

An Bord Pleanála Oral Hearing

Córas Iompair Éireann/Iarnród Éireann

Dublin to Cork Railway Line Level Crossings

Brief of Evidence

Overview of Railway Order & Railway Works

Gerry Healy

BEng (Hons) CEng FIEI IntPE (Irl)

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Summary of proposed Railway Order & Railway Works**

1. QUALIFICATIONS AND ROLE IN THE PROPOSED PROJECT

- 1 In accordance with Section 39(1)(a) of the Transport (Railway Infrastructure) Act 2001 as amended and substituted (including by SI 743 of 2021) (hereafter referred to as 'the 2001 Act'). I confirm that I have over 26 years post graduate experience and I am a Senior Associate Director of Highways in Jacobs. I hold a Bachelor of Engineering (Hons) degree in Civil Engineering from Greenwich University London, I am a Chartered Member and Fellow of the Institution of Engineers of Ireland (Engineers Ireland), and I am registered with them as an International Professional Engineer.
- 2 My experience to date has been primarily focused on the planning, design, construction, and project management of road-based projects. I have been responsible for the road design on a number of Major Road and Motorway projects in Ireland and I have project managed and directed a number of other major roads projects from initial option identification through detailed design and construction in Ireland and Qatar. A number of these projects included the preparation of the roads order documentation (EIAR and CPO).
- 3 I have been involved in the Project since May 2021 and I am currently engaged as the Project Director providing overview and guidance to the Project team and Iarnród Éireann.
- 4 This statement provides a general overview and description of the Railway Order, railway works (the proposed development/project) and provides responses to issues raised in submissions.

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2. SUMMARY OF RAILWAY ORDER & RAILWAY WORKS (proposed development/project)

Project Overview

- 5 Level crossings XC187 Fantstown and XC201 Thomastown are in County Limerick, lying directly south of Limerick City close to the Cork-Limerick border, while the remaining sites are located in County Cork, directly north of Mallow.
- 6 Urban areas in close proximity to the sites are Kilmallock, which lies between existing crossings XC187 Fantstown and XC201 Thomastown; Charleville, which lies to the south-west of XC201 Thomastown and north of crossing XC209 Ballyhay; and directly southeast of crossing XC219 Buttevant.

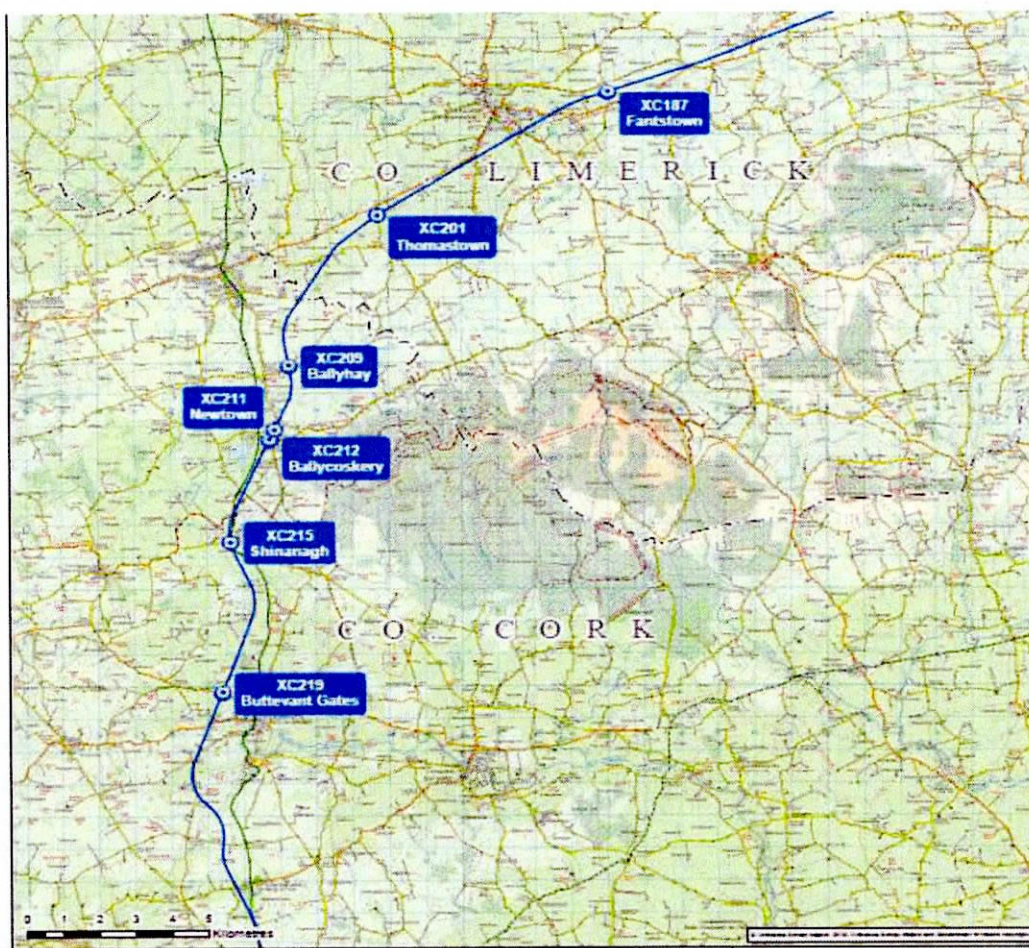


Figure 2.1: Locations of the 7 Level Crossings

- 7 As described by David Vaughan, it is an objective of both CIÉ and IÉ to remove, or upgrade, level crossings in Ireland where possible and practicable. The Railway Order and railway works (referred to herein as 'the proposed Project') is located on the section of the Dublin – Cork railway line between Limerick Junction and Mallow Stations where rail speeds can reach up to 160km/hr. The proposed Project seeks to address the safety risks associated with the road rail interface at seven public road level crossings on this section of the line. The proposed Project seeks to eliminate/upgrade these level

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crossings. The proposed Project is located within a 24km section of the Dublin – Cork Railway Line, which crosses the Cork/Limerick County boundary as set out at Figure 2.1 below.

- 8 In 2018, a Feasibility Study was undertaken by Iarnród Éireann to identify the optimum strategy to eliminate/de-man these seven manned crossings. In accordance with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sports' "Guidelines on a Common Appraisal Framework for Transport Projects and Programmes" the provision of and need for improved transport systems is based on the following criteria:

- Economy
- Safety
- Physical Activity
- Environment
- Accessibility and Social Inclusion
- Integration

- 9 These guidelines and requirements are themselves in compliance, and in accordance with, the Department of Finance's "Guidelines on the Appraisal and Management of Capital Expenditure Proposals in the Public Sector". The development and appraisal of this scheme is being undertaken in accordance with the National Transport Authority (the NTA) 'Project Management Guidelines'.

- 10 Representatives from New Works, CCE, IMO, SET and CIÉ Group Property provided input on each of the potential options for the elimination/de-manning of the crossings. The appraisal covered the comparable advantages or disadvantages, under the Common Appraisal Frameworks criteria, of the below solution options for each of the sites.

- a) Do Nothing
- b) Alternative Access / Overbridge
- c) Upgrade to 4 Barrier CCTV
- d) Straight Closure

- 11 The Straight Closure option was not assessed for level crossings XC209, XC212, XC215 and XC219 due to the volume of road traffic using these level crossings and length of the existing alternative routes.

- 12 Table 2.1 provides a summary of the results of the appraisal for each level crossing. The Feasibility Study is included in Volume 2: Chapter 1 – Introduction, Appendix 1K of the EIAR.

Table 2.1: Feasibility Study Options Appraisal Summary

Level Crossing	Proposed Solution
XC187 Fantstown	Straight Closure
XC201 Thomastown	Alternative Access/ Overbridge
XC209 Ballyhay	Alternative Access/ Overbridge OR Upgrade to 4 Barrier CCTV
XC211 Newtown	Alternative Access/ Overbridge
XC212 Ballycoskery	Alternative Access/ Overbridge
XC215 Shinanagh	Alternative Access/ Overbridge
XC219 Buttevant	Alternative Access/ Overbridge

- 13 In 2019, in order to determine the emerging preferred option at each of the level crossing points, Jacobs Engineering Ireland undertook an option selection analysis at each location identified as requiring an Alternative Access/ Overbridge in the Feasibility Report. The Option Selection Report assessed a

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number of route options for the alternative access/overbridge at each of the six locations noted in Table 2.1 above.

14 The appraisal of the Option Selection is based on the criteria identified in the Common Appraisal Framework for Transport Projects and Programmes (DTTS, 2016). A Multi Criteria Analysis (MCA) was undertaken based on criteria in the Common Appraisal framework for Public Transport Projects and Programmes with the criteria outlined below.

- Economy
- Engineering
- Environment
- Accessibility & Social Inclusion
- Integration
- Physical Activity

15 This comparative assessment is qualitative, high level, and is based only on key criteria that would offer differentiation between the different options. As such, it was assumed that there is no relevant differentiation between the route options regarding Accessibility & Social Inclusion, Integration, and Physical Activity.

16 Following the comparative assessment of the various options utilising an MCA at each level crossing location, the emerging preferred option was identified for each of the locations. These options were taken forward for further development and preliminary design. The Option Selection Report is included in Volume 2: Chapter 2 – Project Need and Alternatives, Appendix 2B of the EIAR.

17 While the emerging preferred overbridge option at XC209 Ballyhay was determined from the Option Selection Report, the initial Feasibility Report had given equal weight to a 4 Barrier CCTV option and an alternative access/overbridge option. XC209 Ballyhay level crossing is located adjacent to the Awbeg River, a tributary of the Blackwater River Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and during the Preliminary Design process the scale of the proposed Awbeg river bridge structure and the scale of the impact of the overbridge option on the surrounding environment became more apparent. The overbridge option was not considered feasible and was therefore discounted from further consideration. The 4 barrier option was progressed to Railway Order.

18 A summary of the proposed solutions at each of the seven level crossing locations that are now the subject of this Railway Order are outlined in Table 2.2 below.

Table 2.2: Options Selection Appraisal Summary

Level Crossing	Proposed Solution
XC187 - Fantstown	Closure
XC201 - Thomastown	New Overbridge
XC209 - Ballyhay	Upgrade to CCTV Level Crossing
XC211 - Newtown	New Alternative Access Road (with Overbridge for XC212)
XC212 - Ballycoskery	New Overbridge (with Alternative Access Road for XC211)
XC215 - Shinanagh	New Alternative Access Road connecting to existing overbridge
XC219 - Buttevant	New Overbridge

19 The proposed Project is described in detail in Volume 2, Chapter 3: Project Description of the EIAR. The key elements of the proposed Project are set out in Table 2.3 below.

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Table 2.3: Overview of the Key Elements of the proposed Project

Location	Infrastructure	Description
XC187- Fantstown	N/A.	Close off level crossing. Divert traffic and non-vehicular users along existing roads to existing overbridge approximately 3km to the northeast.
XC201- Thomastown	1no. bridge over railway line.	New Overbridge: 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. bridge over railway line, 2no. retaining walls. New car park.	New road over rail bridge: Tie in to existing Local Road to East and West (L1327), new carpark proposed for existing school. Tie into Beechwood Housing Estate and Ballyhea National School to North and existing Local Road to south. Carriageway widths are proposed to match existing widths for safety reasons.
XC215- Shinanagh	Upgrade to existing bridge over railway line. New access road.	New access road to the west of the railway, tie in to L1320 in the south and to tie into existing road over rail bridge on the L5507 approx. 1km to the north. Carriageway widths are proposed to match existing widths for safety reasons.
XC219- Buttevant	1no. bridge over railway line, 1no. portal frame road over river bridge culvert, 1no. ditch box culvert, 1no.access road box culvert, 2no. retaining walls.	Replace this crossing with a new road over rail bridge. Tie in to existing regional road to east and west (R522) Crossing of Pepperhill River and adjacent stream spur by box culverts. Carriageway widths are proposed to match existing widths for safety reasons.

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Description of Proposed Elements

20 The following section provides a summary and overview of the proposed project and has been extracted from various sections with the EIAR Chapters 1, Introduction, Chapter 2, Project Need and Alternatives and Chapter 3, Project Description.

XC187 Fantstown

21 The level crossing is located on local road LS 8514, 3km to the east of Kilmallock in the townland of Fantstown. The surrounding area for the crossing is characterised as a dispersed rural area with low density individual housing. See Figure 2.2.

22 The level crossing is manned 07.30hrs-23.30hrs and the gates are normally closed to road traffic, with the gate keeper opening the gates as required. The crossings are closed to road traffic from 23.30hrs until 07.30hrs. Similar to XC201 Thomastown, the length of time that the road user is waiting depends on when they arrive at the gate and if a train has left Limerick Junction or Charleville. The road user has to wait until they pass.



Figure 2.2: XC187 Fantstown

23 The proposed solution for the elimination/upgrade of the XC187 Fantstown, is through the extinguishment of the public right of way across the level crossing. Road users would be diverted to the east to an existing overbridge. See Figure 2.3. The key elements include:

- a) Removal of the existing level crossing infrastructure comprising level crossing gates and all ancillary works in relation to the extinguishment of the public right of way across the level crossing;
- b) Construction of 2.4m high block wall on both sides of the existing level crossing to stop up access across the Dublin – Cork Railway Line;
- c) Signage and all ancillary works; and

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- d) Access to existing Iarnród Éireann compound on the north side of the level crossing to be retained.

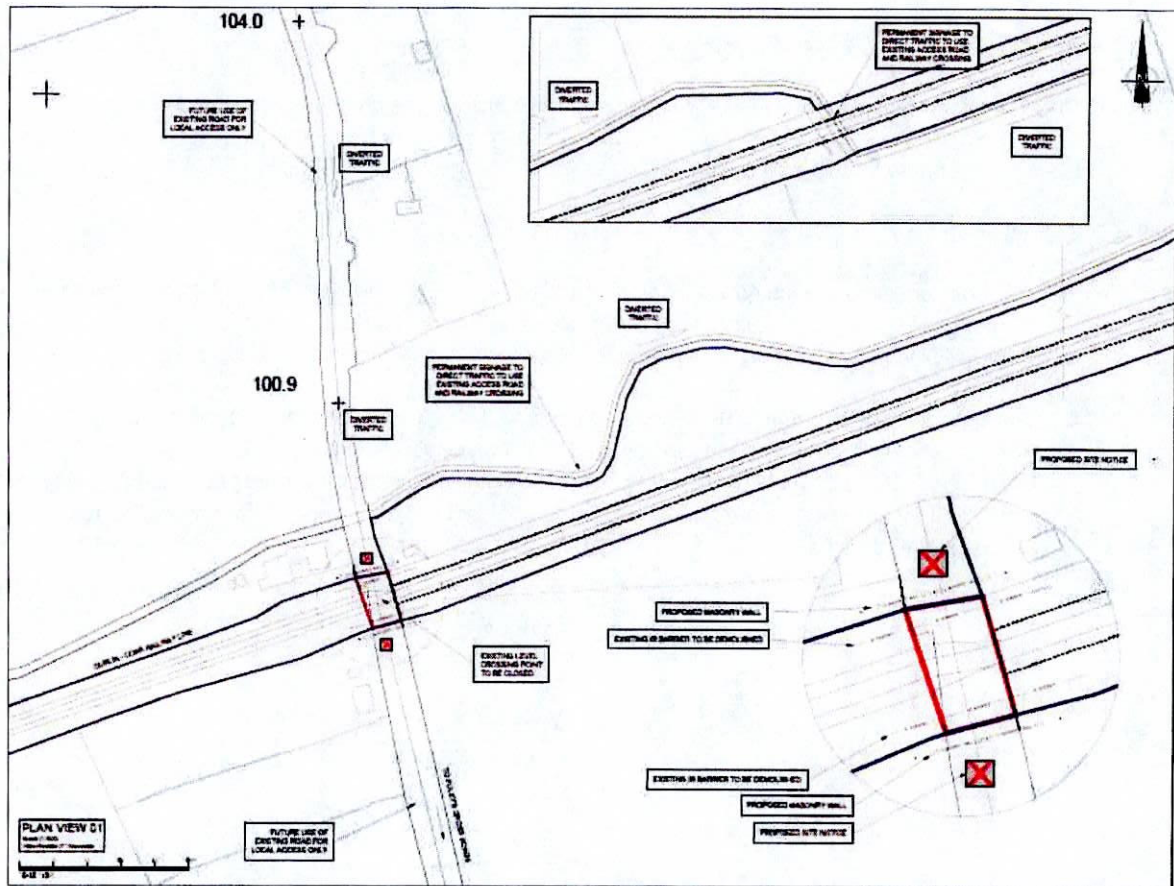


Figure 2.3: XC187 Fantstown Proposed Solution

XC201- Thomastown

- 24 The level crossing is located on a local road, 5km to the east of Charleville in the townland of Thomastown. Like XC187 Fantstown, the crossing is located rurally and conforms to the same hours of operation, 07.30hrs-23.30hrs. See Figure 2.4.

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Figure 2.4: XC201 Thomastown

- 25 The crossing is manned 07.30hrs-23.30hrs and the gates are normally closed to road traffic, with the gate keeper opening the gates as required. The crossing is closed to road traffic from 23.30hrs until 07.30hrs. Similar to XC187 Fantstown, the length of time that the road user is waiting depends on when they arrive at the gate and if a train has left Limerick Junction or Charleville. The road user has to wait until they pass.
- 26 It is proposed to extinguish the public right of way, to close the existing XC201 Thomastown Level Crossing and realign the local road. The proposed realignment will have a new road-over-rail bridge to the southwest of the closed level crossing, and a new junction onto the Regional Road R515, to the west of the existing junction. The remaining sections of the existing local road pavement to the north and south of the closed level crossing will be broken up and removed as this will no longer be required for access. See Figure 2.5. The key elements of the proposed Project include:
- a) Removal of existing level crossing infrastructure comprising level crossing gates and all ancillary works in relation to the extinguishment of the public right of way across the level crossing;
 - b) Construction of 2.4m high palisade gate to the Up (north) side of railway line for retained track access and 2.4m high block wall to the Down (south) side to stop up access across the Dublin – Cork Railway Line;
 - c) Construction of a new road-over-rail bridge to the southwest of the existing Level Crossing and all ancillary works to provide alternative access across the Dublin – Cork Railway Line;
 - d) Realignment of the local road L8572;
 - e) Construction of a new approximately 0.57km long, around 4m wide carriageway with a maximum height of 88.65m AOD road-over-rail bridge to the southwest of the closed level crossing;
 - f) New junction onto the Regional Road R515, to the west of the existing junction, a new junction onto local road L8572;
 - g) Earthworks with a maximum height of 7.2m and maximum width of approximately 39.5m;
 - h) Private access provision to four fields immediately adjacent to the road-over rail bridge and provision of two passing bays;
 - i) Sections of the existing local road pavement will be broken up, removed, and landscaped where no longer required;

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- j) Undergrounding of existing ESB overhead electricity line; and
- k) Associated landscaping, fencing, drainage, surfacing, signage, temporary construction compound areas, bird boxes and all ancillary works.

