Sustainable Transport Corridors Report

Investing in a Sustainable Future for an Even Better Cork

It Starts Now With BusConnects

April 2022

Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040

BUS CONNECTS CORK
SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT FOR A BETTER CITY.

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1. Investing in Cork's Future

1.1 Transformation of Cork

Cork City and the surrounding areas are witnessing a new era of transformation. From new developments supporting job creation and unlocking the opportunities of the green economy, to new cultural initiatives connecting communities, Cork City is reinforcing its position as a European city of choice for inward investment and tourism.

The transformation of the city's medieval quarter is one of the many projects being undertaken in one of Europe's fastest-growing cities. Financed under the Government's Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF), the project will connect the Grand Parade and a series of historic lanes and streets with the south channel of the River Lee and the city centre business core.

The Cork City Docklands Project is another transformative project that will herald major investment in new recreational, residential, commercial and cultural facilities on the iconic banks of the River Lee, making Cork an even more vibrant place in which to work, live, visit and invest.

The 6,000-seat Event Centre being developed on the Beamish and Crawford site, along with growing private sector investment in the city, will further unlock Cork's entrepreneurial and cultural potential.

We see these regeneration initiatives as building upon the momentum of change sweeping through the city.

1.2 Enabling Cork's Growth Potential

We know that the city is projected to grow by 50-60% over the coming two decades, and if we are to take full advantage of this unrivalled opportunity for the development of Cork, investing in sustainable transport in the city, suburbs and county towns will be imperative. A clean, modern, reliable public transport system is a vital component in enabling the sustainable growth of Cork as a dynamic, connected, and internationally competitive European city.

2. Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS): Reimagining Public Transport in Cork

The National Transport Authority (NTA) is committed to enabling Cork's growth potential and reimagining its future. That's why the NTA has been working in partnership with Cork City Council, Cork County Council, Irish Rail and Transport Infrastructure Ireland, to develop, and now implement, the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS).

Published in 2019, CMATS will deliver an accessible, integrated transport network that enables the sustainable growth of the Cork Metropolitan Area as a dynamic, connected, and internationally competitive European city region.

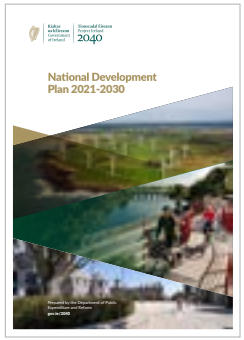
CMATS is about creating a liveable city and liveable communities by giving everybody the opportunity to access sustainable public transport options, along with radically improved cycling and walking infrastructure.

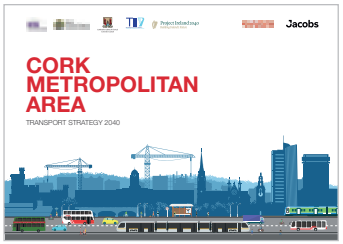
2.1 Putting transport at the heart of the vision for Cork

CMATS sets out an ambitious vision to deliver an accessible, integrated transport network that enables the sustainable growth of the Cork Metropolitan Area as a dynamic, connected, and internationally competitive European city region.

The implementation of CMATS is aligned with a broad national policy framework, supporting regional development, economic growth, climate action and investment in sustainable transport. This framework includes:

- National Development Plan 2021–2030
- Climate Action Plan 2021
- National Planning Framework 2040
- National Sustainable Mobility Policy
- Connecting Ireland



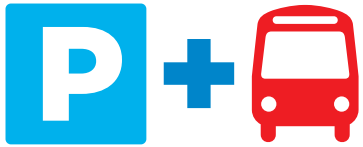


Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS) means:

A multi-billion Euro investment in transport for the Cork Metropolitan Area over the next two decades, delivering;

- A transformed bus system – BusConnects Cork

- A comprehensive cycling network providing safe cycling facilities across the region



- Various new road links and road improvements plus park & ride provision

- An enhanced commuter rail system – Cork Commuter Rail Programme

- A new east-west light rail line – Luas Cork

- Enhanced pedestrian facilities

CMATS will result in more than half of all journeys in the morning peak being made by public transport, cycling and walking when the Strategy is delivered, compared to just 33% at present.

2.2 BusConnects Cork – Investing in Cork's Future

To help Cork city and county fully realise this vision for the future, the NTA is planning an investment of half a billion Euro to develop Sustainable Transport Corridors, revamping key roads and streets to enhance provision for buses, cyclists and pedestrians, as a key component of BusConnects Cork.

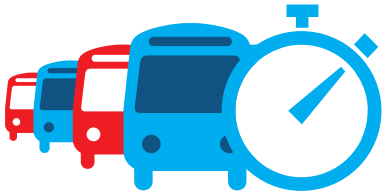
For the people of Cork, this investment will mean greater connectivity to employment, to education, to family and friends, to retail and to the burgeoning social and cultural fabric of the region.

This will help the city achieve its climate goals, become more sustainable, contribute to growing the economy, improve accessibility and drive down journey times in the city.

BusConnects is the NTA's programme of bus service improvement in Irish metropolitan areas. BusConnects Cork will entail a €600m investment and includes nine measures which will transform Cork's bus system, making public transport more useful to more people.

BusConnects Cork will enhance the capacity and potential of the public transport system. It will support the delivery of a low-carbon and climate-resilient public transport system in addition to greatly improving accessibility to jobs and education, whilst playing a key role in regeneration of, and improvements to, public realm and city centre.

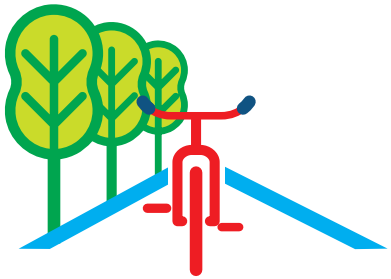
Objectives



Enhance the capacity and potential of the public transport system by improving bus speeds, reliability and punctuality through the provision of bus lanes and other measures to provide priority to bus movement over general traffic movements

Support the delivery of an efficient, low-carbon and climate-resilient public transport service, which supports the achievement of Ireland's emission-reduction targets

Improve accessibility to jobs, education and other social and economic opportunities through the provision of improved sustainable connectivity and integration with other public transport services



Enhance the potential for cycling by providing safe infrastructure for cycling, segregated from general traffic wherever practicable

Enable compact growth, regeneration opportunities and more effective use of land in Cork, for present and future generations, through the provision of safe and efficient sustainable transport networks

Ensure that the public realm is carefully considered in the design and development of the transport infrastructure and seek to enhance key urban focal points where appropriate and feasible

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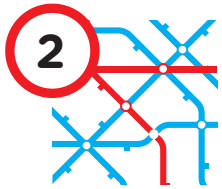
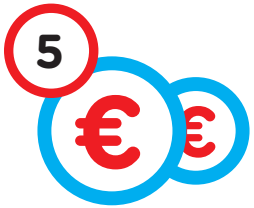
BusConnects Cork aims to overhaul the current transport system in the Cork Metropolitan Area through:

1.
Building a network of **new sustainable transport corridors**

2. 
Completely redesigning the network of bus routes

3.
New state-of-the-art **ticketing system**

4.
Implementing **Cashless payment system**

5. 
Revamping the fare system

6.
New bus livery

7.
New bus stops with better signage and information

8.
New Park & Ride sites in key locations

9.
Transitioning to a **zero emissions bus fleet**

A number of the initiatives are already underway including the **redesign of the Bus Network** in the Cork metropolitan area, which had two rounds of public consultation during 2021. The feedback received by the NTA during these consultations will inform the basis for a Final Redesigned Bus Network. The NTA, in collaboration with Jarret Walker and Associates and Bus Éireann, intends to publish a Final Redesigned Bus Network for Cork during mid-2022, which will be implemented during 2023/2024.

The **restructuring of the fare system** with a new 90-minute fare will allow passengers to take multiple trips on various modes of transport within a 90-minute period of one another without incurring an additional payment. Transitioning the bus fleet from diesel to fully electric zero-emissions vehicles is also a cornerstone of the BusConnects programme. This transition is already underway in Ireland's major cities with the first fully electric buses for Cork planned to be delivered in 2023.

2.3 Sustainable Transport Corridors

Sustainable transport corridors are critical to delivering the objectives of the transport strategy developed by the NTA, TII, Cork City Council and Cork County Council and the BusConnects programme of works. Through planned investment it can further expand the level of use and the provision of bus services across Cork.

The proposed sustainable transport corridors will feature new cycling and walking infrastructure as well as improving bus priority on streets and roads in Cork. The new corridors will help increase the number of people walking and cycling to work and college, shopping, meeting friends; while radically improving the reliability and frequency of bus services across the city.

The proposed increase in bus services and reduction in commuting times via public transport will benefit a significant proportion of Cork's population but will not fully succeed without the roll-out of sustainable transport corridors. Implementing bus priority along these corridors will ensure that buses are not held up in general traffic.

It's clear that the existing bus priority measures throughout Cork City are inadequate to meet the needs of a growing population. Only 14km of bus lanes are currently being provided. The proposed sustainable transport corridors include approximately 75km of new bus lanes, multiples of the existing provision.

Keanes
Saville

3. Opportunities Afforded by BusConnects Cork

3.1 Investment in Cork's Transformation

By transforming the public transport system in Cork, BusConnects, alongside other significant transport infrastructure investment, will position Cork as a leader in efficient and sustainable public transport not just in Ireland but in Europe. It will be one of the best-connected cities in Ireland and, with the introduction of the 90-minute fare resulting in almost all parts of the Metropolitan area being accessible on a single fare, it will also be one of the most affordable cities in the country for public transport.

3.2 Attract Inward Investment and Talent

Cork has developed a strong track record of attracting inwards investment and top talent to the city, creating a thriving innovation ecosystem which has helped foster new start-ups within the region.

However, increased congestion and a lack of access to public transport could hamper the city's attractiveness as a place to invest, work and live. BusConnects Cork can help to ensure that Cork remains an attractive place for inward investment and for talent from Ireland and beyond. By enhancing access to the city and new connections between places of learning and work, Cork can continue to raise the bar as a hub for investment, collaboration and innovation in the decades to come.

