

Rory Kunz

From: Rory Kunz
Sent: Wednesday 23 January 2019 09:53
To: 'rses@emra.ie'
Subject: re: Submission to Draft RSES - Glenveagh Properties PLC
Attachments: 17105 DraftRSESDV1FINAL23-1-2018.pdf

Dear Sir/Madam,

We refer to the publication of the Draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (Draft RSES) for the Eastern and Midland region on the 3rd of November 2018. Glenveagh Properties Plc, F11 Maynooth Business Campus, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, W23 HR64 has instructed John Spain Associates to prepare the attached submission on their behalf.

I would appreciate confirmation of receipt of the submission at your earliest convenience.

Best regards,
Rory

Rory Kunz, *Executive Director*,
John Spain Associates,
39 Fitzwilliam Place,
Dublin 2,
D02 ND61.

T: 01 662 5803
M: 087 322 5858
e-mail: RKunz@johnspainassociates.com
web: www.jsaplanning.ie



The information contained in this email and in any attachments is confidential and is designated solely for the attention and use of the intended recipient(s). This information may be subject to legal professional privilege, and copyright. If you are not an intended recipient of this email, you must not use, disclose, copy, distribute or retain this message or any part of it.

POST

164



John Spain Associates

Planning & Development Consultants
Chartered Town Planners & Chartered Surveyors

39 Fitzwilliam Place,
Dublin 2
D02 ND61

www.jsaplanning.ie

Tel 01 662 5803
info@johnspainassociates.com

Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly,
3rd Floor North,
Ballymun Civic Centre,
Main Street,
Ballymun, Dublin, D09 C8P5
rses@emra.ie

Date: 23rd January 2019

JSA Ref. 17105

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: DRAFT REGIONAL, ECONOMIC AND SPATIAL STRATEGY – EAST & MIDLANDS AREA

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 We refer to the publication of the Draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (Draft RSES) for the Eastern and Midland region on the 3rd of November 2018. Glenveagh Properties Plc, F11 Maynooth Business Campus, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, W23 HR64 has instructed John Spain Associates to prepare this submission on their behalf.
- 1.2 At the outset, our client welcomes and supports the publication of the Draft RSES, which will provide the regional framework for the delivery of new dwellings for the East and Midlands region.
- 1.3 This submission is focused on how the RSES should influence the delivery of new dwellings in appropriate serviced locations and that clear guidance should be provided to Planning Authorities on how additional flexibility in the adopted RSES can assist in the implementation of the RSES at County level, and ultimately the delivery of much needed housing.

Managing Director: John P. Spain BSc MRUP MRICS ASCS MRTPI MIPPI

Executive Directors: Paul Turley BA MRUP Dip Environmental & Planning Law MIPPI ROY KULLZ BA (MOD) MSc-ERM MAT&CP Dip EIA Mgmt MIPPI,
Stephen Blair BA (Mod) MRUP MIPPI Mary Mac Mahon MSc TCF Pg Dip MSP Pg Dip Env Eng Dip Env Plg Law Dip Mgmt Dip EIA & SEA B Sc Sc MIPPI

Associate Directors: Stephanie BYLINE BA MRUP MIPPI, Niall BYLINE BSc(Hons) MSc MRTPI MIPPI

John Spain Associates Ltd. trading as John Spain Associates. Directors: J. Spain, S. Spain.
Registered in Ireland No. 396306. Registered Office: 39, Fitzwilliam Place, Dublin 2. VAT No. IE 6416306U

Associate Offices:

London

Manchester

Leeds

1.4 In summary,

- The kernel of the RSES is the need to balance several factors: setting overall targets for growth wherein *'it is a pattern of development that is being targeted, rather than precise numbers'* (from section 2.3 of NPF); align infrastructure investment and priorities (determine the *'assimilative capacity'* of areas, RPO 4.2); avoid creating an *'unreasonable dependency'* on certain sites, thus paying much closer attention to actual delivery, with the bringing forward of other suitable lands part of the assessment, should some sites be slower to deliver new homes (*'Taking Account of Existing Plans'*).
- In our judgement, where lands have been identified as suitable for housing, and where a competent assessment shows the availability of infrastructure, then full support for early delivery of homes at such locations, always subject to the principles of proper planning and sustainable development, including unit mix, appropriate density etc., must be firmly expressed in the final version of the RSES.
- With specific regard to the use of headroom as an important mechanism for ensuring a spatial allocation of land, including brownfield land, for new homes, the approach as currently outlined in the Draft RSES is uncertain. We suggest that this creates a confusion as to how Local Authorities should address the spatial consequence of needed headroom.
- It is important that the adopted RSES recognise that headroom has an important spatial element. Clarity on the application of headroom should recognise that the deliverability of housing is a complex and often a multi-faceted and lengthy exercise. A reliance on a solely population-based headroom, fails to take into account that the preparation of a core strategy of a County Plan, includes a broader scrutiny of the characteristics of a site. These characteristics may include, proximity to services, social infrastructure and public transport, all of which play a role in the suitability of a site to be brought forward for development.
- Using a solely population-based headroom for zoning as is currently suggested would have the potential effect of curtailing sites, which otherwise are appropriate for development. There still needs to be a spatial dimension to how headroom is applied in the quantum of zoned land to take into account (a) the length of time it takes to get zoned land fully serviced, (b) developer/market considerations, and (c) land assembly etc. An additional spatial element to headroom, along with the associated infrastructure review of land, is required to ensure that lands which are serviced, and ready to deliver housing supply, are not artificially constrained.
- Our client is supportive of the inclusion of an infrastructural review in the delivery of housing and of residential land use zoning as part of the plan-making process. This will take into account the lands which are un-serviced and which have infrastructure constraints. While this exercise would result in the removal/sequencing of such lands, it must be matched by a strong statement of commitment to zoned and serviced lands capable of delivering housing in the short term.
- There is a concern that in the language of the Draft RSES, an arbitrary cap may be placed on certain locations simply to satisfy a theoretical interpretation of the NPF Regional *'rebalancing'* exercise. This would be contrary to the NPF approach which recognises that in future growth, it is the pattern of development which is being targeted rather than precise numbers. Instead the final RSES

should emphasise that there is a need to balance objectives and projections of growth with practical planning realities, such as: the full exploitation of locations where public investment has recently gone in, a need to judge areas which have developed to a certain stage of build out and which would suffer negative consequences if the overall district was not fully completed.

- Equally, where a developer can demonstrate the capability of bridging an identified infrastructure deficit, alongside all other requirements of proper planning and sustainable development that this is taken into account in the preparation of future core strategies and subsequent future land use zonings, and such lands could be brought forward in the short term.
- In short, it is important that key settlements are not artificially constrained in respect of population growth particularly where there has been significant private and public investment in infrastructure.
- We note the commentary in the Draft RSES that the zoning of land and planning permission alone, do not necessarily guarantee delivery and population growth in accordance with projected, targeted timeframes. However, where sites are serviced, and in proximity to relevant amenities (social and retail), then there should not be an undue constraint on the capability of such sites delivering housing, in the short-term. The criteria as set out in the NSS (2002) and the Development Plan Guidelines (2007) could form the basis for the determination of the appropriateness of a site, for development, from a sound planning perspective. Any issue of lands with the benefit of planning permission, not seen to be progressing, is of course being addressed separately by reference to the Vacant Site Levy.
- Our client is supportive of the inclusion of an asset-based criteria (or matrix) for Planning Authorities to use as tool in the determination of land zoning or prioritising, when the review of the core strategies and Local Area Plans occurs after the adoption of the RSES.

2.0 GROUNDS OF SUBMISSION

2.1 Glenveagh is supportive of the Draft Guidelines and this submission is focussed on the technical aspects of the document, where we suggest some small change or additional element which may help in achieving the overall objective.

2.1 Overview

2.2 The draft Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy (RSES), which was published on the 5th of November 2018, notes that the preferred spatial strategy for the Eastern and Midland is the consolidation of Dublin plus the Regional Growth Centres of Athlone, Dundalk and Drogheda, supported by planned focused growth of a limited number of self-sustaining settlements (third tier towns).

2.3 Section 4.6 of the draft RSES states that the characteristics of 'key towns' is that they have undergone relatively sustainable levels of growth in recent decades, where the ratio of jobs to resident workforce has remained high due to a more sustainable balance of employment and population. These growth settlements have the capacity and future growth potential to accommodate above average growth, with commensurate employment growth on high quality public transport corridors aligned with requisite investment in services, amenities and sustainable transport.

