

Comment numberCOM01
Name Olive Burns - DARD
Date submitted..... 27 April 2015
NIMVO plot numberN/A

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above communication and responds as follows:

1. **EIA 1055 14 A24 Ballynahinch By Pass - Environmental Statement**

We have consulted with colleagues in the Department in relation to the abovementioned application and we wish to forward the following comments:

2. **FISHERIES**

DARD FISHERIES have no issues or concerns to raise from an aquaculture aspect at this stage, but we would like to remind the applicant that;

It is an offence under Article 47 of the Fisheries Act (NI) 1966 to cause pollution which is subsequently shown to have a deleterious effect on fish stocks.

Fisheries

- a) An assessment of potential impacts on Fisheries has been undertaken for the Proposed Scheme and reported in Chapter 10 (Ecology & Nature Conservation) in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement (ES), with a full Fisheries Report included at Appendix 16, Annex A in Volume 2 of the ES.
- b) The Department notes your comments regarding the Fisheries Act (NI) 1966.

3. **PLANT HEALTH, FOREST SERVICE**

An examination of the Department's records show that none of the lands as outlined in the map, which accompanied your request, are subject to the terms of a notice served relating to Potato Cyst Nematode (PCN) or Potato Wart Disease (PWD). Therefore there are no restrictions in so far as the Plant Health Order (Northern Ireland) 2006 is concerned on the movement of soil or other material from these lands.

Plant Diseases

- a) A Land Use assessment has been undertaken for the Proposed Scheme and reported in Chapter 12 in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement (ES). Moreover, an assessment of potential impact on agricultural land quality and diseases was undertaken and reported in sub-sections 17.5.6 and 17.6.1.4 in Volume 1 of the ES.
- b) The Department notes your comments regarding Potato Cyst Nematode and Potato Wart Disease.

4. RIVERS

If the proposed works include measures which effect any watercourse schedule 6 permissions may be required, you should contact our Area office at Lisburn for the necessary consent.

The proposed area affects three designated watercourses, managed by our Lisburn office. The watercourses are Windmill Stream, Glassdrumman River and Ballynahinch River.

Designated Watercourses

a) The Department confirms that partial realignment of existing watercourses (Glassdrumman River, Windmill Stream and an un-named stream close to the proposed Downpatrick Road Roundabout) would be required as part of the Proposed Scheme. This is detailed in sub-section 4.8.7 in Volume 1 of the ES. The Department confirms that it is fully aware of its obligations under Schedule 6 to the Drainage (Northern Ireland) Order 1973 (as amended).

5. I have a specific interest in ensuring that any works impacting on the water environment take note of best practice methods. In that regard, when design stages are reached, there are a number of useful documents by SEPA and CIRIA regarding culverts and river crossings which may be of use to you. They highlight relevant issues regarding river crossings and the protection of in-channel habitat during works. This includes smaller channels which may require to be culverted as part of the scheme, however appropriate early design can help reduce the impact of the works. I would be to raise the issue of having the base of the bridge low enough to ensure that a low flow channel, covered with natural bed material is included within the design. This can be done by lowering the floor of the bridge below current bed level, which will allow natural bed material to gather as a natural process, or by creating a two stage channel through the bridge, using the internal shoulders to focus flow into the central third. This also permits mammal passage through the bridge.

Consideration should also be give to a riparian buffer along the river edge if realignment of the watercourse will result in the removal of this feature.

- a) An assessment of impacts on the Water Environment has been undertaken for the Proposed Scheme and reported in Chapters 10 (Ecology & Nature Conservation) and 16 (Road Drainage & the Water Environment) in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement (ES).
- b) Mitigation and Enhancement measures for the Water Environment, during both the Construction phase and Operational phase, are outlined in sub-section 16.7 in Volume 1 of the ES. This includes adherence to various SEPA and CIRIA guidance documentation, and the requirement for ongoing consultation with NIEA, DCAL and DARD – Rivers Agency. Mitigation proposals for fisheries are detailed in sub-section 10.7.11 in Volume 1 of the ES. Moreover, a range of mitigation measures are proposed for the culvert design and the habitat loss at culvert sites and main watercourse crossings, as outlined in sub-sections 16.7.1.2 and 16.7.1.3 in Volume 1 of the ES. In terms of the riparian corridor, it is proposed that a riparian buffer zone, consisting of trees, shrubs and other associated vegetation be retained along the watercourses, as outlined in Table 10.27 in Volume 1 of the ES.

c) Construction-related impacts issues are given very careful consideration by the Department, particularly when working in proximity to such a sensitive water environment. In line with the guidance contained within Interim Advice Note 183/14, and as discussed in sub-section 4.12 in Volume 1 of the ES, an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) has been prepared for the Proposed Scheme and is contained within Appendix 4 in Volume 2 of the ES (specific Water Environment requirements are contained in sub-section 3.7 of the EMP). The EMP forms an outline plan and is closely aligned with the design and assessment process contained within Part II of the ES (Chapters 7 to 17). The EMP would be further refined and expanded by the appointed Contractor into a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) as more information becomes available and there is more certainty in terms of the proposed layout, construction methods, programme and the likely environmental effects.

6. If we receive any further comments, we will forward them to you. Thank you.

a) We would thank you for your interest in this scheme.

DRD TransportNI
Southern Division
11 December 2015

Comment numberCOM02
Name..... Dr. Barry McAuley - DOE – Air and Environmental Quality Unit
Date submitted..... 01 April 2015
NIMVO plot numberN/A

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above communication and responds as follows:

1. I am writing in response to the letter of 23 March 2015 from Roads Service Southern Division, regarding the Environmental Statement (ES) which has been prepared for the proposed construction of the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme.

I note that it is predicted that, regionally, total emission of air pollutants is predicted to decrease slightly (p110) from the 'do minimum' and base year (2013) scenarios, for both the Opening Year (2019) and Design Year (2033) with scheme implementation (p110).

I would advise that you engage with Newry Mourne and Down District Council for its views on the local air quality assessment carried out for this report.

Air Quality

- a) The Department notes your letter of 01 April 2015.
 - b) The Department also notes the various comments made in relation to the findings of the Air Quality assessment contained within Chapter 8 of the Environmental Statement.
 - c) The Department can confirm that it consulted with the now Newry Mourne and Down District Council throughout the development of the scheme, and issued Council with a copy of the Environmental Statement as part of the statutory consultation on the draft Orders.
2. I would also advise that you engage with the Council with regard to the noise assessment in this report. With regard to noise, please note that any relevant Noise Action Plans (prepared in fulfilment of requirements of the Environmental Noise Directive - 2002/49/EC) which have been prepared (or will be prepared) will have to take account of the proposed scheme, as necessary.

Noise

- a) The Department notes the various comments made in relation to the findings of the Noise & Vibration assessment contained within Chapter 13 of the Environmental Statement.
- b) As previously mentioned, the Department can confirm that it consulted with the now Newry Mourne and Down District Council throughout the development of the scheme, and issued Council with a copy of the Environmental Statement as part of the statutory consultation on the draft Orders.
- c) The Department would also confirm that on reviewing its 'Roads - Environmental Noise Directive Round Two – Noise Action Plan 2013-2018', for a candidate Noise Management Area to be identified/declared, a minimum of 11 clustered properties (Band 1 & 2) must be exposed to noise levels of at least 75dB (L_{A10,18h}). Under both assessment scenarios (Do-Minimum & Do-Something) and assessment years (assumed year of Opening (2019) &

Design Year (2032)), no relevant receptors within Ballynahinch or adjacent to the Proposed Scheme, would be exposed to noise levels in excess of this.

3. For information, all historic air quality data collected on the Northern Ireland network can be found at the Department's website: www.airqualityni.co.uk

Noise maps are available from the Department's website at: www.noiseni.co.uk

If I can be of any further assistance, do not hesitate to contact me.

- a) We would thank you for your interest in this scheme.

DRD TransportNI
Southern Division
11 December 2015

Comment numberCOM03
NameDr. Sam Roberson - GSNI
Date submitted..... 13 April 2015
NIMVO plot numberN/A

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above communication and responds as follows:

1. **The Environmental Statement (ES) has identified several areas of potentially compressible or unstable ground with the area of the proposed bypass, including areas of river alluvium and peat. GSNI would like to highlight the requirement for a thorough ground investigation in these areas to ensure that any potential risks associated with these lithologies are identified, assessed and either avoided or mitigated against in an appropriate manner to reduce potential impacts to an acceptable level.**

Ground Investigation

- a) The Department notes your letter of 13 April 2015.
- b) A full Geology & Soils assessment has been undertaken for the Proposed Scheme and reported in Chapter 17 in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement (ES).
- c) In particular, the assessment considered the solid and drift geology within the study area, and indeed the fact that the area was underlain by areas of river alluvium and peat (sub-section 17.5.2).
- d) A certain amount of intrusive ground investigation (trial pitting, boreholing, dynamic probing, soakaway testing) has already been undertaken for the Proposed Scheme, in 2008 and 2013. The Department confirms that a much more comprehensive ground investigation would be undertaken as part of the Detailed Design for the scheme in due course, which in turn, would identify the requirement for appropriate mitigation.
- e) We would thank you for your interest in this scheme.

DRD TransportNI
Southern Division
11 December 2015

Comment numberCOM04
Name Jayne Cooling – Bank of Ireland UK [REDACTED]
Date submitted..... 01 May 2015
NIMVO plot number [REDACTED]

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above communication and responds as follows:

1. Re [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

We refer to your letter dated 23 March 2015 and have noted your comments concerning the A24 Ballynahinch-by-pass.

According to our records we have received no correspondence from our borrowers regarding this matter and we have, therefore, written to them today. In the meantime, we would be grateful if you could advise whether any compensation monies are to be paid in respect of the road improvement scheme,

Should you have any queries regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact us on the above number, quoting the mortgage account number.

- a) The Notice of Intention to Make a Vesting Order (NIMVO) includes 63m² of land which is existing road bed. No land has been vested yet; affected landowners would all be notified when the Vesting Order is made.
- b) The Department is unable to comment on compensation matters, as these would be the subject of negotiation between the landowner and Land & Property Services' District Valuer.

DRD TransportNI
Southern Division
11 December 2015

Comment numberCOM05
Name John Weir – NI Water
Date submitted..... 04 May 2015
NIMVO plot number N/A

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above communication and responds as follows:

1. Thank you for your letter dated 23rd March 2015 regarding the above.

Please find enclosed Service Mark Up's which indicate there are several services that may be affected by the proposed works. However it is unclear from the outline drawings if the scheme will entail substantial alteration to existing road levels. This being said it would be NIW's intention to relocate the existing water mains within the new carriageway/footway of the proposed scheme where required. The enclosed service mark-up's for the areas which may be affected by your proposals broadly concur with the findings of table 5.13.3 prepared by URS Scott Wilson and shall be progressed to C3 upon request and submission of the necessary drawings.

At this stage I would also bring the following points to your attention:-

1. Existing NIW infrastructure should be protected during construction stage.
2. Where ground levels at manhole and valve covers are to be altered the covers should be raised or lowered accordingly.
3. Ground levels above water and sewage infrastructure should not be significantly altered without the approval of NIW.
4. No new Kerb lines to be positioned directly over or close to existing services.
5. 24 hour access is required at all times for maintenance and emergency purposes.
 - a) The Department commenced discussions with NI Water at an early stage in the development of the Proposed Scheme and are now in receipt of C3 cost estimates and mitigating design proposals.
 - b) The Department confirms that further approaches to NIW will be made when appropriate.
 - c) We would thank-you for your interest and information provided in connection with this scheme.

Comment numberCOM06
Name Gail Ritchie – DARD - Rivers Agency
Date submitted..... 13 May 2015
NIMVO plot number N/A

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above communication and responds as follows:

1. **The proposed area affects three designated watercourses, managed by our Lisburn office and I understand that you have been in contact with them regarding schedule 6 permission and consent.**

Schedule 6 Consent

- a) The Department confirms that partial realignment of existing watercourses (Glassdrumman River, Windmill Stream and an un-named stream close to the proposed Downpatrick Road Roundabout) would be required as part of the Proposed Scheme. This is detailed in sub-section 4.8.7 in Volume 1 of the ES. The Department confirms that it is fully aware of its obligations under Schedule 6 to the Drainage (Northern Ireland) Order 1973 (as amended).
2. **As a member of the Rivers Agency Conservation team I have a specific interest in ensuring that any works impacting on the water environment take note of best practice methods. In that regard, when design stages for bridges, culverts or watercourse diversions are reached, there are a number of useful documents by SEPA and CIRIA regarding culverts and river crossings which may be of use to you. It is important that the gradient, width and alignment of the current channel are maintained, and that the channel bed is designed to accommodate low flow, so that even in the driest of conditions, there is a low flow channel of sufficient depth to accommodate fish passage. The bed of the bridge should also be low enough to accommodate natural bed material, so that the channel rugosity does not change through the bridge. Creating a two stage channel through the bridge, using the internal shoulders to focus flow into the central third also permits mammal passage through the bridge in low to medium flow conditions. It is also important to ensure that any temporary works do not impinge on fish or mammal passage, and are carried out at the correct time of the year.**

You should also give consideration to a riparian buffer along the river edge if realignment of the watercourse will result in the removal of this feature.

Sediment control during works is extremely important, and should be addressed through timing of works, and through suitable sediment control measures and plans. Liaison with NIEA is recommended.

Fisheries

- a) An assessment of potential impacts on Fisheries has been undertaken for the Proposed Scheme and reported in sub-sections 16.5.4 and 16.6.1.6 in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement (ES), with a full Fisheries Report included at Appendix 16, Annex A in Volume 2 of the ES. Section 6 of the Fisheries Report includes a set of prescriptive mitigation measures to minimise impact on fish and fisheries habitat. Moreover, a range of mitigation measures are proposed for the culvert design and the habitat loss at culvert sites and main watercourse crossings, as outlined in sub-sections 16.7.1.2 and 16.7.1.3 in Volume 1 of the ES.

Rivers

- b) A subsequent assessment of impacts on the Water Environment has been undertaken for the Proposed Scheme and reported in Chapters 10 (Ecology & Nature Conservation) and 16 (Road Drainage & the Water Environment) in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement (ES).
 - c) Mitigation and Enhancement measures for the Water Environment, during both the Construction phase (including Sediment Control) and Operational phase, are outlined in sub-section 16.7 in Volume 1 of the ES. This includes adherence to various SEPA and CIRIA guidance documentation, and the requirement for ongoing consultation with NIEA, DCAL and DARD – Rivers Agency. Mitigation proposals for fisheries are detailed in sub-section 10.7.11 in Volume 1 of the ES. In terms of the riparian corridor, it is proposed that a riparian buffer zone, consisting of trees, shrubs and other associated vegetation be retained along the watercourses, as outlined in Table 10.27 in Volume 1 of the ES.
 - d) Construction-related impacts issues are given very careful consideration by the Department, particularly when working in proximity to such a sensitive water environment. In line with the guidance contained within Interim Advice Note 183/14, and as discussed in sub-section 4.12 in Volume 1 of the ES, an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) has been prepared for the Proposed Scheme and is contained within Appendix 4 in Volume 2 of the ES (specific Water Environment requirements are contained in sub-section 3.7 of the EMP). The EMP forms an outline plan and is closely aligned with the design and assessment process contained within Part II of the ES (Chapters 7 to 17). The EMP would be further refined and expanded by the appointed Contractor into a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) as more information becomes available and there is more certainty in terms of the proposed layout, construction methods, programme and the likely environmental effects.
- 3. If you have any further questions regarding the information above feel free to contact me using the details below.**
- a) We would thank you for your interest in this scheme.

DRD TransportNI
Southern Division
11 December 2015

Comment numberCOM07
Name
Date submitted..... 18 May 2015
NIMVO plot number

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above communication and responds as follows:

1. I am the owner of the property at [REDACTED] which is right in the middle of the proposed junction/ overpass for the Ballynahinch by pass.

While I am not objecting to the by pass in any way, I am concerned about the uncertainty the recently delivered vesting order has raised.

- a) The Department acknowledges the distress and uncertainty surrounding the planning of a major road scheme, especially in your case where your property is to be compulsorily purchased.

2. My son has been living in the property for over 10 years and has now been joined by his wife. Obviously as a young couple starting out together they are keen to be settled in their own home.

We have already made significant improvements to the property, but if this were to be a family home, it would need to be extended - it is a large site which allows plenty of scope for this.

However, the issue of the proposed vesting order, and the lack of clarity re timescale puts any development on hold.

- a) Spending beyond the current budget period on schemes, such as the Ballynahinch Bypass, will depend on the funding made available by the Northern Ireland Executive in future budget periods.
- b) Whilst construction of the bypass is subject to the availability of finances, it is essential to complete planning of the Proposed Scheme to prepare for implementation.

3. Obviously, my son and his wife will need somewhere to live and as things stand everything is very uncertain.

I would appreciate some reassurance or advice on how I and my son should proceed.

- a) The property and land is blighted as it lies underneath the footprint of the new road, and the owner may be able to serve a blight notice to compel the Department to acquire some or all of the property at its untainted value.
- b) The blight notice procedure is a process by which the owners may bring forward the acquisition of their property if it has become "blighted", as defined in planning law. Where the value of a property has been reduced by certain categories of planning or other development proposals, anyone with a qualifying interest, may be entitled to serve a "blight notice" on the body responsible for this, requiring them to buy the property at its untainted value. In short,

the threatened or prospective compulsory purchase is brought forward thereby removing the uncertainty that might otherwise make the property unmarketable save at a significantly reduced price.

- c) Further guidance on compulsory purchase and compensation is provided in a series of guides, which cover agricultural, residential and business land. These are produced by Land and Property Services and are available from www.dfpni.gov.uk/publications/compulsory-purchase-and-compensation-guides. Alternatively, guides can be requested by writing to: Department of Finance & Personnel, Land & Property Services, Lanyon Plaza, 7 Lanyon Place, Town Parks, Belfast, BT1 3LP. The guidance contained within these booklets is concerned with the procedures for compulsory purchase rather than the broader subject of public development.
- d) Should you wish to wait until the Vesting Order is confirmed, compensation will be based on the principle of equivalence: the landowner should be no worse off in financial terms after the acquisition than before.
- e) The Department is willing to meet at your convenience to discuss your and your son's options in greater detail.

DRD TransportNI
Southern Division
11 December 2015

Comment numberCOM08
Name District Commander – Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service
Date submitted..... 14 May 2015
NIMVO plot number N/A

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above communication and responds as follows:

1. I refer to your letter dated 23rd March 2015 in connection with the above and advise that Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service (NIFRS) have no objections to such a proposal.

However, I have inspected proposed plans and NIFRS may require construction of hydrants should land surrounding the by-pass route be subject to future development, either business or residential.

The existing Fire Hydrants should be maintained or reinstated and kept free from obstructions at all times.

- a) The Department notes your request that construction of hydrants may be required should land surrounding the bypass be subject to future development.
- b) According to the Ards Down Area Plan 2015, the Proposed Scheme would ultimately form the Development Limit to the east of the town.
- c) The Department would highlight that funding for the Proposed Scheme has not been allocated; therefore adjacent development sites may proceed in advance of the scheme construction.
- d) There is currently no request for a watermain to be placed within the Proposed Scheme by NI Water.
- e) Should the need arise for a new watermain to be placed within the Proposed Scheme by NI Water, the Department would consider its inclusion together with any necessary hydrants.
- f) Existing Fire Hydrants will be maintained or reinstated and kept free from obstructions at all times unless otherwise agreed with NIFS during the construction phase of the Proposed Scheme.
- g) We would thank you for your interest in this scheme.

Support numberSU01
Supporter's Name
Date submitted 14 April 2015
NIMVO plot numberN/A

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above communication and responds as follows:

1. I visited the Public Exhibition of the proposed bypass scheme today and would like to record my strong support for the scheme.

A resident of Saintfield I travel through Ballynahinch at least twice a week to Newcastle.

As a result I am aware that, on many occasions, traffic is tailed back either side of the town at morning and evening peaks throughout the year. In summer in fine weather and particularly at weekends and on bank holidays traffic tail backs are especially acute. I understand this was the case this Easter monday.

The conflict between through traffic, local traffic and pedestrians causes frustration for everyone. Hopefully the bypass will improve the environment for shoppers and shopkeepers and improve air quality.

Congratulations to the team who prepared the exhibition. The text, project plans and the drive through were very informative.

- a) The Department notes your email of 14 April 2015 and welcomes your strong support of the Proposed Scheme.
- b) The Department also notes the compliments made in relation to the text, graphics, project plans and drive-through visualisation model on display during the Orders Exhibition.
- c) We would thank-you once again for your interest in this scheme.

DRD TransportNI
Southern Division
11 December 2015

Support numberSU02
Supporter's Name
Date submitted 29 April 2015
NIMVO plot number N/A

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above communication and responds as follows:

1. I would be grateful if you would send me a copy of the DVD containing the full Environmental Statement which has been prepared in connection with the above scheme.

a) The Department notes your letter of 29 April 2015 and welcomes your support of the Proposed Scheme.

ES Request

b) The Department trusts that you received a copy of the full Environmental Statement on CD, which was posted to you on 13 May 2015.

2. Without a doubt there is an urgent need for the construction of this proposed road and I would ask you to keep me informed of future developments, including details of the associated Public Inquiry which I understand is likely to be held towards the end of this year.

Please add my name to your list of supporters of this scheme.

Public Inquiry

a) Given the nature of the proposals and the likelihood that a number of the objections could not be resolved, the Minister for Regional Development approved the holding of a Public Inquiry to give the Department and the objectors a fair opportunity to be heard and to question the case for and against the scheme. The Public Inquiry will be held in the Millbrook Lodge Hotel, 5 Drumaness Road, Ballynahinch, Co. Down, BT24 8LS, commencing on Tuesday 26 January 2016 at 10am and continuing on such other days as may be determined by the inspector appointed to conduct the proceedings.

b) The inquiry procedure is subject to the rules of natural justice. These rules, developed by the Courts, provide that there must be fairness in the conduct of an administrative process and, in particular, each side must have a fair opportunity to be heard and to hear and question the case against them. The inquiry is held before an independent Inspector appointed by the Department. The appointment of an inspector for a specific inquiry takes into account the particular suitability of the Inspector for dealing with the matter in question. The Inspector will determine how the inquiry is to proceed.

c) We would thank-you once again for your interest in this scheme.

Support number.....SU03
Supporter's Name.....
Date submitted..... 08 May 2015
NIMVO plot numberN/A

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above communication and responds as follows:

1. I am writing to support the above proposal.

I have lived in Ballynahinch for 27 years and suffered with the volume of traffic going through this small town.

The size of the articulated lorries heading for Newcastle or the M1 are a danger to every pedestrian I witnessed a neighbour killed by one on church road a number of years ago.

Ballynahinch is gridlocked which is a nightmare for anyone attempting to get to Newcastle Kilkeel or the Mourne or in the direction of Belfast I viewed your excellent proposal in the market house & discussed the bypass with your staff who were extremely knowledgeable & helpful I hope this project starts as soon as possible; ideally in 2017

- a) The Department notes your email of 08 May 2015 and welcomes your support of the Proposed Scheme.
- b) The Department also notes the compliments made in relation to the graphical displays and knowledge of the project staff present during the Orders Exhibition.

Construction Programme

- c) It is anticipated that the scheme would take approximately 18 months to 2 years to construct. Based on the current programme, the Department expects construction works to commence in late 2017 / early 2018, subject to successful progression of the Statutory Orders procedures (including Public Inquiry), availability of funding, and detailed economic appraisal. On this basis, the scheme could be completed by late 2019.
- d) We would thank-you once again for your interest in this scheme.

DRD TransportNI
Southern Division
11 December 2015

Support number **SU04**
Supporter's Name
Date submitted 10 May 2015
NIMVO plot number N/A

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above communication and responds as follows:

1. **As a daily commuter to Belfast from Newcastle I cannot begin to convey the joy I felt when I learned of the proposed bypass!**

When you're considering 'safety', don't forget to count those of us who may just avoid a heart attack by the reduction in stress that will be effected by not having to drive through Ballynahinch.

It is one of the most trying experiences of the day.

The road from Newcastle to Belfast must surely be one of the most frustrating routes in the country. There are such limited opportunities to overtake tractors, slow drivers etc that any improvement has got to be welcomed with open arms.

I sincerely hope you are successful in your plan.

- a) The Department notes your email of 10 May 2015 and welcomes your support of the Proposed Scheme.
- b) We would thank-you once again for your interest in this scheme.

DRD TransportNI
Southern Division
11 December 2015

Support numberSU05
Supporter's Name
Date submitted..... 19 May 2015
NIMVO plot numberN/A

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above communication and responds as follows:

1. As a commuter to Belfast from Castlewellaan I am enthused to see progress on this scheme as Ballynahinch is a bottleneck on a well trafficked route.

In relation to the overall scheme can consideration also be given to use of the hardshoulder north of Ballynahinch to Carryduff. Use of this unused hardshoulder could increase this road to dual carriageway capacity and alleviate hold-ups caused by cyclists, farm machinery, quarry lorries, caravans and camper vans. This would also help to reduce pollution caused by crawler trafficking.

Keep up the good work.

- a) The Department notes your email of 19 May 2015 and welcomes your support of the Proposed Scheme.

Hardshoulder running

- a) A main objective of the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme is to reduce journey time for strategic traffic wishing to transit the town and consequently relieve congestion within the town of Ballynahinch. Your suggestion is noted by the Department however, as the hard shoulder running is located outside the Proposed Scheme's area of interest, it cannot be addressed further within this specific scheme. It has been passed to the relevant section in TransportNI for consideration.
- b) We would thank-you once again for your interest in this scheme.

DRD TransportNI
Southern Division
11 December 2015

Support numberSU06
Supporter's Name
Date submitted.....01 December 2015
NIMVO plot numberN/A

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above communication and responds as follows:

1. As a resident in the countryside to the Belfast side of Ballynahinch, I am in support of the proposed Ballynahinch By-Pass. From my perspective this by-pass project is long overdue.

At the moment my family have difficulty driving into Ballynahinch during normal peak hours traffic to the town centre to access local shops and amenities. On occasion it has been easier to travel further afield to other towns and use alternate shops and amenities due to traffic congestion. We often need to use small back roads to circumvent the main queues which normally start around Carlisle's shop from the Belfast side. We have on occasion witnessed queues as far back as the Temple Cross Roads when there are events in South Down or Public Holidays with people heading toward Newcastle.

In my opinion a new by-pass would benefit my family in numerous ways;

- Firstly when we are travelling to the south of Ballynahinch, travel times / fuel consumption should be reduced through that section of the journey
- Allow better access to the shops and amenities within Ballynahinch
- Make parking and travelling within the town to the shops and amenities much easier
- Reduce the traffic using undersized country roads such as the one I live on to circumvent the town - improving safety on our road

Generally the proposed by-pass would benefit everyone by;

- Improved access to the shops and amenities in the town centre - which in my view should reduce reasons to avoid going to the centre of the town to use local shops and amenities
- Improve pedestrian safety within the town centre - removing unnecessary HGV traffic from the town centre
- Improve travel times for travelling between South Down and Belfast
- Removal of traffic volume from small Country Roads

In summary; while there may be opposition to the scheme due to the impact on some properties where the actual road would be built, it is my view that the benefits to Ballynahinch, South Down and Belfast will significantly outweigh these issues.

The sooner this scheme can be implemented, the better for all.

- a) The Department notes your letter of 01 December 2015 and welcomes your support of the Proposed Scheme.

Construction Programme

- b) It is anticipated that the scheme would take approximately 18 months to 2 years to construct. Based on the current programme, the Department expects construction works to commence in late 2017 / early 2018, subject to successful progression of the Statutory Orders procedures (including Public Inquiry), availability of funding, and detailed economic appraisal. On this basis, the scheme could be completed by late 2019.
- c) We would thank-you once again for your interest in this scheme.

DRD TransportNI
Southern Division
14 December 2015

Objection number OB01
Objector's Name Tim Martin [REDACTED]
Date submitted 17 April 2015
NIMVO plot number [REDACTED]

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above objection and responds as follows:

1. I would confirm that we act as Agents for [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

The Department considers it appropriate to make the following statement before addressing the specifics of your objection.

Development Priorities

- a) The programme to improve transport links in Northern Ireland has been developed and is based on a series of key documents which include:
- A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, the Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport, published in 1998;
 - Moving Forward: The Northern Ireland Transport Policy Statement, published in 1998;
 - Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025 - Shaping our Future, published in 2002;
 - Regional Development Strategy 2035 – Building a Better Future, published in 2012;
 - Regional Transportation Strategy for Northern Ireland 2002-2012, published in 2002;
 - Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future – A New Approach to Regional Transportation, published in 2012;
 - Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan 2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2005-2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2008-2018, published in 2008;
 - Investment Delivery Plan (IDP) for Roads, published in 2008;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-2021, published in 2012; and
 - Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015, published in 2006.
- b) The Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) identifies the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass as a Strategic Highway Improvement. This forms part of a range of transportation initiatives across Northern Ireland to provide, for example, up to 13 bypasses, approximately 85km of dual carriageway, 36km of widened single carriageway, and 11 major junction improvements, which will ultimately contribute to increasing the economic well-being of the Region.
- c) The New Approach to Regional Transportation complements the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and aims to achieve its vision for transportation. One of its main strategic objectives is to 'improve connectivity within the region' by completing the work identified in the current Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) and Strategic Road Improvement (SRI) Programme.
- d) The RSTNTP includes a programme for the implementation of SRIs to remove bottlenecks on the network where lack of capacity is causing serious congestion, and to improve the environment by providing bypasses of towns situated on the Regional Strategic Transport

Network (RSTN), thus relieving the effects of heavy through traffic. As part of this programme, the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme has been identified as a major highway scheme which should commence later in the plan period. The scheme has also been identified in the Consultation Document '*Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015*' and '*Investment Delivery Plan for Roads*' as a scheme in the current SRI programme.

- e) Progress to construction is subject to clearing statutory procedures, having a satisfactory economic appraisal, and the availability of funding.

Selection of the Preferred Route – Appraisal Procedure

- a) The appraisal of any form of transport investment requires a clear understanding of the objectives, which are to be met, and appropriate criteria to be used to decide whether a proposal meets them. The Government's five objectives for transport (Environment, Safety, Economy, Accessibility and Integration) are pivotal to the appraisal process. There is tension between these objectives, such that proposals may contribute to the achievement of one objective, but work against the achievement of others. The appraisal procedure must allow determination of an appropriate balance between the five objectives.
- b) The study of alternatives for major road schemes is undertaken through a three-stage appraisal procedure. Scheme Assessment Reports act as a summary of the more technical reports generated during the appraisal of road schemes; the level of detail and coverage is appropriate to the type of decision that can reasonably be taken at each stage.
- c) As part of this appraisal process, the Department examined strategies for future improvement of the A24 trunk road corridor around Ballynahinch. At Stage 1, three preliminary corridors were identified; one to the west and two to the east of the town. Based on the assessment findings, the Department identified the shorter of the two eastern corridor options as being preferable, particularly as it followed (in principle) the route of the bypass as indicated in the Ards Down Area Plan 2015 (which was in draft at that time).
- d) At Stage 2, three preliminary route options for the proposed bypass were subsequently identified by the Department within the preferred corridor to the east of Ballynahinch. The three options (the Red Route, Blue Route and Yellow Route) were developed, environmental impacts assessed, costs evaluated, traffic volumes predicted and economic cost benefit analysis carried out. Based on assessment, the Department identified the Red Route as being preferable and the then Minister for Regional Development (Mr Danny Kennedy MLA) announced the Preferred Route on 24th January 2012.
- e) Following the announcement, the Department developed a preliminary design of the scheme (the 'Proposed Scheme') to facilitate a subsequent Stage 3 Scheme Assessment and to inform the preparation of a draft Direction Order, draft Vesting Order and Environmental Statement.

Standard of Road

- a) The Proposed Scheme would provide a bypass of Ballynahinch, approximately 3.14km in length. Aligned to the east of the town, it would be a Category 3A carriageway, as defined in the DMRB TD9/93: 'Highway Link Design', commencing with a roundabout at the existing A24 Belfast Road/A21 Saintfield Road junction and terminating with a roundabout at the existing

A24 Drumaness Road/B2 Downpatrick Road junction. It would also include a compact grade-separated junction with the B7 Crossgar Road, a new underpass to accommodate Moss Road, and partial realignments of Ballylone Road and Crabtree Road to facilitate continued access.

- b) It would comprise a single 2-lane carriageway bypass with widening to a Wide Single (2+1) carriageway to provide overtaking opportunities for northbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the southern extent of the scheme, and a Differential Acceleration Lane (DAL) to provide overtaking opportunities for southbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the northern end of the scheme.
 - c) Due to the strategic nature of the bypass, there would be no provision for direct access to adjacent agricultural land, private property or central reserve crossovers.
2. You wrote to [REDACTED] on the 23rd March 2015, your reference MP/D/168048/28/07. [REDACTED] are extremely distressed and disturbed by the proposals as contained in your letter and attached maps, which substantially reduces the size of their garden and decimates their mature landscaped garden [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] Their concerns regarding their garden are as follows:-
- a) The Department acknowledges the effect that the proposals would have on your client's property and has striven to mitigate these where possible.
3. (1.) The construction of the new By-Pass and adjoining roundabout will have a serious material effect on the privacy and enjoyment of their property, will substantially increase the disturbance by noise and traffic within their property and garden, and as a result of the lands to be vested [REDACTED] and seriously diminish the visual enjoyment and amenity of their property, compromise the privacy of the property and undoubtedly substantially increase the noise pollution in their property.

Privacy and Amenity

- a) The Department recognises that partial realignments to existing roads can have a substantial impact on properties in terms of privacy. It is also acknowledged that construction of the Proposed Scheme would result in some loss of amenity at various property locations. The Environmental Statement at Volume 1 Section 11.6.2.1 Table 11.12 and Figures 11.7 & 11.8 accepts that the Proposed Scheme would adversely impact views from nearby properties.
- b) The Department is content that the fencing / boundary treatment, hedging and planting commitments contained in the Environmental Statement at Volume 3 Figure 11.6 (5 sheets) would reduce any loss of privacy when the scheme opens to traffic and through time, the openness of the site would be reduced as the comprehensive landscape planting matures.
- c) The Department would wish to discuss proposed boundary treatment options further with your clients in an attempt to reduce any loss of visual enjoyment and amenity, and in particular the [REDACTED] shrubbery.

