



# Mahon to City

## Sustainable Transport Corridor

Public Consultation March 2023

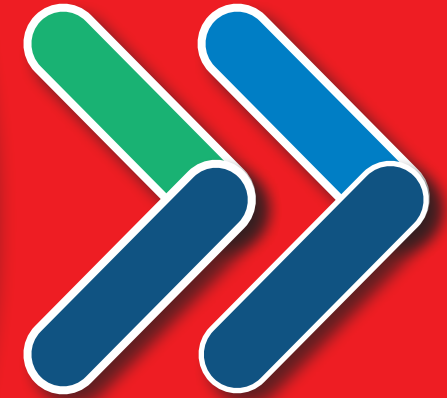


Rialtas  
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of Ireland

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.

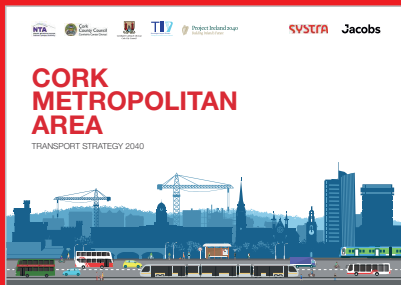
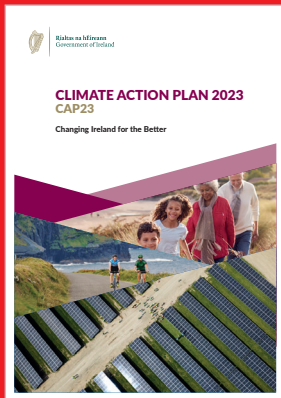
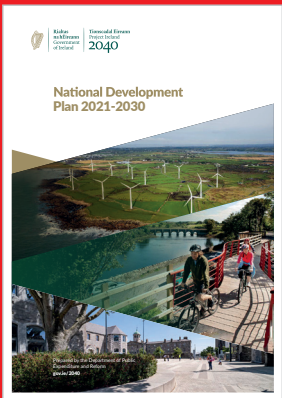
The original brochures detailing each Emerging Preferred Routes, published last year, remain available to view and download on our website [www.busconnects.ie](http://www.busconnects.ie). These brochures contain information on the process for impacted property owners, the project timelines and steps 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.

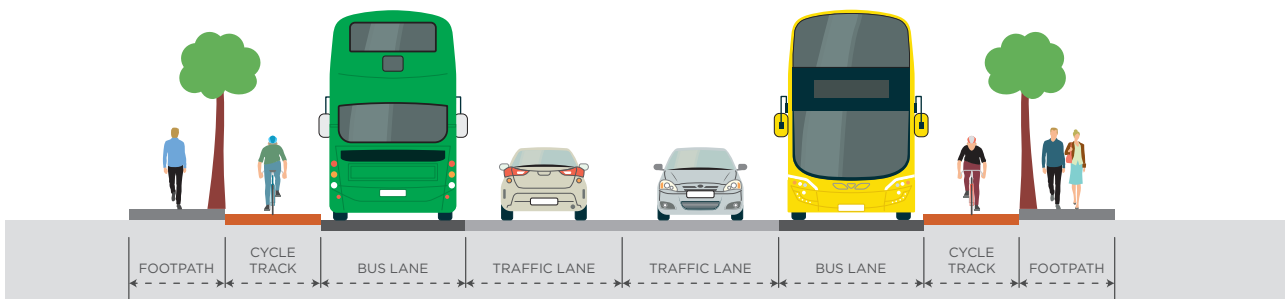
### 4. Preferred Route Option:

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

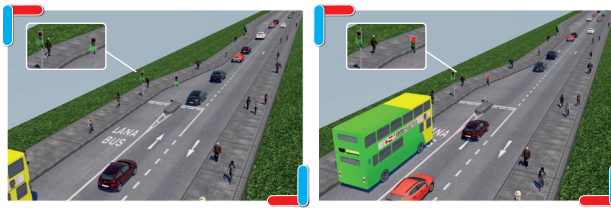




divert away to other roads before they arrive at the bus gate. Further information on how a Bus Gate would work is detailed in Section 1.5.

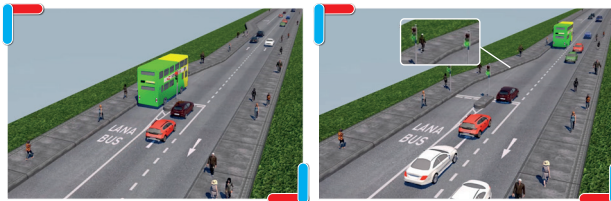
### 6. Signal Controlled Priority:

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

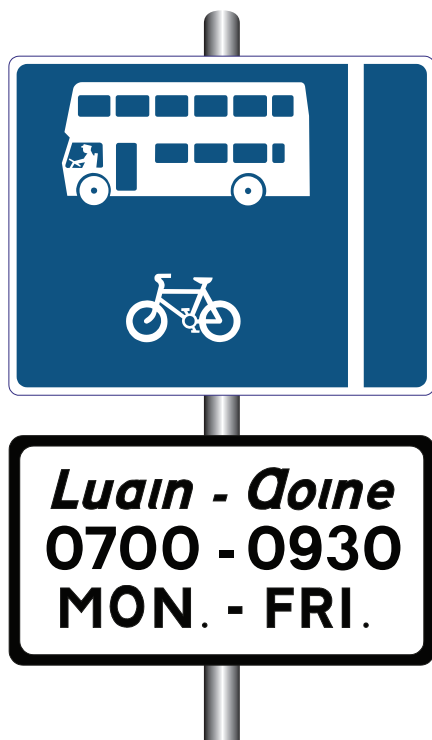
the general traffic without the need to construct segregated cycle tracks or painted cycle lanes. The Quiet Street treatment would involve appropriate advisory signage for both general road users and cyclists.

### 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.

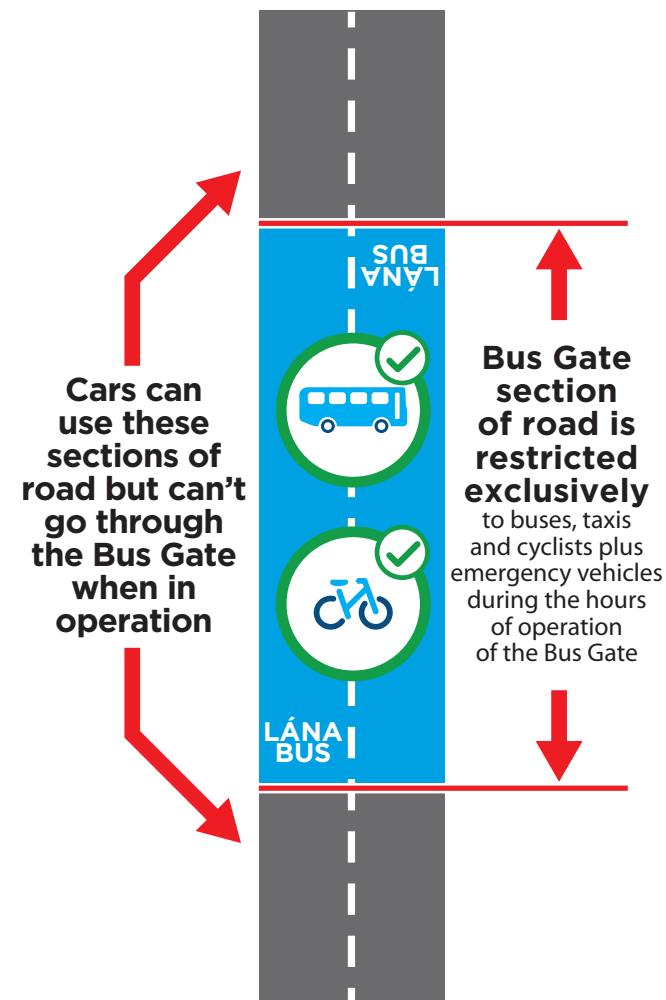
As part of the BusConnects Cork project, one and two-way Bus Gates are currently being considered at various locations along the proposed Sustainable Transport Corridors.

### 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.

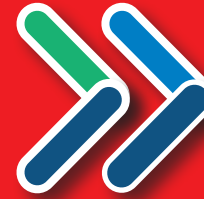
## **What happens if I am driving towards a Bus Gate during the hours of operation?**

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.



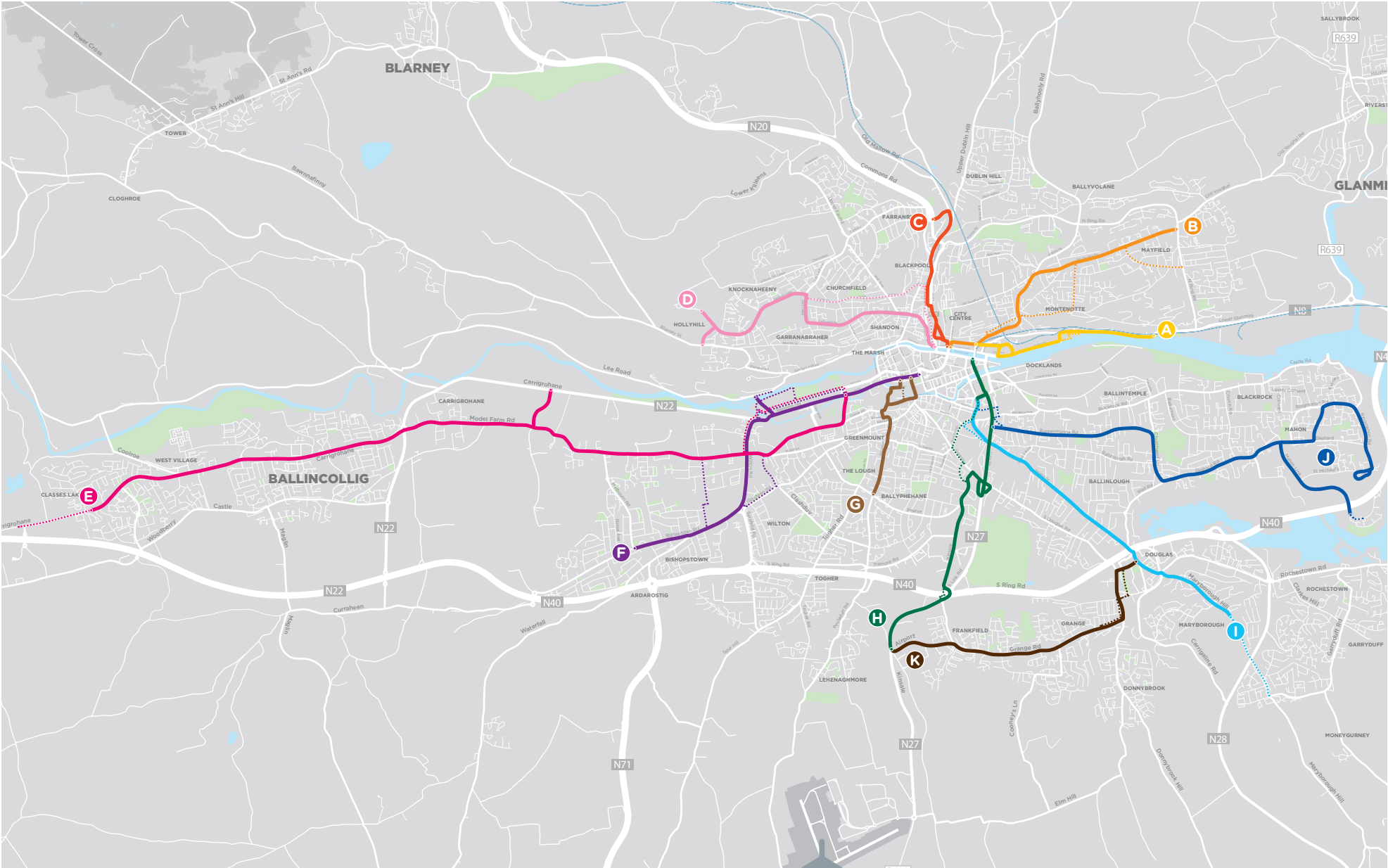
## 1.6 Sustainable Transport Corridors

- 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 Mahon to City 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, to continue into the city centre.

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





## 2.2 Route Description

### 2.2.1 Jacob's Island to 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 likely to be required in places to achieve this.

To facilitate these sustainable transport improvements, it is proposed that 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.





## 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 Road	Continuous segregated cycle tracks on both sides of the road.
Loughmahon 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 Road Junction	Junction upgraded to provide bus priority and prioritising pedestrian and cycle friendly design.

## 2.2.2 Mahon Point to 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	<p>A traffic calmed environment will provide a safer and more attractive environment for pedestrians and cyclists.</p> <p>Opportunity for improvement works such as placemaking, landscaping, and mobility improvements.</p> <p>Two new bus stops.</p>

### 2.2.3 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

Boreenmanna Road there is a bus lane in the inbound direction only. Between 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 160m east of the junction with Victoria Avenue, where both inbound and outbound bus lanes are provided. 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 Ballintemple National School. From the national school 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 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.

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

- Lands of private property on Boreenmanna Road

- Lands of private property on Churchyard Lane
- 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.

## 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.

## 2.3 Key changes from the Published EPR

- On Churchyard Lane and Boreenmanna Road there is now generally a bus lane proposed in one direction only. As a consequence the impacts on private properties and roadside trees have been reduced.
- Some additional on-street parking spaces have been retained. New off-street parking spaces are proposed close to Ballinlough Pitch and Putt and also near the entrance to Rockboro Primary School.
- The bus gates will only be active during peak hours. Outside of these hours cars can use Avenue de Rennes in both directions as normal.

