

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION REPORT IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 38 OF THE ROAD TRAFFIC ACT, 1994, AS AMENDED BY SECTION 46 OF THE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION REGULATION ACT 2009

Re: LIMERICK CITY 30KMPH MULTIPLE JUNCTION IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS



Mike Richardson

Trevor McKechnie

**Mike Richardson
Senior Executive Engineer**

**Trevor McKechnie
Senior Engineer**

Pursuant to SECTION 38 OF THE ROAD TRAFFIC ACT, 1994, AS AMENDED BY SECTION 46 OF THE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION REGULATION ACT 2009 this report is submitted to the members of Limerick City & County Council. In accordance with Section 38 of the above Act, it is proposed to proceed as indicated in Section 5 of this report.

Brian Kennedy

**Brian Kennedy
Director of Services
Transport and Mobility Directorate
Limerick City & County Council**

Date: 14/06/2023

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1.0 Foreword

This report has been prepared pursuant to provisions of Section 38 of the Road Traffic Act, 1994, as amended by Section 46 of the Public Transportation Regulation Act 2009, Limerick City and County Council hereby gives notice of its intention to carry out 30kmph junction tightening measures at five various identified locations in Limerick City Centre.

2.0 Description of the nature and extent of the proposed development

The scheme comprises of the introduction of a 30kmph speed limit in Limerick City Centre with the introduction of additional junction tightening measures at five various identified locations including:

- Barrack street & Castle Street junction
- Dock Road & Curry Street junction
- Quinlan Street & Barrington Street junction
- Harstonge Street and O' Connell Avenue junction
- Harstonge Street and O' Pery Square junction

Refer to Figures 2.1 to 2.6 of this report.

The plans and particulars went on public display from Friday 5th of May to Friday the 2nd of June 2023. Submissions and observations had to be submitted by 4pm on the 2nd of June 2023.

Location:



Figure 2.1: Site Location – 5no. locations in Limerick City area

Site Layouts:

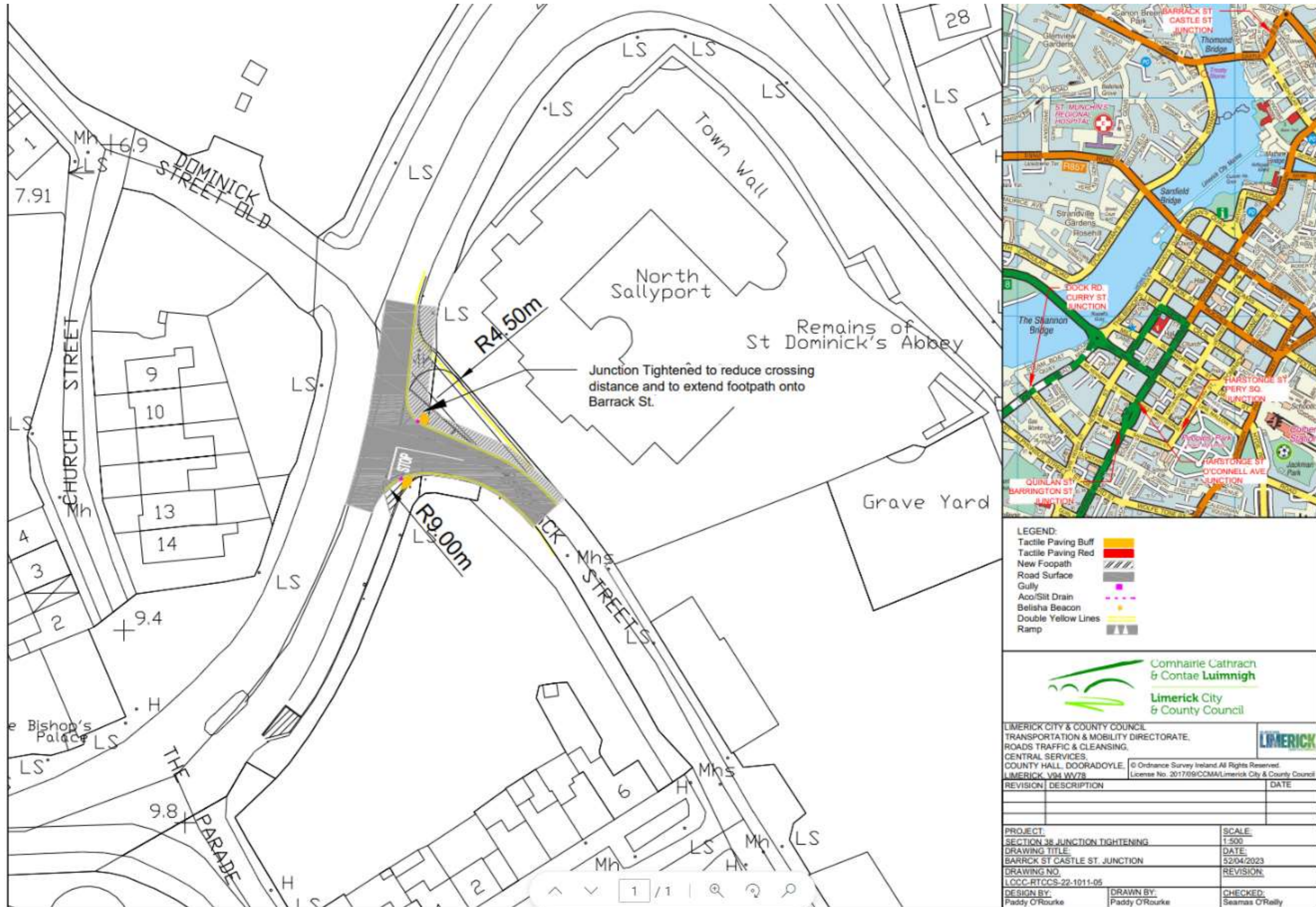


Figure 2.2 Barrack Street / Castle Street Junction Tightening