Noise

- a) A Noise & Vibration assessment has been undertaken for the scheme and reported in Chapter 13 in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement. Based on this assessment, appropriate mitigation & enhancement measures have been developed and reported in Section 13.7 of the ES.
 - b) The noise assessment has determined that in the Baseline year (2019), 523 dwellings would experience an increase in noise level, the vast majority of which (466 or 89%) would be classed as 'Negligible' to 'Moderate' in the short-term, and 1249 dwellings would experience a decrease in noise level.
 - c) A Thin Surface Course System (TSCS), otherwise known as low noise surfacing, would be provided on the mainline. Whilst the noise benefits of this surfacing are mainly evident at higher speeds, there would be some benefits at the lower speeds on the Proposed Scheme.
 - d) With this mitigation in place, [REDACTED] is predicted to experience a Minor decrease in noise levels with the Proposed Scheme (and associated mitigation) in operation.
 - e) The results of the noise impact assessment indicate that no properties would qualify for noise insulation, under the terms of The Noise Insulation Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995.
4. (2.) You indicated that a dry ditch running along the edge of the garden adjacent to the Downpatrick Road which leads to an existing culvert which crosses the county road leading into the existing drainage system [REDACTED]. It is my understanding that this drain is to be enlarged and enhanced to take additional water coming from the Crabtree Road, and that a new retaining bank will be formed along a substantial length of the boundary of their property to retain the Downpatrick Road. As a result of the construction of the drain and the bank, this will absolutely decimate the shrubbery and trees planted in their garden as indicated above. We note that a number of drains leading from the Crabtree Road are to be realigned to have the outflow of these drains into the proposed drain running along the side of the garden, and would confirm that the [REDACTED] are extremely concerned that at times of excess water it is highly likely that this drain will overflow and their garden will be flooded.
- a) The Proposed Scheme has been designed in accordance with the standards set out in The Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB), including TD 9/93 'Highway Link Design'. TD 40/94 'Layout of Compact Grade Separated Junctions' and TD 42/95 'Geometric Design of Major/Minor Priority Junctions', and HD 33/06 'Surface and Sub-Surface Drainage Systems for Highways'.
 - b) There are four major objectives in the drainage of trunk roads: (i) the speedy removal of surface water to provide safety and prevent flooding of the highway; (ii) provision of effective sub-surface drainage to maximise longevity of the pavement and its associated earthworks; (iii) minimisation of the impact of the runoff on the receiving environment; and (iv) provision of effective earthworks and structures drainage. The drainage would be designed to be compliant with these design standards, and therefore aim to eliminate the risk of your Client's property being adversely affected by the water runoff from the road.

- c) The Department accepts that construction of roads can affect and modify existing drainage layout. Through negotiations with landowners and statutory consultees, the Department will seek to understand drainage concerns and include appropriate measures in the construction contract to ensure existing land and other drainage is not compromised. The construction contract would, as far as practicable, strive to intercept existing drains and, where necessary, install new collector drains and channels to restore connection to local watercourses.
5. (3.) [REDACTED] fail to understand why the Roads Service have considered decimating their garden when there is ample agricultural land on the opposite side of the road to slightly realign the road to take the road away from their garden and use available ground with minimum effect on residential property and in particular their own property.
- a) The Proposed Scheme has been designed in accordance with the Design Standards contained within the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) together with TransportNI Policy and Procedure Guidelines (RSPPG). During scheme preparation, alternative junction options/types at this location were considered and it was determined that a roundabout was most appropriate. The location of the roundabout must comply with DMRB standards for sizing, based on predicted flows of traffic and safe entry/exit deflection criteria. Alternative locations for the roundabout were considered, however compromised design standards and consequently road safety. The Department further considered reducing the width of the B2 Downpatrick Road southern verge to reduce impact on your client's garden, however this would inhibit provision of the required Road Restraint System (safety barrier).
- b) The Department will continue to work with your client to try and reduce/mitigate the impact of the Proposed Scheme.
6. (4.) I would confirm that we had a meeting with Mr Pat Turley on the 16th April together with a number of his colleagues to consider the plan as set out in the map supplied by yourselves. I would record my thanks to Mr Turley and his colleagues for meeting me on site to discuss a range of options. As a result of that meeting it is my understanding that Mr Turley and his associates will come back to us with revised considerations and I would respectfully request that you make contact with him to discuss these proposals and provide us with a revised set of proposals in order that these can be considered by the [REDACTED]

Options & details

- a) Options for the development of the scheme and pre-earthworks drainage associated with the development of the scheme have been discussed with your clients prior to and subsequent to publication of the draft Statutory Orders.
- b) An existing culvert, which runs through the middle of the garden and across the main entrance drive, is below standard and requires upgrading. However, in the current outline design proposal, the Department sought to limit the impact of the scheme on the garden and to minimise the landtake by re-routing the drainage along the bottom of the garden adjacent to the road; this proposal would have an impact on the main [REDACTED] area which is unacceptable to your clients. The discussions with your clients were helpful in establishing the priorities for them in their garden and in particular the request to limit the impact on the rhododendrons.

c) In order to minimise the effect on the main [REDACTED] area, the Department will consider upgrading the culvert along its current alignment through the centre of the garden, whilst avoiding the main entrance drive area. This proposal would be developed further to allow further discussions and agreement with your clients.

7. Finally, I would confirm that [REDACTED] have requested that I object most vehemently to the proposed plans which seriously affect their garden and which decimates their property, and that they will continue to object to any Vesting Order if a realistic revised plan is not put forward and agreed prior to any Vesting Order being issued.

We look forward to your comments and those of Mr Turley in the immediate future.

a) The Department notes your objection and is eager to continue to discuss the concerns of your clients in an attempt to seek some form of resolution.

DRD TransportNI
Southern Division
11 December 2015

Objection numberOB02a
Objector's Name William Stewart - NIE Wayleave Payments
Date submitted..... 20 April 2015
NIMVO plot numberN/A

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above objection and responds as follows:

1. With reference your letter received on 25 March 2015 regarding the above.

I write to inform you that Northern Ireland Electricity objects to the proposal since NIE equipment is situated at the above location.

The Department considers it appropriate to make the following statement before addressing the specifics of your objection.

Development Priorities

- a) The programme to improve transport links in Northern Ireland has been developed and is based on a series of key documents which include:
- A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, the Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport, published in 1998;
 - Moving Forward: The Northern Ireland Transport Policy Statement, published in 1998;
 - Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025 - Shaping our Future, published in 2002;
 - Regional Development Strategy 2035 – Building a Better Future, published in 2012;
 - Regional Transportation Strategy for Northern Ireland 2002-2012, published in 2002;
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 - Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015, published in 2006.
- b) The Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) identifies the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass as a Strategic Highway Improvement. This forms part of a range of transportation initiatives across Northern Ireland to provide, for example, up to 13 bypasses, approximately 85km of dual carriageway, 36km of widened single carriageway, and 11 major junction improvements, which will ultimately contribute to increasing the economic well-being of the Region.
- c) The New Approach to Regional Transportation complements the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and aims to achieve its vision for transportation. One of its main strategic objectives is to '*improve connectivity within the region*' by completing the work identified in the current Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) and Strategic Road Improvement (SRI) Programme.
- d) The RSTNTP includes a programme for the implementation of SRIs to remove bottlenecks on the network where lack of capacity is causing serious congestion, and to improve the

environment by providing bypasses of towns situated on the Regional Strategic Transport Network (RSTN), thus relieving the effects of heavy through traffic. As part of this programme, the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme has been identified as a major highway scheme which should commence later in the plan period. The scheme has also been identified in the Consultation Document 'Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015' and 'Investment Delivery Plan for Roads' as a scheme in the current SRI programme.

- e) Progress to construction is subject to clearing statutory procedures, having a satisfactory economic appraisal, and the availability of funding.

Selection of the Preferred Route – Appraisal Procedure

- a) The appraisal of any form of transport investment requires a clear understanding of the objectives, which are to be met, and appropriate criteria to be used to decide whether a proposal meets them. The Government's five objectives for transport (Environment, Safety, Economy, Accessibility and Integration) are pivotal to the appraisal process. There is tension between these objectives, such that proposals may contribute to the achievement of one objective, but work against the achievement of others. The appraisal procedure must allow determination of an appropriate balance between the five objectives.
- b) The study of alternatives for major road schemes is undertaken through a three-stage appraisal procedure. Scheme Assessment Reports act as a summary of the more technical reports generated during the appraisal of road schemes; the level of detail and coverage is appropriate to the type of decision that can reasonably be taken at each stage.
- c) As part of this appraisal process, the Department examined strategies for future improvement of the A24 trunk road corridor around Ballynahinch. At Stage 1, three preliminary corridors were identified; one to the west and two to the east of the town. Based on the assessment findings, the Department identified the shorter of the two eastern corridor options as being preferable, particularly as it followed (in principle) the route of the bypass as indicated in the Ards Down Area Plan 2015 (which was in draft at that time).
- d) At Stage 2, three preliminary route options for the proposed bypass were subsequently identified by the Department within the preferred corridor to the east of Ballynahinch. The three options (the Red Route, Blue Route and Yellow Route) were developed, environmental impacts assessed, costs evaluated, traffic volumes predicted and economic cost benefit analysis carried out. Based on assessment, the Department identified the Red Route as being preferable and the then Minister for Regional Development (Mr Danny Kennedy MLA) announced the Preferred Route on 24th January 2012.
- e) Following the announcement, the Department developed a preliminary design of the scheme (the 'Proposed Scheme') to facilitate a subsequent Stage 3 Scheme Assessment and to inform the preparation of a draft Direction Order, draft Vesting Order and Environmental Statement.

Standard of Road

- a) The Proposed Scheme would provide a bypass of Ballynahinch, approximately 3.14km in length. Aligned to the east of the town, it would be a Category 3A carriageway, as defined in the DMRB TD9/93: 'Highway Link Design', commencing with a roundabout at the existing A24 Belfast Road/A21 Saintfield Road junction and terminating with a roundabout at the existing

A24 Drumaness Road/B2 Downpatrick Road junction. It would also include a compact grade-separated junction with the B7 Crossgar Road, a new underpass to accommodate Moss Road, and partial realignments of Ballylone Road and Crabtree Road to facilitate continued access.

- b) It would comprise a single 2-lane carriageway bypass with widening to a Wide Single (2+1) carriageway to provide overtaking opportunities for northbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the southern extent of the scheme, and a Differential Acceleration Lane (DAL) to provide overtaking opportunities for southbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the northern end of the scheme.
 - c) Due to the strategic nature of the bypass, there would be no provision for direct access to adjacent agricultural land, private property or central reserve crossovers.
2. However, Northern Ireland Electricity would be prepared to withdraw its objection in the event that:
- (a) Northern Ireland Electricity's rights to retain and access its equipment at the above location are preserved, and
 - (b) In the event the above location is to be redeveloped thereby necessitating the relocation of NIE equipment the Developer enters into a legally binding agreement with NIE to reimburse NIE for any and all costs and expenses associated with the relocation of its equipment.

A copy of our records has been enclosed for your information. Any further correspondence should be made in writing to Wayleave Payments at the above address quoting reference number.

NIE's rights to retain and access its equipment

- a) The Department has no plans to restrict or inhibit access to any NIE plant along any of part of the route.

Relocation of NIE equipment

- b) The Department is currently discussing the details of the scheme and its impact on NIE infrastructure with NIE's technical personnel and it is expected that this process will fulfil the requirements as set out in your objection.
- c) Should any NIE plant require relocation as a result of the Proposed Scheme, then the Department would invoke the procedures and codes of practice set out in the Street Works (NI) Order 1995.

Objection number **OB02b**
Objector's Name William Stewart - NIE Wayleave Payments
Date submitted 20 April 2015
NIMVO plot number N/A

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above objection and responds as follows:

1. **With reference your letter received on 30 March 2015 regarding the above.**

I write to inform you that Northern Ireland Electricity objects to the proposal since NIE equipment is situated at the above location.

The Department considers it appropriate to make the following statement before addressing the specifics of your objection.

Development Priorities

- a) The programme to improve transport links in Northern Ireland has been developed and is based on a series of key documents which include:
- A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, the Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport, published in 1998;
 - Moving Forward: The Northern Ireland Transport Policy Statement, published in 1998;
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- b) The Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) identifies the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass as a Strategic Highway Improvement. This forms part of a range of transportation initiatives across Northern Ireland to provide, for example, up to 13 bypasses, approximately 85km of dual carriageway, 36km of widened single carriageway, and 11 major junction improvements, which will ultimately contribute to increasing the economic well-being of the Region.
- c) The New Approach to Regional Transportation complements the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and aims to achieve its vision for transportation. One of its main strategic objectives is to *'improve connectivity within the region'* by completing the work identified in the current Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) and Strategic Road Improvement (SRI) Programme.
- d) The RSTNTP includes a programme for the implementation of SRIs to remove bottlenecks on the network where lack of capacity is causing serious congestion, and to improve the

environment by providing bypasses of towns situated on the Regional Strategic Transport Network (RSTN), thus relieving the effects of heavy through traffic. As part of this programme, the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme has been identified as a major highway scheme which should commence later in the plan period. The scheme has also been identified in the Consultation Document '*Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015*' and '*Investment Delivery Plan for Roads*' as a scheme in the current SRI programme.

- e) Progress to construction is subject to clearing statutory procedures, having a satisfactory economic appraisal, and the availability of funding.

Selection of the Preferred Route – Appraisal Procedure

- a) The appraisal of any form of transport investment requires a clear understanding of the objectives, which are to be met, and appropriate criteria to be used to decide whether a proposal meets them. The Government's five objectives for transport (Environment, Safety, Economy, Accessibility and Integration) are pivotal to the appraisal process. There is tension between these objectives, such that proposals may contribute to the achievement of one objective, but work against the achievement of others. The appraisal procedure must allow determination of an appropriate balance between the five objectives.
- b) The study of alternatives for major road schemes is undertaken through a three-stage appraisal procedure. Scheme Assessment Reports act as a summary of the more technical reports generated during the appraisal of road schemes; the level of detail and coverage is appropriate to the type of decision that can reasonably be taken at each stage.
- c) As part of this appraisal process, the Department examined strategies for future improvement of the A24 trunk road corridor around Ballynahinch. At Stage 1, three preliminary corridors were identified; one to the west and two to the east of the town. Based on the assessment findings, the Department identified the shorter of the two eastern corridor options as being preferable, particularly as it followed (in principle) the route of the bypass as indicated in the Ards Down Area Plan 2015 (which was in draft at that time).
- d) At Stage 2, three preliminary route options for the proposed bypass were subsequently identified by the Department within the preferred corridor to the east of Ballynahinch. The three options (the Red Route, Blue Route and Yellow Route) were developed, environmental impacts assessed, costs evaluated, traffic volumes predicted and economic cost benefit analysis carried out. Based on assessment, the Department identified the Red Route as being preferable and the then Minister for Regional Development (Mr Danny Kennedy MLA) announced the Preferred Route on 24th January 2012.
- e) Following the announcement, the Department developed a preliminary design of the scheme (the 'Proposed Scheme') to facilitate a subsequent Stage 3 Scheme Assessment and to inform the preparation of a draft Direction Order, draft Vesting Order and Environmental Statement.

Standard of Road

- a) The Proposed Scheme would provide a bypass of Ballynahinch, approximately 3.14km in length. Aligned to the east of the town, it would be a Category 3A carriageway, as defined in the DMRB TD9/93: 'Highway Link Design', commencing with a roundabout at the existing A24 Belfast Road/A21 Saintfield Road junction and terminating with a roundabout at the existing

A24 Drumaness Road/B2 Downpatrick Road junction. It would also include a compact grade-separated junction with the B7 Crossgar Road, a new underpass to accommodate Moss Road, and partial realignments of Ballylone Road and Crabtree Road to facilitate continued access.

- b) It would comprise a single 2-lane carriageway bypass with widening to a Wide Single (2+1) carriageway to provide overtaking opportunities for northbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the southern extent of the scheme, and a Differential Acceleration Lane (DAL) to provide overtaking opportunities for southbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the northern end of the scheme.
 - c) Due to the strategic nature of the bypass, there would be no provision for direct access to adjacent agricultural land, private property or central reserve crossovers.
2. However, Northern Ireland Electricity would be prepared to withdraw its objection in the event that:
- (a) Northern Ireland Electricity's rights to retain and access its equipment at the above location are preserved, and
 - (b) In the event the above location is to be redeveloped thereby necessitating the relocation of NIE equipment the Developer enters into a legally binding agreement with NIE to reimburse NIE for any and all costs and expenses associated with the relocation of its equipment.

A copy of our records has been enclosed for your information. Any further correspondence should be made in writing to Wayleave Payments at the above address quoting reference number.

NIE's rights to retain and access its equipment

- a) The Department has no plans to restrict or inhibit access to any NIE plant along any of part of the route.

Relocation of NIE equipment

- b) The Department is currently discussing the details of the scheme and its impact on NIE infrastructure with NIE's technical personnel and it is expected that this process will fulfil the requirements as set out in your objection.
- c) Should any NIE plant require relocation as a result of the Proposed Scheme, then the Department would invoke the procedures and codes of practice set out in the Street Works (NI) Order 1995.

Objection numberOB02c
Objector's Name William Stewart - NIE Wayleave Payments
Date submitted..... 22 April 2015
NIMVO plot numberN/A

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above objection and responds as follows:

1. **With reference your letter received on 25 March 2015 regarding the above.**

I write to inform you that Northern Ireland Electricity objects to the proposal since NIE equipment is situated at the above location.

The Department considers it appropriate to make the following statement before addressing the specifics of your objection.

Development Priorities

a) The programme to improve transport links in Northern Ireland has been developed and is based on a series of key documents which include:

- A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, the Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport, published in 1998;
- Moving Forward: The Northern Ireland Transport Policy Statement, published in 1998;
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b) The Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) identifies the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass as a Strategic Highway Improvement. This forms part of a range of transportation initiatives across Northern Ireland to provide, for example, up to 13 bypasses, approximately 85km of dual carriageway, 36km of widened single carriageway, and 11 major junction improvements, which will ultimately contribute to increasing the economic well-being of the Region.

c) The New Approach to Regional Transportation complements the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and aims to achieve its vision for transportation. One of its main strategic objectives is to '*improve connectivity within the region*' by completing the work identified in the current Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) and Strategic Road Improvement (SRI) Programme.

d) The RSTNTP includes a programme for the implementation of SRIs to remove bottlenecks on the network where lack of capacity is causing serious congestion, and to improve the

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- e) Progress to construction is subject to clearing statutory procedures, having a satisfactory economic appraisal, and the availability of funding.

Selection of the Preferred Route – Appraisal Procedure

- a) The appraisal of any form of transport investment requires a clear understanding of the objectives, which are to be met, and appropriate criteria to be used to decide whether a proposal meets them. The Government's five objectives for transport (Environment, Safety, Economy, Accessibility and Integration) are pivotal to the appraisal process. There is tension between these objectives, such that proposals may contribute to the achievement of one objective, but work against the achievement of others. The appraisal procedure must allow determination of an appropriate balance between the five objectives.
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- c) As part of this appraisal process, the Department examined strategies for future improvement of the A24 trunk road corridor around Ballynahinch. At Stage 1, three preliminary corridors were identified; one to the west and two to the east of the town. Based on the assessment findings, the Department identified the shorter of the two eastern corridor options as being preferable, particularly as it followed (in principle) the route of the bypass as indicated in the Ards Down Area Plan 2015 (which was in draft at that time).
- d) At Stage 2, three preliminary route options for the proposed bypass were subsequently identified by the Department within the preferred corridor to the east of Ballynahinch. The three options (the Red Route, Blue Route and Yellow Route) were developed, environmental impacts assessed, costs evaluated, traffic volumes predicted and economic cost benefit analysis carried out. Based on assessment, the Department identified the Red Route as being preferable and the then Minister for Regional Development (Mr Danny Kennedy MLA) announced the Preferred Route on 24th January 2012.
- e) Following the announcement, the Department developed a preliminary design of the scheme (the 'Proposed Scheme') to facilitate a subsequent Stage 3 Scheme Assessment and to inform the preparation of a draft Direction Order, draft Vesting Order and Environmental Statement.

Standard of Road

- a) The Proposed Scheme would provide a bypass of Ballynahinch, approximately 3.14km in length. Aligned to the east of the town, it would be a Category 3A carriageway, as defined in the DMRB TD9/93: 'Highway Link Design', commencing with a roundabout at the existing A24 Belfast Road/A21 Saintfield Road junction and terminating with a roundabout at the existing

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- b) It would comprise a single 2-lane carriageway bypass with widening to a Wide Single (2+1) carriageway to provide overtaking opportunities for northbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the southern extent of the scheme, and a Differential Acceleration Lane (DAL) to provide overtaking opportunities for southbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the northern end of the scheme.
 - c) Due to the strategic nature of the bypass, there would be no provision for direct access to adjacent agricultural land, private property or central reserve crossovers.
2. However, Northern Ireland Electricity would be prepared to withdraw its objection in the event that:

- (a) Northern Ireland Electricity's rights to retain and access its equipment at the above location are preserved, and
- (b) In the event the above location is to be redeveloped thereby necessitating the relocation of NIE equipment the Developer enters into a legally binding agreement with NIE to reimburse NIE for any and all costs and expenses associated with the relocation of its equipment.

A copy of our records has been enclosed for your information. Any further correspondence should be made in writing to Wayleave Payments at the above address quoting reference number.

NIE's rights to retain and access its equipment

- a) The Department has no plans to restrict or inhibit access to any NIE plant along any of part of the route.

Relocation of NIE equipment

- b) The Department is currently discussing the details of the scheme and its impact on NIE infrastructure with NIE's technical personnel and it is expected that this process will fulfil the requirements as set out in your objection.
- c) Should any NIE plant require relocation as a result of the Proposed Scheme, then the Department would invoke the procedures and codes of practice set out in the Street Works (NI) Order 1995.

Objection number OB03
Objector's Name
Date submitted 28 April 2015
NIMVO plot number

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above objection and responds as follows:

1. [REDACTED] and I wish to object to the effect the A24 Bypass will have on our property [REDACTED] which is a bungalow with garage containing two reception rooms, three bedrooms, kitchen and bathroom.

The Department considers it appropriate to make the following statement before addressing the specifics of your objection.

Development Priorities

- a) The programme to improve transport links in Northern Ireland has been developed and is based on a series of key documents which include:
- A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, the Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport, published in 1998;
 - Moving Forward: The Northern Ireland Transport Policy Statement, published in 1998;
 - Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025 - Shaping our Future, published in 2002;
 - Regional Development Strategy 2035 – Building a Better Future, published in 2012;
 - Regional Transportation Strategy for Northern Ireland 2002-2012, published in 2002;
 - Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future – A New Approach to Regional Transportation, published in 2012;
 - Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan 2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2005-2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2008-2018, published in 2008;
 - Investment Delivery Plan (IDP) for Roads, published in 2008;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-2021, published in 2012; and
 - Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015, published in 2006.
- b) The Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) identifies the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass as a Strategic Highway Improvement. This forms part of a range of transportation initiatives across Northern Ireland to provide, for example, up to 13 bypasses, approximately 85km of dual carriageway, 36km of widened single carriageway, and 11 major junction improvements, which will ultimately contribute to increasing the economic well-being of the Region.
- c) The New Approach to Regional Transportation complements the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and aims to achieve its vision for transportation. One of its main strategic objectives is to 'improve connectivity within the region' by completing the work identified in the current Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) and Strategic Road Improvement (SRI) Programme.
- d) The RSTNTP includes a programme for the implementation of SRIs to remove bottlenecks on the network where lack of capacity is causing serious congestion, and to improve the

environment by providing bypasses of towns situated on the Regional Strategic Transport Network (RSTN), thus relieving the effects of heavy through traffic. As part of this programme, the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme has been identified as a major highway scheme which should commence later in the plan period. The scheme has also been identified in the Consultation Document '*Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015*' and '*Investment Delivery Plan for Roads*' as a scheme in the current SRI programme.

- e) Progress to construction is subject to clearing statutory procedures, having a satisfactory economic appraisal, and the availability of funding.

Selection of the Preferred Route – Appraisal Procedure

- a) The appraisal of any form of transport investment requires a clear understanding of the objectives, which are to be met, and appropriate criteria to be used to decide whether a proposal meets them. The Government's five objectives for transport (Environment, Safety, Economy, Accessibility and Integration) are pivotal to the appraisal process. There is tension between these objectives, such that proposals may contribute to the achievement of one objective, but work against the achievement of others. The appraisal procedure must allow determination of an appropriate balance between the five objectives.
- b) The study of alternatives for major road schemes is undertaken through a three-stage appraisal procedure. Scheme Assessment Reports act as a summary of the more technical reports generated during the appraisal of road schemes; the level of detail and coverage is appropriate to the type of decision that can reasonably be taken at each stage.
- c) As part of this appraisal process, the Department examined strategies for future improvement of the A24 trunk road corridor around Ballynahinch. At Stage 1, three preliminary corridors were identified; one to the west and two to the east of the town. Based on the assessment findings, the Department identified the shorter of the two eastern corridor options as being preferable, particularly as it followed (in principle) the route of the bypass as indicated in the Ards Down Area Plan 2015 (which was in draft at that time).
- d) At Stage 2, three preliminary route options for the proposed bypass were subsequently identified by the Department within the preferred corridor to the east of Ballynahinch. The three options (the Red Route, Blue Route and Yellow Route) were developed, environmental impacts assessed, costs evaluated, traffic volumes predicted and economic cost benefit analysis carried out. Based on assessment, the Department identified the Red Route as being preferable and the then Minister for Regional Development (Mr Danny Kennedy MLA) announced the Preferred Route on 24th January 2012.
- e) Following the announcement, the Department developed a preliminary design of the scheme (the 'Proposed Scheme') to facilitate a subsequent Stage 3 Scheme Assessment and to inform the preparation of a draft Direction Order, draft Vesting Order and Environmental Statement.

Standard of Road

- a) The Proposed Scheme would provide a bypass of Ballynahinch, approximately 3.14km in length. Aligned to the east of the town, it would be a Category 3A carriageway, as defined in the DMRB TD9/93: 'Highway Link Design', commencing with a roundabout at the existing A24

Belfast Road/A21 Saintfield Road junction and terminating with a roundabout at the existing A24 Drumaness Road/B2 Downpatrick Road junction. It would also include a compact grade-separated junction with the B7 Crossgar Road, a new underpass to accommodate Moss Road, and partial realignments of Ballylone Road and Crabtree Road to facilitate continued access.

- b) It would comprise a single 2-lane carriageway bypass with widening to a Wide Single (2+1) carriageway to provide overtaking opportunities for northbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the southern extent of the scheme, and a Differential Acceleration Lane (DAL) to provide overtaking opportunities for southbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the northern end of the scheme.
 - c) Due to the strategic nature of the bypass, there would be no provision for direct access to adjacent agricultural land, private property or central reserve crossovers.
2. **This has been constantly let for at least thirty five years providing us with much needed income to supplement our pensions.**

The property is in perfect order and stands in 3-4 acres of good ground including part of the old railway which runs along one border. This has been a long standing issue for us, the house and land is within the building line but has been turned down for development due to the bypass.

- a) The Department acknowledges the distress and uncertainty surrounding the planning of a major road scheme, especially in your case where your property is to be compulsorily purchased.
 - b) It is also acknowledged that some of the subject land is zoned for development for housing and that previous applications have been refused due to the protection line for the bypass.
 - c) Spending beyond the current budget period on schemes, such as the Ballynahinch Bypass, will depend on the funding made available by the Northern Ireland Executive in future budget periods. Whilst construction of the bypass is subject to the availability of finances, it is essential to complete planning of the Proposed Scheme to prepare for implementation.
 - d) The Department will investigate the potential to exercise discretion to make a favourable opportunity purchase of the property. However, you should note that the Department is normally not minded to purchase land in advance of making a Vesting Order.
3. **Until we have been informed of the amount of compensation covering both the loss of our regular rental income and the development potential of the land we naturally cannot agree to the building of the bypass.**

Compensation

- a) Should you wish to wait until the Vesting Order is confirmed, compensation would be based on the principle of equivalence: the landowner should be no worse off in financial terms after the acquisition than before.

- b) The Department is unable to comment on matters of the compensation that may be due, as these would be the subject of negotiation between the objector and Land & Property Services' District Valuer.
- c) The District Valuer acts on behalf of Transport NI to negotiate with the landowner and appointed agent to determine compensation for land lost to a new road, compensation for the injurious affection, devaluation of property, and compensation for other pertinent issues. In the event that the District Valuer and you or your agent are unable to agree the compensation due, the subject of compensation can be referred to the Lands Tribunal for determination.
- d) Further guidance on compulsory purchase and compensation is provided in a series of guides, which cover agricultural, residential and business land. These are produced by Land and Property Services and are available from www.dfpni.gov.uk/publications/compulsory-purchase-and-compensation-guides. Alternatively, guides can be requested by writing to: Department of Finance & Personnel, Land & Property Services, Lanyon Plaza, 7 Lanyon Place, Town Parks, Belfast, BT1 3LP. The guidance contained within these booklets is concerned with the procedures for compulsory purchase rather than the broader subject of public development.

DRD TransportNI
Southern Division
11 December 2015

Objection number OB04
Objector's Name
Date submitted 04 May 2015
NIMVO plot number

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above objection and responds as follows:

1. I wish to strongly object to the draft orders of the Ballynahinch By Pass.

The Department considers it appropriate to make the following statement before addressing the specifics of your objection.

Development Priorities

a) The programme to improve transport links in Northern Ireland has been developed and is based on a series of key documents which include:

- A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, the Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport, published in 1998;
- Moving Forward: The Northern Ireland Transport Policy Statement, published in 1998;
- Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025 - Shaping our Future, published in 2002;
- Regional Development Strategy 2035 – Building a Better Future, published in 2012;
- Regional Transportation Strategy for Northern Ireland 2002-2012, published in 2002;
- Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future – A New Approach to Regional Transportation, published in 2012;
- Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan 2015, published in 2005;
- Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2005-2015, published in 2005;
- Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2008-2018, published in 2008;
- Investment Delivery Plan (IDP) for Roads, published in 2008;
- Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-2021, published in 2012; and
- Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015, published in 2006.

b) The Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) identifies the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass as a Strategic Highway Improvement. This forms part of a range of transportation initiatives across Northern Ireland to provide, for example, up to 13 bypasses, approximately 85km of dual carriageway, 36km of widened single carriageway, and 11 major junction improvements, which will ultimately contribute to increasing the economic well-being of the Region.

c) The New Approach to Regional Transportation complements the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and aims to achieve its vision for transportation. One of its main strategic objectives is to *'improve connectivity within the region'* by completing the work identified in the current Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) and Strategic Road Improvement (SRI) Programme.

d) The RSTNTP includes a programme for the implementation of SRIs to remove bottlenecks on the network where lack of capacity is causing serious congestion, and to improve the environment by providing bypasses of towns situated on the Regional Strategic Transport Network (RSTN), thus relieving the effects of heavy through traffic. As part of this programme,

the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme has been identified as a major highway scheme which should commence later in the plan period. The scheme has also been identified in the Consultation Document 'Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015' and 'Investment Delivery Plan for Roads' as a scheme in the current SRI programme.

- e) Progress to construction is subject to clearing statutory procedures, having a satisfactory economic appraisal, and the availability of funding.

Selection of the Preferred Route – Appraisal Procedure

- a) The appraisal of any form of transport investment requires a clear understanding of the objectives, which are to be met, and appropriate criteria to be used to decide whether a proposal meets them. The Government's five objectives for transport (Environment, Safety, Economy, Accessibility and Integration) are pivotal to the appraisal process. There is tension between these objectives, such that proposals may contribute to the achievement of one objective, but work against the achievement of others. The appraisal procedure must allow determination of an appropriate balance between the five objectives.
- b) The study of alternatives for major road schemes is undertaken through a three-stage appraisal procedure. Scheme Assessment Reports act as a summary of the more technical reports generated during the appraisal of road schemes, the level of detail and coverage is appropriate to the type of decision that can reasonably be taken at each stage.
- c) As part of this appraisal process, the Department examined strategies for future improvement of the A24 trunk road corridor around Ballynahinch. At Stage 1, three preliminary corridors were identified; one to the west and two to the east of the town. Based on the assessment findings, the Department identified the shorter of the two eastern corridor options as being preferable, particularly as it followed (in principle) the route of the bypass as indicated in the Ards Down Area Plan 2015 (which was in draft at that time).
- d) At Stage 2, three preliminary route options for the proposed bypass were subsequently identified by the Department within the preferred corridor to the east of Ballynahinch. The three options (the Red Route, Blue Route and Yellow Route) were developed, environmental impacts assessed, costs evaluated, traffic volumes predicted and economic cost benefit analysis carried out. Based on assessment, the Department identified the Red Route as being preferable and the then Minister for Regional Development (Mr Danny Kennedy MLA) announced the Preferred Route on 24th January 2012.
- e) Following the announcement, the Department developed a preliminary design of the scheme (the 'Proposed Scheme') to facilitate a subsequent Stage 3 Scheme Assessment and to inform the preparation of a draft Direction Order, draft Vesting Order and Environmental Statement.

Standard of Road

- a) The Proposed Scheme would provide a bypass of Ballynahinch, approximately 3.14km in length. Aligned to the east of the town, it would be a Category 3A carriageway, as defined in the DMRB TD9/93: 'Highway Link Design', commencing with a roundabout at the existing A24 Belfast Road/A21 Saintfield Road junction and terminating with a roundabout at the existing A24 Drumaness Road/B2 Downpatrick Road junction. It would also include a compact grade-

separated junction with the B7 Crossgar Road, a new underpass to accommodate Moss Road, and partial realignments of Ballylone Road and Crabtree Road to facilitate continued access.

- b) It would comprise a single 2-lane carriageway bypass with widening to a Wide Single (2+1) carriageway to provide overtaking opportunities for northbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the southern extent of the scheme, and a Differential Acceleration Lane (DAL) to provide overtaking opportunities for southbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the northern end of the scheme.
 - c) Due to the strategic nature of the bypass, there would be no provision for direct access to adjacent agricultural land, private property or central reserve crossovers.
2. **Apart from the unacceptable changes this will make to the aesthetics of my home I am greatly concerned about the impact this will have on the quality of my life.**

I have been to the open day to view the plans, read the proposals and consider the counter arguments you have expressed with regards to environmental impact, air quality, noise and vibration, ecology and nature, landscape and visual effect, and road drainage, etc. (which is of particular concern to me as I have had to leave my home due to flooding two years ago).

Aesthetics and Quality of Life

- a) The Department recognises that partial realignments to existing roads can have a substantial impact on properties in terms of aesthetics, privacy and amenity. The Environmental Statement at Volume 1 Section 11.6.2.1 Table 11.12 and Figures 11.7 & 11.8 accepts that the Proposed Scheme would adversely impact views from nearby properties.
- b) The Department is content that the fencing / boundary treatment, hedging and planting commitments contained in the Environmental Statement at Volume 3 Figure 11.6 (5 sheets) would reduce any loss of privacy when the scheme opens to traffic and through time, the openness of the site would be reduced as the comprehensive landscape planting matures.
- c) The Department would wish to continue to discuss proposed boundary treatment options further with you in an attempt to reduce any aesthetic change to your home.

