

22<sup>nd</sup> January 2019

Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly  
3rd Floor North  
Ballymun Civic Centre  
Main Street  
Ballymun  
Dublin  
D09 C8P5

By e-mail only to: [rses@emra.ie](mailto:rses@emra.ie)

**Re: Draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region  
PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

Dear Sir or Madam,

This is a submission on behalf of *Ms. Jane Tripp and Ms. Rita Shah, Shabra Lodge, Cortober, Castleblayney, Co Monaghan* in respect of the Draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region (draft RSES) published in November 2018. Our clients are involved in a range of developments throughout the Eastern and Midland Region and elsewhere in Ireland and overseas.

Based on our clients' experience across various Local Authorities, they are encountering a demand and identified need from the Ageing Population for Retirement Accommodation which would not displace them too far from their rural locality and that this accommodation should be provided within a safe and secure environment within close proximity of Dublin. Accordingly, the Assembly is invited to include the following additional regional policy objective in section 4.8 of the Draft RSES:

**RPO 4.56:** *In Development Plan policy, Local Authorities shall identify appropriate rural locations that have the potential for retirement accommodation for the ageing population.*

This policy would assist to counteract the ageing population crisis, social exclusion and isolation, and the lack of access to infrastructure in rural areas. All of these issues are identified in the draft RSES but there is no policy objective included specific to the provision of retirement accommodation for the ageing population in rural areas. Section 4.8 on Rural Areas acknowledges the declining and ageing population and the lack of access to infrastructure in rural area. The most notable infrastructure deficiency is access to rural broadband, which is also a problem within the Assembly's region. In addition, many ageing rural residents also have difficulty accessing other essential social and community services, which leads to social exclusion and isolation (as stated in section 9.1).

Section 9.2 of the draft RSES acknowledges that there will be an increasing ageing population and states *“there is an urgent need for responsive planning policy to avoid an ageing population crisis.”* This potential crisis would be most severely felt in rural areas because the current planning policy only relates to urban centres with no regard for rural locations or the need and locational preference of older persons that currently reside in rural locations to remain resident in rural locations.

Our clients suggested policy objective would enable local authorities to plan appropriate rural locations for retirement accommodation and housing for the ageing population. Any potential rural locations would probably be identified through the Housing Need Demand Assessment to be undertaken by each local authority as required by National Policy Objective 37 in the National Planning Framework.

Please acknowledge receipt of this submission and direct any future correspondence to this office.

Regards,



Raymond O'Malley

Kieran O'Malley & Co. Ltd.

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