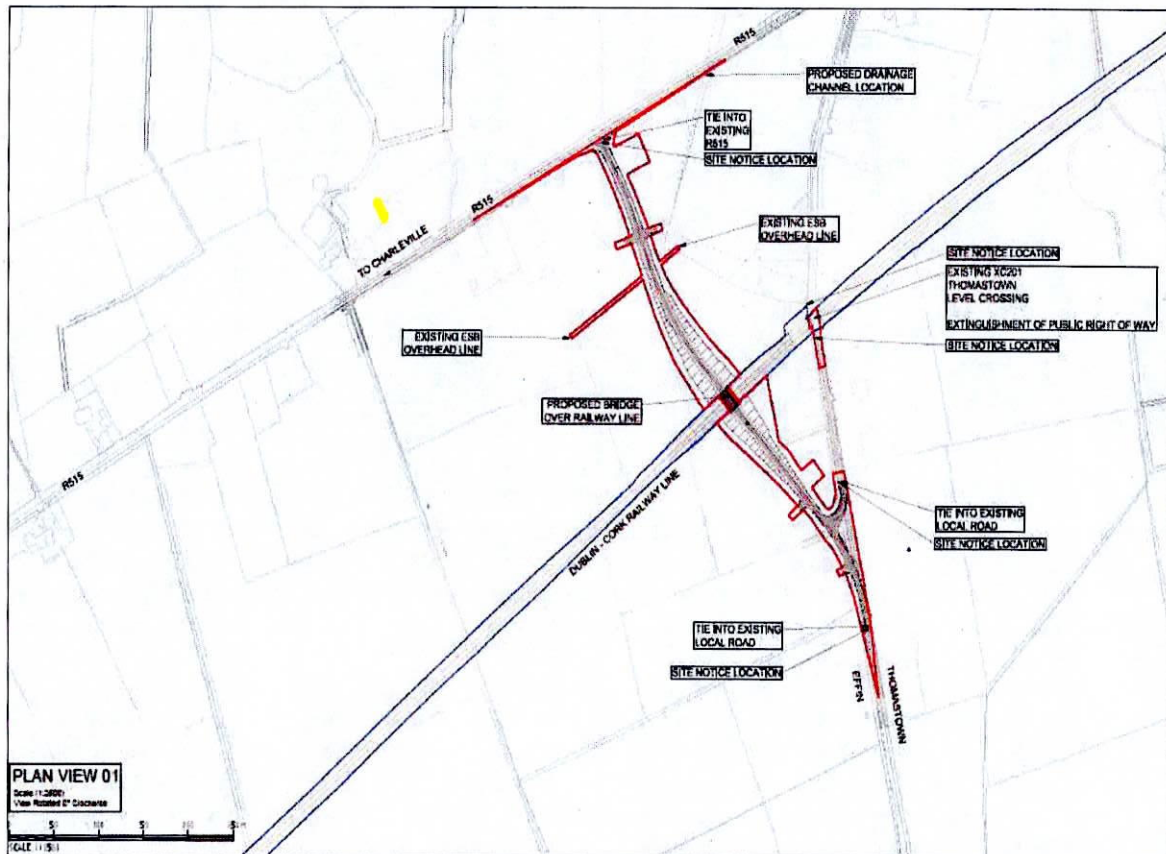


Figure 2.5: XC201 Thomastown Proposed Route Alignment

XC209- Ballyhay

- 27 The crossing is located on a local road in the townland of Ballyhay. It is within a rural, dispersed community consisting of low-density individual housing, with a built-up area consisting of a supermarket distribution centre, GAA Club and ribbon development centring on a crossroads to the west. See Figure 2.6.
- 28 The crossing is usually open to road traffic during the day, with the gatekeeper closing the gates to facilitate train movements. It is manned 07.30hrs-23.30hrs; at night the crossing is closed to road traffic. The level crossing is immediately to the north of a rail over river bridge (UBC 296) on the Awbeg River, which is a tributary of the Blackwater River Special Area of Conservation (Site No. 002170). There is also a junction on the road and a river bridge (Awbeg River) immediately to the east of the level crossing.

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Figure 2.6: XC209 Ballyhay

29 The proposed solution for XC209 Ballyhay is to retain the existing level crossing function and convert it to a CCTV controlled level crossing. A CCTV level crossing would be manually controlled by the Level Crossing Control Centre (for XC209 this would be the control centre in Mallow). CCTV cameras mounted in close proximity to the crossing enables the signaller to monitor the road closure and to determine that the crossing is clear, before releasing the protecting signals. See Figure 2.7 below. The key elements of the proposed CCTV upgrade to XC209 Ballyhay include:

- a) Removal of existing level crossing gates and installation of a 4-barrier CCTV controlled level crossing comprising;
- b) Construction of single storey REB building 2.4m wide x 9m long;
- c) 2No. 6.1m wide barriers to replace the existing level crossing gates;
- d) 4No. Traffic lights and 1No. advanced warning traffic light;
- e) 2No. 10m high lighting towers;
- f) 2No. 8m high CCTV towers and bases;
- g) Relocation of existing gate keeper's hut;
- h) Allen key fencing;
- i) Road resurfacing;
- j) Underground electrical cable ducting;
- k) Undergrounding of existing ESB overhead electricity line;
- l) 2No. recycled plastic cattle grids; and
- m) All associated fencing, drainage surfacing, signage, and all ancillary works.

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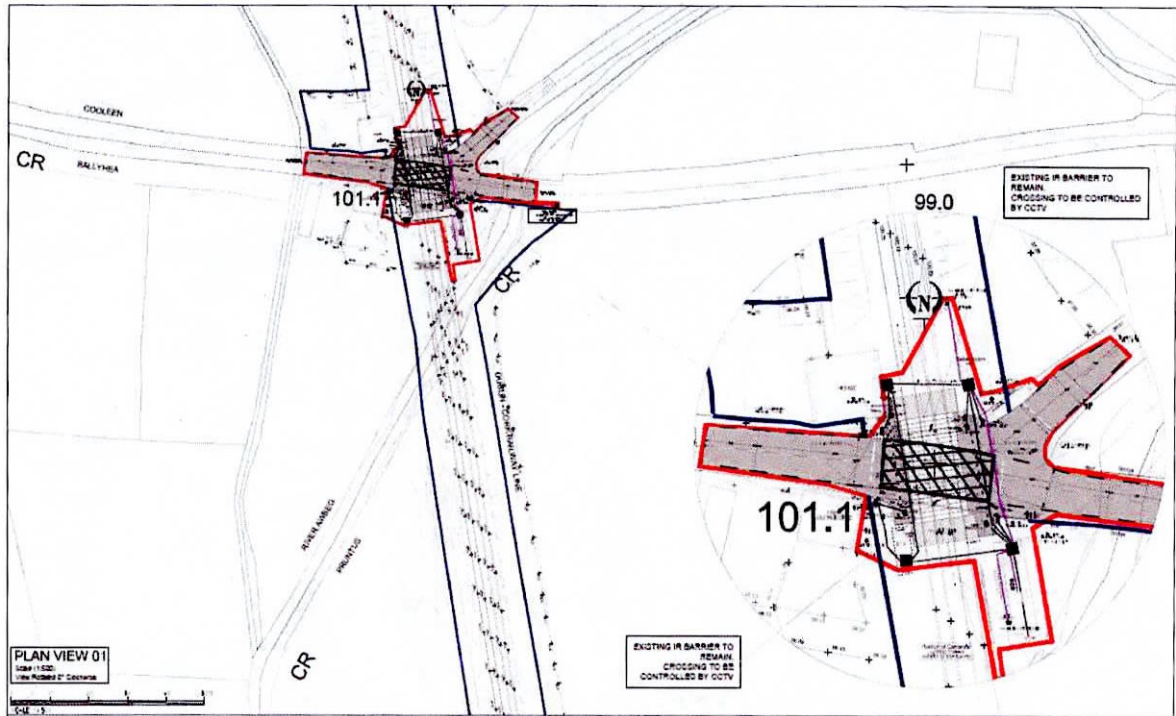


Figure 2.7: XC209 Ballyhay CCTV Upgrade

XC211- Newtown

- 30 The level crossing runs along the eastern side of Ballyhea Village in County Cork. It is located on a local road, 0.5km to the north of Ballyhea Village in the townland of Newtown, See Figure 2.8.
- 31 XC211 Newtown is manned 07.30hrs-23.30hrs and the gates are normally open to road traffic during the day when not required to close to facilitate the movement of trains. During night-time, the crossing is closed to road traffic.



Figure 2.8: XC211 Newtown

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- 32 The proposed solution involves provision of a new link road to the east of the railway corridor, immediately east of the existing road over rail bridge north of XC211 Newtown, to connect the local road at the east side of XC211 Newtown. It is proposed to extinguish the public right of way and close the existing XC211 Newtown level crossing. See Figure 2.9 below. The key elements of the proposed Project include:
- a) Removal of existing level crossing infrastructure comprising level crossing gates and all ancillary works in relation to the extinguishment of the public right of way across the level crossing;
 - b) Construction of 2.4m high block wall to Up (west) side and 2.4m high palisade gate to Down (east) side for retained track access to stop up access across the Dublin – Cork Railway Line;
 - c) Construction of a new approximately 0.477km and 4m wide link road, to the east of the closed level crossing;
 - d) The maximum height of the proposed road alignment is at 109.5m AOD;
 - e) Earthworks with a maximum height of 3.19m and maximum width of 36m;
 - f) The proposed access road will be 'cut' into the existing topography to the east along its length and for a short distance to the west at its northernmost point, up to a maximum height of 5m, to allow for the vertical alignment to be designed to TII standards;
 - g) To the west of the proposed access road, embankments will be created, up to a maximum height of 5m from existing levels, to allow for the vertical alignment to be designed to TII standards;
 - h) Private access provision to 1no. field immediately adjacent to the link road and provision of 2No. passing bays;
 - i) Sections of the existing local road pavement will be broken up, removed, and landscaped where no longer required; and
 - j) Associated landscaping, fencing, new pond area, bird boxes, drainage, surfacing, signage, and all ancillary works.

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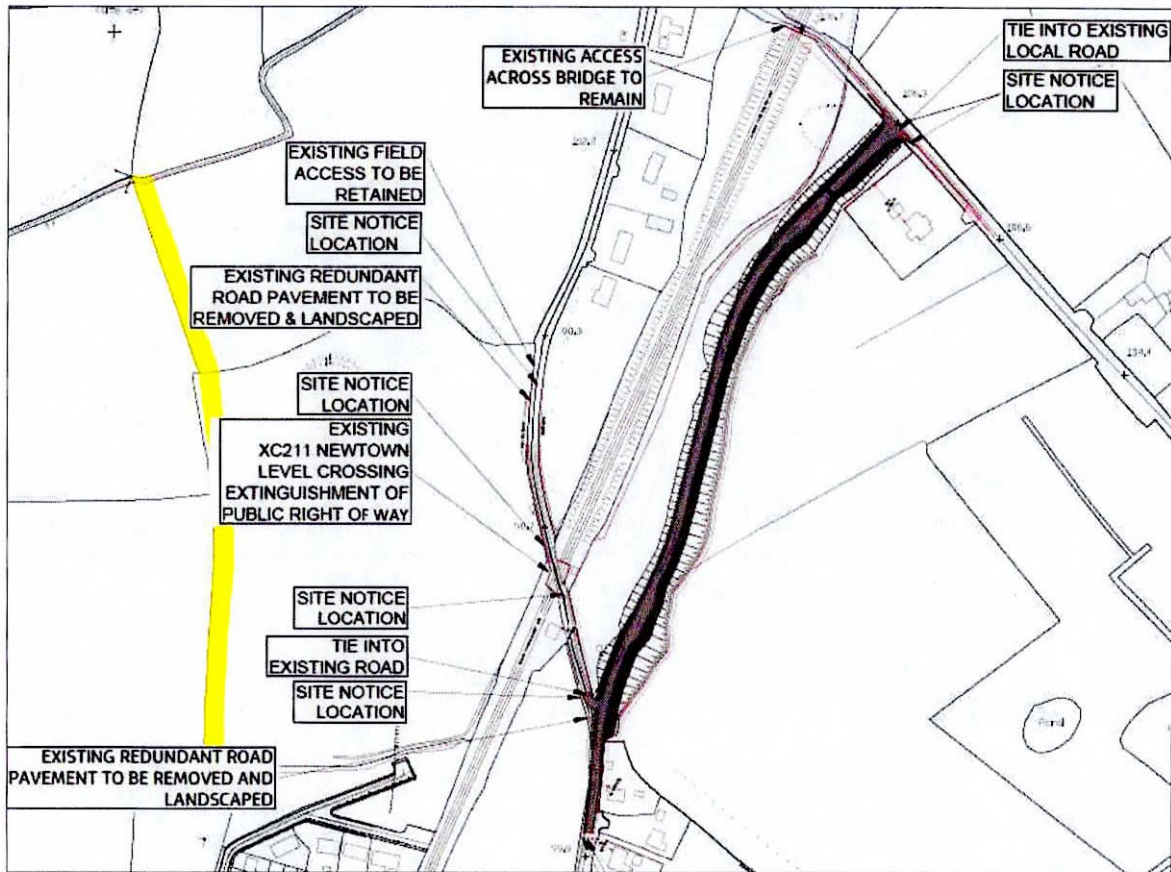


Figure 2.9: XC211 Newtown Proposed Alignment

XC212- Ballycoskery

33 The level crossing runs along the eastern side of Ballyhea Village in County Cork. The XC212 Ballycoskery crossing is located in Ballyhea Village on local road L1327 in the townland of Ballycoskery, directly adjacent to the Ballyhea National School (east side) and the Beechwood Housing Estate (west side). See Figure 2.10

34 XC212 Ballycoskery is designated as a 'CD-Type' level crossing which should mean gates normally open to road traffic by day and night and only closed to road traffic to facilitate the movement of trains. It is operated as a 'CX-Type' level crossing and is therefore manned on a 24-hour basis. There are also pedestrian wicket gates at the crossing, but these are permanently locked.

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Figure 2.10: XC212 Ballycoskery

- 35 The proposed solution for the elimination/upgrade of the Level Crossing XC212, Ballycoskery is through the provision of alternative access across the railway line via a new road-over-rail bridge. The existing XC212 Ballycoskery Level Crossing will be closed and the L1327 local road realigned, with a new road-over-rail bridge to the south of the closed level crossing, tying in before the N20 national road junction to the west, and after the existing Ballyhea National School and crossroads to the east. It is proposed to change the existing crossroads to the east of the level crossing to a right-left stagger junction to improve safety. See Inset Figure 2.11 below. It is proposed to extinguish the public right of way and close the existing XC212 Ballycoskery level crossing. The 'stopping up' of the existing level crossing will be via a 2.4m high block wall on both sides of the track.
- 36 The proposed Project will separate those vehicles associated with school drop off from those just seeking to travel west and will create a dedicated turning and parking area that will improve safety for children and parents accessing the school and for that of road users. The remaining sections of the existing local road pavement to the west of the closed level crossing will be broken up and removed as no longer required. The key elements of the proposed Project include:
- a) Removal of existing level crossing infrastructure comprising level crossing gates and all ancillary works in relation to the extinguishment of the public right of way across the level crossing;
 - b) Construction of 2.4m high block wall on both sides of the existing level crossing to stop up access across the Dublin – Cork Railway Line;
 - c) Realignment of the L1327 local road to the South of the closed level crossing, and all ancillary works;
 - d) Construction of a new approximately 0.46km, around 7m wide road with 1m verge over rail bridge with a maximum height of about 105.3m AOD to the south of the closed level crossing, forming part of local road L1327, tying in before the N20 national road junction to the west and tying in after the existing school and crossroads to the east, and all ancillary works;
 - e) Reconfiguration of the existing crossroads junction to the east of the level crossing to a right-left stagger junction;
 - f) Provision of a new 5m – 10.5m high by 85m long retaining wall;
 - g) Provision of new pedestrian walkway to the south of Beechwood Drive across the road over rail bridge ending outside Ballyhea National School;

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- h) Construction of a car park and turning area to the immediate south of Ballyhea National School;
- i) Private access provision to existing dwellings;
- j) Earthworks with a maximum height of 9m and maximum width of 54m;
- k) Demolition of former level crossing gate keepers building and ancillary single storage building;
- l) Sections of the existing local road pavement will be broken up, removed, and landscaped where no longer required; and
- m) Associated landscaping, fencing, lighting, drainage, surfacing, signage, temporary construction compound areas, ecological translocation area, bird boxes and all ancillary works.

