

CONSULTANTS IN ENGINEERING, ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE & PLANNING

IMPROVEMENT WORKS TO THE R639 CASHEL, CO. TIPPERARY

P21-214 – PART 8 REPORT

Prepared for: Tipperary County Council



Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann Tipperary County Council

Date: July 2022

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P21-214 - PART 8 REPORT

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Abstract: This Part 8 Report has been prepared in consideration of a proposed active travel scheme along on the R639 Cahir Road in Cashel, Co. Tipperary.



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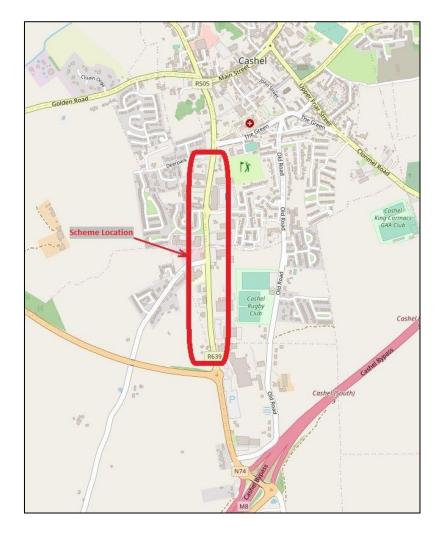
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Fehily Timoney and Company (FT) was commissioned by Tipperary County Council (TCC) to carry consultancy services and PSDP roles for the design of mobility improvements within the existing cross section of the R639, Cashel. The scheme comprises approximately 1km of new cycle tracks and new or upgraded footpaths.

This Part 8 Report includes a description of the location of the project and sets out the nature, extent and principal features of the proposed scheme.

The scheme commences at the existing pedestrian crossing north of the R639/N74 roundabout and extends to Deerpark Road. A scheme location map is shown in Figure 1.1 below. The project will include the installation of cycle tracks, improved footpath connectivity, improved crossings and junction tightening along the R639 (Cahir Road) in Cashel.





Scheme Location



2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 Description of the Scheme

The proposed improvements along the R639 will comprise the following:

- The provision of 1.0km of 2.0m wide raised cycle tracks from the existing pedestrian crossing north of the R639/N74 roundabout to the R639 junction with Deerpark Road;
- Extension of the existing footpaths to cover the full length of the R639 from the pedestrian crossing north of the R639/N74 roundabout to Deerpark Road;
- Existing and proposed footpath widths to be a minimum of 1.8m;
- Reduction in the width of the R639 traffic lanes to 3.0m lanes to reduce vehicle speeds;
- Controlled and uncontrolled pedestrian and cyclist road crossings;
- Reduction in junction widths to reduce crossing times and distances;
- Additional areas of landscaping throughout the scheme;
- Upgrades to public lighting; and
- All associated ancillary works.

The proposed scheme has been designed to current standards including the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) and the National Cycle Manual (NCM).

2.2 Need for the Scheme

The 'Need for the Scheme' is defined by the identified deficiencies and safety issues of the existing road infrastructure.

In terms of identified deficiencies the existing section of the R639 under consideration presents significant infrastructural and safety deficiencies for cyclists, and are summarised below:

- 1. Existing Cyclist Facilities The existing section of the R639 under consideration does not have formal dedicated facilities for cyclists.
- 2. Active Travel Route Connections The existing network of active travel routes requires additional pathways and connections to create a more comprehensive network to encourage modal shift.
- 3. Existing Road Layout Along the R639 there are areas where through traffic lanes narrow to 3.0m and adjacent hard strips narrow to 0.3m, resulting in potentially hazardous overtaking of on-road cyclists. There are a high number of direct accesses, particularly as road users approach the town centre. Junction layouts, including pedestrian crossing facilities, are poor.
- 4. Existing Road Condition The existing traffic lane pavement surface generally provides a good quality surface for cyclists with notable exceptions including on the northern approach to the roundabout at Tesco where surface failure/distress is evident and where pavement repair or reinstatement of excavations for utilities has resulted in settlement and/or a rough surface finish. In general the road shoulders, often used by cyclists, are of poor quality and there are clear indications of surface failure/distress in several sections of the existing route. Isolated instances of unsafe cycling conditions



are present and include a large tourist sign that protrudes into the road shoulder and a non-standard drainage gully which has the potential to snag narrow bicycle wheels.

With the existing infrastructural and safety deficiencies outlined above, the need for an improvement to the R639 between the existing pedestrian crossing north of the R639 – N74 Roundabout and the junction of Deerpark Road has been identified in order to meet the current and future demands on the route in a safe and efficient manner. The delivery of cycle infrastructure along this section of the R639 is key to the provision of a high-quality active travel network within Cashel which will enable the growth of sustainable and active travel alternatives to private vehicles.

2.3 Scheme Objectives

The purpose of these works is to provide a safe walking and cycling environment for local people and facilitate cycle tourism in the region. The objectives of the project can be summarised as follows:

- To provide continuous segregated cycle tracks;
- To improve pedestrian facilities through junction tightening, improved and new crossings, appropriate widths, etc.;
- To provide traffic calming to reduce vehicle speeds; and
- Upgrading links to schools and businesses.

The scheme objectives are complimentary to the objectives of the Tipperary Walking and Cycling Strategy, which include:

- Improve walking and cycling facilities for short trips;
- Promote walking and cycling as the primary means of travel for shorter trips;
- Improve safety on roads for cycling;
- Facilitate walking and cycling access to public transport;
- Promote walking and cycling as the main forms of travel for education;
- Sustain and enhance local retail vitality and tourism;
- Provide improved facilities for recreational walking and cycling; and
- Promote behavioural change to more sustainable modes of travel other than the private car.



3. DESIGN DESCRIPTION

3.1 Existing Roadway Arrangement

The 1.0km stretch of the R639 under consideration is a two-lane two-way carriageway with a posted speed limit of 50km/hr. The existing road cross section can loosely be broken into three sections. The southern section, approx. 380m in length, runs from the pedestrian crossing north of the R639 / N74 Roundabout to Scoil Aonghusa. This section contains a narrow footpath along the eastern boundary separated from the road by a wide verge. Traffic lanes are 3.5m wide. The southbound lane contains a 2.5m wide shoulder for approx. 80m north of the pedestrian crossing which then narrows to a 1.0m hard strip. The northbound lane has a varying width shoulder with a minimum width of 1.7m.

The middle section runs from Scoil Aonghusa to the roundabout at Oliver Plunket Park / Spafield Crescent, a distance of approx. 320m. Footpaths are present on both sides of the road and are separated from the carriageway by grassed verges. A 2.8m wide painted central median provides right turn lanes to access side roads and businesses. Traffic lanes narrow to 3.0m where the right turn lanes are present. Hard strips of 0.3m are provided on both sides.

