



Togher to City

Sustainable Transport Corridor

Public Consultation March 2023

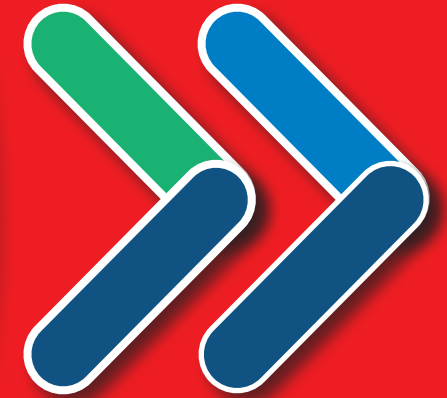


Rialtas
na hÉireann
Government
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Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040

**BUS
CONNECTS
CORK**

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT FOR A BETTER CITY.



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1. Introduction

1.1 What has happened so far?

Between June 30th 2022 and October 3rd 2022, the National Transport Authority (NTA) undertook the first round of public consultation on initial proposals for the twelve Sustainable Transport Corridors proposed under BusConnects Cork. During this consultation phase almost three thousand submissions were received in total.

All of the submissions were reviewed and considered as part of the ongoing design process for each corridor. In addition, we held six Public Information Events, five Community Forums and hosted numerous meetings with approximately thirty-five residents' groups, business groups and other special interest groups. Based on the submissions made and the constructive meetings with the various stakeholders, we have amended our initial proposals to address some of the issues raised including incorporating suggestions and recommendations for alternative solutions.

We are now publishing those revised proposals, referred to as Preferred Route Options, for the eleven remaining Sustainable Transport Corridors and commencing a second round of public consultation in relation to the plans.

This document is one of a series of eleven information booklets, each dedicated to a single corridor. The document provides a written description of the Preferred Route Option from start to finish with supporting maps and includes information on any revisions and key changes made from the initial Emerging Preferred Route.

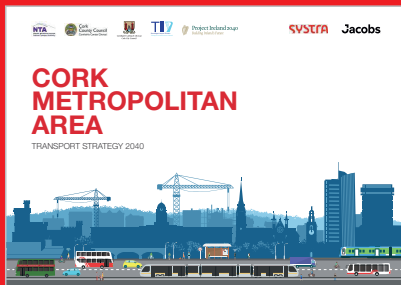
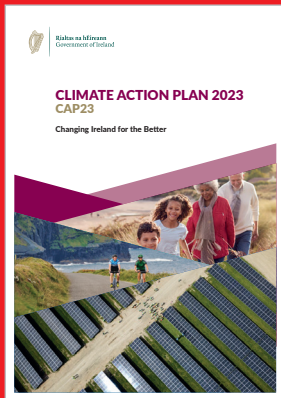
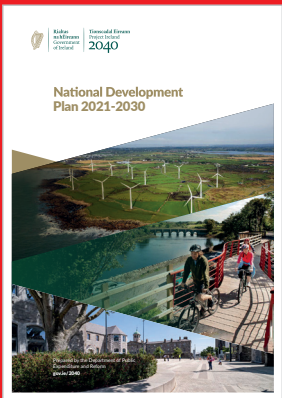
The original brochures detailing each Emerging Preferred Routes, published last year, remain available to view and download on our website www.busconnects.ie. These brochures contain information on the process for impacted property owners, the project timelines and steps required for statutory planning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

1.2 What is BusConnects?

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

- The National Development Plan 2021 - 2030;
- Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy 2040; and
- The Climate Action Plan 2023.

Cork is growing and needs a bus network that works for a developing city. The aim of BusConnects Cork is to deliver an enhanced bus system that is better for the city, its people and the environment. BusConnects Cork is designed to provide a better, more reliable and more efficient bus service for everyone in addition to providing safe cycling facilities along key routes.



BusConnects Cork: At a glance



91km of new bus lane / bus priority

making journeys faster and more reliable

96km of cycle facilities

(one direction) delivering 48km of the cycle network.



Redesigning the bus network



State-of-the-art ticketing system

Cashless payment system



Simpler fare structure



New Park & Ride sites
in key locations



Transitioning to a new **Zero emissions bus fleet**



New bus stops and shelters
with better signage and information

1.3 What are the benefits of this project?



Faster, more reliable journeys

By removing buses from traffic congestion, the punctuality and reliability of the bus system is vastly improved. Journeys are faster and, even more importantly, arrival times are more consistent and dependable.



Building a sustainable city and addressing climate change

Tackling the challenges of climate change is a priority for Ireland and moving more people to public transport is a key component of the solution. The Climate Action Plan 2023 recently published by the Government, sets challenging targets for increasing travel by public transport plus cycling, and reducing the need for car journeys.



Cork's carbon neutral target

Cork has been selected by the European Commission to become one of Europe's first climate neutral cities by 2030 under the EU's Cities Mission Programme. Through enabling more people to use public transport, cycling and walking, the development and delivery of BusConnects Cork will be essential to achieve that climate neutral city ambition.



Accessibility for all

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



Better cycling facilities

This project will see the provision of much needed cycling facilities around the city region with over 96kms of high quality cycling facilities provided. Segregated cycling along the key corridors of the city will allow the public to have cycling as a real sustainable alternative. The new cycling infrastructure will be of significant benefit to the public, business, tourism, education and retail.

Pedestrians and Urban Realm



Along each route, improvements and enhancements will be made to footpaths, walkways and pedestrian crossings. In addition, there will be investment in local urban realm improvements at key locations, where additional landscaping, pavement treatments and outdoor amenities will be provided.

1.4 Understanding the terminology

1. Sustainable Transport Corridor (STC):

Part of the overall BusConnects Programme is to create eleven Sustainable Transport Corridors (STCs) along existing roads across Cork city, representing key bus and cycling routes. The development of these Sustainable Transport Corridors will enable efficient bus movement along these routes, together with the provision of safe, segregated cycling facilities, where feasible, in addition to accommodating general traffic movement.

The proposed arrangements include removing buses from traffic congestion by developing separate bus lanes along these routes or by using traffic signalling arrangements over short distances. Alternatively, general traffic levels would be reduced by restricting through traffic using bus gates (described later), such that buses will no longer be delayed by traffic congestion.

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 lanes/tracks, there will be the option of quiet roads and shared cycling on reduced speed roads for cyclists.

3. Emerging Preferred Route:

The NTA published outline plans for each of the Sustainable Transport Corridors in a non-statutory public consultation process in June 2022. The options were called Emerging Preferred Routes to inform the public of the indicative layout of the roadways with the necessary infrastructure in place, at that stage of the design process. They included indications of potential impacts on gardens and other land

areas, and potential changes to how traffic would operate to facilitate bus priority.

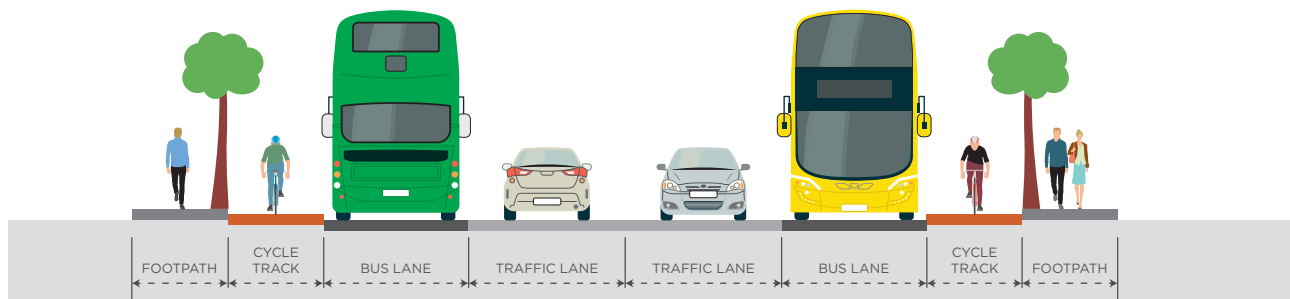
4. Preferred Route Option:

Following consideration of the public submissions about the Emerging Preferred Routes, the Sustainable Transport Corridor proposals have been reviewed and amended. Each of the revised proposals is now referred to as a Preferred Route Option (PRO) and these will be the subject of a second round of non-statutory public consultation.