- 2.4 It is important that key towns are not artificially constrained in respect of population growth particularly where there has been significant private and public investment in infrastructure.
- 2.2 Use of Headroom**
- 2.5 The Draft RSES notes that *"Practice in relation to previous Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) and core strategies, has generally been to match future population targets to the physical extent of land being zoned for development, based on assumptions related to density and household occupancy. A further factor of 50% of the identified land requirement has also been universally applicable as 'headroom'."*
- 2.6 The Draft RSES further notes that the concept of headroom based solely on zoned land provision does not account for housing yield arising from the re-use of existing housing stock, mixed-use development, urban intensification or infill or brownfield development. It is submitted that the core strategies of County Plans do take into account infill and regeneration sites in how land is allocated for development. As such Local Authorities are familiar with reviewing sites and making judgement on which sites are appropriate for development. Artificially constraining Local Authorities to a solely population-based headroom, may lead to sites which are appropriate for development (from an asset-based review), not being considered appropriate, due to perceived ceiling of a population threshold.
- 2.7 The Draft RSES outlines that the NPF incorporates 25% (population) headroom figures for all parts of the country and that this may be supplemented by additional 25% headroom, applicable in the 16 local authority areas that are projected to grow at or above the national average growth figure.
- 2.8 The Draft RSES envisages that the application of headroom is particularly relevant to the five cities, but that the scale of the projected population targets for cities means that some transfer of projected growth to their wider metropolitan areas is appropriate, (particularly during the transition period to 2026), with the level of transfer to be determined at the regional or metropolitan levels.
- 2.9 It is noted that the National Planning Framework Implementation Roadmap (July 2018) indicates that there is limited further requirement for 'headroom' for population growth to be incorporated into statutory Development Plans in most cases and that *"Notwithstanding previous guidance, this will be reflected in forthcoming updated Development Plan guidance."* It is important that clarity is provided to Local Authorities a
- 2.10 While our client is supportive of a robust analysis of land for the purposes of the delivery of sustainable housing, it is incumbent that at a time of housing shortages, within the EMR, that there is not an artificial constraint on the delivery of housing. This is particularly so where it can be demonstrated that the lands are serviced, or capable of being serviced, in the short term.
- 2.3 Asset Based Criteria**
- 2.11 Our client is supportive of the inclusion of an asset-based criteria (or matrix) for Planning Authorities to use as tool in the determination of land zoning or prioritising, when the review of the core strategies and Local Area Plans occurs after the adoption of the RSES.

- 2.12 In this regard the criteria used in the former National Spatial Strategy could be used as an implementation tool to assist Planning Authorities, in the implementation of the Regional and Spatial and Economic Strategy.

The Asset Test	Are there existing community resources, such as schools etc, with spare capacity?
The Carrying Capacity Test	Is the environmental setting capable of absorbing development in terms of drainage etc?
The Transport Test	Is there potential for reinforcing usage of public transport, walking and cycling?
The Economic Development Test	Is there potential to ensure integration between the location of housing and employment?
The Character Test	Will the proposal reinforce a sense of place and character?
The Community Test	Will the proposal reinforce the integrity and vitality of the local community and services that can be provided?
The Integration Test	Will the proposal aid an integrated approach to catering for the housing needs of all sections of society?

- 2.13 The Development Plan Guidelines (2007) further states that under Section 95 (1) of the 2000 Act, planning authorities are obliged to ensure that sufficient and suitable land is zoned for residential, to meet the requirements of the housing strategy and to ensure that a scarcity of residential land does not occur at any time during the period of the plan. The Guidelines state that matters typically relevant to the proper planning and sustainable development of areas, *inter alia*, include:-

- Need
- Policy Context
- Capacity of Water, Drainage and Roads Infrastructure
- Supporting Infrastructure and Facilities
- Physical Suitability
- Sequential Approach
- Environmental and Heritage policy, including conservation of habitats and other sensitive areas

- 2.14 In addition, the Development Plan Guidelines provide a range of similar criteria, for the zoning of land as follows:

Table 1 - Development Plan Guidelines (2007) Zoning

Criteria
<i>Need</i>
<i>Policy Context</i>
<i>Capacity of Water, Drainage and Roads Infrastructure</i>
<i>Supporting Infrastructure and Facilities</i>
<i>Physical Suitability</i>
<i>Sequential Approach</i>
<i>Environmental and Heritage policy, including conservation of habitats and other sensitive areas.</i>

2.4 Alignment of Infrastructure to housing

- 2.15 One of the key elements in the delivery of housing and the zoning of land is the spatial alignment of existing infrastructure (foul services and roads) to the location of zoned land. It is recommended that the adopted RSES require Local Authorities to include an infrastructural review relating to water supply, wastewater infrastructure, roads (including access) so that it can be demonstrated that the lands are appropriate for development in the short term. The analysis by the Local Authority should also include a review of social infrastructure such as schools, proximity to amenities, and employment areas, all with a view to prioritising lands which have a realistic capability of delivering housing in the short to medium term.
- 2.16 Our client is supportive of such a review of the residential land use zoning (existing and proposed) as part of the plan-making process. This will take into account the lands which are un-serviced and which have infrastructure constraints. While this exercise may result in the phasing of currently unsuitable land for development, from the overall quantum of zoned residential land, in the EMA, it is considered reasonable that zoned land is capable of delivering housing in the short term, particularly where there is a housing shortage. Equally, where a developer can demonstrate the capability of bridging an identified infrastructure deficit, that this is taken into account in the preparation of future core strategies and subsequent future land use zonings, and that such lands can be brought forward in the interim.

2.5 The Draft RSES Commentary in “*Taking account of existing plans*”

- 2.17 Glenveagh note the acknowledgment in the Draft RSES that the zoning of land and planning permission alone, do not necessarily guarantee delivery and population growth in accordance with projected, targeted timeframes.
- 2.18 Therefore, in planning for future growth, the RSES notes that Planning Authorities set out and monitor the service capacity and likely rate of completion of development on zoned land (brownfield and greenfield) – having regard to local conditions and trends.
- 2.19 The Draft RSES notes that there may not be an “*ideal fit*” between some current plans and the more recent parameters set out in the NPF and that appropriate transitional arrangements will be put in place. The Draft RSES states that the “*consideration of development land prioritisation*” measures by LAs “*rather than de-zoning of land where there may be a surplus, would be more appropriate*”.
- 2.20 The following is noted in the Draft RSES: -
- Closer attention to the actual delivery (of housing) is required and PAs take steps that may be necessary to implement strategic planning aims and “***above all avoiding the hoarding of land and/or planning permissions.***”
 - PAs to tackle any tendencies towards and land or/planning permission hoarding, or excessively slow delivery using vacant site levy “***and the release of alternative lands where permitted development, without any wider delivery constraints, is not being brought forward.***”
 - PAs to avoid creating “*an unreasonable dependency*” on certain sites which would impede the bringing forward of other suitable lands with better prospects for delivery in the short term, if the strategic sites are not being brought forward by their owners.

- 2.21 Having regard to the above, our client is seeking the inclusion of the recognition, that some sites and lands may be medium and long term in their capability to deliver housing, while other sites are capable, due to being serviced, of delivering housing in the short term. More specifically, where sites are serviced, and in proximity to relevant amenities (social, retail), then there should not be an undue constraint on the capability of such sites delivering housing, in the short-term. The criteria as set out in the NSS (2002) and the current Development Plan Guidelines (2007) could form the basis for the determination of the appropriateness of a site, for development, from a sound planning perspective.
- 2.22 We would also note that National Policy Objective 9 allows for some settlements to be identified for significant growth (i.e., greater than 30% growth above 2016 levels) provided there is agreement at regional assembly level and or local authority as appropriate, and that this may entail a balancing of growth elsewhere, so that the totality of growth is in line with the overall growth target; all to ensure alignment with investment in infrastructure and the provision of employment (together with supporting amenities).
- 2.23 In the adopted RSES, it is important that the key towns such as Navan, Wicklow and Naas are promoted in this regard.