## 2.4 Key Facts

Approximate number of properties that may be impacted:	<b>34</b>
Approximate number of on-street parking spaces that may be removed:	<b>216</b>
Approximate number of roadside trees that may be removed:	<b>56</b>
Approximate route length:	<b>8.4km</b>
Approximate length of cycle route: <i>Inbound - (5.7km)</i> <i>Outbound - (5.7km)</i>	<b>11.4km</b>

## 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](http://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](mailto: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**

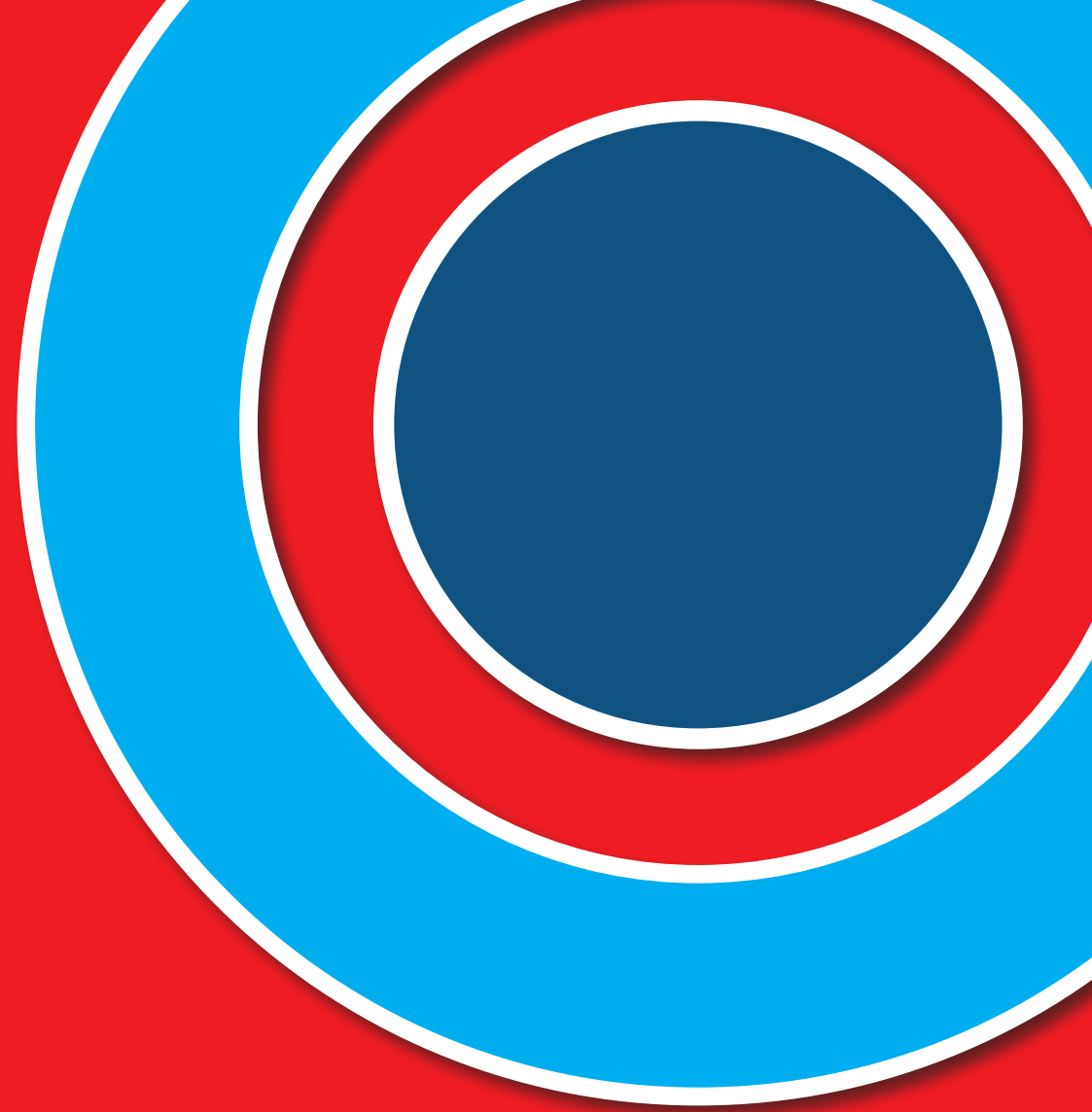
- Submission of Applications to An Bord Pleanála to approve the Proposed Scheme and to confirm the associated CPO
- Statutory Consultation in accordance with the legislative requirements
- An Bord Pleanála deliberations including an Oral Hearing where required
- An Bord Pleanála may:
  1. Approve the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