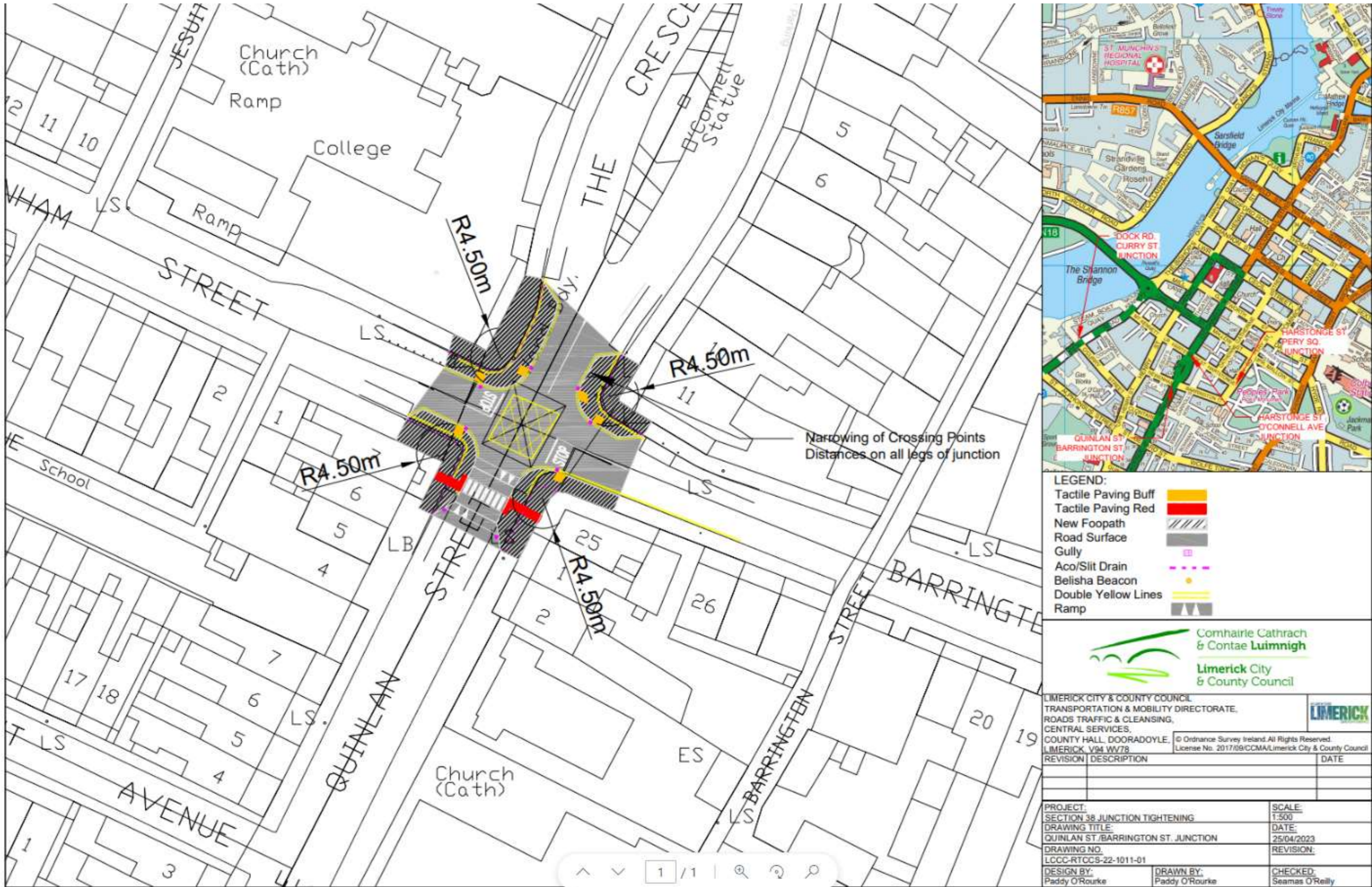


Figure 2.4 Quinlan Street / Barrington Street Junction Tightening / Pedestrian crossing

