

3. First Public Consultation

An initial (first) Public Consultation was undertaken at the end of March 2001 and presented the “Initial Study Area” of interest for the proposed scheme.

The consultation involved the presentation of mapping and information on the scheme through a full-page advertisement in the following local newspapers: -

The Nationalist and Leinster Times;
The Leinster Express;
The Munster Express;
The Waterford News and Star;
The Leinster Leader;
The Carlow People; and
The Kilkenny People.

Comments from the public on the scheme were invited and facilitated by a ‘cut-out’ comment sheet which could be returned to the National Roads Design Office in Kildare County Council or to Kilkenny County Council. Responses were requested by 11 April, 2001 if possible.

A total of 46 responses were received by Kildare and Kilkenny County Councils from the first Public Consultation. Over 80% of the responses were relevant to the northern section.

The comments can be divided into four main categories:

- i) comments on the extent of the Study Area
- ii) comments on the choice of route
- iii) information provided on local constraints
- iv) requests to be kept informed

Two responses (representing the parishes of Tullow, Grange and Ardattin and representing the Tullow Community Development Initiative) indicated that the Study Area should extend (or be moved) eastwards to include the Tullow area. Areas outside the Study Area are included as part of the traffic study and hence the possible impact of Tullow will be considered.

The majority of responses were comments on the choice of route and can be summarized as follows:

- route to go to the east of Carlow
- route to go to the west of Carlow
- the N9/N10 to be upgraded
- extend the N81 to New Ross and use the N25 (to Waterford)
- route to serve Athy
- route to follow N78 corridor
- route to go from East of Kildare to Waterford
- route to go from Kilcullen to New Ross (and hence to Waterford and Rosslare)
- route to serve Carlow and Kilkenny and provide direct access to Athy, Castlecomer, Bagenalstown and possibly Tullow
- route to the east of Carlow, Thomastown and, perhaps, east of the railway to Waterford.

The issue of route corridors will be considered during Public Consultation No.2

Some responses included local information which will be considered during the development of the route corridors.

A final group of respondents asked to be kept informed during the development of the scheme.