The northern section runs from the roundabout at Spafield Crescent to Deerpark Road, a distance of approx. 280m. Immediately north of the roundabout, on the east side of the R639, a plaza area in front of the Cashel Town Shopping Centre is separated from the road with a row of bollards. On the western side, opposite the shopping centre, a footpath is separated from the road by a wedge-shaped grassed verge. North of the shopping centre traffic lanes are 3.5m wide with a parking lane and footpath located on both sides of the road.

3.2 Proposed Scheme

The proposed improvement works to the R639 in Cashel commence at the existing pedestrian crossing immediately north of the R639/N74 roundabout and extend to the R639 junction with Deerpark Road. 2.0m wide raised cycle tracks will be constructed between the R639 carriageway and the existing footpath along both sides of the R639.

The existing hard shoulder will be removed and the road carriageway will be narrowed to provide 3.0m wide traffic lanes in order to slow vehicle speeds and to provide additional width in the verge for the cyclist and pedestrian facilities. Existing footpaths will be widened to provide a minimum width of 1.8m with footpaths north of the Cashel Town Shopping Centre being widened to 2.5m where space allows. The footpath along the western side of the R639 will be extended from where it currently terminates, at Scoil Aonghusa, to connect with the existing footpath immediately north of the R639/N74 roundabout.

Part of the existing verge and the hard shoulder will be excavated to allow the construction of the proposed cycle and pedestrian facilities. The proposed cycle tracks will have an asphalt surface and the proposed footpaths will have a concrete surface finish. Proposed drainage will generally consist of new gully connections to existing drainage pipes with new drainage pipes installed in the verge in locations where required.

Controlled pedestrian crossing facilities are provided at each approach road to the roundabout at the Cashel Town Shopping Centre with additional uncontrolled crossings provided at the future road connection adjacent to the veterinary Hospital, the R639 / Haighs Terrace junction at Scoil Aonghusa and at the entrance to Lidl. Junctions will be narrowed where excess width is currently provided by reducing the existing corner radii.



Where the existing road is to be narrowed, the former road areas not required for the proposed cycle track will be converted to landscape areas. Supplementary trees will be planted to replace those that are to be removed and additional landscaping will be provided adjacent to the entrance to St. Patricks Hospital.

The public lighting along the R639 is proposed to be broadly maintained with additional lighting provided where possible in areas where the current provision is inadequate. Where the proposed cycle tracks end at the scheme extents, advance warning signs will be provided to indicate an end to the dedicated cycling tracks. The existing on-street car parking between Spafield Crescent and Deerpark Road will be removed to allow space for the proposed cycle tracks.

Preliminary design drawings, including layout plans and typical cross sections, are contained in Appendix A.

3.3 Compliance with Design Standards

The width of cycle facilities was determined in accordance with the recommendations of the National Cycle Manual width calculator as shown in Figure 3.1.

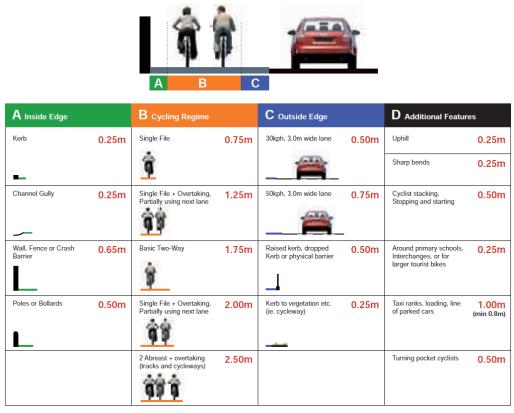


Figure 3.1: National Cycle Manual Width Calculator

The typical cross section configuration for the improvement works provides an off-road cycle track between the footpath and the traffic lanes. The width of the cycle track is therefore determined on the following basis:



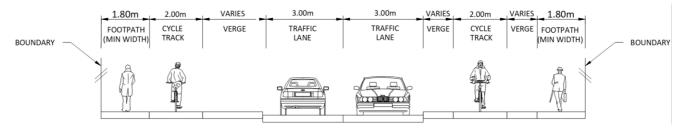
Table 3-1:Cycle Track Width

Element	Condition	Min. Width
A - Inside Edge	-	0.00m
B - Cycling Regime	Single File	0.75m
C - Outside Edge	50kph, 3.0m Wide Lane	0.75m
D - Additional Features	Uphill / School	0.25m
Minimum Width Required:		1.75m
Proposed Width:		2.00m

The width of the footpaths was determined by reference to DMURS Section 4.3.1. A minimum footpath width of 1.8m has been applied throughout the scheme and where additional space is available north of the roundabout at Cashel Town Shopping Centre, a wider footpath width of up to 2.5m will be provided.

3.4 Proposed Typical Cross Section

The available width along the R639 corridor varies, with a generally narrower corridor available north of the roundabout at the Cashel Town Shopping Centre. Therefore two separate typical cross sections have been developed for the scheme, Typical Section (South), applied south of the roundabout at the Cashel Town Shopping Centre and shown in Figure 3.2 below and Typical Section (North), applied north of the roundabout at shown in Figure 3.3. In addition, both typical section show reduced traffic lane widths of 3.0m which act to slow traffic and provides additional width in the verges for cycling and pedestrian infrastructure.





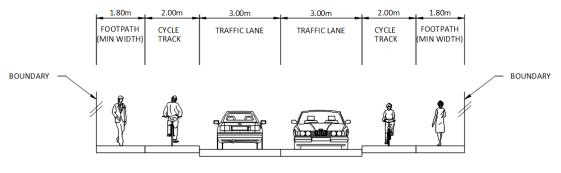


Figure 3.3: Typical Cross Section (North)



4.1 Environmental Assessment

Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Reports have been prepared by TCC, and are contained in Appendices B and C respectively.

The scheme extents are not within any Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The nearest SAC is the Lower River Suir SAC, at a distance of over 3.7km from the scheme. There are no Natura 2000 sites within 1km of the project.

The AA and EIA Screening Reports conclude that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment and therefore Appropriate Assessment and/or an EIAR are not required.

4.2 Flood Risk Assessment

A preliminary flood risk assessment has been undertaken by reviewing information from the Office of Public Works (OPW) national flood information portal (www.floodinfo.ie). The fluvial flooding map is shown in Figure 4-1 below. The scheme extents are not subject fluvial (river) flooding with no fluvial flood catchment area in proximity to the site.

