Barnesmore Gap Greenway

Volume 1: Non-Technical Summary

Donegal County Council

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1. Introduction

This Non-Technical Summary (NTS) is part of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) for the proposed Barnesmore Gap Greenway, hereafter referred to as the 'proposed development'.

This EIAR has been prepared by Roughan & O'Donovan Consulting Engineers in alliance with AECOM, (stylised as ROD-AECOM) and a team of competent experts on behalf of the applicant Donegal County Council (DCC). This EIAR forms part of the application that will be submitted by DCC to An Coimisiún Pleanála (ACP) (formerly An Bord Pleanála) for their approval of the proposed development.

It should be noted that surveys, assessments and information that form the basis of this EIAR are based on the current design of the proposed development which has been developed to a stage that permits a fully informed EIA.

1.1 Overview

Donegal County Council (DCC), in association with Transport Infrastructure Ireland, are developing a greenway which will provide commuters and leisure cyclists, pedestrians and impaired mobility users with an attractive recreational route linking the town of Donegal to the 'twin towns' of Ballybofey/Stranorlar in South County Donegal.

The Barnesmore Gap Greenway aims to provide an attractive route between the towns of Donegal Town and Ballybofey/Stranorlar in County Donegal, mainly to be used both for recreational purposes by pedestrians, cyclists and people with impaired mobility. The provision of a greenway (a facility for pedestrians and cyclists that is segregated from vehicular road traffic) in this location will provide enhanced access to the wider region, enticing users to explore its surrounding towns and villages and further develop the untapped tourism potential within the region. The proposed development also provides the opportunity to highlight the historical and educational significance of such places, whilst promoting the scenic nature of the surrounding area. At Donegal Town the proposed greenway will connect with the international EuroVelo Route 1 which follows the northern, western and southern coastlines around Ireland, and the route also forms part of the proposed National Cycle Network across Ireland. Furthermore, the proposed development provides connectivity to schools, urban centres, healthcare facilities, community centres and places of employment, facilitating day to day utility trips for local residents and the wider area.

The settlements of Donegal Town, and Ballybofey and Stranorlar are separated by the Barnesmore Gap. It is a scenic glacial valley, located within the 'Bluestack Mountains' in Donegal. This mountain pass provides the main link between north and south Donegal. The N15 National Road and the former West Donegal rail line runs through Barnesmore Gap, providing the only direct route from Derry and North Donegal to South Donegal and beyond along the central section of the Atlantic Coast.

Figure 1-1 - Barnesmore Gap Valley (Source - Ireland's Content Pool)

The proposed route of the greenway mainline is approximately 31km in length and will be a bi-directional shared walking, wheeling, and cycling route. There is a further 6.5km of links which provide additional connectivity and integration to surrounding amenities and active travel routes, which gives a total length of 37.5km for the proposed development.

The general arrangement drawings of the proposed development are presented in Appendix A of this NTS.

1.2 Environmental Impact Assessment

The requirement for environmental impact assessment is imposed by Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU) (the EIA Directive).

1.3 Requirement for Environmental Impact Assessment

The requirement for Environmental Impact Assessment arises from Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by 2014/52/EU. This directive classifies a number of activities, defined as “projects”, as either Annex I, requiring mandatory EIA, or Annex II, where the project may be subject to EIA dependent upon a project-specific threshold set by out in Schedule 5 (Part 1) of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001. The proposed development is classified as a public road project under Section 68 of the Roads Act 1993 (as amended). The prescribed types of proposed road development which are subject to EIA are detailed in Article 8 of the Roads Regulations 1994 (as amended).

Article 8 (b) of the Roads Regulations 1994 (as amended) states that the construction of a new bridge or tunnel, which would be 100 metres or more in length, shall require an EIA. As the proposed development involves the provision of a bridge greater than 100m in length at the Eske Loop, the proposed development is subject to mandatory EIA.

1.4 Structure of the EIAR

This EIAR has been prepared by the ROD-AECOM alliance, with the assistance of a team of competent experts, on behalf of Donegal County Council ("the Applicant").

This EIAR is presented in four volumes:

Volume 1: Non-Technical Summary

Volume 2: Main Text

Volume 3: Technical Figures

Volume 4: Appendices

1.5 Consultation

Consultation during the design and environmental impact assessment process is a key part of any proposed development. A number of non-statutory public consultations were undertaken to inform the design and environmental assessments throughout the preparation of this EIAR, in addition to multiple consultations with other relevant stakeholders.

The following non-statutory public consultations were held as part of the proposed development:

- Non-statutory Public Consultation on the Study Area (February 2023).
  - Two in-person events were held (and the information was made available online) to inform the public of the proposed development in Phase 1 and invite feedback on the study area.
  - 219 submissions were received
- Non-statutory Public Consultation on the Route Corridor Options (June 2023)
  - Two in-person events were held (and the information was made available online) to inform the public of the Route Corridor Options developed in Phase 2 and invite feedback.
  - 36 submissions were received
- Non-statutory Public Consultation on the Emerging Preferred Route Corridor (December 2023)
  - Two in-person events were held (and the information was made available online) to inform the public of the Emerging Preferred Route Corridor developed in Phase 2 and invite feedback.
  - 1270 letters were issued to land and property owners within the EPRC
  - 41 submissions were received
- Non-statutory Public Consultation on the Preferred Route (June 2025).
  - Two in-person events were held (and the information was made available online) to inform the public of the Preferred Route and trail heads developed in Phase 3 and invite feedback.
  - 33 submissions were received

In addition to the non-statutory public consultations outlined above, extensive stakeholder engagement was undertaken throughout the planning phases to determine the optimum preferred route, design considerations and mitigation measures. This engagement is outlined below.

Landowners – Recognising that landowners are critical stakeholders in the development of the project, individual affected landowners were actively engaged with since Phase 2, through letters inviting feedback on the EPRC. In Phase 3, individual landowner meetings took place with every landowner when developing the preferred route, and numerous design iterations,

follow up meetings, correspondence and site visits took place to develop the optimum route and design for all parties as far as possible. A dedicated Public Liaison Officer (PLO) was also in place. Approximately 300 individual landowner meetings took place in Phase 3, including meetings with the project agronomist present.

Elected Members – Elected members have been briefed in advance of each public consultation and have been kept informed at regular intervals of the progress of the scheme.

Stakeholder Bodies – Approximately 100 different bodies were consulted at each public consultation, as well as receiving the Non-Statutory Informal EIA Scoping Report in April 2025. These included local and national government departments, utility providers and environmental bodies. Furthermore, extensive correspondence was held with key stakeholders, and numerous consultation meetings were held with bodies such as TII, NPWS, IFI, Loughs Agency, ESB, OPW, Uisce Éireann, Eirgrid and various DCC departments. Site visits were also undertaken with NPWS and IFI.

Community Groups – Groups including community/enterprise centres, local development groups and heritage groups were consulted both through the public consultation process and on an ongoing basis throughout the project development.

2. Policy Context and Need for the Proposed Development

This section addresses the policy context and the need for the proposed Barnesmore Gap Greenway.

2.1 Policy Context

The proposed development gives effect to and facilitates planning and transportation policy objectives at EU, national, regional and local levels and secures objectives of the County Development Plan.

At a national level, the proposed development will provide a greenway route that forms part of the Department of Transport's National Cycle Network Plan across the island of Ireland to link all the main population centres with segregated cycle routes to encourage longer distance travel by bicycle.

The National Planning Framework: First Revision (NPF) (April 2025) and the Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways (July 2018) both specifically highlight the importance of greenways, and the opportunities associated with them. As set out in the NPF, National Policy Objective 34, is to "*Facilitate tourism development and in particular a National Greenways, Blueways and Peatways Strategy, which prioritises proposed developments on the basis of achieving maximum impact and connectivity at national and regional level*". One of the objectives of the 'Strategy for Future Development of National and Regional Greenways' (published in 2018) is to increase the number and geographical spread of greenways throughout the country over the next ten years.

Key policies are outlined in Table 2-1.

Table 2-1 - Overview of Policy Documents which support the Barnesmore Gap Greenway Proposed development

Policy Level	Document
European	EU Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy 2020
	Road Infrastructure Safety Management (RISM) Directive
	EU Cycling Strategy 2017-2030
	European Green Deal
	Northern Ireland Executive's New Decade, New Approach 2020
	Trans-European Network – Transport (TEN-T) Regulation
National	Project Ireland 2040 • National Planning Framework First Revision • National Development Plan 2021-2030
	National Development Plan Review 2025
	National Development Plan Review 2025: Transport Sectoral Investment Plan
	Programme for Government 2025: Securing Ireland's Future
	National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (NIFTI)
	Ireland's Government Road Safety Strategy 2021 – 2030
	Climate Action Plan 2025
	National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030
	National Sustainable Mobility Policy 2022 - 2030

Policy Level	Document
	National Physical Activity Plan 2024-2029
	Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways
	Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy 2021-2025
	National Cycle Network Plan (Department of Transport)
	Cycle Connects: Ireland's Cycle Network (Draft) (National Transport Authority)
	Shared Island Initiative Report 2025 – Action on a Shared Future
	Tourism Policy Framework 2025-2030
Regional	Northern & Western Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy 2020-2032 (RSES)
Local	Donegal County Development Plan 2024 -2030
	Donegal County Development Plan 2024 -2030 (Incl. Proposed Variation No.1)
	Draft Donegal Town Local Transport Plan
	Ballybofey-Stranorlar Regeneration Masterplan and Action Plan
	Donegal County Climate Action Plan 2024-2029
	Draft County Donegal Biodiversity Action Plan 2026-2030
	Donegal Integrated Framework Local Economic Community Plan 2023-2029

2.2 Project Need and Strategic Fit

Donegal Town and Ballybofey/Stranorlar are key urban centres in the southeast of the County with a substantial local population that would benefit from a high-quality active travel corridor. A total population of 22,341 reside in the region, spanning 17 electoral divisions (CSO 2023).

The proposed development will provide both long and short-distance recreational users and commuters with safe, convenient opportunities to travel between areas along the route. The provision of a Greenway in this location will provide enhanced access to the wider region, enticing users to explore its surrounding towns, villages, natural beauty and heritage and to further develop the tourism potential within the region. It will also provide increased opportunities for local residents in the area to undertake utility trips using sustainable modes of transport, providing improved access to centres of employment, schools and higher education facilities and healthcare facilities. The greenway has been designed to maximise connectivity to these facilities, especially the schools along the route.

The proximity to the Northern Ireland border offers significant potential to attract additional visitors from Derry and the North West City Region, and as a popular tourist destination along the Wild Atlantic Way, the proposed development will encourage visitors to explore the extensive opportunities within this scenic mountainous region close to the West Coast and will provide opportunities for knock-on positive impacts to the tourism industry.

The towns of Donegal and Ballybofey/Stranorlar are vital economic hubs in the south Donegal region. Trip attractors in the area include educational and employment opportunities, tourism points of interest including hiking and fishing and community facilities such as sports facilities, pharmacies and churches. The proposed development will provide improved connectivity to regionally significant sports facilities such as MacCumhail Park, Finn Park and the Finn Valley Leisure Centre.

The proposed development has the potential to provide a major improvement for the existing Northwest Trail cycle route. At Donegal Town, the proposed development will connect with the international *EuroVelo* Route 1 which follows the northern, western and southern coastlines around Ireland. Connection to the *EuroVelo* route and other planned cycling trails

has the potential to create a significant cycling network within County Donegal. The proposed route will form a key element of the National Cycle Network between Sligo and Derry via Donegal Town and Ballybofey/Stranorlar.

In the absence of existing safe and attractive walking and cycling facilities local users either have to travel, primarily by car, to parks and trails, or to walk or cycle along the busy national road, which discourages outdoor physical activity. The proposed development will create links to existing active travel infrastructure and will open up more opportunities for local residents, particularly those outside the main settlements, to engage in recreational walking and cycling with associated health benefits.

The proposed development is in line with current strategic policy direction in that it aims to reduce emissions associated with transport, increase levels of physical activity, stimulate tourism and economic growth in rural communities, and enhance sustainable mobility and connectivity on a regional and national scale.

2.3 Proposed Development Project Objectives

The objectives for the proposed development have been developed in accordance with Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways (2018). The proposed development will improve connectivity between Donegal town and the twin towns of Ballybofey and Stranorlar, providing a safe, inclusive mode of sustainable transport while promoting rural development within the area. It will provide a key link for the National Cycle Network in the North West of Ireland and will boost the economy in the region.

The objectives and sub objectives of proposed development are outlined Table 2-2 below:

Table 2-2 - Project Objectives

Project Objectives	Sub-Objective
Provide a high-quality, substantially segregated Greenway linking the settlements of Donegal Town, Ballybofey and Stranorlar, as part of the National Cycle Network.	• Promote the general health and wellbeing of all end users by encouraging physical activity through provision of convenient, accessible, and inclusive infrastructure, increasing opportunities for daily exercise. • Provide a safe and attractive route to improve safety and security for vulnerable road users.
Enhance economic growth in the region by increasing visitor numbers, promoting activity tourism in the area and increasing utility trips.	• Integrate with attractions / activities and existing tourist hubs in the study area (“things to see and do”). • Facilitate access to places of employment, education and retail.
Improve safety and security for vulnerable road users by providing a safe, segregated and attractive route.	• Minimise potential interactions between pedestrians / cyclists and vehicular traffic. • Provide a facility that is secure for pedestrians/cyclists to maximise usage.
Support a transition to a zero-carbon society by promoting cycling and walking.	• Increase the number of recreational trips within the study area by improving the provision of safe and attractive cycle infrastructure. • Promote active travel including Greenway usage as a sustainable recreational activity.
Improve accessibility in, and attractiveness of, the area for use by people of all age groups and abilities.	• Improve accessibility to local amenities, community facilities, local attractions, schools, public facilities and onward transport links creating social and recreational opportunities for all users. • Improve accessibility and connectivity for vulnerable road users with multiple accesses to the route allowing for long or short journey distances.

Project Objectives	Sub-Objective
Improve integration in the area and create linkages to existing and proposed cycling and walking infrastructure and other public amenities.	• Contribute towards the creation of a National Cycle Network. • Integrate with the *EuroVelo* 'Atlantic Coast Route' and other local and regional active travel infrastructure.
Minimise where possible the environmental impact of the Greenway.	• Minimise potential impacts on designated sites, protected views and any areas of high landscape value. • Minimise potential impacts on sensitive receptors. • Provide environmental enhancement opportunities where practicable.

3. Alternatives

3.1 Introduction

This section presents an overview of the reasonable alternatives studied during the development of the proposed development which have been informed by relevant policy / plans, previous studies and developed and refined as part of the ongoing design development and EIA process.

The approach to consideration of alternatives is in accordance with the EIA Directive and TII guidelines which set out a phased approach to project development, appraisal and consideration of alternatives leading to the statutory planning process.

3.2 Feasibility Study

The proposed development was subject to a TII Phase 1 – Concept and Feasibility study 2023, and the Barnesmore Gap Greenway Feasibility Report was produced in June 2023. The purpose of the feasibility study was to establish and verify the need for the proposed development and was undertaken in accordance with TII Project Manager's Manual for Greenway Projects (PE-PMG-02047). An initial task was to identify and define a study area and to collate the constraints and opportunities within it, in order to examine all the potential reasonable options.

During the development of options, the study area has three distinct subareas, namely, the area on the southern side of the Barnesmore Gap, through the Gap itself, and the area between the northern side of the Gap and Ballybofey/Stranorlar. As part of the feasibility study, and in accordance with TII Project Appraisal Guidelines, an assessment was undertaken to identify the key Natural and Artificial constraints within the defined Study Area.

3.3 Option Selection Process

The Phase 2 Option Selection process in accordance with the TII Project Management Guidelines (PMGs) was undertaken to identify the Preferred Route Corridor through a systematic assessment of the potential impacts as outlined in the Department of Transport (DoT) Transport Appraisal Framework (TAF). This Phase 2 process takes cognisance of the Project Objectives and the 'Five S' criteria as outlined in the Code of Best Practice for National and Regional Greenways, published by the Department of Transport in December 2021.

3.3.1 Stage 1 – Preliminary Options Assessment

The Preliminary Options Assessment is a comparative assessment of the potential impacts of the options, and their relevant success in achieving the Project Objectives, under the headings of:

- Environment;
- Engineering; and
- Economy.

3.3.1.1 Do-Something – Investment Options

Given the significant extent of the study area (over a length of approximately 31km), a multi-stage approach was implemented for the development of the Do-Something Investment Options for the Preliminary Options Assessment. The multi-stage approach adopted involves the following three stages:

- Stage 1A – Development of Potentially Feasible Links

- Stage 1B – Initial Sift of Potentially Feasible Links
- Stage 1C – Multi-Criteria Analysis of Feasible Options (end-to-end).

Due to the narrow study area through the mountainous terrain at Barnesmore Gap, there was only one corridor through the Gap brought forward and so it was common to all end-to-end options. Therefore, the Stage 1C assessment has been split into two sections:

- Section 1 - southern section from Donegal Town to the western end of Barnesmore Gap
- Section 2 - northern section from the eastern end of Barnesmore Gap to Ballybofey/Stranorlar.

The Stage 1C Route Corridor assessment resulted in a total 8 corridor options for Section 1 and Section 2. These eight route corridor options, along with the central corridor common to all options, as shown in Figure 3-1 below.

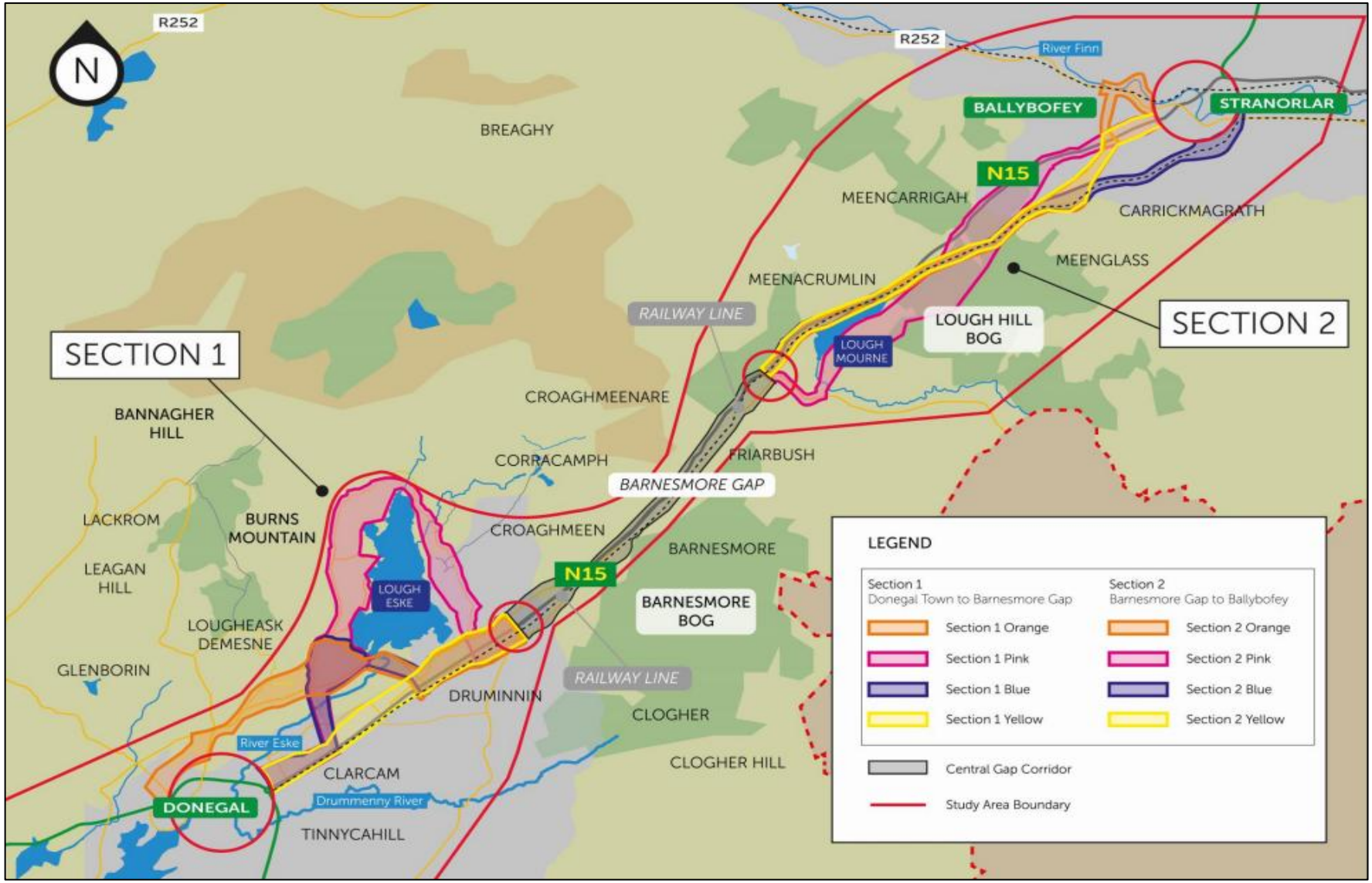


Figure 3-1 - Schematic of Route Corridor Option

3.3.2 Stage 2 – Project Appraisal Matrix

To inform the Phase 2 Project Appraisal Matrix, assessments were undertaken in accordance with the following criterion, in line with the TII Project Manager's Manual for Greenway Projects, Transport Appraisal Framework (TAF) and TII Project Appraisal Guidelines Unit 13.0 – Appraisal of Active Modes

- Transport User Benefits and Other Economic Impacts
- Accessibility Impacts
- Social Impacts
- Land Use Impacts
- Safety Impacts
- Climate Change Impacts
- Local Environmental Impacts

In order to provide a detailed assessment, the TAF 7-point scoring procedure was used for the assessment of the route corridor options. This scoring procedure follows the guidelines outlined in TAF Module 7, Section 7.4 and Box 7.4 (MCA Scoring Scale of Transport Appraisals). The guideline sets out a seven-point scoring method with an integer to be assigned according to the impact level as set out in Table 3-1 where the higher the number, the more positive the impact. It is noted that the assessment carried out as part of this Project Appraisal Matrix will ultimately feed into further detailed analysis of a Preferred Option.

Table 3-1 - MCA Scoring Scale of Transport Appraisals

Impact of Option	PAG Impact Score
Highly Positive Impact	7
Positive Impact	6
Slight Positive Impact	5
Not Significant or Neutral Impact	4
Slightly Negative Impact	3
Negative Impact	2
Highly Negative Impact	1

3.3.3 Emerging Preferred Route Corridor

The Stage 2 assessment resulted in the Blue and Yellow corridors receiving the highest overall performance scores in Section 1. While these two corridors are broadly similar, the Blue corridor provides the opportunity to include Lough Eske and its attractive surroundings as a scenic focal point of this part of the greenway. This natural beauty, along with the two hotels, connectivity to existing walking trails and the option of a connected loop will attract more users, especially given its proximity to Donegal Town.

In Section 2 the Blue Corridor received the highest overall performance score. Together, the Section 1 Blue corridor and Section 2 Blue corridor were selected to be combined and brought forward as the Emerging Preferred Route Corridor.

3.4 Approach to Phase 3 Optioneering

To develop the design of the greenway, a preferred route was selected within the Preferred Route Corridor identified at Phase 2. This was an iterative process, considering known constraints and opportunities as identified in Phase 1 and Phase 2 optioneering and during

significant consultation with landowners, the public, statutory and non-statutory bodies. Section 1.5 provides further detail on the consultation held with various stakeholders, including landowners.

A preliminary review of the corridor was undertaken to identify preferred route options, based on a range of criteria listed below. Based on the significant assessment undertaken to determine the Preferred Route Corridor, the criteria were established based on the known constraints identified during the earlier phases. These criteria were considered to be the most appropriate in identifying a preferred route and differentiating between alternatives.

Population & Human Health, Biodiversity, Land & Soils, Water, Air, Climate, Material Assets, Cultural Heritage, and Landscape factors were reviewed as a desktop exercise, along with numerous site walkovers undertaken over the course of Phase 3. Additionally, the preferred route considered the following factors:

- Topography (Gradients <3% where possible, up to 5% permissible over distance of 150m, in line with TII DN-GEO-03047 Rural Cycleway Design)
- Horizontal geometry – smooth alignment avoiding excessive twists and turns where possible
- Existing infrastructure, including bridges (and piers/abutments), and abandoned railway line
- Existing residential, commercial and agricultural buildings
- Conflicts with the existing road network
- Land severance – route to align with field boundaries where practicable
- Connectivity to scenic areas and attractions (Things to See and Do)
- Connectivity to education facilities
- Potential trail heads and terminal points

Route options are described in Chapter 03 of Volume 2 of this EIAR. These were subjected to a further optioneering exercise by way of a 'mini' multi criteria analysis (MCA). However, given that the MCA, is assessing localised options within a previously identified Preferred Route Corridor, some of the TAF criteria and sub-criteria have not been used, as they are not relevant to a localised option or would not provide any differentiation between the options. Likewise, some of the 5 'S' are not expected to differentiate between options.

A 3-point scoring scale was used to assess each option, and the scores were summed across the criteria to identify the preferred route. This allowed for a preference to be made, and a performance score applied to each preference.

3.5 Conclusion

A systematic appraisal of alternatives has been undertaken in line with TII's Project Management Guidelines and the requirements of the EIA Directive. This included consideration of a Do-Nothing scenario, functional alternatives such as other transport modes, and a robust assessment of potential route corridors using Multi-Criteria Analysis (MCA). Environmental, accessibility, technical, and social factors were all weighed in the selection of the proposed development. Extensive assessment of alternatives with respect to route selection, structures and trailheads was undertaken during the design phase. Alternatives included various offline and online route options, locations of key crossing points and ancillary infrastructure. The preferred option for the proposed development was identified as that which best meets the project objectives of a substantially segregated and attractive greenway, improving safety and accessibility for people of all ages and abilities and connecting to trip generators and therefore enhancing economic growth and promoting walking and cycling. The preferred option was identified having regard to the effects of the alternatives on the environment, involving surveys, assessments and consultation.

The preferred route is shown in General Arrangement Drawings (60701883-ACM-HGN-SW_ZZ_ZZ_ZZ-DR-HG-0096-0125) in Volume 3 of the EIAR.

The preferred option delivers a greenway that will benefit the local community, through increased accessibility and connectivity, by supporting sustainable transport and economic growth, and by protecting and enhancing Donegal's unique natural and cultural heritage.

The route is designed to maximise accessibility and connectivity for local residents, linking key destinations such as schools, leisure centres, and town centres. This supports active travel, improves safety for vulnerable road users and encourages economic growth through increased tourism and local use. Extensive public and stakeholder consultation has ensured that community concerns, such as land severance, property access and amenity impacts, are addressed, with the route largely aligned along field boundaries or existing infrastructure to minimise disruption.

The use of existing infrastructure brings a number of environmental benefits. Over 20km of the route is along the abandoned railway corridor, and the associated reuse of existing embankments, structures and sub-formation minimises earthworks, material import and new construction. Benefits include reductions in embodied carbon, air quality and noise impacts and habitat fragmentation. Retention of the existing tree and hedge lines along the corridor also provides landscape and visual benefits by providing continuity with the baseline conditions.

Existing infrastructure has also been utilised by incorporating existing parking into the trailheads, in using the existing road and river crossing at Lough Eske, in using the existing road at Cappry and in using the existing walking trails in Lougheask Demesne.

Where it has not been feasible to utilise existing infrastructure, the preferred option has been designed to minimise environmental impacts by avoiding sensitive habitats in Designated Sites. The route prioritises areas with lower biodiversity value and avoids extensive site clearance, especially of mature woodland and peatlands, wherever feasible. Where river crossings are required, clear span bridge structures have been selected to avoid in-stream works, thereby protecting water quality and aquatic ecology. Watercourse crossings have been selected to avoid impacts on the most sensitive habitats and the majority of habitats lost are improved agricultural grassland and wet grassland, both of low ecological value.

Whilst aiming to keep gradients within acceptable limits for the accessibility of all users, the route has been selected to follow the existing topography as far as practicable, reducing the requirement for extensive cut/fill earthworks and associated impacts on soils, groundwater, noise and construction traffic. By following field boundaries, impacts to land use, population and material assets are reduced, and retention of existing hedgerows provides ecological and landscape benefits.

The preferred option for the proposed development also provides opportunities for heritage and ecological enhancement. By using and preserving the historic railway corridor and bringing users to key cultural heritage sites, the greenway will have a positive effect on the heritage environment. The preferred route also provides a number of areas which will be planted and/or managed to provide improved habitat for biodiversity including native woodland planting, and also allows for the removal of invasive species at key locations.

4. Description of the Proposed Development

4.1 Introduction

The proposed development will provide commuters and leisure cyclists, pedestrians and impaired mobility users with an attractive recreational trail linking the town of Donegal to the 'twin towns' of Ballybofey/Stranorlar in south County Donegal.

The proposed route of the greenway mainline is approximately 31km in length and will be a bi-directional shared walking, wheeling, and cycling route. There is a further 6.5km of links which provide additional connectivity and integration to surrounding amenities and active travel routes, which gives a total length of 37.5km for the proposed facility. The greenway is proposed to pass through Barnesmore Gap, a scenic glacial valley that provides the only communication gap through the 'Bluestack Mountains' in southern County Donegal.

Trailhead facilities, including car parks, toilets, and signage, will be provided to provide attractive access points to the greenway. A considerable length of the greenway (approximately 55% of the total route) will be constructed along the route of an abandoned railway line and existing railway infrastructure such as bridges and tunnels will be reused where feasible. New bridge structures will be built to cross the N56 national road at Donegal town, and across the N15 national road at two locations between Clar and Barnesmore, along with several other new road and river bridges.

The route provides a scenic loop to Lough Eske and provides links to Clar, Biddy's O'Barnes, Cappry, Sessiaghoneill, Lawnsdale and Ballybofey.

The proposed development consists of the following key elements:

- Greenway:
  - 31km of surfaced greenway mainline, 3m wide plus verges.
  - 6.5km of surfaced greenway spurs and loops, 3m wide plus verges.
  - Earthworks (cut, fill, capping and geogrid) and pavement.
  - Drainage, including ditches, pipes, outfalls and attenuation.
  - Online active travel connections and crossings.
- Ancillary Infrastructure, which will improve user experience, including:
  - 4no trailheads including provision of car parking, amenity space and services.
  - 21no rest areas including benches/picnic tables and bicycle parking.
- Accommodation works to facilitate the development, including:
  - Access tracks.
  - Privacy fencing, stockproof fencing and gates.
- New structures, which are required along the proposed route, including:
  - Underpasses
    - N56 underpass at Ch. 950 north of Donegal Town, 40m long and 6m wide.
    - N15 underpass at Clar, 26m long and 6m wide.
    - N15 underpass at Ch. 8,250 in Mullanalamphry, 26m long and 5.5m wide.
  - Road Overbridge
    - Road overbridge at Sessiagh View to the south of Ballybofey, a single-span, 24m long structure.

- River Bridges
  - River Eske Viaduct: 179m long, 6-span viaduct in a steep topography south of Lough Eske.
  - Clogher River Bridge: single-span, 24m single span bridge adjacent to St. Francis National School.
  - Lowerymore River Bridge: 24m single span bridge connecting to the Trailhead near Biddy's O'Barnes pub.
  - River Finn Viaduct: a new deck structure on the existing piers from the old railway viaduct. The overall length of this four-span structure will be approx. 54m in length.
- Culverts
  - 10no. new culverts, with Section 50 Consent under the Arterial Drainage Act, 1945.

- Existing structures including:
  - Incorporation of 11no existing overbridges/underbridges and numerous minor culverts into the proposed development.
- Landscaping and environmental mitigation measures.
- Lighting provision at specified trailheads and sections of greenway near urban areas.
- All associated site works.

The greenway has been designed as a 'cycleway that caters for people walking, wheeling and cycling in a mainly recreational environment', in accordance with TII Publication DN-GEO-03047. The proposed development has been designed in line with the the Code of Best Practice for National and Regional Greenway, and has been undertaken to maximise the benefits with respect to safety and to minimise impacts upon the environment.

The location and route of the proposed development is shown in General Arrangement Drawings 60701883-ACM-HGN-SW_ZZ_ZZ_ZZ-DR-HG-0096-0125 and in Figure 4-1 to Figure 4-4 below:

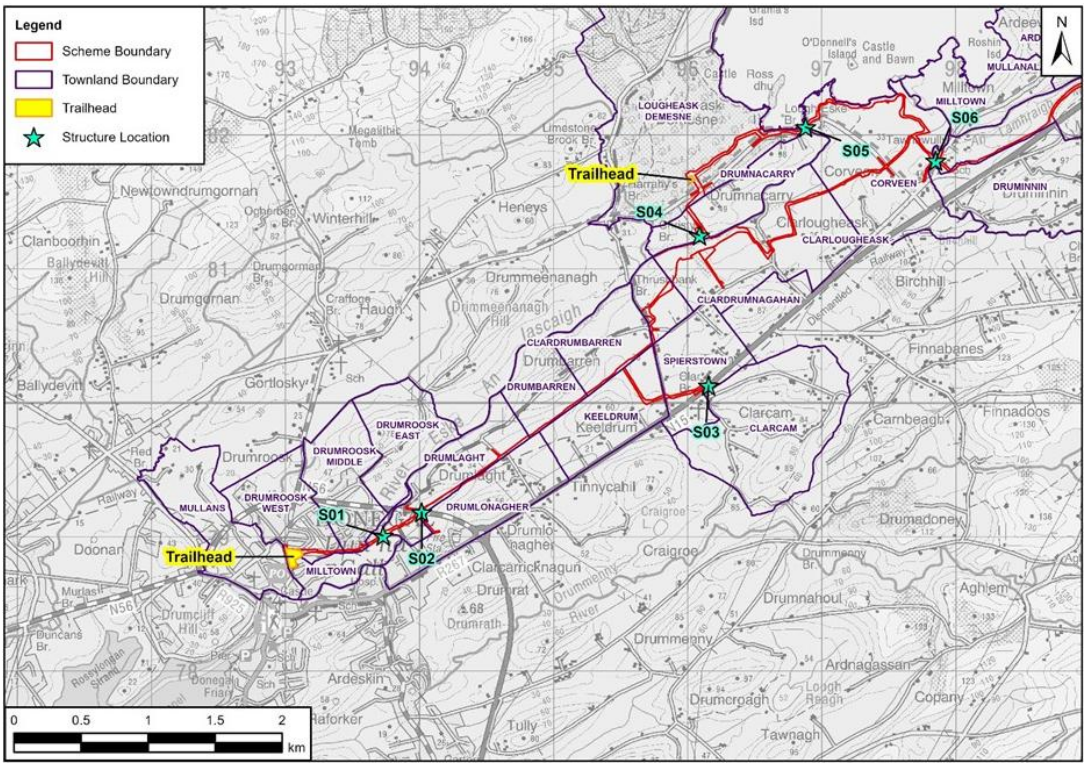


Figure 4-1 - Proposed Route Overview – Section 1

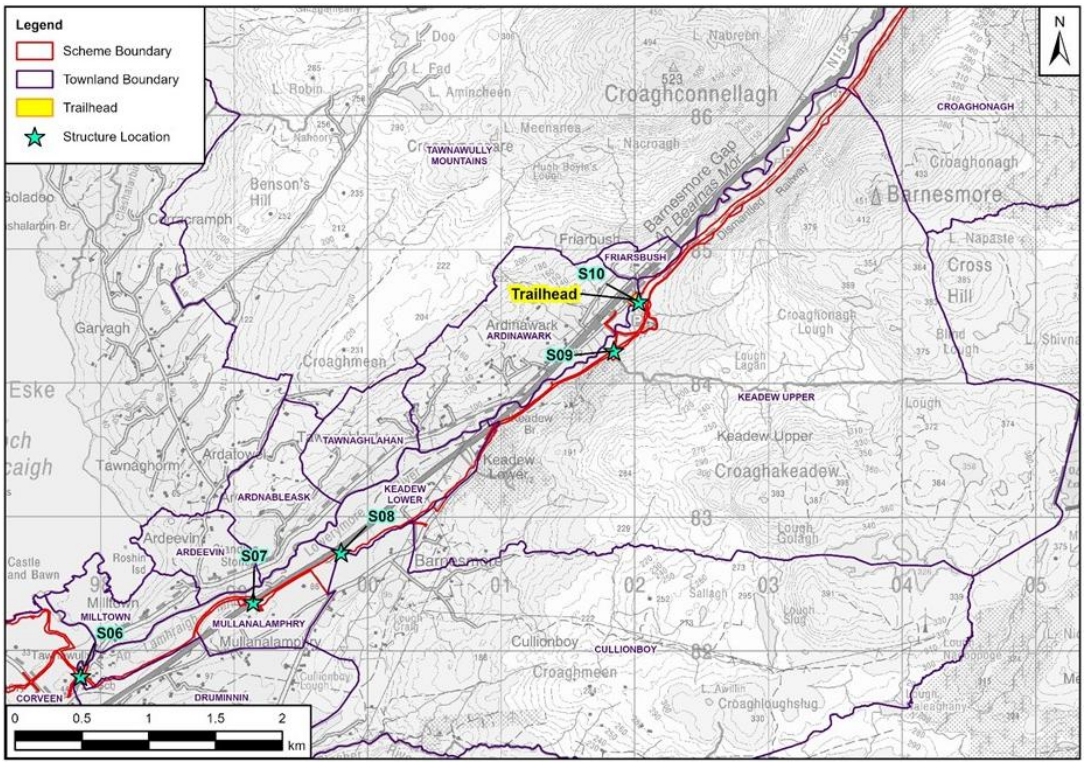


Figure 4-2 - Proposed Route Overview – Section 2

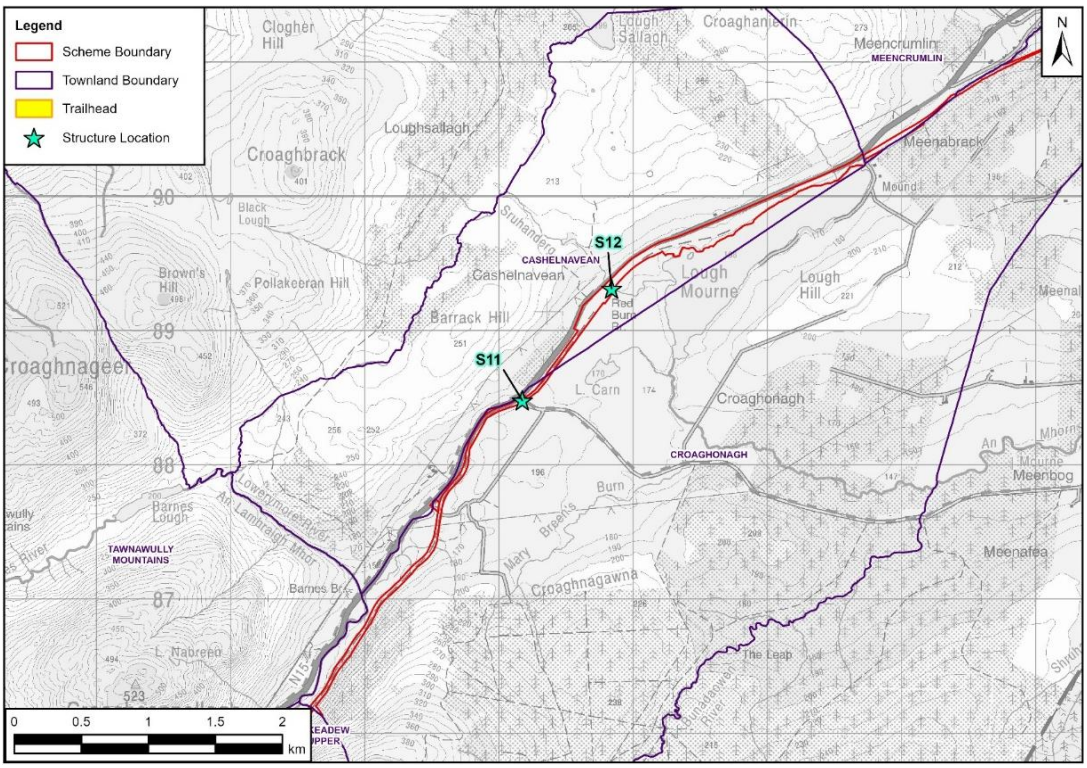


Figure 4-3 - Proposed Route Overview – Section 3

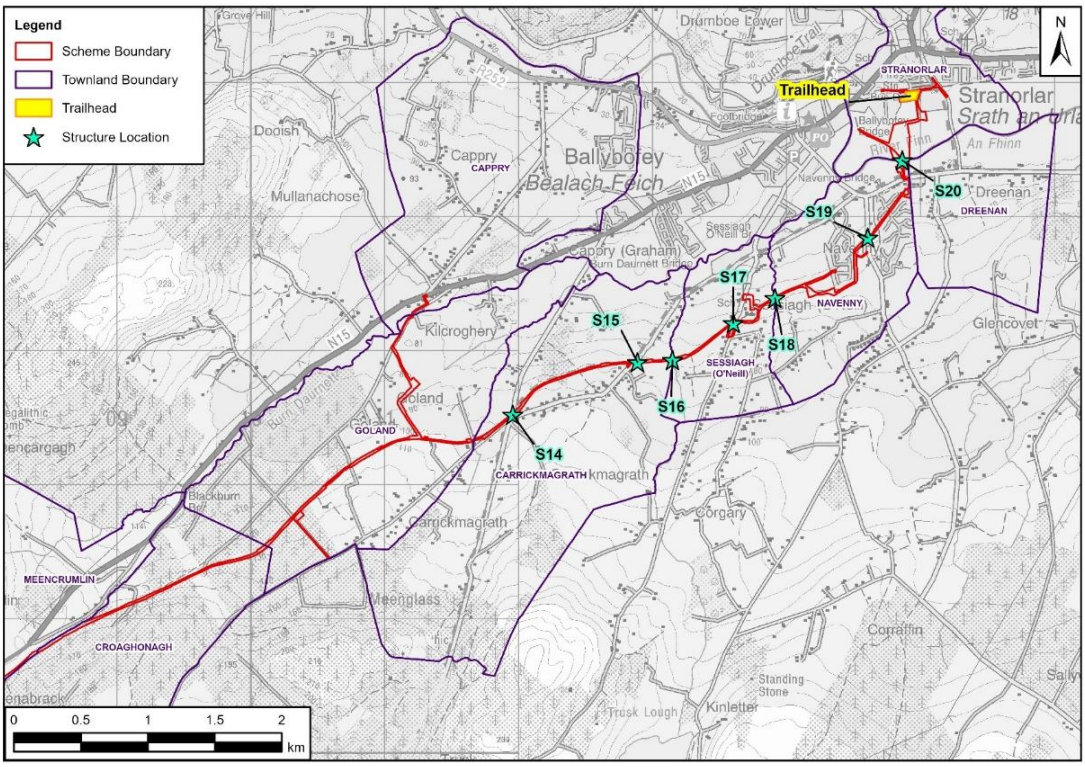


Figure 4-4 - Proposed Route Overview – Section 4

4.2 Construction

The construction programme for the proposed development is anticipated to last up to 24 months depending on the approach taken by the contractor. Construction will take place on three sections simultaneously, as detailed in Table 4-1 below. Each section has a main compound and several temporary working areas.

