



Togher 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.

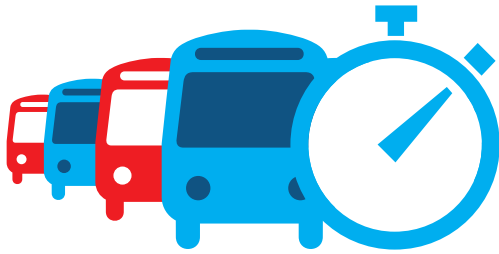
For the people of Cork, this investment will mean greater connectivity to employment, to education, to family and friends, to retail and to the burgeoning social and cultural fabric of the region.

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

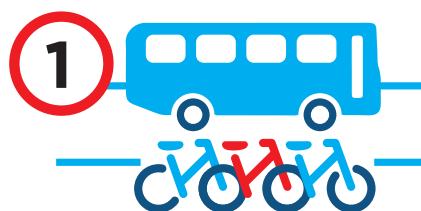


Enable compact growth, regeneration opportunities and more effective use of land in Cork, for present and future generations, through the provision of safe and efficient sustainable transport networks



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:



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



**Completely
redesigning
the bus
network**



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



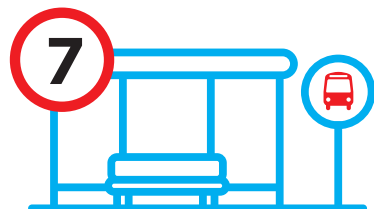
Implementing
**Cashless
payment
system**



**Revamping
the fare system**



**New
bus
livery**



**New bus
stops and
shelters**
with better signage
and information



**New Park
& Ride**
sites in key locations



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.

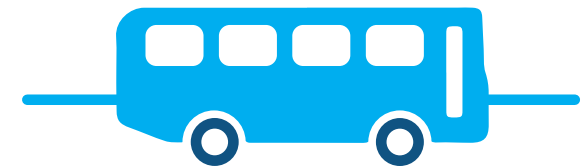
1.3 What is the Sustainable Transport Corridor Project?

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



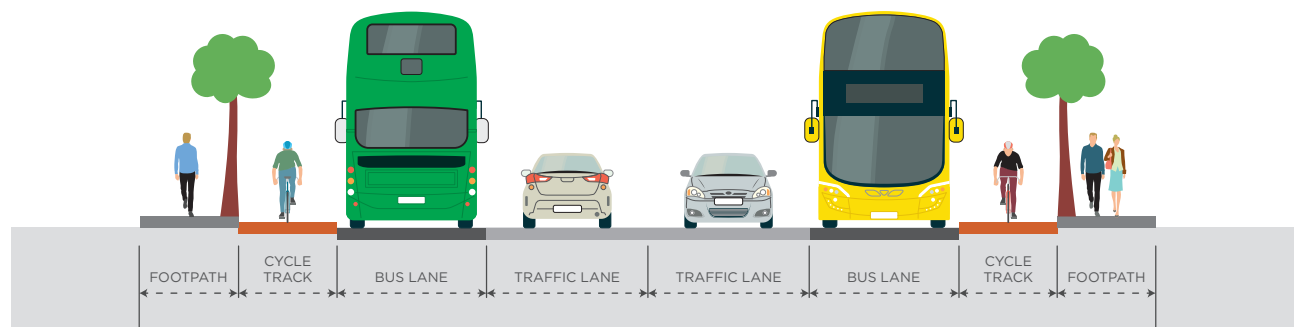
112km of cycle facilities
(one direction)
delivering 56km of
the cycle network



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

Cork's pedestrian facilities have been a concern in many areas for many 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.

1.5.4 Sustainable and Liveable City

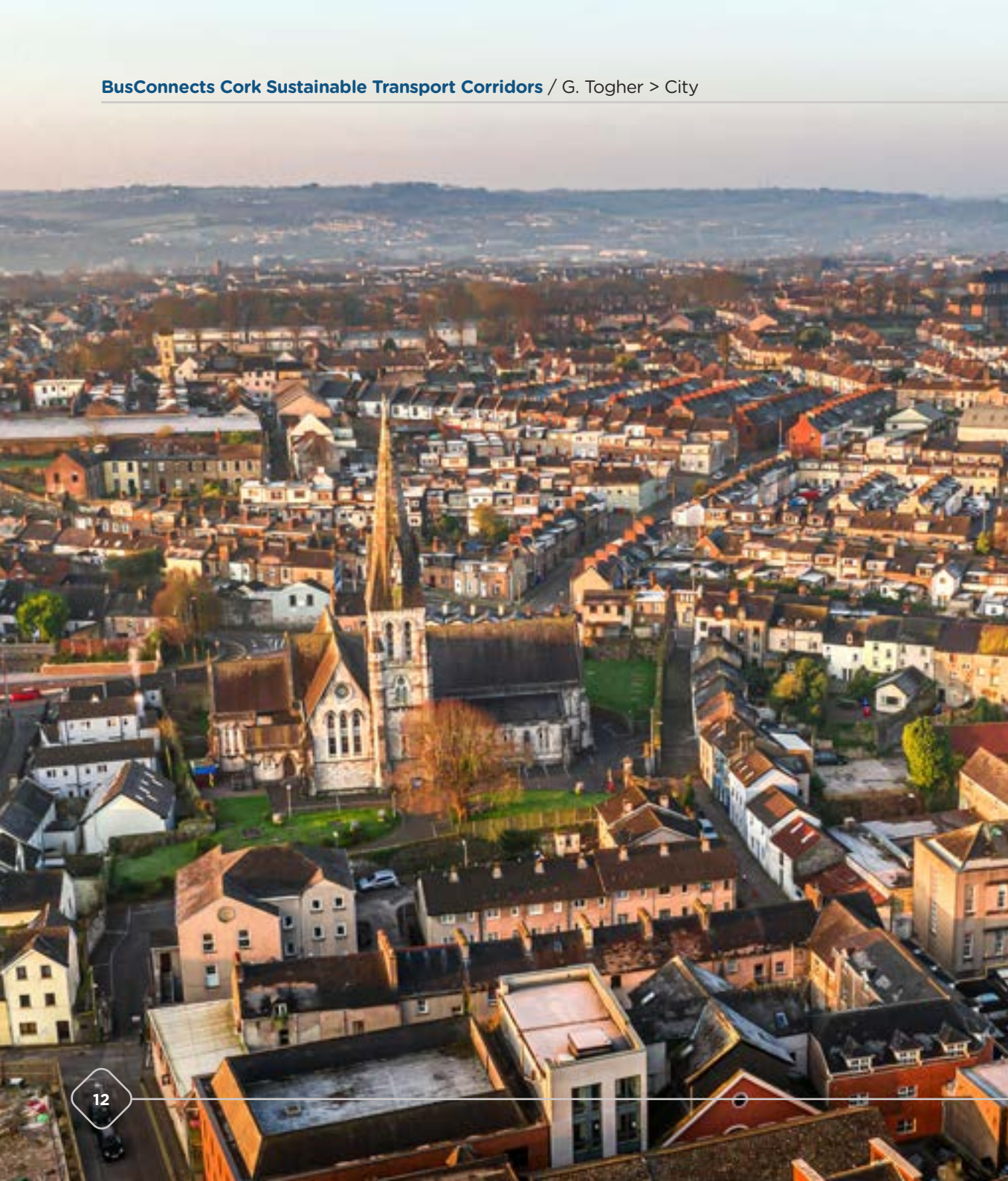
BusConnects Cork is about making sustainable transport a better and more accessible option. By providing a high-quality, frequent and reliable bus service, and improving cycling and pedestrian infrastructure, we can make Cork a more attractive place to live, work and visit. Moving some people from their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

