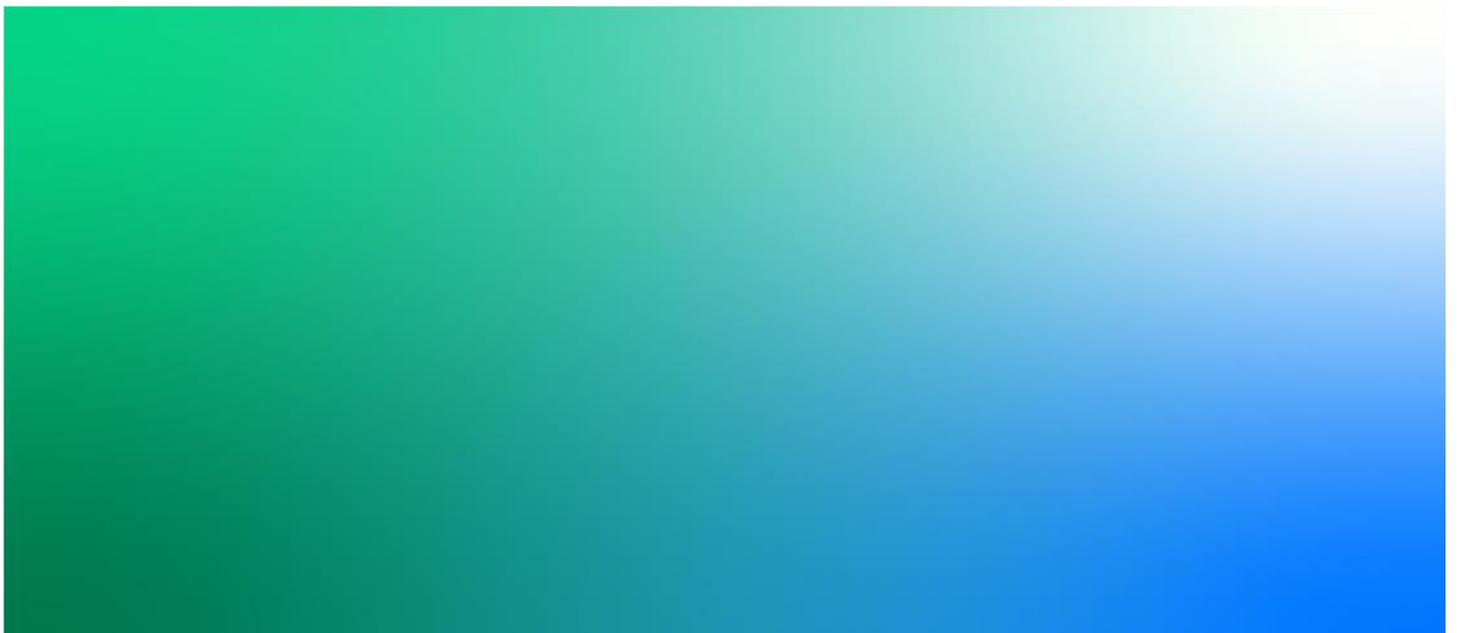




Cork Line Level Crossings
Consultation Report
Iarnród Éireann

June 2020



Cork Line Level Crossings

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 Author: Lisa Halpin
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Artola House,
 3rd & 4th Floors,
 91 Victoria Street

www.jacobs.com

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Executive Summary

Iarnród Éireann is undertaking the Cork Line Level Crossings (CLLC) Project to identify the best approach to removing/upgrading seven level crossings located along the main Cork to Dublin line. The public were asked to give feedback on the plans to remove the seven manned level crossings in operation on the Cork to Dublin line between Limerick Junction and Mallow Stations in Counties Cork and Limerick.

This non-statutory public consultation took place over a ten-week period from Tuesday 12 November 2019 until Tuesday 21 January 2020. A range of communications tools were used to publicise this period of non-statutory public consultation, including advertisements in national and local press, engagement through media and social media, updates to the project website and a dedicated project email and postal address. Two public information events were also held during this period, one in County Cork and one in County Limerick. A number of stakeholder briefings were also held.

In total, 144 submissions were received via post and email. There were two submissions received from local authorities, one submission was received from an elected representative, one submission received was from an educational institution, four submissions were received from statutory bodies and the remainder were from individual members of the public, such as local residents and landowners.

There were a few common themes across submissions received in relation to the solutions proposed in the Preliminary Design Report. At each level crossing location submissions contained concern and apprehension that roads would be turned into cul de sacs as a result of closing the local level crossing. They cited concern over anti-social behaviour, illegal dumping and increased isolation. Other submissions raised concerns that these proposed solutions would impact on the value of their property.

A number of submissions expressed a preference for the Blue Route over the chosen Green Route in the case of the elimination of level crossing at XC211 Newtown, as this would allow for continued connection to the GAA complex, the holy well and the new community hall.

The following report is an analysis of submissions received in relation to each of the proposed seven level crossing schemes.

1. Introduction

Iarnród Éireann is undertaking the Cork Line Level Crossings (CLLC) Project to identify the best approach to removing/upgrading seven level crossings located along the main Cork to Dublin line. These level crossings are currently operated by full-time members of Iarnród Éireann staff on the ground. These level crossings are being removed/upgraded to provide a safer environment for those living near the rail line and a more efficient service for all Iarnród Éireann customers.

There are currently seven manned public road level crossings in operation on the Cork to Dublin line between Limerick Junction and Mallow Stations in Counties Cork and Limerick. The crossings are located within a 24km section of the line between the Cork and Limerick county boundary. The crossings, shown in Fig 1.1, are located at Fantstown, Thomastown, Ballyhay, Newtown, Ballycoskery, Shinanagh and Buttevant.

Figure 1.1: Overview of the proposed seven level crossings



1.1 Project Need

The National Development Plan (2018-2027) sets out that the Dublin-Belfast, Dublin-Limerick and Dublin Cork lines will be 'subject to an examination to move to higher speeds leading to improved connectivity to regional cities through improved rail journey times.

It is the general duty of CIÉ, as detailed in Section 15 of the Transport Act 1950 (i.e. establishing legislation for CIÉ), to:

'provide or secure or promote the provision of an efficient, economical, convenient and properly integrated system of public transport for passengers and merchandise by rail, road and water with due regard to safety of operation, the encouragement of national economic development and the maintenance of reasonable conditions of employment for its employees and for that purpose it shall be the duty of the Board to improve in such manner

as it considers necessary transport facilities so as to provide for the needs of the public, agriculture, commerce and industry'. (underlining emphasis)

The proposed Project is an improvement to Ireland's railway network infrastructure and is principally driven by the need to improve safety.

The proposed Project will help to reduce ongoing operational and maintenance costs associated with level crossings and will assist in reducing the risk of trespass onto the railway line.

It is clear that the removal of level crossings is at the core of IÉ's approach to building a safe and robust railway network. There is a significant volume of existing railway traffic along the line carrying passengers at high speed. Given the health and safety risks associated with the interface between road users and rail, CIÉ and IÉ is progressing the proposed Project to identify preferred options for each of the seven current level crossing points. The objective of the proposed Project is to remove the level crossings and to provide a safer environment for those using the crossing points.

2. Public Consultation

2.1 Introduction

A Preliminary Design Report was published in November 2019 which outlines the proposed design solution for each of the seven level crossings. Iarnród Éireann asked for feedback from stakeholders during a ten-week, non-statutory public consultation that was held between Tuesday 12 November 2019 and Tuesday 21 January 2020. This consultation sought feedback on the Preliminary Design Report, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening & Scoping Report and any other comments or observations on the Cork Line Level Crossings Project.

Iarnród Éireann invited feedback on the following questions:

1. Do you have any comments or additional information in relation to the Cork Line Level Crossings Project that you would like us to be aware of as the project progresses?
2. Do you have any comments on the proposed solutions for the seven level crossings as outlined through Chapters 4 to 10 of the Preliminary Design Report?
3. Appendix D of the Preliminary Design Report includes the Route Options Report. Do you have any comments on the Route Options Report?
4. Do you have any comments on the Environmental Impact Assessment Screening & Scoping Report?
5. How would you like Iarnród Éireann to communicate with you as the project develops?

All submissions and feedback received during the public consultation were reviewed and will be considered as part of the ongoing design development on each of the seven level crossings. Relevant feedback will be incorporated into the final design for the Cork Line Level Crossings Project and the accompanying Environmental Impact Assessment Report.