These are not final scheme proposals as they are subject to further consideration of the feedback from the second round of public consultation and are also to subsequent examination in the context of environmental impact assessment.

5. Bus Gate

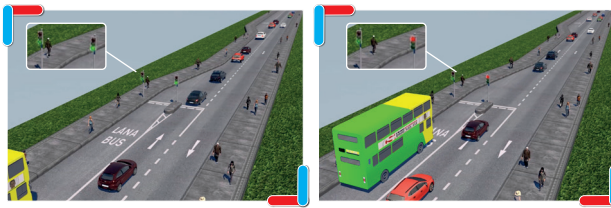
A Bus Gate is a sign-posted short length of stand-alone bus lane. This short length of road is restricted exclusively to buses, taxis and cyclists plus emergency vehicles during the hours of operation of the Bus Gate. It facilitates bus priority by removing general through traffic along the overall road 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. Further information on how a Bus Gate would work is detailed in Section 1.5.

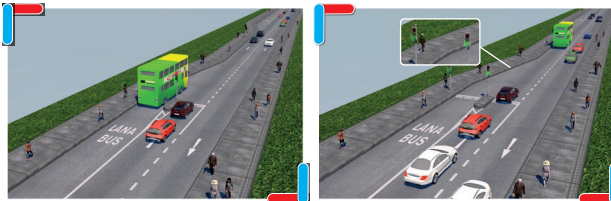
6. Signal Controlled Priority:

Signal Control Priority uses traffic signals to enable buses to get priority ahead of traffic where both buses and traffic are sharing the same lane, but it is only effective for short distances. This arrangement typically arises where a bus lane cannot be continued 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 prevent widening of the road to make space for a bus lane.



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.

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 traffic signal to allow the bus pass through the narrow section first and when the bus has passed the general traffic will then be allowed through the lights.

7. Toucan Crossing:

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

8. Quiet Street Treatment:

Where roadway widths along a Sustainable Transport Corridor cannot facilitate cyclists in addition to bus facilities, alternative cycle links have been explored along nearby routes. 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

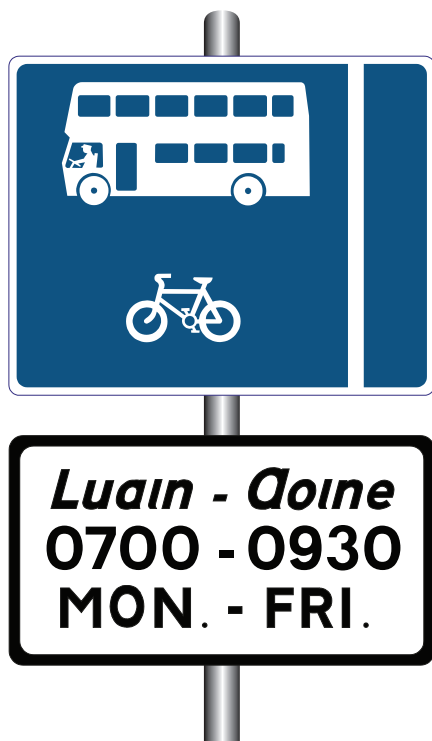
the general traffic without the need to construct segregated cycle tracks or painted cycle lanes. The Quiet Street treatment would involve appropriate advisory signage for both general road users and cyclists.

9. Urban Realm:

Urban realm refers to the everyday street spaces that are used by people to cross, shop, socialise, play, and use for activities such as walking, exercise or commute to/from work. 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.

1.5 Understanding how a Bus Gate would work

As you study the brochures and examine the detail in our Preferred Route Option proposals, you will notice that we are proposing the use of Bus Gates to deliver the desired improvement in bus reliability at various locations across the city.



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 during the hours of operation of the Bus Gate. 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.

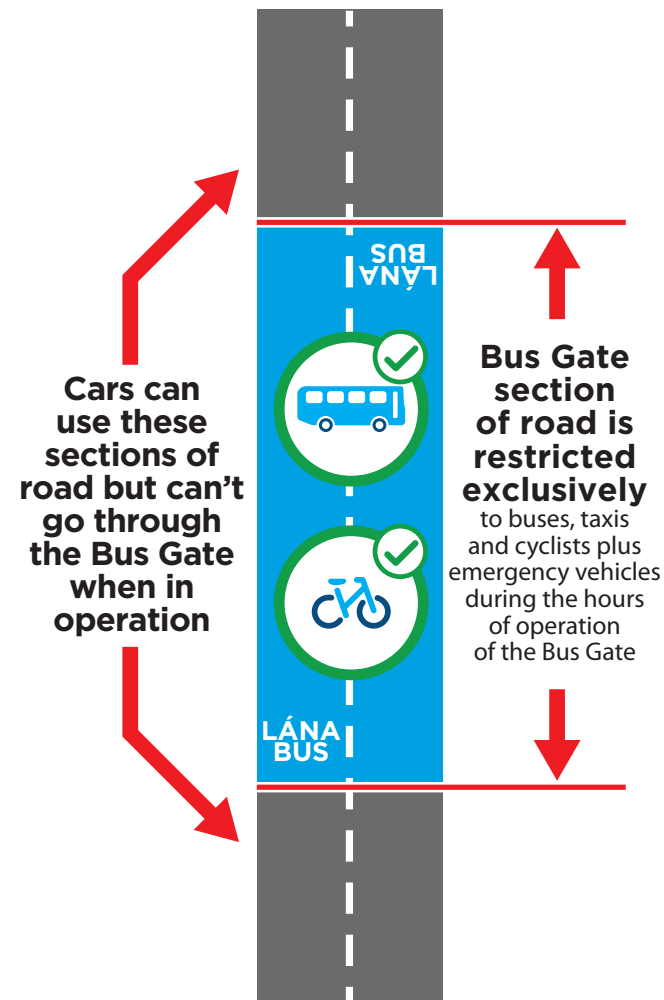
As part of the BusConnects Cork project, one and two-way Bus Gates are currently being considered at various locations along the proposed Sustainable Transport Corridors.

Will Bus Gates be 24-hours?

24-hour Bus Gates are an option in areas where it is considered necessary. However, in most cases 24-hour Bus Gates are not necessary and Bus Gates can be timed to operate only during peak traffic periods when traffic congestion is most significant.

Will there be physical infrastructure at the Bus Gate?

A Bus Gate is simply markings on the road that delineates where a short section of bus lane starts and finishes. It will be sign-posted to



LÁNA BUS

inform drivers that that section of road is restricted exclusively to buses, taxis and cyclists plus emergency vehicles during its operational hours. A sign-post at either end of the bus lane will include the details of the operational hours.

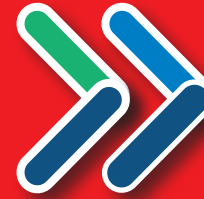
What happens if I am driving towards a Bus Gate during the hours of operation?

