



Blackpool to City

Sustainable Transport Corridor
Emerging Preferred Route

Public Consultation June 2022



**BUS
CONNECTS
CORK**
SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT FOR A BETTER CITY.



Rialtas
na hÉireann
Government
of Ireland

Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040



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1. Introduction

1.1 Investing in Cork's Future: 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 supporting its future development. That's why the NTA has been working in partnership with Cork City Council, Cork County Council, Irish Rail, Bus Éireann and Transport Infrastructure Ireland, to develop, and now implement the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS).

Adopted in 2020, 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 connected communities by giving everybody the opportunity to access sustainable public

transport options, along with radically improved cycling and walking infrastructure.

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

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;
- An enhanced commuter rail system - Cork Commuter Rail Programme;
- A new east-west light rail line - Luas Cork;
- A comprehensive cycling network providing safe cycling facilities across the region;
- Various new road links and road improvements plus park & ride provision; and
- 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 26% at present.



1.2 What is BusConnects Cork?

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.

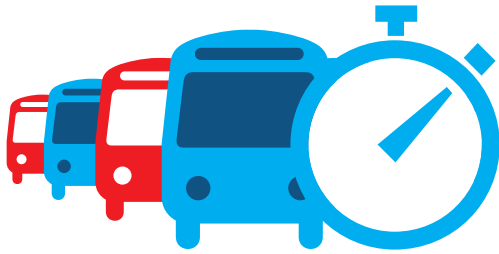
For the people of Cork, this investment will mean greater connectivity to employment, to education, to family and friends, to retail and to the burgeoning social and cultural fabric of the region.

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, education whilst playing a key role in regeneration and improvements to public realm and City Centres.





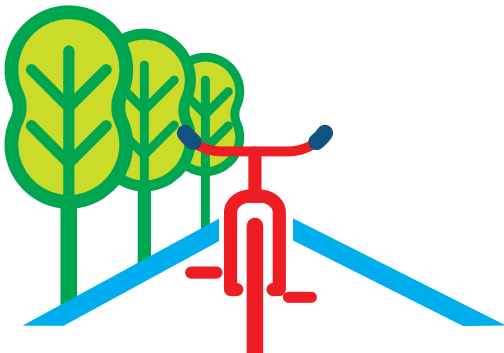
Enhance the capacity and potential of the public transport system by improving bus speeds, reliability and punctuality through the provision of bus lanes and other measures to provide priority to bus movement over general traffic movements



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

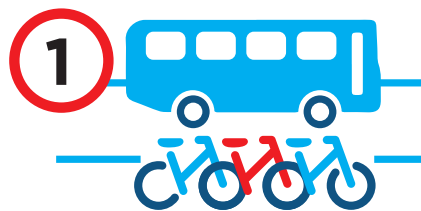


Enable compact growth, regeneration opportunities and more effective use of land in Cork, for present and future generations, through the provision of safe and efficient sustainable transport networks

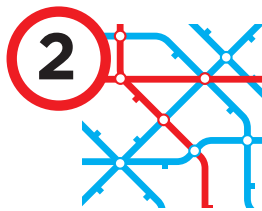


Ensure that the public realm is carefully considered in the design and development of the transport infrastructure and seek to enhance key urban focal points where appropriate and feasible

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



1 Building a network
of new **Bus
and Cycle
Corridors**



2 Completely
redesigning
the bus
network



3 New state
-of-the-art
ticketing
system



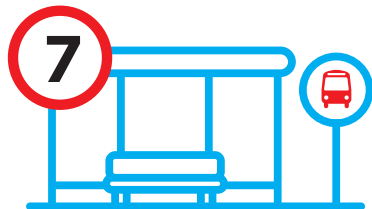
4 Implementing
**Cashless
payment
system**



5 Revamping
the fare system



6 New
bus
livery



7 New bus
stops and
shelters
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 **redesigning of the Bus Network** in the Cork metropolitan area which had two rounds of public consultation during 2021. The Final Redesigned Bus Network for Cork was recently published and will be implemented during 2023 / 2024.

The **restructuring of the fare system** with a new 90-minute fare, that will allow passengers to take multiple trips on various modes of transport within 90 minutes of one another without incurring any additional financial penalty. 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.

1.3 What is the Sustainable Transport Corridor Project?

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

93km of bus lane/
bus priority



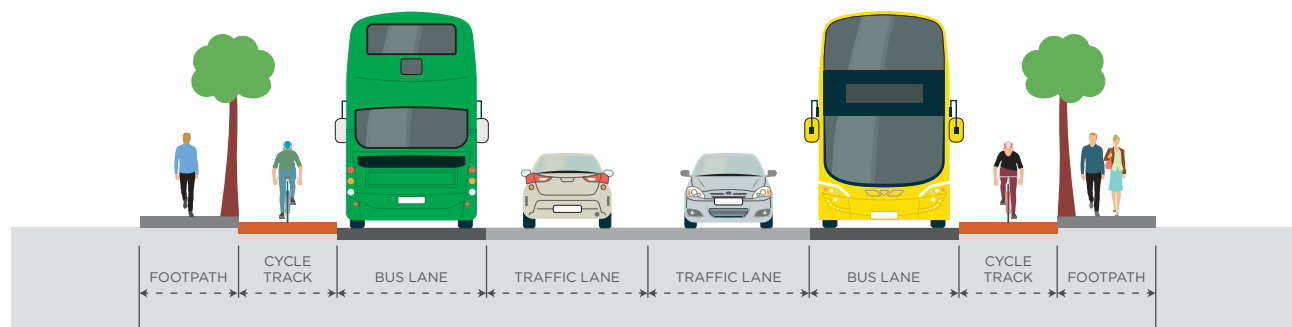
112km of cycle facilities
(one direction)
delivering 56km of
the cycle network



1.4 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.

All of the routes are at Emerging Preferred Route (EPR) options 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.



1.5 What are the 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.

1.5.1 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.

1.5.2 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 Metropolitan 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 112km of cycle facilities (in one direction) will be built which will deliver 56km of the cycle network. 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 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.

1.5.3 Enhanced Facilities for Pedestrians

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.

1.5.4 Sustainable and Liveable City

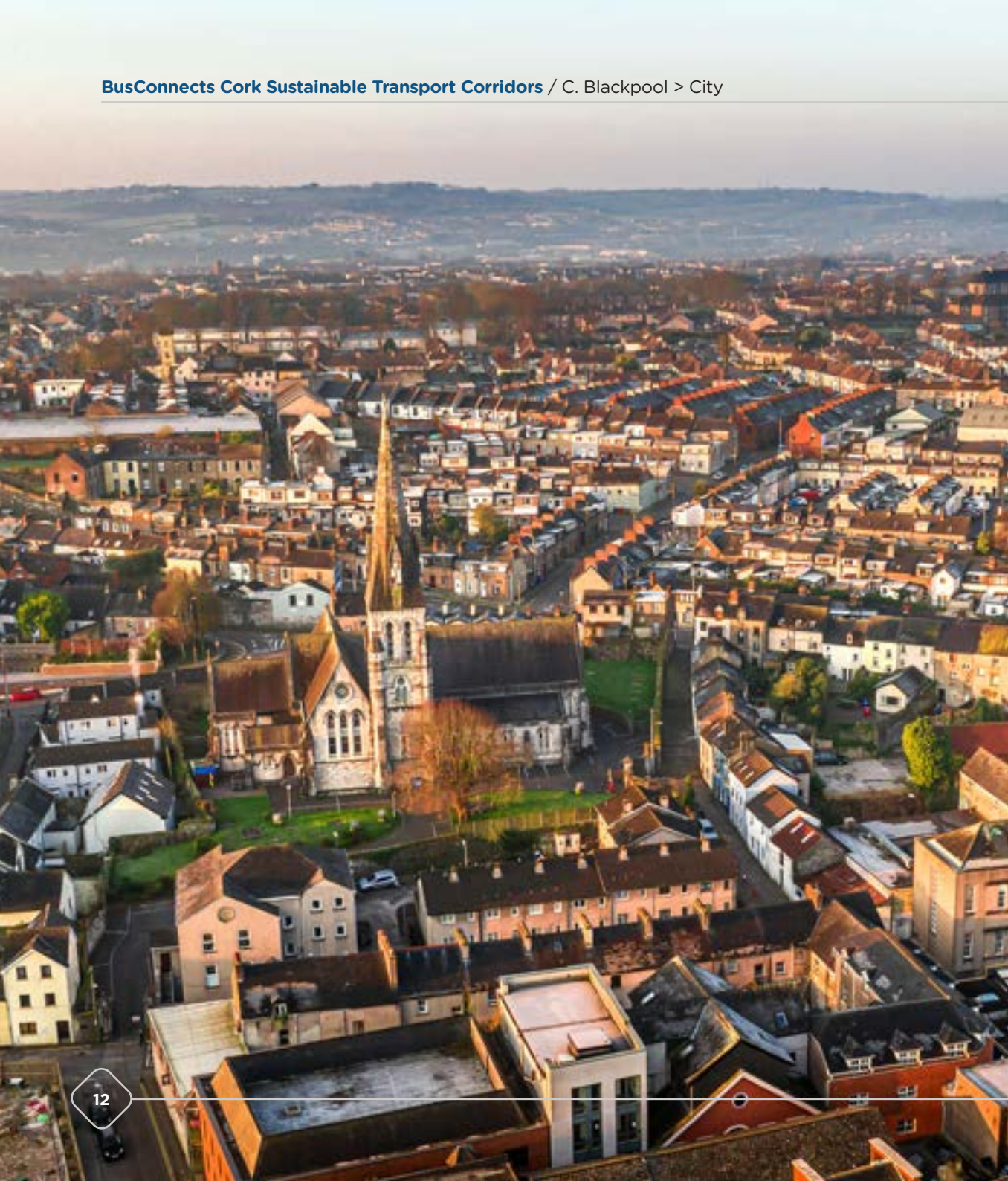
BusConnects Cork is about making sustainable transport a better and more accessible option. By providing a high-quality, frequent and reliable bus service, and improving cycling and pedestrian infrastructure, we can make Cork a more attractive place to live, work and visit. Moving some people from their 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 and 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.