Table 4-1 - Construction Sections

Section	Location	Summary	Total Length	Comments
Section 1	Ch.0 – 10+300 including Lough Eske Loop and Clar Link	Largely offline greenfield construction from Donegal Town to southwest of Gap	14.7km	2no trailheads and 5no major structures
Section 2	Ch.10+300-20+500	Abandoned Railway corridor (mountainside and bog) from southwest of Gap to Lough Mourne	11.4km	1no trailhead and 1no major structures
Section 3	Ch.20+500 – 30+100 including Goland Link	Largely abandoned Railway corridor (forestry and agricultural land) from Lough Mourne to Stranorlar	11.3km	1no trailhead and 2no major structures

Construction of the greenway will be carried out in compliance with the Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and Environmental Operating Plan (EOP).

The type of construction along the proposed development can broadly be classified in four ways and is further described in Volume 2 Chapter 4 of this EIAR:

- Abandoned Railway Corridor
- Offline Greenfield
- Offline Woodland

- Structures

4.2.1 Construction Compounds and Temporary Working Areas

Three main compounds will be situated at trailhead locations, with a number of satellite working areas situated at regular intervals along the development. Overall, there will be 22no working areas and multiple direct access points from the local road network. Works will be undertaken in each direction from the compounds, typically 500-2000m depending on the spacing of compounds in a given area.

Access to the works locations will be from the construction compound or a direct access point. The compounds will be accessed via public roads, or through private lands which will form part of the land take for the development. Following completion of construction these areas will be cleared and re-instated.

4.2.2 Works Sequencing

Works will largely be undertaken in the following sequence; however, it is expected that the construction programme will involve works at multiple areas being undertaken concurrently.

1. Pre-construction works will include diversion works of services and utilities, along with vegetation clearance, archaeological testing and resolution, ground investigation and fencing. Some of these activities are dependent on the seasonal timing of the award of the main contract.
2. The establishment of the works compounds and the connection of services for their operation will be undertaken at the start of the works, along with the construction of access roads.
3. This will then be followed by site clearance and topsoil stripping of the site in stages. This will be phased to keep just ahead of the major earthworks' movements. Initial works on permanent and temporary boundary fences will also be undertaken as a preliminary operation, with further boundary works required on completion of the main construction works. Accommodation works where required for access, as well as temporary access routes and haul routes through the site will be key early activities.
4. The contractor will construct elements of the permanent drainage system as early as practicable to facilitate earthworks haul routes, control drainage from the works and to avoid flows onto adjacent land and/or untreated discharges to watercourses.
5. Works to the new structures will be significant elements of the construction phase and may be constrained by seasonality in some locations.
6. The bulk earthworks will be undertaken along with capping and geogrid where required. Where earthworks will be minimal in nature, i.e. along the railway corridor, operations will be able to move quicker from clearance to drainage and pavement activities. Pavement activities, including sub-base, binder and surface course will follow in all areas once the earthworks and sub-formation is complete.
7. Trailheads will be constructed after the main greenway alignment as they are proposed to be used as site compounds.
8. The last activities to be completed will be signs and road markings, followed by the removal and reinstatement of temporary site compounds to pre-work conditions.

5. Traffic and Transport

5.1 Introduction

The traffic and transportation assessment identifies the potential traffic and transportation impacts of the Barnesmore Gap Greenway ('proposed development') during the construction and operational phases of the proposed development.

The 'Study Area' refers to the area surrounding the proposed development which may be impacted by traffic and transportation during the construction and operational phases of the development. In this instance, the study area was determined to be the road network adjacent to the four proposed trailheads. This includes:

- Donegal Town – Tirchonaill Street is a single carriageway, with a width of approximately 6.5m. It is an urban road, providing access to housing estates, with a footpath on its eastern side.
- Lough Eske – the local road that runs adjacent to the Lough Eske trailhead is rural in nature, with a narrow carriageway width of approximately 5.75m, no road markings, no verge, and a limited number of access points.
- Biddy O'Barnes - The N15 is a National Primary route running from Sligo to Lifford. In the vicinity of Biddy's O'Barnes, it has a carriageway width of approximately 13m, with verges on both sides.
- Ballybofey/Stranorlar – Main Street is part of N15. In the vicinity of the proposed trailhead, it is a single carriageway, with a width of approximately 9m. It is an urban road, with multiple accesses and footpaths on both sides.

5.2 Receiving Environment

Background traffic flows were established through traffic surveys undertaken in late April / early May 2025, as well as data taken from a TII Traffic Monitoring Unit (TMU) on the N15. These estimates, showing the Annual Average Weekday Traffic Flows (AAWT) and Annual Average Daily Traffic Flows (AADT) are shown in Table 5-1 and Table 5-2 below.

Table 5-1 - Estimation of AAWT

	Donegal Town	Ballybofey / Stranorlar	Lough Eske	N15
April 2025 Weekday (5-Day) Traffic Flow	878	15,818	389	9,056
Annualisation Factor	1.003	1.060	1.003	0.979
AAWT	881	16,765	390	8,870

Table 5-2 - Estimation of AADT

	Donegal Town	Ballybofey / Stranorlar	Lough Eske	N15
April 2025 Weekday (7-Day) Traffic Flow	812	15,545	423	8,729
Annualisation Factor	1.006	1.065	1.006	0.977
AAWT	817	16,560	425	8,532

5.3 Potential Impacts

Potential Construction Phase Impacts

Construction is expected to begin in or about 2028 and last for two years, subject to statutory approvals. The main construction impacts will be related to heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) transporting materials and light vehicles used by construction staff.

An assessment of estimated construction vehicles against forecast future background traffic flows shows that the existing road network has sufficient capacity to facilitate the construction stage impacts without major disruption. The most significant impacts are predicted to occur near Donegal Town and Lough Eske, where traffic volumes are currently low, making percentage increases appear more significant. A Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) will be implemented to minimise disruption, ensure safety, and maintain road conditions.

Potential Operation Phase Impacts

Operational phase impacts have been assessed for an assumed Opening Year of 2030. The main operational impact will be walkers and cyclists travelling to the Greenway by car.

The number of daily users and the car-based mode share of these users have been estimated using TII's MOVE dataset, which contains data from surveys of users of existing Greenways in Ireland. The operational phase assessment indicates that, even during peak summer months, the traffic generated by the proposed development is expected to be minor and within the capacity of the adjacent local road network.

Further assessment shows that the proposed parking spaces at each trailhead will be sufficient to cater for the expected demand.

5.4 Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures are proposed to eliminate, as far as possible, the potential negative impacts of the construction and operation of the proposed development, which include (but are not limited to): HGV movements, noise, air quality, traffic delays/congestion, road safety, parking, construction debris/dirt on roads.

The successful contractor shall prepare a comprehensive Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) in consultation with Donegal County Council, TII, and An Garda Síochána before the commencement of the construction phase. In the operational phase, the proposed development will not have a significant negative impact on the road network. Monitoring of the proposed development, once it is operational, is recommended to determine the actual trip generation.

Full details of the mitigation measures are contained in the EIAR and NIS.

5.5 Residual Effects

The construction of the proposed greenway will lead to additional construction traffic, including HGV's, during the construction phase which is estimated as approximately 24 months.

By adopting the proposed mitigation measures and through the implementation of an adequately designed CTMP, it is envisaged that the impact of construction related traffic will be 'temporary' to 'short-term' in duration, and a 'slight' to 'moderate' in significance.

The primary operational residual effect of the proposed development will be an increase in car trips on the adjacent road network. This increase, however, is relatively minor compared to the future receiving environment conditions. Furthermore, the assessment demonstrated that the local road network has adequate capacity to accommodate the forecast increase in traffic volumes. As such, it is considered that the proposed development will not have a significant impact on general traffic.

6. Population and Human Health

6.1 Introduction

The population and human health assessment identifies the potential population and health impacts of the proposed development during the construction and operational phases. The assessment examined the population attributes and characteristics associated with:

- Employment and economic activity;
- Land use and accessibility;
- Amenity; and
- Human health.

6.2 Receiving Environment

The Study Area comprises the following seventeen electoral divisions (EDs): Altnapaste, Ballintra, Cloghan, Clogher, Donegal, Dooish, Gleneely, Goland, Haugh, Killygordon, Knock, Laghy, Lough Eask, Stranorlar, Tantallon, Tawnawully and Tullynaught. This study area is where the majority of effects are likely to occur. A study area of 500m from the proposed development boundary is considered appropriate for the land use and accessibility and amenity assessments.

6.2.1 Receiving Environment: Population

The study area is primarily a rural area with a relatively small population, which has remained steady in recent years. The primary land use is agriculture. However, there are some residential properties, business premises, and community land and assets within the study area. There are also a number of schools within the study area. The N15 is the national primary road from Lifford, County Donegal to Sligo. The N15 is a part of the proposed Wild Atlantic Corridor route and runs to the border with Northern Ireland. As the primary road through the centre of the Study Area, the N15 is likely to be used regularly by commuters and residents within the Study Area. In the Study Area, schools and employment opportunities are predominantly located in the towns of Donegal and Ballybofey/Stranorlar. Therefore, for populations located outside these towns, few public transport options necessitate ownership of a car/van to access the surrounding towns and community facilities.

6.2.2 Receiving Environment: Human Health

Data on general health and the prevalence of disabilities has been taken from a self-assessment on health carried out as part of the 2022 Census. 84.1% of the population of the study area identified themselves as having either ‘Very Good’ or ‘Good’ health. The proportion of the study area population identifying as having a disability (23.0%) is slightly higher than Donegal County (22.9%), Border (21.5%) and Ireland (21.5%).

The majority of the population of West and North West undertake ‘walking to get to and from places’ (85.4%), with cycling ‘to get to and from places’ being the least common (7.6%). Sports and recreational physical activities also saw a lower rate of uptake in the West and North West region, 65.8% compared to 66.9% nationwide.

6.3 Potential Impacts

Potential Construction Phase Impacts

During the construction phase there is the potential for a range of effects on Population and Human Health. Potential impacts include impacts on residential properties, non-motorised

users, amenity, transport and impacts on human health indicators such as air quality and noise. In general, the effects are assessed as being **not significant** as they are low in magnitude and/or temporary in nature, having regard to the mitigation measures and standard construction features proposed.

Potential Operational Phase Impacts

During operation it is considered the proposed development will have a number of positive effects (some significant) with respect to employment and economic activity, amenity, accessibility and human health.

6.4 Mitigation Measures

No further mitigation measures have been identified as there are no adverse significant effects concluded in this assessment.

6.5 Residual Effects

The assessment of effects included a consideration of the relevant chapters' residual effects assessments. No significant adverse effects were identified during the construction or operational phases. Therefore, all effects reported in the assessment are residual.

7. Biodiversity

7.1 Introduction

This chapter assesses the impact of the proposed development on biodiversity during the construction and operation phase. The process of identifying, analysing and evaluating the potential impacts of the proposed development on the topic of Biodiversity, i.e. habitats, species and designated sites, was undertaken in accordance with guidance on ecological and environmental survey and assessment provided by the Heritage Council, the Environmental Protection Agency, Transport Infrastructure Ireland and the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management. These guidelines informed the planning and conducting of field survey work, and the analysis and evaluation of the potential impacts of the proposed development on Biodiversity.

7.2 Receiving Environment

It was established that thirteen European sites occur within the Zone of Influence of the proposed development, namely the Donegal Bay (Murvagh) SAC, Lough Eske and Ardnamona Wood SAC, Croaghonagh Bog SAC, River Finn SAC, River Foyle and Tributaries SAC, Donegal Bay SPA, Lough Swilly SPA, Derryveagh and Glendowan Mountains SPA, Lough Nillan Bog SPA, Durnesh Lough SPA, Pettigo Plateau Nature Reserve SPA, Lough Derg (Donegal) SPA, Pettigo Plateau SPA.

In addition to these European sites, there are five National Heritage Areas (NHAs), twenty-three Proposed National Heritage Areas (pNHAs) and nine Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs) within the Zone of Influence. There is also one Ramsar site and two designated nature reserves.

The site is hydrologically connected to Donegal Bay and the River Foyle, which have a number of designations for nature conservation, including SACs and SPAs. The site of the proposed development is important for biodiversity, as it runs adjacent to designated bogs and loughs, EPA watercourses and functions as an ecological corridor linking saltwater and freshwater habitats. The site also supports species listed on Annex II and IV of the Habitats Directive. A Natura Impact Statement has been prepared as part of the application for approval.

7.3 Potential Impacts

Potential Construction Phase Impacts

The biodiversity impact assessment analysed the potential impacts of the proposed development on the KERs and characterised these impacts in terms of their magnitude, extent, duration, frequency and reversibility, thereby evaluating their significance on a geographical scale.

Habitat loss

The proposed development will predominantly result in the loss of Improved Agricultural Grassland (GA1), Amenity Grassland (GA2), Wet grassland (GS4), Scrub (WS1), Wet Heath habitat (HH3) and woodland habitats (WD1, WD2, WD4, WN1, WN6). There will also be some loss of Hedgerow (WL1) and Treeline (WL2) habitat where the proposed development is required to 'punch through' in order traverse field boundaries.

Habitat loss will also occur during the construction of the trailheads, compounds and temporary working areas. The trailheads in Donegal Town, Lougheask Demesne, Biddy's O'Barnes, and Ballybofey/Stranorlar will first facilitate construction compounds or temporary working areas prior to their conversion into trailheads. Habitats lost at all other compound locations and temporary working areas will undergo replanting and enhancement mitigation measures.

Habitat loss has the potential to impact KER 1: Woodlands, KER 3: Linear terrestrial habitats including the Abandoned Railway Line Ecological Corridor, Hedgerows and Treelines, KER 4: Upland habitats, KER 6: Badger, KER 7: Bats, KER 8: Red Squirrel and KER 9: Birds. There are 91 structures in total including bridges, culverts, underbridges and one overbridge. The construction of watercourse crossings including culverts and bridges has the potential to impact KER 2: Aquatic Ecosystems and Associated Aquatic Fauna and KER 5: Otter.

Habitat Fragmentation and Barrier Effect

In general, the earthworks, fencing and vegetation removal during construction may fragment the ecological corridors within the area and temporarily inhibit the movement of species, such as Otter, Badger and other terrestrial species. These impacts are anticipated along the proposed development, including the area north of the existing River Finn piers, whereby there is suitable Otter habitat in the River Finn and Badger setts were recorded in the embankments of the abandoned railway line.

Artificial lighting of the construction area also presents the risk of light disturbance for nocturnal species, particularly Otter, bats and fish by fragmentation of commuting/foraging corridors, disruption to circadian rhythms and increased risk of predation.

Prolonged or repetitive disturbances have the potential to cause barriers to connectivity for species moving past the construction area in the terrestrial or aquatic environment.

Habitat degradation - water quality

During construction in and around watercourses, the following may impact water quality.

- Surface water run-off can contain high levels of suspended sediments and other pollutants. Such run-off, if not attenuated and treated prior to discharge, has the potential to cause significant ecological impacts.
- Concrete, grout or other pollutants may spill directly into the local environment or be washed into watercourses in construction site run-off.
- Vehicles, plant and equipment which will be used during construction rely on hydrocarbons such as diesel, petrol and lubricating oils. Leaks from poorly maintained vehicles, plant, equipment, or storage tanks risk the input of hydrocarbons into the environment.
- In the absence of appropriate mitigation, hydrocarbons from the construction site may be washed into surface waters in construction site run-off.
- Inadequate treatment of wastewater from on-site toilets and washing facilities also provides for potential water quality impacts which could lead to ecological effects.

Direct Mortality

There is potential for direct mortality as a result of site clearance, tree felling and vegetation removal. Birds are particularly vulnerable during the nesting season which occurs March - August inclusive. Construction works including vegetation removal and structure repair during this period has the potential to lead to the loss of nests and direct mortality to birds in nests.

Badger are present along the railway line and could build setts within the footprint between the time of the surveys to inform the EIAR and the construction phase.

The removal of trees or structures supporting bat roosts has the potential to result in injury or mortality of roosting bats.

Disturbance

Construction of the proposed development will result in temporary noise, vibration, lighting and visual disturbance and has the potential to affect birds, including breeding and wintering birds, Badger, Otter, Red Squirrel and Bat species where they occur in suitable habitat in proximity to the proposed development. These species have the potential to be impacted both within and outside the construction footprint.

Introduction of Invasive Species

Construction activities have the potential to result in the spread of invasive species within and beyond the proposed development footprint. In the absence of control measures, there is a possibility that species may be inadvertently spread during construction, through the movement of equipment and contaminated soil to, from, or within the site. An Invasive Species Management Plan, outlining the procedures to be followed for the management of Invasive Alien Plant Species has been prepared and is presented in the Construction Environmental Management Plan.

Potential Operational Phase Impacts

Habitat Fragmentation and Barrier Effect

The proposed development primarily runs though rural and agricultural areas with trailheads and links at established urban or tourist areas, such as Donegal Town and Biddy's O'Barnes. There is also potential increase in the presence of dogs along the route of the proposed development.

Where fencing is proposed at areas along the proposed development, this has the potential to restrict animal movement, such as Badger and Otter if not designed to allow mammals to pass through.

Lighting is proposed at the trailheads at Donegal Town, Biddy's and Stranorlar, as well as the lengths of greenway closest to the towns. Lighting will also be provided in underpasses along the route to maintain user safety.

Therefore, the proposed development has the potential to cause noise and artificial lighting disturbance to the surrounding area during the operational phase. These impacts have the potential to negatively affect KER 5 'Otter', KER 6 'Badger', KER 7: 'Bats' and KER 9 'Birds'.

Habitat degradation - water quality

The introduction and increase in visitors and dogs may lead to an increase in dog fouling and human waste along the proposed development. It should be noted that Lough Mourne is a source of drinking water.

There are areas, particularly at the trailheads, where there is some potential for water quality impacts to the receiving environment from surface water runoff during the operational phase which could result in pollutants entering watercourses and discharging to European designated sites.

Habitat degradation – shading

The water course crossings have the potential to cause shading on the River Eske, the Lowerymore River and River Finn. Aquatic species, such as Freshwater Pearl Mussel and spawning salmon would be vulnerable to shading impacts.

According to research carried out on the effects of shading to estuarine wetlands from bridges, in order to avoid shading impacts to the water and in-river vegetation, the soffit height: deck width ratio is required to be 0.7 or above (Broome et al., 2005). The new watercourse crossings for the proposed development will be 4m wide. Therefore, the soffit heights are required to be at least 2.85m high to meet the 0.7 ratio requirement, thereby avoiding shading impacts.

Disturbance

For much of the length of the proposed development, there will be an increase in human presence from the baseline. There is also potential increase in the presence of dogs along the route of the proposed development.

Increased presence of humans and dogs has the potential to result in disturbance impacts to birds. Surveys undertaken for the proposed development indicate that the habitats adjacent to the route are not important for birds of conservation concern. Other terrestrial species that may be impacted by increased disturbance include Badger, Otter, and Bats.

The majority of the proposed development will not be lit, however lighting is proposed at the trailheads at Donegal Town, Biddy's and Stranorlar, as well as the lengths of greenway closest

to the towns; Ch.0-1050 (Donegal Town) and Ch.27500 – 30050 (Ballybofey/Stranorlar and Sessiaghoneill link). Lighting will also be provided in underpasses along the route to maintain user safety. It is not anticipated that lighting will be required at minor side road crossings however these will be assessed on an individual basis.

Therefore, the proposed development has the potential to give rise to changes in noise and artificial lighting levels, resulting in noise and artificial lighting disturbance to the species listed above along the proposed development and in the surrounding area during the operational phase.

Introduction of Invasive Species

During the operation of proposed development, human traffic has the potential to spread invasive species by dispersing seeds within the proposed development.

7.4 Mitigation Measures

The proposed development has been developed with regard to EU and Irish legislation and all relevant guidelines in relation to ecology and engineering best practice for the planning and construction. These guidelines provide practical measures that are incorporated into the design to minimise impacts and protect the receiving environment. The design has followed the basic principles outlined above to eliminate the potential for ecological impacts, where possible, and to minimise such impacts where total elimination is not possible. The design has followed the TII Publications (Standards) and the TII Environmental Assessment and Construction Guidelines.

Beyond general mitigation measures and standard construction methodologies, a number of project specific mitigation measures are provided to reduce impact upon Key Ecological Receptors. Key mitigation measures include fencing, planting, the addition of ramps to trenches and excavation, and timing or total avoidance of works at certain locations. The full set of mitigation measures to be implemented are included in Section 7.10 in Chapter 07 Biodiversity, contained in Volume 2 of this EIAR.

7.5 Residual Effects

Table 7-1 below assesses the significance of the residual impacts on the Key Ecological Receptors following the inclusion of the mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures described in the chapter.

Table 7-1 - Residual Effects

Key Ecological Receptor	Ecological significance following mitigation
KER 1: Woodlands	**Construction Phase** Following the implementation of mitigation measures in relation to landscaping, including areas of woodland planting adjacent to the River Eske, the construction of the proposed development will have **a not significant, medium-term negative impact on this KER at the local level.** As the planting matures, this impact will be reduced to imperceptible levels. The mitigation measures provided in relation to invasive species is considered that the proposed development will result in a **permanent positive impact** as invasive species will be eradicated from public lands. **Operational Phase** Following the implementation of mitigation measures in relation to landscaping, the operation of the proposed development will have **a medium-term slight impact on this KER at the local level.** As the planting matures, this impact will be reduced to imperceptible levels. The mitigation measures provided in relation to invasive species is considered that the proposed development will result in a **permanent positive impact** as invasive species will be eradicated from public lands.

Key Ecological Receptor	Ecological significance following mitigation
KER 2: Aquatic Ecosystems and Associated Aquatic Fauna	**Construction Phase** Following the implementation of mitigation measures in relation to timing of the works, water quality, lighting and invasive species, the construction of the proposed development will have **a neutral impact on this KER.** **Operational Phase** Following the implementation of mitigation measures in relation to water quality, signage and the provision of dog waste bins, the operation of the proposed development will have **a neutral impact on this KER.** Structures will not create shading impacts on Freshwater Pearl Mussel; therefore, the operation of the proposed development will have **a neutral impact on this KER.**
KER 3: Linear terrestrial habitats including the Abandoned Railway Line Ecological Corridor, Hedgerows and Treelines	**Construction Phase** Following the implementation of mitigation measures in relation to landscaping, including areas with linear planting at various points along the greenway, the construction of the proposed development will have **a not significant, medium-term negative impact on this KER at the local level.** As the planting matures, this impact will be reduced to imperceptible levels. **Operational Phase** Following the implementation of mitigation measures in relation to landscaping, fencing and lighting, the operation of the proposed development will have **a neutral impact on this KER.**
KER 4: Upland habitats	**Construction Phase** The temporary habitat loss associated with the installation of fencing along the red line boundary within this KER will have **a non-significant temporary negative impact on this KER at the national level.** The loss of wet heath habitat at the River Lowerymore crossing at Biddy's O'Barnes will constitute a **permanent significant negative impact on this KER at the county level.** The proposed development will not create drainage impacts on these habitats; therefore, the construction of the proposed development will have **a neutral impact on this KER.** **Operational Phase** The proposed development will not create drainage impacts on these habitats; therefore, the construction of the proposed development will have **a neutral impact on this KER.** Following the implementation of mitigation measures in relation to fencing, signage, lighting and water quality, including the provision of dog waste bins, the operation of the proposed development will have **a neutral impact on this KER.**
KER 5: Otter	**Construction Phase** Following the implementation of mitigation measures in relation to the pre-construction survey, excavations, water quality, lighting and fencing, the construction of the proposed development will have **a neutral impact on this KER.** **Operational Phase** Following the implementation of mitigation measures in relation to fencing, signage, lighting and water quality, including the provision of dog waste bins, the operation of the proposed development will have **a neutral impact on this KER.**
KER 6: Badger	**Construction Phase** Following the implementation of mitigation measures in relation to the pre-construction survey, excavations, and lighting and fencing, the construction of the proposed development will have a **neutral impact on this KER.** **Operational Phase** Following the implementation of mitigation measures in relation to fencing, signage and lighting, the operation of the proposed development will have **a neutral impact on this KER.**

Key Ecological Receptor	Ecological significance following mitigation
KER 7: Bats	**Construction Phase** Following the implementation of mitigation measures in relation to the roost exclusion, pre-construction inspection survey, timing of the construction, lighting and landscaping, the construction of the proposed development will have **a neutral impact on this KER.** **Operational Phase** Following the implementation of mitigation measures in relation to provision of bat boxes, landscaping and lighting, the operation of the proposed development will have **a neutral impact on this KER.**
KER 8: Red Squirrel	**Construction Phase** Following the implementation of mitigation measures in relation to the pre-construction survey, timing of the construction, lighting and landscaping, the construction of the proposed development will have **a neutral impact on this KER.** **Operational Phase** **A neutral impact on this KER.**
KER 9: Birds	**Construction Phase** Following the implementation of mitigation measures in relation to the timing of the works, water quality, landscaping and lighting, the construction of the proposed development will have **a neutral impact on this KER.** **Operational Phase** Following the implementation of mitigation measures in relation to the provision of dipper and grey wagtail boxes, water quality, landscaping and lighting, the operation of the proposed development will have **a neutral impact on this KER.**
KER 10: Invasive Species	**Construction Phase** The mitigation measures provided in relation invasive species is considered that the proposed development will result in a **permanent positive impact** as invasive species will be eradicated from public lands. **Operational Phase** The mitigation measures provided in relation to invasive species is considered that the proposed development will result in a **permanent positive impact** as invasive species will be eradicated from public lands.

8. Land and Soils

8.1 Introduction

This section presents the Land and Soils assessment of the proposed Barnesmore Gap Greenway (the 'proposed development' hereafter). 'Land' in the context of this chapter refers to the existing soil and geological characteristics of the receiving environment.

A site walkover was carried out along the proposed development at both the abandoned railway corridor and the offline greenfield sections. A ground investigation (GI) programme was carried out by Northwest Geotech Ltd (NWG) along the proposed development. The scope of this investigation was determined from analysis of existing information such as mapping and aerial photographs.

Existing information such as mapping and aerial photographs were used during initial desktop studies to plan the ground investigations. Sources of historical information, geological maps and/or features had been established during the geotechnical desktop study of the area including a review of information from various previous projects and site developments.

8.2 Receiving Environment

The greenway route passes through offline greenfield sections characterised by a mix of agricultural land, peatlands and natural habitats near the SACs such as Lough Eske and Ardnamona Wood SAC and Croaghonagh Bog SAC which the proposed development runs parallel to. The study area for the proposed development comprises of a geologically diverse region. The overburden in the study area was mainly deposited during the last Ice Age and the subsequent post-glacial period. These sediments include deposits such as glacial till, alluvium and peat, and bedrock outcrop or subcrop along with outwash gravels and boulders. In the river valleys (Eske, Lowerymore, Finn and respective tributaries) there are gravels and soft areas of alluvium and peat. Blanket peat covers the flatter mountain areas, such as around Lough Mourne. There are two geological heritage sites closely related to the proposed development according to the GSI database:

- Donegal and Inver Bays (DL011)

  The site is considered one of the finest examples of ribbed moraines and associated drumlins in Ireland, making it a significant County Geological Site with potential for designation as a Geological Natural Heritage Area (NHA).

- Barnesmore Gap (DL002)

  The Barnesmore Gap is a deep, steep-sided glacial valley formed during the Last Ice Age. It follows the Barnesmore Fault which is one of the major structural features of the bedrock geology of Donegal and is recommended as NHA due to its ease of accessibility and striking geomorphology.

The route of the proposed development includes areas along the Barnesmore Gap at risk of landslide / ground instability in the form of landslides, rockfalls, bog-slides and/or flows.

8.3 Potential Impacts

The potential impact of the proposed development on the soils and geology environment has been assessed through classification of the importance of the relevant attributes and quantification of likely magnitude of impact on these attributes. The assessment methodology is consistent with the impact assessment criteria outlined within the Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (EPA, 2022).

Potential Construction Phase Impacts

During the construction phase, in the absence of mitigation, there is potential impacts from temporary construction compounds and machinery access that may expose soil to erosion during rainfall, soil compaction under heavy machinery, and potential for soil pollution through fuel or oil spills/leaks.

It will not be necessary to export any excavated soils from the proposed development for disposal elsewhere.

The proposed development includes repairs and modifications to several existing structures along the route, primarily comprising former railway underbridges and overbridges, culverts, and retaining walls. This process may disturb soils and sediments surrounding the foundations of these structures including temporary stockpiling of excavated materials.

Potential Operational Phase Impacts

No significant impacts are likely to occur during the operation phase. 5-yearly inspections at the mountain slopes will be conducted as mitigation measures against the external natural hazard of rockfall, which is not an impact caused by the proposed greenway. These inspections have no environmental impact.

8.4 Mitigation Measures

The following is an outline of mitigation measures that will be implemented during the construction phase to avoid or reduce the potential impact of the proposed development:

- To prevent soil erosion, excavations will be completed and promptly backfilled. Work will not continue during heavy rainfall to avoid contamination risks. Refuelling of machinery will be restricted to designated areas with spill containment measures.
- Disturbance of peat/organic soils along the proposed development will be generally avoided through floating construction techniques, restricting plant movement to designated routes, protected by temporary timber matting, and reusing any excavated material on-site for habitat restoration. It is not expected that contaminated soil will be encountered in the proposed greenway works.
- A geological inspection will be undertaken in zones that may be susceptible to ground instability, including landslides, rockfalls, and bog-slides. If necessary, stabilisation works will be undertaken to reduce such risk to an acceptably low level.
- During the operational phase, repeat geological inspections of the mountainside above the old railway through Barnesmore Gap will be carried out every 5 years to monitor the stability and safety of the mountain slope, and any necessary further stabilisation measures will be carried out to ensure the ongoing safety of the greenway.

Full details of the mitigation measures are contained in the EIAR and NIS.

8.5 Residual Effects

No residual effects are expected from the proposed development.

9. Hydrology

9.1 Introduction

This assessment considers impacts of the construction and operational phases of the proposed development on the surface hydrology of the receiving environment. The scope of this assessment is to identify the potential impacts on the hydrology of natural and artificial water bodies, including the identification of hydrological processes relevant to the components of the proposed development. The assessment considers effects on:

- Water quality
- Hydromorphology
- Water Framework status of receiving water bodies

9.2 Receiving Environment

The proposed development is located within a series of river catchments in County Donegal, including the Eske, Lowerymore, Finn and Mourne Beg systems. These watercourses ultimately discharge to Lough Eske, Lough Mourne and downstream river networks, some of which are designated as environmentally sensitive areas, including Special Areas of Conservation and drinking water sources.

Overall, water quality within the study area is generally good, although some water bodies are identified as being under pressure from wider land uses such as agriculture and forestry. Several high-value receptors are present, including protected habitats, drinking water abstraction sources and salmonid rivers.

Flood risk within the study area is primarily associated with rivers and their floodplains, with additional localised surface water flooding possible during periods of heavy rainfall. These risks are generally confined to low-lying areas adjacent to watercourses.

A Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment (See Appendix 9.2 contained in Volume 4 of this EIAR) has been undertaken for the proposed development and has concluded that the proposed development is appropriate under the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines (OPW, 2019).

9.3 Potential Impacts

Potential Construction Phase Impacts

During construction, there is potential for short-term impacts on the water environment. These may arise from activities such as earthworks, bridge and culvert construction, and works carried out close to rivers and lakes.

The main risks identified are:

- Increased sediment entering watercourses due to disturbance of soils
- Runoff containing pollutants such as fuels, oils or construction materials
- Temporary disturbance to riverbanks and local drainage patterns

These impacts would be temporary and localised in nature.

In some cases, indirect impacts could occur where construction activities upstream affect downstream water bodies such as Lough Eske, Lowerymore River and Lough Mourne. However, these effects would be limited and short-term.

There is also potential for temporary localised disruption to drainage during construction, which could give rise to minor flood risk effects if not appropriately managed.

Potential Operational Phase Impacts

Once constructed, the proposed development will not give rise to significant impacts on the water environment.

The design incorporates measures such as permeable surfaces, drainage controls and vegetated filter strips to manage surface water runoff. These features ensure that runoff is controlled and treated before reaching receiving watercourses.

As a result:

- No impacts on water quality are expected
- No changes to river flow or morphology are predicted
- No impacts on protected water bodies are identified
- No increase in flood risk is expected.

9.4 Mitigation Measures

A range of standard construction measures will be implemented to protect the water environment. These measures form part of the design and construction of the proposed development and are widely used in similar projects.

Key measures include:

- Careful management of surface water runoff to prevent pollution
- Measures to control sediment, such as silt barriers and drainage controls
- Protection of riverbanks and buffer zones along watercourses
- Safe storage and handling of fuels, oils and construction materials
- Use of best practice methods for bridge and culvert construction
- Monitoring and supervision of construction works

These measures are designed to prevent pollutants from entering watercourses, minimise disturbance to rivers and lakes, and control runoff during construction. Construction activities will also be managed to ensure that there is no increase in flood risk, including maintaining natural drainage pathways and controlling surface water flows.

The assessment of the operational phase has identified no impacts on surface water quality, hydromorphological conditions, or hydrological regimes arising from the proposed development. As such, no specific mitigation measures are required during operation.

Full details of the mitigation measures are contained in the EIAR and NIS.

9.5 Residual Effects

With these mitigation measures in place, all impacts on surface water quality and hydromorphological conditions will be reduced to a negligible level.

No significant effects on rivers, lakes or downstream receptors are predicted during the construction phase. This includes sensitive water bodies such as Lough Eske, Lowerymore River and Lough Mourne. No increase in flood risk is predicted during the construction phase once mitigation measures are implemented.

The assessment concludes that the proposed development will not result in significant impacts on the hydrological environment.

All potential effects during construction are temporary and can be effectively controlled through standard mitigation measures. No long-term impacts are expected during operation.

10. Hydrogeology

10.1 Introduction

The hydrogeological assessment identifies and assesses the likely significant effects that the construction and operation phases of the proposed development will have on groundwater. The hydrogeological impact assessment methodology is as per the relevant guidance published by the Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII, 2025) 'Water Impact Assessment for National Roads, Light Rail, Metro and Rural Cycleways – Overarching Technical Document' (PE-ENV-01202).

