

INTRODUCTION

The A5 Western Transport Corridor is one of five key transport corridor upgrades identified in the Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) for Northern Ireland and represents a significant link in longer-term plans to improve connections between Dublin, the City of Derry and Donegal

Last summer the Irish Government announced its intention to make available £400m to help fund major roads programmes in Northern Ireland. The funding will contribute towards provision of dual carriageway on the A5 Western Corridor between Derry and Aughnacloy and on the Eastern Corridor between Belfast and Larne.

The Northern Ireland Executive has confirmed its acceptance, in principle, to taking forward these two projects and Roads Service has appointed consulting and business provider Mouchel as their advisor on the A5 Western Transport Corridor (WTC) study.

Mouchel have just begun a route corridor study for the stretch of the A5 between Derry and Aughnacloy. A number of public exhibitions are being held to explain the objectives of the scheme and to obtain public opinion. Feedback from these public exhibitions will be considered in the development of route corridor options, along with the assessment of environmental, safety, economic, accessibility and integration issues. To further enhance the public's opportunity for comment a website has been set up to keep stakeholders informed of the proposals.

A constraints assessment will be carried out to provide information on the impacts that the A5 road improvements may have. Teams of specialists are now out and about in the towns and countryside recording significant information and making informed assessments.

Transportation Vision of the Regional Development Strategy (RDS)

The transportation vision of the RDS is:

“To have a modern, sustainable, safe transportation system which benefits society, the economy and the environment and which actively contributes to social inclusion and everyone’s quality of life”

The development of the Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTN TP) as part of the Strategy will generate a number of benefits. These include:

- providing an efficient and integrated regional public transport system;
- strengthening social cohesion;
- facilitating decentralised growth; and,
- helping to build an integrated regional economy.

The Strategy recognises that the provision of a sustainable, integrated transport system that facilitates the rapid, efficient, predictable and safe movement of both people and goods is a key factor in achieving its vision for the region.

The strategy takes account of local, national and international influences, which are collectively driving change in Northern Ireland.