3.3 Growing Transport alongside a Growing Population

Cork City plays a pivotal role as the major regional centre for employment, education, retail and leisure for a large geographical area. Cork's population is expected to grow by up to 50-60% in the next two decades. This growth is a major reason for the development of the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy and the €600m proposed investment in BusConnects Cork.

Already, public transport patronage has been growing faster in Cork than anywhere else in Ireland. The number of journeys on the Cork bus network increased by 51% from 2013 to 2019, surpassing the area's growth in population, employment or bus service over the same period. This demonstrates the rapidly growing demand for bus services amongst commuters in Cork and the need for modern infrastructure to support that increase into the future.

High public transport patronage will enable Cork City to position itself as a sustainable European city and help attract a young, mobile and educated workforce by meeting the needs and demands of new residents and workers. It will also enhance growth in the tourism and hospitality sectors as well as attracting new businesses and increasing connectivity across the city and county.

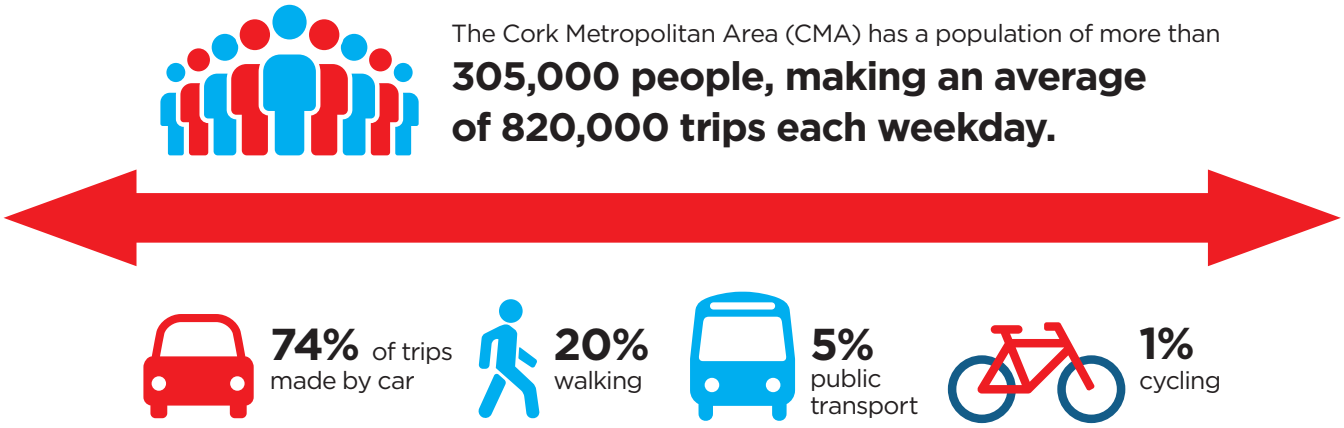
3.4 Changing the Landscape of Transport in Cork

BusConnects Cork brings about the opportunity to radically transform the way people travel in the city and surrounding towns. Up until recent times, there has been a disproportionate dependency on the private car in Cork, with public transport and cycling only sharing a combined total of 6% of the 820,000 trips made every weekday in the metropolitan area.

The current level of private car dependency is leading to significant congestion in the Cork City area. If a portion of the 74% of the private car trips can be converted onto public transport and bikes, Cork City will see a significant reduction in congestion.

The aim of BusConnects Cork is to transform the bus system so that it becomes a viable alternative for more people, reducing dependency on the private car and increasing the number of people travelling on sustainable modes of transport around the city.

Transforming how the people of Cork travel and reducing congestion will lead to improved quality of life for residents, commuters, cyclists and pedestrians and has been shown to have a positive impact on economic activity and growth in cities.



There are only 14km of bus lanes currently provided in Cork City. This means that for most of the journey, buses are competing for space with general traffic and so are also affected by the increasing levels of congestion. As a result, whereas bus journeys should be fast, reliable and predictable, the increasing impact of congestion is undermining that objective and people are being disincentivised to use public transport. BusConnects Cork offers a solution by increasing the amount of dedicated bus priority in the city from 14km to 75km.

The bus system is the main component of the solution to address the current congestion problem and to meet Cork's future transport needs. Because of its regional coverage and its flexibility, the bus system is and will continue to be, the main form of public transport for most people across the Cork region. It is the backbone of public transport services and carries multiples of the numbers of passengers carried by the rail system. With dedicated bus and cycle corridors, it will assist in addressing congestion and improve accessibility for all.

3.5 Accelerate the journey to a net-zero future

Tackling the challenges of climate change is a national priority and BusConnects Cork provides an opportunity to contribute significantly to that objective.

Under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, emissions must reduce by 51% by 2030, setting a path towards a net-zero emissions scenario by 2050. The transport sector will play its part in achieving those targets. Moving people from cars onto sustainable transport modes will help accelerate the journey to a net-zero future.

BusConnects Cork will serve existing and future passengers in a more sustainable and environmentally friendly way. Reducing the need for private cars and moving more people to public transport and cycling is a key part of tackling climate change. In addition, as part of BusConencts Cork, the city bus fleet will be fully transitiioned to electric zero emisisons vehicles by 2032.

3.6 Increase Connectivity and Accessibility

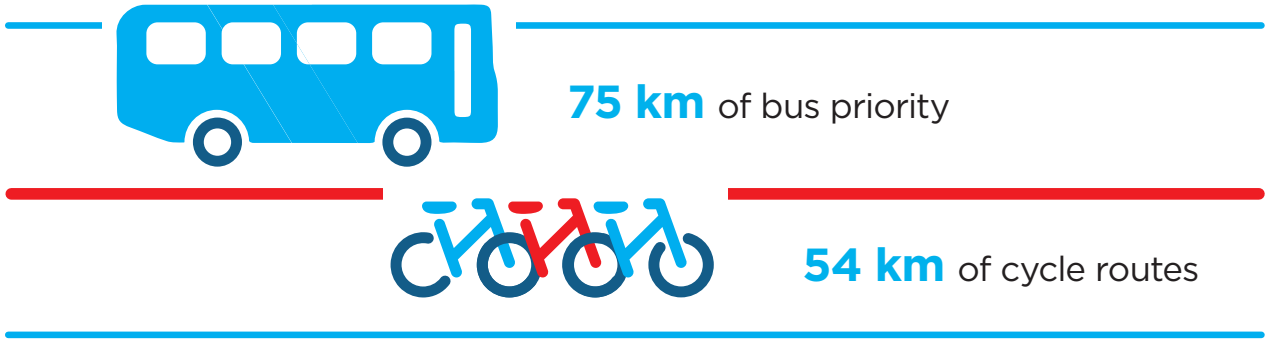
BusConnects Cork will also deliver better interchange facilities with the Cork Suburban Rail Network, proposed Light Rail network and the proposed park and ride services. Improved interchange facilities will allow more people to travel to more places, faster and easier than is currently possible, whether it be transferring from a train to bus or bike to bus.

New park and ride facilities envisioned under the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy will help to attract more people onto the bus and make the public transport system accessible to those both inside and outside the city centre.

4. Introducing the Sustainable Transport Corridor Project

4.1 Overview

The focus of this part of the BusConnects Cork programme is the delivery of sustainable transport corridors that are needed to make the bus system operate efficiently, reliably and punctually, together with the cycling facilities required to enable more people to move out of their cars and onto bicycles.



The proposals are to invest in Sustainable Transport Corridors that will have continuous bus priority – generally, a continuous bus lane in each direction, but other arrangements are used in constricted locations. This will remove the delays currently being experienced by the bus system, which will grow worse as congestion increases, and allow the buses to transport their many thousands of passengers with greater certainty about the arrival times to their destinations.

Along these corridors, we also intend to provide segregated cycle tracks in each direction, separated as far as is practically possible from general traffic. In areas where this may prove difficult to achieve, we intend to provide offline cycle tracks, where a cycle track will divert off the Sustainable Transport Corridor and onto a quieter road or purpose-built cycleway, before re-joining with the corridor.

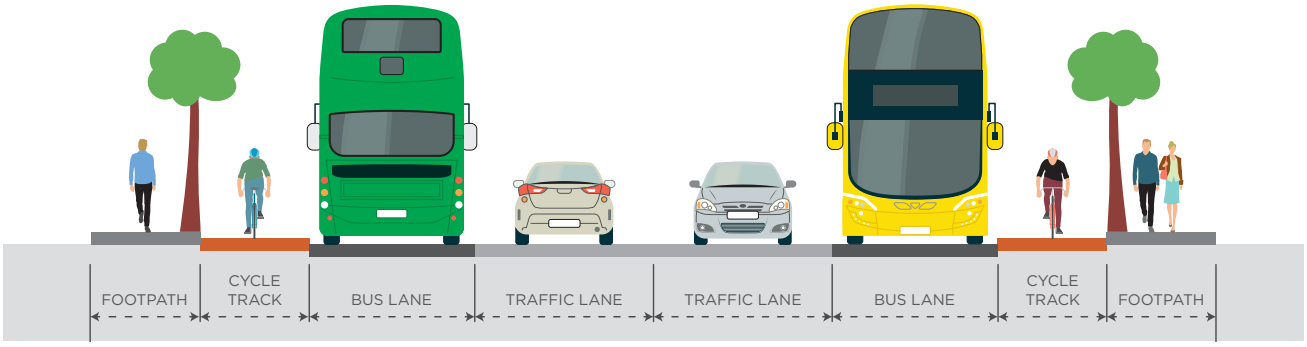
The proposals are being developed taking into consideration the changing transport patterns now emerging and the challenges and opportunities that Cork will face over the coming decades. Projections of a future without BusConnects Cork clearly indicate that, as traffic congestion worsens, bus journey times will continue to deteriorate and overall bus reliability will be further eroded. The following sections outline the plans to vastly improve and enhance the travelling experience of bus users and cyclists.

4.2 Potential Road Layout

To create the Sustainable Transport Corridors changes to current road layouts will need to be designed and built. The new design will allow for improved footpaths, segregated cycle tracks where achievable and dedicated bus lanes to remove the buses from congestion. An example of a road layout is shown below – however, this layout is only possible in certain areas.