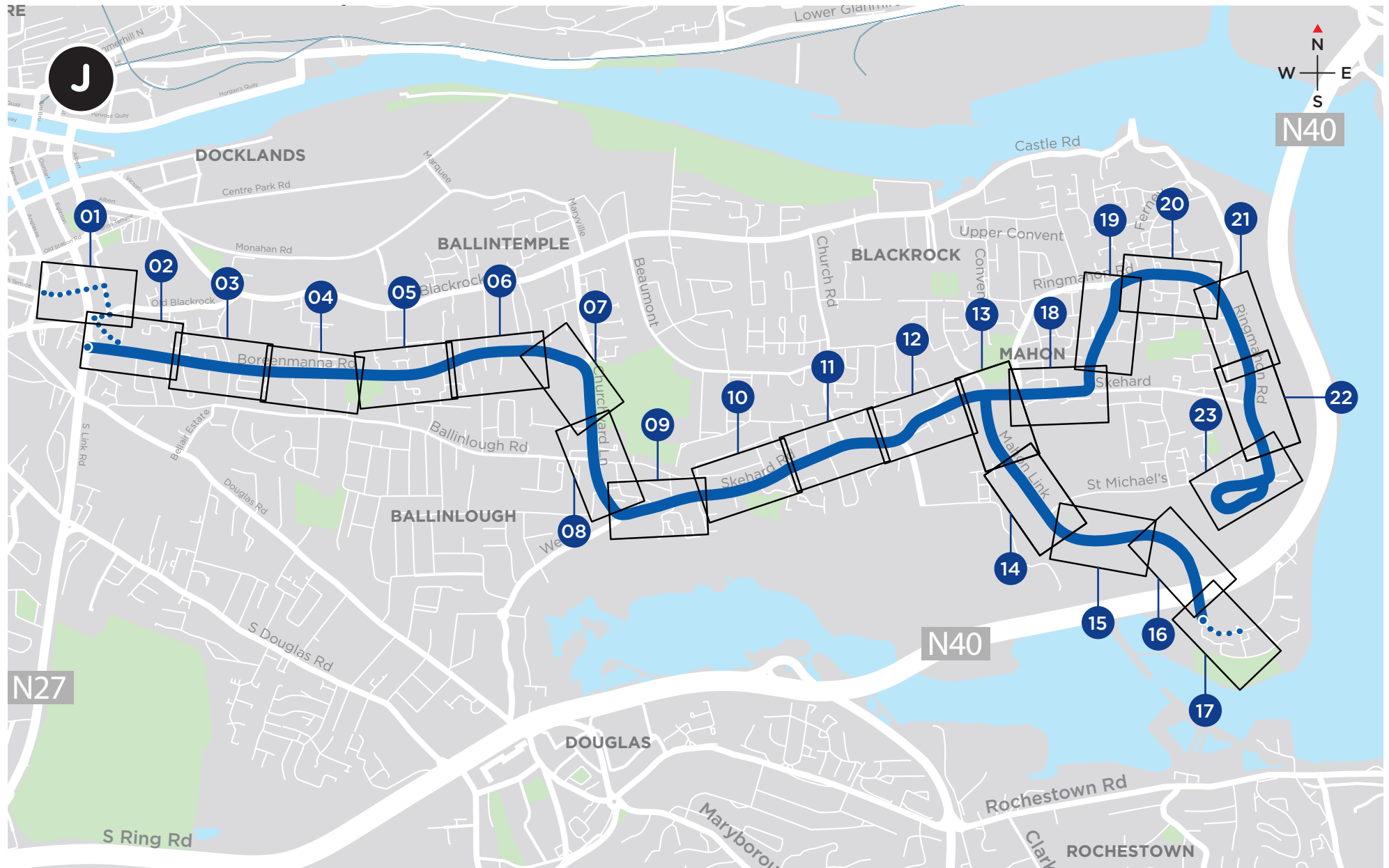


## 4. Appendices

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4.1 Index maps

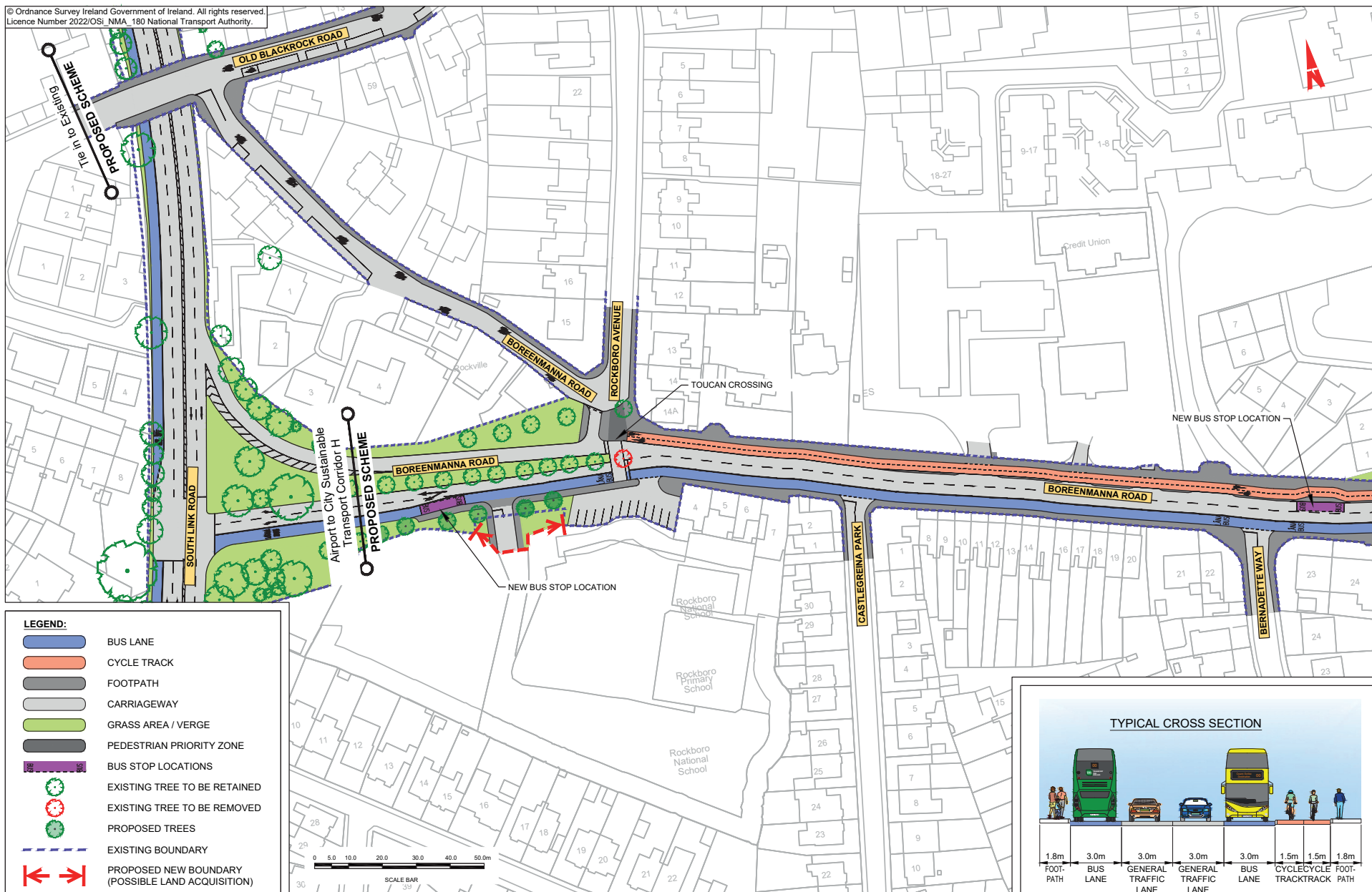
4.2 Route maps



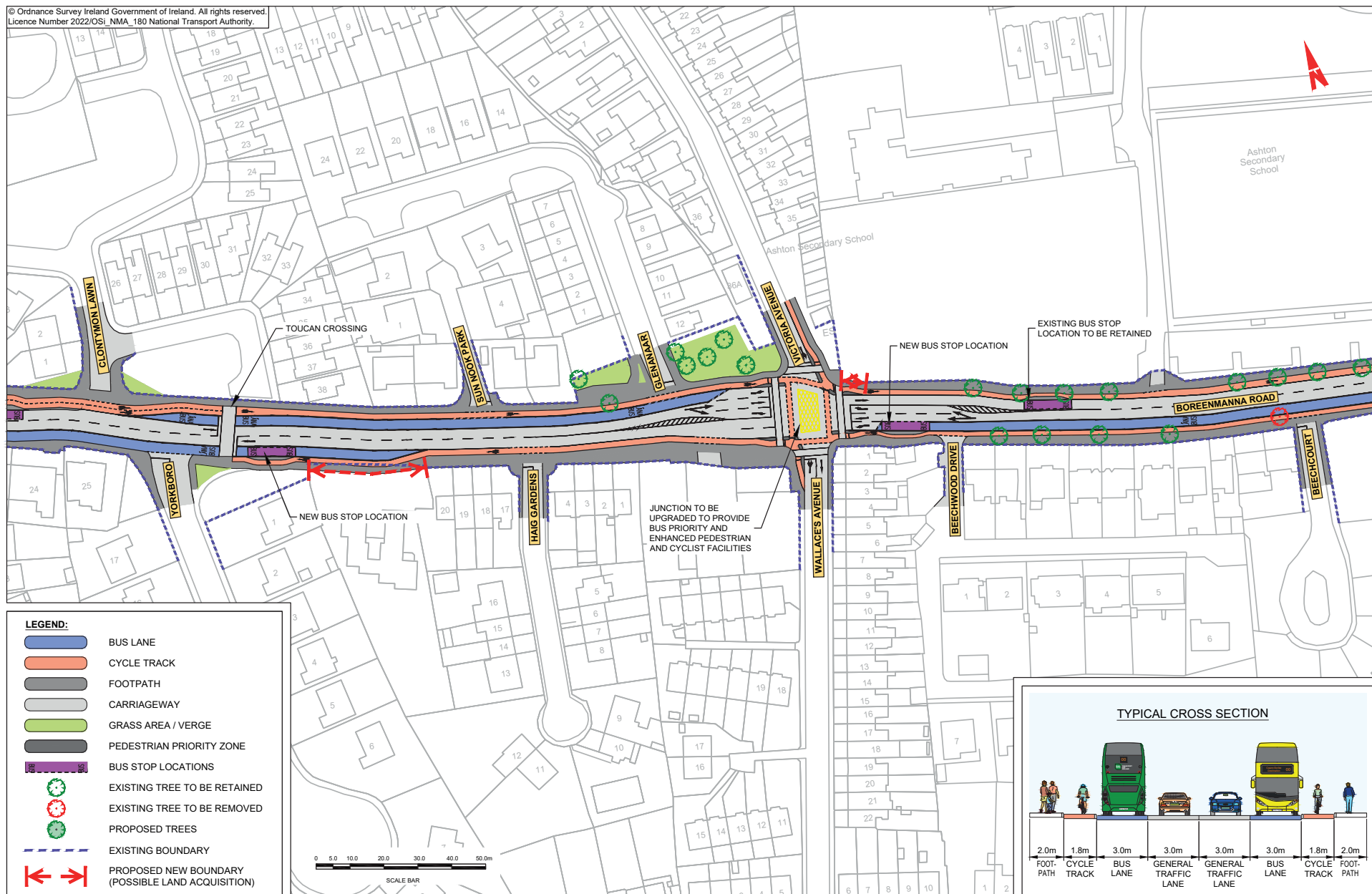
NOTE: The Emerging Preferred Route shown on the following drawings is indicative only and is subject to change following consultation and as part of the design development process.

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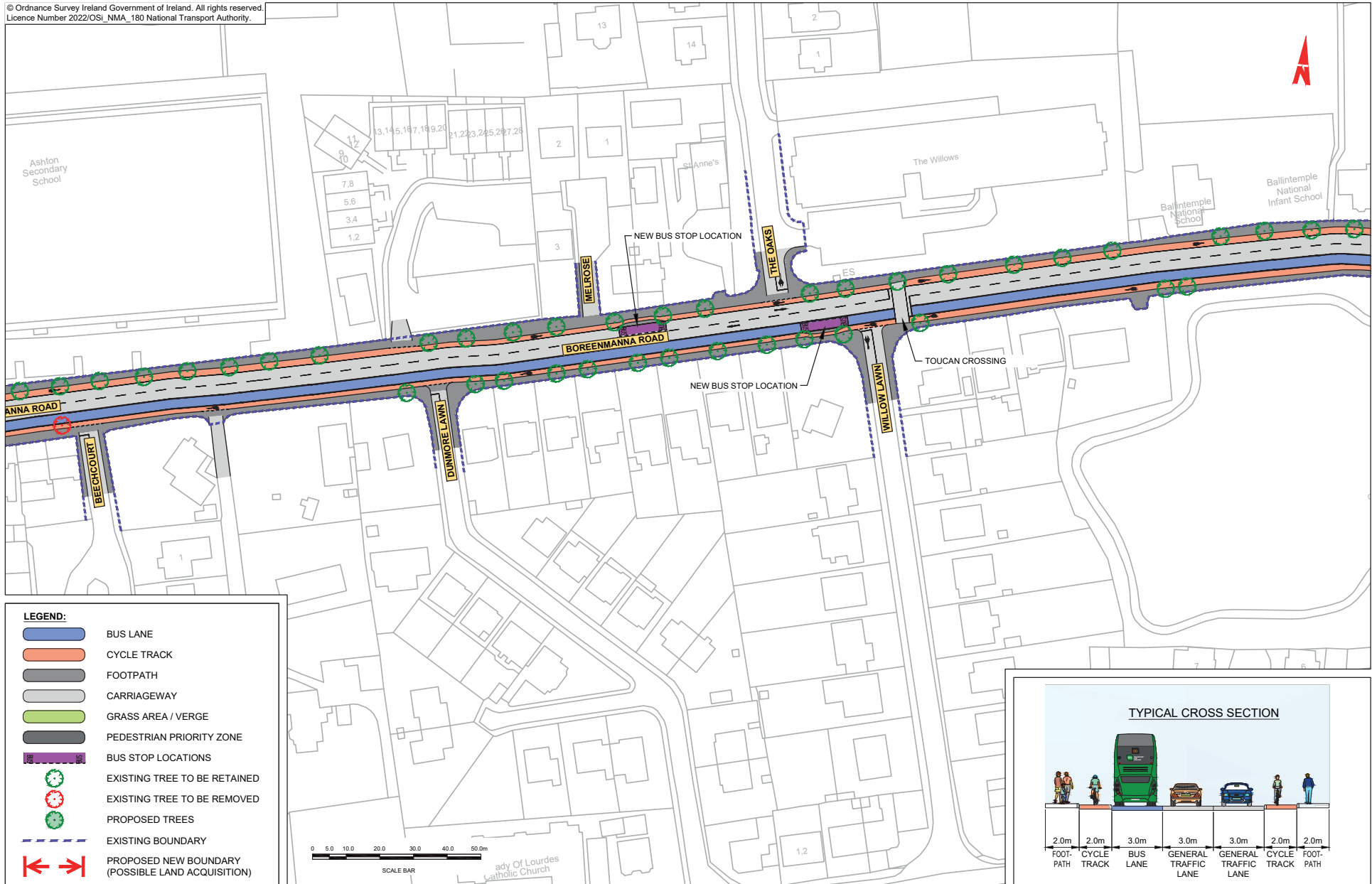




