



**Comhairle Contae  
Dhún na nGall**  
Donegal County Council

## Variation No.1 (July 2013) to the County Donegal Development Plan 2012-2018

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**Note:**

- Text for deletion is shown in ~~black strikethrough~~
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## Chapter 4 Infrastructure

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### 4.1 Transportation

#### **Aim:**

**To achieve quality strategic International, National and Regional links to sea, air and rail from Donegal to other Gateways, locations and markets; to provide for high quality connectivity within the County in line with the Core Strategy; and to deliver optimum accessibility and ease of movement to provide for the economic, social and environmental development of the County into the future.**

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#### 4.1.1 Background

A high quality and sustainable transport network is a crucial element in growth and development across all areas of social, environmental and economic development. The transportation network is particularly fundamental in attracting investment, developing the tourism industry, addressing climate change and in creating sustainable places and communities. The Transportation Strategy set out in this chapter is inextricably linked to and flows from the Core Strategy set out in Chapter 2. The implementation of the settlement hierarchy (map 1 refers) is in part dependant on the key transportation links around the County, at a strategic level, at an intra county level and at a local level.

#### **Strategic Context**

The NSS provides a number of strategic principles that supports the National approach to identifying and prioritising economic infrastructure including highlighting key transport networks that will underpin balanced regional development. These principles are carried forward through the Regional Planning Guidelines, 2010-2022. The Guidelines recognise that despite some significant infrastructural improvements in recent years there remain transport infrastructure deficits within the Region that require future investment. With regard to transportation, the RPG's cite Public Transport, Roads, (including the Northern Cross as outlined in RPG's) Rail, Airports, Ports, Cycling and Walking as fundamental areas of priority investment. Connectivity between the Border Region and Northern Ireland is considered critical to its future development along with connectivity to other regions in Ireland. Integration with the Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland is a fundamental consideration in the development of strategies for the Region.

The National investment priorities are set out in the National Development Plan and Transport 21, 2006-2015. The current transport strategy for Ireland is set out in Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future, 2009-2020 comprising ambitious targets for modal shift (moving to modes of travel alternative to road based transit particularly the private motorcar), a reduction in transport emissions, easing of congestion. It sets out a range of measures designed to encourage smarter travel, deliver transport choice, improve the efficiency of motorised transport, and ensure integrated policy delivery.

In January 2012 the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government published its 'Spatial Planning and National Roads: Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (DoECLG Guidelines). The guidelines set out planning policy considerations relating to development affecting national primary and secondary roads, including motorways and associated junctions, outside the 50-60 kph speed limit zones for cities, towns and villages. These guidelines were issued under section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and planning authorities and An Bord Pleanála are required to have regard to the guidelines in the performance of their functions under the Planning Acts.

~~National guidelines on development accessing National roads provides for the protection of investment in transport infrastructure. This is currently under review and advocates a collaborative approach between planning authorities and the National Roads Authority (NRA).~~

### 4.1.2 Objectives

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- T-O-1:** To achieve quality strategic International, National and Regional links to sea, air and rail from Donegal to other Gateways, locations and markets.
- T-O-2:** To provide for high quality connectivity within the County in line with the Core Strategy [through the promotion of a quality Strategic Road Network as identified on Map 3a.](#)
- T-O-3:** To deliver optimum accessibility, ease of movement and to facilitate appropriate proposals for modal shift.
- T-O-4:** To provide good access to the locations of major economic activity.
- T-O-5:** To safeguard the carrying capacity and safety of National roads and other ~~strategic routes~~ [specified regional roads.](#)
- T-O-6:** To protect the corridors and routes and acquire the lands necessary for transportation improvement projects as identified in Chapter 10.
- T-O-7:** To support the provision of a rail link between the Letterkenny/Derry linked Gateway and also to Sligo and to support the reopening of the Western Rail Corridor from Athenry to Sligo.
- T-O-8:** To support access to and appropriate development of ports and airports.
- T-O-9:** To support the development and expansion of public transport services including The Rural Transport Initiative.
- T-O-10:** To support appropriate enhancement of access to offshore islands.
- T-O-11:** To strengthen cross border transportation links (including the A5 Western Transport Corridor) and support the development of new links.