Adequate signage will be placed along the route to redirect general traffic away from the bus gate prior to arrival at the bus gate.

How will the Bus Gate affect residents who live near one and wish to use their private car?

This short length of road, as described above, is restricted exclusively to buses, taxis and cyclists plus emergency vehicles during the hours of operation. This means residents who live near to a Bus Gate may, depending on the journey direction, have to seek alternative route options,

similar to other drivers. The Bus Gate restrictions will only apply to the short section of road that is clearly highlighted with road markings and sign-posts. During operational hours, accessing the road beyond the Bus Gate in a private car will still be possible, once you use alternative routing options.



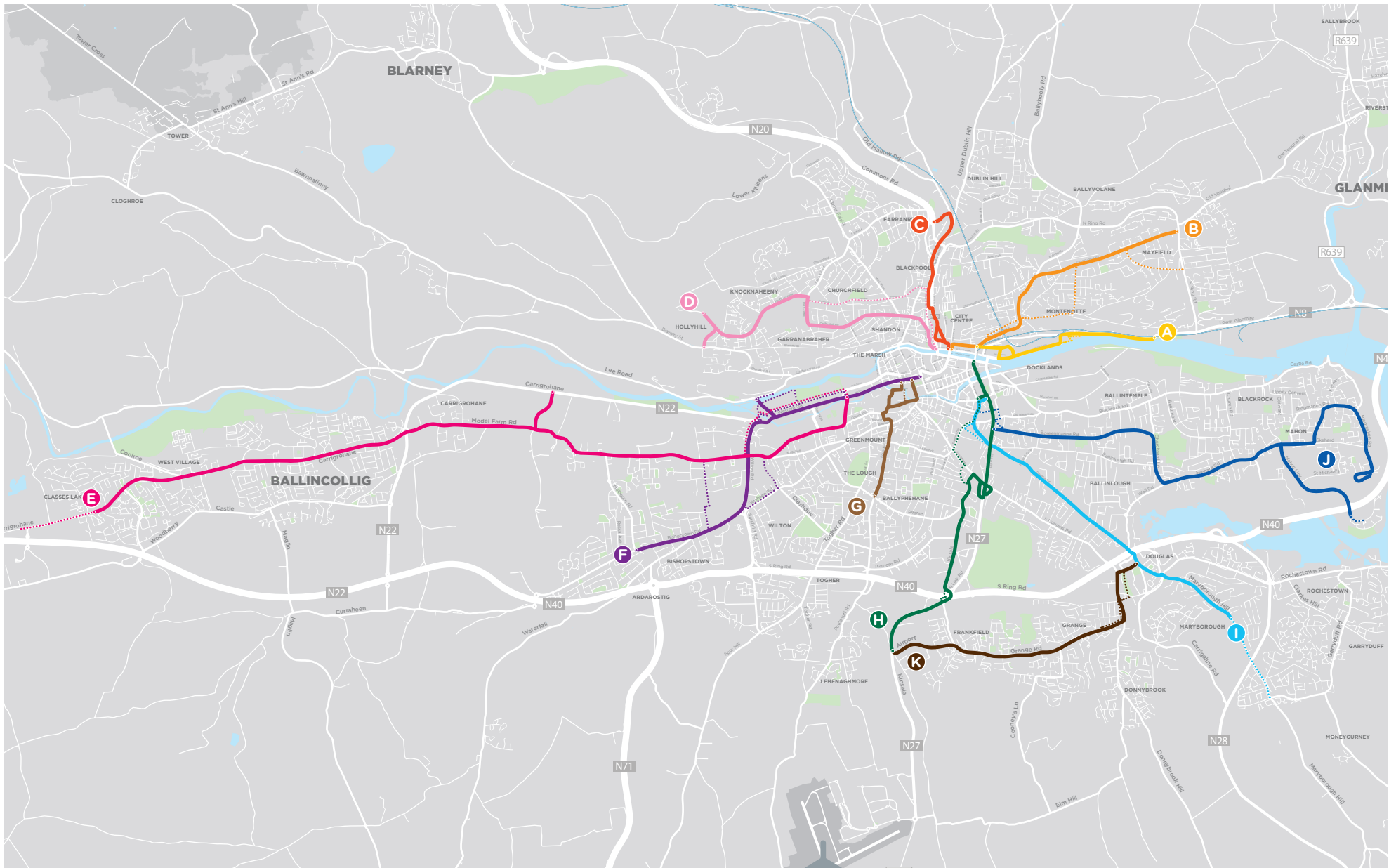
1.6 Sustainable Transport Corridors

- 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

———— Sustainable Transport Corridor

..... Alternative Cycle Facilities





2. Preferred Route Option Description

2.1 Togher to City Overview

The Togher to City Sustainable Transport Corridor (STC G) commences on Pouladuff Road, just north of the junction with Pearse Road. It is proposed that buses and cyclists will proceed along 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.

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 Crosses 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 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 segregated cycle facilities. Cyclists will ultimately tie into future cycle route schemes to be developed for Pearse Road and Lough Road as part of the Cork Cycle Network.

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 on Pouladuff Road, Bishop Street and at Clarke's Bridge to manage bus journey time reliability.

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





2.2 Route Description

2.2.1 Pearse Road to Bishop Street

The corridor commences on Pouladuff Road, just north of the junction with Pearse Road. It is noted that this represents a change from the EPR which showed the corridor commencing on Pearse Road at the junction with Lough Road. In the EPR, bus priority along Pouladuff Road was limited to a section of inbound bus lane between Pearse Road and Nun’s Walk. For the remainder of Pouladuff Road as far as Bandon Road buses would have shared with general traffic as the route is too constrained to provide dedicated bus lanes. However, in lieu of this bus lane, it is now proposed to achieve inbound bus priority along Pouladuff Road by introducing a bus gate in the inbound direction that would only be operational in the morning peak periods (i.e., only buses, taxis and cyclists permitted to pass through).

Due to prevailing space constraints, it is not possible to provide for 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.

It is noted that the EPR proposed removal of a large number of car parking spaces along Pouladuff Road to support bus journey time reliability. However, in response to the public consultation, the volume of parking to be removed along Pouladuff Road has been significantly reduced. 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 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.

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

- Lands at the Lough Community Centre to facilitate a new bus shelter.
- Lands in the verge at Pouladuff Place to facilitate off-street parking.
- Lands in the green at Ardross Estate to facilitate off-street parking.

Proposed Enhancements to Urban Spaces and Pedestrian/Cycle Environment

Location	Proposed Enhancements
Pouladuff Road, between Pouladuff Place and Woodhall	New footpath provided on western side of the road where there is currently none and existing footpath widened where it is currently substandard.
Pouladuff Road, just south of Gould Street	New footpath provided on western side of the road where there is currently none.
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.

2.2.2 Bishop Street to City (Grand 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 proposed 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.

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

- Lands on the western side of Sharman Crawford Street approaching Wandesford Quay.