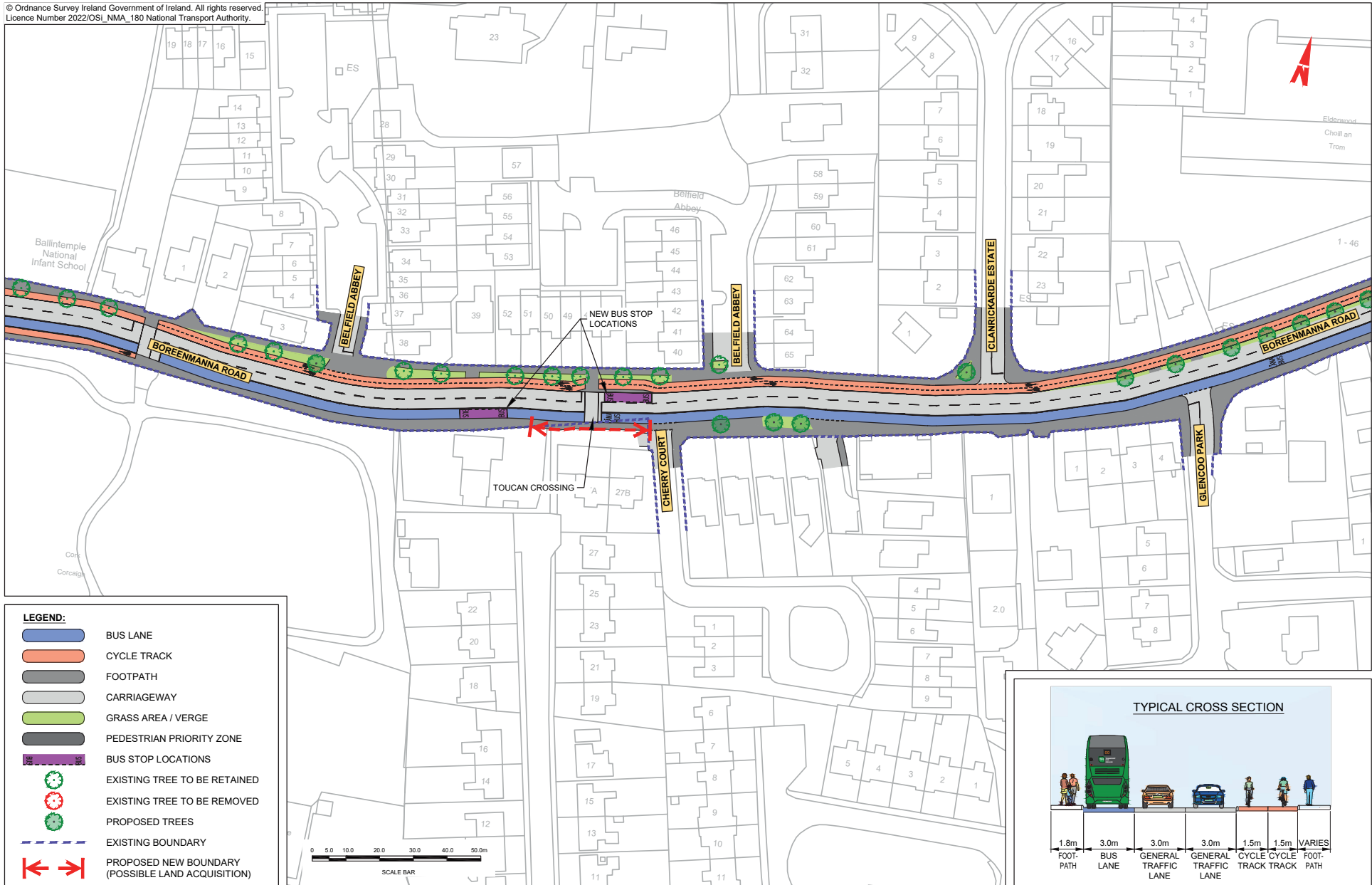
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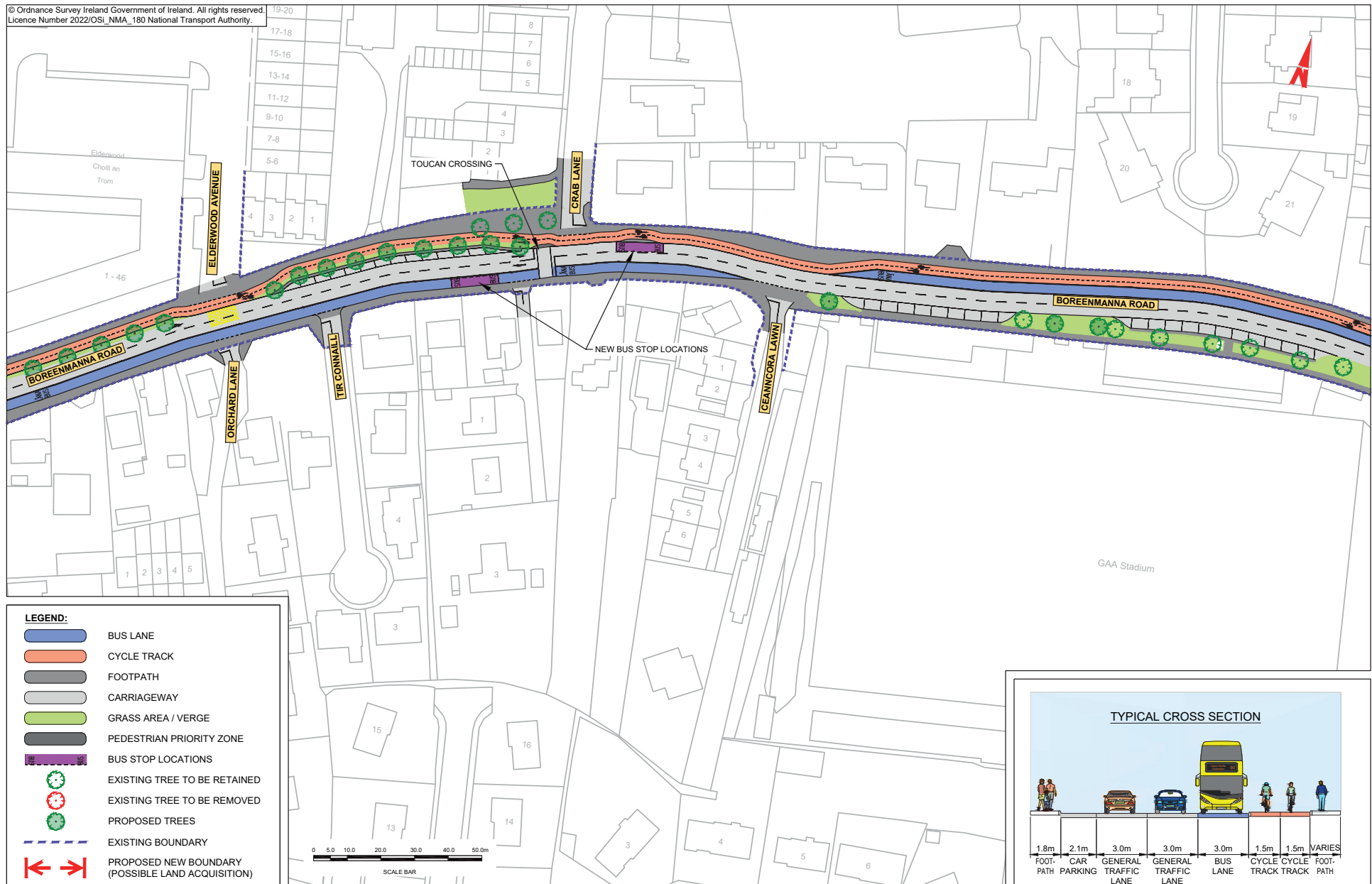
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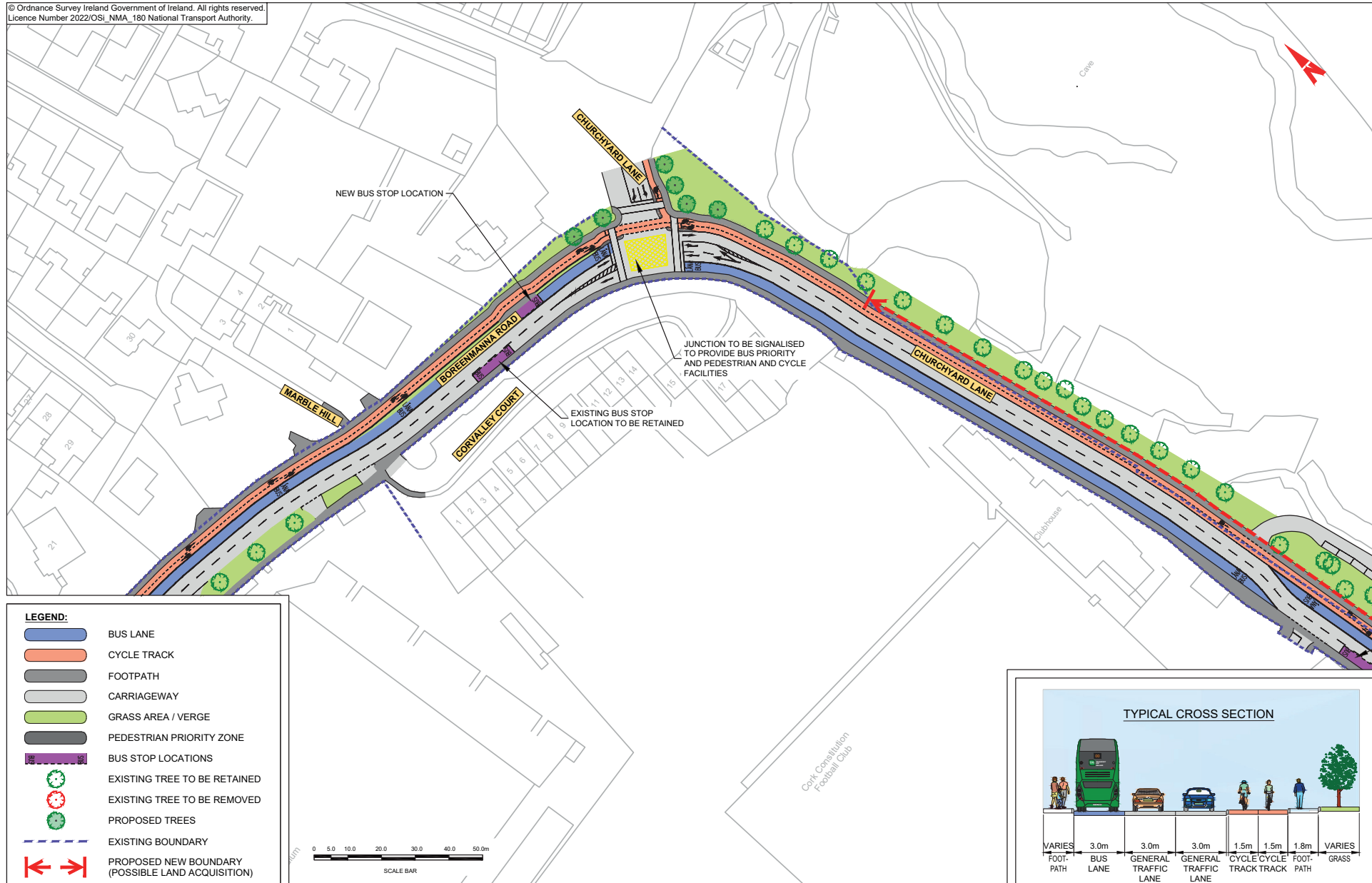
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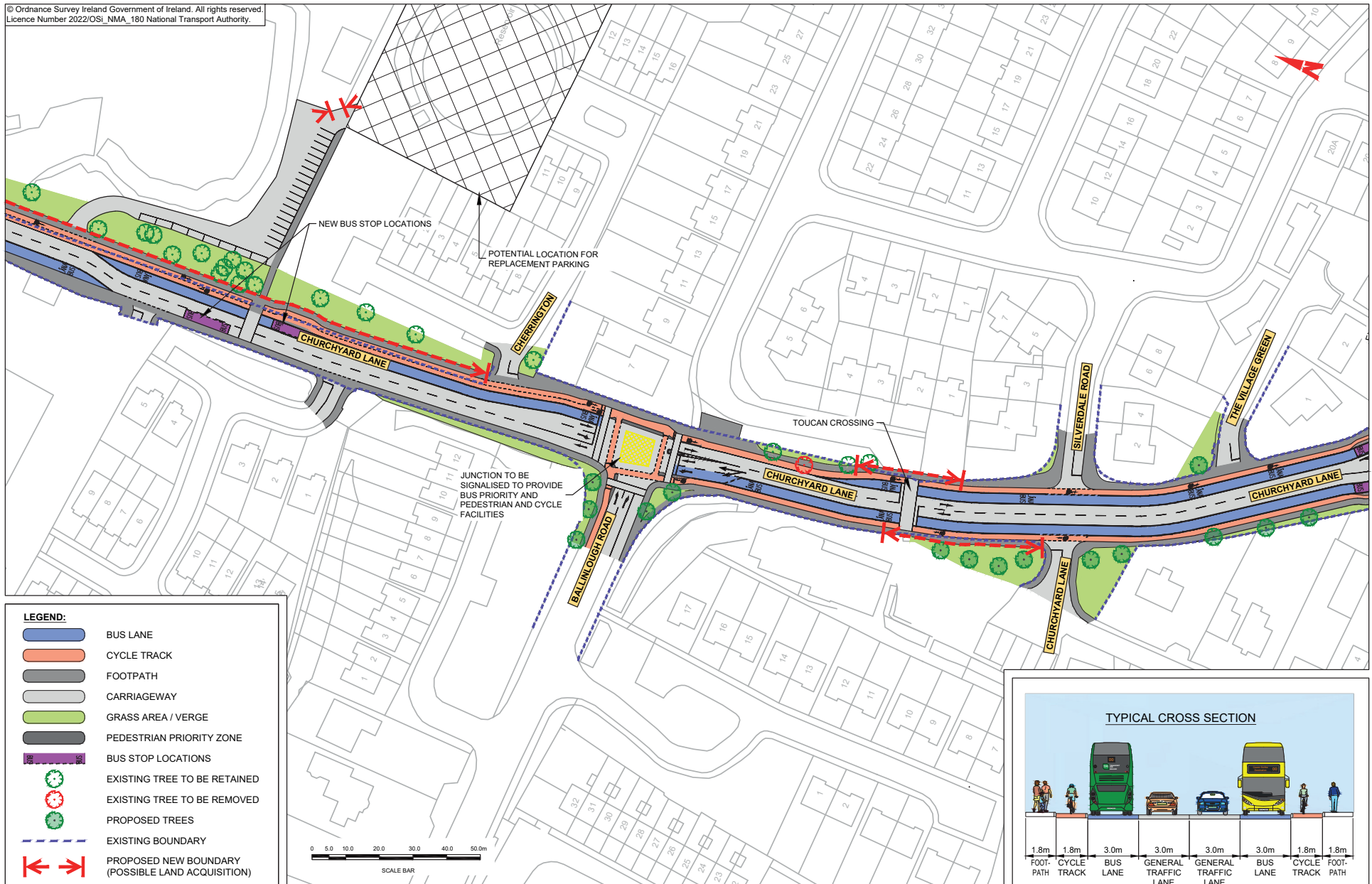