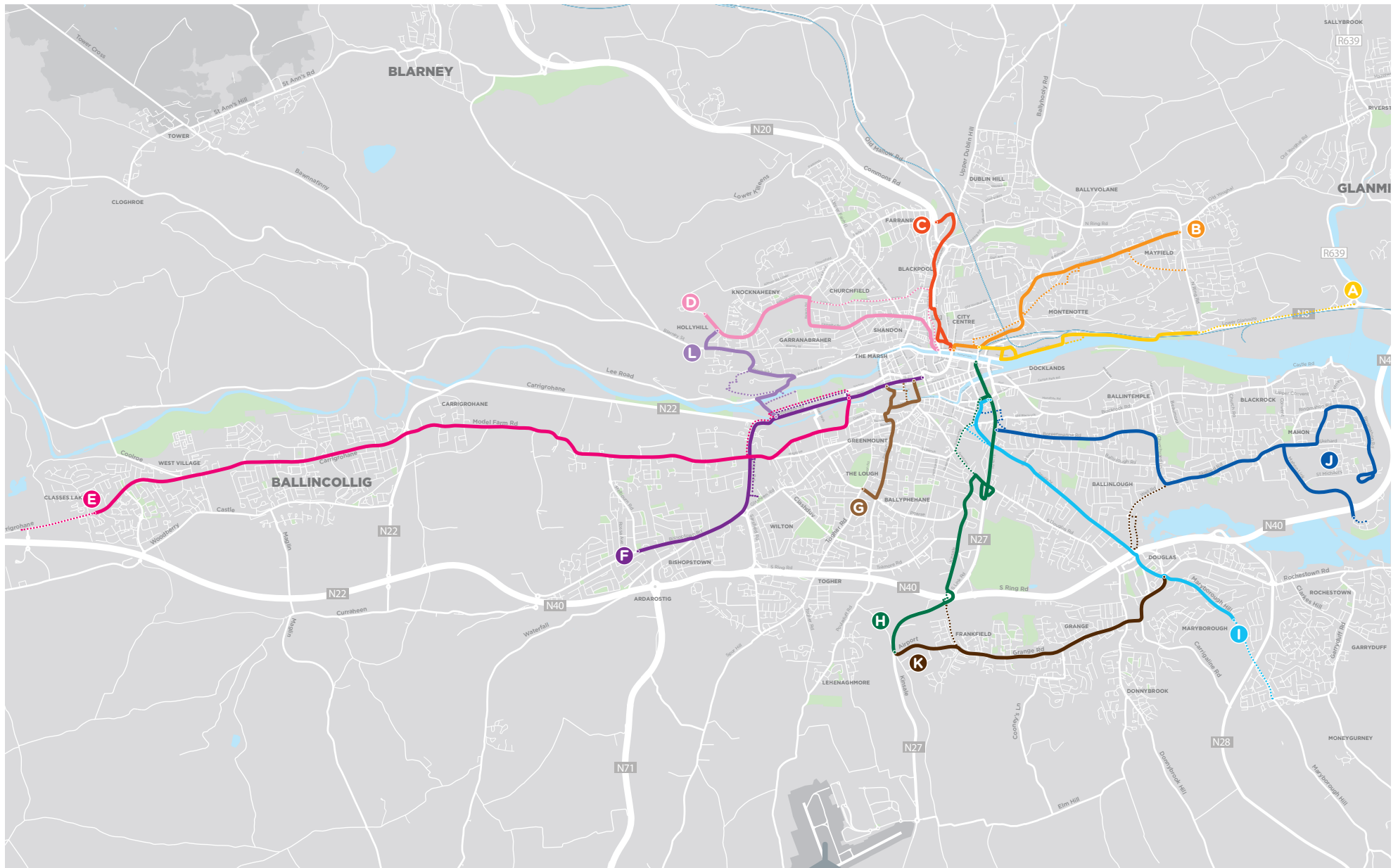


1.6 Emerging Preferred Routes

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 Togher 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 Togher to City Overview

The **Togher to City Sustainable Transport Corridor (STC G)** commences at the junction of Pearse Road and Lough Road. It is proposed that buses and cyclists will proceed along Pearse Road and on to Pouladuff Road before continuing through to Noonan Road and on to Gregg Road. From Gregg Road, STC G routes along Gillabbey Street and on to Bishop Street. At the junction with Sharman Crawford Street, alternative routes are proposed for buses and cyclists continuing to the City Centre.

There is a proposal for a future cycle route to be developed along Lough Road in accordance with the Cork Cycle Network Plan. This cycle route is not currently included within the STC G plans.

Inbound buses (towards the city) will continue on Sharman Crawford Street, Wandesford Quay, over Clarke's Bridge and then turn right onto Washington Street and from here will continue to the junction with Grand Parade using the proposed bus infrastructure in **Sustainable Transport Corridor F (Bishopstown to City)**.

Outbound buses from Grand Parade will route west on Washington Street using the proposed

infrastructure in STC F before turning left to South Main Street to merge with general traffic and then turn right on to Proby's Quay, continuing west before then turning left on to Bishop Street.

Inbound cyclists will route along Bishop Street and Proby's Quay before diverting through Crosse's Green, over Clarke's Bridge and on to Hanover Place before turning onto Washington Street and continuing to the junction with Grand Parade using the proposed cycle infrastructure in **Sustainable Transport Corridor F (Bishopstown to City)**.

Outbound cyclists from will route along Washington Street using the proposed cycle infrastructure in **STC F** to the junction with Hanover Place, before heading south over Clarke's Bridge and routing via a shared environment with inbound cyclists and pedestrians and local access traffic through Crosses Green, connecting with Proby's Quay and heading west along Proby's Quay to the junction with Bishop Street.

Dedicated cycle tracks are provided along a portion of STC G. However, along Pouladuff Road from Pearse Road through to Gregg Road,

due to prevailing space constraints it is not possible to provide dedicated cycle facilities. As outlined above cyclists will ultimately tie into a future cycle route scheme to be developed for Lough Road.

Priority for buses is provided for along a portion of the corridor using dedicated bus lanes in one or both directions, while changes in traffic management have been proposed at Bishop Street and at Clarke's Bridge to manage bus journey time reliability.

2.2.1 Pearse Road to Bishop Street

The corridor commences at the junction of Pearse Road/Lough Road, and from this location the buses and cyclists are routed via Pearse Road and Pouladuff Road.

It is proposed to provide dedicated cycle tracks in both directions along Pearse Road between the junction with Lough Road and the junction with Pouladuff Road. Due to prevailing space constraints, it is not possible to provide cycle facilities on Pouladuff Road. Cyclists will continue through to Noonan Road, sharing with general traffic.

Dedicated cycle tracks are then proposed in both directions along Gregg Road and Gillabbey Street to the junction with Bishop Street. Along Bishop Street to the junction with Sharman Crawford Street cyclists will share with buses in a traffic-calmed environment.

Partial bus lanes in both directions are proposed along Pearse Road between Lough Road and Pouladuff Road, with an inbound bus lane approaching the junction with Pouladuff Road, and an outbound bus lane proposed approaching Lough Road/Togher Road. The inbound bus lane then continues on Pouladuff Road between Pearse Road and Nun's Walk. For the remainder of Pouladuff Road as far as Bandon Road buses will share with general traffic as the route is too constrained to provide dedicated bus lanes.

To support bus journey time reliability, it is proposed that some of the existing parking on Pouladuff Road and Green Street will need to be removed. New off-street parking is proposed at a number of locations along the corridor to mitigate the loss of on-street parking.

Bus lanes will be provided in both directions on Noonan Road between the junction with

Bandon Road and the junction with Gregg Road. On Gregg Road itself up to the junction with Gillabbey Street, an inbound bus lane is proposed. In the outbound direction, buses will share with general traffic. To facilitate the introduction of bus priority measures, Gregg Road and Noonan Road (to the junction with the Bandon Road/Pouladuff Road) will become a one-way outbound traffic route.

Along Bishop Street it is proposed that a bus gate (i.e., only buses and cyclists permitted to pass through) would be implemented on the section of the street to the north of the entrance to The Bishop's Palace. This would facilitate local access on Bishop Street but would provide the necessary traffic environment to ensure bus journey time reliability.

New and improved bus stops will be provided along the entire section of the corridor with bus stops being relocated to better serve users.

Improvements and enhancements to urban spaces and the pedestrian/cycle environments are also proposed at numerous junctions along this section of the corridor as outlined in the following table.