1.5.5 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.

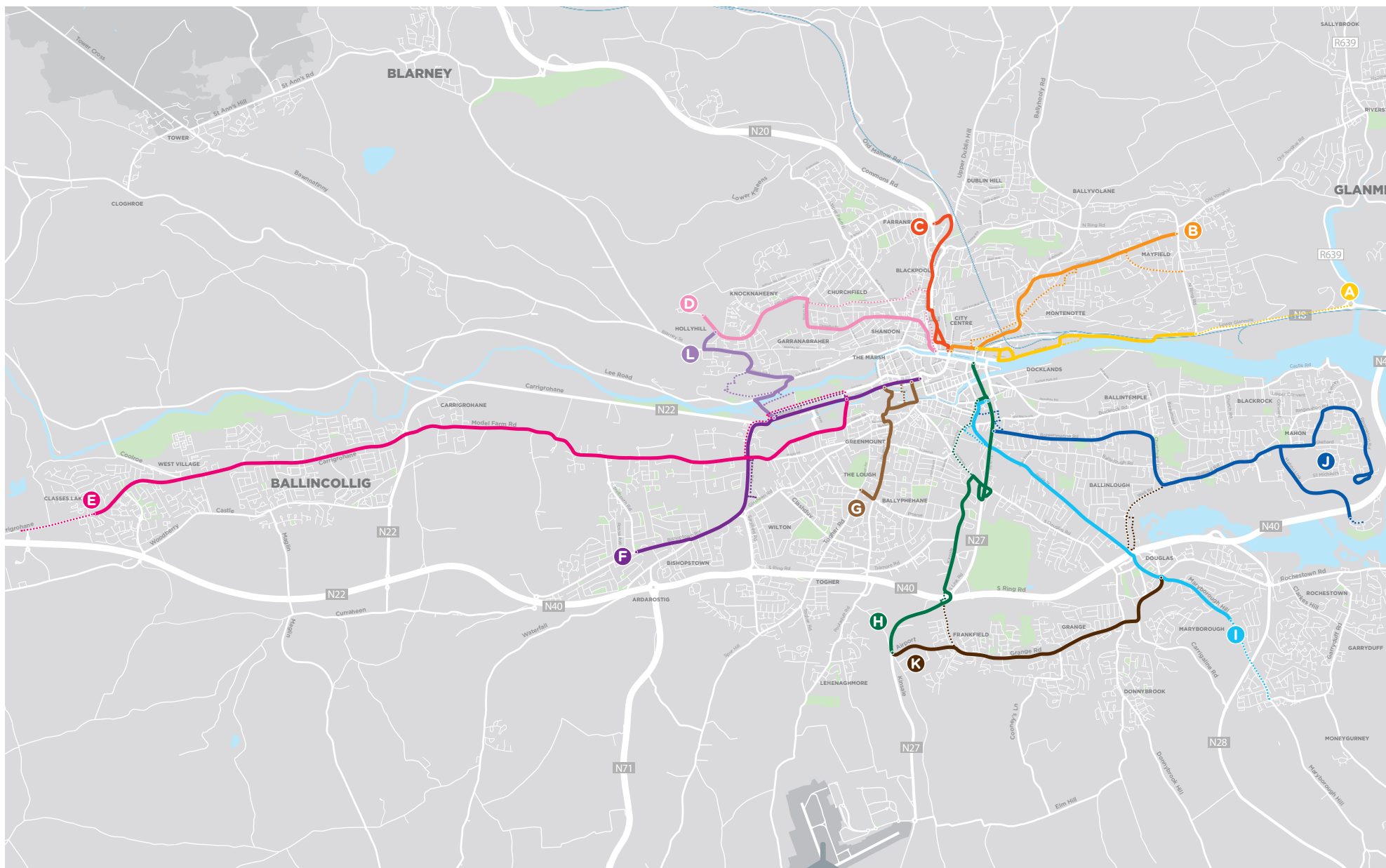


1.6 Emerging Preferred Routes

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



2. Emerging Preferred Routes

2.1 Emerging Preferred Route for Blackpool to City

The Emerging Preferred Route set out in this consultation document was identified following an assessment of various alternatives.

The route selection process involved identification and consideration of possible options taking account of criteria including local impacts on property frontage, existing traffic patterns and broad assessment of environmental impacts. A Feasibility Report setting out details of the assessment work undertaken is available on www.BusConnects.ie.

Arising from that work an Emerging Preferred Route has been identified for this corridor and public feedback on that proposal is now sought. It is important to know that this option is not adopted yet. Only following this public consultation and the review of the submissions received will a decision on the final Preferred Route be made.

2.2 Blackpool to City Overview

The Blackpool to City Sustainable Transport Corridor (STC C) commences north of Blackpool Shopping Centre on Brothers Delaney Road. The STC proceeds on Brothers Delaney Road to connect with Blackpool Shopping Centre and Redforge Road. From here the STC proceeds south on Redforge Road, Dublin Street, Thomas Davis Street and Watercourse Road. The STC then proceeds on Cathedral Walk and the N20 south, where it connects into the sustainable transport facilities currently being provided on Leitrim Street and Devonshire Street as part of the MacCurtain Street Public Transport Improvement Scheme. It is also proposed that the STC will connect in with proposed cycling facilities on Lower John Street and Knapps Square to offer an alternative 'quietway' route to the west of the N20.

Priority will be provided for buses using dedicated bus lanes on Popham's Road and Brothers Delaney Road. Redforge Road, Dublin Street, Thomas Davis Street, Watercourse Road and Cathedral Walk are physically constrained in a number of areas. It is proposed that bus priority will be provided through several different measures such as bus lanes, bus gates

and traffic signals. Bus priority on the N20 is to be delivered using bus lanes and traffic signals.

Proposed cycling provision includes dedicated cycle tracks to Blackpool Shopping Centre from the junction of Popham's Road and Commons Road via the N20 and Brothers Delaney Road.

From here a cycle route is provided in the inbound (towards the city) direction from Brothers Delaney Road via Redforge Road as far as the junction with Madden's buildings. An inbound cycle track is proposed on Watercourse Road between Madden's Buildings and the junction with O'Connell Street. An outbound (towards Blackpool) cycle track is proposed from the junction of Watercourse Road/ Madden's Building to the pedestrian access to Blackpool Shopping Centre on Thomas Davis Street, adjacent to the Glen Hall Apartments. Inbound and outbound bus gates are proposed on Watercourse Road between O'Connell Street and Cathedral Walk which allows for a 'quietway' cycle provision in this area. Two-way cycle tracks are provided along Cathedral Walk and the N20 as far as the junction with Leitrim Street. From here the STC will link into the cycling facilities currently being implemented on Leitrim

Street as part of the MacCurtain Street Public Transport Improvement Scheme.

The proposed corridor also connects to Sustainable Transport Corridor D (STC D)- Hollyhill to City at the intersection of O'Connell Street and Watercourse Road.

The following paragraphs will describe each section of STC C in more detail, identifying the measures proposed so that sustainable transport is prioritised.

Proposed Enhancements to Urban Spaces and Pedestrian/Cycle Environment

Location	Proposed Enhancements
Brothers Delaney Road	Continuous segregated cycle lanes on both sides of the road.
Brothers Delaney Road/N20	Junction upgraded to prioritise pedestrian and cycle friendly design.

2.2.1 Popham's Road to Redforge Road via N20 and Brothers Delaney Road

It is proposed that bus lanes and segregated cycle tracks will be provided for the full length of Brothers Delaney Road.



2.2.2 Redforge Road to Madden's Buildings/ O'Connell Street

Redforge Road, Dublin Street, Thomas Davis Street and Watercourse Road are physically constrained, and it is not possible to provide extensive bus lanes along this section. Traffic management measures are proposed to achieve bus priority.

From the junction of Brothers Delaney Road and Redforge Road to the entrance to Blackpool Shopping Centre on Redforge Street, it is proposed to use a short section of inbound (towards the city) bus lane and bus priority traffic signals. This means that buses will get a "head-start" over cars. An inbound (towards the city) bus gate (short section of bus/cycle-only roadway) is proposed south of the junction of Dublin Street and Spring Lane as far as Common's Road.

