

Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015

Consultation Document



**Please respond by
Friday 29 September 2006
to:**

Network Development Branch
Roads Service Headquarters
Clarence Court
10-18 Adelaide Street
Belfast
BT2 8GB



An Agency within the Department for

**Regional
Development**

www.drdni.gov.uk

1. Background

1.1 Strategic Road Improvements (SRIs) are large capital schemes (>£1m) to develop and improve Northern Ireland's motorway and trunk road network. The purpose of this document is to consult key stakeholders on the make-up of an expanded SRI programme, made possible by the Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland (ISNI) which was developed by the Strategic Investment Board and announced in December 2005.

[\[http://www.sibni.org/index/information\]](http://www.sibni.org/index/information)

- 1.2 ISNI envisages an investment of £1,400m in SRIs in the period up to 2015. This is around £400m more than the current SRI programme which emanated from the Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTN TP) published in March 2005. ISNI envisages the additional funding to be available towards the end of the 2015 period.
- 1.3 The Strategic Road Network is Northern Ireland's motorway and trunk road network, comprising the 5 Key Transport Corridors (KTCs), 4 Link Corridors, the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Corridors and the remainder of the trunk road network (see Annex E). The RSTN TP identified schemes to develop this network up to the end of 2015.
- 1.4 Consultation on the RSTN TP revealed strong support for SRIs. In a largely rural region, the strategic road network is seen as essential to facilitate the transport of people, goods and services and to support economic development across Northern Ireland.
- 1.5 While ISNI gives a very good basis for medium-term planning, it is important to note that once the expanded SRI programme is finalised, each scheme will be progressed on a measure-by-measure basis subject to:
- **detailed economic appraisal;**
 - **clearing the relevant statutory procedures such as environmental assessment, planning and land acquisition (each of which may require public inquiries); and**
 - **the availability of funds through the normal budgetary processes.**
- 1.6 The costs of all schemes in this document are estimated at 2005 prices, to match the price base used by ISNI.

2. Current SRI Programme

2.1 The current SRI programme comprises schemes on the motorway and trunk road network that are either at construction, preparation or forward planning stage.

- **Construction Programme** - Schemes already under construction.
- **Preparation Pool** - High priority schemes that Roads Service is progressing through the statutory procedures of Environmental Appraisal, Direction Order

(equivalent to planning approval) and Land Vesting. Preparation Pool schemes are expected to be implemented within the next 5 years or so (subject to clearing the statutory procedures, having a satisfactory economic appraisal and the availability of funds at the time).

- **Forward Planning Schedule** - Schemes that perform well when assessed at feasibility stage using the 5 national criteria and which are expected to be implemented within the next 10 years or so (subject to clearing the statutory procedures, having a satisfactory economic appraisal and the availability of funds at the time).

2.2 A list of all schemes in the current SRI programme is given in Annex A.

3. Expanded SRI Programme

3.1 ISNI envisages an additional investment in SRIs of around £400m, becoming available towards the end of the 2015 period.

3.2 However, SRIs have long lead times – at least 6 years – from the time they are included in a programme until the work starts on site. This is because extensive feasibility studies are needed to select the preferred route, there is a requirement to undertake environmental assessments, ground surveys and economic appraisals as well as to progress the schemes through the statutory procedures of environmental statement, planning approval, land acquisition and procurement. So it is important to start planning early.

3.3 Roads Service has developed a proposed list of additional SRIs to make up the Expanded SRI Programme and this is given in Annex B. The description of any particular scheme should not be taken to represent the line of the scheme on the ground – this will be developed later once the scheme enters the Preparation Pool.

3.4 The proposed Expanded SRI programme, like the RSTN TP, is based on the guidance set out in the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and the Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS). The selection is based on the Government's five key criteria of environment, safety, economy, accessibility and integration. It builds on the extensive work undertaken for the RSTN Transport Plan and aims to address bottlenecks on the Strategic Network, giving priority to the KTCs, next the link corridors and then the trunk roads.

3.5 In developing the list, it was essential to work within the funding envisaged by ISNI. This meant the list had to be constrained, and other possible SRI schemes which performed less well in the assessment, but which are not affordable within the ISNI funding envisaged to 2015, are given in Annex C. These are given for information, but are **not** proposed for the expanded programme at this time.

4. Distribution

4.1 The proposed list is reasonably well balanced across Northern Ireland, with good coverage in the West (which has 48% by value of the additional schemes) and the North-West (39%); this is on top of the £250m Derry to

Dungiven scheme added to the existing programme last December. For example, the proposed additional SRIs include a significant new route from Londonderry – Strabane – Sion Mills, bypasses of Enniskillen, Ballykelly and Fivemiletown and improvements to the A32 route from Enniskillen to Omagh.