The Appendix to this document provides preliminary route maps for the proposed twelve Sustainable Transport Corridors and cycle tracks. These maps set out a preliminary concept proposal for each of the corridors, together with some of the key benefits that relate to the particular corridor.

All of the routes and options are indicative only at this stage. There will be extensive public consultation undertaken in relation to these proposals and it is likely that various refinements and changes will be incorporated as that public engagement and dialogue progresses.



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5. Benefits of the Sustainable Transport Corridor Project

The Sustainable Transport Corridors being proposed to realise the vision of the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy will achieve a number of benefits which will have far-reaching influence on all modes of transport in Cork.

5.1 Improved Bus Journey Times

By improving the roads and infrastructure that the bus services operate on, ultimately BusConnects Cork will achieve a much more efficient bus system for Cork. By improving bus priority across the city, journey times will be reduced and will become much more predictable.

Consistently faster and more predictable journey times means a more reliable bus system. This improved reliability will make public transport in Cork more appealing to more people, and resourcing the bus services with drivers and buses will become more streamlined.

The potential journey time savings for each Sustainable Transport Corridor can be seen in the Appendix Maps of this document.

5.2 Better Environment for Cyclists

BusConnects Cork entails much more than just investment in buses and bus lanes, in fact, this plan will provide much needed cycling facilities and make it easier, safer and more attractive to cycle around the Cork City region.

Only 1% of the 803,000 trips that are made in the Cork Metropolitian Area on an average weekday are made on bicycles. A significant factor in the low number of cyclists is the lack of safe cycling infrastructure and the Sustainable Transport Corridor Project aims to significantly improve this by building a network of cycle lanes and cycle tracks that will make up the core of the region's cycling network.

The major Sustainable Transport Corridors across the metropolitan area are also the main cycling arteries. The reconfiguration of these roads for bus lanes provides the opportunity to transform the cycling infrastructure at the same time.

On each of the 12 Sustainable Transport Corridors, our objective is to invest in and provide high-quality cycling facilities, segregated from the bus lanes and general traffic lanes as far as is practicable. Approximately 54kms of cycle tracks/lanes will be either built or current lanes improved upon. A better cycling network is good for all transport users. It avoids cyclists sharing general traffic lanes or bus lanes with buses and will remove many of the conflicts between general traffic, buses and cyclists.

The Sustainable Transport Corridors being proposed in this Report are the same corridors that are important cycling routes into the city centre. The cycling infrastructure delivered under this programme will form the core of the region's cycling network and deliver a radical stepchange in cycling facilities in Cork.

5.3 Enhanced Facilities for Pedestrians

Cork's pedestrian facilities have been a concern in many areas for the last number of years. A key component of the Sustainable Transport Corridors project is to use this unique opportunity to create a better environment for pedestrians as we improve these corridors. In particular, we will look to add new footpaths in

areas where they are currently lacking, improve the quality of footpaths and pedestrian crossings, as well as expanding pedestrian facilities at junctions. We will also enhance key local centres with public realm improvements including additional landscaping and outdoor amenities.

5.4 Sustainable and Liveable City

BusConnects Cork is about making sustainable transport a better and more accessible option. By providing a high-quality, frequent and reliable bus service, and improving cycling and pedestrian infrastructure, we can make Cork a more attractive place to live, work and visit. Moving people from their cars onto buses, bicycles and footpaths will make Cork a less congested, and more climate-friendly region. More areas of the region will be accessible by public transport. The inclusion of people with additional needs will be carefully considered at all stages of the design process. Effective and accessible public transport will allow people of all ages and abilities to reach their full potential and participate wholly in society.

5.5 Supporting the Economy

A well-functioning public transport system is a basic requirement for any metropolitan area that aspires to provide plenty of employment opportunities for its people into the future. With bus and rail, Cork boasts some excellent services but if it is to achieve its potential as the fastest-growing city in Ireland, and to continue to attract the best jobs and the best employers, we have to develop a transport system that will meet the needs of such a rapidly developing region.

Creating dedicated bus lanes and safer cycling facilities will make journeys by bus or on a bike more convenient, attractive and reliable. It will allow people to plan journeys with confidence and therefore make Cork a more attractive location for employers, leading to increased economic activity and the regeneration of the city. It will also make it easier for people to get out and enjoy the city and all it has to offer, which is good news for businesses in the city centre and beyond.

PORT OF CORK

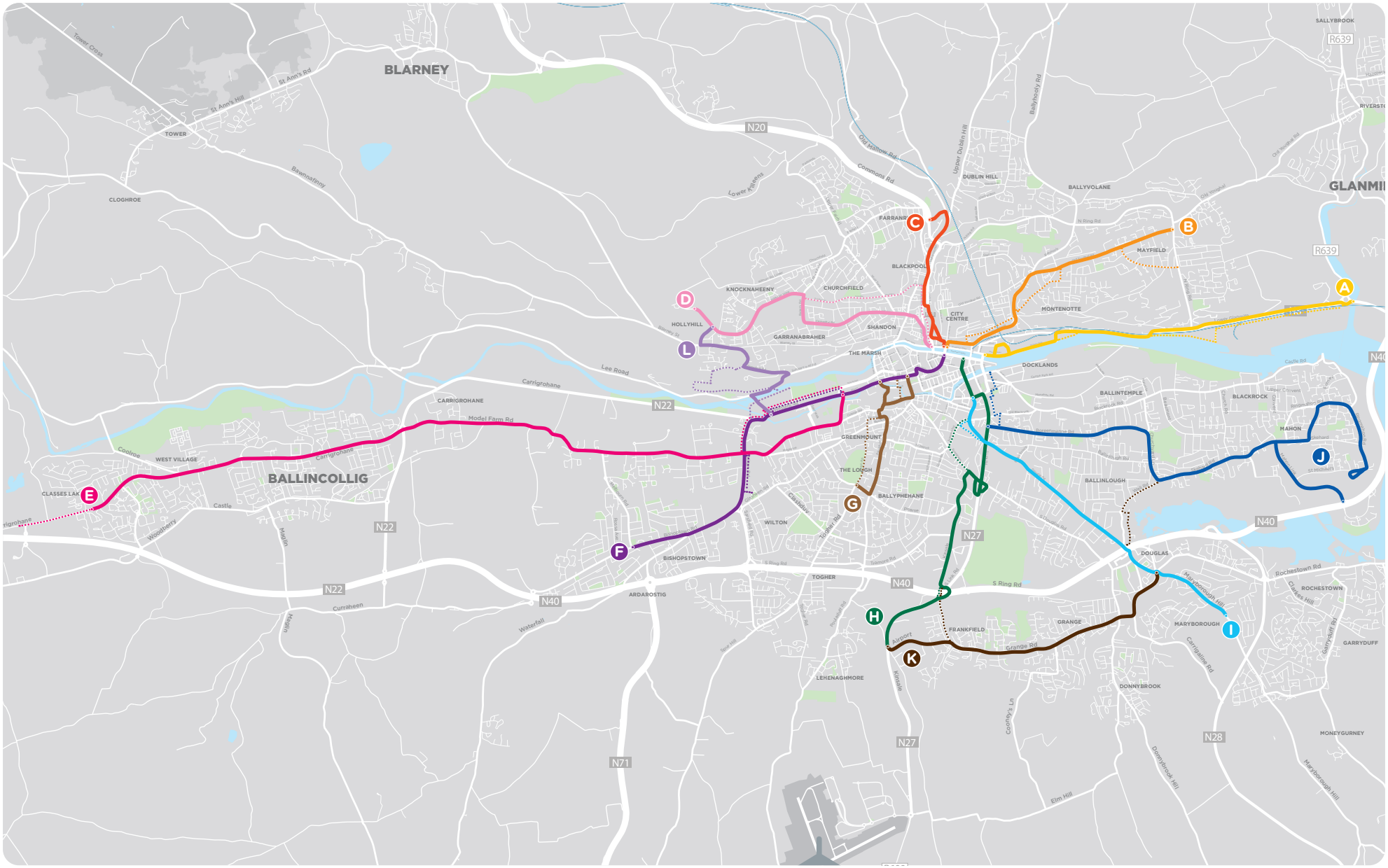
The 12 proposed

Sustainable Transport Corridors

- A Dunkettle to City
- B Mayfield to City
- C Blackpool to City
- D Hollyhill to City
- E Ballincollig to City
- F Bishopstown to City
- G Togher to City
- H Airport Road to City
- I Maryborough Hill to City
- J Mahon to City
- K Kinsale Road to Douglas
- L Sunday's Well to Hollyhill

Sustainable Transport Corridor

Alternative Cycle Facilities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BALLINCOLLIG
GLANMI
TOWER
CLOGHROE
CARRIGROHANE
WEST VILLAGE
CLASSES LAK
KNOCKNAHEENY
CHURCHFIELD
HOLLYHILL
GARRANABRAHER
SHANDON
THE MARSH
CITY CENTRE
MONTENOTTE
DOCKLANDS
BALLYVOLANE
DUBLIN HILL
MAYFIELD
BALLINTEMPLE
BLACKROCK
MAHON
BALLINLOUGH
GREENMOUNT
THE LOUGH
BALLYPHEHANE
WILTON
BISHOPSTOWN
TOGHER
ARDAROSTIG
FRANKFIELD
GRANGE
DOUGLAS
MARYBOROUGH
ROCHESTOWN
GARRYDUFF
DONNYBROOK
MONEYGURNEY
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6. Unlocking Opportunities whilst addressing potential challenges

6.1 Overview

Investing in public transport in Cork is essential for the development of the city and with this comes a number of challenges. Developing on-street sustainable transport infrastructure and investing in urban renewal involves many competing demands which have to be addressed in a balanced and realistic way. Cork is no different as the establishment of the city dates back to the 6th century. Whilst it has grown into a modern metropolitan city, there are still many older quarters made up of narrow, winding and increasingly congested streets. Many of these streets are hilly with steep gradients, especially north of the River Lee. There are many streets with narrow or missing footpaths. The uniqueness of many parts of the city and the limitations of physical space to work with presents significant but surmountable challenges for the provision of the required level of bus priority and cycling provision.