Air Quality

- a) An Air Quality assessment has been undertaken for the Proposed Scheme and reported in Chapter 8 in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement. Air pollution concentration levels were calculated in the vicinity of the scheme (Figure 8.3 in Volume 3 of the ES), with the site-specific assessments described in sub-sections 8.5 & 8.6, and Tables 8.7, 8.10 & 8.11. Based on these site-specific assessments, there would be an Imperceptible change in air quality at 4 Drumaness Road.
- b) There would be no significant effect on either local or regional air quality as a result of the Proposed Scheme. Local air quality pollutant concentrations would remain well within the relevant national objective limit values and are forecasted to marginally decrease from existing levels at the majority of locations. With strategic traffic moving to the new bypass,

there would be a net benefit for the majority of properties within Ballynahinch with slightly improved air quality. In terms of regional air quality, there would be an improvement.

- c) During the operational phase of the Proposed Scheme, no predicted exceedances of the national objective limit values are expected, thus there would be no significant effects on air quality. Therefore, no specific mitigation measures are deemed necessary.

Noise & Vibration

- a) A Noise & Vibration assessment has been undertaken for the scheme and reported in Chapter 13 in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement. Based on this assessment, appropriate mitigation & enhancement measures have been developed and reported in Section 13.7 of the ES.
- b) The noise assessment has determined that in the Baseline year (2019), 523 dwellings would experience an increase in noise level, the vast majority of which (466 or 89%) would be classed as 'Negligible' to 'Moderate' in the short-term, and 1249 dwellings would experience a decrease in noise level.
- c) A Thin Surface Course System (TSCS), otherwise known as low noise surfacing, would be provided on the mainline. Whilst the noise benefits of this surfacing are mainly evident at higher speeds, there would be some benefits at the lower speeds on the Proposed Scheme.
- d) With this mitigation in place, [REDACTED] is predicted to experience a Minor decrease in noise levels with the Proposed Scheme in operation.
- e) The results of the noise impact assessment indicate that no properties would qualify for noise insulation, under the terms of The Noise Insulation Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995.

Ecology & Nature Conservation

- a) The impact of the Proposed Scheme on ecology and nature conservation is reported in Chapter 10 in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement. The scope of this assessment included both desktop study and field survey, consisting of an 'extended' Phase 1 habitat survey, protected mammals (badger, otter, bat), amphibians (common frog & smooth newt), fisheries survey, and breeding bird survey.
- b) The Department accepts that there would be the loss of a range of habitat types, regarded as being of local importance. With implementation of the mitigation and enhancement measures proposed in sub-section 10.7 of the ES, the residual impact on local habitats and their associated wildlife should be minimal, as the introduction of additional vegetation in newly planted areas using native species would provide new habitats.

Landscape & Visual Effect

- a) The impact of the Proposed Scheme on the Landscape and associated Visual Effects is reported in Chapter 11 in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement. The scope of this assessment included both desktop study and field survey.
- b) The Department recognises that a scheme of this scale would inevitably have an impact on the landscape and individual visual receptors. However, the Department is content that the

fencing / boundary treatment, hedging and planting commitments contained in the Environmental Statement at Volume 3 Figure 11.6 (5 sheets) would reduce the landscape and visual impact when the scheme opens to traffic and through time, the openness of the site would be reduced as the comprehensive landscape planting matures.

Road Drainage

- a) The road drainage facilities to be provided as part of the Proposed Scheme would be designed to intercept any run-off coming from the carriageway before it enters private property.
- b) At this location, the Proposed Scheme also presents an opportunity to improve the drainage regime in this area. The Department has met with various Statutory Authorities to discern the cause of the historical flooding along Crabtree Road and this, together with our own surveys and studies, has suggested that one of the factors contributing to the flooding is the existing culvert downstream of the Crabtree Road, which will be upgraded. The drainage design forming part of the Proposed Scheme is being developed to address the current situation. Scheme proposals include relaying the culvert under the Downpatrick Road and upgrading the drainage in the Crabtree Road area.

3. **None of your arguments convince me that my home and lifestyle will become extremely disturbed and unsavoury should this by pass go ahead.**

This has been my home for 24 years, It is the only home my daughter has known and it is a perfect home for me to grow old in and welcome my grandchildren into. I'm now looking forward to virtually living on a busy roundabout with all the chaos that entails.

Aesthetics and Quality of Life

- a) As previously stated, the Department recognises that partial realignments to existing roads can have a substantial impact on properties in terms of aesthetics, privacy and amenity. The Environmental Statement at Volume 1 Section 11.6.2.1 Table 11.12 and Figures 11.7 & 11.8 accepts that the Proposed Scheme would adversely impact views from nearby properties.
 - b) The Department is content that the fencing / boundary treatment, hedging and planting commitments contained in the Environmental Statement at Volume 3 Figure 11.6 (5 sheets) would reduce any loss of privacy when the scheme opens to traffic and through time, the openness of the site would be reduced as the comprehensive landscape planting matures.
 - c) As previously mentioned, the Department would wish to continue to discuss proposed boundary treatment options further with you in an attempt to reduce any aesthetic change to your home.
4. **There have been some vague discussions about compensation for acquired land. In these circumstances I would like must greater clarity as my home has been substantially devalued by virtue of this proposal alone.**
 - a) The Department is unable to comment on compensation matters, as these would be the subject of negotiation with Land & Property Services' District Valuer.

b) Compensation following compulsory acquisition of land is based on the principle of equivalence. The landowner should be no worse off in financial terms after the acquisition than before. Land & Property Services' (LPS) District Valuer acts on behalf of Transport NI to negotiate with the landowner and/or his/her agent to determine compensation for land lost to a new road, compensation for the injurious affection, devaluation of property and compensation for other pertinent issues. In the event that the District Valuer and you or your agent are unable to agree the compensation due, the subject of compensation can be referred to the Lands Tribunal for determination.

DRD TransportNI
Southern Division
11 December 2015

Objection number OB05
Objector's Name B. Clarke [REDACTED]
Date submitted 05 May 2015
NIMVO plot number [REDACTED]

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above objection and responds as follows:

1. We represent [REDACTED] In respect of the above Road Scheme and write to you to request that you reconsider your proposals In respect of [REDACTED]

The Department considers it appropriate to make the following statement before addressing the specifics of your objection.

Development Priorities

- a) The programme to improve transport links in Northern Ireland has been developed and is based on a series of key documents which include:
- A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, the Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport, published in 1998;
 - Moving Forward: The Northern Ireland Transport Policy Statement, published in 1998;
 - Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025 - Shaping our Future, published in 2002;
 - Regional Development Strategy 2035 – Building a Better Future, published in 2012;
 - Regional Transportation Strategy for Northern Ireland 2002-2012, published in 2002;
 - Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future – A New Approach to Regional Transportation, published in 2012;
 - Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan 2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2005-2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2008-2018, published in 2008;
 - Investment Delivery Plan (IDP) for Roads, published in 2008;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-2021, published in 2012; and
 - Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015, published in 2006.
- b) The Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) identifies the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass as a Strategic Highway Improvement. This forms part of a range of transportation initiatives across Northern Ireland to provide, for example, up to 13 bypasses, approximately 85km of dual carriageway, 36km of widened single carriageway, and 11 major junction improvements, which will ultimately contribute to increasing the economic well-being of the Region.
- c) The New Approach to Regional Transportation complements the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and aims to achieve its vision for transportation. One of its main strategic objectives is to *'improve connectivity within the region'* by completing the work identified in the current Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) and Strategic Road Improvement (SRI) Programme.
- d) The RSTNTP includes a programme for the implementation of SRIs to remove bottlenecks on the network where lack of capacity is causing serious congestion, and to improve the environment by providing bypasses of towns situated on the Regional Strategic Transport Network (RSTN), thus relieving the effects of heavy through traffic. As part of this programme,

the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme has been identified as a major highway scheme which should commence later in the plan period. The scheme has also been identified in the Consultation Document '*Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015*' and '*Investment Delivery Plan for Roads*' as a scheme in the current SRI programme.

- e) Progress to construction is subject to clearing statutory procedures, having a satisfactory economic appraisal, and the availability of funding.

Selection of the Preferred Route – Appraisal Procedure

- a) The appraisal of any form of transport investment requires a clear understanding of the objectives, which are to be met, and appropriate criteria to be used to decide whether a proposal meets them. The Government's five objectives for transport (Environment, Safety, Economy, Accessibility and Integration) are pivotal to the appraisal process. There is tension between these objectives, such that proposals may contribute to the achievement of one objective, but work against the achievement of others. The appraisal procedure must allow determination of an appropriate balance between the five objectives.
- b) The study of alternatives for major road schemes is undertaken through a three-stage appraisal procedure. Scheme Assessment Reports act as a summary of the more technical reports generated during the appraisal of road schemes, the level of detail and coverage is appropriate to the type of decision that can reasonably be taken at each stage.
- c) As part of this appraisal process, the Department examined strategies for future improvement of the A24 trunk road corridor around Ballynahinch. At Stage 1, three preliminary corridors were identified; one to the west and two to the east of the town. Based on the assessment findings, the Department identified the shorter of the two eastern corridor options as being preferable, particularly as it followed (in principle) the route of the bypass as indicated in the Ards Down Area Plan 2015 (which was in draft at that time).
- d) At Stage 2, three preliminary route options for the proposed bypass were subsequently identified by the Department within the preferred corridor to the east of Ballynahinch. The three options (the Red Route, Blue Route and Yellow Route) were developed, environmental impacts assessed, costs evaluated, traffic volumes predicted and economic cost benefit analysis carried out. Based on assessment, the Department identified the Red Route as being preferable and the then Minister for Regional Development (Mr Danny Kennedy MLA) announced the Preferred Route on 24th January 2012.
- e) Following the announcement, the Department developed a preliminary design of the scheme (the 'Proposed Scheme') to facilitate a subsequent Stage 3 Scheme Assessment and to inform the preparation of a draft Direction Order, draft Vesting Order and Environmental Statement.

Standard of Road

- a) The Proposed Scheme would provide a bypass of Ballynahinch, approximately 3.14km in length. Aligned to the east of the town, it would be a Category 3A carriageway, as defined in the DMRB TD9/93: 'Highway Link Design', commencing with a roundabout at the existing A24 Belfast Road/A21 Saintfield Road junction and terminating with a roundabout at the existing A24 Drumanness Road/B2 Downpatrick Road junction. It would also include a compact grade-separated junction with the B7 Crossgar Road, a new underpass to accommodate Moss

Road, and partial realignments of Ballylone Road and Crabtree Road to facilitate continued access.

- b) It would comprise a single 2-lane carriageway bypass with widening to a Wide Single (2+1) carriageway to provide overtaking opportunities for northbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the southern extent of the scheme, and a Differential Acceleration Lane (DAL) to provide overtaking opportunities for southbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the northern end of the scheme.
 - c) Due to the strategic nature of the bypass, there would be no provision for direct access to adjacent agricultural land, private property or central reserve crossovers.
2. **Your proposals will have a serve impact on [REDACTED] Not only will he loose valuable farm land, he will lose a Farm Yard and a number of agricultural buildings.**

Reduction in farm land

- a) The Department recognises that the scale of new road works in a green field location can have a substantial impact on farms in terms of injurious affection (including damage to the viability of the farm business), severance and disturbance. It is also accepted that the 'preferred route' for a scheme would impact landowners to differing degrees of severity. The Department believes the proposed layout is the most equitable when viewed in the wider context of landowners likely to be affected by the scheme.
- b) Landowners who suffer a negative impact on their farm business have a right to compensation for this impact. The Department is unable to comment on the detail of compensation matters, as these would be the subject of negotiation between the objector and Land and Property Services' District Valuer. Depending on the particular circumstances, compensation can be claimed under the following categories (Heads of Claim) (i) the value of the land vested (ii) severance and injurious affection (iii) disturbance and (iv) fees. Additional compensation for severance could arise if the resultant shape of fields or access restrictions makes future farming operations difficult or impractical.
- c) It is accepted that the loss of land may result in a reduction in monies paid to landowners in relation to both Single Farm Payments (SFPs) and for land within a Countryside Management Scheme (CMS).
- d) Compensation following compulsory acquisition of land is based on the principle of equivalence. The landowner should be no worse off in financial terms after the acquisition than before. Land and Property Services' District Valuer acts on behalf of TransportNI to negotiate with the landowner and/or his agent to determine compensation for land and property lost to a new road, compensation for the injurious affection, devaluation of property and compensation for other pertinent issues. In the event that the District Valuer and the landowner or his agent are unable to agree the compensation due, the subject of compensation can be referred to the Lands Tribunal for determination.

3. In the first instance we would ask you to consider a minor realignment of the scheme so as to avoid [REDACTED]

In the event that you will not alter your design we would ask you to outline your proposals for the remainder of the farm.

- a) The Department in following the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges assessment process did consider, during scheme development, alternative corridors that could have avoided this property. However, they did not perform as well as the preferred corridor when reviewed under the scheme assessment process. Of the three route options assessed within the preferred corridor, the preferred alignment affected the fewest number of properties; unfortunately, this property is one of those affected.
- b) The Department accepts that the "Preferred Route" for a scheme would impact landowners to differing degrees of severity. The Department believes that the road proposal presented in the draft Statutory Orders is the most equitable when viewed in the wider context of landowners likely to be affected by the scheme.
4. We would ask that you provide an underpass to link both sides of the farm and to lessen the impact of the scheme on the remainder of [REDACTED]

We would also require cattle collection facilities on the lands which will be on both sides of the proposed carriageway.

We would require that the remainder of the laneway which will be redundant and field hedging be removed and the land made good.

We would request that you replace the existing farm yard and buildings on another area of the remaining lands.

A water supply will be required which should be linked to all parts of the remaining lands.

We would request a complete list of your proposed accommodation works for the remainder of [REDACTED]

Accommodation Works

- a) Accommodation works can comprise such things as the provision of fences (temporary or permanent), hedges, walls, gates and provision of new or altered access to the road network. It can also include rationalisation of drainage and water supply layout. The Department has an explanatory leaflet on Accommodation Works on its website as follows: - <https://www.drdni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/drd/roads-service-northern-ireland-guide-to-accommodation-works.pdf>

Underpass

- a) In certain circumstances, the Department may consider the provision of a cattle crossing in the form of a cattle creep underpass or an overbridge. These are assessed on a case-by-case basis and may include neighbouring farms sharing facilities. The Department would consider the needs of the farm, its layout and management, the frequency and type of movement of cattle, size of the herd, the degree of severance, the opportunity to share facilities and road user safety.

- b) Currently, the land is accessed from both Hall Road to the East, and from an access lane off Crossgar Road to the West; both means of access would be maintained. On this basis, the Department do not propose to install an underpass in this instance.

Stock collection facilities, yard & buildings

- a) Any cattle facility that is lost during construction of the new road, or any additional cattle facility required by construction of the new road, is normally taken into account in the compensation agreed between the landowner or his agent and Land and Property Services. The Department would prefer to offer compensation for the loss of animal facilities, as the landowner may be best positioned to assess his future requirements regarding the type and location of yard, buildings and cattle handling facilities.

Lanes & Hedging

- a) The Department recognises that compulsory acquisition of land for a linear road development can result in small irregular shaped portions of retained land, which may not be economically viable for commercial agriculture. Subject to DARD Countryside Management branch approval, the Department may carry out as accommodation works the removal of hedgerows and realignment of fences to join small, mis-shapen remnants of fields with larger neighbouring fields. Removal of redundant lanes is to be agreed with landowner as part of the accommodation works.

Existing services

- a) The Department accepts that construction of roads can damage existing water and other service supplies to farms and dwellings. Through dialogue with the service suppliers and with landowners, the Department and its contractor would seek to maintain services to the farm at all times, by installing temporary connections during construction and permanent connection on completion of the road construction.
- b) All costs associated with the diversion of privately-owned services would be borne by the Department including, but not limited to, temporary and permanent alterations to the services, temporary or permanent alternative supplies, materials and charges levied by public bodies in respect of new connections.

5. **At this stage [REDACTED] objects to your proposals however will consider any revised proposals and of course is willing to meet to discuss the scheme and any proposed accommodation measures.**

- a) Accommodation Works are works which the Department is prepared to carry out during a road contract to accommodate adjoining landowners and to reduce the impact of the road scheme. Accommodation works can be carried out only by agreement with a landowner. The Department is keen to continue the dialogue with the landowner to discuss the scheme and agree a comprehensive schedule of accommodation works and possible mitigation measures.

Objection number OB06
Objector's Name
Date submitted..... 05 May 2015
NIMVO plot number

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above objection and responds as follows:

1. I have been instructed to write to you to highlight the concerns of [REDACTED] and to ask you to revisit your proposal for the A24 Ballynahinch By Pass.

The Department considers it appropriate to make the following statement before addressing the specifics of your objection.

Development Priorities

- a) The programme to improve transport links in Northern Ireland has been developed and is based on a series of key documents which include:
- A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, the Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport, published in 1998;
 - Moving Forward: The Northern Ireland Transport Policy Statement, published in 1998;
 - Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025 - Shaping our Future, published in 2002;
 - Regional Development Strategy 2035 – Building a Better Future, published in 2012;
 - Regional Transportation Strategy for Northern Ireland 2002-2012, published in 2002;
 - Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future – A New Approach to Regional Transportation, published in 2012;
 - Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan 2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2005-2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2008-2018, published in 2008;
 - Investment Delivery Plan (IDP) for Roads, published in 2008;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-2021, published in 2012; and
 - Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015, published in 2006.
- b) The Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) identifies the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass as a Strategic Highway Improvement. This forms part of a range of transportation initiatives across Northern Ireland to provide, for example, up to 13 bypasses, approximately 85km of dual carriageway, 36km of widened single carriageway, and 11 major junction improvements, which will ultimately contribute to increasing the economic well-being of the Region.
- c) The New Approach to Regional Transportation complements the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and aims to achieve its vision for transportation. One of its main strategic objectives is to 'improve connectivity within the region' by completing the work identified in the current Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) and Strategic Road Improvement (SRI) Programme.
- d) The RSTNTP includes a programme for the implementation of SRIs to remove bottlenecks on the network where lack of capacity is causing serious congestion, and to improve the environment by providing bypasses of towns situated on the Regional Strategic Transport

Network (RSTN), thus relieving the effects of heavy through traffic. As part of this programme, the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme has been identified as a major highway scheme which should commence later in the plan period. The scheme has also been identified in the Consultation Document 'Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015' and 'Investment Delivery Plan for Roads' as a scheme in the current SRI programme.

- e) Progress to construction is subject to clearing statutory procedures, having a satisfactory economic appraisal, and the availability of funding.

Selection of the Preferred Route – Appraisal Procedure

- a) The appraisal of any form of transport investment requires a clear understanding of the objectives, which are to be met, and appropriate criteria to be used to decide whether a proposal meets them. The Government's five objectives for transport (Environment, Safety, Economy, Accessibility and Integration) are pivotal to the appraisal process. There is tension between these objectives, such that proposals may contribute to the achievement of one objective, but work against the achievement of others. The appraisal procedure must allow determination of an appropriate balance between the five objectives.
- b) The study of alternatives for major road schemes is undertaken through a three-stage appraisal procedure. Scheme Assessment Reports act as a summary of the more technical reports generated during the appraisal of road schemes, the level of detail and coverage is appropriate to the type of decision that can reasonably be taken at each stage.
- c) As part of this appraisal process, the Department examined strategies for future improvement of the A24 trunk road corridor around Ballynahinch. At Stage 1, three preliminary corridors were identified; one to the west and two to the east of the town. Based on the assessment findings, the Department identified the shorter of the two eastern corridor options as being preferable, particularly as it followed (in principle) the route of the bypass as indicated in the Ards Down Area Plan 2015 (which was in draft at that time).
- d) At Stage 2, three preliminary route options for the proposed bypass were subsequently identified by the Department within the preferred corridor to the east of Ballynahinch. The three options (the Red Route, Blue Route and Yellow Route) were developed, environmental impacts assessed, costs evaluated, traffic volumes predicted and economic cost benefit analysis carried out. Based on assessment, the Department identified the Red Route as being preferable and the then Minister for Regional Development (Mr Danny Kennedy MLA) announced the Preferred Route on 24th January 2012.
- e) Following the announcement, the Department developed a preliminary design of the scheme (the 'Proposed Scheme') to facilitate a subsequent Stage 3 Scheme Assessment and to inform the preparation of a draft Direction Order, draft Vesting Order and Environmental Statement.

Standard of Road

- a) The Proposed Scheme would provide a bypass of Ballynahinch, approximately 3.14km in length. Aligned to the east of the town, it would be a Category 3A carriageway, as defined in the DMRB TD9/93: 'Highway Link Design', commencing with a roundabout at the existing A24 Belfast Road/A21 Saintfield Road junction and terminating with a roundabout at the existing

A24 Drumaness Road/B2 Downpatrick Road junction. It would also include a compact grade-separated junction with the B7 Crossgar Road, a new underpass to accommodate Moss Road, and partial realignments of Ballylone Road and Crabtree Road to facilitate continued access.

- b) It would comprise a single 2-lane carriageway bypass with widening to a Wide Single (2+1) carriageway to provide overtaking opportunities for northbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the southern extent of the scheme, and a Differential Acceleration Lane (DAL) to provide overtaking opportunities for southbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the northern end of the scheme.
- c) Due to the strategic nature of the bypass, there would be no provision for direct access to adjacent agricultural land, private property or central reserve crossovers.

2. You will be aware that the [REDACTED] run a [REDACTED] and that your road proposal as designed will have an adverse affect on their business.

The [REDACTED] will lose land they own to the scheme. They will also lose land that adjoins their farm and that they have leased from [REDACTED] which they will be unable to replace.

Reduction in farm land

- a) The Department recognises that the scale of new road works in a green field location can have a substantial impact on farms in terms of injurious affection (including damage to the viability of the farm business), severance and disturbance. It is also accepted that the 'preferred route' for a scheme would impact landowners to differing degrees of severity. The Department believes the proposed layout is the most equitable when viewed in the wider aspect of landowners likely to be affected by the scheme.
 - b) Landowners who suffer a negative impact on their farm business have a right to compensation for this impact. The Department is unable to comment on the detail of compensation matters, as these would be the subject of negotiation between the objector and Land and Property Services' District Valuer. Depending on the particular circumstances, compensation can be claimed under the following categories (Heads of Claim) (i) the value of the land vested (ii) severance and injurious affection (iii) disturbance and (iv) fees. Additional compensation for severance could arise if the resultant shape of fields or access restrictions makes future farming operations difficult or impractical.
 - c) The portion of land that would be severed by the Proposed Scheme would continue to have access but only indirectly via an access lane off the Crossgar Road.
3. We would ask you to consider a small realignment of the scheme which would reduce the area of land taken and thereby lessen the impact on their farm business.
- a) Any realignment of the mainline to the west would intrude on already granted Planning Permissions for housing development. The Department will work with the landowner to try and reduce/mitigate the impact of the Proposed Scheme where feasible.

- b) The Department accepts that the "Preferred Route" for a scheme would impact landowners to differing degrees of severity. The Department believes that the road proposal presented in the draft Statutory Orders is the most equitable when viewed in the wider context of landowners likely to be affected by the scheme.
4. **We would also request details of all proposed accommodation works both temporary and permanent so that these can be fully considered and agreed.**

Accommodation Works

- a) Accommodation works can comprise such things as the provision of fences (temporary or permanent), hedges, walls, gates and provision of new or altered access to the road network. It can also include rationalisation of drainage and water supply layout. The Department has an explanatory leaflet on Accommodation Works on its website as follows: - <https://www.drdni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/drd/roads-service-northern-ireland-guide-to-accommodation-works.pdf>
- b) Accommodation Works are works which the Department is prepared to carry out during a road contract to accommodate adjoining land owners and to reduce the impact of the road scheme. Accommodation works can be carried out only by agreement with a landowner. The Department is keen to continue the dialogue with the landowner to discuss the scheme and agree a comprehensive schedule of accommodation works and mitigation measures.
5. **In relation to the leased land you should be aware that the [REDACTED] claim the single farm payment in respect of these lands.**

Although this is a matter for L.P.S we would request details of the proposed methodology for dealing with the loss of single farm payments.

Compensation

- a) The Department also recognises that loss of land can have a significant impact on Single Farm Payments (SFPs) and Countryside Management Scheme (CMS) payments. Compensation following compulsory acquisition of land is based on the principle of equivalence; the landowner should be no worse off in financial terms after than before. However, the Department is unable to comment on compensation matters as these would be subject of negotiation with Land and Property Services' (LPS) District Valuer.
- b) Land and Property Services' (LPS) District Valuer will negotiate with the landowner and/or his agent to determine compensation for land lost to a new road, compensation for the injurious affection, devaluation of property and compensation for other pertinent issues. In the event that the District Valuer and the landowner and/or his agent are unable to agree the compensation due, the subject of compensation can be referred to the Lands Tribunal and it will determine the matter.

Objection number OB07
Objector's Name J.G. Rice [REDACTED]
Date submitted..... 13 May 2015
NIMVO plot number [REDACTED]

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above objection and responds as follows:

1. We write to you on the instructions of [REDACTED]

We are instructed to record our clients' objections to the proposed Bypass and in particular that section of the Bypass running through the townland of Ballylone off the B7 Crossgar Road.

The Department considers it appropriate to make the following statement before addressing the specifics of your objection.

Development Priorities

- a) The programme to improve transport links in Northern Ireland has been developed and is based on a series of key documents which include:
- A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, the Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport, published in 1998;
 - Moving Forward: The Northern Ireland Transport Policy Statement, published in 1998;
 - Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025 - Shaping our Future, published in 2002;
 - Regional Development Strategy 2035 – Building a Better Future, published in 2012;
 - Regional Transportation Strategy for Northern Ireland 2002-2012, published in 2002;
 - Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future – A New Approach to Regional Transportation, published in 2012;
 - Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan 2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2005-2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2008-2018, published in 2008;
 - Investment Delivery Plan (IDP) for Roads, published in 2008;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-2021, published in 2012; and
 - Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015, published in 2006.
- b) The Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) identifies the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass as a Strategic Highway Improvement. This forms part of a range of transportation initiatives across Northern Ireland to provide, for example, up to 13 bypasses, approximately 85km of dual carriageway, 36km of widened single carriageway, and 11 major junction improvements, which will ultimately contribute to increasing the economic well-being of the Region.
- c) The New Approach to Regional Transportation complements the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and aims to achieve its vision for transportation. One of its main strategic objectives is to *'improve connectivity within the region'* by completing the work identified in the current Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) and Strategic Road Improvement (SRI) Programme.

- d) The RSTNTP includes a programme for the implementation of SRIs to remove bottlenecks on the network where lack of capacity is causing serious congestion, and to improve the environment by providing bypasses of towns situated on the Regional Strategic Transport Network (RSTN), thus relieving the effects of heavy through traffic. As part of this programme, the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme has been identified as a major highway scheme which should commence later in the plan period. The scheme has also been identified in the Consultation Document '*Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015*' and '*Investment Delivery Plan for Roads*' as a scheme in the current SRI programme.
- e) Progress to construction is subject to clearing statutory procedures, having a satisfactory economic appraisal, and the availability of funding.

Selection of the Preferred Route – Appraisal Procedure

- a) The appraisal of any form of transport investment requires a clear understanding of the objectives, which are to be met, and appropriate criteria to be used to decide whether a proposal meets them. The Government's five objectives for transport (Environment, Safety, Economy, Accessibility and Integration) are pivotal to the appraisal process. There is tension between these objectives, such that proposals may contribute to the achievement of one objective, but work against the achievement of others. The appraisal procedure must allow determination of an appropriate balance between the five objectives.
- b) The study of alternatives for major road schemes is undertaken through a three-stage appraisal procedure. Scheme Assessment Reports act as a summary of the more technical reports generated during the appraisal of road schemes, the level of detail and coverage is appropriate to the type of decision that can reasonably be taken at each stage.
- c) As part of this appraisal process, the Department examined strategies for future improvement of the A24 trunk road corridor around Ballynahinch. At Stage 1, three preliminary corridors were identified; one to the west and two to the east of the town. Based on the assessment findings, the Department identified the shorter of the two eastern corridor options as being preferable, particularly as it followed (in principle) the route of the bypass as indicated in the Ards Down Area Plan 2015 (which was in draft at that time).
- d) At Stage 2, three preliminary route options for the proposed bypass were subsequently identified by the Department within the preferred corridor to the east of Ballynahinch. The three options (the Red Route, Blue Route and Yellow Route) were developed, environmental impacts assessed, costs evaluated, traffic volumes predicted and economic cost benefit analysis carried out. Based on assessment, the Department identified the Red Route as being preferable and the then Minister for Regional Development (Mr Danny Kennedy MLA) announced the Preferred Route on 24th January 2012.
- e) Following the announcement, the Department developed a preliminary design of the scheme (the 'Proposed Scheme') to facilitate a subsequent Stage 3 Scheme Assessment and to inform the preparation of a draft Direction Order, draft Vesting Order and Environmental Statement.

Standard of Road

- a) The Proposed Scheme would provide a bypass of Ballynahinch, approximately 3.14km in length. Aligned to the east of the town, it would be a Category 3A carriageway, as defined in the DMRB TD9/93: 'Highway Link Design', commencing with a roundabout at the existing A24 Belfast Road/A21 Saintfield Road junction and terminating with a roundabout at the existing A24 Drumanness Road/B2 Downpatrick Road junction. It would also include a compact grade-separated junction with the B7 Crossgar Road, a new underpass to accommodate Moss Road, and partial realignments of Ballylone Road and Crabtree Road to facilitate continued access.
 - b) It would comprise a single 2-lane carriageway bypass with widening to a Wide Single (2+1) carriageway to provide overtaking opportunities for northbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the southern extent of the scheme, and a Differential Acceleration Lane (DAL) to provide overtaking opportunities for southbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the northern end of the scheme.
 - c) Due to the strategic nature of the bypass, there would be no provision for direct access to adjacent agricultural land, private property or central reserve crossovers.
2. The proposals as designed will greatly affect our clients' farming business and livelihood.

[REDACTED] rented land adjacent to theirs belonging to the [REDACTED]

Those lands we understand will be affected by the Bypass.

The loss of those conacre lands, in particular, will crucially affect the financial viability of our clients' continued [REDACTED]

Reduction in farm land

- a) The Department recognises that the scale of new road works in a green field location can have a substantial impact on farms in terms of injurious affection (including damage to the viability of the farm business), severance and disturbance. It is also accepted that the 'preferred route' for a scheme would impact landowners to differing degrees of severity. The Department believes the proposed layout is the most equitable when viewed in the wider aspect of landowners likely to be affected by the scheme.
- b) Landowners who suffer a negative impact on their farm business have a right to compensation for this impact. The Department is unable to comment on the detail of compensation matters, as these would be the subject of negotiation between the objector and Land and Property Services' District Valuer. Depending on the particular circumstances, compensation can be claimed under the following categories (Heads of Claim) (i) the value of the land vested (ii) severance and injurious affection (iii) disturbance and (iv) fees. Additional compensation for severance could arise if the resultant shape of fields or access restrictions makes future farming operations difficult or impractical.

3. **Our clients therefore require a reconfiguration of the proposed route of the Bypass at their property off the B7 Crossgar Road site adjacent.**

Please acknowledge receipt and confirm that our clients' objections will not only be considered but positively acted upon to minimise the real financial impact this Scheme will cause them.

- a) Any realignment of the mainline to the west would intrude on already granted planning permissions for housing development. The Department will work with the landowner to try and reduce/mitigate the impact of the Proposed Scheme where feasible.
- b) The Department accepts that the "Preferred Route" for a scheme would impact landowners to differing degrees of severity. The Department believes that the road proposal presented in the draft Statutory Orders is the most equitable when viewed in the wider context of landowners likely to be affected by the scheme.

DRD TransportNI
Southern Division
11 December 2015

Objection number OB08
Objector's Name B. Clarke [REDACTED]
Date submitted..... 11 May 2015
NIMVO plot number [REDACTED]

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above objection and responds as follows:

1. We represent the [REDACTED] in respect of the above Road Scheme and write to you to request that you reconsider your proposals in respect of their property.

Your proposals will have a severe impact on the Farm Business. As they will be lose valuable farm land, which will be impossible to replace in the locality.

The Department considers it appropriate to make the following statement before addressing the specifics of your objection.

Development Priorities

- a) The programme to improve transport links in Northern Ireland has been developed and is based on a series of key documents which include:
- A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, the Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport, published in 1998;
 - Moving Forward: The Northern Ireland Transport Policy Statement, published in 1998;
 - Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025 - Shaping our Future, published in 2002;
 - Regional Development Strategy 2035 – Building a Better Future, published in 2012;
 - Regional Transportation Strategy for Northern Ireland 2002-2012, published in 2002;
 - Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future – A New Approach to Regional Transportation, published in 2012;
 - Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan 2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2005-2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2008-2018, published in 2008;
 - Investment Delivery Plan (IDP) for Roads, published in 2008;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-2021, published in 2012; and
 - Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015, published in 2006.
- b) The Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) identifies the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass as a Strategic Highway Improvement. This forms part of a range of transportation initiatives across Northern Ireland to provide, for example, up to 13 bypasses, approximately 85km of dual carriageway, 36km of widened single carriageway, and 11 major junction improvements, which will ultimately contribute to increasing the economic well-being of the Region.
- c) The New Approach to Regional Transportation complements the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and aims to achieve its vision for transportation. One of its main strategic objectives is to 'improve connectivity within the region' by completing the work identified in the current Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) and Strategic Road Improvement (SRI) Programme.

- d) The RSTNTP includes a programme for the implementation of SRIs to remove bottlenecks on the network where lack of capacity is causing serious congestion, and to improve the environment by providing bypasses of towns situated on the Regional Strategic Transport Network (RSTN), thus relieving the effects of heavy through traffic. As part of this programme, the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme has been identified as a major highway scheme which should commence later in the plan period. The scheme has also been identified in the Consultation Document '*Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015*' and '*Investment Delivery Plan for Roads*' as a scheme in the current SRI programme.
- e) Progress to construction is subject to clearing statutory procedures, having a satisfactory economic appraisal, and the availability of funding.

