

3<sup>rd</sup> February 2021

Attention: Mr Kieran Somers  
An Bord Pleanála  
64 Marlborough Street  
Dublin 1  
Ireland

Project Name: Cork Line Level Crossings – Railway Order Application  
Project Number: 32111000

**Subject: Replacement of 7No. manned level crossings on the main Dublin to Cork Railway Line ABP**  
**Reference: ABP-305149-19**

Dear Mr Somers

I refer to the above proposed Project and to our upcoming pre application consultation meeting with An Bord Pleanála (the Board) on the 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

The purpose of this letter is to set out the applicant's understanding of the process and the content of the application for confirmation by the Board.

### **The Applicant**

Córas Iompair Éireann (CIÉ) is the applicant for the proposed Project. The 2001 Act provides that an application may be made to the Board for a Railway Order by the National Transport Authority (NTA), the Agency (Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII)), CIÉ, or another person.

Iarnród Éireann (IÉ) has developed the proposed Project on behalf of CIÉ and is responsible for the operation of intercity rail passenger services throughout Ireland and more specifically for the proposed Project on the Dublin to Cork line.

### **Content of Application**

The application for the Railway Order will be made pursuant to the provisions of Section 37 of the 2001 Act (as amended by the Planning and Development (Strategic Infrastructure) Act 2006 (the 2006 Act)). This requires, inter alia, that an application shall be made in writing and shall be accompanied by:

- a) A draft of the proposed Railway Order;
- b) A plan of the proposed railway works;
- c) A book of reference to a plan indicating the identity of the owners and of the occupiers of the lands described in the plan; and
- d) A Statement of the likely effects on the environment of the proposed railway works.

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A statement of the likely effects on the environment of the proposed railway works is addressed by preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) (previously referred to as an Environmental Impact Statement in Section 39 of the 2001 Act) and the EIAR supporting the Railway Order application has been compiled in accordance with Directive 2014/52/EU.

In addition to the contents listed above, the application will include:

- Water Framework Directive (WFD) (2000/60/EC) Compliance Report; and
- Planning Compliance Report.

## Procedure/Process

It is understood from previous discussions with the Board that the following is also required as part of the application package:

- 1) Completed Strategic Infrastructure Development Application Form;
- 2) Copy of the published notice. There is no statutory requirement for Site Notices Railway Order applications under the legislation and we do not intend to erect any;
- 3) A list of the bodies notified of the application and an indication of the date they were notified;
- 4) A list of any other public notices or other public consultations, and an indication of the date or dates of such notice(s) or consultation required by the Board as indicated to the prospective applicant in pre application discussions;
- 5) Screening opinion in relation of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) in relevant cases. The application includes a NIS and this includes Screening for Appropriate Assessment;
- 6) The applicable fee is that under Category SA1 (of the Boards online Strategic Infrastructure Development cases: Fees Guide) in the amount of €100,000;
- 7) A project website has been created: [www.irishrail.ie/CorkLineLevelCrossings](http://www.irishrail.ie/CorkLineLevelCrossings); and
- 8) It is also understood that the Board requires:
  - 3No. hard copies and 7No. electronic copies of the application documents; and
  - 5No. hard copies and 5No. electronic copies of the application documents for both Cork County Council and Limerick City and County Council (being the relevant local authorities).

Further to the above, the table below sets out the procedure/process of submitting a Railway Order Application as per the 2001 Act (as amended) and includes a project response to each aspect.

Section 40 of 2001 Act	Project Response
<p>Section 40 (1) of the 2001 Act sets out that <i>"Before an application is made for a railway order, the applicant shall:</i></p> <p>a) <i>Deposit and keep deposited at such place or places, being a place or places which is or are easily accessible to the public, as may be appointed by the Board, a copy of the draft order and all documents which may accompany the application, for not less than 6 weeks following the publication of the notice referred to in paragraph (b);</i></p>	<p>The proposed Project will deposit copies of the application documents at the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Planning Department, Limerick City and County Council, Dooradoyle Road, Dooradoyle, Limerick, V94 WV78; and</li> <li>▪ Planning Department, Cork County Council Headquarters, County Hall, Carrigrohane Road, Cork, T12 R2NC.</li> <li>▪ Kilmallock Library, Áras Mainchin Seoighe, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick.</li> </ul>
<p>b) <i>Publish a notice in one or more newspapers circulating in the area to which the order relates-</i></p>	<p>The proposed Project will include a notice in the following newspapers circulating in County Cork and County Limerick.</p> <p>Irish Examiner Corkman</p>

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<p>(i) Indicating that an application will be made for an order;</p> <p>(ii) Indicating the time and the place or places at which, and the period (which shall be 6 weeks) during which, a copy of the draft order and accompanying documents deposited under this section may be inspected;</p> <p>(iii) Stating that the Board will consider any submissions in relation to the proposed order or in relation to the likely effects on the environment of the proposed railway works which are submitting in writing to it by any person within the period referred to in subparagraph (ii)</p> <p>(iv) Stating that a copy of or extract from the draft order and accompanying documents may be purchased on payment of a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making such copy or extract, and</p> <p>(v) Stating, if it be the case, that the proposed railway works are likely to have significant effects on the environment in Northern Ireland,"</p>	<p>Limerick Post Limerick Leader Weekly Observer Vale/Mallow Star</p> <p>Can the Board please provide a sample notice.</p>
<p>c) "Serve on the planning authority in whose functional area (or any part thereof) the proposed railway works are proposed to be carried out, on the Minister and such other persons (if any) as the Board may direct a copy of the draft order and accompanying documents and the notice referred to in paragraph (b),"</p>	<p>The proposed Project will serve notice on Cork County Council, Limerick City and County Council and the Minister (Minister for Transport);</p>
<p>d) "Serve a copy of the notice referred to in paragraph (b) together with relevant extracts from the documents referred to in paragraph (a) on every (if any) occupier and every (if any) owner of a land referred to in the draft order, and</p>	<p>The proposed Project will serve a copy of the notice referred to in paragraph b with relevant extracts from the from the application on every occupier and owner or land referred to in the draft order.</p>
<p>Section 40 (2) sets out that "Members of the public may inspect a copy of the draft railway order and accompanying documents deposited under this section free of charge at the times and during the period specified in the notice referred to in subsection (1)(b) and may purchase copies of or extracts from any of the documents aforesaid on payment of a fee to the applicant not exceeding the reasonable cost of making such copies or extracts as may be fixed by the applicant."</p>	<p>Noted. The Non-Technical Summary will be made available free of charge. The EIAR and other documents will be available at print cost.</p>
<p>Section 40 (3) "A person may, during the period specified in the notice referred to in subsection (1)(b), make submissions in writing to the Board in relation to the proposed railway order or the likely effects on the environment of the proposed railway works."</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