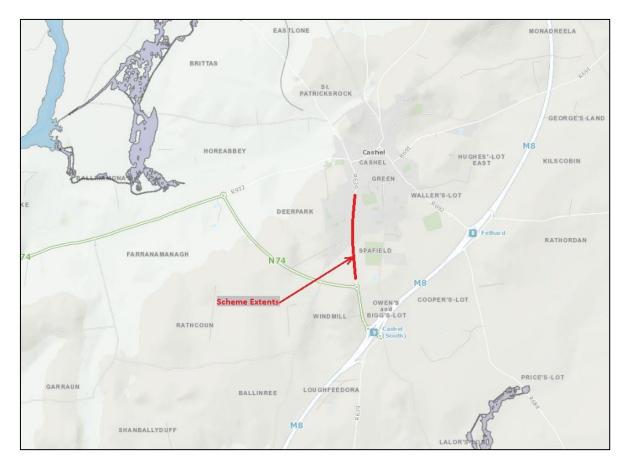


Figure 4.1: Fluvial Flooding Risk Assessment Map

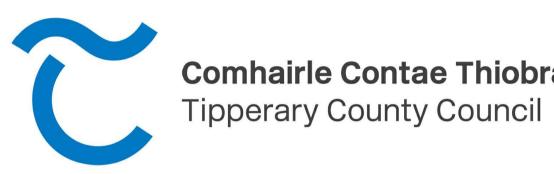


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Preliminary Design Drawings





IMPROVEMENT WORKS TO THE R639 CASHEL, Co. TIPPERARY

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Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann



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IMPROVEMENT WORKS TO THE R639 CASHEL, Co. TIPPERARY

Drawing Name

COVER SHEET DRAWING INDEX SITE LOCATION PLAN TYPICAL CROSS SECTIONS PRELIMINARY DESIGN - GENERAL LAYOUT - SHEET 1 OF 3 PRELIMINARY DESIGN - GENERAL LAYOUT - SHEET 2 OF 3

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Drawing Number

- P21-214-0200-0001
- P21-214-0200-0002
- P21-214-0200-0003
- P21-214-0200-0004
- P21-214-0200-0005
- P21-214-0200-0006
- PRELIMINARY DESIGN GENERAL LAYOUT SHEET 3 OF 3 P21-214-0200-0007

