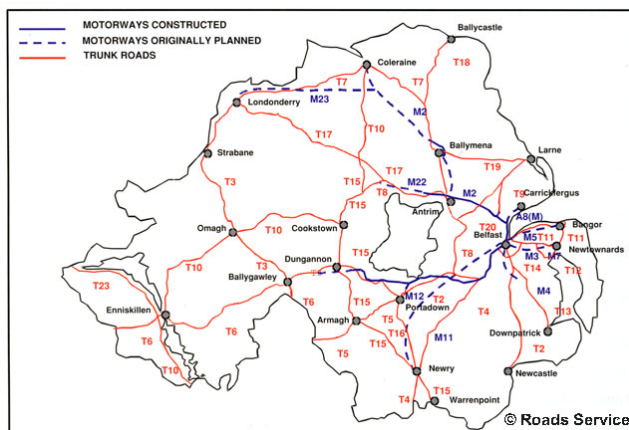


Motorway plans announced in the House of Commons in 1964 envisaged that a motorway would be constructed to Antrim and then fork and give motorways to Castledawson and to beyond Ballymena. Later, the motorway to Ballymena would be extended to Coleraine and on to Londonderry. Five M2 motorway contracts were completed:

- Belfast to Greencastle opened to traffic on 22nd May 1973: McAlpine, Cementation and PW Foundations built this 2.5 mile stretch at a cost of £7.5M.
- Greencastle to Sandyknowes opened to traffic on 24th October 1966: Lowe and Cubar built this 3.5 mile stretch.
- Sandyknowes to Templepatrick opened to traffic on 4th September 1975: Farrans built this 5.9 mile stretch at a cost of £5M.
- Templepatrick to Dunsilly opened to traffic on 26th February 1971: Graham built this 6.5 mile stretch at a cost of £4.1M.
- Ballymena Bypass opened to traffic on 26th April 1969: Lowe and Farrans built this 5 mile stretch at a cost of £5M

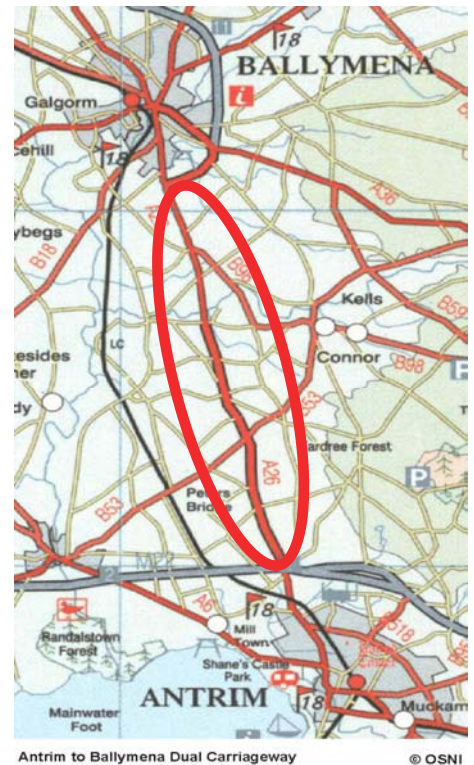


The section of the M2 between Antrim and Ballymena was deleted from the programme following a public inquiry in the early 1980s. The existing single carriageway road between Antrim and Ballymena has been converted to dual carriageway by building a new carriageway alongside the existing road.

This road proposal was included in the Ballymena Area Plan 1986—2001. The Plan envisaged that the A26 Antrim/Ballymena Dual Carriageway (Dunsilly to Ballee) would be completed during the Plan period. The Plan acknowledged that “the dualling of the A26

Antrim/Ballymena Road from Dunsilly to Ballee has been confirmed by the Department of the Environment after Public Inquiry. The scheme will probably be constructed in 4 stages. Stage 1, Dunsilly to Drumkeeran, is programmed to start in spring 1988”.

The A26 Antrim to Ballymena Dual Carriageway (Dunsilly to Ballee) was completed in four contracts:



The A26 Antrim to Ballymena Dual Carriageway (Dunsilly to Ballee) was completed in four contracts:

- Dunsilly Roundabout to Byrnes Pub opened to traffic in March 1989: R J Maxwell built this 4.6 kilometre stretch at a cost of £2.3M.
- Byrnes Pub to Woodgreen opened to traffic in May 1998: F P M^cCann built this 3.5 kilometre stretch at a cost of £2.8M.
- Maine (Line) Bridge opened to traffic in October 1998: F P M^cCann built this at a cost of £0.8M.
- Maine Bridge to Ballee Roundabout opened to traffic in May 2001: Whitemountain Civils built this 3.5 kilometre stretch at a cost of £3.7M.



PARTIALLY FUNDED
BY THE
EUROPEAN REGIONAL
DEVELOPMENT FUND

THE LINE BRIDGE, WOODGREEN
OPENED BY
ENVIRONMENT MINISTER
LORD DUBS
25 NOVEMBER 1998