

Contents

1. Intro	duction	4
1.1	What is BusConnects?	4
1.2	What is this public consultation for?	4
1.3	A reminder of what the Sustainable Transport Corridor Project is about	6
1.4	Objectives of the Sustainable Transport Corridors	7
1.5	What has happened so far?	8
1.6	What is in this brochure?	8
1.7	Understanding the terminology	9
1.8	11 Sustainable Transport Corridor Preferred Routes	12
2. What	t has been happening over the last number of months?	14
2.1	Technical Design	14
2.2	Statutory Consent Application	14
2.3	Traffic Surveys	14
2.4	Urban Realm	15
2.5	Timeline	16
3. How	to take part in the public consultation	18
3.1	General queries	18
3.2	How to engage	18
3.3	What happens next?	19
4. Prefe	erred Route Description	20
4.1	Overview	20
4.2	Jacob's Island to Central Statistics Office (CSO)	20
4.3	Mahon Point Shopping Centre to Central Statistics Office (CSO)	22
4.4	CSO to Skehard Road, Churchyard Lane and Boreenmanna Road	23
4.5	Key Changes from the Preferred Route published in March 2023	25
4.6	Key Facts	25
5. Appe	endices	26
5.1	Index maps	26
5.2	Route maps	26

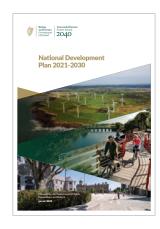
1. Introduction

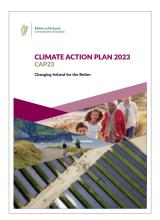
1.1 What is BusConnects?

BusConnects is the National Transport
Authority's (NTA) programme to greatly
improve bus services in Cork and other cities.
It is a key part of the Government's polices to
improve public transport and address climate
change. 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 and enhanced pedestrian facilities along key routes.



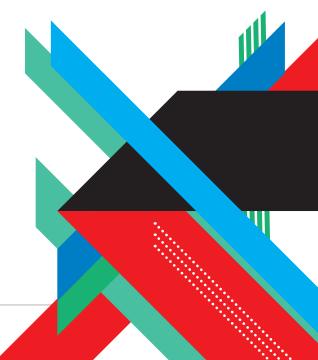




1.2 What is this public consultation for?

This is now the third round of non-statutory public consultation on the eleven proposed Sustainable Transport Corridors (STCs) since June 2022. The development of these STCs is a key part of the overall BusConnects Cork programme and will help future proof Cork's bus system and create safe cycling across the city and region as it continues to grow.

This consultation provides further opportunities for the public to review and submit feedback to the revised set of designs.



The overall BusConnects Cork programme is made up of 9 elements











1.3 A reminder of what the Sustainable Transport Corridor Project is about

The proposals are to invest in eleven Sustainable Transport Corridors (STCs) that will have continuous bus priority – generally, a continuous bus lane in each direction, but other arrangements maybe used in constricted locations. This will remove delays currently being experienced by the bus system and its users. Dedicated bus lanes, or other equivalent measures, will allow the buses to transport their many thousands of passengers with greater certainty about when buses will arrive and depart, making a better and more efficient service.

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 STC and onto a quieter road or purposebuilt cycleway, before re-joining with the corridor.

It is important to remember that the STCs identified are the key bus corridors in the city. In addition to these corridors, there is a much wider redesigned bus services network

planned for Cork which will provide increased frequencies and new services. The new bus network will be implemented during 2024/2025 and full details can be found on **busconnects.ie**.



1.4 Objectives of the Sustainable Transport Corridors



Enhance the capacity and potential of the public transport system by

improving bus reliability and punctuality through the

provision of bus lanes and other measures to provide priority to bus movement over general traffic movements;



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



Support the delivery of an efficient, low carbon and climate resilient public transport service

which supports the

achievement of Ireland's emission reduction targets;



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;



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; and



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.



1.5 What has happened so far?

Between June 2022 and October 2022 the National Transport Authority (NTA) carried out the first round of public consultation regarding proposals for the Emerging Preferred Route (EPR) of twelve Sustainable Transport Corridors (STCs) across Cork. During this first round of consultation we received approximately 3,000 submissions in total. These submissions were reviewed and considered as part of the design process for the Preferred Route Option (PRO) for each corridor. A second round of public consultation on the PRO of eleven STCs commenced in March 2023 and continued until 25th May 2023. Approximately 4,400 submissions were received as part of the second round of public consultation.

The submissions and feedback have been reviewed and a third round of non-statutory public consultation is taking place during Q4 2023. This will provide further opportunities for the public to review and submit feedback to the revised set of designs.

1.6 What is in this brochure?

This document is one of eleven brochures, each dedicated to a single Sustainable Transport Corridor (STC). The document provides a written description of the Preferred Route from start to finish with supporting maps. It includes all revisions made, if any, since the second round of public consultation. It also includes a

timeline for the progress of the programme and details of how you can engage with the public consultation. The brochures from the first and second round of consultation are available to view and download on our website www.busconnects.ie. Definitions of the terminology used in the document are outlined in the next section.



1.7 Understanding the terminology

1. Sustainable Transport Corridor (STC):

Part of the overall BusConnects Cork
Programme is to create eleven Sustainable
Transport Corridors (STCs). 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.
In constricted locations, other arrangements
may be used. The bus lanes will be alongside
segregated cycle lanes/tracks where feasible
and general traffic lanes.

2. Segregated Cycle Tracks:

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

3. Emerging Preferred Route (EPR):

The NTA published outline plans for each of the STCs in a non-statutory public consultation process in June 2022. The options were called Emerging Preferred Routes (EPR) to inform the public of the likely layout of the roadway with the necessary STC infrastructure in place. They included possible impacts on front gardens, and likely changes to how traffic will operate to facilitate bus priority.

4. Preferred Route Option (PRO):

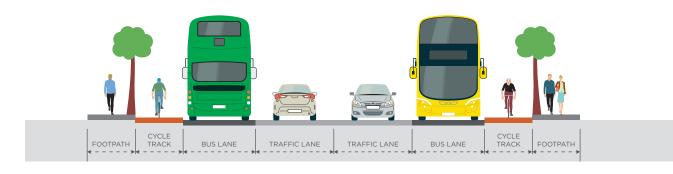
Following consideration of the public submissions about the EPRs, the Sustainable Transport Corridor proposals were reviewed and amended. In March 2023, they were presented as the Preferred Route Option (PRO) and were subject to a further round of non-statutory public consultation.

Following refinements and additional design development, the proposals are now being presented as the updated PROs and are subject to this additional round of public consultation.

They are not final proposals as they are subject to further consideration from this third round of public consultation and also subsequent examination in the context of environmental impact assessment and design development.

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, thereby reducing congestion on the relevant road section and enabling more reliable bus movement`. General traffic will be directed by signage to divert away to other roads before they arrive at the bus gate.



6. Signal Controlled Priority (SCP):

Signal Control Priority uses traffic signals to enable buses to get priority ahead of 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



1. Traffic proceeds as normal.



3. The bus has priority to proceed.



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



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

the road space for a short distance until the bus lane recommences downstream. The general traffic will be stopped at the signal to allow the bus pass through the narrow section first and when the bus has passed the general traffic will then be allowed through the lights.

7. Toucan Crossing:

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

8. Quiet Street Treatment:

Where 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.