Submissions from individuals will be reported anonymously and feedback from organisations will be attributed to them. Submissions will not be individually responded to but will be summarised in this consultation report. The Cork Line Level Crossings Project will submit a Railway Order planning application to An Bord Pleanála for its independent assessment in 2020.

Stakeholder and landowner engagement will be ongoing throughout the project. An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) will be produced in Q2 2020. This will detail the findings of the surveys and EIA scoping activities. The EIAR, Preliminary Design Report and stakeholder and landowner engagement all form part of the Railway Order application. Feedback from this public consultation period will also be considered in the development of the final design that is expected to be submitted for all seven level crossings to An Bord Pleanála in 2020.

The consultation roadmap illustrates the opportunities to give feedback on the project as it develops and can be viewed below:

Figure 2.1: Cork Line Level Crossings Roadmap



2.2 Consultation publicity and activities

Iarnród Éireann is committed to delivering the CLLC project in compliance with the Aarhus Convention regarding public participation in decision making. Therefore, the Project Team endeavours to carry out a meaningful, transparent and accessible public consultation at all stages of the project. To generate awareness of the project and to facilitate public participation, a range of communications tools were used to publicise this non-statutory public consultation, including advertisements in national and local press, engagement through media and social media, updates to the project website and a dedicated project email and postal address.

2.3 Information materials

2.3.1 Preliminary Design Report

Iarnród Éireann published the CLLC Preliminary Design Report for public consultation on 12 November 2019 on Iarnród Éireann’s website. This report aims to develop the preferred route option for each of the seven level crossing locations to preliminary design stage, in order to apply for a Railway Order from An Bord Pleanála for the combined locations.

The report outlines:

- Need for the scheme;
- Scheme delivery;
- Seven level crossings;
- Route Options Report; and

- Public consultation drawings.

The Preliminary Design Report is available to view and download on the Iarnród Éireann website here:

<https://www.irishrail.ie/Admin/IrishRail/media/Content/CLLC-Preliminary-Design-Report.pdf>

2.3.2 Environmental Impact Assessment Screening & Scoping Report

The application for a Railway Order requires the submission of materials as described in Section 37 of the Transport (Railway Infrastructure) Act 2001 (as amended). This includes the preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) detailing the potential significant impacts of the proposed project.

Screening determines the need for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The screening exercise has determined that EIA is required as it is mandatory for a Railway Order Application. Scoping is a key stage of the EIA process and the purpose of the Screening and Scoping Report was to request an opinion from the planning authority on the scope and level of detail of the information to be contained within the EIAR.

The report includes:

- description of the proposed Project;
- a screening determination on the need for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA);
- a description of the potential significant impacts which may arise during construction and operation of the proposed Project; and
- an outline of the proposed methods for assessment of the potential impacts.

The Environmental Impact Assessment Screening & Scoping Report is still available to view and download on the Iarnród Éireann website here:

<https://www.irishrail.ie/Admin/IrishRail/media/Imported/Cork-Line-Screening-Scoping-Report-18-11-2019.pdf>

2.3.3 Public Consultation Information Leaflet

A public consultation information leaflet was produced and published on the Iarnród Éireann at the launch of the consultation on Tuesday 12 November 2019.

The leaflet included:

- Map of the seven level crossings;
- Public Consultation Roadmap;
- Details on where to view or download the Preliminary Design Report and Environmental Impact Assessment Screening & Scoping Report;
- Consultation Terms of Reference;
- Details on how to make a submission or contact the Project Team; and
- Details on the CLLC public information days.

A copy of the public consultation information leaflet is included in Appendix A.

2.3.4 FAQs

A link to the FAQs on the Iarnród Éireann website can be found here:

[https://www.irishrail.ie/Admin/IrishRail/media/Imported/FAQs-\(1\).pdf](https://www.irishrail.ie/Admin/IrishRail/media/Imported/FAQs-(1).pdf)

2.4 Media

2.4.1 Advertising

At the launch of the consultation, newspaper adverts were placed in national and local newspapers. The advertisements introduced the CLLC project and gave details of the public consultation and public information events and invited members of the public to contribute their feedback. The publications and dates of these were then featured are detailed in Table 2-1. A copy of the advert can be found in Appendix B.

Table 2.1: Advertising for CLLC public consultation

Publication	Reach
Irish Independent	National
Irish Times	National
The Irish Examiner	National
Cork Independent	Local
The Corkman	Local
Vale Star/Mallow Star & Weekly Observer	Local
Limerick Leader	Local
Limerick Post	Local
The Avondhu	Local
The Evening Echo	Local
North Cork Star	Local
Weekly Observer	Local

2.4.2 Press release

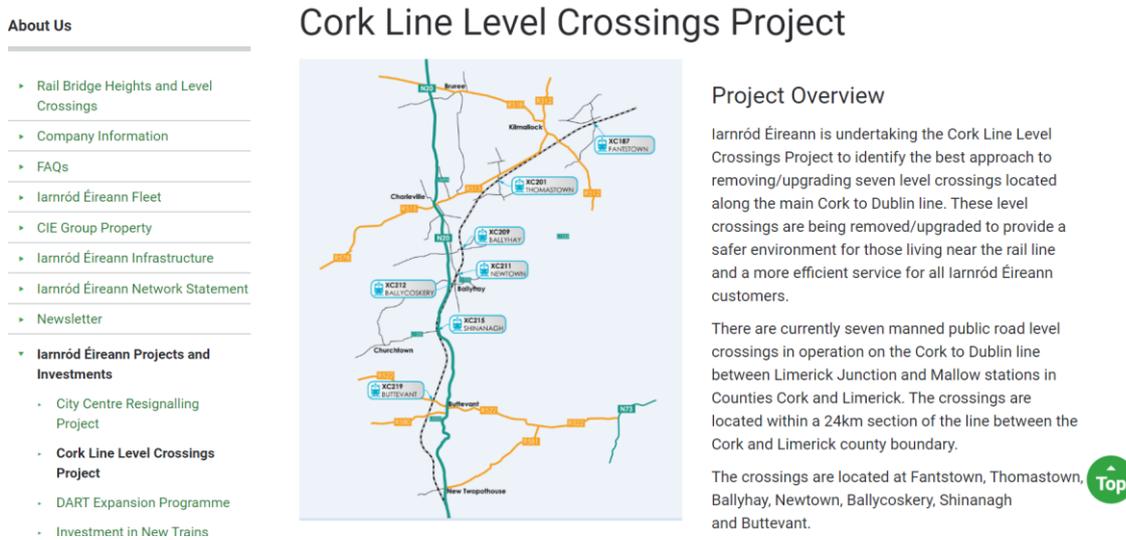
A press release was issued to national and local media. The press release introduced the CLLC project and the need for it and gave details of the public consultation. There was local newspaper coverage received in the Evening Echo on 18 November 2019 and in The Corkman on 28 November 2019. A copy of the press release can be found in Appendix C.

2.5 Project Webpage

A dedicated project webpage went live at <https://www.irishrail.ie/about-us/iarnrod-eireann-projects-and-investments/cork-line-level-crossings-project> on Tuesday, 12 November 2019. It outlined the project background

and project need and gave a detailed account of the consultation period and methods by which stakeholders could make a submission. The Preliminary Design Report, EIA Screening & Scoping Report, FAQs, information leaflet, project consultation roadmap and public consultation drawings were all made available to view and download. Since the launch of the public consultation on 12 November 2019 up to 9 March 2020 the webpage has been viewed 2,451 times for an average time of four minutes. Figure 2-2 shows a screenshot of the CLLC project webpage.

Figure 2.2: Screenshot of the CLLC project webpage



2.6 Public information events

Two public information events were held during the consultation period. Venues were selected based on the proximity to the level crossings, accessibility and for both Counties Cork and Limerick. The events were well attended with 88 members of the public recorded.

Table 2.2 Details of public information events.

Date	Venue	Attendees
Tuesday 19 November 2019	Charleville Park Hotel, Cork	77 recorded attendees
Wednesday 20 November 2019	Deebert Hotel, Limerick	11 recorded attendees

At the information events, members of the public or stakeholders were greeted at the sign-in desk and provided with the CLLC public consultation information leaflet. Stakeholders also had the option to view both the Preliminary Design Report and the EIA Scoping Report at the events and have any questions and concerns answered by members of the Project Team.

A number of displays were erected at the events that allowed stakeholders to view images and location maps of the level crossings. Sample display material and the event layout can be found in Appendix D.