2.6 Measuring Delivery through Active Land Management

- 2.24 The Draft RSES acknowledges that the achieving good performance (in delivering growth) *"will require will require a range of more active land management measures, beyond just zoning land."*
- 2.25 According to the Draft RSES, *"this will include analysis of service capacity, needs and overall cost, infill/brownfield potential and patterns of housing delivery and output, including the takeup and completion of planning permissions..... All of this will require a suitable 'pipeline' of development opportunities, prioritised on the basis of likelihood of meeting targets and kept under review through monitoring and reporting."*
- 2.26 It is submitted that *"a suitable pipeline of development opportunities"* will require flexibility in the allocation of zoned land in the EMA and that this will not be solely based on population figures and that the spatial and land based allocation of headroom as per current practice, is the most appropriate mechanism to avoid the hoarding of land and/or planning permissions and a future shortfall in land supply for housing.

3.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 3.1 We respectfully request the Eastern Regional Authority takes this submission into account and to include the proposed alterations into the adopted Regional Spatial Strategy for the East and Midlands Regional Authority.

Yours Faithfully,



John Spain Associates

Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly,
3rd Floor North,
Ballymun Civic Centre,
Main Street,
Ballymun, Dublin, D09 C8P5
rses@emra.ie

Date: 23rd January 2019

JSA Ref. 17105

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: DRAFT REGIONAL, ECONOMIC AND SPATIAL STRATEGY – EAST & MIDLANDS AREA

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 We refer to the publication of the Draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (Draft RSES) for the Eastern and Midland region on the 3rd of November 2018. Glenveagh Properties Plc, F11 Maynooth Business Campus, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, W23 HR64 has instructed John Spain Associates to prepare this submission on their behalf.
- 1.2 At the outset, our client welcomes and supports the publication of the Draft RSES, which will provide the regional framework for the delivery of new dwellings for the East and Midlands region.
- 1.3 This submission is focused on how the RSES should influence the delivery of new dwellings in appropriate serviced locations and that clear guidance should be provided to Planning Authorities on how additional flexibility in the adopted RSES can assist in the implementation of the RSES at County level, and ultimately the delivery of much needed housing.

Managing Director: John P. Spain BRS MRUP MRICS ASCS MRTPI MIPI
Executive Directors: Paul Turley BA MRUP Dip Environmental & Planning Law MIPI Rory Kunz BA (MOD) MSc-ERM MAT&CP Dip EIA Mgmt MIPI,
Stephen Blair BA (Mod) MRUP MIPI Mary Mac Mahon MSc TCP Pg Dip MSP Pg Dip Env Eng Dip Env Plg Law Dip Mgmt Dip EIA & SEA B Soc Sc MIPI
Associate Directors: Stephanie Byrne BA MRUP MIPI, Niall Byrne BSc(Hons) MSc MRTPI MIPI

John Spain Associates Ltd. trading as John Spain Associates. Directors: J. Spain, S. Spain.
Registered in Ireland No. 396306. Registered Office: 39, Fitzwilliam Place, Dublin 2. VAT No. IE 6416306U

1.4 In summary,

- The kernel of the RSES is the need to balance several factors; setting overall targets for growth wherein *'it is a pattern of development that is being targeted, rather than precise numbers'* (from section 2.3 of NPF); align infrastructure investment and priorities (determine the *'assimilative capacity'* of areas, RPO 4.2); avoid creating an *'unreasonable dependency'* on certain sites, thus paying much closer attention to actual delivery, with the bringing forward of other suitable lands part of the assessment, should some sites be slower to deliver new homes (*'Taking Account of Existing Plans'*).
- In our judgement, where lands have been identified as suitable for housing, and where a competent assessment shows the availability of infrastructure, then full support for early delivery of homes at such locations, always subject to the principles of proper planning and sustainable development, including unit mix, appropriate density etc., must be firmly expressed in the final version of the RSES.
- With specific regard to the use of headroom as an important mechanism for ensuring a spatial allocation of land, including brownfield land, for new homes, the approach as currently outlined in the Draft RSES is uncertain. We suggest that this creates a confusion as to how Local Authorities should address the spatial consequence of needed headroom. '
- It is important that the adopted RSES recognise that headroom has an important spatial element. Clarity on the application of headroom should recognise that the deliverability of housing is a complex and often a multi-faceted and lengthy exercise. A reliance on a solely population-based headroom, fails to take into account that the preparation of a core strategy of a County Plan, includes a broader scrutiny of the characteristics of a site. These characteristics may include, proximity to services, social infrastructure and public transport, all of which play a role in the suitability of a site to be brought forward for development.
- Using a solely population-based headroom for zoning as is currently suggested would have the potential effect of curtailing sites, which otherwise are appropriate for development. There still needs to be a spatial dimension to how headroom is applied in the quantum of zoned land to take into account (a) the length of time it takes to get zoned land fully serviced, (b) developer/market considerations, and (c) land assembly etc. An additional spatial element to headroom, along with the associated infrastructure review of land, is required to ensure that lands which are serviced, and ready to deliver housing supply, are not artificially constrained.
- Our client is supportive of the inclusion of an infrastructural review in the delivery of housing and of residential land use zoning as part of the plan-making process. This will take into account the lands which are un-serviced and which have infrastructure constraints. While this exercise would result in the removal/sequencing of such lands, it must be matched by a strong statement of commitment to zoned and serviced lands capable of delivering housing in the short term.
- There is a concern that in the language of the Draft RSES, an arbitrary cap may be placed on certain locations simply to satisfy a theoretical interpretation of the NPF Regional *'rebalancing'* exercise. This would be contrary to the NPF approach which recognises that in future growth, it is the pattern of development which is being targeted rather than precise numbers. Instead the final RSES