Selection of the Preferred Route – Appraisal Procedure

- a) The appraisal of any form of transport investment requires a clear understanding of the objectives, which are to be met, and appropriate criteria to be used to decide whether a proposal meets them. The Government's five objectives for transport (Environment, Safety, Economy, Accessibility and Integration) are pivotal to the appraisal process. There is tension between these objectives, such that proposals may contribute to the achievement of one objective, but work against the achievement of others. The appraisal procedure must allow determination of an appropriate balance between the five objectives.
- b) The study of alternatives for major road schemes is undertaken through a three-stage appraisal procedure. Scheme Assessment Reports act as a summary of the more technical reports generated during the appraisal of road schemes, the level of detail and coverage is appropriate to the type of decision that can reasonably be taken at each stage.
- c) As part of this appraisal process, the Department examined strategies for future improvement of the A24 trunk road corridor around Ballynahinch. At Stage 1, three preliminary corridors were identified; one to the west and two to the east of the town. Based on the assessment findings, the Department identified the shorter of the two eastern corridor options as being preferable, particularly as it followed (in principle) the route of the bypass as indicated in the Ards Down Area Plan 2015 (which was in draft at that time).
- d) At Stage 2, three preliminary route options for the proposed bypass were subsequently identified by the Department within the preferred corridor to the east of Ballynahinch. The three options (the Red Route, Blue Route and Yellow Route) were developed, environmental impacts assessed, costs evaluated, traffic volumes predicted and economic cost benefit analysis carried out. Based on assessment, the Department identified the Red Route as being preferable and the then Minister for Regional Development (Mr Danny Kennedy MLA) announced the Preferred Route on 24th January 2012.
- e) Following the announcement, the Department developed a preliminary design of the scheme (the 'Proposed Scheme') to facilitate a subsequent Stage 3 Scheme Assessment and to inform the preparation of a draft Direction Order, draft Vesting Order and Environmental Statement.

Standard of Road

- a) The Proposed Scheme would provide a bypass of Ballynahinch, approximately 3.14km in length. Aligned to the east of the town, it would be a Category 3A carriageway, as defined in the DMRB TD9/93: 'Highway Link Design', commencing with a roundabout at the existing A24 Belfast Road/A21 Saintfield Road junction and terminating with a roundabout at the existing A24 Drumaness Road/B2 Downpatrick Road junction. It would also include a compact grade-separated junction with the B7 Crossgar Road, a new underpass to accommodate Moss Road, and partial realignments of Ballylone Road and Crabtree Road to facilitate continued access.
 - b) It would comprise a single 2-lane carriageway bypass with widening to a Wide Single (2+1) carriageway to provide overtaking opportunities for northbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the southern extent of the scheme, and a Differential Acceleration Lane (DAL) to provide overtaking opportunities for southbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the northern end of the scheme.
 - c) Due to the strategic nature of the bypass, there would be no provision for direct access to adjacent agricultural land, private property or central reserve crossovers.
2. In the first instance we would ask you to consider a minor realignment of the scheme so as to avoid the [REDACTED]

In the event that you will not alter your design we would ask you to outline your proposals for the remainder of the farm.

Route alignment

- a) The Department, in following the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges assessment process, did consider during scheme development alternative corridors that could have avoided some of this land. However, they did not perform as well as the preferred corridor (which also aligns with the Ards Down Area Plan 2015) when reviewed under the scheme assessment process. Of the three route options assessed within the preferred corridor, the preferred alignment affected your Client's land the least. The Department accepts that the "Preferred Route" for a scheme would impact landowners to differing degrees of severity. The Department believes that the road proposal presented in the draft Statutory Orders is the most equitable when viewed in the wider context of landowners likely to be affected by the scheme.
3. We would ask that you provide an underpass to link both sides of the farm and to lessen the impact of the scheme on the remainder of the [REDACTED]. Your current proposal does not allow the free and easy movement of stock between both areas of land that will be severed by the new road.

We would also require cattle collection facilities on the lands which will be on both sides of the proposed carriageway.

A water supply will be required which should be linked to all parts of the remaining lands.

We would request a complete list of your proposed accommodation works for the remainder of the [REDACTED]

Accommodation Works

- a) Accommodation works can comprise such things as the provision of fences (temporary or permanent), hedges, walls, gates and provision of new or altered access to the road network. It can also include rationalisation of drainage and water supply layout. The Department has an explanatory leaflet on Accommodation Works on its website as follows: - <https://www.drdni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/drd/roads-service-northern-ireland-guide-to-accommodation-works.pdf>
- b) In certain circumstances, the Department may consider the provision of a cattle crossing in the form of a cattle creep underpass or an overbridge. These are assessed on a case-by-case basis and may include neighbouring farms sharing facilities. The Department would consider the needs of the farm, its layout and management, the frequency and type of movement of cattle, size of the herd, the degree of severance, the opportunity to share facilities and road user safety.
- c) Currently, the land is accessed from the Ballylone Road and from an access lane off the Crossgar Road; both means of access would be maintained. The Proposed Scheme would sever land from the farm yard and therefore the scheme includes for a further access from Crossgar Road on to lands on the West side of the scheme to assist with access to the severed land. On this basis, the Department do not propose to install an underpass in this instance.

Stock collection facilities, yard & buildings

- a) Any cattle facility required by construction of the new road, is normally taken into account in the compensation agreed between the landowner or his agent and Land and Property Services. Stock facilities could be constructed as part of the accommodation works agreed with the landowner or his agent; the cost of accommodation works carried out would be deducted from the compensation agreed between the landowner or his agent and Land and Property Services. The Department would prefer to offer compensation for the loss of animal facilities, as the landowner may be best positioned to assess his future requirements regarding the type and location of yard, buildings and cattle handling facilities.

Existing services

- a) The Department accepts that construction of roads can damage existing water and other service supplies to farms and dwellings. Through dialogue with the service suppliers and with landowners, the Department and its contractor would seek to maintain services to the farm at all times, by installing temporary connections during construction and permanent connection on completion of the road construction.
 - b) All costs associated with the diversion of privately-owned services would be borne by the Department including, but not limited to, temporary and permanent alterations to the services, temporary or permanent alternative supplies, materials and charges levied by public bodies in respect of new connections.
4. At this stage the [REDACTED] objects to your proposals however will consider any revised proposals and of course is willing to meet to discuss the scheme and any proposed accommodation measures.

- a) The Department accepts that the "Preferred Route" for a scheme would impact landowners to differing degrees of severity. The Department believes that the road proposal presented in the draft Statutory Orders is the most equitable when viewed in the wider context of landowners likely to be affected by the scheme.

- b) Accommodation Works are works which the Department is prepared to carry out during a construction contract to accommodate adjoining landowners and to reduce the impact of the road scheme. Accommodation works can be carried out only by agreement with a landowner. The Department is keen to continue the dialogue with the landowner to discuss the scheme and agree a comprehensive schedule of accommodation works and possible mitigation measures.

DRD TransportNI
Southern Division
11 December 2015

Objection number OB09
Objector's Name B. Clarke [REDACTED]
Date submitted 14 May 2015
NIMVO plot number [REDACTED]

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above objection and responds as follows:

1. We represent [REDACTED] in respect of the above Road Scheme and write to you to request that you reconsider your proposals in respect of their property.

The Department considers it appropriate to make the following statement before addressing the specifics of your objection.

Development Priorities

- a) The programme to improve transport links in Northern Ireland has been developed and is based on a series of key documents which include:
- A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, the Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport, published in 1998;
 - Moving Forward: The Northern Ireland Transport Policy Statement, published in 1998;
 - Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025 - Shaping our Future, published in 2002;
 - Regional Development Strategy 2035 – Building a Better Future, published in 2012;
 - Regional Transportation Strategy for Northern Ireland 2002-2012, published in 2002;
 - Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future – A New Approach to Regional Transportation, published in 2012;
 - Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan 2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2005-2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2008-2018, published in 2008;
 - Investment Delivery Plan (IDP) for Roads, published in 2008;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-2021, published in 2012; and
 - Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015, published in 2006.
- b) The Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) identifies the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass as a Strategic Highway Improvement. This forms part of a range of transportation initiatives across Northern Ireland to provide, for example, up to 13 bypasses, approximately 85km of dual carriageway, 36km of widened single carriageway, and 11 major junction improvements, which will ultimately contribute to increasing the economic well-being of the Region.
- c) The New Approach to Regional Transportation complements the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and aims to achieve its vision for transportation. One of its main strategic objectives is to *'improve connectivity within the region'* by completing the work identified in the current Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) and Strategic Road Improvement (SRI) Programme.
- d) The RSTNTP includes a programme for the implementation of SRIs to remove bottlenecks on the network where lack of capacity is causing serious congestion, and to improve the environment by providing bypasses of towns situated on the Regional Strategic Transport

Network (RSTN), thus relieving the effects of heavy through traffic. As part of this programme, the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme has been identified as a major highway scheme which should commence later in the plan period. The scheme has also been identified in the Consultation Document 'Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015' and 'Investment Delivery Plan for Roads' as a scheme in the current SRI programme.

- e) Progress to construction is subject to clearing statutory procedures, having a satisfactory economic appraisal, and the availability of funding.

Selection of the Preferred Route – Appraisal Procedure

- a) The appraisal of any form of transport investment requires a clear understanding of the objectives, which are to be met, and appropriate criteria to be used to decide whether a proposal meets them. The Government's five objectives for transport (Environment, Safety, Economy, Accessibility and Integration) are pivotal to the appraisal process. There is tension between these objectives, such that proposals may contribute to the achievement of one objective, but work against the achievement of others. The appraisal procedure must allow determination of an appropriate balance between the five objectives.
- b) The study of alternatives for major road schemes is undertaken through a three-stage appraisal procedure. Scheme Assessment Reports act as a summary of the more technical reports generated during the appraisal of road schemes, the level of detail and coverage is appropriate to the type of decision that can reasonably be taken at each stage.
- c) As part of this appraisal process, the Department examined strategies for future improvement of the A24 trunk road corridor around Ballynahinch. At Stage 1, three preliminary corridors were identified; one to the west and two to the east of the town. Based on the assessment findings, the Department identified the shorter of the two eastern corridor options as being preferable, particularly as it followed (in principle) the route of the bypass as indicated in the Ards Down Area Plan 2015 (which was in draft at that time).
- d) At Stage 2, three preliminary route options for the proposed bypass were subsequently identified by the Department within the preferred corridor to the east of Ballynahinch. The three options (the Red Route, Blue Route and Yellow Route) were developed, environmental impacts assessed, costs evaluated, traffic volumes predicted and economic cost benefit analysis carried out. Based on assessment, the Department identified the Red Route as being preferable and the then Minister for Regional Development (Mr Danny Kennedy MLA) announced the Preferred Route on 24th January 2012.
- e) Following the announcement, the Department developed a preliminary design of the scheme (the 'Proposed Scheme') to facilitate a subsequent Stage 3 Scheme Assessment and to inform the preparation of a draft Direction Order, draft Vesting Order and Environmental Statement.

Standard of Road

- a) The Proposed Scheme would provide a bypass of Ballynahinch, approximately 3.14km in length. Aligned to the east of the town, it would be a Category 3A carriageway, as defined in the DMRB TD9/93: 'Highway Link Design', commencing with a roundabout at the existing A24 Belfast Road/A21 Saintfield Road junction and terminating with a roundabout at the existing

A24 Drumaness Road/B2 Downpatrick Road junction. It would also include a compact grade-separated junction with the B7 Crossgar Road, a new underpass to accommodate Moss Road, and partial realignments of Ballylone Road and Crabtree Road to facilitate continued access.

- b) It would comprise a single 2-lane carriageway bypass with widening to a Wide Single (2+1) carriageway to provide overtaking opportunities for northbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the southern extent of the scheme, and a Differential Acceleration Lane (DAL) to provide overtaking opportunities for southbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the northern end of the scheme.
- c) Due to the strategic nature of the bypass, there would be no provision for direct access to adjacent agricultural land, private property or central reserve crossovers.

2. **Your proposals as designed will have a severe impact on their [REDACTED], which provides valuable local employment.**

- a) The Department cannot accept that there would be any significant impact on the [REDACTED] business. The impact on the hotel is considered in sub-section 14.6.1.3.7 in Volume 1 of the ES.

3. **In the first instance, we would ask you to consider a minor realignment of the scheme so as to avoid the property.**

In the event that you will not alter your alignment, we would ask you to alter the design, so that a better access to the [REDACTED] is provided.

We understand that [REDACTED] have prepared two alternative designs for your scheme, which provides a more suitable access to the [REDACTED] and does not compromise the design criteria of your road proposal.

We would require a complete list of your proposed accommodation works for the remainder of the scheme.

- a) The Proposed Scheme has been designed in accordance with the Design Standards contained within the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) together with TransportNI Policy and Procedure Guidelines (RSPPG). During scheme preparation, alternative junction options/types at this location were considered and it was determined that a roundabout was most appropriate. The location of the roundabout must comply with DMRB standards for sizing, based on predicted flows of traffic and safe entry/exit deflection criteria. Alternative locations for the roundabout were considered, however compromised design standards and consequently road safety.
- b) The Department has received two proposals from Douglas Wallace Architects and would comment as follows:
 - i) Option 1 accesses directly onto the proposed Downpatrick Road Roundabout. Due to the strategic nature of the proposed bypass, there would be no provision for such direct access. On completion, the Proposed Scheme would form part of the Protected Route Network.

- ii) Under Policy AMP3: *Access to Protected Routes*, the Department of the Environment will restrict the number of new accesses and control the level of use of existing accesses onto Protected Routes, including:

Motorways and High Standard Dual Carriageways - All locations

- Planning permission will not be granted for development proposals involving direct access. An exception may be considered in the case of motorway service areas.

Other Dual Carriageways, Ring Roads, Through-Passes and By Passes – All locations

- Planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal involving direct access or the intensification of the use of an existing access in exceptional circumstances or where the proposal is of regional significance.

- iii) Option 2 - The alternative access suggested under Option 2 falls outside the scope of the Proposed Scheme and is not therefore included.

4. At this stage, [REDACTED] object to your proposals, however will consider any revised proposals and of course will meet to discuss the scheme and any proposed accommodation measures.

Accommodation Works

- a) Accommodation Works are works which the Department is prepared to carry out during a construction contract to accommodate adjoining land owners and to reduce the impact of the road scheme. Accommodation works can be carried out only by agreement with a landowner. The Department is keen to continue the dialogue with your client to discuss the scheme and agree a comprehensive schedule of accommodation works and mitigation measures.

Objection number OB10
Objector's Name
Date submitted 18 May 2015
NIMVO plot number N/A

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above objection and responds as follows:

1. As a local resident I would like to take this opportunity to comment on the Environmental Statement and the proposed plans for the Ballynahinch Bypass.

The Department considers it appropriate to make the following statement before addressing the specifics of your objection.

Development Priorities

- a) The programme to improve transport links in Northern Ireland has been developed and is based on a series of key documents which include:
- A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, the Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport, published in 1998;
 - Moving Forward: The Northern Ireland Transport Policy Statement, published in 1998;
 - Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025 - Shaping our Future, published in 2002;
 - Regional Development Strategy 2035 – Building a Better Future, published in 2012;
 - Regional Transportation Strategy for Northern Ireland 2002-2012, published in 2002;
 - Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future – A New Approach to Regional Transportation, published in 2012;
 - Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan 2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2005-2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2008-2018, published in 2008;
 - Investment Delivery Plan (IDP) for Roads, published in 2008;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-2021, published in 2012; and
 - Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015, published in 2006.
- b) The Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) identifies the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass as a Strategic Highway Improvement. This forms part of a range of transportation initiatives across Northern Ireland to provide, for example, up to 13 bypasses, approximately 85km of dual carriageway, 36km of widened single carriageway, and 11 major junction improvements, which will ultimately contribute to increasing the economic well-being of the Region.
- c) The New Approach to Regional Transportation complements the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and aims to achieve its vision for transportation. One of its main strategic objectives is to 'improve connectivity within the region' by completing the work identified in the current Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) and Strategic Road Improvement (SRI) Programme.
- d) The RSTNTP includes a programme for the implementation of SRIs to remove bottlenecks on the network where lack of capacity is causing serious congestion, and to improve the environment by providing bypasses of towns situated on the Regional Strategic Transport

Network (RSTN), thus relieving the effects of heavy through traffic. As part of this programme, the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme has been identified as a major highway scheme which should commence later in the plan period. The scheme has also been identified in the Consultation Document '*Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015*' and '*Investment Delivery Plan for Roads*' as a scheme in the current SRI programme.

- e) Progress to construction is subject to clearing statutory procedures, having a satisfactory economic appraisal, and the availability of funding.

Selection of the Preferred Route – Appraisal Procedure

- a) The appraisal of any form of transport investment requires a clear understanding of the objectives, which are to be met, and appropriate criteria to be used to decide whether a proposal meets them. The Government's five objectives for transport (Environment, Safety, Economy, Accessibility and Integration) are pivotal to the appraisal process. There is tension between these objectives, such that proposals may contribute to the achievement of one objective, but work against the achievement of others. The appraisal procedure must allow determination of an appropriate balance between the five objectives.
- b) The study of alternatives for major road schemes is undertaken through a three-stage appraisal procedure. Scheme Assessment Reports act as a summary of the more technical reports generated during the appraisal of road schemes, the level of detail and coverage is appropriate to the type of decision that can reasonably be taken at each stage.
- c) As part of this appraisal process, the Department examined strategies for future improvement of the A24 trunk road corridor around Ballynahinch. At Stage 1, three preliminary corridors were identified; one to the west and two to the east of the town. Based on the assessment findings, the Department identified the shorter of the two eastern corridor options as being preferable, particularly as it followed (in principle) the route of the bypass as indicated in the Ards Down Area Plan 2015 (which was in draft at that time).
- d) At Stage 2, three preliminary route options for the proposed bypass were subsequently identified by the Department within the preferred corridor to the east of Ballynahinch. The three options (the Red Route, Blue Route and Yellow Route) were developed, environmental impacts assessed, costs evaluated, traffic volumes predicted and economic cost benefit analysis carried out. Based on assessment, the Department identified the Red Route as being preferable and the then Minister for Regional Development (Mr Danny Kennedy MLA) announced the Preferred Route on 24th January 2012.
- e) Following the announcement, the Department developed a preliminary design of the scheme (the 'Proposed Scheme') to facilitate a subsequent Stage 3 Scheme Assessment and to inform the preparation of a draft Direction Order, draft Vesting Order and Environmental Statement.

Standard of Road

- a) The Proposed Scheme would provide a bypass of Ballynahinch, approximately 3.14km in length. Aligned to the east of the town, it would be a Category 3A carriageway, as defined in the DMRB TD9/93: 'Highway Link Design', commencing with a roundabout at the existing A24 Belfast Road/A21 Saintfield Road junction and terminating with a roundabout at the existing

A24 Drumaness Road/B2 Downpatrick Road junction. It would also include a compact grade-separated junction with the B7 Crossgar Road, a new underpass to accommodate Moss Road, and partial realignments of Ballylone Road and Crabtree Road to facilitate continued access.

- b) It would comprise a single 2-lane carriageway bypass with widening to a Wide Single (2+1) carriageway to provide overtaking opportunities for northbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the southern extent of the scheme, and a Differential Acceleration Lane (DAL) to provide overtaking opportunities for southbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the northern end of the scheme.
 - c) Due to the strategic nature of the bypass, there would be no provision for direct access to adjacent agricultural land, private property or central reserve crossovers.
2. **As a resident living to the east of the proposed Downpatrick Road Roundabout I feel that the proposed planting on the eastern side of the carriageway is insufficient to act as a noise barrier or prevent the loss of amenity through increased noise levels from traffic to the dwellings along the Downpatrick Road to the east of the proposed carriageway. The proposed plans show high level mature planting on the western side of the carriageway along the boundary with the football pitch which is surely less of a receptor for noise than the dwellings to the east.**

Noise & Vibration

- a) A Noise & Vibration assessment has been undertaken for the scheme and reported in Chapter 13 in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement (ES). Based on this assessment, appropriate mitigation & enhancement measures have been developed and reported in Section 13.7 of the ES.
- b) The noise assessment has determined that in the Baseline year (2019), 523 dwellings would experience an increase in noise level, the vast majority of which (466 or 89%) would be classed as 'Negligible' to 'Moderate' in the short-term, and 1249 dwellings would experience a decrease in noise level.
- c) A Thin Surface Course System (TSCS), otherwise known as low noise surfacing, would be provided on the mainline. Whilst the noise benefits of this surfacing are mainly evident at higher speeds, there would be some benefits at the lower speeds on the Proposed Scheme.
- d) With this mitigation in place, properties in the vicinity of the Downpatrick Road are predicted to experience a Negligible increase in noise levels with the Proposed Scheme in operation.
- e) Furthermore, it should be noted that screen planting offers very little (if any) attenuation in noise levels; key mitigation measures are firstly a low noise surfacing, and only if deemed necessary, a solid acoustic barrier.
- f) The results of the noise impact assessment indicate that no properties would qualify for noise insulation, under the terms of The Noise Insulation Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995.

Landscape Planting

- a) The impact of the Proposed Scheme on the Landscape and associated Visual Effects is reported in Chapter 11 in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement. The scope of this assessment included both desktop study and field survey.
 - b) The Department recognises that a scheme of this scale would inevitably have an impact on the landscape and individual visual receptors. However, the Department is content that the fencing / boundary treatment, hedging and planting commitments contained in the Environmental Statement at Volume 3 Figure 11.6 (5 sheets) would reduce the landscape and visual impact when the scheme opens to traffic and through time, the openness of the site would be reduced as the comprehensive landscape planting matures.
 - c) As noted within sub-section 11.7.1.3 in Volume 1 of the ES, the landscape planting design has been specifically developed to reflect the rural and open setting to the east of the proposed bypass.
 - d) In contrast, for the western side of the bypass, Volume 3 of the Ards Down Area Plan 2015 identifies three zoned housing areas under Housing Policy HOU 2, located adjacent to the indicative 'Road Proposal' alignment of the proposed Ballynahinch Bypass. These include Proposal BH 12, BH 13, and BH 14. Key design considerations for these zoned housing lands have been specified in the Area Plan, which for all sites includes *"the boundary of the site adjacent to the proposed bypass to be landscaped with an 8-10 metre belt of trees of native species to provide screening for the development and help integrate it into the surrounding countryside"*.
- 3. Secondly, I would have concerns with regards the proposed drainage pond. Will there be Environmental health concerns with the storage of stagnant water or will this water be able to discharge from the ponds at appropriate times.**

Drainage Ponds

- a) The drainage ponds are designed to be detention (rather than retention) basins. Detention basins are normally dry, but safety must be considered for both wet and dry conditions. A risk assessment and safety review would be carried out for each SuDS pond location and appropriate fencing would be installed. It is expected that stockproof permanent fencing would suffice in most cases. Barrier planting is an alternative to traditional fencing that provides greater value as visual amenity and wildlife habitat. Adequate access must be provided to the main basin, inlet and outlet structures, settling pond and the dry weather channel, so that sediment can be removed during maintenance.
- b) The drainage ponds, which are an integral part of the road drainage infrastructure, have been designed to current best practice guidelines and in accordance with the Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) Manual CIRIA C697. The purpose of the SuDS ponds (detention basins) as stated in CIRIA C697, is to detain water long enough to remove peak high flow rates and facilitate discharge into a nearby watercourse at a rate which is calculated to match current circumstances. The proposed basins would all have drainage outlets and would not store water indefinitely. This is dependent on rainfall events.

4. **Thirdly, I would be concerned that any works to the Ballynahinch River may result in potential flooding downstream during periods of heavy rainfall as well as increased erosion to river banks downstream.**

Ballynahinch River

- a) There are no plans to undertake any works to the Ballynahinch River or its banks. All drainage, carriageway and structure designs within the area have been reviewed and accepted by the appropriate authorities.
- b) The potential impact of the Proposed Scheme on the Ballynahinch River floodplain resulted in the need for the Department to prepare a Flood Risk Assessment (included at Appendix 16, Annex A in Volume 2 of the Environmental Statement) and demonstrate to DARD - Rivers Agency that the scheme would not have a negative impact on lands or property within or adjacent to the floodplain of the river. This assessment has been carried out and acceptance of the report's findings and mitigation strategy have been provided by the appropriate authority.

DRD TransportNI
Southern Division
11 December 2015

Objection number OB11
Objector's Name
Date submitted..... 18 May 2015
NIMVO plot number

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above objection and responds as follows:

1. We wish to place an objection to all of the orders made in relation to the Ballynahinch By-Pass scheme.

The reasons for the objections are as follows.

The Department considers it appropriate to make the following statement before addressing the specifics of your objection.

Development Priorities

- a) The programme to improve transport links in Northern Ireland has been developed and is based on a series of key documents which include:
 - A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, the Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport, published in 1998;
 - Moving Forward: The Northern Ireland Transport Policy Statement, published in 1998;
 - Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025 - Shaping our Future, published in 2002;
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- b) The Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) identifies the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass as a Strategic Highway Improvement. This forms part of a range of transportation initiatives across Northern Ireland to provide, for example, up to 13 bypasses, approximately 85km of dual carriageway, 36km of widened single carriageway, and 11 major junction improvements, which will ultimately contribute to increasing the economic well-being of the Region.
- c) The New Approach to Regional Transportation complements the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and aims to achieve its vision for transportation. One of its main strategic objectives is to 'improve connectivity within the region' by completing the work identified in the current Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) and Strategic Road Improvement (SRI) Programme.
- d) The RSTNTP includes a programme for the implementation of SRIs to remove bottlenecks on the network where lack of capacity is causing serious congestion, and to improve the

environment by providing bypasses of towns situated on the Regional Strategic Transport Network (RSTN), thus relieving the effects of heavy through traffic. As part of this programme, the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme has been identified as a major highway scheme which should commence later in the plan period. The scheme has also been identified in the Consultation Document 'Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015' and 'Investment Delivery Plan for Roads' as a scheme in the current SRI programme.

- e) Progress to construction is subject to clearing statutory procedures, having a satisfactory economic appraisal, and the availability of funding.

Selection of the Preferred Route – Appraisal Procedure

- a) The appraisal of any form of transport investment requires a clear understanding of the objectives, which are to be met, and appropriate criteria to be used to decide whether a proposal meets them. The Government's five objectives for transport (Environment, Safety, Economy, Accessibility and Integration) are pivotal to the appraisal process. There is tension between these objectives, such that proposals may contribute to the achievement of one objective, but work against the achievement of others. The appraisal procedure must allow determination of an appropriate balance between the five objectives.
- b) The study of alternatives for major road schemes is undertaken through a three-stage appraisal procedure. Scheme Assessment Reports act as a summary of the more technical reports generated during the appraisal of road schemes, the level of detail and coverage is appropriate to the type of decision that can reasonably be taken at each stage.
- c) As part of this appraisal process, the Department examined strategies for future improvement of the A24 trunk road corridor around Ballynahinch. At Stage 1, three preliminary corridors were identified; one to the west and two to the east of the town. Based on the assessment findings, the Department identified the shorter of the two eastern corridor options as being preferable, particularly as it followed (in principle) the route of the bypass as indicated in the Ards Down Area Plan 2015 (which was in draft at that time).
- d) At Stage 2, three preliminary route options for the proposed bypass were subsequently identified by the Department within the preferred corridor to the east of Ballynahinch. The three options (the Red Route, Blue Route and Yellow Route) were developed, environmental impacts assessed, costs evaluated, traffic volumes predicted and economic cost benefit analysis carried out. Based on assessment, the Department identified the Red Route as being preferable and the then Minister for Regional Development (Mr Danny Kennedy MLA) announced the Preferred Route on 24th January 2012.
- e) Following the announcement, the Department developed a preliminary design of the scheme (the 'Proposed Scheme') to facilitate a subsequent Stage 3 Scheme Assessment and to inform the preparation of a draft Direction Order, draft Vesting Order and Environmental Statement.

Standard of Road

- a) The Proposed Scheme would provide a bypass of Ballynahinch, approximately 3.14km in length. Aligned to the east of the town, it would be a Category 3A carriageway, as defined in the DMRB TD9/93: 'Highway Link Design', commencing with a roundabout at the existing A24

Belfast Road/A21 Saintfield Road junction and terminating with a roundabout at the existing A24 Drumaness Road/B2 Downpatrick Road junction. It would also include a compact grade-separated junction with the B7 Crossgar Road, a new underpass to accommodate Moss Road, and partial realignments of Ballylone Road and Crabtree Road to facilitate continued access.

- b) It would comprise a single 2-lane carriageway bypass with widening to a Wide Single (2+1) carriageway to provide overtaking opportunities for northbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the southern extent of the scheme, and a Differential Acceleration Lane (DAL) to provide overtaking opportunities for southbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the northern end of the scheme.
 - c) Due to the strategic nature of the bypass, there would be no provision for direct access to adjacent agricultural land, private property or central reserve crossovers.
2. **We do not understand why the road bed to the front of our property is being vested when there are no planned works to upgrade it.**

Vesting of road bed

- a) All existing roads under the footprint of the Proposed Scheme have been included in the Notice of Intention to Make a Vesting Order (NIMVO) to clear title and to have all land for the scheme under one folio. In this instance, only road bed is being vested. The limit of vesting has been guided by the extent of the folio mapping in the area.

3. [REDACTED] As part of our [REDACTED]

Once this road is stopped-up we will have no access to turn at the end of the road to facilitate reversing into our yard. We cannot be expected to reverse a heavy goods vehicle along a public road to the new suggested entrance to our property. An adequate turning head must be provided. We cannot be made to turn at the entrance to someone's property as suggested by one of the consultants, which I might add was only the evening before the vesting order arrived on our door step.

- a) A turning head to cater for Large Rigid 10m long HGVs is included in the scheme to the north of the property to facilitate the approach to the yard (from the usual northern direction).
 - b) The Department will continue to consult with you regarding the details of this turning head.
4. **There has been no contact made with ourselves during the planning process of this scheme to ascertain any requirements which we as road users may need such as, can there be any facility of a left turn made to access our property from the Belfast Road, once the roundabout is in place? This is especially essential to the running of our business.**
- a) The Department held Public Exhibition and an Orders Exhibition in November 2009 and March 2015 respectively where the proposals were presented to local residents. Since you were not a directly affected land owner no specific meeting was set up.

Left turn facility

- a) The Proposed Scheme facilitates a left turn off the existing A24 Belfast Road at the existing junction. A new direct domestic access is not included as part of the Proposed Scheme.
5. **When the stopping up comes into force we will be left with only one entrance to our property, this is currently a "man-made" entrance whereby we have to drive over dropped kerbs to access our property at present. I note from the drawings, the line of works does not cover this section of road.**
- a) There are currently three accesses to the (old) Saintfield Road; one from the A21 Saintfield Road and a further two some 300m apart off the A24 Belfast Road. This junction 100m south of your dwelling would be upgraded as part of the Proposed Scheme.
6. **There is currently a housing development planned for the field adjacent to our property. As part of their planning application the developer is to create a new access onto the Belfast Road. We must object to this. If the bottom portion of the Saintfield Road is to be Stopped Up then we must be provided with a new entrance on to the Belfast Road. This will require a right turning pocket also. We use the Saintfield Road to access our property for the safety of ourselves and our children as there is a right turn pocket in place. There have been incidents in the past where a car has driven into the back of a lorry waiting to turn onto our road at the location of our proposed new entrance. We are overtaken and undertaken on numerous occasions while waiting to use this entrance.**
- a) A right turning lane has not been included as part of the Proposed Scheme for the following rationale:
- The volume of right-turning traffic requires particular consideration with a view to the provision of a right-turning facility when total flow on the minor road exceeds 500 vehicles per day (i.e. serving more than 50 dwellings). There are 4no. existing dwellings on the (old) Saintfield Road.
 - the dominant movement is North on the existing A24, rather than the right turn movement into the (old) Saintfield Road;
 - the forward sight distance along the A24 in advance of the location of the right turn into the (old) Saintfield Road is in accordance with the Desirable Minimum Stopping Sight Distance of 215m, as per the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges TD 9/93 Volume 6, Section 1, Part 1, Table 3.
7. **To the Ballynahinch side of our property there is a culvert which is starting to fall into disrepair and the road is currently sinking, this may stand the test of time for a few years yet, although our concern is when it does eventually fall in and the road is stopped up, we will not be able to access our property. If our house goes on fire, the Fire Service could not get to our property to rescue us, or if a member of the family takes ill an ambulance cannot get to them. These examples may sound far-fetched at the moment but unfortunately no one knows when these things may occur and we cannot let our family suffer because we have been overlooked in the planning process stage. This must be looked at in the bigger scale of things.**
- a) Any structures, such as culverts, which may be affected by the Proposed Scheme would be assessed and if necessary appropriate measures would be implemented to ensure that the future lifespan of the structure would comply with the DMRB.

- b) Article 8 of The Roads (Northern Ireland) Order 1993 places a duty of care on the Department to maintain all public roads in a reasonable condition. This would extend to the obligation to maintain access to your property.
 - c) TransportNI Design & Consultancy Services, Structures Section carried out an inspection of the stream flow and culvert system at the U23 Saintfield Road / A24 Belfast Road junction, Ballynahinch on 04 November 2015. This inspection confirmed the main culvert to be in 'good' condition.
8. **With these matters in hand we feel that the value of our properties will be reduced dramatically if we were ever in the position to need to sell them.**

Compensation

- a) The Department is unable to comment on compensation matters as these would be the subject of negotiation between the objector and Land & Property Services' District Valuer.
 - b) Anyone whose property is adversely affected by the construction and use of the new road may have a right to compensation. Compensation may be claimed for: (i) a reduction in the value of their property caused by the execution (construction) of Public Works, (ii) a reduction in the value of their property caused by the subsequent use of Public Works.
 - c) Part II of the Land Acquisition and Compensation (NI) Order 1973 includes a right to compensation for reduction in value caused by the use of public works. Commonly referred to as "a Part II claim", it applies to certain "public works" such as highway, aerodrome and other works provided under statutory powers. Compensation is based upon the depreciation in the value of the land due to the "physical factors" caused by the use of the public works. The seven specified physical factors are noise, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, artificial light, and discharge onto the land of any solid or liquid substance. In addition to decreasing the value of land, development works may cause inconvenience and discomfort to people living in the area.
9. **The Saintfield Road at present is rarely maintained and is in vast need of an upgrade.**
- a) The Department is happy to meet to discuss any particular concerns you may have in relation to the maintenance of the existing (old) Saintfield Road.
10. **If the new proposed access our property is not upgraded as part of the by-pass scheme this will impact on our human rights as we will be left without a proper/safe access to our property.**

Human Rights

- a) The Human Rights Act 1988 (as amended) incorporated into domestic law the European Convention on Human Rights ("the Convention"). The Convention includes provisions, the aim of which is to protect the rights of individuals.
- b) Section 6 of the Human Rights Act prohibits public authorities from acting in a way that is incompatible with the Convention. Various Convention Rights may be engaged in the process

of making and considering a Vesting Order, notably Article 1 of the First Protocol, which protects the right of everyone to the peaceful enjoyment of possessions and Article 8, which protects private and family life, home and correspondence.

- c) The European Court has recognised in the context of Article 1 that regard must be made to the fair balance which has to be struck between competing interests of the individual and of the community as a whole. Interference with a Convention right is permitted only where it is necessary and proportionate. In pursuing the Vesting Order for the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass, the Department has considered carefully the balance to be struck between individual rights and the wider public interest. Such interference with Convention rights as exists is considered to be justified in order to secure the economic, social, physical and environmental regeneration that the overall A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme would bring. Compensation would be available to those entitled to claim it in accordance with the relevant statutory provisions.
- d) The Department considers that there is a compelling case in the public interest for confirmation of the draft Vesting Order and the Order, if confirmed, would strike a balance between public and private interests. The rights of owners of interests in the Vesting Order lands under Article 1 of the First Protocol have been taken into account by the Department when considering the Vesting Order and when considering the extent of the interests to be comprised in the Vesting Order. The Department considers that the Vesting Order land is both suitable for and would facilitate the carrying out of, development, redevelopment and improvement and would make for a positive contribution in the promotion or achievement of the economic, social and environmental wellbeing accruing from the construction of the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme.