2.7 Direct engagement

2.7.1 Stakeholder correspondence

At the launch of the consultation on Tuesday 12 November 2019, a number of stakeholders and organisations were contacted by email including:

- Elected representatives;
- Statutory bodies;
- Interested stakeholders & organisations;
- Local communities;
- Cork and Limerick local authorities; and
- Landowners.

The email correspondence provided information on the CLLC project, links to the Preliminary Design Report and EIA Screening & Scoping Report, details of the public consultation and information events and the contact details of the Project Team.

The email issued to elected representatives also invited them to attend one of two dedicated elected representatives' briefings prior to the public information events.

Stakeholders also received an email on 15 January 2020 reminding them of the consultation closing date for the following week.

Sample correspondence can be viewed in Appendix E.

2.7.2 Stakeholder Briefings

During the consultation period, the Project Team was available to meet with any interested stakeholders. One stakeholder meeting was held with interested parties in relation to the Ballycoskery and Newtown level crossings.

2.8 Project Information Service

- A dedicated project information service was established at the launch of this public consultation period to facilitate any stakeholder queries and submissions. It will remain active right up to lodging a Railway Order. It was promoted on the project webpage, in advertisements, press releases, and all information materials relating to the project. Stakeholders were invited to contact the Project Team or make a submission through the following channels:
- **Email:** CLLC@irishrail.ie
- **Post:** Cork Line Level Crossings Project, c/o Jacobs, Mahon Industrial Estate, Blackrock, Cork, T12 HY54

3. Feedback from public consultation

This non-statutory public consultation took place over a ten-week period from Tuesday, 12th November 2019 until Tuesday, 21st January 2020. In total, 144 submissions were received via post and email. There were four submissions received from statutory bodies, two from local authorities, one from an elected representative, one from an educational institution and the remainder were from individual members of the public.

In some cases, individuals sent in multiple submissions containing variations of the same information. A decision was taken to count each of these as a separate submission.

Three petitions were received by the Project Team during the ten-week consultation.

Submissions received from individuals and landowners have been described anonymously in this report, and referred to as a stakeholder, a respondent, a contributor, a resident or an individual. The feedback received from elected representatives, organisations and statutory bodies has been attributed to them.

Feedback in this report is presented in accordance with the consultation questions which were as follows:

1. Do you have any comments or additional information in relation to the Cork Line Level Crossings Project that you would like us to be aware of as the project progresses?
2. Do you have any comments on the proposed solutions for the seven level crossings as outlined through Chapters 4 to 10 of the Preliminary Design Report?
3. Appendix D of the Preliminary Design Report includes the Route Options Report. Do you have any comments on the Route Options Report?
4. Do you have any comments on the Environmental Impact Assessment Screening & Scoping Report?
5. How would you like Iarnród Éireann to communicate with you as the project develops?

In some cases, submissions received did not respond directly to the consultation questions. In this case, these were thoroughly reviewed and grouped into relevant subsections pertaining to the criteria outlined in the report.

All feedback received as part of this non-statutory public consultation on the Cork Line Level Crossings Project was acknowledged and recorded by the Project Team. All feedback received during the public consultation open days, stakeholder meetings and through our project information channels was reviewed and considered by the Project Team and is reflected in this Public Consultation Report.

Feedback from this public consultation period will be considered in the development of the final design that is expected to be submitted to An Bord Pleanála later in 2020. The graphic below shows the various stakeholders that contributed to this Public Consultation Report.



The views contained in this report do not reflect the views of Iarnród Éireann but represent the views of the stakeholders who made submissions. Accordingly, Iarnród Éireann does not attest to the accuracy of these submissions with regard to their validity against factual data.

3.1 Consultation question 1

Do you have any comments or additional information in relation to the Cork Line Level Crossings Project (CLLC) that you would like us to be aware of as the project progresses?

This consultation question asked respondents if they had any comments or additional information that they would like to share with the Project Team. Most feedback fell under consultation question two as it dealt with a specific level crossing proposed solution, however, any general comments or comments about a few level crossings are addressed in this section.

One respondent stated in relation to the level crossing at Thomastown “this is not just about addressing Iarnród Éireann’s need to close the crossing and make the route to Dublin faster, this is about linking the upper and lower parish who have been divided since the start of Iarnród Éireann and the safety of all those who will be affected by the bridge.”

Another respondent commented that “the CLLC project is a fantastic idea and it will help further improve safety. This project is very vital and must happen...I strongly support the CLLC project and wish Iarnród Éireann the very best with it.”

A contributor remarked “it’s a great idea, long over-due for such a busy line and is having a negative impact on community, missed connections in stations, delay joining N20 etc.”

At Buttevant level crossing a stakeholder acknowledged “we are in favour of improvements and for safety of people using the present crossing, but our own safety is important also, we are open to options that will help us to eliminate this problem [line of sight concern] and are willing to discuss any suggestions.”

A number of submissions were received in relation to XC211, XC212 and XC215, stating that they would be “obtaining professional advice and charging same to Iarnród Éireann.” They stated “No substantial reason has been given to justify the solutions that have been proposed in this development. No method statement has been given for any of the solutions proposed.”

Another respondent was concerned about “creating a hazardous situation close to our property.” They added that the road is “one of the fastest, narrowest, straightest roads in County Limerick, placing a second junction between us and Thomastown cross will cause added stresses to driving in and out our entrance on a daily basis.”

One individual identified that the “bridge being proposed is a single lane carriageway [which] is going to lead to serious road safety issues. This bridge is going to open up access to Upper Effin and there will be a major increase in traffic so realistically this needs to be a double lane dual carriageway with a footpath.” The stakeholder also noted that “due to the definite increase in traffic the bridge will create, the road needs to be upgraded.”

A stakeholder outlined that their farm would suffer a loss of privacy as people will be able to see directly into it from the top of the bridge, which is “a major concern for us due to increasing farm theft in the area. For this reason, we would like to see some form of screening.”

One contributor outlined in the submission how the project would require the construction of a new road through his land, stating “that the suggested route would be extremely disruptive and that it will significantly devalue my property.” The respondent commented that this proposed route would split agricultural land which is especially suitable for harvesting forage.” The respondent offered an alternative route for consideration by the Project Team citing lease conditions and tax implications should the preferred route be chosen.

One stakeholder expressed concern regarding the closure of the road at upper side of the railway crossing, i.e. the Effin side. The respondent raised concern that by turning this road into a cul de sac the road would become “an area for anti-social behaviour, illegal dumping, illegal parking or temporary dwellings.” The stakeholder suggested some mitigation measures to be put in place such as “a barrier, or electric gates.”

One respondent commented “visual access to oncoming vehicles both on new and existing road” would be an important consideration. Another stakeholder added “the road on Effin side of the railway track [runs] to blind 90 degree bends which will be a danger as traffic will increase after the overpass is opened. I hope that contact will be made with Limerick Co. Co. to improve these bends.”

A petition containing 78 signatures was received by the Project Team on behalf of members of the Effin community. In it the following requests were made;

1. The bridge has to be a two-way carriage road with a pedestrian footpath.
2. Move roadway at north side close to the hedge, which will suit the landowner and adjacent dwelling house.
3. Major concern the cul de sac on both sides are secure from illegal camping, dumping and anti-social behaviour.
4. Consult with residents on height of walls close to the existing railway gates.

A stakeholder living on the L8572 road echoed one of these concerns “that there will be severe dumping and parking on either side of the road where I live.”

3.2.3 Chapter 6 – XC209 Ballyhay

There were nine submissions received in relation to the Ballyhay level crossing.

One respondent stated that “the crossing at Ballyhea level crossing is proposed as automatic... commuters will still have to sit and wait at the level crossing... In today's world that's not progress.” The stakeholder noted that in other cases flyovers were provided as a solution to this.

3.2.4 Chapter 7 - XC211 Newtown

There were 37 submissions received in relation to the Newtown level crossing, mainly covering the themes of safety and access to amenities.

One stakeholder described how children cycle along the road to get to the GAA pitch, as it is quieter and safer than the main road and that "the proposed road by the housing estate is far too dangerous as there are kids playing out there all the time." The stakeholder suggested an alternative solution of a cycle and walkway over the level crossing instead. Another submission added "the proposed thoroughfare through the housing estate on the west side of the rail line is a danger to the residents and in particular the children living in this area."

One individual living on the western side of the Cork/Dublin railway line stated that they "use the Newtown level crossing to move animals to and from the farm to this land. If Iarnród Éireann close this crossing, it will cut off access to this land totally." The respondent explained "I can't use the N20 road to move animals on health and safety grounds because of the high volume of traffic that use this road."