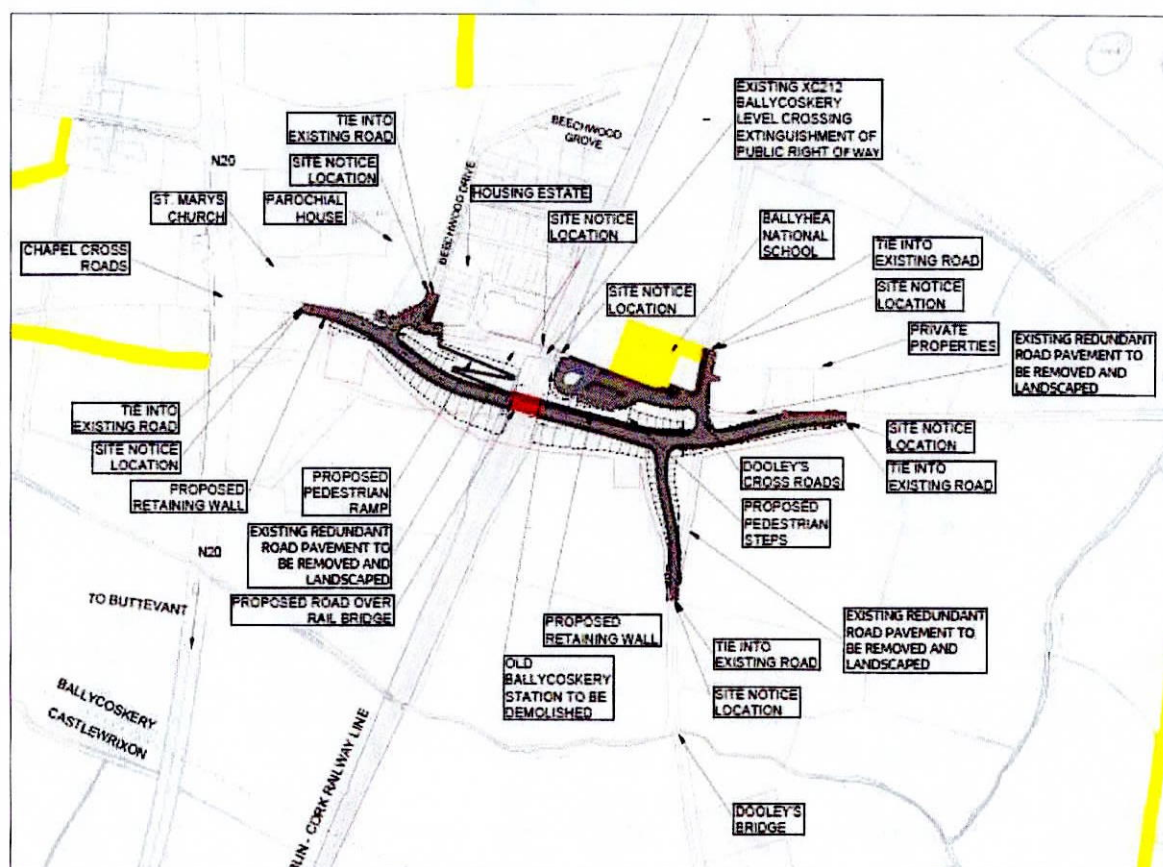
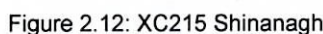


Figure 2.11: XC212 Ballycoskery Proposed Alignment

XC215- Shinanagh

37 The XC215 Shinanagh level crossing is located in the townland of Imphrick, County Cork, approximately 3.5km north-east of the village of Churchtown. The surrounding area is predominantly rural in character with a dispersed population and low-density individual housing. The crossing is immediately adjacent to the junction between the N20 National Primary Route, which is due to be downgraded on the completion of the M20 in 2027. See Figure 2.12.

38 XC215 Shinanagh is designated a 'CD-Type' level crossing, but it has been operated as a 'CX-Type' level crossing for over 25 years and similar to XC212 Ballycoskery is manned on a 24-hour basis. Its operation as a 'CX-Type' crossing results in the gates being normally open to road traffic with the gate keeper closing the gates as required for rail traffic.



39 The proposed solution for the elimination of the Level Crossing XC215 Shinanagh, is through provision of a new road alignment diverting traffic to an existing road-over-rail bridge, it also involves the upgrade of the existing junction onto the N20 carriageway and removal of existing N20 junction at the level crossing. See Figure 2.13 below. It is proposed to extinguish the public right of way and close the existing XC215 Shinanagh level crossing. The 'stopping up' of the existing level crossing will be via a 2.4m high block wall on both sides. Access to an IE compound on the west side of the level crossing will be retained.

40 The proposal involves closing the crossing and diverting traffic along a new section of local road to an existing road-over-rail bridge to the north. This tie into the existing bridge will improve on the existing arrangements at this location. The existing link from the N20 to this existing bridge will also be improved, with the N20 junction shifting north to increase length of existing left-turn lane and improve junction sightlines. The existing N20 junction at the level crossing will be removed. N20 road marking and signage will be updated and the redundant section of pavement to the east of the level crossing will be broken up and removed as no longer required. The key elements of the proposed Project include:

- 16

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- g) Earthworks with a maximum height of 5m and maximum width of approximately 32m;
- h) Sections of the existing local road pavement will be broken up and removed and landscaped where no longer required;
- i) Diversion of existing ESB overhead electricity line;
- j) Relocation of field accesses; and
- k) Associated landscaping, fencing, drainage, surfacing, signage temporary construction compound areas, bird boxes and all ancillary works.

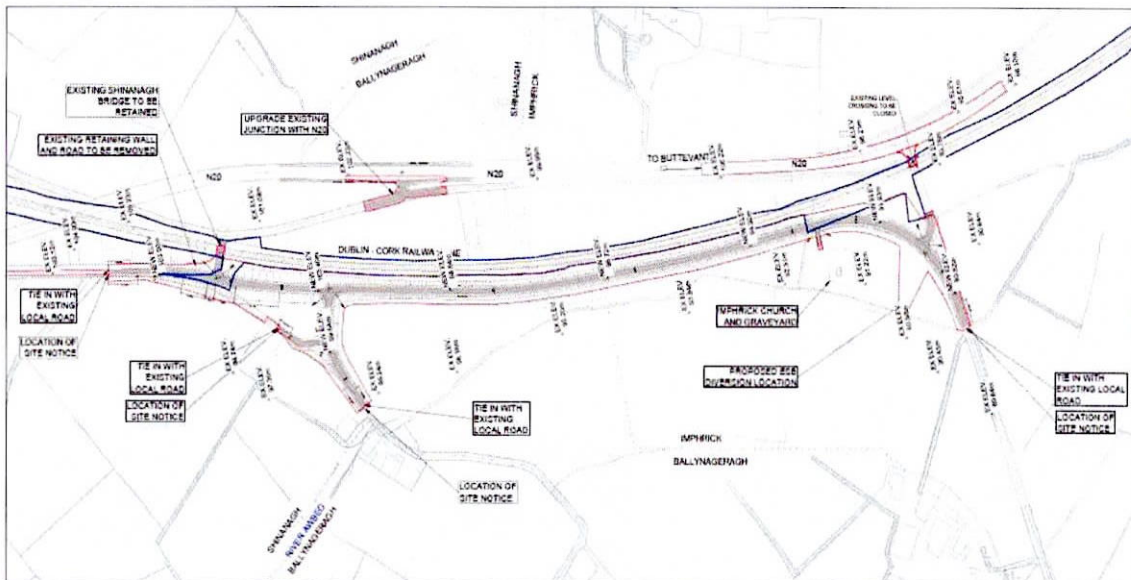


Figure 2.13: XC215 Shinanagh Proposed Alignment

XC219- Buttevant

- 41 The immediate locale for the XC219 Buttevant level crossing is rural in character with higher-density housing and small-scale commercial enterprises in the town which is around 500m to the south-east. The existing level crossing is directly adjacent to the former Buttevant Station. See Figure 2.14.
- 42 The level crossing is a CX type, it is manned on a 24-hour basis and the gates are normally open to road traffic with the gate keeper closing the gates as required for rail traffic.



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Figure 2.14: XC219 Buttevant

- 43 The proposed solution for the elimination/upgrade of XC219 Buttevant level crossing, is through the provision of alternative access across the railway line via a new road-over-rail bridge. It is proposed to close the existing XC219 Buttevant Level Crossing and realign the R522 Regional Road. The proposed realignment will have a new road-over-rail bridge to the south of the closed level crossing, tying back into the existing regional road to the east and west. The new alignment will cross an existing stream and a culvert is therefore proposed at this location. See Figure 2.15 below.
- 44 It is proposed to extinguish the public right of way and close the existing XC219 Buttevant level crossing. The 'stopping up' of the existing level crossing will be via a 2.4m block wall on both sides. Access to an Iarnród Éireann compound to the east side will be retained. The key elements of the proposed Project include:
- a) Removal of existing level crossing infrastructure comprising level crossing gates and all ancillary works in relation to the extinguishment of the public right of way across the level crossing;
 - b) Construction of 2.4m high block wall on both sides of the existing level crossing to stop up access across the Dublin – Cork Railway Line;
 - c) Access to Iarnród Éireann compound on the east side of the level crossing to be retained;
 - d) Realignment of the R522 regional road south of the closed crossing;
 - e) Construction of a new approximately 0.53km road-over-rail bridge to the south of the closed level crossing forming part of the realigned regional road R522, tying back into the existing regional road to the east and west of the crossing, and all ancillary works;
 - f) Construction of an approximately 3m high by 6m wide by 14.5m in length river bridge structure and a 2.5m high by 3m wide by 14.5m in length box culvert across a tributary of the Awbeg River to the west of the crossing on the realigned regional road R522;
 - g) Earthworks with a maximum height of around 8.5m and maximum width of about 47m;
 - h) Diversion of existing ESB overhead electricity line; and
 - i) Associated landscaping, fencing, lighting, drainage, surfacing, signage temporary construction compound areas, ecological translocation area, bird boxes and all ancillary works.

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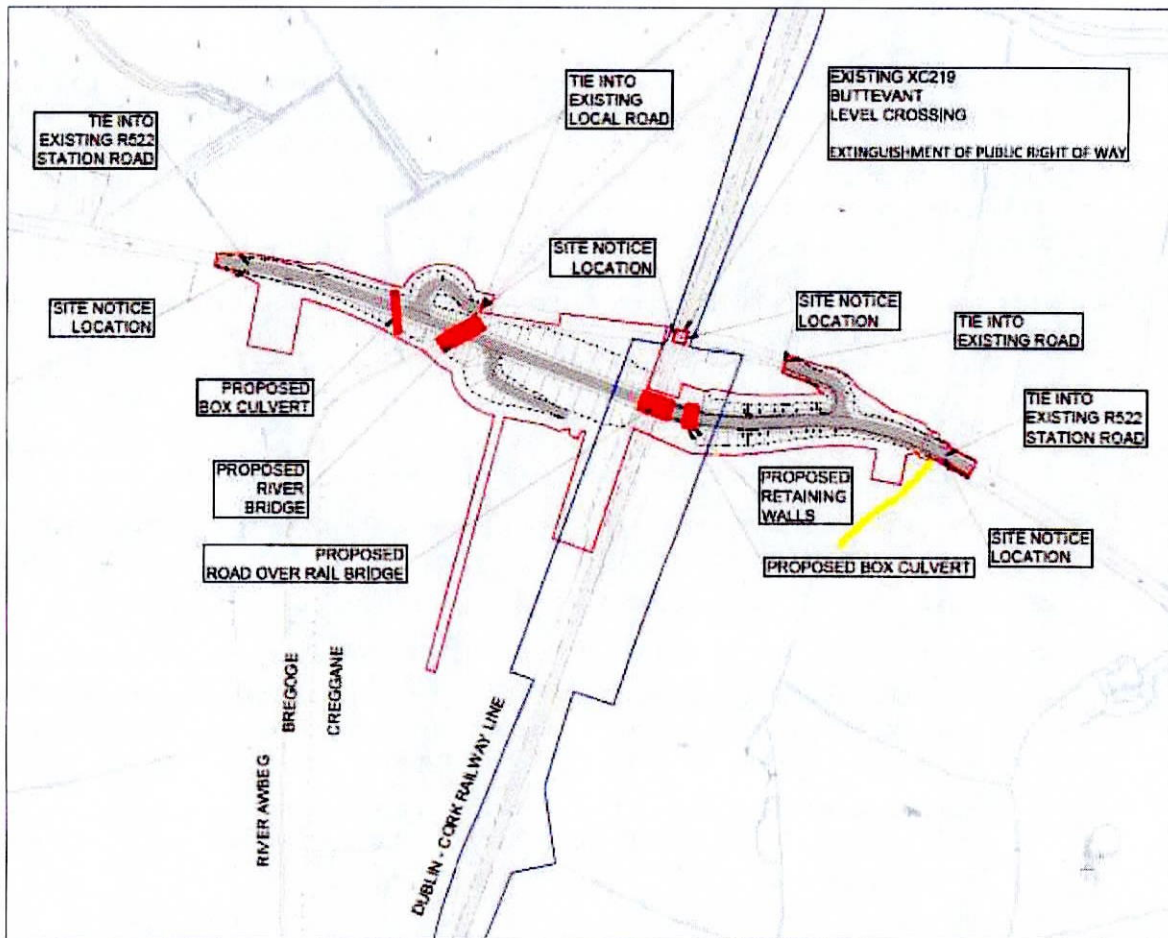


Figure 2.15: XC219 Buttevant Proposed Realignment

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3. RESPONSE TO ISSUES RAISED IN SUBMISSIONS

- 45 In Part 2, I set out in detail the context and the nature of the railway works provided for in this application for a Railway Order and against submissions and observations have been made to the Board.
- 46 To recap, the proposed Project is within the jurisdictions of Cork County Council and Limerick City and County Council. A Planning Compliance Report (PCR) has been prepared as part of the suite of application documents and includes a detailed review of national, regional, and local planning policy.
- 47 The evolution of the proposed project and the alternatives considered are set out in the EIAR at Volume 2, Chapter 2: Project Need and Alternatives.
- 48 In 2018, Iarnród Éireann and CIÉ conducted a feasibility study to identify and appraise options for the elimination/de-manning of the 7 no. subject level crossings. Following the findings of the Feasibility Study, an Options Report was undertaken using a Multi-Criteria Assessment.
- 49 The proposed road alignments were designed in accordance with TII standard DN-GEO-03031 Rural Road Link Design, and in consultation with Limerick County Council and Cork County Council Roads Departments.
- 50 A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit has been completed on the Preliminary Design for the Scheme, as submitted within the Railway Order.
- 51 In certain instances, where a cul de sac was created by the closure of a level crossing, agreement was reached with landowners to remove the road surface and return these lands into the adjoining holdings. This is proposed to address concerns regarding management of these areas. This could be considered at other similar locations if agreement between all parties could be reached.
- 52 I now set out the responses, categorised by way of issues, on behalf of CIÉ to the submissions and observations received. The particularised responses for each submission, from which this categorisation is based, is out in Appendix 1 to this statement.

XC187 Fantstown

Submission Issue 1

- 53 2 Submissions noted the need to include improvement works / upgrade to the existing Ballinscaula Bridge due to the potential increase in traffic flow.

Response:

- 54 The diverted traffic flow to the Ballinscaula bridge would not be considered sufficient to warrant improvement works to this bridge.

Submission Issue 2

- 55 12 submissions received, noted objection to the closure of XC187 and expressed a preference to the provision of an overbridge in lieu of closing the crossing.

Response:

- 56 There is an underlying health and safety issue with any interface between a railway line and a public road. The function of a level crossing where there is an overlap in two different transportation modes is such that there is a heightened risk of an accident occurring. It is the duty of CIÉ to maintain the operational

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safety of the railway network and it is an objective of both CIÉ and IÉ to remove, or upgrade, level crossings in Ireland where possible and practicable.

57 The findings of the February 2019 Feasibility Study are laid out in the EIAR. The options assessment was undertaken using a multi-criteria assessment and resulted in the best performing solution being a straight closure of the level crossing.

58 The options considered in the Feasibility Report for XC187 Fantstown included:

- Do Nothing
- Straight Closure;
- Alternative Access/Overbridge; and
- Upgrade to 4 Barrier CCTV.

59 The numbers of vehicles crossing the level crossing at Fantstown are very low. A pedestrian survey was carried out in January 2020 and over a period of a week no pedestrians, cyclists or livestock crossed the railway between the hours of 0700 and 2100. Although there will be diversions for some, the same journeys are still possible. The diversion route that runs parallel to the R515 will not result in reduced safety in comparison to the current local walking route. The diversion is of similar standard to the LS8514 used for the existing crossing and would also have less traffic than the R515 which already makes up part of any local walking route.

60 Closing the level crossing improves safety for pedestrians, cyclists, vehicles, and rail users.

XC201 Thomastown

Submission Issue 1

61 Some 18 submissions were received noting concerns and objections about the width of the proposed carriageway and expressed a preference for a wider 2 lane carriageway to be provided to avoid stacking or queuing of traffic at the junction with the R515. The layout and size of this junction was also raised as a concern within some of these submissions expressing a preference for a right turning lane on the R515.

Response:

62 DN-GEO-03060 Geometric Design of Junctions Table 4.1 indicates that the requirement for a right-turn lane is governed by a minimum of between 600-5,000 movements AADT for the minor road. The traffic counts at this location (as discussed in Chapter 11 of the EIAR) indicate a significantly lower number of turnings than the minimum required.

63 The proposed road is designed to align with the existing road to the south, which is approximately 3.5m wide. A Type 3 Single Carriageway, in accordance with TII standard CC-SCD-00003, with a 3m lane in each direction would not be appropriate in this situation. Widening this short section of road carriageway would encourage increased speeds over the length of the scheme and would not be suitable. Passing bays have been provided, in accordance with TII DN-GEO-03031, to allow for two-way traffic through the proposed scheme.

64 Following consultation with Limerick CCC, widening of the proposed road at the junction with the R515 for a length of approximately 15m will be included within the scheme. This will allow vehicles to join the proposed road and pass any vehicle waiting to exit, minimising the impact on the R515.

65 A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA) has been undertaken by an approved Road Safety Audit Team, in accordance with TII GE-STY-01024 - Road Safety Audit. The findings of the RSA did not identify any safety concerns with the design at this location.

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Submission Issue 2

66 Single submissions were received noting concerns in relation to impact on boundary walls, accesses, height of walls and pedestrian accessibility.

Response

67 Detailed responses are provided in Appendix 1.

Submission Issue 3

68 Commitments required from LCCC for the provision of design standards and construction supervision.

Response

69 All commitments requested are agreed and detailed responses provided in Appendix 1.

XC209 Ballyhay

70 No common Engineering submissions have been made in relation to XC209 Ballyhay. Two number individual submissions were received in relation to this location and detailed responses have been provided in Appendix 1.