should emphasise that there is a need to balance objectives and projections of growth with practical planning realities, such as; the full exploitation of locations where public investment has recently gone in, a need to judge areas which have developed to a certain stage of build out and which would suffer negative consequences if the overall district was not fully completed.

- Equally, where a developer can demonstrate the capability of bridging an identified infrastructure deficit, alongside all other requirements of proper planning and sustainable development that this is taken into account in the preparation of future core strategies and subsequent future land use zonings, and such lands could be brought forward in the short term.
- In short, it is important that key settlements are not artificially constrained in respect of population growth particularly where there has been significant private and public investment in infrastructure.
- We note the commentary in the Draft RSES that the zoning of land and planning permission alone, do not necessarily guarantee delivery and population growth in accordance with projected, targeted timeframes. However, where sites are serviced, and in proximity to relevant amenities (social and retail), then there should not be an undue constraint on the capability of such sites delivering housing, in the short-term. The criteria as set out in the NSS (2002) and the Development Plan Guidelines (2007) could form the basis for the determination of the appropriateness of a site, for development, from a sound planning perspective. Any issue of lands with the benefit of planning permission, not seen to be progressing, is of course being addressed separately by reference to the Vacant Site Levy.
- Our client is supportive of the inclusion of an asset-based criteria (or matrix) for Planning Authorities to use as tool in the determination of land zoning or prioritising, when the review of the core strategies and Local Area Plans occurs after the adoption of the RSES.

2.0 GROUNDS OF SUBMISSION

2.1 Glenveagh is supportive of the Draft Guidelines and this submission is focussed on the technical aspects of the document, where we suggest some small change or additional element which may help in achieving the overall objective.

2.1 Overview

2.2 The draft Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy (RSES), which was published on the 5th of November 2018, notes that the preferred spatial strategy for the Eastern and Midland is the consolidation of Dublin plus the Regional Growth Centres of Athlone, Dundalk and Drogheda, supported by planned focused growth of a limited number of self-sustaining settlements (third tier towns).

2.3 Section 4.6 of the draft RSES states that the characteristics of 'key towns' is that they have undergone relatively sustainable levels of growth in recent decades, where the ratio of jobs to resident workforce has remained high due to a more sustainable balance of employment and population. These growth settlements have the capacity and future growth potential to accommodate above average growth, with commensurate employment growth on high quality public transport corridors aligned with requisite investment in services, amenities and sustainable transport.

2.4 It is important that key towns are not artificially constrained in respect of population growth particularly where there has been significant private and public investment in infrastructure.

2.2 Use of Headroom

2.5 The Draft RSES notes that *“Practice in relation to previous Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) and core strategies, has generally been to match future population targets to the physical extent of land being zoned for development, based on assumptions related to density and household occupancy. A further factor of 50% of the identified land requirement has also been universally applicable as ‘headroom’.”*

2.6 The Draft RSES further notes that the concept of headroom based solely on zoned land provision does not account for housing yield arising from the re-use of existing housing stock, mixed-use development, urban intensification or infill or brownfield development. It is submitted that the core strategies of County Plans do take into account infill and regeneration sites in how land is allocated for development. As such Local Authorities are familiar with reviewing sites and making judgement on which sites are appropriate for development. Artificially constraining Local Authorities to a solely population-based headroom, may lead to sites which are appropriate for development (from an asset-based review), not being considered appropriate, due to perceived ceiling of a population threshold.