Proposed Enhancements to Urban Spaces and Pedestrian/Cycle Environment

Location	Proposed Enhancements
Pearse Road, at junctions with Lough Road and Pouladuff Road.	Improvements to the existing signalised junctions prioritising pedestrian and cycle friendly design.
Pouladuff Road, approaching Nuns Walk.	New pedestrian crossing to facilitate easy access to new bus stops and generally improved permeability for pedestrians.
Green Street junctions with Roselawn and Barrack Street.	Improvements to the existing signalised junctions.
Noonan Road, at the junction with Gregg Road.	New signalised junction with pedestrian and cycle friendly design.
Gillabbey Street, at the junctions with Gregg Road and Bishop Street.	Improvements to the existing signalised junctions prioritising pedestrian and cycle friendly design.

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

- Lands on the south-east of the junction of Lough Road/Togher Road;
- Lands in the vicinity of the Pouladuff Road/Pearse Road junction;
- Lands on both sides of Pouladuff Road between Pearse Road and Nun's Walk;
- Lands on the western side of Pouladuff Road between Croghtamore Gardens and Gould Street; and
- Lands on both sides of Pouladuff Road to the south of the existing Maxol service station at Ard na Rí Avenue;
- Lands on the corner of Noonan Road/Gregg Road.

2.2.2 Bishop Street to City (Grade Parade)



At the junction of Bishop Street and Sharman Crawford Street the proposed routes for cyclists and buses diverge. Inbound cyclists route along Bishop Street towards Proby's Quay using the existing contra-flow cycle track and then turn onto Crosses Green, sharing with local traffic to the junction with Convent Place. North of Convent Place, Crosses Green is proposed to be closed to through traffic, with inbound and outbound cyclists and pedestrians sharing the space adjacent to the Meitheal Mara building and onward to Wandesford Quay, complementing the public realm enhancement plans proposed by Cork City Council (as part of the Beamish and Crawford Quarter Infrastructure Public Realm Project). Inbound cyclists will then travel over Clarke's Bridge which is to become a bus-only inbound route (inbound cyclists will share with inbound buses over the bridge) and continue through Hanover Place on an inbound cycle track. From the junction of South Main Street/ Washington Street inbound cyclists will then avail of the cycle facilities proposed for Washington Street forming part of Sustainable Transport Corridor F – Bishopstown to City.

Outbound cyclists will also avail of the cycle facilities on Washington Street proposed under Sustainable Transport Corridor F – Bishopstown to City, before routing on to Hanover Place to an outbound cycle track and on to a new contra-flow cycle facility across Clarke's Bridge. The outbound cycle route again merges with the shared space for cyclists and pedestrians proposed for Crosses Green, complementary to the Beamish and Crawford Quarter Infrastructure Public Realm Project, which includes new bridge crossings over the River Lee. Inbound and outbound cyclists will share with local access traffic and pedestrians along Crosses Green in a traffic-calmed environment to the junction with Proby's Quay, which will be upgraded to a signalised junction.

The outbound cycle route then travels from Crosses Green along Proby's Quay/Bishop Street towards the junction with Sharman Crawford Street using a dedicated outbound cycle track proposed on this section of the route.

An inbound bus lane is proposed on Sharman Crawford Street, commencing north of the Crawford School of Art and Design, and continuing to the junction with Wandesford

Quay. The inbound bus continues right onto Wandesford Quay, crossing over Clarke's Bridge (which will be an inbound, bus-only route) and on to Hanover Place (which will be shared with local access traffic) and then inbound buses turn right onto Washington Street. From the junction of Washington Street/Clarke's Bridge the proposed route joins Sustainable Transport Corridor F – Bishopstown to City and avails of the bus lanes proposed for Washington Street to access the city.

Outbound buses from Washington Street will route via South Main Street (shared with general traffic) and on to Proby's Quay and Bishop Street, with a short bus lane proposed along Bishop Street approaching the junction with Sharman Crawford Street.

A proposed bus gate on Bishop Street will prohibit general through-traffic flow from Bishop Street to Sharman Crawford Street in the inbound direction and will also prohibit the left-turning movement in the outbound direction on Bishop Street towards Gillabbey Street. This will provide enhanced journey time reliability for buses using this portion of the corridor and enable the provision of the proposed outbound bus lane on Bishop Street approaching

the junction with Sharman Crawford Street.

New and improved bus stops will be provided along the entire section of the corridor with bus stops being relocated to better serve users.

Improvements and enhancements to urban spaces and the pedestrian/cycle environments are also proposed at numerous junctions along this section of the corridor as outlined in the following table.

Proposed Enhancements to Urban Spaces and Pedestrian/Cycle Environment

Location	Proposed Enhancements
Sharman Crawford Street, at junction with Bishop Street.	Improvements to the existing signalised junctions prioritising pedestrian and cycle friendly design.
Sharman Crawford Street, at junction with Wandesford Quay.	New signalised junction with pedestrian friendly design.
Crosses Green.	Closure of the street to through-traffic to improve the pedestrian environment and facilitate a safe cycling environment.
Proby's Quay, at junction with Crosses Green.	New signalised junction with pedestrian and cycle friendly design.
Hanover Place/Clarke's Bridge.	Provision of a contra-flow cycle lane linking Washington Street to Crosses Green.

To facilitate these sustainable transport improvements, it is proposed to that limited land take will be required at the following location:

- Lands on the western side of Bishop Street in the vicinity of the junction with Sharman Crawford Street; and
- Lands on the western side of Sharman Crawford Street approaching Wandesford Quay.

2.3 Key Facts

Approximate number of properties that may be impacted	38
Approximate number of on-street parking spaces that may be removed	204
Approximate number of roadside trees that may be removed	72
Approximate STC route length	2km
Approximate cycle route length	0.8km inbound and 0.9km outbound
Current bus journey time	up to 16 mins
BusConnects journey time	9 mins
Future bus journey time without BusConnects	19 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 Route (EPR) are the initial design options for each route which will now be subject to a non-statutory public consultation process. The EPR's, 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

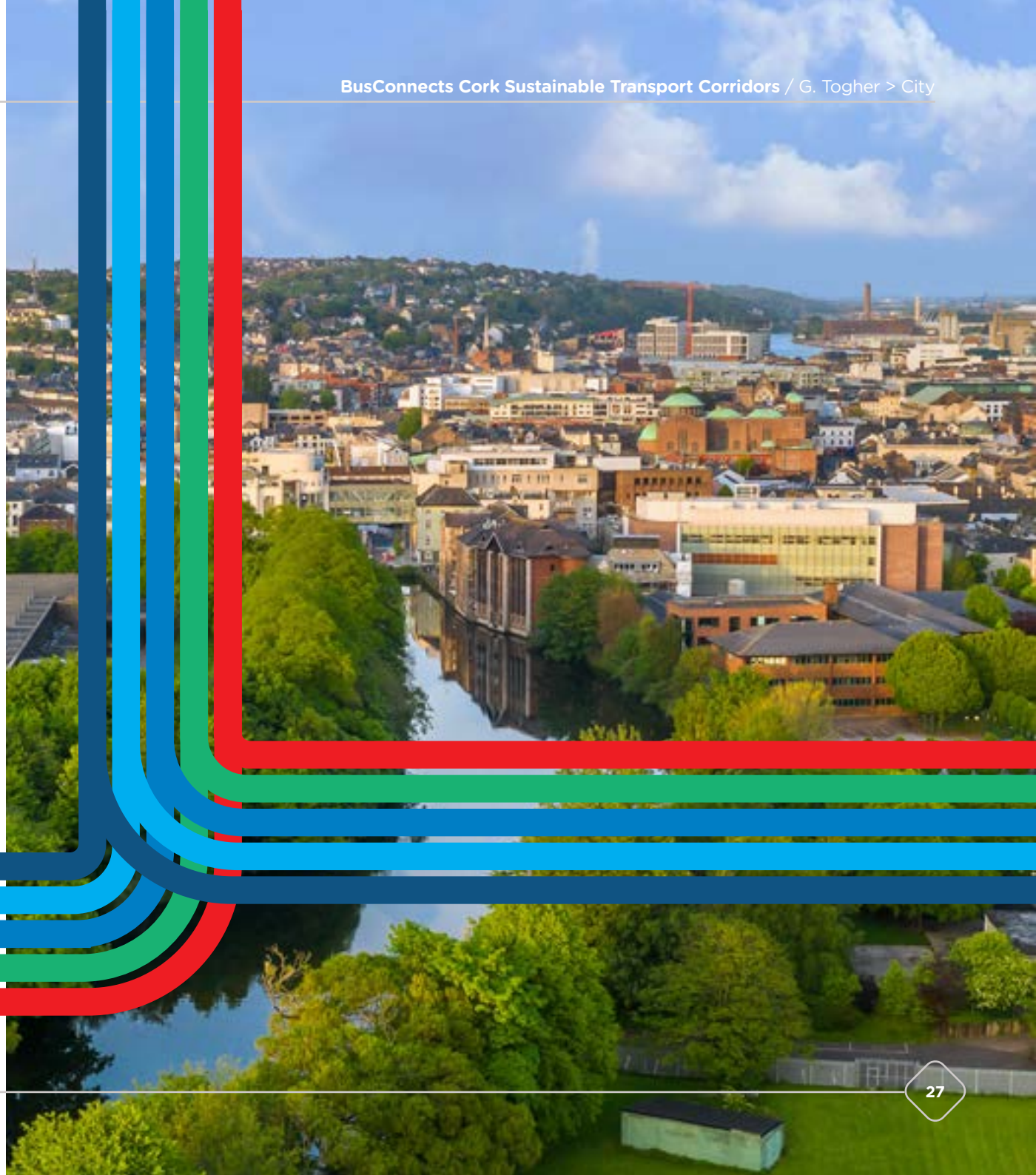
acquisition, and the public at large, to make submissions and/or objections directly to An Bord Pleanála. This will be followed by an Oral Hearing by An Bord Pleanála if deemed necessary. The statutory process will conclude with a decision by An Bord Pleanála on whether to:

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.

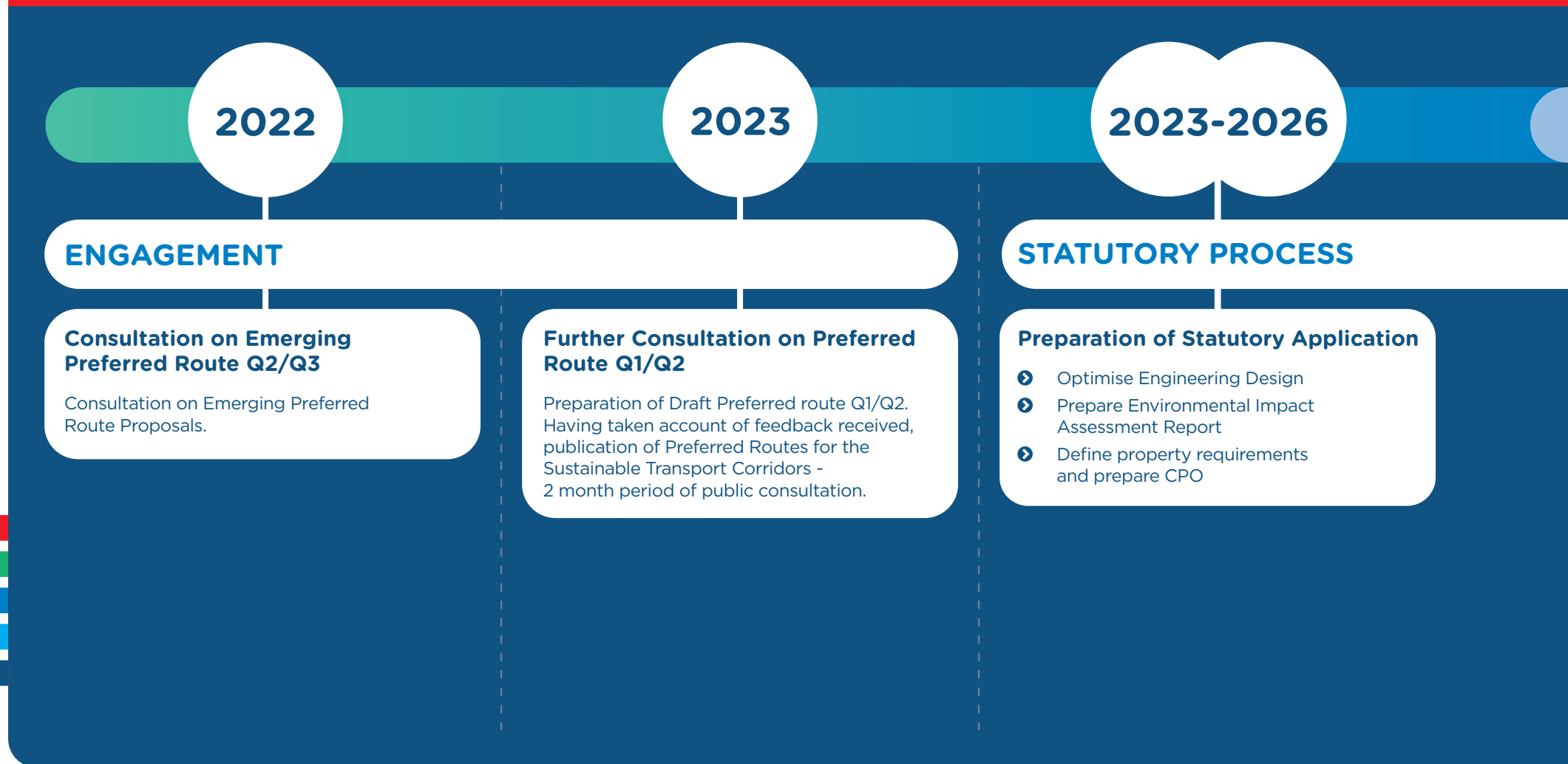


If An Bord Pleanála grants approval for the schemes, the NTA will, from 2025 onwards, commence valuations and negotiations to acquire the lands in the CPO, and progress construction of the projects. The compensation payable for any acquisition will include the value of the land being acquired plus any 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

2025-2030

ACQUISITION & CONSTRUCTION

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.