Proposed Enhancements to Urban Spaces and Pedestrian/Cycle Environment

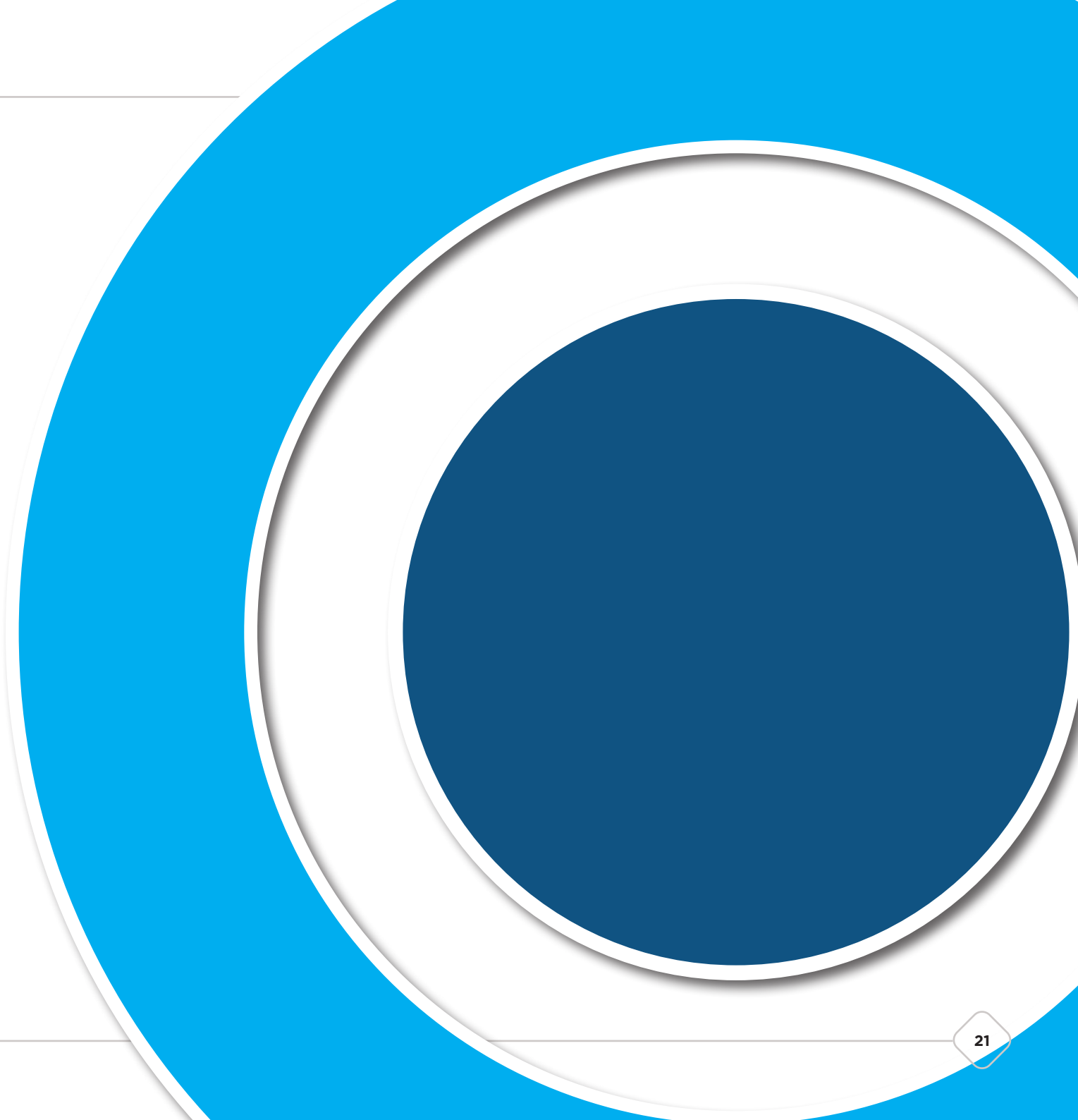
Location	Proposed Enhancements
Sharman Crawford Street, at junction with Bishop Street	Improvements to the existing signalised junctions prioritising pedestrian and cycle friendly design.
Sharman Crawford Street, at junction with Wandesford Quay	New signalised junction with pedestrian friendly design.
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.

2.3 Key changes from the Published EPR

- The corridor now commences on Pouladuff Road, just north of the junction with Pearse Road.
- The proposed inbound bus lane on Pouladuff Road between Pearse Road and Nuns Walk is no longer proposed. Bus priority will now be provided by an inbound bus gate which will be in operation at AM Peak hours only.
- Works on Pouladuff Road have been limited, significantly reducing the loss of car parking compared to the EPR.
- Some additional off-street parking has been proposed in the verges at Pouladuff Place adjacent to the entrance to the Soundstore yard.

2.4 Key Facts

Approximate number of properties that may be impacted:	7
Approximate number of on-street parking spaces that may be removed:	134
Approximate number of roadside trees that may be removed:	0
Approximate route length:	1.7km
Approximate length of cycle route: <i>Inbound - 0.8km</i> <i>Outbound - 0.9km</i>	1.7km



3. How to take part in the public consultation

This brochure provides details of the proposed Preferred Route Option for this Sustainable Transport Corridor. These proposals are subject to a second round of public consultation and, depending on the public's feedback, subsequent design refinement before a formal statutory application will be made by the NTA to An Bord Pleanála for approval.

3.1 General queries

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

General queries can be directed to:



Freephone
1800 303 653



or by email to
corkstc@busconnects.ie

3.2 How to engage

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

Written submissions and observations may be made by:



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



Post:
Sustainable Transport Corridor Project
NTA Cork Office, Suite 427, 1 Horgan's Quay
Waterfront Square, Cork
T23 PPT8

3.3 What happens next?

Following the second round of public consultation the NTA will finalise the Preferred Route Options for all eleven corridors. The scheme designs will be finalised in tandem with the undertaking of transport and environmental assessments. This is likely to culminate in the preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) for the scheme, together with details of land to be acquired, which will be submitted to An Bord Pleanála during 2024-2025 for its consideration and determination. A formal statutory consultation process will be undertaken as part of that process.



3.4 Anticipated Project Timeline

2022

ENGAGEMENT

Consultation on Emerging Preferred Route Q2/Q3

Consultation on Emerging Preferred Route Proposals.

2023

Further Consultation on Preferred Route Q1/Q2

Preparation of Draft Preferred route Q1/Q2. Having taken account of feedback received, publication of Preferred Routes for the Sustainable Transport Corridors - 2 month period of public consultation.

2023-2026

STATUTORY PROCESS

Preparation of Statutory Application

- Optimise Engineering Design
- Prepare Environmental Impact Assessment Report
- Define property requirements and prepare CPO