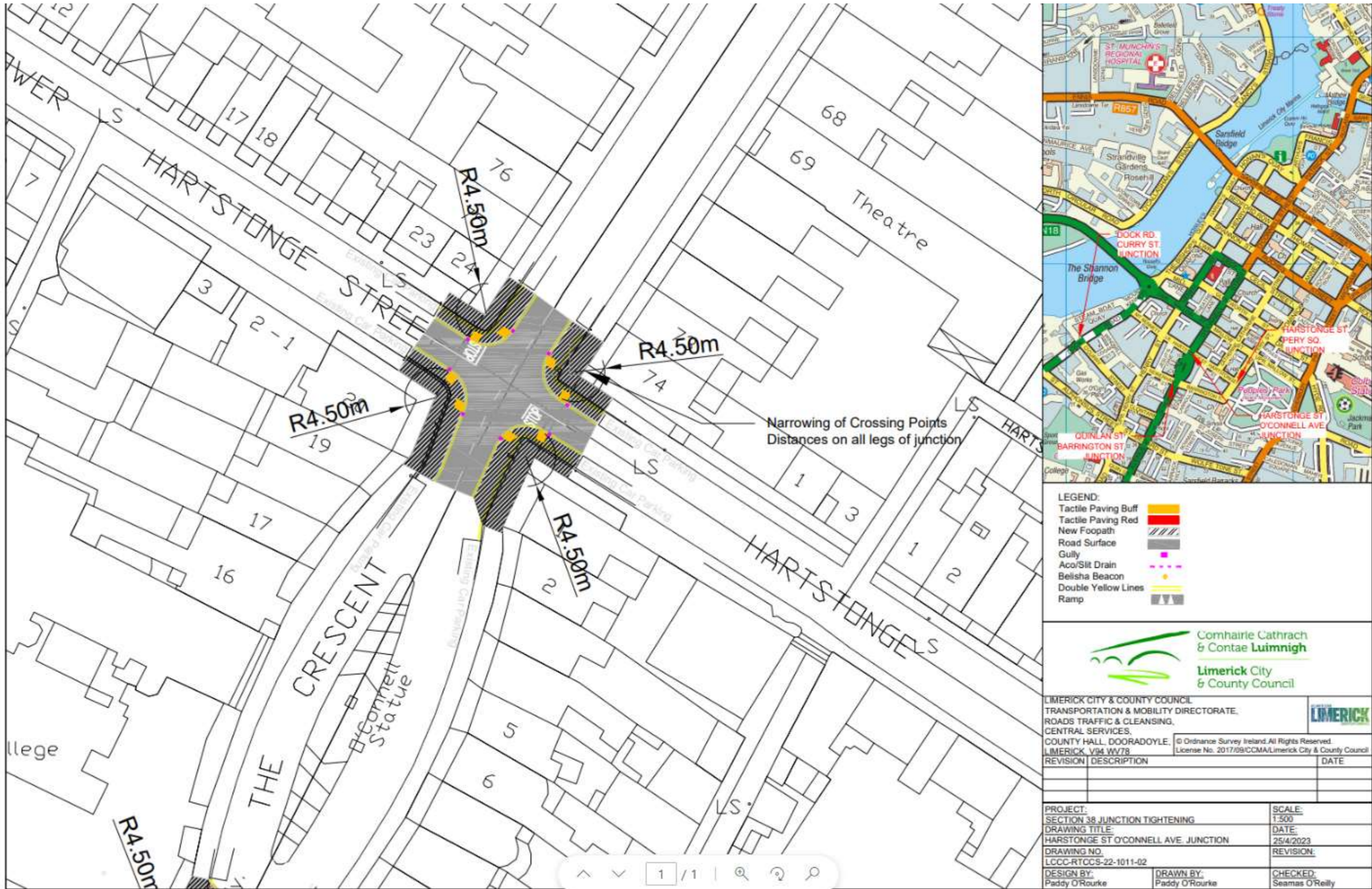


Figure 2.5 Hartstonge Street / O'Connell Avenue Junction Tightening

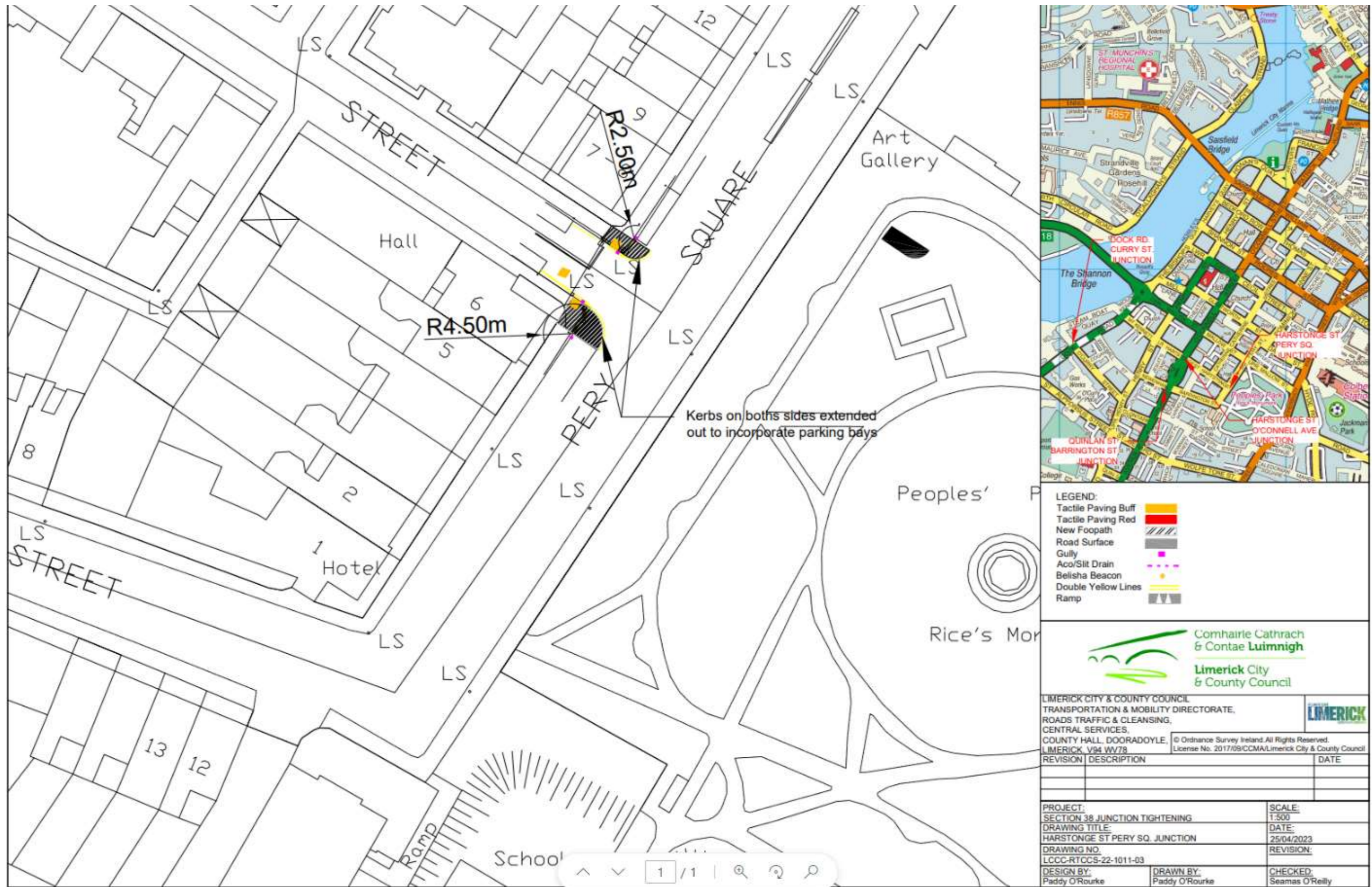


Figure 2.6 Hartstonge Street / Pery Square Junction Tightening

3.0 Likely implications, if any, with respect to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area

This project does not have any likely implications, with respect to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. No significant road infrastructure amendments will be made as part of this scheme that could have any further planning implications in the area.

4.0 Submissions with respect to the proposed development

| Submission Ref | Submitted by |
|----------------|---------------------|
| 1 | Alexander Schieweck |
| 2 | Brian Haugh |
| 3 | Brian Haugh |
| 4 | Ken O'Neill |
| 5 | Peter Spencer |
| 6 | Damian Coughlan |
| 7 | Damian Coughlan |
| | |

4.1 Submissions:

SUB 1

Submission Summary:

Theme: Pedestrian

Title: Missing Pedestrian Crossing Facilities

Documents Attached: No

Boundaries Captured on Map: No

Observations:

I am writing to you regarding the 30Kph Junction Project in the city centre. Overall, I am in favour of this project. However, I noticed a lack of pedestrian crossing options in your drawings. There seem to be spots, marked in yellow, where the curb is lowered or some other way to indicate a possible pedestrian crossing. But drivers are only forced to stop after this, closer to the intersection itself, and there are no other means to draw attention to the pedestrians either.

