



EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

accompanying the

Draft Toll Scheme

for the

Dublin Port Tunnel

**amending the Toll Scheme made by the
National Roads Authority
on 25th September 1998**

NATIONAL ROADS AUTHORITY

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1 Introduction

1.1 *Background*

The National Roads Authority (the “Authority”) made a Toll Scheme on 25th September 1998, hereinafter called the “1998 Scheme”, and approved by the Minister for the Environment and Local Government on 22nd December 1999 in respect of the proposed national road known as the Dublin Port Tunnel and defined as the Proposed Road in the 1998 Scheme.

Having regard to:

- the increases in traffic levels in Dublin City since the 1998 Scheme was prepared;
- the provisions of EC Directive 2004/54 on minimum safety requirements for tunnels on the trans-European road network;
- the necessity to ensure that the tunnel remains capable of fulfilling its primary objective of providing an access route to Dublin Port for heavy goods vehicles;
- the levels of economic growth since 1998 and the consequential impact on the deterrent value of the car toll level in dealing with commuting into the city centre in the peak hours via the tunnel,

the Authority has reviewed the toll levels provided in the 1998 Scheme and has prepared a Draft Toll Scheme amending, inter alia, those toll levels.

1.2 *Description of the Dublin Port Tunnel*

- 1.2.1 The overall Dublin Port Tunnel comprises approximately 5.6 km of dual carriageway (of which 4.5 km approx. will be in tunnel) together with associated junctions and infrastructure (a plan of the Dublin Port Tunnel route is attached to the Draft Toll Scheme).
- 1.2.2 The Dublin Port Tunnel, which it is intended to be classified as a motorway, will provide a direct link between the M1 Motorway and Dublin Port, follows a broad north-south alignment linking the M1 Dublin-Belfast Motorway at Santry to the North Port area at Promenade Road and to East Wall Road at the Tolka Quay Road junction.
- 1.2.3 The tunnel section of the project commences at the Coolock Lane Junction on the M1 motorway and, at the southern end, the Dublin Port Tunnel will emerge above ground before the River Tolka, close to Fairview Park, and continue as a surface road into the North Port as well as linking with the local road network at East Wall Road.
- 1.2.4 The Dublin Port Tunnel will result in many benefits for the country as a whole. These include:
- Support for national, city and local planning policies.

- An overall improvement in the amenity of the City of Dublin in the context of reducing the separation of communities due to traffic, particularly heavy goods vehicles.
- Facilitating the continued development of Dublin Port through the provision of a high quality access to the motorway system.
- Reduction in heavy goods vehicles in the city centre, across the canals cordon and in particular on the Quays.
- Reduction in heavy goods vehicles on local residential roads.
- Providing the opportunity to implement a comprehensive heavy goods vehicle management plan to improve the environment of the city centre.
- Providing increased potential to implement public transport, cycle and traffic calming measures.

1.3 Dublin Transportation Initiative

- 1.3.1 The Dublin Transportation Initiative (DTI) identified a long-term transportation strategy for the greater Dublin Area. Regarding Port Access, the DTI Final Report (1994) recommended that:

10.7.1 *“Access to Dublin Port should be tackled by an integrated package of measures involving HGV Management, the construction of a new port access route and the introduction of tolls to manage effectively non-HGV traffic using that route.”*

- 1.3.2 Regarding tolling, the DTI elaborated in Technical Volume 10 (Dublin Port Access Study) that:

6.20 *“It would not be appropriate for the NPAR (i.e. the Dublin Port Tunnel) to be a fully tolled facility: HGVs should not be tolled. Application of tolls to private car users will also need to be subject to overall controls set by the planning agencies in order that DTI Strategic objectives relating to port access are met.”*

- 1.3.3 In developing its preferred strategy, the DTI Study assessed various proposals for Port access. As part of the assessment, the numbers and destination of car trips within the tunnel were examined. The issue of attracting extra cars into the city centre, particularly in the morning peak hour, was highlighted, indicating that the free use of the Dublin Port Tunnel would result in additional peak hour trips being made by private cars, as opposed to public transport, most of which would be destined for the city centre. It was considered that this would be in conflict with the objectives of the DTI strategy which seeks to discourage additional car trips into the city centre, particularly during the peak hours.