2024-2025

An Bord Pleanála Applications

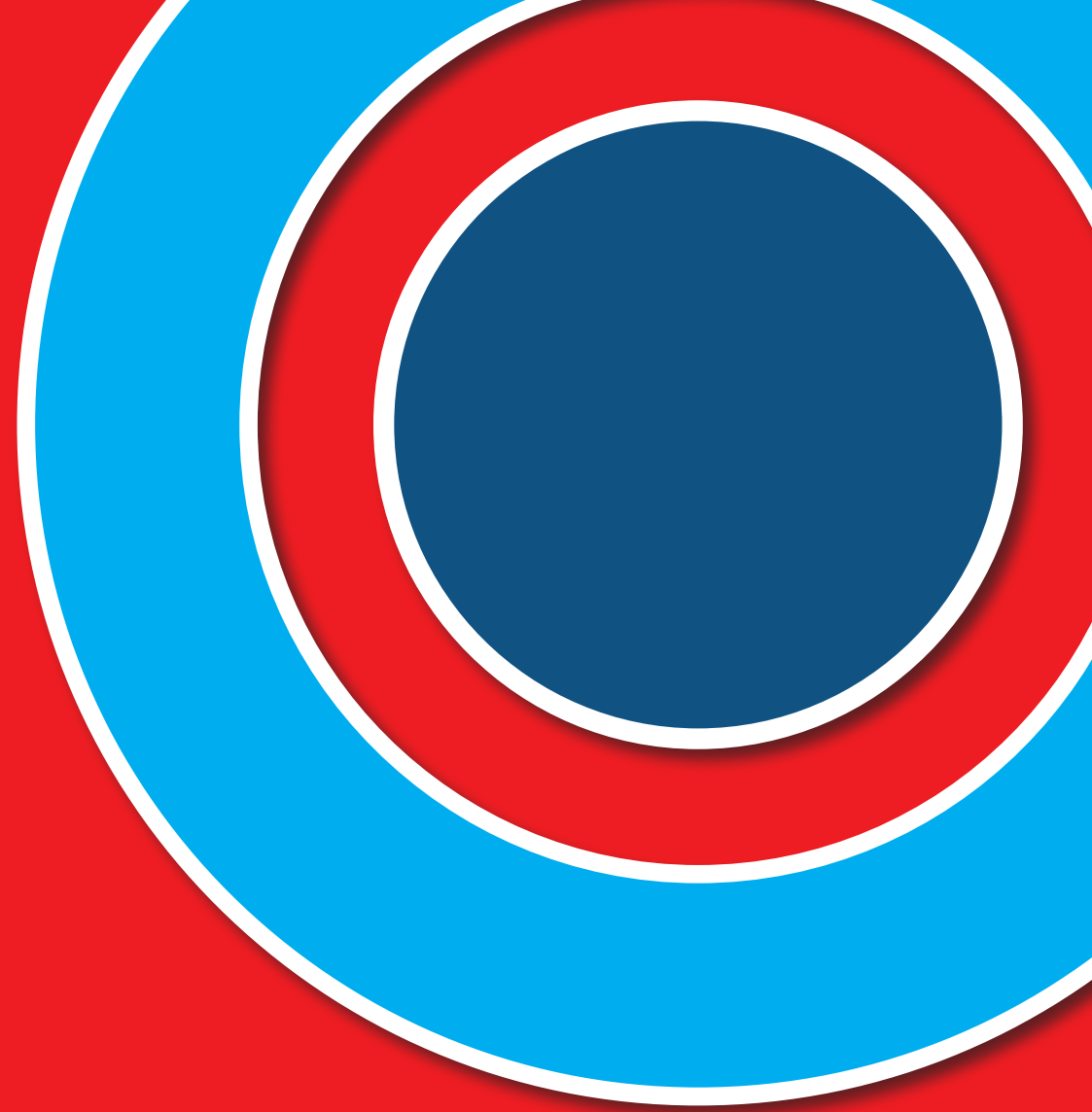
- Submission of Applications to An Bord Pleanála to approve the Proposed Scheme and to confirm the associated CPO
- Statutory Consultation in accordance with the legislative requirements
- An Bord Pleanála deliberations including an Oral Hearing where required
- An Bord Pleanála may:
 1. Approve the 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

