

The construction of this project forms part of a Public Private Partnership (PPP) scheme. The contract was awarded to DirectRoute (Fermoy) Ltd in June 2004. The PPP company comprises John Sisk & Son Ltd, Kellogg Brown & Root, Lagan Holdings, Roadbridge Ltd and Strabag AG and third party equity provides FIIF and HBOS.

**Client**

National Roads Authority

**Local Authority**

Cork County Council, NRDO Glashaboy

**PPP Company**

DirectRoute (Fermoy) Ltd

**Contractor**

DirectRoute (Fermoy) Construction Ltd

**NRA Supervising Consulting Engineers**

McCarthy Hyder Carl Bro



**FUNDING**

This brochure was funded by the Irish Government under the National Development Plan (NDP) 2000- 2006 and part funded by the TEN-T Financial Instrument of the European Union.



# M8 Rathcormac / Fermoy PPP Motorway Scheme

A Major Milestone in our National Road Network

Officially opened on 2nd October, 2006 by

Mr. Martin Cullen, T.D. Minister For Transport

in the presence of  
Cllr. John O'Shea – Mayor of the County of Cork



# Message from the Minister...

“Seeing another step of Transport 21 come to fruition is fantastic. The Rathcormac-Fermoy PPP project is a major step in connecting Dublin and Cork. This project not only advances regional economic growth, but also allows for local advancements in the areas of tourism and general business services. The opening of this scheme further demonstrates the role of Public Private Partnership in the delivery of much needed road infrastructure. The completion of this project brings us ever closer to achieving our goal of connecting Dublin and Cork.”

**Martin Cullen, TD.**  
Minister for Transport



The link between Dublin and the southern capital is a vital part of Cork's national road infrastructure and I am proud to be associated with this major stage in the continuing development of our National Roads Programme.

The town of Fermoy has been gridlocked by the ever increasing volume of traffic on this route and with this fabulous new bypass, I believe the interests of tourism, business and especially the local community will be greatly enhanced by this development.

This project was scheduled to open in June 2007 so I would like to offer my congratulations to all involved in the early completion and pay tribute to the engineering feats that were overcome.

**Cllr. John Patrick O'Shea**  
Mayor of the County of Cork



Once again we are marking the early completion of a significant piece of infrastructure with the opening of the M8 Rathcormac-Fermoy PPP Bypass. The 18km motorway is being delivered eight months ahead of schedule - another great achievement in the development of our national Roads Programme in Cork County.

I believe the opening will be invaluable to the town of Fermoy and will benefit all road users by reducing journey times by up to 30 minutes as a consequence of relieving traffic congestion and further improving journey times between Cork and Dublin.

Guíonn muid go mbeidh turas slán sábháilte ag chuide thaistealaí ar an seach-bhóthar nua seo agus go n-éirí an bóthar leo.

**Mr. Maurice Moloney**  
County Manager  
Cork County Council



We are well on the pace to achieving the goals set out in Transport 21 to connect Dublin and Cork via safe and modern road infrastructure. The M8 Rathcormac-Fermoy project brings much needed relief to the towns of Rathcormac and Fermoy by removing significant volumes of heavy good vehicles and cars from the town centres. I have seen first hand throughout the country the benefits of giving back to the residents their town centre. It affords tourists and business alike the opportunity to re-establish themselves directly within the heart of the community. It should be noted that this project was a Public Private Partnership project. It is these partnerships that bring private investment to public projects thus limiting the public financial risk and allowing for the projects to be delivered well ahead of the national planning schedule. So combined with other projects along the N8 like; the M7/M8 Portlaoise to Cullahill By-Pass, the N8/M8 Cullahill/Cashel Project, and the N8 Cashel By-pass Project we are closer to achieving our goal of connecting Dublin and Cork with high quality dual-carriageway or motorway by 2010.

**Peter Malone,**  
Chairman,  
National Roads Authority



DirectRoute and its contractors have delivered the Rathcormac/Fermoy By-Pass, Munster's first motorway, 8 months ahead of schedule and within the allocated budget. The road, probably one of the best in Ireland was built as a PPP scheme and will continue to operate as a value for money benchmark well into the future.