## Indicative Timeframe for Submission

We have set out below an indicative timeframe for submission in line with our understanding of the process.

# Jacobs

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Process	Timescale
The Board issues letter confirming content, process, and procedure for Railway Order Application.	2 weeks from final pre application consultation meeting
1) Applicant Publishes Notice of application which specifies the 6-week period of consultation/submissions; 2) The application documents are deposited at the specified places; and 3) Notice is served on Cork County Council, Limerick City and County Council and owner/occupiers of lands included within the Railway Order application.	Within 4 weeks from receipt of Boards letter

I trust the above will help to inform our discussion during the pre-application consultation meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> February.

Yours sincerely



**Rory McDonnell**  
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Jacobs  
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Cc

Conleth Bradley (Senior Counsel)  
James Kenny (Iarnród Éireann)  
Diarmuid Dunne (Iarnród Éireann)  
Alex Bradley (Jacobs)  
Tony Magee (Jacobs)  
Heidi Curran (Jacobs)



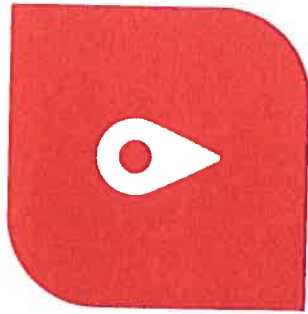
# Cork Line Level Crossings

Railway Order Application under The Transport (Railway Infrastructure) Act  
2001 (as amended)

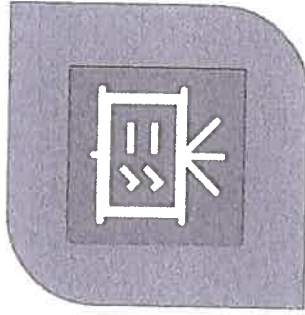
Presentation 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021  
An Bord Pleanála Reference 305149-19



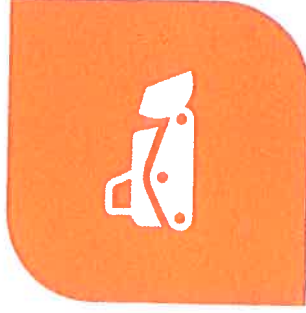
# Background



THE OBJECTIVE OF THE PROJECT IS TO ELIMINATE/DE-MAN SEVEN MANNED LEVEL CROSSINGS ON THE DUBLIN-CORK LINE.



IN 2018, IARNRÓD ÉIREANN UNDERTOOK A FEASIBILITY STUDY TO INVESTIGATE AND APPRAISE THE OPTIONS FOR THE ELIMINATION/DE-MANNING OF THE LEVEL CROSSINGS.



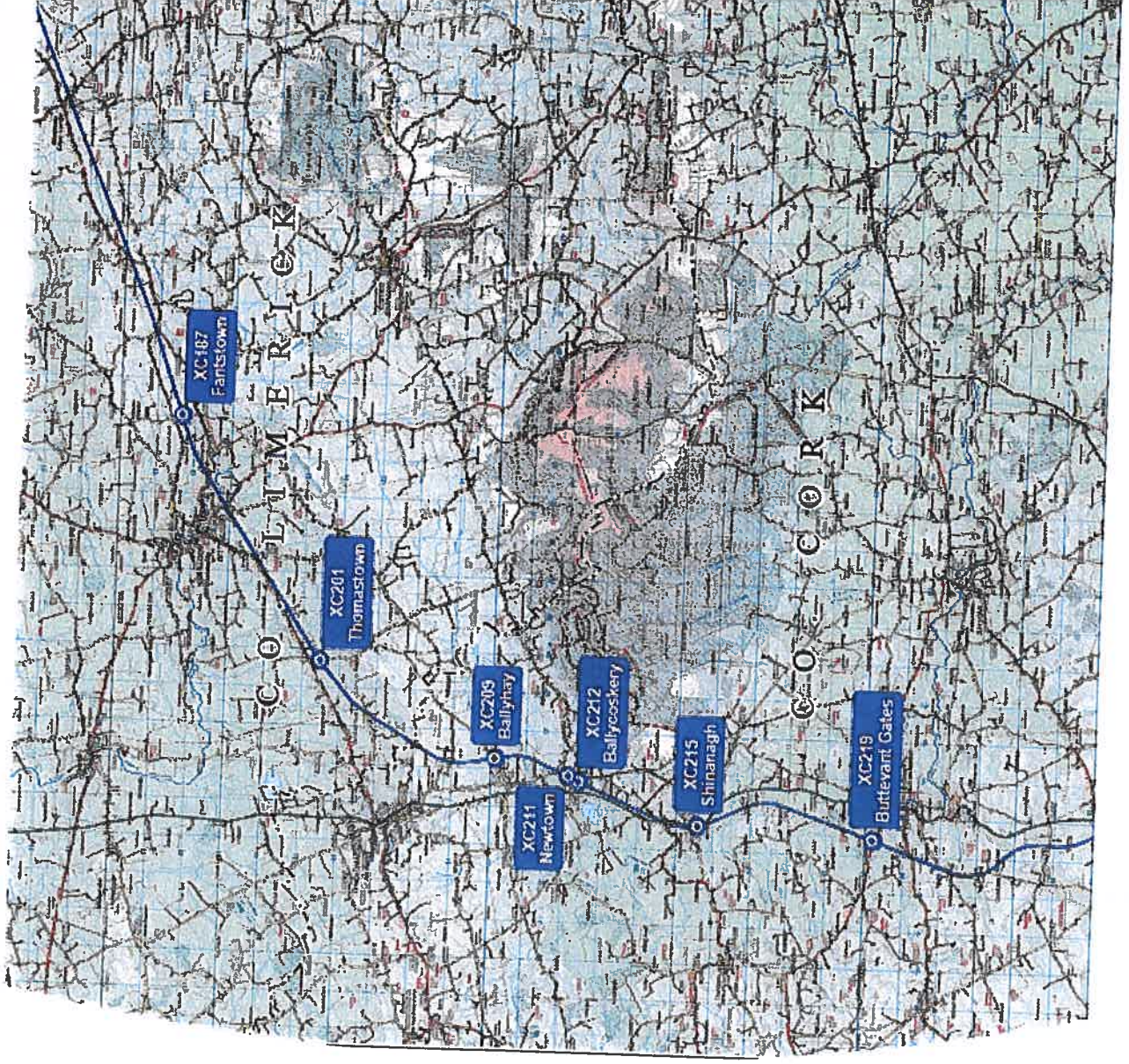
THIS STAGE OF THE PROJECT IS TO REFINE AND DEVELOP PRELIMINARY DESIGNS TO UNDERTAKE AN EIA AND SUBMIT AN APPLICATION FOR A RAILWAY ORDER.

