

Simon Musial

From: Mark Mahon <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 23 January 2019 14:39
To: RSES
Subject: RSES Observation/submission
Attachments: Lt. EMRA RSES 23-01-19.pdf

To whom it may concern,

Please find attached submission.

May I compliment the team on their informative presentation in Tullamore.

Best Regards,

Mark

Mark Mahon | Area Engineer - Edenderry Municipal District
Offaly County Council | Town Hall | Edenderry
[REDACTED] | [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

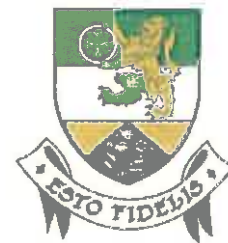
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23rd January 2018

RE: Draft Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy – Public Consultation

Dear Sir,

Please see observations in relation to the aforementioned public consultation below:

Transport, Infrastructure & Settlement Strategy

With reference to sections such as 8.3 (Framework for the Integration of Transport planning with Spatial Planning Policies) and the Regional Policy Objectives therein, the specific planning and development of measures to aid the functionality of routes servicing the Hinterland towns are not stated aims. Some non-national routes have developed to become critical links between these Hinterland towns and the Greater Dublin Area (GDA). For example, the R402 Regional Road servicing much of Co. Offaly, while upgraded between Enfield and the Offaly border (outside Edenderry), is wholly inadequate within Offaly for the increased traffic. Traffic levels of 12,500 AADT (2017) illustrate that this route is servicing the wider Offaly area including the Key Town of Tullamore (for all intents and purposes connecting it to the GDA).

As identified in the Functional Areas (refer Figure 1.10 Draft RSES), Edenderry Municipal District has become part of the Greater Dublin Commuter Belt, with over 25% leaving work before 7am, as illustrated by the Census 2016 (refer *Report on Travel patterns and car ownership*, issued by CSO in June 2017).

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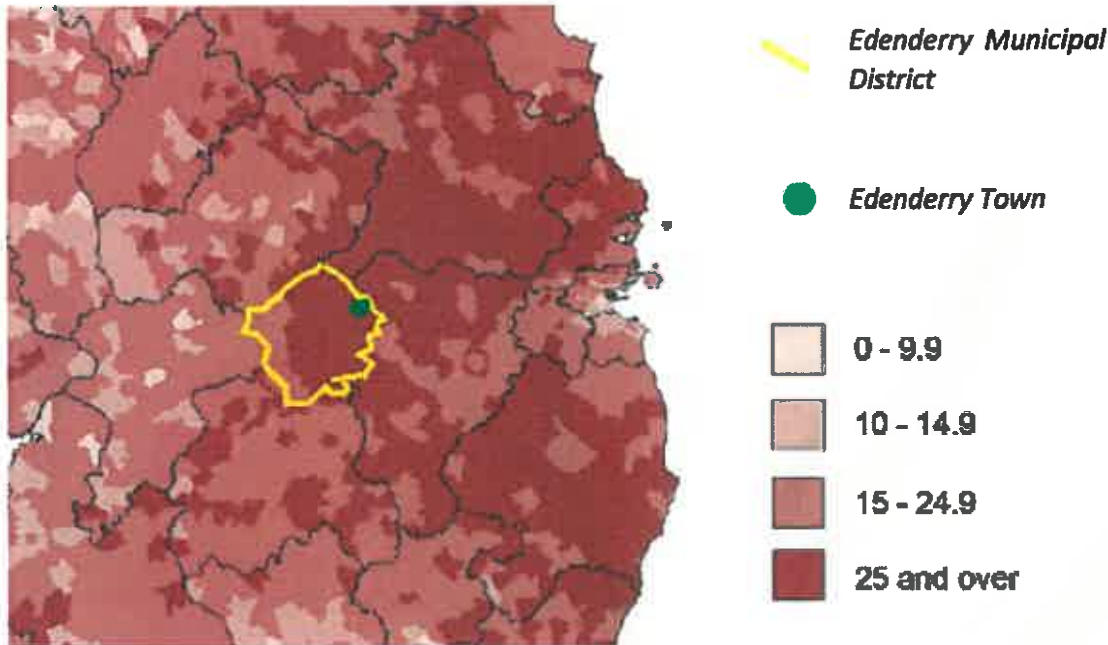
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From CSO Map 8.1 Percentage of commuters by electoral division leaving home before 7 a.m. to travel to work, 2016.

While the provision of Local Transport Plans for larger towns is welcome, the RSES would benefit from the inclusion for studies/plans to identify and support critical radial routes (such as the R402). The RSES should make provision for a mechanism for review of the appropriate status of such routes which have had a significant functional change and commensurate increase in traffic. Routes such as the R402 are operating a quasi-national secondary routes. There is currently a large area between the M4/M6 and M7 that is being serviced by this road. The RSES should contain a provision to review the appropriate status of strategically important routes which may still have a status which relates to the former usage, but not to their current critical nature. This is necessary for due consideration to be given for the need for infrastructure investment under any forthcoming Regional Investment Plans.

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While the Settlement Strategy points to consolidation of Hinterland areas (such as Edenderry) that have undergone rapid expansions in recent times (Edenderry – 1996: 3,825; 2016: 7,359), it makes little distinction between particular challenges or measures to support the optimisation of the locational advantage. Counter-urbanisation in conjunction with remote working infrastructure has the potential to support the development of services and greater place-making. Towns such as Edenderry are significant local drivers and have the potential to become more self-sustaining with a greater positive impact on the surrounding area.

National Land Development Agency

Given the planned transition of Bord na Móna out of peat based activities over the lifetime of this RSES, it would be more than appropriate to foresee a role for the National Land Development Agency in the utilisation of the significant land banks. There are huge land-banks owned by Bord na Móna which would place a role in the future economic development of the County and wider region.

Yours faithfully,

Mark Mahon
Area Engineer
Edenderry Municipal District