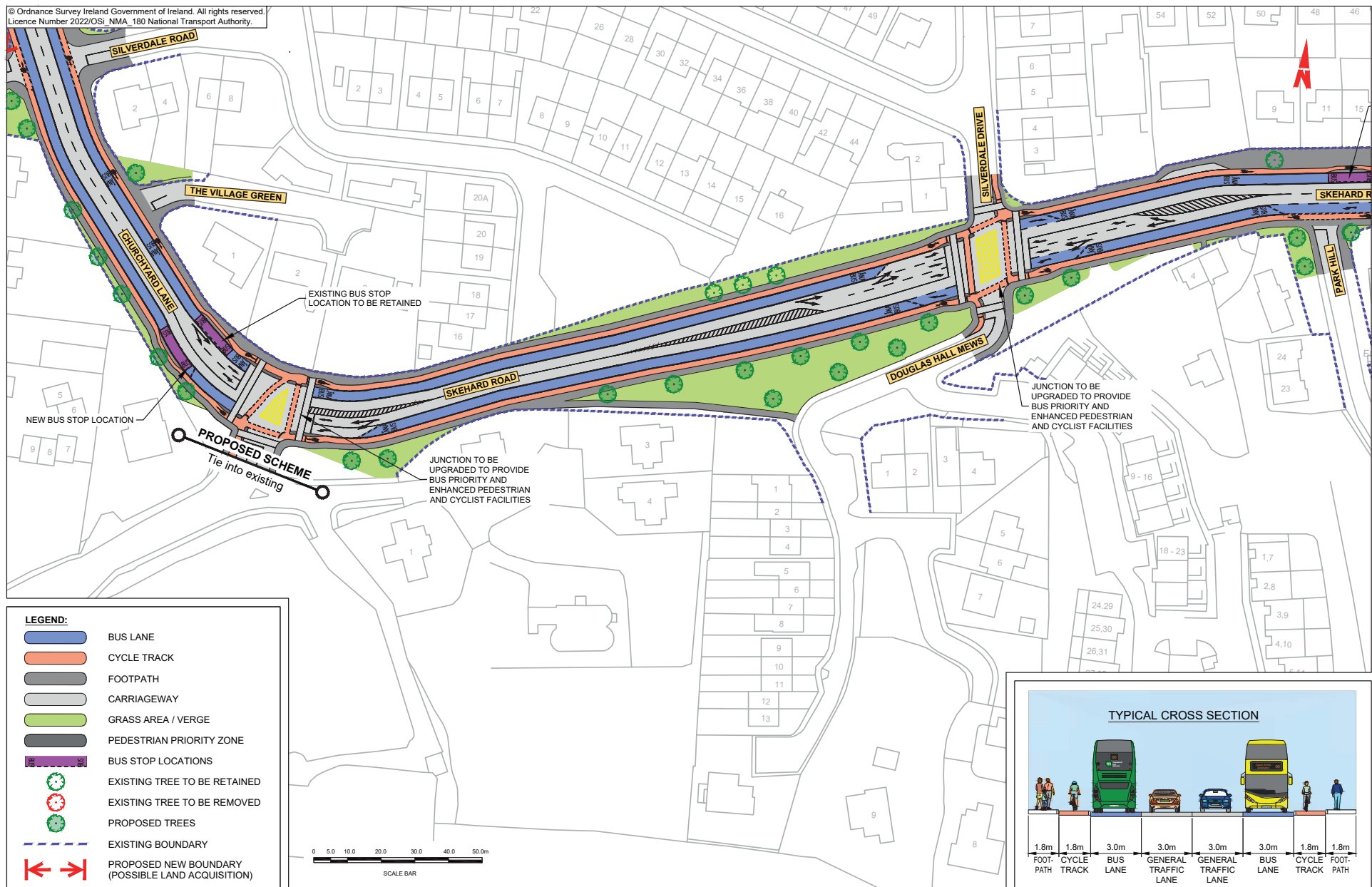




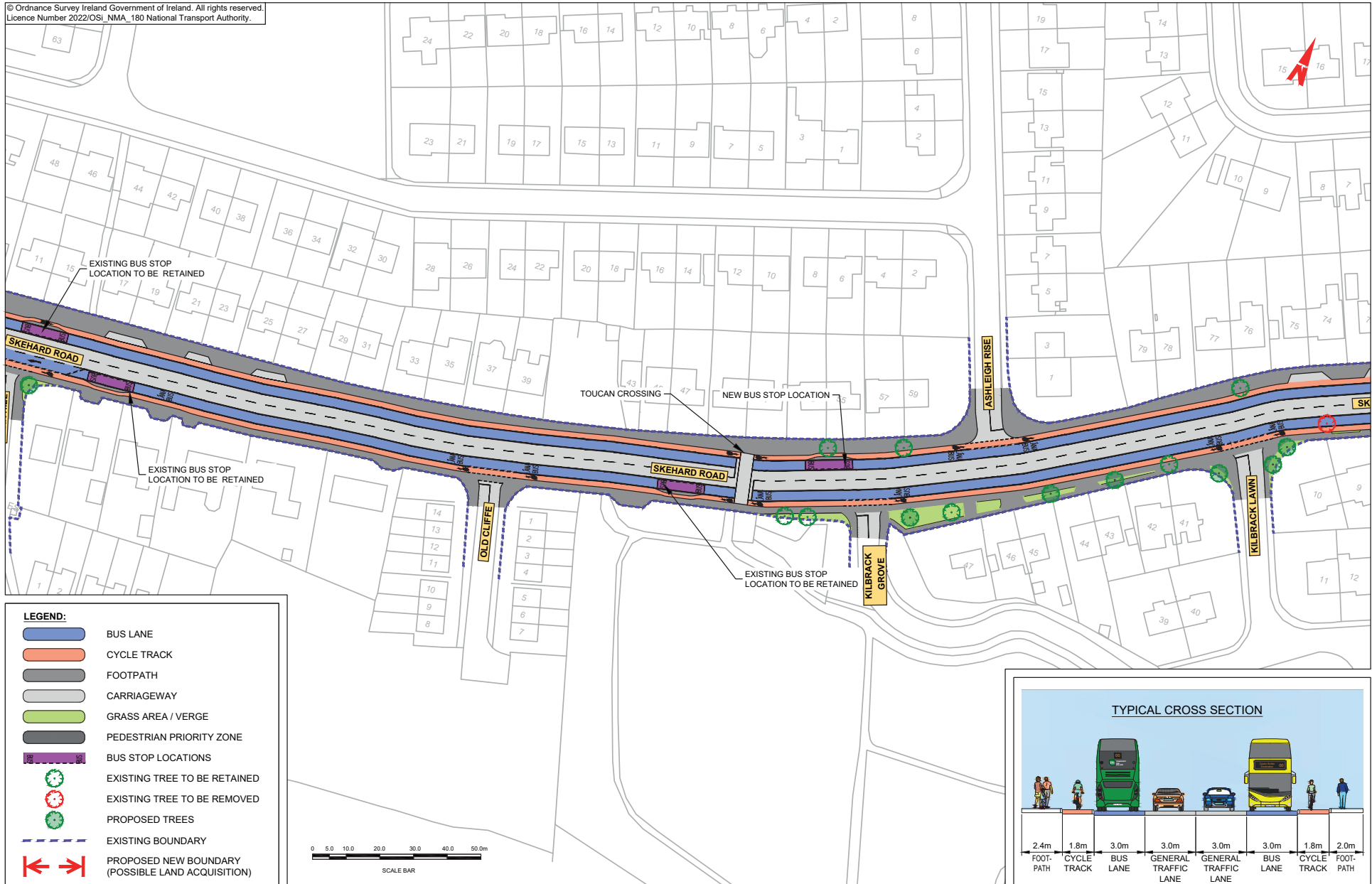
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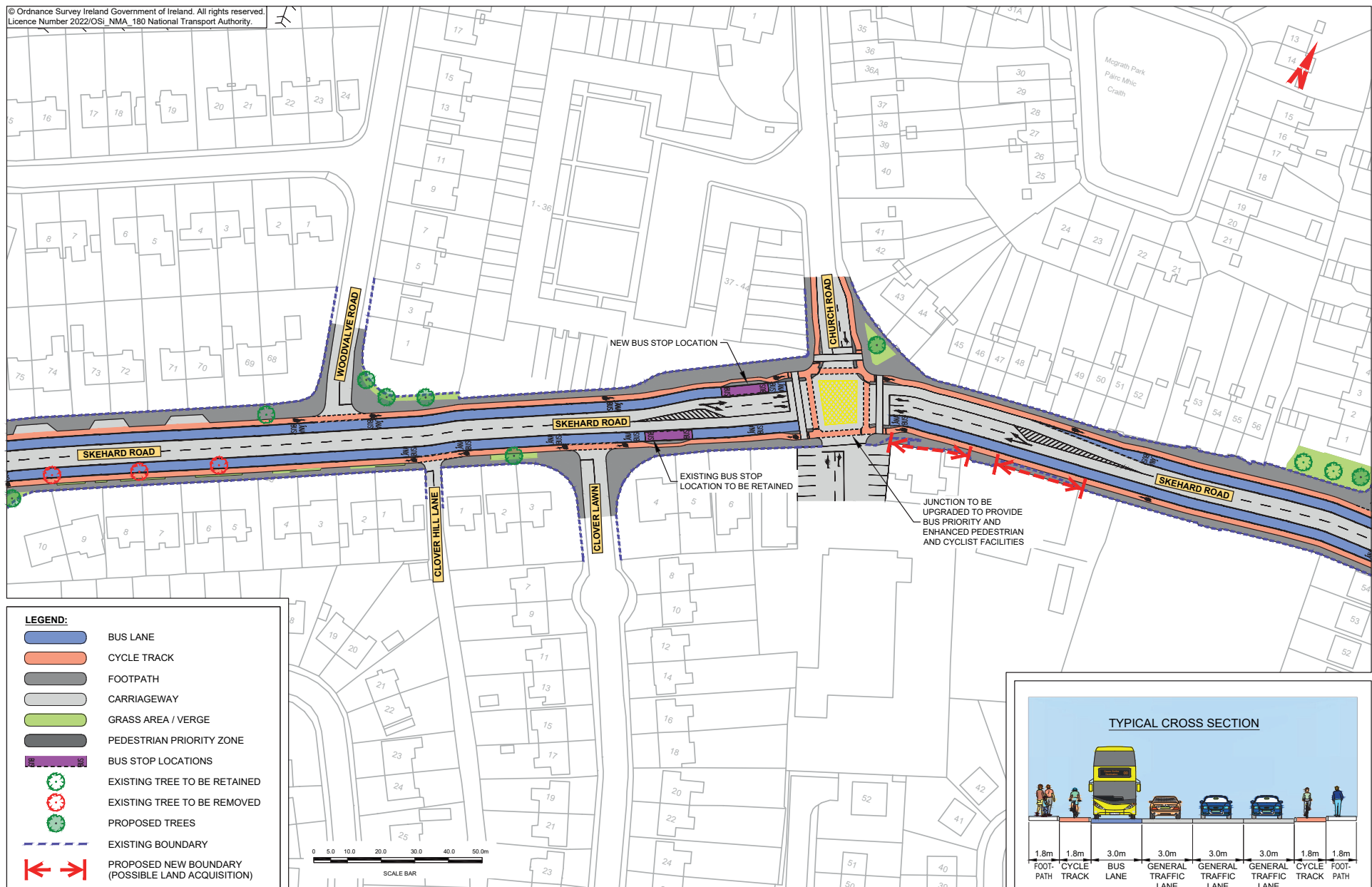