Inbound (towards the city) general traffic will be directed onto:

- ▶ Dublin Hill Lower, Redforge Road/Brothers Delaney Road to the N20 or

- ▶ Ballincollie Road to the North Ring Road (adjacent to the Ballyvolane Fire Station).

In the outbound (towards Blackpool) direction buses will share with the general traffic.

Along Redforge Road and Dublin Street to its junction with Spring Lane, it is proposed for cycling to share with general traffic. The proposed inbound (towards the city) bus gate (short section of bus/cycle-only roadway) south of the junction of Dublin Street and Spring Lane will reduce traffic and allow for a 'quietway'

route, where cyclists share with low volumes of general traffic. Alternatively, cyclists can enter/exit Blackpool Shopping Centre via the existing access (located just south of Spring Lane/Dunnes Stores, adjacent to the Glen Hall Apartments).

It is proposed to provide an outbound (towards Blackpool) continuous cycle track along Watercourse Road/Thomas Davis Street from the junction of Madden's Buildings to the existing pedestrian/cyclist access to Blackpool Shopping Centre (located just south of Spring Lane/Dunnes Stores, adjacent to the Glen Hall Apartments).

Proposed Enhancements to Urban Spaces and Pedestrian/Cycle Environment

Location	Proposed Enhancements
Dublin Street/Thomas Davis Street	A traffic calmed environment will provide a safer and more attractive environment for pedestrians and cyclists.



2.2.3 Maddens Buildings/ O'Connell Street to Cathedral Walk

Watercourse Road from Madden's Buildings to Cathedral Walk is physically constrained, and it is not possible to provide extensive bus lanes along this section. Traffic management measures will be provided to achieve bus priority.

At the junction of Watercourse Road and Madden's Buildings, outbound (towards Blackpool) bus priority is proposed through a short section of bus lane, and by using bus priority traffic signals, which means that buses will get a "head-start" over cars. In the inbound (towards the city) direction buses will share with the general traffic.

It is proposed to remove through-traffic from Watercourse Road (between O'Connell Street and Cathedral Walk) using bus gates (short sections of bus/cycle-only roadway). This will limit general traffic to access-only and allows buses to move freely through this section of the STC. Access to Watercourse Road for local access traffic will be via its junction with O'Connell Street.

Along Watercourse Road (between O'Connell Street and Cathedral Walk) no physical works are proposed except for bus gates (short sections of bus/cycle-only roadway) and bus stop upgrades.

Inbound (towards the city) and outbound (towards Blackpool) through traffic will be directed onto:

➤ N20.

Between Madden's Building and O'Connell Street an inbound (towards the city) cycle track is proposed. It is proposed that outbound cyclists will share a short section with the bus lane.

The proposed bus gates (short section of bus/cycle-only roadway) on Watercourse Road, between O'Connell Street and Cathedral Walk, will reduce traffic, and allow for a 'quietway' route, which involves cyclists sharing the traffic lane with low volume general traffic.

Proposed Enhancements to Urban Spaces and Pedestrian/Cycle Environment

Location	Proposed Enhancements
Watercourse Road between O'Connell Street and Cathedral Walk	<p>A traffic calmed environment will provide a safer and more attractive environment for pedestrians and cyclists.</p> <p>New signalised toucan crossings to facilitate easy access to bus stops and generally improved permeability for pedestrians.</p>
Watercourse Road by Madden's Buildings	Junction upgraded to prioritise pedestrian and cycle friendly design.
Watercourse Road/O'Connell Street	Junction upgraded to prioritise pedestrian and cycle friendly design.

2.2.4 Cathedral Walk to City

A two-way cycle track is proposed on Cathedral Walk between Watercourse Road and the N20. In the inbound (towards the city) direction buses will share with the general traffic. It is proposed to provide an outbound (towards Blackpool) bus gate (short section of bus/cycle-only roadway) on Cathedral Walk between Watercourse Road and the N20.

Along the N20 between Cathedral Walk and Leirim Street, inbound (towards the city) bus priority is proposed through a short section of bus lane and by using a bus priority traffic signals at the junction of the N20 with Leirim Street, which means that buses will get a 'head-start' over cars.

As part of the MacCurtain Street Public Transport Improvement Scheme, an outbound

(towards Blackpool) bus lane is currently being implemented along Devonshire Street.

As part of STC C, an outbound (towards Blackpool) bus lane is proposed on the N20 from its junction with Devonshire Street as far as the junction of N20 and Leirim Street.

From here, outbound (towards Blackpool) bus priority is proposed through a short section of



bus lane and by using bus priority traffic signals at the junction of the N20 with Cathedral Walk, which means that buses will get a ‘head-start’ over cars.

A two-way cycle track is proposed on N20 between Cathedral Walk and Leitrim Street. The cycling provision continues along Leitrim Street as part of the MacCurtain Street Public Transport Improvement Scheme.

It is also proposed that STC C will connect in with proposed cycling facilities on Lower John Street and Knapp’s Square to offer an alternative ‘quietway’ route to the west of the N20.

To facilitate these sustainable transport improvements, it is proposed that land take would be required at the following approximate locations:

- Lands of private properties on Cathedral Walk and
- Lands of private properties along the N20.

The STC will link into the works currently being implemented as part of the MacCurtain Street Public Transport Improvement Scheme.

The indicative extents of this land take are shown on the drawings shown in the Appendix of this brochure.

Proposed Enhancements to Urban Spaces and Pedestrian/Cycle Environment

Location	Proposed Enhancements
N20/Cathedral Walk	Junction upgraded to prioritise pedestrian and cycle friendly design.
N20/Leitrim Street	Junction upgraded to prioritise pedestrian and cycle friendly design.

2.3 Key Facts

Approximate number of properties that may be impacted	3
Approximate number of on-street parking spaces that may be removed	30
Approximate number of roadside trees that may be removed	8
Approximate STC route length	2.2km
Approximate new cycle lane length	1.7km
Current bus journey time	up to 24 mins
BusConnects journey time	10 mins
Future bus journey time without BusConnects	29 mins





2.4 Understanding the terminology

1. Sustainable Transport Corridor (STC):

Part of the overall BusConnects Programme is to create 12 Sustainable Transport Corridors (STC). A STC 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):

Emerging Preferred Routes (EPR) are the initial design options for each route which will now be subject to a non-statutory public consultation process. The EPRs, in some cases with multiple sub-options, are to inform the public of the likely layout of the roadway with the necessary STC infrastructure in place. They include possible impacts on front gardens, and likely changes to how traffic will operate to facilitate bus priority.

4. 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.

5. Signal Controlled Priority (SCP):

Signal Controlled Priority (SCP) 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.



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.

6. 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.

7. Quiet Street Treatment:

Where STC roadway widths cannot facilitate cyclists without significant impact on bus priority, alternative cycle routes are explored for short distances away from the STC 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.

8. 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.

3. Understanding Potential Challenges and Ways to Mitigate

3.1 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 public 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.





3.2 Challenges and how we will mitigate to address them

3.2.1 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 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.

3.2.2 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.

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.

3.2.3 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 layouts.

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.

3.2.4 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.

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.

3.2.5 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.

3.2.6 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.

3.2.7 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. For information on how resident and community group representatives can become a member of a Forum please visit the website www.busconnects.ie/cork.



4. The Process for the Acquisition of Land

While extensive efforts will be made to minimise the impact on the grounds of private properties, there will be locations where additional road widening will be necessary. This may require, for example, the acquisition of parts of front gardens, walls, fences, gates, driveways and the rebuilding of those elements to enable the street widening. In such cases the following process will apply.

Firstly, the NTA will issue information letters to each land owner and/or occupier along the Sustainable Transport Corridors who might, potentially, be impacted by widening proposals. These are not formal compulsory purchase order (CPO) notifications – no final decision on the proposals have been made at this stage. The intention of these letters is to start a direct dialogue between NTA and the potentially impacted parties.

After the issue of these information letters, design development and consultation will continue. During this time NTA will refine the design and consider options to reduce impacts on private lands. Direct dialogue between NTA and potentially impacted parties will continue to understand the likely impact of the proposed development and what arrangements can be made to reduce and, where possible, avoid those impacts.

At the end of the design process, probably early in 2024, the NTA will finalise the statutory planning documentation and submit formal consent applications to An Bord Pleanála for the proposed BusConnects schemes, including seeking confirmation to compulsorily purchase the necessary lands. It is at this stage that the NTA will serve formal notice on the actual impacted owners of land proposed to be compulsorily purchased for the projects.

