EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO

The Trunk Road T8 (A31) (Magherafelt Bypass) Order (Northern Ireland) 2010

S.R. 2010 No. 293

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 14(1), 68(1), (3) and (5) of and paragraph 5 of Schedule 8 to the Roads (Northern Ireland) Order 1993 and is subject to negative resolution procedure.

1.3. The Statutory Rule as laid differs from the information provided to the Committee in the SL1. As a result of the public inquiries and the Inspector's recommendation, Killyneese Road will not be stopped-up.

2. Purpose

2.1. The Order provides that 5900 metres of new road (including 3 new roundabouts) in the townlands of Coolshinny, Killyfaddy, Leckagh, Dunamoney, Carraloan (Glebe), Tullylinkisay and Killyneese in Magherafelt District Council Area and County of Londonderry shall become trunk road and be part of the Moira-Antrim-Magherafelt-Moneymore Trunk Road T8.

3. Background

3.1. The proposed A31 Magherafelt Bypass Scheme has been identified in the Regional Strategic Transport Network – Transport Plan 2015 (RSTNTP), the Magherafelt Area Plan 2015 – Draft Plan and is in Roads Service's 10-year Forward Planning Schedule.

3.2. The existing A31 is an important strategic route running north from Moneymore to the Castledawson Roundabout passing through the town of Magherafelt where traffic congestion during peak times is a major problem. The proposed new road will involve the construction of a bypass which would re-direct strategic traffic along a corridor to the east of the town. The bypass will consist of a 5.9km single carriageway running from a new roundabout at the junction with the Coolshinney Road and the Moneymore Road to a new tie-in with the existing Castledawson Roundabout.

3.3. The scheme will help improve road safety and relieve traffic congestion within Magherafelt town centre, thus improving the quality of life for the residents. It also proposes to reduce travel times in the immediate area and to improve the road network between the north and south of the Province.

4. Consultation

4.1. In October 2007 a public consultation day was held to explain the process and invite comment on the alternative options being considered. A public

exhibition was held on 9 January 2008 to advise the public of the emerging preferred option that was to be taken forward to the statutory process.

4.2. In February 2008, The Roads 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 June 2008 and 18 objections were received, 2 of which were subsequently withdrawn.

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 29 April 2009. The Inspector reported his findings to the Department on 3 June 2009.

4.5. Having considered the Inspector's Report and all other representations, the Department has made the Order with modification. As a consequence of the public inquiries and the Inspector's recommendation, Killyneese Road will not be stopped-up, instead, an underpass will be constructed to serve local traffic.

5. Equality Impact

5.1. The A31 Magherafelt Bypass 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.

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. The Department has carried out a Human Rights Act impact assessment and has concluded that the proposal does not engage any Convention Rights.

9. EU Implications

9.1. None

10. Parity or Replicatory Measure

10.1. N/A

11. Additional Information

11.1. Not applicable