XC211 Newtown

71 No common Engineering submissions have been made in relation to XC211 Newtown. Two number individual submissions were received in relation to this location, noting property impacts. Detailed responses have been provided in Appendix 1.

XC212 Ballycoskery

Submission Issue 1

72 18 number submissions noted objection to the proposed option and expressed preference for other alternatives, most expressed a preference for a rail over road option as this would be less intrusive.

Response

73 Alternative options were considered, including CCTV, underbridge, and overbridge options. Following the findings of the February 2019 Feasibility Study are provided in the EIAR, an Options Report was undertaken using a Multi-Criteria Assessment and indicated that the Overbridge Option is best performing option based on the Common Appraisal Framework criteria used

Submission Issue 2

74 2 submissions expressed concern regarding the provision of the carpark without reference to Child safety concerns and could give rise to anti-social behaviour.

Response

75 We are happy to work with the Board of Management of the school to review any child protection concerns, none have been raised to date on the project during earlier Consultations. Footways and pedestrian crossings have been provided in the car park to ensure the safety of pedestrians. Maintenance of the carpark will be provided by IE..

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76 The proposed carpark has been designed to provide safe parking and drop off for those attending the school and is designed to a similar layout used at other schools throughout Ireland.

77 There is no evidence provided in the submissions to support the assertion that the creation of these sections of unused road will lead to an increase in anti-social behaviour; nor is there any evidence of this nature published by the local authorities; nor any evidence of such issues arising on similar areas already created. If such were to arise, there are a range of statutory remedies that are open to any person affronted to deal with such issues.

78 Cork County Council have noted in their submission that the proposed car park is positive in terms of child safety.

Submission Issue 3

79 3 number submissions were received expressing concern over the proposed foot way being difficult and unsafe for older people.

Response:

80 The proposed scheme has been designed in accordance with DN-GEO-03031 Rural Road Link Design. The proposed footway has been designed in accordance with DN-PAV-03026 Footway Design, with the portion to the west of the bridge brought offline to keep the vertical gradients within the recommended limits.

Submission Issue 4

81 3 number submissions were received which identified inaccuracies within the documentation.

Response:

82 Individual and detailed responses have been provided within Appendix 1.

Submission Issue 5

83 3 number submissions were received from CCC noting no objection to the proposal and expressing requirement for additional sewer for future use.

Response:

84 Comments received were noted and liaison will be made with CCC for the provision of the additional sewer.

Submission Issue 6

85 Single submissions were received noting concerns in relation to impact on boundaries and a burial site.

Response:

86 Detailed individual responses are provided in Appendix 1

XC215 Shinanagh

Submission Issue 1

87 Only one observation received in regard to the location of IE access point shown

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Response:

88 Locations of existing Irish Rail access points and the closure or retention of same are in agreement with Irish Rail.

XC219 Buttevant

Submission Issue 1

89 4 number submissions received raise concern and request particular works in regard to access, boundaries and accommodation works.

Response:

90 Detailed individual responses are provided in Appendix 1.

Submission Issue 2

91 3 number submissions received, raise concerns and requirements for a speed limit of 50kph to be extended to the far side of the proposed works.

Response:

92 The road geometry has been designed in accordance with TII standards, with relaxations discussed with Cork County Council (CCC). The road has been subject to a Road Safety Audit at Preliminary Stage and will be subject to further Road Safety Audits at Detailed Design Stage. The posted speed limit is an executive function of CCC.

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APPENDIX 1: Addendum Detailed Responses to Engineering Submissions

XC187 Fantstown

Submission: Gabriel Clery

- 1 Fantstown Crossing is included in this application for a RO, yet the remedial work needed to facilitate this, at Ballinscaula Crossing is deemed not part of the Railway Order. Irish Rail have acknowledged as far back as 2009, that Ballinscaula Railway crossing needs serious improvement. They refuse to make Ballinscaula safe, until they are approved for "Straight Closure" of Fantstown.

Response:

- 2 The diverted traffic flow to the Ballinscaula bridge would not be considered sufficient to warrant improvement works to this bridge.

Submission: Tabitha Lillingston

- 3 Many of us in the locality are aware of Emergency Services and Delivery Vans being sent to the railway crossing by their SatNavs only to be unable to cross. There have been numerous incidents with ambulances at night when the crossing is unmanned, the Ambulance then has to find an alternative route.

Response:

- 4 Removal of the level crossing will create more consistent journey times for Emergency Services through other routes, removing the issue of delays/unmanned gates at the level crossing.

Submission: William Bagnall

- 5 I am asking An Bord Pleanála to drive the alternative routes when they visit Fantstown crossing XC187. The alternative road by Gibbonstown is narrow and has dangerous bends and is not suitable to an increased traffic burden. The crossing at Ballinscaula is already accepted as dangerous and no plans have been shown for upgrading this. In particular children and the elderly will not be safe using these roads. They will also not be safe on the main Tipperary to Kilmallock road as cars travel very fast on this stretch of the journey.

Response:

- 6 The diverted traffic flow to the Ballinscaula bridge would not be considered sufficient to warrant improvement works to this bridge.

Submission: Betty Houlihan

- 7 Having worked as a gatekeeper at the level crossing for thirty four years and only recently retired, I am fully aware of the safety implications involved for Iarnród Éireann on such level crossings. I welcome all progress and reduced journey times for users of Iarnród Éireann. I agree with the updating of the seven manually operated crossings, six of which, I believe, are being facilitated by means of addition of new overhead roads or full automation. Fantstown is the only crossing and public road that is being totally closed off. This will create two cul-de-sacs, one on either side of the existing crossing.

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- 8 The most suitable crossing for Fantstown crossing is to construct an overhead road or full automation. Nothing less will suffice for the alternative means the loss of our right of way and freedom of movement.
- 9 Instead upgrade its facilities to the necessary automated standards to ensure safe ongoing public right of way and access to public roads by the local community, for local farmers and businesspeople and so as to ensure that access to all such local amenities as mentioned here are maintained.

Response:

- 10 There is an underlying health and safety issue with any interface between a railway line and a public road. The function of a level crossing where there is an overlap in two different transportation modes is such that there is a heightened risk of an accident occurring. It is the duty of CIÉ to maintain the operational safety of the railway network and an objective of both CIÉ and IÉ to remove, or upgrade, level crossings in Ireland where possible and practicable.
- 11 The findings of the February 2019 Feasibility Study are laid out in the EIAR. The options assessment was undertaken using a multi-criteria assessment and resulted in the best performing solution being a straight closure of the level crossing.
- 12 The numbers of vehicles crossing the level crossing at Fantstown are very low. A pedestrian survey was carried out in January 2020 and over a period of a week no pedestrians, cyclists or livestock crossed the railway between the hours of 0700 and 2100. Although there will be diversions for some, the same journeys are still possible. The diversion route that runs parallel to the R515 will not result in reduced safety in comparison to the current local walking route. The diversion is of similar standard to the LS8514 used for the existing crossing and would also have less traffic than the R515 which already makes up part of any local walking route.
- 13 Closing the level crossing improves safety for pedestrians, cyclists, vehicles, and rail users.

Submission: Tabitha Lillingston

- 14 I believe that the community is now sadly divided by the closed railway gates. I know of families that live on both sides and cannot see each other as frequently or easily now the gates are manned and often locked, especially those with elderly or unwell family members. Now that the pedestrian gates are also locked this is a significant physical barrier between families.

Response:

- 15 The restrictions on access have been clearly set out in the EIAR. It is considered that the proposed detours are not unreasonable. A pedestrian survey was carried out in January 2020 and over a period of a week no pedestrians, cyclists or livestock crossed the railway between the hours of 0700 and 2100.
- 16 The pedestrian gates were locked due to safety concerns.

Submission: Gabriel Clery

- 17 The fact that "no other option but straight closure was considered for Fantstown Crossing XC187" despite their consultants Roughan and O'Donovan Consulting Engineers in 2011 recommending that an overhead bridge be built over XC187.
- 18 The flawed Options Appraisal carried out by Irish Rail's own staff for the Preliminary Design Report. Irish Rail admit that their staff already knew that "no other option but straight closure would be considered for Fantstown XC187"

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- 19 Why was XC187 the only crossing where other options were not even considered?
- 20 Why was Roughan and O'Donovan report not made available at the public information meeting?
- 21 Why was the Roughan and O'Donovan Report not made available to the local councillors in the Kilmallock/Cappamore electoral area. Why was the Roughan and O'Donovan Report not made available to or ABP? I am asking ABP to request a copy of this report from Irish Rail.
- 22 I can see why the priorities of Irish Rail, led to the "Options Appraisal" that was produced by their staff. This very much ignores the priorities of the local community. I feel an overhead bridge is required for the needs of the local community.
- 23 Why did Irish Rail decide to ignore the advice of their own consultants Roughan and O Donovan to build an overhead bridge?
- 24 Why was Fantstown the only gates not even considered for an overhead bridge?

Response:

- 25 The 2011 Roughan and O' Donovan study developed concept designs for alternative access options at each level crossing, it did not consider all options to close/upgrade the level crossings nor did it assess/appraise all options to close/upgrade the level crossings.
- 26 The Roughan and O' Donovan report pre-dated the feasibility study and options assessment that was undertaken for this application.
- 27 The findings of the February 2019 Feasibility Study are laid out in the EIAR. The objective of the study was to identify the optimum strategy to eliminate/de-man seven level crossings on the Cork to Dublin line. Options for closing and upgrading the level crossings were assessed in accordance with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sports' 'Guidelines on a Common Appraisal Framework (CAF) for Transport Projects and Programmes'. These guidelines and requirements are themselves in compliance and in accordance with the Department of Finance's 'Guidelines on the Appraisal and Management of Capital Expenditure Proposals in the Public Sector'.
- 28 The options considered in the Feasibility Report for XC187 Fantstown included:
- Do Nothing
 - Straight Closure;
 - Alternative Access/Overbridge; and
 - Upgrade to 4 Barrier CCTV.
- 29 The feasibility appraisal assessment undertaken for XC187 Fantstown resulted in the identification of the best performing solution, in accordance with the CAF requirements, being a straight Closure of the level crossing.

Submission: Gabriel Clery

- 30 Why is Fantstown the only crossing with pedestrian gates locked?
- 31 Why were Fantstown gates always left in the closed position and only opened for a crossing?
- 32 Most other gates were open for traffic and closed when a train was coming. They are all on the same Dublin to Cork line.

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Response:

33 The pedestrian gates were locked due to safety concerns.

34 XC187 Fantstown is a C Type level crossing which is usually closed to road traffic and opened as required.

Submission: Patrick Irvin

35 I would like to see the Roughan and O'Donovan Consulting Engineers appraisal of the options for Fantstown crossing. I know they recommended an overhead bridge, but I feel that if I saw the report that I might better understand the different options considered.

Response:

36 The options considered in the Feasibility Report for XC187 Fantstown included:

- Do Nothing
- Straight Closure;
- Alternative Access/Overbridge; and
- Upgrade to 4 Barrier CCTV.

37 The feasibility appraisal assessment undertaken for XC187 Fantstown resulted in the identification of the best performing solution, in accordance with the CAF requirements, being a straight Closure of the level crossing.

Submission: Patrick Irvin

38 I would like to see the application for a Railway Order refused for Fantstown crossing and a recommendation from An Bord Pleanála for an overhead bridge to be provided.

Response:

39 There is an underlying health and safety issue with any interface between a railway line and a public road. The function of a level crossing where there is an overlap in two different transportation modes is such that there is a heightened risk of an accident occurring. It is the duty of CIÉ to maintain the operational safety of the railway network and an objective of both CIÉ and IÉ to remove, or upgrade, level crossings in Ireland where possible and practicable.

40 The findings of the February 2019 Feasibility Study are laid out in the EIAR. The options assessment was undertaken using a multi-criteria assessment and resulted in the best performing solution being a straight closure of the level crossing.

41 The numbers of vehicles crossing the level crossing at Fantstown are very low. A pedestrian survey was carried out in January 2020 and over a period of a week no pedestrians, cyclists or livestock crossed the railway between the hours of 0700 and 2100. Although there will be diversions for some, the same journeys are still possible. The diversion route that runs parallel to the R515 will not result in reduced safety in comparison to the current local walking route. The diversion is of similar standard to the LS8514 used for the existing crossing and would also have less traffic than the R515 which already makes up part of any local walking route.

42 Closing the level crossing improves safety for pedestrians, cyclists, vehicles, and rail users.

Submission: Geraldine O'Connor

43 I would use the crossing if a bridge were provided, or the pedestrian gates were unlocked.

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Response:

- 44 There is an underlying health and safety issue with any interface between a railway line and a public road. The function of a level crossing where there is an overlap in two different transportation modes is such that there is a heightened risk of an accident occurring. It is the duty of CIÉ to maintain the operational safety of the railway network and it is the policy of both CIÉ and Iarnród Éireann to remove all level crossings in Ireland.
- 45 The findings of the February 2019 Feasibility Study are laid out in the EIAR. The options assessment was undertaken using a multi-criteria assessment and resulted in the best performing solution being a straight closure of the level crossing.
- 46 The numbers of vehicles crossing the level crossing at Fantstown are very low. A pedestrian survey was carried out in January 2020 and over a period of a week no pedestrians, cyclists or livestock crossed the railway between the hours of 0700 and 2100. Although there will be diversions for some, the same journeys are still possible. The diversion route that runs parallel to the R515 will not result in reduced safety in comparison to the current local walking route. The diversion is of similar standard to the LS8514 used for the existing crossing and would also have less traffic than the R515 which already makes up part of any local walking route.
- 47 Closing the level crossing improves safety for pedestrians, cyclists, vehicles, and rail users.

Submission: Councillor Mike Donegan

- 48 We, the elected members of the Cappamore/Killmallock Municipal District call on Irish Rail to reconsider its decision to close the Fantstown level crossing permanently and replace the crossing with a bridge to link the community.

Response:

- 49 There is an underlying health and safety issue with any interface between a railway line and a public road. The function of a level crossing where there is an overlap in two different transportation modes is such that there is a heightened risk of an accident occurring. It is the duty of CIÉ to maintain the operational safety of the railway network and it is the policy of both CIÉ and Iarnród Éireann to remove all level crossings in Ireland.
- 50 The findings of the February 2019 Feasibility Study are laid out in the EIAR. The options assessment was undertaken using a multi-criteria assessment and resulted in the best performing solution being a straight closure of the level crossing.
- 51 The numbers of vehicles crossing the level crossing at Fantstown are very low. A pedestrian survey was carried out in January 2020 and over a period of a week no pedestrians, cyclists or livestock crossed the railway between the hours of 0700 and 2100. Although there will be diversions for some, the same journeys are still possible. The diversion route that runs parallel to the R515 will not result in reduced safety in comparison to the current local walking route. The diversion is of similar standard to the LS8514 used for the existing crossing and would also have less traffic than the R515 which already makes up part of any local walking route.
- 52 Closing the level crossing improves safety for pedestrians, cyclists, vehicles, and rail users.

Submission: Monica Clery

- 53 I am requesting that the gates not be closed but be replaced with an overhead bridge.

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Response:

- 54 There is an underlying health and safety issue with any interface between a railway line and a public road. The function of a level crossing where there is an overlap in two different transportation modes is such that there is a heightened risk of an accident occurring. It is the duty of CIÉ to maintain the operational safety of the railway network and it is the policy of both CIÉ and Iarnród Éireann to remove all level crossings in Ireland.
- 55 The findings of the February 2019 Feasibility Study are laid out in the EIAR. The options assessment was undertaken using a multi-criteria assessment and resulted in the best performing solution being a straight closure of the level crossing.
- 56 The numbers of vehicles crossing the level crossing at Fantstown are very low. A pedestrian survey was carried out in January 2020 and over a period of a week no pedestrians, cyclists or livestock crossed the railway between the hours of 0700 and 2100. Although there will be diversions for some, the same journeys are still possible. The diversion route that runs parallel to the R515 will not result in reduced safety in comparison to the current local walking route. The diversion is of similar standard to the LS8514 used for the existing crossing and would also have less traffic than the R515 which already makes up part of any local walking route.
- 57 Closing the level crossing improves safety for pedestrians, cyclists, vehicles, and rail users.

Submission: William Bagnall

- 58 It is my view that a bridge over XC187 would be much safer than cars, agricultural machinery, pedestrians, and cyclists all using the Gibbonstown route.

Response:

- 59 There is an underlying health and safety issue with any interface between a railway line and a public road. The function of a level crossing where there is an overlap in two different transportation modes is such that there is a heightened risk of an accident occurring. It is the duty of CIÉ to maintain the operational safety of the railway network and it is the policy of both CIÉ and Iarnród Éireann to remove all level crossings in Ireland.
- 60 The findings of the February 2019 Feasibility Study are laid out in the EIAR. The options assessment was undertaken using a multi-criteria assessment and resulted in the best performing solution being a straight closure of the level crossing.
- 61 The numbers of vehicles crossing the level crossing at Fantstown are very low. A pedestrian survey was carried out in January 2020 and over a period of a week no pedestrians, cyclists or livestock crossed the railway between the hours of 0700 and 2100. Although there will be diversions for some, the same journeys are still possible. The diversion route that runs parallel to the R515 will not result in reduced safety in comparison to the current local walking route. The diversion is of similar standard to the LS8514 used for the existing crossing and would also have less traffic than the R515 which already makes up part of any local walking route.
- 62 Closing the level crossing improves safety for pedestrians, cyclists, vehicles, and rail users.
- 63 Numbers of vehicles currently crossing XC187 are very low. Closing the level crossing improves safety for pedestrians, cyclists, vehicles, and rail users. Journey times will be more consistent as level crossing delays will be removed.
- 64 The Kilmallock Cycle Hub loops 2A and 4 routes will be unaffected by the closure as they currently follow the same route as the diversion.

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- 65 There is no significant impact due to low numbers of vehicles diverting to crossing in the east. Although there will be diversions for some, the same journeys are still possible.

Submission: Valerie Hanley

- 66 I would ask C.I.E to reconsider the proposed closure for the reasons I have outlined and to look at other options that are been used on other crossings along the line such as a bridge or an automated system which would keep our community united and also open up our community for further access and maybe development in years to come.