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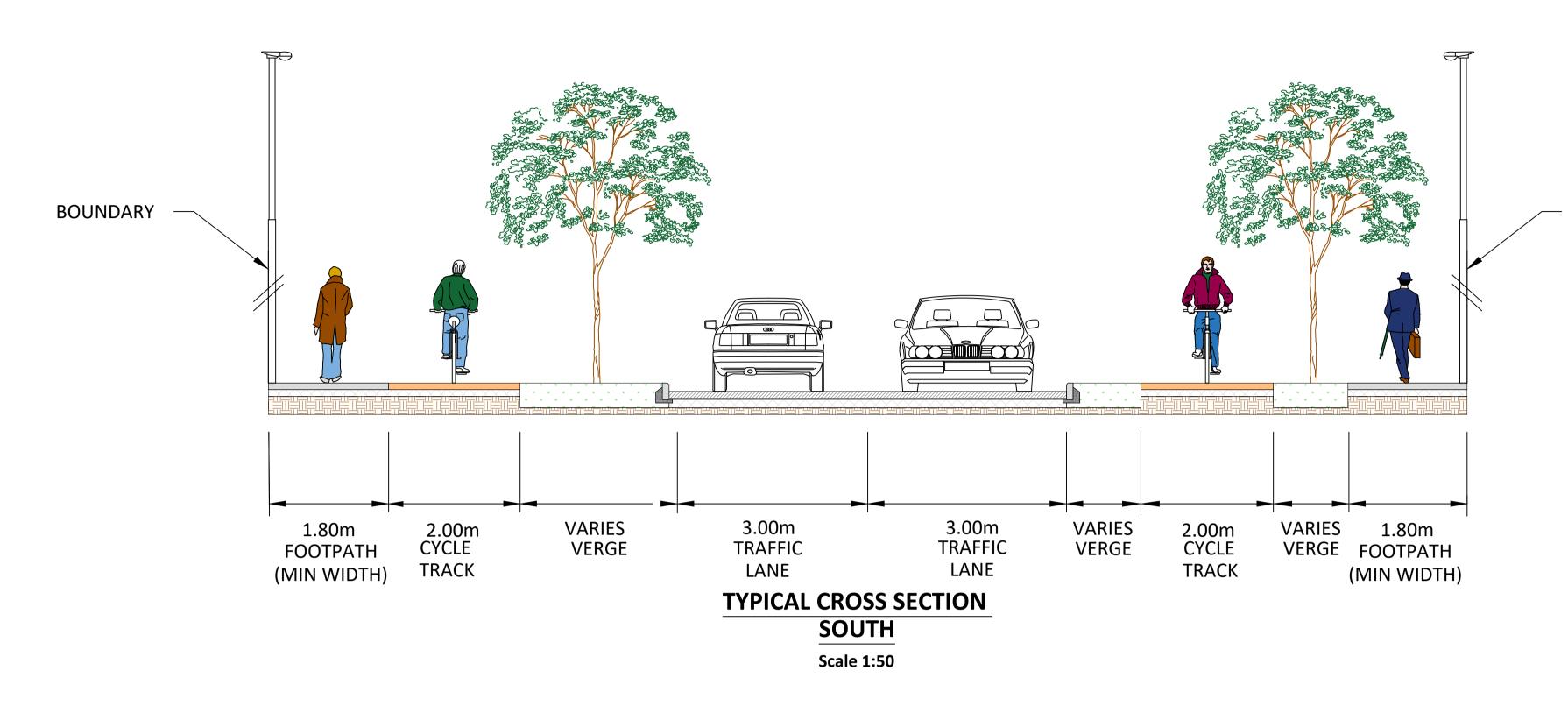
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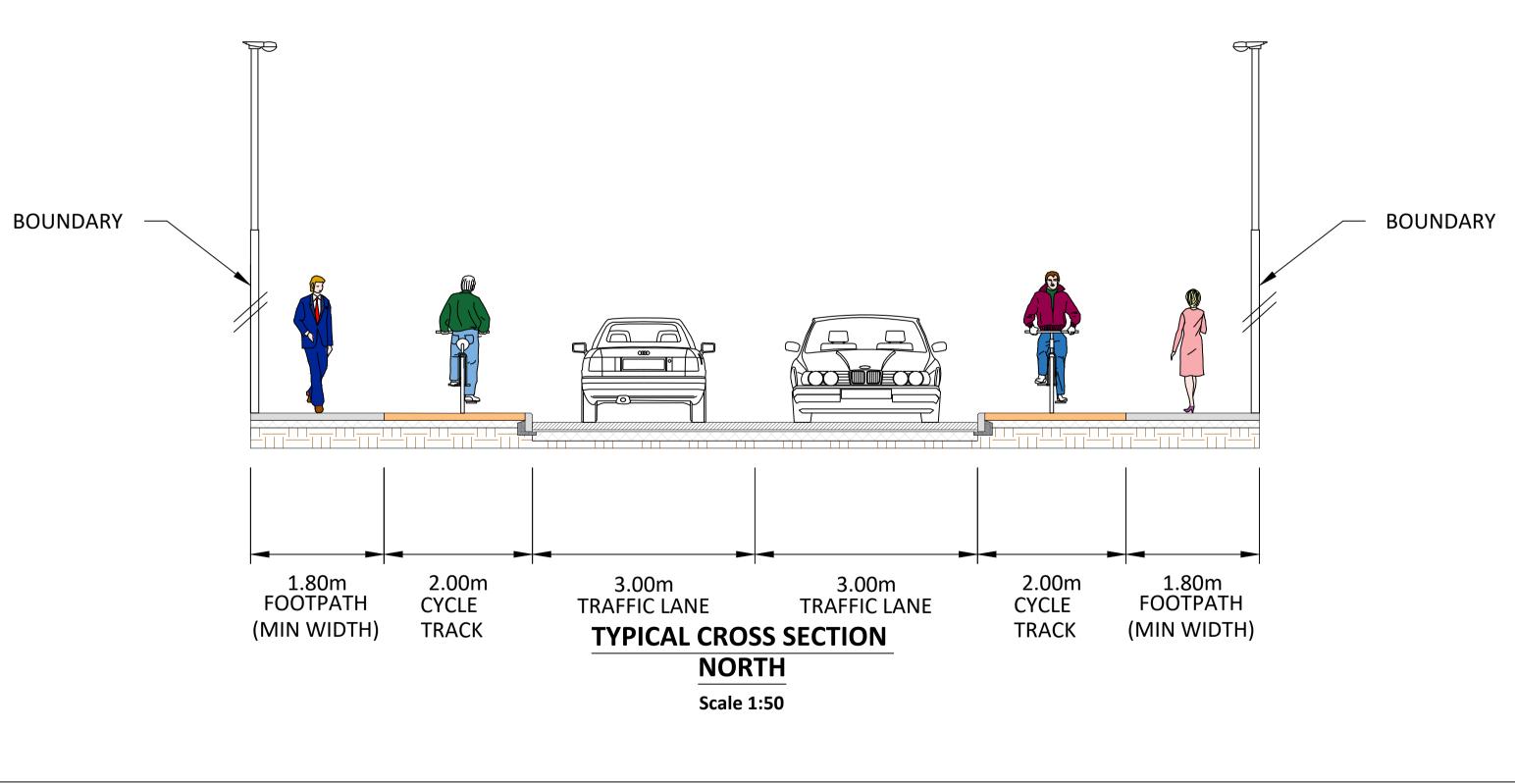
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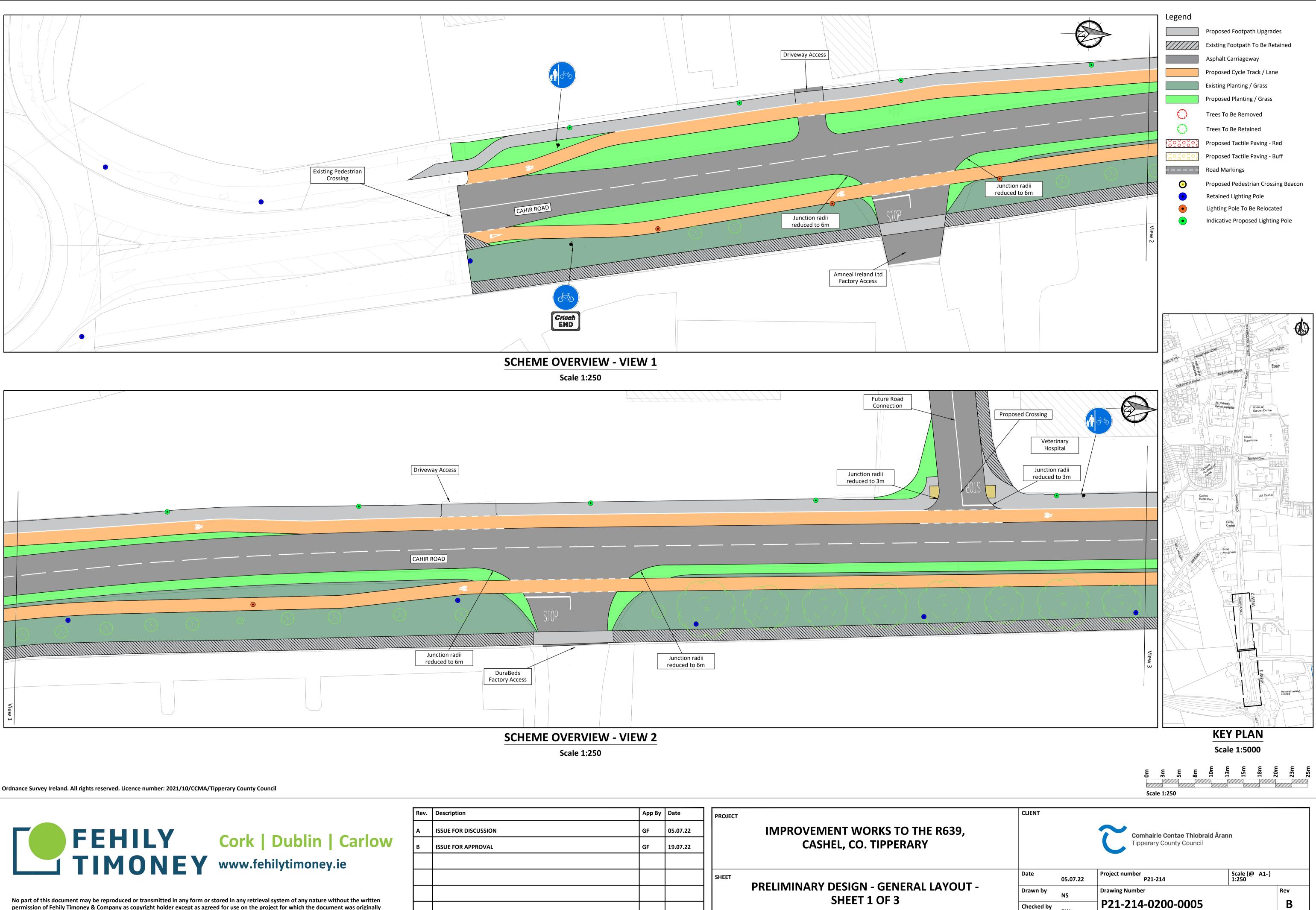