It is then the role of An Bord Pleanála to decide whether or not the particular scheme should proceed to construction. Following receipt of the planning applications, there will be a period of statutory public consultation to allow those notified as being subject to some property

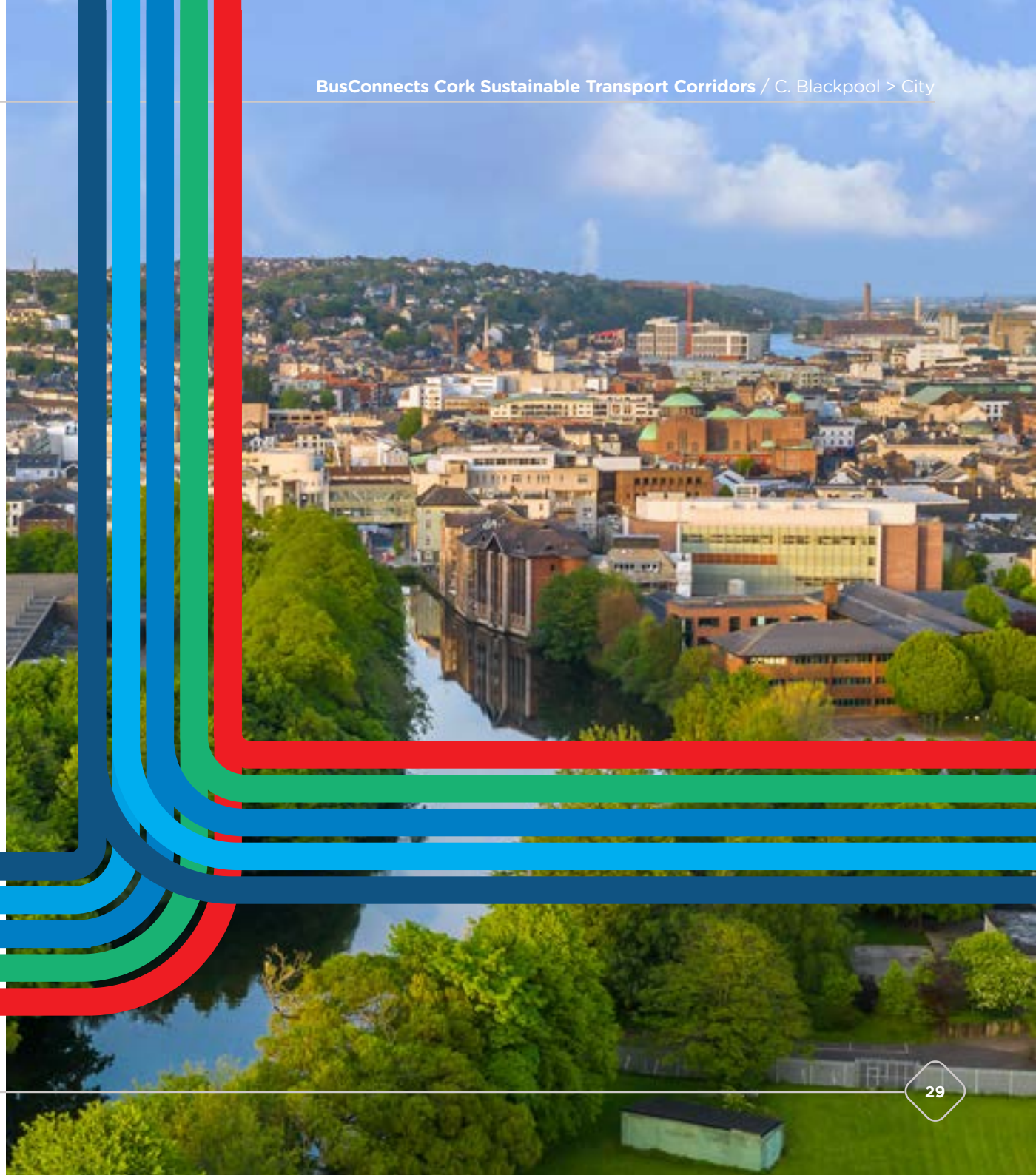
acquisition, and the public at large, to make submissions and/or objections directly to An Bord Pleanála. This will be followed by an Oral Hearing by An Bord Pleanála if deemed necessary. The statutory process will conclude with a decision by An Bord Pleanála on whether to:

1. Approve the proposed scheme with or without modifications and subject to whatever environmental conditions it considers appropriate, or refuse to approve the proposed scheme; and
2. Confirm the CPO or any part thereof with or without conditions or modifications, or annul the CPO or any part thereof.

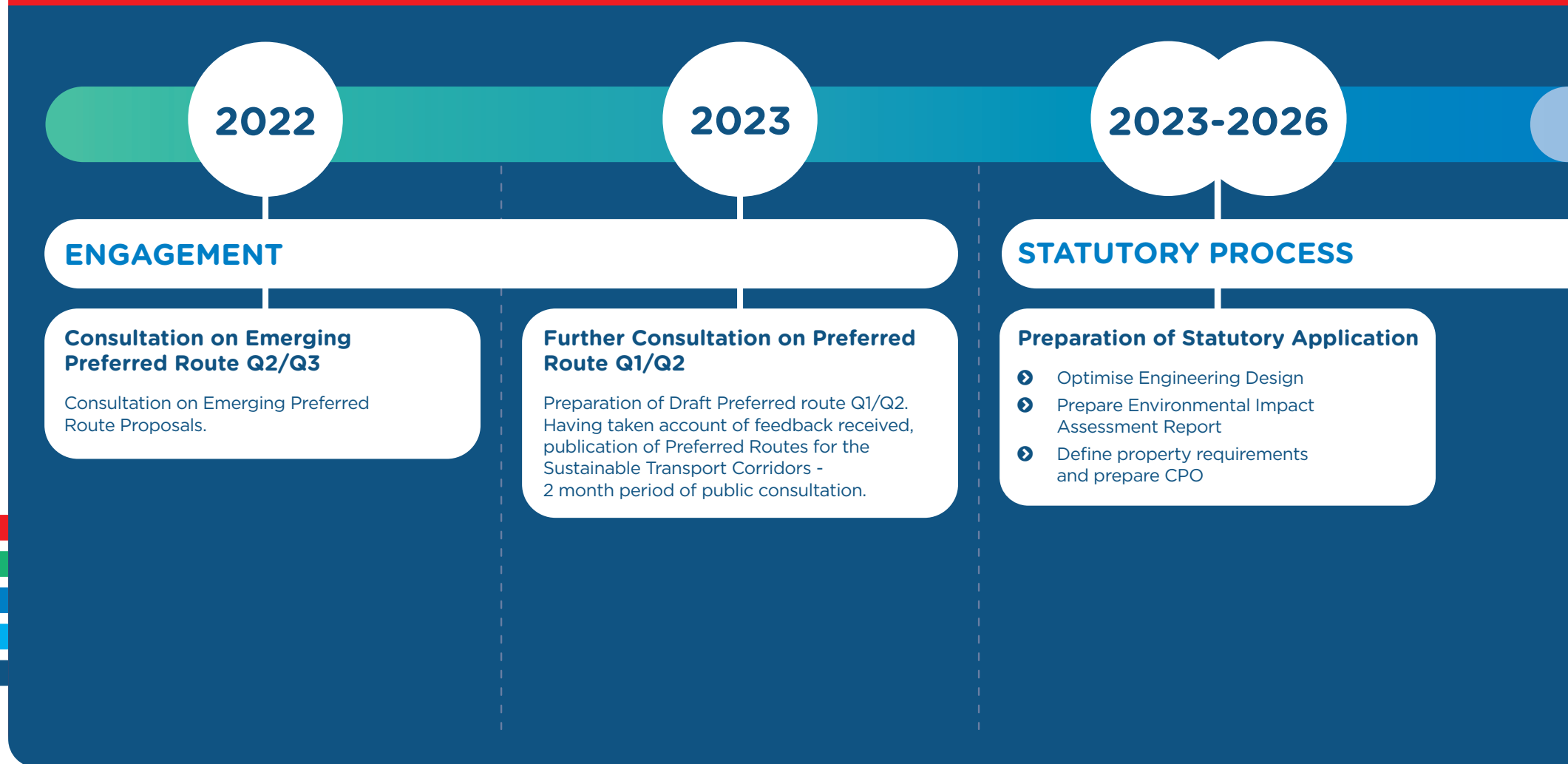


If An Bord Pleanála grants approval for the schemes, the NTA will, from 2025 onwards, commence valuations and negotiations to acquire the lands in the CPO, and progress construction of the projects. The compensation payable for any acquisition will include the value of the land being acquired plus any devaluation (if applicable) in the remainder of the property, disturbance/disruption costs and professional fees such as a valuers and/or solicitors required for the acquisition.

The construction of each corridor will take up to two years to complete. The construction start dates for each of the 12 corridors will be managed over the period 2025 through 2030.



4.1 How the Project will progress through public consultations until Formal Planning



2024-2025

An Bord Pleanála Applications

- Submission of Applications to An Bord Pleanála to approve the Proposed Scheme and to confirm the associated CPO
- Statutory Consultation in accordance with the legislative requirements
- An Bord Pleanála deliberations including an Oral Hearing where required
- An Bord Pleanála may:
 1. Approve the Proposed Scheme with or without modifications and subject to whatever environmental conditions it considers appropriate, or refuse to approve the Proposed Scheme; and
 2. confirm the CPO or any part thereof with or without conditions or modifications, or annul the CPO or any part thereof.

2025-2030

ACQUISITION & CONSTRUCTION



Construction Commences on a Phased Basis - Each corridor upgrade will take up to 2 years to complete

5. How to take part in the public consultation and have your say

Please remember that the plans that we are publishing are proposals and that no final decision has been made on these matters in advance of the public consultation. We welcome all of your views. Where you do not like a proposal, please consider suggesting an alternative solution or other option for consideration.

5.1 If a property owner has land that may be impacted

If your property is potentially impacted by the proposals, a letter will have been delivered to the property and details of how to engage with the NTA are detailed in that letter. A dedicated property liaison representative will be available to contact each property owner and provide regular updates on the project.

