Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Extent of the Road Scheme

The scheme under consideration extends from a location west of Cortober / Carrick-on-Shannon in the townland of Cloongownagh to the northern tie-in of the recently completed N4 Dromod Roosky Bypass Road Project in the townland of Faulties.

The study section of the existing N4 falls into two counties with the River Shannon acting as the boundary. The area to the west of the River Shannon falls into Roscommon County and to the east of the River Shannon falls into Leitrim County.

The existing N4 in the area of interest runs through rural and urban areas. Major towns and villages en-route are Carrick-on-Shannon and Aghamore. There are a number of at-grade local road junctions and access frontages along the study section of the N4. The existing N4 crosses the Shannon River at Carrick-on-Shannon through a narrow masonry arch bridge. Although different sections of the existing N4 have been improved in the past there are several poor sections of alignment within the study area. There are many deficient horizontal curves as the alignment passes through Carrick-on-Shannon Town. There are a number of at-grade junctions within this section of the N4. The Study Area is shown on Drawing RCSR – 101 in Volume 2 of this report.

1.2 Scheme Objectives

The scheme objectives were set out in the National Development Plan 2007 – 2013 as part of the Strategy for National Roads, i.e.:

• to improve the reliability of the road transport system by removing bottlenecks, remedying capacity deficiencies and reducing absolute journey times and journey time variance;
• to improve internal road transport infrastructure between regions and within regions, contribute to the competitiveness of the productive sector and foster balanced regional development;
• to facilitate better access to and from the main ports and airports with the main objective of offsetting the negative effects of peripherality;
• to contribute to sustainable transport policies, facilitating continued economic growth and regional development while ensuring a high level of environmental protection; and
• to help achieve the objectives of the Government’s Road Safety Strategy in relation to the reduction in fatalities and serious injuries caused by road accidents.

1.3 Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is to present the technical and environmental evaluation of the options presented in Public Consultation No. 2 (September 2009) and to outline the process by which an emerging preferred route was selected. The report also describes the public consultation process and the method by which the Preferred Route was developed.

The general requirements of this Route Corridor Selection Report are outlined in the National Roads Project Management Guidelines, Phase 3.
1.4 **Structure of this Report**

This Route Corridor Selection Report has been prepared in two volumes, namely:

- Volume 1 – Main Text
- Volume 2 – Drawings

This is Volume 1 and describes the route selection process for the N4 Carrick-on-Shannon to Dromod Road Project. Volume 2, which contains the A3 drawings, presents the graphical information as described in this document.

1.5 **Difficulties Encountered**

The most significant difficulty experienced during the route corridor selection phase of the project was the flooding in November and December 2009. This proved to be problematic to the preliminary site investigation contract, however sufficient data was collected to allow for the selection of an Emerging Preferred Route Corridor.