### 4.1.3 Transportation Policies

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#### General

- T-P-1** It is a policy of the Council to support and facilitate the appropriate development, extension and improvement of Donegal's transport network, [including the Strategic Road Network \(Map 3a refers\)](#), in accordance with the core strategy and subject to environmental, safety and other planning considerations.
- T-P-2** It is a policy of the Council to work in partnership with the Northern Ireland authorities to strengthen and improve existing cross border transportation links (including the A5 Western Transport Corridor) and support the development of new links.
- T-P-3** It is a policy of the Council not to permit development that would prejudice the implementation of a transport scheme identified in the development plan.
- T-P-4** It is a policy of the Council to facilitate the appropriate development of affordable, multi-modal transport solutions that offer communities and future generations real transport choices such as park and ride; pedestrian and cycling; bus and taxi services; and ancillary infrastructure.
- T-P-5** It is a policy of the Council to seek provision, improvement and extension of footpaths and lighting at appropriate locations subject to environmental, safety and amenity considerations.
- T-P-6** It is a policy of the Council to require development proposals to provide adequate provision for car parking and associated servicing arrangements. The precise amount of car parking will be determined according to the specific characteristics of the development and its location having regard to the standards set out in Chapter 10 Development and Technical Standards. A reduced number of car parking spaces may be acceptable in the following circumstances:
- Where, through a Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) it forms part of a package of measures to promote alternative transport modes; or
  - Where the development is in a highly accessible location well served by public transport; or
  - Where the development would benefit from spare capacity available in nearby public car parks, car parks habitually open to public use or on on-street car parking; or
  - Where it is clear to the Planning Authority that one of the uses is daytime use and the other is evening use; or
  - Where it can be established that members of public visit the site by pre-arranged coach/bus; or
  - Where the exercise of flexibility would assist in the conservation of the built or natural heritage, would aid the renewal of areas in need of regeneration, would facilitate a better quality of development or the beneficial reuse of an existing building.

In assessing car parking provisions the Council will require that a proportion of the spaces to be provided is reserved for people with disabilities in accordance with best practice. Where a reduced level of parking provision is accepted, this will not normally apply to the number of reserved spaces to be provided.

