

**LONGFORD COUNTY COUNCIL
ROADS DEPARTMENT**

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION REPORT
IN ACCORDANCE WITH
SECTION 38 ROAD TRAFFIC ACT 1994 AND
“GUIDELINES ON TRAFFIC WORKS PROCEDURES”
ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT
IN OCTOBER 2023**

**PROPOSED JUNCTION RECONFIGURATION AT
DRUMLISH CROSSROADS, DRUMLISH TOWN.
(MAIN ST, ST MARY’S ST, HILL RD
AND LONGFORD RD.)**

AUGUST 2024

To: Samantha Healy, Director of Services for Infrastructure, Climate Action and Innovation.

Following on from an earlier determination that Section 38 Road Traffic Act 1994 is the appropriate process for the assessment and implementation of the proposed works titled “Proposed Junction Reconfiguration at Drumlish Crossroads”, a non-statutory public consultation process was undertaken to determine local attitudes and responses to the proposed works. This report outlines this consultation process and the decisions and actions that arise from it.

As mentioned, an earlier determination process was carried out to determine if Section 38 Road Traffic Act 1994 was the appropriate process for the assessment and implementation of the proposed works “Proposed Junction Reconfiguration at Drumlish Crossroads.” A copy of this determination report is included in Appendix 1 of this report.

Being satisfied that the requirements of the Section 38 Guidelines (issued by the Department of Transport in Oct 2023, Appendix 2) have been fully complied with in relation to the above proposed development, I have prepared the following report in accordance with the requirements of Section 8 of the above Guidelines and formally submit same to you for a Traffic Works Order to be signed off.

This report concludes by requesting a “Traffic Works Order” to be formally signed off in the form of a Chief Executive’s Order approving the proposed works outlined hereafter.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Goffinger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'D' and a long, sweeping underline.

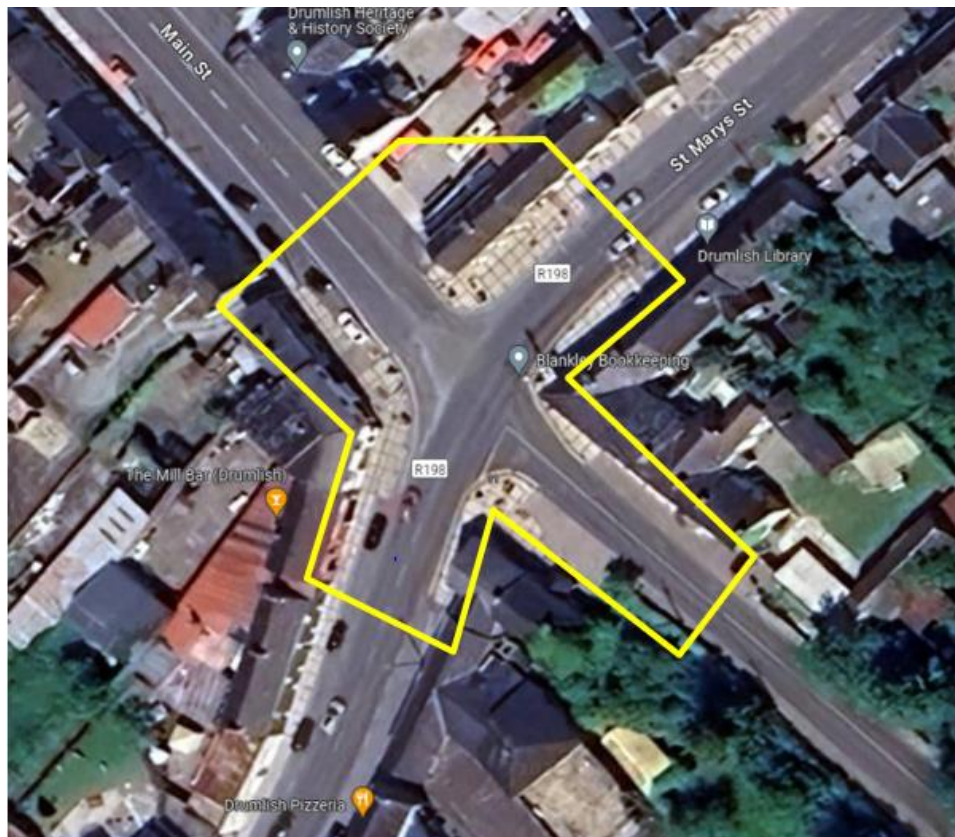
Senior Executive Engineer Granard Municipal District.

1. INTRODUCTION/ SITE LOCATION

The proposed project involves the permanent reconfiguration of the existing crossroad in the middle of the town of Drumlish. This will require the alteration of the junction kerb lines, roadways and footpaths in order to improve safety and reduce speed. The subject area is outlined by the yellow shape on the satellite photo below.