9. Urban Realm:

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





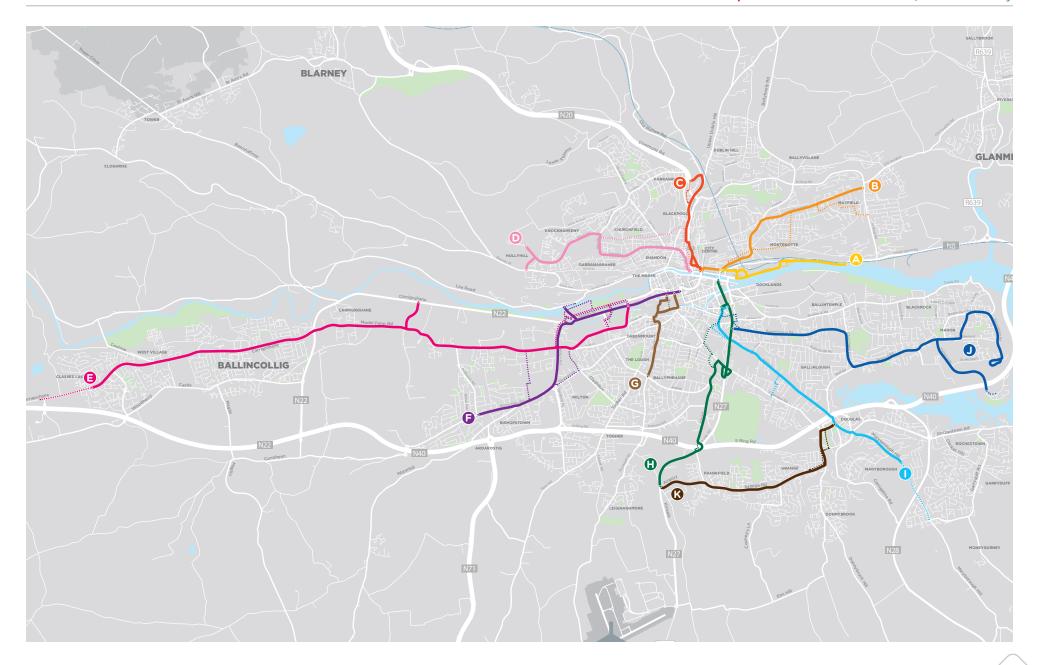


1.8 11 Sustainable Transport Corridor Preferred Routes

- A Dunkettle to City
- **B** Mayfield to City
- © Blackpool to City
- D Hollyhill to City
- **E** Ballincollig to City
- **(F)** Bishopstown to City
- **G** Togher to City
- **H** Airport Road to City
- Maryborough Hill to City
- **Mahon to City**
- K Kinsale Road to Douglas

Sustainable Transport Corridor

...... Alternative Cycle Facilities



2. What has been happening over the last number of months?

Considerable design work has been continuing since the last round of consultation. This work includes the following:

2.1 Technical Design

Designs have progressed with further refinements being made to elements of each corridor such as junctions, alignments, bus stops, cycling and walking facilities, and urban realm features. Engagement with stakeholders is continuing including engagement with individual householders potentially impacted. The developing design has been, and continues to be, informed by stakeholder engagement and further detailed surveys.

2.2 Statutory Consent Application

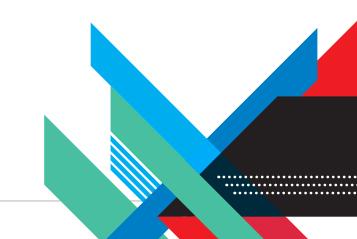
As part of the intended Statutory Consent Application for each Sustainable Transport Corridor (STC), the NTA will be preparing an **Environmental Impact Assessment Screening** Report, Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report, Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), and where required, a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) in accordance with current Irish and European legislation, guidelines, and best practice. These screenings and assessments are being undertaken by environmental specialists that have recently been appointed to work on the project on behalf of the NTA. The EIAR and AA documentation will form a significant part of the formal statutory application to An Bord Pleanála and will be available upon submission to the Board, as part of the statutory public consultation.

2.3 Traffic Surveys

A comprehensive set of traffic surveys has been undertaken across the City, providing up to date information on traffic volumes and other road user information. This information, supplemented by a variety of other information sources, will be used to further refine and calibrate the computer simulation transport model that has been developed for the Cork metropolitan region.

Forecasts from the transport model will be used by the design team in developing the various elements of the corridors and in the assessment of the impacts that will be reported in the EIAR documentation.

In advance of the full suite of transport models that will be prepared to support the EIAR for each STC (as described above), preliminary traffic modelling has been undertaken in order to provide high-level insight into the potential traffic impacts of the STC proposals. This model provides an indication of the scale of changes in traffic flow along streets across the city. The development and outputs of this model are described in the Preliminary Transport Modelling Report published as part of this third round of public consultation. The Preliminary Modelling Report can be viewed and downloaded from the BusConnects website – www.busconnects.ie



2.4 Urban Realm

In tandem with the technical design work on finalising the road alignment in the urban areas along the sustainable transport corridors, design has also progressed for refining the Urban Realm design proposals. These designs are being developed in consultation with the local authority to ensure tie-in to existing schemes and initiatives.

The Urban Realm improvement opportunities are spread out along the corridors and will reflect the specific location and local context. In the design of the urban spaces we will be using appropriate materials and urban furniture that comply with standards for use, durability and maintenance as well as being sustainable.



2.5 Timeline

2022

2023

2023-2025

ENGAGEMENT

Consultation on Emerging Preferred Route Q2/Q3

Consultation on Emerging Preferred Route Proposals.

Further Consultation on Preferred Route

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.

• Further round of public consultation on Preferred Route Q4

STATUTORY PROCESS

Preparation of Statutory Application

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

2024-2026

2026-2030

An Bord Pleánala 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.

ACQUISITION & CONSTRUCTION



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

3. How to take part in the public consultation

This brochure provides details of the proposed Preferred Route Option (PRO) for this Sustainable Transport Corridor (STC). These proposals are subject to a third round of non-statutory public consultation, plus subsequent design refinement and environmental impact assessment, before a formal statutory application will be made by the NTA to An Bord Pleanála for approval.

3.1 General queries

The project website www.busconnects.ie has a dedicated section for the Sustainable Transport Corridor element of the BusConnects Cork project. All previous Emerging Preferred Route (EPR) brochures and the brochures from the second round of consultation 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:





3.2 How to engage

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

Written submissions and observations may be made

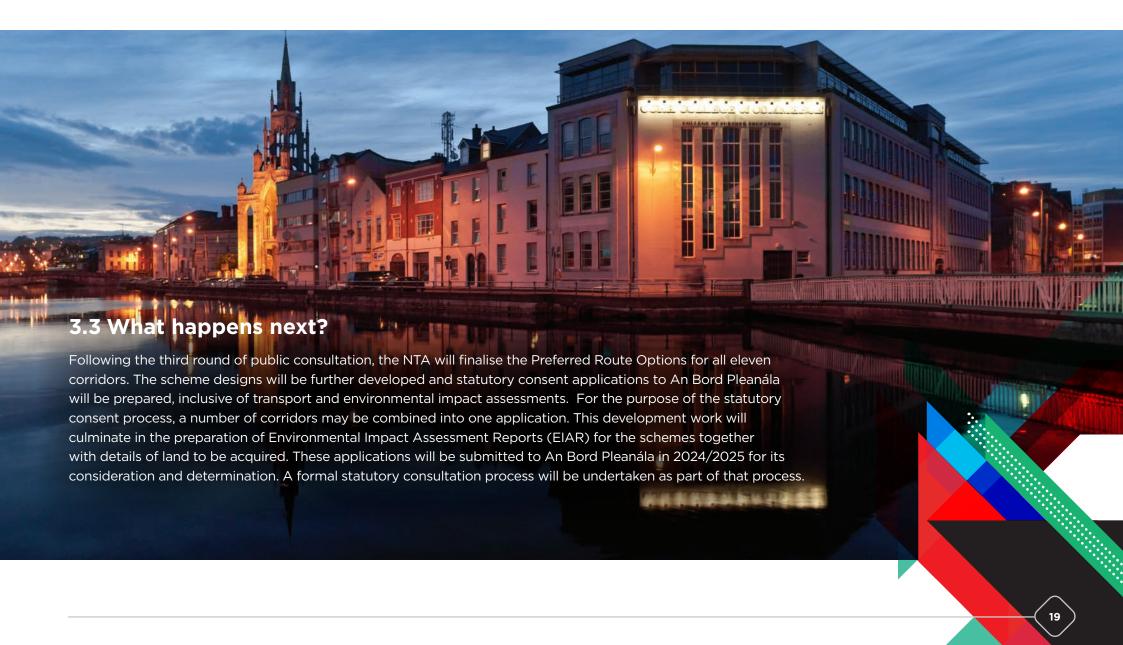


Click on "Public Consultation" section of the Sustainable Transport Corridor page on our website: https://consult.nationaltransport.ie

Post:



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



4. Preferred Route Description

4.1 Overview

The Mahon to City Sustainable Transport Corridor (STC J) approaches the city from two different starting points. The first of its two tails starts on Jacob's Island and makes its way inbound (towards the city) on the Loughmahon Link Road (R852) as far as the junction with Skehard Road.

The second tail starts at Mahon Point Shopping Centre and uses the existing bus-only access at the eastern end of St. Michael's Drive. It then travels along Estuary Drive, Ringmahon Road, Avenue de Rennes and Skehard Road as far as the junction with Loughmahon Link Road (R852).

From this point (near the Central Statistics Office) the two tails join and the STC continues inbound to the city on Skehard Road, Churchyard Lane and Boreenmanna

Road, before joining the Sustainable Transport Corridor H - Airport to City at the junction with the South City Link Road (N27).

The cycle route follows the bus route for most of its length but diverges from the bus route at the junction of Boreenmanna Road and Rockboro Avenue. From here it is proposed that cyclists use the quiet streets of Rockboro Avenue, Old Blackrock Road and Rockboro Road. A new, wider pedestrian and cyclist bridge is proposed to link Rockboro Road to Hibernian Road. The cycle route then joins with Sustainable Transport Corridor I on Anglesea Street (R610), to continue into the city centre.

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 Preferred Route Option in the second Public Consultation in March 2023.

4.2 Jacob's Island to Central Statistics Office (CSO)

The route starts at the existing roundabout on Jacob's Island. An inbound bus lane and segregated cycle tracks in both directions are proposed on approach to the bridge over the South Ring Road (N40). Two new bridges are proposed, one either side of this existing bridge, to provide dedicated cycling and pedestrian facilities. Relocating pedestrians off the current bridge frees up space that allow bus lanes to be included on the existing bridge without reducing the number of lanes available for traffic. Bus lanes and segregated cycle tracks are proposed in both directions on Loughmahon Link Road (R852) as far as the junction with Skehard Road. Some widening into green spaces either side of the road is likley to be required in places to achieve this.

Proposed Enhancements to Urban Spaces and Pedestrian/Cycle Environment

Location	Proposed Enhancements
Mahon Interchange Bridge, over the South Ring Road (N40)	Two new pedestrian and cyclist bridges built either side of the existing bridge and upgrade of the two junctions either end of the bridge to provide bus priority and prioritise pedestrian and cycle movements.
Jacob's Island and Loughmahon Link Road	Continuous segregated cycle tracks on both sides of the road.
Loughmahon Link Road/ Mahon Retail Park Junction	Junction upgraded to provide bus priority and prioritising pedestrian and cycle friendly design. Direct crossings for pedestrians provided on all arms of the junction and waiting times reduced.
Skehard Road/Loughmahon Link Road Junction	Junction upgraded to provide bus priority and prioritising pedestrian and cycle friendly design.

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

- Lands of private property on Jacob's Island;
- Lands of private property on Loughmahon Link Road (R852).

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

4.3 Mahon Point Shopping Centre to Central Statistics Office (CSO)

This section of the route starts at the Mahon Point Shopping Centre where a one-way clockwise loop for buses and traffic would be created within the shopping centre car park, this provides bus priority without the need for new road space. This loop connects to the roundabout at the eastern end of St Michael's Drive.

On Estuary Drive it is proposed to have a bus lane in the southbound direction only between Riverbank and St Michael's Drive, and a bus lane in the northbound direction only between the rear entrance to St. Michael's Cemetery and Skehard Road. This allows buses to skip traffic queues which may form on approach to these junctions and requires no road widening on Estuary Drive.

The corridor then overlaps with the "Mahon Cycle Scheme" on Ringmahon Road and Avenue de Rennes. In addition to the cycle facilities proposed by that scheme a bus gate is proposed to be added to Avenue de Rennes which would prevent its use by through traffic during peak hours and reduce delays for buses using the road. Road widening would be required along a section of Skehard Road to provide both bus and cycle lanes.

Proposed Enhancements to Urban Spaces and Pedestrian/Cycle Environment

Location	Proposed Enhancements	
Avenue de Rennes	A traffic calmed environment will provide a safer and more attractive environment for pedestrians and cyclists. Opportunity for improvement works such as placemaking, landscaping, and mobility improvements. Two new bus stops.	

4.4 CSO to Skehard Road, Churchyard Lane and Boreenmanna Road

Bus and cycle lanes are provided in both directions on Skehard Road and Churchyard Lane as far as the junction with Ballinlough Road. Some road widening and removal of on-street parking spaces would be required to achieve this.

On Churchyard Lane between Ballinlough Road and the entrance to Ballinlough Pitch & Putt Club there is a bus lane proposed in the outbound direction only, north of this as far as the junction with Boreenmanna Road there is a bus lane in the inbound direction only. Between the junction of Churchyard Lane and Ceanncora Lawn on Boreenmanna Road there is a bus lane proposed in the outbound direction only. Then from Ceanncora Lawn to South Link Road an inbound only bus lane is proposed, except for the 170m east of the junction with Victoria Avenue, where both inbound and outbound bus lanes are provided.

Limited land take would be required from private properties for some sections of this route. One lane in each direction is maintained for general traffic and there are no new restrictions for general traffic proposed. The route ends at the South Link Road where it joins the Sustainable Transport Corridor H - Airport to City.

From the junction with Ballinlough Road, on Churchyard Lane and Boreenmanna Road a two-way cycle track is proposed on the east / north side of the carriageway as far as Ballinlough Park. From the Ballinlough Park to the west, cycle tracks are proposed on either side of the road as far as Yorkboro, then a two-way cycle track is provided again on the north side of the road as far as Rockboro Avenue.

Here the cycle route diverges from the bus route and onto Rockboro Avenue, Old Blackrock Road and Rockboro Road, to avoid travelling along the South Link Road where cycle tracks could not be accommodated. A new, wider pedestrian and cyclist bridge would be constructed passing over the South Ring Road in order to link Rockboro Road to Hibernian Road and the existing narrow bridge would be dismantled. It is proposed to restrict traffic on Rockboro Road to local access only to create a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists. The cycle route joins with Sustainable Transport Corridor I on Anglesea Street, to continue into the city centre.