5.2 General queries

The project website www.busconnects.ie/cork has a dedicated Sustainable Transport Corridor section and all 12 Brochures are available to view and download. General queries can be sent by email to corkstc@busconnects.ie

For queries where the information is not available on the website please contact - **1800 303 653**

5.3 How to send a submission

We are inviting submissions in relation to the proposals set out in this Emerging Preferred Routes Document.

Written submissions and observations may be made by:



Online: Click on "Public Consultation" section of the Sustainable Transport Corridor page on our website: <https://consult.nationaltransport.ie>



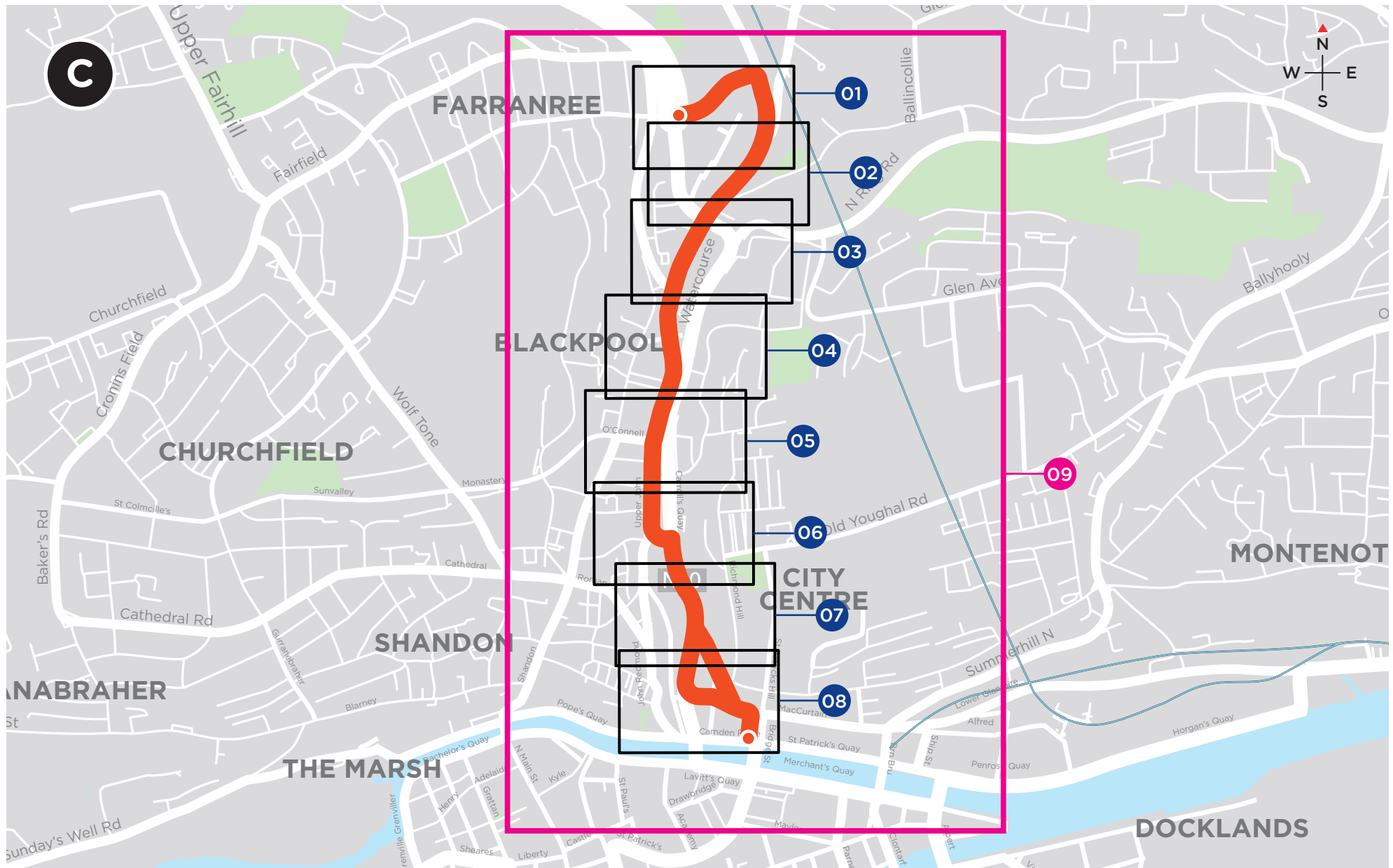
Or by post to:
**Cork Sustainable Transport Corridors Project,
National Transport Authority,
Dún Scéine, Harcourt Lane,
Dublin 2 D02 WT20**