2.7 The Draft RSES outlines that the NPF incorporates 25% (population) headroom figures for all parts of the country and that this may be supplemented by additional 25% headroom, applicable in the 16 local authority areas that are projected to grow at or above the national average growth figure.

2.8 The Draft RSES envisages that the application of headroom is particularly relevant to the five cities, but that the scale of the projected population targets for cities means that some transfer of projected growth to their wider metropolitan areas is appropriate, (particularly during the transition period to 2026), with the level of transfer to be determined at the regional or metropolitan levels.

2.9 It is noted that the National Planning Framework Implementation Roadmap (July 2018) indicates that there is limited further requirement for ‘headroom’ for population growth to be incorporated into statutory Development Plans in most cases and that *“Notwithstanding previous guidance, this will be reflected in forthcoming updated Development Plan guidance.”* It is important that clarity is provided to Local Authorities a

2.10 While our client is supportive of a robust analysis of land for the purposes of the delivery of sustainable housing, it is incumbent that at a time of housing shortages, within the EMR, that there is not an artificial constraint on the delivery of housing. This is particularly so where it can be demonstrated that the lands are serviced, or capable of being serviced, in the short term.

2.3 Asset Based Criteria

2.11 Our client is supportive of the inclusion of an asset-based criteria (or matrix) for Planning Authorities to use as tool in the determination of land zoning or prioritising, when the review of the core strategies and Local Area Plans occurs after the adoption of the RSES.

2.12 In this regard the criteria used in the former National Spatial Strategy could be used as an implementation tool to assist Planning Authorities, in the implementation of the Regional and Spatial and Economic Strategy.

The Asset Test	Are there existing community resources, such as schools etc, with spare capacity?
The Carrying Capacity Test	Is the environmental setting capable of absorbing development in terms of drainage etc?
The Transport Test	Is there potential for reinforcing usage of public transport, walking and cycling?
The Economic Development Test	Is there potential to ensure integration between the location of housing and employment?
The Character Test	Will the proposal reinforce a sense of place and character?
The Community Test	Will the proposal maintain the integrity and vitality of the local community and services that can be provided?
The Integration Test	Will the proposal add an integrated approach? Is catering for the housing needs of all sections of society?

2.13 The Development Plan Guidelines (2007) further states that under Section 95 (1) of the 2000 Act, planning authorities are obliged to ensure that sufficient and suitable land is zoned for residential, to meet the requirements of the housing strategy and to ensure that a scarcity of residential land does not occur at any time during the period of the plan. The Guidelines state that matters typically relevant to the proper planning and sustainable development of areas, *inter alia*, include:-

- Need
- Policy Context
- Capacity of Water, Drainage and Roads Infrastructure
- Supporting Infrastructure and Facilities
- Physical Suitability
- Sequential Approach
- Environmental and Heritage policy, including conservation of habitats and other sensitive areas

2.14 In addition, the Development Plan Guidelines provide a range of similar criteria, for the zoning of land as follows:

Table 1 - Development Plan Guidelines (2007) Zoning

Criteria
<i>Need</i>
<i>Policy Context</i>
<i>Capacity of Water, Drainage and Roads Infrastructure</i>
<i>Supporting Infrastructure and Facilities</i>
<i>Physical Suitability</i>
<i>Sequential Approach</i>
<i>Environmental and Heritage policy, including conservation of habitats and other sensitive areas.</i>

2.4 Alignment of Infrastructure to housing

- 2.15 One of the key elements in the delivery of housing and the zoning of land is the spatial alignment of existing infrastructure (foul services and roads) to the location of zoned land. It is recommended that the adopted RSES require Local Authorities to include an infrastructural review relating to water supply, wastewater infrastructure, roads (including access) so that it can be demonstrated that the lands are appropriate for development in the short term. The analysis by the Local Authority should also include a review of social infrastructure such as schools, proximity to amenities, and employment areas, all with a view to prioritising lands which have a realistic capability of delivering housing in the short to medium term.
- 2.16 Our client is supportive of such a review of the residential land use zoning (existing and proposed) as part of the plan-making process. This will take into account the lands which are un-serviced and which have infrastructure constraints. While this exercise may result in the phasing of currently unsuitable land for development, from the overall quantum of zoned residential land, in the EMA, it is considered reasonable that zoned land is capable of delivering housing in the short term, particularly where there is a housing shortage. Equally, where a developer can demonstrate the capability of bridging an identified infrastructure deficit, that this is taken into account in the preparation of future core strategies and subsequent future land use zonings, and that such lands can be brought forward in the interim.