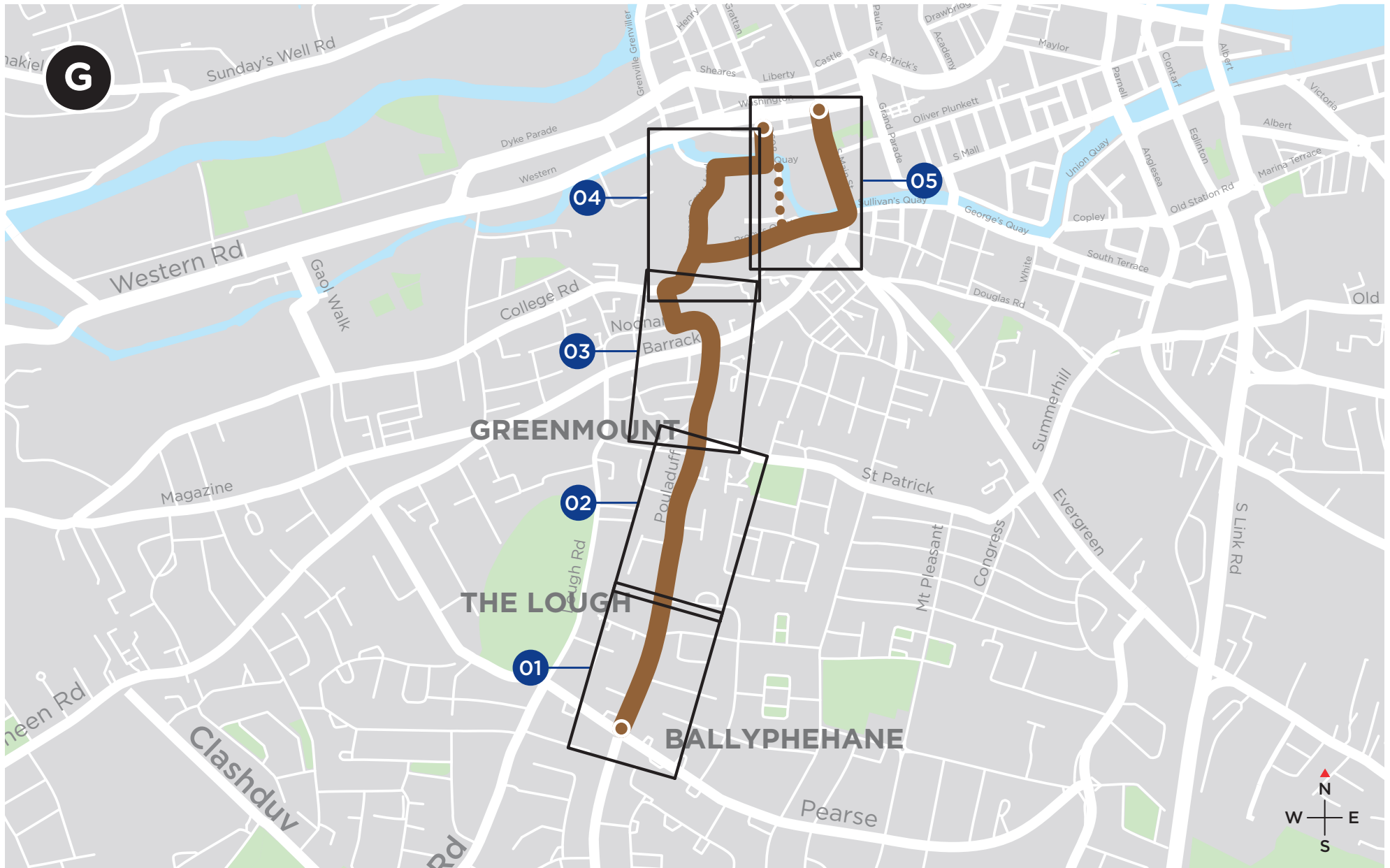


4. Appendices

4.1 Index maps

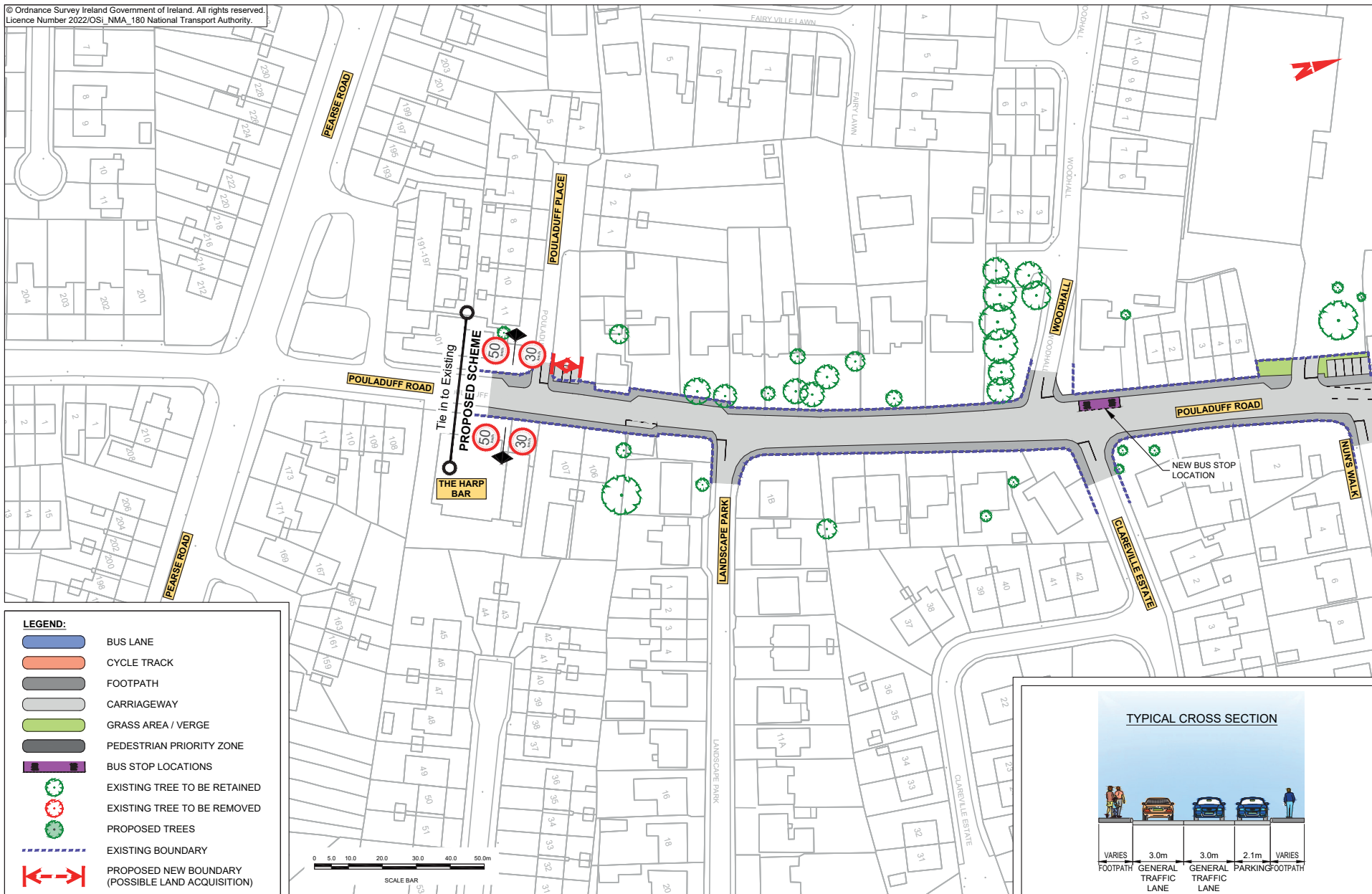
4.2 Route maps

Index Map

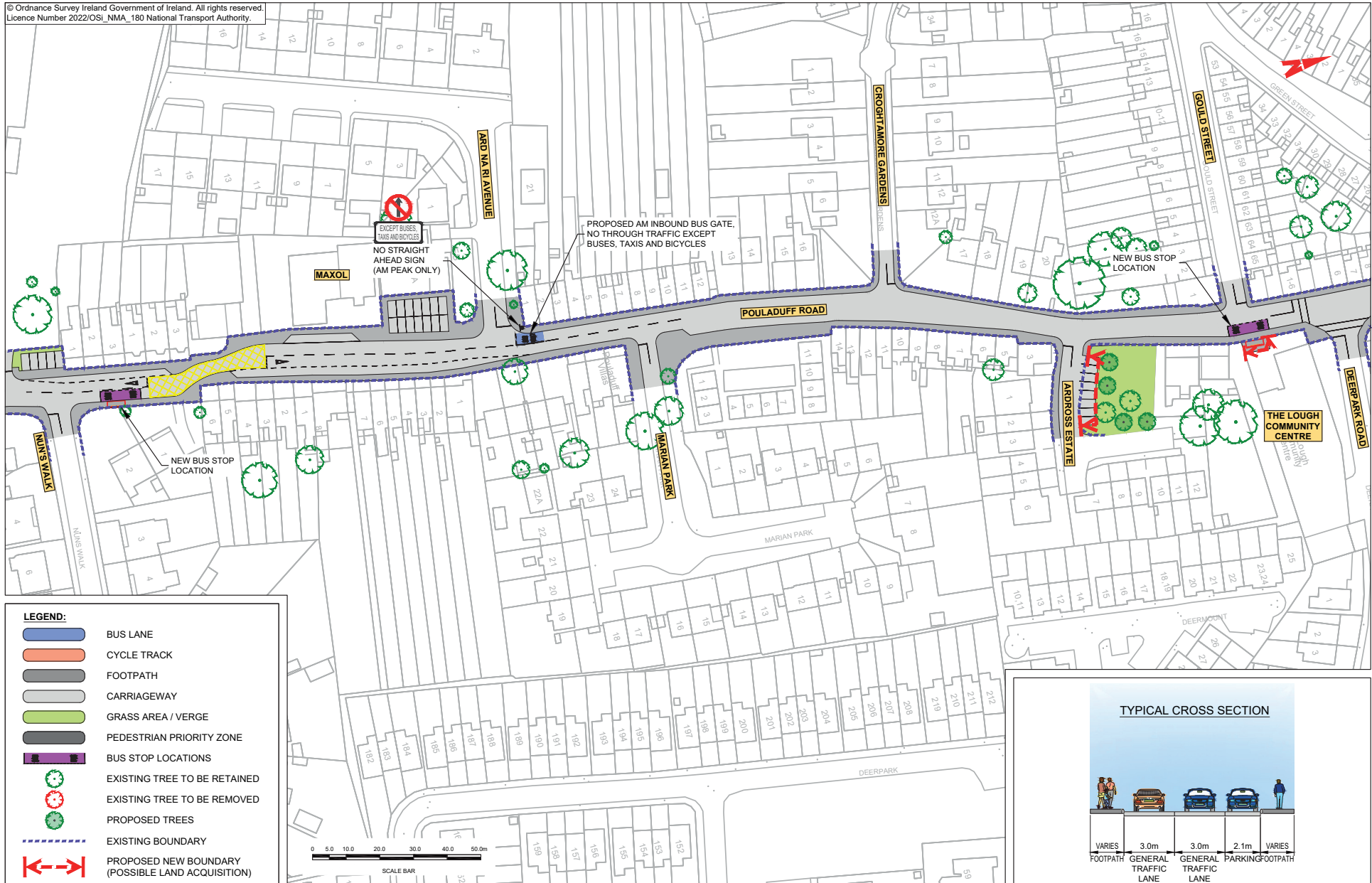


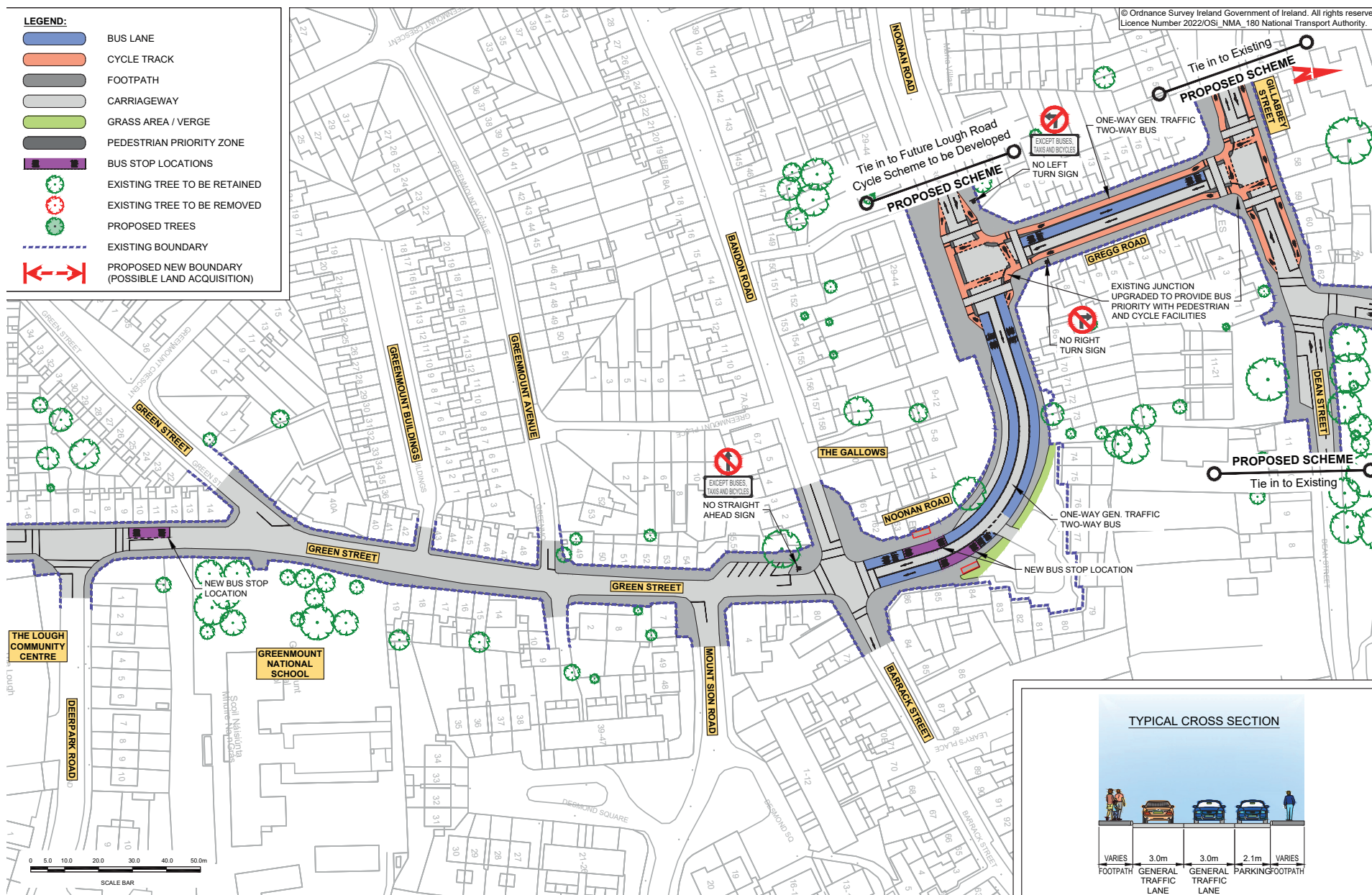