However, the NTA is committed to continuing its partnership with Cork City Council to mitigate any of the potential impacts of the infrastructural work and ensure that this €600 million investment in Cork is realised.

The NTA has significant experience of designing bus and cycle infrastructure and, importantly, engaging extensively with local communities, residents and businesses. We are acutely aware of the issues and concerns that may be raised regarding the impact of any change to road layout, loss of portions of gardens, parking and trees. All decisions taken by the NTA are to achieve better sustainable transport options for people and address the climate crisis. Therefore, we endeavour to lessen likely impacts and where feasible find alternative solutions.

In addressing the likely challenges, people in all areas of the city will enjoy increased access to jobs, education and other essential services. Communities will benefit from increased walking and cycling infrastructure and urban renewal while businesses will enjoy greater connectivity to attract the best talent to the city.

6.2 Changes to Traffic Movement to improve Sustainable Transport Options

Considerations:

By creating more space and priority for buses and cycling, there will be changes to how the private car currently moves around the streets. Some roads may become one-way, new bus-only sections will be introduced and in some places, general traffic will have to take new routes in and out of the city. Additional cycle routes which will be built, generally segregated from vehicular traffic and pedestrian crossings, will be added and moved in some areas. These cycle routes along these key corridors are essential to generate the real benefits of cycling in the city.

Reducing and Balancing Potential Impact:

Where traffic is diverted and re-routed, adequate signage and road markings will be provided for people to navigate the new routes. While some access routes may change, vehicular access will be maintained to all properties.

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6.3 Potential Acquisition of Portions of Gardens

Considerations:

There is very little unused space along many of the busy roads in the city and because of that, it will often not be possible to accommodate the bus lanes and cycle tracks in the width available. In order to achieve the required space, it will be necessary, in places, to acquire parts of the garden space of houses plus land in front of commercial properties, in order to allow the bus and cycle facilities to be provided. Where this is necessary there will be appropriate consultation and engagement with potentially impacted property owners. The potential impact on gardens will not be known until the emerging designed route options are developed.

Redesign & mitigation landscaping to balance the reduction of garden space:

Where lands, such as parts of gardens, are being acquired for widening – we will purchase the portion of front gardens from property owners; ensure new landscaping and replanting of the gardens as well as providing compensation for the garden portion loss and disruption.

6.4 To facilitate better walking and cycling there will be reductions of On-Street Parking

Considerations:

Because the proposed corridors travel through residential and business areas, there will be a need to reduce the amount of on-street parking to accommodate the new layout. The extent of the reduction of on-street parking will not be known until the route options are designed.

To offset the reduction of on-street parking:

Where there is a loss of parking spaces and it is appropriate to provide replacement spaces, we will seek to provide, where feasible, alternative parking close by for residents and businesses.

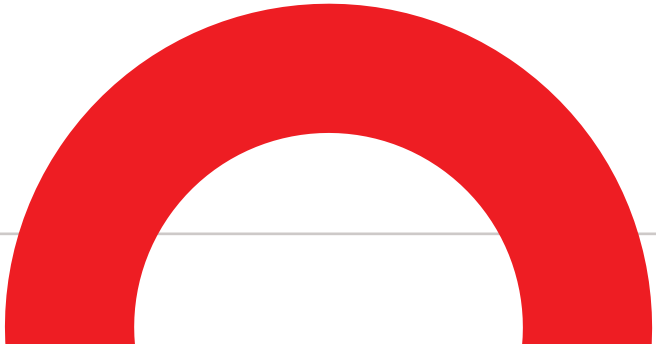
6.5 Tree replanting to offset the potential removal of some existing trees

Considerations:

As with the need to remove some parts of front gardens and alter footpaths, there will also be a need to remove some trees along some of the corridors. The Public Consultation stage later this year will have details and locations of the trees and potential lands impacted, once the initial designs are developed.

Comprehensive Tree Planting Programme:

The NTA will, however, endeavour to maintain as many mature trees as possible. Moreover, where trees have to be removed from roadsides and footpaths – we will put in place a comprehensive replanting programme. This programme will use mature or semi-mature ready-grown trees where appropriate and, where it is feasible, plant them as close as possible to the original locations. This will ensure that every tree removed will be replanted as part of the project.



6.6 Road Works and Construction Sites

Considerations:

Widening roads, and building bus and cycle lanes, requires a certain amount of construction work. There will be the excavation of the existing roads, plus parts of gardens and footpaths where needed. There will be resurfacing, kerbing, replanting and landscaping. During the construction stages, the construction sites will be localised and managed on a road-by-road basis. As with any worksite and road works, there will be a certain level of noise, dust and temporary traffic diversions.

Lessening any construction work effects:

Traffic management will be very important to keep the traffic moving whilst ensuring local access for people and deliveries is always maintained. In addition, where private and public walls or fencing are removed – we will rebuild new garden walls and replace fencing where gardens have been affected and shortened. Also, where public or commercial walls and fencing have been taken they will be rebuilt and replaced.

6.7 Investing in Urban Renewal and Increasing Pedestrian Facilities

We will look for areas along the busy corridors where it is possible to improve the existing local spaces and the existing landscaping. It is important to use this opportunity to not only replace what is removed but to enhance the local areas. To do so, we will provide funding support for urban centre improvements and creating attractive local environments.

6.8 Community Forums

A series of Community Forums will be established as part of efforts to engage with people and organisations across the city as plans for the Sustainable Transport Corridors are developed, finalised and progressed. The aim is to create two-way communications with local communities, allowing information and feedback to be exchanged in a convenient and comprehensive manner. It is envisaged that the meetings of the Community Forums will be chaired by an independent chairperson and will feature community associations, special interest groups, business organisations and local public representatives as well as personnel from the NTA.

7. Timeline

Following the publication of this report, the NTA in liaison with Cork City Council, will complete the preliminary route options outlined in this document for the 12 Sustainable Transport Corridors, and will then commence an initial public consultation on the more developed proposals during Q2 of this year.

Upcoming Consultations

2022

Q2 – Emerging Preferred Routes

In Q2 of 2022 the NTA will hold an initial consultation on the Emerging Preferred Routes for the 12 Sustainable Transport Corridors. This will be an infrastructure-centric consultation on the key transport corridors that have been provisionally earmarked as the roads where improved bus priority and cycle track facilities will be developed.

Q2 – Final New Bus Network

In Q2 of 2022 the NTA will publish the Final Redesigned Bus Network for Cork.

Q4 – Preferred Route Options

During 2022 the Emerging Preferred Routes will be further designed based on feedback gathered from the initial consultation phase. Once this feedback has been implemented into the designs the Preferred Route Options for the 12 Sustainable Transport Corridors will be published later in the year. There will be a further round of consultation held on these revised designs and the feedback will help shape the Final Sustainable Transport Corridors.

8. Next Steps

This Report provides an update on BusConnects Cork and the initial work being undertaken in planning the bus and cycle lane infrastructure. In relation to the individual corridors, work is continuing on assessing options and developing proposals which will be published for an initial round of consultation in Q2 of this year. Accordingly, more detailed information on the individual corridors will be available at that later consultation stage.

For regular project updates please visit

busconnects.ie/busconnects-cork

For general queries

corkcbc@busconnects.ie

Freefone **1800 303 653**

BusConnects Cork
National Transport Authority,
Dún Scéine, Iveagh Court,
Harcourt Lane, Dublin 2, DO2 WT20

Corridor A – Dunkettle to City

Key Facts

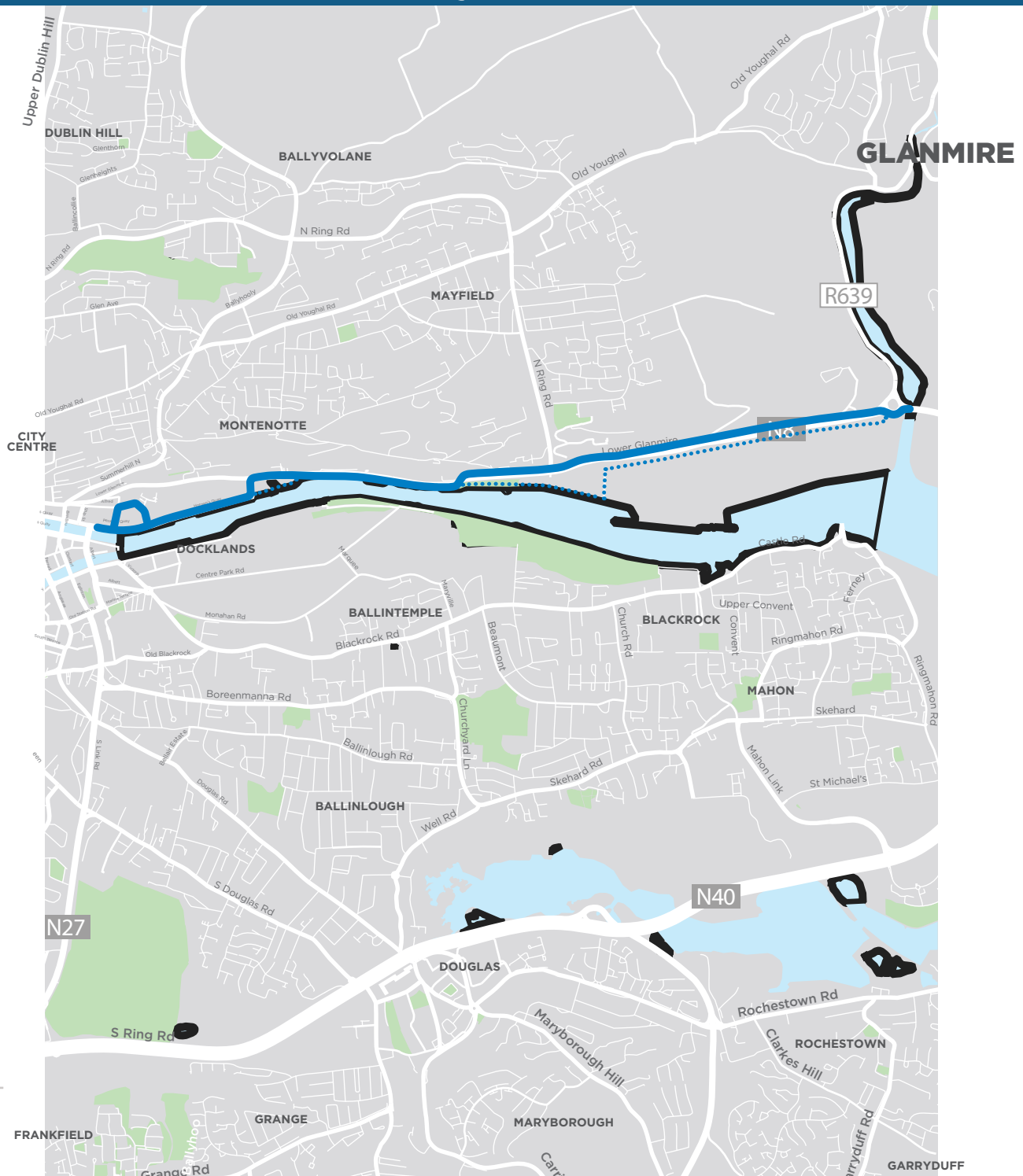
- Route length **5.0 km**
- Cycle route length **5.0km**
- Current bus journey time up to **29 mins**
- BusConnects Cork journey time **13 mins**
- Future bus journey time without BusConnects Cork **35 mins**

