

Infrastructure

The overall objectives of the Infrastructure Directorate are, firstly to contribute to sustainable transport in County Louth through the continued development and maintenance of a safe and efficient network of roads, secondly to act as guardian of public health through its supply and protection of public water and sewerage facilities and thirdly to contribute to the sustainable development and maintenance of coastal infrastructure such as piers and harbours.

- ▶ Noise barrier on M1
- ▼ Overview of Dundalk Western By-Pass



LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL

MAJOR ROAD DEVELOPMENT

Newry – Dundalk Link Road

Tenders for the main contract works, which will be a Design and Build contract, were received in December 2004. It is expected that the Contract will be awarded to the preferred Contractor in the first quarter of 2005.

Land acquisition is ongoing and the advance contracts for Fencing and Archaeology have got underway.

It is anticipated that construction of the high-quality dual carriageway from Ballymacscanlon roundabout to Cloghogue will commence in the second quarter of 2005 with expected completion in 2007.

Ardee Bypass

Statutory procedures for the N2/N52 Ardee Bypass are ongoing.

As part of the pre-construction procedures, an additional archaeological assessment of the preferred route led to the discovery of an early Christian cemetery on a section of the N52 part of the bypass. Consequently this section of the route will undergo a small change in alignment in order to ensure that the cemetery is not directly impacted by the scheme.

It is expected that statutory procedures will be completed in 2005 and construction will commence in 2006, subject to the availability of funding.

Up Grade Works to M1 Motorway

As part of the PPP contract the road concessionaires, Celtic Road Group, officially took over the Existing M1 Motorway from Gormanston Interchange in Co. Meath to Dundalk in April 2004. Part of their contract was to carry out "up grade work on the existing scheme".



Retro-fitting Median Safety Barrier on M1

These works which are ongoing consisted of installation of noise barriers, safety barriers, emergency telephones, ETC express lane at the Toll Plaza and the automatic traffic counters.

Dundalk Western By-Pass

The Public Private Partnership Contract was officially signed in February 2004. The PPP Contract is between the NRA and the Road Concessionaire Celtic Roads Group (CRG). Under this contract Celtic Roads Group are responsible for the design, construction and funding of the construction of the Dundalk Western By-pass.

CRG are also responsible for maintenance of the M1 Motorway, for 30 years from Gormanston Interchange to Ballymacscanlon Interchange, north of Dundalk.

The scheme is 12 km in length and includes for the construction of 7 overbridges and 4 underbridges

Construction of the scheme commenced in February 2004 and is expected to be completed in the last quarter of 2005.



Dundalk Western Bypass under construction

NON-NATIONAL ROADS

The R173 Rockmarshall and R178 Rosslough to Essexford Road Improvement Schemes were funded under the E.U. Co-Financed European Roads Development Fund in 2004.

Contractors commenced work on the R173 Rockmarshall Scheme in March 2004. The scheme consists of the realignment and upgrading of 3 Km of regional road together with ancillary works. Construction will be completed by end of 1st quarter of 2005. Total cost including land purchase for the scheme will be approx €4.8M.

Consulting Engineers were appointed for the R178 Rosslough to Essexford Road Improvement Scheme. Site Investigation, Topographical



Rockmarshall Improvement Scheme – installation of box culvert

Survey and Preliminary Design have been completed. The 2km scheme is estimated at €8M. Part 8 will be completed and C.P.O. procedures commenced by end of 2005.

PAVEMENT IMPROVEMENT

Pavement restructuring and improvement works to the value of €222,000 were carried out on Bridge Street, Ardee. Resurfacing of the pavement, drainage works and footpath construction were carried out on the R132 north of Dundalk. Road improvement and pavement restructuring were also carried out south of Hunterstown.

Road improvement works including drainage and resurfacing commenced on Tierney Street, Ardee and Seafield/Wallaces Road, Blackrock.

Annual Resurfacing works were carried out on a total of 35 sites in the County. The works were carried in two phases at a cost of €1,677,818 for phase 1 and €1,326,345 for phase 2.

LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

Eligible improvement works under this scheme includes non-public roads which provide access to Parcels of Land of which at least two are owned or occupied by different persons. During 2004, 11 roads were completed with expenditure of €129,004 which includes a local contribution of 10% from landowners/occupiers and residents. The roads remain in private ownership when works are completed.

LOCAL CONTRIBUTION SCHEME

The Local Contribution Scheme allows people to apply for works to be carried out whereby local contributions are matched by local authority funding. Works carried out to date include upgrading of category three roads, school safety measures through enhanced signage and reinstatement of footpaths in county areas.

During 2004, 19 projects were completed with a total spend of €97,748.

URBAN & VILLAGE RENEWAL

The aim of the Urban & Village scheme is to provide financial support

for a range of interventions to upgrade cities towns and villages to make them more attractive places in which to live and work, encourage social and economic development and facilitate and support the development of tourism and tourism-related activity.