Access

- a) The Department do not accept that this access would become unsafe as it would be designed in accordance with current design standards;
- b) As previously mentioned, the junction 100m south of your dwelling would be upgraded as part of the Proposed Scheme.

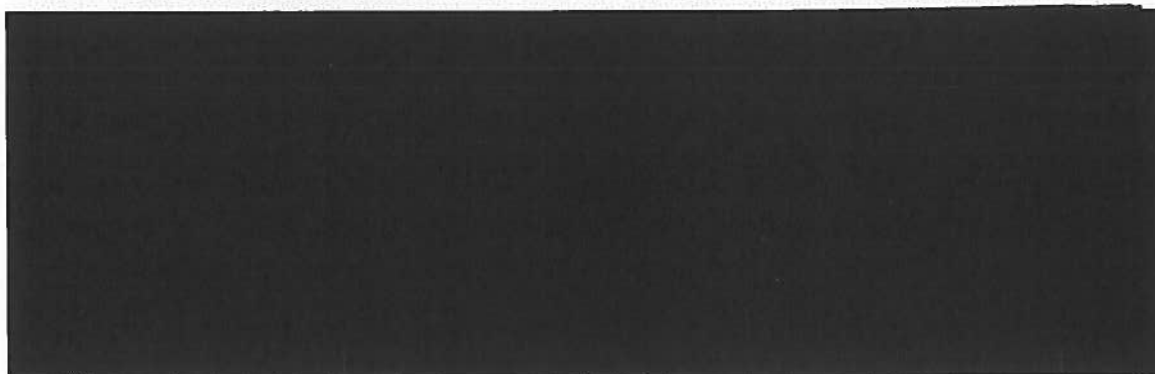
DRD TransportNI
Southern Division
11 December 2015

Objection number OB12
Objector's Name E. Davis for ([REDACTED])
Date submitted 15 May 2015
NIMVO plot number [REDACTED]

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above objection and responds as follows:

1. On behalf of [REDACTED] I have been briefed to make the following objections to this proposed vesting order.

(1) Background Information



(2) Land Ownership

[REDACTED] adjoining the Ballynahinch By-Pass proposal. (See Appendix 2 Farm Map) Of this [REDACTED] lies inside the Development Limit with [REDACTED] in Green Belt.

The Department considers it appropriate to make the following statement before addressing the specifics of your objection.

Development Priorities

- a) The programme to improve transport links in Northern Ireland has been developed and is based on a series of key documents which include:
- A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, the Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport, published in 1998;
 - Moving Forward: The Northern Ireland Transport Policy Statement, published in 1998;
 - Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025 - Shaping our Future, published in 2002;
 - Regional Development Strategy 2035 – Building a Better Future, published in 2012;
 - Regional Transportation Strategy for Northern Ireland 2002-2012, published in 2002;
 - Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future – A New Approach to Regional Transportation, published in 2012;
 - Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan 2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2005-2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2008-2018, published in 2008;
 - Investment Delivery Plan (IDP) for Roads, published in 2008;

- Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-2021, published in 2012; and
 - Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015, published in 2006.
- b) The Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) identifies the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass as a Strategic Highway Improvement. This forms part of a range of transportation initiatives across Northern Ireland to provide, for example, up to 13 bypasses, approximately 85km of dual carriageway, 36km of widened single carriageway, and 11 major junction improvements, which will ultimately contribute to increasing the economic well-being of the Region.
- c) The New Approach to Regional Transportation complements the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and aims to achieve its vision for transportation. One of its main strategic objectives is to '*improve connectivity within the region*' by completing the work identified in the current Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) and Strategic Road Improvement (SRI) Programme.
- d) The RSTNTP includes a programme for the implementation of SRIs to remove bottlenecks on the network where lack of capacity is causing serious congestion, and to improve the environment by providing bypasses of towns situated on the Regional Strategic Transport Network (RSTN), thus relieving the effects of heavy through traffic. As part of this programme, the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme has been identified as a major highway scheme which should commence later in the plan period. The scheme has also been identified in the Consultation Document '*Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015*' and '*Investment Delivery Plan for Roads*' as a scheme in the current SRI programme.
- e) Progress to construction is subject to clearing statutory procedures, having a satisfactory economic appraisal, and the availability of funding.

Selection of the Preferred Route – Appraisal Procedure

- a) The appraisal of any form of transport investment requires a clear understanding of the objectives, which are to be met, and appropriate criteria to be used to decide whether a proposal meets them. The Government's five objectives for transport (Environment, Safety, Economy, Accessibility and Integration) are pivotal to the appraisal process. There is tension between these objectives, such that proposals may contribute to the achievement of one objective, but work against the achievement of others. The appraisal procedure must allow determination of an appropriate balance between the five objectives.
- b) The study of alternatives for major road schemes is undertaken through a three-stage appraisal procedure. Scheme Assessment Reports act as a summary of the more technical reports generated during the appraisal of road schemes, the level of detail and coverage is appropriate to the type of decision that can reasonably be taken at each stage.
- c) As part of this appraisal process, the Department examined strategies for future improvement of the A24 trunk road corridor around Ballynahinch. At Stage 1, three preliminary corridors were identified; one to the west and two to the east of the town. Based on the assessment findings, the Department identified the shorter of the two eastern corridor options as being preferable, particularly as it followed (in principle) the route of the bypass as indicated in the Ards Down Area Plan 2015 (which was in draft at that time).

- d) At Stage 2, three preliminary route options for the proposed bypass were subsequently identified by the Department within the preferred corridor to the east of Ballynahinch. The three options (the Red Route, Blue Route and Yellow Route) were developed, environmental impacts assessed, costs evaluated, traffic volumes predicted and economic cost benefit analysis carried out. Based on assessment, the Department identified the Red Route as being preferable and the then Minister for Regional Development (Mr Danny Kennedy MLA) announced the Preferred Route on 24th January 2012.
- e) Following the announcement, the Department developed a preliminary design of the scheme (the 'Proposed Scheme') to facilitate a subsequent Stage 3 Scheme Assessment and to inform the preparation of a draft Direction Order, draft Vesting Order and Environmental Statement.

Standard of Road

- a) The Proposed Scheme would provide a bypass of Ballynahinch, approximately 3.14km in length. Aligned to the east of the town, it would be a Category 3A carriageway, as defined in the DMRB TD9/93: 'Highway Link Design', commencing with a roundabout at the existing A24 Belfast Road/A21 Saintfield Road junction and terminating with a roundabout at the existing A24 Drumaness Road/B2 Downpatrick Road junction. It would also include a compact grade-separated junction with the B7 Crossgar Road, a new underpass to accommodate Moss Road, and partial realignments of Ballylone Road and Crabtree Road to facilitate continued access.
- b) It would comprise a single 2-lane carriageway bypass with widening to a Wide Single (2+1) carriageway to provide overtaking opportunities for northbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the southern extent of the scheme, and a Differential Acceleration Lane (DAL) to provide overtaking opportunities for southbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the northern end of the scheme.
- c) Due to the strategic nature of the bypass, there would be no provision for direct access to adjacent agricultural land, private property or central reserve crossovers.

2. (3) Land to be Vested by Department of Regional Development

The Ards Down Area Plan 2015 (March 2009) defined the land take for the By-Pass proposal. (See Map 1) The vesting order will take a further [REDACTED] from [REDACTED] [REDACTED] (See Map 2) Such land is normally considered acceptable for development. [REDACTED]

(4) The By-Pass Proposal

The information provided states the by-pass will be a trunk road forming part of the Belfast-Newcastle Trunk Road 2. It will entail 3,138m of new and 257m of upgraded road. It will take the form of a 2 lane road with hard shoulders.

- a) A description of the Proposed Scheme, including its standard and proposed length is set out in the Non-Technical Summary which accompanies the Environmental Statement. A full Scheme Description is given in Chapter 4 in Volume 1 of the ES.

- b) Essentially, the bypass mainline would comprise a single 2-lane carriageway bypass with widening to a Wide Single (2+1) carriageway to provide overtaking opportunities for northbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the southern extent of the scheme, and a Differential Acceleration Lane (DAL) to provide overtaking opportunities for southbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the northern end of the scheme.
- c) By way of clarification, there would be no hard shoulders.

3. (5) The Effect of the By-Pass on Trade

I understand that some 2 years ago Roads Service commissioned a traffic survey presumably to confirm the need for a by-pass. This included a traffic count outside [REDACTED]. This survey will have confirmed that a high percentage of traffic past [REDACTED] is through traffic. Major elements of this through traffic includes commuters from South Down to the Greater Belfast Area or vice versa, day trippers from the Greater Belfast Area to St Patrick's Country, the Lecale Coast, Newcastle and the Mourne and also shoppers to the Greater Belfast Area.

At present there are a number of traffic bottlenecks within Ballynahinch which generate tail backs entering the town from Drumaness Road in the south, Dromore Street in the west and Belfast Road in the north. The new road will enable motorists to by-pass these hold ups. Traffic levels past [REDACTED] will be greatly reduced and this will inevitably impact on the viability of the [REDACTED]. The turnover will fall dramatically and consequently many of the [REDACTED] will be made redundant.

Traffic Surveys

- a) In September 2013, a detailed programme of data collection surveys was undertaken around Ballynahinch. These surveys included a manual classified traffic count at the A24 Belfast Road / A21 Saintfield Road junction to the north of Ballynahinch.
- b) A traffic flow of approximately 9,200 vehicles was observed on the A24 Belfast Road to the south of Saintfield Road during the 12-hour period between 7am and 7pm.
- c) Examination of the predicted change in trip patterns indicates that the Proposed Scheme would attract strategic traffic on to the bypass, with a corresponding reduction in traffic volumes through Ballynahinch.
- d) It is estimated that traffic volumes on the A24 Belfast Road at this location would reduce by approximately 37% as a result of removing a significant proportion of strategic through traffic from the town.

Viability of [REDACTED]

- a) The Department understands that statutory roads legislation does not make provision for a right to compensation for economic loss, where it exercises its duty to repair, or improve the public highway.

4. (6) Options open to [REDACTED]

At present the company has a successful outlet at [REDACTED] with an annual turnover net of [REDACTED]. The basis of this success is the store's location at the principal exit/entry point to Ballynahinch. This nodality will cease when the by-pass, aligned some [REDACTED] to the north, syphons up the vast majority of traffic into and out of Ballynahinch. Inevitably [REDACTED] turnover will plummet as will employee numbers.

The by-pass re-joins the existing road network via a roundabout at the southern end of the town. At this location [REDACTED] of land lying either side of the proposed by-pass. This includes 2 flood free areas adjoining the by-pass alignment which would be suitable [REDACTED] subject to access. The company has the stark option to run down/close the [REDACTED] or attempt to re-locate to either of these locations.

- a) In the proposed year of Opening, it is estimated that approximately 11,500 vehicles per day would use the A24 Belfast Road to the south of Saintfield Road. It is estimated that the volume of traffic on this section of Belfast Road would reduce to approximately 7,200 vehicles per day as a result of removing a significant proportion of strategic through traffic from the town.
- b) The decision to relocate the business is entirely a matter for the owner/operator.
- c) Current DARD - Rivers Agency flood (and historic flood) mapping suggests that the majority of Plot Nos 2-11 and 2-31 are at significant risk of flooding at all events with an Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) of 10% or greater i.e. Q_{10} or greater.
- d) Each option would be subject to a planning application and judged on its individual merits. Therefore, it would be inappropriate for the Department to comment on the suitability of either indicative option presented below.

5. (7) [REDACTED]

This option is located on [REDACTED] within the Development Limit of Ballynahinch. Such land is zoned as suitable for proposals in keeping with adjoining land usages. It is D. R. D.'s intention to vest this site even though it lies [REDACTED] as designated by the Ards Down Area Plan 2015.

The proposal is sited on higher ground rising above the Ballynahinch River flood plain. It is set back some 30m from the amended alignment of the By-Pass. The indicative only layout shows a [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] in 2014 set a precedent for an access on to the By-Pass. I would point out that in these instances the application sites lay within Green Belt and there was no vesting threat from D. R. D.

- a) The Ards Down Area Plan indicates that 'The bypass, when implemented will provide an effective limit to development to the east'. Thus the development limit will be determined by the Proposed Scheme.
- b) Any application for a replacement garage and store should be progressed with the Planning Department of Newry, Mourne & Down District Council. TransportNI is a statutory consultee to planning applications.
- c) Due to the strategic nature of the proposed bypass, there would be no provision for direct access to adjacent agricultural land. On completion, the proposed A24 Ballynahinch Bypass would form part of the Protected Road Network.
- d) Under Policy AMP3: Access to Protected Routes, the Department of the Environment will restrict the number of new accesses and control the level of use of existing accesses onto Protected Routes, including as follows:

Motorways and High Standard Dual Carriageways - All locations

- Planning permission will not be granted for development proposals involving direct access. An exception may be considered in the case of motorway service areas.

Other Dual Carriageways, Ring Roads, Through-Passes and By Passes – All locations

- Planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal involving direct access or the intensification of the use of an existing access in exceptional circumstances or where the proposal is of regional significance.

- e) The majority of your client's proposed development footprint is currently subject to flood risk. The Proposed Scheme would utilise a small portion of elevated ground within the plot area and lower its level to provide a flood compensatory area to offset the loss of floodplain resulting from the construction of road embankment.

6. (8) Option 2- New Outlet adjoining Development Limit (See Map 4)

This option is located just beyond the By-Pass alignment within [REDACTED]. Again It is sited on higher ground rising above the flood plain of the [REDACTED]. The indicative layout shows a [REDACTED]

Access is shown as either direct from the By-Pass or from Downpatrick Road. Again the recent approvals on the [REDACTED] are thought to set a precedent which could be applied to this proposal.

- a) As previously stated, any application for a replacement garage and store should be progressed with the Planning Department of Newry, Mourne & Down District Council. TransportNI is a statutory consultee to planning applications.
- b) Due to the strategic nature of the proposed bypass, there would be no provision for direct access to adjacent agricultural land. On completion, the proposed A24 Ballynahinch Bypass would form part of the Protected Road Network.

- c) Under Policy AMP3: Access to Protected Routes, the Department of the Environment will restrict the number of new accesses and control the level of use of existing accesses onto Protected Routes, including as follows:

Motorways and High Standard Dual Carriageways - All locations

- Planning permission will not be granted for development proposals involving direct access. An exception may be considered in the case of motorway service areas.

Other Dual Carriageways, Ring Roads, Through-Passes and By Passes – All locations

- Planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal involving direct access or the intensification of the use of an existing access in exceptional circumstances or where the proposal is of regional significance.

- d) Your client's proposed development footprint would be largely unaffected by the Proposed Scheme.

7. (9) **Other Options for the Land being Vested**

- (a) [REDACTED] are registered farmers who are in receipt of Single Farm Payments. Their desire to keep their agricultural land intact is self explanatory. The vesting proposals entail splitting their out-farm in half. This will make it inconvenient for normal agricultural activities such as cutting silage, grazing and spreading slurry.

- a) The Department recognises that the scale of new road works in a green field location can have a substantial impact on farms in terms of injurious affection (including damage to the viability of the farm business), severance and disturbance. It is also accepted that the 'preferred route' for a scheme will impact landowners to differing degrees of severity. The Department believes that the proposed layout is the most equitable when viewed in the wider context of landowners likely to be affected by the scheme.
- b) Landowners who suffer a negative impact on their farm business have a right to compensation for this impact. The Department is unable to comment on the detail of compensation matters, as these would be the subject of negotiation between the objector and Land and Property Services' District Valuer. Depending on the particular circumstances, compensation can be claimed under the following categories (Heads of Claim) (i) the value of the land vested (ii) severance and injurious affection (iii) disturbance and (iv) fees. Additional compensation for severance could arise if the resultant shape of fields or access restrictions makes future farming operations difficult or impractical.
- c) It is accepted that the loss of land may result in a reduction in monies paid to landowners in relation to both Single Farm Payments (SFPs) and for land within a Countryside Management Scheme (CMS).
- d) Compensation following compulsory acquisition of land is based on the principle of equivalence. The landowner should be no worse off in financial terms after the acquisition than before. Land and Property Services' District Valuer acts on behalf of TransportNI to negotiate with the landowner and/or his agent to determine compensation for land and

property lost to a new road, compensation for the injurious affection, devaluation of property and compensation for other pertinent issues. In the event that the District Valuer and the landowner or his agent are unable to agree the compensation due, the subject of compensation can be referred to the Lands Tribunal for determination.

8. (b) [REDACTED] own land within the Development Limit which adjoins the [REDACTED]. This land could be sold for an [REDACTED].

a) The Department notes your comments and welcomes your suggestions.

9. (c) Part of the land inside the Development Limit lies above the Ballynahinch River flood plain. This land would be suitable for a number of uses, including residential or an extension to provide parking [REDACTED].

a) The Proposed Scheme passes through a floodplain and the land referred to above is required to provide flood mitigation / compensation; this would render the whole of this area within the floodplain when the scheme is constructed. As a consequence, the future development of this area would be limited.

10. (d) Part of the lands being vested lie within LLPA 1 The Ballynahinch River Corridor. The Area Plan zones LLPA 1 as being retained due to its existing visual and wildlife value. [REDACTED] note this zoning and feel it affords an opportunity to develop a recreational facility based on bird watching/combined with a mini park.

a) The Department notes your comments and welcomes your suggestions.

11. (10) Contrary to Ards Down Area Plan 2015

Part of the lands to be vested fall within LLAP 1 Ballynahinch River Corridor, which the plan states:-

- *"is an important link between town and countryside with existing and potential recreational value for public access for riverside walks*
- *Riverside vegetation and woodland are important especially in visual and wildlife terms"*

The proposed vesting as part of the By-Pass scheme would appear to be contrary to Policy CON 2 Local Landscape Policy Areas which states:-

"Planning policy will NOT be granted to development proposals which would be liable to adversely affect the environmental quality, integrity or character of these areas"

LLPA 1

- a) The presence and importance of Local Landscape Policy Area (LLPA) 1 is duly noted and assessed in Chapter 11 (Landscape and Visual Effects - Table 11.10, sub-section 11.5.1.2.2,

Table 11.13) and Chapter 12 (Land Use – sub-sections 12.5.3.4 and 12.6.1.4.4) in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement (ES):

Contrary to Policy CON 2 of Area Plan

- b) Based on the assessment contained within the Environmental Statement, the Proposed Scheme does not adversely affect the environmental quality, integrity or character of same, and thus is not contrary to Policy CON 2.
- c) The Ards Down Area Plan 2015 refers not only to LLPA 1, but indeed the 'Road Proposal' (Volume 1 – Part 2, Policy TRAN 1; Volume 3 – Ballynahinch Proposal BH 19 (Ballynahinch Bypass) and Map No. 3/003a - Ballynahinch) and hence the two have been designated in tandem. Notwithstanding this, as the Proposed Scheme is of strategic importance (Chapter 2 in Volume 1 of the ES), then it would take precedence over any local area plan designation.
- d) The Area Plan would have taken into consideration the compatibility of the LLPA and the 'Road Proposal' during development, since the Area Plan shows an indicative route for the bypass and therefore it can be confidently assumed that both can operate simultaneously without significant detriment to visual quality subject to appropriate landscape mitigation measures.

Effects on LLPA 1

- a) As shown on Figure 12.2 in Volume 3 of the ES, LLPA 1 (Ballynahinch River) would be crossed by the Proposed Scheme on an open span bridge structure, east of and downstream from Ballynahinch WwTW. The key attribute associated with this LLPA in relation to the scheme is the important link that the river valley corridor provides between the town and the countryside, and potential recreation value for public access for riverside walks.
- b) Whilst there is currently no public access in the vicinity of the crossing point of the river, the proposed open span bridge structure over the Ballynahinch River, with abutments set back from the river's edge would not preclude the possibility of developing a riverside walk in the future.
- c) In terms of magnitude of impact, it must be noted that these LLPAs have been zoned with provision of the bypass in mind; thus on this basis, the Department has already acknowledged that the impact on LLPA 1 would be Minor Adverse.
- d) However, the Department is content that the boundary treatment, hedging and planting commitments contained in the Environmental Statement at Volume 3 Figure 11.6 (5 sheets) would reduce the landscape and visual impact when the scheme opens to traffic and through time, the adverse effect on the environmental quality, integrity and character of the LLPA would be reduced as the comprehensive landscape planting matures.

Objection number OB13
Objector's Name
Date submitted..... 18 May 2015
NIMVO plot number N/A

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above objection and responds as follows:

1. **As a resident currently living in a property affected by the proposed Ballynahinch Bypass**
[REDACTED] **I am concerned about the potential impact the scheme will have on the property and my future living arrangements.**

The Department considers it appropriate to make the following statement before addressing the specifics of your objection.

Development Priorities

- a) The programme to improve transport links in Northern Ireland has been developed and is based on a series of key documents which include:
- A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, the Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport, published in 1998;
 - Moving Forward: The Northern Ireland Transport Policy Statement, published in 1998;
 - Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025 - Shaping our Future, published in 2002;
 - Regional Development Strategy 2035 – Building a Better Future, published in 2012;
 - Regional Transportation Strategy for Northern Ireland 2002-2012, published in 2002;
 - Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future – A New Approach to Regional Transportation, published in 2012;
 - Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan 2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2005-2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2008-2018, published in 2008;
 - Investment Delivery Plan (IDP) for Roads, published in 2008;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-2021, published in 2012; and
 - Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015, published in 2006.
- b) The Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) identifies the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass as a Strategic Highway Improvement. This forms part of a range of transportation initiatives across Northern Ireland to provide, for example, up to 13 bypasses, approximately 85km of dual carriageway, 36km of widened single carriageway, and 11 major junction improvements, which will ultimately contribute to increasing the economic well-being of the Region.
- c) The New Approach to Regional Transportation complements the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and aims to achieve its vision for transportation. One of its main strategic objectives is to *'improve connectivity within the region'* by completing the work identified in the current Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) and Strategic Road Improvement (SRI) Programme.
- d) The RSTNTP includes a programme for the implementation of SRIs to remove bottlenecks on the network where lack of capacity is causing serious congestion, and to improve the

environment by providing bypasses of towns situated on the Regional Strategic Transport Network (RSTN), thus relieving the effects of heavy through traffic. As part of this programme, the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme has been identified as a major highway scheme which should commence later in the plan period. The scheme has also been identified in the Consultation Document '*Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015*' and '*Investment Delivery Plan for Roads*' as a scheme in the current SRI programme.

- e) Progress to construction is subject to clearing statutory procedures, having a satisfactory economic appraisal, and the availability of funding.

Selection of the Preferred Route – Appraisal Procedure

- a) The appraisal of any form of transport investment requires a clear understanding of the objectives, which are to be met, and appropriate criteria to be used to decide whether a proposal meets them. The Government's five objectives for transport (Environment, Safety, Economy, Accessibility and Integration) are pivotal to the appraisal process. There is tension between these objectives, such that proposals may contribute to the achievement of one objective, but work against the achievement of others. The appraisal procedure must allow determination of an appropriate balance between the five objectives.
- b) The study of alternatives for major road schemes is undertaken through a three-stage appraisal procedure. Scheme Assessment Reports act as a summary of the more technical reports generated during the appraisal of road schemes, the level of detail and coverage is appropriate to the type of decision that can reasonably be taken at each stage.
- c) As part of this appraisal process, the Department examined strategies for future improvement of the A24 trunk road corridor around Ballynahinch. At Stage 1, three preliminary corridors were identified; one to the west and two to the east of the town. Based on the assessment findings, the Department identified the shorter of the two eastern corridor options as being preferable, particularly as it followed (in principle) the route of the bypass as indicated in the Ards Down Area Plan 2015 (which was in draft at that time).
- d) At Stage 2, three preliminary route options for the proposed bypass were subsequently identified by the Department within the preferred corridor to the east of Ballynahinch. The three options (the Red Route, Blue Route and Yellow Route) were developed, environmental impacts assessed, costs evaluated, traffic volumes predicted and economic cost benefit analysis carried out. Based on assessment, the Department identified the Red Route as being preferable and the then Minister for Regional Development (Mr Danny Kennedy MLA) announced the Preferred Route on 24th January 2012.
- e) Following the announcement, the Department developed a preliminary design of the scheme (the 'Proposed Scheme') to facilitate a subsequent Stage 3 Scheme Assessment and to inform the preparation of a draft Direction Order, draft Vesting Order and Environmental Statement.

Standard of Road

- a) The Proposed Scheme would provide a bypass of Ballynahinch, approximately 3.14km in length. Aligned to the east of the town, it would be a Category 3A carriageway, as defined in the DMRB TD9/93: 'Highway Link Design', commencing with a roundabout at the existing A24

Belfast Road/A21 Saintfield Road junction and terminating with a roundabout at the existing A24 Drumaness Road/B2 Downpatrick Road junction. It would also include a compact grade-separated junction with the B7 Crossgar Road, a new underpass to accommodate Moss Road, and partial realignments of Ballylone Road and Crabtree Road to facilitate continued access.

- b) It would comprise a single 2-lane carriageway bypass with widening to a Wide Single (2+1) carriageway to provide overtaking opportunities for northbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the southern extent of the scheme, and a Differential Acceleration Lane (DAL) to provide overtaking opportunities for southbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the northern end of the scheme.
- c) Due to the strategic nature of the bypass, there would be no provision for direct access to adjacent agricultural land, private property or central reserve crossovers.

2.



We have made a significant investment in the property in recent years and will need to continue to modify the house to make it suitable for the family we hope to have in the near future. However we have been told we should not plan any substantial modifications to the property as planning permission is unlikely to be given because of the proposed bypass.

We have been notified that a vesting order was issued in March of this year, however as there has been no official date for purchase of properties effected by the bypass we are unable to plan or invest for our future. We have been told the vesting order could be made as soon as 2016, but may take considerably longer. We therefore have serious concerns about our future family home, and the probable difficulty in finding a suitable alternative at short notice if the official vesting order is made.

- a) The Department acknowledges the distress and uncertainty surrounding the planning of a major road scheme, especially in your case where your property is to be compulsorily purchased.
- b) Spending beyond the current budget period on schemes, such as the Ballynahinch Bypass, will depend on the funding made available by the Northern Ireland Executive in future budget periods.
- c) Whilst construction of the bypass is subject to the availability of finances, it is essential to complete planning of the Proposed Scheme to prepare for implementation.

Blight

- a) The property and land may be blighted as it lies underneath the footprint of the new road, and the owner may be able to serve a blight notice to compel the Department to acquire some or all of the property at its untainted value.

- b) The blight notice procedure is a process by which the owners may bring forward the acquisition of their property if it has become "blighted", as defined in planning law. Where the value of a property has been reduced by certain categories of planning or other development proposals, anyone with a qualifying interest, may be entitled to serve a "blight notice" on the body responsible for this, requiring them to buy the property at its untainted value. In short, the threatened or prospective compulsory purchase is brought forward thereby removing the uncertainty that might otherwise make the property unmarketable save at a significantly reduced price.
 - a) Further guidance on compulsory purchase and compensation is provided in a series of guides, which cover agricultural, residential and business land. These are produced by Land and Property Services and are available from www.dfpni.gov.uk/publications/compulsory-purchase-and-compensation-guides. Alternatively, guides can be requested by writing to: Department of Finance & Personnel, Land & Property Services, Lanyon Plaza, 7 Lanyon Place, Town Parks, Belfast, BT1 3LP. The guidance contained within these booklets is concerned with the procedures for compulsory purchase rather than the broader subject of public development.
 - c) Should you wish to wait until the Vesting Order is confirmed, compensation will be based on the principle of equivalence: the landowner should be no worse off in financial terms after the acquisition than before.
3. **As our property is directly in the route of the proposed bypass at the Crossgar Road overpass / junction and therefore forms a strategically important part of the scheme we would like to discuss the options available to us with the DRD without delay, so we can plan for our future.**
- a) The Department is content to meet with you to discuss the options available.

DRD TransportNI
Southern Division
11 December 2015

Objection number OB14
Objector's Name
Date submitted undated
NIMVO plot number

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above objection and responds as follows:

1. **My family and I wish to object to the proposed 'A24 Ballynahinch Bypass' (URS, March 2015). Having looked at this booklet, we object to the bypass based on the following points.**

The Department considers it appropriate to make the following statement before addressing the specifics of your objection.

Development Priorities

- a) The programme to improve transport links in Northern Ireland has been developed and is based on a series of key documents which include:
- A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, the Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport, published in 1998;
 - Moving Forward: The Northern Ireland Transport Policy Statement, published in 1998;
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 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-2021, published in 2012; and
 - Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015, published in 2006.
- b) The Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) identifies the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass as a Strategic Highway Improvement. This forms part of a range of transportation initiatives across Northern Ireland to provide, for example, up to 13 bypasses, approximately 85km of dual carriageway, 36km of widened single carriageway, and 11 major junction improvements, which will ultimately contribute to increasing the economic well-being of the Region.
- c) The New Approach to Regional Transportation complements the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and aims to achieve its vision for transportation. One of its main strategic objectives is to 'improve connectivity within the region' by completing the work identified in the current Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) and Strategic Road Improvement (SRI) Programme.
- d) The RSTNTP includes a programme for the implementation of SRIs to remove bottlenecks on the network where lack of capacity is causing serious congestion, and to improve the environment by providing bypasses of towns situated on the Regional Strategic Transport

Network (RSTN), thus relieving the effects of heavy through traffic. As part of this programme, the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme has been identified as a major highway scheme which should commence later in the plan period. The scheme has also been identified in the Consultation Document '*Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015*' and '*Investment Delivery Plan for Roads*' as a scheme in the current SRI programme.

- e) Progress to construction is subject to clearing statutory procedures, having a satisfactory economic appraisal, and the availability of funding.

Selection of the Preferred Route – Appraisal Procedure

- a) The appraisal of any form of transport investment requires a clear understanding of the objectives, which are to be met, and appropriate criteria to be used to decide whether a proposal meets them. The Government's five objectives for transport (Environment, Safety, Economy, Accessibility and Integration) are pivotal to the appraisal process. There is tension between these objectives, such that proposals may contribute to the achievement of one objective, but work against the achievement of others. The appraisal procedure must allow determination of an appropriate balance between the five objectives.
- b) The study of alternatives for major road schemes is undertaken through a three-stage appraisal procedure. Scheme Assessment Reports act as a summary of the more technical reports generated during the appraisal of road schemes, the level of detail and coverage is appropriate to the type of decision that can reasonably be taken at each stage.
- c) As part of this appraisal process, the Department examined strategies for future improvement of the A24 trunk road corridor around Ballynahinch. At Stage 1, three preliminary corridors were identified; one to the west and two to the east of the town. Based on the assessment findings, the Department identified the shorter of the two eastern corridor options as being preferable, particularly as it followed (in principle) the route of the bypass as indicated in the Ards Down Area Plan 2015 (which was in draft at that time).
- d) At Stage 2, three preliminary route options for the proposed bypass were subsequently identified by the Department within the preferred corridor to the east of Ballynahinch. The three options (the Red Route, Blue Route and Yellow Route) were developed, environmental impacts assessed, costs evaluated, traffic volumes predicted and economic cost benefit analysis carried out. Based on assessment, the Department identified the Red Route as being preferable and the then Minister for Regional Development (Mr Danny Kennedy MLA) announced the Preferred Route on 24th January 2012.
- e) Following the announcement, the Department developed a preliminary design of the scheme (the 'Proposed Scheme') to facilitate a subsequent Stage 3 Scheme Assessment and to inform the preparation of a draft Direction Order, draft Vesting Order and Environmental Statement.

Standard of Road

- a) The Proposed Scheme would provide a bypass of Ballynahinch, approximately 3.14km in length. Aligned to the east of the town, it would be a Category 3A carriageway, as defined in the DMRB TD9/93: 'Highway Link Design', commencing with a roundabout at the existing A24 Belfast Road/A21 Saintfield Road junction and terminating with a roundabout at the existing

A24 Drumaness Road/B2 Downpatrick Road junction. It would also include a compact grade-separated junction with the B7 Crossgar Road, a new underpass to accommodate Moss Road, and partial realignments of Ballylone Road and Crabtree Road to facilitate continued access.

- b) It would comprise a single 2-lane carriageway bypass with widening to a Wide Single (2+1) carriageway to provide overtaking opportunities for northbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the southern extent of the scheme, and a Differential Acceleration Lane (DAL) to provide overtaking opportunities for southbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the northern end of the scheme.
 - c) Due to the strategic nature of the bypass, there would be no provision for direct access to adjacent agricultural land, private property or central reserve crossovers.
2. **We are extremely concerned about the noise pollution caused by the construction of this road, and the traffic using this road. This noise pollution will affect our health through sleep disturbance, impaired hearing with long term exposure leading to possible hypertension or cardiovascular related illness. We wish for a noise impact assessment to be carried out with the findings published and the relevant control measures in place, such as acoustic double glazing or acoustic ventilation.**

Noise (Operational)

- a) A Noise & Vibration assessment (including a night-time assessment) has been undertaken for the scheme and reported in Chapter 13 in Volume 1 of the published Environmental Statement (ES). Based on this assessment, appropriate mitigation & enhancement measures have been developed and reported in Section 13.7 of the ES.
 - b) The noise assessment has determined that in the Baseline year (2019), 523 dwellings would experience an increase in noise level, the vast majority of which (466 or 89%) would be classed as 'Negligible' to 'Moderate' in the short-term, and 1249 dwellings would experience a decrease in noise level.
 - c) A Thin Surface Course System (TSCS), otherwise known as low noise surfacing, would be provided on the mainline. Whilst the noise benefits of this surfacing are mainly evident at higher speeds, there would be some benefits at the lower speeds on the Proposed Scheme.
 - d) With this mitigation in place, [REDACTED] is predicted to experience a slight increase in noise levels with the Proposed Scheme in operation.
 - e) The results of the noise impact assessment indicate that no properties would qualify for noise insulation, under the terms of The Noise Insulation Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995.
3. **In addition, to noise pollution we are worried about dust exposure from the construction of this bypass. Dust pollution can trigger respiratory problems and asthma. [REDACTED] and we are extremely concerned that this will have further implications to her health. The particulate matter and other pollutants emitted from vehicles using this road, through long term exposure will impact on the health of our family. Are there control measures in place to prevent this dust exposure? Will there be an**

air quality assessment carried out to measure the exposure of pollutants from these vehicles?