- 4.2 But there are also schemes necessary to deal with bottlenecks and safety concerns on very highly trafficked routes in the east. These include a £50m scheme to provide a flyover junction carrying Westlink over York Street, as well as dualling on the A26 from Coleraine to Ballymoney and the A3 from Portadown to Richill. On the key A1 route from Belfast to Dublin, there would be a new £45m link between the M1 and Hillsborough to take through traffic past Sprucefield, and 4 additional flyover junctions on the existing dual carriageway between Hillsborough and Loughbrickland which, in addition to the 4 already programmed, will turn it into an expressway with no movements across the central reserve and a continuous central safety barrier.

5 Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

- 5.1 In consideration of its obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Department determined that a full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) should be carried out for the Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan. The EQIA was published in June 2005. In addition to this the Department also considered New Targeting Social Needs (TSN), Rural Proofing and Health Impact Assessments. Copies of the EQIA document are available on the DRD website

[http://www.drdni.gov.uk/DRDwww_Consultations/].

- 5.2 A Section 75 Screening Analysis has been completed for the Expanded SRI Programme. In developing the proposed additions to the SRI programme and completing the screening process, Roads Service has taken into account the equality work already carried out for the RDS, RTS and RSTN TP. It has concluded that a further full EQIA is not required as the proposed programme does not affect the previous assessments. A copy of the Section 75 Screening Analysis Form can be obtained by contacting Roads Service at the address or given in section 7.3 or alternatively from the DRD and Road Service websites which are also given in section 7.3.

6 Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 6.1 The Department has developed a draft Environmental Report for consultation alongside the consultation of the Expanded SRI Programme. A copy of this draft report can be obtained by contacting Roads Service at the address given in section 7.3 or alternatively from the DRD and Road Service websites which are also given in section 7.3.

7 Consultation

7.1 We are interested in your views on the proposed list of additional SRIs given in Annex B.

In particular, we welcome responses to the following questions:

1. Are you generally in favour of the additional SRIs proposed in Annex B, and are there any particular schemes in it that you strongly support?
2. Are there any of additional SRIs proposed in Annex B that you definitely do not support, and if so what are your reasons?
3. Are there any schemes not listed in Annex B that you would like to see included in an expanded SRI programme? Given that we have to work within the funding envisaged by ISNI, which scheme or schemes would you remove from the list in order to make room for your additional proposals.
4. Do you agree with the Section 75 Screening conclusion? If not please give details.

7.2 In responding, please note two very important points:

- This element of ISNI and this particular consultation is in relation to **major improvement schemes (i.e. > £1m) on the motorway and trunk network**. In this consultation we will not be able to take account of suggestions for schemes on other roads, nor comments in relation to other types of work.
- The overall funding for this type of work is envisaged in ISNI which was the subject of consultation in 2005. In this consultation we will not be able to take account of suggestions that would vary the amount of funds envisaged by ISNI for SRIs. There will be an opportunity to consider that aspect again when ISNI is reviewed by the SIB in the next year or so.

7.3 The consultation period begins on the 31 July and **responses must be returned by Friday 29 September 2006**. Responses should be addressed to;

Network Development Branch
Roads Service Headquarters
Clarence Court
10-18 Adelaide Street
Belfast
BT2 8GB

Copies of this Consultation Document and the Draft Environmental Report are also available on the Roads Service and DRD Websites

www.drdni.gov.uk www.roadnsi.gov.uk

Should you require this document in an accessible format such as Braille, audio-tape, large print, minority ethnic language etc please contact the above address.

Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015

Annex List

Annex A

All Schemes in Current SRI Programme

Annex B

Proposed additional SRI Schemes to be added to the programme subject to consultation

Annex C

List of schemes that performed well in the assessment but are not affordable with the ISNI funding envisaged to 2015.