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>

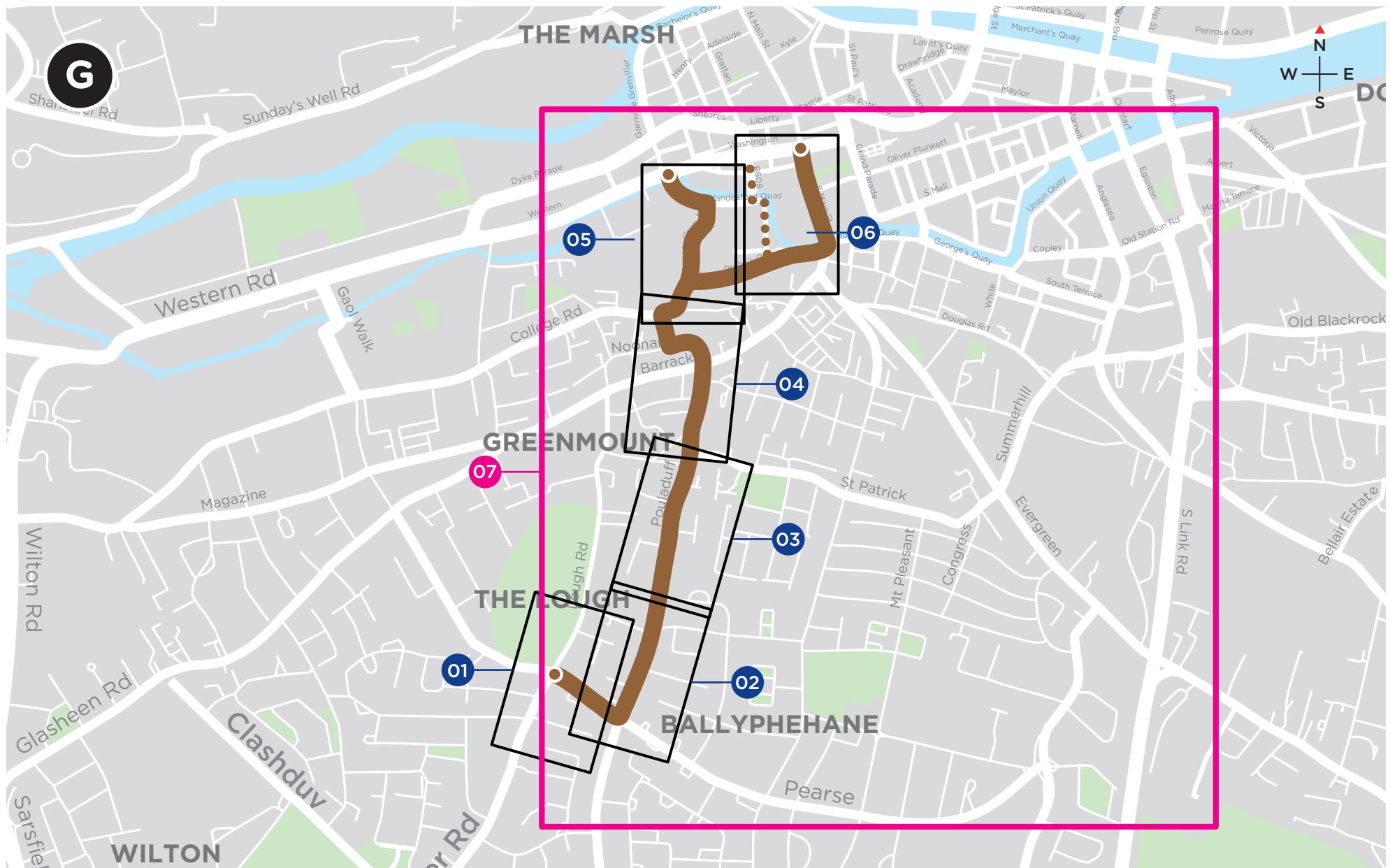


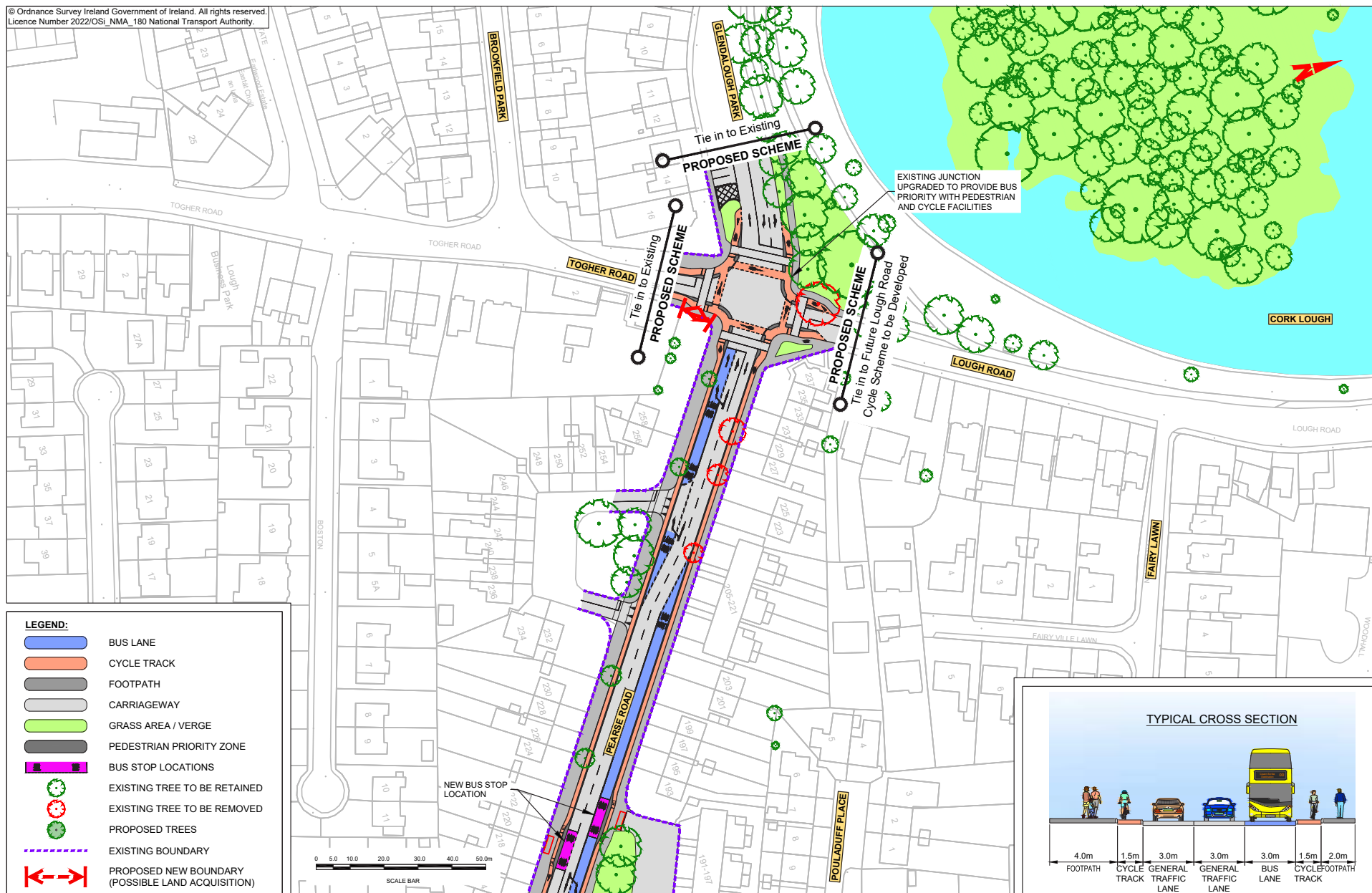
Or by post to:
**Cork Sustainable Transport Corridors Project,
National Transport Authority,
Dún Scéine, Harcourt Lane,
Dublin 2 D02 WT20**

