. Such offline options may include directing cyclists along streets with minimal general traffic other than car users who live on the street.

They are called Quiet Streets due to the low amount of general traffic and are deemed suitable for cyclists sharing the roadway with the general traffic without the need to construct segregated cycle tracks or painted cycle lanes. The Quiet Street Treatment would involve appropriate advisory signage for both the general road users and cyclists.

9. Urban Realm:

Urban Realm refers to the everyday street spaces that are used by people to cross, shop, socialise, play, and use for activities such as walking, exercise or commute to/from work. The Urban Realm encompasses all streets, squares, junctions, and other rights-of-way, whether in residential, commercial or civic use. When well-designed and laid out with care in a community setting, it enhances the every-day lives of residents and those passing through. It typically relates to all open-air parts of the built environment where the public has free access. It would include seating, trees, planting and other aspects to enhance the experience for all.

Signal Controlled Priority (SCP)



1. Traffic proceeds as normal.

2. As the bus approaches, the light signal changes to halt general traffic.

3. The bus has priority to proceed.

4. When the bus has cleared the junction, general traffic proceeds.

1.5 Map of all 16 core bus corridors

Preferred Routes

1. Clongriffin to City Centre
2. Swords to City Centre
3. Ballymun to City Centre
4. Finglas to Phibsborough
5. Blanchardstown to City Centre
6. Lucan to City Centre
7. Liffey Valley to City Centre
8. Clondalkin to Drimnagh
9. Greenhills to City Centre
10. Tallaght to Terenure
11. Kimmage to City Centre
12. Rathfarnham to City Centre
13. Bray to City Centre
14. UCD Ballsbridge to City Centre
15. Blackrock to Merrion
16. Ringsend to City Centre



2. Preferred Route Description

2.1 Overview

The Blackrock to Merrion Core Bus Corridor (CBC) commences on Merrion Road at its junction with Nutley Lane. Buses are proposed to be routed along Rock Road joining the N31 at the Mount Merrion Avenue junction. The proposed CBC terminates at the junction of Temple Hill/ Monkstown Road and Stradbroke Road. Priority for buses and cyclists is provided along the entire route, consisting primarily of dedicated bus lanes in each direction, and continuous segregated cycle tracks. The Blackrock to Merrion CBC connects to the route of the UCD to City Centre CBC at the junction of Merrion Road and Nutley Lane, providing a continuous route from Blackrock to the City Centre.

The following paragraphs will describe each section of the CBC in more detail identifying the key design revisions which have been incorporated into the design since the publication of the Emerging Preferred Route (EPR) in February 2019.

2.2 Nutley Lane to Booterstown Avenue – Merrion Road, Rock Road

Between the Merrion Road/Nutley Lane junction and the Rock Road/Booterstown Avenue junction it is proposed to provide a single bus lane, a single general traffic lane and segregated cycle tracks in each direction along the majority of the route. At the access junction to St. Vincent's Hospital from Merrion Road, it is proposed to remove the left-turn lane in order to improve cyclist safety and reduce the necessary land acquisition.

An adjustment to the proposed cross-section is proposed between Merrion Avenue and Estate Avenue in order to reduce the extent of necessary land acquisition.

Between Elm Court and the Strand Road junction, it is proposed to provide a three-lane carriageway with a footpath and cycle track in each direction. The carriageway will comprise of two general traffic lanes and one outbound bus lane. Priority for inbound buses will be provided

via Signal Controlled Priority at the Strand Road junction. A strip of parallel parking bays will be provided on the outbound side of the Merrion Road, in the vicinity of No. 264 to No. 270.

The proposal contains provisions for safety improvement works at the junction of Merrion Road and Strand Road, including segregated cycle facilities; the removal of the slip lane from Strand Road to Merrion Road and the control of the Strand Road utilising traffic signals. On the southern arm of the junction, a strip of parallel parking bays is proposed on the outbound side.

Between Strand Road and Booterstown Avenue, a two-way cycle track is proposed on the eastern side of the route.

Adjustments to the Rock Road cross-section and layout are proposed between the junctions of Trimleston Avenue and Booterstown Avenue in order to reduce the necessary land acquisition and to provide improved access to the nearby school.

To facilitate this proposed layout, land-take from the following areas will be required:

- Properties at the junction of Merrion Road / Nutley Lane,
- Portion of green space from St. Vincent's Hospital Campus,
- Properties between Merrion Village junction and Herbert Avenue,
- Properties between Estate Avenue and Elm Court,
- Properties adjacent to the Strand Road / Merrion Road (Merrion Gates) junction, and
- Properties between the entrance road to Elmpark Apartments and Trimleston Avenue.

The indicative extents of this land take are shown on the maps included in the Appendix to this brochure.

2.3 Booterstown Avenue and Stradbroke Road – Rock Road, Frascati Road, Temple Road, Temple Hill, Stradbroke Road

Between the Booterstown Avenue and Stradbroke Road junctions, it is proposed to provide a single bus lane, a single general traffic lane and segregated cycle track arrangement in each direction.

The right turn lane from Rock Road to Booterstown Dart station as outlined in the EPR is no longer being proposed in order to maintain current pedestrian facilities at the junction.

An adjustment to the proposed cross-section is proposed between Booterstown Avenue and Blackrock Clinic. This will reduce the necessity for land acquisition along Willow Park School and reduce the extent of necessary land acquisition along Blackrock College and adjacent properties.

Alterations to junctions along this section are proposed to improve cyclist safety. This

includes the removal of the left-turn slip lane from Rock Road to Rock Hill and the provision of protected cycle lanes at other junctions.

To accommodate this proposed layout, land-take from the following areas will be required:

- Blackrock College,
- Car parking area adjacent to Blackrock Park,
- Properties between Blackrock College and Blackrock Clinic,
- Blackrock Clinic lands,
- Boundary lands of Blackrock Park,
- Seapoint Park, and
- St. Vincent's Park.



2.4 Key Changes from the Published EPR

- The width of the road in front of St. Vincent's Hospital and Estate Avenue has been reduced to achieve a reduction in land take.
- The width of the road between Estate Avenue and Merrion Gates junction has been reduced to a three-lane arrangement with outbound bus lane only to reduce land take and impact on trees.
- The Merrion Gates junction has been altered to a consolidated T-junction with improved cycle facilities and to facilitate Signal Controlled Priority inbound.
- Land acquisition from residential properties and Blackrock College has been reduced along the Rock Road, Booterstown Avenue, and Blackrock Clinic following revised road alignment.

2.5 Key Facts

- Approximate number of properties that may be impacted **18**
- Approximate number of on-street parking spaces that may be removed: **64**
- Approximate number of trees that may be removed **59**
- Approximate route length: **4kms**
- Approximate cycle route length: **4kms**
- Current bus journey time: **30 mins**
- BusConnects journey time: **13-15 mins**
- Future Bus journey time without BusConnects: **40 mins +**

3. How to take part in the public consultation

This brochure provides details of the proposed Preferred Route Option for this core bus corridor. These proposals are subject to a second non-statutory round of public consultation, and subsequent design refinement and environmental impact assessment, before a formal statutory application will be made by the NTA to An Bord Pleanála for approval.