Air Quality (Operational)

- a) An Air Quality assessment has been undertaken for the Proposed Scheme and reported in Chapter 8 in Volume 1 of the published Environmental Statement. Air pollution concentration levels were calculated in the vicinity of the scheme (Figure 8.3 in Volume 3 of the ES), with the site-specific assessments described in sub-sections 8.5 & 8.6, and Tables 8.7, 8.10 & 8.11.
- b) There would be no significant effect on either local or regional air quality as a result of the Proposed Scheme. Local air quality pollutant concentrations would remain well within the relevant national objective limit values and are forecasted to marginally decrease from existing levels at the majority of locations. With strategic traffic moving to the new bypass, there would be a net benefit for the majority of properties within Ballynahinch with slightly improved air quality. In terms of regional air quality, there would be an improvement.
- c) During the operational phase of the Proposed Scheme, no predicted exceedances of the national objective limit values are expected, thus there would be no significant effects on air quality. Therefore, no specific mitigation measures are deemed necessary.

Construction Dust

- a) Construction-related impacts are given very careful consideration by the Department. Construction-related impacts are assessed and mitigation proposed in each of the technical chapters (Chapters 8 to 17) in Volume 1 of the published ES. Moreover, in line with the guidance contained within Interim Advice Note 183/14, an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) has been prepared for the Proposed Scheme and is contained within Appendix 4 in Volume 2 of the ES. The EMP forms an outline plan and is closely aligned with the design and assessment process contained within Part II of the ES (Chapters 8 to 17). The EMP would be further refined and expanded by the appointed Contractor into a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) as more information becomes available and there is more certainty in terms of the proposed layout, construction methods, programme and the likely environmental effects.
 - b) Specifically, in relation to air quality during construction, this aspect has been considered and assessed in sub-section 8.6.2 in Volume 1 of the published ES, with proposed mitigation outlined in sub-section 8.7.2. Moreover, proposed mitigation measures are outlined in sub-section 3.2 of the EMP referred to above (Appendix 4 in Volume 2 of the published ES).
- 4. Another concern we have is vibration, caused from the traffic on this bypass. The vibration could lead to structural defects to the dwellings in this area. Has measures been put in place to avoid this?**

Vibration (Operational)

- a) A Noise & Vibration assessment has been undertaken for the scheme and reported in Chapter 13 in Volume 1 of the published Environmental Statement (ES). Based on this assessment, appropriate mitigation & enhancement measures have been developed and reported in Section 13.7 of the ES.

b) Specifically, the vibration assessment is reported in sub-section 13.6.4 in Volume 1 of the published ES. Vibration levels from traffic are low, even in properties close to heavily-trafficked roads. Extensive research has shown that traffic-induced vibrations do not cause significant damage to buildings. The highest levels of traffic-induced vibration are generated by irregularities in the road, and this is unlikely to be an important consideration for new roads. Empirical data suggests that vibration levels would be less than 0.5mm/s at the majority of properties. With reference to BS7385 and allowing for normal circumstances, this vibration level is not of a severity that would cause any structural damage to a property.

5. **This proposed bypass is being built on green belt which is not promoting sustainability of the land. The eco-systems which currently exist in this area will be seriously threatened or damaged forever. There is risk of contamination to the land from the construction of the bypass. The bypass will have a negative visual impact on the rural landscape of this area. It will destroy the land which has been sustained since the 16th Century. The conservation of Greenfield throughout Northern Ireland is at risk through this proposal and other applications, such as the A5.**

Green Belt and destruction of land

- a) With reference to the Ards Down Area Plan 2015 (Adopted March 2009), there is no designated green belt around Ballynahinch. Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 21 (Sustainable Development in the Countryside) sets out planning policies for development in the countryside. With the publication of PPS 21 in its final form on 01 June 2010, the policies and provisions contained within it now take precedence over the policy provisions for all Green Belts in existing statutory and published draft Plans, with a limited number of exceptions. None of these exceptions are relevant to the area affected by the Proposed Scheme.
- b) As outlined in sub-section 12.4.2.8 in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement, PPS 21 was introduced to replace PPS 14 (*'Sustainable Development in the Countryside'*). This policy aims to manage development in the countryside in a manner:
- consistent with achieving the strategic objectives of the RDS; and
 - which strikes a balance between the need to protect the countryside from unnecessary or inappropriate development, while supporting rural communities.

In light of this, the eight aims of the revised RDS are to:

- Support strong, sustainable growth for the benefit of all parts of Northern Ireland;
- Strengthen Belfast as the regional economic driver and Londonderry as the principal city of the North West;
- Support our towns, villages and rural communities to maximise their potential;
- Promote development which improves the health and wellbeing of communities;
- Improve connectivity to enhance the movement of people, goods, energy and information between places;
- Protect and enhance the environment for its own sake;
- Take actions to reduce our carbon footprint and facilitate adaption to climate change; and
- Strengthen links between north and south, east and west, with Europe and the rest of the world.

- c) The production of PPS 21 superseded a number of policy provisions in the Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland (PSRNI), including the Green Belt planning policies. It is stated that *'for the purpose of this document the countryside is defined as land lying outside of settlement limits as identified in development plans. The provisions of this document will apply to all areas of Northern Ireland countryside'*.
- d) PPS 21 allows for various forms of development in the countryside where it meets a range of policies, including residential development, farm diversification, agricultural and forestry development, the re-use of existing buildings, tourism development, industry and business uses, minerals development, outdoor sport and recreation, renewable energy and necessary community facilities.
- e) As part of the strategic planning process for Ballynahinch, the Ards Down Area Plan 2015 includes an indicative alignment for the 'Road Proposal' (Volume 1 – Part 2, Policy TRAN 1; Volume 3 – Ballynahinch Proposal BH 19 (Ballynahinch Bypass) and Map No. 3/003a - Ballynahinch). This is also shown on Figure 12.2 in Volume 3 of the ES.

Eco-systems

- a) The impact of the Proposed Scheme on ecology and nature conservation is reported in Chapter 10 in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement. The scope of this assessment included both desktop study and field survey, consisting of an 'extended' Phase 1 habitat survey, protected mammals (badger, otter, bat), amphibians (common frog & smooth newt), fisheries survey, and breeding bird survey.
- b) The Department accepts that there would be the loss of a range of habitat types, regarded as being of local importance. With implementation of the mitigation and enhancement measures proposed in sub-section 10.7 of the ES, the residual impact on local habitats and their associated wildlife should be minimal, as the introduction of additional vegetation in newly planted areas using native species would provide new habitats.

Land contamination

- a) A review of known and potentially contaminated sources has been undertaken, and subsequently assessed in relation to the Proposed Scheme, as described in sub-sections 17.5.7, 17.6.1.5 and 17.6.2.1 in Volume 1 of the ES. This included preparation of a conceptual site model risk assessment, as outlined in Table 17.7.
- b) As outlined previously, construction-related impacts are given very careful consideration by the Department. Moreover, in line with the guidance contained within Interim Advice Note 183/14, an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) has been prepared for the Proposed Scheme and is contained within Appendix 4 in Volume 2 of the ES. The EMP forms an outline plan and is closely aligned with the design and assessment process contained within Part II of the ES. The EMP would be further refined and expanded by the appointed Contractor into a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) as more information becomes available and there is more certainty in terms of the proposed layout, construction methods, programme and the likely environmental effects.
- c) Specifically, in relation to contamination during construction, proposed mitigation is outlined in sub-section 17.7.2 in Volume 1 of the ES. Moreover, proposed mitigation measures are

outlined in sub-sections 3.8 and 3.9 of the EMP referred to above (Appendix 4 in Volume 2 of the published ES).

Landscape & Visual Effect

- a) The impact of the Proposed Scheme on the Landscape and associated Visual Effects is reported in Chapter 11 in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement. The scope of this assessment included both desktop study and field survey.
 - b) The Department recognises that a scheme of this scale would inevitably have an impact on the landscape and individual visual receptors. However, the Department is content that the fencing / boundary treatment, hedging and planting commitments contained in the Environmental Statement at Volume 3 Figure 11.6 (5 sheets) would reduce the landscape and visual impact when the scheme opens to traffic and through time, the openness of the site would be reduced as the comprehensive landscape planting matures.
6. **The proposed slip road for the Ballylone Road will interfere with the extensive planting of trees which are already located on the upper section of this road. We wish to have these trees kept as they are. Will there be further trees planted to reduce the visual impact of this slip road from our property? These trees would enhance segregation from our property to this road and reduce the aesthetics caused by it.**

Ballylone Road realignment

- a) The impact of the Proposed Scheme on the Landscape and associated Visual Effects is reported in Chapter 11 in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement. The scope of this assessment included both desktop study and field survey.
 - b) The Department recognises that a scheme of this scale would inevitably have an impact on the landscape, and in particular, mature vegetation. However, the Department is content that the fencing / boundary treatment, hedging and planting commitments contained in the Environmental Statement at Volume 3 Figure 11.6 (5 sheets) would reduce the landscape and visual impact when the scheme opens to traffic and through time, the openness of the site would be reduced as the comprehensive landscape planting matures.
 - c) Indicative landscape mitigation proposals in the vicinity of the Ballylone Road partial realignment are shown on Figure 11.6, Sheet 3 in Volume 3 of the ES. This includes an extensive area of proposed native woodland planting.
7. **There will be damage caused to the townscape character of Ballynahinch. As the bypass promotes increased car usage, this will decrease public transport services to and from Ballynahinch. The service will ultimately become less efficient for existing users through decreased journey times either from or to Ballynahinch. Does this not undermine Government policy which aims to increase public transport within the province, rather than encourage car usage?**

Townscape Character

- a) The impact of the Proposed Scheme on the Landscape and associated Visual Effects is reported in Chapter 11 in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement. The scope of this assessment included both desktop study and field survey.

- b) The Department recognises that a scheme of this scale would inevitably have an impact on the rural landscape. However, the Department is content that the fencing / boundary treatment, hedging and planting commitments contained in the Environmental Statement at Volume 3 Figure 11.6 (5 sheets) would reduce the landscape impact when the scheme opens to traffic and through time, the openness of the site would be reduced as the comprehensive landscape planting matures.
- c) Specifically, in terms of Townscape Character, the Department believes there is likely to be a slight improvement due to the removal of a significant proportion of strategic traffic from the town centre.
- d) Two original scheme objectives were to reduce journey times and improve time reliability for strategic A24 traffic.

Public Transport

- a) A description of current public transport provision is outlined in sub-sections 14.5.4 and 14.5.5 in Volume 1 of the published ES. Potential impacts of the Proposed Scheme on public transport facilities are detailed in sub-sections 14.6.1.4 and 14.6.1.5 in Volume 1 of the ES.
- b) With scheme implementation, it is unlikely that any services would be significantly altered, as the town centre would remain the hub for routes in order to serve the local community. This includes the regional Goldline Express Service. The town itself is the population centre, and the origin/final destination for a number of services, with the central location being convenient for bus users.
- c) Bus services would continue to utilise the existing road network, though the highway environment would improve significantly for buses, as the bypass would achieve separation of a significant proportion of strategic and local traffic. Essentially, traffic through the town would become more regulated, less congested and bus services should benefit significantly with the reduction in traffic flows; maybe even resulting in marginally shorter journey times for a number of services.
- d) Consultation with both Translink and the South Eastern Education & Library Board (SEELB) confirmed that the Proposed Scheme is unlikely to have a major effect on their services, in and around the town.
- e) Overall, the Proposed Scheme would improve journey time reliability for public transport as congestion through the town would be eased, resulting in a Moderate Beneficial impact upon the public transport network.
- f) Moreover, contained within the Ards Down Area Plan 2015, is an indicative location on the Down Countryside Map (Map No. 3/001a – Down District North) for an informal Park & Ride / Park & Share site.
- g) As part of this Proposed Scheme, a Park & Share facility has been incorporated in the design (as detailed in sub-section 4.5.2 in Volume 1 of the ES) to encourage more sustainable journeys. The location is on the northern side of the proposed Saintfield Road Roundabout

between the A24 Belfast Road and A21 Saintfield Road. It has been designed to accommodate 27 parking bays (including 3no. disabled bays).

8. From experiencing horrendous 'bumper to bumper' traffic congestion over holiday periods, on the 'A24' from Seaforde to Newcastle; a bypass located at Ballynahinch will still not prevent such traffic congestion occurring on this road in the future.

A24 traffic congestion

- a) The A24 from Belfast to Clough forms part of the Regional Strategic Transport Network (RSTN) within Northern Ireland. The Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) includes a programme for the implementation of Strategic Road Improvements (SRIs) to remove bottlenecks on the network where lack of capacity is causing serious congestion, and to improve the environment by providing bypasses of towns situated on the RSTN. As part of this programme, the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme has been identified as a SRI which should commence later in the plan period.
- b) The scheme-specific objectives include:
- i) To reduce journey times for strategic A24 traffic in the Opening year;
 - ii) To improve journey time reliability for strategic A24 traffic in the Opening year;
 - iii) It will also reduce congestion in Ballynahinch town centre.
- c) The Department has considered the options available and concluded that implementation of the Proposed Scheme would greatly benefit both strategic and local road users by reducing journey times, improving journey time reliability and improving safety on the A24 Belfast to Newcastle trunk road.
- d) It is acknowledged that the proposed bypass would not rectify existing problems along the A24 route outwith the extents of the Proposed Scheme.

Objection number OB15
Objector's Name
Date submitted 17 May 2015
NIMVO plot number N/A

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above objection and responds as follows:

1. I write in connection with the above draft order. I have examined the plans and I know the site well. I have lived on the farm at [REDACTED] for the last 28 years. I wish to object strongly to the proposed bypass. The [REDACTED] and my [REDACTED] on it and any proposals should be considered very carefully.

The Department considers it appropriate to make the following statement before addressing the specifics of your objection.

Development Priorities

- a) The programme to improve transport links in Northern Ireland has been developed and is based on a series of key documents which include:
- A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, the Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport, published in 1998;
 - Moving Forward: The Northern Ireland Transport Policy Statement, published in 1998;
 - Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025 - Shaping our Future, published in 2002;
 - Regional Development Strategy 2035 – Building a Better Future, published in 2012;
 - Regional Transportation Strategy for Northern Ireland 2002-2012, published in 2002;
 - Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future – A New Approach to Regional Transportation, published in 2012;
 - Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan 2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2005-2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2008-2018, published in 2008;
 - Investment Delivery Plan (IDP) for Roads, published in 2008;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-2021, published in 2012; and
 - Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015, published in 2006.
- b) The Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) identifies the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass as a Strategic Highway Improvement. This forms part of a range of transportation initiatives across Northern Ireland to provide, for example, up to 13 bypasses, approximately 85km of dual carriageway, 36km of widened single carriageway, and 11 major junction improvements, which will ultimately contribute to increasing the economic well-being of the Region.
- c) The New Approach to Regional Transportation complements the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and aims to achieve its vision for transportation. One of its main strategic objectives is to 'improve connectivity within the region' by completing the work identified in the current Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) and Strategic Road Improvement (SRI) Programme.
- d) The RSTNTP includes a programme for the implementation of SRIs to remove bottlenecks on the network where lack of capacity is causing serious congestion, and to improve the

environment by providing bypasses of towns situated on the Regional Strategic Transport Network (RSTN), thus relieving the effects of heavy through traffic. As part of this programme, the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme has been identified as a major highway scheme which should commence later in the plan period. The scheme has also been identified in the Consultation Document 'Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015' and 'Investment Delivery Plan for Roads' as a scheme in the current SRI programme.

- e) Progress to construction is subject to clearing statutory procedures, having a satisfactory economic appraisal, and the availability of funding.

Selection of the Preferred Route – Appraisal Procedure

- a) The appraisal of any form of transport investment requires a clear understanding of the objectives, which are to be met, and appropriate criteria to be used to decide whether a proposal meets them. The Government's five objectives for transport (Environment, Safety, Economy, Accessibility and Integration) are pivotal to the appraisal process. There is tension between these objectives, such that proposals may contribute to the achievement of one objective, but work against the achievement of others. The appraisal procedure must allow determination of an appropriate balance between the five objectives.
- b) The study of alternatives for major road schemes is undertaken through a three-stage appraisal procedure. Scheme Assessment Reports act as a summary of the more technical reports generated during the appraisal of road schemes; the level of detail and coverage is appropriate to the type of decision that can reasonably be taken at each stage.
- c) As part of this appraisal process, the Department examined strategies for future improvement of the A24 trunk road corridor around Ballynahinch. At Stage 1, three preliminary corridors were identified; one to the west and two to the east of the town. Based on the assessment findings, the Department identified the shorter of the two eastern corridor options as being preferable, particularly as it followed (in principle) the route of the bypass as indicated in the Ards Down Area Plan 2015 (which was in draft at that time).
- d) At Stage 2, three preliminary route options for the proposed bypass were subsequently identified by the Department within the preferred corridor to the east of Ballynahinch. The three options (the Red Route, Blue Route and Yellow Route) were developed, environmental impacts assessed, costs evaluated, traffic volumes predicted and economic cost benefit analysis carried out. Based on assessment, the Department identified the Red Route as being preferable and the then Minister for Regional Development (Mr Danny Kennedy MLA) announced the Preferred Route on 24th January 2012.
- e) Following the announcement, the Department developed a preliminary design of the scheme (the 'Proposed Scheme') to facilitate a subsequent Stage 3 Scheme Assessment and to inform the preparation of a draft Direction Order, draft Vesting Order and Environmental Statement.

Standard of Road

- a) The Proposed Scheme would provide a bypass of Ballynahinch, approximately 3.14km in length. Aligned to the east of the town, it would be a Category 3A carriageway, as defined in the DMRB TD9/93: 'Highway Link Design', commencing with a roundabout at the existing A24

Belfast Road/A21 Saintfield Road junction and terminating with a roundabout at the existing A24 Drumaness Road/B2 Downpatrick Road junction. It would also include a compact grade-separated junction with the B7 Crossgar Road, a new underpass to accommodate Moss Road, and partial realignments of Ballylone Road and Crabtree Road to facilitate continued access.

- b) It would comprise a single 2-lane carriageway bypass with widening to a Wide Single (2+1) carriageway to provide overtaking opportunities for northbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the southern extent of the scheme, and a Differential Acceleration Lane (DAL) to provide overtaking opportunities for southbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the northern end of the scheme.
 - c) Due to the strategic nature of the bypass, there would be no provision for direct access to adjacent agricultural land, private property or central reserve crossovers.
2. **People from Ballynahinch use the Moss Road extensively for recreation and walking dogs, I myself run the 3 mile loop as it is commonly known on a daily basis in preparation for many marathons I have run. This proposed road would diminish the historic character of the Moss Road.**

Moss Road Historic Character

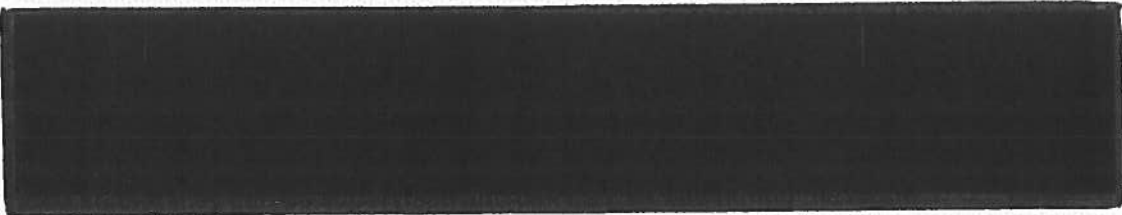
- a) The Department recognises that the scale of new road works in a rural green field location would result in some loss of amenity at various locations.
 - b) The Department is content that the fencing / boundary treatment, hedging and planting commitments contained in the Environmental Statement at Volume 3, Figure 11.6 (Sheet 2) would reduce the loss of amenity and historic character on the Moss Road when the scheme opens to traffic and through time, the openness of the site would be reduced as the comprehensive landscape planting matures.
 - c) Mitigation measures include sympathetic design of the road and associated landscaping to help integrate the road into the surrounding landscape, providing adequate and appropriate screen planting.
 - d) Maturation of the extensive landscape planting mitigation measures would, in time, 'soften' landscape and visual effects, particularly in the vicinity of embankments, cuttings and junctions; the effects would remain significant in the medium-term at least. In the long-term, the negative landscape and visual effects would reduce, in tandem with the maturing of proposed planting.
 - e) As stated in sub-section 4.4.4 in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement, an underpass would be provided on the Moss Road to maintain it as a through route under the proposed bypass, with minimal change to the alignment of Moss Road on either side of the underpass.
3. **Northern Ireland has enough roads. We should be making greater efforts to improve public transport as an alternative to the proposal. We have some the highest dependency upon roads in Europe. Cycleways should be considered throughout County Down.**

- a) The strategic need for the Proposed Scheme is set out in Chapter 2 in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement.
- b) Translink were consulted with respect to the Park & Ride/Share facility proposed at the northern end of the proposed bypass.

Cycling Provision

- a) The Department established a Cycling Unit in November 2013 to provide a focus and co-ordination role for cycling issues and cycling-related activities. This Unit works towards making cycling an integral part in network planning and development, and to ensure that cycling provision remains a key element in both strategy and delivery.
- b) The Unit is central in delivering the vision for cycling: "*A community where people have the freedom and confidence to travel by bicycle for every day journeys*".
- c) Consultation for the Proposed Scheme included liaison with both the DRD Cycling Unit and Sustrans, and has resulted in an enhancement to the dedicated cycleway originally proposed.
- d) A shared footway/cycleway extending between the terminal roundabouts would be included along the western side of the proposed bypass.

4.



The proposed bypass will leave me without any facilities to test cattle and to monitor calving cows. It will increase costs and will cause significant disruption to the farm, animals my farming management and routine.

- a) The Department recognises that the scale of new road works in a green field location can have substantial impact on farms in terms of injurious affection (including damage to the viability of the farm business), severance and disturbance. It is also accepted that the 'preferred route' for a scheme would impact landowners to differing degrees of severity. The Department believes the proposed layout is the most equitable when viewed in the wider aspect of landowners likely to be affected by the scheme.
- b) Landowners who suffer a negative impact on their farm business on their lands have a right to compensation for this impact. The Department is unable to comment on the detail of compensation matters, as these would be the subject of negotiation between the landowner and Land and Property Services' District Valuer. Depending on the particular circumstances, compensation can be claimed under the following categories (Heads of Claim) (i) the value of the land vested (ii) severance and injurious affection (iii) disturbance and (iv) fees. Additional compensation for severance could arise if the resultant shape of fields or access restrictions makes future farming operations difficult or impractical.

- c) The Proposed Scheme does not remove any cattle sheds. However an external cattle handling facility, including a cattle crush, north of [REDACTED] would have to be removed for the scheme. The Department would be keen to continue discussions with the landowner on mitigation measures during and after the construction period.
5. I would request that the bypass avoid the land at [REDACTED] and the handling pen and facilities on the [REDACTED]
- a) The Department, in following the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges assessment process, did consider during scheme development alternative corridors that could have avoided this property. However, they did not perform as well as the preferred corridor when reviewed under the scheme assessment process.
6. If this application is to be decided by public enquiry please take this letter as notice that I wish to give evidence to the enquiry.

Public Inquiry

- a) Given the nature of the proposals and the likelihood that a number of the objections could not be resolved, the Minister for Regional Development approved the holding of a Public Inquiry to give the Department and the objectors a fair opportunity to be heard and to question the case for and against the scheme. The Public Inquiry will be held in the Millbrook Lodge Hotel, 5 Drumaness Road, Ballynahinch, Co. Down, BT24 8LS, commencing on Tuesday 26 January 2016 at 10am and continuing on such other days as may be determined by the Inspector appointed to conduct the proceedings.
- b) The inquiry procedure is subject to the rules of natural justice. These rules, developed by the Courts, provide that there must be fairness in the conduct of an administrative process and, in particular, each side must have a fair opportunity to be heard and to hear and question the case against them. The inquiry is held before an independent Inspector appointed by the Department. The appointment of an Inspector for a specific inquiry takes into account the particular suitability of the Inspector for dealing with the matter in question. The Inspector will determine how the inquiry is to proceed.

DRD TransportNI
Southern Division
11 December 2015

Objection number OB16
Objector's Name
Date submitted 18 May 2015
NIMVO plot number N/A

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above objection and responds as follows:

1. **I write in connection with the above draft order. I have examined the plans and I know the site well. I have lived on the Moss Road for the last year. I have stayed on the Moss Road on numerous occasions throughout the last 8 years.**

The Department considers it appropriate to make the following statement before addressing the specifics of your objection.

Development Priorities

- a) The programme to improve transport links in Northern Ireland has been developed and is based on a series of key documents which include:
- A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, the Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport, published in 1998;
 - Moving Forward: The Northern Ireland Transport Policy Statement, published in 1998;
 - Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025 - Shaping our Future, published in 2002;
 - Regional Development Strategy 2035 – Building a Better Future, published in 2012;
 - Regional Transportation Strategy for Northern Ireland 2002-2012, published in 2002;
 - Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future – A New Approach to Regional Transportation, published in 2012;
 - Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan 2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2005-2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2008-2018, published in 2008;
 - Investment Delivery Plan (IDP) for Roads, published in 2008;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-2021, published in 2012; and
 - Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015, published in 2006.
- b) The Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) identifies the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass as a Strategic Highway Improvement. This forms part of a range of transportation initiatives across Northern Ireland to provide, for example, up to 13 bypasses, approximately 85km of dual carriageway, 36km of widened single carriageway, and 11 major junction improvements, which will ultimately contribute to increasing the economic well-being of the Region.
- c) The New Approach to Regional Transportation complements the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and aims to achieve its vision for transportation. One of its main strategic objectives is to '*improve connectivity within the region*' by completing the work identified in the current Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) and Strategic Road Improvement (SRI) Programme.
- d) The RSTNTP includes a programme for the implementation of SRIs to remove bottlenecks on the network where lack of capacity is causing serious congestion, and to improve the

environment by providing bypasses of towns situated on the Regional Strategic Transport Network (RSTN), thus relieving the effects of heavy through traffic. As part of this programme, the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme has been identified as a major highway scheme which should commence later in the plan period. The scheme has also been identified in the Consultation Document '*Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015*' and '*Investment Delivery Plan for Roads*' as a scheme in the current SRI programme.

- e) Progress to construction is subject to clearing statutory procedures, having a satisfactory economic appraisal, and the availability of funding.

Selection of the Preferred Route – Appraisal Procedure

- a) The appraisal of any form of transport investment requires a clear understanding of the objectives, which are to be met, and appropriate criteria to be used to decide whether a proposal meets them. The Government's five objectives for transport (Environment, Safety, Economy, Accessibility and Integration) are pivotal to the appraisal process. There is tension between these objectives, such that proposals may contribute to the achievement of one objective, but work against the achievement of others. The appraisal procedure must allow determination of an appropriate balance between the five objectives.
- b) The study of alternatives for major road schemes is undertaken through a three-stage appraisal procedure. Scheme Assessment Reports act as a summary of the more technical reports generated during the appraisal of road schemes; the level of detail and coverage is appropriate to the type of decision that can reasonably be taken at each stage.
- c) As part of this appraisal process, the Department examined strategies for future improvement of the A24 trunk road corridor around Ballynahinch. At Stage 1, three preliminary corridors were identified; one to the west and two to the east of the town. Based on the assessment findings, the Department identified the shorter of the two eastern corridor options as being preferable, particularly as it followed (in principle) the route of the bypass as indicated in the Ards Down Area Plan 2015 (which was in draft at that time).
- d) At Stage 2, three preliminary route options for the proposed bypass were subsequently identified by the Department within the preferred corridor to the east of Ballynahinch. The three options (the Red Route, Blue Route and Yellow Route) were developed, environmental impacts assessed, costs evaluated, traffic volumes predicted and economic cost benefit analysis carried out. Based on assessment, the Department identified the Red Route as being preferable and the then Minister for Regional Development (Mr Danny Kennedy MLA) announced the Preferred Route on 24th January 2012.
- e) Following the announcement, the Department developed a preliminary design of the scheme (the 'Proposed Scheme') to facilitate a subsequent Stage 3 Scheme Assessment and to inform the preparation of a draft Direction Order, draft Vesting Order and Environmental Statement.

Standard of Road

- a) The Proposed Scheme would provide a bypass of Ballynahinch, approximately 3.14km in length. Aligned to the east of the town, it would be a Category 3A carriageway, as defined in the DMRB TD9/93: 'Highway Link Design', commencing with a roundabout at the existing A24

Belfast Road/A21 Saintfield Road junction and terminating with a roundabout at the existing A24 Drumaness Road/B2 Downpatrick Road junction. It would also include a compact grade-separated junction with the B7 Crossgar Road, a new underpass to accommodate Moss Road, and partial realignments of Ballylone Road and Crabtree Road to facilitate continued access.

- b) It would comprise a single 2-lane carriageway bypass with widening to a Wide Single (2+1) carriageway to provide overtaking opportunities for northbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the southern extent of the scheme, and a Differential Acceleration Lane (DAL) to provide overtaking opportunities for southbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the northern end of the scheme.
 - c) Due to the strategic nature of the bypass, there would be no provision for direct access to adjacent agricultural land, private property or central reserve crossovers.
2. The Moss, Ballylone and Crossgar Roads are used continuously by people walking, running and cycling of all age groups, religions and backgrounds on a continual basis 24 hours per day. As soon as I wake in the morning I will see someone walking their dog before dawn and in the hours of darkness a runner or walker will be out with a torch or walking by moonlight.

The proposed bypass would lose the tranquillity and peace currently on offer to the people of Ballynahinch. Ballynahinch does not have suitable recreational area for walking like Tollymore Forest in Newcastle, the Comber Greenway in Comber and Dundonald or the Towpath connecting Belfast and Lisburn. The Windmill is much too small and challenging to walk for recreation. No parkrun has been able to develop in Ballynahinch due to the lack of parks to run in.

Loss of Tranquillity and Peace

- a) The Department recognises that the scale of new road works in a rural green field location would result in some loss of amenity at various locations.
- b) The Department is content that the fencing / boundary treatment, hedging and planting commitments contained in the Environmental Statement at Volume 3, Figure 11.6 (Sheets 2-4) would reduce the loss of amenity on the Moss Road, Ballylone Road and Crossgar Road when the scheme opens to traffic and through time, the openness of the site would be reduced as the comprehensive landscape planting matures.
- c) Mitigation measures include sympathetic design of the road and associated landscaping to help integrate the road into the surrounding landscape, providing adequate and appropriate screen planting.
- d) Maturation of the extensive landscape planting mitigation measures would, in time, 'soften' landscape and visual effects, particularly in the vicinity of embankments, cuttings and junctions; the effects would remain significant in the medium-term at least. In the long-term, the negative landscape and visual effects would reduce, in tandem with the maturing of proposed planting.

- e) A Noise & Vibration assessment has been undertaken for the scheme and reported in Chapter 13 in Volume 1 of the published Environmental Statement (ES). Based on this assessment, appropriate mitigation & enhancement measures have been developed and reported in Section 13.7 of the ES.
- f) A Thin Surface Course System (TSCS), otherwise known as low noise surfacing, would be provided on the mainline. Whilst the noise benefits of this surfacing are mainly evident at higher speeds, there would be some benefits at the lower speeds on the Proposed Scheme.

3. As a [REDACTED] who moved to Northern Ireland I am disappointed with the lack of cycle paths connecting towns and villages. With increasing costs of healthcare, obesity epidemics and global warming we should be encouraging healthier, sustainable and environmentally friendly options for transport not endorsing road transport further with another new bypass!

- a) The strategic need for the Proposed Scheme is set out in Chapter 2 in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement.
- b) Translink were consulted with respect to the Park & Ride/Share facility proposed at the northern end of the proposed bypass.

Lack of Cycling Provision

- a) Firstly, by way of clarification, the Department is responsible for the delivery of this strategic road improvement scheme, whereas Sustrans is the body responsible in developing the National Cycle Network (a series of safe, traffic-free paths and quiet on-road cycling and walking routes that connect to every major town and city), working with partners to identify future routes and, in some cases, providing the funding to build extensions.
- b) The Department established a Cycling Unit in November 2013 to provide a focus and co-ordination role for cycling issues and cycling-related activities. This Unit works towards making cycling an integral part in network planning and development, and to ensure that cycling provision remains a key element in both strategy and delivery.
- c) The Unit is central in delivering the vision for cycling: *"A community where people have the freedom and confidence to travel by bicycle for every day journeys"*.
- d) Consultation for the Proposed Scheme included liaison with both the DRD Cycling Unit and Sustrans, and resulted in an enhancement to the dedicated cycle way originally proposed.
- e) Sustrans has indicated that the former railway branch line could be returned to use as a Greenway and DRD Cycling Unit has requested that allowances are built-in to the Proposed Scheme so as not to preclude this aspiration.
- f) As outlined in sub-section 4.5.1 in Volume 1 of the ES, the Proposed Scheme would incorporate a dedicated shared footway/cycleway on the Ballynahinch [western] side of the bypass, with pedestrian linkages to the existing footway network (where available) at the three proposed bypass junctions. The provision of such a facility has been developed in

consultation with Sustrans and the DRD Cycling Unit, which has influenced the final layout and resulted in an enhancement to the dedicated cycle way originally proposed.

- g) This would be an attractive recreational facility, providing an opportunity for walks along the bypass and into the town for the residents of Ballynahinch.
- h) Where the old Saintfield Road would be stopped-up, a connection from the shared footway/cycleway would also be provided.
- i) At the proposed Crossgar Road grade-separated junction, the shared footway/cycleway would terminate on Crossgar Road just to the east of where the compact connector loop ties-in with this road. It is proposed to provide a crossing point, with refuge, to allow connection to existing facilities on Crossgar Road (as shown on Figure 14.4 in Volume 3 of the ES).
- j) As outlined in sub-section 14.6.1.7 in Volume 1 of the ES, the Proposed Scheme would have a Moderate Beneficial impact upon cyclist provision in the vicinity of Ballynahinch.

4. I would urge you to reconsider the proposals and not proceed with the bypass.

- a) As stated in our introductory paragraph, indicating the strategic need for this scheme within the RTS, "*The A24 Ballynahinch Bypass is a key element of the improvements to the province's transportation infrastructure*".
- b) Traffic survey records also indicate the need to address the traffic congestion occurring in the town on a daily basis.

Public Inquiry

- a) Given the nature of the proposals and the likelihood that a number of the objections could not be resolved, the Minister for Regional Development approved the holding of a Public Inquiry to give the Department and the objectors a fair opportunity to be heard and to question the case for and against the scheme. The Public Inquiry will be held in the Millbrook Lodge Hotel, 5 Drumaness Road, Ballynahinch, Co. Down, BT24 8LS, commencing on Tuesday 26 January 2016 at 10am and continuing on such other days as may be determined by the Inspector appointed to conduct the proceedings.
- b) The inquiry procedure is subject to the rules of natural justice. These rules, developed by the Courts, provide that there must be fairness in the conduct of an administrative process and, in particular, each side must have a fair opportunity to be heard and to hear and question the case against them. The inquiry is held before an independent Inspector appointed by the Department. The appointment of an inspector for a specific inquiry takes into account the particular suitability of the Inspector for dealing with the matter in question. The Inspector will determine how the inquiry is to proceed.