Annex D

Map showing locations of schemes in Annexes A, B and C

Annex E

Map showing the Regional Strategic Transport Network

ALL SCHEMES IN CURRENT SRI PROGRAMME

Scheme	Description	Status	Cost £m
Eastern Seaboard Corridor			
M2 Widening (Sandyknowes to Greencastle)	Widen 5.4km of motorway to 3 lanes from Sandyknowes to Greencastle, replace 3 overbridges, and provide 3 lanes northbound over Greencastle interchange.	PP	£20m
M1 / Westlink Upgrade	Widen 2.6km of motorway and 1.4km of dual carriageway to 3+3 lanes between Blacks Road and Divis Street, including 2 underpass junctions.	CP	£104m
A1 Junction Improvements	Provide flyovers at 4 key junctions on A1.	PP	£16m
A1 L'brickland to Beech Hill	Upgrade 9.0km of single carriageway to standard dual carriageway, including hard shoulders.	CP	£25m
A1 Beech Hill to Cloghogue	12.1km of high standard dual carriageway with no central reserve crossings, including hard shoulders and 5 grade separated junctions.	PP	£109m
A1 Newry to Dundalk Link Road (NI section)	4.3km of high standard dual carriageway with no central reserve crossings, including hard shoulders and 1 grade separated junction (+10km in ROI).	CP	£33m
North Western Corridor			
A2 Widening - Buncrana Rd	Widening from Pennyburn roundabout to Skeoge Link section & from Skeoge Link to Border section.	FPS	£18m
Skeoge Link, Londonderry	New 1.9km dual carriageway link road.	PP	£5m
A514 Crescent Link	Widen 1.9km of single carriageway to standard dual carriageway (completes dualling of Crescent Link).	PP	£5m
A6 Derry to Dungiven	30km of dual carriageway from outskirts of Derry to Southeast of Dungiven (inc. Dungiven Bypass).	FPS	£250m
A6 Dualling: Randalstown - Castledawson	14.0km of high standard dual carriageway with no gaps in the central reserve and flyover-type junctions.	PP	£70m
M2 Crosskennan - slip roads at Antrim Hospital	Provision of two on-slips onto M2	CP	£3m
Northern Corridor			
A2 Broadbridge Dualling	6.75km of existing route to standard dual carriageway.	PP	£25m
A26 Glarryford - A44 Dualling	7km of standard dual carriageway.	FPS	£33m
A26 / M2 Ballee Road East	1.5km of dual carriageway passing under the Larne Road Roundabout, with 2 slip roads and 0.5km of side road.	PP	£7m

Annex A

Scheme	Description	Status	Cost £m
Western Corridor			
A5/N14 Strabane - Lifford Link	Link between N14/ N15 in Lifford and A5 in Strabane (NI section).	FPS	£3m
A5 Omagh Throughpass - Stage 3	2.4km single carriageway extension to Omagh Throughpass.	CP	£10m
South Western Corridor			
A4 Dungannon to Ballygawley	20.5km of high standard dual carriageway from Dungannon to Ballygawley Roundabout with no central reserve crossings and 6 flyover-type junctions.	PP	£102m
A4 / A5 Improvements	A4 Annaghilla: 3.8km of single carriageway realignment with eastbound 2+1 lane. A5 Tullyvar: 3.1km of single carriageway realignment with climbing lanes each way.	PP	£16m
A4 Henry Street/Sligo Road	Provision of additional traffic lane on approach to junction	PP	£2m
Belfast Metropolitan Transport Corridors			
A55 Widening at Knock Road, Belfast	Widen 0.6km of existing two lane single carriageway to four lane carriageway between Clarawood and Kings Road	PP	£4m
A2 Sydenham Bypass	Widen 2.5km of dual to 3 lanes	FPS	£29m
A2 Widening, Greenisland	Widen 2.4km of single carriageway to four lane carriageway between Jordanstown and Seapark.	PP	£39m
Link Corridors and Trunk Roads			
A20 Newtownards Southern Distributor	New 2.0km link road from Blair Mayne Rd South to Comber Rd to Portaferry Rd in conjunction with Castlebawn Development	PP	£3m
A20 Newtownards Frederick Street Link	New 0.3km single carriageway link road	PP	£2m
A24 Ballynahinch Bypass	4.1km single carriageway bypass with climbing lanes	FPS	£12m
A28 Armagh East	1.5 km single carriageway link road from Portadown Rd. to Newry Rd	FPS	£6m
A29 Carland Bridge Improvement	1.3km of single carriageway realignment	PP	£4m
A29 Cookstown Eastern Distributor	2.8 km single carriageway distributor road between Dungannon Rd. roundabout and Old Coagh Rd	FPS	£13m
A31 Magherafelt Bypass	3.0km single carriageway bypass linking Moneymore Rd. and Castledawson Rd	FPS	£13m

Annex A

Scheme	Description	Status	Cost £m
A32 Cherrymount Link	New 1.1km single carriageway link road	PP	£4m
A3 Armagh North and West link	New 3.8km single carriageway link road to Portadown	PP	£28m