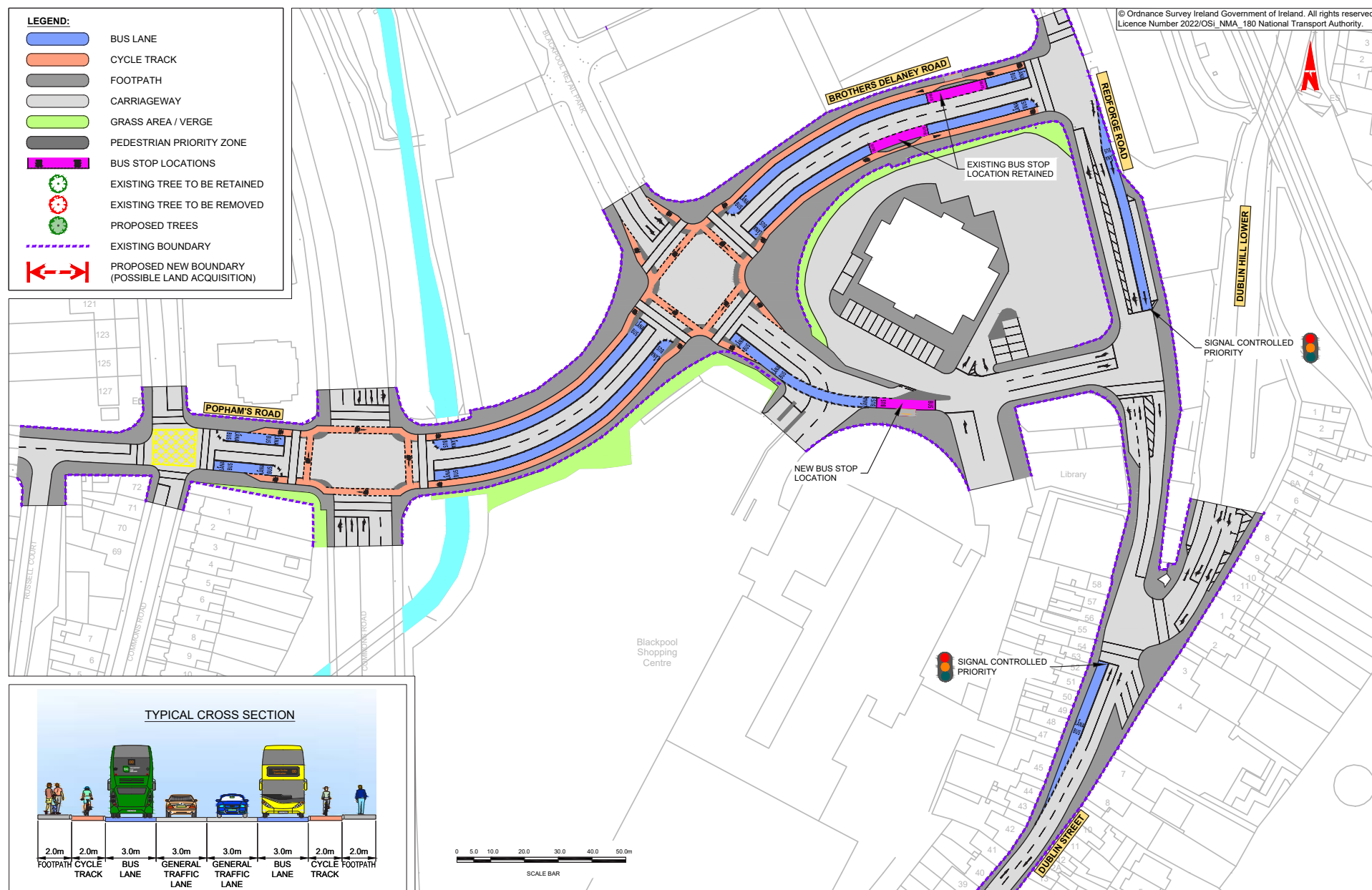
6. Appendices

- 6.1 Index maps
- 6.2 Route maps

Index Map

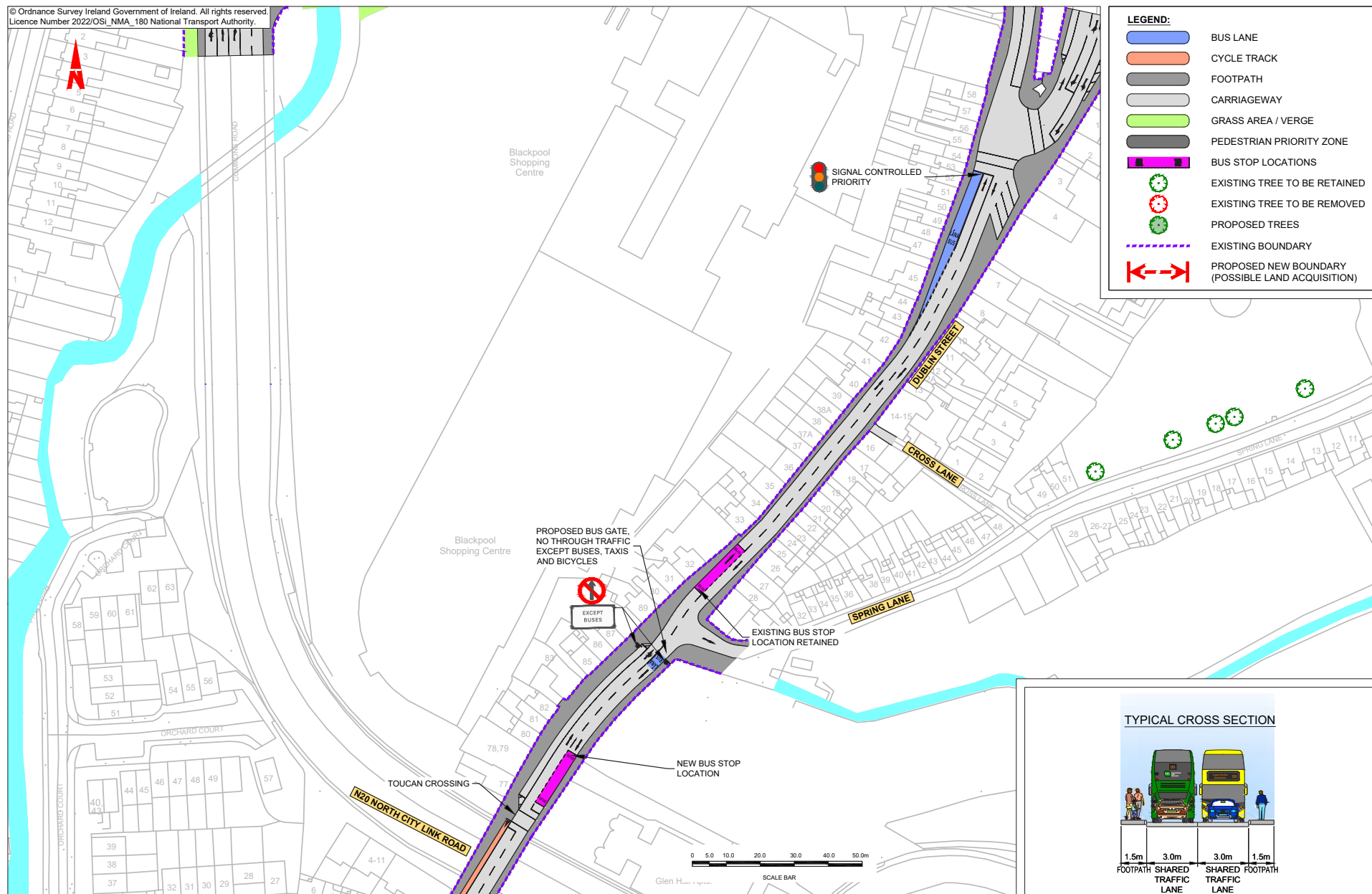


NOTE: The Emerging Preferred Route shown on the following drawings is indicative only and is subject to change following consultation and as part of the design development process.

