

**COUNCIL FOR NATURE CONSERVATION
AND THE COUNTRYSIDE**
An Advisory Council to the Department of the Environment

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20 January 2011

Divisional Roads Manager
Roads Service Western Division
County Hall
Drumragh Avenue
Omagh, BT79 7AF.

Dear Mr Doherty,

A5 WTC - Environmental Statement

The Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside (CNCC) is the statutory body providing advice to the Department of the Environment on nature and countryside conservation issues, particularly as they affect Northern Ireland. CNCC is grateful of the opportunity to contribute to this consultation.

We welcome the comprehensive review conducted. A huge amount of work has obviously gone into the process and we appreciate the substantial effort that has been made towards identifying the potential environmental impacts. From our biodiversity and landscape focused viewpoints we consider that the Environmental Statement has identified the major issues and potential effects that would most likely result from the proposed works.

We also welcome the proposed remediation measures and planting schemes and feel that they will help restore some of the ecosystem services impacted by the scheme. However, we have concerns that the resources available locally may not be sufficient to deliver on the scale required to meet contractual timescales. If this is the case, pressure to weaken the proposed provenance requirements should be strongly resisted and the possibility of extending the timescale over which the planting schemes are implemented should be investigated. Indeed, this would have an additional benefit of giving some variation to the age structure of the planting.

Finally, seen in the context of Government's declared intention to reduce capital spending, it is felt there will be strong pressures to be selective with which measures to implement. The ES should be seen as the absolute minimum measures necessary to mitigate the impact of this scheme on the environment and no compromises should be made.

Yours sincerely



**PATRICK CASEMENT
CHAIRMAN**