In 2004 four projects were funded. They are as follows:

Project	Cost
Navy Bank Dundalk The upgrading of a riverside walk with the provision of a landscaped seating area and improved pathways was carried out.	€130,790
Kilsaran A focal point at the statue area with the use of paving, decorative lighting, seating and upgrading of existing planting was created.	€59,799
Dunleer The project included the upgrading of the footpath area linking the village centre to the community facilities on Shamrock Hill. Provision of lighting, seating and soft landscaping to enhance the railway bridges located within the village area was also carried out.	€89,744
Knockbridge The upgrading of the area in front of Lisheen Pk, with provision of brick paving, soft landscaping and lighting was carried out. The provision of a footpath was provided between Lisheen Pk and Lisheen Tce, planting on the Newtown road and trees in the park area add to the aesthetic look of the village.	€89,999



Navy Bank Dundalk – Urban & Village Renewal



Knockbridge – Urban & Village Renewal

CLÁR

Continued co-funding was provided by the Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and the Department of Environment Health and Local Government during 2004 for non national roads in the Clár area. Eight roads in the peninsula were improved during the year with a total spend of €134,000

INTERREG

Major resurfacing works were carried out on three cross border roads following an allocation of 75% funding received under the Rural Roads Project, 25% matched funding was provided from our own resources. In total €280,000 was spent. The roads improved include

1. County Road 104, Kilcurry-Carrickedmond
2. County Road 113, Traceys Cross-Sky Hill
3. County Road 97, Carrickanagh-Jonesborough.

VILLAGE AND COUNTRYSIDE ENHANCEMENT SCHEME

This scheme which is provided jointly by Louth Leader/Clár/Louth County Council and the local community provides funding for works to facilitate projects of enhancement in rural areas.

Two projects were undertaken during 2004 at Meath and Carlingford. The total spend will be in the region of €60K

ROAD SAFETY

During 2004 a new initiative was introduced aimed at tackling the problem of non-wearing of seatbelts in vehicles by school going children. The "Dim Family" visited approximately 40 primary schools in the County bringing the harsh reality of the aftermath of a car crash to children. In conjunction with this programme "Seatbelt Sheriff" appointed approximately 3,500 deputies to reinforce the seatbelt wearing



Road Safety for Schools Project

message. Under the Councils Local Contribution Scheme enhanced safety signage was erected at seven schools throughout the County.

Low cost safety improvement grants were again used to improve collision prone locations. In 2004 junction improvements were carried out at Togher Cross, Martinstown Cross, Rathescar Cross, Shortstone Cross and Bellurgan Point Road. In Dundalk town safety enhancements were carried out on the Ard-Easmuinn Road.

The Collision Prevention Programme for North Louth and South Louth continued throughout the year. Towards year end the Council began gearing up for metrication and public awareness campaigns were commenced.

ABNORMAL LOAD FIGURES 2004

The following are the figures for permits issued in 2004:

Year	2003	2004
Single Heavy Load Permits	118	79
Annual Heavy Load Permits	42	29
Dump Truck Permits	-	8

Type	Hackneys	Limosines
New licences issued	16	2
No Licences renewed	4	2

MOTOR TAX

Receipts for 2004 were €15,642,227.00 (€15,521,401.00 in 2003) and transactions numbered 101052. Approximately 1500 changes of ownership and 7000 parking enquiries were processed.

Motor Tax Online came into operation on 1st March 2004. 5939 transactions were carried out on this system to December 2004 in addition to the figures below.

Summary of Vehicle Licensing

Year	2003	2004
Annual	27258	25775
Half Yearly	15258	14344
Quarterly	45612	46328
Total	88128	86447

Summary of Driving Licensing

Year	2003	2004
1 Year	183	153
3 Year	1639	1330
10 Year	7093	5632
Provisional	7201	7490
Total	16116	14605

SANITARY SERVICES

2004 has seen significant changes in Sanitary Services with the consolidation of the single sanitary function at county level under the Local Government Act 2001. The development of the national water pricing policy has brought a requirement for increased local funding for the development of future domestic and non-domestic supplies and upgrading of existing schemes from the non-domestic sector. Each new capital scheme now has a significant requirement for local funding. New drinking water regulations have also been introduced in 2004 which has brought procedural changes to sampling and analysis along with stringent requirements in terms of compliance for some parameters. Continued development has brought additional requirements for expansion of waste water treatment and conveyance facilities.

CAPITAL SCHEMES

Baltray Termonfeckin Sewerage Scheme

The sewerage scheme serving the two villages became operational in July 2004. Effluent is pumped from the Baltray pumping station to the Drogheda Treatment Works Network. In addition to the foul sewer network system, a surface water drainage system has been put in place and watermains were provided in Baltray along with upgrading of the water pumping station in Termonfeckin.



Pipe laying – Baltray Termonfeckin Sewerage Scheme

Mid Louth/Dunleer Regional Water Supply Scheme

First phase works have been complete in providing a boosted water supply from Greenmount to serve Dunleer. In addition, bank protection works have been carried out along the river Dee at the intake point. Planning works for phase II were ongoing during 2004. Modelling of the existing network has also been completed.