A number of recent incidents at the crossroads have highlighted a problem with traffic on the side roads (Main S and Hill Road) not stopping as they approach the R198, which has priority at the junction. In a number of instances vehicles have continued through the crossroads and have collided with traffic on the Regional Road. Although there have been some significant injuries, thankfully there have been no fatalities to date.

The proposed works are detailed on the attached drawing (**Appendix 3**). These works involve changing the shape and configuration of the junction to eliminate straight through traffic movements on the minor roads, thereby forcing traffic on these roads to yield to the traffic on the R198. The narrowing of the junction on all approaches will serve to reduce approach speeds. Pedestrian Safety will also be significantly improved. It will also provide an opportunity to install some planted areas to soften the overall visual impact of the junction.



Aerial View of the subject area.

2. NATURE AND EXTENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development will consist of the following:

- Alterations to the existing kerb lines at the junction
- Increasing the size and area of the existing pavements to create larger “Build Outs”.
- Alterations/Removal of small sections of the existing paths to accommodate the “Wheel Tracking” of large Heavy Goods Vehicles through the crossroads.
- Narrowing of all four roads to reduce the risk to pedestrians using the crossing.
- Provision of Raised Pedestrian Crossings at the Hill Rd and Main St approaches to the junction.
- Provision of new planted areas to improve the visual amenity of the junction.

3. IS SECTION 38 OF THE ROAD TRAFFIC ACT 1994 APPROPRIATE

The Guidelines on Traffic Works Procedures, issued by the Department of Transport in October 2023 requires that a separate determination exercise is undertaken to determine the works described herein, which are proposed to be carried out by Longford County Council Roads Section, are appropriate for assessment and implementation in accordance with Section 38 of the Road Traffic Act 1994.

This determination was carried out in June 2024 and the conclusion was that this is indeed the correct procedure. A copy of this Determination Document is included in **Appendix 1**.

4. NON-STATUTORY PUBLIC CONSULTATION, SUBMISSIONS, ETC.

Once it was decided that Section 38 was the appropriate process, Section 8 of the Guidelines Document provided for a Non-Statutory Public Consultation process to be undertaken to get local feedback from the Residents of Drumlish regarding the proposed works.

A notice of consultation was published on Longford County Council's website under the roads section notifying the public of the Public Consultation. In addition, Longford County Council's Social Media Platforms were used to spread the word regarding the process and the deadline dates. And finally, paper copies of the consultation documents were placed on display in Drumlish Branch Library, including drawings of the proposed works.

The consultation process went live on Wednesday 3rd July 2024 and all documents remained on display until 4pm Wednesday 24th July 2024.

The public were invited to make submissions in writing or via a dedicated email address and the deadline for receipt of submissions was set as 4pm on Wednesday 31st July 2024.

A total of 6 submissions were received concerning various aspects of the proposals. Below is a brief description of the submissions and Longford County Council proposed response to the submissions.

- 4.1 A submission by Catherine Heaney welcomed the proposed development and called the omission of the large existing planters located on the Butcher's Shop corner. She suggested a much lower planter on the corner.

Response: *This is accepted and indeed the intention of the green areas at the corners is to allow an alternative to the larger planters which are obstructing sightlines at the junction.*

- 4.2 A submission from Green Pasture Meats requested that narrowing of all 4 roads on approach to crossroads in centre of village should not be done. It noted the high number of articulated lorries and trailers passing through the crossroads each day and suggested that the narrowing of the roads this will lead to traffic congestion in our village. It suggests an alternative traffic calming proposal, consisting of raised crossings on the 4 roads feeding into the crossroads and digital stop signs. It called for these to be implemented immediately and the whole area should be reassessed in six months' time.

Response: *This submission would not provide any significant improvement to Pedestrian safety at the existing crossings points especially on the Mohill Rd (Main St) or the Hill Rd. At present pedestrians are exposed for extended distances when crossing the road and Vulnerable Road users are particularly at risk. Furthermore, the current alignment provides straight through traffic movements from the Mohill Rd to the Hill Rd and vice versa. These straight through movements and pedestrian safety are the primary concerns driving the development of the current proposals.*

- 4.3 A submission by Detective Inspector David Jordan on behalf of An Garda Síochána was also received. This submission confirmed the accident history at the junction, particularly in recent times and attributed these to speed and a lack of awareness of signs and road markings but primarily drivers failing to observe. It acknowledged that the proposals would slow down traffic through the crossroads and in particular on the Mohill Road. It did however express concerns that for articulating vehicles approaching from the Longford direction and wishing to turn left down the Mohill Rd, would have to slow or even stop due to the new alignment and this might cause traffic collisions as traffic queued behind the articulating vehicles. It asked if additional measures could be implemented to warn approaching traffic of the potential for this type of queuing traffic.