3.1 General queries

The project website www.busconnects.ie has a dedicated section for the Core Bus Corridor project. All previous emerging preferred route brochures are available on the website. Users can access the site to find out more about the project and download copies of the key documents.

General queries can be directed to a dedicated Freephone - **1800 303 653** or by email to cbc@busconnects.ie

3.2 How to engage

We are inviting submissions in relation to the Preferred Route Options set out in this document. The closing date for submissions is stated on the website.

Written submissions and observations may be made by:



cbc@busconnects.ie



Core Bus Corridor Project
National Transport Authority,
Dún Scéine, Harcourt Lane, Dublin 2
D02 WT20

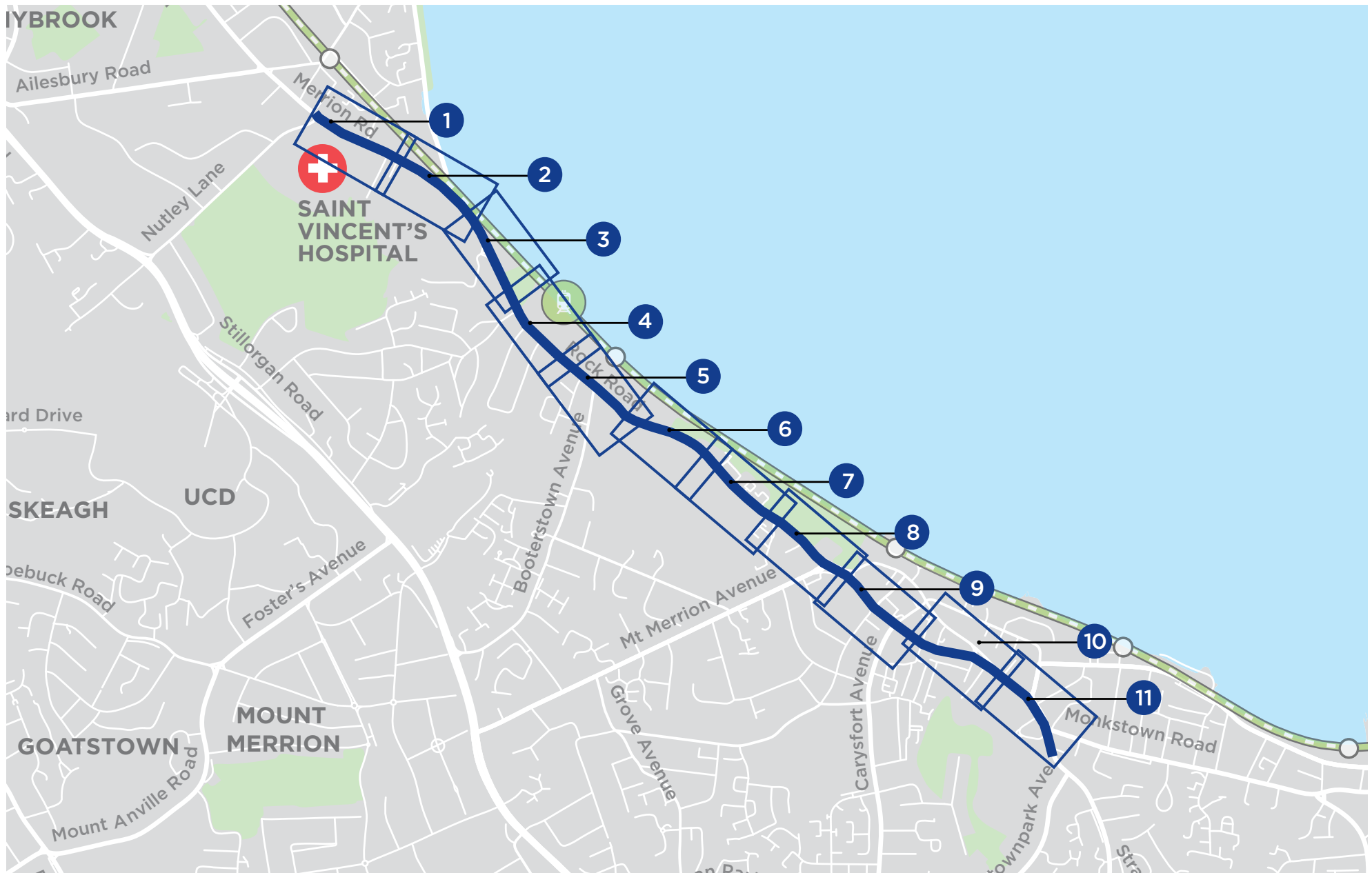
3.3 What happens next?

Following the second round of public consultation the NTA will finalise the Preferred Route Options for all sixteen corridors. The scheme designs will be finalised, transport and environmental impact assessments will be completed. This will culminate in the preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) for the scheme together with details of land to be acquired. This will be submitted to An Bord Pleanála during Q4 2020 for its consideration and determination. A formal statutory consultation process will be undertaken as part of that process.