**Jacobs**

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## Location

- The 7 no. manned level crossings are on the Dublin-Cork line. The crossings are located within a 24 km section of the line and straddles the Cork/Limerick County boundary.



# Existing Situation

Level Crossing	Crossing Type	Road Type	Local Authority
XC187- Fantstown	C - Type (Gates normally CLOSED to road traffic)	Local	Limerick City & County
XC201- Thomastown	C - Type (Gates normally CLOSED to road traffic)	Local	Limerick City & County
XC209- Ballyhay	CD - Type* (Gates normally OPEN to road traffic by DAY and normally closed at other times)	Local	Cork County Council
XC211- Newtown	CD - Type (Gates normally OPEN to road traffic by DAY and normally closed at other times)	Local	Cork County Council
XC212- Ballycoskery	CD - Type** (Gates normally OPEN to road traffic by DAY and normally closed at other times)	Local	Cork County Council
XC215- Shinahagh	CD - Type* (Gates normally OPEN to road traffic by DAY and normally closed at other times)	Local	Cork County Council
XC219- Buttevant	CX - Type (Gates normally OPEN to road traffic)	Regional	Cork County Council

\*Note that the signalman can also directly control the signals at XC209 Ballyhay, it is not just automatic.

\*\*Although CD Type crossing, operated on a 24-hour basis as a CX type crossing.

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# Project History/Background

## **XC187 – Fantstown – Oral Hearing**

Limerick County Council sought to close the crossing at XC187 - Fantstown by extinguishment of the public right of way. However, some of the local elected members objected. The Section 73 motion was never put before the Council.

## **2010/2011: Concept Stage Schemes**

In 2010/2011, concept stage schemes were developed for over-bridges to eliminate each of the level crossings. The closures for the seven crossings were proposed to be progressed as individual schemes and while the closures of level crossings XC187, XC211 and XC212 progressed to statutory approval stage in 2009 and 2011, they were ultimately not progressed due to local objections and a lack of funding.

## **2018: Feasibility Study**

In March 2018, the Project was revisited and the board of Iarróid Éireann approved the preparation of a feasibility study into the elimination/de-manning of the seven level crossings. The objective of the study was to investigate and appraise options, including property requirements, legal/planning strategy, safety approvals strategy, capital costs, operational costs, programme requirements and a risk profile of proposed solutions.

## **2019/2020: Preliminary Design to Railway Order Submission**

Jacobs is now in the process of finalising the EIA, Natura Impacts Statement, Flood Risk Assessment and all required materials for the submission of a Railway Order Application.

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# Proposed Development

Location	Infrastructure	Description
XC187 – Fantstown	N/A.	Straight Closure: Alternative route along existing roads to existing overbridge approximately 3km to the north east.
XC201 – Thomastown	1 no. road over rail bridge.	New road over rail bridge: Tie in to existing local road to south and new junction on Regional Road R515 to north. Carriageway widths are proposed to match existing widths for safety reasons. Following consultation with Limerick City and County Council Highways Department as well as submissions made by members of the public, the structure has been widened so that minimal works would be required to accommodate a future widened carriageway.
XC209 – Ballyhay	CCTV solution	Replace the existing manned level crossing with a remote monitored CCTV solution.
XC211 – Newtown	New access road.	New Access Road: Immediately east of the existing road over rail bridge to the north of XC211 Newton; tie in to existing Local road to the east of XC211 Newtown. Carriageway widths are proposed to match existing widths for safety reasons, with passing bays located in accordance with TII standards. This alignment was chosen following public consultation and concerns raised about the initial proposal for a new access road tie in from the rear of the Beechwood Grove housing estate to the local road west of the XC211 Newtown level crossing.
XC212 – Ballycoskery	1 no. road over rail bridge, 2no. retaining walls.	New road over rail bridge: Tie in to existing Local Road to East and West, new carpark proposed for existing school. Tie into Beechwood Housing Estate and Ballyhea National School to North and existing Local road to south
XC215 – Shinanagh	Tie into existing road over rail bridge. Upgrade of existing junction on N20, closure of existing N20 junction at current level crossing location. Resurfacing of section of existing local road.	New access road to tie into existing road over rail bridge approximately 1km to the north.
XC219 – Buttevant	1no. road over rail bridge, 1no. portal frame road over river bridge culvert, 1no. ditch box culvert, 1no.access road box culvert, 2no. retaining walls.	New road over rail bridge. Tie in to existing regional road to east and west.