A number of submissions stated, "this is one of the oldest right-of-ways in Ballyhea and is used not just by us but by a large number of people for access to school...it is one of the most popular walking routes in the parish." One of these submissions continued "we strongly object to a proposed new road through the local council housing estate to access the N20" citing anti-social behaviour, illegal dumping and devaluing of their properties as their main concerns. These stakeholders offered the following alternative solution "make XC211 automatic (24-hour operation) or alternatively, construct a bridge over it suitable for vehicles."

A number of residents commented "the closure of the road and the development of a cul de sac will divide the parish and obstruct access to the GAA complex and the new community hall." They added "the proposed thoroughfare is going through an area designated for community and social amenities."

A resident living on the same road as the level crossing expressed concern should the road become a cul de sac stating their "property is devalued straight away." The resident further requested compensation for the "devaluation of my property." The resident claimed the road would become an area of anti-social behaviour and illegal dumping and also contended that it "will obstruct access to the holy well and GAA complex."

One stakeholder offered an alternative solution suggesting the provision of electric gates for XC211 would be a welcome alternative.

3.2.5 Chapter 8 - XC212 Ballycoskery

There were 72 submissions received in relation to Ballycoskery level crossing, including a petition with ten signatures. The proposed solution of a new road alignment with new road-over-rail bridge was of concern to a number of residents.

Many submissions stated similar feelings, "the green route is not acceptable to me. My preferred option is the blue route. The proposed pedestrian access is a hazard and a potential health and safety risk."

One respondent expressed concern regarding her elderly mother and uncle and aunt who live adjacent to Ballyhea School, "they walk to the shop/church/bus stop and the proposed structure over these gates would be too steep for them to manage." A concern was further outlined that house values could drop in the area as a result of these changes.

A submission was received on behalf of Ballyhea National School and Board of Management, which stated "on behalf of the Board of Management of Ballyhea National School and in relation to the proposed road realignment at Ballycoskery (XC212), I am to apprise you that the Board of Management of the school has not requested Iarnród Éireann to provide car parking facilities to the south of the school." The school reiterated that it remained "neutral" with regard to the proposed development at XC212.

Similarly, a submission was received on behalf of a stakeholder in the area stating "the trustees/owners of the property have not requested Iarnród Éireann to provide car-parking facilities to the south of Ballyhea National School on their property. The trustees/owners of the property would be obliged were Iarnród Éireann to explain why and how property not necessary for railway construction or maintenance can be the subject of a compulsory purchase order emanating from a Railway Order."

A petition was received from residents in the locality with 10 signatures, calling on Iarnród Éireann to “abandon the proposed overpass and in the event of the closure of XC212 to provide an underpass at Ballycoskery.” However, a number of submissions stated their support for the red route “the preferred option for the affected is the red route. The proposed development will have a negative effect on the property value of the houses adjacent to the development.”

One stakeholder remarked “that following a detailed inspection of the maps and plans provided I am satisfied that the proposed development is a good one for both the people of Ballyhea and the North Cork South Limerick region as well as Irish Rail. As a [stakeholder] in Newtown Ballyhea I can only see a benefit to me and my family.”

One resident raised the concern of “roads becoming cul de sacs with no through traffic becoming a hive of anti-social activity dumping etc. Perhaps cameras or low bar entrances can be put in place in Ballycoskery.”

Another respondent commented “we do not support the proposed solutions for the Ballyhea level crossing – we believe that an underpass (under the railway) would solve the problem and not impact negatively on the village and its inhabitants.”

3.2.6 Chapter 9 - XC215 Shinanagh

There were 27 submissions received in relation to the Shinanagh level crossing.

One resident who is potentially impacted by the proposed development asked the Project Team “if it would be possible to keep [a] single road open for local access to enter the new road I wish to keep this road open to prevent anti-social behaviour.” The same resident further requested to “have the ditch with the trees opposite my house kept and help block the new road development from my view” and also requested that the old section of road leading to their house be “grassed over, not left as old, unused road.”

Another respondent stated “regarding Shinanagh Bridge, the width of bridge doesn’t allow for larger vehicles i.e. trucks/tractors to pass.” There is a “deep drop off at the N20 side of the bridge.” The respondent offered an alternative solution, proposing “a junction nearer to Charleville where they use existing traffic islands as N20 would be a better option.”

A number of objections were raised regarding closing the existing road and creating a cul de sac remarking “the proposed embankment will block light and obstruct views.”

Another stakeholder commented “the route goes through an archaeologically sensitive area passing between St. Declan’s Well and the ruins of the medieval church of Imphrick.”

3.2.7 Chapter 10 - XC219 Buttevant

There were nine submissions received in relation to the Buttevant level crossing.

One submission stated that the Project Team’s traffic/wait time calculation seems conservative, for example “it can be 15+ mins of wait at Buttevant if 2 trains are crossing and by the time [the] gatekeeper re-opens the R522,” in relation to the Buttevant level crossing.

“Traffic movements seem conservative also for Buttevant crossing, 20 cars waiting an average 10 mins is not uncommon, especially as XC219 requires manual opening, lever is gone. AADT [Annual Average Daily Traffic] would be over 3,000, especially with the new Secondary School within 1km to east of crossing.”

A stakeholder asked that the Project Team “please add a pedestrian footpath to the design for XC219 Buttevant that extends over rail and road bridge to the new 80km limit being set to east, design has less footpath than the current road that goes to XC219.” The stakeholder also asked that the Project Team take into account “heavy farm machinery that uses the road...hard shoulder is unsafe for a walker caught between rail bridge wall and tractor/HGV. Also future proof the design to accommodate passenger services/platform reopening in Buttevant - especially with development works happening around Kent station.”

Another point was to improve access to the future M20, a respondent stated "once XC219 bridge is built, the east of XC219 now has the better infrastructure to tie into M20."

One resident raised concern about "increased traffic going past my home and what proposals you plan to put in place to negate this." The resident also raised a safety concern, "it would appear that my line of site for traffic approaching from my left as I exit my house will be reduced under the new proposal." Another stakeholder commented "the line of vision would be restricted coming from the town and when we wish to enter our gate the traffic coming from the overpass would not be in our line of vision as we have to cross to the right-hand side of the road to enter our gate." They added that "with a clear road with no stop the traffic would be travelling at an excessive speed regardless of speed limits imposed."

One submission stated that their living room area is south facing, and that the proposed new roadway would act as "a barrier of 18 feet in height" directly in front of their home. They stated this will have a "catastrophic effect on the provision of natural light and the overall aspect" of the house and "panoramic/scenic views" from the house.

One respondent made a number of remarks regarding the proposed works at Buttevant. This stakeholder outlined that "I have a cattle crush at the roadside near the rail station where we load cattle in the corner so we would need this moved to a location which would be easy to corral the cattle into the pin for loading." The respondent further remarked "the new access road would better suit me if it was turned the opposite direction into the land by the river bank as well as the road being shorter, steeper & sealed with tarmac." They also requested access under the new bridge.

One stakeholder queried whether the "RSA has approved speed limit change from 80kph to 50kph?" advising that "compromise will be required prior to formalising the design." The respondent further stated that in order "to satisfy the needs of the holding, the design would need an access to the north-west part of the lands by providing an underpass min 10m wide under the proposed road next to the western boundary where adequate headroom can be achieved or some other desirable location. It would also need a new access onto the old road with adequate sight lines and safe stopping distances."

A detailed submission from Cork County Council was received regarding the level crossing at Buttevant outlining "that this road should be to at least 'Type 3 single' standard with a minimum road width of 6m with 3m hard shoulders, tapering to existing profile at tie-ins. Also concerned about the safety of pedestrians/cyclists crossing the bridge in that the 'typical cross-section' appears to show the crash barriers close to the road edge and hence, nowhere for the pedestrian/cyclists to step-in. Given that there is going to be running strips crossing the bridge deck in any case, we recommend that the footpath be extended out to the bridge, on one side and sufficient verge width thereafter to allow one to step off the road. The lighting should also extend to the bridge."

3.3 Consultation question 3

Appendix D of the Preliminary Design Report includes the Route Options Report. Do you have any comments on the Route Options Report?

This consultation question asked respondents if they had any comments specifically on the Route Options Report. Generally, submissions were specific to the proposed solution for the level crossing of concern however in some cases stakeholders put forward alternatives or suggestions to the proposed design.