Objection number OB17
Objector's Name
Date submitted 19 May 2015
NIMVO plot number N/A

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above objection and responds as follows:

1. I write in connection with the above draft order. I have examined the plans and I know the area well. I have lived on the farm at [REDACTED]. I wish to object strongly to the proposed bypass which runs across the [REDACTED].

The Department considers it appropriate to make the following statement before addressing the specifics of your objection.

Development Priorities

- a) The programme to improve transport links in Northern Ireland has been developed and is based on a series of key documents which include:
- A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, the Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport, published in 1998;
 - Moving Forward: The Northern Ireland Transport Policy Statement, published in 1998;
 - Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025 - Shaping our Future, published in 2002;
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 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-2021, published in 2012; and
 - Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015, published in 2006.
- b) The Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) identifies the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass as a Strategic Highway Improvement. This forms part of a range of transportation initiatives across Northern Ireland to provide, for example, up to 13 bypasses, approximately 85km of dual carriageway, 36km of widened single carriageway, and 11 major junction improvements, which will ultimately contribute to increasing the economic well-being of the Region.
- c) The New Approach to Regional Transportation complements the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and aims to achieve its vision for transportation. One of its main strategic objectives is to 'improve connectivity within the region' by completing the work identified in the current Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) and Strategic Road Improvement (SRI) Programme.
- d) The RSTNTP includes a programme for the implementation of SRIs to remove bottlenecks on the network where lack of capacity is causing serious congestion, and to improve the

environment by providing bypasses of towns situated on the Regional Strategic Transport Network (RSTN), thus relieving the effects of heavy through traffic. As part of this programme, the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme has been identified as a major highway scheme which should commence later in the plan period. The scheme has also been identified in the Consultation Document 'Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015' and 'Investment Delivery Plan for Roads' as a scheme in the current SRI programme.

- e) Progress to construction is subject to clearing statutory procedures, having a satisfactory economic appraisal, and the availability of funding.

Selection of the Preferred Route – Appraisal Procedure

- a) The appraisal of any form of transport investment requires a clear understanding of the objectives, which are to be met, and appropriate criteria to be used to decide whether a proposal meets them. The Government's five objectives for transport (Environment, Safety, Economy, Accessibility and Integration) are pivotal to the appraisal process. There is tension between these objectives, such that proposals may contribute to the achievement of one objective, but work against the achievement of others. The appraisal procedure must allow determination of an appropriate balance between the five objectives.
- b) The study of alternatives for major road schemes is undertaken through a three-stage appraisal procedure. Scheme Assessment Reports act as a summary of the more technical reports generated during the appraisal of road schemes; the level of detail and coverage is appropriate to the type of decision that can reasonably be taken at each stage.
- c) As part of this appraisal process, the Department examined strategies for future improvement of the A24 trunk road corridor around Ballynahinch. At Stage 1, three preliminary corridors were identified; one to the west and two to the east of the town. Based on the assessment findings, the Department identified the shorter of the two eastern corridor options as being preferable, particularly as it followed (in principle) the route of the bypass as indicated in the Ards Down Area Plan 2015 (which was in draft at that time).
- d) At Stage 2, three preliminary route options for the proposed bypass were subsequently identified by the Department within the preferred corridor to the east of Ballynahinch. The three options (the Red Route, Blue Route and Yellow Route) were developed, environmental impacts assessed, costs evaluated, traffic volumes predicted and economic cost benefit analysis carried out. Based on assessment, the Department identified the Red Route as being preferable and the then Minister for Regional Development (Mr Danny Kennedy MLA) announced the Preferred Route on 24th January 2012.
- e) Following the announcement, the Department developed a preliminary design of the scheme (the 'Proposed Scheme') to facilitate a subsequent Stage 3 Scheme Assessment and to inform the preparation of a draft Direction Order, draft Vesting Order and Environmental Statement.

Standard of Road

- a) The Proposed Scheme would provide a bypass of Ballynahinch, approximately 3.14km in length. Aligned to the east of the town, it would be a Category 3A carriageway, as defined in the DMRB TD9/93: 'Highway Link Design', commencing with a roundabout at the existing A24

Belfast Road/A21 Saintfield Road junction and terminating with a roundabout at the existing A24 Drumaness Road/B2 Downpatrick Road junction. It would also include a compact grade-separated junction with the B7 Crossgar Road, a new underpass to accommodate Moss Road, and partial realignments of Ballylone Road and Crabtree Road to facilitate continued access.

- b) It would comprise a single 2-lane carriageway bypass with widening to a Wide Single (2+1) carriageway to provide overtaking opportunities for northbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the southern extent of the scheme, and a Differential Acceleration Lane (DAL) to provide overtaking opportunities for southbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the northern end of the scheme.
 - c) Due to the strategic nature of the bypass, there would be no provision for direct access to adjacent agricultural land, private property or central reserve crossovers.
2. **As an employee of my father's, I am concerned as to the havoc and management issues which the chosen road plans will mean to our farming enterprise. With land at such a scarcity within Northern Ireland, and with the lose of some of my fathers ground as well as other close neighbouring ground which we have taken in conacre for decades, we would be left short of ground close to home which is vital to the upkeep of the family business which have been farming on this site for three generations. The proposed bypass would mean an increase in costs and will cause significant disruption to the farm, animals and workers due to the extra travelling needed to see stock and the expenditure which this would bring.**
- a) The Department recognises that the scale of new road works in a green field location can have substantial impact on farms in terms of injurious affection (including damage to the viability of the farm business), severance and disturbance. It is also accepted that the 'preferred route' for a scheme would impact landowners to differing degrees of severity. The Department believes the proposed layout is the most equitable when viewed in the wider aspect of landowners likely to be affected by the scheme.
 - b) Landowners who suffer a negative impact on their farm business on their lands have a right to compensation for this impact. The Department is unable to comment on the detail of compensation matters, as these would be the subject of negotiation between the objector and Land and Property Services' District Valuer. Depending on the particular circumstances, compensation can be claimed under the following categories (Heads of Claim) (i) the value of the land vested (ii) severance and injurious affection (iii) disturbance and (iv) fees. Additional compensation for severance could arise if the resultant shape of fields or access restrictions makes future farming operations difficult or impractical.
3. **I would request that the bypass avoid the land at [REDACTED] Ballynahinch as well as the handling pen and facilities on the [REDACTED] north of the farm yard.**
- a) The Department, in following the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges assessment process, did consider during scheme development alternative corridors that could have avoided this property. However, they did not perform as well as the preferred corridor when reviewed under the scheme assessment process.

- b) An external cattle handling facility, including a cattle crush, north of [REDACTED] would have to be removed for the scheme. The Department would be keen to continue discussions with the landowner on mitigation measures during and after the construction period.
4. **The bypass would also bring with it big changes in terms of noise and privacy issues as the road would run in such close proximity to our farm yard. This is a matter which I think is unnecessary and something which cannot be ignored.**

Noise

- a) A Noise & Vibration assessment has been undertaken for the scheme and reported in Chapter 13 in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement. Based on this assessment, appropriate mitigation & enhancement measures have been developed and reported in Section 13.7 of the ES.
- b) The noise assessment has determined that in the Baseline year (2019), 523 dwellings would experience an increase in noise level, the vast majority of which (466 or 89%) would be classed as 'Negligible' to 'Moderate' in the short-term, and 1249 dwellings would experience a decrease in noise level.
- c) A Thin Surface Course System (TSCS), otherwise known as low noise surfacing, would be provided on the mainline. Whilst the noise benefits of this surfacing are mainly evident at higher speeds, there would be some benefits at the lower speeds on the Proposed Scheme.
- d) With this mitigation in place, [REDACTED] is predicted to experience an increase in noise levels in the short-term with the Proposed Scheme in operation.
- e) The results of the noise impact assessment indicate that no properties would qualify for noise insulation, under the terms of The Noise Insulation Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995.

Privacy

- a) The Department recognises that the scale of new road works in a rural green field location away from older alignments would result in some loss of privacy at various locations.
- b) The Environmental Statement at Volume 1 Section 11.6.2.1 Table 11.12 and Figures 11.7 & 11.8 accepts that the Proposed Scheme would adversely impact views from nearby properties.
- c) The Department is content that the fencing / boundary treatment, hedging and planting commitments contained in the Environmental Statement at Volume 3 Figure 11.6 (5 sheets) would reduce any loss of privacy when the scheme opens to traffic and through time, the openness of the site would be reduced as the comprehensive landscape planting matures.
5. **If this application is to be decided by public enquiry please take this letter as notice that I wish to give evidence to the enquiry.**

Public Inquiry

- a) Given the nature of the proposals and the likelihood that a number of the objections could not be resolved, the Minister for Regional Development approved the holding of a Public Inquiry to give the Department and the objectors a fair opportunity to be heard and to question the case for and against the scheme. The Public Inquiry will be held in the Millbrook Lodge Hotel, 5 Drumaness Road, Ballynahinch, Co. Down, BT24 8LS, commencing on Tuesday 26 January 2016 at 10am and continuing on such other days as may be determined by the Inspector appointed to conduct the proceedings.

- b) The inquiry procedure is subject to the rules of natural justice. These rules, developed by the Courts, provide that there must be fairness in the conduct of an administrative process and, in particular, each side must have a fair opportunity to be heard and to hear and question the case against them. The inquiry is held before an independent Inspector appointed by the Department. The appointment of an inspector for a specific inquiry takes into account the particular suitability of the Inspector for dealing with the matter in question. The Inspector will determine how the inquiry is to proceed.

DRD TransportNI
Southern Division
11 December 2015

Objection number OB18
Objector's Name
Date submitted..... 17 May 2015
NIMVO plot number

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above objection and responds as follows:

1. I write in relation to the above proposal. I have examined the plans at Ballynahinch Market House. I have lived on the farm at [REDACTED] all my life. I write to ask you to reconsider the proposal.

The Department considers it appropriate to make the following statement before addressing the specifics of your objection.

Development Priorities

- a) The programme to improve transport links in Northern Ireland has been developed and is based on a series of key documents which include:
 - A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, the Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport, published in 1998;
 - Moving Forward: The Northern Ireland Transport Policy Statement, published in 1998;
 - Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025 - Shaping our Future, published in 2002;
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 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-2021, published in 2012; and
 - Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015, published in 2006.
- b) The Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) identifies the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass as a Strategic Highway Improvement. This forms part of a range of transportation initiatives across Northern Ireland to provide, for example, up to 13 bypasses, approximately 85km of dual carriageway, 36km of widened single carriageway, and 11 major junction improvements, which will ultimately contribute to increasing the economic well-being of the Region.
- c) The New Approach to Regional Transportation complements the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and aims to achieve its vision for transportation. One of its main strategic objectives is to 'improve connectivity within the region' by completing the work identified in the current Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) and Strategic Road Improvement (SRI) Programme.
- d) The RSTNTP includes a programme for the implementation of SRIs to remove bottlenecks on the network where lack of capacity is causing serious congestion, and to improve the environment by providing bypasses of towns situated on the Regional Strategic Transport

Network (RSTN), thus relieving the effects of heavy through traffic. As part of this programme, the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme has been identified as a major highway scheme which should commence later in the plan period. The scheme has also been identified in the Consultation Document 'Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015' and 'Investment Delivery Plan for Roads' as a scheme in the current SRI programme.

- e) Progress to construction is subject to clearing statutory procedures, having a satisfactory economic appraisal, and the availability of funding.

Selection of the Preferred Route – Appraisal Procedure

- a) The appraisal of any form of transport investment requires a clear understanding of the objectives, which are to be met, and appropriate criteria to be used to decide whether a proposal meets them. The Government's five objectives for transport (Environment, Safety, Economy, Accessibility and Integration) are pivotal to the appraisal process. There is tension between these objectives, such that proposals may contribute to the achievement of one objective, but work against the achievement of others. The appraisal procedure must allow determination of an appropriate balance between the five objectives.
- b) The study of alternatives for major road schemes is undertaken through a three-stage appraisal procedure. Scheme Assessment Reports act as a summary of the more technical reports generated during the appraisal of road schemes; the level of detail and coverage is appropriate to the type of decision that can reasonably be taken at each stage.
- c) As part of this appraisal process, the Department examined strategies for future improvement of the A24 trunk road corridor around Ballynahinch. At Stage 1, three preliminary corridors were identified; one to the west and two to the east of the town. Based on the assessment findings, the Department identified the shorter of the two eastern corridor options as being preferable, particularly as it followed (in principle) the route of the bypass as indicated in the Ards Down Area Plan 2015 (which was in draft at that time).
- d) At Stage 2, three preliminary route options for the proposed bypass were subsequently identified by the Department within the preferred corridor to the east of Ballynahinch. The three options (the Red Route, Blue Route and Yellow Route) were developed, environmental impacts assessed, costs evaluated, traffic volumes predicted and economic cost benefit analysis carried out. Based on assessment, the Department identified the Red Route as being preferable and the then Minister for Regional Development (Mr Danny Kennedy MLA) announced the Preferred Route on 24th January 2012.
- e) Following the announcement, the Department developed a preliminary design of the scheme (the 'Proposed Scheme') to facilitate a subsequent Stage 3 Scheme Assessment and to inform the preparation of a draft Direction Order, draft Vesting Order and Environmental Statement.

Standard of Road

- a) The Proposed Scheme would provide a bypass of Ballynahinch, approximately 3.14km in length. Aligned to the east of the town, it would be a Category 3A carriageway, as defined in the DMRB TD9/93: 'Highway Link Design', commencing with a roundabout at the existing A24 Belfast Road/A21 Saintfield Road junction and terminating with a roundabout at the existing A24 Drumaness Road/B2 Downpatrick Road junction. It would also include a compact grade-

separated junction with the B7 Crossgar Road, a new underpass to accommodate Moss Road, and partial realignments of Ballylone Road and Crabtree Road to facilitate continued access.

- b) It would comprise a single 2-lane carriageway bypass with widening to a Wide Single (2+1) carriageway to provide overtaking opportunities for northbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the southern extent of the scheme, and a Differential Acceleration Lane (DAL) to provide overtaking opportunities for southbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the northern end of the scheme.
 - c) Due to the strategic nature of the bypass, there would be no provision for direct access to adjacent agricultural land, private property or central reserve crossovers.
2. I own [REDACTED] on the [REDACTED]. All other land I take in conacre. I winter all animals at home on the land I own. All suckler cattle remain at home all year round to ensure that they are given the constant monitoring a breeding herd requires. I test all my cattle for Tuberculosis and Brucellosis on the farm I own as it is the only place with handling facilities to accommodate all my animals. This results in less stress on the animals, better organisation and enhanced bio security.

If I was to test cattle on other land I have no facilities to test them, it will require additional time and transport costs and will increase the risk of diseases spreading to my cattle and sheep and other animals on other farms.

The proposed bypass will leave me without any facilities to test cattle and to monitor calving cows.

As all the cattle are wintered at home, with less land I will now be unable to spread manure on my home land. To comply with the Nitrates Directive I will be required to transport the manure to outfarms which will significantly increase workloads and costs whilst decreasing the profitability of my farm.

- a) The Department recognises that the scale of new road works in a green field location can have substantial impact on farms in terms of injurious affection (including damage to the viability of the farm business), severance and disturbance. It is also accepted that the 'preferred route' for a scheme would impact landowners to differing degrees of severity. The Department believes the proposed layout is the most equitable when viewed in the wider aspect of landowners likely to be affected by the scheme.
- b) Landowners who suffer a negative impact on their farm business on their lands have a right to compensation for this impact. The Department is unable to comment on the detail of compensation matters, as these would be the subject of negotiation between the objector and Land and Property Services' District Valuer. Depending on the particular circumstances, compensation can be claimed under the following categories (Heads of Claim) (i) the value of the land vested (ii) severance and injurious affection (iii) disturbance and (iv) fees. Additional compensation for severance could arise if the resultant shape of fields or access restrictions makes future farming operations difficult or impractical.

3. I would ask that the road is moved further North to allow me to retain as much of my farm as possible and the handling facilities which are used by both [REDACTED]

The handling pen North of the farm yard is of extreme importance to me as it provides handling facilities without the need to put the animals into the sheds thus decreasing stress on the animals and having to walk animals up and down the road which requires assistance from another person when I am home alone.

The fields on both sides of the pen are used as quarantine fields for dosing, calving, testing and for isolation facilities as required by DARD. They are of the utmost importance to my farming enterprise.

- a) The Department, in following the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges assessment process, did consider during scheme development alternative corridors that could have avoided this property. However, they did not perform as well as the preferred corridor when reviewed under the scheme assessment process.
 - b) In 2014, the Department responded to a similar request to realign the Proposed Scheme in the vicinity of Moss Road. This was investigated and following an additional site investigation, it was concluded that the Proposed Scheme was in the optimum location.
 - c) The Department acknowledges that an external cattle handling facility, including a cattle crush, north of [REDACTED] would have to be removed for the scheme. The Department would be keen to continue discussions with the landowner on mitigation measures during and after the construction period.
4. If this application is to be decided by public enquiry please take this letter as notice that I wish to give evidence to the enquiry.

Public Inquiry

- a) Given the nature of the proposals and the likelihood that a number of the objections could not be resolved, the Minister for Regional Development approved the holding of a Public Inquiry to give the Department and the objectors a fair opportunity to be heard and to question the case for and against the scheme. The Public Inquiry will be held in the Millbrook Lodge Hotel, 5 Drumaness Road, Ballynahinch, Co. Down, BT24 8LS, commencing on Tuesday 26 January 2016 at 10am and continuing on such other days as may be determined by the Inspector appointed to conduct the proceedings.
- b) The inquiry procedure is subject to the rules of natural justice. These rules, developed by the Courts, provide that there must be fairness in the conduct of an administrative process and, in particular, each side must have a fair opportunity to be heard and to hear and question the case against them. The inquiry is held before an independent Inspector appointed by the Department. The appointment of an inspector for a specific inquiry takes into account the particular suitability of the Inspector for dealing with the matter in question. The Inspector will determine how the inquiry is to proceed.

Objection number OB19
Objector's Name
Date submitted..... 19 May 2015
NIMVO plot number

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above objection and responds as follows:

1. We wish to object to the bypass design as presented in the Proposed Scheme Report - March 2015.

The Department considers it appropriate to make the following statement before addressing the specifics of your objection.

Development Priorities

- a) The programme to improve transport links in Northern Ireland has been developed and is based on a series of key documents which include:
- A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, the Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport, published in 1998;
 - Moving Forward: The Northern Ireland Transport Policy Statement, published in 1998;
 - Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025 - Shaping our Future, published in 2002;
 - Regional Development Strategy 2035 – Building a Better Future, published in 2012;
 - Regional Transportation Strategy for Northern Ireland 2002-2012, published in 2002;
 - Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future – A New Approach to Regional Transportation, published in 2012;
 - Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan 2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2005-2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2008-2018, published in 2008;
 - Investment Delivery Plan (IDP) for Roads, published in 2008;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-2021, published in 2012; and
 - Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015, published in 2006.
- b) The Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) identifies the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass as a Strategic Highway Improvement. This forms part of a range of transportation initiatives across Northern Ireland to provide, for example, up to 13 bypasses, approximately 85km of dual carriageway, 36km of widened single carriageway, and 11 major junction improvements, which will ultimately contribute to increasing the economic well-being of the Region.
- c) The New Approach to Regional Transportation complements the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and aims to achieve its vision for transportation. One of its main strategic objectives is to '*improve connectivity within the region*' by completing the work identified in the current Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) and Strategic Road Improvement (SRI) Programme.
- d) The RSTNTP includes a programme for the implementation of SRIs to remove bottlenecks on the network where lack of capacity is causing serious congestion, and to improve the environment by providing bypasses of towns situated on the Regional Strategic Transport

Network (RSTN), thus relieving the effects of heavy through traffic. As part of this programme, the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme has been identified as a major highway scheme which should commence later in the plan period. The scheme has also been identified in the Consultation Document 'Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015' and 'Investment Delivery Plan for Roads' as a scheme in the current SRI programme.

- e) Progress to construction is subject to clearing statutory procedures, having a satisfactory economic appraisal, and the availability of funding.

Selection of the Preferred Route – Appraisal Procedure

- a) The appraisal of any form of transport investment requires a clear understanding of the objectives, which are to be met, and appropriate criteria to be used to decide whether a proposal meets them. The Government's five objectives for transport (Environment, Safety, Economy, Accessibility and Integration) are pivotal to the appraisal process. There is tension between these objectives, such that proposals may contribute to the achievement of one objective, but work against the achievement of others. The appraisal procedure must allow determination of an appropriate balance between the five objectives.
- b) The study of alternatives for major road schemes is undertaken through a three-stage appraisal procedure. Scheme Assessment Reports act as a summary of the more technical reports generated during the appraisal of road schemes; the level of detail and coverage is appropriate to the type of decision that can reasonably be taken at each stage.
- c) As part of this appraisal process, the Department examined strategies for future improvement of the A24 trunk road corridor around Ballynahinch. At Stage 1, three preliminary corridors were identified; one to the west and two to the east of the town. Based on the assessment findings, the Department identified the shorter of the two eastern corridor options as being preferable, particularly as it followed (in principle) the route of the bypass as indicated in the Ards Down Area Plan 2015 (which was in draft at that time).
- d) At Stage 2, three preliminary route options for the proposed bypass were subsequently identified by the Department within the preferred corridor to the east of Ballynahinch. The three options (the Red Route, Blue Route and Yellow Route) were developed, environmental impacts assessed, costs evaluated, traffic volumes predicted and economic cost benefit analysis carried out. Based on assessment, the Department identified the Red Route as being preferable and the then Minister for Regional Development (Mr Danny Kennedy MLA) announced the Preferred Route on 24th January 2012.
- e) Following the announcement, the Department developed a preliminary design of the scheme (the 'Proposed Scheme') to facilitate a subsequent Stage 3 Scheme Assessment and to inform the preparation of a draft Direction Order, draft Vesting Order and Environmental Statement.

Standard of Road

- a) The Proposed Scheme would provide a bypass of Ballynahinch, approximately 3.14km in length. Aligned to the east of the town, it would be a Category 3A carriageway, as defined in the DMRB TD9/93: 'Highway Link Design', commencing with a roundabout at the existing A24 Belfast Road/A21 Saintfield Road junction and terminating with a roundabout at the existing

- A24 Drumaness Road/B2 Downpatrick Road junction. It would also include a compact grade-separated junction with the B7 Crossgar Road, a new underpass to accommodate Moss Road, and partial realignments of Ballylone Road and Crabtree Road to facilitate continued access.
- b) It would comprise a single 2-lane carriageway bypass with widening to a Wide Single (2+1) carriageway to provide overtaking opportunities for northbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the southern extent of the scheme, and a Differential Acceleration Lane (DAL) to provide overtaking opportunities for southbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the northern end of the scheme.
 - c) Due to the strategic nature of the bypass, there would be no provision for direct access to adjacent agricultural land, private property or central reserve crossovers.
2. The design fails to address our main concerns expressed previously in written correspondence and during several meetings with roads service representatives, specifically how the detrimental consequences of the bypass on our home and surrounding land will be mitigated.

Environmental Mitigation

- a) The Department has developed comprehensive landscaping proposals to integrate the Proposed Scheme into the environment; these are shown on Figure 11.6 (Sheets 1-5) in Volume 3 of the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass Environmental Statement.
 - b) The Department would wish to explore the types of planting / boundary treatment further with the Landowner.
3. The following are questions copied from our letter dated 11th November 2009 and again 19th April 2010.

- How will the impact of traffic noise be minimised?
- How will the visual impact of road be reduced?
- Will access be maintained between my land and our neighbours land?
- Our private and secure property will be opened up along a new boundary how will this be addressed?

Noise

- a) A Noise & Vibration assessment has been undertaken for the scheme and reported in Chapter 13 in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement. Based on this assessment, appropriate mitigation & enhancement measures have been developed and reported in Section 13.7 of the ES.
- b) The noise assessment has determined that in the Baseline year (2019), 523 dwellings would experience an increase in noise level, the vast majority of which (466 or 89%) would be classed as 'Negligible' to 'Moderate' in the short-term, and 1249 dwellings would experience a decrease in noise level.

- c) A Thin Surface Course System (TSCS), otherwise known as low noise surfacing, would be provided on the mainline. Whilst the noise benefits of this surfacing are mainly evident at higher speeds, there would be some benefits at the lower speeds on the Proposed Scheme.
- d) The Department accepts that even with this mitigation in place, [REDACTED] is predicted to experience a Moderate increase in noise levels in the long-term with the Proposed Scheme in operation.
- e) The results of the noise impact assessment indicate that no properties would qualify for noise insulation, under the terms of The Noise Insulation Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995.

Landscape & Visual Effect

- a) The impact of the Proposed Scheme on the Landscape and associated Visual Effects is reported in Chapter 11 in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement. The scope of this assessment included both desktop study and field survey.
- b) The Department recognises that a scheme of this scale would inevitably have an impact on the landscape and individual visual receptors. However, the Department is content that the fencing / boundary treatment, hedging and planting commitments contained in the Environmental Statement at Volume 3 Figure 11.6 (5 sheets) would reduce the landscape and visual impact when the scheme opens to traffic and through time, the openness of the site would be reduced as the comprehensive landscape planting matures.
- c) With specific reference to Figure 11.6, Sheet 3 in Volume 3 of the ES, the proposed landscape treatment to the rear of [REDACTED] is a stockproof fence with native tree and hedgerow planting.
- d) The Department would wish to explore proposed types of planting / boundary treatment further with the Landowner.

Access and Accommodation Works

- a) Accommodation Works are works which the Department is prepared to carry out during a construction contract to accommodate adjoining land owners and to reduce the impact of the road scheme. Accommodation works can be carried out only by agreement with a landowner. The Department is keen to continue the dialogue with the landowner to discuss the scheme and agree a comprehensive schedule of accommodation works and mitigation measures including the examination of access to neighbouring land.

Privacy and Security

- a) The Department recognises that the scale of new road works in a rural green field location would result in some loss of privacy at various locations.
- b) The Department is content that the fencing / boundary treatment, hedging and planting commitments contained in the Environmental Statement at Volume 3 Figure 11.6 (5 sheets) would reduce any loss of privacy when the scheme opens to traffic and through time, the openness of the site would be reduced as the comprehensive landscape planting matures

- c) As mentioned above, with specific reference to Figure 11.6, Sheet 3 in Volume 3 of the ES, the proposed landscape treatment to the rear of [REDACTED] is a stockproof fence with native tree and hedgerow planting.
 - d) The Department would wish to explore proposed types of planting / boundary treatment options further with the Landowner in an attempt to reduce any loss of privacy and security.
4. The Environmental Statement describes the likely impact on our property as 'Major Adverse' or 'Very Large Adverse', yet there is a complete lack of any screening between our property and the bypass. The proposed bypass is situated relatively close to rear of our property and will reduce the privacy and enjoyment of our personal outdoor space. Furthermore the current design makes no effort to reduce the effects of vehicle lights, noise and vibration on our dwelling.

Screening

- a) As previously mentioned, the impact of the Proposed Scheme on the Landscape and associated Visual Effects is reported in Chapter 11 in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement. The scope of this assessment included both desktop study and field survey.
- b) The Department recognises that a scheme of this scale would inevitably have an impact on the landscape and individual visual receptors. However, the Department is content that the fencing / boundary treatment, hedging and planting commitments contained in the Environmental Statement at Volume 3 Figure 11.6 (5 sheets) would reduce the landscape and visual impact when the scheme opens to traffic and through time, the openness of the site would be reduced as the comprehensive landscape planting matures.
- c) With specific reference to Figure 11.6, Sheet 3 in Volume 3 of the ES, the proposed landscape treatment to the rear of [REDACTED] is a stockproof fence with native tree and hedgerow planting.
- d) The Department would wish to explore proposed boundary treatment options further with the Landowner.

Privacy & Enjoyment

- a) The Department recognises that the scale of new road works in a rural green field location would result in some loss of privacy at various locations.
- b) The Department is content that the fencing / boundary treatment, hedging and planting commitments contained in the Environmental Statement at Volume 3 Figure 11.6 (5 sheets) would reduce any loss of privacy and enjoyment when the scheme opens to traffic and through time, the openness of the site would be reduced as the comprehensive landscape planting matures.
- c) As mentioned above, with specific reference to Figure 11.6, Sheet 3 in Volume 3 of the ES, the proposed landscape treatment to the rear of [REDACTED] is a stockproof fence with native tree and hedgerow planting.
- d) The Department would wish to explore proposed boundary treatment options further with the Landowner in an attempt to reduce any perceived loss of privacy and enjoyment.

Vehicle Lights

- a) The Department accepts that nuisance caused by vehicle headlights could detract from the living conditions currently enjoyed by the occupiers of neighbouring houses. The Department is content that the fencing/boundary treatment, hedging and planting commitments contained in the Environmental Statement at Volume 3 Figure 11.6 (5 sheets) would create visual barriers between traffic using the new bypass and the established housing.
- b) With specific reference to Figure 11.6, Sheet 3 in Volume 3 of the ES, the proposed landscape treatment to the rear of [REDACTED] is a stockproof fence with native tree and hedgerow planting.
- c) The Department would also note that there should be no direct headlight glare from the bypass on [REDACTED] as the road would be aligned parallel to the rear boundary, rather than facing the property directly.

Noise

- a) A Noise & Vibration assessment has been undertaken for the scheme and reported in Chapter 13 in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement. Based on this assessment, appropriate mitigation & enhancement measures have been developed and reported in Section 13.7 of the ES.
- b) The noise assessment has determined that in the Baseline year (2019), 523 dwellings would experience an increase in noise level, the vast majority of which (466 or 89%) would be classed as 'Negligible' to 'Moderate' in the short-term, and 1249 dwellings would experience a decrease in noise level.
- c) A Thin Surface Course System (TSCS), otherwise known as low noise surfacing, would be provided on the mainline. Whilst the noise benefits of this surfacing are mainly evident at higher speeds, there would be some benefits at the lower speeds on the Proposed Scheme.
- d) The Department accepts that even with this mitigation in place, [REDACTED] is predicted to experience a Moderate increase in noise levels in the long-term with the Proposed Scheme in operation.
- e) The results of the noise impact assessment indicate that no properties would qualify for noise insulation, under the terms of The Noise Insulation Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995.

Vibration

- a) As mentioned above, a Noise & Vibration assessment has been undertaken for the scheme and reported in Chapter 13 in Volume 1 of the published Environmental Statement (ES). Based on this assessment, appropriate mitigation & enhancement measures have been developed and reported in Section 13.7 of the ES.
- b) Specifically, the vibration assessment is reported in sub-section 13.6.4 in Volume 1 of the published ES. Vibration levels from traffic are low, even in properties close to heavily-trafficked roads. Extensive research has shown that traffic-induced vibrations do not cause significant damage to buildings. The highest levels of traffic-induced vibration are generated

by irregularities in the road, and this is unlikely to be an important consideration for new roads. Empirical data suggests that vibration levels would be less than 0.5mm/s at the majority of properties. With reference to BS7385 and allowing for normal circumstances, this vibration level is not of a severity that would cause any structural damage to a property.

5. We would be grateful if the following proposal could be considered.

A large earth bund and/or tree planting to the immediate rear boundary of dwelling is not suitable as it will alter our existing skyline and block sun to patio and sunroom at rear of dwelling, we would therefore ask if the bypass vertical alignment could be dropped generally between [REDACTED] any additional excavated material used to construct a 3.5m to 1.5m earth bund between [REDACTED]

A more substantial bund (approx. 4m above finished road level, up to 7m above existing ground level) could also be constructed between [REDACTED] with ground to eastern side of this bund levelled to tie in with adjacent field ground levels where practical. The placement of this significant volume of material at this location should keep cost of transporting material within site boundary to a minimum and should avoid expensive material off-site disposal costs. Actual height of bund will depend on existing ground level but in order to provide an adequate screen it should finish 4-5m above FRL while still maintaining existing skyline to rear of dwelling (west and northwest) in full.

It would appear the area of vested land can accommodate our proposal however we will permit further earthworks on our land if necessary to maximise effectiveness of this work.

Other properties on Hall Road will also benefit from construction of a bund in this area.

Woodland Screen Planting to east side of bypass between [REDACTED] will further reduce the night time disturbance of headlights on property and livestock.

- a) The Department would be keen to continue consultation to try and reduce/mitigate the impact of the Proposed Scheme.
- b) Some tree planting to the eastern slopes is envisaged for the Proposed Scheme; the Department will consider augmenting this.
- c) The Department has considered the request to drop the alignment and construct a bund, and would comment as follows:
 - i) Dropping the vertical alignment would result in significant impacts on adjacent properties/landowners, increased land take, increased material requiring disposal, and additional engineering [drainage] constraints. The impacts, whilst reducing, would extend for significant distances north and south of the change an impact on a number of landowners.
 - ii) Placing significant bunds on top of cuttings (in effect loading the cutting) would require more detailed investigation, and may necessitate a separating strip/bench and thus advancing the earthwork outline (to include the new bund) some 15 – 20m (20 – 25m in total) closer to the property. However the Department is developing potential options

in regard to a bund that could be put in place and as previously discussed, would seek to discuss these with you in detail.

Woodland Screen Planting

- a) As mentioned previously, the impact of the Proposed Scheme on the Landscape and associated Visual Effects is reported in Chapter 11 in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement. The scope of this assessment included both desktop study and field survey.
 - b) As also mentioned, the Department recognises that a scheme of this scale would inevitably have an impact on the landscape and individual visual receptors. However, the Department is content that the fencing / boundary treatment, hedging and planting commitments contained in the Environmental Statement at Volume 3 Figure 11.6 (5 sheets) would reduce the landscape and visual impact when the scheme opens to traffic and through time, the openness of the site would be reduced as the comprehensive landscape planting matures.
 - c) As noted within sub-section 11.7.1.3 in Volume 1 of the ES, the landscape planting design has been specifically developed to reflect the rural and open setting to the east of the proposed bypass.
 - d) In contrast, for the western side of the bypass, Volume 3 of the Ards Down Area Plan 2015 identifies three zoned housing areas under Housing Policy HOU 2, located adjacent to the indicative 'Road Proposal' alignment of the proposed Ballynahinch Bypass. These include Proposal BH 12, BH 13, and BH 14. Key design considerations for these zoned housing lands have been specified in the Area Plan, which for all sites includes *"the boundary of the site adjacent to the proposed bypass to be landscaped with an 8-10 metre belt of trees of native species to provide screening for the development and help integrate it into the surrounding countryside"*.
 - e) Nevertheless, the Department would wish to explore proposed boundary treatment options further with the Landowner.
6. **An updated photomontage and other Environmental Statement Figures would be useful in order to confirm suitability of any proposed bund or planting. Further suggestions and guidance from bypass consultant engineers would also be much appreciated.**

Ongoing Dialogue

- a) The Department and their technical advisors are content to meet with you to illustrate, explain and discuss impacts of mitigation measures being considered.
7. **Finally, the existing bypass proposal appears to cut off access between our farmland and neighbouring farmyard/land. At present a river defines our existing north and east boundary and it may be necessary to access some of our land via our front garden driveway which is not ideal. Moving livestock between our and neighbours land will also be significantly complicated by construction of the bypass. We would be grateful if a means of connecting our land to the neighbouring southwest farmland could be incorporated into bypass design.**

Access and Accommodation Works

a) Accommodation Works are works which the Department is prepared to carry out during a construction contract to accommodate adjoining land owners and to reduce the impact of the road scheme. Accommodation works can be carried out only by agreement with a landowner. The Department is keen to continue the dialogue with the landowner to discuss the scheme and agree a comprehensive schedule of accommodation works and mitigation measures including the examination of a possible access to neighbouring land.