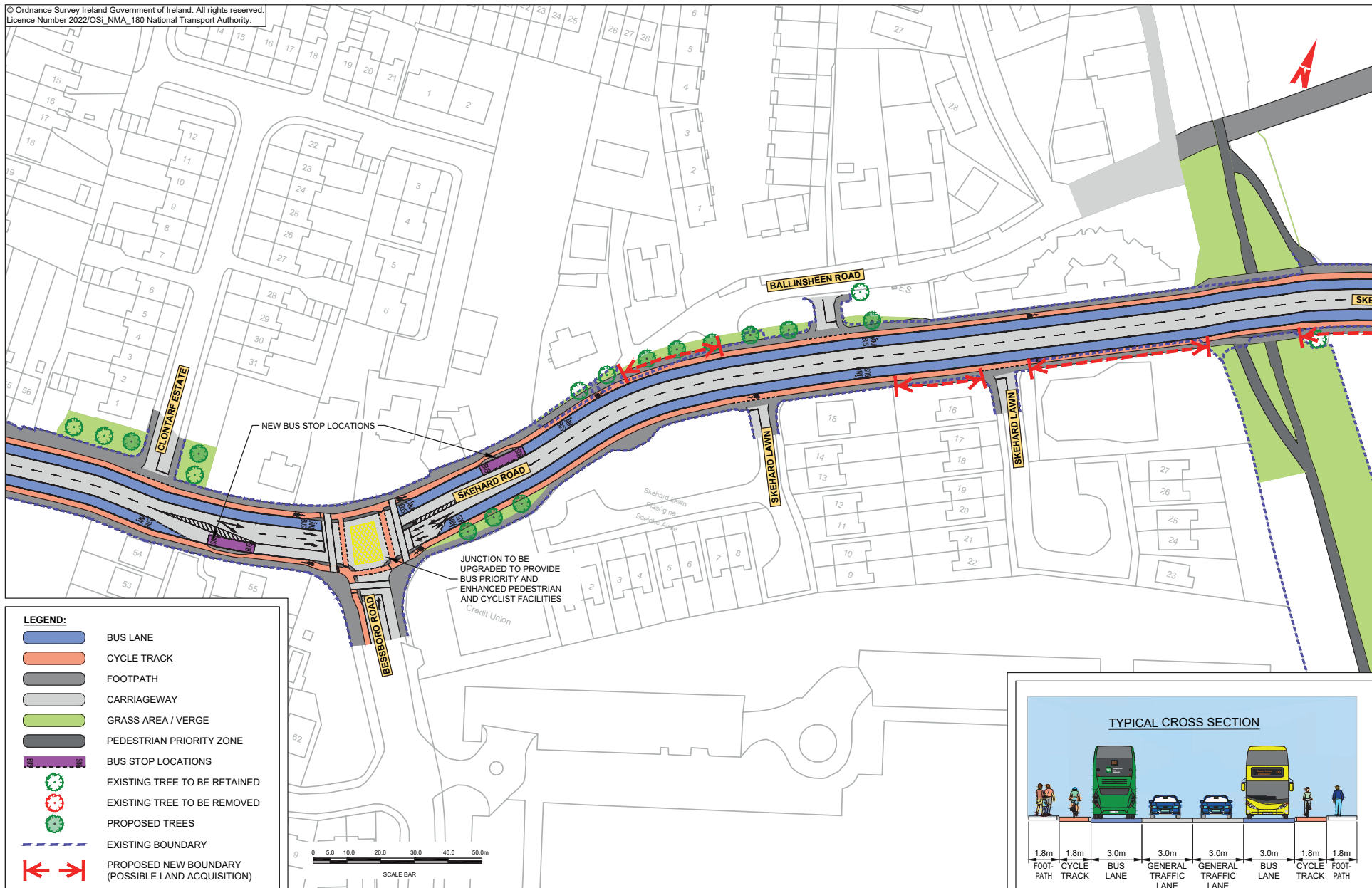




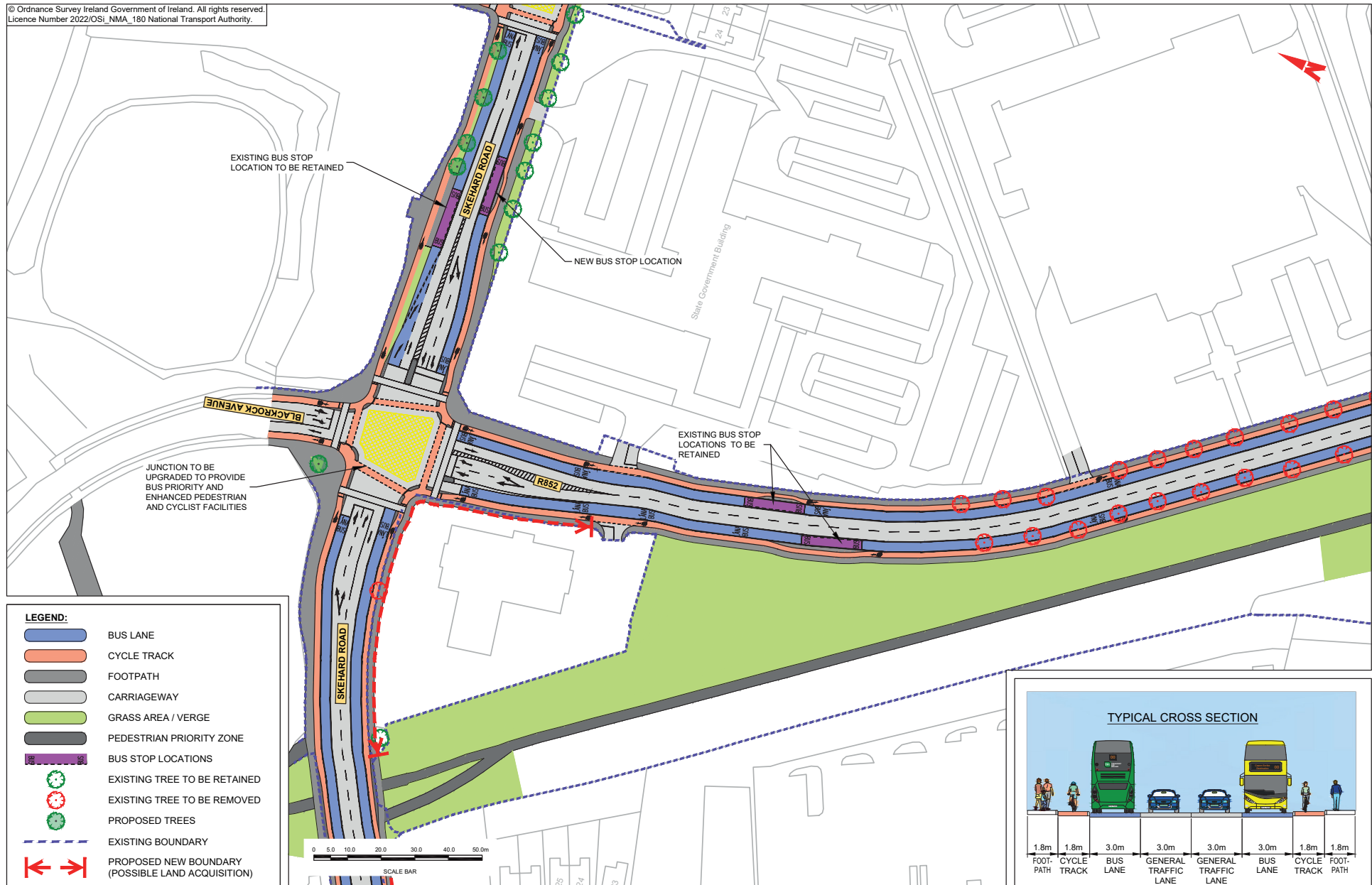
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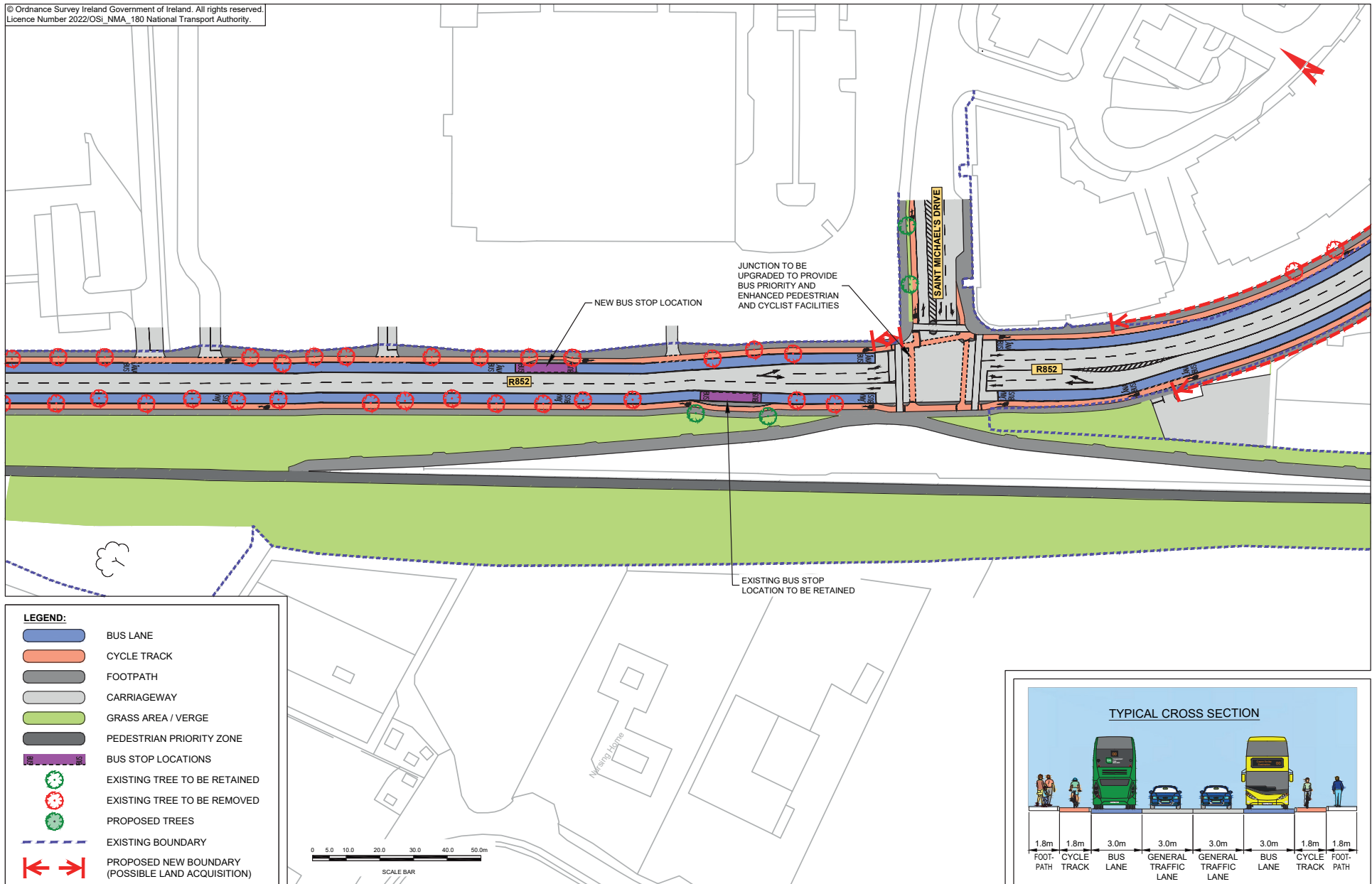


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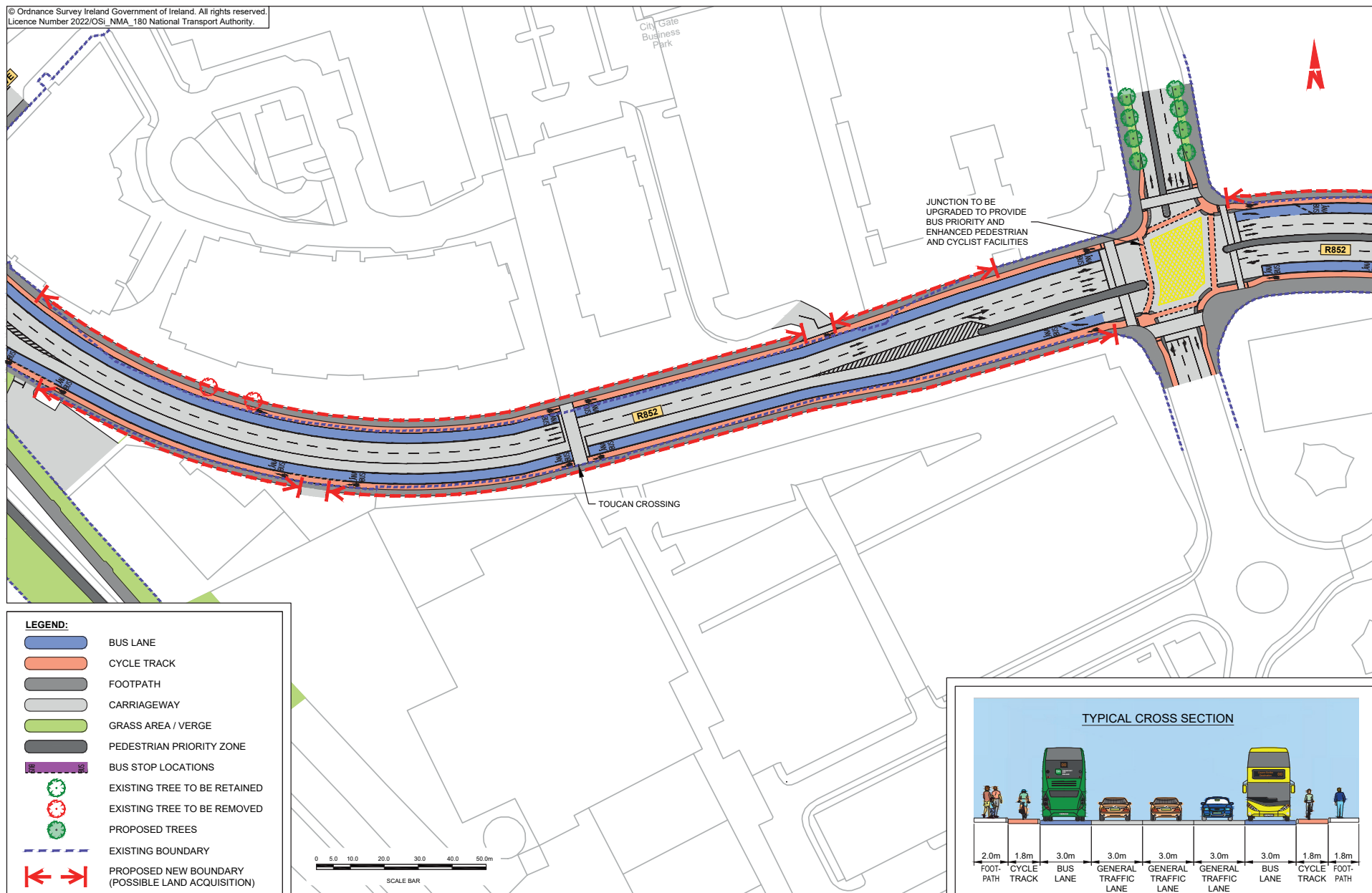




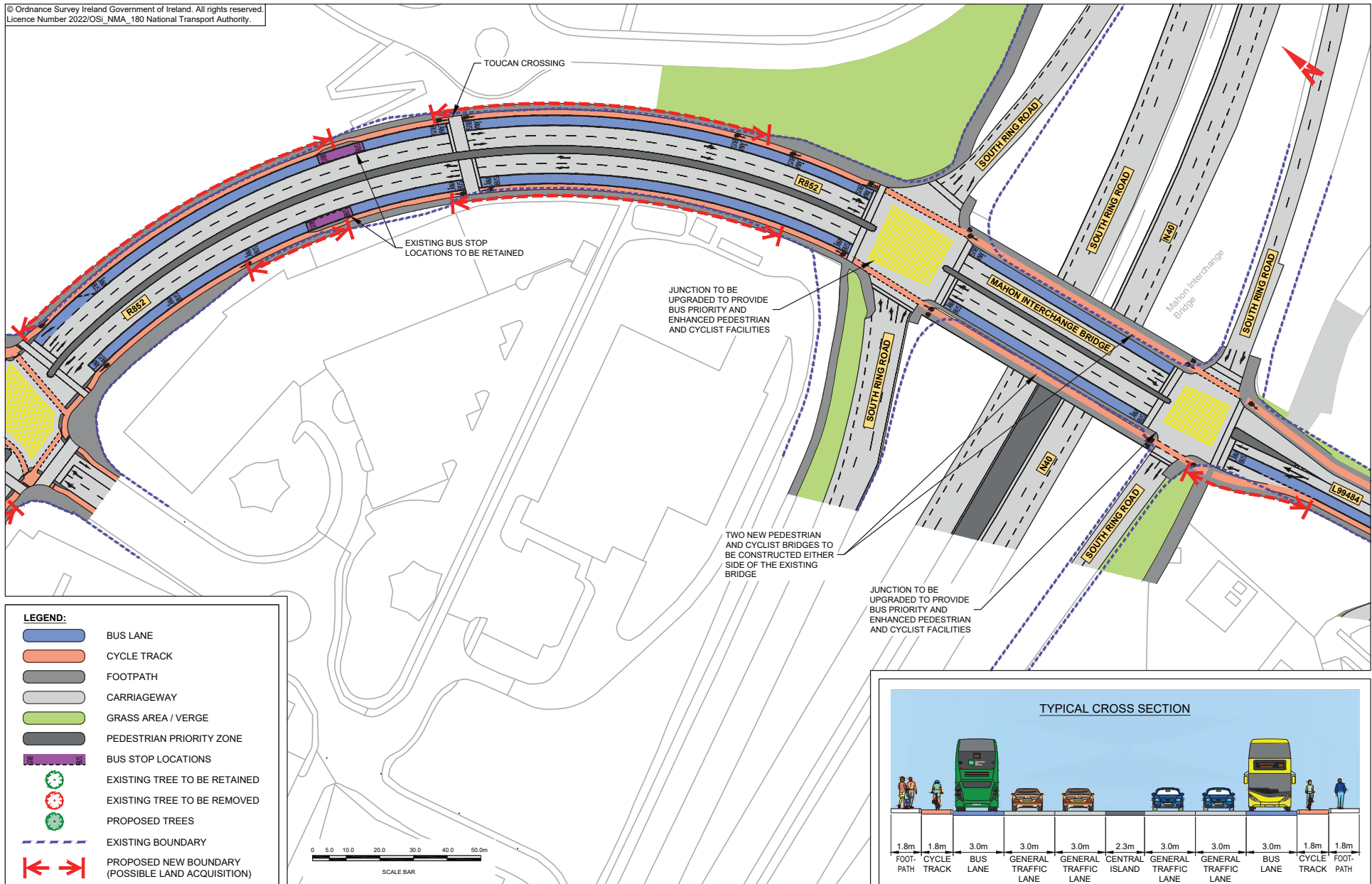
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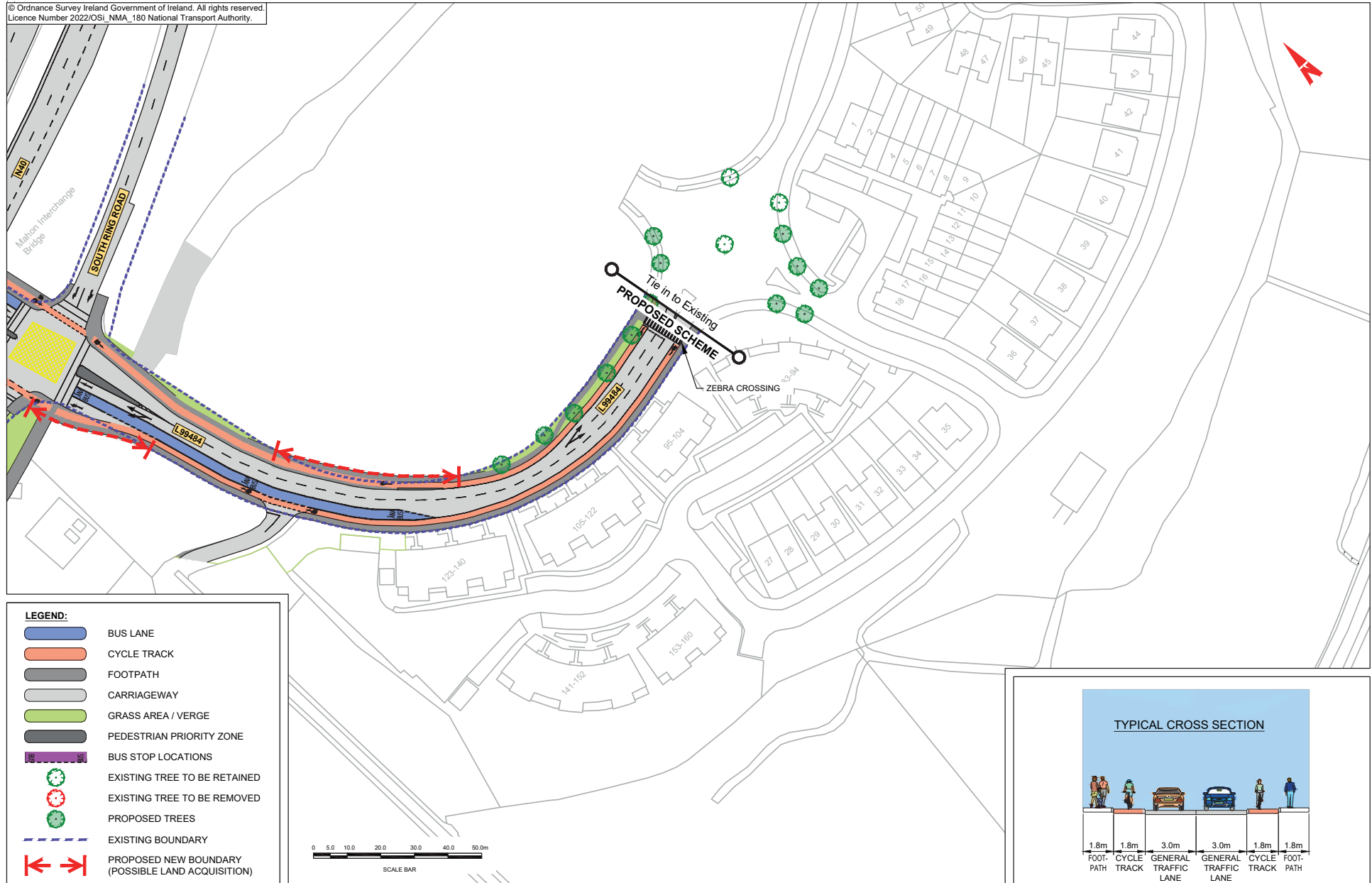
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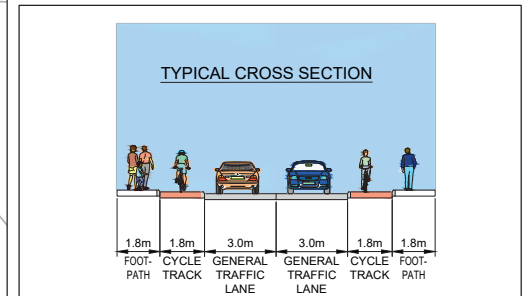
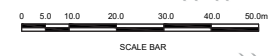