- T-P-7** It is a policy of the Council to require that adequate cycle lanes, stands and ancillary facilities be provided in appropriate development proposals having regard to the standards set out in Chapter 10 Development and Technical Standards.
- T-P-8** It is a policy of the council to only permit Directional Signage on the subject business/development, or at, or in the immediate vicinity of, key junctions leading to the subject business/development where it is:
- Exclusively directional in nature;
  - Of a scale appropriate to its directional function and its host location. In rural areas signs shall be of a modest scale.
- T-P-9** It is a policy of the Council to only permit general Advertising Signage on the subject business/development or within the Town Centre boundaries of Tier 2 and 3 settlements or the Identifiable Town Centres of Tier 4 settlements.
- T-P-10** It is a policy of the Council to only permit General Interpretative/Informational Signage of a non-commercial nature on lay-bys, parks, public car parks, viewing points or other points or areas of historical, geographical, scientific, literary or architectural significance.
- T-P-11** It is a policy of the Council to only permit Name/Welcome signage for the County, Town/Village or Specific Geographical Area (including signs for geographically specific tourism brands) at entry points to; the county, the subject town/village, or geographical areas (e.g. Ballybofey/ Stranorlar An Gaeltacht, Fanad Peninsula etc.) where the name/crest of the county, particular town/village or tourism brand is the dominant element if appropriate.
- T-P-12** It is a policy of the Council to only permit Signage for key Tourism Attractions (e.g. Heritage Centres, Museums, Interpretative Centres etc), Tourism Routes, Community Facilities (e.g. community centres, sports facilities etc) or other Key Public or Infrastructural Facilities (e.g. Parking facilities, Post Office, Hospitals, Health Clinics, Libraries, public toilets, civic amenity sites airports etc) on the subject development, at the entry points to the host town/village, or at, or in the immediate vicinity of, key junctions leading to the subject development. At such locations signage for multiple facilities/attractions shall be grouped on a single sign. Signage for Tourism Attractions/Routes shall be brown and white in colour. Signage for public/community facilities shall generally be Black and white in colour. Signage for car parking/transportation shall be predominately blue and white in colour. Logo's/symbols shall be a dominant element of such signs. Internationally Recognised symbols of a non commercial nature shall be a dominant element of such signs.
- T-P-13** It is a policy of the Council to ensure that all signage proposals, shall
- Not compromise road safety;
  - Be of a High Visual Quality in terms of design, colour and materials;
  - Be, as appropriate, of a scale/character suitable to the subject building and the host environment;
  - Not detract from built or natural heritage;
  - Comply with shop front policies set out in the Urban Design Policies (CS-P-5 to CS-P-15, Chapter 2).
- T-P-14** It is a policy of the Council that:
- All signage erected by public bodies shall abide by the provisions of The Official Languages Act 2003, An tOrdu Logainmneacha (Ceantair Ghaeltachta) 2004, Signage Regulations S.I. No. 391 of 2008 and the Road

Traffic Manual in relation to the use of Irish and English on various types of signage.

- All Business/Community signage shall be either Irish Only or Bilingual in nature with Irish First and not smaller or less prominent than the other languages used.

**T-P-15** It is a policy of the Council to require that all development proposals comply with the Development and Technical Standards set out in Chapter 10 to promote road safety.

## Strategic Roads

The strategic road network has been identified on Map-3 3a and in the Core Strategy and comprises National roads and ~~strategie~~ a number of regional roads ~~which the Council recognise are of strategic importance as these roads facilitate high volumes of vehicular traffic,~~ allowing for the efficient movement of traffic between settlements within and outside of the County. ~~The Strategic Road Network is essential in terms of the purpose of identifying a Strategic Road Network is to contribute to the implementation of the core strategy and settlement hierarchy and to demonstrate the strategic importance of appropriate linked connectivity throughout the County, especially between tier 2 settlements and the Letterkenny Gateway which is presented at Map 1.~~

Within the 'Strategic Road Network', a ~~A~~ higher level of strategic importance is afforded to National Primary & National Secondary roads (and the R238 from Buncrana to Bridgend) through the application of Policy T-P-16 (accesses onto National Roads) as these roads specifically ~~all of which,~~ form part of the Atlantic Corridor, provide for external access or link the Gateway population centres. ~~The carrying capacity, efficiency and safety of the Regional Roads which form part of the 'Strategic Road Network' will be appropriately protected through Objective T-O-5 and Policies T-P-15, T-P-17 and T-P-19, and the effectiveness of this approach will be monitored.~~

~~Major road improvements tend to take place over prolonged periods and in the short/medium term the County will have to rely heavily on its existing infrastructure. It is important therefore, that the quality and carrying capacity of existing routes are protected into the future.~~

**T-P-16** It is a policy of the Council not to permit developments requiring new accesses or which would result in the intensification of existing access points onto National Roads ~~where the speed limit is greater than 60 kph~~ or roads treated to National Roads Standards ~~namely (map 3b refers): (Strategic Road Network) where the speed limit is greater than 60kph~~

- R238 Bridgend-Buncrana Road (where the speed limit is greater than 60 kph)

~~Notwithstanding the foregoing, in exceptional circumstances, developments of national and regional strategic importance may be considered where the locations concerned have specific characteristics that make them particularly suitable for the developments proposed, subject to such developments being provided for through the Local Area Plan or Development Plan making process, including in consultation with the NRA.~~