Proposed Enhancements to Urban Spaces and Pedestrian/Cycle Environment

Location	Proposed Enhancements
Skehard Road, Churchyard Lane and Boreenmanna Road	Bus stop and pedestrian crossing locations rationalised to facilitate easy access to bus stops and generally improved permeability for pedestrians. Pedestrian crossings at junctions upgraded so that pedestrians can cross each arm in a single movement. Continuous segregated cycle tracks provided.
Hibernian Footbridge	The existing narrow Hibernian pedestrian and cycle bridge would be replaced with a new, wider, and more accessible bridge.
Rockboro Road	Through traffic removed from Rockboro Road to provide a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists. Urban realm and mobility improvements will create a safe, attractive route for pedestrians and cyclists.
Hibernian Road	Urban realm and mobility improvements will create a safe, attractive route for pedestrians and cyclists.

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

- Lands of private property on Boreenmanna Road;
- Lands of private property on Churchyard Lane; and
- Lands of private property on Skehard Road.

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

4.5 Key Changes from the Preferred Route published in March 2023

- Churchyard Lane and Boreenmanna Road junction upgraded.
- Additional parking spaces proposed at the Churchyard Lane and Boreenmanna Road junction as well as Ballinlough Road.
- There is a proposal for new off-street parking spaces near the entrance to Rockboro Primary School whilst parking arrangements with Flora View Residents are to be agreed.
- A proposal for the development of a new pedestrian and cycling gateway to Mahon Point shopping centre from the Loughmahon Link Road (R852) as shown in the drawings provided in the Appendix of this brochure.

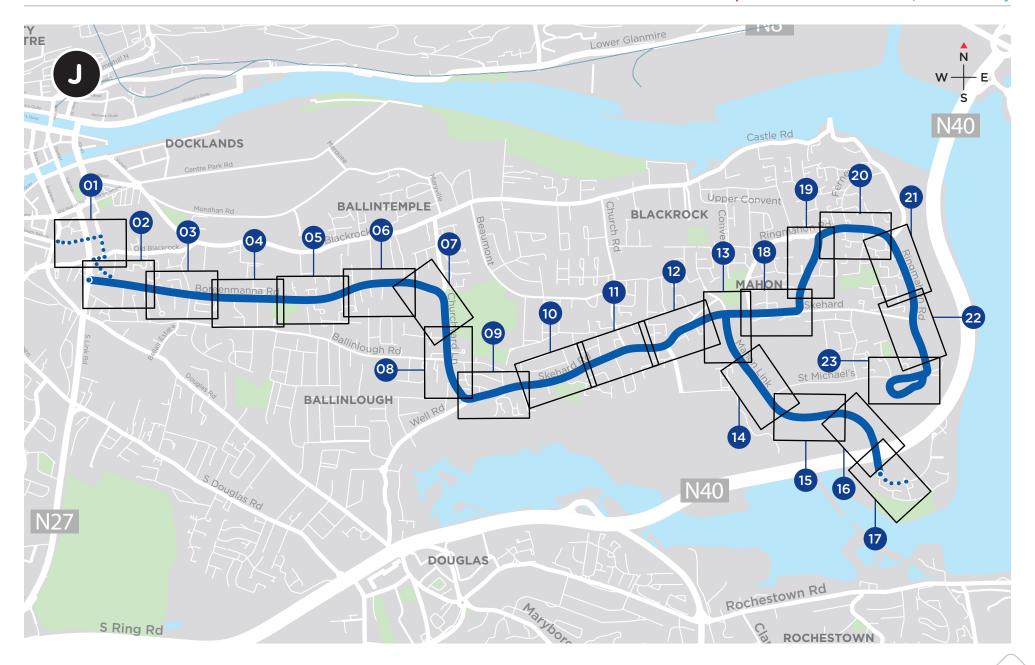
4.6 Key Facts	
Approximate number of properties that may be impacted:	40
Approximate number of on-street parking spaces that may be removed:	216
Approximate number of roadside trees that may be removed:	74
Approximate route length:	8.4km
Approximate cycle route length: Inbound Outbound	11.4km 5.7km 5.7km