Notes:

- 1: CP Construction Programme
PP Preparation Pool (within 5 years)
FPS Forward Planning Schedule (5 to 10 years)

**PROPOSED ADDITIONAL SRI SCHEMES TO BE ADDED TO
PROGRAMME SUBJECT TO CONSULTATION**

Scheme	Description	Cost £m
Eastern Seaboard Corridor		
M2 / A8(M) Sandyknowes Junction	Improvement to link the A8 Larne to the M2 motorway without being delayed at the Sandyknowes roundabout.	£10m
Westlink / York St flyover	Provide grade separated junction at the last remaining part of Westlink which has a traffic signalled junction.	£50m
M1 Slip Roads at Blacks Road	2 west facing on/off slips at the M1 Blacks Road junction, to relieve local roads carrying traffic to and from the M1 (west).	£5m
M1 / A1 Sprucefield Bypass	Approx 4km of high standard dual carriageway from M1 motorway to A1 at Hillsborough, bypassing Sprucefield Retail Centre and including flyover at Hillsborough roundabout.	£45m
A1 Junctions	4 additional flyover junctions and central safety fence to upgrade the A1 between Sprucefield & Loughbrickland to a higher standard dual with no at-grade crossings.	£22m
Northern Corridor		
A2 Ballykelly Bypass	6km of 2+1 single carriageway to bypass Ballykelly.	£30m
A26 - Ballymoney to Coleraine	7km of standard dual carriageway between Ballymoney (Portrush Road roundabout) and Coleraine (Windyhall)	£35m
A26 Nutt's Corner to M1 Moirá	Provision of 2+1 carriageway widening schemes.	£15m
Western Corridor		
A5 Londonderry to Victoria Bridge.	30km of new route to 2 +1 standard, including bypasses of New Buildings, Maghermason, Strabane and Sion Mills.	£130m
South Western Corridor		
A4 Enniskillen Southern Bypass	3.2km of 2+1 single carriageway to bypass Enniskillen.	£18m
A4 Fivemiletown Bypass	3.4km of 2+1 single carriageway to bypass Fivemiletown.	£12m
Link Corridors and Trunk Roads		
A3 Portadown – Richill Dualling	6.5km of standard dual carriageway.	£33m
A32 Dromore - Irvinestown - Enniskillen	Programme of single carriageway improvement and realignment schemes including 2+1 sections.	£10m

£415m

**LIST OF SCHEMES THAT PERFORMED WELL IN THE ASSESSMENT BUT
NOT AFFORDABLE WITHIN ISNI FUNDING ENVISAGED TO 2015**

Scheme	Description	Location	Cost £m
Eastern Seaboard Corridor			
M1 Widening Sprucefield to Black's road	Provision of additional lane in both directions, possibly using hard shoulder running.	Eastern Seaboard Corridor	£18m
North Western Corridor			
Queens Quay, Londonderry.	0.5 km of 4 Lane urban road to widen the last remaining 2 lane section between Craigavon Bridge and Culmore Roundabout.	North Western Corridor	£10m
Northern Corridor			
Greysteel Bypass	5.5km single carriageway bypass of Greysteel, linking to the proposed Ballykelly Bypass.	Northern Corridor	£27m
Western Corridor			
A5 Omagh Bypass	Outer bypass of Omagh for strategic through traffic, to single carriageway 2+1 standard.	Western Corridor	£22m
South Western Corridor			
A4 Improvements	Series of 2 + 1 widening schemes	South Western Corridor	£10m
Link Corridors and Trunk Roads			
Newry Southern Relief Road	Strategic link from Warrenpoint to the A1, avoiding Newry City Centre. Proposed measures to be developed and costed in feasibility study.	Trunk road	Not yet known
A3 Killylea Road to Monaghan Road Armagh	2+1 single carriageway extension of the Armagh North and West link scheme, currently in the Preparation Pool.	Link Corridor	£6m
A3 Northway Junction	Improvement of key junction for Portadown local traffic and through traffic to Armagh.	Link Corridor	£8m

ANNEX D

- Legend**
- Schemes in current SRI Programme
 - Proposed additional SRI schemes to be added to programme subject to consultation
 - Schemes that performed well in the assessment
 - Schemes that are not affordable within ISNI funding envisaged to 2015