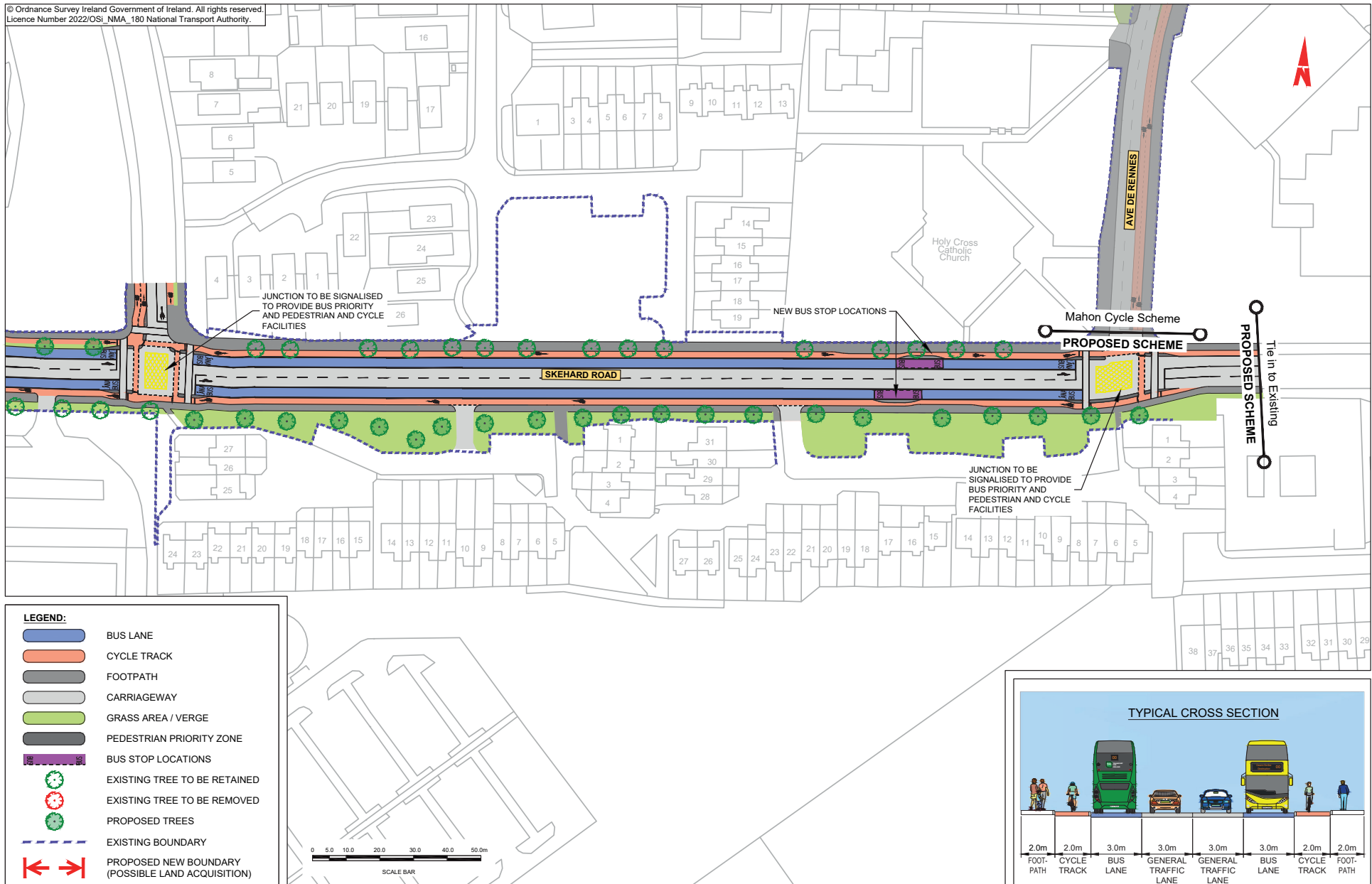
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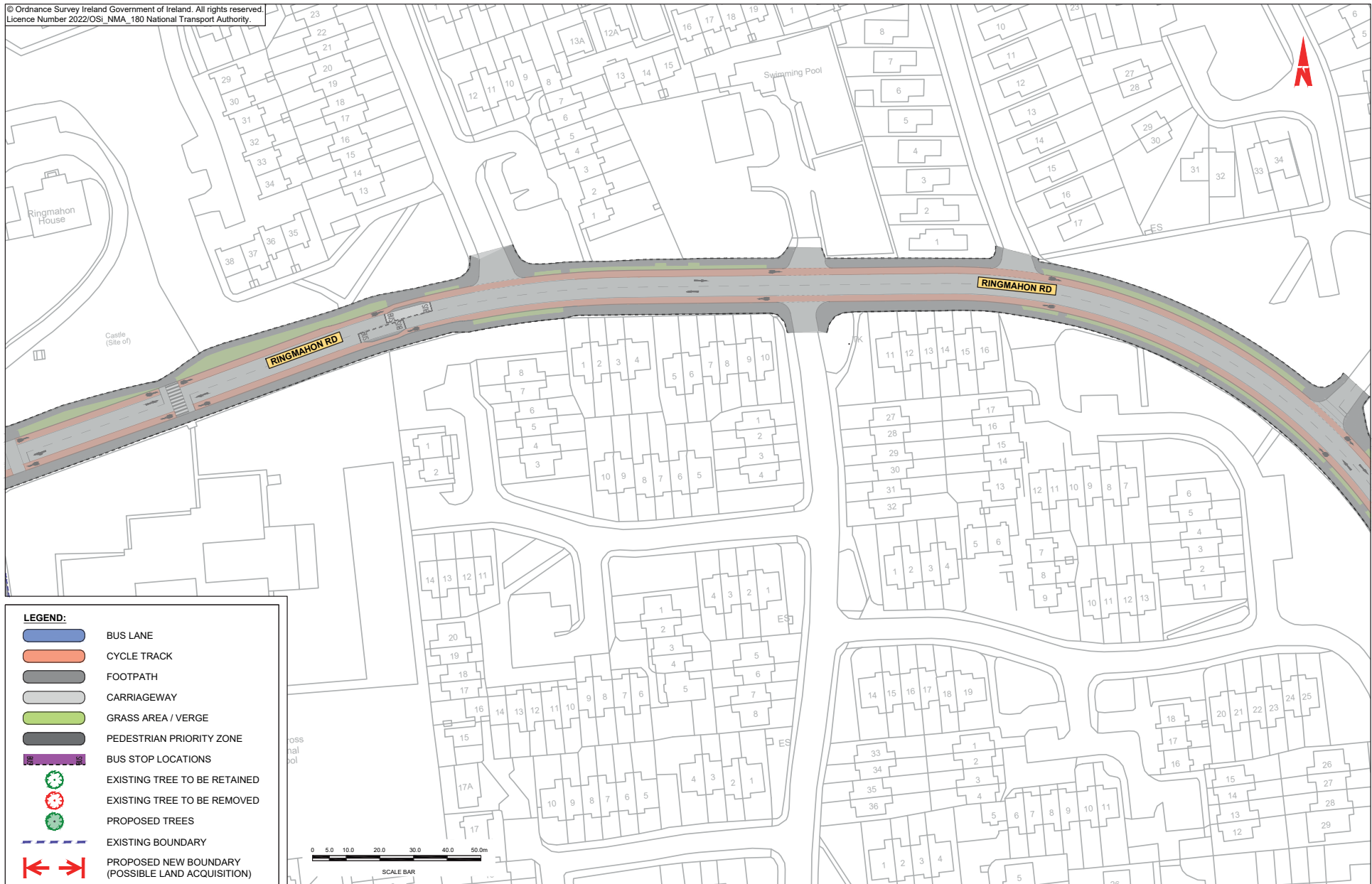
**LEGEND:**

- BUS LANE
- CYCLE TRACK
- FOOTPATH
- CARRIAGEWAY
- GRASS AREA / VERGE
- PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY ZONE
- BUS STOP LOCATIONS
- EXISTING TREE TO BE RETAINED
- EXISTING TREE TO BE REMOVED
- PROPOSED TREES
- EXISTING BOUNDARY
- PROPOSED NEW BOUNDARY (POSSIBLE LAND ACQUISITION)