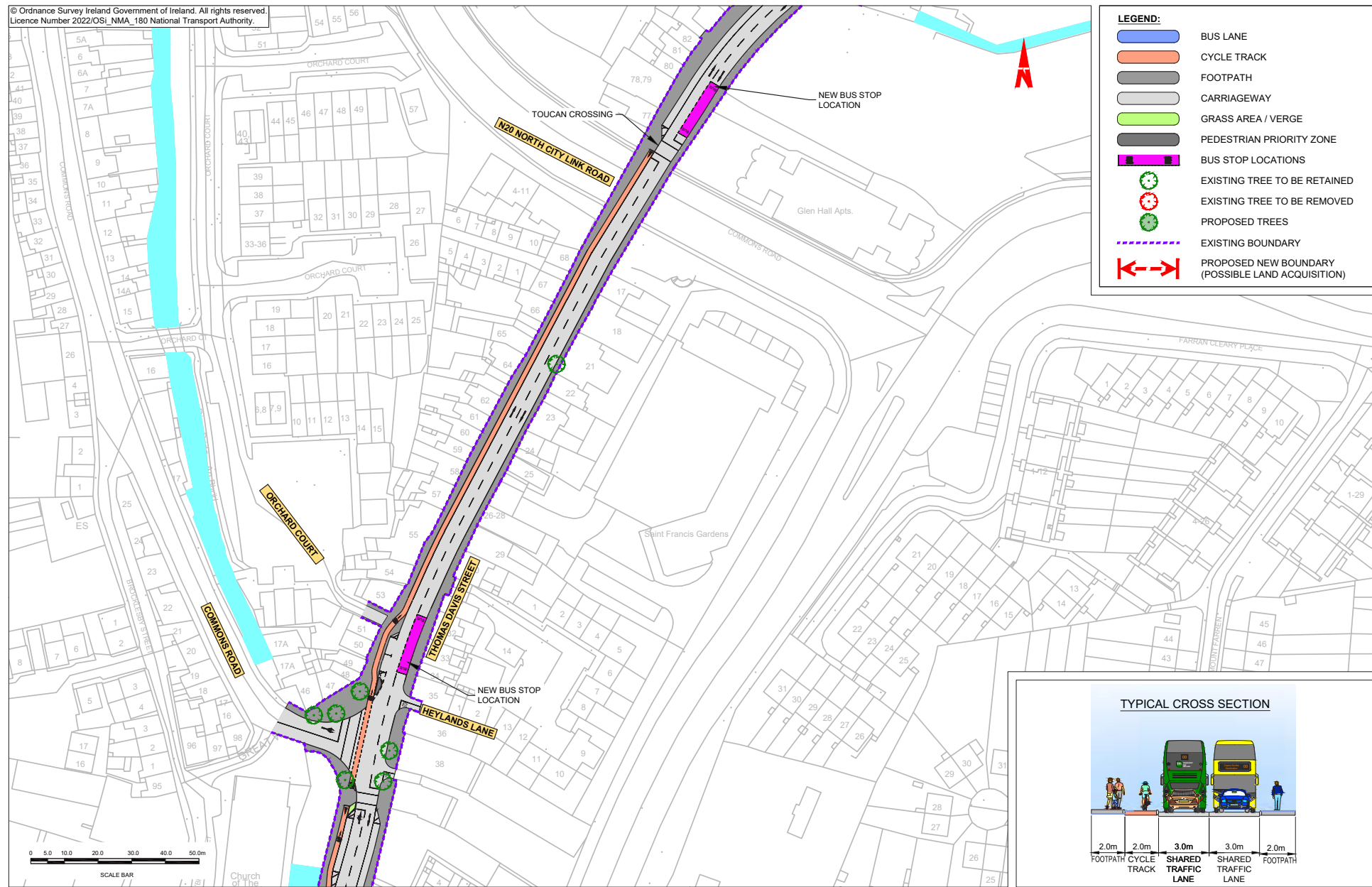


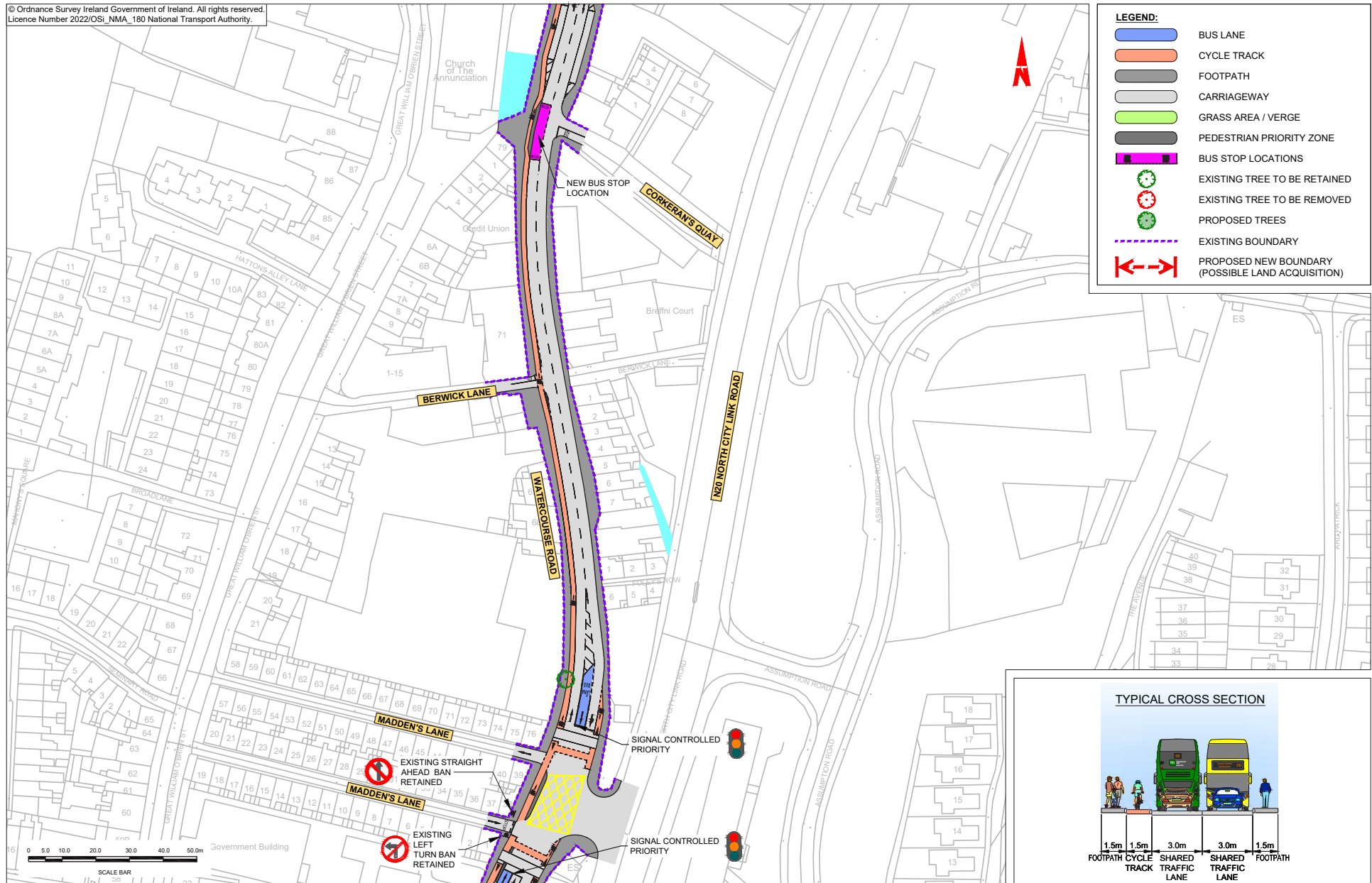
Indicative Layout - Brothers Delaney Road