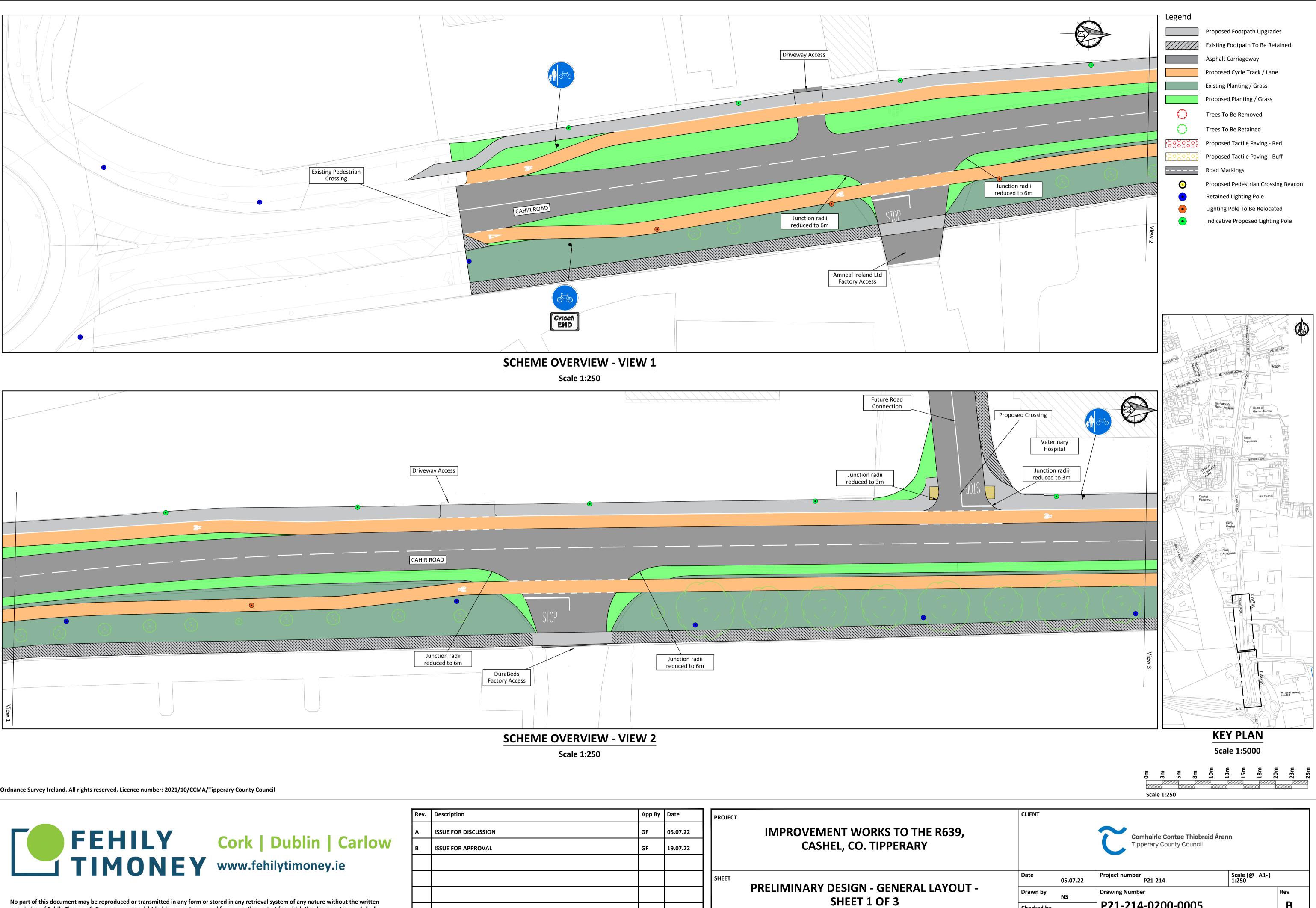
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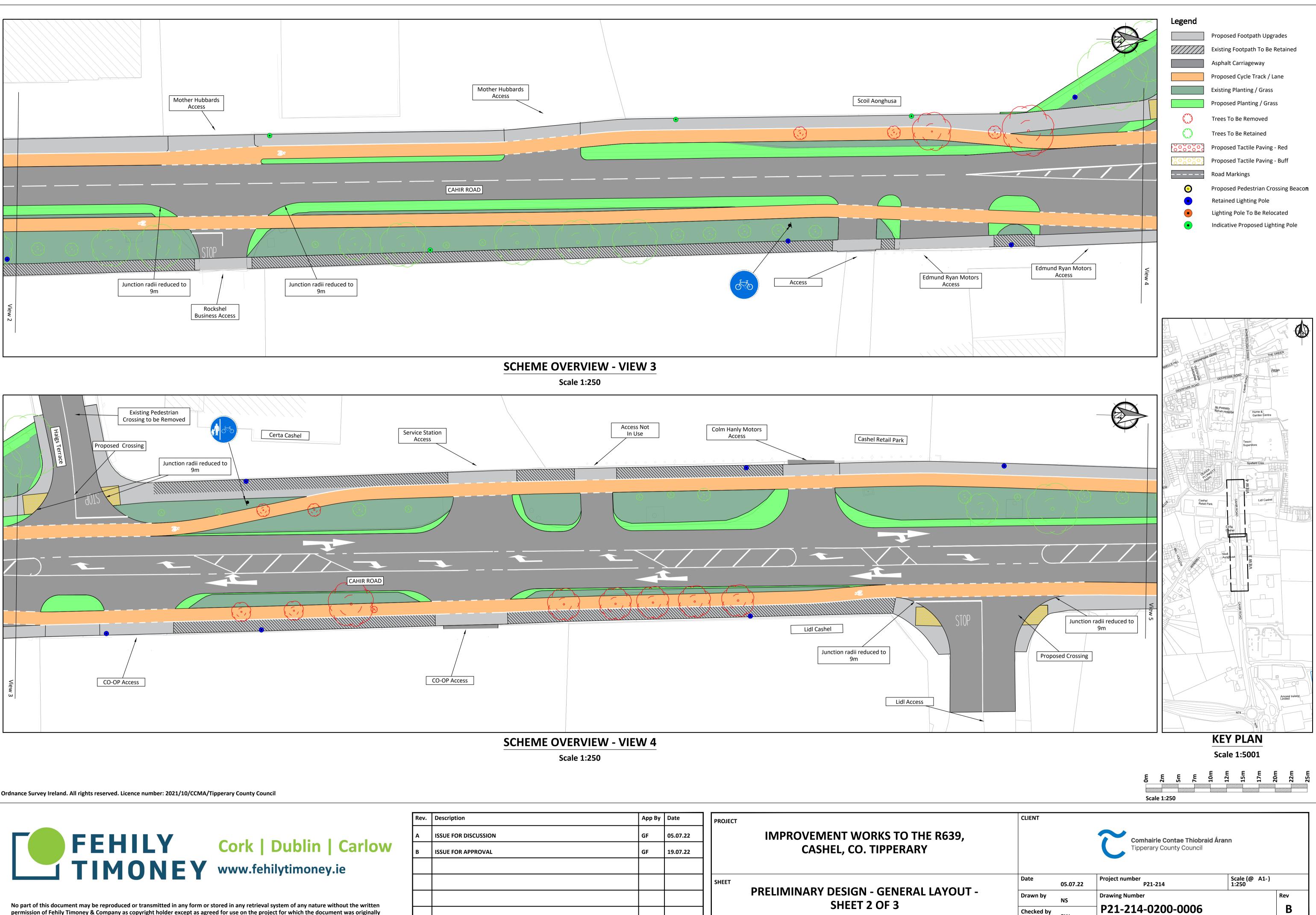


