

Heather Cooke

From: Brian Hughes <brian@bradyhughes.com>
Sent: 23 January 2019 12:40
To: RSES
Subject: Submission / Observation on EMRA Draft RSES

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Dear Sir/Madam,

With reference to the Draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy currently on display for the East Midlands region, please note the following submission on behalf of my client, Shannon Homes (Drogheda) Ltd, an experienced developer with a track record of delivery of high quality residential and commercial development in Drogheda over the past 30 – 40 years :

RSES Statement: *'The vision provided for in the draft RSES is that Drogheda will act as a Regional Growth Centre with a population target in the region of 50,000 by 2031.'*

Comment/Observation: The current population of Drogheda is approximately 42,000. The 2007 Planning Strategy for the Greater Drogheda Area (prepared jointly by Louth and Meath County Council's) included a more ambitious target for a population growth to 65,000 and an aspiration to achieve city status. The town boundaries as defined by Local Area Plans for the North and Southern Environs caters for achieving that critical mass. Infrastructure framework plans exist which set out how such a population could be catered for within a compact urban setting bounded by distributor roads linking with the M1 motorway.

The reduction of the target population will have the effect of reducing the impetus for provision of funding for infrastructure, without which the town will fail to meet even the modest target set by the Draft RSES.

We would contend that the Draft RSES sets an unambitious target that will result in underachievement of the town's potential.

RSES Statement: *'The distribution of the population between the two local authorities should be agreed by both local authorities in the Joint UAP and this distribution, in the first instance should be commensurate with existing population levels.'*

Comment/Observation: This statement seems to suggest that the potential population increase of approx. 8000 will occur pro-rata in Louth and Meath depending on what proportion of the existing 42,000 are located within Louth and Meath. There is no planning rationale for this – the development should be located where it can best be accommodated – consolidation of the town settlement, available capacity in roads and utilities, proximity to public transport etc.

I would be obliged if you would take the foregoing into consideration.

Regards,

Brian Hughes

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