~~The Council may consider the creation of a new access point from an existing, authorised use which eliminates a traffic hazard on a strategic Road, subject to the closure of the existing access. In exceptional circumstances direct access may be considered, on a case by case basis, in consultation where appropriate with the NRA, to accommodate strategic infrastructure or regionally significant development.~~

- T-P-17** It is a policy of the Council to promote the quality and connectivity provided through the identified Strategic Road Network (Map 3a), subject to environmental, safety and other planning considerations.
- T-P-18** It is a policy of the Council to require that all new development proposed adjacent to existing and planned National Primary roads is set back 50m from outside edge of running carriageway unless existing buildings have formed an established building line in which case the new buildings may follow the established building line.
- ~~**T-P-18** It is a policy of the Council to require that new filling stations requiring direct access onto strategic will not be considered outside the 60kph speed limit. This policy will apply to the strategic road network set out in Map no. 3~~
- T-P-19** It is a policy of the Council to require that any new access to strategic roads is designed in compliance with the National Roads Authority's Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB), avoiding the use of right turn lanes unless a clear warrant has been established.
- T-P-20** It is a policy of the Council to require a Traffic and Transport Assessment and Road Safety Audit for any development proposing access to the Strategic Road Network.
- T-P-21** It is a policy of this Council that the Finn Valley is recognised as a central geographic location within the County as it acts as a significant access point to and through the County.

## Air

Donegal County Council recognise the strategic importance of Donegal Airport and City of Derry Airport in the provision of key international, national and regional access to/from the County.

- T-P-22** It is a policy of the Council to facilitate and enhance appropriate access to and expansion of Donegal airport subject to proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
- T-P-23** It is a policy of the Council to manage development proposals within the wider vicinity of Donegal Airport having regard to the safeguarding map set out at the end of this section (Map 4 refers).
- T-P-24** It is a policy of the Council to support and promote Donegal Airport as a key transport and tourism asset to County Donegal
- T-P-25** It is a policy of the Council to support and promote City of Derry airport as an important strategic cross border infrastructure asset for east Donegal.

## Seaports and Ferry Services

As set out elsewhere in the plan, seaports and ferry services play an important role in promoting the social and economic vitality of the County.

- T-P-26** It is a policy of the Council to promote and facilitate the further development and expansion of Killybegs Harbour Centre as a strategically important deep water commercial and leisure port, subject to environmental considerations.
- T-P-27** It is a policy of the Council to promote, sustain and enhance the Greencastle to Magilligan and Buncrana to Rathmullan ferry services.
- T-P-28** It is a policy of the Council to promote and facilitate services at Burtonport and Greencastle.

## Rail

Donegal County Council recognise the social, economic and environmental opportunities associated with the reintroduction of rail services into and through the County. Consequently the Council have initiated feasibility work on re-establishing rail links in the North West both with the Western Rail Corridor and with Dublin and Belfast and is working with the other counties along the Border to progress this initiative.

- T-P-29** It is a policy of the Council to support the provision of a rail link between the Letterkenny/Derry linked Gateway and also to Sligo and to support the reopening of the Western Rail Corridor from Athenry to Sligo, thereby completing the All Ireland rail network.
- T-P-30** It is a policy of the Council to protect established/historic railway corridors throughout the County primarily for strategic infrastructure provision (such as rail/road projects) and secondly for recreational development. Along these corridors other uses shall not be considered. Where these corridors have already been compromised by development, adjacent lands which could provide opportunities to bypass such an impediment and reconnect these routes for amenity purposes (walking/cycling) shall be protected for this purpose. However, in all instances, the over-riding objective shall be the provision of strategic infrastructure.
- T-P-31** It is a policy of the Council to facilitate the appropriate development of small-scale tourism based rail projects in the County subject to environmental and other planning considerations.