3.3.1 XC187 Fantstown

One submission disagreed with the options appraisal undertaken stating more weighting should have been given to a bridge option at Fantstown. The stakeholder remarked "a meeting of Irish Rail staff was held at Limerick Junction to decide the best option for seven railway crossings. This could never produce an independent view. Irish Rail had already decided that 'No other option but straight closure would be considered for Fantstown XC187'." The stakeholder reiterated that "I want to be clear I am asking Irish Rail for a bridge over XC187 crossing."

3.3.2 XC201 Thomastown

One respondent remarked “the current suggested route will split a large field which is especially suitable for harvesting forage. Not only will it be more difficult to continue harvesting forage should the works proceed, part of the field will become cut off from the remainder of the parcel and a road crossing for machinery and animals will be required.”

3.3.3 XC209 Ballyhay

There was no submission in relation to XC209 Ballyhay which addressed consultation question three specifically.

3.3.4 XC211 Newtown

One submission included a map and stated “I propose that a better route, should the project go ahead, [as marked by the green line on map as part of submission]. This would require the removal of the existing hedgerow with the new road to be constructed in its place.”

A number of stakeholders remarked “the preferred option for XC211 is the blue route options report as this maintains connection with the GAA complex and the new community hall.” Another stakeholder expressed support for the blue route stating it would maintain access to the “holy well and to the new hall being built at Ballyheha N.S. This road needs to stay with excess traffic to and from our new hall.”

Many submissions offered an alternative solution at Newtown level crossing. “My solution is simple and probably most financially viable - make XC211 automatic (24 hour operation) or alternatively construct bridge over it suitable for vehicles. Another solution may be a road connecting our road to the N20 but not through or in close proximity to the Council Housing Estate. The last thing I want to see is this level crossing XC211 closed and this road made into a cul de sac, limiting my access to one way and devaluing my property. This would greatly impact on my home and lifestyle.”

A number of residents indicated that “the preferred option for XC211 is the blue route as this maintains connection with the GAA complex and the new hall.”

3.3.5 XC212 Ballycoskery

One resident remarked “I fully understand and support the need to eliminate the level crossing, but my preferred option is the blue route.”

A number of submissions were received which commented that “the route options report is a 'desk report' and lacks a field survey”. They stated “some of the information is obsolete. It is obvious from the information outlined in the summary report that the blue option at XC212 is better for all concerned and it is obvious that Iarnród Éireann have put cost before the social and environment impact of this bridge. One submission stated “the proposed option is unsafe and not acceptable on many levels. The re-join at the N20 is the narrowest point of the existing road and the footpath in this area is already too narrow and dangerous to walk.”

Many submissions from residents stated that the preferred option for the residents affected is the underpass - red route. One reason given for this was “the proposed development will have a negative effect on the property value of the houses adjacent to the development.” This resident also expressed concern regarding noise and light pollution and that the pedestrian access is a “potential health and safety risk.”

One stakeholder opposed the route stating it would have a “negative impact on the village by closing the current route and building a high structure. Building an under-railway road would solve all the negative aspects of the proposed over rail route.”

3.3.6 XC215 Shinanagh

Many stakeholders commented that “the route options report is a 'desk report' and lacks a field survey.”

3.3.7 XC219 Buttevant

One stakeholder remarked that "XC219 Green route is preferred."

One contributor remarked "My field is divided with no link access under the proposed road. The short spur road also divides my lands leaving a piece of land which I will not be able to use in its present format. The new road as designed would landlock my lands from further development and it reduces capacity for future developments (this is a serious issue). This land was zoned and I intend to make a submission to have this land rezoned under the next Local Area Plan. The new road will deny the Folio in its present format, to gain access for any new type of the development including developments in relating to farming. While the holding is small, the reduction in area reduces greatly the viability of the holding with reduced stocking rates."

This stakeholder further commented that the "red route option will be the best option for me as it does not interfere with my lands. The blue option would be preferable based on road safety grounds provided that an underpass min 10m wide with proper headroom would be provided."

3.4 Consultation question 4

Do you have any comments on the Environmental Impact Assessment Screening & Scoping Report?

This consultation question asked respondents if they have any comments on the Environmental Impact Assessment Screening and Scoping Report. In total six submissions were received from statutory bodies to our request for organisations to feed into our EIAR screening and scoping report consultation. Four were received from statutory bodies and two from county councils.

The Geological Survey of Ireland noted "our records show that there are no current CGSs located within the vicinity of the proposed railway crossings."

The M20 Cork to Limerick Project Team commented that the "N/M20 Project Team have no objections to the proposals but as the two projects are developing simultaneously, the N/M20 Project Team will require updates with the progress of the levels crossings scheme as it progresses."

Limerick County Council made a number of points to be taken into consideration by the Project Team such as being mindful of the various planning laws in this area such as Department of Housing Planning and Local Government 2018 and the 2010 Limerick County Development to see if that fits with the proposed works.

Limerick County Council also noted "in the 'population and human health' section it might be worth stressing increased safety of the rail network following the works, in this situation perhaps it might be worth citing the accident figure mentioned earlier in the scoping reports as they relate to the seven crossing points. This might also tie in with S17.2 on page 72 of the scoping document."

Limerick County Council additionally commented that "In relation to water issues, particularly for those crossings with water courses nearby (e.g. Fantstown p. 28) it would be worth giving specific details of measures designed to prevent run off and local water contamination. This might arise in S17.4 resource use and waste (p.74) and the provision of a construction and Environmental management Plan (CEMP) would help address these issues. They further commented that "Impacts on water is to be commended as a good summary of the issues involved."

Cork County Council noted "Crossings located at Ballyhea, Newtown, Ballycoskery, Shinanagh and Buttevant are all located within the catchment of the Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) Special Area of Conservation (Site Code:2170). It is recommended that a mammal survey for otter should be carried out in respect of each of these sites and consultation should take place with NPWS and IFI in relation to each of these sites as there is potential for direct and indirect impacts on the SAC and fisheries."

Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) commented in relation to the general topography of the location and its proximity to the main Awbeg floodplain. FI noted “your calculations on culvert dimension will be very much ‘flood’ driven and that the relevant culvert size will adequately allow for fish passage.”

Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) made comments which are recorded below in relation to Shinanagh level crossing.

3.4.1 XC187 Fantstown

One respondent remarked “I hope animal habitats are treated with due care i.e. foxes, hares, rabbits etc.”

3.4.2 XC201 Thomastown

A respondent adjacent to the new road stated they were “objecting to the proposed positioning of the new road for several environmental impact reasons.” These reasons involved health concerns for medical conditions and the respondent expressed concern that these conditions would worsen during construction and when operational.

Another contributor added “the proposal to relocate and loop around the new road to existing road (as is being done on opposite side of the proposed bridge) and again create a hedgerow on both sides of this new road.” Due to outlined medical reasons the stakeholder stated that “the proposed road location during and after construction could prove a huge concern for [his] health going forward.”

The submission also stated that the new road would impact on their privacy and that a “privacy screening solution” for their property would be required to avoid an increase in noise pollution both during and after construction.

3.4.3 XC209 Ballyhay

A respondent remarked “if the river was cleared the small field would not flood. Also, it’s a non-productive piece of land so its loss would not be any major loss.”

A stakeholder in the area wished to advise the Project Team that there is a river on the right hand side of the road after you cross the railway line and “approximately 80 metres east of the railway crossing there is a pipe under this road that supplies water from this river to my land on the left side of the road. I would ask that you take this into consideration if any alterations are to be done to the road during the upgrading of the level crossing.”

Another submission stated “it will have a negative impact on the environment and obstruct views of the Ballyhoura Mountains forever for the inhabitants of Ballyhea village. This is a great and deep loss.”

3.4.4 XC211 Newtown

A number of submissions stated that “the report does not take into account the impact on the two bat colonies in the area.”

3.4.5 XC212 Ballycoskery

Many stakeholders observed “the proposed development is visually intrusive on a tourist and environmentally sensitive area.” They remarked “It does not take into account protected species such as bats, hawks, buzzards, otters etc.” They further added “the report does not take into account the impact on the two bat colonies in the area affected.”

One stakeholder commented that “the proposal makes a negative aesthetic impact. The elevated road to and from the proposed overpass. The proposed solution does not take account of the geo-spatial profile of the village and its curtilage. Rather, the solution is atomically focused on itself, for example, it does not take into account the fact that the village is already bisected by the N20 main thoroughfare rendering communication between both sides of the village less than optimal.”

A resident commented “the proposed development is visually intrusive on a tourist and environmentally sensitive area. The bridge will be unsightly and spoil the area.”