Considerations

- To facilitate walking and cycling there is potential reduction in on-street parking spaces
- To allow for sustainable transport and pedestrian facilities changes will be made for general traffic flow and the amount of allocated space

Changes to enhance the provision for sustainable travel

- Restricted widths in some areas would see cyclists re-routed offline before re-joining the Sustainable Transport Corridor.
- A new cycle route through the North Docks would also be constructed to avoid the most constrained section of Lower Glanmire Road.



Sustainable Transport Corridor

Alternative Cycle Facilities

Corridor B – Mayfield to City

Key Facts

- Route length **3.5 km**
- Cycle route length **3.5km**
- Current bus journey time up to **32 mins**
- BusConnects Cork journey time **15 mins**
- Future bus journey time without BusConnects Cork **38 mins**

Considerations

- Redesign & mitigation landscaping may be required to balance potential reduction of garden space
- To facilitate walking and cycling there is potential reduction in on-street parking spaces
- Rearrangement of traffic movements
- Comprehensive tree replanting programme to offset the possible removal of some existing trees

Changes to enhance the provision for sustainable travel

- It is proposed to remove through traffic from Old Youghal Road, limiting general traffic to access only, through the implementation of bus gates (short sections of bus/cycle-only roadway). This reduces traffic volumes on this street, which allows buses to move freely.
- Restricted widths in some areas would see cyclists re-routed via offline section through Wellington Road and Gardiner's Hill, plus Iona Park and Colmcille Avenue.
- The corridor will link in the works currently being implemented on MacCurtain Street.
- Ballyhooly Road and Summerhill are very constrained and will require traffic management measures to achieve bus priority.

Sustainable Transport Corridor

Alternative Cycle Facilities

Corridor C – Blackpool to City

Key Facts

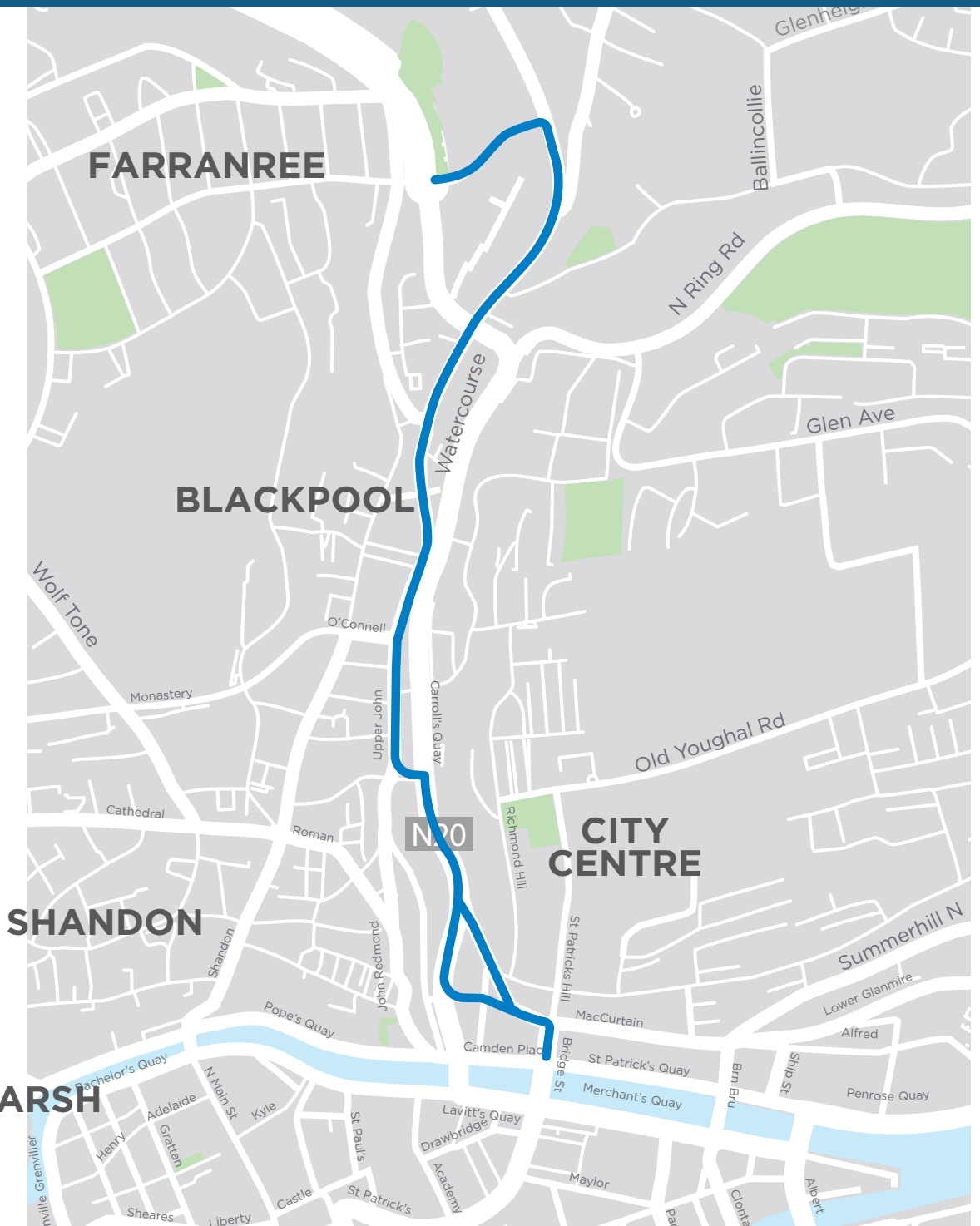
- Route length **2.2 km**
- Cycle route length **1.4km**
- Current bus journey time up to **24 mins**
- BusConnects Cork journey time **10 mins**
- Future bus journey time without BusConnects Cork **29 mins**

Considerations

- To facilitate walking and cycling there is potential reduction in on-street parking spaces
- Rearrangement of traffic movements
- Comprehensive tree replanting programme to offset the possible removal of some existing trees

Changes to enhance the provision for sustainable travel

- It is proposed to remove through-traffic from Watercourse Road (between Cathedral Walk and O'Connell Street), limiting general traffic to access-only through the use of bus gates (short sections of bus/cycle-only roadway). This allows buses to move freely through this section of the route.
- Due to width constraints on Thomas Davis Street/Dublin Street, it is proposed to convert this route to one-way outbound movement for general traffic through an inbound bus gate to be located south of Spring Lane.
- The corridor will link in with the works currently being implemented on Leitrim Street, Devonshire Street and Coburg Street.



Corridor D – Hollyhill to City

Key Facts

- Route length is **3.9 km**
- Cycle route length **3.9km**
- Current bus journey time up to **29 mins**
- BusConnects Cork journey time from **16 mins**
- Future bus journey time without BusConnects Cork **35 mins**

Considerations

- Redesign & mitigation landscaping may be required to balance potential reduction of garden space
- To facilitate walking and cycling there is potential reduction in on-street parking spaces
- Rearrangement of traffic movements
- Comprehensive tree replanting programme to offset the possible removal of some existing trees

Changes to enhance the provision for sustainable travel

- It is proposed to remove through traffic from Cathedral Road, limiting general traffic to access-only through the use of bus gates (short sections of bus/cycle-only roadway). This reduces traffic volumes on this street, which allows buses to move freely through this section of the route.
- It is proposed that cyclists would use Knapps Square and Watercourse Road as cycle-friendly streets.
- The corridor will link in with the works currently being implemented on Mulgrave Road.