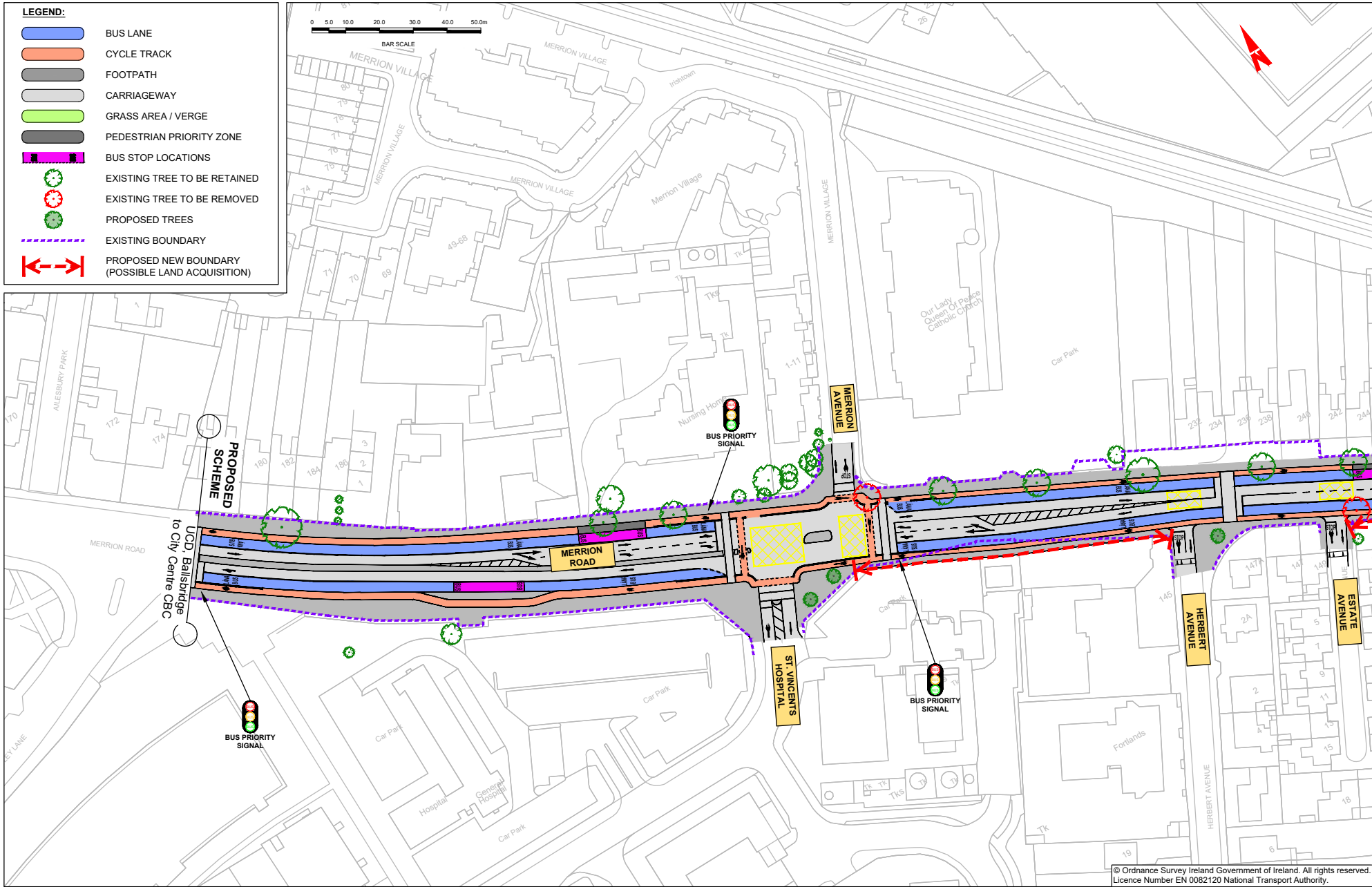


4. Appendices

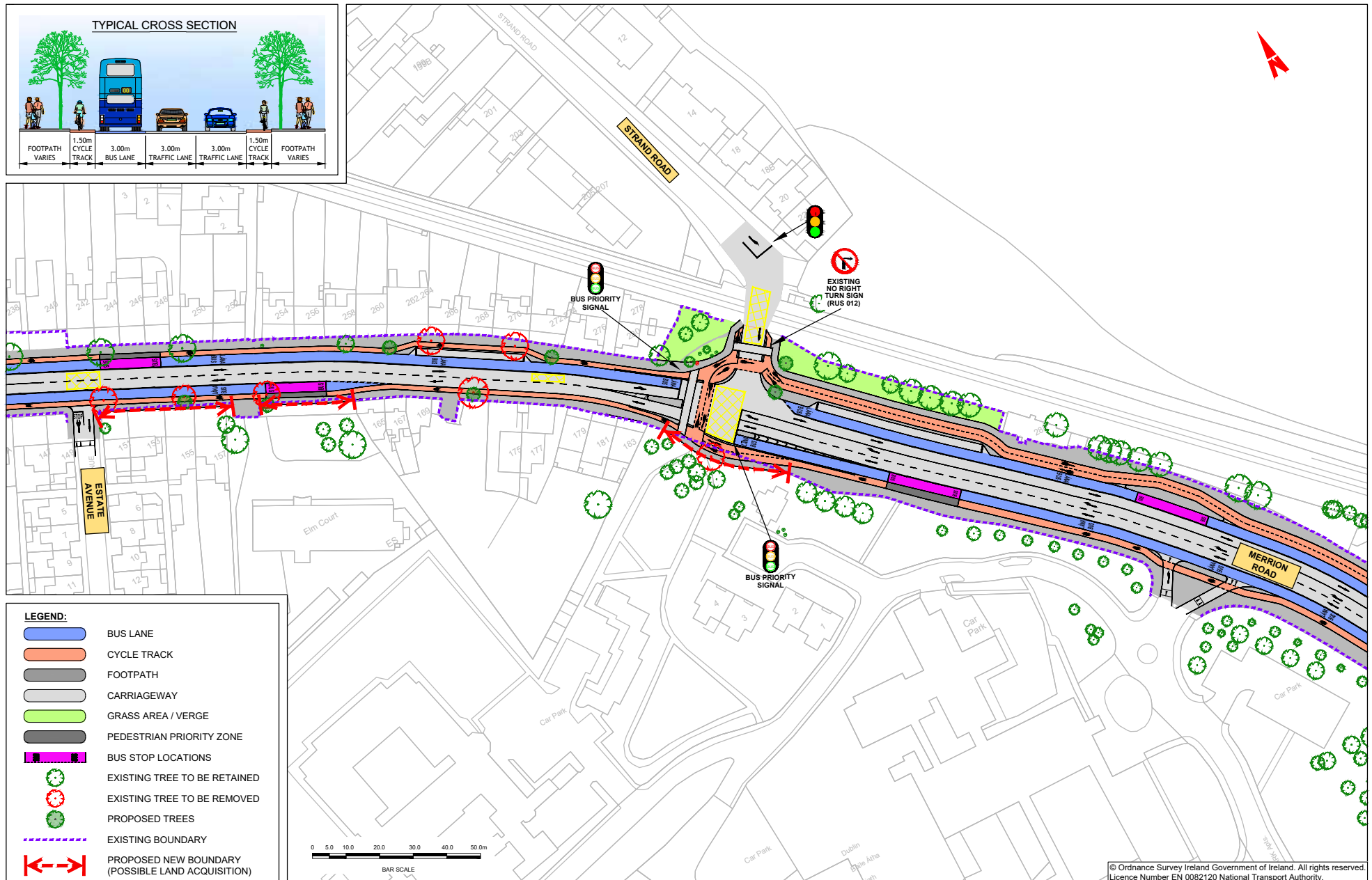
Index map
Route maps



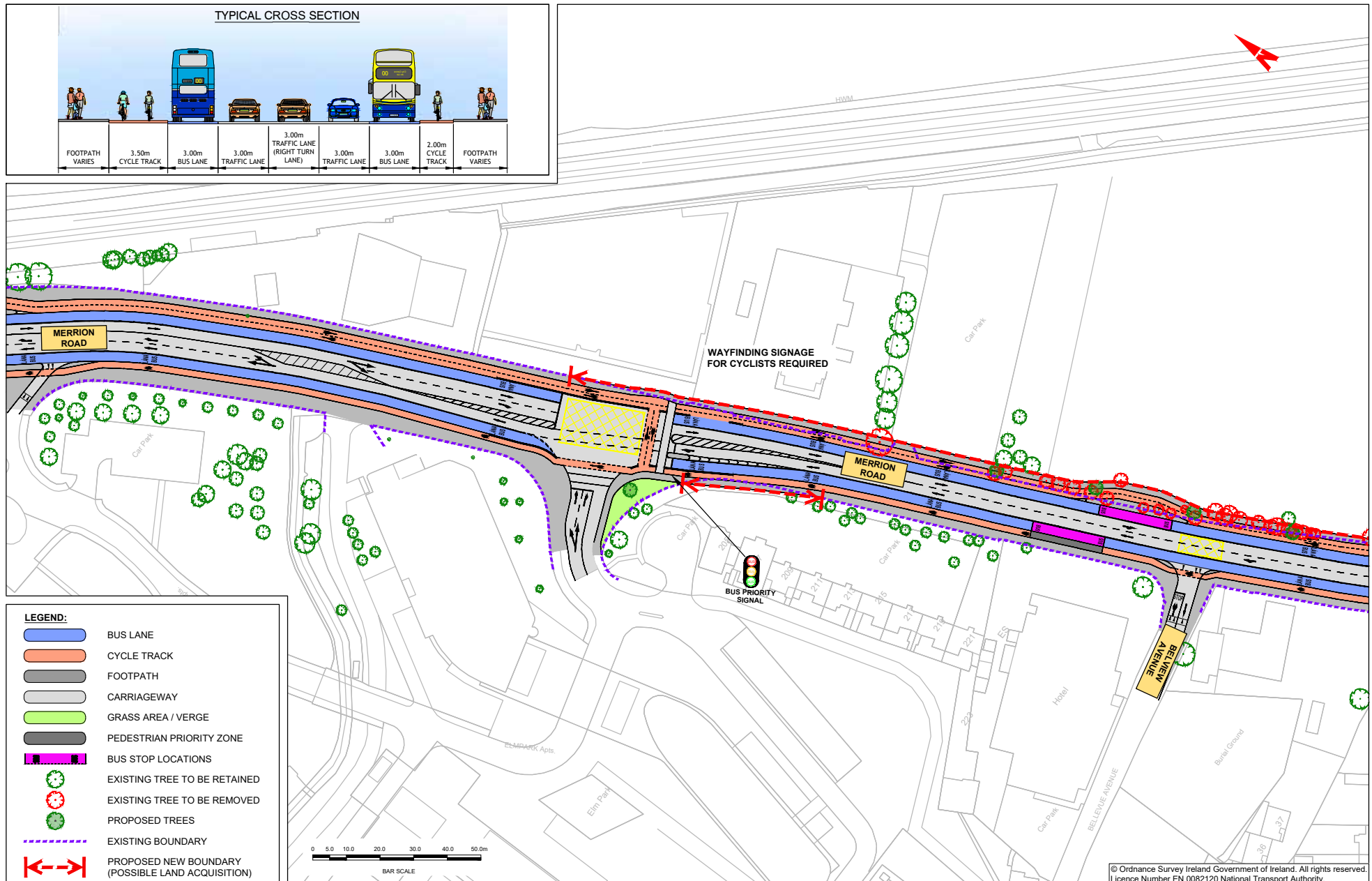
NOTE: The Preferred Route shown on the following drawings is indicative only and is subject to change following consultation and as part of the design development process.