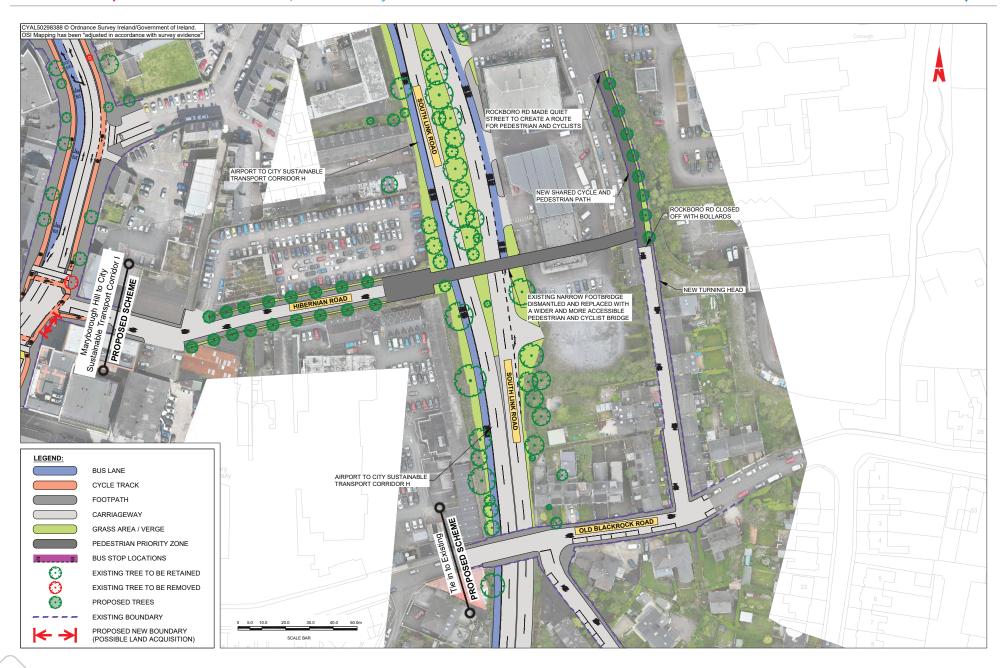
5. Appendices

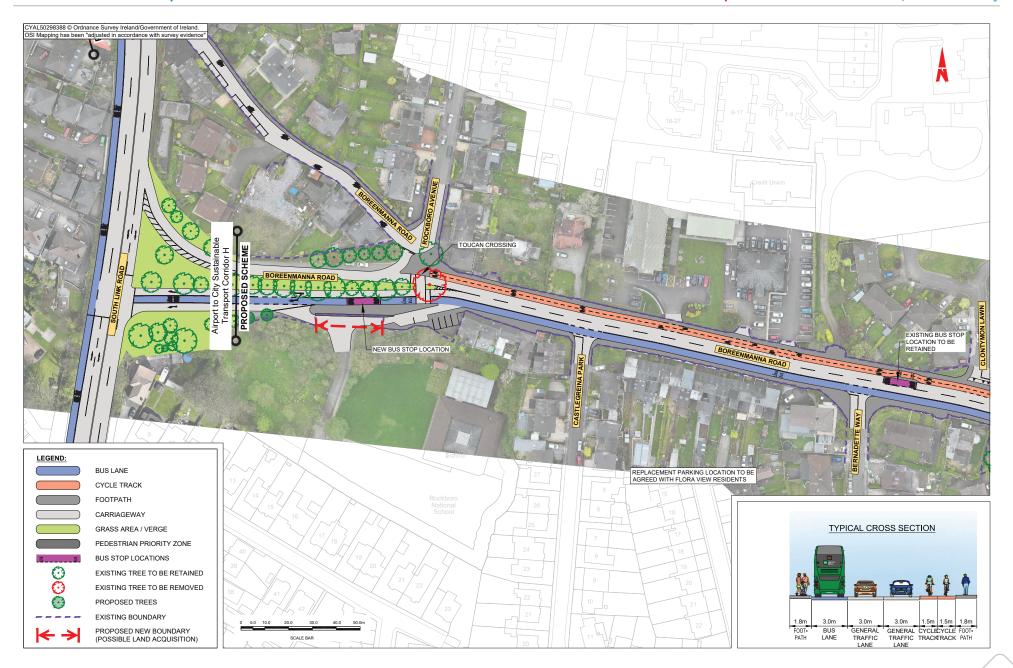
5.1 Index maps

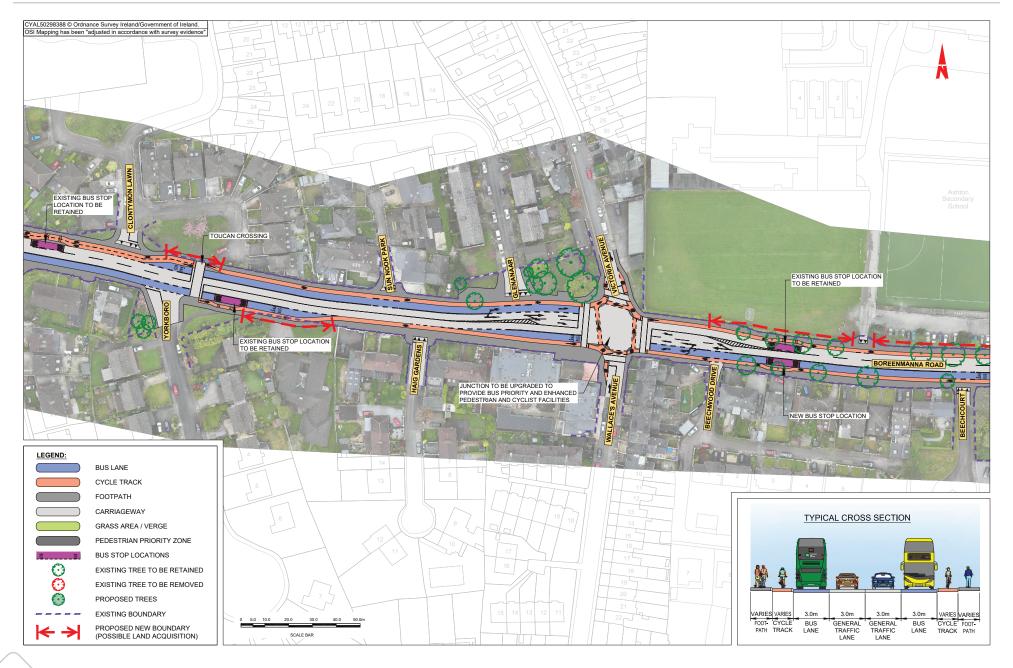
5.2 Route maps









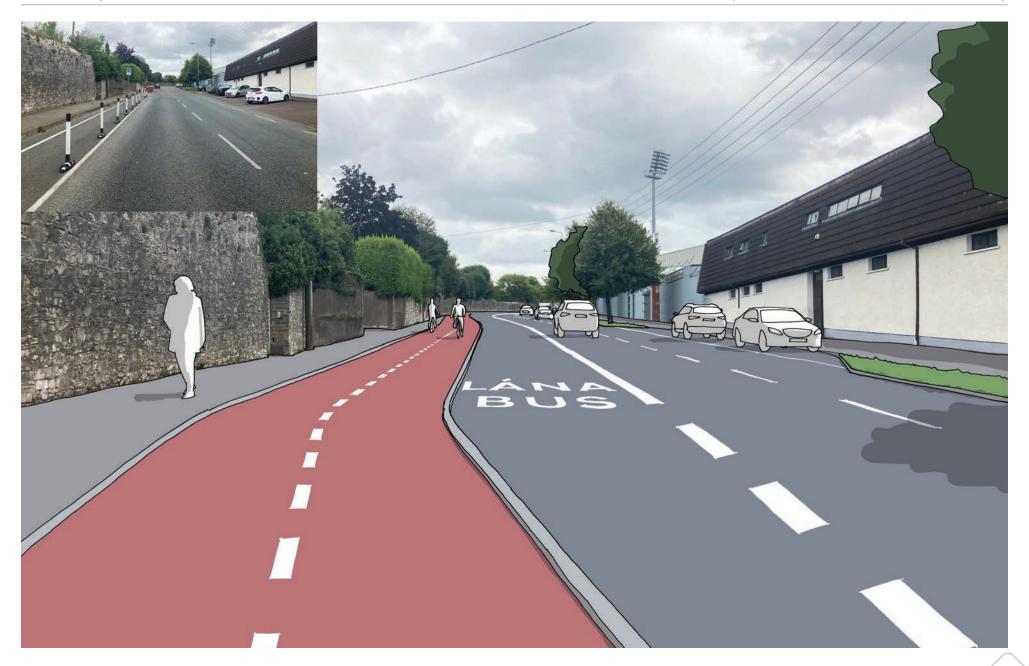