The key hydrogeological attributes that have been considered within the proposed development include:

- The nature of the aquifer(s) underlying the proposed development including aquifer extent, Water Framework Directive Groundwater Bodies status, groundwater quality, recharge characteristics, and flow patterns within.
- Groundwater abstractions and their Zones of Contribution (ZOC).
- Karst landforms.
- Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems – both designated and non-designated – and their ZOCs.
- Groundwater flood risk.

10.2 Receiving Environment

The proposed development is underlain from northeast to southwest by Precambrian Quartzites, Gneisses and Schist, Granites and other Igneous Intrusive rocks, Dinantian (early) Sandstones, Shales and Limestones, Dinantian Lower Impure Limestones, Dinantian Sandstones, Dinantian Pure Bedded Limestones, and Dinantian Shales and Limestones hydrostratigraphic unit. While there are no mapped superficial deposit (sand and gravel) aquifers, the water table within the study area is likely to be high, i.e., within 5m of the ground surface, within the superficial deposits and to be closely linked with surface water bodies.

The proposed development and study area are mapped as having extreme groundwater vulnerability to contamination where significant outcropping and subcropping bedrock, and karstified bedrock are mapped, and either high or moderate groundwater vulnerability to contamination for the remainder of the proposed development extent and study area. Pockets of low groundwater vulnerability to contamination are mapped south of Lough Eske.

The proposed development and study area to the north of Lough Eske are mapped as being underlain by superficial deposits with groundwater recharge coefficients in the range of 4 to 10% (51-100mm), with a pocket located close to Lough Eske underlain by recharge coefficient of 4% (1-50mm). To the south of Lough Eske, the proposed development is underlain by a variable recharge coefficient in the range of 4 to 25% (51-400mm) with tiny pockets of high recharge coefficient of 85% (1001-1400mm).

According to the GSI (Geological Survey of Ireland) Map Viewer, there are fifty-nine recorded wells and springs located within the study area. None of these wells are recorded as being used for public water supply or group water supply purposes, with most recorded as being used for agricultural and domestic supply purposes. According to the GSI Map Viewer and the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) Map Viewer, there are no Source Protection Areas (SPAs) mapped within the study area. SPAs are delineated by the GSI to protect groundwater drinking water sources from microbial pollution.

According to the EPA's Abstraction Register, there are no registered groundwater abstractions located within the study area. There are no Zones of Contribution (ZOCs) areas mapped within the proposed development or the study area for EPA groundwater monitoring boreholes

or group water schemes. ZOCs refer to the catchment area that contributes groundwater to the well or spring.

10.3 Potential Impacts

Potential Construction Phase Impacts

The proposed development could result in potential impacts to the groundwater environment during construction, in terms of changes to water quality, water levels and flows (both surface and groundwater), and contributions to groundwater dependent ecosystems and groundwater abstractions. The following potential impacts have been considered as part of this assessment:

Impacts on groundwater quality, due to the migration of sediments, or other construction chemicals/ wastewater, through uncontrolled site runoff.

Impacts on groundwater quality, due to accidental spillage of oils, fuels, or other construction chemicals/ wastewater.

Impacts on groundwater flows, levels, and contributions to abstractions and GWDTEs (groundwater dependent terrestrial ecosystems), due to altered drainage regimes for watercourse crossings, and discharging of abstracted water as a result of dewatering for cuttings and excavations for structures.

Full details of the mitigation measures are contained in the EIAR and NIS.

11. Air Quality

11.1 Introduction

The assessment of Air Quality is contained within Chapter 11. The air quality assessment has focused on:

- Potential construction dust emissions and impacts to nearby sensitive receptors such as residential properties, schools, hospitals, etc.
- Potential vehicle emissions from traffic accessing the site for construction works and during operation.

11.2 Receiving Environment

Baseline data and data available from similar environments indicates that levels of particulate matter less than 10 microns (PM10) and particulate matter less than 2.5 microns (PM2.5) are generally well below the current National and European Union (EU) ambient air quality standards.

11.3 Potential Impacts

Potential Construction Phase Impacts

An assessment of the potential dust impacts as a result of the construction phase of the proposed development was carried out based on the UK Institute for Air Quality Management 2024 guidance document '*Guidance on the Assessment of Dust from Demolition and Construction*'. This established that there is a high risk of dust related impacts associated with the proposed development. In the absence of mitigation there is the potential for *short-term, direct, localised, negative* and *slight* impacts to air quality, which is potentially significant in the absence of mitigation.

In addition, construction phase traffic emissions have the potential to impact air quality, particularly due to the increase in the number of HGVs accessing the site. A detailed air quality assessment was scoped out for the construction stage of the development as outlined in Transport Infrastructure Ireland's 2025 guidance document '*Air Quality Assessment of Specified Infrastructure Projects – PE-ENV-01106*'. No significant construction phase effects of traffic on air quality are therefore predicted.

There is the potential for cumulative effects on air quality should the construction phase of the proposed development coincide with that of other developments within 500m of the site. A review of proposed/permitted developments in the vicinity of the site was undertaken.

The recommended dust mitigation measures will be applied during the construction phase which will avoid significant cumulative effects on air quality. With appropriate mitigation measures in place, the predicted cumulative impacts on air quality associated with the construction phase of the proposed development is deemed *short-term, direct, localised, negative* and *not significant*.

Potential Operational Phase Impacts

A detailed air quality assessment was scoped out for the operational stage of the development as outlined in Transport Infrastructure Ireland's 2025 guidance document '*Air Quality Assessment of Specified Infrastructure Projects – PE-ENV-01106'*. No significant operational phase effects of traffic on air quality are therefore predicted. As no significant operational phase effects of traffic on air quality are predicted, there are also therefore no cumulative operational phase effects of traffic on air quality predicted.

11.4 Mitigation Measures

During the construction phase, all dust and air quality complaints are to be recorded, cause(s) identified and appropriate measures taken to reduce emissions in a timely manner. The site layout shall ensure dust impacts are kept to a minimum. Materials which have the potential to generate dust will be kept to a minimum on site and will be covered to prevent dispersion. To reduce fossil fuel emissions, diesel or petrol-powered generator use will be avoided and idling of vehicles on site shall be prohibited. Operations will be conducted in a manner which reduces the potential for dust generation, alongside suitable dust suppression techniques. Exposed soils will be revegetated as soon as possible, and a wheel washing system will reduce trackout beyond the footprint of the proposed development.

No site-specific mitigation measures are proposed for the operational phase as no significant operational stage effects of traffic on air quality are predicted.

Full details of the mitigation measures are contained in the EIAR and NIS.

11.5 Residual Effects

With the implementation of proposed mitigation measures, derived from the Institute for Air Quality Management 2024 guidance '*Guidance on the Assessment of Dust from Demolition and Construction*' as well as other relevant dust management guidance, are implemented the effects on air quality during the construction of the proposed development are *short-term, direct, localised, negative* and *not significant*.

12. Climate

12.1 Introduction

The climate assessment has incorporated the following assessments:

- The potential greenhouse gas emissions during the construction, operational and decommissioning phases of the development.
- The vulnerability of the proposed development to climate change, including considerations for increased rainfall and other projected climate impacts.
- The design measures to enhance the proposed development's resilience to future climate risks, such as expanded drainage systems and green infrastructure for increased rainfall.

12.2 Receiving Environment

The EPA state that Ireland had total GHG emissions of 57.6 Mt CO2e in 2024. This is 1.03 Mt CO2e higher than Ireland's annual target for emissions in 2024. EPA projections indicate that Ireland has used 82.5% of the 295 Mt CO2e Carbon Budget for the five-year period 2021-2025. This leaves 17.5% of the budget available for 2025, requiring a substantial 10.3% annual emissions reduction for 2025 to stay within budget.

12.3 Potential Impacts

The potential impacts on climate have been assessed in two distinct ways – a greenhouse gas assessment (GHGA) and a climate change risk assessment (CCRA). The GHGA quantifies the GHG emissions from a proposed development over its lifetime and compares these emissions to relevant carbon budgets, targets and policy to contextualise magnitude. The CCRA considers a proposed development's vulnerability to climate change and identifies mitigation measures to increase project resilience to identified risk.

The potential impact of the construction, operation, and eventual decommissioning of the proposed development on Ireland's national GHG emissions has been assessed against Ireland's 2024 total emissions, the relevant sectoral ceilings, and the 2030 carbon budgets. Any adverse impacts are expected to occur primarily during the operational phase, given the extended lifecycle of approximately 120 years. The dominant sources of GHG emissions during this phase are associated with electricity consumption for lighting and EV charging infrastructure. When considered over the full lifecycle of the development, these emissions represent a minimal contribution to national GHG budgets. In addition, avoided emissions associated with a shift from GHG emitting vehicles to zero-carbon active transport methods such as walking and cycling have been accounted for within the assessment.

12.3.1 Greenhouse Gas Assessment

Calculation of the GHG emissions associated with the construction of the proposed development was calculated using information on the lifecycle assessment completed by the project developer on the online Transport Infrastructure Ireland Carbon Assessment Tool (TII, 2024). The proposed development will incorporate a number of mitigation measures as well as sustainable policy measures from the project developer, the proposed development is aligned with Ireland's GHG trajectory to net zero by 2050.

GHG emissions during the operational phase were assessed and are mostly attributed to EV charging and lighting. Ireland's target to decarbonise 80% of the electricity grid by 2030 and achieve net zero by 2050 should reduce the emissions associated with the EV chargers as emissions should follow a decreasing trajectory until the point the electricity grid achieves net zero.

Impacts to climate from the construction, operational and decommissioning phases are deemed *direct, long-term, negative* and *slight,* which is considered *not significant*.

This assessment approach is considered to be inherently cumulative. As a result, the cumulative impact of the proposed development in relation to GHG emissions is considered *direct, long-term, negative* and *slight,* which is overall *not significant* in EIA terms.

12.3.2 Climate Change Risk Assessment

A CCRA was conducted to consider the vulnerability of the proposed development to climate change, as per the TII 2022 PE-ENV-01104 guidance. The hazards assessed included flooding (pluvial, fluvial); extreme heat; extreme cold; wildfire; extreme wind; and landslides. The proposed development is predicted to have at most low vulnerabilities to the various climate hazards and therefore climate change risk is considered direct, long-term, negative and not significant.

Overall, no significant impacts to climate are predicted during the construction and operational phases of the proposed development.

12.4 Mitigation

Incorporated Design

A range of mitigation measures have been integrated into the design of the proposed development. The proposed development will fully comply with regulatory requirements and actively contribute to reducing its operational carbon footprint enhanced active travel opportunities, and measures that promote biodiversity and environmental sustainability such as meadow woodland and wildflower regeneration and tree planting.

To address future climate change risks, the design incorporates mitigation measures such as enhanced drainage systems to manage increased rainfall and expanded Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to reduce the impact of intense rainfall. These measures provide larger permeable surfaces for infiltration and help slow runoff rates. Vulnerable assets, such as EV chargers, will be located in low-risk areas, installed on raised plinths, and designed to IP68 standards to ensure resilience against water exposure and maintain operational integrity. The overall design aligns with relevant standards and applies flood-resilient construction along the greenway route, ensuring the development is considered climate-resilient.

Construction Phase

A number of best practice mitigation measures are proposed for the construction phase of the proposed development to ensure that impacts to climate are minimised. Best practices will be implemented to prevent significant GHG emissions which include avoiding dense vegetation removal where possible, minimising waste, recycling, cut/fill balancing and no-dig solutions in areas of peat.

Operational Phase

Mitigation measures including planting meadows and trees woodland and wildflower regeneration suitable to sequester carbon are proposed. Routine monitoring of all infrastructure will be undertaken in line with best practice to ensure timely repairs and effective maintenance, thereby maximizing the full lifecycle value of all assets.

Monitoring and reporting of the embodied carbon in the construction phase will be conducted. The aim of monitoring will be to seek further ways to minimise climate impacts. Monitoring will include embodied carbon of construction materials, water usage, power and fuel usage, and waste generation (including reuse and recycling rates). Where monitoring shows that the proposed development is not meeting its targets, further mitigation will be put in place.

Full details of the mitigation measures are contained in the EIAR and NIS.

12.5 Residual Effects

The proposed development has incorporated best practice mitigation measures to reduce climate impacts where feasible. With the implementation of mitigation measures, the effect of the proposed development in relation to GHG emissions is considered *direct, long-term, negative* and *slight,* which is overall *not significant* in EIA terms.

In relation to climate change vulnerability, it has been assessed that given the level of mitigation integrated into the design there are no significant risks to the proposed development because of climate change. The residual effect of climate change on the proposed development is considered *direct, long-term, negative* and *not significant*, which is overall *not significant* in EIA terms.

13. Noise and Vibration

13.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an assessment of the potential noise and vibration impacts and significant environmental effects of the Barnesmore Gap Greenway with respect to noise and vibration during the construction and operational phases of the proposed development.

13.2 Receiving Environment

The predominant contributor to the prevailing noise environment within the study area is road traffic noise from the existing N15 National Road which cuts through the middle of the study area and N56 National Road to the northwest of Donegal, and to a lesser extent, road traffic noise from the local road network. The future noise baseline climate is likely to be similar to the existing noise baseline.

13.3 Potential Impacts

Noise levels associated with construction have been identified.

A total of 1532 residential dwelling Noise Sensitive Receptors (NSRs) have been identified within 300 metres of all construction activities which will progress along the proposed development route. To mitigate potential impacts on these sensitive receptors, construction activities will typically be undertaken during core construction working hours:

- 08:00 – 18:00 (Monday to Friday).
- No noisy works on weekends or bank holidays unless required for exceptional circumstances, subject to approval.

Method statements regarding construction management, traffic management, and overall site management will be prepared prior to construction in accordance with best practice guidance to help minimise impacts of the construction works with reference to the measures outlined in the Contractors CEMP. One of the main aims of such method statements will be to minimise noise and vibration disruption to local NSRs during the construction phase.

13.4 Mitigation Measures

Where necessary, mitigation measures and appropriate strategies will be reviewed and confirmed by the construction contractor once the construction plant, methods, and traffic management plans have been finalized. This process will ensure that construction noise thresholds and limits for the relevant time periods are adhered to, in accordance with the requirements outlined in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). This process will ensure that construction noise thresholds and limits for the relevant time periods are adhered to, in accordance with the requirements outlined in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). Additional noise control measures would be required where significant adverse effects are predicted, especially if the construction works take place outside standard weekday construction hours. These include acoustic screening, shrouds on piling rigs and cranes, jackets on pneumatic drills, acoustic covers on compressors and fitting a suitably designed muffler or other noise reducing equipment to minimise noise without impairing machine efficiency. During the construction phase, the construction contractor will undertake noise monitoring at the nearest sensitive locations, where significant adverse effects have been identified. The noise monitoring will be undertaken in accordance with ISO 1996:2017: Acoustics – Description, measurement and assessment of environmental noise. Once the Proposed Development is operational it is not expected to generate significant noise or vibration impacts on sensitive receptors.

Full details of the mitigation measures are contained in the EIAR and NIS.

13.5 Residual Effects

The residual construction noise effects at NSRs are likely to be Negative, Temporary or less (Not-Significant). Subject to traffic management as required by the construction traffic management plan, there is the potential for Negative, Short-Term, Significant effects due to construction traffic along Lough Eske.

As the Proposed Development is not expected to generate significant noise or vibration impacts on sensitive receptors no mitigation measures are proposed and the residual effects are Not Significant. However, it is noted that the potential significant effect is temporary and not anticipated to persist for the full duration of construction, and the predicted construction traffic noise levels remain below Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) maximum permissible construction noise limits.

14. Landscape and Visual Impact

14.1 Introduction

This chapter of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) assesses the likely significant effects of the proposed development on the landscape and visual resource of the study area. It identifies mitigation and compensation measures that will be implemented to prevent, reduce, or offset potential adverse landscape and visual effects or enhance potential beneficial effects, where possible.

The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (herein referred to as LVIA) considers how:

- Landscape effects associated with the proposed development relate to changes to the fabric, character, and quality of the landscape resource and how it is experienced.
- Visual effects relate closely to landscape effects, but concern changes in existing views.

14.2 Receiving Environment

The Barnesmore Gap Greenway will run for approximately 31 km between Donegal Town and Ballybofey/Stranorlar, mainly following the former Donegal Railway line. The landscape along the route is varied, ranging from the dramatic glacial valley of Barnesmore Gap to the wooded edges of Lough Eske and the drumlin farmland around Donegal Bay. The wider setting includes uplands, bog, lakeshore landscapes, and settled rural fringes. Overall, the area has a mixed rural, scenic and locally urbanised character, shaped by tourism, forestry, agriculture and transport corridors.

14.3 Potential Impacts

Potential Construction Impacts

During the construction period, localised vegetation clearance, earthworks and temporary compounds will be visible at different points along the route. Construction activity will be noticeable to nearby residents, road users, hotel guests, and recreational users, especially close to Lough Eske, Barnesmore Gap, and settlements at either end of the route. These effects will be temporary and will diminish as works move along the corridor and are reinstated.

When complete, the greenway will become a permanent part of the local landscape. Its alignment along the former railway corridor and existing boundaries means that it sits naturally within the surrounding landform and vegetation pattern. The proposed development will introduce new path surfacing, fencing, signage and five trailheads, which will be visible in places, particularly at road crossings and open lakeshore sections. While the greenway will subtly change the character of its immediate setting, it will not alter the wider scenic qualities of Barnesmore Gap, Lough Eske or the surrounding landscape character areas.

For receptors closest to the route – such as residents overlooking short sections of the corridor, hotel guests at Lough Eske, and users of local roads – the greenway will remain visible, but its prominence will reduce over time. By around Year 15, newly planted hedgerows, woodland belts and native vegetation will have matured, screening much of the route and integrating the path edges into the surrounding land cover. In most locations, long-term visual effects will be no more than *slight* and will be *neutral* or even *slightly beneficial* where new planting strengthens local landscape structure.

While the greenway will give rise to localised landscape and visual effects during construction and in early operation, these will *not be significant* at the wider landscape scale. Residual effects will steadily reduce as planting establishes, and in many areas the proposed

development will enhance biodiversity and landscape pattern along the former railway corridor.

Potential Operational Phase Impacts

The greenway forms part of Donegal's wider investment in sustainable travel, recreation and tourism. Together with ongoing improvements to access, walking and cycling routes, the proposed development in its operational phase will contribute to a more connected and accessible landscape, consistent with the planned development of the region, resulting in *positive, long-term* impacts.

14.4 Mitigation Measures & Residual Effects

By Year 15, following the establishment of extensive mitigation planting and the integration of green infrastructure, the proposed development will result in predominantly *neutral* to *slight positive* effects across all identified Landscape Character Areas (LCAs), Seascape Character Areas (SCAs), and Local Townscape Character Areas (LTCAs). Mature native planting and habitat restoration will effectively screen development elements, reduce visual prominence, and enhance biodiversity, while the sensitive design approach ensures the preservation of key landscape and seascape qualities. Urban fringe areas will benefit from regeneration and the introduction of new civic spaces, improving visual cohesion and community amenity. Overall, the development will be well-assimilated into the evolving landscape, maintaining landscape integrity and contributing positively to the local environment and sense of place.

Full details of the mitigation measures are contained in the EIAR and NIS.

15. Cultural Heritage

15.1 Introduction

The cultural heritage assessment identifies and assesses the likely significant effects that the construction and operation phases of the proposed development will have on archaeology and cultural heritage.

The area examined for this study includes the full extents of the proposed development land take boundary. In order to identify potential significant effects from a cultural heritage perspective, a study area measuring 50m either side of the redline boundary was established. Given the proposed development type (a greenway), this was sufficient and suitable to assess the immediate cultural heritage potential of the proposed development.

Professional judgement was used to determine where the area should be extended to consider archaeological sites / monuments or historic structures that lie beyond its boundaries. As required and where appropriate, the relationship of structures, sites, monuments, and complexes that fall outside this study area will be considered and evaluated.

The wider landscape was also considered, to provide an archaeological and historical context for the proposed development.

15.2 Receiving Environment

The proposed greenway runs through the Barnesmore Gap, following the route of the old railway line through an upland area of heath, Atlantic Blanket Bog, and commercial forestry, past the mountain lake of Lough Mourne. The presence of the natural geological formation of 'Barnesmore Gap' and the valley of the River Lowerymore therein, would have been uniquely important from the prehistoric period onwards as a means of traversing the county from the coastline at the south-west to the north-eastern parts of the county. Barnesmore Gap represents a 'natural highway' and an important transport corridor, up to the present day. It continued to be an important strategic route throughout history that traversed the 'Bluestack Mountains', which formed the boundary between Connaught and Ulster (Lacy 1983).

A cluster of prehistoric sites (RMP/SMR DG086-002001 to -002007) are recorded in Croaghonagh townland and are located at the edge of the study area, c. 33m south-east of the proposed greenway. These sites demonstrate the continued use of a ritual or burial location for a variety of activities across the prehistoric period. Prior to their discovery through excavations undertaken in 2010, only a cairn (formerly classified as a megalithic tomb) and a standing stone were recorded at the site (RMP DG086-002001 & -002002).

There is one recorded monument located within the proposed development boundary and another immediately south of it in Goland townland. These are situated close together at the edges of the disused 19th century railway line and the proposed alignment follows the disused railway line at this point.

There is also a number of recorded monuments located outside the study area but which are considered relevant to the assessment. These occur primarily in two locations, at Lough Eske and at Lough Mourne. There is one protected structure within the proposed development, Lough Eske Bridge (RPS 40801105, CH038), which carries the road over the River Eske to the south-east of Lougheask Demesne. There is only one protected structure in the study area, a mid-19th century church (Christ Church, Church of Ireland) (RPS 40909402, CH029). It is situated a short distance south-east of the entrance to the demesne, partly screened by the trees and shrubs that enclose its grounds, accessed by a laneway that runs upslope to the church.

There are four NIAH sites located within the proposed development (CH104, CH105, CH049 and CH051), all of which are bridges associated with the 19th railway Donegal Railway connecting Donegal town with Ballybofey/Stranorlar. A Roman Catholic church is also located within the study area, St Agatha's Catholic Church (CH047), at Clar Bridge.

15.3 Potential Impacts

Potential Construction Impacts

It is proposed that trees/vegetation running alongside the rail corridor may need to be cut back but will be retained in situ where possible. Any removal of mature trees and vegetation along the southern railway embankment, adjacent to and in the vicinity of the ringfort (RMP DG077-015; CH019) would have a potential *negative* impact of *moderate significance* on the setting of the monument.

Potential direct impacts were identified in relation to the possible buried foundations of 18th / 19th century structures (lime kilns, other buildings, most likely small cottages or cabins, and mill features) depicted on the OS historic mapping that may survive within the proposed development (CH083 to CH086, CH088, CH092, CH095, CH097, CH099, CH100). These receptors are considered to have a low sensitivity value, and the magnitude of effect will be medium. Therefore, the overall significance of effect is *slight negative.*

Townland boundaries are a feature of cultural heritage interest. They are considered to have a low importance rating and there would be a medium magnitude of impact where sections require removal during construction phase, resulting in a *slight negative* impact.

The proposed development will traverse the former Lougheask Demesne (CH053), now the grounds of the Lough Eske Castle Hotel. It will enter the grounds in two locations: south-west of the existing south-east entrance, through the trees and parallel to an existing road / path; and from the public road along the south boundary. There are no demesne walls or other enclosing element present and no designed landscape features within the proposed development that would be negatively affected. The part of the estate crossed by the proposed development was once parkland but is now under coniferous woodland. The former demesne is considered to be of medium importance and there would be a low magnitude of impact during construction phase, resulting in a temporary *slight negative* impact.

The proposed development will require the demolition of a range of three small outbuildings (CH112), dating to the early 20th century, in Sessiagh (O'Neill) townland. The buildings are considered to have a low importance rating. There would be a very high magnitude of impact during construction phase, resulting in a *slight negative* impact.

Reuse of large parts of the disused 19th century railway (CH056) will help to preserve this important part of Donegal's industrial heritage. On the abandoned railway corridor, minimal earthworks will be required as the vertical profile follows the existing profile for the majority, and there will be a reuse of existing elements (e.g. drainage ditches, culverts, tree-lined embankments) where possible and repair where needed. It may not be possible to retain all of the surviving elements intact. In general, the existing rail ballast will be taken as the formation level. It is likely that once the soil build-up along the railway line has been removed, extant tracks and rails may be uncovered, and these would require removal to facilitate the construction of the pavement surface. The disused 19th century railway is considered to be of medium importance and there would be a medium magnitude of impact during construction phase, resulting in a *moderate negative* impact.

Potential Operational Impacts

The proposed development follows an ancient routeway through the Barnesmore Gap, which has been used since the prehistoric period. Evidence from archaeological investigations at the north shore of Lough Mourne, in the vicinity of the proposed development, speaks to a focus of prehistoric activity here and to the importance of thisrouteway through the Gap. The 18th century barracks (NIAH 40908605, CH107) on the hillside above the Gap tells the story of the dangers faced by travellers along this route during that time. The proposed development follows the disused railway line in this area, demonstrating the continued importance of this route in the transport history of Donegal up to the present day. It is considered that there could result in an overall *positive* impact for the cultural heritage environment.

Given the nature of the proposed development, which is in line with the type of infrastructure already present (the existing road, both public and that which accesses the hotel, the paths through the hotel grounds), the changes to the setting of the architectural heritage receptors

by the operational greenway are considered to be of low magnitude. All of the receptors have a medium sensitivity value, thus the significance of effect is considered to be *negative and slight* during Operation Phase.

The intact railway bridges and embankment (NIAH 40908604, 40908501, 40907721, 40907829; CH104, CH105, CH049, CH051) within the proposed development, will be integrated into the proposed design and will continue in use (in the case of the road bridges) and brought back into use (the bridge and embankment at Keadew Upper), thus ensuring their preservation and ongoing maintenance. The former railway line in the vicinity of NIAH bridges CH104, CH049 and CH051 is for the most part overgrown and otherwise barely, if at all, identifiable. Thus, the bridges have lost connection with the 19th century railway that they served. In the case of the undesignated remains of the railway viaduct at the River Finn (CH056.53), the bridge will be brought back into use, thus preserving the surviving elements. The disused railway line where it survives (much of it overgrown with vegetation and inaccessible), and the more subtle elements associated with it (e.g. culverts, gate posts), will benefit from the improved setting of the operational greenway. The operation phase impact for the railway heritage is considered to be *moderate positive*.

15.4 Mitigation Measures

The mitigation strategy for cultural heritage was agreed in consultation with the TII Project Archaeologist. The measures include:

- Archaeological testing.
- A detailed survey of the disused railway line.
- Any necessary archaeological monitoring and inspection work required along the proposed development will take place during the site preparation / advanced works phase of the proposed development.
- Prior to construction commencing, a full written and photographic record of all extant and intact townland boundaries to be impacted by the works will be carried out by a suitably qualified cultural heritage specialist.
- Informative or interpretative signage highlighting the history and heritage of the area will be installed at appropriate locations along the proposed development and should incorporate any significant or interesting findings from the archaeological investigations.

Full details of the mitigation measures are contained in the EIAR and NIS.

15.5 Residual Effects

Following the implementation of the mitigation measures proposed, no significant residual effects are predicted to occur in relation to cultural heritage.

16. Material Assets and Land: Agricultural Properties

16.1 Introduction

This assessment describes and assesses the likely direct and indirect significant impacts of the proposed development on agricultural property. The study area for this assessment comprises of the agricultural property directly impacted by the proposed development. The zone of influence extends to the agricultural lands, to include owned or rented lands, being farmed as part of directly affected agricultural properties.

The key parameters for assessment that have potential to result in likely significant effects on agricultural properties are outlined below:

- Land-take
- Farm division
- Farm enterprise
- Effects on farm buildings / farm facilities.

16.2 Receiving Environment

The baseline study area is comprised of seventy-nine agricultural properties directly impacted by the proposed development extending from Milltown Townland in Donegal Town to Stranorlar Townland. Agricultural lands in the southern and northern extents of the study area, in vicinity of Donegal Town and Ballybofey/Stranorlar are predominantly agricultural pasture with small areas of forestry. In the middle section of the study area, land cover is primarily comprised of upland heath and peat wetlands.

In the northern and southern extents, the study area is generally undulating lowlands comprising mainly of improved grassland with small areas of forestry. The land use on these properties can be limited by drainage due to heavy soils. In the central section of the study area, there is a significant section of state-owned lands (by Coillte and Donegal County Council). Land use of the remaining privately owned lands is comprised of sheep grazing of upland heath.

The agricultural farm holdings affected by the proposed development (with the exception of Coillte) range in area from less than 1ha to greater than 300ha with an average area of 20.9ha. This is considerably less than the average farm size in County Donegal and the national average. While some farm enterprises are moderately intensive in nature, agricultural holdings within the study area are generally extensively managed. The predominant farm enterprises are sheep (20.3%), mixed beef and sheep production (16.5%) and beef production (10.1%). There is a high level of farm holdings where the lands are either unused or available for short term rental (27.8%). There are four holdings (5.1%) involved in commercial forestry.

16.3 Potential Impacts

Potential Construction Phase Impacts

The assessment of the impact on agricultural land includes the effects of the construction impacts.

Temporary land-take is a construction-phase impact of the proposed development. The construction works for the proposed development will involve a total temporary land-take of 4.6ha of agricultural lands and 0.1ha of public road.

Construction noise is anticipated as a construction-phase impact of the proposed development. The activity of earth moving machinery, transport lorries and other ancillary vehicles will generate additional noise emissions in the immediate vicinity of the construction

area. Noise can be of significance for farm animals (i.e. when noise becomes excessively loud). In general, animals become accustomed to regular noises and sounds. Intermittent noises can cause fright and distress. Intermittent noises close to farm buildings can distress livestock.

Dust is also anticipated as a construction-phase impact of the proposed development. Dust generated from the exposure of soil to the atmosphere during construction may cause annoyance or nuisance to the farmer and farm animals. Livestock are at risk of eye irritations from high levels of windblown dust particles. This stress may reduce productivity and increase management difficulties.

The construction phase may restrict access to land. Access to land will be maintained, as much as possible, during the proposed development construction process (i.e., following the commencement of construction but before the accommodation works have been completed).

Field drainage systems currently in situ will be interrupted by the construction works. These systems will be restored as part of the completed proposed development works. However, there may be temporary impaired drainage in the period of time between initial disturbance and final reinstatement of such drainage works.

Access to either piped water or drinking points on watercourses may be affected during construction through the interruption of existing water supply piping on the farm or the diversion of watercourses used by livestock on the farm. Electric fencing used on farms to stock proof farm boundaries or control the movement of stock may also be affected.

Potential Operational Phase Impacts

On agricultural properties, the proposed development will involve a total land-take of 79.8ha from 79 holdings involving permanent land-take of 75ha and temporary land-take of 4.7ha. Permanent land-take is comprised of 74.2ha agricultural lands and 0.8ha public road. Temporary land-take is comprised of 4.6ha agricultural lands and 0.8ha public road. The impact on agricultural land is confined to farm holdings impacted by the proposed development.

16.4 Mitigation Measures

- Following the completion of relevant construction works, lands temporarily acquired will be reinstated to existing agricultural condition. Measures will be considered on a site-by-site basis, subject to proposed construction works.
- Temporary compound fencing will be erected prior to the commencement of works to function as tree protection fencing and to prohibit any works within the Root Protection Areas (RPAs) identified by the project Arboriculturist.
- Where required, an alternative source of water / electricity will be provided to ensure that disruption to farming is minimised during the construction phase.
- Screening will be provided, where required, to mitigate the noise and visual effects of construction works and operational traffic.

Full details of the mitigation measures are contained in the EIAR and NIS.

16.5 Residual Effects

After mitigation, there are no agricultural properties on which the residual impact is likely to be *profound or very significant.*

There is one agricultural property on which the residual impact is likely to be *significant.* This represents a reduction of nine agricultural properties with a *significant* impact.

There are 21 agricultural properties (26.6%) on the proposed development where the level of impact is *moderate*. There are 50 agricultural properties (63.3%) on which the residual impact is likely to be *slight* and a further seven agricultural properties (8.9%) on which the residual

impact is likely to be *not significant*. There are no agricultural properties with an impact deemed to be *imperceptible*.

17. Material Assets and Land: Non-Agricultural Properties

17.1 Introduction

This chapter of the EIAR assesses the impact of the Barnesmore Gap Greenway on non-agricultural property during the construction and operation phase. This chapter describes and assesses the likely direct and indirect significant impacts of the proposed development on non-agricultural property.

The Study Area for this assessment comprises of the non-agricultural property directly impacted by the proposed development.

Non-agricultural property includes the following:

- Residential property.
- Commercial property.
- Community property – Public parks, open space or lands that are used for recreation amenity.
- Non-agricultural land – Lands zoned for development (with or without planning permission) and sites with planning permission.
- Non-agricultural land – Lands not zoned for development, non-amenity lands, waterbodies, public road, etc.

17.2 Receiving Environment

The proposed development will require the permanent and temporary acquisition of lands from 34 non-agricultural properties.

The proposed development commences in Donegal Town and will impact on eight non-agricultural properties comprised of community property and non-agricultural land property. There are direct impacts on one community property and seven properties comprised of lands. The community properties include St. John Bosco Centre and Donegal Cooperative Mart. The 'land' properties are within the Donegal Town Area Plan 2024-2030 and are zoned as 'Opportunity Site' and / or 'Open Space and Recreation'. On one land property, a commercial retail development (Tesco) is under construction at Milltown Townland.

The central section of the proposed development will impact on twenty-eight non-agricultural properties comprised of residential, commercial, community property and non-agricultural land property. There are direct impacts on fourteen residential properties, two commercial properties, four community properties and seven properties comprised of lands. The commercial properties include Lough Eske Hotel, Scottish Renewables and Daytona Heavy Haulage Ltd. The community properties include Clar Church, Christ Church Lough Eske, St. Francis National School and Seisagh Uí Neill National School. On one land property, there is current planning permission for residential development in Sessiaghoneill Townland.

The proposed development terminates in Ballybofey/Stranorlar Town and will impact on eight non-agricultural properties comprised of residential, commercial, community property and non-agricultural land property. There are direct impacts on four residential properties, two community properties, one commercial property and one property comprised of land. The commercial property is Lafferty Bus Hire, and the community properties include Ballybofey & Stranorlar Cooperative Mart and the Finn Valley Centre.

17.3 Potential Impacts

Potential Construction Phase Impacts

Temporary land-take is an impact of the proposed development at construction phase. The construction works for the proposed development will involve a total temporary land-take of 0.82ha. The non-agricultural lands will comprise of a range of land types including residential lands, commercial lands, development lands, amenity lands and public road.

Access to some properties will be affected during the construction phase. The construction of local road junctions and crossings in particular may impact on access to properties.

The activity of construction vehicles will generate additional noise emissions in the immediate vicinity of construction. Noise and vibration may be a cause of disturbance to those residing in dwelling houses located in close proximity to the construction of the proposed development.

Dust generated during the construction phase may have a nuisance effect on nearby properties especially during dry weather.

Existing drainage systems may be disturbed and in places removed by the construction of the proposed development. These systems will be restored as part of the completed works. However, there may be temporary impaired drainage in the interim period between initial entry and final reinstatement of such drainage works.

Potential Operational Phase Impacts

The proposed development will involve a permanent land-take on non-agricultural properties of 4.17ha, consisting of 3.37ha non-agricultural lands and 0.36ha public road.

17.4 Mitigation Measures

- Following the completion of relevant construction works, lands temporarily acquired will be reinstated where necessary.
- Prior to construction and subject to written agreement with the relevant property owners, property condition surveys will be undertaken in relation to all buildings / structures in use located within 50m of the extents of the land-take boundary.
- Access will be maintained to all affected property as much as possible and if interrupted will be restored without unreasonable delay. Traffic management measures will be put in place during construction where temporary or minor diversions are required.
- Where part of the curtilage of a property is to be permanently acquired, the acquiring authority will hold discussions with the property owner and generally agree to replace boundaries on a like-for-like basis where possible, subject to safety considerations.

Full details of the mitigation measures are contained in the EIAR and NIS.

17.5 Residual Effects

After mitigation, there are no non-agricultural properties on which the residual impact is likely to be *profound* or *very significant*.

There are seven non-agricultural properties (20.6%) on which the residual impact is likely to be *significant*. This represents a reduction of three properties with a *significant* impact.

There is one non-agricultural property (2.9%) where the level of effect is considered *moderate*.

There are fourteen non-agricultural properties (41.2%) where the level of impact is *slight* and twelve properties (35.3%) on which the residual impact is likely to be *not significant*. There are no non-agricultural properties with an impact deemed to be *imperceptible*.

18. Material Assets and Land: Utilities

18.1 Introduction

This chapter of the EIAR assesses the impact of the Barnesmore Gap Greenway on built services during the construction and operation phase. This chapter describes and assesses the likely direct and indirect significant impacts of the proposed development upon gas networks, water mains, surface water sewers, foul or combined sewers, fibre telecommunications and electricity supply.

The Study Area for this purpose of this assessment is the site of the proposed Barnesmore Gap Greenway, which includes the extent of the construction compounds. The proposed development site has an area of approximately 112 hectares(ha) and extends for approximately 36km between Donegal Town and Stranorlar.

18.2 Receiving Environment

Uisce Éireann has confirmed the presence of infrastructure located throughout the site of the proposed development. Existing watermains are found throughout the proposed development but are mainly concentrated around the population centres of Donegal Town and Ballybofey/Stranorlar. An existing water main runs through the proposed trailhead in Donegal town. There is a water extraction point and water treatment works at Lough Mourne, although outside the proposed development site it is in close proximity to the greenway alignment. The existing network is entirely sub-surface, comprising pipelines of various dimensions and materials, along with manholes and valves, at various locations throughout the zone of influence.

Surface water treatment mainly consists of over the edge drainage throughout the rural local road network. Urban roads in Donegal Town and Ballybofey/Stranorlar are drained by way of kerbs and gullies which connect to a local surface water drainage network. The national road at the crossing locations at Donegal Town and Mullanalamphry features filter strip drainage, with kerbs and gullies in place at the Clar crossing. The existing network is sub-surface, comprising pipes and gullies and chambers. The greenway alignment also runs in proximity to existing foul sewers.

Electrical infrastructure is already present throughout the site, including high voltage (HV), medium voltage (MV) and low voltage (LV) overhead powerlines and underground cables. No gas networks are present within the site. Telecommunication ducts and chambers are present throughout the site.

18.3 Potential Impacts

Potential Construction Phase Impacts

There will be no diversion of high voltage overhead or underground electricity infrastructure. Local diversions and protection of medium/low electricity infrastructure, water mains and telecoms infrastructure will be required during the construction phase. In the absence of mitigation measures, construction activities near existing built services and infrastructure could lead to physical changes and/or accidental damages to material assets. This could result in service outages, safety risks and nuisances associated with repairs or remedial works.