A number of residents stated that “There will be an increase in noise pollution and light pollution and reduction in sunlight.”

One resident stated that “the proposed option has the highest environmental impact of all proposed options.” The submission stated the it was “visually intrusive on a tourist and environmentally sensitive area... and does not take into account protected species such as bats, hawks, buzzards, otters etc.”

3.4.6 XC215 Shinanagh

A number of submissions advised the proposed route “goes through an archaeologically sensitive area, passing as it does between St. Declan’s Well and the ruins of the medieval church.” They further outlined their objection to the existing road becoming a cul de sac stating the “embankment will be unsightly and block light and obstruct the view in the area.”

Another stakeholder remarked “it is an environmentally sensitive area and does not take into account protected species in the area.”

Other submissions mentioned “the route goes through an archeologically sensitive are passing between St. Declan’s Well and the ruins of the medieval church of Imphrick.”

Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) made an official submission in response to the Environmental Impact Assessment scoping referral. In it they stated “XC215 Shinanagh involves the closure of an existing crossing and diversion northward for local traffic to access the N20 national primary road. Treatment of the existing local road junction with the N20 national primary road, at XC215 Shinanagh which is proposed to be closed, as well as the upgrade works to the revised local road junction accommodating the diverted local road traffic to the N20 will require careful consideration. All works to national road junctions shall adhere to the standards in TII Publications and all works to the national road shall be assessed to determine the requirement for a Road Safety Audit.”

TII further stated that for the purpose of the EIA scoping report consultations shall be necessary with:

- Cork County Council Transportation Department and Cork National Roads Office, especially with regard to operation and safety of the existing N20 and associated improvement schemes with particular regard to site XC 215 Shinanagh and potential diversions associated with level crossings at Ballyhea/Newton and Buttevant, and
- M20 Project Office and associated Mid-West National Road Design Office Limerick.

3.4.7 XC219 Buttevant

One respondent remarked that the EIA Screening and Scoping Report contains “loss of bird and bat habitat from tree and hedgerow destruction and shed removal at XC219” and disagrees with Irish Rail’s approach to hedge cutting. The respondent further requested information on what mitigation measures and wildlife relocation will be taken especially around tree replacement/hedging planting and stopping construction material/liquid and run road off after construction from entering waterways alongside the XC219 crossing. They added that “swans, herons, otters all use the fields surrounding [the] station as it’s a flood plain and a number of lakes form there over winter.”

A stakeholder raised concern regarding “the level of noise I will be exposed to at unsocial hours while the proposed works are ongoing.”

A stakeholder mentioned in their submission that “the area outside my house is frequently flooded when raining, I expect there to be increase run off from the new works into this area and would like further details on what drainage works are planned to accommodate the run off from the newly elevated road. This is not clear from your drawings in the proposal.”

Another stakeholder remarked “the surface water that will be coming from the overpass may result in some flooding as it does at present with a very small fall in the road.”

One submission described how “the creation of the overbridge will have an adverse environmental effect” on their home from a noise perspective. Another stakeholder remarked how the proposed project would “severely prejudice any planning application” they may wish to make to the local authority in the future.

A stakeholder commented that they “have a water connection at the bridge that will have to be relocated to the other side of the new road.” They further queried where the run off from the new road would flow.

3.5 Consultation question 5

How would you like Iarnród Éireann to communicate with you as the project develops?

Many respondents indicated they were happy to be contacted by the Project Team and listed their preferred method of contact i.e. post, email, face to face meetings. The Project Team has made a note of these requests.

One respondent living close to the Thomastown level crossing stated that they had contacted Irish Rail hoping to get more information on the project. They had also attended the public consultation day in the Charleville Park Hotel. However, they were disappointed that they had not heard anything from Irish Rail since.

Another stakeholder living adjacent to the railway crossing at Buttevant queried whether the Project Team “have a nominated liaison officer to deal with queries.” They further requested additional “information on a rough estimate of the length of time that works will take to carry out.”

A petition with five names was received on behalf of the residents of Beechwood Drive, Corrin Drive, Ballycoskery and Newtown outlining concerns with the proposed preferred (green) option. The residents requested a meeting with the Project Team at their earliest convenience to arrive at a “mutually acceptable solution.”

4. How feedback has influenced the final design

Feedback received as part of this non-statutory public consultation on the Cork Line Level Crossings Project was acknowledged and recorded by the Project Team. All feedback received during the public consultation open days, stakeholder meetings and through our project information channels was reviewed and considered by the Project Team and is reflected in this Public Consultation Report.

Feedback from this public consultation period will be considered in the development of the final design that is expected to be submitted to An Bord Pleanála later in 2020.

In relation to the design of the level crossing at XC201 Thomastown and at XC 211 Newtown significant change has already been considered as a direct result of this consultation period as those changes are outlined below.

4.1 XC201 Thomastown

Following feedback received from local residents, the general public and representations made from the Municipal District of Cappamore-Kilmallock it was decided by the Project Team to futureproof the new overbridge being constructed as a solution to closing the level crossing. This means that instead of the proposed single lane bridge, the bridge will now be a wider two-way bridge allowing for ease of traffic movements and improved road safety conditions.

4.2 XC211 Newtown

Following the close of the consultation period it was noted by the Project Team that a number of submissions were received expressing a preference for the Blue Route over the chosen Green Route in the case of the elimination of level crossing at XC211 Newtown.

Many stakeholders felt the blue route would allow for continued connection to the GAA complex, the holy well and the new community hall. After careful consideration, the Project Team decided to hold a second period of consultation for XC211 Newtown. This consultation sought to take these local resident and stakeholder concerns into account and requested feedback on the elimination of XC211 in relation to the Blue Route, feedback on the Preliminary Design Report and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report.

In total 11 submissions were received in relation to this further consultation which can be viewed on the Irish Rail website with the majority of submissions expressing support for the change of route.

5. Next Steps

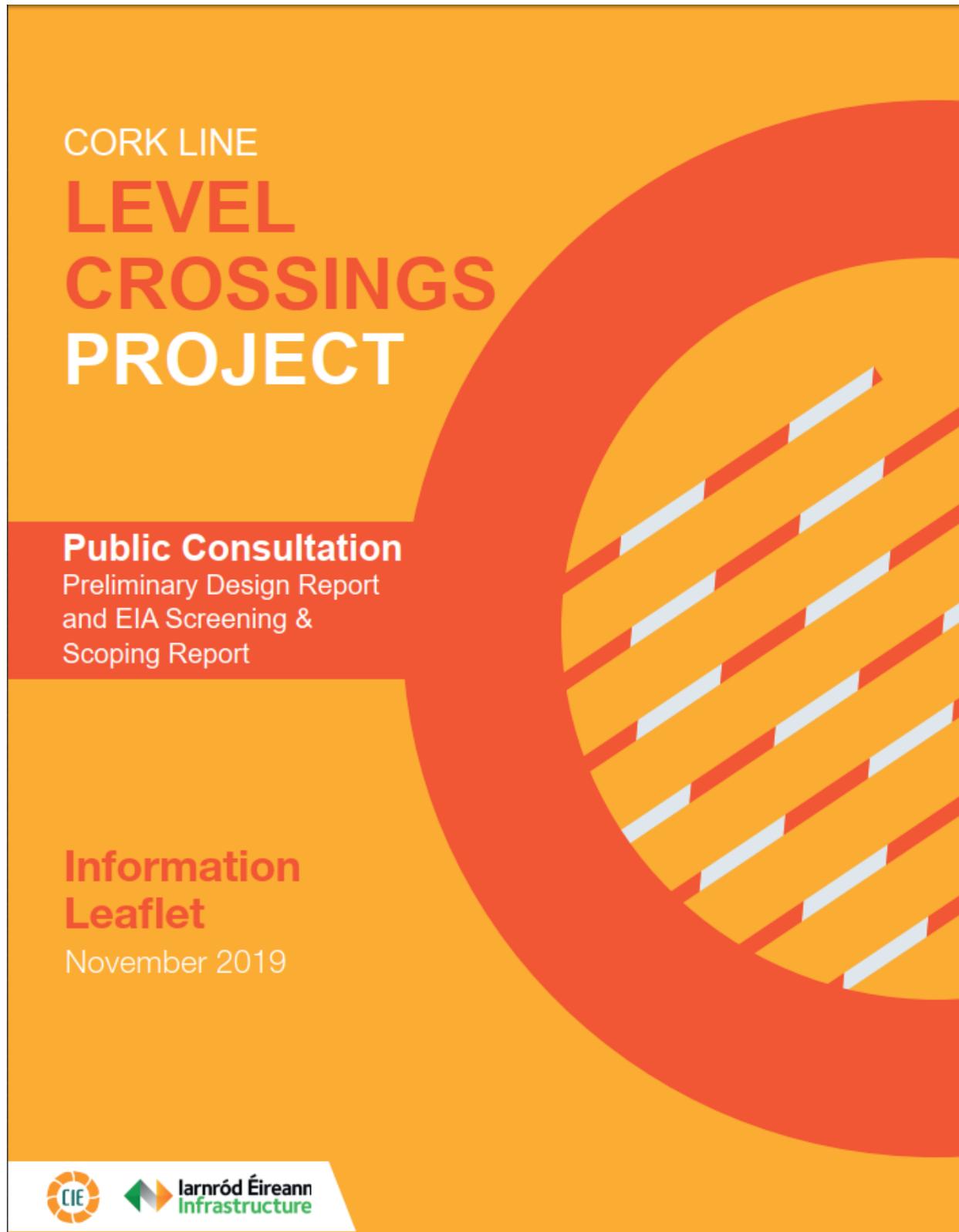
The CLLC Project Team has reviewed each submission from this public consultation and will now consider how feedback influences the next design phase of the project. We would like to thank everyone who made a submission to this public consultation or has engaged with the project to date.