2.5 The Draft RSES Commentary in "*Taking account of existing plans*"

- 2.17 Glenveagh note the acknowledgment in the Draft RSES that the zoning of land and planning permission alone, do not necessarily guarantee delivery and population growth in accordance with projected, targeted timeframes.
- 2.18 Therefore, in planning for future growth, the RSES notes that Planning Authorities set out and monitor the service capacity and likely rate of completion of development on zoned land (brownfield and greenfield) – having regard to local conditions and trends.
- 2.19 The Draft RSES notes that there may not be an "*ideal fit*" between some current plans and the more recent parameters set out in the NPF and that appropriate transitional arrangements will be put in place. The Draft RSES states that the "*consideration of development land prioritisation*" measures by LAs "rather than de-zoning of land where there may be a surplus, would be more appropriate".
- 2.20 The following is noted in the Draft RSES: -
- Closer attention to the actual delivery (of housing) is required and PAs take steps that may be necessary to implement strategic planning aims and "***above all avoiding the hoarding of land and/or planning permissions.***"
 - PAs to tackle any tendencies towards and land or/planning permission hoarding, or excessively slow delivery using vacant site levy "***and the release of alternative lands where permitted development, without any wider delivery constraints, is not being brought forward.***"
 - PAs to avoid creating "*an unreasonable dependency*" on certain sites which would impede the bringing forward of other suitable lands with better prospects for delivery in the short term, if the strategic sites are not being brought forward by their owners.

- 2.21 Having regard to the above, our client is seeking the inclusion of the recognition, that some sites and lands may be medium and long term in their capability to deliver housing, while other sites are capable, due to being serviced, of delivering housing in the short term. More specifically, where sites are serviced, and in proximity to relevant amenities (social, retail), then there should not be an undue constraint on the capability of such sites delivering housing, in the short-term. The criteria as set out in the NSS (2002) and the current Development Plan Guidelines (2007) could form the basis for the determination of the appropriateness of a site, for development, from a sound planning perspective.
- 2.22 We would also note that National Policy Objective 9 allows for some settlements to be identified for significant growth (i.e., greater than 30% growth above 2016 levels) provided there is agreement at regional assembly level and or local authority as appropriate, and that this may entail a balancing of growth elsewhere, so that the totality of growth is in line with the overall growth target; all to ensure alignment with investment in infrastructure and the provision of employment (together with supporting amenities).
- 2.23 In the adopted RSES, it is important that the key towns such as Navan, Wicklow and Naas are promoted in this regard.

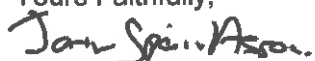
2.6 Measuring Delivery through Active Land Management

- 2.24 The Draft RSES acknowledges that the achieving good performance (in delivering growth) *"will require will require a range of more active land management measures, beyond just zoning land."*
- 2.25 According to the Draft RSES, *"this will include analysis of service capacity, needs and overall cost, infill/brownfield potential and patterns of housing delivery and output, including the takeup and completion of planning permissions..... All of this will require a suitable 'pipeline' of development opportunities, prioritised on the basis of likelihood of meeting targets and kept under review through monitoring and reporting."*
- 2.26 It is submitted that *"a suitable pipeline of development opportunities"* will require flexibility in the allocation of zoned land in the EMA and that this will not be solely based on population figures and that the spatial and land based allocation of headroom as per current practice, is the most appropriate mechanism to avoid the hoarding of land and/or planning permissions and a future shortfall in land supply for housing.

3.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 3.1 We respectfully request the Eastern Regional Authority takes this submission into account and to include the proposed alterations into the adopted Regional Spatial Strategy for the East and Midlands Regional Authority.

Yours Faithfully,



John Spain Associates

