



A5 Western Transport Corridor (A5 WTC)

Appendix TNI – Theme Report: The Proposed Scheme

15 July 2016

Appendix TNI – Theme Report: The Proposed Scheme

The Existing Situation

1. The existing A5 route runs from New Buildings to the border with the Republic of Ireland just south of Aghnacloy where it links to the N2 route travelling southwards towards Dublin. It passes through or adjacent to the settlements of New Buildings, Magheramason, Bready, Cloghcor, Ballymagorry, Strabane, Sion Mills, Victoria Bridge, Newtownstewart, Omagh, Garvaghy, Ballygawley and Aghnacloy. It extends for a length of approximately 85km between the scheme boundaries.
2. The A5 WTC is intersected at Ballygawley by the A4 South Western Corridor which runs from the end of the M1 motorway at Dungannon through Enniskillen to the border at Belcoo. It also links to the A32 Trunk Road (Enniskillen – Omagh); the A505 (Omagh – Cookstown) Trunk Road within the town of Omagh; the A38/N14/N15 Lifford / Strabane cross border link; the A2 Key Transport Corridor (Londonderry – Limavady); and the A6 Key Transport Corridor (Londonderry – Belfast) within Londonderry.
3. On a European dimension the A5 is part of the Trans-European Network reflecting its importance as a strategic link, joining Dublin with Londonderry which is the principal city of the northwest. Londonderry is a key cross-border and international gateway providing access by road, rail, sea and air to and from the northwest region.
4. The A5 carries a mix of local and strategic traffic and suffers from delays, congestion and driver frustration. It is typically a single carriageway trunk road although a number of overtaking '2 + 1' sections were added at strategic locations prior to 2007 and these cover about 12% of the existing A5 route. Bypasses / through-passes at Omagh, Strabane and Newtownstewart have also been provided over the years.

5. The existing A5 WTC is substandard over approximately 38% of its length, being deficient in terms of carriageway cross section, forward visibility and/or horizontal and vertical alignment.
6. There are approximately 1370 at grade junctions / private accesses along the existing A5. The private accesses include commercial, residential and agricultural use. These accesses and junctions create conflict between road users and contribute to the collision potential along the route.
7. There have been many collisions along the existing A5 route in recent years with 22 fatal collisions in the period between 2005 and 2015. By way of comparison, the A4 South Western Transport Corridor between Ballygawley and Dungannon, upgraded to dual carriageway standard, has had one fatality since its opening to traffic in 2010.

The Proposed Scheme

8. The A5 WTC scheme involves providing a new off-line dual carriageway between New Buildings and Aughnacloy, with single carriageway bypasses of New Buildings and Aughnacloy tying the scheme into the existing A5 at the northern and southern ends respectively.
9. It would connect to the new A4 dual carriageway at Ballygawley, linking to the M1 motorway to Belfast. It would also connect to the N2, which has been identified for an upgrade by the Irish Government, thereby providing an improved strategic link to the Republic of Ireland.
10. A proposed A5/N14/N15 Strabane / Lifford Link road, being taken forward by the Irish Government would provide a strategic connection from A5 WTC at Strabane to Donegal.
11. Along the new dual carriageway there would be no direct private accesses or gaps in the central reserve and major road junctions would be kept to a minimum while providing connectivity to bypassed towns and communities along the route and the existing road network. The majority of the local roads

would not be connected to the dual carriageway but taken over or under the new road or stopped up where appropriate.

12. The main objectives of the A5 WTC dual carriageway scheme are to:
 - a. improve road safety;
 - b. improve the road network in the province and north-south links;
 - c. reduce journey travel times along the A5 Western Transport Corridor;
 - d. provide increased overtaking opportunities for motorists along the A5 Western Transport Corridor; and
 - e. develop the final proposals in light of safety, economic, environmental, integration and accessibility considerations.

13. Achieving these objectives would contribute to the higher level objectives of contributing to the achievement of sustainable progress on social, economic and development goals in Northern Ireland.

14. The proposed road would affect approximately 100 side roads which would mostly be accommodated by the provision of under or over bridges or by realigning the side roads into other minor roads. A small number of roads would be stopped up; these are typically roads with very low traffic flows and where the alternative road is not very long. In total it is proposed to provide 39 over bridges and 36 under bridges as part of the works. This number excludes accommodation structures to provide access to severed lands.

15. Section 1 has 6 overbridges and 11 underbridges; Section 2 has 22 overbridges and 14 underbridges; and Section 3 has 11 overbridges and 11 underbridges.

16. Approximately 1,200 hectares of land would be required for the construction of the Proposed Scheme, the vast majority of which is agricultural land. Approximately 160 hectares of the total land take would be required temporarily during the construction phase with the remainder within the permanent highways boundary.

17. Section 1 would require approximately 286 hectares and includes for the demolition of 5 residential properties; Section 2 would require approximately 424 hectares and includes for 2 residential properties; and Section 3 would require approximately 490 hectares and includes one residential property.
18. The Proposed Scheme has been designed to minimise adverse environmental effects which have been mitigated where practical.
19. Full details of the Proposed Scheme 2016 are included within the brochures published by TransportNI for each section of the scheme and also in the draft Stage 3 Scheme Appraisal Report, available through www.a5wtc.com.