**Mr. Barry Jensen,**  
General Manager, DirectRoute  
(Fermoy) Limited.



On behalf of the European Commission, I welcome the opening of the M8 Rathcormac Fermoy motorway scheme, which is part of the Trans – European Transport Network. The scheme contributes to achieve European priorities, such as developing key links and interconnections needed to eliminate bottlenecks, filling in missing sections and completing the main routes, integrating safety and environmental concerns in the design and implementation of the trans-European transport network.

The Commission is pleased to have been able to support the project with a grant through the Trans – European Network budget of the European Union.

**Jacques Barrot,**  
Vice-President of the European  
Commission with Responsibility  
for Transport





# Scheme Description

The M8 Rathcormac / Fermoy Bypass scheme comprises 17.5km of dual two lane motorway commencing at the northern end of the Watergrasshill Bypass and extending to the Moorepark interchange. Forming bypasses of the expanding village of Rathcormac and the busy market town of Fermoy, the scheme ties back into the existing N8 National road at Moorepark North of Fermoy.

The project includes 21 new motorway structures (river and road bridges), the new Blackwater River Crossing and 3 new grade separated interchanges.

The M8 Rathcormac / Fermoy Motorway contract forms part of the National Roads Authority's Public Private Partnership (PPP) initiative and will be the third such project to open in Ireland.

On June 11th 2004, the National Roads Authority signed a Public Private Partnership (PPP) agreement with DirectRoute (Fermoy) Ltd, the concessionaire company. DirectRoute comprises a consortium of the construction companies John Sisk & Son, KBR, Lagan, Roadbridge and Strabag with equity partners Uberior Investments (HBOS) and First Irish Infrastructure Fund (AIB & EIB).

Construction started in June 2004 with a completion date originally scheduled for June 2007. The project now opens on 2nd October 2006, more than 8 months ahead of schedule.



**Tolling**  
The Toll Plaza is located on the southern end of the motorway at Skahanagh North between Watergrasshill and Rathcormac, and two subsidiary Toll Plazas are located at the Corrin Interchange, one on the southbound exit from the motorway and one on the northbound entry to the motorway. There are 6 lanes in each direction at the main toll plaza, including one express lane.



# Motorway & Interchanges

## The Motorway

The 17.5 km long 2 x 2 lane M8 Motorway links the N8 dual carriageway at Watergrasshill to the N8 National road at Moorepark, North of Fermoy. Between Watergrasshill and Moorepark, the motorway bypasses the village of Rathcormac and the town of Fermoy, via a new crossing of the River Blackwater on a 450m long viaduct East of Fermoy.

## Interchanges

Three new grade separated interchanges are included under the scheme, which together with incorporation of the existing Watergrasshill Interchange; provide access to and from the motorway to the local road network.

## Rathcormac South Interchange

The Rathcormac South Interchange comprises a half-diamond partial interchange, providing access on to the motorway southbound and exit off the motorway northbound, connecting with the existing N8 National Road at Curraghprevin, South of Rathcormac. Once the motorway opens this section of the N8 will be re-designated Regional Road R639.

## Corrin Interchange

Corrin Interchange comprises a full diamond interchange providing for all traffic movements on and off the motorway. Situated to the South of Fermoy, Corrin Interchange provides slip roads on and off the motorway both North and South. New link roads are provided to carry the existing N8 from Fermoy to Rathcormac, (re-designated R639) under the motorway, with new junctions providing local access and links to Ballyoran and Conna. Satellite toll facilities are provided on the northbound access slip road and the southbound exit slip road.



## Moorepark Interchange

Moorepark Interchange is presently a half diamond interchange, providing access to and from the existing N8 at Moorepark northwards towards Kilworth and Mitchelstown and connecting with the re-designated R639 southwards into Fermoy. This interchange will be converted into a full diamond interchange providing all traffic movements on and off the motorway, when the final Co. Cork section of the Cork-Dublin strategic route is constructed, the Mitchelstown bypass, connecting the M8 Motorway at Moorepark to the under-construction N8 dual carriageway at Kilbeheny, North East of Mitchelstown.





## Benefits of the Scheme

The Rathcormac / Fermoy Bypass scheme represents an important step in the development of the strategic Dublin-Cork Corridor as well as provides a significant relief to the communities of Fermoy and Rathcormac.