The 'Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets' in its latest version from May 2019 (Version 1.1) accessible under <https://www.dmurs.ie/copy-of-what-is-dmurs>, states on page 90: 'More generally, designers should - Provide pedestrian crossing facilities at junctions and on each arm of the junction'. Further down in Fig. 4.60 on page 105 are sketches of general junction layouts, where the sketch for a priority junction clearly shows a corridor for pedestrians to cross.

I understand that a full zebra crossing is not possible at every location, but providing a more visual cue to drivers that pedestrians might be crossing, and to guide pedestrians on where to cross, would be greatly appreciated.

Transport and Mobility comments:

1. In all five junctions of this scheme pedestrian crossing points will be greatly improved with the introduction of upgraded dish paths, improved tactile paving, tightening of junctions and increased widths of footpaths reducing pedestrian crossing distances. Works will be carried out within DMURS standards or guidance. A road safety audit will be carried out on all five locations of this scheme over 3 stages prior to and upon completion of these works.
2. A designated pedestrian zebra crossing point will be introduced on the junction of Quinlan Street & Barrington Street to assist pedestrians crossing the busy trafficked O'Connell Avenue. A signalled crossing is already in place at the Dock Road / O'Curry Street junction. As alluded to signalled crossing points would not be feasible at all junctions. However, the addition of these additional junction tightening, traffic calming and improved pedestrian crossing measures will make it easier and safer for pedestrians especially venerable road users to cross these junctions.

