

5.9 Pedestrian, Cyclist, Equestrian and Community Effects

5.9.1 Introduction

This section looks at the implications of the proposed road improvements on the local journeys people make between Randalstown and Toome. The guidelines set out in the DMRB advise that the potential impact on journeys made by people such as pedestrians and cyclists is considered, in addition to the impact of the proposal on local vehicle traffic where relevant.

5.9.2 Objectives

The objective at this stage is to undertake sufficient assessment to provide an appreciation of the likely effects on pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians and for people's ability to move around their local community, and to identify the relevant constraints associated with the eight broadly defined alignments within the three route corridors.

5.9.3 Methodology

In accordance with the requirements of DMRB 11.3.8.9 (Stages in the Assessment of Impacts on Pedestrians, Other Travellers and Communities), the steps taken include:

- Identification of important community facilities used by pedestrians and others which may be affected by the possible route corridors; and
- A broad assessment of whether pedestrians' and others' journeys would be lengthened or reduced by the various alignments, whether the amenity value of such journeys would increase or diminish and whether some people would be deterred from making journeys which they currently make.

5.9.4 Existing and Proposed Road Network

From the Toome bypass roundabout to the M22 junction 3, the existing A6 comprises approximately 7.0km of rural 'A' class road. This existing route forms a significant linear feature, carving through the landscape causing a certain degree of severance along its entire length. The A-class road is interspersed with twelve C-class roads and six other unclassified roads, serving the many hamlets, farms and individual dwellings in the area.

In reality, as the proposed new road is to be a high standard dual carriageway, any route option would not provide direct access to the routes it traverses, either bridging over (or under) the minor roads. It would, however, have at least one grade-separated junction arrangement with the existing A6 to provide access to the local road network.

North Corridor

From Randalstown, route options 1 and 2 would pass south of the existing A6 between the M22 and just west of Aghaloughan Road. Both options would then traverse the existing A6 via a grade-separated junction before passing to the north and parallel to the Moneynick Road. Both options would return online nearer Toome.

Central Corridor

There are three route options within the central corridor (3, 4 and 5). Option 3 is largely online widening of the existing A6 from Greenan Road to Toome. Options 4 and 5 are largely sygmoidal in plan, passing to the south of existing A6 near Randalstown, then crossing the A6 via a grade-separated junction west of Derryhollagh Cottages, then passing north of the Moneynick Road. The routes would then traverse over or

under the existing A6 again (depending on exact route option), passing to the south of the Moneynick Road, tying in at the new roundabout, east of Toome.

South Corridor

The south corridor route options (6, 7 and 8) involve construction of a completely new offline dual carriageway from Randalstown to Toome, south of existing A6. Option 6 would entail online widening from Drumaslough Hill to the roundabout east of Toome. South corridor route options do not cross the existing A6, therefore access to the existing road would be via a grade-separated junction near Randalstown. In the case of option 6, the stretch of online widening would result in a significant diversionary route for local traffic along the Ballynafey Road and Staffordstown Road.

5.9.5 Community Facilities

The principal facilities within the rural community, which residents would be travelling to and from on a regular basis, include: Health Facilities, Schools, Library, Shops, Recreation Facilities, Churches, and Public Transport facilities. The majority of these are, by and large, located in the towns of Randalstown or Toome, and thus severance aspects affecting pedestrians and cyclists should be no worse than at present. However, Moneynick Primary School lies outwith these towns on the existing Moneynick Road. Access to and from the school should actually improve with the removal of strategic traffic from the Moneynick Road, however the school would be lost to route option 3.

5.9.6 Pedestrian Facilities

The existing network of footways and footpaths along the existing A6 between Randalstown and Toome is severely limited with little provision. In the case of the minor roads, the verges are narrow and overgrown in places. As a result, pedestrian journeys in the area are infrequent. Any of the offline options would improve the amenity for pedestrians in the area, as they would be able to use the existing section of the Moneynick Road, which would become quieter and less trafficked.

5.9.7 Cycling Facilities

Consultation with Sustrans, the National Cycle Network (NCN) charity, has confirmed that there are no formal cycle routes within the study area. However, with reference to Figure 5.9.1, it is evident that National Route 94 (the Loughshore Trail) passes to the south of the study area, along the Staffordstown Road between Randalstown and Toome, and National Route 96, also the Loughshore Trail, passes along the eastern shores of Lough Beg between Newferry and Toome.