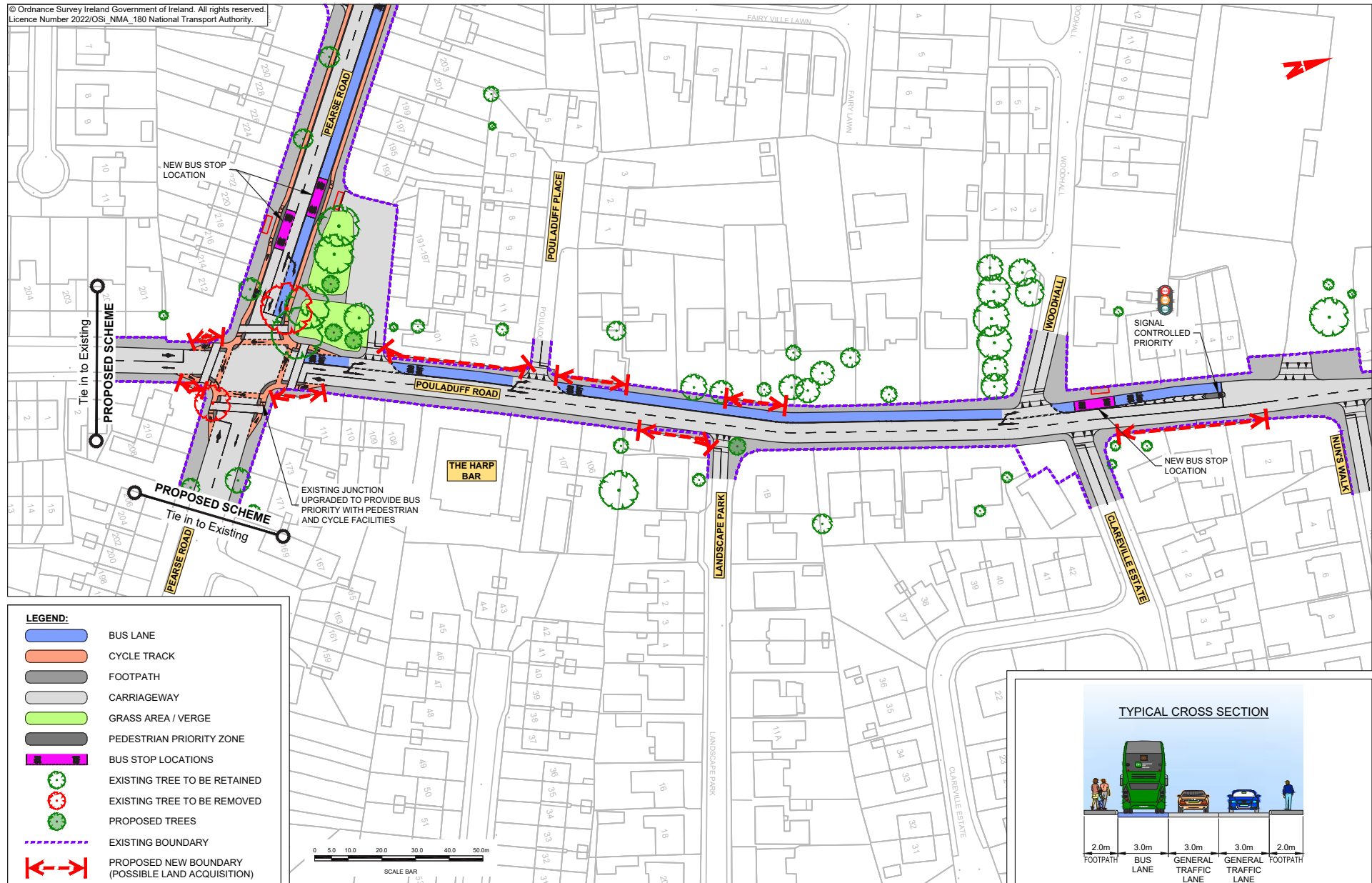


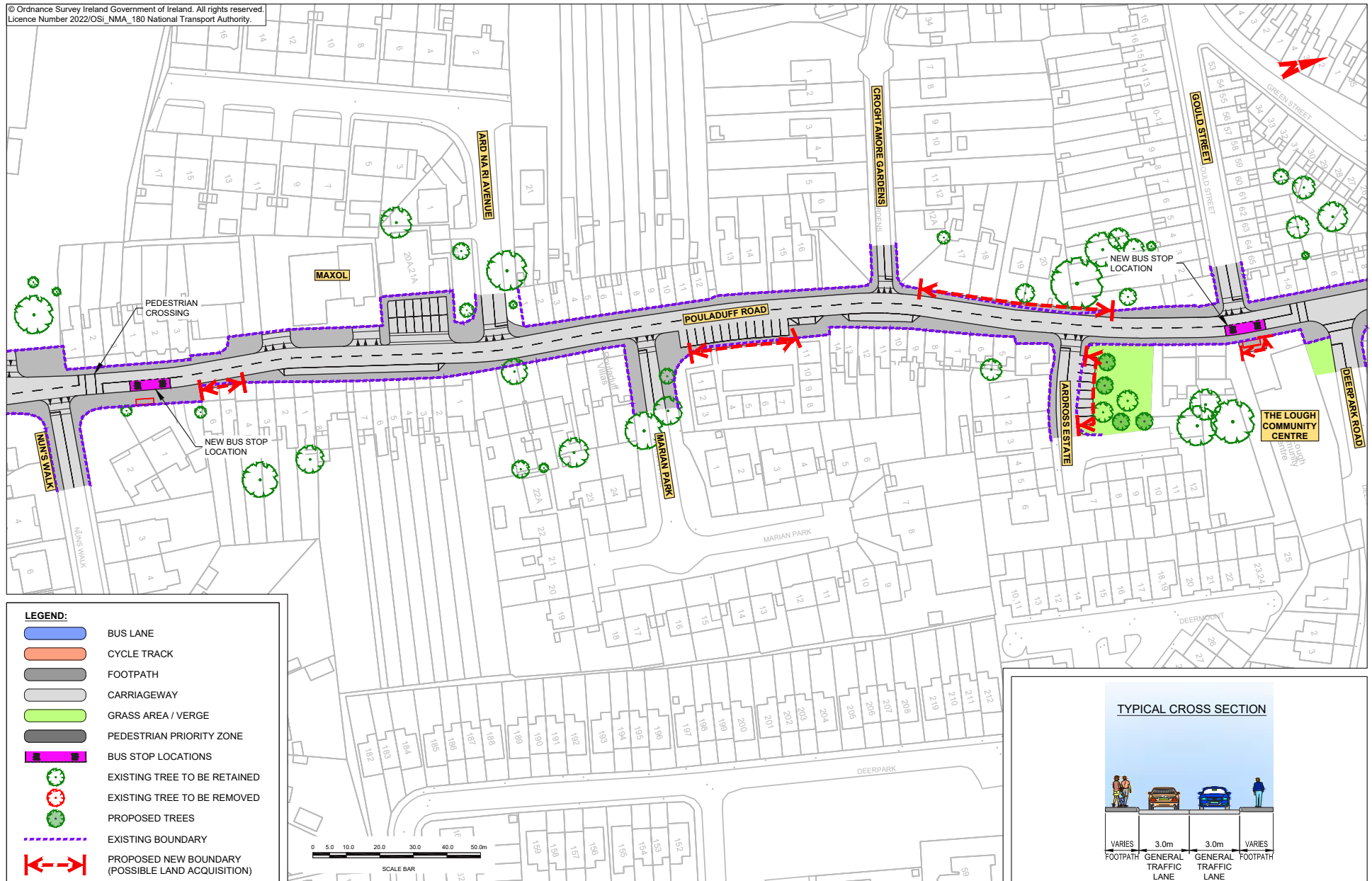
6. Appendices

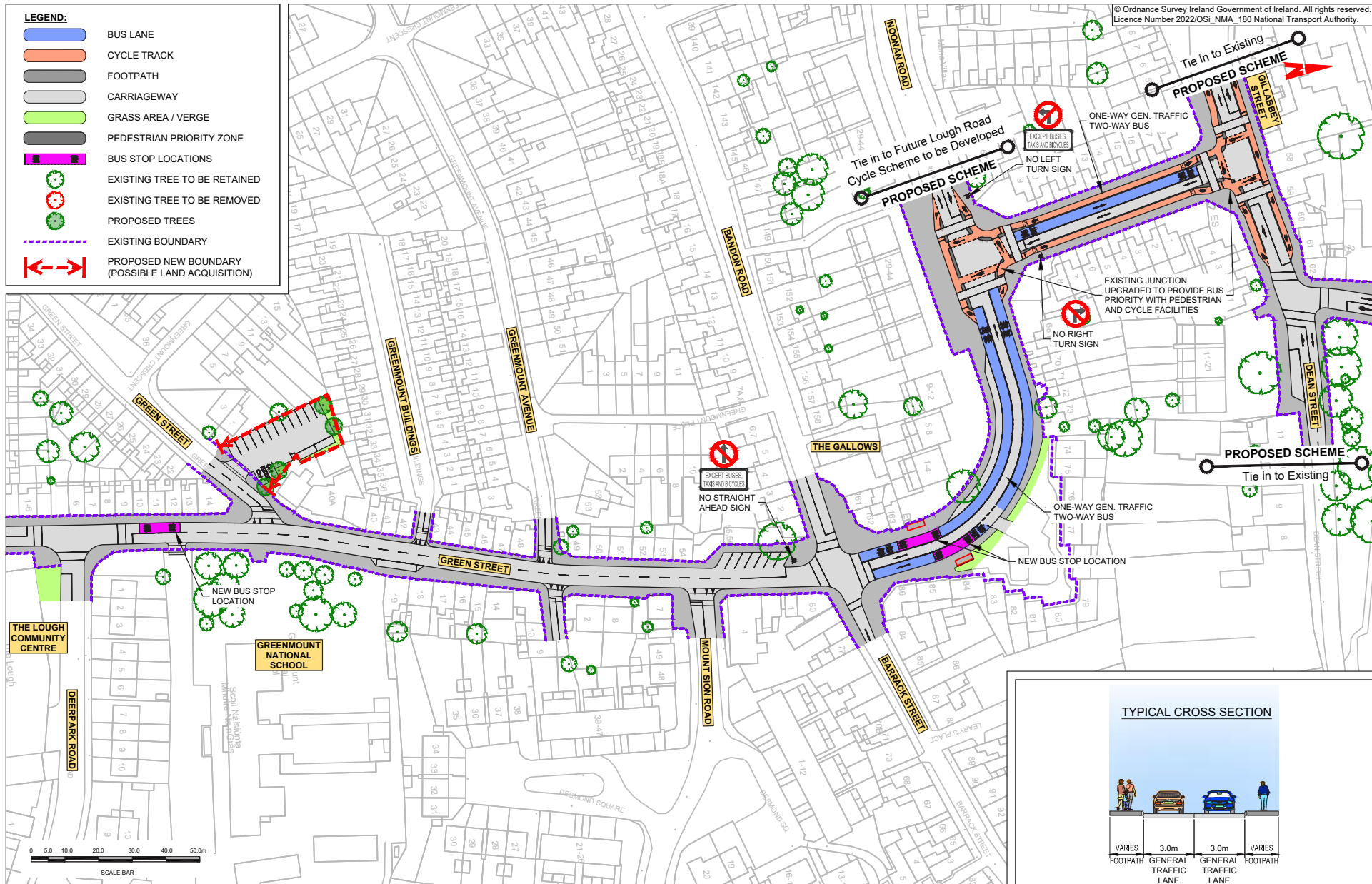
- 6.1 Index maps
- 6.2 Route maps

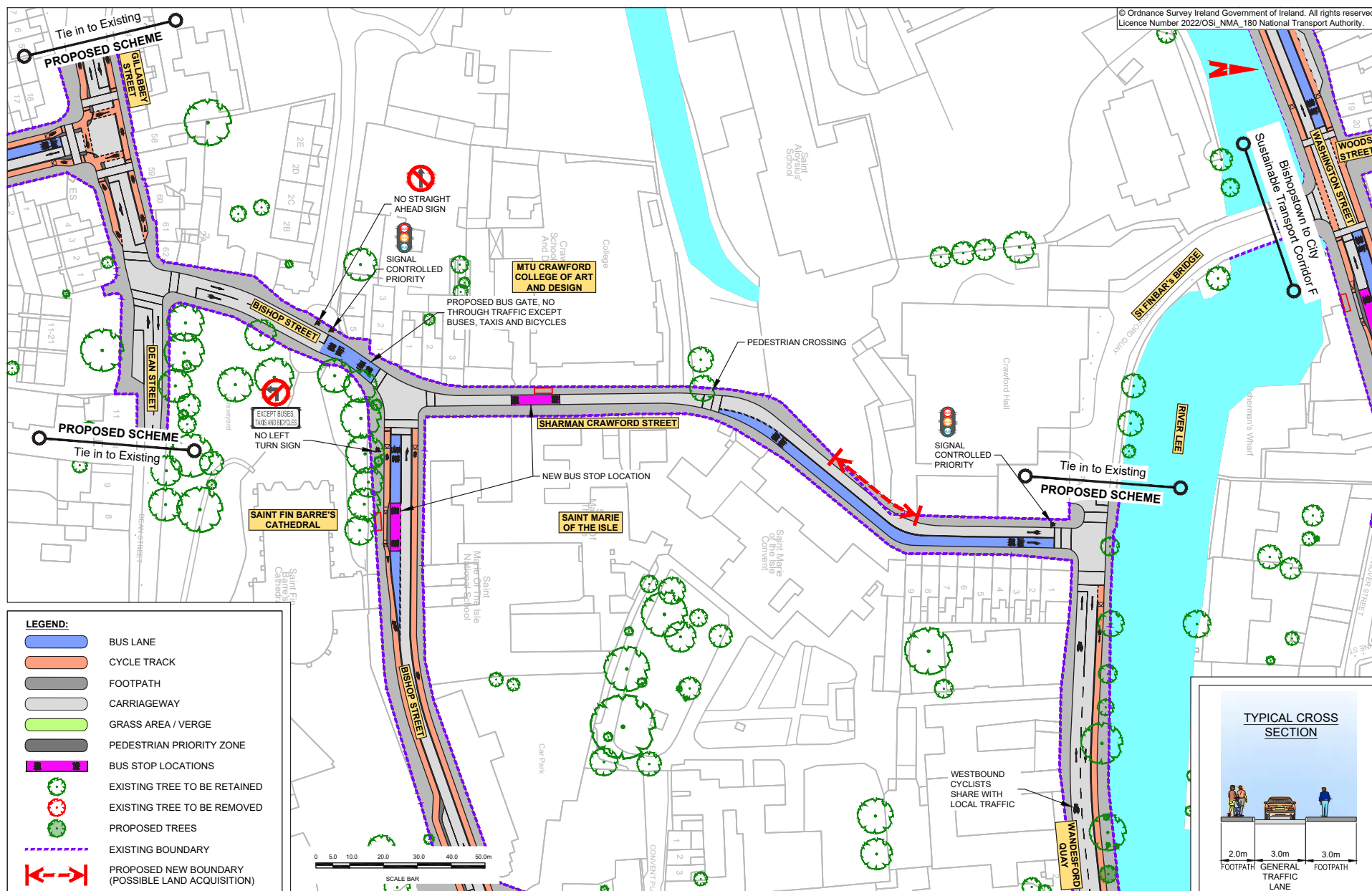