Response:

- 67 There is an underlying health and safety issue with any interface between a railway line and a public road. The function of a level crossing where there is an overlap in two different transportation modes is such that there is a heightened risk of an accident occurring. It is the duty of CIÉ to maintain the operational safety of the railway network and an objective of both CIÉ and IÉ to remove, or upgrade, level crossings in Ireland where possible and practicable.
- 68 The findings of the February 2019 Feasibility Study are laid out in the EIAR. The options assessment was undertaken using a multi-criteria assessment and resulted in the best performing solution being a straight closure of the level crossing.
- 69 The numbers of vehicles crossing the level crossing at Fantstown are very low. A pedestrian survey was carried out in January 2020 and over a period of a week no pedestrians, cyclists or livestock crossed the railway between the hours of 0700 and 2100. Although there will be diversions for some, the same journeys are still possible. The diversion route that runs parallel to the R515 will not result in reduced safety in comparison to the current local walking route. The diversion is of similar standard to the LS8514 used for the existing crossing and would also have less traffic than the R515 which already makes up part of any local walking route.
- 70 Closing the level crossing improves safety for pedestrians, cyclists, vehicles, and rail users.

XC201- Thomastown

Submission: Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire

- 71 The design of the new junction on the Charleville Kilmallock road is not fit for purpose - it will cause stacking of cars as they wait to turn off the R515 onto the new road. The new road is not wide enough to accommodate two vehicles to pass safely. There is always agricultural machinery on the roads especially during the summer school term.
- 72 Reconsider that a double lane road be accommodated for all vehicular traffic, incorporating stacking lanes from both directions on the main Charleville Kilmallock Road.

Response:

- 73 DN-GEO-03060 Geometric Design of Junctions Table 4.1 indicates that the requirement for a right-turn lane is governed by a minimum of between 600-5,000 movements AADT for the minor road. The traffic counts at this location (as discussed in Chapter 11 of the EIAR) indicate a significantly lower number of turnings than the minimum required.
- 74 The proposed road is designed to align with the existing road to the south, which is approximately 3.5m wide. A Type 3 Single Carriageway, in accordance with TII standard CC-SCD-00003, with a 3m lane in each direction would not be appropriate in this situation. Widening this short section of road

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carriageway would encourage increased speeds over the length of the scheme and would not be suitable. Passing bays have been provided, in accordance with TII DN-GEO-03031, to allow for two-way traffic through the proposed scheme.

- 75 Following consultation with Limerick CC, widening of the proposed road at the junction with the R515 for a length of approximately 15m will be included within the scheme. This will allow vehicles to join the proposed road and pass any vehicle waiting to exit, minimising the impact on the R515.

Submission: Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire

- 76 There have been a number of fatalities and other serious accidents on the R515 and this new junction, in its current format, is likely to exacerbate rather than improve the situation. Because of these road safety concerns Scoil Mhuire is very concerned that we would be putting the lives of our students and their parents at risk if they were to use this road to access our school.

Response:

- 77 A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA) has been undertaken by an approved Road Safety Audit Team, in accordance with TII GE-STY-01024 - Road Safety Audit. The findings of the RSA did not identify any safety concerns with the design at this location.

Submission: David Fleming

- 78 I also have concerns regarding the removal of the road margin for what appears to be along 23m of my land. The best indication I can give of this area is along the point marked XC201.T.13 and XC201.14 although it's not exactly between those points. I am concerned about this changing my ability to potentially build on this land in future or to put an agricultural dwelling entrance at that point as it is at a point where an entrance could be more practical for me.

Response:

- 79 The impact on the existing boundary will be minimised where possible. However, it is not feasible to cater for all future unknown planning applications. Any future approval for an entrance at this location will be subject to normal planning requirement of the Local Authority.

Submission: Donal Kelly - Effin GAA Club

- 80 Effin GAA are delighted with the development of the new railway bridge. However, looking at the plans we see that the new development is only a single lane road. We believe that this will restrict access to our club and a double lane road is the only safe solution, and a safe new junction layout where the new road meets the R515.

Response:

- 81 Access to Effin GAA Club will not be restricted by the proposed road layout at XC201 - Thomastown.
- 82 A similar issue was highlighted in the submission above and is described below.
- 83 DN-GEO-03060 Geometric Design of Junctions Table 4.1 indicates that the requirement for a right-turn lane is governed by a minimum of between 600-5,000 movements AADT for the minor road. The traffic counts at this location (as discussed in Chapter 11 of the EIAR) indicate a significantly lower number of turnings than the minimum required.
- 84 The proposed road is designed to align with the existing road to the south, which is approximately 3.5m wide. A Type 3 Single Carriageway, in accordance with TII standard CC-SCD-00003, with a 3m lane in

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each direction would not be appropriate in this situation. Widening this short section of road carriageway would encourage increased speeds over the length of the scheme and would not be suitable. Passing bays have been provided, in accordance with TII DN-GEO-03031, to allow for two-way traffic through the proposed scheme.

85 Following consultation with Limerick CC, widening of the proposed road at the junction with the R515 for a length of approximately 15m will be included within the scheme. This will allow vehicles to join the proposed road and pass any vehicle waiting to exit, minimising the impact on the R515.

86 The proposed road is designed to align with the existing road to the south, which is approximately 3.5m wide. A Type 3 Single Carriageway, in accordance with TII standard CC-SCD-00003, with a 3m lane in each direction would not be appropriate in this situation. Widening this short section of road carriageway would encourage increased speeds over the length of the scheme and would not be suitable. Passing bays have been provided, in accordance with TII DN-GEO-03031, to allow for two-way traffic through the proposed scheme.

87 A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA) has been undertaken by an approved Road Safety Audit Team, in accordance with TII GE-STY-01024 - Road Safety Audit. The findings of the RSA did not identify any safety concerns with the design at this location.

Submission: Eddie Ryan and Other Councillors from Limerick

88 We request that a double road lane over the railway be accommodated for all vehicular traffic and for accessing and exiting the junction in a safe manner. This should also incorporate stacking lanes from both directions on the main Charleville- Kilmallock road in the interests of further road safety as a result of the ongoing huge volume and consistent speed of traffic.

Response:

89 A similar issue was highlighted in the submissions above, and is described below;

90 DN-GEO-03060 Geometric Design of Junctions Table 4.1 indicates that the requirement for a right-turn lane is governed by a minimum of between 600-5,000 movements AADT for the minor road. The traffic counts at this location (as discussed in Chapter 11 of the EIAR) indicate a significantly lower number of turnings than the minimum required.

91 The proposed road is designed to align with the existing road to the south, which is approximately 3.5m wide. A Type 3 Single Carriageway, in accordance with TII standard CC-SCD-00003, with a 3m lane in each direction would not be appropriate in this situation. Widening this short section of road carriageway would encourage increased speeds over the length of the scheme and would not be suitable. Passing bays have been provided, in accordance with TII DN-GEO-03031, to allow for two-way traffic through the proposed scheme.

92 Following consultation with Limerick CC, widening of the proposed road at the junction with the R515 for a length of approximately 15m will be included within the scheme. This will allow vehicles to join the proposed road and pass any vehicle waiting to exit, minimising the impact on the R515.

93 A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA) has been undertaken by an approved Road Safety Audit Team, in accordance with TII GE-STY-01024 - Road Safety Audit. The findings of the RSA did not identify any safety concerns with the design at this location.

Submission: Joseph and Donnie Clifford

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- 94 The current proposal for exiting R515 onto the new road is wholly unacceptable as it has the potential to be highly dangerous due to the high volume of traffic on the main Charleville Kilmallock road R515. We feel a filter lane from R515 onto the new road is necessary to exit off the R515 in a safe manner.

Response:

- 95 A similar issue was highlighted in the submissions above and is described below.
- 96 DN-GEO-03060 Geometric Design of Junctions Table 4.1 indicates that the requirement for a right-turn lane is governed by a minimum of between 600-5,000 movements AADT for the minor road. The traffic counts at this location (as discussed in Chapter 11 of the EIAR) indicate a significantly lower number of turnings than the minimum required.
- 97 Following consultation with Limerick CC, widening of the proposed road at the junction with the R515 for a length of approximately 15m will be included within the scheme. This will allow vehicles to join the proposed road and pass any vehicle waiting to exit, minimising the impact on the R515.

Submission: Joseph and Donnie Clifford

- 98 As the road will link a currently divided parish it is inevitable that traffic will increase substantially and in the interest of the safety of all road users (ie car, farm machinery and trucks) it is essentially that the new proposed road is a two lane roadway, allowing two vehicles to safely pass in order for it to be fit for purpose and carry the volume of traffic that will be created by linking the parish. Realistically anything less than a two lane roadway is a step backwards.

Response:

- 99 Chapter 11: Traffic and Transport, of the EIAR outlines the forecasted traffic distribution for the proposed arrangement. It is forecasted that the proposed scheme will not lead to a significant increase in traffic along the route.
- 100 Passing bays have been provided, in accordance with TII DN-GEO-03031, to allow for two-way traffic through the proposed scheme.

Submission: Joseph and Donnie Clifford

- 101 Currently all heavy goods vehicles access my farmyard using the level crossing. As this is an essential part of my business it further reiterates the need for an improvement to the current proposal for the road.

Response:

- 102 Access to all properties is maintained as part of the proposed scheme. Heavy goods vehicles can still access all properties with the proposed scheme in place.

Submission: Joseph Clifford - Effin and Garrienderk Community

- 103 The Parish of Effin has been divided for many years by the railway line and gates at the level crossing which are always closed to vehicles. All the amenities of the Parish are on the southern side of the railway line (ie primary school, GAA facilities, church etc.). This new road is a major step forward in uniting what was a divided Parish and the volume of traffic will increase tenfold at a minimum as a result of this proposed development and therefore in the interest of health and safety for road users a two lane road is essential.

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Response:

- 104 The proposed road is designed to align with the existing road to the south, which is approximately 3.5m wide. A Type 3 Single Carriageway, in accordance with TII standard CC-SCD-00003, with a 3m lane in each direction would not be appropriate in this situation. Widening this short section of road carriageway would encourage increased speeds over the length of the scheme and would not be suitable. Passing bays have been provided, in accordance with TII DN-GEO-03031, to allow for two-way traffic through the proposed scheme.
- 105 Chapter 11: Traffic and Transport, of the EIAR outlines the forecasted traffic distribution for the proposed arrangement. It is forecasted that the proposed scheme will not lead to a significant increase in traffic along the route.

Submission: Joseph Clifford - Effin and Garrienderk Community

- 106 Width of the road. The new road will not be wide enough for two vehicles to pass safely ie cars, trucks & farm machinery. The new junction on to the main Charlville , Kilmallock road (R515) is designed in an unsafe way as it will cause stacking of cars when a vehicle is turning off the R515 onto the new road.
- 107 All of the above points have been made on health and safety grounds for our local community. In recent years there has been six fatalities on the R515 as well as hundreds of other accidents leaving some people with life changing injuries. While this development would be of benefit to the community if the above points are not addressed, we feel that it would create an unnecessary risk to road users and leave the road unfit for purpose.

Response:

- 108 A similar issue was highlighted in the submissions above and is described below.
- 109 The proposed road is designed to align with the existing road to the south, which is approximately 3.5m wide. A Type 3 Single Carriageway, in accordance with TII standard CC-SCD-00003, with a 3m lane in each direction would not be appropriate in this situation. Widening this short section of road carriageway would encourage increased speeds over the length of the scheme and would not be suitable. Passing bays have been provided, in accordance with TII DN-GEO-03031, to allow for two-way traffic through the proposed scheme.
- 110 Following consultation with Limerick CC, widening of the proposed road at the junction with the R515 for a length of approximately 15m will be included within the scheme. This will allow vehicles to join the proposed road and pass any vehicle waiting to exit, minimising the impact on the R515.
- 111 DN-GEO-03060 Geometric Design of Junctions Table 4.1 indicates that the requirement for a right-turn lane is governed by a minimum of between 600-5,000 movements AADT for the minor road. The traffic counts at this location (as discussed in Chapter 11 of the EIAR) indicate a significantly lower number of turnings than the minimum required.
- 112 A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA) has been undertaken by an approved Road Safety Audit Team, in accordance with TII GE-STY-01024 - Road Safety Audit. The findings of the RSA did not identify any safety concerns with the design at this location.

Submission: Michael Donegan - Cappamore Kilmallock Municipal District

- 113 While the new bridge and access road is welcome by the community. We as elected members want to future proof the design of the new route to allow Limerick and City Council upgrade the road on the south side at a later date.

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Response:

- 114 Following discussions with Limerick County Council, it was agreed to future-proof the design and widen the rail bridge structure to allow for future widening of the road, if required. Lane width will be maintained through the structure through road marking. Our scheme does not preclude the widening of the road in the future.

Submission: Michael Donegan - Cappamore Kilmallock Municipal District

- 115 Proposal to provide an overbridge at this location was discussed. It was noted that there was a reasonably positive reaction to the proposal but that some clarifications were being sought. These included the width of the proposed road carriageway, measures to address unauthorised parking and dumping on the section of road that would be closed at the level crossing, possible provision of a footpath on the overbridge and what weight restrictions would be proposed for the overbridge. "We the elected members of the Cappamore/Kilmallock Municipal District call on Irish Rail for the design to include a single carriageway with 2 lanes and a pedestrian footpath on the new bridge proposed for Thomastown".

Response:

- 116 A similar issue was highlighted in the submissions above and is described below:
- 117 The proposed road is designed to align with the existing road to the south, which is approximately 3.5m wide. A Type 3 Single Carriageway, in accordance with TII standard CC-SCD-00003, with a 3m lane in each direction would not be appropriate in this situation. Widening this short section of road carriageway would encourage increased speeds over the length of the scheme and would not be suitable. Passing bays have been provided, in accordance with TII DN-GEO-03031, to allow for two-way traffic through the proposed scheme.
- 118 Following discussions with Limerick County Council, it was agreed to future-proof the design and widen the rail bridge structure to allow for future widening of the road, if required. Lane width will be maintained through the structure through road marking. Our scheme does not preclude the widening of the road in the future.
- 119 Agreement was reached with landowners to the east of the level crossing to remove the road surface along the unused section of road at the end of the cul de sac and return these lands into the adjoining holdings. This section of unused road would no longer be accessible to the public for illegal parking.
- 120 Pedestrian provision is in line with the surrounding area. There are no existing footways at either end of the scheme. A verge is provided as part of the proposed scheme which pedestrians can use if required.

Submission: Michael Donegan - Cappamore Kilmallock Municipal District

- 121 There are safety concerns with the width of the road which is not wide enough to pass safely through. The new junction planned for the Charleville -Kilmallock road (R515) needs to be reviewed as it will cause stacking of vehicles when turning off the R515 to the new road.

Response:

- 122 A similar issue was highlighted in the submissions above and is described below:
- 123 The proposed road is designed to align with the existing road to the south, which is approximately 3.5m wide. A Type 3 Single Carriageway, in accordance with TII standard CC-SCD-00003, with a 3m lane in each direction would not be appropriate in this situation. Widening this short section of road

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carriageway would encourage increased speeds over the length of the scheme and would not be suitable. Passing bays have been provided, in accordance with TII DN-GEO-03031, to allow for two-way traffic through the proposed scheme.

124 Following consultation with Limerick CC, widening of the proposed road at the junction with the R515 for a length of approximately 15m will be included within the scheme. This will allow vehicles to join the proposed road and pass any vehicle waiting to exit, minimising the impact on the R515.

125 DN-GEO-03060 Geometric Design of Junctions Table 4.1 indicates that the requirement for a right-turn lane is governed by a minimum of between 600-5,000 movements AADT for the minor road. The traffic counts at this location (as discussed in Chapter 11 of the EIAR) indicate a significantly lower number of turnings than the minimum required.

126 A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA) has been undertaken by an approved Road Safety Audit Team, in accordance with TII GE-STY-01024 - Road Safety Audit. The findings of the RSA did not identify any safety concerns with the design at this location.

Submission: Michael Donegan - Cappamore Kilmallock Municipal District

127 Consult with residents on height of walls close to the existing railway gates.

Response:

128 The walls/fencing used to prevent access to the railway will be to a specification which prevents unauthorised access. Typically, this will be approximately 2m in height for the walls and is a necessary feature of the provision of safety for railway users and the public.

Submission: Niall Collins TD

129 Concerns with the width of the road which is not wide enough for two vehicles to pass safely and as this is a rural area there are a number of farms in close proximity to the rail crossing with a significant movement of agriculture machinery. The volume of agricultural machinery will also increase on this road especially during the busy harvesting season which further outlines the importance of having a wider to lane road.

Response:

130 A similar issue was highlighted in the submissions above and is described below.

131 The proposed road is designed to align with the existing road to the south, which is approximately 3.5m wide. A Type 3 Single Carriageway, in accordance with TII standard CC-SCD-00003, with a 3m lane in each direction would not be appropriate in this situation. Widening this short section of road carriageway would encourage increased speeds over the length of the scheme and would not be suitable. Passing bays have been provided, in accordance with TII DN-GEO-03031, to allow for two-way traffic through the proposed scheme.

132 Chapter 11: Traffic and Transport, of the EIAR outlines the forecasted traffic distribution for the proposed arrangement. It is forecasted that the proposed scheme will not lead to a significant increase in traffic along the route.

Submission: Niall Collins TD

133 Following a recent meeting with elected members and residents of the Thomastown community, the following points were highlighted to us: concerns with the width of the road which is not wide enough for two vehicles to pass safely and as this is a rural area there are a number of farms in close proximity

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to the rail crossing with a significant movement of agriculture machinery. The new junction planned for the Charleville - Kilmallock road (R515) is designed in an unsafe way as it will cause stacking of cars when a vehicle is turning of the R515 onto the new road. This new road is a major step forward in uniting what was a divided Parish, and the volume of traffic will increase tenfold at a minimum as a result of this proposed development and therefore in the interest of health and safety for road users a wider two lane road is essential.