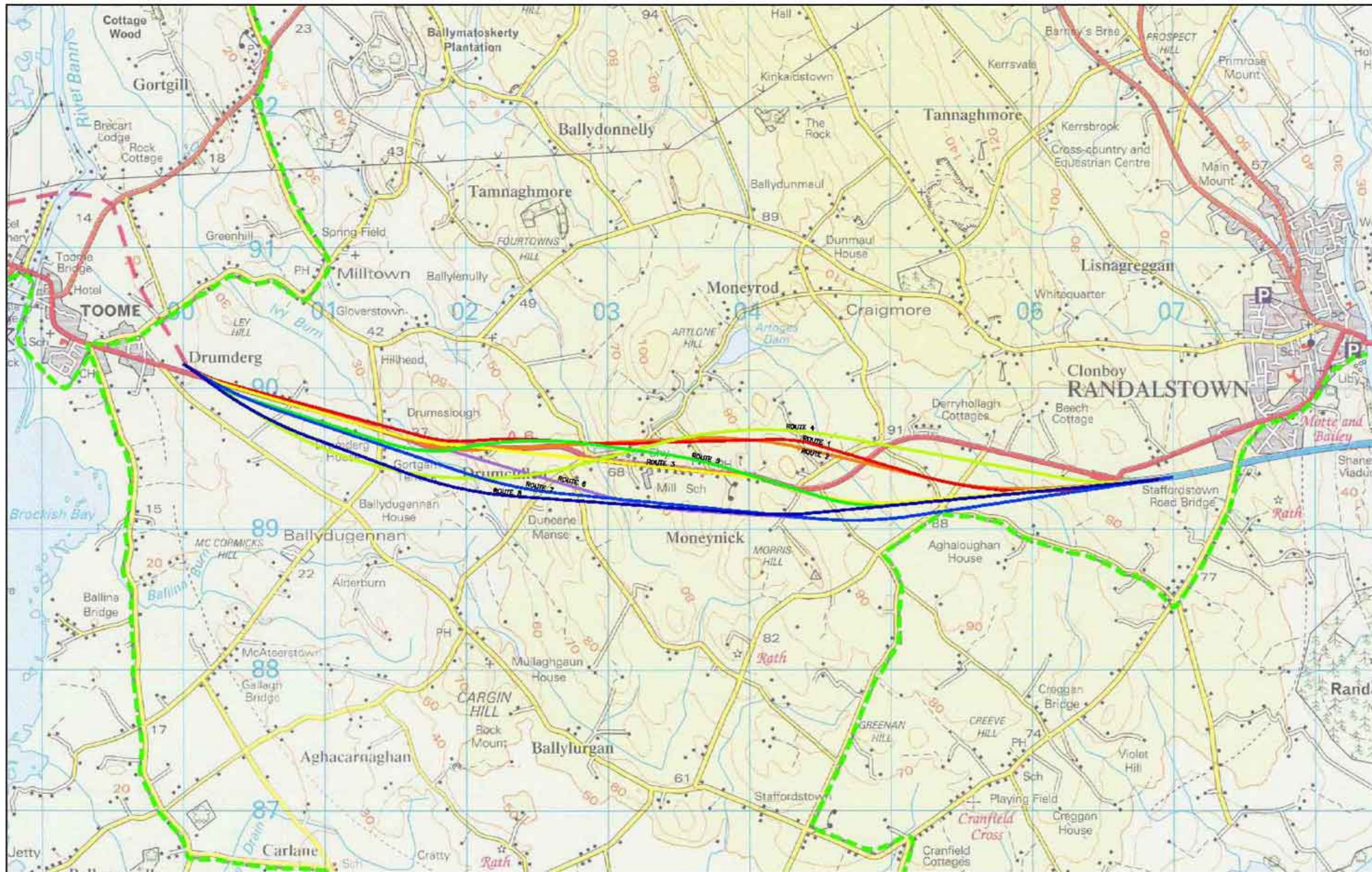
5.9.8 Equestrian Facilities

There are no known specific equestrian facilities within the study area. It is possible however that equestrians use the local road network, away from the main A6.

5.9.9 Local Vehicle Movements

Irrespective of which route option is selected, provision would be made for local vehicle movements, in the form of underbridges (or overbridges) of the proposed dual carriageway. Access to Moneynick Primary School should be enhanced, as the existing Moneynick Road would experience a significant reduction in traffic flows, facilitating easier access onto and across this section of road. It may even result in marginally shorter journey times. To this end, it is envisaged that implementation of an offline road improvement may actually encourage an increase in local vehicle movements between Randalstown and Toome by those currently deterred by the high risk of accessing onto and across this strategic route.

With the proposed scheme traffic should flow better through the area and the safety of the highway environment would improve significantly for the vehicle user, as it would largely separate strategic and local traffic. However, as the scheme would be a high standard dual carriageway, access onto this strategic route from the local road network would be restricted and may lead to permanent diversions and access arrangements being required to facilitate local vehicle movements in places.



**FERGUSON
McILVEEN**



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Notes:

--- NATIONAL CYCLE NETWORK

- ROUTE OPTION 1
- ROUTE OPTION 2
- ROUTE OPTION 3
- ROUTE OPTION 4

- ROUTE OPTION 5
- ROUTE OPTION 6
- ROUTE OPTION 7
- ROUTE OPTION 8

Scale 1:25,000

A6 RANDALSTOWN TO TOOME DUALLING

**PEDESTRIANS, CYCLISTS & COMMUNITY EFFECTS
NATIONAL CYCLE NETWORK**

Figure 5.9.1