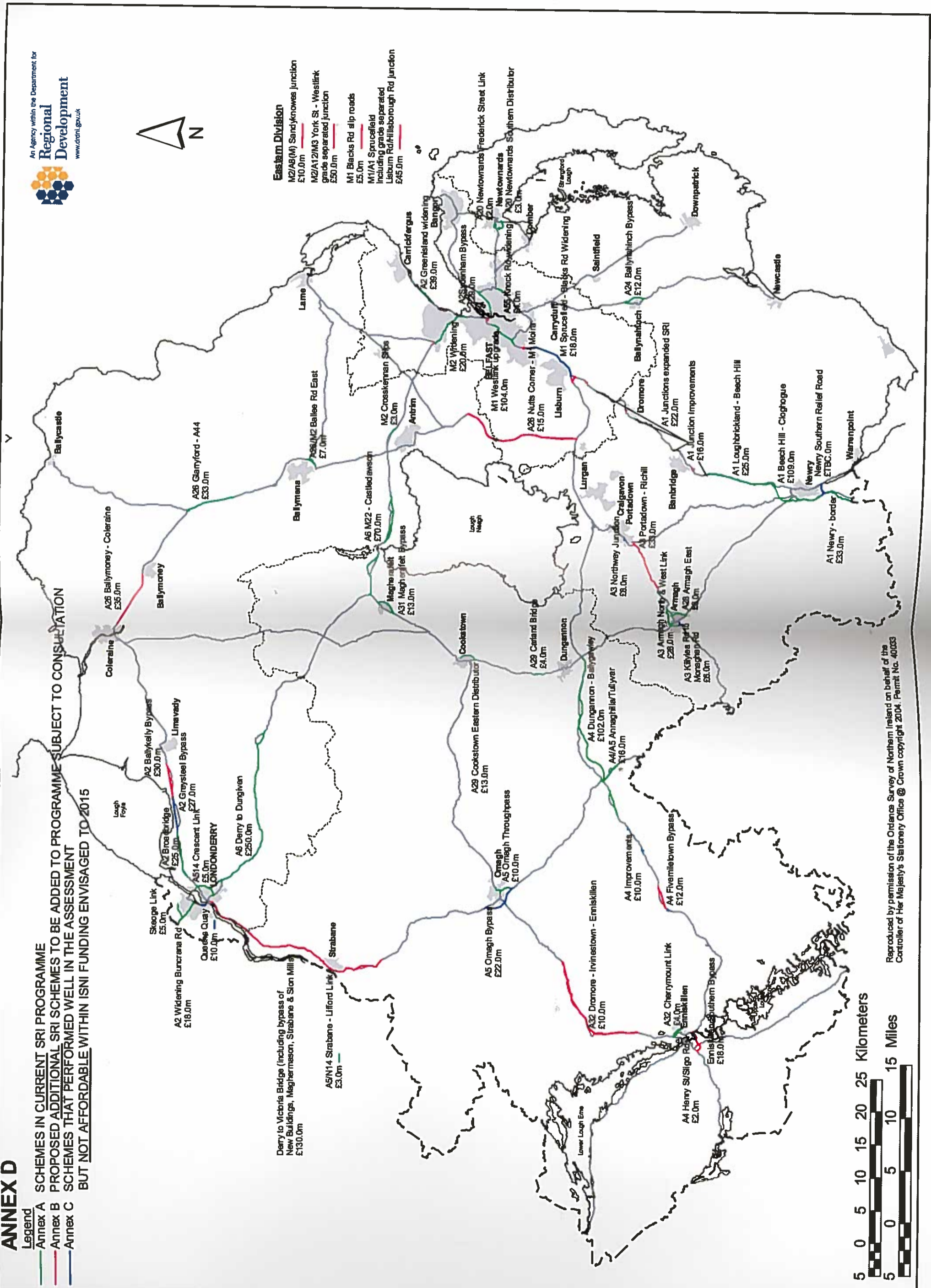
Eastern Division

M2/A8(M) Sandyknoles junction
£10.0m

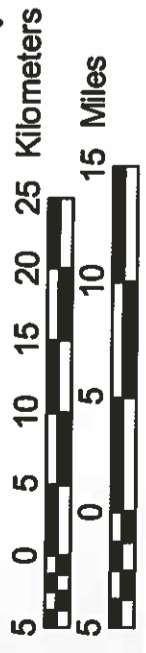
M2/A12/M3 York St - Westlink
grade separated junction
£50.0m

M1 Blacks Rd slip roads
£5.0m

M1/A1 Sprucefield
including grade separated
Listburn Rd/Hillsborough Rd Junction
£45.0m



Reproduced by permission of the Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright 2004. Permit No. 40033



Annex E : The Regional Strategic Transport Network