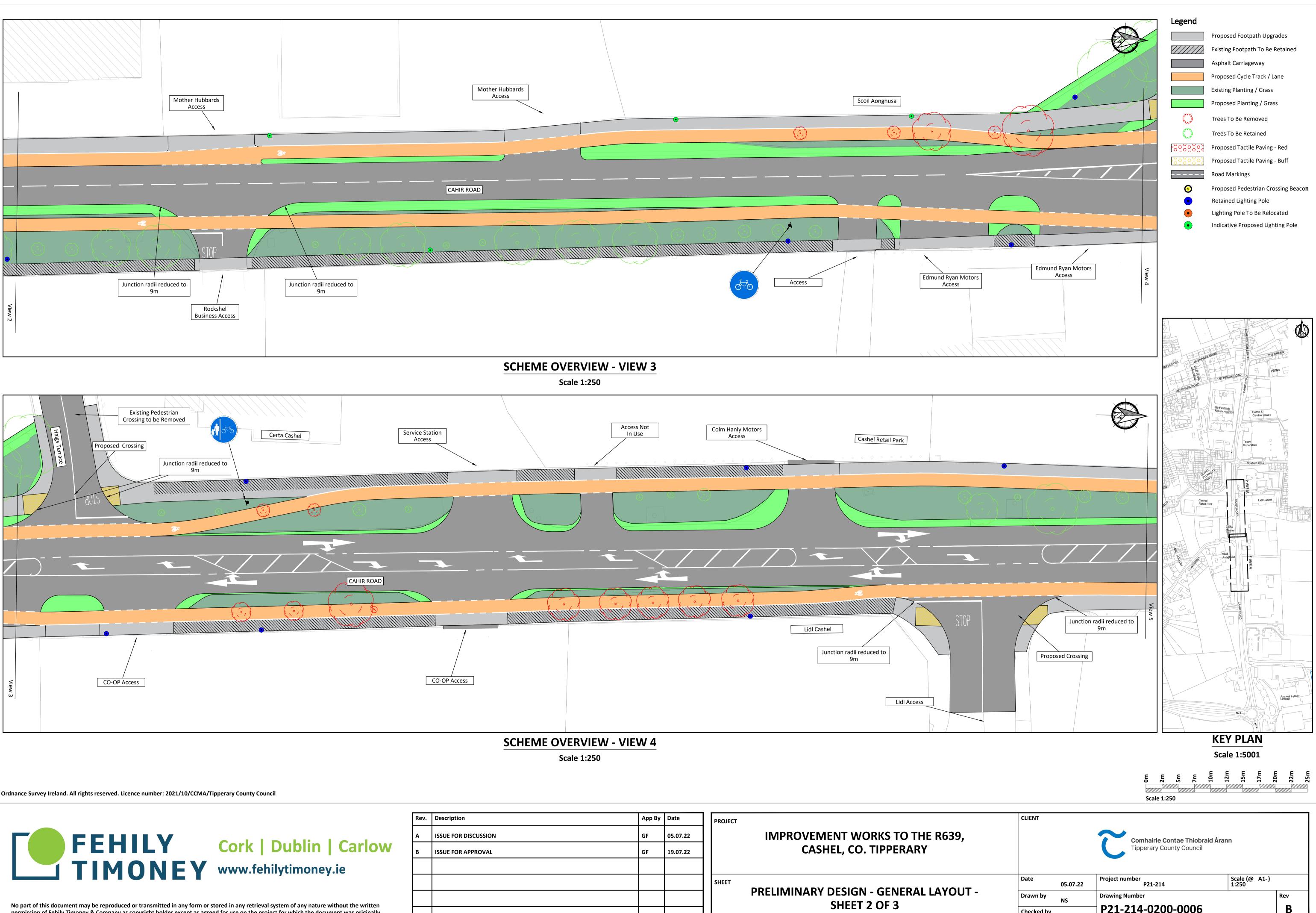
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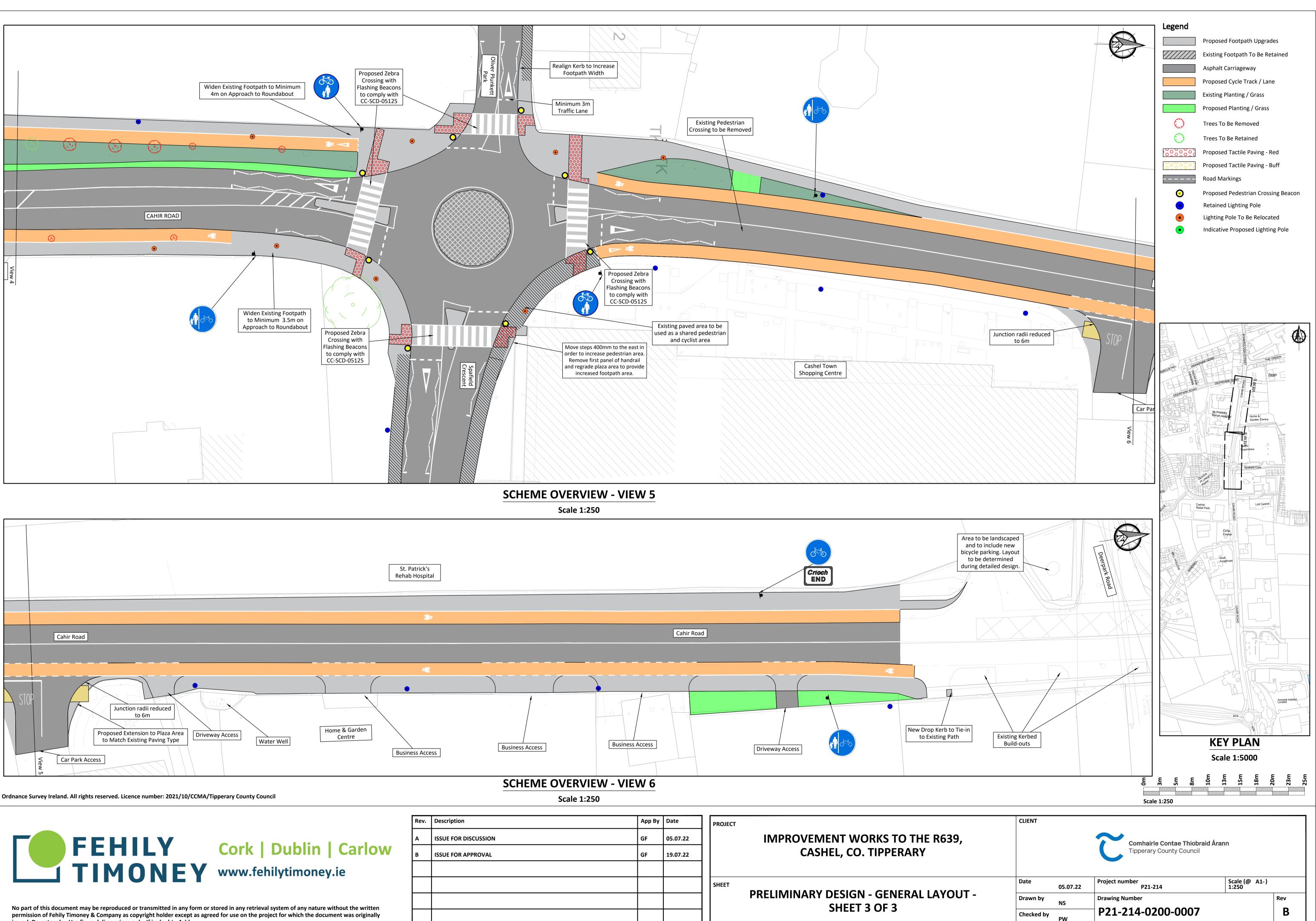