Response:

- 134 A similar issue was highlighted in the submissions above and is described below.
- 135 The proposed road is designed to align with the existing road to the south, which is approximately 3.5m wide. A Type 3 Single Carriageway, in accordance with TII standard CC-SCD-00003, with a 3m lane in each direction would not be appropriate in this situation. Widening this short section of road carriageway would encourage increased speeds over the length of the scheme and would not be suitable. Passing bays have been provided, in accordance with TII DN-GEO-03031, to allow for two-way traffic through the proposed scheme.
- 136 Following consultation with Limerick CC, widening of the proposed road at the junction with the R515 for a length of approximately 15m will be included within the scheme. This will allow vehicles to join the proposed road and pass any vehicle waiting to exit, minimising the impact on the R515.
- 137 DN-GEO-03060 Geometric Design of Junctions Table 4.1 indicates that the requirement for a right-turn lane is governed by a minimum of between 600-5,000 movements AADT for the minor road. The traffic counts at this location (as discussed in Chapter 11 of the EIAR) indicate a significantly lower number of turnings than the minimum required.

Submission: Nuala and Joe O Connor

- 138 We vehemently object to the current proposed layout and propose instead that a double road be accommodated for all vehicular traffic and for access and exiting the said junction in a safe manner. This should also incorporate staking lanes from both directions on the main Charleville, Kilmallock Road. This, we feel is the only way to protect the future safety of the user.

Response:

- 139 A similar issue was highlighted in the submissions above and is described below.
- 140 The proposed road is designed to align with the existing road to the south, which is approximately 3.5m wide. A Type 3 Single Carriageway, in accordance with TII standard CC-SCD-00003, with a 3m lane in each direction would not be appropriate in this situation. Widening this short section of road carriageway would encourage increased speeds over the length of the scheme and would not be suitable. Passing bays have been provided, in accordance with TII DN-GEO-03031, to allow for two-way traffic through the proposed scheme.
- 141 Following consultation with Limerick CC, widening of the proposed road at the junction with the R515 for a length of approximately 15m will be included within the scheme. This will allow vehicles to join the proposed road and pass any vehicle waiting to exit, minimising the impact on the R515.
- 142 DN-GEO-03060 Geometric Design of Junctions Table 4.1 indicates that the requirement for a right-turn lane is governed by a minimum of between 600-5,000 movements AADT for the minor road. The traffic counts at this location (as discussed in Chapter 11 of the EIAR) indicate a significantly lower number of turnings than the minimum required.

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- 143 A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA) has been undertaken by an approved Road Safety Audit Team, in accordance with TII GE-STY-01024 - Road Safety Audit. The findings of the RSA did not identify any safety concerns with the design at this location.

Submission: Nuala and Joe O Connor

- 144 While we whole heartedly welcome this upgrade as a means of uniting our divided parish of Efin, we have very serious concerns re the health and safety of the proposed Railway crossing in its current layout. The danger of this road has been highlighted by the number of road traffic accidents on this road the last 10 years alone, 21, 2 of which have been fatal. The proposed single lane road leading to a double road bridge of the railway crossing is creating a death trap. Those waiting on the main Charleville, Kilmallock road to cross over are "sitting ducks". That anyone could consider this safe is beyond comprehension, it is another fatality waiting to happen. We have 4 drivers in our family and would use a safe crossing with great enthusiasm. However, in all sincerity, we cannot support the proposed railway crossing in this current layout. Our aim is to prevent tragedy and not to facilitate it as the current proposed layout of the railway crossing does.

Response:

- 145 A similar issue was highlighted in the submissions above and is described below.
- 146 A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA) has been undertaken by an approved Road Safety Audit Team, in accordance with TII GE-STY-01024 - Road Safety Audit. The findings of the RSA did not identify any safety concerns with the design at this location.
- 147 The proposed road is designed to align with the existing road to the south, which is approximately 3.5m wide. Following discussions with Limerick County Council, it was agreed to future-proof the design and widen the rail bridge structure to allow for future widening of the road, if required. Lane width will be maintained through the structure through road marking.
- 148 DN-GEO-03060 Geometric Design of Junctions Table 4.1 indicates that the requirement for a right-turn lane is governed by a minimum of between 600-5,000 movements AADT for the minor road. The traffic counts at this location (as discussed in Chapter 11 of the EIA) indicate a significantly lower number of turnings than the minimum required.

Submission: Patrick O Donovan TD

- 149 The community of Efin want their views brought to the attention of the Board and want the Board to listen to their concerns under the heading of road safety, having lived there for generations, and now getting a once off opportunity to benefit their community.
- 150 The residents have again expressed their concern at the proposed width of the road from the proposed new junction with R515 to the new bridge over the rail and have asked that the proposed road be widened to allow at least two vehicles to pass. They have also asked that the Board take into consideration the agricultural backdrop and setting of the area and the heavy nature of the vehicles that will be likely to use this road. Again they point out that this will be a once off opportunity to improve the road safety aspect for the community of Efin and they would like to ensure that the proposed width is not designed in a way that will hamper its use in the future and render it unsafe for two vehicles attempting to pass each other.

Response:

- 151 A similar issue was highlighted in the submissions above and is described below.

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- 152 Following consultation with Limerick CC, widening of the proposed road at the junction with the R515 for a length of approximately 15m will be included within the scheme. This will allow vehicles to join the proposed road and pass any vehicle waiting to exit, minimising the impact on the R515.
- 153 The proposed road is designed to align with the existing road to the south, which is approximately 3.5m wide. A Type 3 Single Carriageway, in accordance with TII standard CC-SCD-00003, with a 3m lane in each direction would not be appropriate in this situation. Widening this short section of road carriageway would encourage increased speeds over the length of the scheme and would not be suitable. Passing bays have been provided, in accordance with TII DN-GEO-03031, to allow for two-way traffic through the proposed scheme.
- 154 Following discussions with Limerick County Council, it was agreed to future-proof the design and widen the rail bridge structure to allow for future widening of the road, if required. Lane width will be maintained through the structure through road marking. Our scheme does not preclude the widening of the road in the future.

Submission: Patrick O Donovan TD

- 155 Having met residents that live along and adjacent to the R515, they have laid out a very clear case for the need for stacking / turning lane for right hand turning traffic off the R515. They do so with the daily knowledge they have gained over years of trying to turn right off of the R515 at the existing junctions that are along the road and point to the fact that this is a new junction, and with growth in traffic clearly being established, the need for a right-hand lane at the junction is clear.

Response:

- 156 A similar issue was highlighted in the submissions above and is described below.
- 157 DN-GEO-03060 Geometric Design of Junctions Table 4.1 indicates that the requirement for a right-turn lane is governed by a minimum of between 600-5,000 movements AADT for the minor road. The traffic counts at this location (as discussed in Chapter 11 of the EIAR) indicate a significantly lower number of turnings than the minimum required.

Submission: Richard O Donoghue TD

- 158 The submission has not made any specific provision for accessibility, pedestrians or cyclists, as it is a requirement of the Limerick City and County Development Policy Plan Based on the recommendations above, it is requested that the following be taken into consideration, and that minor amendments be made to the proposal. Consider provision of a footpath for pedestrian movement and increased accessibility.

Response:

- 159 Provision for accessibility, pedestrians or cyclists is in line with the surrounding area. There are no existing footways at either end of the scheme to tie into safely. A verge is provided as part of the proposed scheme which pedestrians can use if required.

Submission: Richard O Donoghue TD

- 160 Based on the recommendations above, it is requested that the following be taken into consideration, and that minor amendments be made to the proposal. The new carriageway is increased in width to two lanes for the entirety of the proposed roadway in order to address access, egress and passing movements of the roadway.

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Response:

161 A similar issue was highlighted in the submissions above and is described below.

162 The proposed road is designed to align with the existing road to the south, which is approximately 3.5m wide. A Type 3 Single Carriageway, in accordance with TII standard CC-SCD-00003, with a 3m lane in each direction would not be appropriate in this situation. Widening this short section of road carriageway would encourage increased speeds over the length of the scheme and would not be suitable. Passing bays have been provided, in accordance with TII DN-GEO-03031, to allow for two-way traffic through the proposed scheme.

Submission: Richard O Donoghue TD

163 Vehicles exiting the R515, onto the new stretch of L8572 may unexpectedly encounter obstructions caused by oncoming vehicles, preventing them from fully exiting the R515 and leaving them stopped on the live carriageway, prone to accident. Emphasising the single lane nature of the proposal, vehicles encountering larger traffic on this new roadway may be forced to reverse in the direction of oncoming / following traffic, as there will be obstructed forward visibility on the gradient of the bridge. Based on the recommendations above, it is requested that the following be taken into consideration, and that minor amendments be made to the proposal. Consider provision of cycle lane, in order to increase traffic safety.

Response:

164 A similar issue was highlighted in the submissions above and is described below.

165 Following consultation with Limerick CC, widening of the proposed road at the junction with the R515 for a length of approximately 15m will be included within the scheme. This will allow vehicles to join the proposed road and pass any vehicle waiting to exit, minimising the impact on the R515. Additional passing bays have been provided, in accordance with TII DN-GEO-03031, on either side of the bridge to allow for two-way traffic through the proposed scheme. This will avoid the need for any vehicles to reverse out onto the R515.

Submission: Limerick County Council

166 To avoid unnecessary queuing of traffic on the R515 at the proposed junction, the realigned road from its junction with the R515 should be widened locally to allow traffic from the R515 enter onto the proposed road and pass safely any traffic (including large vehicles such as agricultural machinery) that may be queuing in the opposite direction. The length of the road that will require localised widening to be agreed with Limerick City and County Council proper to commencement of construction.

Response:

167 Following consultation with Limerick CC, widening of the proposed road at the junction with the R515 for a length of approximately 15m will be included within the scheme. This will allow vehicles to join the proposed road and pass any vehicle waiting to exit, minimising the impact on the R515.

Submission: Limerick County Council

168 The design of all works must be in accordance with the TII suite of technical standards for all road and structural elements of the works. The designer of all works should be a Chartered Engineer and a declaration should be provided that all design works are completed in accordance with the TII suite of Technical Standards.

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Response:

169 The design will be carried out in accordance with TII standards and will be prepared by suitably qualified Engineers.

Submission: Limerick County Council

170 All construction works should be supervised by a suitably qualified team led by a Chartered engineer who has over 15 years' experience in the management and supervision of Civil Engineering works of a similar nature to those proposed under the Railway Order. The supervision team should ensure that all construction works including materials testing are recorded correctly and the safety file is updated throughout the construction phase.

Response:

171 All supervision will be carried out using suitable qualified and experienced Engineers

Submission: Limerick County Council

172 The full safety file including as built information pertaining to the road should be submitted to Limerick City and County Council for review at least 4m months prior to the road being handed over.

Response:

173 Noted and agreed.

XC209- Ballyhay

174 No Engineering Submissions Received for this site other than those received from Colm Moore which are contained in the section below.

XC211- Newtown

Submission: Aidan O'Connor

175 The close proximity of the boundary line to my house as shown in plan A4. This raises major concerns for me and my family. As you can see from the drawing part of the boundary line cuts into my property which is completely unacceptable and grossly unfair as this would affect our privacy greatly, devalue our property and make our home less secure. this is the only private dwelling that is impacted out of all the seven proposed projects by CIE.

Response:

176 A detailed Options Assessment Report was carried out to determine the preferred route. A multi-criteria analysis was used as part of the process to assess each of the route options. The study found that this route was the best performing option. It is acknowledged that there will be a physical impact on the property and a replacement boundary fence alongside the proposed carriageway will be provided. Details will be agreed subject to confirmation of the scheme.

177 Also refer to response provided in the Noise Precis of Evidence presented by Chris Conroy.

Submission: Aidan O'Connor

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- 178 It seems completely disproportionate to destroy 5 acres of prime farm land belonging to the O'Connor family which is being leased. This would result in loss of future rental income. It also prevents family members using this site for a family dwelling.

Response:

- 179 A detailed Options Assessment Report was carried out to determine the preferred route. A multi-criteria analysis was used as part of this process to assess each of the route options. The study found that this route was the best performing option. Appropriate compensation will be considered should the Rail Order be approved.

Submission: Cork County Council

- 180 It is considered that the proposed closure of the Newtown level crossing is positive, and pragmatic have regard to its proximity to the Ballycoskery crossing 350metres to the south and the existing bridge 360metres to the north.

Response:

- 181 Comment noted.

XC212- Ballycoskery

Submission: Ballyhea National School (James O'Brien)

- 182 The BOM requests ABP to refuse permission for the proposed development. It further submits that a reconsideration of a rail-over-road solution at Ballycoskery might be made. The BOM maintains that a less intrusive option for an eventual closure of Ballycoskery gates would be a rail over road solution given its lesser intrusive profile, its maintenance of current connectivity and its general acceptance by the village community.

Response:

- 183 Alternative solutions to close/de-man the level crossings were considered using Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA) as part of the February 2019 Feasibility Study. The best performing solution was the Alternative Access/Overbridge. An Options Report was then undertaken to appraise the various Alternative Access/Overbridge options (an underbridge option was also assessed for XC212 Ballycoskery) and indicated that the best performing option based on the Common Appraisal Framework criteria used, was the proposed option that has been included in the Railway Order.

Submission: Ballyhea National School (James O'Brien)

- 184 The BOM notes that CIE has made no provision or proposal for the safety, security, or maintenance of the proposed carpark. The BOM notes with no little concern that CIE has advanced a project to construct a significant carpark space in the immediate vicinity of the school without any reference to child protection concerns, procedures, risk assessment or risk management.

Response:

- 185 We are happy to work with the Board of Management to review any child protection concerns, none have been raised to date on the project during earlier Consultations. Footways and pedestrian crossings have been provided in the car park to ensure the safety of pedestrians. Maintenance of the carpark will be provided by IR.

Submission: Bernadette Leahy

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186 I drive a motor car to and from Ballyhea. The proposed new bridge would make access to the east part of the village very complicate and unsafe in poor weather, especially during the winter months when we have ice on the roads. The bridge also complicates access to the church, shop, and parochial house in the west part of the village.

Response:

187 The proposed scheme has been designed in accordance with DN-GEO-03031 Rural Road Link Design. Access to all existing amenities and local roads have been maintained as part of the proposed scheme. New signage is also proposed.

Submission: Bernadette Leahy

188 As for pedestrians, the proposal makes little sense as it will not be possible to use it in poor weather conditions. A much simpler solution such as automated gates or a tunnel under the railway line would be a much simpler solution, less costly, and likely to have minimal impact on the landscape and the community. I would ask An Bord Pleanala to set this proposed development aside and to require CIE to provide a working alternative for Ballycoskery.

Response:

189 Alternative solutions to close/de-man the level crossings, including a 4 Barrier CCTV option, were considered using Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA) as part of the February 2019 Feasibility Study. The best performing solution was the Alternative Access/Overbridge. An Options Report was then undertaken to appraise the various Alternative Access/Overbridge options (an underbridge option was also assessed for XC212 Ballycoskery) and indicated that the best performing option based on the Common Appraisal Framework criteria used, was the proposed option that has been included in the Railway Order.

Submission: Bernadette Leahy

190 There are two SAC areas close to Ballycoskery. One is the Blackwater River special area of conservation which is intersected by streams passing through Ballycoskery, the other is the Ballyhoura Mountains special area of conservation. The Ballyhoura Mountains SAC is home to the Hen Harrier, 20% of whose national population is located in Cork. Whooper Swans are also to be found in the local area. There is also an Annex I area of Hydrologous habitat very close to the Ballycoskery gates. From my reading of CIE's report, it seems to me that the proposed bridge at Ballycoskery has been designed with little or no consideration of alternative options that would have a lesser impact on the environment or none at all.

Response:

191 Alternative solutions to close/de-man the level crossings, including a 4 Barrier CCTV option, were considered using Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA) as part of the February 2019 Feasibility Study. The best performing solution was the Alternative Access/Overbridge. An Options Report was then undertaken to appraise the various Alternative Access/Overbridge options (an underbridge option was also assessed for XC212 Ballycoskery) and indicated that the best performing option based on the Common Appraisal Framework criteria used, was the proposed option that has been included in the Railway Order.

192 If additional evidence is needed, then the following could be used - The Natura Impact Statement for the proposed Development provides a full assessment of any Special Area of Conservation and/or Special Protection Area that screened in for Appropriate Assessment. Ballyhoura Mountains SAC was screened out of the assessment due to there being no hydrological link and hen harrier are not a Qualifying Interest of this SAC. In addition, there is no suitable habitat to support this species within or

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in proximity to Ballycoskery and as such hen harrier was not considered within the EclA or the NIS for the project. The habitat corresponding to Hydrophilous tall herb that was identified at Ballycoskery is not associated with any SAC in the area. The mitigation strategy for the loss of a proportion of this Annex I habitat is considered to result in no residual impacts. The conclusion of the NIS was that there would be no adverse effects on site integrity for the Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC and Kilcolman Bog SPA (see Section 5.3 and proposed mitigation measures measure in Section 5.3.8 of the NIS).

Submission: Bernadette Leahy

- 193 The document supplied by CIE has mistaken the location of Ardpatrik and has erroneously placed it to the west of the N20 on what appears to be L5530 which is a local road going west from the N20, through the townland of Ballinadridden, and eventually to Churchtown. Ardpatrik and Ballycosker level crossing are in the exact opposite direction.

Response:

- 194 Noted. However, it is unclear where the reference to Ardpatrik is incorrectly shown.

Submission: Bernadette Leahy

- 195 Some of the maps in your documentation appear to be out of date. For example, the new community hall does not appear on any of the maps included in CIE's application. As this is a recent development, I was inclined to think that the Ordnance Survey had not yet updated their maps. On closer inspection, I find that the maps for the school at Ballycoskery do not show the new classrooms added to the east end of the school building. I am certain that the new school rooms were built and opened in 2012. This would have allowed the Ordnance Survey ample time to update their maps. It seems to me that CIE has used maps to illustrate this development that are almost ten years out of date.

Response:

- 196 The maps provided on the drawings are based on the latest version provided by the Ordnance Survey which may not have recent changes included, however, we are aware of the buildings that have been added in recent times and have included them in our assessments.

Submission: David and Geraldine Mc Namara

- 197 We have reason to question the proportionality of the solution proposed for Ballycoskery. This proposal is excessive for the safety needs of the railway crossing at Ballycoskery. An application of a proper MCA would have favoured a more suitable solution such as an underpass or an electrified gate system.