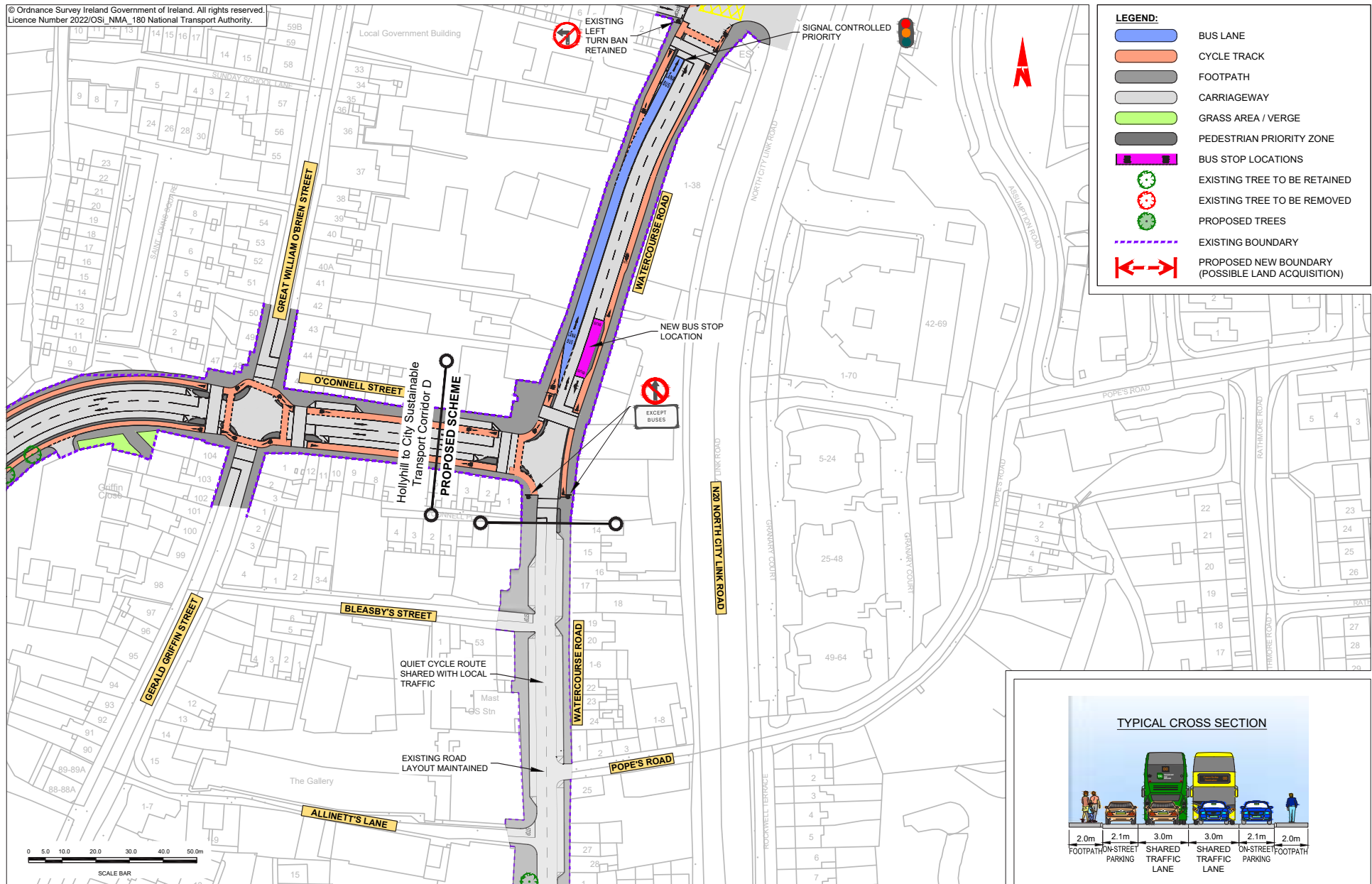


MAP 3: Emerging Preferred Route



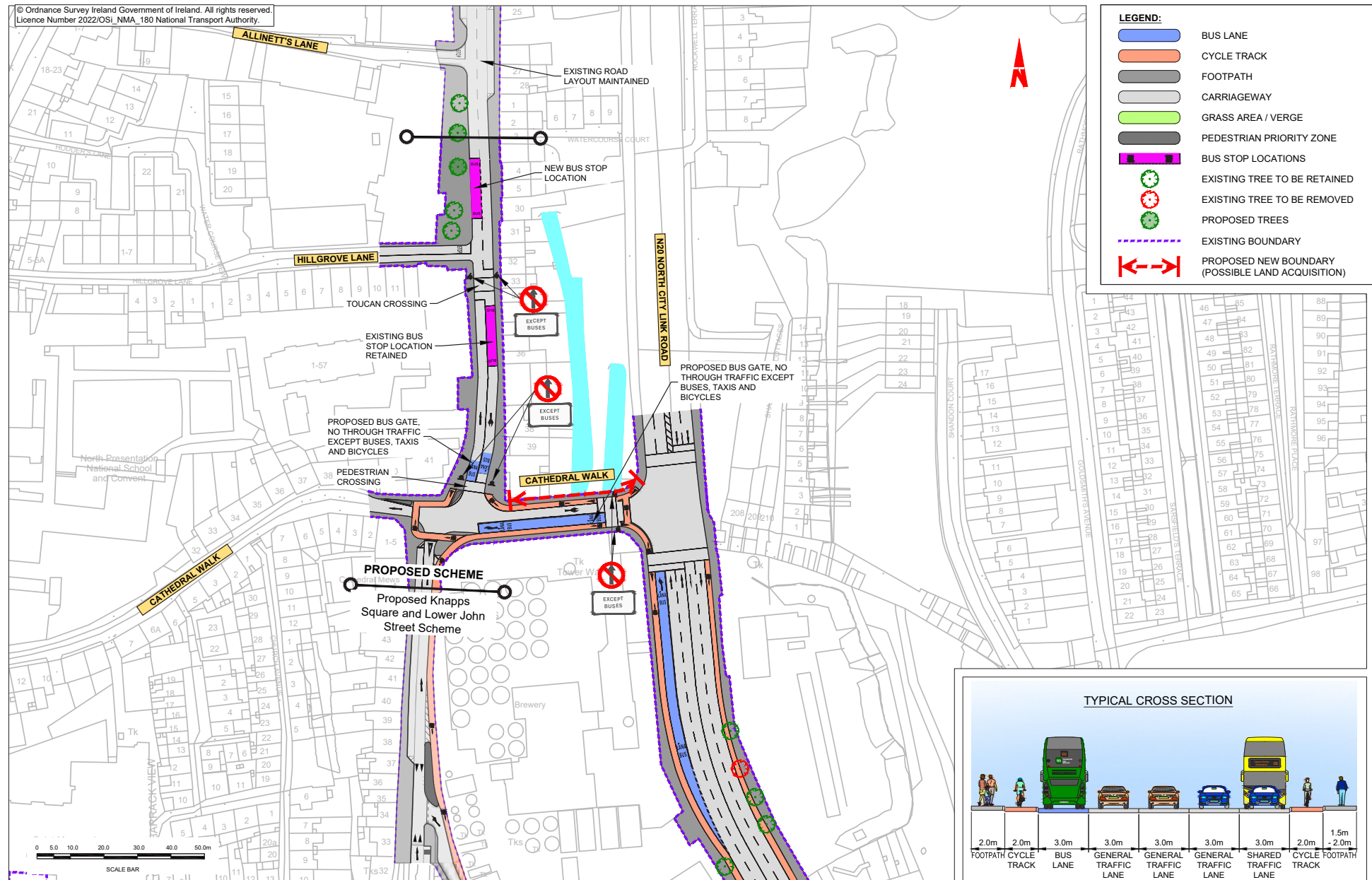




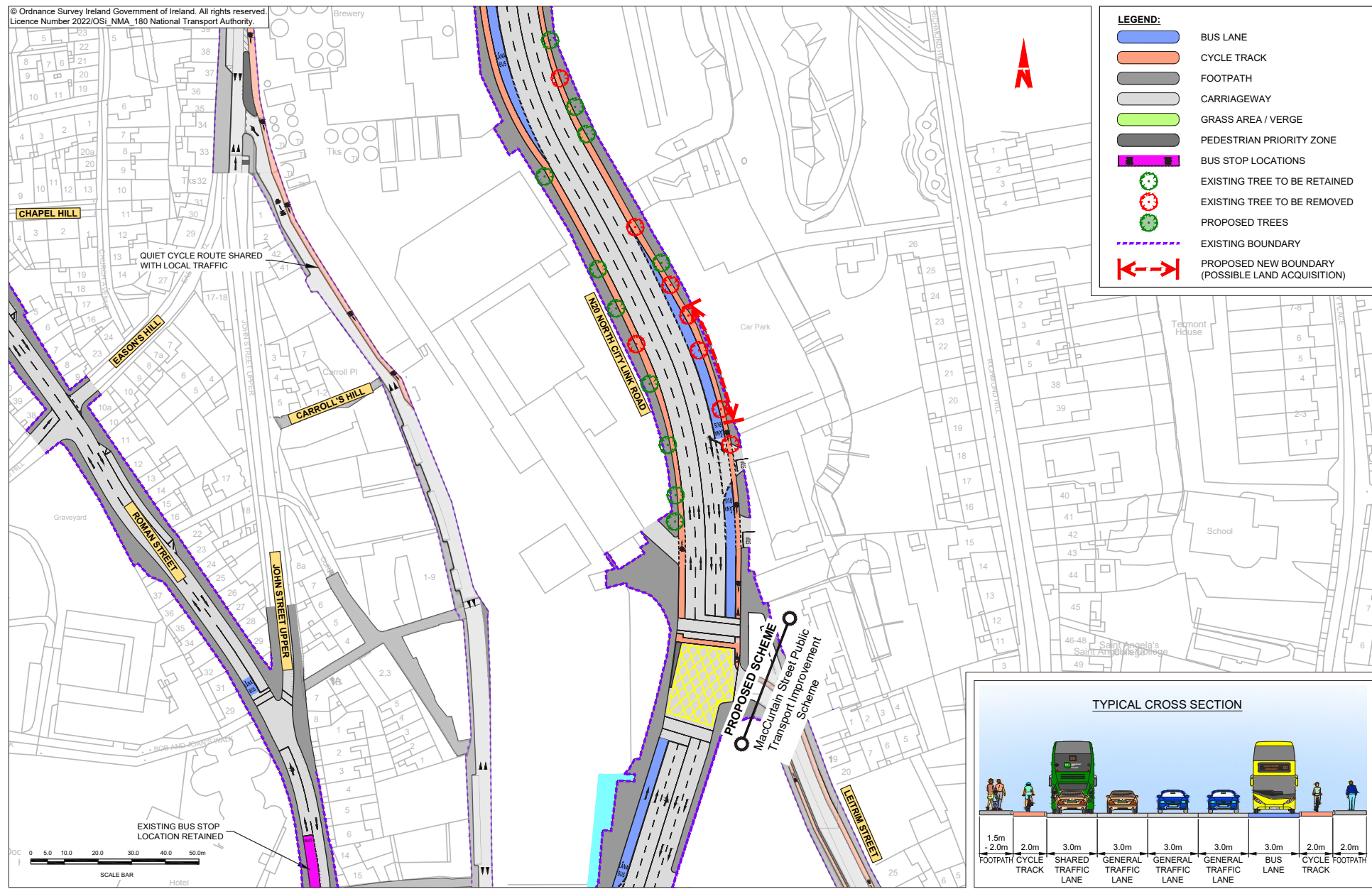


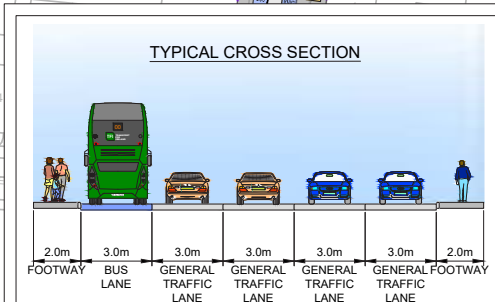
Indicative Layout - Watercourse Road



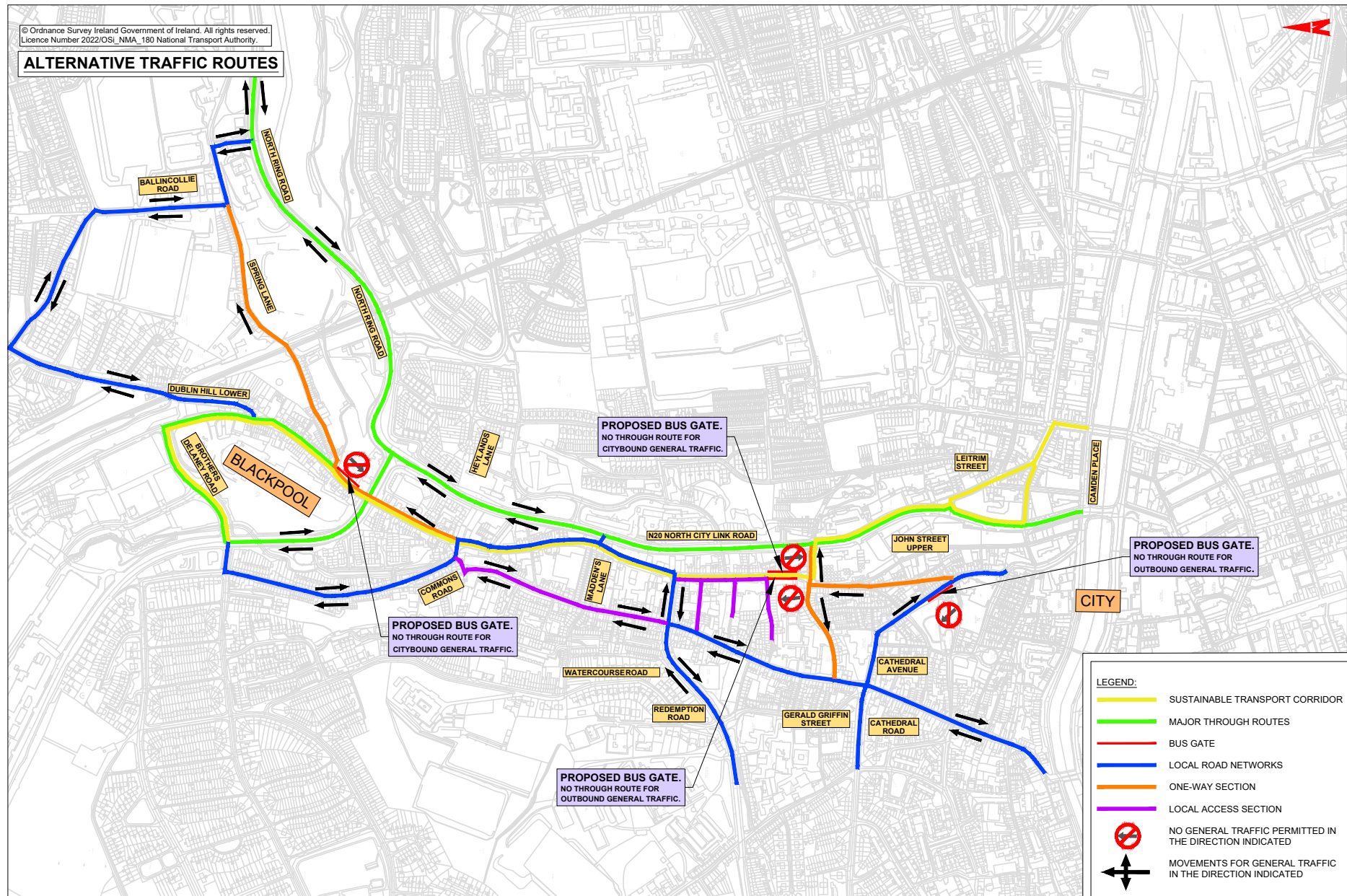


MAP 7: Emerging Preferred Route





MAP 9: Alternative Traffic Routes





Údarás Náisiúnta Iompair
National Transport Authority

National Transport Authority
Harcourt Lane,
Dun Sceine,
Dublin 2.
D02 WT20



Rialtas
na hÉireann
Government
of Ireland

Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
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