## Bus and Taxi Services

Bus and taxi services play a vital social role in rural communities, linking rural areas with settlements and essential services such as schools and healthcare. There are various types of bus and taxi transport serving the County, these are set out below;

- Bus Eireann expressway long-distance services, linking Donegal with Derry, Dublin, Sligo and Galway.
- Bus Eireann/Ulster Bus and private transport operators provide local commuter routes and services throughout the County.
- School bus services operated on behalf of the Department of Education and Science.
- Private coach and mini-bus services to Derry, Belfast, Galway, Dublin and Glasgow.
- Community bus routes operated under the Rural Transport Initiative (RTI).
- Private taxi services.
- Publicly funded taxi services, such as those operated under Health Service Executive (HSE).

- T-P-32** It is a policy of the Council to facilitate the development and enhancement of transport facilities, programmes and initiatives that service both the urban and rural areas of the County.
- T-P-33** It is a policy of the Council to facilitate appropriate tourism based transport developments and programmes associated with strategic tourism assets (e.g. Glenveagh National Park and Slieve League).
- T-P-34** It is a policy of the Council to support and facilitate the development of public, semi-public and community projects and proposals which provide innovative transport solutions in rural, disadvantaged and border areas such as rural park and ride schemes, rural carpooling and car sharing schemes, and bus and taxi schemes in consultation with public, private and community organisations north and south subject to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
- T-P-35** It is a policy of the Council to ensure that large scale developments provide sufficient infrastructure for the use of buses and taxis, where appropriate, subject to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

## **Walking and Cycling**

Walking and cycling are the most sustainable forms of transport and are key components to movement and accessibility in urban and inter-urban areas. Walking and cycling benefit the environment and the population by reducing pollution, noise and traffic congestion, as well as contributing to healthy more active lifestyles.

- T-P-36** It is a policy of the Council to ensure that development proposals protect the route of potential linkages (such as linear parks, roads, footpaths, trails, cycleways) through the subject site where the planning authority considers that a strategic opportunity exists to provide a linkage to or between adjoining areas.
- T-P-37** It is a policy of the Council to ensure that the design and layout of multiple residential, community, large scale industrial and commercial development incorporates distinct and effective provisions for pedestrian and vehicular traffic movements within the site and its locality.
- T-P-38** It is a policy of the Council to ensure that large scale development proposals provide walking and cycling infrastructure.
- T-P-39** It is a policy of the Council to require developments to make comprehensive provision, where appropriate, for access for people with special mobility needs in accordance with current best practice.
- T-P-40** It is a policy of the Council to encourage and facilitate joined up long distance walking and cycling routes for recreation and as alternatives to the car, particularly in rural areas, between settlements.
- T-P-41** It is a policy of the Council to support and facilitate the maintenance, enhancement and expansion of the National Cycle Network.