SUB 2

Submission Summary :

Theme: Pedestrian

Title: Pedestrian Safety

Documents Attached: No

Boundaries Captured on Map: No

Observations:

While the proposed junction upgrades are certainly an improvement on the current layouts, they unfortunately perpetuate the car dominated status quo that has made the area a hostile environment for pedestrians. Due to the volume and speed of the traffic passing through these junctions, simple dropped kerbs, which are only suitable for low traffic areas, are insufficient to provide safe crossing. I note that only one zebra crossing is proposed across five junctions. These junctions are located in areas of relatively high residential density, and lie along key walking routes for the residents both into the city centre and to the People's Park. Continuous footpaths/table junctions would be preferable as they would both slow traffic and provide a clear signal that drivers should take care when travelling through the junction.

Transport and Mobility comments:

1. LCCC Roads currently deem pedestrian users as our biggest priority, however we also have a duty to ensure vehicles can commute to areas around the city where required to provide goods/services and for other commuters where required. A designated pedestrian zebra crossing point will be introduced on the junction of Quinlan Street & Barrington Street to assist pedestrians to cross the busy trafficked O'Connell Avenue. A signalled crossing is already in place at the Dock Road / O'Curry Street junction. Unfortunately, signalled crossing points would not be feasible at all junctions. However, the addition of these additional junction tightening, traffic calming and improved pedestrian crossing measures will make it easier and safer for pedestrians especially venerable road users to cross these junctions.

SUB 3

Submission Summary

Theme: Speed limit

Title: Speed limit enforcement

Documents Attached: No

Boundaries Captured on Map: No

Observations:

The proposed reduction in speed limit in the city centre is welcome. There is a large body of data supporting a lower 30km/h speed limit both in terms of pedestrian safety and increasing the walkability of cities. However, it is clear the current 50km/h speed limit is neither adhered to or enforced in the city centre and I fear that

without significant garda enforcement and the installation of significant traffic calming infrastructure throughout the city the new speed limits will have little effect. I fully support the introduction of the reduced speed limit, however, I ask that this be backed up with a major investment in traffic calming measures. I note that the reduced turning radii in the proposed junction upgrades will discourage drivers from speeding around corners, however, much more can be done to slow the speed of traffic through these junctions.

Transport and Mobility comments:

LCCC roads hope to carry out an assessment of the newly installed 30kmph zones where possible once they the new 30kmph measures are formally introduced and junction improvements are completed. We will be working with the Gardai on any speed enforcement issues if required. Further improvements will be considered in future pending scheme feasibility and availability of future budgets

SUB 4

Submission Summary

Theme: Speed Limit

Title: Reduce the city center speed limit to 30km/h

Documents Attached: No

Boundaries Captured on Map: No

Observations:

This 30 Km/h speed limit makes sense from a basic health & safety viewpoint and should be standard across all of Limerick City in my view. This would reduce the risk to pedestrian and cyclist as well as reduce the risk of vehicular collision with the lower traffic speed and reducing the walk distance at zebra crossings for pedestrians. However, just another note on the "Maps of Multiple Junction Schemes" provided - Limerick really needs to include 'Street Trees' in all new construction works. This was a real miss on the current (nearly completed) O'Connell Street Revitalisation Project. Street Trees would not only cool down the street for pedestrians and provide cover during wet days - not to mention what it could do for biodiversity, but would also, according to Demurs (<https://www.dmurs.ie/copy-of-what-is-dmurs> - pp 26), ...helps enhance enclosure - which spatially defines streets and creates a more intimate and supervised environment.

Transport and Mobility comments:

The introduction of the Limerick City 30kmph zone and junction tightening improvements schemes unfortunately would not be able to cater for additional street trees as these may cause sightline and safety issues at junctions. However, the Public Realm department within LCCC will consider additional trees in the streetscape for any future urban renewal schemes in the city centre if possible.

SUB 5

Submission Summary

Theme: Speed limit

Title: Speed limit

Documents Attached: No

Boundaries Captured on Map: No

Observations:

As a physiotherapist specialising in orthopaedic and spinal injuries I have seen first hand the life changing injuries that road traffic accidents can cause and fully support the proposed change to 30km/h and traffic calming measures at the junctions listed.

The science and research regarding both fatalities and injuries following impact of cars at 50km/h and 30km/h is irrefutable and has been known for a number of years (Aarts, L.; Van Schagen I., 2006. Driving speed and the risk of road crashes: A review. Accident Analysis & Prevention. 38.2, 215-224.)