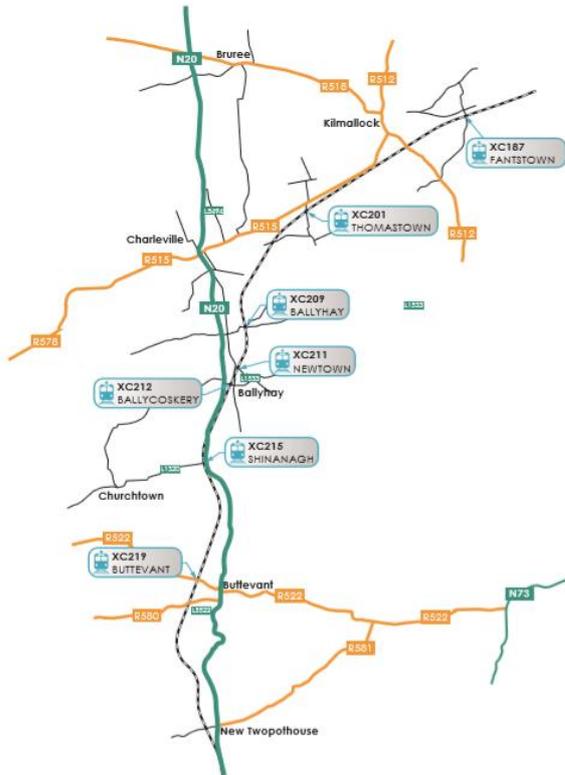
Stakeholder and landowner engagement will be ongoing throughout the project. An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) will be produced in Q2 2020. This will detail the findings of the surveys and EIA scoping activities. The EIAR, Preliminary Design Report and stakeholder and landowner engagement all form part of the Railway Order application. It is expected that the application will be submitted for all seven level crossings to An Bord Pleanála in 2020.

Railway Orders are similar to planning permissions for strategic infrastructure developments. Iarnród Éireann must apply directly to An Bord Pleanála for a Railway Order.

Feedback received from this public consultation and the further identified XC211 Newtown public consultation will be considered in the development of the Railway Order that is expected to be submitted to An Bord Pleanála in Q2 2020.

Appendix A. - Information leaflet





Cork Line Level Crossings Project

Iarnród Éireann is undertaking the Cork Line Level Crossings Project to identify the best approach to removing seven level crossings located along the main Cork to Dublin line.

These level crossings are being removed/upgraded to provide a safer environment for those living near the rail line and a more efficient service for all Iarnród Éireann customers.

There are currently seven manned public road level crossings in operation on the Cork to Dublin line between Limerick Junction and Mallow stations in Counties Cork and Limerick. The crossings are located within a 24km section of the line between the Cork and Limerick county boundary as detailed in the map opposite.

Cork Line Level Crossings Project | Public Consultation

Why is this project needed?

In June 2019 Iarnród Éireann participated in International Level Crossing Awareness Day (ILCAD) which aims to highlight the dangers of level crossings and to educate the public on acting safely at level crossings.

In the first six months of 2019, Iarnród Éireann reported 51 incidents at level crossings nationally, an increase of 82% on the same period in 2018. This figure includes cars and HGVs colliding with barriers and near-misses between vehicles and trains.

It is Iarnród Éireann's policy to close level crossings where possible and practicable. The removal of the level crossings in conjunction with providing alternative routes for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists will remove the potential for accidents. The permitted line speed of trains at each of these seven level crossing locations varies between 140 – 160 kilometres per hour so this high speed creates an additional safety risk.

The Level Crossing Risk Model (LCRM) is used by Iarnród Éireann to assist in the management and identification of risks at level crossings which calculates risk based on factors such as the number of users of a rail service and several of the seven level crossings are identified as high-risk on this scale.

Public Consultation Roadmap

Stakeholders are being invited to contribute to the development of the Cork Line Level Crossings Project through public consultation and engagement at key stages, as outlined in the Cork Line Level Crossings Public Consultation Roadmap below.



Cork Line Level Crossings Project | Public Consultation

Public Consultation

Iarnród Éireann has published a Preliminary Design Report which shows the proposed solutions for each of the seven level crossings. We are seeking feedback on the Preliminary Design Report and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report and any other comments or observations on the Cork Line Level Crossings Project.

Public consultation will be undertaken for ten weeks from Tuesday 12 November 2019 until Tuesday 21 January during which time the Preliminary Design Report and EIA Screening & Scoping Report can be viewed and downloaded at www.irishrail.ie/CorkLineLevelCrossings.

Iarnród Éireann is inviting feedback on the following consultation questions:

1. Do you have any comments or additional information in relation to the Cork Line Level Crossings Project that you would like us to be aware of as the project progresses?
2. Do you have any comments on the proposed solutions for the seven level crossings as outlined through Chapters 4 to 10 of the Preliminary Design Report?
3. Appendix D of the Preliminary Design Report includes the Route Options Report. Do you have any comments on the Route Options Report?
4. Do you have any comments on the Environmental Impact Assessment Screening and Scoping Report?
5. How would you like Iarnród Éireann to communicate with you as the project develops?

Information Events

Public consultation events will take place at the following venues where you can meet with the Cork Line Level Crossings Project team to discuss the project and have any questions you may have answered.

Date	Venue	Time
Tuesday 19 November 2019	Charleville Park Hotel, Charleville, Co. Cork	2.00pm to 8.00pm
Wednesday 20 November 2019	Deebert House Hotel, Deebert, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick	2.00pm to 8.00pm

How to make a submission

If you would like to make a submission, please send it by email or post by Tuesday 21 January:

Email: CLLC@irishrail.ie

Post: Cork Line Level Crossings Project, c/o Jacobs, Mahon Industrial Estate, Blackrock, Cork, T12 HY54

What happens next?

All submissions and feedback received during the public consultation will be reviewed and considered as part of the ongoing design development on each of the seven level crossings. Relevant feedback will be incorporated into the final design for the Cork Line Level Crossings Project and the accompanying Environmental Impact Assessment Report.

Submissions will not be individually responded to but will be summarised in a consultation report which will be published on www.irishrail.ie/CorkLineLevelCrossings. The Cork Line Level Crossings Project will submit a Railway Order planning application to An Bord Pleanála for its independent assessment in 2020.

Cork Line Level Crossings Project | Public Consultation



Appendix B. – Newspaper advert

Iarnród Éireann seeks feedback on the Cork Line Level Crossings Project

Public Consultation

Iarnród Éireann is undertaking the Cork Line Level Crossings Project to identify the best approach to removing seven manned level crossings located along the main Cork to Dublin line between Limerick Junction and Mallow stations in Counties Cork and Limerick.

The crossings are located at Fantstown, Thomastown, Ballyhay, Newtown, Ballycoskery, Shinanagh and Buttevant.

Iarnród Éireann has published a Preliminary Design Report which shows the proposed solutions for each of the seven level crossings. We are seeking feedback on the Preliminary Design Report and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening & Scoping Report and any other comments or observations on the Cork Line Level Crossings Project.

A ten week public consultation is now underway during which time the Preliminary Design Report and EIA Screening & Scoping Report can be viewed and downloaded at www.irishrail.ie/CorkLineLevelCrossings.

