

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO

The Trunk Road T8 (Randalstown to Toome) Order (Northern Ireland) 2011

S.R. 2011 No. 74

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Explanatory Memorandum has been prepared by the Department for Regional Development to accompany the Statutory Rule (details above) which is laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly.
- 1.2. The Statutory Rule is made under Articles 14(1), 15(1), 16(1) and (2) and 68(1), (3) and (5) of the Roads (Northern Ireland) Order 1993 and is subject to the negative resolution procedure.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. The purpose of the order is to allow for the construction of the Randalstown to Toome dual carriageway which will provide improved road safety and consistent journey times for strategic traffic and local road users, and will facilitate further expansion of local industry in the area.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan 2015 (RSTNTP) confirms individual road schemes to be implemented subject to economic assessments, statutory processes and availability of resources. The RSTNTP includes a proposal to upgrade the North Western Key Transport Corridor to dual carriageway standard between the western end of the M22 Motorway at Randalstown and the Castledawson Roundabout. The Randalstown to Toome Dual Carriageway is part of this proposal and will run from the western end of the M22 Motorway at Randalstown to the Drumderg Roundabout at the eastern end of the Toome Bypass. Although parts of the route have been improved over the last 40 years, improvements have been limited to minor junction improvements and routine maintenance resurfacing. The Order provides that 175 metres of proposed new road shall be part of the M22 Motorway and subject to motorway traffic restrictions and 7715 metres of new road shall be part of the Moneymore-Antrim-Moira Trunk Road T8. It also provides for the abandonment and stopping-up of certain roads.

4. Consultation

- 4.1. The Environmental Statement, Notice of Intention to Make a Direction Order and Notice of Intention to Make a Vesting Order were published in the Press in March 2007 and an exhibition was also held at the end of the same month. Thirty six letters of objection and seven letters of comment were received. Due to the number and nature of the objections, it was decided to hold concurrent Public Inquiries to consider the proposals, which commenced in November 2007. The Inspector reported his findings to the Department in January 2008. A Notice was published in the Press in November 2009 which provided details of the availability of the Inspector's report and the Department's Statement setting out its decisions

on his recommendations. As a result of the Inspector's recommendations, a Public Exhibition was held at the end of November start of December 2009 to seek public opinion on a revised junction proposal. After this Exhibition and having considered the Inspectors's report and all other recommendations, the Department proposes to proceed to make the original Order without modifications.

5. Equality Impact

- 5.1. The Randalstown to Toome Dual Carriageway Scheme is identified in the Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTN TP) as a strategic road improvement which was the subject of a full EQIA. An equality impact assessment for this scheme was considered and 'screened out' as unnecessary.

6. Regulatory Impact

- 6.1. A Regulatory Impact Assessment was not considered necessary.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1. Funding for this scheme is subject to the normal budgetary considerations.

8. Section 24 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

- 8.1. Consideration has been given to compliance with section 24 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. No human rights issues have been identified by the Department and no issues were raised following the publication of the notice in the Press.

9. EU Implications

- 9.1. Not applicable

10. Parity or Replicatory Measure

- 10.1. None

11. Additional Information

- 11.1. Not applicable

D J Millar

7 March 2011