Sustainable Transport Corridor

Alternative Cycle Facilities

Corridor E – Ballincollig to City

Key Facts

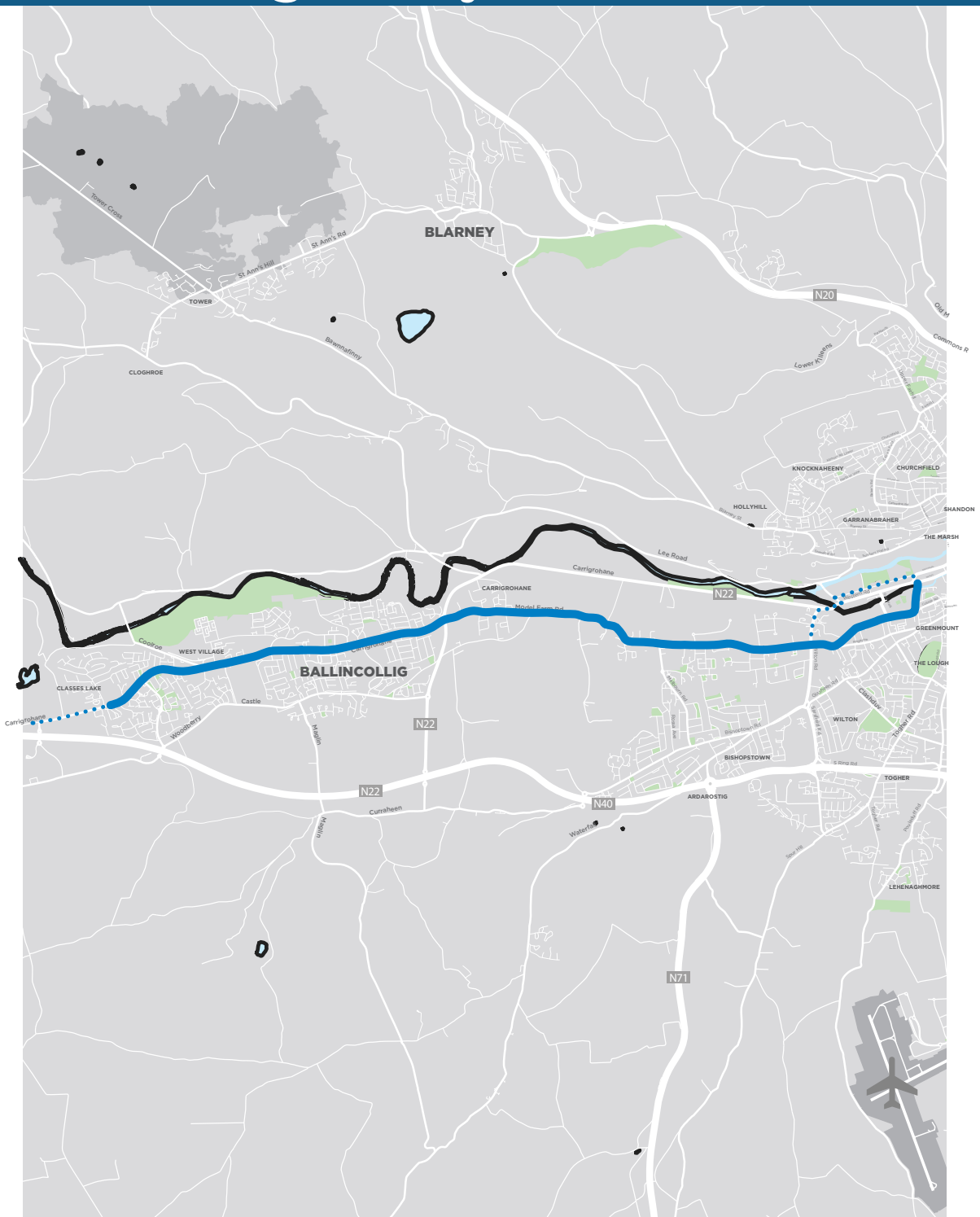
- Route length **11 km**
- Cycle route length **10.5 km**
- Current bus journey time up to **56 mins**
- BusConnects Cork journey time **35 mins**
- Future bus journey time without BusConnects Cork **67 mins**

Considerations

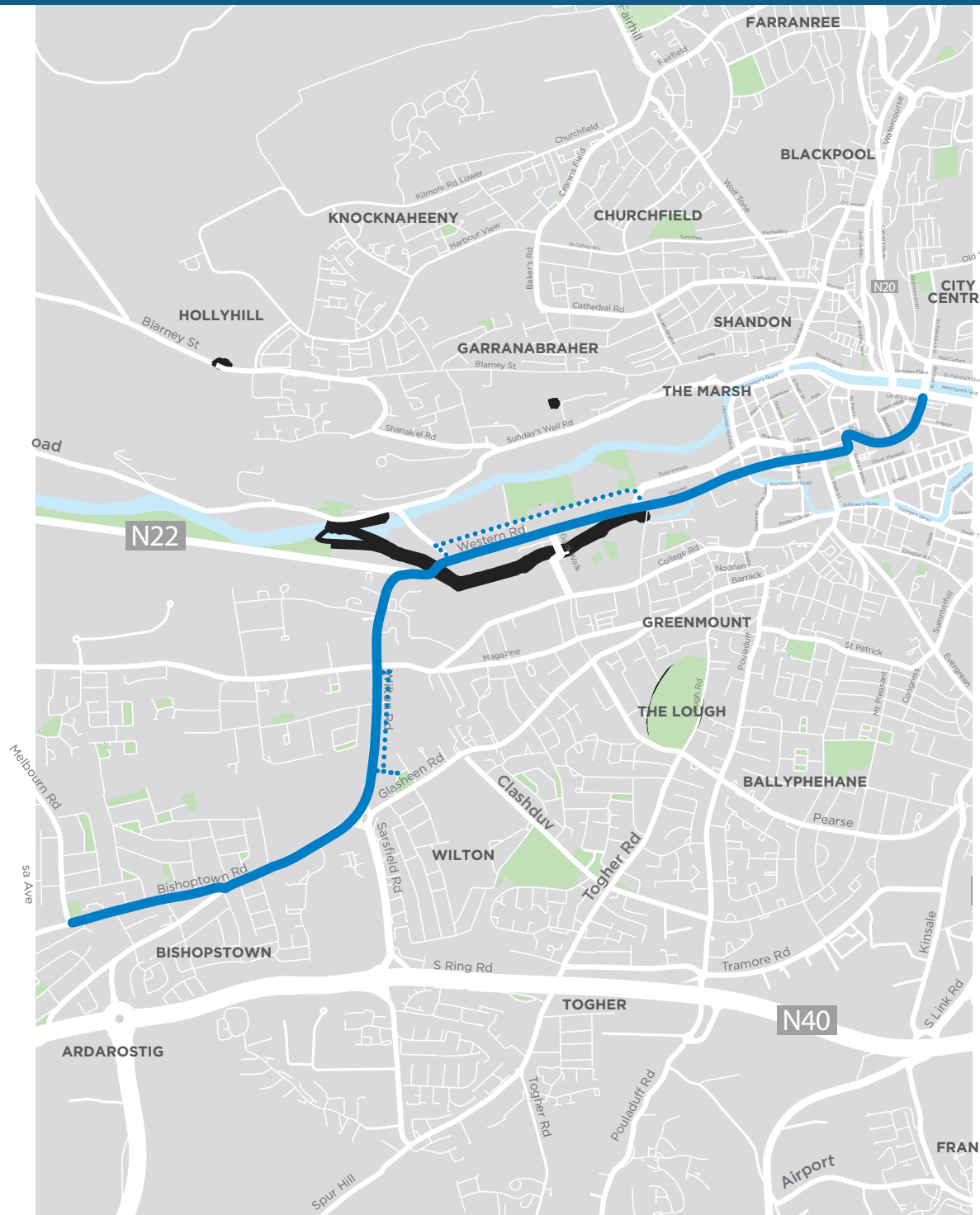
- To facilitate walking and cycling there is potential reduction in on-street parking spaces
- To allow for sustainable transport and pedestrian facilities changes will be made for general traffic flow and the amount of allocated space
- Comprehensive tree replanting programme to offset the possible removal of some existing trees
- Redesign & mitigation landscaping may be required to balance potential reduction of garden space
- Acquisition of buildings

Changes to enhance the provision for sustainable travel

- Bus gate (short section of bus/cycle-only roadway) proposed in Ballincollig Town Centre to ensure a sufficient degree of bus priority and enable the provision of dedicated cycle facilities.
- Cyclists are proposed to be routed via Victoria Cross Road, Western Road and Mardyke Walk (to Bandfield), and strategically placed bus gates are proposed on College Road to reduce non-essential through traffic.
- Significant junction upgrade at Poulavone Roundabout.



Corridor F – Bishopstown to City



Key Facts

- Route length **5.3 km**
- Cycle route length **5 km**
- Current bus journey time up to **35 mins**
- BusConnects Cork journey time **19 mins**
- Future bus journey time without BusConnects Cork **42 mins**

Considerations

- To facilitate walking and cycling there is potential reduction in on-street parking spaces
- To allow for sustainable transport and pedestrian facilities changes will be made for general traffic flow and the amount of allocated space
- Comprehensive tree replanting programme to offset the possible removal of some existing trees
- Redesign & mitigation landscaping may be required to balance potential reduction of garden space

Changes to enhance the provision for sustainable travel

- Along Wilton Road (between Wilton Roundabout and Dennehy's Cross) it is proposed that cyclists would route via a parallel facility to the east of Wilton Road for a portion of this section.
- Along Western Road it is proposed that cyclists would route via Mardyke Walk (which will function as a quietway).
- It is proposed to convert Washington Street and Lancaster Quay into a two-way route for buses and cyclists, including accommodating local traffic access only; general two-way traffic is proposed to be accommodated on Dyke Parade and Sheares Street (as far as Courthouse Street).
- Junction upgrades are proposed at Bishopstown Road/ Curraheen Road junction and at the entrance to CUH. Wilton Roundabout is proposed to be converted to a signalised junction.

