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# Written Ministerial Statement

The content of this written ministerial statement is as received at the time from the Minister. It has not been subject to the official reporting (Hansard) process.

## Regional Development

### **A8 Belfast to Larne Dualling: Publication of Notice of Intention to Proceed and Making of Statutory Orders**

*Published at 12:00 noon on Tuesday 1 May, 2012*

**Mr Kennedy (The Minister for Regional Development):** On 14 February 2012, I announced a programme of improvements to our strategic road network over the next four years. The A8 Belfast to Larne Dualling Scheme is one of the projects I identified to take forward, subject to the outcome of public inquiries. Public Inquiries have been held and the Inspector submitted his report in September 2011.

The Inspector recommended that the proposed dual carriageway should be constructed in accordance with the preferred route which is largely online widening, with an eastern bypass of Bruslee and a western bypass of Ballynure.

The Inspector made over 130 recommendations, which include, keeping Church Road open, the removal of the Rushvale Road – Calhame Road link and the provision of agricultural crossing facilities. The remaining recommendations made by the Inspector are relatively minor and typically relate to accommodation works, provision of additional information, or recommendations for the detailed design or construction phase.

Having discussed the Inspector's report with my Department's officials and having given the matter due consideration, I concur with the main recommendations made by the Inspector.

Construction of the scheme, which will provide 14.4 km of new dual carriageway from Coleman's Corner to Ballyrickard Road is expected to commence in June this year. The scheme helps

reduce journey times, improves road safety along the A8, and helps the development of the Port of Larne, which is the second largest Port in Northern Ireland.

The scheme should also lead to an increase in demand for local suppliers of construction material as well as give a boost to commercial trade in the surrounding area.

I have asked my Department to publish Notice of its intention to proceed with the scheme and to make the necessary statutory orders.

Please note the above statement is embargoed until 12:00 on Tuesday 1 May 2012.