During the construction phase, a water and electricity supply will be required for the construction compounds. The electricity supply will be provided using a temporary power supply via a low voltage rural connection or diesel generators, while the water supply will be obtained from a water main. Given the nature of the proposed works and the short-term construction phase, the demand for electricity and water during construction will be minor.

Potential Operational Phase Impacts

No significant impacts on utilities are anticipated during the operational and maintenance phase of the proposed development.

18.4 Mitigation Measures & Residual Effects

The significance of impacts upon built services in the construction phase range from *slight* to *not significant.* Impacts are reduced by design measures and following best practice during construction. The Contractor's Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will also include best practice site management measures. Disruption to services will be carefully planned to minimise their duration. In addition, the Contractor shall obtain all necessary connection/discharge licences/permissions from the relevant authority/service provider, whether these are permanent or temporary for the construction phase.

With the implementation of mitigation measures, no significant adverse residual effects on built services and infrastructure are likely to occur during the construction phase.

No significant adverse residual effects on built services and infrastructure are likely to occur during operation of the proposed development.

Full details of the mitigation measures are contained in the EIAR and NIS.

19. Major Accidents and Disasters

19.1 Introduction

This chapter assesses the potential risk of 'major accidents and disasters' arising from construction and operational phase activities for the Barnesmore Gap Greenway. The assessment is prepared in accordance with the requirements of Directive 2014/52/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 amending Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment ("the EIA Directive"). Close co-ordination and discussion between the EIA team has informed the preparation of this chapter to ensure that the major accidents and disasters identified are adequately identified and assessed.

19.2 Methodology

In accordance with the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) guidelines (IEMA, 2020), this assessment follows a three-stage methodology as follows:

- Stage 1 Screening.
- Stage 2 Scoping.
- Stage 3 Assessment.

Information was obtained from the desktop studies and surveys completed for the environmental factors contained within the other chapters of this EIAR (e.g. Hydrology, Air Quality, etc.), and they have informed this assessment as appropriate. Consultation, and the consideration of feedback from the public and statutory consultees is a key part of the EIA process and integral to informing the design development and this environmental assessment.

19.3 Potential Impacts

From examining all potential risk events associated with the proposed development, scenarios that were considered to be of the highest risk in terms of project vulnerability and its potential to cause such an event include the following:

During construction:

- Extreme weather events (Flooding)
- Spillage or long-term seepage of pollutants into a watercourse

During operation:

- Mass wasting

The assessment considered mitigation by design (where appropriate) and it was determined whether these are sufficient to mitigate the associated risk level(s) to be As Low As Reasonably Practicable (ALARP). Secondary mitigation measures have been specified for the above listed risk events, which will be implemented to mitigate the associated risk level(s) to be ALARP.

Full details of the mitigation measures are contained in the EIAR and NIS.

19.4 Residual Effects

Significant residual effects are not likely to occur during construction or operational phases of the proposed development as following mitigation, there are no identified risk events that

would present a sufficient in-combination likelihood of risk and consequence that would lead to a major accident or a disaster.

20. Interactions and Cumulative Effects

20.1 Interactions

In addition to the assessment of impacts on individual environmental topics, the potential interactions between these factors have also been considered. 1 shows the principal interactions / interrelationships identified for the proposed development. The nature and magnitude of all identified interactions / interrelationships was assessed, and it was concluded that, provided the proposed mitigation measures are fully implemented, no significant adverse effects will arise as a result of interactions / interrelationships between the various environmental topics considered, either during construction or operation.

Table 20-1 - Interactions between the environmental factors

Activity \ Receptor	Traffic and Transportation	Population and Human Health	Biodiversity	Land and Soils	Hydrology	Hydrogeology	Air Quality	Climate	Noise and Vibration	Landscape and Visual Amenity	Cultural Heritage	Material Assets and Land	Material Assets and Land (Non-Agri)	Material Assets (Utilities)
Traffic and Transportation		✓			✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	
Population and Human Health	✓		✓											
Biodiversity				✓	✓	✓			✓	✓				
Land and Soils			✓		✓	✓				✓	✓	✓		
Hydrology		✓	✓	✓		✓				✓				
Hydrogeology												✓	✓	
Air Quality	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓		✓	✓	
Climate					✓	✓				✓				
Noise and Vibration		✓	✓									✓	✓	
Landscape and Visual Amenity		✓									✓	✓		
Cultural Heritage										✓				
Material Assets and Land (Agri)														
Material Assets and Land (Non-Agri)														
Material Assets (Utilities)					✓							✓	✓	

20.2 Cumulative Effects

Cumulative effects result from the addition of many minor or significant effects, including effects of other projects, to create larger, more significant effects (EPA, 2022). Cumulative effects can be caused due to incremental changes by other past, present or reasonably foreseeable projects together with the proposed development.

The main aspect of the cumulative effects assessment (CEA) relates to the assessment of existing and / or approved plans and projects with the proposed development. However, with respect to the proposed development there is potential for cumulative effects associated with other aspects. These have been split into three tiers or types of potential cumulative effects:

Tier 1 Cumulative Assessment

The methodology for the 'Tier 1' development(s) relates to a development that is functionally or legally interdependent on further development(s), not included in the application for consent approval. The proposed Barnesmore Gap Greenway is not functionally or legally interdependent on an additional development.

Tier 2 Cumulative Assessment

The Tier 2 includes the assessment of existing and/ or approved plans or projects.

A list of relevant national, regional and local plans and programmes identified as having the potential to have a cumulative effect with the proposed development was collated. The assessment of plans is detailed in Chapter 20 'Interactions and Cumulative Effects' in Volume 2 of this EIAR.

To identify and assess the likely significant cumulative effects with existing and /or approved projects, a staged approach is adopted for projects and is informed by *Advice Note seventeen: Cumulative effects Assessment* relevant to nationally significant infrastructure projects, published in 2019 by the Planning Inspectorate, an executive agency of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government of the United Kingdom (MHCLG, 2019) referred hereafter as 'Advice Note 17'.

Tier 3 Cumulative Assessment

Tier 3 'Other' projects are those that are in the public domain/at preliminary design i.e. not yet submitted for planning but have the potential for cumulative effects with the proposed development. There is no legal requirement to assess these projects.

21. Summary of Mitigation and Monitoring Measures

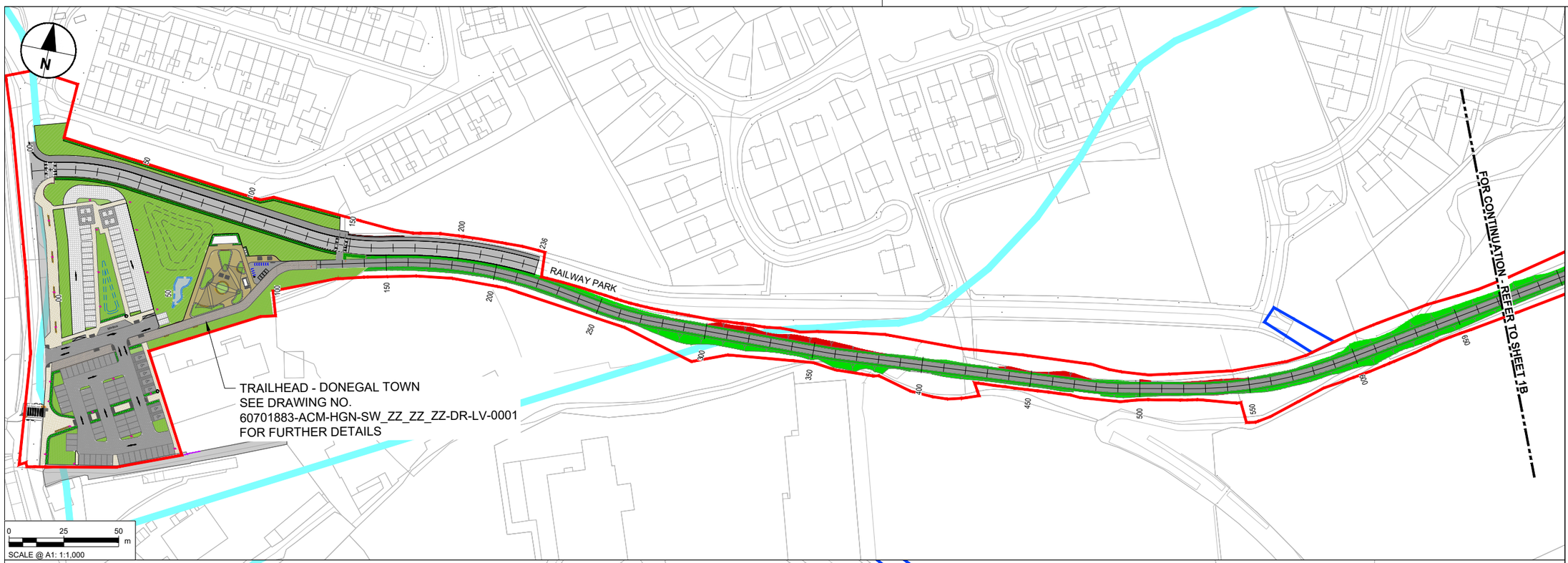
Chapter 21 of the EIAR Volume 2 presents a summary of the mitigation and monitoring measures identified as a result of undertaking the environmental impact assessments carried out in the preceding chapters of this EIAR.

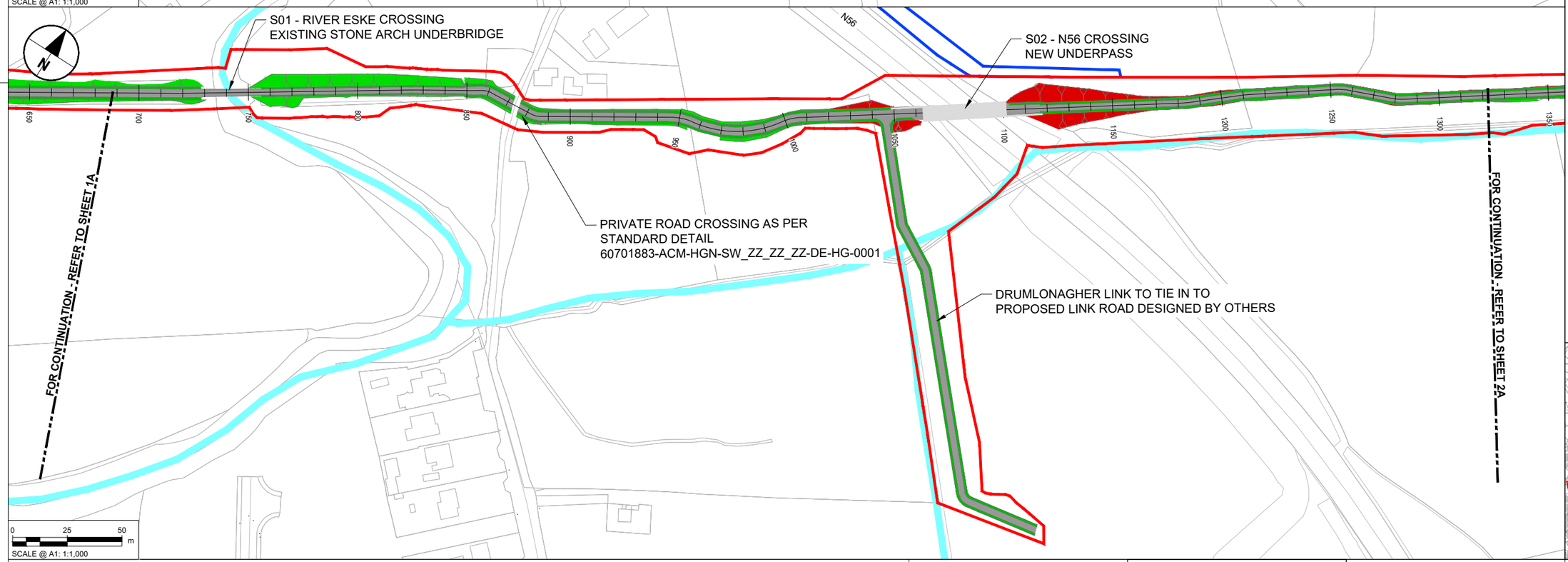
From the inception of the design and environmental assessment process of the proposed Barnesmore Gap Greenway (referred to hereafter as the 'proposed development') the project team has striven to avoid, prevent and reduce adverse effects, through design details which are incorporated into the design drawings and specifications of the proposed development that have been assessed as part of this EIAR.

Avoidance of impacts during the design and environmental assessments process has been applied by the design team and EIA team. Mitigation measures, standard construction methodologies and project specific measures have been applied to remedy or reduce and offset adverse effects.

All of the mitigation and monitoring commitments in Chapter 21 in Volume 2 of this EIAR are incorporated into the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) submitted as part of this planning application.

APPENDIX A
GENERAL ARRANGEMENT DRAWINGS





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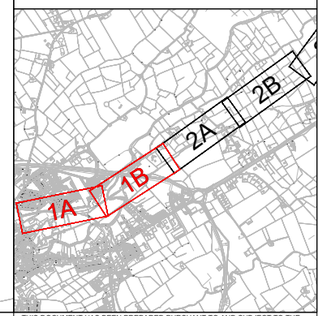
KEY

- PERMANENT LAND TAKE BOUNDARY
- TEMPORARY LAND TAKE BOUNDARY
- PROPOSED GREENWAY PAVEMENT
- PROPOSED GRASS VERGE
- PROPOSED EARTHWORKS - FILL
- PROPOSED EARTHWORKS - CUT
- WATERCOURSE

TRAILHEAD KEY

- GRASSCRETE
- ASHPHALT
- RESIN BOUND GRAVEL
- VERGE PLANTING
- HEDGE



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Project Title: Barnesmore Gap Greenway

Drawing Title: SERIES 0100 GENERAL ARRANGEMENT SHEET 1 OF 31

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Internal Project No.: 60701883
Suitability: S2
Scale @ A1: 1:1000
Volume: General

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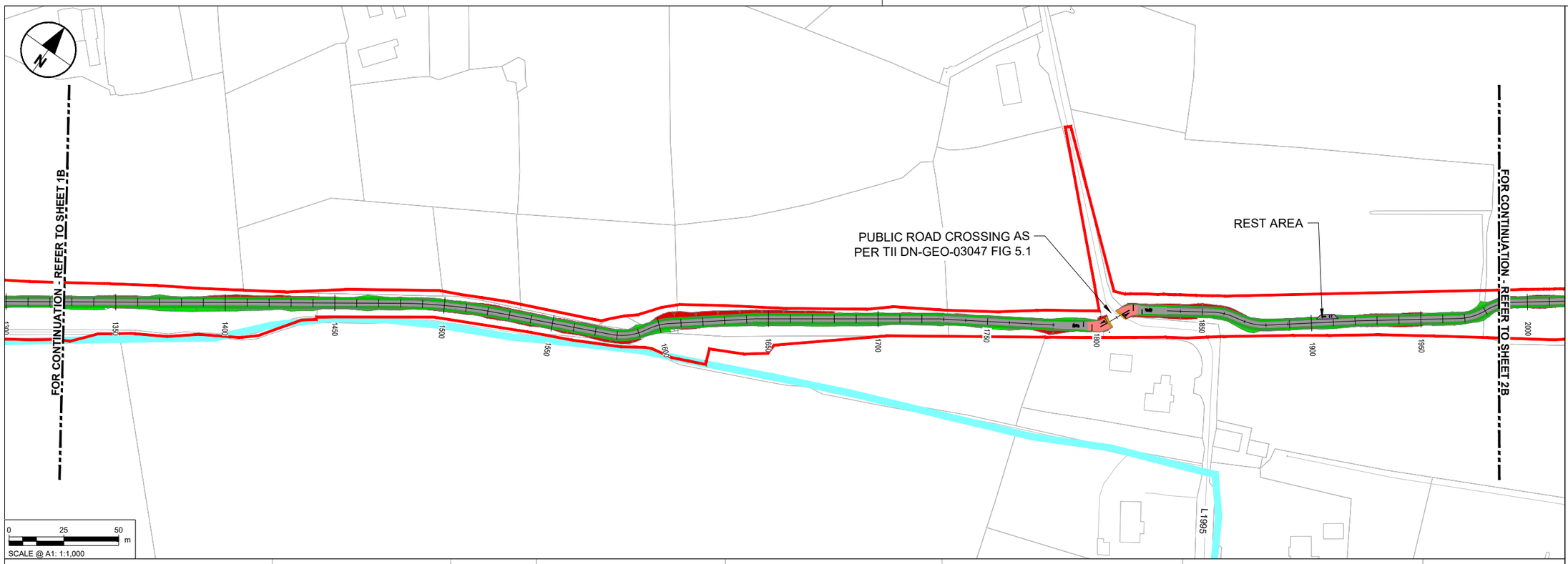
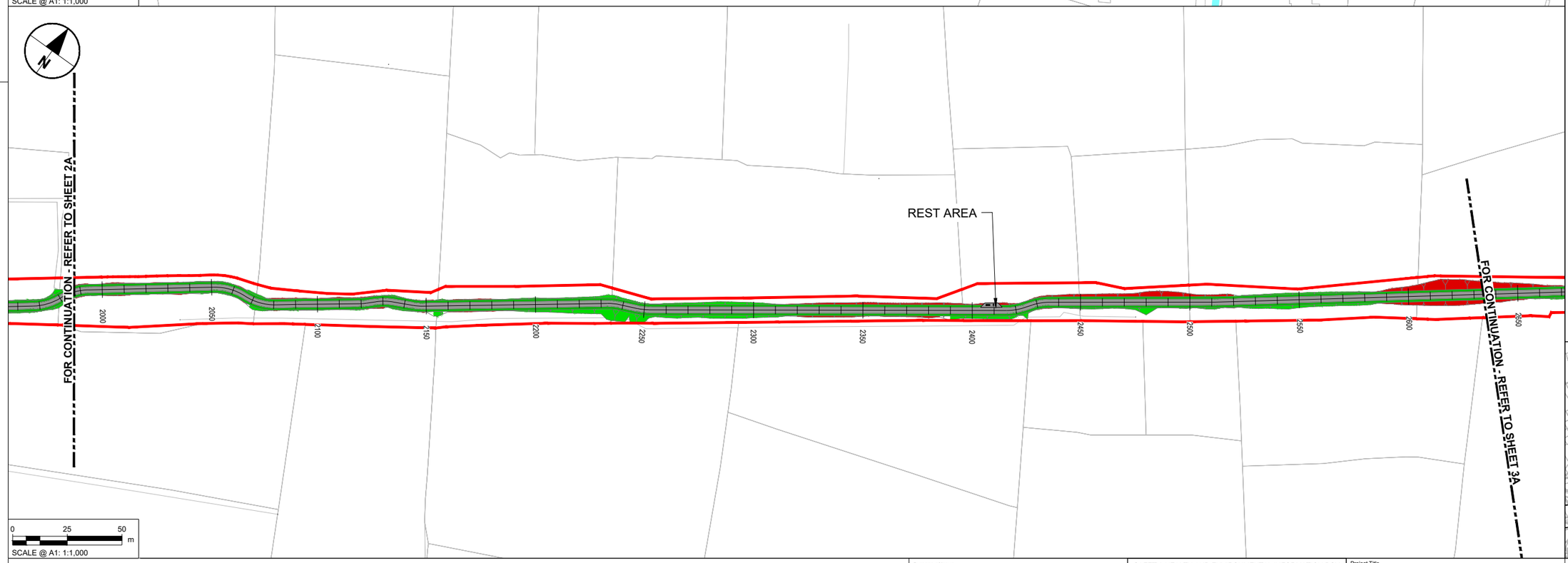
Rev: P05





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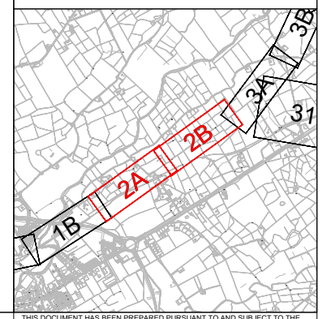
- WATERCOURSE



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Project Title

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Drawing Title

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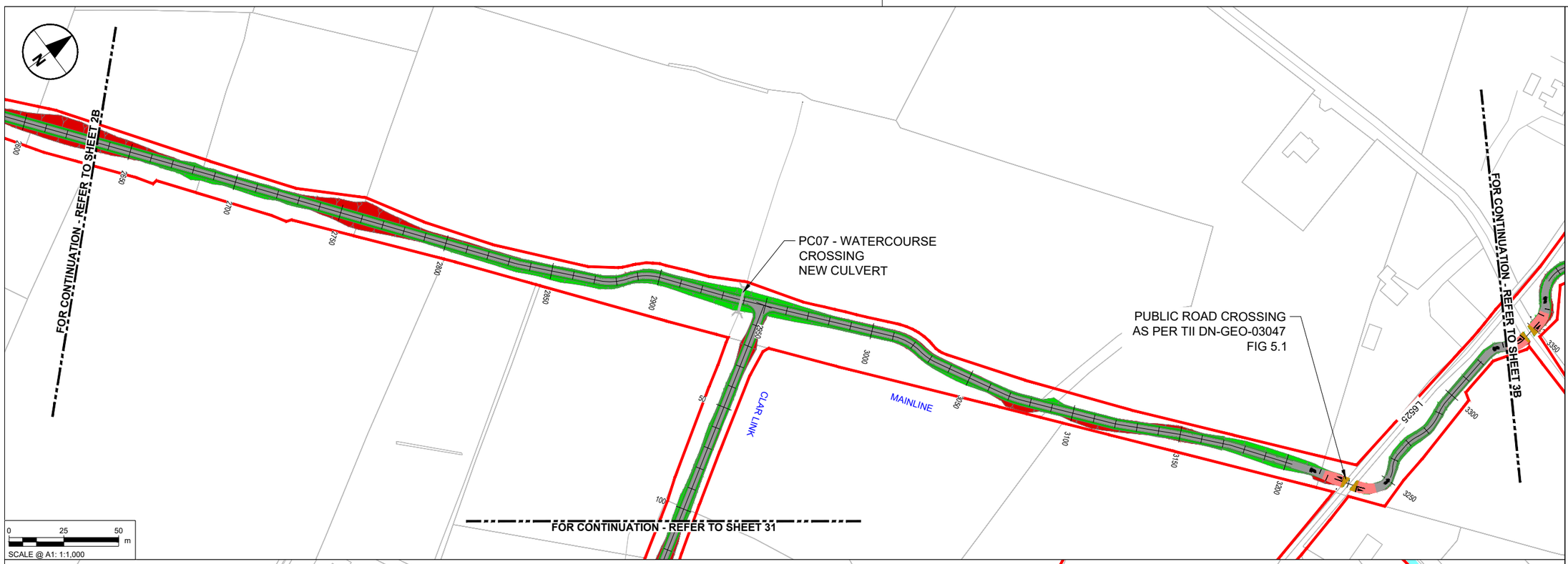
Internal Project No.	Suitability
60701883	S2

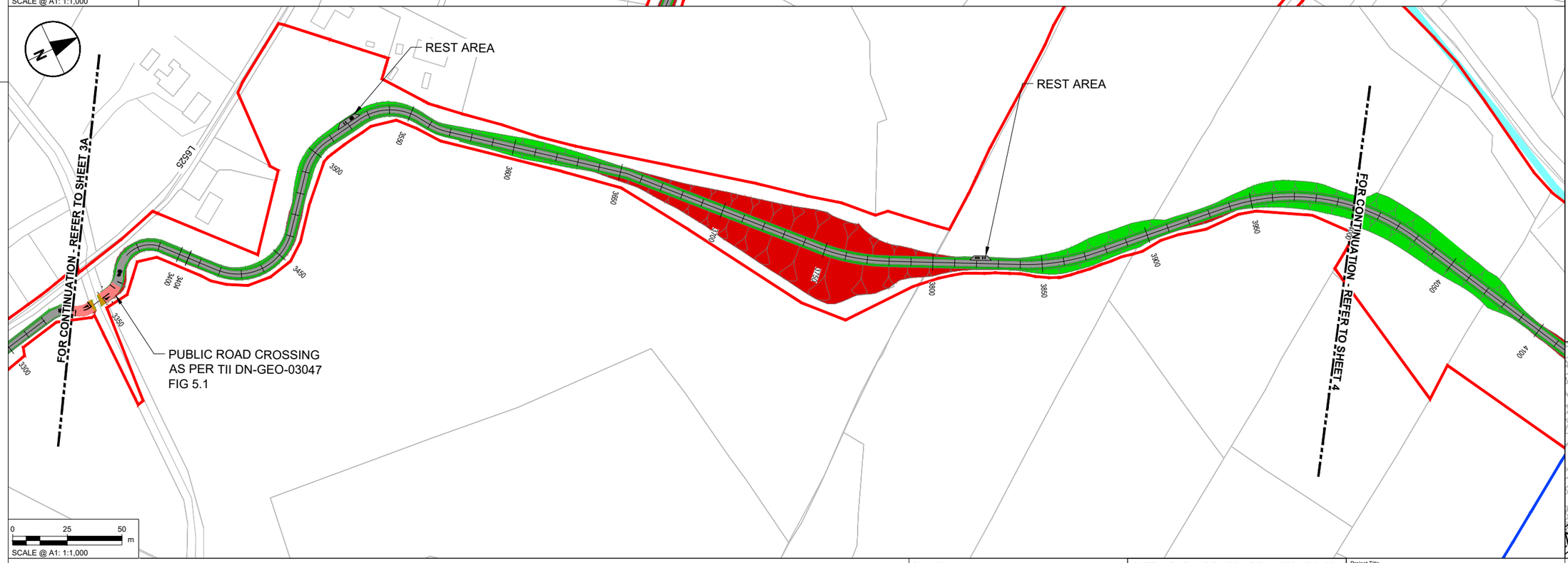
Scale @ A1	Volume
1:1000	General

Drawing Number: 60701883 -ACM -HGN- SW_ZZ_ZZ_ZZ -DR -HG-0097

Location | Type | Role | Number

Rev: P05





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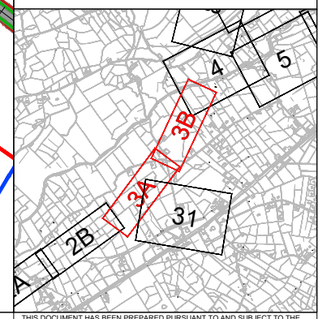

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Internal Project No.	Suitability
60701883	S2

Scale @ A1	Volume
1:1000	General

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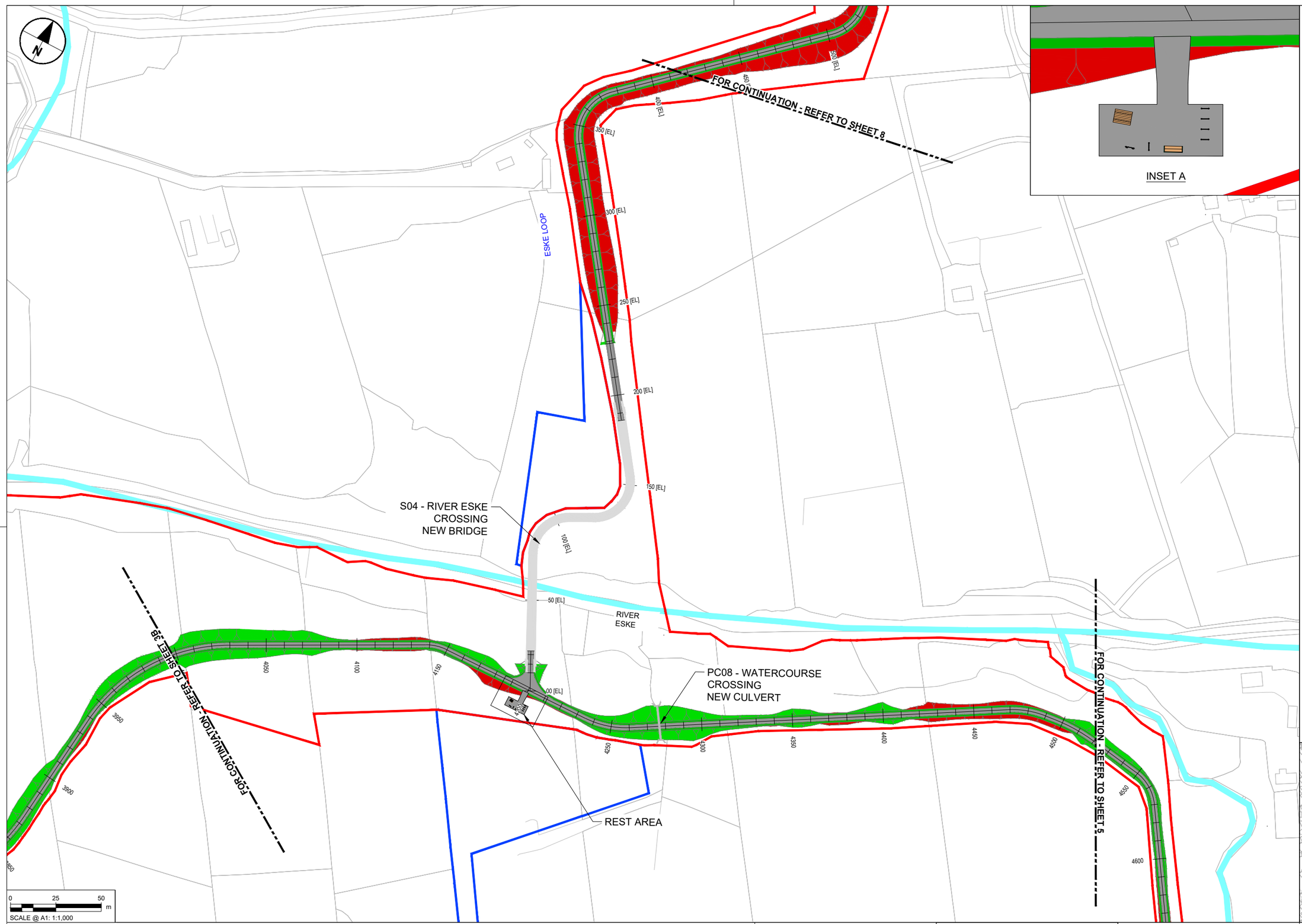
Rev: P05



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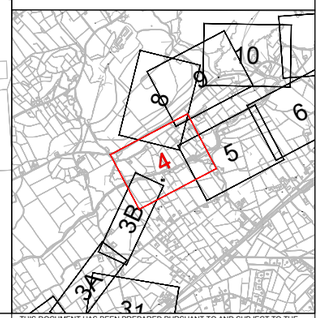

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Project Title

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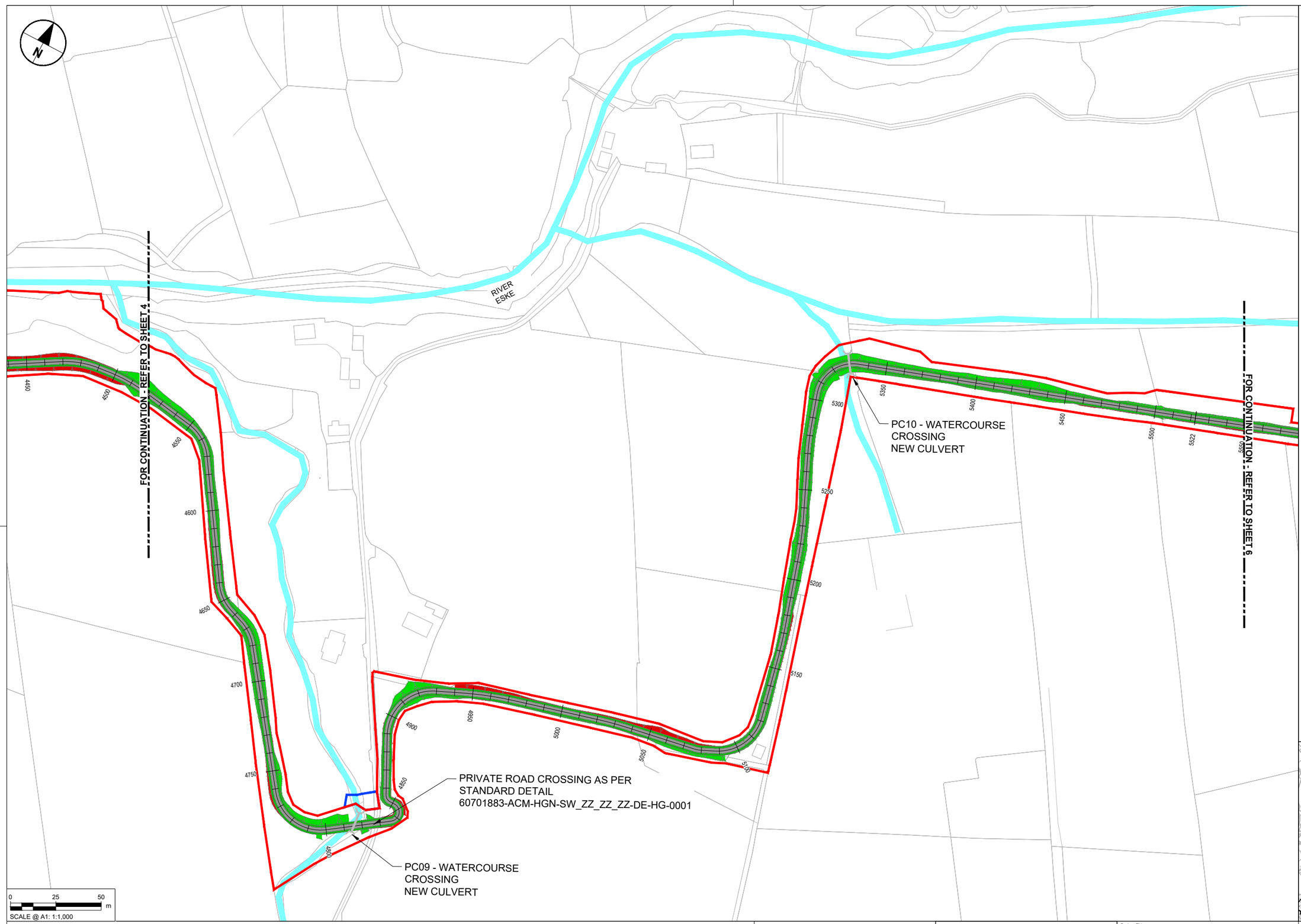
Internal Project No. 60701883 | Suitability S2

Scale @ A1 1:1000 | Volume General

Drawing Number: Aecom Project ID 60701883 - Originator ACM - Volume HGN - Location SW_ZZ_ZZ_ZZ - Type DR - Role HG - Number 0099

Rev P05



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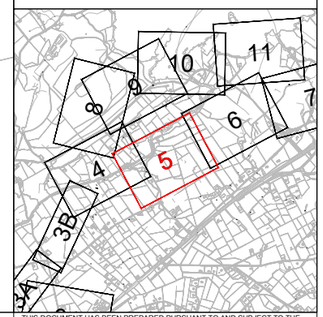

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Project Title

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Drawing Title

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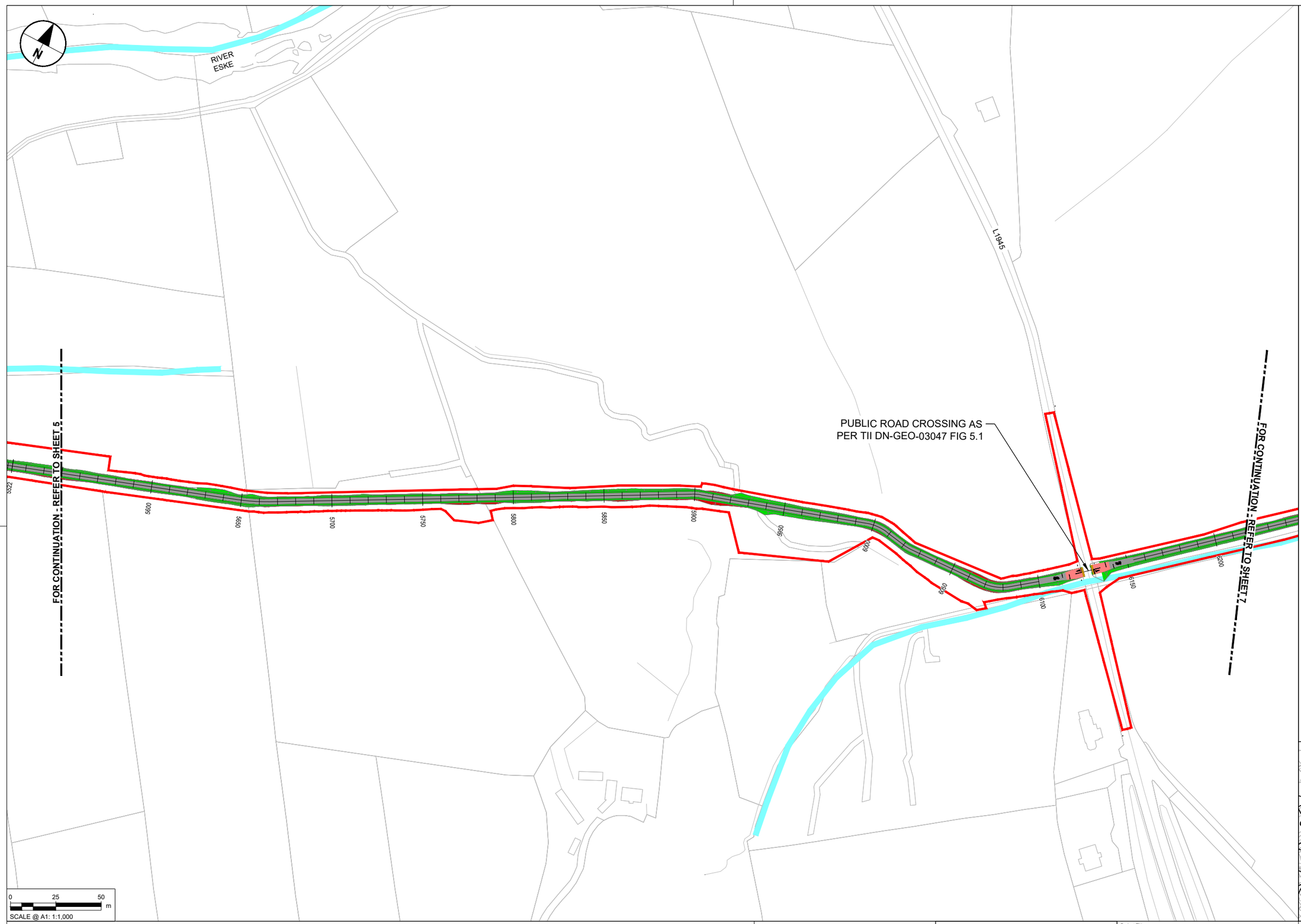
Internal Project No. 60701883 | Suitability S2