Public consultation events will take place at the following venues where you can meet with the Cork Line Level Crossings Project Team to discuss the project and have any questions you may have answered.

Date	Venue	Time
Tuesday 19 November 2019	Charleville Park Hotel, Limerick Road, Charleville, Co. Cork	2.00pm to 8.00pm
Wednesday 20 November 2019	Deebert House Hotel, Deebert, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick	2.00pm to 8.00pm

Comments and feedback can be sent to Iarnród Éireann by **Tuesday 21 January 2020**:

Email: CLLC@irishrail.ie

Post: Cork Line Level Crossings Project, c/o Jacobs, Mahon Industrial Estate, Blackrock, Cork, T12 HY54

All feedback received will be reviewed and considered as part of the ongoing design development of the seven level crossings. Relevant feedback will be incorporated into the final design for the Cork Line Level Crossings Project and the accompanying Environmental Impact Assessment Report.

The Cork Line Level Crossings Project will submit a Railway Order planning application to An Bord Pleanála for its independent assessment in 2020.

Appendix C. – Press release

Public Consultation launched on Cork Line Level Crossings Project

Iarnród Éireann launch public consultation on proposed designs to facilitate the closure of seven level crossings on the Cork to Dublin rail line.

Iarnród Éireann is undertaking the Cork Line Level Crossings Project to identify the best approach to removing seven level crossings located along the main Cork to Dublin line. The seven manned level crossings between Limerick Junction and Mallow are being removed/upgraded to provide a safer environment for those living near the rail line and a more efficient service for Iarnród Éireann customers.

Safety

In the first six months of 2019, Iarnród Éireann reported 51 incidents at level crossings nationally, an increase of 82% on the same period in 2018. This figure includes cars and HGVs colliding with barriers and near-misses between vehicles and trains.

It is Iarnród Éireann's policy to close level crossings where possible and practicable. The removal of the level crossings in conjunction with providing alternative routes for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists will remove the potential for accidents. Any location where there is an interface between rail and road traffic has the potential for an accident, including cars getting stuck, pedestrians being hit by a train or vehicles making risky manoeuvres so that they clear a level crossing in time before a barrier closes. The seven identified level crossings on the Cork-Dublin line have high risk ratings on Iarnród Éireann's Level Crossing Risk Model which calculates risk based on factors such as the number of users of a rail service.

Public Consultation

Iarnród Éireann has published a Preliminary Design Report which shows the proposed solutions for each of the seven level crossings. We are seeking feedback on the Preliminary Design Report and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening & Scoping Report and any other comments or observations on the Cork Line Level Crossings Project.

Public consultation will be undertaken for ten weeks from **Tuesday 12 November 2019** until **Tuesday 21 January 2020** during which time the Preliminary Design Report and EIA Screening & Scoping Report can be viewed and downloaded at www.irishrail.ie/CorkLineLevelCrossings.

Barry Kenny, Corporate Communications Manager, Iarnród Éireann said "the Cork Line Level Crossings Project is being undertaken to improve safety and operational efficiency for our customers on the Cork-Dublin service and for those living nearby. We have now published our Preliminary Design Report and the Environmental Impact Assessment Screening & Scoping Report and we know there are many people in the local community who will welcome this opportunity to participate in the public consultation process. We welcome everyone's feedback on this as we strive to find the best possible solutions to the level crossing closures."

All submissions and feedback received during the public consultation will be reviewed and considered as part of the ongoing design development on each of the seven level crossings. Relevant feedback will be incorporated into the final design for the Cork Line Level Crossings Project and the accompanying Environmental Impact Assessment Report.

The Cork Line Level Crossings Project will submit a Railway Order planning application to An Bord Pleanála for its independent assessment in 2020.

Notes to editor

The seven level crossings are located within a 24km section of the line between the Cork and Limerick county boundary and are as follows:

- Fantstown
- Thomastown
- Ballyhay
- Newtown
- Ballycoskery
- Shinanagh
- Buttevant

Contact for interview/comment: Barry Kenny

Appendix D. – Display material

CORK LINE LEVEL CROSSINGS PROJECT



XC187 FANTSTOWN





Appendix E. – Sample correspondence

Dear XX,

Iarnród Éireann is undertaking the Cork Line Level Crossings Project to identify the best approach to removing seven level crossings located along the main Cork to Dublin line. I am writing to inform you about a public consultation taking place on the Cork Line Level Crossings Preliminary Design Report and Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report. These documents are now available to view and download at www.irishrail.ie/CorkLineLevelCrossings.

The seven manned level crossings between Limerick Junction and Mallow are being removed to provide a safer environment for those living near the rail line and a more efficient service for Iarnród Éireann customers. The crossings are located at Fanstown, Thomastown, Ballyhay, Newtown, Ballycooskery, Shinanagh and Buttevant.

Public Consultation

Iarnród Éireann has published a Preliminary Design Report which shows the proposed solutions for each of the seven line level crossings. We are seeking feedback on the Preliminary Design Report and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report and any other comments or observations on the Cork Line Level Crossings Project.

Public consultation will be undertaken for ten weeks from **Tuesday 12 November 2019** until **Tuesday 21 January 2020** during which time the Preliminary Design Report and EIA Scoping Report can be viewed and downloaded at www.irishrail.ie/CorkLineLevelCrossings.

Consultation Questions

Iarnród Éireann is inviting feedback on the following consultation questions:

1. Do you have any comments or additional information in relation to the Cork Line Level Crossings Project that you would like us to be aware of as the project progresses?
2. Do you have any comments on the proposed solutions for the seven line level crossings as outlined through Chapters 4 to 10 of the Preliminary Design Report?
3. Appendix D of the Preliminary Design Report includes the Route Options Report. Do you have any comments on the Route Options Report?
4. Do you have any comments on the Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report?
5. How would you like Iarnród Éireann to communicate with you as the project develops?

Information Events

Public consultation events will take place at the following venues where you can meet with the Cork Line Level Crossings Project team to discuss the project and have any questions you may have answered.

Date	Venue	Time
Tuesday 19 November 2019	Charleville Park Hotel, Limerick Road, Charleville, Co. Cork	2.00pm to 8.00pm
Wednesday 20 November 2019	Deebert House Hotel, Deebert, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick	2.00pm to 8.00pm

How to make a submission

If you would like to make a submission, please send it by email or post by **Tuesday 21 January 2020**

- **Email:** CLLC@irishrail.ie
- **Post:** Cork Line Level Crossings Project, c/o Jacobs, Mahon Industrial Estate, Blackrock, Cork, T12 HY54

All submissions and feedback received during the public consultation will be reviewed and considered as part of the ongoing design development on each of the seven level crossings. Relevant feedback will be incorporated into the final design for the Cork Line Level Crossings Project and the accompanying Environmental Impact Assessment Report.

Submissions from individuals will be reported anonymously and feedback from organisations will be attributed to them. Submissions will not be individually responded to but will be summarised in a consultation report which will be published on www.irishrail.ie/CorkLineLevelCrossings.

The Cork Line Level Crossings Project will submit a Railway Order planning application to [An Bord Pleanála](#) for its independent assessment in 2020.

Iarnród Éireann is committed to continuously engaging with stakeholders and we encourage feedback as we work through the development of the NWRP. For more information, please visit www.irishrail.ie/CorkLineLevelCrossings

Yours sincerely,

James Kenny

Cork Line Levels Crossing Project Manager



Cork Line Level Crossings Project Public Consultation

To ,

We thank you for expressing interest in the Cork Line Level Crossings project. This ten-week, non-statutory consultation will close next Tuesday, 21st January 2020. If you have any further feedback or concerns regarding the project, we encourage you to make a submission by this date.

If you would like to make a submission, please send it by email to this address or by post to: **Cork Line Level Crossings Project, c/o Jacobs, Mahon Industrial Estate, Blackrock, Cork, T12HY54.**

Following the closure of this consultation period, submissions will be reviewed and considered by the Project Team in the design and development of the scheme. Submissions will be incorporated into a consultation report, with individuals having their feedback attributed anonymously. This report will be available on the Cork Line Level Crossings webpage: <https://www.irishrail.ie/About-Us/Iarnrod-Eireann-Projects-and-Investments/Cork-Line-Level-Crossings-Project>

We thank you again for your engagement. If you have any queries regarding the project, we would be happy to assist via email.

Yours sincerely,

James Kenny

Cork Line Levels Crossing Project Manager