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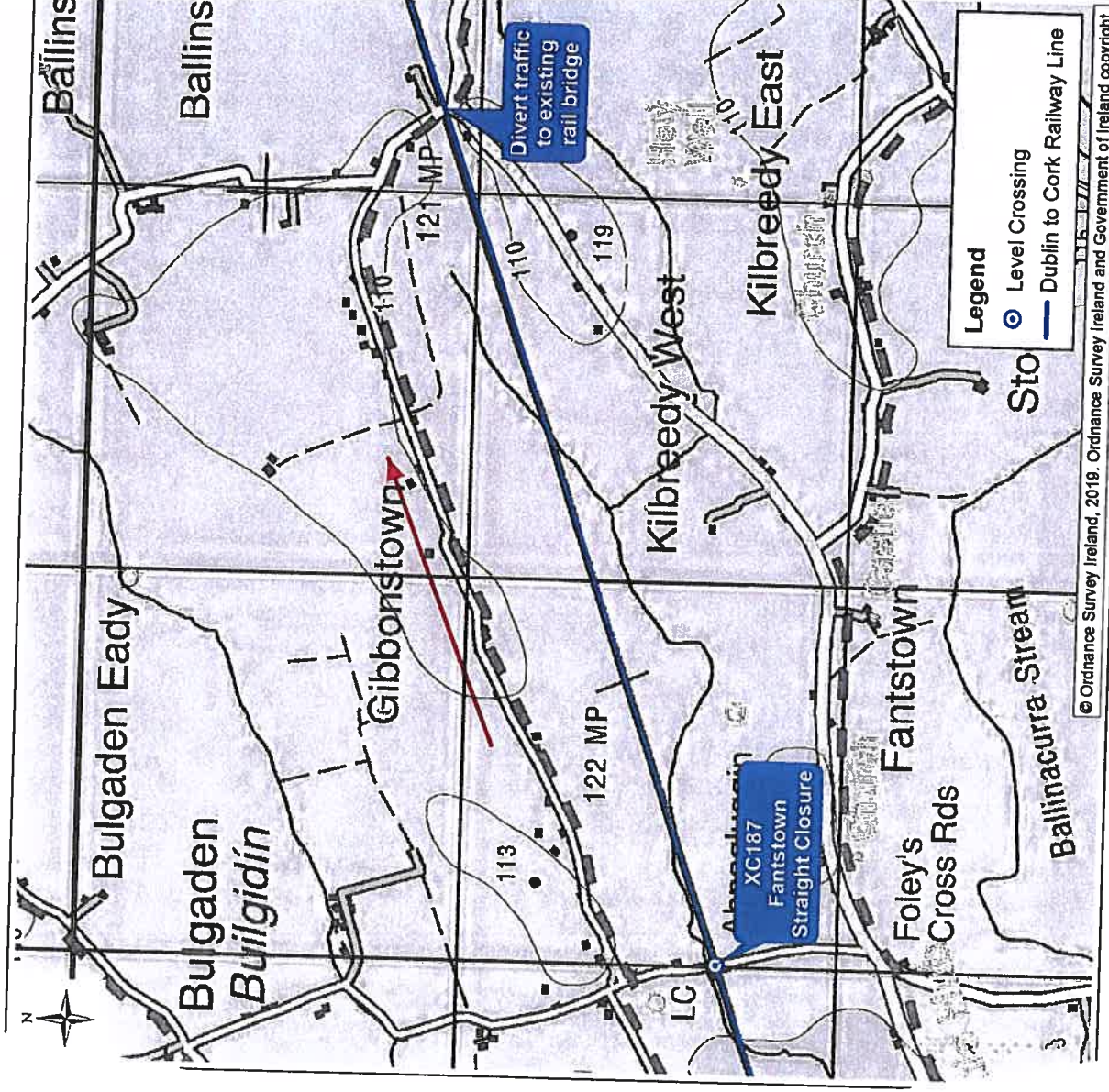




