

## Planned Works Over The Next 3 Months

The only remaining Bulk Earthworks requires the removal of part of the existing N8 at Moorepark and rock excavation of the associated short cutting providing the connection for (future) extension works. These earthworks will commence following the diversion of existing traffic over the new bridge (S21).

Outstanding roadworks include tie-ins to the existing N8 at both ends of the Scheme. Works are planned to commence in January at Watergrasshill, tying-in to the existing dual carriageway, and followed on by tie-in works at Moorepark.

Blacktop pavement works will continue throughout the period completing first and second layers and following up with the third layer. The final layer, the Asphalt surfacing, is planned to commence before Easter, followed by Road Markings and Signage.

Works on the remaining underbridges at College Road (S18) and Rathealy Road (S20) will continue, with targeted completion in February and March. Further temporary short term road closures will be put in place to allow tying-in to the existing roads as these bridges are completed. Regrettably, some inconvenience to road users is unavoidable but this will be kept to the minimum possible.

On the Blackwater Viaduct, launching of the second concrete deck will continue towards completion, followed by prestressing of the whole structure and removal of the temporary piers.



*River Flesk Bridge S05, Looking East*

## Road Closures & Traffic Management

The following traffic management is in place or planned for the following quarter:

- Rathcormac South Diversion at Curraghprevin.
- Corrin Interchange Diversion.
- College Road Diversion and Temporary Closure.
- Rathealy Road one way working, controlled by traffic lights, and Temporary Closure.
- Watergrasshill Tie-ins to existing dual carriageway.
- Moorepark Tie-ins to existing N8.

Within the areas of public roads subject to temporary traffic management, motorists and members of the public should observe traffic regulations and incident procedures as per normal. Emergency services and Cork County Council have 24-hour access to the contractor to coordinate responses with construction activities.



# BYPASS NEWS

Quarterly newsletter for the N8 Rathcormac Fermoy PPP project

## Progress Over The Last 3 Months

Once again, the Contractor has achieved good progress over the last three months.

**Bulk Earthworks** are now substantially complete with the final "plug" of material being removed at Corrin close to the Site Offices alongside Fermoy Golf Club Road, following diversion of traffic from the existing N8 at Corrin on to the new roadworks. A similar exercise was carried out earlier at Rathcormac South, after traffic was diverted over the new bridge to allow completion of the deep cutting at Curraghprevin.

**Mainline Drainage** operations are coming to an end with approximately 95% now complete, with concentration being on the many Balancing Ponds either side of the mainline which control and regulate discharges into the existing watercourses.

**Blacktop surfacing** works are now well advanced with materials still being delivered from the on-site plant near Moorepark Interchange. The first two of the total of four layers of bituminous material have now been laid to over 14km of dual carriageway and the third layer has been laid to a further 11km. The slipformed-concrete central barrier is now in place over 13km of the new road.



*Third Layer Surfacing and Concrete Barrier, Looking North at Mondaniel Road Overbridge*



*Removal of Earthworks "Plug" at Rathcormac South Interchange, Looking North*

All 21 of the major **structures** are now under construction and most are substantially complete. Eight of the nine overbridges are now carrying local and main road traffic and the remaining bridge at Moorepark Interchange (S21) will follow shortly, when N8 traffic is diverted over it. The River Flesk Bridge (S05), high over the Flesk valley, is now carrying construction traffic with the similar River Bride Bridge (S07) soon to follow. At Corrin, the underbridge through the Interchange (S16) is now taking N8 traffic and the remaining underbridges at College Road (S18) and Rathealy Road (S20) are both well advanced. In the Toll Plaza area at Condonstown, the access tunnel under the motorway is structurally complete, Canopy erection has commenced and the Administration Building is now roofed and externally finished, with works proceeding on M&E and fit-out.

On the **Blackwater Viaduct** the first of the twin bridge decks is structurally complete and the second, the northbound carriageway, has progressed beyond half way. Temporary piers have been moved from the completed first deck to support the second deck, leaving the first deck now spanning the full 58 metres between piers.

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# Environmental Issues



*An Otter Pass*

## Environment During Construction

Two badger underpasses have been constructed along the road at locations where it has been identified that badgers may try to cross the road. The underpasses consist of 600mm diameter concrete pipes with headwalls 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.

The surveys undertaken show that similar underpasses for otters were not necessary, however, a river access path was required and this was constructed along the southern bank edge of the River Funshion.

No mitigating actions were considered necessary for red deer, Irish hare or red squirrels. Similarly pine martens, pygmy shrew, rabbit, fox, stoat, mink, rats and wood mice whilst studied were considered to be unaffected by the construction of the road.

In order to reduce the environmental impact of the viaduct construction the contractor erected large temporary works to facilitate the launching of the bridge sections. This removed the need for permanent piers in the river itself. Silt traps were placed on the edge of the river and as the caissons were being dewatered the water was passed through filters before being returned to the river. Any impact therefore on the wildlife within the river was eliminated.

## The Environment & Motorway Construction

During the Design Stage of the Project the Authority undertook an Environmental Impact Statement 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.

## Pre- Construction

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.



*Temporary works for launching deck*

## Birds and Wildlife

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.

The survey methodology followed the recommendations of the Joint Nature Conservation Council (JNCC), which basically required all areas to be walked to identify floral species present and also, the presence of nesting/feeding birds within the hedgerows themselves.

The reports produced were submitted to the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and National Parks and Wildlife Services for their approval. The kind of floral species encountered included ivy, briar fern, moss dandelion cocksfoot, scutchgrass, black medick, hawthorn, vetch, buttercups, sycamore, cow parsley, mares tail, forget-me-not and many others totalling 169 species. None of the species were considered to be rare with the exception of deadly nightshade. Some of the species however are locally important such as Irish Spurge and wild raspberry.

Where areas of hedgerow were removed, these were reinstated to ensure the protection and reduction of impact on the wildlife. In a similar vein a survey of the birdlife listed the presence of many Birds Of Conservation Concern. These included Barn Owl, Lapwing and Curlew which were wintering in the area. Actually breeding in the area were Barn Owl and Yellow Hammer as well as Snipe, Stock Dove, Sand Martin, Swallow, Stonedrat, Spotted Flycatcher and Redpoll. Replanting of hedgerows, provision of wildlife corridors, revegetation of land all provide for suitable habitats and the continued presence of all these birds in the future.



*A Badger Pass*