NOTE: The Preferred Route shown on the following drawings is indicative only and is subject to change following consultation and as part of the design development process.

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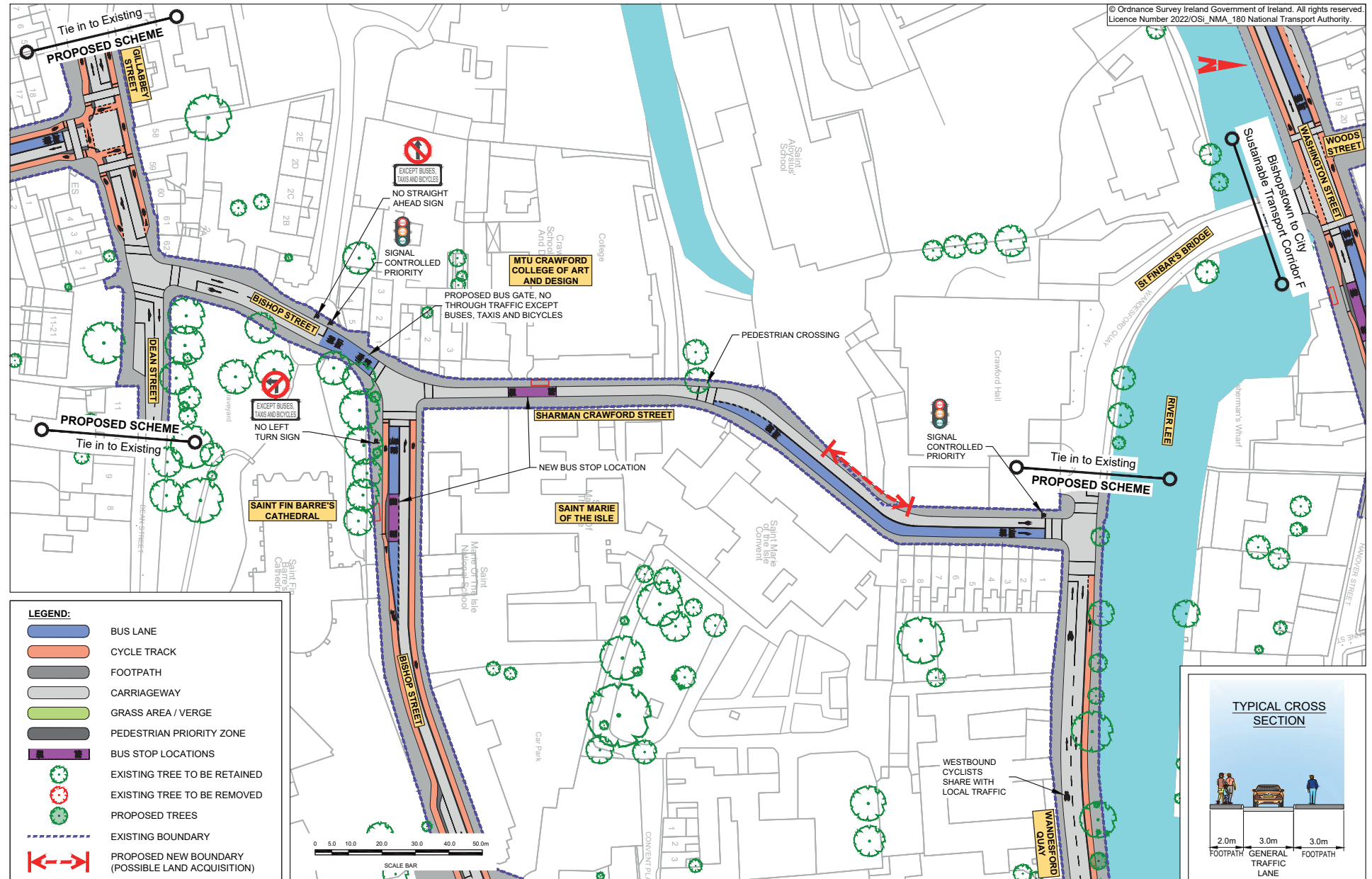