# XC187 - Fantstown

## Proposed Development:

**Straight Closure:** Alternative route along existing roads to existing overbridge approximately 3km to the north east.

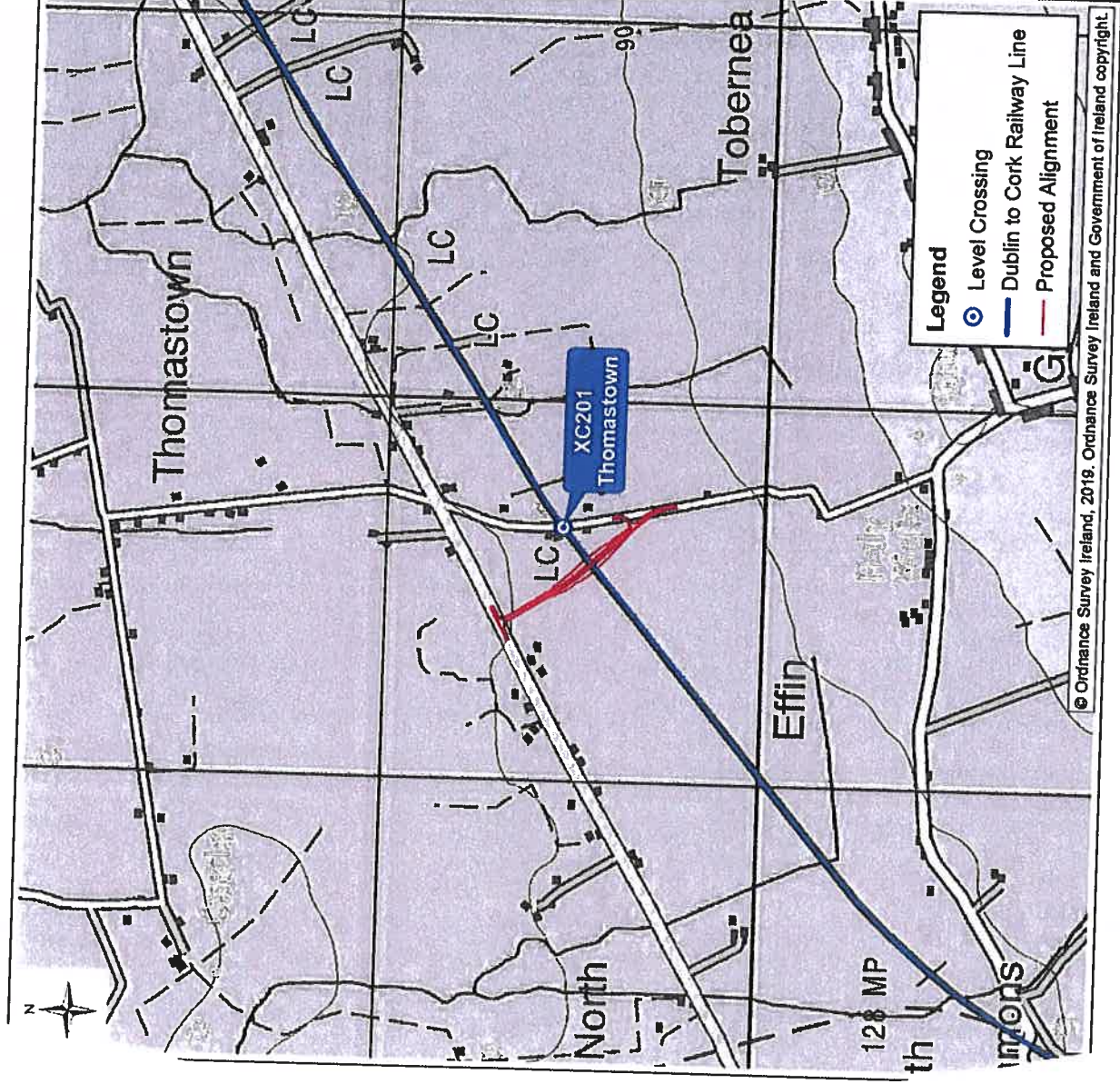




## XC201 – Thomastown

### Proposed Development:

- New road over rail bridge: Tie in to existing local road to south and new junction on Regional Road R515 to north.
- Carriageway widths are proposed to match existing widths for safety reasons. Following consultation with Limerick City and County Council Highways Department as well as submissions made by members of the public, the structure has been widened so that minimal works would be required to accommodate a future widened carriageway.

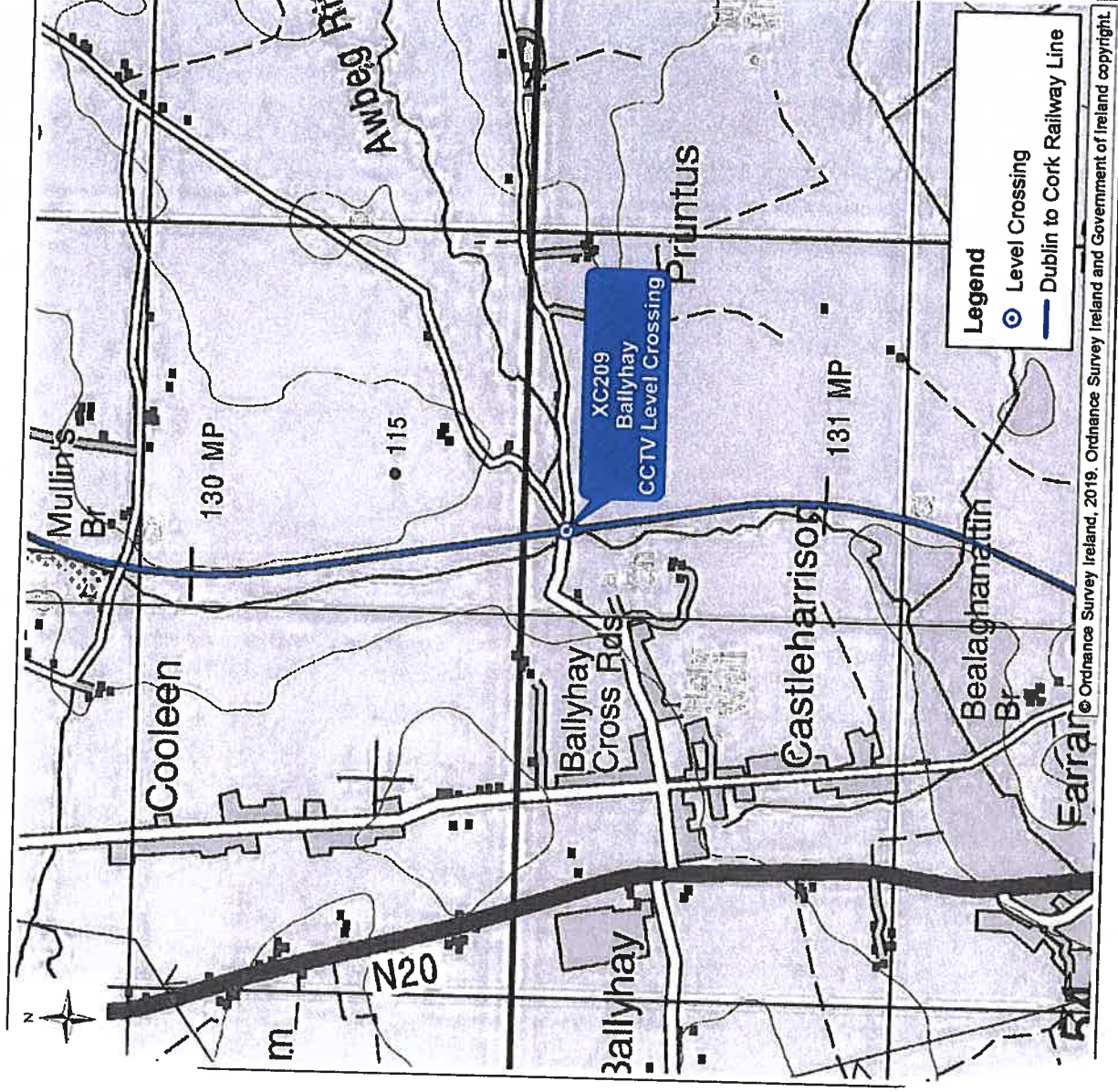




# XC209 – Ballyhay

## Proposed Development:

- Replace the existing manned level crossing with a remote monitored CCTV solution.