Scale @ A1 1:1000 | Volume General

Drawing Number: Aecom Project ID 60701883 - Originator ACM - Volume HGN - Location SW_ZZ_ZZ_ZZ - Type DR - Role HG - Number 0100

Rev P05



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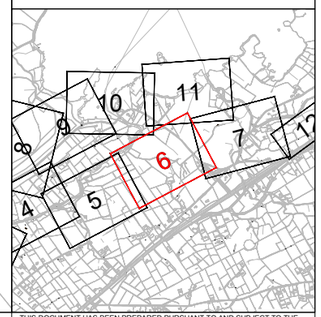

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www.rod.ie

Project Title

Barnesmore Gap Greenway

Drawing Title

SERIES 0100 GENERAL ARRANGEMENT SHEET 6 OF 31

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Designed	Drawn	Checked	Approved	Date
---	IL	AM	DK	15/06/26

Internal Project No.	Suitability
60701883	S2

Scale @ A1	Volume
1:1000	General

Drawing Number

Aecom Project ID	Originator	Volume	Location	Type	Role	Number	Rev
60701883	-ACM	-HGN-	SW_ZZ_ZZ_ZZ	-DR	-HG	-0101	P05

FOR CONTINUATION - REFER TO SHEET 11

FOR CONTINUATION - REFER TO SHEET 6

FOR CONTINUATION - REFER TO SHEET 12A

PC11 - WATERCOURSE CROSSING NEW CULVERT

ESKE LOOP

REST AREA

PUBLIC ROAD CROSSING AS PER TII DN-GEO-03047 FIG 5.1

S06 - RIVER DERG CROSSING NEW BRIDGE

PC13 - WATERCOURSE CROSSING NEW CULVERT

PC14 - WATERCOURSE CROSSING NEW CULVERT

L1945

L1975

2950 [EL]

2900 [EL]

3050 [EL]

3056 [EL]

6200 6250 6300 6350 6400 6450 6500 6550 6600 6650 6700 6750 6800 6850 6900 6950 7000 7050 7100 7150

0 25 50 m

SCALE @ A1: 1:1,000

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- PROPOSED GRASS VERGE
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- PROPOSED EARTHWORKS - CUT
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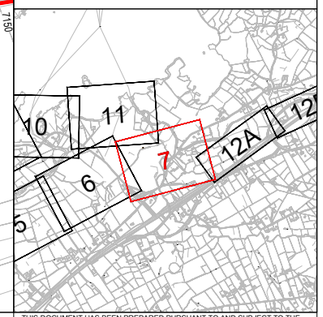

Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

Bonneagar Iompair Éireann Transport Infrastructure Ireland

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FOR INFORMATION

	By	Check	Date	Suffix
	IL	DK	22/09/25	P02
	IL	DK	14/11/25	P03
	IL	EP	20/03/26	P04
FOR ISSUE	IL	DK	15/06/26	P05
REVISION DETAILS				

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Project Title

Barnesmore Gap Greenway

Drawing Title

SERIES 0100
GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
SHEET 7 OF 31

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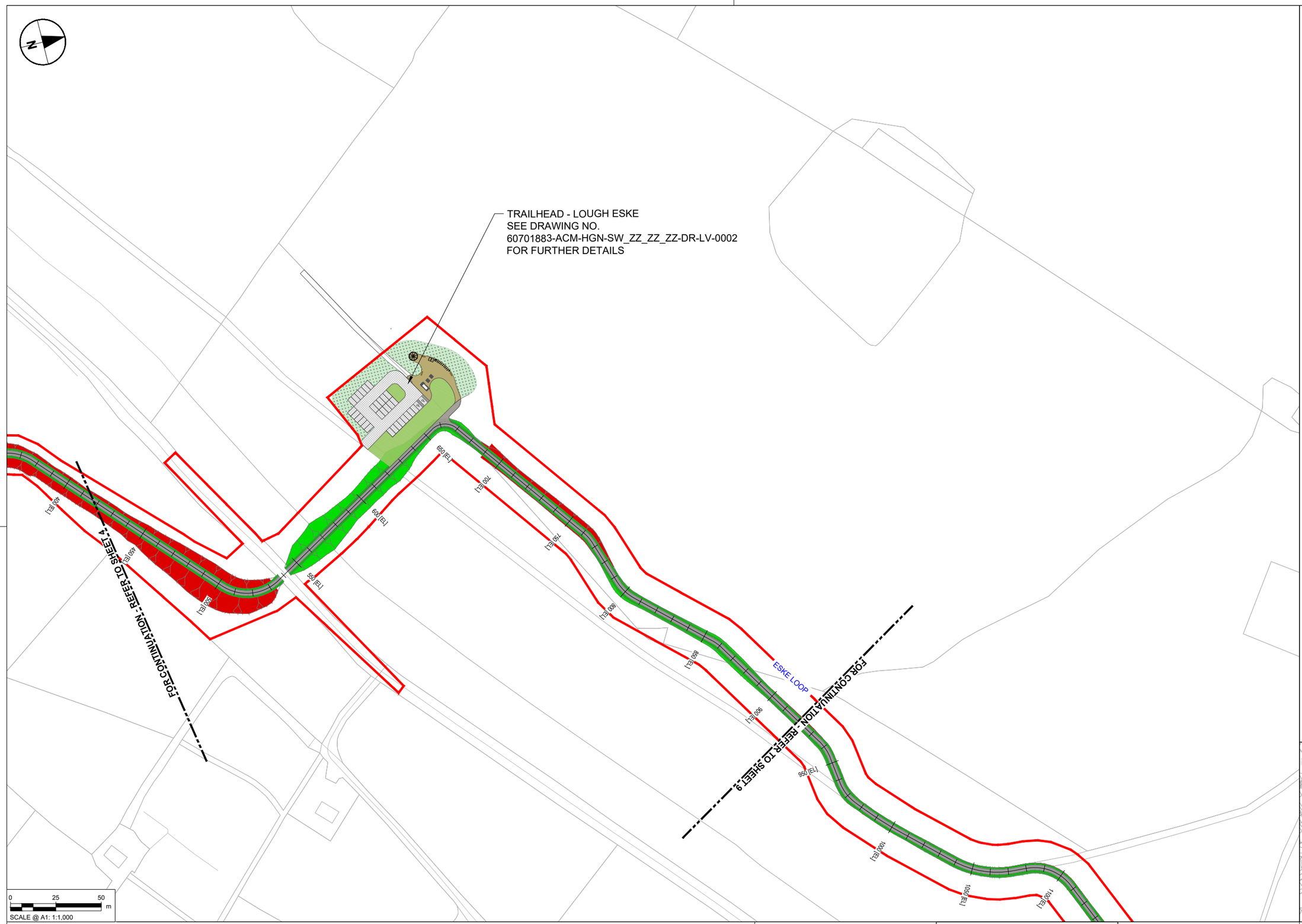
---	IL	AM	DK	15/06/26

Internal Project No.	Suitability
60701883	S2

Scale @ A1	Volume
1:1000	General

Drawing Number (Aecom Project ID – Location)	Originator	Volume	Role	Type	Number	Rev
60701883 SW_ZZ_ZZ_ZZ	-ACM	-HGN-	-DR	-HG	-0102	P05



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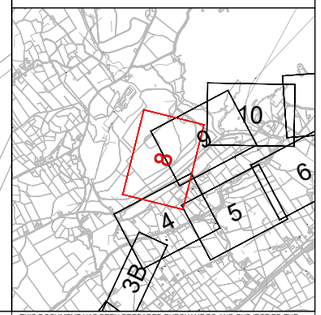
- PROPOSED EARTHWORKS - CUT
- WATERCOURSE

TRAILHEAD KEY

- GRASSCRETE
- ASHPHALT
- RESIN BOUND GRAVEL
- VERGE PLANTING
- HEDGE



Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

Bonneagar Iompair Éireann Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall Donegal County Council

Donegal NRO Oifig Boichne Náisiúnta Dhún na nGall

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	IL / EP	20/03/26	P04
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Project Title

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Drawing Title

SERIES 0100
GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
SHEET 8 OF 31

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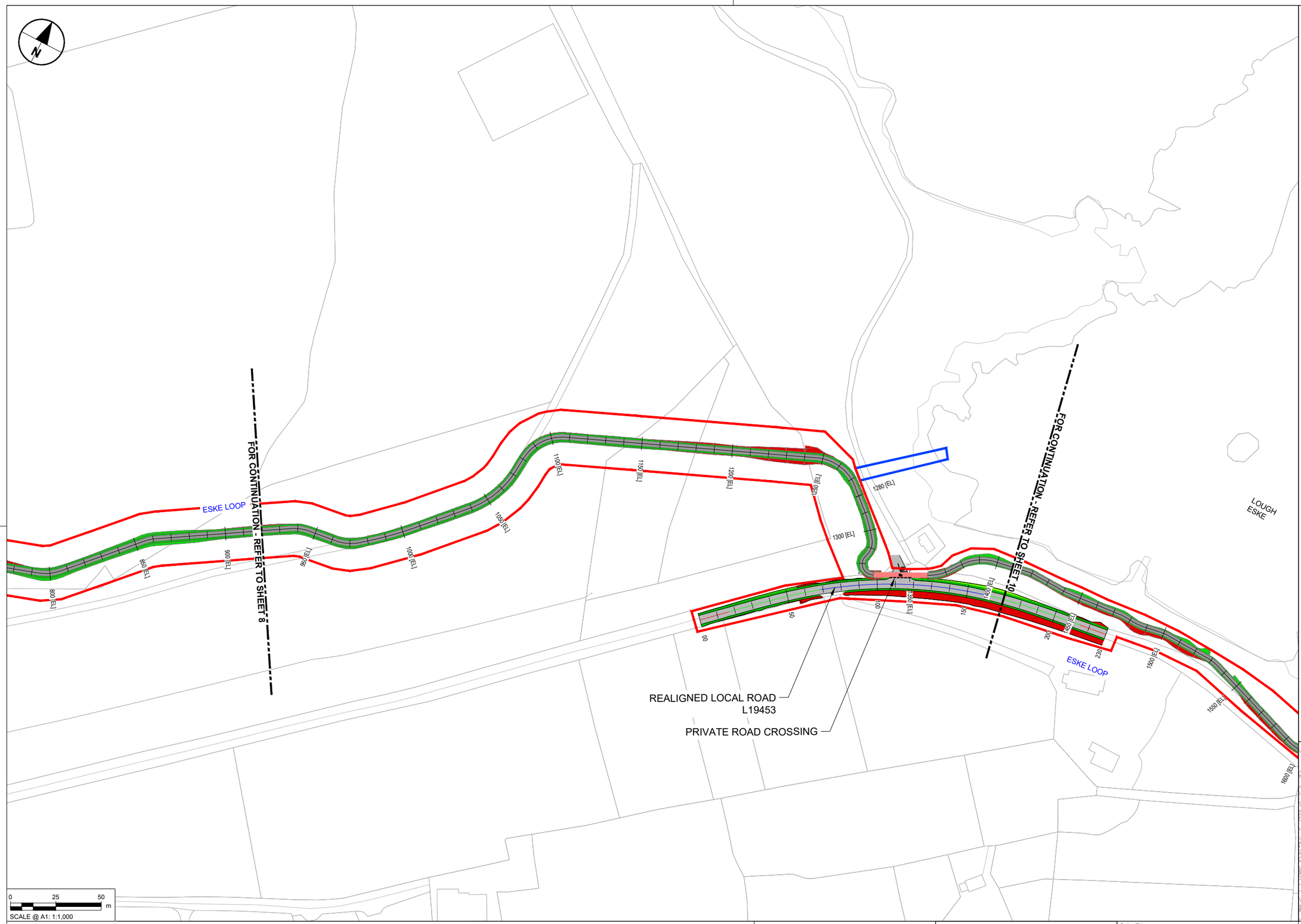
Internal Project No.	Suitability
60701883	S2

Scale @ A1	Volume
1:1000	General

Drawing Number				Rev
Aecom Project ID	Originator	Volume		
60701883	-ACM	-HGN	-	P05
SW_ZZ_ZZ_ZZ	-DR	-HG	-0103	
Location	Type	Role	Number	



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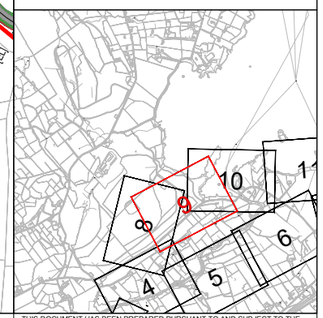

Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

Bonneagar Iompair Éireann Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall Donegal County Council

Údarás Boithrín Náisiúnta Dhún na nGall Donegal NRB

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Project Title

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Drawing Title

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60701883	S2

Scale @ A1	Volume
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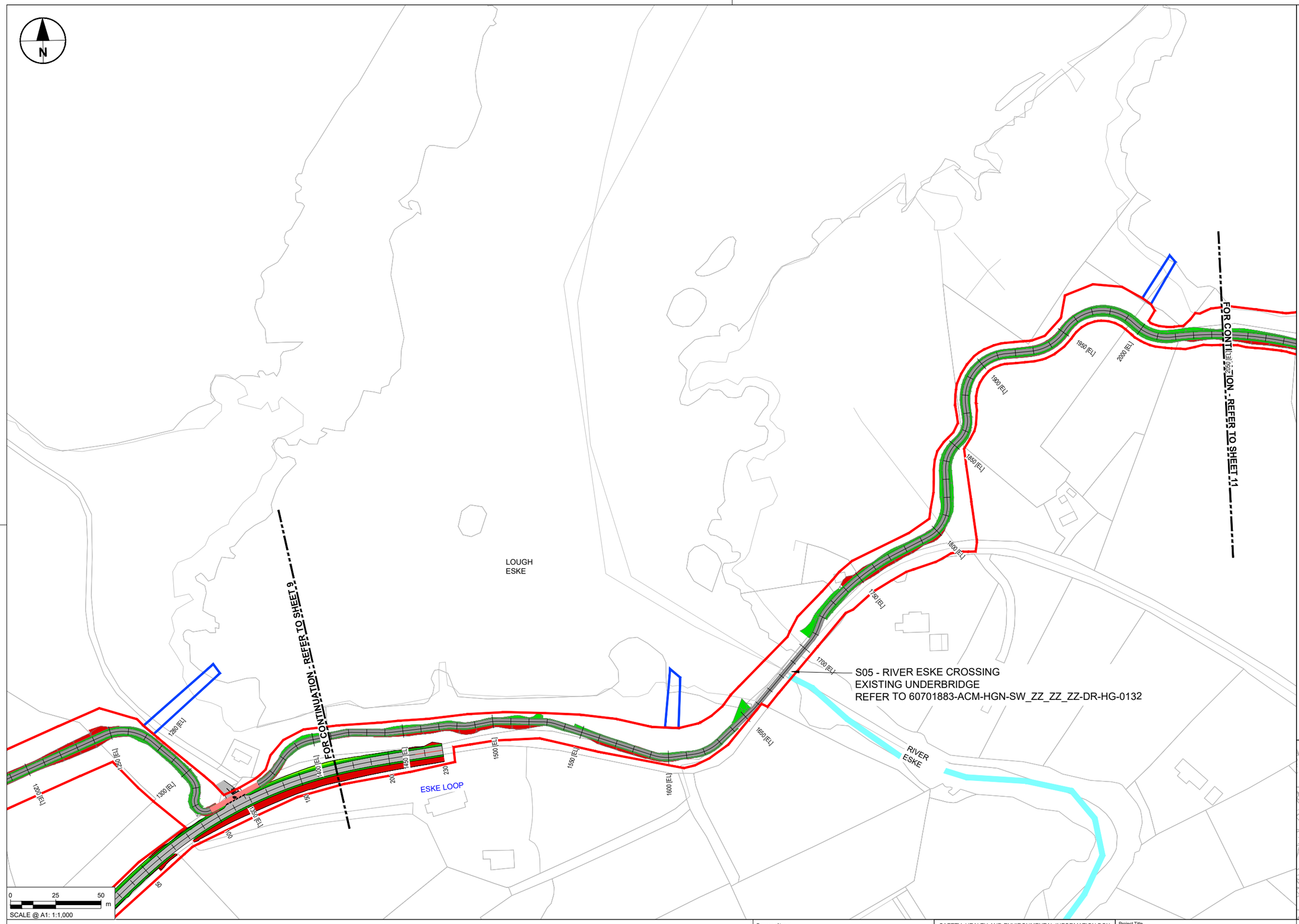
Drawing Number

Aecom Project ID	Originator	Volume	Rev
60701883	-ACM	-HGN-	P05

Location	Type	Role	Number
SW_ZZ_ZZ_ZZ	-DR	-HG	-0104



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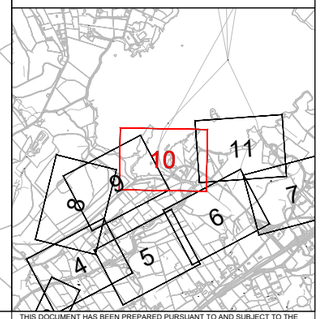

Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

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Project Title

Barnesmore Gap Greenway

Drawing Title

SERIES 0100
GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
SHEET 10 OF 31

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Internal Project No.	Suitability
60701883	S2

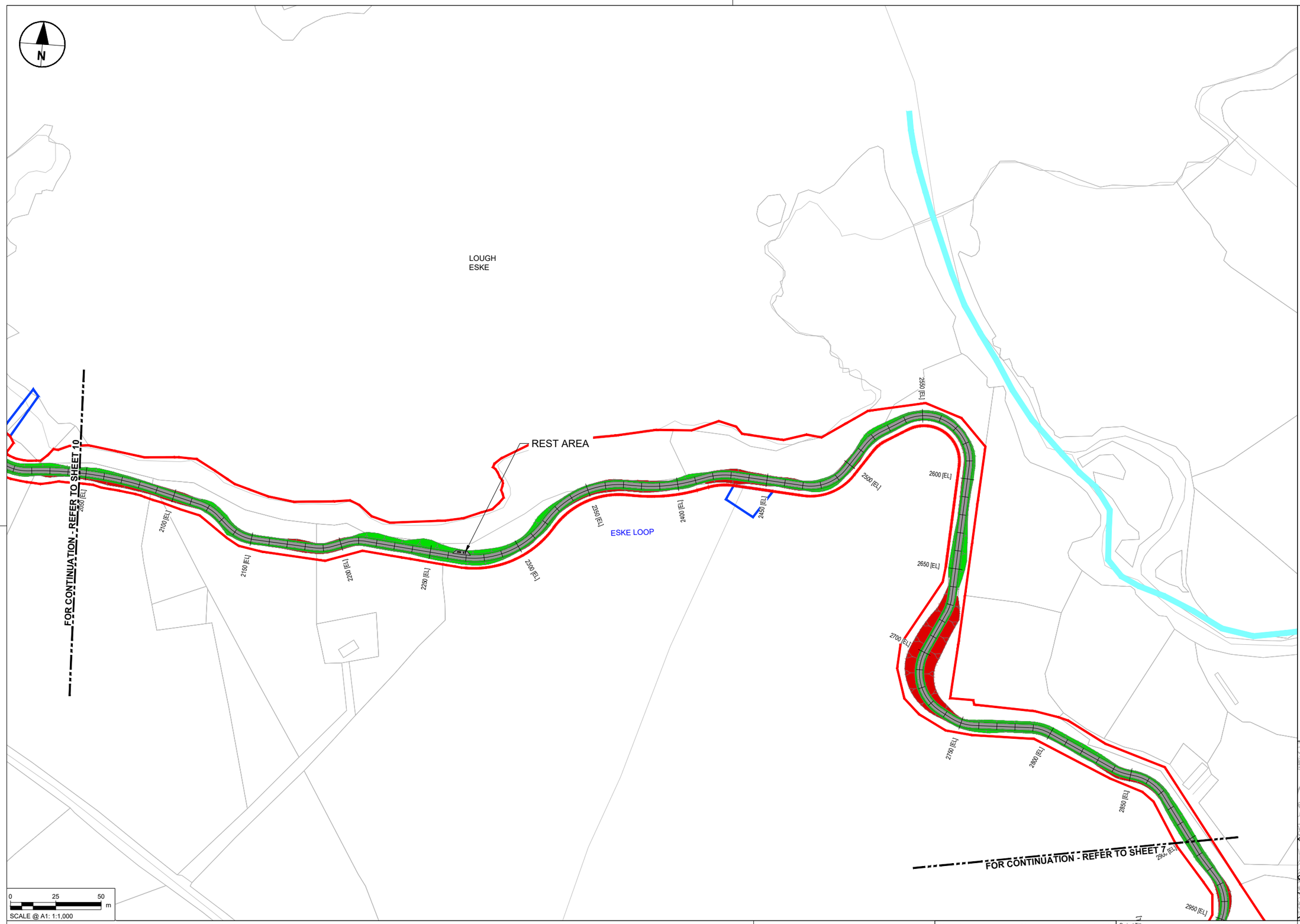
Scale @ A1	Volume
1:1000	General

Drawing Number

Aecom Project ID: 60701883 | Originator: -ACM | Volume: -HGN- | Role: SW_ZZ_ZZ_ZZ | Type: -DR | Number: -HG-0105

Location

Rev: P05



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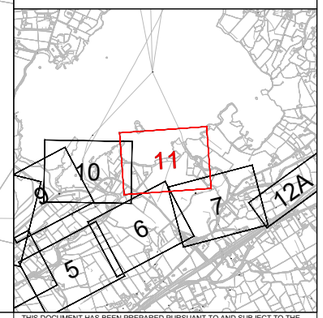

Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

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Project Title: Barnesmore Gap Greenway

Drawing Title: SERIES 0100 GENERAL ARRANGEMENT SHEET 11 OF 31

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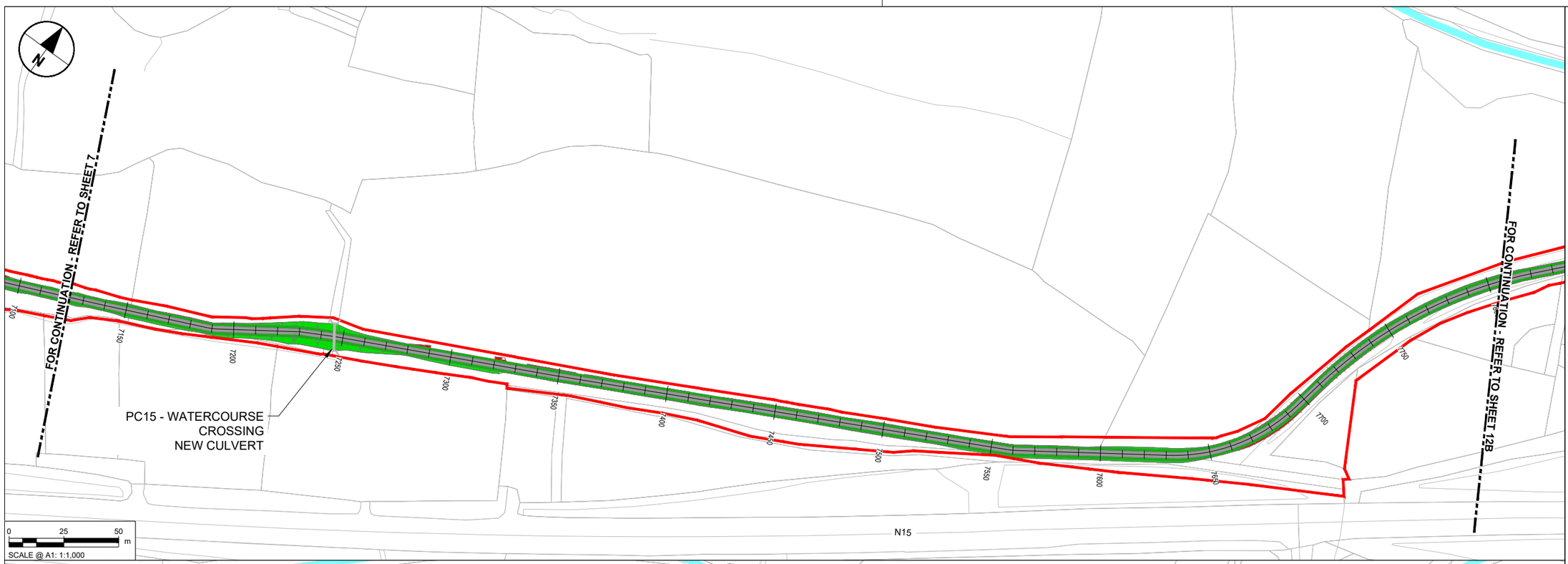
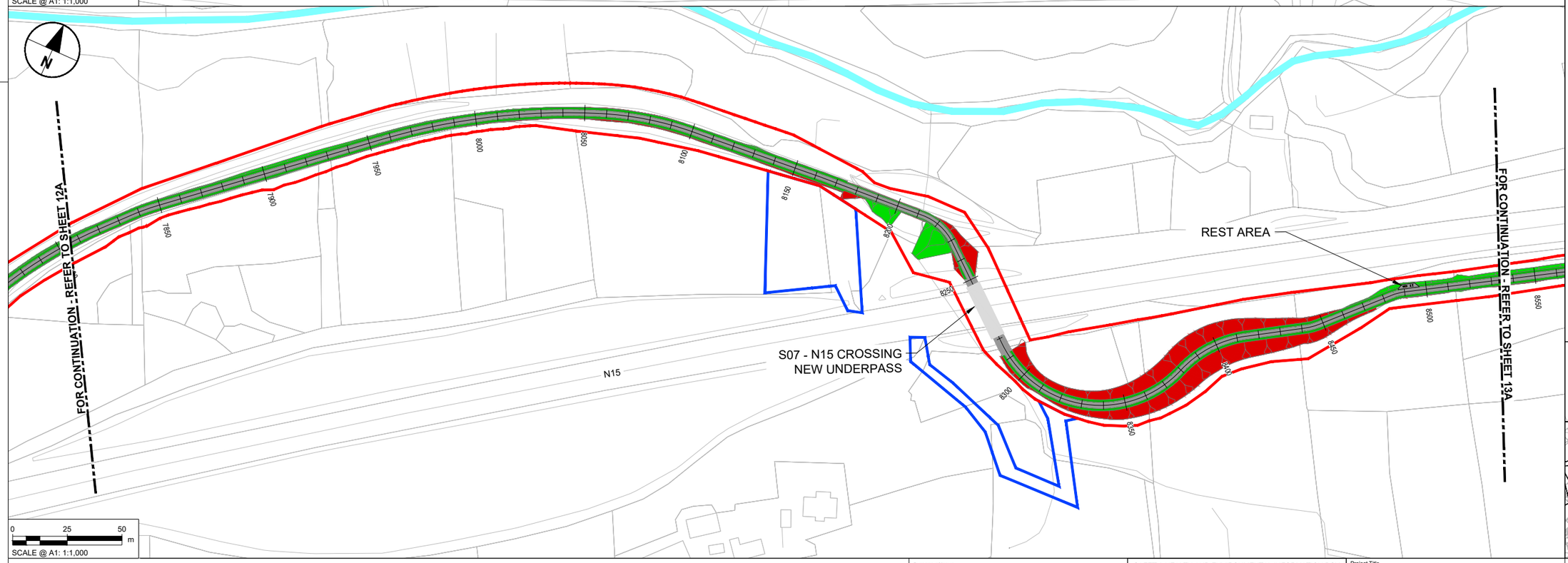
Internal Project No.	Suitability
60701883	S2

Scale @ A1	Volume
1:1000	General

Drawing Number: Aecom Project ID 60701883 - Originator ACM - Volume HGN - Type SW - Role ZZ - Number ZZ - DR - HG - 0106 (Location)

Rev: P05





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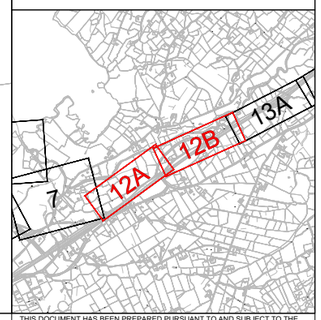

Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

Bonneagar Iompair Éireann Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall Donegal County Council

Donegal NRO Oifig Boithre Náisiúnta Dhún na nGall

Greenway

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Purpose of issue

FOR INFORMATION

	By	Check	Date	Suffix
	IL	DK	22/09/25	P02
	IL	DK	14/11/25	P03
	IL	EP	20/03/26	P04
FOR ISSUE	IL	DK	15/06/26	P05
REVISION DETAILS				

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Project Title

Barnesmore Gap Greenway

Drawing Title

SERIES 0100
GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
SHEET 12 OF 31

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Designed	Drawn	Checked	Approved	Date
---	IL	AM	DK	15/06/26

Internal Project No. 60701883

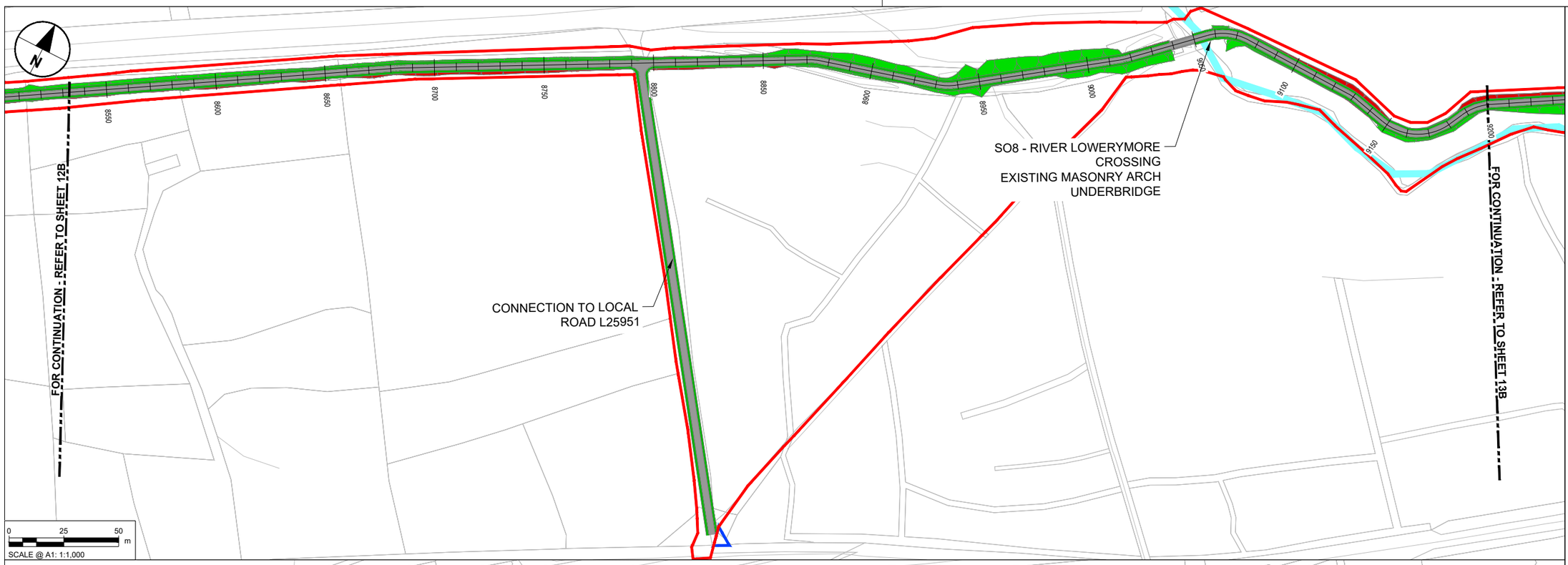
Suitability S2

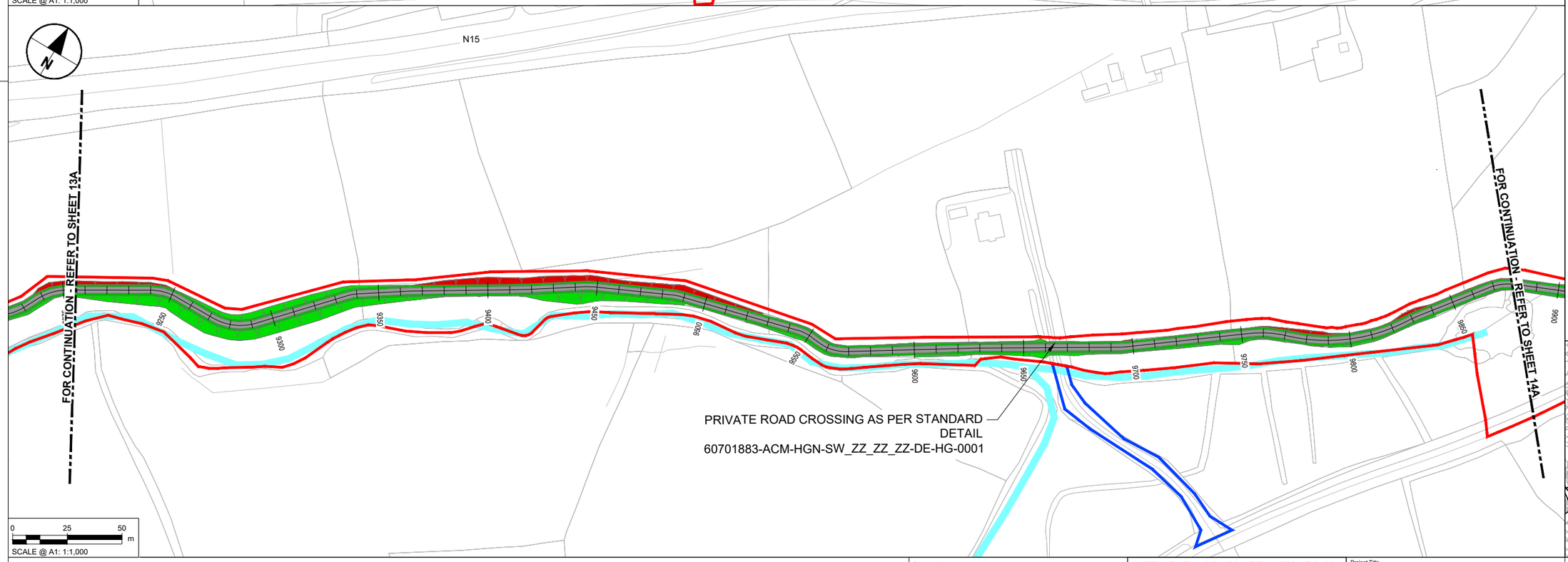
Scale @ A1 1:1000

Volume General

Drawing Number
Aecom Project ID 60701883 | Originator -ACM | Volume -HGN-
SW_ZZ_ZZ_ZZ -DR-HG-0107
Location | Type | Role | Number

Rev P05





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- PROPOSED GRASS VERGE
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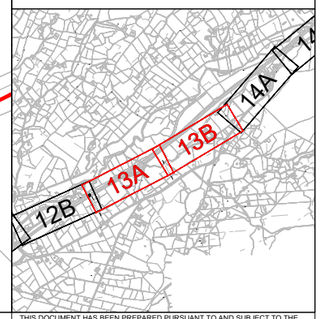
- PROPOSED EARTHWORKS - CUT
- WATERCOURSE



Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

Bonneagar Iompair Éireann Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall Donegal County Council

Donegal NRO Oifig Boithre Náisiúnta Dhún na nGall

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FOR INFORMATION

FOR ISSUE	By / Check	Date	Suffix
	IL / DK	22/09/25	P02
	IL / DK	14/11/25	P03
	IL / EP	20/03/26	P04
	IL / DK	15/06/26	P05

REVISION DETAILS

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Project Title

Barnesmore Gap Greenway

Drawing Title

SERIES 0100
GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
SHEET 13 OF 31

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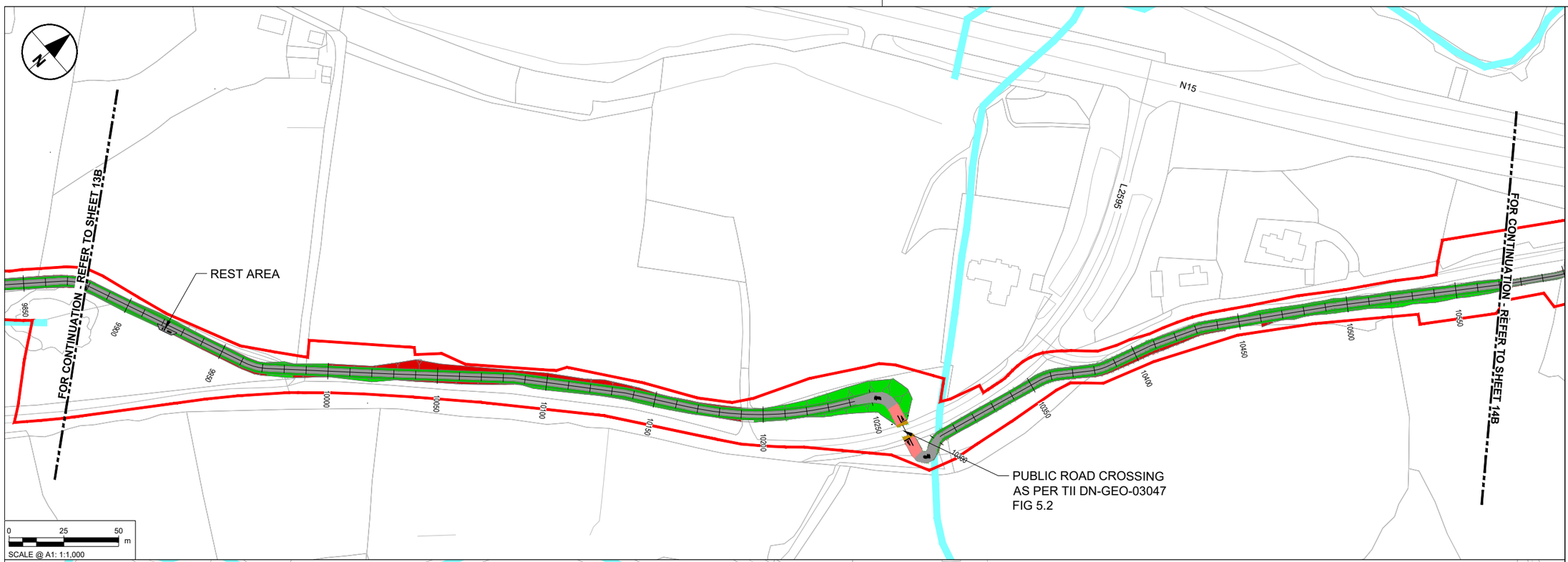
Designed	Drawn	Checked	Approved	Date
---	IL	AM	DK	15/06/26