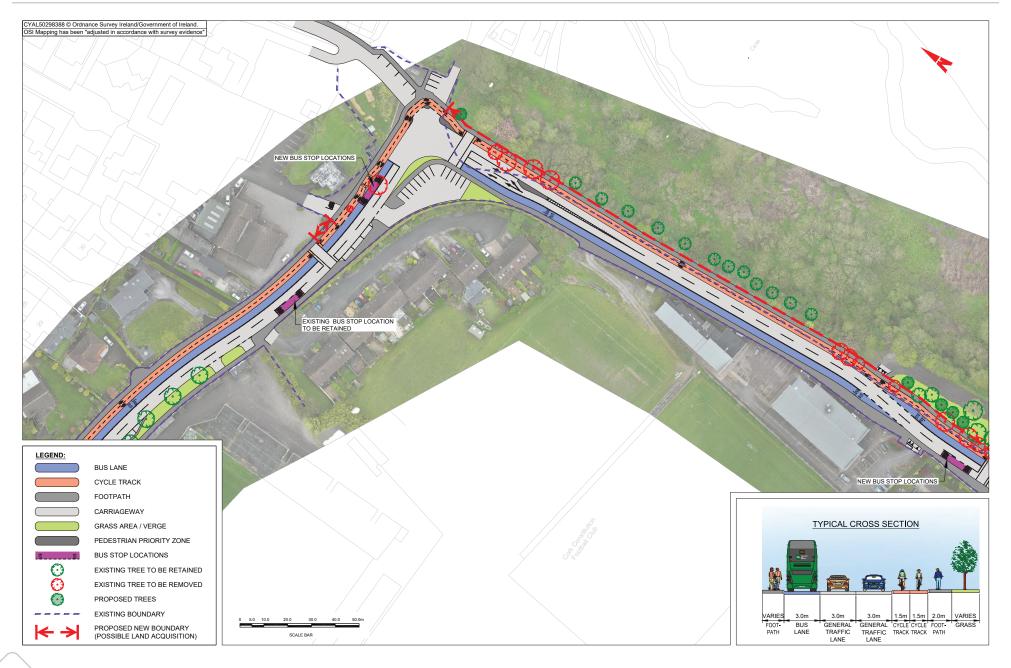


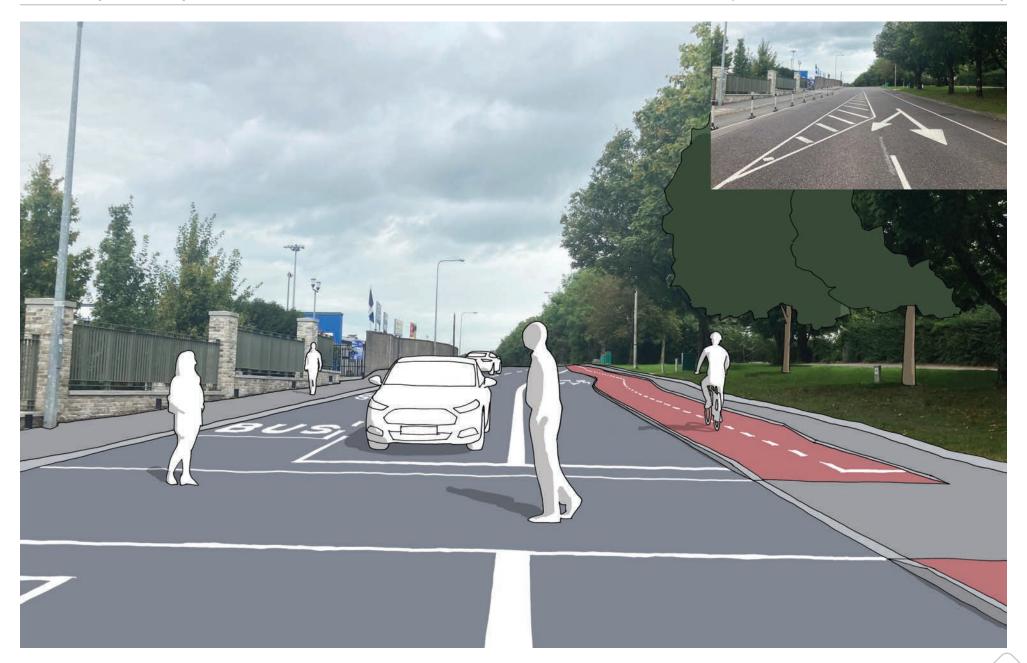


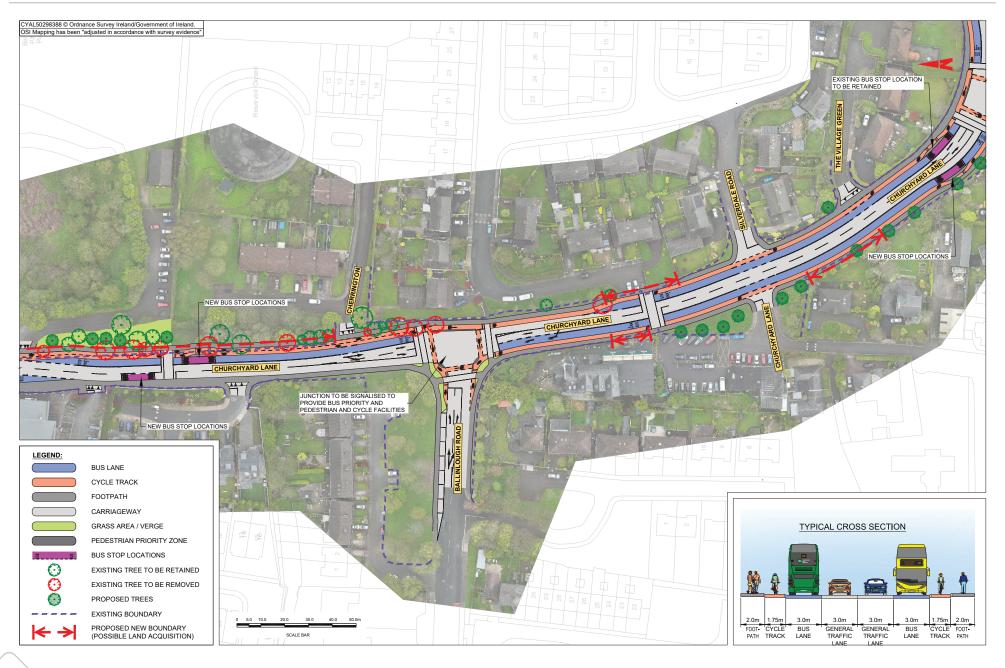


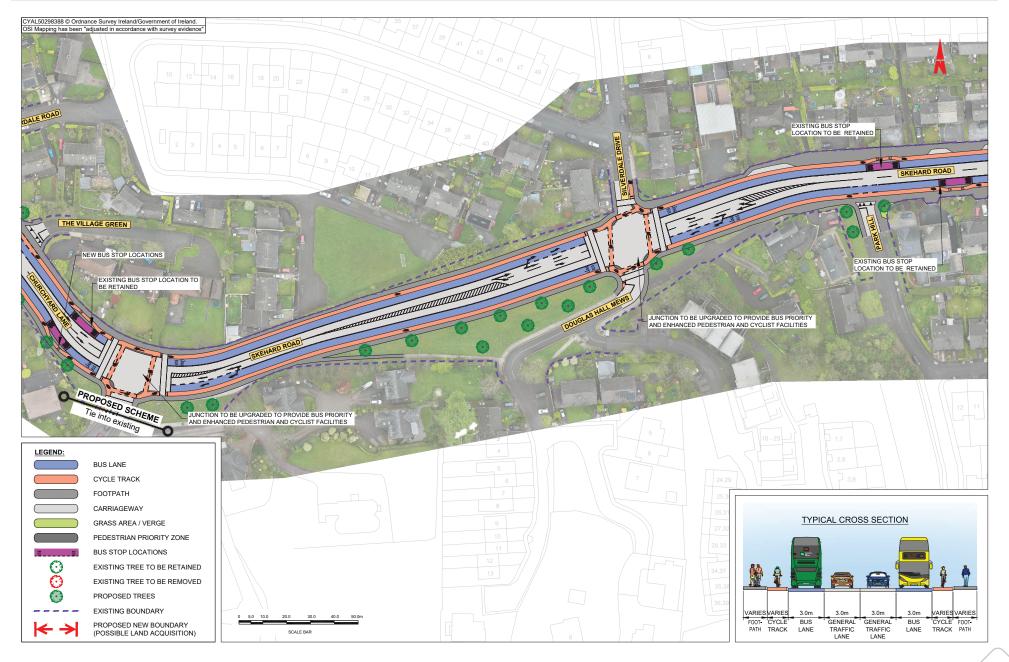




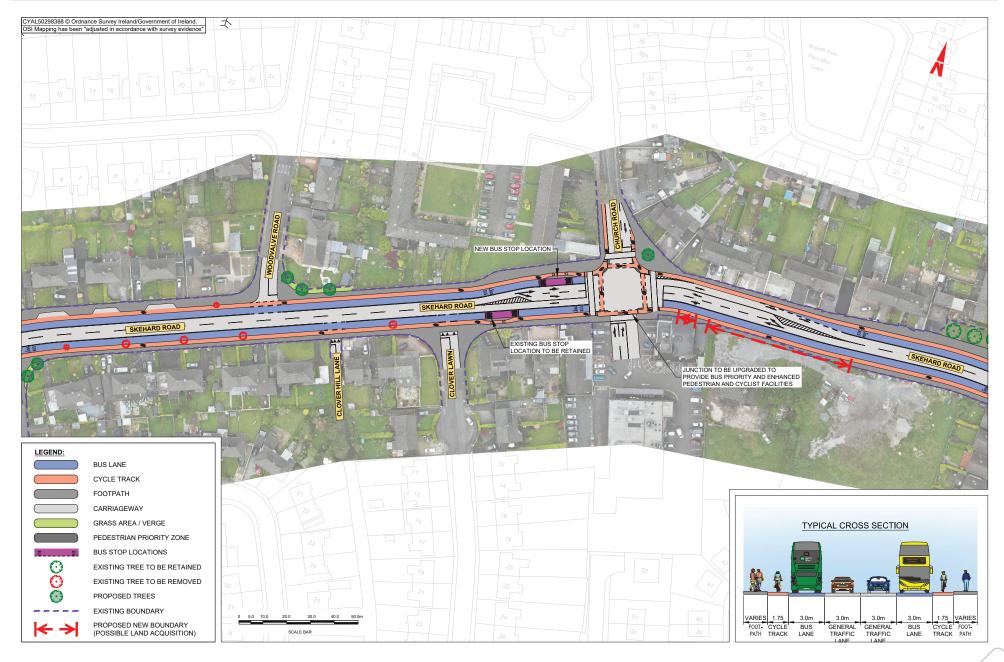