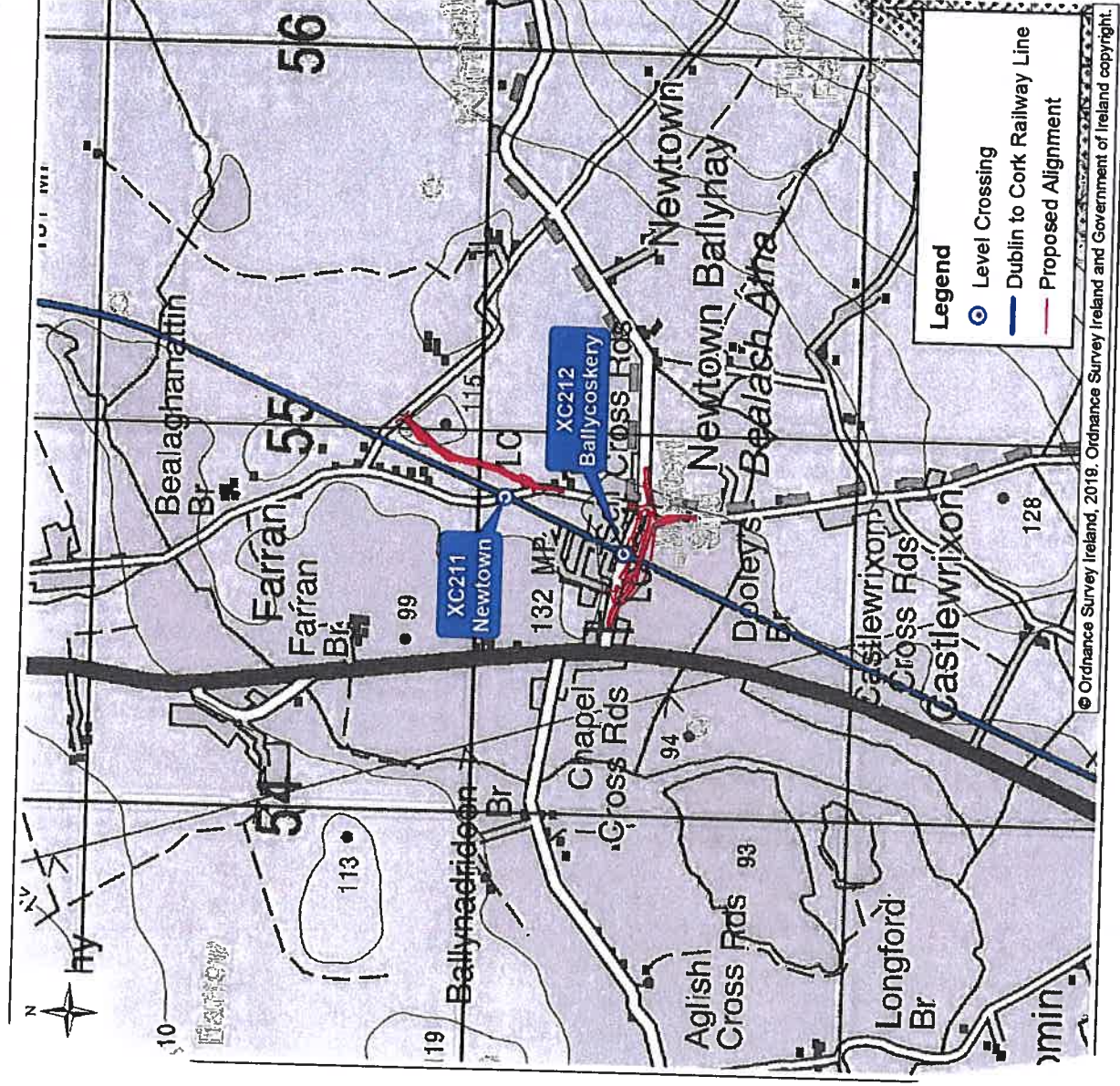


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# XC211 – Newtown & XC212 Ballycoskery

## Proposed Development:

- **New Access Road:** Immediately east of the existing road over rail bridge to the north of XC211 Newton; tie in to existing Local road to the east of XC211 Newtown. Carriageway widths are proposed to match existing widths for safety reasons, with passing bays located in accordance with TII standards.
- **New road over rail bridge:** Tie in to existing Local Road to East and West, new carpark proposed for existing school. Tie into Beechwood Housing Estate and Ballyhea National School to North and existing Local road to south.