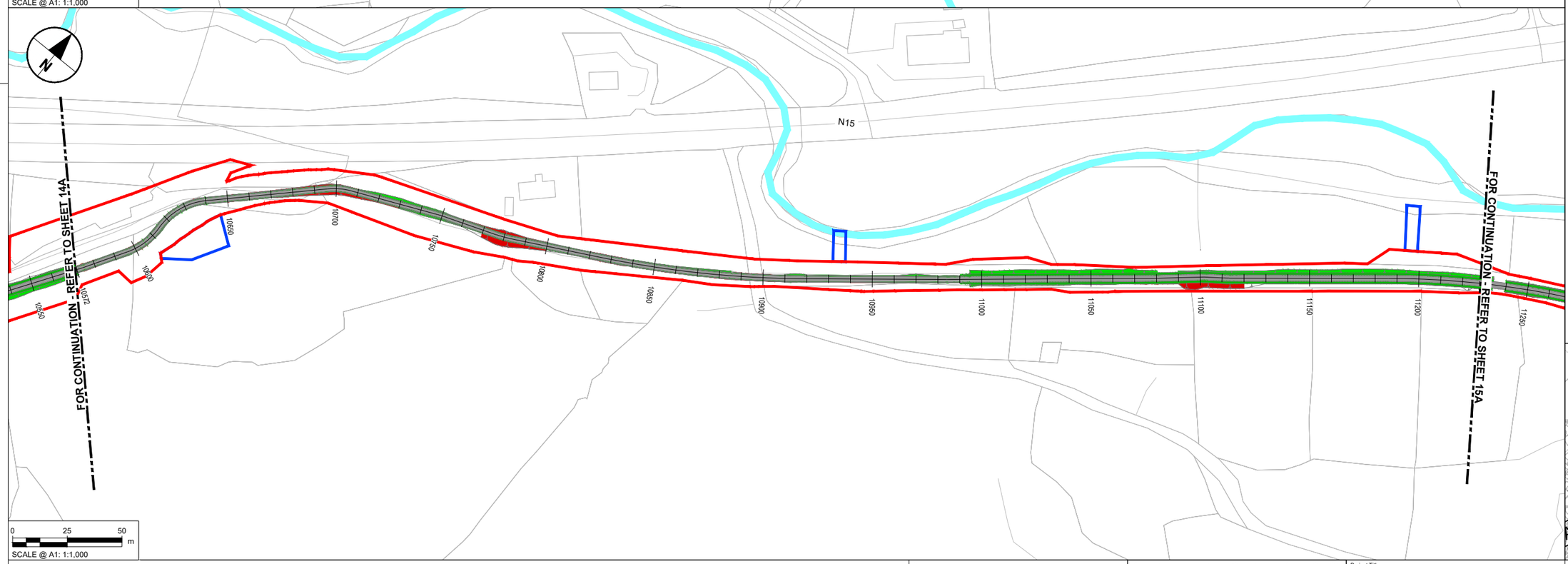
Internal Project No. 60701883 | Suitability S2

Scale @ A1 1:1000 | Volume General

Drawing Number: Aecom Project ID 60701883 (Location) | Originator -ACM | Volume -HGN- (Type, Role) | SW_ZZ_ZZ_ZZ -DR-HG-0108 (Number)

Rev P05





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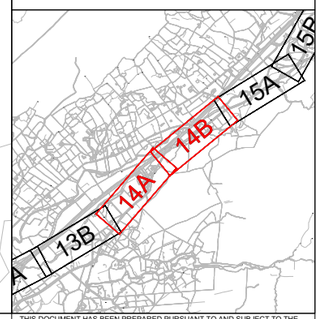

Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

Bonneagar Iompair Éireann Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall Donegal County Council

Donegal NRDO Oifig Boirche Náisiúnta Dhún na nGall

Greenway

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FOR INFORMATION

	By / Check	Date	Suffix
	IL / DK	22/09/25	P02
	IL / DK	14/11/25	P03
	IL / EP	20/03/26	P04
FOR ISSUE	IL / DK	15/06/26	P05
REVISION DETAILS	By / Check	Date	Suffix

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Project Title

Barnesmore Gap Greenway

Drawing Title

SERIES 0100
GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
SHEET 14 OF 31

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Designed	Drawn	Checked	Approved	Date
---	IL	AM	DK	15/06/26

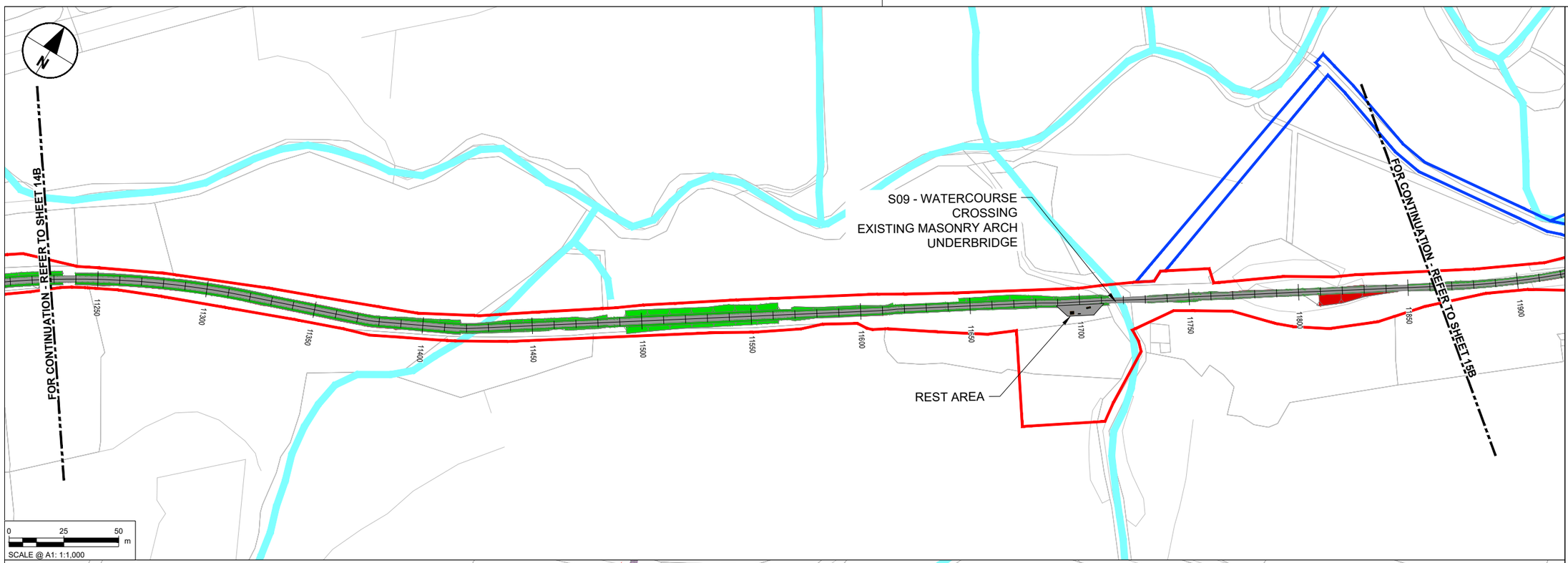
Internal Project No.	Suitability
60701883	S2

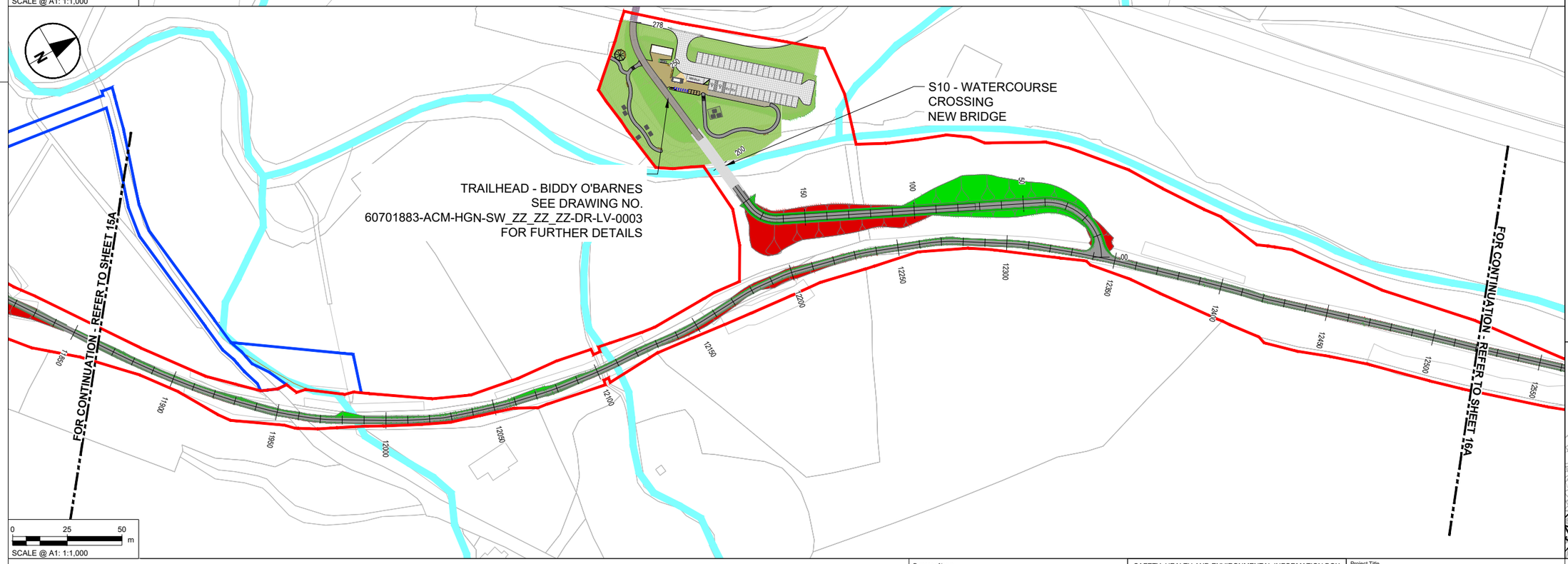
Scale @ A1	Volume
1:1000	General

Drawing Number

Aecom Project ID	Originator	Volume	Type	Role	Number	Rev
60701883	-ACM	-HGN-	SW_ZZ_ZZ_ZZ	-DR	-HG-0109	P05

Location





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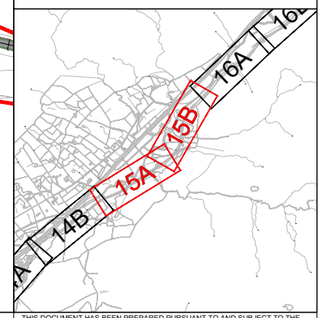
- PROPOSED EARTHWORKS - CUT
- WATERCOURSE

TRAILHEAD KEY

- GRASSCRETE
- ASHPHALT
- RESIN BOUND GRAVEL
- VERGE PLANTING
- HEDGE



Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

Bonneagar Iompair Éireann Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall Donegal County Council

Donegal NRO Oifig Boithne Náisiúnta Dhún na nGall

Greenway

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	By / Check	Date	Suffix
	IL / DK	22/09/25	P02
	IL / DK	14/11/25	P03
	IL / EP	20/03/26	P04
FOR ISSUE	IL / DK	15/06/26	P05
REVISION DETAILS	By / Check	Date	Suffix

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Project Title

Barnesmore Gap Greenway

Drawing Title

SERIES 0100
GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
SHEET 15 OF 31

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Designed	Drawn	Checked	Approved	Date
---	IL	AM	DK	15/06/26

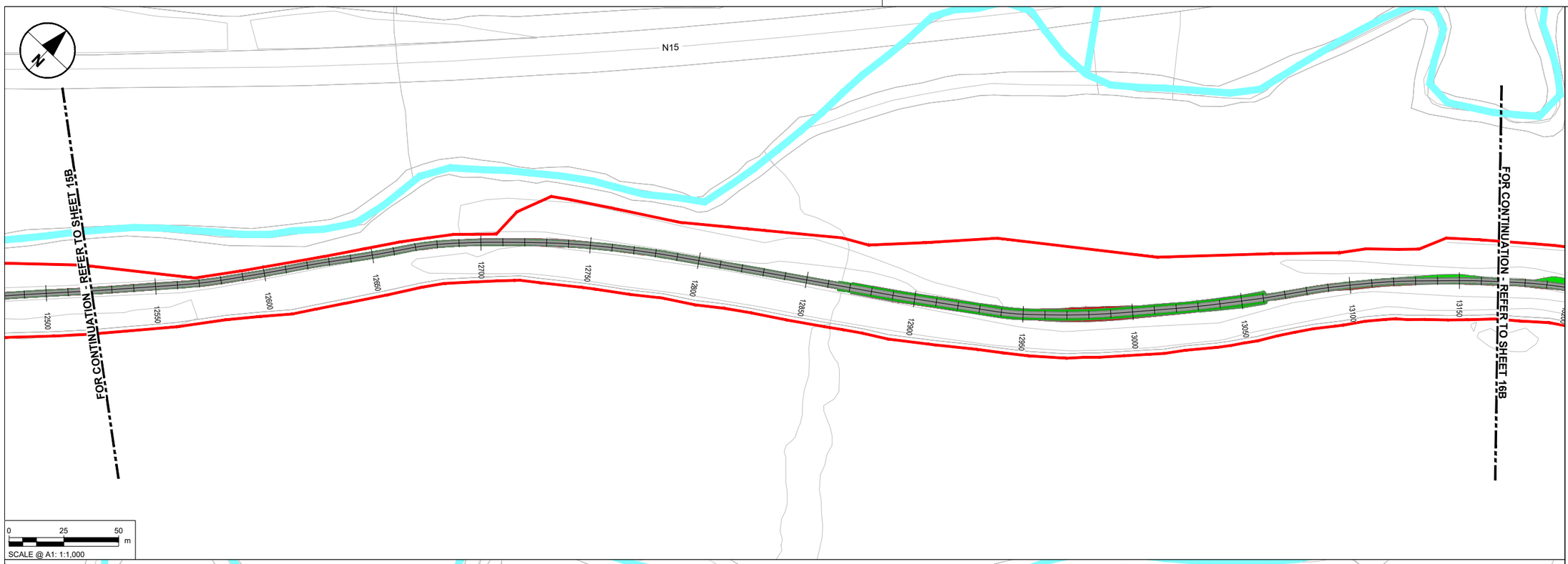
Internal Project No. 60701883

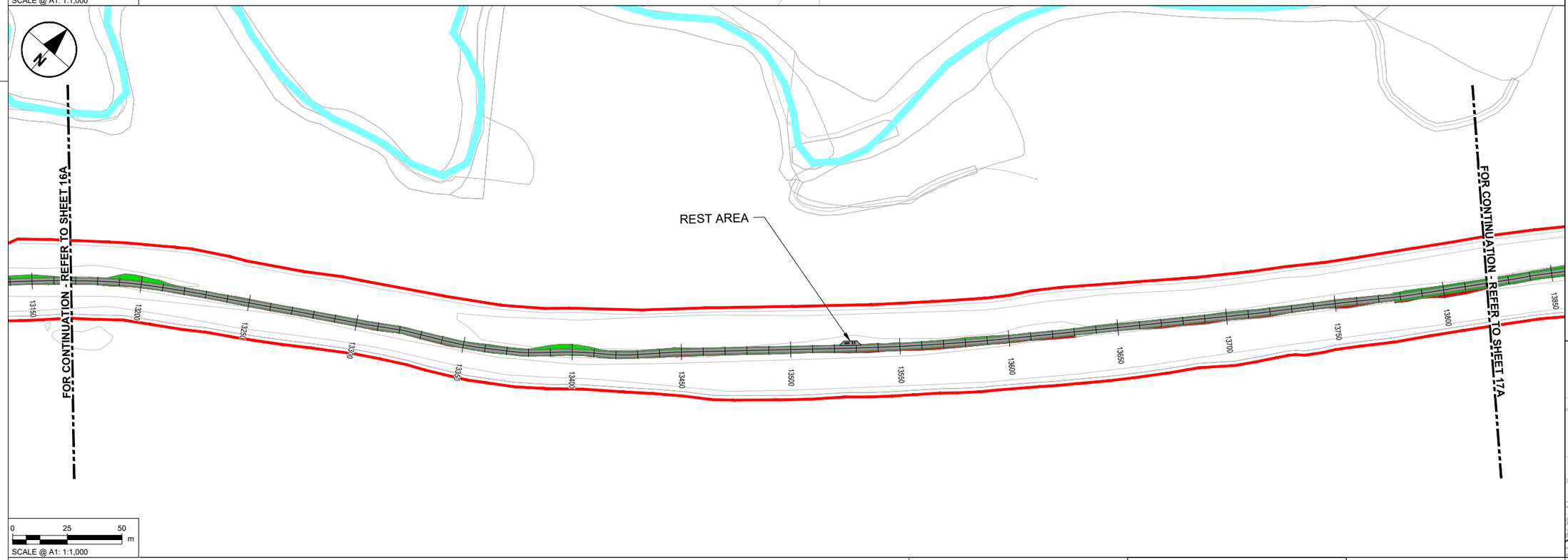
Suitability S2

Scale @ A1 1:1000

Volume General

Drawing Number
Aecom Project ID 60701883 | Originator -ACM | Volume -HGN- | Rev P05
SW_ZZ_ZZ_ZZ -DR -HG-0110
Location | Type | Role | Number





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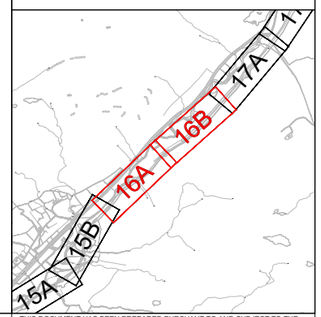

Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

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Donegal NRO Oifig Boithre Náisiúnta Dhún na nGall

Greenway

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	By	Check	Date	Suffix
	IL	DK	22/09/25	P02
	IL	DK	14/11/25	P03
	IL	EP	20/03/26	P04
FOR ISSUE	IL	DK	15/06/26	P05
REVISION DETAILS	By	Check	Date	Suffix

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Project Title

Barnesmore Gap Greenway

Drawing Title

SERIES 0100
GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
SHEET 16 OF 31

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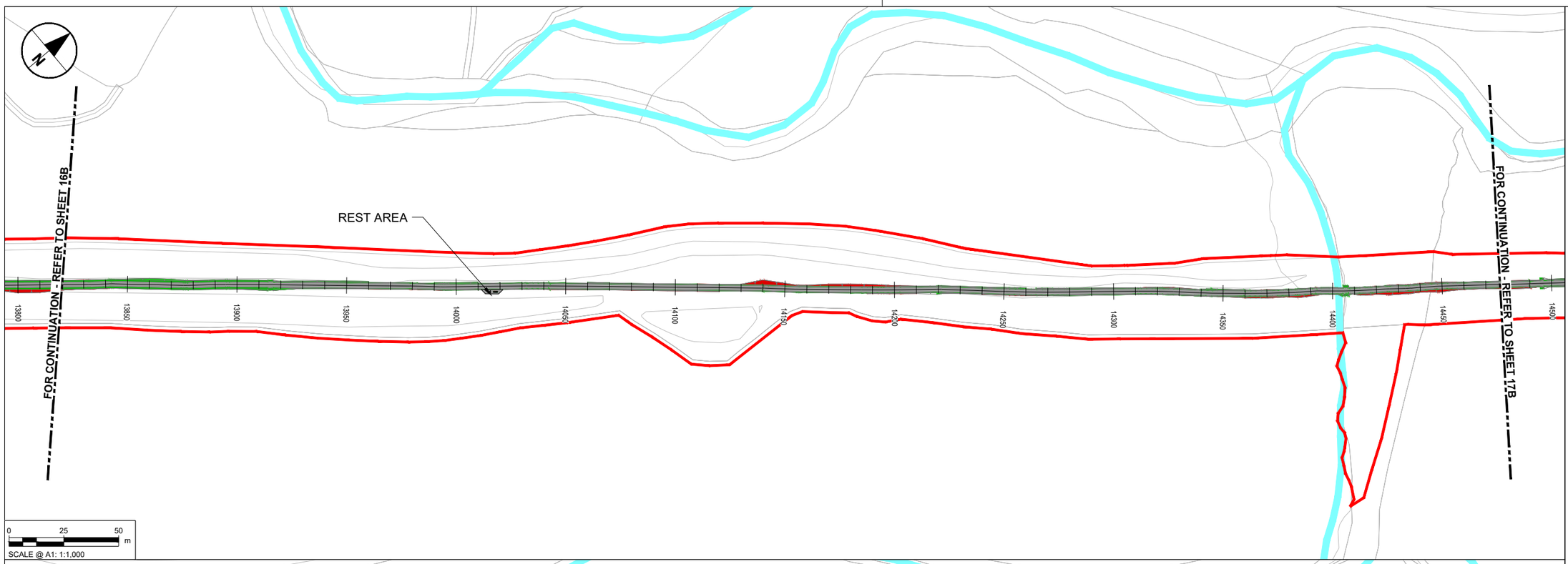
Designed	Drawn	Checked	Approved	Date
---	IL	AM	DK	15/06/26

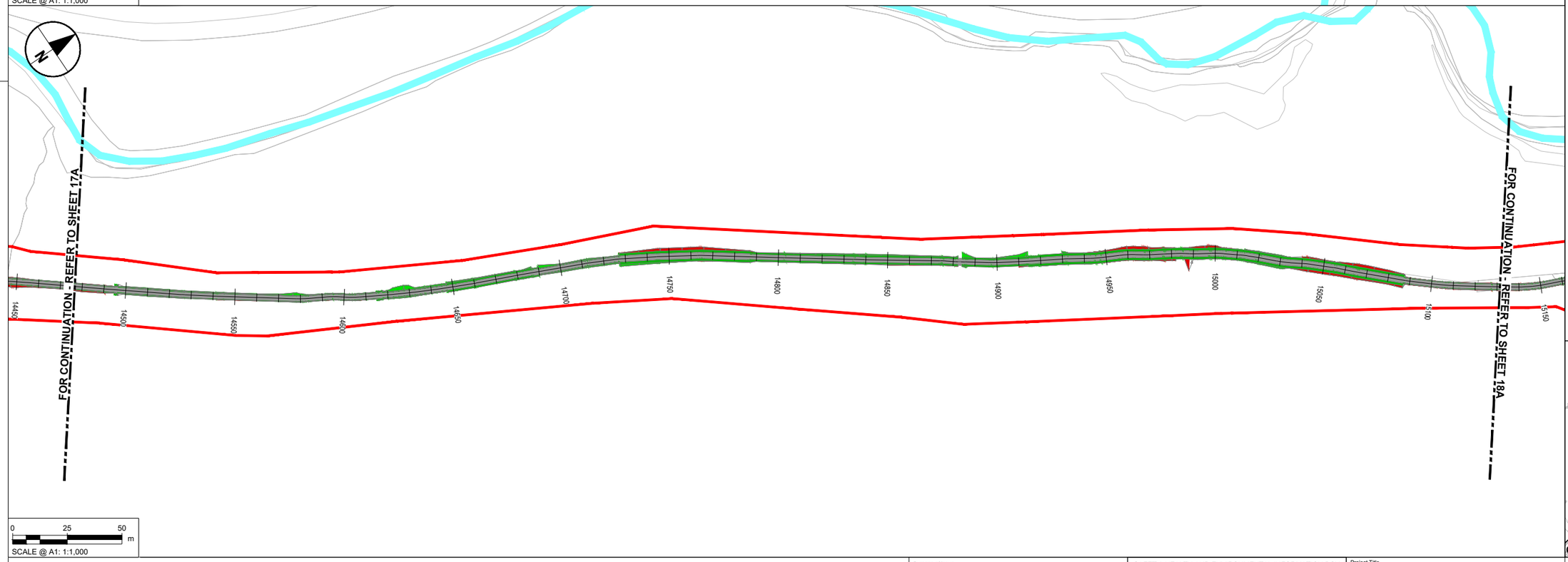
Internal Project No.	Suitability
60701883	S2

Scale @ A1	Volume
1:1000	General

Drawing Number: 60701883 -ACM -HGN- SW_ZZ_ZZ_ZZ -DR -HG-0111
(Aecom Project ID | Originator | Volume | Location | Type | Role | Number)

Rev: P05





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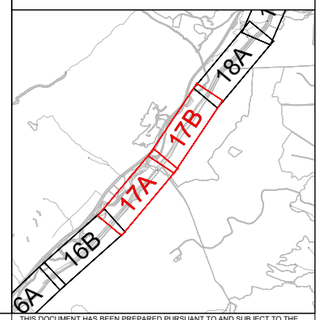

Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

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FOR ISSUE	IL	DK	15/06/26	P05
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Project Title

Barnesmore Gap Greenway

Drawing Title

SERIES 0100
GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
SHEET 17 OF 31

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Designed	Drawn	Checked	Approved	Date
---	IL	AM	DK	15/06/26

Internal Project No.	Suitability
60701883	S2

Scale @ A1	Volume
1:1000	General

Drawing Number

Aecom Project ID	Originator	Volume	Location	Type	Role	Number	Rev
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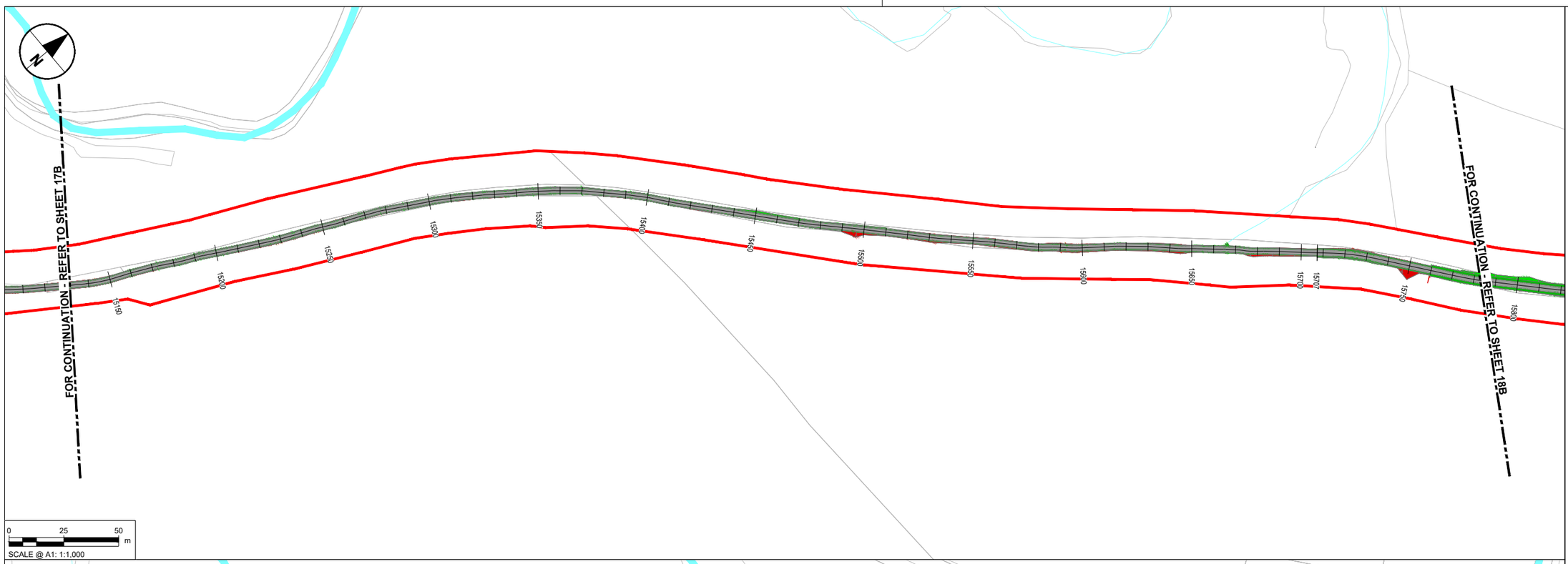

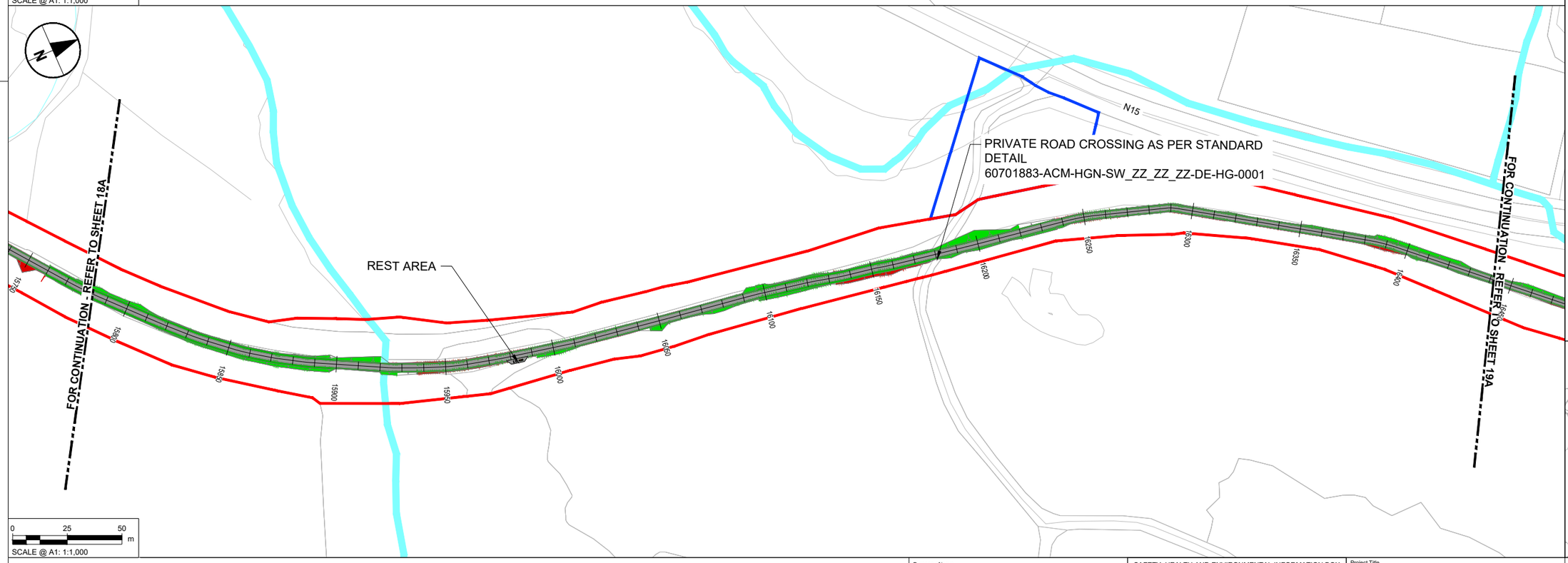

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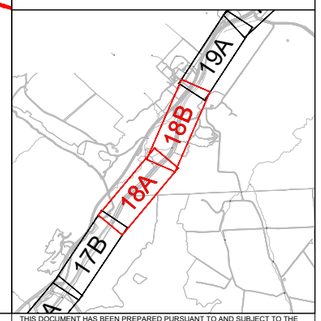
KEY

- PERMANENT LAND TAKE BOUNDARY
- TEMPORARY LAND TAKE BOUNDARY
- PROPOSED GREENWAY PAVEMENT
- PROPOSED GRASS VERGE
- PROPOSED EARTHWORKS - FILL
- PROPOSED EARTHWORKS - CUT
- WATERCOURSE



Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

Bonneagar Iompair Éireann Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall Donegal County Council

Donegal NRO Oifig Boithre Náisiúnta Dhún na nGall

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Purpose of issue

FOR INFORMATION

	By	Check	Date	Suffix
	IL	DK	22/09/25	P02
	IL	DK	14/11/25	P03
	IL	EP	20/03/26	P04
FOR ISSUE	IL	DK	15/06/26	P05

REVISION DETAILS

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Project Title

Barnesmore Gap Greenway

Drawing Title

SERIES 0100
GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
SHEET 18 OF 31

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Designed	Drawn	Checked	Approved	Date
---	IL	AM	DK	15/06/26

Internal Project No.	Suitability
60701883	S2

Scale @ A1	Volume
1:1000	General

Drawing Number (Aecom Project ID – Originator – Volume – Role – Type – Number)	Rev
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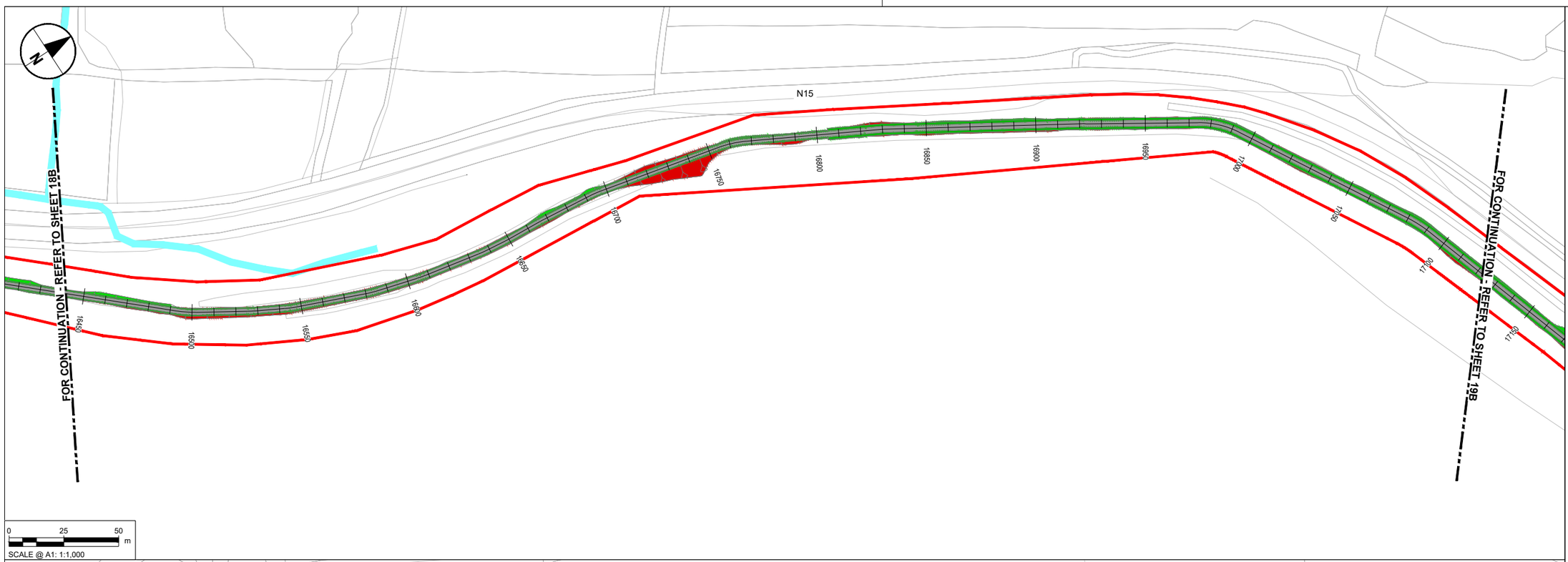

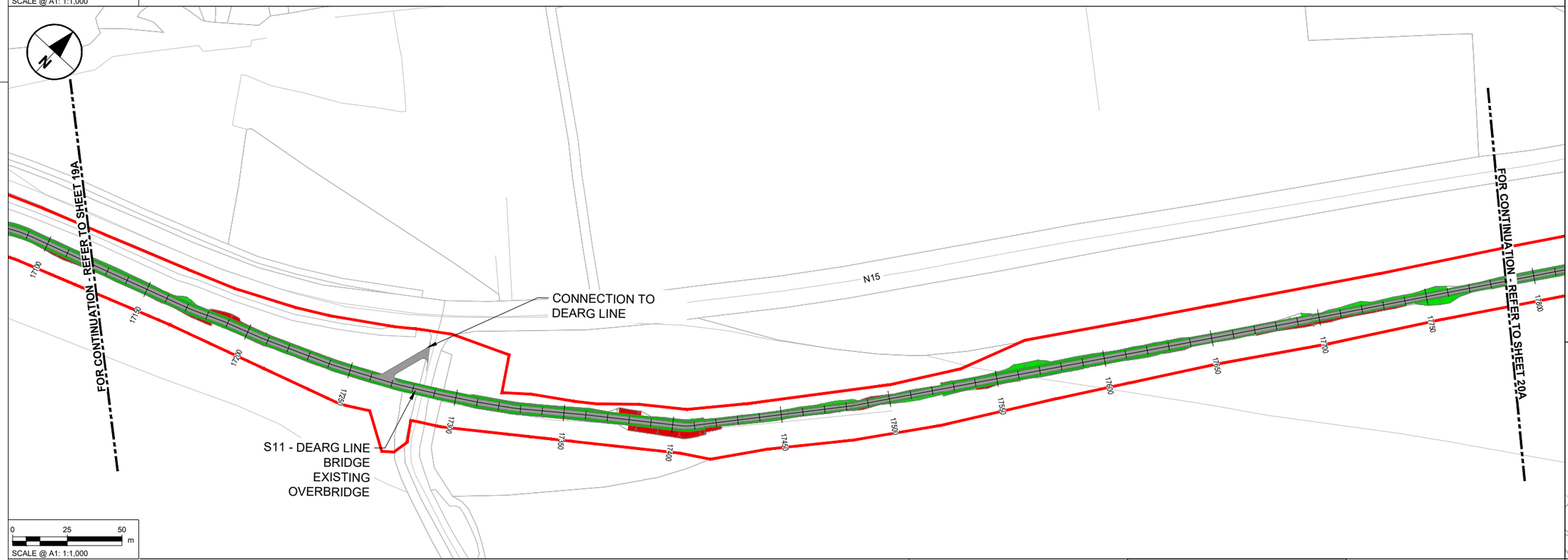

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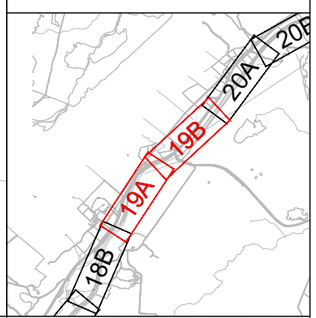
- WATERCOURSE



Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

Bonneagar Iompair Éireann Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall Donegal County Council

Donegal NRO Oifig Boichte Naisiúnta Dhún na nGall

Greenway

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Purpose of issue

FOR INFORMATION

	By	Check	Date	Suffix
	IL	DK	22/09/25	P02
	IL	DK	14/11/25	P03
	IL	EP	20/03/26	P04
FOR ISSUE	IL	DK	15/06/26	P05
REVISION DETAILS	By	Check	Date	Suffix