8. We would appreciate if you would address our ongoing concerns at your earliest convenience.

Ongoing Dialogue

b) As mentioned previously, the Department and their technical advisors are content to meet with you to illustrate, explain and discuss impacts of mitigation measures being considered.

DRD TransportNI
Southern Division
11 December 2015

Objection number OB20
Objector's Name B. Clarke [REDACTED]
Date submitted 11 May 2015
NIMVO plot number [REDACTED]

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above objection and responds as follows:

1. We represent [REDACTED] in respect of the above Road Scheme and write to you to formally object to the scheme and to request that you reconsider your proposals in respect of [REDACTED]

The Department considers it appropriate to make the following statement before addressing the specifics of your objection.

Development Priorities

- a) The programme to improve transport links in Northern Ireland has been developed and is based on a series of key documents which include:
- A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, the Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport, published in 1998;
 - Moving Forward: The Northern Ireland Transport Policy Statement, published in 1998;
 - Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025 - Shaping our Future, published in 2002;
 - Regional Development Strategy 2035 – Building a Better Future, published in 2012;
 - Regional Transportation Strategy for Northern Ireland 2002-2012, published in 2002;
 - Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future – A New Approach to Regional Transportation, published in 2012;
 - Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan 2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2005-2015, published in 2005;
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 - Investment Delivery Plan (IDP) for Roads, published in 2008;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-2021, published in 2012; and
 - Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015, published in 2006.
- b) The Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) identifies the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass as a Strategic Highway Improvement. This forms part of a range of transportation initiatives across Northern Ireland to provide, for example, up to 13 bypasses, approximately 85km of dual carriageway, 36km of widened single carriageway, and 11 major junction improvements, which will ultimately contribute to increasing the economic well-being of the Region.
- c) The New Approach to Regional Transportation complements the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and aims to achieve its vision for transportation. One of its main strategic objectives is to '*improve connectivity within the region*' by completing the work identified in the current Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) and Strategic Road Improvement (SRI) Programme.
- d) The RSTNTP includes a programme for the implementation of SRIs to remove bottlenecks on the network where lack of capacity is causing serious congestion, and to improve the

environment by providing bypasses of towns situated on the Regional Strategic Transport Network (RSTN), thus relieving the effects of heavy through traffic. As part of this programme, the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme has been identified as a major highway scheme which should commence later in the plan period. The scheme has also been identified in the Consultation Document '*Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015*' and '*Investment Delivery Plan for Roads*' as a scheme in the current SRI programme.

- e) Progress to construction is subject to clearing statutory procedures, having a satisfactory economic appraisal, and the availability of funding.

Selection of the Preferred Route – Appraisal Procedure

- a) The appraisal of any form of transport investment requires a clear understanding of the objectives, which are to be met, and appropriate criteria to be used to decide whether a proposal meets them. The Government's five objectives for transport (Environment, Safety, Economy, Accessibility and Integration) are pivotal to the appraisal process. There is tension between these objectives, such that proposals may contribute to the achievement of one objective, but work against the achievement of others. The appraisal procedure must allow determination of an appropriate balance between the five objectives.
- b) The study of alternatives for major road schemes is undertaken through a three-stage appraisal procedure. Scheme Assessment Reports act as a summary of the more technical reports generated during the appraisal of road schemes; the level of detail and coverage is appropriate to the type of decision that can reasonably be taken at each stage.
- c) As part of this appraisal process, the Department examined strategies for future improvement of the A24 trunk road corridor around Ballynahinch. At Stage 1, three preliminary corridors were identified; one to the west and two to the east of the town. Based on the assessment findings, the Department identified the shorter of the two eastern corridor options as being preferable, particularly as it followed (in principle) the route of the bypass as indicated in the Ards Down Area Plan 2015 (which was in draft at that time).
- d) At Stage 2, three preliminary route options for the proposed bypass were subsequently identified by the Department within the preferred corridor to the east of Ballynahinch. The three options (the Red Route, Blue Route and Yellow Route) were developed, environmental impacts assessed, costs evaluated, traffic volumes predicted and economic cost benefit analysis carried out. Based on assessment, the Department identified the Red Route as being preferable and the then Minister for Regional Development (Mr Danny Kennedy MLA) announced the Preferred Route on 24th January 2012.
- e) Following the announcement, the Department developed a preliminary design of the scheme (the 'Proposed Scheme') to facilitate a subsequent Stage 3 Scheme Assessment and to inform the preparation of a draft Direction Order, draft Vesting Order and Environmental Statement.

Standard of Road

- a) The Proposed Scheme would provide a bypass of Ballynahinch, approximately 3.14km in length. Aligned to the east of the town, it would be a Category 3A carriageway, as defined in the DMRB TD9/93: 'Highway Link Design', commencing with a roundabout at the existing A24

Belfast Road/A21 Saintfield Road junction and terminating with a roundabout at the existing A24 Drumaness Road/B2 Downpatrick Road junction. It would also include a compact grade-separated junction with the B7 Crossgar Road, a new underpass to accommodate Moss Road, and partial realignments of Ballylone Road and Crabtree Road to facilitate continued access.

- b) It would comprise a single 2-lane carriageway bypass with widening to a Wide Single (2+1) carriageway to provide overtaking opportunities for northbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the southern extent of the scheme, and a Differential Acceleration Lane (DAL) to provide overtaking opportunities for southbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the northern end of the scheme.
- c) Due to the strategic nature of the bypass, there would be no provision for direct access to adjacent agricultural land, private property or central reserve crossovers.

2. **Your proposals will have a sever impact on [REDACTED]. He will loose his entrance, a farm yard and a number or agricultural buildings, which will mean that he cannot continue at this location.**

- a) The Department recognises that the scale of new road works in a green field location can have substantial impact on farms in terms of injurious affection (including damage to the viability of the farm business), severance and disturbance. It is also accepted that the 'preferred route' for a scheme would impact landowners to differing degrees of severity. The Department believes the proposed layout is the most equitable when viewed in the wider context of landowners likely to be affected by the scheme.
- b) Landowners who suffer a negative impact on their farm business have a right to compensation for this impact. The Department is unable to comment on the detail of compensation matters as these would be the subject of negotiation between the objector and Land and Property Services' District Valuer. Depending on the particular circumstances, compensation can be claimed under the following categories (Heads of Claim) (i) the value of the land vested (ii) severance and injurious affection (iii) disturbance and (iv) fees. Additional compensation for severance could arise if the resultant shape of fields or access restrictions makes future farming operations difficult or impractical.
- c) Compensation following compulsory acquisition of land is based on the principle of equivalence. The landowner should be no worse off in financial terms after the acquisition than before. Land and Property Services' District Valuer acts on behalf of the Department to negotiate with the landowner and/or his agent to determine compensation for land and property lost to a new road, compensation for the injurious affection, devaluation of property and compensation for other pertinent issues. In the event that the District Valuer and the landowner or his agent are unable to agree the compensation due, the subject of compensation can be referred to the Lands Tribunal for determination.

3. In the first instance we would ask you to consider a minor realignment of the scheme so as to avoid [REDACTED]

In the event that you will not alter your design we would ask you to outline your proposals for the reinstatement of the [REDACTED]

- a) The Department, in following the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges assessment process, did consider during scheme development alternative corridors that could have avoided this property. However, they did not perform as well as the preferred corridor (which also aligns with the Ards Down Area Plan 2015) when assessed under the scheme assessment process. Of the three options assessed within the preferred corridor, the preferred alignment affected the fewest number of properties.
- b) The Department accepts that the "Preferred Route" for a scheme would impact landowners to differing degrees of severity. The Department believes that the road proposal presented in the draft Statutory Orders is the most equitable when viewed in the wider context of landowners likely to be affected by the scheme.

4. It is [REDACTED] intention to acquire an alternative site and to [REDACTED]. You will appreciate the difficulty in replicating the site, with the specialist facilities, permissions and operating consents at another location. This would also be a lengthy process, probably taking up to 2 year to resolve.

To achieve a satisfactory and timeous move, it would be necessary to identify and secure a suitable site, have assistance in obtaining the necessary consents and have compensation to finance the new development. Although some preliminary discussions have taken place, nothing significantly has happened. We would therefore request that [REDACTED] be given priority status and professional and financial assistance to achieve a move within the anticipated timeframe. It is vital that his new premises are up and running prior to possession being taken of his existing facility.

We therefore request up front finance to facilitate the sourcing of a new site and rebuilding of the facilities.

- a) The Department appreciates the impact of the Proposed Scheme and the position your Client is in.
- b) Permission to replicate the existing facilities on an alternative site would be subject to the Planning process and would be a matter for the Planning Department of Newry, Mourne & Down District Council, however the Department is happy to provide assistance, as appropriate, in this process.
- c) The Department is keen to continue consultation, and the opportunity to provide assistance in this regard.
5. We would request a complete list of your proposed accommodation measures in relation to [REDACTED].

Accommodation Works

- a) Accommodation works can comprise such things as the provision of fences (temporary or permanent), hedges, walls, gates and provision of new or altered access to the road network. It can also include rationalisation of drainage and water supply layout. The Department has an explanatory leaflet on Accommodation Works on their website as follows: - <https://www.drdni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/drd/roads-service-northern-ireland-guide-to-accommodation-works.pdf>.
6. At this stage [REDACTED] objects to your proposals however will consider any revised proposals and of course is willing to meet to discuss the scheme and any proposed accommodation measures.

Accommodation Works

- a) Accommodation Works are works which the Department is prepared to carry out during a road contract to accommodate adjoining land owners and to reduce the impact of the road scheme. Accommodation works can be carried out only by agreement with a landowner. The Department is keen to continue the dialogue with the landowner to discuss the scheme and agree a comprehensive schedule of accommodation works and mitigation measures, including the examination of access to neighbouring land.

DRD TransportNI
Southern Division
11 December 2015

Objection number OB21
Objector's Name
Date submitted 16 April 2015
NIMVO plot number N/A

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above objection and responds as follows:

1. Yesterday having visited the Exhibition at The Market House and now studied in detail the Environmental Statement, I should like to comment on the proposed plan.

I have lived at the same address for 38 years and therefore am very well aware of the traffic problems associated with the town of Ballynahinch.

The Department considers it appropriate to make the following statement before addressing the specifics of your objection.

Development Priorities

- a) The programme to improve transport links in Northern Ireland has been developed and is based on a series of key documents which include:
- A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, the Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport, published in 1998;
 - Moving Forward: The Northern Ireland Transport Policy Statement, published in 1998;
 - Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025 - Shaping our Future, published in 2002;
 - Regional Development Strategy 2035 – Building a Better Future, published in 2012;
 - Regional Transportation Strategy for Northern Ireland 2002-2012, published in 2002;
 - Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future – A New Approach to Regional Transportation, published in 2012;
 - Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan 2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2005-2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2008-2018, published in 2008;
 - Investment Delivery Plan (IDP) for Roads, published in 2008;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-2021, published in 2012; and
 - Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015, published in 2006.
- b) The Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) identifies the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass as a Strategic Highway Improvement. This forms part of a range of transportation initiatives across Northern Ireland to provide, for example, up to 13 bypasses, approximately 85km of dual carriageway, 36km of widened single carriageway, and 11 major junction improvements, which will ultimately contribute to increasing the economic well-being of the Region.
- c) The New Approach to Regional Transportation complements the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and aims to achieve its vision for transportation. One of its main strategic objectives is to '*improve connectivity within the region*' by completing the work identified in the current Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) and Strategic Road Improvement (SRI) Programme.

- d) The RSTNTP includes a programme for the implementation of SRIs to remove bottlenecks on the network where lack of capacity is causing serious congestion, and to improve the environment by providing bypasses of towns situated on the Regional Strategic Transport Network (RSTN), thus relieving the effects of heavy through traffic. As part of this programme, the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme has been identified as a major highway scheme which should commence later in the plan period. The scheme has also been identified in the Consultation Document '*Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015*' and '*Investment Delivery Plan for Roads*' as a scheme in the current SRI programme.
- e) Progress to construction is subject to clearing statutory procedures, having a satisfactory economic appraisal, and the availability of funding.

Selection of the Preferred Route – Appraisal Procedure

- a) The appraisal of any form of transport investment requires a clear understanding of the objectives, which are to be met, and appropriate criteria to be used to decide whether a proposal meets them. The Government's five objectives for transport (Environment, Safety, Economy, Accessibility and Integration) are pivotal to the appraisal process. There is tension between these objectives, such that proposals may contribute to the achievement of one objective, but work against the achievement of others. The appraisal procedure must allow determination of an appropriate balance between the five objectives.
- b) The study of alternatives for major road schemes is undertaken through a three-stage appraisal procedure. Scheme Assessment Reports act as a summary of the more technical reports generated during the appraisal of road schemes; the level of detail and coverage is appropriate to the type of decision that can reasonably be taken at each stage.
- c) As part of this appraisal process, the Department examined strategies for future improvement of the A24 trunk road corridor around Ballynahinch. At Stage 1, three preliminary corridors were identified; one to the west and two to the east of the town. Based on the assessment findings, the Department identified the shorter of the two eastern corridor options as being preferable, particularly as it followed (in principle) the route of the bypass as indicated in the Ards Down Area Plan 2015 (which was in draft at that time).
- d) At Stage 2, three preliminary route options for the proposed bypass were subsequently identified by the Department within the preferred corridor to the east of Ballynahinch. The three options (the Red Route, Blue Route and Yellow Route) were developed, environmental impacts assessed, costs evaluated, traffic volumes predicted and economic cost benefit analysis carried out. Based on assessment, the Department identified the Red Route as being preferable and the then Minister for Regional Development (Mr Danny Kennedy MLA) announced the Preferred Route on 24th January 2012.
- e) Following the announcement, the Department developed a preliminary design of the scheme (the 'Proposed Scheme') to facilitate a subsequent Stage 3 Scheme Assessment and to inform the preparation of a draft Direction Order, draft Vesting Order and Environmental Statement.

Standard of Road

- a) The Proposed Scheme would provide a bypass of Ballynahinch, approximately 3.14km in length. Aligned to the east of the town, it would be a Category 3A carriageway, as defined in the DMRB TD9/93: 'Highway Link Design', commencing with a roundabout at the existing A24 Belfast Road/A21 Saintfield Road junction and terminating with a roundabout at the existing A24 Drumaness Road/B2 Downpatrick Road junction. It would also include a compact grade-separated junction with the B7 Crossgar Road, a new underpass to accommodate Moss Road, and partial realignments of Ballylone Road and Crabtree Road to facilitate continued access.
 - b) It would comprise a single 2-lane carriageway bypass with widening to a Wide Single (2+1) carriageway to provide overtaking opportunities for northbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the southern extent of the scheme, and a Differential Acceleration Lane (DAL) to provide overtaking opportunities for southbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the northern end of the scheme.
 - c) Due to the strategic nature of the bypass, there would be no provision for direct access to adjacent agricultural land, private property or central reserve crossovers.
2. Therefore, I am, and have always been, in total favour of a bypass for Ballynahinch, however I simply cannot understand the inclusion of the elaborate Crossgar Road Junction in the proposed plan. Of the three proposed Junctions, the Crossgar one entails the greatest alterations, vesting and demolishing of buildings. This appears to be totally out of proportion with the questionable advantages and at a totally unwarranted cost.

The B7 Crossgar Road is a quiet country road, and anyone approaching Ballynahinch is heading for the town itself, as Crossgar already has the A7 road, north to Belfast, and South to Downpatrick and Newcastle.

The inclusion of an access from the B7 Crossgar Road onto the bypass is totally unnecessary and could seriously jeopardize the whole project, in terms of planning, vesting, cost, and worst of all, delay.

To add to this view, I would quote from your Statement (page vii)"Construction of the Crossgar junction, with associated lighting and embankments and cuttings, would be the most visually significant feature of the Proposed Scheme." (in layman's terms, an "eye sore"), which is another reason for my objection.

Therefore in my opinion, the B7 Crossgar Road should bridge over the Bypass with no direct access onto the bypass thus avoiding all the unnecessary work outlined in your proposal.

- a) A public consultation event during Stage 2 (route options) was held on Thursday 12 November 2009 in the Market House, Ballynahinch. The aim was to inform the local population, elected representatives and other interested parties on the current stage of development. This event also enabled views and information to be collected from the public and their representatives.

- b) Following this event, the Department received representation from an elected representative and local residents requesting that the Department investigate the inclusion of a junction between the B7 Crossgar Road and the proposed bypass. The Department undertook this investigation.
- c) Several types of junction were tested at this location and all enhanced the scheme. The compact grade-separated junction option was selected as it had no cross-carriageway manoeuvres and could be designed to integrate well within the available topography.
- d) The proposed grade-separated junction at Crossgar Road would allow free-flow traffic on the A24 mainline and provide a connection between the proposed bypass and the local road network for traffic travelling to/from the communities on the eastern side of Ballynahinch and the surrounding area.
- e) The proposed junction would also improve access to the bypass for future developments in the area.
- f) It is estimated that approximately 1,300 vehicles per day would use the grade-separated junction at Crossgar Road in the proposed year of Opening.
- g) A detailed traffic & economic assessment was undertaken using cost benefit analysis techniques, in accordance with Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, to quantify the effects of the Proposed Scheme. A range of sensitivity tests was also undertaken.
- h) The results of the economic assessment indicate that the Proposed Scheme represents good value for money with an overall Benefit to Cost Ratio of 2.146.

DRD TransportNI
Southern Division
11 December 2015

Objection number OB22
Objector's Name
Date submitted..... 04 May 2015
NIMVO plot number N/A

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above objection and responds as follows:

1. I agree with the Ballynahinch Bypass in principle, however I have the following comments to add

The Department considers it appropriate to make the following statement before addressing the specifics of your objection.

Development Priorities

- a) The programme to improve transport links in Northern Ireland has been developed and is based on a series of key documents which include:
- A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, the Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport, published in 1998;
 - Moving Forward: The Northern Ireland Transport Policy Statement, published in 1998;
 - Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025 - Shaping our Future, published in 2002;
 - Regional Development Strategy 2035 – Building a Better Future, published in 2012;
 - Regional Transportation Strategy for Northern Ireland 2002-2012, published in 2002;
 - Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future – A New Approach to Regional Transportation, published in 2012;
 - Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan 2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2005-2015, published in 2005;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2008-2018, published in 2008;
 - Investment Delivery Plan (IDP) for Roads, published in 2008;
 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-2021, published in 2012; and
 - Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015, published in 2006.
- b) The Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) identifies the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass as a Strategic Highway Improvement. This forms part of a range of transportation initiatives across Northern Ireland to provide, for example, up to 13 bypasses, approximately 85km of dual carriageway, 36km of widened single carriageway, and 11 major junction improvements, which will ultimately contribute to increasing the economic well-being of the Region.
- c) The New Approach to Regional Transportation complements the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and aims to achieve its vision for transportation. One of its main strategic objectives is to *'improve connectivity within the region'* by completing the work identified in the current Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) and Strategic Road Improvement (SRI) Programme.
- d) The RSTNTP includes a programme for the implementation of SRIs to remove bottlenecks on the network where lack of capacity is causing serious congestion, and to improve the environment by providing bypasses of towns situated on the Regional Strategic Transport

Network (RSTN), thus relieving the effects of heavy through traffic. As part of this programme, the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme has been identified as a major highway scheme which should commence later in the plan period. The scheme has also been identified in the Consultation Document '*Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015*' and '*Investment Delivery Plan for Roads*' as a scheme in the current SRI programme.

- e) Progress to construction is subject to clearing statutory procedures, having a satisfactory economic appraisal, and the availability of funding.

Selection of the Preferred Route – Appraisal Procedure

- a) The appraisal of any form of transport investment requires a clear understanding of the objectives, which are to be met, and appropriate criteria to be used to decide whether a proposal meets them. The Government's five objectives for transport (Environment, Safety, Economy, Accessibility and Integration) are pivotal to the appraisal process. There is tension between these objectives, such that proposals may contribute to the achievement of one objective, but work against the achievement of others. The appraisal procedure must allow determination of an appropriate balance between the five objectives.
- b) The study of alternatives for major road schemes is undertaken through a three-stage appraisal procedure. Scheme Assessment Reports act as a summary of the more technical reports generated during the appraisal of road schemes; the level of detail and coverage is appropriate to the type of decision that can reasonably be taken at each stage.
- c) As part of this appraisal process, the Department examined strategies for future improvement of the A24 trunk road corridor around Ballynahinch. At Stage 1, three preliminary corridors were identified; one to the west and two to the east of the town. Based on the assessment findings, the Department identified the shorter of the two eastern corridor options as being preferable, particularly as it followed (in principle) the route of the bypass as indicated in the Ards Down Area Plan 2015 (which was in draft at that time).
- d) At Stage 2, three preliminary route options for the proposed bypass were subsequently identified by the Department within the preferred corridor to the east of Ballynahinch. The three options (the Red Route, Blue Route and Yellow Route) were developed, environmental impacts assessed, costs evaluated, traffic volumes predicted and economic cost benefit analysis carried out. Based on assessment, the Department identified the Red Route as being preferable and the then Minister for Regional Development (Mr Danny Kennedy MLA) announced the Preferred Route on 24th January 2012.
- e) Following the announcement, the Department developed a preliminary design of the scheme (the 'Proposed Scheme') to facilitate a subsequent Stage 3 Scheme Assessment and to inform the preparation of a draft Direction Order, draft Vesting Order and Environmental Statement.

Standard of Road

- a) The Proposed Scheme would provide a bypass of Ballynahinch, approximately 3.14km in length. Aligned to the east of the town, it would be a Category 3A carriageway, as defined in the DMRB TD9/93: 'Highway Link Design', commencing with a roundabout at the existing A24 Belfast Road/A21 Saintfield Road junction and terminating with a roundabout at the existing

A24 Drumaness Road/B2 Downpatrick Road junction. It would also include a compact grade-separated junction with the B7 Crossgar Road, a new underpass to accommodate Moss Road, and partial realignments of Ballylone Road and Crabtree Road to facilitate continued access.

- b) It would comprise a single 2-lane carriageway bypass with widening to a Wide Single (2+1) carriageway to provide overtaking opportunities for northbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the southern extent of the scheme, and a Differential Acceleration Lane (DAL) to provide overtaking opportunities for southbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the northern end of the scheme.
- c) Due to the strategic nature of the bypass, there would be no provision for direct access to adjacent agricultural land, private property or central reserve crossovers.

2. (1.) DUAL CARRIAGEWAY

Since the bypass will include a grade separated junction with the B7 Crossgar Road, why not make the bypass a dual carriageway between the Saintfield and Downpatrick Road roundabouts?

DC would enable long overtaking opportunities in both directions and "future proof" the road should traffic volumes increase

The roundabouts would terminate the dual carriageway and indicate the change in road category.

- a) The Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) provides standards for the design of highways and takes account of future/anticipated traffic growth. The predicted traffic figures are dependent on existing traffic flow numbers and on predicted growth scenarios. The predicted traffic flows in the proposed 2019 year of Opening are firmly within the *single carriageway* Opening Year Economic Flow Range. The currently predicted 2033 (Design Year) traffic figures remain well within this flow range also (they would have to more than double to consider DC).
- b) Overtaking opportunities would be provided on the proposed bypass in the form of a southbound Differential Acceleration Lane (DAL) to the south of the proposed Saintfield Road Roundabout, and a northbound Wide Single 2+1 carriageway to the proposed Downpatrick Road Roundabout.

3. **Please consider adding 2+1 lanes for a short distance southbound on the A24 Drumaness Road leaving the roundabout.**

northbound on the A24 Belfast Road (remove hard shoulders, HQ surface whole existing road width, add new markings to achieve this)

- a) The Proposed Scheme has been designed in accordance with the design standards contained within the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) together with TransportNI Policy and Procedure Guidelines (RSPPG). 2+1 (DAL and WS2+1) lanes were considered during initial scheme development, however DMRB design guide TD 70/08 "*Design of Wide*

Single 2+1 Roads" places restrictive demands on the spacing of access that may be provided directly onto these types of carriageway.

4. As a further road improvement, outside of scope of the bypass, please consider providing alternating 2+1 road the whole way to Carryduff.

- a) This suggested improvement falls outside the scope of the Proposed Scheme. Your comments have been passed to the relevant personnel within TransportNI for consideration.

5. (2.) DOWNPATRICK ROAD ROUNDABOUT

Please consider realigning the B175 Spa Road as a 5th arm onto the roundabout, there is space to do this between Drumaness and Church Roads unlike Crabtree Road.

- a) The Department considered the realignment of Spa Road to create a 5-arm roundabout at Downpatrick Road as part of the Proposed Scheme. On the basis of the engineering, environmental and operational assessments, it was concluded that the 5-arm roundabout did not improve on the proposed 4-arm roundabout arrangement.
- b) The results of the assessments indicate that both the 4-arm roundabout layout and the 5-arm roundabout layout would accommodate the predicted volumes of traffic, but that the 4-arm roundabout performed marginally better than the 5-arm roundabout in terms of operational capacity and junction delay costs.
- c) Based on the results of the assessments, it was concluded that the significant additional investment cost associated with realigning Spa Road could not be justified by the predicted level of benefit to strategic road users.

6. (3.) LIGHTING

Please specify White LED lighting for the roundabouts and the intermediate junction, as has been done for the A8 Larne Dualling Scheme and the Public Realm improvement in Ballynahinch Town Centre.

As an additional improvement, please upgrade all current yellow SOX and orange SON lighting along the route via the town (current A24) between the two roundabouts to white LED, to match that of the town centre.

This is my submission

- a) The proposed street lighting for the scheme is described in Section 4.7 in Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement.
- b) The Department's policy is to provide LED lighting as part of all future road schemes, including this Proposed Scheme.
- c) The additional suggested improvement of upgrading the street lighting on the A24 through the town centre falls outside the scope of the Proposed Scheme. However, your comments have been passed to the relevant personnel within TransportNI for consideration.

DRD TransportNI
Southern Division
11 December 2015

Objection number OB23
Objector's Name
Date submitted..... 07 May 2015
NIMVO plot number N/A

The Department has considered the correspondence in the above objection and responds as follows:

1. **I spent some time looking at your display of the By-pass in Ballynahinch and had a good conversation with one of your attendants, While I agree the By-pass is needed I have a few reservations as to the proposed plan as it is.**

The Department considers it appropriate to make the following statement before addressing the specifics of your objection.

Development Priorities

- a) The programme to improve transport links in Northern Ireland has been developed and is based on a series of key documents which include:
 - A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, the Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport, published in 1998;
 - Moving Forward: The Northern Ireland Transport Policy Statement, published in 1998;
 - Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025 - Shaping our Future, published in 2002;
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 - Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-2021, published in 2012; and
 - Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015, published in 2006.
- b) The Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) identifies the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass as a Strategic Highway Improvement. This forms part of a range of transportation initiatives across Northern Ireland to provide, for example, up to 13 bypasses, approximately 85km of dual carriageway, 36km of widened single carriageway, and 11 major junction improvements, which will ultimately contribute to increasing the economic well-being of the Region.
- c) The New Approach to Regional Transportation complements the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and aims to achieve its vision for transportation. One of its main strategic objectives is to '*improve connectivity within the region*' by completing the work identified in the current Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) and Strategic Road Improvement (SRI) Programme.
- d) The RSTNTP includes a programme for the implementation of SRIs to remove bottlenecks on the network where lack of capacity is causing serious congestion, and to improve the

environment by providing bypasses of towns situated on the Regional Strategic Transport Network (RSTN), thus relieving the effects of heavy through traffic. As part of this programme, the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass scheme has been identified as a major highway scheme which should commence later in the plan period. The scheme has also been identified in the Consultation Document '*Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015*' and '*Investment Delivery Plan for Roads*' as a scheme in the current SRI programme.

- e) Progress to construction is subject to clearing statutory procedures, having a satisfactory economic appraisal, and the availability of funding.

Selection of the Preferred Route – Appraisal Procedure

- a) The appraisal of any form of transport investment requires a clear understanding of the objectives, which are to be met, and appropriate criteria to be used to decide whether a proposal meets them. The Government's five objectives for transport (Environment, Safety, Economy, Accessibility and Integration) are pivotal to the appraisal process. There is tension between these objectives, such that proposals may contribute to the achievement of one objective, but work against the achievement of others. The appraisal procedure must allow determination of an appropriate balance between the five objectives.
- b) The study of alternatives for major road schemes is undertaken through a three-stage appraisal procedure. Scheme Assessment Reports act as a summary of the more technical reports generated during the appraisal of road schemes; the level of detail and coverage is appropriate to the type of decision that can reasonably be taken at each stage.
- c) As part of this appraisal process, the Department examined strategies for future improvement of the A24 trunk road corridor around Ballynahinch. At Stage 1, three preliminary corridors were identified; one to the west and two to the east of the town. Based on the assessment findings, the Department identified the shorter of the two eastern corridor options as being preferable, particularly as it followed (in principle) the route of the bypass as indicated in the Ards Down Area Plan 2015 (which was in draft at that time).
- d) At Stage 2, three preliminary route options for the proposed bypass were subsequently identified by the Department within the preferred corridor to the east of Ballynahinch. The three options (the Red Route, Blue Route and Yellow Route) were developed, environmental impacts assessed, costs evaluated, traffic volumes predicted and economic cost benefit analysis carried out. Based on assessment, the Department identified the Red Route as being preferable and the then Minister for Regional Development (Mr Danny Kennedy MLA) announced the Preferred Route on 24th January 2012.
- e) Following the announcement, the Department developed a preliminary design of the scheme (the 'Proposed Scheme') to facilitate a subsequent Stage 3 Scheme Assessment and to inform the preparation of a draft Direction Order, draft Vesting Order and Environmental Statement.

Standard of Road

- a) The Proposed Scheme would provide a bypass of Ballynahinch, approximately 3.14km in length. Aligned to the east of the town, it would be a Category 3A carriageway, as defined in the DMRB TD9/93: 'Highway Link Design', commencing with a roundabout at the existing A24

Belfast Road/A21 Saintfield Road junction and terminating with a roundabout at the existing A24 Drumaness Road/B2 Downpatrick Road junction. It would also include a compact grade-separated junction with the B7 Crossgar Road, a new underpass to accommodate Moss Road, and partial realignments of Ballylone Road and Crabtree Road to facilitate continued access.

- b) It would comprise a single 2-lane carriageway bypass with widening to a Wide Single (2+1) carriageway to provide overtaking opportunities for northbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the southern extent of the scheme, and a Differential Acceleration Lane (DAL) to provide overtaking opportunities for southbound traffic exiting the new roundabout at the northern end of the scheme.
- c) Due to the strategic nature of the bypass, there would be no provision for direct access to adjacent agricultural land, private property or central reserve crossovers.

2. (1) I thought the purpose of this by-pass was to get the A24 traffic passed Ballynahinch.

- a) The specific objectives of the Proposed Scheme include reducing journey times and improving journey time reliability for strategic A24 traffic and to contribute positively to transport economic efficiency.
- b) Examination of the predicted changes in trip patterns due to the proposed bypass indicates that the bypass would attract a significant volume of through-traffic, with a corresponding reduction in traffic flows in the town centre.

3. (2) Did the planners take into account the increase in traffic on the A7 Downpatrick road, why would traffic from Ardglass, Downpatrick, Kilmore and the traffic that use a maze of back roads at present not head straight for the new road instead of fighting there way through Crossgar and Saintfield as they do at present, this will put a lot more traffic on the A7 and can it cope with the increase.

- a) In line with DMRB guidance, the study area for the Proposed Scheme was defined as the area within which link flows would be significantly affected by the implementation of the scheme, noting that the area should be drawn as close to the scheme as possible to provide the information necessary to assess the scheme.
- b) In September 2013, a detailed programme of data collection surveys was undertaken around Ballynahinch. These surveys included a manual classified traffic count at the A24 Drumaness Road / B2 Downpatrick Road junction to the south of Ballynahinch.
- c) The results from these surveys have allowed the definition of existing traffic conditions at key locations in the area, and have assisted in defining future conditions following the provision of the Proposed Scheme.

4. (3) When the A7 traffic gets to the new round about joining it to the A24 the A7 traffic has right of way and the A24 traffic has a new bottle neck.

- a) As part of the traffic & economic assessment of the Proposed Scheme, operating conditions at the proposed Downpatrick Road Roundabout were assessed using industry standard computer models.
- b) The results of the assessments indicate that the proposed roundabout has sufficient capacity to accommodate the predicted demand in traffic. The proposed roundabout also has sufficient capacity to accommodate additional traffic demand from adjacent routes, should this occur.

5. (4) Half way down the new road we have a junction with traffic joining a single carriage road, another bottle neck? when I mention this to your rep. he quoted very low figures of joining traffic .if the figures are so low why are we having this junction? I know of no other by-pass with a similar lay out.

- a) The proposed grade-separated junction at Crossgar Road would allow free-flow traffic on the A24 mainline and provide a connection between the proposed bypass and the local road network for traffic travelling to/from the communities on the eastern side of Ballynahinch and the surrounding area.
- b) The proposed junction would also improve access to the bypass for future developments in the area.
- c) It is estimated that approximately 1,300 vehicles per day would use the grade-separated junction at Crossgar Road in the proposed year of Opening.

6. (5) I also think the traffic heading to the M1 from the East of the county would come to Ballynahinch so that when they get to the Temple instead of fighting there way across the A24 it is a simple left turn.

These are just a few of my ramblings, now go and get the thing built before someone find a badgers den or something and you have to build another by-pass to get round it.

- a) The Department acknowledges the uncertainty surrounding the planning of a major road scheme. Spending beyond the current budget period on schemes, such as the Ballynahinch Bypass, will depend on the funding made available by the Northern Ireland Executive in future budget periods.
- b) Progression of the bypass, which represents a potential investment in the range of £40 to £50million, onto TransportNI's Construction Programme remains subject to the bypass proposal clearing these statutory procedures, continuing to have a satisfactory economic appraisal and is dependent on funding made available in future budget settlements. However, it is essential to complete planning of the scheme to prepare for implementation.