- 1.3.4 Based on this conclusion, the rationale behind the tolling scheme was outlined in Technical Volume 10 as follows:

6.10 *“It has been clearly identified that if the NPAR were to be freely available for private cars as well as HGV’s it would have the unwanted side effect of attracting public transport users to the city centre to switch to private cars. The implication is that this facility would need to be tolled, for private cars, in order that this effect is countered. The application of tolls to private cars would need to be subject to the control of the public authorities to ensure that the route meets DTI objectives. Care must be taken, however, as the removal of private cars from the NPAR may result in increased flows on other roads with little or no benefit to improving the modal split.”*

- 1.3.5 As part of its consideration of the DTI's Final Report, the Government announced in October 1994 that the Dublin Port Tunnel should proceed subject to:
- i) the route being constructed as a dual carriageway (mostly in tunnel) from the airport Motorway at Whitehall to the North Port;
 - ii) the route being classified as a proposed national road, thereby placing its construction under the overall responsibility of the National Roads Authority;
 - iii) the implementation of the project being accompanied by traffic management measures (including tolling and a truck management system) on the lines recommended in the DTI Final Report.

This Government decision has informed the development and implementation of the project to date.

1.4 Statutory Procedures

The Draft Toll Scheme for the Dublin Port Tunnel and its accompanying Explanatory Statement have been prepared in accordance with the statutory provisions of the Roads Act, 1993, as amended by the Planning and Development Act, 2000.

In accordance with these legislative enactments, the following provisions apply as part of the statutory procedures:

- A Notice is published informing that a Draft Toll Scheme has been prepared and indicating the place and times where the Draft Toll Scheme and accompanying Explanatory Statement can be inspected, and including a statement of the time limits within which members of the public can make objections in writing to the Authority.
- Copies of the Draft Toll Scheme and Explanatory Statement are made available for inspection by the public for a minimum period of one month. In the case of this Draft Toll Scheme, the display period for the documents will be from 25th August 2005 to 26th September 2005.
- Objections to the Draft Toll Scheme may be made, in writing only, to the Authority before 5.00 pm on 10th October 2005.
- A Notice is served on Dublin City Council informing them that a Draft Toll Scheme has been prepared for the Dublin Port Tunnel and stating that representations may be made in writing under Section 57 of the Roads Act, 1993, as amended, to the Authority within a specified period.
- If objections to the Draft Toll Scheme under section 58 of the Roads Act, 1993, as amended, are received and not withdrawn, the Authority will cause an oral hearing to be held into the matters to which the objections relate. The report and recommendations of the person appointed to hold the hearing will be considered

by the Authority prior to determining whether or not to adopt the Draft Toll Scheme.

- The Authority may adopt the Draft Toll Scheme with or without modifications or may refuse to adopt it.

2

Provisions of the Toll Scheme

2.1 *Proposed National Road to be Tolled*

The Draft Toll Scheme describes the location of the proposed national road which is proposed to be tolled. The description is also set out in paragraph 1.2 of this Explanatory Statement, with details of the toll collection location stated in paragraph 3.1.

2.2 *Purpose and Effect*

The purpose of the Draft Toll Scheme is to amend the previously approved 1998 Scheme in respect of the Dublin Port Tunnel (i.e. the Proposed Road in the 1998 Scheme) to modify, inter alia, the estimated toll charges and the categorisation of exempt vehicles.

The effect of the Draft Toll Scheme, if adopted, is to amend the 1998 Scheme thereby facilitating the traffic management objectives associated with the Dublin Port Tunnel. The adoption of the Draft Toll Scheme would establish a level of tolls that would be expected to:

- ensure that the non-HGV traffic would not interfere with the ability of the Dublin Port Tunnel to meet its primary objective of providing a high quality access route to Dublin Port;
- ensure that the Dublin Port Tunnel would not cause an increase in car based commuter trips into the city centre;
- limit the potential for traffic congestion, which is undesirable in a tunnel situation, to occur within the tunnel.

2.3 *Classes of Vehicles and Road Users*

The Proposed Road is intended for use by all classes of vehicles and road users set out in Schedule B of the 1998 Scheme.

2.4 *Exempt Vehicles*

The categories of vehicles and road users proposed to be exempt from tolls are set out in the applicable section of the Draft Toll Scheme. The original 1998 Scheme provided for taxis and hackneys (as defined therein) to be exempt from tolls. The de-regulation of the taxi industry since the publication of the 1998 Scheme has led to a very substantial growth in taxis in the metropolitan region. The exemption from charges for taxis and hackneys has been removed in the Draft Toll Scheme as the significant volumes of taxis now existing will need to be regulated in similar fashion to private motor cars in order to protect the principal purpose of the tunnel. In 1998, the number of taxis and hackneys prior to de-regulation was of such a low order that the toll free provision could be incorporated into the 1998 Scheme without any concerns on the attendant effects on the capacity and satisfactory safe operation of the tunnel for heavy goods vehicles.

2.5 Toll Charges

There is one toll collection location on the Proposed Road. The estimated amounts of the tolls that it is proposed to charge at this toll collection location are given in Table I.