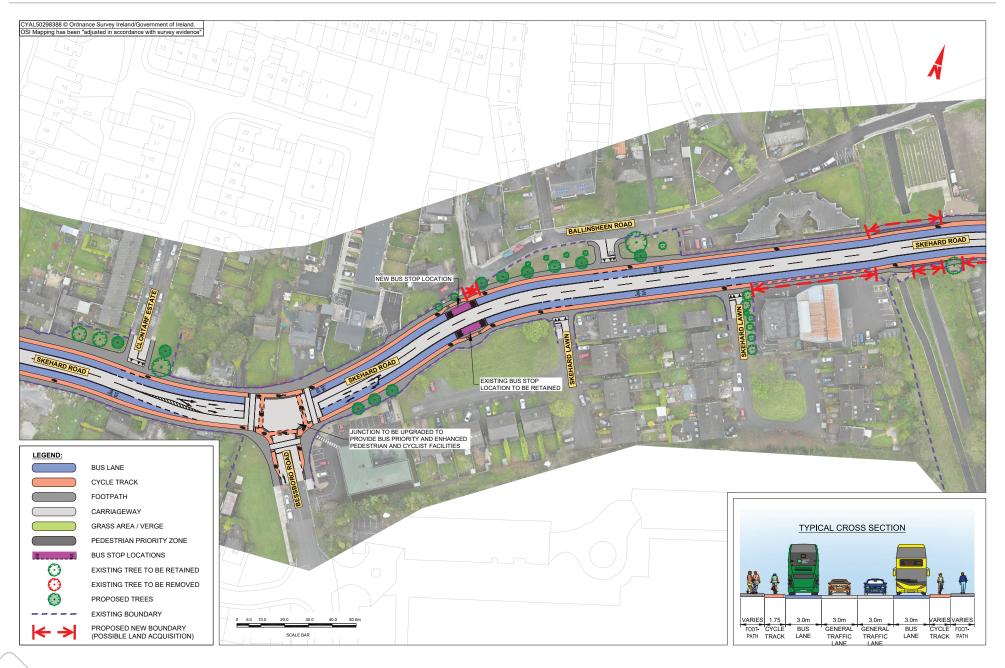


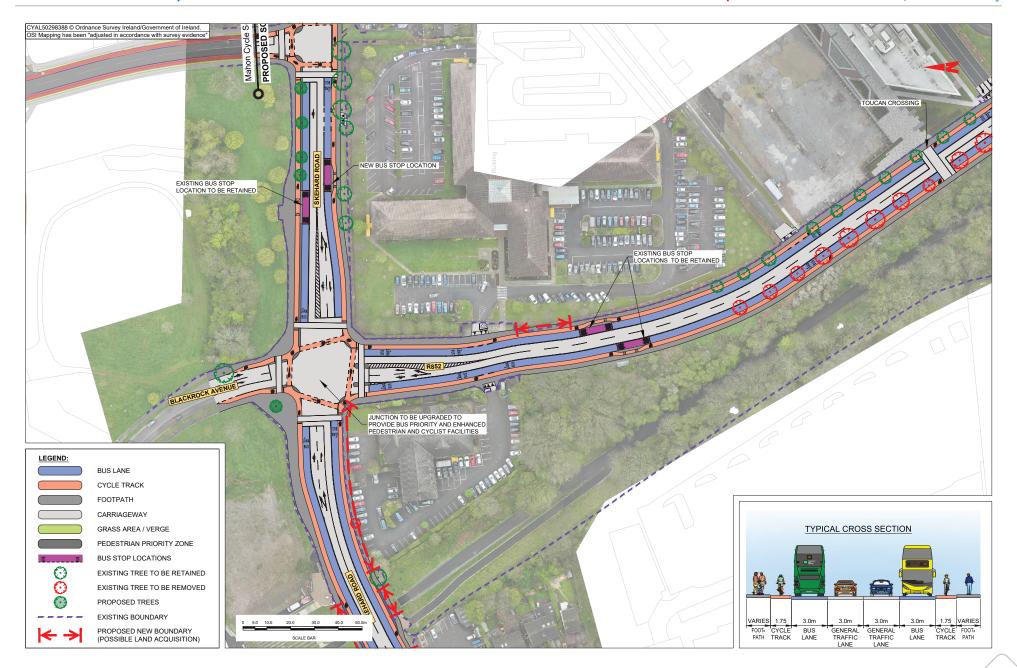


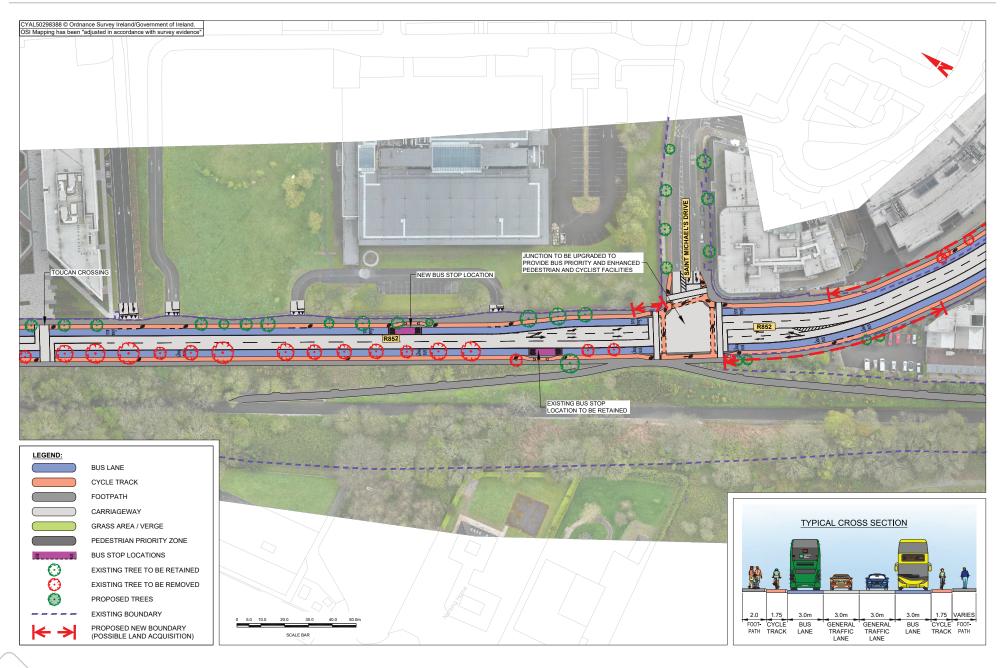


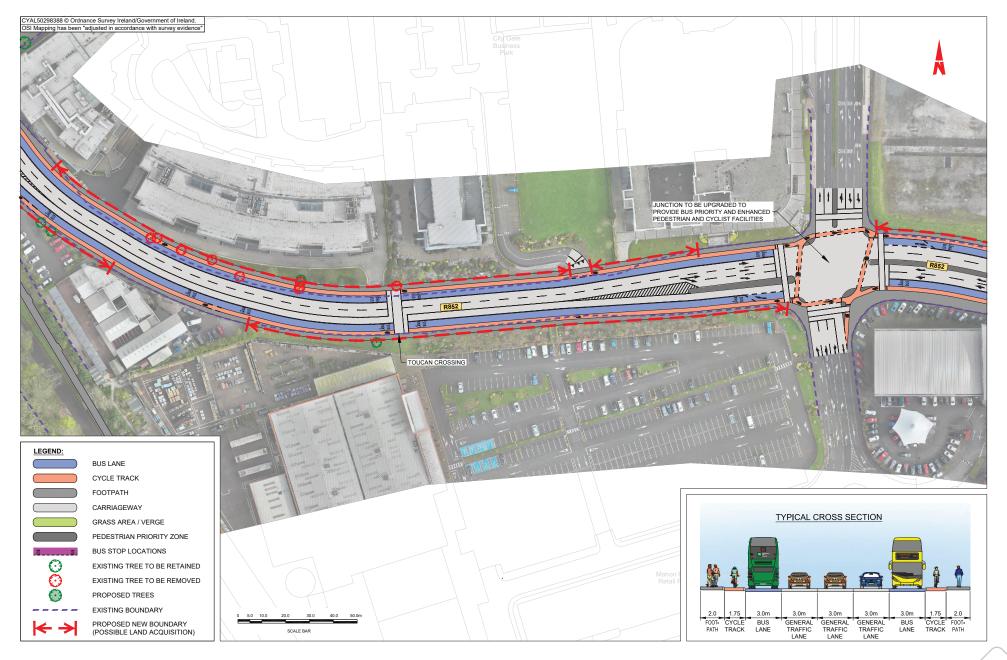


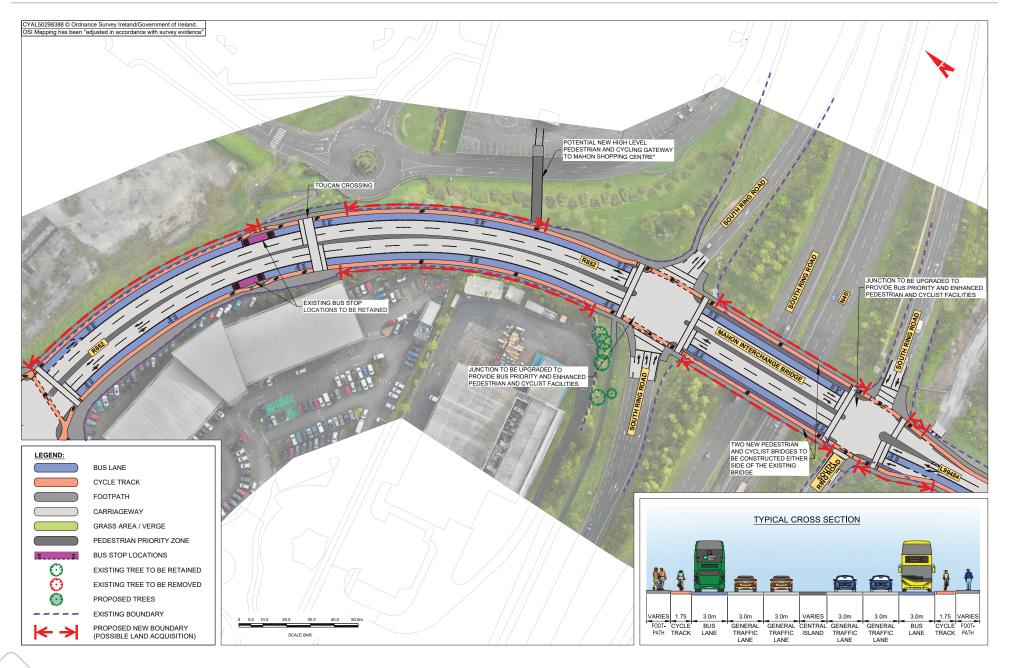