Sustainable Transport Corridor

Alternative Cycle Facilities

Corridor G – Togher to City

Key Facts

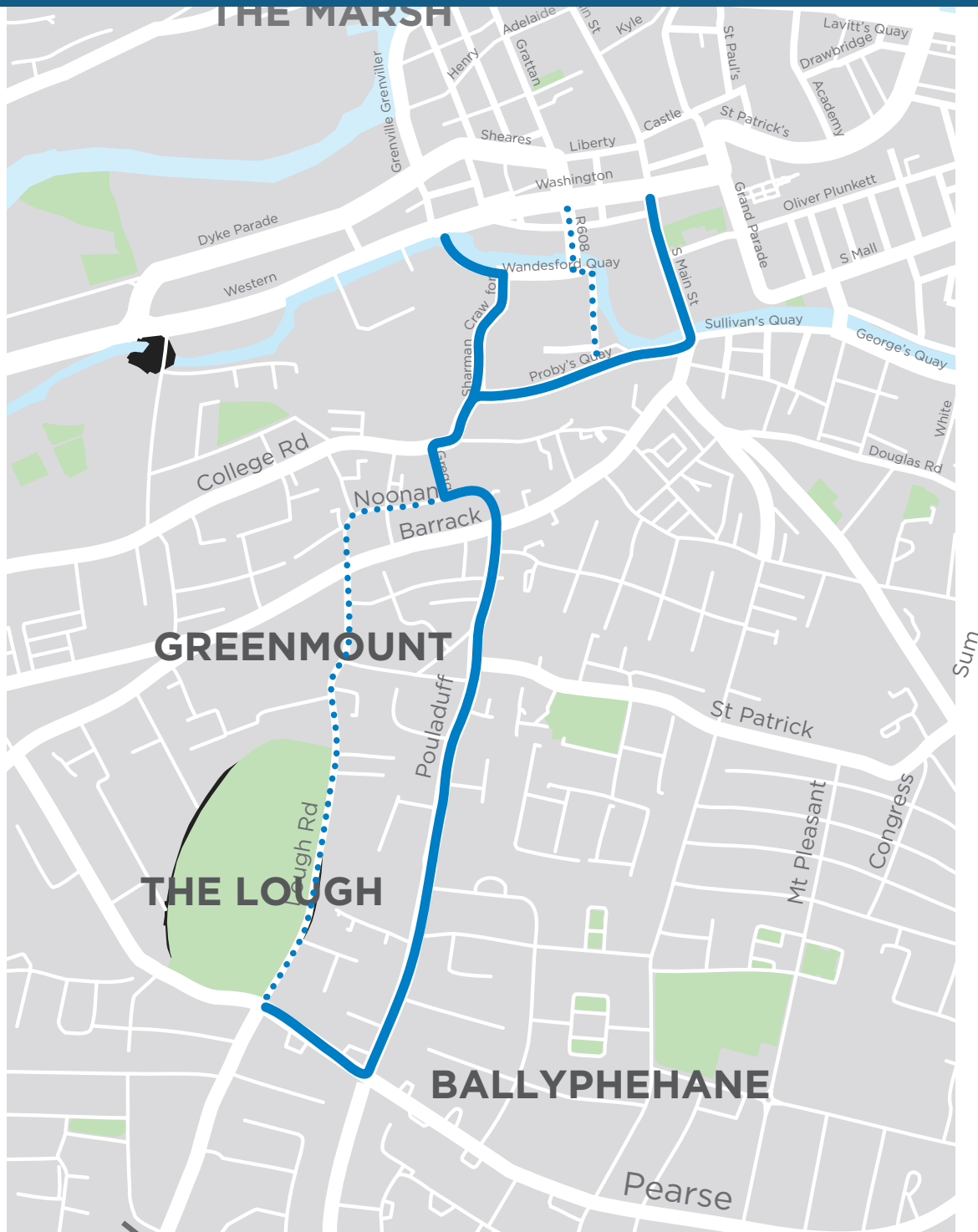
- Route length **1.8 km**
- Cycle route length **1.8 km**
- Current bus journey time up to **16 mins** (*based on existing bus services on Lough Road as a proxy for Pouladuff Road)
- BusConnects Cork journey time **9 mins**
- Future bus journey time without BusConnects Cork **19 mins**

Considerations

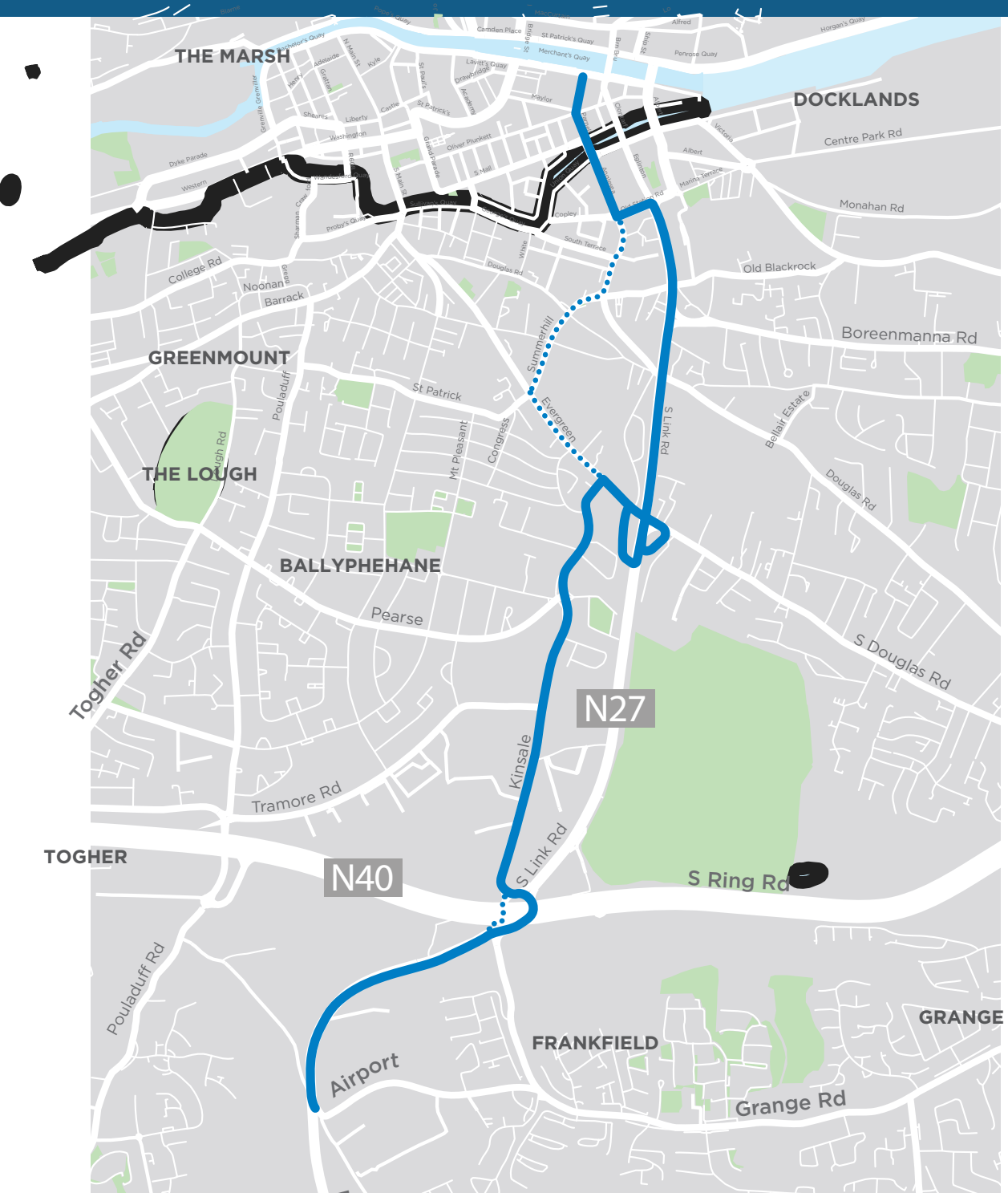
- To facilitate walking and cycling there is potential reduction in on-street parking spaces
- To allow for sustainable transport and pedestrian facilities changes will be made for general traffic flow and the amount of allocated space
- Comprehensive tree replanting programme to offset the possible removal of some existing trees
- Redesign & mitigation landscaping may be required to balance potential reduction of garden space

Changes to enhance the provision for sustainable travel

- Provision of cycle facilities on Lough Road requires the removal of portions of on-street parking and traffic management.
- The presence of existing trees adjacent to the Lough will require the introduction of traffic restrictions at its northern end.
- Provision of dedicated bus priority on Pearse Road, Pouladuff Road, Noonan Road and Gregg Road.
- Due to the potential impact on adjacent historic buildings at Sharman Crawford Street, it is proposed that inbound cyclists would route via Proby's Quay and South Main Street, and outbound cyclists via Crosses Green and Proby's Quay. Inbound buses are proposed to route via Sharman Crawford Street/St. Finbarr's Bridge, and outbound buses are proposed to route via South Main Street/Proby's Quay.



Corridor H – Airport Road to City



Key Facts

- Route length is **5.0 km**
- Cycle route length **4.3 km**
- Current bus journey time not available as there is no existing route serving the catchment
- BusConnects Cork journey time **17 mins**

Considerations

- To facilitate walking and cycling there is potential reduction in on-street parking spaces
- To allow for sustainable transport and pedestrian facilities changes will be made for general traffic flow and the amount of allocated space
- Comprehensive tree replanting programme to offset the possible removal of some existing trees
- Redesign & mitigation landscaping may be required to balance potential reduction of garden space
- Potential acquisition of buildings

Changes to enhance the provision for sustainable travel

- Provision of bus priority on N27 South Link Road requires re-designation of existing lanes, or alternatively the widening of a section of the route.
- Achieving bus priority on Old Kinsale Road requires traffic restrictions on the exit arm from the Kinsale Interchange.
- Provision of cycle facilities on Evergreen Street, Infirmary Road and Langford Row requires removal of a portion of existing on-street parking.
- It is proposed to facilitate two-way bus movements on Parnell Place and Anglesea Street.

Corridor I – Maryborough Hill to City

Key Facts

- Route length is **4.3 km**
- Cycle route length **4.3 km**
- Current bus journey time up to **33 mins**
- BusConnects Cork journey time **14 mins**
- Future bus journey time without BusConnects Cork **40 mins**

Considerations

- To facilitate walking and cycling there is potential reduction in on-street parking spaces
- Comprehensive tree replanting programme to offset the possible removal of some existing trees
- Traffic restrictions
- Redesign & mitigation landscaping may be required to balance potential reduction of garden space

Changes to enhance the provision for sustainable travel

- To provide bus and cycle lanes in both directions on Douglas Road, it is proposed that this road would be made one-way outbound only for general traffic. Inbound traffic would be required to use other routes.
- Due to width constraints on Southern Road, the proposal is to re-route cyclists via High Street and Langford Row. High Street and Capwell Road would be made access-only for general traffic to reduce through-traffic and encourage their use as cycle-friendly streets.
- It is proposed to limit Douglas East to local access only using bus gates. Fingerpost Roundabout is proposed to be converted to a signalised junction.