MAP 2: Preferred Route Option

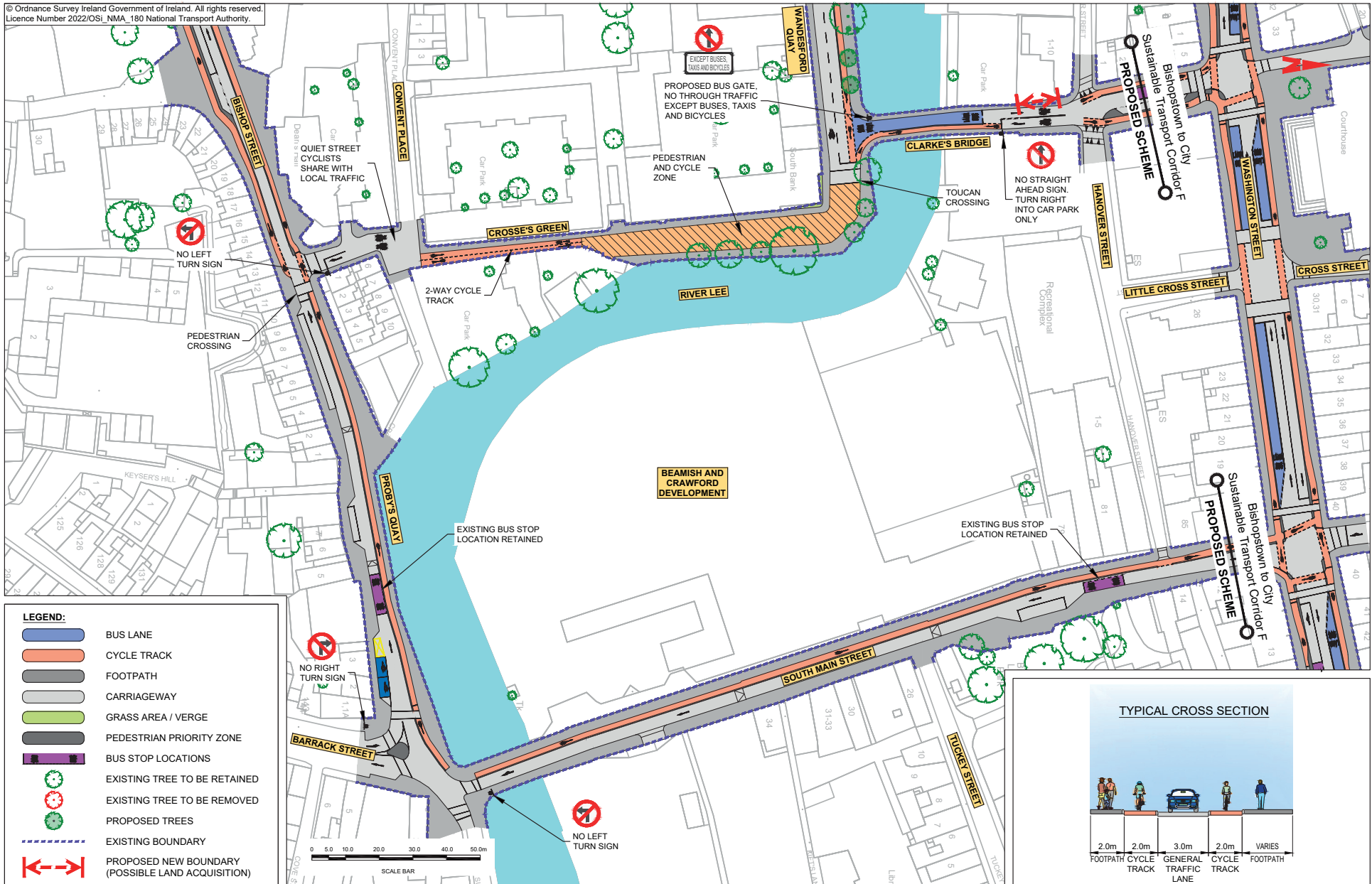


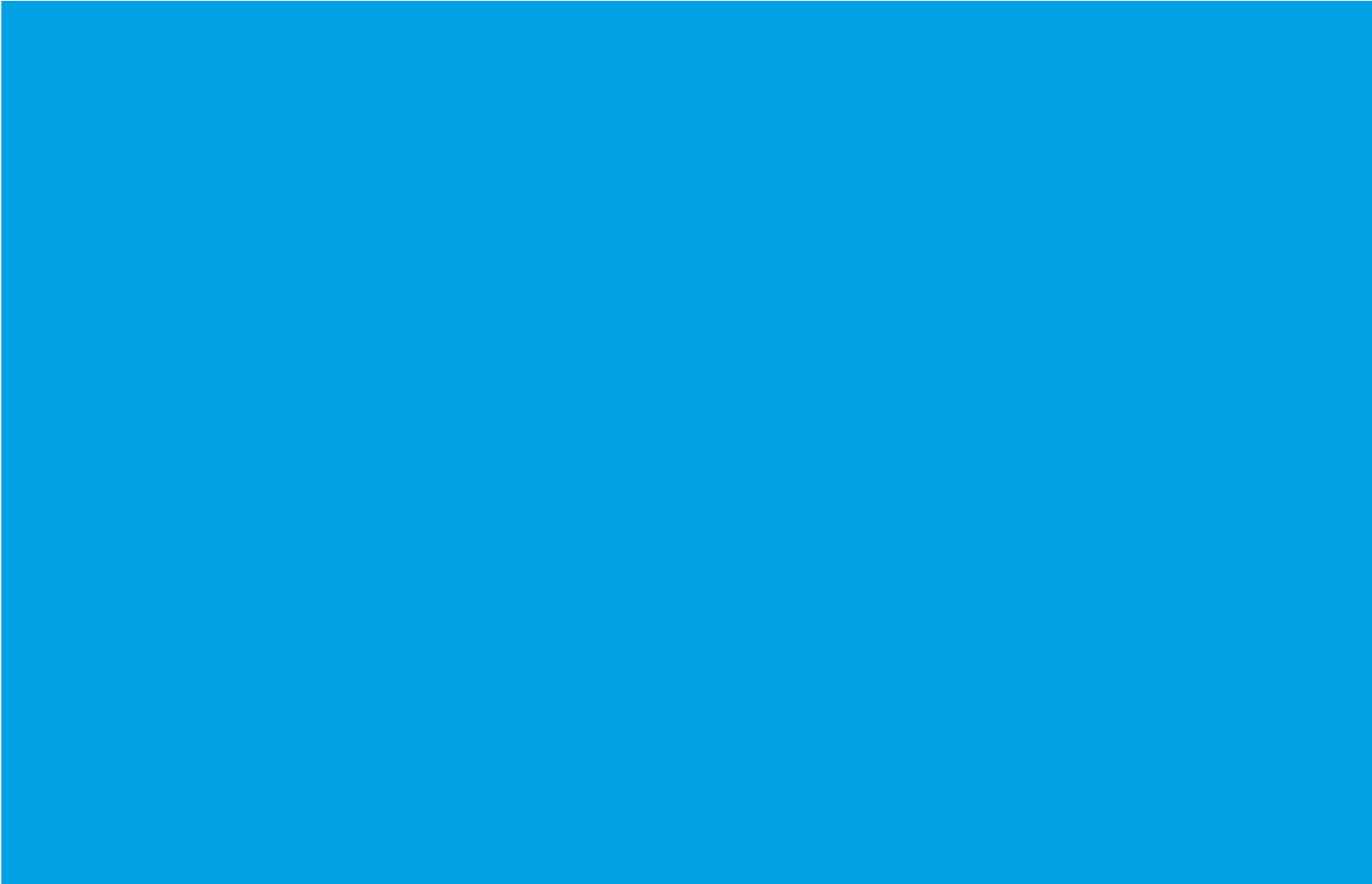


MAP 4: Preferred Route Option



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