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Project Title

Barnesmore Gap Greenway

Drawing Title

SERIES 0100 GENERAL ARRANGEMENT SHEET 19 OF 31

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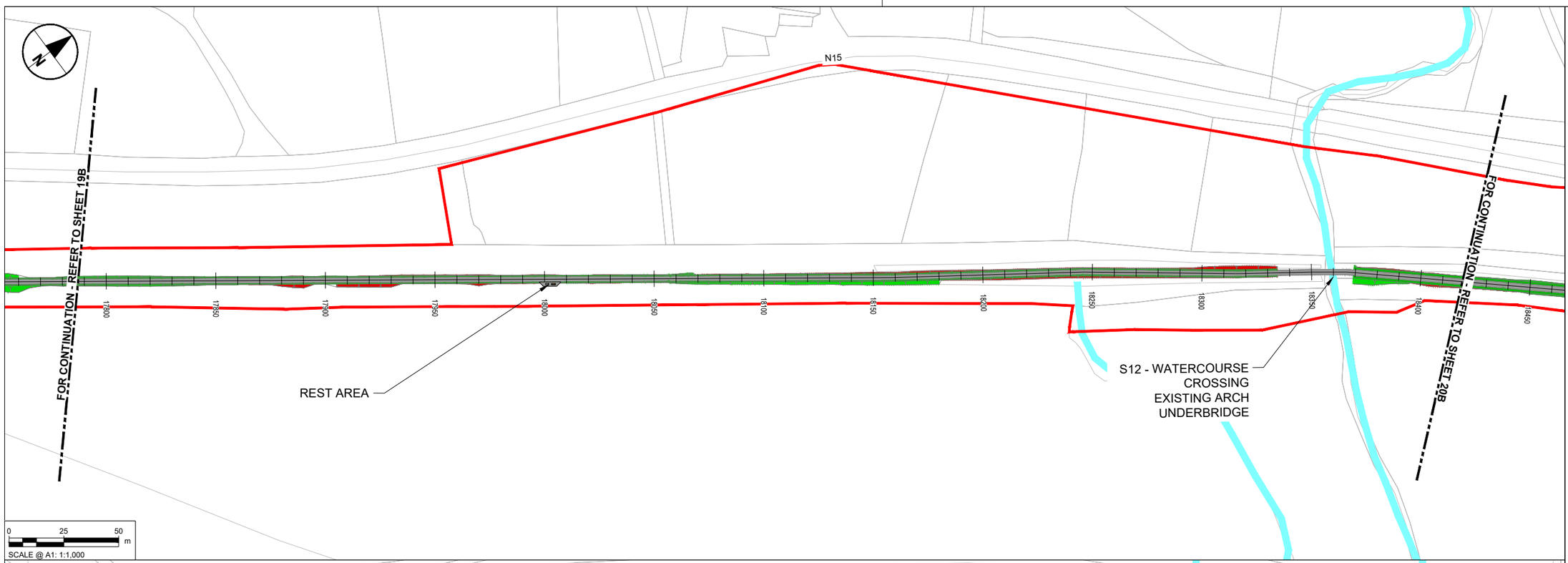
Designed	Drawn	Checked	Approved	Date
---	IL	AM	DK	15/06/26

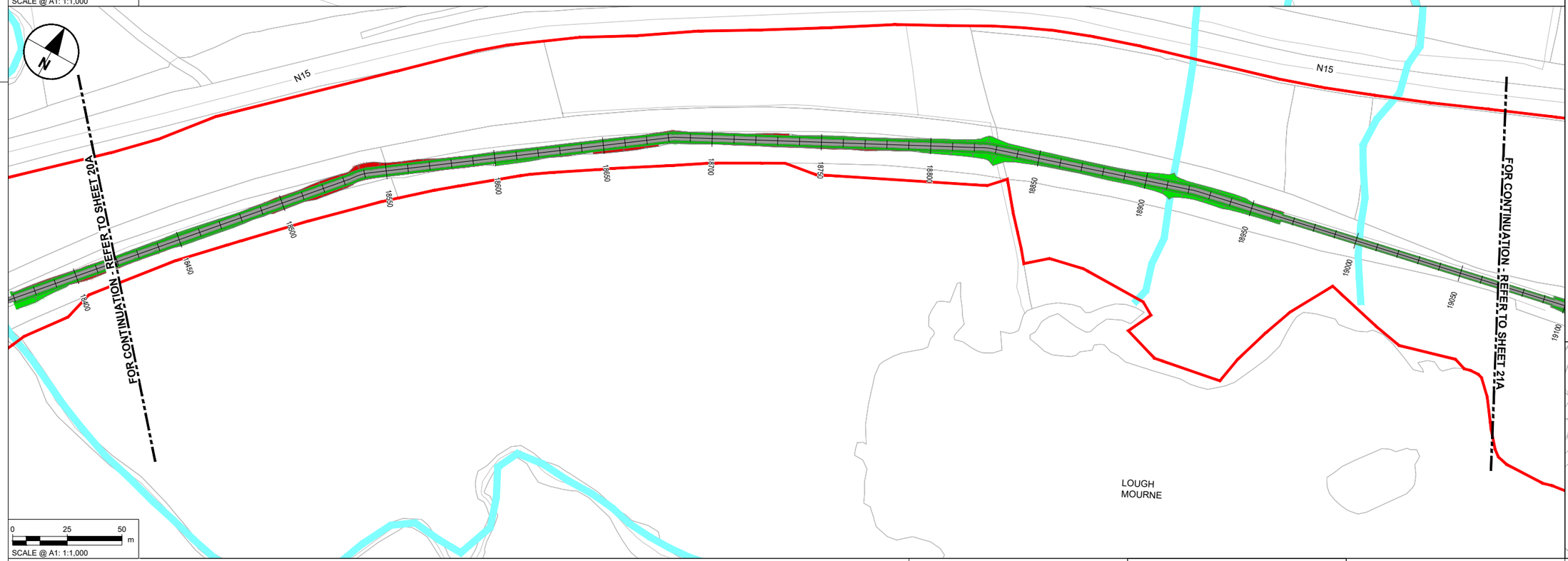
Internal Project No. 60701883 | Suitability S2

Scale @ A1 1:1000 | Volume General

Drawing Number: Aecom Project ID 60701883 - Originator ACM - Volume HGN - Location SW_ZZ_ZZ_ZZ - Type DR - Role HG - Number 0114

Rev P05





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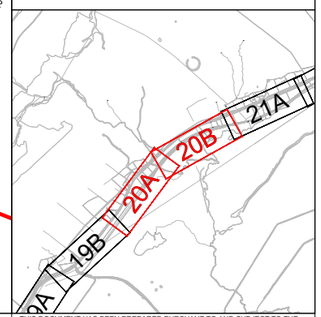
- WATERCOURSE



Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

Bonneagar Iompair Éireann Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall Donegal County Council

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	By	Check	Date	Suffix
	IL	DK	22/09/25	P02
	IL	DK	14/11/25	P03
	IL	EP	20/03/26	P04
FOR ISSUE	IL	DK	15/06/26	P05
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Project Title

Barnesmore Gap Greenway

Drawing Title

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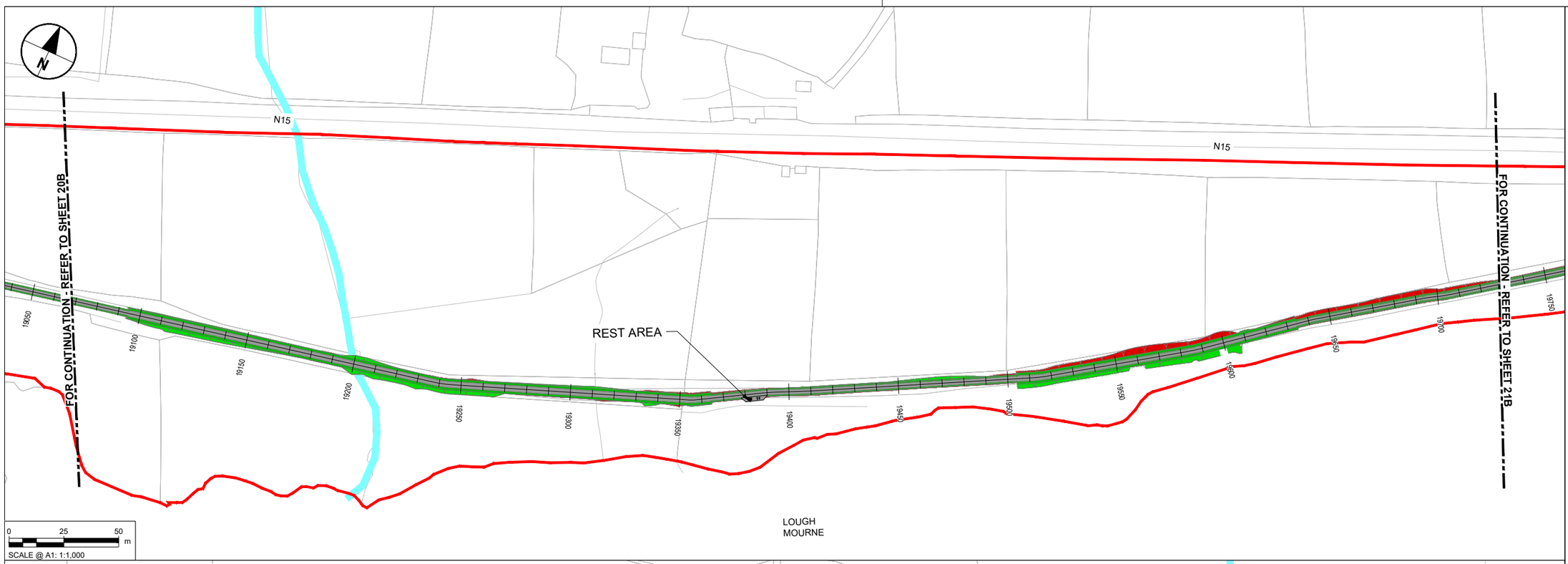
Designed	Drawn	Checked	Approved	Date
---	IL	AM	DK	15/06/26

Internal Project No.	Suitability
60701883	S2

Scale @ A1	Volume
1:1000	General

Drawing Number

Aecom Project ID	Originator	Volume	Location	Type	Role	Number	Rev
60701883	-ACM	-HGN-	SW_ZZ_ZZ_ZZ	-DR	-HG	-0115	P05



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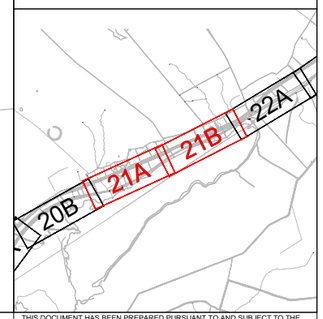

Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

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	IL / DK	22/09/25	P02
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FOR ISSUE	IL / DK	15/06/26	P05

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Project Title

Barnesmore Gap Greenway

Drawing Title

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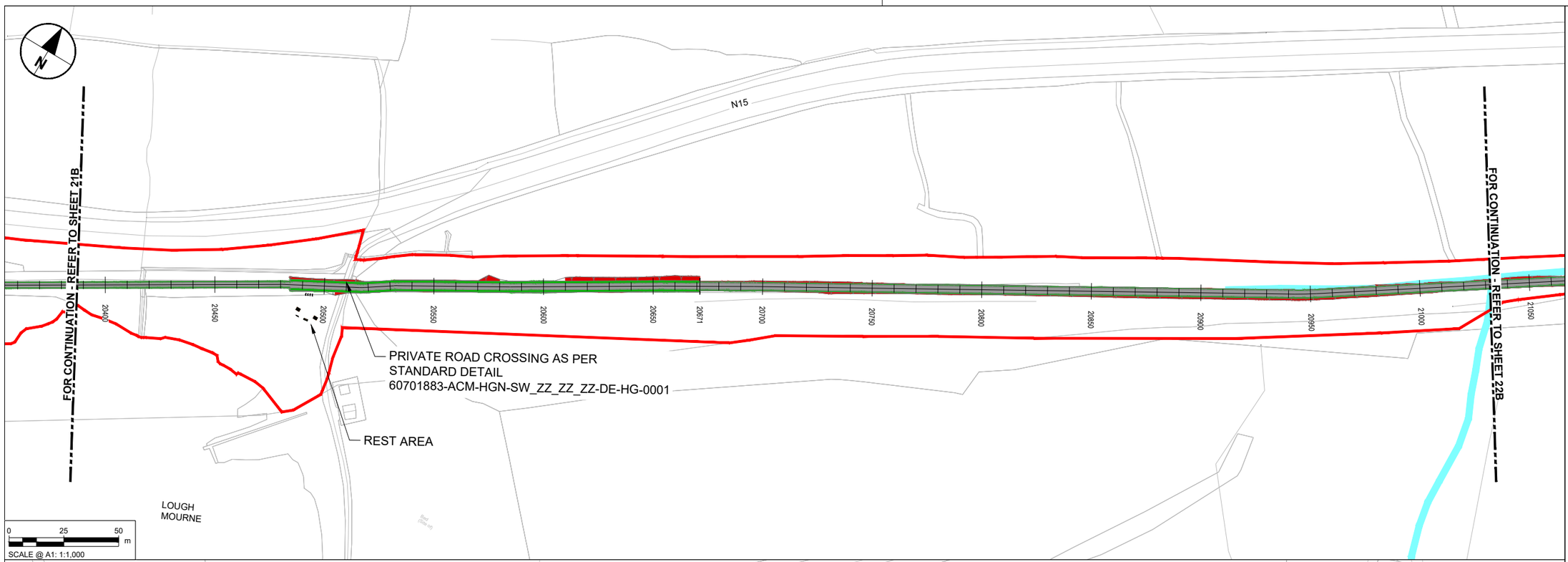
Designed	Drawn	Checked	Approved	Date
---	IL	AM	DK	15/06/26

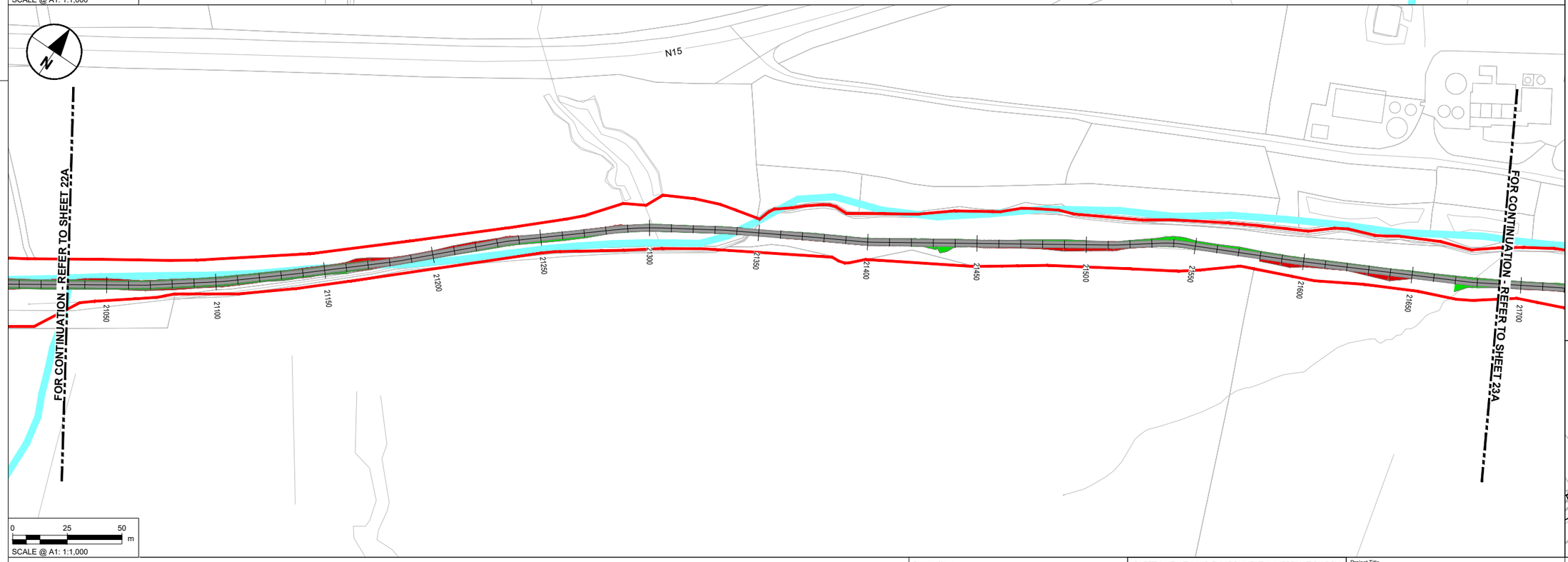
Internal Project No.	Suitability
60701883	S2

Scale @ A1	Volume
1:1000	General

Drawing Number

Aecom Project ID	Originator	Volume	Location	Type	Role	Number	Rev
60701883	-ACM	-HGN-	SW_ZZ_ZZ_ZZ	-DR	-HG	-0116	P05





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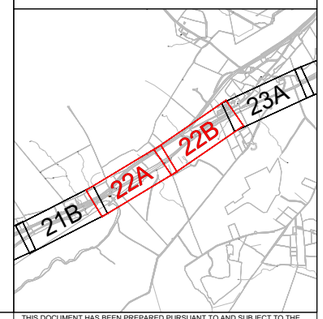

Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

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Project Title

Barnesmore Gap Greenway

Drawing Title

SERIES 0100 GENERAL ARRANGEMENT SHEET 22 OF 31

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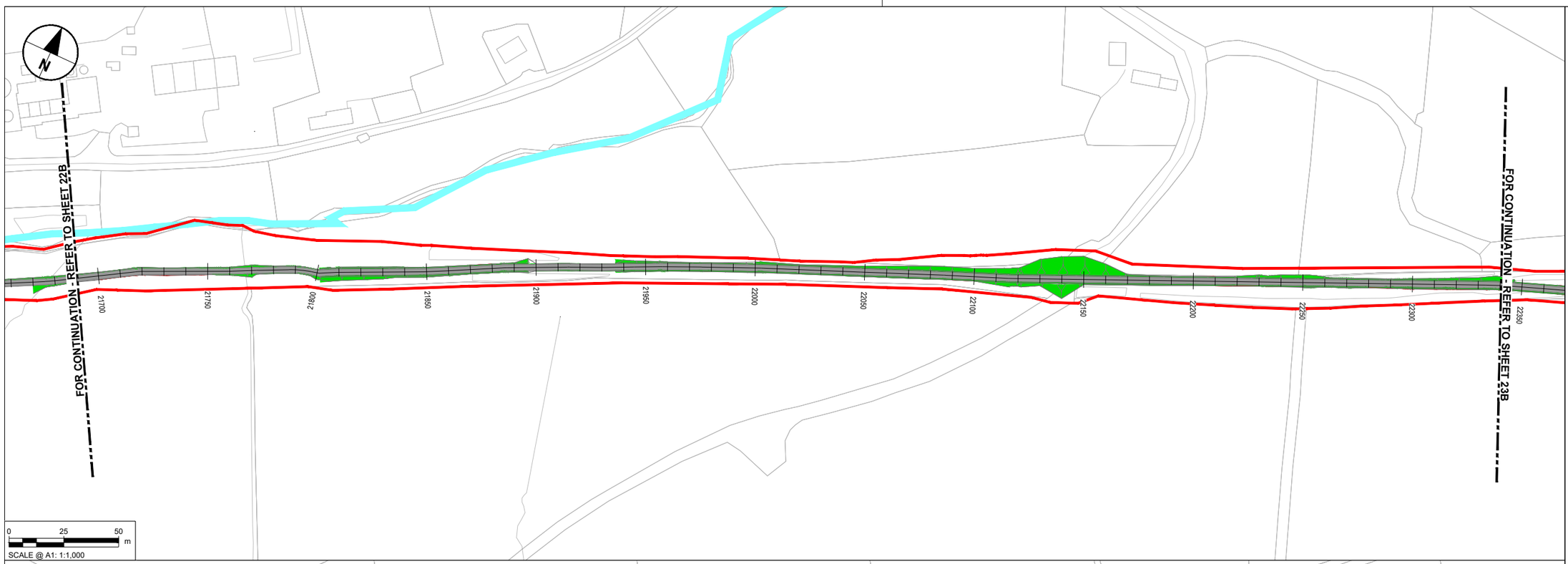
Designed	Drawn	Checked	Approved	Date
---	IL	AM	DK	15/06/26

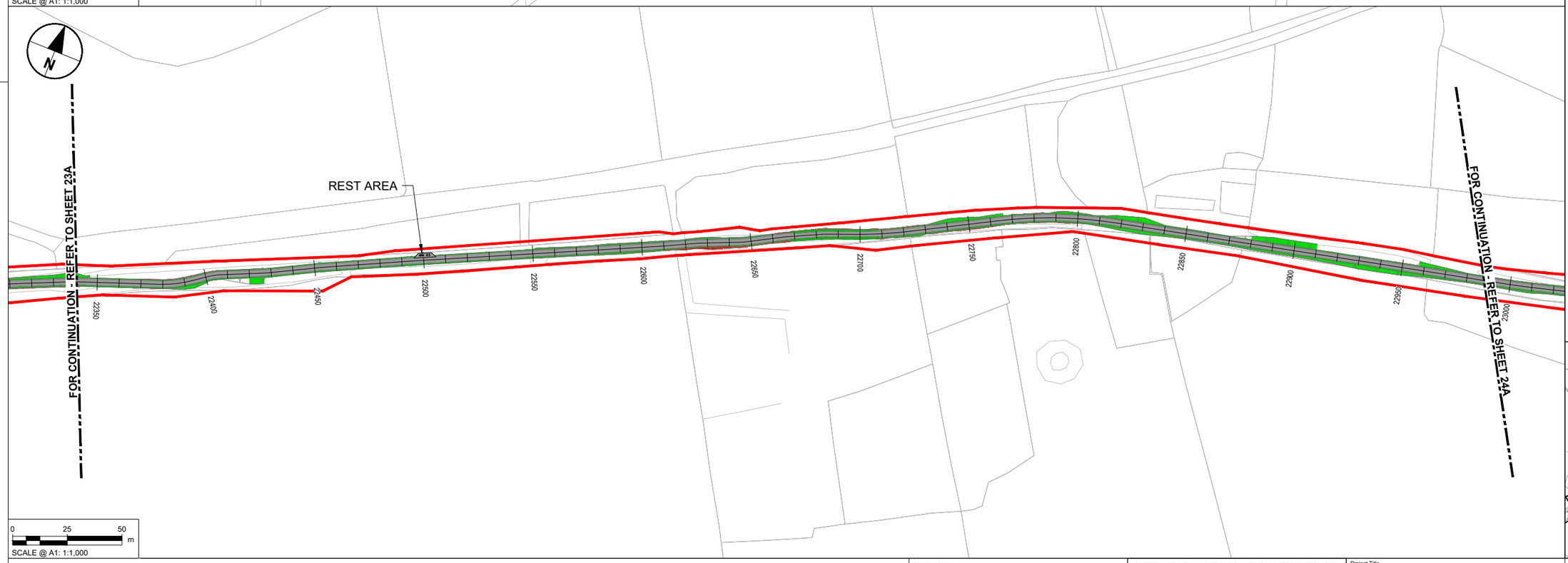
Internal Project No.	Suitability
60701883	S2

Scale @ A1	Volume
1:1000	General

Drawing Number

Aecom Project ID	Originator	Volume	Location	Type	Role	Number	Rev
60701883	-ACM	-HGN-	SW_ZZ_ZZ_ZZ	-DR	-HG	-0117	P05





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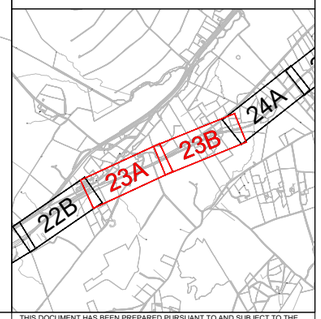

Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

Bonneagar Iompair Éireann Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall Donegal County Council

Donegal NRO Oifig Boithre Náisiúnta Dhún na nGall

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FOR INFORMATION

	By	Check	Date	Suffix
	IL	DK	22/09/25	P02
	IL	DK	14/11/25	P03
	IL	EP	20/03/26	P04
FOR ISSUE	IL	DK	15/06/26	P05
REVISION DETAILS				

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Project Title

Barnesmore Gap Greenway

Drawing Title

SERIES 0100 GENERAL ARRANGEMENT SHEET 23 OF 31

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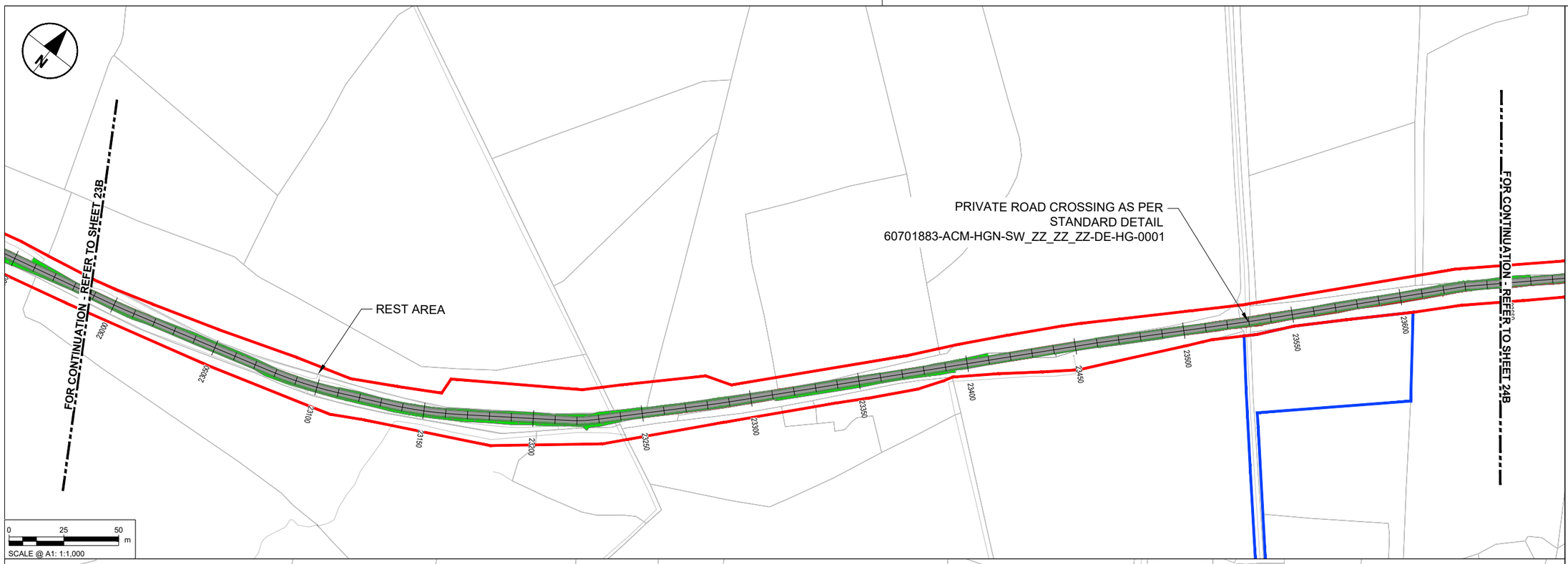
Designed	Drawn	Checked	Approved	Date
---	IL	AM	DK	15/06/26

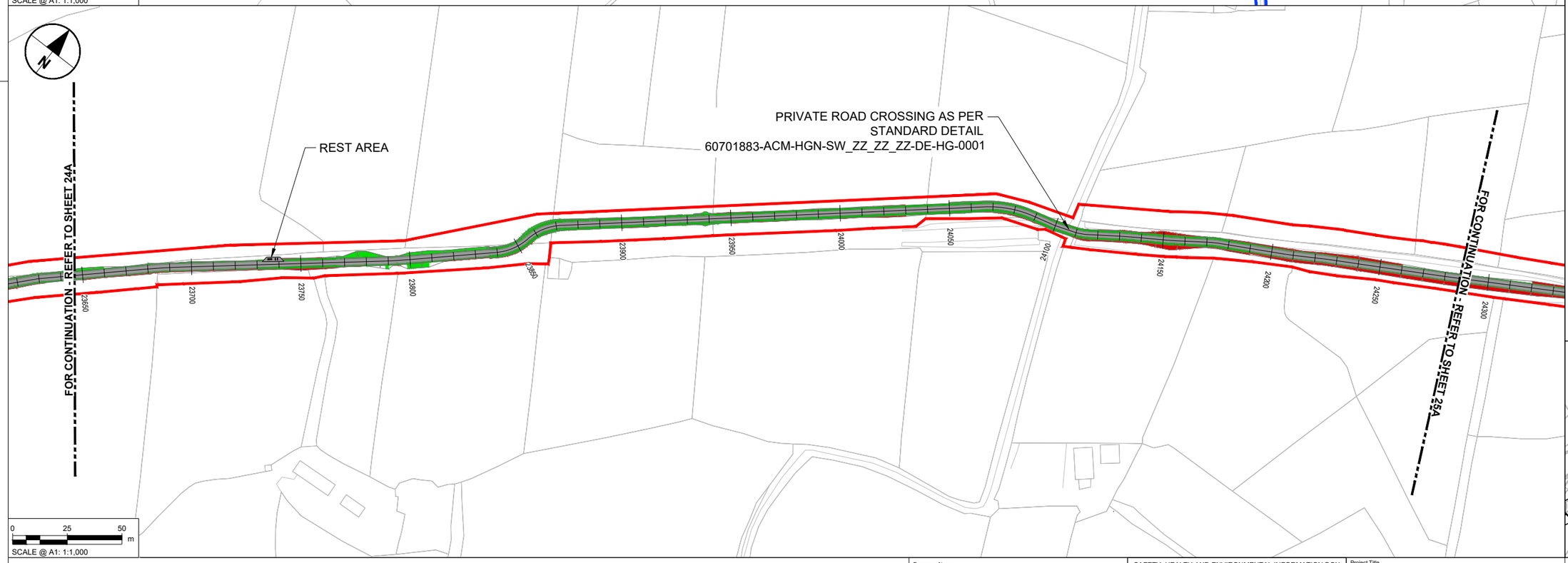
Internal Project No.	Suitability
60701883	S2

Scale @ A1	Volume
1:1000	General

Drawing Number

Aecom Project ID	Originator	Volume	Location	Type	Role	Number	Rev
60701883	-ACM	-HGN-	SW_ZZ_ZZ_ZZ	-DR	-HG	-0118	P05





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- TEMPORARY LAND TAKE BOUNDARY
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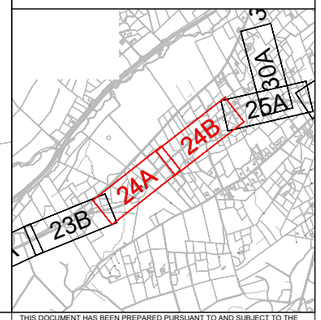
- PROPOSED EARTHWORKS - FILL
- PROPOSED EARTHWORKS - CUT
- WATERCOURSE



Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

Bonneagar Iompair Éireann Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall Donegal County Council

Donegal NRO Oifig Boithrín Náisiúnta Dhún na nGall

Greenway

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FOR INFORMATION

REVISION DETAILS	By / Check	Date	Suffix
	IL / DK	22/09/25	P02
	IL / DK	14/11/25	P03
	IL / EP	20/03/26	P04
FOR ISSUE	IL / DK	15/06/26	P05

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Project Title

Barnesmore Gap Greenway

Drawing Title

SERIES 0100
GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
SHEET 24 OF 31

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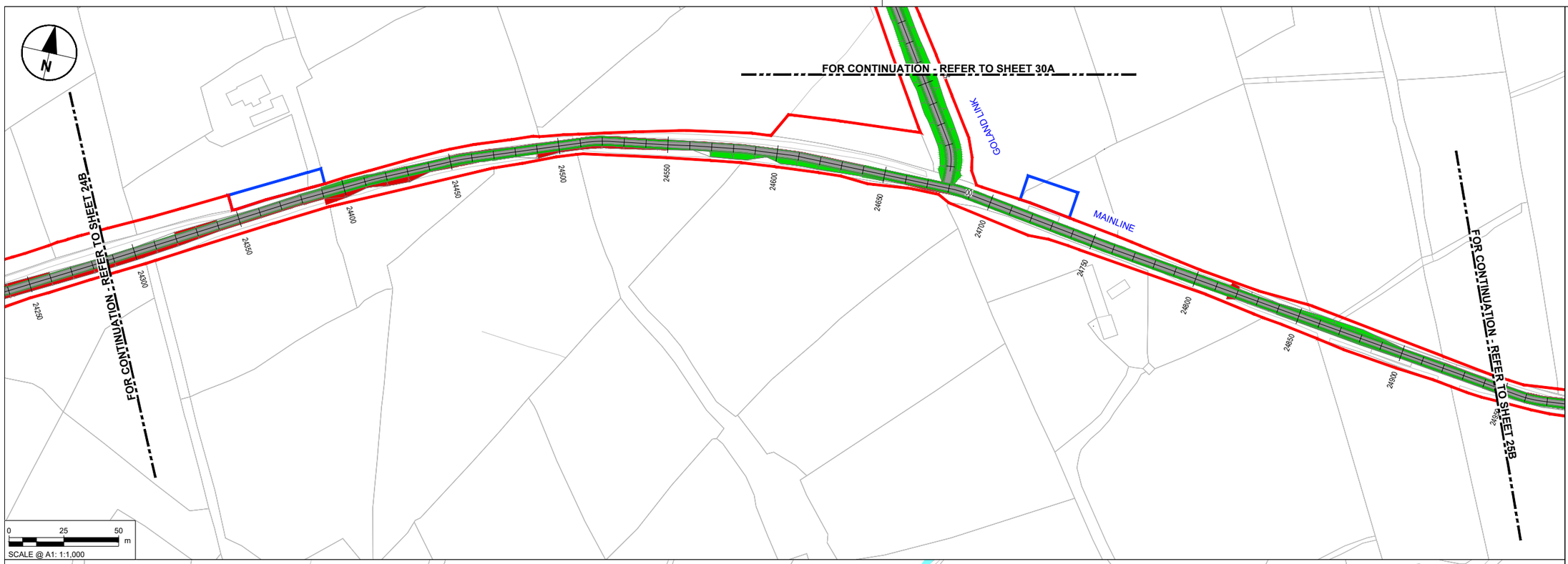
Designed	Drawn	Checked	Approved	Date
---	IL	AM	DK	15/06/26

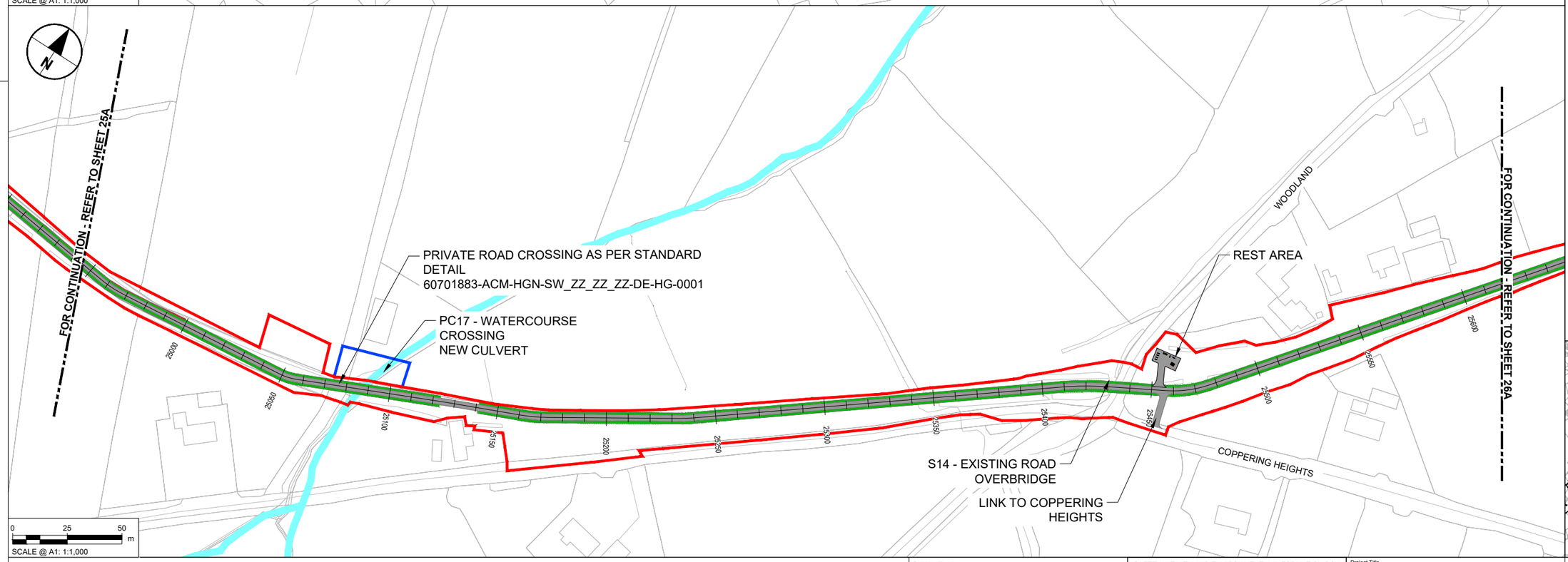
Internal Project No. 60701883 | Suitability S2

Scale @ A1 1:1000 | Volume General

Drawing Number: Aecom Project ID 60701883 | Originator -ACM | Volume -HGN- | Location SW_ZZ_ZZ_ZZ | Type -DR | Role -HG- | Number -0119

Rev P05





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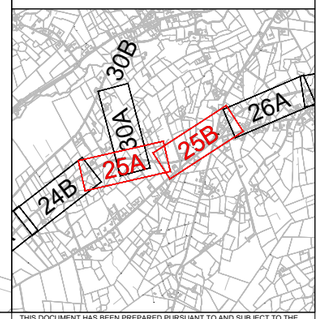
- PROPOSED EARTHWORKS - FILL
- PROPOSED EARTHWORKS - CUT
- WATERCOURSE



Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

Bonneagar Iompair Éireann Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall Donegal County Council

Donegal NRO Oifig Boithne Náisiúnta Dhún na nGall

Greenway

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FOR INFORMATION

	By	Check	Date	Suffix
	IL	DK	22/09/25	P02
	IL	DK	14/11/25	P03
	IL	EP	20/03/26	P04
FOR ISSUE	IL	DK	15/06/26	P05

REVISION DETAILS

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Project Title

Barnesmore Gap Greenway

Drawing Title

SERIES 0100
GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
SHEET 25 OF 31

