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From: Kenneth Craig Bishop <[REDACTED]>
Organisation: Wicklow Planning Alliance

Message Body:

Attached is our submission of the draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy. If there is an issue please call me on [REDACTED]

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This e-mail was sent from a submission form on Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly (<http://emra.ie>)

Wicklow Planning Association

Submission on the Draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy of the EHRA

The Wicklow Planning Alliance is a group of citizens who have an interest in spatial planning. The Group started making submissions on proposed development plans locally and at national about 20 years ago. It was heavily involved in the Spatial Planning Guidelines and attempting to make some of the principals stick in the County Development Plan

We would like to support the Draft Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy, It is an excellent piece of work; It exhibits a clear understanding of how the measures that we as a people need to take to address Climate Change are exactly the measures that will;

- Drive our economy in a sustainable way;
- Deliver the best value for our taxes and public capital investment;
- Improve the general wellbeing of our people.

We like the way your draft Strategy aims to link funding with policy; we like the aim to promote active land management and the acknowledgement of the importance of urban regeneration; infill development, brownfield development, compact urban growth and evidence-based strategies. We like the aim of the draft Strategy to align spatial planning with capital investment but we are not convinced that it will have the impact so desired.

1. Implementation - More fine control needed.

The sticks and carrots approach to ensuring implementation of the national and regional strategies is good but past experience makes us suspicious. The litmus test will be the villages just beyond the urban centres. Communities with populations below 5000 but no longer rural. Villages like Kilcoole and Newtownmountkennedy, dormitories for car based commuters who spend 2 -3 hours a day in their cars. The pressure on councils to wave through planning permission for new houses in such areas will be too great to resist. When the implementation group visits 2 -3 years later it will be too late to do anything - the horse will have bolted and developers and counsellors will be reassured that its business as usual. The growth junkies have got their fix.

The draft should be changed; **the mechanism for ensuring compliance needs to be refined if it is to be effective at the local area level.**

2. Growth - A dependancy that needs to be addressed

The RSES is an economic development plan that is dependant on 'growth'. It is written at a time when what is needed is a redefining of the concept of growth. If we are to avoid world order decaying into mayhem, 'growth' needs to be reframed as progress towards achieving a healthy future for our country, our earth rather than the be all of a capitalist system. Part of that process involves changing the hearts and minds of the people. We need to let go of 'the old ways' of consuming resources and accept a very different reality. Its a similar process to the one that someone must engage in when told that he has a chronic illness to which he must adapt. We have come through the phase of disbelieving that climate change is happening, then we deny its impact. Next comes anger and despair before acceptance dawns.

The EMRA has a role in facilitating this 'grief' process. To promote the vision, enable and encourage joined up actions and incentivise attitudinal and behavioural change as well as producing plans.

Craig Bishop

Chairman Wicklow Planning Alliance

23rd January 2019