TABLE I: Estimated amounts of the tolls in August 2005 prices proposed to be charged at the toll collection location

Class of Vehicle	Direction of Travel	Days of Week	Time Period	Estimated Toll *	Comparison with Toll Charges from 1998 Scheme **
All mechanically propelled vehicles not exempted	Southbound	Monday to Friday	6 a.m. to 10 a.m.	€12	€5.59
All mechanically propelled vehicles not exempted	Southbound	Monday to Friday	All times other than 6 a.m. to 10 a.m. above	€6	€1.86
All mechanically propelled vehicles not exempted	Northbound	Monday to Friday	4 p.m. to 7 p.m.	€12	€1.86
All mechanically propelled vehicles not exempted	Northbound	Monday to Friday	All times other than 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. above	€6	€1.86
All mechanically propelled vehicles not exempted	Northbound and Southbound	Saturday and Sunday	All	€6	€1.86

*The estimated toll charges are inclusive of VAT (if applicable). The toll (inclusive of VAT if applicable) that would actually be charged would be rounded in accordance with bye-laws.

** The toll charges in the 1998 Scheme have been presented for comparison purposes only and have been adjusted in accordance with Real Gross National Disposal Income per capita for the period from July 1998 to August 2004 but are exclusive of VAT (if applicable). The estimated tolls that are intended to apply are set out in the "Estimated Toll" column.

- Notes:**
- (a) Southbound is the direction from Santry to Dublin Port.
 - (b) Northbound is the direction from Dublin Port to Santry.

The charges specified above are an estimate at August 2005 prices and may be updated periodically, for example, in line with increases in the Consumer Price Index or increases in Gross National Disposable Income. The tolls actually to be charged will fall to be specified in bye-laws to be made by the National Roads Authority under Section 61 of the Roads Act, 1993, as amended by section 274 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000.

The increases in toll charges proposed in this Draft Toll Scheme are those considered necessary, from updated transportation modelling, to control the number of private cars and goods vehicles with a design gross vehicle weight of less than 3,500 kilograms accessing the tunnel and thereby impairing the primary purpose of an efficient and safe transport artery for heavy goods vehicles. As a result of the general growth in traffic in the Dublin region, the need to provide a specific category to address the afternoon peak hour in the northbound direction has been identified and has been included in the Draft Toll Scheme.

3 Toll Facility

3.1 Toll Collection Location

It is proposed to locate a toll plaza to the north of East Wall Road on the section of the Proposed Road between the River Tolka and the proposed Dublin Port entrance at Promenade Road. The location of the proposed toll plaza is indicated on the map attached as Schedule A to the 1998 Scheme which is appended to the Draft Toll Scheme.

3.2 Description

It is proposed that the toll plaza will involve the management of ten lanes with varying combinations of manual payment, automatic coin machine, and electronic toll collection (ETC) lanes being possible under different traffic loading conditions. The overall toll system will be required to provide:

- a secure and reliable system for the collection of tolls due;
- users with a safe, speedy and efficient passage through the toll plaza;
- users with flexible and convenient methods of paying the tolls due, and
- toll collection staff with a safe and secure environment in which to carry out their duties.

4 General Arrangements for the Toll Road

4.1 *Funding and Construction*

The Dublin Port Tunnel is currently under construction by a contractor working on behalf of Dublin City Council. The funding for this construction is being provided by the National Roads Authority.

4.2 *Tunnel Operation*

The National Roads Authority proposes to award a separate service contract to a company or consortium to operate and maintain the Dublin Port Tunnel, inclusive of the tolling functions, on its behalf. That contract will provide explicit performance requirements to ensure the efficient operation of the toll facility for the benefit of users and the safe operation of the tunnel.

5 Traffic and Revenue

5.1 *Predicted Traffic Flows*

The estimated average daily traffic flow predicted through the Dublin Port Tunnel at the anticipated year of opening, 2006, (and passing through the toll plaza location) is 21,600 vehicles of which approximately 29% are Heavy Commercial Vehicles above 17 tonnes laden weight. The estimated average daily traffic flow predicted through the Dublin Port Tunnel in the year 2028 is 19,400 vehicles of which approximately 55% are Heavy Commercial Vehicles above 17 tonnes laden weight.

5.2 *Tolling Revenue*

Based on the daily estimates of the traffic volumes, as set out above, using the Dublin Port Tunnel, the gross amount of toll revenue in the first year of operation, is estimated to be approximately €2 million, excluding VAT (if applicable), at August 2005 prices.

6

Scheme Costs

6.1 Scheme Cost and Cost of Tolling

The estimated capital cost (including the estimated capital cost of tolling the road) of the Proposed Road (inclusive of design, land acquisition and other related costs) is approximately €751 million, including VAT, in year 2005 prices.

The estimated capital cost of tolling the Proposed Road is approximately €9 million, including VAT, in year 2005 prices, and the annual toll operating cost is estimated as approximately €2.5 million, including VAT, in year 2005 prices.