**County Donegal  
Development Plan  
2012 - 2018**

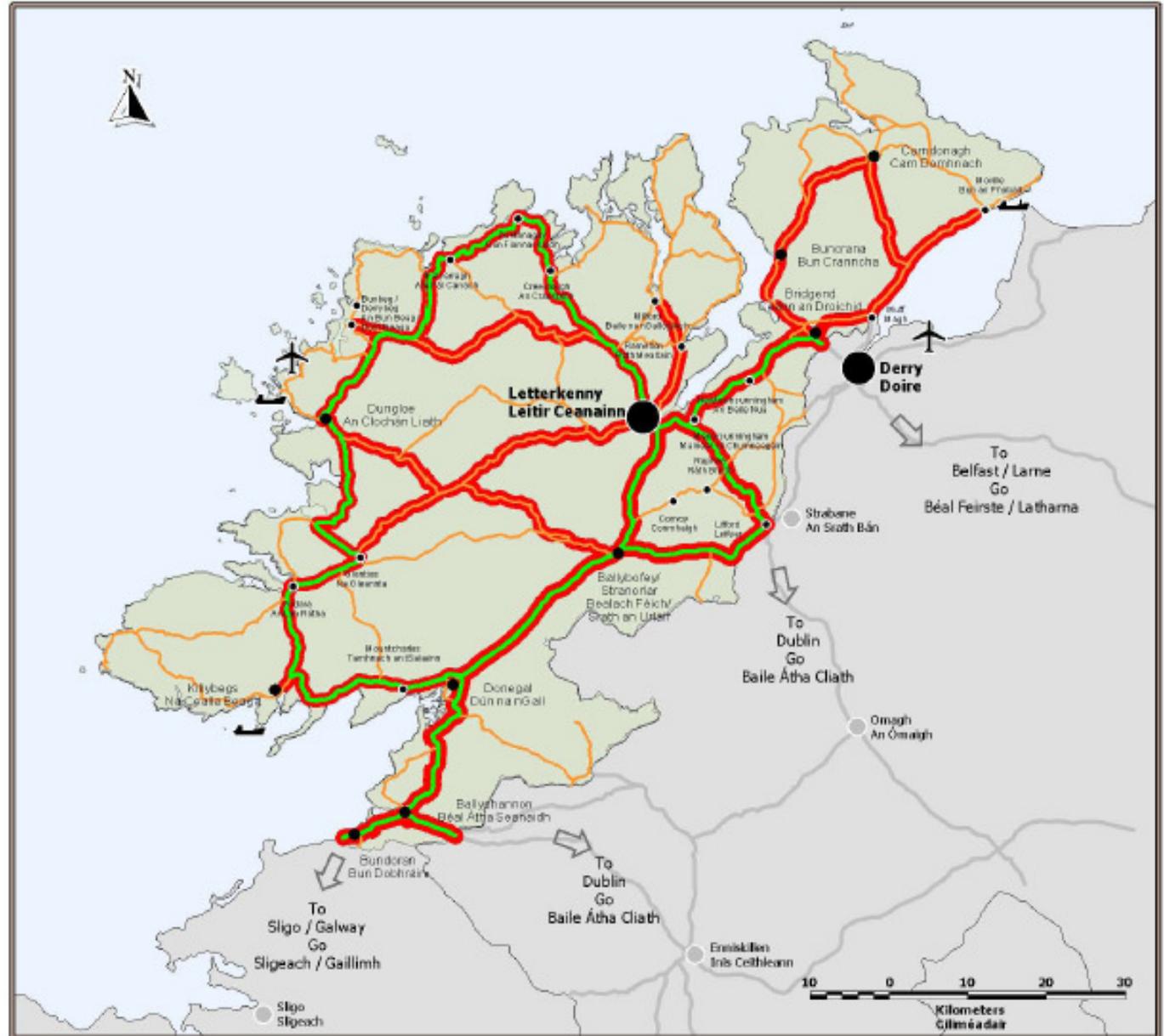
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**Plean Forbartha  
Contae Dhún na nGall  
2012 - 2018**

**Map 3 A / Léarscáil 3 A**

**Strategic Transport Network  
Líonra Iompair Sraitéiseach**

- Strategic Road Network  
Gréasán Bóithre Straitéiseacha
- National Roads  
Bóithre Náisiúnta
- Regional Roads  
Bóithre Réigiúnaíoch
-  Airport  
Aerfort
-  Strategic Ports  
Caisfort Straitéiseach





**County Donegal  
Development Plan  
2012 - 2018**

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**Plean Forbartha  
Contae Dhún na nGall  
2012 - 2018**

**Map 3 B / Léarscáil 3 B**

**Roads to which  
Policy T-P-16 applies  
Bóithre lena mbaineann  
Polasaí T-P-16**

National Roads (& R238 Bridgend to Bun Cranna) and to which policy T-P-16 applies.

— Bóithre Náisiúnta (& R238 Coann an Droichid go Bun Cranna) agus lena mbaineann polasaí T-P-16

Regional Roads  
Bóithre Réigiúnacha