Response:

- 198 Alternative solutions to close/de-man the level crossings, including a 4 Barrier CCTV option, were considered using Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA) as part of the February 2019 Feasibility Study. The best performing solution was the Alternative Access/Overbridge. An Options Report was then undertaken to appraise the various Alternative Access/Overbridge options (an underbridge option was also assessed for XC212 Ballycoskery) and indicated that the best performing option based on the Common Appraisal Framework criteria used, was the proposed option that has been included in the Railway Order.

Submission: Hilton Lowell and Others (100 signatures)

- 199 I have been asked to forward to you the enclosed petition concerning Ballycoskery Level Crossing requesting that the proposed construction of a flyover be rejected, and that CIE be directed by the An

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Bord Pleanála to develop alternative proposals, preferably the alternative of a rail over road solution which is acceptable to those who signed the petition.

Response:

200 A similar issue was highlighted in a submission above and is described below:

201 Alternative solutions to close/de-man the level crossings were considered using Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA) as part of the February 2019 Feasibility Study. The best performing solution was the Alternative Access/Overbridge. An Options Report was then undertaken to appraise the various Alternative Access/Overbridge options (an underbridge option was also assessed for XC212 Ballycoskery) and indicated that the best performing option based on the Common Appraisal Framework criteria used, was the proposed option that has been included in the Railway Order.

Submission: Hilton Lowell and Others (100 signatures)

202 The petition also demonstrated to ABP that there is extensive consensus among the residents of Ballyhea village for the rail over road option.

Response:

203 A similar issue was highlighted in a submission above and is described below:

204 Alternative solutions to close/de-man the level crossings were considered using Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA) as part of the February 2019 Feasibility Study. The best performing solution was the Alternative Access/Overbridge. An Options Report was then undertaken to appraise the various Alternative Access/Overbridge options (an underbridge option was also assessed for XC212 Ballycoskery) and indicated that the best performing option based on the Common Appraisal Framework criteria used, was the proposed option that has been included in the Railway Order.

Submission: Jerome O' Keefe

205 This car park will serve no useful purpose. It is too far from the bus stop on the N20 for those who use the bus services. It is too far for those who car share going to work on the N20. Both of these groups use the church car park on the N20. On the other hand, a car park located in front of the school in a relatively secluded place will give rise to anti-social behaviour including halting and camping sites, and drug related activities.

Response:

206 The proposed carpark has been designed to provide safe parking and drop off for those attending the school and is designed to a similar layout used at other schools throughout Ireland.

207 There is no evidence provided in the submissions to support the assertion that the creation of these sections of unused road will lead to an increase in anti-social behaviour; nor is there any evidence of this nature published by the local authorities; nor any evidence of such issues arising on similar areas already created. If such were to arise, there are a range of statutory remedies that are open to any person affronted to deal with such issues.

Submission: Jerome O' Keefe

208 I am over 80 years of age and would be unable to use the footbridge. In bad weather no one could use it. It is also unusable for anyone in a wheelchair.

Response:

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- 209 The proposed scheme has been designed in accordance with DN-GEO-03031 Rural Road Link Design. The proposed footway has been designed in accordance with DN-PAV-03026 Footway Design, with the portion to the west of the bridge brought offline to keep the vertical gradients within the recommended limits

Submission: Jerome O' Keefe

- 210 Apart from leaving the level crossing as it is or automating it, I still think that the best proportionate solution to the level crossing at Ballycosgery is an underpass.

Response:

- 211 A similar issue was highlighted in a submission above and is described below:
- 212 Alternative solutions to close/de-man the level crossings, including a 4 Barrier CCTV option, were considered using Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA) as part of the February 2019 Feasibility Study. The best performing solution was the Alternative Access/Overbridge. An Options Report was then undertaken to appraise the various Alternative Access/Overbridge options (an underbridge option was also assessed for XC212 Ballycoskery) and indicated that the best performing option based on the Common Appraisal Framework criteria used, was the proposed option that has been included in the Railway Order.

Submission: Margaret McNamara

- 213 To lessen the social and environmental impact on my land and the village, I am formally proposing that an Underpass be built in order to enable the passage of motor traffic and pedestrians underneath the existing railway line. Such an underpass will ensure the preservation and integrity of the landscape, the village and the environment with minimal impact on above as well as the safe passage of traffic. I know that residents at Ballycoskey support the building of an Underpass as Ballyhea railway crossing XC 212. An underpass will ensure that the social, historical, visual, landscape and environmental integrity of Ballyhea Village is minimally affected and will ensure the safe passage of traffic and pedestrians. Alternatively, we support electric gates at the railway.

Response:

- 214 A similar issue was highlighted in a submission above and is described below:
- 215 Alternative solutions to close/de-man the level crossings, including a 4 Barrier CCTV option, were considered using Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA) as part of the February 2019 Feasibility Study. The best performing solution was the Alternative Access/Overbridge. An Options Report was then undertaken to appraise the various Alternative Access/Overbridge options (an underbridge option was also assessed for XC212 Ballycoskery) and indicated that the best performing option based on the Common Appraisal Framework criteria used, was the proposed option that has been included in the Railway Order.

Submission: Maria McInerney

- 216 I ask an Bord Pleanála to encourage CIE to re-examine the proposal to build a tunnel under the railway line at Ballyhea Village as this would have the support of most people in the village and would be less of an intrusion. In the event that building a tunnel might prove too costly for CIE I then ask the Bord to encourage CIE to upgrade the present level crossing to four gate CCTV, such as the proposed gate at Ballyhay, an to avail of modern safety technology.

Response:

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217 A similar issue was highlighted in a submission above and is described below:

218 Alternative solutions to close/de-man the level crossings, including a 4 Barrier CCTV option, were considered using Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA) as part of the February 2019 Feasibility Study. The best performing solution was the Alternative Access/Overbridge. An Options Report was then undertaken to appraise the various Alternative Access/Overbridge options (an underbridge option was also assessed for XC212 Ballycoskery) and indicated that the best performing option based on the Common Appraisal Framework criteria used, was the proposed option that has been included in the Railway Order.

Submission: Maurice O Riordan - Cork Older Age Council

219 Things like access, mobility, park-and-go, easy movement between both sides of Ballyhea Village as well as lighting, and security would all need to be incorporated into any development at the railway gare at Ballycosgry, fate 212 on the cork line. While the present crossing at Ballycoskery might not be ideal, at the very least it affords good accessibility to older people, both driving cars or pedestrians, to both sides of the village of Ballyhea. The proposal now being made by Iarnrod Eireann severely impacts that accessibility and reduces mobility for older people driving cars. Getting from one side of the village to the other is made more complicated and access to the parochial house almost impossible. As for the foot bridge, this is one of the mist unfriendly developments i have seen as far as older people are concerned.

Response:

220 The proposed scheme has been designed in accordance with DN-GEO-03031 Rural Road Link Design. Access to all existing amenities and local roads have been maintained as part of the proposed scheme. New signage is also proposed. The proposed footway has been designed in accordance with DN-PAV-03026 Footway Design, with the portion to the west of the bridge brought offline to keep the vertical gradients within the recommended limits within the standards.

Submission: Maurice O' Riordan - Cork Older Age Council

221 The proposed bridge at Ballycoskry is almost unusable for older people, people of impaired mobility and especially for wheel-chair users.

Response:

222 The proposed scheme has been designed in accordance with DN-GEO-03031 Rural Road Link Design. The proposed footway has been designed in accordance with DN-PAV-03026 Footway Design, with the portion to the west of the bridge brought offline to keep the vertical gradients within the recommended limits.

Submission: Maurice O' Riordan - Cork Older Age Council

223 Keeping these considerations in mind, I would ask you to refuse permission for the proposed bridge at Ballycoskry and to advise Iarnrod Eireann to develop alternative solutions that reflect the community needs for older aged people.

Response:

224 Alternative solutions to close/de-man the level crossings were considered using Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA) as part of the February 2019 Feasibility Study. The best performing solution was the Alternative Access/Overbridge. An Options Report was then undertaken to appraise the various Alternative Access/Overbridge options (an underbridge option was also assessed for XC212 Ballycoskery) and

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indicated that the best performing option based on the Common Appraisal Framework criteria used, was the proposed option that has been included in the Railway Order.

Submission: Noel Hanleys

- 225 I would request that Bord Pleanala to reject the present proposal and in line with Cork County Council, to advise CIE to draw up alternative proposals, particularly in relation to an underpass solution which has broad public support.

Response:

- 226 A similar issue was highlighted in a submission above and is described below:

- 227 Alternative solutions to close/de-man the level crossings were considered using Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA) as part of the February 2019 Feasibility Study. The best performing solution was the Alternative Access/Overbridge. An Options Report was then undertaken to appraise the various Alternative Access/Overbridge options (an underbridge option was also assessed for XC212 Ballycoskery) and indicated that the best performing option based on the Common Appraisal Framework criteria used, was the proposed option that has been included in the Railway Order.

Submission: Noel Hanleys

- 228 Let me illustrate what I mean by factual inaccuracy. Please see the executive summary part of the report at 9.6.1. It stated here that "The existing crossing XC212 is located on the L1533, a single carriageway road that runs east to west from the N20 to Ardpatick". In my dealings with Cork County Council the road leading from the N20 to Ardpatick at Ballyhea church is referred to as a number L1327. This I can confirm with a photograph of the signpost pointing to the road.

- 229 I cannot say where the road number L1533 came from. A Google search gives a road of that number in County Limerick at Ardpatick. Up to very recently Ballycoskery level crossing was either in County Limerick nor in Ardpatick. The quotation above also says that L1533 'runs east to west from N20 to Ardpatick'. As anyone will tell you, the L1327 intersects the N20 from the east at a T-junction. It does not continue west over the N20. The N20 runs north south. The T-junction for the L1327, coming from Ballycoskery level crossing, is on the east side of the N20. Neither the L1533 nor Ballycoskery gates is on the west side of the N20. There is nothing there. Such a basic mistake, thrice repeated, in locating the position of the Ballycoskery level crossing on a map is simply unacceptable at this level. There must surely be limits to non-technicality below which even non-technical summaries should not fall.

Response:

- 230 Error noted. Reference to L1533 for XC212 Ballycoskery scheme in Chapter 3 Project Description (sections 3.3,3.4, and Table 3.9) should read L1327. Reference to L1533 for XC211 Newtown scheme in Chapter 3 Project Description (Table 3.9) should read L5534.

Submission: David Coops and Others, Nicola Barrett, Mark Donoghue Mary Scammell

- 231 We ask ABP to encourage CIE to re-examine the proposal to build a tunnel under the railway line at Ballyhea Village as this would have the support of most people in the village and would be less of an intrusion.

Response:

- 232 A similar issue was highlighted in a submission above and is described below:

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- 233 Alternative solutions to close/de-man the level crossings were considered using Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA) as part of the February 2019 Feasibility Study. The best performing solution was the Alternative Access/Overbridge. An Options Report was then undertaken to appraise the various Alternative Access/Overbridge options (an underbridge option was also assessed for XC212 Ballycoskery) and indicated that the best performing option based on the Common Appraisal Framework criteria used, was the proposed option that has been included in the Railway Order.

Submission: David Coops and Others, Nicola Barrett, Mark Donoghue Mary Scammell

- 234 The proposal now submitted for Ballycoskerry to An Bord Pleanala is basically the same plan drawn up in 2010 without taking any notice of Cork County Council's decision or our concerns. By going to An Bord Pleanala CIE thinks that it can get around the decision of Cork County Council to continue with its proposed bridge.

Response:

- 235 A similar issue was highlighted in a submission above and is described below:

- 236 Alternative solutions to close/de-man the level crossings were considered using Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA) as part of the February 2019 Feasibility Study. The best performing solution was the Alternative Access/Overbridge. An Options Report was then undertaken to appraise the various Alternative Access/Overbridge options (an underbridge option was also assessed for XC212 Ballycoskery) and indicated that the best performing option based on the Common Appraisal Framework criteria used, was the proposed option that has been included in the Railway Order.

Submission: John Dundon and Others Margaret Haully Harrod Desmond Mike Butler

- 237 We ask an Bord Pleanala to encourage CIE to re-examine the proposal to build a tunnel under the railway line at Ballyhea Village as this would have the support of most people in the village and would be a less of an intrusion.

Response:

- 238 A similar issue was highlighted in a submission above and is described below:

- 239 Alternative solutions to close/de-man the level crossings were considered using Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA) as part of the February 2019 Feasibility Study. The best performing solution was the Alternative Access/Overbridge. An Options Report was then undertaken to appraise the various Alternative Access/Overbridge options (an underbridge option was also assessed for XC212 Ballycoskery) and indicated that the best performing option based on the Common Appraisal Framework criteria used, was the proposed option that has been included in the Railway Order.

Submission: Michael and Bridie McDermott

- 240 My brother Peter McDermot is buried inside the road wall and my concerns is any damage or interference with his grave in church grounds. In my opinion and view there has to be no interference with his remains or grave.

Response:

- 241 We can confirm that no interference will made to any existing burial sites and that the existing church/graveyard wall will be retained as part of the scheme.

Submission: Michael Mackessy and Others Caroline Mackessy

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- 242 We ask An Bord Pleanála to encourage CIE to re-examine the proposal to build a tunnel under the railway line at Ballyhea Village as this would have the support of most people in the village as this would have the support most people in the village and would be a less of an intrusion.

Response:

- 243 A similar issue was highlighted in a submission above and is described below:
- 244 Alternative solutions to close/de-man the level crossings were considered using Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA) as part of the February 2019 Feasibility Study. The best performing solution was the Alternative Access/Overbridge. An Options Report was then undertaken to appraise the various Alternative Access/Overbridge options (an underbridge option was also assessed for XC212 Ballycoskery) and indicated that the best performing option based on the Common Appraisal Framework criteria used, was the proposed option that has been included in the Railway Order.

Submission: Michael O Kelly and Others Dennis and Margaret Ring

- 245 We ask An Bord Pleanála to encourage CIE to re-examine the proposal to build a tunnel under the railway line at Ballyhea Village as this would have the support of most people in the village as this would have the support most people in the village and would be a less of an intrusion.

Response:

- 246 A similar issue was highlighted in a submission above and is described below:
- 247 Alternative solutions to close/de-man the level crossings were considered using Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA) as part of the February 2019 Feasibility Study. The best performing solution was the Alternative Access/Overbridge. An Options Report was then undertaken to appraise the various Alternative Access/Overbridge options (an underbridge option was also assessed for XC212 Ballycoskery) and indicated that the best performing option based on the Common Appraisal Framework criteria used, was the proposed option that has been included in the Railway Order.

Submission: Michael O Kelly

- 248 It is regrettable that CIE have not given serious consideration to alternatives such as an underpass or to an upgraded system of four barrier CCTV such as is widely used in upgraded European rail systems of which examples can be seen in Spain, Lithuania, Germany and France.

Response:

- 249 A similar issue was highlighted in a submission above and is described below:
- 250 Alternative solutions to close/de-man the level crossings, including a 4 Barrier CCTV option, were considered using Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA) as part of the February 2019 Feasibility Study. The best performing solution was the Alternative Access/Overbridge. An Options Report was then undertaken to appraise the various Alternative Access/Overbridge options (an underbridge option was also assessed for XC212 Ballycoskery) and indicated that the best performing option based on the Common Appraisal Framework criteria used, was the proposed option that has been included in the Railway Order.

Submission: Trustees of The Diocese of Cloyne.

- 251 Without prejudice to the above, the Trustees bring to the attention of ABP the entrance to the avenue along the entire northern boundary of Ballyhea National School. The entrance and avenue are dedicated facilities providing access to the school, its playground, and to the community hall for

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emergency vehicles (ambulance, fire tender etc.) as per planning permission granted by Cork County Council and per fire certificate issued by Chief Fire Officer for Cork County Council. They are required to be functional at all times. The Trustees bring to the attention of ABP that emergency water supplies (fire hydrants) are required to be operational at all times.

Response:

252 There are no works proposed along the northern boundary of the Ballyhea National School as part of this proposed scheme. Access to Ballyhea National School, the community hall and emergency water supplies will be maintained during the works.

Submission: Cork County Council

253 Given the proximity of the school, the proposed bridge and slightly elongated route is considered positive in terms of child safety.

Response:

254 Comment noted.

Submission: Cork County Council Water Services Dept

255 Ballyhea Agglomeration located directly adjacent to the west of the railway line. There is no wastewater infrastructure crossing the railway line. There is a pump station located in the green area in front of the housing estate with the Control Kiosk for same located adjacent to the Railway Gates at the Public Road. No objection in principle subject to the works not impacting on existing Wastewater infrastructure.

Response:

256 The proposed new alignment is further away from the green area in front of the housing estate and its construction will not impact upon the pumping station kiosk. No earthworks are proposed in that location.

Submission: Cork County Council Water Services Dept and Cork County Council Conditions Recommendation

257 The settlement East of the proposed road works at XC212 is currently unsewered. While capacity is currently an issue at Ballyhay wastewater works, consideration should be made for the laying of a (blanked off) sewer during these road works. Should capacity ever be provided, existing development such as the school (currently served by an onsite wastewater treatment system) and potential future development could be serviced. The Applicant should engage with Irish Water in this regard.

Response:

258 The Project Team are continually liaising with all utility providers to finalise the utility designs. Discussions are ongoing for the identification of any betterment required/agreed by the utility provider to be incorporated within the project.

Submission: Aidan O'Connor

259 Surely a four barrier CCTV structure would be the least destructive and more proportionate option for XC211 considering the low level of traffic that passes through it or alternatively close XC211 permanently. This option still leaves two other routes available with minimal time delay.

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Response:

260 The removal of the link between railway and road users is an important aspect of Irish Rail's plan for safety of the railway network. The 2030 Iarnród Éireann Rail Network Strategy Review (2011) sets out under 'Background' that a broad strategic goal for the rail network is: "To provide safe, accessible and integrated rail services that contribute to the sustainable economic and regional development in an efficient manner".

261 In addition, the Commission for Railway Regulation (CRR) Railway Safety Performance in Ireland 2018 sets out that "Level crossings are a significant risk to the railway and to any third parties who use them".