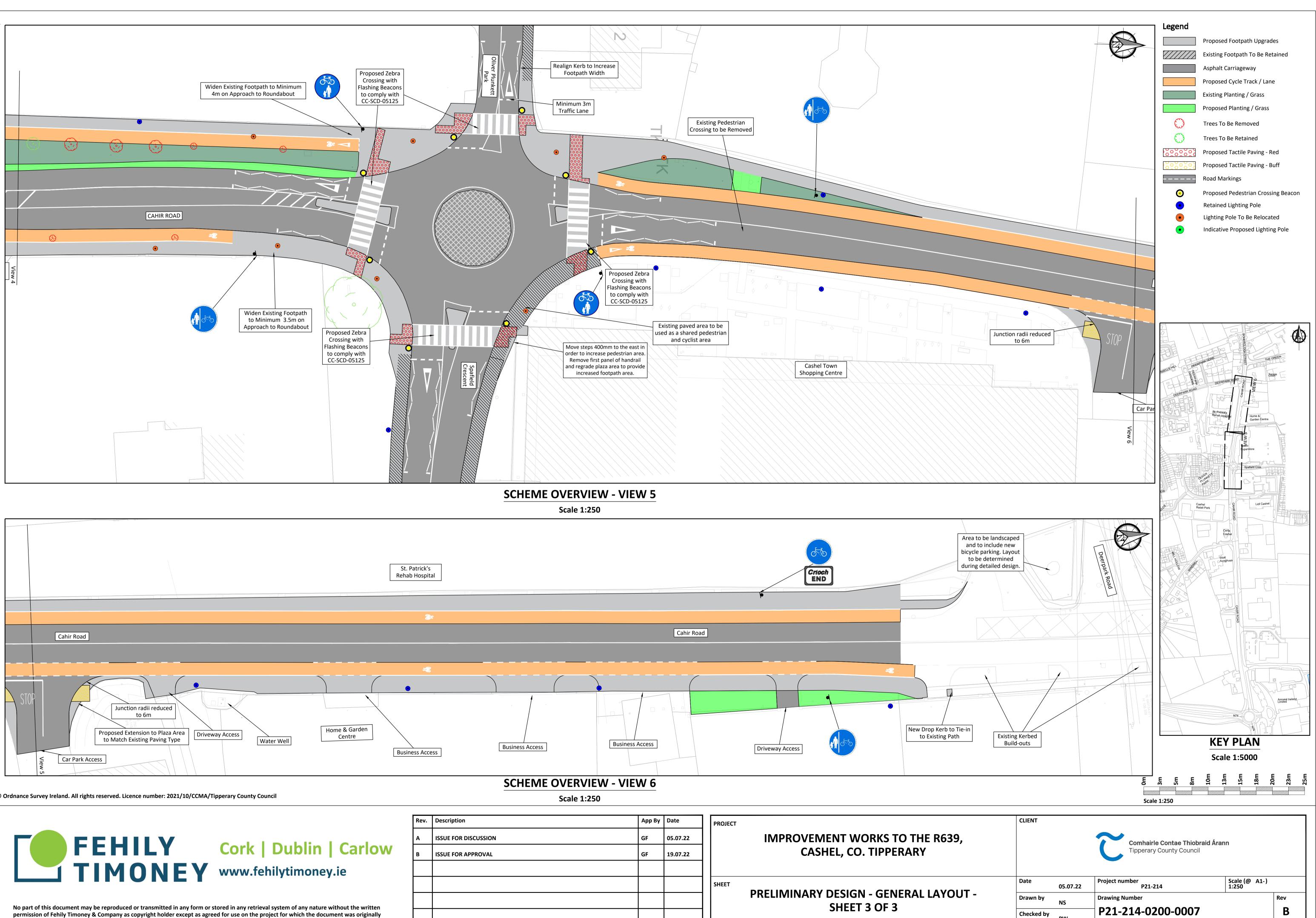
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APPENDIX B

AA Screening Report



ASSESSMENT SCREENING REPORT FOR PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Local Authority Own Development-Improvement Works to the R639 Cashel, Co. Tipperary

 R639 within the townlands of Owen's and Bigg's-Lot, Spafield and Ashwell's – Lot, Cashel The scheme aims to improve active travel arrangements on the existing R639. The scheme commences at the existing pedestrian crossing north of the R639 / N74 Roundabout and extends to the junction of Deerpark Road, a distance of approximately 1 km. The project will include the installation of cycle and pedestrian infrastructure to improve active travel connectivity along the R639 (Cahir Road) in Cashel. No – not required HE RELEVANT NATURA 2000 SITE(S): Within 15km 			
 existing R639. The scheme commences at the existing pedestrian crossing north of the R639 / N74 Roundabout and extends to the junction of Deerpark Road, a distance of approximately 1 km. The project will include the installation of cycle and pedestrian infrastructure to improve active travel connectivity along the R639 (Cahir Road) in Cashel. No – not required 			
 and extends to the junction of Deerpark Road, a distance of approximately 1 km. The project will include the installation of cycle and pedestrian infrastructure to improve active travel connectivity along the R639 (Cahir Road) in Cashel. No – not required 			
 The project will include the installation of cycle and pedestrian infrastructure to improve active travel connectivity along the R639 (Cahir Road) in Cashel. No – not required HE RELEVANT NATURA 2000 SITE(S): 			
pedestrian infrastructure to improve active travel connectivity along the R639 (Cahir Road) in Cashel. No – not required HE RELEVANT NATURA 2000 SITE(S):			
HE RELEVANT NATURA 2000 SITE(S):			
Within 15km			
SAC 002137 – Lower River Suir			
pNHA 000959 – Killough Hill			
pNHA 002043 – Bansha Wood			
pNHA 000948 - Aughnaglanny Valley			
pNHA 000965 – Laffansbridge			
pNHA 000950 – Dundrum Sanctuary			
pNHA 000670 – Rockwell College Lake			
pNHA 000969 – Power's Wood			
pNHA 000966 – Moneypark, Fethard			
pNHA 000964 – Knockroe Fox Covert			
pNHA 001526 – Quarryfort Bridge			
pNHA 000639 – Annacarty Wetlands			
pNHA 000945 – Ardmayle Pond			
pNHA 000971 – Scaragh Wood			
pNHA 000949 – Knockavilla National School, Dundrum			
pNHA 002096 – Dundrum			