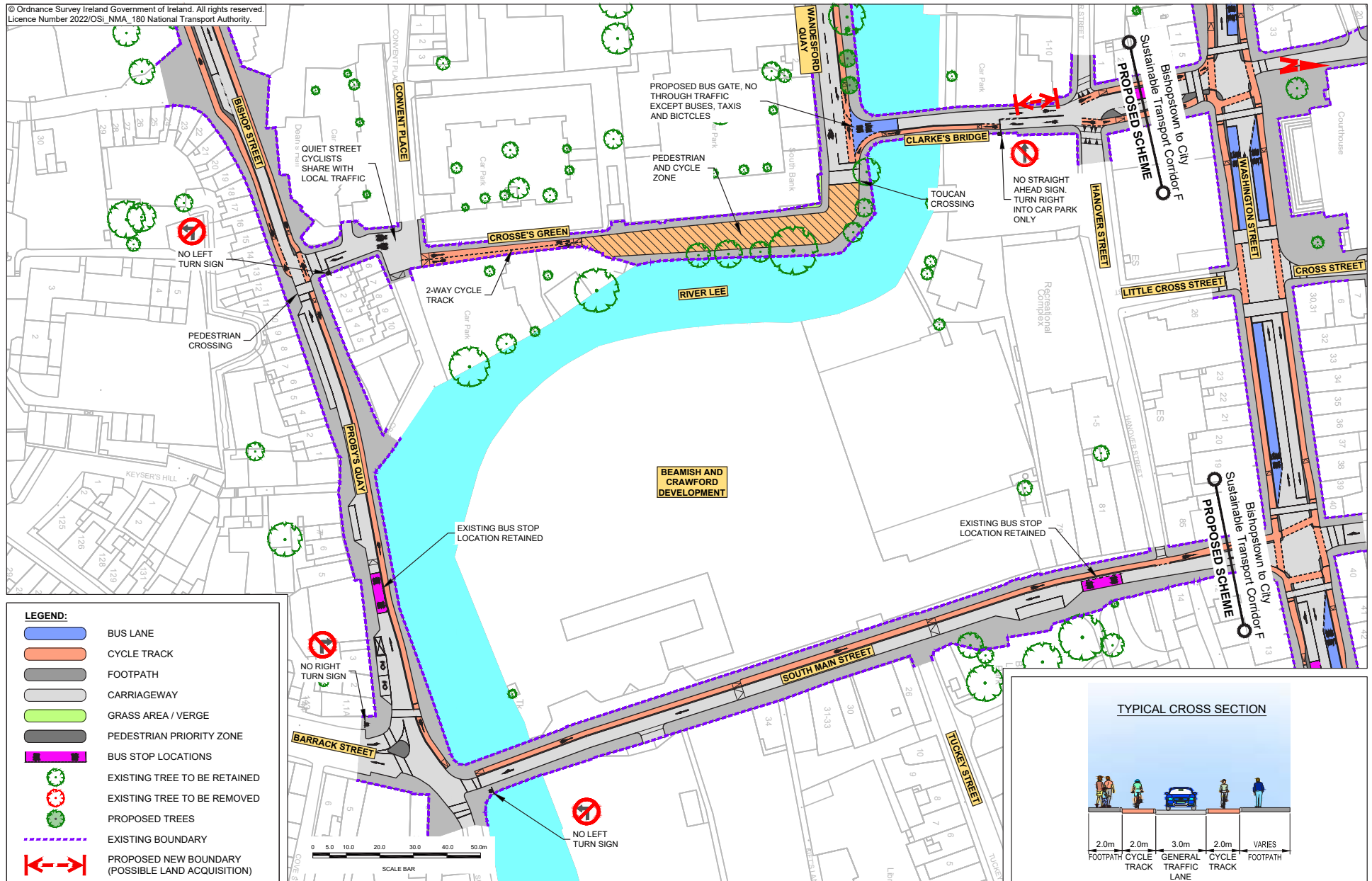




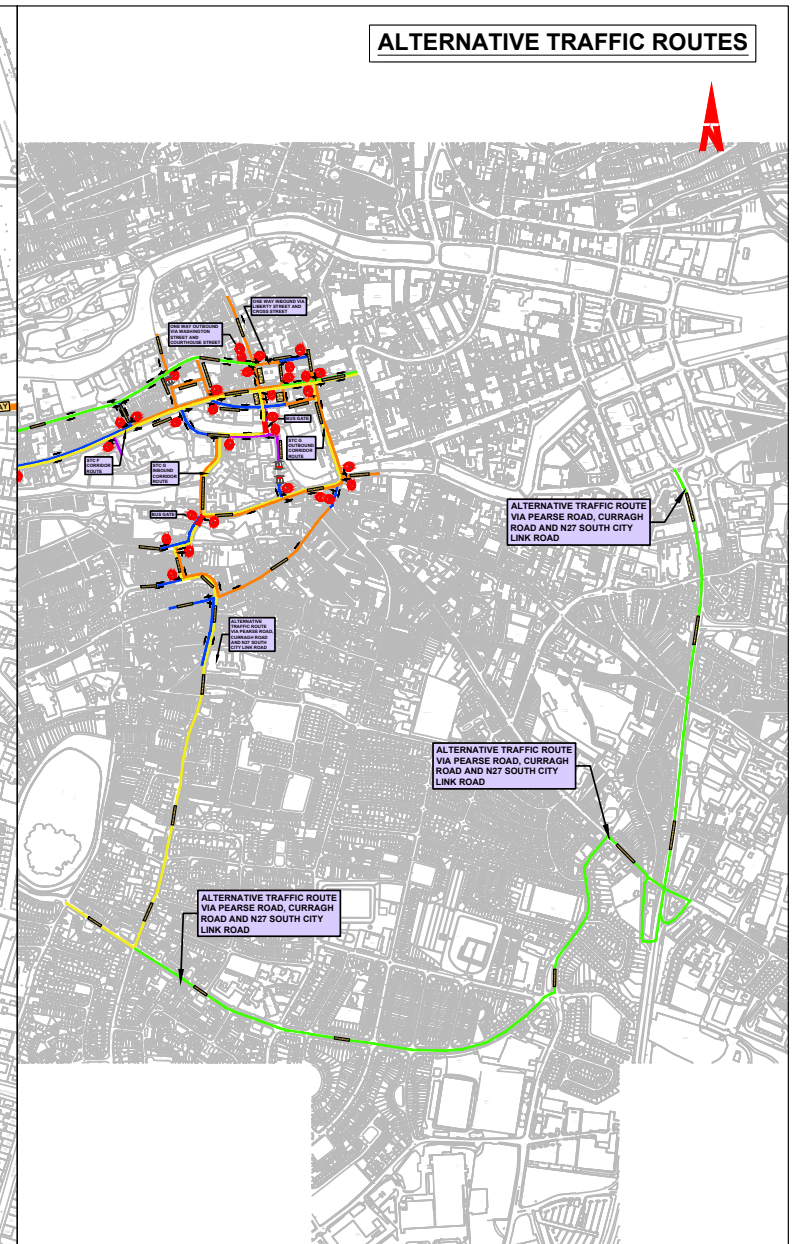
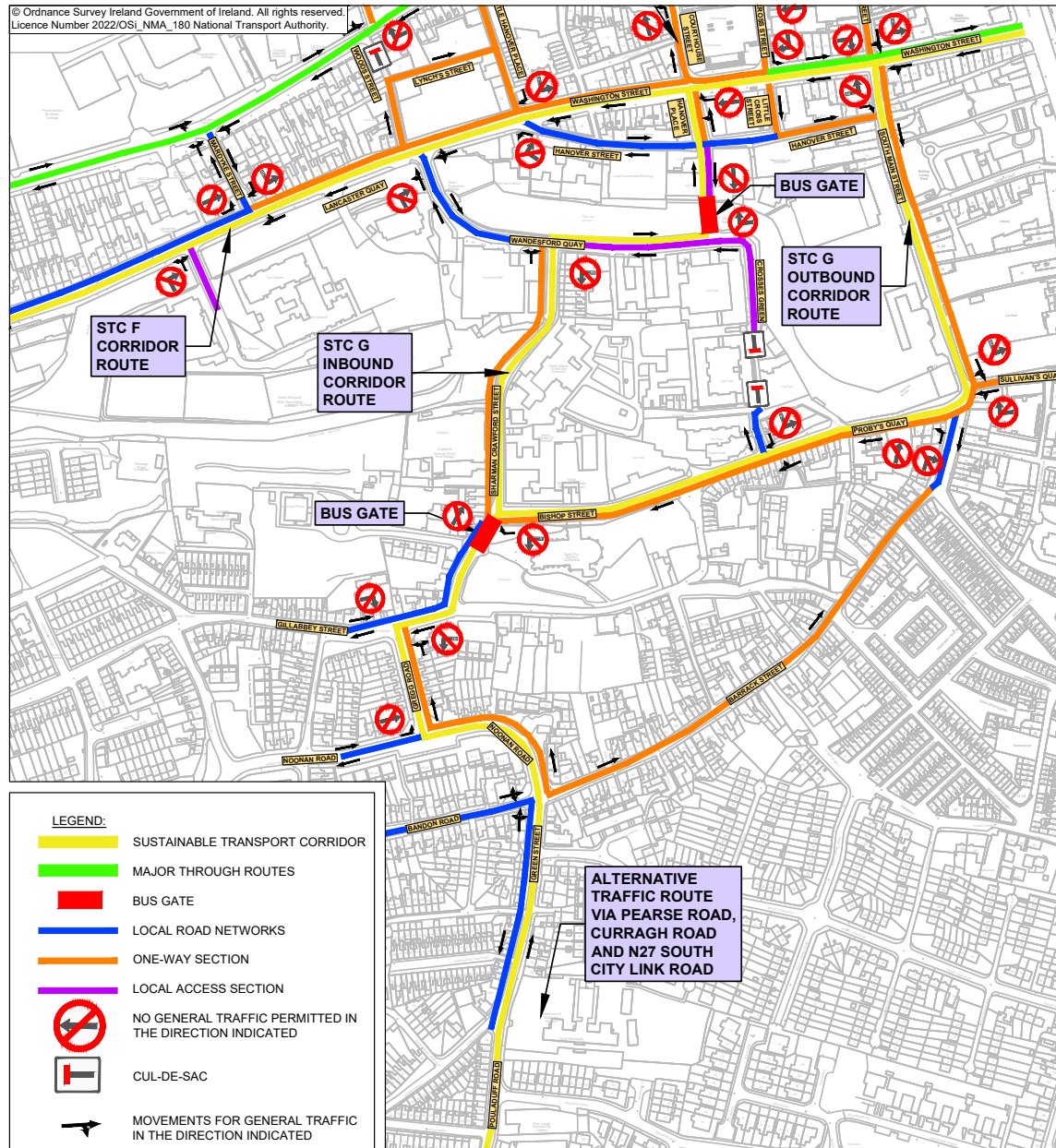








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Údarás Náisiúnta Iompair
National Transport Authority

National Transport Authority
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Rialtas
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Project Ireland
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