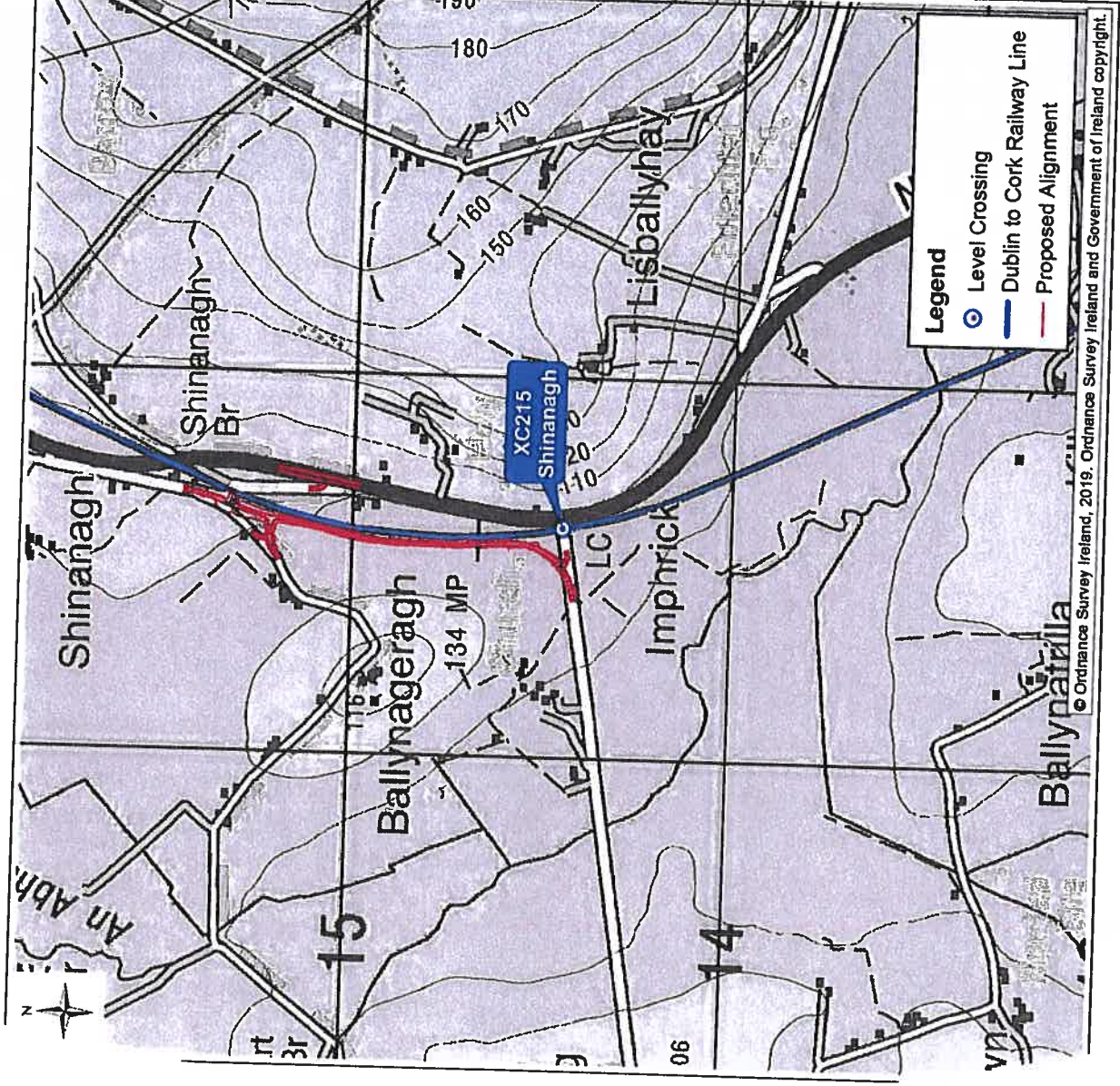




## XC215 - Shinanagh

Proposed Development:

- New access road to tie into existing road over rail bridge approximately 1km to the north.