Response: *The designers have taken on board this suggestion and will now include some additional buildouts and signage (particularly at the pinch point opposite Cairn Hill Guesthouse) to provide for an extended sightline and warnings to approaching traffic from the Longford direction. In addition to this, Longford County Council have separate plans to provide a raised controlled pedestrian crossing on Longford Town approach, in the vicinity of Drumlish Health Centre, which will aid in reducing traffic speeds on approach to the crossroads junction.*

- 4.4 Two submissions were received from Aiden Gray and Shane Gray, both expressing concerns at the loss of parking spaces adjacent to their properties and the impact of the works on access to their properties. They also had a query regarding the proposed footpath levels from the Library to the Hill Rd corner.

Response: *Engineers from Longford County Council met with both individuals to clarify the query and the works as designed do not significantly impact the parking or access arrangements at the location. Some minor alterations to the design can be made to retain 4 parking spaces and the entrance access. The revised footpath arrangements along their property are needed to facilitate wheelchair users and people with buggies who currently have to walk through parking spaces to access the footpath on the Hill Rd. The new arrangement will remedy this problem. The footpaths levels can be adjusted at construction stage to accommodate property entrances.*

4.5 A submission was received from Drumlish Tidy Towns making comments on three issues regarding the works and footpaths in general in the village. These are dealt with separately below.

4.5.1 This first comment/query related to the proposed planted areas and in general welcomed them. However, it queried the type, size, and location of these areas. It also went on to suggest that planter boxes would be preferable.

Response: *At the time of the Public Consultation, no decision had been made regarding the detailed proposals for the planted areas other than they would be located on all four corners and would be visual aids to all footpath users to define the appropriate walking routes to the various street crossing points. Currently pedestrians can cross at any number of locations due to the lack of desire line definition. It is now proposed to construct these green areas with grass and some semi mature trees. These will provide colour contrast to guide pedestrians and are easily maintained. However, they can be replanted in the future should local groups wish to do so, provided that any planting does not hinder sightlines. The planter boxes proposed would likely require high maintenance and could impede sightlines, so they are not considered appropriate.*

4.5.2 Point 2 related to general comments on the condition of paths in the village and the problems with keeping them clean. It mentioned matters such as waterlogged, and dirty paths and kerbs, dog fouling, litter etc.

Response: *These matters while obviously of general concern, are not relevant to the public consultation process for the proposed crossroads layout and therefore no response is required.*

4.5.3 Point 3 related to the lack of a Community Worker under TÚS / RSS since early April 2024 and the impact this has on the resources available to the Tidy Towns Committee in maintaining the village.

Response: *This matter while obviously of concern to the Tidy Towns Committee, is not relevant to the public consultation process for the proposed crossroads layout and therefore no response is required.*

5. CONCLUSIONS.

Having regard to the above-mentioned public submissions and observations received, it is considered that the proposed development would provide a significant improvement to the safety of all road users utilising the crossroads. It is therefore proposed that the development should proceed with minor alterations to deal with the issues raised during the non-statutory public consultation phase. The following is a list of the proposed alterations.

- 5.1 Concerns raised by Gardai, regarding queuing traffic on Longford Rd.
Additional buildouts and signage will be installed on the approach road with specific works at the “pinch point” at the existing gate and entrance opposite the Cairn Hill Guesthouse.
- 5.2 Concerns raised by the Gray’s regarding parking and footpath levels.
Some minor alterations to the design will be made to retain 4 parking spaces and the entrance access. The footpaths levels can be adjusted at construction stage to accommodate property entrances.
- 5.3 Green Area Design query raised by Drumlish Tidy Towns committee.
It is now proposed to construct these green areas with just grassed areas and some semi mature trees in order to minimise maintenance. However, they can be replanted in the future should local groups wish to do so, provided that any planting does not hinder sightlines.

6. RECOMMENDATION

In accordance with Section 38 of the Road Traffic Act (1994) and the associated guidelines issued by the Department of Transport in Oct 2023, a decision to proceed with the proposed works is an Executive decision, to be recorded by way of a Chief Executive’s Order (Traffic Works Order).

I therefore recommend that the proposals should proceed, with the minor alterations outlined in Section 5 above and that the decision to proceed be formally recorded as a Chief Executive’s Order (Traffic Works Order) and should be published on the local authority’s website.



Senior Executive Engineer Granard Municipal District.

APPENDIX 1 Determination Report June 2024 attached separately.

**APPENDIX 2 Section 38 Guidelines (issued by the Department of
Transport in Oct 2023, attached separately.**

**APPENDIX 3 Drawing of the proposed Reconfiguration Works attached
separately.**