Sites within the zone of influence:						
Conservation objectives/qualifying	SAC 002137 – Lower River Suir					
interests of the site and the factors that contributes to the conservation value of	Objective: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected:					
the site: (which are taken from the Natura 2000 site synopses and, if applicable, a Conservation Management Plan: (all available at <u>www.npws.ie</u>)	 [1330] Atlantic Salt Meadows [1410] Mediterranean Salt Meadows [3260] Floating River Vegetation [6430] Hydrophilous Tall Herb Communities [91A0] Old Oak Woodlands [91E0] Alluvial Forests* [91J0] Yew Woodlands* [1029] Freshwater Pearl Mussel (Margaritifera margaritifera) [1092] White clawed Crayfish (Austropotamobius pallipes) [1095] Sea Lamprey (Petromyzon marinus) [1096] Brook Lamprey (Lampetra planeri) [1099] River Lamprey (Lampetra fluviatilis) [1103] Twaite Shad (Alosa fallax) [1106] Atlantic salmon (Salmo salar) 					
Key Environmental conditions to support site integrity.	• [1355] Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.					
	 Favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when: its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing, and the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and the conservation status of its typical species is favourable. The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when: population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats, and the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and 					
	• there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.					

(C) POSSIBLE IMPACTS ARISING FROM THE PROJECT:						
	ider the potential for direct impacts on habitats ider proposed developments within 200m of the Natura 2000 site	Y/N and Comment				
1.1	Could the proposed project give rise to direct loss of habitats for which the Natura 2000 site is designated, or other habitats occurring within the Natura 2000 site?	N				
1.2	Could the proposed project give rise to increased human usage/access to the site, which could potentially cause deterioration of certain habitat types eg woodlands, wetlands or riverbanks. Consider proposals for development of a large scale within 1km of sensitive woodlands eg large scale residential development or hotels. Consider proposals for the development of paths or cycleways along the river.	N				
1.3	Does the proposed project involve development of drainage systems? If yes, could this cause drying out of wetland or woodland habitats within the Natura 2000 site?	N				
2000 Cons	Consider the potential for impacts on water quality within the NaturaY/N and Comment2000 siteConsider all proposed developments within the catchment of the Natura2000 site.					
2.1	Are there any rivers, streams or drains connecting the proposed development site and the Natura 2000 site? If yes, consider whether there is potential for construction related impacts on water quality.	N				
2.2	Would the proposed project result in surface water or other discharges to rivers, streams or drains directly connected to the Natura 2000 site? If yes, consider whether the discharges could give rise to increased eutrophication or other pollution risk within the Natura 2000 site. Consider whether increased surface water discharge could give rise to increased risk of downstream storm water surges.	N				
2.3	Would the proposed project require an industrial waste water discharge license? If yes, consider the potential impacts of the discharge on water quality in the Natura 2000 site.	N				
2.4	Is the proposed project located within a flood zone? If yes, consider whether there is potential for construction or operational related impacts on water quality in the Natura 2000 site; consider whether the proposed project increases flood risk elsewhere in the catchment and particularly the Natura 2000 site; or increases the risk of stormwater surges downstream.	N				
2.5	Are the proposals for waste water treatment in compliance with EPA requirements?	N/A				
2.6 Could the proposed project contribute to cumulative negative impacts on water quality? Consider the current status of the freshwater system (see <u>www.wfdireland.ie</u>).		N				

2.7	Would the proposed project involve dredging (construction or ongoing maintenance related)?	N		
Consid	er potential for impact on species	Y/N and Comment		
Freshw	ater Pearl Mussel			
3.1	Protection of this species will be achieved by the protection of water quality (see section 2 above), by the protection of river habitats (see section 1 above), and by the maintenance of free passage for fish.	N		
Freshw	ater Crayfish			
3.2	Protection of this species will be achieved by the protection of river habitats (see section 1 above).	Ν		
Fish sp	ecies including Salmon, Lamprey spp. and Twaite Shad			
3.3	Protection of these species will be achieved by the protection of water quality (see section 2 above), by the protection of river habitats (see section 1 above), and by the maintenance of free passage for fish.	N		
Otter				
3.4	Would the proposed project result in any interference with river banks within the Natura 2000 site?	N		
3.5	Would the proposed project result in increased levels of disturbance to the habitat of the Otter?	N		

D) NPWS ADVICE:	
Summary of advice received from NPWS:	N/A

(E) SCREENING CONCLUSION:

Screening concludes that : (Tick [v] the appropriate box A, B or C)						
	A) Appropriate Assessment is not required because the project is directly connected with or necessary to the nature conservation management of the site.					
C) Signific Statem						
Name: Gillian Flynn						
Position:	Position: A/ Senior Executive Engineer Date: 24/06/22					



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APPENDIX C

EIA Screening Report



Preliminary Examination					
Planning Reference:					
Site location:		R639 within the Ashwell's – Lot, C		nd Bigg's-Lot, Spafield and	
Proposed Developmen	t:	R639. The scheme existing pedestria extends to the jur a distance of appr The project will in	to improve active travel arrangements on the existing e commences at the an crossing north of the R639 / N74 Roundabout and nction of Deerpark Road, roximately 1 km. nclude the installation of cycle and pedestrian improve active travel connectivity along the R639 (Cahir		
		Exa	mination		
			Yes / No/ Uncertain	Comment	
Is the size of the development exceptional in the context of the existing environment?			No	Development small in scale relative to mandatory EIA threshold	
Is the proposed development located on, in, adjoining, or have the potential to impact on a sensitive site or location?			No	Site carries no environmental designations. Over 3.7km to the Lower River Suir SAC	
Will the development result in the production of any significant waste, or result in emissions or pollutants?			No	No significant operational impacts anticipated to arise from the development	
Conclusions					
Based on a preliminary likelihood of significant			ize or location of the develo	pment, is there a real	
There is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment			EIAR not required	V	
There is significant and realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effects on the environment			Screening Determination Required		
			Schedule 7A information required?		
There is a real likelihood the environment	d of signif	icant effects on	EIAR is required		
Name:		Gillian Flyr	าท	Date: 24/06/2022	
Position		A/Senior E	xecutive Engineer, Active Tra	avel	



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