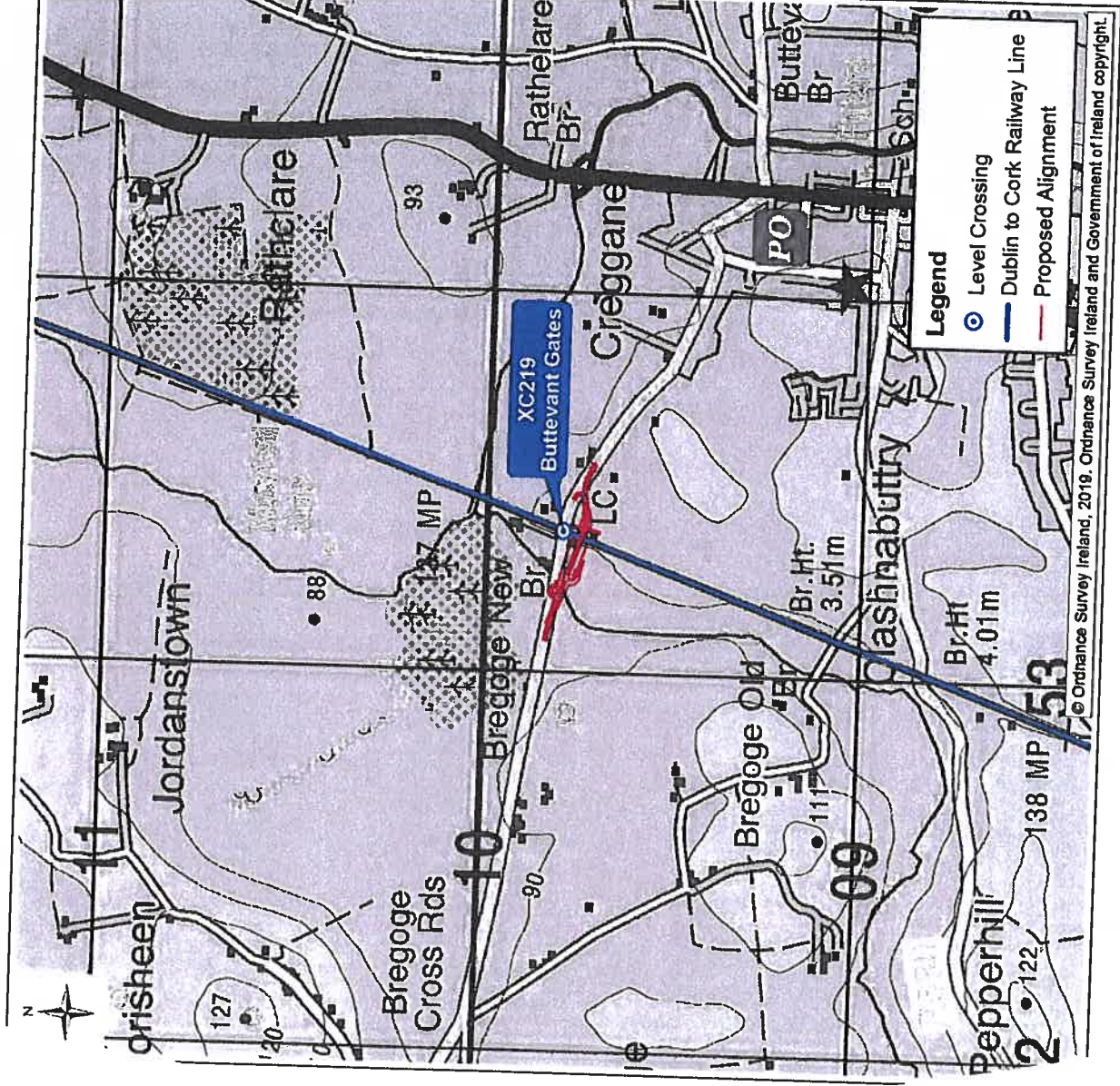




## XC219 - Buttevant

Proposed Development:

- New road over rail bridge. Tie in to existing regional road to east and west.



**Jacobs**



# Initial Pre-Application Consultation 17/10/19

## Issues Previously Raised by the Board:

- The Board advised consultation with NPWS and TII – the relationship of Shinanagh to the preferred N20/M20 Corridor should be resolved in full in advance of any application;
- The Board advised that public consultations need to be robust so as to ensure thorough and meaningful engagement; and
- The Board advised that there is a need for proportionate balance between the optimum engineering design and solutions which takes account of planning and environment matters.

## Responses:

- Consultation has taken place with both TII and NPWS and this will be set out within the EIA. Also, a meeting took place with the M20 Project Team on 10th March 2020. The M20 Project Team requested to be kept informed of any major changes to the programme. No significant issues were raised and it was agreed to keep communications open between the projects.
- A robust consultation process has taken place; and
- Proportionality has been considered within the EIA.



# Second Pre-Application Consultation 09/07/20

## Issues Raised by the Board:

- CCTV - The Board stressed the importance of showing alternative options for the seven manned level crossings;
- Required full justification of the preferred options and justification of the proportionality of the engineering works arising in the context of planning and environmental impacts;
- Newtown/Ballycoskery - The Board enquired if there was feedback from local residents;
- Ballyhay - Queried the extent of consultation with local groups;
- Thomastown – Requires justification for overbridge widening;
- Buttevant – Requires more information re watercourses; and
- Shinanagh – Required update re archaeology and consultation with NMS.

## Responses:

- The EIAR sets out alternative options considered. CCTV was reviewed as a potential solution for each site;
- The EIAR has considered proportionality and sets out a rationale;
- Local residents have been consulted and responses to concerns are set out in the EIAR;
- The EIAR provides a justification for the overbridge widening and provides more information in regard to water courses; and
- The project Team has consulted a number of times with National Monuments Service. Additional Geophysics and test trenching has been undertaken and NMS has provided a mitigation strategy which will be incorporated into the EIAR.





# Public Consultation

## Overview:

- 1) Initial Consultation lasted 12<sup>th</sup> November – 21<sup>st</sup> January 2020 (10 weeks). Further consultation 10<sup>th</sup> February – 6<sup>th</sup> March 2020 (4 weeks).
- 2) Dedicated Project Website: [www.irishrail.ie/CorkLineLevelCrossings](http://www.irishrail.ie/CorkLineLevelCrossings)
- 3) Dedicated Email Address: [CLLC@irishrail.ie](mailto:CLLC@irishrail.ie)
- 4) Postal Address: Cork Line Level Crossings Project, c/o Jacobs, Mahon Industrial Estate, Blackrock, Cork, T12 HY54
- 5) Public Information Events:

Date	Venue	Time
Tuesday 19th November 2019	Charleville Park Hotel, Charleville, Co. Cork	2.00pm to 8.00pm
Wednesday 20th November 2019	Deebert House Hotel, Deebert, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick	2.00pm to 8.00pm
- 6) Consultation Report has been prepared as part of the suite of Railway Order application documents.



# Consultation

## Key Meetings

1. Cork County Council – 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2020 & 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2020
2. Limerick City and County Council – 8<sup>th</sup> January 2020
3. M20 Cork to Limerick Project – 21<sup>st</sup> January 2020 & 5<sup>th</sup> November 2020
4. Cappamore-Kilmallock Municipal District Council - 16<sup>th</sup> January 2020
5. Ballyhea Village Community Group – 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2019

## Key Changes to Design Following Consultation:

### XC201 Thomastown

Following feedback from consultation, instead of the originally proposed single lane bridge, the bridge will now be a wider two-way bridge allowing for ease of traffic movements and improved road safety conditions.

### XC211 Newtown

Following the close of the initial consultation period it was noted that a number of submissions were received expressing a preference for the Blue Route over the chosen Green Route. A second period of consultation was undertaken for XC211 Newtown. Subsequent to this consultation it was decided to take a Blue Route forward given the level of support received.



# Key Updates

- 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2020 – NMS attend site;
- 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020 - Limerick County Council confirmed it would take the proposed roads in charge;
- 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020 – Meeting with NMS;
- 5<sup>th</sup> November 2020 – Final meeting with M20 Project Team;
- 27<sup>th</sup> November 2020 – NPWS confirm no objections;
- November 2020 – Further Geophysical Surveys and Test Trenching is undertaken;
- 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2020 – Final meeting with Cork County Council;
- 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020 – Limerick County Council confirms no further comments;
- December 2020 - Test Trenching and geophysical reports issued to NMS;
- 6<sup>th</sup> January 2021 – Final Meeting with NMS;
- 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021 – NMS issued letter setting out archaeological mitigation strategy; and
- February 2021 – EIA and Railway Order Documents are almost complete.



## Next Steps

- Conclusion of Pre Application Consultation.
- An Bord Pleanála to confirm form and content of application.
- Finalisation of EIAR and Railway Order Documents.
- Submission of Railway Order Application to An Bord Pleanála.





Questions?

**Jacobs**

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