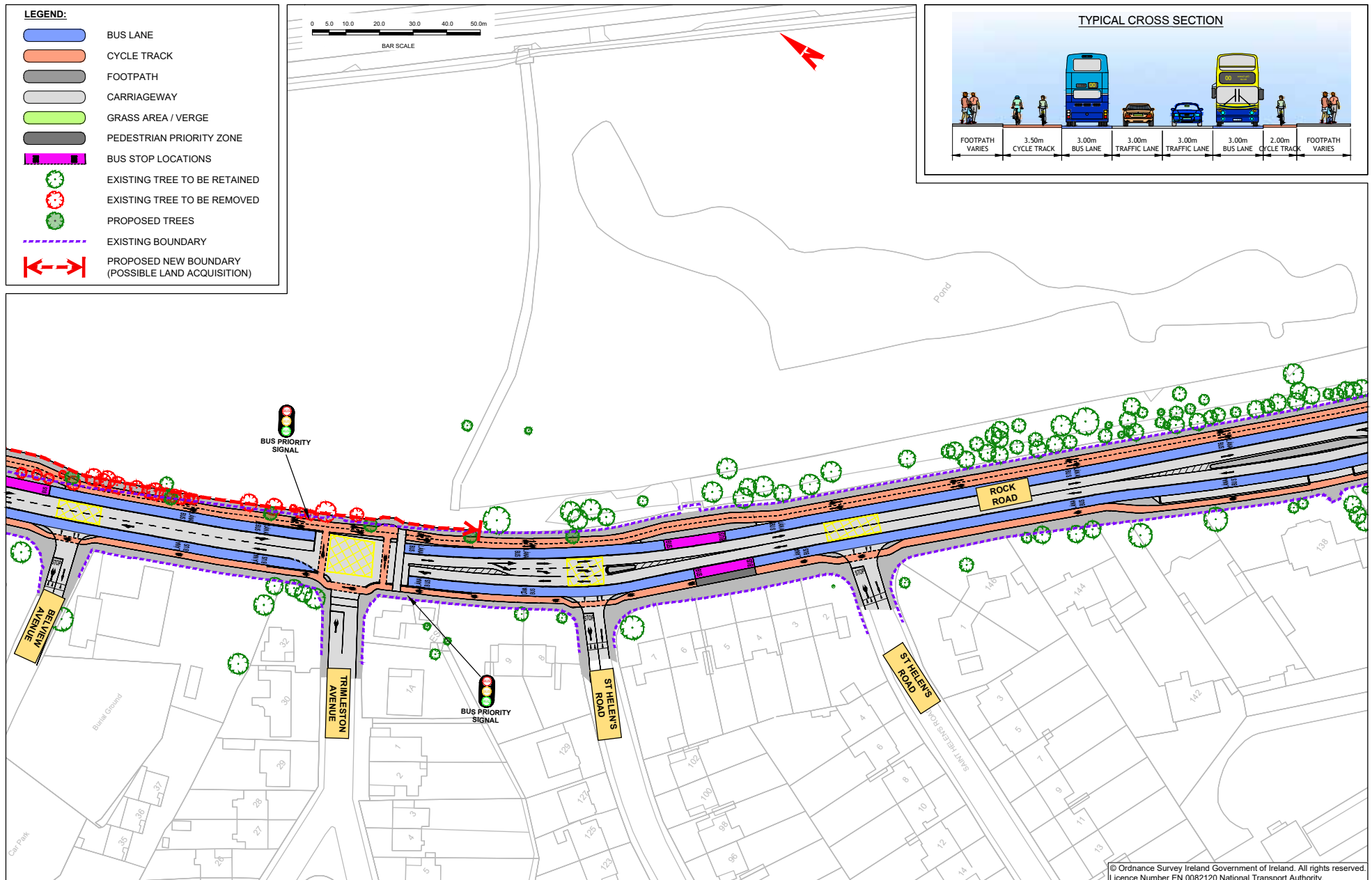


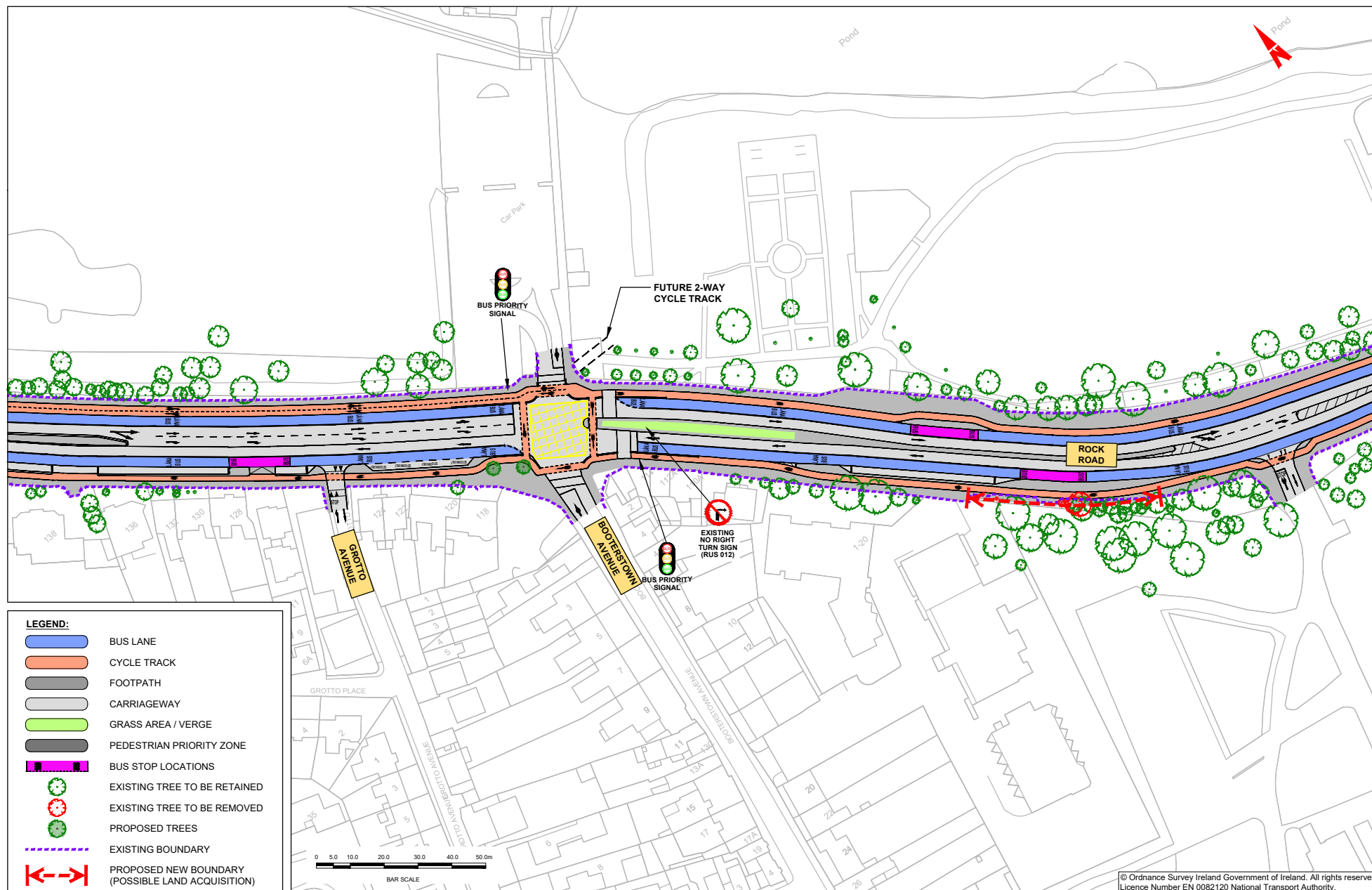




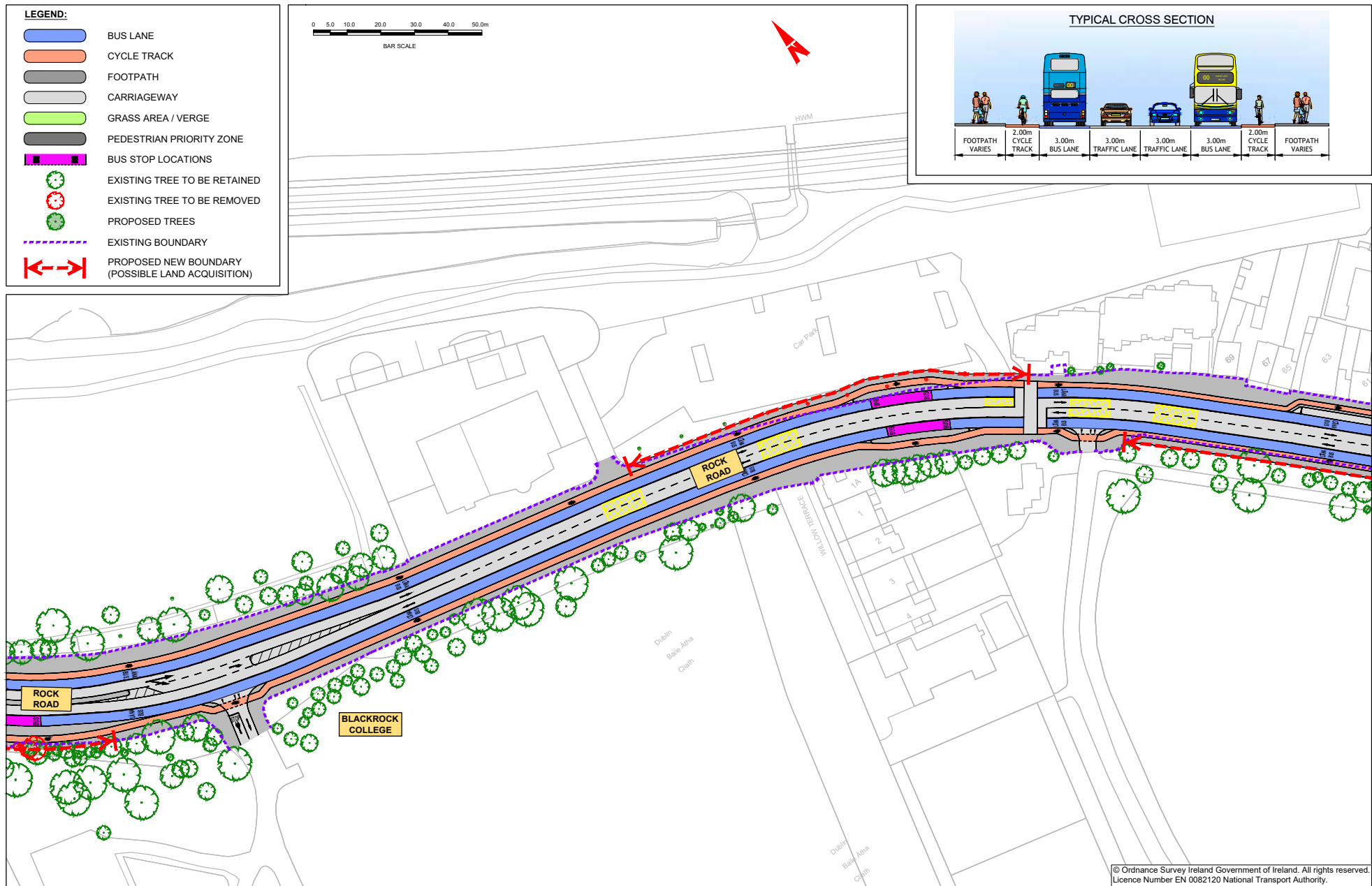