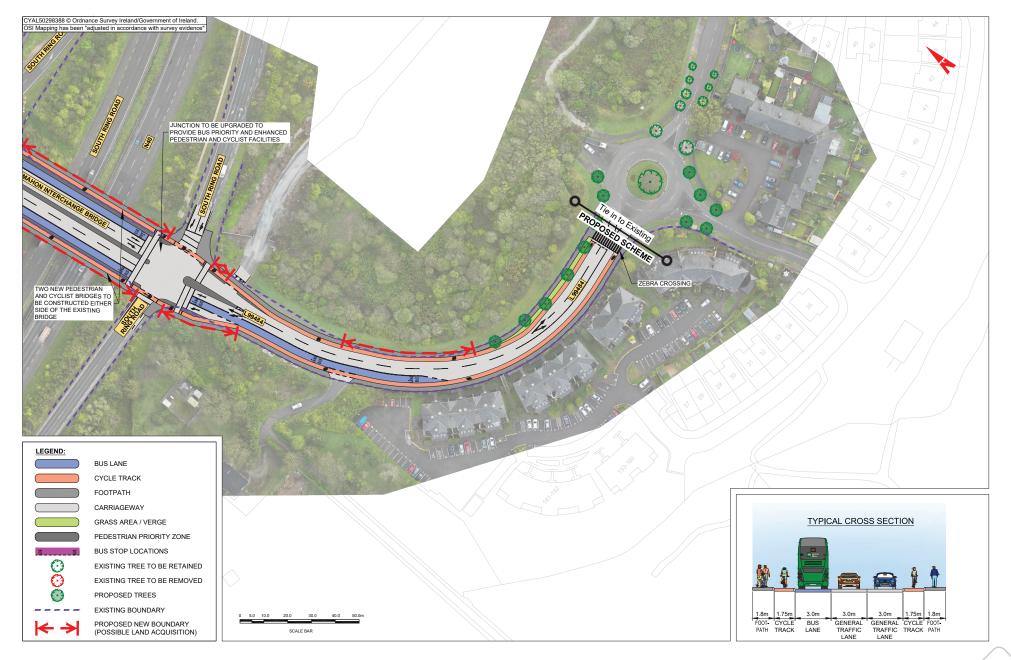


























National Transport Authority Harcourt Lane, Dun Sceine, Dublin 2, D02 WT20.

NTA - Cork Office Suite 427 1 Horgan's Quay, Waterfront Square, Cork **T23 PPT8**



Tionscadal Éirear Project Ireland