Shorter journeys between Dublin and Cork will open up new opportunities for business and tourism at national and regional levels.

The completion of this important stretch of road will improve road safety in the region and will reduce the potential for head on collisions as a result of overtaking manoeuvres on the existing single carriageway section of the N8.

### *The Construction of this Section of the M8 Motorway Scheme will deliver the following Benefits:*

- The Motorway bypasses the village of Rathcormac and the town of Fermoy, and will improve quality of life for the local communities.
- Significant journey time reductions in both off and on peak times.
- Improved safety levels as a result of the benefits of the motorway design and inclusion of grade separated junctions.
- Improved environmental quality through removal of road traffic noise and pollution from towns and villages.
- Elimination of vehicle/ pedestrian/ cyclist conflict on the national road.
- Reduced travel times & improves access between Cork and Dublin.



## Public Private Partnership

Public Private Partnership exists between public sector bodies and private enterprise and are essentially agreements to share risk and reward on large scale developments initiatives. They now form a significant part of the NRA's capital investment programme without which the Government would be unable to achieve its challenging infrastructure provision targets. On a world wide basis the partnerships increasingly extend into provision of services (IT included), health and educational facilities, construction of roads and railways, water supply and waste management.

### *Benefits of the PPP Procurement method:*

- *Improved value for money. Risks and rewards are shared.*
- *Alternative method of procurement and finance allows government infrastructure targets to be met and keeps pace with public demand.*
- *Assists in national economic development by providing essential transportation links.*
- *Utilises private sector operational skills.*
- *Increases the number of development projects by making private sector funding available.*
- *Transfers government funding into other development projects.*
- *Provides long term high standard operation and maintenance.*
- *Encourages increased standards in design and construction based on long term interests.*



# Protecting Our Environment

During the Design Stage of the Project the company undertook environmental surveys which identified the activities of badgers, otters, hare, red squirrel and red deer in the footprint of the road and surrounding environs. Based on these findings the company focused on the species protected under the Wildlife Act (1976), the Wildlife Amendment Act (2000) and the EC Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Flora and Fauna (Habitats Directive 1992) and produced a number of mitigating measures to minimise or eliminate the impact of the road construction and road usage on these species.

Before the construction in the locality, the contractors erected temporary fencing to protect all known badger setts. As the earthworks proceeded the use of heavy plant and machinery within 30m of a sett/holt was restricted and within 10m only light digging by hand was permitted. To protect otters all site offices and depots were sited at least 50m away from the River Funshion. Temporary fencing was also erected close to the river when construction work took place to prevent otters accessing the site works. Chestnut paling fencing with 25mm mesh was used and this was regularly monitored for damage. No work was permitted at night to avoid contact with otters and to reduce the need for light.

Two badger underpasses have been constructed along the road at locations where it has been identified the badgers may try to cross the road. The underpasses consist of 600mm diameter concrete pipes with head-walls and fencing at the entrance to guide the badger into the structures. The location of the underpasses was agreed with the ecologist and site engineers.



At other locations along the route badger proof fencing has been erected to further guide the badgers into the underpasses.

As part of the earthworks for the Bypass the company engaged consultants to complete a hedgerow survey for all hedgerows that would need to be removed during the construction phase.

Where areas of hedgerow were removed, these were reinstated to ensure the protection and reduction of impact on the wildlife. Replanting of hedgerows, provision of wildlife corridors, revegetation of land all provide for suitable habitats and the continued presence of all birds in the future.



Excavation of skeletal remains



Giant Deer Skulls

## Archaeology... Preserving Our Heritage

The motorway route was the subject of intense archaeological investigation prior to commencement of any construction work. The NRA carried out a programme of archaeological site investigations on these sites between May and October 2003. These excavations revealed an exciting array of finds including the following:

- Giant Irish Deer skeletal remains from Ballyoran Bog
- A prehistoric hunting platform in Ballyoran Bog
- Bronze Age burnt mounds at Fermoy town land & Scartbarry
- A small prehistoric settlement at Gortore
- A Bronze Age round house at Ballybrowney
- A series of smaller sites at Currhprevin & Mondaniel



Giant Deer Skulls

Fulacht Spread