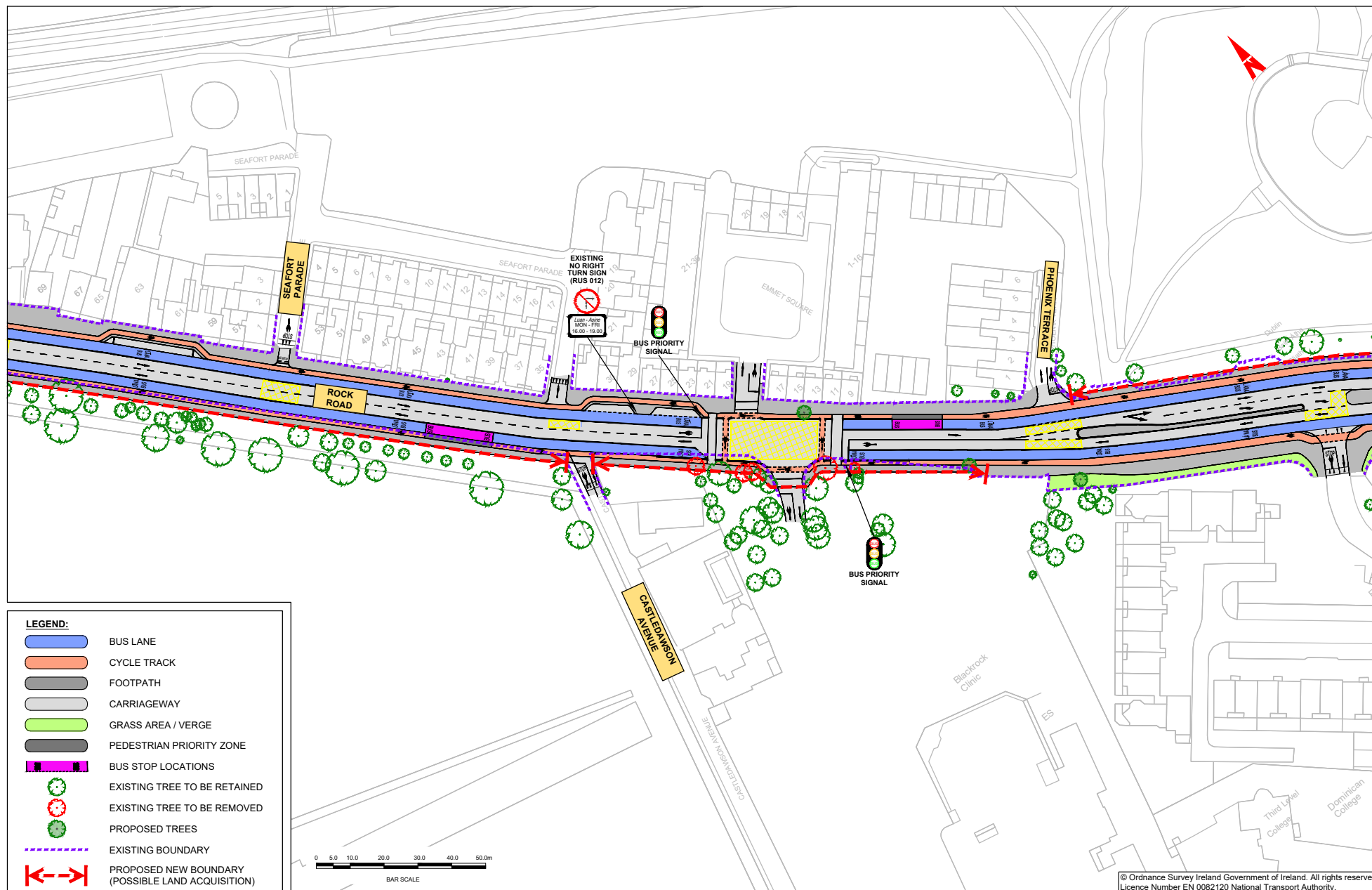


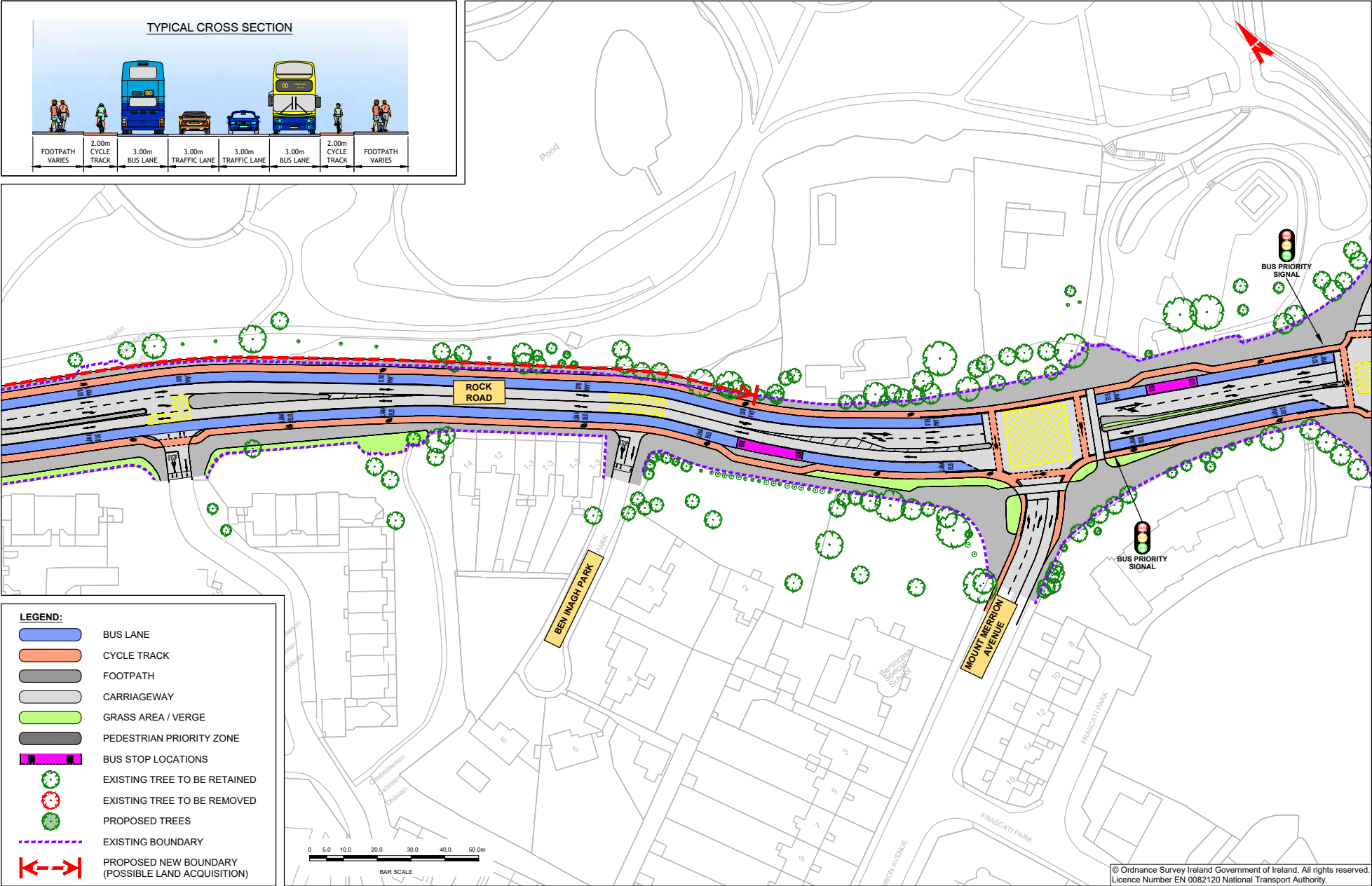




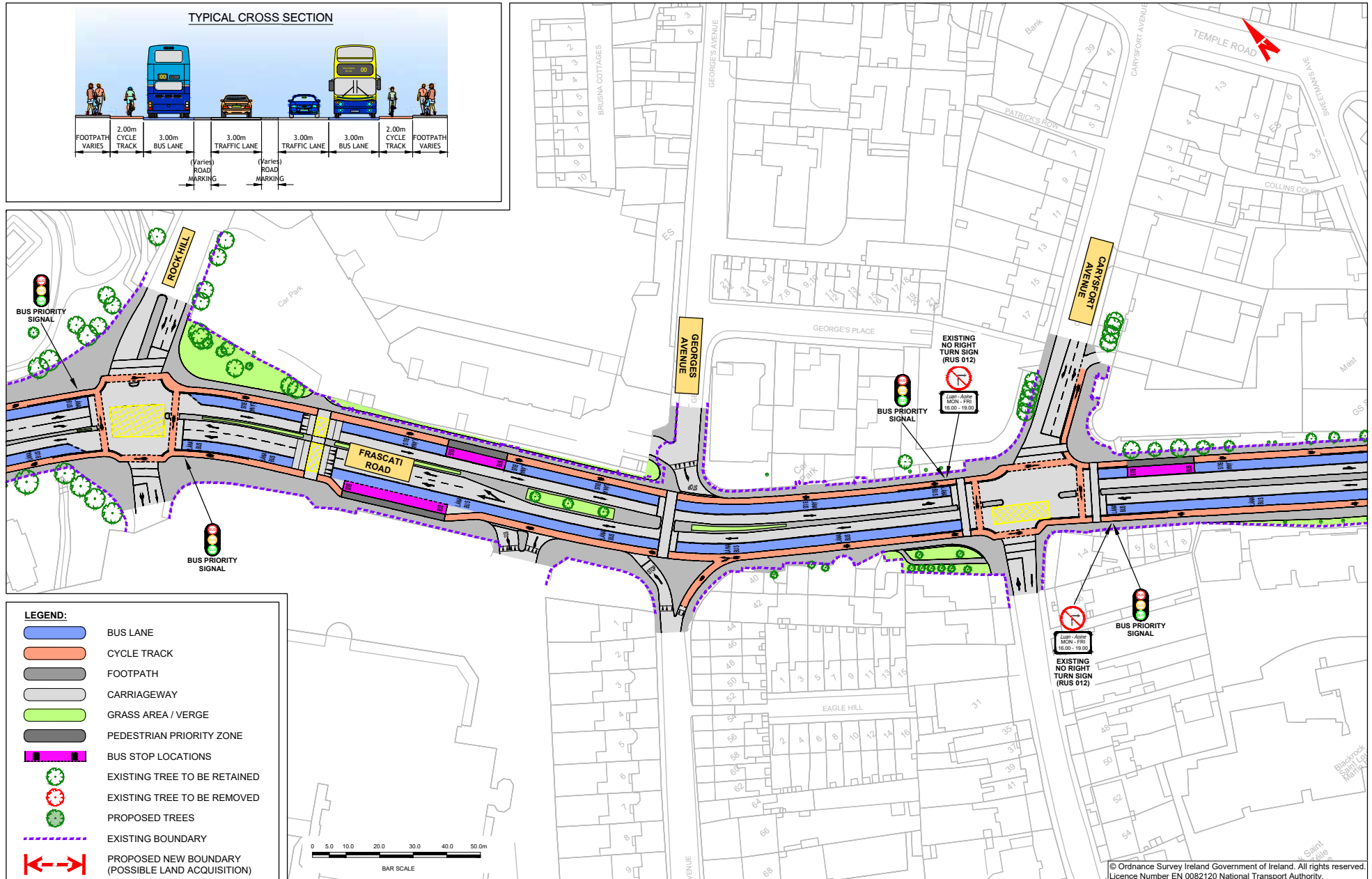