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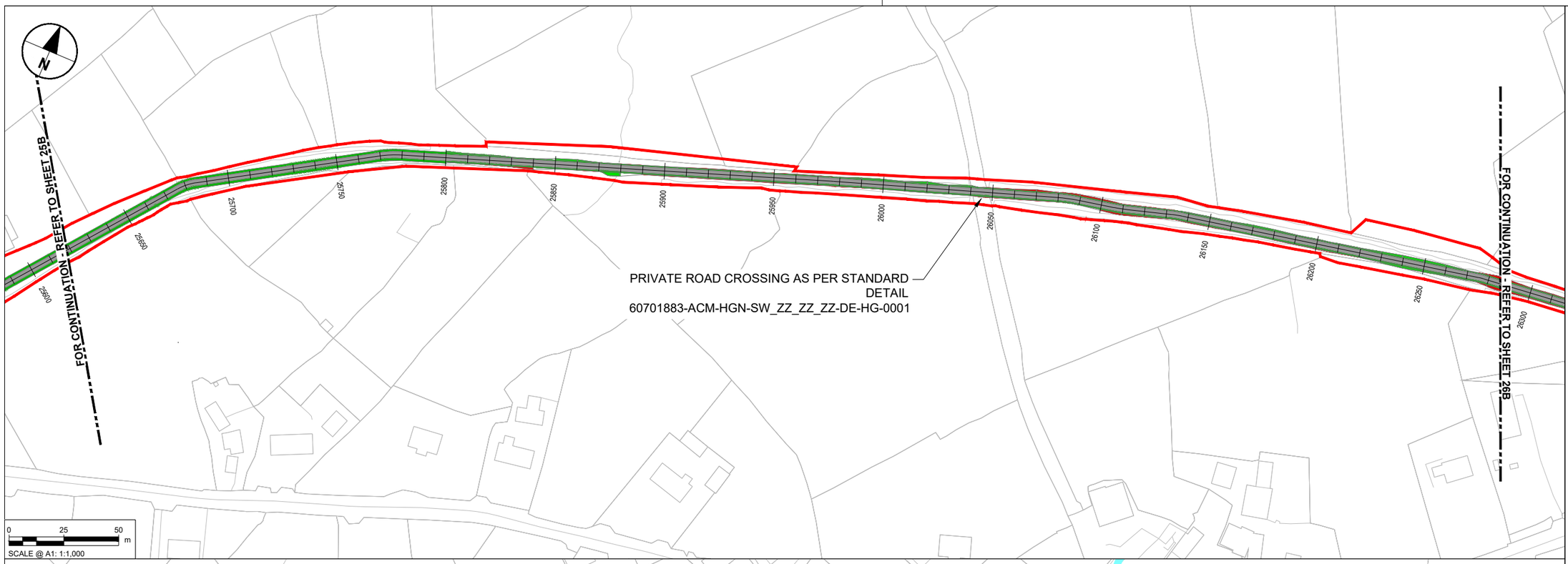
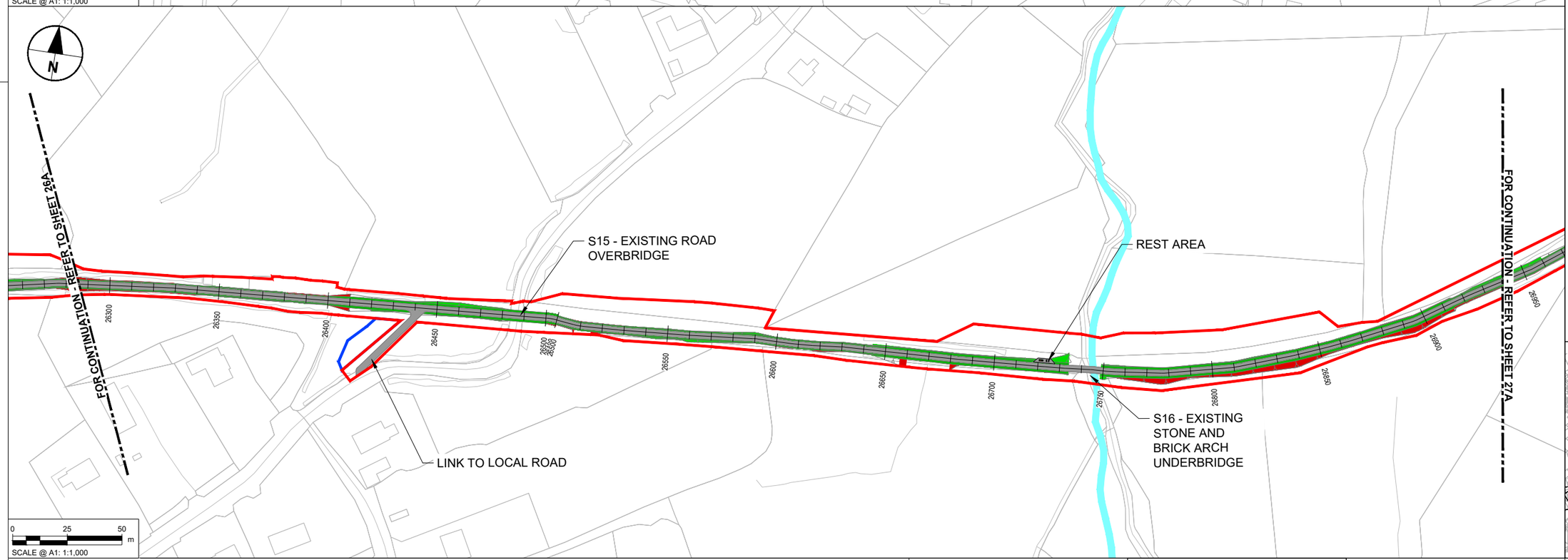
Designed	Drawn	Checked	Approved	Date
---	IL	AM	DK	15/06/26

Internal Project No.	Suitability
60701883	S2

Scale @ A1	Volume
1:1000	General

Drawing Number				Rev
Aecom Project ID	Originator	Volume		
60701883	-ACM	-HGN-		P05
SW_ZZ_ZZ_ZZ	-DR	-HG-0120		
Location	Type	Role	Number	





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KEY

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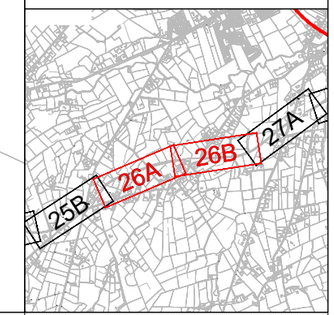
- TEMPORARY LAND TAKE BOUNDARY
- PROPOSED GREENWAY PAVEMENT
- PROPOSED GRASS VERGE
- PROPOSED EARTHWORKS - FILL
- PROPOSED EARTHWORKS - CUT
- WATERCOURSE



Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

Bonneagar Iompair Éireann Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall Donegal County Council

Donegal NRO Oifig Boithne Náisiúnta Dhún na nGall

Greenway

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	By / Check	Date	Suffix
	IL / DK	22/09/25	P02
	IL / DK	14/11/25	P03
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FOR ISSUE	IL / DK	15/06/26	P05
REVISION DETAILS			

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Project Title

Barnesmore Gap Greenway

Drawing Title

SERIES 0100
GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
SHEET 26 OF 31

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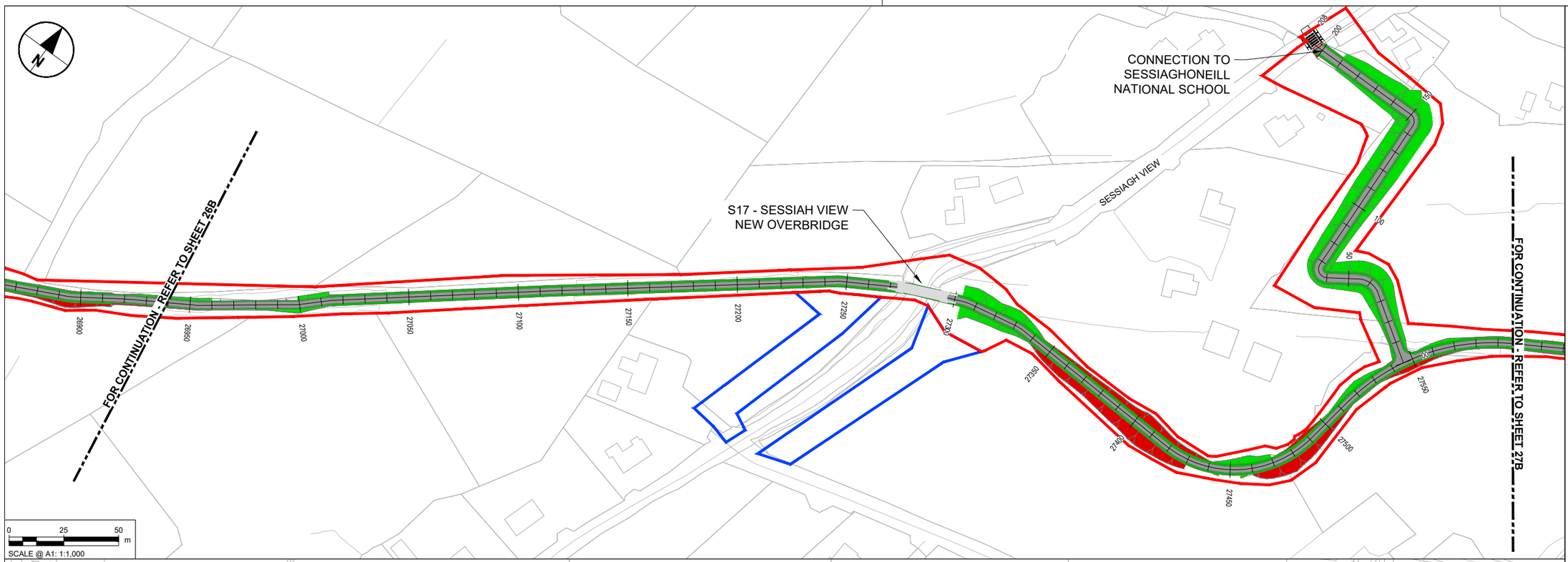
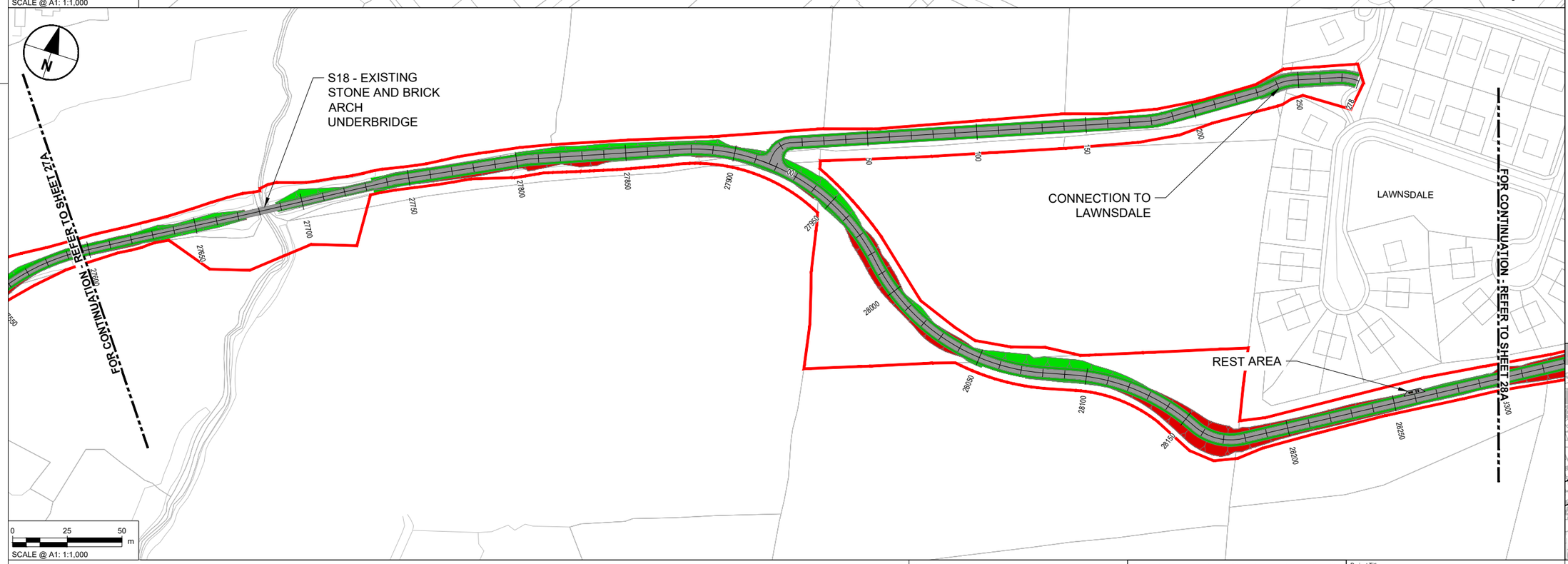
Designed	Drawn	Checked	Approved	Date
---	IL	AM	DK	15/06/26

Internal Project No.: 60701883
Suitability: S2
Scale @ A1: 1:1000
Volume: General

Drawing Number
Aecom Project ID: 60701883 | Originator: -ACM | Volume: -HGN- | Location: SW_ZZ_ZZ_ZZ | Type: -DR | Role: -HG | Number: -0121

Rev: P05





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KEY

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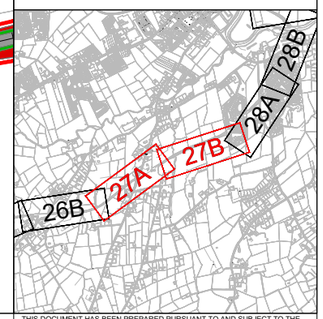

Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

Bonneagar Iompair Éireann Transport Infrastructure Ireland

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Greenway

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FOR INFORMATION

	By	Check	Date	Suffix
	IL	DK	22/09/25	P02
	IL	DK	14/11/25	P03
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FOR ISSUE	IL	DK	15/06/26	P05
REVISION DETAILS				

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Project Title

Barnesmore Gap Greenway

Drawing Title

SERIES 0100
GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
SHEET 27 OF 31

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Designed	Drawn	Checked	Approved	Date
---	IL	AM	DK	15/06/26

Internal Project No. 60701883

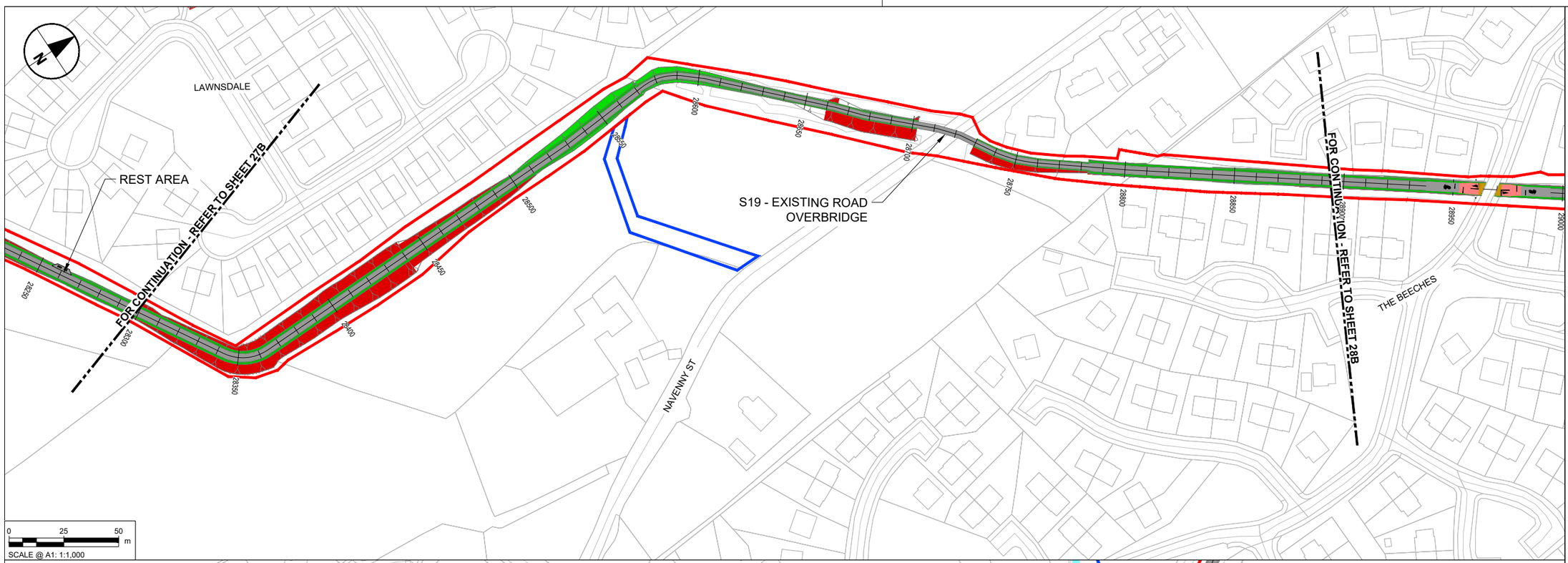
Suitability S2

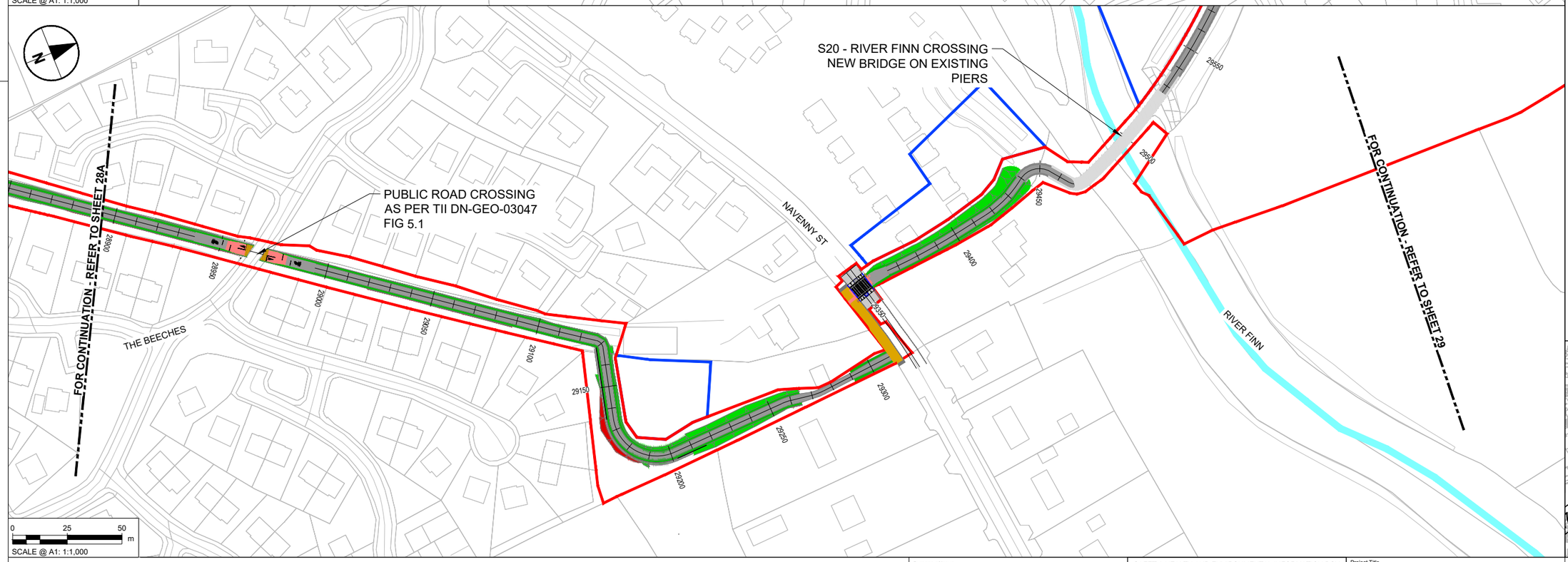
Scale @ A1 1:1000

Volume General

Drawing Number

Aecom Project ID	Originator	Volume	Location	Type	Role	Number	Rev
60701883	-ACM	-HGN-	SW_ZZ_ZZ_ZZ	-DR	-HG	-0122	P05





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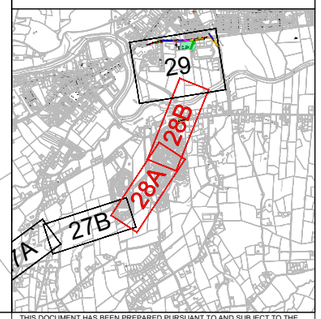

Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

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FOR INFORMATION

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	IL	DK	22/09/25	P02
	IL	DK	14/11/25	P03
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FOR ISSUE	IL	DK	15/06/26	P05
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Project Title

Barnesmore Gap Greenway

Drawing Title

SERIES 0100
GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
SHEET 28 OF 31

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Designed	Drawn	Checked	Approved	Date
---	IL	AM	DK	15/06/26

Internal Project No.: 60701883

Suitability: S2

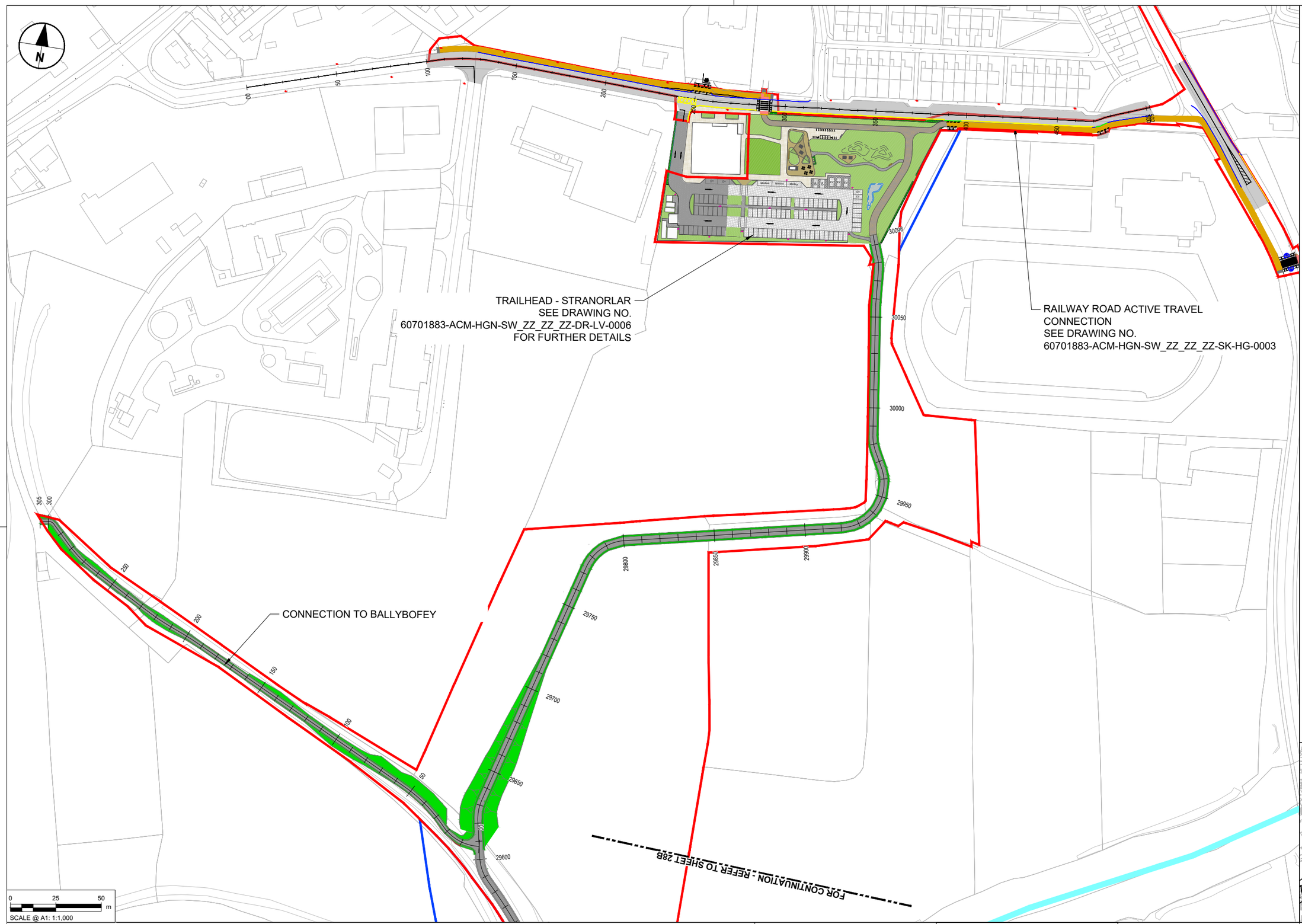
Scale @ A1: 1:1000

Volume: General

Drawing Number

Aecom Project ID: 60701883 | Originator: -ACM | Volume: -HGN- | Location: SW_ZZ_ZZ_ZZ | Type: -DR | Role: -HG | Number: -0123

Rev: P05



NOTES

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3. DRAWING IS BASED ON OS MAPPING.
4. EXISTING SURFACE DATA BASED ON MULTIPLE SOURCES;
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   - 4.2. UAV SURVEY DATA PROVIDED BY IO GEOMATICS ON 21/10/2024.
   - 4.3. TOPO SURVEY DATA PROVIDED BY IO GEOMATICS ON 02/09/2025.
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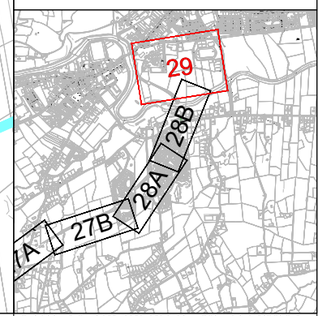
KEY

- PERMANENT LAND TAKE BOUNDARY
- TEMPORARY LAND TAKE BOUNDARY
- PROPOSED GREENWAY PAVEMENT
- PROPOSED GRASS VERGE
- PROPOSED EARTHWORKS - FILL
- PROPOSED EARTHWORKS - CUT
- WATERCOURSE

TRAILHEAD KEY

- GRASSCRETE
- ASHPHALT
- RESIN BOUND GRAVEL
- VERGE PLANTING
- HEDGE
- SHARED SURFACE



Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

Bonneagar Iompair Éireann Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall Donegal County Council

Donegal NRO Oifig Boithre Náisiúnta Dhún na nGall

Greenway

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Purpose of issue

FOR INFORMATION

	By	Check	Date	Suffix
	IL	DK	22/09/25	P02
	IL	DK	14/11/25	P03
	IL	EP	20/03/26	P04
FOR ISSUE	IL	DK	15/06/26	P05

REVISION DETAILS

SAFETY, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION BOX

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Project Title

Barnesmore Gap Greenway

Drawing Title

SERIES 0100
GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
SHEET 29 OF 31

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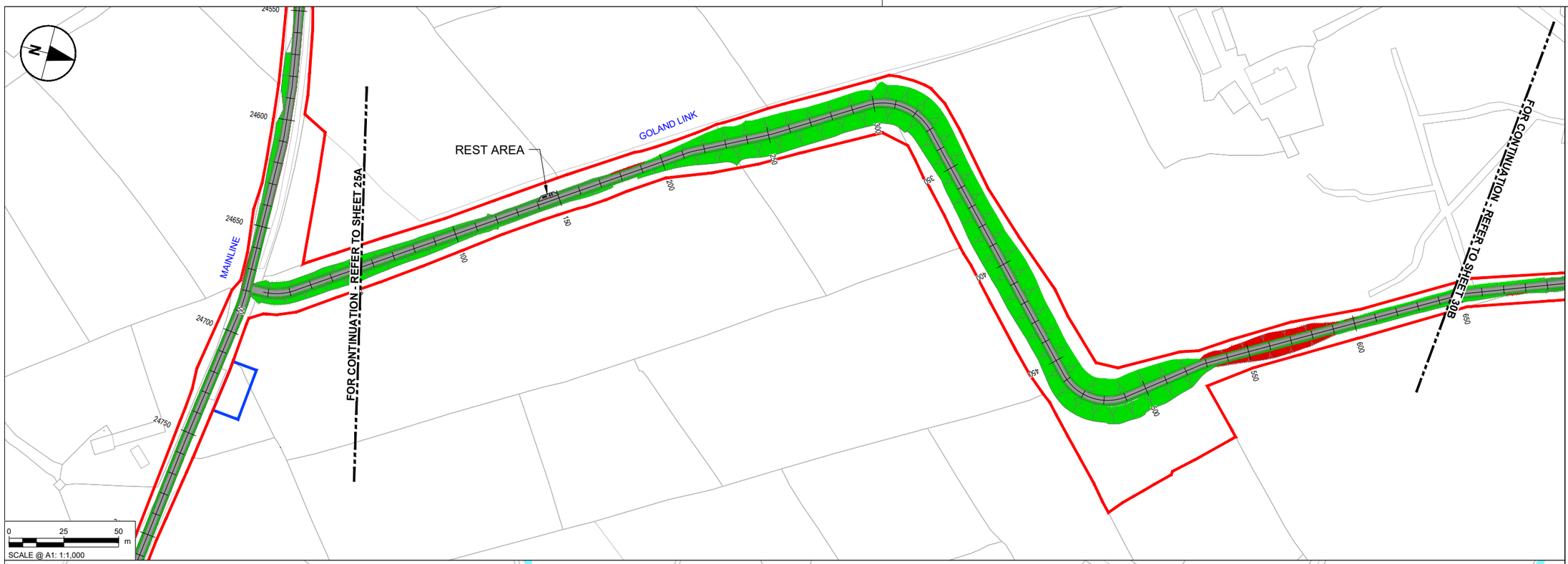
Designed	Drawn	Checked	Approved	Date
---	IL	AM	DK	15/06/26

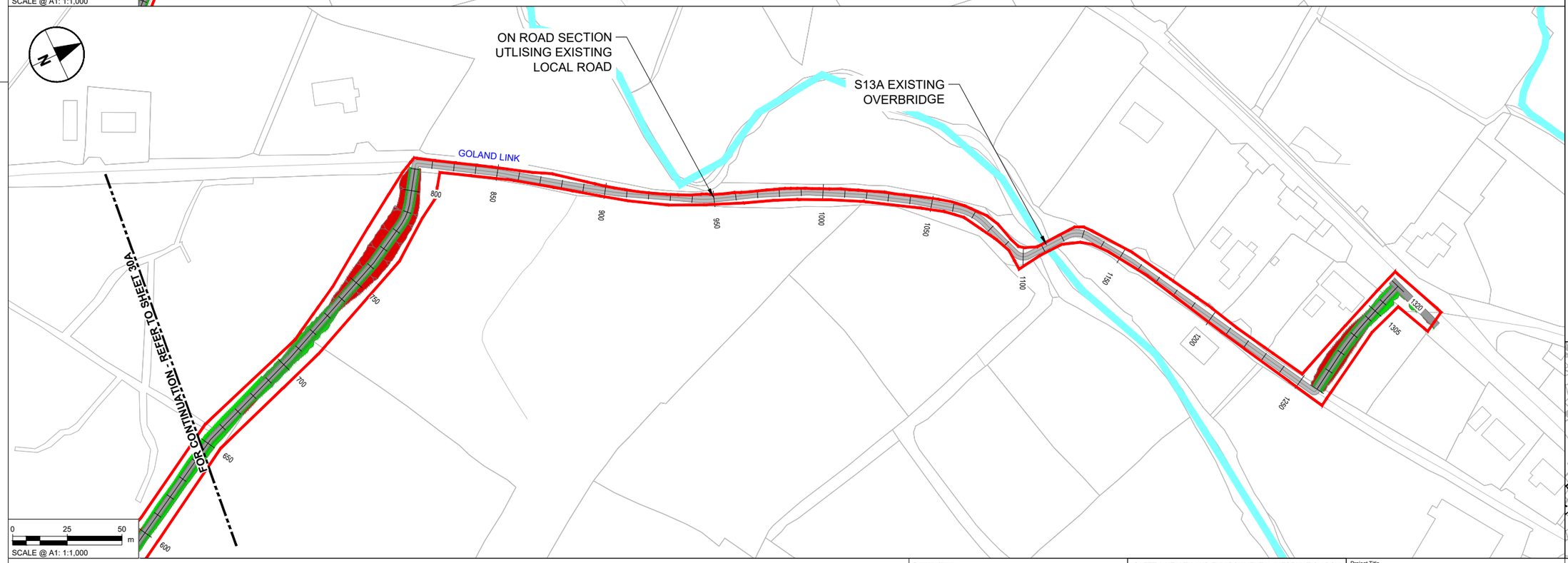
Internal Project No. 60701883 | Suitability S2

Scale @ A1 1:1000 | Volume General

Drawing Number
Aecom Project ID 60701883 | Originator -ACM | Volume -HGN- | Location SW_ZZ_ZZ_ZZ | Type -DR | Role -HG- | Number -0124

Rev P05





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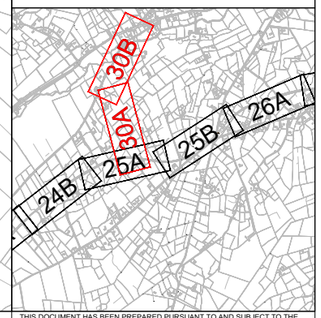

Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

Bonneagar Iompair Éireann Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall Donegal County Council

Donegal NRB Oifig Boithre Náisiúnta Dhún na nGall

Greenway

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FOR INFORMATION

	By	Check	Date	Suffix
	IL	DK	22/09/25	P02
	IL	DK	14/11/25	P03
	IL	EP	20/03/26	P04
FOR ISSUE	IL	DK	15/06/26	P05
REVISION DETAILS	By	Check	Date	Suffix

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Project Title

Barnesmore Gap Greenway

Drawing Title

SERIES 0100
GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
SHEET 30 OF 31

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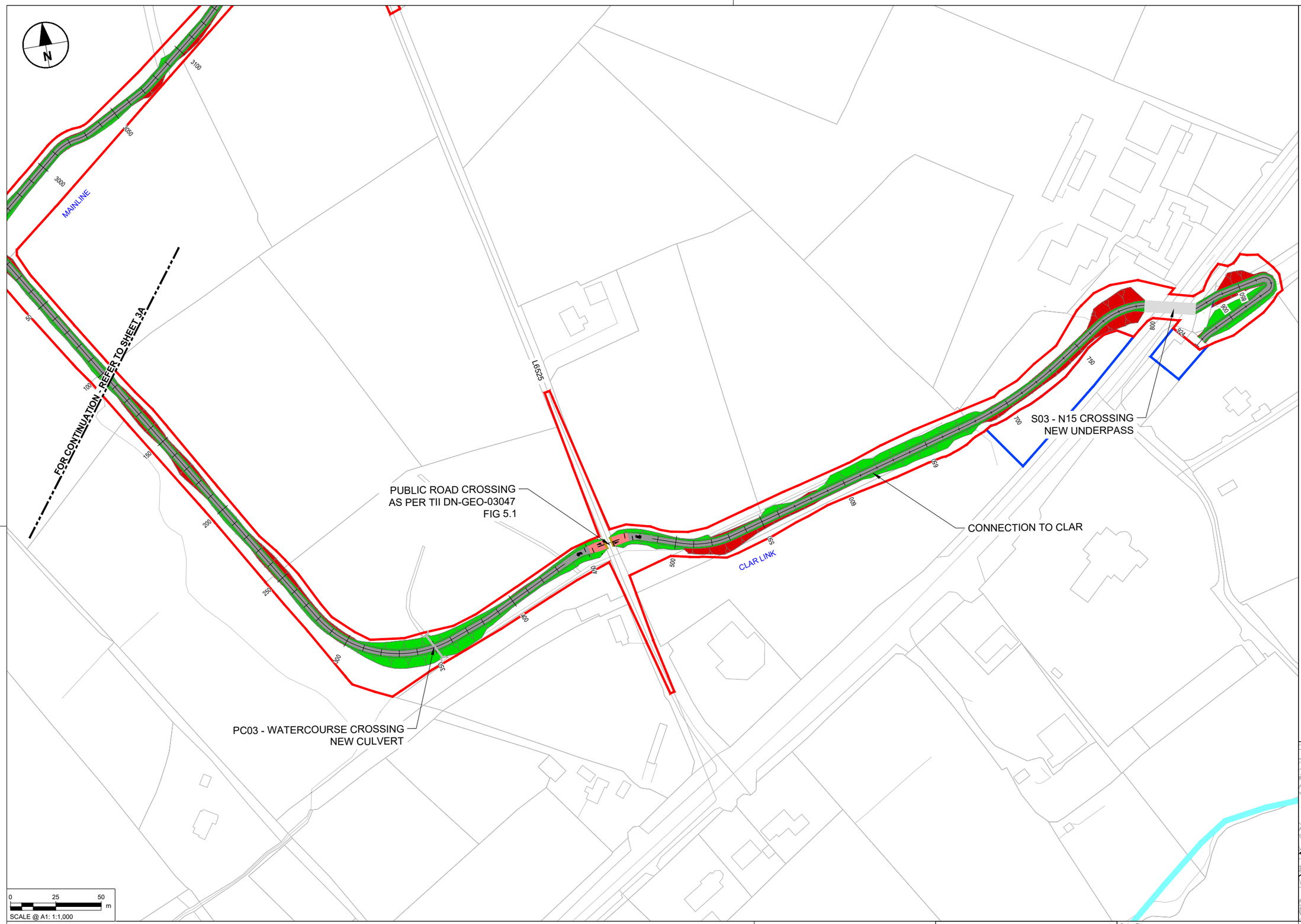
Designed	Drawn	Checked	Approved	Date
---	IL	AM	DK	15/06/26

Internal Project No.	Suitability
60701883	S2

Scale @ A1	Volume
1:1000	General

Drawing Number

Aecom Project ID	Originator	Volume	Location	Type	Role	Number	Rev
60701883	-ACM	-HGN-	SW_ZZ_ZZ_ZZ	-DR	-HG	-0125	P05



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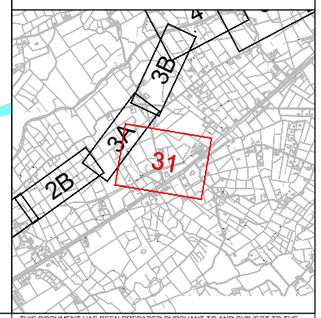

Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

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Greenway

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	IL / DK	22/09/25	P02
	IL / DK	14/11/25	P03
	IL / EP	20/03/26	P04
FOR ISSUE	IL / DK	15/06/26	P05
REVISION DETAILS	By / Check	Date	Suffix

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Project Title

Barnesmore Gap Greenway

Drawing Title

SERIES 0100
GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
SHEET 31 OF 31

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Designed	Drawn	Checked	Approved	Date
---	IL	AM	DK	15/06/26

Internal Project No.	Suitability
60701883	S2

Scale @ A1	Volume
1:1000	General

Drawing Number

Aecom Project ID: 60701883 | Originator: -ACM | Volume: -HGN- | Location: SW_ZZ_ZZ_ZZ | Type: -DR | Role: -HG | Number: -0126

Rev: P05