Submission: Michael O'Kelly

262 A feasible study and analysis was not undertaken for XC212 at Ballycoskery as all potential options for a new crossing facility were not reviewed.

Response:

263 It is incorrect to state that a feasibility study and analysis was not undertaken at Ballycoskery. The findings of the February 2019 Feasibility Study are laid out in the EIAR. The options assessment was undertaken using a multi-criteria assessment and resulted in a proposed solution of New Overbridge (with Alternative Access). The recommendations of the Iarnród Éireann 2019 Feasibility Report were further assessed in the Options Report prepared by Jacobs Engineering, the findings of which are outlined within the EIAR. The Options Report was undertaken using a multi-criteria analysis and indicated that the Green Option is the most preferable based on the Common Appraisal Framework criteria used.

XC215 Shinanagh

264 No Engineering Submissions Received.

XC219 - Buttevant

Submission: Daniel Lucey

265 Consultation 2020 submission: "Access on the northwest corner of the field Folio CK26597F (owned by Daniel Lucey) is not provided." The access is still not provided by way of underpass to the existing road. Consultation 2020 submission "Folio CK26597F (owned by Daniel Lucey) is divided with no link access under proposed road". You might note that CIE has catered for an access for themselves, but there is no access still provided for the Appellant in the latest drawings. It is a safer option to provide access onto the existing road. Consultation 2020 submission "The short spur road also divides Folio CK26597F (owned by Daniel Lucey)" Still applicable to this submission.

266 Consultation 2020 submission "Compromise will be required prior to formalising the design." No proper compromises were made in relation to the link and access to the existing road from the southern portion of the holding owned by the Appellant prior to formalising the design.

Response:

267 With regards to access to the portion of land to the northwest of this plot, a separate gated access can be provided from the existing road to this portion of land. However, an underpass into this area is not feasible due to insufficient headroom available under the proposed road.

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Submission: Daniel Lucey

268 Has RSA approved speed limit change from 80kph to 50kph? " Still applicable to this submission.

Response:

269 The proposed speed limit of the road is an executive function of the Local Authority and not the Road Safety Authority.

Submission: Daniel Lucey

270 Consultation 2020 submission "Existing access on the northeast corner of the field Folio CK26597F (owned by Daniel Lucey) is not catered for in relation to reduction of sight lines and road safety." If this application is granted at its present format without a link to the existing road to the north, future development options for the Appellant's lands will be eliminated, unless adequate space is provided for the entrance with adequate sight lines in accordance latest roads guidelines. The entrance width should be min. 10.5m to accommodate a 6.5m wide road with 2m wide footpath at either side with junction radii not less than 10m. Surely, this entrance will be required at construction stage to cater for temporary land acquisition as shown on Plan 3 A XC219 - Buttevant and left in situ for any future development for the Appellant's lands.

Response:

271 The proposed field access has been provided in accordance with TII standard DN-GEO-03060. A Road Safety Audit has been undertaken on the scheme and will be subject to additional Road Safety Audits at Detailed Design Stage. Any outcomes from this Audit in relation to signage will be provided as necessary.

Submission: Daniel Lucey

272 Drawings presented to the Appellant on A3 sheets are not to correct scale and therefore it is difficult to analyse.

Response:

273 Scales have been checked and confirmed. Note scales vary depending on printed size of drawing as is standard practice.

Submission: Daniel Lucey

274 There are no proper details for the construction stages.

Response:

275 Construction phasing drawings have been developed as appropriate for each level crossing location. These can be found within the Volume 4 Figures folder of the application.

Submission: Daniel Lucey

276 The size of the underpass to join the subdivided Appellant's lands by the proposed development needs to be of adequate widths and heights to cater for future development.

Response:

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277 With regards to access to the northwest area of land, a gated access can be provided from the existing road, adjacent to the memorial site. However, an underpass into this area is not feasible due to the headroom constraints in this area.

Submission: Michael Kennedy and Deirdre Ryan

278 The proposed road space will present a harsh pedestrian environment, not conducive to a comfortable walking environment. No pedestrian crossing provided for our clients to cross the bridge and so they are cut off from walking northward from their house. Failure to provide safe pedestrian connectivity could lead to pedestrians crossing the road at unsafe location possibly resulting in collisions with passing vehicles. A safe continuous footpath should be provided through the length of the road alignment to accommodate safe access for local residents along the route. Failure to provide adequate sightlines at our clients entrance and at other junctions along the extents of the scheme, would present a significant road safety hazard to road users.

Response:

279 As part of the proposed scheme, existing footways are being enhanced. Footway connection to the memorial site is maintained and the proposed footway is extended to the proposed bridge. A verge is provided to the west of the structure to tie in with the existing arrangement. The road geometry has been designed in accordance with TII standards, with relaxations discussed with Cork County Council. The road has been subject to a Road Safety Audit at Preliminary Stage and will be subject to further Road Safety Audits at Detailed Design Stage.

Submission: Michael Kennedy and Deirdre Ryan

280 It is further submitted that the applicant should request of CCC that the 50kph urban speed limit be extended to the far side of the proposed works.

Response:

281 The road geometry has been designed in accordance with TII standards, with relaxations discussed with Cork County Council (CCC). The road has been subject to a Road Safety Audit at Preliminary Stage and will be subject to further Road Safety Audits at Detailed Design Stage. The posted speed limit is an executive function of CCC.

Submission: Michael Kennedy and Deirdre Ryan

282 Our client requires that appropriate boundary accommodation works be constructed in advance of the overall road works to minimise the impact of work on our client.

Response:

283 This is a matter for discussion upon confirmation of the Railway Order.

Submission: Cork County Council Water Services Dept

284 The Buttevant Agglomeration is located to the east of this crossing. There is no wastewater infrastructure crossing the railway line and the nearest foul sewer is approximately 0.5km away. No objection

Response:

285 Comment Noted.

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Colm Moore General Submission

Submission: Colm Moore

286 What are the minimum sightlines over bridges?

Response:

287 The sightlines have been designed in accordance with TII standard DN-GEO-03031 and in consultation with local authorities.

Submission: Colm Moore

288 All bridges should have at least one footway. In places where there is no footway, ensure there is a rubbing strip between each carriageway and parapet / divider of sufficient width (not including width of gutter) for someone to take refuge.

Response:

289 All bridge structures have raised paved verges between the carriageway and the parapets in accordance with TII standard DN-GEO-03036.

Submission: Colm Moore

290 Where there is a footway on a road approaching a bridge, there should also be a footway on that side of the bridge.

Response:

291 Suitable provision is planned where applicable and where local conditions require / permit.

Submission: Colm Moore

292 How much footway is proposed? There seems to be a blurring of what is footway and what is verge.

Response:

293 Please refer to Proposed Site Plan for each site location to identify areas of proposed verge and footways.

Submission: Colm Moore

294 The maximum slope of all footways should be no more than 5%. Slopes steeper than this are difficult, especially for wheelchair users.

Response:

295 The proposed footways have been designed in accordance with DN-PAV-03026 Footway Design. All footways have a maximum gradient of 5%.

Submission: Colm Moore

296 Why are some bridges designed with a concrete divider (between roadway and footway) and a metal parapet?

Response:

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297 In accordance with TII standard DN-REQ-03034, H4a containment level barriers are required on approach and departure from all rail bridges. At XC212 Ballycoskery, to allow for the ramped pedestrian footway to link into the footway crossing the structure, the H4a concrete barrier has been moved between the footway and the carriageway.

Submission: Colm Moore

298 Reduce the kerb radius at residential junctions and add speed tables / dished kerbs.

Response:

299 All junctions and kerb layouts will be designed in accordance with TII standards.

Submission: Colm Moore

300 Footways should be continuous across private entrances. Pedestrians should not have to stop for vehicles exiting driveways. See DMURS.

Response:

301 All footways and entrances will be designed in accordance with TII standards.

Submission: Colm Moore

302 Ban parking in passing bays on new roads.

Response:

303 Appropriate signage will be provided in accordance with the Traffic Signs Manual.

Submission: Colm Moore

304 Provide suitable signage and turning areas where roads are closed.

Response:

305 Appropriate signage will be provided in accordance with the Traffic Signs Manual. The proposed scheme does not include for turning areas.

Submission: Colm Moore

306 Consider options of revising the Ballyhoura Way waymarked route, without necessarily lengthening it.

Response:

307 The scheme will include for relocation of waymarked signs to compliment the proposed alignment.

Submission: Colm Moore

308 XC209 Ballyhay - while is it perhaps more complicated than the other locations, adding a bridge would be desirable.

Response:

309 All considered options have been included in the EIAR Chapter 2: Project Need and Alternatives.

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Submission: Colm Moore

310 Planning - XC212 Ballycoskery - Drawing No. 2111000-JAC-HGN-XC212-DR-CB-0001(i) - Plan - this drawing appears to have spurious detail (possibly survey lines), that is not included on other drawings. The level of detail makes the drawing almost illegible in places.

Response:

311 Comment noted.

Submission: Colm Moore

312 Planning - XC212 Ballycoskery - Drawing No. 2111000-JAC-HGN-XC212-DR-CD-0001 (i) - Longitudinal Profile A-A - steps are missing at the pedestrian ramp.

Response:

313 Error noted.

Submission: Colm Moore

314 Ballyhea National School - ensure turning area is sufficient for more than one bus/coach at a time.

Response:

315 Comment noted and will be considered as part of the detailed design.

Submission: Colm Moore

316 Ballyhea National School - bus stop should be near school entrance, possibly with only wheelchair accessible parking spaces being nearer.

Response:

317 The bus stop has been located in the car park adjacent to the school. It is located to avoid blocking other circulating vehicles within the car park.

Submission: Colm Moore

318 Ballyhea National School - is it appropriate to have the railway maintenance / emergency access via the school access road? Is it appropriate to have a direct approach to the gate?

Response:

319 There is no railway maintenance access proposed from the school access road. It is proposed to block up the existing rail boundary with a masonry wall.

Submission: Colm Moore

320 Ballyhea National School - long flights of steps are unsafe. Ensure any steps comply with the Building Regulations.

Response:

321 All pedestrian steps will be designed in accordance with TII standards.

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Submission: Colm Moore

322 Shinanagh - "Existing IE Access to Be Retained" - the layout here may have changed in recent years. The access appears to have been misidentified. It is south of the bridge, not north of the bridge and the proposed works would appear to obliterate it. The proposed level changes to the location north of the bridge would seem to make an access point impractical. (See images on submission document).

Response:

323 Locations of existing Irish Rail access points and the closure or retention of same are in agreement with Irish Rail.

Submission: Colm Moore

324 Figure 10F Permanent Road Section - "Typical Road Cross Section" - "Typical depth of tarmac minimum 20mm to be confirmed at Detailed Design Stage" - check depth.

Response:

325 Figure 10F is a Typical Road Cross Section detail. Proposed pavement depths will be confirmed at the Detailed Design stage of the Scheme.

Submission: Colm Moore

326 Executive Summary - "There are 7 remaining manned public road level crossings in operation on the Dublin to Cork Line between Limerick Junction and Mallow stations (XC187, XC201, XC209, XC211, XC212, XC215 and XC219)" Every word in this sentence is necessary for it to be true. There are other level crossings between Heuston and Cork Kent that have not been closed.

- Accommodation Crossing, Loughmoe Tipperary, Possibly closed but not obviously so. (See Link on submission)
- Accommodation Crossing, Thurles, Tipperary, Possibly closed but not obviously so. (See Link on submission)
- XC133 Grange CCTV, R497 Donohill, Tipperary, Seems to be in operation. Not on Google Streetview (See link on submission)
- Accommodation Crossing, Emly, Limerick, Possibly closed, but not obviously so (See link on submission)
- XC164 Emly CCTV, Emly Limerick, Seems to be in operation.
- XC196 McCathy L, Kilmallock, Limerick, Recently closed. Still listed on Irish Rail Website (See link on Submission)
- XC197 O'Brien T./ David O'Briend, Kilmallock, Limerick, Replaced by bridge. Still listed on Irish Rail website. (See link on Submission)
- XC226 Kilnockin No1/Cashman N./Traf (U), Mallow General Hospital, Mallow, Cork, Possibly closed, but not obviously so. (See link on Submission)
- Accommodation Crossing, Grenagh, Cork, Possibly closed, but not obviously so. (See link on submission)

Response:

327 The works contained within this project are related wholly to the locations identified in the project description (Chapter 3 of EIAR)

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Submission: Colm Moore

328 Need for the Scheme - 2.3. Physical Activity - "This criterion relates to the health benefits derived from using different transport modes. This criterion is not considered relevant for differentiating between route options for this project because all options would be expected to have a broadly similar impact on physical activity" - improving safety and travel times on public transport does impact physical activity.

Response:

329 As noted in section 2.3 "all options would be expected to have a broadly similar impact on physical activity", and so this would not be any differentiating factor in the assessment.

Submission: Colm Moore

330 Accessibility and Social Inclusion - "This criterion relates to the potential benefits that accrue to those suffering from social deprivation, geographic isolation and mobility and sensory deprivation from the proposed project. This criterion is not considered relevant for differentiating between options for this project because all options would be expected to have a broadly similar impact" - note that reductions in severance and improvements in public transport will have impacts against social deprivation, geographic isolation and mobility and sensory deprivation issues.

Response:

331 As noted in section 2.5 "all options would be expected to have a broadly similar impact", and so this would not be any differentiating factor in the assessment.

Submission: Colm Moore

332 XC187 Fantstown - 4.1 Introduction - "There are also pedestrian wicket gates at the crossing, but the gatekeeper has no function in relation to the use of these gates" - are these gates to be closed?

Response:

333 All access through this existing level crossing will be closed as part of the scheme.

Submission: Colm Moore

334 Table 4.1 - XC187 2011 Traffic Counts - "85% Speed 0" - surely the 85% speed must be above 0?

Response:

335 Error noted. Table 4.1 should have read "n/a" for 85th percentile speed as this information was not available in the 2011 traffic counts.

Submission: Colm Moore

336 XC209 Ballyhay - 6.1 Introduction - "There are also pedestrian wicket gates at the crossing, but the gatekeeper has no function in relation to the use of these gates" - are these gates to be closed?

Response:

337 The pedestrian gates will not be closed as a part of this scheme.

Submission: Colm Moore

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338 XC211 Newtown - 7.1 Introduction - "There are also pedestrian gates..." is this correct, there appears to be no such gates?

Response:

339 Error noted. There is currently no separate pedestrian access across the level crossing.

Submission: Colm Moore

340 XC212 Ballycoskery - 8.1 Introduction - "There are also pedestrian gates..." is this correct, there appears to be no such gates?

Response:

341 Error noted. There is currently no separate pedestrian access across the level crossing.

Submission: Colm Moore

342 9.3 Options Considered - "Figure 5.3 below shows the 4no. Alternative route options that were considered.

- Green Option - New road alignment to East of level crossing. Requires Pink or Orange tie-in Option.
- Blue Option - New road alignment to North of level crossing. Requires Pink or Orange tie-in Option.
- Red Option - New road-over-rail bridge to West to level crossing. New junction on N20" - only three, not four, options are presented, although two further tie-in options are presented.

Response:

343 Error noted. This should read 'Figure 5.3 below shows the 3no. alternative route options, with 2no. alternative tie-in options, that were considered'.

Submission: Colm Moore

344 9.5.2 Design speed - "The design speed was proposed to be consistent with anticipated vehicle speeds and existing road alignment.

- Current AADT: 1053 (4.9% HGV's)
- Current 85% Speed: 50.1km/h
- Proposed Design Speed: 50km/h." is a design speed of 50 km/h appropriate for a road that will have a default speed limit of 80 km/h?

Response:

345 The posted speed limit of the road is an executive function of local authority. In accordance with TII DN-GEO-03031 'Design Speed shall be consistent with the anticipated vehicle speeds on the road. Design speed is related to road characteristics and is not directly related to mandatory speed limits.' The design speed for the road will be calculated in accordance with DN-GEO-03031.

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Submission: Colm Moore

346 10.5.2 Design Speed - "The design speed was proposed to be consistent with anticipated vehicle speeds and existing road alignment.

- Current AADT: 2185 (9.6% HGVs)
- Current 85% Speed: 72.6km/h
- Proposed Design Speed: 50km/h

347 As part of the alignment design it would be advised that the 50km/h speed limit in Buttevant would be extended over the proposed alignment. Construction would be required with the relevant department of Cork County Council to progress this separately to the Rail Order process"" - is a design speed of 50 km/h appropriate for a road that has a current 85% speed: 72.6km/h and will have a default speed limit of 80 km/h?

Response:

348 The posted speed limit of the road is an executive function of local authority. In accordance with TII DN-GEO-03031 'Design Speed shall be consistent with the anticipated vehicle speeds on the road. Design speed is related to road characteristics and is not directly related to mandatory speed limits.' The design speed for the road will be calculated in accordance with DN-GEO-03031.

Submission: Colm Moore

349 General Arrangement Plan - XC212 Ballycoskery - 32111000-JAC-HGN-XC212-DR-CH-001-RRM 025 - Broken Edge of Carriageway Line - line is drawn incorrectly as a solid white line.

Response:

350 Comment noted. the proposed road markings will be prepared at Detailed Design phase in accordance with TII Standards.

Submission: Colm Moore

351 Appendix C. Structural Design - Approval in Principle and General Arrangement Drawings: XC201 - Thomastown - 3.0 Structure Description - The proposed structure is a single span bridge with a 0 degree skew and square span of 18.3m between faces of supports. The bridge deck is parallel to the carriageway and square to the bankseat abutments. The reinforced earth walls are parallel to the railway track and are therefore at a 2.7 degree skew to the carriageway and bridge structure. - on drawing "Plan and Profile - XC201 Thomastown" - 32111000-JAC-HML-XC201-DR-CH-0001 this is shown as 21 metres.

Response:

352 Drawing No 32111000-JAC-SDN-XC201-DR-S-0010 P01 in Volume 4- EIAR Drawings and Figures shows the bridge layout. There is a skew angle of 2.7deg between the railway and the proposed road. The strengthened earthworks walls run parallel to the railway. The bridge bankseat abutments are square to the road centreline. The clear span between the strengthened earthworks walls is 14.444m. The span between the centrelines of the bankseat abutments is 18.995m.