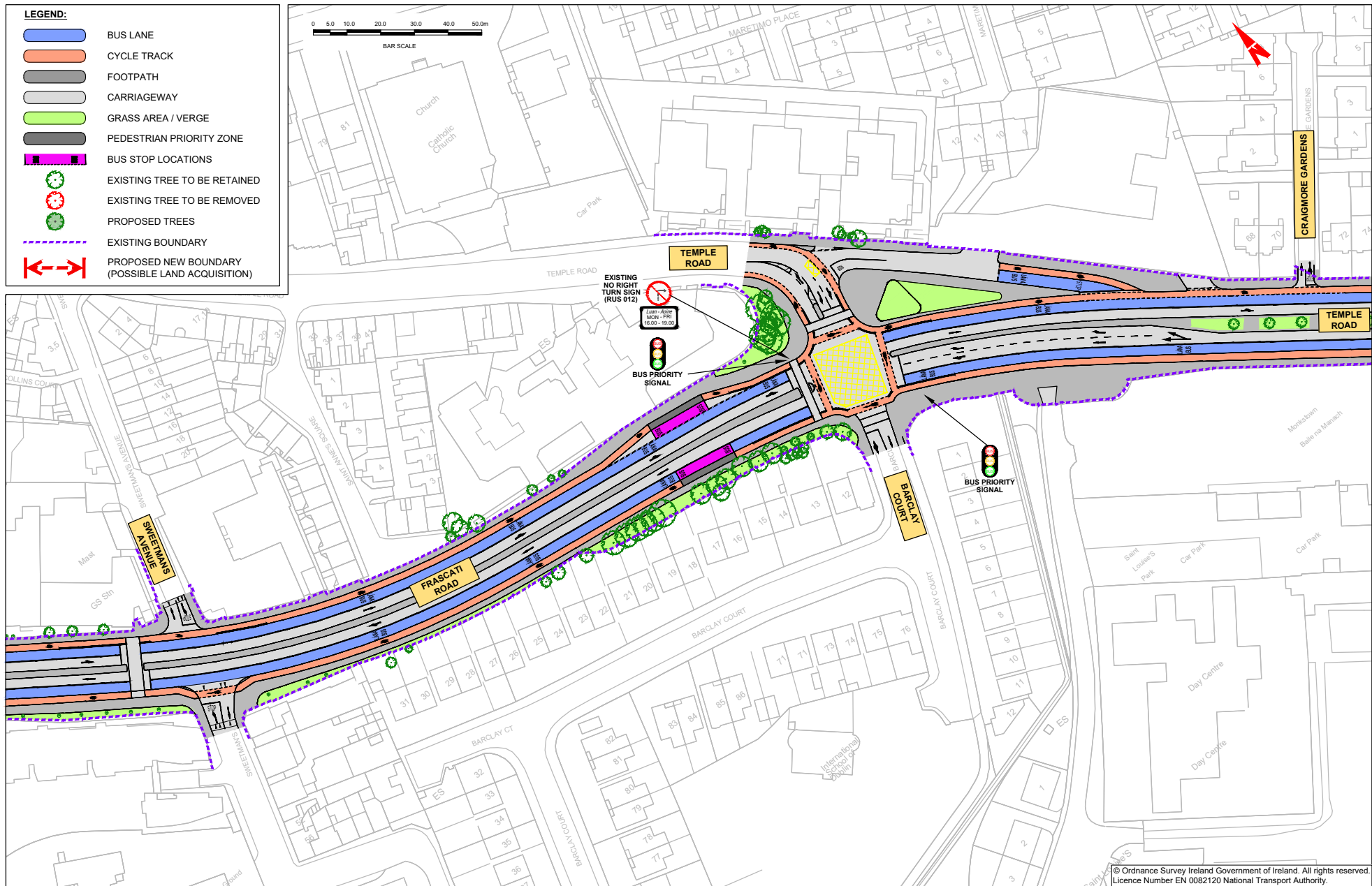


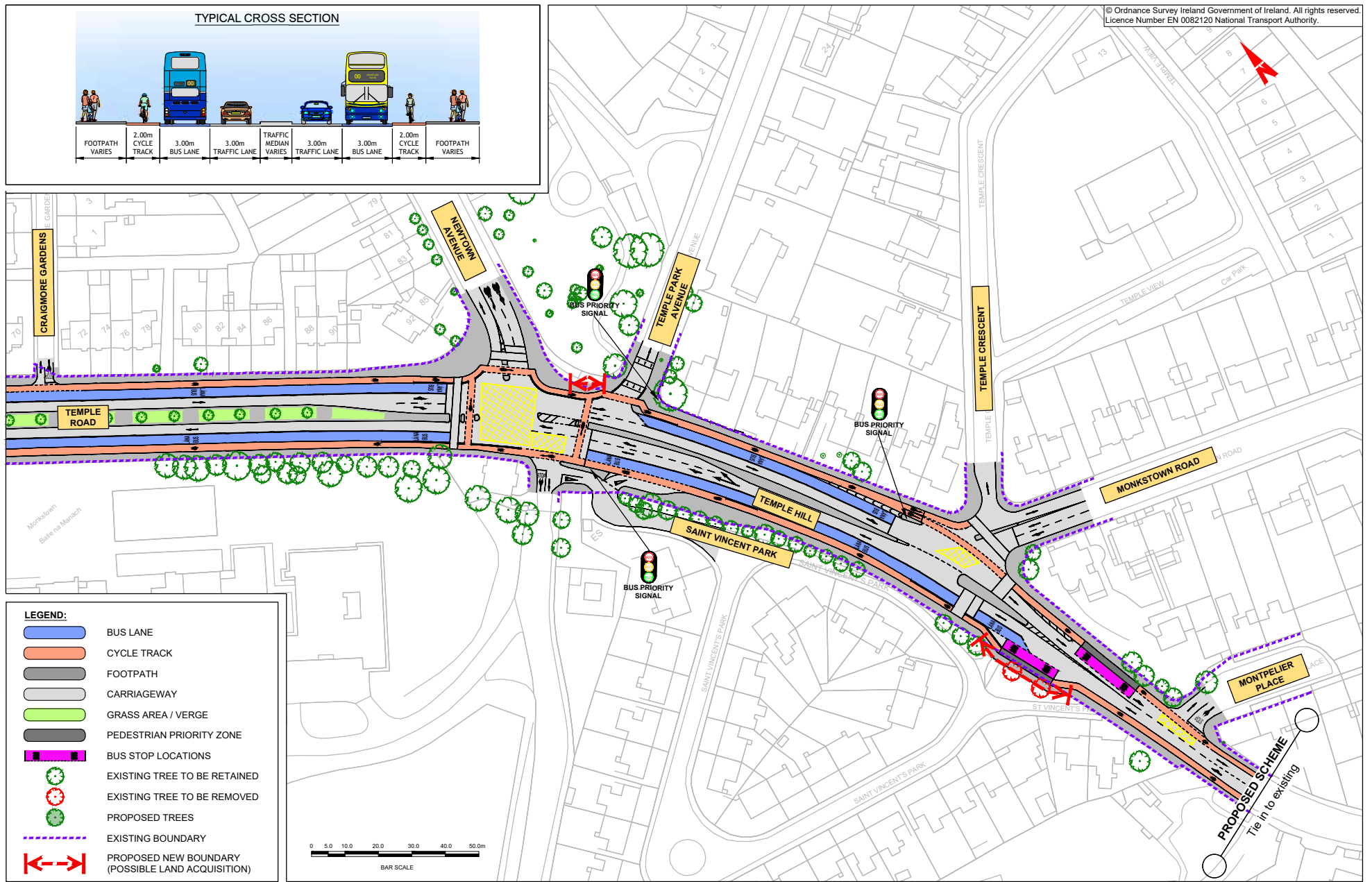
















Údarás Náisiúnta Iompair
National Transport Authority

National Transport Authority

Harcourt Lane,
Dun Sceine,
Dublin 2.

D02 WT20



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