Tullyallen Sewerage Scheme

Contract Documents have been prepared for upgrading the plant to serve a population of 1500 pe. A mechanical/electrical contractor is currently being appointed and tenders have been received for civil works. Works are expected to commence in April 2005.

Drogheda Waste Water Treatment Plant Extension

During the year contracts have been prepared to increase the capacity of the plant by 33,000 pe. Tenders have been received and a report on tenders is currently with the Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government for approval. When works are completed, the plant will serve a population of 101,000 pe in South Louth, Drogheda and North Meath.

Operational Contract of Dundalk and Drogheda Waste Water Treatment Plant

A 20 year contract was put in place in January for the operation of the treatment plants and pumping stations.

A sludge drying plant has been under construction at the Dundalk site during 2004 which will facilitate sludge disposal from all the municipal waste water facilities in the county when completed.

SCHEMES IN PLANNING

Ardee Sewerage Scheme – Stage II

Approval has been sought from the Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government for the appointment of consultants to prepare plans to upgrade the scheme.

Cooley Regional Water Supply Scheme – Stage II

Work is ongoing on the preliminary report, consultants have been appointed to model the hydraulic network to facilitate design of the future needs of the scheme.

Blackrock Sewerage Scheme – Stage II

A brief has been commenced following discussions with the Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government.

Water Conservation

During 2004 expressions of interest were sought and consultants were appointed to manage a Water Conservation Project for Louth Local Authorities.

Sewerage Network Survey

Significant works were undertaken in surveying the existing network in a number of development centres.

Surface Water

A series of studies have been undertaken to determine the extent of works necessary in development centres, including North Drogheda, Termonfeckin, Blackrock and Dundalk.

Rural Water Programme

The following Small Schemes were progressed in 2004 with a total expenditure of €452,087.98:-

- Knockattin Road Watermain
- Blakestown Reservoir
- Watermain Replacement – Campbell's Park, Ardee
- Killineer W.S. Disinfection System
- Piedmont Watermain Replacement – Stage 2

- Ardee WTP Improvement – Stage 2
- Groundwater Investigation – West Ardee
- Muchgrange Water Supply
- Reservoir Level Controls – Tallanstown & Clogherhead W.S.
- Nth. Louth Area Watermain Improvement Works
- Upgrading of Pumphouses at Ardtullybeg and Rath Reservoir
- Ardee Replacement Watermains (Bridge St. & Sean O'Carroll St.)
- Interlink Watermain Dunbin-Sheelagh W.S.

The following group schemes received grant assistance in the sum of €305,136.19 during 2004:-

- Beltichburne GWS – New
- Tinure GWS – Upgrading
- Mountain Park GWS (Stage 1 & Stage 2) – Upgrading
- Knockattin GWS – New
- Ardagh GWS – Upgrading
- Drybridge & Waterunder GWS – Upgrading
- Sheepgrange GWS – Upgrading
- Tullyallen – Upgrading
- Kells Road (Collon) GWS – New
- Golf Links Road (Blackrock) GWS – New
- Dunmahon GWS – New
- Chapel Hill (Omeath) GSS – New

The following group schemes were taken in charge by Louth County Council in 2004 following completion of upgrading works:-

- Beltichburne GWS
- Knockattin GWS
- Kells Road (Collon) GWS
- Golf Links Road (Blackrock) GWS

In addition, during 2004 a total of 5 group water schemes received subsidies totalling €59,002.70 towards the operational cost of their group schemes.

MARINE

HARBOURS AND PIERS

The major project to upgrade Port Oriel is due to commence in early spring 2005. Detailed design and processing of statutory procedures were carried out in 2004.

The upgrading and modernisation of the harbour infrastructure at Port Oriel will provide more extensive, safer and more convenient berthing and fish landing facilities than those which currently exist. The proposed development will comprise the following principal elements:

- Extension and widening of existing pier
- Provision of precast concrete armour units
- Construction of in-situ concrete wave wall
- Dredging in harbour basin
- Provision of pier services

The cost of the project comes to €8.55m, of which the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources will provide 75% grant aid.



Public Consultation on Port Oriel Harbour Improvements

Louth County Council maintains Carlingford, Clogherhead and Annagassan Harbours along with Gyles Quay, Omeath Pier and Ballyoonan.

COASTAL EROSION

The coastline along County Louth is exposed to strong wave action and tidal surges which occur in the Irish Sea. This, along with the sandy and gravelly nature of the coastal soils, leaves the coastline vulnerable to erosion. The high tides and strong winds of February 2002 and October 2004 in particular, severely damaged the coast.

Louth County Council has prepared a programme for coastal protection works. This programme of work is based on the findings of a comprehensive survey/report carried out in 2002. Louth County Council have also included sections of the coastlines which have suffered damage in recent storms.

Louth County Council is dependent on contributory funding from the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources (DCNMR). Priority is given to protecting public property, such as the county road network.

During 2004 coastal protection works were carried out at Whitestown, Ballagan, Annaloughan, Strand Road, Annagassan and at Salterstown.