A 30km/h speed limit has been shown to result in a fivefold reduction in fatalities and has been successfully adopted in an increasing amount of European cities as well as the likes of Belfast and Edinburgh (Milton et al 2022)

As such, although this is likely to be unpopular at first amongst a small percentage of car owners, I feel that it is policy that should be completed in its entirety and commend those involved in pursuing this change for the safety of the citizens of Limerick

Transport and Mobility comments:

We envisage that the introduction of the Limerick City 30kmph zone and junction tightening improvements schemes will make Limerick City centre a safe environment for pedestrian including venerable road users and reduce the risk of road injuries.

SUB 6

Submission Summary

Theme: Speed limit

Title: A safer city for everyone

Documents Attached: No

Boundaries Captured on Map: No

Observations:

I am fully supportive of reducing speed limits in these areas and the wider city environs. All the evidence that has been gathered states that slower streets are safer for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists alike. In order to make Limerick a liveable city we need safe streets in order to encourage people to return. The increase in e-mobility and cycling has already had an impact on the quality of our city. Reductions in speed will eliminate much of the danger caused by cars and hgv's. The streets that have been selected for this scheme are currently used mostly as rat runs or shortcuts to other areas and are treated as normal national roads by a small cohort of speeding drivers. We need to eliminate the risks caused by speeding vehicles. As a resident of this city I have seen numerous incidents of near misses caused by inconsiderate drivers. We need action to allow safe passage for all our citizens.

Transport and Mobility comments:

We envisage that the introduction of the Limerick City 30kmph zone and junction tightening improvements schemes will make Limerick City centre a safe environment for pedestrian and venerable road users. Further improvements in other areas will be considered in future pending scheme feasibility and availability of future budgets.

SUB 7

Submission Summary

Theme: Pedestrian

Title: Pedestrian priority crossings

Documents Attached: No

Boundaries Captured on Map: No

Observations:

I would favour pedestrian priority crossings at all these junctions to allow safer access for people. The implementation of these crossings would also enable a reduction in speeds. There is a severe lack of pedestrian crossings in the city and priority should be in place for all footpath users.

Transport and Mobility comments:

It is envisaged that the introduction of the Limerick City 30kmph zone and junction tightening improvements schemes will make Limerick City centre a safe environment for pedestrian and venerable road users. Further improvements in other areas will also be considered in future pending scheme feasibility and availability of future budgets

Operations & Maintenance Services (Roads), Limerick City & County Council

Transport and Mobility comments:

In all five junctions of this scheme, pedestrian crossing points will be greatly improved with the introduction of upgraded dished footpaths, improved tactile paving, tightening of junctions and increased widths of footpaths reducing pedestrian crossing distances. Works will be completed within DMURS standards or guidance. A road safety audit will be completed on all five locations of this scheme over 3 stages prior to and upon completion of these works.

A designated pedestrian zebra crossing point will be introduced on the junction of Quinlan Street & Barrington Street to assist pedestrians crossing the busy trafficked O'Connell Avenue. A signalled crossing is already in place at the Dock Road / O'Curry Street junction. Signalled crossing points would not be feasible at all junctions. However, the addition of these additional junction tightening, traffic calming and improved pedestrian crossing measures will make it easier and safer for pedestrians especially venerable road users to cross these junctions.

The scheme unfortunately would not be able to cater for additional street trees as these may cause sightline and safety issues at junctions.

LCCC roads hope to carry out an assessment of the newly installed 30kmph zones where possible once they the new 30kmph measures are formally introduced and the improved pedestrian crossing / junction tightening schemes as outlined are completed. We will be working with the Gardai on any speed enforcement issues if required. Further improvements in other areas will be considered if required in future pending scheme feasibility and availability of future budgets.

5.0 Conclusion

The Limerick City and County Council road department currently intend to proceed with this scheme. All comments issued on submissions have been reviewed and scheme will proceed based on Transport and Mobility comments given above.

6.0 Action taken by Local Authority

1. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application, on the 5th of May. This project does not require planning as it does not meet the planning thresholds as laid out in the Planning & Development Regulations, 2001-2021.