Corridor J – Mahon to City

Key Facts

- Route Length **7.6 km**
- Cycle route length **7.1 km**
- Current bus journey time up to **30 mins**
- BusConnects Cork journey time **17 mins**
- Future bus journey time without BusConnects Cork **36 mins**

Considerations

- To facilitate walking and cycling there is potential reduction in on-street parking spaces
- Comprehensive tree replanting programme to offset the possible removal of some existing trees
- Traffic restrictions
- Redesign & mitigation landscaping may be required to balance potential reduction of garden space

Changes to enhance the provision for sustainable travel

- Bus gates (short sections of bus/cycle-only roadway) are proposed for Avenue De Rennes, limiting general traffic to access only on this road. This means buses will be able to move freely and there will be space to provide cycle facilities.
- New pedestrian and cycling bridges to be built on either side of the N40 overbridge at Jacob's Island.

Corridor K – Kinsale Road to Douglas and Well Road Cycle Route

Key Facts

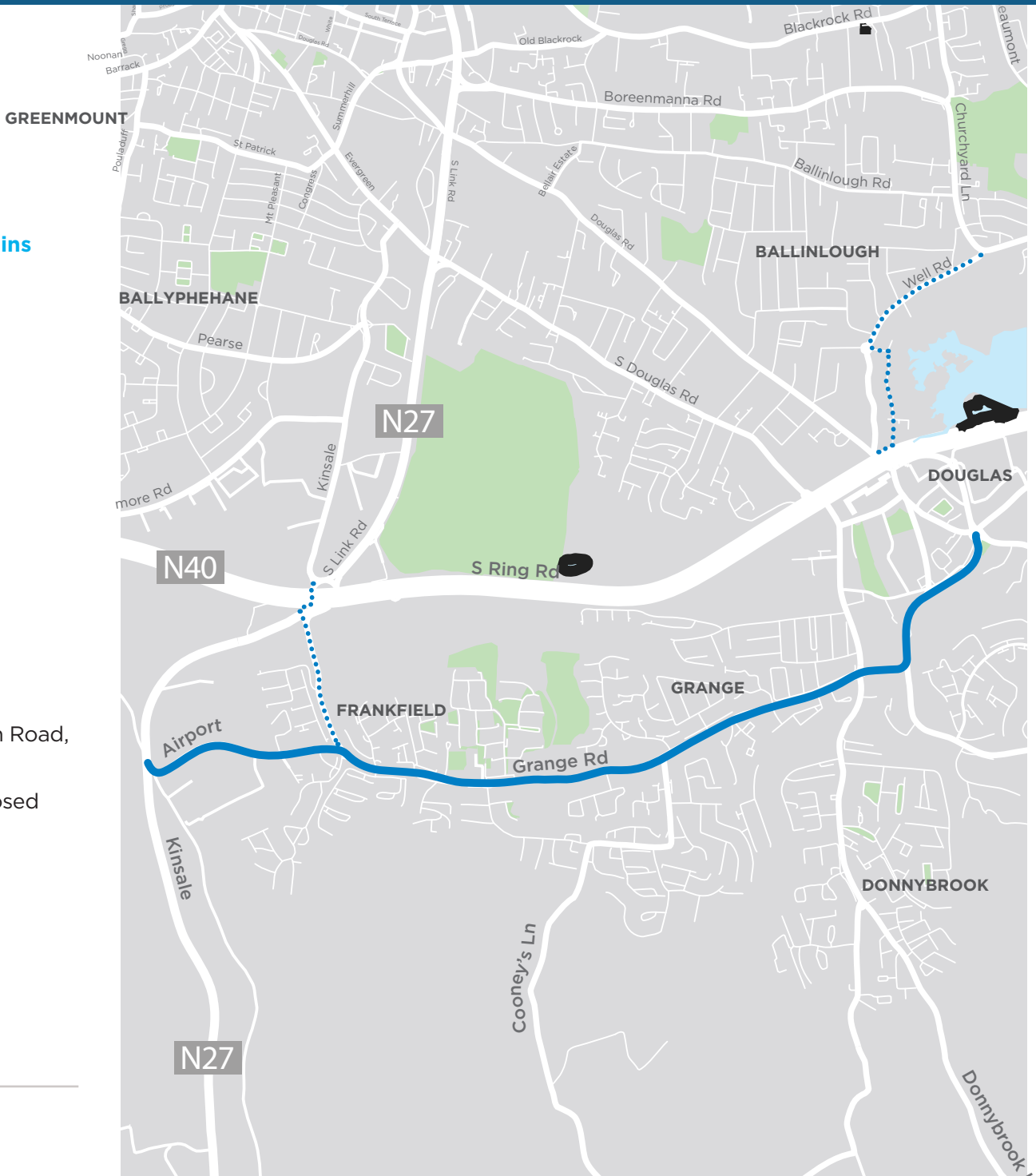
- Route length **5.7 km**
- Cycle route length **4.8 km**
- Current bus journey time up to **25 mins**
- BusConnects Cork journey time **15 mins**
- Future bus journey time without BusConnects Cork **30 mins**

Considerations

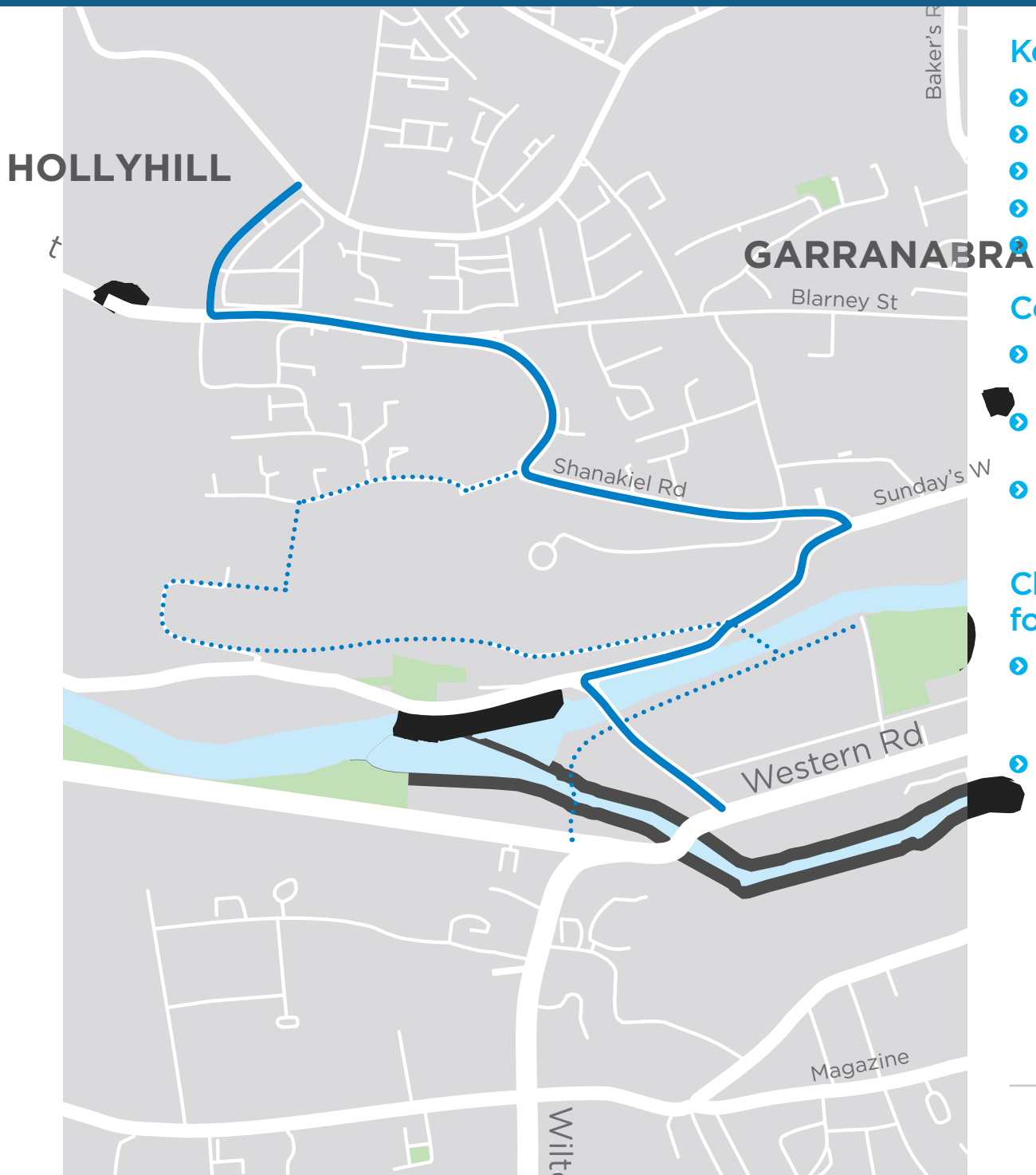
- Redesign & mitigation landscaping may be required to balance potential reduction of garden space
- Comprehensive tree replanting programme to offset the possible removal of some existing trees
- To facilitate walking and cycling there is potential reduction in on-street parking spaces

Changes to enhance the provision for sustainable travel

- A new bridge is proposed to connect Grange Road to Carrigaline Road over Mangala Valley.
- Additional road widening will be required on Ballycurreen Road, Grange Road and Carrigaline Road.
- Due to width constraints a ‘quietway’ cycle route is proposed along Douglas Hall and Riverbank.



Corridor L – Sunday's Well to Hollyhill



Key Facts

- Route length **2.5 km**
- Cycle route length **2.5 km**
- Current bus journey time up to **34 mins**
- BusConnects Cork journey time **12 mins**
- Future bus journey time without BusConnects Cork **41 mins**

Considerations

- Redesign & mitigation landscaping may be required to balance potential reduction of garden space
- Comprehensive tree replanting programme to offset the possible removal of some existing trees
- To facilitate walking and cycling there is potential reduction in on-street parking spaces

Changes to enhance the provision for sustainable travel

- Shanakiel Road and Sunday's Well are physically constrained, and it is not possible to provide dedicated bus lanes. Priority will be provided for buses through traffic signals.
- The cycle route involves connecting from Sunday's Well to Shanakiel Road through the residential development site at St Kevin's, which provides a better gradient for cyclists and avoids the most constrained sections of Sunday's Well and Shanakiel Road. Connectivity for cyclists includes the provision of a new bridge over the River Lee in the vicinity of the Mardyke Sports Grounds.

Údarás Náisiúnta Iompair
National Transport Authority

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