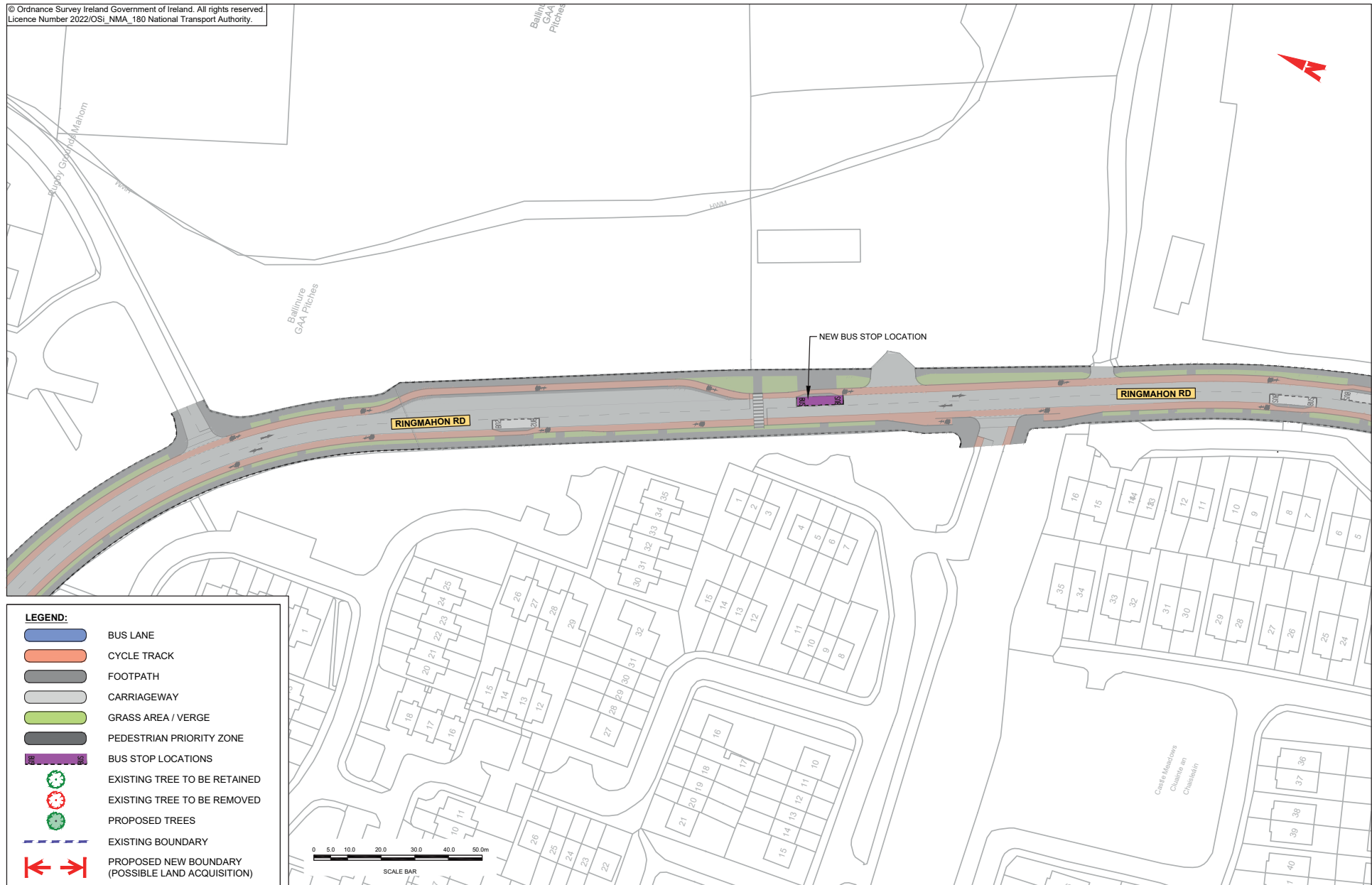


















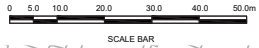


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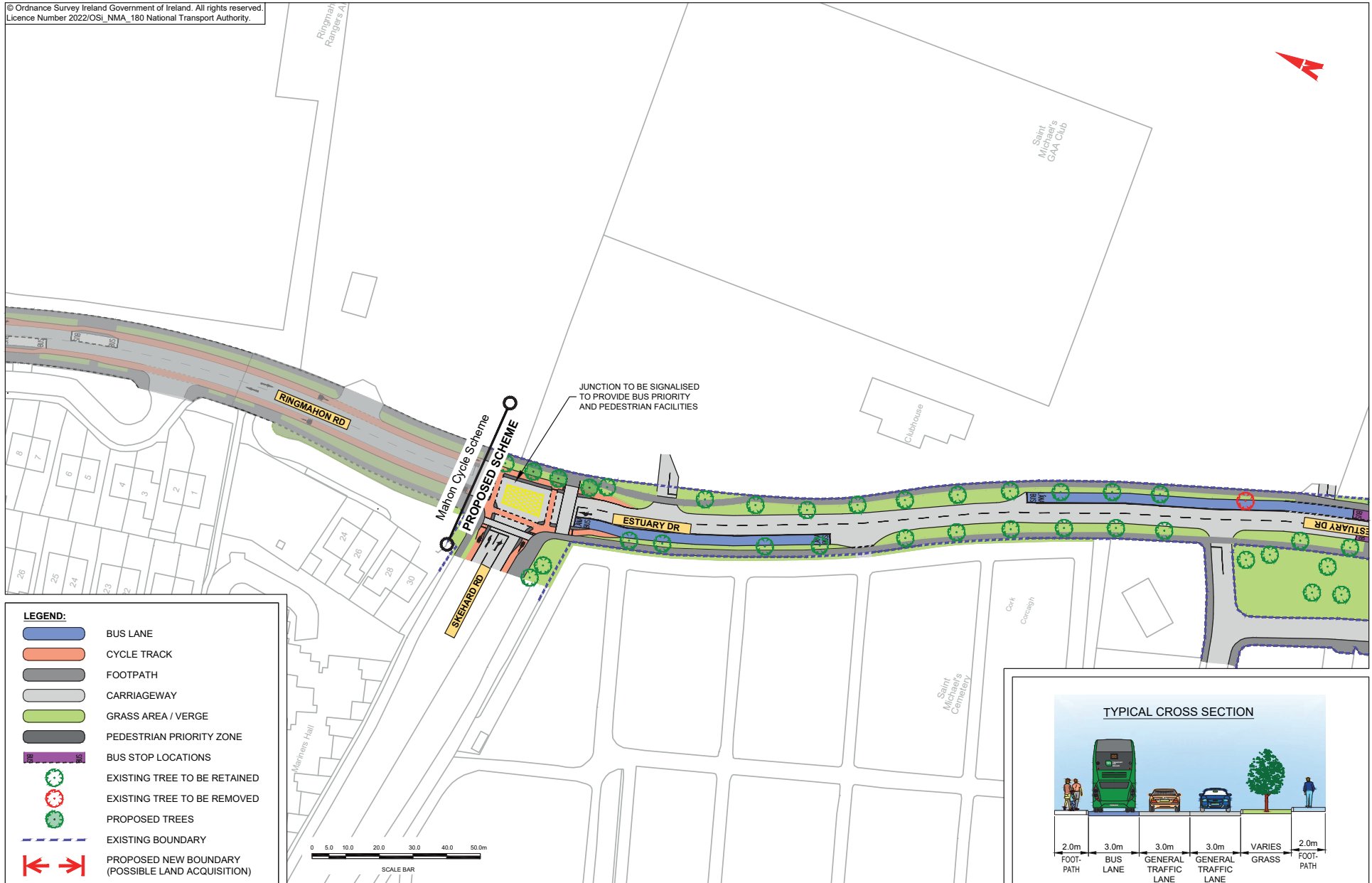


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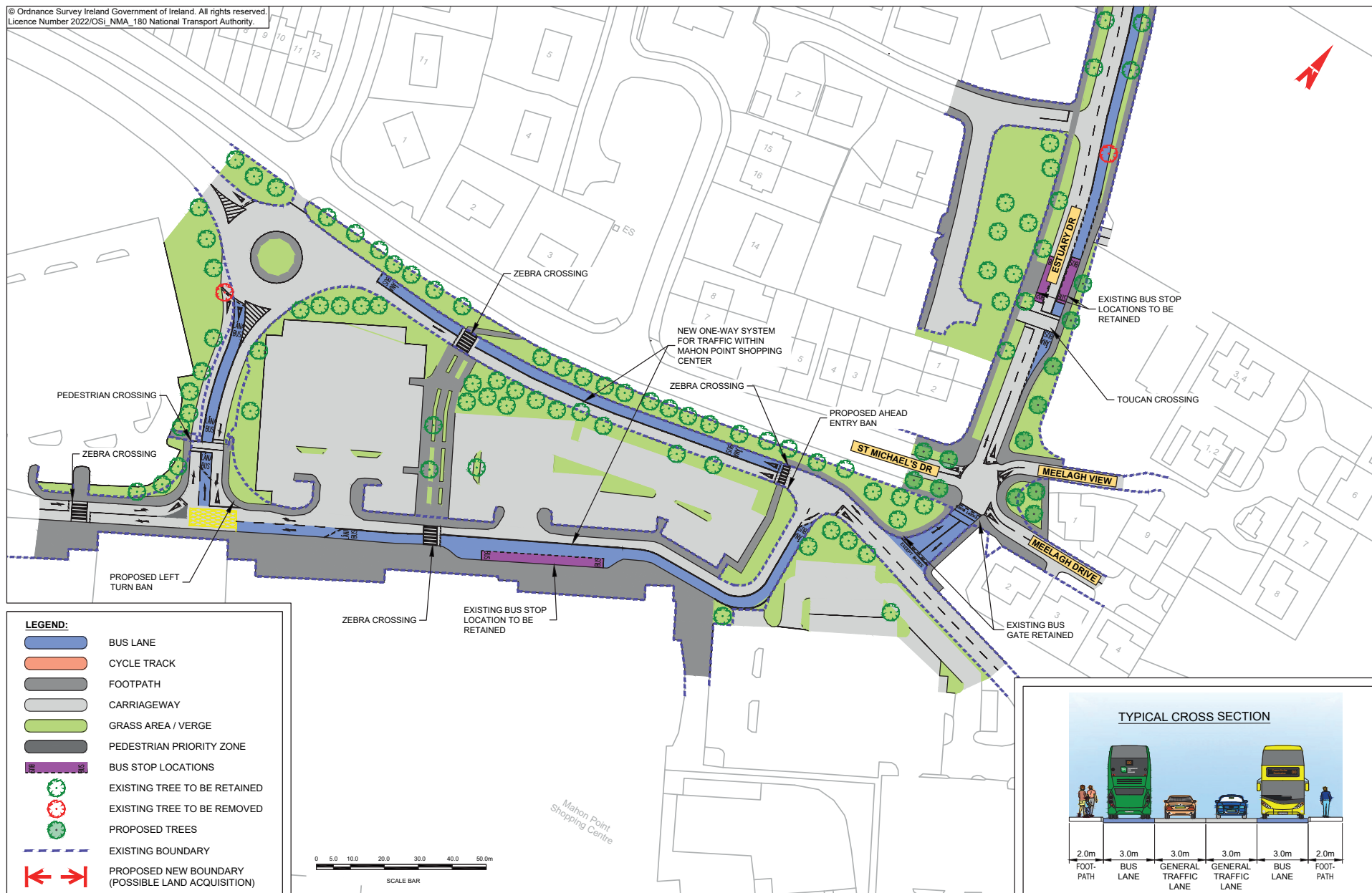
-  BUS LANE
-  CYCLE TRACK
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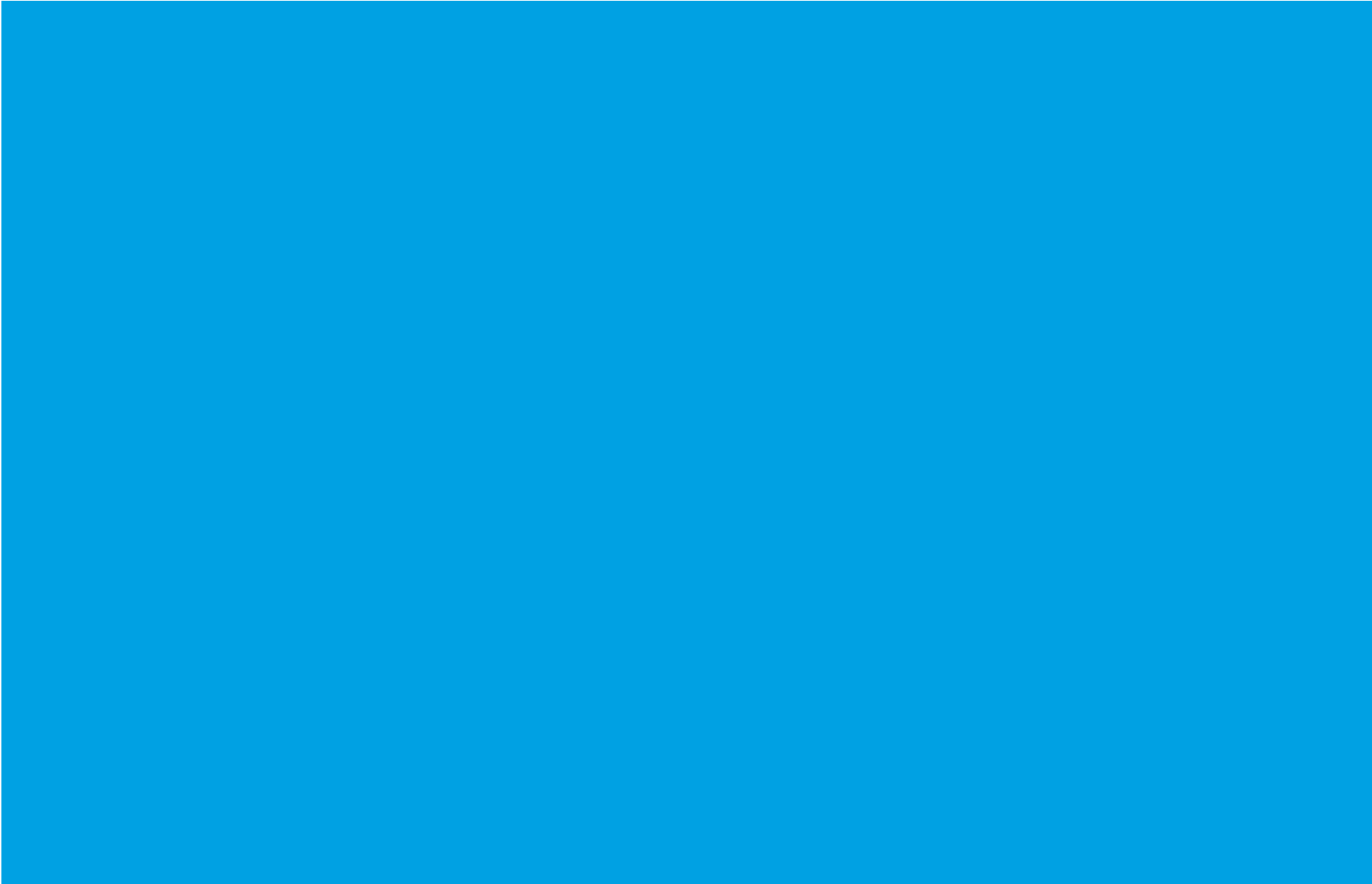






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**Údarás Náisiúnta Iompair**  
National Transport Authority

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



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