

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO

The Trunk Road T14 (A55 Knock Road, Belfast) Order (Northern Ireland) 2012

S.R. 2012 No. 339

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 Article 14(1) and 68(1) and (3) of the Roads (Northern Ireland) Order 1993 and is subject to negative resolution procedure.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. To provide that 1303 metres of improved road which will widen the existing A55 Knock Road, Belfast from a point 180 metres from its junction with Glen Road to its junction with Kings Road, shall become trunk road and be part of the Belfast Outer Ring Trunk Road T14 and for the stopping-up to road traffic of Ascot Park at its junction with Knock Road.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Regional Transportation Strategy for Northern Ireland confirmed the need to address bottlenecks on the strategic road network as one of its priorities. The Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan, published in November 2004, identified the Knock Road section of the A55 Outer Ring Road as one such scheme. The standard of the road along the A55 Outer Ring Road varies considerably. While most of the road has two lanes in each direction, the 0.5km section between Sandown Road and Brooklyn has only one lane in each direction. This section of road is a bottleneck on the Belfast Metropolitan Area's strategic road network, which causes significant congestion on this corridor. The current daily two-way traffic flow on the road is in the region of 40,000 vehicles.

4. Consultation

- 4.1. A public consultation day was held in June 2006 to explain the process and invite comment on the alternative options being considered.
- 4.2. In March 2007, the Road Service Board granted Gateway 1 Approval for the preferred route to proceed to the statutory process.
- 4.3. The Environmental Statement, draft Direction Order and Notice of Intention to Make a Vesting Order were published during November 2009 and 111 objections were received.
- 4.4. Due to the number and nature of the objections, it was decided to hold concurrent Public Inquiries to consider the proposals, which commenced on 8 November 2010. The Inspectors reported their findings to the Department on 24 March 2011.

- 4.5. Having considered the Inspectors' Report and all other representations, the Department has made the Order without modification.

5. Equality Impact

- 5.1. The A55 Knock Road Dualling 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.
- 5.2. 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 as the proposal does not result in any costs or savings on business, charities or the voluntary bodies.

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